

# TRIM BUT DEADLY

The Quarterly Newsletter of  
The Destroyer Escort Historical Museum



Volume 26 Number 3  
Third Quarter 2020

## Chairman's Report

By Bartley J. Costello, III



Slater returned from Caddell's shipyard, arriving with great fanfare. She was accompanied by fire boats providing huge sprays and tremendous media coverage, including a local television

reporter, Jacquie Slater, who provided regular updates as she rode the ship from Staten Island. Our guides are once again providing tours to crowds of visitors. It is time to take a deep breath and give thanks for all we have achieved, despite the many external challenges presented in 2020.

Our shipyard experience was enhanced by the presence of a large number of our experienced volunteers, led by Tim Rizzuto, and our shipyard coordinator, Ed Zajkowski. They accomplished much work that complemented the work done by the shipyard. We are grateful for their efforts, working in extremely steamy conditions. We were very fortunate to be joined for the entire shipyard period by two very talented RPI midshipmen, Jack Carbone and Brendan Lutz, who had worked for over a year prior to departure, assisting with planning and technical details. While in the shipyard for six

weeks, they became our management team's eyes and ears, communicating daily with yard workers, and skillfully answering technical questions. Simply, they are inspiring as examples of America's best going forward! They will be honored in the fall as Volunteers of the Year by the Capital Area Chief Petty Officers Association.

There are two issues, important to our future, that are underway. First, after five years, we are in

*Continued on page 9.*



**SLATER back home in Albany.**

# A View From the Bridge

By Tony Esposito, President DEHM



We are excited to have long time USS SLATER supporter, Geoffrey Bullard, donate a Hamilton Model 22 Chronometer for our chartroom. The ship presently has three large

model 24 chronometers that are on loan from the Maritime Commission. In doing historical research, we determined that destroyer escorts carried two of the smaller model 22 type. Geoffrey is on track to help keep us more historically correct. A former Naval Officer himself, Geoffrey served as gunnery officer in the old repair ship, USS TUTILIA (ARG-4), a converted Liberty ship. Clocks have always been a hobby of Geoffrey's, and he has donated many clocks to our SLATER over the years.

One of the most satisfying aspects of being involved with USS SLATER, for all of us, is the contact with our Destroyer Escort Veterans. Our Program Manager, Shanna Schuster, talked to WWII vet, Emory Miller, on the telephone, on Wednesday 9 September 2020. Emory was a torpedoman aboard USS WHITEHURST DE-634. Emory explained to Shanna that he will be 95 the day after Christmas 2020, and has his sights set on triple digits. To Emory's knowledge, there are only 4 plank owners (the first crew of the ship after its commissioning) from WHITEHURST still with us. He and his Chief are half of them.

Emory calls his Chief Torpedoman J. L. Wilson every week, and they chat about old times. The Chief turned 101 on 11 September 2020. Wilson is a Pearl Harbor survivor, serving aboard the destroyer USS DALE DD-353. Their ship, USS WHITEHURST, has quite the history. She earned six battle stars during WWII, and another 3 battle stars in the Korean War, as well as starring in a major motion picture.

WHITEHURST was commissioned on 19 November 1943. Less than a year later, on 29



## ***The beautiful chronometer donated by Geoffrey Bullard.***

October 1944, she sunk Japanese sub I-45, after the sub had sunk a fellow Destroyer Escort, USS EVERSOLE DE-404, the previous day. In November 1944, WHITEHURST was attacked by Japanese "Lilly" bombers, and she shot down one of the planes. When the landings in Okinawa started, she was there, protecting transports and cargo vessels.

In April 1945, the ship was once again attacked by Japanese "Val" dive-bombers. WHITEHURST's 20-millimeter gun crews shot down two planes, but one plane continued attacking, despite the hits that tore at the plane. This bomber crashed into the ship's superstructure, on the port side of the pilot house. It went through bulkheads and engulfed the entire bridge. The plane's bombs continued through the ship, and exploded 50 feet off her starboard bow.

She was reactivated for the Korean War, and received 3 battle stars for her actions. For six weeks in June and July 1957, the ship starred in 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox's "The Enemy Below," where she lives forever on our televisions. The ship was sunk as a target on 28 April 1971.

I also have the sad news to report that on Saturday 19 September, another USS SLATER World War II crewmember crossed the bar. We lost Ship's Cook First Class, Floyd Eugene Martin. His ship's flag flew at half mast, in his honor. Rest in Peace Floyd. So few of you remain. We have the watch.

# The Bassett Mystery

By Tim Rizzuto

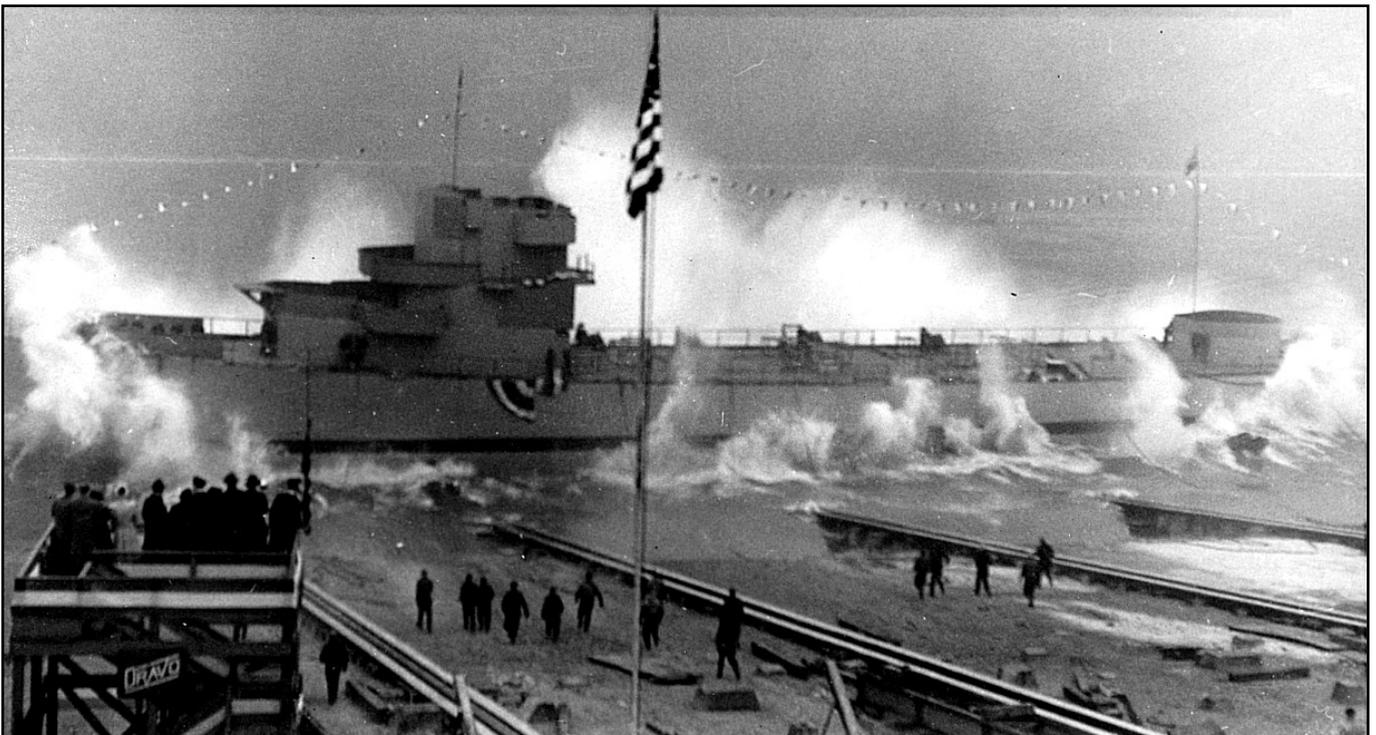
When I recently read Lynn Vincent and Sara Vladic's book, *INDIANAPOLIS*, they alluded to what amounted to a near mutiny on the destroyer transport, USS *BASSETT* (APD-73), regarding the rescue of *INDIANAPOLIS* survivors. I'd never heard of the incident, and made a mental note that this was worth exploring further, from the standpoint of preserving destroyer escort history.

USS *BASSETT* was laid down as Buckley class DE-672, on 28 November 1943, at Orange, Texas. She was completed as a high speed transport, and commissioned on 23 February 1945, with Lcdr. Harold J. Theriault in command. Theriault was born in Gloucester, Massachusetts, on 14 February, 1914. As a graduate of Massachusetts Maritime Academy, Theriault had seen extensive service in the Atlantic. He placed the destroyer escort, USS *HAYTER* (DE-212), in commission in 1943. He commanded her from 16 March 1944 until 30 Nov. 1944, when he was detached to commission *BASSETT*. Theriault's second command, *BASSETT*, had a routine career, reporting to the Pacific Fleet for duty on 1 May 1945.

Following training, she reported for duty with the Commander, Philippine Sea Frontier, in Leyte. She delivered mail and passengers to various ports in the Philippine archipelago, and to Brunei Bay, Borneo, prior to taking up antisubmarine station east of Leyte.

I asked our National Archives researcher and Warship International Editor, Chris Wright, to check the Archives. The first step was to get the official records, deck logs, and war diary from the time period of the rescue from the National Archives. What he found was that all the pertinent documents for *BASSETT*'s participation in the rescue were missing. Even the pages from the pertinent pages from Transport Division 107's War Diary were missing. Interpret that any way you want.

What we did have was an excellent account of *BASSETT*'s participation in the rescue by one of her boat officers, Ensign Peter Wren. Peter only made one brief reference to the "Mutiny," obviously wishing that the ship be remembered for her heroic contribution, rather than any controversy involved. We also have Tom Balunis' account of Bill Van



***Launch of USS *BASSETT* at *DRAVO*. Photo from *DEHM* Special Collection.***

Wilpe's participation in the rescue, one of the true heroes of the night. Balunis was successful in his effort to get Bill's heroism recognized. A USS BASSETT webblog contains several photos and accounts of the events on the ship that night. Richard Hulver's book, "A Grave Misfortune: The USS Indianapolis Tragedy" details the findings of the BASSETT inquiry. The Muster Rolls of BASSETT are available, and a look at the officer transfers on and off of the ship provides some insight. And finally, the deck logs and action reports of the other ship's that participated in the rescue give some insight into BASSETT's participation.

BASSETT's timeline for the night of the rescue began on 2 August 1945, at 1430, when she received orders to proceed to 11 degrees 54' N 133 degrees 47' E, to search for survivors from an unknown ship. At 2230, she went to General Quarters. At 2242, the first rescue ship on the scene, Graham Claytor's USS CECIL J. DOYLE, illuminated the sky with her searchlights as encouragement to the men in the water. In contrast, the mood aboard BASSETT was apparently one of suspicion, as the possibility that the men in the water were Japanese being used to lure the Americans into a trap was considered. DOYLE would use her searchlights intermittently after midnight, but strangely there are no reports of BASSETT seeing DOYLE's searchlights. Aboard BASSETT, at 0052, the first life raft was sighted.



*Survivors aboard USS BASSETT.  
Photo by Steve Butler.*



**L. Peter Wren, ENS USNR. USS BASSETT.  
Photo by Films by Serendipity.**

Right here, it should be noted that as an APD, BASSETT was much better suited to a rescue mission than a standard DE. An APD had four boats available, as well as expanded berthing and medical facilities, including a doctor aboard, Lt. (jg) Royce Pruett, MC. By 0056, she had launched three of her LCVP's. Boat 1 was commanded by Ensign Jack Broser, Boat 2 by Ensign Peter Wren, and Boat 3 by Ensign Ken Hager. There is no mention of her having her full complement of four LCVP's, and if so, why the fourth boat was not launched.

At 0110, CECIL J. DOYLE's log noted BASSETT's searchlight to the north, and they exchanged visual signals. Claytor asked BASSETT to assist DOYLE, but BASSETT was already engaged in rescue operations of her own. Radio communications were not established. At 0121, BASSETT brought her first survivors aboard. By 0450, with 150 survivors aboard, BASSETT requested medical assistance from OTC, in USS MADISON (DD-425). At 0515, LTjg. H.A. Stiles (MC) was transferred to BASSETT via LCVP, and remained aboard for the trip to Samar. At 0548, with several other rescue ships on the scene, BASSETT reported that she was heading to Leyte.

