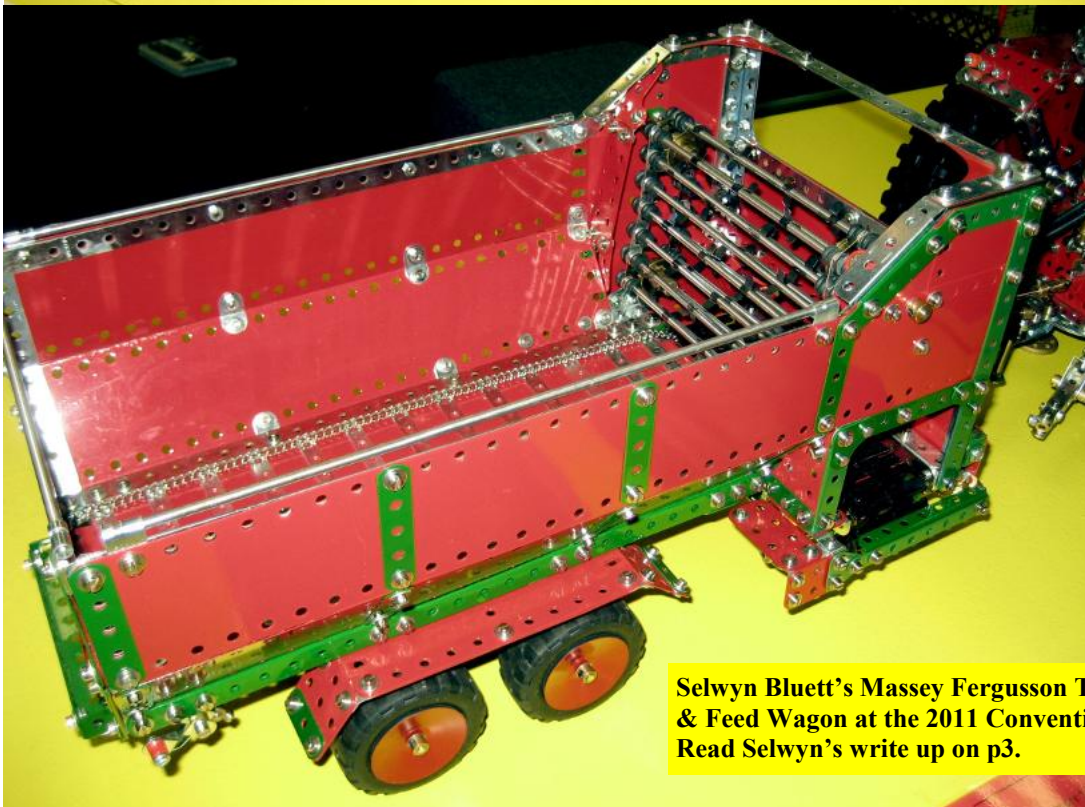




NZFMM MAGAZINE

Volume 36 No. 2

May 2012



Selwyn Bluett's Massey Ferguson Tractor & Feed Wagon at the 2011 Convention. Read Selwyn's write up on p3.

Volume 36, No. 2

NZ Federation of Meccano Modellers Magazine

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Letters are welcome and may be sent by post or by email. The author's name and address must be supplied. Publication of letters will be at the editor's discretion.

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Meccano is More than a Toy

After seeing the letter in a recent IME Journal, shown to me by George Ovenden (see p 6), the quote that "Meccano is more than a toy" made me realise that I have long felt that sentiment but had never put it into words. When we see the complex, sophisticated and often large models built today in Meccano, by modellers here and overseas, the above statement is obviously true. I'm sure that if Frank Hornby was living today he would be astonished at what is now built from his simple construction toy. A prime example has to be Selwyn Bluett's magnificent *Massey Ferguson* tractor featured in this issue.

It is often stated that many of the 20th century's engineers and scientists had and used Meccano in their formative years, but I wonder where the engineers of this century will come from? I can't see many coming from using that popular plastic brick toy, even though there are some fairly complicated and sophisticated *Lego* models to be seen on the internet. As we all know bricks are useless at carrying tensile forces, a fact made very clear in the recent Christchurch earthquakes. So how could a child get a feeling for tensile and bending stresses from *Lego*? They don't; all they get are the results of brittle structural failures as the bricks collapse.

I see some hope for civil and mechanical engineers of the future after watching the children building Meccano models during Easter at Te Papa (and I believe also at the Stoke Meccano Magic show). However I must say I can't get the same confidence from looking at and building Meccano France's latest efforts. How about some manual models that actually look a little like actual prototypical vehicles and structures instead of things that are hardly recognisable in today's world (some of the *Tintin* models excluded). A vehicle which turns right when you steer left is no use to anyone, except for creatures from another planet perhaps.

I have serious worries when I read that a modern stadium in our southernmost city had sagging roof trusses under its own self weight and then collapsed in a severe snow storm, and now the investigators are blaming poor welding or lack of welds. What ever happened to good old nuts and bolts for site connections?

My special thanks to the contributors of articles and reports in this magazine; your efforts in helping to keep Meccano alive and kicking make it all worthwhile. LM

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Massey Ferguson Tractor & Feed Wagon

By Selwyn Bluett

Photos: Les Megget, Gary Higgins, Charles Steadman and the author.

This was my model for the 2011 NZFMM Convention held in Palmerston North (Ed. First Prize winner in the Senior section). See cover images.

I won't bore you with every technical detail, but will try to give you an interesting account of its construction.

I was told that a tractor is really only a gearbox on wheels, now that I have built one I would have to agree. A quick count up for my own curiosity realized a total of two hundred and eighty brass components; of that eighty six are gears. Purchasing a pair of ash tray tyres off a fellow club member was what got this model on its wheels, so to speak. Ok, a tractor had been a model that I wanted to build for quite a while, mainly to complement my International B46 hay baler that I had built for the 2007 NZFMM Convention.

As a tractor has many varied functions, I hoped this would make for an interesting model, for me to construct, but also of interest to the public when demonstrating it. Plenty of movement is always good. Looking ahead to the future, a tractor would lend itself nicely to a whole range of equipment that could be built, for it to demonstrate.

Starting off, I had to decide what make and model of tractor I was to build. There is a vast range to choose from. I decided red was to be the main colour I wanted to build with, so this narrowed down the selection. Generally, late model tractors have many curved body panels and rounded bonnets. I knew that I would find it hard to replicate these features neatly in Meccano. A Massey Ferguson 3645 was chosen as this tractor's main colour is red, the operator's cab is grey, (zinc parts would work well here) and it also has very straight body lines.

Front axle/power steering:

Building began at the front and progressed rearward, (many times backwards). This plan of attack was used as I had not found any rear wheels suitable and I knew this would be a big problem.

First off, I constructed the front axle case; this holds the simple Contrate/Pinion differential which also has a sliding socket coupling incorporated to select differential lock. The diff lock is activated from the cab by a Meccano Bowden cable. The over centre, type lever, is spring loaded and gives positive engagement. Drive is taken to the front wheels through 19 tooth Pinions driving 57 tooth Gear Rings mounted to each wheel; this gives a 3:1 reduction at the wheel.

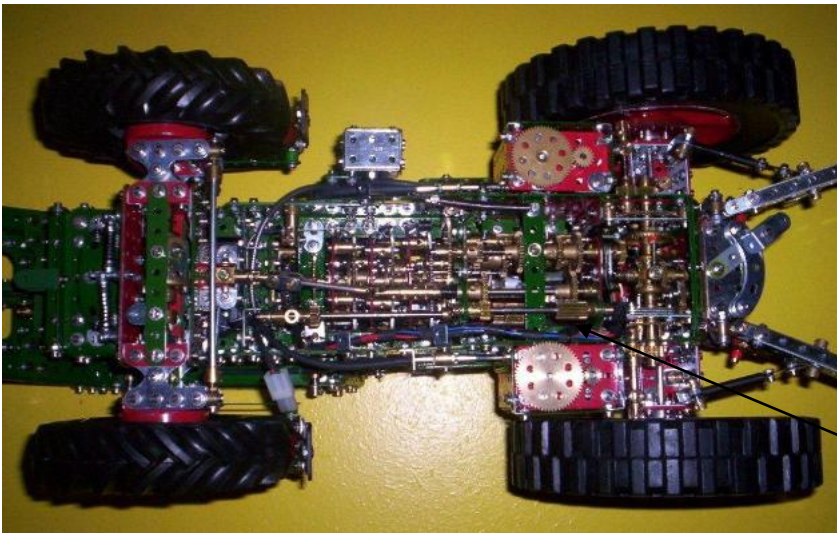


Rear three-quarter view of the tractor.

The front axle assembly pivots off its mounting bracket, at the centre of the tractor chassis. A Worm is secured to the rear side of the pivot axle. Bowden cable is wound onto the worm a few turns and the ends of the cable are attached to each side, stub axle. An adjustable track rod is also attached to both stub axles; this sets the toe-in of the front wheels but also keeps tension on the Bowden cable. The pivot axle with the worm mounted on it is driven by a suitably geared electric motor and activated by four micro-switches, connected to the steering wheel. Two more micro-switches are used to set the limits of the turn radius.

Chassis/transmission:

The main chassis is seven holes wide at its base and the bonnet reduces to five holes in width. The bonnet is slightly longer than it should be, but I knew I had to have as much space as possible in this area. Under the bonnet is the largest of the five electric motors in the model. This motor is connected to the epicyclic transmission, but also supplies drive to the rear power take-off, (PTO). I used three 95/57tooth Gear Rings and many 19 tooth narrow faced Pinions to construct the three speed epicyclic transmission. Gearbox ratios are 4:1 (First gear), 2.28:1 (Second gear) and 1.73:1 (Third gear). This transmission is coupled to a conventional, gate change, high-low, forward and reverse gearbox, which gives, six forward and six reverse ratios. To select a given gear ratio, one of the three gear rings has to



View from below gives some idea of the complex mechanical detail.

be stopped from rotating, (braked) at any one time. Neutral is obtained when all gear rings are allowed to rotate freely. Each of the three gear rings has a small solenoid mounted above it, (these are available from *Jaycar*). When energized the selected solenoid pulls a spring loaded, lever mounted, locked plastic Pinion into mesh with the Gear Ring, thus stopping rotation to give you drive.

