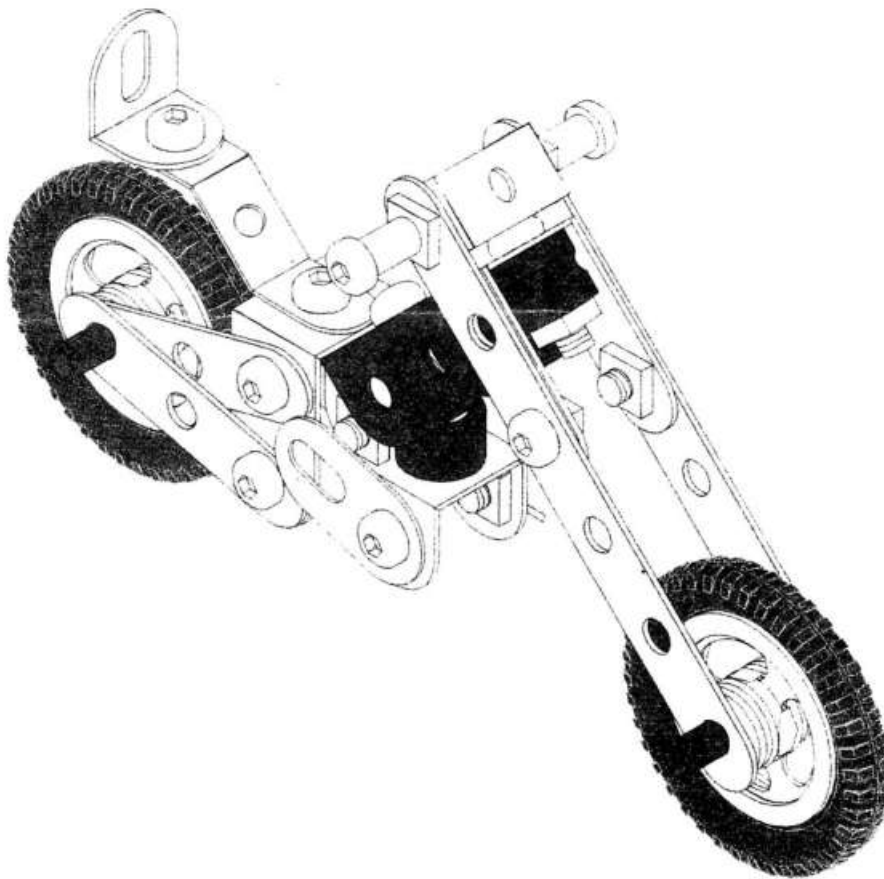


Vol 21 No 1 February 1997



NZEMM Magazine



The Collection Series - No 2302 The Chopper Bike

NZ FEDERATION OF
MECCANO MODELLERS

EDITORIAL

PRESIDENT:

David Wall
502 East Coast Road
Mairangi Bay
Auckland
09-478-6825

EDITOR:

Don Flowers
90 Holborn Drive
Stokes Valley
Lower Hutt
04-563-8008

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Welcome to this the third issue from Wellington, I presume that you are all happy with the magazine as nobody has contacted me with any complaints- except regarding page numbers- the pages were numbered in the last issue but the printer removed them. I hope that you have sent your form back to MWT for the convention, an information sheet is printed on page 12 of this issue. I would like to apologise to Don Redmond of Canada for spelling his name wrongly in the last issue Included with this issue is an account for subs ,please pay on this account as it is the only one you will get, you will notice that they have been increased to \$20.00 per year. This is so that we can send the magazine out in a large envelope without folding it. We need articles for the magazine on any Meccano or related topics also photos of models with brief descriptions, if you can help please send them to us. Photos will be returned. Do not worry about presentation as I will type it out. See you all at the convention at easter in Fielding.

NEW ZEALAND MECCANO CONTACT PERSONS

AUCKLAND	David Wall, 502 East Coast Road, Mairangi Bay	09-478-6825
WAIKATO	Don McClelland, 32b Hazelwood Avenue, Hamilton	07-847-4503
HAWKES BAY	Trevor Adam, 22 Ferguson Street, Bay View, Napier	06-836-6827
MANAWATU	Bruce Geange, 4 Winchester Street, Palmerston Nth	06-357-0566
WANGANUI	Tom Pitams, 77 Maria Place Ext, Wanganui	06-345-6788
TARANAKI	Lindsay Bond, 93 Hathaway Street, Stratford	06-765-5665
WELLINGTON	Bryan Jones, 9-21 Islington St, Trentham, Wgtn	04-528-3988
	Laurie Webb, 70 Calabar Road, Wellington	04-388-9638
CANTERBURY	Graeme O'Neill, 49 Hindness Street, Christchurch	03-322-7456
	John Ince, 37 Burnside Crescent, Christchurch	03-358-7351
OTAGO	Karen Murcott, 56 Aytoun St, Shiel Hill, Dunedin	03-454-3457

FROM THE PRESIDENT

I would like to take this opportunity to wish all our members and their families the Complements of the Season - good health -good luck, and good modelling for 1997.

Congratulations also to Don Flowers and his team on the exceptionally smooth transition between the change of Editors occasioned by the death of Bill Watt. It is a first class effort -Bill would be proud of you. May I make a couple of suggestions- first, that page numbering be re-introduced (Done Ed) and second, that the editor advise potential contributors of the cut off date for receiving material for the next issue.(refer Comming Events Ed)

With the imminence of our Convention, I would like to broach several matters for Members consideration prior to the AGM.

1.LIFE MEMBERSHIP-SERVICE AWARD.

Members will recall that Bill Watt was our first and only Life Member. Bills death raises the question-should we continue to offer life membership? Should life membership be restricted to one Member at a time? If so what should the criteria be for selection ? What, if any, privileges should a life member be entitled to eg. free subscription to the magazine?

Another suggestion is Service Awards. There are many Members throughout NZ who have contributed to the Meccano movement over the years whom you may consider worthy of recognition. The criteria would need to be different from that of a Life Member.

2.RESPONSIBILITY FOR RETURN OF TROPHIES

I believe that an officer (President or Secretary) of the club which hosted the previous convention should be responsible for ensuring the return of all trophies to the club hosting the next convention, say a week prior to the next convention taking place. A trophy book recording recipients name address and phone number will be provided for use at the next convention (possibly we could record all trophy

winners from all previous conventions - Ed. This will help avoid embarrassment of trophies missing at the prize giving ceremony.

3.JUDGING.

This is a vexed question and I agree with the Editors comments in the December issue. Judging methods should be clarified and adopted by all clubs to ensure uniformity. My personal view is that Public judging results in poor decisions. The fairest system, in my opinion is the one introduced some years ago by Bruce Neilson, this resulted in fair decision making. As I am not competing at the forthcoming convention I am available if required to assist Bruce (or anyone else) in judging.

Please let me know your thoughts on the above issues as soon as possible as these matters are of considerable importance to all federation members and need to be tidied up for the future. Final decisions will of course be made at the AGM.

Now for a couple of personal observations. The first concerns an article in the December issue of our magazine. According to FW Cave Ltd we have "lady" modellers and "male" modellers.Whatever happened to our "gentleman" modellers? Have we none or aren't any of us deemed to be worthy of the title? Anyway is it politically correct to differentiate between modellers gender?

Secondly, my brother and I went to the Auckland Museum's Toy Exhibition and were disappointed that Frank Hornby's products were poorly represented there being no standard Meccano and only a very sparse Hornby train display. Also there were no steam toys- a poor show on both counts.

Finally, I wish to advise readers that thanks largely to Lindsay Bond, all of Brian Buchanan's Meccano Collection has now been sold and the proceeds given to his mother prior to Christmas - thank you to all concerned.

Auckland members are reminded that the next meeting is at my home on Saturday 8Th February commencing at 2pm.

DAVID WATT

Wellington Meccano Club

Meeting notes for December 1996

-reported by Bryan Jones and Mike Highley

It has become a tradition of the Wellington Meccano club to hold its December meeting at a member's house, and this year at short notice Joe Bell kindly made his place available. An informal gathering of seven members took place, with five apologies.

Some members had been busy model building and their latest efforts were shown. **Joe Bell** showed a large model of a traction engine, as yet uncompleted. He showed how he had built up the crankshaft and was trying to fit in a simulation of the valve gear.

Don Flowers brought along the Front End Loader model from the new Action Control Construction Series. We were interested to see how the control system worked, and noted that the sensor needed to be positioned carefully for "line-of-sight" working to get the greatest reliability from the system.