Commanding Boat 2 was Ensign Peter Wren. Wren enlisted in the Navy on 28 December 1941, and completed "boot camp" in Norfolk, Virginia, in January 1942. The highest rate he earned as an enlisted man was Storekeeper first class. He was commissioned as a line officer from Columbia University in April 1944, and was assigned to the

USS COATES (DE-685) in the Atlantic fleet. He was transferred to BASSETT in April 1945.

Wren's account of his boat's first return trip to BASSETT probably sheds considerable light on the "Mutiny." Directed by Lt. Ralph Horowitz, the CIC officer, Wren's boat located a group of 75-100 survivors. In trying to identify if the men in the water were American, Wren called out "Who are you and what ship are you from." According to Wren, the response was, "Just like a dumb officer, always asking dumb-ass questions."

Realizing that there were more men in the water than he could handle, Wren used the FCR radio to have Jack Broser's Boat 1 assist. Communications were a problem, in that radio communication was lost when the boats were in the trough. Six to ten-foot swells were running that night, and the men in the water were covered with oil. The only light available was provided by hand held battle lanterns. In addition, the LCVP's had high freeboard, making pulling the survivors aboard very difficult. Initially, the rescue craft had only four men aboard, the coxswain, engineer, bow hook, and the officer in

charge. More were needed to effect rescue.

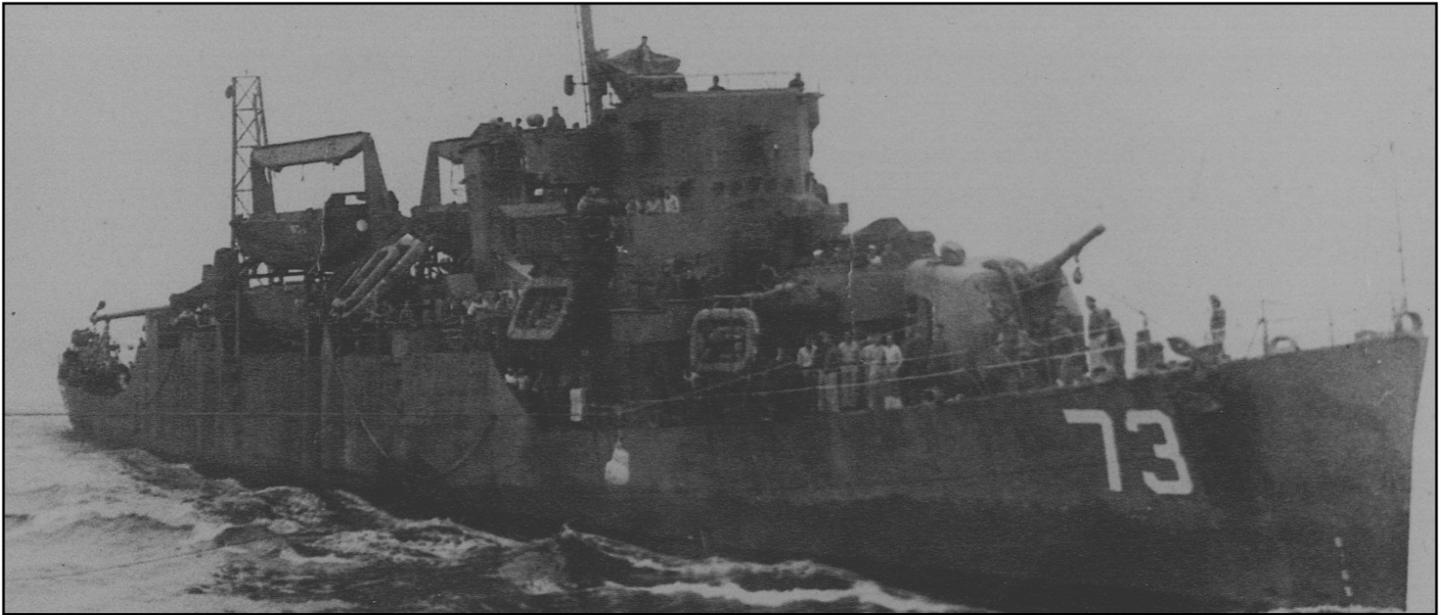
Wren described the night as the blackest overcast night he'd ever encountered. As he prepared to return to the BASSETT with his first load of survivors, the ship was showing no lights, and Wren radioed CIC requesting that they turn on lights to guide him back.

This was apparently the critical moment on the bridge of the BASSETT. It would appear that Theriault was reluctant to turn on lights for fear of being torpedoed. According to sonar man Gunnar Gunheim, who was in the sound hut just forward and below the bridge, a seaman yelled out, "Look at that fish," in reference to a large shark in the water. The Captain mistook the exclamation to be a reference to a torpedo, and gave the order "All head full!" and yelled "Get the LCVP's aboard and let's get the hell out of here." A throttle man, Gene Bell, told Wren that he did receive the full ahead order in the engine room, immediately followed by an "All stop" order. The Chief Engineer Lt. William Anderson made his way to the bridge to find out what was going on.

Topside, we can only speculate, but it would appear that the Exec Lt. James W. Henderson, and



***Survivors on deck of the USS BASSETT. Photo courtesy of Steve Butler.***



**Wartime view of BASSETT APD-73. Photo by DEHM Special Collection.**

two other officers, calmly countermanded the Captain's order, and said, "No way. We are going to stay here until we get every survivor aboard." It would appear that events on the bridge, coupled with Peter Wren's plea for illumination, forced the officer's to take action and According to Peter Wren, he was confined to his quarters for the duration of the rescue. The lights were turned on to guide the LCVP's back to the ship, and the rescue effort continue throughout the night. The first INDIANAPOLIS officer rescued was Ens. Don Blum, in Wren's second trip. He was ushered to the bridge after pickup, and was told he could sit in the Captain's chair because "He would not need it." In the end, BASSETT saved 151 men, more than any other ship.

There were incredible feats of heroism by the BASSETT. The officer in charge of Boat 1, Ens. Jack Broser, went into the water twice to rescue survivors. The real hero of the night was a brawny 19 year-old gunner's mate from New Jersey, Bill Van Wilpe. Initially, Van Wilpe helped bring survivors aboard on the fantail. An expert swimmer of incredible strength, he realized the greater need was to help out in the boats. He volunteered to go aboard Jack Broser's boat, to assist in pulling men out of the water. When they arrived on the scene, without orders, Van Wilpe dove into the water to boost survivors aboard. Broser ordered him back aboard, but Van Wilpe challenged

him to assist him in the water, which Browser did, As the boat prepared to depart, Van Wilpe insisted on remaining in the water to keep the spirits up of those yet to be rescued. On their last trip, three survivors were washed overboard while attempting to board BASSETT. It was documented by several witnesses that Van Wilpe dove in and brought all three back to the surface.

The small boats had to struggle through ten-foot swells and a thick layer of surface bunker oil. The survivors were surrounded by schools of sharks. Wilpe was not the sole hero among the Bassett rescuers, but certainly the most notable. The care that the INDIANAPOLIS survivors received from the BASSETT crew could only be described as outstanding. Faced with the horrific wounds and sounds of men in agony, the survivors described their treatment aboard as most compassionate. Because of the fresh white paint in the troop quarters, and the care they received, many of the survivors thought they were on a hospital ship.

The total number of survivors rescued varies with different sources. But as Wren described it, "You should realize that the crew of the USS Bassett recovered 158 survivors, two of which died on board. With a crew of 206 men and officers, subtract those who had to stay on watch, maintaining the ship's

operations. Wherever a crewman on watch could be spared to help along those who were off watch, all were helping [the survivors]. Bringing them from the sea and getting aboard was difficult, but the job of caring for them became one on one. They had to be washed free from the bunker oil (think, especially hair, eyes, ears, and nostrils), and washed with diesel oil tenderly around the chafed arms, neck, and chin areas, from the life jackets' canvas. Then came the fresh water, soap, followed by clothing, bedding down, and feeding. The onboard procedures continued from just after midnight on August 2nd until we put them ashore in Samar after 0830 hours on August 4th. That's about 32 hours of constant care."

Following their delivery of the survivors to Samar, accusations of cowardice, incompetence, and malingering during the rescue of the survivors were brought against the skipper of BASSETT, by his executive officer. The CNO ordered a special investigation by the Navy Inspector General and it was determined that there were no serious faults of which Theriault was guilty, and that the accusations primarily stemmed from personal differences between the two officers.

Richard Hulver's book, "A Grave Misfortune," includes some of the minutes of the inquiry. Unfortunately, Hulver omits large portions, including the findings of the investigation, general chronology of BASSETT's service, biographies of officers, and specifications 1-9. The specifications presented mostly related to an improper performance of duty and poor judgment, relating to seamanship during the rescue. At no time is there any indication that Theriault was not in command of the vessel during the rescue. A reading of the transcript does emphasize the difficulties the crew encountered in making the rescue under adverse conditions.

The questions investigated included whether "Inexperienced boat crews were used although more experienced personnel were available," and that "The third boat was lowered away improperly and dangerously."

That "Rescue work was carried on without advance instructions or orders from the Commanding Officer," that "There was no coordination between ship and boats through CIC and boat radios."

"No vectors to and from survivors and other boats were furnished, even when specifically requested."

"No answer was received to a specific request for instructions as to whether the first officer rescued should be immediately returned to the Bassett, to the end that higher authority might be more promptly advised as to details of the casualty, or whether further rescue work should precede return to the ship."

"Upon return to the ship, Ensign Wren was ordered to make the windward side, but finally came along quarter to leeward on his own initiative, after perceiving the extreme difficulty and danger involved in attempting to unload survivors on the windward side."

When difficulty was experienced in taking survivors aboard at the fantail, from Ensign Wren's LCVP, the Commanding Officer ordered the boat,



*Bill Van Wilpe on the cover of Balunis' book "60 Years Later: A Small Town Discovers a Hero in their Midst."*

containing about 25 survivors, to be hoisted to the rail. Lcdr. Reginald R. Axtell, (D), USNR, First Lieutenant, advised against this procedure, and, after the boat very nearly capsized while an attempt was being made to secure the falls, informed the Commanding Officer that he would continue only upon orders issued upon Commander Theriault's own responsibility. The boat was then ordered to resume unloading at the fantail. And it also mentioned how long Thierault and Axtell argued about whether or not to bring bodies aboard. Even Wren's boat handling decisions came under scrutiny.

Following the inquiry, while the rest of the rescue ships were back at sea performing the onerous and sickening task of body identification and burial, the Navy decided to send the USS BASSETT crew to Hollandia, New Guinea. They left Samar on August 6, and learned about the atomic bomb being dropped on Hiroshima while they were at sea. The crew was given a week on shore, staying at what Van Wilpe referred to as an "Officers' Rest Camp." They remained there for 1 week of rest, relaxation, and good food usually reserved for officers. The crew had the sense that the Navy wanted to get the crew out of the picture for a while. They didn't want any more

controversy over the rescue, and this was a way of saying, "Let's forget about the whole rescue incident and go and take a little vacation. You guys did a good job rescuing those 152 men, and now it's time to relax and forget about everything for a while." Bill said it was a reward for the crew, and to help quiet things down. They were being rewarded for their silence, while the Navy swept the controversy under the rug. Time at a rest camp was a good way to get the crew's mind off of what had taken place.

The muster roles tell the final chapter. On 30 August 1945, Theriault was transferred to Navy Base Hospital 114 for hospitalization. That same day, Lcdr. Wallis C. Wetlaufer arrived on board from USS DIACHENKO APD-123, as temporary CO. On 26 September 1945, Theriault returned on board from Fleet Hospital 114. On 1 October, Wetlaufer was transferred back to USS WASATCH (AGC-9) to await further orders. The quarterly muster roll dated 1 October is signed by Theriault and Henderson. On 14 October 1945, Theriault was transferred to the Bureau of Personnel for reassignment. That same day, Lcdr. Wallace C. Wetlaufer was transferred back from USS WASATCH, to take command.



