

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

New Dory Build as well as Winter Maintenance on Rowing Craft
at UCONN Avery Point Boat House Building 36

Next Meeting: 5 pm Thursday, January 26th at Avery Point Boathouse
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 and <http://www.jgtsc.org>

National: 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.

The Year in Review (2022):

We are lucky here in the John Gardner Chapter to have such a beautiful locale for exercising our traditional small craft, traditional in shape and use if not always in materials or methods of construction. As is our wont, the turning of the year gives us a chance to cast an eye back across the year to remind ourselves of the diverse group we have, some might say "cast of characters", in a diverse collection of boats and experiences. We also have worked out, over the years, some tried and true reoccurring "touchstone" activities: a Winter visit to a nearby museum, or brew-pub, as the case may be; a Spring Row; the John Gardner Small Craft Workshop, a Summer Cruise, well, at least an overnight; our September Oar & Sail & Paddle Outing in the protected waters behind Bluff Point State Park's Bushy Point, all culminating in our traditional Solstice Row up the Mighty Mystic with a stop-over at the majorly Irish Pub, the "Harp and Hound".

All this plus creative original art and stunning photographs made for some interesting Newsletters...take a gander sometime at the website John Hacunda has assembled which include blasts from the past Newsletters, current news, coming events, activities at the Boathouse as well as a dash of interesting Scuttlebutt. JGTSCA.org

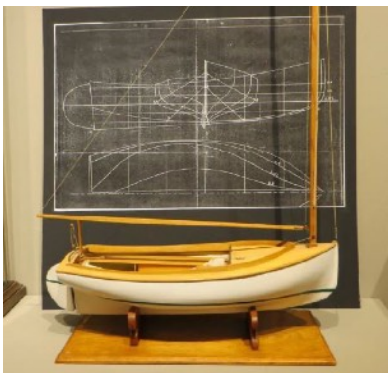
A quick trip down memory lane follows. Perhaps this will spark some new ideas to discuss at our first Chapter Meeting in a while...5 pm Thursday, Jan 26th at our Community Boathouse. It will be good to see everyone there.



January 2022: The White Dory: First Solo Row:

I put her in at a pretty rough and tumble dirt ramp on the Mystic River, upstream from Mystic Seaport Museum, and headed upstream. Right away, the sweet rowing qualities I began to experience on her launch day became more apparent. Little drag, easy to get moving, keeps momentum well, responsive to subtle unequal pulling pressures on each of the oars—in all of these things, White Dory showed me the quality of her lineage. This was a fast, easily worked, but stable and maneuverable rowing vessel. As she glided upstream past reed covered banks and fall-colored shores, the

oncoming current and foul breeze rather than impeding us, seemed to pull her forward faster. It was though she had her reins loosed, and she was running like the thoroughbred workhorse (if there is such a thing—I'm a sailor, not a horse person) that she was. Matt McKenzie



February 2022: Escape to the Cape: Becalmed in the February doldrums, the cheer of the holiday lights has faded behind our transom and the prospect of warming seas and summer festivities still lies somewhere ahead on the horizon. When New England winter has us yo-yoing between a blizzard dumping over a foot of snow one week, followed by a spring-like thaw with temperatures arcing into the 50s, sometimes a change of scenery is in order.

A short drive from the Rhode Island coast and over the canal bridge lies Cape Cod – its mighty arm jutting out into the Atlantic – slumbering while it too awaits the onslaught of the summer tourist season. It may be quiet on the Cape now, but there's still boatyards to explore in search of that "perfect boat", hearty clam chowder to savor, and the wonderful Cape Cod Maritime Museum to visit. The 13'6" Catboat is a Weneumet Kitten designed by Reuben Bigelow of Pocasset. John Hacunda.



