



# TIDE MILL INSTITUTE

Committed to Sustainable Industrial Heritage

## Tide Mill Times

*December, 2011*

4 pages – [www.tidemillinstitute.org](http://www.tidemillinstitute.org)

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### *“The Tide Mill: A Once and Future Thing”* - 7<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL CONFERENCE A HIT

More than fifty tide mill aficionados gathered at Kennebunkport Conservation Trust’s headquarters November 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> for Tide Mill Institute’s 7<sup>th</sup> annual conference to explore the past and future of tide mills.

Friday evening’s reception was followed Saturday by a busy round of presentations and activities. Through the day, participants conferred, exchanging experiences and information, supported by a display of tide mill literature and a video presentation “What is a Tide Mill?”

On Saturday author-historian Dr. Roger Charlier of the University of Brussels gave historical background of the wide international scope of tide mill technology. He discussed European mills from different eras, highlighting the extensive French hydro-electric tidal installation at La Rance, in France. Steve Simcock, manager of Kennebunkport Conservation Trust’s Grist Mill Project, explained the intricate permitting process now underway for reconstruction and operation of the 1746 Perkins grist mill. After archaeologist Peter Morrison showed images of his work on the site, participants boarded a bus for a field trip for a low-tide look at what’s been uncovered so far. The remnants of a 19<sup>th</sup>-century iron turbine and bed logs at the gate structure were clearly visible. It’s likely that when this mill is operational, it will be the only operating tidal mill on the Atlantic coast.

After lunch, environmental lawyer Todd Grisct discussed how courts regulated early American tide mills and how that process is now managed by agencies, standards and statutes. Bud Warren described the nature and distribution of the many salt-water mills from one end of the Maine coast to the other.



Low tide exposes the 19<sup>th</sup> century turbine.



Participants view archaeology and hear about the Perkins Mill.

## DISCUSSIONS GAVE PARTICIPANTS A CHANCE TO SHARE

The busy day ended with participants forming two groups to discuss how better to share the tide mill story and how to facilitate real-world tide mill projects.

**HISTORY-ORIENTATION** - Initial discussion focused on how Tide Mill Institute can help local historical societies bring attention to tide mill heritage in Maine and along the whole Atlantic Coast.

Several suggestions emerged, giving Tide Mill Institute some strong guidance for its future:

- Extend efforts to educate Maine's local historical societies about Maine's tide mill heritage
- Create a "Tide Mills 101" CD for distribution.
- Create links to other organizations like Society for Industrial Archaeology, and SPOOM
- Develop educational templates for mill sites
- Develop contact-hour/credit courses and college/graduate-level "Tide Mills 101" course for teachers
- Encourage and work with historical societies to enhance involvement with schools.
- Kennebunkport should be encouraged to be planning a video about its *Tide Mill Project*
- Put effort into developing a younger, hands-on, involved audience

## REAL-WORLD TIDAL PROJECTS -

The group agreed that:

Hydro power has its place in contemporary renewable/alternative energy discussion.

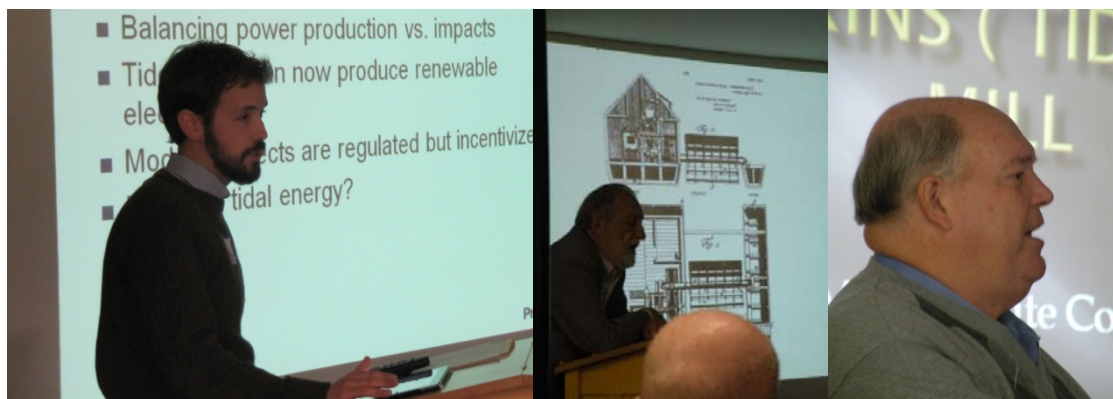
The existing hydropower infrastructure including historic sites should be utilized.

