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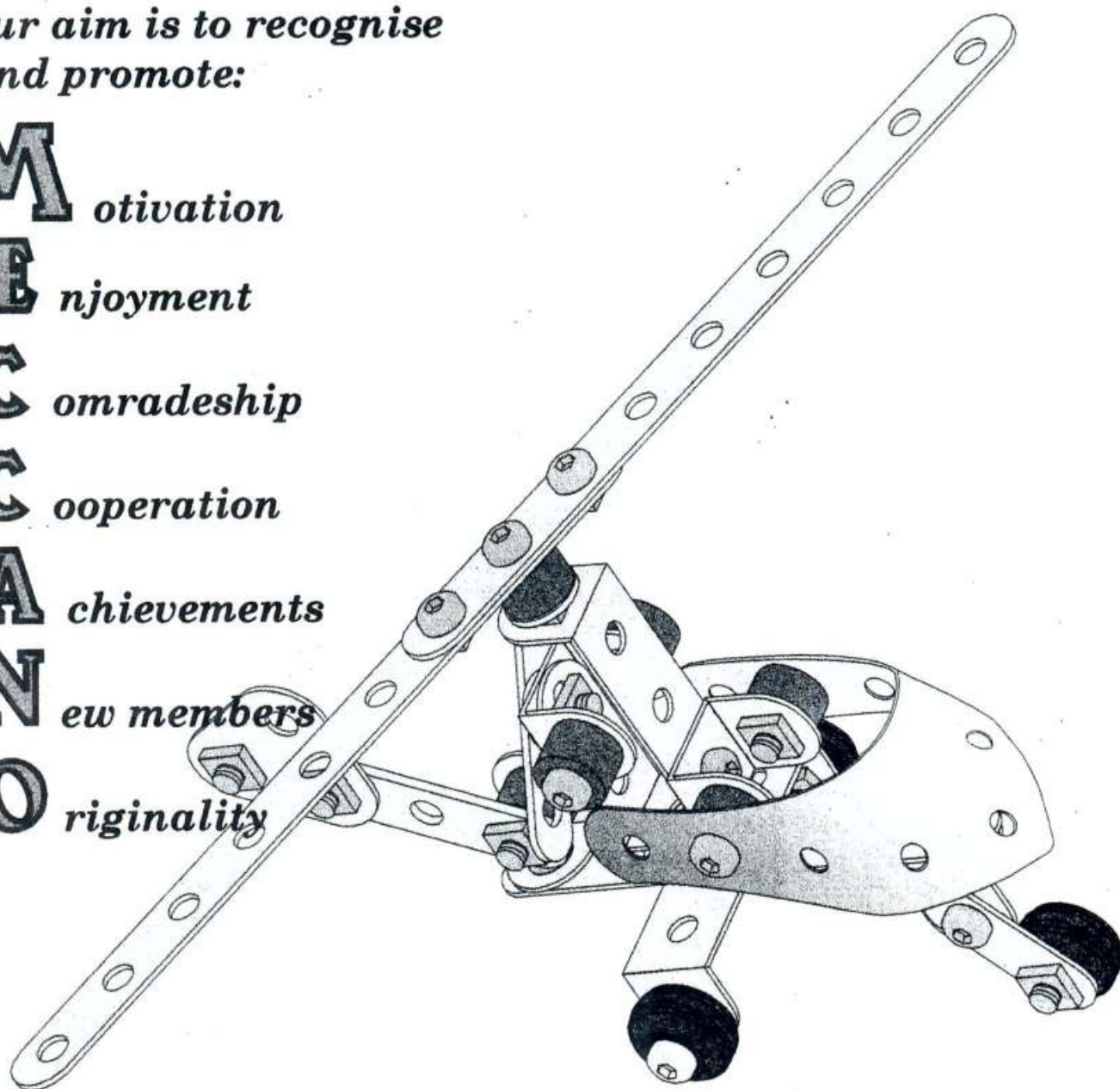


NZFMM Magazine

Written and produced by Meccano people for Meccano people

*Our aim is to recognise
and promote:*

Motivation
Enjoyment
Comradeship
Cooperation
Achievements
New members
Originality



The Collection Series
No 2105 — Microlite

NZ FEDERATION OF
MECCANO MODELERS

PRESIDENT:

David Wall

EDITOR:

Don Flowers

90 Holborn Drive

Stokes Valley

Lower Hutt

Phone 04-563-8008

Fax 04-563-5522(day only)

e-mail flowers@jhug.co.nz

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Max George

3A St John's Tce

Tawa

Wellington

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Drawn by Colin Croft using ISOMECA

From the Meccano collection series

EDITORIAL

Welcome to this issue, on the following pages you will see an article on Daryl Anderson's prizewinning model from the Feilding Convention. Hopefully other modelers will send me a note on their models for inclusion in future issues of the magazine. I would like to thank COLIN CROFT for his work in drawing the cover pictures for each of the issues that I have done. No doubt it takes a lot of his time and I hope that you all enjoy the results

A few members still have not paid their subscription for this year, if you are one of them your address label will have a colour highlight on it, please pay as soon as possible as this will be the last issue that you will receive from us. Also please pay the amount shown on the account that is included with your newsletter as this will bring you up to March 1998. We now have most of our members paid up to this date-thanks.

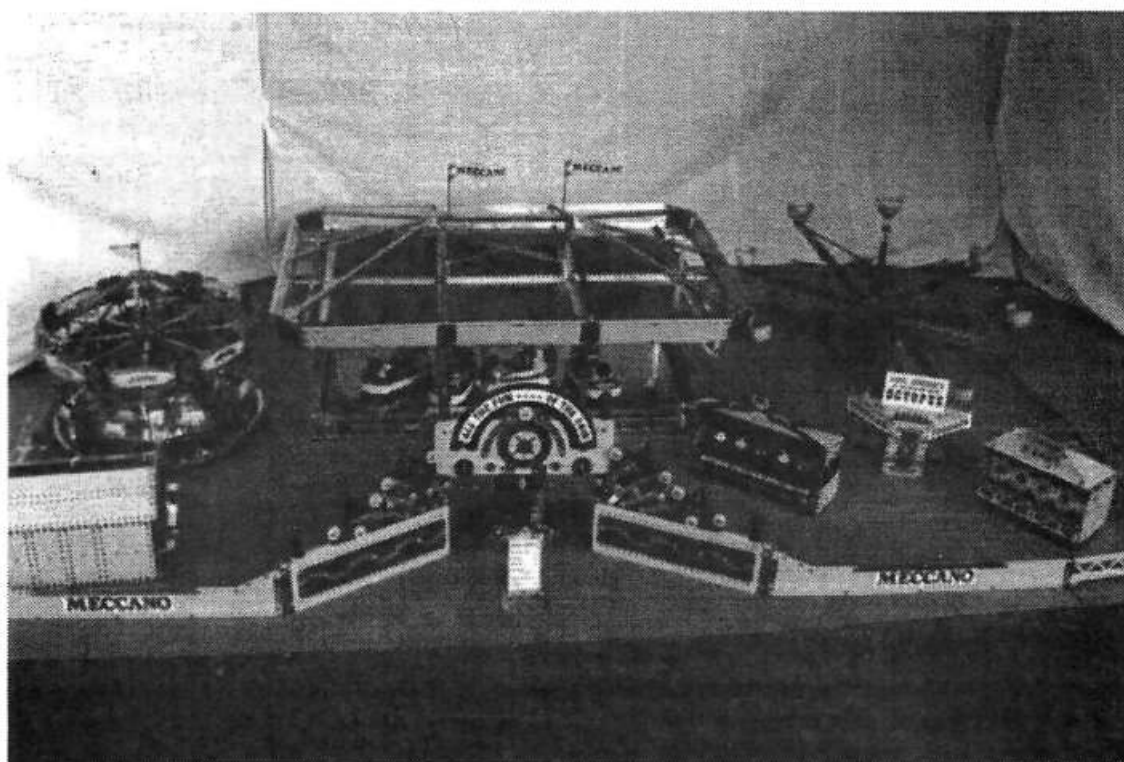
Any of you who have an interesting mechanism that you have made, please send it in to us, it can be hand written or typed and even a sketch will do.

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, 90 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

ALL THE FUN OF THE FAIR

BY DARYL ANDERSON, HAWERA



I was asked to write about my models by our editor while at the Easter Convention.