March 2022: Russ Smith, Founding President of our Chapter, is leading an effort to put some lipstick on the Gales Ferry Chapter's 19 ft. Cheticamp rowing boat, a sister to our "Susan B. Holland". The goal is to take both boats on the Inaugural John Gardner Classic Row to the Seaport, Memorial Day Weekend, May 28th. While there, they could meet their smaller sister, the Seaport's 17 ft. "Green Machine.", John Gardner's Modified L. Francis Herreshoff Rowing Boat. I'm not saying there will be a race, but one may be faster than the other....



April 2022: 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. Photo by Sharon Brown.



May 2022: May 1st Shakedown Row: “How do you keep getting these great weather breaks for your rowing events?” Ian asked as we leisurely rode the tide and a quartering breeze down the Mystic River. He was part of the previous Fall’s White Dory rehab crew, and like today, we enjoyed amazing weather when we launched that back in November. And indeed, this day proved spectacular—warm and calm after a month of blustering westerly springs winds that would make even Vivaldi rethink the harshness of his movement. But

today, the sun shone, the breeze was kind and gentle, and three dories, a dinghy, and a kayak glided around the Mystic River for a few hours to shake out the winter cobwebs. Ian, Mackenzie, Meghan (UCONN Avery Point students), Roberta, Ron, Dane, and myself made up the flotilla for this opening event of the JGTSCA season. By Matt McKenzie



June 2022: The Memorial Day Row: “Plans proved dynamic this weekend” Fog thwarted the plans for a long distance row on the Saturday of Memorial Day weekend. While the wind proved sufficient, the visibility did not, so the intrepid venturers (Me and Tim) opted for prudence over valor, and stuck to the Mystic River. With the last wafts of fog blowing off the water, Tim hove to and waited for me at the entrance to the little cove on the west side of Mason’s Island. Putting the wind onto our quarters, we glided into this little piece of paradise, with birds calls and a light shoreside lapping drowning out what little boat noises our boats emitted. By Matt McKenzie



July 2022: Report on John Gardner Small Craft Workshop: While lots of sea stories were exchanged at the beach or at our booth, the real fun occurred on the water. Matt McKenzie led the morning rows in his recently rehabilitated White Dory, leaving at 8 am on Saturday on a tour upriver with plenty of time upon return to attend Ben Fuller and David Cockey’s “Peapod’s of Maine” talk. Sunday morning’s row was down river, under the Mystic River highway bridge, recently rehabilitated for its 100th anniversary, and the Railroad Bridge a little further on down ending at Six Penny Island opposite Noank on the west side of the river. Our sandy spit of yesteryear is slowly eroding away but going to Sixpenny gives us nice tour of the Noank waterfront as well as the classic yachts on moorings, one of which is an original

Dunkirk Boat, one of the Small Boats that evacuated British troops from Dunkirk early in the Second World War. In the photo Ben Fuller shares modifications to dory “Topsy” with fellow dory Owner Dick Sleeper.



August 2022 Summer Sailing:

“Stonington Harbor, an excellent place to sail for traditional and modern small craft, Peter Vermilya in the classic Beetle Cat POUSETTE and NESS students having a blast in the latest, a Hartley 12” (a Sharon Brown Photograph).



September 2022 Report on Oar, Sail and Paddle Outing at Bluff Point SP: We launched at Peruzzotti Boat Launch at Barrows Ball Field, rowed under the active Amtrak bridge and through the old trolley line bridge abutments to enjoy the lower reaches of the Poquonock River. There we found light breezes passing over Bushy Point to energize some of the sailors to explore out past the point and on around Pine Island in Fishers Island Sound. All enjoyed exploring the protected shallow waters.



October 2022: September 27th, the JGTSCA dories hosted Alexis Dudden’s senior history seminar at the Avery Point beach. Twenty four UCONN students, most with no prior exposure to rowing, experienced for the first time the vicissitudes of the sea on a clear, warm, and calm afternoon. Despite the steep learning curve (and culturally consistent minimal on shore training) these kids got a good taste of “Swamp Yankee tricycles”—i.e. small boats. Smiles abounded, no one dumped the boat, and a few took and interest in the shop itself after their time on the water.



