NZFMM MAGAZINE

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A few covers from the 50 NZFMM Magazines edited by Les Megget

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My Last Editorial

It doesn't seem like 11 years since I took over as Editor of this long running Magazine in January 2008, soon after the previous long-standing editor **Bruce Neilson** had several strokes and retired. In between **John Hansen** edited 2 issues before I was appointed. My co-editor was the late **John Ince,** who called himself the *Compositor*, which meant he did all the setting up of the Magazine using articles and photos emailed to him by yours truly but he didn't read the articles, so he said. **Bruce Geange** built many small models and these were written up by Bruce Neilson and subsequently filled many pages in the Magazine..

At that time the Magazine was published 6 times a year with usually 24 pages and only the outer cover in full colour. I soon decided that I could only cope with 4 copies a year but the number of pages would be increased to 28, if enough copy was forthcoming. A prominent member of the NZFMM said that editing the Magazine should only take about 6 hours an issue but that was soon proven to be incorrect with the actual number being about 5 times that! The real problem was often a lack of copy requiring me to write several pages to fill gaps. That certainly forced me to build more models though. Not knowing whether enough copy would come in by the deadline was stressful at times. Full colour was introduced 5 years ago when I realised that the cost of colour printing had become more economical compared with a decade before.

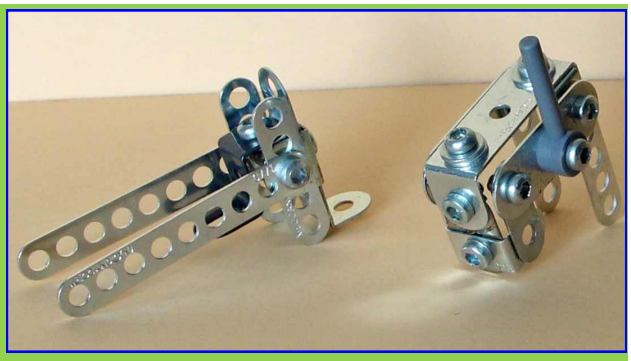
I must thank **Bruce Geange** for his continuous supply of small detailed model instructions and his fantastic proof reading skills over the years. Also the late **Lloyd Spackman** who provided regular "Bits & Pieces" articles, a task he had been doing for many years. **Gary Higgins** always finds time to research and write his Ebay column, following on from **John Hansen**, who moved to Australia over a decade ago. **Daryl Anderson** and **Peter Hancock** have been great at producing articles (Other Systems and Archives, respectively) at short notice. Thanks too to the regular club reporters, **Gary, Robin Rye, Max George and Mike Howse with Roland Jaspers** as his alternate, and latterly **Graeme Wrightson** for the new Greater Waikato club..

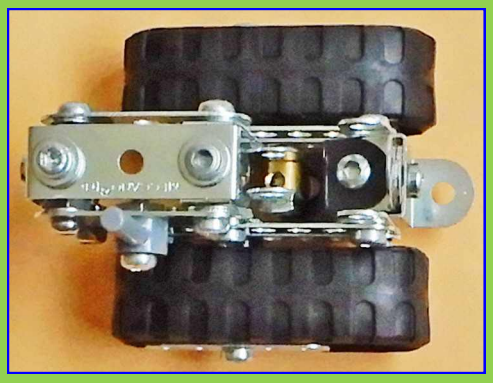
My best wishes to our new editor, **Richard Feltham** and please continue to send in articles because as it's often stated "a magazine is only as good as its contributions". Seasons greetings to you all and I hope to catch up with you at the Convention in Inglewood at Easter. **Les**

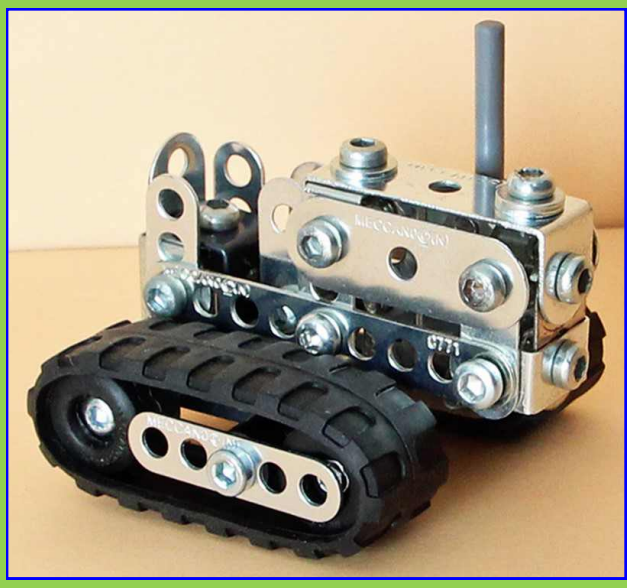
Contents

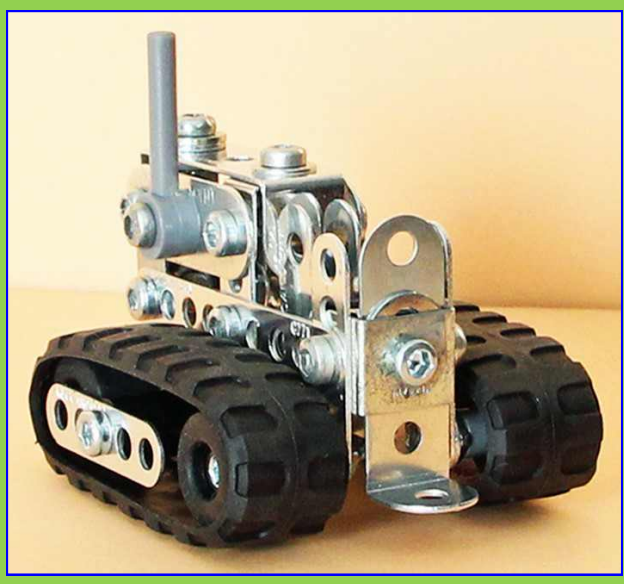
Small Crawler Tractor
by Bruce Geange

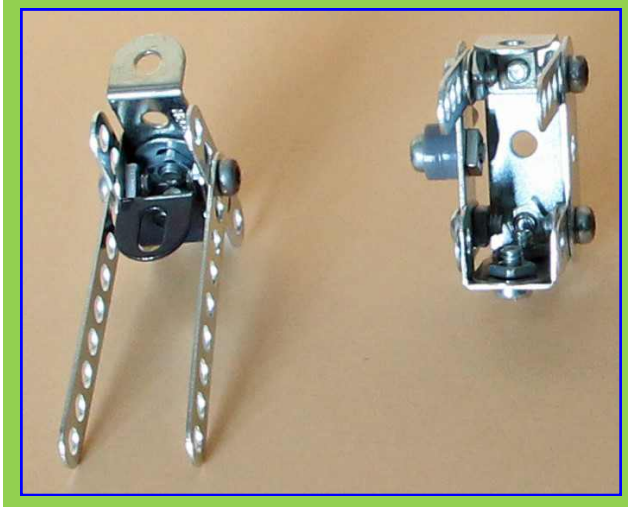
This model can be constructed from the pictures provided. The tracks and wheels came from the Maxi Kit Excavator No. 0708B. The main frames are 2" 9-hole Narrow Strips. A Reversed Angle Bracket became the seat and footplate having a Collar Bolted to it with 1" Narrow Strips for the levers. 1½" 5-hole Narrow Strips used for the seat and rear bonnet sides also support the track frames and bolt to the 2" 9-hole Narrow Strips used for the chassis. A 1½" x ½" Double Angle Strip is the top of the bonnet with a Fishplate at the front.

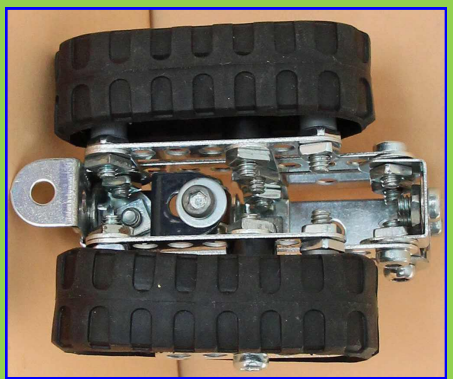












Christchurch Meccano Club Report

by Roland Jaspers

Well, the silver beet is in, the spuds are coming along nicely and the first strawberries are ripening. Such is the exiting life in Christchurch that these become highlights. It has been a very quiet period in the Club. The competitions have been well supported with some excellent models submitted. The strong focus of the meetings is to keep business items as short as possible, to allow for maximum interaction between members.

Themes were:

August: Construction Machine. I was rather impressed by the simple mechanism of **Alex Lang's** jackhammer. It is not something I would have thought of with my limited technical knowledge.

September: Child's toy. They ranged from **Sam Lang's** simple spinning top (but Boy, did it go!), to Nathan's shooting gallery with a rifle firing rubber bands and **Peter Satterthwaite's** gyroscope. **John Hamlyn** displayed his usual ingenuity with a Seal, balancing a ball.

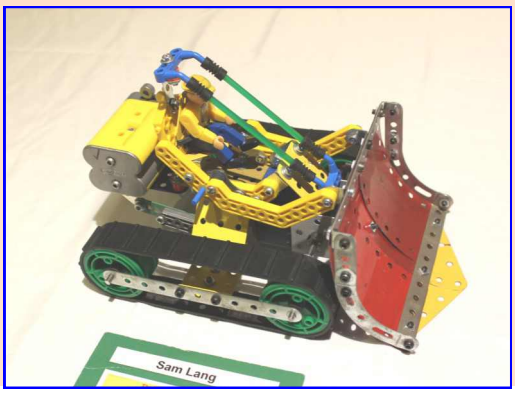
October: Mini car. John Hamlyn's model did again impress, while Neil showed how a simple model can be enhanced by some custom parts. **Thomas Woermann** set the models for this year and remained closest to the model theme with a car that was indeed very "mini".

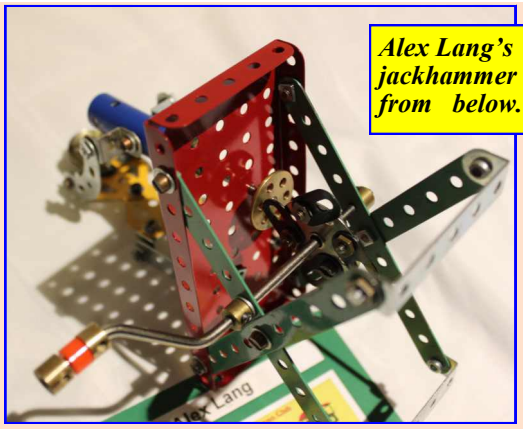
The current leaders have a strong lead, but competition for second and third place in both senior and junior categories is still wide open

Kevin Downie is re-creating Blake Huffam's dredge. He brings parts or sections of the model to meetings for display as well as discussion and problem solving. It will be a multi-year project. The project so far will be detailed in the next magazine.

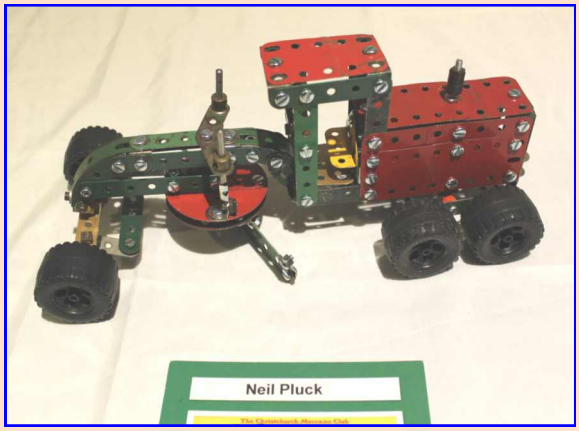
The Club's Christmas lunch will likely be on 8 or 9 December. If you are going to be in Christchurch that weekend let me know and I'll provide details of time and place.

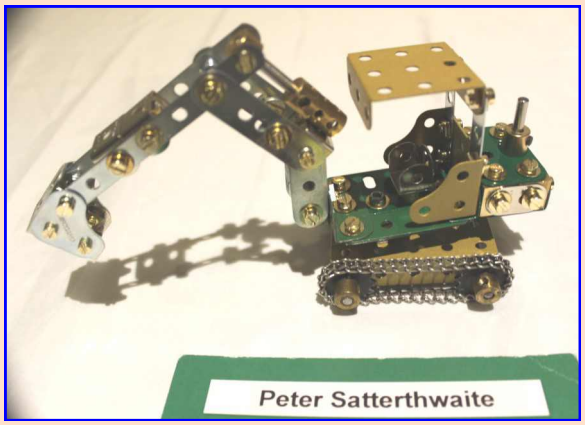
Oh, forgot! The chooks are back to laying an egg each every day, after their winter moult.

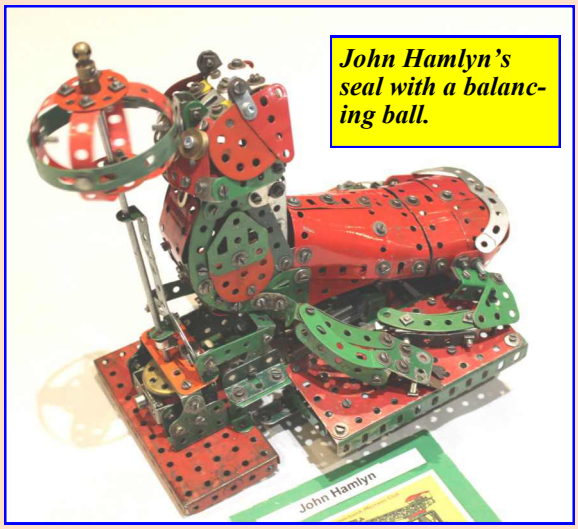




Alex Lang's jackhammer from below.