***Postwar view of USS BASSETT, moored at Genoa, Italy.  
Photo by NAVSOURCE, Carlo Martinelli***

## Chairman's Report continued...

Henderson was released from the ship on 1 November 1945, to return to the states. Wetlaufer was relieved on 13 December 1945, for separation. On 1 January 1946, the muster roll was signed by CO Lt. C. L. Nagle, and the Exec was now Ralph Horowitz. By April 1946, Nagle was still the CO, but the Exec was now Lt (jg). J. R. Jackson.

The ship was decommissioned on 29 August 1946, at Green Cove Springs, Florida, until recommissioned on 7 December 1950. She was decommissioned a second time on 26 November 1957, at Norfolk, Virginia, until struck from the Naval Register on 1 May 1967. Then she was transferred to Colombia, commissioned as ARC ALMIRANTE TONO (DT-04) on 6 September 1968, and served until struck from the Colombian Naval Register and broken up for scrap, date unknown.

Harold Theriault went on to serve in the Korean War and served twenty years, retiring with the rank of commander. He went on to pursue a career in education, earning his masters from Florida State University, and teaching history at Broward County Community College, in Ft. Lauderdale. He died at age 76, on Sept. 25, 1990, in Norfolk, and was buried in Virginia Beach.

Tom Balunis' account of Bill Van Wilpe's participation in the rescue, brought the story to light, but it received little attention. In the end, most felt that a "Secret Deal" had been made, by which the USS BASSETT crew did not bring charges against their captain, and the Navy would not bring charges of mutiny against the three USS Bassett officers who overturned the captain's orders. Documents, depositions, and the BASSETT's action reports disappeared from the records. And as a result of the "Deal," none of them would be put in for any medals or commendations either. Peter Wren said that was fine by the crew, because what they accomplished was their great reward. They saved over 150 fellow sailors. And the crew kept their word all these years. They sought no additional recognition. Thus many men deserving of recognition never received it.

the process of updating our strategic plan, which will guide our journey into the future, now that we have completed almost all of the work to bring Slater back to its original condition. Second, we have established a separate corporation, the Frank Lasch/DEHM Foundation, to formally segregate our endowment. We will credit funds designated for such purpose to that account. The reasons for creating this separate corporation are to insulate our ship's funds from liability, if any, as well as investing monies to grow them for future needs. Since the Slater's Board of Trustees has the ability to transfer funds to this foundation, we ask that, unless you specifically designate funds to it, that you continue to support our ship by directly donating to Slater's Restoration Fund.

And, I thank you, on behalf of the Trustees, as we have paid all bills associated with the shipyard overhaul, and still maintain a healthy balance because you have responded so positively. It is also due to our matching funds, from the National Maritime Heritage Grant, a grant that we have pursued for several years. SLATER has been restored to the finest ship in the historical fleet, with the exception of operational engines. We will continue to preserve her for generations to come. Visitors see, feel, smell, and experience the ship as she appeared in 1945 and they appreciate it fully, lauding our guides, and voting us the number one attraction on Trip Advisor in the New York Capital Region.

We are looking forward to a busy winter, maintaining our ship against the difficult conditions of mooring on the Hudson River, with the ice and snow Albany produces in abundance.

Thank you for your continued support and stay well during this pandemic!

*The Destroyer Escort Historical Museum (DEHM) is an educational organization, chartered by the New York State Board of Regents, to increase the knowledge of the general public about naval history and heritage focusing on destroyer escorts and the men who sailed them through World War II, Korea, Vietnam, and the Cold War years. The Museum is a non-profit 501(c) (3) organization funded by contributions from members, corporations, and private foundations. All contributions are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.*

## When are we going to get USS SLATER underway?

The question that has come up most often since this overhaul began has been, “Could we get the engines operational and get USS SLATER underway on her own power? We’ll address that question now. The short answer is yes, we could, but why?”

The ship has been financially successful as a static museum ship for 23 years. At the present time, thanks to our 2,500 individual members and donors, we are able to maintain USS SLATER (A/T AETOS) as one of the finest examples of maritime preservation in the world, and continue to build our endowment fund. That financial stability would no doubt be jeopardized should we try to make the vessel operational. It would probably take about 15 million dollars to get her seaworthy again. At this time, we do not have the funding, but our policy is not to do anything to the ship that would preclude the next generation from making her seaworthy if they so desire and they decide to accept the challenge.

Environmental considerations play a major factor. All of the USS SLATER’s fuel oil tanks and the main engine oil sumps are “Skin Tanks” meaning the actual hull forms part of the tanks. All the tanks were cleaned and degassed in the shipyard overhaul of 2014. Since the ship does not have a double bottom, it would be too risky to reintroduce oil to the tanks, for fear of a leak. This is a risk hard to justify in today’s environmental climate

In addition, all the cooling water inlets and outlets, (25 total) for the diesel engine cooling, were plated over when the ship was in Greece. This was an insurance requirement for towing the ship across the Atlantic, so we have no way to cool the engines. Also, when the Greeks walked off of the ship in 1991, it was assumed she was going for scrap, so no preservation measures were taken to protect the machinery. The water was never drained from the engines. Since coming to America, the machinery has been through 25 years of hard winters, so it has to be assumed there is freeze damage to the machinery. Parts to restore the machinery are becoming more difficult and expensive to find.

Since the ship came to Albany in 1997, our engineers have activated the emergency diesel generator, a Cleveland 3-268A 100 kW battery start genset. That engine had three cracked cylinder liners and was in very bad condition, but is now operational. The cooling system was modified with the use of a truck radiator.

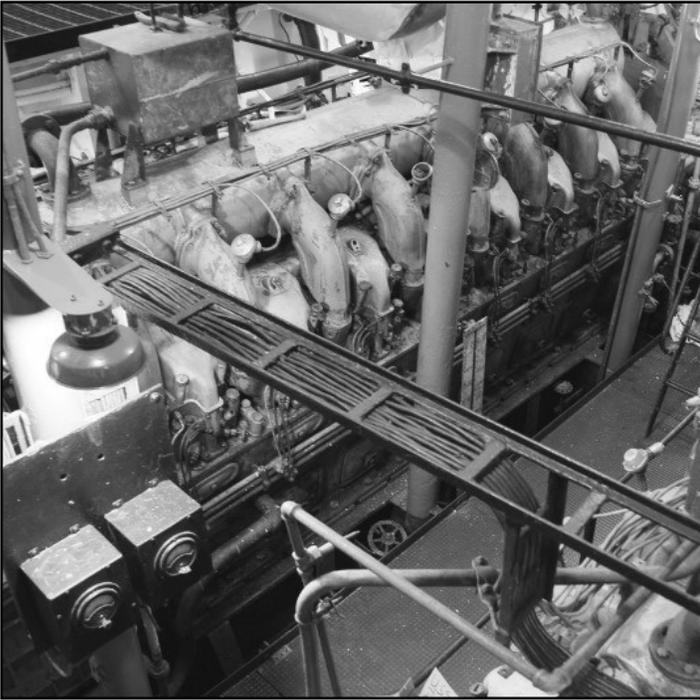
In 2012 and 2013, the engineers successfully overhauled and ran number 2 ships service generator, a Cleveland 8-268A 200 kW air start genset. This engine was in much better condition than the emergency diesel generator, and has been run many times under load. These generators kept AC power on the ship for the trip to and from the yard.

During the 2014 overhaul, all the blanks on the sea chests were renewed with heavier steel, except for the B-3 ship’s service generator. That sea chest was opened up so that the engine can be cooled in the traditional way. Fuel for the two operational generators is stored in the 275-gallon heating oil tank, in the muffler room, and gravity fed to day tanks mounted on the bulkheads in B-3 and B-4.

However, the number of local volunteer engineers



**Mike and Gary on watch  
in SLATER’s B-4 Motor Room.**



### ***SLATER's B-3 Engine Room Compartment.***

who are interested in the project has dwindled from six to one. Age has taken its toll on our volunteers, and new engineers are not stepping up to the plate. When the US Navy donates a ship as a museum, the contracts specifically state that the vessel can never be made operational or navigated. In the case of SLATER, as a direct donation from the Government of Greece to the Destroyer Escort Historical Museum, through the State Department, we do not have that restriction. We are the only large combat ship on display in America that could legally be made operational. However, we would have to comply with all the Coast Guard safety and environmental regulations.

The main propulsion machinery is almost completely intact. The only equipment that was removed by the Greeks was the two auxiliary boilers that made steam for heating, cooking, and the laundry, and the evaporator that made fresh water. All the missing equipment was located in B-2. This would not impact our ability to get under way. With regards to opening the sea valves, so the machinery could be made operational, there are a total of 25 openings below the waterline for cooling machinery. The ship would have to go into a dry

dock to remove the blanking plates, and then the valves and piping would have to be overhauled. There is one serious concern about efforts to activate propulsion machinery aboard the SLATER. That is the issue of the sea chests freezing. As you know, we are in fresh water here in Albany, and it gets very cold. In fact, it got so cold that the water in the shaft alleys used to freeze solid. One year, the sump pump down there was frozen in through March. We are very reluctant to remove any of these blanks, as once we introduce fresh water into the machinery space piping the possibility of freezing exists. Since we can't afford to keep heat on the machinery spaces, we run the risk of ice bursting a line, and having a very unpleasant surprise when the spring thaw comes.

This is not paranoia. This actually happened to the cruiser LITTLE ROCK, in Buffalo, many years ago. Several marine surveyors and operators have warned us that this is a concern, if we cannot keep the machinery spaces heated in the winter time. As a precaution, during the shipyard overhaul, two water tight boxes were welded around the propeller shafts, where the shafts leave the stern tubs to keep the shaft tunnel dry, and prevent corrosion to the tunnel and leakage in the shaft alleys. You can see that operating machinery results in a condition that the museum professionals call "consumptive use of an artifact."

Over the years, various proposals have been put forth for the installation of a smaller, modern, automated, propulsion system in the aft fuel tanks or magazines. For the present time, such modification have not been considered, as getting the ship underway is not judged to be as high a priority as long term hull preservation.

### **Visit Albany and USS SLATER**

*The Albany County Convention and Visitors Bureau stands ready to assist you in planning your trip to Albany, New York and the surrounding areas. Individuals and reunion groups can obtain information by contacting:*

**Jay Cloutier, Director of Sales**  
Phone: 1-800-258-3582, Ext 301

# SLATER SIGNALS

July, August, September 2020

By Tim Rizzuto, Executive Director

**What a summer it's been.** The crew celebrated Independence Day by preparing for the big move to Caddell Dry Dock and Repair Company, on Staten Island. A hint of the excitement that our trip down river would bring occurred on June 30<sup>th</sup>, when the Poughkeepsie Rock Station, WPDF, posted on their website "Spectacular WWII Warship to Sail Down Hudson River This Weekend." Who knew we were spectacular? That story alone got over 2.1K hits on the WPDH Facebook page, and almost a thousand on our page when we reposted it. We took advantage of the surge in interest in the project to post a project history, with before and after pictures of USS SLATER, that made it clear that this endeavor is supported by your donations, and not by the government, as many people assume.

**Thomas Scian led the effort to make SLATER shipshape for her trip down river, making sure all the decks got painted,** and all those eyesores that show up in drone photography looked good.

Preparations for the departure began in earnest on the Fourth of July. Led by **Doug Tanner**, the full crew showed up to remove the mooring cables, rig the pilot ladder, stage the Dutch Apple crane, and prep the diesel generators. We even had **Ed Zajkowski** and **Blair Sandri** aboard, to cook for the crew and stow the food. We celebrated with a pizza party for chow.

**Much to everyone's relief, the initial departure time of 0500 was moved back to 0700.** That made it a lot better for the photographers riding the **Dutch Apple**, as she followed us down to Castleton to say farewell. At 0630, **NYS Marine Highway's** tugs SARAH D and NATHAN G tied up alongside. We started the emergency diesel, shifted to ship's power, pulled the shore tie cable aboard, and disconnected the communications cable and the water hose.

**Danny Statile** lifted the gangway, and we cast off, as the tugs turned us to face south. We were underway.

**It was a beautiful trip down river.** We were

escorted by multiple law enforcement agencies and a constant convoy of private yachts, and pleasure craft. Spectators lined the shore and bridges until dark. We used Facebook to give continual reports on our location, until our wifi overheated and we had to go offline with a final post, "Computer is too hot, shutting down." At that point, our fans took over and continued to use the post to update everyone on our progress. The key man on the trip down river was **Mike Dingmon**, our only regular diesel engineer. With **Barry Witte's** help blowing out the sea chest, Mike alternated between 3-cylinder and 8-cylinder gensets, and kept power to the ship for the whole trip. The engine watches were the toughest in the heat.

