

# 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 Project: Rehab Swampscott Rowing/Sailing Dory**  
at UCONN Avery Point Boat House (APBH) Building 36

**Next Meeting: Friday, November 5th at 5:30 pm at APBH**  
Monthly meetings resume as Matt McKenzie and Crew describe the White  
Dory Project. Launching is the following day at 10 am. All are welcome.

Local: [www.facebook.com/JGTSCA](http://www.facebook.com/JGTSCA) and <http://www.jgtsca.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 in 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:

First of all, **We are excited to announce resumption of our monthly gatherings** at the Avery Point Community Boathouse, Building #36 on the UCONN Avery Point Campus. We plan to meet around the BBQ **on the side deck of the Boathouse at 5:30 pm Friday, November 5th** to burn some hot dogs followed immediately by Matt McKenzie and his student crew describing their rehabilitation of the White Dory. A thumbnail sketch of their activities is included in this issue. **They plan to launch the Dory the following day, Saturday, November 6th at 10 am off the beach at the Avery Point Sailing Center**, which is located on the other side of the parking lots, just north of our Building 36. We hope to see you all there. It should be an interesting time.

But, before that, **Dan and Kate Nelson are leading a Fall Foliage Paddle on the Upper Pawcatuck River starting at 10 am Sunday, October 31st, from the Bradford Road Boat Launch on Alton Bradford Road in Bradford, RI.** The launch site is on Route 91/216 about 0.4 miles south of Route 91's junction with Route 216 in Bradford. Dan plans a 3-1/2 mile paddle upstream through quiet water, returning to the Bradford Launch. Go as far as you wish, no need to go the full distance. He advises that the boat ramp will accept small rowing boats but suggests that a paddling craft will save having to constantly look over your shoulder. He suggests we bring food, drink, camera, etc. PFD's are required this time of year. Check your email for details or contact Dan at [dkenelson@att.net](mailto:dkenelson@att.net)

## **PAWCATUCK RIVER CANOE & KAYAK TRAIL OPENED SEPT. 19th**

As Erica Moser explained in the September 13th issue of the New London “Day”, The Lower Pawcatuck River Quad Town Canoe and Kayak Trail, which designates public boat launch sites on a 10-mile stretch of the river, officially opened Sept. 19 at a ceremony held at noon at the launch site at Boombridge Road in North Stonington. Boombridge is the third launch site on the trail, with the first at Laurel and Maxon streets in Hopkinton, R.I. and the second just south of the Potter Mill Dam on Post Office Lane in Westerly.

There are three sites after the Boombridge Road launch site: White Rock Road in Westerly, Donahue Park in Stonington, and the Westerly Boat Ramp on Main Street in Westerly. From there, it is five miles across Little Narragansett Bay to Napatree Point, the end of the trail.

Copies of a brochure that includes a map of the trail can be found at North Stonington Town Hall, Wheeler Library, North Stonington and Watch Hill Outfitters and Adventure (157 Main St. Westerly, which is located south along the River just south of the traffic circle and just south of the Shell Station). Or visit North Stonington’s website at [https://www.northstoningtonct.gov/sites/g/files/vyhli4806/f/events/kayak\\_brochure\\_draft\\_rev5.pdf](https://www.northstoningtonct.gov/sites/g/files/vyhli4806/f/events/kayak_brochure_draft_rev5.pdf)

The Wood-Pawcatuck Rivers were designated “Wild & Scenic” rivers by the Federal Government in 2018. Only 8% of RI’s rivers and 1% in CT hold that designation. The river classification “wild” means free-flowing and generally inaccessible except by trail and “scenic” means mostly undeveloped, or riverside structures well screened, with occasional road crossings. This section of the Pawcatuck borders the four towns of Hopkinton and Westerly, RI and North Stonington and Stonington, CT. In this section the river forms the border between Connecticut and Rhode Island.

Organizers spent years completing the trail in cooperation with the conservation commissions in North Stonington, Westerly and Hopkinton, as well as the Stonington Economic Development Commission. The Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation also designated a right of way on its property off Boombridge Road.

For the upper River, the Wood-Pawcatuck Watershed Association (WPWA) produced river route maps <https://wpwa.org/paddling-maps/> for the Wood and Pawcatuck Rivers in 2012. The maps were updated in 2020 to reflect changes made to the rivers thanks to several river restoration projects conducted by WPWA and its partners. The Wood River maps were created through a partnership between the Rhode Island Blueways Alliance, the Narragansett Bay Estuary Program, and the Wood-Pawcatuck Watershed Association, and funded by a grant from the Rhode Island Foundation. The beautiful full color maps are in PDF format and can be downloaded for free below. They include information about put-ins and take-outs, parking, dams and portaging. You will also find information about the local history, both natural and human. To find it and other free downloadable maps for watersheds around southern New England visit the [Rhode Island Blueways Alliance website](#).