All the individual fairground models were grouped together and displayed as one model. Together they measured 3.6 x 1.5 metres (12' x 5').

The photos are not the ones taken at Convention because I was disappointed with them. I think I have a problem with my flash unit. It would have been better to use lights but I did not take them, so these photos are taken in daylight at home. The models were grouped closer together than at the Convention and were not working at the time.

The individual models are listed below starting with the moving ones. I have listed after each one which are original and which are built from plans as many people asked me this question at the Convention.

Dodgem Cars. cars from CQ 22, Dec. 1993, frame original

Merry-go-round. Keith Cameron MMGG 13, Sept. 1988.

Octopus. original

Balls in Clowns mouths. original

and non moving:

Trow a dart. original

Shooting Gallery. original

Entrance and fences. original

The table was covered in green material to simulate grass, around the perimeter of the table was a fence

of braced girders. The offcuts of material proved useful in disguising the wiring to each model.

All models were lit in some way using voltages from 12 - 27 volts. The higher voltages are necessary because some of the lights are in series. These are Xmas tree lights with 3 volt bulbs, hence 3 volts x 9 bulbs = 27 volts. If these were wired in parallel then cables would need to be excessively large to allow for voltage drop, and 3 volts is not as easy to produce as the higher voltages.

Some bulbs are coloured with glass paint obtained from our local craft shop. This is sold to make artificial stained glass windows by painting. It works well and can be recommended.

Altogether 7 power supplies were needed, one of them overheated because of the current draw over the extended period. I changed the power supplies around which overcame the problem. Prior to Easter all the models had never run together.

With some AC and some DC and all the different voltages and power supplies, I was unsure of my earthing so I took care to ensure no part of any model or fence could touch any other model and cause a possible short circuit.

As I intend to make many more fairground models, I will need to rationalise power supplies! I do have a 12 volt transformer at 500 watts (41 amps!) so I will try to use 12 volts AC for lights in the future.

Dodgem Cars

The frame base size is 3' x 2' and is mainly made from 24½" and 18½" angle girders. The base is stainless steel sheet and the electrical pickup in the roof is 1mm thick stainless mesh. This has holes approximately 2mm dia. I was going to use thinner steel 'fly screen mesh', but soon discounted this when I realised the tension that would be needed to stop sagging. The whole roof is insulated from the walls above the lights by 3/8" dia. plastic spacers threaded right through and bolted from each side.

The floor is insulated from the walls using tape, providing double insulation in case a car tips and shorts out to the frame.

The cars are generally as the CQ feature mentioned earlier, but are longer. They also have double insulation to prevent short circuits. I discovered a great electrical pickup in feeler gauges, and have used .002 to .005 thou with no problems. Genuine Meccano pickups cannot take up the slight differences in roof height.

A 6 speed powerdrive motor is used in each car and I found 9 volts was about right on the motors for good performance and quietness. The only problem was that 9 volts is not enough for reliable electrical pickup, so I solved this by increasing the voltage up to 20 and put a three terminal voltage regulator in each car to reduce it back to 9.

There is a light on the front of each car, these use neat little round bulb holders I found at Dick Smith Electronics for about \$1.00 each and as a bonus they have 1 inch hole spacing. The bulbs are 24 volt and are wired directly between the roof and floor.

The lights on the frame are 10 x 12 volt in parallel and draw over 3 amps.

This model was started in February and only just finished for Convention. In the last week I was burning the candle at both ends to finish everything, but I see this as part of the fun of preparing for Convention.

I made 4 cars but found 3 was the right number for this size base. With 4 running the pileups and jams against the wall increased considerably. The cars were numbered 1 - 4 and whenever there was a problem it was usually number 3. So this car became the spare. I don't know why number 3, they were all built the same. I guess this is part of the idiosyncrasy of Meccano, I spent a large part of Easter fiddling with this car.

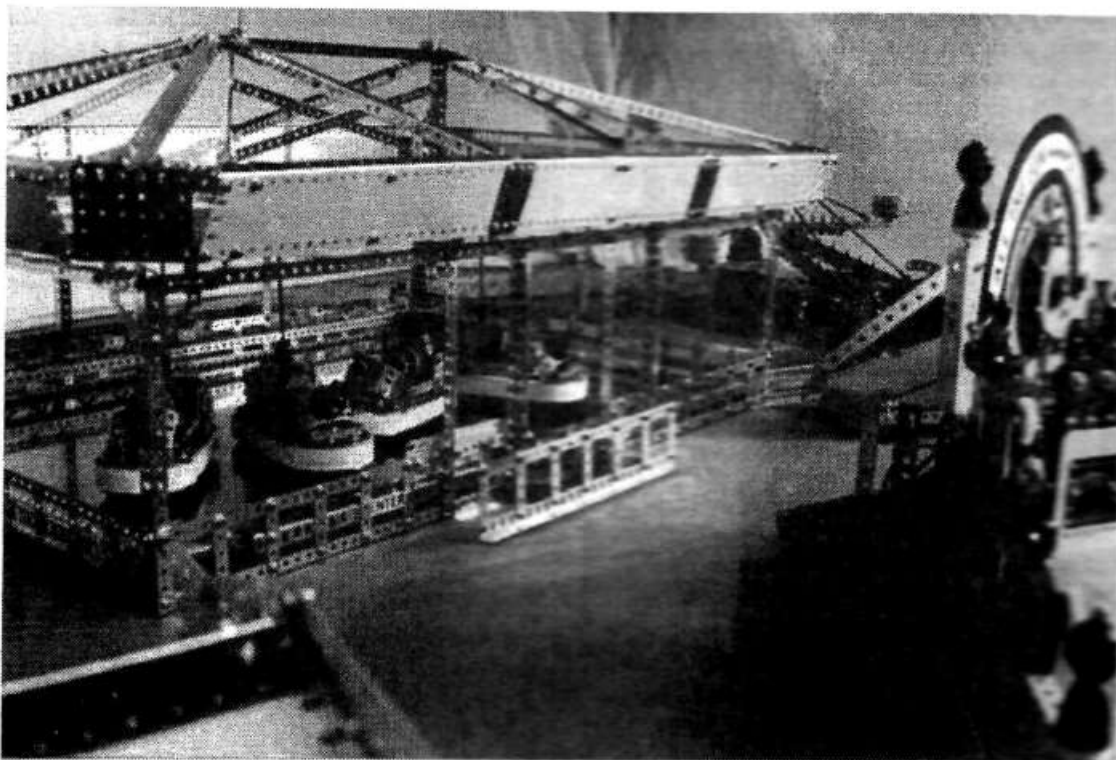
The cars move very realistically around the base, following the same path if not hit by another car.

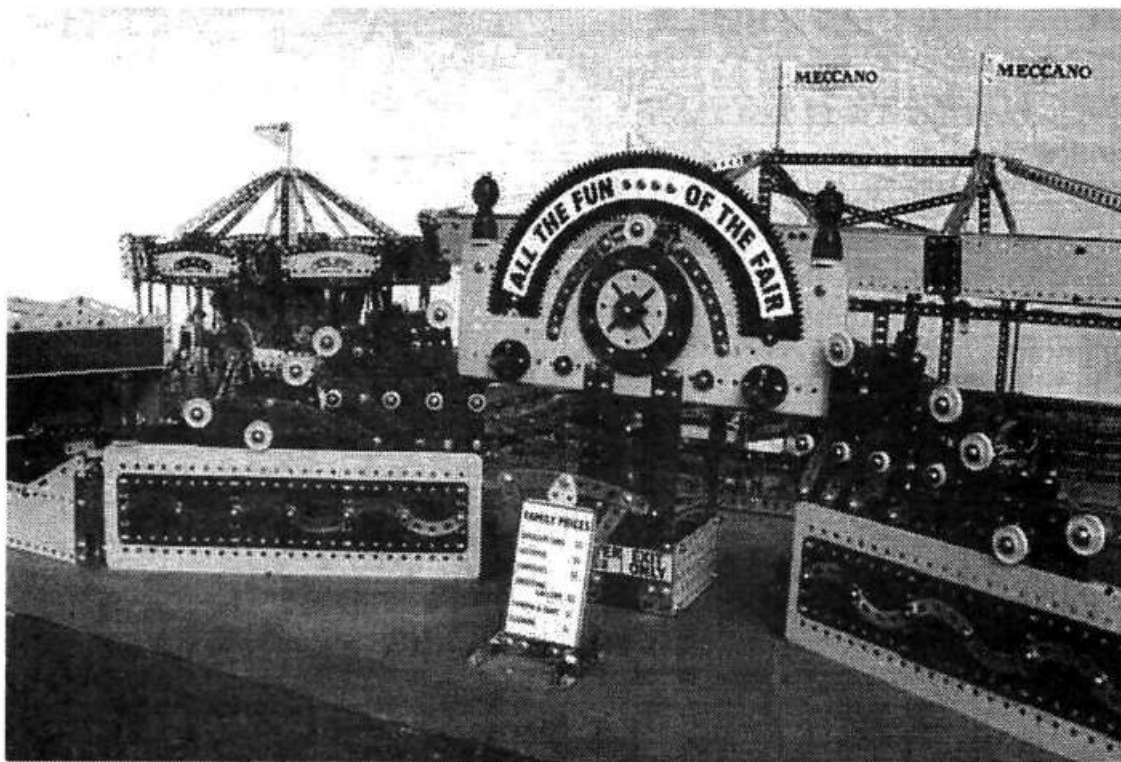
The model was positioned at the back of the table, to get at it easier because I new it would require more maintenance than the others, as it hadn't been run for extended periods.

