

TRIM BUT DEADLY

The Quarterly Newsletter of
The Destroyer Escort Historical Museum



Volume 26 Number 2
Second Quarter 2020

Chairman's Report

By Bartley J. Costello, III



Recently, in preparation for our return to Caddell Drydock & Repair Shipyard in Staten Island, for extensive work on our mast and other updates, I collected and organized onboard historic documents. This activity provided a glimpse into the inspired leadership, and often unrecognized volunteers over the past three decades. Together, they have worked to achieve the dramatic result we know today as the Cannon Class USS Slater DE-766, named for Frank O. Slater, a sailor killed aboard the USS San Francisco during the Battle of Guadalcanal in 1942. Her keel was laid down in March 1943, and commissioned in May 1944, with Slater's mother present.

What became clear was that it was no sure thing that this particular ship would be saved and preserved; faithful to its original state, or that Albany would be its homeport. In this and future columns, I will write more about the various aspects of its history, in order to provide perspective for our mission.

Aboard Slater, we honor the sacrifices, courage, and the dedication of those who served aboard destroyer escorts. These were civilian sailors, often reservists, who responded at a time of great need, to play a large role in winning the Battle of the Atlantic and preserving our freedoms. The sailors of the fifteen lost DE's paid with their lives, and are honored at various times, especially annually on DE Day held aboard our ship.

I came across a 1992 letter from a sustaining member, a British citizen, of the Destroyer Escort Historical Foundation. He served aboard a Captain Class frigate (sister to our DEs) during World War II. He recalled his experience escorting a convoy in 1943. He was traveling from Scapa Flow to North Russia as "first ship, first trip on one of the worst journeys in the world," the sinking of U-Boats and taking the surrender of the first



*SLATER approaching Bear Mountain Bridge on her Southbound trip to drydock in Staten Island.
Photo by Thomas Scian.*

Continued on page 8.

A View From the Bridge

By Tony Esposito, President DEHM



We did it! Our beloved USS SLATER is now pierside at Caddell Drydock and Repair Company on Staten Island. As I write, on this 8th day of July, the mast has been scaffolded to the yardarm which is scheduled to be removed today. Then, the scaffolding will continue to the

top of the mast. The air search radar will be removed and overhauled, so it will once again rotate. All this is thanks to the outpouring of donations we have received from you, our supporters.

We worked closely with our neighbors on the adjacent Dutch Apple Cruise Boat, and they arranged a mourning cruise to follow us down river to Castleton, on the morning of our July 5th departure. The original departure time was scheduled to be 0500. Needless to say, everyone was greatly relieved when the Hudson River Pilot changed the departure time to 0700. Unfortunately, due to insurance rules, we were only able to have fifteen crew aboard for the trip down river. As a way of thanking some of our



Getting lines out as SLATER leaves her Albany homeport.

Did you shoot an amazing picture of SLATER during her trip up or down the Hudson? We want to see it!

Send it to INFO@USSSLATER.ORG

Send it as a JPEG, include a title, and the photographers name.

Maybe we'll feature it in our 2021 calendar fundraiser!

staff and volunteers who were not making the trip, I arranged to bring them on the Dutch Apple cruise boat for breakfast and a chance to see our USS SLATER depart. Watching the tugs skillfully maneuver SLATER from her berth and get underway was a very exciting experience for all of us.

I would be totally remiss if I failed to thank the shoreside volunteers who got up early to make our departure possible. Doug Tanner, Dave Mardon, Tommy Moore, Dick Walker, Bill Holt, Ken Kaskoun, Bill Wetterau, Earl Herchenroder, Boats Haggert Chuck Teal, Fred Sirois, and Alan Fox, and anyone I forgot. Anthony Renna of Dutch Apple Cruises generously loaned us his crane to lift the temporary gangway. Our thanks also to Alex Titcomb, Steve Klauck, Grant Hack, Charlie Poltenson and Chuck Teal for standing overnight security watches in the days before we departed.

One of the most exciting aspects of this whole journey is the publicity and the amazing photographs that continue to flood our social media. Facebook and Instagram exploded the week of our departure. At the end of June, we are at 17,000 Facebook Friends, and had hoped to reach 20,000 by the time we returned from the shipyard. When I checked this morning, we were close to 22,000 Facebook Friends. So, thank you all for your continued support as we all continue to zealously protect this national treasure.

The Destroyer Escort Historical Museum (DEHM) is an educational organization, chartered by the New York State Board of Regents, to increase the knowledge of the general public about naval history and heritage focusing on destroyer escorts and the men who sailed them through World War II, Korea, Vietnam, and the Cold War years. The Museum is a non-profit 501(c) (3) organization funded by contributions from members, corporations, and private foundations. All contributions are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.

DALE W. PETERSON

DE-337

By David Phelps

I grew up in the 1950s. My parents, born and raised in New Hampshire, married in October 1941, but Pearl Harbor and World War II interrupted their plans. Dad enlisted in the Navy in December 1942, saying he would rather “ride to war” than walk. The *USS Dale W. Peterson, DE-337*, an Edsall Class destroyer escort, took seven convoys from New York Harbor to Europe and back. We kids heard of faraway places like Cardiff, Glasgow, South Hampton, Cherbourg, Oran, Naples, and Sicily. Dad was a Carpenter's Mate Second Class, and ran the ship's Construction and Repair Division.

We had *Sea Stories* at the supper table! Our favorite was about when Dad's ship attacked a U-boat in European waters. Details were sparse, and he was not an eye witness because his GQ Station was below decks. Some of the crew told him the submarine was spotted on the surface. The captain reportedly tried to ram the U-boat, but it quickly submerged. An oil slick was seen after depth charging and the crew believed they had sunk the submarine, but the ship did not get credit because there was no wreckage.

Dad died in 1981 and Mom passed away in 2003. I realized the stories they told to me and my brother would be lost — if no one wrote them down. I decided to do that.

For my first effort, I determined to learn the

facts about the attack on the U-boat. I hoped to answer these questions: When, and Where, and What had occurred. Did the Peterson really attack a U-boat, or was it just a false contact, as almost all were? And — if there was a U-boat, did they sink it? I had little to go on; but through the internet, I found two crew members — former Radioman Second Class LeRoy Robbins, of Galesburg, Illinois, and Seaman First Class Bert Blanchet, of LaQuinta, California. I am grateful for their enthusiastic help; I would not have this story without them. Sadly, they have since passed away.

LeRoy Robbins gave me a rough estimate of the date, so I went to the National Archives to search the ship's log. I found a report of the attack under the entry for the night of Dec 26-27, 1944. The place was the Irish Sea. The deck log reported facts only; date, time, latitude and longitude, courses and speeds ... but little detail. And — *there was no mention of the submarine being on the surface*. I began to think that it was only a rumor; the Navy calls it Scuttlebutt. But later, I found Bert Blanchet, whose account of that night did not agree with the log — he said the submarine *was* on the surface. *He was on the weather decks that night — and he saw it!* Now I had a dilemma. What was the truth? Bert had no reason to lie and neither did my father. If I was to believe them — and I do — how do I explain the discrepancies between the log and their story, and how to reconcile the two?



USS DALE W. PETERSON steaming in 1944. Photo courtesy of NAVSOURCE.org.

What I have to offer is — **One Event with Two Different Stories: the Deck Log versus the Report of Eyewitnesses.**

(1) This is from the Peterson's deck log. The ship's Condition of Readiness was War Cruising; which means all weapons and all stations were at least partially manned, and the crew was conducting standard sonar and radar searches. It was a clear night with a nearly full moon and little wind. The temperature was about 45 degrees.

At 2323 hrs, Dec 26th, the Dale W. Peterson is on the left van of the Irish Sea section of Convoy CU-51, about 4000 yards (2.27 miles) from the formation. Convoy CU-51 originated in New York Harbor — its destination was the United Kingdom. The convoy had split up near the southern tip of Ireland, with one section destined for the English Channel ports. The other section turned into the Irish Sea. There are 3 other escorts present. USS McDougal DD-358 is the flagship. Captain E.D. Poole is in command of Task Group 21.8. McDougal is a Porter class destroyer leader. The others are Edsall class destroyer escorts; USS Hamman DE-131 and USS Sturtevant DE-239. There are 23 merchant ships arranged in seven columns. Many are oil tankers, and several are troop ships with upwards of 10,000 US Army soldiers aboard. The Peterson gets a sonar contact and immediately carries out an *Urgent* attack. Four depth charges are fired out to the sides of the ship from the "K-guns". The log reports "...no result evident." An Urgent attack was done when a contact was not confirmed, but was carried out because the ships in the convoy were believed to be in immediate danger. This was the situation because it was so near the convoy.

