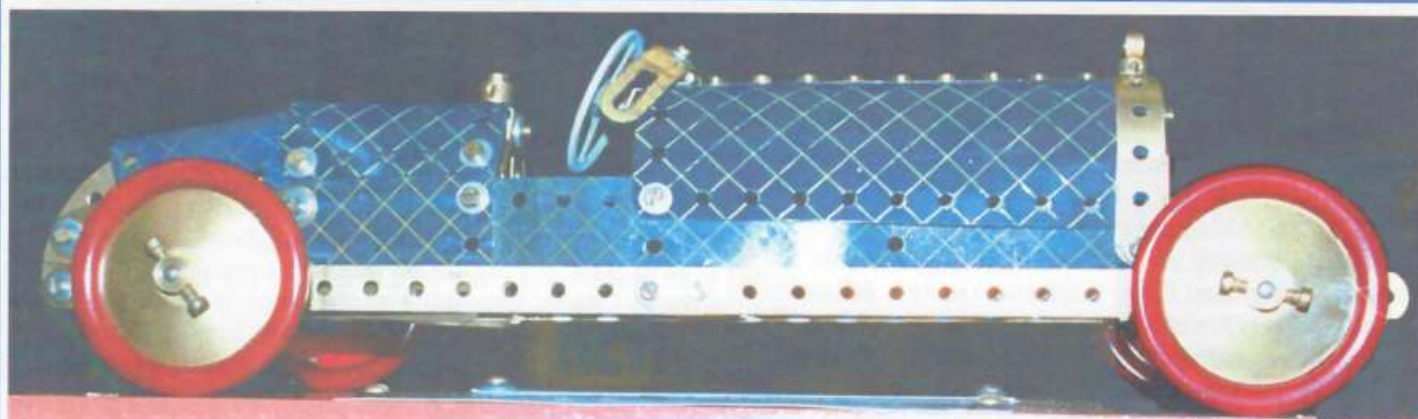




NZFMM MAGAZINE

Volume 26 No 1

February 2002



BLUE

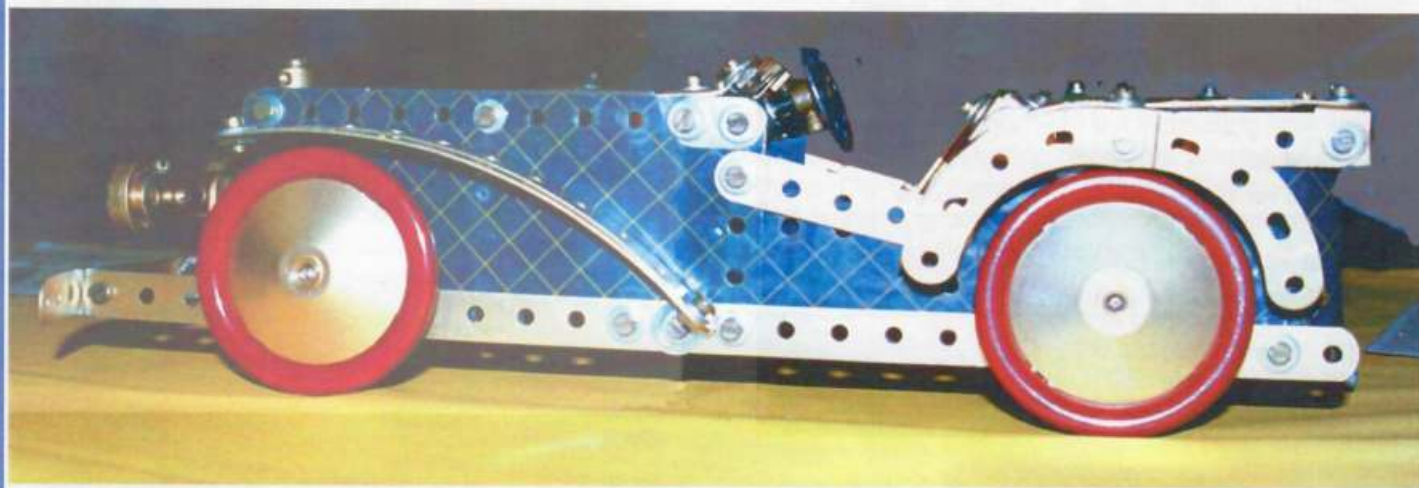


and

GOLD



MECCANO



Published by The New Zealand Federation of Meccano Modellers

NZ Federation of Meccano Modellers Magazine

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

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Cover Picture:

The Cars were made by Lou Nichols and photographed at the 1997 Convention. The blue plates were photographed by John Ince and are part of his collection. The example on the LH side is a 1934 fibre plate.

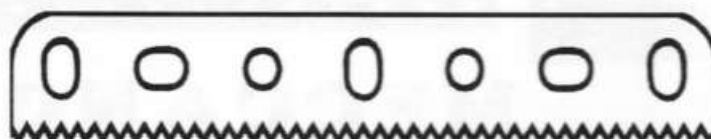
Whips and Butter

This issue is the sixth that the current Editorial team has produced and marks the completion of our first year. I have come to the conclusion that each issue has a mind of it's own. Some issues have needed the application of a sharp pointed stick and a sound whipping to get them into final shape and other issues have come together as smooth as butter. This February issue started to show it's theme six months ago with a flavour of "Blue/Gold" and "Old" when some good articles showed up, and then Viv Alexander appeared with his Sacramento memories and some very rare literature. So we are able to celebrate a First being an A4 Centrefold Replica. The use of modern technology has brought replicas up to a new level of possibility and clarity and will be considered again for future issues.

The 2001 Meccano Outfits did not hit the world markets until December 2001, and to date, have not appeared in New Zealand to my knowledge. Elsewhere in this issue are some comment about these outfits from those lucky modellers who have put their Xmas cash to good use.

The increasing use of modern technology is still infiltrating our Magazine in various ways and New Zealand subscribers will have noticed the use of plastic wrapping of their issues, when appropriate. The price saving between plastic wrap and A4 paper envelope is about 8 cents which can then be used elsewhere in the Magazine. Another innovation is the Read Write CD Rom becoming available to computer owners. I recently received digital photographs from a Club meeting on a CD Rom disc which had numerous photos on it giving the Editor the delightful luxury of choice. The cost of a CD Rom is about \$2 which makes hard copy photographs very expensive on a comparison basis.

I laughed at a recent comment by Jerry Dubois pointing to a recent car sticker going onto vehicles which reads "Courtesy of my children's inheritance". So buy yourself another No. 10 Set and enjoy life now.
R. Bruce Neilson



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THE LOVELIEST ENGINE EVER BUILT

by Bob Prescott

Like me, you have probably thumbed through old Meccano magazines and spotted a model that really stands out and

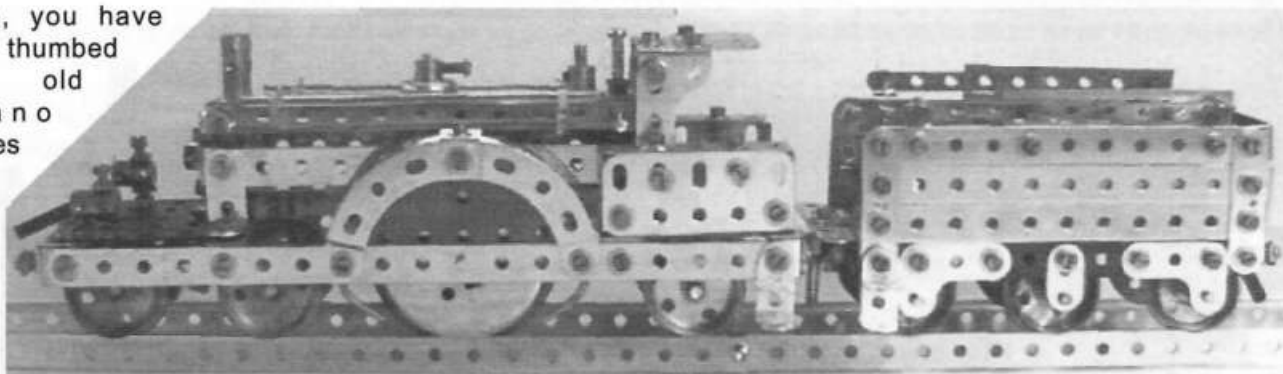
you decide you must build it. It happened to me when I saw the "4-2-2 Locomotive and Tender" in the April 1926 issue. My interest was further enhanced when I read "constructed from drawings submitted by Keith W. Cameron". The model gained an award for him, even though he was only about twelve years old at the time.

His model was based on the Midland Johnson Single 4-2-2, and the Samuel Waite Johnson's magnificent single wheelers, sometimes nicknamed "Spinners" were considered by many to be the "Loveliest Engines Ever Built". It was interesting to discover during my research that the railway fraternity was rather surprised when they were introduced in 1887 because the Midland Railway hadn't built single wheelers since 1866.

The main problem with single axle drive locomotives was providing sufficient traction between the single driving axle and the rail and although gravity sanding was used, it was not very efficient. Apparently the sand landed anywhere but where it was needed on the rail. However, two gentlemen, James Gresham and Francis Holt invented the "steam sanding gear" in 1885 which "blew" the sand to exactly where it was needed and that gave the "Spinners" a new lease of life.

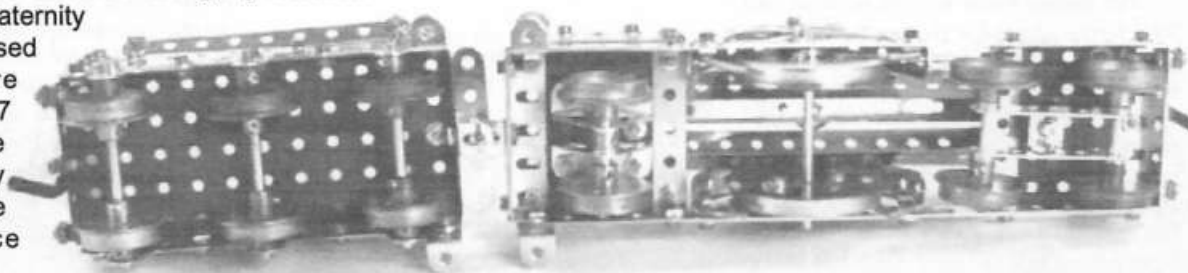


The construction of the Meccano Magazine model is straightforward as can be seen from the photographs and consists of parts available at the time, flanged and flat



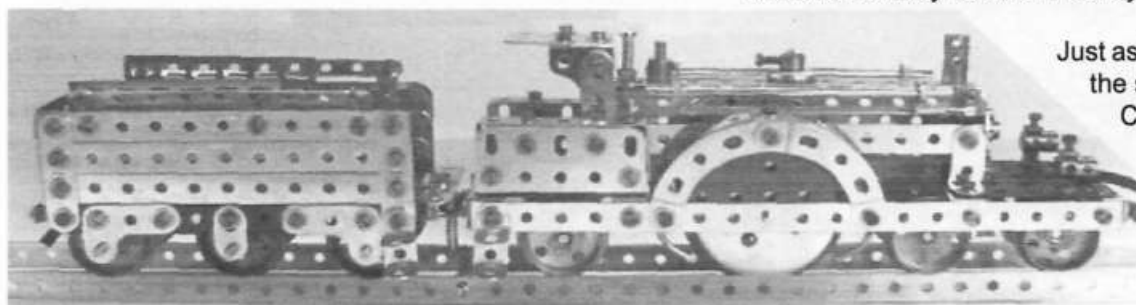
plates, nickel strips and girders, flanged wheels and various brass pieces. At first I wondered why a boiler had not been used but P/N162 boiler was not introduced until 1927 and flexible plates till 1934. To me it was an attractive model so I built my model using the same parts except my strips and girders had the later zinc finish.

Like all modellers I added a few of my own touches to make it my model. I added a third axle to the tender (like the real Johnson 4-2-2) and re-designed the sides using a pair of windmill sails on the top. To the engine I added a steam



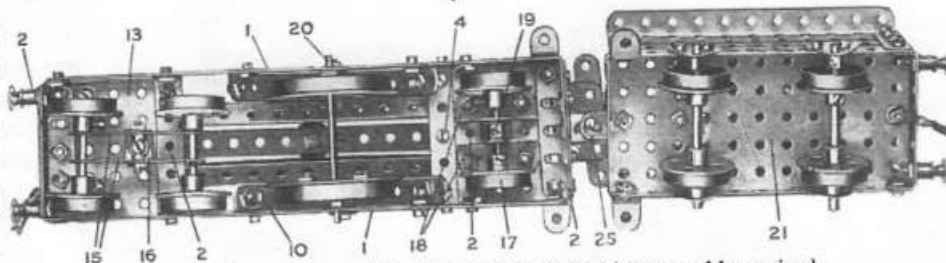
valve, whistle, boiler "piping" and of course the all-important steam sanding gear. For this I used appropriate lengths of wire coat hanger shaped and fixed either side of the main driving wheels.

Ninety-five Johnson single wheelers were produced in five varieties and the final ten which were brought into service in 1900, were considerably larger with 7ft 9in diameter driving wheels. They were all magnificent engines and very economical in operation with loads within their capacity travelling at speeds up to 90mph. All the later engines remained in service until 1919 but increasing train weights required "double heading" and this proved to be their demise. The last engine No. 673 was withdrawn in 1928 and it is this engine that is preserved for posterity at the Midland Railway Centre in Derby.



Just as I had finished this project the same model appeared in Constructor Quarterly No.53 September 2001 built by Bernard Périer, which proves I guess that good models will be built time and time again.

