



NZFMM MAGAZINE

Volume 31 No 6

December 2007

Yes, this Christmas Tree is **MECCANO**, of the plastic variety. You will find more about this product on page 18. Presents suspended from the tree include Selwyn Bluett's tiny tractor (see page 24), a grader (see page 18) and standing under the tree is a Maxamec animal (see page 16)



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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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Welcoming the Day

All of us welcome each day in different manners. I suppose it depends if you are a morning or evening person as to how you feel about it. Myself being a bit of both (morning and evening) I can honestly say that I am glad that I am able to experience the joys of a new day. In this day we all make decisions, some decisions are important and some are nearly hard wired to our brain that I think we do not even consider that we have made a decision. Let us take for example what you will have for breakfast. If you have the same breakfast menu every day for the last six months then I am sure you do not even consider this a decision. Lets move on to further in the day and you are in your car going to the Supermarket. As usual there is always someone ready to pounce on the empty car park you have just spotted-do you risk damaging your car or even your health to grab this illusive car space from the teaming hordes of other car drivers. This surely is a more important decision involving lots more consideration.

So in a way this brings me to two important decisions that affect my life and someone's else life. Let us look at the more distant decision first, the editorship of this magazine. At the time of writing this editorial we have had expressions of interest in taking up this role. The people involved have made I believe an important decision in allowing their names to go forward to be considered. I thank them for that. A decision is to be made as to my replacement and hopefully will be announced in this issue.

Secondly, the decision in my and my families life is too me far more important. We are seriously thinking of moving to Australia for a year or two to experience new ideas, culture and work. Carol has been offered good Physio. positions in their Health system and it is up to us as a family to make the decision to move or not. As with all decisions that need a little time to discuss and digest we hope we come up with an answer. This may be the "right" or "wrong" decision but who is to judge this. If I asked 10 people as to what they would do I would get a fairly even spread of going and staying. In the end I believe you decide what is "right" by your gut feeling that this decision whether it be going for that car park, being the editor of this magazine or shifting to Australia is the right one.

On behalf of all the folk here who bring you this magazine I would like to wish you a Peaceful and Happy Christmas and an interesting and exciting 2008. May all your decisions be the "right" one.

John Hansen, Temporary Editor.

Contents

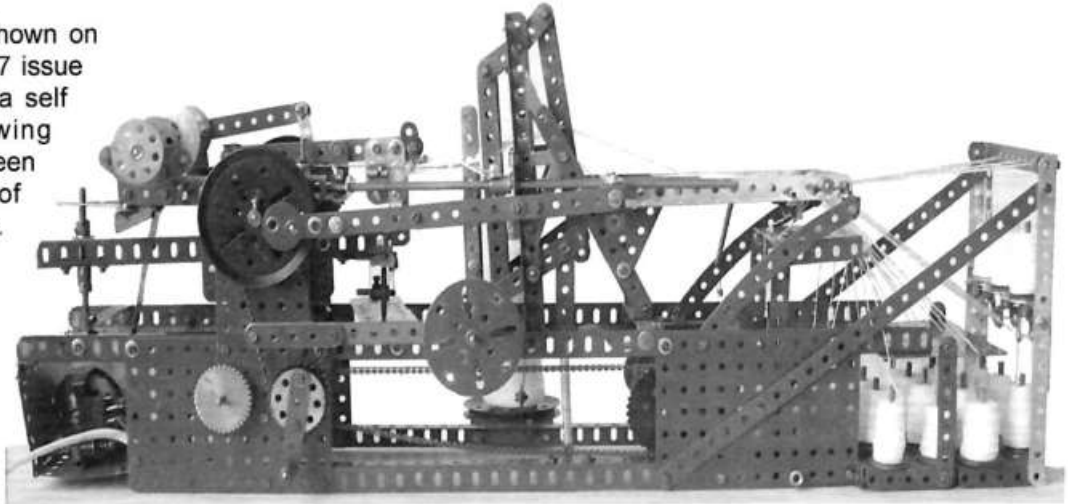
Bandage Knit Loom.....	3 - 6
The Versatile Rubber Grommet.....	7
Differential Analyser - Adding Unit.....	8 - 9
Extending the Boom on My Grove RT Crane.....	10 - 11
Hi to NZFMM Magazine Readers.....	11
A Meccano Alternative.....	12
A Meccano Shop Display 50 Years Ago.....	12
The Meccano Design Set 2 (new version) 5700N.....	13
Propagation of an Urban Legend.....	14
News from the Australian Outback.....	15
An Australian Meccano Display.....	16
Another Construction Toy.....	16
Lloyd's Bits and Pieces.....	17
Plastic Meccano Big Parts for Little Hands.....	18
Miniature Railway And Village.....	19 - 20
Club Reports.....	21 - 22
Club Diary	23
Buy & Sell.....	23
Tiny Tractors.....	24

Bandage Knit Loom

by Hugh Ramage

Introduction

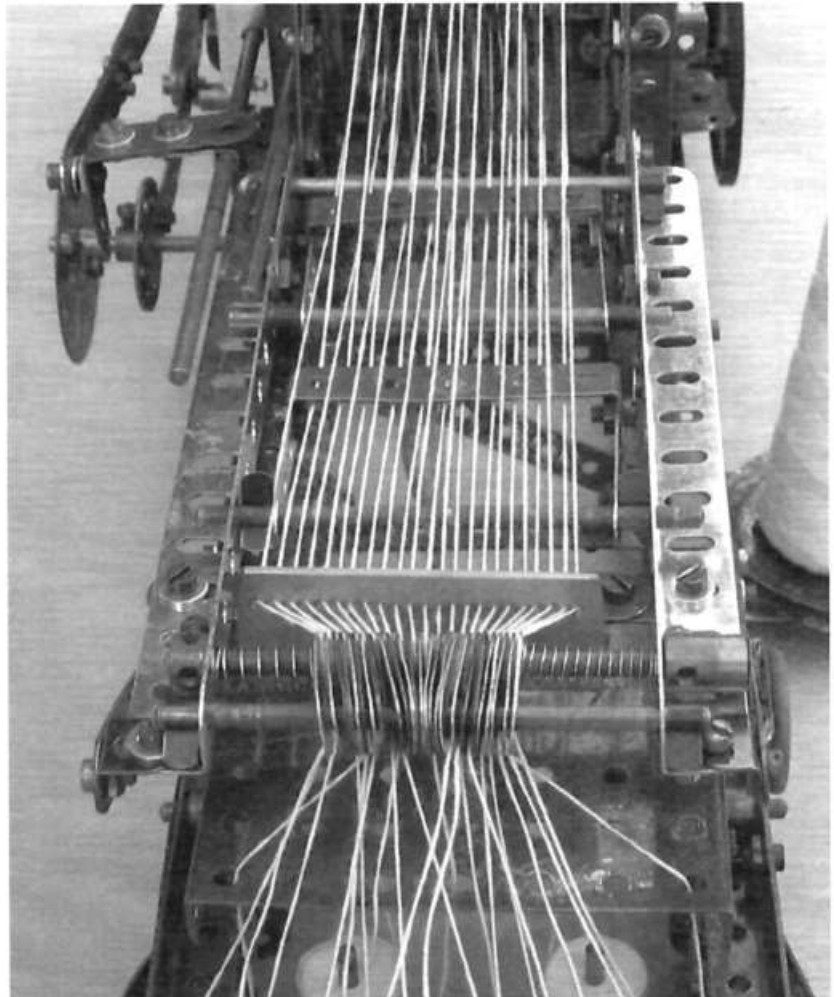
This work in progress is shown on page 20 of the August 2007 issue of NZFMM Magazine. As a self employed industrial sewing machine mechanic I have been into many different types of factories over the years. Recently, a company making safety and medical products installed 2 multi head bandage looms. Intrigued by the lack of a shuttle, I wanted to see if the knit-loom principle could be reproduced in Meccano.



A general view of the Loom from the drive side.



One of the warp spools.



The Loom warp guides (photo: Bruce Geange)

I only had 23 Part No 101 Healds for the loom so I divided the warp threads into 11 and 12 to go up and down alternately. The weft thread is the one usually contained on a bobbin eg shuttle Part No 104. As I don't have a Meccano shuttle, the challenge was to get the knit loom to function and weave some sort of bandage.

How it works.

A 4" Curved Strip, P/N 89b, travels through the 'shed' that is formed when the warp threads go up and down. This

curved strip enters the threads, drawing it's supply from a cone of bag sewing polyester thread, visible in the picture at the bottom of page 5. On reaching the extreme right of it's movement, a domestic large gauge knitting machine needle catches this thread and pulls it back through a loop and chains the selvage so that the weft thread passes twice for every change of the warp threads.

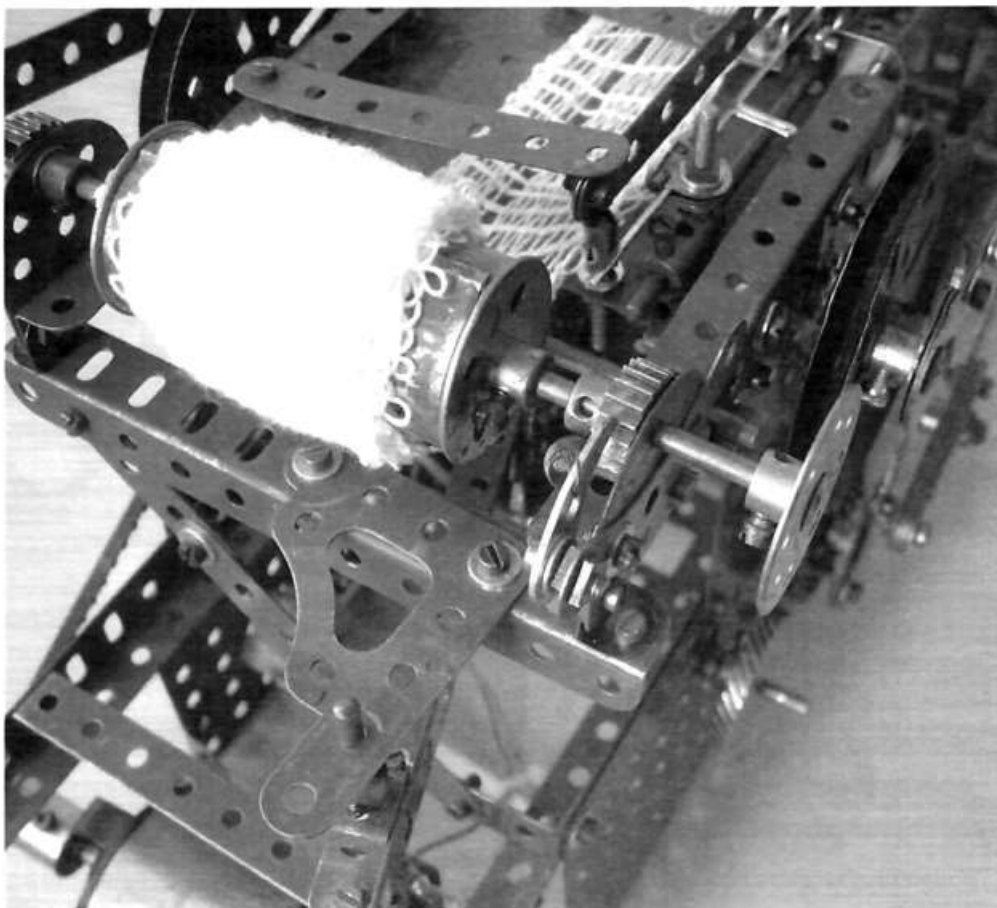
After many hours of trial and error it finally works; a "Meccano Masterpiece".

General Description

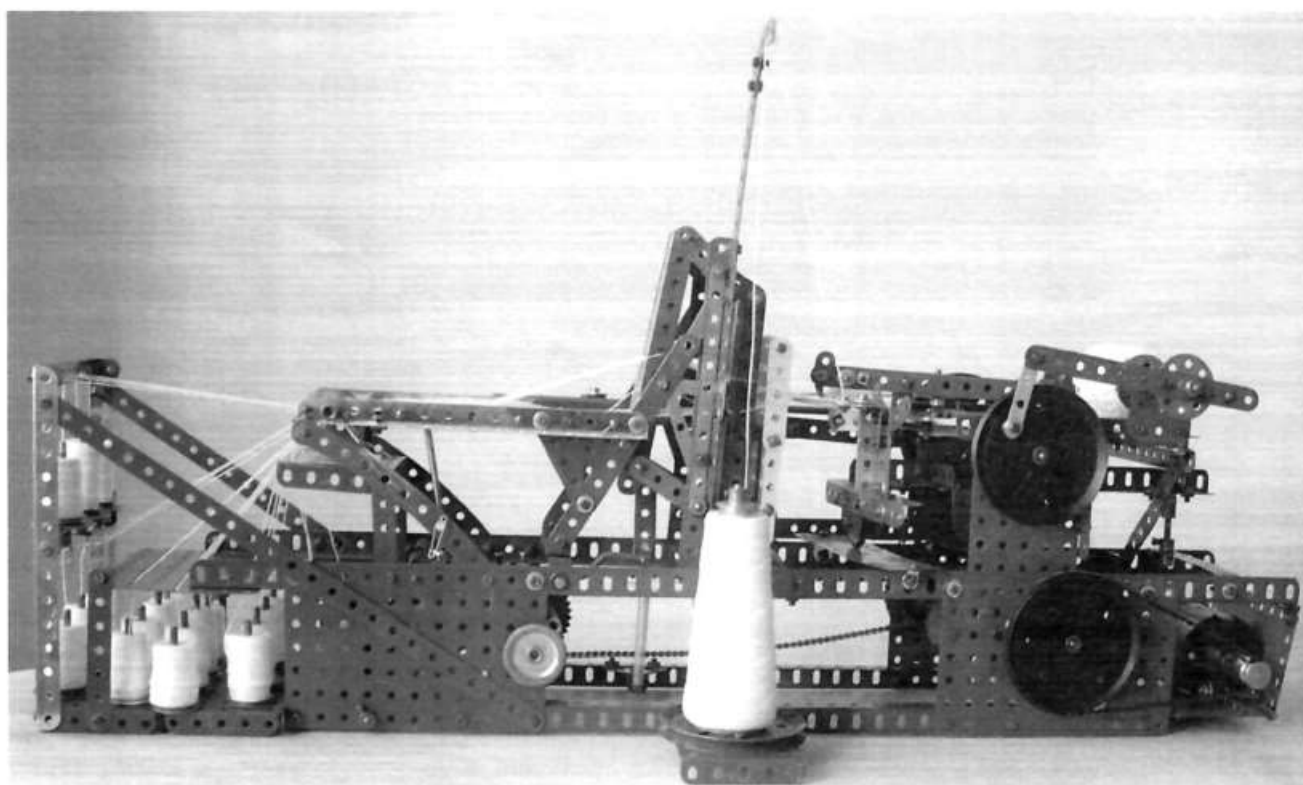
The thread supply for the warp are 23 small cops of polyester bag string thread wound onto 2" Axle Rods. In the work in progress photo I had used sewing machine bobbins but they only held about six metres of thread.

The photo on the previous page shows a small cop of thread wound on a drill press.

