Supporting Model Engineering since 1970



NEWSLETTER April 2023

Editorial

Welcome to the first FMES Newsletter of 2023: not only a new year (albeit we're already a third of the way through!), but a new Newsletter editor as well. I have been persuaded to relieve David Goyder from one of his FMES responsibilities but he promises he'll still be submitting the jokes – I might even be able to publish some of them!

In this issue we include a report of the recent AGM held at the Mining Museum in Wakefield and a report on the FMES presence at the recent Harrogate show. The most substantial item is the report written by Peter Kenington on the relationship between young engineers and model engineering societies. This review started life at the AGM in 2022 and was followed up with surveys. The report has a lot of content which Peter has written in two parts due to its length but I think is best published in full. Please take the time to read through it and if there are any further observations about young engineers in model engineering arising from the report, or in general, please send them to info@fmes.org.uk



In view of the Coronation, I tried to find a picture linking "King Charles" to some sort of engineering activity. The closest I've come is a picture of GWR loco 6009 King Charles II. It was scrapped in 1962 so the only photo I could find was black & white.

Tony Lee

Amongst many other things, the Bridport Foundry supplies the castings for Stuart Models. This YouTube is made by National Traction Engine Trust and is an interview with John Lambert, the owner, and a look around the foundry. www.youtube.com/watch?v= 4L0pic82Zc



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Chairman's Chat

I know I may be stating the obvious when I say that the FMES has a new newsletter editor but all the same I would like to warmly welcome Tony Lee who has volunteered to take on this role. Also warmly welcomed are Jim Hollom who will be looking after technical information development (he has already produced a list of suppliers to our hobby), Peter Harrison and Melvyn O'Connell who will be undertaking events management and not forgetting Peter Kenington who for some time has been involved in encouraging the younger generation to become involved and take up the hobby of model engineering. While I am sure you will join me in thanking them for giving of their time and expertise to help run the FMES can I stress that it is not too late to join them if you feel you have a skill/expertise that the FMES could use in the furtherence of our hobby in it's many forms.

Thinking about the many forms that our hobby takes you may remember a few newsletters ago I mentioned that I had decided to try something new, the construction of a model boat, well it's complete and is ready for its first outing (at least it did not sink when I tried it in the bath). Have you like me tried a different branch of our hobby, if so , how about writing an article about the experience and forwarding it to Tony for inclusion in a future newsletter.

Finally I am sure that those of us who attended the "Harrogate Show" had a very enjoyable time, it was good to see it back in existance and let us hope that it once again becomes an annual event.

Bob Polley

Early Warning Young Engineers!

We are pleased to announce that there will be a competition this year, sponsored by Polly Models Limited under their new ownership. We will announce the rules soon, but we expect that this year's competition will follow the same lines as last years.

To all young engineers: we hope that you will want to enter this prestigious competition, and to all clubs, if you know of a young engineer who should enter, please highlight this to them! We want to see entrants in all disciplines of Model Engineering of course so this affects all of our member clubs.



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The AGM at Wakefield Coal Mining Museum, 25 March 2023



Since we have a goodly spread of member clubs throughout the country, we try to 'rotate' the venue of the AGM 'South-Midlands-North' to give all of our members a chance to get to an event in person, and this time, it was a northern venue that hosted us. We also try to find somewhere (within budget of course) that has some added interest to help attract people to devote a day to help us understand our members needs and desires. If we were only to conduct 'an AGM', then we could do this quickly, but that would deprive us of the chance to meet our members representatives in person, and vice versa. So, our 'AGM' has more in it than a formal meeting....

We started with an introduction from our chairman, and quickly moved on to awarding the Federation Trophy and Polly Engineering prize to Spencer Priddy, as described elsewhere in this newsletter.

A nice spread for lunch was provided by the Museum and this was demolished quickly by the attendees.



Paul Naylor then led a workshop to explore the clubs view of attracting and keeping members. This was the third such workshop after a show of hands three years ago suggested that such an exchange of ideas is a good idea... this seemed to cause some animated discussion and we will report on this one in due course, when we have analysed the notes taken!



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And so, to the formal part of the day, led by Bob Polley and with the absolutely essential support of our valiant secretary, Peter Squire.

The formal minutes, agenda and reports are all available on the website in the documents library (<u>https://fmes.org.uk/project/documents-for-2023-</u> <u>annual-general-meeting/</u> but you will need to be logged in to read these).