**We arrived at Pier "G," at Caddell Dry Dock, at 0700, on Monday morning.** The yard crew got us tied up, and connected the water and shore power. Then three cars took the majority of the crew home, leaving the yard crew to supervise. At this point, it



***Scaffolding is all the way up the mast.***

would be worthwhile to say a few words about these hardy souls who stayed with the ship.

**Everyone would agree that the team leader was Ed Zajkowski.** Ed had been the key man, working with shipyard Vice President, **Joe Eckhardt**, for over a year, to develop the work package and plan the overhaul. Loud to the point of belligerent, Ed had an opinion on everything and kept us constantly entertained.

**However, the most important man in the crew was Blair Sandri.** Brought in by Ed to cook for us, Blair turned out three squares a day for all of us, for five weeks. A former diner owner of incredible patience and good humor, his daughter referred to the galley as “Blair’s Happy Place.” To make himself even more indispensable, Blair sorted out all of our socket sets in the machine shop.

**The third key man in the crew was Gary Sheedy.** He spent four weeks restoring the running lights, measuring, and attaching the armored cable, so it would be the correct length for the electrical contractor that attached it to the cable supports on the mast. He was always on hand to help everyone else. His sense of humor added to making the whole experience enjoyable.



***Brendan, Jack, and Thomas climbed the mast to keep us up to date on progress made in the shipyard.***

**Thomas Scian traveled back and forth from Monticello every week to contribute to the effort.** He undertook the restoration of the pilothouse as his special project. He was the “go to guy” for all of the menial tasks no one was interested in and his photographs documented the whole project. Thomas gained a lot of experience working with our two RPI Midshipmen, **Jack Carbone and Brendan Lutz.** The three of them became our eyes, donning safety harnesses at the end of each day, and climbing the mast to report on what work had been done, and what work needed to be done. The rest of us were too old to make the climb. Brendan developed so much rapport with the yard workers, that they assumed he was the project manager. Both Jack and Brendan were supposed to be assigned to Navy ships for training this summer, but that was canceled due to Covid-19. However, their shipyard experience aboard USS SLATER, and their exposure to the ways of the old Navy vets, probably gave them a more well-rounded experience than they could have gotten anywhere else.

**These regulars were joined at various times by Bill Wetterau, George Gollas, George Amandola, Steve Klauck, and Barry Witte.** Bill worked on the longwire radio antennas. George Amandola chipped all of the portside bitts, since these are usually wrapped with mooring lines. Steve did a complete restoration of the mast-mounted bullhorn. George Gollas worked on our IC systems, and Barry continued to monitor the progress of the restoration, and mentored the midshipmen through nightly video chats. I can’t thank these guys enough for the good humor they maintained, despite the absolutely oppressive heat, humidity, and long hours. They were an incredible team. Everyone was generally up by 0500. Blair had eggs to order, and everyone was usually fed by 0530. At 0545, Ed and I would head over to the administrative office for our morning meeting with Joe. Joe was always in good humor and the meetings became more a social event for us than a work necessity.

**On Tuesday 7 July, the scaffolding subcontractor delivered the scaffold to the pier, and began erecting the scaffold around the**

**foremast.** By the next day, the scaffold was complete up to the yardarm. The yard crew unbolted the yardarm, and **Harry**, the crane operator, gently lifted it onshore. That afternoon, the scaffold team completed the scaffold, all the way to the air search antenna. The following morning, on Thursday, Harry was back on hand, as the air search antenna was unbolted and lifted onto the dock. On Friday 10 July, the shipyard crew completed the scaffolding around the stack required for the stack repair. On that same day **Ed Zajkowski** celebrated his 77<sup>th</sup> birthday by climbing to the top of the stack to make a video “Inspection” that he posted to his Facebook page.

**Week two began with “Demo Day.”** Our Midshipmen **Brendan Lutz and Jack Carbone** spray painted red all the items on the mast that needed removal, to make the restoration authentic. On Monday, 13 July, **Hector Sousa’s** crew began cutting off the platforms, wiring, and equipment that had been added since the end of World War II. We soon had a sizeable pile of scrap on the pier. On Tuesday, 14 July, a major milestone occurred, when the first piece of newly fabricated equipment, the SL radar service platform, was welded in place on to the mast. By Wednesday, 15 July, shipyard day ten, the major components of the SL radar maintenance platform, the bullhorn mounting bracket, and the whistle platform had been hoisted to the mast and tacked in place. On Thursday, production welding continued on all the pieces that had been tacked into place by that point. By Friday, 17 July, the replacement gaff support was made, and was tacked into place. The blocks in dry dock 5 were positioned for us, and the yardarm was stripped, blasted, and primed. The yard brace and middle ladder support were also installed.

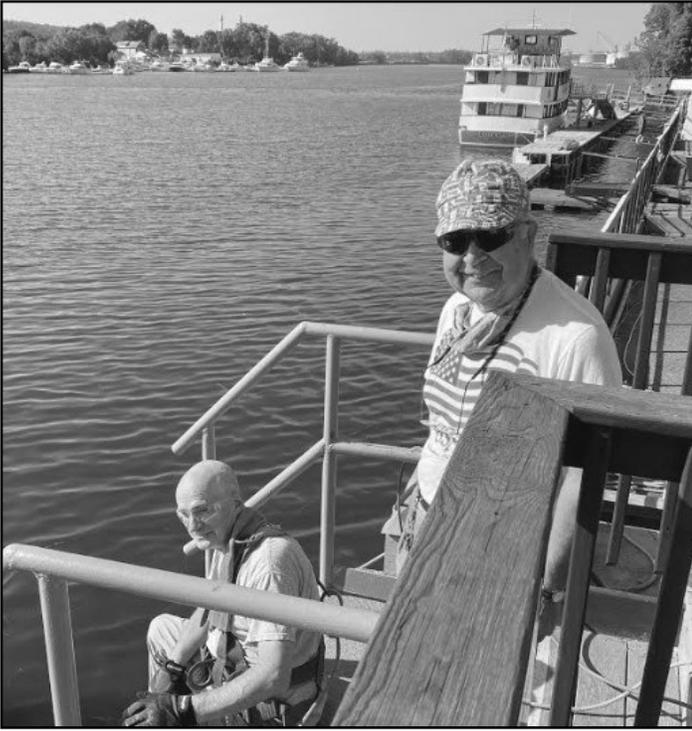
**Week three started on Monday, 20 July.** Many of the new items that were fabricated in Albany and planned for installation, were sandblasted and returned to the ship. The yardarm was back on the pier for us to work on, the bed spring radar was being rebuilt, and the SA radar motor was back, repaired, and wired up. **Bill Wetterau** dyed 1800 feet of 3/8” nylon line to look like 1945 manila for the halyards. Most important, the high-pressure hydro-blasting of



***“Demo Day” all the wasted metal from the mast.***

the mast started. On Tuesday, 21 July, which was shipyard day 16, work continued, hydro blasting the mast, stack cap repairs, repairs to the longwire radio antennas, and the air search radar reassembly. **Gary Sheedy** successfully tested and rotated the air search radar antenna.

**On Wednesday, 22 July, we had our morning meeting with Joe Eckhardt, and he announced, “You’re going into dry dock tomorrow.”** That came as a shock to both of us, and we took a “We’ll believe it when we see it” attitude. That day we had **Ryan Symanski and Alaina Noland**, from the Battleship NEW JERSEY, visit us. When they heard we were going into dry dock, they immediately made plans for a return visit the following day. More fittings were attached to the mast, the mast ladder was installed, the painters began priming the mast, and the air search radar was taken to the paint shop. The yardarm was outfitted with all the correct 1945 fittings, and the stack parts arrived from the fabrication shop, and an evening thunderstorm cooled things off. On Thursday, the Caddell welders started the installation of the SL radar waveguide. They had completed all the metal mast jobs, except the SA radar platform handrails, a support for the center



***Chuck and Doug in Albany securing the new safety nets to the seawall.***

line ladder, and installation of the ship's whistle.

**That Friday, the high tide was at noon, so we were told to expect to depart Pier “G” around 1100.** The early part of the morning was spent bringing the yardarm aboard, and all the various parts we had scattered around the pier. Around 1000, the two Henry Towing tugs made up alongside, and we waited for word that it was time to move. In the meantime, the skies opened up and it began to pour rain. We started to wonder if they would move us in a downpour. As I explain this, keep in mind that all parties involved here are equipped with a multitude of communications device including cellphone, walkie talkies, and marine radios. Eleven hundred came and went, and nothing was happening until the figure of the top man at the yard, **Steve Kalil**, was seen walking towards the wharf in his raincoat and hard hat, in the pouring rain. Steve said something to the effect of “Are we going to get this thing moving, or what?” and he began throwing our lines off the bollards. It was a stellar performance. That got everybody moving.

**The tugs eased us away from the gangway that had been beating up our paint for two weeks, passed the Staten Island Ferry that was in Dry**

**Dock 6, and into our new home, Dry Dock 5.** It took a couple hours to get the dry dock pumped out, settle us on the blocks, and a new “Ladder from Hell” set into place. Power, water, and sewer were quickly connected. The blocks were set perfectly, and though there was the usual concern about the sonar dome, the blocks were set with room to spare and two feet under the sonar dome to the floor of the dry dock. The gang from Battleship NEW JERSEY was aboard and posted several videos of the process on to their website.

**No work occurred over the weekend, but on Monday 27 July, work began in earnest with hydro-blasting the mast, and pressure washing the bottom.** Steve Klauck completed the restoration of the 1MCmast-mounted bullhorn and departed. Metal work continued on the mast and stack simultaneously, with the hydro-blasting. That evening, Brendan and Jack felt ambitious enough to haul the ship’s whistle up to the new whistle platform, and began its reassembly.

**On Tuesday, they completed the hydro-blasting on the mast and pressure washing of the hull.** The condition of the paint looked excellent! There was a question about the condition of the magnesium anodes. Brendan, Jack, and Thomas took off six, and we weighed them to get an assessment. It took a few days of research to determine that they were in much better condition than they looked.

**On Wednesday the 29<sup>th</sup>, work continued on the mast wave guide assembly, the stack cap repair, and priming the stack.** Thomas finished up repainting the pilothouse. And as the month finished, the priming was completed on the mast. The stack cap repair and metalwork on the mast were completed, and preparations were made to begin sand sweeping the hull. On the last day of the month, things started coming back together. The SA air search radar was repainted, hoisted up, and bolted on the mast. The bullhorn was also hoisted into position. Preparations for sandblasting were completed.

**The team has not been idle in Albany. Doug Tanner** has been working his crew two days a week, doing all the maintenance tasks that can only be done

when the ship is away. Over the course of the month, **Earl Herchenroder, Dave Mardon, Danny Statile, Bill Wetterau, Warren Brozio, Chuck Teal, Kevin Sage, and Tim Benner** inspected the gangways and safety nets, and made all the necessary repairs. They built containment for Kevin, so he could spray the aft gangway with long life PSX-700 paint. They kept the grass cut, and kept Shanna and Jo Ann amused.

**Speaking of Shanna and Jo Ann, they are in Albany, keeping the office running.** Bills are being paid, merchandise is being sold, donations are being processed, thank you letters are getting mailed, e-mails are being answered, and plans are being made for when the ship returns.

**We cannot thank the workers at Caddell Dry Dock enough for their hard work, commitment, integrity, and professionalism.** They perform the most physically demanding work under the most difficult conditions. They have our deepest respect.

**Saturday 1 August 2020, found us resting on the keel blocks in Dry Dock Number 5, at the Caddell Dry Dock and Repair Company.** That day, **Thomas Scian, Jack Carbone, and Gary Sheedy** accepted an invitation to visit Battleship NEW JERSEY. Meanwhile, **Ed Zajkowski, Brendan Lutz, and Barry Witte** had a very productive day. The biggest event for Ed and Barry was the installation of the battle gaff at the fore truck. They rigged the two halyards in place and planned to fly the ensign from there for the trip home. Work continued at two locations. In Albany, **Doug Tanner, Earl Herchenroder, Danny Statile, and Dave Mardon** also worked, putting a new cover on our transformer box cover.

