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Don Wilson's Fine Model of HMS Cairo



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NZ Federation of Meccano Modellers Magazine

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

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Top picture by Bryan Jones

Bottom picture by Peter Hancock

Introducing R. Bruce Neilson

Bred, born, educated and employed in New Plymouth, Taranaki. In-land Revenue examiner, accountant and auditor by trades and qualified in computers and accountancy. Now taken second retirement and residence in Palmerston North.

My Meccano life story has been influenced by boyhood deprivation in the 1940's and as far as I can remember my first set was received new when I was 13 in 1951. The red and green colours are burnt into my soul and all modelling and repainting are in the colours of this period. I restarted when my son was 12 and carried on after he left home. This was in the 1970s when people were throwing out a lot of Meccano cheap; and advertising on radio



buy and sell sessions and newspaper adverts brought in a lot of Meccano including 2 No 10 sets. I have also had a lifelong urge to build Giant Blocksetting Cranes with reasonable success. Over the years I have accumulated a large collection of Meccano literature with consequent problems of finding specific models and mechanisms so I compiled a database of models and mechanisms and from that published "Volume 1 Meccano Company Literature 1913 to 1981", and "Volume 2 Meccano Company Literature 1982 to 1991 and Non Company Literature 1960 to 1991". Volume 3 for 1992 to 2001 is on my list of things to do by the end of 2001.

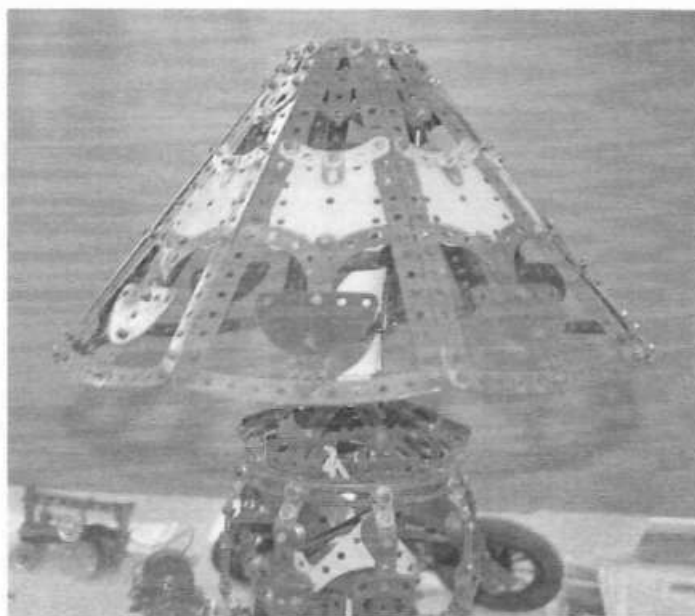
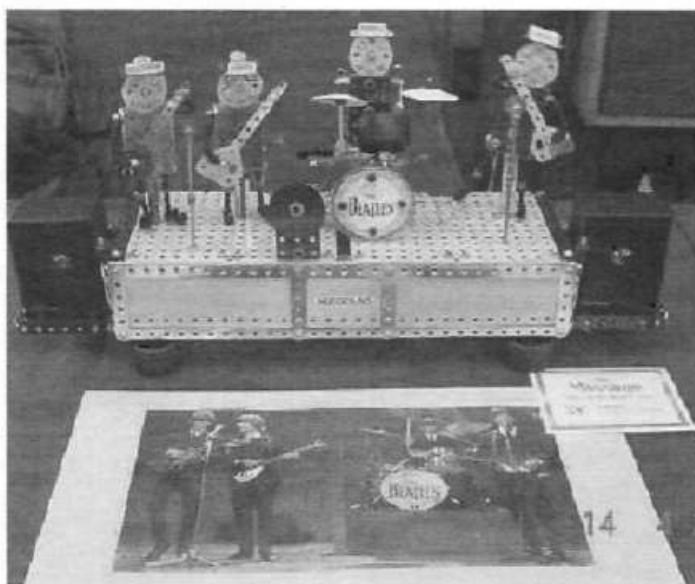
Being retired and the only person living in the house, I indulge myself with the Meccano building table in the middle of the sitting room, 'N' gauge model railway in the spare bedroom, a wall of science fiction paperback books and a satellite TV channel

I have been involved with the New Zealand Federation of Meccano Modellers, and MWT Meccano Club (Provinces of Manawatu, Wanganui, and Taranaki, North Island, NZ) since their inceptions and also one of the original authors of the NZ Meccano model judging rules

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A Few of the More Unusual Models at the Convention 2001



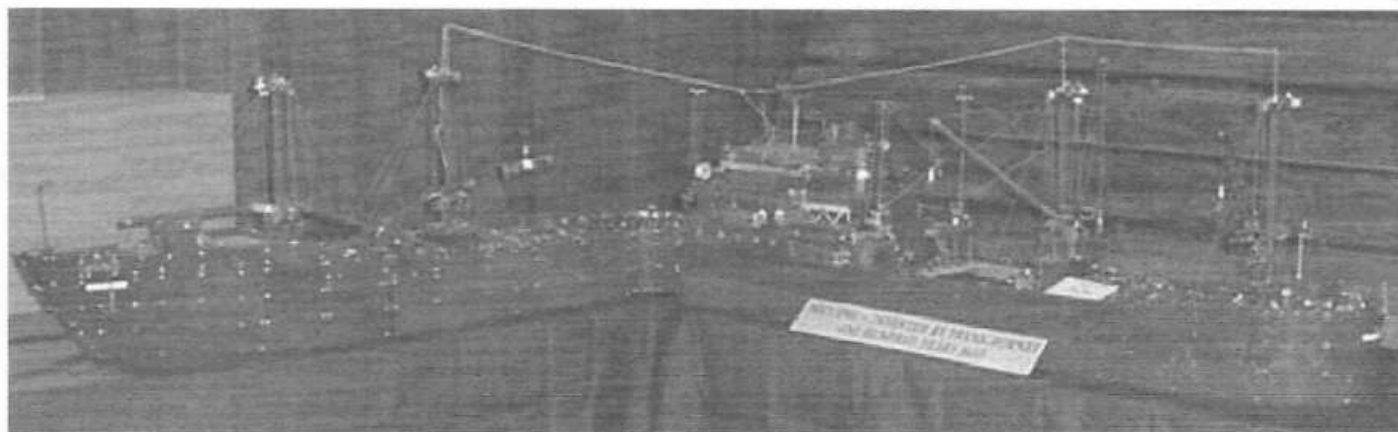
Centre Left: Neil Pluck's Lamp Shade - it works casting a dappled light!

Above: Bruce Geange's Pile Driver - watch your fingers. (Photos by Bryan Jones)

Top Left: Bob Prescott's Beatles - with music.

Below: Robin Rye's Cargo Ship specially designed to dock in confined ports.

(Photos by Peter Hancock)



Behind the Scenes at the 2001 Convention

by Bryan Jones

Four years ago, at the Feilding Convention, it was decided that the Wellington Meccano Club would be the hosts for the 2001 Convention. This began a series of planning meetings by a few of the Club members, who considered all sorts of ideas from the wider membership. We were very pleased to run a successful Convention, successful not only financially but also from the number of attenders and models, and the time which was available for the interaction between attenders.

Two decisions made early on in the planning were - to hold the Convention in Upper Hutt, and to make the Saturday a non-public day. Various venues in Wellington were considered, but rejected because of cost, availability of accommodation near by, or considerations of size and catering arrangements. The Upper Hutt Civic Centre offered a 20m by 40m space which would allow a large number of stands, with generous aisles to avoid crowding if (as hoped) a large number of the public turned up. It had side rooms which could be used for storage or catering, and came with a large number of tables. It was also available at an attractive price, and had restaurants and accommodation near by. An advance booking was made.

The non-public Saturday decision was much discussed, and not everyone was convinced it would work, because of the reduction in door takings. In its favour was the increase in time allowable for the setting up of models on Saturday morning, and it was envisaged that a tour could be held, so that all modellers would have the chance to meet each other and have their models demonstrated. In the end the tour did not occur, but there certainly was plenty of time for circulating, meeting, demonstrating and photographing of models. Having made the decision, we then organised our fund-raising so that the major expenses would be taken care of, before having to rely on the door takings.

We adopted a slogan created by Colin Croft ("Meccano - 100 years young in 2001 - a lifetime hobby") for all of our written communication during the planning time, and this helped in a subtle sort of way with our publicity. Colin also designed a colour poster, a limited number of which were available for sale at the Convention, and a black-and-white version of this appeared in public places around Well-

ington and the Hutt Valley. The local Information Centre generously supported us with window and newspaper advertising. Simon Moody spread the word via the Internet, so that by the beginning of the year we were starting to have enquiries of interest from overseas. Registration forms duly went out, and at the beginning of February replies were being received daily. Over 50 registrations were finally received, including six from overseas. We were pleased to have several New Zealand attenders at their first convention.

Good Friday arrived, and the setup team arrived at the Civic Centre to arrange tables and power distribution. The discovery that the stage, previously thought to be a modular design capable of being split up, was actually a solid, almost immovable object, led to a hurried bit of re-planning, and a trailer was sent off to retrieve more tables. By lunch time the tables were set up and covered, modellers were beginning to arrive, and the hall decoration was under way. Banners and laminated posters lined the walls, and the tables were covered with the yellow and blue tablecloths acquired for previous conventions. Jo Moody had the registration table under control and was kept busy with registration packs. Each modeller was presented with a Certificate of Attendance and a commemorative badge.



Simon Moody and Max George at the AGM and Prize Giving.

Each modeller was presented with a Certificate of Attendance and a commemorative badge.

An outstanding number of models appeared over the day-and-a-half setup period; over 150 models, and of all

sorts of sizes and varieties. As well as their "main" models, attenders were invited to contribute models to a display called "My Favourite First Model". There were a number of models placed in the display, and it was interesting to note that a large number of them were cranes. There were also group displays such as the "Magic Carpet" by the Wellington Club (a re-creation of the cover of one of the Cavendish books, showing two boys on a rectangle of carpet, with a Meccano hammerhead crane surrounded by a Hornby train layout), and a diorama of a rural landscape featuring a large collection of small models by the MWT Club. A large railway layout by the Hornby Modellers Club was set up on the stage, and this ran continuously through the weekend.

The logistics of transport featured highly in some of the displays - several modellers required trailers or over-stuffed carloads to transport their models, and Daryl Anderson of the MWT Club used a trailer to size of a horse float, packed full, to bring his contributions. Assemblies and final adjustments were made, and by Saturday afternoon the circulat-

ing and meeting of new faces and old friends could begin. Big models drew immediate attention, and were impressive to watch being put through their paces, but there were also lots of smaller and more unusual models, and displays of Meccano associated items such as historic sets and dealers models that were of considerable interest. A large number of the stands were attended and supported by the partners and or family members of the modellers. A reporter from the *Evening Post* spent some time interviewing and photographing, and an excellent article subsequently appeared in that paper.

At mid afternoon members retired to the supper room for the Federation meeting. President Lou Nichols lead the speeches, and he introduced Michael Adler, from Israel, the founder of the International Society of Meccanomen. Speeches were also contributed by past President David Wall, MWT president John Hansen, and Max George. Lou invited each of the overseas attenders to introduce themselves and tell us a little about their home Clubs.

