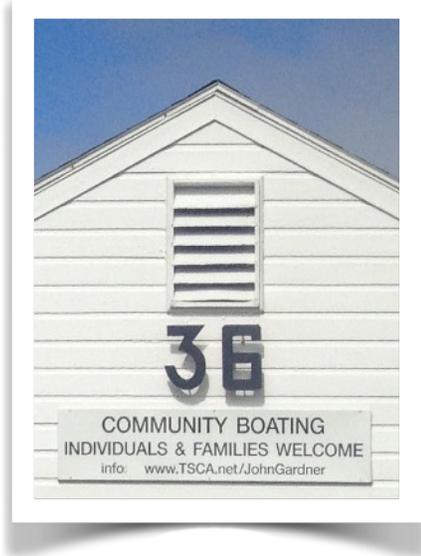


# JGTSCA



## 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

**Winter Maintenance on Rowing Craft**  
at UCONN Avery Point Community Boathouse Building 36

**Next Meeting: January 9, 2022 at 12 noon at APBH**  
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](https://www.facebook.com/JGTSCA) and <http://www.jgtzca.org>  
National: [www.TSCA.net](http://www.TSCA.net)

## News from around the Chapter

Welcome to the John Gardner Chapter of the Traditional Small Craft Association! Visit us at the Community Boathouse, Building #36, on the University of Connecticut's Avery Point Campus at 1084 Shennecossett Road, Groton, CT. We invite you to attend one of our gatherings, go for a row, a sail or get involved in our next boatbuilding project.

### Upcoming Events:

Phill Behney is leading the **Annual Solstice Row, December 19th. Meet at 2:30 pm near Mystic Shipyard East (MSYE)** at the end of Stafford Street, Mystic which is off Broadway Extension south of the RR tracks and south of Route 1 and East of the Mystic River. Park in the Parking lot at the end of Stafford Street. The Chapter's dories are stored alongside the garage at the end of the street., or bring your own car-top boat. We launch at the end of the path beside the garage.

Phil advises: "Please remember to have warm clothing and life jackets that are Coast Guard approved and comfortable, the law requires PFD's to be worn this time of year. There are four Club Dories available to be used on first come, first served basis; that is eight rowing positions available! So there are plenty of seats, no excuses! Please remember to be responsible for your safety equipment and respectful of each other. See you at Stafford Street MSYE 2:30ish pm Sunday. Plan to depart no later than 3pm. We will try to meet back in Mystic at the Harp and Hound to see all the landlubbers who were content to wait for our return, hopefully 5pm-ish. See you all then. Let's have a great row!" Philip Behney (860) 599-1915

Our next **Monthly Meeting will be January 9th at 12 noon at the Avery Point Community Boathouse**, Building 36 on the UCONN Avery Point Campus. The Boathouse is on the water side beyond the Sailing Center. We'll plan to spiff the place up a bit, burn some hot dogs, eat some pizza and if ambitious, bring a dish to share and ideas for activities in the New Year.

JGTSCA Officers for 2022:

## JGTSCA Officers for 2022

We met the first Friday of December, the 3rd, burned some hot dogs (thanks Dan) ate some pizza (thanks Phil) and elected the following officers for 2022:

President: **Brian Cooper**  
Vice President: **Phil Behney**  
Secretary: **Cookie Wierski**  
Treasurer: **Ellie Czarnowski**  
Member at Large: **Dan Nelson**  
Dory Master: **Phil Behney**  
Shop Coordinator: **Matt McKenzie**  
Webmaster: **John Hacunda**  
Newsletter: **Bill Rutherford**

Brian Cooper, as our new President will be our primary contact. He may be reached at 35 Mohawk Rd, Windsor Locks CT 06096 or by email at [cooperbd@aol.com](mailto:cooperbd@aol.com). Brian has been an active member for years and a leader of our John Gardner Small Craft Workshop, carving Inuit kayak paddles, leading morning rows and giving demonstrations. An avid kayaker (just ask him how many he owns) who lately has gotten into ultra light rowing and sailing boats, he designs his own sails and experiments with the results.