Lou Nichols brought two models, the stationary engine produced by Peter Matthews and a bicycle with rider, which appeared on the Internet in an article with photos from URL Canada. Lou invited assistance from members with good eyesight and imagination, to help with some of the details for both models, as the photographs only give one view of each model.

Bryan Jones had received several leaflets, a price list and a publication from MW Models and these were circulated for interest. The latest Federation Magazine had also been received, and Don spoke about its production and invited contributions.

A general discussion followed on what

members saw as a future for Meccano in New Zealand. Its popularity seems to be waning, due to factors such as limited interest from parents in helping children with "fiddly" toys, the requirement to put in time and effort to achieve a result (where these days the emphasis seems to be on instant entertainment with minimal effort), and the obstacle of Meccano's comparatively high price and lower availability. What could we do as a Club? Suggestions were made of selling Starter sets at exhibitions, to continue the interest shown when people see the display models, and to be as much in the public eye as possible with involvement in exhibitions. The discussion concluded over a very nice supper.

The Club's Christmas dinner was held on Sunday 15th December, at Valentines restaurant in Wellington. A party of 17 members and families attended, and we were pleased to welcome Keith and Emma McCallum, who have not been able to attend meetings for a while. A postcard was received with greetings from Wes Dalefield, the picture on it being a reduced copy of the September 1930 Meccano Magazine front cover featuring the opening of the Liverpool and Manchester Railway. A pleasant evening and meal was enjoyed, with plenty of opportunity for meeting the partners and families of members.

Coming Events:

- Meeting- Friday 7th February, St. Lukes
- Meeting- Friday 7th March, St. Lukes
- Convention- 28-30 March, Fielding Civic Centre

**Christchurch Meccano Club Meeting
December 1996
Reported by John Ince**

The December meeting of the Christchurch Club is a Christmas Party and members bring something to make a tasty supper. This year there were 23 present including friends and junior members. To add to the interest we had a raffle for some Christmas goodies (not Meccano) and a collection set for second prize.

Threats made at the November meeting were effective in bringing a great collection of models. **Chris Thompson** had a windmill which was designed to operate through 360°. **Neil Pluck's** fairground merry-go-round had prancing horses and flashing lights as it revolved. **Ian Torrens** thought that the December magazine cover picture was worth presenting in the flesh (or is it the metal!) He has also made a fine model of the prime mover from the 1995 Master Builder set 7064. Perhaps he will build the semi-trailer unit for our next meeting.

Selwyn Megson brought the little collection set go cart. **David Lang** once again showed his modelling skill with a fine model of a Massey Fergusson farm tractor with trailer. The motor drives through a two speed and reverse gear box to a reduction drive on each wheel. The large battery was carried by the trailer. **John Hamlyn** has built a Foden 8 x 4 forward control cab high sided truck. The cab tilts to show the engine location. For wheels he used boiler ends with 142a tyres. These are a tight fit but are very realistic with the twin rear axles having the boiler ends open side out. John used soap solution to assist with the tyre fitting but this could also be aided by immersion of the tyres in boiling water. **John Ince** now has the gearbox of his motor car chassis fitted with the special gear wheel for low gear so the gear change works quite well with selectors and gear lever. His Dresser 510b FE loader is now completed with hand operated bucket lift and tilt.

Kingsley Burrell reminded members of the last days of Binns Road with a Mogul crane truck and Mogul set box; a lifting bridge in Binns Road yellow using parts from the crane multi-kit and two Dinky toy super models. **Anjuli Burrell** produced a revolving Christmas tree with lights (whatever happens to the roots?); a Dynamic set racing car and several small models. **Stefan Burrell** presented a fine playground with a double swing; a see-saw; a tractor towing several sledges; a tower with slide, fireman's pole and a tyre swing.

As the magazine editor has asked for views on model judging we had a discussion on this issue. **Ian Torrens** thought that

public judging was not worthwhile as models were too difficult to compare. He felt that models should be judged by a panel of experienced modellers. **Peter King** felt that there should be separate parallel competitions, one judged by peers and one judged by the public. **Kingsley Burrell** thought that there was a problem when exhibitors ability to construct a model was limited by the range of parts available in their collection. He thought that people with big sets had an advantage. At this stage a show of hands indicated that most of the active modellers had No 10 sets or better so perhaps it is not a problem. At this stage everyone started to talk at once but eventually the general feeling emerged that competitions were not the main purpose of exhibitions. The important thing was to show the public what great things could be built with Meccano and to allow modellers to admire each other work. Asking modellers to restrict their models to specific sets or collections of parts would defeat this objective. A suggestion that modellers should be asked to build to a theme topic was not supported although the idea has been tried in the past. At one past convention a prize was offered for models meeting a specified dimensional criteria i.e. fitting into a 12" cube.

Graeme O'Neill has bought a new video camera which he used throughout the evening to record activities and models. As it has a remote control it was possible to mount on the tripod and control from his seat. Perhaps he will be able to buy one of the Meccano Action Control sets and build a remote control pan and tilt control for the tripod!

John Ince read a letter received recently from **Bert Love** concerning the 1922 Meccano Crystal Set featured in the October magazine. Bert says that he *has never seen such a fine example of such a rare Meccano item*. He thinks the carton is a *complete knock-out*. It will be the subject of a two page colour illustrated article in the March 1997 issue of the Constructor Quarterly.

The meeting concluded with an excellent supper set out by **Joyce Pluck** assisted by **John Pluck** and some of the other ladies present.

BITS AND PIECES

from Lloyd Spackman

N.Z. in S.A.:

Not the All Blacks this time !

Colin Croft's four speed and reverse gearbox, clearly depicted in Isomec drawings, took up three pages of Transvaal Meccano Guild's Newsletter No. 15, 6/96.

As well as this, Simon Moody's Multipoint Gearbox with Isomec drawings by Colin was featured in T.M.G. October Newsletter and on the cover of their August issue.

SHINE THOSE BRASS PARTS !:

Many households will have among their cleaning materials a jar of GODDARD'S SILVER DIP.

Using this may be the simplest and easiest of all remedies for tarnished brass parts. Take out grubscrews first.

Then dip the collars or whatnot in 'Goddards' for a few minutes, fish them out (with tweezers), rinse thoroughly under the tap and dry them.

After that, a light rub with a soft cloth should bring them up like new. A light scrub with an old toothbrush cleans out teeth of pinions. 'Goddards' works well and is available at supermarkets.

(Adapted from a hint by Peter Mason in S.M.G. Newsletter No. 7).

THIS MONTH'S LIMERICK:

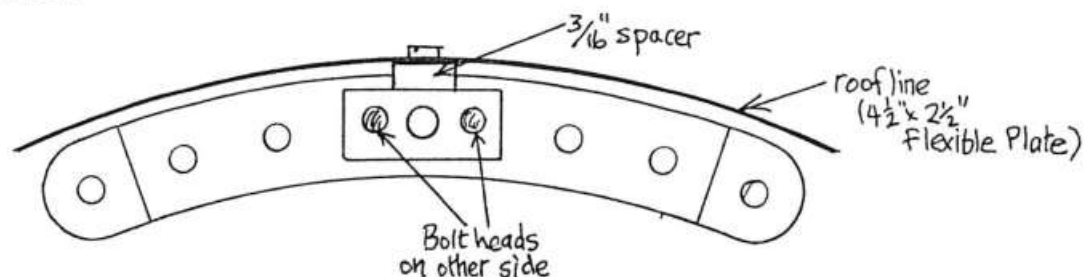
"A fastidious builder named Bickle
Said 'I find I'm in rather a pickle.
When Meccano I clean
Whether red, blue or green
I polish it down till its nickel".

(Don Redmond in Canadian Meccanotes 9/96)

TWO HINTS FROM KEITH CAMERON:

The "Humbug" wheels certainly make good feet. See my Meccanograph for set No.6 in the *Canadian Meccanoman's Newsletter* for June.1994. The best way to fix them is to press them on to Long Threaded Pins. Long bolts are more economical, but the wheels tend to fall off and the threads wear their internal bore.

