NZFMM MAGAZINE

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NZFMM Life Member and Golden Spanner recipient Don Blakeborough passed away on the 4th October 2012. The photo above shows Don with his RC bulldozer and truck & semi-trailer taken in March 2009, while the photo to the left shows him and his grandfather clock taken in October 2007.

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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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Is there a future for Meccano?

With the recent passing of NZFMM Life Member **Don Blakeborough** I'm again forced to think whether there is a future for Meccano as the old stalwarts pass on and their places are seldom filled by younger Meccanomen and women.

The latest Meccano products some would say are a load of rubbish, although *The Crazy Rabbids* Washing Machine does contain quite a lot of metal pieces (about 30, excluding nuts and bolts). Although produced for the younger generation's need for instant gratification, most sets are mainly of plastic with few nuts and bolts and metal pieces, these expensive 1-off models will soon be out of fashion and destined for the rubbish bin I fear. The enthusiast has to get much of his/her "real" brass and steel Meccano from producers other than *Meccano France* and I wonder how long this will continue as we all get older. At least Meccano is still making 10-50 model sets but I wonder how many of these sets they actually sell and for how long they will produce these almost "traditional" sets? Meccano has missed its chance to mix modern electronic control with traditional Meccano, the single model RC cars and trucks made using Nikko's *black box* haven't been a lasting success in my view. Meccano's competitors have left them for dead on this one I'm afraid.

With this issue you will find a registration form for next Easter's Convention to be centred at Pukekohe, South Auckland. As Peter Hancock says in his write–up this is likely to be the last Convention to be held in Auckland. We are all getting too old and tired to think of organising another in 8 or so years time!

I hope to see many of you at the 2013 Convention and don't forget to book your accommodation asap. Season's greetings to you all.

LM

Contents

Don Blakeborough: 27 January 1934—4 October 2012

It is with very real sadness that I heard of the death of Don Blakeborough.

I first met Don together with Joyce and their two children when they visited Elizabeth and I in early 1977. Needless-to-say we discussed a range of Meccano topics including Don's idea of creating a nationwide Meccano group with the object of having periodic inter-club meetings. I expressed my interest and willingness to participate in any such gathering. The first of these was held in Wellington during Easter 1978 at the railway staff social hall. It was a great success and formed the basis for the many subsequent biennial conventions.

I do not pretend to have known Don very well, however, we always had a good chinwag during the many Conventions we attended. Don sometimes also popped in to see us when visiting his relatives in Auckland. (Blakeborough Drive on Auckland's North Shore was named after one of them.)

To Don I attribute the founding of the **NZFMM** together with its magazine. Whilst I do not recall him ever having been its President, I do know he was its first Life Member.

Don's knowledge of Meccano and everything related to it was truly prodigious and together with the late Lindsay Bond, they formed a formidable Meccano brains-trust.

My last meeting with Don was during the Palmerston North Exhibition in 2011.

It was a privilege to have known him.

David Wall
NZFMM Life Member

DONALD GILBERT BLAKEBOROUGH

This eulogy was read at the Memorial Service

Donald Gilbert Blakeborough was born 27th January 1934 at Napier. The family moved to Pirongia in the Waikato, to Papakura, then to Warkworth.

Don went to school at Warkworth. Like other children he was infamous for not doing homework and falling asleep as soon as he got home. He and his brother Ivan had to rise early each day to help with milk duties. Along with other youngsters he was known to steal his Dad's tobacco, and even take a ride in the family car.

As a lad he was very concerned about the War raging in Europe. His interest in family history made him aware that there would be relatives in England who may be bombed. He was scared of the dark.

Leaving school he took up an apprenticeship with McEwans Engineering. Then he had to go to Compulsory Military Training at Dunedin. He was interested in joining the Air Force. It was there that he met and wooed a certain Joyce Harvey. They were married on Christmas Eve 1955 and lived in Dunedin, Central Otago, Dunback and Herbert. Eventually they had five children. Sadly, young Don, Alan and Ian were drowned in a boating tragedy in 1967.

Phillip and Marie, their remaining children, remember a memorial cup presented to Herbert School, and the way it was played for every year with Dunback School. When Herbert School closed the cup was returned to the Blakebourgh family.

The Blakebourgh's lived in a number of places after Herbert – Oamaru, Ngaio and finally Wanganui. Don pursued various occupations such as farming, engineering, truck driving, rabbiting and then on the NZ Railways where he worked as a shunter, a guard and in various supervisory roles.

Don spent 38 years with the railways and he was not slow to take up a cudgel with other railway tenants and lead them when NZR wanted to sell the houses from under them.

You will remember that Joyce passed away on the 11th November 2007.

(Continued on next page).

After this Don had a short marriage with Ingrid who was an old friend of Joyce and Don. Sadly they parted after six months.

Don had gone to church most of his life and from a young age had a yearning to be a minister. He had several roles in various churches and he was well known for his helping with friendship lunches at St Luke's.

Don loved children, his own and others. He often hosted groups from Ngaio School and helped with school trips and camps. He also helped with scout camps and became a leader in the Ngaio Venturers. But Don had a special love for his children and grandchildren. Photos of them were still on display in the flat in which he spent his final months. He loved playing games and practical jokes with them. One was taking the spoon from his favourite chicory coffee and burning a child's hand with it.

Other interests were chess, debating, Esperanto, bowls and tennis. But of course we know him most of all because of Meccano. Hobby or obsession, Don was involved with Meccano most of his life. Before the days of Meccano Clubs he used to hold his own displays, often in the Oamaru Library, and then once in Kilbirnie Park, Wellington, where he met and forged a friendship with Lou Nicholls. They started the *Wellington Meccano Club*. Then at Wanganui he helped start another club. He has held secretary and president roles in both clubs. At Wellington he started a monthly magazine for its members and over a period of time this became mailed all over the country. Don was instrumental in starting the *NZ Meccano Federation* and produced their magazine for several years.

Every family holiday was an excuse for catching up with friends from the Meccano world. He came with his family to see me at Rangipo in about 1978. We probably met earlier at Christchurch in 1975 where I attended both Meccano and Model Railway exhibitions.

Don had a passion for making clocks. His family back in England were very well known clock makers. He has built numerous large models to scale where ever possible. Other such models were an AB class steam locomotive which was displayed at the Wellington Railway Station for several months and I particularly remember his working model of an Elevator/Lift and large Walking Dragline.

I guess we all have a copy of Don's "Encyclopaedia of Meccano Parts", which he completed in 1995. But so many new variations of parts have appeared since. Who will be the next Don to write some extra volumes?

Don was awarded a life membership of the Wellington Meccano Club and also of the NZ Meccano Federation. In 2004 he received the ISM's Golden Spanner award.

On the 4th October this year Don's life came to an end at 78 years and eight months. We remember so many times of fellowship and fun. But here today we particularly want to support Phillip and Marie in their time of loss.

Tom Pittams.

Why not join the ISM?

by Bob Prescott (ISM 565)

The *International Society of Meccanomen* has, as its title indicates, members from around the world – some thirty countries in all. The organisation's mission is "to encourage links in the Meccano world across international boundaries", a mission I am sure we all share.

The annual subscription at the present time is £20 and this is what you get:

The magazine "The International Meccanoman" (the I.M.) airmailed to you three times a year. This is an excellent 32 colour page magazine with lots of pictures. It includes articles about meccanomen, club exhibitions and models from all over the world as well as a 3 or 4 page "model building technology" section which will help both experienced and inexperienced members.

The ISM Yearbook which has the Society's Constitution, ISM awards, and contacts' information. There is a detailed list of all members and clubs, guilds and societies throughout the world as well as suppliers of Meccano sets and parts.

There is also an ISM badge available at a small cost.

The ISM has a website www.internationalmeccanomen.org.uk with lots of Meccano and Society information including how you can join and pay with your credit card.

Don't worry if you are not on line, I can provide a membership application and my details are inside the front cover of this NZFMM magazine. Feel free to contact me if you want any further information.

So take action NOW and join the ISM for the 2013 year.

"My Latest Crane",
Liebherr Compact Crane: LTC 1045-3.1

by Les Megget

Figure 1: Liebherr City Crane nearly ready for the road.

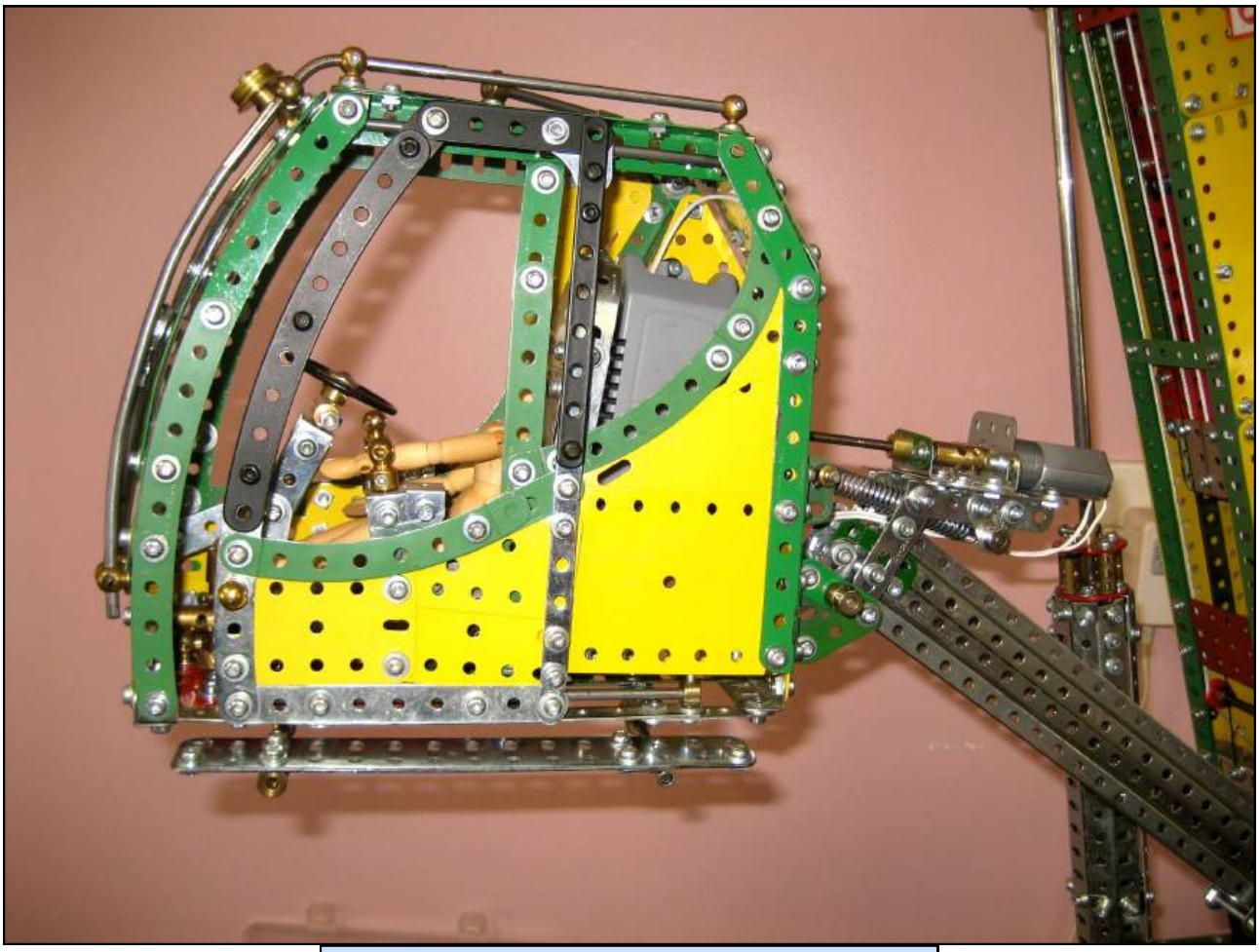

Figure 2: Liebherr City Crane: Cab fully elevated.

"My Latest Crane", Liebherr Compact Crane: LTC 1045-3.1

Part 2: The Crane & Driver's Cab

The near completed crane with the driver's cab in the travelling position can be seen in Figure 1, while Figure 2 shows the elevated cab being used in the crane mode.

Roller Bearing: The crane's roller bearing was one part which was taken directly from the earlier red Liebherr crane (LTM 1050), without modification. It is bolted in 4 places to a substantial box section across the chassis, which encloses the lower roller bearing used to carry the vertical forces from the crane. The upper, larger roller bearing mainly resists the overturning moments of the crane with boom extended and loaded hook. The inner circle of the roller bearing is attached to the base of the crane supporting structure by 8 long Bolts passing through two 6" diameter Circular Plates (see Figure 10). Thus the crane superstructure can easily be removed by undoing the 8 Nuts on these long bolts.

