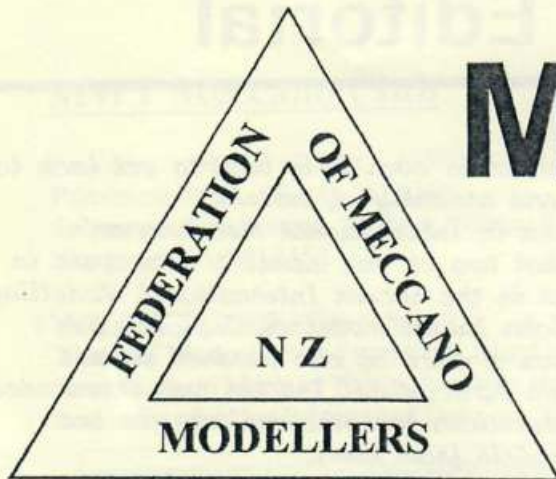


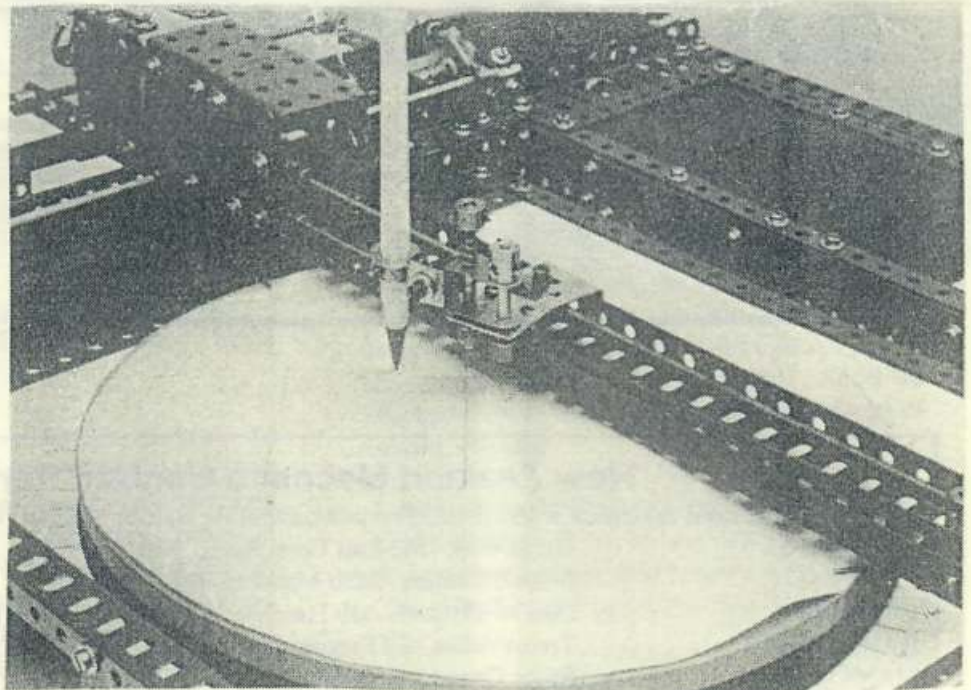
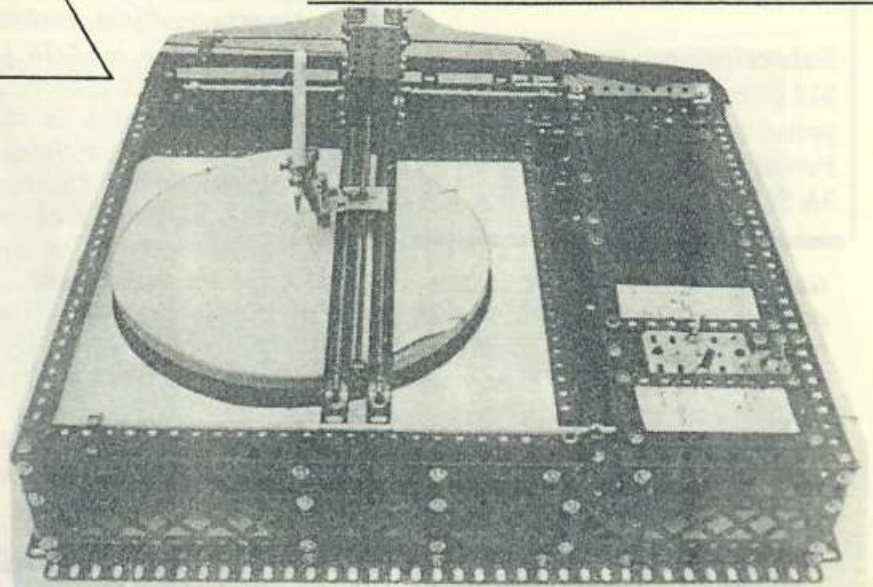


MAGAZINE

Vol 19 No 6 February 1996

MECCANO PLOTTER.

See Article
inside.



*The aims of this magazine are to unite Meccano clubs
and individual Meccano modellers; to generally
promote and encourage the enjoyment of Meccano*

NZ FEDERATION OF MECCANO MODELLERS

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Editorial

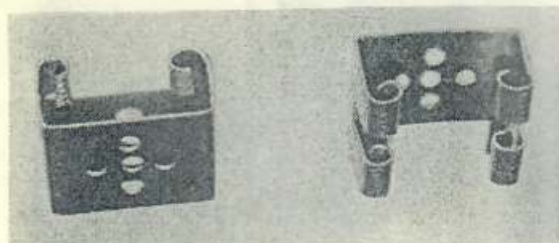
Now that Christmas is over it is time to get back to nuts and bolts and assembly of models.

I have just seen in International Meccanoman's Journal No17 that two of our members names are in the awards list in the recent International Modelling Competition. John Ince's model of Captain Cook's 'Endeavour' won a prize of one hundred pounds and Robin Rye's Agricultural Tractor was commended. Hearty congratulations to both, and may we see many more models from them.

Colin Croft's Isomec graphic of Simon Moody's gearbox model in this issue is a 'first' for us. Are there any others of you out there with this computerised facility? If so, any of your work would be most welcome for publication here.

Opinions have recently been expressed in Meccano

literature as to what is the most useless Meccano part. I contend that no Meccano part is entirely useless, although the obsolete part 122, miniature loaded sack, must just about qualify. Another part, recently condemned, is 44 stepped bent strip, and I would defend it as being useful in plenty of places, particularly as a means of holding the paper down on a Meccanograph table, where it is unequalled. The slimmer part 102 single bent strip is also good for this. Part 144 dog clutch has also been condemned, but, in this issue, Simon Moody has found it perfectly satisfactory in his gearbox construction. So let us end this carping criticism! *Bill*



Alan Partridge's

Twin Rod & Strip Connector.

See Article on Meccano Plotter.

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These are the persons to contact if you need information about the nearest Meccano Club, or Meccano generally.

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HAWKES BAY:	Trevor Adam, 22 Ferguson Street, Bay View, NAPIER	0-6-836 6827
MANAWATU/ WANGANUI:	Bruce Geange, 4 Winchester Street, PALMERSTON NORTH	0-6-357 0566
	Tom Pittams, 28 Pauri Village, R.D. 2, WANGANUI	0-6-345 6788
TARANAKI:	Lindsay Bond, 93 Hathaway Street, STRATFORD	0-6-765 5665
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CANTERBURY:	Graeme O'Neill, 49 Hindness Street, CHRISTCHURCH	0-3-322 7456
	John Ince, 37 Burnside Crescent, CHRISTCHURCH	0-3-358 7351
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MWT Meccano Club

President - Bruce Geange, 4 Winchester St., Palmerston North. Ph (06) 357 0566.

Secretary - Tom Pittams, 28 Pauri Village, RD 2, Wanganui. Ph (06) 345 6788

MEETING REPORT 4 November 1995

A total of 28 members and supporters joined in the Great Northern Meccano Tour with visitors coming from as far afield as Gisborne and Tauranga. Thank

We then traveled on to Robin Rye's farm outside Eltham where not only does he have models in miniature Meccano but a number of real size vintage tractors in the yard for the mechanically inclined.