I found the base plate, tyres and electrical pickups to the floor needed cleaning twice a day, because of a black grime that built up. I presume this was off the tyres, and a speck of oil from the cars.

Merry-go-round

This model is powered by a video recorder motor and has a clutch. This is an excellent design as Keith's always are with a central column as a tower crane so all the weight is on the base. The top bearing is only to stop sideways movement. The model has required no maintenance or repairs since built and has run for 7 full days at least.





On Keith's original he uses wooden horses but I designed Meccano ones. As there are 16 I had to be careful what parts I used. I found I had more than 32 pawls without boss so these are ears. These were taken from many now obsolete set 203 plough & roller sets that the MWT club bought and sold off.

The horses are arranged in 8 rows of 2 abreast. Each horse is 90 degrees out from the next row and 90 degrees out from it's neighbour.

Some of the canopy is my own design and I have left off the roof as people want to see mechanisms.

The lights around the edge are 8 x 12 volt sub miniature Edison screw Christmas tree lights that were cannibalised from our first set of lights bought when married 19 years ago. (Please don't tell Vera!)

Octopus

This was the oldest model on display being built in 1993. It is powered with a car rear windscreen wiper motor, and has been very reliable. As in the real ride, the arms rotate one way and the offset pivot the other, creating a wave effect. The lights on the arms are switched on and off by a half ring which makes the red then green bulbs turn on and off.

The arms are 12½" long and pivot off a strong central tower and bearing.

This model has it's own lighted ticket box to make it self-contained.

Balls in Clowns Mouths

This attraction was a favourite with my children when younger, they always had to have a go and I would happily pay \$2.00 to get a 50 cent toy!

There are 5 clowns who oscillate backward and forwards driven by a single throw eccentric. In reality when a player puts table tennis balls in their mouths they roll down and out the front into slotted numbered grids. The sum of the numbers determine the prize.

They are lit by a row of 12 x 3v Christmas lights in series/parallel on 18 volts. The motor is from a tape recorder.

Shooting Gallery and Throw A Dart

These models were made to hide speakers through which played authentic steam fairground organ music. This was taped from a record Chris Morton found for me, thanks Chris, I think the music helped to set the scene although some people said at times it was a fraction loud!

The shooting Gallery is lit from the inside by 2 x 12v bulbs, the darts by 3v bulbs. I intend to develop the shooting gallery more and have motorised ducks revolving inside, but time did not permit.

Entrance and fences

In the front was a decorated entrance to simulate the great fairground entrances like Luna Park in Sydney. It is lit with 6 x 12 volt Dick Smith bulbs. As the fences are 12½" long the entrance pivots to fit to any table size.

In Conclusion

These models have used large numbers of current finish parts, but some parts are old and have been repainted. With Meccano France now painting parts in many colours, my next project will be to re-paint old parts for the fairground models for 1999.

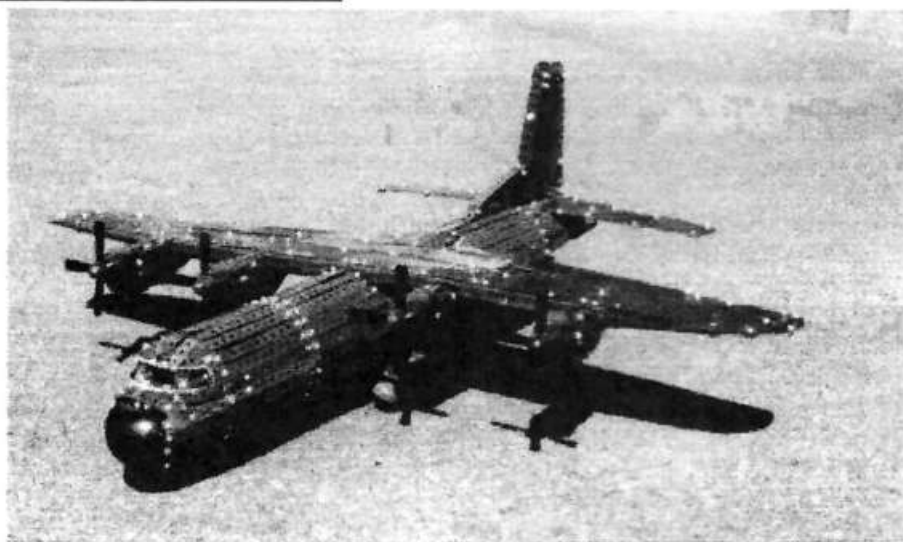
FROM FRANK DAVIS

Edited by L Spackman

I have recieved another interesting letter from Frank Davis of Rotorua, so following on from his 'thoughts' in our October 1996 issue here are some more extracts;

was suffering from 'muscular strain syndrome' [MMS] through working for extended periods at the garage bench, building the Hercules.

I cut the work down to short bursts and made a high stool to sit on. **NO MORE TROUBLE.** So, tell those other oldies among you to watch it. There must be a stress element in assembling Meccano, especially when not working to a pre-conceived design and having to pull things apart several times to get it right.



HERCULES

Here is my Lockheed Hercules aircraft in Meccano. It represents about four months work as the project clashed with the bowling season. It involved making replica 12.5" perf strips and some 12.5" plates for the upper wing.

You may be outraged to learn that the paddle type propellers are cut from beer cans, the spinners are turned wood, and the radome at the front is a half plastic ball. Wing span is about 3'6" and the fuselage the same. Like you I dont like to bend Meccano, but it was necessary. I must admit to outlining the cockpit with 'twink' as the curved strips didn't seem to emphasize the window enough.

Meccano RSI or OOD?

A word of warning for elderly Meccanomen. About Christmas time I developed mysterious aching shoulders, finished up going to the Doctor, but he was at a loss. Prescribed Panadol. I gave this some thought and came to the conclusion I

NEXT ONE

My next project is a Christchurch tram, about 1930 vintage, of a type I rode in a lot when at primary school. I thought I might try the Motor Chassis, supermodel 1A but have decided the parts required are beyond me at present.

LANCASTER MEMORIES

The Meccano model of a Dambusting Lancaster Bomber which I found in 'Model Engineer'

December 1995, attracted my eye straight away [This was George Illingworth's model exhibited by Midlands Meccano Guild at the 'M.E' Exhibition. It has also appeared in some Meccano magazines-ED]

I had the experience in WW2 of flying in one of these aircraft as second pilot to Wing Commander Cheshire on a trip over the Pas de Calais one night. I was allowed to fly the plane on the way back- it was like driving a bus after the Spitfires I was flying at the time at Coningsby near Norwich and met all the Dambusting crowd - Guy Gibson, Cheshire and others.

FROM HANK FORNBY

Congratulations to Don FLOWERS for a wonderful magazine and to Colin CROFT for a splendid cover and graphics.

MWT, what can we say? It is not as if we want to hear all the gruesome details or have your dirty laundry aired, but for those who were unable to attend the convention at Fielding, a good long winded report and expose would be interesting. Lets even have the excuses why models didn't work. Now that we have been titillated with some photographs, a list of exhibitors and 4 sentences in the April magazine, a literary masterpiece would complete the picture.(see the chatty 1996 Skegness Report, CQ Volume 33)

Quite a few North Islanders went to the Christchurch Convention 2 years ago. Luckily John INCE went to Fielding so there wasn't a complete no showing of South Islanders. This could lead to the reclassification of the North Island as the Mainland.

