



## SLATER SIGNALS

The Newsletter of the USS SLATER's Volunteers  
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**Another March.** March Sixteenth, to be exact. Today it was sunny and forty-five degrees. It honestly felt like it was sixty. Albany gives us new standards for "nice" weather. Here in the port, the river is free of ice. However, north of the Troy Lock, the rivers are still frozen over. We hope for a slow melt and no flooding. Warm days and cool nights are what we want this time of the year. Time to get the ship cleaned up and move back to Albany. The winter yard period is about over.



Capt. S. Greg Krawczyk and his team of U.S. Navy volunteers stop for a photo in front of the gangway for the decommissioned ship.



In better days, the USS CAVALLARO APD128.

**Halfway around the world in Korea, Captain Greg Krawczyk led a team of eight volunteers back aboard the old APD Cavallaro/ex-ROKN Kyung Nam and hit paydirt.**

Greg's apartment in Seoul is now full of old, haze-gray, metal parts. Donating parts back to the country the ROK Navy purchased the ship from has never been done before and thus Greg has broken new ground in US-Korean relations. There's been a lot paper work to do and red tape to go through. The Republic of Korean government has been really generous to the SLATER by letting us have the parts. But, like any government process, it has taken time. Greg's skills as a liaison officer have paid off for the project. Not only has he had to interface with the Korean government, there are the daily meetings between him and the ROK Navy officers each time he travels to the ship to remove more parts. After the morning huddles, salutes and handshakes, it's been off to work, removing parts for transfer back to the U.S.

**Greg has managed to find volunteers willing to help him remove the parts from the ship, most looking for a change of pace.** He was assisted by NS Dan Kwaitkowski, HT2 David Neaves, HT3 Al Clausen, IT3 Edith Martinez, ISSN Laurice Hemming, ISSN Angela Ramos, ISSN Kelly Counts, and

JO2 **Michael Howlett**. Howlett also did a great job in writing up two stories about their adventure and getting a lot of publicity about the effort. They got more parts off the ship than he'd hoped for. The ROK Navy gave Greg a real boost when they pulled off a large number of the heaviest items prior to using the ship for an unscheduled target exercise on short notice.

**Greg has been removing the high priority items from the larger components, then taken pictures of each piece to email back to Albany.** His living room has been a disassembly and packaging center and so far six boxes have arrived safely in Albany. Meanwhile Greg is working on the cheapest way to ship approximately one ton of the heaviest items back to us. Two of Michael Howlett's articles along with a list of the material Greg has acquired have been posted to the SLATER website bulletin board.



Ens. Daniel Kwiatkowski hands a signal lamp yoke to HT3 Class AI Clausen. US Navy photo by JO2 Michael S. Howlett.



Senior Chief Kim, Petty Office 1c Ku, Capt Krawczyk, Ltjg Choi and Master Chief Park in front of the Cavallaro.



Intelligence Specialist Seamen Angela Ramos and Laurice Heming show off the day's work of parts collected.

**Aboard the ship we are in final count down for opening day. A great deal of work will be accomplished in the next two weeks.** The focus of the work has been the restoration of the mess deck and forward crew's berthing. These areas were originally scaled and repainted in the winter of 1998-'99, and rushed to completion in an effort to get the ship open for spring. This winter the thought was to go back and redo the spaces and do the detail work we couldn't get to the first time. The detail work includes scaling the overhead of forward crew's berthing down to bare metal, priming and repainting the whole space. This difficult and tedious process took two months, and was done by men whose average age is 76. The months of holding needle scalers overhead is finished as the chippers have finished scaling forward berthing and primer and topcoat are being sprayed on as I write. Special thanks to **Dick Smith, Chris**

**Fedden, Ed Whitbeck, Raf Suarez, Dave Floyd and Andy Desorbo** who spent their SLATER time holding needle scalers up against the overhead. Not an easy task for these youngsters.

**The shipfitters finished all the metal work in the compartment that included making eight new table stanchions, reconfiguring piping and lockers and getting the whole place back to original.** A major project has been the fabrication of the original wooden tables that the DE's carried in WWII. These have been handcrafted and set on the original stanchions. **Dennis Nagi** finished fabricating replica wooden folding tables that were in forward berthing and on the messdecks and stained them a rich dark oak. The shipfitters fabricated missing table stanchions. They also did great deal of grinding on the deck and bulkheads to remove Greek postwar modifications. Holes in the deck have been repaired. Bunk lockers that had been modified were restored to their original configuration and new locker tops fabricated. The electricians removed a lot of old cable, replaced a lot of wiring and really dressed up the cable runs. Extensive rewiring has been done; replacing commercial alarm cables with tradition shipboard armored cabling. Postwar plumbing was removed, the fire main returned to its original run, and missing pipe supports added. The plan is to have this area completed for opening day on 2 April. Restoration work aft is continuing in the officer's stateroom, passageway and the ship's laundry. These spaces should be completed by mid April.



