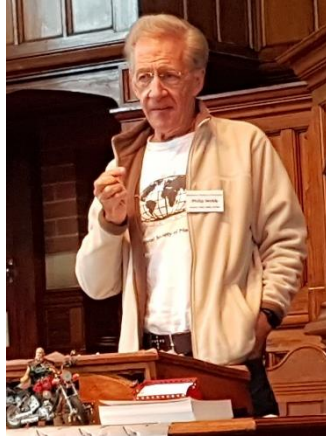


ISM Chairman's Report 2021

I saw a birthday card last year which said, "You're NOT a year older – 2020 doesn't count!" I liked that idea – but you may feel much the same about 2021. Country after country has been in lockdown; at times even travel in our own countries has been very limited and gatherings of any size have been prohibited. Great exhibitions like SkegEx were cancelled for the second year running. Around the world Meccano clubs are beginning to open up again as restrictions ease in many countries (though not all), but given the average modeller's health and age of many Meccano some members are still reluctant to venture out. For such reasons we felt unable to hold our customary ISM AGM in Henley again this year.



At such times we rely very much on models and news. In a time when one's personal horizons may be good it is to remain in contact around the world! Our meetings are the way of the world. A number (to us at least) electronically, and related sites with inevitable

Page and a Group, and we receive a steady stream of applications to join ISM via this means with new enquiries every week. Do feel free to post information about your own Club there – it is a great way of promoting your activities locally. Behind all Kees Trommel continues his good work in maintaining our own ISM website - <http://internationalmeccanomen.org.uk/> - don't forget to check this out regularly.

It is good to see traditional Meccano-related magazines still being published by enthusiasts in France and Switzerland and we are grateful for regular copies of these. We cherish the memory of paper publications such as the venerable Meccano Magazine and our own International Meccanoman, but sadly these are no longer published. Some clubs seem to have given up producing paper-based material altogether and even the mighty CQ announced in their September 2021 issue that their subscriptions are going up as the number of subscribers falls. That can only end one way.

But despite all this the hobby remains in good heart. eBay sales would indicate a large and active user-base which goes beyond the club-scene. Pioneer developers are producing printed parts and electronic supplements to expand the modeller's options.

Digitally the vast catalogue of nzmeccano.com demonstrates the incredible range of imagination and ingenuity still at work in our world-wide community. Georg Eiermann documents the work of European modellers (using Meccano and other allied systems) in a very professional pdf magazine entitled ""Schrauber & Sammler" and John Burke issues the colourful picture-heavy pdf magazine entitled "Johnny's Meccano Magazine". All in all, we are not starved of material, ideas or international news!

In a world torn by political divisions and threatened by climate change you could say that we have the ideal hobby – it transcends language and politics, it is accessible by men and women, young and old, and it is remarkably ecological! We've never liked plastic, and we cling to the mantra of Repair, Refurbish, Recycle, Remake. And, of course, while there are some who cling to clockwork or steam power, most of our vehicles have been powered by electric motors for years!

I'm sorry that the Company seems increasingly distant from the adult hobby but how many of us really need more parts to fulfil our dreams when we already have more than our childhood selves could have imagined possible? In this uncertain world none of us can be sure how many more models we have left in us, but for now enjoy all that you have, and not least the world-wide fellowship made possible by this venerable System.

Philip Webb, Derby 2021