

# JGTSCA

## John Gardner Traditional Small Craft Association



Welcome to John Gardner  
**Traditional Small Craft Association**

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

**Good Little Skiff & Dory Maintenance**  
from 5:00 pm Fridays, at UCONN Avery Point Boat house Building 36  
**Next Meeting: Sunday, December 8th at 12:30 pm**  
Holiday Potluck with Meeting to follow at the New London Maritime  
Society's Custom House, 150 Bank Street, New London 06320

Local: [www.JGTSCA.org](http://www.JGTSCA.org) [www.facebook.com/JGTSCA](https://www.facebook.com/JGTSCA)  
National: [www.TSCA.net](http://www.TSCA.net)

### New Traditional Craft Right In Our Own Backyard



After driving to Brooklin, Maine twice this summer to spend time in the “Wooden Boat Capitol of the World”, or so the sign says when entering town, I was pleasantly surprised to meet Ted Beck who advised that he was about to launch his recently completed CLC Skeery! His garage is literally a Maine Potato’s throw from our front porch. The boat is beautifully built and finished to perfection. Most importantly, she floats on her lines and sails smoothly in the cool fall water. We often meet Ted on our morning walks, he with his crew of two lovely lades, resplendent in their white coats as they immediately sit and wait to have their ears rubbed by anyone who passes. Who knew he was building such a salty craft just one street over?



And here is Clay Burkhalter, proud owner of a Rob Pittaway designed Stonington Pulling Boat, freshly refinished, gleaming in the late fall sun. This taken just days before he departed on a big-boat delivery to Antigua. He is usually seen heading out in his high tech Axopar power launch to catch the bright colors of a day's setting sun. Perhaps soon we will see him piloting his photo drone from the sliding seat of this sleek craft. He plans a drop-in Piantadosi rowing unit complete with 9-1/2 ft. sculls. Clay is partners with Dave Eck in the Dog Watch Cafe; catch his latest photos on the Cafe walls after their annual January spruce-up or at [ClayBurkhalterPhotos.com](http://ClayBurkhalterPhotos.com).



A progress photo of Clay's boat: note the complete sand-down and addition of internal flotation tanks. The craft is an original built back in the '80's by Peter Freeman, another local icon, and carefully preserved out under some trees in his back yard after his small craft boatyard burned down. Clay's efforts have inspired Peter to pull out the last remaining hull in his collection and bring it back to life. Stay tuned for a photo. On light air summer evenings Peter often rows circles around the Wednesday Afternoon Races fleet in one of his rowing boats. We look forward he and Clay again doing so in style.

## Meanwhile, Our Culler Good Little Skiff Build Continues

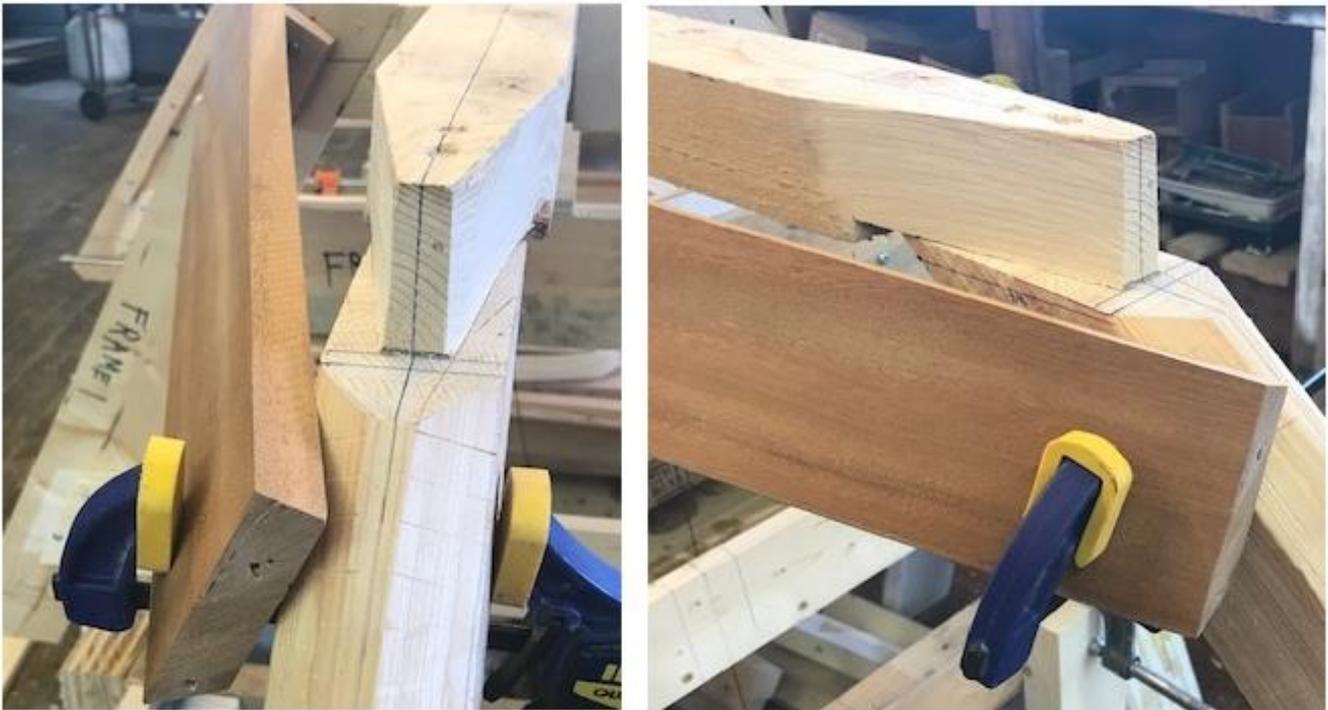
Oct 25 & 27th: A Tale of Two Days (with apologies to Charles Dickens)