These 23 threads are gathered together and pass through sprung fishplates to provide a constant tension, next they pass through a drilled plate with 23 holes. Each set of threads, eg the 11 and 12, are controlled by a take-up arrangement to compensate for the alternate motion of the healds. I said that I had only 23 Healds, but found that the threads did not slide well, so on inspecting the real loom again found they used a flat strips. So I remade the 'castle' with 5 1/2" Flat Strips that are raised and lowered by a see-saw action using 2" and 3" Strips in an off-centre arrangement that lets the back healds lift higher.



The Loom Ratchet winder and take-up drum.

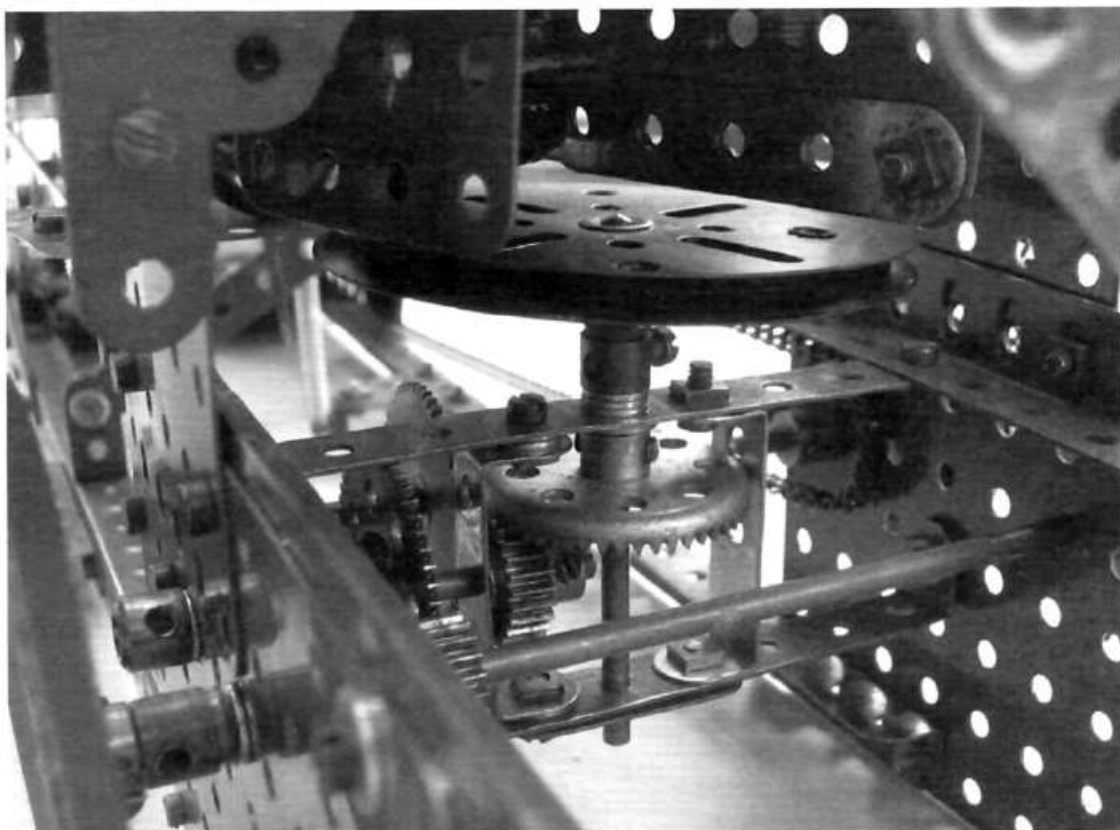


The Loom - Spool side

The cam that lifts these up is driven by the long horizontal Sprocket Chain and is half speed to the rest of the timing. This cam was made by bolting a Semi-circular Plate, P/N 214, to a Bush Wheel, P/N 24, with a Corner Bracket, P/N 113a, on the leading edge.

The Latch Needle

To drive the latch needle back and forth, a 3" Pulley with a Threaded Pin holds an Eccentric, P/N 130a, which is linked to the two sliding axles and the latch needle. This allows the stroke of the needle to be adjusted - something critical to the correct working of the loom.



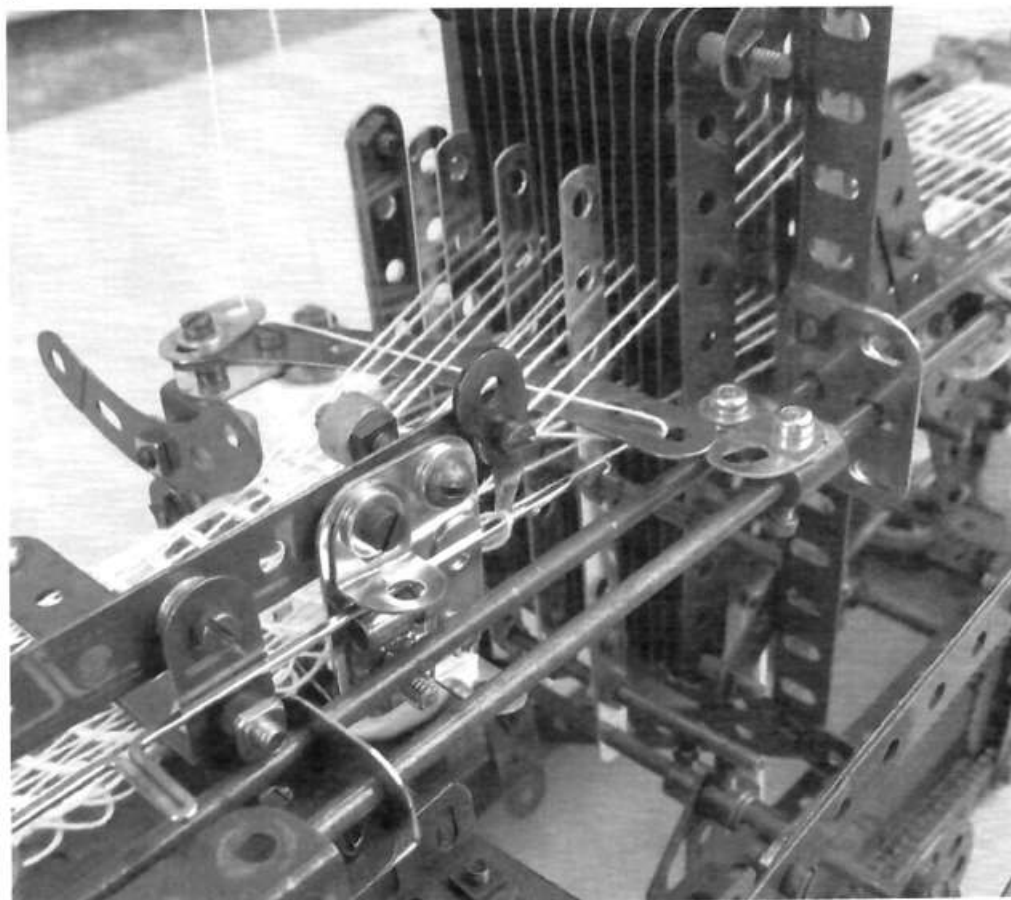
The Loom drive (photo: Bruce Geange)

The Weaving Action

At the motor end of the loom is a Helical Gear, P/N 211b, for hand turning; beside it is a Bush Wheel and a roller mounted on an arm. This lifts a weighted 5½" Perforated Strip that is centred at the Face Plate (just for show) and this action causes the beaters (the shiny Narrow Strips) to move behind the weft Curved Strip. At the end of the cycle when the weft looper is out of the threads, the beaters fall forward onto a stop and push the weft up. At the same time the ratchet winder rotates one tooth to keep everything under tension.

The Drive

This photo of the Loom Spool side shows the Elna 30v DC motor and the 3" driving Pulley. The input is further reduced 3:1 (see the loom drive picture) before driving the rest of the works.



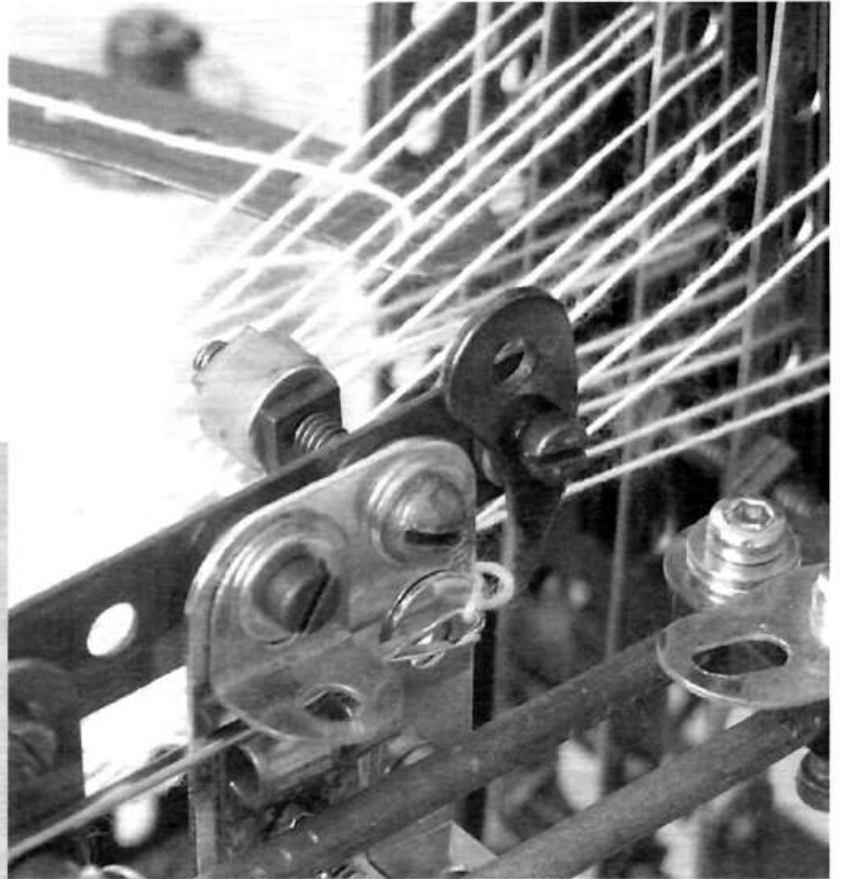
The Loom healds and the needle in the open position (photo: Bruce Geange)

The top 3" Pulley is a simple way to make a crank to drive the bandage winder drum. The gear driven vertical shaft has a 3" Pulley on top and a Threaded Pin on which a Pulley,

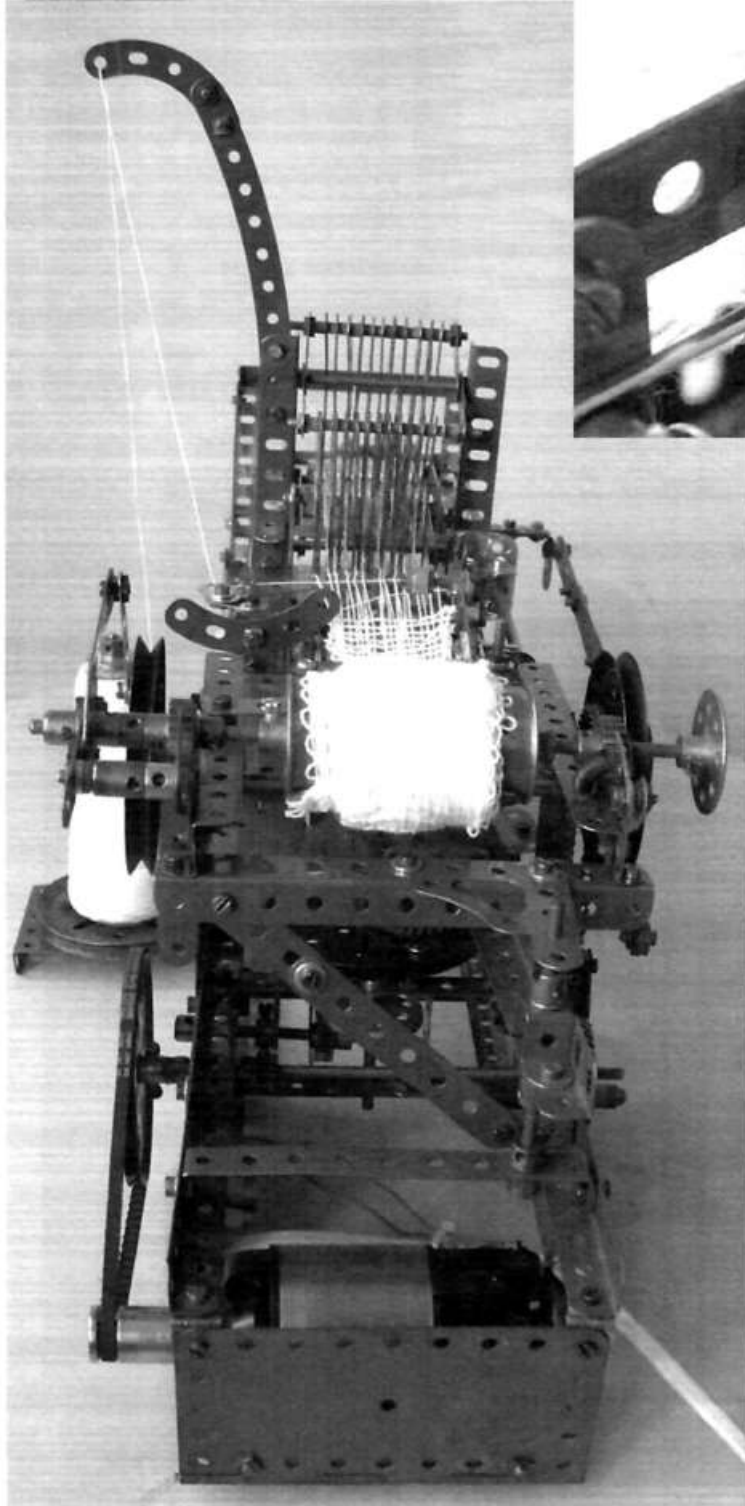
P/N 22, with Tyre is mounted. This Pulley runs in a channel to make the weft looper move from side to side.



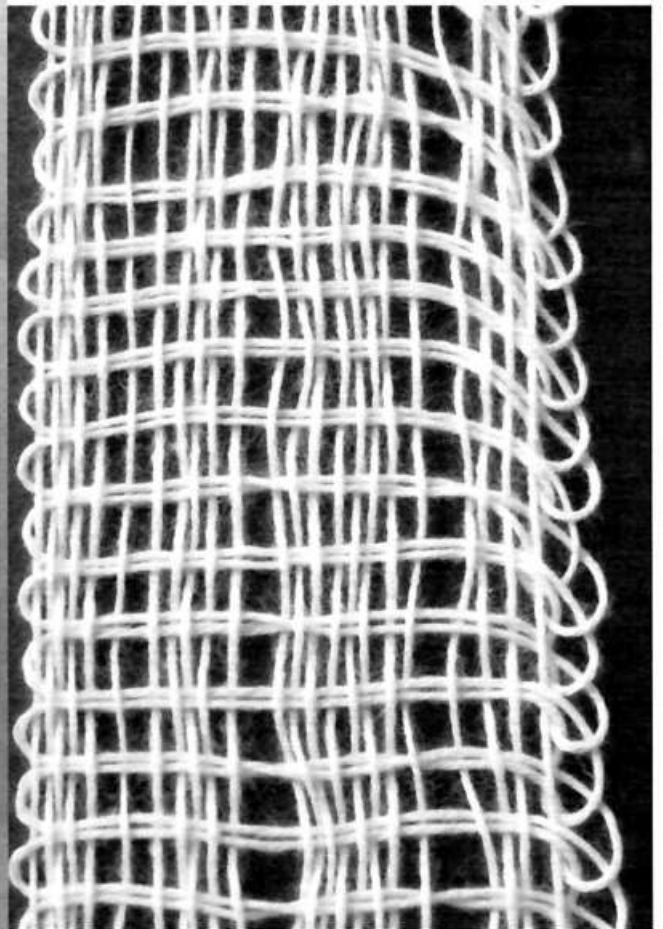
The author



The latch needle in the closed position.



