

SLATER SIGNALS

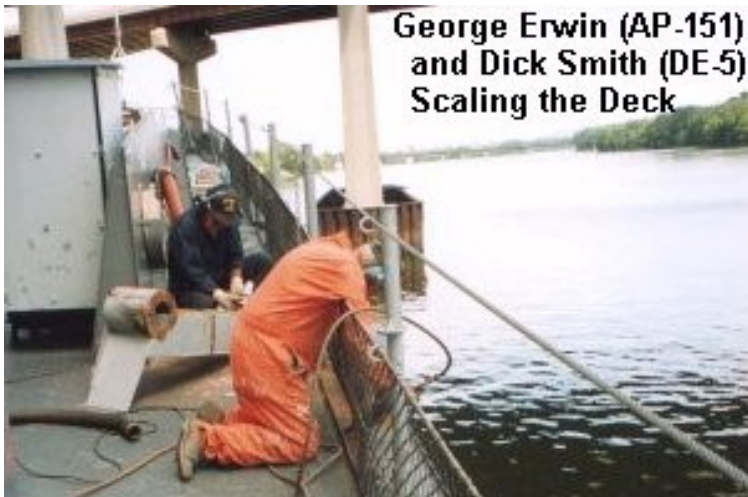
The Newsletter of the USS SLATER's Volunteers

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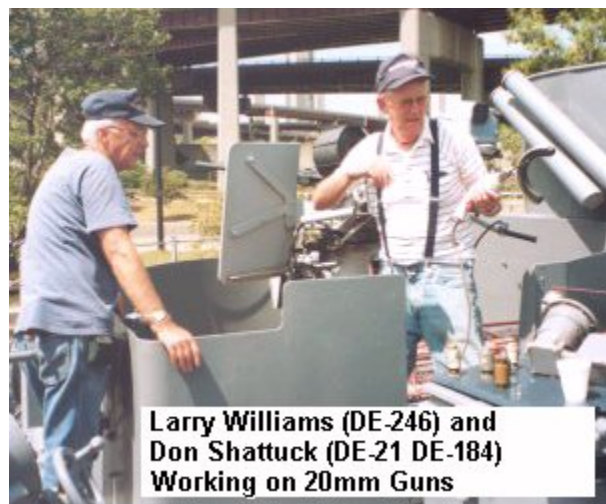
On the ship, the deck force has been making terrific progress. Gene Cellini, AS-15/AS-34, Dick Smith, DE-5, and Tom Moore have been working together to get the final gloss coat of haze gray on the whole starboard side main deckhouse, stack and superstructure. It shines like a new penny. Russ Ferrer, USA has loaned us his airless sprayer, and the guys have really taken off with it. It's an amazing thing that finally, after a year and a half, the starboard side is all the same shade of gray. We're all planning a picnic lunch on the Rensselaer side of the River so that we can enjoy the new view. No time to rest. Now we're working on the foc's'le. It seems half the deck force is taking the month off. Chris Fedden, DD-711, Bob Dawson and George Erwin, AP-151 have all been away, and now Dick Smith says see you in three weeks. Just when there were no chippers left a new volunteer trucker Tom McNamara showed up from Binghamton, NY and stayed several days chipping paint. Tom served on THE SULLIVANS and ESSEX and was a signalman striker. Ray Lammers, APD-81 finished repainting the messdeck tables and benches and moved on to the sky lookout chairs for the flying bridge.



The Naval Reservists have been really helpful again this month. The Gang from Glen's Falls worked on the flying bridge depth charge release levers, and ground smooth the last of the welds from the Greek modified windshield. The Albany crew hefted the four sky lookout chairs from the maindeck to the flying bridge. They also worked on welding up the deck flanges by the hose racks aft, sanding gun tub 21 and mounting the fingers on the starboard flagbag. Pat Perrella is arranging to have a set of nylon flags positioned in one of the flagbags. These will withstand the weather much better than our historically correct cotton flags which will be saved for "fair weather" signals.

Down in the bowels of the ship Doug Tanner continues working on the holding tank for the aft head. He has isolated the piping, installed a vent to the maindeck, and fabricated a new manhole cover with fittings for the suction piping, alarm float switch and sight glass. Now he is working to install the 3" suction line to a new valve on the maindeck aft. Our Portajohn folks will then be able to take suction on it and pump us out once a month. Hang on Nancy. We're getting closer. One of Doug's GE co-workers, Lew Knott, DD-834, DD-841 has been helping with the aft head project for several months now. Lew served as a BT-3 and couldn't find any steam fittings but enough other interesting gadgets to become involved with SLATER. Doug & Lew will both have the crews' SPECIAL THANKS on that day we make our first flush! Dutch Hannmann, DE-530 brought a box of rags & toilet paper so we'll be prepared.