Salutations must also go to the new NZ importers of MECCANO for advertising the best hobby products on TV. I hope they reap rewards for their efforts.

Along with this, is it not a little peculiar having a Lego exponent and his staff car featured in the NZ Federation MECCANO Magazine? A few spelling mistakes we can overlook but a blunder of this magnitude may be to much.

Who can help as to what has happened to Andreus KONKOLY from Hungary? He was a prolific model builder and appeared in print often several years ago. I have not heard anything about him for ages.

Hydraulic supply shops are a good source of tires for pulleys if you have an application for smooth low profile tires. "O" rings can be obtained in a variety of cross sections. The rubber material is quite firm and transforms a pulley into a smooth silent roller. The larger cross section rings 3" in diameter start to go up in price but the smaller ones are certainly competitive.

Wheels in general in the MECCANO system are a problem. They set real limits on what can be built so that the model retains a realistic appearance. When building a larger model, the 3" pulley

with a standard tyre often does not look right.

Similarly, models with a rail theme suffer.

I have spoken to a Wellington Club member about the lack of wheel size choice and problem of larger models being hampered by a relatively flimsy wheel which can be built using a circular girder bolted to a 6" circular plate. From the engineers what can be suggested? Perhaps a circular girder in a heavier gauge steel with no holes or slots in the circumference. Any suggestions for wheels of other sizes?

Does this magazine get to MECCANO in Calais? Perhaps on a subject such as this, some market research, consultation with enthusiasts (other magazines could canvass their readers) and discussion with production engineers some decent wheels could be supplied to satisfy all. (Even the purists!!)

More on this can of worms later

Looking forward to hearing from you.

Hank Fornby

FROM ISM No21

In the letter from Joseph Attard of Malta about his trip to Australia, and the people he met he says that Ken Gordon told him that he [Ken] makes all his own parts. The editor of ISM notes that Ken does not sell the parts that he makes, is this the same Ken Gordon that we in New Zealand purchase parts from?

FROM MMGG No 18

In contrast to the spray plant [at Binns Road] most of the plant looked very dated, and one or two were real museum pieces dating back to the pre first world war period. Chris [Jelley the editor of MM at this time-1978] remarked that as the machines were still doing a first rate job, it seemed a waste to throw them out.

This is from an article reprinted in MMGG from NWMG June 1978.

The Easter 1997 Meccano Exhibition **at Feilding.**

The prior planning carried out by the MWT Club swung into action on Friday morning with the trestle tables being laid out according to the floor plan, table coverings (top and front) color coordinated and stapled into place, and power cables and multi boxes lowered down from the ceiling for the island displays and along the two side walls.

Members started arriving, placing and erecting models after lunch and into the late night.

The planned placement of models had been influenced by the need to make a visual impact on the paying public so Don Wilson's 18ft submarine hit the public in the eye first. The submarine was set up nearest the door as an island with access to all sides with a rope barrier to keep fingers away from mechanisms.

The use of Robin Rye's large Eiffel Tower, Tower Cranes by Brian Jones and Simon Moody, and a Walking Dragline with 11ft boom by Don Blakeborough placed in 3 corners of the basketball stadium gave vertical dimension to fill the air space available.

Sound effects were catered for by the genuine Fairground music which accompanied Daryl Anderson's Fairground complex which featured a number of models integrated into a whole by a green "grass" base cloth, boundary fence, and lots of flashing lights. Additional sound came from the clunk of the Marble Roller (well into its 2nd or 3rd millionth marble) and live steam whistle toots.

Smell effects were a little subtler but the Blocksetter Crane by Brian

Hickson driven by a two cylinder Mamod Steam engine ran for the two days giving off the 'real' aroma of hot oil and steam to a never absent circle of admirers.

Movement and mechanisms in models was well catered for with cranes operating, horizontal steam engines rotating and cyclists pedaling. Special mention goes to Daryl's Fairground where the Carousel, Octopus and Dodgems ran faultlessly for the two days often unattended. This was not by good luck but good modelling with reinforced bearings, tight nuts and bolts, etc. and sufficient lead time so that thorough testing and trial running was completed before the show.

"Hands on" models for the public to operate were not catered for well (Gears Table and Color Machine) with not a Meccanograph in sight, and also very few Clockwork powered models displayed and operated.

Two model railway layouts, one Hornby Dublo and the other 3 rail Hornby O gauge electric were used as corner pieces, ran well and acted as counter balances to the mass of Meccano models.

The current availability of "A Meccano Model in a box" was evident with considerable numbers of small models being used as table fillers. Plastic Meccano models were encouraged by the chance of winning a prize and turned out in force with the largest being a 30" truck and trailer.

Similar type models were separated to give variety to the spectators and give each model room to breath with plenty of table space. The maximum desired depth of spectators is about two

spectators and we averaged one and a half so there was no pushing forward into the model tables.

The three islands layout encouraged people to wander rather than join a one direction queue and the 5000 (approx.) customers never became congested.

The zinc and yellow color schemes predominated in the models and showed up the best against the background of brown varnished walls with red and green (which has now been extinct for 30 years) now becoming the minor party.

Tom Pittams "Building a Meccano model" live demonstration gave people the opportunity to ask questions and observe the process.

The red MWT baseball caps worn by club members gave instant recognition of club members.

The number of non modelling people needed for the smooth running of the show included door admission, cup of tea and food, and the four floor stewards. The floor stewards were supplied with red 'jerkies' for identification and were called on for the school party tours, assistance to disabled and made quite an impression on the blind gentleman who was given the opportunity to 'read' with his hands a considerable number of models

A camera club friend was given the brief to take candid shots of models and members as a record of the event. Even the official photograph of all participants and families outside the hall was remembered. The 200 photos have now been mounted into albums and will be circulated to the other New Zealand clubs in due course. A video was also taken by Bruce Geange and

after editing, runs for just over one hour.

The Retail shop run by Jason and Yvonne Bond satisfied the buying urge of the public (and some 'irresistible bargains' at special prices saw most exhibitors going home with more Meccano than they came with).

The auction of Meccano brought by members and the public was run under a new format but generally did not gain the prices expected. A 'scruffy collection' originally passed in at \$40 was subsequently broken down into 19 lots and realised over \$200.

Security at the hall was well covered at night with a number of members sleeping in the hall and saving accommodation costs.

There were no reported thefts of Meccano models but with the growing trend of small models being liberally used for exhibition table enhancement, members will have to consider their future personal anti thief arrangements such as models being mounted onto large baseboards, etc. to prevent pocketing of models.

The other matter that has been raised is safety and hazards. A child deliberately poked her finger down into a bunch of moving gears with inevitable loss of skin and required bandage treatment. So please cover with transparent plates mechanisms that you want seen.

The other hazard is liquid meths used for steam engines. This has potential to flow onto table coverings, hall floors, etc. and the use of naked flames may be forbidden inside the premises. So please incorporate drip trays into your models and bring your own decent size fire extinguisher in working order.

RBN

AUCKLAND CLUB AT MODEL X-97

Our club has exhibited regularly at model X for the past ten years, and this year would have been one of the best for models on display. Regrettably it was spoiled by a lack of display space. We had only a small area with frontage one table wide. So we could not show the two outstanding large models adequately. And the smaller ones had to be packed together on the front table.

Neil Carey's huge "Challenger" Union Pacific Locomotive has been around for several years. This was to have been it's first (and last) appearance at Model X, as Neil will, one of these days really get down to dis-assembling it. So he says!

The other large model was Brian Hickson's Titan Blocksetting Crane which he showed at Feilding Convention. Measuring about 5'6" over the jib and motor house, it was an impressive model. Unfortunately, sensitive fire safety sprinklers in the hall prevented Brian firing up his twin cylinder MAMOD which drives the crane.

Among the smaller models were Lloyd Spackman's Concrete Mixer Truck and Miniature Workshop, both battery operated. George Ovenden's Carousel with bears, low Loader carrying a Traction Engine, Cat, small Blocksetter Crane and another Low Loader. David Wall's Blimp and his "Wall's Ice Cream Seller" with his little cart. Graeme Wrightson's two neat cranes, and Bruce Haine's group of vehicles, partly coloursteel. Bruce has added a motor coach to his lot.