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It is difficult to pick out highlights, but one is the extremely good news that five people at least have now volunteered to support us in our endeavours. Peter Kenington (Young Engineers), Tony Lee (Newsletter Editor), Jim Hollom (Website Information Development) and Peter Harrison and Melvyn O'Connor (Events Management). You will hopefully see more about this in the future, especially as their work becomes obvious...but if you were on the verge of volunteering and now feel you

need not, there are still other activities that we could usefully pursue, so do let us know if you want to offer support.

Finally, an exhortation for next year! This will be a south based event and we will be seeking a venue and ideas for a workshop so if you have thoughts on this please let us know. We will announce a date in due course, but it is likely to be a little earlier in the year as we were conscious that many clubs were committed to the new season's opening activities (and we need to 'dodge' the Harrogate exhibition). It is our ambition to develop the event into a thriving day for many



rather than a meeting for a quorum and so please try to make the trip! We were delighted to see Adrian Parker again this year...Adrian comes from Romney Marsh and according to Google, his round trip was around 500 miles!



Paul Naylor

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Federation Trophy &Polly Model Engineering Ltd. Prize

The recent AGM held at Wakefield National Coal Mining Museum on 25th March 2023 was, as usual, also the venue for awarding the annual prizes to Young Engineers who entered the competition.

2022 competition

Mike Chrisp was on hand to introduce the entrants and explain a little background to the competition.

The short list for this year's Federation Award included three nominees: Thomas Readman of Ryedale Society of Model Engineers, James Barrett of Peterborough Society of Model Engineers and Spencer Priddy of Portsmouth Model Engineering Society.

Regrettably Thomas and James were unable to be at the AGM, but we are delighted to welcome Spencer with his Mum, Julie and Dad, Stuart.

Members of the Federation Committee were unanimous in recognising Spencer's enthusiastic approach to research, design and assembly of his locomotive and his participation in Society activities despite his youthfulness.

Spencer received the 2023 Federation Trophy, £50 Federation cash prize, and a £50 Polly Model Engineering Ltd. voucher.

We wish him continued pleasure in his model engineering activities and every success in the future.

Our Chairman, Bob Polley presented Tom with his Certificate of Commendation and a £50 Polly Model Engineering Ltd. voucher at Rydale's AGM the previous weekend.

James, who receives a Certificate of Commendation and a £50 Polly Model Engineering Ltd. Voucher, will have a presentation on 5th June at an evening event at Peterborough MES.



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info@fmes.org.uk 01327 342167 **www.fmes.org.uk** A private company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales No 9002737 Registered Office: 18 Wakefield Way, Nether Heyford, Northants, England NN7 3LU Mike went on to thank Andy and Jayne Clarke, until very recently Directors of Polly Model Engineering Ltd., for their generous support in sponsoring the Federation Award for so many years. Regrettably, they were unable to be with us at the AGM as they were enjoying a well-earned break now the business is in new hands, we wish Andy and Jayne a long, happy and productive retirement and hope to see them around. However, we were delighted to welcome Julia and Matt Thomas, the new owners of Polly Model Engineering who came to support the award and to communicate their enthusiasm for continuing the competition in the future.



Matt and Julia meeting Spencer and telling us a little about themselves and their plans.

Paul Naylor

Presentation to Tom Readman at Ryedale SME AGM 19 March 2023 (as reported in the Rydale SME March newsletter)





The conclusion was the presentation to Tom Readman by the Chairman of the Federation of Model Engineering Societies, Bob Polley, of a young engineer Commendation Certificate. This was followed with a £50 Polly models voucher, presented by Peter Squire, the Federation Secretary. Congratulations Tom.

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Update re. the AGM workshop

Following the workshop at the AGM recently about attracting and keeping new members, we have drafted the initial findings and have been discussing our next steps. We will of course make the results known and may even ask people to help by answering a brief questionnaire to garner further thoughts. We will use the website for further information in due course. Whilst we will inform our usual club contacts when this happens, if you see something on the website inviting you to have a go at the questionnaire, please do try it, we will be delighted to get replies from all model engineers!

