



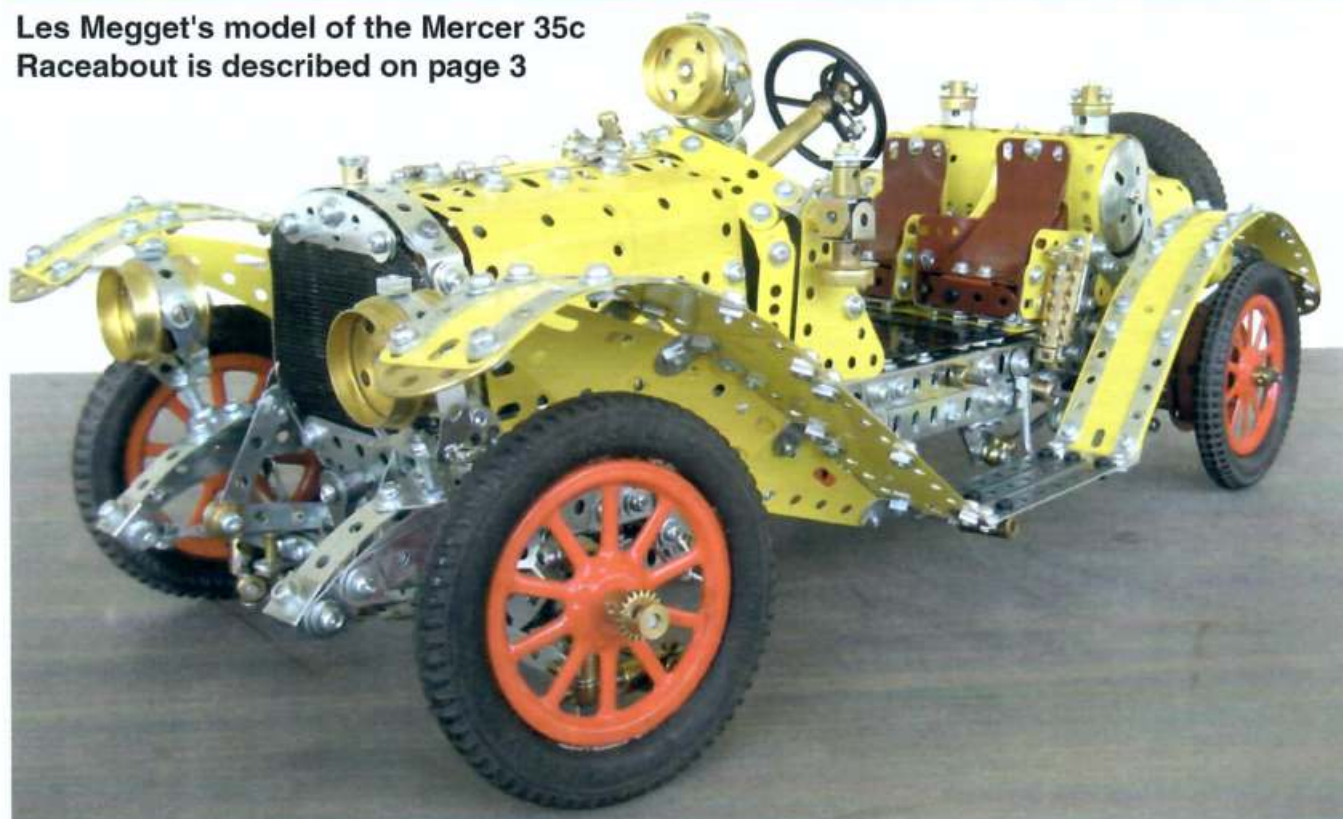
# NZFMM MAGAZINE

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Les Megget's model of the Mercer 35c Raceabout is described on page 3



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## NZ Federation of Meccano Modellers Magazine

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The NZFMM Magazine is published six times a year in February, April, June, August, October and December. The publisher is the NZ Federation of Meccano Modellers. The purpose of the magazine is to publish articles and photographs about Meccano and Meccano models, to report the meetings of New Zealand Meccano Clubs, to print letters expressing the views of Meccano modellers, to keep members informed of future events and to print advertisements of Meccano related things. The views expressed in the magazine are not necessarily those of the editor or of the Federation.

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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(Free advertising intended!)

I hope you find this Xmas issue interesting, even entertaining and motivating, and let me wish you and yours all the best for Christmas and the coming year. Also here's wishing you happy building and collecting. Goes without saying really.

## Do we get what we deserve?

It's been an interesting few weeks, what with the historical American elections and then ours (less historical version) a few days later. Did we get the government we deserve? I guess time will tell.

Anyway after all that excitement Christmas beckons, but in these hard economic times the chances of large Meccano Christmas presents seems remote. I fondly remember Christmas mornings when I was much younger. I hardly used to sleep on Xmas Eve and as soon as I knew my parents must be asleep (about 2am) I used to sneak out of my room and check the parcels Father (Xmas) had left under the kitchen table. Knowing that there actually were presents was reassuring and I would go back to bed (after a bit of judicious shaking of parcels) till the summer dawn awoke me about 4am. Down under the table opening those gifts was a joy, especially when it was Meccano, as it often was between my 6th and 12th years.

I remember Accessory sets (5A and 6A) to compliment the No.6 set received on my birthday in 1952 (in late wintry July). I'm not sure why the 5A set but I guess the 7A wasn't available, but those extra pieces were always useful. The 7A bits came in yellow box spare parts in the following 2 or 3 years with an E20R motor, cricketball motor and a large clockwork motor also received as Xmas and birthday gifts. My fondest memory was receiving a Gears Outfit A in its lovely blue box and ever since I've been very fond of Meccano gears. I was indeed a lucky lad to receive these expensive sets and parts as there wasn't much money around in the mid-50s, my father had a new job attempting to sell life insurance and he had just bought his first second hand car (needed it for the job).

Oh how different things are now! The gifts aren't opened till after Xmas lunch at about 3pm, as is Shirley's family tradition, and you know what I'm likely to get; "useful" things like socks, shirts, sandals, etc. If I want something really useful (to me) I have to buy it for myself and about this time of the year I buy myself a little (or larger) Meccano set as "the present to myself". It usually gets wrapped up (by me) and is positioned under our plastic, sustainable "green" Xmas tree. I'm lucky because Shirley has got used to this indulgence and as she says "how would she know what to buy me anyway?" One year my mother-in-law, bless her, tried to please me by giving me a book on model trains (my other hobby) but unfortunately I already had 2 copies of that book! Oh well it's the thought that counts, or so they say.

So take my advice and go out and buy yourself a Xmas present of some Meccano. It's more useful (and good for you) than smokes and booze and you can say it's educational and brain food to boot. Now those new Meccano Infra-red sets look interesting; what is *Meccaparts* website address again?

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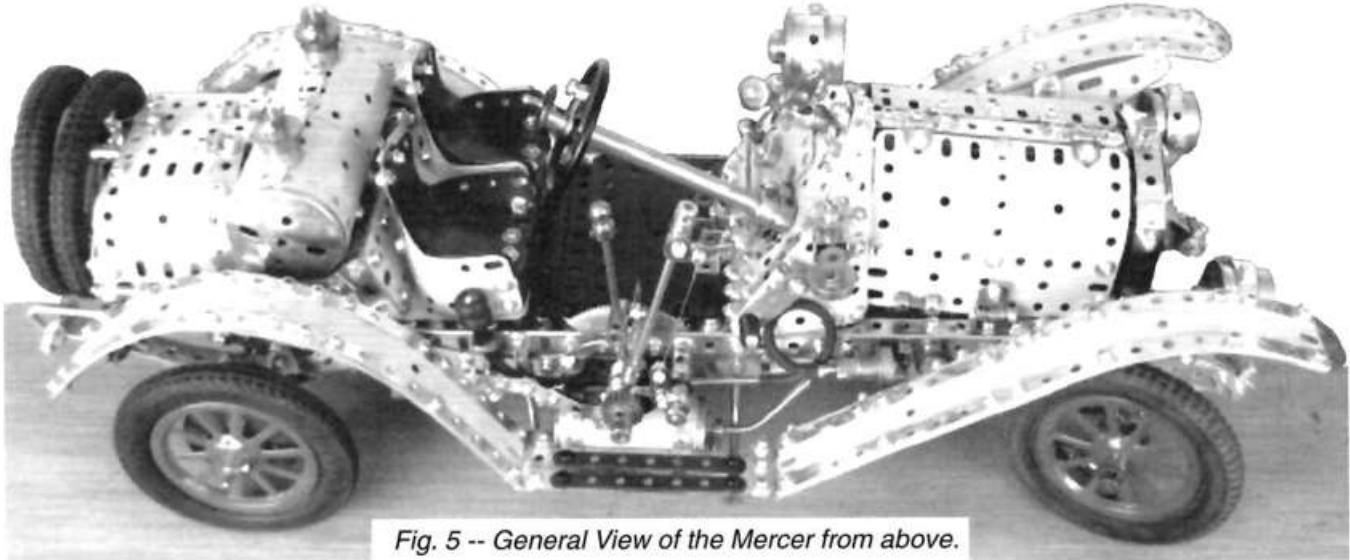
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## Mercer 35c Raceabout

by Les Megget

The Mercer Automobile Co. was founded in Trenton, Mercer County, New Jersey USA in 1909. The company was owned

used. The 4.7 litre 4-cylinder engine produced 58 HP at 1,800 rpm. The car weighed about 2,450 lb in normal tune and could reach 75 mph. It employed twin spark magneto ignition and the headlights were acetylene powered, as was common pre-war. The only windscreen was a circular monacle, in front of the driver, supported by the long steering shaft, which cantilevered from the timber faced dash-board. The most common colour was canary yellow with black



*Fig. 5 -- General View of the Mercer from above.*

by the wealthy wire-rope spinning Roebbling family, who had made much of their fortune building the Brooklyn suspension Bridge in New York about 20 years previously.

The firm began racing in 1911 with the new 35C "torpedo style" Raceabout powered by a 4,926cc T-headed 4-cylinder engine. This car came 12th in the 1911 Indianapolis 500 mile International Sweepstakes, averaging 63 mph without the bonnet being raised once! Mercers became very successful in US racing in the following few years. Washington A. Roebbling II, the son of the founder C.G. Roebbling died in the *Titanic* sinking in April 1912. Washington had been the creative inspiration for the Mercer car and racing programme and after his death the company's products became much more mundane, producing more conventional roadsters. Fellow founder F.W. Roebbling died in 1917 and the company was later taken over by Hare's Motors syndicate, the marque disappearing in 1925. The Mercer 35 Raceabout series are still regarded as "America's finest sports cars" so says "Automobile Quarterly", in the winter 1965 issue, and "will always be the finest!" So much for Corvettes and Thunderbirds. Figure 1 shows a 35C at the Pebble Beach Concours in California.

### The 35C Raceabout prototype:

This sports car was very basic and low slung compared with many other pre-WW 1 racers. There was no weather protection whatsoever, the driver and the navigator/engineer sat in crude bucket seats bolted to the floor-boards. The suspension was borrowed from the horse and cart era with semi-elliptic leaf springs front and back with a foot operated transmission brake and a hand brake operating the back wheels only. The original gearbox was a 3-speed crash box being expanded to a 4-speeder in 1913. Damping of the suspension was by friction lever dampers front and rear. No hand starter was provided, the hand crank-handle being

striping, very distinctive at a time when many cars were black. The remaining 100 or so Raceabouts are each worth a fortune these days and their closest competitor at the time was the 6.5 litre Stutz Bearcat. The traditional competitor's war-cry was "There was never a worse car than a Mercer!" and its riposte "You've got to be nuts to drive a Stutz!"

### The Meccano model:

I've always admired the looks of this vintage racer, which appears to be doing 80 mph when standing still! After seeing a very nice model of a Bugatti 35 racer with 3" pulleys as wheels at SkegEx I decided to make the Mercer at a similar scale using red Spoked Wheels (P/N 19a) as the rims with the old style Meccano 3" cord tyres. Black rims may be more suitable but I don't have 4 of them and the prototypical yellow spoked wheels were never produced in that colour by Meccano. These 3" diameter rims give a scale of about 1:7 for the model, shown in Figure 2. I've scaled the car's dimensions from several photographs and sketches I have in books, as well as what I found on the Internet. Also Mike Dennis in England kindly emailed me some scale drawings he has of this model Mercer. They proved very useful for depicting details, which weren't obvious on the photos.

### Chassis and suspension:

The 21 inch long chassis ladder frame is made up from channels of 12 $\frac{1}{2}$ " (bottom) and 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ " Angle Girders (top) joined by Flat Girders to form a 1" deep section. Both ends of the chassis are curved and reducing in depth to  $\frac{1}{2}$ " at front and rear. Combinations of Curved Strips of varying radii were used to represent these curves. Bent Perforated Strips made up the top and bottom flanges following the curved shape. 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ " Angle Girders made up the chassis cross-members at the mid-point and rear while a U-shaped

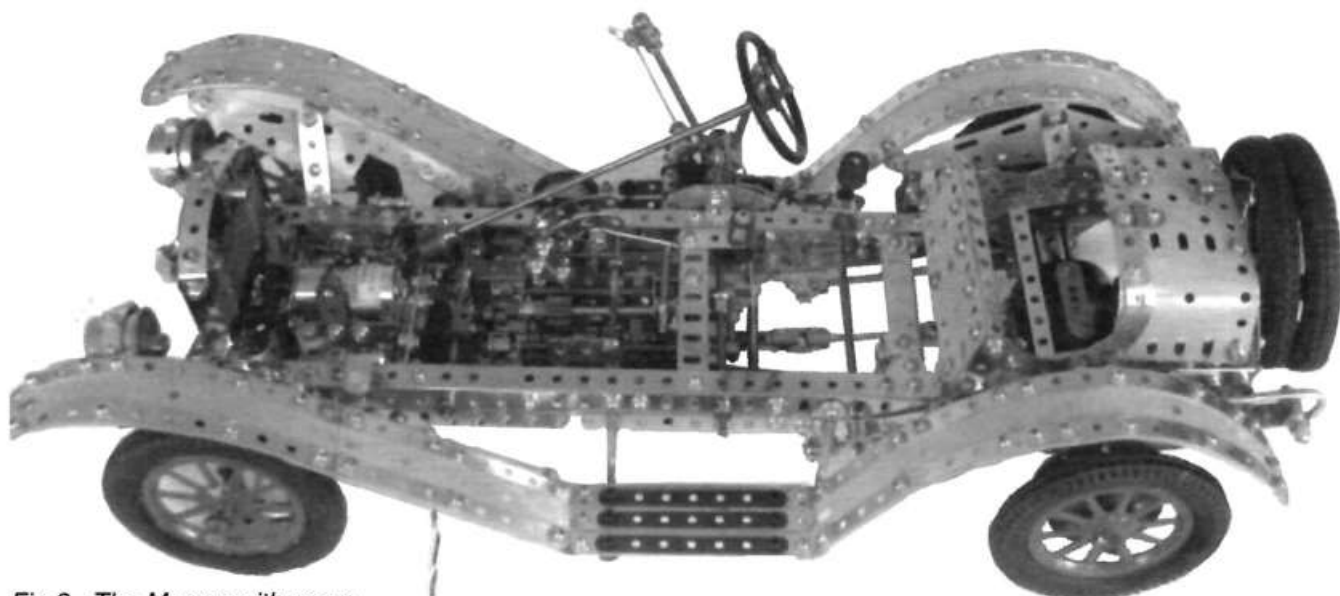


Fig 3 - The Mercer with some Bodywork Removed.

front cross member was positioned directly behind the solid front axle.