Photo 5 shows Robin with his No 10 Meccano chest. (Pectorals not included !)

The menagerie of Meccano maniacs completed their meandering at Lindsay and Judith Bond's in Stratford. Lindsay's new Meccano modeling room



Back row: Cushla Whitehead, John Hansen, Peter Hancock, Paulette Bradley, Robin Rye, Don Blakeborough, Doug Lloyd, Julian Avisenis Snr, Donna Chadwick, Daryl Anderson, Alistair Tong
Middle row: Brian Whitehead, Alison Geange, Jock Clouston, Lindsay Bond, Wayne Blakely, Julian Avisenis Jnr, Rebecca Anderson
Kneeling: Wes Dalefield, Chris Morton, Bruce Neilson, John Jordan, Bruce Geange

you one and all for your support and enthusiasm. Photo 1 is the group photo taken in Alistair Tong's garden at Hawera .

The first official stop was Daryl Anderson's in Hawera at 10am. Photo 2 shows Daryl standing in a corner of his Meccano room with his long running Marble Roller at the back, boxes of literature and magazines to the side and a recently acquired Aeroplane Constructor Model in the hand. Photo 3 is the rest of the wall to Daryl's right with his boxed Meccano sets from ancient to recent laid out for inspection.

The cavalcade then stopped at Alistair Tong's (Photo 4) where his large hobby room had an excellent storage facility for the growing Meccano collection, a radio ham setup, and a comfortable bed for contemplation and inspiration. Lunch was taken here and an auction of some 'other system' sets donated by Don Blakeborough.

was open for inspection, the garage was laid out with collectors treasures, and his literature room had the filing cabinets open. Photo 6 shows part of the garage display with a dealer's model of Blackpool tower and 4 dealers spare part chests of varying vintages.

A magnificent buffet dinner was served (thank you Judith) followed by an auction of Meccano Magazines etc. donated by Lindsay and then a pre Christmas buying opportunity of boxed sets and other goodies.

Photo 7 shows Lindsay on the left, the table of Meccano sets in the middle, and John Hansen caught in the act at the end of a long and memorable day.

Bruce G. & Bruce N.



2



3



4











NEXT MEETING












3pm


Saturday 3rd


February 1996


St Lukes Church Hall


Cornfoot Street


Wanganui












Across the road from


Don Blakeborough's


place












Tea will be at 5pm












Check meeting notice




5



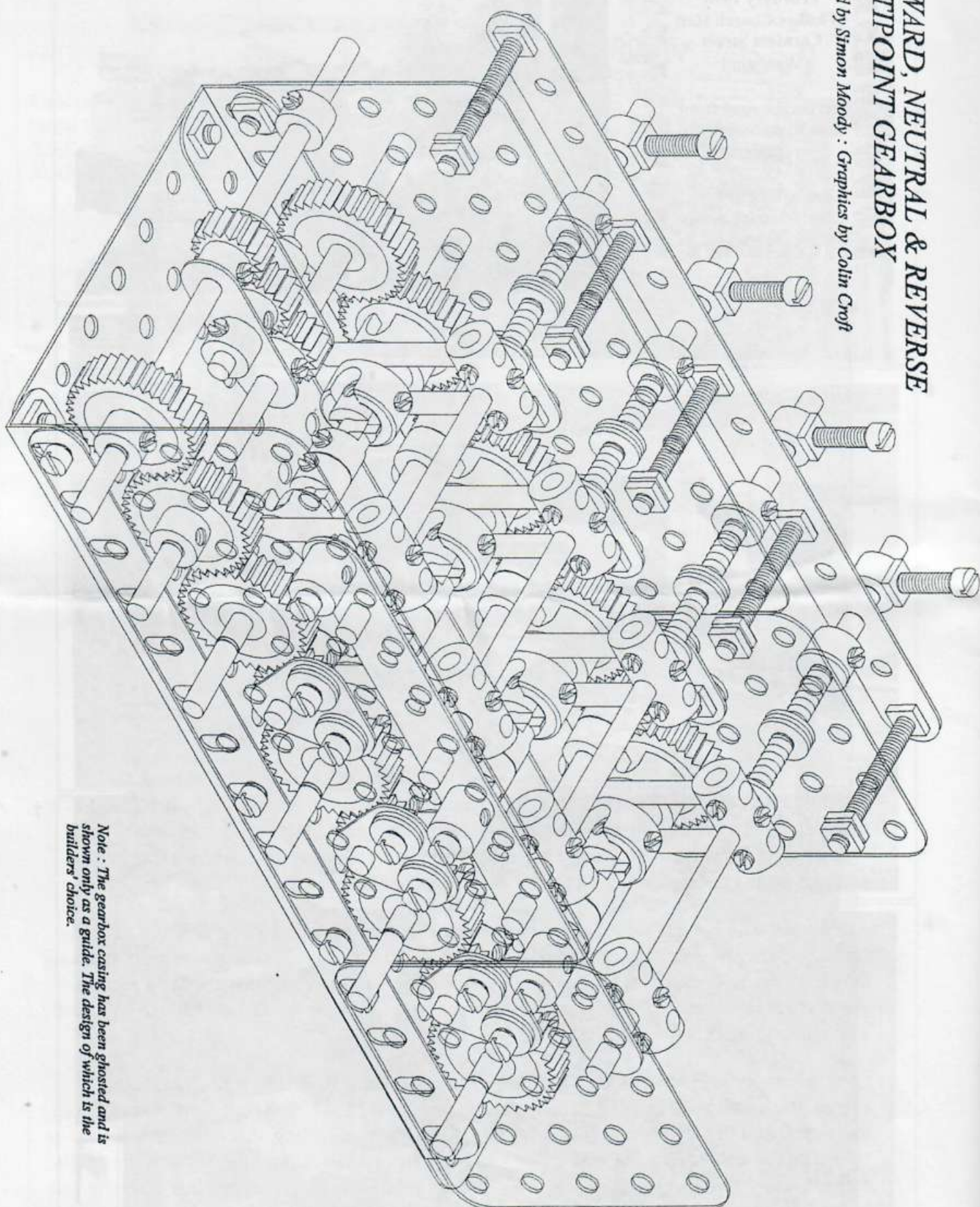
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7

