

# SLATER SIGNALS

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

Destroyer Escort Historical Museum

USS Slater DE-766

PO Box 1926

Albany, NY 12201-1926

Phone (518) 431-1943

Vol. 25 No. 5, May 2022



**The month of May has our tour guides looking optimistically at the summer ahead!** We have already experienced some large groups, a couple of presentations at area libraries, and some sunny weather! On the 1st, Interns **Austin** and **Liam** manned our table at the Annual Albany History Fair, held at the historic home, Cherry Hill. They entertained the masses by bringing an empty 3-inch shell for people to hold, distributing our brochures, and enticing people to visit with their sea stories.

**On the 3rd, Shanna set up an artifact display inside the Voorheesville Public Library.** These displays promote the ship, as well as the partnership that we have with the



***Collections Manager John instructs new intern Tyler on exercising the sight setters.***

library. Many area libraries participate in our Museum Pass Program.

Through this program, patrons of the libraries can check out our Family Pass and tour the ship with free admission. **Austin** gave a hybrid presentation at the Clifton Park-Halfmoon Public Library on the 6<sup>th</sup>. There were people inside the library following him on his Virtual Tour of the ship, as well as people participating over Zoom.

**We had visits from school groups this month as well.**

Wheelerville 8<sup>th</sup> graders, Ichabod Crane Middle School, Victory Christian Academy, TR Proctor High



***New intern Gio explaining the operation of the 20mm guns.***

School, and Rochester School for the Deaf all stepped aboard for a lesson in DE history. You get the picture that we've been busy with groups, but we also have had overnights every weekend this month! Over 150 Scouts have been aboard with their parents, to experience life aboard ship.

**Martin Irons made his way aboard on Memorial Day to sign copies of his books for SLATER visitors.** He has written about the kamikaze hit on the USS HAYNSWORTH (DD-700), and about Marine Corsair pilots trained for carrier duty in 1945. Turnout was great and Martin sold out of the copies he came with. His visit was topped off with a private tour with tour guide extraordinaire, Chief Art Dott.

**Our Collections Manager, John and our Program Manager, Shanna started the month continuing to train**



***Historian and author Marty Irons did a signing for his new book, "Corsair Down."***

**the new interns.** By the end of May, all were qualified to conduct a tour, hoist the signal flags, ensign, and jack. As well as get the doors secured quickly when the rain starts. John also gave them a lesson in lubricating and running the 3”/50 - caliber deck guns through their paces, to prevent the seizing up of the train, elevation, breeches, and sightsetters.

**On the collections side of the museum, more artifacts, documents, and uniforms related to destroyer escorts were donated to the museum.** These have all been catalogued and stored away in our collections space. John has also begun the process of going through all of our boxed artifacts, to get an idea of what the museum has, and how to make them readily accessible to family, friends, and researchers that may inquire about a particular destroyer escort. Some have been digitized and uploaded to our website.

**Last month, John also began a weekly video series following the SLATER through her wartime service from commission to decommissioning.** Not only do you get a glimpse at the ship’s deck logs, but also period photographs of the crew and ship taken during WWII. Also included were views of compartments you don’t get to



***Volunteer Cathy Wheat arranges artifacts on display on the messdeck.***



***Our whaleboat made it back from the boatyard for the winter months. Its always exciting the day she returns.***

see on the tour route. You can see all of that on our YouTube channel. Also on YouTube, you can view weekly vlogs of the maintenance projects for the week. In celebration of getting 500 subscribers on YouTube our man in the bilges, **James Miles**, conducted a Q&A special. Make sure you check it out and subscribe to the channel. We've got a goal to reach 1,000 subscribers this season!

**Finally, the month closed out with a visit from one of Frank Slater's nieces. Karen Slater Bryan, her husband, and children traveled to Albany to learn about the ship named after her uncle. John gave them the VIP tour and by all accounts, they had a great time, and we all learned a lot about the Slater family. Karen is the daughter of Frank's**



***Karen Slater Bryan and her family in front of SLATER.***

**youngest brother Paul, and he was a small child dressed in a Navy Uniform for the Christening ceremony.**



***Tune in to hear our crew during Museum Ships Radio Weekend on 4 June.***

**USS SLATER will participate in Museum Ships Radio Weekend on Saturday, June 4, 2022.** Our radio gang will operate authentic World War 2 radio equipment as part of the worldwide amateur radio operating event that day, from 0700 1300. This year we are excited because we hope to be entirely 1945-authentic Saturday morning, using the TBL-8 transmitter and RAL-7 regenerative receiver.

**Visitors to USS Slater will be able to observe the operation of**

**radiotelegraphy, using Morse code in a manner that served as a primary method of social, commercial, and military communication for decades.** Equipment in use will be a 1942 US Navy TBL-8 transmitter, manufactured by RCA and originally installed aboard the USS CLAMP, where it saw service off Okinawa. Other equipment includes an RAL-7 regenerative receiver, the ship's original long-wire antennas, and a semi-automatic key from the WW2 era. Persons interested in hearing the TBL signal over the air are encouraged to listen around 7062 kHz for callsign "WW2DEM." We hope you'll tune in for us.