This front axle was made from two  $4\frac{1}{2}$ " Narrow Girders with pairs of Narrow Curved Strips and 5-hole Narrow Strips at the ends to support the king-pins. The axle is supported on leaf spring comprising  $4\frac{1}{2}$ ",  $3\frac{1}{2}$ " and  $2\frac{1}{2}$ " Perforated Strips with Right Angle Rod and Strip Connectors at their ends. These are supported by Pivot Bolts through Double Brackets at the front and Narrow Fish Plate shackles at the rear. The stub axles are Long threaded Pins into Couplings on the king-pins. The steering is by Worm and 19t Pinion running on a cross-shaft through the right hand chassis rail (note that US manufactured cars were right-hand drive at this time). The cross-shaft uses an old style Crank as the drop-arm, which is connected to the steering rods by a shortened Crank Handle and a Swivel Bearing.

The rear axle is conventional Meccano with a Pinion and 25t Contrate differential within a casing of Boiler Ends with a Bevel Gear crown wheel and pinion (P/N 30a and c). The axle is beefed up somewhat with a Sleeve Piece either side within strengthening brackets and strips with a  $2\frac{1}{2}$ " Face Plate forming each brake plate. The 12-hole rear leaf springs are constructed from a range of Perforated Strips and yes the rear axle is not centralised on the springs, as per the prototype (axle is centred on the 6th hole from the front). Narrow Fish Plates are used as shackles front and rear. The rear of the springs are supported by Collars on very bent Axle Rods, themselves supported in Couplings double bolted to the rear of the chassis rails.

### Engine and transmission:

Figure 3 shows the model with much of the bodywork and engine heads removed. The engine's motor is a Meccparts 220 rpm geared motor driving the crankshaft via Sprocket and Chain. The simple single plate clutch (tyred 1" Pulley in a sprung Socket Coupling with twin levers operated by the left foot pedal) drives a 4-speed and reverse all-pinion gearbox. This gearbox is a copy of Roger Marriott's development of the gearbox in the Meccano Super model

1a motor chassis (see Runnymede Meccano Guild Magazine, No. 66, February 2008). I've repositioned the reverse idler pinion so that it has more substantial bearings at both ends, as well as incorporating a couple of  $1/8$ " face pinions to get a larger space between gears, in an effort to stop gears clashing as you move from 1 speed to the next. Vintage cars of this period have the gear and hand brake levers outside the bodywork, which must have required some flexibility by the driver to seat himself! There are 2 layshafts in the gearbox, which means the gear lever must move both sideways and forwards and back. I have used a Short Crank on the gear lever transverse shaft which slots, into either of the Pallet Pins attached by Collars to each sprung layshaft control shaft. The gear lever is held in position by a Narrow Fish Plate acting on a Toothed Segment (P/N 129) bolted to the chassis rail. The sprung gear lever needs to be lifted up to disengage the fish plate from the segment when changing gears. On the gearbox output shaft is a  $1\frac{1}{2}$ " Pulley, which acts as the transmission brake when a piece of string is tightened around it on depressing the foot brake pedal. Simple but effective stopping device, as long as you remember to disengage the clutch.

I have only fitted an expanding internal brake to one rear wheel to demonstrate the workings of the differential when the brake is applied. I found this brake design in a 1960s MM and it uses two curved  $2\frac{1}{2}$ " by  $1\frac{1}{2}$ " Double Angle Strips as brake shoes, which are jammed onto the Boiler End brake drum when a Collar is turned between the ends of the shoes. The hand brake lever is supported on an extension of the gear-shift transverse shaft with a crude Pawl and Ratchet Wheel locking device. This is controlled by a Pawl without boss fixed to the top of the brake lever handle (a Coupling) using a mutilated and obsolete weaving Heald (P/N 101).

To give some realistic thickness to the long steering column I've used a thin walled brass tube held at the bottom in the end of a short Socket Coupling and at the top by a Aero Collar with a shortened short Grub Screw just below the large Steering Wheel. A Märklin (what's that?) small spoked wheel represents the circular ring, which carries the fuel/air mixture and advance/retard levers on the real car. I haven't modelled the monocle windscreen at this time but it is a

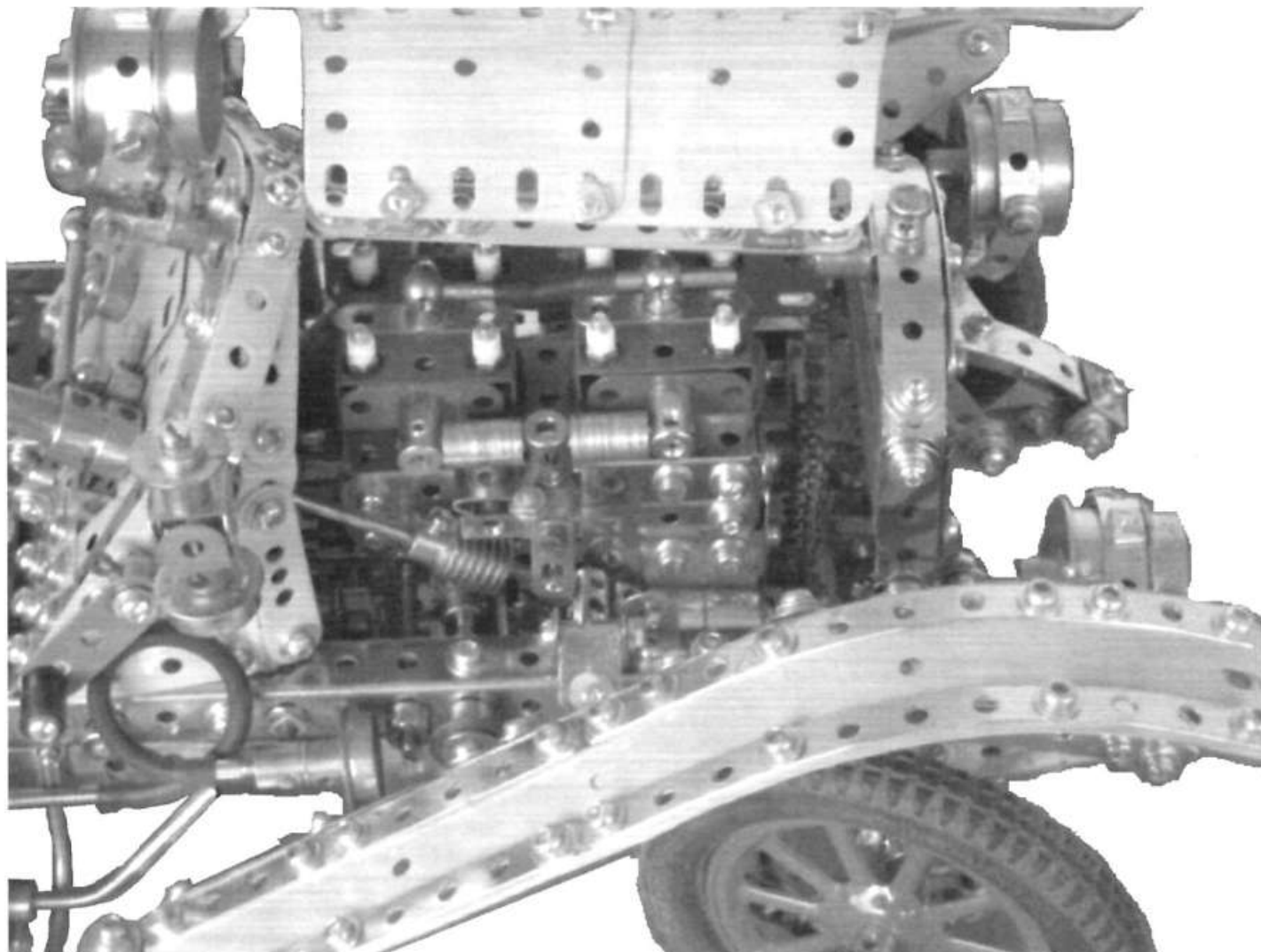
possibility if I replace the brass tube with the hollow large axle pieces made by *Exacto?* and use one of their large Collars to support the glass disk screen.

The motor is covered by a representation of the twin headed engine using red double  $1\frac{1}{2}$ " square Flanged Plates supported on Chimney Adaptors representing the 4 cylinder walls. The 8 spark plugs are each represented by  $\frac{3}{8}$ " bolts,

recent Mechanical Workshop set) and 1" Axle Rods direct the virtual cooling water from the heads to the radiator top tank.

### Bodywork and fittings:

The bodywork, what there is of it, is constructed from French yellow Flexible Plates with zinc plated Narrow Strips as highlights (or Edwardian speed strips!) on the flowing



*Fig 4 - A General View of the Engine*

hexagon nuts and a short length of white rubber tube. I haven't fitted spark plug leads to the magneto (2 Chimney Adaptors back to back) bolted to the engine block, at this stage. The heads are removed by removing a bolt from each side, these being screwed into Threaded Cranks on each side of the block. The inlet manifold is made up from Short Threaded Couplings and brass washers, see Figure 4. The exhaust manifolds are similar, using stacks of zinc plated washers on Flexible Coupling Units (P/N 175) merging into a Sleeve Piece muffler, culminating in the thick exhaust pipe (4" long Sleeve Piece), which ends under the navigator's seat!

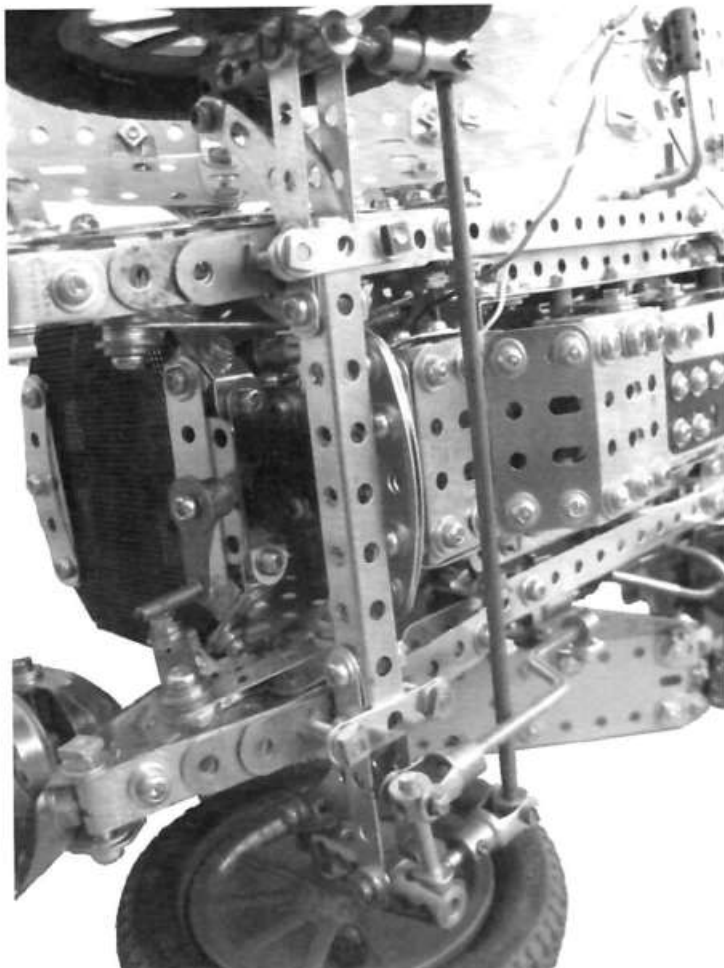
The distinctive radiator uses Perforated Strips for the frame with a carefully mutilated piece of black mesh from a car speaker box. The cooling fins are  $3\frac{1}{2}$ " and  $2\frac{1}{2}$ " Narrow Strips on vertical Screwed Rods, with a washer between each strip. Short lengths of black rubber tube (from the

mudguards. The strips should be black but I have insufficient for both sides and I wasn't prepared to paint them. The most difficult shape to get about right was the cowling between the sloping dashboard and the bonnet. This requires a reduction in width across the car of nearly  $\frac{1}{2}$ " on each side over a length of 2". I have used yellow Strips from the Renault F1 car set and 2" Strips from the Ferris Wheel set. The bonnet should be double-hinges on both sides but I decided against that extra complication and used slightly unbent Curved plates (P/N 199) with  $2\frac{1}{2}$ " by  $1\frac{1}{2}$ " Flexible Plates for the bonnet hinged at the centreline. The dashboard should have a dark timber facing panel but as I don't have any brown Meccano plates (has anyone?) I used the beige plates from the recent Monument set. Instruments are few on this car and the speedometer is fixed on the left hand side of the dash and can be adjusted to point towards the driver. As can be seen the clutch and

brake foot pedals protrude from slots in the dashboard and have Narrow Angle Brackets as the pedals. The accelerator pedal (a Crank) seems to have been an after-thought, as it is positioned outside the cowl, just above the horn's trumpet, see Figure 5.

The bucket seats were tricky to make and after some trial and error I used yellow  $5\frac{1}{2}$ " by  $1\frac{1}{2}$ " and  $2\frac{1}{2}$ " by  $1\frac{1}{2}$ " Flexible Plates with Flexible Gusset Plates to model the curved rears. The maroon upholstery incorporates Flexible Plates from the 6-wheel RC truck set, as I didn't have any suitable black plates. The black floorboards representing the rubber mats of the prototype also come from the truck set. You might have gained the impression that I purchase these modern sets for the coloured parts to use in other models; you would not be wrong. The floorboards and seats come off without undoing any bolts for easy access to the gearbox and transmission brake.

