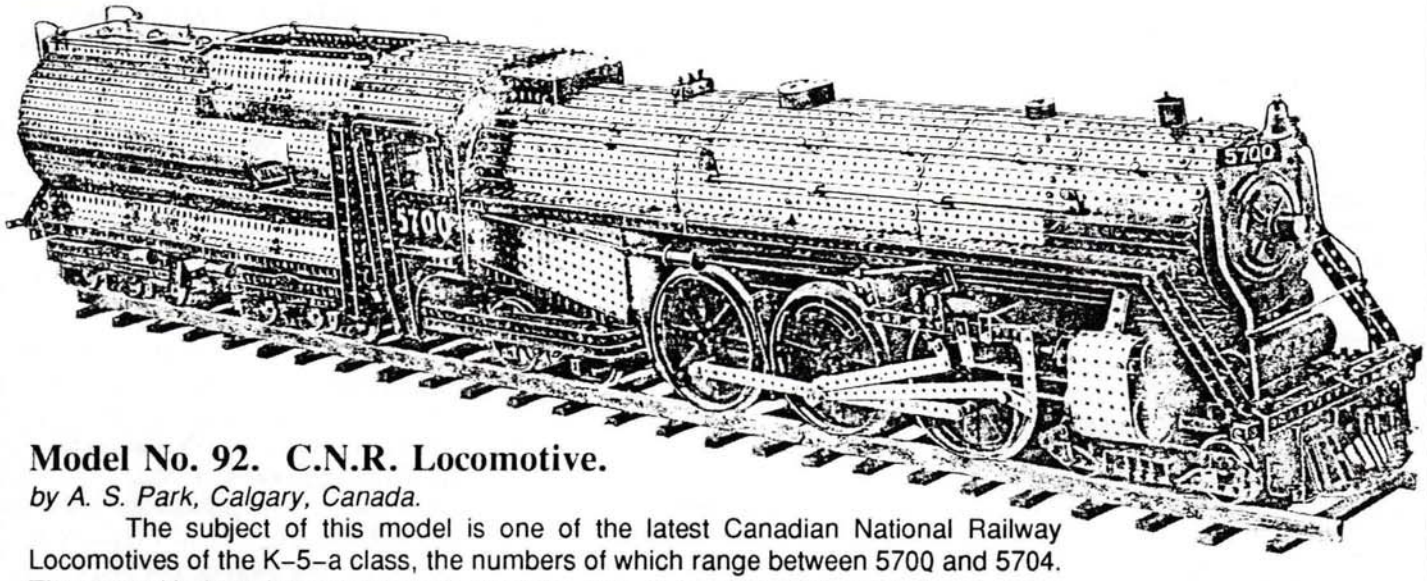
Canadian MeccaNotes

Issue # 8 **DECEMBER 1997**

IRWIN TOY BUYS AMERICAN MECCANO COMPANY—SEE PAGE 14



Model No. 92. C.N.R. Locomotive.

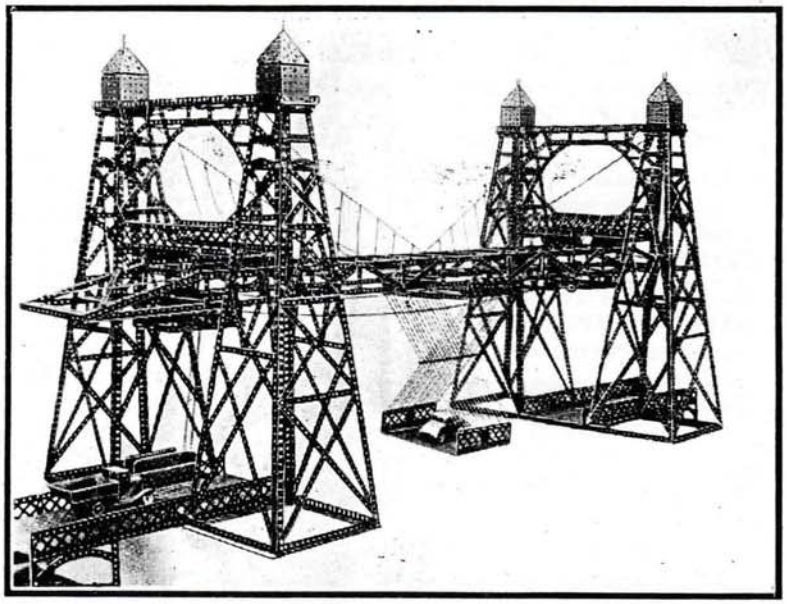
by A. S. Park, Calgary, Canada.

