PMS Meeting Friday 6th November 2018

Ancient Egyptian Engineering

The Impossible Explained

Peter Brooks, local engineer and polymath was introduced by Dr. Chris Westwood.

Peter Brooks has given many talks and been involved in TV productions on his subject of the mystery of ancient Egyptian engineering. Specifically, he has been perplexed by the explanations given by historians on the cutting of the very hard stone used in their monuments. He explained that these theories are scientifically impossible.

It is usually stated that copper tools were used but he demonstrated using Mohs scale of mineral hardness that neither bronze nor copper would have been hard enough to cut the Aswan pink granite used in the production of the pyramids around 1100 BC (Bronze Age) and 1000 years before the Iron Age. Granite, which is mainly quartz and feldspar, can only be cut by minerals harder on the scale such as topaz and diamond.

The unfinished Obelisk at Karnak is explained by guides as having been pounded out by balls of Dolerite rock found within the granite. Peter showed us the sharp edges, corners and machine marks which make this look impossible. He suggests that the small balls of rock around the site were more likely used as ball bearings to move the huge blocks of cut stone.

He then showed us some beautiful and intricately detailed hieroglyphic carvings of bulls and scarabs cut onto different obelisks over 70 years which were remarkably identical. He suggests that the only way this could have been achieved would be with some form of rigid template and possibly a gemstone cutting tool.

The final film clip proposes the possible answer of a huge cutting wheel edged with diamonds or other gemstones against which the granite was brought to be cut. It is possible that pits near the sites could have been the location of these wheels.

It was a fascinating and thought provoking talk and much enjoyed by the 34 members and 25 guests who attended.

The talk was followed by dinner.