



## 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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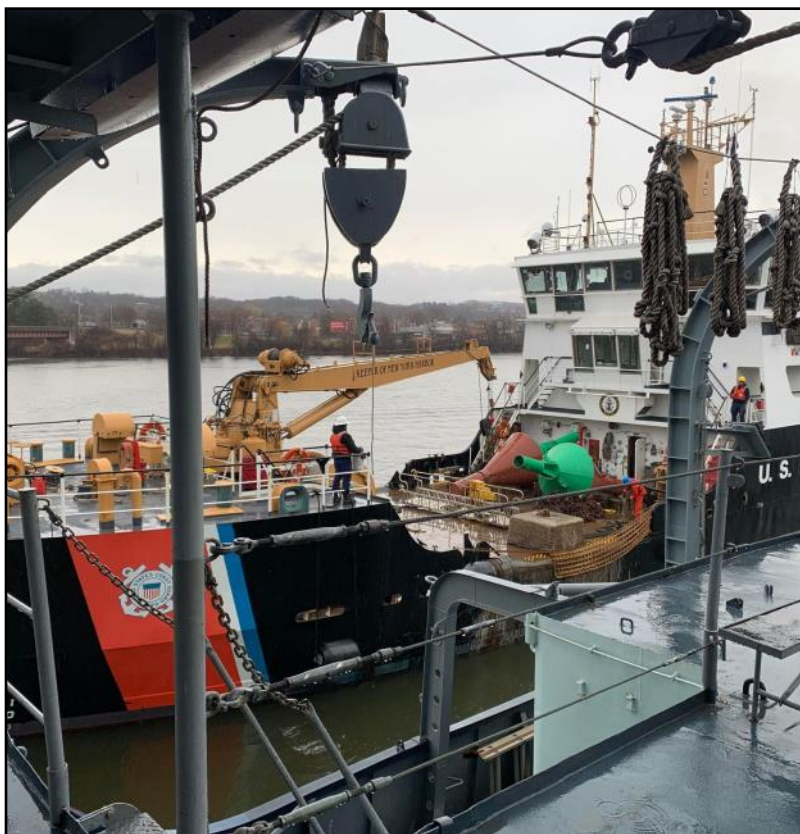
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Vol. 25 No. 4, April 2022

The crew worked very hard to have USS SLATER ready for the opening of our 25<sup>th</sup> season on Wednesday the 6<sup>th</sup> of April. Thanks to the hard-working crew, we had everything cleaned up and ready for visitors. Our first Saturday was marred by a blown main electrical transformer on a power pole. That resulted in having to cancel our first overnight encampment of the season, something **Shanna Schuster** was not happy about. Thankfully, the Scouts were able to reschedule for later this spring.

The power did return and we've had an overnight each weekend since opening. Returning interns, **Austin**, **Cassidy**, and **Christian** made sure the Scouts on those first overnights had a fantastic experience.



**USCGC KATHERINE WALKER getting underway.**

Opening day started with **Shanna** being an hour late because of an accident on I-90 but our crew stepped up to the plate while waiting for her to arrive. **Coast Guard Cutter, KATHERINE WALKER** tied up alongside that night and enjoyed Liberty in Albany. **Alan Fox** was the lucky man to conduct the first tour of the season, and the rest of our tour guides have been very busy. We were especially busy the first couple of weeks as many students were on Spring Break and eager to step aboard a warship. We were closed for Easter Sunday and by the time we were ready to open again on Wednesday some news shocked the Historic Ship world, more on that later.



***Volunteer guide Charles is back with us, explaining the hedgehog projector.***

**It's been a hectic month training five new tour guides, Tyler, Andrew, Viktor, Aung, Gio, and Dennis.** It's been an *all hands on deck* situation while **Shanna** and **John** are both spending a lot of their time getting the new people up to speed. **Jo Ann** has covered the register as well as all her other duties. **Liam** has been very helpful at the helm (on the register) on Fridays and Saturdays and **John** is still on Sundays. **Shanna** keeps repeating to herself that things will be better in May when her interns are out of school with more availability and trained so they can help with the tours more. Fingers crossed!

**Most of our Education Volunteers are returning from last year, and they are doing a wonderful job.** We hosted over a thousand visitors in the month of April and countless messages stating that people enjoyed their tours have been shared with us.