At 2348 hrs the Pete (the crew called their ship the "Pete") begins *Operation Observant*; a Lost Contact procedure. Sonar contact was always lost because depth charge explosions roiled the water and sonar became useless for up to 15 minutes. As soon as contact was lost, a square measuring one mile on each side would be drawn on the chart. The last point of contact was located in the center. A search pattern, made up of short runs at different angles would be made, hoping that the U-boat's path would be intersected at some point. After about 15 minutes, it was assumed the U-boat had slipped out of the square, and the destroyer escort would move on.

At 2357 hrs the Peterson's commanding officer, New Orleans native Lt. Cdr Alvin A. Hero, breaks off "Observant" after only 8 or 9 minutes, having conducted one leg of the operation, as he reported in



*Lieutenant Commander Alvin A. Hero on deck.
Photo Courtesy of David Phelps.*

his War Diary. His reasoning *probably was*— why waste time looking for a U-boat *here*, when if there is one, it will be pursuing the convoy? The convoy was woefully under protected by only four escorts, and now with the Pete's absence from its station, there were only three.

At 2359 hrs, the log reports "... shaped course to regain station...increased speed to 20 knots."

(2) What follows is pure speculation. — but I believe the facts I have discovered and/or deduced- make a case for it. **I speculate** — the U-boat sneaked away from the Peterson at about 3 or 4 knots for silent running. Then they surfaced so they could run at their top speed of 17 knots. **I am assuming** that it was most likely a Type VIIC U-boat, which was the most common type in use during the war. They needed to run on the surface on their diesels to have any chance of catching the convoy, which was moving away at 14.5 knots. **I speculate** —that at this time, the U-boat crew could not hear the Peterson coming up from behind them, because the U-boat's own propeller noise would mask the sound of the Pete's screws on their hydrophones. The U-boat captain certainly took a quick look through his periscope before surfacing, but in his haste he missed seeing the Pete. It was night, and looking through a periscope is like trying



DALE W. PETERSON DE-337, 1945 in San Diego. Photo Courtesy of David Phelps.

to see the world through a keyhole. **I speculate** — one other thing; the U-boat captain probably knew about Operation Observant from the reports of other U-boat encounters with the US Navy. He expected the C.O. of the Peterson to follow protocol and fuss about for 15 or 20 minutes. He did not expect him to come sooner.

(3) Back to the ship's log — at 0001 Hrs, Dec 27th, the Pete "...regained contact bearing 312° true, distant 1600 yards (.9 miles). The log does not specify the kind of contact (radar, sonar, or visual). **Again I speculate** — *the submarine had just surfaced, when the Peterson plowed right past it at 20 knots.* It would be impossible to know who was more surprised. The Peterson's radar did not pick up the sub because it had surfaced so close that there was insufficient time for the radar to send and then receive the return signal. This was a known limitation of radar. **By the way, I am indebted to the Navy veterans at the DEHM, USS Slater, for this information about radar.** The Peterson's lookouts missed seeing the submarine in the dark, and perhaps it surfaced so fast and so close they had no time to report it.

This is an eye witness account: Bert Blanchet told me he was at his GQ station on the twin 40 mm AA gun mount on the 01 level, just behind the stack. He was so surprised at seeing the U-boat that he spilled a mug of hot coffee on his hand. He said

that even after all the years — just thinking about it made his hand hurt again. As the Pete shot past the sub, there was a lot of talk on the sound powered phones as to why General Quarters was not being called, and why no order to open fire. **I speculate** that the OOD (Officer Of the Deck) on the open flying bridge *may have* been concerned that the Pete's guns could not be depressed low enough to hit the sub at such close range. The CO had gone below a few minutes earlier, perhaps answering a call of nature, so the OOD, a Lt.(j.g.) had the conn. **If the U-boat was a Type VII-C,** then it *could have been* armed with an 88mm deck gun, and also a 20mm flak gun. Some U-boats of that type were so armed, until Admiral Karl Doenitz ordered them removed. He did not want his U-boats engaging in losing battles with allied surface ships. *If it was so armed,* its crew would have no trouble raking the deck of the Peterson and killing many of the crew who were in the open with little protection. I think the Peterson's OOD was reluctant to provoke the Germans at that moment. **But — I think the U-boat captain had no thought to fire on the Peterson.** It was unlikely the guns were manned because he had just surfaced. Instead, he would be shouting orders to submerge. Men who had just come on deck were jumping back below, slamming the hatches behind them. It takes a little time to stop the diesel engines (if they had been started), close the main induction valve, open the ballast tanks, lower the bow planes and get the boat under.

(4) **The Pete was steaming along at 20 knots**, anxious to get back to their assigned station on the left van of the convoy. I think that the relative position of the U-boat suggests it too was on its way to the left of the convoy. This was *the same position* where the Pete found it the first time. Both the Peterson and the U-boat were on course 301° true (west-northwest), when the Peterson discovered it *the second time*. The convoy was on course 062° true (east-northeast). The German U-boat fleet preferred night surface attacks if possible, which afforded 360° of visibility, and the speed and maneuverability afforded by diesel engines. Not to mention the firepower of their deck guns. The most successful U-boat skipper, *Otto Kretschmer*, advocated stalking a convoy during the day while submerged, and attacking on the surface at night. He advised attacking from the same side as the moon — if there was a moon, because the glare would make it harder for a submarine to be seen. Where possible, an approach should be made with the wind behind, so that there would be less spray thrown up by the submarine's bow. The U-boat should flood its ballast tanks so the boat would be low in the water and present a lower profile. His specialized in lying submerged until a convoy escort passed by, (like with the Peterson) and then surfacing in darkness. He would sneak into the interior of a convoy and attack the most highly

prized targets; the oil tankers and troopships. Kretschmer said a U-boat should not submerge except in dire necessity. His tactics paid off; he sank 40 allied ships before he was forced to the surface and captured in March, 1941. ***I believe that our U-boat was following the Kretschmer Doctrine. Further, let's pretend to enter the mind of our U-boat commander:*** I think he preferred to approach the convoy from the port side because he knew from intelligence reports that they would be making a turn to starboard to enter the Bristol Channel, on the way to their destination of Cardiff, Wales. He did not want a whole formation of ships heading in his direction, and forcing him to maneuver to avoid a collision. It was better to be on the other side, pursuing rather than outmaneuvering them.

According to the log "...changed speed to 10 knots, commenced *Deliberate attack*". A Deliberate attack is designed to kill and is undertaken immediately after an Urgent attack. It is delivered with maximum accuracy and the maximum firepower available. The goal is to destroy the submarine and eliminate the threat. **The log reports:** "...Sounded General Quarters. **0007 hrs** fired full Hedge Hog pattern of 24 charges on course 301° true. Three heavy underwater explosions in rapid succession noted four seconds after projectiles entered the water..." It is important to note here that Hedge Hogs were equipped with contact fuses, and



DALE W. PETERSON Crew. Photo courtesy of David Phelps.

there would be no explosions unless they hit something. Three did explode, 21 did not. The log also reports "...Oil slick and diesel oil odor observed." Dropped night markers. "...**0029 hrs** set course 062° true to return to station, speed 20 knots. **0033 hrs. Obtained permission to return** (from Commander Task Group 21.8) to location of explosion...**0045 hrs** Dropped pattern of 11 depth charges, set at 200 feet at position of marker...**0052 hrs** changed course to 060° true, speed to 20 knots to return to station. **0053 hrs Secured from General Quarters.** "

5) We have seen how the log differs from eyewitness accounts. How would the truth have caused unwanted questions? **First, how was it possible for a DE to come so close to a U-boat without detecting it on radar or the lookouts reporting it?** Lt. Cdr Hero knew the limitations of radar, as did his superiors. But they just might want to look into it. There would be questions about the lookouts. Were they asleep? He knew his crew very well, and had a high opinion of their competence. If there was a problem with their performance, he would address it himself. **Second, did the OOD freeze and fail in his duty?** He was a Lieutenant Junior Grade, about 30 years old, a college professor in civilian life. His decision not to open fire on the U-boat, and his choice to try to sneak past it could be logically defended. Cowardice or disloyalty was not an issue. Lt. Cdr Alvin Hero was not about to destroy a young man's reputation just because he himself might have chosen to act differently. The Lt.(j.g.) continued to stand watches as OOD after the incident, a fact that further proves the captain's confidence in him. **Third, why was the captain not on the bridge** for the second action, when it was so close in time to the first? The answer could be as simple as — even a commanding officer has to take a pee sometime.