Behind the seats is the large cylindrical petrol tank with its 2 large fillers. There is a very small toolbox with hinged lid behind the tank and 2 spare tyres are carried on a bracket at the back. Note that these cars carried spare tyres only as the practise was to replace punctured/blown tyres only, the wooden spoked rims remaining in place. The tyres were fixed to steel rims, which bolted directly to the wheel's circumference. The old pattern Meccano 3" Motor Tyres don't stay on the Spoked Wheels too well and really could do with some double-sided Sellotape to fix them. Attempts at wheel-spin starts from standing

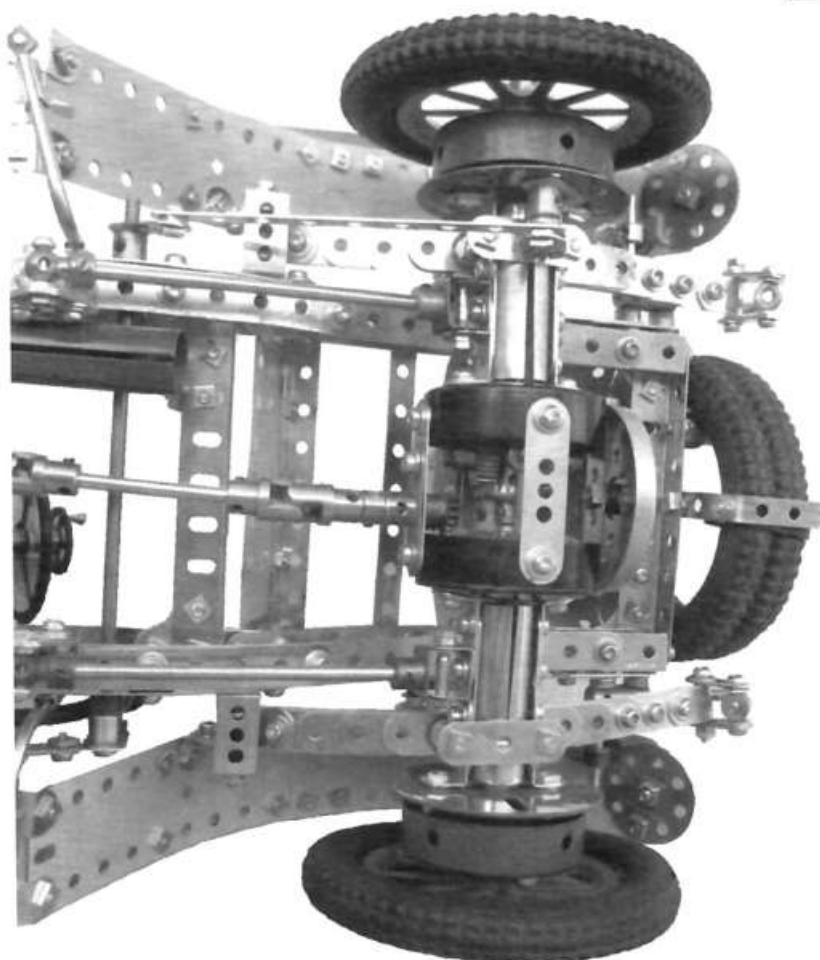


*Fig 6 - The Front Axle Assembly*

still would certainly result in peeling off the rear tyres.

The very large acetylene headlights and the navigator's spotlight were made from two large Flanged Wheels with a curved 5-hole Narrow Strip over the top and curved 7-hole Narrow Strips for the holding brackets. The acetylene gas cylinder (large Flanged Wheels with a silver Cylinder, also "borrowed" from a recent set) is positioned through the running board on the driver's side. The two 5-hole Couplings with Collar handles on the side of the navigator's seat represent the oil hand pumps used to replenish the sump while on the move.

Building the Mercer has been a lot of fun while I was recuperating from my recent goitre operation and I've learnt a lot about veteran (Edwardian) cars. Now all we need is some summery weather and we can drive off into the sunset.



*Fig 7 - The Rear Axle, Drive Shaft and Differential*

## Plans for a Dalek...

by Rick Vine

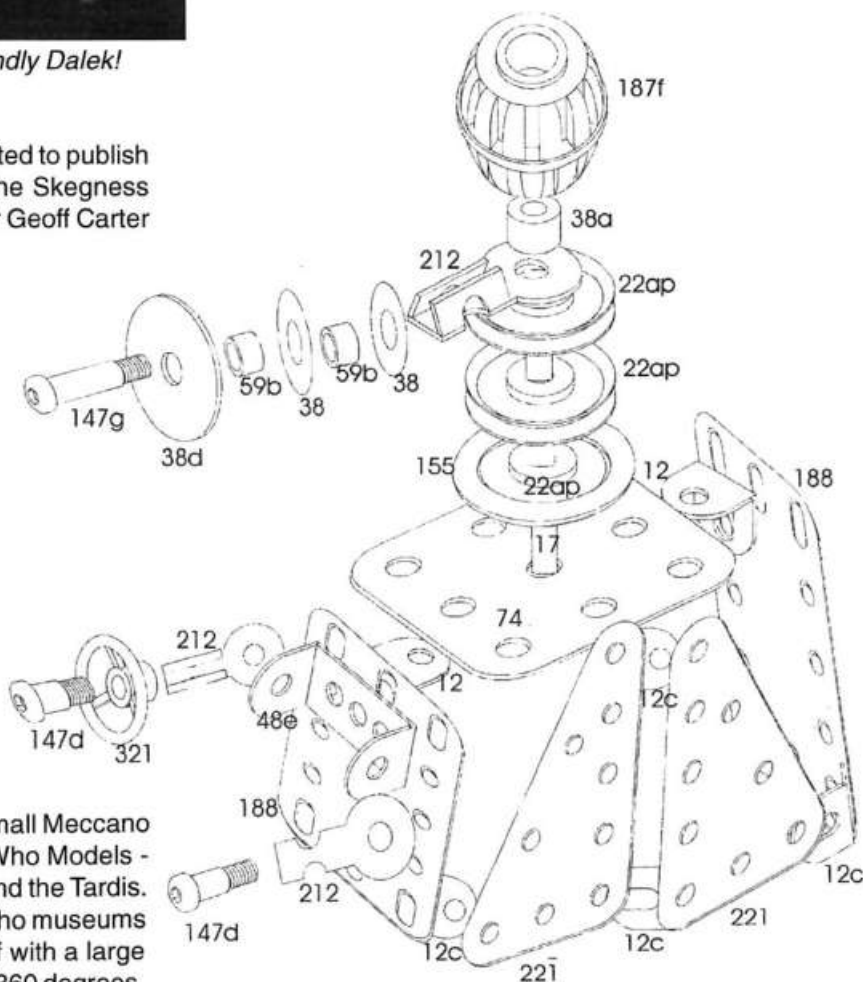
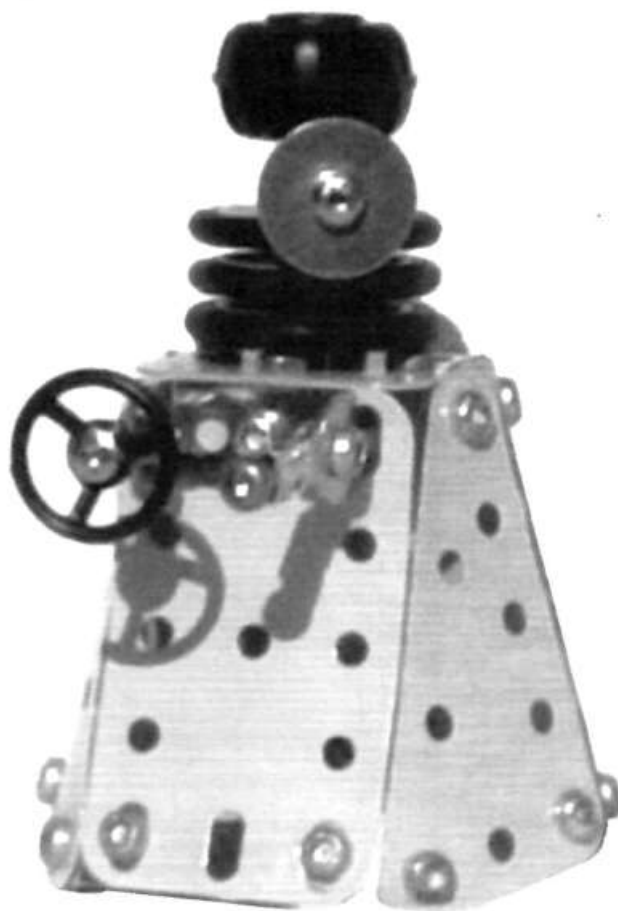
In July I was asked by John Ince to produce some plans for a small model for the December NZFMM, "to feature small models which people can build while they are recovering from their Christmas dinner!".



*Chris Harris holding hands with a large friendly Dalek!*

Not long after that the Spanner mail group started to publish pictures of the amazing large models from the Skegness 2008 exhibition, all out of my league! However Geoff Carter published some pictures of the smaller exhibits he saw and one immediately caught my eye. Being a Doctor Who fan, one of the smaller models was a great representation of a selection of Daleks by Chris Harris, and I could tell I had all the parts to build one. I also thought this was a lucky coincidence to produce the plans for the NZFMM, but I thought I should ask permission before making them and give credit where due.

A few queries enabled me to contact Chris in the UK (who isn't on email), he replied that he would not only produce some plans but also send me a model. What a wonderful gesture I thought. A few weeks later a well packed Dalek model arrived complete with plans, Chris also enclosed a small Meccano car and photos of some of his other Doctor Who Models - Daleks in various colours, K-9, a Cyberman and the Tardis. He also enclosed brochures for two Doctor Who museums in the UK. One of Chris's photos is of himself with a large Dalek he's built: 33 inches tall, the head turns 360 degrees, the arms go up and down, it has a tape inside playing Dalek

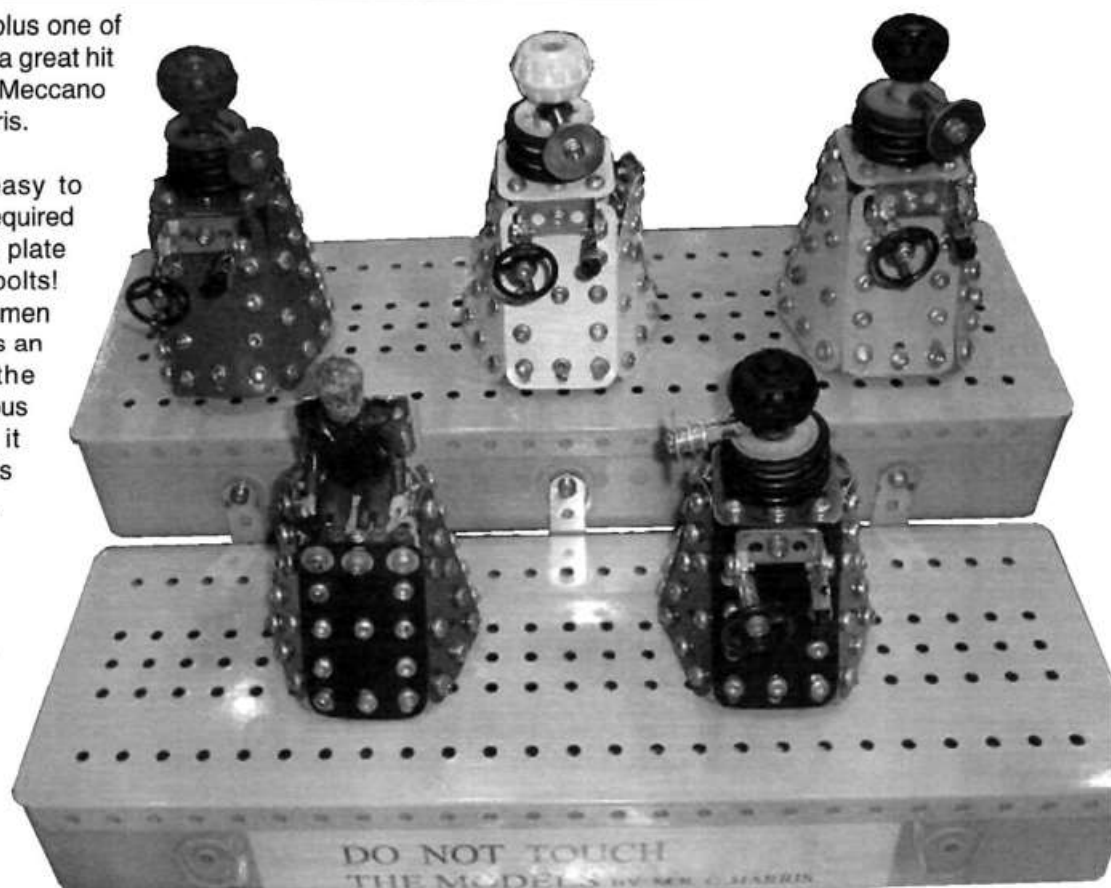


*Dalek diagram*

sounds (exterminate!) plus one of the arms squirts water (a great hit with kids) – a really fun Meccano model, great model Chris.

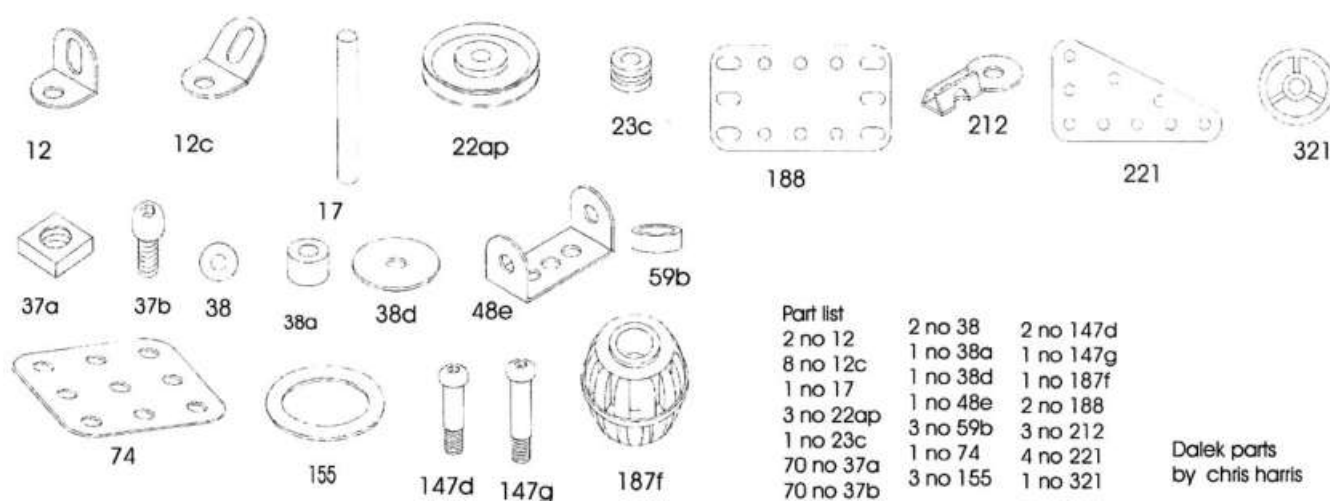
The small Dalek is easy to build, the longest time required is to fill in the flexible plate holes with nuts and bolts! Many Meccano men/women consider holes in plates an annoyance but for the Dalek it's an advantageous feature. I also found it easy to add some wheels so kids can play with it.