To complete the gear train, drive is taken to each rear wheel via the lockable rear differential. On each wheel is mounted a 95 tooth boss less Gear, driven by a 13 tooth Pinion, this gives a reduction ratio of 7.30:1. This gives excellent torque to the wheels and less stress on the driveline components. While on the subject, the rear eight inch wheels were obtained from a lawn fertilizer spreader, they are the only ones that I have come across with a tread pattern that could pass as tractor type tread.

Loader:

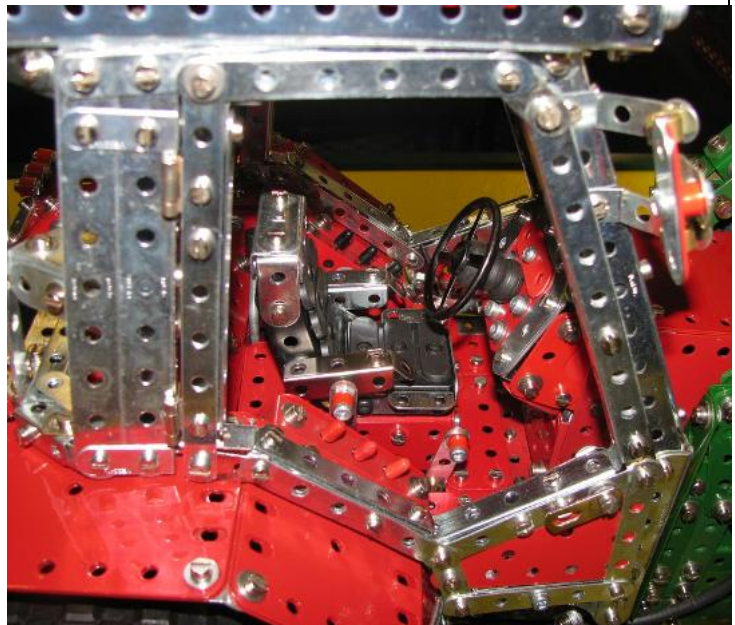
I added a front end loader to this model, as I like to incorporate a simulated hydraulic component in my models, if I can. The loader is of basic construction, the main arms are fully boxed for strength and neatness. All of the rams are actually mini gas struts, as found on large workshop tool chests. These have been modified

so they are now controlled by Bowden cables that run through the simulated hydraulic hoses. These are wound onto Meccano Worms and driven by small electric motors. On this model these 'winch drum' modules are located just in front of the rear wheels, and pass as large fuel tanks. The single ram that operates the fork attachment is double acting, whereas the two main lifting rams are single acting only. No limit switches are used on the loader.

Operators cab:

This was a mission to build, with its many unusual angles. I made full use of the narrow and standard zinc parts available. The cab is double skinned, as are the opening lockable doors. Located to the chassis by long threaded pins, this makes for ease of alignment when refitting the cab. Housed within the cab are the nine tiny toggle switches and six levers that control all tractor operations.

A unique feature is that the cab and bonnet can be quickly removed from the tractor, but remain connected to it by the extended wiring looms. This allows you to operate the tractor for adjustment and viewing of the mechanisms. Power is supplied from an external, twelve volt battery via an umbilical cord.

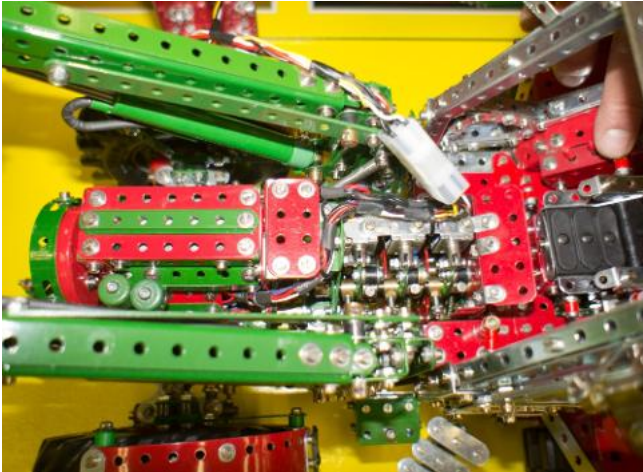


Driver's cab detail with gearbox selector switches to right of seat.

Three point linkage:

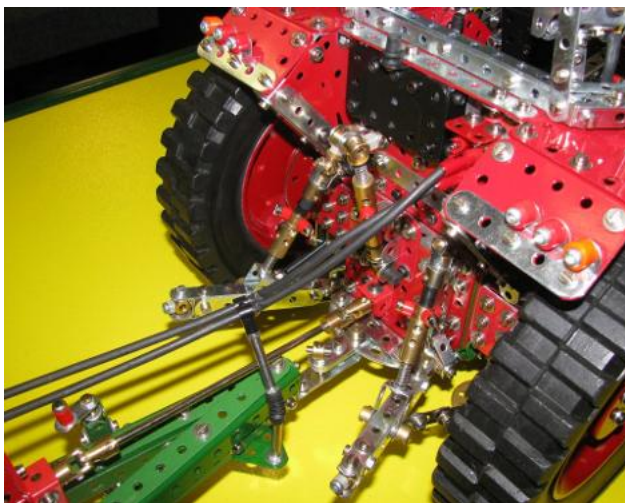
This standardized mounting system is used to attach a wide range of implements that a tractor can operate.

It is a feature of most modern tractors. Comprising two lower adjustable hydraulic lifting arms and a third upper adjustable link, that is used for setting an implement's angle of operation. I have incorporated this feature in my model. The lower lifting arms are boxed, tapered, fully adjustable and double acting. A small electric motor is mounted below the driver's seat; this provides the lifting power, through a Worm and Pinion reduction gearbox. Upper and lower limit switches are also fitted.



Engine and gearbox with engine cover removed showing the 3 gearbox speed selector solenoids.

At the rear of the tractor is a swinging drawbar, used to tow equipment. Just above this is the power take-off (PTO) shaft. This provides rotary power to implements either towed, or attached to the tractor. In addition the tractor can supply high pressure hydraulic fluid to machinery that it is operating, from a bank of outlets mounted at the rear of the tractor.



Tractor's 3-point linkage.

The Feed wagon:

Initially I planned to build a plain tipping trailer for the tractor but that idea did not gel and a feed wagon evolved. This seemed a good idea as it showcases how a tractor's various systems can be used to operate equipment. There was a lot more work in this model, more than I first thought, but at least it gave me a break from the tractor for a while.

History:

Feed wagons were introduced in the early 70s and have grown from small single axle units capable of holding a few cubic metres of feed, to large twin axle units able to carry up to twenty cubic meters or more of stock feed.

Operation:

The wagon is parked by the feed stock pile; the tractor uses its hydraulic front end loader to fill the wagon and then tows it to where the stock will be fed. Controlled by the operator, from the tractor, part or all of its contents can be unloaded through the side delivery conveyer belt.



Feed Wagon showing the discharge conveyor belt.

The model:

This feed wagon is operated by the tractor's PTO. Electricity is also supplied to the wagon through the simulated hydraulic hoses from the tractor. At the rear is the lockable opening door, this is used for bulk unloading of feed. A set of Meccano chains are located on the wagon's floor, these draw the feed to the elevator at the front, or to the rear if you want to unload the wagon in bulk.

The Elevator is made from Axle Rods, narrow Fish Plates, (used as links) and small black rubbers, (#23c3P) used as Collars. This is powered by a concealed electric motor. The elevator rotates to lift feed from the advancing feed pile in the wagon and deposit it onto the conveyer belt. The conveyer belt consists of a pair of Meccano plastic Caterpillar Tracks running side by side.

Other wagon features are twin independent pivoting rear axles, an access ladder and a drawbar jack.

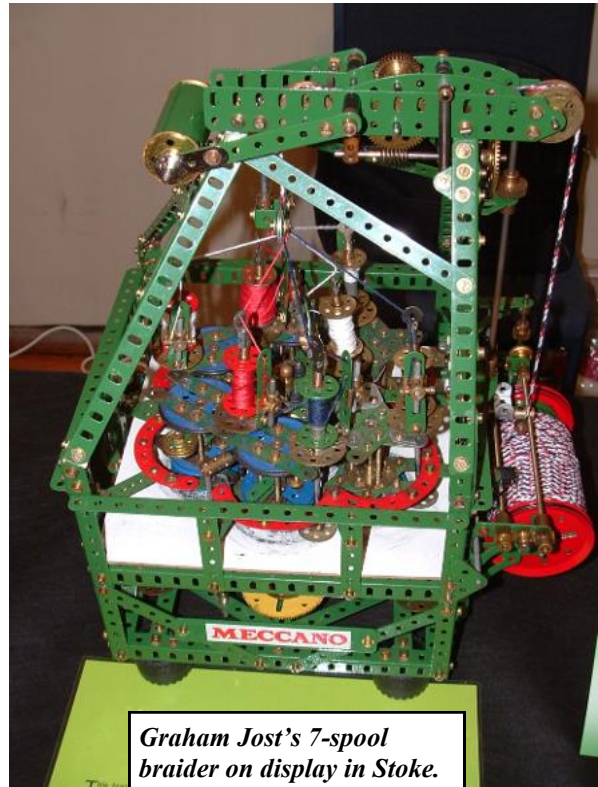
Letter to the Editor

Dear Les,

We would like to congratulate all participants in the Nelson and Christchurch Meccano Clubs for staging a superb first Meccano Exhibition in Nelson over the Easter weekend. The great variety of interesting models was clearly appreciated by the public, and even the gods smiled upon us for the entire time with cloudless skies. It is true that the occasional "other system" also made its appearance, but that only added to the variety of the whole – the overall mix of Meccano with a dash of Hornby, k'nex and even L*g* was just right. And while some kids really got stuck into Torro with obvious enjoyment and gusto, others queued with commendable patience waiting their turn at the chocolates dispensing robot!

