



SLATER SIGNALS

The Newsletter of the USS SLATER's Volunteers
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First, its mailing list purge time. Time to try and keep costs down. This mailing list is out of control. In the enclosed big envelope you will find a little return envelope. **To stay on the snail mail mailing list, simply check the box and return it to us with your name, address and ship.** We're going to start rebuilding the mailing list from scratch based on the returns we get. **You don't need to send any money.** Just return the envelope with your name and address. But if you want to send money, it's okay. You can if you want to. It is an envelope, and things often go in envelopes. For you computer geeks, remember that the SLATER SIGNALS is posted monthly on our website at www.ussslater.org complete with color pictures, so it's always available to print from there.

Back to the ship. All the out of town help has gone home. We're back on our own. This is the month that the tour guides really came through for us. We had days when the place was inundated with school kids. All the work that **Nancy, Deb and Beth** have been doing to promote the project to school groups is really starting to pay off. Now, I consider a five hundred dollar day a good day here. We had one day when they made twenty four hundred dollars in the gift shop. Of course, as soon as they told me how much they made, they told me they wanted to spend two thousand on new merchandise. **This spring they put 1,901 school kids through the ship, up from the 845 last year.** Our thanks to the whole guide crew



Beth Spain Nancy Buxton and Deb Moore are living the DE experience every day.



New Volunteer Dave Blostein at work in the machine shop.

who worked so hard. Just remember, summer has just started, so it ain't over yet!



The tour guide crew waiting for the next bus load.

It has been the tour guides and the cashiers who have really made the education program work. George Longmuire, Tom McLaughlin, Dennis Morrissey, Al Vanderzee, Jack Madden, Gordon Lattey, Bill Scharoun, Larry Williams, Ken Kaskoun, Art Dott, Les and Annette Beauchaine, Dave Floyd, Rafael Suarez, Leo Bahler, Jim Kuba, Bob Dawson, Paul Czesak, Alan Fox, Dennis Nagi, Bruce Hodsoll, Dick and Maralyn Walker, Eric and Julie Weidman, Chuck Marshall, Russ Ferrer, Doug Schultz, Bill Goralski, Kira Zaikowski, Bob Whitney, Rosemary Williams, Claire Oesterreich, Pat Cancilla, and faithful Nancy Buxton and Beth Spain have maintained order amid chaos and made sure that all these school children have a quality experience. The old hands are joined by new guides **Joe Zaikowski, Jeremy Hoyt, Tara Palmer, Moira Pulitzer-Kennedy, Bill Calhoun and Bob Bull**. Even maintenance guys **Chuck Teal, Tim Benner, Jerry Jones, Gus Negus and Chris Fedden** had to be called out for guide duty. It's been that kind of month.

Out in Michigan, Ron Zarem made a presentation to a group of school kids about the SLATER. In his presentation, he pointed out to the children that they are the very last generation of children who will be able to learn of World War II and Korea first hand from the veterans who were there. Kind of makes you shudder and think. We've got to teach faster.

The whole crew has been beefed up by a lot of new blood in the past months. Radioman **Joe Breyer** has joined us in the radio shack. He served in the ASR SUNBIRD and went to radio school on our TDE transmitter. His buddy **Walt Stolte** is former Air Force, but just as welcome in the radio shack. **Peter Schick** is a high school student who is volunteering as a painter and tour guide four days a week. Dave Blostein is a former electronics tech who saw combat in Vietnam and then served on a GEARING. He says his claim to fame is he never stood a watch and never missed a meal. He's gotten sucked into all the problems of the engineering and ordnance departments, and has proved very adept at taking large pieces of machinery apart and getting them back together. Former Pharmacist Mate Steve Hurley has come aboard initially to guide tours but is also eager to start on the sickbay restoration. And Bruce Byrd was never in the navy, but is a historian dedicated to detailed study of naval ammunition. He joins the ordnance gang on Sundays.



Playing the bagpipes at the USS JENKINS Memorial Service.



The SLATER Color Guard Posting The Colors on DE Day.

On Saturday, June 15, the CAPDESA Chapter honored all the lost destroyer escorts, sailors, and our own shipmates at our fifth annual DE Day Memorial Service. Chapter President Don Justus, Yeoman Bob Donlon, and our own Ken Kaskoun and Paul Czesak put together a touching ceremony to remember our lost destroyer escorts and the men who were lost on them. Rev Earl Flatt gave the benediction; Frank Lasch spoke of the role of the SLATER in keeping our history alive. Over fifty people crowded under our tent on a rainy Saturday to remember their sacrifice. The CAPDESA veterans themselves chose to stand on the fantail in the rain to drop the carnations into the river in honor of their lost shipmates. Captain Steve Stella of the Albany Police Department sounded

taps. **Bill Pott's** and **Tom Sawyer's** Saratoga group from the National Honor Guard Association Rifle Squad fired a final volley, and **Jack O' Hare** played bagpipes. It was a fitting way to remember.