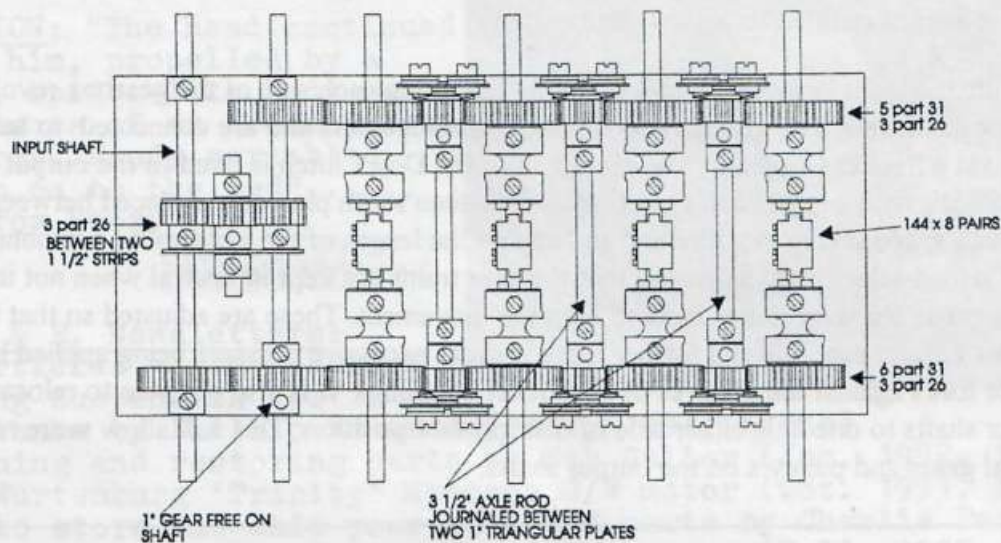
FORWARD, NEUTRAL & REVERSE MULTIPOINT GEARBOX

Designed by Simon Moody : Graphics by Colin Croft

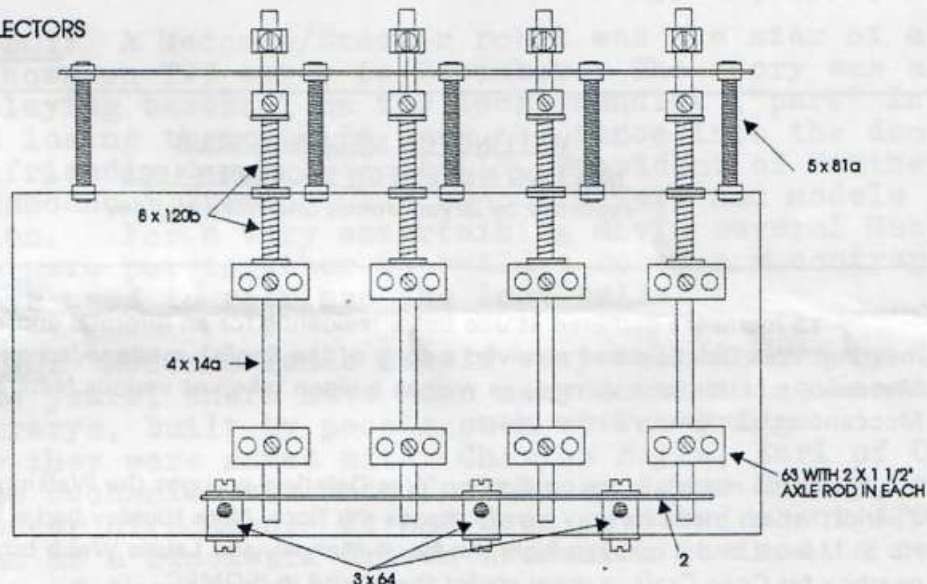


Note : The gearbox casing has been ghosted and is shown only as a guide. The design of which is the builders' choice.

PLAN VIEW OF GEARBOX



PLAN VIEW OF SELECTORS



Recently I was distressed to read, in a CQ magazine, that the Meccano Dog Clutch (no. 144) was described as one of the most useless parts in the system. I have been a Meccano enthusiast for 38 years and have not been able to bring myself to build gearboxes that had precious gears crashing into mesh and so damaging their teeth.

Any model with several individual movements and only one power source, tends to have the "crash and smash" gear engagement system. To this end the gearbox shown was born. It uses Dog Clutches to engage the drives and utilises their robust nature to eliminate damage to the gears. After all, surely this is the reason they were introduced. At worst, you have to wait half a revolution for them to engage.

I built a prototype in 1980 and tested it on a Derrick crane powered by a Mamod steam engine. It worked well. In 1989 Laurie Webb (Wgtn M. C) and I each built a matching Craven Railway Steam Crane. These were inspired by two such cranes lifting a locomotive, which was shown on the dust cover of a book called "Railway Steam Cranes" by John S. Brownlie. Each crane was powered by one E15R electric motor with the same described gearbox and both had four separate movements. These models were displayed at the 1991 Wanganui convention.

The advantage of this gearbox is that the input can be left running in one direction and all movements can be operated individually or any number together, forwards or in reverse. Also it can be easily extended to obtain more outputs.

Basically the input is split so that a train of gears along each side of the gearbox revolves in opposite directions. The gears are loose on the output shafts and are connected to half a Dog Clutch via a Socket Coupling. The other half of the Dog Clutch is fixed to the output shaft back to back with another half Dog Clutch. Nineteen tooth pinions are placed between these shafts as a space saving measure and so keeping the length of the gearbox to a minimum. The spring loaded selector shafts ensure that the gear trains are kept in neutral when not in use. Collars act as stops on these shafts to limit the movement. These are adjusted so that the Dog Clutches engage properly and further more prevent excessive pressure being applied by the selector forks against the grooves of the socket couplings. It is also possible to relocate the selector shafts to one hole either side of their present position. This will allow more room for external gears and pulley's on the output shafts.

WELLINGTON MECCANO CLUB
MEETING NOTES FOR DECEMBER 1995
 -reported by Bryan Jones and Mike Highley

13 members gathered at Joe Bell's residence for an informal end-of-year meeting. Wes Dalefield had received a copy of the English-made video on collecting Meccano, and this was viewed, as well as a video taken at various New Zealand Meccano exhibitions in earlier years.

Some models were on display: **Wes Dalefield** brought the Walking Horse and Chariot, which made its way slowly across the floor, **Mike Highley** had a lorry from the No 5. Manual and a caravan from the No. 4 Manual, and **Laurie Webb** brought his crane gearbox for Colin Croft to draw up for the record in ISOMECE.

Colin has been busy writing up a brief history of Meccano on his computer, and has created a single sided A4 sheet which he has copied to A3 size and has had laminated. This is intended to be used at exhibitions for public information. He had also taken orders for the MW Models jumbo packs, and had the first orders on hand for distribution.

The evening was completed with supper and refreshments. Our thanks go to Joe for making his house available for the meeting.

On December 20th a party of 24, made up of members, their partners and family, gathered at Valentines Restaurant in Petone for the Club's Christmas dinner. An excellent smorgasbord meal was enjoyed at a very reasonable price, enhanced by the view over Wellington harbour on a warm, clear evening with a beautiful sunset- a pleasant end to the year's activities.

The next meeting will be held on February 2nd at our usual venue of St Lukes, Wadestown.

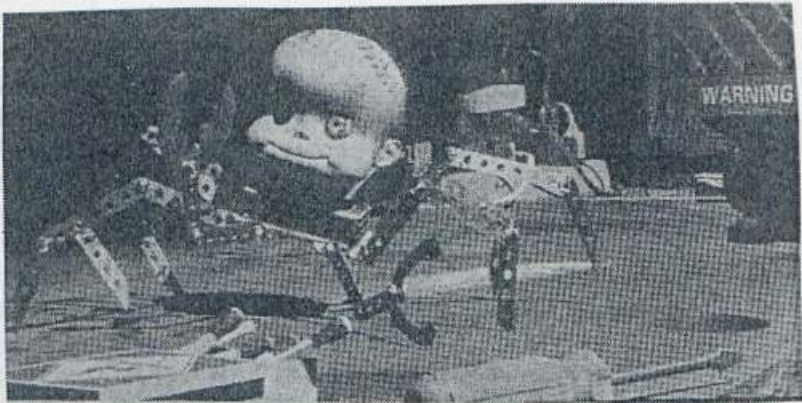
9.
BITS AND PIECES

from Lloyd Spackman

THANKS to Bill Watt for doing the page heading for me on his Canon Tpestar 220 Mk. 2 typewriter.

QUOTATION: "The head continued toward him, propelled by a creepy, spider-like body made from pieces of an Erector set. In horror, Woody scrambled back up on to the bed".....
From "Toy Story" by

Walt Disney Pictures



S.C.M. & E. Newsletters:

More articles worth reading:

- * Spring Suspension for model tanks by Phillip Edwards (Fall, 1994, issue)
- * Cleaning and restoring parts by Bob Galler (Jan. 1992, issue)
- * The Wurtemberg 'Trinity' Meccano C/W motor (Oct. 1991, issue)
- * How to store and ship your sets and parts by Charlie Pack (Fall, 1995, issue)

"SANDLOT" ROBOT: A Meccano/Erector robot was the star of a 1993 U.S. movie shown on TV3 early in December. The story was about youngsters playing baseball on the local sandlot ("park" in English) and losing their balls over the fence into the domain of a very unfriendly dog. JOEL PERLIN, President of Southern California Meccano & Erector Club supplied sets and models for the production. For a very entertaining movie several Meccano/Erector sets were put together to build a robot arm contraption which the boys used to retrieve the lost balls.

