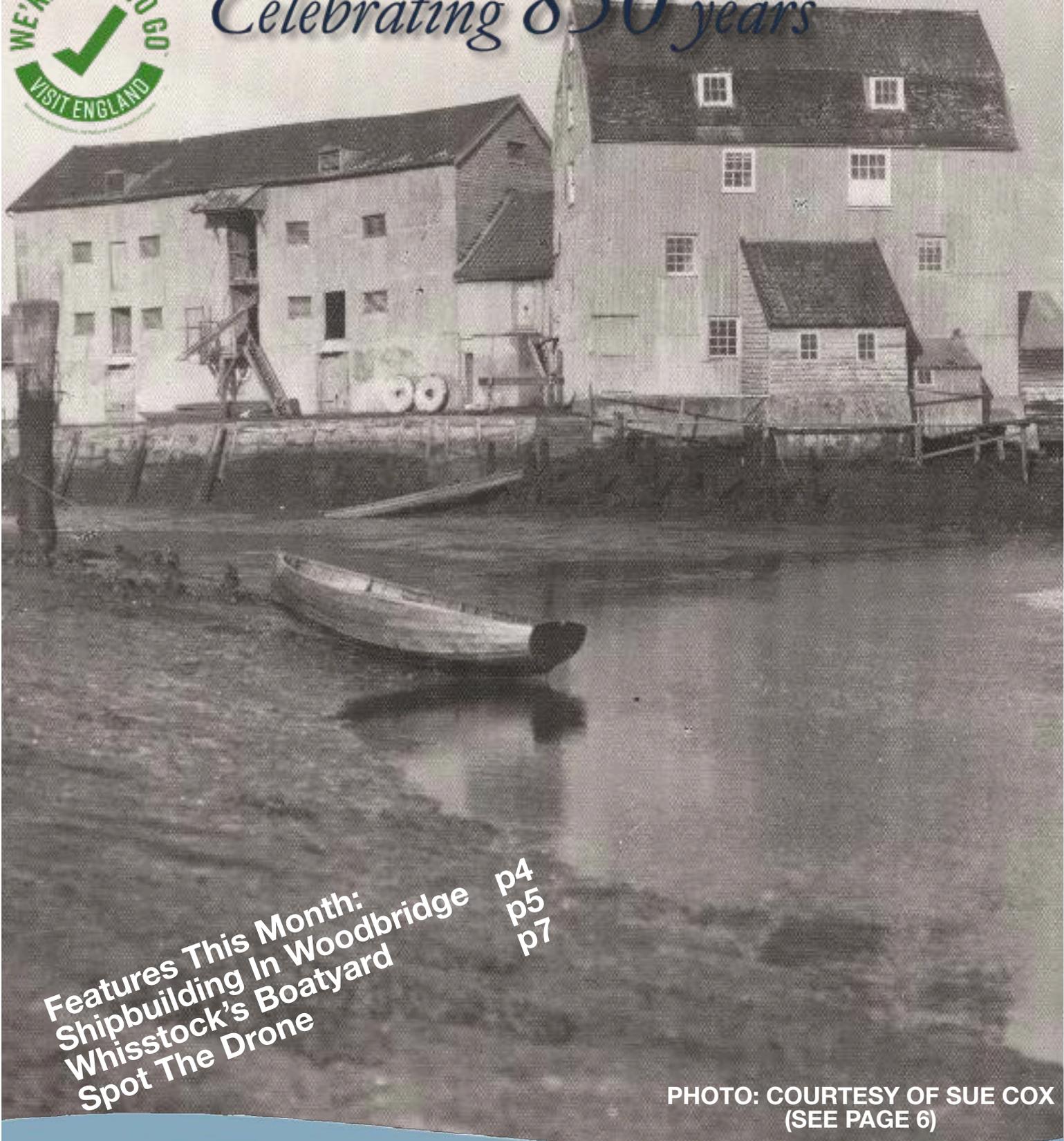


Honorary
Tide Mill
President:
Nigel Barratt

WOODBIDGE TIDE MILL MUSEUM[®]

Patrons of the
Tide Mill:
Lord & Lady
Framlingham

Celebrating 850 years



Features This Month:
Shipbuilding In Woodbridge p4
Whisstock's Boatyard p5
Spot The Drone p7

PHOTO: COURTESY OF SUE COX
(SEE PAGE 6)



EDITORIAL

We are still in difficult times, which I am sure you do not need your Editor to tell you.