In the next space forward Tony Demitraszek, Jim Quigley, John Waechter, SSBN-616 and Gus Negus, SS-347 have installed the new cylinder liners that Claire bought and are putting the engine back together. Chief Roy Cannode welded two four inch pipe nipples to two holes that he cut into the hull above the waterline for cooling suction and discharge lines. He was hanging off the side of the tug CLEVELAND when he did it. We plan to take suction and discharge from above the waterline for the immediate future. John is a new volunteer who works for an environmental consulting firm, and was a former nuke submarine machinist mate. We mentioned in casual conversation to John that it might be nice to have some oil boom to put around the paint float when we begin work on the sides. A week later a hundred-foot of oil boom appeared on deck. We're planning to try rigging it across the bow for the time being to try and keep the debris from floating onto the camels. As our main camel cleaners, Tom Moore, Raf Suarez, DD-944, Roy Gunther, CDR (ret) LSD-17, and Dick Walker, USCG all believe that's an idea whose time has come.

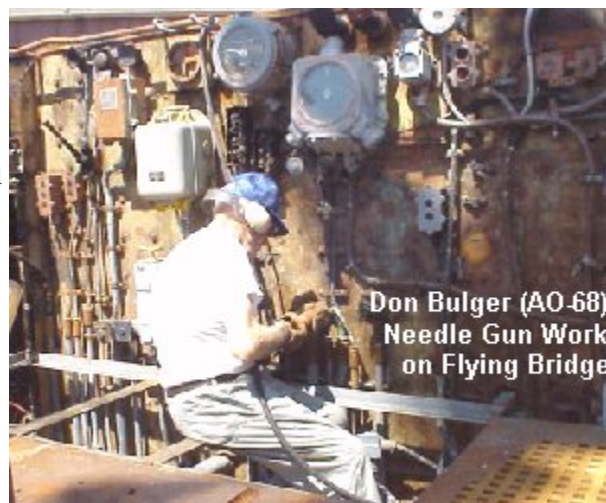


Larry Williams (DE-246) and Don Shattuck (DE-21 DE-184) Working on 20mm Guns

The electricians have been working on the running lights. True to form they have settled for nothing less than complete disassembly, restoration and reassembly of the sidelights and masthead light fixtures.

Work on the flying bridge continues unabated. Raf continues chipping paint when he's not giving tours. He's gotten many compliments as one of our best guides. Meanwhile Russ, Jerry Jones, AO-144 and Don Bulger, A0-68 are working restoring all the instrumentation on the bulkheads. Below in the pilothouse Roy Gunther has restored and hung all the missing battleports and is now working on remounting condition tags around the ship.

Pat and Frank Perrella, DE-326 traveled to Baltimore to make the most recent cruise on the restored Liberty Ship JOHN W BROWN. (Wouldn't it be great to be her escort someday?). Ever alert, they found that the BROWN crew has squirreled away the optical rangefinder from the USS GAGE, the same mark as the DE's used. Unfortunately, a rangefinder pedestal has yet to be found. Anyway, this gear was not normal equipment on a Liberty Ship, so we're hoping to negotiate a trade. It also seems that the Baltimore Inner Harbor was well represented by the Slater crew.



Don Bulger (A0-68) Needle Gun Work on Flying Bridge

Upon boarding the Historic Naval Ship USCG TANEY, one of the volunteers noticed Frank & Pat's shirts and hats and told them



Don Norris DE-766, had been there visiting the museum and getting ideas for the future DE museum in Albany.

Marty Davis, DE-253 and Gordon Lattey have been working on a very important project. They are working to get directional road signs on the Interstate 787 and on the city roads leading to SLATER. This should be a great help to all of you who have

trouble finding us and end up dead ended down at the Port face to face with Mark Bruno.

Along the lines of promotion, our resident Airedale turned yeoman, Al Vanderzee, VC-5 is organizing a speakers bureau. We have many requests from reunion groups and civic organization to have someone from SLATER come and talk to them about our progress. This also could really help our fundraising if you are so inclined. Who knows what one motivated sailor can do armed with a video, a few pictures, a microphone and a stack of membership brochures? If you enjoy talking to groups of people and want to help spread the gospel, please leave a message for Al on the ship at 431-1943. He is developing some written guidelines, props and notes so you won't be going out "unarmed". This is a really important part of our effort, so we urge you to get involved.