**On Monday 3 August, sandblasting of the hull below the waterline began.** Two blasters worked, one port, one starboard, doing a nice easy sweep blast, so as not to blow any holes in the bottom. Remember that statement as you keep reading. They were about 50% finished at the end of the day. Painters also top coated the yardarm, and the yard welders fabricated a ladder to access inside the stack cap.

**August 4<sup>th</sup> was Thomas Scian's 25th**

**birthday.** He takes our photos and does any task asked of him. In the first few days of August, he has singlehandedly painted the decks of two berthing compartments and chief quarters. He's a quiet volunteer who gets stuff done. That same day, the anticipated storm curtailed the sandblasting effort. But the yard made good use of the day, despite the rain and wind. Life raft number 1 was lowered to the main deck, so that the straps that **Angelo Bracco** made over a year ago could be replaced. The sand blasters and painters, from **Union Maintenance Corp,** prepared to climb into the void under the steering gear compartment. The space experienced severe corrosion and was in desperate need of preservation. As cook Blair Sandri prepared to depart to cook for a wedding, **George Amandola** stepped in to take over in the galley, keeping us fed.

**On Wednesday 5 August, the yard finished sandblasting.** The electrical contractor, **General Marine Electrical,** started the electrical installation on the mast. They began installation of the aircraft warning lights and the breakdown lights. **Hector Sosa's** crew reassembled the sidelights with the brackets **Danny Statile** fabricated many months ago, and fitted them into position.



***Blair kept us well fed in the yard!***



***The crew in Albany took care to repair the gangways while the ship was away.***

**Thursday 6 August, was the seventy-fifth anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima.** It would have been a much longer war for USS SLATER if the bomb hadn't been dropped, should she have been lucky enough to have survived the extended war. Flash forward 75 years, and I wonder if you can comprehend the feeling that comes from accomplishing restoration tasks that you always thought would never happen. The yard welders, **Josue and Edwin**, began the replacement of wasted metal on the port lookout station. They cut out all my Bondo, so lovingly applied 20 years ago, and replaced it with real steel. **Brandon Easley, George Amandola, and JC** worked on the restoration of life raft number 1, installing the new straps and rigging. Union Maintenance got the first coat of red epoxy paint on the hull, with two more to follow. Work also continued in the voids, under the steering gear compartment. Back in Albany, **Earl Herchenroder** painted out the new transformer box cover, while **Chuck Teal** painted the mooring bollards.

**Friday 7 August 2020 was the 78th anniversary of the invasion of Guadalcanal.** We got the sense that they must want us out of there, because the yard worked overtime. Welders, **Josue**

and **Edwin**, finished repairs to the lookout stations. **Matt Kelly's** painters finished painting the voids under the steering gear compartment. **Brandon Easley** finished painting raft #1, and **Ron Frankosky** touched up paint on the 02 level, as well as on the yardarm, until the rain caught up with him. The yard painters completed the first coat of epoxy on the hull, to the waterline. Painters, **Francisco and Adrian**, spent the afternoon painting the final coat on the mast.

**On Saturday we didn't have much of a holiday routine.** The yard took the day off, but our volunteers kept working. We thought we were still looking at a return date of around 15 August. **Ron Frankosky** spent the day painting bitts. **Jack Carbone, Mike Clark, and Barry Witte** spent the afternoon wiring up the aircraft warning lights at the top of the mast. **Mike Clark** also happens to be one of our Museum Trustees, on the Board of Directors. The grandson of former Board Chairman, **Frank Lasch**, Mike has been volunteering since he was fourteen. Up in Albany, the crew primed all the mooring bollards. **Danny** straightened out the handicap ramp rail. They patched hole in trailer roof that had leaked into gift shop, and they installed new anchor point cleat studs in the sea wall cap for the new safety net, as well as fabricating a safety net cleat. Board President, **Tony Esposito**, brought them donuts to keep them working.

**Sunday was just as busy, everyone was working.** Union Maintenance pressure washed both sides of the superstructure and painted out the second coat on the boot top. **Barry Witte** made sure the mast electrical light connections were right, and **Jack and Mike** worked on the side light connections.

**It was Monday 10 August, when Ed Zajkowski celebrated his fortieth day aboard, and he was starting to act like a guy who really needed a liberty.** The painters put the second coat of black epoxy paint on the hull. The fumes were pretty rough from the bottom spraying. Ed spent his 40th day aboard, painting radio antenna insulators. Red for transmitters. Blue for receivers. The painters began sanding the superstructure, following the pressure

washing. Back in Albany, the crew painted the top coat on the bollards, painted the interpretative stand by the aft gangway, and painted the underside of forward gangway attachment on the sea wall. They also installed clips and fasteners on the forward gangway, for the communications cable. They wanted everything perfect for our return.

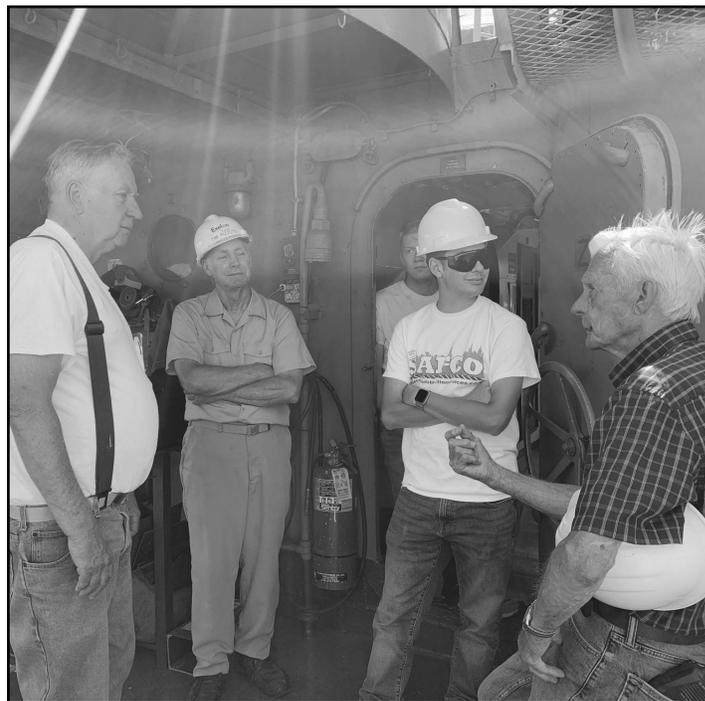
**On Tuesday 11 August, the upper section of scaffold came down, and it was like watching the bandages being removed after cosmetic surgery.**

The air search antenna was rotated again, following two years of being inoperative. The yard did more sanding and prep work on the forward superstructure. And the final coat of epoxy red was applied to the hull.

**Wednesday was a big day because the yardarm went back up.** The hangings could now continue. It was tough, sorting out the web of halyards and longwire radio antennas hanging from the yard, but we figured it out. The yard painted the boot top, and with the hull painting complete, they began reinstalling the magnesium anodes. They also began priming the superstructure. Back in Albany, **Doug Tanner** and his crew installed rubber isolation hoses on mooring cables, at the bollards. Then they started installing suspension lines on the safety nets. They had pretty much figured out the safety net rigging, and had done as much as they could do before the ship returns.

**When Ed and I went in for our morning meeting with Joe Eckhardt, we got a shock.** Joe announced that USS SLATER's departure date from Caddell Dry Dock on Staten Island had been changed to Friday 21 August, at 1030. That meant we'd be in Staten Island for a week longer than we expected. We went back to the ship, and Ed recorded my announcement to the crew on his cell phone. Ed consoled himself by going out and buying some expensive rib-eye steaks on the ship's credit card and grilling them up for the crew.

**Back on the ship, boot top painting continued until the rain came.** Anode attachment continued as well, since they were protected from the weather. The electricians, from General Marine Electrical, completed the wiring on the mast. Yard workers,



***Morning Meeting with Joe Eckhardt, the bearer of bad news.***

**Sergio** and **JC**, completed the yardarm attachment and the wave guide reassembly, and **Jack Carbone** finished attaching the yard braces. Back in Albany, **Doug Tanner** got all of the 3/4" line spliced for the new safety net, and spliced one end for the suspension rope. Once the ship was back, they'd need to figure out the securing points on the ship, and finish the ship side of the gangway safety nets.

**On Friday 14 August, Jon Cirmi led the scaffold contractors in disassembling the remaining mast scaffold, so the restored mast was revealed in all its glory.** Jon's work aloft was not for the faint of heart, as he disassembled all the safety rails section by section. That same day, we made the decision to replace the rotted metal in the flagbags, so the shipyard removed them and sent them to the fabrication shop for restoration. The painters also finished painting inside the stack top and completed the boot top.

**On Saturday 15 August, the yard celebrated the 75th Anniversary of VJ-Day by working overtime to help us meet our Friday departure date.** We had five painters topside, which seemed like a record. Yard workers, **Sergio** and **Edwin**, assisted **Ed Zajkowski** and **Jack Carbone**, in

rigging the vertical longwire radio antennas. Following that effort, **Sergio** climbed the mast and met **Edwin**, who arrived by crane basket. Together, they connected the yardarm lift cables. The contract work on the mast was now complete.

**Brandon Easley**, and his son **Braden**, spent the weekend helping clean up the ship. That night cook **Blair Sandri** turned out spaghetti and meat sauce for supper.

**By Monday, the level of activity aboard seemed almost frantic, as the yard worked to have us ready for our Friday undocking and departure.** The bridge level was to have been repainted pale gray, to more closely conform to our 32/3d camouflage pattern. I was somewhat disappointed in the paint color. In 2014 PPG matched the Federal Standard Color Numbers we gave them perfectly. But this time, the pale gray was too blue, and the haze gray had no blue in at all. It's something that will haunt me forever, or until the next painting and a chance to make it right. Six painters worked all day, as the scaffold on the stack began to come down. Both repaired flagbags were hoisted back aboard, and welded into place. Ed continued his newfound passion for color coding



***Blair Sandri, our cook, taking a break outside the galley.***

radio antennas. Up north, the Albany crew took the opportunity of me being out of town to cut down the dead tree that has been annoying some people for years.

**Things started to wind down on Tuesday.**

Painting continued, but shipyard equipment removal was the order of the day. John finished the stack, as the scaffold was broken down. Scaffold, planks, and pressure washers were all lifted ashore. The restored number 1 life raft was lifted into position. Yard workers Sergio, Edwin, and Joshua secured the raft. Blair finished out the day by serving us up a delicious pork chop dinner.

**With one working day left before departure, the weather wasn't very cooperative.** We had showers most of the day, at a time when every painting minute counted. Our towing plan had been approved by the Coast Guard, and departure was still scheduled for 1030 Friday. The rain didn't bother John, who scrubbed away rust streaks on the hull. **Hector's** crew installed the large radio transmitted insulators aft of the radio room, and rigged the port longwire antenna. Painting continued under the overhang of the superstructure. **Jack Carbone** restored the original 1944 compartment label tag for the gunfire control hut that he had been working on for several days. We're all about detail here at USS SLATER.

**On Thursday 20 August, in a private ceremony, two old US NAVY veterans raised the first ever Ensign from the new battle gaff aboard USS SLATER.** They were **Blair Sandri**, USS FORRESTAL CVA-59, and **Ed Zajkowski**, USS KEPPLER DD-765. The Kelly family, of **Union Maintenance Corporation**, donated ribs and hamburgers for the trip home. Memorial hull writing was in vogue, as many of the volunteers wrote family names and memorials on the underwater hull. The painting crew worked right up until quitting time.

**Friday 21 August, was my bad day.** It started perfectly, our departure day following six weeks in the shipyard. At 0800, **Chris Deeley** arrived to coordinate the tug hook up, the yard workers prepared to sink the dry dock, while the tugs

SARAH D. and MARGOT were standing by. As the ship floated off of the dry dock, the volunteers checked all the interior tanks, voids, and bilges for leaks. A serious leak was detected by **Steve Klauck** in the aft motor room, B-4. The shipyard management was contacted, and reluctantly the decision was made to put SLATER back in the dock to repair the leaks. Water continued to pour out of a quarter sized hole for about four hours. The yard planned to work over the weekend, with a departure date now scheduled for Tuesday 25 August, at 1400.

