

# SLATER SIGNALS

The Newsletter of the USS SLATER's Volunteers

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**Phone & Fax (518) 431-1943  
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**This July has been unusually hot for the folks here in Albany.** I won't start talking about Louisiana again. I'm sure all the volunteers are sick of hearing my comments on the Albany "heat wave". However, it's interesting to note that the crew that was showing up in force when the temperature was nine degrees has withered to a handful when the temperature gets above ninety degrees. I guess that's why they live in Albany and not Louisiana.

A few crewmembers deserve honorable mention for going above and beyond the call of duty in the heat. Gene Cellini, AS-15/AS-34 spent a day on the extension ladder getting the stack ready for painting. He Corrosealed all the bare metal on a day when the rest of us weren't moving out of the shade. The next day Tom Moore came in and primed the whole stack with gray primer. It still needs a topcoat, but it looks great already. Tom said not to tell his wife he was out in the heat, so now we'll find out if she's reading SLATER SIGNALS or not.

Chief Roy Cannode and Rafael Suarez DD-944, have really been going at it on the flying bridge. The metal work is just about done and the whole area is about seventy-five percent scaled to bare metal. Jerry Jones AO-144, Larry Williams DE-246 and Don Bulger AO-68 have started work on restoring the instrumentation on the forward bulkhead. Neither Jerry or Don had ever used a needle gun before, and they think it's the greatest tool ever invented. Nobody is going to tell them otherwise. We'll just let them keep chipping.

Despite the heat Russ Ferrer USA and Clark Farnsworth CV-32, have continued restoring scuppers, building hose racks, and working on the 40mm gun tubs. Gordon Lattey has been scaling the deckhouse overhead under 20mm gun 23, another miserable job. Angleo Bracco VQ-3, USAF continues his work pulling down fiberglass insulation in the maindeck passageway in preparation for painting this winter, an even more miserable job. The electricians, Barry Witte LCDR USNR and Gary Sheedy ARL-23, have been completing work on the running lights and working on lighting on the flying bridge. One of Barry's students, Scott Dessingue has been with us since the beginning. He has become our resident expert on battle lanterns and emergency lighting as we continue that reinstallation project. Roy Gunther CDR (ret) LSD-17, has been detailing the pilot house, installing battle ports, the 21MC box, a speaker amplifier, sound powered phones, and voice tubes.

The deck force, Dutch Hannmann DE-530, Bob Dawson, George Erwin AP-151, Dick Smith DE-5, and Earl Gillette DE-441, finally completed the depth charge rack. They are now sanding and scaling the starboard side of the main deck house and the starboard side gun tubs. We hope to have that sprayed out by the end of the month. Bob Callender DE-744, has fallen into the role of head painter. He is being assisted by our two summer youth workers, Jason Hughes and Jessica Wildman.



Down in the hole the engineers just received \$1,500 worth of parts donated by Claire Oesterreich DE-680 the Angel of the month. Chuck Major of Hatch and Kirk Co. of Seattle donated the shipping. The parts arrived at Gus Negus's SS-347, house this week, so installation and reassembly should begin tomorrow.

And in the aft head, Doug Tanner has transferred all the fuel out of the aft service tank and is beginning installation of the commode and pumpout system. Hang on, Nancy. Just a couple months and you won't have to use the Port- a -John anymore.

**Naval Reservists have been out in force this month.** The Albany unit sent about twelve men down. They did a big job in removing all the scrap metal, trash and old grating from the flying bridge and hauling it to the dumpster. They also worked on painting and reassembling 20mm gun 21 and are continuing their efforts to get 3" gun #2 unfrozen. She's working pretty well in train. Elevation is still pretty tight. They also did a lot of burning and grinding to fix up the appearance of the aft 40mm gun tubs where the Greek torpedo deck had been cut off. The Glens Falls crew is due in this weekend and will continue work on the flying bridge and dressing up the 40mm gun tubs.

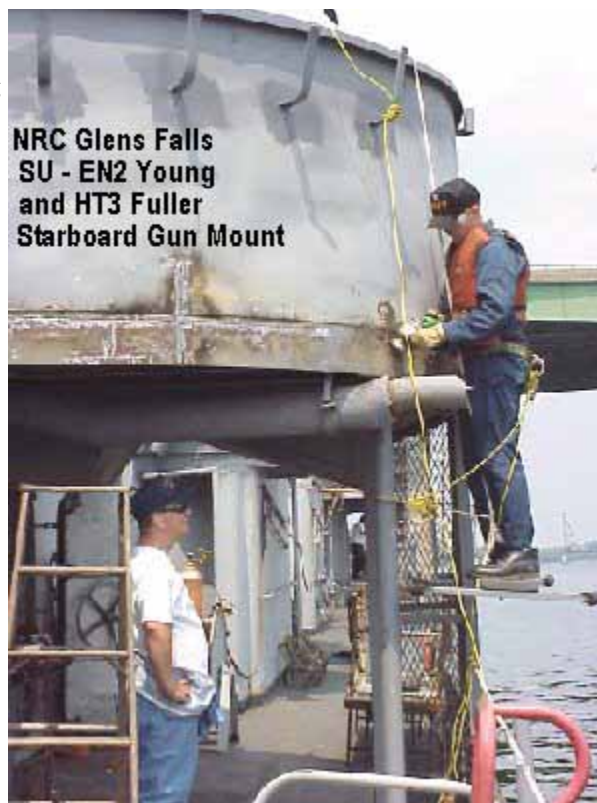
**A lot of good work was done shoreside to prepare the side for Chris Wenz's retirement ceremony.** We got the main gangway repainted and the USS SLATER banner rehung. We repainted the face and top of the seawall with paint that was donated by the City of Albany Water Department. The City also had a crew stripe the parking lot for maximum parking, and improvements are also being made to the lot across the street under the I-787 ramp. The whole area looks a lot cleaner and better than it did before.