As for the rest of the crew: Phil Behney, VP, has been our Dory Master for many years, building the originals; Cookie Wierski, Secretary, is a new member, a UCONN student and an active re-builder of our White Dory; Ellie Czarnowski, a previous President and long time Treasurer keeps track of us all; Dan Nelson, Member at Large, also a previous president, leader of Fall Foliage paddles and dory builder; John Hacunda, Webmaster, a regular dory rower, transitioned us to the electronic age with our own website; Matt McKenzie, Shop Coordinator, a UCONN Professor, who brought his class to our Community Boatshop, fell in love with our donated White Dory and led its restoration; and Bill Rutherford who will continue to issue our electronic, sometimes monthly Newsletter. Stop by the Boathouse, attend a monthly meeting or meet these folks at an event, introduce yourself and start talking boats.

### Remember your Dues for 2022:

\$15 to Ellie Czarnowski for LOCAL CHAPTER JOHN GARDNER TSCA dues: Join and Renew Online [www.JGTSCA.org](http://www.JGTSCA.org) or Mail the following to:

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

\$25 for NATIONAL TSCA MEMBERSHIP (remember, they pay our event Insurance) Join and Renew Online at [www.tscanet.net](http://www.tscanet.net) and receive a copy of the "Ash Breeze".

## **“Small Boats Build Big Communities”: The White Dory and New Beginnings**

by Matt McKenzie

Fellow JGTSCA member Cookie Wierski said that—this piece’s title—one afternoon as we closed up the shop after another wonderful afternoon working on a 17’ Dion Dory—the White Dory. The two of us, along with another JGTSCA member Ian Bradley, had been picking, filling, epoxying, sanding, and painting for about a month, and as we closed the door for the night, the dory was starting to look close to finished. With the launch only a few days off, we were feeling pretty good.

We had begun the project in mid-September—when it seemed the cold couldn’t possibly arrive—after Cookie, Bill Rutherford, Phil Behney, Dan Nelson, and I took a look at the punky rot spots that marred this otherwise fantastic boat. Her bones suggested she had been a professional build: well-selected materials, dynamite riveting, great planking—all of it told us this was a great boat into which time had begun to sink its teeth. Fresh water had pooled up against the forward sides of the frames away from the limber holes’ freeing graces. Once there, the sweet water did its work with the pine planking, leaving about half a dozen spots of varying degrees of rot. Some areas rotted completely through, others just down to the false bottom, and still more just carried “that look” that said something was amiss. Aside from those spots, however, she looked great: she just needed someone to steward her back to readiness.





How to go about doing that had the five of us staring at the hull in the John Gardner TSCA shop on a beautiful September afternoon. One approach would be to replace planking, but given how localized the rot was, and how much would have to be disassembled (at least to this neophytes' eyes), that seemed impractical. Bill pointed out that traditionally, the owner would have chinked the holes to wring a few more seasons out of her, and Dan recounted how his grandfather always kept some oil cloth handy to push

into any evident gaps in their family's boat. Both approaches had many advantages and drawbacks, and as four of us hummed and hawed, opined, and ruminated, Dan simply and quietly picked up a chisel and started picking at the rot spots. We all took that as a sign, at least I did: this boat would get the TLC she needed in a traditional manner—making and mending, chinking and clinking. And, with Bill smiling at me, I also knew I swallowed this project whole: hook, bait, line, and sinker. She called to me, needed me, and I her, and what the hell, I had a little time this fall . . .



After picking out the rot, we installed custom cut and shaped dutchmen. Cookie had studied boat building in Maine, and while I was nominally the person responsible for the final decisions, I quickly learned from them, a.) a ton about how to do this, and b.) Cookie knew far more about what to do than I did. So what developed was a perfect combination of expertise detached from management decision-making that gave everyone plausible deniability should things go wrong, but an equal share of the glory if things went right.

Given the decision to use dutchmen and not replace planking, Cookie also raised questions about the level of effort for other elements needing attention: do we strip and bleach the rails? Do we hold up work until we found the perfect wood to replace the shoe, or, do we follow Gardner's mantra: "use what you've got"? Soon, Cookie and I developed an evaluative benchmark we

dubbed the "epoxy threshold": given how much epoxy we were using to address the rot spots, was doing something ridiculously detailed really warranted? Is "perfect" really justifiable when we're just hoping to breathe a few more years of life into the old girl?