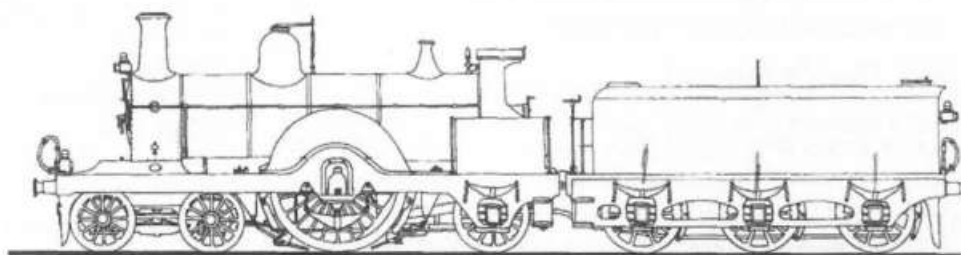
4-2-2 LOCOMOTIVE AND TENDER



(This page is reproduced from the April 1926 Meccano Magazine)

MIDLAND JOHNSON SINGLE 4-2-2

Country of origin: UK
Railway: Midland Railway (MR)
Date: 1887
Length overall: 16.038m (52ft 7.5in)
Total weight: 82,500kg (181,500lb)
Cylinders: two 483 x 660mm (19 x 26in)
Driving wheels: 2.375m (7ft 9.5 in)
Axle load: 17,954kg (39,500lb)
Fuel: 4,000kg (8,800 lb)
Grate area: 1.82m² (19.6sq ft)
Water: 15,902 litres (3,500 Imp gal/ 4,200 US gal)
Heating surface: 115m² (1,237sq ft)
Superheater: none
Steam pressure: 12kg/cm² (170psi)
Adhesive weight: 17,950kg (39,500lb)
Tractive force: 6,582kg (14,506lb)



The Midland Railway specialised in fast, light locomotives, and introduced the first of its Johnson- designed single-wheelers in 1887. The fleet had grown to 95 by the end of the century. The original driving wheels measured 2.23m (7ft 4in) across, but by the time the last examples were built in 1900 this had increased to 2.37m (7ft 9.5 in). The class was built in several batches, with minor modifications having been incorporated along the way. The Midland Railway had appointed Samuel Waite Johnson as its locomotive superintendent in 1873. The application of steam sanding gear in 1885 caused the side rods of some of the Midland 2-4-0 engines to be removed, and they then worked satisfactorily with only one driving axle. This heralded the return of the single-wheelers, or 'Spinners' as they had become known. The Midland Johnson Singles operated fairly successfully, regularly hauling express trains of between 203.2 and 254 tonnes (200 and 250 tons), or more in good weather and recording speeds of up to 144km/h (90mph). Today, the one which is still preserved is on exhibition at Derby. It was built in 1897, and No 118 remained in service until 1928.



The restored Midland Railway Johnson Single No 673 at Butterley, July 1977

Painting Blue and Gold Meccano: Two Points of View.

Neil Pluck's Method.

I saw some pictures of blue and gold Meccano models; liked the look of them, and decided to make some - starting with some old Meccano that I didn't use. After building the Sports Car, it looked ordinary so I pulled it apart and painted it.

First I stripped the parts with paint stripper. Finding the paint in a spray can was a bit hard. The gold was OK but it took a bit to get the right shade of blue, "Plasti-kote Royal Blue". I painted all the parts and let them dry.

For the gold lines I used a "Pilot Super Colour gold pen extra fine tip" and used a ruler through the centre of the holes in the plates. It takes a few goes to get the lines correct working out the right speed and pressure.

I put the car back together and it looked very smart so I made the Single Seater Racing Car and the Aeroplane. I have also made a blue and gold Truck from a genuine French set imported into New Zealand.

John Ince's Technique.

I have not used blue and gold Meccano since building the "Flying Machine", 1937 manual model G5. For that model I had nearly sufficient appropriate parts so did not need to do much repainting.

In more recent years I have repainted blue plates for a couple of other modellers. Finding a satisfactory blue is quite difficult. Although the blue shade varied quite a bit in the mid 30s none of the commercially available spray can colours are ideal. I suspect that the blues used by Meccano Ltd at Binns Road were based on pigments which are no longer considered safe for toys. I looked at enamel in small tins and found some, in 1995, made by Asian Paints. The shade was Oxford Blue and at that time was stocked by The Warehouse. Unfortunately the line was discontinued by that company but I was able to obtain another 125ml can from the agents in Auckland. It is still available. Please contact Apco Coatings, Email: <APSPNZBR@xtra.co.nz>.

The Oxford Blue needed to be reduced a little with white but it then gave an excellent match to the 1930s blue. Application was by means of an airless spray kit. I drew the lines on the completed plates with a draughtman's pen - the sort with two blades - and a straight edge. I was able to mix up a suitable shade of yellow - gold from my paint stock.

Finding a suitable shade of gold is just as difficult as finding the blue. I did not realise how many shades of gold there are. Try Plasti-kote NQ 347 Classic Lacquer. As there is very little original Meccano gold around, it did not come to New Zealand in the pre-war sets, no one is likely to spot the fact that the colour is not quite right. Being a colony, New Zealand had to be content with sets made up of the blue cross hatched plates with green strips! I did not realise, until many years after my Meccano youth, that the stuff should have come in gold.

Restoration and Protection

Extracted from "More Notes on Post War Hornby O Gauge" by Albyn Austin.

Reproduced by permission of The Hornby Railway Collector Magazine, May 2001, No 354.

No 50 Manchester Oil Tanker

The green colour fades in the sunlight. This is well known to old members, some of whom found out the hard way, but bears repeating! The red on the lining and buffer beams of later locomotives also fades in sunlight. Do not store these items in direct sunlight and check both sides before you buy in case one is faded! I've brought red lining back from the dead using several washes of the acrylic inks sold by Games Workshop for painting their miniature fantasy figures. Perhaps you could do something similar with the faded green, which turns a light blue if I remember correctly. I protect the finish of all gloss finishes by use of either Waxoyl or a good grade of Bees Wax furniture polish, especially for the axles, brake levers and couplings which all rust easily.

More Restoration Tips

I use 'Mr Sheen' polish on matt items such as coach underframes, with a simple mask to keep gloss polish off

them or vice versa. Wheels also get a good clean with an old toothbrush in soapy water and a polish. Dirty stock can also be washed in warm water with liquid soap with care. Be warned though, I once lost some lithograph from a rare LNER tarpaulin wagon, when a section around the tarpaulin rail hole at one end lifted! Dry on a towel over a radiator or similar after careful rinsing in clean water and drying with kitchen roll. Rust on black areas can be dealt with using "Trustan" rust inhibitor, which dries black. Try a gentle polish with penetrating oil or even "Brasso" to remove rust on painted or lithographed surfaces, using a cotton bud or similar, (or even Trustan if it's washed off before it fully reacts). Try a small test piece first if in doubt. Be very careful not to damage the surfaces further, as the oil or cleaner contains a mild abrasive. If in doubt leave well alone, just polish! I rarely retouch paint as it is very difficult to get the correct shade (especially greens) and most retouches look dreadful. Prevent rust by keeping stock at even temperatures in a low humidity environment. Even modern centrally heated houses get cold at night time or over winter breaks when relative humidity of the air in the house rises rapidly promoting corrosion. However rates of corrosion will be much less than in draughty lofts with wide temperature changes or in damp cellars. Best to move to Arizona or similar. Failing that, use a dehumidifier on a timer for the early hours when things are coolest. Original Hornby boxes use cardboard with quite high levels of acidity in it,
(continued on next page)

Hudson Scott & Sons, Tinprinters to Hornby

The Hornby Railway Collector Magazine has been running a series of articles by Ian Layne based on his research into the records of Hudson Scott & Sons, tinprinters to Hornby. The following is an extract from part 7 in the July 2000 issue.

Something for the Meccano boys

I possessed some blue and gold Meccano as a boy and for many years past had assumed that this colour scheme was adopted in anticipation of the 1937 Coronation. However memory has played me false. These colours were actually introduced towards the end of 1934 in anticipation of the Silver Jubilee of King George the Fifth in the spring of 1935. My assumption of a later dating arose from the fact that the first mention of a blue and gold lattice design appears in the Hudson Scott tinprinting records in the autumn of 1936, just in time to receive a costing of £33 per thousand sheets. These were, of course intended for the Strip Plates and Flexible Plates which been introduced into the Meccano system two years earlier to coincide with the blue and gold scheme. The former were made from Spring or Tempered Steel of 0.008" in thickness, but initial batches of the Flexible Plates produced in 1934 to 1935 were in fibreboard which rapidly assumed a tatty appearance. Hence the change to soft tinplate material during 1936 this being the same thickness as the Strip Plates.

The first order for chequered Strip Plate material was placed with Hudson Scott in early July 1936, followed by a first order for Flexible Plate material in October. Sheet sizes were circa 28" x 20". During the next three years or so there were over 20 repeat orders at more or less bi-monthly intervals and with order quantities varying from as low as 56 sheets (during early wartime years) up to several orders for over 30,000 sheets. The overall number of chequered sheets supplied was almost 206,000. The ratio between spring steel and soft tinplate was almost exactly four to one.

Additional to the above some 35,000 sheets were supplied without recorded colours, or in the alternative colours of plain green or plain grey. One cannot be sure whether the lack of colour details was a clerical error, or a case of familiarity with repeat orders breeding contempt. There is a possible alternative explanation, namely that these sheets were supplied to Meccano Ltd with protective or base coats only for finish enamelling at Binns Road, maybe in the now superseded red. Adoption of the blue/gold combination had not been universally popular with the Meccano red/ green traditionalists and various transitional accessory sets and/or components were marketed to give continuity to those who possessed Meccano collections in the old colours. Red Strip Plates or Flexible Plates would have been useful to these otherwise traditionalists, so perhaps Binns Road did supply same. Maybe Jim Gamble could confirm.

There is another possibility that unprinted sheets were supplied to Meccano Ltd for tooling checks and/or production of plates for building prototype or demonstration models.

The combined area of the tinprinted sheets produced by Hudson Scott for the Meccano Strip and Flexible Plates between 1936 and 1940 amounted to more than one hundred thousand square yards or around 21 1/2 acres; 18 1/2 acres of this being the chequered variety, with a residue of circa 3 acres for the subsidiary orders. From my Liverpool street map I guess that the Binns Road site measured eight or nine acres, so we have enough sheets to cover it twice over with a substantial residue spilling out over the factory fence onto the neighbouring streets and railway. Did someone once insist that nothing of any commercial value was produced outside the boundaries of Binns Road?

Put on your gas-masks... a Meccano mystery solved

The spring steel and soft tinplate sheets in plain green were readily identifiable as being intended for the Mechanised Army outfits of the early wartime years. Identification of the grey sheets was more elusive, this order for 5000 sheets being placed on Hudson Scott in April 1940 and being amongst the last dozen or so wartime tinprinting orders.

Scanning through the Hornby Companion Volume 6, I finally ran it to earth. The order was intended for Meccano Civil Defence or Air Raid Precautions (ARP) sets that didn't make the market due to application of the wartime toy embargoes. Demonstration sets were produced and illustrated as 'forthcoming events' in Meccano trade literature, with a rather macabre choice of models in the shapes of a Gas Decontamination Lorry and Trailer. Luckily they were never needed in real life.

Although the total embargo on the manufacture of metal toys was not implemented until 1 January 1942, it seems evident that situations were becoming tight by the middle of 1940, as evinced by this non-starter in the Meccano inventory and the absence of tinprinting orders after July 1940.

(Reprinted with the written permission of the Hornby Railway Collectors Association.)

(continued from previous page)

so long term storage in acid free replacement cardboard boxes and in acid free tissue paper has a lot to recommend it. Even wooden furniture can release quite high levels of acid into drawers or cupboard interiors. I've noticed slight rusting over ten years or so on Hornby items stored in a spare bedroom for instance. Dean stores his items in sealed polythene plastic bags to limit water uptake, but I've always been more worried about additives in the plastic attacking the model. PVC plastic, e.g. bubble wrap, will attack Hornby finishes over a month or two. I've seen several rare items damaged with circular bleach marks from contact with bubble wrap! Any better thoughts out there?

"THE MYSTERY OF THE SACRAMENTO BOX" (AN AMERICAN TALE)

Text by Viv Alexander

Pictures by John Ince



Observant readers of the April NZFMM Magazine, will have noticed, under the notes of the MWT meeting, reference to some items relating to American Meccano. After I had exhibited these, our esteemed Editor came up to me, with a tiger's grin, and advised me that I had just "Talked myself into

a job"!! Who could resist such 'genteel' arm-twisting?? So here goes.

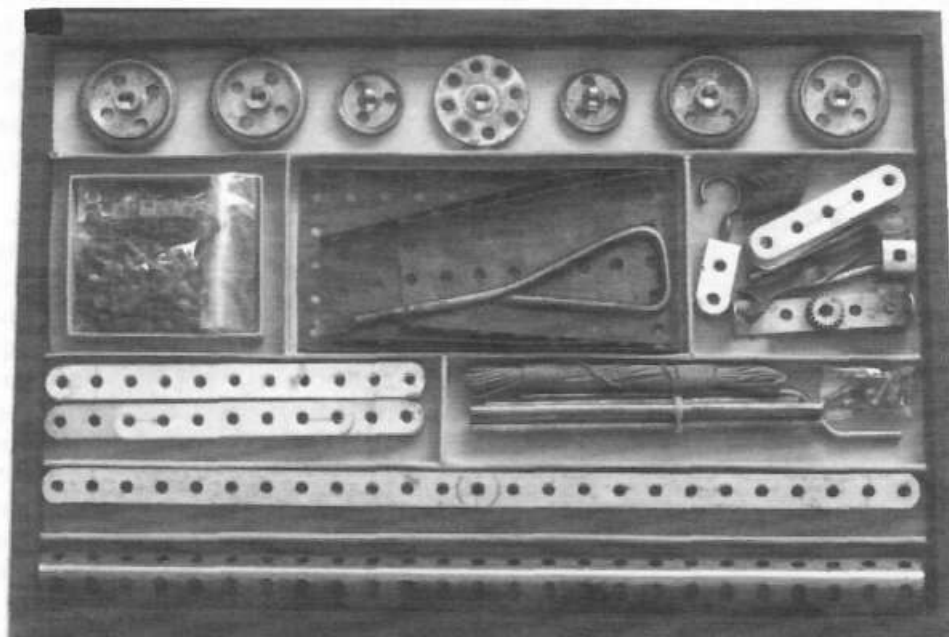
In April, 1979, I had occasion to visit California. Having a couple of days to spare, and never having been to Sacramento before, I decided to go there and visit a colleague I hadn't seen for some time. As it happened, I had little time to spare, so spent it window shopping. Occasionally, I would go into a shop, and one of these was a little antique shop, on K St, or J St, or one of the other quaintly 'named' streets in the centre of the capital. Browsing around, I saw in a home-made wooden box, what I thought was another batch of Erector, which is common in the States. However, some literature was with the lot, and it seemed I saw the magic name on it. Closer inspection did indeed show that it was 'Meccano.' As the price was \$US75, (which in those days was about \$NZ75!!! (my, how times have changed)) I thought it was reasonable, so purchased it, and became the new owner of some nickel-plated bits and pieces, as I thought, as there were no set box(es) with it. In response to my enquiry, the owner of the shop told me that the 'set' was a 'one-owner' job, and had been sold to the shop recently by the original owner, who was coincidentally aged 79 at the time. He said he had possessed it since he was 14, which in the light of investigation of the material when I returned home, may not have been quite true. Anyway, the box of goodies became mine, and I had to lug it around with me for the rest of my brief stay in the USA, packed in my luggage, with the empty space in the box crammed with socks and such. By the time I left, I was beginning to wonder if it was worth it.