We have also been writing a lot of grants. Dave Meyersberg has been working on a Greenway Grant to get some money for signage and graphics and maybe some money for the whaleboat. Marty Davis and Tom Owens, USNR have been working on a Historic Preservation Grant to get funding to restore the after living spaces over the 2000-2001 winter (boy, writing those numbers feels weird). Finally, Barb Higbee and Dave Crandall of Mercer Management are working on a Waterfront Development Grant to fund the ice deflection system that we need to stay at the Snow Dock year round. We owe a special debt of gratitude to Georgette Steffans of the Mayor's Riverfront Action Committee who has been helping us get these grants underway.

We also want to acknowledge Hal Hatfield's help in trying to get the hull painting accomplished. Everyone keeps asking when we're going to start on the hull. With state funds, state bid laws, environmental laws and OSHA regulations, we're finding out that you don't start a job by calling a contractor anymore. You have to start by calling an attorney. Welcome to the nineties. Hal also keeps us supplied with donated steel. Most recently he supplied steel for the forward life raft racks, vent intake grills and ready service lockers.

We have several unsung heroes who have been toiling away for over a year with little mention. What was the routine comedian Red Buttons used to have about, "He never got a dinner?" **Mike Muzio** is an ex boatswain's mate of my first ship, the JOSEPH P KENNEDY, JR (DD-850). Mike has been giving authentic boatswain's mate style tours for over a year. In fact, there is some question about whether Mike is a volunteer or an artifact we've kept on display so we can point to him and say, "That's a real Boatswain's Mate. They don't make them like that anymore." If any of you have been fortunate enough to hear him over the 1MC, you know what we're talking about! He sounds just like the "best drill-sarge" you ever remember!

Ken Kaskoun is a former aviation electronics technician and physics professor at Hudson Valley Community College. He has been working with Larry Williams, DE-246 on the sound powered phone circuits over the last few months, in between other electrical projects. They can now talk from the foc's'le to the fantail to the pilothouse. They have eliminated many grounds in the circuits, but it's a slow process when you have no prints and what few tags that remain are in Greek. Ken is always on hand when Nancy needs an extra tour guide too. Larry Williams other helper is Don Shattuck, DE-21, DE-184, one of the most cheerful faces in the Monday crew. They just completed reassembly of the port flagbag fingers and letterboards, and are now working on the cease fire alarms on the amidships 20mm guns.

Jim Quigley has been involved with us since day one. An engineer graduate of King's Point back in 1941, Jim is always the first to arrive on Saturday, usually asking, "Is Tony Dudes gonna show up today". Jim is an old steam man, but has been instrumental in helping reassemble the emergency Diesel generator. He is also in competition for the "Golden Crutch Award", as one of the three oldest members of the crew. He is in competition for the award with Don Bulger, AO-68 and our Chief Shipfitter Clark Farnsworth, CV-32 for the honor. At that age they play their cards pretty close to their chests, but rumor is that these guys are all approaching eighty. They are among the hardest workers in the crew. Don has been seen putting in six hours straight on a needle gun on the flying bridge. They just don't make 'em like that anymore.

Old friends continue to visit SLATER. While working on the foc's'le I couldn't help overhear a young fellow showing his friend the ship. His descriptions of the 3" Gun were so detailed I was amazed and stopped work to find his identity. And no wonder he knew so much about the ship as he is Lou Yacullo's Grandson, Anthony Martino. For those of you who don't know; Lou served aboard DE-302 and 535 and was Slater's Superintendent during the NYC years. Anthony was one

of the first to board her and absorbed a lot of DE heritage along the way. It was a real pleasure to meet him and have him aboard once again.

