

SLATER SIGNALS

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

Destroyer Escort Historical Museum

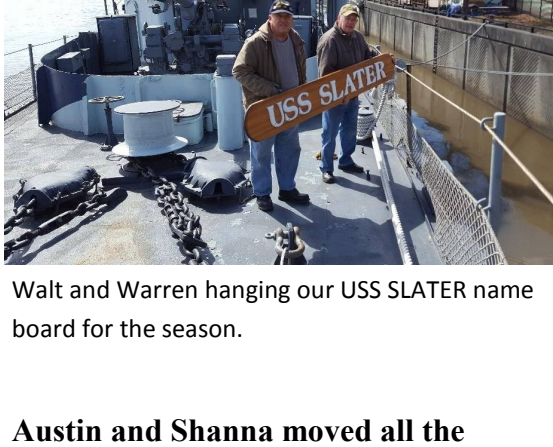
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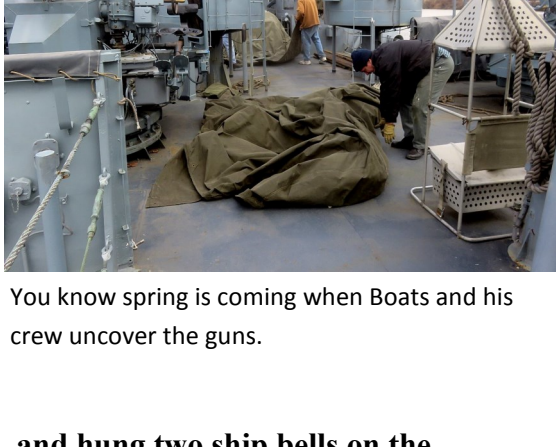
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Walt and Warren hanging our USS SLATER name board for the season.

With the last month before we are open, Shanna, Gary, and Austin have been scrambling to finish setting up the Special Collections Space in C-203-L. Gary built a display case for one of our most interesting objects. He's also in the process of making display stands for photos and plaques, on top of a laundry list of smaller tasks that grows every time he talks with Shanna.

Austin and Shanna moved all the uniforms onto the hanging rods Gary installed, and they organized them by ship hull number. Shanna pinned new identification tags to them, and identified those that had lost a tag, in the last five years of being moved at least ten times. After the uniforms were all organized, Gary convinced Shanna that they didn't like where they were, so they moved them again. Let's hope it's the last time for a while.



You know spring is coming when Boats and his crew uncover the guns.

Danny welded a couple of brackets, and hung two ship bells on the bulkheads. We know he did a great job, because both Shanna and Austin hit their heads on them and they didn't budge at all!



Our volunteer tour guides and interns are gearing up for the 22nd season.

On the 30th, we filled the ship. Shanna hosted the annual Refresher Lunch for the tour guides, and the maintenance crew was busy finishing their projects before opening day on Wednesday. Shanna has updated the manuals for tours and overnights for the guides, and hired five new interns. **John, Cassidy, Christian, and Liam** are

all students at UAlbany. They are either working toward a degree in history, or here in a passion for learning and teaching history. **Priscilla** attends Siena College here in Albany, and has visited SLATER multiple times in the last couple years. Her brother, Paul, was an excellent guide, who left us after he was accepted to Cornell Law School. We were very pleased with the number and quality of applicants we had this season. It was a long six days of interviews for our staff, but we are confident and excited to get this season started.



Our new interns received their introductory tour from Austin.

The new interns join returning guides including **Evan, Lorna, Merissa, Evan, Alex and Austin, and volunteers Carl Camurati, Greg Healey, Rich Wallace, Art Dott, Grant Hack, Tom Cline, Bill Goralski, Dave Pitlyk, Dan Healey, Mike Marko, Bob Wheelock, Alan Fox, Don Cushman, Rich Bob Herbst, Ken Kaskoun, Charles Starks, Herb Marlow and Paul Guarnieri.**

Everyone was treated to a pizza lunch. New hires took their first official tour with Shanna in the morning, and every guide was "refreshed" before they left for the day.