ORRERY ORIGINS: Meccano lends itself very well to orrery design and, over the years, there have been many outstanding Meccano models of orreries, built by people such as Pat Briggs. Did you know they were named after Charles Boyle, Earl of Orrery. A copy of the mechanism was made for him by James Rowley, an instrument maker of London. It had been invented about 1700 by George Graham as a clockwork driven mechanism devised to represent the movements of the planets about the sun.

SHELVING QUOTATION: Arranging the shelving for the new Warehouse stores has been the task of Mr. Pat Leonard who is a 'Store Set-up Manager'. He says the shelving, made in Pukekohe, fits together "like a giant MECCANO set."

FLAVOUR OF THE MONTH - TRACTORS: First prize winner at Skegex '95 was Howard Sie from Holland with his selection of tractors. He later brought to the N.M.M.G. show at Oxtou his best creation - a model (to large ashtray tyre scale) of an eight-wheel Canadian farm tractor. This model included four fully floating all driven axles with epicyclic hub-reduction gearing, an epicyclic transmission, power steering, safety cab, sliding doors and adjustable steering column.

Its tractive force output was astonishing considering that it was powered by a single small D C canister motor. And it stood on its own wheels - no perching it on stands to avoid bent axles.

(From N.M.M.G. Newsletter 11/95)

" "Gossip travels like a breeze which is started by a couple of wind-bags". - Jean Paré

A MECCANO PLOTTER.

W.J.Watt,Auckland.

In C.Q.6(Dec.1989) Oscar Fontan described his Plotter which could operate manually or by computer control. For manual operation, he advised using five relays, which dissuaded me from trying it. His model plotted along standard x-o-x and y-o-y axes, and he indicated how, by juggling the controls, one could draw letters and other figures..

I have designed and built a plotter, manually operated, that will plot along the two rectangular axes and will also describe circles or arcs with diameter depending on the pen distance from the centre of the table which can rotate from 0° to 360°.

To drive the cursor (and pen) in the rectangular axes, I used long screwed rods engaging threaded bosses, and to rotate the table, a 3½" gear wheel driven by a worm. Richards-Marx motors set at 16:1 ratio were used for the two axis drives, and a Buehler motor for the rotation drive, all at 6VDC. For control I used three DPDTCO switches, finding this easier than push-button switches.

CONSTRUCTION DETAILS. See the photographs.

The Frame This is 18½"x 18½"x 3½" made up of angle and braced girders. Inside the frame crossbracing is by further angle girders from front to rear and supported on further vertical short girders fixed inside the frame. Four of the braces are fixed at the bottom of the short girders and two are fixed four holes up, i.e. one inch from the top. One set of braces is at the twelfth hole from the left edge of the frame and one set at the twentieth hole. The third set (both at bottom level) is at the 25th and 27th holes from the left. Two 5½"x 3½" flat plates are bolted across the two top braces and those under them. A ball thrust race 168a is bolted on the top plate and this, with its other components is the bearing for the rotating table. The table is a circular piece of wood 10" diameter and 3/8" thick with a 168b screwed on to its under surface. A bushwheel is attached to the 168b holding in its boss a rod vertically passing through the bearing and plates and girders. On this rod, and between the plates, is a 3½" gear wheel. This is driven by a worm on a rod journaled in channel bearings attached to the lower cross braces. The rod is coupled to a Buehler motor fixed on another plate attached to the two right hand side lower cross braces. Quite a large space is left to the right of the table, and in this is fixed the control panel on a deck 4½" wide running from the front towards the R.M. motor driving the x-o-x axis motion. A battery could be installed in this space, making the model portable.

The x-o-x and y-o-y arms. These are the essence of the model as they carry the cursor and the pen.

The x-o-x arm. Two 18½" angle girders are connected by two 2½"x 1" D.A. strips. Through the centre holes of these pass a long screwed rod fixed at one end to an adaptor for screwed rod whose shank is journaled in one strip and fixed in a coupling on a R.M. motor bolted between the two long girders via a 2½"x 1½" flanged plate and two 1½" flat girders. This arm is bolted across the rear of the main frame one hole forward of the rear edge.

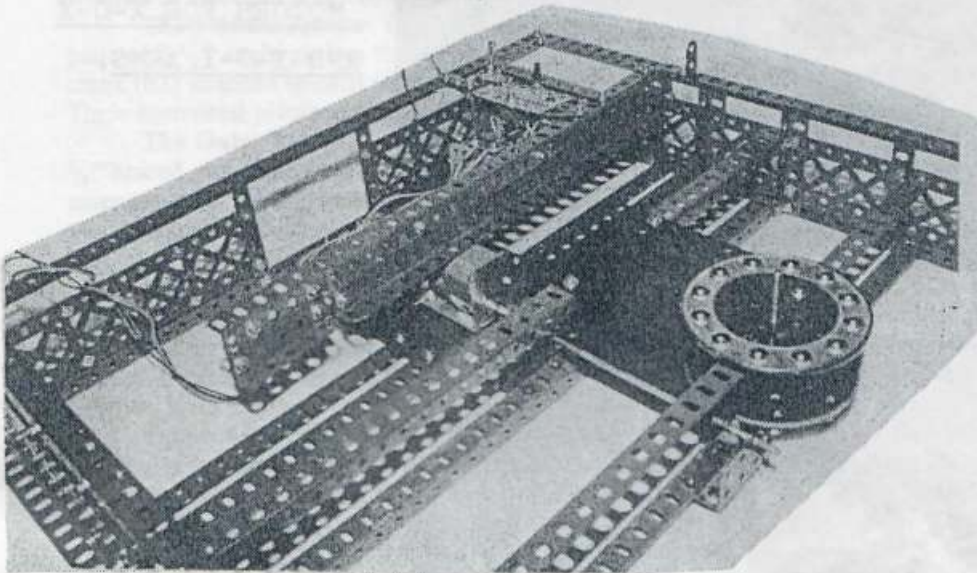
The y-o-y arm. This is another pair of 18½" angle girders connected by one 1½" DA strip and two 1½" strips. A threaded coupling is vertically fixed to the centre hole of each plain strip. The couplings are bearings for another long screwed rod attached to an adaptor at one end. The shank of the adaptor after passing through the coupling, is fixed to a half inch pinion. A threaded boss on the screwed rod is fixed under the cursor (see below) The pinion is driven by a 7/16" pinion on a R.M. motor mounted near the rear end of the arm on two 1½" angle girders, which, by 2"x 1½" flat plates are attached to the long angle girders.

The y-o-y arm slides along the x-o-x arm by the following means. Two (slightly longer than normal) 2½"x ½" DA strips are fixed on the under surface of the long girders, and below these, also on the same bolts, a 2½"x 1½" flanged plate. The lugs of the DA strips and the plate all point downwards and fit on either side of the upturned flanges of the long girders of the x-o-x arm. This provides an easy but not sloppy sliding movement, further controlled by three 11½" rods. Two of these are journaled in angle brackets on the long girders of the x-o-x arm and one in brackets on the extreme front of the main frame. One of the rods passes through the rear end holes of the y-o-y girders and another through the eighth hole forward, and the third through the extreme front holes. Bearings for the rear two long rods are cranks bolted on the outside of the long girders. By this means, the y-o-y arm moves quite smoothly along the x-o-x arm.

The cursor and pen holder. The basis of this is a piece designed by Alan Partridge, which he called 'twin rod and strip connector' and which won him a prize in a new parts competition (see Newsmag59 p78). Alan sent me specifications of the piece and I made up a few, finding them very useful for sliding mechanisms. This piece slides along on two long parallel rods fixed inside the long girders of the y-o-y arm. The rods are journaled in the DA strip at the motor end and in two small angle brackets at the front end. The driving threaded boss on the screwed rod is bolted to the centre hole on the under surface of the piece. A fishplate also bolted to the top of the piece holds the penholder which is spring operated and designed for a six sided pen. I made up a brass ring to hold the pen, the ring being fixed by angle brackets to a double bracket. The spring arrangement should be clear from the photos.