The exhibitors, the range of models, the organization, the friendship and the delighted public – it was all quite magical, fully living up to its advertised title of "Meccano Magic".

Mary and Graham Jost, Melbourne, Australia



Graham Jost's 7-spool braider on display in Stoke.

This letter was found by George Ovenden in the March 2012 issue of *PE, Professional Engineering*, the Journal of the UK Institution of Mechanical Engineers. Les Pook is a regular contributor to *Spanner*.



DO NOT CALL MECCANO AN EDUCATIONAL TOY. IT IS MUCH MORE THAN THAT

provided.

J C Jones, Aberdeen

Bolt-on technology

There are numerous active and retired engineers, including myself, who are Meccano enthusiasts (Soundbites, *PE* February). Clubs around the country hold regular meetings where a wide range of models are exhibited. There are numerous websites devoted to various aspects of Meccano.

It also has practical applications: for example I made an easily removable satnav bracket for a car. The old-style progressive Meccano sets are no longer made, but second-hand and reproduction parts are readily available. Please do not call Meccano an educational toy. It is much more than that.

Les Pook, Sevenoaks, Kent

Engine room?

HERMAN THE GERMAN: Following the success of his model of the cruise ship "Ryndam", (NZFMMM ,Dec., 2011) Joe Attard in Malta and Tony Brown in the U.K. are each building a model of a sister crane. Their prototype is the "Langer Heinrich" crane.

However, Tony is using Märklin parts. Models of "Herman" have been built by N.Z. Meccano modellers, notably the late Frank Davis in 1998 and Henry Porter a little later. See NZFMMM issues of June and December, 2008. (L.S.)

HERMAN'S HISTORY: This giant level luffing floating crane was built just before World War 2. It was captured by the Allies in 1945 and brought to the U.S.A. in 1948. It served at Long Beach Naval Dockyard in California where it was also known as YD171. In 1994 "Herman" was transported to Panama, where it still is. (Rolf Valkema on Spanner)

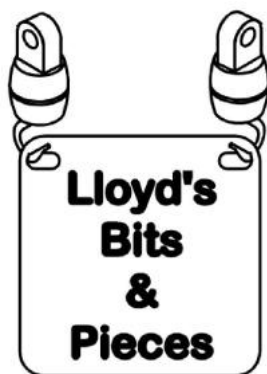
I DREAM: It has been said that there are those who look at things and ask why ? I dream of things that never were and ask why not ? Some of each works for me. (John Sheridan on Spanner)

PRAISE FROM JULIAN: " Despite the fact that Gisborne is somewhat isolated from the N.Z. Meccano world, I must say that I find the enthusiasm and friendliness of NZFMM members, who I have managed to contact, tremendously encouraging". (Julian Avesinis, 1995)

FROM ROTHESAY, SCOTLAND: Bert Love said in a 1996 letter to me: "As you guessed, the grapevine does reach to this Island -- from many quarters --and it is most encouraging to know that New Zealand enthusiasts keep the Meccano flag flying in "wide apart" areas where Meccano is far less available than it is at the many swap meets, Club meetings and Meccano exhibitions in the U.K." (L.S.)

FROM THE LATE FRANK DAVIS: "It is really wonderful to have a constructive hobby like Meccano to keep you thinking and scheming. I have a friend who sits and does jigsaw puzzles all the time. It would drive ME up the wall". (from a 1996 letter to me, L.S.)

TODAY'S JOKE: "What is an IG? Answer - An Eskimo's house without a loo. (Howard Somerville on Spanner)



QUOTATION: "If God had put me on this earth to complete a certain number of Meccano models, then I am so far behind I shall live for ever." (Ellis Cory on Spanner).

TOYWORLD EASTER BROCHURE: Their catalogue had one small section advertising two Meccano construction boxes priced at \$NZ 39.99 each. The theme of the advertising was "Build Big and More". (L.S.)

QUOTATION: " Eitech is like Meccano used to be". From an Eitech newspaper advertisement. (Alan S. on Spanner)

MECCANO FRANCE: Liz from Redbook Communications (U.K. Meccano agents) arranged for a U.S.A. news company to visit the Calais factory for a video news item about Meccano France. It included an interview with C.E.O. Michael Ingborg. Commenting on Spanner, Geoff Brown said, "OK, it's a newsroom story, but there's no such thing as bad publicity."

DOES IT FLOAT?: There have been discussions on Spanner about how to float marine models on water. George Illingworth and others have successfully built paddle steamers and pontoon bridges using the yellow Meccano storage boxes for flotation. (L.S.)

WORM MESHES: For decimal-like ratios, the obsolete Meccano 20 tooth pinion will mesh at standard spacing with the Meccano worm. (Chris Shute on Spanner)

"TRICKY TRACK": " If you exhibit models frequently, Tricky Track is an ideal project. Kids relate to it and love it". (Charlie Pack on Spanner). Charlie's album is on our N.Z. website at <http://www.nzmeccano.com/image50316>

TE PAPA EXHIBITION, 2012: In an e-mail to me, Peter Hancock said that, as always, we had a great Auckland team to support the event. He was very pleased that Campbell Morrison had put so much effort into it as well as having a number of others from the Wellington Club who found time to help us out with an array of models and their time. (L.S.)

TE PAPA BROCHURE: "Meccano at Easter". "Enter a world where big dreams are realised on a small scale, as local enthusiasts show off intricate models -- both old and new".



Auckland Meccano Guild Meeting

18th February
2012

Reporter: Gary Higgins

The February meeting of the Auckland Meccano Guild was held at the home of **Peter & Jan Hancock**. For the first time it was held on the 3rd Saturday of the month (Normally the 2nd would be the case). There was a large turnout for the meeting and Peter had contacted many members personally so they were aware of the date change.

Apologies were received from **Les Megget** and **William Irwin**.

David Wall had made up an excellent model of a Nuremberg clock.

George Ovenden had unearthed the original instructions for the Meccano robotic arm and will be giving it a go. He had adapted a couple of Meccano curved strips to clamp onto his walking stick to form a holder or hook at one end. A Meccanoman can always find a use for the stuff!

Gary Higgins had brought along a 1981 Meccano *Hyperspace* set with the unusual blown plastic parts to be cut out and the small spacemen figures to act as props for the models. He also had a model made with the latest *Space Chaos* Meccano sets.

Rick Vine had two models from the latest Meccano *Tintin* sets, the seaplane with a fixed wing and the red jeep (4x4). He had motorised both fitting the seaplane with a tiny 9-volt motor and had fitted a Magic motor under the jeep and both worked very effectively. He also had brought a model of a walker originally conceived by Andeas Konkolly, a 1960s Phillips mechanical engineer set and a Bayko house.

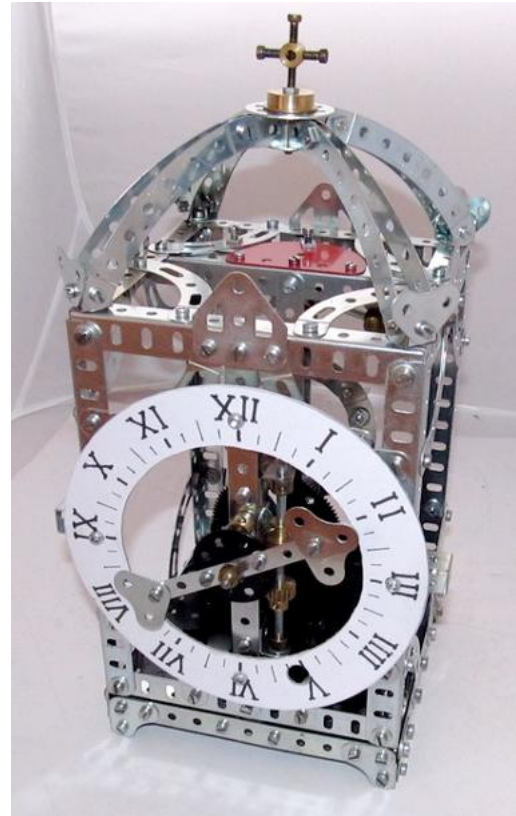
Henry Porter, not to be outdone, almost needed a table of his own for his displays. These included a motorised dragon with opening and closing mouth and various propellers spinning around. Some were made from the original Meccano propeller blades X3 and were lethal when activated. Henry had two fire engines, an early USA horse drawn engine from 1905 and a 1907 Merryweather steam fire

engine. He had a Gaer Scott 3-way separator from 1903 as well.

Gerald Hart had brought along a very nice model of a bush locomotive with external gearing via rods, universals and bevel gears, a nice model. I saw **Neil Carey**, master loco builder, cast an approving eye over it though it is probably a bit small in scale for him as he usually deals with the real thing.

Mike Stuart had an automatic ship coaler in nickel and red Meccano. It worked well with an automatic drop, grab and lift motions. Mike told me that he had spent a great deal of work on the gearing in a very confined space. True of many Meccano models; of course Henry's answer is to make them bigger. The model is based on a CQ26 article by Keith Cameron.

Richard Sealey, our early Meccano aircraft enthusiast, brought along a set 0 aircraft made up in grey, one of the earliest set 0's to be introduced. He also had examples of many of the Meccano aircraft small parts tins most in excellent condition and two Number 1 aircraft motors each with a variation in the key fittings and a No. 2 aircraft motor, all boxed and with the various extra parts included.

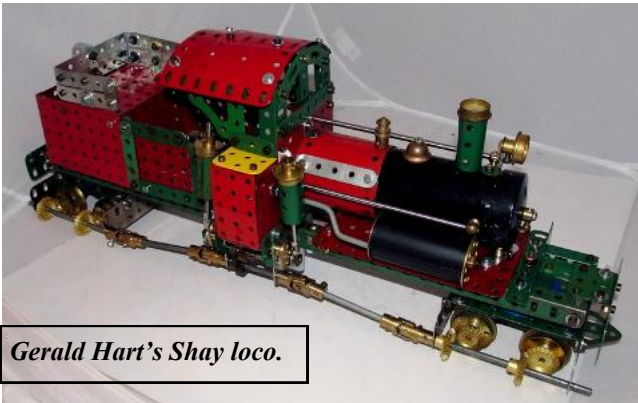


David Wall's Nuremberg clock.

