

SLATER SIGNALS

The Newsletter of the USS SLATER's Volunteers
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Ever since "My Friend" Ed Zajkowski accused me of writing a boring repetitious newsletter, the task of putting this out every month has become much more difficult. This is particularly true in February; we've beaten the subject of the weather to death, and it isn't getting any better. Half of the crew are sunning themselves in Florida. Saturdays and Mondays remain our biggest volunteer days, and hardly a week has gone by that we haven't had some significant weather event on those days that causes anyone with common sense to stay off the road. Between that and the weather, all the projects are progressing at a snail's pace. And since it's March 1st, winter is officially 75% over and we only have thirty days to get this ship ready to open. But I've said all that before, too.





While "Super Dave" was sunning himself on the beach with about half the crew...



...the ones that stayed behind are carrying the load. Here Gene Jackey crams himself into a fan to weld the repair steel plate.

Those hardy souls who have stuck it out in Albany deserve a lot of credit. The work continues out on the main deck where we are replacing twenty feet of wasted bulkhead that rotted out at the bottom. The section they are cutting out is actually about 14 inches high. Of course all the supporting frames are rotted out and several holes have turned up in the decks of the adjacent fan rooms. Most of the wasted metal has now been cut out and about half the replacement metal has been fitted. There are several groups tackling the project, most notably **Doug Tanner, Gene Jackey, Tim Benner, Bill Siebert, Chuck Teal, Clark Farnsworth,** and when he isn't sunning himself on the beach, Dave Mardon. Special kudos to Don Miller and Bill Wetreau who have been doing the thankless job of fire watching down in the engineroom while hot work is going on overhead. As any of you who have had to fire watch for welders remembers, there is nothing so boring as fire watch in a stone cold engineroom. And that bucket of water for use in emergencies doesn't do much good if it's in its solid form.



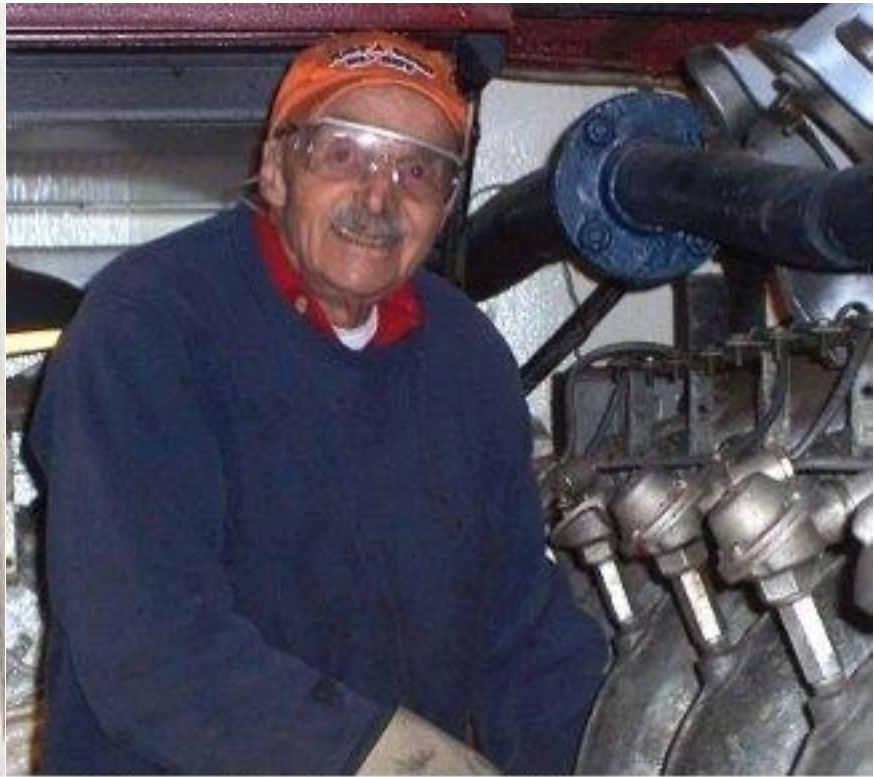
Jerry Jones explains the TBL wiring to Bob Kibbey.

Electronically, there are three significant projects going on. The first, of course, is the TBL installation in radio central. **Jerry Jones** has doggedly been putting in three days a week to try to get the installation somewhat complete by opening day. Working with **Joe Breyer, Bob Kibby, Barry Witte**, and from afar, Californian **Tom Horsfall**, they have completed the motor controller for the MG set and tested its 1943 contactor (with a 450 VAC coil). They've got it set up with a low-voltage starter so it can be started from the operator's position at the desk. Most of the cable-run hardware has been fabricated on the bulkheads and the overhead. They have started the next phase, which is pulling the armored cables between the various controllers, MG set, filter box and the transmitter itself. They didn't know where they were going to find the Receiver Attenuator that was needed for use with the TBL Speech Input Equipment, a piece required so that so you can hear your own transmitter without overloading the receiver. In a bit of serendipity, and out of the blue, **Will Donzelli** emailed us and said that his friend Nick England had the model CQE-29017 Attenuator and was willing to donate it. Problem solved. Thanks guys.