The Honor Guard fires the three volleys on DE Day.

The progress on the trailer has been a true, "God will provide saga." As you recall, **Bob Cross** got us the trailer loaned from the Port to set up as a classroom and gift shop. That was in April. May went by and the weeds grew up, but not high enough to cover this blight on our landscape. The Saturday crew started making fun of my latest project with decorating proposals; the broken pickup truck with a bed full of beer cans, a rusty '67 GTO up on blocks with no wheels, some large broken kitchen appliances scattered outside the door, a washer dryer combo on the porch, and a couple junkyard dogs to guard it all. Things weren't looking good.



Doc Milner lead man on the trailer conversion.



Progress on the new classroom and gift shop... temporarily dubbed the pink Palace.

Then things began to happen. Board member, professional architect and former SLATER crewmember **Don Norris** from Pennsylvania came up and took the project under his wing. Working in conjunction with Beth and Nancy on what layout, he developed a plan for the conversion of the trailer to a functioning classroom, gift shop and office. **Frank Lasch** got several very expensive Pela windows donated, but they had one problem; they were fixed windows that wouldn't open. Not very unctional. **Tom Beeler** took one home to see if he could hinge them, but found that if you removed two setscrews, they were already hinged. Problem solved. **Dick Walker** got the State Military museum to donate several glass cases that they were disposing of. **Erik Collin** donated two working window air conditioners, and **Bob Lawrence** got his son in law to position and properly level and block up the trailer according to **Don's** plans, and paid the significant bill out of his pocket.

But the real godsend has been Charles Miner. A contract carpenter by trade, **Charles**, former pharmacist's mate, sold all his tools and moved to Florida last fall. He came back with a pick up truck full of fishing gear and offered to give a few tours this summer. I pleaded, "**Charles**, how'd you like to help me out of a little jam I'm in?" **Charles** agreed not only to oversee the construction, but also to go to all the area lumberyards to beg for material. He wears a white hardhat with the red cross and his first class crow that he wore aboard the ATF HITCHITI. It has "Doc" stenciled on it. Another guide, college professor **Dennis Nagi** volunteered to work with **Charles**. **Bob Cross** sent two of his guys, **Jim Fowler** and **Bob Clow**, to help the crew. The weekday shipboard electrical, **Larry Williams**, **Bob Calender**, **Ken Kaskoun** and **Don Shattuck** also volunteered to pull "shore duty." Material was delivered to the site, and work began. **Russ Ferrer** loaned scaffolding. **Erik Collin** loaned his table saw, and amid the din of hammering and the whine of skil saws, a metamorphosis is taking place. They won't be laughing at me for long! Hmmm... I think I'm starting to sound a bit like Captain Queeg.

Back aboard ship, the ordnance guys are having a big month. Frank Beeler's is back with us. **Frank** is a former turret captain who survived the glide bomb attack on the cruiser SAVANNAH off Salerno in '43. He got obsessed with freeing gun three in train. He enlisted the help of **Rich Pavlovik**, **Bill Siebert**, **Bob Lawrence**, **Russ Ferrer** and **Dave Blostein**. Together, they are working to disassemble the whole train drive including taking off the worm gear. Now they are trying to get at the roller path, on the assumption that it's a mass of rust that needs to be freed.



These guys are really working under the gun. Rich Pavlovik and Frank Beeler working on gun 3.



Bob Lawrence, Dave Floyd and Andy Desorbo tackle the training gear on gun 1.



How the hell does he expect me to paint that. Chris Fedden and Ray Lammers rig a ladder to get under a director tub.

In the radio room there are now so many guys in the department that when they're all there you can hardly move. We've got to be excess of allowance. **Jerry Jones** has recorded bells and pipes, put it all on computer, and tied it into the one IMC. Now bells are struck every half hour, meals and sweepers are piped on time and work commences at 0830 sharp and secures at 1545 sharp. His system has a regularity that commissioned ships would envy. He, **Don Bulger, Dick Engler and Joe Breyer** are overhauling the IMC signal generators. So soon all the original alarms will be online including general quarters, chemical attack, and the salvo alarm. **Lou Renna** from our neighbor, the DUTCH APPLE cruise boat, has donated an old commercial radar unit to us. The boys are already figuring how to mount it under an SL dome and run a live radar picture into the old scopes in combat and on the bridge.