The only continuously operating model was George's Carousel which is a big favorite with the younger children.

Thank you to the Club members who took part in Model -X97. In particular to Brian Hickson who brought his Titan crane from Matamata for the three days of the exhibition.

RED PAINT PROBLEMS

In the Canadian MeccaNotes issue 6 the Editor talks about painting Meccano parts in red and says that advice from a paint salesman was to oven dry at 100-150 F. for three hours. The paint turned brown even though it had been air dried for three weeks. I have had a similar experience, I baked the parts in the oven with a similar result and a terrible smell.

I have since found out that what is meant by "oven dry" is to dry in an oven heated by moving air, not electric elements. When I have done this it gives a good finish, after this I have put the parts outside in all weathers for a few days.

DOUBLE ANGLE STRIPS

Not all double angle strips are equal. Over the years they have come in almost random sizes. The ordinary 5 hole DAS part 48a, for instance, if you look through a pile of them you may find as many as three that will nest snugly together. This isn't always useful, but sometimes one "size" will fit where another will not, and when several must be used together, it's worth being sure that they are the same size. Meccano SA (Calais) is keeping up the tradition of irregular sizes: two 1" DAS with center hole, part 48e, have turned up, of which one fits neatly and freely inside the other with barely enough space between them for a flexible plate.

REMOTE CONTROL SET'S

Louis Boselli is advertising in MeccaNotes the following;

Remote Control Sets At Half Price!

Moon Trekkers \$50.00

Heavy Haulers \$60.00

Remote control Units with two motors \$50.00

Prices in \$US.

His address is;

Louis Boselli

19 Payson Road

Cornwall-on-Hudson

NY-12520 USA.

From MeccaNotes No 6

Wellington Meccano Club
Meeting notes for June and July 1997

-reported by Bryan Jones and Mike Highley

The June meeting, held at St. Lukes, was attended by 12 members and we welcomed the return of Andrew Cathie, a member from earlier years of the Club.

Discussion was held regarding the venue for meetings; it had been suggested that we return to having meetings in member's homes which would be more comfortable. It was decided that St. Lukes provided a central place that was more convenient to hold regular meetings in, as not everyone would be able to hold a meeting at their place, but we would have every third meeting at a members home to allow time to advertise it in these notes and tie in with occasions when we need to meet elsewhere. The meeting frequency was also discussed; a proposal to only meet every two months was not carried as it was felt that we would lose touch with each other more than we do already.

An extra gathering was held in May at Max George's place to meet John Jenkins and his wife Eadie from California. They had contacted us earlier in the month to arrange a meeting while they were touring New Zealand, and several of our members were able to entertain them for the evening. John is interested in other construction sets as well as Meccano, and also collects Dinky toys. He does quite a lot of traveling and manages to meet Meccano people wherever he goes.

The following members had items on display:

Don Flowers brought a crawler track frame with a working track built out of flat girders. It features adjustable tensioning and is intended to be a low-ground-pressure type platform for a hydraulic crane.

Mike Highley brought a post war MG sports car model from the December 1968 Meccano Magazine and a partly built forklift truck from a No 5. Manual.

Bryan Jones brought his photos taken at the Easter Convention.

Simon Moody brought a pair of bogies of low profile, featuring individually sprung and powered axles, which are to be used under a tram.

Lou Nichols also had photos, some of the Convention and some of our 21st Birthday party.

The July meeting was attended by only five members, the bad weather and other reasons resulting in several apologies. A short meeting resulted as there was little business to discuss.

Don Flowers reported on the last magazine with its colour inserts. The photos had reproduced very well but the process was fairly expensive and would probably be limited to Convention reports, rather than being a regular feature. The magazine circulation was discussed, especially the number sent out overseas, and it was considered that the mailing list should be reviewed as it appeared that it had not been for some time.

A request had been received for information about the 2001 Convention. A planning meeting has not yet been held this year, but will provide details when the sub-committee has met.

The only model on display this evening was **Don Flowers'** crawler track frame, which now has two track units joined by a central frame. One track has been test run by a proprietary motor with reduction gearbox, and apparently this works well.

Coming Events:

- 1 August: Meeting at Brian Peterson's home, Maungaraki.
- 5 September: Meeting at St. Lukes
- 3 October: Meeting at St. Lukes (to be confirmed).
- 3-5 October: Rail Expo, Rotorua. Any one joining in with this?
- 25-27 October: Great Models and Hobbies Expo, Capital E, Wellington.

**Christchurch Meccano Club Meeting
June 1997
Reported by John Ince**

This was a well attended meeting with 15 members and two juniors present. We also welcomed Mike Hamilton's mother Shon and Neil Pluck's partner Grace Oelderlink.

Ian Torrens demonstrated his 243:1 reduction gear which was described by Spanner in the January 1943 Meccano Magazine page 23. A motor was fitted to the gear box so that it could be seen in action.

John Hamlyn had also used the Meccano Magazine for inspiration with the boom of a railway breakdown crane from June 1948 page 203. We will watch progress with interest. **Stefan Burrell** had a little racing car made from collection sets parts. **John Ince** ran his Nightingale Meccanograph with the guilloche arm fitted. This results in rather different designs from those produced by the simple arm demonstrated at a previous meeting.

Despite the gloomy predictions **Peter King** has made a quicker recovery from his broken ankle and is now able to put weight on his leg. As well as being a tribute to the surgeons, who must have had Meccano sets as boys, what is more important to readers is that Peter has been able to make progress on the helical gears. Details and prices are printed elsewhere in the magazine.

Neil Pluck and **Grace** arrived late as they had driven over from Greymouth. Very impressive was Grace's lamp stand and shade! It looked even better when the lamp was turned on. **Selwyn Megson** produced a 1978 Swedish stamp featuring a Meccano model of a fairground wheel. An enlarged photocopy made study easier.

John Ince read extracts from a letter from **Bert Love** in which he said that John's side switch 110v motor c1922 *Never seen one anywhere in the UK or anywhere else.* A similar motor is illustrated in the December 1925 MM p 661 and also in September 1962 p 373. Bert then went on to discuss the later 1924 cruciform switch high voltage motors which he says are all of French manufacture. As John has one stamped *Made in Liverpool* it will be interesting to know what other NZ collectors have.

Copies of the June edition of the Federation Magazine, the May edition of the International Meccanoman and three recent issues of Constructor Quarterly were available for inspection. Members were favourably

impressed by the centre colour section of the 1997 Easter exhibition and would like to see more colour sections.

The meeting concluded with supper served by John and Joyce Pluck with assistance from Shon Hamilton.

**Christchurch Meccano Club Meeting
July 1997
Reported by John Ince**

Sixteen members and one junior attended this rather cold wintry evening.

Mike Hamilton has made good use of some Meccano parts he was supplied with at the last meeting and produced a crane and a tricycle. Mike likes to use his imagination in creating models.

Graeme O'Neill had a box full of small models including three small aeroplanes, a two wheel and a three wheel motor cycle, a 500 series space craft, a farm tractor, a plastic rabbit (resistant to 1080 poison!) and a plastic dump truck by Graeme's wife Miriam.

John Ince had produced larger copies of the postage stamp fairground machine for Selwyn and for good measure made up the actual model. It stands 750mm high and although motorised still needs another four passenger seats. John has now received a replacement infra red motor kit and with this installed in the Dresser Front End Loader the machine works much better. What a pity that Meccano France does not have better quality control to avoid this sort of problem. The replacement parts contained no explanation of what the problem was.

Ian Torrens has been in correspondence with **Colin Hoare** who lives at Glen Williams, Ontario, Canada and is pleased with the set of plans for making a scale model of the Royal Yacht *Britannia*. He hopes to get inspired to build this model soon.

Neil Pluck showed us a greetings card based on the June 1944 MM cover of the Coronation Scot railway locomotive.

John reported that **Doug King** had been unable to attend the meeting as he has had eye surgery. His new plastic lens was proving very satisfactory and he is again able to see where to put the screwdriver tip into the screw head! Doug is expected back next meeting. As usual the meeting concluded with supper before members ventured out into the cold again.

Trevor Adam Of Napier want's to purchase Mogal Models as made by Meccano in 1974. If you can help him his address is;

Trevor Adam
22 Ferguson Street North
NAPIER.