The Loom from the wind-off end.



A piece of the woven fabric.

The pictures are by the author except as noted.

The Versatile Rubber Grommet

by Bob Prescott

Whilst building my version of Bernard Périer's Epicyclic Roundabout from CQ 76 recently, I realised how versatile P/N 23c really is. I call it a rubber grommet but I see that the IPL (Inclusive Parts List) refers to it as "P/N 23c Rubber Pulley/Collar".

In this model I used it as:

1. A pulley on the shaft of the 19 to 1 gearbox and as a model foot on a $1\frac{1}{2}$ " bolt. (see Fig.1).
2. A collar keeping a 1" pulley in place, and as an anchor to hold in the passengers. The grommet is placed on a long bolt and the Meccanomen's legs are clamped around it (see Fig.2).
3. A rubber washer holding the P/N 187a Conical Disc in place. For this I cut the grommet in half and this is particularly useful when the conical disc is not flush on its base e.g. if there are bolt heads underneath (see Fig. 3).

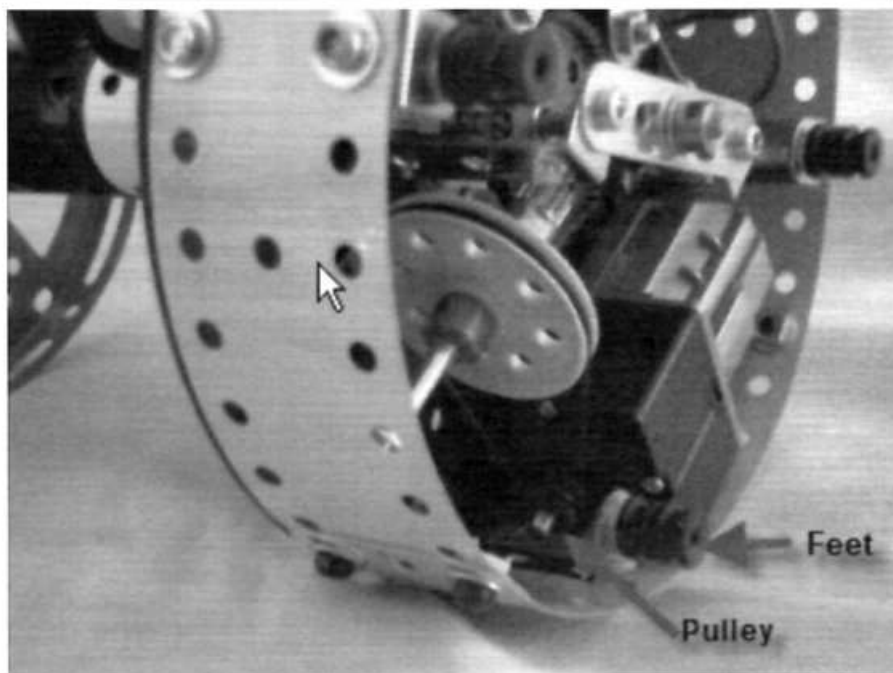


Fig. 1

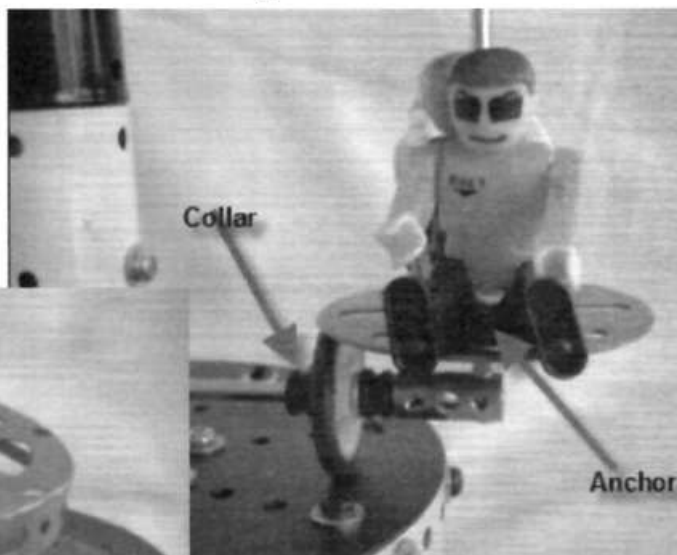


Fig. 2

So pulley, feet, collar, anchor, washer, soft spacer – a truly versatile part.

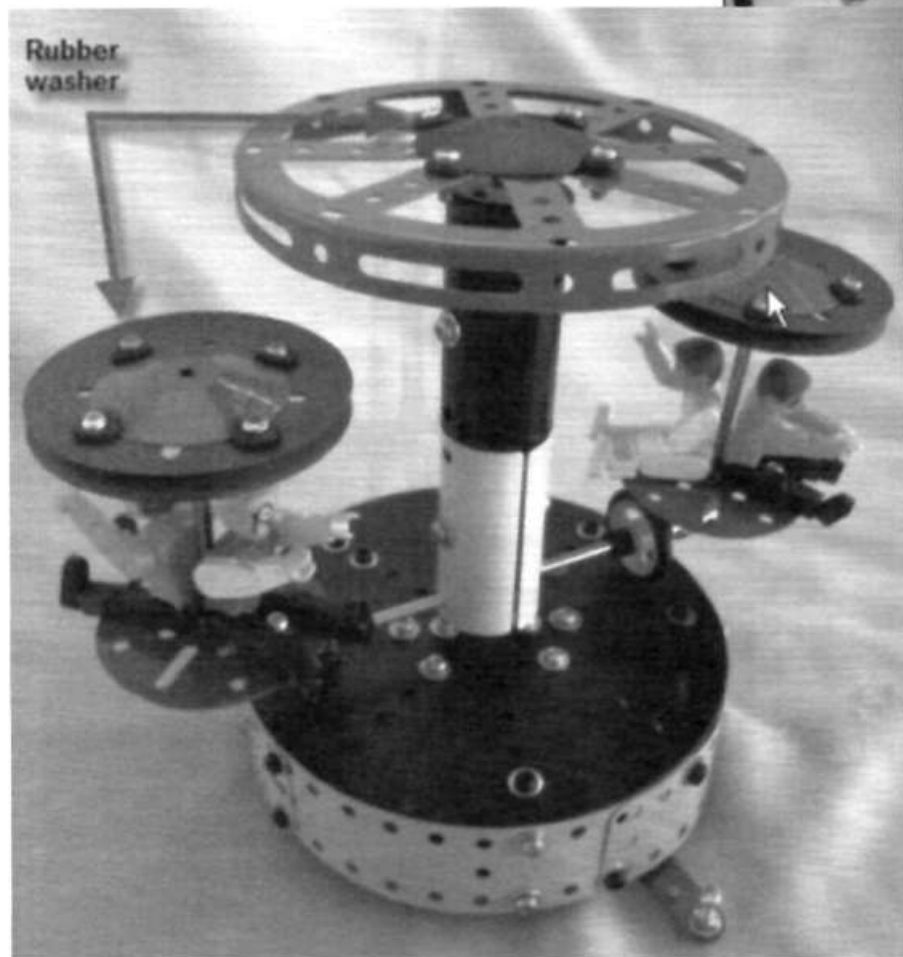


Fig 3

(from page 24)

Parts List, Bruce's model

P/N	Description	Qty
18a	$1\frac{1}{2}$ " Axle	1
23b	$1\frac{1}{2}$ " Plastic Pulley	1
37b	$7\frac{1}{32}$ " Bolt	11
38	Washer	2
38a	Plastic Spacer Red	1
59a	Rubber Boot	1
63	Coupling	1
63d	Short Coupling	1
69	Set Screw	3
111	$3\frac{1}{4}$ " Bolt	1
111a	$1\frac{1}{2}$ " Bolt	1
111c	$3\frac{1}{8}$ " Bolt	2
142i	Tyre	2
452	Tyre	2
810	Fish Plate Narrow	1
811	Double Bracket Narrow	1
812	Angle Bracket Narrow	2
812c	Obtuse Bracket Narrow	2

Differential Analyser - Adding Unit

built, photographed and described by William Irwin

The adding unit was used where required in the early Differential Analysers to interconnect three shafts in such a way that the rotation of any one shaft is the algebraic sum of the other two shafts. It makes use of the principles of a differential gear. An actual adding unit can be seen on the historic Cambridge Meccano Differential Analyser currently on display at MOTAT (Fig. 1).

A demonstration adding unit was built to the same design using identical gears. The rotation of the central shaft is the sum (or difference) of the rotation of the two outer shafts (with handles).

Operation

Hold the right handle still and rotate the left handle through one revolution. The central shaft rotates at the same speed through one revolution, i.e. $1 + 0 = 1$.

Hold the left handle still and rotate the right handle through one revolution. The central shaft again rotates at the same speed through one revolution, i.e. $0 + 1 = 1$.

Rotate the two handles simultaneously in opposite directions through one revolution. The central shaft rotates at twice the speed through two revolutions, i.e. $1 + 1 = 2$.

Rotate the two handles simultaneously in the same direction through one revolution. The central shaft remains stationary, i.e. $1 - 1 = 0$.

Construction Details

Refer to the various photographs for construction details. The unit is mounted in a simple framework consisting of a

P/N 52 base and two P/N 53 uprights connected together at the top by two $3\frac{1}{2}$ " Strips. An extra P/N 51 is mounted at the back to provide an extra journal and better stability for one of the differential half shafts.

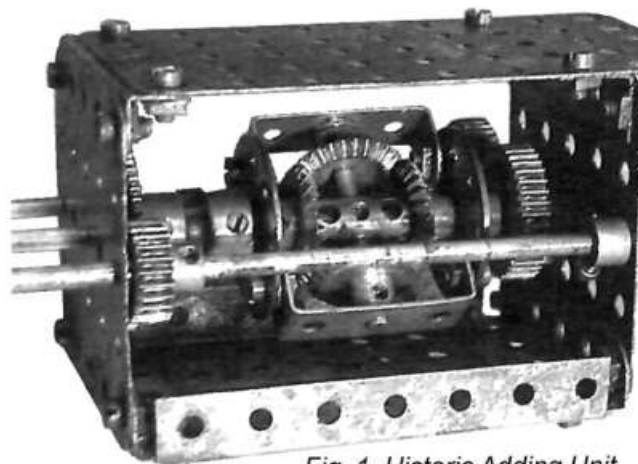


Fig. 1, Historic Adding Unit

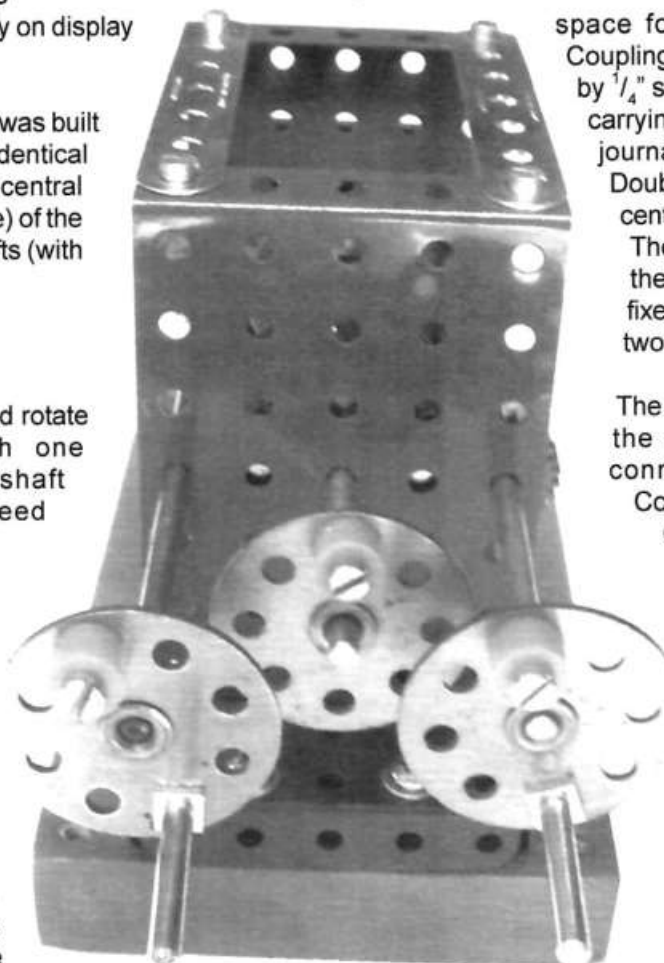


Fig. 2, Front View

The two outer axles are $6\frac{1}{2}$ " Rods. The two half shafts of the differential are a $3\frac{1}{2}$ " Axle Rod (front) and 3" Axle Rod (rear). The framework of the differential consists of a Bush Wheel and a Wheel Disc connected by two P/N 48 Double Angle Strips separated from the Bush Wheel and Wheel Disc by Washers to allow

space for the two Bevel Gears and a Coupling. A $1\frac{3}{4}$ " Rod, (a 2" Rod cut down by $\frac{1}{4}$ " so as to clear the outer Axle Rods), carrying two free running Bevel Gears, is journaled in the central holes of the Double Angle Strips and locked in the central cross bore hole of the Coupling.

The two half shafts are journaled in the ends of the Coupling and have fixed Bevel Gears which mesh with the two free running Bevel Gears.

The boss of the Bush Wheel forming the one side of the differential is connected by means of a Socket Coupling to the boss of a 50 tooth Gear Wheel. This assembly is free running on the front half shaft.

The right outer axle carries a 25 tooth Pinion which meshes with the 50 tooth Gear Wheel. The left outer axle carries a 38 tooth Gear Wheel which meshes with an identical 38 tooth Gear Wheel fastened to the rear half shaft.

Bush Wheels are mounted as shown on the ends of the 3 shafts in front, the outer ones carrying Threaded Pins as turning handles. Red Plastic

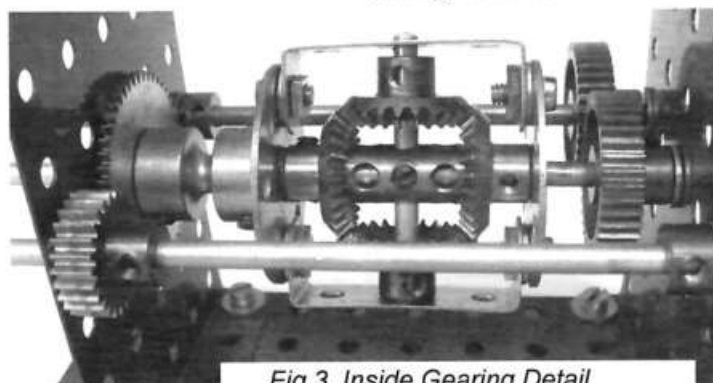


Fig. 3, Inside Gearing Detail

Collars are mounted on the Bush Wheels as markers to facilitate counting of the shaft revolutions. All Gear Wheels and Collars are spaced from the frame by Washers to facilitate free running.