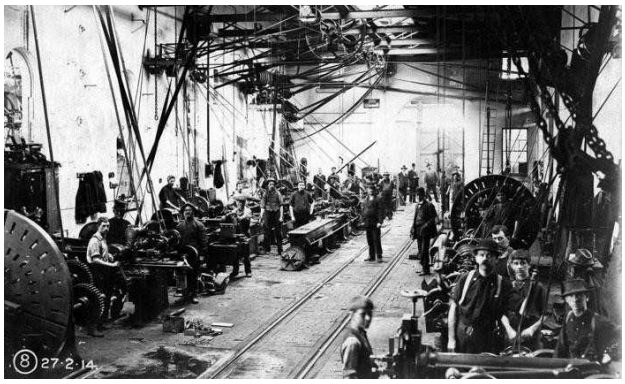
John Hamlyn's seal with a balancing ball.

More CMC models are shown on the back cover.

COCKATOO ISLAND SYDNEY HARBOUR

by David Glenday

My wife and I celebrated a recent birthday with a long weekend in Sydney. On a fine morning we caught the local ferry to Cockatoo Island. Cockatoo Island is a UNESCO world-heritage-listed island in the middle of beautiful Sydney Harbour.



The Island was for many years been a naval dockyard. It is now a tourist destination where you can admire the old slipways, rusting cranes, buildings where the ships were designed and fabricated, and even stay in a tent on a camp ground adjacent to the water.

The Island features sheer cliffs to an elevated table top where a convict prison was built with barracks.

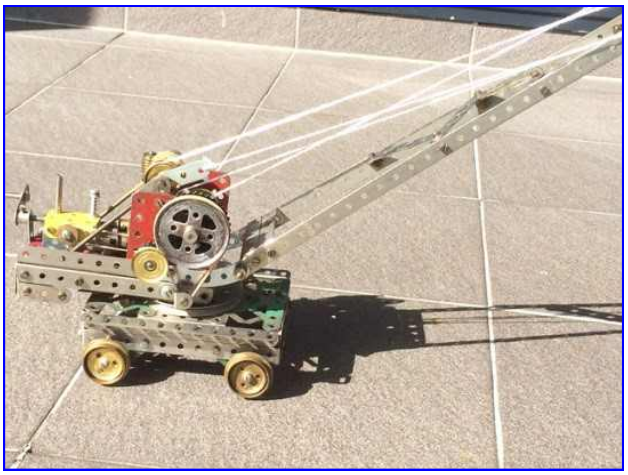
Between 1839 and 1869, Cockatoo Island operated as a convict penal establishment, primarily as a place of secondary punishment for convicts who had re-offended in the colonies. It was one of Australia's biggest shipyards, operating between 1857 and 1991. The first of its two dry docks were built

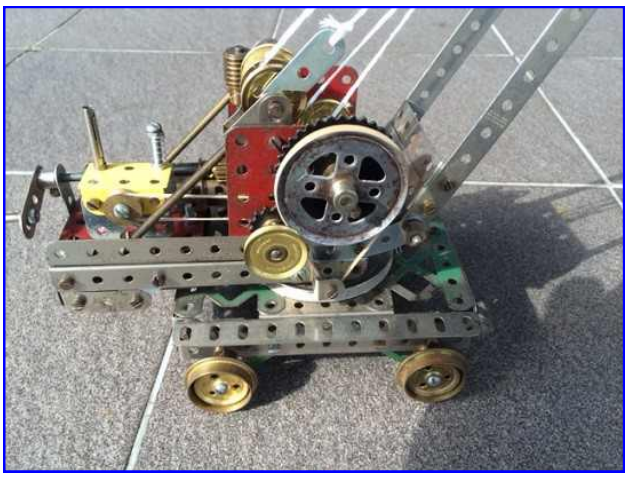
by the convicts. Through the centre of the central raised land is a service tunnel that links the port dry docks and slipways.

During World War Two the dockyards were busy in construction and repair of allied ships. Many men served as apprentices in a variety of trades. There are large buildings where the parts for the ships were designed and fabricated in real size, not scaled as would be the case today.

The landscape is a wonderland of rusting cranes and buildings that will inspire any Meccano man. There are various cranes and I have used two smaller cranes as prototypes for two models.

The small travelling crane appears in illustrations of the construction of the dry docks. For my model I used some remaining nickel parts in my collection for a more "period" look. The jib and hook actions are with simple cranks and using a worm for the jib luffing.



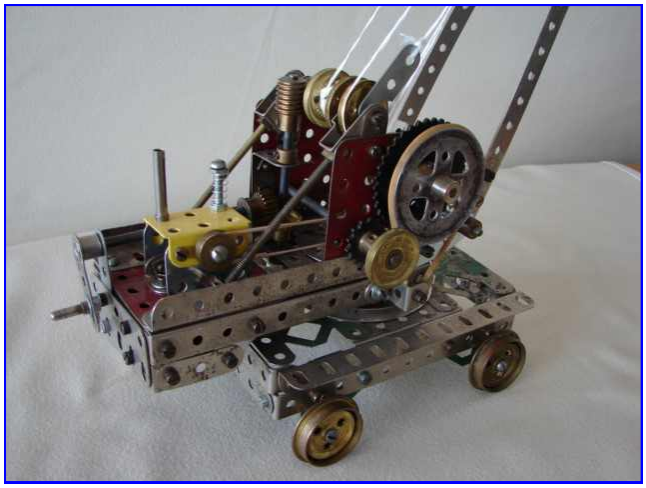


The second model uses the steam driven dockside crane shown below:

The model uses traditional red/green and incorporates a very simple crank and piston with flywheel, and chain drive from an MO motor and to the winding drum via the crank.

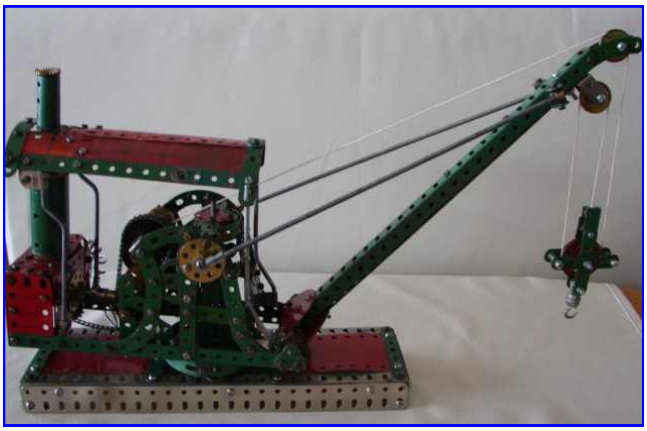
For the Meccano Man there is the tour of the numerous aging cranes (no two seem alike) and buildings. For the historian a walk through the old barracks, and the drafting buildings where the ships were designed, and the huge engineering workshops, is nostalgic and educational.

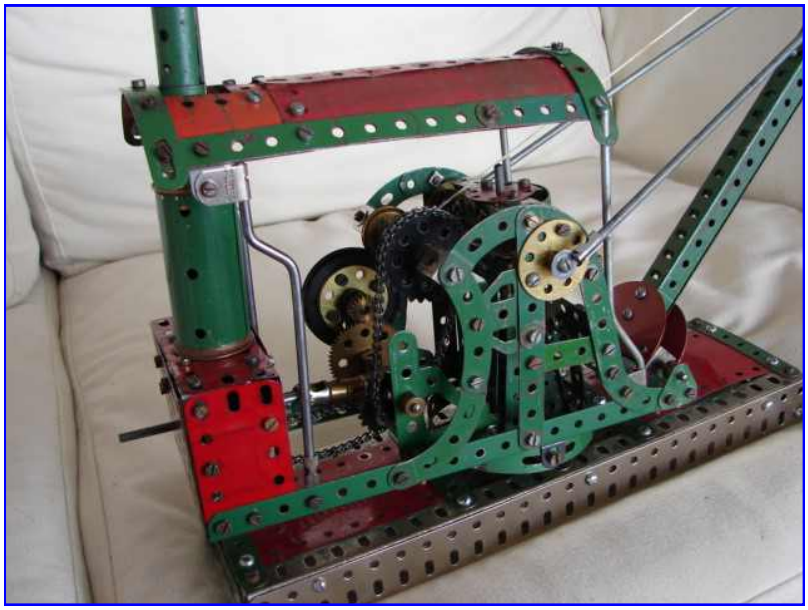
There are various links to Cockatoo Island on-line of course, and both the history of the island and its



current use for recreation and arts is well documented and illustrated.

A visit is recommended
David Glenday (Nelson).





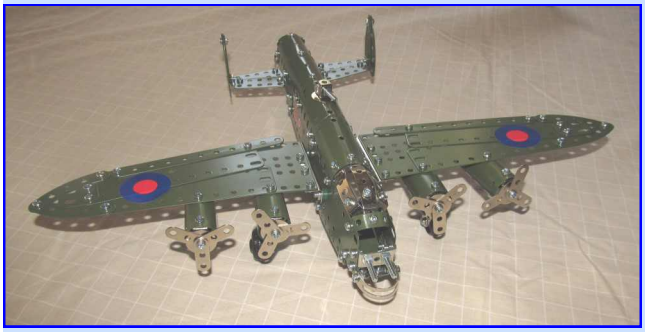
Auckland Meccano Guild Meeting

11th August 2018

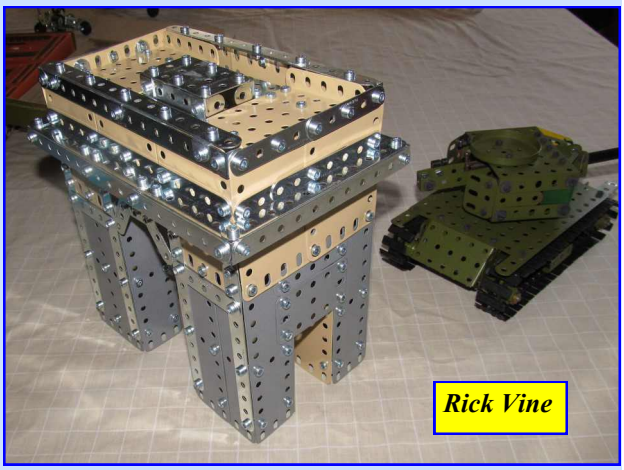
Reporter & Photos: Gary Higgins

The quarterly meeting of the Auckland Meccano Guild took place at **Neil Carey's** house in Hillsborough Auckland on August the 11th. We had a small but highly enthusiastic group and some interesting models on display.

I think that **Rick Vine** would have to take first prize both in the number of models and variety of items on display. He had built up a rather excellent Lancaster Bomber from a set put out by the Imperial War Museum in the UK. They put out a number of sets recently which appear to be part Meccano, part metric spacing and well painted to match the models. So far they have produced the Lancaster, a Corvette, a US army Sherman Tank and a Willys Jeep, all of which look the part from a distance. The Lancaster appeared well made and was of fairly simple construction, my only criticism would be that it was a little short in fuselage length. I would certainly buy one if the price was right.



Rick had also scored a very nice Meccano Combat Multikit set, fairly complete but he needed to replace some of the plates and narrow strips which in these sets get bent at right angles from which there is no return. Meccano should have learnt their lesson from the Mechanised Army sets where the bending created many consumer complaints. Rick had built the Arc de Triumph from one of the larger model sets. This is the second model and not often seen, he had it made up for our Bastille day display at Remuera. He had built up a realistic tank from the Army construction set which looked very good, I have seen these motorized from time to time.
He had a micro model of a moon buggy and a set with tiny holes and screws etc. You would need a magnifying glass to put it together. It was a Micro Steel World model kit and looked the part from the illustration but I find Meccano screw and nuts quite small enough thanks very much.

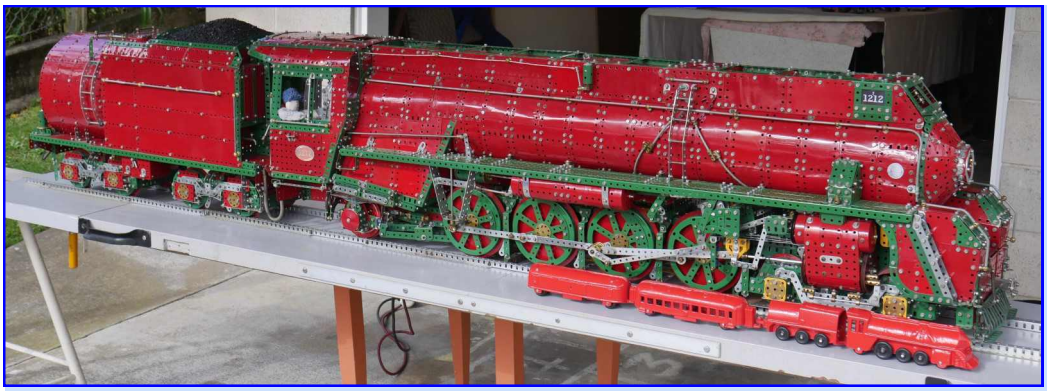


Rick Vine

David Wall, a long time motorcycle enthusiast, had built his own Ducati Monster and looked prepared to take on all comers on the race track. One of the nicer bike models to come out of the plasticano stables recently, a new one is on the way, with a wrap around cowling, watch out David!

Gary Higgins had built up the new kit of the Boeing F/A-18 Super Hornet, a very nice model in blue and yellow but like many of the new models most of the parts were plastic. It looks the part and as an attractive model may sell better than the old style Meccano. The ends of the wings are adjustable via a hinged section. Gary also had built up a second model from the Roadster cabriolet set, this is a great little set for the price and builds 5 unique little models. It has a pull back motor so will be a hit with the youngsters.

Gary Higgin's Super Hornet



tion yet it would pay to get moving.

The meeting closed as usual with afternoon tea hosted by the ladies, another excellent afternoon of Meccano collaboration.