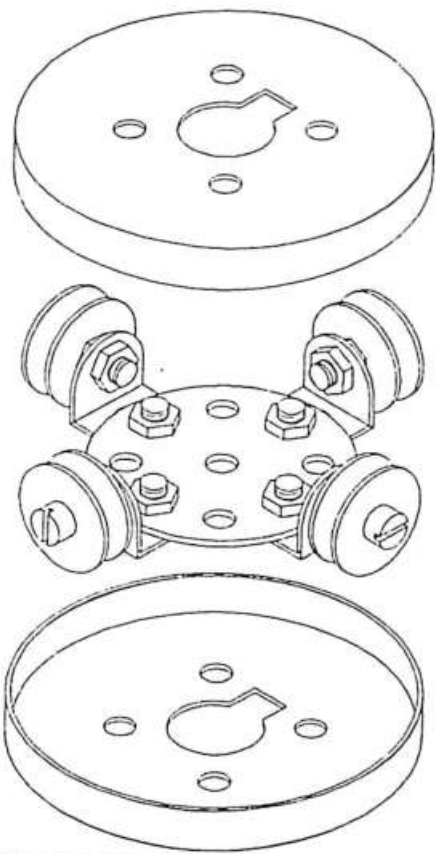
Couplings are useful for 1/4" spacing in many areas in addition to gear spacing. See the sketch below for a way to fix a roof centrally over a 4" Curved Strip. The 5-hole 2" Strip also provides 1/4" spacing, but its uses are more limited.



MOVED: NORTH SHORE HOBBY WORLD from Lake Road to 34 Hurstmere Road, Takapuna (opposite A.S.B. Bank). We also understand Modelcraft & Hobbies, Wellington, has moved further up Victoria Street.

A SIMPLE THRUST BEARING by Robin Lake, London.

Here is a simple but robust thrust bearing that could be used in a tower crane where the bearing surfaces are relatively small. The spider is sandwiched between two wheel flanges (part 137). The spider is assembled from a wheel disc (part 24a) to which are attached four angle brackets (part 12) by their slotted holes. Four 1/2" brass pulleys without boss (part 23b) are attached to each angle bracket by 1/2" bolts (part 111a). The bolts are lock-nutted to the angle brackets so they can rotate freely. Simple but effective.

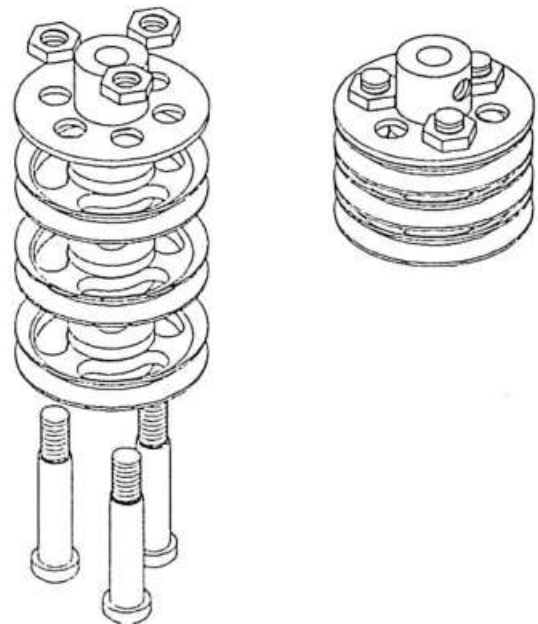


A REALISTIC TRIPLE PULLEY

Peter Matthews of the TMG came up with a novel way to put the new plastic pulley, part 26bp, to good use.

The slots in the pulley are large enough to take a bolt - unlike the holes in the original metal pulley without boss, part 22a. Using these slots three

plastic pulleys can be bolted together as shown in the IsoMec drawing below, using pivot bolts part 147g, and the six hole metal 1" bush wheel, part 518. The boss on the bush wheel is used to secure the made up triple pulley to the rod. triple pulleys with three driving bands can make an engineering model look much more realistic.



AUTOMATIC BRAKE FOR A CRANE

From Robin Lake, London

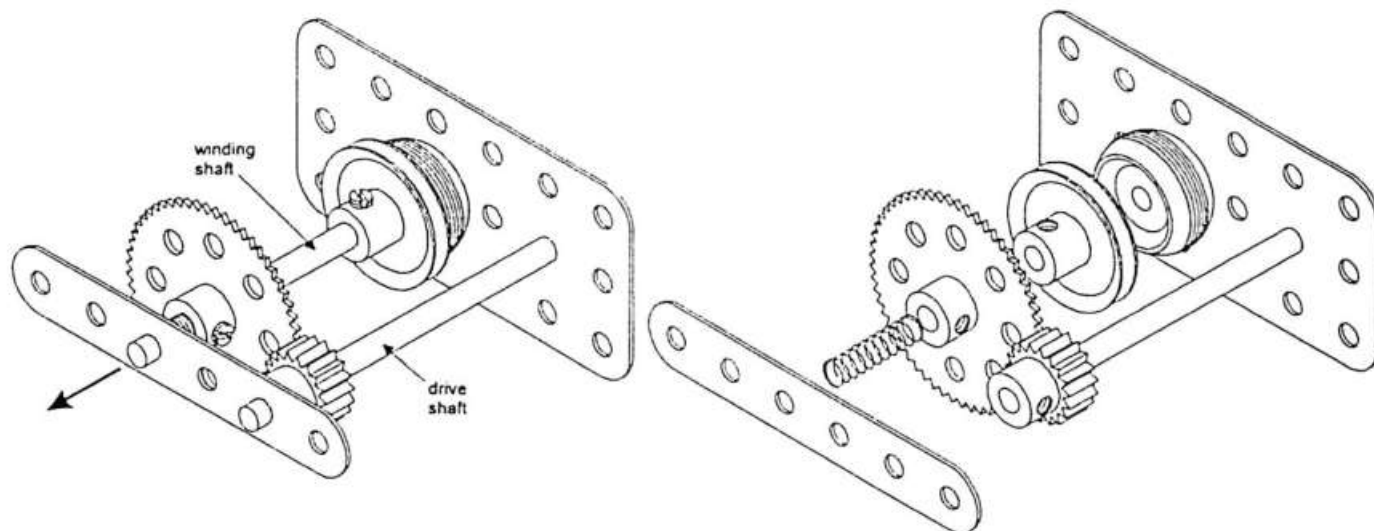
The brake mechanism is basically a friction clutch formed by a loose half inch pulley with a tyre sandwiched between the frame and a 1" pulley with boss. From the isoMec diagram below, you will see that the 1" pulley is kept pressed against the 1/2" pulley and tyre (which in turn is kept pressed against the frame) by the compression spring situated between the opposite frame and the driving gear. both the gear and the 1" pulley are fixed to the winding shaft. When the winding shaft is pushed in the direction of the arrow the pressure on the 1/2" pulley and tyre is released (thus releasing the brake)

and the driving gear meshes with the pinion on the drive shaft (which would already be turning hence engaging the hoist)

Simple, effective and very compact, this brake/clutch mechanism has many more applications. It could be made even more compact by using the new, very small tyres that fit over a collar.

Spare parts.

I faxed to Mike Rhoades in the UK for parts recently and received them by air mail 8 days latter with an account enclosed, unfortunately he does not take credit cards, so you have to send a bank draft. I think that he must be a very trusting person as I had never corresponded with him but he sent the parts before payment was received. The only thing to remember if you get parts from him is that



**THE ABOVE ITEMS ARE REPRINTED
FROM THE TRANVAAL MECCANO
GUILD NEWSLETTER**

If you are building a model of a vintage vehicle with solid tyres, get an old 'V' belt, turn it inside out, cut to length and join with super glue. By getting the belt of the correct section you can make the tyres suit different scales. The same can be done for bike tyres by using 'O' ring cord.

as his parts are second hand there is no VAT on them.

I have also received price lists from the following

Frizinghall Models and Railways-UK
Bernard Mailot-France this is in French and the prices in Francs
Valley Transport- USA, Erector parts

If you want a copy of any of these let me know

THE NEW MECCANO ACTION CONTROL SET 9526 BUILDING SITE TRUCKS

"The revolutionary new range of Meccano Action Control introduces remote control, infra red command. A first in construction toys where all builders learn new technology."

This is the way Frizinghall Models and Railways introduce the new sets.

So is it true? I purchased the above set from Moore Wilsons in Upper Hutt while Simon Moody purchased the 9515 space set.

The set was well packaged and the box well illustrated and the parts well packed, a reasonable selection of parts with 5 new parts - 51f flanged plate, 133c angle brace, 25c die cast gear, 187q hub cap, 64a short threaded coupling.

The control system was in a sub compartment and here I would make the following comments The motors cannot be used seperatly unless you cut the plugs off or can get a female plug to suit the plug moulded onto the wires.

The "sound" from the controller is that quiet that it might as well not be there, and the battery box, relay box and infra red reciever are permanintly connected together.

I gave the set to my son Michael (14 years old) to build the models from the instruction book and the only problem that he had with all three models was with the meshing of the 15 and 25 tooth pinions, as it is nessary to move the flat girders and DAS on the screws to ensure a good mesh.

