



Bob Prescott built this Meccanoville Miniature Railway. Turn to page 2 for a detailed description of how to build one for yourself.

NZ Federation of Meccano Modellers Magazine

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

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A Good Time Was Had By All

The "Exhibition" at Easter in Christchurch has been and gone and now we have to wait two long years till the next Convention, to be held in the central-lower North Island. I thought the Easter show was excellent with a high standard of modelling apparent and I enjoyed catching up with Meccano people from around the country, as well as the overseas exhibitors. The large public crowds seemed to enjoy it too and I've had excellent feedback from some of my ex-colleagues at Canterbury University who were persuaded to pay the Arts Centre a visit over Easter. In two cases I know that new Meccano sets were purchased for their offspring, so hopefully the bug will be passed on (and I don't mean swine flu). I will be surprised if the Christchurch Meccano Club don't get several new members in the near future. This issue includes several articles about the Exhibition and upcoming issues will cover some of the prize-winning models in more detail.

My words of doom and gloom in the February Editorial have produced several articles from members, which are either in this issue or will be in future issues. My sincere thanks to those people who put pen to paper. John Denton sent me his Meccano life story and I hope to make this a regular feature, if I can persuade some of you to tell us about your life with the holey stuff.

We were in Christchurch the weekend before Easter for the annual Earthquake Engineering Conference where I was honoured with a Life Membership of the Society. One of my colleagues ran through my professional and community life and a certain picture of me standing on a chair trying to fix the telescopic boom on my 2005 Convention truck crane appeared for all to see (see the cover of June 2005 issue). The background in this shot was our new, (then) unpainted, gibbed family room, where the crane was built over a two year period. Several people mentioned that fact after the dinner and asked how could Shirley let me mess up the room with Meccano! I told them that we have our priorities sorted out and making models definitely comes ahead of painting interior extensions.

Well I was inspired to greater things by the exhibition, as I hope others were. I can feel another large crane coming on. Clear the decks Shirley, a large model needs lots of room, but I think I might hide the camera first!

NZFMM Unpaid Subscriptions

Please turn to page 23 for an important notice for those who have not yet paid their subscription.

Contents

Meccanoville Miniature Railway.....	3 - 4
The MOTAT Meccano Differential Analyser.....	5
Gunnar Berger - A Man Influenced By Meccano.....	6 - 7
Your Next Model?.....	8
Factory of Dreams Review.....	9
Visitors to 2009 Christchurch Exhibition.....	9
Impressions of the 2009 Meccano Exhibition.....	10 - 13
2009 Easter Meccano Exhibition.....	14 & 24
Annual Accounts 2008 - 2009.....	15
General Meeting Report.....	15 - 16
Meet NZFMM Members: John S. Denton.....	16
Lloyd's Bits and Pieces.....	17
Wanganui Hobbies of Wheels Show.....	18
Club Reports.....	18 - 21
John Hansen's eBay Column.....	22
Club Diary	23
Buy, Sell, Auction, & Exchange.....	23



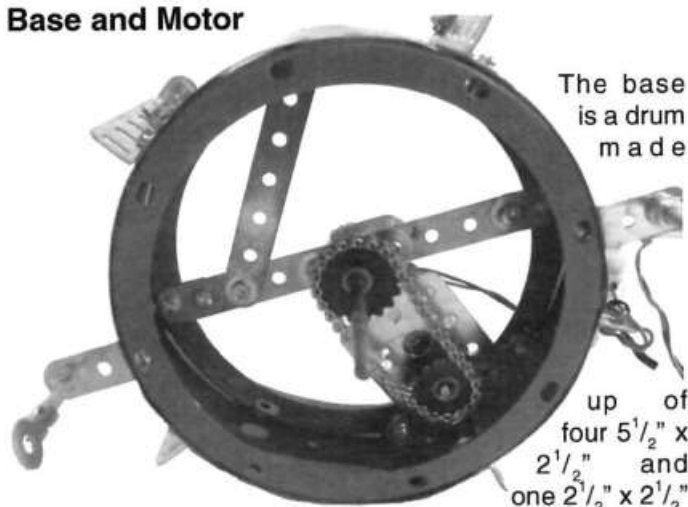
Meccanoville Miniature Railway

by Bob Prescott

Thumbing through some Meccano literature recently, I came across the late Roger Le Rolland's Miniature Railway. It's a great little model and it deserves a new "write up" so other Meccanomen can enjoy it.

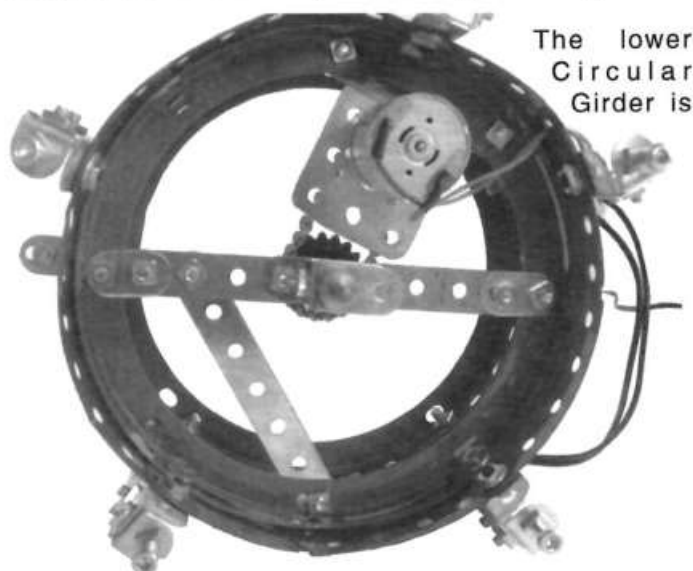
Although it only uses a small number of parts, you will need two P/N146c Circular Girders and one P/N146a Circular Plate. I can't think of another way to build my version of this model although a slightly larger version can be assembled using two 7 1/2" Circular Strips with Angle Brackets to hold the sides and a 6" Circular Plate on which to build the village.

Base and Motor



Flexible Plates wrapped around the two Circular Girders. In the original model, plastic plates were used but if you have a good plate bending machine you can use normal flexible plates. The bend is gentle and plates should be able to be straightened easily when the model is dismantled.

The upper Circular Girder has its inward pointing flange aligned with the top holes of the plates and the lower one is positioned in the second row of holes from the bottom of the plates, with its inward pointed flange to the top.

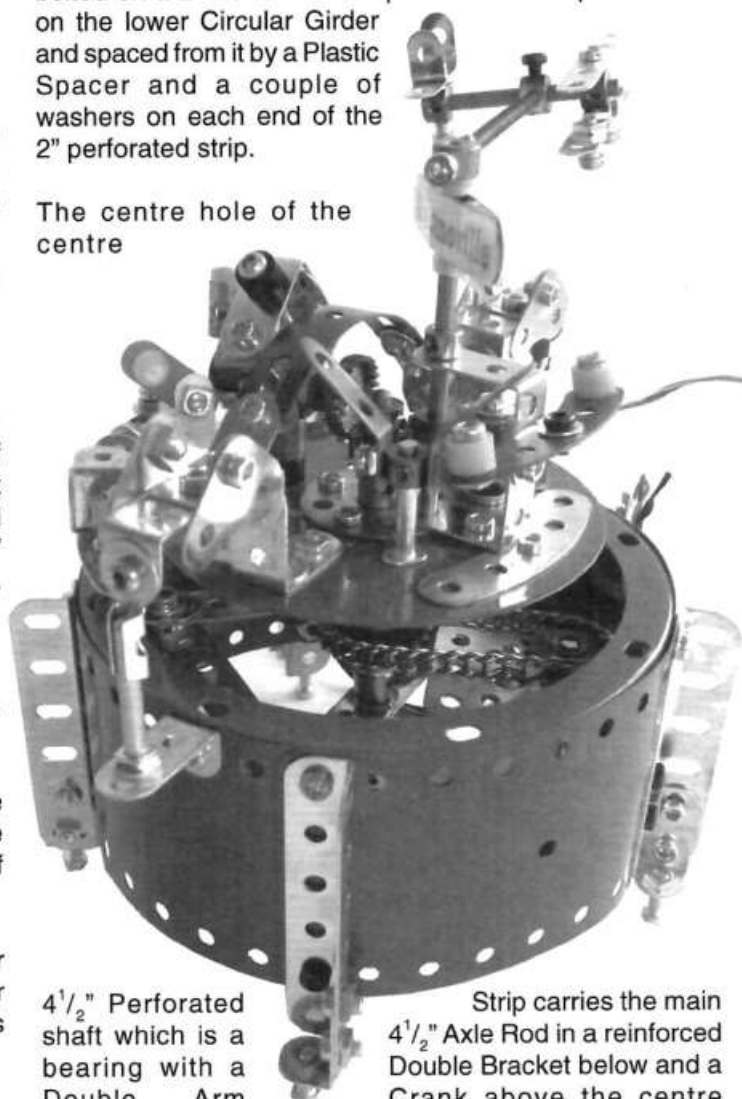


spanned diametrically by a 4 1/2" Perforated Strip and a pair of Fishplates on both ends and these are sandwiched and adjusted above and below the flange of the Circular Girder. The base is further stiffened with a 3 1/2" Perforated Strip placed between the 4 1/2" Perforated Strip and the Circular Girder.

Five 3" Angle Girders are positioned outside the drum to act as legs. If longer legs are required 1" x 1/2" Angle Brackets are connected to the Angle Girders with appropriate long bolts to determine the height of the drum.

The motor fitting is dependent on the motor used. I decided to use a 37rpm Meccparts Motor which reduces the need to gear down to achieve about 25-30rpm. The Motor is bolted on a 2" Perforated Strip which itself is positioned on the lower Circular Girder and spaced from it by a Plastic Spacer and a couple of washers on each end of the 2" perforated strip.

The centre hole of the centre



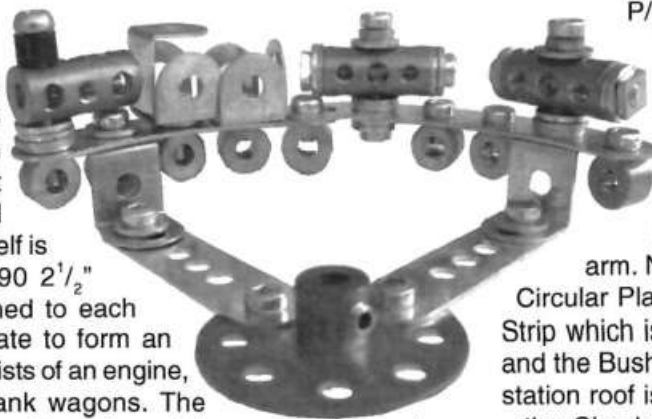
4 1/2" Perforated strip which is a bearing with a Double Arm Perforated Strip. Sprocket Wheel driving a 1" Sprocket Wheel on the main shaft. I know that using sprocket chain horizontally is not recommended but in this instance with the two shafts only 2" apart it works well.

Strip carries the main 4 1/2" Axle Rod in a reinforced Double Bracket below and a Crank above the centre. The motor shaft carries a 3/4" Sprocket Wheel driving a 1" Sprocket Wheel on the main shaft. I know that using sprocket chain horizontally is not recommended but in this instance with the two shafts only 2" apart it works well.

Two 1" x 1/2" Angle Brackets are connected horizontally to the upper Circular Girder opposite each other and they in turn carry long Threaded Pins and a Rod and Strip Connector to later support the village.

Train Rotor

Two 2" Perforated Strips are bolted to an 8 hole Bush Wheel at right angles by their end holes. The train itself is built on two P/N90 2 1/2" Curved Strips joined to each other by a Fishplate to form an arc. The train consists of an engine, tender and two tank wagons. The wheels are Collars, the boiler of the engine and the tanks are Couplings and the engine cab is made using a pair of Double Brackets. Washers and long bolts complete the train. This assembly is connected to the ends of the 2" Perforated Strips extending from the Bush Wheel by Reversed Angle Brackets which places them above the level of the Bush Wheel.

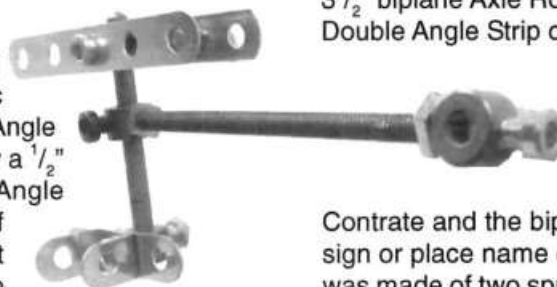


Meccanoville Village

The village is built on the 4" Circular Plate which carries a central Bush Wheel on its upper face through which the main shaft passes, and here you can use your imagination to include what you like. You will need the two footbridges arrangement to support the Circular Plate and they cross the railway at diametrically opposite points.

Each footbridge consists of a 1" Angle Bracket secured to the Circular Plate "L" inwards with its outer hole carrying a Corner Angle Bracket. The bridge on each side is a 1 1/2" Double Angle Strip with a Double Bracket attached to its centre hole, flange up, and this in turn carries two 1" Corner Brackets, which is attached to the top upright of the 1" Angle Bracket. The spare lugs of the Corner Angle Bracket carry an Obtuse Angle Bracket and a Formed Slotted Strip is suspended between them with a Fishplate on each end to form an arch.