The subject of this model is one of the latest Canadian National Railway Locomotives of the K–5–a class, the numbers of which range between 5700 and 5704. The great Hudson locomotives are used for fast passenger service on two or more divisions of the Montreal and Chicago run and they are also used for hauling the *International Limited* train.

They were constructed at the Montreal Locomotive Works at the end of 1930, and are amongst the most powerful locomotives designed and constructed by this firm.

They have an overall length of 92ft. 6½in. and in working order they weigh, with tender, 662,200 lbs. The boiler is of the straight top type with radially stayed fire–box and it has a diameter of 7ft. 2in. with a working pressure of 275 p.s.i.

(continued on page 14)



Prizewinning Canadian model of a British bridge (from the Meccano Magazine).

This model of the fine transporter bridge that crosses the River Mersey at Runcorn, Cheshire, was built by H. Shorten, Regina, Canada. An illustration of the actual bridge appeared on page 228 of the March 1929 "M.M."

Canadian MeccaNotes

Written and produced by Meccano® enthusiasts, for Meccano® enthusiasts.

No. 8 . . December 1997

Our Seventeenth Year

CANADIAN MECCANOTES is published by the Canadian Modeling Association for Meccano® & Allied Systems. The association and its publications are not affiliated with any other organization or firm.

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EDITORIAL

This is the last issue of our second year as the Canadian Modeling Association (etc. etc.), and the last issue of CANADIAN MECCANOTES for which I shall be responsible. From all the reports I hear (unsupported, unsubstantiated), readers both at home and abroad think it had been a satisfactory two years of publication. Complaints, at any rate, have been minimal: that we should have more mechanisms and less history; that we should have more pictures. To which I can only repeat: give us the mechanisms; give us the pictures. And be sure the pictures are not flash pictures taken in big dark rooms, with acres of gloomy black background.

It has been a busy two years. The gestation period for each issue is a about two months: writing, hoping for material, getting it arranged and (by someone else) input, laying out and taken to the printer, enveloped and mailed. My greatest thanks must go to Hubert Hogle, assisted by members of his family and his staff, who have played courier, typesetter, and cheering section. Half the credit for the newsletter as you see it goes to them. He (they) worthily deserve the accolade of Meccanoman (Meccano-persons!) of the Year—see elsewhere in this issue.

For patience and endurance my thanks also go to my wife Ruth, who for some time had been thinking, if not saying, "Enough already!" and will be glad when this project ends. There will be time now for other things. Our major occupation had actually been babysitting three small granddaughters.

Norm Lacroix, who started this newsletter so long ago, retired this year and agreed to take on the editorial task for the next two years. It may well be another new era: Norm is computer-literate and already has connections along the Net with Meccano activities. He is even getting Mike trained as a computer specialist, presumably so he can add to the *CMN* staff. I won't even suggest things which I have not been able to do in the past two years, and which he should undertake. I will promise/threaten to provide him with material for future issues, when I feel like it. Someone even mentioned that they had enjoyed my Old Mutilator columns in past issues; I avoided such personal prejudices while I was being editor—one has to *seem* neutral. Perhaps I shall even have time to think of a model or two, though the real problem there is space rather than time. For now, I hope you enjoyed *CMN* in these two years, and that you will enjoy it even more in 1998 and as long as Meccano lasts. See you at the Meccamillenium celebrations, and the Meccacentenary in 2001! – *Don*

Exchanges With Other Societies

CANADIAN MECCANOTES is sent to other Meccano-Erector societies. Complimentary copies of newsletters from other societies come to the Editor in exchange. Would recipients of exchange copies please note that after Jan. 1998, publications should go to the new Editor, Norm Lacroix, 8 White St., Petawawa, ON., K8H 1Z6.

[This change does *not* affect personal copies of publications from several societies which are received by Don Redmond as part of memberships in those societies!]