Neil Carey had his immense NZR J Class locomotive on display (above), Just as well he does not have to move it about much. I can feel a hernia coming on just looking at it. A real work of art and I understand it is going down to the Convention in 2019 so we will see more of it. Neil also had a model train built by the company *Fun Ho*! whose sand cast toys were a first in New Zealand. Those lucky enough to attend the Convention will be able to visit the museum at Inglewood to see more of our heritage.

William Irwin had brought along a selection of *Stokeys* modelling systems sets and advertising materials. A very interesting collection and very popular in its day. He also had a selection of overseas club magazines.

Anthony Caldwell had put together a fork-hoist which was very well modelled, from a modern set I think. He now has a bigger selection of parts and we can expect to see some Henryesque type models from him in the future.

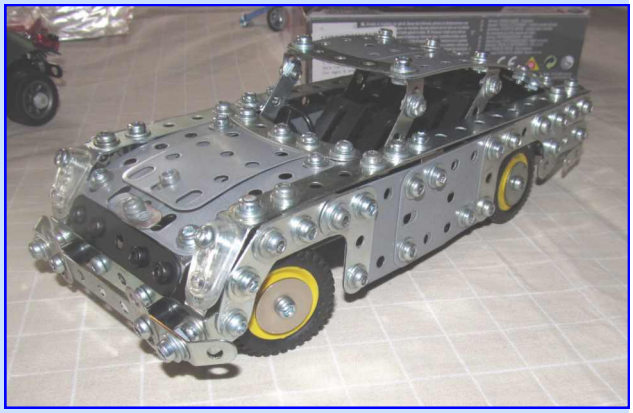
Les Megget had made up a very nicely crafted Aston Martin from one of Bernard Perier's models, Les no doubt added a few bits here and there. He also had made up one of the new small car sets described as a race car 16208.

Henry Porter is in the process to creating a rather unusual locomotive, described as the Fontaine Locomotive from the Canadian Southern Railway built in 1881, It had a reported speed of 90 MPH, I'm sure Henry would be most pleased if he could get his model to go that fast!

Graeme Mills was also present and thinking about building again which is excellent. Just take over the lounge Graeme, Meccano wives are very understanding.

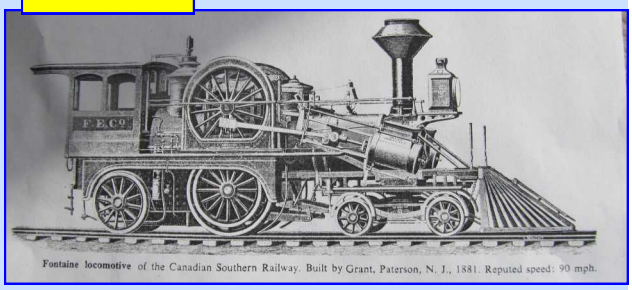
A number of volunteers came forward for the Bastille Day display held in the Remuera Library, which was a great success and thank to all those who helped out, It all went very smoooothly.

There were many discussions about the Convention next year so if you have not booked accommoda-



Les' mini Aston Martin DB5

Henry Porter



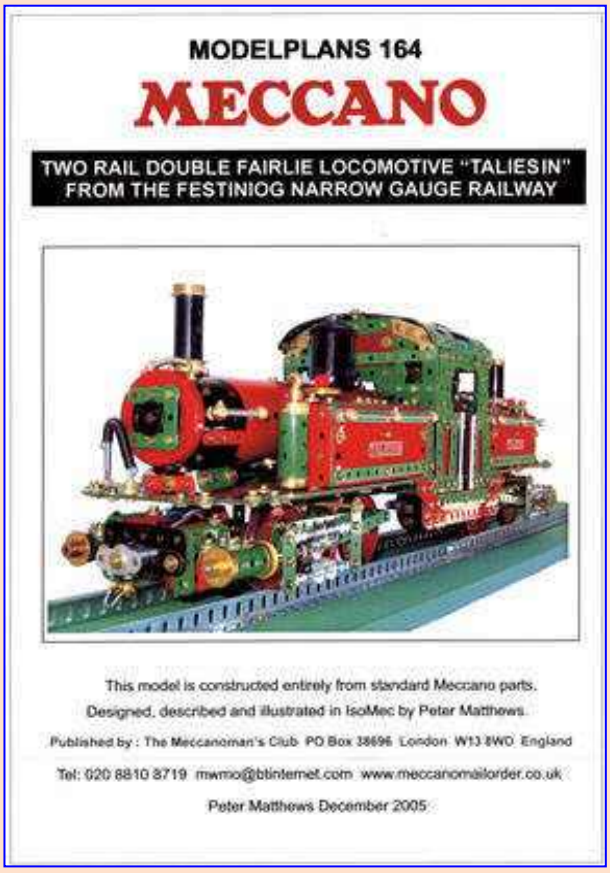
Fontaine locomotive of the Canadian Southern Railway. Built by Grant, Paterson, N. J., 1881. Reputed speed: 90 mph.

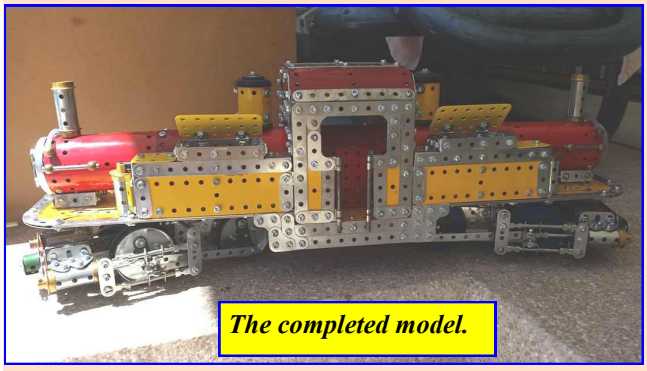
Tony Caldwell

Double Fairlie Locomotive "Taliesin"

by Graeme O'Neill (CMC)

Two rail Double Fairlie locomotive from the Ffestiniog Narrow Gauge railway. This model is constructed from standard Meccano parts and described and illustrated in IsoMec.

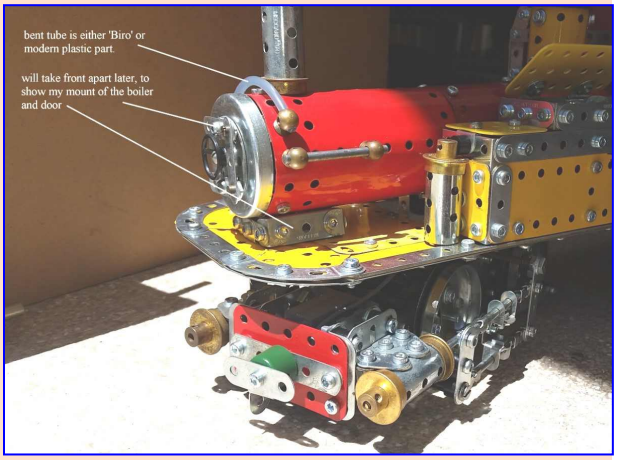




The completed model.

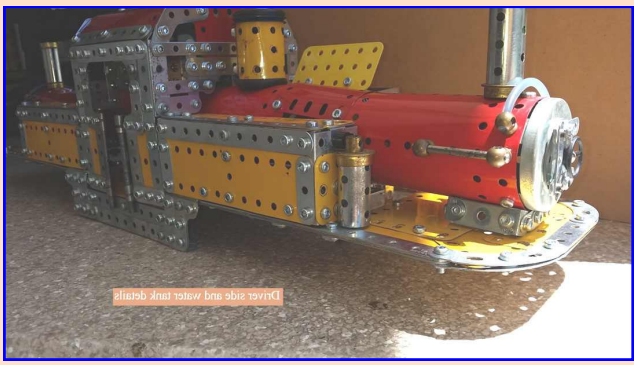
The brainchild of Robert F. Fairlie (1831-85), the double Fairlie - really two engines back-to-back - was an answer to the problem of getting more power onto Ffestiniog's narrow rails. The rebuilt "Taliesin" is still in service today.

My mods to the Fairlie Narrow Gauge Locomotive follow:



Looking at the boiler end.

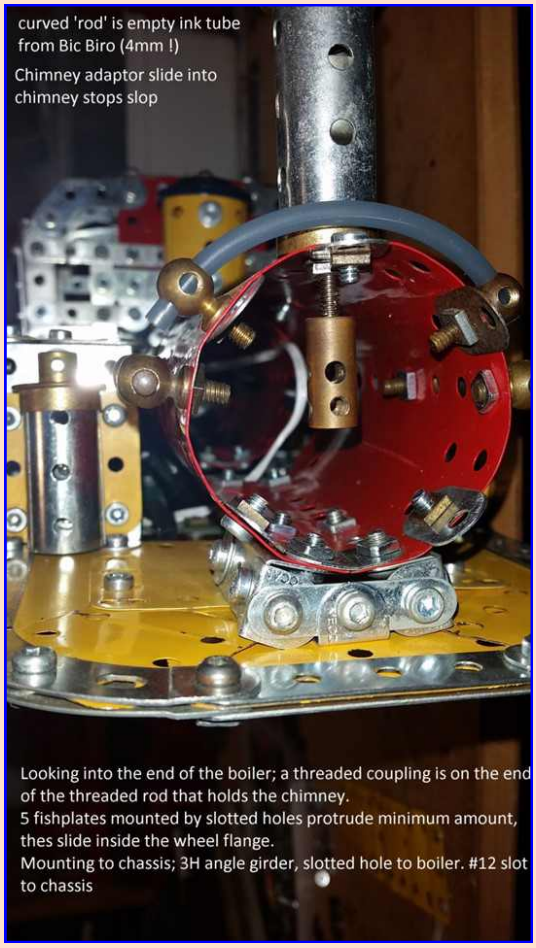
Summary of build of this section; the sandbins are bolted onto tanks via centre and lower hole – spaced by two washers. Flanged wheel on top via long bolt and small spacer into boss, bolted to end of tank.

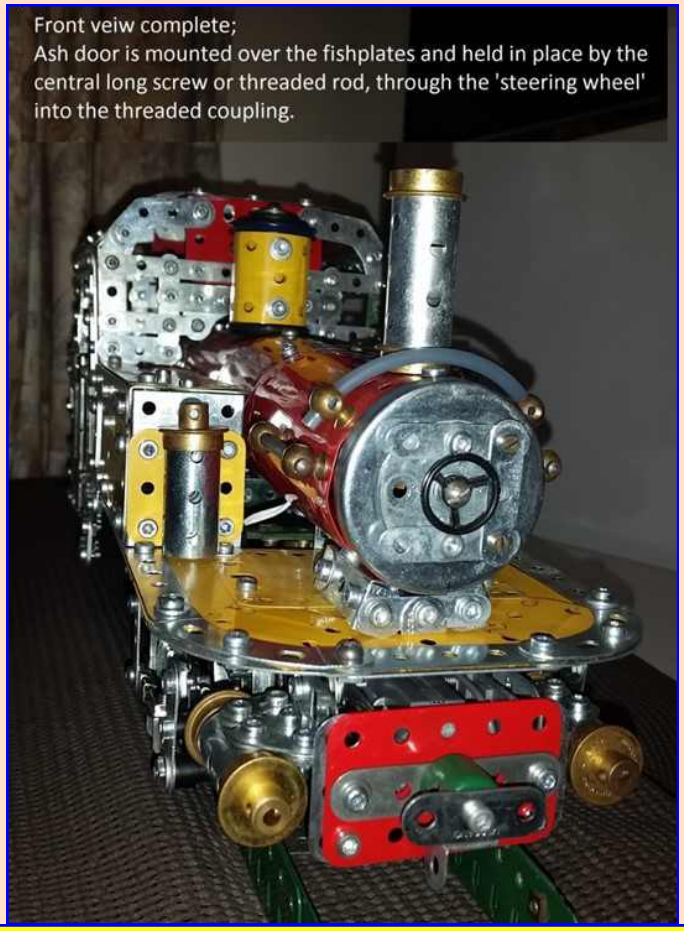


Chassis without the bogies (above and below).

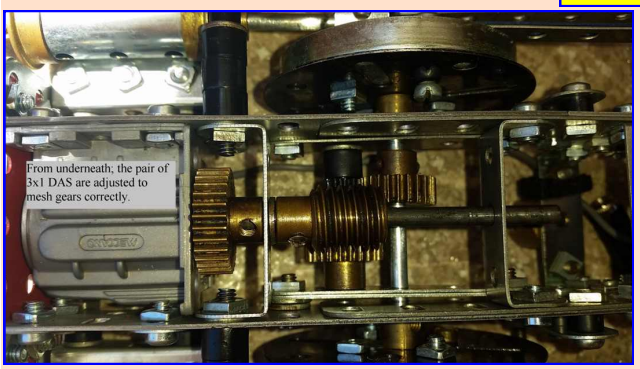
Tanks left at 11-hole long and mounted onto round holes of 9-hole angle girder that is bolted to chassis edge – slotted holes used to align to driver's cab. Tank also connected to cab with #133A corner bracket, and to inside corner behind sand bin by #12 to chassis.

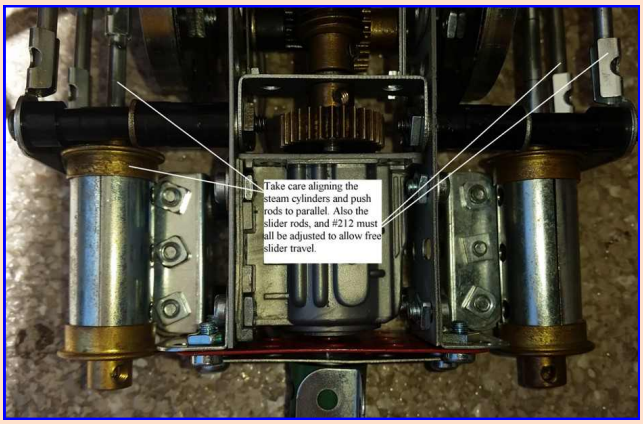
Front boiler support is mounted prior to fire/ash door being fitted. A curved #10 is bolted inside boiler front row holes, with the same bolts through the slotted holes of the 3-hole girders. A #12 is behind front 3-hole NS strip, this being first attached to strip and then bolted to chassis. The rear edge of the leading boiler cylinder is bridged by another #10,this is firstly fitted lose on the outside, and then a narrow reversed angle bracket, (that is bolted to the chassis) is captured. The #10 is then tightened. See photo at end of document.

