

# 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

**Spring Maintenance on Rowing Craft**  
at UCONN Avery Point Boat House Building 36

**Next Meeting: In Person Meetings will resume as Feasible**  
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](http://www.facebook.com/JGTSCA) and <http://www.jgtsc.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:

See the new “Activities at the Boatshop” section at our website: <http://www.jgtsc.org/activities-at-the-boathouse.html> for an invitation from Matt McKenzie to both Students and Members. Note: only one week remains for this mid-week offer before the semester ends. We also meet Friday afternoons and evenings, but that is mostly members which also includes some of our new student members. See our feature article for details on recent accomplishments.



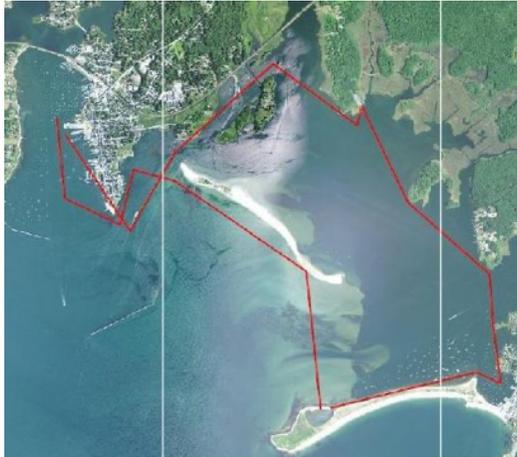
### **Need a Break? Want to Rest Your Brain? Need the Satisfaction of Working with Your Hands?**

Come to the Avery Point **BOAT SHOP** and see beautiful wooden boats get a new life—and join in if you want!

No experience needed, Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 1-3 pm, 29 March thru 4 May

Community Boating Building – look for the flag by the door. For more information, contact Prof. McKenzie: [matthew.mckenzie@uconn.edu](mailto:matthew.mckenzie@uconn.edu).

We kick off our Season of Rows May 1st with a **Shakedown Row from Mystic Shipyard East (not Barn Island ) to Napatree Point with a stop for lunch**. Return will be via Sandy Point and Stonington Harbor (approx. 10 miles). Complete info on our [JGTSCA.org/Events](https://www.jgtasca.org/Events) page. Contact Matt McKenzie if interested. Note: Matt advises that folks may shorten the trip by



visiting just Sandy Point, if desired. Also, note they will be leaving from Mystic Shipyard East, 18 Stafford St, Mystic, CT 06355, as a couple of folks will need boats and there are already two there.

**Sun May 1st 8:30am - 4:00pm at Mystic Shipyard East 18 Stafford St, Mystic, CT 06355.** Arrive early enough to be on the water at 8:30 am (High tide at Stonington is 0943)

Barn Island to Napatree Point with a stop for lunch. Return will be via Sandy Point and Stonington Harbor.

For more information contact Matt McKenzie [matthew.mckenzie@uconn.edu](mailto:matthew.mckenzie@uconn.edu)

**On Memorial Day Weekend**, the Seaport will be celebrating the beginning of Summer with a Grand Opening of their new exhibit, “Story Boats and the Tales They Tell”. More info on their website at <https://www.mysticseaport.org/explore/exhibits/story-boats/> And we at John Gardner TSCA will celebrate the weekend with an **inaugural John Gardner Classic Row** from our Community Boathouse at UCONN Avery Point to the Seaport, and return. Info at our website [JGTSCA.org/Events](https://www.jgtasca.org/Events). Matt advises shorter routes possible or drive to visit along the way.



**Shop-to-Shop John Gardner [ersatz] “Classic” Sat May 28th 8:00am - 5:00pm** at the Peruzzotti Boat Launch, (near the Ball Field) at 140 South Rd, Groton, CT 06340, USA [map](#)

Arrive early enough to be on the water at 8:00 am (High tide at Noank is 0825)

Catch the east-running tide to Noank then ride the back eddies up the Mystic River to the John Gardner Boat Shop at Mystic Seaport's Australia Beach. Lunch break and folks can take part in the Seaport's "Story Boats" events until slack tide. Then we will run back down the Mystic River to catch the fair tide back to the Peruzzotti launch.

(Approx. 20 miles) **SAFETY NOTE** This trip will bring us into Fishers Island Sound for a good stretch. Participants should be comfortable with wind, chop, boat wakes and channel crossings. For more information contact Matt McKenzie [matthew.mckenzie@uconn.edu](mailto:matthew.mckenzie@uconn.edu)

Last year we held our **John Gardner Small Craft Workshop** on Memorial Day Weekend. This year **it will be WoodenBoat Show weekend, June 24-26th** . The link is now up. It can be easily found on the MSM website by going to the Calendar and clicking on the date, June 24th. There will be a short description and a link to Register, which has a longer description and an opportunity to fill out a Google form (name?bringing a boat?, etc.). A letter to Participants will be sent to your mailbox. Cost: \$20 if a Member of the Seaport; \$40 if not. **This year's theme is "It's All About the Boats"**, so if you bring a boat there will be an opportunity to share its story.