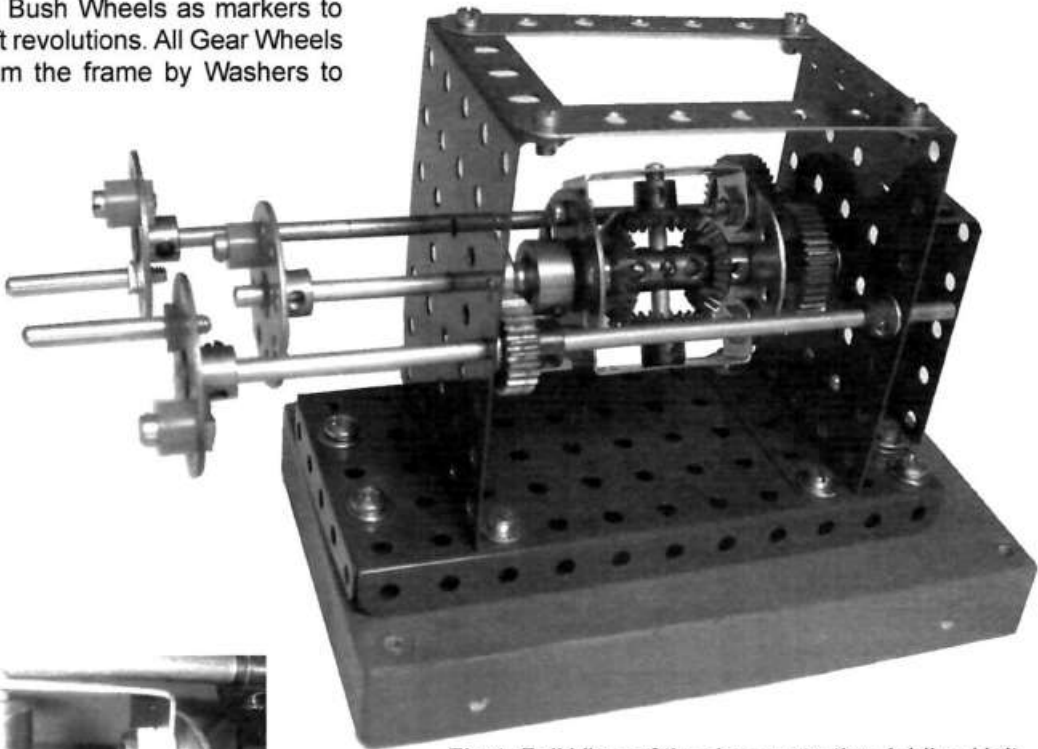


Fig 4, Full View of the demonstration Adding Unit mounted on a wooden block for display at MOTAT.

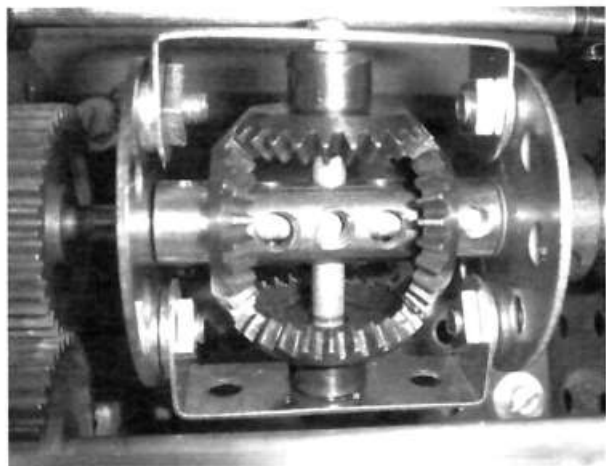


Fig 5, Differential Gear Detail

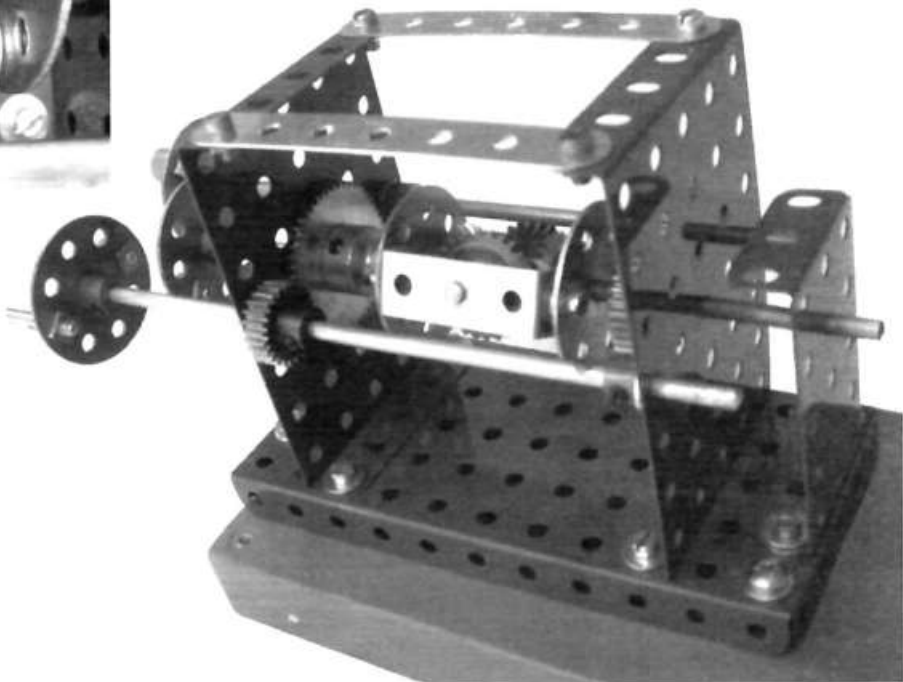


Fig 6, Rear View detail of the demonstration Adding Unit.

Parts List

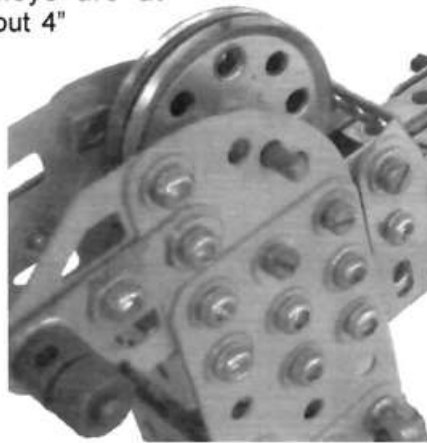
P/N	Description	Size	Qty	P/N	Description	Size	Qty	P/N	Description	Size	Qty
3	Perforated Strip	3 1/2"	2	30	Bevel Gear	26T	4	52	Flanged Plate	5 1/2" x 2 1/2"	1
14	Axle Rod	6 1/2"	2	31	Gear Wheel	38T	2	53	Flanged Plate	3 1/2" x 2 1/2"	2
16	Axle Rod	3 1/2"	1	37b	Bolt		14	59	Collar		2
16b	Axle Rod	3"	1	37c	Nut		17	63	Coupling		1
17	Axle Rod*	2"	1	38	Washer		16	111c	Bolt	3/8"	3
24	Bush Wheel		4	38a	Red Plastic Spacer		3	115a	Long Threaded Pin		2
24a	Wheel Disc		1	48	Double Angle Strip	1 1/2" x 1 1/2"	2	171	Socket Coupling		1
25	Pinion	25T	1	51	Flanged Plate	2 1/2" x 1 1/2"	1	* (shortened to 1 1/4")			
27	Gear Wheel	50T	1								

Extending the Boom on My Grove RT Crane

by Les Megget

This Rough Terrain crane comes with a boom comprising 3 sections giving a maximum extension of 60 feet. The biggest problem in modelling telescoping booms in Meccano is keeping the overall cross-sectional dimensions roughly to scale. The outer main boom is 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ " deep by 3" wide at the bottom and 2" wide at the top (trapezoidal). This turns out to be about $\frac{1}{2}$ " too deep for the 1:8 scale I was using but it was almost impossible to make it any shallower without major conflict between the sections.

The second section is 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ " deep by 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ " wide while the inner section is 1" square. The second section runs on Angle Girder rails along the inner bottom main boom section using pairs of $\frac{1}{2}$ " bossed pulleys on the outside of second section. These pulleys are at about 4" centres along the section. Photo 1 shows the boom head, sections



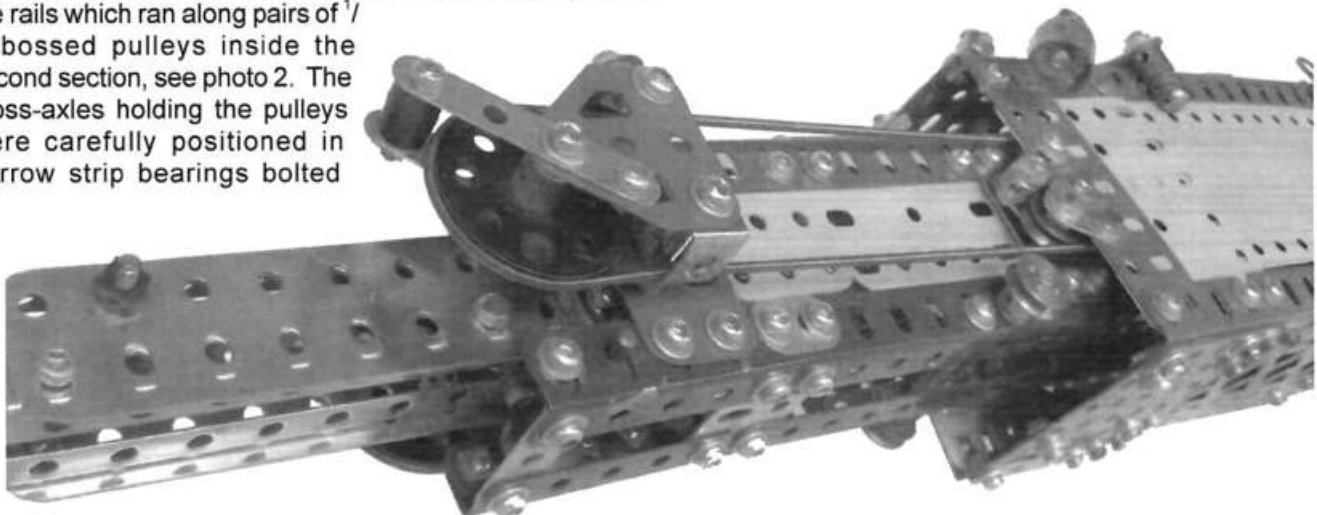
centres along the section. Photo 1 shows the boom head, sections

partly extended from above. The joints between the rails were lapped with carefully positioned Fishplates, so that the second section would not jump from section to section along the boom. The third section comprised Flat Girder sides with pairs of Narrow Angle Girders for the top and bottom held together by 2-hole by 2-hole plates. The sides had the elongated holes at the bottom so that about $\frac{1}{8}$ " protruded below the Narrow Angle Girders. These knife-edges formed the rails which ran along pairs of $\frac{1}{2}$ " bossed pulleys inside the second section, see photo 2. The cross-axes holding the pulleys were carefully positioned in narrow strip bearings bolted

inside the Angle Girders forming the corners of the second section. There were many frustrating hours spent getting the three sections to roll in and out without fouling on anything. Every side plate that was put on the second section had to be checked that the new nuts and bolts weren't going to stop the free extension movement. The careful use of M4 washers helped in this exercise.

A $\frac{1}{2}$ " Pulley with a tyre was put near the outer end of the outer boom rolling along the top of the second section. Its purpose was to eliminate the chance of the second section derailing. There was also a tyred Pulley on the back of the second section running on the inner top of the outer section to stop the second section trying to rotate out of the boom at full extension, when the second section is only being supported by 2 pairs of pulleys.

Once the sections were all rolling in and out without hindrance the problem of mechanically extending the jib was tackled. A 12V geared Phillips motor was positioned in the rear of the outer section and a 19t pinion on its shaft meshed with a large Contrate (50t) journaled in the sides of the outer section, see photo 3. A Rod with Keyway was used for this, as I realised that gear slip was sure to be a problem. In fact the Key Bolt has driven itself into the axle under load, which means that dismantling may require the use of a solid object (viz. a hammer!) to get the Keyway Rod and Contrate apart. Initially under the substantial loads required to extend the second and 3rd sections the Contrate just loved jumping teeth with the pinion, and the bearings



on either side were substantially strengthened with strips and short Angle Girders, with threaded rods transversely holding it all together. This eliminated most of the tooth jumping except when there was a large load on the hook (my overload device!!).

The pair of cable hoists to extend the boom are made from pairs of Bush Wheels joined together with $8\frac{3}{4}$ " Pivot Bolts were fixed to the Keyway Rod. One winch was also bolted directly to the Contrate so at least one side was permanently fixed to the drive gear eliminating slip between the winch and the drive. Nylon coated braided steel fishing cable (60lb

outer section is nearer 8 lb. The fishing cable works well but you must keep some tension on it otherwise its self-straightening effect will allow it to come off pulleys, which are almost impossible to get at. I was forced to build opening hatches at the end of the main boom and easily removable side panels so that I could get at any problem easily.

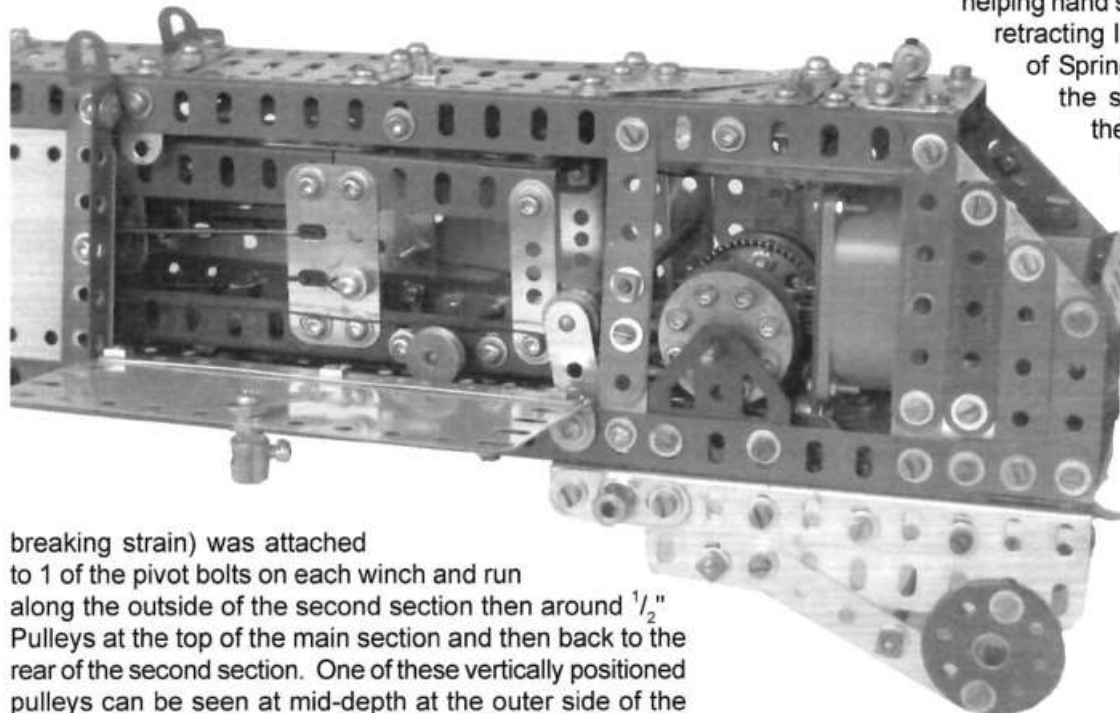
Prototype cranes of this type usually extend their boom when fully luffed, so as to reduce the stresses on the roller bearing and the luffing jacks, I presume. Thus boom retraction should occur easily under gravity in the model. This certainly is true for the inner section but the second section needs a

helping hand sometimes. To assist the retracting I placed 1 metre lengths of Spring Cord from the rear of the second section, around the $1\frac{1}{2}$ " pulleys at the head of the second section and back to the outer section (photo 1).