Crane Superstructure: The substantial frame which carries the boom support was a total redesign from the earlier crane and comprises mainly light green Angle Girders and Flat Girders forming channel sections (U-section). The boom pivots on a Large Axle (5/16" diameter) supported in Large Axle Square Bearing Plates, P/N 252. Similar Bearing Plates are the pivot supports on the boom sides.

Cab Support Frame: As mentioned in Part 1 the most innovative aspect of this crane is the use of only 1 cab instead of the two (truck and crane) common on most road going mobile cranes. The driver's cab is fixed to the crane support structure but is able to elevate, extend/retract and slew when being used as a crane but can be locked to the front of the carrier when being driven from site to site. The extendable cab support box section is supported in a very strong open box made of yellow Plates (doubled up 7 by 5 holes and 9 by 5 holes) seen in Figure 3. This was securely bolted to the outer left side of the boom support frame and the outer frame which makes up the left hand side panels of the crane superstructure. My initial design of this box had proven to be too flexible and had to be substantially rebuilt.

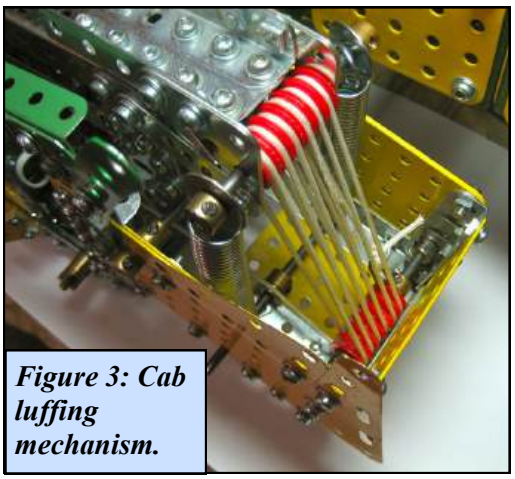

Figure 3: Cab luffing mechanism.

Cab Support Outer Arm: This 12 ½" long arm was constructed of zinc Angle Girders and Flat Girders to form an open sided box section, seen in Figure 4. I've kept the sides open for easy maintenance and to keep the weight down. The cab arm can elevate to about 45 degrees from the horizontal rest position, activated by a single hydraulic cylinder on the prototype. I first attempted to copy this mechanism by using a conventional Meccano Screwed Rod but the substantial loads were too great and the eccentricity due to the single screwed rod caused the arm to twist. Doubling up the screwed rods didn't help much either. I then reverted to one of the oldest mechanical advantage methods in history; the block and tackle system. A small low rpm motor with a small Bevel Gear drives a Large Bevel Gear on the winch shaft, relaying the braided cable back to the lower 6 plastic ½" Pulleys journalled in the open support box. The corresponding upper 6 Pulleys are of course positioned across the rear of the cab arm. Although the lever arm from the pulleys to the arm's pivot shaft is only about 2" this block and tackle mechanism will lift the 2 kg cab on its extended 22" long arm without difficulty, along with a little help of 2 long, non-Meccano springs to balance the load a little.

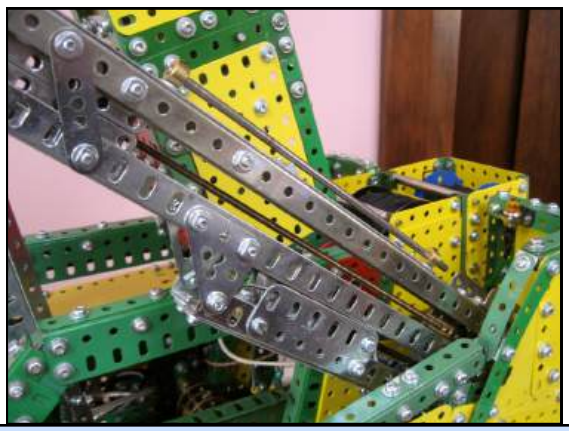

Figure 4: Cab outer support arm showing Screwed Rod drive to the inner extension section.

Cab Arm Telescoping: The inner cab arm telescopes out of the outer arm and is constructed from eight 12-½" Narrow Angle Girders. The top and bottom edges of the Narrow Girders run on the top and bottom inner edges of the outer box section, being kept in position by Bolt Heads along the outer arm. The inner arm extends by using a geared motor longitudinally positioned below the outer arm, driving via Sprocket and Chain a 12-½" Screwed Rod near the rear of the outer arm. The inner arm has a Threaded Coupling fixed at its rear which moves up and back along the screwed rod. The Screwed Rod is journalled in 2 Couplings (untapped cross holes) in the outer arm to reduce any tendency to buckle at full extension. Figure 5 shows the cab at full extension and maximum elevation. At this time the mini switches to control, the arm elevation and extension are positioned behind a hinged door in the side body panels of the crane support structure.

Figure 5: Driver's Cab fully extended and elevated. Boom at full luffing.

Cab Rotation: The cab itself needs to rotate about a horizontal axis as the arm moves from below the horizontal to 45 degrees. It can also be rotated above the horizontal so the driver gets a better view of the hook and load above him. I've used a medium sized geared motor from Stan Baker to rotate the cab, driving a Screwed Rod (4") running in the cross tapping of a Coupling supported on the back wall of the cab, shown in Figure 4. Again 2 springs were incorporated to reduce the force in the Screwed Rod. This motor is controlled by one of Stan's radio control reversing switches. The grey electronic box and the 5- 1.5V battery box holder are squeezed into the back of the cab behind and below the seat (see Figure 2). I started off using cables from a mini switch (12V) on the side of the crane structure but the cables need to extend with the telescoping arm, causing no end of problems as well as looking unsightly.

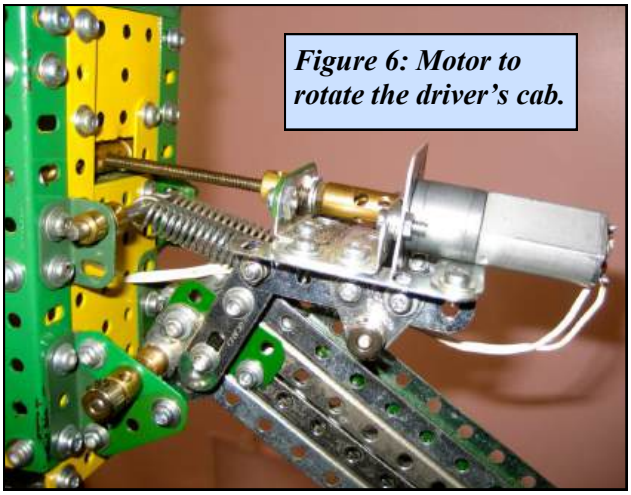

Figure 6: Motor to rotate the driver's cab.

Driver's Cab: The crane's cab is almost identical to that on the earlier crane, except this time it is yellow (see Figure 2). The dashboard is different (still to be fitted) and of course now it has the steering wheel there. The articulated (2 UJs) steering shaft has 2 small Helical Gears at its bottom to relay the motion horizontally back to the Coupling which couples up with the Socket Coupling on the carrier when in road travelling mode. The horizontal shaft is just above cab floor level, journalled in a couple of Handrail Supports. There is negligible space between the inner side of the cab and the boom's left hand side, in fact certain Bolt heads are likely to hit each other as the boom drops or rises. Making the cab ½" narrower would have looked silly (requiring a very narrow driver) and out of scale.

Telescoping Boom: The 4 section boom (should be 7 actually) was a headache to design and detail, as the booms have been on all my 3 previous mobile cranes. There is never enough room for the telescoping sections, if you are wishing to keep to scale, as I was. I decided to use Selwyn Blewett's method of sliding one section against its neighbour, namely ½" Flanged Wheels without boss (P/N 20e) running between long Perforated Strips spaced out along the sides of the neighbouring inner section. On the inner end of each section the Flanged Wheels are on the side of each section with their running strips on the inner sides of the corresponding outer section (if that makes sense?). The top end of this system is shown in Figure 7. Once setup correctly this mechanism works very well with little friction between sections and the sections will contract under gravity alone on each other at full luffing without the need for extra cables, as required in my earlier cranes.

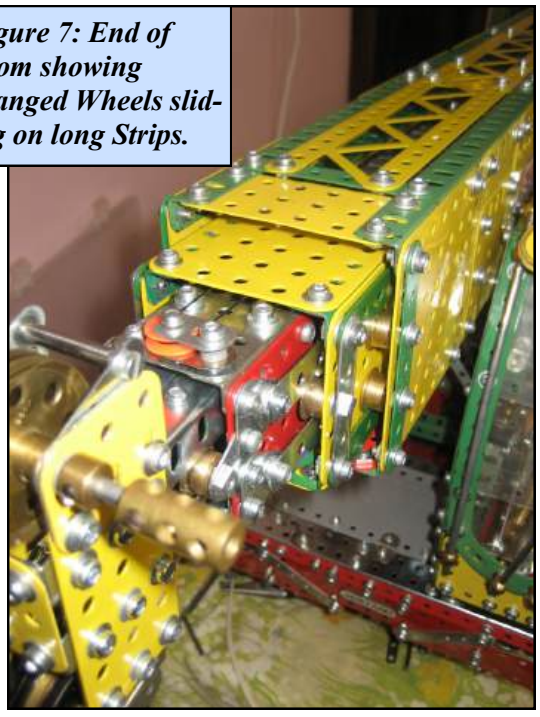

Figure 7: End of boom showing Flanged Wheels sliding on long Strips.

The depth and width of the 4 sections are: outer 7 by 6 holes, 2nd section 5 by 5 holes, 3rd section 4 by 3 holes and the inner section is 3 by 2 holes. There is very little free space between sections and a lot of time was spent setting up the sections so that they would not bind on each other. Some bending deformations occur in the inner sections when the boom is near horizontal (with a load on the hook) and some binding is then likely to occur but these mobile cranes are mainly used to lifting large loads at or near maximum luff, 82 degrees to the horizontal here. Sometimes I wish that I could use welded sections in such cases but that wouldn't be Meccano! I know of Meccanomen who use countersunk headed bolts in their telescoping booms but I stick to conventional Meccano Nuts and Bolts where ever possible.

The trickiest section was getting the ½" gap between the long Strips on section 3, it being only 4 holes deep. I've used 1" Triangular Plates at the ends (see Figure 7) but had to use Narrow Fish-plates, on the diagonal, along their length to position the Strips out from the section. I've since realised that I could use a single long Strip and a long (37 hole) Flat Girder on the side of the section to obtain an offset ½" gap. I may change to this system if I get annoyed with the inherent sideways sloppiness of the fish plate set up. The outer boom is 2'-9½" long, a good 6" shorter than the previous crane. Each inner section is 2ft long and designed to telescope out by a maximum of about 18", thus giving a maximum boom length of over 7ft. This scaled length is of course a lot shorter than the prototype's 7 sections but you can't have everything!

Telescoping mechanism: Figure 8 shows the cable mechanism used to telescope the 2nd section. A geared motor drives through a pair of 38t Gears to a Worm on the second shaft, which meshes with a 57t Gear forming one of the side cheeks of the winch. This is in fact a double winch with both ends of the cable being wound in or out at the same rate, which gets around the problem of using two cables where one is likely to stretch more than the other thus giving unequal forces to each cable. The cable goes up the inside of the outer section, around ½" Pulleys fixed at the top of the outer section. The single cable then goes around a ½" Pulley attached to the lower end of the second section. Sections 3 and 4 move out at the same pace as section 2 incorporating a single nylon covered stainless steel fishing cable for each section. Section 3 moves out by a cable attached to the rear of section 1, around a ½" Pulley at the outer end of section 2 and then ends at a connection to the inner end of section 3, being careful to route the cable correctly so it doesn't get jammed up as each section passes its neighbour (easier said than done).

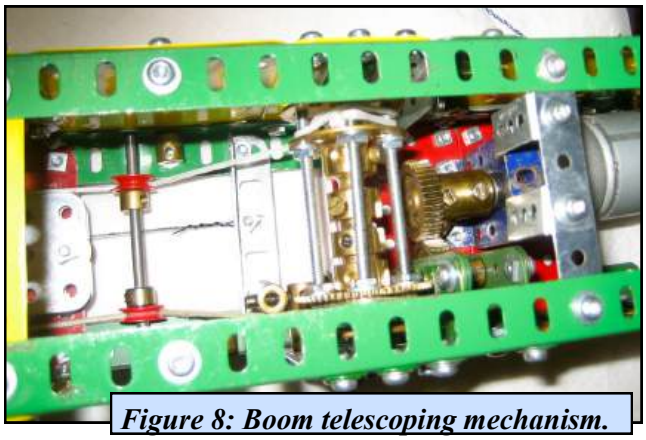

Figure 8: Boom telescoping mechanism.

I had problems with the bearings of the winch shaft during Model-X this year when the flexible 7-hole Flat Girder bearing plate bent outwards under transverse forces allowing the winch shaft to move sideways, causing loss of meshing between the Worn and 57t Gear. I've stiffened up both bearings, using a 7 by 3-hole Flat Plate with an internal Angle Girder stiffener to the offending side.

