

**A Publication of the Evergreen Slate Company, Inc.**

## The Slaters Corner

### Winning Business With Quantity Takeoffs By Tom DeGraw

An experienced slate salesman can do a pretty fair job of estimating the number of squares a new roof will require with a few simple measurements. But developing the skill to spec an accurate materials estimate takes many years to acquire. Luckily, there is another way. A few slaters are slowly catching on to the idea of preparing a quantity takeoff directly from the architect's CAD-CAM drawings to guarantee the most accurate estimate possible.

At Evergreen Slate, Tom DeGraw, a salesman with a head for numbers and a knack for graphic design, is one such slater. Tom takes the estimating process seriously and rigorously creates his own detailed roof drawings by

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Tom DeGraw at his drafting table.

### Inside This Issue:

- The Slaters Corner. Evergreen's Tom DeGraw on How to Win Business
- Evergreen's Web Site Gets a New Look.
- Re-Roofing Cincinnati's Sisters of Mercy Convent.
- Seasoned Slaters: A Hands-On Lesson in Correct Slate Application.
- Putting A Face to a Name: Meet Evergreen's Sales Team

## Evergreen's New Look Online

As part of Evergreen's ongoing effort to provide high-quality customer service, earlier this spring, the company's web site underwent the first of a two-part redesign scheduled for 2005.

With an increasing number of Evergreen's customers going online, and the near nationwide availability of broadband Internet service,

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## Quantity Takeoffs...

importing an architect's original drawings into his own CAD-CAM program and then calculating the quantity of pieces required with a much higher level of accuracy.

There are a number of off-the-shelf software programs available for purchase, however these options are limited by the small number of inputs they allow, and have little or no ability to calculate materials required for complicated hips and ridges.

A quantity take-off is created like this: When bidding a new job, Tom first calculates the field and accessory slate...starters, hip and ridge, and valleys...based on the roof area. He then applies general industry guidelines for graduated roofs plus a bit of individual style to layout each coursing of slate in the most cost effective and eye pleasing way that he can, using the building elevation, roof pitch and specific roof dimensions.

He typically works with

graduated roof layouts, where the slates are longer and/or thicker at the eaves and diminish in length and/or thickness as the roof line progresses towards the ridge.

While this step is time consuming, the effort to blend together each length with dormers and intersecting areas results in his drawing being a cleaner depiction of the roof's final appearance and therefore a more accurate estimate of the quantity of slate required. "It would be difficult to be successful in quoting or supplying the proper slate quantities without at least a preliminary layout," says Tom.

The last step is to prepare a graduated roof drawing, where Tom will generate a final layout which specifies each coursing position, starter sizes and head lap, if other than the standard three inches.

It is this final step where the CAD-CAM software compliments

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## Quantity Takeoffs...

Tom's meticulous layouts, to give him a much more accurate estimate.

Copies of Tom's work are then distributed to the architect, general contractor, roofer and building owner, where they each have the opportunity to comment, ask questions, make changes and ultimately approve the roof design and layout.

This valued-added service is available to all of Evergreen's customers. The final product goes a long way in demonstrating to Evergreen's customers how committed

we are to excellent service, while the reduced potential for over or under-ordering, saves the customer time and money.

Tom estimates that by employing this approach, that he can generate a materials quote to within 2% to 3% of the final cost of the roofing materials, versus an industry average of maybe 10%.

In a business where customer service is paramount, it's this type of effort that creates and maintains a repeat customer. Thanks, Tom!

*"By employing this value-added service, that he can generate a quote to within 2% to 3% of the final cost of the roofing materials."*

## Web Site...

phase one's objective was to offer a faster-loading and easier to navigate web site.

Visitors to the Evergreen web site, be they architects, builders, facilities manager, roofers or home owners, will now more easily find the technical and product-related information they are seeking, and will also find more of it. "With so many of our customers now using the Internet, it was important for Evergreen to stay ahead of the curve," explains Sales Manager and 18-year Evergreen sales veteran, Jo Anne Baker. "We invest a lot of time answering customers' technical questions, so it makes great sense to use our web site to keep everyone up-to-

date with information on all of our products and services."

The second phase of the redesign will build on the new site architecture, by adding web tools, such as a quick-order engine, a calculator to estimate installation materials and an email form to submit technical questions.

Also, to follow the old adage that a picture is worth a thousand words, we will be publishing a steady supply of photos of in-process and completed jobs to show-case the quality and variety of work Evergreen's skilled employees undertake.