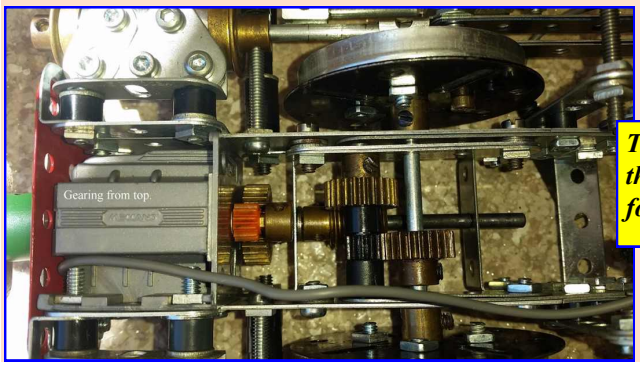




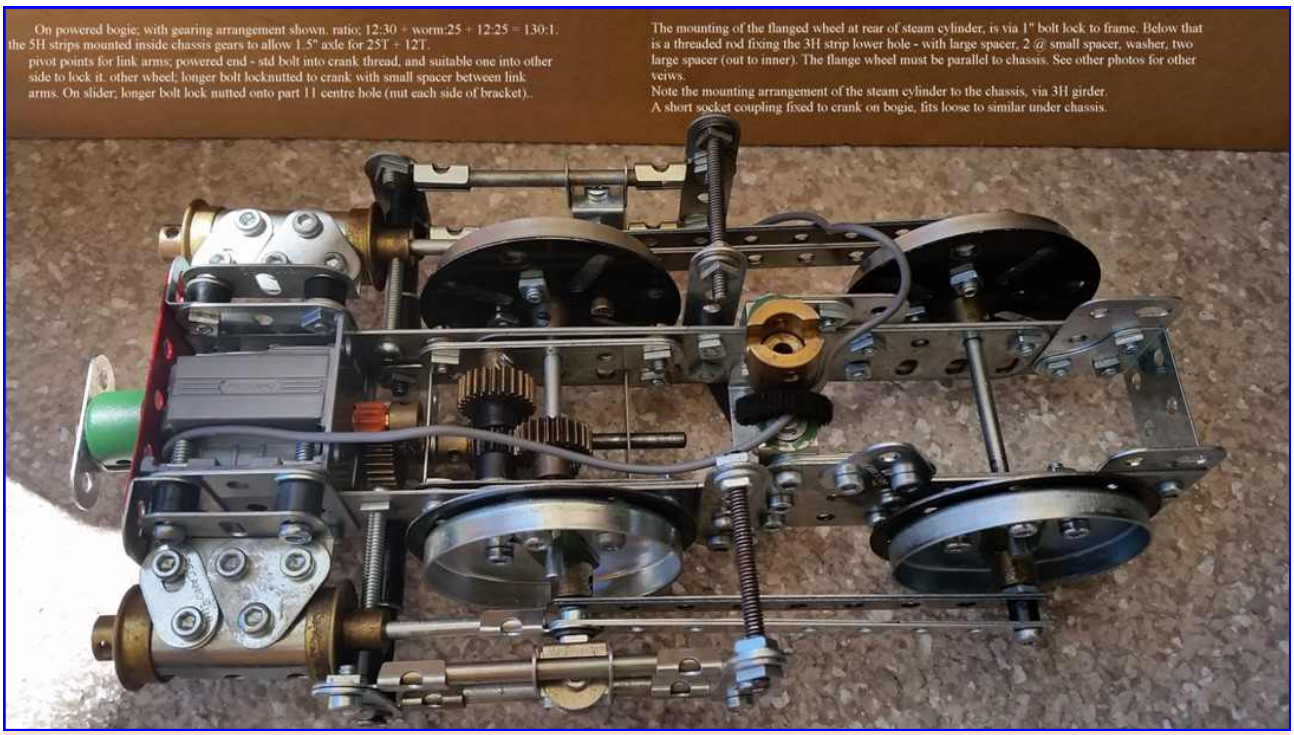
Details of the mounting arrangement for the front of the boiler.



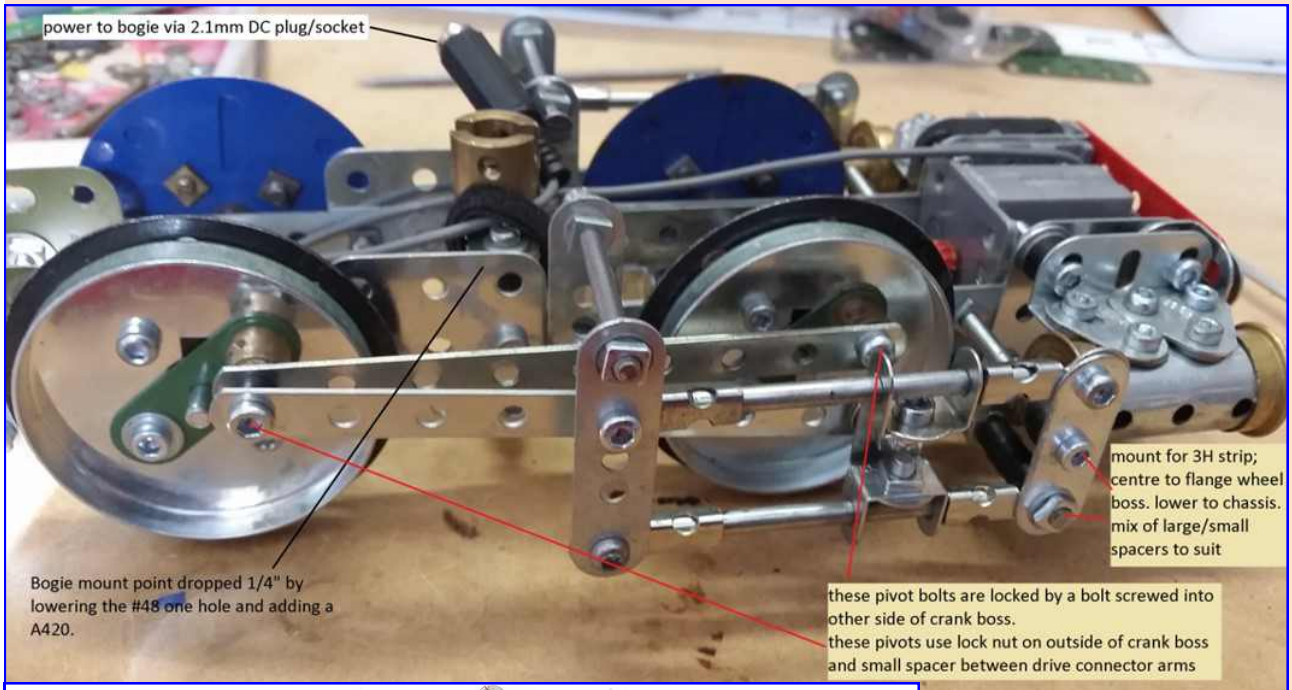


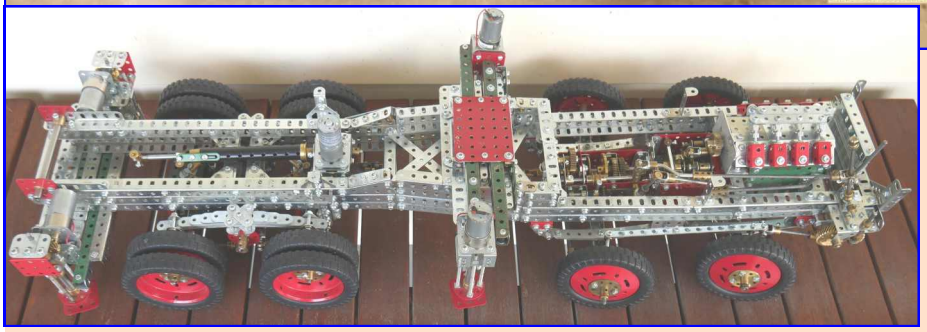


The DAS holding the worm shaft is adjusted to mesh the motor connection and the worm connection. See following text re selection of gears for this task.

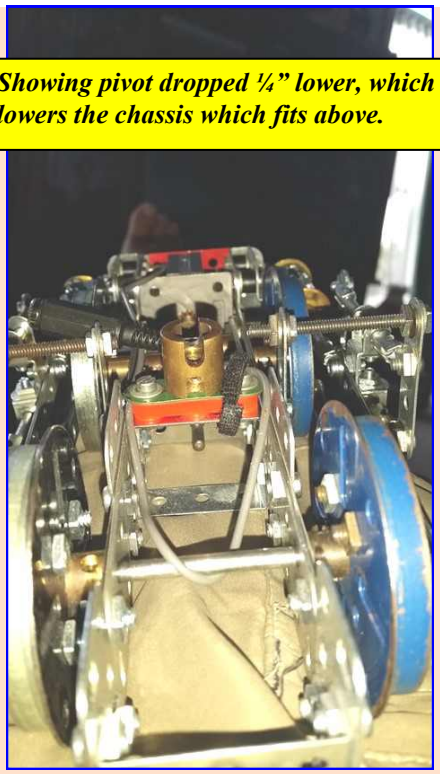


Note; the pivot bearing has now being lowered ¼" . See following photos; the #48 dropped one hole, and a #A420 mounted between the #62b and the #48. Other arrangements would be needed if short boss couplings not available. Of course a short axle could be used to same effect, but not quite as strong. Note the narrow strips of double sided Velcro strap used to hold motor wire.

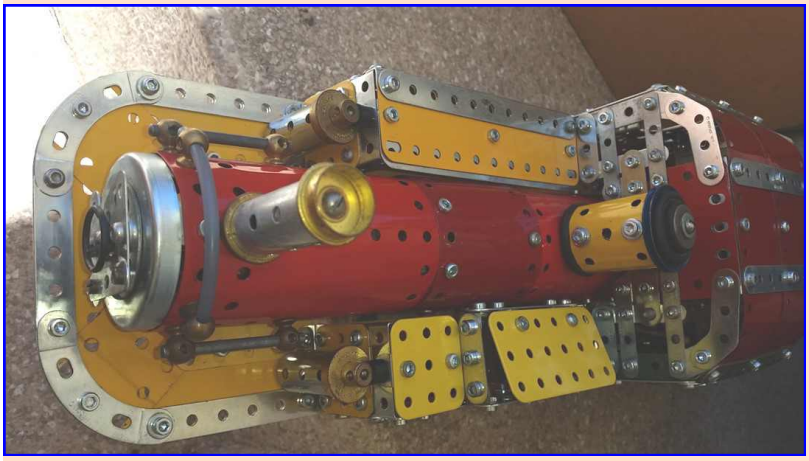




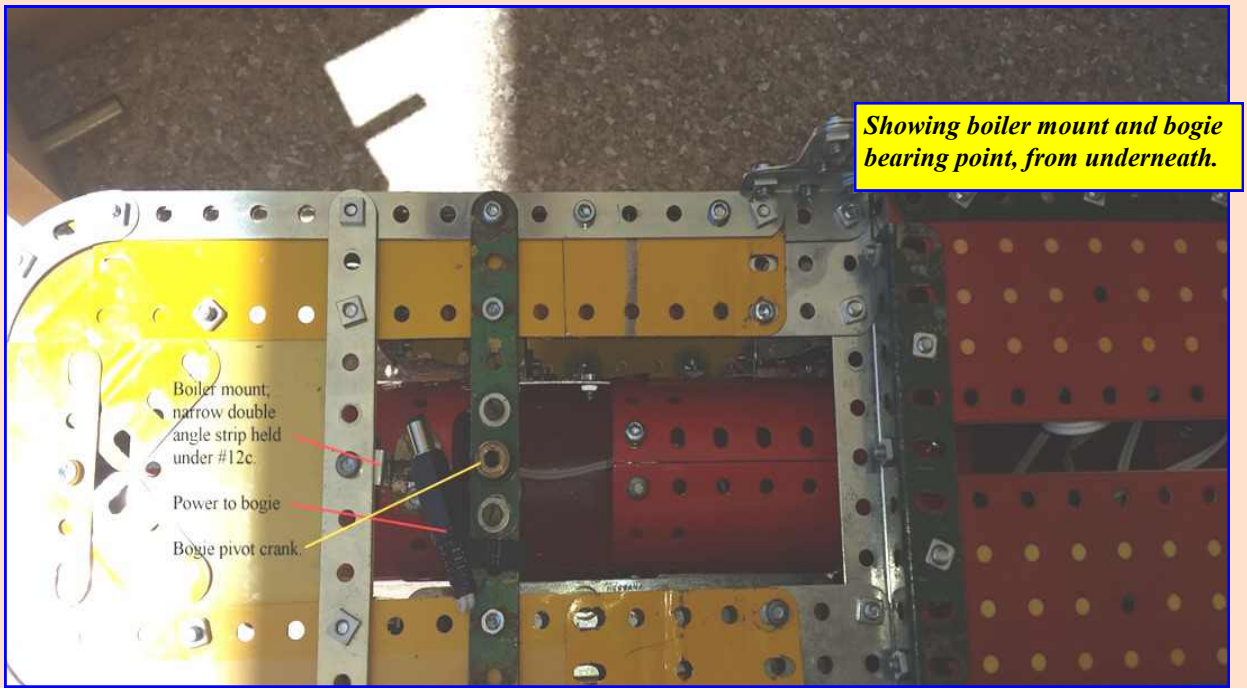
My intension was to write about this Mercedes Actros chassis in this magazine (will support the knuckle crane seen in the August mag). However after a plea for articles several arrived thus pushing the write up into a later issue. Thanks all.