An enjoyable little model to build, many thanks Chris. Now I'm off to build a Tardis ...



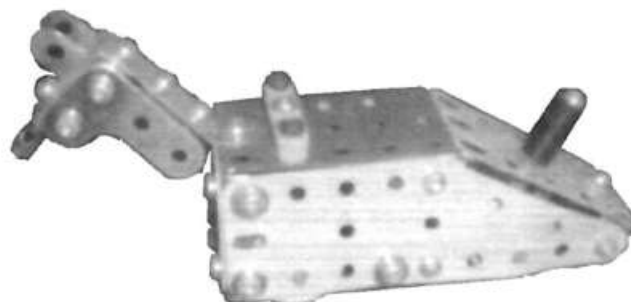
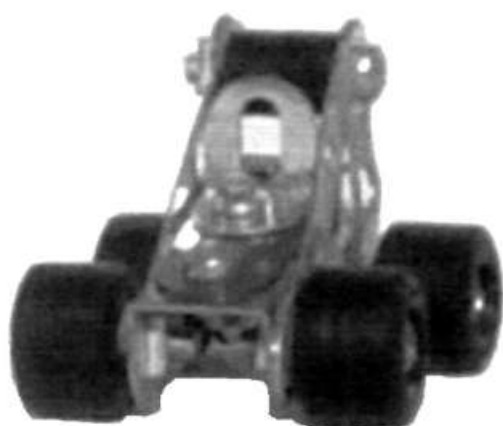
## Parts List

## Daleks at Skegex



| Part list |          |           |
|-----------|----------|-----------|
| 2 no 12   | 2 no 38  | 2 no 147d |
| 8 no 12c  | 1 no 38a | 1 no 147g |
| 1 no 17   | 1 no 38d | 1 no 187f |
| 1 no 22ap | 1 no 48e | 2 no 188  |
| 3 no 23c  | 3 no 59b | 3 no 212  |
| 70 no 37a | 1 no 74  | 4 no 221  |
| 70 no 37b | 3 no 155 | 1 no 321  |

Dalek parts  
by chris harris



Here are two more of Chris Harris's small models. The one on the left is obviously a car; is the one above a horse on wheels?

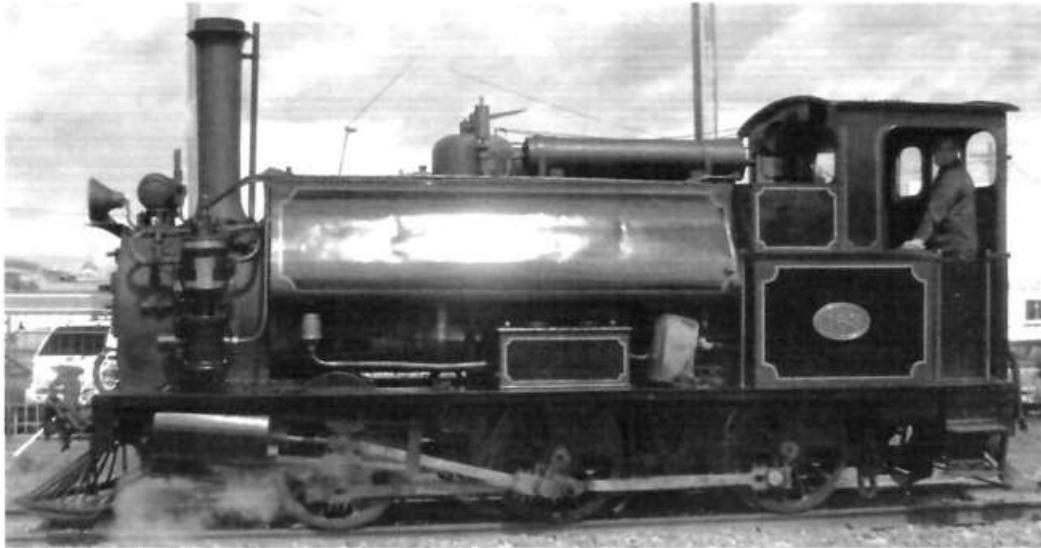
## So you want to Model a Steam Engine?

by Bob Prescott

Over Labour Weekend, October 25 - 27, I attended the "All Aboard" event in Feilding, celebrating the centenary of the

efficient when compared with an uncomfortable sea journey or a bone-shaking stage coach ride.

At Feilding there were seven working steam engines, an old railcar, diesel and electric engines and many restored carriages. Here are a few photographs on which to base your model.



*F163 "Ivanhoe" was the oldest locomotive on show.*

North Island Main Trunk line (NIMT).

It was on 7 August 1908 that the first train completed the journey Wellington to Auckland, taking more than 20 hours. The construction of this 680 kilometres line was an amazing engineering achievement, including many viaducts and the famous Raurimu spiral, and took more than 20 years to complete. Although twenty hours travelling time would seem like a long journey, it was very



*Ab 663 was all bright and shinning!*



*Wab 794 is a fine old workhorse.*

Among the rolling stock at Feilding were:-

### F 163

Built 1880 by Dubs & Co, Glasgow, Scotland  
0-6-0 ST (saddle tank)  
Driving wheels: 36 $\frac{1}{2}$ "  
Coal load: 1 ton  
Water load: 450 gallons  
Length: 23' 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ "  
One of nine surviving members of class and only one in main line running condition. 88 were built. Owned by NZ Railways, current caretakers: Feilding

and District Steam Railway Society.

### Ab 663

Built 1917 by NZ Government Railway Workshops, Addington  
4-6-2  
Driving wheels: 54"  
Oil fired  
Water load: 4,500 gallons  
Length: 62' 6"  
A total of 141 were built from 1915 and were in use all over New Zealand.

## Wab 794

Built 1927 by NZ Government Railway Workshops, Hillside, Dunedin  
4-6-4 T (tank)

Driving wheels: 54"  
Coal load: 3 tons  
Water load: 1,700 gallons  
Length: 44' 5 1/2"

One of only two survivors in class and only one in main line running condition. 30 built.

Owned by NZ Railway and Locomotive Society, on heritage lease to and restored by the Feilding and District Steam Railway Society (F & DSRS).



*J 1211 is one of the most streamlined NZ locomotives.*

## J 1211

Built 1939 in Scotland by North British Locomotive Company.  
4-8-2



*Ka 942 looks the powerful locomotive that it is.*

Driving wheels: 54"  
Oil fired  
Water load: 4,000 gallons  
Length: 66' 11 1/2"

## Ka 942

Built 1940 by NZ Government Railway Workshops, Lower Hutt  
4-8-4

Driving wheels: 54"  
Oil fired  
Water load: 5,000 gallons  
Length: 69' 8"

The Ka's were NZ's largest and most powerful locally-built locomotives. Owned by Mainline Steam.

## Ja 1271

Built 1956 by NZ Government Railway Workshops, Hillside, Dunedin  
4-8-2

Driving wheels 54"  
Coal load 6 tons  
Water load 4,000 gallons  
Length 66' 11 1/2"

Owned by Steam Incorporated, Paekakariki. One of the last steam locomotives built for NZ Railways.

Happy modelling and remember if you need more information GOOGLE your chosen engine.

**Editor's Note:** Although three of these locomotives are now oil burning, they were originally coal burning. The

conversions to oil were made at various times.

"All Aboard" attracted a large number of visitors to Feilding including about 300 from many overseas countries.



*Ja 1271 is one of the last steam locomotives in NZ.*

## Herman the German Crane (again)

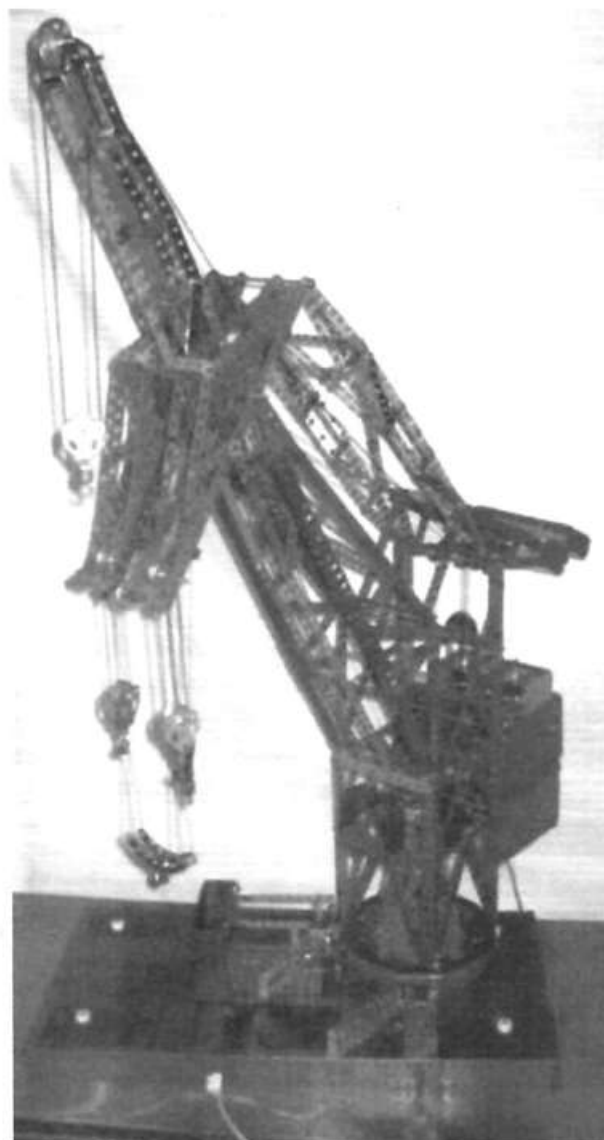
by Henry Porter

I first became aware of the crane nicknamed Herman the German when Gerald Hart brought me a copy of three illustrations for the construction of the crane. I built a larger version of the model. The main tower was  $7\frac{1}{2}$ " square instead of  $5\frac{1}{2}$ ". It was mounted on a roller bearing made from 167b Flanged Rings and Toothed Quadrants. It was driven by several motors. Only the hoists were manual.

Then after I saw the photos and description in our Magazine, I set about constructing the original model with modifications to suit. The gearing is Exacto No. E 145a and a pinion E 145b. The  $7\frac{1}{2}$ " Circular Girders are from Ashok namely No. 143b. The pinion is mounted on the deck-house and was driven by a 9-volt motor concealed in the housing.

The original model does not have the jib extension moving separately. It is bolted at the bottom to the main jib. The engine room was built in two layers. The bottom one had four 6-volt motors from the current Meccano sets, which drove the hoists. The upper level had one 6-volt motor driving the trolley on the level luffing extension from which the central hook is suspended.

The other motor is an Emebo, which was connected by gears and chain to the screwed luffing movement. There were three motors with battery boxes, two of which were mounted vertically



side by side. These could be controlled together or individually on the main two hoists. The other one was mounted on the side. The block on top of the engine house had three reversing switches, with centre position off (from Dick Smith), for the remaining motors.

The counterweight box was filled with pieces of lead, mostly pre-war 50 and 100 gram Meccano weights. These weighed over a kilo. The original instructions indicated 1 kg was required. The other slight alteration was to build a lighter tie brace that connects the top of level luffing extension to the main fulcrum at the top of the tower. It was built with Narrow Strips and Angle Brackets, which was much lighter and looked near to the small original photo of the crane, at the top of the front cover page of the NZFMM Magazine.

If the  $7\frac{1}{2}$ " gear ring is being used on a model, it has to be spaced either side with two hexagonal nuts, otherwise the pinion will not run freely. These were used on my block setting crane in the October 2008 Magazine. I hope that this will inspire people to build some interesting models.

Ed. Sorry about the poor quality of the photographs but as the crane has now been dismantled it was not possible to take better ones.

## The Meccano Ship Building Outfit

by Gary Higgins

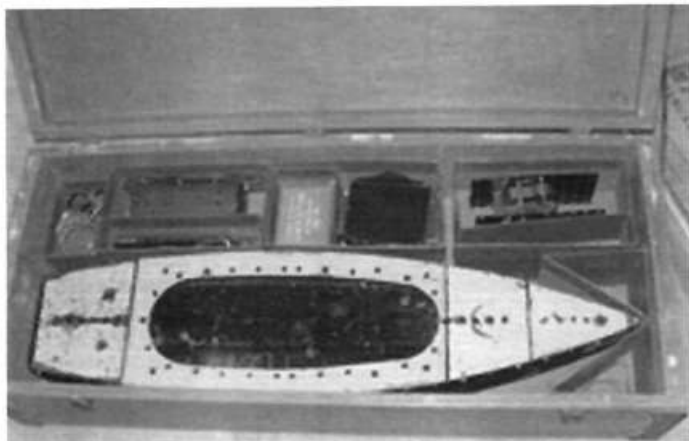


Fig. 1

In the early part of 1930 A.C. Gilbert, who had been using the Meccano name in the U.S.A, developed a new series of sets including a set 115 featuring the ability to construct Meccano Ship models that would actually float. Set 115 provided the user with plans for twenty different ship models such as yachts, battleships, ocean liners etc. The lower hull was a 24 inch single pressing of steel with holes spaced around the top section of the hull to enable upper decks to be held in place. This hull also had holes for a propeller and a rudder, the placement of which used special washers to ensure that the hull remained leak free. Sixteen special parts were manufactured for this set.

The set was provided in either a solid cardboard box or in the more familiar, to Erector users anyway, the large green wooden box with the familiar USA Meccano logo. The set also contained a motor and enough other parts to make up models such as special parts to make up a large truck.

