

Forthcoming Events.

- Wednesday December 1st – Meeting at Memorial Hall 'Mill Suite' 19:00 – 22:00 + Zoom extension for remote participants – Program: A Discussion About The Future Of PEEMS. (a continuation of the discussion at the end of this newsletter). If time permits, Ted Fletcher has kindly offered to discuss the successful conversion of his gas MIG welder to gasless.
- Tuesday December 21st – Workshop session at 10:30am – 12:00noon

PEEMS Visit To Vintage Douglas Motorcycle Collection ~ Monday 25th October 2021

John Jennison kindly opened his vintage Douglas motorcycle collection for a PEEMS visit. The collection included the very earliest bikes (early 1900s), up to the final bikes from the 1950s. There were also some vintage bikes from other manufacturers.

There was a very good turnout of members with some guests in attendance. There are several motorcycle enthusiasts in the club, so this was a "good morning out".

After the visit, some members retired to Neville Foster's house for fish and chips.



Douglas Motor Cycles, A Potted History (reference Wikipedia).

Douglas was a British motorcycle manufacturer from 1907–1957 based in Kingswood, Bristol, owned by the Douglas family, and especially known for its horizontally opposed twin cylinder engined bikes. They were also manufacturers of speedway machines. The company built a range of cars between 1913 and 1922.

History: The brothers William and Edwin Douglas founded the *Douglas Engineering Company* in Bristol in 1882. Initially doing blacksmith work, they progressed to foundry work.

Joseph F. Barter's *Light Motors Ltd.* was one of Douglas's customers. Barter built a single-cylinder bicycle engine between 1902 and 1904; he then developed the *Fée* bicycle engine system. The *Fée*'s 200cc flat-twin engine was mounted in-line with the frame, using chain drive to a countershaft beneath (with clutch); this then used a drive belt to power the bicycle's rear wheel. Barter founded *Light Motors Ltd.* to build the *Fée* system. Production began in 1905; the *Fée*'s name was anglicized to *Fairy* shortly afterward.

In 1916 *The Motor Cycle* magazine claimed that the 1904 *Fée* was the earliest flat-twin motorcycle engine, of which there had since been many copies. Douglas made castings for *Light Motors* and took over the manufacturing rights when *Light Motors* went out of business in 1907.

From 1907 a 350cc Douglas version was on sale, similar to the *Fairy* with the engine in-line mounted high in the frame, but without the chain driven countershaft beneath, and with belt final drive. At the 1907 *Stanley Show* they attracted a lot of attention with a V4 engined motorcycle, with automatic inlet valves, and 2-speed drive. The V4 was not to go into production and by the 1908 show it was only the updated in-line twin that was on show, now lighter and with a lower engine position. Around 1911 the frame was modified to make the engine still lower, and in 1912 the automatic inlet valves were replaced by mechanically operated valves.

During World War I, Douglas was a major motorcycle supplier, making around 70,000 motorcycles for military use. In a 1916 review of flat-twin engines in *The Motor Cycle* magazine, two models of Douglas engine are listed. One was 2.75 hp (350cc) with a 60.5mm bore and 60mm stroke, and with the valves placed side-by-side on the side of the engine. The other engine was the 4 hp (544cc) flat twin of 72mm bore and 68mm stroke. One of the significant differences with this larger engine was that the oil was carried in the sump and supplied by pump to bearings and cylinders. The sump had a glass window to inspect the oil level. The valves were placed side by side above the cylinders. A third engine was the *Williamson Flat Twin* made by Douglas, with cycle-cars in mind, but produced for the *Williamson Motor Company* to use in their motor cycles from 1912. This was an 8 hp engine of 964cc, 85mm bore and 85mm stroke. Initially water cooled, from 1913 it was also available air-cooled.

In the 1920s Douglas built the first disc brakes, and had a Royal Warrant for the supply of motorcycles to the Princes, Albert and Henry.

Douglas motorcycles also became popular in dirt track racing. The 1923 *RA* model with disc brakes was favoured initially, and this prompted Douglas to build specific dirt track models. These motorcycle designs were gradually increased in size and power with 500cc and 600cc engines fitted to the *DT5* and *DT6* Dirt Track models in the late 1920s and early 1930s. The engines had hemispherical heads and a short rigid forged crankshaft. They dominated dirt track racing for about three years. In 1929, the most successful dirt racing year, 1,200 Dirt Track motorcycles were sold.

The *Endeavour*, a 494cc (30.1 cu in) shaft drive model came out in 1934. This was again a flat-twin, but for the first time Douglas fitted it across the frame instead of in-line. Like other companies of the time, they were struggling, and attempting to diversify into other modes of transport. In 1935 they were taken over by *BAC, Bond Aircraft and Engineering Company*.