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LETTERS

Bill Derksen writes: The enclosed pictures are of myself and a summer student living at our place. I've been hooked on nuts and bolts since I was 8. Michiko took to it instantly—perhaps assisted by summer boredom!

Many of you will recognize the model of the old 10-set manual: the "transporter bridge" over the river Mersey at Runcorn. It was actually quite exhilarating to revisit and to revise. The model is an impressive length, even without the on/off ramps that we added to each extremity, and it had elegant towers. The UK flags were added by Michiko. The automatic reversing mechanism needed no improvement. I added the automatically raising/lowering hinged ramps inside the towers.

I am a music professor, not yet retired (to Meccano) but finding time here and there to pursue this hobby. Michiko Kato is a music student at the college where I teach. She has never seen Meccano in Japan.

I am a new subscriber to MECCANOTES, and am looking forward to receiving my second issue. Thank you for assembling the magazine. It is a joy to read.

Dave Feinstein writes, from Johannesburg: With regard to your question on powder manufacturers, while I am not sure if the manufacturers also operate in Canada, hereunder are the popular colour details.

On the subject of SteelTec, I hear from the local import agent that there has been a management change and that the plant is to be moved from Hong Kong to Mainland China with a new onslaught planned for the worldwide market. – Remains to be seen. In the interim there is no SteelTec in the shops.

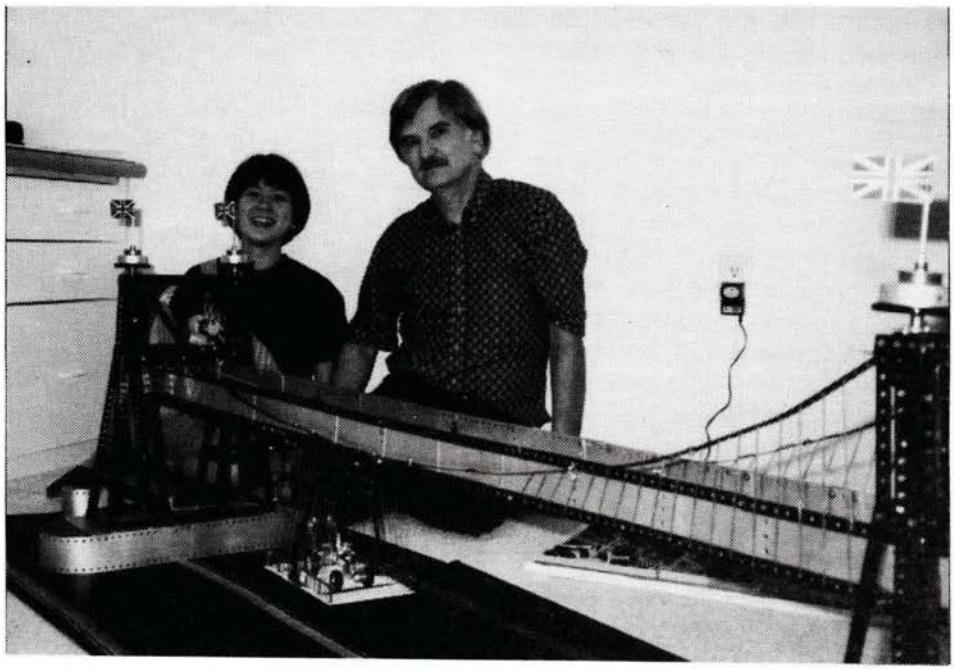
Our show was a success; it could have been better if more members took time to stand shifts; we gained 16 new members. It's all in the newsletter. Hopefully I may have some photos in time for our next Newsletter.

Keith Cameron writes: A plethora of good things has come our way in the form of MECCANOTES, so full of interest and so ably edited, and too long a time has passed since I wrote an acknowledgement. I am also writing to Colin Hoare thanking him for his report of Skegex and the kind mention of my efforts and his nicely prejudiced remarks about "smooth running". Here are some of my comments in my letter to Colin:

We should welcome, indeed expect, our models to be tweaked and accept it as a compliment that anyone should build anything of ours. My instruction are submitted only after multiple tweaking and rigorous testing for dependability *but* in spite of that there inevitably are *always* residual problems. Servetti's Fantasy Factory is a good example. Let me bore you with some details. I built it in 1981 and the instructions were published in C.Q. in 1982. This is, let me see, 15 years ago. During those years much has changed on the Meccano scene and elsewhere so I would doubtless build the model quite differently now, incorporating what I have learnt (by reading and by experience) in the interim. This may in part account for some of the "tweaking" by Tim.