Please visit the new web site; Let us know if you can't find what you are looking for, or if we can add more or better information to make your job easier. That's our goal!

*"With so many of our customers now using the Internet, it was important for Evergreen to stay ahead of the curve."*

## Evergreen Slate Graces Turn-of-the-Century Convent

By Cherie Downey

Sisters of Mercy is a religious order, founded in Dublin, Ireland in 1827, which devotes its work to the areas of education and health care.

The Sisters of Mercy convent in Cincinnati, Ohio, was built in the early 1900s, and had a Pennsylvania black slate roof which was at the end of its service life. When the roof began leaking, the decision was made

to replace the entire roof with a superior quality Vermont black slate, provided by the Evergreen Slate Company and installed by Durable Slate Company of Cincinnati, Ohio.

Durable ordered from Evergreen twenty-five squares of Vermont black slate because the color so closely matched the original roof, and it offered a far longer service life. The color of Vermont black slate is attractive



*“The entire roof was replaced with superior quality Vermont black slate.”*



because of the striations and texture not found in other black slates.

Terne-coated stainless steel metal components were chosen for the pewter color of this metal, which would pick up and compliment the pewter shades of the striations in the slate. This color play between the

slate and the metal enhanced the overall appearance of the roof and also served to create a unifying effect. Other details of the project included relining the box gutters and installing new downspouts.

The job also required the fabrication of an ornamental ridge crest

## Convent...

to match the original installation. This work involved fabricating, not only the ridge material itself, but also the diamond-shaped appliques which were individually hand-soldered onto the custom ridge roll.

Finally, the dormer cornices were replaced with the terne-coated stainless steel, while the upper flat roof was covered in a flat-lock installation of the same material.

Durable Slate has offices in Columbus, Cincinnati, and Cleveland and frequently uses Evergreen Slate products for important installations.

**Cherie Downey is Director of Public Relations at Durable Slate. She can be reached at 800-666-7445.**



**Terne-Coated Ridge on Vermont Black Slate.**

## Seasoned Slaters

### A Young Hand Imparts Some Valuable Knowledge

By Fred Whitridge

On April 14, 2005 the sales staff of Evergreen Slate Co., Inc. picked up their slate hammers and refreshed their knowledge of how to apply a slate roof under the watchful gaze of Brian Stearns.

Brian hails from Stowe, Vermont, is a former slate roofer, principal of Alpine Snow Guards, coauthor of *"The Slate Book"* and outspoken rain maker, *err*, proponent for the entire slate industry. The crew found his last name apt, as he was a very 'stern' no-nonsense taskmaster with his budding crew.

The job in question is a breezeway connecting the "east

wing"--a modular office building--to the main office of Evergreen Slate.

Since we are bursting at the seams with additional personnel and enjoying a great year, it was time to add more office space and a slate roof to offset the (leaky) flat rubber membrane roof of the trailer.

While only about two square in total, this was a chance to get out and "walk the talk". Among the following, here are 10 things we learned or heard from Brian:

- 1) "Always use a cant strip." Brian brought some interesting new material that Alpine and Evergreen are considering for the task.
- 2) "Always cover the cant strip at the eave edge with a formed copper drip

*"Hey Fred, this is a RANDOM roof. Why are you using all the widest slates on your side?"*

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## Seasoned Slaters...

edge." Brian keeps talking about inventing and co-marketing (with Evergreen) an integrated cant/drip edge, and we hope he will.

3) "Fred, this is a RANDOM roof. Why are you using all the widest slates on your side?"

4) "If you'd listen to what I tell you, and trim the slate before you try punching the nail holes, we would be saving some time."

5) "Don't bang on those slates. Try to hit the nail occasionally! It looks like you guys think you own a slate company...."

6) "Any problem with slate application can always be traced back to the roof framer."

7) "Why are you dropping all these nails on the ground? They are meant for the two holes in the slate."

8) "You better take off that piece of

slate that's nailed too tight or [insert name of your favorite slater] will look at the roof when he visits Evergreen and say 'Stearns messed that up.'"

9) "Did you tap that slate with a hammer before nailing it on to make sure it had a good ring?" Brian NEVER forgets to ring every piece of slate.

10) "Roofing bosses like me make our crew eat lunch up here on the roof because if I let you go down, there's no telling when I'll see you back up on the roof."

Both teacher and students had a fun day. This is a tight roof and hasn't leaked a drop yet. We were delighted to see all of the sales staff pitch in on the roof with talented help from various yard personnel.