The windmill is a Threaded Coupling standing on a Plastic Spacer base. The roof is a 1" x 1" Angle Bracket extended on each end by a 1/2" Angle Bracket and an Obtuse Angle Bracket. The front of the roof structure is a 1" Corner Bracket attached with a single Angle Bracket. The roof is attached using a 3/4" Bolt through the lower plain bore of the Coupling. The upper plain bore of the Coupling acts as the journal for the mill shaft which is a 1" Axle Rod carrying a small Contrate at the rear and a P/N213b 3-way Rod Connector at the front with coloured



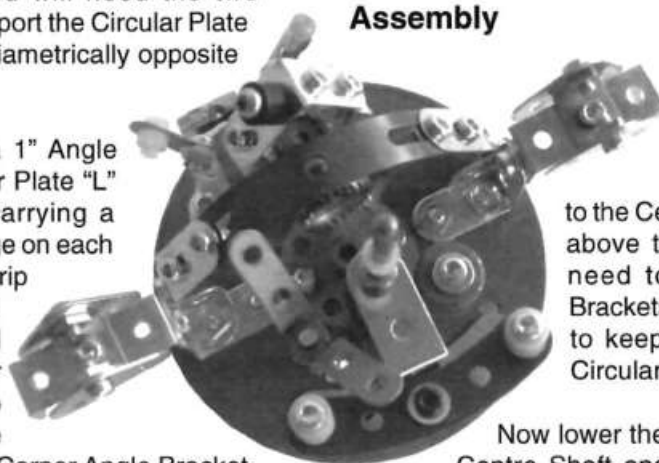
P/N184g Antenna Holders in the ends of the 'blades'. P/N 212 Rod and Strip Connectors can be used here, secured to a Threaded Pin.

The signal standing beside the windmill is made from a 1" x 1/2" Narrow Angle Bracket mounted on a Plastic Spacer with a 1" Narrow Strip and an Antenna Holder forming the signal arm. Now we mount the biplane shaft bearer on the Circular Plate. This is a P/N46a 1 1/2" x 1" Double Angle Strip which is secured so that the end hole of the flange and the Bush Wheel hole are aligned for the bearing. The station roof is attached to the P/N46a and the platform to the Circular Plate, both being 2 1/2" Curved Strips. The tree branches are narrow 1" x 1/2" Obtuse Angle Brackets, secured to a long Threaded Pin with a collar. The water tower is a Chimney Adaptor and a long bolt. There is more room to add other items in the village if you wish to do so.

Biplane Attachment

A 3" Screwed Rod is attached to a Collar at both ends. One end is for mounting on the turning shaft. A 2" Axle Rod is fed through the Collar at the other end and the biplane is built using narrow strips and collars as can be seen in the diagram. Bolts are used for the wheels.

Assembly



Arrange the centre shaft so that about 2" of the Axle Rod shows above the top Circular Girder. Lower the train rotor on to the Centre Shaft until the train sits just above the Circular Girder. You might need to adjust the Reverse Angle Brackets at the outer end of the 2" Strips to keep just inside the flange of the Circular Girder.

Now lower the Village Circular Plate over the Centre Shaft and connect the outer lug of the footbridge Double Angle Strips to the Rod and Strip Connectors on each side with a Nut and Bolt. Lower the 3 1/2" biplane Axle Rod through the end hole of the P/N46a Double Angle Strip carrying a 19 tooth Pinion and through the Bush Wheel hole. This Axle Rod is supported at the top with a Collar. Next lower a 19 tooth Pinion over the Centre Shaft and adjust to drive both the windmill 'blades'

Contrate and the biplane shaft. If you want an advertising sign or place name on the biplane shaft do so now - mine was made of two spring steel perforated strips - and retain with two clear Mini Plastic Spacers. Finally add the biplane on the top and adjust for everything to run smoothly.

In my view this is a cracking little model so go on, use your imagination and build your version - enjoy.

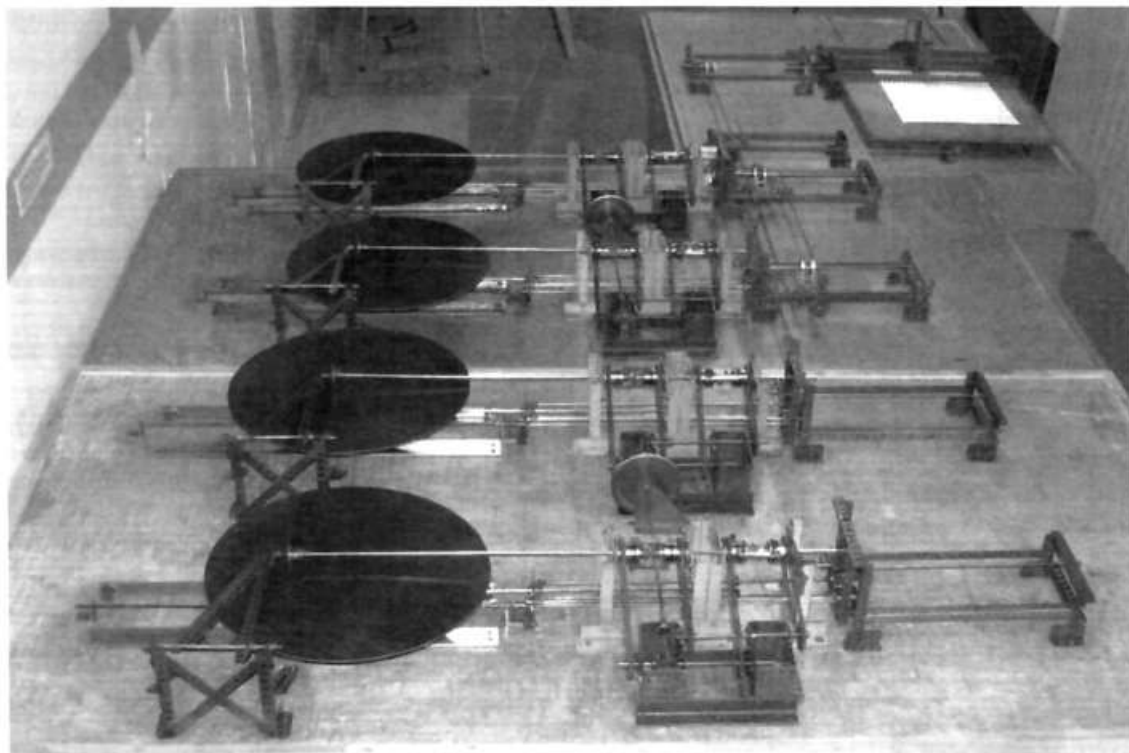
The MOTAT Meccano Differential Analyser Now Operational

by William Irwin

On Thursday 27th November 2008 it all came together. We finally got the historic Differential Analyser at MOTAT hooked up to the plotter and got it to plot a curve on paper. It was amazing to see this machine built in Cambridge in 1935 come to life again. It was last running in demonstration mode at MOTAT (Museum of Transport and Technology, Auckland, New Zealand) in the mid to late 1970s. You can see some still pictures and a short video on line at http://amg.nzmeccano.com/differential_analyser.html.

Thanks to both John Denton and Gary Higgins of the Auckland Meccano Guild for assisting me in the restoration. Two of the three original mains motors are positioned underneath and drive the machine through the baseboard by belt. The recently restored 3rd and 4th Integrators (non-

operational) are placed next to the first two integrators in the photos to show the entire machine. The 5th integrator built and added in 1937 is not yet restored and the 2nd

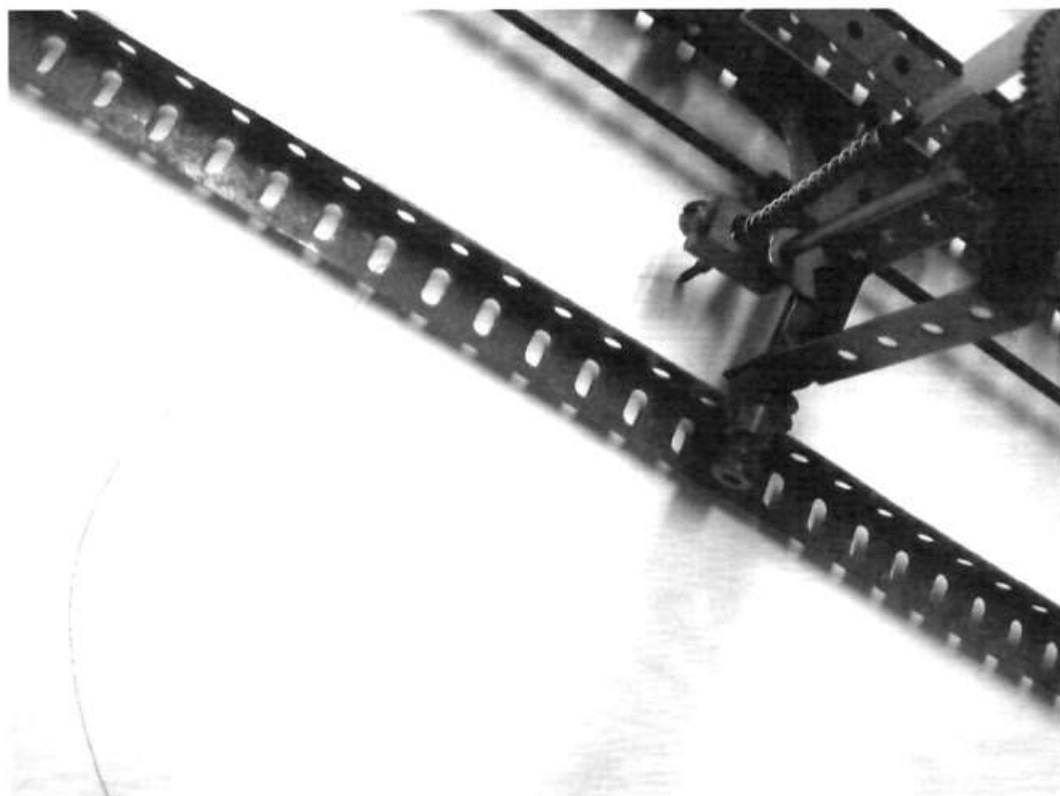


plotting table has been lost. Nevertheless this is the most complete Meccano based Differential Analyser from this period still existing in the world and the only one now operational!

The Differential Analyser is a special type of Mechanical Analogue Computer capable of solving differential equations by integration. It consists of several wheel and disc Integrators connected together by suitable shafting to suit the problem to be solved. The answers are produced graphically as output to a plotting table.

The Differential Analyser has been declared "artefact of the month" for April and will be on public display again at MOTAT from April 2009.

(Photos by Gary Higgins)



Gunnar Berger - A Man Influenced By Meccano

by Chris Rickard

Inventive toy maker Gunnar Berger came to Eltham on a whim over whey. In 1950, the Swede was looking for a fresh start after falling out with management at MilkCentral dairy company in Stockholm. The trigger came the following year, via a Swedish newspaper article about whey being dumped into streams around Eltham in New Zealand. Knowing lactose (milk sugar) could be extracted from whey, the industrial chemist and engineer felt an urge to visit the small central Taranaki town with the idea of setting up a lactose factory there.



"After having worked hard for the MilkCentral for 17 years I was very aware of the drastic step out in the unknown I was taking," he says in his unpublished autobiography.

Sweet plan for Eltham

Within weeks, Gunnar and a financier, Danish millionaire Borup Jorgensen, were standing in the Eltham Pipe Band Hall talking to 300 farmers about the factory proposal.

"I held my first speech in English in that hall, and voting for and against my proposal followed," says Gunnar, who learnt the language by reading second-hand novels written in English. The farmers, Eltham Dairy Factory shareholders, voted in favour of the lactose plan. By August, the Berger family had left for New Zealand. At Gunnar's side were his wife, Margit Leijonflycht (called Flychten), daughter Lena (8) and son Svren (7). Moving from Solna, on the outskirts of Stockholm, to a tiny town in a small country on the other side of the world, was a massive change and one Flychten found difficult to come to terms with.

Swedes help put in plant

Pipe-smoking, bespectacled Gunnar was one of those leading the way in the mid-1900s. To set up the lactose operation, he called on the expertise of fellow Swedes Birger Nordmark (a chemist) and Erik Persson (a mechanical engineer), plus Eltham men, Les McGonagle and Gordon Commerer. They converted an unused part of the Eltham Dairy Factory and installed stainless steel equipment. *"Long hours were necessary - at least 12 hours (and) often 16 hours a day for me and the mechanic,"* Gunnar writes.

In November 1952, the first shipment of 10,000 kilograms of lactose was exported to India. Whey was transported to the factory in one of the first tankers used in New Zealand's

dairy industry. In the following years, the annual sugar milk production was about 500,000kg. The same year India bought the first lot of lactose, Kerstin Berger was born.

Baby, basement and boredom

Two years later, Peter Berger came into the world - and a new home. *"During 1954 we built our dream house just as we wanted it, from our own drawings,"* Gunnar writes. It is believed that it was the first Eltham home with a basement. Three years later, Gunnar resigned from the factory because his plan for a second evaporator was vetoed. In 1958, the operation was bought and closed down by the Kapuni Lactose Plant.

