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Rob Campbell
Rebuilds an American

Classic Locomotive with

MECCANO

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NZ Federation of Meccano Modellers Magazine

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

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A list of New Zealand subscribers is included with this issue.

Lies and Deceptions

If you are an addicted Meccano collector, buyer, investor, here is some advice to maintain your relationship with your partner.

1. – Never keep all your Meccano in one place. Scatter it around in various places.
2. – Don't number your collection of sets from 1 to XXX. Just refer to them by name i.e. 1930 L set.
3. – Collect only one style or type of Meccano. That way it is harder to figure out how many variations you actually have.
4. – Early in your collecting, buy some Meccano you don't want and sell it quickly. Then you can honestly say "Remember the Meccano I sold? I am thinking of selling some more so we can have the spare room back."
5. – Pay for Meccano with cash, and after delivery destroy all the paper trail before the receipts, etc. become an embarrassment.
6. – Buy some junk Meccano lots with good Meccano lots so that you can average out the price per lot and be able to say "Yes, 10 lots for \$200" when actually the best lot on its own was an overpriced \$160.
7. – Buy a No 9 Set this month. "No! This is not another No 10 Set." Then later buy a No 9A Set. "No! This is not another No 10 Set."
8. – Have a mate ring when you are not home and leave a message. "Tell Bruce that that Meccano lot went for \$xxx and there is no way a financially cautious and responsible person like Bruce would want to pay that much, so I didn't even make a bid for him."
9. – If the floors of the house are starting to sag and the car is permanently parked in the drive because you have so much Meccano causing your partner to ask, "Who do you love the most? Me or your Meccano?", do NOT ask for time to think about it!

Well, if you nodded your head somewhere in the above, you had better not get caught out.

Have fun. R. Bruce Neilson

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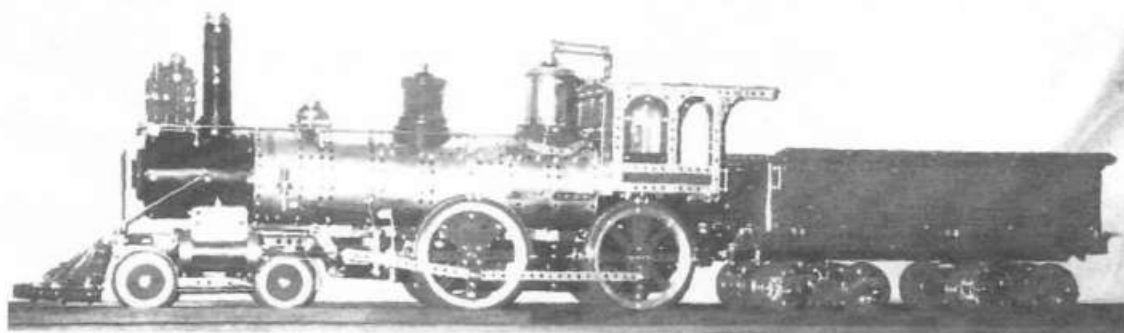
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The Cover pictures of the Rogers Locomotive are by Rob Campbell

Model of the American Rogers 4-4-0 Locomotive

by Rob Campbell



I have been encouraged by a few people to submit this article and photos for possible publication in the NZFMM magazine. Here are the basics, and if it's of interest you can contact me down track for any more details.

ITEM: $\frac{1}{12}$ th scale model of 'Promontory' Union Pacific 4-4-0 No.119, which participated with the West Coast of USA's 'Jupiter' 4-4-0 when they met at Promontory in Utah to join the first transcontinental railroad line in the U.S. in 1868. At that site, the event was celebrated by a luminary being present to salute the occasion by driving in the golden spike to commemorate the occasion.

This Rogers manufactured locomotive had a longer smoke box front than the West's wood burning version, and was fired by coal, hence the straight stack instead of a funnel with spark arrester on top. Apparently 2,500 of these locos were built and sold by the Rogers concern; most would have been for USA's consumption with some perhaps going to South American nations.

MODEL SOURCES:

Once I decided to pursue with this project, a hot rodder gave me TMC Market in Christchurch as a starting source. Via email I chose three boxes of random parts which ranged from quite good to buckled from TMC at a very reasonable price. Another hot rodder, Brian Bonisch in Gore put me, onto a tool concern in Mosgiel where I got some flexible and rigid Meccano parts left in a tea chest which was initially full, but had otherwise been raided and depleted. Wayne Blakely in Marton, Rangitikei helped with used parts I needed, and Bruce Geange in Palmerston North aided by making and rolling the two cylinder boxes and steam dome perfectly (what would you expect?) in brass, to allow a better effect than gold spray paint. Bruce Geange also made the narrow adorning strips for the boiler, but was unable to source thin brass sheet at the time so he crafted them in thin tin. The gold spray paint is not really effective enough on the 'bands' but folks don't seem to mind.

MECCANO GENUINENESS:

(Is that a real word?) Two sections are not genuine. These are the four front bogie rims, left-overs from another loco model, wider and $\frac{1}{8}$ inch larger diameter than Pt No 137 Wheel Flanges. Plus all visible axles are 4mm stainless rod, to avoid depleting stocks of Meccano Axles and joiners

PART COMBOS:

A few combinations in the model are the result of buckled and broken or separated parts. I have separated and panelbeaten some

Pt No 19b 3inch Pulleys, and used the halves for all bogie wheel flanges. They're more substantial than the less common Pt No 109 $2\frac{1}{2}$ inch Face Plates.

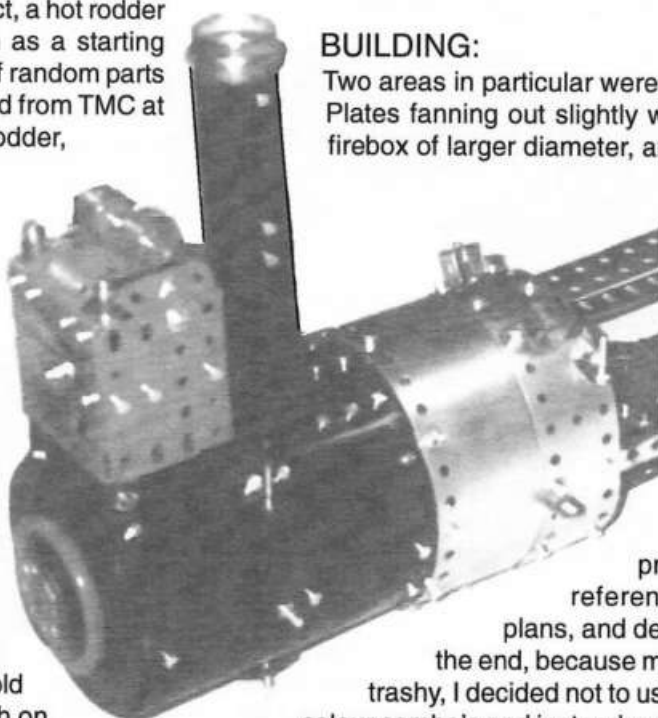
The same operation gave me the driving wheel flanges, using two Pt No 19c 6inch Pulleys. Both well used, on one boss the screw threads did not penetrate to the axle hole, so I drilled the boss off but then realised that brazing it back on would be ugly. Thence the separated wheels gave me the flanges, bolted to four Pt No 143 circular girders as rims.

A few broken and buckled Pt No 187 $2\frac{1}{2}$ inch metal Road Wheels were used; the rims for doubling-up on the sand dome, and their conical centres were used on the front bogie wheels and tops of both sand dome and steam dome, plus head lamp. The smoke stack's top also made use of a boss-less Pt No 20 Flanged Wheel, joined to a complete one. Like the domes, the smoke stack is held together by an axle at its centre, running through Pt No 12 Brackets spaced on washers inside two Pt No 216 Cylinders

BUILDING:

Two areas in particular were difficult to plan: Flexible Plates fanning out slightly where the boiler met the firebox of larger diameter, and the cow-catcher. The former ended up easy by using four Pt No 188 Flexible Plates with slotted end holes, and the cow-catcher is a compromise.

The only other problematic areas were scaling the model for Meccano in the first place, getting proportions right off what references I had to draw my plans, and deciding on the colours. In the end, because much of the Meccano was trashy, I decided not to use any genuine Meccano colour combo's and instead go for that of the loco itself.



Here, I chose not to emulate the replica 119 as used for tourist re-enactment of the golden spike ceremony, and instead concentrate on the original with silver insulating sheathing on boiler and firebox. The remainder is a combination of red, black, brass and silver, with the cab being walnut wood. For the latter section, I used a very dull lifeless gold Supa Kote can.

All remaining painting was done with VHT spray cans, on VHT quickdry undercoat grey. The VHT silver and black were also quick-dry enamel. The red pieces were VHT engine enamel which takes much longer to dry. As this is a model loco and not a Concorde aeroplane, once I'd panel beaten parts I didn't strip them.

Only a few rusty spots got sandpapered, so the original range of Meccano is still there underneath complete with scratches. (Prior cleaning was with white spirits)

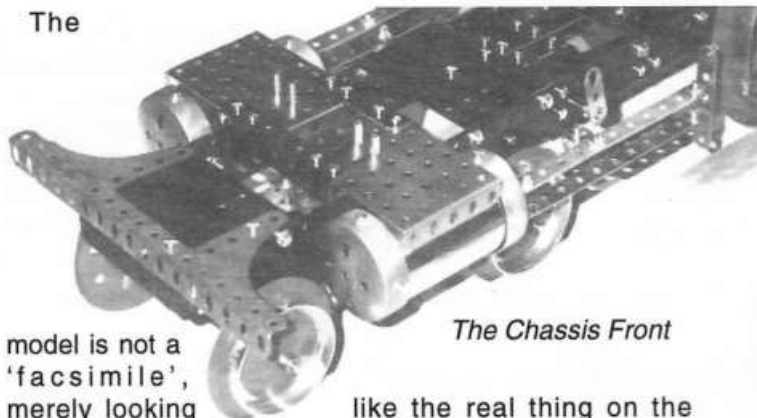


All wheel flanges were

The Steam Dome and the Sand Dome

painted red by HPC Coatings in South Auckland.

The



The Chassis Front

model is not a 'facsimile', merely looking outside. I built it like the real thing on the outside. I built it like the original would have been done; chassis for loco and tender with operational bogies and cranking/valving gear all working correctly when it's pushed along its tracks.

The best thing is the joy it gives to adults, and the wonderment it arouses in children. Both sexes, too. It also allows one to explain the great and even torque from steam

power, added to by the fact of double-acting steam engines having two power strokes per crank revolution, unlike our 4-stroke cars which have one power stroke per two crankshaft rev's. Eight times better and smoother. People love being enlightened, too.

And tell me this; who doesn't love steam trains?

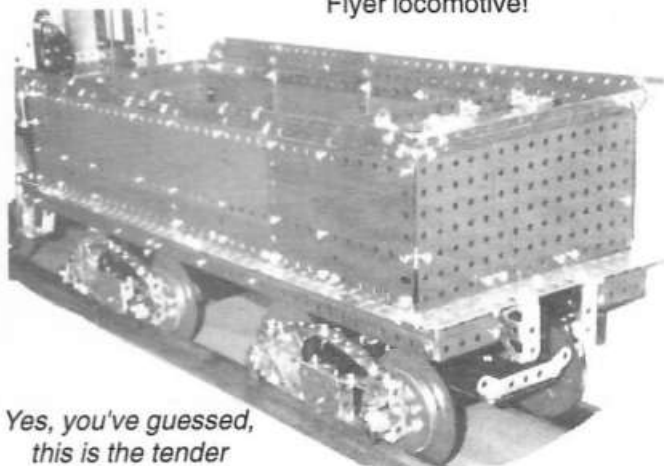
OTHER DATA:

The model is built to a scale of 1:12 and has an overall length of 4ft 9½ in. The height at cab roof is 12 inches; the height at smoke stack is 14 inches; the width is 8½ inches. There are about 1295 parts plus Bolts/Nuts/Washers.

NOTE:

Early last century New Zealand had some interesting American made locos like the Baldwin 4-6-0 on the Wellington-Manawatu Railway Co, which were similar in style to the Rogers locos. The Rogers-made K88 'Washington' 2-4-2, most similar to my model except for wheel arrangement, was one example pulled from the Oriti River in Southland where it had been dumped to act as a groyne to avoid erosion. This K88 has undergone its second restoration by the Plains Railway group of enthusiasts in Masterton, is now running, and is a wonderful example and testament to its restorers.

A similar Rogers 2-4-2 was the original Kingston Flyer locomotive!



Yes, you've guessed, this is the tender

THOUGHT:

If I were to devise a heading for my 4-4-0 model it would be something like:

The 1868 American Rogers 4-4-0 'Promontory' original. Built from trashed Meccano left-overs by a hot rodder who was a 'Meccano boy' 50 years ago.



