

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

Next Meeting: 1 pm Sunday, January 14 at 1pm at Building 36
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.jgtsca.org>

National: www.TSCA.net

This Year's Solstice Row:

Just in from Phil Behney: "For this year's Solstice Row (Thursday 12-21-23 10:45am) I plan to do something a bit different. We will be leaving from New London GPS coordinates 41.36346, -72.09141. This is the ramp on the New London side under the Bridge, not the Ken Streeter ramp on the Groton side which is still closed. Launch Address: Thames River Boat Launch at 1 State Pier Road New London, CT or [in Google Maps](#) (click on "Google Maps" text for link).

I would like to meet at the ramp by 10:45 am. Low tide is at 11am. We will row north, up river to Mamacoke island, approximately two miles. We can pull ashore for a snack and to look around. There are nice hiking trails for anyone so inclined, but I would like to be back to the ramp by 2:30pm.

There are also interesting sunken ships and barges off the historic Thames Shipyard that we can explore along the way. Please remember safety especially around sunken derelicts as these may be hazardous. So please exercise caution and safety on this trip as always. Only experienced rowers, using winter appropriate PPE, should join the row. This is a row for experienced rowers only. That said, if conditions are such that we can't go, we won't go but as of now (12/15) the weather looks good for the Thursday, Dec 21st Row.

After the row I will be taking two of the Dories back to Mystic. The Harp and Hound opens at 4pm so we can meet there for the annual Solstice Row for landlubbers, wives, and friends, warm up and social gathering.

Hope to see you all at the row or at the Harp, or both! Please forward this to any interested parties.

Thanks, Phil Behney, JGTSCA Vice President (860) 599-1915"

(If plan to participate in the row, best advise Phil - call or text)

Our Feature Article:

New London Currach Rowers Preserve the Heritage of the Currach

by John Hacunda

A currach (also spelled curragh) is a traditional Celtic boat. It is a type of wooden frame boat covered with a layer of animal hides or, more commonly in modern times, canvas. Traditionally, currachs were used by fishermen along the western coasts of Ireland and Scotland. They were designed to be lightweight, easily maneuverable, and suitable for use in rough seas. Currachs are featured prominently in Robert Flaherty's 1934 classic documentary *Man of Aran* which depicts the spartan life of residents of the Aran islands off the west coast of Ireland.

A traditional currach on the Aran Islands, west coast of Ireland

The construction of a currach typically involves a wooden frame made from flexible, lightweight wood such as hazel or willow. This frame is then covered with a layer of animal hides, traditionally from cows or seals. The hides are often treated to make them waterproof. In modern times, canvas is often used as a substitute for hides. While they have ancient roots, currachs continue to be built and used today, preserving a connection to Ireland's maritime heritage.

(See next Page for Photograph)