In fact, that restraint and level-of-effort context became the most difficult parts of the job. I'm not saying we cut corners or did shoddy work. But on a well-used boat such as this, a level of care called for in a new build simply didn't make sense. I used stainless screws instead of bronze when replacing some gusset planks, as an example, but because I had some leftover mahogany lying about, I did use that for the new gussets anyway. Was bunging the screw holes in the new floorboards really worth the time, or could we use un-countersunk stainless oval headed screws? These were the questions Cookie and I debated the most as we filled, sanded, primed, sanded, painted, sanded, painted, sanded . . . One element on which Cookie was not willing to compromise was the brightwork: she would see that would be done properly. Ian witnessed most of these disputations with a smile. While we haggled, Ian listened, adding important points, but generally lightening the mood. And one afternoon, as we all were busily tending to our respective projects, Cookie and I looked up to hear Ian's magnificent voice singing some English folks song in the afternoon autumn sun.



Always cheerful, always laughing, always happy to put his talents to good use, Ian, in fact finished out the dory's "epoxy triumvirate." With Cookie and Ian's expertise, and my willingness to do the needful—unhindered by my lack of skill most days—we formed a tight team of complementary personalities, talents, and expertise. We respected one another and the dory itself, but most importantly, we respected the social space the shop had become for us. Working on the dory—either alone or together—became a high point for our weeks. Even if only for an hour, the shop allowed us to put the abstract world aside and see for ourselves what a tight group of mutually respecting people could do together.

And that aura—for it was a glow that the three of us all felt this past fall—was both exciting and saddening as we closed up

shop that evening on the rehabbed Dion dory, now wearing her proper Kirby "Maynard Bray Off White" topcoat. We were thrilled with the project's outcome: we had successfully navigated the challenges of time, resources, and repair efficacy (or so we hoped—we wouldn't know until she launched), and brought new life to a proud boat that the JGTSCA could now use. But we also saw a magical moment coming to a close, a moment that saw the shop become, ironically, a place of labor and ease, effort and relaxation, work and recreation.

"We need another project," Cookie said as we walked to our cars. "I don't want this one to end." And I agreed. This boat, this process, and these two people became something bigger than just a boat project.

A few days later, and with a huge outpouring of support from the rest of JGTSCA chapter, the White Dory launched on what would have been my father's 89<sup>th</sup> birthday—which he would have loved to see. The chapter had always supported us unflinchingly in this work, with everything from technical guidance to sheer enthusiasm, and launch day proved no different. The dory swam wonderfully, rowed gloriously in a light swell coming onto the UCONN Avery Point beach, and what little water she made, it stopped pretty quick. All who wished took her out for a row, and Cookie's "goblin laff," as they were rowed about, filled the morning air. Along with Dan, Bill, and a host of other chapter members, my son Sam and wife Shannon, and Ian's wife Frances, came down for the festivities. Additionally, chapter members we had never met before, for the three of us had joined in the pandemic, introduced themselves as they grabbed a piece of rail to help carry the White Dory down the beach.



In many ways, White Dory's launch day marked a beginning: a new post-pandemic reopening of the chapter (I hope), and a new beginning for me with a new boat. Most of all, however, it marked not the end of golden moment working with two magnificent people, but a new beginning for the three of us as we get to know the chapter.

## Upcoming Activities at Mystic Seaport Museum



✨ Holiday past and present, twinkling lights, and unforgettable nights!

There are just five days left of our **Lantern Light Village** event. Have you booked your tickets yet? Take a journey through time as you seamlessly transition between the holidays you experience today and the holidays of the past. Enjoy festive lighting displays, live music, horse-and-carriage rides, fire pits, a visitation from St. Nicholas, and more including holiday themed stories, crafts, and games!

More tickets have been added for Saturday evening. Just 5 days left, book now!

Friday, December 17, Saturday, December 18 - **More Tickets Added!**

Monday - Wednesday, December 20 - 22



The annual **Community Carol Sing** will be held on Sunday, December 19, 2021. Mystic Seaport Museum visitors will be admitted free of charge on this day from 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. As in the past, donation of non-perishable food will be collected as well as monetary donations in lieu of admission. The donated food and contributions will be given to the Pawcatuck Neighborhood Center.

**The Carol Sing will commence at McGraw Quadrangle at 3:00 p.m.**

## **Report from the Mystic Seaport Boat Livery:**

New Leader of Yachts on Exhibit (YOE) and Boathouse Livery, Nick Parker, who introduced himself to current Boathouse volunteers this past Thursday and we, in turn, introduced him to our charges as we commence winter “putty & paint” for the Livery fleet. If interested in volunteering, contact Carrie Moore, Assist. Director of Volunteer Services at [carrie.moore@mysticseaport.org](mailto:carrie.moore@mysticseaport.org) There are many other opportunities to volunteer at the Seaport as well. Carrie can fill you in.