The ship hull was finished in Black with the upper deck plates in a rich yellow colour. The additional Meccano was finished in a Dark red for the plates, similar to the early dark red of

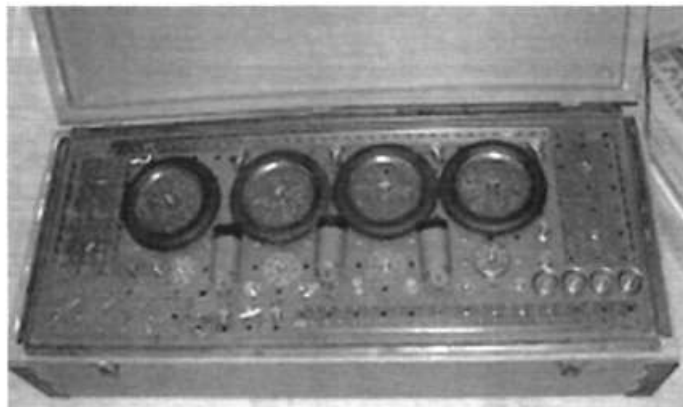


Fig. 2

the mid-1920s and a light green, fairly distinct from other Meccano greens.

Boiler ends were included in the set but they had only two holes together on one side enabling them to be used as a

pair of guns on a warship.

The drive mechanism for the ship was by means of a very long rubber band attached to a axle rod ending in a hook which connected with the propeller shaft. The other end of the rubber band was connected to a hand wound capstan vertically mounted near the bow of the vessel and winding this handle enabled the rubber band to be wound thus providing drive to the propeller. The rudder could be moved back and forth from a fitting on the stern deck.

This was an unusual model and the Hull no 172 was, and still is, one of the largest Meccano parts available. The set was not produced in huge numbers and is today one of the most sought after of Meccano collectibles. Current valuation depends on supply and condition, as with all Meccano sets but they are usually sold at around the \$4000 NZ mark. The set sold for \$17 US in 1930.

Models Built With No. 115 Meccano Outfit

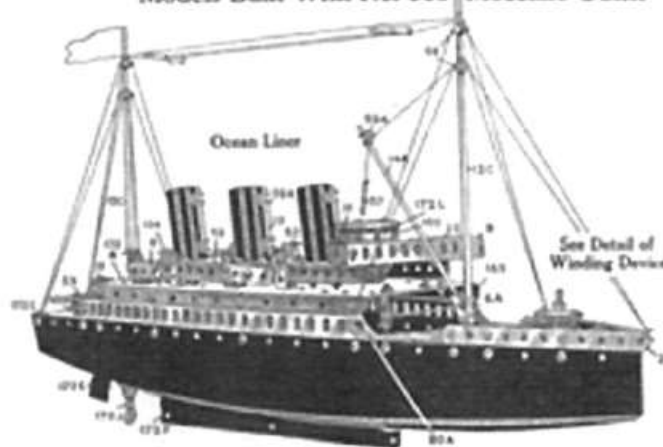


Fig 3: Manual model of ocean liner

Figure 1 shows a view of the hull and upper hull plates in the original box. In this picture the two boiler holes can clearly be seen. Figure 2 image shows the large tray inserted into the top of the box to hold a parts display.

Thanks to W.Bean and J Pirat for the pictures

For those who want further information, the complete manual and parts list is available on my web site at [http://ohig.bravehost.com/the\\_meccano\\_ship\\_building\\_set.html](http://ohig.bravehost.com/the_meccano_ship_building_set.html)



Fig 4: Erector-Meccano box of set

## Replicating the Meccano Ship Building Outfit

by Gary Higgins

I first became interested in this set some years ago but because of its rarity and cost I was unable to own an original. I read with interest that Frank W Webber in Germany had built a replica ships hull from Aluminium which he had beaten into shape and welded the joins (see his article in Constructor Quarterly No. 75, March 2007).

Having had some previous experience in surfboard manufacturing I figured that a model hull could be made using fibreglass resin. Exact measurements of an original hull were obtained thanks to Frank and to Jaques Pirat in France, who also supplied me with photos of the model parts. From this I constructed a paper template of the hull shape and made a hull former out of wood on which to layer the fibreglass. I have since found out that boat builders use polystyrene which can easily be scraped away from the interior of the hull once the resin has set.

After a couple of tries I was successful in getting the hull looking like it should. It was easy to drill the holes around the top edge of the hull, the spacing being at one - inch intervals.

I had built up a small mound of fibreglass near the stern of the vessel and I drilled a hole for the prop shaft here at the appropriate angle. A vertical hole was drilled further back for the rudder. These holes were drilled out to the size of a coupling. A suitable brass section was first drilled to the diameter of a Meccano axle rod and a screw hole was tapped at each end to secure the prop shaft.

To power the vessel I used a 6-volt Meccano motor from the earlier infrared set and it was geared down by the use of a gearbox designed by Frank. It generates quite a bit of

torque when running.

To steer the vessel I used another 6-volt motor from the same set and this time using another of Franks designs using a worm to pull two rods backwards and forwards to pull on the steering rod. Although noisy, this also worked well. There was room in the hull for the battery cases for the motors and the infrared gear. The deck plates were cut to the original specifications and drilled

accordingly but I did not use flanged edges as they would have been too difficult to produce. Simple angle brackets were all that was needed to fix the deck plates to the hull. Any superstructure could be built up from there using standard Meccano.

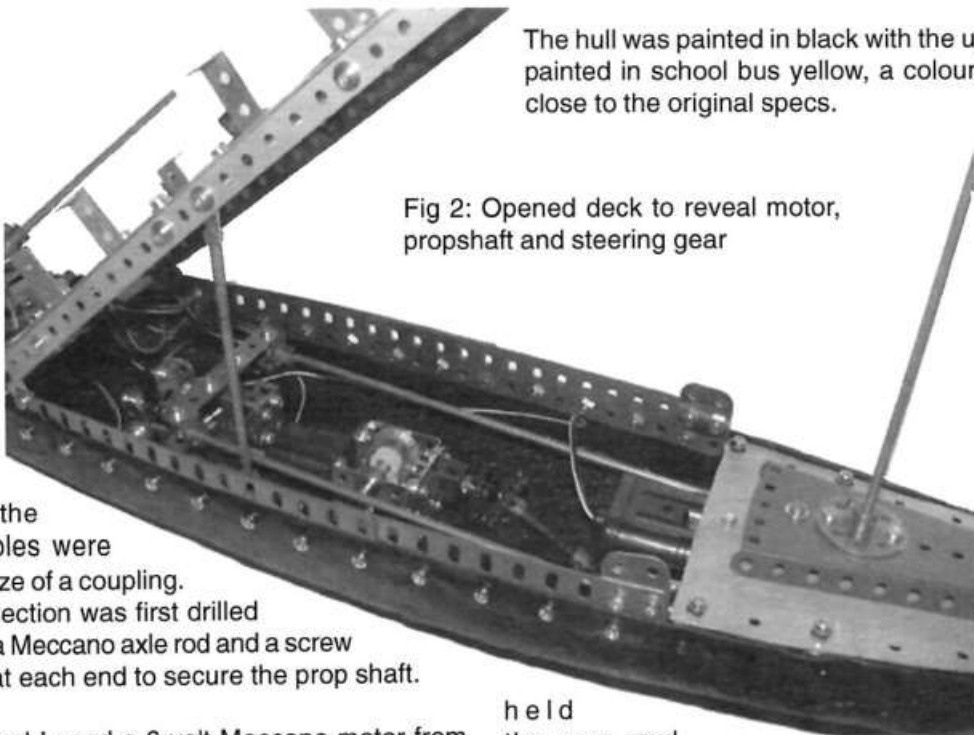
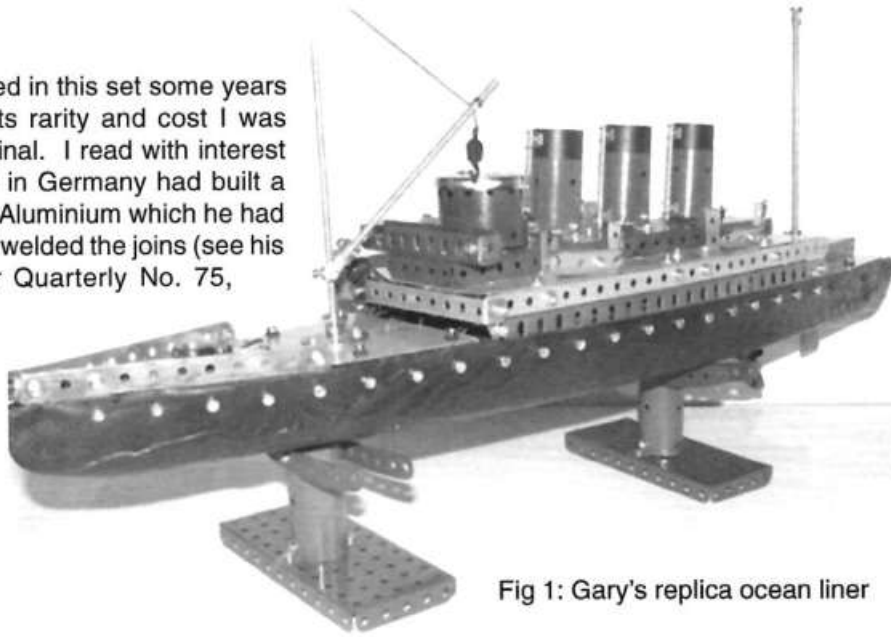
A quantity of vaseline was applied to both the propeller shaft and the rudder shaft to make them watertight. A small propeller of very similar shape to the Meccano original was acquired at a model boat shop and the rudder was simply a Meccano rod with the rudder blade soldered in place.

The hull was painted in black with the upper deck plating painted in school bus yellow, a colour, which was very close to the original specs.

Fig 2: Opened deck to reveal motor, propshaft and steering gear

I did modify the top deck by having it pivot up on a Meccano rod, using another Meccano rod to hold it in place so that the interior and motor gearing could be worked on. This proved very useful. The front and rear decks were in place using type plugs and

held the new rawl screws from the speed play sets, an added bonus.





*Gary Higgins surrounded by his models.*

Having the original model plans from Jaques was an advantage and it now gives me the opportunity to construct all 20 of the original models.

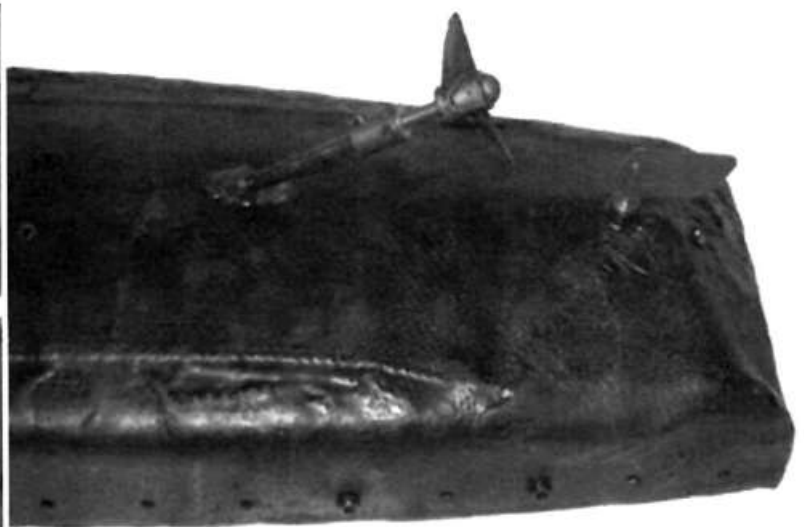
Obviously the current model was based on what was considered the best looking model of the original set, the passenger liner.

I replaced the unusual pilot house sections (a pentangle shaped piece with flanges) with a Wheel Flange and rolled a Flexible Plate to fit inside it. Mounted at the forward end of the superstructure it certainly looks the part.

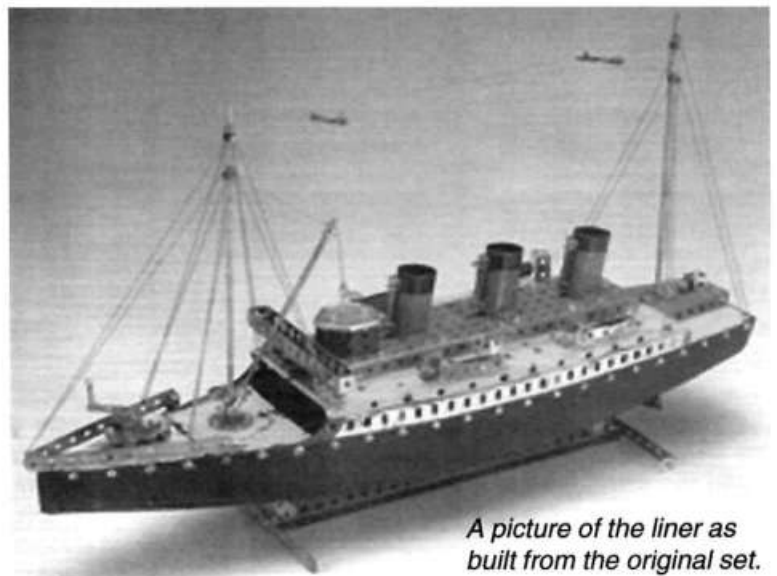
It was an enjoyable project and one which gave the satisfaction of recreating one of the early Meccano icons.