However, when I was back home, and started to examine it, I soon

found that, yes, it was worth it all. Naturally, I soon started to sort it out, and that was when the fun really started. First thing I noticed, was the 12 1/2" angle girders. There were eight, but four were square ended, which rang a wee bell in my mind. So I turned to the back of one of the manuals. First thing that hit my eye was that the contents of a No. 3 set had all been marked with pencil - and appeared to be complete, with a few extra of one or two items, all carefully noted. So the next job was a complete inventory - and yes, it was complete (except for the nuts and bolts, which I didn't bother to count.) This is another example of something I have found before in collecting. Boys (and men) from earlier generations were much better at looking after toys and possessions than their counterparts are today. Which is a happy circumstance for modern collectors. So it looked as though I had a complete nickel No. 3 set, albeit purchased in two parts.

So back to the parts themselves. Checking for trademarks showed that none of the strips was marked Meccano, and only a few of the gears. So that put the set as quite early. Until recently, like the late Lindsay Bond, I had thought that all parts post 1912 were trademarked 'Meccano', but recent info. appears to show that even parts in sets up to 1919 could be unmarked. Next, those P/N 8 girders. The contents lists showed that No. 2 set had four, and No 2a set had four. Ahaa!. Maybe our young Meccano enthusiast was given a No. 2 set, and added a No. 2a set later. So the pieces were separated in to the two sets. Now inspection was really interesting. All the wheels and gears in the No. 2 set items were tunnel fixing. And there were the appropriate keys to go with them (the ones with the tongue). The gears/wheels in the No. 2a set were all tapped for set-screws or grub screws, and the keys were replaced by spring clips, i.e. they had lost their tongues, and were the first type with tapered wings. Now, collars with grub screws were introduced either late in 1911 or early 1912: worms with grub screws appeared later in 1912. By late 1912, or early 1913, all gears etc. had set screws or grub screws.





Box 2 Contents

Other parts separated nicely too. The two sector plates were blackened. So I separated the other blackened parts from the nickelled parts. All the blackened parts were exactly what was required for the No. 2 set, and the nickelled parts corresponded to the No. 2a set. This included P/N 52, (one in each); P/N 53, (one black in No. 2 set, three nickel in No. 2a set). Even the angle brackets, P/N 12, divided exactly! See what I mean about looking after the sets! If some black P/N 12's had been lost, and they were later replaced, they would almost certainly have been nickelled, and the numbers would have been incorrect. I don't know how often the owner played with his Meccano, as there was a light

better with the ages of the sets. The later items of literature in the collection don't help here.

There was one most interesting piece in the lot - P/N 26, $\frac{1}{2}$ " pinion. This was the standard 20 tooth version of the time. But what was not standard was the face of the teeth. Normal versions are $\frac{1}{4}$ " across the face. Don Blakeborough, in his Encyclopedia of Meccano Parts (EMP), mentions that a version of the 25 tooth pinion has been seen with a $\frac{3}{16}$ " face. The $\frac{1}{2}$ " pinion in my No. 2a set also has teeth which are $\frac{3}{16}$ " across the face - which I don't think has been recorded before. The part is perfectly genuine, having the trademark 'Meccano' around the

face of the pinion, so it couldn't have been cut down in a lathe by some enterprising gentleman, and all other dimensions equate to the standard variety. So it appears that $\frac{3}{16}$ " face gears may have been produced in a number of sizes. Incidentally, the teeth of the tunnel fixing $\frac{1}{2}$ " pinion in the No. 2 set is the standard $\frac{1}{4}$ " face. The screwdriver is as shown in the 1912 manual, with a tapered end to the shorter side of the triangular shape (not shown in EMP).

LITERATURE.

As mentioned before, there were some items of literature with the pieces. The state of these also show how carefully even the paperwork was looked after, even though obviously used. The editor and I both think it would be interesting if reproductions of some of the smaller items were included in the NZFMM magazine, and this we have done.

First, the manuals:

(i) A US 1912 0-6 manual, minus front cover. (There are

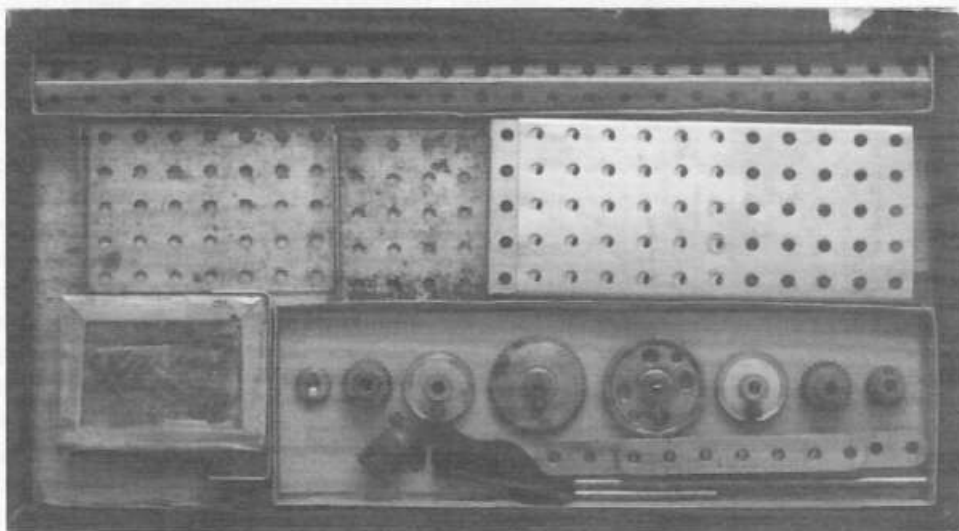


blue 'cord' (P/N 40) with the lot, unused, exactly as supplied by Meccano. I am not sure if this is the right colour for this period, someone more knowledgeable than I could confirm this.

Anyway, it appeared that I was now the proud possessor of a 1911/12 No. 2 set, and a 1912 (probably - see later) No. 2a set. And if the editor is being kind, you will see these in the photos - the accessory set in an original 1912 hinged lid box. The No. 2 set box is a reproduction.

ways of dating this, as most of you know, even though the dating code is missing) It is obviously American, from the dollar prices on the back few pages. These correspond with

to a 'dandy' set. I can't find the electric loco referred to on page 18. None of the literature with the set corresponds. Does anyone know which model book this refers to? The



Box 2a Contents

boy must have taken up the offer at the end of paragraph three, because with the Meccano, was a copy of:-

(v) The Meccano Engineer. (See reproduction, pages 11 - 14 of this magazine) This issue was for Nov-Dec 1917, so the letter was probably late 1916. This American published magazine is much larger than its British counterpart, and has completely different content. (although the English Meccano Magazine for Nov/Dec 1917 has the same tank model illustrated at the same place in the magazine - top centre of the first page). There are letters from Meccano boys, but

other prices in dated literature from around 1912). This presumably came with the No 2 set (as no manuals were included in the Accessory sets - the manuals with the main sets covering all sets), which would date it as early 1912.

the main difference is that it actually contains some Meccano models. The English version is, apart from the letters, almost totally advertising in one semi-disguised form or another.

(ii) Two 1916 Manuals, 'Book No. 1' (Don't know what Book No. 2 would cover, as Book No. 1 is for all sets 1-6). Both are American editions - although one is modified for the Australasian market - by removing the last page, which contained the American prices, and replacing it with a 4 page leaflet pasted in, with prices for the Australasian market. The second last page illustrates motors, with prices - and this page (which couldn't be cut out without losing some of the constructional principles) was rubber-stamped in purple ink at the bottom of the page "See Revised prices, page 135" Despite doubt by some, this definitively came from America, and I was pleased to see in a recent letter to Spanner, that an American also makes reference to having such a modified manual, albeit at least 10-12 years later, which came with a American set. Why American editions were so modified, and why a number were used with sets in America, I can only surmise.

(vi) Meccano Prize Models. This is an American version - price 15 cents! The models are from the 1914/15 model building competition, and the models represented are almost exclusively from American participants. So it is presumably printed in America, although there is no conclusive evidence of this in the booklet - just a note on the front cover saying 'Copyrighted by Meccano Co. Inc', which is the American branch.

(iii) Revised price list, dated January 1st 1917. Inflation is not a recent phenomenon! Most of the prices show an increase of 50%!!! (The main exceptions were the two sets supplied in oak boxes - perhaps the price of the boxes didn't increase, only the contents) True, the prices had remained constant since 1912. Of course, there may have been other factors - e.g., did the GB pound/ US dollar rate change during the war? Certainly, price changes in England at the time were not so drastic. Reference to page 358 of Volume 6 shows that, except for sets 1 & 2, changes for the rest over this period were of the order of 20-25%.

(vii) Meccano Toy Engineering for Boys. A 4 page 1917 advertising brochure, again with the 'dandy' tank). This is typical of the careful way the advertising dept. proceeded. This may have been sent out with item (v), or Meccano probably kept an address list of all the boys who responded to various appeals, just like today, and contacted them occasionally by sending out advertising material. Again I am surmising, but it seems quite likely to me.

(iv) Advertising letter. Again, an early example of a method still used today. I presume the recipient was the person who owned the Meccano. Can't date it, except that it must be pre 1 Jan 1917, from the reference to the \$5 set with motor. (the No. 2X set) Typically American - with a reference

Well, there it is. I hope I haven't bored you. I appreciate this will appeal more to those with a collector/historical bent, but others may have found it interesting. If anyone has alternative suggestions to some of the statements I have made, feel free to write to the Editor or to me, preferably with documentation to back it up. All theories considered. Finally, I am naturally interested in obtaining any other very early pieces, sets or literature. Anyone want to give a 'Mechanics Made Easy' set a good home? (I'm forever an optimist) Hope the editor hasn't noticed I've slipped in an ad!!!

PS I make no apology for the title - it was the editor's suggestion!!

Ed. For A4, or full size (about A3), photocopies of The Meccano Engineer please contact the Editor.

The MECCANO ENGINEER

A Magazine for Meccano Boys

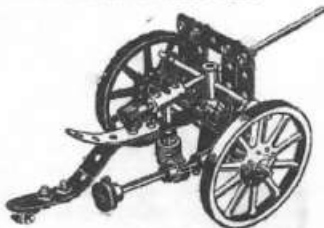
Copyrighted 1917 by Meccano Ltd., Liverpool

November—December

Published by MECCANO COMPANY, INC., Building No. 10, Bush Terminal, Brooklyn, N. Y.

1917

Model of Field Gun



THE MAGIC OF
MECCANO

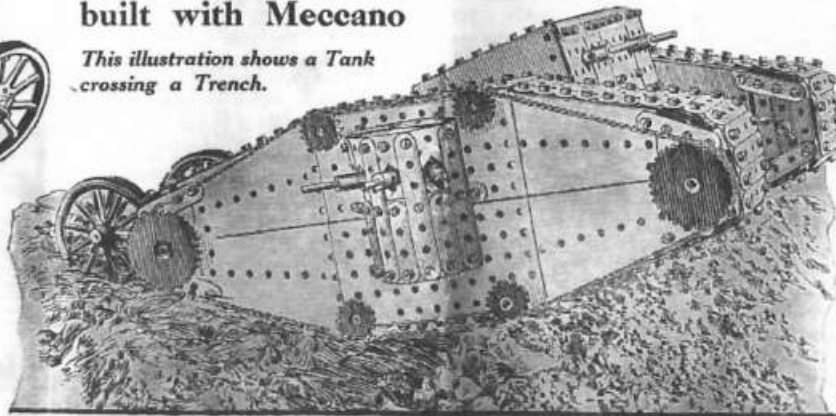
The same parts which make the Tank will make the Gun or the Motorcycle or the Flying Machine. You can make anything with Meccano.

There are 50,000 toys possible to the boy who has a Meccano Outfit—And yet it is all so easy, no study is necessary even to make the biggest models, way bigger than any boy. The fun begins as soon as you open the box and you can have a new toy every day. Is this not magic? Order your

Meccano right away and let the fun begin at once. It is too good to miss a single day.

Model of Big Battle Tank built with Meccano

This illustration shows a Tank crossing a Trench.

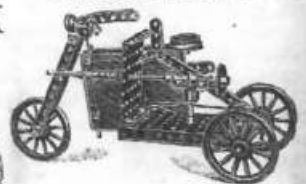


Who has not heard of the wonderful Tanks. Those Machines which crawl over trenches and shell holes, knock down trees and houses, and climb right over them.

The Tanks were one of the big surprises of the Great War. They were first used in the Battle of the Somme, and it was said that the soldiers when they saw them for the first time could hardly fight for laughing. It was the soldiers who first called them "Tanks", they are of course, great gasoline propelled tractors, heavily armed so that both the guncrews and the mechanism is fully protected.

This wonderful Meccano model, illustrated above, was designed and built by a French boy who lives within sound of the enemy's guns, who must often have seen the real Tanks which he copied in his model. American boys who live in the big cities will soon have the opportunity of seeing the big army tanks, and we are sure they will want to build this fine model. It is made entirely of Meccano parts and can easily be built from the illustration given.

Armored Motor Cycle



THE SUPREMACY OF
MECCANO

is proved by the fact that other steel construction toys use Meccano parts—they cannot do without them. What a tribute to Meccano! But the best parts are patented and are to be found only in Meccano.

This is why it is so important when purchasing to insist on having the genuine Meccano. Say the name over to yourself—Meccano—Meccano—Meccano and see that the name is on the box.