Jeff Clark was along with his usual selection of well made Meccano replica gears for sale and he has been making a walker based on a 3.5" gear.

Anthony Caldwell had brought along a Meccano loco made with the Meccano *special Hudson train* outfit.

Graeme Wrightson had constructed a 4x4 wheeled machine based on one of the modern *Multikit* sets.



Gerald Hart's Shay loco.

Andrew Cathie had not brought a model but had brought some refurbished brass parts that he had done at Rigg's electroplaters in Glenfield. He filled up a large bag with brass ware and had them brass plated. No need to clean them beforehand. The total cost was \$100 for the bag, they looked better than new.

Michael Holderness had made up a small bicycle in a micro Meccano format but a little larger.

Others present were **Bob Cook, John Denton, Graeme Mills and Peter Hancock.**

Peter had a large quantity of Meccano and sets for sale, most of which was eagerly snapped up by club members.

A group photo was taken once we were able to extract members away from the sales table and an excellent afternoon tea was provided as usual by the ladies. The photos show it to have been one of the best afternoon teas we have had.

Peter Hancock gave some information about the up and coming Te Papa exhibition, which some of our club members will be attending with very positive feedback from the previous display held there.

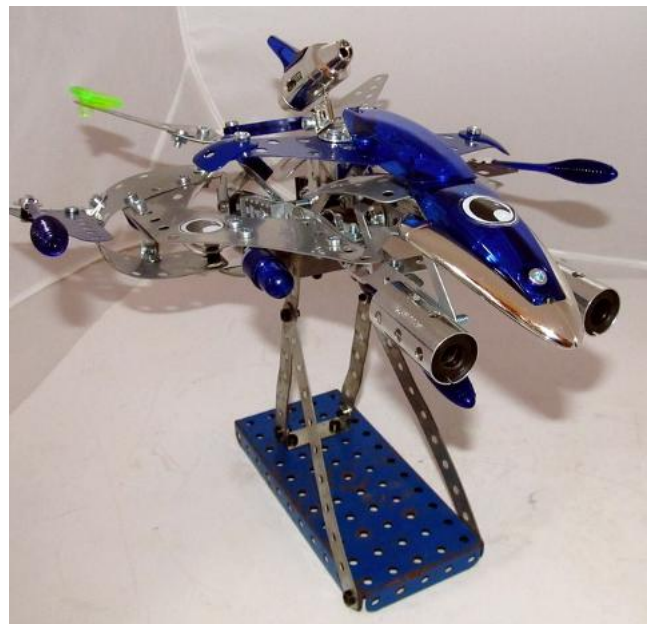
Model-X will be on us again shortly and we will need staff to cover the 3 days of the show over

Queen's Birthday weekend. The set-up details for next year's Convention are rolling on and it looks like it will be a real winner.

The magazine is now under the control of Les Megget, Peter has seen a copy of the new format and is most impressed (it takes a lot to impress Peter). From the May issue on the magazine will also be available in PDF format (for a small fee).



Gerald Hart (left), Graeme Wrightson, Rick Vine, Michael Holderness, John Denton (obscured) and George Ovenden search the parts bins.



Space Chaos Commander set by Gary Higgins.

MWT MEETING REPORT for 14 APRIL 2012

Article by Lou Nichols, Photos by Bruce Geange

The term “Indian Summer” has been bandied around for the last few weeks on the West coast of the lower North Island. Autumn came in with a couple of nasty cool days and everyone thought, well that was summer over. But we spoke to soon because the weather generally has been great, with some really lovely days. Today for our meeting has been no exception, it makes travelling pleasant and brought out a goodly number of members.

Again, members did not disappoint with their offerings. Good models, collectables and items out of the ordinary were brought along, to be commented upon and enjoyed.

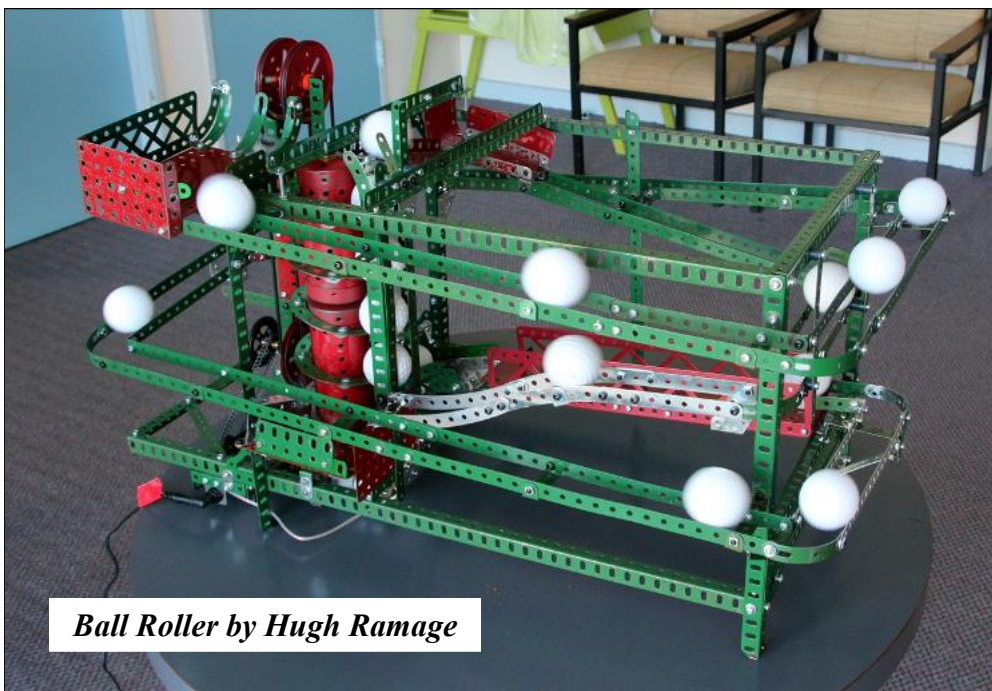
Hugh Ramage always brings along a good model, but today we got a double helping in the shape of a clock and a ball roller. Nicely modelled in red/green was a Nuremberg Clock taken from a Lindsay Carroll design. This type of clock has a verge and folet escapement and normally has only the hour hand, but this one has both the hour and minute hands. It is driven by a No.1 clockwork motor giving it a running time of three hours. The dial was able to be printed straight from the inter-net, cut out and fitted straight to the clock. Model No.2 was a Ball Roller with twelve practice golf

balls running on two continuous sets of tracks. The tracks were driven with ‘O’ rings by the metre, with the spiral made up from 2-1/2” curved stepped strips. These types of model are mesmerising to watch and make great exhibition models.

Not to be outdone, **Bruce Geange** also had two models. First up was the No.2 version of his compact grader, which now has steering, plus the scarifier and the blade has four movements, up or down and left and right. Bruce’s second contribution is the commencement of a International (McCormick-Deering) T-6 Crawler Tractor of the late 40s-50s. A complete crawler track which utilises 2” narrow girders and a Märklin track pack. Watch this space.



Paul Vodanovich's Night Bomber



Ball Roller by Hugh Ramage

Paul Vodanovich has also improved his 'Fairey' Hendon night bomber model, with the fitting of a nose triangle, rudder tension wires and rear wheel. The bomber also has an escort of two single engined fighter planes, also carried out in nickel. Paul also had the commencement of a Harmonograph from a Meccano Magazine of 1955. A further watch this space for updates.



Boxes made by Graham Hawtree

Now to our collectors. Firstly from **Graham Hawtree**. If the item is going to be very difficult to obtain, make your own. Graham has done just this for the small cardboard boxes used for nuts and bolts and components in the No.9, 9A and 10 sets of the early 1950s. The boxes are a very true copy and Graham has gone to a great deal of trouble in getting them correct. The boxes are available from Graham at \$12.00 each or a set of seven for \$80.00

Viv Alexander's contribution today was the pre-war Meccano publication 'Famous Trains', complete with the dust cover and in very good



condition. This book is not easy to come by, but by a fluke three MWT members now have a copy. A very interesting collection spanning eleven years, 1926 through to 1937 and originally belonging to a Greek boy was Viv's second contribution. The collection consists of order forms, correspondence, Meccano Magazines, a No.3 Meccano Set and two Aeroplane Constructor sets with the corrugated wings. A No.11 set in red and white with Danish markings and a No.2 in blue and white with Belgium markings. The boy dealt with the French Meccano factory, a very interesting time capsule and diverse and a great collectors item.



Tom Pittam's Hornby Dublo set

Tom Pittams is the inveterate shopper and he always manages to come up with something out of the ordinary. Today, he brought along LOGIBLOCS and BRAIN BOX ELECTRONIC, both items aimed at children. They do some interesting experiments and reward the user with some nice sound effects. So we can't accuse Tom of moving away from Meccano, this came along in the form of a London Taxi in red/green of the 1950s vintage plus a Hornby Dublo train set with A4 Pacific Locomotive, tender and two carriages, with the loco carrying the name 'Silver King'.

Viv Alexander's Belgium marked No. 2 Aeroplane Constructor Set.

**Palmerston North's Square Affair
"Retro Festival" Weekend
Easter 2012**

**By Anne Prescott
Photos by Bob Prescott**

Following on from the very successful NZFMM Convention at Easter 2011 in Palmerston North, the MWT Club was again asked to participate in this year's "Square Affair" Retro Festival. Unfortunately we could not provide as many models as previously because New Zealand Meccanomen were also exhibiting in Te Papa in Wellington and at a Meccano gathering in Nelson (Stoke).

Nevertheless, **Paulette Morton** with the help of her husband **Chris** arranged a wide collection of models from MWT Club members plus several detailed scale model radio controlled boats from the *Manawatu Model Boat Club* which included a WW2 German torpedo boat, guided missile cruiser and a paddle steamer, all about one metre long. A large number of *Fun Ho!* models of varying sizes were on show in two glass cabinets and were kindly loaned by "John" from Levin and they are but a small part of his collection. The Fun Ho! models were originally made from lead in the mid 1930s and then of aluminium from the early 40s till 1982. The *National Toy Museum* in Inglewood is now producing new models using the original mouldings. Two Hornby train layouts in an adjoining room completed the "small boys' toys" displays in the Palmerston North Central Normal School.