Modern advancements and technologies should be encouraged and utilized.

Educating policy makers and the public should be a major thrust for TMI and proponents.

Discussion focused on two projects:

Adding a small hydro electric component and converting the impoundment at an oyster farm at an existing lobster pound dam, formerly a tide mill site in Maine. The diversity of historical and proposed uses and the duality of tidal power and sustainable mariculture were seen as enhancements for possible sources of support. *The Grist Mill Project* at Kennebunkport Conservation Trust will be an important educational destination that highlights the permitting process, the historical and technical aspects of tidal power and its economic impact on the Kennebunkport region. Both these projects have the potential for broadening regional and State-wide awareness of tidal power/hydroelectric power. It's likely that State and local tourism officials would take note and respond to a historic tide-mill/technical byway trail tying sites and projects together.



SPEAKERS: Todd Griset

Roger Charlier

Steve Simcock



Direction signs helped participants find Kennebunkport Conservation Trust Headquarters



Browsing before the presentations

A trolley bus took us to the tide mill



Faces

Lunch Break

## TIDE MILL NEWS FROM ELSEWHERE

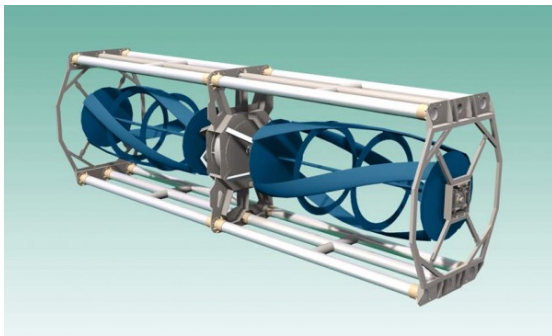
### HUNTINGTON, NEW YORK - Tide mill seeking a new owner.

The Van Wyck- Lefferts tide mill may be yours for the taking! It has sat quietly since 1793 on a picturesque dam at Lloyd Harbor, Long Island. More than a decade ago the mill building was stabilized and recently its owners, the Nature Conservancy did a major repair of the dam, which had badly deteriorated and has recently been overtopped by higher tides. Because its mission does not include maintenance of historic structures, the Conservancy has been seeking a new owner, preferably a non-profit group that would leave it at the original site or move it to another suitable location.



### EASTPORT MAINE – Electrical power from the tides!

The dream of producing commercially available electrical tidal power is now being realized on the coast of Maine. Ocean Renewable Power Company of Portland has developed and installed a turbine that is taking advantage of the favorable tides of Cobscook Bay. Glen Marquis of ORPC spoke last year at our Arlington Conference about their efforts in Eastport and in Alaska, which also has great tides.



For a great short video of the Eastport installation, check out the company's website [www.orpc.co](http://www.orpc.co) [" co" NOT "com"]. Go to the bottom of the page and click on the center video: "Beta TGU 2010."

### RESEARCH ON TIDE MILL NUMBERS

David Plunkett, an old friend of Tide Mill institute, is a researcher findings of old tide mill sites in the UK. He recently sent us a summary of his research at a recent conference in Denmark, held by TIMS (The International Molinological Society). He listed just over 700 known mill sites in Ireland, the UK, France, Spain and Portugal.

So far we've identified over 220 salt water mill sites here in Maine alone. Until the advent of steam power, tide mills abounding along coves and estuaries in most of our coastal communities were a major part of the region's colonial and early national economy. Tide Mill Institute's hope is that Maine's historical societies will begin to explore, document, interpret and share the story of their important role in this part of our State's industrial heritage.



Harpswell



Kittery



Brooksville



Deer Isle



Arrowsic