A Report by Brian Cooper: On Chines, Planks, Stem and Transom

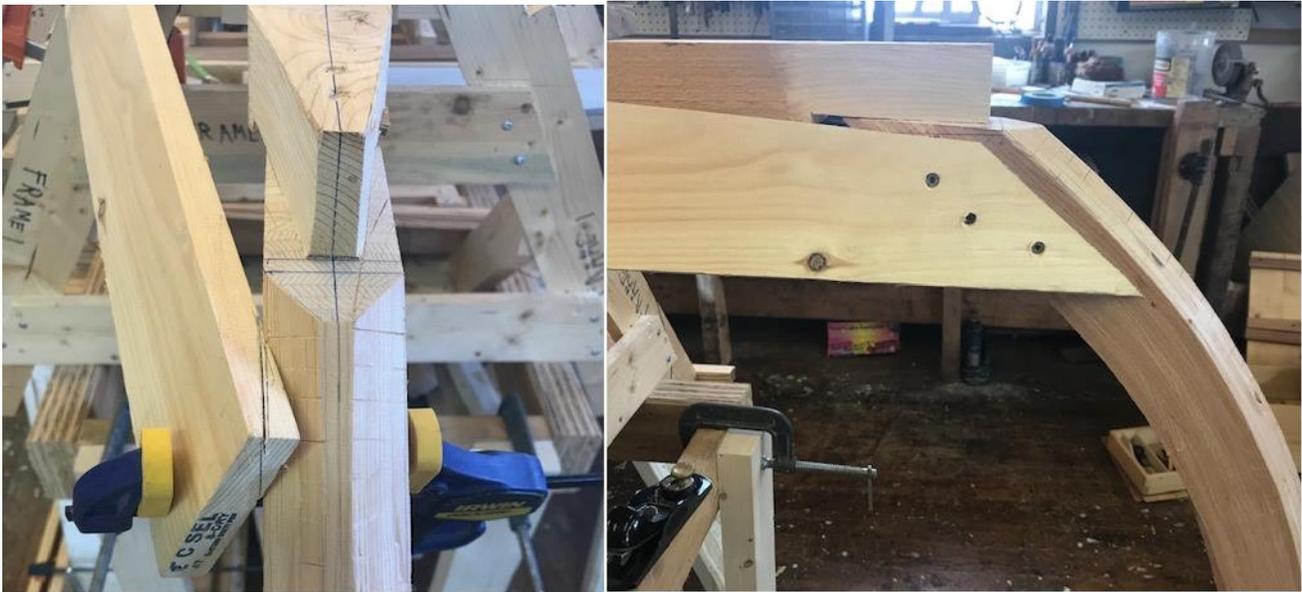
Friday was beautiful day at the shop. Sun shining and warm. Sunday was a dark and dreary day which turned cold and wet with rain in the afternoon.

### Attaching the Chine to the Stem

I worked Friday from 8:00 to 12:00 on one of the chines. Here are pictures of the Chine clamped to the Stem. The Chine is beveled to fit flush to the back of the Stem and positioned so the Plank will land on the Stem rebate.



I used a scrap piece of pine to practice making the bevel. The process is to saw the Chine using the back of the Stem as a guide.  
The finished joint.



A saw cut is started by using the back of the Stem as a guide. A line drawn on Chine using a straight edge held against the Chine and then continued down the front of the Chine. The cut is started with the Chine in clamped in place. The clamp is removed to complete the cut. Multiple cuts must be made to arrive at the final bevel.