The Spring Cord in the photo is shown unattached to its Handrail Support just back from the front of the main section. This is because I found that only 1 Spring Cord was sufficient to retract the boom, while when both were acting it stressed out the extension motor.

The prototype has a similar arrangement with a small winch to retract the boom using cables.

On the whole I am satisfied with this boom extension mechanism. It extends at a realistic rate under full power and retracts satisfactorily with the transformer set at about $\frac{3}{4}$ power. A beefier motor would help but there is little space for a larger one. I have hopes someday of building a crane with a 5 or 7 section telescoping boom but that will take some thinking about.



breaking strain) was attached to 1 of the pivot bolts on each winch and run along the outside of the second section then around $1\frac{1}{2}$ " Pulleys at the top of the main section and then back to the rear of the second section. One of these vertically positioned pulleys can be seen at mid-depth at the outer side of the main boom section in photo 1. A Collar guide positioned as close as possible to the pulley was required to keep the cable from jumping out of the pulley when the boom was retracting. Again clearances between these pulleys and the sides of the second section are negligible. A single cable from the back of the outer section runs around a $1\frac{1}{2}$ " Pulley at the top of the second section and runs back to the rear of the inner section. Thus as the second section extends the 3rd inner section extends out of the second section at the same rate. The inner section and boom head is comparatively light at 2.5 lb and requires only 1 cable to extend it. The second section weighs about 5 lb while the



Hi to NZFMM Magazine Readers

from Wes Dalefield, Ohio, USA

I have not been keeping up with the NZFM website in the last few months as I have not been well. To be precise I have had a brain tumour. Fortunately it responded to chemotherapy and I am on the mend and am responding to therapy that my neurologist is giving me. It was once thought that the brain was set at 3 years of age. It has now been realized that the brain is fluid and can remodel itself.

On a lighter side, the school our second son was at, at the time, asked why I was in hospital. He told them I was having my brain removed! My wife got a very worried call from the school :-). I will soon have the website updated. Our website is very popular thanks to Google. It gets up to 20,000 hits a day. The average visitor spends ten minutes; they mainly go to the Meccano Magazine site.

Email: <wes@dalefield.com>, Internet: www.dalefield.com

(Ed. Our very best wishes to Wes for a good recovery)

A Meccano Alternative

by Rod Stubbs

The accompanying photo(s) shows a chimera purchased 2 years ago in a box from Mitre 10 Mega Store in Petone (\$175). It is cast-iron, a lot of fun to assemble, permanent, and can even be used to cook scones. However, the Chinese instructions were a bit unclear as to where to use these three different lengths of screws with their attendant nuts and washers. As someone who hasn't made a Meccano model for years it took me all of a wet afternoon to work out how to finally assemble the chimney correctly.

As I worked on this project, Meccano memories came flooding back and I would recommend it as a different practical alternative to the excellent models constructed by the core of you keen older Meccano 'nuts'. Similar chimera can still be seen at various outlets priced from under \$100 to \$149 – you'll never need to pull it to pieces to make an alternative model!

Many people, like myself, played with and enjoyed Meccano until other hobbies, sports, marriage, children etc relegated it to the attic. During World War II, I had to 'make do' with a No 3 Blue/gold Set until those great accessory outfits became available again in the late 1940s. Only then was I able to extend by degrees to a No 6 Set by the early 1950s. Since then I have only gone back to the Meccano Sets twice – once in the 1970s to construct



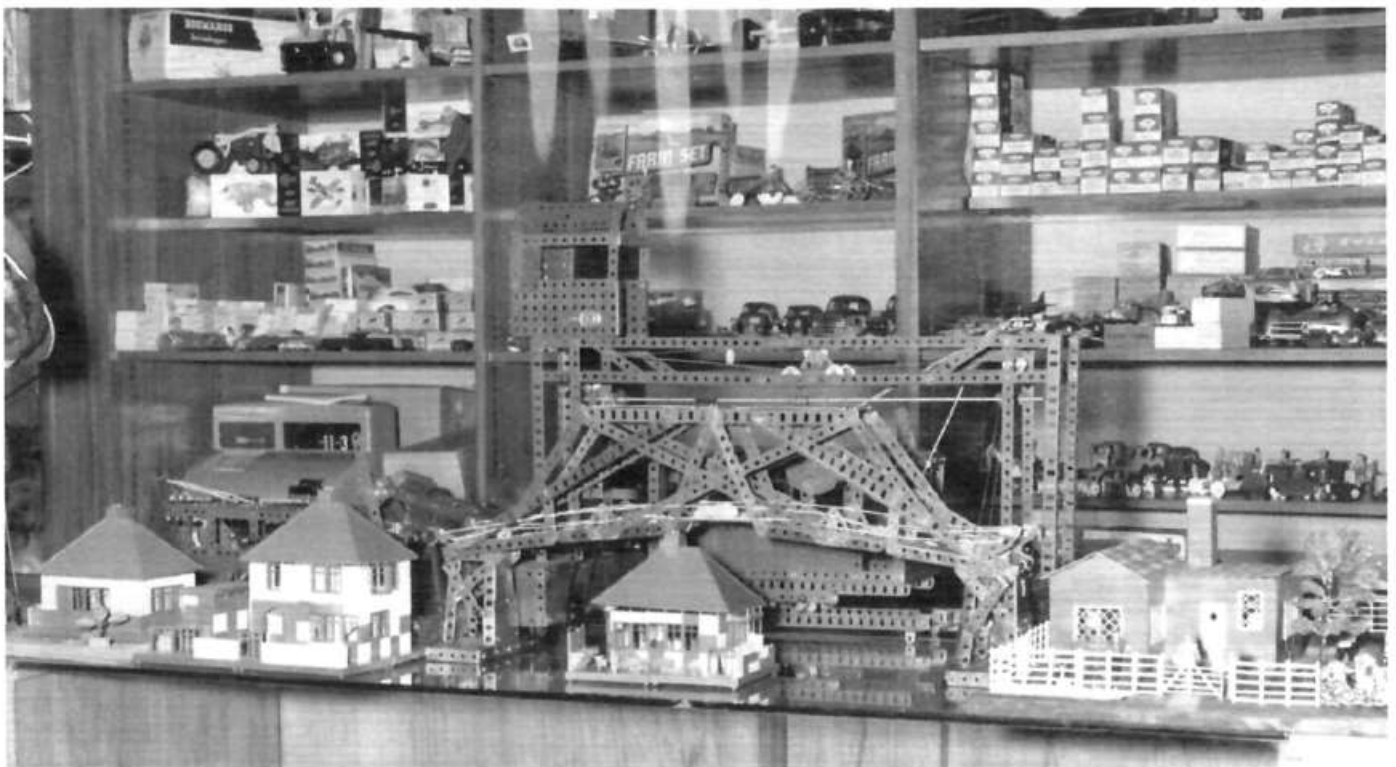
the great traction engine from the No 6 set to encourage my children and again in the 1980s when I purchased a Mamod steam engine and linked it to the scratch-built fly boat as a party feature – and there it still survives alongside the Chimera.

A Meccano Shop Display 50 Years Ago

Gary Higgins son Shaun works at the Auckland Museum and found this photo among the archives. It was taken in Dunedin in the mid 1950s. The display shows from the left an electric tram (in front of the till), a racing seaplane (facing

out), an overhead gantry crane with rail rolling stock beneath (to the rear) and a Twin lifting bridge to the front. There is also a nice display of Bayco houses all around.

This photograph is from The Auckland Memorial Museum, Whitcoulls collection.



The Meccano Design Set 2 (new version) 5700N

by Gary Higgins

I saw some pictures loaded onto Flickr the other day among which was a new futuristic looking motorcycle with wheels that looked the part. The tyres were smooth and had the right convex look to them.

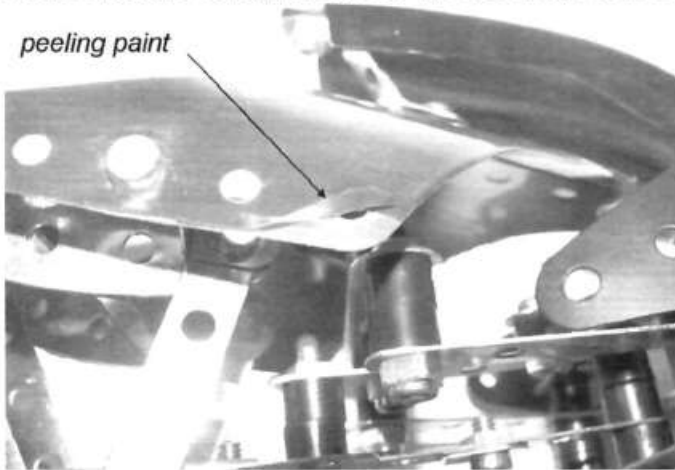
I thought about making a model up similar to it but, as other things and models took place I forgot about it.



Looking through one of the new toy catalogues I noticed the very same model was available as part of the new Design set series; in this case design set 2.

I sent off for the set and it arrived. The first thing I noticed

peeling paint



that was different from most other sets was that it was in a completely sealed box. Yes it was all glued in place, no lid to lift off, just a zipper type area at the side of the box to rip it open. Being a collector of Meccano boxes I was a little surprised at this change in packaging. I had been used to it being in the small single design packs with the throw away boxes but any of the larger sets had always had the boxes with slide of covers/ lift off lids, the more modern sets having a polystyrene tray to keep all the parts in. In the new box the parts were in plastic bags with the manual just dropped into the empty box which was obviously intended to be discarded.

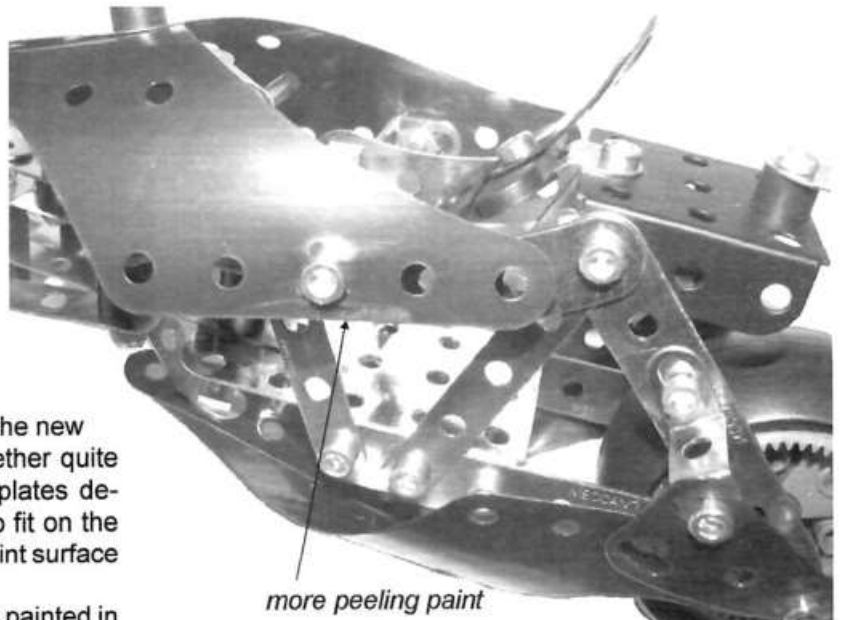
As to the parts they certainly looked the part in the new metallic blue colours, and the model went together quite well; but I noticed some of the b969 flexible plates delaminating, this got worse with bending them to fit on the model and in some cases I realised the whole paint surface could easily be peeled off. The new mp3 car set using the same b969 parts painted in



green has no problems; the paint appears well attached but the finish on the above set is very poor.

To add insult to injury there was even one of the 5 hole narrow strips missing from the set; too bad if you didn't have a spare. My other gripe is that you get the plans for four models; there is a second motor bike, which looks interesting but the book only provides a number of photos with the exterior plates hiding many of the construction details. A test of skill I guess.

Generally not recommended, however the motorcycle was innovative and interesting and as I have mentioned the tyres were the bonus in an otherwise poorly presented set.



Propagation of an Urban Legend, a Differential Analyser Myth.

by William Irwin

Recently I thought I would search the web for Meccano using Google and I was amazed at how many references are now thrown up compared to say 10 years ago. Among other references was an item in Wikipedia, the on-line encyclopedia to which anyone can contribute (ref 1). On the whole the information on Meccano is fairly accurate and imparts a good overview to the layman on the history and development of the Meccano system over the years.

However the reference to the Meccano Differential Analyser is rubbish. This is a prime example of "a little knowledge is a dangerous thing", especially when newspaper journalists get hold of an idea to create headlines. I quote as follows from Wikipedia:

"In 1935 Meccano was the primary construction material used by J. B. Bratt in building several analog computers. The computers were used for several decades to calculate differential equations, and one such machine, the **"Meccano Differential Analyser No. 2"** survives to this day. That specific machine was used by the Allies in Operation Chastise where the computer played a critical role in planning the bombing runs for bombs that would bounce across water before colliding with and destroying German dams."

Apart from the initial error in stating that J B Bratt built several analog computers (he only built one), the big snafu here is that the actual Meccano differential analyser no 2, now at MOTAT, was used in the design of the Dam Busters bombs. Upon investigation this has been proved to be doubtful. It is possible that a differential analyser, of which several existed in UK at the time (both full scale non-Meccano machines and Meccano based ones), was used in the design calculations for the bouncing bomb, but no confirmation has been found to date due to the secrecy that surrounded such wartime activities at the time.

Wikipedia gives as reference an article published in the Computerworld newspaper on 16 July 2007 entitled "Meccano Dam Busters computer stars at MOTAT" (ref 2). This article covers the opening of the "Machines that Count" computer exhibition at MOTAT in Auckland in which the historic Meccano based differential analyser brought to New Zealand in 1950 is prominently displayed after recent restoration. Where did the journalist get this incorrect information?

The earliest reference I can find to the bouncing bomb story is an item in MOTAT Museum News of September 1973 describing the opening of a new computer display which included the Meccano differential analyser recently donated to the museum and brought up from Wellington (ref 3). It includes the quotation: "This type of machine was used extensively during the Second World War on operational research problems, including the design of the bombs used by the Dam Busters". An identical statement was included in the general MOTAT Museum of Transport and Technology

book published in 1976 (ref 4). This statement was also part of the general display material used next to the machine at the time and found in the museum archives.

When writing my article "The Differential Analyser Explained" in June 2002 (ref 5), I included the bouncing bomb example as one of several practical examples of the type of calculation done on these machines. I had of course obtained the information from the MOTAT literature, but nowhere was it stated that the specific MOTAT differential analyser was used for this purpose. Unfortunately the bouncing bomb story has found its way on to one of the posters at the current MOTAT exhibition, from which the Computerworld journalist must have twisted the facts for his headlines, and which has now also entered Wikipedia!