Tim Benner and Doug Tanner brought the fresh water back aboard.

You know spring is in the air the first time you can hit the head on the ship. The shipfitters, **Doug Tanner, Tim Benner, Dave Mardon,** and new volunteer **Jon Romeu** pressure-tested and activated all of the fresh water and sewer lines over a period of two weeks. They also fired up the hot water heater, and the system seems to be working fine.

The deck department has their work cut out for them, as we ready the ship for the public. **Boats Haggart, Bill Holt, Walt Stuart, Warren Brozio,** and **Paul Guarnieri** got all of the guns uncovered and the canvases stowed. All of the circulators were brought aboard, cleaned, and stowed. The cocoa mats were cleaned, rolled-up, and stowed. Their final task was a thorough topside washdown, courtesy of the shipfitters, who brought fresh water back aboard. Also, all of the fire extinguishers have been checked and hydro-tested as necessary.



The circulators have been stowed for another season.

The temporary shrink wrap covering over the flying bridge has come down.

Up on the flying bridge, the crew deserves kudos for their tenacity in sticking with the flying bridge repairs over the winter, in an unheated area. Each Monday and Saturday, **Earl Herchenroder, Andy Sheffer, Dave Wasson, Chuck Teal, Gene Jackey, Tim Benner, Dave Mardon,** and **Doug** had to make multiple trips up and down three narrow

ladders. Over half of these guys are more than eighty years old. They sure won't miss the climb when the job is done. At this point, all the leaks have been patched, bad stuffing tubes replaced, and the depth control release levers reinstalled. The fire control hut has been situated, and all the gear has been hauled back down to the main deck. They even touched-up the paint. All that remains to be done is reassembly of the CIC vent motor and ductwork. **Danny Statile** has that in hand, down on the workbench outside the machine shop. Our resident IC electrician, **Steve Klauk,** has been up there, pulling cables from wasted stuffing tubes, so they can be replaced.



The installation of the depth charge release gear marked the completion of the flying bridge work.

The aft cross passageway is now a work of art.

Back aft, in compartment C-201-L, **Gary Sheedy and Barry Witte** have supervised the restoration of the compartment. Volunteers **Carl Camurati, Bill Holt, Tommy Moore, Paul Guarnieri,** and **Warren Brozio** followed up on the work by the professional insulators, and did a lot of caulking and taping of seams. **Ron Prest** and **Rich Mouzakes** handled the entire chipping. **Andy Sheffer, Barry,** and **Grant Eastman** did all

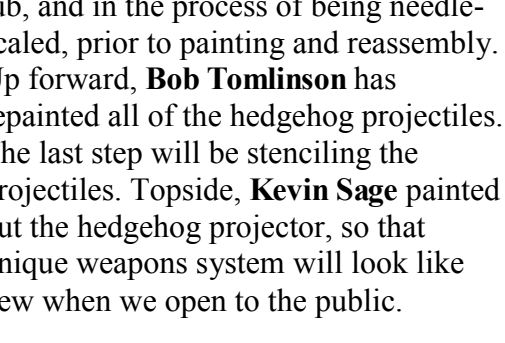
the welding work. There was a lot of new wiring run, and painting will begin on 1 April.

The Ordnance Department has made progress over the winter. **Guy Huse** and **Alex Titcomb** have gotten the sight assembly pivot freed up. All of the sight assembly parts are back in the aft gun tub, and in the process of being needled-scaled, prior to painting and reassembly. Up forward, **Bob Tomlinson** has repainted all of the hedgehog projectiles. The last step will be stenciling the projectiles. Topside, **Kevin Sage** painted out the hedgehog projector, so that unique weapons system will look like new when we open to the public.

Cathy Wheat's winter cleaning paid big dividends this spring.

Ship's custodian, **Cathy Wheat,** has continued cleaning all winter, to try to reduce her spring workload. Her final tasks were making up all of the tanks in Officers' quarters, and resetting the wardroom table. The wardroom got a real facelift, thanks to new volunteer, **Dr. Fred Antico.** Fred first got involved with us many years ago, when he was teaching video production at the College of St. Rose.