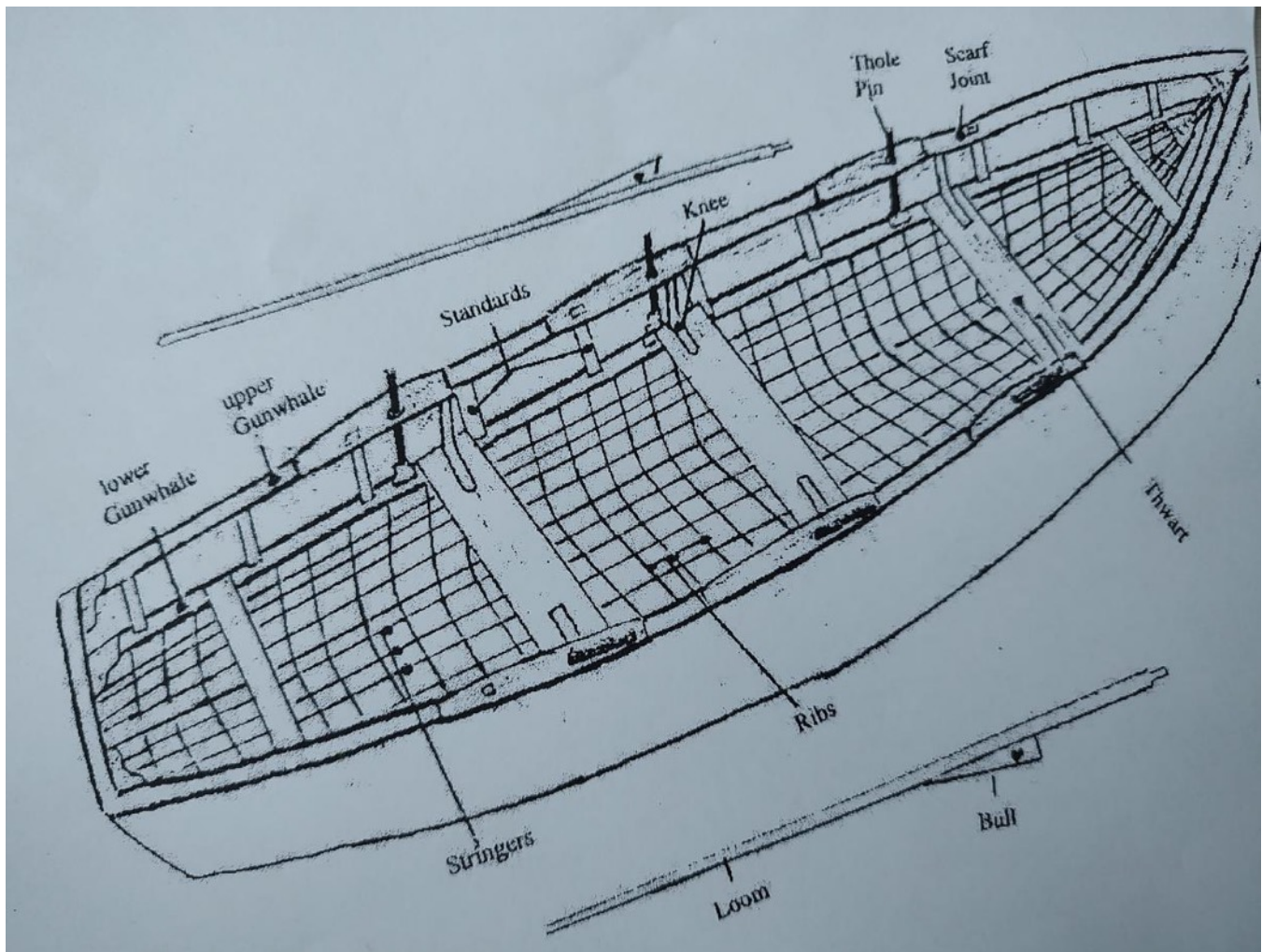


Diagram of Currach components

The New London Currach Rowers work to preserve the currach tradition through rowing and other Celtic cultural activities. The club maintains two traditional 25ft currachs which are used to train new rowers and to practice team rowing skills in preparation for currach rowing regattas. The regattas are held by the team members of the North American Currach Association: Boston, Milwaukee, Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, Albany, Leesdale (PA), Annapolis, and New London.

This past July the New London Currach Rowers hosted a regatta on the Thames River. Teams from Annapolis, Boston, Pittsburgh, and Philadelphia joined the New London Currach Club rowers for some spirited competition.

Racing competition on the Thames River, New London (Photo credit Daniel Passapera)



The New London team hosts “Learn to Row Irish” days in early spring and late autumn. You’ll also find club members with a currach on display at cultural events such as the Mystic, New London, and Norwich St. Patrick’s Day parades, Garde Theatre performances, and gatherings at the Forty Thieves Pub in Groton. An additional currach has been restored by the John P. Holland division of the Ancient Order of Hibernians, and is also displayed or rowed as a means of educating the public about one part of Irish culture.

The friendly folk of the New London Currach Rowers are happy to demonstrate their craft and host "Learn to Row Irish" opportunities for compatible and interested organizations.

Practice session on Rogers Lake (Photo credit Mindy Welch)

As current NLCR president Maureen Plumleigh explains: “Irish rowing is open to everyone. And there’s no need to be Irish. Those interested may simply try it out, and then decide if it suits them. It’s an activity that, when viewed, looks easy, but ‘Rowing Irish’ differs greatly from the traditional rowing in shells. We welcome those who enjoy a new challenge.”