Boom Luffing: This is identical to the red crane but everything had to be repositioned naturally. A double winch is driven but a 24V Exacto geared motor through a 19t Pinion and Worm set on very substantial bearings. Nylon covered stainless steel fishing cable (80 lb. breaking strain) runs from the winches (2 separate cables) under 1" Plastic Pulleys at the luffing cylinder bottom pivot (Figure 10), up inside the pseudo luffing cylinder, around small ½" Pulleys at the top, then around more ½" Pulleys at the bottom of the "piston" shaft (5/16" large diam. Rod), up to the top again and then anchored off at the bottom of the piston shaft. With over 50 lb. in each cable when the boom is near horizontal, this setup is getting near the limit for conventional Meccano. The 13 lb. boom with unloaded hook can be fully luffed in about 2 minutes using 24 volts. With now over 50 hours of use at 3 exhibitions the cable is starting to show some wear and tear, the nylon covering has been ripped off in places but the stainless steel cables seem up to plenty of use yet (haven't appeared to have broken any strands)! This crane uses a longer 14" piston than the previous crane in an effort to get the full 82 degree luffing of the prototype.

Hoist Winches: Both the main and auxiliary winches are cantilevered from the back of the boom support frame (Figure 9, the auxiliary winch being an optional extra on the prototype. Both are driven by 16 rpm geared motors geared up by a 1:3 gear ratio, to speed up the hoisting and have enough braking in the motors themselves so that extra winch brakes were not necessary. With faster geared motors the hook tended to drop under its own weight with a small 2 lb. load when the hoist was stopped.

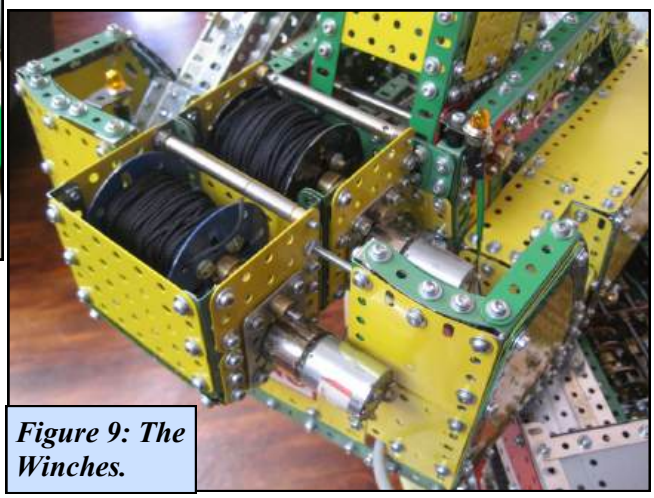

Figure 9: The Winches.

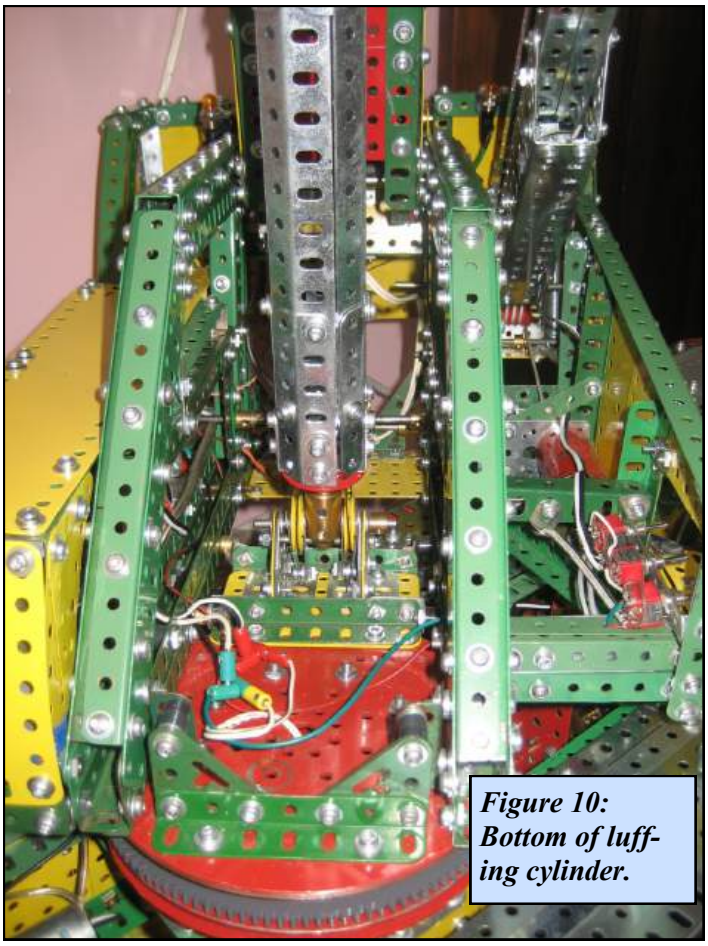

Figure 10: Bottom of luffing cylinder.

Part 3 of this series, if I find time to write it, will briefly describe the crane details not already covered.

Firstly I would like to thank **Lloyd** for many years efforts in starting and writing this column. I hope my contributions live up to his work.

Meccano and the Air raids

From Meccano Magazine Nov-Dec 1916. Did you notice how many of the daily papers refer to the resemblance between the Meccano parts and the constructive parts of Zeppelins? We are told that one boy asked his father why the government allowed the Germans to buy Meccano from us.

Olympic Award

First prize to **Rick Vine** who was quick off the mark with his Meccano models of a single sculls rower and 3 runners and a starter.

GRB just "hanging around"

Neil Pluck from Christchurch came up with an excellent use for a GRB when his wife asked for him to construct something to hang her necklaces on. A great construction Neil with 30 or more hooks at the top supporting necklaces and the GRB to rotate the whole device.

Neville Bond suggested motorising the device to keep the necklace's apart using centrifugal force, perhaps 1,000 rpm!

The comment was made that the women require multiple necklaces but fail to understand why we need more than one GRB.

Videos of Unusual Models

Georg Eirmann (Germany) posted details of models by **Peter Hartmann** from Switzerland on Spanner.

Two working pneumatic models: a pneumatic lift and a beam steam engine. Both are powered by compressed air and driven by pneumatic parts of the ORSTA-sets from the former GD
http://elihama.magix.net/meine-alben/!/oa/6599171
The second model is called "Bähnli", which is Swiss-German language for small railway or tram.

http://elihama.magix.net/meine-alben/!/oa/6599196
The last video is a model of a Stirling-motor. Peter is a retired teacher of physics and he loves to build educational models.
http://elihama.magix.net/meine-alben/!/oa/6599190
The models are built with parts from Meccano, Märklin, Stokys, Erector (and Orsta) systems.

Quote from the TV Program 'Grand Designs"

Allan Dawson attempts to make his house like a giant Meccano set by arranging the parts in a workshop and assembling them on site.

Cheap No 10 set

Meccano displays tend to pull all types of people out of the woodwork don't they? Our latest at Auckland's MOTAT had its usual selection. One man told me that up until a couple of days ago he had a complete 10 set, but the original case had gone. He had sold it for the grand sum of $300. That I told him was an excellent price. (if you were the buyer)! Of course having not seen the set it could have been any old load of Meccano parts in the ubiquitous cardboard box but who knows.

New Meccano sets on the way

Yes its true Meccano have new sets as described in the current issue of the Meccano Club of South Africa. They are the *Crazy Rabbids* (not a spelling mistake) series, still recognisable as Meccano but with a couple of plastic characters in the set.

The Crazy Toilet set (the mind boggles), Infernal Catapault, Time Washing Machine and the Racing Trolly (a supermarket trolley). It appears that Meccano are trying to reinvent the *Crazy Inventors* outfits, however these sets look much smaller.

I am sure that all Meccano enthusiasts will want to have Crazy Rabbids inhabiting their models in the near future!!

Also newly introduced are sets based on the popular *Gears of War* computer game. However these have no traditional parts, just moulded plastic screwed together with Allen head nuts and bolts and the Speedplay Rawlplug system. They were available from the end of September.

Winston a Meccano enthusiast

From **Roger Marriott's** excellent little book on Meccano I see that Winston Churchill was a Meccano enthusiast and there is a great picture in the book of him building a Meccano model bridge in the winter of 1915 – 16.

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AUCKLAND MECCANO GUILD SIGNALS THAT NZFMM CONVENTION AT EASTER 2013 WILL BE THE FINAL NZFMM CONVENTION THEY WILL HOST. By Peter Hancock.

There has been much discussion about "Conventions", "Exhibitions", and the perceived responsibilities that modellers have to exhibiting and promoting our beloved MECCANO hobby to the public over recent years. As is often the case with organisations run by volunteers such as our NZFMM there are extremes of personal views that make it difficult to establish a format and blueprint that is acceptable to and caters for every individual modeller's tastes, expectations, personal satisfaction and perceived best use of their personal dollar investment from attending such an event.

After reviewing the wealth of history of Meccano and its "people" throughout New Zealand over past years contained in the numerous *NZFMM Magazines* lovingly produced by our dedicated past and current editors and compositors over many years since the NZFMM was first conceived, it is possible to see that the focus on Conventions and public Exhibitions has been a moving target determined by the club hosting the event. The time devoted to public Exhibition as compared to Convention activities has spanned the gambit from none at all to essentially nearly all of the hours that modellers were in attendance depending on who hosted them.

After a little research it becomes clear that the focus, aims and objectives of each of the four New Zealand Meccano groups differ significantly and that these differences affect the direction taken for mounting each Convention/Exhibition event by each group when it is their turn to act as host to NZFMM members.

Some groups have detailed rules and membership subscriptions and look to public Exhibitions to raise money so that they can fund their aims, objectives and club activities while others such as the Auckland Meccano Guild have no annual subscriptions, no rules other than to enjoy oneself (and be professional when exposed to the public) and participate in public Exhibitions by invitation with no expectation of reward.

The 2013 Convention Committee, appointed from within the ranks of the Auckland Meccano Guild, have received comments from some modellers around the country (unfortunately some quite critical) who apparently do not approve of the planned programme for "Convention 2013" that was announced some months ago by the Auckland Meccano Guild.

To refresh memories about Convention 2013, it is planned that Easter Friday will be a day for non-pressured travel, set up and fellowship. Easter Saturday is an attendee's day providing time for those who have travelled long distances on the Friday and still require more time to set up their exhibits to do so. It will also allow time for photos and videos to be taken at a leisurely pace and for members who would like to listen to their colleagues talk technically and may be whimsically about their exhibits. There will be time for an auction and for those who have parts to sell or trade to do so. It is also about spending quality time with each other. After all these occasions only occur every second year and we are all at liberty to attend pure Exhibitions every year and from the activity reported from around the country over recent months there have been plenty of exhibitions to satisfy individual needs over the past two years.

It is planned that Easter Sunday 2013 will be open to the public to enable them to view the magical Meccano wonders that participating modellers have spent many an hour on building. The public will have the opportunity to vote for what they believe is the best model(s) and this will satisfy those modellers who look to satisfy their competitive urges. It is important that we understand that not all modellers want to have their pride and joy rated, so those who do not want their offerings judged will not be embarrassed by being expected to do so.

Why is this the last time that we will be acting as a host! Well, we are all aging and we will not have people who are willing and able to mount such an event when we would be expected to do it again in the future. Regretfully we are not having people, young or old, wanting to join our Guild in any great numbers. Some sobering facts:

AMG participated in three major exhibition events during 2012. Three days, Easter Saturday, Sunday and Monday at Te Papa Wellington (attendance of 17,682). Three days over Queens Birthday Weekend at Model-X-2012 Henderson (attendance of over 7,000) and Saturday and Sunday 1st and 2nd of September being "Father's Day" weekend at "MOTAT" at Western Springs (attendance 2,126).

During these exhibitions we spoke to a number of people who have Meccano for sale. They are NOT potential members! We held Meccano workshops on all days we exhibited using the Centenary 00+ Meccano sets (10 stations working most of the hours each exhibition was open). Huge number of young people and parents participated and enjoyed their time with us BUT only a handful who might be interested in purchasing Meccano sets and we talked hard. When questioned, parents told us that their young ones generally had too many other distractions. One could go on, but in a nut-shell the members of the Auckland Meccano Guild will after Easter 2013 look to participate in smaller events which do not require big budgets, costly public insurance cover and hours of volunteer time to arrange. We believe that our time will be better spent modelling. We will for the foreseeable future attend Model X Exhibitions but we do not plan to take on events such as Te Papa again.