The RI Blueways Alliance website describes the lower section of the Pawcatuck River which is now designated as the Quad-Town Kayak/Canoe Trail thusly: “The **Potter Hill to Westerly** paddle follows the Pawcatuck River for 7 miles from the access point at the end of Post Office Lane down to Westerly, Rhode Island. There is some whitewater at the site of the former dam at White Rock and at the remnant dam at Stillman Avenue. The latter can be portaged. Otherwise, this section of the river is quiet, with forested banks and only a few bridges, at least until you get to Westerly, where the river becomes more urban. Below Westerly the river widens into a tidal estuary as it flows into the sea.”

The Wood-Pawcatuck Watershed Association describes this section in detail. Follow along on the “Potter Hill Mill to Westerly Municipal Boat Ramp” map at <https://wpwa.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Pawcatuck4PottertoWesterly-Updated.pdf> Their description from “Potter Hill Mill to Westerly (About 6.9 miles): is as follows: “From Ashaway to Little Narragansett Bay, the river is the boundary between Rhode Island and Connecticut.

Put in at the public parking area on river left at the end of Post Office Ln. Upstream is Potter Hill Mill and Dam. This is a beautiful, bucolic section of the river. After passing under Boom Bridge it is about 1.5 mile to the former dam at White Rock. A dirt road across from Gingerella Sports Complex provides informal access to the river but because this site has not been properly developed its use is not recommended at this time. A remnant dam at Stillman Ave. can be run down the millrace to the left, about 200 yards of Class II whitewater. To avoid the whitewater, lift across the dam on the right bank at a willow tree. You are now in tidal water. Below the dam the river runs through downtown Westerly, RI on your left and Pawcatuck, CT on your right, with interesting views of commercial buildings. Take out on river right 50 yards below bridge at Donahue Park or 300 yards below on river left’s Westerly Boat Ramp. Both have limited parking. Numerous restaurants are available to kayakers and fishermen alike near the terminus of the trail. more information, contact North Stonington Conservation Chairman Bill Ricker at (860) 535-2426 or [williamricker@comcast.net](mailto:williamricker@comcast.net).”

#### A Summary of the Trail:

Level: Intermediate

START: Post Office Lane Put-in, Post Office Lane, North Westerly

END: Municipal Boat Ramp, Margin St., Downtown Westerly

RIVER MILES: 6.9 miles

ESTIMATED DURATION: 5 hours

SUMMARY: One section of class II rapids, tidal section, one possible portage, forest and commercial

ACCESS: Street parking, municipal boat ramp/parking

Attached is a small version of the trail map; see web link for larger, more interactive version at: <https://exploreri.org/documents/watertrailmaps/Pawcatuck4PottertoWesterly.pdf>



In summary: An interesting water trail right here in our back yard. Note that once below the “Remnant Dam” at Stillman Street you are in tidal water, next stop Napatree Point. There are some alternate possibilities: Launch and return to the Westerly Boat Ramp after touring the lower Pawcatuck, perhaps with a stop for lunch at Watch Hill? A one-way trip from Westerly, down the River and around the corner to quiet water behind Sandy Point with take-out at Stonington Small Boat Association in Stonington Harbor? With perhaps a motor skiff escort followed by a BBQ at our house and a return ride to your car in Westerly? Possibilities.....

## September Oar & Sail Outing

Saturday September 18th we held our our latest annual Oar & Sail Outing at Bluff Point/Bushy Point. Last year it was our first gathering of the year. This year it was the first of our Fall/Winter/Spring season. We're making progress. We saw old friends, new faces and shared some good times on the flat water behind Bushy Point. We usually have a nice SW breeze across Bushy Point's sand spit which protects us from the rough water of the Sound. If from the North, as it was this year, we get a free ride down to the Point and a little exercise rowing (or tacking) our way back. It dawned cloudy and cold but was sunny & warm by 10 am with a light breeze from the North. Nine of us turned out floating everything from kayaks to light weight rowing boats to a dory and a sailing Peapod.