***John now doubles as our curator, Sunday duty officer, and still gives tours.***

This month's episode of our podcast *DE Classified* featured the French Destroyer Escort **SENEGALAIS**. You can listen to all our episodes on our website or wherever you find your podcasts. **Liam** is up to bat again next month with USS **ATHERTON**.

The shipfitters have several projects going. **Doug Tanner**, **Super Dave Mardon**, **Gene Jackey**, **Tim Benner**, **Warren Brozio**, **Earl Herchenroder**, **Chuck Teal**, **Chuck Tanner** and **Danny Statile** have finally located the source of the leak on the flying bridge that is dripping onto the Dead Reckoning Tracer in CIC. They are in the process of welding a doubler plate over the wasted metal on the flying bridge. After that, there is another section of wasted deck over the forward crew's head, adjacent to gun 31. After they get those taken care of, they'll move over to the trailer where there are several leaks in the roof. All this has delayed completion of the starboard watertight door on the pilothouse.

Elsewhere around the ship, **Danny Statile** completed his hedgehog restoration project, and **Thomas Scian** got them moved to the hedgehog magazine and set up on display. **Carl Camurati** even made replica caps to put over the replica fuses. Volunteer quartermaster, **Dennis Murray**, has been taking care of the



**4 May 1944 SENE GALAIS is hit by a torpedo fired by U-371. She sinks the U-boat as well. Navsource photo by Louis Le Coent.**



**The rain doesn't stop Doug Tanner, as he repairs the flying bridge deck that was leaking into CIC.**

pilothouse, cleaned up our magnetic compasses, and filled them with alcohol. **Ron Prest** and **Bill Wetterau** spent the month needle scaling and priming on the fo'c's'le, a project that has become an annual event. The deck gang got the accommodation ladder lowered and brought the paint float alongside. The significance of that evolution will be apparent as you read on. **Richard** and **Henry Bourgeois** have continued their work on the Mark 14 gunsights, as well as assisting **Barry Witte** with his pipe insulation project. **Vic Consiglio** was back aboard helping us out with stenciling, and **Ed Nowik** has been busy keeping up with **Gary Sheedy** and his various projects.



***Bill Wetterau touches up the paint following the welding on the flying bridge.***

**Up in the radio shack, Steve and Chuck have been busy preparing for the Museum**

**Ship Radio Weekend, using all vintage gear.** On Saturday, 9 April 2022, they spent some time swapping various master oscillator tubes in the TBL Transmitter and checking their performance. They installed the cleanest sounding one, which is still a little chirpy but nowhere near as bad as the one we had in there. Once we buttoned everything back up, they fired up the TBL on 7062 kc and began to call "CQ." They were answered by Ken, WB2KWC in Massapequa who gave us a reception report.



***Steve has had a lot of luck finding vacuum tubes as he and Chuck prepare for the historic ships radio event.***

**They were transmitting along nicely with the Morse code key, on the TBL when - BANG! The power went out.** All over the ship...*did we do that?* A little checking told them it was a shore