November 2022: Fall Colors Row: It was a beautiful fall day, coolish but warm enough for a few short sleeves. Leader Dan Nelson’s intent was to hold it a week later than last year to catch the exact peak of Fall color, but Mother Nature chuckled and dropped many of her leaves during high winds the week before.

Attendees: Dan & Kate Nelson, Kate’s friend Karin, Matt McKenzie, Phil Behney, John Hacunda, Roger Mennillo and Ian and Frances Bradley.



December 2022: Winter Solstice Row: Going out for a Row on the evening of the Winter Solstice is a tradition at our John Gardner Chapter. Phil Behney again led the Row from Mystic Shipyard East, out around the Point, up to Mystic Seaport and back with an after gathering at Downtown Mystic’s best Irish Pub, the “Harp and the Hound”. Departing at 3 pm they rode the last of the incoming tide up the River and bucked the first of the ride coming back. Rowers included Phil, Ian Bradley, Ron Reinhart, Chris Vargas, Brian Cooper, Matt McKenzie and John Hacunda. Joining at the Pub were Leigh Reinhart, Francis

Bradley, Ian’s Mom and John and Nikita Unverzagt. All reported having a great time.

Coming Events:

- JGTSCA Business Meeting Thursday, January 26th at 5 pm in our UCONN Avery Point Community Boathouse: our first Business Meeting for 2023.
- “Student Shop Hours” at our UCONN Avery Point Community Boathouse restart with Spring Semester classes Tuesdays and Thursdays, 11:30-2pm starting January 17th? or for sure Jan 24th. Email Matt Mckenzie to confirm no real work has gotten in the way: matthew.mckenzie@uconn.edu
- “Friday Night Work/Community Sessions” 5 pm to 7 pm starting at least Feb. 3rd and likely Jan 27th. Come checkout the newly organized, brightly lit shop.
- Seaport “Shipyard and Watercraft Hall Tours” resume Fridays and Saturdays in January. Visit the Seaport Museum Calendar page to sign up <https://www.mysticseaport.org/calendar/>
- Catboat Association Meeting last weekend in January at Mystic Marriott. See Catboats.org

Launch Points

East/West Side of Connecticut River

by John Stratton, a founding Member of JGTSCA

(We have been waiting to share this wonderful list by a local insider until there’s a fire in the hearth, maps are out and plans for summer excursions are being made. Many Thanks, John)

021718/103021/011422 updates

East Side Connecticut River, Heading North:

Old Lyme starting east of river mouth and moving northward:

Old Lyme town beach (“White Sand Beach”)--non-summer only...beach requires parking sticker and is provided with sticker-watching guards from May 30-Labor Day.

Griswold Point--no actual boat launch but it is possible to walk from town beach westward to uncontrolled beaches; excellent views of Saybrook lighthouses.

State Boat Launch at Smith Neck Road west off Rt. 156--excellent access to Griswold Point beaches, sandbars, and tricky, variable shallows at river mouth; perfect access to convoluted estuary system to the east (Black Hall River/Black Hall Outfitters--which is also a commercial launch point); waterways to north reach also to the Back River estuaries which culminate at the Lieutenant River, which has a useful boat launch as it

crosses under Rt. 156, and emerges close to the railroad bridge (heavy tidal currents through the bridge area!).

Town Landing Road off Smith Neck Road off Rt. 156--looks like a long driveway but is public and connects to Back River estuary system. Best at medium/full tides: muddy! Limited parking.

Dinghy Dock and Ferry Landing beach off Ferry Road west of Rt. 156--access to river between the RR bridge and Rt 95. Swift current and boat wakes, but good parking at the DEEP lots. Launching is easy but a few paddle strokes and you are in the river currents.

Pilgrim's Landing--at curve on Rt. 156 north of Rt. 95. Best at non-low tides but good access to main river, the large Lord's Cove estuary complex, and Nott Island and its beaches off Essex. Lord's Cove is shallow at low tides but is great to explore if you have seen Apocalypse Now. There is another direct entry from the river to the cove but it can be tricky, winding, shallow.