FMES Rally 2023

Rally date reminder 16th September 2023 at Frimley and Ascot Locomotive Society

We hope that you are able to attend the rally this year and experience the excellent multigauge track at Frimley Lodge Park as announced on our website in the news and the events pages. There is the chance to enter two competitions this year, as well as of course just enjoying driving around the one kilometre long track or meeting fellow model engineers.

We were expecting the date to coincide with the 7¹/₄" Society event in Woking, but this has now been moved, at least in location.

To find out more please see the website <u>https://fmes.org.uk/fmes-2023-rally/</u> or visit the club website at <u>https://www.flmr.org/</u>.



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The What, Why and Wherefore of Young Engineers Part 1 of 2

Dr Peter Kenington

Introduction

Some months ago, the FMES committee sought the views of the membership on the clubs' attitudes to younger members and what (if any) provision was being made for younger members within their clubs. This initiative was kicked-off at the AGM in 2022, with a workshop on this topic, and continued with a survey of the clubs, to allow those not represented at the AGM to also express their views. It has taken a while to gather and analyse the results, but this process is now complete and it makes for fascinating reading...



Photo 1: My son, Matthew, with one of the projects he built at Hereford SME's Young Engineers Club – a combined ground and raised-level riding truck/tender for 5" gauge

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Overview

The information sought from clubs fell into in three broad categories:

- 1. Current status how many clubs have "Young Engineers" (YEs)? What provision do they have for YEs (e.g. a dedicated YE section, an acceptance of YE members but no specific provision for them, no YEs, etc.)?
- 2. Perceived barriers to YE involvement. Whether or not a club has YEs already, what either prevents YE membership from growing or what prevents clubs from attracting (or even accepting) YEs?
- 3. What would help? In effect, this question could be re-phrased as "What can FMES and other organisations, including local companies, perhaps the engineering institutions, etc. do to facilitate the adoption, encouragement and attraction of younger members into the hobby?" Built into this question is the converse: "What are the 'barriers to entry' which prevent or discourage model engineering societies from taking on or further engaging with YEs?"

Without getting too much ahead of ourselves, one surprising outcome of the survey is that there were few 'standout' issues in the 'barriers to entry' category – a broad range of areas had very similar scores, indicating that a number of things need to be addressed in order to broaden the involvement of YEs. There was no 'silver bullet'!

One very encouraging finding was, however, that almost all clubs either have or want YEs; only 16% are not seeking YE involvement in some form and, in a number of cases, this was because they weren't 'normal' clubs. This category, for example, could include a private railway in the owner's garden or grounds, although even some of these encourage YE involvement.

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Current Status

As noted above, only 16% are not looking to recruit younger members. If we also exclude clubs which already have a YE section of some form, that leaves around three-quarters of clubs who would like to initiate or increase the involvement of young engineers and could therefore be helped to do so. We will discuss, later, what help may be needed and what could be provided (e.g. by FMES).

These clubs divide into two almost equal categories:

- 1. Those that need help to attract YEs or to move forward in working out how to accommodate them.
- 2. Those that have YE members already and just need assistance and encouragement to form a YE section.

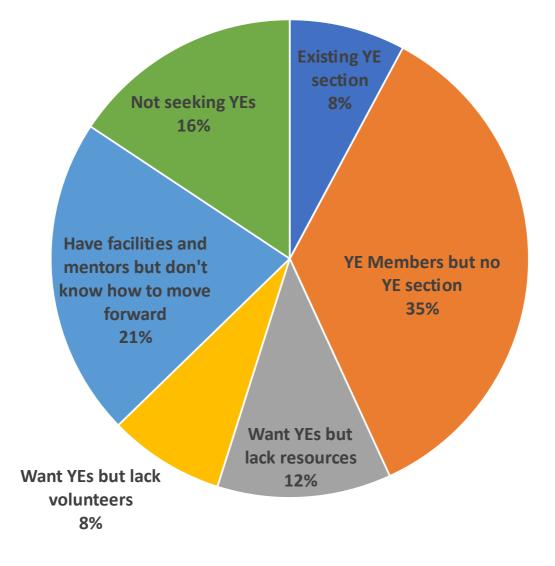


Figure 1: Current status of young engineers and associated activities within ME clubs