**The weekend of June 17th brought the Amateur Radio Operators to the ship where they operated Special Event Station N2USN on the fwd 01 level.** Jerry Jones K2AYM, Don Bulger WB2VJC, Rich Guthrie KA2JKA, McDonald Smith KB2SPM and Charlie Havlick DD-886 conducted this exercise under very hot and humid circumstances. They reported contacts with several Historic Naval Ships participating in the event.

**The heat is just as tough or tougher on Nancy's tour guides and souvenir crew than it is on maintenance.** They somehow manage to put on a happy face to the public no matter how hot it is. Attendance has really picked up in July and the tour guides have been plenty busy. We hope it continues. New guides Fitz Bradford, Frankie Empl, Steve Ellis & Eric Weidman have provided steady assistance during these summer months. Keep doing what you can to get the word out about the SLATER. By the way, Les and Annette Beauchaine DE-509, have reopened the Dogtag operation at Crossgates Mall after a brief summer hiatus. They are in operation Friday and Saturday evenings if you want a new set of dogtags. They worked hard dressing up the table and making the display more attractive.

**The video that was taped during the DE Day Observance of 19 June is available for purchase at the Ship's Store table for a modest cost.** It is a two-hour tape that includes the entire ceremony and a tour of the ship with Tim Rizzuto providing the commentary along the way. There are about 35 of these left so grab one for a historic record of June 1999 aboard the SLATER. There are also copies of Bruce H. Franklin's autographed book "The Buckley Class Destroyer Escorts" available at the Ship's Store. Now that some of us have had the chance to read the book we can report it is an excellent volume; very detailed and complete with information and a photo with description of every Buckley Class DE. We can't wait until he begins working on the Cannon Class! Another great shop item is Maralyn Walker's "Slater Salad", a hardy and nourishing combination of grains and legumes. She will even tell you exactly how to make it. Who knows, we may even end up with a televised cooking program from the decks of the USS Slater to give "Emeril" and those "Two Fat Ladies" some competition.

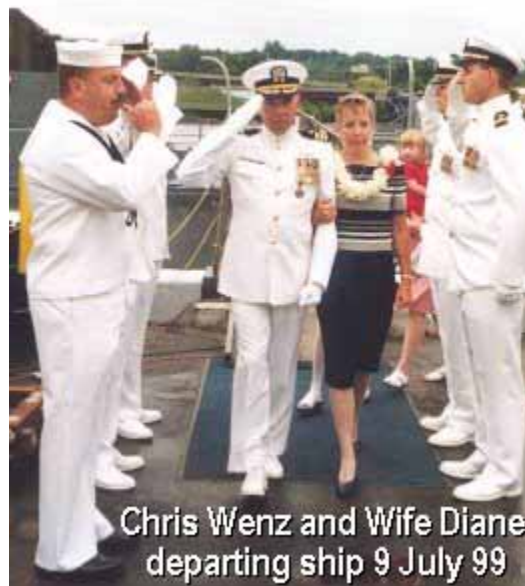
**Joanne McFadden scored a big hit with TV Channel 10.** Susan Tepper LeClaire came down to the ship and filmed a public service spot on SLATER encouraging parents to bring their children down to the "family-friendly" ship. The piece will begin airing this month. She must have been impressed because next Tuesday Susan is coming back to film another PSA on the ship to advertise a student production of the play, Dames at Sea. While it won't specifically mention SLATER,



hey, how many other DE's are there here in Albany? You figure it out. I wonder how many of the "Old Salts" will show up for work the day the dancing girls show up?

The Historic Naval Ships Association's newsletter, the Anchor Watch edited by Anne McCarthy, posted almost an entire page about the progress aboard SLATER. They used a color photo of the ship taken early on a very cold, snowy February morning; which reminded us of the other weather extreme.