Another minor problem was the threads on the screwed rod needed a die nut run down them. The remote control can be aimed at the model from about 10 feet max at an angle of not less than 45degrees. The models as described in the manual do not look like a "real" machine as virtually all that you see is the control units, but no doubt the sets were made up with cost being a factor.

How would I rate the set:

The manual is good and simple to follow- however a breif description of how the system works would have been uscfull for the age group it is aimed at (8+ years)

The models as described work and are fun to

play with, however the motors seem to be under powered, perhaps a change in the gear ratios would help.

The paint finish on the parts was good, and the plated parts were well finished.

Value for money? A lot of us will have got a set to try, but is it worth \$180 you tell me what you think. Personally I do not think it is worth the price, but hey, I got one.

MECCANO MAGS FOR EXCHANGE

1939 June, July and August

1935 Full year in fair condition Jan and August have no covers, Feb no front cover, Dec bottom off front cover. The set is suitable for binding.

Will exchange for 15 of the following

1941 Jan,may, June, July, Aug, Nov, Dec.

1940 June, July, Sept, Nov, Dec.

1939 Feb.

1938 May, July, Oct, Nov.

1937 all except May, Oct, Nov.

1936 Aug, Sept, Oct, Nov.

1934 Jan, Feb, Oct, Nov, Dec.

Contact : John Ince

37 Burnside Cres

CHRISTCHURCH

or Phone (03)3587351 after 10pm is ok.

The MWT Club is looking for the canvas banner that was last seen at the Auckland convention in 1992. It is white with red lettering.

If you can help please contact Bruce Neilson

NZ MECCANO AGENCY

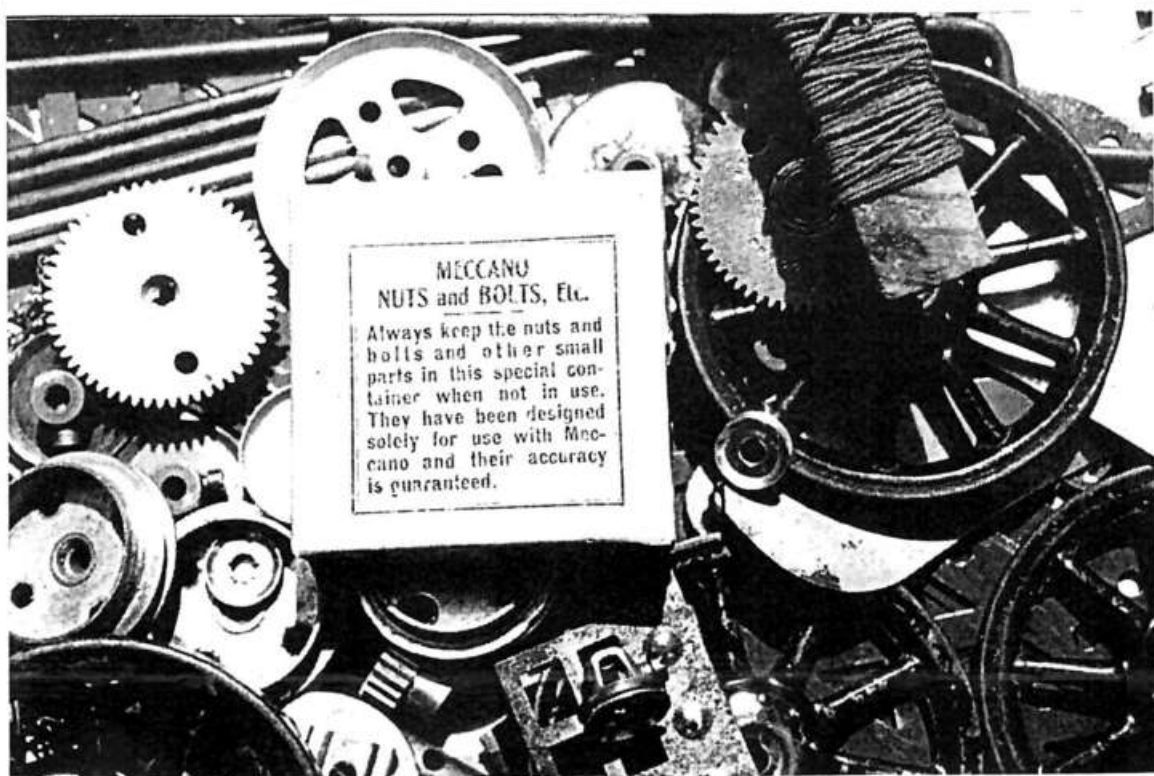
The New Zealand agency for Meccano is no longer held by FW Cave Ltd. It has been taken over by Mattel NZ Ltd as from mid January 1997. It has been suggested that the price of Meccano will come down, but we will have to wait and see, and Mattel are planning to advertise Meccano sets. FW Cave are still supplying the prizes for the convention as advertised in the last magazine.

SCM&EC START 21st YEAR

The Southern California Meccano and Erector Club advised in their October 1996 issue that they were in the 21st year of publication-congratulations. In the editorial, taken from their first issue it states:

"The purpose of this newsletter is to inform our members and correspondents of the club activities, to help them on problems of model construction, to provide a forum for opinions, (and) to help members and other readers in obtaining sets, parts, manuals and other literature on metal construction sets. The term 'metal construction sets' is used instead of Meccano as many correspondents are interested in other metal construction sets as well". A good reason for a club newsletter -ours as well as theirs.

A collection of early Meccano parts, as seen at MWT.



THE CHIEF (FRENCH) MECCANOMAN

A very french businessman believes there is a kind of child, with patience, who will like Meccano. In the independent newspaper in London last July 28, David Bowen described Dominique Duvauchelle, who bought the Meccano business in 1989. Bowen quotes Duvauchelle as saying that Meccano is more challenging than plastic bits and more satisfying than video games, and he is convinced that children need a tangible balance to virtual play. "A successful construction toy must be difficult enough to challenge a child, but not so hard that he cannot complete it. This balance is difficult to judge, especially as the standards vary from country to country. In Germany, for example, children can be challenged hard whereas in the US they give up with hardly a struggle."

From: Canadian Meccanotes Issue 4.

Where would NZ children fit into this range- give up or finish the model?

Also from Canadian Meccanotes issue 4

In a copy of Meccano Parts and How to Use Them of the blue and gold era (1934-37) On the cover, the famous pontoon crane model of many years standing, illustrated supposedly with blue/gold strip plates replacing the original braced girders- but the supporting bearing still using Channel Segments instead of the Geared Roller Brg that supposedly replaced them.

IsoMechanisms

By Colin Croft

A Curious Right - Angle Drive

"The Curious Meccano Model shown here, is inserted in view of it's general interest rather than it's practicability as far as Meccano - model building is concerned. It is a model of a device designed to provide a method of transmitting motion from one shaft to another without the use of bevels or other toothed gearing. We are unable to call to mind any instance in actual practice where this mechanism is employed."

As described by Spanner in the suggestion column of MM Dec 1927. I wonder whether anyone has ever been able to find a use for this model? I have modified this mechanism slightly, but it still functions in exactly the same manner as the original. In the IsoMec drawing you will only be able to see 3 rods connected by couplings at right angles. In fact there are 4 rods, but due to the isometric projection, it is not possible to show the fourth. However, they can all be seen in the plan view.