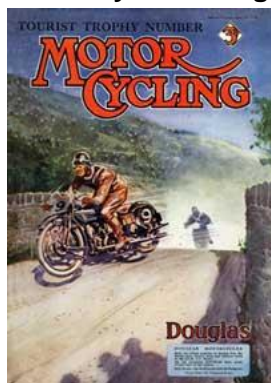
Motorcycle production continued into World War II, and was extended to generators. In 1948, not long after the war, Douglas was in difficulty again and reduced its output to the 350cc flat twin models. The first of these models designated the T35, was one of the first production motorcycles to be fitted with rear suspension (swinging arm) which was unique in that the springing medium was a longitudinal torsion bar.

The 1955 350cc *Douglas Dragonfly* was the last model produced; although a flat-twin, it had chain rear drive rather than an arguably more suitable shaft drive.

The Westinghouse Brake and Signal Company Ltd bought Douglas out, and production of *Douglas Motorcycles* ended in 1957. Douglas continued to import *Vespa* scooters into the UK, and later imported and assembled *Gilera* motorcycles.

Douglas gained significant attention in 1932–1933 when Robert Edison Fulton Jr. became the first known man to circumnavigate the globe on a 6 hp Douglas twin fitted with automobile tyres. Fulton went on to write a book on his adventure titled "*One Man Caravan*".

Motor Cycle Racing:



1926 magazine cover showing a Douglas motorcycle in the Isle of Man TT.

Douglas had some success in motorcycle racing and trials events. Twelve Douglas motorcycles were entered in both the Junior TT and Senior TT, and another three were in the Sidecar race during the 1923 TT. This gave Douglas their first senior Isle of Man TT victories. However, Douglas had previously won the Junior TT in 1912. Tom Sheard won the 500 cc Senior TT and they won the first ever Isle of Man Sidecar race with Freddie Dixon. Jim Whalley meanwhile, had the fastest lap in the Senior TT with a time of just under 60 mph (97 km/h) during a wet race. A Douglas was also placed third in the Junior TT that year. Later in 1923 Jim Whalley won the French Grand Prix, a distance of 288 miles (463 km), and another Douglas won the 1923 Durban-Johannesberg Marathon race; a remarkable achievement by Percy Flook on a 2.75 hp machine with an average 43 mph (69 km/h) for 430 miles (690 km). 1923 also saw Jim Whalley win the Spanish 12-hour race and Alec Bennett won the 1923 Welsh TT race.

The late twenties saw success in Austria (the 1929 Austrian TT was won by Rudolph Runtsch). Post war the factory had little road racing success, however a Mark 3 did win an outstanding victory in the 1950 Bemsee 'Silverstone Saturday', beating all the Velocettes, Nortons and BSA Gold Stars.

The Douglas Story | Douglas Motorcycle History Film | Bristol History Series - YouTube.

There is a fascinating history of Douglas motorcycles on YouTube, at this link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jgAvqH57Exk>

Press on link. To return to the newsletter please press the back arrow at the top left hand side of the screen.



Some Bikes In John's Collection.



Some Pre-1914 Douglas Bikes.



1914 Douglas Ladies Bike 2.75 hp.



1923 P.P. Sleeve Valve 2.75 hp.



1957 Douglas Dragonfly Special 350cc.



1933 Douglas Bantam with 150cc Villiers Engine.



1950 Douglas Mk 4 350cc.



1933 Coventry Eagle Silent Superb 150cc.



Lincoln Elk Motorcycle with Side-Car. **

** The details of the *Lincoln Elk* Motorcycle Company can be found at this link:

Lincoln Elk Motorcycles by James Kirby (cybermotorcycle.com).

<https://cybermotorcycle.com/marques/lincoln-elk/lincoln-elk-story.htm>

Press on link. To return to the newsletter please press the back arrow at the top left-hand side of the screen.

Thanks and Acknowledgements.

PEEMS would like to thank John Jennison and Geoff Fletcher for a very interesting and informative morning.

John accepted donations of £91 for the *Motor Neurone Disease Society*, from PEEMS, in appreciation for the visit.

PEEMS 2021 Annual General Meeting (AGM) on Wednesday 3rd November 2021

- **Introduction.**

The PEEMS 2021 AGM was held in the Main Hall at Pickering's Memorial Hall. It was held during the morning, running into the afternoon to allow maximum attendance of members. Twenty members attended. There were no 'Zoom' attendees, although the system had been set up with enhanced features.

Apologies for absence: Colin Bainbridge, Harold Hulse, John Powell and Brian Rees.

- **Chairman's Introduction.**

Jonathan Milner thanked everyone for coming to the AGM. Pre-sent questionnaires, canvassing member's views on the future of the Club, had been submitted.