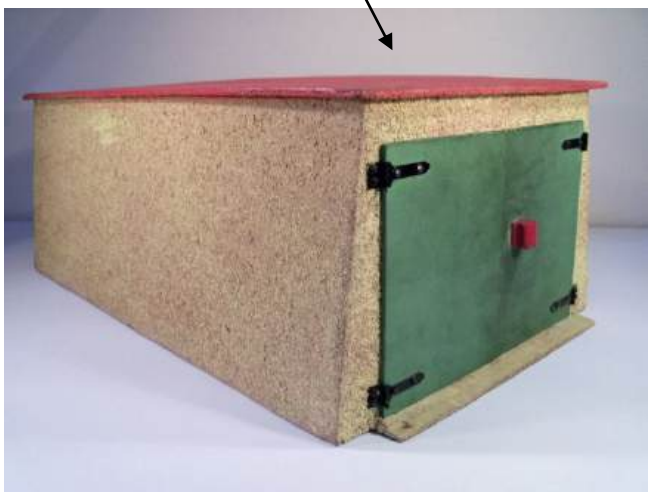
So in closing this dissertation, we invite all modellers who would like to join us for our swan song event in Pukekohe over Easter 2013 to do so. We look forward to being your hosts and enjoying your company and fellowship. To those who don't feel that they will receive personal value from having only one public exhibition day we respect your views and hope that you will respect ours from here on in.

It is great that I once again have the opportunity to "talk" to all the Meccano builders and collectors in New Zealand, Australia and the rest of the world. The weather here in Cairns, Australia is starting to build up to the "wet" season. It has been very dry this year with below average rainfall over the past 3-4 months. The sugar cane harvest has finished and we are all looking forward to the "Mango" season. This fruit is only in season from November to March.

Lets move on and see what we have for this issue; some rare and interesting items are on view.

- A 1934/35 Meccano Book. This is one of the most beautiful publications Meccano printed and this one is in extra good condition. Only real fault is a carefully applied repair along the spine. Worth every penny at NZ$156.

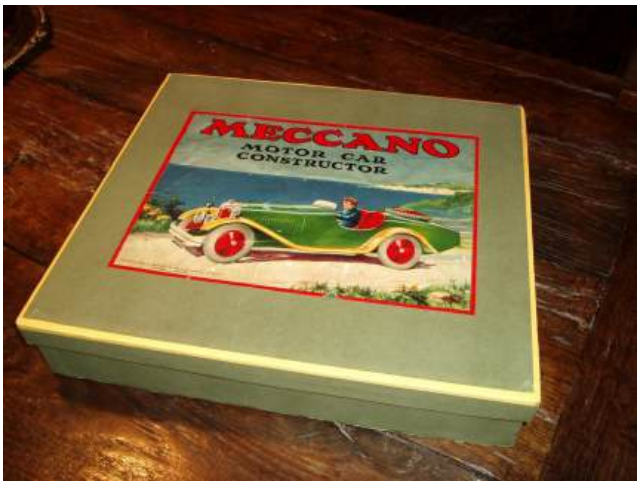
- 1911 Meccano Manual, American version (The Embosing Co, Albany, N.Y). This manual is for all 11 outfits of the time, 80 pages long, interior pages good but cover shows repairs, tears, etc. Uncommon manual and sold for NZ$155.
- 1977 Meccano/Märklin EU 1072 AC/DC Motor. M.I.B. Never used, made by Märklin for Meccano, 8-16v AC or 8-14v DC. Complete with instructions and very nice box. NZ$150.
- 1924 Meccano Championship Trophy cup. This silver plated cup which measures 8" tall and 4" wide at the top was awarded to L.F. Brown in 1924 for a Meccano Building contest. The cup is in a tarnished condition but would polish up O.K. Base has a few dents but considering its age it is in good nick. A very unique piece of Meccano history and sold for NZ$2,790.
- Hornby Speed Boat "Racer 2". This lovely boat and box dates from the 1930s and the boat comes in the Blue/Cream colour scheme. Seller states that it is in near mint condition. Still has the "Tested" tag attached and comes with an advertising leaflet. The box is as good as the boat with no colour fading and comes complete with inner packing. Original guarantee still attached to inside of lid. A good investment at NZ$530.
- Original flag for a Hornby Boat. If you purchased the nice "Racer 2" above you could add this flag to it. This flag from the 1930s is made of cloth with a metal shaft. Flag measures 40mm from back to front. Shaft rusty and slight rust stain to top edge of flag. NZ$60.
- Meccano Shop Display Sign. This is probably a 1940/50 display sign which reads "Meccano Toys of Quality". There are no cracks to the wooden lettering or "toys of quality" glass sign part. Only fault is one corner of the horizontal glass panel is broken off. Seller advises that it should be rewired but there is a photo of it going. Sold for NZ$1,309.
- Very Rare Garage for No 2 Constructor Car. These garages could not have been a very big seller as they rarely come up for sale. This one is in very good condition with its Pebbledash finish still intact. Transfer good but slightly worn. Sold for NZ$1,200. As much as the car you could put inside it.



- Meccano Sales leaflet-about 1959-60 in Russian. Sets look to have the plastic inserts which makes it about this time span. Leaflet folds out into a sheet, it has light brown highlights on white paper. Has no tears, one or two light stains. Size 38 by 26.5 cm unfolded. Very uncommon. Sold for NZ$ 510. Upon research in 1961 Meccano Ltd took a stand at the Moscow Trade Fair so this item probably dates from there.

- French No 9 Set 1960. This set has been reconstructed with parts in good order. Set is complete with original wooden handled screw-driver. Correct small part tins. This set looks great in its red box and gold and blue parts. Sold for NZ$680, which is a good price.
- Lovely 1900s *Bing* Tin Railway Telegraph Train Station, 0 Gauge. Pre-war Bing German station has very nice lithograph graphics. All original with lovely detailed slate roof. This three story station measures 10 inches tall and 10 inches long. Some wear to base. Nice buy at NZ$830.
- Four of Meccano Part 187B Road Wheels, Boxed. These are the large 4-$^1/_4$" road wheels made of plastic and grey and blue in colour. Near mint in a reasonable trade box; sold for NZ$200.
- No 2 Meccano Constructor Car Outfit, 1930s. One of the best I have seen on eBay for a while. Car is in beautiful condition, finished in blue and cream. Set includes the extra parts that come with a No 2 (Car is made up). Motor with correct key, correct screwdriver, small parts boxes, etc. The No 2 Manual is there and is in nice order. The box has been professionally restored and looks the part. An amazing set and as good as it comes. Sold well for NZ$2,700.

- The final item I have for you today is something which I have never seen before, maybe someone out there can enlighten us further. The auction is entitled Meccano Accessory Case "A" dated 1919 with Nickel Contents. A most unusual item, it seems to be an outfit which a Meccano salesman would take with him to show interested retailers parts available at that time. The Pack is in good condition with parts in very good nick. The lid has split corners and missing one apron. Great buy at NZ$390. I wonder if there is a "B" Pack; maybe one day it will turn up.

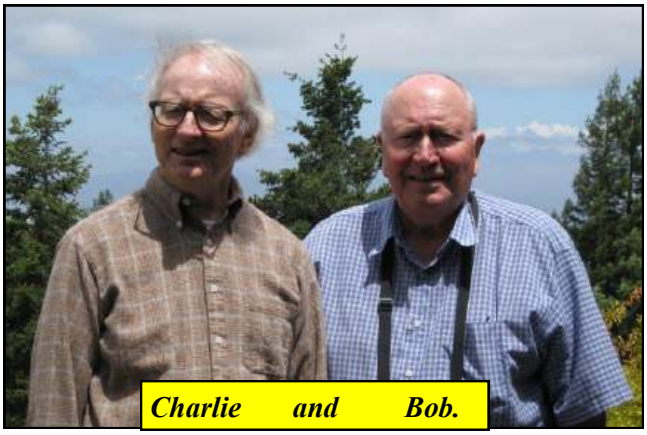


California Meccano Visit – Saturday 26 May 2012

by Anne Prescott

Bob and I have recently returned from a tour around the USA travelling by Amtrak train between the cities of San Francisco, Denver, Chicago, New York, Washington, New Orleans and Los Angeles with hotel stays of between two and five days in each of those very interesting destinations – almost 7,000 miles by train.

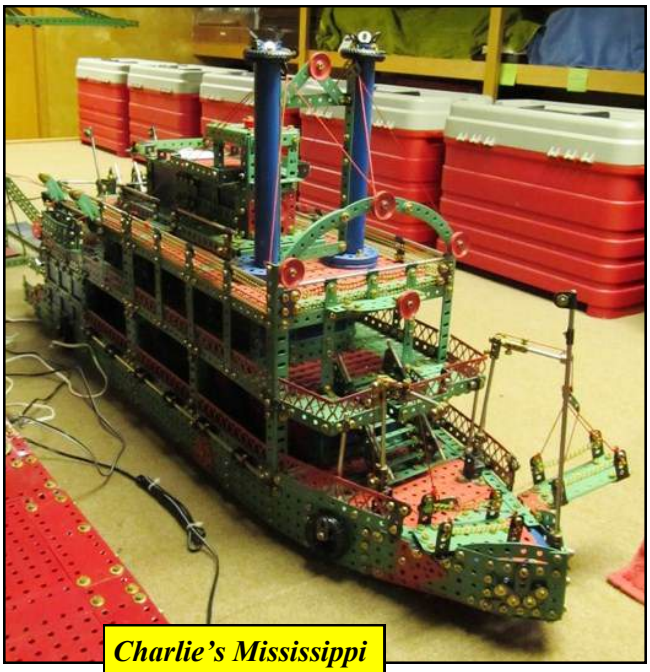
Our first stop gave us the opportunity to visit **Charlie Pack** and his wife Kim in their lovely home in the wooded hills of Los Altos, south east of San Francisco. My cousin Mary who lives in nearby San Jose picked us up at our hotel and gave us a short sightseeing tour before visiting Charlie's home. He had invited **Phil Edwards** and his wife to join us for an afternoon of talk about Meccano! Charlie's work room had some of his models on display and he has more in the Museum of American Heritage in Palo Alto including a working model of the San Francisco Cable Car.



Charlie and Bob.

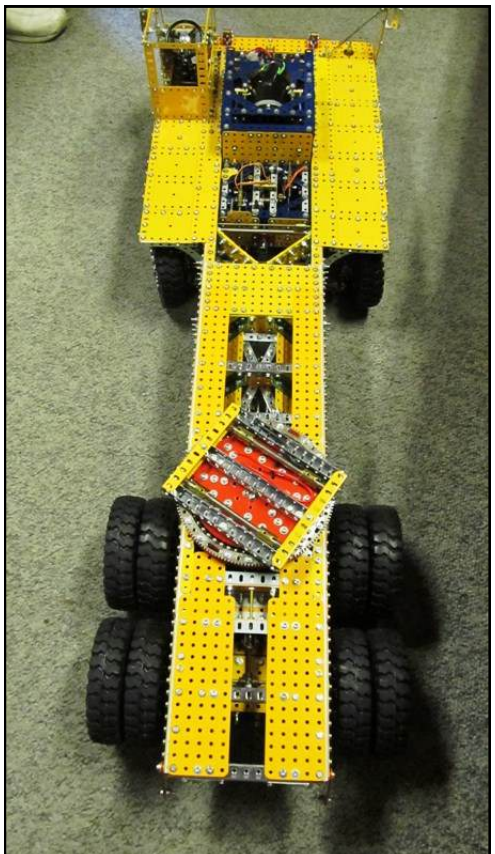
Charlie's models included a stagecoach with Konkoly design horses, an aerial cyclist, a large gantry crane and a lovely model of a steamboat, similar to the "Natchez" on which we had a cruise along the Mississippi River later in our trip.

Phil brought along a scale model of a carrier-mounted hydraulic crane, a remarkable model of intricate design and controlled by computer wizardry and despite the overall weight and associated shipping problems, he is hoping to exhibit it at Skegness this July (Ed. He didn't, only the gearbox made it to Skegness). He also had a working rickshaw and driver, with a sun umbrella, as well as a hood for protection from the rain and a remote controlled tank with an opening turret so that the mechanics could be seen.



Charlie's Mississippi Steamboat.

It was very interesting to see these complicated models and to have their construction and workings explained and we thank Charlie and his wife for making us so welcome. Cousin Mary was most impressed by the planning and technology that went into the models on display at her introduction to Meccano.



Truck-crane chassis by Phil Edwards.

Auckland Meccano Guild Meeting

11th August 2012

Reporter & Photos: Gary Higgins

The meeting was held at the home of **Neil Carey**. Neil has been continuing to work on his mammoth NZR Locomotive, which has progressed a great deal further than the chassis we saw at a previous meeting (Ed. A year earlier).

Neil's loco is an NZL WW class loco powered by an E15R electric motor which runs very well. The coal on board is represented most realistically as is the firebox and as with all of Neil's locomotives it runs perfectly.

Gary Higgins had brought along a model of the latest *Tintin* galleon set. He had purchased the set and made the model, however as he said the Rod Connectors supplied with the mast were small and useless he substituted them for the earlier 1" variety. Also 3 parts were missing from the set which were replaced by Meccano Ltd within a month, using their on line feedback option.

Gary also brought two of the new pull back and go motor racing car sets from the Meccano Turbo series and a small remote controlled car from the same series. He also had a Meccano 1916 ship using two of the original castellated, rolled funnels, the first coloured Meccano part.