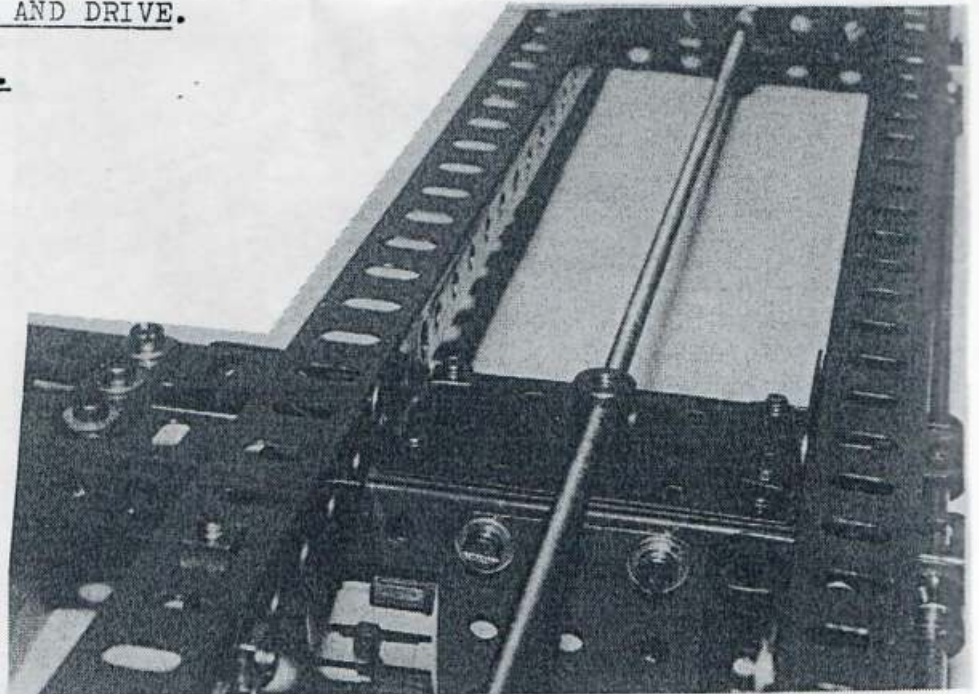
Suitable decking conceals the rotating mechanism, control panel and wiring. On top of the main deck and outside the table, is a cardboard ring graduated from 0° to 360° to enable any angular course to be plotted.

Covers for two motors can be seen in one photograph.

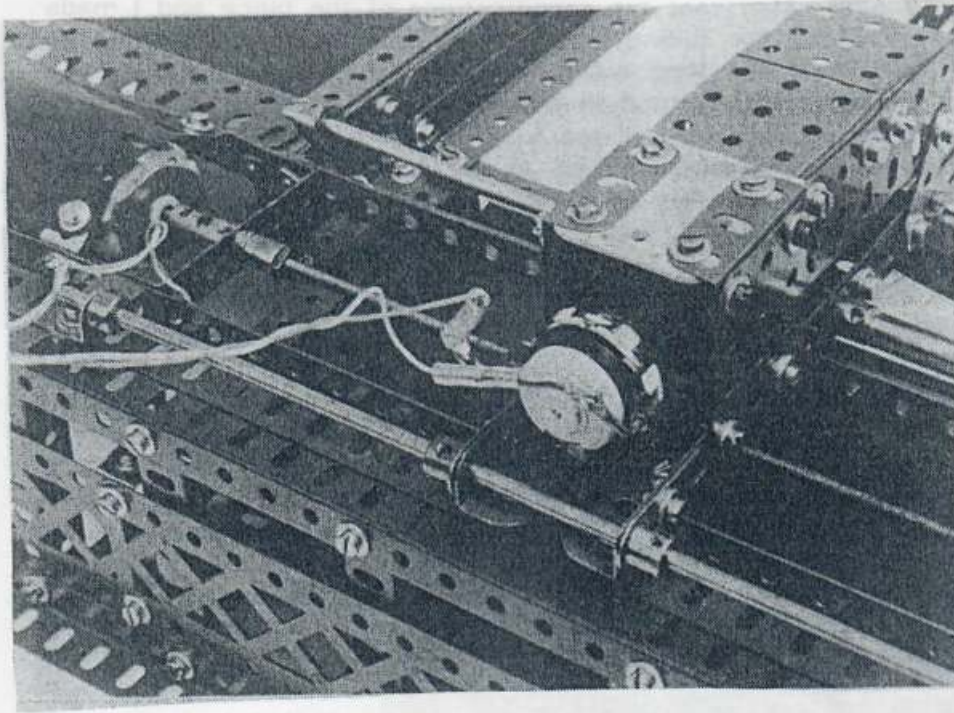


TURNTABLE AND DRIVE.

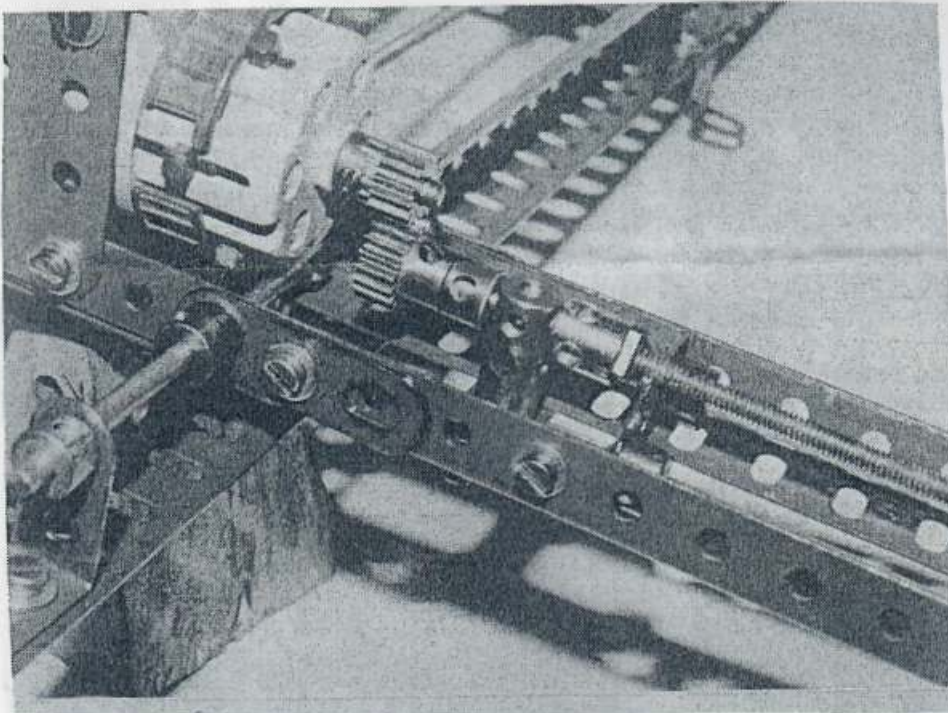
FRAME.



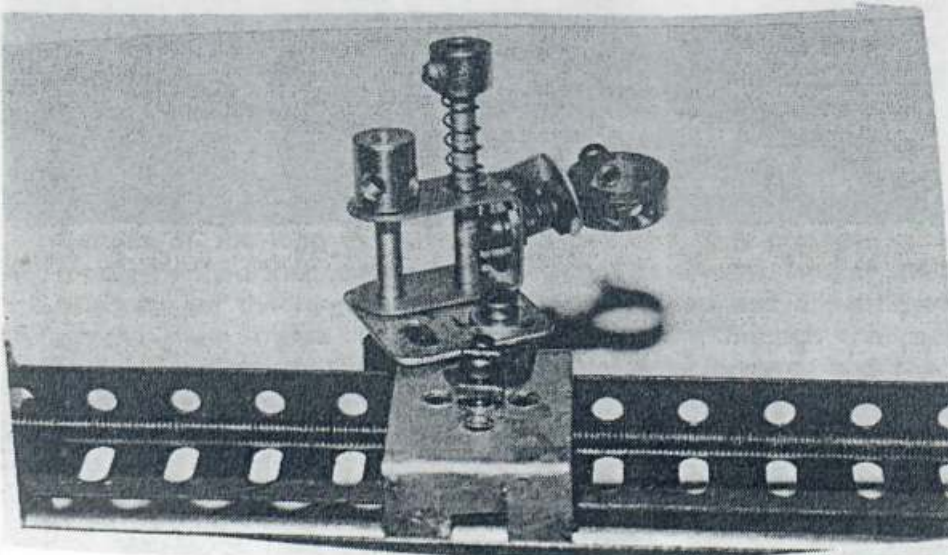
UNDERSURFACE OF
X-O-X ARM.