**The leak was a result of internal corrosion in an almost inaccessible section of bilge, under the generators.** Moist scale and debris ate through the shell plating. Thomas Scian volunteered to bilge dive and cleaned it all out. We found the same condition in the forward motor room, but the debris was dry. Kudos to volunteer **Thomas Scian** for accessing the space. That evening, **Angus McCamy** treated the crew to a tour of a ferry that was undergoing overhaul, and the following day, half the crew headed back to Albany until the repair could be completed. Following consultation with the yard and our Marine Surveyor **Rick Meyerrose**, it was decided to double the wasted area.

**Saturday, the crane hoisted the plate into the dry dock first thing in the morning.** Jacks were used to hold the plate into position for welding. Following welding, high pressure water was shot at the double from every direction, while we monitored from the inside, to insure there were no leaks. **Jan Schweiger** spent the weekend needle scaling on the 01 level and painting ladders, **Vince Montouri** spent the day painting the anchor chain, and **Jo Ann Mulligan** worked at putting the special collections space back together.

**Sunday and Monday, work in the bilges continued.** On Tuesday, we all had our fingers crossed. The Albany portion of the riding crew arrived back on board around 1000. **Bill Wetterau** carried the check for the final repairs to the bottom. The yard gave us a real break and only charged us for the actual repair. There was no charge for the redocking the ship or the additional lay days. Since



*The best place to find a leak is in drydock.*

Joe wasn't in his office, **Brendan, Jack, Thomas,** and **Jo Ann** handed the final check over to shipyard President **Steve Kalil**. The high tide was at 1400. Around 1230, they began flooding the dry dock. They let the ship rest on the blocks for about thirty minutes, while all hands checked every space for leaks. When none were found, the launching continued. Once afloat, the yard tug towed us into the stream, and SARAH D. and MARGO lashed to starboard and port respectively.

**We were privileged to have WNYT reporter, Jacquie Slater, aboard for the trip home, along with her cameraman, Matt Soriano.** They broadcasted live updates and interviews with the volunteers while we were underway. One particularly moving interview was with **Jan Schweiger**, remembering her recently deceased friend and SLATER volunteer, **Robin Larner**.

**Barry Witte had prepared a watch bill that called for a bridge watch, sounding, and security and generator watch.** The engineroom watch was the toughest, with temperatures over 100 degrees. Sounding and security continued to check all bilges, tanks, and voids for the duration of the trip. We were underway at 1415 and made way better time than

expected. We had about a three-hour layover around the Hyde Park area. We got a third pilot around 0400 and started moving soon after.

**It was sweltering hot when we left Staten Island, and rather cool by the time we got to Albany.** The trip was made without incident, and the tug handling, when we made the approach to the snow dock, was superb. Heaving lines went over, followed by mooring lines that were soon doubled up. Barry got the power and water connected, and **Danny Statile** was on hand to set the temporary gangway. The tugs and pilot were released, and we were finally home.

**The following day, thanks to Doug Tanner and his contacts at Mullins Crane Service, a crane was on hand to set both permanent gangways in place.** The aft gangway looks beautiful following the repair and repainting that Doug's crew did. This was the most important step before we would be able to open to the public.

**Our Program Manager, Shanna Schuster really stepped up to the plate and took charge of getting the ship ready for the public when USS SLATER returned home from the shipyard.** She organized the volunteers and Interns, and they took charge of getting the ship cleaned, exhibits set up, gangways set, technology running, and spreading the word to our eager visitors that we were opening to the public. **Cathy Wheat, Shanna,** and a handful of our college interns spent the last days before opening getting the ship clean. That means they dusted, vacuumed, and disinfected everything on the tour route. I mean everything; pipes, overhangs, railings, ladders, light switches, fans, ledges, door frames, door handles, tables, chairs, and hatches. We ensured every light bulb was working, every brass fixture in the pilot house was polished, and all the guns were able to be trained and elevated.

**In the Officer's staterooms, beds were made, and artifacts displayed.** Charts, pictures, and typewriters were in their proper place. The Captain's uniform and photos of his family were all set up. Beds were made in forward berthing, blankets folded, pillows cases put on and set, bunk straps attached, mattress

covers cleaned, and life jackets hung. The wardroom table was set, refrigerators were cleaned, fans stowed, Covid-19 protocols set up, hand sanitizing station with signage placed, and the briefing room setup. **The three heads were cleaned, restocked, and disinfected.** Press releases were sent out, tour guides notified, cashiers were trained on the new cash register and credit card machine, and a final topside washdown was done. She got us ready to go.

**All this, in addition to running errands, making bank deposits, gathering mail, restocking office supplies, and stocking up on disinfectant.** Shanna also restocked the volunteer's cold drinks, loaded the new mini fridge in the ship's store, and answered a lot of phone calls generated by all the publicity the move created. While all this was going on, she found time to completely redesign and launch our new USS SLATER website. If you haven't visited the website since summer you need to check out all the improvements she made.

**Over the course of the month, the maintenance crew has gotten back into the swing of things. Doug Tanner and his crew have been primarily occupied with trying to figure out how to deal with the gangway safety nets, which have too much sag. They are also replacing deteriorated**



***Austin explaining the 3 inch gun on his tour.***

gutter on the street side of the trailer, and figuring out what to do about depth charges filled with damp concrete that are rotting from the inside out.

**Boats Haggart** and his crew got all the mooring wires rigged, the mooring ropes doubled, and are now working to get all the signal halyards properly spliced with snap hooks, rings, and the retrievers. **Gary Sheedy** spent the month wiring in and connecting all the electrical cables that the shipyard ran down the mast, and left coiled on the signal bridge, for Gary to deal with in Albany. **Barry Witte** has been completing his running light control panel, and wiring in the eighteen light fixtures that make up the fighting light system. Again, our thanks go to The Electroswitch Company for providing the switches, and also go out to **Jan Coons**, who made the donation to purchase the switches in honor of her father, **Harold Ward**.

**I could write an epistle as long as this, thanking everyone who needs to be thanked.** All of you donors who made this possible. All of the yard workers, welders, painters, scaffold erectors, and electricians. And what doesn't come through these pages is the incredible and relentless heat and humidity everyone suffered through, on our 1944 destroyer escort. The fact that these senior citizens voluntarily endured these conditions speaks volumes about their character and dedication.

**Ed Zajkowski deserves a great deal of his credit for years of planning, his monthly phone calls with Yard Vice President, Joe Eckhardt, the**



**Ed Zajkowski, our Shipyard Coordinator.**

**historic research he provided, and going the distance in the shipyard.** It was **Barry Witte** who had the vision of restoring the mast, and coordinated the fabrication of all the parts needed, to bring the mast to its 1945 configuration. Midshipmen, **Jack Carbone** and **Brendan Lutz**, were our eyes and legs in the shipyard. Having participated in the mast planning since its inception, they were in position to advise and guide the shipyard workers as the project progressed, climbing the mast daily to report on progress.

**Thomas Scian remained aboard several days a week, climbing with Jack and Brendan, and was always willing to do the little tasks that needed doing.** That culminated in his volunteering to clean out the bilge spaces in B-4, in preparation for the leak repair. **Gary Sheedy** spent a month aboard, and in his Gary way, continued to organize everything he came in contact with.

**But the highest tribute has to go to our cook Blair Sandri.** Except for the week he had to take off for a wedding, he spent his whole summer in the hot galley, making sure we were well fed. His daughter referred to the galley as “My Dad’s happy place,” and that must be true, because at the end of six weeks, he said he was still ready to “Ship over.” In tribute, **Barry Witte** produced, and **Ed Zajkowski** presented Blair with the “Meals on Keels” plaque, with the whole crew present on the messdeck, just a few hours before we reached Albany. Well done, Blair.

**Others who made the trek to Staten Island to help out included George Amandola, Brandon Easley, Mike Clark, Bill Wetterau, Mike Dingmon, George Gollas, Alex Titcomb, Grant Hack, Rich Wallace, Grant Eastman, and Steve Klauck.** And in Albany, under **Doug Tanner’s** direction, through the volunteer effort, great improvements were made to our shore facilities by **Dave Mardon, Tim Benner, Earl Herchenroder, Bill Holt, Danny Statile, Warren Brozio, Chuck Teal,** and others. And we must recognize **Shanna Schuster**, who spent the summer completely redesigning our website, and adding the long-awaited

online gift shop. It is an amazing transformation, and you can see it at [www.ussslater.org](http://www.ussslater.org).

I'll close with a post Ed Zajkowski put on his Facebook page, as a tribute to our younger SLATER Volunteers. It bears repeating here. Ed wrote:

*"With all the bad talk about the youth of America, I want to highlight 4 that I have had the incredible pleasure of working with. They range in age from 20 to 25. Jack is a NROTC midshipman who came close to matching my 56 days. He did the mast climbing, computer work, planning assistant, parts fabrication, etc. Thomas has been a dedicated Slater volunteer for years and is currently laid off from his casino job. He does the dirtiest of jobs on the ship and stayed up*

*many nights while we were sleeping, painting. He is Tim's go to man when the chips are down. A great personality too. Brendan is the same as Jack, NROTC. He was my steady climber in the beginning. He also generated computer drawings as we needed new parts made and so much more. Thomas and Brendan spent 3/4 of the 56 days aboard. Our newbie, Jo Ann, has been a part time Slater employee doing accounting and admin work. She came down a week ago to ride the ship back and asked to stay when we leaked. She has asked to do every job we did, from galley helper to line handler. Full of energy, she helped remove and put back all the tank tops for leak inspection. I respect and would want them on my team anytime. This is the youth."*



**Brendan, Jo Ann, Jack, and Thomas.**

## Mail Call

### Second Quarter 2020

16 Sept 2020

Dear Tim,

I know that I have said this in an earlier post but I feel as though it is worth repeating. I along, with so many others, stand shoulder to shoulder to applaud your team's efforts to maintain this irreplaceable historic artifact on a daily basis. This display of pride and ownership which I have observed from afar is what drove me to the un-regrettable decision, to no longer stand on the sidelines to applaud your efforts but to step up onto the playing field to assist this team where

you, in my opinion, needed the most help. I submitted my donation to this great cause and organization on 8/24/20. I am pleased to see that so many others felt this same draw to contribute as well. Keep up the good work and continue to do great things.

John M. Gregory



14 July 2020

Hello,

My father served in WWII on the USS SUESENS DE-342. He's been gone since 4/1/06. I was able to visit the SLATER on 7 September 2019 with my son. I am thankful that I was able to see it first hand, a ship like he served on. I wish I could have had more time on the ship, hopefully, someday I'll return. As a result of current events, I wish to make a small contribution by becoming a member in memory of my dad, Leonard Curtis Laroue, Radarman Second Class (T) USS SUESENS DE-342.

Richard Laroue



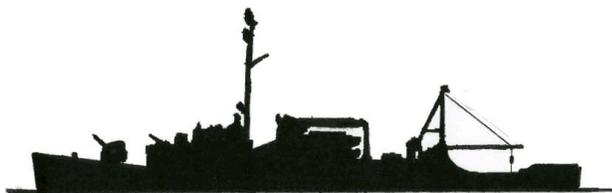
4 July 2020

The attached check for \$100 is donated to be used wherever it will do the most good at this time in keeping the SLATER afloat.

This donation is from me (Paul) and Gary Hanson. I recently did a small hobby project for Gary to donate to his VFW post and he wanted to pay me for the work. Since I did it as a hobby and was happy that it would go to a display at the post, I refused his payment. He insisted and we compromised by making a donation in our names, hence this donation. Hope that it helps somewhat during this trying year.

Paul Friswold : USS PILLSBURY DER-133, USS BROUGH DE-148

Gary Hanson: USS WEEDEN DE-797, USS MUNRO DE-422, USS VAMMEN DE-644



20 July 2020

Dear Tim,

Sorry you could not read my note. The name is Don B. Harris, my oldest son and a crew member of USS OKINAWA CV-3, during the Vietnam War. He had one year at W.V.U. He would have continued but was caught in the draft lottery. He decided to follow in his Dad's footsteps and enlisted in the Navy, with most of his enlistment on the OKINAWA in elevator maintenance.

Don developed Leukemia in 1998 and passed in May at Cleveland Clinic. He had been with a floating maintenance crew for three A.E.P. plants in our area, serving as a foreman.

