



SLATER SIGNALS

The Newsletter of the USS SLATER's Volunteers
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I went back and reread the SLATER SIGNALS from November a year ago. Seems that last year about this time I was writing the sad story of Captain **Greg Krawczyk** in Korea. Having nothing to do in his spare time, he spent all his idle hours stripping parts off an old Korean APD, the USS CAVALLARO, hauling them back to his apartment, and preparing to ship them to us.



Lynn and Greg.

Well, a year has come and gone for Greg. Quite happily, I might add, Greg has since gotten married to a fine girl named **Lynn**. **Barry Witte, Joanne and Scott McFadden** and I attended their wedding party in the Officer's Club at Newport, Rhode Island. A beautiful affair. Greg, true to form, left the wedding receipt on to hand deliver us a bag of fragile vacuum tubes that he had carried all the way from Korea, for fear of them getting damaged in shipment. We, in turn, gave Greg what every sailor wants most; a set of four navy officer's plates and soup bowls. About the only thing he didn't find on the CAVALLARO. A fair exchange for two tons of DE electrical parts. We're sure Lynn was thrilled with the pattern. The only downside for Greg and Lynn is that Greg still has five months of duty to do in Korea. The time he picked to be there has not been the most relaxed billet of his career. He and Lynn are returning to Korea to his apartment that has been cleaned out of all the ship parts, just in the nick of time I might add.

As for the parts, we found that the Government will forward the shipment from Ft. Belvoir Virginia to Albany for \$430.00.

The cheapest rental truck we could find was a minimum of \$500.00 not including gas and road expenses. And the best quote we got to

motor freight the items up here was \$1,500.00. This time somebody negotiated a good government contract. When I told Greg the shipping story at his wedding, his response was, "So, I suppose you want me to pay the \$430.00 too?" I had an amazingly uncharacteristic response and said, "Don't worry Greg, we can handle that part." We still have another ton or so of parts in Chin Hae that were flooded out in a typhoon including lighting transformers, a "K" gun roller loader and the whole L.P. air compressor. He's still working on getting this stuff military airlifted from Korea. As for the CAVALLARO, the story isn't so happy for her. After serving the US and Korean Navies for over sixty years, and several years of target service, she was finally put under this fall for good. She will live on in the spirit of the SLATER.

The last reunions of the season were the USS MCNULTY and the USS INCH.

We were especially honored at the USS MCNULTY reunion when one of her shipmates, **Bud Lovett**, presented us with a beautiful builders-quality model of the ship. Everyone was surprised when our area Congressman, whose name just



Presentation of the McNulty Model at their reunion. L-R Adm. Paul Caszak (CVT184), Bud Lovett, John McNulty, Doris McNulty, Congressman Michael McNulty, and Jim McNulty. Doris and Jim the children of the John McNulty DE581's namesake.

happens to be **Mike McNulty**, showed up at the reunion with his father and spoke at their memorial service. While the Congressman wasn't directly related to the ship's namesake, in talking with members of the McNulty family who were present, they all found out that they were from the same county in Ireland There must be a connection there somewhere. It was suggested that we loan the MCNULTY model to the Congressman to display in his office, and he seemed very excited about the prospect. Our thanks go to **Tessa Gillespie** and her dad who worked so hard to organize the event. Later that same day **USS INCH DE146** crew joined us. On 11 June, the ship, along with sister ships, made a contact and proceeded to attack and destroy U-490. The entire crew of 60 German sailors was rescued by the escorts. **Fiete Barhahn**, a survivor of U-490, joined INCH's reunion and participated in their Memorial Service. The USS INCH crew happened to get interviewed by a reporter from the **Albany Business Review** on the economic impact the SLATER is having on our town, so they too played an important role in getting us more recognition. Also thanks to **Gina Mintzer** from the Convention Bureau for all the kind things she said about us. All in all, it was a good Saturday for the SLATER.

We had an emissary from the Naval Historical Center in Washington D.C. visit. Karen French, a uniform curator, was in town for a conference on textile preservation. She spent an afternoon with **Pat Perrella** sharing advice and was quite impressed with Pat's sense of organization and how well she has set up the museum exhibits. The museum exhibit in C-203L continues to receive more and more artifacts from your destroyer escorts and has become the national center for the preservation of our artifacts and documents.

The whaleboat is back aboard for the season. The crew came down on Saturday November 1st to hoist it aboard. The weather was unusually warm and sunny. Not like the cold and rain we usually experience on such evolutions. Rocky, Roy and Dennis tried a new trick. They hoisted the boat up backwards, so that the starboard side is now facing inboard and will be easier to paint and caulk next spring. This led to a lot of jokes about who doesn't know forward from aft, or, "The whaleboat is okay, the SLATER is backwards!" And then the inevitable confusion on the windlass crew when they said "Hold the stern and raise the bow!"