(6) Some final conclusions — When I first looked at the two submarine contacts, my immediate thought was the first was probably false — or, perhaps there were two U-boats. But I did the math and saw that they were 26 minutes apart and the distance was about 2.034 miles. It is certainly possible for one U-boat to have been in both locations, given the distance and time. The USS Dale W. Peterson almost certainly encountered a German U-boat at least once, and probably twice — and *it could have been and probably was the same U-boat.* By the way — most contacts *were* false.

LeRoy Robbins told me the Peterson routinely returned from escorting convoys with

most of their depth charges expended. Policy called for an immediate and aggressive response to any contact. The Navy knew that if there was a U-boat, a vigorous response was likely to interfere with the U-boat's ability to set up an attack, forcing it to alter course, lower their periscope, and go deep.

Did the Dale W. Peterson actually detect, attack, and hit a U-boat — or was it just another false contact? There is evidence to support the idea that they did. Dad said he heard that Lt. Cdr Hero gave an order to ram the U-boat. If this is true, then at that moment it still had to be on the surface; confirming Bert Blanchet's account. Twenty-four Hedge Hogs were fired and three exploded. Hedge Hogs were equipped with contact fuses and only exploded if they hit something. **Captain Poole, the Task Group commander** stated in his Action Report dated 15 January 1945 — "The Dale W. Peterson ... obtained three heavy explosions from Hedge Hogs four seconds after the charges entered the water. The depth of water was between fifty and sixty fathoms ... There were no marked wrecks in this position." **I think Capt. Poole was of the opinion that it was likely that it was a submarine.** There was a quantity of oil on the surface after the attack, indicating there must have been a U-boat present to leak that oil, either as a result of damage, or perhaps as a ruse to aid in its escape. **I think it probable** that the U-boat was damaged. Note: It has been reported that there is no known example of a U-boat surviving a hit by a Hedge Hog. I think the U-boat limped away, and sank at some other location. It is also possible that they got away, damaged, leaking oil, and were sunk later by another ship or aircraft. **It is certain** that there is no U-boat wreck in the position reported by the Dale W. Peterson. The nearest wreck, U-260, near Cork, Ireland, is known to have been scuttled by her crew in early 1945.

The Dale W. Peterson almost certainly prevented a U-boat attack on the convoy and saved many lives. Question: *what* was the primary duty of a convoy escort? Simply stated, it was to get the convoy to its destination without loss. The Peterson succeeded; no ship was even attacked, much less damaged. Further, the Navy did not really expect a convoy escort to sink a U-boat. That duty was reserved for radar equipped patrol aircraft or Navy hunter-killer groups, made up of an escort carrier, and 5 destroyer escorts assigned to patrol a specific area. Everyone aboard the Pete wanted to sink a U-boat. Most of the crew believed they had, but as LeRoy Robbins said, they did not get credit because

there was no identifiable wreckage. It was a well-known tactic for a submarine to pump a little oil overboard to distract an attacker while the sub attempted to sneak away. Late in the war the Germans even developed an oil pill that they could release overboard to mislead the hunters.

David Phelps SK-2
USS Fairfax County LST-1193
USN 1971 - 1974

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DOG TAGS

**Personalized . Stainless Steel . Rubber Silencer
Order form is available at usslater.org**

Chairman’s Report continued...

U-Boat, U-1009, on the morning of May 10, 1945. This story and loyalty fit well into our mission, to educate the thousands of individuals of all ages who visit us annually, through our well trained and talented guides that make this era come alive and relevant to visitors of all ages.

In the early 1990s, the Destroyer Escort Sailors Association led by Martin Davis, a retired Superintendent of the Huntington, New York School District, organized “Operation Return”. He was described in a news article as “a small, bespectacled man who might not stand out in a crowd. But give him a soapbox from which to expound on the Slater and watch him become fully animated.”

By early 1993, after exploring possible ships, including the former USS Baron DE-166, located in Uruguay, as well as a former Coast Guard ship, the USS Ramsden, the group identified Slater. She was then located in Crete, and serving in the Hellenic Navy as the Aetos since transferred in 1951. While Patriots Point in Charleston was initially considered as a homeport, ultimately, after securing permission in 1992 from the Department of Defense, the group settled on the Intrepid Air and Space Museum in New York City. The Foundation raised \$275,000 to tow the ship, and it arrived at Pier 86 in New York on August 27, 1993. Shortly thereafter a young ship superintendent of the Baton Rouge-based USS Kidd DD-661, Tim Rizzuto, visited, met Martin Davis, and fell in love with what would become his life’s work-our ship!

By 1996, the Intrepid Museum was reorganizing and requested Slater to depart. This was not so bad, as the site did not permit good visibility and carried a high cost. There ensued a scramble by many individuals, some unsavory, to relocate the ship to other New York City piers, as well as New London, Staten Island, and various Long Island locations. A group of Albany citizens and Mayor Gerald Jennings, envisioning a rebirth of the Albany shoreline, and with the availability of facilities and an appreciation of our naval history, won out. In October 1997, Slater moored in Albany. Tim Rizzuto, with a national reputation as a ship restoration expert, was chosen as Superintendent and tours began in the spring of 1998.

Eventually, the Destroyer Escort Historical Foundation, formed under the leadership of Sam Saylor on July 14, 1993, to hold title to the ship, was succeeded by the Destroyer Escort Historical Museum, now chartered by the New York State Board of Regents as an educational, not for Profit Corporation. This was due to the leadership of Frank Lasch, chair of the DEHM, and Bob Stone, a highly respected former counsel of the New York State Education Department.

We now look forward to our shipyard visit and return, better than ever, to continue our mission. None of this would be possible without your support for which we remain very grateful!

Fair winds and following seas!



Breakfast for the Crew in NYC.

Destroyer Escort Historical Museum

Financial Statements

2019 Yearly Report

Below you will find the statement of financial activity for the most recently completed fiscal year, 2019. Our success last year put us in a position to weather the challenges that 2020 has brought us. The COVID-19 Pandemic has been a disaster for many not-for-profits who do not have the dedicated support base that the USS SLATER has. We were forced to suspend volunteer activity on March 16th, and were not permitted to open to the public until New York State reached phase four. It was your donations, along with a Key Bank Payroll Protection Loan of \$35,592.00 that got us through this critical period. We are now in the shipyard and hope to salvage part of the tourist season when we return to Albany in August. We thank you all for your continued faith in our mission and for your continued support.

Audited Statement of Financial Position -- December 31, 2019

ASSETS

Current Assets

Cash & cash equivalents	\$	867,578.00
Investments	\$	1,712,185.00
Merchandise Inventory	\$	7,388.00
Prepaid Expenses	\$	18,878.00
Total Current Assets	\$	2,606,697.00
Property & Equipment, net,	\$	5,736.00
TOTAL ASSETS	\$	2,612,433.00

LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS

Current Liabilities

Accounts Payable & Accrued Expenses	\$	24,142.00
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Net Assets

Without Donor Restrictions:

Undesignated	\$	1,166,285.00
Board designated	\$	100,000.00
With Donor Restrictions	\$	1,322,006.00

Total net assets	\$	2,588,291.00
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<u>TOTAL LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS</u>	<u>\$</u>	<u>2,612,433.00</u>
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Audited Statement of Financial Position -- December 31, 2019

Operating Income/Expense

Income

Support:

Individual & business contributions	\$ 289,261.00
Grants	\$ 27,100.00
Donated use of facilities	\$ 195,457.00

Total support	\$ 511,818.00
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Revenues:

Ticket sales	\$ 86,869.00
Merchandise sales	\$ 38,684.00
Membership dues	\$ 28,548.00
Event Income (i.e. overnight camping)	\$ 28,938.00
Other income	\$ 5,504.00

Total revenues	\$ 188,543.00
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Total Income	\$ 700,361.00
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Expenses

Salaries & related expenses

Staff salaries & wages	\$ 195,690.00
Payroll taxes	\$ 16,568.00
Retirement plan costs	\$ 15,896.00
Employee benefits	\$ 34,313.00

Total Salaries & related expenses	\$ 262,467.00
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Non-personnel expenses