Gerald Hart had made up a bush locomotive (a Heisler bush loco) from a Keith Cameron model plan described in CQ. It was a very attractive model in red and green Meccano.

Les Megget has been working on another whopping great chassis but would not commit himself to its final form at this stage. He would only describe it as a MAN 8x4 truck chassis. Wow! Lots of gears and differentials and all working as they should, Les must have magic fingers to conjure up these models.

Rick Vine brought along some models in keeping with the current Olympic games interest, he had a single sculls Olympic rower and a set of 3 runners and a starter. Rick also had a box of original Minibrix, made up into a house and a very nice pier modelled in Bayko, I have never looked closely at Bayko models but this was wonderfully done with a tower and separate windows and pier piles, all very realistic.

Neil Carey's WW Class tank locomotive.
(Photo: Les Megget)

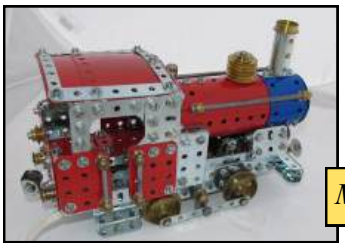
Rick Vine's Bayko Pier.

Henry Porter rolled in with his usual selection of unusual models, something for everyone. Henry's models either originate from his imagination or from pictures he has found in obscure books, no model plans needed! Henry had made a steam powered tractor using 3 caterpillar tracks, the steering used being similar to that of a bulldozer, a touring car in red-green Meccano with plastic spoked wheels, a flying bed stead based on a device from the film "Those magnificent men in their flying machines". However I have one complaint, although the umbrella part went round and round it did not jump up and down, see to it next time please Henry!

Henry Porter's Flying Bedstead.

He also had a R.S. Thompson Indian road steamer pulling a special 2 wheeled omnibus, a display of gear trains using a variety of large and small gear wheels, a very nice model of a SCAT 1910 car with self starter, a Polylong car, a small dalek and a couple of Martians… whew, I always feel like I have run a marathon when describing Henry's models.

Mike Stuart had constructed a beautiful little locomotive and passenger carriage in silver blue and red which operated by means of a rack and pinion system, the driving sprocket being one of the plastic sprockets from the Superhighway Multikit set.



Mike's little rack loco.

David Wall had created an Electrikit motor which gave the impression that it was being driven by a hard working little plastic man at one end, it was obviously some toy that had been taken away from a small child to fulfil a "greater purpose". It did work very well and I almost felt sorry for the poor wee chap, the toy that is, not David.

Graeme Wrightson had brought along a helicopter from the 20 model set which worked very well. It is however prone to moving about the table, especially with full batteries and needed watching to ensure it did not dice up another model with its efficient rotor blades.

Graeme Mills had made a nice motorcycle using the Trix construction system and also had a small Trix motor in original box; this was later tested and runs well.

Trix Motorcycle by Graeme Mills.

Matthew Carey has been working on a couple of models one being powered by using the earlier version of the infrared set motor that came out with the "Action control" sets.

Other members to attend were: **Jeff Clarke**, with a range of *Meccagears*, **Bob Cook, Richard Sealey, John Denton and George Ovenden.**

Peter Hancock who regaled us with tales of the setup complexities of running a display at MOTAT, (yes it did go ahead after Peter's legendary powers of persuasion were brought to bear.) It also appears that plans for the Convention next year are well underway.

Meccano use in constructing scientific instruments

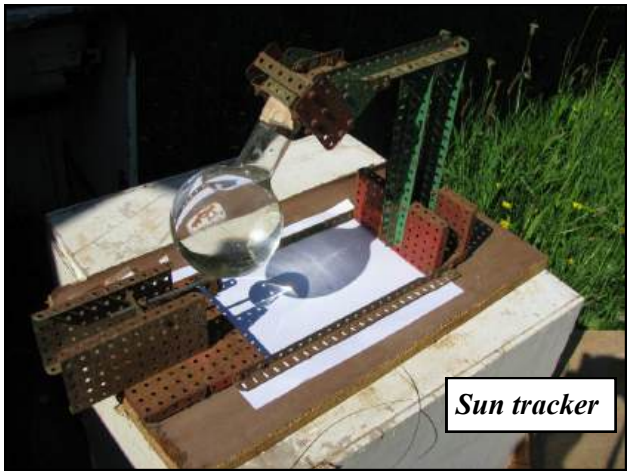
by Gary Higgins

Meccano lends itself to the construction of various items that replicate real machinery in miniature. It is hardly surprising then that people have used it to construct working scientific instruments.

I have seen excellent examples of two such items which I will describe here.

One is a machine used to track the sun and its intensity throughout the day the other is an automatic radio clock capable of self-tuning pre-set stations. The sun shine recorder fell into my hands via *Trademe,* initially I had no idea how it worked however it was described as a "sun shine recorder" and a little research on the web provided the information that there was a scientific instrument by the same name which tracked the path of the sun across the sky measuring its intensity by the use of photo sensitive paper and a lens to focus the sun's rays. In this case the lens was provided by a sealed flask of water and a small Meccano wheel could be adjusted to focus the sun's rays to a small point, much like we can use a magnifying glass to burn a pattern in wood.

When a piece of photo sensitive paper, such as that used in fax machines, is placed under the unit the apparatus focuses the sun's rays and burns a small mark on the paper following the path of the sun. The larger the burn mark the more intense are the sun's rays. The apparatus was designed and built by well-known weatherman **Dr. Jim Salinger**. He built this at his home in Dunedin. Jim became interested in weather and climate as a teenager setting up rain gauges, a thermometer and simple equipment at this home.



Sun tracker

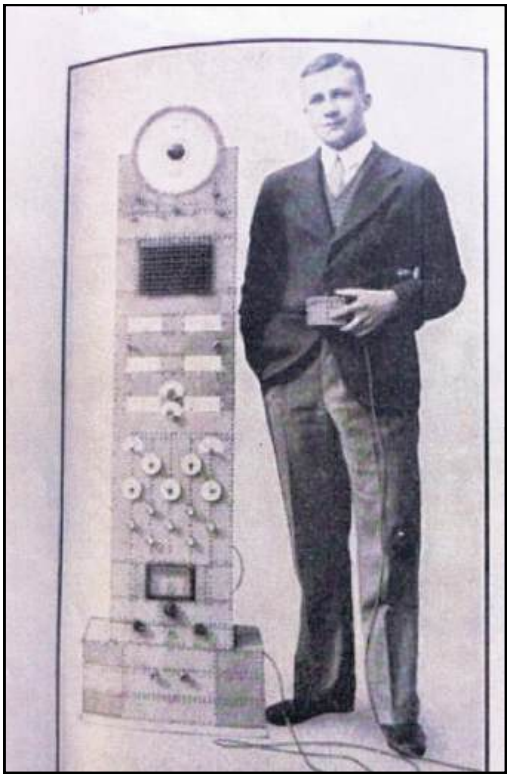
The second example is by a New Zealand Meccano man by the name of **Vern Butcher**. Vern was a bit of a whiz with Meccano models and had already won a number of prizes in the Meccano Magazine. He was also very knowledgeable about radio and designed an automatic radio receiver clock.

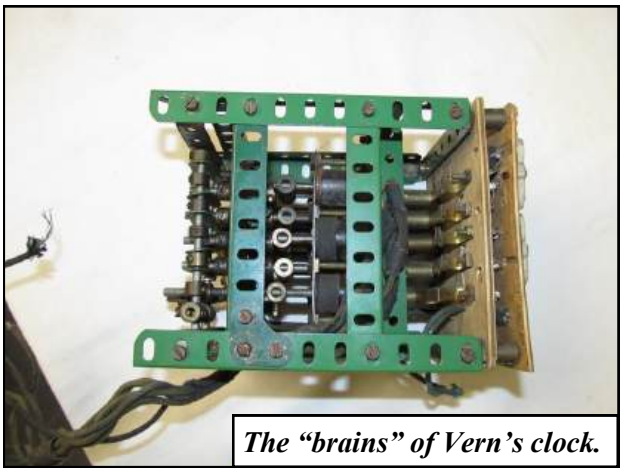
The completed clock was 5 feet tall, with 4 electric motors, 20 electro- magnetic relays, more than 2000 nuts and bolts and took more than 12 months to build. A series of dial controls could be pre- set to give a whole evening's entertainment from different radio stations.

The clock radio was exhibited on the Meccano stand at the local Industries Fair and went on to win the grand sum of 5 guineas, first prize in the Feb 1940 Meccano Magazine.

The brain of the clock was purchased on *Trademe* by MOTAT and is now part of their collection along with the patent papers submitted by Vern for his design. This is the only part which remains intact and is an insight into the clever skills he employed when designing it.

An excellent write up on Vern, the clock radio and his other models is in the October 2004 copy of the NZFMM Magazine written by **Nigel Boyle**.





The "brains" of Vern's clock.

We should also mention here the Meccano Differential analyser Wikipedia offer a good explanation: a "proof of concept" model of a differential analyser which made extensive use of Meccano parts was built at Manchester University, UK, in 1934, by Douglas Hartree and Arthur Porter. Use of Meccano meant that the machine was cheap to build, and it proved "accurate enough for the solution of many scientific problems". This machine is now in the Science Museum, Exhibition Road, London, England. A similar machine built by J.B. Bratt at Cambridge University in 1935 is now in the Museum of Transport and Technology (MOTAT) collection in Auckland, New Zealand. A memorandum written for the British military's Armament Research Department in 1944 describes how this same machine was modified during World War II for improved reliability and enhanced capability, and identifies its wartime applications as including research on the flow of heat, explosive detonations, and simulations of transmission lines.

*Wikipedia

It would be interesting to know whether people have knowledge of other uses of Meccano for scientific purposes. I had heard that Barns Wallace, the UK scientist who designed the dam buster's bombs used Meccano to design the bomb casings and of course he invented the concept of geodetic frame work for aircraft. The first aeroplane to use his revolutionary Geodetic design in full was the Wellesley followed in 1936 by the Wellington bomber. It is not hard to see how Meccano could have played a part in the development of such designs. In fact Wikipedia states "**Wellington bomber,** the 26.25 metres (86.1 ft) wingspan Vickers Wellington bomber was designed by Barnes Wallis and made by the Vickers-Armstrongs company. It was named after Arthur Wellesley, 1st Duke of Wellington. A total of 11,461 were built during the War, more than any other British aircraft except the Supermarine Spitfire and Hawker Hurricane, which were smaller, single-engine aircraft.

With its geodetic aluminium skeleton airframe construction covered by a varnished linen fabric skin it was said to be held in great regard by aircrews and pilots for its durability and resistance to damage, able to survive long enough to return home, even if one engine failed.

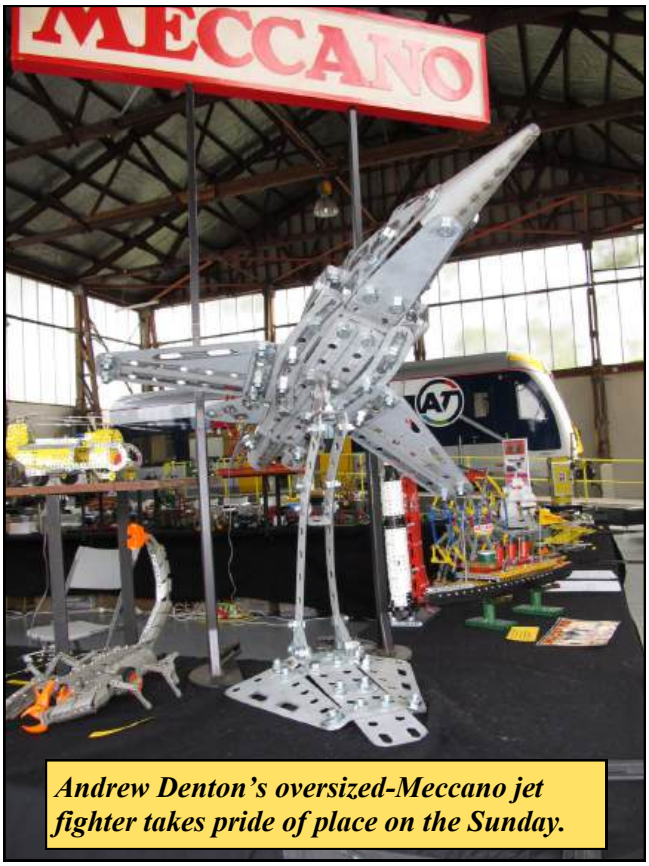
The aircraft's fabric construction and a frame which simply slotted together, likened to the children's toy **Meccano**, meant that it was easy to assemble, making it a perfect choice for the construction record attempt". Who knows what other scientists were inspired by the use of a children's toy?