Back when they were boys...

By then Gunnar had turned to toys. After leaving school at 14, he worked in an engineering workshop where he learnt to use a metal lathe and other equipment. He also had toy-making experience, stemming from a passion he shared with his elder brother, Sven. Gunnar and Sven loved Meccano and even cast their own pieces to expand their construction sets.

"It became an addiction and in the end when I had been working for two years and Sven was studying, Kellin (our mother) made us give it away," Gunnar writes.

During his last months at the lactose factory, the inventive Swede began shaping wood to make his own Meccano-type construction sets. With his sets came words of wisdom: *"Please be careful not to spoil your children's feelings of achievement and pride by too many suggestions of improvements to their simple models, which, to them, are perfect."*

Taranaki's own taste of Texas

Gunnar dreamed up, designed and made a whole range of toys, including a covered wagon on which he wrote the word "Texas". Which is how the name "Texas Toys" came about. The business began in the basement of the Glentworth Street home, and to afford the fit-out, Gunnar and Flychten cancelled their Swedish retirement insurance and received £2000. With that, they bought tools and machinery to make the toys, and spent £400 on a 1939 Chevrolet.

Their two oldest children left school to work in the toy factory, a move Gunnar regretted later in life. Both Lena and Sven sacrificed their education in order to help get our venture going. Texas Toys soon outgrew the confines of the basement, the teenagers continuing their schooling by correspondence. For Sven, especially, this was difficult. But traditional education is not everything and Sven is now a well-known wood turner in Christchurch, who spends New Zealand winters in the USA doing workshops and lecturing in wood turning.

Gunnar's amazing mind.

Gunnar was also a whiz with wood - and a man with never-ending ideas. Not only did the Swede construct toys, he invented the tools to make the educational playthings. Many believe that Gunnar was a genius, he was a very intense fellow. He built a seven-spindle multiple drill unit. It was a precision machine for boring the holes in his Texas Toys. For the drill shafts of the machine, he used Volkswagen axles. The Texas Toys factory began in the basement of the Berger home on Collingwood Street, the small business tapping into educational needs, and by 1961 was flying along.

Tragedy in hotel room

That same year, Lena was ready for a career change, with a position secured at a Wellington laboratory.

While all appeared to be going well for the Bergers, underlying health problems were unsettling the family. From a young age, Kerstin began to display psychological problems and was difficult at home and school. And Flychten was struggling. As well as living in a foreign land, she was still suffering the long-term effects of tuberculosis, an illness she had battled and beaten in Sweden. However, severe infection can result in permanent organ damage and also lead to depression.

The family decided Flychten would benefit from a week's holiday with a Swedish friend in Kaitia before Lena went away. *"...she enjoyed the stay and wrote positive letters from there,"* Gunnar says. On the way home, Flychten had an over-night stay in Auckland. She died in her hotel room from an overdose of pills. *"It was a catastrophe for us all,"* Gunnar writes. Lena had to cancel her Wellington job and Kerstin went to live at Kimberley Hospital & Training School. For Peter, losing his mother at seven was very difficult," Lena says, in an interview.

Educating Kiwi kids

In his memoirs, Gunnar does not dwell on his Flychten's death. *"Life had to go on, with long hours of work and planning,"* he writes.

Then moves on to talk about 'Texas Toys' success in selling to schools, beginning with Eltham Primary with products included wooden puzzles, fraction trays, number sets, one-ten-hundred sets, abacus and line rulers for the bright-coloured Cuisenaire rods, used by many Kiwi kids to learn maths.

"A big mail-order trade in teaching aids resulted and we gradually had contact with hundreds of New Zealand schools, leading to exports of teaching aids to Australia and later Sweden," Gunnar writes.

In 1962, the Bergers bought the old power pole factory in Bridge St. They renovated the run-down building and made it the new home of Texas Toys. The following year, Lena got a job in the laboratory at a New Plymouth chemical

factory, then in 1966, she went back to Sweden, where she got a job with the State Health Laboratory analysing fish for mercury pollution.

Tourists and Exports

In 1967, she came home and again decided to join the family business. Four years later, the factory was on the move again, its last premises were in the old Mountain Road Dairy Factory, bought for \$3750.

The new site was spacious, with room for a shop. *"The shop on the main road made a big difference to our economy,"* Gunnar says. *"Lots of tourists passed daily."* The factory shop provided more space and brought an increase in sales, while overseas visitors came to Texas Toys, the company also made a splash offshore. The Berger brainteasers were sold in Sweden and Australia, but the big orders came from the United States.

After a visit to the US in 1972 for meetings with a Los Angeles importer, a contract was signed for a minimum of 800 construction sets a year. Texas Toys geared up for the operation, employing staff and working full tilt. After 700 sets had been delivered, the importer wrote and asked to delay the next shipment because he had too many sets in stock.

Decisive actions

Gunnar, a decisive man, wasn't happy about being mucked around. *"With eight people on the payroll and wholly concentrated on the construction set production, it was unthinkable for me to delay shipments."* After a hasty meeting, he decided to drop the contract and cut down staff, keeping enough to fulfil the New Zealand demand.

Lena took over the business in 1973, with Roger Loveridge as her right-hand man. *"The next ten years under Lena's management was a pleasant, efficient and relatively profitable period,"* Gunnar writes. But at the end of that decade, the business began to wind down.

"Postage charges went up, petrol prices went up and consequently our sales started to slide and then the Rubic Cube arrived," he says.

Texas Toys closed in September 1983. The end of a remarkable career that was in part started by the creative joys of Meccano.

The Genius still active

In 1993, at the age of 81, Gunnar made himself a wood lathe specifically to turn spheres. His first creation was a table lamp in the shape of a big round ball. *"The fascination for me of cutting out a perfect sphere from a rough material still remains,"* he says.

Gunnar Berger, born 1912, the man whose educational toys were enjoyed by many people, died on 24 November 2000, aged 88.

Your Next Model?

by John Ince

Chris Morton thought that the Super Tipper Truck featured in the December 2008 issue of the PayloaderNZ magazine would be a good subject for a Meccano model. I have talked to Michael Henstock, Editor of that magazine, and he is quite happy that we republish the story. In fact it came from a web site probably <http://www.gizmag.com/the-electric-super-tipper-truck/8801/>. although if you search for "Super Tipper Truck" on Google, you will get several sites.

The futuristic design of the Super Tipper Truck looks more like a giant pack animal than a conventional dump truck. This is no accident. Designer Haishan Deng used the movement of big creatures in nature to create a dump truck that is more manoeuvrable.

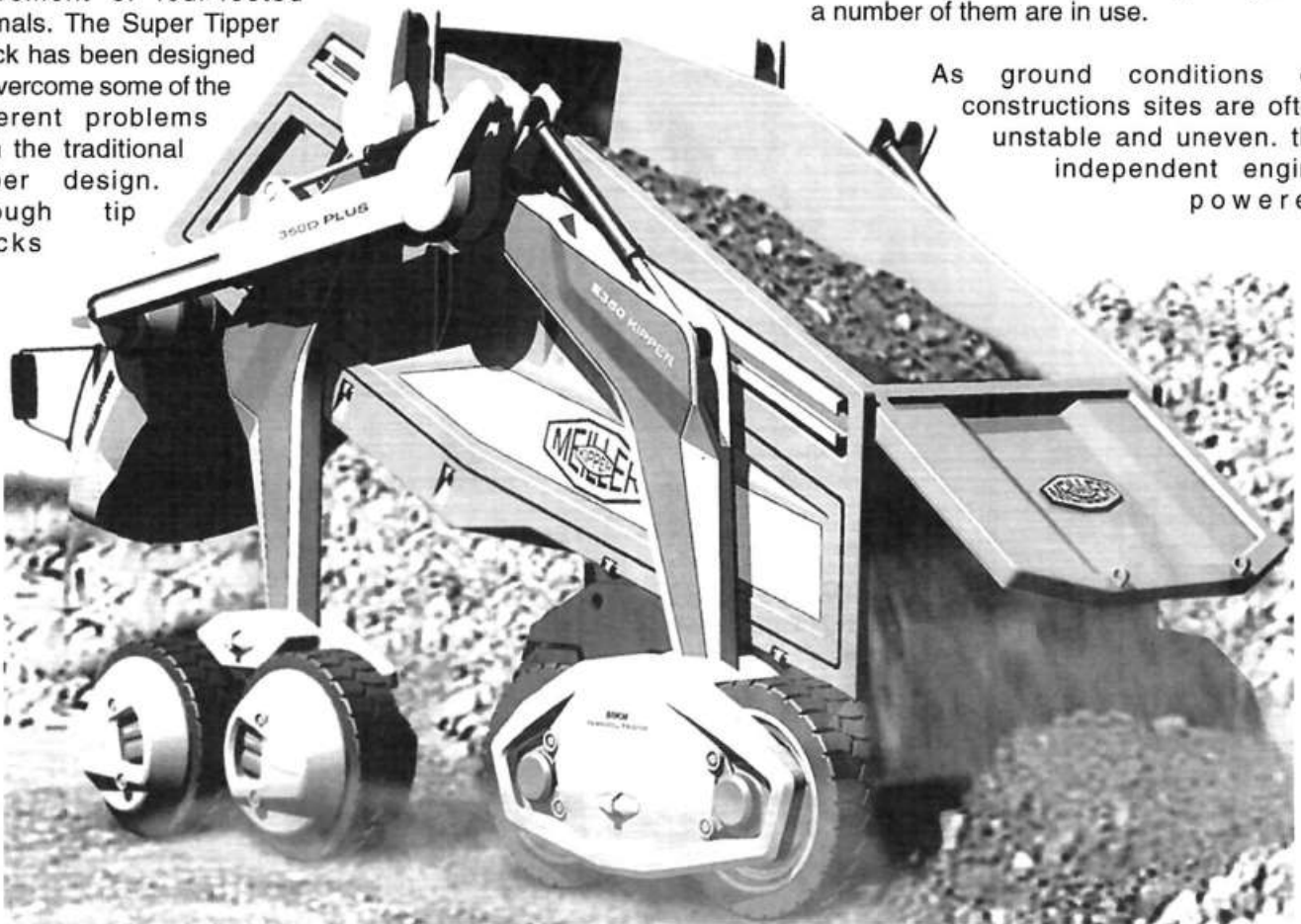
Haishan Deng's concept is inspired by the structure and movement of four-footed animals. The Super Tipper Truck has been designed to overcome some of the inherent problems with the traditional tipper design. Though tip trucks

cockpit will always be a problem. So I searched nature to find some inspiration. I finally drew inspiration from the body of quadruped animals. In this concept, the base pan of the truck was removed, with the tipper as a central main connection for every part of the truck.

"The suspension arms are connected to the main tipper on rails, to allow parts to slide past each other. The wheels are attached to independent engines, which allow them to move in different directions. The hydraulic system attached to each arm moves the arms to enable the main tipper to rotate and be positioned at different angles. The cockpit is also independent and can be lifted up or down just like the head of an animal, so the truck can unload at the front. The ability to unload at the front makes it easier for drivers to navigate and position the truck more accurately, also making the process safer.

The flexibility of unloading makes the whole process fast and simple; and makes the management of trucks at construction sites - far more efficient especially when a number of them are in use.

As ground conditions on construction sites are often unstable and uneven, the independent engine powered



have got bigger and stronger, they're largely still based on a design we all first encountered in the sand pit as children. With electric motors in all wheels and a complete rethink of the fundamentals, Haishan's design unloads four different ways, and does everything more efficiently.

"It took me a long time to figure out a structure to do this function," said Deng. "Normally the tipper is fixed on the base pan of the trucks. If the tipper needs to unload in four directions the structure will be very complicated and the

suspension arms allow it to navigate and unload over tough terrains effortlessly. The Super Tipper Truck can also unload on an incline surface, which is impossible to do with traditional trucks. Another benefit of the moving cockpit is that the truck can load materials such as sand and mud by itself, scooping up the load into the tipper while being driven into the material.

So, get building and see who will be the first to model this fascinating machine.

Factory of Dreams Review

by Lou Nichols

The *Factory of Dreams* by Kenneth D Brown was published by Crucible Books in 2007; the paperback edition costs £14.95. This book of 230 pages is a history of Meccano Ltd.