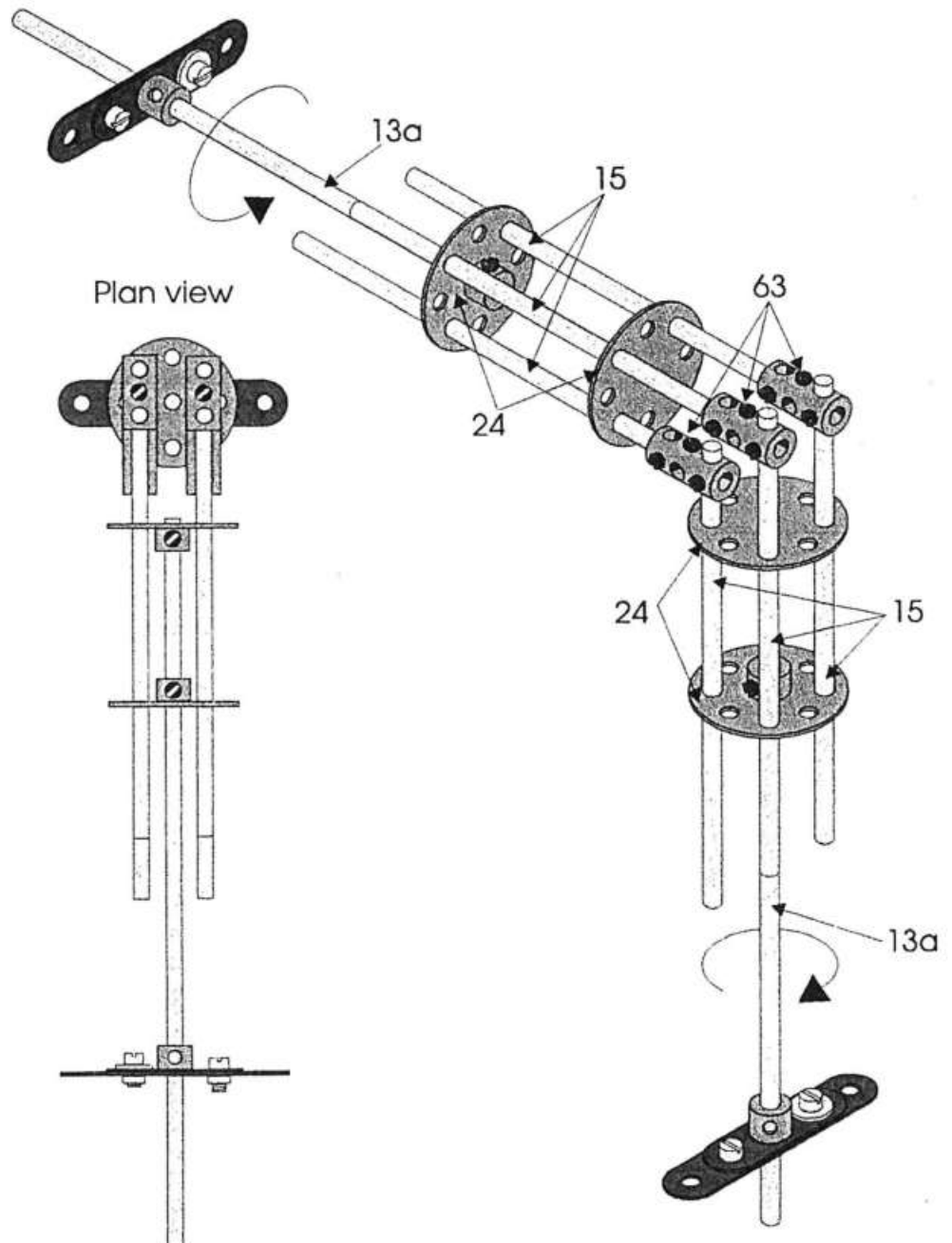
Construction

First, a suitable frame needs to be constructed. The mechanism is then attached by the 2½" strips (optional) at each end of the 8" Axle Rods (13a).

These rods are secured in the centre

hole of two pairs of 8 hole Bush Wheels (24). Four 5" rods (15) are passed through one pair of the Bush Wheels, which are spaced approximately 2" apart. The same then applies to the right angle section. Four couplings (63) connect the rods as per the drawing.

At first glance it would appear that the device would rotate with great difficulty, if at all. But in actual fact it is surprisingly smooth. Care should be taken however, to ensure the rods are exactly at right angles. Also a little oil should be applied to where the rods slide in the Bush Wheels.



MWT Meccano Club
 Secretary / Treasurer - Tom Pittams
 77 Maria place Extension, Wanganui

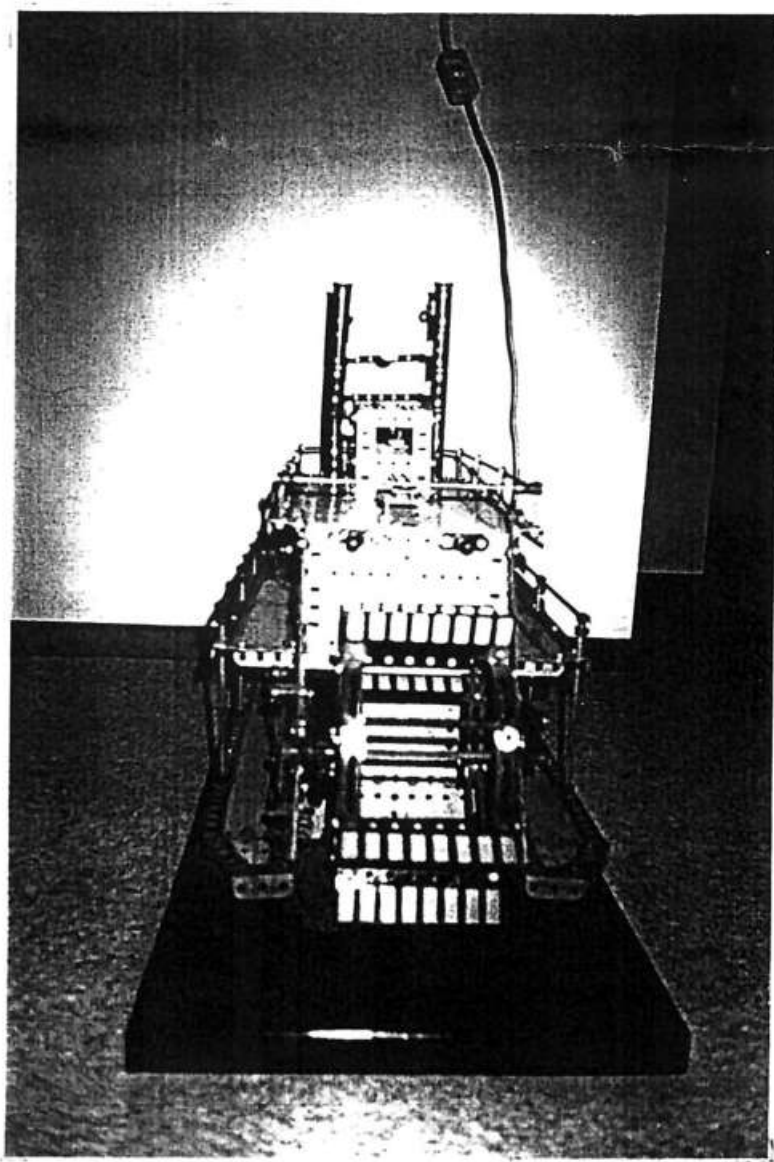
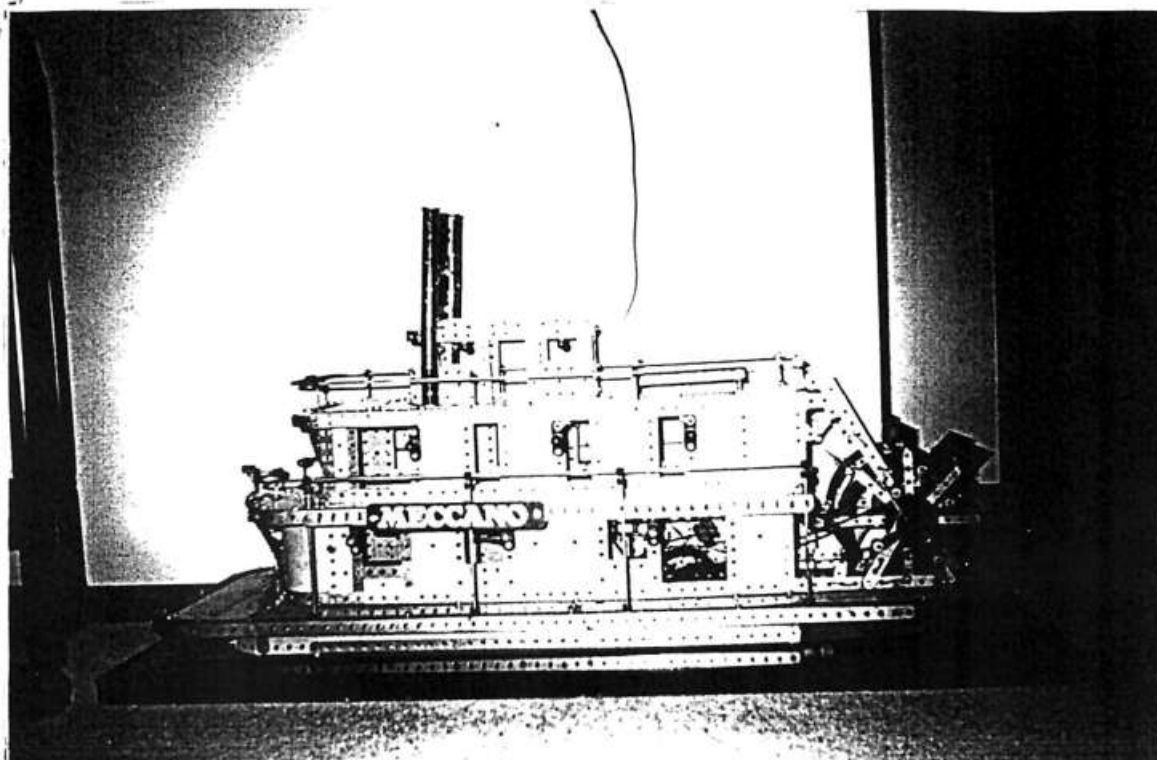
PRELIMINARY Exhibitor Information