In the Second World War The MOTAT Differential Analyser no. 2 was taken over by the Ordnance Board and later by the Armaments Research Department. In a restricted paper published in September 1944 by Cairns, Crank and Lloyd (ref 6), a few recent applications were described which included problems in heat flow, explosive detonations, and transmission line simulations, but there were no mention of bouncing bombs.

In none of the literature produced by the differential analyser pioneers of the time, namely Douglas Hartree, Arthur Porter, Maurice Wilkes and John Crank, were there any references to the bouncing bomb application. Through Tim Robinson in California, contact was made with Arthur Porter, now in his 90s and who built the first Meccano Differential Analyser in Manchester. He has no knowledge or recollection of any of the differential analysers being used for the bouncing bomb calculations.

If anyone out there has information to the contrary please come forward. The moral of the story is: do not believe everything you read, especially in newspapers and in on-line free for all forums such as Wikipedia.

References:

1. Wikipedia at <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Meccano>
2. O'Neill, Rob, Meccano "Dam Busters" computer stars at MOTAT, Computerworld, 16 July 2007.
3. MOTAT Museum News, September 1973, page 4.
4. Cresswell, John, MOTAT, Museum of Transport and Technology, 1976, page 102.
5. Irwin, William, The Differential Analyser Explained, NZFMM Magazine, June 2002.
6. Cairns WJ, Crank J, Lloyd EC, Some Improvements in the Construction of a Small Scale Differential Analyser and a Review of Recent Applications, Armament Research Department, Research Memo no. 27/44, September 1944.

News from the Australian Outback

by Christel & Vern Ellis

My wife and I read with great interest the article on page 9 in our latest issue of NZFMM, "Viv Comes Home to Number 16". Earlier this year we visited the Maylands Meccano Club on our visit to Western Australia. Ross Smith picked us up from our Hotel, and on the way to the club he let us have a look at Jack Stanbridge's hobby shop which was listed in the Meccano Magazines for many years as a Meccano dealer. It is now owned by different people, but they trade under his name. On display is a large ship in zinc and yellow, above where the Meccano is sold. Apart from the modern kits, they also have a good range of zinc and yellow parts, nuts/bolts etc.

On arrival at the club we were given a tour of the club house. Above the door is the original club certificate which if you look closely you can still see Frank Hornby's signature on it. A lot of their exhibition models were set up on tables, some red/green, but mostly blue/yellow. At most clubs their display is changed each year. Their Meccano parts are in draws along one wall, all marked by their part number. Ross, Dave Howe & Mike Hanrahan also gave us a good history and run down of the club over the years. We were also shown the clubs library and their collection of Meccano Magazines. The club house has naturally plenty of room for model making, a kitchen and a room where one can sleep if need be. Afternoon tea was supplied and an evening Bar B Q at Ross Smith's Town house over looking the Swan River topped off a great visit to Maylands Meccano Club Perth.

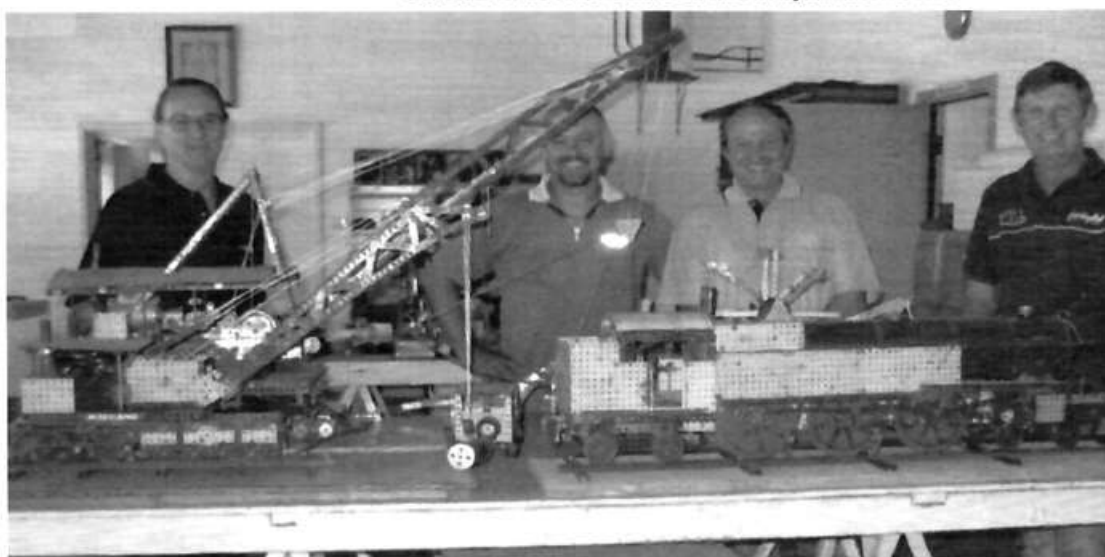
Christel & Vern Ellis are members of the Alice Springs Branch of the Melbourne Meccano Club.



The ship in Jack Stanbridge's hobby shop



Christel Ellis with some of the Maylands models



Vern Ellis, Mike Hanrahan, Dave Howe, Ross Smith partly obscured by some fine Meccano models.

An Australian Meccano Display

by Vern Ellis

My wife (Christel) and I put on a Meccano display each year at our Old Timers Aged Care facility in Alice Springs, Northern Territory, Australia. It is said to be the largest fete in Australia. The gates open at 11.00 am and people are starting to queue up at 8.00am. The police



are on hand to control traffic and parking. There are over 20 stalls, bric a brac, cakes, plants, jams etc; There is also an auction for larger items such as TVs, fridges etc; The spinning wheel is always popular with prizes like travel vouchers, electrical goods etc; all donated to Old Timers. There are seven different types of food stalls along with several drink stalls. For the kids there are pony rides, jumping castle, merry go rounds etc; there are several craft displays, mainly knitting, needle work etc.

This is our fourth year displaying Meccano, and we had 52 models on display. They ranged from blue/gold, red/green, blue/yellow, to the latest kits available. Most people as usual

remember the red/green era, along with the blue/yellow. Most had never seen the blue/gold sets. Models ranged from Vintage cars, trucks, army vehicles, fairground rides to boats and cranes. We had two of the Tuning Car sets up on stands which meant that they could be run without being on the floor. They created a lot of interest, especially with the younger visitors. A lot of people were amazed that Meccano is still available, and some were disappointed when they found out a lot of the parts are now plastic. It takes me about 8 months to build the exhibition models, but I am lucky as our house has a large double room which we use as a hobby room.

Another Construction Toy

by Chris Morton

My line of work is bus and coach driving, and sometimes when the task is a day trip at the weekend Paulette will come along for the ride. It was a trip to

Whakapapa ski field with Feilding Ag High School, and as she does on occasions, Paulette purchased the Herald on Sunday as cold wet stuff (snow) is not her thing and there on the front page was an add for Maxamec, the fun, educational toy that enhances children's imagination and creativity. It looked so interesting that the largest set available was sent for and duly arrived. The eight year old grandchild was very impressed with Gran's choice of toy to play with but I don't know whether he approved of Gran's attempt to make something out of the set. When we were preparing for the Meccano day that the Mortons hosted in Feilding not so long ago, she who must be obeyed said that there should be a Meccano man after the style of Simon Moody's large man, which, for those who have never seen

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it, is a stick figure made from super-sized wooden Meccano parts. I had always admired this splendid fellow, and agreed that such an item made from Maxamec would be an excellent signpost for the day. We fiddled about with various layouts and designs until we had what seemed to be the best possible compromise with the available parts and his supporting pole was a fibreglass board-sailing mast and a couple of automotive hose clips ensured that he stayed in place. Next stage was where to put the pole and how high on the pole should the man be? The pole site was agreed on but in the finish I appealed to a passing lady walking her dog on the thorny issue of height - guess who was out-voted, yes, the lone male.

HIS FAVOURITE TOY: Andrew Moss is the hard working chief executive of Aviva. The former Coopers & Lybrand trainee wakes at 5.30am and is at his desk by 7.15. So, what do you think is his favourite toy? You will never guess! "It is a John Deere tractor", he told an interviewer. "I have always done quite a lot of my thinking while mowing. There's so much noise that it actually blocks out everything else. Some people do strategic thinking while shaving. I do it while mowing".

(from *I.C.A.N.Z. Journal*, October, 2007.)



with \$50 off and a Tuning Radio Control set at \$99.99, (down from \$129.99). Other sets were shown, all with good price reductions.

WELDING INSTEAD OF N & B: Les Megget showed on *Spanner* an advertisement in "N.Z. Truck & Driver" magazine for something called a Fairfax (truck?) body apparently built with no bolts to hold it together. The caption said "Construction techniques have moved on from the old Meccano bolt together systems". The implication was that Fairfax

MECCANO POSTERS: Doug Harris is well known for his reproductions of Meccano posters. Log in to www.geocities.com/hornbymeccano to see a range of his attractive posters. The colours are brilliant. I note that Graham Hawtree has a dozen framed prints in his Meccano room. I have a couple laminated but not framed as I don't have a 'Meccano Room' to hang them in. For any Meccanoman with spare wall space these posters are a great idea. (L.S.)

HOBERMAN SPHERE: Whether this could be modelled in Meccano was discussed on *Spanner* recently. William Irwin capped the discussion with a great photo of Neil Carey at the 2003 Convention, holding his Meccano version which he modelled on a plastic one he had at home. Incidentally I also have a plastic one hanging in my lounge. Our October, 2003, issue included Neil's instructions how to build it, with a comment by John Ince. Neil just called it "an expanding ball". (L.S.)

QUESTION: "What is the difference between a doctor, an architect and a Meccanoman?"

"A doctor buries his mistakes; an architect has to live with his; a Meccanoman simply takes his apart and builds something else".

(from John Bridger, U.K.)

QUEEN MARY LINER MODEL: A spectacular Meccano model of R. M. S. 'Queen Mary' is on display in the foyer of Frizinghall's new shop. Also on display are Meccano and Exacto sets and models, vintage sets, motors and models built from C.Q. instructions. The 'Queen Mary' model is the one built by the late Mr Arthur Wilson and recently restored by him. (John Hornsby on *Spanner*)

SIR FRANK — WHY NOT ? Reading the first part of "Factory of Dreams" set me to wondering why Frank Hornby was never awarded a knighthood. In view of his accomplishments it seems to have been a surprising omission. I don't know much about the British Honours system but I'd have thought he should have received at least an M.B.E. for his services to the toy industry and to Liverpool City. (L.S.)

TOYWORLD'S CHRISTMAS: Once again, Toyworld's Christmas catalogue has included nearly a page of Meccano sets. In its 'Boys Zone' section it showed Design Starter sets (usually \$14.99) at \$9.99; the Super Construction set

bodies are all-welded. Les commented that in building construction bolts and nuts are often still used for on-site connections rather than unreliable on-site welding.

SUBSCRIPTION RENEWALS: Providing our magazine continues publication through 2008, a personalised subscription renewal form will be included with our February issue. Current subscriptions (N.Z. \$30, Overseas \$40) expire with the February issue. Some subscribers have paid to February, 2009, and we will deal with those separately. (L.S.)

MECCANO RUGS: On 21st November the 'N.Z. Herald' printed a short article about Meccano rugs designed by artist John Lyall in conjunction with Dilana Rugs. They are apparently faithful reproductions of Meccano flat plates and strips in red and yellow colours. Doug Harris said they have been around for several years but he doesn't know how many have been sold. Doug was considering getting some to display at a Convention — until he saw the price!

David Wall kindly sent me a clipping of the article. He had asked Elizabeth about buying him one of each for Christmas — until they saw the price!

The rugs are quoted at \$NZ4275 for the 2 metre x 2m square and \$NZ2756 for the 0.8m x 3.1m strip.

MECCANO CIGARETTE CARDS: Rockwell is a respected name in engineering circles so it is appropriate that they have come up with two sets of cards reproducing some of the superb covers from Meccano Magazines of the 1930s to 1960s. One set of 10 cards covers aviation; the other set is of railway subjects, mainly locomotives such as the 'Coronation Scot'. The aviation set includes such aircraft as the Avro Vulcan and the Douglas DC4. For cigarette card collectors (there is at least one among our N.Z. Meccano fraternity) these are a 'must'. For Meccanomen generally they would be a colourful addition to your Meccano literature collection.

The cards are sold by The London Cigarette Card Co. Ltd., Sutton Road, Somerton, Somerset, TA11 6QP, England. They cost £13 in England and price to overseas is available on application. Their web address is

www.londoncigcard.co.uk

(Thanks to Bob Prescott for this item from "Best of British" magazine, September, 2007)

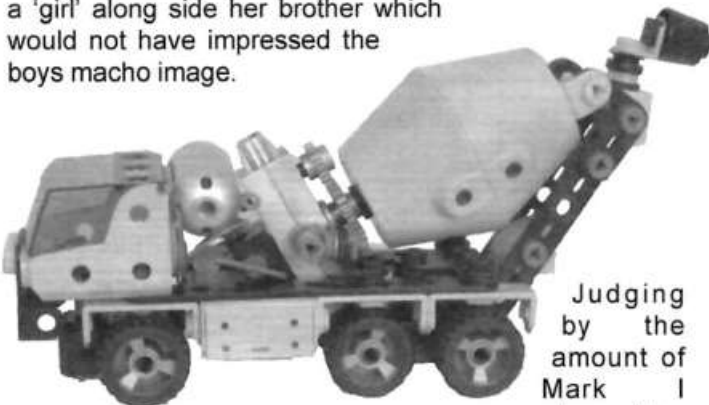
Plastic Meccano Big Parts for Little Hands.

by John Hansen and others

Mark I

Between 1965 and 1993 Meccano Ltd marketed an all plastic giant sized Meccano as an adjunct to metal Meccano. This is illustrated by a parts list and a Meccanograph sans drawing table (see photo Meccanograph). Referring to the parts list readers will note the similarities to metal Meccano i.e strips, double angle bracket etc. and in particular angle girders, bevel gears and worm.

A Excel spreadsheet showing dates of introduction and obsolescence, contents of sets etc is available on Tim Edward's Internet site <http://edwards.web.users.btopenworld.com/meccano.htm>. The models offered in the manuals follow the concept of metal Meccano particularly the curving perforated Strips. An unfortunate side effect was that the world thought that metal Meccano had been replaced by plastic Meccano which would not of helped sales. In addition the manuals showed a 'girl' along side her brother which would not have impressed the boys macho image.



Judging by the amount of Mark I plastic

Meccano being offered on Internet auctions I do not think that sales were large. Some of the larger sets are particularly hard to find. Meccano Ltd also marketed some speciality Gear Box Sets.

Mark II Meccano /Erector Junior.

This was a completely revamped and new approach to plastic Meccano. See cover for Grader and Xmas Tree. The emphasis is on strips, angle brackets, double angle

brackets together with axles and wheels. All the



parts are fatter which in turn requires cunning use of fat washers to get side by side alignment of parts. The Mark II concept also incorporated elongated holes suitable for metal Meccano bolts to encourage mix and match. The number of models able to be built

from a box set is limited and follows metal Meccano's idea picked up from Lego of theme sets e.g 4 wheel loaders and dumpers.