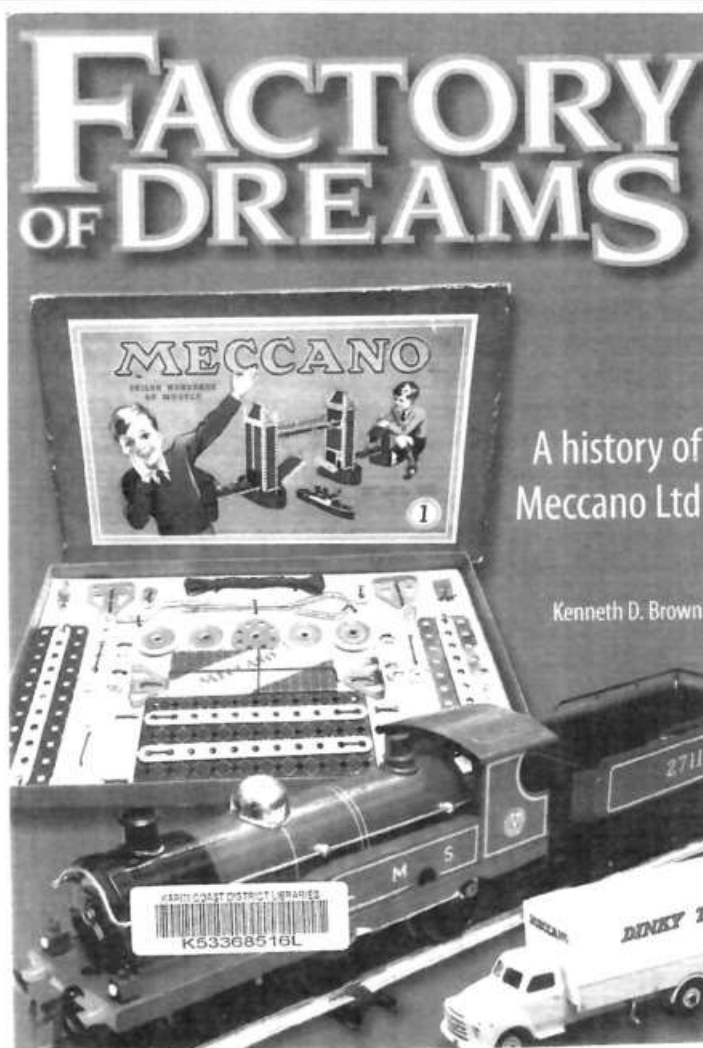
The first chapter of the book deals with the development of commercial toy manufacturing in Britain following on to "Mechanics Made Easy" and the early history of Meccano Ltd from 1901 to 1918. The story then proceeds on to the final chapter which is entitled "Post Mortem".

If you enjoy history and would like to know more about our hobby, the people who shaped Meccano, the personalities, the politics, the rise and fall of a great company and what is happening, and has happened, to the three most important products, Meccano, Hornby trains and Dinky toys, then this book will give you the facts.

All three products, - Meccano, Hornby and Dinky - became eponymous terms among the population as a whole, an achievement which probably no other company anywhere in the world has ever matched.

So, we as Meccano enthusiasts are part of a worldwide brotherhood which continues to be supported by our Clubs and Exhibitions. Enthusiasts somewhere in the world at every hour of every day are constructing Meccano models, thinking about Meccano and conversing about Meccano, so *Factory of Dreams* is written with us in mind. Enjoy this book; it is a worthwhile read.

Copies of the book are no longer available from MW Mailorder but John Ince is willing to import copies from the publisher in the UK. The paperback edition (hard cover



edition out of print) costs £14.95 plus postage etc of about £5.00. This converts to about \$52.00. If the order is for more than five copies then the publisher will discount the purchase price. If you are interested then please email John.

Visitors to 2009 Christchurch Exhibition

by Anne Prescott

A first time visitor to a New Zealand Meccano Convention was renowned Meccanoman Jim Gamble with his wife Diane from Nottingham, England. Aged 65 he is a retired University Chemistry Laboratory Manager and is a member of the ISM and the North Midlands Meccano Guild. He received his first Meccano Set (No.5) for Christmas when he was 7. His most valuable Meccano item is a very rare "Raylo" game made in 1914 which is described as being extremely exasperating to play. Jim likes modelling ships and has an extensive historical collection of Hornby and Dinky toys, Meccano sets,



magazines, catalogues and manuals. With Bert Love he produced Volume 6 of the Hornby Companion Series of Books called "The Meccano System and the Special Purpose Meccano Sets". It was a great pleasure to meet this most knowledgeable Meccano expert.

We were very pleased to welcome back to New Zealand the following visitors from overseas:- Tim and Lisa Robinson from USA, John and Pamela Pond from England, Malcolm and June Booker from Sydney, Graham and Mary Jost from Melbourne and Ross and Laurel Smith from Perth.

Impressions of the 2009 Meccano Exhibition

by Les Megget

My first impression on entering the Great Hall at the Arts Centre in Christchurch on Good Friday morning was the huge Otago Dock Container Crane being assembled in the centre of the stage. There was much feverish activity around the crane by its builder **Ross Mitchell** (Oamaru) and his assistant and this seemed to carry on for most of the weekend, talk about development on site. I never saw the crane being operated fully during the Exhibition but I believe it was fully operable by show's end.

Next to the dock crane was **Selwyn Bluett's** immaculate telescopic crane. Selwyn as usual had used new red and green *Exacto* parts and his detailing of structure and mechanisms were peerless. The crane luffs by using car tailgate telescopic dampers with cable control rather than the more normal threaded rods.

The Hall was a hive of activity as exhibitors set up their models and searched for power points to get them operating. Being an old heritage building it doesn't have a great number of hot points and long extension cords were in order. The organisers were checking all transformers and issuing stickers for their power cables, the first time I had witnessed this procedure. I don't know if any older power sources were rejected. As a result there were very few E20R and E15R motors churning away at this show. I did miss the smell of ozone on the air.

The lighting in the Great Hall isn't the greatest and much of the useful light was sunlight coming through the huge feature leadlight window to the north. I hoped the sun would keep shining over the weekend and it sure did. The gearbox in my Mercedes truck seized up on the first public day (reverse idler jamming on the over-plated Nikko pivot bolt). When I tried to find the problem the next morning before the crowd arrived I found it too dark to see clearly into the guts of the gearbox, so the truck was set to run in neutral from then on!

Table space was at a premium and my Mercer Raceabout ended up across the other side of the hall because of lack of space on either side of me (**Bob Prescott and Neil Pluck**). Talking of Bob reminds me that my lasting mental impression will be the songs of *Mamma Mia* bouncing around in my head. At least Bob's model band played all the film's song tracks, not just a couple. A month later I've still got those tunes on the brain.

Everything was going together well by mid-afternoon but there was a large empty space in the NW corner where **Simon Moody** was expected. Simon was delayed on his way south and his huge gantry crane was still being set up the next morning when the walk-about was under way.

I was impressed with the variety of models displayed from more than 50 exhibitors. There were too many models to

describe but I took over 300 photos over the weekend with hardly a model repeated.

Saturday morning again dawned clear and calm. Everyone was assembled in time for **Charles Steadman** to start videoing the walk about. The descriptions of the larger models tended to be too long (mine included) and we ran out of time for every exhibitor to get his word in before the doors opened to the public at 11am. I'm told there was an expectant crowd queuing up outside well before opening time and once the doors opened it was all on. The crowd was 3 or 4 deep most of the next 2 days as far as I could see, and slipping away for a cup of coffee or lunch became problematical. Obviously the TV and media advertising had done the trick and there was a far bigger public attendance than I had witnessed at SkegEx last year. Shirley was on the door much of the Saturday and they ran out of Peoples Choice forms and the amount of money they had to handle was almost an embarrassment (where to store it, their pockets were not large enough). I was particularly pleased to see the number of families with young children present. Bob's ball roller got a real hammering and the kids enjoyed chasing the errant balls across the floor. The idea of having some of the models being touchable (viz. public friendly) worked well and my Mercer had been given a good work out by the end, as it needed quite a lot of tightening and readjustment of gear and handbrake levers and the steering was rather too sloppy. I'm glad I decided not to have the transmission running because there could have been some minced up little fingers with the gearbox being so accessible.

By closure on Saturday (5pm) I think most people were rather tied and thirsty but there was no rest as we tripped upstairs for the lectures from the 2 invited speakers. At least we could sit down, even though those old wooden lecture theatre seats would have kept most students awake through the duller of lectures. **Jim Gamble's** talk was far from dull as he showed some of his Meccano life history, the background in writing the *Meccano bible* (Vol. 6 "*The Meccano System*") with **Bert Love** and photos of much of his huge collection. Did I see 5 or 6 GRBs on display in 1 slide? Jim used to build dealer display models for Meccano at Binns Road and his slide of over a dozen identical traction engines lined up together brought a gasp from the assembled Meccanophiles. Jim's impressive display at the Exhibition included lots of rare Meccano advertising pages as well as original drawings of parts and mechanisms used in the MM.

Next up was **Tim Robinson** from California, who briefly described his Differential Analysers and his latest analytical engine modelled on the designs of Charles Babbage, including a short video clip. Tim had brought only the programmable sequencer part of the engine to the Exhibition. No one could fail to be impressed with Tim's Meccano modelling. It is a level of magnitude above the rest of us and I'm somewhat surprised that his model didn't win the Exhibitor's prize but you do really need a PhD in maths to get to grips with what the models are doing and I certainly need to do more research to understand his latest model. Thanks Tim for coming over again.

We then disbanded briefly across the courtyard to the restaurant where dinner was to be served. What happened to the AGM that **Peter Hancock** was all primed up to chair? In the excitement it had been forgotten and instead was held in the restaurant before dinner, but at least we had a glass of champagne to quench out dry throats, brought on by the amount of talking we had done that day. The significant AGM announcement was the awarding of a Life Membership to **Bruce Neilson**, the announcement being carried with acclamation by those assembled.

The dinner was a slap up, sit down affair, which we enjoyed very much and what a nice change from the usual get-up-and-down buffet format. The Exhibitor's trophy winners were announced (Supreme Award to Selwyn Bluett) and the crowd dispersed quickly after coffee to head for their beds, after a very full day. It wasn't all finished at our motel though as Shirley spent a couple of hours counting the people's choice forms

before hitting the sack. I did offer to help but claims of a conflict of interest or some such could have been forthcoming.

Sunday's weather was again perfect. In fact it was a pity to be stuck inside all day but we were all having fun, I think. The public entered at 10am, again in their droves. By closure at 5pm my poor flat feet were past it and personally I was glad that it was all over. The outside enclosure (in a marquee) was very busy with children making up their own masterpieces from mainly plastic Meccano. My Steelbro sidelifter crane was exhibiting a bit of wear and tear by midday. One of the tri-sided axles at the support for the rear up-and-down crane was grinding its way out of the double-plated bearing resulting in me having to take 2 links out of the sprocket chain drive during the 2 days! As a result the cranes were not keen about lifting the container from the table (without jumping sprocket chain links) and I spent the afternoon manually lifting the container back onto the trailer and only letting the cranes lower it. I estimate that the container went up and down 50 times on the Sunday alone. No wonder it was a little tired by the end of the show. Everything else held together well on the model and the little piles of brass filings under the trailer weren't too bad and there were only a couple of nuts and bolts which fell off on the long trip to Christchurch (1000 km)!

At 4pm the crowd had thinned somewhat allowing Charles and Sue to draw the raffles and lucky old Selwyn won both the 2nd and 3rd prizes. He did confide to me that he had spent quite a lot on raffle tickets because he was so appreciative of the organisers transporting his crane and other models to and from Hawera in the van, for nothing. He also said he owned no boxed sets so his 2 prizes would remain strung. I fear another collector is born.

Other prizes were also announced but I found it hard to

hear some of them. The important one though was the People's Choice award (Bruce Baxter Memorial Trophy), won this year by **Graham Jost** (Melbourne) for his braiding machine. He did wonder if he had influenced the voting youngsters by giving away many a sample of the machine's output. We could never suggest such a thing of an Aussie could we? A richly deserved award I say. In fact the organisers decided not to count all the votes handed in on the Sunday because the result from Shirley's Saturday counting was obvious. The Best New Exhibitor award went to **Roman Johnston** with his Chair-o-plane model. The



final vote checking for the Club trophy had not been completed so that result (MWT) was not announced till later. The club result was close, I believe, and I may have to build 3 models for the Convention in 2011 (2 not being enough in Chch).

The furthest travelled exhibitor was **John Pond** (Cornwall, UK) who

showed several small models, including a vintage Märklin Metall crane. John & Pam have been in NZ for several months staying with family in Auckland and this was their third visit to a NZ Convention. John is particularly interested in farm equipment (being a retired farmer) and I saw him in deep conversation with Selwyn, whose hay-bailer (2007 Convention) John wishes to replicate after his return home.

At 5pm everyone started packing their models up for the trip home and within about half an hour the Hall was cleared. A great Exhibition all round and my thanks and congratulations go to Charles and his small team of CMC members.

Models which particularly caught my eye and some of whose photos are shown in this issue were:

John Freer's Half-track RC controlled truck,
John Stark's 5 clocks, all showing the same time!
Neil Pluck's bulldozer (the late Eric Taylor's masterpiece) and his tracked excavator,
Laurie Webb & Bryan Jones' railway track tamping machine, which we hope to see completed and working in 2011,
Jason Mairs F1 Racing Car,
Robin Rye's huge cargo ship (Set 10?) which greeted visitors outside the main door,
Bob Prescott's continuous ball roller,
David Wall's Rotating Pendulum Clock and a wide variety of other models,
Roger Keey's frame beam engine,
John Hamlyn's International F180 truck and trailer unit,
Roman Johnston Best New Exhibitor, Chair-o-plane.

