



# SLATER SIGNALS

The Newsletter of the USS SLATER's Volunteers  
By Timothy C. Rizzuto, Executive Director

Destroyer Escort Historical Museum

USS Slater DE-766

PO Box 1926

Albany, NY 12201-1926

Phone (518) 431-1943

Vol. 24 No. 1, January 2021

After recovering from our first subdued Covid-19 New Years' experience (I was in bed before the ball dropped) we had to wait until January second for the real party; Doug Tanner's 78<sup>th</sup> birthday. Even that was a subdued celebration, with Doug having to serve himself **Thomas Scian's** macaroni and cheese. It wasn't until the following Monday that Thomas brought in a cake for Doug. It seemed a small reward for all that Doug has done for us over the years.



*Doug helps himself to Thomas' mac & cheese.*



*Bill Scharoun and his son stopped by to make their Winter Fund Donation.*

This month, Shanna created a new design for our magazine ads. We are so excited for it to hit the stands. It will feature the great photo of SLATER, taken by **Marc Glucksman**, of River Rail Photo, on our return from drydocking. It is the January cover of our 2021 SLATER Calendar. Speaking of the calendar, they are available in the Ship's Store, if you still need your copy.

**On that same marketing vein, Shanna is working on a new brochure to produce, featuring new photos of SLATER and a full cutaway image of the ship's compartments.** These will be available inside the Ship's Store to visitors and available in rest areas next season, after we exhaust the supply of the previous design.

**She is negotiating with the distributors of the brochure holders from last year, to see if they can cut us a deal.** As you can guess, very few travelers picked up brochures in 2020. Fingers crossed that 2021 will see an uptick in people visiting SLATER, and other attractions across the country.



***Dick Walker is always ready to help out with stuffing envelopes.***

**We are also offering a discount for those libraries that supported us in 2020.** Since their patrons didn't get to check out the family pass they purchased from us, we are replacing last year's pass for a discounted rate. Letters to all libraries in our area went out this month. Thankfully, Shanna had **Dick Walker's** help in getting those envelopes sealed and dropped off to the post office.



***Shanna and Jo Ann have stepped up to make lunch for the crew on Mondays.***

**We are taking care of the layout of Trim But Deadly in house these days.** Shanna has gotten the hang of it now, and can get it set pretty quickly. Then, we send it off to our favorite sticklers, **Alan Fox, Dick Walker, and Nancy Crom** to proofread. As soon as it's ready to go, it flies off to the printers; **Andrew Dieckman** at Executive Printing has been doing an amazing job





***Cassidy is down in the magazine where we store artifacts, completing inventory.***

with it! After it's printed, Andrew sends it off to the Post Office, and soon you'll find it in your mailbox. If you aren't getting the Quarterly Newsletter, and want to reach out to us, you can sign up for it on our website, [www.ussslater.org/publications](http://www.ussslater.org/publications).

**Jo Ann** has been hard at work processing donations, keeping the books current, and preparing for the 2020 audit, that is only three weeks away. In addition, she has been serving, along with **Thomas** and **Shanna**, as one of our relief cooks on Saturdays and Mondays. She always seems to make enough that there are leftovers for the new Tuesday crew. We've got to keep the volunteers fed.

**We have a nice new maintenance aspect, the fact that Tuesday is turning into a real workday.** Several volunteers have decided to make this their regular workday, including **Gary Sheedy, Dick Walker, Danny Statile, Bill Wetterau, Cathy Wheat, Jimmy Gelston,** and Tuesday regular, **Ron Prest.** It's nice to see the crew spread out and put a normally quiet day to good use.

**Interns, John and Cassidy, continue to take inventory of all the artifacts, and set up displays in the Special Collection space.** They are also researching and writing descriptions to accompany each display. **Shanna** is adding descriptions into the booklet that will serve as a guidebook to the space when it opens, hopefully this spring. She has also been



***Shanna has been doing some filming for a collaboration with the ships at the Buffalo Naval Park.***

updating Past Perfect, our artifact database, with the list and locations of artifacts. These artifacts have been packed and unpacked, moved, and moved again over the last 7 years. It's safe to say no artifact is in the same place that it was 7 years ago, when the database was last updated.