Chocking her up.



Hoisting aboard.



Stan and Roy hauling her inboard.



Sheedy, McGarrigle, Jones and Beeler on the capstan hoisting the boat.



Alan Fox and telephone talker Erik Collin standing by.



"You mean the whaleboat bow that's facing aft or the stern that is now facing forward?" Anyway, we learn a little every year and this year she came up with a minimum of kibitzing and without any trouble. The cover is on and the engine has been winterized for the season. We pulled the water from the ship, drained the heads and disconnected the shoreline. It's back to bottled water that we haul from home for the coffee and the good old Port-a-Johns for everything else. I guess winter must be just around the corner.

The crew continues their familiar cycle of maintenance, repair and hosting visitors. The deck force, **Smitty, Chris, Ed, Peter, Erik, Stan and Earl**, are finishing up their outside work. They've been chipping, priming and painting under the gun tubs and director tubs to get that last bit of outside work done before it gets too cold to spread paint. **Rafael Suarez** is back with us and has begun restoration of the bosun's locker with a vengeance. We got all the gear stowed below so he has room to work, and the paint chips have been flying ever since. Shipfitters **Doug, Tim, Clark, Gene and Chuck** continue work on the chocks and the never ending odd welding jobs that come up for their shipmates. Gunners **Dave and Andy** are back to chipping in the ordnance shack. **Rich Pavlovick** has pulled in all the MK14 and three inch gunsights for the winter. **Erik Collin** has developed an obsession with the depth charge projectors, and is disassembling all the breech mechanisms; getting them in working order and putting them back together so they are "factory new." Electricians **Barry, Gary, Mike, Bob, Ken, Don Shattuck and Larry** have been working on sound powered phone circuits, fire alarms and the cease fire alarms to the 40mm gun mounts. **Larry and Don Bulger** have the engine order annunciators working throughout the ship.



Tanner repairing another chock.



Erik Collin working on a K gun breech.

The Radio guys, Jerry, Don, Stan, Walt, Joe, and Dick are aboard every Monday and Saturday, tweaking their equipment, connecting more antennas, making more contacts and sending out QSL cards. It's very satisfying to work in my office right around the corner from them and hear the chirp of Morse code and the sounds of big band music. Down below the engineers plug along, **Larry Lachance** and his apprentices getting the fire and bilge pump back together, and **Gus Negus** maintaining the emergency diesel. And a big thank to all the guides, without whom we couldn't function.

We have several new faces aboard who have joined the crew since September. Our intern from last year, **David McGarrigle**, is back with us for another semester. His expertise is diesel engines, but since none of the other engineers are aboard when he's here, he's become a mainstay on the boat crew, and is getting tired of me saying, "Hey

David, why don't you clean out the shop today." **MacDonald Smith** is retired from AMTRAK, and has joined us as a welder taking his place on the infamous "Chock project." Maybe it will move a little faster now. Mac served out his Navy days as a seaman aboard the EDSON DD946. Texan **Les Yarborough** started his Navy career as a corpsman. When he got out, he went to veterinary school and then to the Army where he retired as a major. Not having much need for veterinary services aboard, he joined **Rafael** chipping paint in the bosun's locker. And we have two new interns aboard, **Seth Siegel** and **Guillermo Trujillo**. They are aboard Wednesdays and Fridays and have both learned the ropes of being tour guides and have done a great job helping keep the ship clean.



Out of Coffee.



The crew discusses the gravity of the coffee crisis.

The Great Coffee Crisis of 2003

We were approaching a coffee crisis. For the last four years donations of coffee have been so plentiful that we have never had to make a purchase. **Dave Floyd and Earl Gillette**, in particular, have been most generous with their donations of the fuel that keeps the crew running. Now, this may make a lot of people who have been contributing to the coffee fund suspicious, about just where that money has been going. Well, the coffee fund continues to serve as a back up change fund for the gift shop, has paid for the cream, sugar (these guys use a hell of a lot of sugar), the annual volunteer breakfast, and a bunch of small maintenance purchases by the volunteers over the years. We have a bag of receipts to show for it if you ever want to do an audit. But this month we got down to our last five pounds of coffee, and it looked like we were going to finally have to use the coffee fund for it's intended purpose. Just as things were looking desperate, in came Earl Gillette from Connecticut with enough to last us for another month. We'll keep you posted if the crisis develops further.