AMG Exhibits at Museum of Transport and Technology (MOTAT)

Earlier this year AMG was contacted by the Exhibits team at MOTAT and asked to consider mounting a Meccano Exhibition which would be a focal point of the celebration that they would to be staging over the weekend of the 1st and 2nd of September to recognise "Father's Day" 2012. The MOTAT team considered that a live Meccano display with "hands on" opportunities suitably advertised would complement the many mechanical and special displays that MOTAT is famous for.

MOTAT is located at Western Springs and opened in 1964. It is the largest museum of transport, technology and social history in New Zealand, housing a number of outstanding collections. Encompassing 40 acres, on two sites, it presents a fascinating and informative record of many of the technological developments that have helped shape New Zealand. Major collections include Road Transport, Early Auckland, Primary Industries, Medical and Dental and Pioneers of Aviation. MOTAT is also proud to have a working Tram Section, and a large aviation collection including a Lancaster bomber and a Solent flying boat. It is the home to the "Differential Analyser" which incorporates mainly Meccano parts that has been undergoing loving restoration by several AMG members led by **William Irwin.** (Visit website www.amg.nzfmm.co.nz for a detailed explanation and photos.)

The overall display ready for the spectators on Saturday morning.



Andrew Denton's oversized-Meccano jet fighter takes pride of place on the Sunday.

The organising of the exhibition was not without its challenges. Trying to find a space that would accommodate the proposed display and hands on model building station was extremely difficult. Eventually we found one building on the entire site that would meet our needs. Considerable discussion and effort was required from all involved to finally clear the building and prepare it for the display. The AMG team had the opportunity on this occasion to be able to set up the site along with all the models on the day before the display was to open and to pack up on the Monday after the event. This is not a luxury that Meccano exhibitors are often able to experience.

Two oblong table sites were prepared. The model display area comprised of 16 x 1800 mm long tables providing 28 meters of display area. This was supported by the setting up static displays of memorabilia on John Denton's car trailer supported by a selection of various sized smaller tables. MOTAT provided two large glass lighted display cabinets in which precious Meccano museum parts were displayed alongside a Meccano crystal radio set and other Meccano items from MOTAT's own store of goods. We were able to mount a number of posters and other literature on two large free standing boards and various plinths. MOTAT management complimented those involved for the very visual and professional lay out that the team assembled.

The "hands on model building station" was assembled from 6 x 1,800mm tables and two smaller 1,200mm tables in an oblong configuration placed parallel to but clear of the larger model display. Ten individual assembly areas were set up on the 13 meters table length with additional chairs available for parents or others to work with the many modellers that kept members very busy for the two days. We all had the opportunity to speak at length with visitors and attempt to answer the many questions posed. As is the general trend in today's busy society, shows, exhibitions and displays mounted in the greater Auckland area begin to draw crowds later on Saturday afternoon and the volume of visitors generally attend on Sunday's. Patron's comments indicated that the display had been worth visiting.

It was very pleasing to have the support of eleven of our members to share the load in shifts over the two days. A special vote of thanks goes to **Elizabeth Wall, Cora Denton and Shirley Megget** who have devoted so much time at AMG exhibitions over the past year disassembling models, sorting out parts and encouraging the young and not so young modellers who spend quality time on site.

The show was rated a success by MOTAT and our team who thank MOTAT for ensuring that we had continuous coffee, tea and nourishment available while we were on site.

Peter Hancock

Photos: Gary Higgins, Les & Shirley Megget

The willing helpers on the children's building table await the children, from left Cora Denton, Richard Sealey and Shirley Megget.

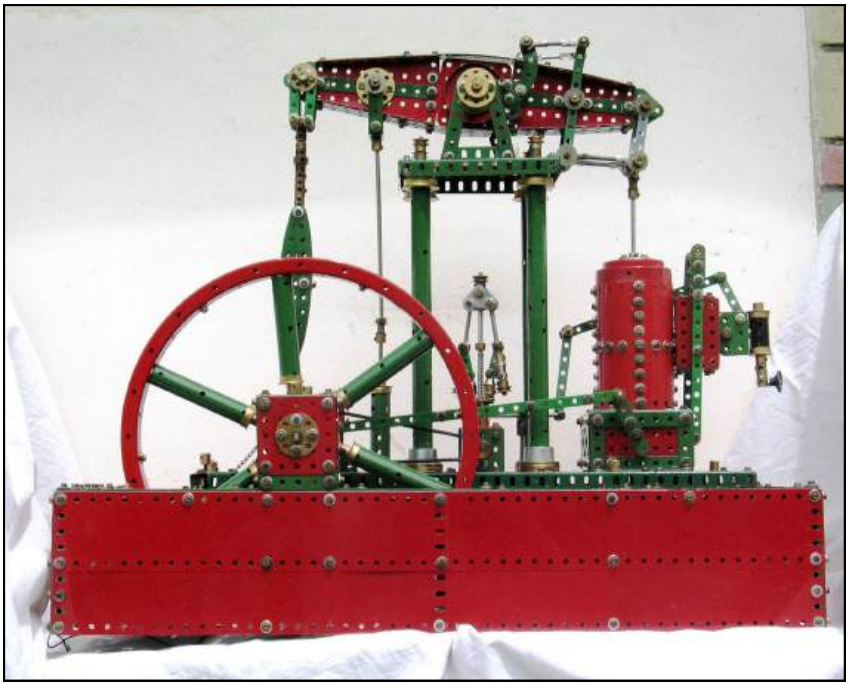
The children and their parents have arrived.

Gary Higgin's collection of RC cars.

John Denton dressed for the part with a model of himself in working garb on the south seeking chariot.

Brian Rowe's Beam Engine
by
Simon Johnson

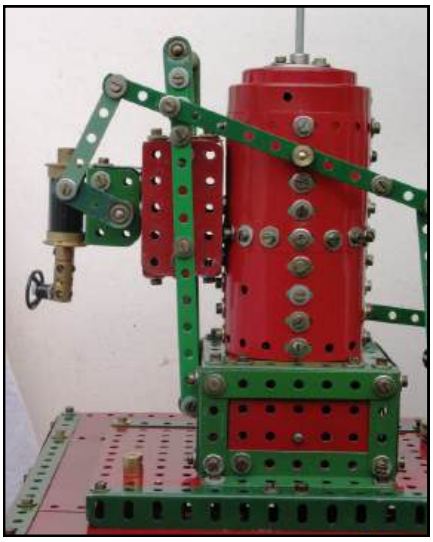
This model, built by Brian Rowe, appeared in *Constructor Quarterly*, No. 28, June 1995. Some years ago I borrowed a copy from the late **Bruce Neilsen**. The article included a couple of overall photographs with the opportunity to buy the full plans.



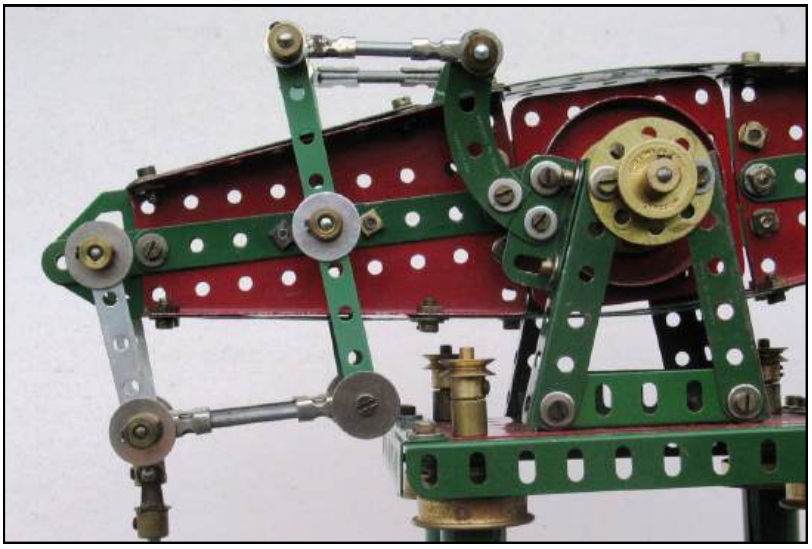
Beam engines are the simplest of all steam power plants to build. No tricky compound crankshaft or complex valve gear to deal with. What was unclear from Brian's photographs could easily be modelled by examining diagrams of beam engines or examples of similar Meccano models.

The result is an easily constructed model of pleasing proportions which could form a good exhibition piece. I have photographed all the significant parts of the model and offer the following general comments:

- The base is made up of 24.5 and 9.5 inch Angle Girders. Strip and Flexible Plates cover all but the flywheel well and the area where the engine bed is to be fitted.
- The engine bed consists of 18.5, 5.5 inch Angle Girders and Flat Plates. A space is left for the crank as shown.
- The four columns are each made up from 2 x 4.5 inch Sleeve Pieces threaded onto 11.5 inch Screwed Rods. Capitals and finials can be made as shown.
- The flywheel is made from two of Jack Parsisson's Channel Rings. These make excellent flywheels, far preferable to Meccano Flanged Rings. There are probably any number of ways of assembling the flywheel. I chose to join the rings using Couplings as captive nuts inside the channel. To six of these an Angle Bracket is fitted, providing a fixing point for a Strip Coupling. Rods carrying 3.5 inch Sleeve Pieces fitted with Chimney Adapters and ¾ inch Flanged Wheels are attached to the Couplings. A Collar at the inner end of the rods is then screwed between two 12 hole Face Plates – these are available via *Ashok* or similar sources. The end result is a most attractive flywheel, applicable to many steam models.



- The rest of the model should be clear from the photographs. A variety of electric motors can be used to power it.



Christchurch Meccano Club

(Est. 1929)

November 2012 Quarterly Report
by

Mike Howse

Over the last three months most CMC members have been busy preparing models for the two displays coming up in November.

The first display will be held on Saturday 17th & Sunday 18th of November at Halswell Domain in support of the Canterbury Society of Model Engineers (CSMEE). The display is open to the public from 10:00am to 4:00pm. As in other years it is expected that 5 or 6 CMC members will display models.

The second display will also be held over the same weekend, but this time it will be in Oamaru in support of local Meccano identity **Ross Mitchell** and a couple of his local Meccano friends. In Oamaru CMC members will hold their display in conjunction with the Oamaru Heritage Celebrations. So far there are 4 CMC members travelling to Oamaru where the display will be held in *The Northern Hotel* on Saturday 17th & Sunday 18th November.

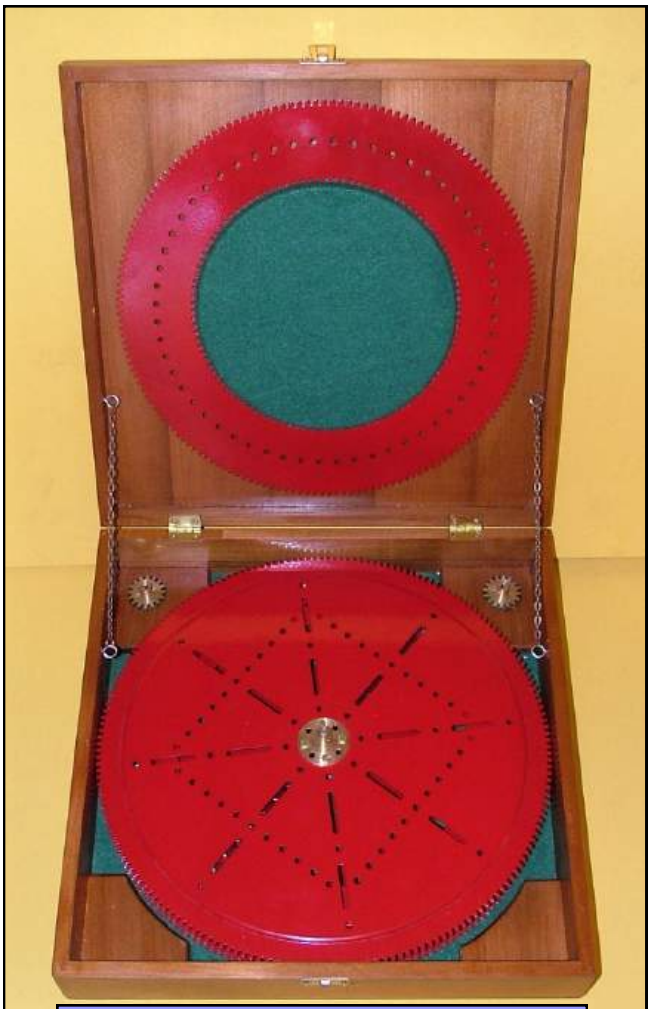
On the subject of Ross Mitchell, the CMC wish him well and that he has a speedy recovery.

It can be reported that the Ralf Wise Fairground Model which is ¾ of the way through a major refurbishment should be ready for Ralf to present to the CMC at the December meeting.