I checked the finished joint by clamping a “plank” to the Chine. The plank was a piece of plywood. The plank lays flush to the chine until it hits the back of the rough bevel on the stem. You can see there is a gap between the chine and the plank. The rough stem bevel will be refined by planing the stem so that the plank lies flush to the chine and the plank has full contact with the stem.



## Checking the Chine and the Frame Cutouts

Sunday I spent the day checking that the Chine was properly positioned on the frames. I had to make a few adjustments (shim or remove material from some frames).

If the Chine is properly positioned then the garboard plank will be flush with the Chine and also be flush with the Frame.

Flush with the Chine Flush with the Frame clamped a Plank to the Chine to check the fit. The plank is a 1x8x10ft pine board planed to 1/2 inch thick.

I checked for fit in three places. Solid contact is preferred but small gaps will be okay as the bedding compound will fill in any voids and prevent water from getting into the wood.

No gap between the Plank and the Chine along the bottom.  
Plank is flush against the Frame.

At the top of the Plank the Chine is flush to the plank.



**Come join the Build:** Contact Brian Cooper to get on his email list of dates and times when he will be at the Community Boathouse, Building 36, UCONN Avery Point. Cut, fit and strategize as we progress through planking.

## Oar & Sail Outing at Bluff Point

September 14th dawned cloudy and cool with a hint of rain in the air, one of those days it would have been easy to stay at home and do chores, but we escaped to row and sail the beautiful Poquonock River which flows alongside Bluff Point State Park. It also flows along the Groton-New London Airport but the old Seaplane base is long closed and the few private planes joined in the fun with a wing wag or two. The sun came out. A sea breeze sprang up. Life was good; we would have missed all this if we had stayed home.

We used local knowledge (thanks Dan Nelson) and launched at the Calvin Burrows Baseball Field just off South Road before going under the railroad. It is the railroad bridge over the River that makes this place perfect for our type of boating. The sequence was: launch, row under the rail bridge, row on to pass through the old trolley line bridge abutments, beach on the airport side to raise sail and then sail to the barrier beach where the river meets the sea. It also helps that the chart shows depths ranging for 4 ft. to 2 ft. to 0 ft. - it keeps the motorboats at bay.



First, the Participants: Ellie Czarnowski with her Skeery and two sea-going puppy dogs, René Boelig, able crew on our Peapod, Brian Cooper with his fabric-on-frame Whitehall, John Hacunda with his bright yellow kayak made from traditional recycled soda bottles and myself, Bill Rutherford, Chief instigator.

And the Destination:



The Sailors: Brian's fabric Whitehall with an experimental sail, the Peapod and Ellie's elegant Skerry:



The high point of the day was Ellie becoming comfortable sailing the Skeery. Given confidence by the group, Ellie sailed her home all the way upriver from the beach. That is what going out on the water with our group is all about; you do not have to be a stellar sailor, paddler or row with your oars feathered inches above the water to have a good time and perhaps learn a few new tricks from others. Mark your calendar for the the second Saturday in September, next, as the English say, and plan to join us for this relaxing, fun outing.

## The Pine Island Cleanup Lunch

Ellie Czarnowski organized a delicious lunch to energize the UCONN Avery Point Eco-Huskies returning from their annual Pine Island Cleanup. Under the leadership of Prof. Syma Ebbin two skiffs were piled high with trash and treasures, a very successful day. Brian Cooper did duty flipping burgers while Ellie presided over a hot, healthy lunch. The students were a tad late, something about one skiff getting lost and circumnavigating the island (didn't they have cell phones? "Yes, we talked, but still could not see each other."). No worries; all had a fine lunch before scurrying off to Class, Professor included.



This is a fine activity for our Chapter; we support the school, the students and the environment. In past years the cleanup was held on Earth Day; this year it moved to Fall to clean up the Summer's use of Pine Island, a beautiful island just off Bushy Point. A big thank you to Ellie and Brian, Syma and the Eco-Huskies. Plan to volunteer next year; the hamburgers are hand-formed, juicy and delicious.