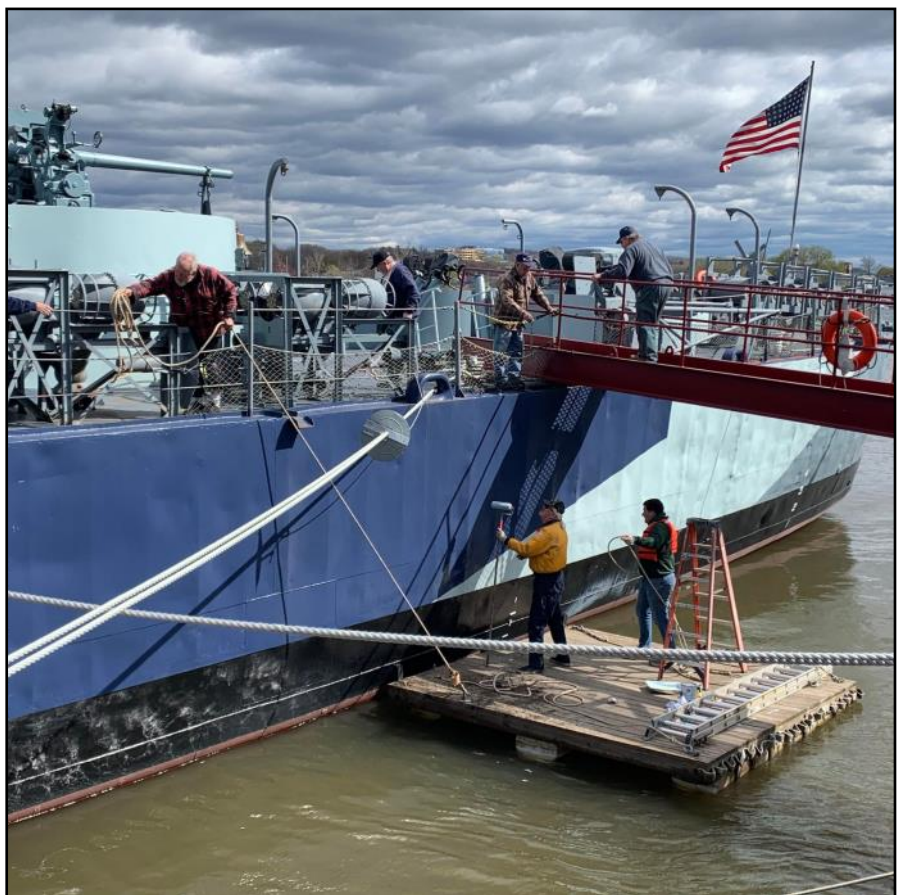
power issue. A transformer had blown south of us along the river. That was the end of transmitting for that Saturday. They have tried to tune the TBL on 20 meters but have not been able to get any antenna current, so more research and work is certainly needed to understand what is going on there.

**At the end of the month, the USS HUSE Association volunteers joined us for their annual work week.** It was a great success, despite colder than average temperatures. Twenty volunteers joined our regulars for their annual spring work week. Volunteers came from Seattle, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Michigan, and Wisconsin. We had **Blair Sandri** back in the galley, supported by **George Amandola**, and together they kept the crew well fed and happy.

**The event was organized by Brandon Easley, who inherited the responsibility from George Amandola.** Brandon brought a load of stainless steel hardware, donated by **Coral Connell of Liberty Recycling.** Brandon also purchased a brand new gas pressure washer that he donated to the ship. The crew got an early start on Sunday afternoon. As soon as the last visitor was off the ship, **Brandon, Ron Frankosky, and Jan Schweiger** set to work, pressure washing and painting the main deck on the portside. Usually this doesn't get done until the end of the tourist season, but the deck took a real beating this winter, so now we have it looking great for our spring visitors.

**Monday dawned as a perfect painting day.** Ron and Brandon climbed down on the paint float. Paul and Marc Suzdak, and Bill Meehan handled the lines to bring the float around to the starboard side. There, battling high winds and waves, they got all the camouflage panels on the starboard quarter pressure washed and painted. This area takes a beating, as the rust generated by the metal cutting and grinding by the work bench causes streaking on the hull.

**Bill Meehan took care of the paint locker and mixing up the epoxy paint all week.** Jan Schweiger and Gail Esker



*Ron and Branden battled wind and wave to complete their side painting project.*

helped the paint crew with touching up the camouflage all over the ship. Trustee, **Gary Dieckman** tackled needlescoring the deck adjacent the port depth charge projectors. **Stan** and **Gary Ray** worked on needlescoring and painting roller loader number six. **Bill Wetterau** scaled and primed on the fo'c's'c'le. **Sue Streiter** scaled and repainted our 20mm ready service ammo locker display and did touch up painting on all the three-inch guns.

**George Gollas, Anthony Amandola, John Meeker, Doug Streiter, and Joe Stout** spent the week checking out interior communications systems. On Tuesday we held a memorial service, to remember departed shipmate volunteers **Joseph Delfoe** (USS DOUGLAS A MUNRO), **Walter Bringslid** (USS PURDY), **Jeffrey Robbins** (Father -USS HUSE), **Jim Ray** (USS DOUGLAS A. MUNRO), and **Frank Heckart** (USS LeRAY WILSON). Our resident Deacon and Coast Guardsman, **Dick Walker**, performed the ceremony in his dress uniform, as we remembered those who have given so much to USS SLATER.