FROM JOHN INCE

While at the Easter Convention someone showed me a copy of the International Society of Meccanomen colour supplement advertised in the January issue of International Meccanoman for 9.00 (GBP) plus postage. What a disappointing document. Colour photocopiers just don't provide a satisfactory result. On the other hand the black and white photographs in the regular issues of International Meccanoman are generally of a high standard which is more than can be said of the Easter exhibition photos in our Federation magazine

(This item is reprinted from the last issue as I left one line out and John felt that this changed the context of the item-ED.)

The photos of the Meccano crystal set in the magazine last year brought a prompt reply from Bert Love. I replied with colour prints and details which have now been published with a three page spread in the March 1997 issue of Constructor Quarterly. This is a fine magazine for the serious modeler and provides 56 A4 pages of good reading including detailed descriptions of models, historical notes and some light relief, all beautifully presented in colour on high quality paper. I have just completed the Nightingale family Meccanograph; it took about a week of intermittent activity. There are four issues a year and the cost is 44.00(GBP) approx \$100 at present exchange rates. It is good value if you can afford it.

I would agree with John, as I also get CQ and enjoy the articles in it. ED.

On page 15 you will see a list of parts that John Ince has for sale and also gears made by Peter King. If any other members have any parts to sell or make parts could you please let me know as we would like to print lists of parts that are made locally so that members know what is available.

Further to the item on page 10 the BCMC Vol 5 No3 says that Joel Perlin in California also has the remote control sets at half price. His address is

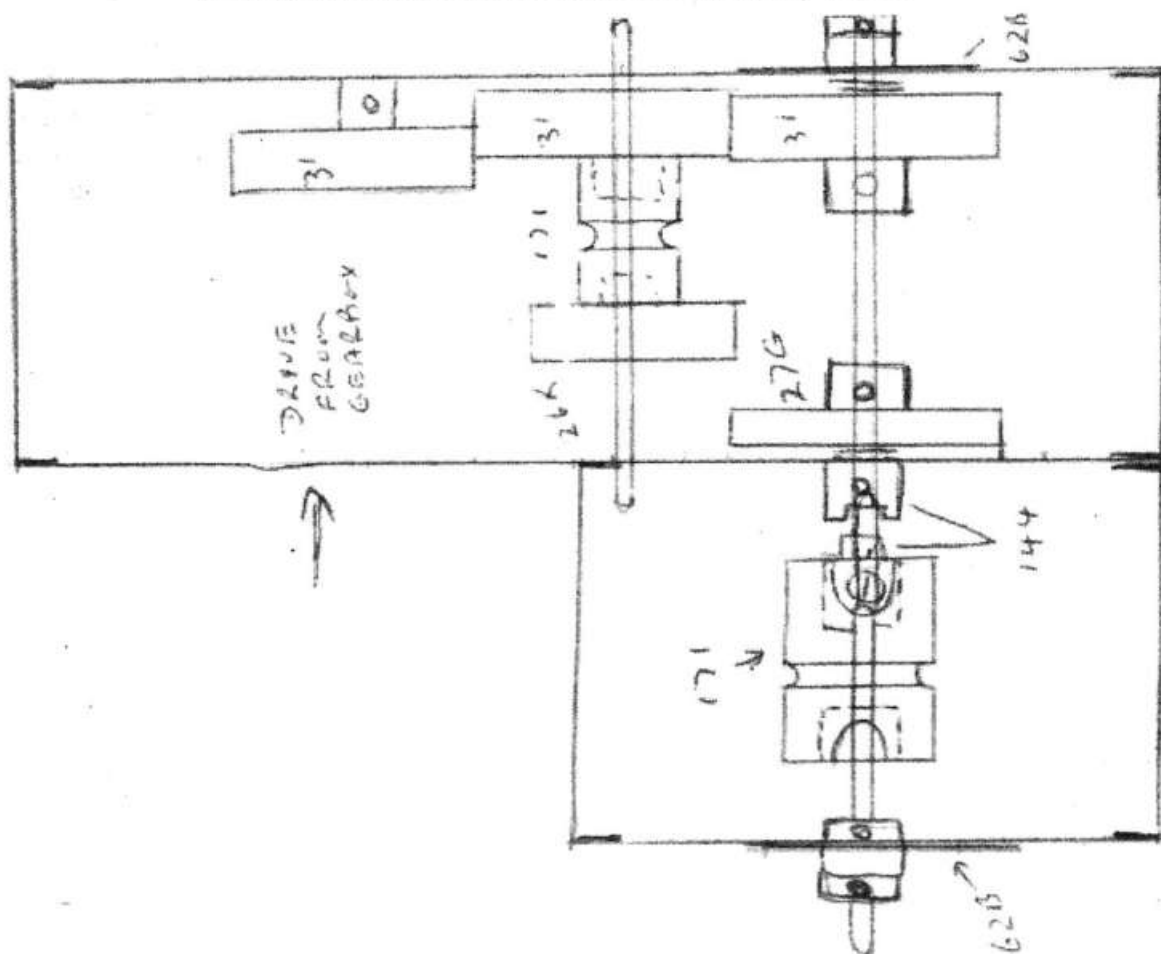
Joel Perlin
1111 Acapulco Court
Oxnard
CA93035
USA

e-mail erector @vol.net
He also has his full price list at this address

Perhaps this means that these sets were not a very good selling item in the U.S. I wonder if they sold well here in NZ. Will the new space sets sell any better when they arrive here. It would be nice if the New Zealand importers (Matel) would supply us with some information regarding when they will arrive and the costs of the sets, but I suppose they will be like the last importers and give us nothing. However all the overseas magazines seem to get pre release information on any new sets before they get to the shops. CQ even appears to get sample sets to review.

If you are looking for Meccano screws try around the various nut and bolt suppliers, I was looking for 200x 2" screws and the price ranged from \$19.95 for 200 to \$17.89 for 100, both plus GST. I was also told that 5/32"W screws are available from 1/4" to 2.5" and nuts are also available, although I don't know what style they are.

TWO SPEED GEARBOX WITH 4WD



The frame to hold this gearbox was made from 2x 74B and 1x 74 flat plates held apart by 236C narrow DAS, and was mounted on the rear of a 3F&1R gearbox.

The input is a 1" gear (31) fixed to the gearbox output shaft. The center shaft holds a 1" and a 30T (26K) gear held together by a socket coupling and this is fixed to the shaft which has to be long enough to allow this assembly to move back and forward to engage the next set of gears. The lower shaft has a 1" and a 45T (27G) gear fixed to it, and spaced apart so that when the 3x 1" gears are in mesh the 45T gear is clear, and when the 30T and 45T gears are in mesh the center and lower 1" gears are clear but the center and top 1" gears are in mesh.

The lower shaft protrudes forward into the FWD section and carries half of a dog clutch.

The other half of the dog clutch is carried in a socket coupling with a collar in the other end to keep it central on the shaft.

This assembly is mounted on a short piece of rod with keyway and is free to slide on it.

The rod with keyway protrudes into the dog clutch half that is fixed to the lower shaft in the two speed section.

At both ends of the lower shaft are double arm cranks to give a good bearing surface.

The gearchange system is by two levers, one for high/low and the other for two or four wheel drive. These selector shafts need to have a ball and washer detent mechanism to positively locate the selected gear.

This arrangement is different to that used in a 4x4 as in the real gearbox the gears on the center shaft are fixed together with the lower shaft gears having one free to turn on the shaft and the other sliding on a spline and each gear having half of a dog clutch built into them. Also the selector shafts have interlocks so that low ratio can only be selected when in four wheel drive.

It is also possible to fit a PTO to this model gearbox by fitting half a dog clutch on the input shaft from the gearbox and making another unit similar to that used for the FWD and mounting it behind the input shaft.