Collection repairs & maintenance	\$ 35,688.00
Insurance	\$ 23,677.00
Professional fees	\$ 20,923.00
Cost of goods sold	\$ 19,883.00
Printing	\$ 17,082.00
Utilities	\$ 15,858.00
Event expenses	\$ 12,936.00
Advertising	\$ 12,866.00
Postage	\$ 9,437.00
Other	\$ 5,121.00
Telephone	\$ 3,645.00
Computer expenses	\$ 2,942.00
Office supplies	\$ 2,221.00
Donated use of facilities & professional services	\$ 195,457.00
Depreciation expense	\$ 1,434.00
Trash removal	\$ 1,234.00
Dues & subscriptions	\$ 1,008.00

Total Non-personnel expenses	\$ 381,412.00
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Total Expense	\$ 643,879.00
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Increase in Net Assets	\$ 56,482.00
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Investment Income, Net	\$ 363,423.00
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Change in Net Assets without Donor Restrictions	\$ 419,905.00
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Change in Net Assets	\$ 419,905.00
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NET ASSETS AT THE BEGINNING OF THE YEAR	\$ 2,168,386.00
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NET ASSETS AT THE END OF THE YEAR	\$ 2,588,291.00
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SLATER SIGNALS

April, May, June 2020

By Tim Rizzuto, Executive Director

Those of you who were fans of the old Seinfeld show, may remember that on one episode, they did a show about “Nothing.” That’s what April and May felt like. June was a whole different animal. In compliance with Governor Cuomo’s stay at home order; our last volunteer day was March 16th.

Having no idea when this social distancing will end, we postponed the USS HUSE Association spring workweek that had been scheduled for the third week of May. If you were planning to attend, you can unpack for now. We have rescheduled it for September 27th to October 3rd.

We continued running on a minimal level. I came in Monday mornings to check the ship, check the draft marks, mooring lines, and the heating oil. I still start my Monday mornings by making a fresh pot of coffee. I didn’t have a lot of visitors, and neither of the girls drink coffee. What’s left over gets

dumped out on Saturday. Maybe that’s why I don’t have many visitors.

After coffee came answering the emails. I think there was a little more email than usual, since people were trapped at home and had time to think of weird questions. Google still won’t let me log in at home. Same with checking our bank and investment balances, so working at home didn’t work for email. I actually stopped paying attention to the investment balances, too depressing. But as we’ve said before, the drydock money is in a fixed income account, and thus safe.

What few visitors I do have practice social distancing. Jim Gelston couldn’t bear to let his clocks run down, so he comes aboard for an hour a week to wind clocks. Coast Guard storekeeper, Dick Walker, still comes in on Wednesdays to fold and stamp the donation acknowledgements for mailing.

Shanna and Jo Ann still come in on alternate days, to practice social distancing. I pick up and open the mail on Tuesday mornings. Jo Ann always arrives at 0700, sometimes beating me,



The Southbound Crew. SLATER tied along side the pier at Caddell’s Shipyard in Staten Island for repairs.

to unlock the gate. Jo Ann enters the donations in our donor data base program, PastPerfect, and into QuickBooks. She continues to generate all of the thank you letters, and presents the stack of letters to me to sign. I double-check the entries in the computer, and sign all the letters. I then tally up the checks, and prepare the deposit ticket for my Wednesday bank run. **Jo Ann** next cuts the checks for any bills that need to be paid. The bank now only permits one person in the lobby at a time, so I have to call to make an appointment to make the deposit. If the weather is warm, it's a nice walk.

Wednesday is Shanna's day. On site, **Shanna** has assembled and cleaned the ship's store, printed price tags, and programmed the replacement register we purchased. She comes in one day a week, so this is pretty good progress, even if **Gary Sheedy** says otherwise. (It's never enough for him.) From home, **Shanna** has been keeping in contact with our tour guides, who are anxious for our season to begin.

Shanna wishes she had a better answer to their questions of when we will be able to open, and what tours will look like when we are allowed. She has interviewed three interns she is excited about, and is hoping we'll get to meet them in person soon. Our previous interns are struggling without their part time work, as their classes continue online, and their rent is still due.

The Non-Profit Leadership training program Shanna was accepted to back in January, met online every other Friday. She continues to make connections within the non-profit community here in Albany, stretching those marketing and sales muscles, and learning skills that are beneficial to all of us at the ship. She completed the course in June, and says it will benefit all aspects of her life immensely.

On Thursday, Jo Ann is back to mail the bills and reconcile her accounts. She prepares our "Last Call" List too. If you have been receiving our quarterly print newsletter, TRIM BUT DEADLY, and we haven't had a donation or contact with you in the past two years, you should have gotten a letter from us asking if you want to remain on the mailing list. As long as you drop us a note, email, or phone call, you're back on the list.



Bill Holt, cleaning up the rangefinder platform for the drone photographers.

When I finish my office work, I go back to my passion, start the compressor, and begin needle scaling. Now that we've discovered the secret of Rusty Metal Primer, I decided to take the main deck portside down to bare metal and recoat everything. Not wanting to let the whole spring go by without any progress, I emailed twenty of my closest friends, and invited them to come down, two at a time, by appointment, to scale decks with me.

I figured that since the deck is 300' long, social distancing wouldn't be a problem. We're working in protective gear anyway, so this also shouldn't be a health issue. I got three responses, from **Warren Brozio, Chuck Teal, and Thomas Scian.** **Thomas** was first one to jump on the invitation. The man is an animal with a needle scaler. He's been coming up from Monticello 3-4 days a week, and is making incredible progress on the deck. Hopefully, we can have it all chipped and painted out by the end of June, so we will look good for the trip down river.

As time went on, I increased my hours on the ship, and the volunteers began to drift back. **Bill Wetterau, Earl Herchenroder, Ron Prest, and Paul Guarnieri** all joined Warren, Chuck, and

Thomas needlescoring. Thomas has been priming with the Rustoleum Rusty Metal Primer. This is the only product we have found that creates any adhesion between the steel and the paint. **Gary Sheedy, Tommy Moore, and Earl Herchenroder** undertook a project that many will appreciate. They have removed the corner curbstone around the base of the tree in the middle of our parking lot. Almost everyone has caught that corner with a wheel at one time or another and this modification will make it a lot easier to get in and out of the parking lot.

Gary also was continuing his work in the pilothouse. He has been replacing insulation board, and cleaning up the degaussing junction boxes. He and Earl also restained the whole observation deck, the handrails, and even did the paint float, with an assist from his son, **Kenny.** **Earl** went on to scale the old navigation light tower that is by the seawall, and repainted it white. He is also repainted the seawall guardrail.

While we were homebound, the volunteers continued to make progress. Doug Tanner made good use of his time at home, taking online courses to improve his professional competence. Are you paying attention, Dave and Tim? Thus far, Doug emailed me certificates certifying that he is professionally competent with respect to electrical safety, fall protection, confined space entry, and lockout and tag out procedures. Other certifications include power tool safety, crane safety, safety signs, arc flash protection, deciphering NFPA codes, and

material data safety. You would have thought that he might have found time for a little sensitivity training. He's come back more cranked-up than ever.

At home, Barry Witte has been making progress on SLATER's replica of the vertical fighting lights. Barry is using blueprints from the National Archives, thanks to research done by **Chris Wright** and **Ed Zajkowski**, as well as photographs from **Duane Gallagher**, aboard the museum minesweeper, USS HAZARD, in Omaha. HAZARD has the last installation of Fighting Lights known by us to exist in the world. Our goal is to create a functioning replica. SLATER's replica is being built exactly to details specified by the original blueprints and guided by the photographs.

The images show SLATER's replica Vertical Fighting Light Panel compared to the original on USS Hazard. Inside the panel are two fuse blocks, with a fuse for each light. Every detail is meticulously replicated.

Modern manufacturing methods allow us to create an exact replica. The sheet metal panel was cut on a CNC waterjet, with the cooperation of our midshipmen volunteers at RPI. The acrylic fuse blocks were cut and engraved using a laser cutter.

Thanks to our friends in the historic fleet, we have obtained the original style fuse hardware to complete our replica fuse blocks. We originally had only 14-fuse clip sets installed, out of the 36-total needed.



Three D Rigging helped us out with a crane to move the temporary gangway into place.

Onboard, while working at appropriate social distance, Barry and Gary have installed all of the cabling needed for the fighting light system, with assistance from Earl Herchenroder. Dan Statile has been working on his own, to weld the fuse and switch foundations inside the control panel. We anticipate mounting the control and indicator panels in the pilot house shortly after the pilot house gets painted, in the shipyard.