Larry Lachance replacing bolts on a sea suction.

**There continues to be much activity in the machinery spaces.** In the aft engine room a gang of dedicated engineers have been working to bring the number two ship's service generator on line. They are using a fresh water tank and recirculated water for cooling. In the aft motor room a dedicated crew of volunteers have continued to work out problems with cooling the emergency diesel generator and have begun replacing the temporary PVC piping with permanent copper



Dirty work. Adam Van Horn repacking the starboard shaft in B-4.

piping to the radiator on the main deck. In the last test the problems appeared to be solved and the generator powered the entire ship for an hour under load. We hope to have it available for the April move back to Albany so we can perk a pot of coffee on the way across the River. The most important project of the winter occurred when **Russ Ferrer, Larry LaChance** and **Adam Van Horn** finished packing the stuffing boxes between the aft motor room and the shaft alleys. We have continuing problems with seasonal flooding in the shaft alleys as freezing annually distorts the stern tube packing. The alleys then flood with the spring thaw. With the motor room packing now intact, at least the river will be contained in the shaft alleys until the packing can be retightened in April.

**As for the rest of the ship, we are now in a two-week period of intensive cleaning and touch up painting.** It's time to titivate the ship. **Gordon Lattey** purchased a whole pile of cleaning supplies and two new small shop vacs for us. He paid to have all the bedspreads and linen in officers country dry-cleaned. Rumor even has it that he got his wife to iron the sheets for us. **Chris and Trudy Fedden** are doing their annual laundering of the two hundred fart sacks on all the bunks. I had **Frank Beeler** and **Bob Lawrence** pitch a whole pile of accumulated steel outside the machine shop on to the pier as trash. However, every volunteer that walks past the pile of scrap brings another valuable piece back aboard, so I doubt I'll end up getting rid of any of it.



Happy people doing happy things. Claire Oesterreich and Nancy Buxton clean the messdecks benches.

Across the river, it has finally gotten warm enough that **Tommy Moore** is getting the camels ready to go back into the water.

Again, **Bob Cross** sent the Water Department crane to shift the camels around to Tommy could put foam in the four sinkers.

**Doug Tanner** is doing a couple of days repair work on the steel gangway.

**Larry LaChance**

is back working and the deck is finished. He is building

the handicapped ramp that will be the entrance to the trailer. While I can't really predict the future, it may be early April before we can put the camels in. We have to wait until the ice up north beaks up and floats by. Once the camels are in, we'll move the ship as soon as possible after that. It may be a couple of months before we can start operating out of the trailer. We still have to make the permanent power connection, replace two windows, get the flooring finished and take delivery of the new aluminum gangway. Then Beth and Nancy can set up shop in their new facility.

**Nancy Buxton** and **Beth Spain** held their first tour guide meeting of the season and 30 tour guides came. After everyone caught up with the latest news, the meeting got underway. Nancy reported that the guide crew is going to spiff up this year, with everyone required to wear denim or khaki. All guides will attend a new training session and will give a tour to a designated supervisor to make sure that their tours are accurate, professional, interesting and entertaining-and you maintenance guys thought the guides had it so easy! **Paul Csezek** educated the group about the Slater insurance situation, including vital safety information that all guides need to know. The meeting came to an end with **Paul Czesak** springing for pizza, not a bad way to end a meeting. The down side was Nancy made them watch a video of the Ship's Superintendent giving a tour. I hear there was a rush for the exits at that point.



Stan Murowski cleaning the aft passage-way as part of the big cleanup.



Doug took a Saturday off so Joe Beyer's wife provided lasangia. This is the real reason we have 27,000 annual volunteer hours.

There was a special treat in the Chiefs' Mess at lunchtime on

**Monday the 10<sup>th</sup>.** Mr. **Robert Reiter**, Director of the Rennselaer County Veterans Service Agency gave a very informative



Al Vanderzee, Walt Stotte, Paul Czesak and Joe Breyer stow dummy three inch ammo obtained during the Portsmouth trip.

presentation on Veterans' benefits. During his presentation he provided us with a fresh insight on the benefits available, and he offered his assistance in obtaining them. Before he left most of the men present took immediate advantage of his offer by completing the forms, which he took with him. He promised to personally pin on any medals that may be awarded, in a ceremony to be held aboard the SLATER

**Greg Krawczyk isn't the only one scrounging for the SLATER.** Once again **Chris Nardi**, curator at the Battleship Massachusetts invited us to accompany them on a scrounging trip to the James River Reserve Fleet. Chris has been helping us for years, and was the individual most responsible for getting our 1MC system operational back in 1998. His crew on this trip included **Rich Angelini**, Rich's dad, a former CT on DD 850, and **Brown Beezer**, who has helped us acquire some of our radio gear. I had been wanting to get back there for two years, ever since I left that Insigner dish washing machine in the wardroom galley of the USS VULCAN. Larry LaChance agreed to drive his pick up down, and we left Albany on Sunday the eighth. We met Chris and the gang from the battleship the following morning and headed down to the Reserve Fleet Landing. By 0720 we were on a Maritime Commission M-Boat headed out to the fleet. We had permission to remove parts from the old repair ship VULCAN and the LSD USS DONNER. VULCAN was the fourth ship in the row, DONNER the sixth. They were separated by the most torn up ship in the fleet, the old APA LAUDERDALE.