Some establishments are gradually opening and Woodbridge Tide Mill is amongst them, but in a very limited way. Tours of the Tide Mill are available, but it is necessary to restrict visitor numbers by only allowing advance bookings, with one family group at a time being shown around.

The safety conditions of a visit are very strictly applied. I just 'dropped in' the other day, to speak to Dan, and got a really good ticking off, because, although I had sanitized my hands when I went in, I was not wearing a mask. He was quite right, so expect to be reminded yourselves when you go, as we hope you do.

Naturally, with less activities going on at the Tide Mill, and no school or group visits, there is less news to tell you in the newsletter, so the opportunity has been taken to pass on some of the history of the River Deben and the ship- and boat-building that has been carried out here in the past and continues today.

The museum continues to develop, under Fraser's caring hands, see page 3, flour production continues at the Tide Mill, as Dan's report on page 7 makes clear, and we always find some maintenance work is essential, though it is done quietly this month.

VIEW FROM THE BRIDGE

Reopening the Tide Mill to visitors has been challenging but, thanks to Dan Tarrant-Willis, a great success. As I explained last month, we are only open at weekends and, because of the pandemic, have to limit the numbers who can visit the Mill at any given time. The online booking system has worked well thanks to Fraser Hale. Feedback from visitors has been very positive.

I am conscious, however, that whilst it is good for the Tide Mill and for Woodbridge for the museum to be open again, it has not been possible to recognise the contribution of our Friends, who are so important to the Mill. To partially remedy this we are, over the next couple of weeks, starting a new service to allow Friends to order our flour online and collect it from the Mill. This facility will be exclusive to Friends, as our flour is generally available from the Woodbridge Co-op and other outlets. We are also preparing to sell Mill merchandise online using a new e-commerce platform. Friends will be offered a discount on all items sold.

We'll send out a mailing to Friends with full details as soon as the new services are ready.

Stay safe.

John Carrington
Chair of the Tide Mill Trustees

CONTACT US

Here are live links to send emails to the contacts needed for those readers who want to contribute to the life of Woodbridge Tide Mill by volunteering for one or more of the various interesting, and fun, jobs that need doing...

If you want to put something in the newsletter (or comment on it):

[Ed.](#)

If you want to be a Guide:

[Wendy](#)

If you want to be a Miller:

[Dan](#)

If you want to be a Flour Bagger:

[Brian](#)

If you want to be a Warden:

[Dan](#)

If you want to be an Engineer:

[John W](#)

If you want to be an Leafleteer:

[John W](#)

If you want to help with Marketing:

[Simon](#)

If you want to help with something we have not thought of:

[Dan](#)

If you would like to contribute to our Collection or Archive:

[Fraser](#)

If you want to contact our Chair of Trustees:

[John C](#)

If you want to be a Friend of Woodbridge Tide Mill:

[Be A Friend](#)

MEANINGFULLNESS



SOMEONE JUST EXPLAINED THE WORD 'MANY' TO ME. IT REALLY MEANS A LOT.

Curators Coruscations

We're good to go!



Thanks to a great deal of hard work on the part of the Tide Mill Museum management team, and in particular our Mill Manager, Dan; our Engineering Team Leader, John Wood; and our Marketing and Sales Adviser, Simon Ballard, Woodbridge Tide Mill Museum re-opened for business on July 4th!

At present the Museum is open Saturdays and Sundays from 11:00 am. In order to keep our visitors, our volunteers and our staff safe, we have introduced a range of new measures and methods of operations. After performing a full Covid-Secure Risk Assessment, and implementing the protective procedures that this indicated, the Museum was recognised as a Covid-Secure destination by 'Visit England'; the national tourist board of England.

A system of online booking allows visitors to purchase tickets in advance for timed visits.

A maximum of just six people are allowed into the museum at one time. This means that visitors can move freely around the mill, maintaining a safe distance from our staff and volunteers, and enjoying a very personal tour of the Tide Mill.

We have introduced screens at reception, multiple hand sanitation points, and a high frequency extended cleaning regime. This means that visitors are able to interact with the mill and its exhibits almost without restriction, while we are still able to offer a safe and rewarding visit.

To welcome visitors back (on top of our beautiful gleaming exterior paintwork) there are a few changes inside the museum. One or two displays have been rearranged to offer a more logical 'journey' through the Mill and its history; and there are two completely new exhibits.