THE MAN:

Rob Campbell lives at Red Beach, Orewa, Auckland. He has been involved with the NZ Hot Rod magazine since its inception 35 years ago, and has been the editor for last 30 years. Contacts: Bus ph (09) 376-4114 Pvt ph (09) 426-3164 email robandchrisc@xtra.co.nz

Meccano - Fit and Well in Hawke's Bay

by Bob Prescott

I recently visited the Model Expo held at the Napier Boys' High School. This biennial exhibition was advertised as "good fun for all the family". Bonsai, war-games, several model railway layouts, miniature dolls' houses and shop windows, tethered flying model aircraft, models of all descriptions and, of course, Meccano.

The Meccano display organised by Trevor Adam contained a variety of models made by Trevor himself, his grandson Jordan Evenson aged 8, and Jim



Trevor Adam's Automatic Gantry Crane

in 2000 they won the prize for the best display.

Crarer. The major attraction was Trevor's 7ft high Ferris Wheel. Young Jordan's contribution included a tank and spaceship and Jim Crarer's horizontal steam engine completed the impressive collection of Meccano models and memorabilia.

There was much interest in the Meccano stand which is why I guess that when Trevor and his grandson displayed their models at the last Model Expo

Toy Importer Brings Back a Kids' Classic Something about Gordon Good

by Laura Richards.

Reprinted by permission of the author and the Rodney Times.

A Kaukapakapa resident might find himself making a mint from a construction kit. Toy importer Gordon Good has brought Meccano, the construction set which looks nothing like the ubiquitous 'click click' sets of construction blocks, back to New Zealand. "We brought in the first container load two weeks ago," he says.

While neither he nor his children ever played with Meccano, lots of baby-boomers and generations before them did, and they are the people seeking sets for their children. With Meccano, children have to think about what they are creating, Mr Good says. "This is not a click and click set. They have to be able to make the structure work. If it doesn't, then they have to go back and figure out why. That seems to be the genius of Meccano".

the product disappeared off toy store shelves for over a decade. It's only back in New Zealand because Mr Good went to France and got the rights to import it. He notes he never played with it himself; as he was brought up during the war years. He is confident his grand daughters will enjoy it, though.

"I think kids today have as much imagination as others, but we need to present them with toys that require them to think" he says. "With Meccano you have to think as you're building. It expands their knowledge and abilities. This is good value for ones money. The construction diagrams teach kids to follow directions using pictures rather than words. This is not a toy where you can give it to a child and expect them immediately to know what to do".



Once they have made one thing, however, children can let their imaginations flow with the pieces, which are now made from metal and plastic. The sets can be bought at quality toy stores.

The Meccano name has been around for 101 years, but

Doug Harris Strikes Gold (Twice)

by Doug Harris

Gold the First

I've found a colour picture of the Meccano jerseys. It was on the inside of the box lid of a lot of very early nickel parts (including two tab type funnels) which I bought at an Auckland swapmeet. As well, it contained an early flat-type screwdriver with the cut out centre and a number of tunnel type spring clips. No vertical saw cut type, though, but several of the wheels have these cuts and some have both the saw cut and the tunnel type.



Also I have the lid of a 'Mechanics Made Easy' box, Set D, which I have dated at about 1906. Unfortunately (and how often do we hear that word in collecting) it has been cut out of its original box, drilled and mounted with six wood screws on a custom made, partitioned wooden box. I plan to remove it from the box, treat it with museum wax to prevent any further deterioration, and store it carefully. The seller told me it came from a garage sale in Torbay.

I sent a description and measurements of the box to Jim Gamble, our Meccano historian in England, and he confirmed that the box was a genuine original 'Mechanics Made Easy' box.



Working Model of Sydney Harbour Bridge on view in Our Window. Can be built from a Standard Meccano Set. Boys! You must see this.

WILKINSON'S

Saddler and
Sport Dealer
Bank St. : Whangarei
December 1935 advertisement

Gold the Second

I have also acquired a vintage collection from an elderly lady who told me she had been building Meccano models with it for the past 75 years. At 90 years of age, she was losing both her hearing and sight and so it was almost impossible to communicate freely with her to get her Meccano story. She has now gone into a rest home, and I have asked the people looking after her property and possessions to keep an eye out for pictures of her Meccano models. So far, I have had no word.

The newspaper cuttings etc are from the collection I purchased. As I understand it, she never married, and spent a lot of her life looking after elderly and ill family members.

She had hand-made a wooden seven drawer storage cabinet on wheels, with partitions to fit all the standard Meccano sizes – a fascinating piece of work, which had a lift-up flap on one side to act as an extension work area. She was quite talented at planning and drawing models. One of her particular interests was cranes, and there is a collection of cuttings of the Auckland Harbour Board Crane, which I will pass onto the Maritime Museum.

Also she belonged to the Wisemans Meccano Club, and must have joined fairly early, her membership number was 85, I think.

In her collection were a large number of Meccano Magazines and scrapbooks of machinery, tractors, cranes etc. Some of the very early, square cornered blue/gold hatched parts are in factory mint condition. Also some of the brass and nickel, and brass nuts and bolts in their original small tins, look like they have just left the factory. A lot of parts still have their paper wrapping although all have been opened. It is an excellent collection, probably about the size of a No. 9 or 10 outfit."

This article has been put together from faxes sent to Lloyd Spackman.

A 1938 Advertising Leaflet



What Readers Think

To the Editor
Hello again.



The hump is now behind me so I've had a chance to read the magazines without being distracted by urgent demands on my time. However, things did not go as smoothly as planned. My PC went sick and I had to wait until my younger son Ken could spare the time to drive 75 miles to my place. He eventually arrived about ten days later, and being armed with his magic wand and a sachet of stardust, chased away the Gremlins and brought my PC back to life.

I chose to read the magazines in date-order and commenced with the April '02 issue. It soon became clear that today's Meccano parts are often different from the parts that knew in my youth. No plastic parts in those days, so, with the exception of rubber tyres for 2" and 3" wheels and hanks of non-twisting Meccano cord for use on cranes equipped with multi-sheave pulley-blocks, every part was either steel or brass.

I marvel at the ingenuity of some Meccano modellers. The Differential Analyser being a noteworthy example. Another is the Robot Gargantua crane described in the August issue. I became so engrossed in the magazine's contents that it had slipped my mind that one of the magazines might contain something that I had written. Consequently, as the names in by-lines were unknown to me, I habitually leapfrogged them and jumped straight to the nitty-gritty. Believe me, I got as far as the second paragraph before I realised that I was reading Beginners Luck, my own piece!

Some skilled modellers appear capable of tackling anything, including the seemingly impossible — exemplified by the Torque Amplifier mentioned in the June issue and the robot programme for the Gargantua auto-crane shown in the August issue.

Some modellers appear to have incorporated a differential gear in the drive to the rear axle of a steam traction engine. Has anyone managed to produce a working replica of the ingenious device that not only operated as a differential drive, but also allowed the tractor's rear axle to move up and down in response to the rear axle's springs? The ingenious design of that device allowed the drive pinion and the driven bull-gear to remain in correct mesh at fixed centres, despite the axle's ever changing position in the horn-plates. Darned clever those Victorian engineers!

In 1905, the Lancashire Electric Power Company built a coal fired power station alongside the River Irwell at Radcliffe, near Manchester.

As a member of a small group with a common interest in engineering in all its disciplines, I thoroughly enjoyed a conducted tour of that small station in 1947 - yes 1947. Even at that time, the writing was on the wall and we were told that its days were numbered.

Following our tour of the station, our guide took us to a vantage point so that we could watch the semi-automatic coal bunkering system in operation. It proved intriguing - almost hypnotic - and a credit to its ingenious designer.

Coal supplies arrived by rail at a track-level higher than,

and some distance from, the power station buildings. Built to support a single-track runway at an incline of 1 in 10, a gantry about one-hundred yards long, spanned the gap between the high sidings and the bunkers, located in the roof space above the station's boilers.

The semi-automatic system operated in the following manner: A free-running transfer-car, held captive under the loading chute by catches, received a two-ton load of coal at the high sidings-end of the gantry. When loaded, the operator released the catches, whereupon the car ran down the inclined gantry's track-way, gathering speed en-route for the bunkers. At about the halfway point, the loaded car made a surprisingly shock-free contact with a rail mounted buffer-device which the car promptly pushed forward, the twosome moving as one for the remaining part of the journey down to the discharge point over the bunkers. Suspended by a rope and sheave system attached to the travelling buffer device, a huge weight effectively retarded the twosome until the pair stopped — directly over the bunker. At that point an automatic trip-device released the loaded car's bottom dump-door and discharged the load in seconds. Under the influence of the pull from the suspended weight, the buffer device then propelled the empty car at an increasing speed up the incline, the buffer stopping when it reached the midway point. The car's momentum caused it to continue alone up the incline, slowing as it did so, and gently coming to a stop as it reached the retaining catches at the crest where they secured it on a weigh-bridge under the chute during the subsequent reloading cycle.

It is difficult to believe that such an ingenious example of the UK's Industrial Heritage could have been lost entirely without trace. To my dismay, all my efforts to locate any archived records of the above scheme have so far proved fruitless. Nothing appears to have been saved for posterity. In fact, had I not found a large scale map of the area dated 1907, with the power station, the position of the gantry, and the coal sidings etc, clearly marked, it would not have been too difficult to convince me that subconsciously I had dreamed the whole visit!

I often picture the scheme's designer, who, aided by no more than log tables and a slide rule, must have juggled with all the system's variables until he eventually got it to work as intended.

I recall our guide pointing out that it was a very reliable system, but it was somewhat sensitive to cold weather. If the lubricant in the car's bearings stiffened or a layer of heavy snow increased the weight of the buffer retarder, it could, and sometimes did, cause the car to stop some distance from the discharge point over the bunkers.

Perhaps some of your members will treat the scheme as a challenge and produce a working Meccano replica.

Cheers for the present,
Brian Taylor, UK.

(More letters on page 11)

Death of a Dinosaur - Part III

Reprinted by kind permission of The Hornby Railway Collector Magazine Issues June, July and August 2001.
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Finally, efficiency had undoubtedly been hampered by the failure to introduce new equipment into the plants. One employee who started work in 1948 recalled that the tool used to make the drive chains for Meccano sets dated from 1912. Another was struck by the contrast between the modern watch factory in which he had formerly worked and Binns Road, 'a very old fashioned family firm, the equipment was antiquated and I don't recall even seeing any forklift trucks.' Again, new owners did attempt to improve this situation but it is significant that an inventory of surplus equipment for disposal in 1976 contained two presses acquired in 1927 and 1947, and a conveyor also bought in 1947. As late as 1975 the basic strips for the Meccano building sets were still being punched out on old fashioned hand presses and even when new, more modern equipment was introduced it was rarely utilised to maximum effect. The installation by Airfix of an electro-phoretic painting plant was a major investment but the old flat bed painting process continued to be used. Similarly, machines to trim model car bodies and to smooth Meccano parts remained idle. The proper utilisation of new machinery would undoubtedly have raised the level of Meccano's productivity, which remained low. A study made in 1976 revealed that at 75-80% of sales value, the

production costs of Dinky Toys were about 20% higher than those of four other leading British diecast toy companies. This, combined with unimpressive sales, helped to account for the fact that turnover per employee in 1974-75 was £2978. This compared unfavourably with £7941 at Britains, a company of comparable age, while Meccano's

direct rivals, Mettoy and Lesney had average turnovers per employee of £4223 and £4521 respectively.

In part, at least, new machinery remained idle because of union fears about potential job losses. This in turn points up a further management defect, not discussed in the 1962 Peat Marwick and Mitchell report because it did not fully manifest itself until the 1970s – poor industrial relations. Traditionally labour relations at Meccano had been good and strikes rare. But in the postwar years of full employment, Meccano had experienced high labour turnover and suffered from erratic work by part time employees. This helped to create a generally low expectation of labour performance,

which undoubtedly exacerbated the company's lack of competitiveness. By the 1970's industrial militancy was growing and at Meccano, attempts to improve efficiency by tightening up control systems and introducing machinery provoked strong resistance.

Overmanning was endemic and, as one report suggested, 'the unions are more aware of the large scale overmanning which exists than management is.' To all intents and purposes Meccano's managers had effectively forfeited control of the workforce by the 1970's. On his first day as Meccano's first personnel director, Bev Stokes was told that the unions ran the plant. Certainly it was at the unions insistence that random bag searches, designed to prevent pilfering, had been abandoned and it was common practice for workers to continue running off sub-standard products in order to boost their overtime payments. According to J G Thomas, one electrician had so much guaranteed overtime that he was earning £12000 a year, about twice what Thomas received as assistant company secretary. Work discipline at Binns Road was so lax that George Perry likened the factory to 'a holiday camp.' Small wonder, therefore, that the sales budget projection for 1979-80 concluded with gloomy warning that 'management has lost control and must seize it back.'

