



DGEng BUGLE NEWS

Maurice Walker talks about:-

Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics Network (STEMNET)

I asked Maurice for an 'identity' photo for inclusion in his write-up. This is what I got!! It is Maurice hiding in his restored Model Y Ford 8. Nice one!

When I attended a previous reunion at the Hercules Pillars, I was wearing my STEMNET badge, the previous two days I had spent at a girl's secondary school judging their engineering challenge. Malcolm suggested that members might find the activities of STEMNET interesting.

My association with the organisation began twenty five years ago when the engineering council ran an initiative known as "Neighbourhood Engineers"; interested volunteers from the engineering profession offered their time to assist schools and their students to understand engineering and may be consider that as a profession. During the early years, I would take time off to visit schools and help in classes studying Design and Technology (D & T). I maintained my association with the organisation and assisted in after school or lunchtime engineering clubs. It was at a function held by "Neighbourhood Engineers" at London City University, there I met the organiser and was persuaded to become the area organiser for the borough of Southwark and with a list of interested schools and a list of volunteer engineers; hours on the telephone later I concluded that it was a difficult exercise. Volunteers would give time in the evenings but teachers would not give their time after hours.

I was asked by STEMNET to assist a school which was bidding to become a specialist 'Engineering College' and to acquire the extra funding that the government was offering. The bid was successful and my career as a school governor began. This association lasted about five years until I had a disagreement with the head teacher and we parted company. He believed his teaching staff knew more about engineering than I did.

During these many years that I have been a STEMNET ambassador I have been involved in many diverse activities. To enhance and assist in these activities Science and Engineering Ambassadors are invited to bring their skills and knowledge into schools.

During this current year, 2013, I have attended quite a number of schools, both primary and secondary.

Examples of the activities to which I have contributed:-

The Enterprise Game. This was an activity organised by the Bromley EBP (Education and Business partnership). This board game is designed for junior schools students to grasp the concepts of business i.e. Making and selling goods. Lots of cheating goes on; just like business.

Maximise Your Potential. A sort of speed dating where students who are preparing for their futures in a work environment meet ambassadors. Tables are set in a circle around a hall and the students spend 10 minutes with specialists e.g. engineers.

At Crown Woods School. I presented a short lecture on product design and development. During the Q & A session I always ask the audience "What do engineers do?" The answer is, almost invariably, "They fix things". i.e. they mend washing machines.

Another interesting activity is **“The Dragon’s Pen”**, based on the TV show “Dragons’ Den”. This will involve the complete year 11/12 intake split into groups of 16/20 and one or two ambassadors take the class. The students then design a product or service and sell it to a couple of ambassadors acting as dragons.

K’Nex challenge. Teams of four primary school children are given a bag of K’Nex construction bits and challenged to construct a suspension bridge. I went around the class offering advice and eventually had to judge the results and give prizes.

At Newstead Woods School for girls. SAY (Serious about Youth) Create Sport Challenge. For this the students had to design and build a model of a sports stadium. My girls didn’t make the final but I got another free lunch.

March 15th 2013. The Big Bang. This event held at EXCEL East London, adjacent to the Olympic Park. A three day Science and Engineering Fair for school children from 5 to 18. I volunteered as an evaluation assistant; this entailed taking an I-Pad with questionnaire and getting views of those attending. My bonus was to get in for free, with lunch, and get first hand information from stall holders. Rolls Royce had a stand with a construction model of a jet engine which the children could build up. The apprentices on the stall were reluctant to give me one. I also had a personal guide around the bloodhound 1000mph car. I have volunteered for 2014.

At Darrick Wood School. Advising 16 year olds on developing a useful C.V. and writing letters of introduction

I answered a request for an ambassador who understood the working of cams and camshafts; ideal for an engine man. For every Friday for the rest of term I attended class supervising unruly kids using woodworking power tools. Nothing to do with understanding camshafts.

This year I will have attended thirty functions. I just try to pass on the message – Engineering is cool.

Should any of you engineers be tempted to join; the STEMNET websight is www.stement.org.uk

P.S. This is my small claim to fame and association with the BBMF.



RAF Biggin Hill 1956 - Hurricane LF363
With 4137632 SAC Walker M - Engine mechanic.



RAF Conningsby BMMF 2006.
Reunited with LF363

Maurice Walker

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