(Les Megget's photographs of the models on display are on pages 11 and 12)



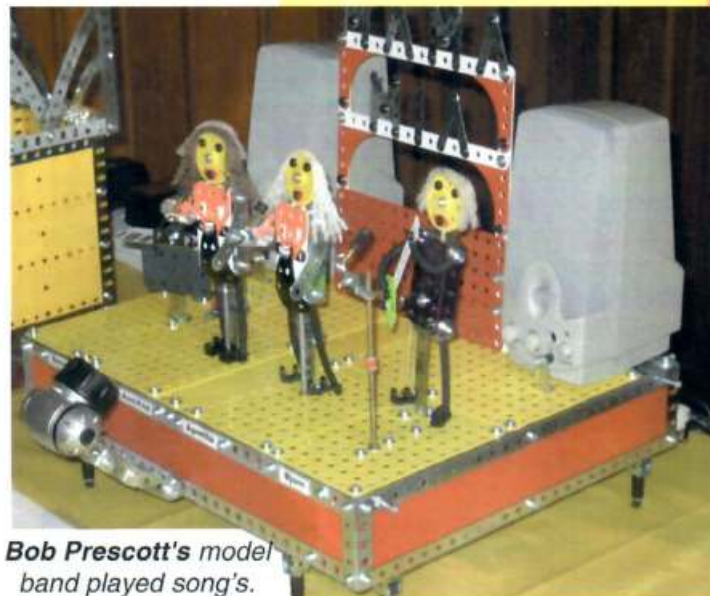
Selwyn Bluett's
immaculate telescopic
crane



Otago Dock Container Crane being set up by **Ross Mitchell**
assisted by Roman Johnston



John Stark's five clocks, all showing the same time.



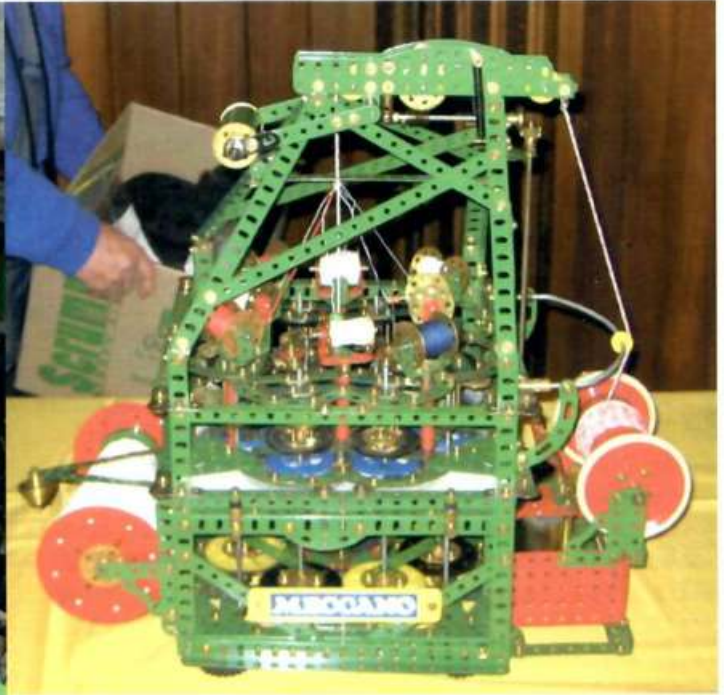
Bob Prescott's model
band played song's.



Simon Moody with his huge gantry crane



Tim Robinson with his programmable >> mechanical sequencer.



Graham Jost's braiding machine.

Pictures at the Exhibition
photographed
by Les
Megget.



Jim Gamble gave an illustrated talk about Meccano history. >>>



Neil Pluck's bulldozer (the late Eric Taylor's masterpiece)



Charles Steadman's Blocksetting Crane.



Roger Keey's frame beam engine.

2009 Easter Meccano Exhibition

by Gary Higgins

The Christchurch Meccano Exhibition (Convention) 2009 was held in the Christchurch Arts Centre located centrally in the city. The exhibition itself was held in the Great Hall, which was an impressive sight empty but even more so when filled to overflowing with Meccano models and packed to capacity with crowds of people.

The set up day was Good Friday with many exhibitors arriving early and having the day set aside to chat and exchange ideas on model building/collecting etc. with their fellows. On Saturday morning a walk around was done of their displays with the exhibitors giving a small demonstration of their models after which the doors were opened to the public. Crowds were at the Arts Centre over the Easter period, many being drawn by the pre-show advertising put out by the Christchurch Club. This was one of the major reasons many came. The Arts Centre also has a regular weekend market with stalls catering from items for sale to various foods and this no doubt attracted many who then went on to see the Meccano display.

The Christchurch Club ran a raffle consisting of a No. 9 oak boxed set of late 1940s vintage as first prize with 1950s cardboard boxed No 8 and No 7 second and third. 1st prize was won by Neil Pluck of the Christchurch Club and second and third by **Selwyn Bluett** (lucky boy).

There were a vast display of models present from all eras of Meccano modelling from nickel through to those currently on sale. There was also a nice display of historical material set up by Mike Howse and a nice running Hornby train display along with its Dinky Toys' companion. So there were things to cater for all tastes and to bring a sense of nostalgia to many of the older visitors, most of whom would have had Meccano sets in their youth. A great deal of interest was shown in some of the newer models and Graeme O'Neill had made up a display of many of the newer models available.

A shop in the Hall was run by the Christchurch Club, after asking for outside shops to attend and getting no offers. It looked busy from day one with many of the customers being the convention attendees sneaking in for a quick fix while their partners were occupied elsewhere.

The main prizes, voted on by the Exhibitors, were:

1. The NZ Senior Trophy went to **Selwyn Bluett** of the MWT Club with his Telescopic Crane, which was most impressive and finished in immaculate red and green Meccano. It worked well and Selwyn was able to raise the boom high up into the ceiling area of the hall with no problems.
2. The second prize went to **Les Megget**, Auckland Guild, with his Mercedes truck and Steelbro Sidelifter trailer. The mechanism worked well simulating a container pick up and drop using the system that was invented in New Zealand. Obviously a crowd pleaser.
3. The third prize went to **Graham Jost** of the Melbourne Meccano Club and he had brought his third braiding

machine with him. This looked to be a rather complicated device consisting of a number of spools revolving around a central cord creating a braided pattern in many colours. His display drew a large crowd and was fascinating to watch. How he didn't get pinged for overweight baggage remains a mystery although it did have a carrying handle on top, cabin baggage perhaps?

There were other prizes awarded for public voting but I don't have details of those apart from the prize that went to **Joffre Marshall** for the most interactive display for children, with its windmills, generators, roundabouts and lights. I'm sure that no child could resist the display.

Other overseas visitors were:

John Pond from Cornwall, UK who had brought with him a spaceship and sail cart made with the 1982 sets and making use of the fabric plates. As John said "something that you can roll up and stow easily in your suit case is what is needed". John also brought a Märklin tow truck.

Our two guest speakers also hailed from overseas. **Jim Gamble** had brought a display of mock up display cards from the Binns Road era, a number of original blueprints for Meccano parts, many of which were never proceeded with and some original artwork from instruction models; all most impressive.

Tim Robinson had flown in from California and provided an interesting display of what he has been building currently which is a programmable mechanical sequencer based on the work of Charles Babbage. It was fascinating to watch and its operation was almost indecipherable for us mere mortals.

The largest model on display was undoubtedly the giant model of the Otago Port container crane built by **Ross Mitchell**. This occupied most of the stage area of the display and worked very well. It stood over six feet high at the centre.

The sheer variety of models made people aware of the versatility of Meccano and how long it has been around. Many were unaware that it could still be purchased and that new sets were still being made. I am sure that we won over a number of converts over the two days and would hope that the Christchurch Club will be inundated with new members as a result. Another good idea was a children's tent set up outside the display where the younger "engineers" could try their skills at putting together models.

I found the three days most enjoyable and made the most of the Christchurch Club's hospitality. The venue, although a little cramped, was in a most suitable location for this type of venue being able to draw the crowds in from around the Arts Centre.

We look forward to the next convention in 2011, to be held somewhere in the Manawatu, Wanganui or Taranaki area.

(Gary's photographs of the exhibition are on page 24)

Report of the Business transacted at the biennial General Meeting of the NZFMM held on Saturday evening, April 11th, 2009.

by Peter Hancock, President NZFMM.

The meeting was held in "Annie's Wine Bar" which was conveniently located next to the Great Hall.

The NZFMM President welcomed the large gathering and asked those in attendance to pass a special vote of thanks to Charles and the Christchurch team for managing and hosting the event.

Apologies and good wishes were received from Doug Harris, John Hansen, Lloyd Spackman, Bruce Geange, George Ovenden and Don Blakeborough. It was brought to the attention of the meeting that congratulations were in order for Don Blakeborough on his upcoming wedding.

The meeting shared a quite moment while they thought about Bruce Neilson, Alison Geange and Don Wilson who could not be in attendance due to health reasons.

Les Megget made a brief report regarding the recent changes to the magazine and made a plea for greater participation from all in providing copy for future editions. Les's verbal report was received.

The financial accounts relating to the production of the Magazine were tabled and moved for acceptance by the meeting by the President and seconded by David Wall. The motion was carried.

Life membership of the NZFMM for Bruce Neilson: The president reported on the discussions that had been held with the Chairs/Presidents of the New Zealand clubs relating to honouring Bruce for his long term involvement in the federation and editorship over a number of years of the Federation Magazine. The President put the motion that Bruce be honoured with a 'Life Membership'. The motion was accepted unanimously. The President then asked the MWT President, John Freer to accept the Life Membership certificate on behalf of Bruce who had not been able to attend the event due to health reasons. Peter Hancock would deliver the framed certificate to Bruce on his way back to Auckland.

Golden Spanner Award: The North Island clubs have agreed to support the nomination of Bruce Neilson for this prestigious international award. The meeting endorsed this

N.Z. FEDERATION OF MECCANO MODELLERS Income and Expenses - April 2008 to March 2009.

2007/8		2008/9	
3086	Cash Book Balance	March 1, 2008	2923.13
	INCOME		
3703	Subscriptions, N.Z.	3777.00	
2473	Subscriptions, Overseas	2372.15	
180	Subscriptions in Advance	32.00	
69	Cas.Sales & Back Copies	88.84	
74	Donations	70.51	
-	Donation, Wgton M.C.	400.00	
6499			6740.50
		9663.63	
	EXPENSES		
4650	Printing 6 issues	4599.80	
68	Printing Back Copies	70.42	
1763	Postage, 6 issues	1978.49	
19	Postage, Back Copies	15.00	
18	Printing Member List, etc.	39.60	
62	Plastic Wraps	100.00	
49	Envelopes	9.99	
30	Labels (Bulk Buy)	56.98	
2	Bank Charges	3.00	
=	Convention Regn. Forms	24.98	
6661			6898.26
	Cash Book Balance	March 1, 2009	2765.37

Bank Reconciliation

Cash Book Balance, March 1, 2009	2765.37
Plus Unpresented cheques 1	836.10
2	360.00
Bank Balance March 11, 2009	3961.47

Mailing List March 1, 2009

New Zealand	123
Australia	37
Rest of World	27
	187

proposal. It had been planned that the application would be forwarded to the judging panel for inclusion in this year's nominations. However, it has been necessary to defer the application until next year - 2010 - as we are still preparing the necessary application and nomination data.

Venue for the next NZFMM Convention due to be staged during Easter 2011: This event will be hosted by the MWT Meccano Club at a venue to be advised in the near future.

Special mid term 'Get Together': It was agreed by a show of hands that the President should arrange for an event to be held similar in format to that held in New Plymouth during 2008, i.e. a model challenge, get together and group dinner. Watch out for further details in the August edition of the Magazine. The location agreed to is New Plymouth.



Peter Hancock in his role as adjudicator.

Meet NZFMM Members: John S. Denton (Auckland Meccano Guild)

Our illustrious editor's plea for more copy for the NZFMM Magazine brought back memories of when I was co-editor of a club magazine. We faced exactly those same dilemmas - so here goes - *My Story*.

Back in the 30s, one of a family of six children and money somewhat scarce, I was lucky one Xmas to be given my first construction outfit in the form of a Trixy Trix set. As I recollect this was the electric version of the standard Trix system. The set only allowed one to construct very simple models but they taught me one of the basics of electrics: red to red, black to black, as it were. Following this I did have a small Meccano set handed down to me whilst in an isolation hospital with one of those childhood ailments, scarlet fever, but of course I had to hand it on when released.

Then there was a lapse from Meccano whilst indulging in those various boyhood hobbies aero-modelling, model boats and the like. Oh, I did have a Juneero set at one time but swapped it in favour of fishing gear!

By this time we were at war with Germany, which put a stop to Meccano production whilst the factory went on to war work. I was still at school and had aspirations of becoming a handicraft teacher and eventually studied for two years at Loughborough Engineering College whilst enjoying deferred call up into the armed forces. On leaving college I served just over two years in the Fleet Air Arm leading an idyllic life as an EVT (Educational & Vocational Training) instructor in woodwork. What? In the Fleet Air Arm you may ask? I did say idyllic!

However after leaving the forces and feeling the need of a change from "instructing" I got my hands dirty, as it were,

taking a job as a carpenter with a local building contractor. One thing led to another ending up the years as a contract manager, during which time I had wooed and wed Cora and raised two children. Then aged 42 we got itchy feet, sold up and came to New Zealand.