For years these problems had not been seriously addressed - perhaps not even fully recognised - partly because in a seller's market they were relatively unimportant, and partly because as a company Meccano lacked the mechanisms for monitoring the true costs of its operations. Attention had

been drawn to this in the Peat Marwick & Mitchell report but little real change had been implemented. As late as 1975 the company secretary was told bluntly that there was still a need for basic data in order to 'plug the huge operational gaps which exist currently'. For a long time profitability measures were based on monthly statements of estimated gross profits compared

with previous periods. Lines Brothers and Airfix both tried to introduce cost monitoring procedures and more modern methods of profit estimation, but senior management seemed impervious to change.

Graeme Lines vented his exasperation on more than one occasion. 'I hardly know how to answer your reaction to my memorandum' he told the company secretary in August 1969, 'since it appears to indicate a reluctance on your part to even try to introduce the economies which are virtually and urgently necessary to Meccano'. Airfix was similarly frustrated. Surviving in the archives is a Head Office



1933 Edition

memorandum of 1975 concerning cash, purchasing and payroll systems. It is heavily pencilled over by Meccano's current managing director executive with comments such as 'displays lack of knowledge of our systems', 'criticism without knowledge', 'the present system does that and always has'.

Fifty years of success had encouraged the belief that Meccano products would sell themselves, as indeed they had - in relatively easy markets - on the quality and name alone. Even that reputation began to slip, however. Virtually the last sales report ever made noted that 'a general comment that seems to be gathering more weight relates to the quality of Dinky products... the complaint does seem to apply in general'. Export orders were cancelled with increasing frequency as quality deteriorated and Meccano's production difficulties caused delivery dates to be missed. By the late 1970's the company was displaying clear systems of terminal decay. The personnel manager reported in November 1979 that poor timekeeping and absenteeism continued to be a problem, arising from slack discipline, lack of job satisfaction and lack of faith in the company.

Changes of personnel at senior level worked in the same direction. There can be little doubt that part of Meccano's difficulty lay in the fact that men in senior positions had been with the firm a long time and were incapable of responding positively to change. This in turn was the product of a recruitment policy which had relied on internal promotion and which was indifferent to training.

In 1910 Frank Hornby took on Jones and Beardsley. Beardsley looked after production and Jones dealt with sales. The team worked very well. George Lines of Lines Brothers, who was a trained engineer, went every year to the Leipzig Fair with Beardsley and they were good friends. Both were always on the lookout for ways of streamlining production. Meccano marketing at this time was excellent. They could state that wherever you went in the world there was a Meccano price list in the language and currency of that country.

Although Roland Hornby became chairman after Frank Hornby's death in 1936, the real burden of running the company was carried by the three of his father's original collaborators, Beardsley, Jones and Hewitt. George Jones became Managing director and the firm in the late prewar period boomed. Jones understood the market and one of his successes was the introduction of Hornby Dublo in 1938. The war brought plenty of work in the form of military diecasting in which Meccano were at the forefront. Then Jones died and the direction of the company became difficult. After Jones' death, Beardsley took control but as a production man it seems he did not have the same flair as Jones did. When J S Thomas joined in 1948 both the sales and the financial directors had been with the company since 1908. So, too, had the works manager, whose son was sales manager. The managerial dominance of men who had been recruited by Hornby himself continued well into the 1950's. After Beardsley another production man called Dale became managing director. During the crisis period of the early 1960's Meccano did try and bring in some new blood at the executive level. Meccano brought in an accountant called J C Tattersall who was new to the toy business. He looked around for new things for Meccano to market but none were successful. Dinky Toys were eventually fitted with windows long after Corgi's with their slogan 'The ones with windows',

a direct comparison with Dinky.

Also before the 1964 takeover, Meccano brought in an Austrian, Joe Fallerman, who turned out to be one of the best postwar managing directors. He saw the potential of Dinky toys based on film and the TV series. He later worked well with Lines, but the old guard on this point were more worried about devaluing Dinky Toys than selling new products. They waited until 1966 to introduce the TV based Dinky range. Fallerman was very Meccano Ltd. minded and in fact was the last managing director before the rapid succession of managing directors of the 1970's. It was hardly surprising therefore that when Graeme Lines took over for Lines Brothers in 1964 he found Meccano like an old Auntie - friendly but believing that things should always be done as they have been since her own girlhood. Although Lines made several new appointments, there was no attempt to provide management training. This was still the case in 1975 when Bev Stokes was appointed as the company's first formally qualified personnel director. Even then, his first efforts at management training could be stated only as a semi-social activity and involved nothing more rigorous than a reading circle based on standard management texts. Looking back, Stokes was dismissive of the senior personnel. Indeed, he had refused an earlier invitation to join Meccano because he had been so unimpressed by them.

A further dimension to the problem of managerial quality emerged after the Airfix takeover. According to Stokes, John Gray, the group's personnel director, went up to Liverpool two or three days a week, where his presence terrified the senior staff. The frequency with which staff were dismissed and replaced by newcomers deprived the company of any sense of permanence and direction, and often left important posts in the hands of inexperienced men. By June 1979 Meccano was on its eighth managing director in as many years while the export manager had a mere six months experience. With a weak leadership, a disillusioned labour force, and mounting losses, morale collapsed. By the autumn of 1979 an average of 15% of the factory workforce was absent from work each day. Early in November the personnel director reported that 'a number of people have received warnings of lateness and absenteeism, but as yet there is no appreciable change in attitudes. Part of the problem stems from slack discipline'. On the last day of the month Airfix closed the factory and Frank Hornby's Liverpool creation was no more. Later on though, Meccano production quietly emigrated to the old Meccano Factory at Calais, France to re-establish itself as a highly marketable toy again and readily available in most model shops. This original French subsidiary, now an independently owned company, still produces Meccano in the blue and yellow livery. Around 1990, Meccano France purchased the rights to the 'Erector' trademark in the U.S.A. and started selling Meccano sets marked 'Erector Meccano' in the U.S.A. Exacto Ltd. of Buenos Aires, Argentina also still produces Meccano. Meccano France has just announced and produced a 100th year anniversary limited edition construction set. It is the famous old No. 10 block setting crane with 1950's green and red coloured parts in a 3 drawer wooden cabinet. *(to be continued)*

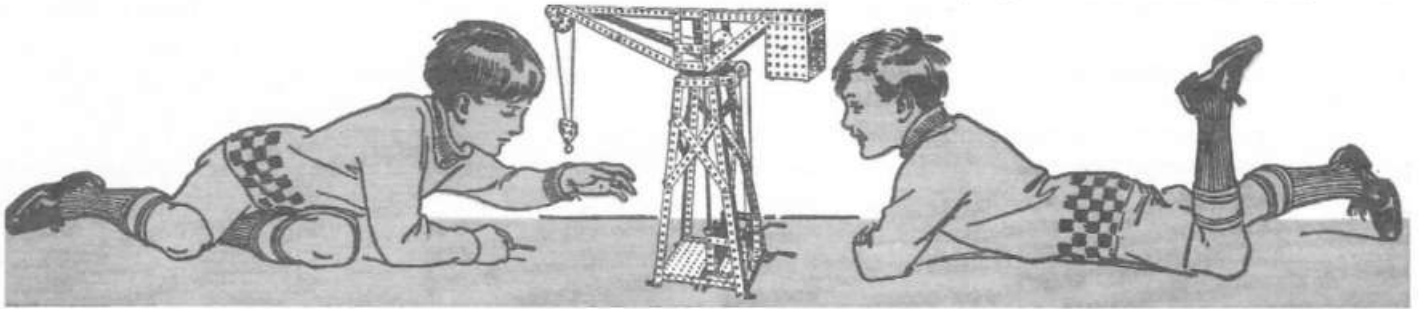
Meccano Weaves Its Magic

by W. Brian Taylor.

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favourite models had to remain dreams. It required most of a No 7 set's parts to build either model. Part of the dream received a boost when, as a Christmas treat, Dad and Mum took me for a browse around Manchester's big stores. Imagine the thrilling experience of standing alongside a working model of the dockyard crane. Little did they guess how much their offspring envied the man who 'played' with



From the Cover of a 1930 Manual

Mention 'Meccano' and it instantly stirs many happy childhood memories. In the early 1920s, Father Christmas could never have guessed at the hours of pleasure a three-year-old boy would enjoy as he played with his new present, a 00 Meccano set.

The 00 set formed the smallest pre-packed set in Meccano's range and the huge, impressive Number 7 was the largest.

A No 7 set contained examples of every item in Meccano's lengthy parts list. A list so vast that the components filled a large furniture-quality wooden cabinet equipped with fabric-lined, divided drawers, all secured by a lock and key. The heady price of a No 7 set has faded from memory. Even so, hazy recollections of Meccano's mid 1920s catalogues spark memories of the price being in excess of ten week's wages. Put that against today's pay packets and you're certainly not buying birdseed. Nevertheless, a multitude of cherished dreams formed around the models that would be built if the opportunity to own such a set ever came my way.

Dad and Mum, Aunts and Uncles, added various parts to my original 00 set, so it grew in a random 'bits and pieces' manner. Unfortunately, no one guessed that I yearned for some gears. With gears I'd be able to build real working models. My working models used string and V-pulleys to drive one shaft from another. String always slipped, even with elastic bands in the V-grooves. Every Meccano boy knew that real working models didn't slip because they used gears. Oh what a difference gears would make!

The lid of even the smallest box of Meccano parts carried a picture of a huge dockyard hammerhead crane. Two spread-eagled Meccano boys lay alongside as they operated its controls. Just as intended, the picture evoked envious dreams in my young mind. That crane, and a rugged Showman traction engine able to pull huge loads, became centrepieces in my unrestrained visions. Alas, those

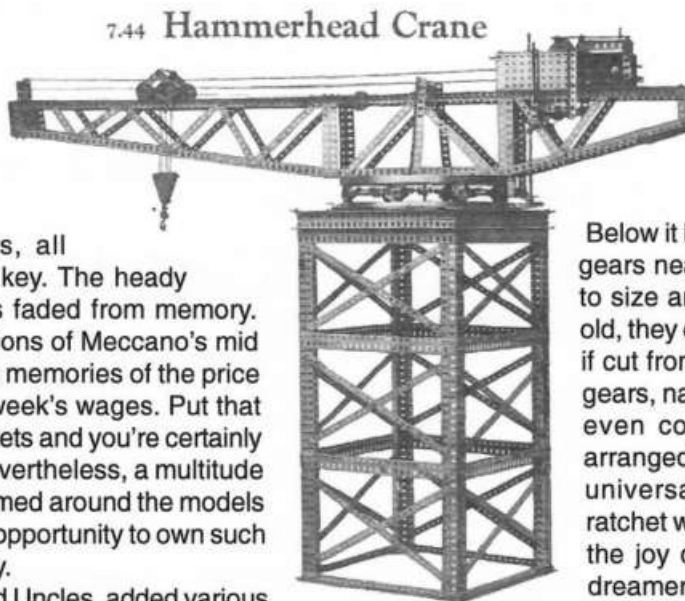
it all day.

But some less ambitious dreams did become reality when, ages before dawn one Christmas morning, a certain seven year old crept downstairs. At a time long before sticky tape and Christmas wrappings, a large brown paper parcel lay alongside the fireplace. Torn open in seconds, it revealed a proper Meccano set in a large red cardboard box. A

momentous occasion that remains etched on memory's walls. Removing the lid, with its picture of boys alongside the dockyard crane, revealed a liftout tray loaded with umpteen green, red and blue components, all secured in place by elastic cord.

Below it lay an Aladdin's cave. Gleaming brass gears neatly arranged and grouped according to size and type. To the eyes of a seven year old, they couldn't have caused more excitement if cut from solid gold. A treasure chest of wide gears, narrow gears, bevel gears, worm gears, even contrate gears where the teeth are arranged on the side. Other groups included universal joints, couplings, chain wheels, ratchet wheels, flanged wheels and sliders. Oh the joy of it all! At last, as a seven year old dreamer, I could look forward to building real models that didn't slip when I turned the handle. In a word, Ecstasy!

The illustrated manual gave instructions for building a small, simplified version of the hammerhead dockyard crane. But I'd been building Meccano models for years, so what could a book tell me about building models? Why waste building-time reading instructions? Excited young 'clever clogs' masterpiece stood almost complete by the time Dad came downstairs. Like magnets, his engineer's eyes clamped on the model. No flaw escaped his experienced gaze. He spotted a list of short cuts and silly mistakes. Pieces missing, others added for no reason. Screws inserted from inside so nuts and screw threads formed exposed projections. Christmas morning or not, that model had to be rebuilt. As we rebuilt it, Dad's meaningful comments became engraved in my memory. "Take care of the details, son, and a finished product will look after itself".