Further details of this project can be found on my website:

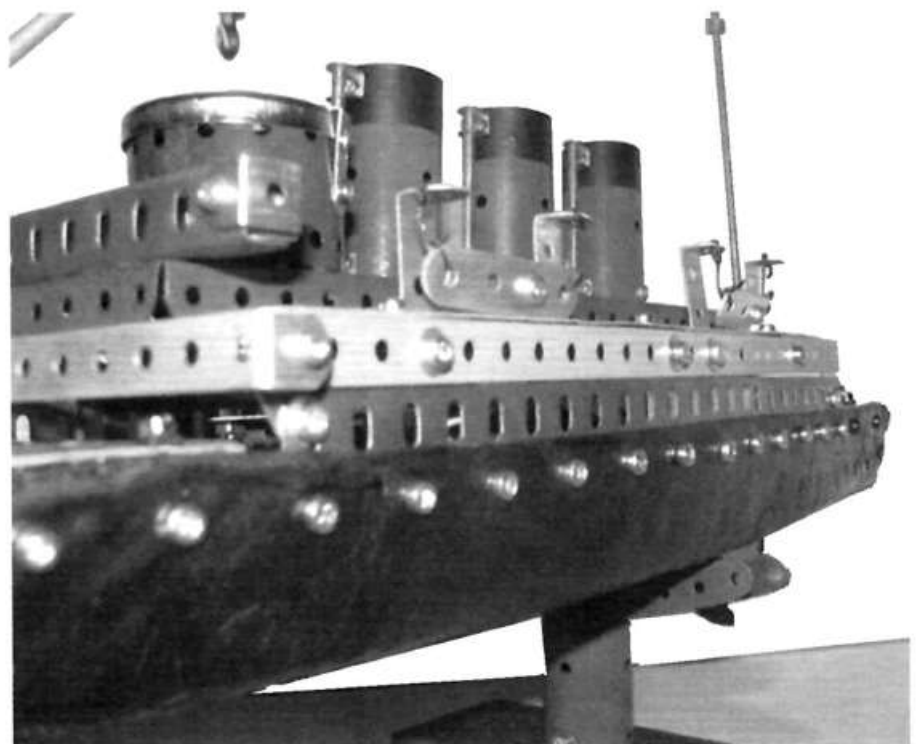
[http://ohig.bravehost.com/meccano\\_ship\\_building\\_project.html](http://ohig.bravehost.com/meccano_ship_building_project.html)



*Fig 3: Hull from underneath showing prop shaft, prop and rudder.*



*A picture of the liner as built from the original set.*



*Fig 4: Front view of liner from sea level*

## The Heath Robinson Steam Lantern (Patent pending)

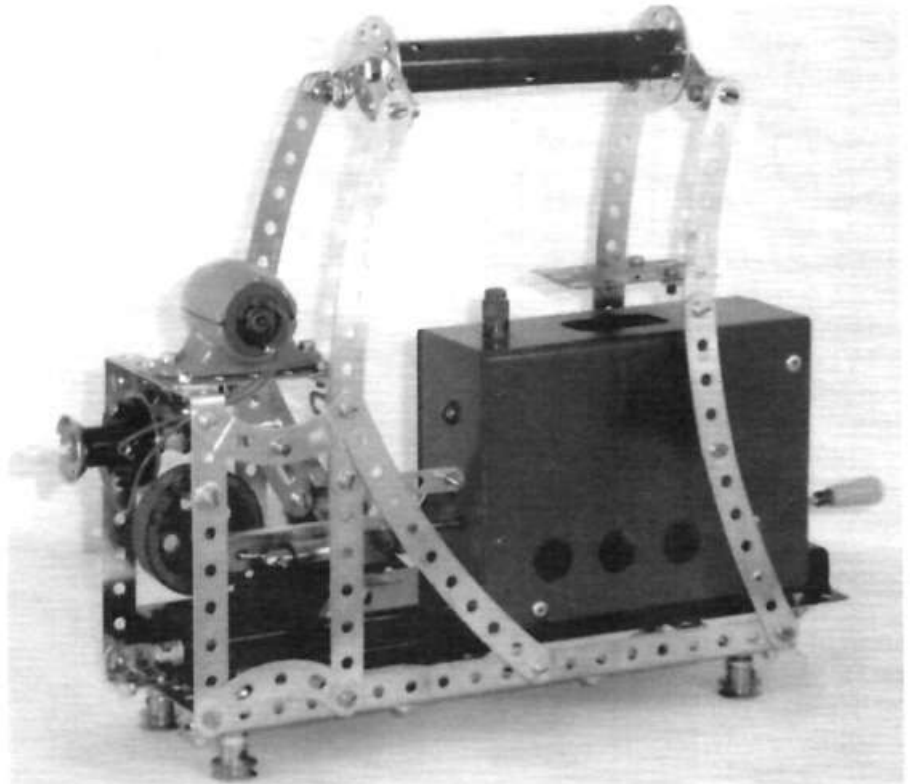
The principal objective behind the design of this elegant instrument is to rid the world of obnoxious batteries which, when discarded, are the bane of the environment and a major contributor to global warming.

Further advantages over conventional lanterns:

1. The light output can be reversed at the turn of a conveniently located control knob.
2. Being large and heavy it is difficult to overturn or mislay.

Currently work is in progress to eliminate two relatively minor shortcomings:

1. The lantern has a rather long lead-time. At present the activity to be illuminated must be anticipated some 5 minutes prior to its occurrence. (In order to raise steam).
2. Scientific studies have revealed that the light output from the spirit burner exceeds that provided by the light bulb. This matter is under further development.



Any member wishing to participate in this bold technical venture is cordially invited to forward their contributions (cash only) to the undersigned.

David Walls Esq.  
(Chief Development Engineer)

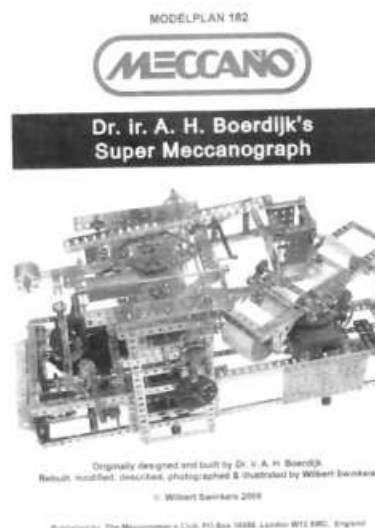
## Comments about MP 182

by John Ince

I have recently purchased MP 182, which describes Wilbert Swinkels' version of Dr. Ir. A. H. Boerdijk's Super Meccanograph. Pictures and details of this remarkable machine were on the inside back cover of the April 1971 Meccano Magazine. I talked about this machine in my article "Evolution of Meccanographs" in the February 2004 issue of the NZFMM magazine

The Super Meccanograph is driven by four geared motors and generates a continuous and endless sequence of unique drawings, the design of which cannot be predicted in advance. In MP182 Wilbert Swinkels traces the history of the original machine and describes his replica which incorporates many improvements.

The Model Plan includes about four pages of historical background; two and a half pages describing the replica followed by ten pages of VirtualMec diagrams and photos, but minimal explanatory text, a one page parts list and a paper guide diagram. The final two pages are about Wilbert's meeting with Dr Boerdijk.



The Model Plan is accompanied by a CD which is advertised to contain the full set of 3D VirtualMec drawings, high-resolution photographs of the original and the replica, explanation of the precise differences between them, examples of drawn figures, and a Dutch-language translation. Unfortunately for Macintosh computer users the VirtualMec drawings are not accessible. While some of the replica photos are large files, most of the close up shots are quite small files and one cannot zoom in for detail.

There is no doubt that this is a fascinating Meccanograph but the lack of descriptive text creates great difficulties for the builder.

The parts list contains part numbers only with no description. Non-standard parts such as 1k may be either 7" or 10.5" according to the IPL. The 59 photos of the replica on the CD include none from underneath showing how some of the gear trains are arranged. Likewise the VirtualMec diagrams are not explicit regarding gear trains and there is no explanatory text.

The VirtualMec diagrams are extensively labelled with part numbers but unfortunately there are many errors in the numbers. I hope that this Model Plan will be corrected and have some explanatory text added. My recommendation is that potential buyers wait to see if this happens.



Vern Ellis, of Alice Springs, Australia, writes:-

I read with interest your comments on **Copyright and all that C\*\*p.**

I quite often change a model to make it look better or more interesting. But after reading your Editorial, am I doing something that is illegal?

For instance, I have had the plans for the Canadian Special Model 10, La Reale Oared Fighting Ship, for a couple of years and I finally got around to making it. I found it assembled well, with very few problems. My

## What Our Readers Think (and Build).



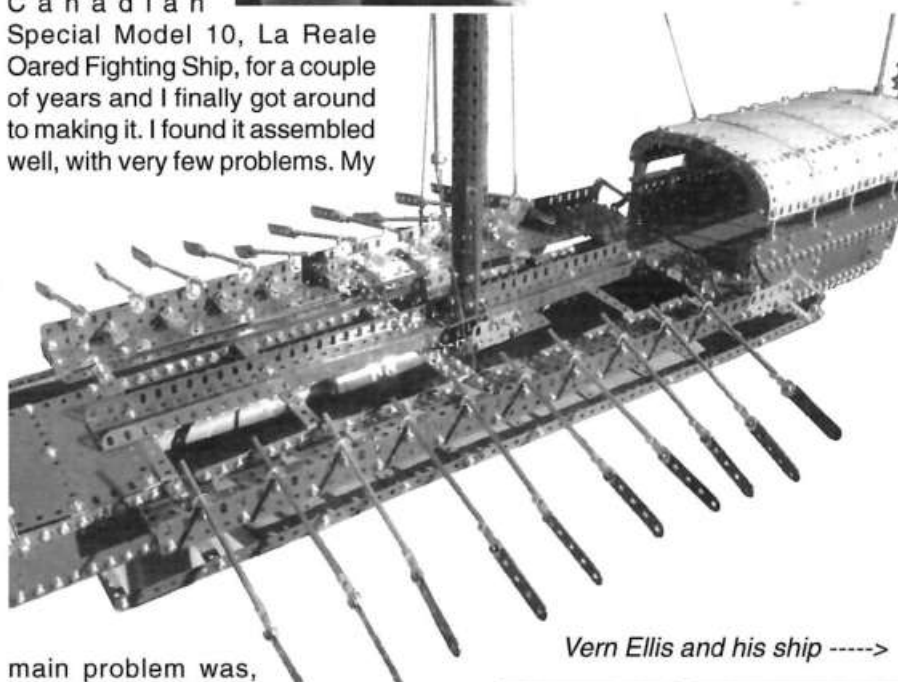
checked and double checked the instructions, but I can not find anything about Copyright. Have I done the right thing by changing the model a bit? I can see no harm in it, as I am a modeller just enjoying his hobby. I have no

intention of printing my own plan, but it does make one think. Are there people out there trying to stop us enjoying

our model building, and if so, where does it stop?

Any way Mr Editor, I have included some shots of the boat without the driving mechanism just in case you are allowed to print them. It is still a very impressive model even as a static display.

**Comment by John Ince:** I have published a number of Model Plans which are copyright - but that means people may not copy the Model Plan. It does not mean that they cannot make their own variations of the model described.

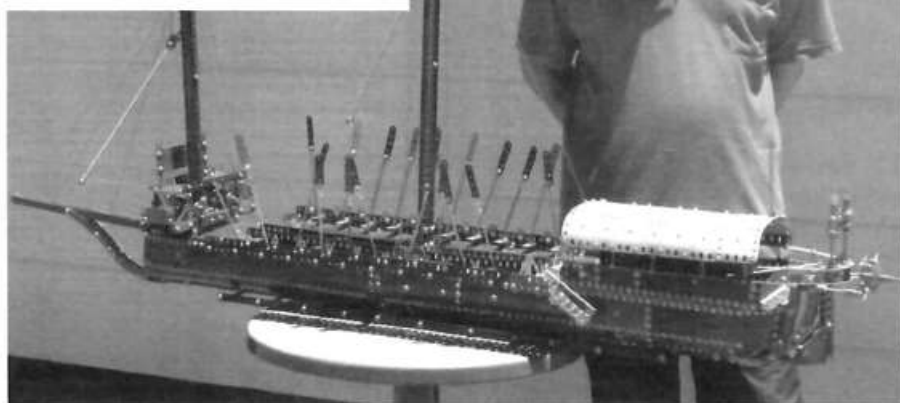


main problem was, and I admit it was probably my fault ( but I did follow the instructions ), was that it was very noisy while running. I oiled and adjusted, but as soon as the oars started to row, the noise came back. Even so, it is a very impressive model to watch in action.

I started to dismantle it, and I wondered what the model would look like without the drive unit in it and the model set up for static display.

Then I remembered your Editorial. I

Vern Ellis and his ship ----->



**Some Oz Bargains ?** From Myers catalogue the Super Construction Set reduced to \$A59.95 from \$99, and the Mechanical Workshop Set to \$A88.95 from \$119.

In Melbourne the VW lookalike Set 4952 is \$A24-95 and the Dune Buggy Set 4951 is the same price.

### The World Of Meccano Magazines:

Jean-Francis Nauroy is in charge of a Meccano press review in each issue of the French C.A.M. magazine. He has been updating their file of world-wide Meccano publications as at now and has comprehensive details of 22 Club and other magazines in his files. Many are well known all over the world such as "C.Q." and "Meccano Newsmag". As well, there are the regional Club magazines such as "TIMS Newsletter"

If anyone would like to contact Jean-Francis for information about any of these magazines, his e-mail address is: [jean-francois.nauroy@wanadoo.fr](mailto:jean-francois.nauroy@wanadoo.fr).

**Winston Churchill Again:** In CBC's film of "The Gathering Storm", a clip shows Churchill speaking in the House of Commons about German aircraft production in the 1930s. He said they use assembly of components "like a jigsaw puzzle or a Meccano game"

(Jim Bobyn, Canada, on Spanner).

**Meccano Magazines In The 1960s:** The 1960s were the time when Meccano Magazine was the premier boys' magazine in the UK, possibly in the world. Regrettably, there wasn't much about Meccano in each issue in those years. Out of most issues of 56 pages there were usually only 5 or 6 devoted to Meccano models.

The rest of the pages in each issue dealt with such "boys" topics as N.Z.'s Inter-Island ferry, "Aramoana"; Eskimos, model and real railways, boat building, Bayko, stamp collecting, electricity, circuses, and Dinky Toys among many other subjects.

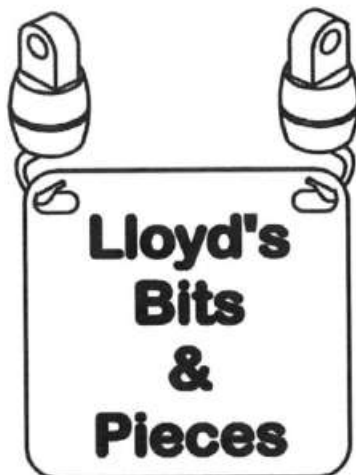
No wonder it was such a successful magazine for boys, but it wasn't much help to Meccano modellers.

**Old Fire Engines:** Gerald Hart in Auckland, N.Z. is seeking plans for an old type fire engine such as a Merrywether. If you can help him, his e-mail is [mariefern@ihug.co.nz](mailto:mariefern@ihug.co.nz).

**Plastic Or Brass Gears ?** Remi Lanne in France writes on Spanner that in general he tries to avoid mixing them, especially a plastic pinion or worm with brass gears. One time he did it he found the pinion almost cut in two. Also he says it is better to avoid the plastic 19t pinion for long running models because of its tendency to break apart, even when stored.