**Larry and I spent most of Monday morning removing the dish machine.** We had to practically disassemble the whole thing to get it out. Years of experience have taught us when climbing around large ships, up and down ladders, and jumping from boats to accommodation ladders, you want to bring only the necessary tools and travel light. **Chris Nardi**, on the other hand has a different philosophy. He brings everything but the kitchen sink, and he takes a lot of grief about it. He brings a two-wheel hand truck and a four-wheel dolly. He brings big pipe wrenches. He brings power chords and droplights in case there is power. He brings an electric sawzall.



DAS Loran off USS NEMASKET restored by Rich Pekelney

**He brings a battery-powered sawzall as a back up in case there is no power.** He brings chain falls and come-a-longs. He even brings folded cardboard boxes, strapping tape and laundry markers to he can pack and label everything. It takes him ten trips up the accommodation ladder to get all his gear aboard and make camp. But most of all he brings more strength and determination than any individual I've ever met. While we measure success in how many individual items we take, I think Chris measures success in tonnage. We had everything we needed to do the job, but Chris had a lot of gear that made it easier and faster. When we needed big pipe wrenches, Chris loaned them to us. Surprisingly, there was power on the ship, and Chris loaned us an extension chord and a droplight. Getting bolts apart with wrenches was a slow process, so Chris loaned us sockets. Chris's electric sawzall made cutting the countertops a lot easier than our hacksaw. And when we were finished, he gave us a big cardboard box to put all the little parts in. **After the dishwasher, we got a lot of brass hardware for the interior joiner doors, some radio transmitter parts, sound powered phone barrel selector switches, the windshield wiper motors for**

**the pilothouse, and a couple battle lanterns.** And **Tom Lowney**, old buddy from my days on the **KENNEDY** got us sixty-four dummy three-inch training rounds. We hope to plan another run this year that will target some of the old diesel tugs and ASR's in the hope they may have some of the engine room parts we need.



Ammo Passers.



Radioman Joe Breyer working on an antenna junction box.



Gus Negus getting his generator ready for the trip back to Albany.

**The move is pending, but like most military operations, we can't say when.** In our case it is waiting for the spring thaw and the snow melt up north. When the high water is behind us, we'll get the camels back in and return to Albany as soon as the tugs can get us there. Hopefully the next issue will be written from the Albany side.



The Monday gang waiting for Spring.

**The USS SLATER's administrative crew Nancy Buxton, Beth Spain, Al Vanderzee, Dick and Maralyn Walker, Jeremy Hoyt, Gordon and Claire Oesterreich** devoted their winter month to writing grants, direct-mail fund raising, working to expand the Museum's membership base and organizing files. Thanks to the successful winter fund drive and a benefit raffle held by the Los Angeles Chapter of the Destroyer Escort Sailors Assn., for the first time we should come out of the winter with a little more money in our bank account than when we started. Most years the winter is a terrible drain on our resources. **Winter fund contributions continue to trickle in.** At last tally the total was \$35,761. The big boost was the Los Angeles Chapter Raffle, which after expenses and giving out the prizes netted \$40,386. The SLATER benefit was increased by \$500. When **Earl Johnson** got the following note from first place winner Jim Doran.

"Dear XO Johnson,

This is the first time I got awakened to be told that I had a nice bundle of cash coming. I didn't do anything to help work on the Slater and I only sold the winning ticket to myself so I think I should share it with the guys who work, especially if he is working up where it is cold. If you agree would you send a share up there. I spent two years on the Ulvert M. Moore, DE 442 during the Korean War as an Electrician. It was cold up there too. That was a great thing for your LA Chapter to do to keep the Slater fund working. Fraternally, Jim Doran

PS: We took the money out of "mothballs" as you can see. I am a 85 year old geezer."

**Finally, Marlayn Walker tallied up the total number of man and woman hours in the logbook that we keep in the CPO mess, and we had an astounding 27,000 hours logged.** That includes the time that Les and Annette spent at the Mall selling dogtags, but not a lot of the other off ship work that people do at their homes. This includes the work the board does, Sam's thank you letters and membership cards, trips to the James River Fleet, and all you good folks who don't bother to sign in. That's a lot of dedication.

**See you next month.**