Binney Road/Landing Road west off Rt. 156 estuary launch—great site but private property.

Tantummaheag Road public launch access—currently again in legal dispute, despite having been established 1705 or so. Heavily silted up at lower tides, but with excellent access to Lord's Cove. (New property owner trying to acquire it, so former “driveway/launch” markings are likely to have been removed.)

Ely's Ferry Road Town of Lyme launch west of Rt. 156--direct public access to river and a small sandy beach. Limited parking, excellent views, bad boat wakes. Good access to entrance of Hamburg Cove to the north.

Town of Lyme boat launch--unmarked, unimproved embankment off Rt. 156 at Cove Road just south of Hamburg Cove Yacht Club; direct access to Hamburg Cove.

State of Connecticut Gillette Castle launch at Ferry Landing, Hadlyme. Excellent, though unimproved, launch site at Ferry landing. Head south on the river to Selden Island (650 acres) and its four “canoe camping” zones. Boat wakes! Pull up vessels high on beach! Also provides access to the “back side” (east side) of the Island—and very sheltered Selden's Creek.

East Haddam (on east side of river):

Rt. 148 at swing bridge crossing, south of bridge and Gelston House restaurant and north of small airport. Small, barely marked access at sandy beach, but scenic views of Goodspeed Opera House, easy launching, and good parking.

State of Connecticut Salmon River boat launch--Rt. 149 north of East Haddam center. Excellent access to Salmon River estuary. Boat wakes!

West Side Connecticut River, Heading North:

Saybrook Light and north to Deep River:

Fenwick: Private property, though the public road (Sequassen Avenue) to the historic lighthouse on Lynde Point is bordered with washed up debris on sandy beaches and grass suitable for launching. The Saybrook Channel is protected by rock breakwaters; caution is advised.

Saybrook Point Inns and Marinas; Saybrook Point Park—North of the park and its parking lots, there is a small point of simple parkland suitable for hand-carried launches. Boat wakes and shifting tides, and close proximity to the main channel, make it tricky for small craft.

North Cove/North Cove Yacht Club—a narrow town launch (and very limited parking for non-Saybrook residents) is near the south side of the cove entrance among homes and lawns. The North Cove Yacht Club is located on the far western end of the cove. The estuaries of Saybrook occupy a large area of winding creeks from north cove upriver to the south side of the railroad bridge. Near the west bank, the main body of the river is characterized by shallow water, low and rocky islands, strong currents!

State Launch Ramp, Old Saybrook—A large ramp and deep water characterize this public facility under the I-95 Baldwin Bridge on Ferry Road. To the north side of the ramps there is a small beach suitable for small craft. Busy on weekends! Maritime Education Network's buildings and small craft (some for sale!) are on the immediate west side of Ferry Road.

Foot of Main Street, Essex—The small beach concrete ramp at the end of Main Street adjacent to the Connecticut River Museum offers a quick launch site and no parking; a less visible ramp is at the foot of Pratt Street (the street north of Main Street), and a still-less-visible public launch site into a large and very shallow cove is located off Bushnell Street, which is eastward off North Main Street. The launches allow careful cross-river trips to the beaches and backwaters of Nott Island. Excellent small boating adventures, for those who pay attention.

Deep River Town Launch—Follow River Street east off Rt. 154 to the end, across the railroad tracks. A fine small launch offers safe river access, and invites a cross-river trip to Selden Island and the Hadlyme Ferry landing park. Parking is constrained in the summer by town regulations. Likewise, there is an informal launch near the Chester Ferry landing, with limited parking—and interference from cars waiting to be ferried.

Mystic Seaport Museum Activities:

[Sargent, Whistler & Venetian Glass: American Artists and the Magic of Murano](#)

Now until February 27: Escape the cold and visit sunny Venice with *Sargent, Whistler & Venetian Glass*! See the exhibit that is "making waves in visual art" according to [Artnet News](#). This exhibit is open seven days a week. Please see the updated Museum hours below. Take advantage of discounted admission Monday through Wednesday.