However, as a boy, his father owned an upholstery shop, and taught Fred the trade. Now retired, Fred has returned to USS Slater as a volunteer. He resurrected his upholstery skills and restored the wardroom sofa, as we prepare for opening day.



New volunteer Fred Antico did a fine job reupholstering the wardroom sofa.

John Chitester and his cousin Phil were a big help during the spring cleanup.

Cathy's cleanup also got a real boost when farmer **John Chitester** returned to help out. John drove up from Jersey to join his cousin, **Phil Stoklosa,** who drove over from Rochester for three days of swabbing interior decks. John's father served in GRISWOLD (DE-7), in World War II, and I don't think we could have finished without their help.

Rich Mouzakes has left us for the season, but he spent the whole winter chipping paint.

After 22 years of organizing their annual Work Weeks aboard the USS SLATER, Chapter organizer **Ron Zarem** has announced that there will be no Michigan workweek in 2019. He wrote, "I sadly announce that it is true, for All Good Things Come To An End. This year the number of those able to commit to the spring trip is lower than our 1st trip in 1998, when 6 of us went to Albany, NY, to work and sleep on a ship that had no heat or running water. Therefore, making arrangements for a cook to volunteer his time for so

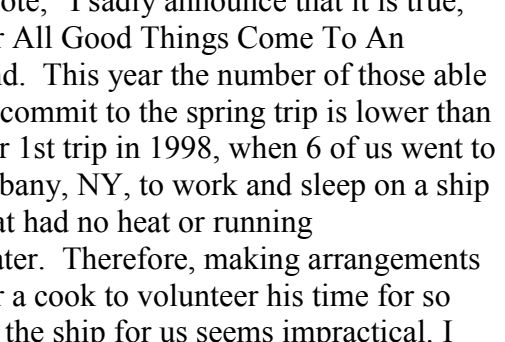
few, and the cost of lighting and heating the ship for us seems impractical. I have enjoyed working with such dedicated men, as we saw the ship convert from its original rusted state to the #1 Museum ship, being maintained in its original 1944 configuration.

I watched our volunteer numbers go to a high of 45 in 2009, and the sons/grandsons that joined us, growing to as many as 13 on one spring trip. And for me personally, among the many memories I have from these years, were the trips that my sons were able to join me on, especially in 2013, when all 4 of them were able to make it at the same time. We have lost 32 of our Chapter members who have made some of these Work Weeks, but they, and the rest of you who have joined us, have made these past 22 years a Memorable Experience."

Gary Sheedy restored all the damage control equipment for the aft cross passageway restoration.

On the plus side, by the end of the month, we anticipate having our contract in place for the Maritime Heritage Grant, to complete "Shipyard Repairs to the Mast and Hull of USS SLATER." We have been in contact with the shipyard, and anticipate going to the yard in April 2020. This summer we will be reaching out to you to make our \$200,000 match. That's our goal, but not our limit. As with the Hull Fund Drive, the more money we get, the more work we can do. We know that you will be there for us.

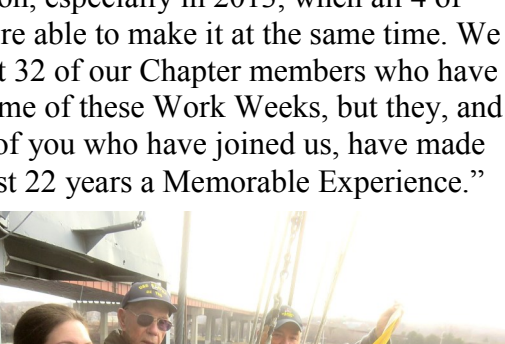
Angelo, Boats and Christa made sure the signal flags were ready for opening day.



Ready to deploy.

Loading the hedgehogs on opening day.

Don't forget the donate button on our homepage www.usslater.org and to like us on Facebook for daily updates.



See you next month!

