

JGTSCA



John Gardner Traditional Small Craft Association

Welcome to the John Gardner Chapter of the
Traditional Small Craft Association

Visit us at the Community Boat House: Building #36 UCONN Avery Point
1084 Shennecossett Rd, Groton, CT 06340

Current Activities: **Winter Maintenance on Rowing Craft**
at UCONN Avery Point Boat House Building 36

**Next formal Meeting: Sunday, April 6th at 1:30 pm at UCONN Avery
Point Community Boat Building #36
1084 Shennecossett Road Groton, CT 06340**

Rowing and Sailing gatherings occur during the three seasons with special
programs and visits planned throughout the year. All are welcome.

Local: www.facebook.com/JGTSCA and <http://www.jgtsc.org>

National: www.TSCA.net

Escape the Winter Blues in Newport, RI

by John Hacunda



SSV Oliver Hazard Perry

The biting wind howls, the threat of snow is ever present, and the sun seems to have forgotten how to shine. Sound familiar? If you're longing for a reprieve from the dreary winter blues, consider a trip to Newport, Rhode Island.

For maritime enthusiasts, the "City by the Sea" offers a variety of activities to pass a winter day. Newport is renowned as the "Sailing Capital of the World," you can delve into its rich sailing history by visiting The Sailing Museum (www.thesailingmuseum.org). Explore fascinating exhibits showcasing the city's legendary yacht races, iconic figures like Harold S. Vanderbilt, and the evolution of sailing technology.

Stroll down to Bowen's Wharf where the tall ship SSV Oliver Hazard Perry is docked for the winter. The OHP (www.ohpri.org) is a 207-foot, three-masted square-rigged ship and is the largest privately owned civilian sail training vessel in the US. Serving as Rhode Island's Official Sailing School Vessel, she acts as a "floating classroom," integrating STEAM education with hands-on sailing experiences.

By now, you may want to escape the chill by popping into a local seafood restaurant where you can warm up with a bowl of creamy clam chowder.

If you're ready to explore further, continue down Thames St. where you will find the IYRS School of Technology & Trades campus (www.iyrs.edu). Enter the center building and take the stairway up to the second-floor balcony, where you can watch boatbuilding apprentices hard at work on their boat projects.

The IYRS Maritime Library is a hidden treasure open to the public. The library's collection includes books, plans, photographs, films, and artifacts related to maritime heritage with a focus on Newport and Rhode Island. You will find the comfortable reading room on the fourth floor of the John Mecray Aquidneck Mill Building.

There's much more to explore in Newport, including the famous Cliff Walk and mansions, lighthouses, and scenic Ocean Drive, so consider a day trip during the quiet season to enjoy Newport's many charms.



Oldest apprentice in history (volunteering on the Oliver Hazard Perry) and Keeping traditional wooden boat skills alive at the IYRS

Solstice Row

Snow, wind, and poor clothing made for an abbreviated Solstice Row this year. However, a few stalwarts were still able to navigate to The Harp and Hound for some holiday cheer.



JGTSCA 2025 Kickoff Meeting

A good turnout to celebrate the New Year and plan our activities for the coming year.

Ben Ellcome described the efforts of the New London Community Boatworks (NLCB) to create a multi-dimensional program with the goal of developing young men and women using boats as a source of inspiration. NLCB hopes to provide kids, 13 – 24, with the hands-on experience they need to develop leadership skills, problem-solving ability and self-confidence which they can then apply to their own lives.



Upcoming Events:

Boat Builders Show on Cape Cod

Fri Jan 31st 2:00pm - Sun Feb 2nd 10:00am

Hyport Conference Center, 35 Scudder Avenue, Hyannis, MA 02601 [map](#)



The Boat Builders Show on Cape Cod was created 19 years ago to showcase the boats built by smaller, independent boat builders. It is one of the few boat shows in the country dedicated to providing these builders an opportunity to showcase their work and demonstrate to the boating public the level of quality and personal service that is available.

<https://www.boatbuildersshowcc.com>

The Catboat Association's Annual Meeting

Friday Evening, February 7, 2025 - Sunday Morning, February 9 , 2025

Mystic Marriott Hotel & Spa, Groton, Connecticut; Route I-95; Exit 88

Feature Presentation: The Race to Alaska: The incredible story of sailing a Marshall 18 from Port Townsend Washington to Ketchikan Alaska

at Mystic Seaport Museum:

Winter Hours: Thursday through Sunday 10 am - 5 pm

Enter through North Entrance

View Events and Exhibits:

<https://secure.mysticseaport.org>

Coopering for Beginners

Saturdays, January 18, 25, and February 1 | 9:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m.