This year's theme for the Meccano was "from Paris to London" and so the late **Lindsay Bond's** Eiffel Tower was in a prominent position together with the more recent smaller versions. Concorde aircraft and Renault car models continued the French theme and London was represented by Big Ben, the Tower of London and a London RT bus. Meccano sets in boxes were on display from early ones from England plus later ones made in France, and also China. **Wayne Blakely** had sets for sale to enthusiastic visitors keen to replicate models like those on display.

Daryl Anderson's marble rolling machine made in 1990 still entertains the crowds and **Bob Prescott's** "tricky track" and "Mama Mia" models once again amused the onlookers, young and old. **Nancy and Bryan Jones** had working mini models for the children to play with and **Tom Pittam's** robots were also "hands on" – always a visitor's drawcard.

Large and small Meccano models were displayed by **Bruce Geange, Robin Rye, Viv Alexander, John Freer, Daryl Anderson and Paulette and Chris Morton** and included a showman's traction engine, steam and beam engines, a Marconi radar aerial, a solar panel which powered a small pump plus various models of aircraft, cars and trucks.

Chris Morton brought several models from members of the *Palmerston North Model Engineering Club* including a traction engine, a Heinrici hot-air engine, a Stirling heat engine and a working marble displacer engine powered by a meths burner.

Once again Palmerston North brought together an interesting selection of 1950s and 60s memorabilia to interest the public and these included fashion shows and films, trucks and cars (full size and models) and a poster and photography exhibition. A large model of Hogwarts Castle was the centrepiece of the doll, doll house and teddy bear show and visitors could take part in several workshops to create doll's house miniatures and make teddy bears. "The Art of Dr Suess" gave the public an insight into the creative mind of this popular author and artist with paintings, story readings and movies to watch.

Two double decker buses and several other old coaches circled the city to take all the visitors to each of the "Retro Festival" venues and once again Palmerston North provided a fun and interesting destination for those in the Manawatu this Easter. It was good to see that Meccano was included in one of the eight photos featured in the Manawatu Standard newspaper report on the Square Affair festival.



Meccano Magic Display Easter 2012

John Stark & David Couch

Following the biennial 2009 NZFMM Convention in Christchurch, the Christchurch Meccano Club (CMC) planned to hold a Meccano display each alternate Easter to provide an opportunity for Meccano persons to meet together and display their models. The first of these was the "Toys of Yesterday" display held in the Christchurch Arts Centre's Great Hall in 2010. Since the earthquakes, this venue (and many others) in Christchurch have been unavailable. At the Easter 2011 NZFMM annual convention in Palmerston North, Mike Howse (CMC), asked if we would be prepared to stage a Meccano display in Nelson at Easter 2012. The aims were to raise the profile of Meccano in the Nelson region and to provide a venue for CMC members to put on a public display. CMC took the financial risk and we (assisted by our wives Yvonne and Jane) formed a local organizing committee to plan for the event.

There are comparatively few venues in good locations in Nelson that are of sufficient size and available at reasonable cost. We decided upon the Stoke Memorial Hall as the main venue because it was not too expensive, and it is where Nelson's Model Railway Exhibition is held. The model train exhibition was held two weeks before Easter, so we arranged for our display to be advertised at that event. We also embarked on an extensive advertising campaign with flyers, posters, paid newspaper advertisements, articles in free local newspapers, a listing on the www.itson.co.nz website, and advertising on radio and TV (Living Channel). Posters were displayed at various locations in Nelson, Stoke, Richmond, Motueka, Takaka, Murchison, and Westport. A registration form on the NZMeccano website and alerts in recent NZFMM magazines also advertised the event. David took the opportunity to set up an interactive Meccano display (including a Meccanograph and a chocolate-dispensing robot arm - always very popular!) at our local primary school's annual fundraiser "Tea by the Sea" on 9 March. This generated a lot of interest and was good advertising for the Easter event too.

We borrowed fold-up tables from Clifton Terrace and Auckland Point Primary Schools (in return for small donations), and together with the tables available at the hall we had the 50 we needed. On the

afternoon of Thursday 5th April the CMC exhibitors arrived and the display was set up. We all dined that evening at Crusoe's Café in Stoke. Crusoe's was a popular lunch-time venue during the event too, as we took advantage of the 10% discount offered to anyone wearing a Meccano Magic Display badge.

The display was open to the public from 10am to 4pm on Good Friday, Saturday, and Easter Sunday. On Friday evening, we had a soup and rolls dinner at St Peter's Anglican Church Hall followed by a very interesting slide show by Graham Jost on his trip to Meccano exhibitions at Skegness (England) and Saint Marcellin (France) in 2011. We had a walk-around before and after the public time on the Saturday for the exhibitors to talk about their models. On Saturday evening we had a buffet meal at the Suburban Club in Tahunanui Drive.

Most exhibitors (ca. 12) were members of CMC, with **Graham and Mary Jost** (Melbourne), and **Simon Moody** (Wellington) in addition to us from Nelson. We had hoped to see more people from the North Island at our display, but competing events diverted them elsewhere.

Text continues on p 16.



Cameron McFarland with an extensive display of K'Nex models. [GJ]



Graeme O'Neil holding his Renault F1 racing car with a range of other vehicles.

Photos from the Meccano Magic Show in Stoke over Easter.



Photo credits: JS = John Stark,
GJ = Graham Jost

David Couch with his chocolate dispensing robot arm and novel French Knitting Machine. [JS]

Simon Moody with his partially completed dockside crane – one of his smaller cranes in recent years! [JS]



A general view of about one quarter of the display with John Hamlyn's models on the near table and Roland Jaspers' behind. [JS]





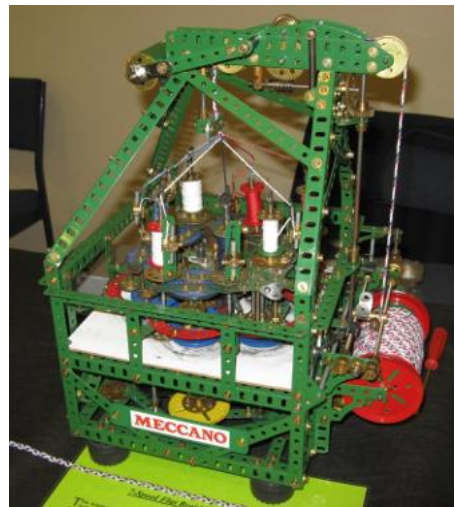
John Stark with 4.5 of his seven clocks, while Mike Howse looks on. [GJ]

Roland Jaspers describing his interactive racing car game. [JS]



The Torro building tables were a constant hive of activity. [GJ]

Mary Jost and her delightfully creative Noah's Ark including some typical NZ (kiwi) and Australian (koala, kangaroo) animals. [GJ]



Graham Jost's 7-spool flat braider performed flawlessly throughout the weekend. [GJ].

The exhibition was attended by approximately 1,300 people, which was a pleasing result. The public reaction was very positive with several people asking when the next one would be held. A highlight was a man from Canada who had seen the event advertised on the NZ Meccano website and timed his planned visit to New Zealand so that he could attend!

We surveyed the public as they came in to find out how they heard about the event. Forty percent mentioned newspaper advertising and articles, with the Its On website (14%), posters and flyers (11%), and word-of-mouth (10%) also proving effective.

The hands-on *Torro* building activity was extremely popular with many children (or their dads!) producing some excellent models.

To the best of our knowledge this is the first Meccano display ever held in Nelson. The exhibition did a great deal to raise the profile of Meccano in Nelson and several people indicated that they would be interested in attending Meccano Club meetings should a Nelson Meccano Club be established.

It was great to see exhibitors with models designed to engage with the public. People clearly preferred models that moved and, even more, models that they could interact with. Many also liked having the builders present to talk about their models and explain technical details. Visitors appreciated being able to take away things produced by the models, such as braid, Meccanograph patterns, or chocolate bars.

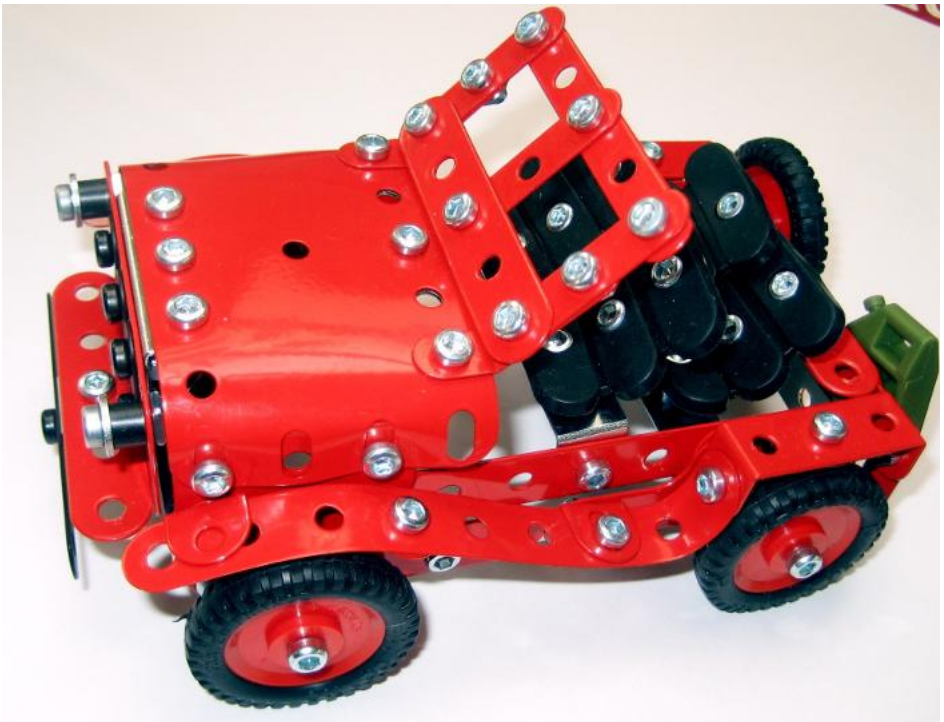
The Adventures of Tintin; the 4x4 model

by Les Megget
(with a little help from Bernard Périer)

I've at last got around to building this model 4x4 after receiving it before Christmas. Well I'm afraid to report that it's not up to standard and as Bernard Périer says in CQ95 (March 2012) "Meccano France should have used the Liverpool model Jeep from the 1961 No. 1 manual as the basis of this model". Also note that nowhere is the model called a *Jeep* because the *Chrysler Company* would never have let their name be associated with such a poor clone (but note that they did in 2009 with the Jeep Wrangler advertising using a later yellow/silver manual model). Bernard refused to build the latest model from the set but build his own version using many of the set's nice red pieces and a few more.

