



# SLATER SIGNALS

The Newsletter of the USS SLATER's Volunteers  
By Timothy C. Rizzuto, Executive Director

Destroyer Escort Historical Museum

USS Slater DE-766

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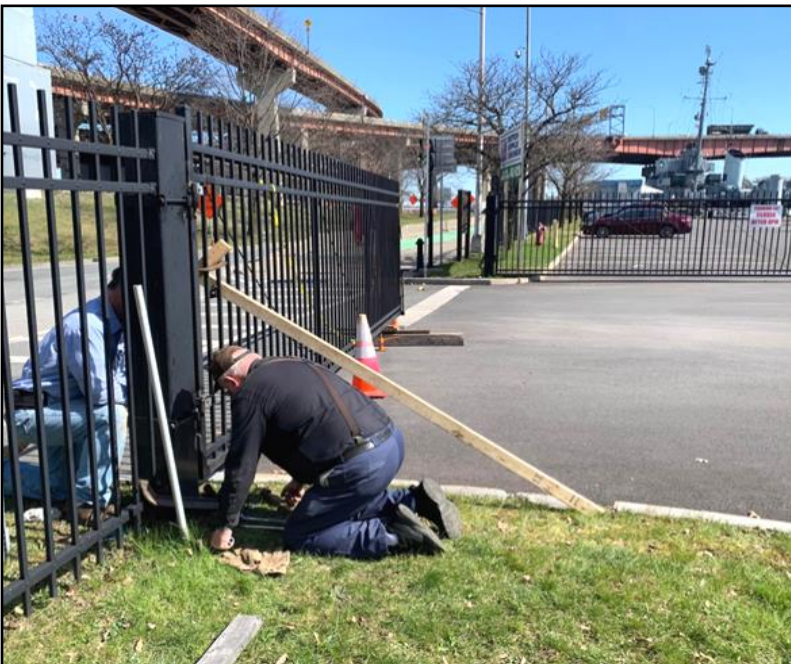
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**Well, we did it again.** We got the ship all cleaned up and open for season 27.

**An unexpected surprise occurred when the hinges broke on the south section of our parking lot gate.** Each side of the gate weighs about 400 pounds, so there was no way we could get the gate open completely. This was not a good situation with opening day for both us and **Dutch Apple Cruises** fast approaching. After discussion with the City of Albany and the contractor who installed the gate, we quickly came to the conclusion that the most time effective answer to fixing the gate was to do the repairs ourselves.

**Doug rigged temporary hinges, and hoisted the gate onto a four-wheel dolly so that it could be opened and closed.** Over the course of the month, we ordered new heavy duty steel gate hinges and fabricated clamps to attach the hinges to the gate post. Working just two days a week, the job was completed by the third week in April. The gate is once again fully functional. Based on past experience, we have purchased hinges, and fabricated the parts to repair the north side of the double gate, so we are prepared if those hinges fail.



*The gate is functional once again.*

**The gate project took a lot of time away from the ship, but the crew still managed to make considerable progress this month.** We completed repairs to the signal light mounts on the signal bridge, and modified the mounts so they terminate a foot above the deck so

there is no issue with the water inside the pipe mounts eating away at the deck. If you recall, the deck on the starboard side signal lamp mount was rotted through and required a doubler. Doug tested the portside, and found that there are no issues with corrosion.

**Work also progressed on the flying bridge.** The shipfitters acquired sheet metal to fit under the radar hut and primed it all with weldable primer. Then, they cut the sheet metal into small enough pieces that they could work into the openings in the radar hut deck.



*Earl primed metal for the flying bridge repairs.*

**Doug and Warren Brozio continued the overhaul of the second low**

**pressure air compressor.** The first compressor has been installed in B-1 and is fully functional. The second compressor has been more of a challenge. Doug has been working with **Bonnie Baker** and **Rolfe Industries** to get the parts he needs. They reassembled it, but it was very hard to turn over. They took it apart again and measured the crank journal and the connecting rod inserts. It appears that whoever rebuilt it, installed undersized connecting rod inserts as replacements. When **Doug** loosened the caps .010", it turned over without a problem.



*Bill got the steps from the observation deck to the gangway painted. He also varnished the all important donation box.*

**Doug discovered that the aft stanchion supporting 40mm gun 42 is badly wasted and the bottom section will need replacement.** **Danny** fabricated a temporary stanchion to support the gun while the original stanchion is removed. **Bill Kubizne** repaired a broken hinge on the magazine scuttle outside the CPO Mess.