A committee of judges had circulated during the day and viewed the eight models entered for the Mattel (NZ) Ltd special prize of a boxed 100th Anniversary Block Setting Crane Set. The other 100 models approx. entered for the competitions for the Junior and Senior trophies were also judged by exhibitors and partners. Junior prizes were awarded to Michael Anderson, Sean Babbage and Natasha Hansen, and Senior prizes to Daryl Anderson, Simon Moody and Don Flowers. Simon received the prize on behalf of the Wellington Meccano Club for the best Club display, and Graham Jost from Australia presented Daryl Anderson with the Wes Dalefield Webmaster Prize. Shirley Nichols presented George Ovenden with a prize for the Favourite First Model. Earlier in the day, Mattel representative Peter Hancock made a speech regarding the Centennial Crane prize promised two years ago, and awarded this to Daryl Anderson, with second prize going to Simon Moody.

About 75 people attended the Convention dinner, held at the nearby Cobb and Co. Restaurant. This proved to be another enjoyable occasion, with a good meal and plenty of excellent company. Tables were set up with about three modellers and

their partners or families at each, so there was plenty of opportunity to catch up with friends and making new ones. I shared a table with a couple from England, and we found a lot of things to talk about (including Meccano, and Skegness!)



Don Blakeborough and Don Flowers at the AGM and Prize Giving

At 9.45 a.m. on Sunday morning all who were available were assembled for the group photographs, then at 10 am the doors were opened to the public. Drawing on the example of a model railway display held in the same hall a few weeks earlier, we had set the admission prices at a low amount but thought that there might have only been a limited public interest anyway. Thanks to our posters and newspaper articles there was a steady stream of people through the door all day, with a lot of people staying for quite some time and revisiting particular models that had

caught their interest. Modellers were kept busy running their displays and answering the usual stream of questions regarding how much time had been spent in construction, how many parts were included, etc. Bruce Neilson had little souvenir helicopters for sale, Bruce Geange had refrigerator magnets, and these were seen changing hands during the day.

Over \$1870 was taken at the door, and although a head count was not done it was estimated that around 1000 people would have seen the display. Together with the fundraising our treasurer was pleased to report that after all bills had been paid a small profit had been made. The public placed votes for the Bruce Baxter Memorial trophy which was won by Daryl Anderson.

All too soon, 4.30 p.m. arrived and it was time to close the doors and begin the packing up. This was achieved quickly, with the hall cleared and swept two hours later. As the last cars were loaded, the conversations were full of comments about how enjoyable the weekend had been and how everything had run well. The Wellington Club has since received several letters and verbal comments of appreciation, and also suggestions of things that could be improved or done differently in future. It was rewarding for the Club members for the convention to have gone so well, and much of this was due to the effort put in by club president Simon Moody, in coordinating and organising a lot of the preparation work.



John Ince talking about the ISM and 100 years of Meccano.

*Photos: AGM Bryan Jones;
Dinner Graham Jost*

WELCOME TO OUR OVERSEAS VISITORS TO CONVENTION 2001

DAVID FEINSTEIN



David is a 56 year old mechanical engineer from South Africa. He is the South African representative on the International Society of Meccanomen committee, Chairman of the Johannesburg Meccano Hobbyists and a Spanner participant.

He was first introduced to Meccano when he was about 7 years old, although he was only allowed to use the No 4 red/green set when his father wanted to build a model! He later renewed his interest in Meccano when at University in Haifa, Israel. In later life his big "buy" was at an army surplus sale. He went to buy a jeep but ended up buying two dustbins full of Meccano for 50 Rand (NZ\$15) in today's money - but no jeep.

His most valued items are a geared roller bearing, original shafting standards and two steam engines. His model specialities include clocks and processing machines.

His Meccano wish for the future is to attend more "get togethers" like Convention 2001 with healthy camaraderie, no "politics", and encouragement for more junior members.

David emphasised there would be a warm welcome for visitors to South Africa and they should contact him in Johannesburg.

N.B. The photo shows David with the Charley Roth trophy for seniors which is presented to the South African who does the most to promote our hobby.

GRAHAM JOST

Graham is a 66 year old retired mechanical engineer from Australia. He is a member of the International Society of Meccanomen, Secretary of the Melbourne Meccano club and a Spanner participant.

His interest in Meccano started with a bout of measles and a "colony's" No 3 blue/green set which he added to in the usual way until he was about twenty. He returned to the hobby in his forties when he bought a box of "treasures" for A\$10 which included shafting standards! Other buying/selling led to the formation of the Melbourne Meccano Club in 1984.

His most valued Meccano item is an almost complete 1930's No 7 set, and his favourite models are the ones that work.



Graham's Meccano wish for the future is that Nikko introduce computer and radio control to bring models to life.

JACK PARSISSON

Jack is a 61 year old plumber from Australia who runs his own plumbing business.

His Meccano days began at 9 years of age and he gradually added to his collection up to a No 9 set. After a break from Meccano he was attracted back to the hobby when he was about 50 after seeing an item on TV about the Melbourne Meccano Club.

Jack is an ISM and Melbourne Meccano Club member and is also a Spanner subscriber.



His most valued item is a near mint No 10 set. His favourite model is a Fowler Ploughing Tractor but he builds any model which takes his fancy.

For the future Jack hopes his replica Meccano parts business is successful and that whoever owns Meccano in the future listens to the requirements of the adult enthusiasts.

HANS VAN OUWERKERK



Hans is a 61 year old Network Manager/IT Consultant from Holland.

He is a Dutch Meccano Guild member and a Spanner participant. For Hans Meccano started as a 6 year old with a No 6 blue/gold set. He was active until he was 24 and then renewed his interest in 1999.

He values his whole collection rather than any individual item and

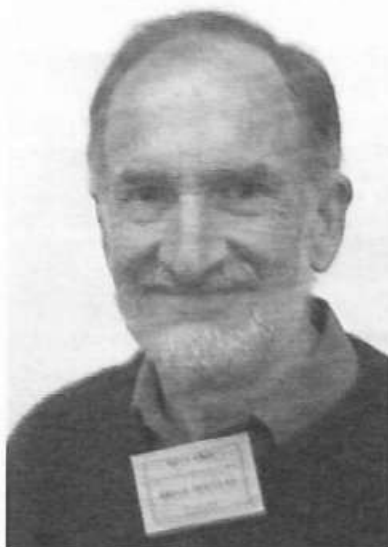
his current favourite model is the supermodel blocksetter with a few of his own modifications and he enjoys building other cranes.

Hans hopes that in the future Meccano introduces other operating systems to make models work and that all clubs encourage more younger people to participate in our hobby.

BRUCE DOUGLAS

Bruce is a 62 year old Architect from Australia.

He is a member of the Melbourne Meccano Club and a Spanner participant. Bruce was introduced to Meccano at age 6 and his collection grew as he obtained more sets. After a break his interest was renewed in his 40's when he started collecting the Dinky models of old classic cars, another of his interests. He admits that he is more of a collector at the moment rather than a builder owing to lack of time.

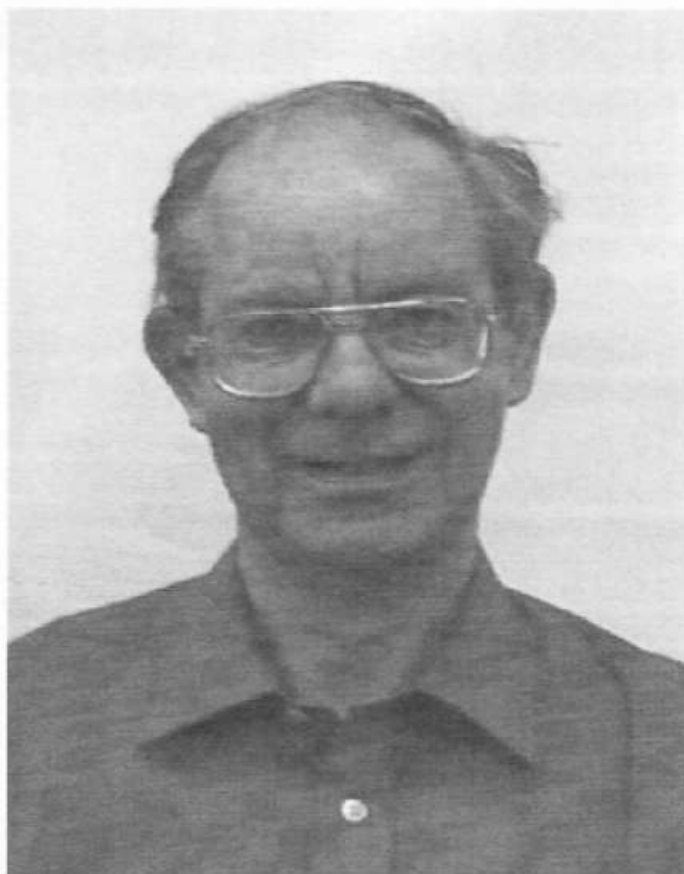


His current favourite model is the GMM blocksetter which is still not finished! His most valued Meccano items are a 1920 steam engine, a 1933 No 3L set and a mint Kemex set.

Bruce's Meccano wish for the future is that the system is brought up to date.

DAVE BARRETT

Dave is a 57 year old Civil Servant from England.



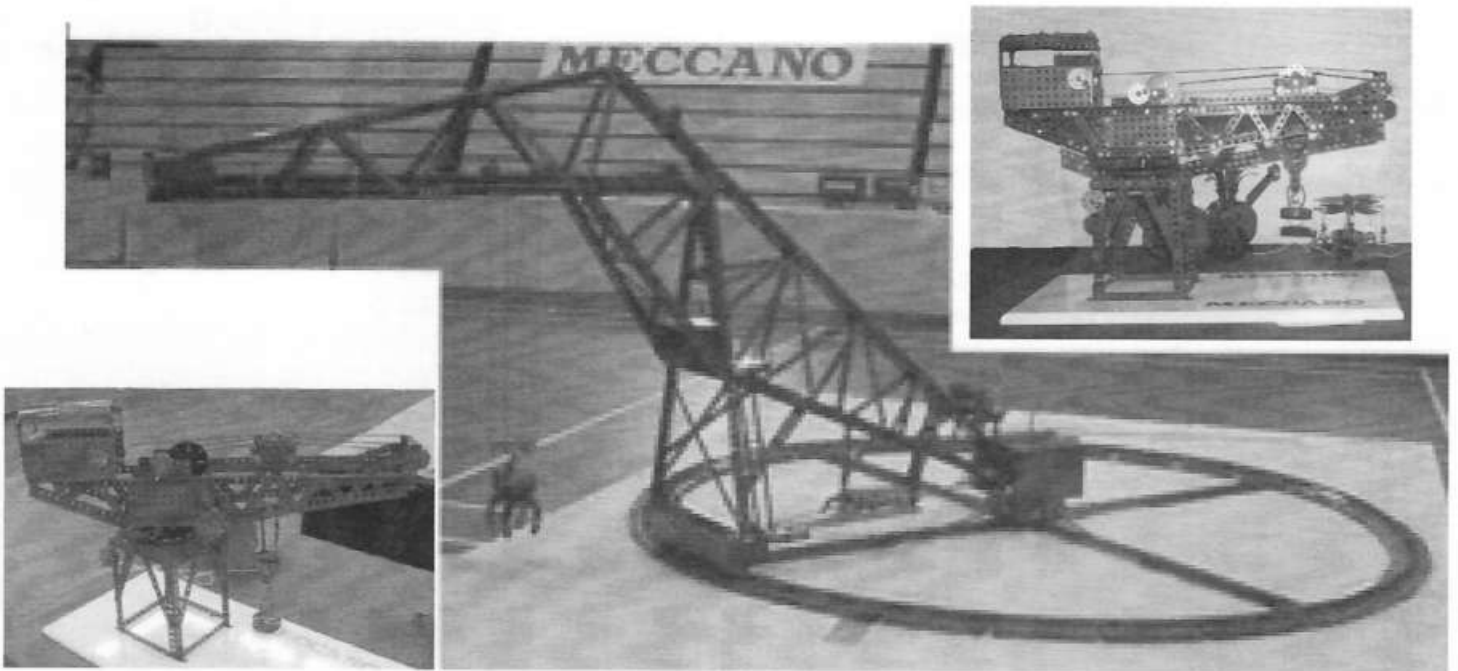
He is a member of the ISM, the Midlands Meccano Club, and the North Midlands Meccano Club of which he is Vice Chairman. He was introduced to Meccano when he was 7 years old with a No3 red/green set. After a break he renewed his interest after borrowing some Meccano Magazines.