Valentine's Day Tea

Monday, February 10 | 3:00–6:00 p.m.

[Full SeaClass schedule here, including newly added classes in wood carving and letterpress printing.](#)

Shipyard Tour

Fridays, January 10, 17, 24 and 31 | 2:00–3:30 p.m.

Pushing the Limits: Dan Walsh's Olympic Journey from Norwalk to Beijing

Thursday, January 16 | 1:30–3:00 p.m.

Newfoundland Dog Training

Saturday, January 18 | 10:00 a.m.–3:00 p.m.

Modern Celestial Navigation: Sextants and Sun Sights

Saturday, January 25 and Sunday, January 26 | 10:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m.

Special Events:

Winter Shipyard Tour

Every Friday, January 3 through March 14 | 2:00–3:30 p.m.

Ever wondered what is behind the ropes in the Museum's Henry B. du Pont Preservation Shipyard? Join us this winter for small group guided tours of the Shipyard's machine shop and rigging loft, and interact with our skilled shipwrights as they describe the work they are doing on this winter's projects, including the *L. A. Dunton*, *Susan Constant*, and more. This also makes a special gift for that someone who has everything! Purchase [tickets](#).

Adventure Series Lectures:

January 16, February 20, March 20, April 17

January 16, 1:30 and 7:00 p.m. |

Pushing the Limits: Dan Walsh's Olympic Journey from Norwalk to Beijing

February 20, 1:30 p.m. | Sailing Through Stories: Pieter Roos Brings Mystic Seaport Museum Collections to Life

March 20, 7:00 p.m. | Sailing Through Stories: Pieter Roos Brings Mystic Seaport Museum Collections to Life

April 17, 1:30 and 7:00 p.m. | Chasing Gold: Maggie Shea's Olympic Path to the Tokyo and Paris Olympics

Members \$20 | Non-members \$25

Location: StoneRidge, 186 Jerry Browne Rd, Mystic, Connecticut, 06355

Latest JGTSCA Meeting Minutes:

by Peter Vermilya

John Gardner Chapter of TSCA

Quarterly Business Meeting

January 5th, 2025

Present: Dan Nelson, John Hacunda, Ben Ellcome, Maeve Ellcome, Ian Bradley, Phil Behney, Bill Rutherford, Ellie Czarnowski, Matt Mckenzie, Victoria Burdick

President Ian Bradley called the meeting to order at 1:30pm

New London Community Boatworks presentation

Ben Ellcome described the efforts of the New London Community Boatworks (NLCB) to create a multi-dimensional program with the goal of developing young men and women using boats as a source of inspiration. NLCB hopes to provide kids, 13 – 24, with the hands-on experience they need to develop leadership skills, problem solving ability and self-confidence which they can then apply to their own lives. Although NLCB means to concentrate on boats and boat building, boat building is a means to an end. The end is to build kids, not necessarily to build or restore boats. Very much in its development stage. NLCB is pursuing 501-c-3 status and establishing a web presence. NLCB has reached out to a large number of community groups, including Mystic Seaport and Snediker Yacht Restoration LLC, for advice and support. The response has been overwhelmingly positive. Ben promised to keep JGTSCA up to date on NLCB's development.

Treasurer's report

Treasurer Ellie Czarnowski reported that the club had a bank balance of \$16,016.48 as of December of 2024, of which \$10,000 consists of the Sid Whelan fund money.

Members voted to approve a donation of \$150.00 to the New London Maritime Society and a payment to UCONN of \$1.00 for use of the JGTSCA boat house.

Sidney Whelan Fund

Members voted to create a subcommittee to develop guidelines for dispersal of Sidney Whelan's donation in accordance with his wishes. Peter Vermilya, Bill Rutherford, Ellie Czarnowski and Ian Bradley volunteered to serve.

Events

Phil Behney reported that this year's Solstice Row was cancelled because of inclement weather.

JGTSCA boats, boat house, and equipment

Phil Behney reported that work is proceeding with the club's dories. Unfortunately, John Unverzagt, the primary mover in the repair and maintenance efforts, has been called away on business.

Members voted in favor of Phil's idea of moving the Susan B Holland to a location in the shop which would make it easier to roll her out of the shop for active use.