REAR END SHOWING
MOTORS FOR X-O-X
AND Y-O-Y ARMS.



DRIVE TO THE
Y-O-Y ARM.



CURSOR AND PEN
HOLDER.

Build a Meccano Gyroscope.

by John Ince

This model is based on one seen at the 1991 Skegec Meccano Exhibition.

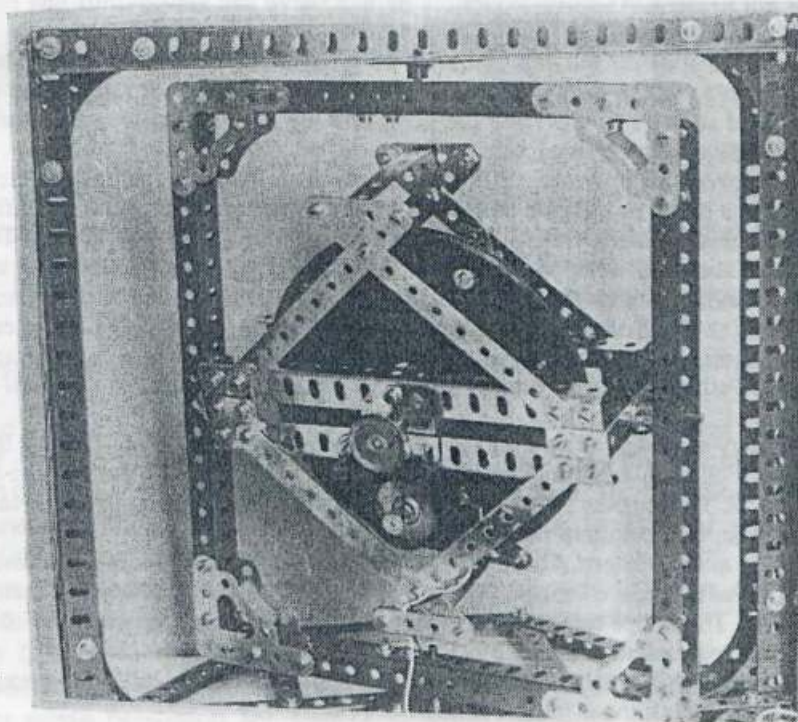
The Flywheel: The heart of the model is the rotating flywheel which is constructed of six 6" circular plates, (146). These are bolted to a couple of bush wheels secured to a 3 1/2" axle rod. The flywheel is housed in a frame constructed from 4 x 7 1/2" angle girders each pair spaced apart by 1 1/2" strips and connected by 2 1/2" x 1" double bent strips at each end. Make sure to check that the flywheel is nicely balanced. If it is not quite true then adjust the bush wheels to bring the axle to the centre of the assembly. Two more bush wheels secured to the angle girders provide bearings for the flywheel axle. An arrangement of 5 1/2" strips and two more double bent strips complete the housing. A small motor - ex tape recorder - is mounted on the housing to provide power to maintain the flywheel rotational speed. It is essential to balance this motor with counterweights on the opposite side of the housing. This consists of stacks of 2 1/2" strips or similar.

The Middle Frame: The middle frame is constructed from 2 pairs of 9 1/2" angle girders each side and two pairs of 7 1/2" angle girders top and bottom; connected by 1 x 1/2" angle brackets (12b) and corner gussets (108). A crank (62) attached to each side holds a 1" axle rod which matches similar cranks attached to the flywheel housing. These horizontal pivots are at 90° to the flywheel axis.

The Outer Frame: I built this from four pairs of 12 1/2" angle girders. The side girders are separated by 12 1/2" braced girders and are attached to the top and bottom pairs directly by two curved strips (89a) at each corner. An assembly of 5 1/2" strips and 5 1/2" angle girders forms the base. At the centre of the top and bottom angle girders are two face plates which provide the vertical axis. The 1" axle rods line up with cranks secured to the centre top and bottom of the middle frame. This axis is at 90° with each of the other axes.

Friction: It is vital to line up the bearing components on each side of each frame with a 11 1/2" axle rod before assembly. Please choose a straight one! The bottom face plate on the outer frame has a couple of 2 1/2" strips bolted to it to block the hole in the boss. A ball bearing is then dropped in the hole to provide a low friction bearing. A drop of machine oil on each bearing should now ensure that the gyroscope pivots nicely on each axis and that the flywheel turns freely.

Operation: I found that my motor was only able to accelerate the flywheel if I gave it an initial swing. The motor is connected to the power supply with flexible wires salvaged from old telephone hand piece cords. Once the gyroscope is up to full speed note that the wheel tends to hold its position when the outer frame is tilted and rotated. Try pushing on the flywheel housing and note the effect.



Dear Bill & Federation Members,

In the December 1995 magazine you have published a letter from Bruce Neilson which was presumably intended for club arranging the next Convention. I think that some comments are necessary.

The convening club accepts responsibility to hold the convention. This may / must be confirmed in writing. I expect that the convening club must accept responsibility for the Convention but acceptance or confirmation in writing would best be in response to a letter from someone. This is tricky for the Federation as it does not have a secretary. Maybe that is the reason for a little confusion regarding the 1995 Convention.

In view of rising cost members to underwrite I agree that the cost and profits of the Convention are the business of the convening club but am not happy about the idea of some club members underwriting losses. A club should be most hesitant about embarking on a convention which will cost more than the available club funds together with the conservative estimate of the door takings. Here is a summary of the 1995 Convention in Christchurch.

Receipts	\$	Payments	\$
Registration	840	Tickets	60
Net Auction Proceeds	283	Stanchion & Rope Hire	225
Net Sale of Parts	203	Road Signs	146
Door Sales	1152	Advertising	472
Loss covered from		Hall Hire	1015
Club funds	712	Name Tag Holders	37
		Public Liability Ins. (\$1m)	100
		Yellow & Blue Fabric	303
		Dinner	826
		Miscellaneous	6
	3190		3190

All 230 volt motors must have a current certificate of compliance. I agree that care must be taken in the condition and use of electrical equipment but believe that this **responsibility must lie with the individual exhibitor**. The Public Liability Insurance is there to protect the club from any claims arising. Any member planning to use electrical equipment which is not of recent commercial origin or which they have constructed themselves should have a look at NZECP 3:1993 which deals with electrical safety of apparatus and materials and especially Section 2.1.3 which deals with electric toys. Get a copy from the Ministry of Commerce. If you plan to use an old metal boxed Meccano transformer have it checked to ensure that the wiring is still in safe condition; if you plan to use a Meccano 110v motor set up the way suggested by Meccano Ltd in the 20's, **don't! If in doubt go and see a friendly electrician.** It is quite impractical for organising clubs to take on this responsibility.

A full photographic record be made of all models be organised. This is easier said than done. Apart from the need to have both a competent photographer and equipment on hand, it is also vital to have opportunity to photograph when the public are not present. As some exhibitors do not arrive and set up until just before opening time the objective is incapable of achievement.

A commission of 25% of all auction proceeds be paid to the convening club. The question of auction commission was argued at a CMC meeting before the 1995 Convention without satisfactory resolution. In the event the matter was negotiated with those providing the items and my only comment is that had a figure of 25% been adopted the CMC would have been a heavy loser!