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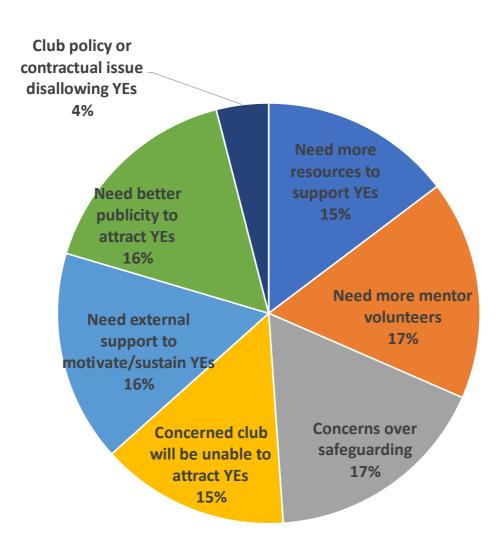


Figure 2: Barriers to clubs doing more for or with young engineers

Barriers to YE Involvement

A range of issues were proposed, in the questionnaire, which might prove to be barriers to some, or greater, involvement by YEs in clubs. Somewhat surprisingly, all bar one of the proposed issues came out as being more or less equally relevant. This is not to say that all clubs ranked them equally, simply that there was a fairly even split amongst the clubs regarding which was most relevant.

One very encouraging finding was, however, that only 4% of the clubs surveyed expressly disallow younger members (e.g. in their constitution), as opposed to the slightly larger group who were simply not looking to attract YEs (although, presumably, if one happened along, then the club might be amenable to admitting them!).

The main conclusion (or 'take-away' in modern corporate parlance) from this section is that clubs need a broad range of support and there may be a number of issues which need to be overcome for a given club to admit/attract/grow its YE involvement. As noted above, there is no obvious form of precious-metal projectile which will 'fix' the problem for all, or even most, clubs.

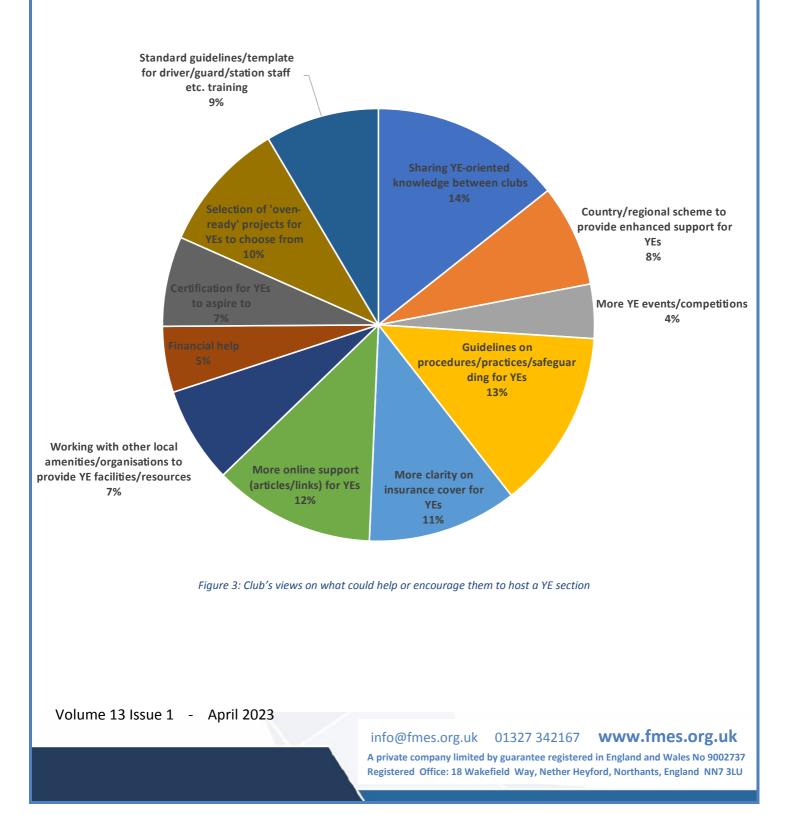
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What Would Help?

Again, there was a fairly even split of areas in which help was felt to be beneficial (or essential) – six categories lie within a 5% range, with 'knowledge sharing' and 'guidelines/procedures' leading the pack. These aspects, in particular, are areas in which an umbrella organisation, such as FMES, could provide help to member societies.

One interesting finding was that finance did not feature as a major issue. It is not a lack of funds which is holding clubs back, but other 'softer' issues and concerns.