Like others he values his whole collection rather than a particular item. His recent favourite model is a Fell Diesel Locomotive and a remote controlled shipyard crane which is his speciality.

Dave's Meccano wish for the future is the introduction of more methods of remote control and servo units, and the encouragement of more youth involvement in our hobby.

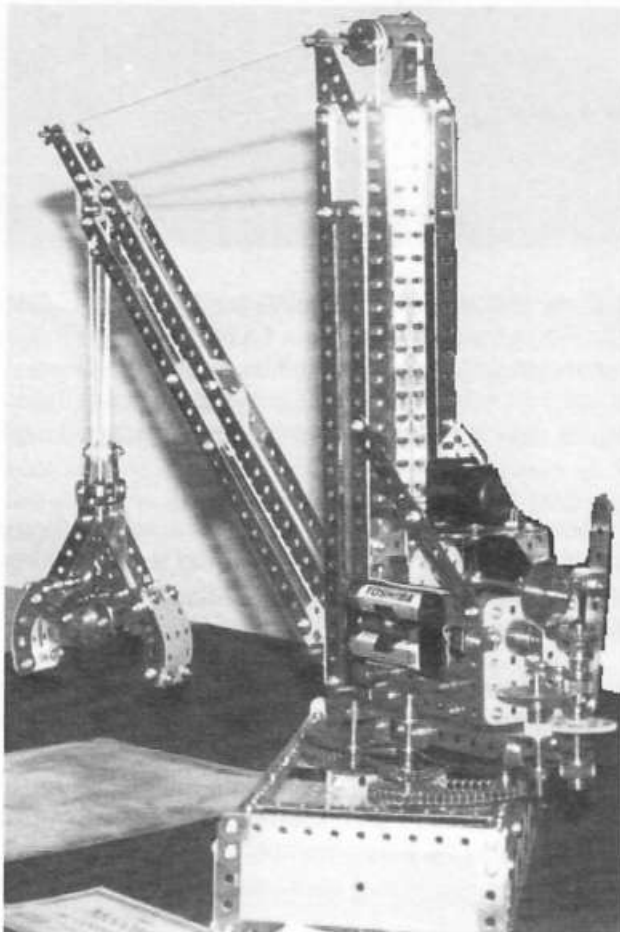
Photographs in these biographical notes were taken by Bob Prescott who also prepared the notes.

Here are a Few of the Cranes on Show at Convention 2001



Crane n.1. Large wading bird of family Gruidae, with long legs, neck, and bill. 2. Machine for moving heavy weights, which are usu. suspended by rope or chain from jib. [Old Eng. *cran*, Old High German *kranos*, Gk *geranos*]

Well, that's what the Oxford dictionary says and I suppose they do look the same!



Alistair Tong: Coal crane - lower left

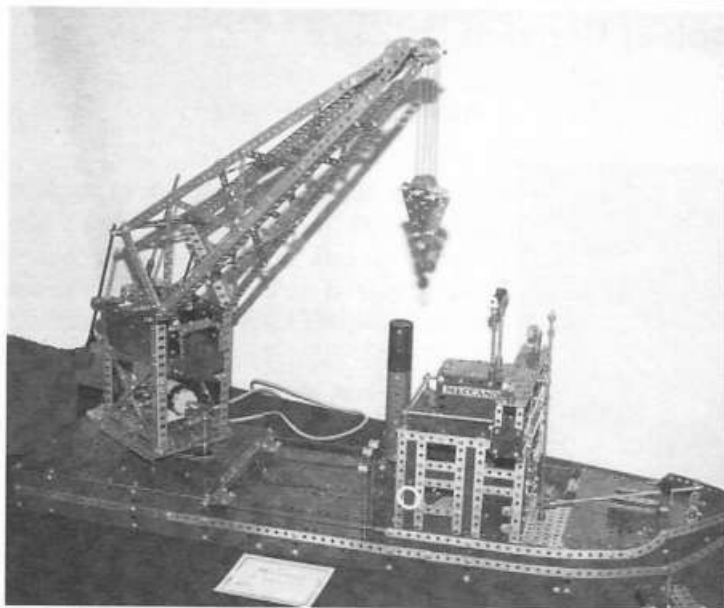
Alistair Tong: Blocksetting crane - lower right

Bruce Neilson: Hammerhead crane - top right

Bruce Neilson: Mini blocksetting crane - top right inset

Brian Hickson: Chipper loading crane - top left

Photos are by Bryan Jones



George Ovenden: Salvage crane - above
 Don Flower Grove: 150 ton crane - below
 Frank Abbott: Level luffing crane - right
 Paul Vodanovich: Dragline & mobile crane - bottom right



The Group Photograph at Convention 2001



2001 Convention, Upper Hutt, New Zealand

- | | |
|-------------|---|
| Back Row - | Russell Genese, Phil Grover, Brian Hickson, Robin Rye, Tim Moody, Daryl Anderson, Neil Carey, |
| | David Wall, George Ovensen. |
| Standing - | Don Blakeborough, Russell Baxter, Tom Pittams, Bob Neilson, Sharee Martin, John Stark, |
| | Colin Croft, Mary Jost (Aus), Graham Jost (Aus), Brian Peterson, Paulette Morton, Lloyd Spackman, |
| | Bob Prescott, David Barnard, Don Flowers, Nancy Blake. |
| Sitting - | Simon Moody, John Ince, Don Wilson, Lou Nichols, John Hansen, Max George, Bruce Geange, |
| | Alison Geange, Anne Prescott. |
| Front Row - | Sandy Feinstein (SA), David Feinstein (SA), Bob Smyth, Jack Parsisson (Aus), Carol Parsisson (Aus), |
| | Chris Morton, Bryan Jones, Grace Pluck, Neil Pluck, Bruce Neilson, Michael Anderson, |
| | Ding Wen, John Jordan, Paul Vodanovich. |

More about People

Daryl Anderson

Winner of the Mattel (NZ) Ltd sponsored competition, the Senior Competition, The Webmaster's Special Prize, and the Bruce Baxter Trophy for the Best Meccano Model - for his model "The Meccano Gutbuster" at the 2001 Convention

By Bob Prescott and Daryl Anderson



Daryl is a Monumental Mason from Hawera, Taranaki. His 44th birthday is coming up shortly and he says "Geared Roller Bearings and Number 10 Sets gratefully accepted". He is a member of the MWT (Manawatu/Wanganui/Taranaki) Meccano Club, the ISM (International Society of Meccanomen) and a contributor to the Internet Spanner Group.

Unlike most Meccano hobbyists he did not have Meccano as a child although he does remember having something called "Lincoln Builder". He started his Meccano collection with a purchase at a local auction house in 1981/82 which included some quite rare items such as a digger bucket. He gradually added to this with new French sets and whilst out working one day he stopped in Stratford for an ice cream, parked outside Lindsay Bond's shop and noticed the Meccano in the window. He went in and after a chat, left with some Meccano and a NZ Federation magazine application form! Since then some people say he is obsessed - including his long-suffering wife, Vera!

Although Daryl values his whole collection, his prize of the Limited Edition Block Setting Crane takes pride of place at the moment and he treasures his one and only genuine tongued spring clip. Of sentimental value is his growing collection of photographs of models and people, some of whom are no longer with us.

His favourite model is "his own design" Dodgems cars for visual effect, reliability and the look on children's faces when they watch the model in action. In the last 7 or 8 years he has concentrated on fairground models although he has built cranes, locomotives and Meccanographs. He also admires Konkoly-designed models and considers him a genius.

Daryl attended his first convention in 1991 and in 2001 he decided to build what is in his opinion the ultimate fairground model - the Gutbuster Roller Coaster. He admits it was a very challenging model to build and took 6 months. He doesn't know how many times he gave up only to try a different angle after thinking about it during the night! In Daryl's words: -

"Getting the thing to run! The secret is in the car. I have seen Meccano roller coasters before but not captive to the track and not looping (or loopy like the builder!). When a car is running on top of the track only, the car can and does leave the track. This means the track heights and cambers must be perfect for the weight of the car to keep it on the track. With a captive car this is less important as (in theory) it won't come off. So if the car is going too fast at the top of a hill, then all that will happen is that the bottom rollers will engage. So a lot of time was spent building the car. When building the track I started with the loop, then worked out the height of the drop needed for the car to go over, plus a little margin. Then I made sure it went over each section as it was built. In practice the car did come off, but this was caused by the track spreading due to the force and wear in the bearings on the car." The model size was determined by the size of his covered trailer.

The Prize - he has no intention of building the crane at present but sincerely thanks Mattel (NZ) Ltd and everyone involved in the competition.

Daryl's Meccano hope for the future is that marketing to children be stepped up. They need to be encouraged back to our "hands on" hobby. They need something to aim for and the old progression system with affordable sets should be re-introduced. In his opinion children are the key to Meccano's future and unfortunately there were only a few showing models at the Convention and Daryl was one of the youngest adults! He says "it would be a great loss if the system fades away".

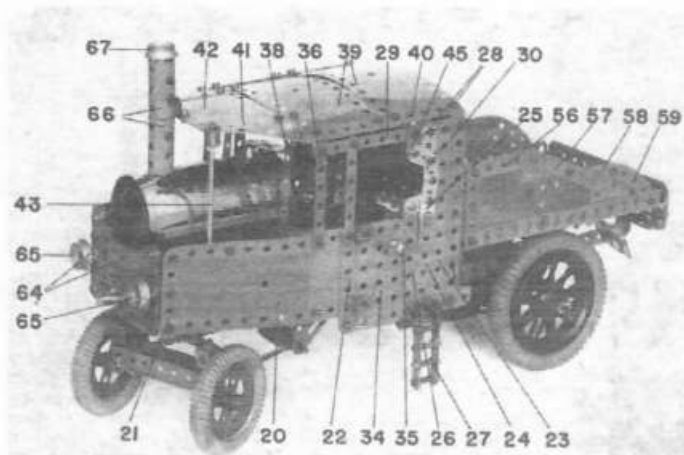


The Hands of an Expert Model Builder!