If you don't get the genuine Meccano you will certainly be disappointed.



With a MECCANO Boy
"SOMEWHERE" in Training

The writer of this letter, for many years an enthusiastic Meccano builder, has obeyed his country's call to arms. We call him the fighting Meccano boy, for he is just as keen at his new work, as he was over Meccano. Another proof that Meccano boys make good.—The Editor.

Dear Mr. Meccanoman:

You will no doubt remember me as the boy who was so fond of building Aircraft of all kinds and trying out new ideas on them. I have been building many years with Meccano, and am still very fond of it, and even yet quite a Meccano "Boy".

At present I am "somewhere" in training, and actually working with these same kinds of machines, of which I so often made models in my play. I am training to be an Aviator.

Of course I have always known the great benefit Meccano is to any boy, both in play and earnest. The fun of it all is great, to make your own toys and then play with them, put them to work, make them do things, is the manliest of all games for the boy of any age. But I liked to work out my own ideas best and I was always trying to invent new things. This certainly helped quite a bit with my education.

It was fun for me to watch all the new fellows who came to camp to learn. All the various mechanisms seemed to be so strange to them and they were at first almost afraid to touch them. A Meccano boy knew of course all about the Gears and what they were for.

One of my earliest tasks was to study Machine gunnery. As you no doubt know, all the fighting in the air is done with Machine guns, which fire at the rate of 500 rounds per minute. This requires a finely adjusted mechanism, working perfectly all the time. It is necessary therefore for the airman to know every little part and just what it should do, and to know it all perfectly, for he may have to adjust it in the air and in the dark and even in battle.



MECCANO Pawl

Some day his life may depend on knowing all about those parts and making an adjustment as easy . . . as falling off a log. If he could not do this and his gun jammed, he would be at the mercy of his opponent.

The Machine gun I had to study was operated by gas, and air cooled and the magazine containing the cartridges was like a circular tin with notches, and a cartridge dropped into the cartridge chamber each time the magazine was turned one notch.

No doubt it will interest Meccano boys to know that this operation is performed by three pawls, just like the Meccano pawl included in their Outfits. One part fits in a notch of the magazine and turns it, another slips into the notch ahead and prevents the magazine from going too far, while a third fits into a notch behind and prevents the magazine from rebounding. The movement spoken of is very similar to the brake made with the Meccano pawl and pinion. The point of the pawl fits into the pinion and prevents it from rotating. It was a simple enough movement for boys with Meccano to understand, but the other fellows had some difficulty in mastering it.

There were several old Meccano boys in camp. I was quite startled to meet a fellow one morning wearing a red knitted sweater with the name Meccano right across the front, in letters 2 to 3 inches high. He reminded me very much of the boy whom you often use in your Meccano advertisements. He is often pictured wearing a sweater. One could see at once that he had been an ardent Meccano enthusiast. Probably he had been a member of some Meccano Club, I thought, the members of which had designed the sweater as a uniform. I have not had time to ask him about it yet, but the whole camp has nicknamed him Meccano. He doesn't seem to mind, however, but appears quite proud of the distinction.

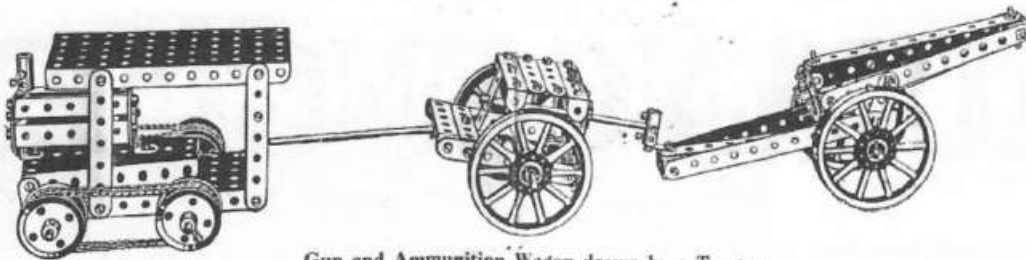
I hope to write you more of my experiences later, but I was anxious to let you know in this letter just how very useful Meccano has been to me. I find my lessons in gunnery and motor construction as easy as A B C, because I have built and played with just such mechanism in the building of my Meccano models.

I hope you will find room for this letter in the Meccano Engineer, as I would like other Meccano boys to know how Meccano "Engineering for Boys" can help a fellow.

Yours very truly

A Meccano Aviator.

The use of Tractors instead of horses is one of the many features of this war



Gun and Ammunition Wagon drawn by a Tractor

Boys! Be up-to-date. You can build all sorts of toys with Meccano.

PREPAREDNESS for MECCANO Boys

Up-to-the-Minute Models

Now that men and women everywhere are turning their minds to preparedness and rehearsing every phase of the war, it is well that boys should realize that there is lots of fun for them too.

In Germany, as soon as war was declared, there was quite a change in the toys and games of the children there. Large quantities of papier maché helmets, cuirassier breast plates, wooden cannon, artillery wagons and such war like stores were in demand. All the boys of the country seemed to be mobilized and one met them in toy uniforms everywhere. Little groups of children paraded the streets with a flag-bearer at their head. They constructed Field Forts and Trenches, manned them with toy guns and conducted many a campaign.

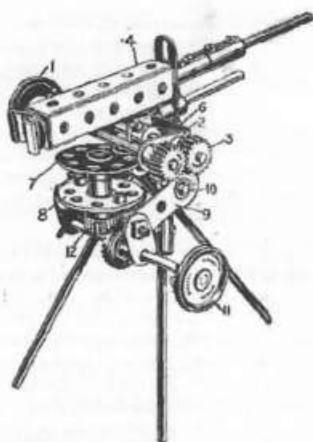
In Holland the schools and even the government have been helping this movement. In many of the parks there were model trenches and gun pits, and children were invited to inspect them. They were conducted through the communication trenches and bomb proof shelters etc., by sentries who explained everything to the youngsters. Sometimes mimic fights were arranged. A scrap of paper with a pencil scribble would be slipped through the letter box of a boys house.

To Mr. Lieutenant Gus,

*This is to declare war on you
and to invite you to battle.*

Yours as ever,

Charles.



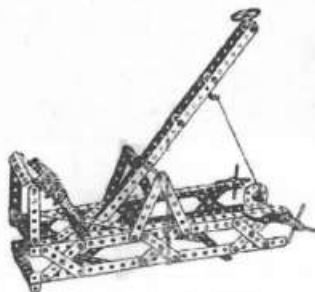
Model of Maxim Gun, with Raising, Lowering and Aiming Mechanism.

Every Meccano boy will want to build this very interesting model, it will give him hours of fun to try out the gears and see just how they work. Perhaps also some bright boy will be able to suggest a worthwhile improvement in this model.

Now the American boy has a more intelligent kind of play. The mobilization of the great machine and steel industry of this country shows him the way, and Meccano provides him with material for his experiments.

The model shown here of Tractor Gun and Carriage is a good example of what we mean. Tractors are being very largely used in the great war and the boy can with heaps of fun and considerable instruction construct, improve and work many different types of Tractors.

Quite a lot has been done with guns which require no explosives, they are modern developments of the Catapult and the Bow and Arrow, they are mechanical contrivances for throwing bombs, etc., and are known as Trench Catapults and Bomb Throwers, etc. See models No. 222 and No. 216 in the new Manual. The Meccano boy will be able to build these and no doubt many other forms and improvements will occur to the lad with an inventive mind.



Trench Catapult or Bomb Thrower.

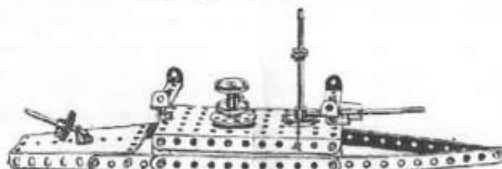
No preparedness play would be complete without some study of air ship designs and Flying Machines generally; you will find a model of a Zeppelin on page 67 of the Meccano Manual. There are also designs of Flying Machines such as No. 117 which is a Monoplane.



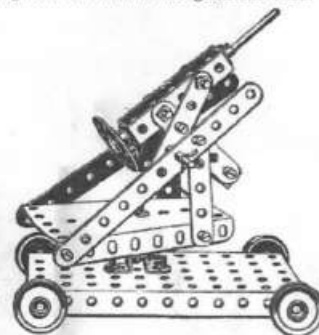
MECCANO Model of Zeppelin.

Meccano is just the thing for experiments in designing all kinds of aircraft. There are one dozen different kinds of Flying Machines, which the boy can make and improve on. Speaking of Zeppelins there are quite a variety of these, some like the above which the soldiers have nicknamed "Sausages" and others which are more the form of a cigar. The position of the gondola, as the cage where the passengers are accommodated is called, varies in the different styles. Meccano builders will have lots of fun in making models of the different types.

Battleship-Type of Submarine Chaser



While speaking of guns do not forget the anti-aircraft class. A gun to be able to fire at a machine high in the air must shoot at a higher angle than ordinary cannon. It must be capable of quick movement, must swing and turn with the greatest ease.

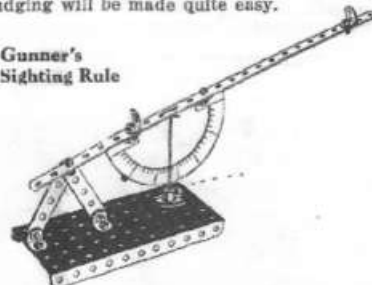


ANTI-AIRCRAFT GUN

Gun raises and lowers for aiming; swings around on carriage; carriage rolls on wheels. Made from Meccano Outfit No. 66.

All gunners must understand the distance rule, and this is a model simple to make and any boy can learn some simple method of using it. One good way is to pace 100, 200 or 500 yards pointing the rule at an object at the distances named, such as a man, noting the angle through which the pointer swings. In this way distances can be marked off on the scale and with a little practice distance judging will be made quite easy.

Gunner's Sighting Rule



Models of Armored Trains and Armored Motor Cars, great Dock Cranes and other machines and war like engines can be constructed in any number. So good is Meccano for all experimenting with machinery etc., for the above and kindred purposes, that Government designers and inventors use it regularly for making their models.

Special Notice.

Six cents brings you the next three issues of this interesting boys' newspaper, postpaid.

The next number of the Meccano Engineer will be issued in March. Subscriptions are now due. You have surely had sufficient copies sent you free to show how good the paper is, so don't forget to send us your subscription to make sure of getting a copy. The Meccano Engineer will be full of interest for the live wire Meccano boy and the illustrations and descriptions of models will make it worth while to every one.

Subscribe today! Send your six cents in stamps to: Subscription Dept., Meccano Engineer, Building 10, Bush Terminal, Brooklyn, N. Y.

The International Society of Meccano Engineers.

The membership of this Society is growing day by day and the boys who by their good work have been successful in obtaining their Engineer degree are very proudly wearing the sign of their rank.

There are still lots of boys however who have not yet joined and we take the opportunity in this issue to explain exactly what they have to do. We want to make it quite clear to every reader that you do not have to study in order to win the degrees offered by the Meccano College. All you have to do is to build, as we believe that more is learned by practical work than from books.

There are three degrees open to all.

Membership—To become a member a boy writes in to us sending name and address in order that we may enroll him in the books of the Society as a member. We will provide him with a few copies of the Meccano Magazine as often as published, so that he will get acquainted with it and hear what other boys are doing. For six months he must continue to use a building Outfit and do all he can by talking about the Society to increase its membership.

A Senior Engineer wears the bar over the button.



A Junior Engineer wears the button only.

Junior Engineer Degree—A member who has been building at least 6 months may qualify for the degree of Meccano Junior Engineer. To obtain this degree you must write us a letter giving,

First, full name and address.

Secondly, date on which you were registered as a member of the Society.

Thirdly, state what you know about Meccano and what you have done with it.

The degree is an award for real genuine merit and will not be granted unless a member shows some real knowledge of toy engineering.

This is why the degree is so greatly prized by those who win it.

During the six months period of building members will have learned something of the history of Meccano and its inventor, the names and uses of the Meccano parts. They will have learned the importance of the Meccano system which provides for strips and girders with standardized holes $\frac{1}{2}$ inch apart. It will thus be easy to write a letter telling us all you know and it would be well to add a list of the models that you have built and any you may have invented. As soon as you have been awarded the Engineer degree you will get a beautiful blue enamel button and a letter certifying that you have been admitted to rank in the Society.

Be sure to write clearly and use one side of the paper only.

Senior Engineer Degree—After you have obtained the first degree and have worn your button for 6 months and continued to use your building Outfit you have the possibility of obtaining a further honor called the "Senior Engineer Degree." You obtain a second certificate and a silver bar with the word "Senior" on it. The latter is to be worn above the blue enamel button. The two have been designed to match. The illustration shows exactly how they go together.

To obtain the second degree send full name and address, date on which you obtained the Junior Degree and what you have done to earn the higher rank. In regard to the latter a Senior Engineer is supposed to know something of the scientific value of Meccano, how different kinds of girders are built and to be able to recite the Meccano standard details. The standard details

are given at the end of the Manual and the scientific value of Meccano was illustrated in the March-April issue of the Meccano Engineer.

All applications for degrees should be addressed to the Board of Examiners, International Society of Meccano Engineers, Building 10, Bush Terminal, Brooklyn, N. Y.

What Shall I Buy?

Some Advice to the Boy Who Wants Meccano.

Every subscriber will receive a Meccano Price-list with this issue of the Engineer. This will enable every one to make their selection in good time and to know the proper prices. All are cautioned against accepting goods offered at lower prices. If people attempt to coax you to buy in this way there is sure to be something the matter with the merchandise. It will either be out of date, or not complete.

Every live boy chooses his own present.

We are writing this article to help our readers to make their choice for the coming holidays. Whether the boy buys for himself, or his parents do the shopping and the paying, we are certain that every live boy does the choosing. Parents are only too glad to consider the boy's wishes and to listen to his arguments if well and intelligently put. On this account we are appending a table of reasons why he should have Meccano, and just in what way it is the best.

Every boy who is interested in Meccano, and what boy is not, ought to understand these arguments and have them ready on the tip of his tongue. We give the above mentioned reasons here and recommend every boy to learn them.

