

# 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 Gathering: Friday, February 7th at 5:30 pm**

We will be working on repairs to our dory fleet as well as advancing our build of Pete Culler's Good Little Skiff design. All are welcome.

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)

### Bermuda Fitted Dinghies - by John Hacunda

#### Keep Bailing and Race On!

Over 40 years ago, as a recent college graduate I had the good fortune to spend two years in Bermuda working as a research assistant at the Bermuda Institute of Ocean Sciences. Returning to visit Bermuda last April was a thrill and the island is as lovely as ever.

Back then, I remembered seeing the Bermuda Fitted Dinghy races in St. George's Harbor. The races featured a fleet of these small 14' vessels seemingly overpowered by too much sail and typically manned by a crew of six to help provide ballast. These sailing craft would fly across the water, with spray flying and crew members constantly moving to trim sails, shift weight, or bail water, as the boats jockeyed for the lead in tight quarters.



During the recent visit, my wife and I took a trip to the western end of the island to visit the Royal Navy Dockyard. The Dockyard was once a stronghold for the British Royal Navy and is a site of significant maritime history. The former naval base now is a destination port for cruise ships and some of the original buildings house the National Museum of Bermuda.

The museum has a boat loft that contains some notable Bermuda small craft including Bermuda dinghies. The dinghies date from the 1850s and were originally family boats built of native Bermuda cedar and used for local transport or fishing within the harbors and along the shoreline.



“Magic” a former working Bermuda dinghy built of cedar and used by the Hayward family of St. David’s for turtle fishing

Over time these open dinghies were fitted out for racing with the addition of a large bowsprit, iron keel, enclosed deck, and Bermuda rig featuring a large mainsail and jib. By the late 1800s, the Bermuda dinghies had become an active sailing class with an annual Championship Cup Regatta featuring competition between Hamilton and St. George’s boats.



Bermuda Dinghy "Victory" built in 1885 and winner of numerous races



"Victory" under sail and manned by a crew from St. George's



*Built for speed, rather than stability, sailing the Bermuda dinghy means sailing on the edge as this one crew discovered.*

Bermuda dinghy racing continues to this day with spirited competition from boats raced by amateur clubs throughout the island.

#### To Learn More

- Bermuda Fitted Dinghies  
<http://www.bermudastamps.co.uk/1983/07/21/bermuda-fitted-dinghies/>
- Bermuda Fitted Dinghy Race, St. George's, Bermuda  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d5gekBwD6yQ>
- Bermuda Fitted Dinghy: Fourteen Feet--Crew of Six  
<https://www.boats.com/reviews/fourteen-feet-crew-of-six/>
- Elizabeth II - Bermuda Fitted Dinghy – Racing at Hamilton, Bermuda  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=glwB3b5v\\_6w](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=glwB3b5v_6w)
- National Museum of Bermuda  
<https://nmb.bm/>
- The Royal Navy Dockyards  
<https://www.dockyardbermuda.com/about/history/>

### **Meanwhile, a Progress Report from Brian Cooper on our Culler Good Little Skiff Build**

#### **A Planking and Spiling Exercise (Jan 24th):**

I decided to attempt spiling 4 planks for the GLS. Below are two pictures of 7/8 width battens on the GLS. The left picture is from a previous workday showing a layout for 3 planks. The right picture is Friday's version for 4 planks (garboard, plank 3, plank 2 and shear plank). A spiling batten is tacked to the frame for the 3<sup>rd</sup> plank.





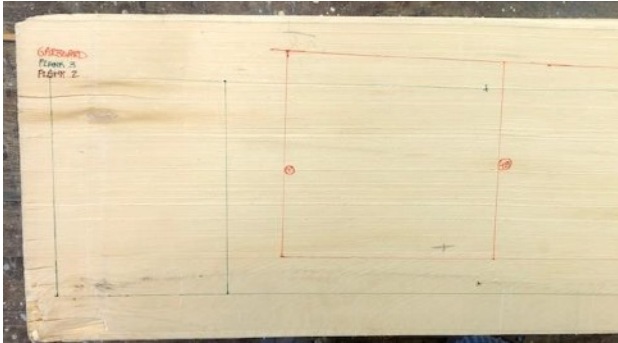
Previously I made a spiling batten 1x4 pine board, planed to approx. 1/4 thick.. This turned out to be too wide as it would not fit between the planking battens. I set up a work stand and cut the batten in two (a 2 and a 1-1/2 width)

Here is a view of the spiling batten in place for the garboard plank. The yellow outline is the garboard plank. The blue outline is the 3<sup>rd</sup> plank. This batten shows the overlap between the two planks.





