

SLATER SIGNALS

The Newsletter of the USS SLATER's Volunteers

Destroyer Escort Historical Museum

USS Slater DE-766

PO Box 1926

Albany, NY 12201-1926

Phone & Fax (518) 431-1943

Vol. 2 no.11, November 1999

It's Winter Fundraising Time Again!

Well folks, like a bad penny, I've come back. It's that time of the year when I try to squeeze blood from stones. To ask those who gave to give more. For you, depending upon your view on direct mail solicitation, it's time to grab your checkbook or your trash can. It's amazing how low I'll stoop to help this ship.

This year we will close to the public from November 28 to April 1 to concentrate on the restoration of all the spaces above the main deck. This ambitious program gives the old guys and even the young guys like Dick Smith four months to restore CIC, the Sea Cabin, the Radioroom, the Captain's Cabin, the four Officer's Staterooms, The Officer's Head, the Maindeck Passageways, the Machine Shop, the Aft Crew's Washroom and Head (including the infamous trough), the Repair Locker, and the Emergency Radioroom. How far we go this winter will depend in part on your generosity. Will you give money to help keep these guys warm and buy paint?



Not counting the Frank Lasch Endowment for future dry-docking, we presently have about \$30,000 available to get us through the winter months. We could use an additional \$20,000. We will have some added expenses this year, including buying fittings to complete the heating system, fuel oil for the new heating boiler, and paint since we finally used up all the cans that the gang in Manhattan sent us with the ship. Some of the money we need will come from Les and Annette Beauchaine and Nancy Buxton selling dogtags and SLATER souvenirs at Crossgates Mall. Some will come from DEHF membership renewals over the winter months. The rest needs to come from us, those who love the SLATER.

As you recall, things got pretty tight last March. It was only through your generosity last year, and some major donors such as John Bartko, the Nolans, and some of you reunion groups that we slid into spring. For those of you who live too far away to pick up a paint scraper, this is a chance to help when we really need it. As last year we are requesting individual and family donations of \$100.00 and corporate and organizational donations of \$500.00. But we'll gratefully take more. And as last year I promise that the first \$100.00 contribution to the winter fund will come from my next paycheck. Because, my wife says it's okay.

This year, thanks to SLATER Angels Claire Osterreich and Pat Perrella we have a special gift to offer our winter fund donors. All our donors will receive your choice of a SLATER millennium pinup calendar, featuring either the SLATER "Pinup Girls", or the SLATER "Chipper-Dale Guys". Both attractive calendars are in full color with that marvelous battleship gray background with a different "pose" for each month. And don't worry; everyone is more than fully clothed so they are entirely appropriate for your kitchen or family room. We wanted to do something special for Y2K and these calendars are certainly unique! If you can't decide, double your contribution and both versions can be yours ! If you would like to use this contribution to take out a new DEHF membership or extend your present one; WE CAN GLADLY ACCOMMODATE that too. . . just indicate on the enclosed envelope.

Which brings us to another benefit to contributing. You'll be putting your money in a project that is Y2K proof! Most of these guys wouldn't know a modem from a toaster. If you recall, they worked from November '97 to March '98 with no electricity and no heat at all. If the lights go out at midnight on December thirty-first, these guys will just crank up the generator and go back to work. . . after they recover from the festivities . . . If they run out of Diesel fuel, they'll just go back to using scrapers and hammers. Heck, we might even get the electricians to chip some paint. They won't have anything else to do. When they run out of paint, well, let's just hope the power is back on by then.

The crew has had a great year. We've accomplished all our intended goals with the exception of getting the sides painted. That will happen in the spring. The whole superstructure above the maindeck has been repainted, including the flying bridge. And, the flying bridge is a work of art, testimony to the efforts of a lot of dedicated people over a six-month period. With the planned work this winter and getting the sides painted in the spring, SLATER will turn the corner and become the first class Naval exhibit that will make all Destroyer Escort Sailors truly proud of her.

As I write, the crew is finishing up the outside work and buttoning up the ship for the winter. Tom Moore and Gene Cellini waited for one more good day to spray haze gray topcoat on the 01 level forward and the gun 1 ready service lockers. Then we'll get them bolted to the deck. New volunteers have reported aboard. Computer tech Erik Collin has signed on as a painter and has been doing the decks in the 20mm amidships tubs and the gun 3 tub. Welder Tim Benner, spent a couple very smoky days burning out modifications to the radiator room.

Raf and the "Oiler Sailors" Don Bulger and Jerry Jones continue to brave the cold, finishing up the detail work on the flying bridge. Another one who hasn't come inside yet is Andy Sandalakis who is finishing work on the midships 20mm gun tubs when he isn't translating Greek tags and publications for us! After October's issue, Andy reminded us that he had also sailed with the Greek Merchant Marine on former Liberty ships. No wonder he knows the ropes when it comes to ship maintenance.