1997 New Zealand Meccano Exhibition

Place	Feilding Civic Centre, 84 Aorangi St., Feilding		
Date	Good Friday - 28 March 1997 -	8am to 12 noon	Setting up hall
		1pm onwards	Set up models
	Saturday - 29 March 1997 -	8am to 10am	Setting up late arriving models
		10am to 4pm	Public admission
		1.30pm to 4pm	Bus tour for partners
		5pm	Clear hall
		5.15pm	Silent auction items
		5.50pm	Group photo
		6pm	AGM start David Wall Chairman
			Don Flowers Editor
			1999 Convention place
		7pm	Go to dinner at restaurant
			Prize giving after dinner at restaurant
	Sunday - 30 March 1997 -	10am to 4pm	Public admission
		5pm	Clear hall
			Remove models and empty hall
Parking	Aorangi St in front of hall. Additional large model access through double doors at side of hall by Kentucky Fried Chicken		
Space	Tables down sides of hall. Table islands in centre of hall		
Security	Hall is secure and volunteers will be sleeping in hall Friday and Saturday night		
Insurance	Insure your own models against theft etc. if required. Public liability done by MWT Club		
Accommodation	Please make your own arrangements. See motels listed in NZFMMM 11/96		
Eating	Tea and coffee supplied free from upstairs lounge at hall		
	Lunch Saturday and Sunday will be supplied (filled roll)		
	Saturday night meal will be 2 blocks away at the ??? restaurant. Price is \$20 approx. to be paid at the restaurant on the night		
Competitions	Prizes to be awarded Saturday night.		
	Club with most aggregate points - Federation Trophy		
	Public choice by public vote - Trophy 1 st only		
	Exhibitors and partners vote - Bruce Baxter Memorial Trophy		
	F. W. Cave Ltd - Plastic Junior Meccano (See rules in NZFMMM 12/96)		
	(1) Up to the age of 10 years		
	(2) Lady over the age of 10		
	(3) Male over the age of 10		
	F. W. Cave Ltd - Current French Metal Meccano (See rules in NZFMMM 12/96)		
	(4) Up to the age of 10 years		
	(5) Lady over the age of 10		
	(6) Male over the age of 10		
	F. W. Cave Ltd - Master Modeller (See rules in NZFMMM 12/96)		
	(7) Largest and most complex model in current series of parts		
Model Labels	Please have the following details for each model available for label production. Modellers name, Club, Name of model, source of building inspiration.		
Name Labels	Will be supplied for all modellers and immediate family		
Map of Feilding	Attached		
Labels	Please name all your gear you bring(cables, transformers, boxes, historical items, etc.)		
Floor stewards	Chris Morton and Bruce Neilson. In cases of dispute their decision shall be final		
Meccano from public	To give everybody a fair go, the floor stewards will arrange purchase and then the items will go into the Federation Saturday auction		

STEAM- BOAT BILL

LINDSAY BOND.



After some years of absence The Rotorua Meccano Dealer,s Model of Steam-boat Bill has surfaced in Auckland, faded by the years but still in working order.

Very few of these models were ever builtand this must be the only one to my knowledge to cometo New Zealand through Models Ltd., the N.Z. Agents.

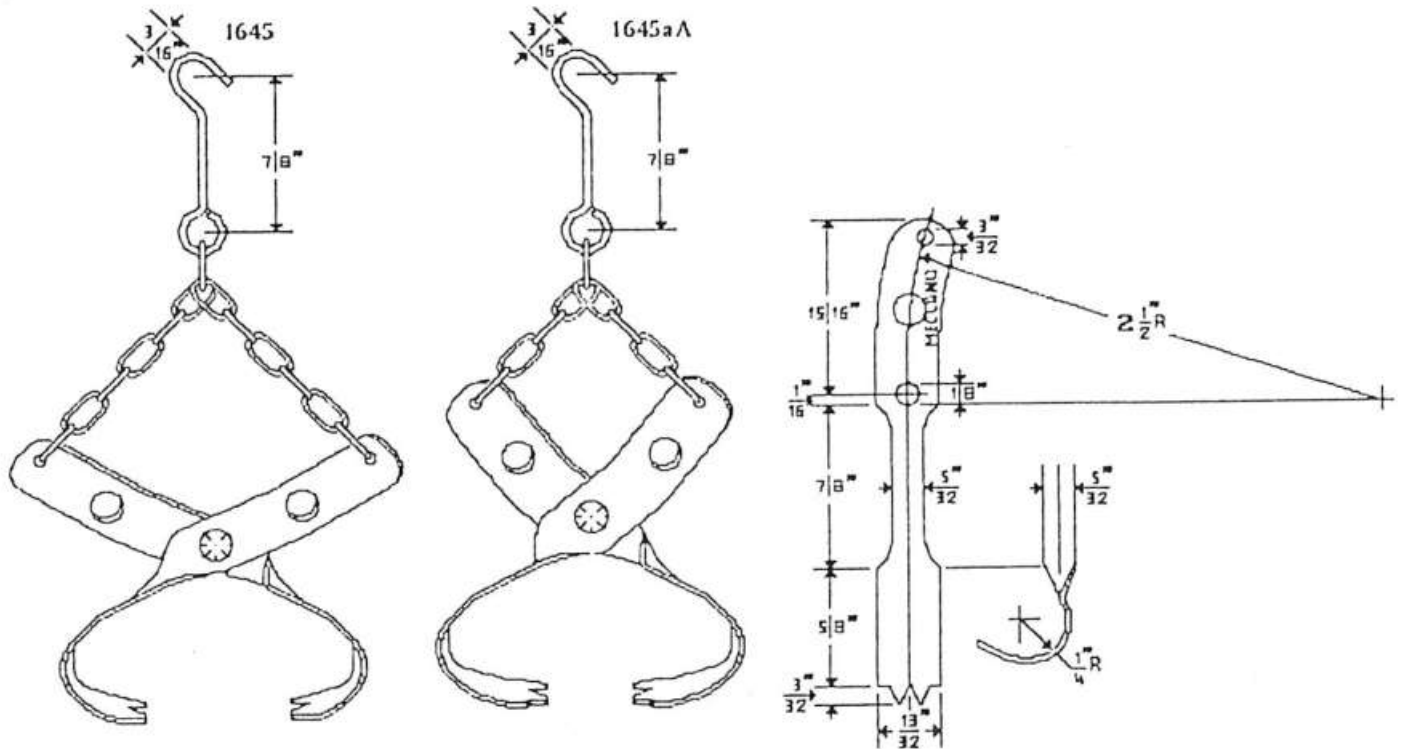
I saw this Model when it was in its prime in the late Mr. Stewarts MECCANO & Toy Shop in Rotorua and have always admired it.

Special thanks must go to David Wall who located it, Peter Hancock who photographed the model under very difficultcircumstances and who has arranged to bring Steam-boat Bill to our Meccano Exhibition at Easter. We await its arrival with interest.

It is not for sale and remains the propertyof the Stewart family.

D.M.S. Ref. No.	Date		Details	Largest Set		Stock
	Introduced	Obsolete		of period	parts in	
1645	1927	1940	Steel painted black. Six links in each chain.	7	0	
1645aA	?		As above but four links in each chain. Later variant.	-	-	

1624.20.11.91. Compiled by Don Blakeborough. 91 Cornfoot St, Wanganui, NEW ZEALAND. (06) 344 5924 Page 150



FROM THE NEW ZEALAND WOMAN'S WEEKLY

WIN

With [®]Hellaby's

BRAND

Details on how to win Meccano, on the entry forms on cans of Hellaby's Corned Beef.

MECCANO[®]

Buy Hellaby's Corned Beef and enter the monthly prize draws for these mighty Meccano Sets.

2 major prize draws each month

4-7 years - Meccano 236 piece Junior Train Set

7+ years - Meccano 476 piece Master Builder Set

Plus, the first 4000 entries will each receive a Meccano Collection or Meccano Junior sample pack.