## JGTSCA Monthly Activities 2019-2020

### January

- **Meeting Saturday, Jan. 5th:** Activity: Seaport Chantey Blast and Pub Sing
- **Jan 12th:** Tour Mystic Seaport's Watercraft Hall w/ Mystic Seaport Ship Modelers
- **Avery Point Boat House (APBH) Project:** Complete John G's Dory

### February

- **Meeting Friday, Feb. 1st:** Topic: Activity Ideas
- **APBH Project:** Bill Armitage's Melonseed
- **Other:** Start leathering new club dory oars

### March

- **Oar Leathering:** Friday, starting at 5:00 pm March 1st, Avery Point Boathouse (APBH).
- **Potluck & Meeting Sunday, 12:30 pm March 3rd** at APBH followed by Visit to UCONN's Research Vessel "Connecticut"
- **Full Moon Row:** 4 pm March 22nd at Mystic Shipyard East; Bill Armitage Leads.
- **APBH Project:** Bill Armitage's Melonseed

### April

- **Meeting Friday, April 5th:** Topic: Visit to Frank Lavigueur's Ketch Rebuild
- **APBH Projects:** Loft Good Little Skiff and Bill Armitage's Melonseed
- **UCONN Avery Point Earth Day Celebration** 11:30 am to 1:30 pm on the Campus Green; in Student Center in case of rain. Ellie Czarnowski, Lead;
- **Visit to Herreshoff Museum Opening Day:** Sunday April 28th - Dane Rochelle
- **Other:** - Turk's Heads on new Club Dory oar leathers - Fridays

### May

- **Meeting Friday, May 3rd:** Topic: Good Little Skiff Lofting
- **APBH Projects:** Good Little Skiff Build and JGTSCA Dory Maintenance
- **May Full Moon Row Friday, May 17th:** to Sandy Point to observe Horseshoe Crabs

### June

- **Meeting Friday, June 7th:** Topic: Planning the John Gardner Small Craft Workshop
- **APBH Projects:** Good Little Skiff Build and Dory Maintenance
- **Viking Days:** June 1st-2nd
- **John Gardner Small Craft Workshop:** June 28th - 30th

### July

- **No Meeting in July**
- **APBH Projects:** Good Little Skiff Build and Dory Maintenance
- **Small Reach Regatta:** July 24th - 28th, Brooklin, Maine

**JGTSCA Monthly Activities 2019-2020****August**

- **No Meeting in August**
- **APBH Projects:** Good Little Skiff Build and Dory Maintenance

**September**

- **Meeting: Sunday, September 8th:** 12:30 pm Topic: Pittaway's Old Tool Cellar Tour
- **APBH Projects:** Good Little Skiff Build and Dory Maintenance
- **Oar & Sail Outing Sep. 14th:** 10am to 2pm at Bluff Point S.P. Bill R. Lead
- **Wellfleet Rowing Rendezvous Saturday, September 21st:** Cape Cod TSCA

**October**

- **Meeting: Friday, October 4th:** 5:30 pm at APBH, Topic: Planking the Good Little Skiff
- **APBH Projects:** Good Little Skiff Build and Dory Maintenance
- **Mid-Atlantic Small Craft Festival Oct. 4th - 6th,** CBMM, St. Michaels, MD
- **Pine Island Cleanup Tuesday, Oct 29th:** Lunch for UCONN Eco-Huskies 10 am to 2 pm  
Ellie Czarnowski Lead.

**November**

- **Meeting: Friday, November 1st:** 5:30 pm at APBH, Topic:
- **APBH Projects:** Good Little Skiff Build and Dory Maintenance
- **Mystic River Lighted Boat Parade Saturday, Nov. 30th.** Bridge Opening at 6:20 pm

**December**

- **Annual Meeting and Holiday Party Sunday, Dec. 8th:** 12:30 pm at NL Custom House
- **APBH Projects:** Good Little Skiff Build and Dory Maintenance

**Upcoming Activities**

**Wednesday, 5:30 pm to 8 pm November 20th at Mystic Seaport:** Make a Rope Wreath

**Saturday, 6:20 pm November 30th Mystic River Boat Parade:** Enter by Monday Nov. 25th

**Sunday, 12:30 pm December 8th at New London Custom House, 150 Bank Street, New London:** JGTSCA Holiday Party and Annual Meeting: Pot Luck, Meeting & Speaker

**Saturday, 3 pm December 21st, at Mystic Shipyard East, Winter Solstice Row; 4 pm at Harp & Hound:** Bring PFD, whistle, light and dress warmly to row; Phil Behney Lead.

**Saturday, January 4th, 11:30 am Chantey Blast & Pub Sing:** Meet at McQuade's for lunch & Meeting prior, then to German Club across from Seaport South Gate on Rte 27

**Winter Solstice Row:****This from Phil Behney: So here's the plan:**

The Solstice Row is planned for Saturday December 21. Interested parties shall meet at the Mystic Shipyard East early enough to prep for a 3pm departure. The Tide will be favorable for a upriver row. High tide is 5:09pm so we can tie up the boats in downtown, or continue upriver to Mystic Seaport. I would suggest a 4pm visit to the Harp and Hound or any other downtown establishment that is agreeable to all. For those who would rather not row back after dark or after drinks can either make arrangements with someone to return the boat in your place, or return the boat before coming to the Harp.. The Tide should be favorable for return to MSYE any time after 5ish.