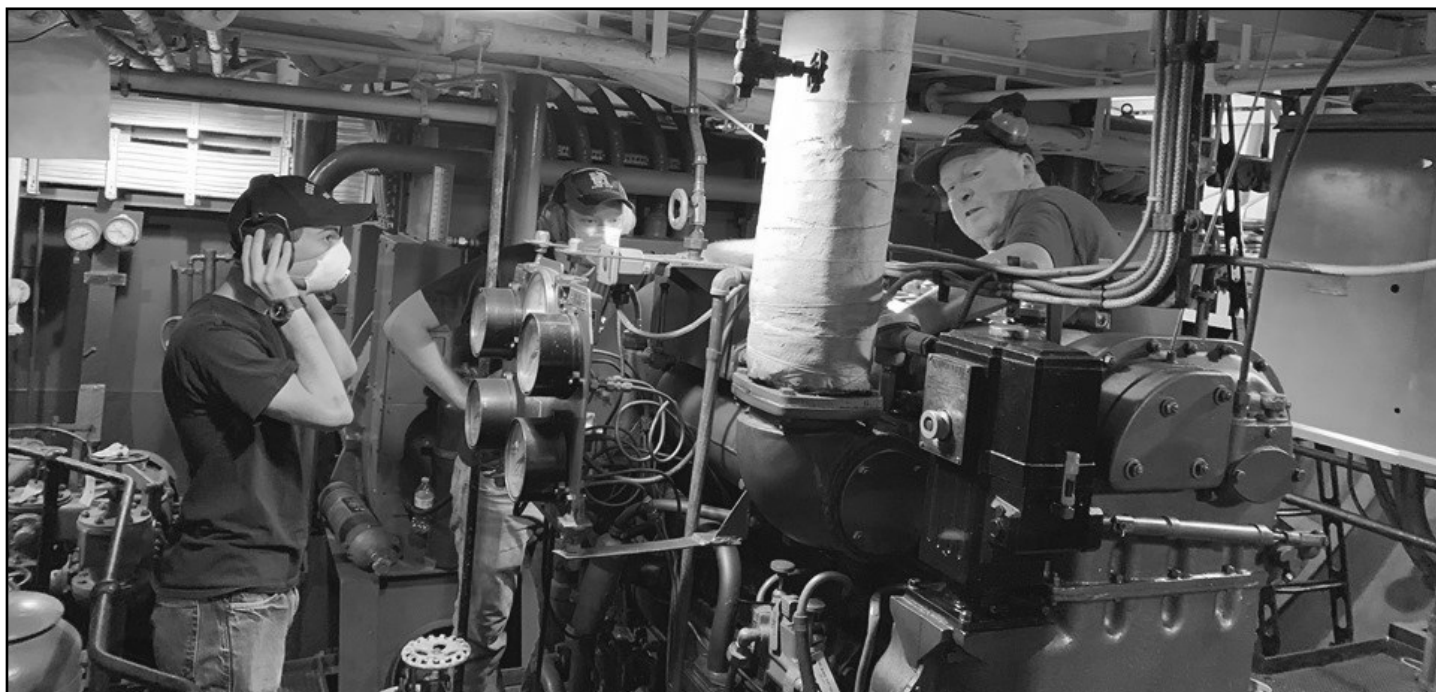
Electroswitch, the company that made the original switches, is still in business. We are awaiting word from them to find out if the switches can be made available again. If we can get 18 switches, we will have everything needed to complete this project. After coming out of the shipyard with a renovated mast, SLATER will be able to recreate the history of the US Navy's Fighting Lights.

Barry has been coming in Sundays, with Midshipmen Brendan Lutz and Jack Carbon. They have been continuing work on the new CIC plotting table. They refined written shipyard work packages for all new installations to go on the mast. These work packages specify the original WW2 configuration, using copies of original blueprints, and WW2 era photographs of USS SLATER. They completed all preparatory fabrication of the kits to be installed on the mast, and made an inventory of each kit, to ensure no delays while in the yard, due to a missing part. They also took advantage of the

COVID delay to work in the pilot house and CIC, regarding electrical cables of mast-related systems. We completed as much pre-move preparation as possible, including: safety equipment inspections, watch stander training, removal and stowage of easily damaged items in the proposed work zones.

Steve Syrotynski has continued his work at home on our radio equipment. He completed repairs, and brought back the now functioning RCH receiver. In addition, he also now has the RCH, RBL -5, RAO-2, and the two RBN's operational. Next up will be the RCK and RAL, and he is working on a donated power supply for them. I always used to cringe when I heard the tour guides say that all the radio equipment is operational, but Steve is making that a reality.

Since we can't do our education programs on the ship, the focus has shifted to educating the public via social media. Seventy-five years ago, there was a lot of destroyer escort history being made, in the Pacific at Okinawa, and in the Atlantic as the U-boat war drew to a close. We've been commemorating these events on Facebook, to remind our readers of the sacrifices made by the greatest generation. On 11 April, MANLOVE (DE-36) was hit by shrapnel from a kamikaze that her gunners splashed close aboard. One man was killed and ten were injured. On 12 April, WHITEHURST, RIDDLE, and RALL were hit. A total of 56 DE Sailors died in these three separate attacks.



Jack, Brendan, and Mike testing the emergency diesel.



Warren and Earl finding some shade while chipping.

On 19 April, BUCKLEY (DE-51) sank U-548 with a single hedgehog pattern, off of Halifax, Nova Scotia. On 24 April, USS FREDERICK C. DAVIS was sunk with a loss of 115 DE Sailors. But after a ten hour search, her division mates put her assailant, U-546, under.

And on the British side, HMS EKINS hit two mines, on the night of 16 April 1945. Thanks to her design and the Herculean efforts of her crew, they managed to get the engines going and keep the ship afloat, and got her to Sheerness with her keel broken. She was declared a total loss, and scrapped after the war. HMS REDMILL had her stern blown off on 27 April by U-1105, with the loss of 28 men. Her hulk was towed to Belfast, and she was scrapped after the war.

The last DE lost in the Atlantic, HMS GOODALL, was torpedoed off of Kola Inlet. U-286, commanded by 35 year-old Oberleutnant Willi Dietrich, fired a torpedo at the frigate, causing its ammunition magazine to blow up. The power of the explosion forced the bridge structure back over the funnel, and casualties were very heavy. The Captain and 111 other crewmembers were killed. The hulk was sunk by HMS ANGUILLA by gunfire, and she went down on 30 April. When we don't have an event

to commemorate, we've been posting a lot of vintage photos of lonely Sailors, to make the point that apparently social distancing is nothing new to our Bluejackets.

Financially, as you can imagine, with no ticket income, it has been a pretty dicey time. What saved us in the month of May was the donations from all of you, and the cherry on top was the arrival of a \$10,000 check from **Tin Can Sailors**. This was part of the **Thomas J. Peltin** Destroyer Grant program, to support the restoration work in the pilothouse. The money is being used for insulation repairs and contract painting. The check could not have come at a more opportune time.

When the Board of Trustees heard about the Cares Act, and the Payroll Protection Plan that included forgivable loans to not-for-profits, Bob Lazar and BJ Costello encouraged me to apply. I went through the normal channels at KeyBank and was told that they were so swamped with applications; they were no longer accepting applications. Nobody seemed to know anybody in the food chain, high enough to help us. Enter **Barry Witte**, again. Remember **Barry Witte**? He asked me if we were applying, and I said they were not accepting applications. He made the offhand remark, "Oh, I know people at KeyBank."

The next day I had an email from April J Ulrich, a Senior Vice President with KeyBank in Cohoes with an invitation to apply for a Payroll Protection Plan Load. April guided me through the application process, and after it was reviewed, I got an email from a **Rachelle Hawkins**, requesting additional information. I had some questions, so I called the number listed in the email. To my surprise, I didn't get a machine and a dial by name directory. I actually got a voice that said, "This is Shelly." I thought that was pretty amazing.

Over the course of the week, I found out that Shelly was so accessible because she was working from home, in her basement, in Michigan. We exchanged several phone calls over the following week, and she gave new meaning to the term customer service, as she guided me through the complexities of completing forms with DocuSign. The most difficult part was photographing my driver's license with my iPad to confirm my identity.