Jonathan also welcomed new member Iain Hale from Scarborough. Iain introduced himself. He is the Chairman of '*Scarborough Mates*' which is a '*Men In Sheds*' group. It has similar aspirations to PEEMS, and is actively catering to 'the old and isolated'. Iain said that if anyone was interested in what '*Mates*' was doing, to see him afterwards.

- **Club Events.**

There had been a 'return to normality' in the previous week when as a group, PEEMS visited John Jennison's Motorcycle Collection. There is a report at the beginning of this Newsletter. It was very well attended, even though there are only a few motorcycle enthusiasts in the Club. That shows that PEEMS is a diverse club with overlapping interests. It was heart-warming to report that the Club raised £91 for John's chosen charity '*The Motor Neurone Disease Association*'.

Jonathan asked if anyone knew of any other local engineering attractions. David Proctor suggested the *Saltburn Miniature Railway* where a special opening could be made for the Club. This visit could be arranged in due course.

Please press on link: <https://www.saltburn-miniature-railway.org.uk/locomotives-rolling-stock>

To return to newsletter, please press back arrow at top left-hand side of the screen.

The *Ellenroad Engine House and Steam Museum* visit advertised in the last newsletter, unfortunately had to be cancelled, as there was no 'steaming' on the intended day of the visit, Sunday 7th November.

There had been a recommendation from a member that the Club could visit *The Bradford Industrial Museum*. Link: <https://www.bradfordmuseums.org/venues/bradford-industrial-museum>

Future visits will be by car-sharing in the current period, rather than coaches, as this will allow more spontaneity.

- **The Workshop Morning.**

There was a good turnout for the last Workshop Morning on Tuesday 19th October especially as Mike Sayers generously provided a 'breakfast' in the form of sausage rolls, both grilled and bought.

The December workshop morning will be on Tuesday the 21st between 10.30am to noon.

- **Annual Dinner.**

The annual dinner has again been cancelled for 2021. If PEEMS has a dinner in 2022 (traditionally in March), Jonathan asked if members would prefer a lunchtime meal (rather than driving in the dark) or an evening meal. A 'show of hands' indicated a minority were in favour of a curry, and a majority for a 'traditional type lunch'. A majority 'show of hands', also indicated a preference for a 'pub lunch' during the day.

- **The December Club Meeting.**

The next Club meeting is at the normal time of 7pm for 7.30pm in the upstairs 'Mill Suite'. The agenda for the meeting is shown at the beginning of this newsletter.

The potential speakers featured in the August/September Newsletter will be approached in the new year.

As regards Club meetings during the day, (as for the AGM), this would be difficult for members who are still working or running businesses, and who wouldn't be able to attend. There is also the issue of lack of free parking during the day in the environs of The Memorial Hall. However, that has to be balanced against the fact that some members have to drive quite a distance in the dark after an evening meeting.

- **'At The Door' Entrance Charge For Monthly Meetings.**

At the last committee meeting, it was decided to reintroduce the original 'entrance charge' for the 2022 Club meetings, which had been suspended over 2021.

- **Staged Scaffolding Tower For Sale.**

Colin Bainbridge said that his next-door neighbour has a 'Staged Scaffolding Tower' for sale.

There is also a very good generator for sale.

If you are interested, please contact Colin whose contact details are in the Members List.

- **The 2020 AGM Minutes Acceptance.**

David Proctor had the 2020 minutes e-mailed and posted to members.

These were proposed as acceptable by Peter Bramley which was seconded by Paul Hayward. All were in favour.

- **The Chairman's Statement.**

Jonathan said that last year's AGM report was mainly about how Covid had affected the Club, but 'we've learnt to live with it'. Realistically the Club has not been able to plan far ahead, and attempting to do so would have been 'tempting fate'.

The Club had been arranging 'car-sharing' (rather than hiring a coach) for the now cancelled visit to the *Ellenroad Engine House and Steam Museum*, but this is shaping how we will arrange things in the future. Car-sharing should allow more spontaneity. The last coach trip was to the *Anson Museum* in Poynton, Cheshire in September 2019, which was organised by Jim Everett. That visit was superb from start to finish and the Club hopes to eventually get back to that sort of excursion.

- **Modelling Shows.**

There were no modelling shows this year to reflect on, although The 2022 Doncaster Show is planned to be in May 2022.

- **The Newsletter and The Breadth Of Modelling At The Club.**

Considering this has been a relatively 'slack year', a number of articles have appeared in the PEEMS Newsletter, such as:

- i. Making a 1/3rd scale cylinder block for a Bentley engine.
- ii. A scratch build 'flat four' engine.
- iii. Wood carving.
- iv. Restoration of a stable block clock.
- v. Making piston rings.
- vi. A 1:50 scale model ship.
- vii. Soldering
- viii. 3D printing
- ix. A model 9-cylinder Bentley BR2 rotary engine.
- x. Insight into the 'World of Speed' by Paul Windross.

The diversity of projects is something to 'brag about' for such a small club.