However accumulating a large amount of second hand Mark II allows the invention of new and bigger models to

occur. The absence of any gears limits the imagination (fortunately the range of Mark I gears can be used with Mark II) A few adult modellers have used this medium to good effect(see Paul Dale's Internet site). The Mark II only had approx half a dozen "shapes" i.e cabs and buckets.

Mark III

In 2002 Mark II was phased out and Mark III City and action Troopers and Future Master was introduced. The concept of strips was replaced by "shapes" (see model pictures) in profusion. Even nuts and bolts were had to have "rivets" to get the shapes attached to each other. There was also the introduction of children's play accessories such as shovels, rakes, little men, etc (the Lego influence). The concept of construction had finally been replaced by clicking together the "shapes". The challenge to a child to invent a model had been reduced to nearly zero. Although nuts and bolts are used in the manual models, "rivets" are also used to attach awkward "shapes" which does not make for a robust model. Even accumulating a large amount of second hand parts does not lend itself to much inventive thought (p.s there is an excellent Chinese copy of Mark III Meccano being marketed – the only difference being the absence of the Meccano imprint). This will give buyers an additional headache.

The only gear wheels seen to date are two pinions which are not compatible with Mark I. The difference is in the teeth – they do not mesh.

There have been some peculiar sets marketed including:

- A Combine Harvester with a Barn building,
- A Land yacht with plastic sail,
- A Vinyl blow-up Boat which allows you to float the model in the bath.

For investors the conundrum is that the more unpopular the set, the rarer they are and therefore the greater the investment values.

Plastic Meccano is almost an area of Meccano building which has been completely by-passed by senior modellers. I am sure there are enough parts and enough imagination to create big and better plastic Meccano models. Your thoughts on this matter would be appreciated and if there is sufficient interest further pages could be devoted to this forgotten subject.

Miniature Railway And Village

by Lloyd Spackman

Roger Le Rolland based his Miniature Railway model on a 4 inch Circular Plate and two 5 1/2" Circular Girders. I have built one on a 6 inch Circular Plate and two Flanged Rings.

Base:

The rings have their narrow flanges facing each other and are joined at four sides by 4 1/2" Angle Girders. The gap between them should be 5 holes so that you can get your hand in, holding a spanner. Bolt an Angle Bracket to the bottom of each Angle Girder and add a 1/2" Plastic Pulley with a thick Tyre for the FEET. Before adding the top Flanged Ring, bolt a 9 1/2" Strip across centrally inside the lower flange. Then another 9 1/2" Strip across outside the flange at right angles to the other one.

Next is the JOURNAL for the central 6" Rod. Fit two 3/8" Bolts from underneath through the lugs of a Double Bent Strip, through the 9 1/2" Strip, then through a pack of 3 or 4 1 1/2" Strips. Make sure the rod runs freely in the journal and fit a Collar above and below. Bolt a couple of 5 1/2" x 2 1/2" Flat Plates to the cross strips towards the outer edge wherever you find holes to match.

Motor, Etc:

These two Flat Plates carry the motor and battery pack or whatever sort of drive you use. The output shaft on the motor will hold a 3/4" Contrate which meshes with a Pinion on the central rod.

I used a grey 770 motor and a 4 AA battery box from a 7600 set plus two 19:1 gear boxes in tandem, giving a reduction of 361:1. This gave about the right speed for the trains running around the village.

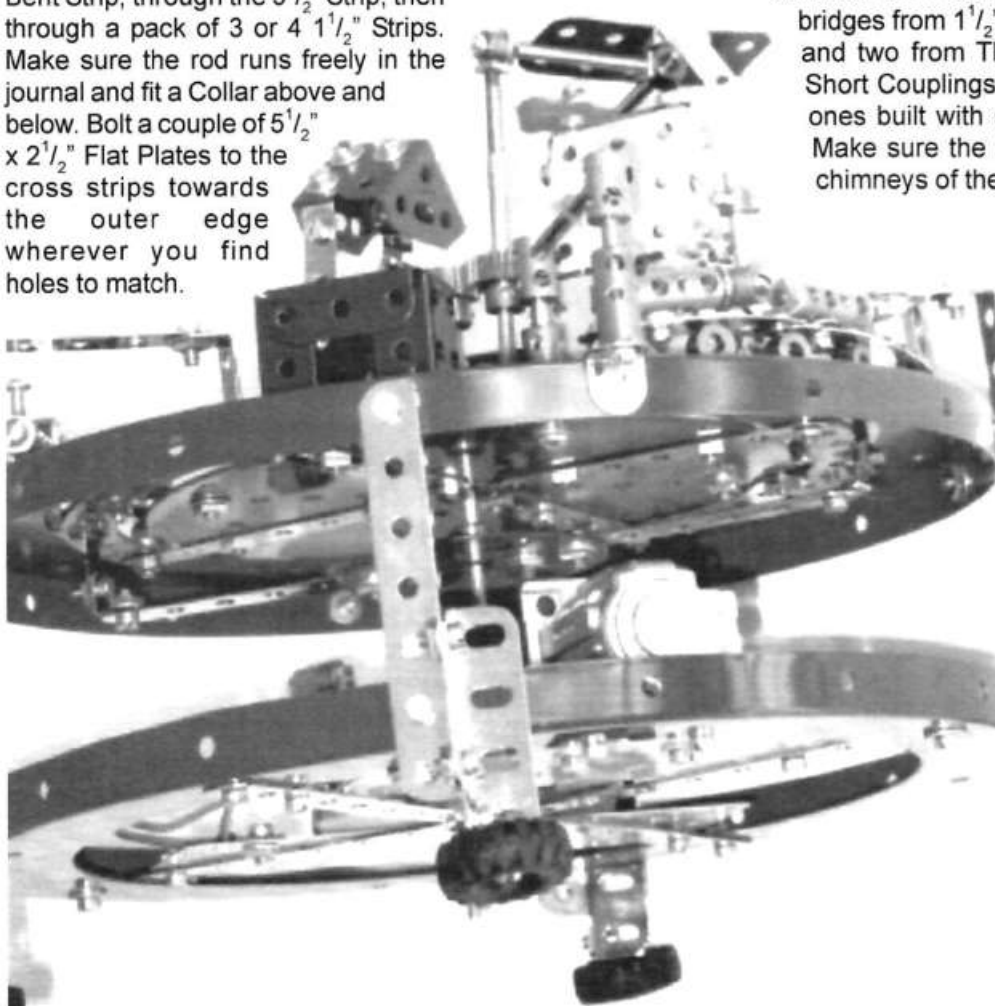
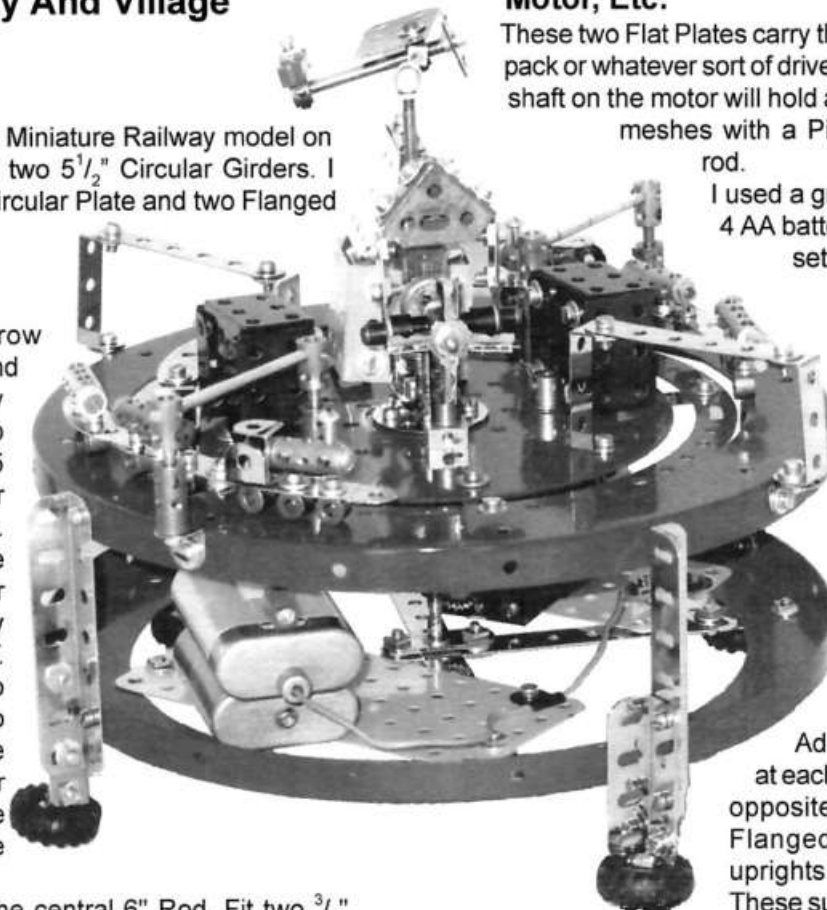
Footbridges:

Now bolt the top Flanged Ring to the top holes of the Angle Girders.

Add an Angle Bracket at each of four diametrically opposite holes outside the Flanged Ring to take the uprights of the footbridges. These support the 6" Circular Plate and the 7 1/2" Circular Strip. The latter fills the gap between the Plate and the Flanged Ring. I built two bridges from 1 1/2" Double Angle Strips and 3" Strips and two from Threaded Couplings, 1" Rods and Short Couplings with 3" Rods across the top. The ones built with strips are better and easier to fit. Make sure the cross strips or rods don't foul the chimneys of the locos.

Drives:

Bolt an 8 hole Wheel Disc to the centre of the Circular Plate, making sure the central rod still runs freely. At the top of this rod a 1/2" x 1/4" Pinion drives (on one side) the **WINDMILL** through a 3/4" Contrate and on the other side it drives the circling **AEROPLANE** through a 3/4" x 1/4" Pinion. Bolt 3 1/2" Strips underneath from the Wheel Disc out to the Circular Strip using the bolts which hold the disc, and also bolt them to the Circular Plate. The narrow GAP between the Circular Strip and the Flanged Ring is where the 1" x 1/2" Narrow Reverse Angle Brackets come up from the drive to the trains.



Spinner:

This comprises a Face Plate, boss upward, and two $3\frac{1}{2}$ " Strips bolted by their two end holes to the face plate and pointing in opposite directions. Fix the Face Plate to the central rod just below the 6" Circular Plate but so that it is clear of any down pointing bolt shanks. I didn't have any narrow 1" Reversed Angle Brackets so made up two from narrow 1" x $\frac{1}{2}$ " Angle Brackets with a narrow $\frac{1}{2}$ " Angle Bracket bolted at the bottom pointing in the opposite direction. Insert the 1" x $\frac{1}{2}$ " Brackets through the gap and bolt each one at the bottom to the end hole of the $3\frac{1}{2}$ " Strips. The top lugs should now be pointing outward and the trains are attached to them later.

Trains:

The two trains are identical. The loco boiler is a $\frac{3}{4}$ " Coupling with a 1" Bolt through it. A Washer is at the front end and at the rear a Nut holds pair of Double Brackets arranged to represent the cab. Each tank **WAGON** is a $1\frac{1}{8}$ " Coupling with a $1\frac{1}{4}$ " Bolt through it and a Washer at each end. The whole is mounted on a 4" Curved Strip extended by a $2\frac{1}{2}$ " Stepped Curved Strip overlapped one hole. Holes 1, 3, 5, and 7 from the rear have bolts which are screwed into Collars under the strips. These Collars represent the wheels. At holes 2 and 6 a bolt from underneath, spaced with two standard Washers, holds the 'tank'. The loco is held by a bolt through the Double Bracket into a Collar. Holes 4 and 12 are vacant. At hole 8 (just behind the cab) a $\frac{3}{8}$ " bolt spaced by Washers attaches the train to the lug of the 1" Reversed Angle Bracket.

Fix the Faceplate to the central rod so that the wheels clear the surface of the Flanged Ring.

Village:

The Village is a job for your imagination. However, I mainly followed Roger Le Rolland's layout. Key features are the windmill, the aeroplane overhead and the church.

The **WINDMILL** sits atop a Threaded Coupling which is atop a $\frac{1}{2}$ " x $\frac{1}{4}$ " Square (Simon Moody) Block. The central vertical rod has a $\frac{1}{2}$ " Pinion on top driving a small Contrate. This is fixed at the plain end of a Long Threaded Pin which runs freely in the top plain holes of the vertical Coupling. Pack with Washers as needed. Four Rod & Strip Connectors represent the sails and are held by a nut either side on the pin's threaded end. Screw a $\frac{3}{4}$ " Bolt each side into the Threaded Coupling's top threaded holes but so as not to

impede the Threaded Pin turning. These bolts hold $1\frac{1}{2}$ " vertical Narrow Strips

by their bottom holes.

Bolt $1\frac{1}{2}$ " Narrow Strips

with obtuse angle lugs to

them. I joined two of Jack Parsisson's green flanged 1" Corner Brackets by a Fishplate to form the roof, held by the lugs mentioned above.

The Aeroplane

The Pinion on the central rod also drives a $\frac{3}{4}$ " Pinion opposite the Contrate. A $2\frac{1}{2}$ " Rod is journalled in the outer holes of a 1 x $\frac{1}{2}$ " Double Bracket bolted to the Circular Plate by its inner lower hole. The end hole of the bracket holds the church in place, bolting it to a lower hole in the church's back plate. A Collar and Washer hold the $2\frac{1}{2}$ " Rod in place. Above the $\frac{3}{4}$ " Pinion a Rod Connector holds a Long Threaded Pin. At the top of the Threaded Pin fix a nut to hold a 2" Bolt securely in a Collar at its head. At the other end the bolt screws into a 4 hole Collar on a $2\frac{1}{2}$ " Rod onto which the plane is built. The tailplane is a 5 hole thick Plastic Strip bolted to a 4 hole Collar. Wings are a $2\frac{1}{2}$ " x 1" Flexible Plate held in the Collar into which the horizontal bolt is screwed. A $1\frac{1}{2}$ " Narrow Strip held on the front end of the rod by two silicone Collars is the propeller.

The Church

The body of the church is two yellow $1\frac{1}{2}$ " x $1\frac{1}{2}$ " Flanged Plates joined at the rear by a $1\frac{1}{2}$ " x $1\frac{1}{2}$ " Flat Plate and at the front by a $1\frac{1}{2}$ " Strip above the door. The roof is two more Flanged Plates inclined inward, joined to the body by Fishplates. A gap at the top is filled by a narrow $1\frac{1}{2}$ " Strip. I didn't build a steeple because the plane hit it. Instead there is a simple cross above the door.

With space to spare I placed two blocks of flats on opposite sides. They are each built from three dark blue 1" x $1\frac{1}{2}$ " flanged plates and a $1\frac{1}{2}$ " x $1\frac{1}{2}$ " Flat Plate, all from 6520 sets. A Threaded Boss at the rear holds each to the Circular Plate. There is also a station platform built from two $2\frac{1}{2}$ " Curved Strips and two Double Brackets.

NOTE:

The photos and the text differ in a couple of places because the photos were taken before some improvements were made during construction.

MWT CHRISTMAS PARTY TOUR

A Personal View by Tom Pittams

Finding myself secretary of the Club once again one of my inherited chores was to finalise and see through the Christmas Party Tour. This year it was decided that we visit the FUN HO Museum at Inglewood and the New Plymouth MODEL RAILWAY Club Layout at Bell Block, and then have our Special Dinner at the DEVON Hotel in New Plymouth.