Insist on Meccano for the holidays because:—

- Meccano building is true engineering.
- No other toy will make such fascinating models.
- Meccano models operate like real machinery.
- You don't need to study, the fun begins when you open the box.
- There is no limit to the number of models you can construct, each set is complete, nothing more to buy.
- You can win a big cash prize.

Warning. But be sure you get Meccano, there are always those who try to make a little extra profit out of you by selling you some cheaper or an imitation line or perhaps some old stock. When a toy is a big success like Meccano, there are always some dishonest enough not to give you the genuine Meccano. So say the name over to yourself, Meccano, Meccano, Meccano. Then tell Mother and Dad why nothing else will give you as much fun.

These stirring times call upon us to spend less

A great wave of economy is sweeping this country and every one is seeking to cut out what is useless or what is unnecessary. Your parents are bound to be thinking along these lines and wondering what is the most economical present to buy you. This is just where Meccano wins, there is nothing more economical, and nothing more necessary to a real live boy. We may have to eat less, clothes will probably be made to last longer, dolls and balls could be done without, but there are some things for the boy who is to be a real man, that no parent dare cut out. Who would economize on schools or books or training, and Meccano is school and books and recreation all in one. To a parent who has the boy's present welfare and future success in mind, Meccano is the best spent money possible. No sacrifice is too great to see that the boy has this wonderful manual training and absorbing hobby—Meccano.

THE X OUTFITS ARE THE BIG VALUE IN MECCANO SETS.

Each one contains a Meccano Electric Motor at only a slight increase of price. Of course there are Meccano Outfits from \$1 upwards so that you can actually buy the set which fits your pocket book. To give you an idea of the value you get when you insist on the genuine Meccano we are going to tell you about the No. 1X set which costs you only \$4.50. This Outfit contains in addition to a good selection of Meccano parts, strips, flanged plates, braced girders, pulley wheels, nuts and bolts, etc., etc., the powerful Meccano Electric Motor. This wonderful motor will drive any Meccano model, it runs on batteries or house current, with a transformer, at small cost.

The Outfit contains a manual of instructions and all necessary tools. It enables you to build a big selection of fine working models. With this Outfit you can build:

Foot Cycle	See-saw
Baggage Carts	Forge Bellows
Railroad Carts	Ore Crusher
Sleighs	Metal Saw
Swings	Lathe
Windmills	Candy Puller
Cable Railways	Beam Scales
Telephone Span	Stamping Mill
Jib Crane	Machine Gun
Monoplane	Anti-aircraft Gun
Railroad Bridge	Power Hammer
Potato Reaper	Roulette Wheel
Derrick	Spinning Top
Morse Key	Gong
Round-about	Dock Drill
Drilling Machine	Motor Truck
Churn	Railroad Signal
Potter's Wheel	Hoisting Block
Torpedo Boat	Dial Press

Drop Stamp and scores of other interesting models.

Every other Meccano Outfit is good value for the money and you will just buy the best you can afford. Suppose for instance you have \$12 to spend, you get the fine 3X Outfit and for \$25 the magnificent 5X is yours. The biggest Meccano Outfit No. 6 is, in cloth bound box, \$40. If you are the proud possessor of this Outfit you can make all the regular models in the Meccano manual and you can invent thousands of new ones of your own.

TO THE BOY WHO HAS MECCANO.

Those who have Meccano will want to make this season an opportunity to add to their sets. They will want to buy the appropriate next accessory Outfit, prices of these are given in the above mentioned price list.

There is one accessory Outfit however, which every boy should have and whatever Outfit he possesses it is the next to buy. It is the Inventors Outfit, price, \$3, it contains the latest parts and is just what is wanted to help build that new model.

The Meccano Spring Motor this year is a dandy. It only costs \$3, has a powerful spring and altogether is a wonderful piece of clock work. It is made specially to run Meccano models and will make them work like real machinery.

Among things new in Meccano, we must not forget to call attention to the Builder's Cabinet. This is a strong oak box furnished with lock and key. It will keep the Meccano parts in safety and in order. Inside the lid there is a steel plate which will take the Meccano wheels and gears and hold them in position with a special catch until needed. Every boy who values his Meccano should have one of these cabinets in which to keep his parts.

When buying Meccano see that the trademark "Meccano" appears on the box.

All those who find difficulty in obtaining Meccano goods, should write to us.

We undertake to see that they are properly and promptly supplied. All Meccano sets and parts may be had postpaid on receipt of price if not at your dealers.

MECCANO

Toy Engineering For Boys.

A THOUSAND NEW TOYS

In Every Outfit.

ALL BOYS WANT IT.

How Fast Does The World Move?

A Word to Parents.



The world moves fast; days and years bring along never ending progress. Inventions and improvements follow each other in quick succession. The years are greedy for great things.

Just think of the wonders which in the space of one man's life have been created. The Bicycle, the Motor Car, the Flying Machine, Telegraphy, the developments of Railways and Cables, Wireless, Electric Light and Traction, Moving Pictures, the Gramophone, the Submarine and Aerial Transport, wonderful Machines, whose work excels that of the deffest fingers. Machines which sew and knit better than our Grandmothers, Looms which embroider and weave the daintiest fabrics, and yet work like lightning. But what an army was necessary to do all this. The world's inventors are not few; the opportunities of doing great things are many.

Inventors are being born every day, but the discovery of genius is not so easy. The world is waiting for them and the cry from the factories is for new ideas and new models of machinery. There are great things to be invented and the men who will do all this are the boys of today.

The boy of today is the great man of tomorrow; what part is your son going to play in this great world building?

Meccano will give him his chance, it has already discovered thousands of inventors for it enables any one with an idea to materialize his discovery. These ideas, children of his brain, he can model, arrange, dis-arrange and re-arrange until he has perfected what the invention calls for. There is nothing so helpful to the ambitious youth as Meccano. Like Aladdin's Lamp it calls into existence what he most desires and will blaze out for him a pathway of fame.

Every parent is anxious enough to give the boy a good start in life and many are the sacrifices made to this end, but many place too much reliance on school and books. They think all that is necessary is to pay the fees of a good school, or be generous in the matter of books. Intelligence, initiative and handicraft are however just as important in the forging of the career of a great man.

This is just where Meccano scores, it is relaxation from school and books. Every set of Meccano is just a great boxful of fun to every boy. A Meccano Outfit contains thousands of toys. At the boy's command a new, different and ingenious plaything springs into being every day.

It is just play—clean, absorbing recreation, and it holds him spellbound and the while he learns, unconsciously but thoroughly, what every growing man must know in this age of mechanism and engineering, how to use a screwdriver and a wrench, orderly methods of work, strength of material, how machines are put together and the various principles involved.

A Meccano Outfit contains engineering elements which will build almost anything, but it is not just a mere assortment of parts, it is a system, which no other toy, not even the various imitations

of Meccano, have ever been able to equal. A system of boy training and man making. The Manual of Instructions which goes with every Outfit interests him in the construction of hundreds of different types of mechanical structures. There is no study needed, the fun begins the moment he opens the box. The models get larger and more interesting as he progresses, and the young builder gets more enthusiastic. Boys never tire of Meccano, and it never wears out.

Parents who know, assure us that to give a boy a set of Meccano is as good as an extra term at high school, and parents who have the future of the boy in mind appreciate this more and more.



Our Letter Box

We invite our young friends to write us on subjects of interest to Meccano Builders. Such letters, or parts of letters, as the Editor considers to be of general interest will be published from time to time.

WOULDN'T MISS A COPY!

Danville.

Dear Sirs:

The Engineer has given me a great deal of pleasure, but I am sorry that I did not pay for it.

I am sending you the six cents subscription now, as I would not like to miss a single copy.

Yours very truly
J. L. P.

HIS SECOND PRIZE.

H-Mass.

Dear Sirs:

Have just received the Meccano Outfit which I won in the recent Prize Contest and wish to thank you for same.

This is the second time my name has appeared in the list of Prize Winners and I hope to see it there on future occasions.

With best wishes for the future success of your wonderful invention,

I am yours truly
L. V.

THINKS MECCANO IS KING OF TOYS.

Dear Sirs:

I am sending a subscription for the good old Meccano Engineer. I like to read it and I read everything in it from beginning to end. I can hardly wait until it comes each time.

Last Friday I had a bad cold and I had to stay in the house over week-end, so I got my Meccano set out and looked in the Manual to see what I could make. I found there a Turn Table Crane made with a No. 5 Outfit. My Meccano is a No. 3X, but I was able to build this Crane with very few alterations. All the fellows wanted to see it and they thought it was the best model they had ever seen.

I intend to get a Spring Motor. I think Meccano is the King of toys.

Yours truly
F. C.

HAS HOURS OF PLEASURE
Scranton, Pa.

Dear Mr. Meccanoman:

I have worked with Meccano for three years and have found it to be a wonderful toy. I have learned a great deal from my Meccano and also have had hours of pleasure in making Cranes, Railroad Bridges and various other things. I have also interested other boys who live in my neighborhood and we have had lots of fun together. I am 11 years old.

Thanking you for all the fun, I am one of your boys.

J. W.

NEVER TOO OLD FOR MECCANO.
Wilkinsburg.

Dear Sirs:

I am one of your best Meccano boosters, having had Meccano since the first year it was on sale and I am now 15 years old and still take great pleasure in using my Outfit. I started with a No. 2 and now have a No. 5 Meccano, an Inventors Outfit and several dollars worth of parts.

While working for the Carnegie Steel Co. this summer I spent my noon hours in the Mill looking at the different pieces of machinery. In the evenings I built models of them, one an open Hearth Charging Machine took me two weeks to perfect. I attend High School now and am taking a technical course to which Meccano has undoubtedly opened the way for me. All the men I tell about it say it is the best thing they ever heard of for teaching the various mechanical principles, but mother says it is a good thing to keep boys out of trouble if nothing else.

One of my chums got persuaded to try an Imitation Outfit but is disappointed because he finds Meccano more complete, he would rather use my set than his own. At present I have a war "Pursuit Aeroplane" which I expect to enter in the next Prize Contest. I intend to complete my Outfit in the very near future by the addition of a No. 5A set.

William W.

MECCANO TURNS GLOOM TO JOY.
S. Ont.

To Mr. Frank Hornby,

Dear Sir:

I thought I must write you a few lines to let you know how I appreciate Meccano. I am nearly 17 and due to a spinal complaint I am unable to walk, and if it were not for Meccano I would have to spend many miserable hours with nothing to do, especially during the long cold winter months. As it is I can be happy building machines and other models.

By the way I am quite an adept at building automobiles and have one before me as I write, which is run by the Meccano Spring Motor and is controlled entirely from the driver's seat by levers. I have a No. 5 set and the E2 Motor. I have also an Inventors set which I like very much.

With best wishes and kind regards

I am yours truly
C. W. B.

GLAD HE INSISTED ON MECCANO.
Lawrence, Mass.

Dear Sirs:

I can hardly wait until the Meccano Magazine comes, it is so full of interesting things that I have read mine over dozens of times. I am also saving every copy of it and when I grow up I shall always have them to read. I am going to enter the Contest again, although the last time I tried I did not win anything.

The Book about Frank Hornby I have read many times and it made me say to myself, "now don't say you can't". That is why I am writing this letter to ask you for an entry form.

Around my way there are a lot of boys who own—, they played with this a couple of months and then threw it aside. It is not that way with Meccano because I have been building with it for six years this Christmas and will never tire of it.

I go to the Lawrence High School and in class we talk about things that should be used in school for education. One of the boys said they thought it would be a good thing if our class had—, the teacher said there is another builder which would suit us more perfectly and I said, "yes Meccano"; our teacher said "right".

When I first got my Meccano the girl in the store tried to give my mother a flimsy looking thing, but my mother said, "my boy wants a Meccano and he won't have anything else". I am glad that I insisted on Meccano because it is the best toy in the world.

Yours truly
A Meccano Boy.

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FRANK HORNBY, President
J. P. FORTIER, Vice-President and Editor
FRANK A. ATZERT, Secretary
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MEMORIES OF BINNS ROAD

by David Greening

I have collected Dinky Toys for as long as I can remember; not surprisingly, since I grew up in Anfield, Liverpool and my mother worked at the Binns Road factory just after the war. In fact, in 1947 she gave me my first Dinky Toy - a Jeep, and I still have it.

After leaving school I went into a garage but got tired of full size motor vehicles and joined Meccano in 1961 at the age of 20. I worked in the Costing Department and have to say that the 1960s were, in my opinion, the beginning of the Dinky decline.

We had an excellent Social Club and they organised many interesting evenings. I remember attending a "Select Dinner



Dance" shortly after I joined - but in typical Liverpool fashion it ended in a mighty brawl between the Office Department and the Finishing Shop!

I had taken a severe pay cut to work at Binns Road and I loved the company but I could see changes ahead. The glory days for me had been in the 1950s. Every month was a new delight.

The Army Vehicles were particularly well made and my passion for racing cars was fed by the excellent 23 SERIES including the Lago Talbot (known as Talbot Lago 23K).

By contrast I found the MORRIS MINI TRAVELLER AUSTIN 7 countryman and NASH RAMBLER lacking in excitement. The erratic move into 1/35 scale instead of 1/43 was cumbersome. There was plenty of innovation - fingertip steering, moving parts etc - but it was no surprise to me that shortly after I left the company in 1963 the Dinky division was

MECCANO CONTINUOUS PAYMENT

Staff No.	£	s.	d.	Overtime	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
3506	6	3	9	2	2	0		GROSS WAGE	8	5	9 +
Week No.				Cross Wages to Date							
7				55	1	7	3	STANDARD DEDUCTIONS	9	9	-
Tax Code				Tax to Date	£	s.	d.				
35				3	1	4	0	INCOME TAX	12	0	-

MECCANO LTD.

PAY ADVICE

	£	s.	d.
NET PAY	7	4	0 +

bought by TRIANG.

My favourites? Probably the Jeep 1 53A and 623 Army covered wagon and any of the racing cars. But I have a favourite that never was. In 1961 a friend in the Design Room showed me a superb prototype of the BIRDCAGE MASERATI. A beautiful little gem in the CAMORADI racing colours, blue and white. This Dinky Toy was fully detailed with wire wheels and working suspension. It even had a mini Stirling Moss to drive it. Unfortunately the model proved far too costly to produce and it never appeared. I wonder what happened to the prototype?