I transferred the lines to a 8-1/4 inch wide cedar plank (1/2 thick x 14-1/2 ft long). Transom on the left, stem on the right. You can see how the planks curve on both the top and bottom. The shear plank was too wide to spile onto this plank. Plank #2 was too long to spile on the plank without shifting the lines (Frame 5 to stem, frame 5 to transom)



The last exercise for the day was clamp the spiling batten onto the frame at approximately where the garboard plank would end. And then clamp another cedar plank about 4-1/2 inches wide to the frame. The planks bent along the frames and there was a slight gap between the planks in some locations. This gap would “disappear” if the planks were overlapped with each other.

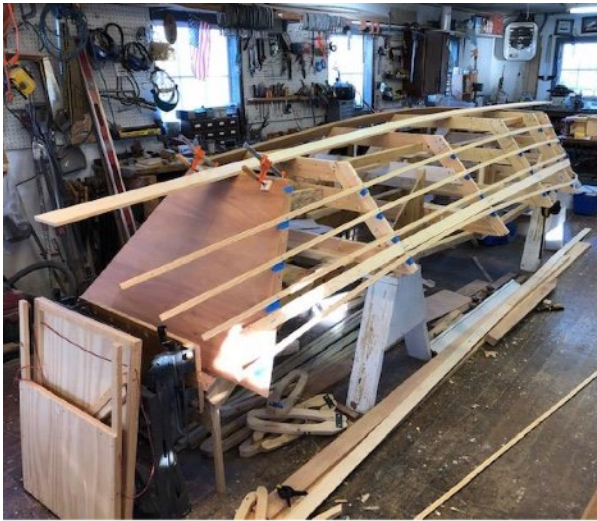


On the next page are views with the spiling batten in place for the shear plank. Wicked powderhorn.

Thank you, Brian, for your report. All you classic traditional boatbuilders out there, or wannabes, come give Brian a hand. Often on Fridays he is at Building 36 plus some Saturdays. He is reachable at [cooperbd@aol.com](mailto:cooperbd@aol.com)



Brian's current plank layout:



### Another Build by a JGTSCA Member:

Captain Nicolas Alley got his flu shots but caught the rowing bug exercising Jim McGuire's Alden Shell. He now has assembled (well, wired together) a Chesapeake Light Craft Chester Yawl into which he plans to drop in a Piantedosi rowing unit and churn up the Mystic River come Spring. We wish him well and look forward to seeing this new craft visit our Small Craft Workshop.



## Report on the JGTSCA Solstice Row:

It was cold! How cold was it? Ice so thick on the river they had to beat their way through it. With much effort, Phil Behney got one dory afloat. Others wisely convinced him that discretion is the better part of valor, whereupon all repaired directly to the Harp & Hound, joining participants wise enough to go there to begin with. By all reports, a good time was had by all.



## Traditional Small Craft Association – John Gardner Chapter Meeting Minutes - By Henk Hoets, Secretary January 4, 2020, McQuade's Market, Mystic, CT

1. Meeting started at 12:00 hours.
  - a. Roll Call - 12 members attended, including newly elected officers,
    - Bill Rutherford, President
    - Brian Cooper, Vice President
    - Ellie Czarnowski, Treasurer
    - Dan Nelson, Member at Large
    - Henk Hoets, Secretary
2. Bill Rutherford addressed highlights of December 2019 meeting.
3. Ellie Czarnowski, Treasurer, reported a bank balance of \$5,416.58 as of December 13, 2019.
4. The motion to add Bill Rutherford as co signer to Chelsea-Groton bank checking account was approved. Henk Hoets will sign bank form adding Bill.