The Seaport will be featuring its recently donated 21 ft. rowing and sailing Beachcomber-Alpha Dory (Chapter 18 in John Gardner's "Dory Book"). In addition, we plan the usual morning rows, afternoon sails and participant presentations. Workshop registration provides access to the WoodenBoat Show all three days including access to their Skills Demonstrations by Shipwrights from Mystic Seaport Museum and others in the nearby Claggett Boat Shed. Hope to see you there. Watch our [JGTSCA.org/Events](https://www.jgtsca.org/Events) page and the Seaport's <https://www.mysticseaport.org/calendar/> for details as they develop.

New this year is the **Squam Lake Raid, Squam Lake, New Hampshire Tue Jun 14th - Fri 17th**. This filled up quickly. **The event is now full**. Details and map are on our website's Events page but here is a quick summary: They will meet at the Squam Lake Association (SLA) headquarters/boat ramp in Holderness, NH then row/sail/paddle to a reserved, primitive island campsite maintained by the SLA about one mile away. The island includes a small beach and small dock to offload gear for the campsite. More details can be found at [www.squamlakes.org/camp](http://www.squamlakes.org/camp) and through the organizer. Bring a fishing pole and sailing rig! Space is limited and the site costs a total of \$50/night (to be divided among those attending). Matthew McKenzie is the organizer: [matthew.mckenzie@uconn.edu](mailto:matthew.mckenzie@uconn.edu). **Note to participants: please send photos of your adventure!**

### Float your Boat a little Higher

Expanded Poly Styrene (XPS) is closed cell foam, which can be glued together with polyurethane construction adhesive and is great floatation. An 8 ft x 2 ft piece is good for 165# buoyancy. Put it in the boat as high as possible to float upright. Alternatively, use float bags (see [NRS.com](http://NRS.com)). Air rollers (9"x60") also work well and can serve double duty. (see [www.Duckworks.com](http://www.Duckworks.com) ). Ballast bags filled with air instead of water are effective: a "365# bag" is 14x65" for 6 cu.ft. or "350# bags" are 5 cu. ft. (see [www.wakemakers.com](http://www.wakemakers.com) ).

## Notes from the Avery Point Boatshop

by Matt McKenzie

“They roars into spring with alacrity and organization!”

### Friday Evening sessions:

We have been meeting at the shop on most Friday evenings around 5-5:30 to get some work done on the various projects—see below. Those will continue into the spring as projects need. *Nota Bene:* We have a little work to be done on club dories this spring, but after that, both bays in the shop will be open. Please think about bringing in your boat project!

### Projects:

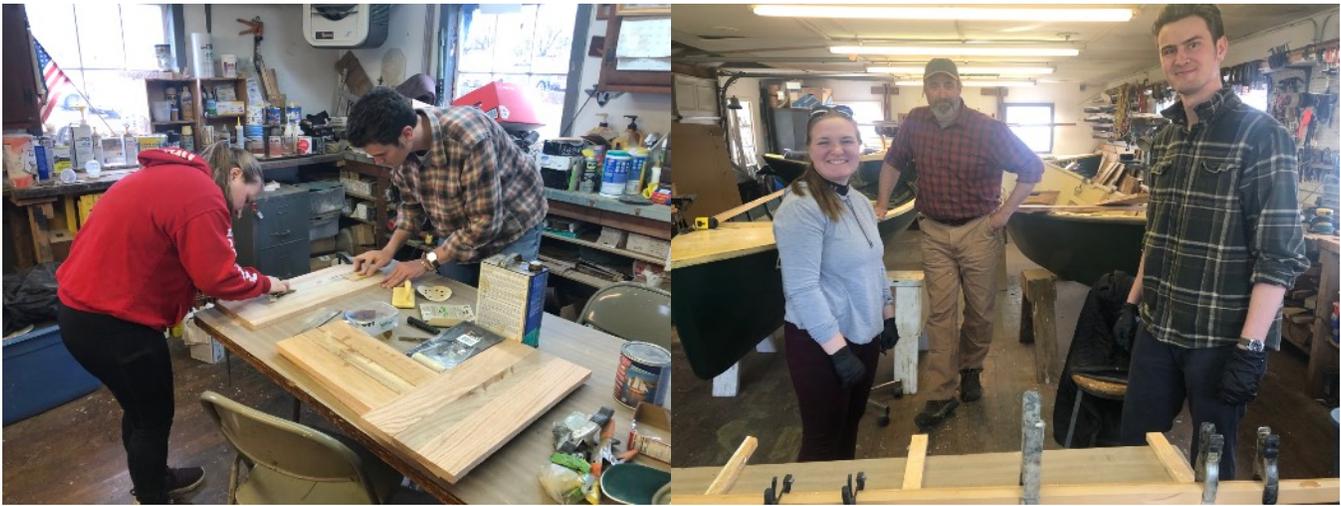
We spruced up *Cheticamp* over the past few weeks, sanding, priming and top coating her with the chapter colors of yellow and green. Russ was kind enough to bring her home for now, freeing up the second bay in the shop. We move ahead, albeit slowly, on the adjustable thwart installation in the club dory. Next week we should see the first of three boats fitted out, and ready to be put into use.