**The engineers Mike Dingmon, James Miles, Jim Skewes, and Jim Niemynski continued their bilge preservation.** Using the Cannon class piping book, they traced the fire and bilge pump system. The system was also used to drain ballast from the oil tanks. The crew is checking to see if the valves are possibly leaking. They are considering that these valves may be the source of the water leaking into the fuel oil service tank, A-6-F, on the messdecks. James is planning to mark the drainage main pipe with yellow paint, so we'll know where the leaks are. The drainage main seems to be leaking maybe 20 drops of water per week, so it definitely has water inside it still. We're making plans to drain the line before we do bilge preservation in that section.

**James has also continued his bilge preservation project.** He worked a whole section in B-3, cleaning it with Simple Green and a large paint brush. He dried it with rags, gave it 30 minutes, and it was ready to coat. They used a 50/50 mix of turpentine boiled linseed oil. When dry, it will be coated with red primer. It will look amazing when painted over again. The engineers have also been working with **Tommy Moore** to bring the whaleboat back from **Scarano's Boatyard**. Tommy has spent the spring caulking and painting, and he has it ready to go. It will go into the water right after Memorial Day, and once she has swelled up,



***We're fortunate to have such a dedicated team of engineers.***

we'll bring her back to the mother ship.

**Doug Tanner's shipfitters, Warren Brozio, Earl Herchenroder, Chuck Teal, Chuck Tanner, Super Dave Mardon, Gene Jackey, Tim Benner, and Danny Statile completed welding the deck plate on the flying bridge. That solved the problem of water dripping into CIC. There is still another section of wasted deck over the forward crew's head, adjacent to gun 31.**

**Thanks to Doug Tanner and his friends at Grace Roofing, they have offered to assist us with temporary repairs to the trailer roof.** We don't want to do anything too permanent, because we are planning to replace the trailer with a new modular building this coming winter. Though the roof is leaking and needs some attention if we are going to make it through the summer.



***Oh boy! Another door to modify.***



***How many times are we going to have to rehang this door before you're happy with it?***

**Thanks to the efforts of our Program Manager, Shanna Schuster, we applied for and received a Covid relief grant.** This grant came through the American Rescue Funding to support the City of Albany's recovery from Covid. Partnering with our neighbors, **Dutch Apple Cruises**, we are planning for shoreside improvements that include better security, repaving the parking lot, and replacing our aging trailer with a new modular structure. We are most grateful to Mayor **Kathy Sheehan** and the City of Albany for this award. Congratulations to Shanna for all the hard work on the application.



***Bill and Ron are our main chippers and painters.***

**Doug's team completed the starboard pilothouse door, and it has been hung for the last time, I hope.** I think I've written that this project has been completed for three consecutive months. But perfection takes time. Doug is still tweaking the knife edge. **Danny Statile** and **Dave Mardon** are deep into the conversion of the third replacement watertight door that will go onto the portside of the pilothouse.

**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, as well as working on the 01 level deck forward of the stack. **Richard** and **Henry Bourgeois** have continued their work on the Mark 14 gunsights, as well as repairing our 40mm display projectiles. **Gary Sheedy** has picked up on the stenciling project and is doing all the recently repainted piping on the main and second deck forward. Volunteer quartermaster, **Dennis Murray**, has been restoring the secondary conning station compass.

**Barry Witte** has continued his valuable work, guiding the RPI Midshipmen as they assist with our restoration projects. This year's group has completed their semester and has headed off for their summer training. We owe a debt of thanks to this year's unit leader, Midshipman **Tom Horsington**. He was commissioned as an Ensign this month, and has been volunteering aboard SLATER for three years. In his time here, he worked on mast component



***It takes a village to get these doors refitted and hung.***

fabrication, pilot house portlight wipers, thermal insulation, steam heat system restoration & lagging, and a variety of other small projects. Tom will be with us for one more month. Then he has orders to report to the Nuclear Power School in Charleston, SC. Fair Winds and Following Seas, Tom. We appreciate your enthusiasm while you were here, and we hope you learned a wealth of practical information that you can take to the fleet.

**Before we leave you for the month, remember to listen to our podcast, “DE Classified.” This month Liam explores another one of the last destroyer escorts in existence in the**



***Walt keeps the decks clean topside.***



world, USS ATHERTON DE-169 (BRP RAJAH HUMABON) has a fascinating story of sinking subs, including one of the last U-Boats sunk during WWII. The ship was still active in the Philippine Navy up until 2018 so she had over 75 years of service under her belt. Join Liam as he escorts you through her story.

**We lost another one of our HUSE workweek volunteers. Ernie Aeschliman** was always one of my favorites. Quiet, unassuming, and thorough, he was a pleasure to work with. It was a loss for the whole crew when he got too old to participate. Ernie served aboard USS HUSE during the Korean War as an Engineman. He will be missed.



***The crew of the ATHERTON painting their Kill on the stack. It was shared with the frigate MOBERLEY.***

See you next month, Tim



***The HUSE work week crew in 2010. Ernie is third from the left. Many of this crew are no longer with us.***