Showing pivot dropped ¼" lower, which lowers the chassis which fits above.



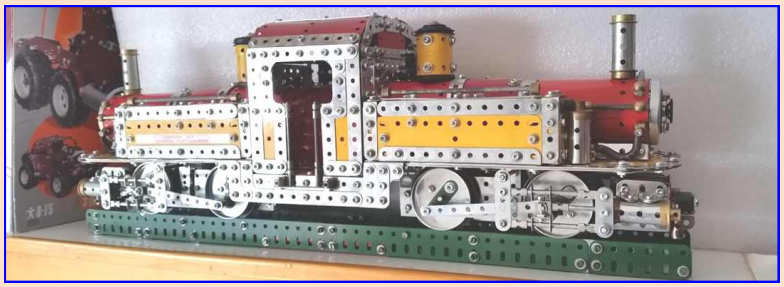
Inside one coalbin is another 2.1mm DC connection with connection to both bogies. This is connected to fly-lead and manually reversible supply. At this stage the loco will only run on request, rather than just going back and forth…



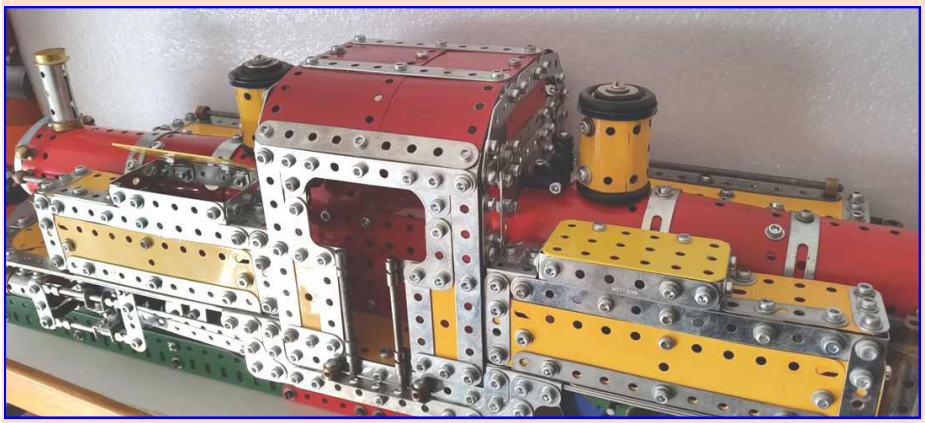
Showing boiler mount and bogie bearing point, from underneath.

After a visit to the Leeds Railway Museum in June, gleaning more info from a real loco, I added a steam whistle and also lengthened the tanks (to the same as in the model plans).

The dome was moved one hole further forward to make room. Also cleaned up the strip layout on the cab front just by the whistle.



While I had the tanks off, I removed the surplus (unseen) 3-hole wide flexible plates that were under them. This allowed access to the refastening again at the end. I redid the assembly that makes up the step below the cab. Note the use of two layers of the newer A367 brackets on each end, for a tidy, strong connection between ends that doesn't flex.



My colour choice was really because of what I had available, would have liked to have replaced the yellow with red – may do some time as these become available soon.

Graeme.oneill@snap.net.nz

Gazza's EBay Column by Garry Higgins

Hi all and welcome once again to my EBay write up.

It appears that EBay have changed the format once again because I cannot locate the number codes for the items on my selection screens either in the selected items mode or the full mode so I will be leaving them out in future. I have, however included the postage rates, where given, as these will be applicable to New Zealand buyers.

I should also point out that once auctions are run , a click on the completed auction picture will no longer link to the item in question, instead a new item will be shown so not much help there either.
All amounts are in $NZ unless specified.

Anyway to get down to what is currently on offer:
A TinTin 4x4 Jeep in rich red Selling at $ 39.33 with 9 bids plus $40.57Postage.

A Meccano two seater sports car No.1 Constructor car, getting rarer now and the price reflects this 1936 vintage plus parts boxes $1,334.55 , $30.33 postage.

A vintage 1926 accessory outfit 2A at $39.54 quite good value at this price, $53.39 postage.

How about a Meccano Powerdrive set in original box with manual 10 bids at $33.02 plus $48.11 Postage.

An Army Multikit with box and instructions from 1970 with 4 bids selling at $16.81 is good value at this price with $47.87 postage. Yes, the postage kills it for a lot of NZ buyers, as it is usually more than the item's value. Here is a more modern set, a Master Connection set 0030 original and unused in box selling for $39.46 plus $38.06 postage.

A *Merkur* army set looks to make up some realistic military models is of Czech origin, a new set selling for $150.14 with $43.98 postage.

An *EPA Toy* construction set No. 7, similar to Meccano and made in Greece, new, circa 1970 and selling for $356.07 plus $55.39 postage.

A couple of models similar to those sold at the British Museum, a *Demand 1261* Land Rover pickup all metal construction set selling at $49.43 plus $17.11 postage.

Another *Demand* set this time a Spitfire Supermarine all metal construction kit selling at $49.43 plus $17.11 postage.

If you want a Meccano Crane building set, complete with motor from 1976 and in original box this will set you back $98.89 plus $33.15 postage.

And here is one hopeful seller with a red / green 1945 set is well worn and obviously restrung condition selling for $4,510.21 with FREE SHIPPING, don't all rush at once.

5 English Pocket Meccano sets plus a plastic construction set selling for $75.81 plus $28.81 postage.

Here is a real collector's item, a Hornby prewar tinplate Racing Speedboat available for $435.18.

If you have not got the "Meccano System" book by Bert Love and Jim Gamble yet and let's face it you deserve this book, you can grab your own copy for $69.24 which is a good price plus $32.76 postage.

A Tinplate Meccano Aeroplane 1930s biplane set 0 is available for $902.34 plus $84.62 postage. These are also getting hard to get in good condition and at the right price.

A Meccano Aeroplane Constructor set No. 2 in original box and declared as in mint condition is going for $2,001.36 with postage of $102.77, again probably a realistic price for a set in the above condition.

An original copy of the Meccano Mechanisms instructions, cover is a little beaten up, can be yours for $14.74 with $11.56 postage. There are plenty of excellent photocopies available but if you must have an original then go for it.

Next up is a rarer item, an original Meccano 3x set from the USA, the X denotes that the set comes with an electric motor. Selling for $151.65.

A Meccano 843710 Flexible models set, including a motorbike, in original packaging is selling for $54.38 plus $32.56 postage.

A Meccano set No. 6 in original wooden case is selling for $453.37 which appears to be a good price for this set. The set appears to be a mix of Meccano and *Erector,* postage at $126.86.

Something for the REAL collectors among you, an original Meccano saw bench from the 1920s, no health and safety in those days. I wonder how many children cut their fingers on these things. This is selling for $749.72, which considering its rarity is a good price. Postage of $49.30.

A Meccano Erector set No. 9009 Action Troopers, not a lot of these about, described as new, selling for $150.14 plus $53.08 postage.

Now here is one we have all been watching for a few years, I am always amused by the comment LAST ONE, were there ever more than one and has he sold any at this price. Good luck selling this.

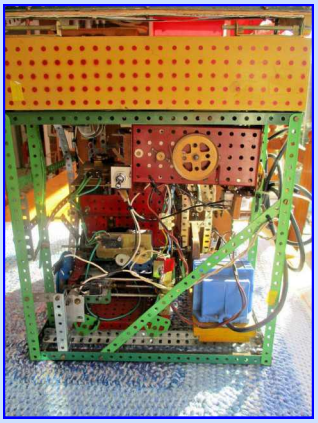
Described as a Meccano No. 8 set still originally strung, dated November 1950 and in great condition, this is a museum piece. You would not buy this set to use it. Selling at $17,208.03 plus $395.63 postage. (*Ed. Another Dreamer!*) How many 10 sets could you buy for the price of this?

Here is something unique that needs a lot of TLC, a large Meccano Cuckoo clock for restoration, Looks to be complex with many parts and electronics. Selling at $385.74 plus $72.62 postage.

A Meccano shop display early sign "Meccano the toy that grows with the boy" a simple sign selling for $197.80 plus $30.05 postage.

Here is something we all could use, In fact I bought a set and they are very useful. A Meccano sized tap, die, drill and reamer set with holder selling for $59.34 plus $32.64 postage.

How about an electric fan and motor outfit, not Meccano but one of those 1930s build it yourself sets, looks intact in box



and selling for $197.82 plus 50.90 postage.

Finally something to smooth rough seas, a bottle of Meccan Oil. I don't know how much oil is left but an expensive bottle; I have one just like it no oil in it YET! This one is selling for $247.27 and $128.58 postage; wow postage on small items is getting really prohibitive these days.

This is time to say goodbye to our editor Les Megget, who I am sure you will all agree has done a sterling job bedding down the magazine. Les will now have plenty of time to write many excellent articles for the new editor. ;-)

Visit to Meccano Lab, Calais.

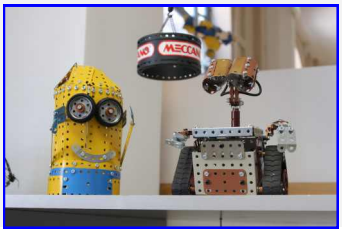
by Roland Jaspers (CMC)

Even though the major Meccano presence has diminished in Calais, a remnant remains. The Calais city council have preserved some of the Meccano history in the "Meccano Lab", situated in the old, ornate "Credit Lyonnais" building in one of the main thoroughfares. It is of modest size, yet caters to many aspects of the Meccano hobby. The Lab, including staff salaries, is fully funded by the Calais City Council and is open part-time.

For our last trip to Europe we had planned an extra day in Calais, while waiting for the ferry crossing to Dover, specifically to enable me to visit the Meccano Lab. And so it was that I spent a couple of pleasant hours on the afternoon of Sunday 1 July this year in the Meccano Lab, being shown the models and facilities by Gregoire, the manager.

It has one display case with original boxes of pre-war Meccano, but the emphasis of the whole enterprise is on the later-era Meccano. The photographs will bear this out. The smaller models are mainly contained within perspex display cases. I would assume this to be an anti-theft measure. There are however some magnificent free-standing models. Tower Bridge is excellent and the church absolutely marvellous in its detail. We should all be familiar with the Tin Tin Moon Rocket. The great strength of the Meccano Lab does not however lie in its model display. What makes the Lab so outstanding is its very strong focus on modelling. The lab takes all comers, of all ages and gives them access to enormous quantities of plastic and metal Meccano. I was blown away by the quantity available and its excellent arrangement round the modelling tables. The Lab caters to large numbers of school groups from around the district, with some classes making multiple visits. The models made can of course not be taken away, but outstanding models are put on display for a period of time. Gregoire emphasised that interest in the construction part of the Lab is still very lively.

I have added a few photographs taken during my visit. There is also a large range of images available on the Net by simply typing "meccano lab Calais" in the Google search line. My thanks go to Gregoire for giving freely of his time and putting up with my halting French. A coincidence Gregoire mentioned to me that the Lab was visited by a N.Z. Meccano enthusiast the preceding Saturday. It is a small world indeed.



Editorial note: It seems that Meccano Calais is still producing metal and plastic parts and some small sets.

Meeting Report 1st September 2018

Our fourth meeting was again held in **Brian Hickson's** garage/ workshop at Putaruru. Ten modellers, including two from Tauranga attended and there was one apology. A special attraction for this meeting was a 2-hour visit to the Putaruru NZ Timber Museum which proved to be very interesting and provided inspiration for future models. Our guide, Bob showed us through the buildings and described the logging history of the local area. We saw some good exhibits on display under cover but there was also much of interest outside, awaiting restoration by the volunteers. Exhibits included bush lokeys, diesel shunters, Caterpillar tractor units, a GMC logging truck, an extensive range of chainsaws, a replica bushman's cook-house and the sawmill itself.

Following our museum visit we met up at Brian's place down the road. First up we had afternoon tea and then some discussion followed, mostly about the 2019 Convention and the Waikato-Tauranga Christmas BBQ. **Graeme Wrightson** then presented the interim constitution (operating framework) for the Club. The Annual subscription was set and the first AGM was scheduled for September 2019. We then started the Model Tour.

The club challenge was to build a Centenary 00+ Set model powered by a clockwork motor and this month there were eight entries presented by five modellers. Windmills were popular: **Mike Walmsley, Graeme Wrightson and Clive Nichols** each showed one and Graeme also showed a farm-style Windmill pump. **Brian Hickson** showed two models: a 3-wheel cart and a Rocking horse. **Clive Nichols** won the published model prize with his acrobat and **John Rickit** won the free-lance model prize with his drill-press. Winning models were chosen by the members and Mars Bars duly awarded.

A number of other models were also shown. **Dave Shand** had a large model of a Garratt locomotive and Brian produced a small trolley, a small mobile derrick crane and another powerful tractor. Clive had a small saw-bench and a nice Marklin Metal set; **Graham Stuart** presented three miniature aeroplanes: a biplane , a WW11 bomber and an excellent fighter jet.

Mike Walmsley brought along his two seven-year old grandsons, **Hamish and Thomas** who are becoming very enthusiastic and keen Meccano modellers under Mike's encouragement. Hamish had built the new Meccano Chevrolet Pick-up truck and Thomas had built a Meccano Quad-bike. These were well-built, mostly their own work and proudly presented. We were privileged to welcome them along. They are now building further models for the next meeting !!

The meeting concluded about 4:40. Special thanks to Brian for providing the garage space and Brian and Shirley for giving us afternoon tea.

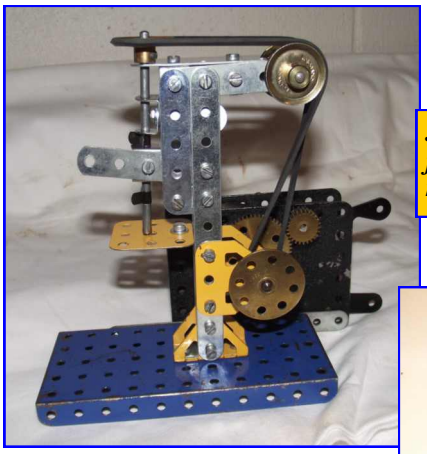
The Christmas BBQ will be held at **Barry Babbage's** place in Tauranga on Saturday 24th November.

