



# SLATER SIGNALS

The Newsletter of the USS SLATER's Volunteers  
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**The younger set at the volunteer appreciation night.**

October 2012 has been a very busy month aboard SLATER with an influx of volunteer help, and several special events and overnights. On Saturday October 6<sup>th</sup> we hosted our annual Volunteer Appreciation dinner. Over 60 SLATER volunteers, wives, families and friends came down to the ship to enjoy Chief

**Bernie Smith's** homemade lasagna cooked right in the ship's galley. The event was largely organized by **Rosehn Gipe** and **Heather Maron**. Most of the crew ate down on the messdecks Navy style, but tables and seating were set up in the Briefing Room for those who had difficulty getting down to the messdeck with the ladders. Our former Marine **John Thompson** made the salad, and several of the volunteers brought in side dishes, desserts and drinks. An additional treat for those who ate shoreside was wine donated by **John Meeker** and flowers from **Gene Jackey**. Someone was smiling on the crew because rain threatened all day but, by around 1630 the skies cleared, the wind died and the sun warmed the air making it a perfect autumn evening on the Hudson. Having the event on the ship gave the volunteers the opportunity to show their families the kinds of projects they have been working on over the past year.

**President Tony Esposito** thanked the group for another year of service, reiterating the fact that this project would not exist without the support of the volunteers. All volunteers were presented

with a USS SLATER key chain engraved by **Barry Witte** and all the guests received USS SLATER pins as a token of our appreciation. Last year our volunteers logged 16,000 hours in the volunteer book, cleaning, painting, welding, making electrical repairs and guiding tours. And that doesn't count most of the work done by trustees and volunteers off site that doesn't make it into the book. SLATER volunteers: It's your ship and we thank you all.



**The Capital District Chief Petty Officer's Association celebrates the Navy Birthday.**

**The next big event rolled three events into one.** On Saturday October 13<sup>th</sup>, the Capital District Chief Petty Officer's Association celebrated the Navy Birthday, awarded the CPOA USS SLATER Volunteer of the Year, and observed the retirement of Chief Petty Officer **Arthur Dott** after 36 years of Navy Service. The ship

was literally covered with Navy blue as Art's retirement turned out to be one of the biggest events we've ever held aboard. The Master of Ceremonies was YNCS **Sean Robbins** who opened the ceremony and welcomed the arrival of the Official Party who were piped aboard and greeted by sideboys. After the National Anthem was played, the Sailor's Creed was read by HM3 **Ashleigh Panunzio**. Chief **Jack Ryan** was aboard to give the Invocation followed by CAPT **Ten Eyck Powell** reading the proclamation for the Observation of the 237th Navy Birthday. The new CO of the local naval reserve center, CDR **Vincent Perry**, presented the awards and CDR **Abbie Jackson** made the presentation to the Dott Family, who were there in force.

**Not coincidentally, the Chief's Association chose Art Dott to receive their USS SLATER Volunteer of the Year award.** The presentation was made by GMC **William Benjamin** and HTC **Clark Farnsworth**, who at ninety is the oldest active member of the Chief's association and the SLATER volunteer crew. Art was born and raised in Colonie, NY. Following in the footsteps of his father, Frederick, who served in the Navy onboard USS Watts (DD-567) during World War II, Chief Dott enlisted in the Navy on March 13, 1974. After graduation from Commissary/Mess Management "A" School in San Diego, California he reported onboard USS Sierra (AD-18) on February 14, 1974. He was released from active duty on December 16, 1976 with the rank of Petty Officer Third Class. He then reported to the Naval & Marine Corps Reserve Center, Albany, NY where he served in a variety of positions with a large number of units in addition to serving as the overall Command Career Counselor for many years. Promoted to the rank of Chief Petty Officer on October 2, 1999, he was recalled to active duty for one year in Support of Operation Noble Eagle and was assigned to Navy

Support Unit, Saratoga, NY.

Throughout his Naval Reserve career, ever since the SLATER arrived in Albany, Art has been involved as a tour guide and messcook for our special events. At the close of the ceremony HMC **Eric Bisailon** read "The Watch," and Art's requested song "Bitter End" was played as the sideboys piped Art ashore for the last time. They all went to a reception at the Zaloga American Legion Post, while the SLATER crew went right back to work.