I went on a trip to Taranaki to visit the people who would be our hosts and sort out times, costs, venues and how to get to them. After reporting to our October meeting my next chore was getting an up to date Computer, struggling with Vista and Email, and getting correct info out to the members. I followed the expert advice of Bruce Neilson joining Seniornet and so on. From the meeting I knew of some 16 takers and I hoped that there would be 30 or more going on the tour. I asked for other takers to let me know so as to give our hosts an idea of how many to cater for.

The DEVON was particularly cooperative, offering special discounted accommodation rates for those of us who stayed overnight as well as senior rates for our meal. And Richard Jordan of Fun Ho was also very kind, offering a cut price if more than 20 attend and even agreeing to see us on his day off. And the Model Railway people were very good to us too.

Then came the day. I set off for Inglewood. At Stratford it was clear that something was up. As I arrived there I met hundreds of bikies, and the main street was packed with people- Every man and his dog, with a few other family members too had turned out for some reason. They were all over the road but didn't seem to be going anywhere. It turned out that the Bikies' Teddy Bear Run, the local Christmas Parade, and a few MWT people all wanted to use Broadway at the same time.

Outside the Fun Ho Museum in Inglewood's centre we met, some 16 of us. First off we had a meal. There is a very nice Café there but we settled for a more modest repast at a local Bakery. At Fun Ho we were given an excellent demonstration of how sand moulds are made for the creation of traditional Fun Ho toys. Special sand from Company Bay, Dunedin, with a tendency to stick together holding a shape is used for the purpose. Aluminium melts at 660 degrees Celsius but needs to be at 850 degrees for pouring. It is too dangerous for visitors to be present to see this part of the process. Other processes such as powder coating and the moulding of lead toys were explained to us. Lead is malleable at ordinary temperatures if pure, and melts at only 327 degrees Celsius, pouring freely when hot and under pressure. Lead toys and other lead products such as pipes can be moulded in metal moulds or extruded without extremely high temperatures being required.

Bruce Geange had a few toys he had repaired and repainted, to show us. They were, like all his handiwork, of the very highest standard.

The Museum part displayed hundreds of Fun Ho and some other makes of toys made in NZ from about the 1940s to the present. Some of us were amazed to discover how valuable some of the older and rarer specimens have become. And there were many new and used Fun Ho toys on sale. For those interested there is a catalogue list sent out every month.

Then we set off for the Model Railway. This was in what looks like a farm shed. Having a number of people following me I went off sedately at about 80kph. I discovered when arriving at Bell Block that there was at least one carload of very irate locals in the cortege who no doubt usually travel some 40kph faster. I was rather scared that nobody would be at the layout to meet us. When I rang my contact early in the day I could raise no one. But when I went over to the shed I found three locals who could, like the characters who lived on a train layout of a boy called Mark in Ray Pope's books, pass for being people like Telford, Brindley, Gresley, Stanier and Stroudley, British railway engineers. However, it turned out that their rolling stock was all American but with a somewhat NZ livery.

Their Club owns their extensive layout and rolling stock. And at their usual meetings they run trains according to a schedule. Wagons are taken to allotted destinations when not left somewhere for emptying and loading. The Club used to follow a timetable using clocks running at speed, but this has been discontinued. Their layout HO background has been virtually completed, and they are nowadays occupied with rolling stock and sophisticated operational matters. I was allowed the tremendous privilege of driving a freight train under radio control. It was a recent acquisition and the programming and controls had not been fully mastered, but I was shown a few important buttons and so on, on the hand held controller. And off I went. I had a fabulous time, and I guess I should apologise to anybody else who might have wanted a play with that particular train. The layout is very large and the main line twists and turns through many stations, freight and marshalling yards, over gorges, bridges and hills and through a number of tunnels. The brake car on my train was rather wobbly and occasionally became uncoupled. The occupant was doing his nana over something I suppose. But he settled down after a while. On my travels around the layout I saw various people deep in conversation or working on the track or driving another train. From snippets of conversations I learned that not only did we have MWT people who were highly qualified in live steam engines and with much railway experience but also that there were Railway men who dabbled in Meccano and keen to construct the famous block setter. And a lady and her little son followed along watching for my train at tunnel mouths and waiting for the whistle to sound when we came to a station or marshalling yard.

Then it was off to the Devon. It is a great place. Our group had grown to 22 by that time. We were warmly welcomed and given the Gallery for our gathering. And the Marbles Buffet was absolutely fabulous with an amazing variety of dishes to choose from. Our President Paul Vodanovich made us welcome and we partook of the delights.

Bruce Neilson, who sadly couldn't be with us, was remembered and a tribute paid to him for his magnificent contributions to Meccano. And with us on this occasion was another of our members, one whom we rarely see, Peter Hancock from Auckland. He is President of the Federation, so we were well presided over. Peter shared with us some things to think about. The Federation Magazine - it is important that we keep it going. Maybe we should publish it in PDF as well as in Paper. The March Madness - it hasn't got off the ground this time around but maybe we could hold the same thing in New Plymouth some time, and maybe at the Devon. It has suitable facilities.

And we were informed that the Christchurch Convention planning is under way and proceeding well. It is important to gain good public support. To help North Island contributors with large models our Christchurch people are thinking about providing something like a removal van to get them over the Strait.

Well here I am. I hope I have got to the 1000 words I was

Meccano Models at the Egmont A & P Show

by Alistair Tong

Good crowds and sunny skies celebrated the Egmont A & P Show Association's 124th Annual show at the Hawera Showgrounds on Friday & Saturday, November 16th & 17th 2007.

The Edna Wills Hall was filled with the usual competitive Home Industries entries of Horticulture (flowers/shrubs/vegetables etc produce) - Home Industries displays (Knitting/Fabric Thread/School Children/& Cooking) - Photography & Model Building.

The following were the classes and prize-winners in the Model Building -

Class 9000 Model made from Meccano static (16 years and under) no entries.

Class 9001 Model using battery pack (16 years and under)
1st a Kinex Motion Machine built by a 10 year old.
2nd a self designed Junk Yard Crane Using Technix.

Class 9002 Model using battery pack (17 years and over)
No entries.

Class 9003 Model made from Meccano working with power (17 years and over)
No entries.

Class 9004 Model made from Meccano static (17 years and over)
1st John Freer 4-6-4 Locomotive similar to the Ab Kingston Flyer.

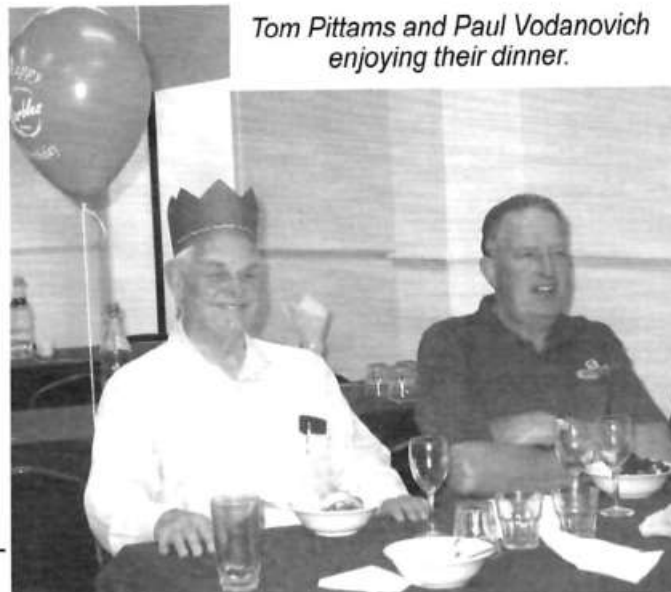
2nd John Freer a 'White' half-track truck.
3rd John Freer Traction Engine (as used in the Turangi Challenge).

Class 9005 Plastic Meccano or kitset
1st Alistair Tong Meccano Speedplay Car.

Class 9006 Model using Lego or similar building materials (under 5 years)

1st Novel Truck and trailing characters - 'Bob the Builder'.

prevailed upon to produce and that you the reader feel something of what the day was like, perhaps even wishing you were there. (Ed. Tom actually exceeded the 1000 words and produced 1336. Well done!)



Tom Pittams and Paul Vodanovich enjoying their dinner.

Class 9007 Model using Lego or similar building materials (5-7 years)

1st Garden Tractor.

Class 9008 Model using Lego or similar building material (8-12 years)

1st Star Wars Galleon.

Class 9009 Any model from any material no larger than 50 cm

1st Moon Lander.

Meccano models on display but not competing included - International B46 Hay Baler built by **Selwyn Bluett** plus Fergusson Tractor to pull it.

'Masport' Hand Mower built by **Alistair Tong**

Dump Truck to fit inside a 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ " cube built by **Alistair Tong**
Meccano Heroes set 9802 (Box only 'found' by Alistair recently at the local Transfer Station in damaged condition and suitably restored).

'Dukw' Amphibious GMC Truck built by **John Freer**.

Carousel built by **Daryl Anderson** and given a green rosette 'Special Award'. A photo of this working model being observed by a father & daughter was published in the local community newspaper after the show.

Selwyn Bluett also received a green rosette 'special award' for his hay baler model.

Daryl and Selwyn helped set up the model display on Thursday evening. Once completed the display is unattended and protected by the wire frames placed around the perimeter of the table.

As part of the show celebrations there is always a street parade of floats through the town on the Friday night. At the conclusion of the parade Alistair was in short conversation with the newly elected Mayor. The Mayor made the remark that he thought the Meccano models on display were quite outstanding. Alistair has been nominated to be the Model Judge at future shows - replacing Peter Meredith (a local now retired engineer/fitter) who has resigned after 10 years of judging.

New Zealand Club Diary

Auckland Meccano Guild

Contact - David Wall Phone 09 426 1965.

Next meeting Saturday, 9th February 2.00pm at 45 Kath Hopper Drive, Orewa.

MWT Meccano Club.

Contact - Tom Pittams Phone 06 345 9099.

Next meeting Saturday, 9th February, 2008 2 pm at St. Luke's Church Hall, Cornfoot Street, Wanganui.

Wellington Meccano Club.

Contact - Lou Nicholls Phone 04 973 6177.

Next meeting at 7.30 pm on Friday, 1st February, 2008 at Konini School, Wainuiomata.

Christchurch Meccano Club.

President: Charles Steadman. Club contact phone: 021 378897

Next meeting at 7.30 pm Friday, 1st February, 2008 at St. John's Hall, cnr St. John's Street and Ferry Road, Woolston, Christchurch.

April Antics 2008

In the previous edition of this magazine it was reported that the 'March Madness 2008' event scheduled to be held at Turangi had been cancelled due to a lack of support.

Apparently this cancellation notice caught several members, who had planned to attend the event (*but had not got around to booking accommodation at Turangi or advising Simon Moody of their intentions to participate*), by surprise.

After receiving various comments of regret at the cancellation and conducting a verbal survey of members of both the Auckland Meccano Guild and MWT Meccano Club at recent meetings, it has been agreed to have another go at setting up a "get together" in the first half of 2008.

The event will be known as 'April Antics 2008'.

Dates/time: Saturday 26th April 9.00am through to 11.00am Sunday 27th.

Venue: The Devon Hotel & Conference Centre, 390 Devon Street East, New Plymouth. (Further details available at www.devonhotel.co.nz)

The hotel offers several levels of accommodation to suit individual needs and is offering our members substantial discounts off their standard rack rates. The discounted rate for a standard economy room is \$100.00 with larger "business" rooms available at \$133.00 per night.

To book, call reservations on 0800 843 338 or email mail@devonhotel.co.nz

To access the discounted room rates for this event it is important that you quote - booking reference #64016 - at the time of booking. These discounted rates are available for the nights of Friday 25th and Saturday 26th.

It is proposed that the program for the weekend will be very flexible but will likely include several (short) presentations on specific items of value to those attending as well as making time for members to present and operate their rendition of Simon Moody's special model challenge where modellers must use a Meccano No 1 clockwork motor to develop a loco that will operate on '0' gauge track. Full details of this contest are in the next column.

Look for the insert supplied with this magazine for further information on this special weekend. If you have any questions or wish to make any suggestions, comments or require a further copy of the flier, email peter@augustus.co.nz or fax (09)537 3989 or call (09) 535 5355 evenings up to 9.00pm.

Peter Hancock.

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 - Meccano Parts and Sets from MeccParts.com

All genuine Meccano and Junior Meccano Parts and Sets, including the latest sets. Famous MeccParts Geared Motors. The full Meccanisms Range of MotorVators and Accessories.

NEW SERVICE: MeccParts is now offering an "Indent Order Service" for those wanting larger quantities of a part for a specific model. Whilst we endeavour to have large enough stocks of all our 1000+ parts, it is just not possible to cover every demand of our modelling customers. So if you are planning a large model, send us a list of your requirements and if we can't fulfill from stock we will offer you a discount on those parts that we have to order in, which you will then receive when our next stock order arrives. So if you plan ahead, you'll make significant savings.

Andrew & Vivien Wells, P O Box 26-179, Epsom, Auckland 1344 (New Post code), Fax 0800 MECCANO

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email andrew@meccparts.com

www.meccparts.com

An Invitation to MWT members

An approach was made to one of our members at the Hawera Show. To see if anyone of us would like to display some of their models at the South Taranaki District Museum Hay Day. This is to become an Annual Event to display Vintage Machinery and demonstrate some of these machines working. This year it will be held in Hawera on the first Weekend in February.

Anyone interested please contact John Freer phone 062728467 or by email nhorvath@xtra.co.nz

Clockwork Motor Challenge 2008

1. Build a locomotive to run on Hornby 0 gauge track.
2. Use a standard No 1 clockwork motor (6 x 8 hole)
3. Meccano parts and replicas only.
4. The final transmission of power to the wheels, must be by connecting rods to the wheels. (As in a traditional steam locomotive) (ie NOT gearing etc direct to the axles)
5. Locomotive shall have a towing hitch about 1" above the track height to facilitate the attachment of a wagon.
6. The wagon will be loaded to a total gross laden weight of 5kg.
7. Objective: Maximum distance travelled by the locomotive with no load around an oval or kidney shaped track on one wind. Plus, the maximum distance travelled by the locomotive towing the loaded wagon around the same track on one wind. The locomotive with the greatest product of these distances (multiplied) will be the winner.
8. Prize: Probably a kg of liquorice allsorts.



Small Meccano Tractors

Selwyn Bluett made this small Meccano tractor for inclusion in the December magazine. It is in the column on the right. Bruce Geange took the model away to photograph it and built his version of the same model. The photos should provide enough detail for you to be able to be built the models.



Parts list, Selwyn's model

P/N	Description	Qty	P/N	Description	Qty
18b	1" Axle	1	69	Set Screws	3
22	1" Loose Pulley	2	111	$\frac{3}{4}$ " Bolt	1
23c	Rubber Pulley	2	111a	$\frac{1}{2}$ " Bolt	1
37a	Hexagon Nuts	5	111c	$\frac{3}{8}$ " Bolt	2
38	Washer	11	810	Fish Plate Narrow	1
59	Collar	1	812	Angle Bracket Narrow	2
63b	$\frac{7}{32}$ " Grub Screw	1	812c	Obtuse Bracket Narrow	2
63d	Short Coupling	1		4 Hole Square Collar*	1
* Simon Moody part					

The parts list for Bruce's tractor is on page 7.