“For me, it combines the elements of social with teamwork and camaraderie, physical -- using the body, often beyond personal expectations, mental -- planning and

responding to the regatta's conditions, as well as spiritual – there are many sweet moments on the water and in nature when my body simply propels the boat, taking in the beauty of creation and experiencing joy of being with like-minded rowers.”





The thrill of currach racing (Photo credit Daniel Passapera)

To receive information about the club and upcoming events contact Maureen at row.currach.nl@gmail.com or visit the New London Currach Rowers Facebook page at

Man of Aran (1934) documentary by Robert Flaherty

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cwmc05qW0xc>



A Big Boat Outing:

by Ellie Czarnowski

Dan and Kate Nelson took us for a sail in Fisher's Island Bay. It was a beautiful sail on a brisk day with a mix of sun and accordion like clouds. We saw a few harbor seal's on the rock clusters. Ellie



THE CREW: (L TO R) KATE NELSON, ELLIE CZARNOWSKI, NICOLAS ALLEY, JOHN HACUNDA AND IN FOREGROUND WITH A FAR-AWAY LOOK IN HIS EYE, DAN NELSON



John Gardner Chapter
TSCA
Quarterly Business Meeting
McQuade's Dining Room
December 3, 2023

Present: Steve Telsey, Phil Behney, Carl Kaufmann, Sharon Brown, Rob Pittaway, Karen Rutherford, Bill Rutherford, Peter Vermilya, Ian Bradley, Larry McGee, Ellie Czarnowski, Brian Cooper, Dan Nelson

FROM L TO R: STEVE TELSEY, CARL KAUFMANN, DAN NELSON, PHIL BEHNEY, ELLIE CZARNOWSKI, IAN BRADLEY, KAREN RUTHERFORD, ROB PITTAWAY, BRIAN COOPER, PETER VERMILYA, BILL RUTHERFORD, LARRY MAGEE. PHOTO BY SHARON BROWN

Meeting called to order at 10:35 am by President Brian Cooper.

A vote of thanks was given to past president Brian Cooper for his exemplary service to JGTSCA.

The following officers were duly nominated and elected for the year 2024:

President: Ian Bradley

Vice President: Phil Behney

Secretary: Peter Vermilya

Treasurer: Ellie Czarnowski

Member at Large: Dan Nelson

Meeting Schedule for 2024:

Quarterly Business Meetings, Sundays at 1 o'clock, January 14, April 7, July 7, October 6.

Weekly meetings for work occur every Friday at 5pm

All meetings take place at the Community Boat Shop, UCONN Avery Point Campus, Groton CT.

This schedule is subject to change. Please consult the latest Newsletter on the JGTSCA website <http://www.jgtsca.org/newsletters.html>

Treasurer's Report

Ellie Czarnowski submitted the Treasurer's Report which was unanimously accepted. See separate report.

Your 2024 Annual dues will be most welcome. Go to:

http://www.jgtsca.org/uploads/1/3/5/9/135917164/jgtsca_membership.pdf

There was discussion of a very generous donation to JGTSCA by Sid Whelan. The funds are to be used specifically for the education of youth in the field of small craft, a subject central to the interests of John Gardner, for whom this Chapter of TSCA was named.

Events

The Winter Solstice Row:

On or about Winter Solstice (December 21st this year). Usually, a row from Mystic Shipyard East, around the tip of Masons Island and up the River to the Bridge and back with a much anticipated stop (either during or after) at the Irish Pub "The Harp and the Hound", 4 Pearl Street, Mystic). Watch for an email from Phil Behney with date and time. Many skip the row and go directly to "The Harp"....

Meeting adjourned at 11:30am. Next definitely scheduled event is a Business Meeting January 14th.

Respectfully submitted,

Peter Vermilya

Secretary

Note from Dan Nelson:

"Hi All: I would like to cut the bow off my pram (it is designed that way) before our January meeting. Since this operation will be performed without anesthesia, I expect that extra hands will be needed to hold her down. The heat will be on, and hot dogs will be provided. See you then, Dan"

So, if wish to witness this operation, plan to arrive before 1 pm in time for a hotdog and the sawing...