Curiously, R. Clark Hicks and Jo Anne Baker, Evergreen's Sales Manager, didn't appear on the job even though they were in the office that day.

Later both claimed that someone had to stay by the phones to take all of your orders.

Thanks Brian, and don't forget to send us some of your retrofit snow guards, which we will gladly install on this roof with whatever spacing your spec calls out.

**Fred Whitridge is President of Evergreen Slate Company.**

*"Any problem with slate application can always be traced back to the roof framer."*

**Training Day....Brian Stearns (center).... makes it all look easy.**



## Putting A Face to a Name

### Meet the Evergreen Sales Team

Evergreen's sales team speaks to hundreds of customers each week, fielding technical questions for new customers or offering up some sage advice to a repeat customer. Their job doesn't afford the luxury of frequent trips to meet everyone face-to-face, and they feel fortunate to when they *can* connect with a customer in person at a trade show or job site.

We'd like our customers to know the sales team first hand, so here is a brief introduction to the team, to help you put a face to a name.

Evergreen's sales team is managed by 18-year Evergreen veteran, Jo Anne Baker. Despite her casual way, there's not much that Jo Anne can't tell you about the slate business. She has worked with customers all over the U.S., as well as in Canada and the United Kingdom. Over the years Jo Anne has developed a keen sense of what works and what doesn't, which has trained her to work closely with architects and builders to steer projects in the right direction from the onset.

Jo Anne is equally skilled in working on large commercial and municipal projects, as she is working on restoration jobs, where she has been known to climb up on the roof to make sure that the color chosen is

as close a match as possible to the original slate.

Working with her are Tom DeGraw (see story on Page 1) and Tom Collard. Tom D. arrived at Evergreen in 2002 with a degree in applied engineering, five years of work as a mechanical designer, and 17 years of work in sales. His time is split between sales, drafting and estimating.

Tom C. joined Evergreen in 1999 and quickly learned the slate business; Tom works on a range of job types and sizes and has proven himself to be very adept at answering detailed technical questions in plain English.

Rounding out the group is Mike Bache who joined Evergreen this spring, and Jan Edwards, already a seasoned slater, who came from Hilltop Slate in May following Evergreen's recent agreement with Hilltop to market a range of its Welsh slate products.

Last is Chris Bean, who joined Evergreen after a career in the financial services business. Chris was promoted to General Manager this spring, and despite his company-wide responsibilities, still makes time to take sales calls to help out the others.

Customers can reach the sales team at [sales@evergreenslate.com](mailto:sales@evergreenslate.com) or toll free at 866-USA-SLATE.



**Tom Collard - Giving technical answers in plain English.**



**Jo Anne speaking to the sales staff of White Plains, NY-based New Castle Building Products.**

*"We'd like our customers to know the sales team first hand."*

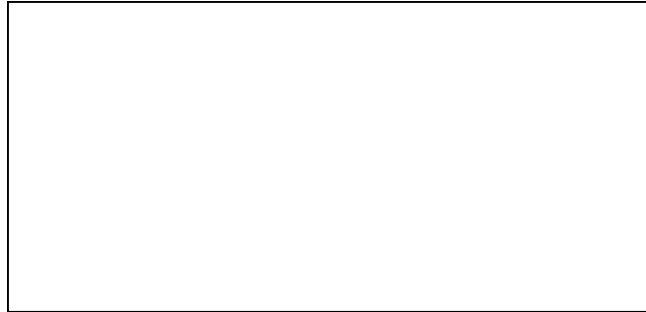


**Vice President & General Manager, Chris Bean.**



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## Readers Forum

SLATETALK wants to hear from its readers and welcomes comments about current articles, as well as submissions for future editions. Email may be sent to [mflower@evergreenslate.com](mailto:mflower@evergreenslate.com).

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What topics would you like to see covered in SLATETALK? \_\_\_\_\_

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## Jobs At Evergreen Slate Company

Evergreen Slate is looking for experienced slate sales people to cover a variety of regional markets. Evergreen offers competitive compensation packages based on industry experience and previous work. If you are interested in working for the leading slate business in the U.S., please send your resume and cover letter to:

Chris Bean, Vice President & General Manager  
68 East Potter Avenue, P.O. Box 248,  
Granville, NY 12832-0248, or by email to  
[cbean@evergreenslate.com](mailto:cbean@evergreenslate.com).

## SLATETALK - Summer/Fall Issue

The next issue will be available in September, and will include a look at Evergreen's new line of structural and interior slate, and showcase more completed and current roofing projects.