The first real problem is that Meccano France didn't use the 5-1/2" by 2-1/2" Flanged Plate, we all know and love, as the floor pan. Instead the set uses 9-hole Strips, both normal and Narrow varieties, 3-hole Flat Girders and 1" by 1/2"

Corner Brackets as the chassis rails with five 2 1/2" by 1/2" DAS as the cross members. Thus the chassis rails are not straight and are quite twisted resulting in the front wheels having a lot of negative camber and toe in. Result is it doesn't roll along the floor well. This twisting is really due to the lapping of strips, flat girders and the 3 hole by 1 hole Corner Bracket along the length without the use of a Washer or two to keep the rails straight! In fact it's a dog's breakfast (see second photo).



The bonnet is made from a nice looking 7 by 4 hole Flexible Plate (Yes *FOUR* holes) which requires bending by 90 degrees on its sides over a radius of about ½". Why Meccano keeps inventing these new plates is beyond me. Bernard uses two 11-hole by 3-hole Plates (spliced by 2 holes) in his version and gets the ground clearance right as well. I found it impossible to bend this plate correctly and get the normal length fixing Bolt on each side into position. In desperation I used one of the 3/8" Bolts in the set and then had to find another later on to use where the instructions specified its use. In my opinion I can't see an 8 year old being able to construct this without the help of the ex-Governor of California (Arnie S.) in his film-era physical shape. I nearly went searching for my long nosed pliers!

The seats are abysmal. Those rubber seat pieces (P/N A177) bolted to a Narrow 1" by ½" Obtuse Angle Bracket bolted directly to a transverse DAS. The problem is that the cab is 5 holes wide and the seats are each 3 holes wide. To fit 2 seats side by side they have to overlap 1 hole; just plain stupid and totally unrealistic. Bernard uses two 1" Flat Girders and ½" Angle Brackets to produce seats which look the part. The model uses the same rubber seats for the rear (lower by ¼" relative to the front seats) where a bench seat made from a 5-hole Flat Girder would have sufficed.

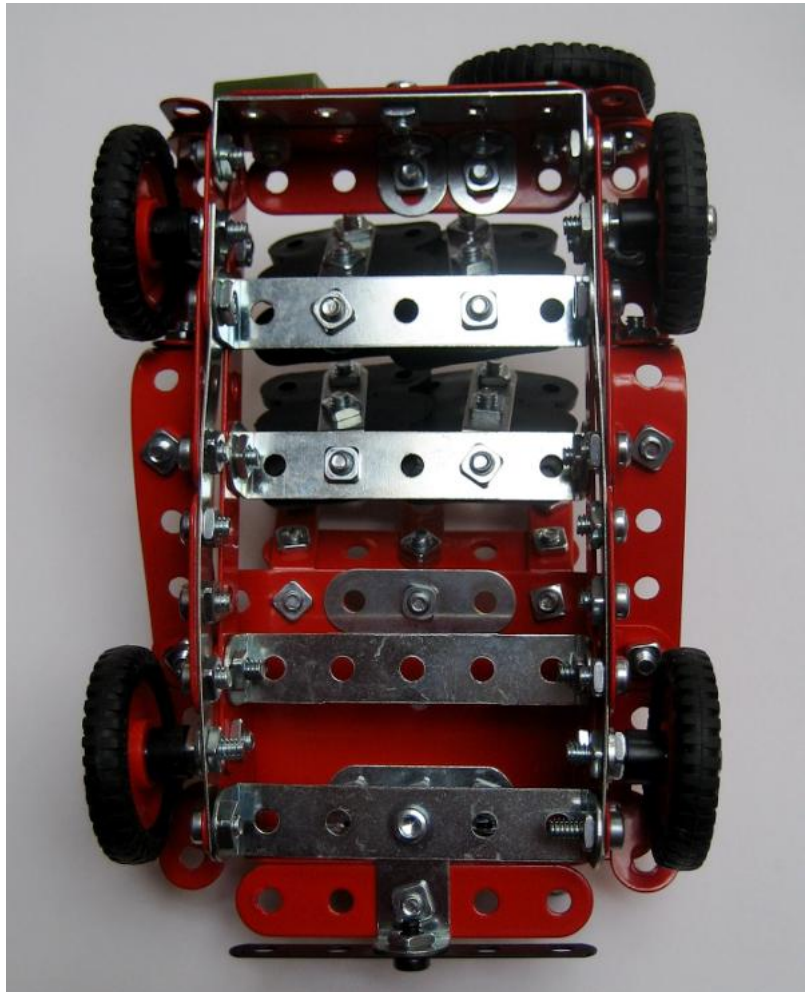
Bernard Périer lists 18 things he dislikes about the set model, some important, some not so much. The most critical missing piece is a steering wheel and with an open top vehicle this is a necessity. The shame is that Meccano make a nice looking 1" diameter plastic wheel (see that loco set without a tender) which would have been perfect fitted to an Obtuse Angle Bracket under the bonnet.

The front view is the best and it does look like a Jeep with its 3 Narrow black 2-hole vertical radiator Strips fixed with black Bolts. The mud guards are all wrong; Jeeps never had a running board as far as I know. The front bumper is held on by ONE central Bolt into an Angle Bracket; very prototypical, not. I think I will have to build Bernard's alternative jeep as a comparison.

Now all these inaccuracies probably wouldn't matter to a 5 year old but this set is aimed at 8 years and older and boys (and girls) of that age are a lot more discerning, if what we saw being built at Te Papa is anything to go by.

I laughed at Bernard's feelings about how this model was accepted by film director Steven Spielberg; "I suspect Spielberg's eyes were very tired when he agreed on such a caricature – or Meccano sent him a more attractive model, who knows?" Suffice to say that this model won't go down in my top 10 of small Meccano models of all time. However the glossy red parts could be very useful on a fire engine or even a crane, maybe.

Note 1: a Jeep never appeared in the *Tintin* book "The Secret of the Unicorn" but a brown one appears in the film, but I guess that is Spielberg's problem or maybe it's just artistic licence?



Note 2: The paint quality was much better in this kit than in the Seaplane set. No flaking paint and the paint stayed secure even after the extreme bending of the bonnet.

DOING IT ALL AGAIN AT TE PAPA MUSEUM

By Les Megget

Shirley and I only arrived at lunch time on Easter Saturday, the second Meccano display day at the Te Papa Museum in Wellington. By then, of course, everything was set up and a good crowd were hanging over the extensive display of Meccano models and sets.



President **Peter Hancock** had been asked by the Te Papa management late last year whether the NZFMM would organise another Meccano exhibition this year, after the very successful exhibition held in late November 2010. They wanted the display to be on over a school holiday period and preferably Easter. Now we knew that the Christchurch Club were organising a display in Stoke over Easter and Peter wasn't keen to split the membership but he was given no choice. So, as on the previous visit south, Peter organised a large van to transport all the AMG member's models, as well as picking up some large and impressive models from **Brian Wilson** in New Plymouth. Brian builds for his own enjoyment and this was the first time that any of his models had been displayed. His 6 excellent models were a Massey Harris 726 combine harvester, Viccon-LB1290 big square bailer, John Deere Crawler loader, Caterpillar D8R, Case 1150 Caterpillar Tractor and a John Deere 9630 Tractor.

We missed all the drama (if any) of setting up the 56 metres of tables, placing black coverings and setting out the models. The group were only allowed into the display space on the first floor after the Museum had closed at 6pm on Good Friday. However I'm told there was no drama this time because Peter had written up a full list of instructions and the order in which they were to be done. He used a double rectangular table display set out

this time rather than the more complex tapered V-plan of 2010. When we arrived NZFMM members helping out were **David & Elizabeth Wall, John & Cora Denton, William Irwin, Garry Higgins, Max George, Lou Nicholls, Stan Baker, Campbell Morrison, Jeremy Sowerbutts, Reg Barlow, Robert Vale** plus a couple of Te Papa staff who had been rostered on to help us out over the weekend. I also spoke briefly to **Lloyd Spackman** who came in from Tawa for a short visit.

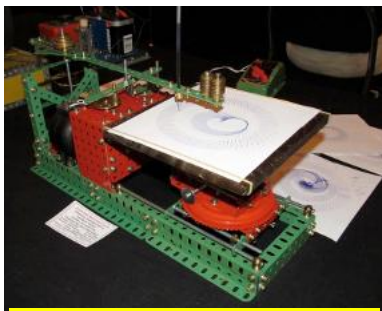
My Liebherr City crane had come from Auckland in the van, in three large pieces, and David had valiantly put the pieces together but wasn't brave enough (wise man) to connect the wires up and raise the boom, etc. Thus my first job was to get all 12 wired up motors running, which was accomplished without too much loss of sweat and tears! Peter had texted me the previous evening saying that several visitors on the Saturday were intending to revisit on Easter Sunday so they could see the crane operating; No pressure then Peter? The crane had been a rushed job to get most everything operating for Easter and some aspects had had little testing but I was very pleased that nothing fell apart or seized up over the next 2 days. The crane still needs body panels and the counterweight block but in its displayed state all the mechanised aspects could be easily seen. As usual the most asked queries were "How long did it take to build and did I make it from a set?" As Stan thinks there could be \$50,000 of parts in my crane if they purchased new today, I don't think such sets would be a big seller! Also Shirley is demanding an explanation of this figure!!!