My version of the Fantasy Factory was a "tweaked" version of a Model of the Moment No.6 published by GMM, see page 142 of *The Mecanoman's Journal* No.6 of January 1967. The brief description, photo-

Powder Manufacturer	Local Descriptor	Meccano Colour
Plascon Ferro Vedoc	Post Office Red	French Red
Plascon Ferro Vedoc	Ruby Red	Liverpool Medium Red
Delux Industrial Finishes	Coca Cola Red	Liverpool Light Red
Plascon Ferro Vedoc	Bosal Green	Liverpool 60's Green
Plascon Ferro Vedoc	Cadac Green	Post War Dark Green
Delux Industrial Finishes	Buttercup Yellow	Liverpool Yellow
Plascon Ferro Vedoc	Maize Yellow	Liverpool Yellow
Plascon Ferro Vedoc	Canary Yellow	French Yellow



graphs and diagrams were obtainable on request and payment of 18/6d for small pictures and 36/6d for large ones. The description and diagrams were the work of Ron Stutter of Hampton Wick, England. The announcement in *MJ* said that "a bolt-by-bolt description of how to build this model is an insult to the intelligence of experienced model-builders; nevertheless a set of twelve photographs and six diagrams is necessary for successful construction".

I sent for the instructions and small photographs but did not start on the model until 1981, another long time gap for me to learn a little more and gain a little wisdom perhaps. I noticed an error in the wiring diagram, so wrote to Sr. Servetti who kindly sent me his original wiring diagram which helped clear some points. However, in that time gap I had already developed a rotary switch* used in my version of Servetti's Magician (another "tweaking"), and incorporated that as more "user-friendly" that the original. So I "tweaked" the great Servetti for the second time. He was pleased. Robin asked me to describe my version. So instead of the meagre couple of pages from GMM, my description was much longer (and the photographs were better though "I say it as shouldn't").

Was my description "an insult to the intelligence of advanced Meccanomen?" Hours were spent figuring out the details of the model from the pictures, details that were not covered on the GMM leaflet. It took more hours to conquer glitches. Should I not share my experience with others? But even so there *were* details not full covered. Many of 'em and editors like brevity. Robin is very generous with his space, but readers grumble when too much space is used up on a model that does not happen to appeal to them at the moment. So one has to compromise and omit details that might lead to the need to "tweak". And what's wrong with that? It's a "learning experience"! I could have continued adding appendices describing situations that might arise and how to deal with them. But I didn't. Art is Long, Life is Short!

Like Alan Partridge, I also enjoyed Neil Fraser on steppers. I'm glad that *somebody* is getting interested in the subject at long last. I have published several models using steppers, and have also shown how ordinary Meccano motors can be used in conjunction with a feed-back mechanism so that they act virtually like steppers. See also the articles in "The Robot Gargantua". Moderately powerful steppers along with drivers for them can be obtained from Dave Vernier, 2920 SW 89th Avenue, Portland, Oregon 97225, USA. They are reasonably priced and a computer program for running motors is also available. I have found his material most satisfactory. See my computer-run Meccanograph in *CQ*. He has excellent explanatory material on steppers in his book "How to Build a Better Mousetrap". I found this use for computers more rewarding (and challenging) than using these graphics programs to build models on the screen. I say "found" rather than "find" because I have quit building computer-driven models because of an almost total lack of interest. In fact some enthusiasts seem to regard the use of the computer as "anti-Meccano" in the same sense that certain practices are "anti-American". Chacun à son goût.

Some have complained of the limitations of the quite excellent IR remote control system recently introduced by Meccano. The current *CQ* shows a game maze run by using the system, an ingenious use. However, I have engaged in another anti-Meccano activity and have built a 15-channel IR transmitter and receiver which works well. Now the problem comes: find a use for it! Perhaps you will have some ideas.