It took me three hours and eight attempts to figure out that the iPad had to be perfectly level when I took the photo. When I finally got that figured out, it took me two more attempts and another day to submit the forms, with the checking account number and the routing number in the right place. Through whole process, **Shelly** retained her sense of humor and patience. A special thank you to **April, Shelly,** and the whole **KeyBank** organization. Now the process of having the loan “Forgiven begins.”

Shanna was a bit distracted in May, while working at home. She is still answering many questions via email, and making sure our programming is ready for whenever we get to open. A lot of her time shifted to caring for her husband, who had to have emergency surgery on his detached retina this month. His recovery is going well, no doubt because of the excellent care he receives from her.

Shanna attended meetings with other historic sites in the Albany area, as well as with her Emerging Leaders in Non-profit classes. These meetings are filled with discussions on how to best prepare for when the world can reopen. With tourism being one of the last sectors allowed to open, **Shanna** is using all information available to her to start imagining what SLATER's 2020 season will look like, and what policies we will have to enact.

I expected the malaise to continue into June and July, but one phone call changed everything. The day after **Jo Ann** sent out the May SIGNALS, **Ed Zajkowski**, our shipyard coordinator, got a call from the shipyard Vice President of Engineering, **Joe Eckhardt**. Ever since our first overhaul in 2014, Joe and Ed have developed a special relationship. You have to understand guys such as Joe and Ed are both in their seventies, and by their own admission, just hitting their stride. But if they are not up drinking coffee and doing business by 0500, call the coroner. It was thus that on 2 June 2020, at 0618, Ed's phone rang and it was Joe, from Caddell's. Joe tells Ed, "A couple of shipping business's aren't doing well and cancelled their overhauls, want to bring Slater in during July?"

To back track for a minute, we received the Maritime Heritage Grant in 2017. After a year of fund raising and planning, we had planned to take

USS SLATER to Caddell's drydock and shipyard in Staten Island on 29 March 2020. However, due to pandemic fears, we made the extremely difficult decision on 19 March to cancel the trip, due to rising COVID-19 fears.

After we all settled down with that decision, we discussed a new schedule, assuming the virus situation would somewhat clear. After discussions with yard VP, Joe Eckhardt, they found a spot for us starting the first week of October 2020. Things quieted down and life became one of masks and isolation. As the liaison person for Slater and Caddell's, Ed would periodically call Caddell's for updates.

Of course, we had packed up the ship for the yard, and secured all the displays. On the assumption that we would try for limited visitation in the summer, that meant unpacking and setting up the artifacts, and then restowing everything for the October overhaul. A July overhaul meant we could leave everything packed up, do the overhaul, and have the yard crew clean up the ship for visitation before we returned.



Thomas and Bill getting the paint down before we leave for the shipyard. We need to look our best for the cameras!



Earl, Dave, Fred, and Dick watch SLATER drift as they cast away the last line.

Ed didn't have the authority to say "Yes", but said yes, pending a call to me around 0715. I said "go with it but pinpoint dates". And Ed knows that when you don't have engines, no matter how noble our intentions and desire to get to the yard, you aren't going unless tugs are available.

As soon as I hung up with Ed, I called Rob Goldman of NYS Marine Highway, our towing company, and asked how much notice he would need to move SLATER. Rob responded that he could have tugs with 48 hours notice. We planned a sailing date of Sunday, 5 July. Ed made one more call to Joe at the yard for agreement, and bingo, in less than 24 hours all involved had a solid plan. Immediately, out came the punch list that we had put on the shelf in March.

That exchange created a flurry of activity aboard USS SLATER, and once again made us realize how generous people are to this project. First and most important, was our cook, Blair Sandri good with the new schedule? Blair could make it. The second problem was that now we would be dealing with intense summer heat. To rectify that problem, we came up with a solution that **Katie Kuhl** used back in collections years ago. **Danny Statile** fabricated a new door at the forward end of officer's

country that mounted two window air conditions. An air handler would exhaust the hot air out the forward hatch, keeping officer's country cool. Window fans would be used to draw the cool air from the passageway into the staterooms.

We felt we needed more refrigerator space and ice, so we approached that problem from two directions. Storekeeper, **Dick Walker**, USCG, got in touch with our friend Jake, over at **Cornwell Appliance**, about a refrigerator with a cold water spigot. Jake agreed to loan us one for duration of the shipyard period. **Gary Sheedy** got the refrigerator mounted on deck right outside the muffler room, and hooked up the water supply. **Gary Sheedy** also dusted off a project he had been planning for years, and mounted a compressor in the original wardroom panty refrigerator. He got that going, as well as an old ice-making machine that we had aboard. **Hal and Mike Hatfield**, of **Maximum Security Products**, loaned us a gas generator, so we can keep the food cold if we have a problem with the ship's service diesel.

We purchased several large air circulators, to draw air from the officer's country passageway into the staterooms, and a gas grill, so we don't have to be dependent on the electric ranges. We also purchased a months supply of galley paper products.

It wasn't all about creature comforts. We purchased 15 new life jackets for the riding crew. **Barry Witte** and his team did preventative maintenance on the anchor windlass brake, freed up the turn buckle on the pelican hook, and lowered and raised the port anchors, all without scratching the paint. **Steve Syrotynski** got all of our portable radios working.

The biggest task of all fell to Doug Tanner. He arranged with his friend, **Hank Digeres** of **Three-D Rigging**, to donate a crane to lift the gangway. On the morning of Tuesday June 23rd, Hank sent **Nick Fretto**, **Pat Fretto**, and **Mark Quinto** to lift the gangways for our pending departure. Former Marine Hank remarked, "The Marines had to bail out the Navy again."

Then there was all of the paperwork involved with the move. The tow survey and tow

plan were dusted off, and reapproved by the Coast Guard. Rob Goldman made arrangements for a pilot. We worked with our agent, **Bill Bergan of Amsure**, to arrange that. The insurance had to be settled, and that looks to be about three times the 2014 trip.

Shanna made sure that the artifacts in the collections space were stored safely and covered in plastic sheeting, with the help of interns Liam, John, Austin, and Evan. She also has started training our three newly-hired interns, before the ship leaves for a month. Shanna is putting finishing touches on the ship's store, and ensuring every product is entered correctly in the newly programmed register.

Shanna picked up new responsibilities since Rosehn left last October. She is making her way through all the paperwork that is necessary to hire new employees, and informing the payroll company. She's working on writing press releases for our trip to drydock. With any luck, we'll have a camera crew on hand to see us off! Shanna updated our Facebook shop with merchandise from the Ship's Store. Take a look, support us, and get yourself some awesome items featuring our favorite ship!

Volunteer tour guide, Bob Wheelock, gave a presentation on the History of USS SLATER over the phone, with Community Caregivers and Albany Guardian Society in their Lunchtime Chats. We were very grateful for this opportunity, considering all of our other speaking engagements



New interns Brill, Sarah, and Xavier on a training tour with John.

were cancelled for this summer.

And despite the lockdown, the old veterans continue to find us. Ted Bogosh and his father, Ted Senior, called to visit. Ninety-five year old Ted Senior was the leading motor machinist mate aboard USS CATES (DE-763), in World War II. They made the four-hour trip to make a visit happen. **Dick Walker, USCG,** was on hand to host their visit. That same day, **Frank Perrella** stopped in for a visit. Frank was one of our original tour guides when we opened in 1998. He served in USS THOMAS J. GARY (DE-326), at the end of World War II.

Jacque Slater, (No relation) from WNYT channel 13, was aboard this month, checking out how we were surviving the coronavirus shut down. You can check it out on WNYT.com, thanks Jacque! We won't be able to fully reopen until New York State reaches phase four. Remember that our gift shop is open for mail order sales.

We recently lost two significant volunteers, who bear remembering here. This past winter we lost **Ray Windle**, one of the last DEHM founding Trustees. Ray hailed from Plano, Texas, and served as an electrician's mate aboard USS FIEBERLING (DE-640) in the Pacific, at the end of World War II. After the war, Ray founded a very successful communications equipment business, and played a major role in convincing me to come to Albany. Our condolences go out to Lois with Ray's passing.

I got a call from Dick Walker that Jack Madden had passed away. Jack was one of our original tour guides, a true patriot, with a great sense of humor. Jack was a gunner's mate on PT-304, in Squadron 15, in the Mediterranean. He was always quick to remind us all that PT Boats did win World War II, in case anyone wanted to argue with him. His Korean War service in destroyers didn't count much to Jack, because his heart was always in the "Boats". Our condolences go out to the entire Madden family. Their passing is a reminder of why preserving this ship is so important to their legacy.