The 1930 Set 7 Model

With Dad's help and guidance, the crane turned out fine and I enjoyed 'working it' for many pleasurable weeks.

A Meccano electric motor (bought with pence saved over many months) required a 6 volt power supply, and then I could use it to make models that would operate at the touch of a switch. A family friend (the owner of a wireless shop) came to my aid and gave me three discarded 'wireless accumulators'. Dad made a wooden container, complete with a leather carrier strap, and watched as I linked the three 2 volt cells in series. At last, I could not only build real models, I could make them 'work' on their own at the touch of a switch.

How I enjoyed 'inventing' working models, especially those that showed their power by pulling or lifting heavy weights. All such models had a 'magic', which, in my imagination, took me into a grownup world. A 'swivelling jib crane', big, cumbersome and difficult to carry, proved a great source of pleasure to me and most of my friends, too. A table near the fully open window of an upstairs bedroom enabled it to be positioned so that its jib extended beyond the sill. The crane had enough 'rope' to reach the ground where my pals used their imagination and hitched loads that built skyscrapers one day and emptied the hold of a ship the next. Childhood's imagination let it lift 100 tons of concrete with the same ease as a seaside bucket's load of pebbles. Such are the happy memories of days spent under the spell of Meccano's wonderful, magic world!

Even so, after hours of effort, not every model worked as intended. Many of childhood's 'inventions' proved disappointing failures. Those disappointing and extremely frustrating failures often led to childish tantrums. Gradually, as attitudes matured, curiosity gained control. It became interesting to find out why a 'brilliant' contraption had failed instead of working as planned. It led to a progressive grasp of basic principles, which made it easier to avoid pitfalls. Thus, by increasing the success rate, it added to Meccano's magic.

To my surprise, my old Meccano held greater interest for our daughter than our two

sons.

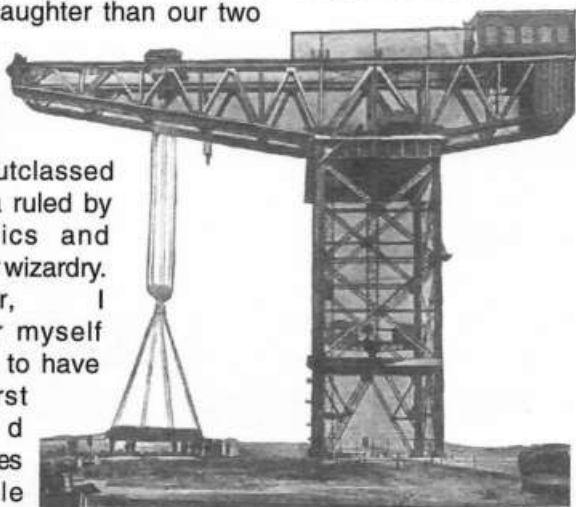
Both boys

found its

magic outclassed in an era ruled by electronics and computer wizardry.

However, I consider myself fortunate to have had first hand opportunities to sample many 'magic'

eras. A range that includes Meccano and crystal sets at one end and computers at the other. It prompts me to muse on future 'magic' eras. What newfangled device will have replaced microchips and computers by the time today's kids recall their childhood days, seven or eight decades hence?



A Giant Hammerhead Crane at work.

(continued from page 7)

Dear Bruce

I have just received my copy of the August NZFMM Magazine, and compliment you on a most interesting and entertaining issue. In fact I look forward to each magazine with pleasant anticipation - but this time you seem to have excelled yourself.

I was particularly please to read about the Griffith Taylor Gargantua built by Chris Shute which made fascinating reading. The point was well and truly made that this was in fact a reprogrammable robot, years before its time, much more than just a hammerhead crane incorporating many interesting mechanisms.

I loved the article by Anne Prescott on her impressions of Skegness - in which she encapsulates and captures so much of the ethos of the exhibition.

What with model plans, details of Meccano activities in New Zealand, you seem to have attained an enviable high standard of what can be achieved by a club magazine. More than just a magazine with pretty pictures, you really get down to what interests Meccano enthusiasts.

I know how powerful the written word is, and how much it can achieve in putting an organisation on the map. My best wishes to you and all the members of the NZFMM for another successful year and for the upcoming exhibition.

With kind regards. Michael Adler (Israel).

Low and Cunning Dodges for Meccanomen

(Culled from all over the place, all the ones tried, worked) by Peter King

PK9 - When spray painting Meccano parts, lay them out on an old cardboard box from the local supermarket and spray away. The cardboard absorbs excess paint and can be discarded when choked with paint.

PK10 - Make a visit to the local roller chain shop, and a polite request to grub around in his scrap box will produce lots of "pitch side plates. Some fit Meccano Axles and others take Meccano Bolts.

PK11 - Use nylon sheathed stainless steel fishing trace for wire line for clocks and elsewhere.

PK12 - Use nylon sheathed stainless steel fishing trace inside Spring Cord for 'Bowden' cables.

PK13 - Tumble old brass parts in crushed walnut shells or similar, then when polished, remove the Grub Screws and dip them in a thin gloss polyurethane varnish. Put one Gear at a time into the tumbler but Couplings and Collars by the handful. Do not be tempted to use abrasive grit! Clean out threads afterwards with a second cut tap.

PK14 - To cure the loose boss syndrome in Meccano parts, take a bottle of "Loctite Nutlock Wick-in" and put a very small drop alongside the boss. It will 'wick-in' and permanently cure the problem.

The Jeep (and Trailer)

built by Bruce Geange
text and pictures by Bruce Neilson

This model follows a design by Bernard Périer described in Constructor Quarterly No 45 September 1999.

This model was a challenge to build as there was no parts list available in the CQ description. Furthermore a couple of non-Meccano parts had to be made. The parts for the model are painted in Army olive green; the jeep has a fold down windscreen,



The Jeep measures 8" long, 3 1/2" wide, 3" high and 1.1 kgs in weight. The Trailer is 5 1/2" long, 3 1/2" wide and 2 1/2" high.

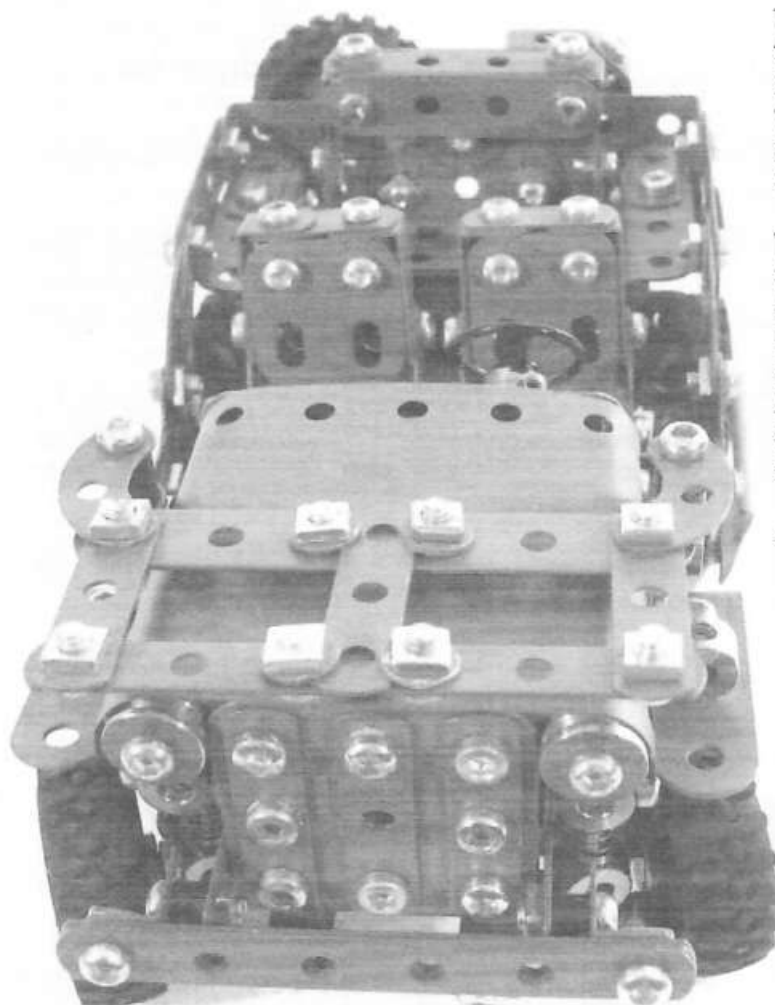
tilting front seats, lift up back seat and Ackerman steering

driven from the steering wheel. Super detailing includes a petrol jerrycan, sidelights, headlights (narrow bossless pulleys), trailer tail lights, a spare wheel and a trenching spade.

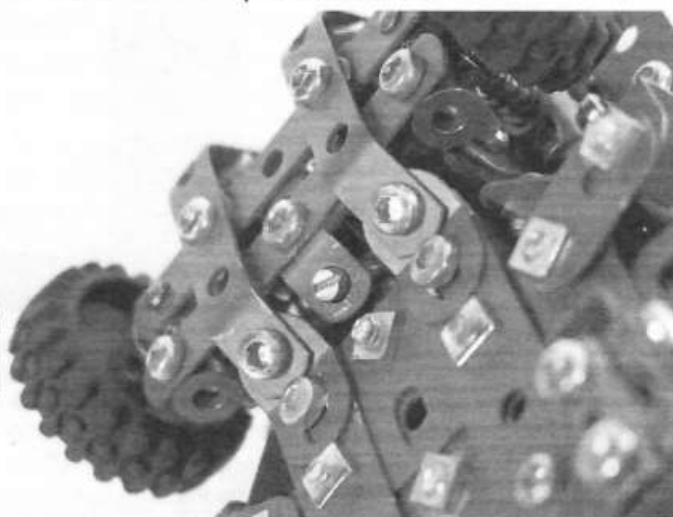
The points of interest that arose during construction were:- the chassis starts with two 2 1/2" x 2 1/2" Flat Plates with everything else added on. There are lots of narrow strips of various lengths and angle pieces. Special non-Meccano parts include six 4 hole and fourteen 3 hole Curved Narrow Strips which are needed for structural work (see picture).

The steering was amended with different size pinions to fit. Surprisingly, the jerrycan needed care in bending strips to get the 'right' look. Wheels were changed to standard Meccano 1" Pulleys and ground grip Tyres. Old junky parts and lots of Narrow Strips were painted before assembly. Allen key Bolts, square Nuts, Washers and Collars are used as required. The Steering Wheel was changed due to a short supply of Rod Sockets.

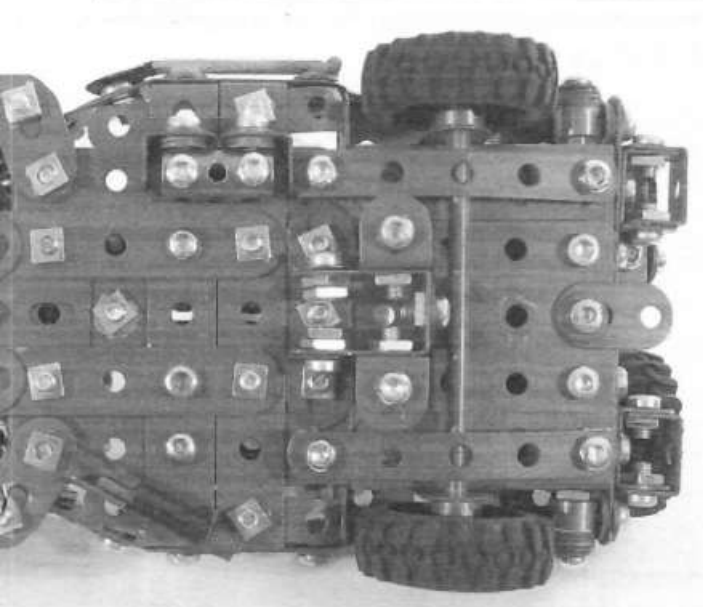
A CDRom with extra pictures is available.