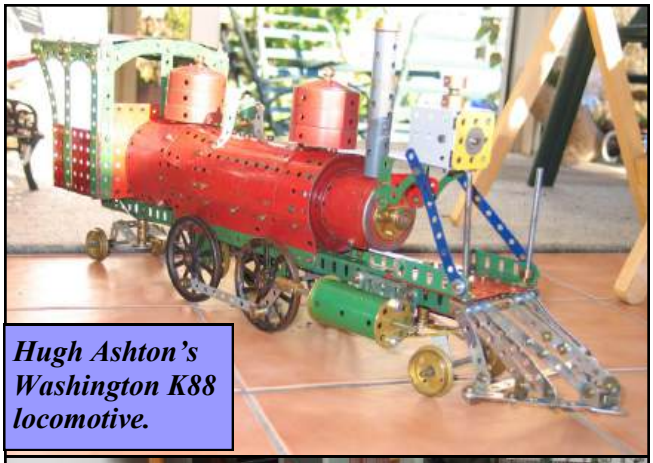
A sad fact has emerged that over the last 3 monthly club meetings, which have excellent member turn-outs … no-one has remembered to bring a camera along to record any of the models that were put on display.

However with the November meeting coming up the President has decreed that he will remember to bring his camera along.

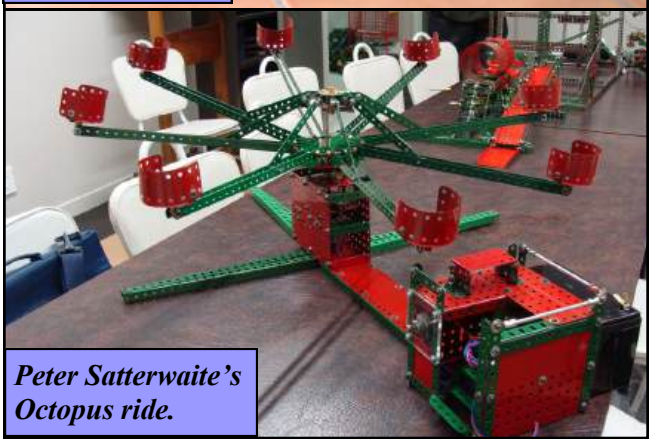
That being the case we will present a couple of pictures from past meetings.



Replica GRB & Ring Gear in display box.



Hugh Ashton's Washington K88 locomotive.



Peter Satterwaite's Octopus ride.

MWT MEETING REPORT for 11th AUGUST 2012

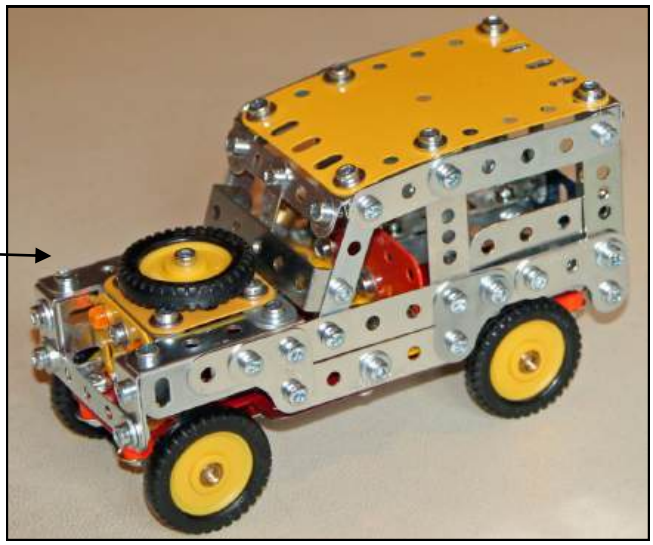
Report by Daryl Anderson, pictures by Bruce Geange

Sixteen members gathered for our normal monthly meeting and AGM at St. Luke's in Wanganui. The new club officers are **Chairman~ Chris Morton, Vice Chairman~ Robin Rye, Secretary~ Daryl Anderson.**

In the absence of **Lou Nichols** our regular scribe, this report is by **Daryl Anderson.**

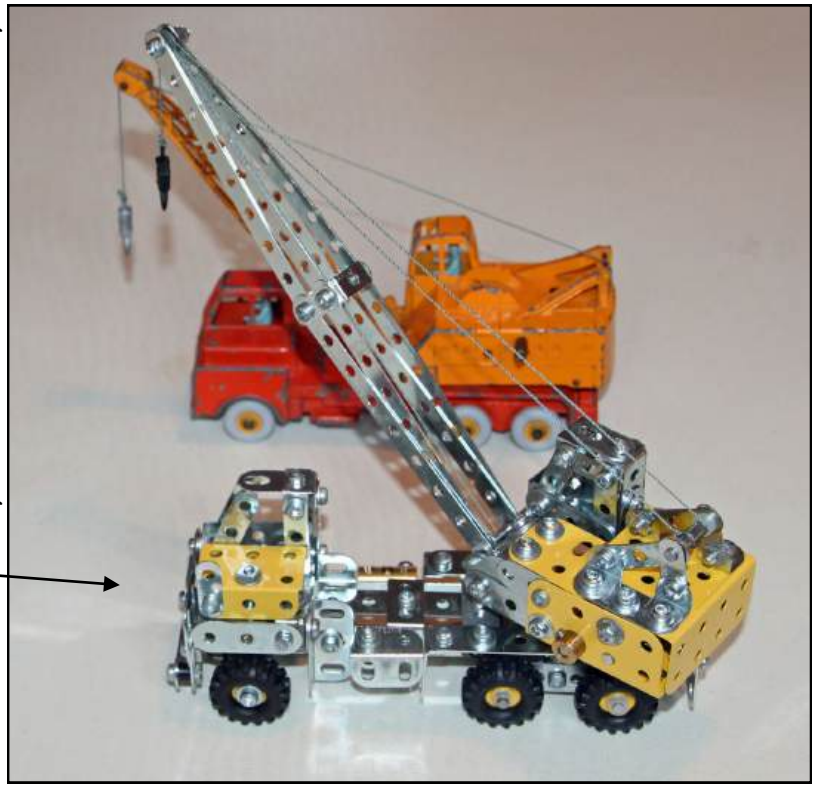
With the London games drawing to a close the model theme was an 'Olympic model', we had a great selection of models, all different.

Bob Prescott brought along a nice ship model 'The Unicorn' from the new *Tintin* series as well as a new Meccano history book by Roger Marriott. Bob's Olympic model was a Land Rover used on the rowing course or by the army.



Tom Pittams's contribution was a Meccano set in a multi-drawer cabinet. This set had been owned for some time and was full of re-plated parts in bright nickel or chrome.

Graham Hawtree had on display some new replica parts made by Pierre Dupont of Canada. There were roller bearings, large gear rings and circular parts. We look forward to seeing what Graham is going to build with these. Graham also had a large selection of MW model plans from England as assembled by the late **Bruce Neilson.** Graham would like to complete the set so if anyone has some plans they are finished with he would be interested in purchasing them.

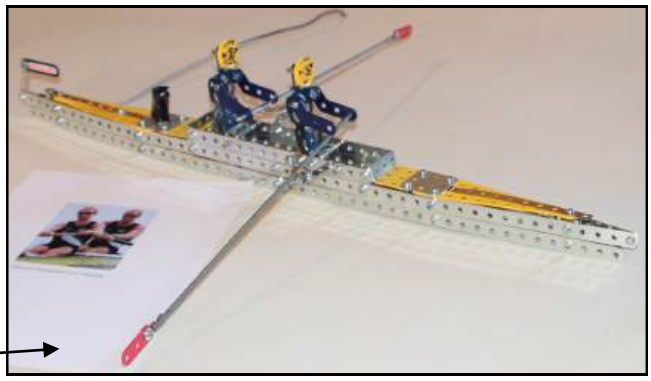


Bruce Geange brought along two Olympic models, the 5 rings very well modelled and a simple high jump. Bruce's other model was a crane based on a Dinky model, number 972. This was not much larger than the Dinky toy and yet featured all the movements of the real crane, modelled to Bruce's usual high standard.

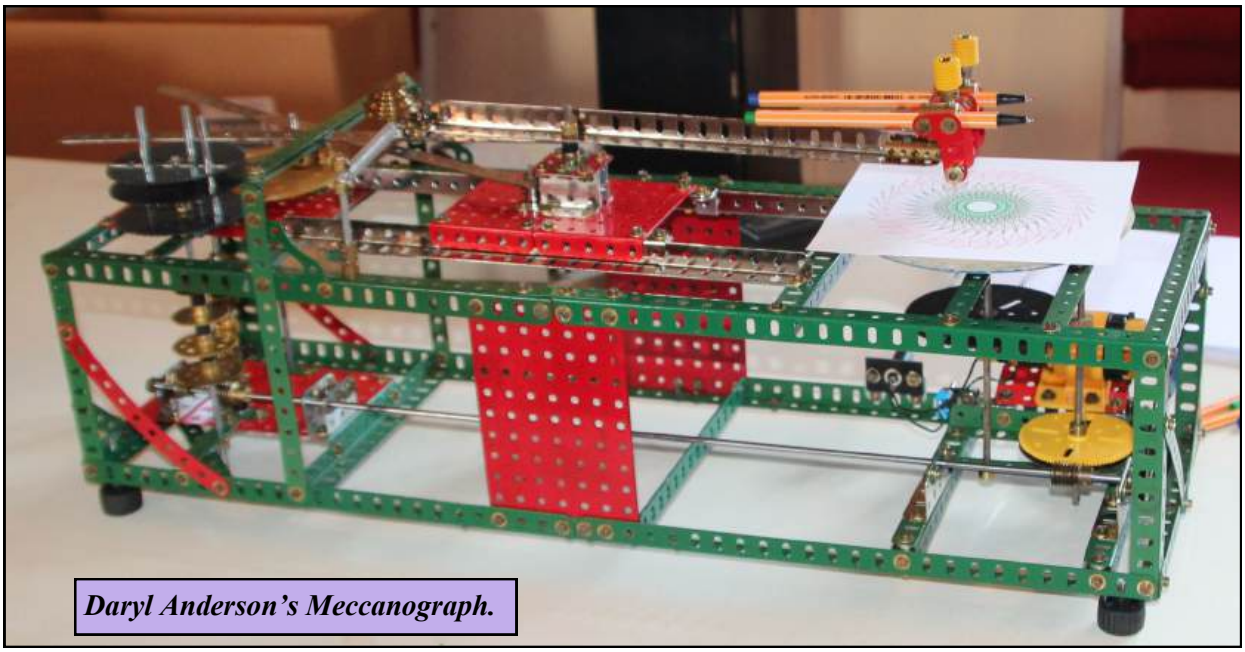
Chris Morton's theme model was a weight-lifter who was so strong he could hold the bar on his nose! A very realistic moving model. Chris also brought to show us a helicopter from the 20 model set and a car model that tried to run down the scribe as he was taking these notes.

Stan Baker came up from Wellington to show us some new Ashok parts including different sized flanged plates, octagonal plates and wheels with roller bearings. He also showed how his remote controlled switches work and displayed the new high capacity batteries.

Hugh Ramage showed us an Olympic silver metal, in actual size! Hugh had also made more modifications to his ball roller that send balls in two directions at random. He also brought a very clever Meccanograph.



Daryl Anderson also had a Meccanograph that **Chris Rickard** took a shine to and had it producing patterns throughout the meeting. Daryl brought along the only powered Olympic model, the gold medal rowers, Hamish Bond and Eric Murray. I wonder if Hamish is a relation of the late **Lindsay Bond** who many members will fondly remember. Daryl also showed a new LED light bulb that can change colours and flash, all controlled with a remote.



Daryl Anderson's Meccanograph.

John Ince brought along a fine looking Olympic athlete balancing on a ball.

Paulette Morton made a splendid Olympic double kayak model, complete with scale medals.

Paul Vodanovitch made a fine discus thrower that captured all the movement of the real athlete.

Viv Alexander's contribution was a pair of fine blue/gold sets, 7 and 7a from 1938. These are a recent purchase from overseas and contain gold strips that we never see in the sets that were sold here. He showed us a tobacco tins that some of the parts were in *'The 3 nuns'* on the tin. Not PC today!

The successful meeting concluded with our usual fish and chips supper.

Bob Prescott's Tintin series Galleon.

Wellington Meccano Club

Meeting Report

Date: 3rd August 2012, 7:30pm

Reporter: Max George

Present: Max George, Eldon Porter, Robert Vale, Reg Barlow, Lou Nichols, Don Flowers, Stan Baker. Max's grandchildren Ethan and Bella also looked at the models displayed.

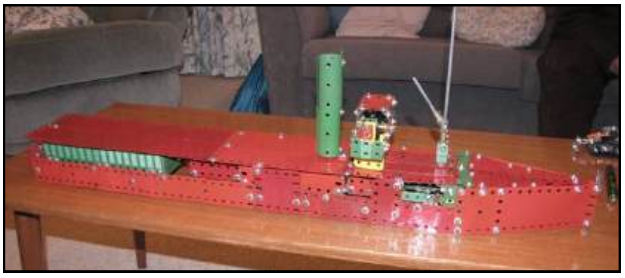
Apologies: Campbell Morrison

Agenda and Models:

Our thanks go to **Max** for not only hosting the meeting but for supplying the photos and minutes.