Now to a little on USS GANDY DE-764. One of the things in common with the SLATER, is that both were Cannon Class, built by Tampa Shipbuilding Co. USS GANDY one ship ahead of SLATER.

Rather than trying to remember, I have enclosed a copy of our history, "The USS GANDY DE-764." With the service we saw, the good Lord blessed our ship, as we replaced the LEOPOLD, Civ Cort. Div-22.

With those comments, I thank you for your dedication to the restoration of the SLATER, which is preserving the history of the proud group of young and middle-aged men that served aboard our fleet of DE's worldwide. (Donation Enclosed)

Again, thanks,

Bill



4 August 2020

Dear Mr. Rizzuto,

My name is Patrick J. Chaisson. I am a retired US Army Officer and writer-historian, who worked with you and the SLATER crew on a few research projects over the past few years. Please find along with

this note a check for \$100.00 to help cover the cost of your shipyard renovations this summer.

I am sure there exists a more nautical term than “shipyard renovations” but my 26 years spent as a ground-pounder has left me with a woefully inadequate command of naval lingo.

Thank you and your staff for all you do to help preserve history along the Hudson River, just down the Thruway from me in Albany. I look forward to paying another visit to the USS SLATER once it reopens for public tours.

Best,

Patrick J. Chaisson



6 August 2020

Dear Tim,

I received the July issue of Slater Signals, with your current update of Slater status, with great pride and memories. I want to thank you and all of those volunteers who are working so hard to keep my old home alive in the memory of the world. I wish I were able to visit the ship one more time, to thank each and every single one person. I had a visit to the ship on my bucket list, but unfortunately, I am no longer able to travel. I'm 93 years of age now, and father time is catching up to me. I was only 17 years of age when I served on SLATER, and it seems like yesterday. Thanks again to you and your crew for a job well done.

Sincerely,

Allen Beddoe

MCPO(SS), USN Ret. Slater Crew 1945-46

3 August 2020

My grandfather was part of a destroyer escort that went to Nagasaki. He was on the USS HAINES. You guys are doing awesome work with SLATER and thank you for the great sharing of progress on Facebook!

Innocent Wodzisz Jr.



11 August 2020

Dear Tony,

I am enclosing my personal check for \$100 to the restoration fund. I was pleased to see that some of my shipmates had also donated to the cause.

It's now about 3 years since my wife and I toured the USS SLATER. It brought back many memories of a small ship in a nor'easter many years ago. Thanks for all your efforts in preserving our history. As I'm sure you know, the Tin Can Sailors reunion was cancelled due to COVID-19. Also, the USS KRETCHMER DER-329 was to be held one week later in San Antonio, TX. Hope next year will be better.

John Nahodyl

USS KRETCHMER DER-329

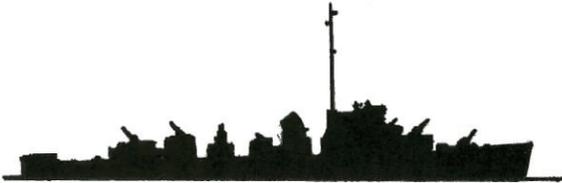
USS REMEY DD-688



15 August 2020

Please accept this donation in memory of my Pop-Pop, a World War II veteran who passed away in June 2020. His name was Clinton L. Gantt, and he was a sonarman on the USS BRONSTEIN. He really valued your mission of restoration and preservation. Thank you for all your hard work.

Anne Van Zant



10 August 2020

Dear Tim,

The news of SLATER's shipyard visit was the best news I have read in many months. I am so happy to hear that things are moving along, and you are able to continue to preserve SLATER despite the challenges of this year. Your staff and volunteers are amazing. Glad to see you are getting lots of positive press!

I do enjoy all of the newsletters, and will admit that I have learned a lot from you in terms of how to write a fundraising letter. So thanks for putting me on your mailing list many years ago, albeit without my permission (haha).

Enclosed is a donation to help offset the costs of the shipyard visit.

Best wishes and I hope to see you and Ed at a future HNSA meeting!

Sincerely,

Marifrances Trivelli

Executive Director

Los Angeles Maritime Museum



7 August 2020

Dear Tim,

The USS BROUGH DE-148 Reunion Group has not used the monies in our account for several years, and with the declining number of ship reunion attendees, there will be no upcoming expenditures.

We have decided to close our account, and in accordance with our By-Laws, forward the remaining funds to DEHM. Therefore, please find our enclosed check in the amount of \$3,292.03, which we choose to be donated to the Maritime Heritage Grant to help with the current shipyard expenses.

For the past 23 years, our Reunion Group has been very active in their annual reunions, with most of them held in conjunction with the DESA Convention, and in all but one time, we were the largest "ships company" present at these Conventions.

We wish you continued success.

Ron Zarem – Treasurer



Tim,

On page 23 of your last newsletter, there is mention of an obituary for Oliver Everts who served on the USS BAUER. I served three years on the BAUER, and during my last year as Operations Officer, he served under me. The Dealey Class ships were fine ships and I enjoyed serving on one during my Navy career. I was proud to be able to say I served on a DE and friends seemed to be impressed. I have worried that since we never saw combat, we were not the real DE Navy. I plan to continue to be a DE sailor. It was a very important part of my life; soon our last DE sailors will be the only ones left.

Sincerely,

John Oakey Jr.

23 July 2020

Dear Sir:

Enclosed please find a donation of \$50 for the restoration of USS SLATER. This is in memory of my beloved friend, Arthur H. Heiderman, a WWII Coast Guard veteran stationed on USS RHODES during wartime. He was born July 31, 1926 and passed on June 17 2020. Thank you for your continued efforts of restoration.

Respectfully,

Bobbie Gray



1 August 2020

Dear Tim,

As always, I enjoyed reading “Trim But Deadly,” and of course SLATER SIGNALS! This time I noted your reference to the sinking of F.C. DAVIS. The USS HAYTER was present and rescued more than 60 survivors!!

Over time we kept in touch with some survivors, and also the Captain of U-546, Paul Just. As the years passed we decided to have joint reunions with the DAVIS, HAYTER and the crew of U-546!

This happened in June 1990 and was an emotional success. I have included a copy of HAYTER Highlights which covers the joint reunion.

I was alerted to your article by Ken Jr., who urged me to write this letter to you. I agreed with him that it does speak to a moment in history. Please read and use it as you seem fit.

In the meantime, keep up your good work! A Navy Well Done!

With warm regards,

Ken McGuire

17 August 2020

Hi Tim!

Haven't written to you in a long time. I was doing some bill paying, and I came across an envelope with a DEHM on it, and thought “Gee, I haven't sent them anything for quite awhile.”

My kids are pretty well off without what little they'll get from me, so it's not much, but as they say, every little bit helps. I'm sending you a check for \$100 Simoleans, guess that's how it's spelt. Who cares, I certainly don't.

Anyway Tim, I was talking to my Navy buddy at breakfast this morning, and asked him when we will make one more trip up to see the SLATER, before I take the final boat ride and join my family. He said right now it's a little too warm. A little later said, I'll be 96 in September, so he better not wait too long. He's 20 years younger than me, and a very good friend. He hauls my butt up to the VA in Lebanon for my shot in the back. I'm also afraid my eyesight is going.

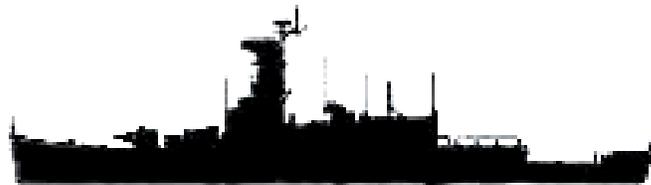
So, keep your fingers, eyes, legs, or anything else you can cross, and hope we both make it.

From Guadalcanal to Iwo Jima. Iwo was the last place we were at, then we headed for Hawaii. We were there 5 months, escorting carriers who were training pilots to land on the carriers, before being sent overseas. Be safe Tim, and have smooth sailing and have fair winds at your back. I guess DEHM is who my money is used on.

Sincerely Yours,

Russell S. Miller

USNR DE-679



**Please Remember USS SLATER**  
**In your will.**  
*She's your legacy.*

4 September 2020

Dear SLATER crew,

Enclosed please find my donation of \$50 for the restoration fund. It is my pleasure to help the ship's upkeep in what small way I can.

I first became aware of SLATER's existence in 2016, when I travelled to Albany with the Marist College Band, to participate in the MAAC basketball tournament. On our way to the Times Union Center, the bus drove past SLATER, and as probably the only person paying attention, I started researching what this warship was doing there. For the next three years of my undergraduate career, I would pass by SLATER in a similar manner.

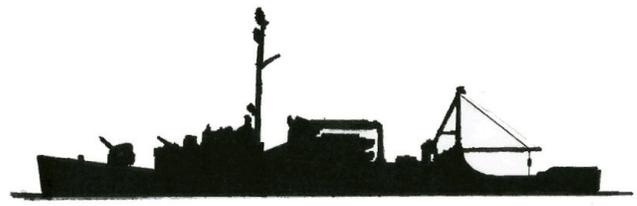
I did not become aware of SLATER's significance, and the massive effort that keeps her maintained until this summer, when I followed the shipyard work via Facebook. Though I missed the journey down to Staten Island, I saw SLATER on the return trip to Albany, passing my hometown of Dobbs Ferry. It was after witnessing this that I became compelled to help out.

While I have no direct personal connections to the U.S. or Hellenic Navies, my older cousin served in the US Marine Corps before transferring to the Air Force. As for me, although I have not served in the armed forces, I am a member of the Civil Air Patrol, the US Air Force Auxiliary, where I am an aircrew member and aerospace education officer. The aeronautical and nautical worlds share similarities, and projects such as SLATER serve as a great example of history and community engagement for our CAP cadets.

As a nonprofit board member, I understand and appreciate the dedication and work that goes into maintaining a community landmark such as SLATER. I am highly impressed by the work that the volunteer team does, and next time I am in Albany I hope to step aboard for a tour.

Fair winds and following seas,

Philip Monteiro



11 July 2020

Greetings all;

We're in the "depths" of this pandemic, which has proscribed almost all social interaction, especially with any gathering of more than five people. Thus all meetings and "bull sessions" for DESA NORPAC have been scrubbed for the time being. We had proposed a meeting in mid-July, but that is not to be.

Our CO, Ron Reiersen, and I were able to meet earlier this week to discuss our options. DESA NORPAC has no plans for another meeting, and won't be able to meet in the near future, so we will need to rely on e-mail, phone, and issues of "Ye Old Salts News" to announce our next proposed meeting date, time, and location. We'll "be in touch".

In the meantime, the USS Slater has had to remain closed for any tours, which removes a major source of funding. It is now in dry dock for repairs, with plans to re-open after that work is complete, by month end. Ron and I examined our next-to-nothing budget and our bulging (for our purposes!) bank account, and pondered a donation to the Slater in order to ensure that this activity continues. We propose an amount of \$3,000. We submit that to our membership for information and approval.

We'll be in contact regarding any proposed get-together and other news. Stories to tell!

Sincerely,  
John Meeker



# Crossing the Line

Told by Dan Drummond, USS SLATER

The Line Crossing Ceremony - Initiation into the Court of King Neptune – November 4, 1944 as told to his wife by Dan Drummond – World War II veteran and Quarter Master third class on the USS SLATER (Destroyer Escort 766)

First of all, it took place on the day before we arrived in Biak (*South Biak Island*), since we crossed the line at midnight on Nov 4 (1944). It was rather a gloomy day with a little rain, but that sort of lent a mysterious hue to the whole thing, and made it a little cooler too.

There were of course a lot of attempts made by the “Shellbacks” to frighten us poor “pollywogs”. Days before it took place, they held secret meetings, posted bloody warnings around the ship, started vicious rumors, and spread “terrifying propaganda” over the IMC.

When the day came, we were all restricted from any part of the fantail-they were setting up their means of “torture.”

We were ordered to don our “whites” - minus skive shirts-and then told to head to the forecastle, which we were called to the fantail for “judgement” by the microphone. Our names were called and we proceeded individually to the frightful event.