***Sue Streiter painted our 20mm magazines.***



***The USS HUSE Association work week group following our memorial service.***

**By now I am sure everyone reading this edition of Signals is aware of the situation on the museum ship, USS THE SULLIVANS (DD-537)** (not to be confused with the current active duty ship of the same name, DDG-68). She sank from uncontrolled flooding in Buffalo, New York, on 14 April. Salvage operations have been successful, and she is now floating again, with temporary patches on her hull.

**We thought it would be good to explain to you, our supporters, how we manage the same threat of flooding on our ship.** First and most importantly, our maintenance issues are greatly reduced by the fact that we only have one small ship to take care of. We're not trying to maintain a fleet. SLATER has recently been to drydock, twice. Thanks to your generous financial support, SLATER has had her waterline hull plating reinforced in 2014, with a four-foot band of three eights inch steel. Prior to that, I can only say it was a miracle that we didn't develop any leaks.

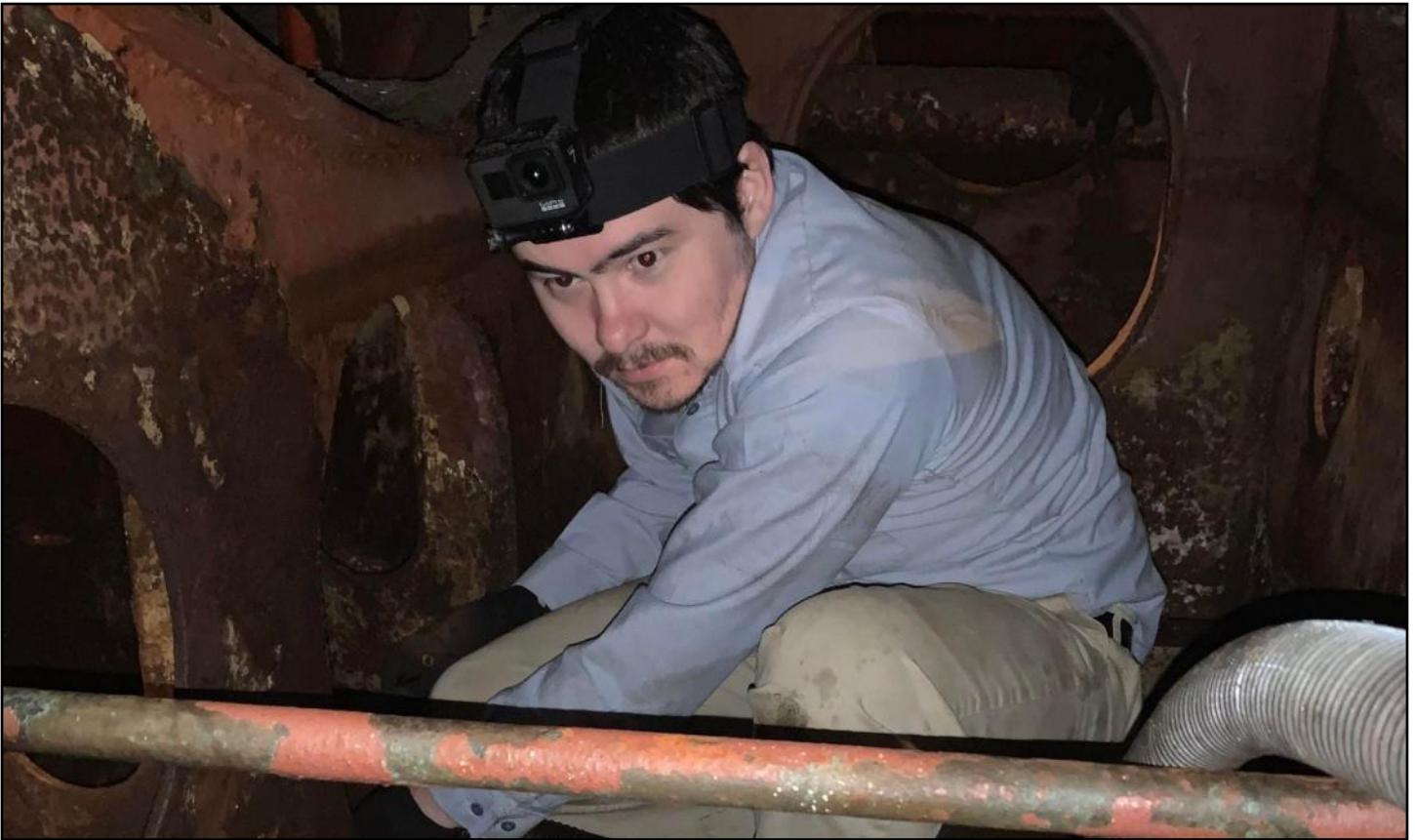
**The reason why the hull was reinforced in 2014 was to reduce the ship's vulnerability to ice.** The spring thaws on the Hudson can send large sheets of ice downriver. These sheets can weigh several tons. Fortunately, our location immediately downstream of the Dunn Memorial Bridge causes the ice to break into smaller sections, and the direction of flow is parallel to the ship. Ice does scrape along our starboard side, but none hits directly.