### Shop Hours and AP Students:

The shop started hosting “Shop Hours” twice a week (Tuesday and Wednesdays, 1-3pm, but often longer) in March to give students predictable times they could hang out in the shop. I am pleased to report that three students have become regulars (Meghan, Mackenzie, and Aiden), with others discovering the shop and hopefully to return. While in the shop, students get crash courses in hardwood vs. softwoods; the composition of varnishes, a “finish lab.” Or they were invited to help out with things needing to be done: Mackenzie built a birdhouse; Meghan helped glue up, sand, and paint the dory thwart rails, and sanded the thwarts themselves; Aiden helped with the gluing up the clamp block stock, sanded the cut blocks, then planed each down to a consistent size. Once student, Victoria, left the shop seemingly ready to start lofting a dory in her apartment, so I hope we get to see her again.

The sustained interest students have had in the shop has got me thinking about running a special topics course in Spring of 2023, focusing on how the experience of using hand tools allows students to ask better historical questions about those who used them in the past. Maybe we won’t build another boat, but small, individual, semester-completable projects could also suffice: a tool box, portable workbench, more and fancier birdhouses. Brian has kindly offered to help in this—thank god!—and if others are interested, please let me know. I will be



cooking up the syllabus over the summer, for submission by 1 September for university approval.

**Shop Clean-Up:**

Cookie Wierski went at the workbenches and storage lockers with a Herculean energy, restoring order and cleanliness after the pandemic hiatus. When folks arrive, please take a minute to note the minor changes made in where things live. Our flag has a proper home next to the door when not flying outside, and the brooms and dust pans have a rack for their more efficient stowage. Aside from those, no fundamental rearranging was done, but I authorized the jettisoning of some things that seemed to have outlived their utility (broken radio, a random orbital sander broken beyond repair, etc.). Please also note our plethora of sticky-backed sanding discs, and our fleet of hook and loop sanders—please use the sticky-backed sanding discs for hand sanding projects.



**Building Repairs:**

I spoke with Ben at AP and he is reviewing a price quote for siding and panting supplies. The window quote proved too high, so alternative routes are being explored to replace both sashes and cases, but that work may happen on a slower bell over the summer. I hope to have the materials on hand to meet the scheduled 5/14 and/or 5/21 “Shop Love Day”—ideally sooner. We’ll see, and please stand by.

**Coming Up:**

Deploying dories to summer berths: let Phil (and me) know if you can help transfer *Holland* and *Prof Jones* on and off trailers to where they will be kept for the summer. The dates are TBD, but the weather is turning nice!

Installing the adjustable thwarts in the remaining two club dories

May 1 Shakedown Row at Barn Island: if you want the use of a club dory, let Phil or I know. We will have to work out how to get the dories there, but it's do-able.

May 28 Shop to Shop Row—or something in the Mystic River at least: let me know if you wish to join. We have permission to pull up on Australia Beach at the Seaport, but non-members are expected to pay admission to the museum. There is an online advance ticket system we can use—again, let me know.

**This Month's Artwork**

A Collaboration: a Kate Wells Painting from a Photo by Sharon Brown



Photo by Sharon Brown, 2021

### In The Shops

#### Mystic Seaport Boat Livery Shop:

The goal was to have a full complement of boats ready for the docks by the first weekend of May, which has already accomplished. Five sections of new docks arrive the following week in time for the Spring Pilots (a separate group of Volunteers who meet twice a year to help with special projects) to launch boats and secure them to the new docks. If interested in joining Pilots, contact Amanda Keenan [amanda.keenan@mysticseaport.org](mailto:amanda.keenan@mysticseaport.org). It is a great group of enthusiastic people. In the meantime, final touches are being made to backup boats, names applied and oars & rigs sorted.