Here I did shift work at AHI whilst building our own modest home. I continued working for myself as a "jack of all trades" and as I like to think- master of them all.

You will have noticed that I have made no mention of Meccano over these years - well there was none until retirement when GST was introduced and wanting none of that I gave it (the job) away. I was 60 and at retiring age anyway. I had lately collected a small amount of Meccano and had always admired Bert Halliday's miniature traction engine but was short of "brass" when lo and behold I came across a small box of such desirables in a local second hand shop. This made up the shortfall and at last I was able to complete the model. I still have it. This was the start of it all and I have been a collector and constructor ever since.

I am not one for building large models, preferring the smaller, handleable and storable ones. I like my models to look the part and as my co-modellers know I am not adverse to a little modification (I prefer this description to mutilation although this along where appropriate, a little model engineering. Contrary to Mr Hornby's ideals of building, dismantling and building a different model, I like to keep most of my models intact for exhibition purposes until such times as they might be superseded.

I enjoy Meccano modelling and with the enthusiastic support of Cora should be able to look forward to more "Meccano Modelling" for some while yet.

As John and Cora did not attend the recent Christchurch Exhibition several of John's latest models were displayed by Peter Hancock.

No More MotorVators: On April 28th, Andrew Wells made the following statement on Spanner Newsgroup:

"It is with regret that we have to announce that Meccanisms will not be producing any more MotorVators. We have just about sold the last stock from the current production run, and the demand does not justify sinking the required capital for another minimum economic order size from our contract manufacturer. Mechanisms will continue to supply accessories and will continue to support and upgrade the MeccCode softwares. We are also prepared to act as broker/intermediary should any current MotorVator owner wish to sell on their unit but do not want to use the e-bay route. We will maintain a register of interested buyers and sellers and try to tie one up with the other. Please continue to contact me directly on any MotorVator issues.

Andrew Wells andrew@meccanisms.com

Praise From Australia: While advising he won't renew his NZFMM sub. this year, "for personal reasons", Bill Fitzgerald in Melbourne writes — "But I would like to take this opportunity to say what a wonderful magazine you all produce. The quality of the presentation and of the articles themselves are second to none. It would be hard to find any other Meccano publication that offers anything like such value for money. With very best wishes. *Bill Fitzgerald*".

N.Z. Differential Analyser: William Irwin advises N.Z. "Spanners" that the public display of the D.A. at Motat has been postponed till later this year. This is due to logistic problems in getting the machine down from the upstairs storage space where it currently resides at Motat. Should any N.Z. or other Meccanomen wish to see the D.A. sooner please contact William to arrange a viewing.

From Ian Stuart Ian Stuart lives in Washington State, U.S.A. and is well known to members of our M.W.T. Meccano Club, having visited frequently in the past. Ian writes: "Thanks for the magazine. Still most enjoyable to read, but sorry to say I have not been able to do much Meccano stuff for a while. Too much else that must be done. About the only article I could contribute to the magazine is how I make and repair broken parts when I find the time. I started by fixing a broken tail on a plane and then went on to remake quite a few parts as I did not want to repaint the originals. Actually it was Bruce Geange who showed me the way.

I will pay my sub. for this year by a direct transfer to the FMM bank a/c from an N.Z. bank a/c I have. Cheques are hard to come by nowadays as they are not used much any more here".

Meccano And Tutus In an article on travelling with the Royal N.Z. Ballet, Diana Dekker mentions Meccano twice within 5 column inches. Her article was in the "Dominion Post's Your Weekend" of March 21st. Regarding the stage set, she says "their 'one size fits all' gear like a big Meccano set with lights and sound". And: "But forget the intricacies of putting up the Meccano set — Heather has to arrange the plastic seats". (Thank you, Diana.) L.S.



The Falkirk Wheel The Falkirk Wheel just outside Edinburgh, Scotland, caused much discussion in Meccano circles when it began operation. It transfers canal barges between the Union canal and the Forth and Clyde canal. Discussion centred on how to build a working model in Meccano — quite a challenge. By now there have been several Meccano models built. There is an excellent article and photographs by David Proctor in the September/October 2008 issue of "Australian Model Engineering". A mini version built by Paul Dale in Queensland

appeared in our February, 2007, issue.

Family Connections ! Geoff Brown on Spanner points out that Gresley Pacific locomotives had Cartazzi slides on their trailing trucks. Signor Cartazzi married into the Hornby family in Liverpool in the 1860s.

No Luggage Problem ! Joe Attard in Malta writes on Spanner that his wife and two grown-up daughters spent a week in London, England, mainly, it seems, in Oxford Street. They came back with 140 Kg of luggage between them. Joe says, "goodness knows how they made it through the airport check-in."

Comment From U.S.A. Al Sternagle in Pennsylvania writes "sorry to hear that the Newsletter is going to 4 issues/year but I can understand this as a couple of my non-Meccano newsletters are doing the same — costs plus fewer articles from members are the cause."

Strong Bridges Mike Dennis on Spanner says the Civil Engineering degree College at Erith in Kent, England, still gets its students to use Meccano to build bridges that will take people standing on them.

An Old Poster Re-Used: Ronald Jaggard pointed out on Spanner that the "London Times" of March 3rd had an advertisement seeking funds for the war against climate change. It included the famous poster from about 1943 for Defence Bonds — "Lend to Defend his Right to be Free". The illustration is of a Meccano boy sitting pensively by his Meccano model of a railway breakdown crane, all in muted gold and red.

The Trislander Aircraft: When talking about the airline's introduction of the Britten-Norman Trislander just 292 days after its first flight in 1971, John Britten described it as like "building with Meccano; All the parts are identical to those in the earlier Islander. You just join on a few more". (Thanks to Bob Prescott for this item)

Stokys News Stokys in Switzerland is apparently now run by some retired investors as a "not for profit" company. Their Internet website, however, is run by another (commercial) company which handles the orders. James Dooley, who lives in Switzerland, watched a very well made (by Radio Switzerland) advertising clip and noticed that one of the factory girls had piercing in her upper lip. "For a Stokys bolt ?" says James.

Wanganui Model Railway Engineering Society Exhibition

Saturday and Sunday 14th and 15th
March 2009

"Hobbies of Wheels Show"

by Lou Nichols

The MWT Meccano Club was invited to participate in this exhibition and twelve Meccano modellers and supporters came up with 75 models mainly in tune with the theme of "Wheels".

John Ince had his "Caledonian No 15" locomotive (available as Model Plan No.118) and five motorcycles, with three labelled with their own voice bubbles – *"Hi, how do you like my flash motorcycle"*, *"Motorbikes are a great way to get around"* and *"This is a great bike. You should see me when I am going really fast"*. Lou Nichols brought his three cars from the 1930s modelled in blue and gold. His composite clock model had a "K" class loco from the 1890s and a smaller scale "K" model going around on a turntable. The background to the model was a station building complete with a Meccanoman in the apex of the roof line.

Bob and Anne Prescott had a fine array of models – a London "RT" bus, "Samantha" a 1929 Foden Steam Tractor, a 'Meccanoville' Miniature Railway (see model write up on pages 3 and 4 of this issue), a motorcycle designed by the late Andreas Konkoly, two cars (a Triumph TR3A and a Bugatti 35) plus 'Dizzy Ryder' designed by Bernard Périer. Don Blakeborough's composite lorry rig with flat bed trailer and radio controlled bulldozer gave a polished performance. Hugh Ramage had Bob Prescott's ball roller built up (see cover picture of February 2009 issue) plus a Meccano manual twin cylinder steam engine. Paul Vodanovich

was ably assisted by his granddaughter Allanah with the operation of the radio controlled sports car and inviting spectators to make a pattern on the Meccanograph.

John Freer had two very nice locomotives, a Beyer-Garratt and an AB "Kingston Flyer". His twin cylinder horizontal steam engine with valve gear performed faultlessly. John's display was finished off with his interpretation of a Gloster Gladiator (John says this one is named 'Hope' – he hopes it will take off some day). Mel Plow dominated a corner of our square of tables with his display of eight wheeled vehicles from a Bugatti to a car transporter plus a ferry boat. Viv Alexander displayed a gold coloured Eiffel Tower and an American 1950s era convertible saloon car. Bruce Geange again impressed with his meticulous modelling, comprising a miniature Stothert and Pitt "Titan" blocksetting crane, two traction engines used as ploughing engines and the balanced plough, plus a bulldozer.

Robin Rye has never taken apart his right angled cargo vessel, all three plus metres of it. This very nicely took up a corner and created great interest amongst the public. Also by Robin, a large Showman's Traction Engine with caravan, a weightlifter, and a model of London's Tower Bridge. Tom Pittams put on his usual display of models that children could interact with, including a bird with flapping wings, radio controlled cars and the new 'spyke' spy robot.

The centrepiece of the Club's display was the late Lindsay Bond's 2 metre high model of the Eiffel Tower and a portrait of Frank Hornby.



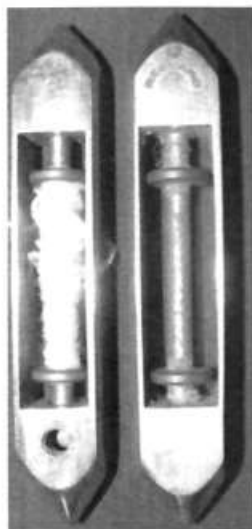


May Meeting

by Les Megget

There was another excellent turn out of 17 members at **Peter & Jan Hancock's** home on Saturday 9th May.

Gary Higgins had printed off a lot of his photos taken at the Easter Exhibition for all to see. He also has made a wooden replica of the rare Meccano Shuttle (for looms, not space). Gary has had a close encounter with his circular saw and was sporting 3 bandaged fingers. Making replica Meccano and Dan Dare parts can be hazardous!

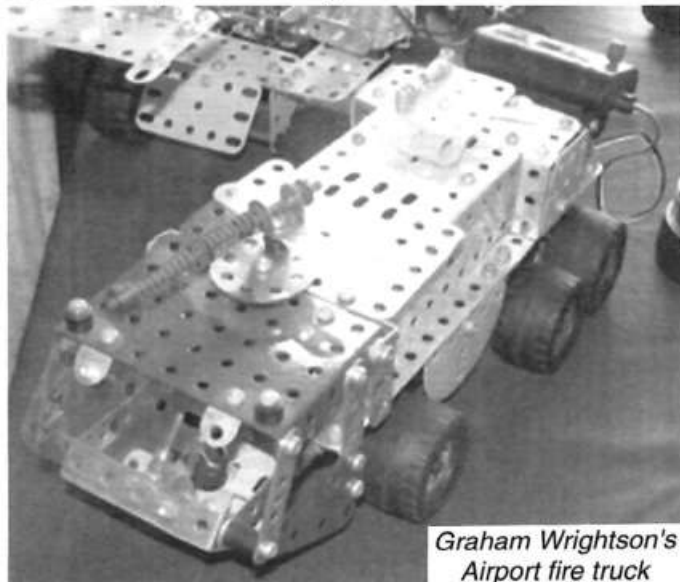


As it happened there were TWO of the rare original Shuttles on show, one by **Don Stewart**, who also had brought a selection of old and rare 1930s and 40s parts (Reed Hook, Designing Machine Table, Fly Wheel, Sand Roller, etc).

John Denton displayed his new crowd restraints, which will be put to good use in the upcoming Model-X show over Queens Birthday weekend at Westwave in Henderson. **Peter** talked about our planned display at Model-X and who was offering to man the display over the weekend. There were plenty of willing helpers.

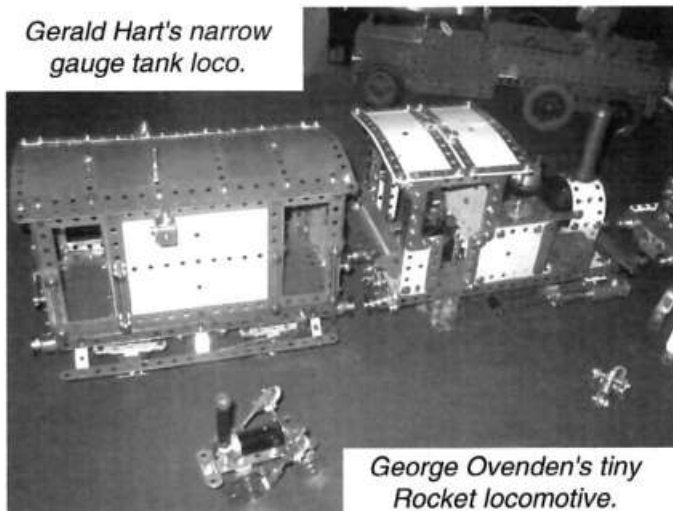
David Wall had an electric solenoid engine to show while **George Ovenden** had a small, motorised tractor designed by Bruce Geange. George also showed a Jeep (we think from CQ) and a lovely mini Stephenson's Rocket.