"SAMANTHA", MY 1929 FODEN STEAM TRACTOR

By Bob Prescott

I really enjoy building models using the Meccano SP3 steam engine and was attracted by the Foden "steam wagon" in the March 1971 Meccano Magazine.



A local "expert" considered it a poor likeness to a Foden wagon so I decided to put the question to the very knowledgeable "Spanner Group" and asked for any advice/improvements that would help produce a better model. Tony Brown was most helpful and agreed that it was difficult to tell whether the model was supposed to be a Foden wagon or a tractor and identified what was required for both. He also directed me to the website www.users.zetnet.co.uk/ejones/tony/foden/ifod2.html which was great, with many photographs of both wagons and tractors.

The website also had a brief history of Edwin Foden who in 1856 at 15 years old became an apprentice with the firm of Plant and Hancock in Elworth and in 1876 the firm was renamed Edwin Foden and Son. In 1902 it became Fodens Ltd and became a major contributor to Britain's industrial heritage. Although Fodens Ltd ceased to trade in 1980 the name still lives on in Foden Trucks since a major American company acquired the business.

Back to my project, it had to be "Samantha" (works No 13454), a wagon built in 1929 and later converted to a tractor. Apparently there was a need to convert to pneumatic tyres for tax purposes and the Road Traffic Act (with amendments to support railway use) was also a reason why a number of wagons were cut down to form tractors.

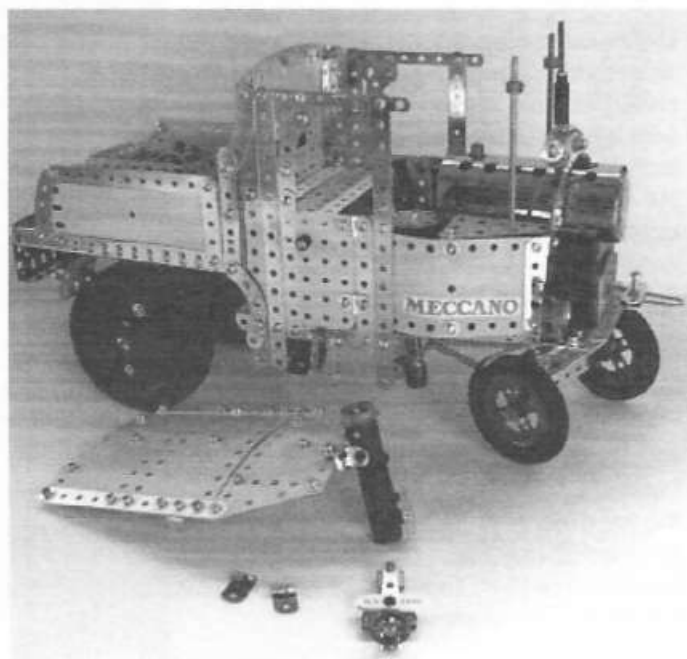
The Meccano Magazine basic chassis and drive was still the basis for my model with minor modifications and I used 3" pulleys for the rear wheels rather than P/N 19a spoked wheels. The bonnet and cab was the area where I decided that a complete re-design was required. The magazine article's last paragraph states "never touch any part of the boiler or firebox.....otherwise you may receive a very nasty burn". I agree - been there, done that, and anyone



who has experience of the Meccano steam engine will know that after filling the boiler with boiling hot water it is a devil of a job to screw in the water level plug - so an important requirement for my model was a removable cab roof to allow easy access to the water level plug and other moving parts for lubrication.

The first problem to correct was that the curved plates between the cab sides and front were too long. The MM model used 5 1/2" x 2" flexible plates so I used 4 1/2" x 2 1/2" ones but once curved I discovered that the holes would not align with those of the front pillar (perforated strip) so I sandwiched the plate between the pillar and a 3" perforated strip double-bolted to the inside of the pillar just above the door level. The rest of the cab area is self evident although I had to use some slotted perforated strips to create the shaped rear of the cab sides to make them fit.

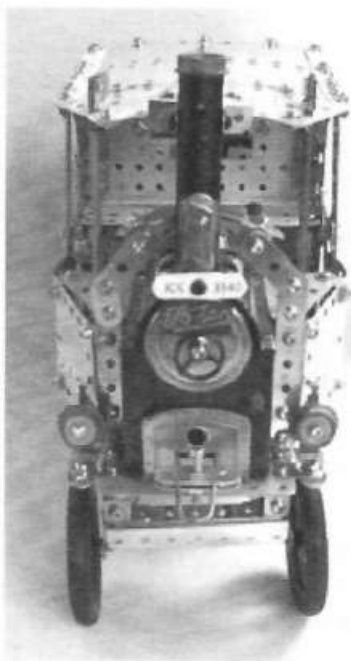
The roof is shaped by a curved 5 1/2" perforated strip in the middle and a curved 3 1/2" perforated strip at the front. Two 5 1/2" x 2 1/2" and one 2 1/2" x 2 1/2" flexible plus two 2 1/2" x 1 1/2" triangular plates complete the roof area with a 5 1/2" perforated strip borders the sides of the roof with an angle bracket on each side and two on the rear to "clip" it to the



cab sides. Two corner angle brackets connect the chimney to the roof. The chimney itself is built from two sleeve pieces connected inside by a 2" narrow strip with a $\frac{3}{4}$ " flanged wheel at the top.

The roof slides onto the cab over the axle rod pillars on either side and the screwed rod represents the relief valve of the real Foden tractor (which the MM model omitted). The chimney fits neatly over the Meccano steam engine relief valve, which is of course important, because the relief valve has to be able to work when steaming. I slid a rod and strip connector over each side pillar above the roof to represent pennants.

I wanted the boiler front to look more like the real thing so I bolted a cut-down piece of perforated strip to the front of the chimney onto which slid a slide piece attached to a $2\frac{1}{2}$ " narrow strip. This carried its registration plate, Foden logo and a P/N 321 small steering wheel representing the fire box door release. The narrow strip fits nicely down the front of the boiler. I filled the rear tray with a P/N 162 boiler representing a water tank, a container full of "coal" (painted cinders) and a length of hose (now a Meccano part - P/N 58d flexible hose pipe).

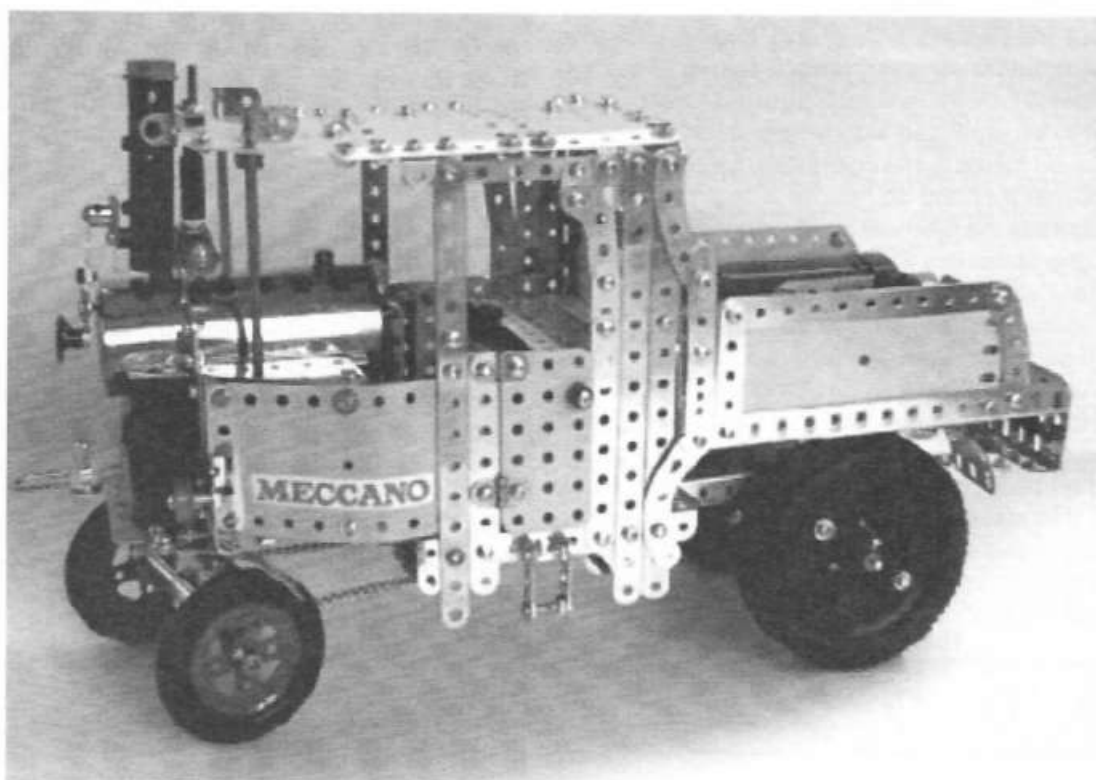
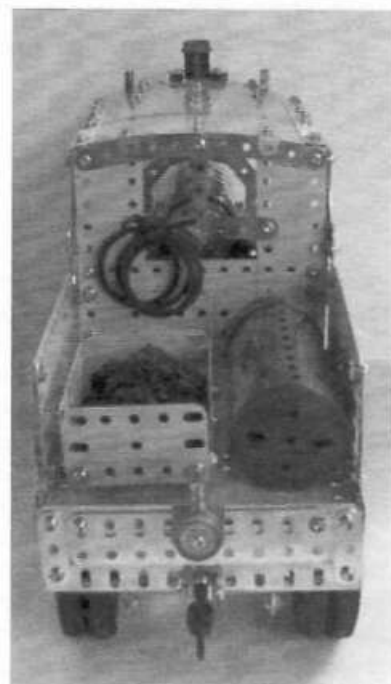


When "Samantha" was finished I sent a photograph to Tony Brown and he replied that the "model looks a lot better than the one in the Meccano Mag and pretty close to the real thing" - I had achieved what I set out to do.

And now to fire her up.

1. Remove the roof.
2. Liberally oil all moving parts.
3. Remove the safety valve and water level plug.
4. Fill boiler through safety valve with boiling water until it overflows from water level plug.
5. Replace safety valve and water level plug - tighten.
6. Place fuel tablet in fuel tray, light and place under boiler. I use tablets rather than liquid methylated spirits because the flame is always visible.
7. While water is beginning to re-boil replace roof.

When the steam is up spin the flywheel and away she goes smoothly and quietly - good eh - that's steam !



SPANNER REPORT, JUNE 2001

by William Irwin.

The use of email from the Spanner group is acknowledged

Introduction

I have been a member of the Internet "Spanner" group for about 2 years now. In the beginning I used to become annoyed at all the non-Meccano and "me too" type of unnecessary messages, which accounts for a large proportion of the traffic. However I have now established some discipline, such as hitting the delete button immediately for the junk items. Also to avoid the user's in-coming mailbox becoming cluttered up with Spanner messages mixed up with private messages, a good tip for new users is to use the mail filtering system available in most reputable email packages to re-direct Spanner mail to a separate Spanner folder, which can then be perused later at leisure.