Dinky Toy Design and Subjects Chosen for Production

The Design Team comprised four people each one with a special bent or liking, e.g. commercial vehicles, saloon cars, racing cars, etc. The ideas for the new models to be produced came from a Committee of Management (Production Dept.) and on occasions from the Design Team. Sometimes one of the motor car companies might make a direct approach and tell Meccano about a new model of vehicle coming onto the market.

Once a design was approved a mock up would be made in clay, or perhaps in wood, and colour schemes worked out.

Dinky Toy Production

The Dinky Toy bodies were made by injection moulding with molten MAZAK (known as ZAMAK in France for some reason) into a die. This alloy was mostly zinc with a little aluminium and copper. The die was in two parts and the moveable piece could be opened horizontally. The metal solidified right away; the finished casting was cleaned in a big barrel lined with rubber and containing small stones.

The bodies were placed on a conveyer belt and sprayed



Stirling Moss at the Wheel of the Real Birdcage Maserati



with high speed jets. The radiator and other bits were done by hand using a collection of specially cut masks.

The ladies are probably packing Double Decker Buses.

Meccano in England and Meccano in France -

During my time at Binns Road I did not see much inter-play between the companies. They each tended to do their own thing and go their own way.

Frank and Roland Hornby

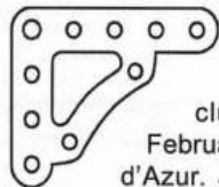
In the 50s and 60s the Hornbys were still very much revered by the older staff members, both management and factory. A large portrait of Frank Hornby hung in the boardroom and I enjoyed going into the boardroom from time to time to view the portrait.

The Decline of Meccano Ltd. at Binns Road

In 1962 Meccano Ltd. made a profit of £94,000 but in 1963 a loss of £670,000. Roland Hornby resigned and Lines Bros stepped in; Jack Tattersall was dismissed from his job as chief accountant. The company continued to lose money until 1968 when they recorded a profit of £145,000 but

that was not enough to prevent voluntary liquidation. Meccano was acquired in 1971 by Airfix. The company never again showed a profit and the Binns Road doors closed in November 1979. I have to say that there was a very defensive attitude from the old Meccano staff under Joe Mullen to the changes proposed by Graeme Lines. It was evident during my short time that the manufacturing costs were exceeding sales revenue by more than 30% - but there existed a powerful group of trade unions at Binns Road who were not ready for technological change. The paint shop, for example, refused to introduce the new Airfix electro painting plant despite it being an obvious advantage.

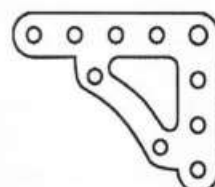
OUR VISITORS FROM FRANCE



Jacques and Danielle Proux joined us at our joint MWT/Wellington club meeting held in Wanganui on Saturday 9 February. They live just outside Nice on the Côte d'Azur. Jacques who is 55 years old started collecting Meccano after his father died about

four years ago. It was discovered that he had left a collection of 1934-1941 blue/gold Meccano in almost mint condition. Jacques was not interested in Meccano at the time and tried to sell it, unsuccessfully at first but then with some sales at a toy fair. At the next toy fair he attended to complete the selling process he chatted to another vendor and instead of selling, he started buying! He was hooked! Jacques admits he is a collector/restorer and not a builder at this time. His oldest restored set is of 1915 vintage.

His Meccano ambition is to "discover" all the parts he is missing and admits he did sell some parts he is now trying to buy!





The items in this "Bits and Pieces" are interspersed with words of engineering wisdom from Anthony of Manchester, U.K., by courtesy of the 'Spanner' Newsgroup.

PROTOTYPES OF EARLY TRAMS & BUSES: If you are looking for drawings of very early trams and buses (some are horse-drawn) try the portfolio of drawings by Hugh Evelyn. They were

published under his own name in 1964. You may find it in a second-hand bookshop.

** I am not old-fashioned. I am just tried and tested.**

HAPPY SUBSCRIBERS: (1) "It was great to see the article and illustration of the gold dredge in the magazine. It is certainly a massive model, as we were led to believe. The magazine goes from strength to strength, with an excellent range of subjects in the October issue." (Frank Davis, N.Z.) (2) "Please find enclosed my subscription to NZFMM Magazine for the year 2002/3. I look forward to receiving and enjoying your most interesting magazine." (John Pond, Cornwall, U.K.)

** Confidence is just the art of not showing how worried you really are.**

UP, UP AND AWAY (BUT NOT IN N.Z.): The Nikko Meccano 8651 Airship set costs \$A77 (NZ\$94) in Australia, GBP39.99 (NZ\$133) in the U.K., and \$US100 (NZ\$236) in New York State. It is proving popular with those overseas modellers who have been able to buy it.

** The first 90% of a project takes 10% of the time; it's the last 10% that takes the other 90% of the time.**

MUSICAL MECCANO: Pierre Bastien is an intriguing French composer and multi-instrumentalist. He has created his own distinctive sound sculptures - musical automatons constructed from Meccano parts and activated by electro-motors that play on acoustic instruments from all over the world. (from the B.B.C. 3 Website). Colin Hinz (Canada) says finding one of Bastien's Mecanum records in a shop back in 1988 was what inspired him to return to Meccano. And, of course, we have our own David Wall with his glockenspiel.

** Fact - computers work faster the less work they have to do.**

QUOTATION: "No, not Rochdale with its Meccano Guild, its drystone walling, badminton and German Shorthair Pointer Club."
(Bill Bryson, in 'Notes from a Small Island').

** The best things in life are ferrous.**

HOTEL MECCANO: The Great Western Hotel at Paignton in Devon is a dream destination for model railway and Meccano fans. It has two huge landscaped train layouts plus a host of working Lego and Meccano models and children are encouraged to play with them all. The owners are Mel and Cathy Sherwood. Mel is an avid model railway fan. He has a 14 x 18 'O' layout in the basement, with most English makes represented. He is also into Meccano with a demonstration model of the GWR 4-4-0 'City of Truro'. (Thanks to Nigel Pope and Brian Willis for these details)

** If only there was a vaccine for rust.**

MECCANO FOR ROBOTS: "While at Wembley Arena with my two sons to watch some of the battles from the TV programme 'Robot Wars', I came across this in the programme for the event. It is from an interview with Derek Foxwell, head of Robot Wars Technical Department and Chris Reynolds, Visual Effects Designer :

Q. 'What advice would you give to anyone who is thinking of building a robot ?'

A. 'In order to be able to build a robot, people need to start by learning how to put things together and the basics of assembly, fitting and engineering. So far as building goes I think that Meccano is a perfect learning tool. I would advise any budding roboteers to go out and buy Meccano.'

(Thanks to Andrew Cathie for this item. Incidentally, Andrew says the battles were fun, if rather loud.)

** An engineer takes an idea and puts wheels on it.**

BOXES FOR TRANSPORTING MODELS: "I like to make strong cardboard boxes to transport models in. Small models are no problem to fit into existing boxes from the supermarket but big models need custom-made boxes. A good source is the whiteware dealer who has cooker and refrigerator boxes in thick cardboard. Some judicious cutting and sewing with plastic coated wire, plus strong, wide packaging tape produces a box which can be stacked and has guts. (Bruce Neilson, N.Z.)

DID YOU KNOW ? The first toilet paper roll was made in 1871.

CAT AND MOUSE: Do you remember the Tom and Jerry cartoon films ? In one there was a robot cat with a big label on it - 'Mechano'.

ABOVE AVERAGE MODELLERS: Meccano is often mentioned in the U.K. *Mensa* magazine which is for persons with very high intelligence.

QUOTATION: "There is a lack of almost anything these days to teach kids practical skills like engineering. Lego is just not up to the job like Meccano is. People brought up on Lego are now buying houses and they can't even put up a curtain rail."

(Jeff Howells in 'Sunday Telegraph' (UK)).



What our Readers Think



Some Thoughts

from Jim Parlane, Te Awamutu.

This is my first correspondence to the magazine. It is the lifeblood of the organisation. Allow me to congratulate you on the magazine, it just keeps getting better and better. The Tool Kit articles have motivated me to put together the suggested items and these are now a collection in their own right. As a result of the address list, one or two of the Hamilton members have contacted me and it seems there is a bit of a network forming.

I am not a prolific Meccano builder averaging one or two models per year and the Christmas break allowed me to do a bit of building and some sleuthing. I spent the holiday break travelling down the West Coast of the South Island with a view to walking into an unsuspecting junk shop and getting a low priced No. 10 set. No luck. Meccano is getting scarce. I must have covered about 30-40 shops in the circuit I did. I saw three sets of about No 6, 7&8 in Richmond, a half beer box of Ezybuilt in Murchison with a handful of brass parts which looked like most of a Gears Set in it, a single pulley block hook, a newish Magic Motor with no key and a couple of train bumpers. That was the bargain of the trip at \$12. Called at Hokitika and saw the legendary Gold Dredge model and had a demo. and saw no more Meccano until Bulls where I got a small cake tin full for \$5. In Wellington on the way home, I got a 99% complete modern no. 5 set with no books for \$50. That is going down to the office to occupy a boy in the holidays while his mum works there.

I bid for a box of bits at an auction in Cambridge and paid the market price, as I found out later, another member was bidding too. Next time we will put our heads together beforehand and work out how we can split the loot without paying so much.

I'm thinking of suggesting the local museum might run a competition for kids to build a Meccano model and see what comes out of the woodwork if I offer a prize. Has anybody done this? If so how did it go?

As kids we always had a Meccano set which came out with the train set on wet weekends. Since then, I got back into it when I bought a NO. 8 set in Rotorua one day about 15 years ago to celebrate a small personal legal victory. Since then I have built it up to a No. 10 set with the help of one or two Auckland members. Even the bloke at the dump has found me a few bits but now he's keeping them all for himself. To think that people throw Meccano away, shows how far off the mark they really are. Bring on a rubbish dump tax to deter the stupid.

Wanted to Buy - Meccano

My New Years resolution - To collect a few more obsolete parts. If anybody can help, please contact me on; <james-parlane-lawyer@clear.net.nz>, or 07 870 4990(Hm), 07 870 4991 (Wk), or Fax 07 870 4992.

Bruce's Choices From Around The World

by Bruce Neilson

Canadian Meccanotes - December 2001

Pick of the articles - A simple way to mount Ash Tray Tyres on Meccano Rims by Lloyd B Schneider.

If you possess some large ashtray tyres, there still remains the problem of filling in the centre hub and to meld the tyre into Meccano format. The use of two 3" Pulleys P/N 19b, four Bent Strip Stepped P/N 44, and a 8 hole Bush Wheel P/N 24 will produce a solution and use up some common Meccano parts.

Also in this issue two items took my eye. A Bird Cage made from a base of Sector Plates, lots of Crank Handles, and Curved Strips. A visit to Ashok Bannerjee and how he has set up his Meccano manufacturing industry.

Southern California Meccano & Erector Club - December 2001

Pick of the articles - Building a Wind Driven Power Generator by Charlie Pack

The model is designed to fit within a No. 10 set plus three boilers, and be transported in modules inside a 21" tool box. It is made up of a cylindrical tower, rectangular head, and three 19 hole long blades with two MO motors to slew the head and rotate the blades. There are three pages of text and three photos which gives sufficient detail for an average Meccanoman to complete the model.

For those who want a large challenge, a model plan (in French and pictures) of the giant floating crane "Herman the German" is available.

The International Meccanoman - January 2002

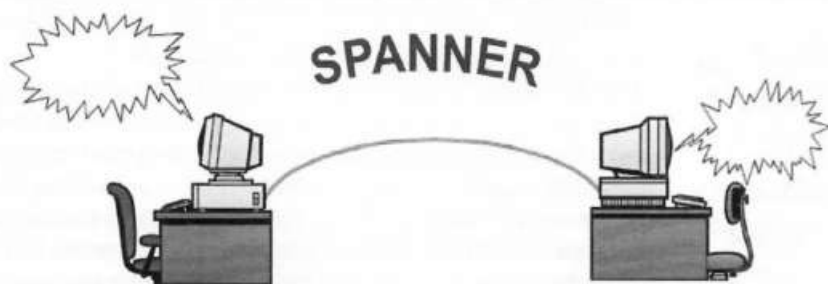
Pick of the articles - A Meccano Front lash Mechanism by Michael Adler

Most of us would not recognise a "backlash" and think it had something to do with car accidents. However when, for the first time, we are looking for smooth action in a Meccanograph or a revolving table, then it jumps out and bites us. To quote from Michael Adler's article " ..occurs in a train of gears where the final drive will lag behind the input and happens each time the drive is reversed". The two page article uses planetary gearing to demonstrate a solution to the problem and the mechanism can be inserted before or after the drive requiring correction.

Subscription rates, addresses, etc., for the above publications are available from the Editor, NZFMM Magazine.

Subscription Renewal 2002-03

Subscription renewal forms are enclosed and addressed individually by courtesy of modern computer technology. Early return of the form with your money to Lloyd Spackman will ensure that you do not miss out on the April 2002 issue. The information supplied becomes the basis for the production of computer address labels and the 2002 Subscribers list which is always a popular item. Persuade a Meccano friend to subscribe and the hobby will become all the stronger.



The use of email from the Spanner group is acknowledged.

Hints and Tips

1. Try using oiled paper in the drawer bottoms after you have cleaned zinc parts. It is used for wrapping gauge plate (Ground flat stock) and silver steel. You can get it at most good engineering material stockists and model engineering suppliers. (Warren Thomason)

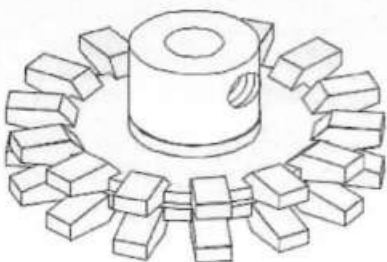
1a. Absolutely avoid using bubble wrap or similar plastic for long-term storage as it can bond to the lithography or enamel paint in some cases; at the very least it can cause discolouring and spots. (Marwan Nusair)

2. I quite often run my steam engines on compressed air from an aquarium pump. This that works out well and is safer especially at shows. (Reg Hall)

3. Old VCR's often have an axle of Meccano diameter, about 8 inches long and with flattened ends, that is great for securing grub screws. A junk computer (PC) power supply delivers 12 v and 5 v DC, (12v with yellow & black, and 5v with red & black wires), with several plugs, and it can run continuously. (Oscar Nenninger)

4. Fitting the small shaft of a motor into a Meccano sized axle does not need a fancy lathe. Simply take a short Axle Rod, drill a hole of appropriate size up the centre of the rod and then glue the motor shaft in place. (Robert Simpson)

5. Multi purpose Gear Wheels P/N 27f are useful as a connecting shafts where there is minor misalignment. (George Illingworth).