Graeme Wrightson (convener)

There are more photos on the back cover, p28.

David Shand

Graham Stuart



John Rickit's free-lance winning drill press.

Clive Nichols' winning acrobat.

From the NZFMM Magazine Archives part 9

by Peter Hancock (MWT)

Continuation of Volume 4, 'SPECIAL ISSUE' December 3rd, 1979.
Editor Don Blakeborough released this unnumbered edition of the magazine to bring the sad news printed in the Wellington daily paper the "DOMINION" titled **Toy factory closes** on Monday 3rd December advising that nearly 1000 people had been made redundant at the Liverpool factory where Meccano had been made since 1906 and Dinky toys since 1932. Don reported that TV News channel 2 had made an announcement at about 9.50pm the previous Sunday evening reporting the closure of the Meccano Factory. Don advised that he had tried to contact Michael J. Walker, Editor of the Meccano Magazine by telephone but was unable to raise him so, no news from him at present.
Don posed the question: "Do we keep on going? I think with out doubt. 'yes'. What is your opinion?
Additional News: Apparently the TV news had reported that the Employees of Meccano Ltd are trying to take over the Factory and hoped that they would be able to continue production! However, from information received there is not much chance of this happening as it is almost standard procedure in England for a company in this situation to be closed down.
What of the MM [Meccano Magazine]? Here again no news on this topic has been received, but I do not think that it will be continued as the Meccano Factory have been giving a large subsidy to the production of the magazine over recent years.
What of the N.Z.F.M.M. Magazine? I hope that it will continue and that more copies will be sold overseas. For this, your support is required in both subscriptions and articles to publish.

Parts from France and Argentine? With parts being made in France and Argentine I see no reason that the Clubs cannot keep going, getting their supplies from a different source.

Replica parts: If the Meccano Factory is indeed closed as reported, then all parts are obsolete, and the genuine parts could become quite valuable in the future. Many New Zealanders have in the past made some Meccano parts. This source of supply could now become quite valuable in the future. Many other enthusiasts have made obsolete parts in many countries as well. Should you decide to make any parts for sale, please let me know and they can be advertised in the NZFMM Magazine where I am sure there will be a good market for them.

Volume 4, Number 11 – November/December 1979.
Don Blakeborough's Editorial [Excerpts]: This is the end of the first year of the N.Z. Federation of Meccano Modellers Magazine. You as the reader know to what extent you like or dislike this Magazine. However, as the Editor I have nothing but praise for the way members have responded to my appeals for material to print. Just great. Thanks to all. If I mentioned one name, then I should mention all names and that would fill a complete issue. Every letter that I have received during the past year has been full of praise for my efforts in the production of the Magazine. I have declined to mention this in earlier issues but think as this is the last edition for the year I should thank all for their words of encouragement. Thanks, they are always welcomed and appreciated.
Into the '80s: Although the costs rose during the past year, postage up 40% and printing up 60% the magazine will continue with your support. A coloured cover will start with the January issue and should have a bit more appeal. The new cover will add slightly to the costs, but it is hoped to be able to lower the annual subscriptions which will be due next April. The costs have been reduced by changing the printer and by the great response to the number of subscriptions that have taken out. Good work by those who have sent in names of possible new members. Don went on to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Article supplied by the late Lindsay Bond: 'Meccano and Electricity'. The Electrical and Electronic Sets.
Frank Hornby also endeavoured to integrate Electricity with Meccano and as early as 1920 his factory produced Electrical outfits X1 and X2. These contained a good range of parts, a 4-volt motor and accumulator. [If you have access to the "Meccano Engineer set of manuals" issue 11, you can view a picture of these early sets.] Some of these parts carried on together with the standard Meccano parts until the 1940s.
1933. – Saw the ELECTRON outfits No 1 and 2 with a larger selection of parts but, most of these parts were for separate experiments rather than a total association with the existing Meccano system.
1934. – The MECCANO LIGHTING SET was introduced for use with standard Meccano models and certain other special sets available at the time. This Set when used with standard Meccano parts added a realism to models that had hardly been seen before.
1962. - Meccano France produced a range of Electrical parts that later in 1963 were to become the well-known ELECTRIKIT.
At the same time, Meccano France were also experimenting with a range of Electronic parts that were numbered but never as far as I know added to the Meccano system master inventory list. Included were, Transistors, Condensors and Resistors, think of the possibilities if they had been introduced……!
1970. – Saw the ELECTRIKIT become obsolete as a separate set but now incorporated in the Meccano Set No4 as the 4EL Set.
1970. – The ELECTRONIC Set appeared with a small range of special parts centred around a Photo Electric or Light Sensitive Resistor Cell and a sensitive Relay associated with motor control etc.
All these parts are now obsolete and their passing leaves the Meccano hobby deeply indebt to the past and not very optimistic about the future. My personal thoughts are that Meccano Ltd will again rethink the advisability of the total withdrawal of all these valuable Electrical and Electronic parts and we may see a reintroduction of something to replace them. Here's hoping.

Correspondence: - Editor Don had received a significant number of pieces of members' inwards mail on a wide range of subjects to which he had had responded with comments/answers in this issue of the magazine.

Amongst the correspondence was a lengthy letter from MECCANO Limited relating to the International "Meccano Magazine" from Editor Michael J Walker. [This letter had been written on the 19th of October prior to the knowledge of the Binns Road Plant closure becoming known]. Michael opened his letter saying: "Many thanks again for the N.Z.F.M.M.M. which, issue after issue, maintains its high standard of readability and Meccano interest. I am very grateful for your supplying me on such a regular basis and hope that, in return the Meccano Magazine isn't too late in arriving in New Zealand."
He went on to advise "that he had pursued Don's query regarding the despatch date of the recent shipment of Meccano to arrive in New Zealand but, was informed that this question would entail much time in sifting through hundreds of despatch documents." To this he had replied that "he was sure that Don would understand the situation if he called off the search, particularly as the actual packing is not done at Binns Road but at a separate plant at Aintree. Initially he had thought it would be simply a matter of someone leafing through a book to find the despatch date, but alas the situation is far more complex than that it would seem!" [Perhaps this was an indicator of the problems about to come?] In Michael's final paragraph he states: "Professor Roger Keey, in his article mentioned that he hadn't seen the split version of the 19c 6-inch pulley. Neither had he! It seems they are not yet in production from what I can see at Binns Road.
The last time I was at Binns Road I looked in vain for any round-111c's, ⅜" bolts? – I have been admiring the models made from the space 2501 set very recently and wonder if a few of these combined could make a Battlestar Galactica or similar. I'm confident that these outfits will in time become collectors' items in a similar manner to the pre-war 'Mechanised Army' kits".

Volume 5, Issue 1 - January 1980. Start of a new decade and the Magazine has a new 'Masthead'
Don's editorial detailed his recent holiday in Dunedin where he met with several Meccano enthusiasts. Don was invited to speak about Meccano on the local Radio station 4ZB during their regular Saturday 'Buy/Sell/Swap' programme. He advertised for Meccano and spoke about the possibility of setting up a local Meccano Club in Dunedin. Apparently, his appeal for people to start a local Meccano club was widely heard but not acted on. (*Ed. Currently NO members in Dunedin!)*
Most of the correspondence received by Don and copied into this magazine related to issues of the closure of the Binns Road Factory. Several letters were received from Editor Michael J Walker of 'Meccano Limited', the 'Southern California Meccano Club', 'The Transvaal Meccano Guild', the 'Society of Advanced Meccano Constructors', 'Models (NZ Ltd)'.

General items:
'MECCANO OR NOT MECCANO?' With the upcoming Convention on the horizon, much discussion had taken place on this topic and it had been generally agreed that models should contain about 95% Meccano. That Meccano do not produce a suitable wheel for a reasonably sized model. Genuine nuts and bolts were discussed and because of their high price others could be used.
'FEDERATION TROPHY?' Don had received a suggestion that Meccano Clubs in New Zealand compete for a Cup or Trophy. This is a good idea but, how could the Clubs be judged? Don asked that if any one had suggestions on this idea to let him know.
'STRAIGHTENING MECCANO PLATES': Tom Pittams suggests that the best method he has come up with is to pound them on a flat block of wood with a hardwood 'Steak Tenderiser'??
'TIP OF THE MONTH': From John Trevor. 'How to demagnetise screwdrivers etc. Use an ELECTRIKIT Coil and connect to a low voltage AC current. Place the screwdriver right inside the coil and then withdraw it. The AC Current should disperse any magnetism, leaving the screwdriver without any magnetism.'

Article supplied by the late Lindsay Bond: 'Meccano and Electricity'. <u>The Practical use of Electricity with Meccano.</u>
Historically we can learn a great deal from the past, because many of the ideas that Frank Hornby introduced have become basic principles for Meccano men of today to use and enjoy.
The Principles are:

a) Electricity or Electrical Energy converted to Mechanical Energy. i.e. the Electric Motor. The Electric solenoid operating a mechanical linkage. 1916 to the present day.
b) Electrical Energy converted to illumination or Light Energy. i.e. The Electric Lamp and model illumination. 1920 to present day.
c) Electrical Energy converted to Electro-mechanical Energy. The sensitive Relay of the Electronic set, etc.
d) Electrical Energy converted to Heat Energy. i.e. The Iron or Resistance wire of the 1920-40s made into resistance coils and added to the motor circuits specially to control the current to the motor and also act as a speed control.
e) Light Energy converted to Mechanical Energy via Chemical changes in a Light sensitive substance. i.e. The Photo or Light sensitive Resistor of the Electronic Set.
f) Chemical Energy converted to Electrical Energy. i.e. The Meccano Accumulator and modern cells.

<u>The Electrical Energy Sources.</u> 1920s. The first Meccano Electrical sets contained a 4 volt Lead -acid storage battery. Once charged with electricity, the Accumulator supplied this energy as and when required. The weight to energy ratio of the Lead cell has never made them a firm favourite with modellers and the acid content never thrilled parents or wives and had a favourite habit of dissolving cloths, a very nasty side-effect. 1930s. The Electron sets contained a wet (very wet) Bi-chromate cell again using dilute acid which required chemical recharging with messy chemicals and with other problems such as fumes, gas etc. The one I made, my mother refused to have in the house. Of not much use to modellers, one can be sure.
1970s. The Electronic and Electronic set period saw a battery box incorporated, suitable for the common torch battery and at todays prices these can prove to be quite expensive.
Powering the lamp in the electronic set can be a very expensive proposition as the current draw by the lamp soon drains the recommended sized NZ cells. This set seemed to be to be complicated for the average model builder, and it appears never to have been very popular.

The Electric Mains voltage was used from early times to drive the many and varied Meccano Motors that the Company produced, but these have already been well covered in previous articles.
TODAY in the propulsion and motivation of our models we have the following choices. We may choose to use:

a) The expensive exhaustible dry cells (torch batteries).
b) The very expensive portable Secondary Cells, more about these later.
c) The Transformer, dropping the NZ voltage from 230-240 volts AC to 20 – 15 – 12 – 6 volts AC (Alternating Current)
d) The transformer as above but incorporating an electrical method of changing the low voltage AC to low voltage DC (Direct Current). Also incorporated would be some system to smooth out the ripple on the DC current due to the rectification.
e) The motor-Generator 230v AC motor mechanically coupled to a small 12 volt or 6 volt generator. An eye-catching combination especially associated with a large remotely controlled model. [Series to be continued].

Volume 5, Issue 2 - February 1980.
Don's editorial covered off his participation in a recent week long camping experience 130 girls and boys aged 11 to 13 years. He appeared to have enjoyed himself and learned a lot about team work.

Correspondence: Don had received mail from the UK, in the main relating to Binns Road, a letter from Jacques Rossouw of the Transvaal Meccano Guild [with a copy of their local Magazine] and more information relating to Binns Road. A number of chatty letters from local members were included in the magazine and covered off a number of member queries.

CLUB REPORTS:
Auckland: President David Wall reported that the first meeting of the year had been held on Wednesday 13 February at his home with a good turn out of members and models. He said that the hot topic of conversation had been what was happening with Meccano at Binns Road. David's call is that the Meccano production will be moved to France to their Factory. Currently Auckland members are purchasing parts from M.W Models who have indicated that they will work to provide stock to NZ.
The Auckland Meccano Association have advised the Christchurch Meccano Club that due to recent increases in travel costs that they will not be represented at the upcoming 1980 Convention.
Christchurch: President Graeme O'Neil reported that attendance at their last meeting had been light with no Juniors attending.
The planned 'LYTTELTON DISPLAY' had been cancelled due to the lack of suitable accommodation and security. The Club had participated at 'THE VINTAGE COUNTRY FAIR'. This event had been excellent, and their display could only be described as a "boomer".

'EASTER CONVENTION 1980'.

President Graeme reminded members who are planning to attend the Convention who have not yet registered, that they should do so as soon as possible.
Wellington: Lloyd Spackman reported on their club meeting held on March the 7th. There were two-star attractions at this meeting, as well as a number of smaller, interesting models. One star was Simons Moody's large Dragline, not complete in that motors and gear box were not yet in place. Simon's design was similar to the one on the front of some of the older instruction manuals and he says he has solved the problem of moving the feet, with a strong mechanism of his own design. The other star was Laurie and David Webb's No10 Railway breakdown crane with matching truck, totalling over 4½ foot long on its rails. We should have said three stars because another attraction was Tom Robinson's ingenious wharf/river scene complete with sheds, river (blue plates), a lifting road bridge over the river, light controls and roadway. With the addition of cars and boats it would be most realistic. There was an Army Multikit truck by Don Blakeborough; a motorised Pedal car by Stephen Westmoreland (a good example of his flair for gearing); and an aircraft loading truck with concertina hoist by Jeremy Lawson. A good deal of the evening was spent in trading a variety of parts which had arrived from Bunkers and some left from last year's Australian order as well as a lot of private buying and selling. The closure of The Meccano Factory was a topic of discussion.