Jonathan thanked everyone who had contributed, and though he felt inadequate in such skilled company, said he had been greatly inspired by attending the meetings.

- **The PEEMS Railway Disposal.**

Following an EGM in January, PEEMS decided to dispose of 'The Railway', and in May, PEEMS accepted an offer. It was a 'quick and clean' sale with 'no hassles'. The Club is seriously considering what to do with the proceeds, but there is no intention to 'fritter the money away' in normal Club running expenses. Member's ideas on how the money should be spent are welcome.

- **The N.A.M.E. 'Alan Bibby Award' For The Newsletter.**

This year, Neville Foster won the *Northern Association of Model Engineers* (N.A.M.E.) 'Alan Bibby Editor's Cup' and a cheque for the 'outstanding' PEEMS newsletter.

Frank Cooper the Chairman of N.A.M.E. came to the July meeting to present the award. At this visit, Frank gave PEEMS an insight into how N.A.M.E. works. With Neville's award winning newsletter being on the web, it has become apparent that it is being read by quite a number of people. Consequently, Neville has been asked to contribute to another website the '*modelengineeringwebsite.com*'. The link is here:

<https://modelengineeringwebsite.com/>

To return to newsletter, please press back arrow at top left-hand side of the screen.

- **The Mike Sayers Trophy Evening.**

The 'Mike Sayers Trophy' evening was something else the Club has been able to carry out in this 'Covid year'. The evening was a combined physical/remote 'Zoom' meeting. The competition went well. Whilst there weren't too many people on 'Zoom', there were two entries from members who were at least 100 to 200 miles away.

There were five entries in total, all very different, fascinating and well presented. PEEMS will seek to invest to make the 'Zoom' experience even better. 'Zoom' allows a physical model to be examined via a remote camera similar to the one supplied by Stuart Walker for the AGM. 'Zoom' also allows 'remote' PEEMS members to attend Club meetings.

'Zoom' is good, but Jonathan is looking forward to when the Club can get back to 'normal conditions', when more people can get out and the meetings can be 'a bit more friendly'.

- **Membership.**

We have gained a few more members this year which is really good.

- **The Treasurer's Report ~ David Hampshire.**

All the members should have received a copy of the accounts before the AGM.

David said that before discussing the accounts, that he wanted to reiterate the fact that he would like to retire as PEEMS treasurer. He had joined the Club some years back, and his first job had been to help with 'The Railway' which was what he was interested in. He ended up as The Membership Secretary, as The Treasurer, and as the Newsletter Editor/Distributor. At one point he felt he was doing everything, until Jim Everett came along and persuaded some others to take on these jobs. Now David is Treasurer only, and he would like to give that up.

Looking at the accounts:

- On the Income Side: PEEMS had imposed an 'emergency' £1 subscription to cover the fact that there would be restricted Club activities during the Covid pandemic. However, the Club actually received more than this £1 per member. For instance, there was income from the annual auction as well as donations of both money and equipment. These are reflected in the 'Income' column.
- On the Expenses Side: There is the Newsletter (printing and stationery), room rent, 'Zoom' costs, equipment storage costs, N.A.M.E subs, equipment purchased, and 'The Mike Sayers Trophy' prizes. The biggest expense is Club Insurance.

All the above expenses are likely to increase in the coming year. Certainly, insurance will go up, as well as room rent. David has estimated from the income/expenses figures that forty members were the minimum to keep the Club running. If the membership falls below that, the Club won't pay its way. This is what the Club has to face going forward.

When David joined the Club, and took over as Treasurer from Les Hulme, the Club was 'virtually broke'. What had happened was that the membership fee had not changed, because 'The PEEMS Railway' had made the biggest contribution to the Club finances. Two things happened; 'The Railway' visited less and less venues because of a 'manpower' problem, and, secondly the cost of running 'The Railway' particularly as the insurance was going up. At the time it was highly recommended that the subscription was increased, and as it happened it was, by a factor of three. There was a concern at the time that this increase would reduce the membership. David doesn't know how high the annual subscription can be increased, as there was also the monthly 'at the door' entrance fee for meetings.

So, in summary: The expenses are going to increase, but if the membership falls below forty there could be financial difficulty.

When 'The Railway' was sold, 'The Railway' account was closed and the balance brought into the Club accounts. There is also money from the workshop including a donation. Both of these items have been 'ring fenced' in a bank account, and will be held there year to year until it is decided what to do with fund. David suggested that the workshop produces its own accounts, because they know what they're doing there.

Accounts ~ Questions, Answers and Comments.

Iain Hale: What do you get for the Club Insurance?

David Proctor: As a club we have the usual liabilities. The insurance allows members who are visiting other sites to be insured for third party accidents, and it covers boiler testing indemnity and indemnity for meetings. Having sold 'The Railway', the Club has reduced liabilities and hence a lower premium. Because we are a model **engineering** club that is the reason for the cost. If it was purely a 'social' club, the insurance would be much less.