MECCANO PARTS

Available from John Ince after 20th August 1997

Part No.	Description	Size inches	No. Avail.	Price Each	Part No.	Description	Size inches	No. Avail.	Price Each
19a	Spoked Wheel		3	\$3.00 ea	28	Contrate Wheel	1.5	4	\$4.50 ea
20	Flanged Wheel	1 1/8"	12	\$2.00	29	Contrate Wheel	3/4"	3	\$3.50 ea
20b	Flanged Wheel	3/4"	18	\$1.50	31	Gear Wheel	1 x 1/4"	2	\$8 ea
21	Pulley	1 1/2"	2	\$3.00	32	Worm	1/2"	4	\$3 ea
22	Pulley	3/4"	24	50c	41	Propellor Blade - red & green		2	\$3 ea
22a	Pulley - no boss	3/4"	14	75c	59	Collar		27	70c
23a	Pulley - brass	1/2"	4	\$1.50	62	Crank		5	50c
23b	Pulley, brass	1/2"	7	80c	63	Coupling		4	\$3.00 ea
24	Bush Wheel		18	\$2.00	95	Sprocket Wheel	2"	7	\$4 ea
25	Pinion	3/4" x 1/4"	4	\$3.50	95b	Sprocket Wheel	3"	1	\$5 ea
25a	Pinion	3/4" x 1/2"	1	\$3.50	96	Sprocket Wheel	1"	4	\$2 ea
26	Pinion	1/2" x 1/4"	9	\$2 ea	96a	Sprocket Wheel	3/4"	6	\$2 ea
26a	Pinion	1/2" x 1/2"	2	\$3 ea	109	Face Plate		2	\$4.00 ea
26c	Pinion	7/16" x 1/4"	3	\$2 ea	114	Hinge		2	\$2.00
27	Gear Wheel	1 1/4"	3	\$4 ea	47b	Pivot Bolt		4	50c
27a	Gear Wheel	1 1/2"	7	\$4 ea	164	Chimney Adaptor			\$3.00
27d	Gear Wheel	1 3/8"	3	\$4.5 ea	67c	Large Tooth Pinion		2	\$7.00
27b	Gear Wheel	3 1/2"	3	\$12 ea	73a	Adaptor for Screwed Rod		1	\$2.00
27c	Gear Wheel	2 1/2"	5	\$8 ea	212	Rod & Strip Conn.		5	25c
27f	Multi purpose Gear		4	\$1.00	212a	Rod & Strip Conn.		1	50c

Peter King Gears 20th August 1997

Description	No Teeth	Type or width	Price Each	
Helical Gear	10	L.H.	\$8.00	The helical gears are made in both left hand and right hand. To create a drive with shafts at right angles use gears of the same hand. Where a chevron drive is required use a left hand and a right hand gear together to mesh with a right hand and left hand. The 1" diam. 26 tooth gears mesh at 1" centres. The 14 and 35 tooth gears used as a pair. The right hand version of the latter are replicas of 211a and 211b. The 10 tooth gear will mesh with the 40 tooth also at 1" centres.
Helical Gear	10	R.H.	\$8.00	
Helical Gear	12	L.H.	\$8.00	
Helical Gear	12	R.H.	\$8.00	
Helical Gear	14	L.H.	\$8.00	
Helical Gear	14	R.H.	\$8.00	
Helical Gear - 1" c	26	L.H.	\$12.00	
Helical Gear - 1" c	26	R.H.	\$12.00	
Helical Gear	35	L.H.	\$12.00	
Helical Gear	35	R.H.	\$12.00	
Helical Gear	40	L.H.	\$12.00	Please order all these parts from; John Ince 37 Burnside Crescent CHRISTCHURCH Phone (03) 358-7351.
Helical Gear	40	R.H.	\$12.00	
Pinion - replica	11		\$8.00	
Pinion - long	12	c1931	\$8.00	
Pinion - short	12		\$8.00	
Gear Wheel	28	1/4"	\$12.00	
Gear Wheel	30	1/4"	\$12.00	
Gear Wheel	65	1/4"	\$15.00	
Gear Wheel	66	1/4"	\$15.00	
Gear Wheel - large tooth	167c		\$15.00	

BITS AND PIECES

From Lloyd Spackman

QUOTATION:

"Only in the same way you wanted Martin's MECCANO and Martin's friend, Guy, and Martin's diligence.....
From "A Village Affair" by Joanna Trollope.

PUBLICITY worth having

The organizers of our 1997 convention obtained a mention in the "next day's events" segment of TVI Weather Report on Easter Friday evening:

FIELDING

MECCANO EXHIBITION

There were also several mentions on Radio Pacific's a.m. program

ELECTROPLATING

Rigg Electroplating Ltd who have cleaned and re-plated [in nickel and palladium] most of the zinc parts in my collection, have moved. They are now at 63 View Road, Glenfield. View Road is off Wairau Road - turn left at the Valentine Restaurant corner.

NOISY PLASTIC GEARS

Driving a plastic 1.5" gear from a 0.5" pinion [plastic] on the output shaft of the useful little MO motor sets up an astonishing clatter. Bernard Perier mentions this in the instructions for his tipping truck [CQ 3/97] His remedy was to start with a rubberband drive from the motor shaft to a 1" pulley. Or try a brass gear and pinion [oiled] The chatter is not so bad at slower speeds.

TEUTONIC

Dictionary definition is "Characteristic of German peoples or languages". Looking at the models in a MARKLIN manual, it struck me how heavy, solid and "Germanic" they are. It was a term we used early this century for things German.

NOBEL PHYSICS PRIZE

Martin L Perl of Stanford University has been a member of the Southern California Meccano and Erector Club since 1986. He was awarded the Nobel Prize for Physics along with a fellow physicist, Frederick Reines. Martin is interested in Meccano and Erector because "they relate to the great mechanical age which ended in the 1940's" says Martin.

[SCM&E newsletter 7/96]

"OLIVERS"

Those twisted barley sugar looking uprights which support the canopy on showman's engines are called "Olivers"- Why?? Well, Oliver is an abbreviation of the cockney rhyming slang Oliver [Can I have some more, please ?"] Twist. Hence Olivier Twists, or just Olivers.

[Newsmag No 75 7/96]

A CONSULTANT

One definition is- Someone who, when you ask them the time, will look to see if you are wearing a watch. If you are, they will pick up your wrist, look at your watch, and tell you what time it is.

[Prashanta Mukherjee, in IT Weekly]

PRICES

DEKA has advertised reductions in prices of Junior Meccano, down to \$17.99 a set. Larger sets reduced by up to \$50.00, but these are not available except in selected DEKA stores.

WHAT'S IN A NAME

In CQ3/97 the name of the new space Meccano sets are given as "MISSION: THE UNIVERSE" with five new sets each building one model. But Erector in the US call the same sets "MISSION XR" and the individual models also have different names.

The Meccano Story.

first published December 18th 1994

There were other weaknesses. Because Meccano was virtually indestructible, replacement sales were minimal. And children were growing out of toys younger. "When I joined in 1971, my two boys were still playing with Dinky toys and Meccano at the ages of 10 and 11," says the former finance director, Ivan Bruce. "But the age span dropped dramatically after that."

As the French are showing, there was a way forward for Meccano, but at the time the company was too busy lurching from one crisis to the next to see what it was.

Industrial relations were poor. Mr Stokes believes they were no worse than the admittedly miserable average for the 1970s - especially against the background of a workforce whose numbers were cut from 1,700 to 800 during the decade. "The reality was that there was some not very good management and significant lack of investment over many years," he says. "Some of the presses must have been original Frank Hornby stuff."

Mr Bruce is more critical of the workforce. "I worked at other companies including Pilkington and British Steel, and none of them ever had the sort of problems we had at Meccano," he says. "There was a running battle with the unions."

In 1976 Airfix decided the rambling Binns Road factory could never become efficient, and announced that Meccano was moving to Huyton. Pressure from Liverpool City Council forced him to change his mind. "The council said it could make things difficult for Airfix if it went ahead," Mr Bruce recalls.

Instead the company tried to reposition Meccano, simplifying the range. But signs of rot were now abundant. Large batches of 1977 production were returned covered in spots, while new powder coating equipment, installed at great expense, was never used because of union blacking.

As managing directors came and went, the lack of any hand on the rudder was increasingly evident. Meccano, while trying to economise, produced its most complex item ever, a road wheel with nine parts. This was part no. 187c and the components are the black plastic

wheel, the diecast wheel centre, a 1" bush wheel and three 1/2" bolts with nuts. Metal plates in the biggest sets were replaced with plastic ones, making some models unbuildable.

By 1979 Meccano sales were down to £2m a year, while Dinky output was running at £4m. The final fling was a range of monsters called Meccanoids; the company spent £100,000 promoting them, but even they were flawed: the design meant they would not stand up properly.