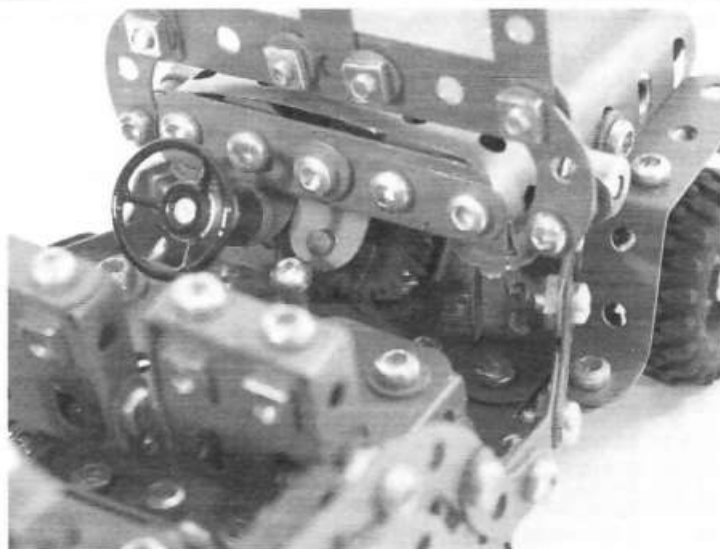
The Jeep Front



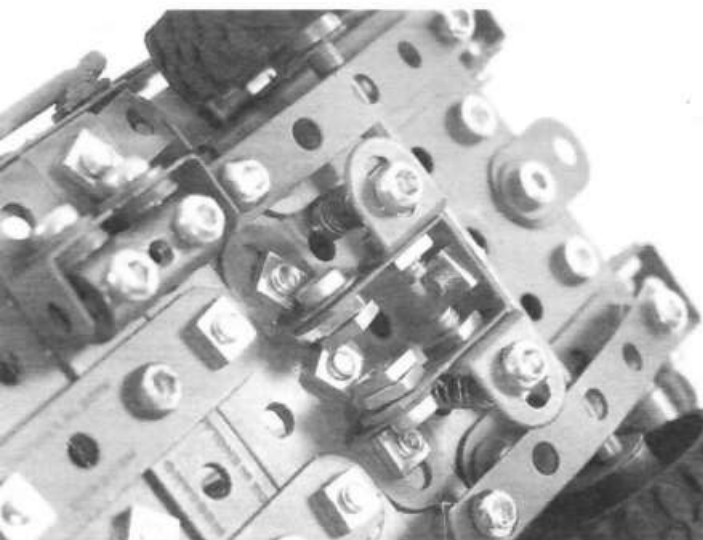
The Front Axle Mounting



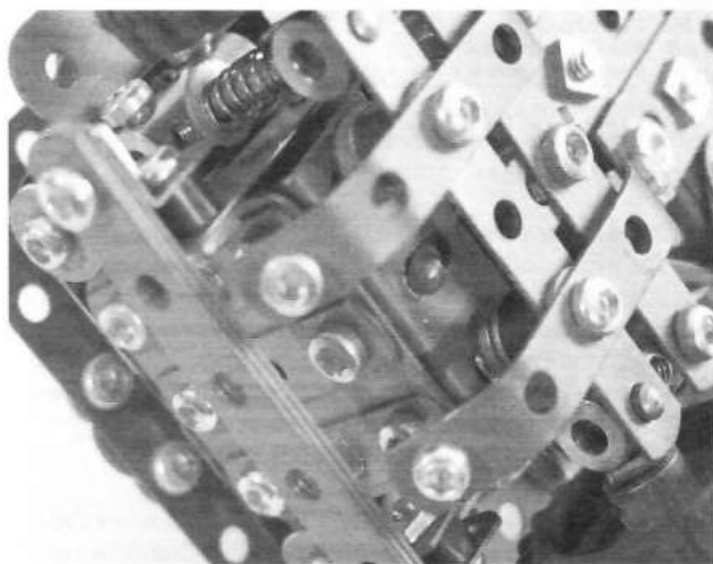
The Underside of the Jeep



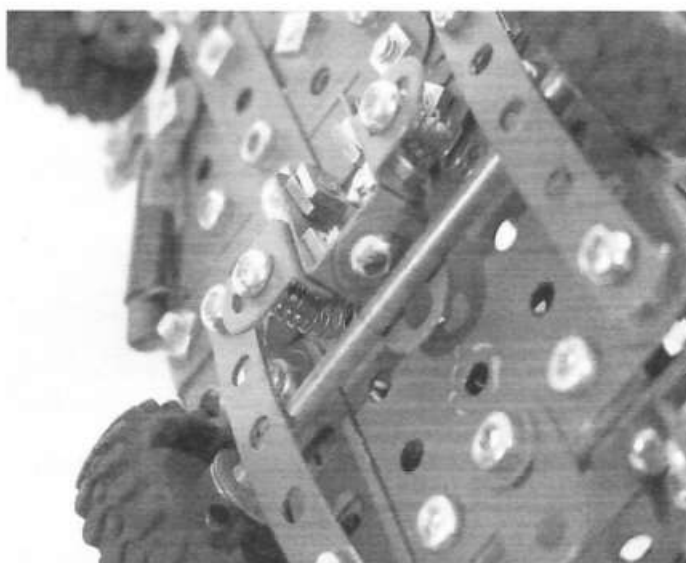
The Dashboard and Steering Column.



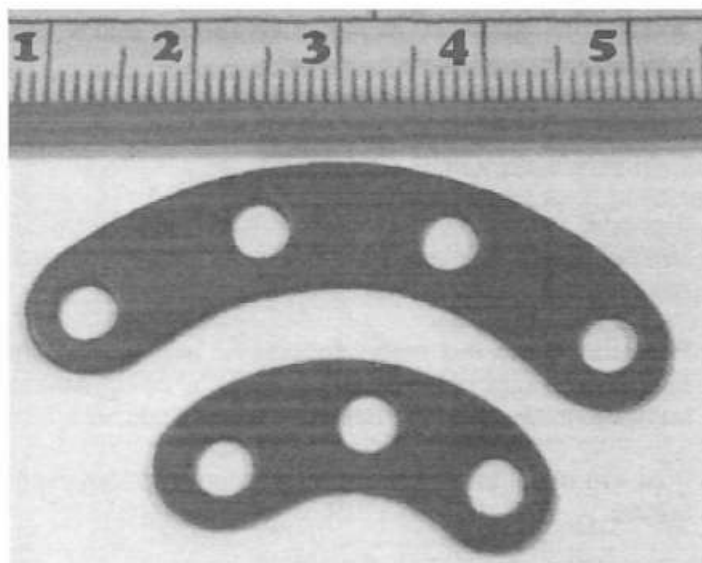
Underside Rear Showing Rear Axle



Underside Front



Another Underside View of the Rear Axle



The Special Curved Parts

Parts List for the Jeep and Trailer (approx)

Jeep

No	Description	Size	Qty.	No	Description	Size	Qty.	No	Description	Size	Qty.
3	Perforated Strip	3 1/2"	2	48b	Double Angle Strip	3 1/2" x 1/2"	4	811	Narrow Double Bracket	1/2" x 1/2"	2
4	Perforated Strip	3"	3	48e	Double Angle Strip	1" x 1/2"	2	811a	Narrow Double Bracket	1" x 1/2"	1
5	Perforated Strip	2 1/2"	4	59	Collar		25	812b	Narrow Angle Bracket	1" x 1/2"	6
6	Perforated Strip	2"	6	63	Coupling		5	??	Narrow Curved Strip	4 hole	6
9c	Angle Girder	2"	2	72	Flat Plate	2 1/2" x 2 1/2"	2	??	Narrow Curved Strip	3 Hole	14
9d	Angle Girder	2 1/2"	1	74	Flat Plate	1 1/2" x 1 1/2"	1				
9f	Angle Girder	1 1/2"	2	103g	Flat Girder	2"	2				
9l	Angle Girder	1"	6	103h	Flat Girder	1 1/2"	2				
10	Fishplate		15	103l	Flat Girder	1"	7				
11a	Double Bracket		1	115	Threaded Pin		1				
12b	Angle Bracket	1" x 1/2"	6	20b	Compression Spring		4				
12c	Obtuse Angle Bracket		8	147f	Pivot Bolt		1				
12	Angle Bracket		10	161	Girder Bracket		2				
15b	Axle Rod	4"	1	176	Anchoring Spring		1				
16a	Axle Rod	2 1/2"	1	179	Rod Socket		1				
18a	Axle Rod	1 1/2"	6	190a	Flexible Plate	3 1/2" x 2 1/2"	1				
18b	Axle Rod	1"	1	212	Rod and Strip Connector		1				
23b	Pulley without boss		2	235	Narrow Strip	2 1/2"	6				
25	Pinion	25 tooth	1	235g	Narrow Strip	1 1/2"	11				
26n	Pinion	11 tooth	1	235a	Narrow Strip	3"	4				
31	Pinion	38 teeth	1	235b	Narrow Strip	3 1/2"	1				
38	Washer	as required		237	Narrow Strip	1"	14				
38a	Plastic Spacer		6	239	Narrow Angle Bracket	1/2" x 1/2"	5				
38b	Mini Plastic Spacer		7	240	Narrow Obtuse Angle Bracket		2				
48	Double Angle Strip	1 1/2" x 1/2"	1	321	Steering Wheel		1				

Trailer

10	Fishplate		6
12	Angle Bracket		13
23	Pulley with boss	1"	2
38	Washer	as required	
53	Flanged Plate	3 1/2" x 2 1/2"	1
103d	Flat Girder	3 1/2"	2
103f	Flat Girder	2 1/2"	2
114	Hinge		1
125	Reversed Angle Bracket	1/2"	1
235	Narrow Strip	2 1/2"	4
235a	Narrow Strip	3"	3
235b	Narrow Strip	3 1/2"	4
235g	Narrow Strip	1 1/2"	2
806b	Narrow Strip	1"	1
811a	Narrow Double Bracket	1" x 1/2"	1
812a	Narrow Angle Bracket	1" x 1/2"	8
??	Narrow Curved Strip	4 hole	2

John's "eBay Auction" Column

by John Hansen

Spring is in the air-the days are getting longer, Christmas is not far away and all good Meccano modellers should be preparing for our biennial convention. The listings on eBay seem to be getting longer and longer. Must be something to do with the Polar ice-cap melting. Just kidding! This month let's look at Mechanisms and Gear sets, Signage, Steam Engines and Curios.

Mechanisms and Gears Sets:

Gears Set A - Mint boxed early 1950s. Contents mint and chain still in unopened cellophane wrapping. Guarantee and exc. instruction book. Sold for NZ\$225.

1960s Gears set - In very good condition. Sold for NZ\$130.

Mechanisms Outfit - late 1950s. Appears to be brand new and unused. Excellent manual. Very nice set sold well at NZ\$330.

1959 Gears Outfit B - In vg. condition with instruction book and guarantee. NZ\$201.

Signage:

Meccano Elekrikit shop sign - made of strong cardboard. About A4 size. Sold for NZ\$144.

Post war bright red metal advertising sign with white Meccano logo (as per eBay page). Size 4 1/2" by 1 1/2". Able to be bolted to Meccano models. Sold for NZ\$55.

Post war metal triangular red advertising flag. Very nice. NZ\$68.

Meccano shop OPEN/CLOSED sign in reasonable order. Size 10" x 8" x 1 1/2". Made of plastic with small model inserted in it. Really neat and quite rare. After three bids sold for NZ\$180.

Steam Engines:

Sold from NZ - Nice Meccano steam engine with box. Modern. Fired only once or twice. NZ\$200.

1965 Meccano Steam Engine-never used-complete. Sold for NZ\$294.

1930 Meccano Upright steam engine MIB. Complete in good working order. Box has water marking and label not so good. Sold for NZ\$998. Most Meccano Steam engines sell between \$200 to \$300.

Curios:

To end with, something very rare and curious. Sold by Nigel Boyle from Christchurch, NZ (from Bruce Baxter Collection?) and as written per eBay page "Five transparencies and four metal frames for building the Hanging Lantern, or Standard Lamp or two

Small Electric signs. These are Meccano Dealer Display advertising models. They were illuminated from behind." In very good

condition for age. About 9 1/2" by 9 1/2" in size. Sold for NZ\$920.



Time to close now. As I send this off to the Editor, the Meccano Centennial set on New Zealand's very own auction site 'Trademe' <www.trademe.co.nz> has reached NZ\$2610 with two days to go. Check it out to see what it makes. Happy building and collecting.