News Release

from Matt McKenzie

“The John Gardner Chapter of the TSCA elected a new president, Ian Bradley, on Sunday, December 3rd. A member since 2020 who has worked on most of the shop projects since then, Bradley is also a UCONN Avery Point alumnus and has considerable canoeing and small boat experience. He succeeds Brian Cooper, who carried the organization through and out of the pandemic, keeping the community going during one of the most challenging periods in recent memory. Bradley’s focus will be to continue to get people back on the water in chapter messabouts, sailing raids, or get-togethers that discuss small craft, their use, development, construction, and enjoyment. He wants to liaise with other regional chapters to organize exchange trips where visiting chapter members can benefit from hosts’ local knowledge. He also seeks to (along with getting shop manager McKenzie’s keister into gear) to continue the shop’s activities, be they student restoration projects, chapter dory maintenance, new builds, or instructional seminars. “The pandemic threw us all for a loop: we have a chance to rebuild a new normal from what worked in the past and what works for the present. People want to be on the water.”

Mystic Seaport Boat Livery:



GENE CAPUTO, PETE HOOVER AND TOM WUNDER PAINTING AND TAPING THE INTERIOR OF CHASE BOAT “GIDEON MANCHESTER”

The boats are coming inside under the able leadership of new Boathouse Supervisor Rosie DiMatteo. Beetle Cats are getting new canvas decks. Skiff “Mary” topsides & bottom painted.

Mystic Seaport Museum Events:

Lantern Light Village: December 8, 9, 15, 16, 21, 22, 23 5:00 – 8:00 pm

Lantern Light Village is an outdoor, self-guided experience for the whole family, designed to exemplify the differences between the modern and 19th century holiday seasons. 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, crackling fires, a visit to St. Nicholas, and more, including holiday themed stories, crafts, and games!

For details see: <https://mysticseaport.org/lantern-light-village/>

Community Carol Sing: Sunday, December 17 3:00 - 4:00 p.m

The 70th annual Community Carol Sing at Mystic Seaport will be 3-4 p.m. Sunday, December 17. A new addition to this beloved seasonal tradition this year is a Holiday Hat Contest.

The Museum will be open to visitors from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and admission is free with the donation of a non-perishable food item or by cash donation. All contributions will be donated to and distributed by the Pawcatuck Neighborhood Center.

The Mystic Seaport Carolers will perform a holiday concert in the Greenmanville Church at 2 p.m. The carol sing will commence at 3 p.m. in the McGraw Quadrangle, led by Associate Professor of Music and Director of Choral Studies at the University of Connecticut Jamie Spillane (now in his 32nd year directing this event) and backed by the Museum Carolers and a brass quartet.

For details see: <https://mysticseaport.org/news/community-carol-sing-is-sunday/>

From the Mailbag:

CT Sea Grant's "Wrack Lines" See Attached copy to email transmittal

Featured articles: "Tiny model boat crosses the Atlantic - Multiple Times", "The Convuluted Geology of the CT Coast" and on the Back Cover: Photo of our JGTSCA Dories. See also the Editorial up front about the UCONN Messabout and JGTSCA's participation. "Wrack Lines" is free from CT Sea Grant; donations suggested

For details see: <https://seagrant.uconn.edu/publications/wrack-lines/>

News from National TSCA:

On November 15th the National TSCA Officers, Council and Chapter Reps, as well as interested individuals, were briefed on **the latest plans for Mystic Seaport's Small Craft Hall** expansion. Our own Chris Freeman shared his new presentation on the \$15 mil project as it moves from concept to construction. A "Cliff Notes" version is attached to email transmittal.

From the Side Deck:

Remember your dues for 2024: Join and Renew at www.JGTSCA.org and www.TSCA.net

And here is a Christmas Bonus: From Dan Nelson courtesy of NOAA Fisheries: Paper Snowflakes to decorate your tree: go to the web site, select and print the template and cut as directed. [Paper Snowflake Link](#) We're doing the Salmon...Happy Holidays! Bill & Karen