Iain Hale: Does the Club have a constitution?

David Proctor: We have 'Articles Of Association'.

Iain Hale: I noticed on the questionnaire that one of the questions was about the Club providing 'social interaction for those with an otherwise solitary hobby'. There may be a very favourable view from say the NYCC '*Stronger Communities*'. Grant funding may be available if there is 'community benefit' because of the existence of the Club.

David: We will be discussing this later. One of the issues is that PEEMS doesn't own its own premises and also model engineering is not a 'cheap hobby'.

Iain Hale: If you can subsidise the membership (with grants), this can 'open up' the Club for people who may be in 'reduced circumstances' but have a real interest in the engineering activities of the Club. This will reduce the chance of members leaving because of big increases in membership fees. Also membership fees could be increased by a small percent annually rather than big increases every so often.

Jim Everett: I'm a member of a different organisation, and in fact when local authorities approve extra local housing, they persuade the building companies to donate money that is then held by the council. That money then gets issued out to 'community projects'. I believe Ryedale District Council has money for 'community projects', as the club I belong to has received grants. I believe this is worth pursuing.

The acceptance of the Accounts was proposed by Brian Stephenson and was seconded by Ted Fletcher. All were in favour

- **Annual Subscriptions.**

The annual subscription and the monthly Club Meeting entrance fee have now been returned to their original (pre-Covid) amounts. It would be really good if the Club could get tea/coffee and biscuits back to their monthly meetings, but in the 'Mill Suite' upstairs in the Memorial Hall the kitchen space is very restrictive.

Q: How are they getting on with restoring the Hungate Centre?

Jonathan: The Hungate Centre restoration is ongoing and we should hear of the situation fairly soon.

- **Election Of The Chairman And Officers Of The Club.**

Jonathan was willing to stay as Chairman for another year, and likewise the current Officers of the Club were willing to remain in post for another year. This has got a lot to do with continuity, and it seems to be working quite well.

A suggestion was made that the Committee was re-elected 'on block'.

Someone said that it should be noted that this was a contingency during the pandemic; the Chairman and Officers were not forming (for want of a better analogy) a 'military dictatorship', and the voting for the Chairman and Officers, in future, would be the same democratic process as it was pre-Covid.

Jonathan reiterated the fact that if anybody in the future wanted to join the Committee, they can do so by being proposed and seconded as per Club rules.

Someone asked if the Club had a 'Sunset Clause', whereby no-one could continue in post 'for decades'.

David Proctor said that the Club didn't have such a clause, and Jonathan added that before he became Chairman, the post was only for one year, which was good on one hand, but on the other, for him it would have made it difficult to get to know everyone.

Ted Fletcher said it was a good idea to keep the current Chairman and Committee for continuity over this period.

The acceptance of the election of the current Chairman and Committee for another year was proposed by Ted Fletcher and seconded by David Hick. All were in favour.

- **Election Of Treasurer.**

Tony Leeming has agreed to take over as Treasurer from David Hampshire.

Proposed by David Proctor and seconded by Jonathan Milner. All were in favour.

- **Interval**

There was then an interval where the attendees enjoyed "Pie and Peas" supplied by Mike Sayers, washed down with tea or coffee.

- **The Chairman's Closing Remarks.**

Jonathan said that this had been a strange year, yet it has flown past. Everyone he had spoken with had been busy. For him, being busy meant 'tinkering about a bit', and not achieving much.... One step forward and two steps back. Some people, like John Heeley tinker for a few days and produce a little steam turbine. Jonathan said that he didn't think it mattered, because it was the satisfaction gained through tinkering, no matter what you do, that was the thing. In the end we are all tinkers.....

Jonathan said that he had thoroughly enjoyed his time as Chairman, and is looking forward to the following year.

The Chairmanship had been made much easier with the support from everyone in the Club to whom he gave thanks.

There have been one or two comments to the Committee, basically saying "thanks for keeping the Club going through the Covid period".

Jonathan thanked David Proctor for his sterling work as Club Secretary, because without him and his organisational skills, the Club would be much worse off.

Mike and Pat Sayers were the 'backbone of the Club' for allowing it to use their premises, and Jonathan thanked them both for this. Jonathan said that it had been an absolute pleasure for him to know Mike in the short time he had been at the Club.

Jonathan once again thanked Neville Foster for the Newsletter and David Hampshire who was stepping down as Treasurer. David leaves the Club with a healthy bank balance and so.....

- **The Chairman's Award For 2021.**

The Chairman's Award for 2021, went to David Hampshire for his excellent work as Treasurer.