Barry Witte has had his crew of **Mike Clark, Steve Moffett and Gary Sheedy** in upper sonar making electrical modifications, pulling old cable and assisting **Bob Donlon** in the restoration of that space. Down at Scarano's Boatyard, we know that **Rocky and Roy Gunther**

are making progress on the whaleboat in the big shed. They keep promising it will be ready soon, but we're afraid that they have become so protective of her, that they don't want to bring her out from under cover and expose her to the elements. Down below in the museum space, we took delivery of the glass covers for the last eighteen lockers. **Bob Lawrence** is installing them and **Pat Perrella** continues logging in the artifacts, and getting them arranged for display. **Ed Whitbeck** has been finishing up chipping on the second deck aft, just outside the laundry. The warmer it gets, the tougher it gets down there.



Mike Muzio finished up the rigging on the life rafts.

Clark Farnsworth tackled a major project. He got involved in repairing the forward expansion joint. The galley was flooding every time it rained because the rubber on the portside was so badly torn. He worked with his old helpers **George Erwin and Bob Lawrence** to cut off the flat bar covers. They affected a repair using insulation cloth and white mastic. **Russ Ferrer** machined new hinges for

the covers, and **Clark** got the hinged covers welded back on. The repair seems to be working just fine, thank you.



Tanner has been working the hatch for so long some of the crew believe rigormortis has set in.

We think Doug Tanner is planning to retire off the fantail hatch job. He and Chuck Teal have had it on the bench so long it's starting to grow moss. After fifty years there



Benner's Chock Project.

isn't much good metal left, so it's almost a total rebuild. He does have the excuse that while trying to finish his pet project, we have continued to sidetrack him to other jobs and still expect him to cook breakfast every Saturday morning. He supervised the **Glens Falls Naval Reservists** in fabricating two davits that will be used to lead the depth charges, is watching over **Tim Benner** while he rebuilds a wasted chock, and even helped rig scaffolding on the trailer. **Benner's chock project is another saga.** This spring we were starting to get rust bleeding down the hull

at the bases of several chocks. I asked **Erik Collin** to chip the rust spots and prime them. Of course, the chipping hammer went right through the chock base. Chocks are shot. We need replacements. In another long story, **Ed Zajkowski** in Philly knows a guy at Metro Machine, a firm that is scrapping frigates.

Metro sells big chunks of frigates to a guy in Camden who cuts big chunks of frigates into little chunks of frigates. **George Amandola** made contact with the guy in Camden who is willing give us little chunks of frigates, including chocks. In other words, if **Benner** doesn't hurry up and finish the chock he's restoring, we may get new chocks to replace it, and he'll be out of a job.

In the "Who cares about your little administrative problems" department, we got shot down for two more grants, one for general operating support and the other for the mooring dolphins again. We do owe a great debt to **Monique Wahba** of the City planning department. The deadline for state grants has always been the end of August. When the applications came in this year, we put them in the "Look at this sometime in August" pile. **Monique** was kind enough to call us and give us the heads up that this year the grant deadline had been pushed up to June 14th. She made every effort to help us out, and made sure that the necessary city council resolutions were passed for the projects we hope to fund. Without her we wouldn't even have been in the game for 2003. We reapplied for funding to build the mooring dolphins to replace the camels, and to hire contract painters to repaint the exterior next year. In another little administrative sideshow, we found that the cost of insuring the overnight camping program will be an additional seventy five hundred dollars a year. I guess the winter fund was a success. Summer was last Friday, and we're still getting winter fund checks. I figured the drive would have been a success if we got five grand back. We've gotten fifteen. It's great to have friends.



Renunions... showing loved ones how it was.



USS JENKINS Shipmates reminisce at their reunion.

I say this is a whole lot of work, and we should just wait for our next tender availability and have the tender lift the gun off and take care of it for us. We'll be waiting a long time. Up on gun one, Dave Floyd and Andy Desorbo are back at work getting her lubricated and free. Rich has also been busy chipping and painting out the interior of the gun three tub. He wants to move on to the forties when he's finished. Chris Fedden and Raf Suarez are already up there, chipping out the MK 51 director tubs and starting to work on the Bofors guns. Dick Smith is working from stern to bow on the main deck. Erik Collin and Peter Schick are right behind him with a paintbrush. They must be making progress. Because each year, there is less and less rust bleeding through.

Finally I repeat, if you want to continue to receive SLATER SIGNALS in the mail you must fill out the return envelope and send it back to us. Again, remember that the SLATER SIGNALS is posted monthly on our website complete with color pictures, so it's always available to print out from there. We'll be waiting for your little envelopes to start coming in. See you next Month.