5. Ellie requested local and national dues for those who have not paid.
6. The motion to conduct TSCA-JG business meetings on a quarterly basis instead of monthly was approved. A formal meeting room should be used for business meetings, for example, Olin Stephens room at the Mystic Seaport.
7. Brian Cooper reported status of the Good Little Skiff. Brian asked for help with lining-off and planking. Goal is to complete boat in time for the WoodenBoat Show in late June 2020.
8. Bill Rutherford requested members to suggest and help with presentation for Matt McKenzie’s UCONN Avery Point maritime class slated for February 17, 2020 at 11:15 AM building 36.
9. Various 2020 activities were discussed.
  - a. 2020 activity list should be organized and prioritized based on members’ interests and each activity championed by an interested member.

Activity Organized By Category and Month

	<b>Boat Building</b>	<b>Boating</b>	<b>Events/ Outings</b>	<b>Education</b>
<b>Jan</b>				
<b>Feb</b>				
<b>Mar</b>				
<b>Apr</b>				
<b>May</b>				
<b>Jun</b>				
<b>Jul</b>				
<b>Aug</b>				
<b>Sep</b>				
<b>Oct</b>				
<b>Nov</b>				
<b>Dec</b>				

10. Meeting adjourned at 13:20 hours.

## A note from Our Treasurer, Ellie Czarnowski:

Dues are Due: \$15 to our local Chapter, please, and \$25 to National, those good folks who insure our outings and publish our magazine the "Ash Breeze". Treasurer Ellie will cash your check if sent to JGTSCA, Community Boat Building, 1084 Shennecossett Rd., Groton CT 06340.

National will drop your copy of the Ash Breeze in the mail if dues are sent to PO Box 183, West Mystic, CT 06388. Note that they recently moved their PO Box from #350 in Mystic to #183 in West Mystic. I guess West Mystic must have offered them a lower number... regardless, please send in your dues to keep our boat afloat.

## Upcoming JGTSCA Activities:

- Matt McKenzie's class at APBH February 17th
- Fred Fischer's Director's Cut - Noank History film at Noank Firehouse 12:30 pm Sunday March 1st.
- April & May's Activity/Gathering - Open: suggest something you would like to do and invite us along.
- Ellie Czarnowski's Outing at Power's Lake, 10 am Sunday, June 7th. details to follow.
- 50th Anniversary of John Gardner's Small Craft Conference at WoodenBoat Show Friday thru Sunday, June 26-28th. Come and plan to participate!

## At Mystic Seaport:

At the **Seaport Boatshop** the Good Little Skiff "Waldo Howland" was getting his topsides spiffed up in preparation to celebrate the 50th anniversary of his inception at the first Small Craft Conference when Boathouse Supervisor Dawn Miller had a chip of French Gray, the Boathouse standard, fly off to reveal original bright yellow paint beneath! It seems Pete Culler preferred bright colors on his boats (see Capt. Pete's quote in the appendix of Dr. John Roche's book on Culler Boats). Reds, yellows and "real" greens. Dawn decided on the spot to return "Waldo" to his original livery. Yellow topsides it will be for him at the celebration at our Small Craft Workshop in June. Dawn is putting out the call to "All Good Little Skiffs" to gather for rowing and sailing in company. Perhaps others will arrive in their own bright colors...





**Mystic Seaport Ship Modelers** meet second Saturdays of the month at 10 am upstairs in the John Gardner Boat Shop. Stop by and find how Bob Andrle made these tiny Parrott rifles for his Civil War Union paddlewheel gunboat. Reach out to Bob at [smallyachtsailor@gmail.com](mailto:smallyachtsailor@gmail.com) and let him know you are interested.