Hall location is extremely important..... If someone can identify the perfect hall in the perfect location and at the right rental and it turns out to be a crowd puller that's great. It is a great subject to pontificate on but not an easy one to resolve. I think the suggestion from some Wellington members that they use the Town Hall for the 2001 Convention may be over ambitious. The problem is that Meccano is not big business in New Zealand now and it is easy to over estimate its ability to draw crowds.

Competitions -I think that Bruce's proposed system of judging is pedantic to say the least. Never the less there is merit in letting competitors know what competitions there are, how they are to be judged and asking them whether they want to participate. Perhaps one merely needs to say that *the judges decision will be final and no correspondence will be entered into.*

Judge is preferably not exhibiting on the day. - Convention Manager. I believe that it is unrealistic to expect the convening club to provide non-exhibiting judges and managers. After all it is usually that club which provides the biggest number of models. The purpose of the Convention and the concurrent Exhibition is to display models to both members and to the public. Competitions are not first priority.

Sponsorship to be acknowledged. CMC would have liked to have made more of acknowledgement of the NZ Meccano distributors but as F.W.Cave Ltd. did not respond to CMC's letters this was not really feasible.

Federation AGM The notice and agenda is presumably the responsibility of the Federation President, there being no secretary. I had no problems with the 1995 meeting.

I have not seen Bruce's Convention Manual but hope that it correctly identifies the purpose of a Convention of Meccano Modellers which I think are as follows in order of priority.

(a) to bring together Meccano modellers from New Zealand and overseas to display and discuss Meccano models,

(b) to mount the event in a location which allows effective display and also has facilities on site or nearby for the Federation AGM, the auction, the dinner and prize giving as well as providing members with morning and afternoon teas and lunch.

(c) to have such competitions as the convening club feels appropriate.

(d) to invite the public to visit the exhibition for reasonable hours during two days.

Yours sincerely,



**Christchurch Meccano Club Meeting
December 1995
Reported by John Ince**

Our December meeting was very well attended with 27 present. This included three juniors and three visitors.

David Lang impressed everyone with his moon buggy which was a four wheel drive fully articulated vehicle capable of climbing over the obstacles which David also provided. **John Hamlyn** brought his fine front end loader which is now completed. On a smaller scale **Stefan Burrell** had a little rotary mower complete with motor. Watch your fingers! **Cameron McFarlane** had made a car from his new Mech Struc set. **Ian Torrens** was in the car business too with a racing car from the parts of set 4037. **John Crawford** produced a colourful painted wooden traction engine. Maybe he will try a Meccano one next year. **Graeme O'Neill** showed a miniature grader, farm tractor and a couple of space craft as well as his well known model of the showman's traction engine.

A feature of the meeting was a rather unusual Christmas raffle for which Graeme sold just 25 tickets - just one each for \$2. As the numbers were drawn out of a box each winner was asked to have a dip in a plastic rubbish bag. Much to the members surprise there were 25 prizes which included collector sets, sets of tyres, pairs of gears and copies of Bert Love's book *Meccano Constructors Guide*. After the raffle John

Ince produced a box of second hand parts which quickly relieved people of any spare cash. Sale of parts has proved to be a most satisfactory way of boosting club funds but depends on sourcing second hand Meccano collections at reasonable prices.

Club President, **Graeme O'Neill**, then addressed the meeting on the events of the year with words of thanks here and there. He then said that in consultation with **Kingsley Burrell** he had decided to appoint John Ince as club leader. This is a position which has not been filled since 1973. He then awarded John the Saunders Cup, a trophy presented to the club by **Ernie Saunders** who was club president for over a decade until 1969. Graeme concluded by reminding members of the value of becoming members of the International Society. A membership renewal form was available.

John mentioned how good it was to see growth in membership as a consequence of the Easter Exhibition. It is likely that we will have an extra four junior members in 1996.

Kingsley announced the award of the Club Modellers cup to **John Hamlyn** and thanked John for his energy and realistic work especially for the Easter Convention.

Members then adjourned to a fine supper organised by **Joyce** and **John Pluck** with help from **Annette Burrell** and one or two others. Thus concluded an excellent meeting and a very successful year.

FUELLING THE GIANT BLOCKSETTER CRANES.

The archtype Meccano model must be the GBS based on the Titan cranes built by **Stothert and Pitt** from about 1880 onwards and widely used for breakwater construction as shown in the Meccano Book of Engineering. These cranes were originally steam driven but most Meccano models appear to have been electrically driven, although some of them may have been meant to represent the original Titans.

If so, one would expect to see some representation of how they were fuelled with coal and water.

In **Julian Head's** articles on Titans in C.Q.28 and 29, a coal hoist is depicted in two of the diagrams of the controls, and also in a crane described by **Miguel Viglioglia** in News mag 42, July 1985, a service crane is shown attached to the port side of the engine house. These are the only indications I have been able to find of such which must have been an essential part of the crane.

In none of the Titans pictured in MBE does there appear to be a coal hoist nor is there one in the GBS models in Meccano manuals. An excellent steam driven GBS model by **Tony Parmee** in C.Q.28 is also lacking in this appendage.

Whether actually steam driven or by electricity, it seems that any model GBS would be enhanced by some provision for coal and water fuelling.

Meccano & Erector Club

NEWSLETTER

Fall 1995

Vol. XIX, No.4

A commentary by Lloyd Spackman

I borrowed a set of Southern California Meccano & Erector Club Newsletters dating from 1987 to 1995 from the NZFMM library. BROWSING through them was most rewarding as I discovered many new facts and stories about Meccano, Erector and other M.C. systems.

From its beginnings in January, 1975, with six founder members, the S.C.M. & E. Club has grown to a membership of well over 200 spread all over the world, including half a dozen in New Zealand. For its first 11 years the Club was entitled 'Southern California Meccano Club'. The 'Erector' in its name was added in 1986.

Clyde Suttle edited the Newsletter until his death in 1991 and Anton Calleia has been Editor since then.

In the S.C.M. & E. newsletters, the early history of Meccano in the U.S.A. has been described in greater detail, I think, than in any British Meccano history publications.

News of discoveries of 'lost' Erector sets features frequently. A.C. Gilbert's Erector system seems to have had a very muddled history. Erector 'buffs' are rightly envious of the Cavendish and other books which have given us such a comprehensive story of Frank Hornby's Meccano, thanks to Jim Gamble, Bert Love and other historians. There is certainly need for a definitive history to be written about A.C. Gilbert's Erector empire in the U.S.A.

S.C.M. & E. Club Editors have tried to preserve a balance in each issue between Gilbert/Erector and Meccano/Erector, plus news of other systems. The two major metal construction systems have always had considerable effect on each other, particularly in the U.S.A.

Reading the editorials and the letters from Club members, and comparing the two it is apparent to me that Erector was and is mainly a 'collectors' system, whereas Meccano was and is very much a 'builders' system.

To quote Club member Jim Mietlicki from New York: "....many members concentrate on one to the exclusion of others. I also see a need to get more Erector people involved in building to the same degree that is apparent in Meccano. Erector seems to be too concentrated on display sets....."

ARTICLES in the Club's Newsletters which are worth reading have been:

*The history of Sr. Richini's Argentine Exacto/Meccano, written by the man himself (1987-1989 issues).

*Illustrated building instructions for some very famous Erector models.

*The history of Meccano in the U.S.A. by Tony Knowles (Summer, 1995, issue).

We continue to be an all-volunteer, loosely organized group and, as individual members, we get out of the Club essentially what we put into it.

If we have learned anything so far, it is that sharing must be our byword. By sharing our personal interests and experiences with fellow hobbyists, we enrich each other's lives and thus make our association truly worthwhile.

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA — Anton Calleia

MECCANO AND ERECTOR CLUB

July 1987

CLUB NEWSLETTER

Vol. XI, No. 3

BITS & PIECES

from Lloyd Spackman

A NEW MECCANO LEG:

This news item did not mention the most important point --- the new leg was made from Meccano parts 23b, 142j, 111 and 114. It was obvious in the T.V. news report that Meccano had been used and Radio Pacific later confirmed this.

CANADIAN MECCANO NEWS is running a series from the 1934 Meccano Magazines on British Marine Engine history in Meccano.