***Time to bring the work float back.***

**We did a lot of work to get the whaleboat ready in hopes of having it back while the spring work week crew was with us. Walt Stuart supervised rigging the accommodation ladder and brought the paint float back alongside from the Dutch Apple dock. Tommy Moore got the boat caulked and painted. Mike Dingmon, James Miles, and James Niemynski got the fuel pump on the diesel installed, and the engine tested out fine. We hope to have the boat back 1 May. The engineers have also continued their efforts to bring back number the four main engine for a test run.**



***We were fortunate to be able to show Robert Fletcher's family a uniform belonging to a crew member with whom he served.***

**Up in the radio room, Steve Syrotynski and Steve McMinn had the space in great shape for opening day. Steve McMinn has become quite the expert on Huff/Duff equipment. He has a sample presentation of a Huff/Duff simulation. Stay tuned for more!**

**We did a lot of work to get ready for the spring work week crew. Cathy Wheat and Ashley Morrison worked to get the berthing spaces ready. Chris Soulia painted the aft head. Gary Sheedy made sure the ice machine was working. It's a process that we have been through so many times before. Doug and his team of shipfitters,**

**Danny Statile, Bill Kubizne, Dave Mardon, and Earl Herchenroder** completed bringing fresh water back aboard the ship, and activated the forward crew's head. As part of the process, they completed running a new air connection to a quick connect under the hedgehog mount, so we have easy access for air tools forward.

**The USS HUSE Association Spring Work Week crew rolled into town over the last weekend in April.**

**Brandon Easley and George Amandola** organized the event. As I write, they are still aboard working. **Blair Sandri and John Meeker** held down the galley and kept the crew well fed, with **George and Phil Leibold** taking care of the messdecks. **Gary Dieckman** took over management of the paint locker, under **Gary Sheedy's** direction. **Doug Strieter** managed keeping the machine shop organized and keeping up morale with the 24 hour tailgate party.



***We got the deck painted out in gun 33.***



***Susie and Ron (not pictured) got the director tubs painted out.***

**Priority one was getting the waterways painted.** **Brandon** supervised that job; and the task required people who were capable of kneeling down, and then being able to get back up. That simple requirement eliminated about two thirds of the crew. Working with **Jan Schweiger, Gail Esker, Sharon Roberts, Susie Strieter, Mike Puccio** and locals **Thomas Scian, Bill Wetterau, and Ed Nowik**, they got the entire port waterway scaled, pressure washed, primed, and painted. As I write, they are working on the starboard side.

**Susie and Ron Frankosky** also painted the forward MK-51 gun director tubs, a project that was a

carry over from last year. **Steve Whynot** and **Gene Byers** were back over from Massachusetts and did their annual lubrication check of the ordnance.

**We had three volunteers from the Buffalo Naval Park, Joe Campese, Mark Maglietto, and Mike Ruggiero help paint the deck in the gun 33 tub. Bill Sarris, Sharon Roberts, Ron Frankosky, and Gail Esker** sanded, primed and painted the outside of the tub. They also painted the 20mm ready service lockers on the fantail and the ventilators.

**The electrical mechanical crew, George Gollas, Randy White, and Anthony Amandola tackled several projects.** They solved the problem with a ground on the windshield wiper circuit. When the galley crew had problems with the water heater, they fixed that problem. They continued work on the ship's "E" call interior communications systems and ran a new internet cable to the ship. **Anthony** tried his hand at metalwork and repaired two broken drawers and mounted a status board in CIC.

**Sonarman Robert St. John, who served on the destroyer escort USS McMORRIS, worked down in the lower sound hut.** Working with **George Gollas, Randy White** and **Gio**, they powered up the sonar gear, and checked out its condition. In both active and passive mode of operation USS SLATER was able to detect the sounds and movement of Dutch Apple cruise boat, This equipment hasn't been powered up since **Greg Shippie** and



*The engineers tested the whaleboat diesel with the new fuel pump and it ran smoother than before. The expected return to the mother ship is 1 May.*

**Dick Ross** powered up the unit over ten years ago. “BZ” to all of those involved over the years.

**One of the biggest projects was painting the inside of the stack cap. Thomas Scian and Gail Esker** climbed the stack, and scaled, cleaned, primed, and painted the interior flat black. Thomas also did a lot of touch ups on the outside of the stack.