Another Jeep in the Making

by Rob Campbell

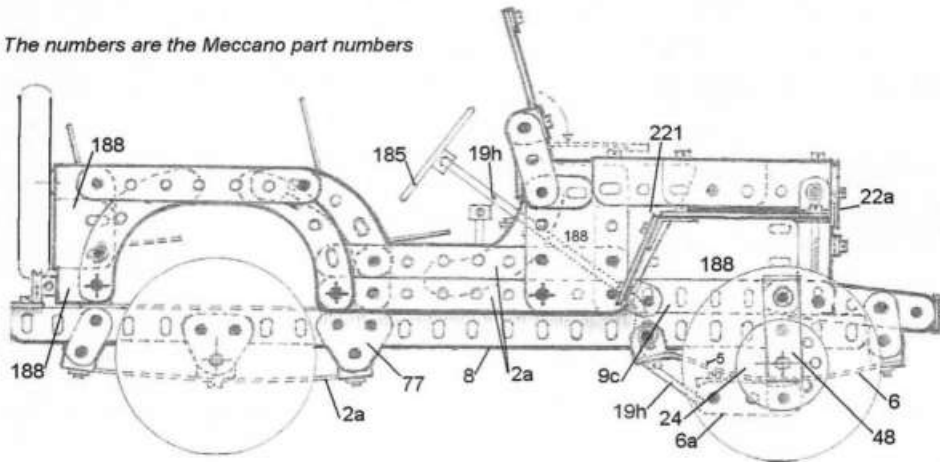
David Wall has encouraged me to submit these plans of a WWII Jeep I'm attempting soon.

link to the opposite side spindle area. Other parts not detailed are seats and supports, firewall, plus four P/N 214 Semi-circular Plates for inner rear fenders, each overlapped $\frac{1}{2}$ " and at both sides topped by four overlapped P/N 215 Formed Slotted Strips.

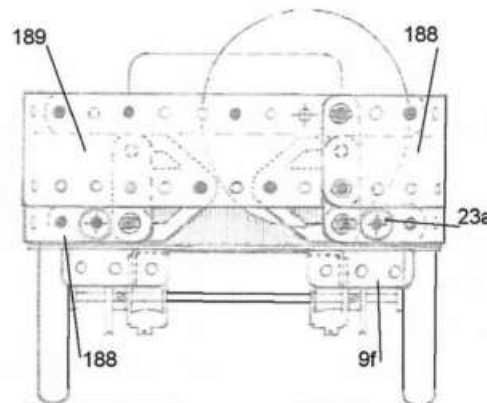
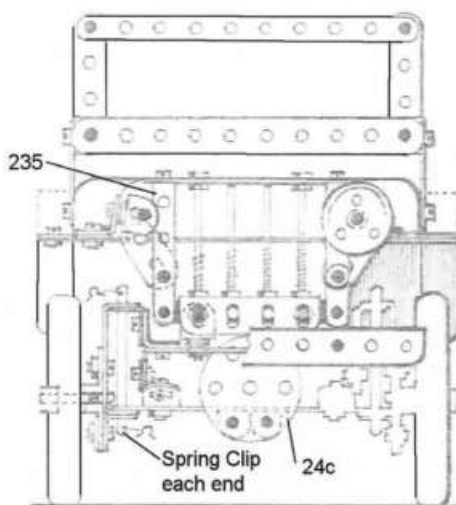
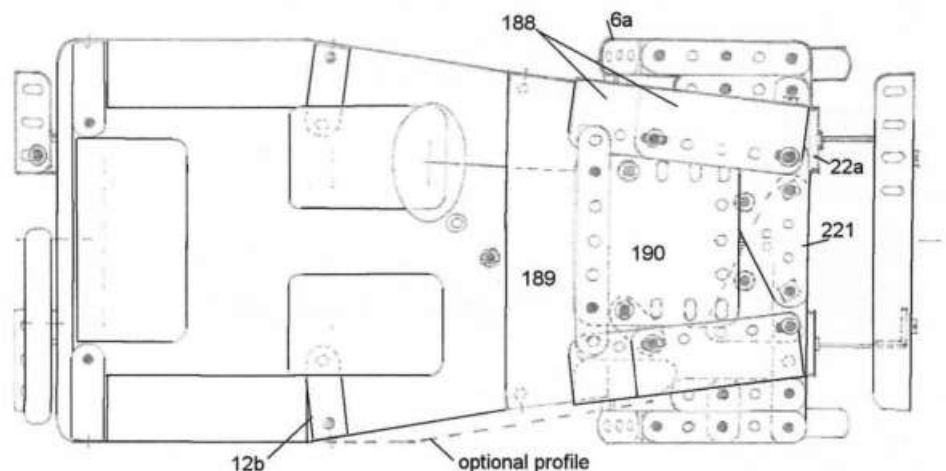
Lou Nichols' sports cars on cover of February 2002 NZFMM magazine were a most beautiful monument to simplicity. This Jeep is up another size and not so simplistically aesthetic. However, my wish is that some Meccano modellers try to better this; devise a smoother engine hood top face, add spare jerry-can or wartime rear mounted machine gun etc, or attain more realism with leaf springs or working rear differential etc where economy of parts is not an issue.

That's about it. Thus far, I've found this cute little project to be a lot of fun in drafting plans (to avoid frustrating teardowns) and I

The numbers are the Meccano part numbers



In this very basic model scaling was dictated by the 3"OD rubber-tyred wheels. This resulted in a situation unusual to me, of having no centre holes down the mid-line of the model, (i.e. 3" wide chassis, 5" wide windscreen, 4" between headlamps' outer rims). Attempts at maintaining a centre-line hole structure put the visual accuracy out of whack. Centre holes only occur across top of the cowl, and in the rear body panel. A lower steering link is not shown, off the 5" crank handle which serves as steering column, but it is easy to accomplish via a transverse drag-



anticipate the same satisfaction in building, down-track. If it works out good enough, I'll mail you a couple of photos of the end result.

The numbers refer to Meccano part numbers

Some Non-MECCANO Sets - Part 4



Ezy-Bilt was a Meccano "Look Alike" made in Australia from the 1940s until the 1960s. Parts often appear amongst secondhand Meccano in New Zealand but can usually be identified by the inferior quality especially of the bosses on the wheels. Hole spacing and diameter is the same as Meccano.

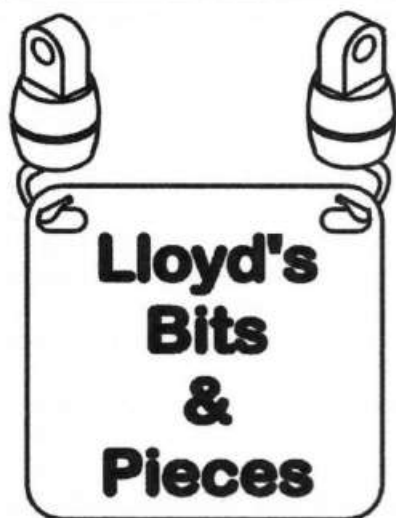


The *Lionel* construction set originates in the USA and was produced briefly in the late 1940s. The components are made from aluminium and are of square tubular construction. They are connected by gusset pieces and secured by domed pins held in place by rubber grommets. The parts were very liable to be damaged, by boys feet, for example, and maybe for this reason the product did not last long on the market.



Most modellers will remember advertisements for *Juneero* in the Meccano Magazines of the 1940s and 50s. The special tool could shear, punch and bend strip and thread rod, suitable raw material being provided in the set. According to the advertisement "Many Famous Engineering Firms now use Juneero".

Is this where the Meccano mutilator was born?

**PROGRESS ?:**

Quotation: "*The pen is mightier than the sword*" Edward Bulwer Lytton, 1803-1876.

Quotation: "*The mouse is mightier than the pen*". National Design Technology College brochure, 2002.

DISCONTINUANCE:

Nikko Meccano's announcement that they are ceasing production of over 100

traditional Meccano parts was not unexpected. Soon we will be reliant on replica makers and the larger dealers for such parts if they are needed for a particular model. There were some queer anomalies in the list of discontinued parts.

ROWAN THE ENGINE DRIVER: Paul Joachim is a well-known UK Meccano modeller. His daughter, Rowan, is well known in another sphere. She is one of only a few ladies with a licence to drive steam engines. She does this on model rail set-ups at holiday resorts.

Howard Somerville says he has known Rowan since she was eight years old and she was a cross between Shirley Temple and Ruth Lawrence. Geoff Carter remembers that at a WLMS meeting Rowan described her model Meccano aircraft as a 'warplane', "because it is full of bullet holes". (Notes from 'Spanner')

IN THE RIGHT PLACE.....: Trevor Baylis, inventor of the clock radio, acquired a large Meccano outfit when he was collecting scrap metal during W.W.2. The owner had been killed in the RAF and his mother had thrown the Meccano out. Trevor was in the right place at the right time and the rest (of his career) is history.. (George Illingworth on 'Spanner')

SIT ON YOUR MECCANO: In a local trading magazine in the UK there was an advertisement — "For sale, a Ford Fiesta XR2 car with many extras including Meccano seats".

NEWS FROM CORNWALL: John Pond, at present visiting his family in Auckland, tells us the Meccano Club he belongs to back in the U.K. is called the ATLANTIC COAST MECCANO ENTHUSIASTS. (Note what the initials spell !). It has eleven members and is three years old. One of their members was well-known modeller, Tony Rednall, who (unfortunately for the ACME Club) has moved to Norfolk to live.

IN GOOD COMPANY: Terry Hall, writing about investing in Art and Collectibles, said, "Most genuine Kiwi collectors are unhappy about the steady loss from New Zealand of important items to overseas. They range from Jaguar cars to Lalique crystal to Marklin and Hornby trains." (The Dominion Post, 26/08/02)

SOME MARKLIN HISTORY: Marklin Metall, production of

which has ceased, had been made since 1914 when Marklin took over the German Meccano factory. In 1918 the factory moved from Berlin to Goppingen. Since 1992 the parts have been produced at Gyor in Hungary. (Holy Trinity M.C. Newsletter, Oct., 1999.)

A PLASTIC MECCANO CLOCK: Matt Goodman of the West London MS, built a grandmother clock almost entirely from plastic (Junior) Meccano parts. It incorporated an escapement, pulleys and gears, swinging pendulum and a dial. While not perfect, it worked well enough to encourage further experimentation.

OPTIMISM: "*The end of Marklin Metall construction sets and the uncertain future of Meccano will not have serious consequences. We belong to a world-wide network that can keep us supplied for the rest of our lives. For collectors, their holdings will probably become more valuable.*" (Anton Calleia in SCM&E Newsletter, 4th Qr., 1999)

WHAT NEXT ?: Select, VALUE, TOILET TISSUE, 10 rolls, 2 ply, recycled. (From a "Warehouse" Spring Shopping Advertisement) (I think that takes recycling a bit too far)

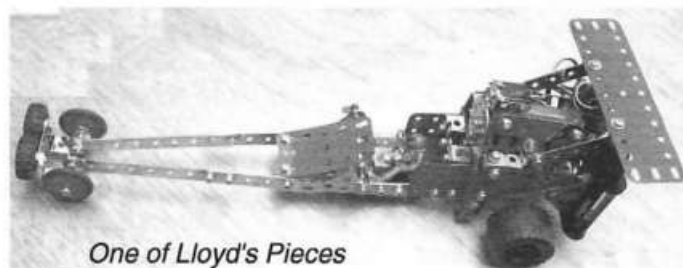
UNUSUAL USE FOR P/N 41: I was browsing through a 1926 Manual when I noticed a model of an agricultural plough. The blade looked unusual until I realised it was a propeller blade with the shaft pointing forward. It was in scale and looked like a real plough blade.

UNUSUAL MODELS: In the same 1926 Manual were smaller models we never see in more recent manuals. For instance, a mouse trap, an invalid chair, a jaunting car and a wool skein winder. Quite a change from cranes and trains and stationary engines.

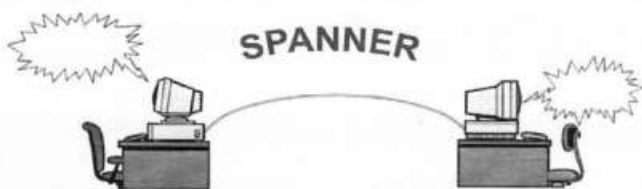
SIXTY YEARS AGO, South of a railway stop called el Alamein I was trudging across the featureless North African desert with thousands of other Allied soldiers, rifle at the ready and bayonet fixed, to confront the German enemy. Today, I build metal construction models with German motors and some German parts.

QUOTATION: "Lego — not to be confused with Sticklebricks or Scaletrix or Meccano. The last is Lego's hottest rival and is to engineers what Lego is to builders." (Katy Greaves, in "Post" Magazine, 3/3/02) (Thanks to Mike Stuart in Hong Kong for this item).

FREAK ACCIDENT: In England in 1944, a man was eating breakfast in his home when a circular saw broke loose at a nearby mill, ripped into his dining room and sliced his table in half. (*Was it Meccano Pt No 159? Ed*)



One of Lloyd's Pieces



The use of email from the Spanner group is acknowledged.

Fitting LED to models - Buy some 3mm LEDs and the associated plastic mounts. These fit into Meccano holes very well being 4mm outer diameter or thereabouts. (Paul Dale).