Robert displayed two of the Tintin models he had been given for Christmas. The Jeep looked splendid in the red and black. He wondered how any 8 year old could successfully bend the plate forming the bonnet as he found this difficult. The Seaplane in its bright yellow looked great and Robert also had problems with some of the construction. It was great to see some models that were basically the Meccano as we know it harking back to the 50s era and not containing the odd shaped pieces on many of the newer models. Credit goes to Meccano on the standard of these models.

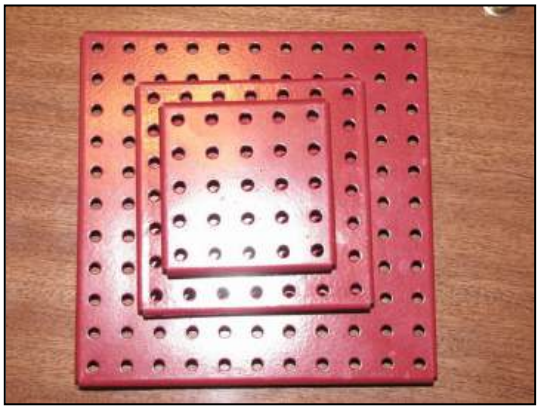
Lou displayed his work in progress model of the TSS Earnslaw. The size of the model is based around the windmill sail (part #61) for the windows of the cabin and is 33" long and 4½" wide. He still has plenty of work to do including adding staircases. Lou has wanted to construct this model since 1985.



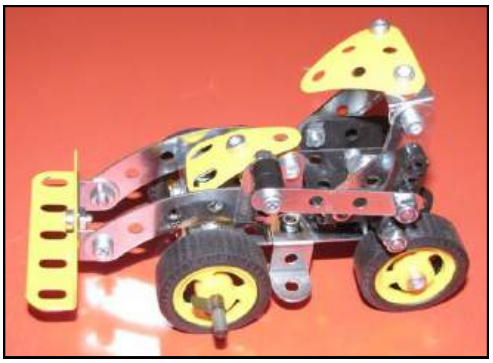
Reg displayed a model digger which is one of the better small models he has seen. He also showed us a book, *'Meccano'* by Roger Marriot, published by Shire Library that he had purchased from Stan.

Eldon showed some of us the small contrate gears that he had manufactured.

Stan showed off some of the new parts that *Ashok* has made. These included 5½", 3½" and 2½" square flanged plates and a hexagonal plate which, unfortunately, a photo of it wasn't taken. He had some of his wheels with ball bearings in them that fit on the standard Meccano axles – these run very smoothly.



Max then took everyone into his "Man Cave" to see the Little Joe and Tricky Track which is set up on a table tennis table. At last the under / over bridge that was shown at a previous meeting was on display.



Little Joe and Tricky Track.

David Couch from the Nelson chapter has supplied the following update of activities in their neck of the woods.

Jane and I arrived in Nelson in June last year. We immediately met up with John and Yvonne Stark, who by a remarkable coincidence are neighbours of ours. That is, their property is corner-to-corner to ours at the back, though we have to walk round the street to get there. We see them quite often.

One of our first projects was to build my Meccano room, at the back of the garage. I now have a properly lined and insulated room with a heat pump and even curtains, very nice in a cold winter.

Towards the end of last year the Christchurch club decided to hold their next exhibition in Nelson, and asked us here to do the groundwork. So John, Yvonne, Jane and I got busy hiring a hall, borrowing tables, putting out publicity and so on. The show, open for three days over Easter this year, was a great success, with about 1300 people through the door - not bad for a population of 50,000. It was good for me to get to know the Christchurch people, and it was also good to see Simon here. It was too bad that more Wellington people couldn't come, but we understand that you are subject to the requirements of Te Papa, and glad that your show was such a success. If you are having another display at Te Papa please let me know well in advance, as I would like to be part of it. How are the plans for Convention 2015 going?

For the Christchurch "Meccano Magic" show I had my "Chocolate Robot", which some of you will have seen either at a club meeting or at Convention last year. It attracted the usual crowd of children, more interested in chocolate than in Meccano. I also built models of the Fairey Rotodyne and the Graf Spee, pictures of which are in my user gallery on the NZ Meccano web site. These seemed almost a waste of time, as both Meccanomen and the public mostly just walk past static models like that with barely a glance. "Oh, it's a boat".

A couple of weeks before the show Jane just happened to mention that someone at her craft group had been doing French knitting. This gave me the idea of building a Meccano French knitting machine. I got it going in time for the show, and it attracted a moderate amount of interest. Graham Jost got quite excited about it, though I don't think it's nearly as clever as his braiders, and went off determined to build one. He also sent pictures to Ken Senar, the prolific English builder of huge, complex models, and he wanted to build one too. Jane and I were planning to go to the UK and Europe for all of June, and Graham persuaded me to stay on for Skegex. So I built a smaller version of the FKM that would fit in my suitcase and took it with me.

Skegex was quite an experience, with everybody who is anybody in the Meccano world there, and some mind-boggling models. For all that, my little machine got quite a bit of attention and some fulsome praise from the praiseworthy. Robin Johnson asked me to write it up for CQ. There has also been a lot of discussion of FKMs on Spanner lately, and other people are building them, so the whole thing has taken off.

You will have seen that the plan for next year's Convention includes just one day of public display. John and I are annoyed about this, and think it is hardly worth going for one day. We have written to Peter Hancock to say so. If Wellington people feel the same perhaps you could also send emails to Peter to reinforce the message.

We had hoped that the "Meccano Magic" show might bring a few more Nelson Meccano enthusiasts out of the woodwork, but it didn't happen. So there is not going to be a Nelson club for a while yet. I would like to remain a member of the Wellington club, but it occurs to me that I haven't paid a subscription for over a year. Could you or Lou please give me a bank account number that I can pay into, and suggest a suitable date for annual subs.

Regards to everyone at the club.

David.

Finally to those who subscribe to the NZFMM, my apologies for the confusion about the next meeting, I was asked to pre-empt the October meeting when I presented the June minutes for publication and at that point the expectation was Keith & Emma McCallum's place.

More of Max's Tricky Track.

2012 NZFMM Subscriber's list

We have decided not to print and distribute a subscriber's listing this year but if you are desperate for such a list a pdf file may be available. Please contact the editor by email.

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 9 February 2013** at Peter & Jan Hancock's 1 Orangewood Drive, Howick starting at 2pm.

MWT Meccano Club

Chairman: Chris Morton
Vice Chairman: Robin Rye
Secretary: Daryl Anderson, Tel. (06) 278 7666

Meetings at 2pm. Next meeting: **Saturday 9th February 2013** 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: **Christmas lunch will be at Valentines, 140 Jackson Street, Petone from midday on Sunday 16 December.**

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.

Additional Meccano Contacts

Hamilton: Don McClelland, Tel. (07) 843 4198
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
Nelson: John Stark, Tel. (03) 545 1025

Articles, etc. for the February 2013 issue of NZFMM Magazine should be sent to Les Megget before the 1st February 2013.

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

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Phone +64 4 566 7150 home or 021 421 750.

****

Neil Abbott of 120 Taylors Road, Otaki RD3, Wellington 5583 has a large number of Meccano Magazines left from his father's estate, which he is willing to give to anyone who will collect them. His email address is : ansas92@farmside.co.nz or tel. 06 364 5760 and leave a message on his voice mail if there is no answer.

****

Gerard Hart is keen to purchase a single Channel Segment, P/N 119 (the later version) to make up a set of 8. He can be contacted at (09) 480 0925 or email mariefern@orcon.net.nz

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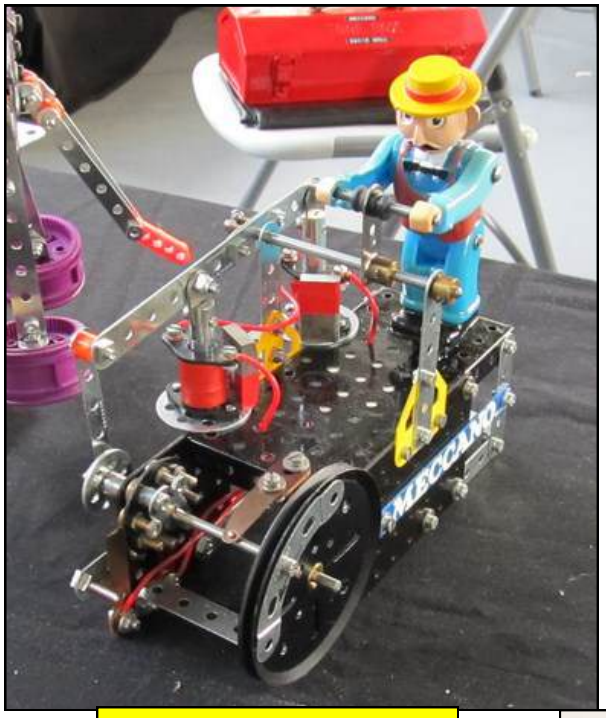
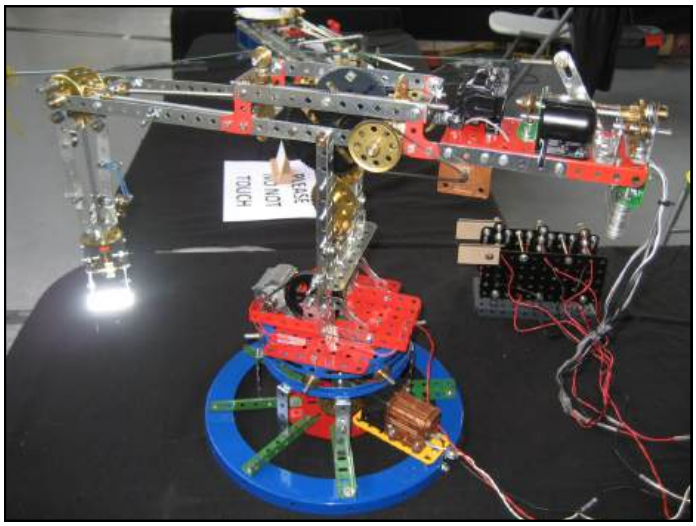
Recent (and not so recent) interesting models.



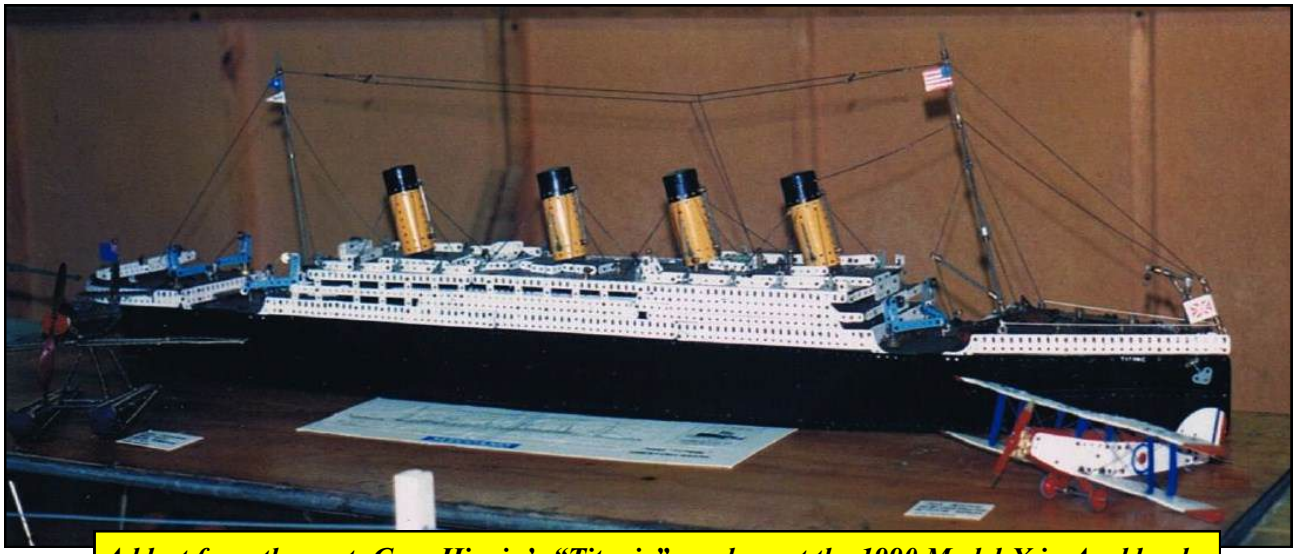
David Wall's "The Man on the Flying Trapeze" seen at the AMG MOTAT display.



Robot Arm by David Wall, picking up the light to pass it on!

Rick Vine's Minibrix Norman Church.

How about a wee Doggy set Meccano?



A blast from the past: Gary Higgin's "Titanic" on show at the 1990 Model-X in Auckland.