Members also agreed that Aiden Davies be allowed to use space in the shop over the winter to work on his John Gardner built dory.

Club members voted to give Ian Bradley permission to borrow the club's trailer to move his boat to Matt McKenzie's house in Old Lyme. He would like to keep the trailer there until approximately May 1st. In return, Ian will overhaul the bearings, hubs, wheels, bunks, and hitch points as needed. Any member who needs to use the trailer before it gets returned to the Avery Pt clubhouse should contact Ian.

Members voted to adjourn the meeting at 2:44pm

Respectfully submitted,

Peter Vermilya,

JGTSCA Secretary

Avery Point Boathouse News:

by Matt McKenzie

Oh, there is news from the shop!

“Small Crafter Christmas Miracle,” by Matthew McKenzie, JGTSCA Shop Manager

As the winter winds finally breezed in during a mid-December weekend, I stood astride the foredeck of my new 14' Fisher Cat, the 18' mast precariously vertical against my shoulder and wheeling about in the breeze as I sought in vain to land the mast heel tenon into the keel mortise. Before I lost control and opened the foredeck like a sardine tin, I safely brought the mast back down onto the deck and sought better ways.

Eventually, I settled on a rapid-deployment sheer leg system slung from the back of my Jeep: two 16' long 2x4s with a block and tackle at the apex, I hoped, would be tall enough to grab the mast just above the balance point, allowing me to single-handedly step the mast. If I was clever, I could run the haul line aft to the mainsheet cam cleat once the mast heel was between the partners. Cleated off, I could then crawl under the deck, line in hand, uncleat it, and lower it gently into place under the guidance of my other free hand.

“What could go wrong?” I concluded, when I told this plan to an old friend with lots of field experience in this sort of thing.

“Dude, I’m giving that a hard no. I’ll design and make you some hinge system.”

I had considered a tabernacle early on, but I was not comfortable cutting up the original mast. And rigging up some janky sheer-legs was a lot easier and cheaper than building a new mast for the purpose—hence my pursuit of the janky sheer leg idea.

I asked him to hold off, for I was pretty sure some other small boater faced a similar problem. But coming as it did right before Christmas, my friend’s unqualified rejection of my idea left me sad and wondering if ever I would be able to trailer my new boat as I had hoped.

With three days before Christmas, clouds were forming over my coming boating season. I resigned myself to building a new mast over the winter, but faced more dejection when no local lumber yard had the spruce I wanted to use. And I still wasn’t sure about the hinge design itself. I also called Geoff at Marshall Catboats to see if they would do it, and while they have in the past, they were not thrilled with the idea, and it would be pretty spendy. I needed help.

Wrapping a football in Christmas garland and ribbons, I lobbed a Hail Mary email out to the TSCA and anyone else I knew afflicted with the love of small boats. “Does anyone have a hinge idea for a small catboat? And while you’re at it, a spare 18' x 4" diameter mast?”

Within an hour, I saw a response from smallcrafter@gmail.com: “Why, I do indeed have a 4" diameter catboat mast,” Bill’s email stated; “and I also have the steel plates—already machined—to do what I think you’re planning to do.” Charles Dickens could not have written a more apropos scene to illustrate the power of Christmas miracles in southern New England. I went into the holiday with a plan for getting my new boat on the water. Where else in the world would this have happened?

I am happy to report that, with the help of the local Dingy Cruising Association member Cate Dolan, the tabernacle is almost complete: photos below. Extensive uses of levels, and the

creative application of a floor jack, ensured all the holes lined up (which blew my mind—I was not expecting things to work as well as they did), and it should be done and dusted by next week.

Thank you, Bill, and the entire TSCA community; and to paraphrase Dickens, “May God bless us smallcrafters, each and every one.”



Mystic Seaport Boat Livery Mystic Seaport Museum News

In the News:



"Bound for Mystic" –Sam Houghton, *Martha's Vineyard Times*

Mystic Seaport Museum is excited to welcome the *Sfogliatelle*, a handmade replica of the 19th-century Nomans Land fishing boats, to its collection. Crafted entirely with hand tools by Giancarlo D'Antonio of Martha's Vineyard, this 20-foot wooden sailboat spotlights a significant part of the history of Vineyard fishing. The *Sfogliatelle* will be featured in the upcoming Wells Boat Hall exhibit, opening next fall. Learn more about its story through the Martha's Vineyard Museum's oral history channel on YouTube. From the Mailbag

A Seasonal Favorite: Make Your Own Suet

Attract winter birds! Learn to tell the difference between a Hairy and a Downy Woodpecker (hint: the Hairy has a longer bill, for starters...). And for any birds that happen to be Vegetarians with **this vegetarian version** of suet (traditionally it's made from rendered animal fat) you can provide the perfect winter substitute for birds that normally feast on insects. **This lipid-rich treat** can help prepare year-round residents for the long winter and is quite the draw for birds such as woodpeckers, wrens, chickadees, nuthatches, and titmice. **Check out this recipe**, inspired by "The Misfit Baker" blog.