A collection of tools used to construct and maintain the Mill, from the time when the current building was erected, are on display on the Ground and Stone floors. On the Crown floor is a small collection commemorating 1968, the year that the Mill was acquired for preservation, and its saviour – Mrs Jean Gardner.

Already we have welcomed an encouraging number of visitors – some returning to the Tide Mill they love and have missed, many making their first acquaintance with our wonderful building.

I am proud to be associated with the effort and endeavour of those who care for the Tide Mill who wished to make it a safe and welcoming



destination again as soon as it was appropriate and practical to do so. I am also hugely grateful to the people who have returned so readily to enjoy and to support the museum.

Stay Safe

Fraser Hale

**Curator
Woodbridge Tide Mill Museum**



SHIPBUILDING IN WOODBRIDGE

As I was sitting outside Coffeelink the other day, I got chatting with a tourist, who asked me about boat-building in Woodbridge, because he had a vague memory of seeing a large boat launched from 'here' ('here' being recently Whisstock's yard), some years ago. I told him boat-building is still very much an activity on the Woodbridge waterfront, although most of the work done now is repairs and refurbishment. However, I told him, if he was a little older he might be remembering ship-building on the River Deben. He was not old enough!

In these times of 'Distancing' (I refuse to use the inappropriate 'L' word as it is an Americanism, coined when they have their regular prison riots; we are not prisoners), when news from the Tide Mill is somewhat limited, I decided that shipbuilding here would make an interesting diversion. And being an Editor I, of course, look to where I can obtain suitable copy (rather than actually doing anything myself) and my eye fell upon The Woodbridge Maritime Trust, who have a very interesting website. So thanks to them for this blatant copy/editing therefrom. Ed.

"Our Maritime History

Although Woodbridge has a maritime history stretching back beyond medieval times, it is not until the Tudor period that we get a clearer picture of shipbuilding in Woodbridge, centred on a good supply of oak trees from the heavy clay land around the Framlingham area.

Ships were built for London merchants. There was a steady increase in the size of ships built at Woodbridge. Notably, in 1566 *Bark Smith*, 120 tons; 1604 *Ann Franci*, 290 tons; 1616 *Palmer*, 292 tons and *Centurion*, 326 tons.

In the Golden Age between 1625-38 eleven ships were built at Woodbridge, of which the largest were the *Levent Merchant* and *Muscovy Merchant*, both 400 tons. Their names suggest that these ships were built for long voyages.

The Deptford ship builder Phineas Pett built ships for the Royal Navy and came to Woodbridge to buy trees. He used to lodge at the Crown Inn, when the landlord was Thomas Cole. Pett arranged a marriage between his fifth son Peter Pett (1610-1672) and Cole's daughter. Through marriage to Cole's daughter, Peter Pett was given the ownership of the Crown Inn and the Lime Kiln Dock. The marriage was in 1633 and, surprise, surprise, that year Peter Pett got the contract to build the first ship for the Royal Navy at



This is a painting of HMS *Kingfisher* by Peter Monamy, and dated 1734, which was probably intended to depict *Kingfisher's* fight with seven Algerines

Woodbridge.

The Pett family fell out with the Admiralty, as they were accused of cheating, but Woodbridge had become accepted as being a good place to build ships for the Royal Navy. The largest ship built at Woodbridge, on a slipway, where the cinema is now, was 663 ton HMS *Kingfisher* in 1675. These were sizable ships and they were towed, by large rowing boats, to Deptford where they were fitted out in the Royal Dockyard

[Wikipedia shows Kingfisher as launched at Woolwich, but that was after she was fitted-out there. Ed.]

Woodbridge was established as a shipbuilding centre and developed all the skills needed to send a merchant ship to sea. Flax grown on farms in the Deben area was woven into sailcloth in the town and there was also a rope walk. By this time merchants in Woodbridge owned ships, and they were commanded and manned by men from the town.

Last merchant vessel in 1853

This went on into the mid-19th century. The last merchant vessel built at the Lime Kiln Yard was the tops'l schooner *Ellen* in 1853. Later on the Lime Kiln yard was run by Mr Garrard, but he just did repairs until the yard closed. Woodbridge had finished as a shipbuilding centre because local owners were buying softwood ships built very cheaply in the Canadian Maritime Provinces. These were sailed across with cargoes of timber and both cargoes and ships were sold in the United Kingdom.