**Some of you may have noticed two special additions to the officers' Wardroom.** One is a framed color print of the ship which was made as a wartime promotional poster by General Electric Co. Greg Krawczyk, CO of the Albany Naval Reserve Unit discovered it among a pile of materials at the Center and it is quite remarkable as the hull designation is that of the SLATER - 766. The other item of interest is the 33" brass Lone Sailor Statue which was presented to the SLATER in February of 1998, by ADM Henry C. McKinney , Pres & CEO of the US Navy Memorial, Washington, DC," in honor of all DE sailors, past and present". It is a impressive reminder of the important role the sailors and their ships have played in the history of the US. The statue had been on display at the Albany Visitors Center with the wooden displays of the DE ships plaques and they now can be viewed on the ship.



**The big social event of the month was Chris Wenz's retirement.** As Exec of the Nuclear Power Training Unit at Ballston Spa, After twenty years, Chris wanted to retire off a ship, so we're happy we could be there for him. The crowd of seventy-five was seated on the pier facing the fantail. The speeches were given from a podium on the fantail, and the ship looked really good as a backdrop. The only problem was that the only serious rain we had during the whole day came right during the ceremony. Rigging Les & Annette's ticket- tent over the podium solved that. It looked a little tacky, but it solved the problem. I'm sure that everyone would agree that the most touching moment was when Chris's wife Diane was escorted aboard and Chris surprised her with a lei, a memento from their Hawaiian tour.

**Well, just when everything was going peacefully, someone has to go declare war on us.** It seems that the folks on the USS KIDD down in Baton Rouge have declared "E" war on us. It seems that our new website has gotten so good that this is bothering them. We have turned the whole problem over to our Webmaster, Col Michael J. Stenzel who sent them an "E" mail of a plane firing missiles at them. Mike is another one of our unrecognized heroes. Back when I was saying, "If it was built after 1945,

I don't need it", Mike said, "I'll build you a website anyway." The site is now a masterpiece of web design, with links to just about every DE and DESA. He now even includes the latest SLATER SIGNALS on the site WITH ANIMATED GRAPHICS and COLOR PICTURES! You're better off reading this from the net than in print, because we can't afford color printing. If you haven't seen the site ask your kids to boot it up for you at: <http://www.dmna.state.ny.us/slater/index.html> .

Speaking of computers, we want to thank Dennis and Louis Nagi for donating a Hewlett Packard 2460 computer and printer for use in the ship's office. It's a sorely needed piece of gear that will make us a whole lot more efficient. We're keeping the 1945 canvas mailbag handy as a cover to disguise this flagrant disregard of an authentic restoration.

**The Slater Signals is ready to record another milestone.** You may have noted we are now mailing on a "Non-Profit" status and this helps reduce our budget considerably. With this issue our printers, Jordan Graphics under the expertise of Michael and Gordon Ryan will be handling the entire production from printing to final mailing. We have come a long way since the days of last March and April when the Signals was photo-copied, stapled together and folded into labeled envelopes. The circulation now reaches the "favorite" reading rooms of over 650 friends of the ship and from the letters and comments we receive, many are perched on the edge of their seats just waiting for the latest "Signals" to arrive. As interest and activities aboard SLATER increase, we try to include everything so we have extended the margins in all directions to fit it all in. There is always a flurry of activity surrounding the preparation of each Slater Signals and in our haste we have inadvertently misidentified a few people, notably some Michigan volunteers. We apologize for this and any mistake is unintentional. We also would appreciate everyone's cooperation by making sure we have your current and correct mailing address. Non-Profit mail is not forwarded as First Class and is returned to us with an additional .50 fee. So give us a call or send us any changes as our label list is updated just before the Signals is printed and we need those correct addresses to get your Signals underway.

Artifacts continue to arrive by envelope, box or hand delivery to be added to the ever growing collection. Dave Meyersburg is back after completing several intensive projects at work and is once again organizing and cataloguing the items. Recent acquisitions have included the "94 recommissioning Flag, photos & recollections from the "Dirty D" (USS Durik DE-666), collection of DESA Newspapers, photos from USS Peiffer DE-588, DE Day Proclamations, Bill Humienny's Ditty Bag from DE-531, Jim Moore's Life jacket pack from DER-318, a flag that flew on Slater's mast in 1945, presented by Cliff Woltz and the Slater Alumni, photos and recollections of the DE-769 capture of U-1228 by Frank McClatchie. Navy uniforms, small personal items, ship photos of USS Hemminger DE-746 and her commissioning crew given by Frank McMahon's family, and a silver Wardroom pitcher. All items are catalogued and acknowledged as soon as possible and we are still reminding any ship personnel who receive them to fill out the collections card so proper identification can be made. The items can be left in the Small Arms Locker, formerly "Lou's Office" where they will be processed by Dave. Dave is also supervising the revision of the Informational Plaque positioned on the fantail.



Anyway, as we roll into August, what was that I said about this crew of Yankees slacking off because of the heat? Somebody seems to be accomplishing a lot, but it sure isn't me. See you next month.