Brian Cooper uses his custom jig for oarlocks Johnny Wheeler paints Dion Dory sheer strake

**Here's Your Chance:** Summer volunteers are still needed at the Livery to assist visitors as well as continue maintenance. Contact Carrie Moore [carrie.moore@mysticseaport.org](mailto:carrie.moore@mysticseaport.org). Hours are flexible. The work rewarding and the group congenial.

#### Model Boats:

It's amazing what you can come up with with a few off-cuts and a plastic grocery bag:



## Mystic Seaport Museum

**The Next Great Exhibit:** One of the Museum's greatest assets is its small watercraft collection, which is arguably the largest of its type and the best in the country. **Mystic Seaport Museum has more than 450 small watercraft** as well as a fleet of larger historic vessels tethered to our docks along the Mystic River, four of which are designated National



Historic Landmarks. As a whole, these vessels represent an extraordinary array of design, purpose, and materials beginning in the early 19th century to the present, from dugout canoes to duck boats to Boston Whalers and everything in between and beyond. What ties these boats together thematically, and **is the inspiration for the exhibition Story Boats: The Tales They Tell**, is the remarkable richness of human interest stories behind them, which include themes of hope, exploration, survival, joy, adventure, sport, immigration, and others.

Clark Senior Curator for Watercraft, Quentin Snediker, consulted with a diverse pool of

experts and regular people to distill a list of boats from the collection that have these outstanding stories to tell. The exhibition installation in the Collins Gallery will fully utilize the grand volume of the space to advantage, where some of the lighter vessels will “fly” suspended from the ceiling, while others will be mounted on the gallery floor. Each vessel will be exhibited with an iconic object that alludes to its story. Opens May 28th.

### From the Mailbag:

**This just in from Bill Stirling, Cape Cod TSCA**, advising us that the rendezvous at Kalmus Beach, Barnstable, MA is on for May 21st. “For the new folks, it will be similar to Walt Baron's fall row in Wellfleet. We all bring our personal boats, so if you have one or two, bring them along. We will have the 27' Whitehall, a 4 oared coxed gig there as well. The boats are available for anyone to row and test out many different types of early New England row boats. Let me know if you have any questions. Bill” contact Bill at [billstirling08@gmail.com](mailto:billstirling08@gmail.com)

### Monthly Quotes:

“Dinghy cruising is increasingly in tune with a contemporary sensibility. People are beginning to question the urge to own things. They wish to seek experiences instead.” Roger Barnes.

“A dinghy is a small boat that rows badly, sails badly and is heavily built to compensate.” Anon.

## New Boat in our Community:

Last month we reported that Pete Peters of the Delaware River TSCA and Old Bay cruising group had cancelled the following advertisement because he had recently sold it to our very own Peter Vermilya: “A 1995 built “York” Delaware Ducker, glued lap construction from Mystic Seaport plans. Bronze fittings, newer sprit sail, Shaw and Tenny oars. Solid boat with registered trailer.”

Well it came to pass, yesterday, when Pete Peters and Paul Skalka arrived, towing a beautiful dark green Ducker. Pete rigged the boat, explained its idiosyncrasies and we carefully lifted it from Pete’s rusty old trailer to Peter’s gleaming new aluminum one. It was both a happy day and a sad day, although everyone said it was a happy day.



On the Left: Peter Vermilya trying out the boat in 2019; On the Right: The purchase in 2022.

From left to right: Bill Rutherford, Paul Skalka, Peter Vermilya and Pete Peters.

And the most important part: right after the boat landed in its new trailer, Peggy Vermilya announced lunch: Alaskan salmon pasta salad, Greek potato salad, Italian Caprese salad, Wicked deviled eggs, English cucumber and onion salad, Naked greens, Oven roasted garlic bread, Assorted beverages, Sweet to follow. Suffice it to say, we rolled out of there about three hours later, full of good food and drink with many sea stories ringing in our ears.

## From the Side Deck:

As you can see from this issue, we have lots going on and many fun activities planned. To fully participate, remember your dues: Remember \$15 LOCAL CHAPTER JOHN GARDNER TSCA dues: Join and Renew Online [www.JGTSCA.org](http://www.JGTSCA.org) **Plus:** \$25 for NATIONAL TSCA MEMBERSHIP (remember, they pay our event Insurance and mail us the magazine “Ash Breeze”) at [www.tsca.net](http://www.tsca.net) and receive a TSCA sticker for your car. Such a deal.

Hope you enjoy this issue. We look forward to seeing you out on the water or at our next landslide event. Send us a photo with few words and we will share with others. Bill & Karen