Chippers; Dutch DE-530 (recently deceased), Dick DE-5, and Chris DD-711, taking a "Photographer's Break" in Radio Central.

The chippers have moved inside. With the outside scaling done, Dutch, Smitty, Bob, Raf, Chris, Richy, Earl, George and Gordon are turning their attention to the radio room, as the start of a short winter. The electricians have several projects going. Barry, Gary, Mike and Scott are working on installation of the 440 volt-shore power at the winter berth in Rensselaer, with electrician Don Newcomb. We are indebted to Hal (Go Army!) Hatfield for loaning us Don off a time critical job in Seneca, and for purchasing and donating the meter weather proof 480 volt disconnect and all the other electrical fittings associated with getting the power hooked up at the winter berth. They have also been doing the electrical on the heating system and working on the B-1 compressor. Not to mention the electrical work in Radio Central that's in the ripout phase.

The weekday part of the electrical gang, Larry, Don, Bob and Ken have been having great success with the sound powered phone circuits. They have identified and have several stations up on the 1JV, JX, X1J, JP and JU circuits. They are installing handsets and holders around the ship, and are now beginning the electrical work in officer's country in preparation for repainting there. Roy Gunther has started the restoration of the Captain's Cabin and this has involved scaling down the shower - it's tedious work with not much room to maneuver. Welders Russ, Clark and George have been finishing up outside work, welding up speakers and jackboxes, and fabricating the windscreen for the flying bridge.



Dick Walker finally said "Good-bye" to the green tile in the "nut & bolt" locker. After that he stenciled all the fittings around the main deck house. He is also writing an article for Fine Sale Modeling about converting a 20 mm magazine to a general storeroom.

The engineers are almost complete with the emergency Diesel reassembly. John Waechter has started work overhauling the anchor windlass. Cleaning out the sump was a real fun job. After cleaning up he then volunteers with Frank Lasch on his fund raising committee.

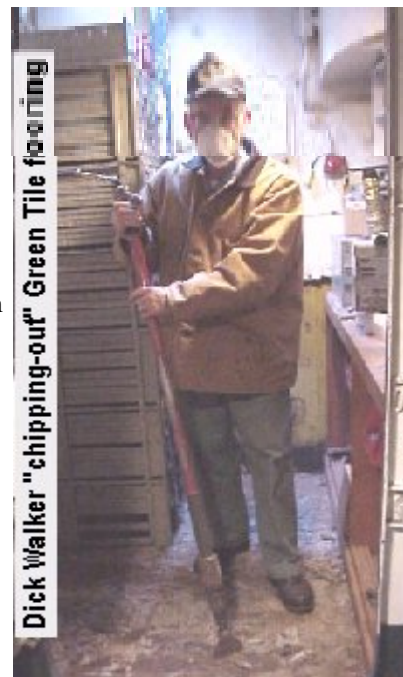
The Naval Reservists have been with us again. This month they welded down the safety gear locker, mounted speakers in the 3" gun tubs and helped with the ripout in radio central. Joanne McFadden wrote an excellent article documenting their efforts which appeared in the October issue of Mariner Magazine. It was also illustrated with Pat Perrella's photos. We were also honored to have a visit by RedCom 1 Commander Capt. Sherry R. Newton escorted by CDR Greg Krawczyk. Bosun Mike Muzio piped them aboard. I hate to date the Captain, but she remembered MASSEY and MOALE when they were reserve training cans at Ft. Schuyler. It's getting hard to find people on active duty who remember the FRAMS.

The Local 7 pipefitter apprentices are progressing with installation of the hot water heating system. They have been working every Monday and Tuesday from 1630 to 1930. The boiler is almost complete with the exhaust piping, and copper tubing is progressing up the passageway. We are indebted to Vince Donnelly of Maincare Heating for piping in the boiler to the tank. Soon you'll see smoke coming out of SLATER's stack.

We are very honored to have several past Destroyer Escort Commanders joining our Slater Signals mailing List. They answered our DECO fund raising call to arms with a resounding amount of contributions to the Endowment fund along with some very supportive letters! The Commanders include: William A. Burgett, USS SPANGLER DE-696, George W. Egan, USS ACREE DE-167, USS BARON DE-166 James V. Grealish, USS CRONIN DE-704, USS MELVIN R. NAWMAN DE-416, USS NAIFEH DE-352 Kenneth H. Hannan, USS SWEARER DE-186 Charles B Henriques, USS EVARTS DE-5, USS THOMASON DE-203 Jack W. Jordan, USS RUTHERFORD DE-347 Alden J. Laborde, USS BLAIR DE-147, Robinson Mc Ilvaine, USS BIRMINGHAM DE-530 Donald McKinlay Jr., USS PEARY DE-132, Leonard A. Myhre, USS VARIAN DE-798 Henry L. Plage, USS TABBERER DE-418, USS DONALDSON DE-44, USS LE HARDY DE-20 Harold V. Richard, USS STATFIELD DE-29, John A. Williamson, USS ENGLAND DE-635 A special SALUTE to all of you from 766. With the DECO Group helping with our mission how can we fail?