- **Suggestions and Ideas About The Future Of PEEMS ~ Peter Bramley.**

Peter had circulated a brief description of his thoughts about the future of PEEMS before the interval, and this has been reproduced at the end of this newsletter.

Peter began by saying that he hoped that the members had digested some of what he had written in his circular.

Peter was a founder member of PEEMS, and had been speaking to some members and there was some agreement that the Club had 'stagnated a bit'. For that reason, Peter thought that the Club needs to 'think into the future, so that the present can be sorted out'. There are a lot of points and ideas in his proposition, but it is not complete, from what he had been hearing from members over the last three or four months. The proposition was written in July.

Peter realised that Covid had put a 'damper' over the last two years of activities and meetings, so 'ideas of quality' can't really be conveyed with confidence at the moment. As seen in the circular, a time limit of 25 years has been proposed, and looking around the room, if the Club did everything written there, none of the membership would be around to see the final results. That will 'put a slant' on what happens in the future. What Peter would like people to do, was to consider the Club as a whole, rather than it serving the individual needs or pursuits of each member.

It had been mentioned at the AGM that membership has stagnated and reduced (although there was a bigger turnout than Peter had expected at the meeting). Not everybody will agree with the 'Plan To Go Forward', as suggested, but that is immaterial. The proposal is what Peter thinks, and obviously the Club as a whole will go forward with what the majority of the membership wants. While that makes it more difficult in certain respects, that is the only way the Club can go.

If in 25 years the Club has achieved half of what Peter has proposed, then he will be very pleased. Unless the Club has a long-term plan, it cannot plan for the immediate future, because things may change, and the direction of travel maybe a 'completely different tack' to the plan. Obviously, the Committee will have to make the final decision on the 'Plan To Go Forward'.

While some members may think that the proposal is 'pie in the sky', some members have mentioned what some of the more successful clubs in the country have achieved, and how they have achieved it.

When PEEMS first started, it was decided that the Club would be "assetless". Then 'The Railway' came and 'Rule No.1' was broken. A permanent base for the Club would allow people to go there any time they liked during the week. To acquire a permanent base though will be very difficult, as the Club finances are 'quite trivial' in modern day terms. While in the early days, 'The Railway' proved to be a 'point of focus and interest' and it was earning money, its role gradually declined. The most obvious reason for that is that the membership is getting older.

Basically, there are two avenues to seriously consider for the Club's future:

- **Recruitment of new members:** In order to achieve what is required, membership in Peter's opinion, should increase to about 60. One of the aspects of membership is that the Club needs 'younger members'. By 'younger members', Peter means from 40 years old upwards. If the Club only recruits members from the current age range, the problems will reoccur in seven or eight years time. The Club must explore avenues for recruitment, and the ideas are in the proposal.

Peter realises that younger people, especially in their 20s, have 'interests' other than model engineering. This is why he was proposing the target age group for recruitment should be 40 years old and above.

- **Funding and Obtaining Revenue:** In the past, 'The Railway' gave quite reasonable 'end of year' financial balances. At the last Ryedale Show, Peter wandered around the showground to see what was happening. The first thing that was obvious was that 'The Railway' was only attracting children under 10 years old. Through the belt of trees was a climbing frame, and the average age group there was about 25 years old. They were charging three times more than 'The Railway' was charging.

That got Peter thinking about whether PEEMS should get rid of 'The Railway' and get something simpler that the Club could charge more for, in order to boost the Club's bank balance.

During the AGM discussions, Peter was interested in the ideas for funding proposed by Iain and Jim. While Iain obviously had more experience in this, the Club has never tapped into other sources of funding. Peter believes that is the way to go if the Club wants to move forward, especially if it comes to own its own premises. The Club may have to amalgamate with other clubs so that common facilities can be shared, and there may be occasions where Club priorities have to change slightly to accommodate the plan.

Finally, whereas the proposals may not be acceptable, especially with current Club finances, what Peter would like people to do is to look at all the various ways, no matter how remote they are, that could help the Club move forward with regards to the plan he is suggesting. Peter hopes that the Club does carry on. After all, it's not the members who make the Club, it's the Club itself and its aims that will ensure its survival.

If people have any ideas, please do not hesitate to contact Peter or the Committee.

There are plenty of ideas, so get your thinking caps on!

Peter's Proposals: Questions, Answers and Comments. *(Please note: some of the comments made by members have been paraphrased and clarified for ease of reading).*

David P: Imagine there was 'fairy godmother' out there, who (taking an extreme position) dropped £5 million on the Club, and gave it to the Treasurer to cash, what happens then?

Peter B: We can go ahead with our plans.

David P: Yes, but it's not the money which is the issue, but the number of 'able bodied' people in the Club.

Peter B: Yes, and that is dependent on our recruitment programme, which at the moment is the crux of the matter. Once we have more members, we can go ahead with the plan.