SteelTec indeed seems on its way to extinction as a result of Meccano's legal battle with them. I sneaked (in disguise) into a toy store in an outlet mall last April and bought two SteelTec sets at a greatly reduced price, a 1:18 scale 1957 Corvette and a Parachute Ride. The Corvette looks nice, with opening doors, trunk and hood, working headlights, all metal body, chassis frame from SteelTec strips in a matte finish. The parachute ride is a pale reflection of the old Erector model, for the two parachutes merely glide up and down gracefully but don't drop. The set contains two interesting large plastic 2in. Pulleys with eight holes, several ½in. Pinions integral with 1½in. Gears for reduction gearing, also transparent flexible plates in two colours. Quality is good throughout.

Mura joins in sending love and greeting to you both, and to our Canadian friends.

*The late lamented Roger Wallis tweaked my Rotary Switch and I re-tweaked it and built it into a tweaked version of Bill Inglis' Automated Ship Coaler. Shouldn't you start a Tweakers Corner?

Neil Dulson writes: SteelTec seems to be finished in North America. Some of our club members have scoured the toy stores and purchased various sets at up to 60% off the normal price. There does not seem to be much left and the stores are not replacing them. On the Meccano scene, Sears Catalogue has a two page spread, advertising Meccano sets of all kinds, even the new Space Base sets, but none of the Standard Sets No.1 to No.6. The local Toys-R-Us stores are stocked up for Christmas and they don't have any of the Standard sets. The other day, one of our club members was shopping at the local Sears Outlet store, which offers discounts on damaged or discontinued stock, and found Meccano sets on sale. I checked it out, and found that they had Standard No.3 and No.5 sets left. So, with Christmas coming up, and two grandsons to buy for, I purchased two No.5 sets at $48.75 each instead of the normal $129.99 each. That's 62½% off, so it seems that Standard Meccano sets are no more. The Evolution sets are now the standard.

I always show off at each club meeting, all the latest Meccano Magazines that I receive, so that everyone can see what's available and maybe decide to make a subscription. I don't think the CMN overlaps the BCMC newsletter. In fact I think that they complement each other and describe the Meccano activities at each end of the country.

As for shows, as I've said before, there are no Hobby Shows in Vancouver any more. However, this summer, I received a phone call from someone organizing a display of people's "collections" for the Pacific National Exhibition, which occurs during the last two weeks of August. So, I exhibited my Block Setting Crane, some Meccano set boxes of various vintages, some Meccano brochures and as many different parts as I could get into the display cabinet. I also included a card describing the BCMC with an invitation to phone me if they were interested in finding out more about it. Well, I got one call. A fellow wanted to sell an 1957 No.8 set. It was in mint condition so I picked it up. But that was it. One call from the hundreds of thousands of people who visited the exhibition.

The idea of importing a large quantity of Exacto parts sounds like a fairly risky proposition. The capital outlay would probably be very high and then there is the question of which parts and how many of each to stock. We all have our different preferences when it comes to model building and we all have different collections of parts on hand to build them with. So how would anyone be able to estimate what parts would be needed? The only way to do it is to get everyone that wants parts to pre-pay for them, and then order accordingly. Then as I found out when I asked our club members to pre-pay for the stainless steel Angle and Flat Girders we had manufactured, nobody wants to pay for parts that may take a while to be delivered. When the fellow in Owen Sound ordered parts from Exacto for BCMC and CMAMAS members a few years ago, the parts took 6 months to 1 year to arrive, causing many of them to think that they would never arrive.