The What, Why and Wherefore of YoungEngineersPart 2 of 2

Dr Peter Kenington

In the first part of this series, we discussed the club's views on young engineers and their involvement (or otherwise) in club activities. In this part, we cover the views of the young engineers themselves (or at least those that participated in the survey) and go on to draw a few overall conclusions from the whole exercise.

Young Engineers' Views

At the FMES AGM, in March 2022, the young engineers (YEs) present participated in a YE-specific version of the survey which the older members completed during the workshop, immediately preceding the formal business of the AGM. This survey provided an interesting and unique perspective on the present debate, albeit from a small sample size (6).

For YEs the number one issue was a certification programme; some form of recognition of 'progress' in skills and achievements, with associated increased access to, for example, 'responsible' activities in running the club or its associated railway (where relevant). It was always an enormous source of frustration to my son, Matthew, that he was unable to undertake responsible jobs on the railway simply due to his age. He felt (understandably) that if he could demonstrate his competence, after a period of supervision and training and perhaps an appropriate skills test, then he should be allowed to undertake a given duty (being a guard or a driver, for example). This is a complex issue, as it involves not only the acceptance of such things within a club but also insurance cover and its associated conditions, but it nevertheless illustrates the thinking of YEs in general. He found it especially galling when he watched 'senior' members being allowed to undertake such duties (without having to prove their competence) and then going on to make mistakes due to their lack of experience or knowledge (he was a competent steam loco driver by the age of 9!).

In contrast, such a certification scheme was very low down in the clubs' list of priorities, thereby showing the value of including YEs themselves in this exercise.

Again, the YEs had a fairly even spread of 'wants', although the actual scores were high in most categories (i.e. they all 'really wanted' X, where X was a given category). I was the 'supervisor' of the YEs' table at the AGM and it was interesting to expand upon each category with them. They were an enthusiastic bunch and keen to expand their knowledge and skills in a way that should make the 'seniors' proud and hopefully keen to assist.

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One final aspect, which was evident on the day and also very obvious at Hereford SME where Matthew and I are members, is the involvement of parents. Not only were they present at the AGM, to support their sons/daughters (and yes, both were represented), but they were actively interested in the provisions made for YEs within the hobby and were (mostly) active participants within their local clubs, having been introduced to them via YE activities. **In other words, the active inclusion/recruitment of YEs, to clubs, often yields new members/helpers in the shape of their parents** (and I am a prime example of this!). Late last year, I did a quick survey at one of the public running days at Hereford SME (which has a very active YE section); **over 50% of those participating were either YEs, or the parents of a YE**. Having a YE section is a great way of building a strong (and useful) membership.



photo 2: My son, Matthew, is finally old enough to drive passenger trains at Hereford SME (note the smile!)

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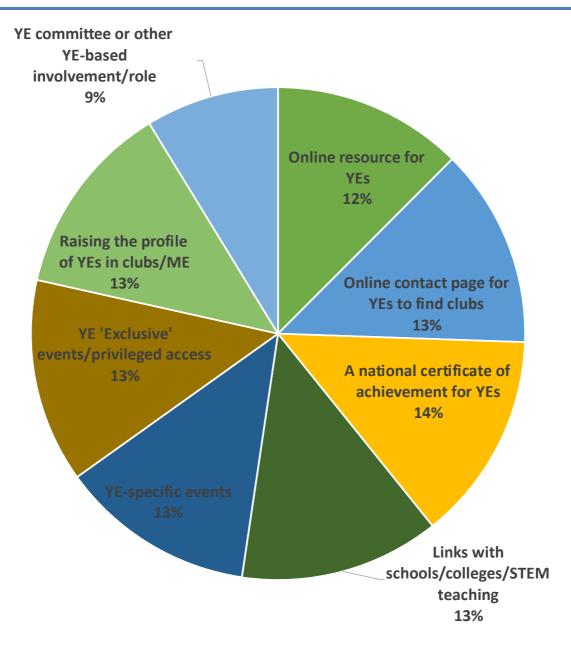


Figure 4: The views of young engineers themselves

A Lack of Self-Confidence

One slightly surprising finding (at least I found it so) arose from some of the comments received along with the formal survey results. Clubs were invited to add explanatory comments along with their answers, in the various sections, and these were very helpful in providing a deeper understanding of some of the issues. A particular stand-out for me was a sense that clubs and club members had little to offer young people, as many members had no formal engineering training and had, for example, learnt model engineering during the process of building their first model. This attitude could be summed up as: "how can we offer training to YEs when we are not, ourselves, trained [in engineering]?".