Stan was still in the development stage of his domino placing machine but was intriguing the crowd anyway, even though the dominos were being placed a little too closely together. That problem was solved overnight by Stan inserting a pair of reduction pinions into the drive train. The crowds were often 3 deep watching the dominos being placed and then being knocked over by the smallest child watching. Not often do you get applause for a Meccano model successfully doing its thing!



John Denton (R) and 3 other well dressed gentlemen seen at Te Papa. Frank Hornby had already left the building!

Both David and William were busy changing bits of paper on their Meccanographs over the long weekend. Meccanographs are obviously still a big hit with children at exhibitions.



William Irwin's Meccanograph uses a cricket ball motor.

John Denton and Gary Higgins were kept busy displaying their multitude of models. Gary had flattened the batteries in his modern models several times by Monday evening. Gary was also displaying the latest

Space Chaos models, which he tells me will be available in NZ by the time you read this. Also the 3 Tintin models will be released in NZ by the importer/distributor shortly. Gary had his versions of the Tintin inspired Galleon and seaplane on display.

Robert Vale had several very nice Meccano Constructor aeroplanes on display and spent much of the 3 days manning his stand.

Peter had a very busy Easter supervising the kids (and their parents) using the ten 00+ sets to build models from the *Spanner* instigated Christmas Challenge models, or anything they wished to build. More building spots could have been used if there had been more table space, as there were children waiting their turn almost all the time. Peter was assisted by **Shirley Megget, Lou Nicholls, Robert Vale, the Te Papa staff** and anyone else who had nothing better to do. I was too busy driving the crane! The look on the children's faces (and their parents) when their masterpiece was complete was a joy to behold. I'm sure we have some new Meccano fans after this exhibition. What a pity Meccano France doesn't produce a set like the 00+ one, we could have sold dozens over Easter. Many parents were amazed to see their children concentrating on building their model for up to 2 hours without being bored or distracted; Meccano certainly still has its place in the development of the younger generation in this electronic age. The Te Papa gift shop was also displaying a few of the current sets on a special stand. I don't know if they had any sales over the weekend.

The AMG members had a lovely dinner together at the Ibis Hotel, where we were all staying, on the Saturday evening.

Easter Monday dawned as yet another perfect Wellington day (who says Wellington weather is terrible? Not when we visit). Another full-on day from 10am till 6pm with a good crowd through the Museum. **Bob & Anne Prescott** arrived for a look after spending the earlier part of Easter at the Palmerston North show. At closing time we began the "tear down" and Peter had the van fully loaded up by 9:30pm. We were sustained during this activity by pizzas ordered and paid for by Te Papa, a much appreciated energy lift. Great care was needed to get every model into their allotted spot, so that there would be no movement or damage on the way north, as well as placing Brian's models for easy removal in New Plymouth. One of the large wheels and half-shaft on Brian's *John Deere* tractor fell off as I gave it to Peter to pack in the van. Peter just happened to have a Spring Clip in his pocket to fix the errant wheel, like its partner.

Peter tells me that Te Papa reported there were 17,682 people through the Museum over the 3 days of our display, this being nearly a 20% increase over the same 3 days during Easter 2011. Even though entry to the Museum is free, they electronically count the number of people entering.

We left the hotel early next morning to catch the Picton Ferry while Peter drove back to Auckland in one day this time (721 km in 11 hours). A most successful exhibition and my thanks to Peter and everyone else who made it such an enjoyable event. There are *no* plans by the AMG to threeppeat this exhibition but maybe the WMC might consider it if asked by Te Papa sometime in the future?



Brian Wilson's John Deere Crawler Loader.

**N.Z. FEDERATION OF MECCANO MODELLERS
Income and Expenses - April 2011 to March 2012**

| 2010/11 | | | 2011/12 |
|----------------|---|-----------------------|----------------|
| 3366.89 | Cash Book Balance | March 1, 2011 | 3937.23 |
| | INCOME | | |
| 3092.00 | Subscriptions N.Z. | 3322.00 | |
| 874.63 | Subscriptions, Australia | 805.20 | |
| 780.74 | Subscriptions, Rest of World | 753.71 | |
| 128.00 | Subscriptions in advance | 35.34 | |
| 6.50 | Back copies & casuals | 7.00 | |
| 161.00 | Donations | 46.00 | |
| <u>5042.87</u> | | | <u>4969.25</u> |
| 8409.76 | | | 8906.48 |
| | EXPENSES | | |
| 3096.31 | Printing 4 Issues | 3046.82 | |
| ----- | Printing back copies | 10.76 | |
| 31.74 | Printing Subs. list | 27.60 | |
| ----- | Printing Subs. Renewal forms | 39.22 | |
| ----- | Printing Feb. folly model | 34.50 | |
| 1197.40 | Postage | 1104.70 | |
| 80.00 | Plastic Wrapping | 80.00 | |
| 12.00 | Envelopes | ----- | |
| 51.08 | Labels | ----- | |
| <u>4.00</u> | Bank Charges | ----- | |
| <u>4472.53</u> | | | <u>4343.60</u> |
| 3937.23 | Cash Book Balance | March 1, 2012 | 4562.88 |
| | Bank Reconciliation | | |
| | Cash Book Balance March 1, 2012 | 4562.88 | |
| | plus 12/13 Subs paid since 1/3/12 | 2869.15 | |
| | plus outstanding cheque no.73 | <u>306.70</u> | |
| | Bank Balance April 5 th , 2012 | <u>7738.73</u> | |

Bob Prescott
NZFMM Treasurer

Meccano Space Chaos Range of Sets

By Gary Higgins

Meccano has recently launched a new set of models they have called the Space chaos sets. There are a number of models available with two major types:- the silver force (good guys) and the dark pirates (bad guys). Ships are available for each of the sets such as raiders, drones, patrols, bombers, fighters, commanders and destroyers.

Each of the sets normally make two versions of the spaceship and there is the ability to morph the vessel into another form by transforming it; (usually accomplished by moving sections on hinges), yes the larger sets have heaps of hinges.

The models are interesting, although they provide limited Meccano building activity. Meccano have placed the emphasis on what you can do with the models and box contents once the model is made up. This is encouraged by the use of cards, both combat cards and transformation cards, which allow you to play a board game. The cards, which are in the model boxes have secret codes on them enabling the owner to go online and download



more cards, game boards, posters, etc. and to play online versions of the game.

There are a number of new plastic parts introduced with these sets, as is normally the case giving extra capabilities to make realistic cockpits. Some of the dark pirate models are reminiscent of star wars' designs and the do look appealing.

I had the models on display at the Te Papa Meccano exhibition recently in Wellington and there was a great deal of interest. The Meccano builder and modeller these days, probably with an average age of 50+ will find them of dubious value but the market is aimed smack at the 9-12 year olds and is probably spot on as most of these kids are very computer savvy.

The prices are not unreasonable and the models I obtained were available on Trademe and were sourced from Australia. Prices ranged from about \$50 for the largest set down to \$10.00. I saw larger prices with sets from the UK up to 50 pound in one case plus postage of 20 pound, which makes it an expensive buy from there.

The best deal was a boxed set of 10 models (makes 5 at a time) put out in the USA for \$60.00 US. This was in a blown plastic box, similar to those used for the Mechanical Workshop set, and was under the *Erector* logo (as all US Meccano is) called the deluxe battle set.

The sets also have sound and fibre optic lighting in the two commander sets and sound and lighting effects in some of the mid-range sets. They have come a long way from Meccano's other efforts at space sets such as the 2501 construction set and the Hyperspace set .

Meccano took the *Best in Show* award at the 2011 London Toy fair with the Space Chaos silver force fighter picked as one of the best construction toys.

They are due for release in NZ in May so I guess time will tell if Meccano have a winner on their hands. (Ed. 12 Space Chaos sets are now available in NZ ranging from \$15 to \$90, but special offers are available).

Christchurch Meccano Club

Est. 1929

May 2012 Quarterly Report

Mike Howse

The period February 2012 through to May 2012 has been very busy on the Meccano front for most members of the CMC.

This is reflective in the numbers of members who have been attending our monthly meetings. We continue to have 25 to 30 members and a fine selection of models in attendance.

Club members have been involved in three Meccano displays over the last three months.

The major display was in Nelson, where CMC Club members, in conjunction with Nelson Meccano enthusiasts' John Stark and David Couch held a very successful Meccano Magic display in the Stoke Memorial Hall over Easter.

The large selection of Meccano models on display were very well received and admired by the steady stream of visitors over the three days the display was open to the public. It was very pleasing also to see the large number of very well behaved children attending and making use of the "hands-on" models and having a go at model making with the Club's Torro Construction Sets.



Neil Pluck gazes over his display in the Stoke Memorial Hall at Easter.

The excellent turnout by the Nelson public can be put down largely due to the sterling efforts put in by John and David, and their respective wives,

Yvonne and Jane in the marketing of the event in and around the Nelson area.

There is a separate comprehensive report on the Nelson display by John and David in this edition.

Please have a look at the large collection of pictures of the Nelson Display on the Facebook page of the Christchurch Meccano Club: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Christchurch-Meccano-Club/188232337862407>

CMC members have held two other one day Meccano displays in Christchurch since Easter, one at the Woolston Community Fair which was held at Woolston Park, the second was held at the Philipstown School and was run by the Christchurch City Council in conjunction with the Christchurch Police.

Pictures of these displays' are also on our Facebook page. Both events were very well supported by the Christchurch public.

At the May Club meeting President Neil Pluck reminded members that the Club's AGM will be held immediately prior to the next monthly on Friday 01 June 2012 at 07:30pm.

As per the Club's constitution, the positions of President, Secretary and Treasurer are voted on every two years, this is election year!!!!

A reminder to anyone who wishes to vote for, or stand for any one of the three roles, you, and your nominator, must be current financial members of the Christchurch Meccano Club, and, your nomination must be received, in writing, by the Secretary no later than one week prior to the 01 June 2012 meeting.

It's worth noting, all three incumbents will again be standing.