**The most exciting task Shanna is undertaking right now is researching new merchandise to carry in the ship's store.** Our ship ornament sold very well over the holidays, and she even had 4 other museum ships ask about where they could get them. So be on the lookout, you may be able to have a tree decorated with all the museum ships next year.



***The crew made repairs to the commode in the shore head.***

**All day on the 27<sup>th</sup>, in the snow, Shanna was starring in a self made video.** She braved the cold in the Pilot House, and on the Flying Bridge, to make a collaboration video with the Buffalo Naval Park. That video should be posted to YouTube and on our Facebook page in mid-February, so watch for that.



***Danny is working on a new ramp for the aft gangway.***

**Doug, Dave Mardon, Chuck Teal, Warren Brozio, and Earl Herchenroder spent the month continuing the renovation of the shore head.** The weather has been moderate enough to allow them to jack the shed up, so they could replace the rotted flooring on the river side of the shed. All of the gutters have been replaced, as well as the trim on the east side. They even pulled the commode out, to inspect the sewer drain and repair a leak under the commode. They did the work on a Saturday, and had the commode back in service the following Monday,



having minimal impact on Shanna and Jo Ann.

**Investigation of the sewer piping under the trailer showed that the insulation had fallen off and needs replacing.** The area is very difficult to access, so Doug is planning to install a trap door in the floor of the head, so they can get to the pipe, to wrap it with heat tracing and insulation. Doug laid out the project in an email to his crew, and **Dave Mardon** responded with, “It never ends.” Doug also arranged for contractors to come down and give us an estimate on replacing the roof on the trailer. We’re awaiting that number, and plan to replace the roof when the weather gets warmer.



***Ron, Tommy and Bill scaling in the Bosun's Storeroom.***

**Dan Statile completed fabrication of the hose guards, that protect the MK14 gunsight air hoses on the 20mm gun mounts.** His next project was fabricating a new access ramp for the ship end of the aft gangway. The diamond plate ramp that has served us for 22 years was prone

to being very dangerous when the ice and snow arrived. To that end, Danny fabricated a new ramp of steel grating that should give us much better traction.



***Gary and Thomas stowed the wire rope in the restored Bosun's Storeroom.***

**Gary Sheedy and Thomas Scian have been making great progress with the Bosun's storeroom forward.** After getting the twenty years of accumulated crap out of there, they began preparations for painting. **Bill Wetterau, Tommy Moore, Ron Prest, Earl Herchenroder, and Ken Powers** all lent a hand in there. They

then painted it out with two coats of bright white paint. The place looked beautiful. Gary and Thomas are now in the process of restowing the wire, rope, and canvas down in the compartment, so the place will look like a showroom.

**They next moved aft to Compartment A-304-AE.** The blueprints call this the “Manifold and Portable Pump Station and Electronic Parts Stowage.” At a later date, the motor generator set for the power drives on gun 31 was installed there. We moved the motor generator and mounting frame out of the way, to make room for the stainless-steel septic tank and hot water heater that we installed there several years ago. Gary Sheedy determined that this area needed to be repainted.



***The first move of the motor generator set.***

**The 400 pound motor generator set generated a lot of controversy.** Apparently, the space had been flooding at least one time, because the motor generators were a mass of rust. Gary

determined that they were unnecessary to our needs and should be disposed of, and over several days, chain hoisted them to the main deck and hauled them aft to the gangway, for eventual disposal. Upon seeing the motor generator parts at the gangway, **Barry Witte** disagreed with this assessment, and determined that as original equipment, the motor generator set should be retained, and spirited the components and frame to the sanctuary of the lower level of B-2, the forward motor room. There, it will rest for eternity, or until a future volunteer feels compelled to restore the power drive system on gun 31. Or



***Cathy Wheat is back every Tuesday, cleaning.***



until Gary decides it's time to clean out B-2.