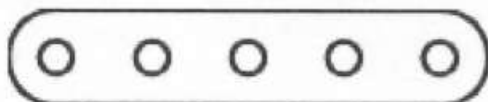
I soon came to realise what a wonderful source of Meccano information the Spanner group represented. It has developed into an internationally based informal virtual Meccano club. An inquiry on any aspect of the Meccano hobby is almost guaranteed to receive a reply from someone within a few hours! Some threads carry on for weeks with more and more information being added from all over the world.

eBay Auctions <www.ebay.com>

The last two months have been no exception, and a few interesting items have cropped up. Several members have commented on the absurd (to us) prices paid on the Internet eBay auction site for Meccano items. These include US\$1200 (NZ\$2930) for yet another Set 8 mechanical man, £102 (NZ\$352) for a PDU motor with 6 speed gearbox, and US\$114 (NZ\$278) for a 1950 Set 10 manual!

Steam Engine SP3 1965

A query about the running time of this engine elicited a consensus of about 20 minutes from one burner of methylated spirits (meths). Meths is known as wood alcohol overseas and not to be confused with Methanol or Ethanol or Alcohol. Because meths burns colourless, be careful when refilling the burner tray and do not use a squirt bottle as a container. Lubricate the flywheel shaft, connecting rod and engine face (the stationery surface against which the cylinder oscillates) with SAE 10-30 motor car engine oil or similar. The burner tray must be filled with an absorbent material such as cotton wool or sheep wool for best burning. Graeme Jost makes new liquid burner trays as follows "The base is not particularly difficult using sheet brass folded at the ends so that no soldering is required (or relied upon), the outside then being given a spray with high-temp black paint. I used thin stainless steel for the top, my favourite dry-cleaner's galvanised wire coat-hanger wire for the handle (identical gauge), cotton wool inside and fine stainless steel gauze for the top"



Escalator

In the light of the recent discussion on escalators to convey ping pong balls or penguins, Philip Webb wondered if anyone had tackled a Meccano model of a normal escalator for conveying people between floors of buildings. Bruce Neilson referred us to an article in the NM Newsmag No. 24, August 1981, in which a model is described built in Stokys parts by Felix Stockman. We now await with interest reports of the first Meccano model to be built!

Centre Fork (P/N 65)

Pete Tabord asked what he called a dumb question, namely what is a centre fork designed to do? The question proved to be not so dumb after all. The consensus of opinion was that it was intended as the drive centre in the headstock of a wood turning lathe as pointed out by Roland Jaggard. However the official Meccano line as stated in the 1930 book "How to use Meccano Parts" was stated as "Perhaps the most important function, however is its use in intermittent motion, where it engages at intervals with the teeth of Meccano Gears or Sprocket Wheels". Other uses were given by Chris Bourne as follows:

"Two centre forks were used in SML 7, Platform Scales, to make a knife-edge bearing for the balance arm. This model was originally published in 1928 in the Set 6 manual (6.21). According to Encyclopedia of Meccano Parts (EMP), the fork section was narrower prior to 1930, but in any case, in SML 7, the teeth of the centre fork don't come into play, as each fork is placed between two teeth of a pinion, so that the three teeth, rather than engaging the pinion teeth, rest lengthways in the groove between the two teeth. There were six centre forks in a Set 7 of the day, and all of them are used in 7.31 (or SML 26) The Meccano Twin-Elliptic Harmonograph. In this they are again used to form knife edge bearings. Les Pattison suggested mounting two of them in the end holes of a coupling and then to insert the longest axle rod you have in the centre hole of the coupling. There is then no finer implement for scratching ones back whilst building a Meccano model!

Tony Bolton suggested the following:

"A novel but very useful Suggestion was printed many years ago concerning this part.

Basically, a number of Centre Forks placed around circular parts may be employed to form build-up Sprocket Wheels of larger diameters. These could introduce new teeth totals which have different prime numbers to the standard range. It would be important for the chain to have a smooth enter and exit in use. To set up, if I remember correctly, take a circle of Chain with a similar number of links as your required size (tooth count) to use as a template. Now build-up the Sprocket Wheel inside the circle of Chain. When set-up, remove the Chain, and you have a new size Sprocket Wheel! Could new Gear Wheels sizes and diameters be formed by using the same principal?"

Colin Smith pointed out the amazing fact that in the 1941 #10 manual there wasn't a single model using the Centre Fork. He wonders how many other pieces in the #10 set had no model usage?

BITS AND PIECES

From Lloyd Spackman

MECCANO IN THE USA: Swedish toy maker, Brio, is taking over distribution and marketing of Meccano in the USA, still selling it as Meccano-Erector. Brio was founded in 1884 and is successful internationally with wooden and construction toys, model railways, R/C cars and computer games. A web site is at <www.briotoys.com>. Brio products, in the form of the early learning type of wooden toys, are available in N.Z. through Modern Teaching Aids Ltd, in Wellington.

MUSIC WHILE YOU MODEL: I've found the best music to have as a background while building models is N.Z. National Radio's Concert Programme. It soothes while I'm trying to get a nut onto that invisible bolt inside the model. Of course, it then cross-threads! Mind you, some modellers may prefer the Beatles or Split Enz as background.

MATHS - WHAT IS WRONG ? "Young people training to become future professional engineers often do not have the basic mathematics skills needed to take engineering related courses in further or higher education. Again, the finger is pointed at curriculum changes made by the Education Department." ('Model Engineer', 29/12/00) (That was England. Isn't it the same in N.Z.? L.S.)

MAMOD'S FUTURE IN DOUBT: "This well-known firm has been making steam powered toys for nearly 70 years. However, its recent history has been unsettled. It has had several owners and its long term survival cannot be certain". ('M.E.', 1/12/00) (Sounds familiar, doesn't it? L.S.)

QUOTATION: (from "Last of the Summer Wine" on TV)
Compo, speaking to Cleggy: "You were never much of a lover, were you?"
Cleggy: "No. But I had a Meccano set".
(Thanks to Lou Nichols for that one)

ARGENTINE MECCANO: Adrian Richini has taken over his late father's *Exacto* business and is apparently able to fulfil new orders from the same address.

PARTS FROM CANADA: CMAMAS. (the Canadian Meccano Club) bought the remaining stock of Meccano parts from Irwin Toys, the former Canadian distributors, last year and sales to Club members have been good. There are, however, plenty of some of the parts still on hand. An up-to-date list is available on the Club's web-site at <www.edmc.net/cmamas/>

HANDRAIL COUPLINGS: Ashok Banerjee in India has produced a run of gold plated P/N 136a, priced at \$Can 2.40 each.

SPARE PARTS FROM NIKKO: "We would like to tell you that the issue is being tackled right now regarding the discontinuance OR NOT of old spare parts. As soon as all the information concerning spare parts is available we will get back to you".

This is from a fax sent by Nikko Meccano to Peter Matthews, Transvaal Meccano Guild, in January, 2001.

USING MO MOTORS: "The best way for a fairly large model is to start with the belt drive directly from the motor shaft to a 1" pulley. That will give about a 5:1 reduction. To a 1-1/2" pulley will give a 7.2:1 reduction". (Charlie Pack, California)

SET 10 PRICES: On e-bay auctions on the Internet, May 11, 2001, a mint 1970's set 10 sold for \$US 2825. And in the Southern California M. & E. Club's newsletter late in 2000, Lou Boselli advertised a French set 10 in a 5 drawer cabinet, never used condition, plus an E15R motor, plus a set of P/N 167a and a 167c, all for \$US3000. It had to be collected from New York.

TEMSEI GONE TOO: Rob Beijersbergen in Breda, Holland, advises that this Dutch version of Meccano is no longer being manufactured. So, it follows the German Marklin Metall into oblivion. Temsei began in 1946 because Meccano was not available in Holland at that time. However, the eighties saw Temsei going downhill and the firm went bankrupt in 1987. Another firm bought the property and machines but could not make a go of it.

ON A KNIFE EDGE: Spanner Newsgroup was discussing uses for P/N 65, the centre fork. Among other uses, as a knife edge for balances. Here is Chris Bourne's contribution:

*"I eat my peas with honey;
I've done it all my life.
It may seem kind of funny,
But it keeps them on my knife".*

LABOUR RELATIONS AT BINNS ROAD

One view of the attitude of bosses to workers early in the last century is that it was very paternalistic. The following extract from "Meccano News", November 1920, does not support that view.

"Meccano News" was an in-house newsletter for customers and staff of Meccano Limited. It is probable only one issue was ever printed and this is reproduced on pages 327-333 of Volume 8 of the Hornby Companion Series. In the introduction which, I have no doubt, was written by F.H. himself, Mr. Hornby says:

"At the present time we have well over 1200 employees in the works and I have every hope that this number will increase in the future. As we all know, there is considerable unrest in the labour world at the present time, due to a variety of causes over which no-one appears to have control. I am happy to think that these troubles have so far touched us but lightly and I believe that this is due mainly to the fact that our workers recognise and understand the spirit of fair-mindedness and sincerity with which we have dealt with those questions which concern their welfare. If this understanding continues in the future, and if it is applied to both sides as I feel sure it will be, there is every reason to believe that whatever misunderstandings or differences of opinion may arise in the future, they will be dealt with in a friendly and satisfactory way."

Bruce's Choice from Around the World

by Bruce Neilson

The International Meccanoman - May 2001

Pick of the articles -

The Giant Blocksetting Crane at Fishguard, Wales; by Ian Evans.

From the cover of the January 1925 (and January 1936) issues of Meccano Magazine to the Manual cover painting by W. H. Pinyon so familiar to many boys of the 1950 and 60's, the Giant Blocksetting Crane (GBSC) is the Meccano model of the 20th Century. But what of the real GBSC? Ian Evans lives within sight of the breakwater where the real GBSC featured on the Meccano Magazine laboured between 1914 and 1919 to cover the breakwater with concrete blocks and lay a "Pell Mell" layer of wave diminishing blocks. There are fourteen photographs included in the four page article and Ian's research even found a nonagenarian who had greased the bearings of the crane as a young man in 1914.

Canadian MeccaNotes - March 2001

Pick of the Articles -

Braced Girders - The Liverpool Years; by Ivor Setten.

Braced girders used to be very common in real life being the reinforcing plates used to stiffen structures and then with lots of holes cut in them to reduce weight. As engineering science improved, new methods were used and diagonal bracing, corner plates, tubes, H and T girders, etc. became the recommended practice. Meccano's Braced Girders follow the same time line. First introduced in 1915 into the Meccano system as Girder Strip, rising to reasonable quantities in Set 7 in 1930 and reduced to a lonely two 5 _ inch specimens in the No 10 set by 1937. Ivor Setten has produced a scholarly work identifying five basic designs (illustrated), a minor variation, ten different finishes, name change, a time line of development, and charts of set contents covering seven pages. Cross reference this article to your Encyclopedia of Meccano Parts (EMP).

Runnymede Meccano Guild - February 2001

Pick of the articles No 1 -

"K" type Oil Can

Made of copper but priced as gold. "Expect to pay GBP 100 to 175 for a nice example". This item would be one of the rarer items of Meccano memorabilia but let the buyer beware. First advertised in the June 1928 Meccano Magazine, there have been four variants identified with copper and steel bodies, and the angle of the droop of the nozzle is always arguable. Two pages of good reference material.