David H: All the things you are suggesting in your proposal actually exist, forty miles from here. If you go to 'York Engineers' you will find everything you describe on your list. What are their problems? They can't attract new members. They are attracting younger members, in a hobby I take part in, which is 16mm garden railways. 'York Engineers' are now talking about building another railway of a different scale to attract new members.

The actual 'engineering side of things' attracted no one. This was in spite of the fact that they set up an excellent workshop, storage facilities and everything else. And they are in a city.

Peter B: Unless we put ourselves forward, nobody will know about us. One of the suggestions I made was that we need to advertise more in our local area. In an area which encompasses Bridlington, Malton, Helmsley, Whitby, the population which is interested in what the Club does, will be relatively small. This is a problem that the Club must either solve or we have to forget everything.

Iain H: Could I suggest that someone gets a copy of the local census, and look at the demographics, with respect to age profile, of the people who live in those areas. That will inform you as to where your target recruits may or may not be. Also the Club may be 'engineering for engineering's sake'. I think the engineering should lead to something practical. David H. has given an example of a 16mm garden railway attracting interest at York.

You need a 'strategic plan', with some goals/markers, showing where you want to be in 2, 3, 4 years time. When 'Scarborough Mates' started, it went from a few mates, playing around with a few tools, to what it is now. It's about putting yourself out there, and getting other people to know who you are and what you're doing.

You need to think about who you want to recruit (you won't recruit people who aren't there). If you are recruiting people who are in their 40s and 50s, they may have teenagers to sort out! For that reason, they may be difficult to recruit. However, if you recruit people who are just about to retire, there will be a 'constant flow' of those people, even if some members only attend for a few years.

Peter B: When I suggested recruits in their 40s and 50s, that was just a general target. I have mentioned in the proposition that we try schools, especially school leavers. As I've said, in spite of the 'ology' outlook of schools, not every school leaver is going to go to university.

Iain H: The North Yorkshire Moors Railway has just taken on seven new apprentices from the local area. These are people who may be interested in bringing their 'large engineering' skills into model engineering.

David P: I work at Grosmont, and meet the apprentices. I have discussed this with them and they are interested in model engineering, but 'not at this level, at this stage'. Their extracurricular activities are the typical ones young people are interested in today.

Paul H: PEEMS is probably 'a well-kept secret'. The members know it exists, but generally, people out there probably don't. This is why publicity is appropriate. However, it should be noted that not everyone is interested in engineering, and getting their hands dirty etc. There is 'The Derwent Training Association' in Malton which trains approximately 150 engineers a week. The majority of those won't know PEEMS exists as a society. They have had some changes at *Derwent* recently, and this could be an appropriate point for PEEMS to talk to them.

With regards to school leavers, PEEMS visited some schools in the past, but they were unhelpful and not interested.

Mike S: What we tried to do in the schools was to try and interest them in the 'Heinz Wolff Great Egg Race'. We as a Club would organise the competition between five schools in the Ryedale area, and offer them a

challenge over the year. We would hire a hall, and they would come and display their solutions. The Club would then judge them and present an award to the winner.

We might as well have not bothered, such was the lack of interest from the schools.

Richard L: I am a relatively new member. I've only been a member for twelve months, and I didn't even know about PEEMS until I met David at the Grosmont sheds. Having been in engineering all my life (in the electrical generation industry), engineering is very much in my blood. I'm so glad that I have joined, and have thoroughly enjoyed the evenings we have had.

If I'm honest, the very definition of PEEMS especially with words "experimental engineering" and "models" felt a bit 'specialist' and 'off-putting'.

The question I have is: Is PEEMS clear about what its primary core objectives and aims actually are? Is it time to re-evaluate that, and broaden it out a bit to have a wider appeal?

Peter B: My idea was that we should 'start from scratch', and listen to what all members were saying. Out of all the interests, we have narrowed it down to suit the majority. As the older members know, I virtually ran 'The Railway' (though, it should be noted, not single handed). I took 'The Railway' to almost every venue we went to, and ending up almost detesting it. But I did it in the interests of the Club.

Part of the idea proposed is to get people more interested in other aspects of model engineering, but unlike the past, should be more broadly based and not be narrowly focused (like 'The Railway'). Hopefully, in time, that would attract more members.

Jim E: The way I see it is, the country is no longer producing the type of engineers that we have in this Club. The world has moved on. I see quite a change in the type of engineering that people would want to do, which is different to the type of things this Club is noted for.

If you go around the Model Engineering Shows (which I have been doing for the last twenty years), then what you see is the age group of the people walking around is getting older and older. We appear to be in a 'dying trade'. My view is that we do have to look at what this Club wants to be in ten years time. If we leave it the way it is, I don't think it will exist then.