On Friday the 26th, I got a call from Rob Goldman, confirming that our departure time will be Sunday morning 5 July at slack tide, which is 0500. Saturday, July 4th will be a busy day for us. The wires will have to come off, the diesel tank

topped off, the generators tested, and the watch bill set. The first days of July will be a busy time for us.

And now we look to you. We are still short \$200,000 of the funding we need to completely cover the shipyard cost. To date we have raised \$274,000 and with the \$200,000 Maritime Heritage Grant we have a total of 474,000. That leaves us \$226,000 short of covering the total shipyard bill. So please continue with your generosity, in the hope that we won't have to use our endowment finds for this project. Stay tuned, and follow our Facebook page for continuing shipyard updates. Also on our Facebook page, is our Facebook shop, filled with merchandise from our favorite ship. We promise you an exciting month ahead.



USS SLATER Enters Shipyard

By: BJ Costello, DEHM Chairman

As Sunday, 5 July 2020, dawned, final preparations were well underway for the USS SLATER DE-766 to transit from Albany to Caddell's Shipyard in Staten Island, for repairs that would restore the ship to its appearance when launched in 1944.

This event is significant, as SLATER is the last destroyer escort afloat of the nearly 600 built to successfully defeat the U-Boat threat. That threat was sinking half of all ships, material, and men striving to save England, the final country left in Europe free from German domination. This success permitted our soldiers to arrive and ultimately land on D-Day, the beginning of the end of the war.

As we left Albany, a reporter asked why SLATER is so significant. The answer is clear. This ship represents the thousands of sailors, all volunteers, who placed their own lives ahead of all else. They chose to sail into harm's way against a very sophisticated enemy, eventually securing our freedoms, and preserving our way of life. Fifteen destroyer escorts were lost at sea, many others severely damaged, and thousands of sailors perished



Ed, Joe, Tim and BJ. 24 hours after leaving Albany we were tied up at Caddell's in Staten Island.

far from home. It is for these young brave Americans that SLATER has been preserved and restored.

And so, it was on this sunny July morning, with no threat of any enemy, that tugboats "Sarah D." and "Nathan G." eased SLATER, and its crew of 15 members, down the Hudson River. The ship was accompanied by hundreds of boats, an honor guard consisting of local police, fire, DEC and State Police boats, drones, biplanes, seaplanes, helicopters, eagles, and thousands of cheering individuals ashore and on bridges. They watched as we sailed south, piloted by Hudson River and Sandy Hook pilots.

Tim Rizzuto, Ship's Superintendent, has led this effort. He has worked closely with Ed Zajkowski, our volunteer shipyard coordinator, to implement the restoration plan. Many of these plans were drafted by RPI midshipmen, who accompanied the ship. Our lead engineer, Mike Dingmon, worked tirelessly in 103-degree heat, to maintain our diesel generators. Without him, we would not have had ventilation, as well as an operational galley, manned by Blair Sandri, and compressed air to announce our appreciation to the applauding crowds. He was supported by Barry Witte, Gary Sheedy, Grant Eastman, and RPI midshipmen, Jack Carbone and Brendan Lutz, who spent three-hour watches in the

hot machinery spaces, tending our diesels. Shanna Schuster, our Visitor Engagement and Program Manager, maintained contact with the media and stood watches with Thomas Scian, Steve Klauck, Paul Guarnieri, and Alex Titcomb. Our Chair, BJ Costello, was thrilled to be aboard!

During the day, we passed several Hudson River Bridges, sailing under the new Mario M. Cuomo Bridge, lit by a full moon soon after darkness fell. We passed Manhattan overnight, and awoke to the magnificent shining Lady Liberty, welcoming all to her harbor. On the sunny, peaceful morning, we could not help but remember a very similar morning of September 11, when, then too; the world seemed so full of promise. With our silent prayers, we transited into the shipyard and will remain until August.

Through the history of our time in America, we have been self-supporting. Half of our income is derived from operations, and the balance comes from our 2,500 worldwide donor base.

It is estimated that the shipyard work and tow will cost \$700,000. The 2017 Maritime Heritage matching grant is the first federal funding we have received. It will cover \$200,000 of this work. We have raised the match and continue to solicit funds to complete our mission.

We remain grateful to all our supporters of this America's treasure.

Visit Albany and USS SLATER

The Albany County Convention and Visitors Bureau stands ready to assist you in planning your trip to Albany, New York and the surrounding areas. Individuals and reunion groups can obtain information by contacting:

Jay Cloutier, Director of Sales
Phone: 1-800-258-3582, Ext 301



Mike and Gary making sure the generator stays running on our shipyard trek., while it was 103 degrees in the engineering spaces.

**Please Remember
USS SLATER
In your will.
*She's your legacy.***



Barry Witte on the bridge.

Mail Call

Second Quarter 2020

22 April 2020

Tim,

My husband, M. William Beaulieu, passed away from Alzheimer's November 30, 2019. We visited the Slater many times. Sometime this year you should receive a donation from the USS STEPHEN POTTER DD-538 Association, which is disbanding—the treasury is donating the remaining monies to four groups – USS SULLIVANS DD-537, USS KIDD DD-661, USS SLATER DE-766, and the Navy League Scholarship Fund.

I was trying to get the group to come to Albany, but the group was advancing in age. At one point, the current chairman of the group visited the Slater upon our recommendation. He was so impressed! I think he has sent you a donation on his own. In the past, we donated some navy items. I remember one item being my husband's Navy officer coat. Hopefully, I can get over for a visit this year, if the weather improves, and the CV-19 goes away.

Mary Jane Beaulieu

4 April 2020

Dear Tim,

Enclosed is my book, "Memories of my Three Years Aboard Destroyer Escorts," for the DE Historical Museum's archives. After I retired, I bought copies of the deck logs for the DE's I served aboard, and I wrote my memoirs. One of my grandsons surprised me for my 80th birthday and had my transcript published.

After my book was published, I learned my 4th CO was abruptly relieved of command of the USS CHAMBERS (DER-391), passed over for promotion to Commander, and transferred to shore duty in South Korea. Five officers who served with me aboard the CHAMBERS read my book and agreed with my comments, and had many of their own comments.

Sincerely,
John J Sheehan



*USS SLATER and her supportive "Flotilla" on the Southbound journey to the shipyard.
Photo courtesy of Daniel Spitzer MD*

6 May 2020

Tim,

This donation is lovingly made in honor of my father – John (Call me Jack) Madden.

Dad was passionate about the Slater, the friendships forged around it, and his work on the ship. Thanks to all whose work and vision brought the Slater to Albany and sustain its mission.

You meant so much to Dad!

Thank you,

Maureen Madden



22 June 2020

Jo Ann,

I'm sure you're the most important person at DEHM. My son Bruce receives the newsletter and passes it on to me. You gals & guys have been and are doing a fabulous job in preparing and maintaining the museum.

Incidentally, Bruce is the author of The Buckley Class Destroyer Escorts a copy of which you have in your library. Bruce and I toured the Slater when she was in New York! I hope we will be able to visit her in her present location.

Sincerely,

Richard L. Franklin



10 June 2020

Howdy Tim,

Hope all is well in Albany. We appreciate everything you and the volunteers are doing to keep things afloat. Enclosing a small donation, hope every little bit adds up eventually...

We are thinking of you guys each day!
Nancy Markham Klein

1 May 2020

Dear Tim,

We have corresponded several times over the years, and I have supported the Slater in all the years you have been "restoring" her. As you may remember, I FIRST VISITED the Slater shortly after she was returned to New York from Greece. She was pretty ragged then, with holes in the deck that you could fall into lower compartments from. All this has changed dramatically over the years. I have visited the Slater twice in Albany, and am amazed at the perfection you have been able to achieve. She now looks just like the CHATELAIN did when I left her in December 1945, (with the exception of torpedo tubes).

To digress, I may need to remind you that I served on USS CHATELAIN DE-149, from her commissioning until December 1945 when I was sent back to Memphis, TN, to be discharged. We did convoy duty from New York to Londonderry, Ireland, and Gibraltar, before being re-assigned to Hunter Killer Group 22.3, operating with the baby flat top USS GUADALCANAL, and 5 DE's, the JENKS, CHATELAIN, PILLSBURY, POPE, and FLAHERTY.