**IN FRONT FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: KATE AND DAN NELSON, JIM FRIEDLANDER, BRIAN COOPER  
IN REAR: IAN AND FRANCIS BRADLEY WITH LEIGH AND RON REINHART IN KAYAKS**

Temperatures eventually warmed to 70 as skies cleared and clouds went away. We launched on a high(ish) tide at Burrows Ball Field ramp (off Airport Road just south of Route 1 in Groton) about 10 am and were back by 2 pm. We brought our own snacks and water. Our one sailor, after rowing under the Amtrak Bridge and through the old trolley line bridge abutments, pulled out to rig sail alongside the airport runway. The Rowers and Paddlers were off on their own right away and were first to Sandy Point. Last year they discovered a hidden route around an island on the eastern end of Bushy Point. Always something new to see and do.

Ian Bradley and his charming wife, Francis, attended sans means to float so Ian and I fetched Chapter dory “Professor Jones” from Avery Point (via trailer). The “Professor”, recently rehabilitated by Phil Behney, was ready and waiting with newly varnished totally adjustable seats and multitudinous choice of oarlocks. Ian and Francis went through many iterations, settling on one very close to Phil’s original plan for two-up rowing. They fell into a rhythm rowing, making it all the way down to a pull-out south of the airport. Return was up wind and tide but they were back at the ramp well before some more experienced (older) rowers (like myself). We returned the boat to Avery Point and got them back on the road in time to make it to a family wedding. One glitch was avoided early on when searching inside the Boathouse for the key to the trailer lock. “This is a padlock key,” Ian said. “How do you know?” asked I. Ian replied, “I am a certified Locksmith,”. Another skill added to our collection at the Boathouse!



**IAN AND FRANCES LINE UP TO GO UNDER AMTRAK BRIDGE AND JIM FRIEDLANDER IN HIS COLORFUL, SELF-DESIGNED AND BUILT DOUBLE ENDED DINGHY**



**DAN AND KATE NELSON PADDLING THEIR DOUBLE KAYAK AND BRIAN COOPER TURNING ON THE SPEED OPPOSITE THE AIRPORT CONTROL TOWER**

## The White Dory Progress Report

Professor Matt McKenzie brought his “Sailor’s Skills” class to our Avery Point Boathouse the middle Wednesday of September. Dan Nelson and I showed them around the shop, introducing them to the boats on the floor. When we reached the white Swampscott Dory, Matt’s eyes lit up. The next day he called. “What is the status of the White Dory”, he asked. “It needs a sponsor”, we replied. “That sponsor could be me.”, was his reply. It went onwards and upwards from there.....Here is Matt’s initial report; come meet him and his crew Nov. 5th.

“A clutch of members (Bill Rutherford, Dan Nelson, Phil Behney, and I) met about a month ago to develop a plan for getting the White Dory back in the water. She suffered from several egregious, but localized, spots of rot, but little else. And it was clear she had good, and perhaps professionally-built bones: well-selected materials, tight joints, good riveting, well-fared planking. A boat like this deserved another chance.



The question was how. To replace rotted planks would involve major surgery on the floor at the sternpost, replacing both garboards, and the starboard side riser planks. In short, a pretty extensive process that would result in the removal of a lot of good material along with the bad. Some proposed another approach, one while less traditional, but would be more expeditious: focused treatment of rot, careful deployment of Dutchmen and thickened epoxy, and rebuilding of lost non-structural material with epoxy putty where needed. This not only would require less concentrated time, but would also get the boat swimming again perhaps before winter. While most of us hummed and hawed about how to proceed, Dan quietly picked up a chisel, and started ripping out hull rot. Soon, we all followed suit, and the choice was made: repair the rot and get her swimming again.

So that's what we've been doing: JGTSCA newbies: myself, Cookie Wierski, and Ian Bradley, along with guidance by Bill Rutherford—set to scraping and treating the rot spots three weeks a month ago. I'll talk about details on the treatment process at the next regular meeting, but as of this writing, the White Dory is coming quickly back to life. The interior rot spots have been tended to, the interior has been primed and top coated, the removable brightwork has been stripped and refinished, and floor boards have been laid out and cut. We flipped her over about a week back, and turned attention to the exterior: replacing the shoe, refilling the false bottom seems, sanding and filling exterior rot spots. This weekend will see priming and painting completed, allowing us to flip her back right side up to finish the rubrail and fixed-thwart brightwork.

As happy as I am to see White Dory coming back to life, I'm more thrilled to see students and visitors stop in during every work session to see what's going on. Folks are just curious about the project and enjoy seeing people using the shop. I hope there are more projects on-deck for the winter to keep this energy going: I've got a few in mind, and Cookie may have a fun project, too, to pitch to the Chapter. Regardless, every day folks are in the shop turns into a good day for me.

