

SLATER SIGNALS

The Newsletter of the USS SLATER'S Volunteers

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Vol. 2 No.1, January 1999



WINTER WEATHER UPDATE

The late arrival of winter had us thinking we might be in for another mild one, but since the New Year, we've gotten clobbered. So far we've gone through about 500 pounds of "ice melt" trying to keep the decks passable. We were trying to remain open for public visitation three days a week. However, weather conditions forced us to stay closed so many days that we finally threw in the towel and closed to the public until March. However, work continues, with the crew showing up on even the coldest mornings. I am amazed at the dedication that the volunteer crew has shown under the most miserable working conditions. We had one recent Saturday that the temperature got above freezing. **Ray Lammers (APD-81)** showed up saying, "I better get the ice off these decks while I've got a chance." He got them clear, but they don't stay clear for long. **Dick, Raf, Chris** and the rest of the crew have all gotten pretty adept at keeping the decks clean. They have plenty of snow to practice on.

RESTORATION PROGRESS

We have completed scaling the CPO quarters, and new volunteer **Tom Moore** has done a great job repairing insulation. We also completed scaling outside the CPO quarters. The electricians have rewired and installed new light fixtures in both spaces. The only problem is that it's too cold to spread any paint, so that will have to wait a month or two. Most days there's a layer of frost on the steel overhead.

We're going to move the crew into the chief's quarters even though it's unpainted. We have started work on the mess decks and the berthing space. We hope to have that all cleaned up so we can bring visitors below decks in the spring. **Roy Gunther** finished his work in the ship's office and we're in the process of moving the fax

machine and word processor up there. **Dick and Marilyn Walker** donated a Brother Word Processor to the ship.

We're trying to disguise the screen as an old sonar scope. (Just kidding!)

Topside, **Clark Farnsworth (CV-32)** completed the doors on the 40mm spent case cages while totally ignoring the winter weather . . . The SLATER Volunteers have added a new job description to their various duties. Nuts and bolts are being sorted in the former electrical storage area and it is a challenging job. **Claire Oesterrich** and **Dick Walker, USCG (SKI)** are sharing these duties and it is amazing how many nuts we have accumulated from various areas of the ship, and we're not just talking about crew members!

NEW VOLUNTEERS

Several new volunteers have joined our ranks over the past few months, and the great news is that they're all under 50. Our Chief of Collections, **Dave Meyersburg**, supervises the exhibit program of the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation at the Peebles Island Resource Center in Waterford.

Joanne McFadden is a writer who is helping with the *Slater Signals* and cataloguing the museum collection. Both of her daughters were christened aboard Navy ships, one on USS CUSHING (DD-985) and one on ENTERPRISE (CVN-65).

James Hartley is a welder who has been helping **Raf** on the flying bridge, and he got his father to donate some old radio gear.

Tom Moore is a carpenter by trade who has all kinds of useful talent, and loves to climb. His biggest thrill is eating lunch on the radar platform at the top of the mast.

Mike Gurney is a GI and now a paralegal who is helping the electricians and scaling paint on the second deck forward.

Graeme Addams is a history major and hardware manager at Builders Square who brings to us a wealth of mechanical skills. And finally,

Barbara Collura is an attorney with the city of Albany who wants to get away from paperwork and help maintain the SLATER. It's great to have so many new faces with an average age of 30 getting involved. It reassures us that SLATER will live on.

ALARM SYSTEMS

We've also made progress on several other fronts. Thanks to our **County Business Incentive Grant** and a kind donation by **Dave Crandall** and **Ed Donovan** of **Mercer Companies**, we completed the alarm system aboard the SLATER we now have monitored smoke detectors in every space from the second deck up, intrusion alarms on the main deck port and starboard, and flood alarms in the four machinery spaces, reefer flat and shaft alleys. The smoke detectors work really well. Every time **Clark** strikes an arc, he sets it off. If you have a key and don't know how to work the alarm system, get someone to show you. Down in engineering, the team is progressing towards the goal of starting the auxiliary generator. The lube oil resents the winter, however, and is slow to respond.

WINTER FUNDRAISING

Our winter fund raiser so far has brought in \$5,000 of our goal of \$10,000. Our heartfelt thanks to all of you who have contributed--and--especially the crew of **JACK W. WILKE (DD/EDE)** who donated \$500. If you are sitting on the fence, still thinking about kicking in, now is the time. We want to thank all of you who contributed to helping us get through this winter. Thanks to you, we're going to make it.