At 3.30 on Friday, 30 November, 1979, the 800 Binns Road workers were told the factory would close in 40 minutes. "It was losing £40,000 a week and Airfix which was starting to slip itself, could not afford to keep it going," Mr Bruce says. He and his team set up in the Holiday Inn to tie up the financial loose ends, while the Maharishi and other potential rescuers came, saw and left. Despite the closing of the factory, the workers did not leave but staged a sit-in strike. In February Airfix was given an injunction to evict the workers, and Mr Bruce's team moved in to empty the factory. He locked the door for the last time in September 1980, and Hornby's factory was demolished.

That was not quite the end of British Meccano production. Parts were made briefly for Airfix by subcontractors; but when the whole group collapsed in November 1980, production finally halted. This collapse had little to do with Meccano but was a consequence of Airfix losing vital US space programme contracts when that program was curtailed.

Thanks to Frank Hornby's early internationalisation, Meccano and its relatives were still being made abroad. Marklin in Germany made a recognisable relative even though the companies had long severed their links. The best Meccano, experts say, was made in Argentina by Exacto. The factory still provides specialist shops with some unusual parts but is unable to use the Meccano name for copyright reasons despite the Binns Road company having granted that right on an earlier occasion. But the only country still using the Meccano name was France: when Lines Brothers collapsed, the French factory, now transferred to Calais, was bought by the

The Meccano Story.

first published December 18th 1994

American food company General Mills, which was diversifying into toys. As Binns Road collapsed, the situation in Calais was not that much better. General Mills was concentrating on more fashionable plastic toys, and Meccano had become a sideline. In 1984, it decided to get out of toys altogether and the Calais factory, which employed only 40 people, was sold to a French accountant, Marc Rebibo. Mr Rebibo decided to redesign all the Meccano sets, meanwhile taking on plastic moulding work for the motor industry to keep his workers busy. He then relaunched Meccano, selling it to shops in France and through distributors in other countries. In the UK, Atlascraft, a Nottingham-based wholesaler, took charge of it.

Jean-Marie Pennel, now general manager at Calais, says that although Mr Rebibo had many of the right ideas, he was naturally cautious and refused to hire a marketing staff that could bring real volume. "He was the man to restart Meccano, but not develop it. It wasn't in his psychology."

In 1989 he sold to Francois Duvauchelle, a high flyer with the Bouygues construction giant who had left to make his own fortune. By now Meccano sales were running at about £6m a year, and Calais was employing 90 people.

Meccano still had a loyal following among adults, who were well served by specialist shops. Geof Wright's MW Models in Henley-on-Thames, for example, had bought much of the Binns Road stock and is now the worlds only source of top-of-the-range sets.

But the real problem was that the toy had lost touch with its original audience. "Meccano had aged with its consumers," Mr Gourmelen says. "We had to try to make it attractive to children again." It was all very well parents wanting to give their children Meccano, he says, but if it was not on their Christmas list, it would probably be abandoned by Boxing Day.

The French rejected the notion that indestructibility was a problem, and believed that with proper marketing Meccano could once again make it on to that wish list. They accepted that to many children it appeared to give little reward for a great deal of effort. But they believed that there would always be

children who were by nature meticulous and patient. It was these children who would make up Meccano's "niche".

The sets were revamped to shed the old image. "Meccano is not about cranes and trains any more," Mr Gourmelen says. "It's about bikes, racing cars and all-terrain vehicles." The company also started a programme designed to capture children young, and to make sure there was a set to which they could move up. It invested £1m in a new plastic range Junior Meccano, which was launched in 1993. "If you haven't convinced them young, there is no point in trying to sell to a 12-year-old," Mr Gourmelen says.

Meccano stopped selling the bigger sets in 1992 but still makes the 400 parts which go into them to supply to hobby shops. When the hearts of youngsters have been recaptured, Mr Pennel says, it will re-enter the top end. Plans have already been drawn up for sets that are more sophisticated than anything hitherto. The 1996 release of the infra-red action control sets demonstrates this intention.

Like Frank Hornby 90 years ago, the French are tapping whatever market they can find. Schools are being invited to pre-Christmas road shows in Britain and France, and Mr Pennel notes that engineering students still naturally turn to Meccano to build models. One day, he says, Meccano might sponsor competitions, just as Frank Hornby used to do.

Despite the new investment, the Calais factory still relies heavily on old fashioned equipment and labour-intensive systems. In 1995 two rival systems, manufactured in China, were launched in Europe and Meccano was once again faced with the sort of challenge which troubled Frank Hornby in the early decades of the 20th century. Meccano knows its first and strongest line of defence is its brand name, but that its sets must not be priced too far above the newcomers. That is why Mr Duvauchelle will have to continue forgoing profits in favour of ever more sophisticated machinery. Meccano may have been bolted back together without the help of meditation - but it will be a while before we can be sure it will not again come apart at the trunnions.

COMMING EVENTS

MEETING ADDRESS:

ST LUKES CHURCH HALL
55 PITT STREET
WADESTOWN

ST JOHNS HALL
FERRY ROAD
WOOLSTON

AUGUST 1997

1ST-WMC
BRIAN PETERSON'S
281 MAUNGARAKI ROAD
LOWER HUTT

1ST-CMC
ST JOHNS HALL

2ND-MWT
ST LUKES CHURCH HALL

9TH-AMC
NEIL CAREY'S
23 EATON ROAD
HILLSBOROUGH

SEPTEMBER 1997

5TH-WMC
ST LUKES CHURCH HALL

5TH-CMC
ST JOHNS HALL

OCTOBER 1997

3RD-WMC
ST LUKES CHURCH HALL

3RD-CMC
ST JOHNS HALL

12th-CLOSING DATE FOR
NOVEMBER ISSUE

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

PRICE LIST 1997

ITEM NO	DESCRIPTION	S.R.P
	MECCANO	
	JUNIOR RANGE AGES 4 - 6	
	PLAYGROUND FUN 4603	\$24.95
M224623	WATER AND WINDMILLS 4623	\$39.95
	JUNIOR RANGE AGES 5-7	
M225703	HELECOPTER 5703	\$24.95
M225706	PLANE 5706	\$24.95
M225709	DUNE BUGGY 5709	\$24.95
M225723	DRAGSTER 5723	\$39.95
M225726	DUMP TRUCK 5726	\$39.95
M225729	RESCUE TEAM 5729	\$44.95
M225753	TOOL CENTRE 5753	\$69.95
M225759	BULLDOZER 5759	\$69.95
M225756	BIG DIGGER 5756	\$69.95
M225773	L/S FIRE TRUCK 5773	\$79.95
M225793	TRAIN 5793	\$159.95
	JUNIOR RANGE AGES 6-8	
M226853	DUNE BUGGY 6853	\$69.95
M226856	SUPER COPTER 6856	\$69.95
M226883	U.S. TRUCK 6883	\$99.95
	COLLECTION SERIES	
M032020	18 ASSTD DSPL EACH MAKES 1M	\$11.95
M030900	4 ASSTD EACH MAKES 3 MODEL	\$25.95
M033910	C-8 ROAD HAULERS 3910	\$39.95
M033920	C-8 SUPER FLYERS 3920	\$39.95
	EVOLUTION SERIES	
M030501	NO 1 MAKES 15 M. WITH EXTRAS	\$49.95
M030502	NO 2 MAKES 25 M. WITH MOTOR	\$79.95
M030503	NO 3 MAKES 35 M. WITH MOTOR	\$99.95
M030504	NO 4 MAKES 50 M. WITH MOTOR	\$129.95
M030505	NO 5 MAKES 75 M. WITH MOTOR	\$169.95
M030506	NO 6 MAKES 100 M. W/2 MOTORS	\$199.95
	ACTION CONTROL (INFA-RED CONTROLS)	
M039515	MOON VEHICLES W/RADAR 3 M.	\$169.95
M039526	TRUCKS MAKES 3 MODELS	\$199.95
	MASTER SET	
M037064	U.S. FIRE TRUCK	\$249.95
	ACCESSORIES	
M032325	POWER TOOL	\$25.95
M035215	STORAGE CASE	\$69.95

MECCANO PRICES REDUCED. FEDERATION MEMBERS, LESS 10%, Freight FREE.

LINDSAY BOND ELECTRONICS
REGAN STREET, STRATFORD.
PH./ Fax. 06 765 5008.

MECCANO