No 2 -

Meccano Ticker - Building Instructions for a clock model by Andre Konkoly.

If you have ever wondered how to write building Instructions for a model, spare a thought for Andre Konkoly whose first language is Hungarian and second is English. Yet he has found a very successful method of doing instructions. This is a reproduction of his Supermodel No 16 instructions for a little model measuring a 5 _ inch cube clock incorporating a P81 18 tooth Plastic Gear Wheel and a Clockwork Motor complete with six pictures and text. As always, Andre has a novel way of designing models.

The Meccano Newsmag - March 2001

Pick of the articles -

Sewing Machine by Anne Nightingale

This is a smart little model and has the bonus of being driven by a Magic Motor. The motor drives through to a cam which works the needle. The model looks the part and construction is set out by 2 photographs and a page of text

Johannesburg Meccano Hobbyists Newsletter March 2001

Pick of the articles -

New sets - First impressions

South Africa has been lucky in that they still have a Meccano agent. A preview of the 2001 sets found plastic parts in new colours; new plastic parts including blow up air envelopes; wooden rotors, wings, decks; fixed length plastic track; and an overall impression of flashy looking models in high tech packaging for kids and mixed feelings for the Meccanoman.

Constructor Quarterly - December 2000

Pick of the articles -

A Ball Roller (alias An Unfinished Prototype); by Stephen Miles.

Constructor Quarterly is the full colour glossy magazine that all Meccanomen should aspire to subscribe to after their NZFMMM. A plethora of good articles made a single pick difficult but if you fancy building a model Caterpillar for fun, using that Mogul prefabricated cab, have a passion for Galleons in full sail, resurrecting the Titanic within 7.5 ft, want to know a little more about the late Keith Cameron, collecting Meccano medallions, badges, certificates, and cups; or wander down Duke St, Liverpool circa 1909; then this issue is for you.

I selected the Ball Roller because it incorporates Elektrikit parts which are sitting idle in my collection. The Elektrikit parts are used for a push button switch to release the 1" steel ball bearing, flash the lights as the ball bearing zigzags its way along the rails, and to start the hoist motor to return the ball bearing to its starting place. Check the parts list, and read the instructions before you start. A compact model within 19 x 13 x 10 inches. The six pages contain 8 photographs, 2 diagrams, parts list and plenty of text instructions.

\$200 Meccano Wind Powered Model Challenge

This challenge, made by Brian Hickson to fellow Meccanomen, is to produce a WIND POWERED land vehicle. It was first offered in 1999 when none of the entries met the conditions. As there were no entries at the 2001 Convention the prize is being carried through to the 2003 Convention with the prize of \$200 cash.

The scene is that the world is facing a fossil fuel shortage and a vehicle is needed to travel areas such as the steppes of Russia, the plains of America, or the Sahara desert. You have been asked to develop a "Wind Powered" land vehicle to meet these needs.

Rules

1 - The parameters set for the development of this prototype model which is to be made from Meccano are:-

a - The vehicle shall be a wind powered land vehicle.

b - The tractive effort is to be applied through either wheels or tracks or a combination of both.

c - The model must be capable of controlled changes of direction regardless of wind direction.

d - The model when placed on a reasonably level playing field or car park in a 10 -15 kph plus breeze, will demonstrate that it is able to move and change direction i.e. 'do it's thing'

2 - All competition models must meet the specified criteria to be eligible for judging.

3 - Brian Hickson will be the sole judge, and no correspondence shall be entered into.

4 The model must be made from Meccano or Meccano pattern parts, with the following exceptions

a) Rubber bands.

b) Protective devices, e.g. if you are using 6" diameter pulleys for wheels you may use large "O" rings as tyres to protect the pulleys from damage.

c) Springs. I feel the Meccano range of springs is rather limited

The NZFMM 2003 Convention 15 inch Cube Model Competition

1st NZ\$ 500 cash

2nd NZ\$ 200 cash

3rd NZ\$ 100 cash

The prizes are sponsored by Peter Hancock, David Wall, and Bruce Neilson who will also be the judges.

1. The competition is open to all registered exhibitors.

2. Registered exhibitors must be personally present at the exhibition.

3. The model must be present at the NZFMM 2003 Exhibition, fully assembled and operating, and **fit inside a fifteen inch cube.**

4. The model must be made only of Meccano or Meccano replicas. This includes motors but not washers.

5. The judges will be looking for:- **Originality of design, Quality of parts used, Quality of construction, Constructional mechanical skills and Super detailing**

6. A minimum of five photographs showing interior details of the model are to be given to the judges for publication in the NZFMM Magazine

6. The decision of the judges shall be in the spirit of the competition, final, and no correspondence shall be entered into.

NZFMM Magazine Account 1 January 1999 - 31 December 1999

31/12/98 Bank Balance			2107.55
1/1/99 to 31/12/99 Subscriptions			<u>2431.79</u>
			4539.34
Expenses 6 issues	Printing	1600.00	
	Postage	790.55	
	Ink ribbon	<u>70.20</u>	(2460.75)
31/12/99 Bank Balance			2078.59

1 January 2000 - 31 March 2001

1/1/2000 to 31/3/2001 Subscriptions			<u>2237.96</u>
			4316.55
Expenses 5 issues	Printing	1750.00	
	Postage	616.55	
	Ink ribbon	74.50	
	Labels	59.95	
	Envelopes	184.40	
	Cheque Bk	<u>2.50</u>	(2687.90)
31/3/01 Cash Book balance			1628.65
<u>Reconciliation</u>			
Cash Book balance			1628.65
Unpresented cheque			<u>74.50</u>
Bank statement balance			1703.15

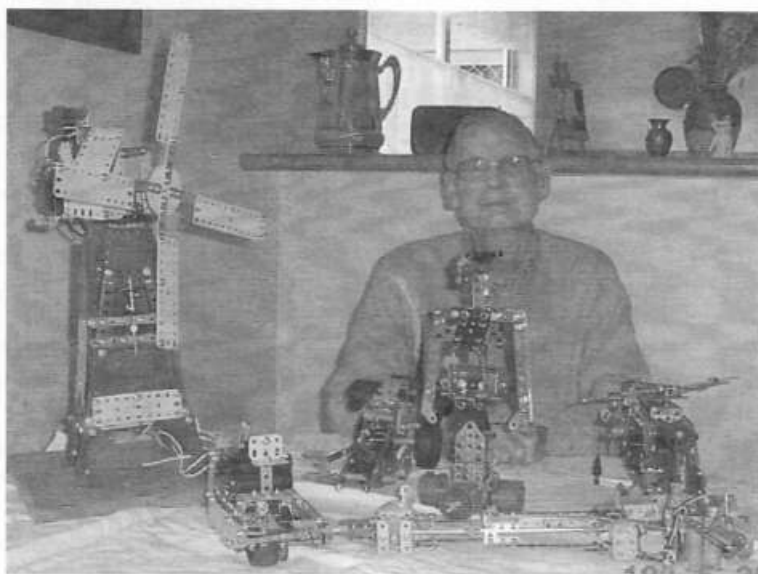
Meet the Meccanoman

Frank Price - Auckland Meccano Club

From The Auckland Meccano Club

Frank was born in England the home of Meccano and was first introduced to the Meccano bug at the age of 16 when he acquired his first Meccano set. For several years he enjoyed Meccano modelling but, the business of life overtook him and he began to apply what he had learned working with Meccano in his career at a very busy shipyard.

The next few years of Frank's life saw major changes as he emigrated to New Zealand; married, had a family and settled down. Unfortunately the Meccano set was misplaced during these moves and his interest in this hobby waned.



Frank Price with his models

In March 1999 Frank saw an advertisement for the bi-annual New Zealand Federation Meccano Modellers Convention that was being held at that time at the Pakuranga Town Centre in Auckland and decided to visit.

Frank's visit to the Convention was a real reawakening to Meccano for him and he was so inspired by the marvellous display of models that were on show and the enthusiasm that participants displayed, that he immediately went out and located and purchased a No. 6 Evolution set which became the basis of both his revitalised enthusiastic return to modelling and his quest to build up his Meccano collection. Frank began looking around the Auckland toy and hobby shops and was able to locate various sets, which he added to his collection.

He began modelling in earnest and joined the Auckland Meccano Club in 1999 becoming an active member, participating both as an enthusiastic Modeller and as an able hand on various show stands such as the annual MODEL X extravaganza held in West Auckland and various other hobby shows held in Howick.

Regrettably, since late last year (2000), Frank has experienced ill health but, as he is able, he continues to produce models, which have been displayed in his absence at recent Auckland Club meetings and at a special Meccano exhibit held at the Hamilton AMP Show in April. Frank has been frustrated that he has been unable to attend recent club meetings or to attend the recent Meccano Convention held in Upper Hutt at Easter 2001.

When in good health, Frank enjoys gardening, stamp collecting, assembling intricate jigsaws, reading and of course Meccano modelling.

The Auckland Meccano Club Members send their best wishes to Frank and his family.

Differential Analyser Myths

by William Irwin

Several myths have been perpetuated in the past with regard to the Meccano Differential Analyser.

1. An acceptable Torque Amplifier cannot be built out of Meccano parts.

This started with the Differential Analyser GMM no. 4 leaflet in 1967 and was repeated in several publications since. This myth has been exploded several times over the years by Ted Brooker (ME 11, March 1976 p 16), Dr. E Gray (NZFMM Oct. 1992 p 4), Alan Partridge (CQ 19, March 1993 p 40) and Tim Robinson (recent years).

2. At least 15 Differential Analysers were built using Meccano Parts.

These were presumably ones used for serious research or education in the 1930s to 1950s, and not the more recent hobbyist machines. This figure was first mentioned by Gary Tee and repeated several times thereafter. I can only find

references to 6 altogether, including the Differential Analysers no. 1 (Manchester) and no. 2 (Cambridge) and Prof. Cooke's machine in Singapore (MM Jan 1951, p 11). The remaining 3 references are all in Prof. J Crank's book (The Differential Analyser, 1947). Where are the others? Did they ever exist?

3. The Meccano Differential Analyser No. 2 was built by J Crank in 1934.

This must have arisen due to the description of this machine in J Crank's book published in 1947. There is no mention of this fact in his book. This machine was in fact built in Cambridge in 1935 by a Mr. J B Bratt under the supervision of Prof. Lennard-Jones. A 5th integrator was later added in 1937 by Miss Elizabeth Monroe under the supervision of M V Wilkes (ref. Memoirs of a Computer Pioneer, by M V Wilkes, 1984).

This is the Differential Analyser brought to New Zealand by Dr Whale on 1950 and is now at MOTAT (Museum of Transport and Technology) in Auckland.

The New Zealand Federation of Meccano Modellers Magazine

By Bruce Neilson

Did you know that our magazine celebrates its 25th anniversary in 2001?

The magazine started life as the fortnightly Wellington Meccano Club Rag on 4 June 1976. It was a single sheet of A4 photocopy paper published by none other than Don Blakeborough who is still a leading light in the Meccano hobby. Another familiar name was Lou Nichols, the current President of the Federation.