On a sadder note, President Neil Pluck announced that due to continuing ill health Mrs. McFarland has had to resign from supper duties. On behalf of the club Neil thanked Joy for the many years of providing supper to club members and visitors and wished her well and a speedy recovery.

The Christchurch Meccano Club has a number of public displays planned for the coming 6 months, one of which will be out of Christchurch again.



Meeting Date:
30th March
2012, 7:30pm

Another good turn out this meeting with 11 members present.

The primary objective of the meeting was to gather the models etc. for the Te Papa exhibition and to confirm any support available during the period of the display. As can be seen below a reasonable number of display items were supplied to augment those being brought by Peter Hancock. A number of members were bringing their models on the set-up evening and others confirmed the days and times they would be able to assist at the display.



Campbell's "Another Housefly" (see top right).

Models:

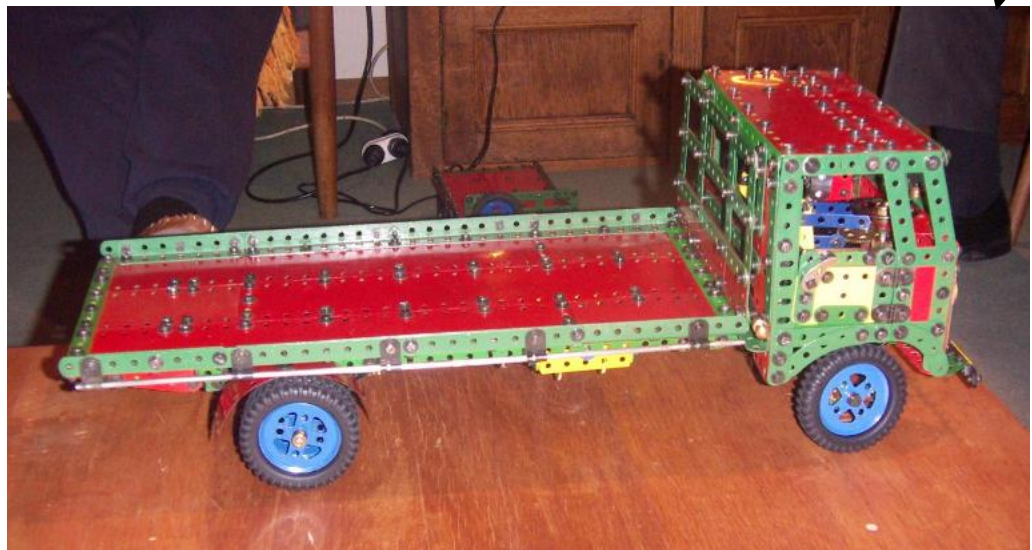
Campbell showed his rendition of an Arthur Ganson sculpture 'Another Housefly'.

Stan Baker bought his block stacker which was in the very early stages of development. Stan's challenge to the members was to guess what it was supposed to do, nobody got it, although there were many humorous suggestions. The idea is to lay out two parallel rows of blocks which will then be felled like a domino stack, gathered and then re-laid. Stan admits he has a wee way to go and it may end up being a demonstration of a model in development. (See the Te Rapa report for more details and a photo of Stan's stacker).

Simon Moody brought his final February Folly entry. The truck and trailer performed very well.



No arrangement for a venue for the next meeting could be finalised but subsequent to the meeting many members said they preferred to move the meeting to avoid the Queens Birthday weekend. So the meeting will again be at **Campbell Morrison's** but at 2pm on Saturday 9th June.



February Folly 2012

By Peter Hancock

St Andrew's Church Hall, Titiraupenga Street Taupo was the venue for this very successful get together of eighteen Meccanomen and seven wives who had travelled from various points of the compass from around the North Island to attend the event. This was an excellent attendance given that there were other events taking place over the weekend to which Meccanomen were previously committed. Apologises were received from **Les Megget, William Irwin, Gary Higgins, Daryl Anderson and John Rickit.**

Selwyn Bluett had brought a large array of used/new parts that were surplus to his requirements to sell and Jeff Clark had brought his extensive range of brass ware and both traded well throughout the day. (Have you ever wondered where Meccanomen keep their spare cash? They nod wisely and state that they have finished spending only to see them drawn back a short time later to the table to purchase yet another 'can't do without' part and squeezing out a few more 'pennies' from some secret source to pay for them?)



Bob Neilson had brought his laptop and ran a loop of photos and memories that had been played at the remembrance get together held last year for his father, our late good friend Bruce Neilson. Peter Hancock displayed a copy of the latest NZFMM Magazine on his laptop to demonstrate what we can expect the magazine to look like in PDF format which will be offered to subscribers in addition to the hardcopy of the magazine from the May 2012 edition. The concept was warmly welcomed with several indicating that they would like to receive

both while others believe that the additional offering will bring a different group of subscribers into the NZFMM fold. Members commented on the sterling service that John Ince had provided us with over the past decade as the magazine compositor while recording very favourable comments on the format that Les Megget had applied to his first offering as both editor and compositor of the latest edition of the magazine.

The morning continued in a very leisurely manner with members deeply engrossed in a variety of discussions on a wide range of subjects including several models such as a 16th century Nuremburg clock provided by **David Wall** and a special prototype walking track beam unit over bottomless cups of tea and coffee. When hunger pangs began to settle in late morning a break was called so that attendees could go in search of sustenance and enjoy some fresh air and exercise. The team regrouped in the early afternoon at which time the all-important showing and judging of the Clockwork Motor Challenge took place. The 2012 challenge was to build a truck and trailer assembly as detailed in the 1951, Outfit 9 Meccano Manual. Only Meccano or replica parts could be used and it was to be powered by a No.1 clockwork motor. There were two, sections to the competition the first being

“Elegance” the second “Go and Show”.

There were five entrants, **David Shand, Brian Hickson, Don Flowers, Robin Rye and Simon Moody** (who dreamt up the challenge and the rules). All five entrants and those who had tried but not entered a completed model agreed emphatically that building a vehicle from this model plan was extremely difficult and very time consuming. Each entrant was given an opportunity to explain their approach to making the model and the difficulties encountered, the changes they made and why.

Each model was carefully scrutinised and the finish and features of each studied. Finally, each entrant was provided the opportunity to show how their model completed the task set under the “Go and Show” rules. Four of the models were powered up with a wide variation of performance results. Robin’s vehicle lacked a motor so was only able to compete in the “Elegance” section. Only one of the powered vehicles actually came anywhere near meeting the criteria set. Brian Hickson’s offering did complete the performance section while the next best came a distant second.

The winners were: Robin Rye for “Elegance” with his yellow rather modern up market version of the plan, David Shand whose model most closely represented the competition plans and Brian Hickson who’s tilting cab vehicle did actually complete the figure of eight manoeuvre. Each won a quantity of liquorice allsorts for their efforts.

The day closed with a group photo and the expectations that a similar event will be held in the future after the Auckland Easter 2013 Convention. Several members and wives stayed over for the night and attended a pleasant evening meal at the Taupo Cosmopolitan Club.



Don Flowers



Robin Rye



Brian Hickson



Simon Moody



David Shand

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General view at Palmerston North Easter Display

New Zealand Club Diary 2012

Auckland Meccano Guild

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

Secretary: Peter Hancock, Tel. (09) 535 5355

Meetings at 2pm on second Saturday every third month.
The next meeting will be held on **Saturday 11 August, 2012** at Neil Carey's, 23 Eaton Road, starting at 2pm.

MWT Meccano Club

President: Daryl Anderson

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

Meetings at 2pm. Next meeting: **?????? 2012** at St. Luke's Church Hall, Corner Cornfoot and Manuka Streets, Wanganui.

Wellington Meccano Club

President: Campbell Morrison, Tel. (04) 528 8624

Secretary: Simon Moody, Tel. (04) 528 3032

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

Meeting at 7:30pm on first Friday every second month.
Next meeting: **Saturday 9 June** at Campbell Morrison's 84 Blue Mountains Road, Silverstream, Upper Hutt.

Christchurch Meccano Club

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

Secretary: Roland Jaspers, Tel. (03) 358 1357

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

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Hawera: Daryl Anderson, Tel. (06) 278 7666

Kapiti Coast: Bob Prescott, Tel. (04) 905 2963

Napier: Trevor Adam, Tel. (06) 843 4837

Palmerston North: Bruce Geange, Tel. (06) 357 0566

Articles, etc. for the August 2012 issue of NZFMM Magazine should be sent to Les Megget well before 10th August 2012.

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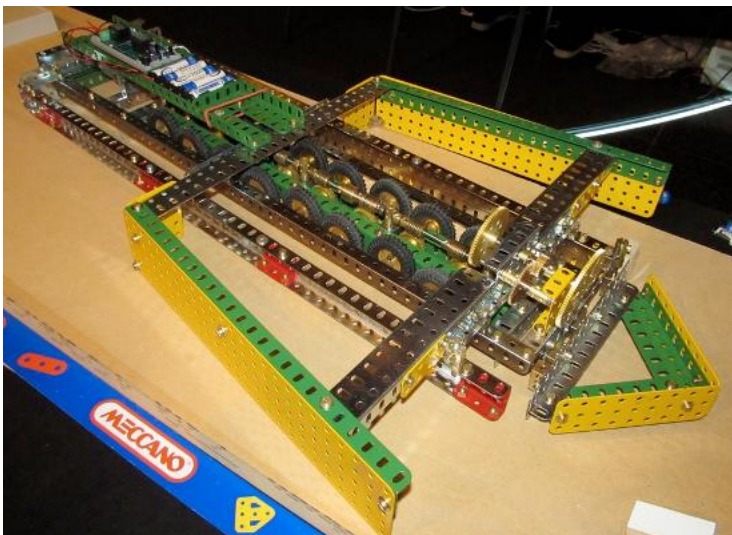
Some of the larger models on display at Te Papa over Easter



Brian Wilson's John Deere tractor with fibreglass bonnet!



The Editor's Liebherr City mobile crane awaiting its driver to rig the hook, etc.



Stan Baker's Domino placing machine ready for domino loading prior to placing them.