**On the last day of the month, we held a Memorial Service for USS HUSE shipmate and volunteer, Bill Mehan, who passed away this past January.**

**Dick Walker** conducted the Memorial, and it was attended by several members of Bill's Family. Following the service, we were all treated to a wonderful steak and potato dinner prepared by **Brandon Easley**. All in all, it was a wonderful evening of warmth and comradeship. We have set the dates for the next work



*Happy cooks, happy crew!*



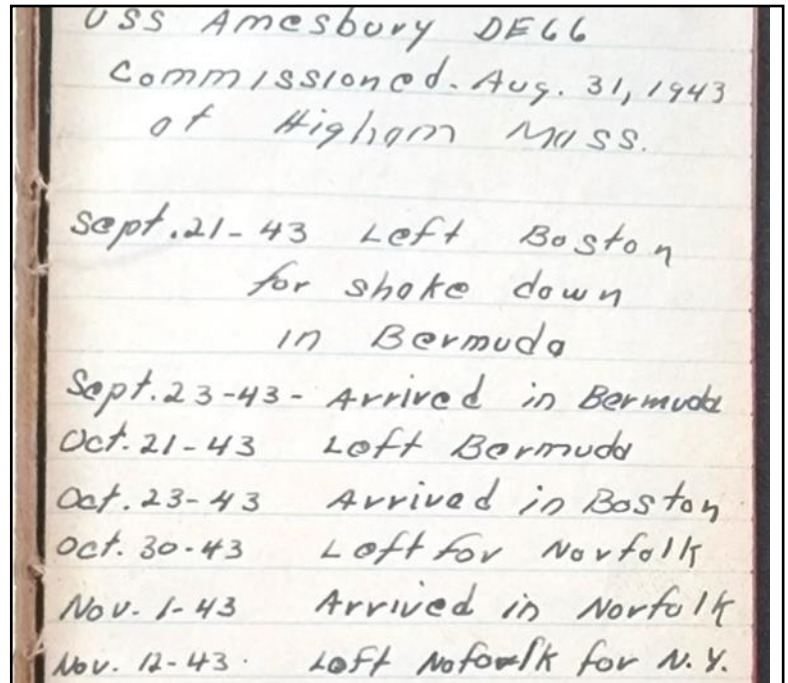
*Jan worked with the crew on the portside waterway.*

weeks, so mark your calendars. USS SLATER's fall work week will be September 29 - October 4 2024. The 2025 USS HUSE spring work week will be April 27 - May 2 2024. We hope to see you aboard.

**We also had a busy month on the education side.** We reopened for tours on Wednesday 3 April, welcoming back old friends and new faces. On Wednesdays, we have **Alan Fox, Greg Healey, Greg Bischoff, Bob Wheelock, and Bob Matuszewski**. Thursdays are covered by **Tom Corigliano, Dennis Murray, Carl Camurati, Don Cushman, and Richard Wallace**. Carl pulls double duty and works Fridays with **Charles Starks, Ken Kaskoun, and Jim Kuba**. Charles comes back for more on Saturdays along with

**Paul Guarnieri, Fred Sirois, and Scott Clayton** once a month. **Art Dott, Grant Hack, Chris Soulia,** joined by **Bill Goralski** once a month, hold down the fort on Sundays.

We are fortunate to have **Gio Romano** and **Tyler Warman** return this spring and **Henry Bourgeois** and **Andrew Laager** this summer. We welcomed aboard new interns **Bradley Bink, Sydney Jones, Alexei Garceau, Nate Hill, Liam Wroblewski, Nora McNabb, and Sebastian Russo.** I would be remiss if I didn't thank long time interns, **Austin Snyder** and **Cassidy Griffin** who came back one more time this Spring to help out with a couple of overnights.



**A pocket notebook from an unknown crewmember aboard USS AMESBURY DE-66.**



**Steve instructs about the International Code Signal Flags and flagbags.**

**On 20 April, we had Boy Scouts and parents from all over the area come aboard SLATER to work on earning their Signaling Merit Badges.** Board member and former Signalman, **Steve Long** taught Semaphore. Radio room volunteer, **Chuck Chandler** came aboard to teach Morse Code. We can't thank **George Hassel, Jeff Middendorf, and Robert Pattison** enough for their help in organizing the Scouting end of the event. Everyone had a good time, and we hope to hold the event again this fall. Hopefully, Jo Ann will remember in the Fall that Chuck and Steve happen to live in the same town, so maybe they can carpool next time from Massachusetts.