We would also like to express our congratulations to the reelected DESA Directors and especially to Tom Kidd, President, USS KEN M. WILLETT DE-354 who has walked SLATER'S decks many times and Bob Fowler, USS SILVERSTEIN DE-534. Bob spent a day working with us in September before Hurricane Floyd blew him out of town. As SLATER steams forward with her restoration we look forward to working with all of the DESA team to bring the ship closer to all DE sailors.

Notes from Joanne: Thanks to the expertise and generosity of producer/director Bob English and his cameraman Ed, USS SLATER was able to submit a "spirit spot" that could appear on this year's Army/Navy football game. At Kevin Lynch's suggestion, I contacted CBS Sports about submitting this 10-20 second segment during which a unit cheers for its respective service. After contacting the Navy Office of Information East, the commander in charge said he had never had a museum ship send in a spot, but that we could go ahead and try it! He then spewed off a list of technical requirements. Demonstrating SLATEResque ingenuity, I called WRGB, Bob English who greeted my request with great enthusiasm. On 12 November, a group of volunteers and Naval Reservists gathered on a 30-degree morning to cheer on the Navy Football team. I got to ride in the Channel 6 van with Bob and Ed over to Rensselaer where we had a striking view of the starboard side of the ship (even though Tim didn't get it painted before the shoot as I had requested). Our spokesperson Commander Greg Krawczyk said, "From Albany, New York, the World War II destroyer escort USS SLATER says, "Come on Navy! Let's make some more history . . .BEAT ARMY!" At Bob's cue, I waved my hands frantically, signaling those aboard to cheer. The finished result was a 15-second spot, complete with music. A big thank you to Bob and Ed of WRGB and to all those who braved the freezing temperatures to root for the Academy football team! You're awesome!



Newly elected DESA Director Bob Fowler DE-534 during September visit to ship

Notes from Nancy: Our second year as a tourist attraction is winding down. By all measures it was a smashing success. We saw 13,078 visitors this year, up 2,300 from last year! Our school group tours have doubled with positive feedback from all teachers. Here's the amazing part - I did not get a single complaint about tour guides or pier volunteers! All I ever heard was lavish praise. I'm really proud of the job you guys and gals did and I want to say a gigantic "THANK-YOU" to every one of you. Now that I've thanked everyone, I have another call to arms regarding the dogtag and ship's store operation at Crossgates Mall. Les & Annette have carried this for us for almost a year single-handedly and it's time to give them some help. Call me for the details and we can work you into any time slot conveniently, I'm sure!



The December to April schedule is simple. We will be working Monday through Saturday. Previously tour days Thursday and Friday will go to work days, so if you're available, come on over to Rensselaer. We'll have something for everybody. Sunday, we'll all take a day of rest. In case you have forgotten the directions, just follow the signs over the Dunn Memorial Bridge into Rensselaer. Take the first right turn at the light onto "Broadway" which goes directly into "Riverside Drive". We are just past the white BASF tower-tank. There is lots of room to park and a marvelous view of our home-port of Albany so come down and check it out (bring your work clothes, while you're at it!)

So you can see, there's a lot going on, but we still need your help. Notice that this year we've even included our special Winter Fund return envelope. Be sure to indicate on the return envelope your choice of calendar and your wishes as far as your DEHF membership. The SLATER "elves & angels" will handle your request with a twinkle in their eyes and some hearty "HO-HO-HO's" while turning it over to the professionals at the Post Office! So think about your shipmates aboard SLATER and help them along this winter. And you can trust that they'll be taking good care of your ship for you. As this is the last issue you will receive this year all of us at SLATER wish to thank everyone out there who has helped us during 1999 - you are too numerous to mention but your letters, checks, calls, visits and support in many ways keeps us going. We wish you the happiest of holidays and a wonderful new year 2000. SEE YOU NEXT YEAR!

Important Notice: Just as this issue was going to press, we have another change of address. With the consolidation of the DEHF affairs being moved to Albany, all mail for the DEHF and USS SLATER should now be sent to PO Box 1926, Albany, NY 12201-1926. **See you next month.**