The **Seaport Adventure Series** [www.mysticseaport.org/event/](http://www.mysticseaport.org/event/)

- February 20th: Mary Maynard Drake - Sailing around the world
- March 19th: Melissa Miller - Research expeditions for Scripps Institute
- April 16th: Rachael Z. Miller - Solutions to cleaning our planet's oceans

**Mystic Seaport Winter/Spring Classes** which may be of interest <https://www.mysticseaport.org/learn/adult/>

- February 22nd: Ropework in the Ropewalk and Sail Loft
- March 7th: Half Model Construction in the John Gardner Small Boat Shop
- March 14th: Varnishing Techniques in the John Gardner Small Boat Shop
- March 21st: Quentin Snediker on Scrimshaw at the Art Gallery
- March 26-29th: Traditional Boatbuilding: Walt Ansel covers all the basics
- March 28-April 18th: Introduction to Sea Chanteys and Songs of the Sailor
- March 30-31st CT Boating Certification
- May 9th: Coastal Navigation
- June 13th: Boating with Tides and Tidal Currents

**UCONN Avery Point's Spring 2020 Coastal Perspectives** Lecture Series start at 7:30 pm in the UCONN Avery Point Auditorium. There will be two per month in February, March and April. The first, "Zoning Matters", is February 11th; the second, "Visualizing Plastic: Integrating Science and Art to Inspire Change" on February 25th. For information about all their events, visit website <http://www.marinesciences.uconn.edu/lectures>

## View from the Side Deck:

Based on consensus at our January meeting we are shifting our emphasis to include:

- Activities instead of Meetings this year - business meetings Quarterly, not Monthly
- Checking out different venues and activities: Powers Lake, Local History Video at Noank Firehouse, TNT (Thursday Night TSCA) on the Last Thursday Nights in July & August at Seaport Boathouse
- Possible Overnights (Camp Cruises), Travel in Company (to Small Reach Regatta in Maine in June, to Mid-Atlantic Small Craft Festival in St. Michael's Maryland in October)
- Let's be creative: in addition to building boats, let's go out and use them!

A big Thanks to John Hacunda this month for the fine lead article. John is our Webmaster and it shows with his many and detailed web links at the end of his article. Please read our 2020 Calendar on the next page. Send us your articles and ideas.

Fair Winds, Bill & Karen

## January

- Saturday, Jan. 5th: Planning Meeting, Chantey Blast and Pub Sing
- Fridays throughout the year at Avery Point Boat House (APBH): Dory Maintenance & Good Little Skiff Build (GLS)
- Meetings Quarterly, Activities Monthly, Gatherings Friday evenings at APBH.

## February

- Friday, Feb. 7th, 5:30 pm at APBH : Dan's Hot Dogs, no meeting; work on Dory & GLS
- Monday, Feb. 17th, 11:15 am: Matt McKenzie's Sailor Skills Class visits Boathouse

## March

- Sunday, March 1st, 12:30 pm in lower level of the Noank Firehouse: Fred Fischer shows his film "Noank Sampler". Very interesting history of Noank by residents in their own words. Short Meeting. Bring own eats with treats to pass.

## April

- Wednesday, April 22nd Avery Point Earth Day Celebration 11:30 am to 1:30 pm on the Campus Green; in Student Center in case of rain. Boathouse Open.

## May

- First Friday is May 1st if at APBH. Full Moon is May 7th for Horseshoe Crabs.

## June

- Sunday, June 7th 10 am Saturday at Powers Lake in Old Lyme: Row/Sail.
- Friday, June 26th thru Sunday, 28th: John Gardner Small Craft Workshop. Meet for Pizza Thursday evening after bring in boats. 50th Anniversary of first Small Craft Conference. Special Events planned. Register at Seaport Website.

## July

- Wednesday, July 22nd thru Sunday 26th: Small Reach Regatta in Brooklin, Maine. Register before March w/ Maine TSCA. Campground along Reach; Sail to Islands.
- Thursday, July 30th 5-7 pm at Mystic Seaport Boathouse: TSCA Night.

## August

- Thursday, August 30th 5-7 pm at Mystic Seaport Boathouse: TSCA Night.

## September

- Pine Island Cleanup with UCONN Eco-Huskies. Date TBD.
- Saturday, Sep. 19th 10am to 2pm at Bluff Point S.P.: Oar & Sail Outing

## October

- Oct. 2nd-4th Mid-Atlantic Small Craft Festival in St. Michaels, MD. sponsored by the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum. Camp on grounds; lots of activities.

## November

- Saturday evening, Nov. 28th: Mystic River Lighted Boat Parade

## December

- Sunday, Dec. 6th at New London Custom House: Annual Meeting and Holiday Party with Speaker.