Respectfully submitted, Matthew McKenzie



## Activities at Mystic Seaport Museum

### Activities, Exhibits and Tours:

Here is an **Activity** for you and the family:

**Make your own rope wreath!** Just in time for the holiday season, join us to make a wreath for your home. We will provide the rope and instructions. Feel free to bring your choice of ribbon or other accessories to personalize your reusable wreath. Offered Tuesday, November 9th from 5:30-8pm or Wednesday, November 17th from 5:30-8pm



Or take in an **Exhibit: The Sea As Muse**

Where do artists find their inspiration? In ancient Greece, the Muses were supernatural beings who inspired artists, scholars, and writers to create their works. The upcoming exhibit, *Sea as Muse*, explores the ways that the sea provided a similar inspiration for decorative arts in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The exhibit showcases fine silver trophies and woodcarvings from the vast collections of Mystic Seaport Museum. In the R. J. Schaefer building.

Take a **Tour**: most Fridays:

Ever wondered what is **behind the ropes at Mystic Seaport Museum's Preservation Shipyard? Or what is inside the Watercraft Hall**- open to the public only a few times per year? Looking for a special gift for that someone who has everything? Join us this fall and winter for small group guided tours of the Shipyard's machine shop, rigging loft, and interact with our skilled shipwrights as they describe the work they are doing on this winter's projects, including *Mayflower II*, *Pilot*, *Sherman Zwicker*, *Star*, and more.

Following the shipyard tour join **a guided tour of the Museum's Watercraft Collection.**

Housed in nearly an acre of the Rossi Mill building, the Watercraft collection is one of the largest and most diverse collections of its kind in the world. Including over 460 boats- mostly wood, and mostly American- going back to 1824, the collection includes vessels owned by a former president, prototypes of famous designs, and every outboard engine that you can imagine.

Registration Required: Registration required at least 24 hours before tour. Non-members will need to purchase admission separately if they wish to visit the rest of the Museum on the day of their tour. Admission can be purchased online or at either entrance.

Please meet your tour guide by 12 p.m. in the Main gift store (47 Greenmanville Ave, Mystic, CT) for the Shipyard Tour and by 1:45 p.m. at the traffic light in the North Parking Lot for the Watercraft Hall tour. Your name will be on a roster at check-in. To register please call 860-572-5331 or email [reservations@mysticseaport.org](mailto:reservations@mysticseaport.org).

## Mystic Seaport Ship Modelers

### Bob Andrie's latest:

"We had a very nice final event on Middle Wharf last month on September 11th--nice weather, and we were treated to a display of the Firefighter's water cannons, commemorating 9-11. A good ending to the season.

At this time plans for next year are to continue as we did this year with a combination meeting/show once per month on the second Saturday of each month, most likely held on the Middle Wharf.

We also spoke about continuing to try to meet through this winter. Given the continued problem with Covid, it'd be preferable to meet outdoors if the weather allows. Otherwise, I have gotten permission from Quentin Snediker to open the Watercraft Hall for us to hold our meetings in. We would stick to once-per-month on the second Saturday of the month at 10 am. Even though it is indoors, we could easily keep our distance and still have a chat, then tour the boats for a while. I know some of you have not been in there for a while now--a few already said they'd like to get in there again for a tour."

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

For those looking for a good, spooky book this Halloween, this is just in from Member Jim Friedlander: "Hi Bill, I have a new book which I think the members of the TSCA might enjoy. It's available on Amazon: <https://www.amazon.com/dp/B09FBX6VKH/>. or at Bank Square Book Store in Mystic. Thanks, Jim"

### **The Castle**

*Everyone loves a good fairy tale but adults rarely get to have their own. Here it is, complete with kings and queens, animals that talk, fools and wise men, lovers and villains, and a castle with a moat. There is even a dungeon below where acts too horrible to describe can happen to scare us out of our wits. This story has it all but beware, it's not for the little ones. It is only to be told after they have gone to bed time.*

Jim also has a collection of historical novels, also at Bank Square Books. Currently, he is working on a novel of the Old West; spoiler alert: Jesse James is in it.....

## From the Side Deck

We look forward to seeing many of you "Friday a week" as the English say, Nov. 5th at 5:30 pm, at the Boathouse for a gathering to hear about and see the White Dory, Transformed. We will be outside on the deck in the open air or if inside, wearing masks with the doors open and a breeze blowing through. No business meeting, just a chance to hear about and see the Dory before she splashes the following day. Hope to see you there. Bill & Karen Rutherford