Materials:

- 1 1/2 cups shortening (look for palm oil free options)
- 3/4 cups nut butter (any kind)
- 3 1/2 cups wild bird seed
- 1 cup quick oats
- 1/2 cup corn meal
- Ice cube tray

Steps:

1. Mix the dry ingredients of bird seed, oats, and corn meal together and set aside.
2. Combine the shortening and nut butter in a separate bowl and melt. Stir until completely combined.
3. Pour the melted mixture into the dry ingredients and stir until combined.
4. Spoon mixture into the ice cube tray.
5. Freeze for one to two hours and place in your suet feeder!

Note: Not recommended for outdoor temperatures above 50 degrees .

From: [https://www.audubon.org/news/make-your-own-suet?ms=ct-x-email-ea-x-engagement\(ct\)january2024enews&utm_source=Aa&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=engagement\(ct\)january2024enews](https://www.audubon.org/news/make-your-own-suet?ms=ct-x-email-ea-x-engagement(ct)january2024enews&utm_source=Aa&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=engagement(ct)january2024enews)

Or, take Advice from Dan Nelson: buy your beef fat at Mystic McQuade's...

And, if you are fortunate enough to have **Bluebirds** over-winter in your backyard, help them out. ... A crumbly mix of such bluebird favorites as peanut butter, sunflower seed chips, dehydrated cherry bits and rendered suet, this Bluebird Banquet is a balanced food that bluebirds prefer it nearly two to one.

Advertisements

We're thinning our Herd...Catboat "Cactus Wren" cold molded 15' Harbinger design by Phil Bolger \$8800, Skin on Frame Platt Monfort 12' double ended canoe and Seaport 12' Three Plank Canoe free to a worthy home and, Special Deal: Free to good home: "Presto" Footy Model Kit, Plans and How to Build Book from WoodenBoat Store as designed by Flavio Faloci. Just convince me you'll build it in time for Mystic Seaport Ship Modelers Show in Summer of 2025. Bill Rutherford smallcrafter@gmail.com

Remember Your Dues

Send \$15 to Ellie Czarnowski for LOCAL CHAPTER JOHN GARDNER TSCA dues:

Use the On Line Join & Renew form at www.JGTSCA.org click on “More” and “Join or Renew” and Mail in the form with your check to the following:

JGTSCA Treasurer
Community Boat Building #36
UCONN Avery Point Campus
1084 Shennecossett Road, Groton, CT 06340

And \$35 for NATIONAL TSCA MEMBERSHIP (remember, they pay our event Insurance): Join and Renew Online at www.tasca.net and receive a copy of the “Ash Breeze”. Click on “Join and Renew” to either join on line or print a form and mail in with your check.

Beetle Cat Model by Thomas Lauria

From Russ Jinishian’s shop at 152 Water Street in Stonington Borough:



Beetle Catboat, c. 1920
Class A Scratch-built Model Scale 1:24
12.75” Long, 8.75” Wide, 15” High

The hull is carved from a single piece of basswood. All the applied details, along with the spars, are white holly or boxwood. Rigging fiber is linen and nichrome wire, and brass for the hardware. The model is in a case made from cherry moldings with an interior of painted MDF. The nameplate is a piece of old piano key. The dust cover is brass bound glass.

\$2,900

Stop in for a visit. Gallery hours are usually Tuesday through Saturday, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

To Schedule an Appointment, just email Russ at: rjinishian@gmail.com or call: Gallery: 860-245-4400; or Mobile: 203-521-1099

Thanks, Russ for sharing!

See more at <https://www.jrusselljinishianguallery.com/thomas-j-lauria/beetle-catboat-c-1921>

From the Side Deck

That’s it for this month, folks. Feel free to reach out to our officers with ideas for Spring/ Summer activities or email Bill & Karen Rutherford smallcrafter@gmail.com . Articles & Photos most welcome. Remember, this is your Chapter; get active and get involved!