As the multi-purpose gear has 14 teeth it may be used in a clock for a Day-of-the-Week drive. A bolt shank protruding from the gear that carries the hour hand, strikes a plunger that advances the 27f by one tooth. A corner angle bracket

154a acts as a pawl to prevent backward motion of the 27f. This gear's axle rod carries the pointer for the day-of-the-week dial. Each day is sub-divided into AM and PM.

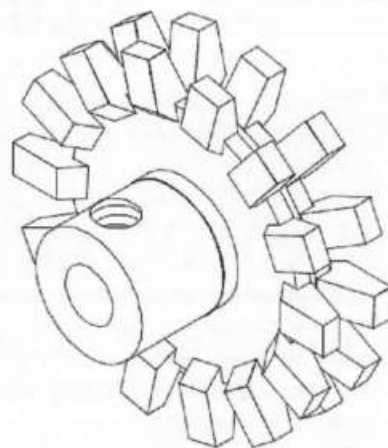
When a 14 tooth Sprocket P/N 96a is mated with the P/N 27f, an excellent clutch is formed and positive engagement is achieved with minimal movement. (Chris Shute).

When mounted on a splined shaft, 27f offers a perfect choice for multi-movement mechanisms from a single drive shaft. It will also accept a belt drive. (Jacques Vuye).

When I build models, I find 27f excellent to use. My V6 engine uses nine to transmit the power from the each of

the six French black motors to the main shaft on which the clutch is mounted. The multi-purpose gears are tolerant of a little misalignment and better suited to right angle power take-off from a motor. A bevel gear pair tends to produce more back-thrust on the motor shaft than desirable. My favourites are the 1979 ones with the push-fit bosses as they are always perfectly aligned;
t h e
bosses

never come loose - both problems with the peened variety. Note however that the extra plastic to take the push-fit boss, means they will not work as a dog-clutch. Also these later yellow and white ones offer a much snuggier mesh than the black variety, which can be handy if back-lash is an issue. (Tim Gant)



2001 Sets Builders Comments

Santa was nice this year and left a Motion Systems Best of 50 and Crazy Inventors Steam Boat under the tree with my name on it. After an hour or so spent joyfully going through the contents of both boxes I was left somewhat disheartened. What had obviously started off as Meccano seems to have morphed into a "toy". I was hoping the feeling would pass but your note reinforces my belief that far too many plastic pieces, most of which are useful only in the theme model are found in today's sets. (Ken Chernabrow)

For Christmas I got a Future Masters 8600 set (the six wheeled excavator). I was drawn to it by the six wheels that could form the basis of an interesting model; the wheels are about the right shape for a quad bike. I've now built the six wheel excavator that goes together well and it trundles along the floor nicely when switched on. There are three LH and three RH wheels. The wheels are an obvious Nikko influence and look just the thing you'd expect on a radio controlled model car. They cannot be fixed to the axle; drive is achieved by means of a threaded pin bolted to a plastic contrate wheel. There is a hexagonal recess on the outside of the wheel centre that will fit a Meccano hex nut. after a little persuasion. That would get a positive drive to the wheel. There is quite a lot of plastic in the set. I don't mind the plastic strips (they have holes at 1/4 " spacings so could be useful) but I do not like the flimsy shaped plastic bits that are supposed to form body mouldings, etc. As I am now 56, I was a little uncomfortable with the "man" provided with the set; that reminds me that it is just a toy! I like the excavator bucket. I expect we'll see more of that. It would probably not look out of place on Michael Adler's excavator. The excavator arm and the "digging" action are fine, but I thought the attachment to the body was a little flimsy. (John Evans)

MWT MECCANO CLUB

Meeting Report for 9 February 2002

Photographs
by Daryl
Anderson

The fame of MWT meetings is spreading and we were pleased to welcome visitors Jacques and Danielle Proux (France), Ian Stuart (USA) and Colin Saunders (NZ).

The meeting was also augmented by members and supporters of the Wellington Meccano Club to participate in a Tug of War Club challenge. About twelve "tractors" lined up on the church foyer carpet and it was literally "knees on the carpet" as tractors were paired off to be chained back to back and the No 1 Clockwork motors released. Deadlock between equals was common, but also some cheers and groans for some overpowering pulls. Ingenuity of models varied from skeletal models to full replicas of tow trucks and farm tractors. Mechanisms started at direct gearing down of the motor power through to self changing gearboxes. Multi rubber tyres were the preferred and most successful rubber to road system. In the end Simon Moody and "Xena" came out as the tractor with the most muscle and won the jar of jellybeans. As Simon is a member of both clubs, claims are being made and refuted of the winning club. All in all, a very successful competition with another different challenge being organised.

Bush Wheels and Flanged Wheels everywhere. Members brought along samples of nearly all the variations including a DMS 1332 1904 large and small hole example. Don Blakeborough's Encyclopedia of Meccano Parts (EMP) was used extensively to identify the many variations. Our discussions even lead to the Korean War of 1951-1954 as the cause of a metal shortage that caused Meccano Ltd to turn out parts in black steel rather than traditional brass.

A number of models were also presented in the model tour. Wayne Blakely had acquired a Mogul Truck (1970's) which was unusual as it was the only one of the series of six that had an open cab.

Bruce Geange had taken a farm tractor from "More New Models Leaflet No 9" issued by Meccano Ltd and reprinted in the July 1992 *Meccanoman's Newsmag* and after striking difficulty with the construction of the plan version, rebuilt it completely and geared it down for the Tug of War. What makes this model different is the use of P/N 187b 4 1/4" Road Wheels which were only available between 1962 to 1973

and never included with sets. A rebuilt X series clockwork motor in red and green was also presented.

The Schmidt Coupling development which started from a lone coupling by Paul Dale has progressed to the Mark 1 and Mark 2 Schmidt Meccanographs by John Ince. The Schmidt coupling allows an offset axle to continually rotate while incorporating a lateral movement. With the addition of some ideas from the Meccanograph illustrated in the April 1971 Meccano Magazine such as the parallelogram pen head, etc, some new ideas for Meccanographs are have been evolved. The logo of the Spanish Meccano Club had also been constructed.

Psychedelic purple is the colour of the case which contained a 40 Motion set which Tom Pittams had acquired along with a 1960's Emebo motor. He also presented his Fire Engine with ladder now completed.

The Midland Single Wheeler 4-2-2 (see elsewhere in this issue) was on display by Bob Prescott and the classic form of this loco and why it keeps being reincarnated became obvious.

The use of the Internet and Spanner group as a means of sending pictures of models is becoming more common and from one of these, Lloyd Spackman built a tractor which



The Tug of War Challenge Participants

uses the MO Motor as the engine. He also had a model which incorporated a model train plus aeroplane, helicopter, windmill, waterwheel, station, over bridges, and goods shed, all mounted inside the area of an P/N 167b Flanged Ring and fully motorised.

A Touring Car and Streamlined Caravan from a 1959 Manual were shown by Paul Vodanovitch along with a Racing Seaplane. A model Front End Shovel from the Mechanic set showed the possibilities of this Chinese imitation which, with a little more thought on hole spacing, could have been most useful to Meccano builders.

Don Wilson showed the possibilities of large spoked wheels using axle rods and made up tyres. A very neat Anderson Concrete mixer which incorporated a dog clutch to operate the lifting of the skip and powered by a 1982 MO Motor was on display. The problem of rotating the concrete drum while tilting the drum had been solved by the ingenious use of a 3 1/2" Gear Ring and 1/2" Bevel Gear.

Wellington Meccano Club Meeting Report 7 December 2001

by Bryan Jones

The Wellington Meccano Club held its end of year dinner on the evening of Tuesday, 4 December 2001. A party of fourteen members and partners enjoyed a pleasant meal in the warm and relaxed surroundings of the Green Parrot restaurant. It was a rather unpleasant night outside, with wind and horizontal rain making up most of the climatic activity, but the atmosphere in the restaurant was most congenial, and the conversation lasted over two and a half hours.

Seven members were present at St Lukes on the following Friday for the final meeting for the year. Since the previous meeting, members had been encouraged to build or further develop their tractors for the Towing Competition. There were four present, so a course was marked out on the carpet and trials began.

We were dismayed to see the size of a new contender, a tow truck named "Xena" (by Simon Moody), but it did fit the rules as published, and was allowed to compete. Tim Moody had redeveloped "Vladimir the Victorious" by adding a body to make it look rather more like an Army recovery vehicle, and some weight and gearing changes. This improved its performance considerably from that of its last showing. Laurie Webb had done some more work on his tractor (as yet unnamed), but it displayed some reluctance to behave for a while. It initially failed even to complete the two metres minimum unhampered travel distance. Accusations of an non-level playing surface were heard to be mentioned, and the direction of the pile of the carpet was checked several times! After the motor spring had been exercised a few times, and the oil had warmed up, the distance was passed and towing trials could take place. Alas! Axle slip occurred and Bryan Jones' "Herman the German" walked away with Laurie's tractor. Laurie withdrew to make temporary modifications, and these proved to be effective. Even "Herman" was unable to compete with the new, improved performance.

By this stage the remainder of the field had been tested several times, and it was determined that "Xena" had the best pulling power, followed by "Son of Vladimir" and then Laurie's entry. Herman still looked the best, but was surpassed by all the others in towing effort.

Lou Nichols demonstrated his little roundabout again. He had brought it to show a member who, as it happened, was not able to attend. He had modified the details of the horses a little, following a comment from someone about their resemblance to goats!

Simon also brought a large selection of the parts being made by Jack Parsisson of Melbourne. As well as copies of standard parts, there were several developments with extra flanges, or extra width of flanges etc. that could be very useful for solving that awkward construction problem. Jack is also producing flexible plates, and initial samples look promising.

The Club has been informed by the bookings manager that St Lukes will become unavailable around the middle of next year. The halls are to be demolished and the property re-developed with a new hall and office space. Lou Nichols offered his place for at least the first meeting which we have to re-locate. The first two meetings for next year (1 February and 5 April) should be able to be held at St Lukes. The February meeting will provide the last opportunity for Tractor Testing, before a visit is made to the MWT Club meeting the following weekend.

Wellington Meccano Club Meeting Report 1 February 2002

By Bryan Jones

The Wellington Club's first meeting for 2002 was held at St. Lukes, Wadestown on Friday 1st February, and was attended by 9 members. The main object of the meeting was to try out the latest improvements to the various tractors produced for the Tug of War, before members attended the MWT Club meeting a week later.

Six tractors were entered for trial:-

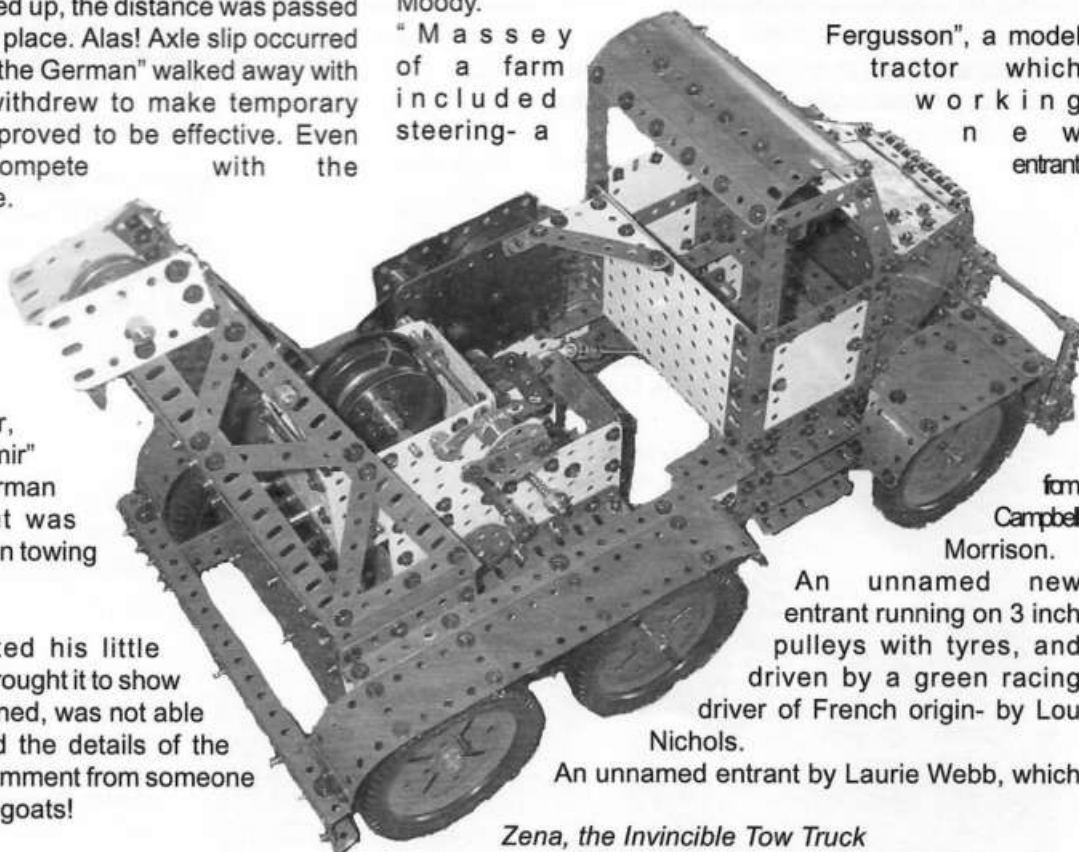
"Herman the German", alias the "Teutonic Tractor", a Volkswagen look alike built by Bryan Jones.

"Xena", a large tow truck by Simon Moody.

"Son of Vladimir", an Army recovery vehicle by Timothy Moody.

"Massey of a farm included steering- a

Fergusson", a model tractor which working new entrant



from
Campbell
Morrison.

An unnamed new entrant running on 3 inch pulleys with tyres, and driven by a green racing driver of French origin- by Lou Nichols.