**While the movement of the motor generator was in progress, the chippers began their work in what we will not call the Forward CHT (Contaminated holding tank) Compartment.** They are scaling the compartment in preparation for painting. Meantime, **Bill Holt, Boats Haggart, and Paul Guarnieri** sorted through the mass of canvas, shackles, cable clams, thimbles, turn buckles, pullies, blocks, waterlights, snaphooks, flagbag fingers, sister hooks, and a couple miles of manila line. Bins were purchased, so we can finally get the deck gear organized.



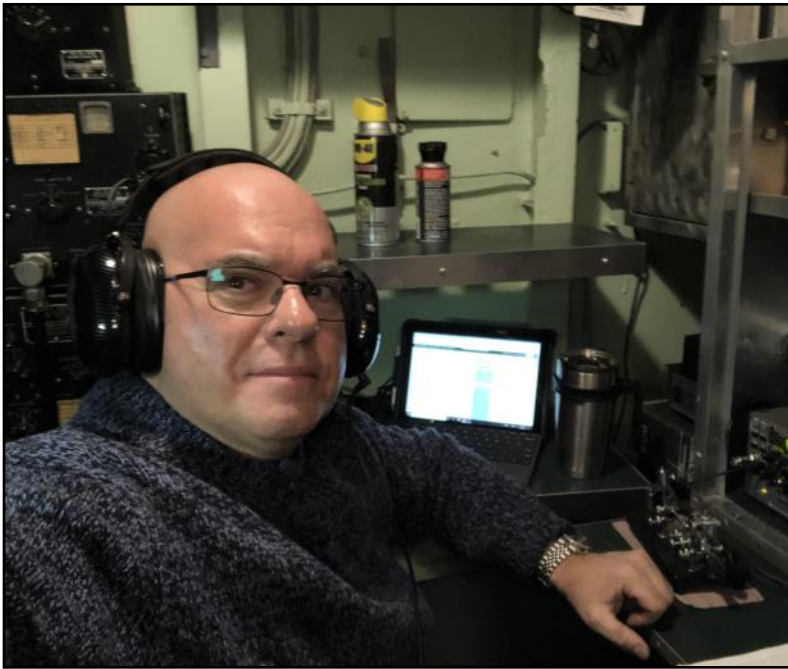
*Steve sorting trash and treasure.*

**Barry Witte has been coming in on Sundays, and has built a team around Grant Eastman, Alex Titcomb, Jack Carbone, Brendan Lutz, Jake Weidman, and Henry and Richard Bourgeois.** They were the crew that worked together to relocate Mount 31's train, and elevate the motor-generator set to B-2. Alex worked on the quick acting watertight door between the CPO passageway and the anchor windlass room. That door is now much easier to open and shut. It was binding, prior to Alex's adjustment of the hinges.



*You can never have enough manila.*

**Grant and Barry worked on label research in the pilot house, and painted a few fire main valve handwheels red.** They ran the power line to the new electric water heater. **Richard and Henry** continued to work on replacing missing pipes in B4. **Jack, Jake, and Brendan** are still working on the whistle pull cables. Barry also did an infrared survey, to determine how cold the areas were getting in