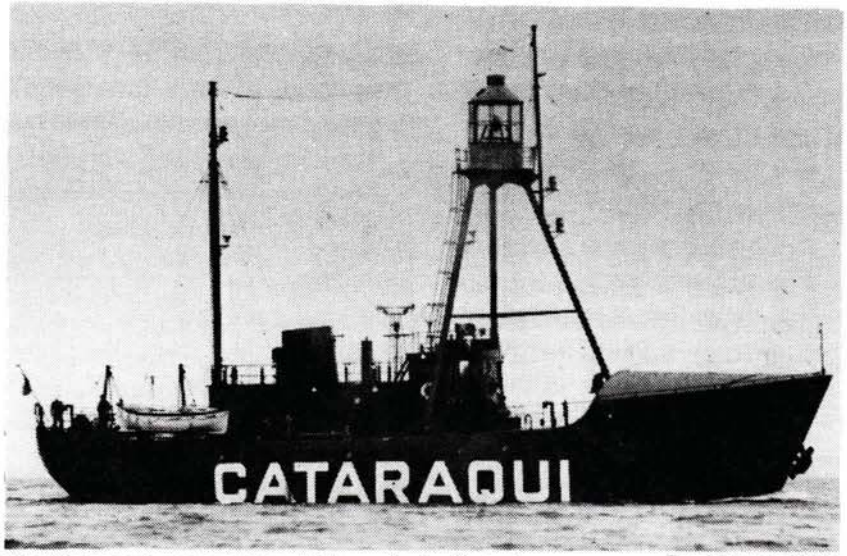
As you know, I've been collecting information on the Eiffel Tower, and during the summer I've been putting together parts of the model to see how it could be built. With everything at odd angles to everything else, everything at varying angles from the vertical and everything tapered, I've tried so many versions and finally decided how I am going to proceed. But I had a problem. I needed about 1000 Narrow Strips of varying lengths for all the cross bracing. I only have about 100. So I have almost cleaned out Joel Perlins's entire stock of Narrow Strips. I feel very fortunate that he had enough of each type of part on hand. With only 8 Narrow Strips in a No.10 set, who would have thought that a supplier would have 1000 of them in stock. I wonder if Bernard Shaw was able to get the Narrow Strips he needed for his Brill Windmill shown on page 18 of CMN Issue No.7 as easily as I did.

Also about paint: Jim Picton reports that he gets his green paint from Canadian Tire; 1961 Meccano green is matched by Nissan automobile lacquer 1970–78. Also, see Dave Feinstein's letter on page 3 of this issue about powder finish colours.

MODELING CHALLENGE: CANADIAN LIGHTSHIP!

"The last of the Canadian lightships", built in Kingston in 1959, served as the *Lurcher* light off the coast of Yarmouth, Nova Scotia, until 1969, when an automated buoy replaced the manned light vessel. Sold and re-sold, the vessel is still afloat and is being refitted as a private yacht.

Lightships have occasionally been modeled in Meccano, but never a detailed Canadian lightship. Here's a chance for ship-model lovers—complete with the swell and pitch of an open ocean station! The photograph is reproduced by courtesy of the Marine Museum of the Great Lakes, Kingston, from their magazine *FreshWater*, with an article by Skip Gillham. Further details of the lightship should be available from the Museum (55 Ontario St., Kingston K7L 2Y2; Tel: (613) 542-2261). The *Lurcher* lightship was launched as *Cataraqui*, and several times renamed. She is 121.9ft (37.155m) long, 30.6ft (9.327m) beam, 21.4ft (6.523m) depth, and 529 gross tonnage. As a lightship she would have been painted entirely red, with the name of the shoal or reef in immense white letters on each side: LURCHER.



The *Cataraqui* seen on her trials on Lake Ontario. *FreshWater* 1997

IDEAS

Knobs On: As noted in the Nepean report elsewhere in this issue, Norm Lacroix's new Handrail Support with short tapp ed base makes great doorknobs. Filling the cross bore of Handrail Supports with $\frac{3}{8}$in. bits of Meccano rod, and the tapped holes with shiny grubscrews, to fill all the gaps, makes knobs even more realistic.

Barbecued Meccano: Powerful slow motors can be made from the geared motor units from old barbecue rotisseries. Usually these have a square socket output connection, so a Meccano adapter with square end must be fitted to convert the drive to a pulley or Meccano rod.

Pseudo Cylinders: Plastic hair-curler rollers can be found, just under 2½in. long and 1in. diameter, and perforated at half-inch spacing along four sides—just the thing when Meccano Sleeve Pieces are too small and Meccano Cylinders too large or too few, to make substantial-looking columns or piping. When two of these rollers are butted end-to-end, the holes in adjacent rollers are ¾in. apart. These can be easily bridged using Gilbert Erector narrow strips which have ¼in. hole spacing. One variety of plastic roller doesn't even need repainting—they come in metallic grey and a sort of bronze colour.