By 17 Feb 1978 the magazine changed its name to the Wellington Meccano Club News, still fortnightly, with club messages, sales of parts, puzzles, how to use parts, etc. and extended to 8 A5 pages. The first NZ Convention was reported in 7 April 1978. Twenty-three adult modellers were listed in 4 Sept 1978 with half of them still being active modellers in 2001. In January 1979, the WMC News became the monthly NZFMM magazine in a 12 page A5 photocopy format with Don Blakeborough continuing as editor. Club notes came from Wellington, Auckland and Christchurch.

Coloured paper covers arrived in 1980 and a change of editor to Simon Moody in 1985. Max George was the Treasurer in 1985 and has retired from this position in 2001. In April 1986 the Magazine moved to Auckland under the editorship of Bill Watt and the help of Lloyd Spackman and became a bi-monthly A4 16 page photocopy publication. Line drawings and black and white pictures were now appearing more often. Fifty-three adult modellers were listed in the members list of 1987. The Wanganui and Districts Meccano Club (to be MWT Meccano Club in 1991) came into existence on 29 April 1989 with 9 members present.

Lou Nichols was thinking about the NZ 2001 convention in 1991 with a list of ideas that included a group visit to the UK. As none of us won Lotto, none of us have made the trip. By August 1994 the magazine moved to a folded A3 format with 16 pages and coloured covers.

Bill Watt retired as editor in August 1996 after suffering a stroke. He was editor for over 10 years. Don Flowers stepped in to fill the gap from the October 1996 issue. Don introduced glossy covers in Dec 1996 and improved paper and photo reproductions. The first coloured picture (black and red) appeared in April 1997. In April 1999 we got a multi coloured front cover and gloss paper and in June 1999 the back cover was also in colour. Don Flowers retired in Feb 2001 with a 24 page issue distributed to 94 NZ and 9 overseas subscribers. Bruce Neilson and John Ince now pick up the magazine to continue the good work of their predecessors.

THE WISDOM OF KEITH CAMERON

(Edited by Lloyd Spackman from letters written to him by Keith Cameron)

NOVEMBER 1995

"Lately I have been overdoing fairground models with my six long-suffering 'buddies' (these are the little bears Keith uses as passengers - L.S.). Phil Bradley described for me the latest modifications of the *Exterminator* (there's a sinister name for you) and it seems that the safety of these machines is inversely proportioned to their mechanical complexity and therefore to the challenge of producing a Meccano version. Phil is working on a version which promises to be interesting. It is far more terrifying than *Whizzy-Dizzy*, having two vertical arms separately powered, one with a hinge to allow for the resulting odd angles of the central portion that has the chairs. The vertical arms can rotate in opposite directions. Heavy universal bearings couple the horizontal section to them. I had more or less signed the pledge and said I would hold off fairground models for a bit but his description of *Terminator* has started my juices flowing again. I will have to consult my six 'buddies' as to whether they want to swing again"

NOVEMBER 1996

"Collection" series are usually \$4.95 over here. Re the *Ferris Wheel*—friction clutches are so easy to include in a model and so helpful for good operation that there is no excuse to leave them off. The only additional parts needed are a pulley and tyre and a compression spring. Instead of collars when building box girders, use the far cheaper spacers."

AUGUST 1997

"Your source for spare parts (Mike Rhoades) should be most useful. Meccano is inevitably expensive but there must be an almost inexhaustible source of secondhand parts somewhere out there if only they can be located. I liked your rotating crane (April, 1997). I am still trying to think of other uses for the Meccano infra-red control system and this model might be one of them. The 1 inch bolt mentioned in Bits & Pieces in April is only used in the Big Meccano Puzzle Game otherwise known as: 'Assemble the Battery Box in less than 30 minutes if you can.' I like the Meccano acrostic on the cover of the June issue. It deserves wide acceptance."

SEPTEMBER 1997

"I cannot get too excited about the Meccano infra-red remote control set because of its limitation to two motors. The system is used in a remote controlled motor chassis seen in an exhibition photo in the current French CAM magazine. So I am planning to build a 15-channel version. Its one of my crazy notions because I still haven't come up with a model that really justifies building the system. Perhaps some idea will come to me in a dream in the night!"

2003 Convention - Stop Press

MWT Meccano Club will host the 2003 Convention on 18-19-20 April 2003 at the Community Centre, Albion St, Hawera.

Auckland Meccano Club Meeting Report, 12 May 2001

by Peter Hancock



Back row: Mike Geary, William Irwin, Peter Hancock, Mike Walmsley, John Denton, Doug Harris.

Centre row: George Ovenden, Graeme Wrightson, David Wall, Neil Carey, Don Stuart.

Front row: Geoff Martin, Eileen Carey, David Barnard, Wendy Barnard, Joan Ovenden, Cora Denton.

Absent: Joan Hancock.

Taking the photo: Elizabeth Wall (insert)

The recent Auckland Meccano Club meeting was held at the home of Jan and Peter Hancock on the afternoon of Saturday 12 May. The meeting was due to start at 2 00pm but, in eager anticipation members and wives began arriving from 1.30 so that by the appointed time for the meeting we had a large turn out with a wide range of models, memorabilia and parts lists (amongst which was the latest list of Meccano model offerings from the new Meccano owners) laid out for viewing.

After some time was spent on discussing the various merits of the offerings on display, Chairman David Wall called the meeting to order using his Elektrikit electric bell and bell push.

This device had to be rung for some time before the meeting finally came to order.

After the standard meeting items were dealt with, discussion took place relating to the brochure that we had received (from M W Models) showing off the new model line up that the new owners of Meccano have designed for this year 2001.

The general consensus of the meeting was that there was little to say until actual sets could be viewed and while there are no doubt more new parts on offer in the new sets, there is real concern that there appears to be no sign yet of the electronic expertise of the new owners showing through in the way of controls for Meccano modellers. The feeling is that we have to wait and see but that we should not hold our breath in anticipation at this time.

The meeting then welcomed Mr Neville Jackson (17 Tate Grove, Pakuranga, Auckland, 1706, phone 09 576 6687) to the meeting. Neville had come to present to members his revised price list of genuine, unused Meccano Spare

Parts that he has for sale. Members of the club had viewed this list of parts at our February meeting and had commented on the prices that were being asked at that time

which prompted Neville to review his schedule. Prices are now in line with the cost of parts on a rough currency calculation with those published by MW Models. A sample of parts demonstrated indicated that they have been well stored. Any one interested should call Neville and ask for a price list.

It was then time to take a group photo of the members attending and so several

were shot including one with wives for club records.

A grand afternoon tea was then served and enjoyed by all before continuing further discussions, bragging and the odd swapping of parts. There was a deal of discussion relating to the recent Upper Hutt Meccano Convention hosted by the Wellington Meccano Club and members who had been fortunate to attend commented on the models they had viewed and the excellent camaraderie that had been experienced.

William Irwin spoke about the Meccano computer that has been found once again at MOTAT in a very poor state of repair. The meeting finally wound up some time after 5.30pm and was declared a real success.

Some of the models and items displayed were an Elektrikit electric bell and bell push displayed by David Wall. Graeme Wrightson displayed the chassis of a steam car that he is building; George Ovenden showed off his flat top truck complete with Multi Kit cab and steering built to a design by Bernard Peviews and, an 'automatic reversing mechanism'; John Denton had built an elephant and an insect, which had everyone in fits of laughter as they moved around. A very ingenious contribution. A Meccano Graph equipped with two three-speed gearboxes and variable crank throws, was displayed and demonstrated by Mike Geary; Don Stuart showed his version of a Hobbs inertia transmission. A working model of Konkoly's 24-hour clock and a crane built from a set 3 manual of the 1940's was William Irwin's worthy contribution. A model of an out board motor and a garden cultivator, based on models in the 8540 Multi Models range, both operating, along with several other models were on display from Frank Price who was unable due to ill health to attend the meeting in person. Doug Harris displayed a railway breakdown crane chassis (one of the Super Model range) that he was about to disassemble and a quite rare TRIX electric motor. A variety of books and manuals were displayed as well.

The next meeting of the Club is scheduled for Saturday 11th August at 2.00pm at the residence of Neil Carey at 23 Eaton Road Hillsborough, Auckland.

Wellington Meccano Club Meeting Report 27 April 2001

by Bryan Jones

The Wellington Club met on 27 April, in place of its May meeting as several members were to be absent on the usual date. Nine members were present, and the following models were displayed:

Colin Croft showed his truck chassis. This is a rebuild of the Kenworth W900 Tractor completed some time ago, and this time the chassis is being rebuilt in black parts. The steering gear, engine, transmission, suspension and axles were complete, and the chassis was seen at the Convention.

Don Flowers showed one of the steering axles from his Grove 150 ton truck mounted crane. This had also been on display at the Convention, and examination of the axle's construction showed how much strength had to be designed in, to support such a large model.

Lou Nichols had a rotating stand at the Convention, which supported several smaller models. He brought along the roller bearing turntable from the stand. This was originally designed by Lloyd Spackman, and appeared in the August 1998 issue of the NZFMM Magazine.

Lloyd Spackman showed a low loader and tractor unit, a very attractive small model of the Collector Series style.

tive aspects of having the Saturday as a non-public day so that exhibitors could spend more time meeting other members and inspecting their models. Over 150 models were on display, and about 100 of these were entered for judging. It was great to have had the participation of so many overseas visitors, which enabled the locals to meet people who had previously been only names in magazine reports. A larger than expected turnout by the public on Sunday had netted \$1876 in door takings, which had resulted in a profit after all expenses had been paid. The co-operation between clubs in helping each other over the weekend was especially mentioned, and perhaps the best summary was the comment that it was "a true Convention" (as opposed to just an exhibition).

A few details remained to be completed. Another Junior Trophy was to be made, as the judging had produced a tied result. Some Convention badges and posters were left over, and it was suggested that these should be offered for sale through the next Magazine. The perennial question of model judging was raised, and it was suggested that models should be grouped into categories with various levels of size or complexity, with separate prizes, so that models could be more fairly compared. Last, but certainly not least, a vote of thanks was recorded to Jo Moody, for her work in organisation and running the Registrations Table.

The April meeting is usually also the Club AGM. Laurie Webb had been nominated to succeed Simon Moody as President, and had accepted. Laurie was not present at this meeting, so Simon continued to lead, and the remaining AGM elections and business were held over to the June meeting. Lou Nichols proposed a vote of thanks to Simon for his three year term of office, especially for the large amount of work that he had put into the Convention planning.

Following discussions on the Spanners Group about Tug o' war machines, notice was given of the MWT Club's intentions to hold a competition. They had suggested that entries should be Magic Motor powered, have four 1" pulleys (no tires) as wheels, and should be capable of at least two metres travel unopposed.

Further details will be advertised by the MWT Club.

The meeting concluded after supper at around 10 p.m.



Lou Nichols and Lloyd Spackman in conference

The meeting's business began with a report on the Convention. This was considered to have been a success, in terms of organisation, participation and finance. Many verbal and several written comments were received from visitors, especially about the light and space of the venue, and the posi-

MWWT MECCANO CLUB

Meeting Report for 2 June 2001

The antique show and tell subjects were Saw blades (P/N 159), Saw benches, Lead

weights (P/N 66 & 67) and Windmill Sails (P/N 61). Members were able to produce examples of nearly all the identified DMS variations with the exception of a Saw bench and the larger Saw blade.

