



# SLATER SIGNALS

The Newsletter of the USS SLATER's Volunteers  
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**I hope you are all staying warm this winter and resting up for a busy spring.** To get to the most important thing first, **Shanna** had her baby! His name is **Theodor Douglas Schuster** and was born February 3rd! Mom and baby are both happy and healthy.

**The winter is three quarters over, and as usual, we're not three quarters done with the work.** The focus of our effort this winter has been to address leaks and corrosion we found in the overhead of the Chartroom and the Combat

Information Center (CIC).

These are two of our most critical display spaces, each containing numerous historical documents and irreplaceable pieces of vintage electronic equipment. It was discovered that the leaks have occurred from the Mk. 52 director above these spaces. The gunfire control radar room has a false deck, and over the years, water has infiltrated under the false deck and rotted away the steel overheads of the Chartroom and the Combat Information Center.



*Shanna and Theodor Douglas Schuster.*

**None of this was anticipated when we planned our winter work package.** The repair

involved removing all the insulation in the overheads of the Chartroom and CIC by a contractor. This has already been accomplished and paid for out of the USS SLATER restoration budget. Of course, this involved asbestos testing, which thankfully came up negative. When the removal of the insulation was complete, the steel false deck in the fire control radar room was removed to expose the actual deck below. The flying bridge deck, under the false deck, was scaled to remove corrosion, inspected, and the results were documented.

**Thomas** and **Gio** did a great job with this nasty assignment. The deck was found to be completely wasted with corrosion and rotted through to the chartroom and CIC in many areas. It became obvious that water has been accumulating in this area for many years.



*Well damn, this certainly wasn't on our winter project list.*



*Doug doesn't look so good when viewed through a hole in the Chartroom overhead.*

**Due to the shortage of time before opening day in April, and to give us time to search for funding for the project, the decision was made to stabilize the area and do a cosmetic restoration for opening day. The permanent repair work will begin in December 2024, after we close to the public. It will be completed by April 2025, when we reopen to the public.**

**The stabilization of the Chartroom, Fire Control Radar Room and the Combat Information Center (CIC) involves removal of the insulation**



*Covering the equipment in CIC.*

**retention clips as much as possible, without doing excessive grinding.**

Removal of the old wire way stand offs was done using a Sawzall to minimize grinding. In the CIC and chart room, we installed sheet metal panels using screws and pop rivets to cover the holes in the overhead. These covers are only being installed to minimize air leakage into the Gun Director hut above, and for cosmetics, so wasted area is camouflaged.



*Cutting away the false deck in the radar room.  
Wherever Doug goes, corrosion seems to follow.*

**The sheet metal panels are not watertight, but will protect the compartments when we do the welding and cutting involved in the permanent repair.** In the gunfire control radar room, we will reset the removed sections of decking back in place using steel clips to hold the plates in place and secure one tab with a screw on each plate, for safety. We are indebted to one of Doug's old contacts, **Hank Digeser** of 3D-Rigging, who was able to provide two metal workers to complete this work in a timely manner.

**We replaced the bolted inspection cover temporarily.** Later, we will drill out and replace the old bolts and nuts. On the flying bridge outside of the radar hut we have inspected perimeter weld, cleaned any rusted areas, and sealed leaks temporarily with roof tar coating. We also reinspected and sealed the perimeter of the hut area that is coated with tar/roof coating at the deck level to prevent rainwater from seeping in.



*Here's what's left of the deck after scaling.*

**Down the road, when the weather is going to be dry and a little warmer, we will clean tar from shell to deck, weld, patch, and repair wasted areas.** We will repaint the overhead of the chartroom and CIC. We'll have to uncover the wood protective coverings we have put on all the equipment and stow it for future use. That will require careful documentation of where all those covers go. This project was unexpected and cost us around \$15,000 that we

hadn't budgeted for, showing how critical your donations are. We will then return all the artifacts to the chartroom and CIC and reset the display in these compartments for public display. Are you ready for that John?



*Sealing up the holes outside the radar shack.*

**The three projects that are on track for timely completion are the wardroom, the aft magazine and the food serving table.** On the messdecks, Ed Zajkowski provided Barry Witte with all the original documentation so he could faithfully replicate the original serving table. The project has

cost us almost nothing because Barry donated all the stainless steel, sheet metal, and piping for the project. Culinary Specialist and Saturday cook, **Chris Soulia**, was so impressed that he offered to personally pay for all the round pans and square trays to outfit the table. They are still available from Restaurant Depot. That project is nearing completion and should be ready for opening day.