We accomplished a lot this past year. We completely restored forward berthing space A-205L, the upper sonar shack, the sickbay and after officer's stateroom. We repainted the entire superstructure port and starboard, the entire starboard side main deckhouse, and got deck blue nonskid on the whole main deck. We repainted all the three-inch mounts and all three 40mm mounts. The gunners also completely disassembled and restored 20mm mounts 23 and 26. The ship fitters completed installation of the new gangway amidships, the fabrication and installation of the rangefinder platform and rangefinder, and rebuilt three more chocks and the wasted decking underneath them. The engineers replaced the plastic cooling piping on the emergency diesel generator with copper and successfully ran the engine on a six-hour test run. The radio gang restored all the insulators on the superstructure deckhouse and participated in the national emergency response drills. We took delivery of 3,000 pounds of scarce destroyer escort electrical parts salvaged from CAVALLARO in Korea before she was sunk as a target.





The completed visitor's center.



Nancy Buxton expresses her appreciation to Dennis and Gordon for the working bathroom.

Shore side, we put the new visitor center into operation for the first year.

We completely furnished and equipped it with gift shop shelving and library shelving, installed gutters, put down carpeting, and scrounged furniture. The electricians ran 220 volt power to the trailer, got the heating system restored, wired in the lights, PA system, speakers telephones and two computer work stations, and networked all these systems to the ship. We installed a high-speed Internet hookup to free up our second phone line, stocked the gift shop, and installed the furniture. We built benches, developed a presentation for the classroom and stained the deck. We lifted the old ticket booth onto the deck, and completely rebuilt it as a restroom facility and completed the fresh water and sewerage hookups. And finally we moved our tent to the deck so visitors have a place to wait out of the rain, and the crew has a place to relax out of the sun.

This winter we plan to refurbish the mess deck, chipping out the wire ways and lockers that we never got to when we did the initial restoration in 1999.

We plan to replace the wasted deck on the reefer decks and

continue restoration of that area. We will restore the anchor windlass room and the passageway leading up to it. We also hope to restore the laundry and the chemical warfare locker aft. Other projects include the installation of a grinder pump in the sewerage tank, and continuing to rebuild the wasted chocks on the portside, while we are tied starboard side to the pier in Rensselaer.



Paul Czesak hoisting the call colors.

What this, of course, is leading up to is my "Winter Fund Appeal." This keeps us from eating up our precious savings during that time of the year when we have no ticket income, but are still working hard to keep the restoration going. **I went back and read over my previous appeals looking for inspiration. Alas, I found none. What's worse is that I found that every catchy tear-jerking line I had planned to use this year, I had already used in years past. I even bored myself. One might ask how I can keep up this incessant begging year after year? The answer is that I possess those**

two characteristics that are vital to the director of any not-for-profit--a total sense of commitment to the ship, and a total lack of personal dignity. So please give again!



Rigging the washdown hose.

This past year we made a total of \$270,190 in operating income, grants and contributions. During that same period we spent a total of \$274,444. However, during the time we put an additional \$89,882 into the endowment fund, making the total endowment donations \$476,826. as of October first. I just paid a quarterly insurance bill that was \$6,000. Our electric bills average \$1,200 and heating oil runs \$500 a month, when I let them turn on the heat. So, on behalf of all the volunteers who will be working through the winter, and sitting on that cold Port-a-John seat, if you are in a position to help us out, please send in an extra hundred bucks to the winter fund. If you can afford to send more we certainly appreciate it. If you can only afford to send less, or can't afford to give at all, we appreciate that, too. We are equally devoted to saving the SLATER for all of you, regardless of your ability to contribute. Once again, I missed the mark on being the first contributor, but my hundred bucks has gone to the fund, and we hope yours will, too. Enclosed you'll find a little envelope with a freezing cold sailor on it to help inspire you.

Also, if you're not getting this monthly newsletter, SLATER SIGNALS, in the mail, it's available on line at our website at www.ussslater.org Email me at tim@ussslater.org to get on our notification list. If you're not a computer geek, and you want to be on our monthly mailing list, drop me a note with your contribution and

we'll be glad to put you on the snail mail list.

The last big event of the year will be the Pearl Harbor memorial service scheduled for Sunday December 7th, to begin at 12:45 p.m. so the service will coincide with the time of the actual attack in Hawaii. You are all invited. The following Monday we will pull the gangways and make preparations for getting underway. We hope to move that second week in December depending on the availability of the tugs. Then we'll button up the trailer and pull the camels soon thereafter. We hope the weather is kinder to us this year. It's always kind of a shame. Right now, at the end of the season, the ship looks better than she ever has. The result of a lot of hard work. You can all be proud, because you're a part of it. See you next month.



Rocky Rockwood and Roy Gunther made the restored whaleboat possible.