**Pretend you like each other and get closer together.**

**The next day, the crew arrived aboard for the fall work week, coming from seven different states including Texas and Alabama. Michigan Dick Walker organized the event that brought seventeen sailors from different parts of the country to Albany to help restore the SLATER. We owe a great debt to Chief Smith, John Thompson and Larry Stiles who kept the crew fed all week. Monday morning the crew went to work.**

Walker was in heaven as the big project for the week was the completion of the restoration of the flying bridge. As a fire controlman, the area is near and dear to his heart. Working with **Mike Marko, Ron Prest, Tom Skufka, Ron Mazure** and **Gary Headworth**, they finished the welding, masked all the instrumentation, cleaned everything, made sure everything got two coats of Corroseal, and a coat of primer. A special thank you goes to Ron, who hates painting more than anything. Thursday dawned a perfect day for painting, and we had **Kevin Sage** standing by who sprayed out the entire flying bridge in half a day. It was a good thing, because it poured rain on Friday. **Don Miller, Earl Herchenroder** and **Bill Wetterau** got the deck primed and are in the process of cutting in and finishing out the nonskid deck gray. We got to make the most of the few good outside painting days we have left.



Look at that old guy work!



We'll have it working on power drive before we go home.

**Laird Confer and Roy Brandon worked with Super Dave Mardon and Gene Jackey to get the last sections of wasted metal cut out of the port lookout station and replaced with new metal.** That finally completed the metal work on the 02 level so it could be painted. After that project Laird and Roy with Jim Ray went on to work on putting a pad eye on gun tub 24 for hoisting the whaleboat, and replaced a rotted stanchion on the tub. Then they went to work on Clark's watertight door. They did a great job completing the flange and taking the warp out of it. Back topside, gun 2 had jammed in elevation again. That detail fell to Gunner's Mate Frank Heckart, Machinery Repairman Gary Dieckman, Electrical Engineer Guy Huse, Jim Parker and electrician Butch Warrender. They tore down the receiver regulator and the cam system for the firing cutouts, without getting into the main gears and bearings. Removal of the main gear boxes to replace bearings is just about a shipyard job, much worse than the train side. Whatever they did worked, because now the gun elevates as easily as gun 1. The elevation side of gun 3 is on the docket for spring. Guy also spent time with his fire and flushing pump and Jim Parker did several plumbing repairs around the ship.

**We gave some attention to the shoreside facility and the observation deck.** Chris Dennis's father had pressure-washed the observation deck last summer, and despite my good intentions we have never gotten it sealed. I think the last time it was done was three years ago by a crew of Volunteers from Key Bank. Now that we had the manpower and the good weather we put Ron Frankosky, Gene Hermanson, and Jim Ray on the job. As always, Jim Ray, the oldest guy in the crew out-worked many younger than him. Jim got himself in trouble with his son Stan, who came by to visit. He found his Dad working on the edge of the seawall painting the outside of the railing without a safety line. Needless to say, Ray was harnessed up in short order. We had another issue in the Ship's Store. The roof started leaking near the cash register. After several attempts to fix it, John Thompson, Doug Tanner, Tim Benner and Dave Mardon decided that recoating the whole roof was the only solution, and that was accomplished on one of the few sunny warm Saturdays we have had this month. Back on the ship, two of the three Rons, Prest and Frankosky, painted out the floater nets on the 01 level forward. As I mentioned, Friday morning it poured down rain, so everybody packed up by ten except for Ron Mazure and Ron Prest who made the day cleaning in B-4. Our thanks go out to all you out-of-towners who do such a great job supporting the regulars.



**I signed up to be a tour guide. What did you sign up for?**



**Whaddya mean you're all going for coffee?**

**The following weekend the whaleboat was hauled aboard without incident.** My annual boat ride is always the last trip of the season. I took the whaleboat from the accommodation ladder to the boat falls as coxswain with Gus Negus as the engineer. Doug Tanner, "Boats" Haggart and the rest of the crew did a great job getting everything rigged and the boat safely aboard. There was little binding of the falls on the capstan this year, so I hope they can remember what they did for next year. Doug brought his pressure washer in and Earl Herchenroder and Don Miller got the bottom cleaned off before the growth and slime had a chance to harden. The following weekend Rocky and Boats supervised the midshipmen who got the boat covered and secured for the winter.

**George Gollas was back up from Pennsylvania this month, and while he was here he worked with Barry and Gary to check out the AC instrumentation in the aft generator switchboard and pronounced it ready for service.** The DC side of the generator has already been checked out. The engineers, Gus Negus, Mike Dingmon, Gary Lubrano, Karl Herchenroder and Ken Myrick did a test run of the ships service generator diesel and they ran it for thirty minutes with no smoke and no vibration. This all means that we're ready to generate both AC and DC power, which means that we can operate the 24-inch carbon arc searchlights. To that end our searchlight expert Will Hevey came over from Connecticut to start preparing the light for operation. Will took the starboard lamp mechanism home for overhaul. Gary Sheedy followed Will's instructions and brush painted the interior of the light flat black. We hope to have the light wired up and operational with the generator running before the end of the season.