Our Task Group has the distinction of capturing the only enemy man-of-war at sea since 1812. The U-505 had surfaced and was captured on June 4, 1944, and is now the #1 exhibit at the Museum of Science and Industry in Chicago.

I was Torpedoman 2/C at that time, but my battle station was as a phone talker and K-gun captain on the starboard side. We only fired 14 depth charges (one 13 charge pattern and one other when we first gained contact on the U-505). We almost ran over the sub, and dropped one 300 pound depth charge from the stern, before maneuvering to get in position for an attack. I can still remember to this day how I felt when the U-505 came to the surface to abandon ship. My job was done, but the adrenaline was pumping through my veins, and the sub was only 300 yards from the CHATELAIN, but looked much closer. Every gun on the starboard side opened fire to encourage the crew to abandon ship and the only weapon I had was the 14-inch spanner wrench used to set the depth that a charge would explode. I threw that wrench at the sub as far as I could, but you can imagine it only went 50/60 feet. My shipmates teased me about this at ship reunions for the next 50 years.

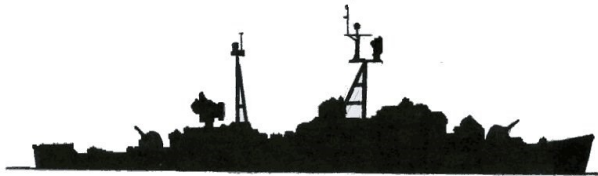
Thanks again for the years you have given to the restoration of the SLATER, and God willing, I will visit again. I am now 95, and enjoying the evening of my life.

Enclosed is my check to be used in whatever manner you deem most needy.

Fair winds and following seas.

Sincerely,

E. Julian Austin



31 May 2020

Tim,

Reading through this Sunday morning's paper, I glimpsed a photo of a Navy Officer as I folded over the obits. The obit was for Cdr Oliver G. Everette, formally on the USS BAUER, DE-1025. I am enclosing the new section with his obit for you to read for details. His Navy path was similar to mine, going through NROTC and ending up on a DE.

What is interesting to me is that he also was the Executive Officer of the Concord Naval Weapons Station, close to where I live. For what it may be worth to you, if Cdr. Everette was on board one of our group of ships, here is his obit to add to your collection of ships' personnel records.

On a more current matter, I do not envy your task of trying to keep Slater open for visitors to any degree. The task of cleaning up to meet COVID requirements has to be monumental, and I am much impressed, and congratulatory, if you are able to maintain any semblance of everyday visitors' routine.

I will help defray some of these extra expenses shortly, as our foundation reaches its annual donation endeavor. Unfortunately, it is unlikely that we will be doing any traveling to the East Coast this summer. Let's see how the virus impacts such activities. Our best wishes to you and the crew, stay well, wear those damned masks, and keep your distance from people, even nice guys likes me..

Patrick Campbell
LT SC USNR Ret.

16 June 2020

Dear Tim,

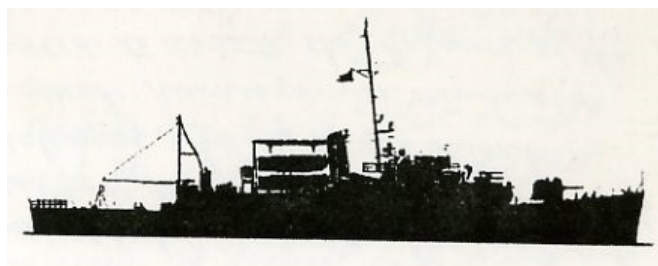
Today the latest issue of Trim But Deadly arrived, and I was absolutely pleased with the writings and pictures of the volunteers who have dedicated their time and efforts to preserve this vessel for the future. It has been years since I have visited the Slater, but my remembrance continues to haunt me. Sadly, I can no longer come to Albany since I am now 97, but my time aboard the USS PAUL G. BAKER (DE-642) remains a focus of today's letter to you, with the enclosed picture, as I will explain.

I used to write a newsletter for years to my shipmates called the Chromate Chronicle, and I searched for the son of Paul G. Baker, as I had a picture of the commissioning with him, his sister, and mother. I found his son, Jay Baker, living in Irvine, California, some years ago, and we have communicated ever since. Enclosed is a picture of Jay, now 86, taken with some memorabilia of past reunions of the crew that I had sent him. We had 8 reunions and unfortunately, Jay wasn't located until after our last reunion. His father, LTjg Paul G. Baker, was a Naval Air Pilot who was promoted as an enlisted pilot, flying in VF-2 from the USS Lexington during the Coral Sea battle. Stories have been written about his exploits in saving the Lexington by drawing Japanese fighters away from the ship at night during the engagement, and then perishing. He was awarded the Navy Cross posthumously, and a ship was named in his memory, USS PAUL G. BAKER (DE-642).

Since I am the last survivor of the PGB, having no knowledge of any of my shipmates still alive, I felt this picture of Jay and the history of his father's heroism might be of interest. In closing, I hope that the Slater will soon be open to the public, and I praise you and the volunteers for your efforts in the continued restoration.

Gratefully,

George E. Martel, CPhM



10 June 2020

Dear Mr. Rizzuto,

The Charles M. Liddle III & Nancy H. Liddle Fund of The Community Foundation for the Greater Capital Region is pleased to enclosed a grant for \$1,500. This grant is for the USS SLATER, Destroyer Escort Historical Museum, for unrestricted use.

This contribution is intended as a gift in its entirety. Neither The Community Foundation nor the donor-advisor is to receive any goods or services in connection with this grant. Furthermore, this grant may not be used to fulfill a personal pledge by the donor-advisor. Your prompt written acknowledgement to the Foundation of your receipt of this gift, and how it will be used will ensure the Foundation’s compliance with IRS regulations.

Yours Sincerely,

John Eberle
President & Chief Executive Officer



29 April 2020

Dear Mr. Rizzuto,

Enclosed please find a Tin Can Sailors check for \$10,000. This check is your 2020 Project Grant for the USS SLATER, under the Thomas J. Peltin Destroyer Museum Grant Program.

Tin Can Sailors exists to preserve and honor destroyers, its history, and the veterans who served aboard them. We believe that joining with you in this cooperative effort brings a special benefit to our members; the opportunity to see their contributions used to preserve these vessels as memorials to destroyer service.

Please report details of the use of this grant, by February 24, 2021. Please make a point of providing “before” as well as “after” pictures, so we can see and show your progress. For any in-progress photos, including the people working on the project, is not appropriate – unless you provide a signed “model release” with each photo. It will likely be easiest to

photograph work without members, because of the image release. Thank you for your cooperation. We intend to post these pictures to aid communication between TCS members, and Historic Ships.

Sincerely yours,

Tin Can Sailors, O.M. Little



15 June 2020

Dear Tony,

I wanted to write and let you know how informative the recent article was in “Trim But Deadly,” written by Charles “Choppy” Wicker, on the sinking of the USS INDIANAPOLIS. There is a special connection between UNDERHILL and INDIANAPOLIS. I’ve gleaned much information from many of the UNDERHILL survivors at the numerous reunions we had.

The article is accurate in that Capt. McVay requested an escort and was told none were available. The UNDERHILL was escorting a convoy from Okinawa to Leyte. On 24 July, it made numerous contacts. The UNDERHILL was sunk 5 days before the INDIANAPOLIS would be traveling the same waters.

It is said but not confirmed, that when Capt. McVay was told no escort available, he asked what the conditions were in these waters to Leyte, since he had been absent for a number of months as repairs were made. He was not told that a DE had been sunk 5 days earlier in these same waters. A slight omission like that caused the worse sinking of a ship of the US Navy.

Regards,

John F. Grandinetti



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Wilber E. Huebner

Jim Kuba, who won charity BINGO

Molly Brennan



Tommy and Gary moved this curb for more space in the parking lot..

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September 27— October 3

If you'd like to join us for our live aboard work week send an email to Tim@usslater.org

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*Day 3 in the shipyard. Yardarm is removed
 and scaffolding is up.*

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The ship is in the yard, but the Ship's Store is open! Call, email, or head to our Facebook Shop to purchase one of a kind merchandise from our favorite ship! Every dollar earned goes back to restoration and preservation!

TRIM BUT DEADLY

*The Quarterly Newsletter of the
DESTROYER ESCORT HISTORICAL MUSEUM*

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Layout & Design: Shanna Schuster

Volume 26, Number 2, Second Quarter 2020

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Tug boats Sarah D. and Nathan G. turn SLATER southbound. Photo courtesy of Michael Schuster.