Please remember to have your safety gear (PFD, lights, whistle, etc.) and to look after each other. I will have a radio, and anyone else who owns a radio please bring it along. I cannot join you in the boats this year, but will see you off and receive you in downtown. Please remember to keep an eye on weather conditions and be prepared for change's to schedule, be flexible, be safe, let's have fun!

Thanks

Phil Behney JGTSCA VP

**UCONN Avery Point Class at the JGTSCA Boathouse:**

**This from Professor Matt McKenzie:** I write to follow up on a promise I made to Dane and Dan a couple of years ago regarding bringing more students to the JGTSCA shop at Avery Point. It's taken me a few months to develop a course and get that course approved, but I am pleased to say that I will be offering MAST 3501: "Sailors' Skills for the Interpretation of the Maritime Humanities" next spring.

As the course syllabus shows, this is very much an introductory smorgasbord course designed to expose students to some of the technical aspects of seafaring they would otherwise not see unless they shipped out. Many of our students lack the means to sail aboard a sailing school vessel for any stretch of time, and this course is not intended to be a substitute for such an experience. This course is, however, designed to expose them to some of the basic technical aspects of working vessels that might help them interpret the works of Joseph Conrad, Farley Mowat, early explorers' narratives, Winslow Homer, and other humanist works emanating from peoples' engagement with the sea.

One key element in this course is understanding how boats are put together. For this spring, I was wondering if the JGTSCA membership would be willing to offer the students a crash review, over one or two class meetings during the term, of the different basic approaches to small boat construction. We have classes on Monday and Wednesday mornings from 11:15 to 12:30 (I hope to shift that to a three hour meeting when I next run this class). To be clear, I am not asking for a hands-on program with all the preparatory hassle that would incur upon you, but more of an overview where students can see different examples you may have in the shop,

and have someone explain to them the what, why, and how of different small-craft construction techniques. That said, if someone is willing to demonstrate tool use, etc., I certainly won't say no!

I've been developing this class since Dan Nelson worked with my student, Maggie Waldron, a couple of years ago. Her experience with Dan meant the world to her—it was the best course she took at UCONN, she told me once—and I've wanted to see if there are other Avery Point students with the focus and drive she had to make it worthwhile to send your way. Regardless, I've long wanted to better integrate your shop into Maritime Studies offerings. This is a first attempt, and I hope you find it as exciting as I do.

Please let me know if you are interested in one or two hours this spring when I can bring my students over to see what your membership does. I know the students would love it!

Thank you,  
Matt

**Our Response, after discussion and approval at our November 1st meeting;** Very impressive, Matt! Quite an extensive survey of maritime skills. We JGTSCA would welcome your class, as well as the opportunity to discuss small boat construction and how different shapes and constructions affect their intended use. Currently, we have a Culler Good Little Skiff build underway as well as a couple of other examples lying about.

**Current Status:**

The details on Matt McKenzie's course "Mariner's Skills for Interpreting the Maritime Humanities" are in a quite a detailed syllabus (previously forwarded to the Membership and available from any JGTSCA officer). It includes an extensive reading list, many titles of which I expect are on our personal bookshelves. Our involvement, as detailed on page 3 of the syllabus, would involve a class during Week 4 at our shop on Campus. Peter Vermilya, Dan Nelson, Brian Cooper, Bill Rutherford and Carl Kaufman volunteered to assist during their visit to our shop as well as follow-up visits to the Seaport's Small Craft Hall and Boat Livery.

Kind of makes me wish I was back in school again. Perhaps we could read along with the class; let's start with Farley Mowat's "The Boat Who Wouldn't Float". That always brings a smile. (Ed.)

**View from the Side Deck:**

As this is a voluminous newsletter, I'll keep it short, but remind you of our Holiday Party and Annual Meeting Dec. 8th at 12:30 pm at the New London Custom House. We look forward to some fine food, good sea stories and an interesting program from our Speaker: Dawn Miller, Manager of the Seaport's Boat Livery and John Gardner Boat Shop. This coming year being the 50th of the John Gardner Small Craft Workshop as well as the 20th of our Chapter, Dawn has some interesting plans on how we may best celebrate. Bring your own ideas and join a lively discussion. Hope to see you there. Happy Holidays! Bill & Karen Rutherford