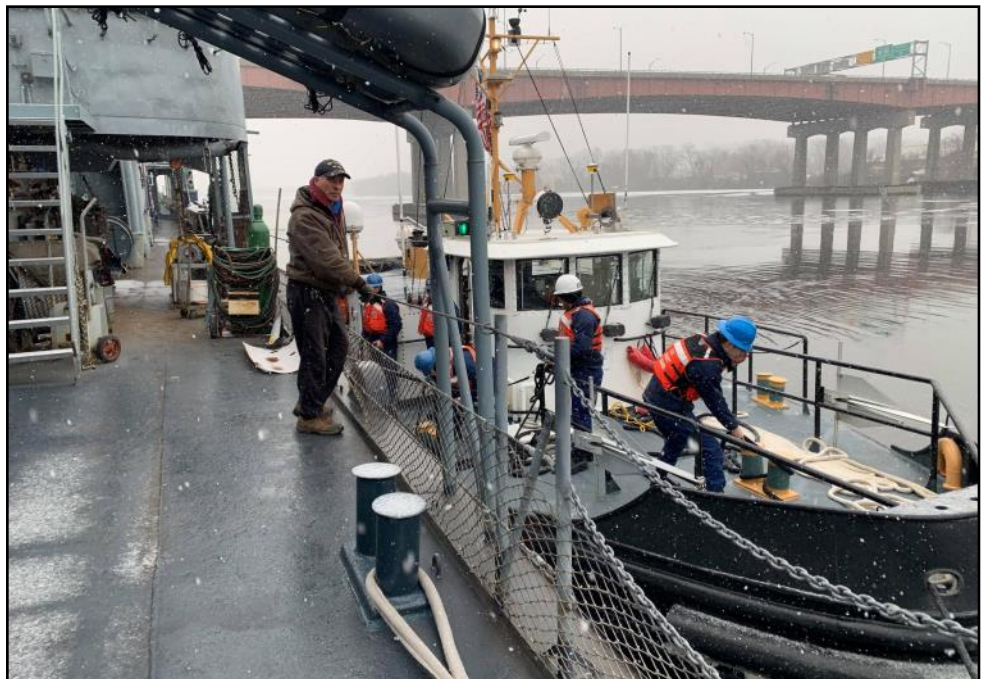
***Chuck Chandler has been making HAM contacts all over the country.***

the four machinery spaces. Then, he made recommendations on precautions to avoid freeze damage, and also on how to keep the spaces warmer.

**Up in the radio shack, Steve Syrotynski has been joined by new volunteer, Chuck Chandler.** Steve has spent most of the month deep below the messdecks, sorting through all the donated radio tubes. He also spent a good bit of time sorting through the other gear found there, making the "Trash or Treasure" decisions. He got all the power supplies working for the RBM receivers and fixed a bad connection inside the

Antenna Connection Panel in Radio Central. Chuck also cleaned out the ham radio station and redid the Elecraft K2/100 cabling. USS SLATER was on the air for a while, making Morse code contacts in Florida and Pennsylvania. Old logbooks were collected, as were instruction manuals for the ham radio equipment. Chuck donated a 2-meter FM radio, and mounted it, along with a VHF Marine radio that will soon share the new commercial VHF antenna on the mast.

**Steve got the TCS-13 in Radio Central on the air, operating on the 75 Meter band in AM mode.** He and Chuck plan to try it on Morse Code soon. That would let them demonstrate all-vintage equipment, using the ship's original antennas and a WWII-vintage US Navy J-36 Speed Key. After that, Chuck put the port vertical antenna on line, and did some tuning



***The Coast Guard Cutter LINE made a visit.***



comparisons with the fore and aft long wires. Chuck has worked several stations around the country, and is now using our HAM presence to try and build our donor base and recruit new members.

**Finally, we can't thank you enough for your continued support through our Winter Fund Drive.** Though mailed in November, the solicitation, in a beautiful envelope that Shanna designed, has been very slow in getting to people. However, this has been a blessing in disguise, spreading the receipt of your donations out over several months, and making them a lot easier to process, as opposed to having them all come in in a three-week period. We are indebted to SK1 **Richard Walker**, USCG, for his assistance in stuffing envelopes, sticking stamps, and making Post Office runs, in addition to his regular gofer duties. But most of all, we are indebted to all of you, our supporters, members, donors, and friends.

See you next month,

*Tim*



*Winter on the Hudson*