Another project receiving an assist from a Californian is a Huff/Duff simulator. Former electronic technician **Frank McClatchie** ransmitting U-Boat. Jerry Jones has tested the card with an oscilloscope and it works beautifully. He is working to create a simulated Huff/Duff training device so that we can show groups of students how this component, which was so critical to winning the Battle of the Atlantic, operated. has created an electronic card that simulates the presentation of the Huff/Duff scope that the operators would have seen when tracking a



Paul Guarnieri refurbishes the paint job on a switch box on the upper level of B3...



...while on the lower level "Rocky" Rockwood works on cleaning up the mains.

Despite the cold, down in the machinery spaces, the work continues unabated. In B-4 **Rocky Rockwood** has continued cleaning the outboard main propulsion diesel in preparation for eventual painting. **Bill Wettreau** and **Ron Mazure** have completed scaling the main propulsion generators and they are ready for painting. They are now in the process of scaling the pumps, controllers and piping on the starboard side of the lower level. Over on the port side **Gus Negus, Gary Lubrano,** and **Mike Dingmon** have just about completed work on the ships service generator. **Gary Sheedy** and **Barry Witte** have been down in the space assisting with the installation of the original working battle lanterns for emergency lighting and the call buzzers for the sound powered phones.



Mike FitzGibbon fabricating the wheels for Ken Kaskoun and Bob Callender install the a depth charge dolly at Colonie High School. new screw in fluorescent bulbs.

The energy incentive program sponsored by National Grid has come to fruition. Don Shattuck, Bob Callender, Ken Kaskoun, and new volunteer Jim DeCota have been working their way through the ship, replacing the old light bulbs with the new energy efficient fluorescents, which look like incandescent lights and give off the same yellow glow. Since historic authenticity is paramount, the extreme high efficiency bulbs fit into existing ship's sockets, so no one should notice the difference. Again, this should enable us to spend less on electricity and more of our hard-earned dollars on restoration and programs. **Boat's Haggart** has been checking fenders, checking mooring lines and helping **Nelson Potter** on his latest fender project, as well as repair work to the Jacob's ladder. **Jim Gelston** faithfully keeps the clocks wound and **Frank Peter** has nearly completed organizing the minute books. While the weather has slowed things down on the ship, Colonie High School's Technology Department continues to fabricate replicas we need. **Mike FitzGibbon** is machining yet another wheel for the newest Depth Charge Side Projector. The projector's stowage rack was installed on the port side last fall.



Lunch is still the best part of the day as Rocky, Chris Fedden and Gene Jackey enjoy lunch with Linda Wruck

Of course, the reward for all the work on a cold day is a hot meal and even there we have had problems. Chief Smith has kept the Monday crew well fed. Even when he can't stay, we can always count on him for a "meals on wheels" delivery. However, Saturday is a different story. With no regular cook, things have been dicey. Tanner has been in Kansas more often than not. Benner is busy fixing snow blowers. That has left me scrambling for volunteers, and, of late, it is **Barry Witte** who has come through for us with his infamous microwave chicken and rice. That indicates the level of desperation we've reached. When he's not available **Katie Kuhl** has stepped into the breach with her famous Louisiana jambalaya actually made on the premises. The only problem is that this is a whole lot of rice, and it seems our number one connoisseur of food, **Jerry Jones**, is hypoglycemic, but has yet to turn down a meal. His response seems to be "I like this rice, so I'll just shoot an extra dose of insulin."

When Katie Kuhl isn't cooking for us she has been keeping herself busy with the museum inventory. To date over 3900 objects, photographs and archival documents have been catalogued, photographed and made accessible via the search engine on the new USS SLATER website. The exhibits in the museum space are slowly being reorganized to give different artifacts the chance to be seen and to give long-exhibited artifacts a chance to be preserved in special acid-free, archival boxes and folders. Katie is also finishing up various odds and end projects, such as the Restoration Exhibit Panels, which will be mounted on the observation deck in the spring. With the graphic design expertise of a long-time SLATER volunteer, **Dave Meyersburg**, these panels were created to highlight the restoration process involved in the ship while giving the visitors a true idea of the amount of work it has taken to restore SLATER to its present condition. Keep an eye out for them when the season opens and if anyone would like to volunteer to make wood or metal mounts, please give Katie a call!

By the way, Dave Meyersburg recently retired from his position with the State as a graphics artist with the Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation. He has been with us since the SLATER first came to Albany, providing technical support and graphics services. He is preparing to move to Florida permanently where he intends to pursue sailing. We wish Dave well and thank him for all his past support.

The most important project Katie has undertaken in the last month involves the training of her replacement, Heather

Maron. Many of you may know Heather from her role as a guide here at the ship for the last two years. She recently completed her Master's degree in Public History at SUNY and has agreed to take on the role of Collections Manager/Ship's Store Manager when Katie leaves at the end of March. Heather is learning all about artifact cataloging, store supply ordering, research requests and the numerous other tasks involved in her new role, including how to stand her ground with the boss. Katie made sure to teach her that last one. Heather will be a valued addition to the SLATER staff and Katie would prefer if you all call her Heather, and not '**The New Katie.**' This coming from the girl who was introduced as "The new **Pat Perrella**" for two years.