Delicious new recipes for summer

If you would like to be put on our database to receive copies of delicious new 'can-venient' corned beef recipes, and other product information, please write to:

AFFCIN
NEW ZEALAND

Hellaby's Corned Beef,
Shortland Cannery Ltd
PO Box 22685,
Otahuhu, Auckland.

14

The Meccano Story.

first published December 18th 1994

IN the first week of January 1980, the Minister of Information and Inspiration of His Holiness Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, put out a statement. "If our methods can cure the problems of Meccano," he said "we believe it will show they can cure anything." The Maharishi, the man who converted the Beatles to meditation and later established the Natural Law Party, said he could rescue the floundering toy factory - as long as its workers took the meditative path to recovery. In the meantime, his Age of Enlightenment Company was looking for state aid to take over the plant.

The workers failed to take up his banner, and the Maharishi lost interest. The factory at Binns Road, Liverpool, was bulldozed later in the year. But this attempt to save Meccano was just one of the more bizarre episodes in the history of a toy whose emotional appeal has always far outstripped its economic impact. Why did the Maharishi want to save Meccano? Most likely because, like many children of the Empire, he was brought up on this most sensible of toys.

In many ways, the story of the Meccano company is typical of much of British industry. It grew mighty in the first half of the century, slipped in the second; failed to fight off the pretenders to youthful pocket money - and fell apart amid allegations of bad management, non-existent investment and anarchy in the workforce. It was one of the first victims of the 1980-81 recession, which wiped out so much of the British manufacturing base.

But there is a happy twist to the tale which shows how difficult it is to erase one of the world's strongest brands. On the outskirts of Calais, 350 workers are busy churning out Meccano. Presses are stamping out such old favourites as flat trunnions and braced girders. Alongside, a helicopter, merry-go-round and racing car chassis are being constructed for toy fairs in England and America.

Meccano is back from the dead. The company, owned by the 40-year-old entrepreneur Dominique Duvauchelle, is turning over £60m - five times more than in 1990 - and is in the midst of a heavy investment programme. It has spent £6m in the last two years, and will spend another £2.5m in 1995. "We have had significant growth for

the last three years," says Yann Gourmelen, who runs the UK office. "We are doing very well." In the United States, Meccano, which has bought its erstwhile rival Erector, claims to be growing faster than the "hot" new building toy, K'Nex. And in Britain, as anyone who has been watching GMTV will have noticed, it is advertising heavily in the run-up to Christmas. Mr Gourmelen says he is convinced that British sales, now "a few million pounds", will triple in the next few years.

The brilliantly original Meccano idea was born at the end of the 19th century, when Frank Hornby, a book keeper for a Liverpool meat importer, began looking for a better way of building models for his sons. He had a workshop, where he cut and shaped metal sheets, and concluded the problem was that parts were not reusable. He made a crude set based on strips with holes punched every half inch. He bolted them together with nuts and bolts - and the first Meccano model was built. He did not call it that at first: the system, which Hornby patented in 1901 when he was already 38, was known as Mechanics Made Easy.

Backed by his employer, Hornby found subcontractors who could make the parts out of tin and brass, and hired a woman to pack them in a room next to the meat warehouse. Then he looked around for distributors.

If Hornby was a late starter, he took to getting rich like a nut to a bolt. By 1905 he had wholesalers in London, Liverpool and Sydney, and was publishing a manual in French and English. As schoolboys told him about the elaborate models they had made, he included the instructions in his next manual. Some of these, such as the 16-foot Forth Bridge, were so spectacular that department stores used them in window displays.

Hornby gave up his day job in 1907, and registered Meccano as a trade mark. His company was now turning over £3,000 a year, and starting to manufacture parts of nickel-plated steel in its own factory. Within three years sales had quadrupled.

The product range grew steadily, adding a spring motor in 1912 and an electric one the next year. Hornby proved adept at marketing.

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When Edward VII died in 1910, he produced Royal Meccano to cash in on Coronation fever. He also offered huge prizes for the best models, which provided great publicity and new ideas for the manuals, and he produced educational sets which, he persuaded schools, were ideal for demonstrating the principles of mechanics.

By 1914, when the Binns Road factory was built, Hornby had a joint manufacturing venture in Germany, and Meccano was so popular in America that it was being shamelessly copied. He spent much time and money on litigation, even crossing the U boat-infested Atlantic in 1916.

He used the *Meccano Magazine*, set up in 1916, to give his "boys" lectures on how they should behave, and set up the Meccano Guild, whose Baden-Powell like precepts included the encouragement of "uprightness, honesty, ambition and initiative". But he sometimes fell a little short himself.

"He preached fair trade, but was not above misleading his customers with claims, descriptions and advertising that would certainly not meet trading standards today," say Bert Love and Jim Gamble in the official Hornby history of Meccano. An illustration for one 18in model suggested that it was 6 ft tall.

The factory made munitions as well as toys during the First World War, and by 1920 Frank Hornby was a millionaire. He branched out into clockwork trains, and dabbled in anything that took his fancy. After one trip to the US, Binns Road was told to start producing a Meccano radio.

By the late 1920s Meccano was being made in New Jersey and at Bobigny, near Paris. Though the US plant was sold during the Depression, the French factory kept expanding. In 1931 Hornby was elected as Unionist MP for Everton. He handed over the reins to his sons in 1933, and died three years later, aged 73.

The 1930s were glory days for Meccano. As its system became ever more elaborate, the company added a variety of other products, the most durable of which were Dinky Toys and Hornby Dublo electric trains. By the time war broke out, Meccano had become an icon. A

National Savings Certificate poster showing a boy with a Meccano model was headlined "Lend to Defend his Right to Be Free."

By 1952 demand was so strong that a second factory was opened to make model cars. But complacency was also setting in. Dinky Toys were not improved, even though they were looking increasingly crude in comparison with the rival Corgi cars, while the Hornby Dublo system, which used three rails, was being trounced by the rival two-rail system from Tri-ang. Profits peaked at £750,000 in 1955, but fell in real terms from then onwards. Meccano launched a two-rail system at great expense at the end of the decade, but all that did was to bring it to its financial knees.

By 1963, teenagers were being seduced away from Meccano by transistor radios and records, while Lego had launched its invasion from Denmark. The company, now making heavy losses, was sold to Lines Brothers, owner of Tri-ang, in 1964.

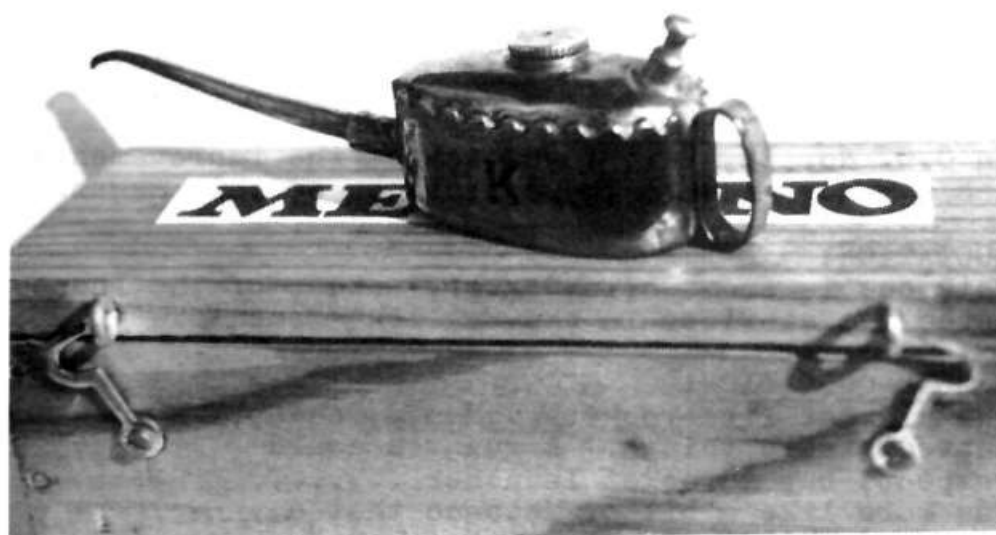
Lines pushed Meccano into further diversification, including a range of plastic Meccano for young children 1965. The railway business was sold in the same year, leaving only Meccano and Dinky production at Binns Road. "Joe" Fallmann, an Austrian-born manager with a tough reputation and a deep knowledge of the toy market, rationalised production, a sales started to rise again. But in 1971 the whole Lines empire collapsed. Meccano, which was profitable, was transferred to a separate company and sold to Airfix the next year.

By the mid-1970s Meccano sale were slipping and the management wondered whether its product was flawed. It concluded that it was not too difficult to make, but that it was too difficult to take to bits.