An unnamed entrant by Laurie Webb, which

Zena, the Invincible Tow Truck

had some problems at its last showing, but we were assured that these had been rectified.

Each tractor was run unhindered to prove its ability to travel a minimum of two metres. "Massey Fergusson" had some sort of problem with its motor and refused to cover the distance, much to Campbell's disappointment. The other tractors all passed.

The tractors were paired off for the Tug of War, with the following results:-

"Xena" out-pulled everything (not surprisingly, when it was revealed why...).

"Son of Vladimir" and Laurie Webb's entry appeared to be about equal, stalling each other.

"Son of Vladimir" was stronger than Lou Nichols' entry, the latter being dragged backwards with its wheels slipping on its axles.

Lou's entry and "Herman the German" were equal in strength.

Campbell produced a spring scale to enable a measurement of the pulling effort of each tractor. Lou's entry and "Herman the German" both registered 500 gm, Laurie's entry achieved 1000 gm, and "Son of Vladimir" managed 1250 gm. "Xena" exceeded the scale maximum measurement.

Lloyd Spackman brought a tractor, but it was not intended for the competition. It was a model from a new Motion Control Set, and was built of khaki and orange parts. It was interesting to note that the MO style motor included with the set was silver-grey, rather than black, and this had been built into the right place in the tractor to look like the engine. A plastic gear train drove the back wheels at a realistic speed.

Lloyd also showed a table display model from a Graeme O'Neill design, which was itself based on an earlier published design. The model featured a small village with a church, windmill, waterwheel and railway station. A circular track supported two of the "smallest trains you can make in Meccano", according to Lloyd, and these travelled around the village, being driven by an MO motor and gear box

Auckland Meccano Club Meeting Report 9 February 2002

by Peter Hancock

The first meeting of the club for the year 2002 was held on Saturday, 9 February 2002 at the new residence of the Auckland President David Wall and his faithful (Meccano) wife Elizabeth in sunny Orewa. David and Elizabeth have recently relocated to Orewa after selling their home on the North Shore where they have resided for many years. Before the big shift took place in December last, rumour has it that David spent a good deal of time working his way through his not inconsiderable collection preparing his library and of course his beloved Meccano collection and other associated memorabilia for the big day. What to discard, what to take?

As generally found in new homes of today, there are not as many hidey holes to store treasures in as in homes of yesteryears and we understand that David found it very hard to 'cull' all those 'bits' that might be really necessary some day soon to complete that special model or to make a piece of essential modelling equipment from. President David had a real dilemma on his hands literally when it came to what could go and what items had to be moved on reluctantly to others who had space and might be able to find a use for them in future. Of course if these items were stored elsewhere then David who has an accurate inventory of their location could call on them if required. We have reason to believe that not too much went out as scrap.

Unfortunately there were several apologies on the day of the meeting including one from the secretary who was reluctantly involved in other matters elsewhere. There were 10 members in attendance and five ladies who came to lend their support and ensured that after all the discussions on the models and the regular meeting had been held and

(Continued on next page)



under the village. The gear box also provided movement to the windmill sails and waterwheel, and rotated two aircraft overhead, in the opposite direction the movement of the trains. The model was based on blue parts, with the village finished brightly in red and yellow parts, and the trains in nickel with some red parts also.

Over supper it was determined that five members would be travelling to Wanganui for the MWT Club meeting and taking tractors for competition.

Next meeting: Friday, 5th April, St. Lukes Wadestown.

The Tug-of-War Winner (Simon Moody, WMC) gets his Just Reward (Jelly Beans) from the MWT President (Bruce Neilson)

Christchurch Meccano Club Meeting Report 7 December 2001

by Ian Torrens

It was a cool wet evening for our final meeting of the year, held on 7 December 2001. Ten members were present with the following Meccano models on display.

The models were: Half Track German Troop Carrier; by Dave Lang. An excellent model mixing Märklin and Meccano.

Cameron McFarlane had a Kinex model of a cat, sliding to and fro, all the while bobbing its head up and down, kept us amused for most of the evening. The cat was 18" long by 8" wide and 16" high.

Old models by Graeme O'Neill on display once again were:

- Showman Traction Engine - the Bert Halliday MM cover model from the 1960s;

- Spur Differential, with helical planets as used in Ferrari racing cars; Naval Frigate, 1950s No 6 set in red and green. This model was 20" long, 14" high, and 11" wide.

- Monoplane from 1950s 5 set; its 15" fuselage with a wingspan of 23" it looked good in yellow and green.

- Motorcycle with two panniers which had a luggage case across the top of the panniers. This model was mounted on a yellow base plate and started life as Steeltec but now revised with 2" Meccano tyres - It looked very good indeed.

- Grandmother Clock, which has been shortened to only six foot high. this was based on Bert Love's 10 set model

There were also Five Plastic Meccano models, built up on the spot to show some of the less active modellers how easy the Junior system is to use with elderly fingers. These

(continued from previous page)

finalised that sustenance was on hand for all before journeying home. A feature of this meeting was that members travelled from far and wide to attend.

- Stuart Glass had travelled up from Hamilton and displayed a 'Ship Coaler' assembled from a 1950's era No 4 outfit. Stuart also brought to the meeting a 'Magic Motor powered Mechanical Horse' that he built using a 1970's No 3 set.

- Bob McCracken from Helensville had an 'Elektrikit' Model number E12, 'Asynchronous Motor' on display.

- George Ovenden from Milford displayed a 50:1 reduction gearbox built to fit a MO motor. George built this unit using as reference, information found in the IM No 35. Jonathon, his grandson, (who could not be present on the day) had built an electrically powered Gantry Crane from a 1990's No 5 set and George showed this off.

- Mike Geary from Sunnynook had built an 'Auto-Gyro' with a very cunningly contrived feathering system for the rotor mechanism.

- From Paeroa, Mike Walmsley, who had travelled some distance to attend, brought with him the completed base and turntable for the SML No 4 Giant Block Setting Crane he is currently constructing, and a miniature motorcycle.

- David Wall had been fantasising and had built a strange creation, which he said was his version of a 'Fantasy

ended up as two Helicopters, two Cars and a Roundabout.

Graeme O'Neill did a video recording of the evening and I left with Doug King at 2145 hours as the meeting was coming to a finish. A fine supper was put on and a pleasant evening was had by all. Mention was made of the Christchurch Meccano Club's 75th Anniversary which is in 2004. A convention for this is in the pipeline; more news of this later. We wish the Meccano fraternity all the best for Christmas and New Year and look forward to 2002 bringing more modelling and enjoyment with our hobby.

Christchurch Meccano Club Meeting Report for February 2002

by Ian Torrens

On a fine but cool evening, 1 February 2002, seven members were present for the first meeting of the year.

David Lang had a K'nex Swing Boat which performed very well. This had a number of seats, each having two small model persons sitting on each seat. Looked very good as it swung to and fro. This model was 20" long x 43" high x 27" wide. David also had his Caterpillar Tracked Lorry on show again but now with two motors and better controls. A worthy effort. Cameron McFarlane had a locomotive modelled in "Morephun", an English construction set. This model was 10" long x 9" high x 6" wide. He also had a 6" circular demonstration unit which showed how the units locked together by means of a circular spline. As well as this, he had an "Acto" Space Explorer Team unit, this being 4.5" wide x 3.5" high x 3.5" long. He also had other "Acto" parts which gave us a good idea of this system. Supper was put on by David and Donnell, (many thanks), after which the meeting finished at 2115 hours.

Airship'. Hm, wonder if the Sun in Orewa is a little stronger than we thought? This model is somewhat a departure from David's usual model themes. Time will tell how the relocation to Orewa has really affected him and whether this new direction in his modelling will become the norm.

- Graeme Wrightson from Howick, Neil Carey, from Hillsborough and Hugh and his son Alistair Munro from Mairangi Bay made up the gathering.

Joan Ovenden, Joyce McCracken, Eileen Carey and Lesley Munro assisted hostess Elizabeth in keeping every one well fed and watered and all enjoyed a happy afternoon.

The Club's next meeting is scheduled for Saturday, 11 May 2002 at the home of Jan and Peter Hancock, Number1, Orangewood Drive, Northpark, Howick, Auckland (09 535 5355) starting at 2.00pm. The theme for this meeting will be 'steam power', the plan being on the day to display any steam engine models and models of steam engines and to fire up any steam driven models that are on hand and in working order. The Fire Brigade have been notified just in case. All Members are welcome, just bring a model or several, and a small contribution of food for the nosh up and even if you don't have anything to show come anyway for an afternoon of fellowship. Wives/partners are especially welcome.

New Zealand Club Diary 2002

Auckland Meccano Club.

Contact - David Wall - Ph 09 426 1965
Meetings at 2 pm on second Saturday every third month. 11 May, 10 August, 9 November.

MWT Meccano Club.

Contact - Bruce Neilson - Ph 06 355 0776.
Meetings at 2pm on second Saturday every second month at St. Luke's Church Hall, cnr Cornfoot and Manuka Streets, Wanganui.

13 April (Wanganui Grand Tour), 8 June, 10 August, 12 October.

Wellington Meccano Club.

Contact - Lou Nichols Ph 04 973 6177.
Meetings at 7.30 pm on first Friday every second month at St Luke's Church Hall, 55 Pitt St, Wadestown, Wellington.

5 April, 31 May (in lieu of 7 June), 2 August, 4 October, 6 December.

Christchurch Meccano Club.

Contact - Graeme O'Neill Ph 03 322 7456.
Meetings at 7.30 pm on first Friday every month (except January) at St John's Hall, cnr St John St. and Ferry Rd., Woolston, Christchurch.

1 March, 5 April, 3 May, 1 June, 5 July, 2 August, 6 September, 4 October, 1 November, 6 December.

Additional Meccano Contacts

Hamilton - Don McClelland Ph 07 847 4503.

Wanganui - Tom Pittams Ph 025 274 8486.

Palmerston Nth - 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>

Articles etc. for the April issue of NZFMM Magazine should be sent to the Editor well before 13 April 2002.

Wanted - Autobiographies from Meccanomen for the "Meet the Meccanoman" series. 1200 words and a facial photo plus. Record yourself for posterity. Contact the Editor.

Back Numbers - NZFMM Magazines from April 2001 are available. Contact the Editor

Reminder - 14 Months to Go.

New Zealand 2003 Convention.

18-19-20 April 2003.

Email <meccano2003nz@bitworks.co.nz>.

Buy, Sell, Auction & Exchange Advertisements in this section are free

For Sale *The Meccano System and the Special Purpose Meccano Sets* by Bert Love and Jim Gamble. Vol. 6 from the HORNBY COMPANION SERIES produced by New Cavendish Books in near new condition. \$110.00 or near offer. Enquiries to Mrs Price at Ph 09 267 4662.

For Sale - Meccano Collection

A resident of Upper Hutt has a collection of Meccano for sale. Much of it is in poor condition, and it would appear to be the remains of a medium sized pre WW2 set. Some gears and a No 1. Clockwork Motor are included. The owner has indicated a reserve price of \$100. I have a list of the parts and the contact details- for further information please email me (bryanj@ihug.co.nz) or phone (04) 5283988 and leave a message.

For Sale - Meccano Centennial Commemorative Stamps

by Michael Adler, ISM 1 and Doug Harris, ISM 158. Featured is the Giant Blocksetting Crane, with a portrait of Frank Hornby. 'Meccano Centennial' is printed at the top, 'Frank Hornby' below. The stamp is orange, black and white. (Page 18, Oct 2001 NZFMM Magazine). A full colour version may be seen on my website: <www.geocities.com/hornbymeccano>, also my Meccano and Hornby posters. NZ\$20 posted for 5 sheets of 20 stamps, overseas prices on the website. Order there or from Doug Harris at Box 82 323, Auckland. email <digbee@xtra.co.nz>

For Sale - WRI Replica Channel Segments P/N 119, available in Nickel Plate, A\$30.00 per set of 8 (= one circle) plus postage and packing. All enquiries to: Bill Inglis, P.O. Box 620, Myrtleford, 3736, Victoria, Australia. Telephone. +61 3 5751 1846 or Email <inglis@netc.net.au>

For Sale - Replica & Meccano Parts

Girders and plates: These parts are made by Newton Engineering, Christchurch

Angle girders	24 1/2"	\$4.00ea;	18 1/2"	\$3.70ea
Flat girders	24 1/2"	\$3.80ea;	18 1/2"	\$3.40ea
Flat platess	3 1/2" x 5 1/2"	\$3.50ea;	2 1/2" x 5 1/2"	\$3.10ea
Flat platess	3 1/2" x 4 1/2"	\$2.40ea;	2 1/2" x 4 1/2"	\$1.95ea
Flat platess	2 1/2" x 2 1/2"	\$1.60ea;	1 1/2" x 24 1/2"	\$4.00ea
Flat platess	2 1/2" x 3 1/2"	\$1.95ea		
Girder Bracket	1 x 2 x 24 1/2"	\$4.30ea		

These parts are all made from 1mm electro galv mild steel and are unpainted.

Bolts, etc:

Nuts & bolts ZP	1000	\$150.00	400	\$65.00
Bolts ZP cheese head 1 1/4"	25	\$3.00		
Bolts ZP c.h. 3/8" & 3/4"	50	\$5.00		
Washers 4mm x 9mm ZP	200	\$6.00		
Grub Screws, slotted	50	\$7.00		

Please order from John Ince, 5 Lennox Place, Feilding.

Phone: 06 323 7075 Email: <johnince@ihug.co.nz>

Prices are in NZ\$ and do not include packing and postage.

The remaining advertisements in this column have been published in previous issues. Please refer to the October 2001 issue for details

For Sale - Meccano Replica Parts made by Jack Parsisson, <www.meerlu.com.au/> Email <jackp@cavva.com.au>.

Buy - Sell - Trade Wayne Blakely Meccano, Ph 06 327 6184, Fax 06 327 4184.

For Sale - Convention 2001 Photos You can email me at <bryanj@ihug.co.nz>.

For Sale - Index to Meccano Literature, Vols. 1 and 2.

Bruce Neilson, Email <rbneilson@infogen.net.nz>.

Wanted - NZFMM Magazine Back Numbers

Prior to April 2001. Albert G Howe. Email to albertghowe@howenos2.freemove.co.uk.