**The starboard bulkhead of the wardroom has been completely welded up, and the shipfitters are now in the process of finishing the replacement frames that had been cropped at their bases.** After that, a little insulation aboard, and a little paint, followed by a lot of cleaning, and it will be ready to reset the displays. In the adjacent executive officer's stateroom, the leakage was traced to the wasted porthole and a bad gasket. **Doug** is repairing the porthole knife edge and **Super Dave** and **Warren** are replacing the gasket. **Dave, Thomas, and Gio** did a super job of scaling all the rust out from under the bunk, and getting everything primed and preserved.



*Chris couldn't wait to start using the serving line.*

Aft, under berthing space C-202-L, Gary Sheedy has been beating Thomas, Ed, and Dennis to complete repainting magazines C-302-M and C-303-M. As of this writing, 302-M, is finished and Gary is carefully organizing and stowing all our ordnance spare parts there. Amidships, 303 is in the process of being painted out, and we plan to have the berthing space ready for the spring work week coming up on April 28th.



*James, Jim, and Larry continue to work on diesel restoration and bilge preservation.*

**That brings us to the reminder about the spring work week.**

The event is an outgrowth of USS HUSE Association work weeks, but you don't have to be a HUSE veteran to participate. The event is being coordinated by **Brandon Easley**, Work Week Coordinator, email [bzeasley@gmail.com](mailto:bzeasley@gmail.com) He's



*Dennis, Ed, and Thomas (not pictured) are nearing completion of the aft magazine.*

excited to announce that the Spring Work Party for USS SLATER is set and ready to go April 28 to May 3, 2024. You're welcome to join us for any or all days that fit your schedule. Accommodation for sleeping and dining will be provided aboard USS SLATER, and this is a coed event, so wives and girlfriends are welcome. We're eagerly anticipating their help. We require RSVPs as soon as possible to ensure we have adequate sleeping quarters for everyone. **Blair** is returning to manage the galley and is open to food suggestions for the week. Please share your preferences, along with your RSVP. Let us know if you'll be joining us on SLATER,

including the specific days you plan to attend, so we can make necessary arrangements for meals. Remember to contact **Brandon** at [bzeasley@gmail.com](mailto:bzeasley@gmail.com)

**The winter Collections projects continue in after berthing.** Avid followers will recall that **John** started reorganizing the artifact storage space below C-203-L, the former depth charge magazine. This compartment was restored during the 2014 drydock and still looks brand new! Volunteer **Tom** helped start the undertaking but has since abandoned the ship for a month-long cruise to escape the cold.



*Jo Ann and her mom do their best keeping everyone happy with lunch.*

**Elsewhere, Shanna's mom, Nancy, and Alan, helped scan a lot of our artifact Deeds of Gifts and other documentation from our early years as a museum.** It's important to have multiple copies of these documents for many reasons. **Nancy** left that job in **Alan's** trusty hands when **Shanna's** baby arrived. He took a break from that to scan a copy of the Deck Log from USS HARVESON (DE-316), for a recent donor whose father served aboard the ship. Fun fact: SLATER and HARVESON completed five North Atlantic convoys to Great Britain together between October 1944 and April 1945.



*Shanna's mom, Nancy, pitched in during her visit to Albany.*

**John and Carl teamed up to learn how to effectively use our Cricut Maker 3, so generously donated by Carl, for stenciling our display**

**helmets.** Going into the winter, **Carl** had the idea to repaint and stencil the helmets at each of the gun mounts. Well, like Tim says: “If you have an idea, do it.” With the new paint job, they look great! Some stenciling has been done and we tried our best to mirror some of the bleeding of the paint (and other mistakes that are visible in photographs of SLATER crew wearing these) and the clean, crisp lines the public would expect. He is also hoping to create a mold of the talker helmets to replace the foam in the deteriorating ones.



*In addition to painting helmets, Carl has gone through the entire ship and restored all of our compartment fans.*

**The helmets are not near**

**completion either, thanks to the many skills of Carl.** He has been tasked with

replacing the compartment fans throughout the ship, and in some cases, restoring others. Some of these fans have blade guards that small hands can easily fit through. Since we host overnights, we would like the kids to leave in the morning with the same number of fingers they arrived with. Carl has been bringing these home to his shop and overhauled a few, to make them quieter but also safer.