COLLECTIONS UPDATE

Dave and Joanne have been working in the stem of the ship preparing spaces for our archives, library and artifacts. The ship has applied for a grant that would provide funds for the climatization of the collections storage areas. They have also been busy cataloguing a steady stream of incoming donations in a computer database. **Dave's** father, **Arnold Meyersburg** of Kensington, Maryland, donated a laptop computer for collections management. The database will make our collections searchable and a great resource for future researchers and exhibit design. Please remember when making donations that we need to know from whence the items came. Be sure that a donation card or letter is included securely with any books, photos, documents, or artifacts donated. This will eliminate any guesswork and make sure that donations are properly acknowledged.

A request from the collections team: The museum has already received many uniform donations. They're wonderfully interesting, and each has a story behind it. When the uniforms arrive, we need to have archival quality hangers ready for them. We need donations of wooden hangers. Search through your closet and ask your clothier or furrier to donate some. If you have any wooden hangers to spare, please bring or mail them to us. We want to make sure we preserve these uniforms in the most archivally-sound fashion. Wooden hangers with padding will do this. The padding helps to reduce the stress on a garment's seams: We have a pattern for the padding part and are looking for some seamstresses to sew the padding and garment bags. Please contact the archives crew for additional information.

If you drop off or mail donations of wooden hangers, please label them:

"Attn: Collections/equipment donation," so that they will go quickly to the right place.

HOLIDAYS ON THE SLATER

Pat harassed Tim so much he defied the 1945 ships' wardroom historical configuration and retrieved the holiday tree and lights from the magazine. **Nancy, Pat and Claire** put up the trimmings with genuine power to illuminate the wardroom for the holiday season. The **NYC Volunteers** left this tree onboard and we had some special thoughts and wishes for all of them while using the decorations once more! A digital photo of the festive wardroom was also added to the DMNA Slater web site for *Seasons Greetings* to all and has also been circulating the internet from Pat's computer to online Slater fans.

On 26 December, **Marty and Rhoda Newman** were special guests aboard SLATER. They both serve as chairpersons for the **SOLDESA** and Auxiliary Chapter down on Long island. Marty is a DE veteran from the **USS RHODES (DE-384)** and served as "Manpower Coordinator" to enlist volunteers from the NYC area to work aboard SLATER. **Rhoda** has been a great supporter in leading the **SOLDESA ladies** while they cooked for field days, made craft items to sell and raise money for the ship restoration efforts. Marty brought up a box of excellent SLATER New York City archival records, and they have been secured in the aft crew quarters where they will eventually become part of the museum exhibits. They also gave the crew and volunteers aboard a lot of encouragement and praise and this always goes a long way- so **PLEASE COME BACK** -soon the SLATER welcome mat is always out on the gangplank.

A certain unknown New Jersey volunteer whose initials **"RK"** stand for **"Ron Frankosky"** has been complaining to **John Mohr** that he never gets mentioned in the *Slater Signals*. John sent us a big donation with a note saying, *"Keep up the good work. Don't mention Ron's name. By the way, Ron, where's the key you walked off with?"* Thanks to all who sent special greeting cards. We put them up on the pea locker in the mess hall for all to enjoy.

NEWS FROM NANCY:

The SLATER faithful have been gathering at Crossgates Mall by the WW II Jeep Exhibit on Friday, Saturday and Sunday. A Dogtag machine is there and we are making and selling them as part of the re-located Ships' Store. As visitors look over the exhibit we can answer questions about the SLATER and attract more interest in our project. If you can help us out give me a call and I'll give you more details. If you haven't seen the exhibit please stop by when you are in the mall but don't get confused by "Nancy's Cafe" and look for me there- I'll be on the upper level by TJ MAXX. I have also been re-evaluating the volunteer duty sign-up sheets and am revising a new, hopefully more efficient, procedure. Please feel free to contact me if you have any suggestions you might offer. We are looking forward to a very busy spring with school tours, Vets tours and work parties as the news about the ship circulates around the community.

It is with a heavy heart that we report the passing of dedicated SLATER volunteer **Roger E. Oesterreich** on January 28. He was a Navy veteran of the Korean War who served as a lieutenant commander aboard the **USS LOESER DE-680** in the Atlantic. Roger was active in the Naval Reserve until 1977. He joined our volunteer crew in 1997. We will miss him. A memorial service will be held aboard the SLATER in the spring.

NEEDED: EMERGENCY RESPONSE CREW

We are looking for volunteers who don't mind being called in the middle of the night for an emergency response crew. We need about four folks who are willing to get out of bed at 2 a.m. on a cold, rainy February night in case we have to slack mooring lines. Before you all say yes, you must have a permission slip signed by your spouse.

Contact Tim at 431-1943.