## **And the Latest from Mystic Seaport Ship Modelers:**

This just in from Bob Andrie:

“Hello all, I hope you're all doing well. We had our monthly meeting Saturday and have some good news for MSSM. Shannon McKenzie has offered us use of the John Gardner Boat Shop (that's downstairs from our meeting room) this coming year, starting April 1st. We've happily agreed. The space would otherwise go unused (the Boathouse refurbishes their boats in there over the winter), and Shannon wants activities going on wherever possible. It is a large space with a visitor space in front separated from the workshop by a counter and display wall, and in the rear (facing Australia Beach) is a large double door. The plan is to fill the space with tables and ship models on display, and to set up one or more workshop benches so that our members can be there working on ship models and talking to visitors. This will be excellent exposure for our group and probably the best way to get people interested in ship modeling. So if you think you would enjoy participating, we'll be working out the details over the next few months and preparing for April 1st. Let me know if you would be interested in helping to staff the workshop/display. We'll want to fill as many hours as we can through the summer. Even putting a few hours once in a while will help..this doesn't have to be any big commitment--you should do only as much as you would enjoy. I know we all have other demands on our time, especially in the summer. This is our chance to show the Seaport that ship modeling is of interest, and this would be a great way to entice more members to join us.

We also plan to continue our 2nd Saturday MSSM Meeting/Event each month, and this room will allow us to hold that regardless of weather. Our plan at the moment is to use Australia Beach since it is directly out the back door of the boat shop. We can open the back double doors and set up tables and tents outside if the weather permits, and run R/C boats from the beach. I also hope this might entice some of you static modelers to join us at the Seaport now and then.

We'll talk more about details at January's meeting (2nd Saturday of the month at 10 am), so if you have any interest in this that would be a good time to come along and contribute any ideas.”

If you would like to get on Bob's mailing list, let me (Bill R.) know and I will share his email address with you.

## From the Mailbag:

The Snowbirds are starting to land down Florida way.....This just in (11/29/21) **from Member Jim Friedlander**: "Hi Bill, Haven't gotten the sharpie in yet but have had my Little River single out for a row. The hardest part is finding a time when the parking area at the launch site isn't full with kayakers. I just learned there is a rowing club in Cape Coral and hope to get over there to meet some of that group. Happy Boating, Jim"

And to keep things in perspective, this just in (12/14/21) **from Steve Brookman of the Maine TSCA**: "Once again we plan on starting the year as we have been with our traditional row on New Years Day. Bring a lunch, Curtis Island could be our lunch pull out. Due to the pandemic that won't go away there will be no brunch at the Manning's this year. For details visit what is posted on [our Event Page](#): Let us know if your boat is unavailable as we may have extra thwarts available.

We hope to schedule a mid winter visit to Maine's first ship, the Virginia, and/or possibly the Maine Maritime Museum. Stand by for details. Any other suggestions to break up the long winter months?

On May 21st the LaBries will be hosting their 4th annual Spring Row. If you're considering having a boating event and would like to have company, let me know and it can be added to our [Events Page](#)."

This **from Member John Gearing in Upstate New York** (Niskayuna - almost the Adirondacks): "Boat news: I have long had the notion to build Pete Culler's "Otter" in plywood but lacked the knowledge necessary to make the required drawings/offsets. Thankfully, Jim Michalak has now done just that, and I have his plans for his "Battoe." I'll be building her come Spring and will document the process for a possible TSCA article. And I'll bring her down to show the chapter as well and let the members try her out. I'm even going to put together a sailing rig for her, like Culler had. The designer reckons she will only weigh about 60 lbs and although not intended as a copy of "Otter", that she will perform better than her inspiration. No way to test that hypothesis unless the Seaport let Otter go into the water for a bit!"

See <https://duckworks.com/batto-plans/>

## From the Side Deck:

We're getting the first dustings of snow but as you can see from the "Mailbag" above our members are getting out on the water and if not, at least thinking about it, looking at boat plans to build and planning trips for the summer. We, too, are planning outings and activities: see above for info on Phil Behney's Solstice Row this Sunday at 2:30 pm at Mystic Shipyard East and our first of the year monthly meeting at noon January 9th at the Avery Point Community Boathouse. Come with ideas for winter, perhaps a visit to the Herreshoff Museum or a member's backyard boatshop. And what shall we create to follow the White Dory Project?

Congratulations to our new slate of Officers and see you at the Boatshop. Bill & Karen