Gerald Hart had two narrow gauge tank locos, newly built and ready to run on Gauge 1 track. **Les Megget** had his just completed 1938 ERF tipping lorry, based on the pre-war MM competition winning model, which also featured in



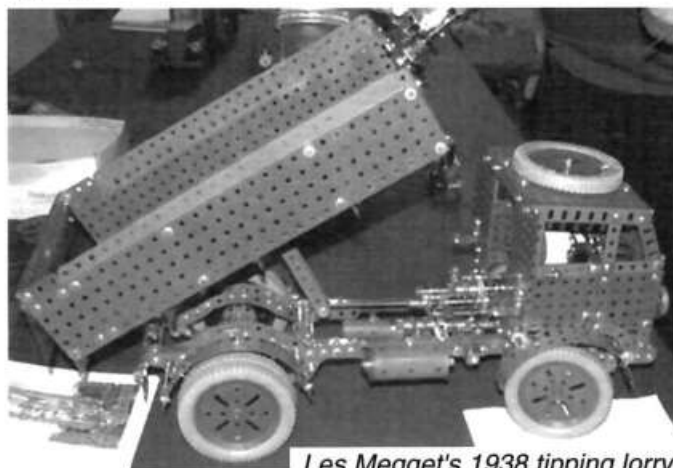
Graham Wrightson's Airport fire truck

Gerald Hart's narrow gauge tank loco.



George Ovenden's tiny Rocket locomotive.

CQ #37, September 1997. As per usual Les has modified the CQ design, moving the front axle forward by 2" (to better follow the prototype) and fitted a reversing gearbox to the tipping mechanism. This detail did not work well on the day



Les Megget's 1938 tipping lorry

due to a gear, which had slipped along its axle, ho-hum. Les also brought his recent acquisition, a 1929 vertical steam engine. This and the ERF parts were recently purchased from a retired doctor in Auckland, which had been stored away in his dry attic for about 40 years.

Graham Wrightson had an Airport fire truck, IR set forklift and 2 cranes on show. **Michael Holderness** showed his Mini Carousel, a cannon, walking man, a cyclist and a model of a human hand. **William Irwin** brought along the latest in Meccano club magazines from around the world, while **Rick Vine** showed a model world on his Earth, Moon and Sun Orrery based on the 60s MM Model of the Month. Rick also had 3 smaller metal Robots, currently on sale worldwide.

There was a very nice Dan Dare spaceship owned by **Henry Porter**, as well as a Howitzer and a Searchlight truck. **Neil Carey** had just completed the Big Ben model; what no locomotives on show this time Neil?

Finally **Bob Pentney** showed his laminated Meccano display card. Also present were **Bruce Haines** and **Richard Sealey**. Another excellent gathering completed with the usual yummy afternoon tea.

MWT Report on 2009 Convention Held at the Arts Centre, Christchurch 10-11-12th April

by John Freer

The Convention was held in The Great Hall at the original Canterbury University, which is a natural gathering point for Christchurch Citizens. Christchurch Meccano Club also celebrated their 80th year of operation.

Good advertising, and weather, ensured a good crowd in attendance. i.e. 6000 ticketed viewers. The Great Hall proved to be a bit cramped for floor space, but ample in height. This made exhibitor-crowd interaction, a bit difficult in some cases.

Overall a good range and quality of models was displayed, ranging from some small models to the large 'Port of Otago' Container Crane. An interesting display was provided by the Hornby Rail display, showing development, from the early stage of Meccano running gear and tin plate body shell, to today's modern style. This was reflected by several

Meccano modellers in the exhibition, running Meccano models on '0' gauge track.

Congratulations to Selwyn Bluett for his tower crane, which won first place in the exhibitors vote. Selwyn was also lucky in taking second and third prizes in the raffle. i.e. Restrung 1950's No 7 and No 8 sets.

Thanks to Selwyn Bluett, Bob Prescott, Mel Plows, Robin Rye, Jason Mairs and John Freer for their excellent models and attendance. This resulted in 'MWT' being awarded the Club Prize.

A special thank you to Paulette and Chris Morton for coordinating the transport and bringing our models to the convention, Arranging a meal at the YMCA on the Friday night and another at 'Oxford on Avon' on Sunday Night. *Chris once again brought his special brand of expertise to the Convention.*

Now the big news the 2011 Convention is our next Major Project. Congratulations to Bruce Neilson who was made a Life Member of NZFMM for his outstanding and enthusiastic contribution to Meccano in NZ. we are also putting together a resume to make him an ISM Golden spanner recipient.



April Meeting

by Lou Nichols

Friendly invasions from the South were the order of the day, namely Simon Moody

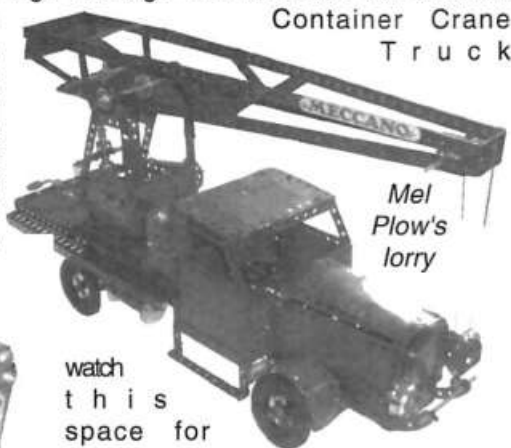
and Bryan and Nancy Jones. Simon brought along his Double Gantry Crane, a freelance model built for the Christchurch convention and in superb operating order. Members were invited to self operate the crane and those with good co-ordination were able to have more than one working operation moving at the same time. Each gantry moved forwards and backwards, up and down for the hoist and a side to side cab movement. A very good model and admired by all present

We will be seeing Bryan and Nancy quite regularly now that they have moved into their bach at Waitarere Beach. They are looking towards building a brand new house on their section. So exciting times ahead for them as their building plans come to fruition.

We congratulated Don Blakeborough on his forthcoming marriage and wish him and Ingrid a very happy future.

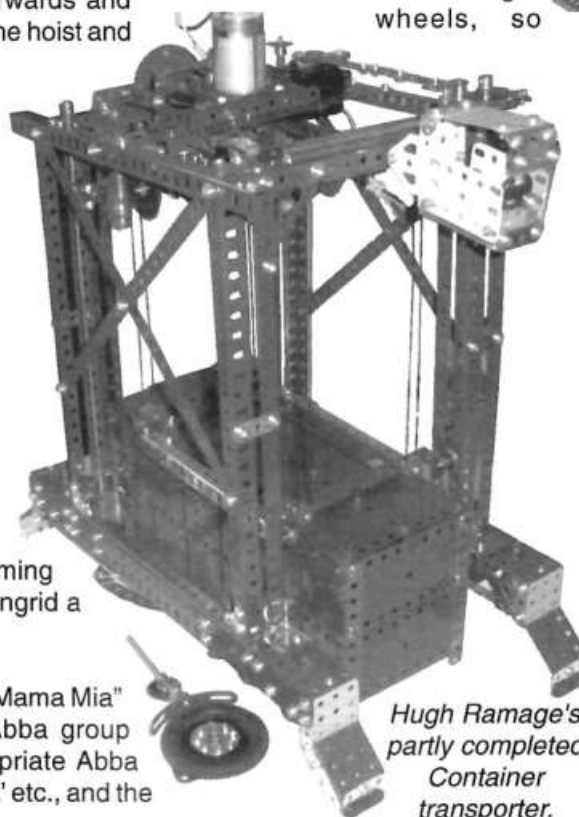
Bob Prescott brought along "Mama Mia" a freelance model of the Abba group complete with all the appropriate Abba music, 'Waterloo'. 'Mama Mia' etc., and the

four performers Anni-Frid, Agnetha, Bjorn and Benny. The original idea came from Nigel Pope's two-man rock band. The model helped to keep the crowd entertained in Christchurch. Mel Plow brought his modified 1950s No.8 set model of a Lorry Crane. A ball race was used instead of flanged wheels for the turntable, giving it a much improved appearance. Hugh Ramage had an under construction model of a Straddle which will have wheel steering on at least two of the eight wheels, so



watch
this
space for
developments.

His other model, a nicely operating Ball Roller based on Bob Prescott's model, featured on the cover of our NZFMM magazine for February 2009. John Ince brought along his Meccano portrait of a Meccanoman, see the Meccano Magazine for January 1927. Lloyd Spackman finished off the model selection with a set of four Micro Models from the 2008 series, looking very resplendent in their brand new parts. Plus also looking very good in silver finish, the Mechanical Workshop Set, Sports Car. The five cylinder engine is working very nicely. However, the gear box gives problems. Any good ideas on the smooth operation of this component would be gratefully received by Lloyd.



Hugh Ramage's
partly completed
Container
transporter.

Wellington Meccano Club

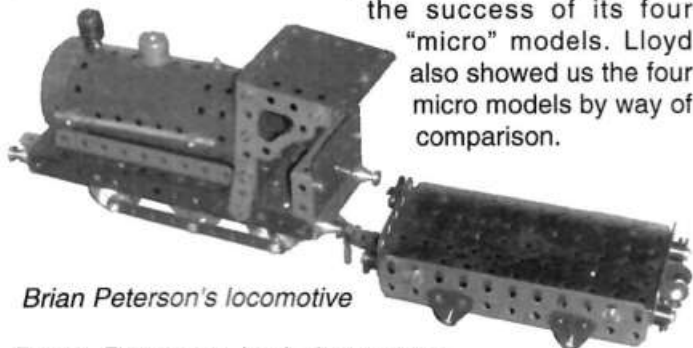
Club Meeting April 3rd, 2009

by Lloyd Spackman

The showpiece at our April meeting was Simon Moody's spectacular double gantry crane. The frame alone measured about 4 ft. square and 2

ft. tall. The twin gantries ran smoothly back and forth, with protruding rods carrying 1" pulleys in place to avoid collisions. If one touched the other gantry it retreated and stopped or reversed its gantry. It is a highly detailed model which, really, only Simon could describe.

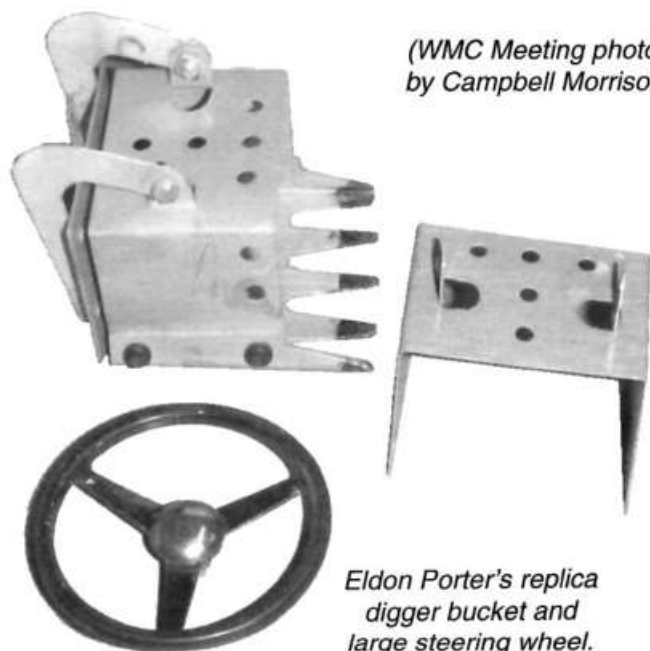
Lloyd Spackman brought along the four "maxi" models which Nikko Meccano has produced, following on from the success of its four "micro" models. Lloyd also showed us the four micro models by way of comparison.



Brian Peterson's locomotive

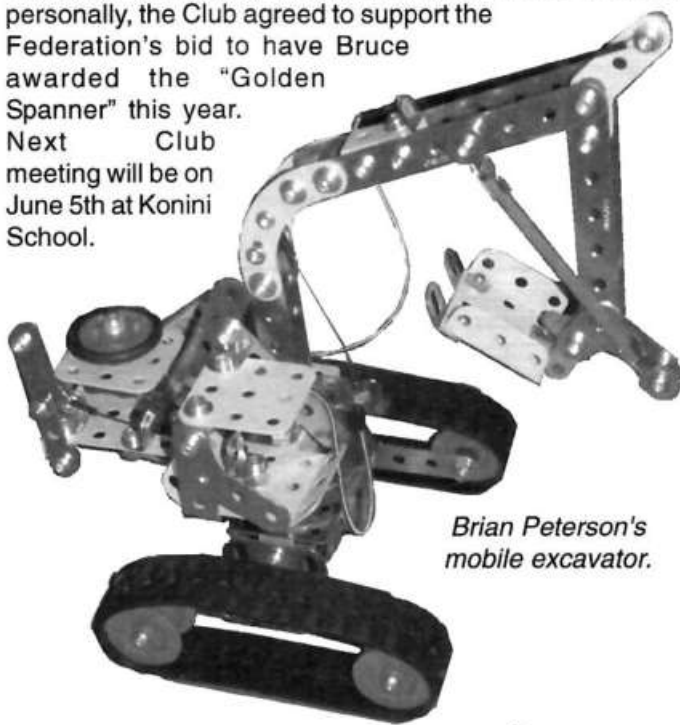
Brian Peterson had three new models. First was a little locomotive, own design, showing off Eldon Porter's home made buffers. Second was a mobile excavator working easily by "cable command", and built from the "C C" set. Finally Brian had a small dump truck, his own design, to go with the excavator.