"That was fine in the days when a model could remain in the front parlour from one weekend to the next," says Bev Stokes, who was personnel then operations director. "But in modern houses, the instantly destructible Lego had a big advantage: parents could knock it down and sweep it under the settee." In 1976, the company spent time and money trying and failing to find alternatives to the nut and bolt.

ITEMS SEEN AT
A RECENT MWT
MEETING.

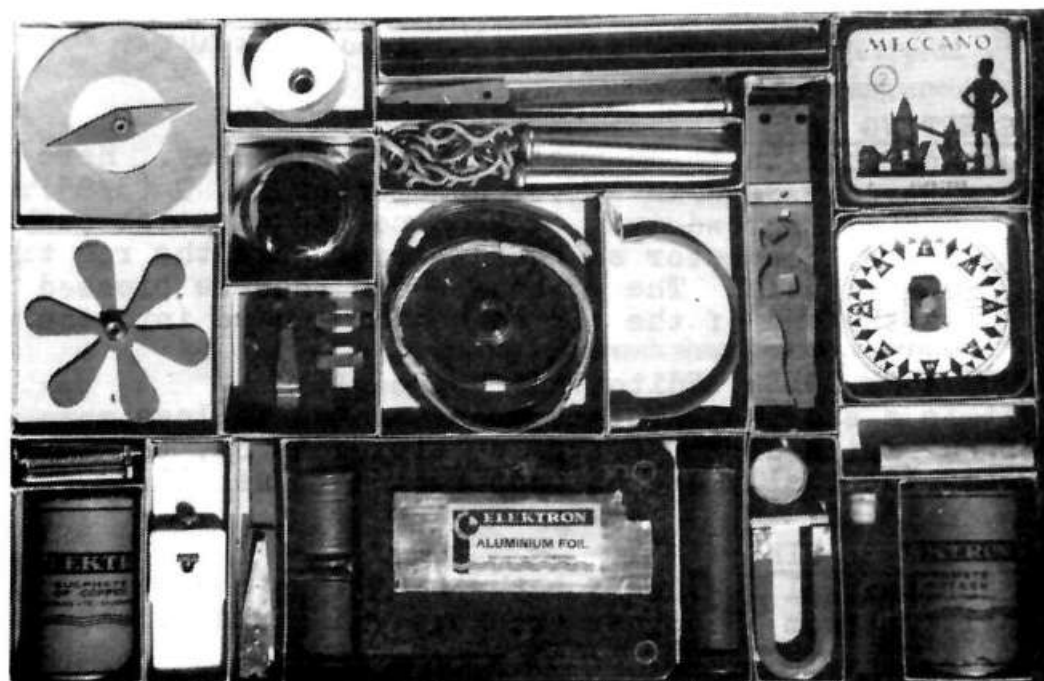
MECCANO TYPE
"K" OIL CAN



ELECTRON No 2
OUTFIT BOX
LID



ELECTRON No2
SET CONTENTS



BITS AND PIECES

from Lloyd Spackman

PRAISE FROM THE "MASTER":

In C.Q. No. 34, Bert Love praises the improvements Don Flowers has already made to the appearance of this magazine.

QUOTATION:

This one is from Colin Dexter, author of the Inspector Morse detective stories, in the English "Women's Weekly":

SECOND QUOTATION:

"We did not like rockets. Nasty, cheap, unpredictable things. A gun you could respect, but a rocket launcher..... was more like a bit of Meccano that a demented child had thrown together."
From 'The Girls Behind the Guns' by Dorothy Brewer Kerr.

Colin Dexter

"The Christmas that's remained clearly etched on my mind was when I was seven years old. My father had bought me a Hornby train set. I always loved toy trains, and I used to build railway stations with my Meccano set, so getting that present made it the happiest time I'd ever had."

FOR ITS SIZE,

Bert Halliday's miniature showman's traction engine must be one of the heaviest Meccano models, weighing in at 1200gms (approx. 2 3/4 lbs).

PRICES:

Keith Cameron comments that 'Collection' series sets are priced at \$US4.95 in the U.S.A. That is about \$NZ7.00. Here they are \$14.95 to \$19.95.

STEERING SMALL LORRIES:

In the Auckland notes, Peter Hancock's model with a rooftop steering "wheel"/plate---reminds me of a neat heavy lorry model at the Nepean (Ottawa) show in September, by Normand St-Aubin. It was so small one could not reach into the cab; so he arranged it to steer by turning the two 2in. pulleys on the cab roof representing the flashing warning lights!

Thanks for this tip to Don Redmond, Editor of 'Canadian Meccanotes'.

THIS MONTH'S LIMERICK:

And I'm sorry I can't
remember where I found
it. It looks like one
of Keith Cameron's !

The wife of a man from Milano
Fancied herself as a soprano;
When she hit a high C
He cried out with glee
"You've shaken the rust off my Meccano!"

INSERTING GRUB SCREWS:

Putting them in to 1" pulleys is rarely easy. Here is a hint from Bernard Sage in S.M.G. Newsletter No. 9 (3/85):

"On a screwdriver of Meccano rod diameter push a rod connector so that it overhangs the rod tip slightly. The grubscrew can then be pressed into the end of the rod connector and so into the pulley"

FROM ANNE COLES, Editor of 'Newsmag':

"It is a sad thought that we are going to lose more and more of our faithful supporters as time goes on, but these 80 plus year olds really are an inspiration to us all."

ANOTHER BEARING:

A substantial bearing for the slot in a socket coupling can be built up from 1" corner brackets and pawls without bosses.
(Brian Rowe in S.M.G. 6/86)

COMMING EVENTS

FEB 1997

7TH-WMC
ST LUKES CHURCH HALL

7TH-CMC
ST JOHNS HALL

8TH-AMC
2PM DAVID WALL'S

8TH-MWT
3PM C MORTENS, 18 KENNEDY AVE
FIELDING

MARCH 1997

7TH-WMC
ST LUKES CHURCH HALL

7TH-CMC
ST JOHNS HALL

12TH -CLOSING DATE FOR
APRIL MAGAZINE

28-30TH-CONVENTION
FIELDING CIVIC CENTRE

APRIL 1997

4TH-WMC
ST LUKES CHURCH HALL

4TH-CMC
ST JOHNS HALL

REPLICA PARTS SUPPLIERS

SIMON MOODY
BLUE MOUNTAINS ROAD
UPPER HUTT

BRASS PARTS

BRUCE GEANGE
4 WINCHESTER ST
PALMERSTON NORTH

NARROW STRIPS
STRIP PLATES

JOHN INCE
37 BURNSIDE DR
CHRISTCHURCH

ANGLE GIRDERS
FLAT GIRDERS
FLAT PLATES
SCREWS AND NUTS

PETER KING
P.O. BOX 2753
CHRISTCHURCH

HELICAL GEARS

FOR SALE

Cheese head, zinc plated machine screws 5/32 W
3/8", 1/2", 3/4", lengths for \$5.00/50 and 1.25"
\$6.00/50

1/4" zinc plated bolts with square nuts approx
\$130.00/1000, other quantities by arrangement.

ANGLE GIRDERS:

18.5" \$3.50- \$4.00 painted.

24.5" \$3.80- \$4.50 painted

FLAT GIRDERS

18.5" \$3.20

24.5" \$3.60

electro galv finish with sharp corners, except as
noted.

Contact: John Ince

MECCANO

Meccano New Plastic Junior Sets...

MEC221542 LIGHT & SOUND FIRE TRUCK.

Fed. Price.....\$80..

MEC221645 U.S. TRUCK (Friction Motor).

Fed. Price.....\$102...

MECCANO

Meccano Action Control (Infra Red) Sets.

MEC39515 MOON VEHICALS, 1 Motor.

Fed. Price.....\$145....

MEC39526 BUILDING SITE TRUCKS,

Two Motors.

Fed. Price.....\$180..

MECCANO

Meccano 1995-1996 Sets,

Special purchase,

More parts than the current

Evolution No. 6, 640 parts.

Fed. Price.....\$199..

Freight Free.

Meccano Special Introduction Set.

A real collectors item.

A small packet of plastic

Meccano, makes one model.

While they last.....

Fed. Price . \$3.. Freight \$1..

MECCANO

Dont forget F.W. Caves Model Building Competition,
details in the last Federation Magazine.

There is no entry fee and the Models will be judged by persons
appointed by F. W. CAVE LTD. the New Zealand Agents for MECCANO.

MECCANO

Look forward to meeting you all in our Shop at the Feilding
MECCANO EXHIBITION.

In the meantime good building.

Lindsay Bond Electronics, Regan St, STRATFORD, Ph/Fax 06 765 5008.