Stepper Motors - After announcing our new stepper motor system, here's some general information for those, who have not yet dealt with this kind of motoring. Stepper motors are used if exact positioning is required, like on plotters, XYZ-positioning systems or industrial robots. All stepper motors are operated by PC via a motor control and converter. Up to 16 motors can be operated with our system. We are offering a standard and a larger,



time special a number of exactly defined rotations or parts of it in a certain time. This is for example necessary when an industrial robot has to move to a position to pick up a small part and put it somewhere else on a machine or car under production. The system-chain looks like this: PC with software > converter > controller > stepper motor. Up to three controllers can be added to the converter which has its own power supply. If more motors are needed, up to 16 controllers can be linked together in a cascade arrangement, that means a chain of several controllers are connected by cables between each controller from 1 to 16 (max.). The software on the PC is DOS-based to keep it simple. It also guarantees that the system runs on older computers. (Stefan Wanders, Administrator and webmaster Metallus <www.metallus.de>).

Golden Spanner Award 2002 - I have been authorised to announce, on behalf of the International Society of Meccanomen, that the Jury of the ISM's Golden Spanner Award 2002 has conferred the Award for 2002 on Willy Dewulf. Willy Dewulf (ISM 490) was nominated for the Award by Le Club des Amateurs du Meccano (CAM). The Jury selected Willy as Golden Spanner Laureate from a number of nominations of eminent Meccanomen from clubs throughout the world. You can read more about the Golden Spanner Award on the ISM website: <www.internationalmeccanomen.org.uk> Further information about Willy Dewulf and his achievements in the world of Meccano can be found in the forthcoming issue of the Society's Journal, International Meccanomen, to be published in September. (Howard Somerville).

Safety Clutch - (1) I've found using two 50T brass contrate gears with a 1" pulley and tyre in between needs less spring loading due to the grip. It works very well (David Bradley).

(2) Back in the 70s when I regularly exhibited large models powered by very powerful mains voltage motors my "overload protection system" was very simple. I took the drive from the motor to the model by twin drive bands. I used a pair of 1/2" pulleys on the motor shaft and either a pair of 2" or 3" pulleys on the model input shaft. If and when the drive train jammed for any reason the bands slipped on the 1/2" pulley and rapidly heated up to the point when they snapped - end of problem. (Bill Inglis).

Doug McHard's Death - In today's The Times (10/10/02), there is an obituary on John Douglas McHard who became assistant editor of Model Aircraft magazine in 1959. In 1967 he joined the Meccano Magazine, which The Times states, "Under his editorship, the publication rose to be the biggest-selling boys' hobby periodical of its day". He was born at West Hartlepool on Friday, January 11th 1929 and died of a heart attack on Thursday, August 29th 2002 at Honington, Suffolk. He was aged 73. (Anthony Bolton).

P/N 163 Sleeve Piece inserts - I am building a model which involves using sleeve pieces to represent circular parts. Traditionally they can be joined, and centred around a rod with chimney adaptors. However these are firstly expensive, and secondly open up the sleeve pieces slightly. I discovered previously that 142M, the large kart tyre, mounted on a 38a plastic spacer, fits exactly inside a sleeve piece. I have now also discovered that 142N, the small kart tyre, mounted on a 38a plastic spacer, fits exactly inside the chimney adaptor. I do not know how available these small tyres are now. There will either be none, or vast stocks somewhere. Fortunately I have enough for immediate needs. (George Illingworth).

Discontinuance of Parts - I have just received the latest price list from Meccano Paris, and what a bomb shell it is. This is a list of discontinued parts compiled by me from their list:- 7a, 8a, 8b, 11b, 13a, 14, 14a, 15b, 19c, 20b, 22ap, 23y, 23r, 23ap, 23b, 24a, 24c, 26, 26b, 26c, 27, 27a, 27b, 27c, 27d, 27cp, 28, 29, 30, 30a, 30d, 31, 32, 32pb, 47a, 48c, 50, 51, 51b, 52, 52a, 53a, 58, 58a, 62, 62a, 62b, 63c, 69, 70, 72, 73, 76, 78, 79a, 80, 80a, 80b, 80c, 81, 82, 94, 95, 95a, 95b, 96, 96a, 99y, 103, 103a, 103b, 103c, 103d, 103e, 103f, 103r, 103t, 108, 110a, 116, 116a, 118, 126a, 128, 130, 130a, 131, 134, 136, 136a, 139, 139a, 140, 142a, 142b, 142f, 142g, 142h, 143, 144, 146, 146a, 148, 154a, 157, 162a, 162b, 164, 165, 166, 167a, 167b, 168a, 168b, 168c, 171, 173a, 176, 179, 185, 186, 186c, 186d, 186e, 187a, 187f, 187j, 189, 190a, 192, 193d, 194b, 194e, 196, 197, 198, 199, 216, 222, 223, 225, 226, 230, 231, 236, 236r.

Some parts not available in their normal colours may be available in the new colours. All parts used in any of the current sets are available separately. Discontinued parts available in different colours. 52 red, grey; 126a red, blue, zinc; 189 red; 201 red; 192 silver; 199 silver.

Haven't had time to go through the list in more detail yet but I have noted that many of the small brackets are now available in zinc. On the new list, parts are not in packets of six or twelve or whatever but appear to be priced individually. Even nuts and bolt are listed as single pieces. The new list has 840 different parts on it. (From Peter Matthews, Toys Past and Present).

Bruce's Choices From Around The World

by Bruce Neilson

Meccano Newsmag – July 2002.

Pick of the articles – (1) Narrow Gauge Single Deck Tram by Mike Edkins and (2) Water Pumping Engine by Mike Cotterill.

There are two models to build in this issue and they caused me difficulty in deciding the best pick. The $\frac{9}{16}$ " track gauge Tram is a 'hidden' model. The tram has no looks from the outside, but take off the plain bodywork and the chassis is carrying a complex collection of two pivoting bogies, motor and gears, shafting and working pantographs which will make any Meccanoman salivate. $11\frac{1}{2}$ pages of text, 8 photos and 9 Isomec drawings gives you a working Tram, and the necessary information to build track, points and overhead wire for a permanent layout.

At the other end of the scale is a Water Pumping Engine. This Pumping Engine is an 'out in the open' model and what you see is what you have to build. In addition this is one of those models that is very suitable to keep on hand to impress visitors. When they make polite enquiries about your hobby, apply some electricity and you will have their total attention.

The Pumping Engine is $18\frac{1}{2}$ " long, 12" high and 8 inches wide with a central rocking beam and frame; steam cylinder, flywheel and governor at one end; and the water pump at the other end. A small electric motor concealed inside the base powers the model. One coloured photo and two pages of text guide you through the construction. I highly recommend this model as a permanent exhibit.

The precursor of this model originally appeared in the 1989 Meccanoman's Newsmag Supplement No 2. I have built and rebuilt this model a number of times and currently have two versions on my display shelf. One is driven by a New Zealand, David Auld, very small, vertical, live steam engine; and the other by an electric tape recorder motor.

Runnymede Meccano Guild – June 2002.

Pick of the articles – The 150 Ton Hammerhead Crane at Barrow by Eddie Oatley.

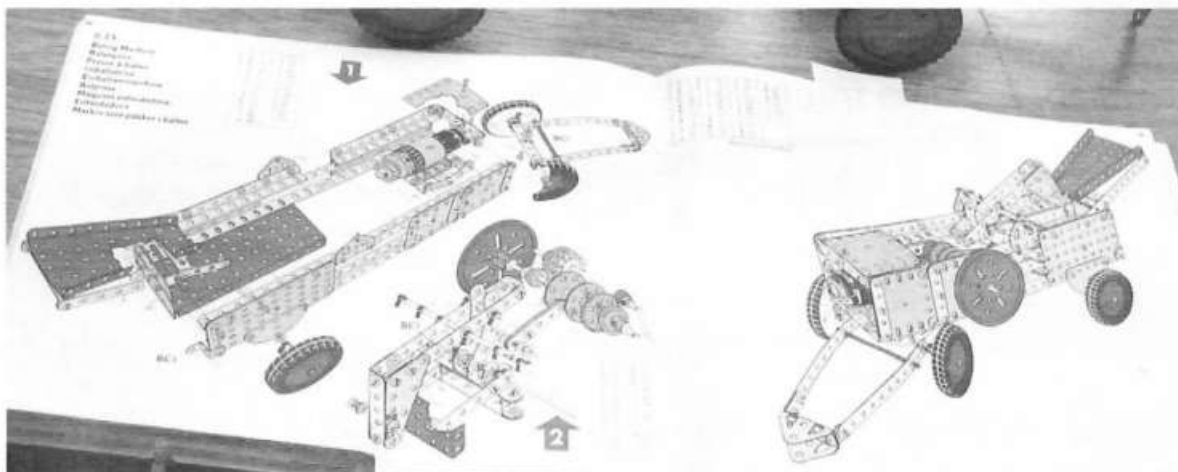
Do you know the difference between a Hammerhead Crane and a Blocksetting Crane? This seven page article includes 14 photos and two diagrams and is a nice piece of research covering real Hammerheads, Meccano Ltd's models in manuals and other literature, and supplying the answer. The end result of the research was Eddie Oatley's magnificent $\frac{1}{40}$ th scale Hammerhead Crane, 36" high with a 72" jib and containing 3000 nuts and bolts.

I found this article interesting in that it sets out the action plan that Eddie followed from idea, research the prototype, draw up the scale drawings of the 'model plan', figure out the major construction methods for strength and looks, and then and only then pick up the screwdriver.

The International Meccanoman (ISM) – September 2002.

Pick of the articles – Model Building Technology by Philip Webb.

The ISM magazine is an interesting blend of the Meccano happenings around the world where there is an exceedingly wide exchange of views, philosophical articles, exhibition models, faces of names you have only met in text and a regular article of practical ideas sifted mainly from Spanner and drawn in isometric view by Philip Webb. The drawings clarify the written word and make the rebuilding of the mechanisms a 'piece of cake'. This month the new tri-flat parts have been given a chance to show their versatility in a Narrow Differential of about 1" in thickness, and then another differential which fits inside the diameter of P/N 27 $1\frac{1}{4}$ " 50 tooth Gear Wheel if you are prepared to drill a set of holes in it and use 12 tooth tri-flat pinions. Coupling two MO motors together for more power, multi-core plugs, and using P/N 23c Rubber Grommets as shock absorbers and packers for mounting an electric motor also feature. However the display of ingenuity of John Stark of Nelson, NZ, in designing a small reduction box inside the $1\frac{1}{2}$ " cube part to get the gearing down to 343: 1 and then a safety clutch inside $\frac{1}{2}$ " x $1\frac{1}{2}$ " shows what a Meccanoman can do when challenged.



This is the illustration from the 1970s manual for Lloyd Spackman's Hay Baler. It is model 6.15 (see page 21)

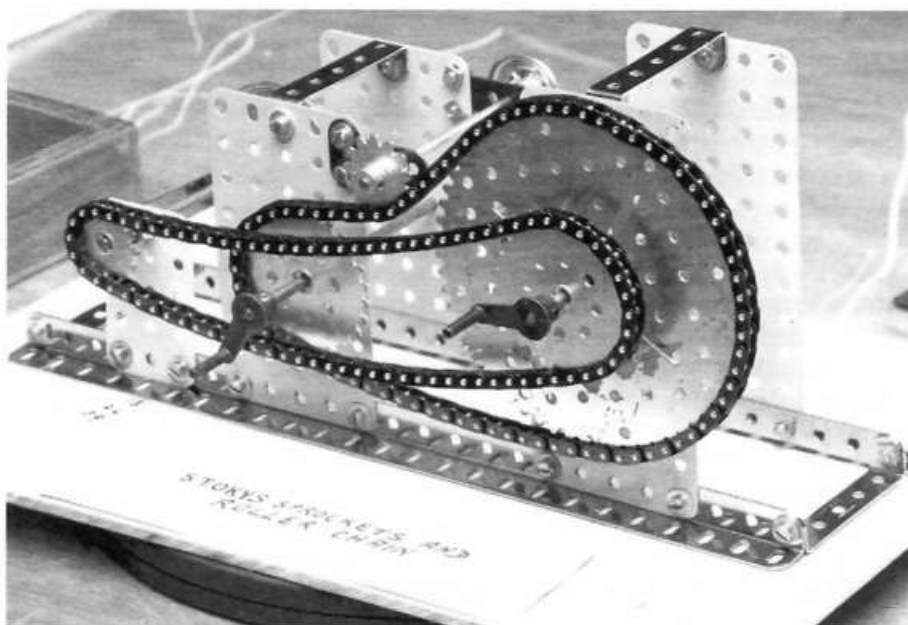
Wellington Meccano Club Meeting Report October 2002

by Lloyd Spackman and Bryan Jones.