COMMENT by the librarian of North Shore City Mobile Library:
(her library bus had just had a major overhaul)
"My bus and I are now at one".

From Keith Cameron:

"I attended the Wembley Empire Exhibition of 1924. I wish I'd known Hubert Lansley was there, I'd have made a point of talking to him! I seem to remember that Mother and Father steered me away fairly soon from such delights in case I got too involved! I was already greedy enough where Meccano was concerned."

JOKES FROM OLD M.M.:

Meccano Magazines of the '20's and '30's contained a section devoted to riddles and jokes which were an attraction for all Meccano 'boys'. Many are still very funny and are being re-printed in Canadian Meccano News.

Here are a couple:

Pat: "Mike what are you boring a hole in your boat for?"

Mike: "There's a hole in it that lets the water in, so I'm boring another one to let the water out".

M.M. Sept. 1926.

Teacher: "Brown, give me a sentence with the words 'attack' and 'heroes' in it"

Brown: "A man sat on a tack and he rose immediately"

M.M. Feb. 1932.

ITS PRETTY, OH SO PRETTY:

Most people would not describe Meccano models as 'pretty'. (Dictionary: 'attractive in a dainty or graceful way'). They are often, instead, called hard, angular and ugly.

In the 'Comfort' washing softener advertisement, the model I built had to be harsh and angular to contrast with the softness of 'Comfort' washed clothes.

On the other hand, we have Pat Edkins' garden and flower models. They are dainty and graceful.

Yet I venture to say that any Meccano modeller, having just completed his project will stand back, look at it with pride, and think 'Its beautiful' !! After all, they say beauty is in the eye of the beholder.

For instance, I have some blue and some white flat trunnions and trunnions. The colours are quite pretty. Would anyone like to buy them, to make his Set 1 or Set 10 pretty.

Rolling on

Harriet the tortoise is on the move again after a British veterinarian replaced a badly injured leg with a small wheel. The tortoise, whose age is estimated at 40 to 80, is thought to have been attacked by a fox or rat. The vet, Dr Steve Drivers, of Sevenoaks, Kent, removed the leg and glued a black and yellow wheel and hinge to the bottom of her shell.

PETER MATTHEWS' MECCANO MUSEUMS

Most modellers will have heard of Peter Matthews' South African collection of Meccano which was auctioned by Christies of London a few years ago. Here, in this contribution by JULIAN AVISENIS, is the background to what happened then and since then:

"THE MUSEUM was in Peter's house during the early '70s. I visited it for the first time in about 1985 - a few years after Peter had moved it to Goldreef City, a large museum-cum- amusement park situated at an old goldmine on the outskirts of Johannesburg. Peter called his museum 'Toys of Yesteryear' and it housed not only a massive collection of working Meccano models but also numerous other items such as Hornby Dublo trains, Dinky Toys, tinsplate cars and antique dolls and dollshouses. Needless to say, Meccano was also on sale.

THE COLLECTION itself was absolutely magnificent. I say 'was' because, sadly, most of it is scattered all over the world following the auction of the more valuable of the items through Christies of London.

I understand that Peter had to take a considerable loan to set up at such a prime site as Goldreef City. Despite the undoubted success of 'Toys of Yesteryear' the management of Goldreef City virtually ousted Peter to make way for some other attraction which they deemed to be of more 'general interest'.

Peter was left with no option but to auction his collection off in order to pay back his debt. It was little consolation to him that Goldreef City went into a steady decline thereafter - mostly as a result of exorbitant admission fees, but also partly as a direct result of the absence of 'Toys of Yesteryear'.

As you know, Peter still sells Meccano, trading under the name of 'Toys Past and Present'. He remains an extremely resilient and avid collector, and I believe that he is about to set up a NEW MUSEUM, this time in Johannesburg itself. From what I have heard, it will be even better than the first one! I will be visiting South Africa in December, and hope it will be open by then.

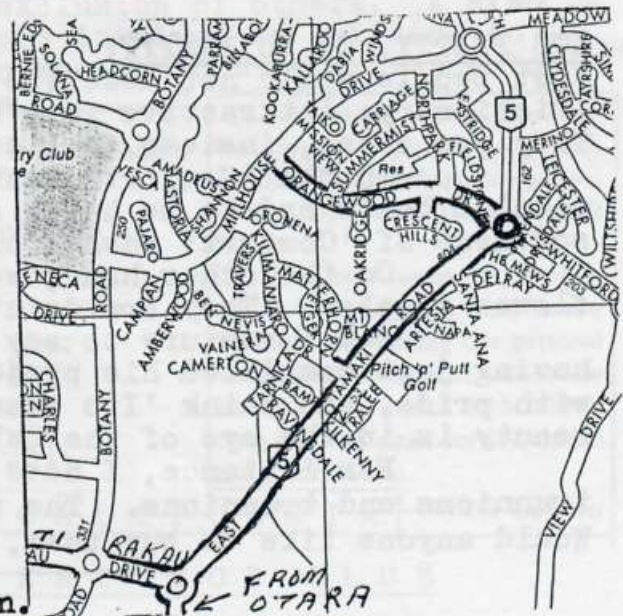
AUCKLAND MECCANO CLUB - NEXT MEETING

The next A.M.C. meeting will be at Peter Hancock's home, 1 Orangewood Drive, Howick, on Saturday, February 10th, from 2pm.

To get to the venue: Coming from the North, take the Mt. Wellington turnoff from the Southern Motorway, past Panmure and along Pakuranga Highway. At Pakuranga Centre, go right into Ti Rakau Drive. Follow Ti Rakau to its end, then veer left into East Tamaki Road. Orangewood Drive is on the left at the next roundabout. Whitford Rd. is on your right.

From the South, take the Otara turnoff and follow East Tamaki Rd. all the way to the Whitford Junction.

Peter's house is the cedar one on your left at the Junction.



EXTRACTS FROM RECENT MECCANO PUBLICATIONS.

Constructor Quarterly 29, Sept. 1995.

Whizzy Dizzy. Fairground model by K.Cameron.
 Steam-powered Ship by J.Bader.
 Controls of Stothert & Pitt Titans by J.Head part 2.
 The Robot Gargantua, review by B.Love.
 Classic Meccano Motor Chassis by B.Love.
 Pottery Museum Stoke on Trent Steam Engine by H.Somerville.
 A Flying Helicopter by A.Rowe.
 Art Deco Mantel Clock by T.McCallum.
 Caterpillar D10N Bulldozer by G.Kind.
 Storage of Meccano psrts by A.Partridge.

Constructor Quarterly 30, Dec. 1995.

Front page picture of B.Rowe's Player Piano model.
 'Imperator' Amusement park model by K.Cameron.
 Large Ferris Wheel by D.Taylor.
 Repair of damaged parts by A.Partridge.
 Clockwork Robots by T.Parmee.
 Vintage Austin Motor Carriage 1909 by J.Catella and B.Lovve.
 4-speed & reverse Synchronous Gearbox by H.Van den Berg.
 "Poclain Case 1288'hydraulic excavator by E.Champleboux.

Newsmag 72, July 1995.

Meccano's First Blocksetter by J.Head.
 Thoughts on Pattern making machines by R.Lake.
 The 'Fuller's Earth Pits' crane by P.Bradley.

Newsmag 73, Nov. 1995.

Seatrak boat launching system by J.Giesen.
 Constructor project 67. Walking dragline for no6 by K.Cameron.
 Meccano's First Blocksetter. Another long article by J.Head.

The International Meccanoman 16, Sept. 1995.

A long article on springs.
 An informative article on Blocksetting Gear.
 Article on computerised illustrations for club magazines.

Transvaal Meccano Guild Newsletter No.10, July 1995.

The bracing of structures by J.Rossouw.
 Automatic Gearbox reprinted from M.M.Dec.1966.

Transvaal Meccano Guild Newsletter No.11, Oct. 1995.

A varying speed mechanism, reprint from M.M.Dec.1966.
 1/4" spacing with standard Meccano by R.Hill.



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