Volume 5, Issue 3 - March 1980.
This issue's Editorial was directed to further letters, newspaper cuttings and speculation regarding the future of Meccano Limited. The correspondence contained letters from both local members and overseas associates which contained individual chatty matters of a general nature. The monthly Club reports did not contain any news that had not been reported previously.

Volume 5, Issue 4 – April 1980.
Editorial [excerpts]: Don wrote: 'Most of this issue will be devoted to the Christchurch Meccano Club who are celebrating their 50th Anniversary in conjunction with the second Meccanomen's Convention this Easter. Is the Christchurch Meccano Club the oldest in the world? I believe it is but stand to be corrected if information to the contrary is received. My reason for thinking so is that during the war years many of the English Meccano Clubs were forced to close down because of the lack of adults to run the clubs. Many of these clubs restarted after the war ended but were not continuously operating as has been the Christchurch Club. What a great achievement for a club of this nature.'

Don went on: 'Many North Island Federation members have sent me their regrets at being unable to attend, mostly because of the high costs involved in travel and accommodation. Some have had to stay home for other reasons including ill health, and work. Most have sent their best wishes and hope that it will be a great success. David Wall from Auckland sends his apology – he was the winner of the first Convention and is the president of the Auckland Meccano Society. He has advised that a trip to the Christchurch Convention would cost him almost $1,000.00. -One could buy a lot of Meccano with that sort of money – if any can be found.' Don went on to comment further on the Factory issues and then to discussing our local annual subscription matters.

This series of Archives will be continued in later issues.

Smarten Up Your Meccano

by Bruce Durdle

When I was given my Meccano Set No 1, back in the 1950s, I quickly discovered that it was more interesting to make models that did things, rather than ones such as the coster barrow that were quite passive. As I had no motors I had to rely on manual operation of my cranes, cable-cars, and similar projects.

During a career working with and teaching about automatic control systems and automation, I developed an interest in electronics and dabbled with the early microcomputers and microcontrollers. Later on, when looking for ideas on developing practical exercises for students and building working equipment to demonstrate principles, my early interest in Meccano came back to me. With the advances in microelectronics in the last 10 years or so, it has become possible to add quite advanced operations to Meccano projects for very little cost.

What would be the point of doing this?
I can think of a lot of reasons.

It adds another dimension to the range of things we can do with the hardware, making the results more interesting to others. From simply building static models such as the Eiffel Tower or the Empire State Building, we can move on to moving objects, and then to things that will change their actions depending on what is happening.

"Coding" is being taught at schools. However, it's often an abstract exercise seen by many as being a branch of maths. In the real world, many coding applications require a detailed knowledge of the application where the code is to be used: it's much easier to get this across if problems are practical and require an understanding of hardware as well as computers. Meccano provides an accessible and flexible way to connect computing elements and moving parts to make things happen that can be seen and are useful in some way.

It's an additional challenge for those of us who enjoy getting to grips with new areas of expertise.

The results can be fun, both for those creating the product and for those who may end up using it.

… and finally, in the words of Mallory, "because it's there".

What does "smart" mean in this context?

"Smart" is one of those words used by advertisers and publicity merchants to make their products somehow magically cool and exciting. In this context, I use it to refer to ways of making constructions react to changes in the environment or to requirements of an operator who may be some distance away. So a "smart" tractor could automatically move towards a light source and steer itself to follow a moving source. The same basic approach can be applied to a solar panel mount so they track the sun during the day and maximise output

What is involved with making Meccano or similar projects "smart"?

There are 3 or 4 additional elements required before you can have something react to the environment.

Sensors:

These detect the effects in the environment that the device will respond to.

Electronic sensors are readily available to measure a wide range of properties that could be useful for our purposes – light levels, magnetic effects, acceleration or force, temperature and humidity, distance to obstacles, orientation, are just some of the possibilities.

Sensing can also use mechanical effects – in fact, until about 30 years ago, sensing for equipment control was almost entirely mechanical and used an extraordinary range of odd effects and principles.

Actuators:

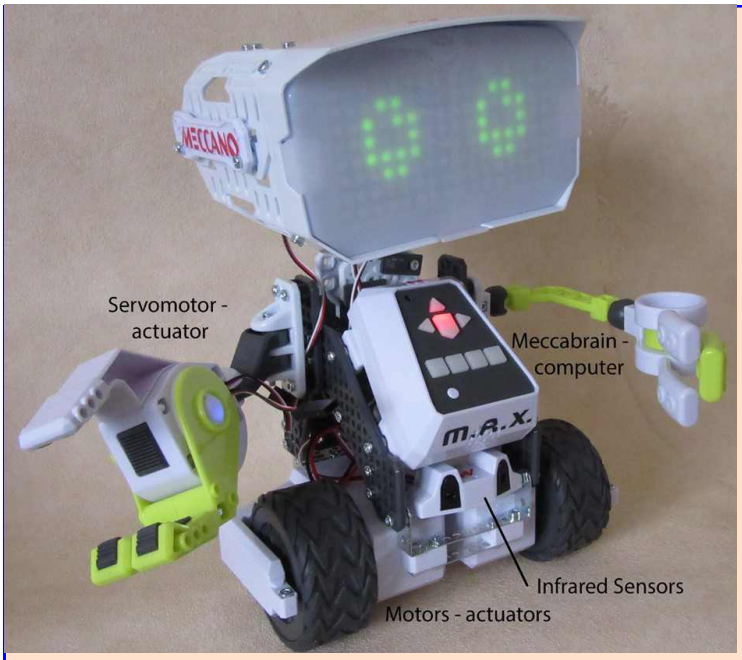
These change their behaviour in some way.

Most actuators are electrical, with several different types of electric motor (brushed DC motor, servos, and stepper motors are the most common) as well as solenoids and relays which allow use of other media such as compressed air or hydraulics.

Computing: Computing elements connect the sensors to actuators so that the overall system has the required behaviour.

There is a wide range of options for "computing" - most based on micro-electronics in one form or another, but other options are also available.

Power Source: The above elements will need to have some sort of energy source. This will usually comprise batteries of some sort, but the exact type will depend on the application.



These elements can be seen in the photo of one of the Meccano MAX "robots".

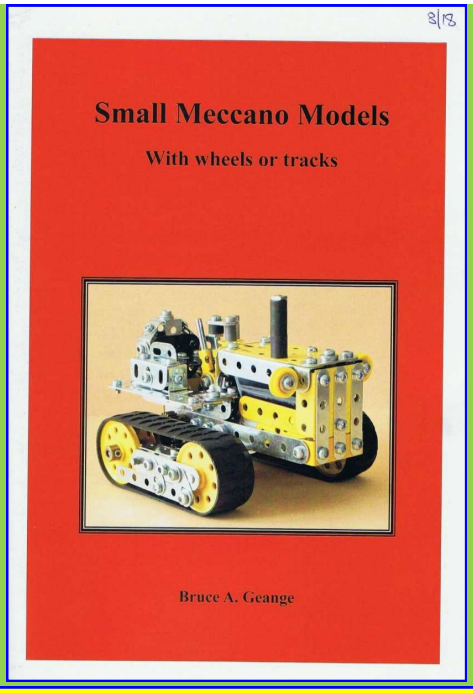
A couple of other items can also be seen – these allow some sort of interaction with the user. The "face" is an 8 x 16 LED array that displays expressions and humanizes the robot. The Meccabrain has some indicating lights and switches. While commonly found, these features are not necessary.

The MAX can also communicate with the user using speech – voice recognition is common to all the range, and speech synthesis allows the robot to speak as well. In addition, the robots can be controlled and to some extent programmed using an Android or Apple tablet.

The stock MAX is not very versatile and, if anything, talks too much. However, the components can be used in true Meccano fashion to make other assemblies. While the basic package has only one IR sensor and one active arm servomotor, there is another servo moving the head, and the standard computer can accept several more servos or other devices. In addition, the makers have made sufficient information available to allow the use of the sensors and actuators with other electronic "brains".

MAX is therefore more in the hoary old Meccano tradition of "once you've built it out of the box, mix and match with other components and let your imagination run free."

In forthcoming issues, I will be exploring the possibilities of adding intelligence to Meccano constructions. I'll cover what is readily available as sensors and different types of electric actuators, and see how these can be used in the Meccano world. It won't all involve fancy electronics, but I will discuss what is available in this line as well.



Bruce has published this 80 page booklet of 19 of his excellent smaller models with building instructions and colour images. Many have been in past NZFMM Magazines but here you have them all together. Highly recommended.
If you would like a copy contact Bruce directly $20 +p&p.

Please fill in the form which came with this Magazine and register for this Easter 2019 event.
See the programme in the August 2018 magazine.

Wellington Meccano Club

Meeting Report

Date: 7th Sept. 2018 at 7:30pm

Reporter: Max George

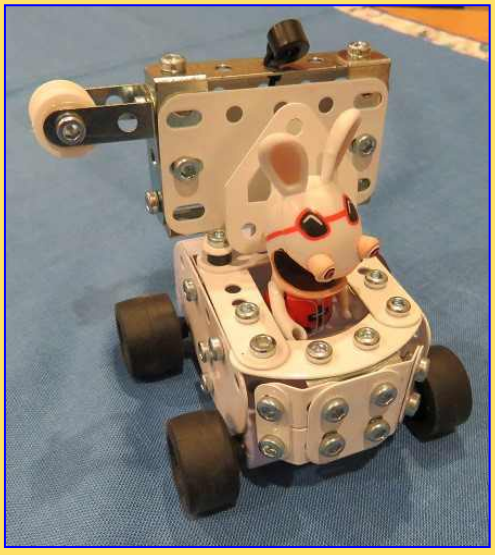
Held at **Keith McCallum's** place, Khandallah.

Present: Campbell Morrison, Keith McCallum, Max George, Ross Quayle, Stan Baker, Stephen Westmoreland and his fiancée **Kerry and Trevor Green.**

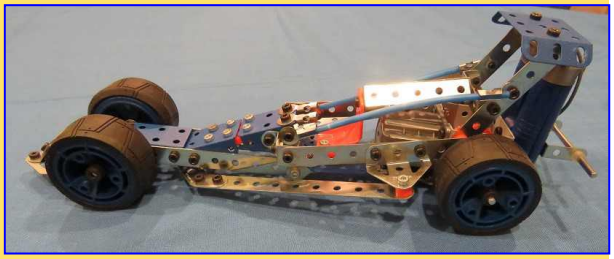
Apologies: Brian Petersen, Lou Nichols, Reg Barlow and Simon Moody.

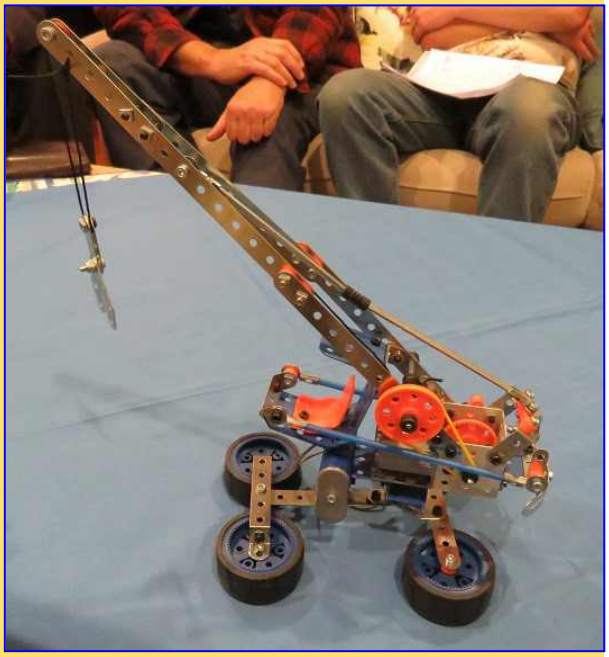
Meeting – General Business
No General Business.

Models displayed.
There was no model theme for the meeting.
Ross Quale – Is building a sailing yacht constructed out of plywood cut to a pattern. It is a bit larger than the Optimus Class yacht. To give us an indication of how it would look, Ross made a small model of it from all the flexible strip he owns. The shape was realistic for the yacht he is building.



Max George – Showed another small model from the Rabbids sets. This time the Crazy Toilet Set #5261.





Max hosts a U3A Meccano Building at his home for a couple of hours twice a month with 7 people enjoying building models of their own, or from sets Max has available. He brought along another 3 models people had built.

Both models are from the 20 model set 6250.
The other model built was the Ducati motorcycle model 16305. According to the builder, it was not easy to construct and took a long time before it looked anything like a motorbike.

MWT MEETING REPORT for 11th AUGUST 2018

Article by Robin Rye, Images by Bruce Geange

Model Challenge : The rule was to make a Heath Robinson seismograph incorporating the Meccano Hank of Cord, part No. 40.

Daryl Anderson : A multi mode earthquake detector that was a computer tablet suspended from a Meccano girder tripod.

Stuart Lindsay : Pocket size earthquake detector with no batteries.

Chris Morton : A suspended weight that scratched lines in a plate of salt as passing seismic waves made the weight move.

Robin Rye : More cord in his model than any other...the number of hanks of cord that tipped out of the dish indicated the severity of the seismic event.

Richard Feltham : GLADIS Geographically Linked and Digitally Interfaced Seismometer. A ball released by a passing earthquake triggered a dart to fall onto a revolving table.