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Whilst this is an understandable sentiment, I think that clubs and members are underestimating their value. The aim of YE involvement and the teaching of practical skills is not to produce ready-trained apprentices capable of going straight into industry to fabricate widgets on lathes and mills (this is mostly done by CNC these days anyway), but to instil (or nurture) in them a fascination for all things practical and technical. These are the steam-enthusiasts of the future who will keep our hobby alive, along with the preserved railways, traction engines, steam pumping engines and so on. The fact that you might not show them the 'best' or the 'approved' method of making a component is not what is important, it is the fact that they have been taught to make something out of nothing, a useful 'thing' from bits of metal/wood/plastic and that this thing can fit together with other similar 'things' to make something useful/beautiful/interesting/fun. Nurturing the interest is what matters, not the formal quality of the teaching. In extremis, there will always be other, more expert, engineers in the club who can help – and you will learn something yourself as a consequence.

Conclusions

Firstly, I must say a big 'thank you' to all of the clubs who participated in the survey, either the 'paper' version or in the workshop at the AGM (or both). It has been a very interesting exercise and certainly produced results I wasn't expecting. In particular, I expected that there would be one or two 'headline' issues dominating the results ('safeguarding' being the one I would have put money on), however this didn't prove to be the case and a broader range of topics are clearly of relevance.

A key and very heartening, conclusion is that the vast majority of clubs are receptive to YE involvement (or, indeed, already have such involvement). This finding countermands the stereotypical 'grumpy old man' attitude I have encountered on (rare) occasions, when it comes to involving young people in clubs and associated 'dangerous' activities (e.g. using machinery).

A key factor in, and indeed benefit of, the involvement of YEs in clubs is the participation of their parents. Parents are key in so many ways: they support and encourage their children, often participate and learn themselves and frequently become more involved members of the club. They realise that if the club thrives then it can support their child and they are usually very willing to give back to the club that is giving so much to their family. I am very much a case in point here.

Finally, there are a number of areas in which FMES can perhaps help, for example in the provision of (legally-checked) safeguarding advice and procedures, 'oven-ready' projects for YEs to undertake, perhaps a central 'recruiting' tool (via the website) to allow prospective YEs to find a local club with a YE section. There is a degree of 'chicken and egg' here – unless a club has a YE section then there is nothing to put a prospective member in touch with, but without existing YE members then a club can't have a YE section – nevertheless it would be a useful function. Over the coming months we will look at what help can be provided by FMES.

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Finally...

FMES are not the only organisation in this space, either in terms of having a membership which could support YE activities or who are interested in encouraging YE involvement in model (and other) engineering activities. We therefore need to adopt a co-ordinated approach, for example with Train4Rail (those of you attending the Midlands exhibition last October will have seen their stand), the Northern Federation, etc. One area of concern to all, for example, is that of safeguarding and this is perhaps an area to focus on initially.

We will be considering what the role is FMES could have in supporting YEs over the next few months and will disseminate our findings as we have them. It is very difficult for a volunteer organisation to produce meaningful activities on this or any subject without enthusiastic people seeking to help.....if you would like to join our team to help develop our ideas, please do not hesitate to contact me at peter.kenington@fmes.org.uk or info@fmes.org.uk.

Through my experiences as Hereford SME, I have seen first-hand how a YE section and YE involvement in a club can lead to a thriving organisation and one which can look to the future with confidence, counteracting the 'decline' narrative which is often heard in our hobby. I would love to see this replicated in clubs nationwide and for this to help in securing the future of our hobby.

The Harrogate Model Rail and Model Engineering Exhibition, 10/11 March 2023

We were very encouraged to hear the news that this exhibition was going ahead....December 2022 had us expecting that the next exhibition would be MMEE in October, and January 2023 saw us making plans for Harrogate! The joint exhibition, capitalising on the two halls at the Yorkshire Event Centre - in Harrogate - was excellent as it provided interest for hobbyists of both 'genres', demonstrating that there are only blurred divisions in model making.