The Tug of War challenge produced 3 entries from Bob Prescott, Daryl Anderson, and Bruce Neilson which operated under the following rules:-

- 1 - Built in Meccano or replica parts and powered solely by one Magic clockwork motor
- 2 - Only parts touching building will be 4 x 1 inch pulley wheels
- 3 - Model will travel minimum of 2 metres under Magic motor power in a pre pull run.



4 - Without alteration to model, Tug of War will be held one on one. Minimum pull to win will be 3 inches.

Very careful interpretation of the rules had models with and without tyres; and one entrant who used pawls on his axles to ensure that the model could not be pulled backwards. However the Tug of War was run with the result being an overall tie with no model able to drag it's opponent the required 3 inches.

The Model Tour produced both earthly and heavenly topics.

Daryl Anderson brought the Roller Coaster Car from "Gut Buster" and explained and demonstrated to members the evolution and design principles the car required to run properly. The car is held captive to the track by 1.1/8 Flanged Wheels (P/N 20) above and 3/4 Flanged Wheels (P/N 20b) below the rails. Because the 4 seater car is articulated to negotiate vertical and horizontal changes of direction, each section is joined with four Shock Absorbers (P/N 120D) and Springs. The careful planning of the rails was further demonstrated by a track gauge made from Meccano. The acquisition of a digital camera let Daryl produce a series of print outs of models and other subjects.

The use of Magic Clockwork Motors is always a tempting option in Meccano modelling and Bruce Geange produce a very neat Bagnall railway platform tractor powered by this motor and the model came complete with two luggage trailers. Old Meccano parts never die, they just come back as straightened and repainted parts very suitable for building models which can be left assembled for years. A Set 6 tractor in resplendent red and green was a good example.

Motors were also John Hansen's contribution being a boxed Trix electric motor 2051 from the 1950's

John Ince showed modern technology by having a continual slide show of photos of the 2001 Convention running on a computer

Paul Vodanovich having been to the deep South Island came back with a very nice collection of 1927 dark red and green parts including braced girders and flywheels. He also demonstrated a Set 7 Builders Lorry, a Helicopter 5.14 and a Defenders Unit set.

The meeting of earth and heaven came when Lou Nichols described an incident when a young lady asked for a photocopy of the Meccano Magazine cover featuring the Forth Bridge which was on display at the 2001 Convention. She explained that she was a major fan of the bridge and just had to get the photocopy. Lou obliged and in return received a photo of the young lady's naked back where all was revealed. A pictorial tattoo displaying the Forth Bridge above and "The Beast" from Revelations 13 below covered her entire back. Tom Pittams, our resident Minister of religion, was able to identify the seven heads, the ten horns and the lions body and quote the appropriate text.

(continued on the next page)

Meccano Displays by the Christchurch Meccano Club at the Sefton CountryShow, April 2001

by Graeme O'Neill,

This old fashion country show, run by the Kowhai sports club, has been running for 93 years now, and attempts to copy the old good old times. The target is to entertain the kids of all ages with bike races and beauty pageants for the 0 to 12 year old girls - 'strong man' muscle shows by the boys, running and sack races. A couple of horse races, wood chopping, sheep shearing, craft tents, old tractors and the like and a couple of cheap side shows and all that. Good little money-maker for the area.

But what makes it so different is the fact that it's completely outdoors! You get the invite and bring everything else - including a tent if you wish. The Christchurch Meccano Club has up till now, have been present at the 1997, 98, 99 and 2001 shows now. We planned on being at the 2000 show but due to the fact it is outdoors and the weather was rather wet, we had to turn down the offer.

Planning for the display has now become quite easy, with Doug King taking his little flat deck Diahatsu truck; Graeme O'Neill taking his boxes of models and other bits and pieces which this year (quite timely) included a Warehouse gazebo to keep the very hot sun off us. The boxes become table supports when emptied and the sides of the truck become the table tops. Chuck in a couple of club signs and you are away. Problems can sometimes test you; with wind blown paperwork, sun stroke, rain and kids being a tad nosy, but what the heck it's great place to have a picnic lunch!

Also in attendance again this year were Ian Torrens, who once again brought along some family members (to look after him and provide his transport). Cameron MacFarlane came this time with Doug and had his collection of Knex

models running from solar panels. I must stress here that we invite new members to club nights that have Knex or Lego - because they are easier to convert to Meccano, as they have already began a constructional hobby. We even have a couple of cheeky signs that ask people if they would like to go further than their present medium will allow.

Dave Palmer, a recently returned member from the early 1970s also came along with some of his models that were built by or for younger members of his family.

Doug King had his super model steam loco running from the truck battery and his pendulum clock running surprising well considering the wind and dust from the BMX motor cross bikes behind us.

A much enjoyed time was had by all present.

Christchurch Meccano Club Meeting Report for May 2001

By Ian Torrens

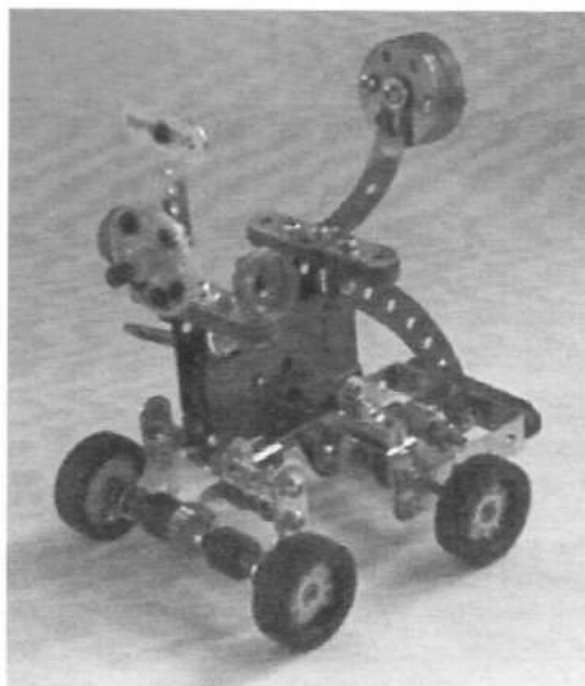
For this meeting held on 4 May 2001, we had seven members present but only two models on display. These were a Walking Machine and a Soccer ball. The Walking Machine by David Lang has four legs and walks very well forwards and backwards. At present it is hand operated, but when completed will be driven by two electric motors. The Walking Machine measures 24 inches high, 20 inches wide and 23 inches long. It looked most impressive as it strode with deliberate steps along the table. Graeme O'Neill displayed his concentric Soccer ball which is two spheres, one inside the other. The outer sphere is 10 inches in diameter and made of 2 " strips. The inner sphere is 7 inches in diameter and uses 2" strips. Graeme also showed us some computer printed pages of our Sefton Display held at Easter 2001. These were most interesting and were well received. General discussions occurred as usual with supper being put on at 2100 hours after which the meeting concluded.

(continued from the previous page)

Tom Pittams also announced that he no longer had to go to work being a retired gentleman. Members congratulated him on seeing the light.

*The tug of war in progress (previous page)
(photo by Daryl Anderson)*

*Bob Prescott's idea of a tug of war machine
(photo by Bob)*



New Zealand Club Diary 2001

Auckland Meccano Club.

Contact - David Wall Ph 09 478 6825

Meetings at 2 pm on second Saturday every third month.
11 August; Neil Carey, 23 Eaton Road, Hillsborough, Auckland.

10 November; George Ovenden, 19 Richards Ave., Milford, Auckland.

MWT Meccano Club.

Contact - Bruce Neilson Ph 06 355 0776.

Meetings at 2pm on first Saturday every second month.
4 August, 6 October (December Xmas dinner to be advised).at

St Lukes Church Hall, cnr Cornfoot and Manuka St, Wanganui.

Wellington Meccano Club.

Contact - Lou Nichols Ph 04 973 6177.

Meetings at 7.30 pm on first Friday every second month
3 August, 5 October, 7 December at

St Lukes Church Hall, 55 Pitt St, Wadestown, Wellington.

Christchurch Meccano Club

Contact - Graeme O'Neill Ph 03 322 7456.

Meetings at 7.30 pm on first Friday every month (except January)

6 July, 3 August, 7 September, 5 October, 2 November, 7 December at

St Johns Hall, Cnr St John St. and Ferry Rd., Woolston, Christchurch.

Additional Meccano Contacts

Hamilton - Don McClelland Ph 07 847 4503.

Wanganui - Tom Pittams Ph 06 345 6788

Palmerston North - Bruce Geange Ph 06 357 0566

Napier - Trevor Adam Ph 06 843 4837.

Internet sites

International Society of Meccanomen (ISM)

<www.actcom.com.il/anthias/>

Meccano Webring <www.meccanoweb.com/meccring>

Errata - Not New Members.

Some readers may have wondered who Don McLelland and Brian Hicks are, - new members of the NZFMM? In fact these names are the aliases which the editorial staff chose for Don McClelland and Brian Hickson! We also got Frank Abbott's name wrong. Sorry about that chaps.

NZFMM Web Site - www.dalefield.com

Meccanomen who like personal service are invited to send an Email to Wes Dalefield, Web master at <wes@dalefield.com> so that they can be put in a data base and quote "I would use it for posting messages about important updates on the website and Meccano for sale. They would probably get a message about every three or four months."

BUY, SELL, AUCTION & EXCHANGE

Advertisements in this section are free

Meccano Replica Parts made by

Jack Parsisson, 7 Meerlu Ave.,

Frankston, Victoria 3199,

Australia.

Ph 9789 5796 Fax 9785 9365

Buy - Sell - Trade

Wayne Blakely Meccano,

RD 1, Marton.

Ph 06 327 6184 Fax 06 327 4184

Second hand Meccano as pieces or sets.

Manuals from 1912.

Photocopy service.

Agent for MW Models England

Current Sets as available - enquire

Postal Auction

Centennial NZ Meccano Convention badges.

5 remaining from only 85 made and the mould has been destroyed. (highest or any bid not necessarily accepted)

Bids to S Moody, Blue Mountains Rd, RD 1, Upper Hutt, New Zealand.

Email <moodys@ihug.co.nz>

Bids close 20 July 2001.

Sale of Full Range of New Meccano Spare Parts - Further Substantial Reductions

For the June 2001 price list, write or phone

Neville Jackson, 17 Tate Grove, Pakuranga, Auckland, NZ.

Ph. 09-576 6687

Includes manuals, leaflets & motors

Wanted to Buy

George Willard wants to buy an E20R Meccano motor. If you have one to sell please contact George with details. His postal address is 1 Lynbrae Court, Hamilton; Phone 07 846 4226

E-mail: <george.willard@vertex-pacific.co.nz>

For Sale - NZ Federation MM Badges - Triangular Blue and Gold

A small number of badges are available at \$5 each plus post and packing. Send Club or individual orders initially to reserve a quantity to Graeme O'Neill at

Email <graeme.oneill@caverock.net.nz>

Snail mail - 49 Hindess St; Christchurch 8003.

If demand exceeds supply, consideration will be given to having some more manufactured.

Articles, etc., for the August issue of NZFMM magazine should be sent to the Editor well before 12 August 2001