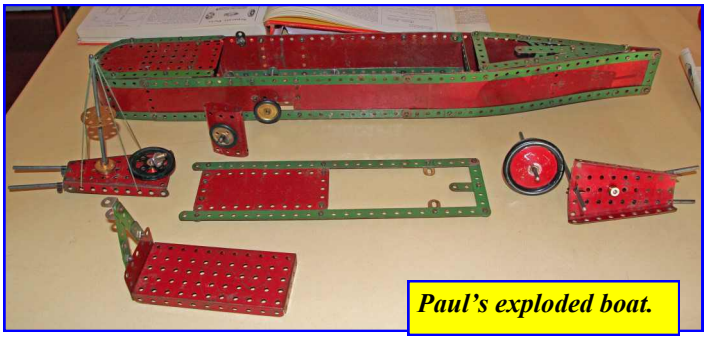
Further models.
Robin Rye : Helecopter model 13 from the 1963 set 5 instructions.

Daryl Anderson : Made a once in a lifetime historic purchase on *TradeMe* of a *Mechanics Made Easy* set E. Previously there were only 2 known to exist. News of the find is yet to reach the wider Meccano community. Daryl has almost complete provenance for the set.

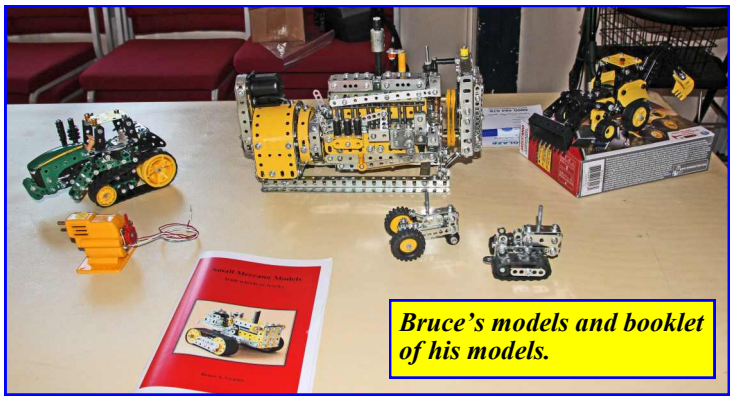
Bruce Geange : Has completed his Caterpillar D13000 Generating Set using Meccano. His current John Deere tractor set returned with improvements including a motor. The current set Backhoe Loader was also made up and on display. Bruce has produced a booklet of his many small Meccano models.

Tom Pittams : Showed a No. 5 set in its home made wooden box that he bought in New Plymouth long ago. He has left it as found. Tom's dad won the Taranaki Round The Mountain bike race in record time in 1935. A Meccano bike was made to resemble the winning bike in the photograph of his father.

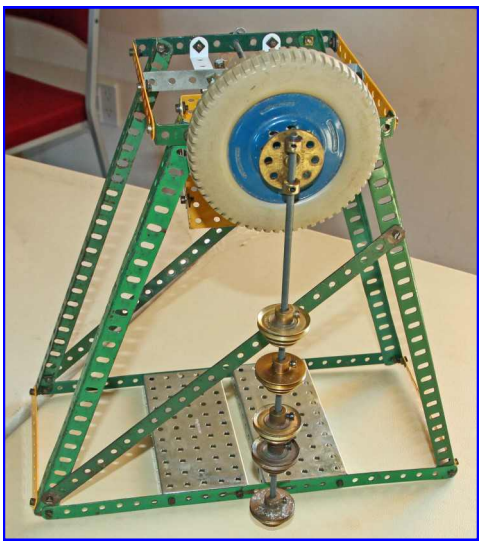
Paul Vodanovich : Had some oddities to identify. A bolt with no slot. Paul made and demonstrated the Exploding Ship model that featured in the No. 7 sets, pre WWII.

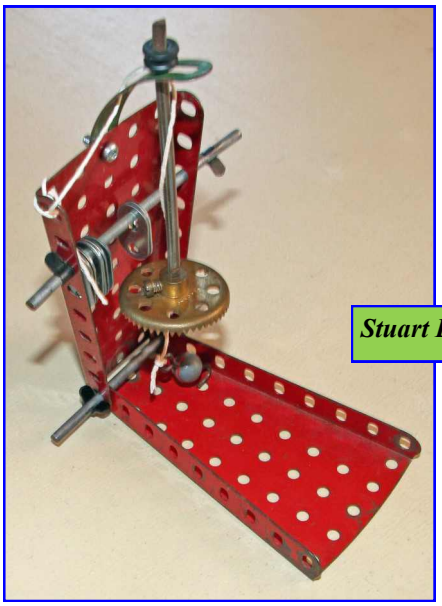


Paul's exploded boat.



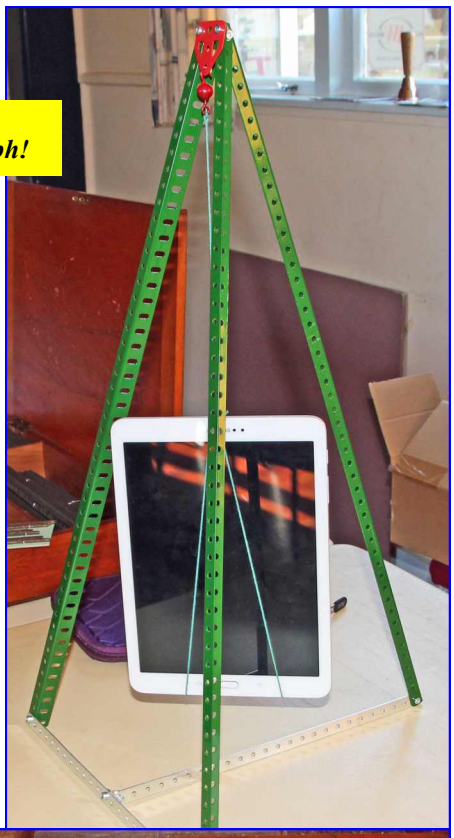
Bruce's models and booklet of his models.





Stuart Lindsay, I think?

Daryl Anderson
Digital seismograph!



Daryl's very rare Mechanics Made Easy Set E, c1907.

Richard's moving ball seismograph.

Richard Feltham and NZFMM President Chris Morton demonstrates his seismograph before or was it after the earthquake?

THE FUTURE OF MECCANO, IF IT HAS ONE

by the Retiring (but not reserved) Editor

Meccano pointed me towards engineering 60 years ago but would today's sets?

I have been back in the Meccano world now for 15 years and frankly I am not very happy with the current situation.

Meccano's name has been considerably devalued in my view over the last decade. I had hoped that when Spin Master (SM) bought the name about 6 years ago the steel strips held together by steel nuts and bolts was in for a resurgence. But no! The proliferation of plastic strips, plates, gears, pulleys and even useless plastic nut and bolt substitutes have produced a rubbishy toy which should be renamed *Crappano*. I'm betting that much of Spin Master's stock gets binned after the first and last attempt to build their predominately one-off model sets. No young budding engineer would go near the stuff mainly because it would teach him/her very little about mechanics, statics and tensile, compressive and torsional strength design.

I thought SM were on the right track with their Tower Crane but no one it seems bothered to check the CAD design by building the set to see if the parts fitted together (some didn't and required a reissue of some Angle Girders). The plastic geared mechanisms and their supports were near rubbish and required a lot of adaptation to make the crane work *almost* satisfactorily. I gave up with my set and put the parts away in their floppy over-sized box. I see a Frenchman has made a Block-setting Crane from much of the set with a lot more thought given to the mechanisms.

CAD designs are all very well but actually building the model will show up the defects with a chance to rectify the problems prior to production. Who ever heard of a vehicle which when you turn the steering wheel left turns the front wheels right? SM have produced several models with that desirable attribute. SM don't seem to know much about tolerances either. A tower crane with cross-braced diagonal bracing was a world first too (note irony). The rule is to have a diagonal brace in one direction on the front panel of the truss and in the other direction on the back face of the tower. These flexible braces are usually designed as tensile braces only. However the Meccano ones are short and rigid enough to act as compression struts as well (when the wind blows in the other direction).

In my humble view SM should sell the Meccano name back to the French and let them carry on with their adequate sets made from mainly steel. I thought many of the Evolution models nearly a decade ago were very good but they were pre-SM.

I've been watching intently the ongoing story of the recently announced *Hachette* Part Model GBSC. From all the latest news (on Spanner and NZMeccano) there are over 6,000 subscribers in France for the weekly parts (now at about week 10 of 130) and now SM are upset that the model gives an "archaic" impression of their named product. Well tough I say. They gave permission for the use of the Meccano name because that's what it is, not a crappy plastic toy. They never seemed to realize that the part works would be such a success. Don't they do any marketing research? If they want Meccano to become "technical, electronic and digital" viz. *modern* they should offer a remote controlled motor/mechanism add-on for the 6,000+ GBSCs being built in France. The latest news is that this wrangle might delay or even the cancel the part works in the UK.

Maybe the Hachette GBSC will bring new life to the hobby with sons and grandsons and their female equivalents wanting to have a go with this metal stuff with holes joined with nuts and bolts, whatever they are. Nuts and bolts are still often used in mechanical and civil engineering, although most of the non-engineering world find that hard to believe.

The Meccano-based club magazines are going through a hard time at present with editors wishing to retire after years of dedicated work but are finding replacement editors very difficult to find. The "International Meccanoman" with 3 issues/year is about to die in December due to not being able to find a new editorial team. I can see printed magazines slowly evolving into internet newsletters of variable length, dependent on the readers/ subscribers emailing in some copy. There could also be some merging of clubs as the current members dwindle due to old age and death. We certainly haven't been very successful in getting new and younger members to join our hobby but that is also the case for car clubs, some sporting groups, etc. We seem to be becoming a society of loners, staying at home watching TV or playing computer games or communicating mainly rubbish on Face Book, Twitter, etc. Getting anyone to volunteer to do anything is becoming more and more difficult.

So I haven't painted a picture of a thriving, worldwide hobby where the Meccano brand still means something and attracts young engineer want-to-bees. I hope I am proven wrong and there is a thriving future for Meccano. Practical engineering, as I know it, hasn't changed that much in the 50 years since I graduated, so why should Meccano, which set me and many of my colleagues on an engineering career?

Les Megget

New Zealand Club Diary 2018

Auckland Meccano Guild

President: David Wall, Tel. (09) 426 1965

Secretary: Gary Higgins, Tel. (09) 832 4292

Meetings at 2pm on second Saturday every third month. The next meeting will be held on **Saturday 9th February at David & Elizabeth Wall's** 45 Kath Hopper Drive, Orewa, starting at 2pm.

MWT Meccano Club

Chairman: Chris Morton, Tel. (06) 323 8001

Secretary: Robin Rye, Tel. (06) 764 8670

Meetings at 2pm. Next meeting: **Saturday 9th February** at St. Luke's Church Hall, Corner Cornfoot and Manuka Streets, Wanganui.

Wellington Meccano Club

President: Reg Barlow, Tel. 021 955 488

Secretary: Max George, Tel. (04) 232 4200

Contact: Lou Nichols, Tel. (04) 297 1515

Meeting at 7:30pm on first Friday every second month. Next meeting: Xmas meeting TBA, Contact Max George or Reg Barlow.

Christchurch Meccano Club

President: Neil Pluck, Tel. (03) 389 8134

Secretary: Roland Jaspers, Tel. (03) 351 4389

Meetings at 7:30pm on first Friday every month (except January) at Papanui RSA Club, 55 Bellvue Ave. or No. 1 Harewood Road, Christchurch.

Additional Meccano Contacts

Hamilton: Don McClelland, Tel. (07) 843 4198
Tauranga: Barry McKey, Tel. (07) 576-1623
Hawera: Daryl Anderson, Tel. (06) 278 7666
Napier: Trevor Adam, Tel. (06) 843 4837
Palmerston North: Bruce Geange, Tel. (06) 357 0566
Nelson: John Stark, Tel. (03) 545 1025

Articles, etc. for the February 2019 issue of NZFMM Magazine should be sent to **Richard Feltham,** email **richard.feltham174@gmail.com** before the 10th February 2019.

Back Numbers: NZFMM Magazines from April 2001 are available. Please contact Bruce Geange.

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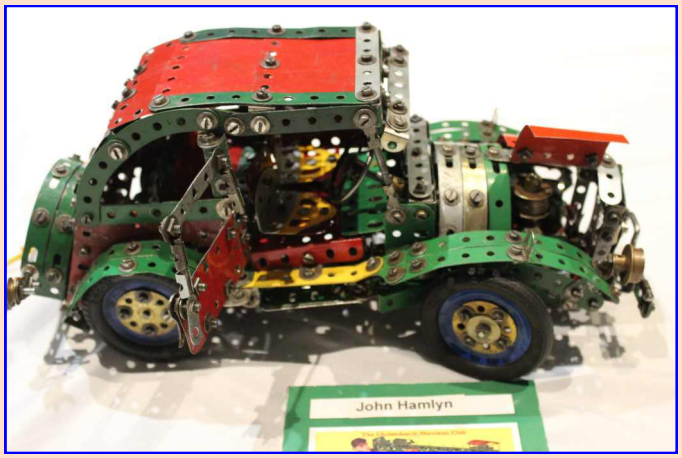
The retiring Editor about to drive off into the sunset! No, you will have to put up with articles from me into the future.

Recent interesting people and models.

The images below are from recent CMC monthly meetings.



David Wall read this in the March 10 2018 NZ Herald. He suggested the title "Frank Hornby's Revenge".

I could suggest that they put the unsold stock in the Binns out on the Road. Oh ha ha.

In brief

Meccano wind-down
The administrators of menswear business Meccano 2016, which went into voluntary administration in February, have been unable to find a buyer and will now wind it down. "We now move to the next phase of administration, which is to sell down all stock through the current store network," said administrator Neale Jackson from KordaMentha. Jackson said seven stores remain open, four in Auckland, two in Hamilton and one in Christchurch.

Thomas & Hamish Campbell with their models at the Greater Waikato club meeting.

Left: Sam Lang with his top. Right: Thomas Woermann.

Neil Pluck