The somewhat wintry weather proved a challenge and there were some stories of difficulty especially from people coming over the Pennines, but the majority of exhibitors made it and evidently visitors did too.

The Model Engineering part in Hall 2 was well attended by clubs showing locomotives, traction engines, boats, planes and more. This demonstrated to the visitor, especially the families that came on the Saturday, the breadth of 'Model Engineering' as well as showing some excellent examples of

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info@fmes.org.uk 01327 342167 **WWW.fmes.org.uk** A private company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales No 9002737 Registered Office: 18 Wakefield Way, Nether Heyford, Northants, England NN7 3LU the art. Trade stands were very much in evidence as well, with visitors able to get tools, model engineering supplies, kits and ready built locomotives and other models.

Hall 1 contained the Model Rail part and this was also populated with clubs showing layouts from smaller 'room sized' examples to extremely large and ambitious undertakings. There were also examples of models and layouts that had a foot in each camp featuring steam locomotives down to 00 - yes, double 0 - gauge live steam. The trade was also in attendance, serving the needs of their model rail enthusiast customers.

We were able to book a stand in Hall 2 and to make sure that we were available to meet and serve our member clubs and other current and prospective model engineering enthusiasts, along with our colleagues from the other representative bodies. We tried to provide a place to introduce ourselves and for people to bring questions and comments – or just have a chat – as befits our brief to support member clubs and spread the word of Model Engineering. That this worked well was given by the steady stream of visitors, some with interesting problems and enquiries, some just to say hello.



We have indicated our enthusiasm to the organisers by agreeing to attend next year, but if you have anything you want to discuss or comment on in the meantime, please let us know via <u>info@fmes.org.uk</u>.

Our next scheduled exhibition attendance is MMEE in Warwick in October....unless of course something else comes along out of the blue!

Paul Naylor

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IMLEC 2023

Bristol SMEE is pleased to be hosting this year's round of the 'International Model Locomotive Efficiency Competition' at Ashton Court Railway.

This event is aimed at Model Engineers, and draws experienced locomotive builders and drivers from across the Country, who put their steam locomotives through their paces hauling passengers, in order to find who is the most efficient user of coal.

The popular competitive event is supported by many Societies, and is returning to Bristol for the first time since 2009; also helping to mark the 50th anniversary of our track at Ashton Court.

The event date is **Friday 7th – Sunday 9th July 2023**, and is subject to an entry charge. These are not public running days, and there are no public rides at this event.

Competition information is available on a dedicated website set up for this event; please follow this link : <u>https://imlec.uk/</u>

If you looking for an in depth history of IMLEC, with highlights of previous years, please click on the link to go to George Winsall's fabulous information site : <u>https://www.imlecarchive.com/</u>

e

Here's an odd idea for anyone with spare cash wanting to lose invest in renewable technology. A Swiss company called Sun-Ways is seeking funding to develop the installation of solar panels along railway tracks! The last time I looked at a railway track I wasn't immediately struck by its suitability as a site for solar panels! A lengthy critique is on the Oz EEVblog on YouTube <u>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7vItnxhWRqw</u>



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All claims and reports of incidents should be notified in the first instance to Walker Midgley FEDERATION INSURANCE BUSINESS Managed by Walker Midgley Insurance Ltd

Committee members' contact details can be found on the Federation MES web site

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Publications Available from FMES

The FMES publications listed below are available from our stand at rallies and exhibitions or by post from David Mayall. Please make contact first by phone or email to get combined postage costs when ordering more than one item. (See note below). The figures shown here are for single items only. Please make cheques payable to 'Federation MES' or use BACS to Sort Code 20-71-82 Acct 43755967.

From Our St	and
Examination & Testing of Miniature Steam Boilers BTC 2018 - Orange Book Vol 1: 3 bar litres to 1100 bar litres; Vol 2: under 3 bar litres; Vol 3: LPG tanks under 25	Free 0 ml.
Boiler Test Certificates - Pad of 50	FREE*
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Boiler History Record Card - Pack of 10	£3.50
Plastic wallets to hold certificates size A5	£0.75
HS 2020 Passenger-carrying min railways 'Guidance' post included	£4.00

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* These publications are issued free of charge to fully paid up member Clubs and Societies ONLY, and are NOT available for general sale. For delivery by mail, the cost of postage and packing is £5.00, and must be borne by the Club/Society placing the order.

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