**Wow, I can see my reflection.**



**You'd think he'd have some sympathy for two old men and not make us work on our knees.**

The RPI NROTC Midshipmen have been getting more involved again. Barry Witte and Steffan Maiwald have been trying to pair groups of midshipmen off with our experienced volunteers so they get some practical experience in seamanship, welding, electrical installation, and mechanical repair. One Saturday Midshipmen could be found helping to cover the whaleboat, removing a cut ventilation controller cable in B-3 in preparation for running a new cable, removing cut 1MC cables running from the pilothouse to the 1mc microphone box on the pilothouse in preparation for rewiring, and working on the installation of the missing lube oil pump in B-4. Our own guys have been busy with several projects. Tanner designed two portable platforms to give us a place to stand and get better angle to pull on the chain falls when we hoist the fenders at the end of the season. **Dave Mardon** and **Tim Benner** did the fabrication. If what I just described makes no sense, it will when I post pictures in next month's SIGNALS. Barry and Gary are finishing up the wiring on the flying bridge for the 1MC and the annunciators. Now that the place is all painted nice, Barry can't wait to weld in some more cable brackets. And we had three more Sailors from NPTU Ballston Spa put time into the B-4 bilges, **Eric Starbuck, Lakin Quillen, Charles Hancock** and **Matt Rodriguez**.



**The morning after Sandy.**



**Back when I was your age.....**

**We had the Hurricane Sandy scare at the end of the month.** Having survived the Irene experience last year, we didn't take any chances. On Monday October 29th **John Thompson, "Boats" Haggart, Doug Tanner, Chris Fedden, Heather Maron, Sarah Voss, Don Miller, Chief Smith, Larry Williams, Jim Gelston, Karl Herchenroder, Don Shattuck, and Bob Callender** were on hand to make storm preparations. While Smitty made lunch the crew secured the observation deck canopy, stowed all the furniture, tightened all the mooring lines, secured all the canvas, and moved all the helmets, life rings and anything else that might go air borne to safe locations inside the ship. Albany lucked out on this one. At the morning high tide on Tuesday, the water was only three feet below the seawall, much higher than usual, but posing no problem. In fact, we had blue sky over the ship and temps in the sixties so Bill Wetterau broke out his paint brush on the flying bridge. Our thoughts and prayers go out to all those who were so badly impacted by the storm.

**If you're a member of the Museum, you no doubt have received an invitation to our upcoming cocktail party fundraiser.** On November 10, 2012 we will host our Annual Fund and Friend Raiser for the Slater Restoration at Albany's Fort Orange Club. All proceeds from this year's event will go to the Hull Preservation Fund. This promises to be an exciting evening with a perfect setting, old and new friends and supporters and a renowned keynote speaker who will bring us up to date on today's Navy. Our keynote speaker will be Captain James T. Loeblien, USN, a 1985 Naval Academy graduate who currently serves as the Director of the Navy's Senate Liaison office. In this position, he is the face of our Navy to the Senate on policy, education and financial issues. We look forward to seeing many of you at our event and welcome your continuous support.



**Don't tell my wife I do this on the ship.**



**We spend all summer on the flying bridge fixing leaks over the director's office and now they want this roof fixed.**

Again, we want to thank everyone who supported the Hull Fund through the USS SLATER Raffle. And, our thanks to the LA Chapter of DESA for putting the whole event on! The winners were drawn on October 15th and the first prize winner was Richard Livingston of Schenectady, NY. The second prize winner was Richard Jefferis, USS WYFFELS DE 6. The third prize winner was John Sullivan, USS HARVESON DER316 from Randolph, MA. The raffle raised over \$20,000 after all the expenses were paid. We thank you all for your continued support.



**Tanner, Tanner, Tanner...**



**If we'd worn ear protection back then we wouldn't be deaf today.**

**We received another nice bit of recognition this month.** A couple weeks ago the SLATER became the number one tourist attraction in Albany. For a long time we've bounced between the number two and the number four slots, but we've finally hit number one. Recent reviews of USS SLATER on the website include praises such as "worth seeing," "history relived," and "a floating treasure." We don't know how long it will last. Rosehn sent out a press release about it and it got picked up on several tourism blogs. It's a real credit to all you tour guides who do such a great job with our visitors and the maintenance crew that keeps the ship looking so good. Thanks for everything you do.

**Finally we received a very historic photograph via the USCGC TANEY Facebook page.** We have it on good authority that the photo shows the captain's reaction to Doug Tanner's appearance during a personnel inspection. Doug's attitude towards uniforms hasn't changed a bit. **See you next month.**