[Continued on next page]



[Continued from page 4]

Yacht building was really started by the canny Scot Ebenezer Robertson, known as ‘Khartoum’ Robertson. He wore the kilt and played the bagpipes. In 1884 he was going to Southwold on a train when he saw the empty Lime Kiln Shipyard and thought that he could build yachts there. Yachts were then the coming thing. He sent his son, A.V. Robertson, over to run the yard. In turn his son, ‘Robbie’ Robertson, also carried on building yachts and became a much respected builder. This yard trained local men to be shipwrights.

Some of these shipwrights set up their own boatyards. The 12ft [sic] Woodbridge pilot boat, Teddy, was built in a shed in Lower Brook Street in 1877. This pilot’s boat was left in a shed for many decades and is now the oldest Woodbridge boat still afloat.

Claude Whisstock started the Whisstock’s boatyard in 1926, near the Tide Mill. [See below]

Mr Everson started boatbuilding at the coal jetty below Ferry Dock and this yard is still in business as ‘The Woodbridge Boatyard’. He began building the first Woodbridge wooden class yacht, the Cherub, in 1931. Frank Knights started a boatyard on the Ferry Dock and traded here for many years, building beach boats and doing repairs. Other boat builders worked in sheds around the waterfront.

Whisstock’s Boatyard – a brief history

Claude Whisstock was born in Woodbridge in 1903 and attended Woodbridge School. He served two years in the merchant navy and then

completed a boat-building and marine engineering apprenticeship at A V Robertons’s boatyard in Woodbridge before working at Brooke’s boatyard in Lowestoft. In 1926, the year of the General Strike, he started his business on the marshland site offered him by his father William Whisstock with fifty pounds borrowed from his elder brother Douglas, as working capital. Claude drained the marsh, constructed the slipway and built the first workshop on stilts. This ‘Little Shop’ was still in existence when the site was cleared for development in 2016.

Claude built his enterprise up from nothing: doing repairs, building dinghies and taking day trips down the river on weekends. By the 1930’s he had a thriving business, building substantial yachts. Between 1926 and 1939 he built one hundred and twenty-seven boats. With a growing reputation Whisstock’s began building the Deben Four Tonner, designed by Maxwell Blake, now a classic boat. These lovely, sea-kindly little craft made yachting accessible to the small boat owner. Sleeping two in a comfortable cabin below, they were the perfect weekend sailing yacht and can still be seen sailing on the East Coast today. Claude Whisstock on the for’ard sheets with Ted Marsh, waterman, at the helm.

Eleven Deben Four Tonners were built between 1937 and 1939 and approximately forty were built in all. With the outbreak of World War II Claude turned to helping to win. He built an incredible two hundred small boats during the war; trawlers, lifeboats, and tenders for the Admiralty and the War Office.

[Continued on next page]

BUSKER'S CORNER

Every good mill needs a miller,
 Who steers the controls like a tiller,
 And the flour, once ground, needs a filler,
 The flour tastes nicer than vanilla,
 And can make you strong, like a gorilla,
 But too much of anything can be a killer,
 When grinding, the mill is a thriller,
 But, when finished, becomes stiller,
 And a rhyme too many would be shriller.



WHAT IS THIS, AND WHAT DOES IT DO?
 Answer on last page



[Continued from page 4]

During the war, Claude had a very small work force, which was constantly changing: conscientious objectors, people in reserved occupations (school woodworking teachers for example), men awaiting call-up, men unfit to serve and the wounded awaiting return to the war. Many of his orders were multiples. For example: twelve 16 ft Trawler Boats for the Admiralty built in June 1941.

The yard was bombed but luckily the bombs all fell in the mud alongside the quays, causing considerable shrapnel damage but no serious harm. In 1951 the yard built Deben Honour, a six tonner which was exhibited at the Festival of Britain. In 1958 Claude built the Whisstock's family boat, Landfall, a 17 ton 38ft Ketch designed by Kim Holman. The Landfall design became so popular that a further six sister ships were launched. At this time many Whisstock's boats were designed by Kim Holman, and this team, together with the West Mersea sail-maker Paddy Hare, created some of the iconic racing and sailing yachts on the East Coast and further afield.

In 1962 Claude's son George joined the yard and trained as a boat-builder and yacht designer. The Whisstock family began work on a yacht harbour, taking the idea from harbours they had seen while cruising in Holland. (Claude and Joan had, with foresight, bought the old mill pool in 1958 when the mill wheel broke).