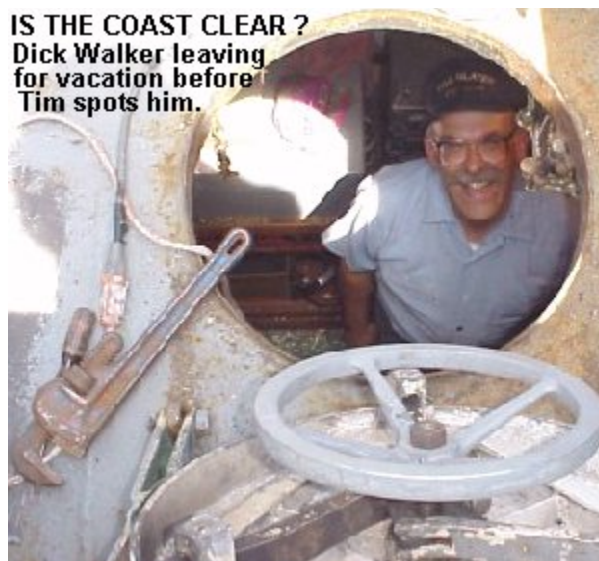
Win some, lose some. We lost our Navy Chief Hull Tech, **Roy Cannode**. He was reassigned up in Ballston Spa after being on loan to us for a month. His efforts put us about four months ahead on the flying bridge project, and greatly improved the quality of every other project he worked on. Our thanks to Roy and Captain Eyler for sharing him with us. He will be missed. I think he was really starting to get attached to this old bucket.

Business has been good, but it could always be better. It's much like being a farmer. You live and die by the weather. The extraordinarily hot weekends really hurt attendance, but it's cooling off and things are picking up. On the real positive side, we have 22 DE and ship reunions scheduled for this fall. Down in Baton Rouge on the KIDD, it took us five years to get to that level of reunion activity. If you float it, they will come. We realize that we skirted some rocks and shoals in getting SLATER to where she is now, and may have alienated some of our supporters in the process. Our goal now is to win all DESA members over to our cause, one man, and one ship at a time. For DE sailors, it's any time, any space. Just don't be surprised if we try to hand you a paintbrush during your visit. This is your ship and we want you all to be proud of her and how far she's come since August of 1993; when a sadly neglected Destroyer Escort was carefully berthed by the INTREPID in NY Harbor to begin the next chapter in her history.

Notes from Nancy: New volunteers are always welcome. If you are reading this and would like to become part of the "Crew" just let us know. There is something for everyone to do and it won't take you long to feel right at home, we can guarantee that! Our volunteers range from the very young to the "Golden Crutchers". If you have had "ship experience" that always helps but is not necessary. So, give us call and we'll be glad to fill in the details. We have been busy stocking the Ships' Store for the Reunion Groups who will be visiting this fall. Several "new" items are being added to our "nautical" line. We plan to list our items in a future issue of "Slater Signals" so you can start your holiday shopping. We are also open to YOUR suggestions concerning items we could offer. Feel free to offer your suggestions. One of our most recent sales was to Charles Fullam who visited as a representative of the USS Haverfield DER-393 where he had served as a RM 3. He saw a "Haverfield coffee mug" just sitting around the ship and wanted to buy it! We are never at a loss to keep our visitors happy and the 1" layer of Slater coffee was hastily scrubbed out and we sold Tim's coffee cup for a \$25.00 donation to the ship!

The E-War continues with the USS KIDD's Website and Webmaster. But we feel quite confident that SLATER's cyberspace is bravely meeting the competition. Col Michael J. Stenzel is providing the dynamic HTML 's, gifs, jpgs, pdf's, midi's and other Internet "weapons" to keep the DMNA website on the cutting edge of the conflict. Check it out for yourself as this issue is already "online". We've also added the URL to the masthead of Slater Signals for your convenience.

Finally Dick and Maralyn Walker went above and beyond the call of duty this month. Dick either threatened or volunteered, depending on how you look at it, to clean out the refrigerator in the CPO mess. And he made good on his promise. The forward draft marks came up about four inches after he finished. While he was doing that Maralyn gave the compartment a good cleaning. After that they headed west for a three-week vacation. Who can blame them?



**Ralph F. Freese saluting Slater Ensign
19 JUN 99, Mrs Trianne L Freese waiting
to board with escort Clark Farnsworth, CV-32**

Just as we were going to press with this month's issue, we received the very sad news that Mr. Ralph F. Freese, Executive Director of DESA has passed away. Mr. Freese served aboard USS Roberts DE-749 as one of his ships during his distinguished Naval Career. He was very dedicated to DESA and a true friend to Slater. We were very honored to have him present for our DE Day Memorial Observance in June and he was quite happy to be aboard a Destroyer Escort once more and to share this experience with his Wife and Grandson. On behalf of all the Slater Crew in Albany, we extend our deepest sympathies to the entire Freese family.

See you next month.