Eldon Porter had used his engineering skills to make a replica digger bucket, painted dark grey, and also a large steering wheel.

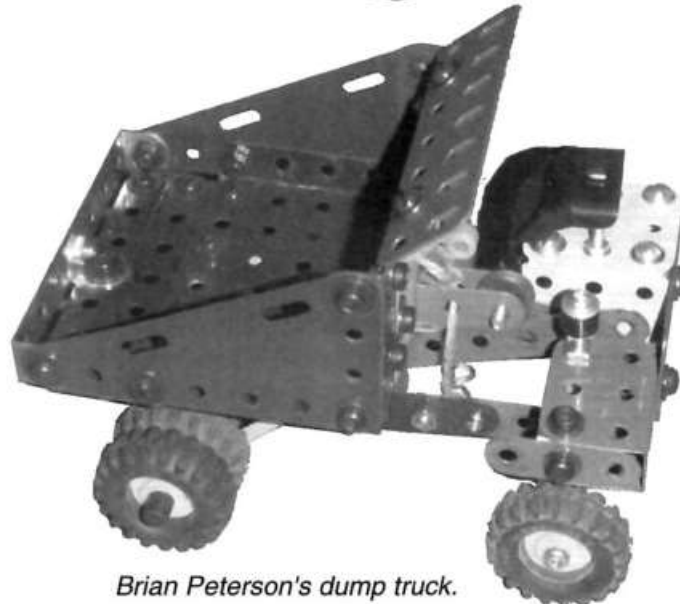


Eldon Porter's replica digger bucket and large steering wheel.

Although not many members know Bruce Neilson personally, the Club agreed to support the Federation's bid to have Bruce awarded the "Golden Spanner" this year. Next Club meeting will be on June 5th at Konini School.



Brian Peterson's mobile excavator.



Brian Peterson's dump truck.



Lloyd Spackman's four Micro Models and the Mechanical Workshop Set, Sports Car. (photo by Lou Nichols at the MWT Meeting)

Lets get down to the serious business of Meccano and related products auction results.

1940-50s Meccano No 9A Box. This is for the box only complete with stringing cards, not sure if guarantee is present. Box is in average condition with a bit of wear. Sold well at NZ\$530.

Part No 149, Collecting shoe. Of very little use in the Meccano world but are readably saleable. This one very nice and yours for NZ\$70.

Circa **1922 Outfit 6A** in Original Oak veneer box. The box looks like it has been well cared for over its long history and the gold lettering on the lid is nice and vivid. Internal partitions are good-displays well. Seller states that the set is nearly complete only missing a few rods, hooks, healds, reed hook, electric manual, couple of SMLs, and Accumulator. Parts look very good for age with nickel nice and bright. Two manuals with one missing cover and second manual dated 1924 missing back cover. Sold for NZ\$5800.

Next a set which I must admit always make me wish I had one. They are simply marvellous. This **00 Set** is from the 1950s, as most of you know these sets had different labels to the rest of the range and this set is as new-just like the day it came out of the factory. Complete with correct manual and guarantee slip. The only fault and is not an uncommon one is that the parts have started to rust where the stringing cord is in contact with the parts. A wonderful set and worth every dollar-NZ\$80.

Märklin Elex Set No 503. The largest of the Märklin Electrical Sets. The other sets are the 501, 502 plus the upgrading sets. This one looks fairly complete, box lid nice and bright with good label. These sets are getting more popular to collect and this nice example brought NZ\$600, Manual included.

Replica GRB-Part No 167b. The iconic Meccano part of days gone by. Has been superseded by better modern parts but still they hold a special place in your Meccano collection. This one is in grey and red, is as new and comes with its pinion. Sold well at NZ\$630.

Meccano Graphite Grease. I do not think this had a part number; this is the older version. Box is in great condition and tube of grease is unused. NZ\$130.

Meccano Parts Handbook by Mike Nicholls. This book was available from MW Models for many years but I believe it is out of print now. Lists the entire Meccano range at that time. All parts are fully illustrated and numbered on heavy weight paper pages. Not often seen on eBay (although I saw another one the other day for a similar price) this one sold for NZ\$98. If I could find my old price lists I could tell you how much they use to cost from MW.

Lovely French 8A Set. Guarantee says 1953. Box looks sound with all aprons present. Label nice and red box really



looks the part. Parts are in gold, red with green and white wheels. They look fairly unused. Correct parts tin present and a nice No 9 manual. This set would display so well as it is strung with all parts present. Well worth the NZ\$460.

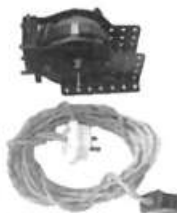
Meccano/Märklin Trinity Clockwork Motor. If you collect Meccano Clockwork Motors then this is one of



the most desirable motors to have. Made by Märklin before WW1 this large powerful motor was a great piece of workmanship. This one is in great condition with its Märklin box (No 202). Box not too bad for age, missing apron on one side, label nice and corners broken. Key included. NZ\$315.

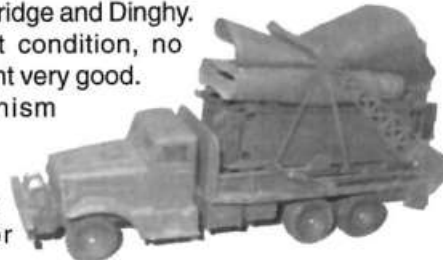
Meccano No 5 Motorised Set. This is of the Yellow and Dark Blue era of the 1978-81. It is quite a pleasant combination of colours and the models look good when built. This set was purchased in 1987 and seller states that he only used it once. It looks complete with as new parts. Box nice and two manuals No 4 and No 5 are in good nick. These manuals were some of the better ones put out by Meccano, it was a pity that they went bust during this time. Set comes with the Crane motor and these sets are getting more desirable as time goes by. One bid purchased for NZ\$120. A good buy.

Meccano 110volt Electric Motor. Seller states that it "looks new and unused with original cable and china mains plug". Circa 1924 this strange beast sold well for NZ\$570. No box.



Vogue Construction Set. This is the No 3 set which was the largest set put out by them, Very similar to Meccano in colour of box, parts etc. Unsure about spacing of holes etc. The other sets in the Vogue range were the No 1 Junior and the No 2 Intermediate. Set is complete with instructions, box has some wear but label and lid clean. Sold well I thought at NZ\$250.

French Dinky Supertoy Brockway Military Truck. This is Dinky toy number 884. All original with box. Model consists of Truck, Bridge and Dinghy. Truck in excellent condition, no restoration and paint very good. Lifting mechanism works well. Nice box. Would make a great Meccano model. Sold for NZ\$400.



And for my last item a **French No 1 Electrical Set** from the 1960s. This is the best Electrical set made by Meccano-better than anything made at Binns Road. From the fantastic lid design to the contents which was more complete and diverse than the English one this is the one. This set is nearly complete, parts in great order and comes with correct manual. In French blue and red with gold strips. Should and did sell well at NZ\$460.

Well that's all for this time, hope the convention in Christchurch went well.

New Zealand Club Diary 2009 - 2010

Auckland Meccano Guild.

President - David Wall - Ph 09 426 1965.

Secretary - Peter Hancock - Ph 09 535 5355

Meetings at 2 pm on second Saturday every third month.

Next meeting -David Wall's home, 45 Kath Hopper Drive, Orewa on 8th August.

MWT Meccano Club.

President - John Freer - Ph 06 272 8467

Secretary - Graham Hawtree - Ph 06 344 7601

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

Next meeting Saturday June 13th.

Wellington Meccano Club.

President - Campbell Morrison

Secretary - Simon Moody

Contact - Lou Nichols - Ph 04 297 1515

Meetings at 7.30 pm on first Friday every second month.

Next meeting Friday 5th June at Konini School, Wainuiomata.

Christchurch Meccano Club.

President - Charles Steadman - Ph 021 378 897

Secretary - Peter Satterthwaite - Ph 027 275 5691

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.

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.

Articles etc. for the August 2009 issue of NZFMM Magazine should be sent to Les Megget and John Ince well before 10 August 2009

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

NZFMMM Unpaid Subscriptions

If the address label on your envelope shows March, 2009, you have not yet paid your subscription for the year to March, 2010. Unless you pay it now, this is the last issue we can send you. Our Treasurer's address is on page 2, as usual.

For the benefit of overseas subscribers who have not yet paid, here are the amounts (in your own currency) which you should send us by cheque or bank draft. Our bank will accept these from most countries.

Australia	\$A28	U.S.A.	\$US20
Great Britain	£14.	Europe	16 euros
Canada	\$C25	India	1024 Rupees

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 - No 10 Set

George Ovenden (09) 476 2235 has a near complete made up Set 10 for sale for \$3,500 including a 22 drawer cabinet (800x800x480mm) made by the late Bob McCracken. Parts range from the 20s to the 90s, some restored. There are some manuals including a photocopied A-E. The set includes extra parts plus quite a lot of obsolete parts: 10 Spoked Wheels, 6 Propellor Blades, 16 Windmill Sails, lots of Braced Girders from 2.5" up to 12.5", 23 Healds for a loom, 1 Wood Roller, 1 Table for Designing Machine, 8 Girder Frames, 1 Cone pulley, 5 Dredger Buckets, 1 Ships Funnel, 1 Pulley Block P/N 151, 1 Circular Saw Blade, 4 Large Tooth Quadrants, 1 Pinion for above, 1 Flanged Ring (167A), 1 Digger Bucket, 6 4.5" diam Road Wheels, 1 2.5" Steering Wheel and 1 Pennant Meccano Flag (red/gold). George's address is 47/21 Graham Collins Drive, Windsor Park, North Shore 0632.

Wanted to Buy

Graham Hawtree is looking for a No 4 Set in the mid red green era 1948 to 54 The set does not need to be complete but the box in reasonable condition if possible. Also a No 5a Set of the same era again contents not important and also a No 8a Set of the same era. The are contents not important as I am more interested in good boxes. Willing to pay good price for nice items. Please contact Graham and Val Hawtree- Ph 06 3447501 or email <grahamandval1@xtra.co.nz>.

A Netherlands Story

This little Meccano story was sent to us via William Irwin in Auckland. Thanks, William. Kees Trommel has been a member of the Federation for several years. He lives in Maasluis which is west of Rotterdam Port and a bit south of The Hague (centre of Government) and Delft (famous for its hand painted porcelain and china).

Kees wrote as follows:

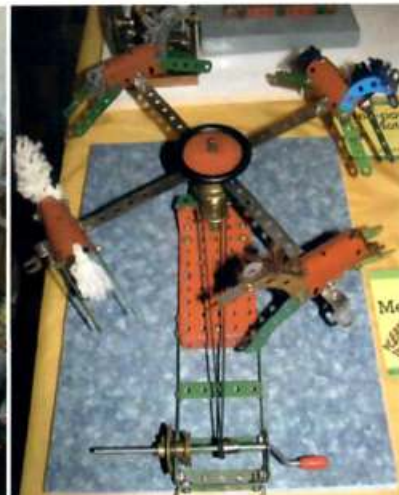
"I always like to read the NZFMM magazine. About a year ago we had the same postman every week day and every time he delivered the NZFMM magazine he always took a good look at the photos visible through the plastic wrapping. When I asked him about it he told me he used to have a large Meccano set when he was a young boy. His mother had thrown away all his Meccano (just in the bin - can you imagine ?) when he married and left the parental house. However, he still had an interest and was surprised to see a Meccano magazine from New Zealand delivered to a Dutch address.

I lent him a few of your and other magazines and I know he started again buying Meccano and making models.

As he moved to another part of the country I haven't seen him lately and he did not leave his new address."



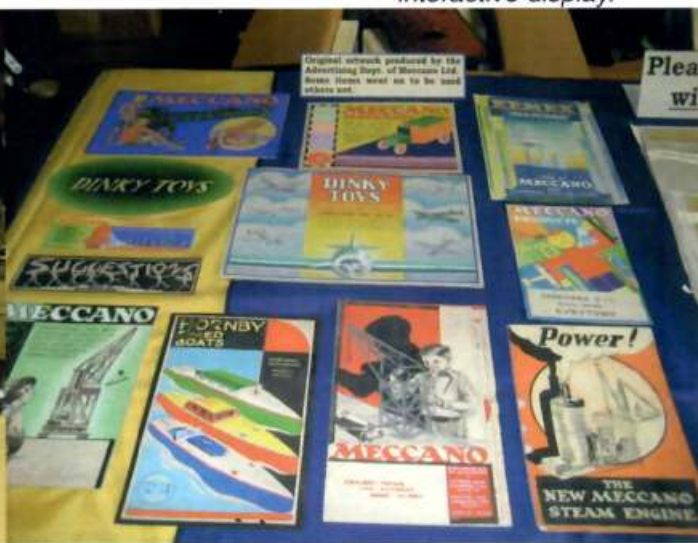
The crowd of people in the Great Hall at the Arts Centre.



A model in Joffre Marshall's interactive display.



Gary Higgins with his collection of models.



Jim Gamble's display cards from the Binns Road era



*Display of historical material set up by Mike Howse.
<< 1950s cardboard boxed No 8 and No 7 second and third prizes won by Selwyn Bluett.*

(photos by Gary Higgins)