Whisstock's built Gypsy Moth I for Francis Chichester, Mary Deare for Hammond Innes, Gang Warily for Maldwin Drummond and many other long keel blue water cruising yachts which were exported all over the world. The boatyard was always at the forefront of yacht building. It tackled

the decline of traditional timber yachts by switching to WEST™ system yachts, epoxy laminated plywood construction. There were about forty Najas, designed by Sylvestre Langevin, built by the yard, most of which were built with the WEST™ system. In 1984 the yard passed out of family ownership, but fine cruising and racing yachts continued to be built on the site until its closure in 1991. In total Whisstock's built in excess of seven hundred boats (including wartime production); it was the biggest boatyard on the Deben with a national and international reputation for building fine yachts, many of which sailed and raced internationally, some indeed having circumnavigated the world. George Whisstock



continues to design boats from his home in Maine, USA exporting his self-build Computer Aided Designs around the world.

WRT is very grateful to Sue Cox, daughter of Claude Whisstock, for providing this history, and to the Whisstocks family for allowing us to use these photographs on our website."

[As equally, by default, are we. Ed.]

Please go to <https://woodbridgeriversidetrust.org> for



THIS PHOTO: WOODBRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL



No prizes, it's just for fun. Try to see whether or not there is a drone in each image, and, if there is, where it is.

Drone Pilot: Tim Curtis, Photos: Simon Ballard.



MILLER'S CHRONICLE

By Dan Tarrant-Willis

We have re-opened the Tide Mill for weekend visitors. The first weekend we had 4 visitors who pre-booked and visited. The next weekend we had 23. This weekend [18-19 July] 66 which is on par with what we would have expected for this time of the season, based on the data from previous years.

This is all good and it's a relief to be open. Over the last few months we have been planning our re-emergence and much time has been spent formulating a visitors' policy in conjunction with our Covid 19 policy. The fundamental aspect of these policies is that our visitors and volunteers feel, and are, safe

while they are in the Mill. These new sensible measures include limiting the number of visitors to 6 pre-booked visitors at a time, keeping to 2 metres distancing while in the Mill and the use of sanitizer and masks applied and donned on entry to the Mill. The job at hand over the last few weekends has been to empirically test out these systems and tweak where necessary, where we feel they could be improved. The feedback from the visitors so far has been good, with many happily self-reporting that they felt looked after and safe during their visit to the Mill.

As part of the milling team these new systems are as important because the Mill is, of course, a food processing facility and the

new Covid procedures that we are asking our wardens and visitors to adopt have been in place and practiced by the millers since March; so although new to many these procedures have become regular practice for the milling team.

By strictly adhering to these new procedures we will keep each other safe and consequently the Tide Mill will be able to flourish during these difficult times.

This year's production of our super flour to date is 3,026.7 kg.

(6,672¾ lb. Ed.)

NB: Reduced flour production this month as stock is high.





Here are just a few examples of the wonderful collection of artwork that we have displayed in the Weaver Room at Woodbridge Tide Mill.

For more details you will need to examine them closely next time you visit.



Diary Dates for 2020

FOR THE TIME BEING, WHILST THE TIDE MILL REMAINS CLOSED, WE ARE SUSPENDING THIS TABLE OF EVENTS, PENDING CLEAR INSTRUCTIONS LEADING TO A SAFE STRATEGY, WITH REGARD TO THE CURRENT COVID 19 SCARE.

BUT DON'T FORGET THAT A GROUP OF UP TO SIX CAN NOW VISIT THE TIDE MILL BY BOOKING IN ADVANCE. MAKE YOUR OWN FAMILY EVENT.

Correspondents: all copy for next month to be sent to WTMeditor@gmx.com by the middle of August please.

WHAT IS IT? ANSWER

This is a section of the large Pit Wheel which is fitted on the square Main Shaft. The Pit Wheel drives the Wallower Gear Wheel which then drives the main verticle shaft off which all other machinery is run.



PURPOSE: The purpose of this newsletter is to support and advance the objectives of the Trustees of Woodbridge Tide Mill. The newsletter provides all supporters a forum of their own, together with information about current and future events and it is hoped it will foster a sense of common interest and shared identity, encourage increased participation and entertain.

EDITORIAL POLICY: The editor has full editorial responsibility for the newsletter. Articles that appear and views expressed are not the official position of the Trustees on any subject, unless specifically noted as such. Items submitted for inclusion may be edited for grammar, style and/or space requirements and contributors wishing to be alerted of any changes prior to publication must notify the editor at the time of submission.

IMAGES: Unattributed images are by the article author or Ed.

DISCLAIMER: The p2 Glenn Miller gag cartoon is not making a comment about any real helpers at WTM.