**During the dry docking, magnesium sacrificial anodes were added to protect the hull from oxygen in the water.** Since magnesium is a more active metal than steel, it will preferentially corrode instead of the steel hull. This is the same technology modern ships use when spending time in fresh water. In 2020, our ship returned to the drydock to add the best hull coating available. The magnesium anodes were found to be working well, and did not need replacement. The hull coating and anodes should last another 20 years.

**One of the most significant pieces of advice I received was years ago when Walter Rybka told me, "Remember, these ships rot from the inside out. Keep your bilges dry."** That explains the one small hole that delayed our undocking, and we took the opportunity to



***Our volunteers keep a close watch on the bilges for any sign of leakage.***



*We don't think there's any space that James hasn't checked.*

repair it. It was in a spot that was almost impossible to access. But our volunteers work to ensure the ship is maintained to high standards, which includes attention to the interior hull. New volunteer, **James Miles**, has taken responsibility for main space bilge inspections and maintenance, while the **RPI midshipmen** conduct annual visual inspections of all the tanks and voids. This year, RPI Midshipman, **Liz Flynn**, supervised this inspection. Any moisture found is dealt with immediately.

**Another source of corrosion is electrical grounding.** Our electricians diligently check for electrical grounds and eliminate any found. Besides the



*Our RPI Midshipmen doing our annual tank and void checks.*



hull paint coating, keeping the ship free of electrical grounds is the most important thing we can do, because if the hull has stray electric currents in it, it will deteriorate much more quickly than an isolated hull would. **Doug Tanner** also insulated all our mooring cables going to shore.

**In addition, we have a few flood mitigation procedures in place.** We pay attention to watertight integrity below the main deck. We shut all watertight doors before we leave every day, as this also serves as fire protection. We shut off the fresh water supply every night. We have installed many flooding sensors in the lower parts of the ship. These sensors are also tested annually. If one detects water, **Shanna**, a few select volunteers, and I get phone calls and text alerts immediately.

**Lastly, in the event we actually start taking on some water, we have the ability to**

**begin pumping.** We have three electric submersible pumps, each capable of removing about 50 gallon per minute. In the two motor rooms, (B2 and B4) we can use the installed circulating pumps to remove up to 500 gallons per minute. The fire pump in B-3 can be used for dewatering as well. With your continued financial support, we plan to restore the Main Drainage System, and then extend that to the forward and aft fuel tanks, all of which are completely empty. This system will allow us to remove water from any major bilge and tank on the ship and pump ashore.



***Jim and Mike performing maintenance on the emergency diesel generator day tank.***



***James and Jim checking bilges in the aft motor room.***

**We have the ability to run two of the ship's diesel generators, so we can continue to run pumps even if there was a power failure ashore.** As with any steel ship of great age, we do expect that someday there will be a leak. It is our intent that we find the leak early on, when it is very small, and take action to protect your investment in the ship. We maintain a financial endowment that will allow us to return to the drydock for repairs should that be required. With your continued support, USS SLATER will continue to be maintained as one of the best in the Historic Fleet. But we could not do it without you.

See you next month,

Tim



***Thomas found another compartment tag to restore.***



***The crew has USS SLATER looking great for season 25.***