**Stainless Steel Parts:** Back in 2000 there was much discussion on Spanner about stainless steel parts. General opinion was that manufacture of such should be restricted to strips and girders, flat and angle.

Jim Picton in Canada had had experience with S/S and pointed out that when ordering strips or girders you are



charged by the sheet from which they are cut. He had his strups cut in 44in lengths to minimise waste and to get maximum yield from the sheets.

To cut the sheets he used a 6in hacksaw with a very narrow blade and a bench grinder to round the ends - tedious but inexpensive, he says. Details of his operation were in the B.C.M.C. Newsletter, Winter, 1999.

Walter Ashburn in Bendigo, Australia, made S/S angle girders, 18 $\frac{1}{2}$  and 24 $\frac{1}{2}$  lengths. His main cost was re-tooling due to the heavy wear on his cutters.

**Our New Zealand:** Peter Bridge and his wife spent 11 days in 2004 touring our

South Island as a side trip from Australia where their family lived. He later commented thus: "For us here in the UK, an island not greatly different in size to N.Z., and with a population of about 55 million, New Zealand is difficult to comprehend until you see it. And when you realise Auckland has half the N.Z. total of about 4 million you get an impression of how empty the rest of it is. What a wonderful place. Great scenery, few people, even fewer cars. We loved every minute of it."

**One Eiffel Tower:** There was a giant Meccano model of the Eiffel Tower on display at the Science and Technology Museum in Atlanta, Ga., USA. Owing to financial difficulties the Museum has closed so the fate of the Meccano model is not clear.

(Madhav Bhalerao on Spanner).

**The Spirograph:** The "inventor" of the Spirograph in the form it was finally patented was an engineer from Leeds, U.K. called Denys Fisher (1918 - 2002). He started building Meccanograph type machines with his family at Christmas, 1962. He originally intended it to be a draughtsman's tool but a colleague advised him to market it as a toy. His small local company sold the first Spirograph in Leeds in 1965. A feature on BBC TV's "Blue Peter" brought it to national attention and it wasn't long before everyone at our school seemed to have one. The Company expanded into board games and other action toys and was eventually taken over by Hasbro.

(Clive Weston on Spanner)

**Meccano - H K Or France?** Andrew Wells in Auckland said on Spanner in August, "I would have to say that the Hong Kong /China arm of Meccano are vastly better than France in terms of customer support. We do have problems with Meccano sourced from H K, but when alerted to the issue they invariably address it immediately and provide appropriate replacement components without question. Our warranty replacement requests are handled promptly. For any issue directed to Meccano France we are lucky to even get a written response, let alone any action or shipment of replacements

H K don't take two months of holidays over summer, either. One week at the Chinese New Year is the only time one has to even think about whether they might be working."

## MECCANO'S MICRO MODELS

### Why I needed slender fingers

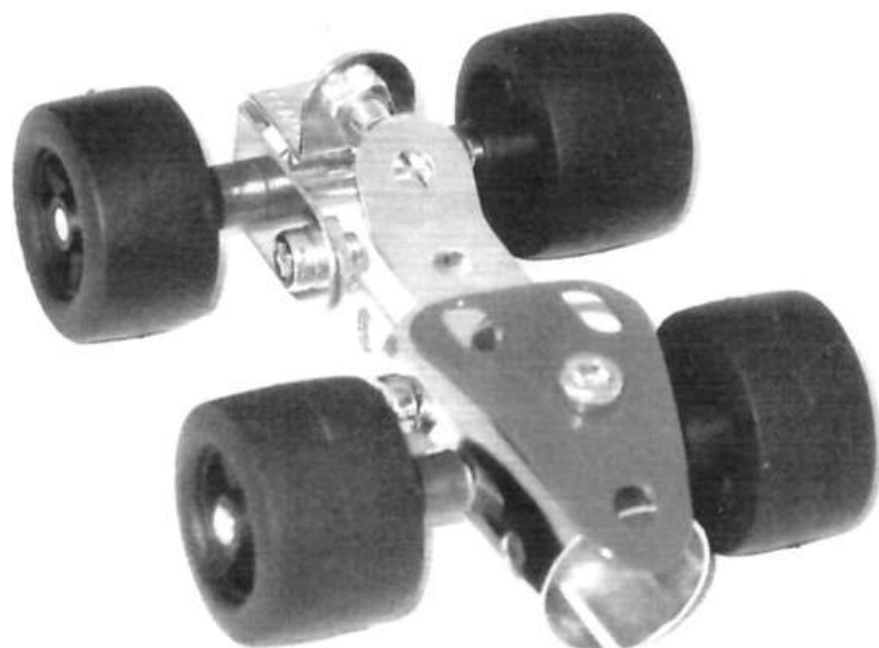
by Lloyd Spackman

I needed them to build the four Meccano Micro Models which are among the latest Meccano France products to reach New Zealand. They are in sets of four and each colourful little box builds one micro model. The boxes are closed with a piece of Sellotape at each end which is a welcome change from the earlier Design Series boxes which had the ends glued down and had to be nearly demolished to be opened.

There is a F1 Racing Car, a Helicopter, a Biplane and an "ordinary" racing car. Each sells for \$NZ11.99 at Toyworld.

Only the helicopter and the F1 car include the new style spanner; the other two have ordinary black spanners. The biplane and the F1 are based on P/N 163, sleeve piece which is the reason I wished I had thinner fingers. However, I managed with the help of various forceps and the new type spanner which can hold a nut in position to place it over the end of the bolt.

The kit numbering is also new for Meccano France. Lettering has been added and the boxes are numbered 1701a to 1701d. Information on the boxes is in 12 languages.



The little instruction leaflets are word-less and easy to follow. They should be no trouble for children from 8 years upward as it says on the boxes.

These little one-model sets are a pleasant addition to the Meccano France range and are worth having for use in introducing youngsters to the delights of building models with Meccano.

## Egmont A & P Association Show

by Alistair Tong

The 125th Annual Egmont A & P Association Show was held on Friday 21st and Saturday 22nd November 2008 at the Burnside Showground in Hawera. The theme for the event was "Back to the Future". It was fine with windy conditions especially on Saturday. Good crowds attended and plenty of comments were noted about the models. As usual the Edna Wills Hall contained the Home Industries Exhibits which included Horticulture/Flowers/Knitting/School Children's sand gardens and paintings/Cooking/Photography and Models.

The models were of both Meccano and Lego design and came from a variety of age groups. The display was organised by MWT members Alistair Tong assisted by John Freer and Tom Pittams demonstrated from a table at the end of the enclosed display area. The Judge for the models was Alistair Tong. Entry fee was 20c for schoolchildren & 50c for adults. Prize money was \$3 for 1st and \$2 for 2nd.

Model classes and prize winners were as follows:

**Class 9000  
Meccano  
static 16 years**

and under

1st Silas McCallum Sports car from Pocket Meccano

2nd Hannah McCallum Car with spoiler French Meccano

**Class 9002  
Model using  
battery pack  
17 years  
and over**

1st Don Blakeborough Meccano Low loader radio controlled truck/trailer with yellow bulldozer

2nd John Freer Meccano half-track truck

**Class 9004 Model made  
from Meccano static**

1st Paul Vodanovitch Meccano bridge in nickel with Hornby Locomotive

2nd John Freer Locomotive in 'black' Meccano

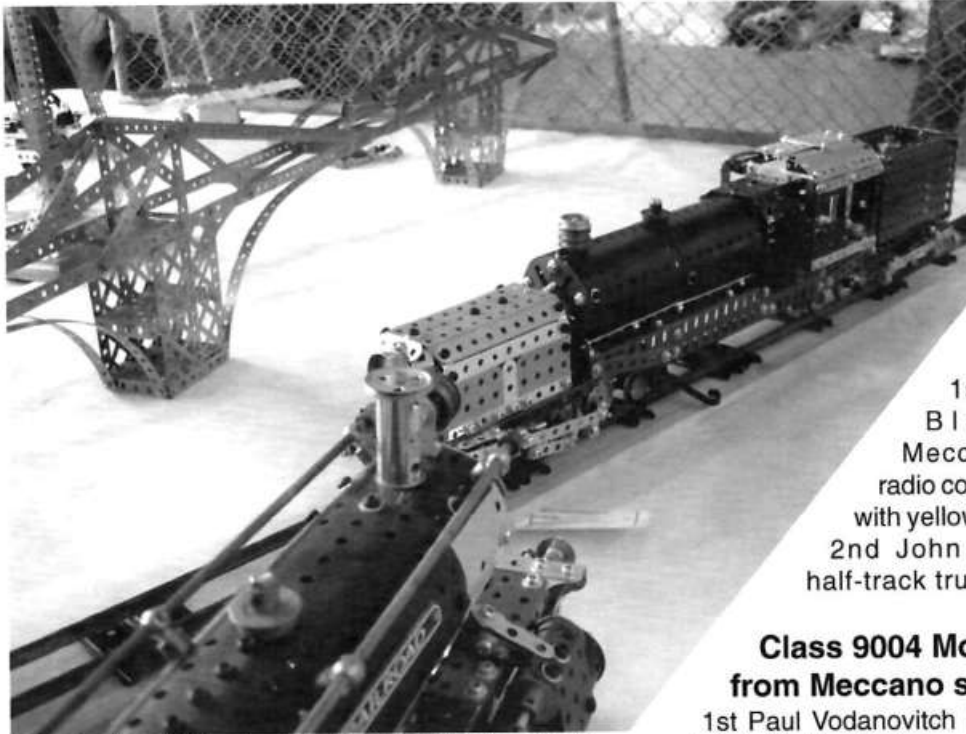
3rd John Freer Stationary Engine in red & green Meccano

Paul Vodanovitch had a Meccano Crane Truck displayed which received a 'special' show award in the form of a rosette and a Quebec bridge model in nickel. Also on display but not entered in competition was a Meccano Traction Engine "Bigger than Texas" from Robin Rye.

From the crowd a couple of comments - The Mayor Ross

Dunlop remarked that each year the models just get better and better. And so they do. Another man claimed that 'real' engineers used Meccano construction to simulate bridge design and work out stress levels. Probably correct.

Tom Pittams always seemed to have a crowd around the demonstration table and enjoyed running his radio controlled cars either on the table or on the floor. He had several models assembled and a lot of interest was evident around the 'Mechanical Workshop Car' working with bare engine parts oscillating realistically.



*Quebec Bridge in nickel by Paul Vodanovitch;  
the locomotives are by John Freer.*



*John Freer & Tom Pittams considering modifications to be made to  
the drive line to the rear axle of the Mechanical Workshop Car.*

## In Memory of Ray Warke

by Lloyd Spackman

Ray Warke, from Devon, England, was well known in the Meccano world and was much admired for his courage and persistence in building good Meccano models in spite of being blind. He was able to "read" text instructions with the aid of a voice synthesiser and voice recognition on his computer.

I was one of the Meccanomen who helped Ray with instructions for a small Meccano model of a jeep. Early in 2004, Ray wrote an e-mail to John Ince which we printed in

our February, 2004, issue together with a photo of Ray's jeep which he scaled up from my text instructions.

In November, Ray's widow, Rachael, put a brief message on Spanner to tell his many Meccano friends that he had passed away after a long battle with cancer. I emailed a personal message to Rachael and in return received the following message from her:- "Thankyou for your message. I remember you well. And that wonderful jeep. Truly, he was a wonderful man And he very much enjoyed his correspondence with you. Thankyou so much, Rachael".

And that message was not just for me but was also for all those who had some connection with Ray.

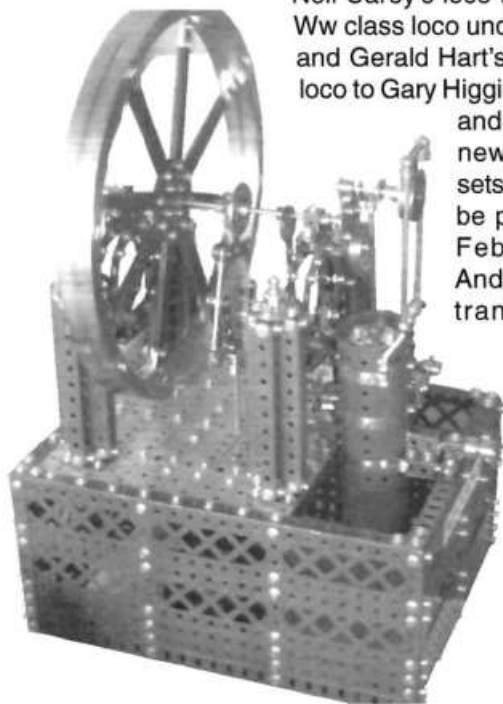
## AMG Meeting Report

by Les Megget

The November 8th meeting was held at the home of David and Elizabeth Wall at Orewa and was attended by 20 members and several wives and partners.

There were a wide variety of models displayed, ranging from Neil Carey's loco frame of a NZR Ww class loco under construction and Gerald Hart's Narrow gauge loco to Gary Higgins mobile crane

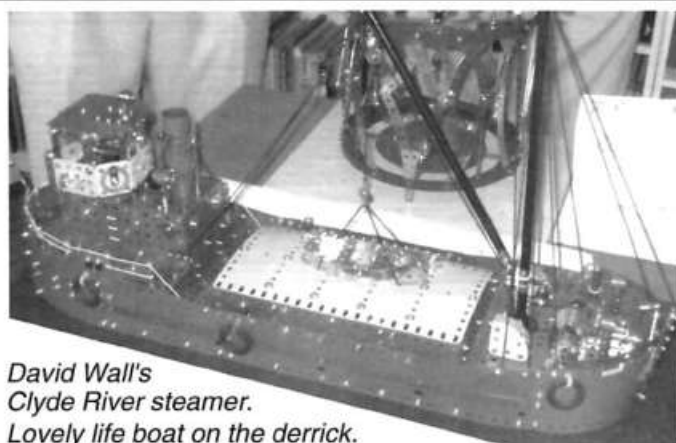
and digger from the newly released IR sets. A full report will be published in the February issue. Andrew Wells had transported his spare parts cabinets across town and was doing a roaring trade all afternoon. I think he went home



*John Denton's Kientz 19th Century single cylinder oscillating engine*

with a considerably lighter load than what he came with! David had a large bookcase full of Meccano Magazines for sale and these were his "double and triple ups", which were more than my whole collection of MMs.