The thought that goes through my mind is that the Club should be more 'socially orientated', so that when we meet, we don't just try and concentrate on this very narrow field of model engineering. If we think a bit deeper, then maybe we have to open up the Club into a very much broader range of engineering, and 'sell the Club' on that basis. The 'Tractor Club', 'Car Clubs', and all sorts of other clubs may then come together. That may be the way we might be able to sustain ourselves.

We need to become more 'socially' orientated. I am a member of several clubs and one club I belong to has a 'weekend away' for their AGM. That works really well, and people came from all over the country for that event. Some clubs have a dinner before they have the meeting. That retains the membership as people talk about other things than the core interests of the club.

I have asked people who have left the Club in recent years, why had they left? They answered by saying "well it wasn't for me". They see the Club as a rather specialised model engineering club.

Mike S: In answer to Jim, I think that our Club evening lectures cover a broad area of engineering. Apart from the model engineering, we have had lectures on flying, motorcycling, and land speed records. These are the envy of about every other club in the country.

Jim E: When we had the motor bikes in, look at how many people came in. That's why I say why don't we join up with, for example, 'The Bentley Club' or 'The Car Club'? I don't know if these other clubs are having trouble with membership. They may welcome the opportunity to join up with us.

Mike S: I would like to thank Peter for telling us about his propositions. Whether or not his ideas are what the Club needs to do, what they have done is spurred comment throughout the membership.

That's what we need. I thank Peter, because nobody else has actually managed to formulate a plan. I noticed the word "girls" appeared twice in his proposals. I wonder how the Club could accommodate them.

Peter B: How many people here know that the most prolific, and most honoured model engineer is a woman? Yes I think the Club should have a wider gender base.

Nevile F: Peter, could I suggest a 'blue sky' hypothetical idea. If you had a project like building an electric kit car, for speed record attempts at Elvington, and you advertised that the Club was looking for people with

requisite skills and expertise to build the car, how many people would you get coming in to do something like that?

Peter B: What struck me were the three adverts in *The Model Engineer* for parts and materials (I'm not suggesting that the Club does this), for a 'Padstow' 3" scale Burrell Traction Engine. 50 castings at a decent price. That could be a project for the Club. Whether the Club wanted to do that, or could afford it is a different matter. Similar ideas will come up all the time, **but we need to plan for the future.**

David P. ~ David Proctor. Peter B. ~ Peter Bramley. David H. ~ David Hampshire. Iain H. ~ Iain Hale

Paul H. ~ Paul Hayward Mike S. ~ Mike Sayers Richard L: Richard Llewellyn. Jim E. ~ Jim Everett.

Nevile F. ~ Nevile Foster



Autumn Colours Around Pickering Castle.

3rd November 2021

Members of PEEMS

For some time I have been thinking about the future of PEEMS. As a founder member I have witnessed the progress of the club and have now concluded that it is not the vibrant force of former years.

The membership number has reduced considerable in the last 5 or 6 years. Looking forward to the next 5 years we can expect in the normal course of events to lose a similar number. This means we have to replace that with twice that number.

This is of major concern because of the lack of success in the past of recruiting younger members. Older new members will leave the club in the same position we are now. The crux of the matter is which section of the public should we target?

Does the club need to change its focus by introducing a more modern approach, i.e laser printing, robotics, electronics and a less mechanical approach.

Bearing in mind selling the railway our income will be much reduced, I feel the matter is urgent. With a balance of approx £10k I would not like to see it frittered away, which could easily happen. What we need is something which would take the place of the railway to create an income without the need of the same mechanical effort and be an asset to the club. At the last Ryedale Show I noticed the railway was used by the under 8's. The Wall Climbing stand was used by the under 25's!! impressing the girls and being charged 3 times more than the railway. Would this be a way to generate income or giving traction engine rides could, be the way forward. Having said all this I feel serious discussion regarding the long term future of the club to attract new members both in activities and age groups and the matter brought to a conclusion by the 2022 AGM. Going to "Men in Sheds" I feel is a waste of time as the age group is the same as ours and the same problems apply School leavers may be a fruitful source for recruitment but that would be a long term proposition (beer And girls), after all despite the 'ology' outlook of schools nowadays, not all the kids will go to uni

Advertising in local areas by means of articles, photos of models and brief descriptions of what the club is doing. Holding a model show when we return to the RVS building but as a solo event and not tagged on to some else's show.

The workshop in the long term will not always be available so an alternative must be found. Looking on the internet a 20ft container is around £3k and would be twice the size of the present workshop and with another on top twice the size should it become necessary. A site would have to be found which would mean a rent payable. This could be the way forward if we decide to concentrate on model engineering as at present. I suggest a committee of 5 youngish members be formed to look into the problems, to look for answers and set a timetable to resolve the club's future.

Peter Bramley

Contact:

If you would like to contribute to the Newsletter, the contact is: Neville Foster Tel 01751 474137 or e-mail nevf123@outlook.com