*Bill has just about completed the welding in the wardroom.*

**Looking forward to March, hopefully everything is squared away in the magazine.** This will give everyone enough time to get SLATER ship-shape for opening day, 3 April. We’ve hired a new



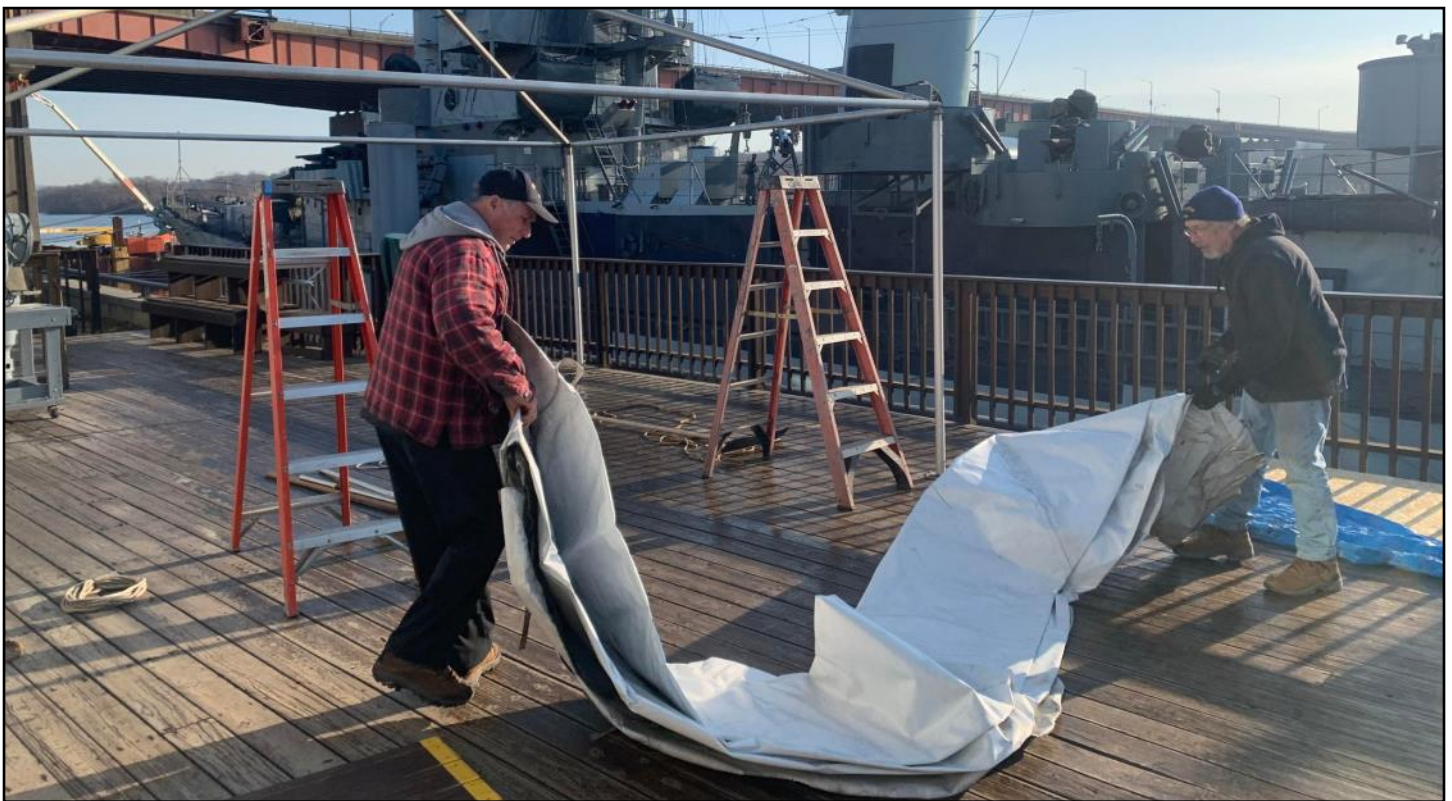
class of interns for our 2024 season and expect to begin training earlier than usual. Our tour guide refresher lunch will be Saturday, March 23rd, on the messdecks.

**Returning Tour Guides Volunteers and Interns need to let Jo Ann know if you are interested in volunteering/interning at the ship again this season.** She'll need to know: what day(s) you are available, if you are able to attend the Refresher Lunch, and any days that you know you are not available this season. Season 27 will kick off on Wednesday, April 3rd. The last day of tours is Sunday, December 1st.

**Finally, we have a big event happening June 15th, 2024 (DE Day).** SLATER will be hosting an 80th anniversary of our Commissioning Party. More details will be coming soon, including ticket price, time, and location. We hope you will come celebrate with us!

**Until then, we've got a lot of work to do.**

See you next month,



*When Gary gets the awning out, it means Spring is in the air.*