The Wellington Meccano Club were invited to be part of the annual Karori Festival on September 7th and 8th. Laurie Webb, Bryan Jones, Nancy Blake and Lloyd Spackman put on a small exhibition at the Karori Community Centre. Bryan and Laurie ran locomotives up and down a long track, Lloyd demonstrated his Pontoon Crane and Nancy showed a collection of Meccano France one model sets which she had built from the 151x and 251x series. The children enjoyed her 'hands on' policy.

Our October meeting was attended by half a dozen members. Laurie showed us his Swiss Railways Locomotive which is nearing the "add the bogies" stage. Lloyd demonstrated Stokys roller chain and sprockets from a collection of parts he bought recently. He also had a dragster built from a Master Builder set.

Our next meeting, on December 6, should still be at St. Luke's, but check with Laurie or Lou Nichols if you are not sure.



Lloyd Spackman bought some Stokys Chain recently!



Don Blakeborough, Lou Nichols and John Hansen looking at something?

A Few More Pictures from the MWT Meeting



Daryl Anderson's Mechanised Army Set



Don's Exacto Ring. Does he want someone to jump through it?

MWTF

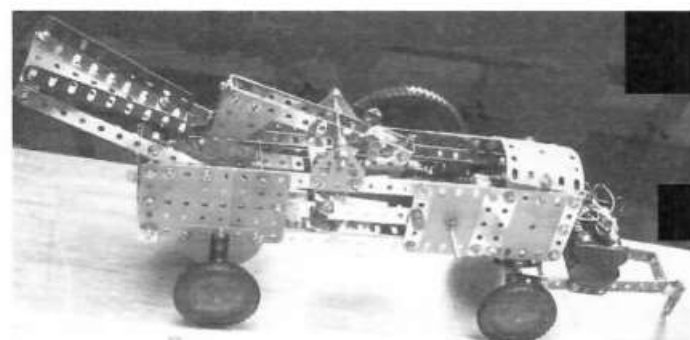
MECCANO CLUB

Meeting Report for 12 October 2002

by Bruce Neilson
Photographs by Daryl
Anderson and Bruce
Neilson

The Antique segment of the October meeting was set as the 'Least used and most useless part' and produced some very persuasive arguments. A general group of specialised parts such as Dredger Bucket P/N 131; Digger Bucket P/N 169; Collector Shoe P/N 149; Train Coupling P/N 121; Rail Adaptor P/N 173;

Signal Arm P/N 158a and 158b; and Ships Funnels P/N 138 were generally considered the best examples uses were very restricted. The Strip P/N 102 had uses as a head and castor wheel holder; Wheel P/N 19c had uses as a wheel, driving band gearing, and turntable; and even the Eccentric Triple Throw P/N 130 could also be used as a human face.



Lloyd Spackman's Hay Baler

The model of the meeting turned out to be a difficult assignment being a 1930's Stationary Hay Baler. The movements involved were the plunger working vertically and the rammer working horizontally both driven mechanically from a mechanism, belt driven, from a single motor. Alistair Tong, Lloyd Spackman, and Bruce Geange presented models and surprisingly two other members, John Ince and Chris Morton, had worked with the real balers in the 1940's and were able to detail the work required from the hay-baling crews. Shredded paper littered the table as Bruce Geange put his baler through its paces.

The model tour produced some unusual items. Daryl Anderson revealed a beautiful, strung, boxed Mechanised

Army set with manual and guarantee label, and a new series of Meccano signage from his print shop (watch this space!!). Don Blakeborough and Wayne Blakely both had a selection of Exacto parts on display so members were able to look and touch some very nicely made parts. Bruce Geange had the Bernard Perier 1943 Jeep and Trailer from the September 1999 Constructor Quarterly reconstructed in pristine drab Army green (see elsewhere in this issue), a Hornby style 1930 No 1 super detailed tank locomotive designed for continuous running on exhibition displays and some replica Meccano Aeroplane wheel spats. John Ince had a rush of blood to his spanner and arrived with a he(a)rd of motorcycles with some very narrow hipped riders standing beside their machines. The bikes had special spokes in the wheels and sprung suspensions. Bob Prescott joined the biker gang with his Harley Davidson. He also had the all moving, all sound, Entertainment Centre model that is going to drive his 2003 Convention neighbours mad with the sound of lots of children turning the handle. On a more serious level, Bob also had a semi-failed model which generated considerable discussion. The model was of a Battlebot driven by four motors, two

*Bruce Geange's
Baler*

infrared receivers and one hand control. The lifting arm worked well but the movement of the model on the floor was not up to requirement. Advice on gearing, differentials to take up the variances in the two axle driving motors, etc were forthcoming and the Mk 2 version will be interesting. Lloyd Spackman demonstrated the Stokys (Switzerland) system of roller chain and sprockets, and a variety of parts. His 15" dragster had performed well, when let loose down the street, going for about 200 yards closely pursued by his grandchildren. Paul Vodanovitch presented the 4-6-2 Locomotive and Tender Model No 7.11, a Ship on wheels and a Marine Engine. He had also acquired a nicely preserved No 1 Clockwork Motor in original box with key, manual, and driving bands in a separate little box. Catalogues from Metallus, Mike Rhoades, Frizinghall and Exacto were also available for perusal.

The meeting wound up with an auction of Meccano Parts, a Mechanisms set, and some empty Meccano boxes. In particular a Number 8 R/G 1950's box sold for \$50 and a Number 9A R/G 1950's box with stringing boards sold for \$160.



Bob Prescott's Battlebot

Christchurch Meccano Club Meetings

August 2002

by Ian Torrens

The CMC Meeting held on 2 August was attended by ten members, even though it was a cold winters night. John Hamlyn brought along the base and part of the control cabin of his Wharf Crane. This has been viewed earlier but is now being extended further and will be a fine model when completed. This was the only model on display so much general discussion continued as usual with supper being put on at 2100 hours and the meeting finishing at 2130 hours.

September 2002

by Ian Torrens

A cool but dry evening for the September meeting of the Christchurch Meccano Club, at which, eight members were in attendance. Graeme O'Neill brought along his selection of magazines and these are always well perused. He also had a previously viewed four speed and reverse gearbox to which he is adding a manual gear lever as in a car. This has a special made-up housing with the required slots for the gear lever to move around in. A really neat unit with still more work needed to complete it. Cameron McFarlane showed a motorcycle, 8" long, 4" wide and 4" high which had been viewed previously and looks very good. He also displayed a racing car from the new Meccano system which also looked very good and measured 8" long, 4" wide and 4" high. Ian Torrens presented the carton of parts for a Planetary Gearbox set. This is available from Dick Smith stores at \$29.95 and has been reviewed in an article by Bob Prescott, NZFMMM April 2002. Supper was put on at

2100 hours and the meeting concluded at 2150 hours. An interesting and enjoyable evening for everyone.

October 2002

by Ian Torrens

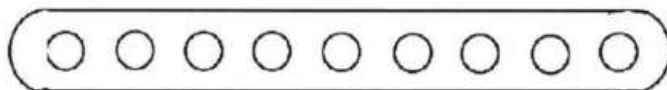
Eleven members were present at the meeting on 4 October of the Christchurch Meccano Club, on a cool but fine evening, at which eleven models were put on show. A good effort by all. Doug King had his Baltic Tank Locomotive as a window display at Leapfrog Toys and of course it made an impressive showing. He brought it along as he was taking it to his home. Bob Prescott from MWT Meccano Club came along as a visitor and brought with him a fine model of a Four Piece Band, three guitars and a drum set. This had two small speakers with the music being supplied by a Sanyo CD Player. Very neat and an interesting model which measured 23" long, 7" wide and 11" high. On the bass drum was the label, 'The Beatles', most appropriate. Graeme O'Neill, once again, showed his Ferry boat, Destroyers and Hammerhead Crane he is still working on. This has two control cabs which extend to left and right of the main boom giving the operator a fine view. Graeme also had his selection of magazines and a four speed and reverse vehicle type gearbox. Three models using Junior Meccano were shown, these being a Helicopter, Motor Truck and a Digger. Five models in Plastic Meccano were tabled for inspection and these were a Helicopter, Digger, Crane Truck, Articulated Lorry and Harley Davidson Motorcycle complete with windscreen. The Harley measured 12" long, 8" high and 5" wide. General discussion followed for a time, then supper, which was at 2050 hours with the meeting finishing at 2130 hours.



Members of the Christchurch Meccano Club - October 2002

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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.

9th November - George Ovenden's home, 19 Richards Avenue, Milford, Auckland.

MWT Meccano Club.

Contact - John Hansen - Ph 06 325 8211.

Meetings at 2pm on second Saturday every second month at St. Luke's Church Hall, cnr. Cornfoot and Manuka Streets, Wanganui.

Christmas Gathering 30 November at John and Carol Hansen's place.

Wellington Meccano Club.

Contact - Lou Nichols Ph 04 973 6177.

Meetings at 7.30 pm on first Friday every second month at ?? (contact Lou to get place of meeting).

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 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.internationalmeccanomen.org.uk>.

Meccano Webring <www.meccanoweb.com/meccring>.

Articles etc. for the December issue of NZFMM Magazine should be sent to the Editor well before 25 November 2002.

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

Reminder - 6 Months to Go.

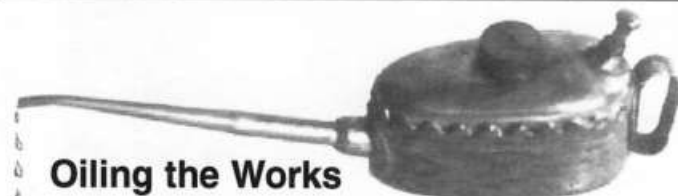
New Zealand 2003 Convention.

18-19-20 April 2003.

Community Centre, Albion Street, Hawera.

Organiser - Daryl Anderson.

Email <meccano2003nz@bitworks.co.nz>.



Oiling the Works

Recently a lady telephoned David Wall in search of a Meccano Set for her husband, who was in hospital. As David had nothing for sale he passed out to George Ovenden. Unfortunately George was also unable to oblige so he got on the phone to John Ince. After explaining the gentleman's needs John felt that a made up No 5 Set of 1950s vintage might be suitable. Accordingly George contacted the lady who shortly after phoned John to settle the deal. >>>

Buy, Sell, Auction, & Exchange.

Advertisements in this section are free.

First insertion will be printed in full.

Subsequent identical insertions (max. one) may be abbreviated to fit space available.

For Sale - Set 9550.

Complete plus extra parts. Original tray and box. Little used. Zinc parts have been replated. Price \$NZ150.

Lloyd Spackman. Ph. 04-2320918.

email - <fishplate@paradise.net.nz>

Wanted To Buy - Manuals and Magazines.

Meccano Outfit Manuals:-

No 4 & 5 (Blocksetter Crane Cover);

No 4 & 9 (Dragline Cover either version)

Meccano Magazines:-

6/50; 4,10/51; 3/52; 2,4,6,12/53; 3,4,9,11/54; 8/56; 12/57; 2,3/58; 5,10/59; 11/60; 5/61.

Must be complete with covers (need not be in pristine condition)

Please advise me with price wanted including courier post.

Also can anybody help me with a contact for second-hand "Model Engineer" magazines?

John Rickit, 19 Findlater St., Matamata, NZ

For Sale - Meccano Stickers

White glossy removable vinyl with red print. There are about 50 to an A4 sheet in various sizes. Cut them up yourself. NZ\$2 (US\$1) per sheet plus post and pack.

(Daryl Anderson, Hawera, New Zealand. email <daryl@bitworks.co.nz>).

For Sale - Meccano Supplies.

New 2002 Sets now available.

Contact Wayne Blakely.

Phone 06 327 6184, Fax 06 327 4184.

Exacto Agency - Wayne Blakely

Paper price list available from me at Phone 06 327 6184, Fax 06 327 4184.

Electronic price list available from William Irwin at email <irwins@ihug.co.nz>.

For Sale - MECCANO Magazines

Approx 200, 1925 to 1975

Doug Harris (09) 535 2546, Fax (09) 535 8048, email <digbee@xtra.co.nz>

For Sale - Digital Camera

Kodak DC3200. 1.0 megapixel, 2X digital zoom, 2MB internal memory and software. Extras:- 16 MB memory card and camera case. \$325.

Bob Prescott, phone 06 323 9963 or email <rjp@xtra.co.nz>

The cheque arrived a few days later. John checked over the contents of the set, wrapped up the parcel and, about 3pm, biked down to the Feilding place which serves as a Post Office. The following evening the lady phoned to say that the parcel had arrived and that her 92 year old husband was delighted!

Don't you think that the Auckland Meccano Club is leaving its recruitment a little late?