Upon my entrance at the quarterdeck, I had to get down on my hands and knees, and crawl the length, while a pollywog (excuse me) a “Shellback” rode on my back, and beat my – ahem! - with a paddle. Then I crawled on my stomach for a piece- my poor whitey! (But I wasn’t thinking of my whites then!), Then I was taken before the “royal family”. They were elaborately dressed in bright colors and really looked good. There was the King (King Neptune), with a long gray hair and beard and a golden, forked scepter in his hand. Then the queen – made up like a woman of course- (the first white woman I’ve seen for several months, incidentally); the royal baby, (and what a scream he was). The Baby was portrayed by an ensign who is very small but fat. He had on only

a diaper, a baby’s cap, and held a big cigar in his mouth. Two royal guards were on each side, with a sword on their side.

We each were supposed to be charged by the King for something we had done wrong to a Shellback. O’Neil was a “Shellback,” and also one of my helmsmen, so they cooked up a charge by accusing me of refusing to let him sit down while on watch - of course helmsmen never sit while at the wheel.

I was found guilty and they forced me to kneel and kiss the baby’s belly-which was covered with mustard. After kissing it they asked me if I like it so I said, “Sure”. They ordered me to kiss it again and this time they pushed my head in. Any answer was wrong, of course.

I forgot to mention that, at the beginning of the ceremony, the “Jolly Roger” was hoisted at the yardarm -that’s the flag with a skull and cross bones on it. Also, when I first entered, they painted my face with a tar solution (used to cover lifelines, etc – and is it hard to get off!!) and mercurochrome.

Then I had to go to the royal doctors who were all dressed in white with bloodstains all over their outfit.



**Crossing the Line Ceremony  
aboard USS SLATER 1944.  
Photo from DEHM Special Collection.**



***Crossing the Line Ceremony aboard USS SLATER 1944.  
Photo from DEHM Special Collection.***

I was put on a table, sprayed with mercurochrome and forced to take a capsule which they washed down with water. They “operated” on me with some mighty weird looking’ instruments, but it was a successful one at that – so I lived.

Then I learned that I had an appointment with the barber, so off they (literally) dragged me.

I don’t think much of the “royal” barber – he certainly made some job of it – a patch off here and a patch off there- he certainly was going wild with those electric clippers. I didn’t get off too bad, though. Some of the fellows had a strip cut right through the center, and this in turn was painted yellow to impress them that resistance only made things worse.

The “assistant barber”, who was standing by, then gave my face the once over with a large brush (the kind used in whitewashing, etc). I later learned that the solution used was composed of water, vinegar, relish, and rotten eggs (and it tasted and smelled like no less than the aforementioned).

From there, they yanked me into a large tank full of water, oil, and garbage. I thought my ordeal was over. Then, after I had pulled myself out of the tank,

I thought that my ordeal was over. But when I looked up, what did I see, but some ex-pollywogs who had gone before me. They were lined up along the port side of the weather deck, looking as much of a wreck as myself. I didn’t like the gleam in their eyes-much less the paddles they each held in their hand. I liked them much more less when I had to crawl (again) past the line, whilst they pounded my bottom-and I didn’t stop to look at the scenery while I was crawling, either. By the time I reached the end of the line, I think my “seat” was throwing sparks-at least it felt as though it was. Was I glad that was done with.

After my rear part had cooled down to almost 200 degrees F, I got on my feet, grabbed a paddle and eagerly went to work on the oncoming “pollywogs”. The officers got the worst beating of all. (I didn’t exactly “spare the rod” on them myself).

Well, honey, there you have a bare sketch of the initiation. I’ll tell you all about it when I get home – and what those capsules were for – which you can no doubt guess. All in all, it was loads of fun – only I couldn’t sit down until the following day.

# Maritime Heritage Match Donations

Third Quarter 2020

## \$2501 - \$4000

**Atta Boy Management Inc. \* USS BROUGH Reunion Assn, USS BROUGH DE148 \***

## \$1001 - \$2500

**Joseph Burke**

## \$501 - \$1000

**Mary Carbone \* DESA Garden State Chapter \* William Long, USS HAINES DE792 \* Keith Poulsen, USS SLATER DE766 \***

## \$251 - \$500

**Al Butkus, USS HANNA DE449 \* B.J. Costello III, USS GENESEE AOG8 \* Bill Holt \***

## \$101 - \$250

**Alan Fox, USS HAYTER DE212/APD80 \* Gene Hermansen, USS THADDEUS PARKER DE369 \* Russ Padden, USS NESHOPA APA216\* Ken Poggenburg, USS HARVESON DE/DER316, USS EDMONDS DE406 \* John Rogers, USS RICHARD L. PAGE DEG5, USS JOSEPH STRAUSS DDG16 \* Roger Shields, USS O'NEILL DE188 \* Michael Traynor \***

## \$51 - \$100

**Ted Arenberg \* Ted Bogosh, USS CATES DE763 \* Kevin Burkins \* Dave Campbell \* Patrick Chaisson \* Pat Duane Lichtenberg \* Chris Duffy \* John Goodson \* John Gregory \* Charlie Hawkins \* Nancy Hopson \* Matthew Maurer \* Joe May \* John McCluskey \* Robert Mulligan Jr. \* Pattersonville Furniture Store Inc. \* Pat Perrella \* David Rothermel \* Jan Schweiger \* Agie Seife \* Fred Sirois \* Paul Slater, USS SLATER DE766 \* Michael Stretch Solecki \* Elizabeth Tremper \* Marifranis Trivelli \* Ed Wakeman, USS EDSON DD946 \* Robert Vincent \* Rick Vorhees, USS HAYNSWORTH DD700 \* Elizabeth Whitworth \* Bill Zourdos, USS EARL K. OLSEN DE765 \***

## \$26 - \$50

**105th Military Police Company Alumni Association \* Phil Bissonnette \* Roger Carter \* Paul Farace \* USS COD SS224 \* Tim Firme \* Matt Franko \* Michael Gaulin \* Jim Gelston, USS PIVOT MSO463 \* Werner Grabner, USS DELONG DE684, USS EDWARD H. ALLEN DE531, USS RIZZI DE537 \* Glenn Hill \***

**Bruce & Suzanne Hoffman, USS OSTERHAUS DE164 \* Scott Hogstad \* Nancy Holden \* Long Huynh \* Daniel Johnson \* Karen Merritt \* Jean Mulligan, USS APPLING APA58 \* Rhoda Newman, USS RHODES DE384 \* Jim Nichol \* Joan O'Neill \* Rosemary Page, USS BARR DE576/APD39 \* Jon Palmer \* Art Rahmer, USS HYMAN DD732 \* Brain Shaughnessy \* David Smith \* Dick Thurton \* Elizabeth Tremper \* Ray Wilson \***

## \$1 - \$25

**Steven Alvarado\* Janet Anderson \* Nick Ariemma\* Tom Buckley \* Sabrina Coccia \* W. Conway \* Gale Darnell, USS SILVERSTEIN DE534 \* Howard Davis \* Jon Elliott, USS STAFFORD DE411 \* Shelia Finning \* John Goss, USS CARROLL DE171 \* Bill Gruber \* William Harper \* Tony Hilliard \* Chad Johnson \* Christian Basile Kapsalakis \* Alice Kish \* Jennifer Lampman \* Grace Lasch \* Frances Lobdell \* Chris Loomis \* Lawrence Mason \* Gayle Lynn McDonald \* Michael McGarrahan \* Judy McLaughlin \* Ed McNamara \* Joseph Melrose \* Jo Ann Mulligan \* Mary Jean Mulligan \* Bill Munday \* Gregg Odell \* Jackie Orbon-Nguyen \* Kimberly O'Sullivan \* Norman Pearson \* Dolores Perricone \* Spyros Politopoulos \* Glenn Raymo \* Matt Robinson \* Rob Roth, USS HOPEWELL DD681 \* Janet Smith \* Maryellen Torrisi \***



***Doug, Dave, and Tim working on depth charge restoration.***

# Memorial Donations

Third Quarter 2020

- Paul Czesak**, USS J. DOUGLAS BLACKWOOD DE219, USS DANIEL A. JOY DE585  
RADM Harold J. Goldman, NYNM (Ret.), George Martens
- Crew of DEC 705**, USS FRYBARGER DEC705  
Charles Ames
- Frederick F. Dott**, USS WATTS DD567  
Arthur F. Dott
- James E. Everin**, USS EMERY DE28  
Carol Everin Gerrish
- Clarkson Farnsworth**, USS LEYTE CV32  
Kenneth McLaurin
- Henry G. Fox**, USS JOHN D. FORD DD228  
Laura Fox-Lyngholm
- Norbert Fraylick**, USS WINGFIELD DE194  
Jean Fraylick
- Clinton Gantt**, USS BRONSTEIN DE189  
World Wings International DFW Chapter, Anne Vanzant
- Carroll Goss**  
John C. Goss
- Bob Gray**, USS WILHOITE DE397  
USS WILHOITE Reunion Assn.
- Don B. Harris**, USS OKINAWA CV3  
William Harris
- Arthur H. Heiderman**, USS RHODES DE384  
Susan Heiderman Henschen, Bobby Gray, Blair Laird
- Sgt. Willard G. Holt**, AEF, WWI  
Bill Holt
- Robert Horne**, USS CAMBRIA APA36  
Stephen Horne
- Don C. Johnson**, USS KENDALL C. CAMPBELL DE443  
Don V. Johnson
- Joseph E. Krawczyk**, GM 3/c USNR, USS NEW YORK BB34, USS GARFIELD THOMAS DE193, USS EISNER DE193  
CAPT Greg Krawczyk USN (Ret).
- Robin Larner**, USS DAY DE225  
Pocket Pals Quilter for Foster Care, Jan Schweiger
- Leonard Curtis Laroue**, Radarman 2nd Class (T), USS RICHARD W. SUESENS DE342  
Richard Laroue
- Jay Lucas**, USS NEUNZER DE150  
Scott Lucas
- John B. "Jack" Madden Jr.**, PT304  
Arthur F. Dott, James Tkacik & Mary Krenceski
- Raymond Malengo**, USS HARTLEY DE1029  
Paul Raith
- Graydon E. Marshman**, USS THOMAS DE102  
Rick Marshman
- Charles McFarland**, USS WILHOITE DE397  
USS WILHOITE Reunion Ass.
- Hugh McMenemy**, USS ROY O. HALE DE336  
James McMenemy
- Robert Mood**, MM3, USS BROWNSON DD868  
Denis Nelson
- Donald J. Reid**, USS DIONNE DE261  
Douglas Reid
- William H. Roberts**, USS EDGAR H. CHASE DE16, USS TRUMPETER DE180  
William Roberts
- Frank Roche**, USS WILHOITE DE397  
USS WILHOITE Reunion Ass.
- Leonard Ross**, USS SWEARER DE186  
Philip Ross
- Richard Ruane**, USS MICKA DE176  
Cynthia Schmidt
- Joseph Rugani**, USS HARVESON DE316  
Geraldine Rugani
- Clifford L. Sayre Jr.**, USS HOBSON DMS 26  
Marie Cole
- Burton "Bert" Sickelsmith**, USS BRONSTEIN DE189  
Sue & Don DeRose
- Ervin Stahl**, USS ROY O. HALE DE/DER 336  
Jo Anne Stahl
- Philip Stephan**, USS EISELE DE34  
DESA Garden State Chapter
- CT. Edwin L. Swallow**, USS BUCKLEY DE51  
Louis Swallow
- Shirley Swart**  
Richard Freed
- Peter J. Tennis**, USS J. RICHARD WARD DE243  
Victor Caroddo, Thomas DiNapoli, Daniel Giordano, Michael & Lillian Giordano, Dennis & Carol Hickey, Kathryn Tennis Miller, John & Frances Mulholland, Diane Smith, John & Jean Weber
- Harold Ward**, USS GUSTAFSON DE182  
Jan Coons
- June Ward**  
Jan Coons
- Chief Waters**, MMC, USS BROWNSON DD868  
Denis Nelson
- James Winebarger**, USS WILHOITE DE397  
USS WILHOITE Reunion Assn.

# Restoration Fund Donations

Third Quarter 2020

## \$2501 - \$6000

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## \$1001 - \$2500

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Third Quarter 2020

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*The Quarterly Newsletter of the  
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**Layout & Design: Shanna Schuster**

*Volume 26, Number 3, Second Quarter 2020*

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