Another project which is getting some help from an old volunteer involves the numerous ship reference files the museum has amassed over the years. Recently, the large collection of research binders, put together by **Victor Buck** during his years writing for the *Trim But Deadly* newsletter, returned from their time at **Bob Cross's** office. The Commissioner was using the binders as part of his research for his latest book, *Shepherds of the Sea*. These binders are now located aft of the museum space and are being supplemented by the reference files which were being kept here on the ship. Mrs. **Kelly Salisbury**, formerly **Kelly Lassonde**, has been assisting Katie in her efforts to consolidate these files into binders for easier access by researchers, DE veterans and anyone interested in learning a little more about particular ships.



New tour guide in training Patrick Whitford studies the tour guide manual in the ward room.

In the world of Education, we interviewed and hired college interns who will be working as tour guides for the 2011 tour season. This year, we have eight new tour guides, three of which come to us through the college-level **Community and Public Service Program** in which students complete volunteer coursework in exchange for college credit. Joining our experienced guides **Rob Nielsen, Julianne Madsen, Mike Paulmeno,** and **Penny Hutton** are **Orin Harcourt, Patrick Whitford, Natalia Briggs, Vincent Knuth, Max Dumicich, Matt Tolman, and Gary Coyle.** Some of you may recognize the Coyle name, because Gary is **Bill Coyle's** grandson. In addition, we have our very own Hollywood star **Max Dumicich,** who had a speaking role in the August 2008 Japanese film production, *Last Operations Under the Orion*. As for our beloved Penny, she and her family are leaving us in mid-May, as they relocate to Oregon. The new guides will begin training onboard the SLATER, so, if you see someone who seems lost, and probably is, please help them out with your usual warm welcome.

Wettereau thought he was sitting down to a warm cup of coffee, minding his own business. On a quiet Monday in the Chief's Mess, **Linda Wruck** was there. Abra Cadabra! Bill is now the newest volunteer restoration worker who will help us provide tours, in between welding and cutting jobs. Bill, you are in good company with the others who walk the line.

Planning for an expanded Scouting program onboard the SLATER is underway, full tilt. Jim Kuba and Linda are preparing to attend the annual POW WOW next month. More on that later. But, if anyone is interested in becoming a Merit Badge Counselor, please contact either Linda or Jim.

Herb Marlow, Mark Gardiner, and Linda met to begin talking about the **STEM** program that will be available on the SLATER in 2012. STEM stands for Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math and, as a program, focuses on the core curriculum for each area, in addition to appealing to girls in the sciences. An example of using the ship to teach math is found in the bearings and range of the guns or the concept of parallax in the gun sights, as compared to the definition of what makes two lines parallel. We'll keep you informed as it develops. If you know of teachers who are interested in being one of several test groups, please have them contact Linda.

The culmination of all our many years of education effort came this month, when our museum was given our Absolute Charter by the New York State Department of Education. It has been a full year since the time when **Eric Rivet** drafted the final application to the State Board of Regents and when they voted to make our provisional charter absolute. This is just one more step to becoming a legitimate museum in the eyes of the public, media, and, most importantly, funders. The vote was adopted February 8, 2011. We'll let you know when we receive the super-duper formal charter certificate, "suitable for framing."

Again, we can't thank all you winter fund donors enough who have kept us going through the winter. Your generosity continues to astound us. We continue to seek new ways to supplement our income. Here's another way to give to the SLATER. You may have noticed a small ad on your Verizon phone bill about Verizon Velocity. This new program generates donations from Verizon to your chosen non-profit when you order new services. The program is available to customers in New York, Connecticut, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island. When you order new services with Verizon, such as high speed Internet, TV, or switch your long distance provider to Verizon, a donation will be made to DEHM. To qualify, the services must be new, not renewals, and you must call one of the dedicated phone numbers to order. The phone numbers are 1-888-692-5385 for New York and Connecticut, and 1-888-896-8873 for Massachusetts and Rhode Island. When asked if you are responding to a Verizon advertisement, answer "yes" then provide our code 30332 to the Verizon representative. For more information about this program, visit www.verizon.com/velocity.

The other way to help out is to come on down and volunteer. I know spring has to be just around the corner and that means it's time to start thinking about the work weeks. The Michigan crew will be aboard May 1 to May 6. The contact for this event is **Ron Zarem** and his phone number is 989-345-0237. The USS HUSE crew will be aboard May 15 to May 20 and the contact for this event is **George Amandola**. Anyone interested in helping to restore the SLATER is welcome. Kids and grand kids over the age of 12 are encouraged because it's a unique family bonding experience. We have something for everyone to do and we don't work anyone harder than they want to be worked.

Finally, our best wishes to two of our shipmates who were on the binnacle list this month. Gus Negus has been in Ellis Hospital with a blood clot in his leg, and Dick Walker had a scheduled knee replacement. We wish them both a speedy recovery so we can get them back aboard. **See you next month.**