Museum Members attend for free! [PURCHASE TICKETS](#)

Updated Museum Hours: North Campus Open Thursday-Sunday 10:00 am-4:00 pm (Grounds Close at 5:00 pm.) Collins Gallery at the Museum North Entrance, Open Daily 10:00 am- 5:00 pm The South Entrance, the Shipyard, and the Village are now closed for the Winter. Grounds are Closed Monday-Wednesday.)

January Classes and Workshops:

[Blacksmithing Sampler](#)

Monday, January 9, through Saturday January 21, 5:30-7:30 pm or 4:00-6:00 pm on select dates

[Eating from the Sea](#)

Wednesday, January 11, 5:30-9:00 pm

[Woodcarving Sampler](#)

Saturdays and Sundays, January 14 through February 25, 10:00 am-12:30 pm and 2:00-4:30 pm

[Murano Mornings: Coffee with Curators](#)

Thursdays, January 19, through February 16, 9:00-11:30 am

[Afternoon Tea in the Buckingham Hall House](#)

Monday, January 23, 3:00-6:00 pm

[Blacksmithing Basics](#)

Mondays, Wednesdays, and Saturdays, January 23 to March 4, 5:30-7:30 pm

[Marine Outboard Engine Maintenance](#)

Saturday, January 28, 9:00-5:00 pm

[Newfoundland Dog Training](#)

Sunday, January 29, 10:00 am-3:00 pm. *Demonstration begins at 11:00 am*

Looking Forward to February: [Join us for Wintertide](#)

Saturday through Monday, February 18 - 20, 10:00 am-5:00 pm

Bundle up and celebrate the great outdoors in New England with ice sculpture demonstrations, games, crafts, and music. Need to warm up? Grab a hot cocoa from Propeller Cafe. Whether you're chilling with a boat ride, or warming up next to a fire, visitors of all ages will find so many ways to have an "ice" day at Mystic Seaport Museum. Check back soon for the full schedule.

Boat Looking for Home:

This just in from long-time Seaport Volunteer Mike Messick: A **Legendary Montgomery 10**

“This dinghy sails more like a real boat than any other ten-footer I know. Back when I and the boat were a lot younger, I had the boat in an 18 knot out of control plane at BI Salt Pond one breezy afternoon. Probably too heavy to do that now. As a yacht tender it probably made six or eight trips to Maine and many miles here locally south of the Cape to eastern Long Island behind the various boats that I have owned.

I would like to see the boat go to a deserving person who would fix it up and commission it. If that person turned around and sold it I would expect a couple of bottles of scotch for my troubles, otherwise free.

It needs a good cleanup, repaint the interior and a little T-L-C.

All fabric fiberglass originally, (no roving)

All teak woodwork, rails, seat, rudder, centerboard (plus centerboard plug for towing).

Oars with captured oar locks.

Sail with battens.

Self-bailing drain

Aluminum mast and boom. (track needs re pop riveting).

All gear and mast dry stored in my basement.”

(If of interest, email me, Bill R. smallcrafter@gmail.com and I will put you in touch with Mike.)

Remember your Dues for 2023:

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

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 and mail us the magazine the “Ash Breeze”) Join and Renew Online at www.tsca.net and receive a copy of the “Ash Breeze”.

From the Side Deck:

The View here today is a bit Wintry but if you look further out, say to Spring and Beyond, it is Sunny and Beautiful with a light breeze from the Southwest....If you have similar visions, bring them to Jan 26th’s JGTSCA Meeting and we’ll figure out ways to make them happen.

Meanwhile, send us shots of what is going on in your shop, guides to a few favorite winter hikes, reports of interesting Sunday Afternoon winter escapes (Herreshoff Museum, anyone?), Art work, Photos, your favorite boat adventures...Thanks for your support! Bill & Karen