**Artifacts continue to make their way to the museum.** This month, tour guide **Bob Matuszewski** donated two photographs he took in the late 1980s of USS BLAKELY (DE/FF-1072) when he was assigned to the

floating dry dock USS SUSTAIN (AFDM-7). They offer a unique view of a KNOX-class DE/FF out of the water, something very few people ever got the chance to see.

**The uniform of Chester J. Gawlik, MoMM1c made its way to us along with a history booklet by way of his son, Don.** Chester served aboard USS HARVESON (DE-316) from April 1944 – February 1945, during which time the HARVESON and SLATER escorted 6 convoys to and from Great Britain.

**An interesting find was made inside an antique table in Massachusetts.** Brenda O’Keefe emailed us recently after discovering a pocket notebook summarizing the travels of USS AMESBURY (DE-66/APD-46). The author, while unknown, must surely have been a member of the ship’s crew. The addresses of a few crewmembers were also recorded. She and her husband will be donating it to the Florida State Archives. The wreck of the AMESBURY is located just a few miles off the coast of Key West in 25 ft. of water. She ran aground in a storm while being towed for sinking as an artificial reef.

**On Veteran’s Day 2022, Zachary Halberd visited SLATER to film a series of videos about the ship and destroyer escorts.** He and his team have done a wonderful job editing it together to not only create educational videos but a moving tribute to these ships and their crews. It’s available for free on their YouTube channel, Creation Corps. Click [here](#) to watch the entire series.



*We've been slacking on our tour guide pictures this season so here's the Wednesday crew.*



As a side note, unrelated to **USS SLATER**, but important to me personally is the fact that my old ship **USS KIDD** was moved out of her **Baton Rouge** cradle after **41** years. I spent fifteen years of my life restoring **KIDD** to her WWII configuration prior to coming to **SLATER**. **KIDD** is headed for a shipyard overhaul in Houma, Louisiana. Our own electrician **Barry Witte** was called upon to go to **Baton Rouge** and assist with electrical preparations prior to the move. When we look back at **Barry's** last three major accomplishments, replicating the smoke generator, the fighting lights, and now the messdeck food serving line, he has brought the ship a lot closer to its WWII configuration. It's nice to see **Barry's** expertise being recognized nationwide.



**Barry assisting *USS KIDD* crew with his shipboard electrical knowledge.**

**On 1 May, SLATER celebrates her 80th commissioning anniversary!** A small celebration will be held at the ship, complete with cake, balloons, and the telling of stories. Thanks go out to Jo Ann and her mom, Mary Beth, for volunteering to bake the cake and bring in cupcakes. The ship's party coincides with our Spring Work Week so I'm sure there will be an after-party with the HUSE crew. We also anticipate the arrival of the whaleboat on 1 May. And we have our special DE Day event coming up in June that includes our standard ceremony in the morning and an anniversary party at night. You can get all the details and book tickets [here](#). Until then, thank you for your continued support, and we'll keep taking care of the last destroyer escort afloat in America.



***"Gene, didn't we just grease these guns last October?"***

See you next month,  
Tim



# Come celebrate USS SLATER'S 80th Anniversary!

Do you like  
1940's Music,  
Dance, and  
Fashion?

Support Albany's biggest  
1940's artifact!

**15 June 2024, 5 PM**  
**The Hangar at 743**  
**743 Albany Shaker Rd**  
**Latham, NY 12110**

Dress is Business Casual,  
Military Attire, or 1940's Theme

Entertainment by Satin Dollz  
Catered Food & Cash Bar



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**Single Ticket \$80.00**   **Couples Ticket \$150.00**

NAME(S) \_\_\_\_\_

NUMBER OF TICKETS \_\_\_\_\_

I AM UNABLE TO ATTEND BUT WOULD LIKE TO DONATE \_\_\_\_\_

I WOULD LIKE TO BUY A TICKET FOR A VOLUNTEER \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to: Destroyer Escort Historical Museum or DEHM

Visa/Mastercard # \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. \_\_\_\_\_ CVV \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

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