NZFMM President Peter Hancock told us about planning for next year's Model-X show planned for Queens Birthday weekend and a

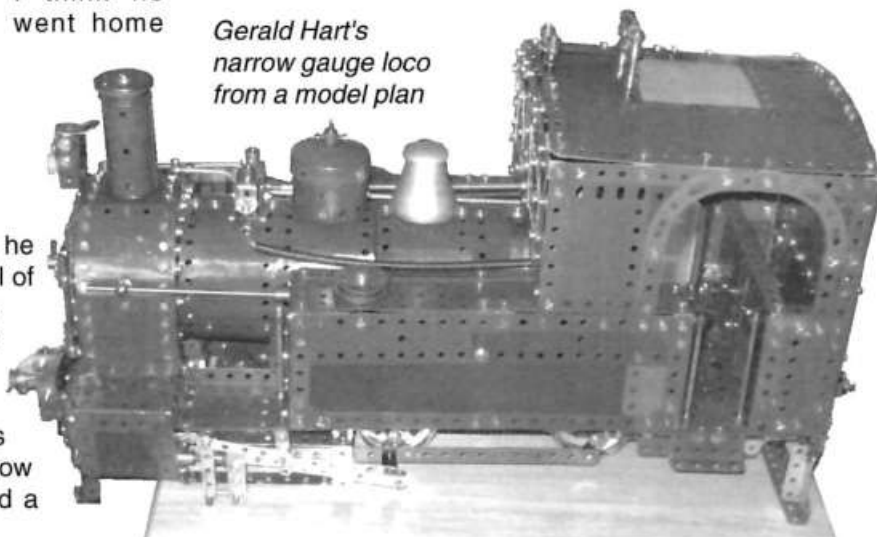


*David Wall's Clyde River steamer. Lovely life boat on the derrick.*

decision was made as to how many tables we required, after marking out the table sizes in David's back yard! Peter also discussed the planning for the 2009 Convention in Christchurch, who intended to go and how we might get our models to the venue.

As per usual the womenfolk had been busy too and a fantastic afternoon tea spread enticed us when we entered the kitchen/dining room area. I fear many of us went home heavier than when we arrived. I don't think David had to survive on cake for the next week or two either.

The next AMG meeting will be on the 14th February at Neil Carey's home.



*Gerald Hart's narrow gauge loco from a model plan*

## MWT Christmas Outing

"Steamboat Willie".

by Lou Nichols

The days of river and lake cruising are still viable tourist attractions and, on Sunday 23 November, 19 MWT members, their wives, guests and girlfriends, the party totalling 34 in all, boarded the PS Waimarie for a lunch-time cruise on the Wanganui river. The weather was perfect, glorious sunshine and a gentle breeze. A very good commentary was supplied on points of interest as we went up the river; appropriate nautical music was played.

Complementary tea and coffee was available throughout our two hour cruise and the lunch of braised steak, new potatoes, small pastries and salad, followed by fruit salad and cake, was enjoyed by all. A special treat for Lou Nichols was that he was allowed to give a couple of blasts on the ship's whistle as a greeting for Mickey Mouse's 80th birthday. Mickey's first cartoon was

After the cruise we proceeded along the quay to where a further heritage attraction for Wanganui is in the final stages of restoration and this, Tramcar No. 12, was part of the system until it closed on 24 September 1950. It is housed in a very handsome tram shed and is looking resplendent



*The paddle steamer, Waimarie - what about building a Meccano model? (photo Bob Prescott)*

in the original red and yellow colour scheme. We received a very good commentary on this heritage project. When part of the original tramway system is reopened, it will be a real drawcard for tourists.

Our three part day finished up at the home of our Club secretary, Graham Hawtree and his wife, Val. They have a very nice home and both are collectors. Val enjoys anything to do with cats and besides Meccano, Graham also enjoys model trains, model earth moving machinery and ham radio. A busy couple indeed. A very nice afternoon tea was served and everyone enjoyed their day and thanks go to Graham for organising this day for us.



*John Freer, Don Blakeborough and Paul Vodanovich enjoying the sunshine on the river. (photo Lou Nichols)*

### Technical details of the PS Waimarie

Waterline Length: 100.2 ft  
 Waterline Breadth: 16 ft  
 Gross Tonnage: 80 tons  
 Register Tonnage: 53 tons  
 Propulsion: Side Paddles

Engines: Two single cylinder, double acting, non-condensing, 9" bore x 24" stroke, 861 Hp with Max rpm 70.  
 Engines built by Yarrow and Co, Poplar, London in 1899.  
 Speed: 10.5 knots  
 Passengers: 150 Crew: 6



*On the left is Lou Nichols' photo of the Tramcar No 12 - up on a steel supporting frame waiting for the wheels and driving motors to be fitted.*

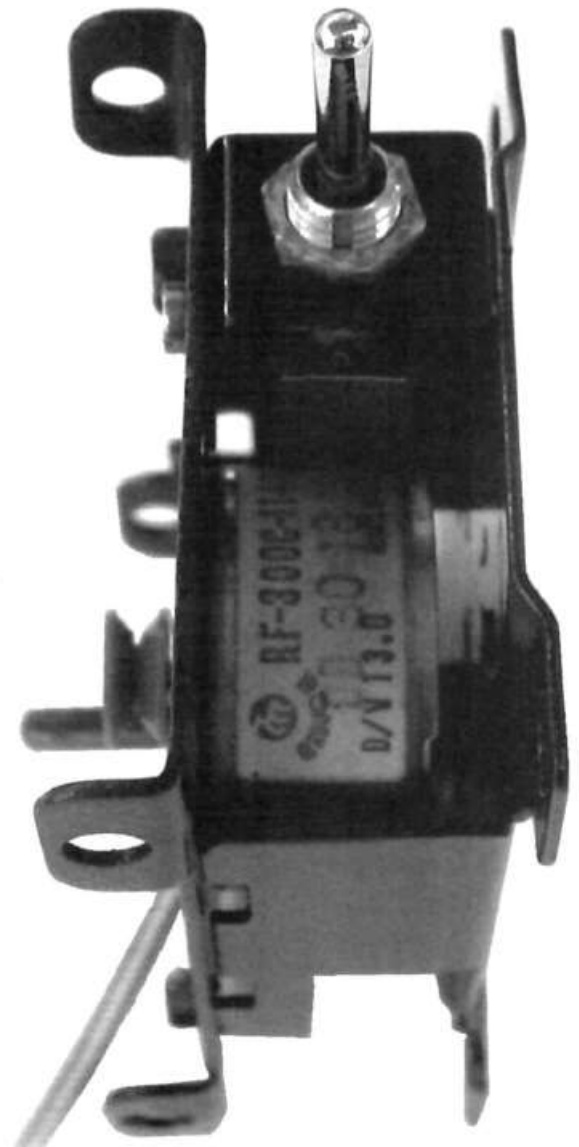
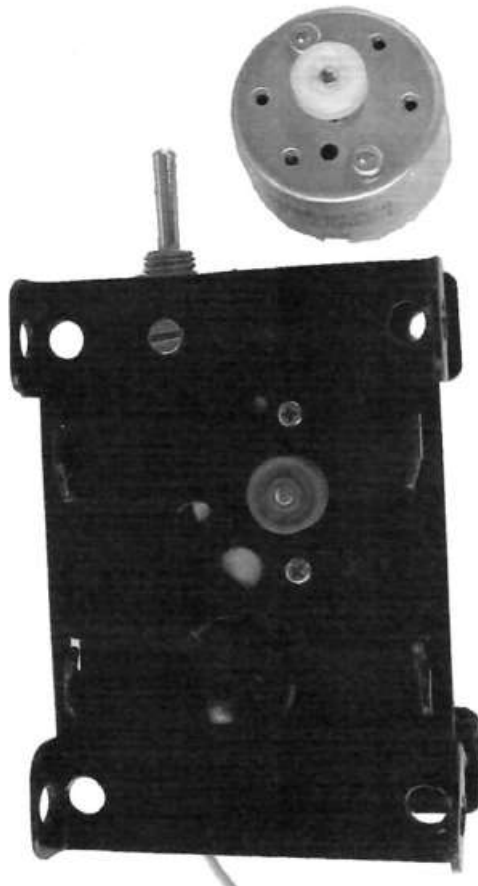


*On the right is Bob Prescott's photo of the Waimarie engine room. The single cylinder can be seen just beside the fireman's head.*

### Meccano Magic Motor

by Bruce Geange

Laying on the workshop bench for some time has been the bent side plates of a Magic motor with the spring shaft and a small electric motor from a CD drive used in a computer. It looked as though this motor would fit inside the side plates of the Magic Motor. A larger hole was filed out where the pulley was for the bearing housing of the electric motor to fit and two mounting screw holes were drilled and the motor was secured to the side plate with the new pulley fitted. A bracket for the single pole switch is fitted where the brake lever was. Wiring was completed and the switch fitted. Assemble the side plates and test.



## New Zealand Club Diary 2008 - 2009

Auckland Meccano Guild.

Contact - David Wall - Ph 09 426 1965.

Meetings at 2 pm on second Saturday every third month.

Next meeting Saturday Feb. 14th, 2009 at Neil Carey's home.

MWT Meccano Club.

Contact - Tom Pittams - Ph 06 345 9099.

Meetings at 2 pm as listed. Wanganui meetings at St. Luke's Church Hall, cnr. Cornfoot and Manuka Streets, Wanganui.

First 2009 meeting Feb. 14th.

Wellington Meccano Club.

Contact - Lou Nichols - Ph 04 297 1515. (after July 12th)

Meetings at 7.30 pm on first Friday every second month at Konini School, Wainuiomata. So next year starts with Friday 6th February 2009.

Christchurch Meccano Club.

Contact - Charles Steadman. Ph 021 378897

Meetings at 7.30 pm on first Friday every month (except January) at St. John's Hall, cnr St. John's Street and Ferry Road, Woolston, Christchurch.

Other Important Dates

**10 - 12 April 2009 – Convention, Christchurch.**

### Additional Meccano Contacts

Hamilton - Don McClelland Ph 07 843 4198.

Hawera – Daryl Anderson Ph 06 278 7666.

Kapiti Coast – Bob Prescott Ph 04 905 2963.

Napier - Trevor Adam Ph 06 843 4837.

Palmerston Nth - Bruce Geange Ph 06 357 0566.

### Internet sites

International Society of Meccanomen (ISM)  
<[www.internationalmeccanomen.org.uk](http://www.internationalmeccanomen.org.uk)>.

Meccano Webring <[www.meccanoweb.com/meccring](http://www.meccanoweb.com/meccring)>.

**Category Indexes** to articles in Meccano related Magazines  
<[www.dalefield.com/nzfmm/constructorq/bneilson.html](http://www.dalefield.com/nzfmm/constructorq/bneilson.html)>

**Articles etc. for the December 2008 issue** of NZFMM Magazine should be sent to Les Megget and John Ince well before **15 November 2008**

**Back Numbers** - NZFMM Magazines from April 2001 are available. Please contact John Ince.

## SUBSCRIPTIONS:

With our February, 2009, issue you will, as usual, receive your personalised subscription reminder forms.

## New Infra Red Sets

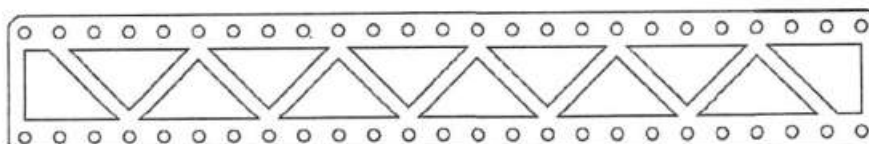
by Rick Vine

I was recently contacted by Jason Curry of Elephanta Marketing (the new, exclusive distributors of Meccano in New Zealand). They wanted me to build the two new Meccano Infra Red Models for a trade fair in Auckland, so I agreed without hesitating. The models arrived three days before they were to be delivered to the fair. Unfortunately my father was hospitalised at the time, but I figured I could still build the smaller of the two in time for the fair, and asked Bob Pentney, fellow spanner and work colleague, to build the larger.

Both models have a few parts we haven't seen in Meccano sets in recent years (screwed rod, brass threaded boss, slotted strips) so that may be reason alone to buy the sets. The screwed rod uses a new plastic part that allows the rod to be screwed in one end and attaches to a triangular rod (or motor) at the other. The orange digger model took around 3 hours to build but I was unhappy with the performance (the motor turns the screwed rod too quickly and jams if you aren't careful to stop before reaching the end of travel - even though there are springs apparently to stop this), so I dismantled it and built the helicopter (from plans in the set). The larger model set (yellow) comes with two motors driven off the one controller. The motors in both sets can be set to one of four frequencies and operated individually from the controller. Unfortunately the range of the infra red control is disappointingly short, about a metre, and of course you have to be in line of sight of the receiver. The plans have full instructions for all of the number of models listed on the box, twelve and eight respectively, and there are a good variety of them. The orange model has the same colour parts as the Tuning Radio cars, and the yellow set is very similar to the French Meccano yellow, though some parts have black diagonal stripes. The paint quality appears good and didn't flake off when bending parts, and they both contain the new spanner with one end box the other standard open end. I don't know exactly when the sets will be available to the public in NZ but imagine it's before Christmas.

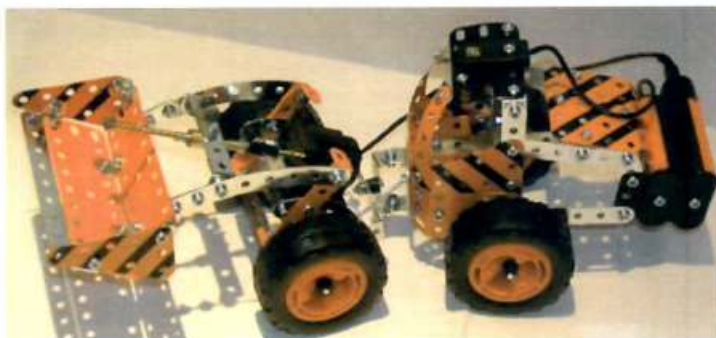
I delivered both models plus some other models I have (Ferris Wheel, Spitfire, Red Arrows Hawk) to the ASB Showgrounds. Sunil Dahya (Managing Director) and Kim Piper (Sales Manager) were present and most happy with the sets. I heard later the show went well. And for our efforts we got to keep the sets (minus boxes which will be used for display purposes).

(Pictures on page 24)





Above are the Infra Red boxed sets described on the previous page.



Here are the models built up by Rick Vine



Finally here are a couple of photos of the show room with lots of Meccano sets waiting for an enthusiastic buyer.