Salvaging Road Wheels: The original p/n 187 tinplate Road Wheels are as common as autumn leaves, and about as valuable. The major design fault in these wheels was the tiny tin tabs which held the centre disc with boss into the outer or tire disc; many tabs broke off. For the common style with red centre disc and black tire disc, the best treatment for broken or rusty ones is to punch out the long boss, and throw the tinplate away. Use a thick $\frac{3}{8}$in. nut, such as an automobile wheel stud nut, to hold the wheel, and a $\frac{3}{8}$in. rod or bolt ground to a conical end to punch out the boss. *But* for tinplate wheels in less common colours (grey tire, blue centre; red tire, gold centre; black tire, aluminum or Army olive green centre; cream tire, red centre) which were in pre-war Meccano sets only for brief periods, discarding such a wheel may make a set incomplete.

If the paint needs restoration, separate the discs, by prying up the tabs, and repaint. Then put the discs together and bend the tabs down. If there are only one or two tabs left, the following repair is simple and sturdy, if inelegant.

A *short* 3mm bolt is needed. Hold a standard bolt (*not* p/n 69 setscrew) in an old strip with a nut. Grind or file the bolt down almost to the surface of the nut. Take an angle bracket and insert the bolt through the slotted arm into one tapped hole of the boss, with the shorter arm of the angle bracket butted against the back of the wheel. It should just be possible to get the short bolt into the tapped hole; if not, file the slot down *very little* with a round file. Screw the bolt tightly into the boss. If it projects into the bore, *carefully* file it flush using a 3mm chainsaw file, followed by a 4mm file—or take the bolt out and grind off another very thin layer. The angle bracket will lock the discs together sturdily enough for use. The end of the slotted arm can be ground or filed off, or simply bent outward and down so it does not project above the end of the boss

Conical discs from old road wheel can often be used where p/n 187a Conical Discs are called for. Break off any remaining tiny tabs; use a ¾in. Washer over the centre if necessary. The long bosses can be used as rollers or collars, or even (by drilling and tapping in a jig made of eight Couplings) as short couplings.

If the tiny tabs are intact but the tire is rusty or damaged (as usual), give the wheel a new tire from another wheel. If the tire disc is salvageable but the centre disc is not, the tire disc can be converted for other uses. Press a Bush Wheel into the boss hole, and drill two, three, (for 6-hole Bush Wheels) or four holes. The tire could then for instance be stacked to make a road roller or wide-tread wheel.

A Splashy Model: Who will be first to model an Everglades swamp buggy? Not the kind with boat hull and an aircraft propeller at the rear, but a kind which seems to have large disc front wheels, tractor rear wheels, a boat-like body and a huge engine—which runs on the bottom and throws up incredible amounts of splash. Watch for them on the new TV Speed channel.

Painting on the Internet: Six pages of the Runnymede Meccano Guild Newsletter No.34 (Sep. 1997) are devoted to discussions of restoring Meccano parts, gathered from e-mail by Nick Rodgers. It's almost everything you wanted to know about painting but were afraid to ask! There's also a reprint of Roger Hill's description of his Flexible Plate Processor--taking the kinks through the rollers. You can get a copy from Nick Rodgers, 21 Copthall Way, Weybridge, Surrey, England KT15 3TX; e-mail: n.rodgers@surrey.ac.uk.

Meccano for Profit: Building models in Meccano was never a money-making prospect-until now, it would seem. Having just read the September 1997 edition of the British publication *Collectors Gazette*, I am not so sure any more. At the Barry Potter Auction held in Benn Hall in Rugby, England, a display model of the Servetti Magician (said to have been build by Meccano Limited) was up on offer. The model did contain the eight Dinky Toys that are called for in the instructions and in addition has a couple more Dinky Toys in plastic cases sitting in the front of the model. As a result, a tremendous amount of interest was created both in the room and by mail-in bids. The final realization? £3,650! Even at current prices for spare parts, one would turn a handsome profit at that price!

The President's Column

Colin Hoare

After two years and eight issues of CANADIAN MECCANOTES it is time to look back on what has been achieved, and also what can be anticipated in the future. The success of the new magazine is largely due to the Editor, *Don Redmond*. Don had put in a tremendous amount of work in the past twenty-four months, and has contributed a vast amount of the material published in the magazine. Without his efforts and dedication, we would not have the magazine that exists today. Don has not been alone however, as we have seen yeoman service from the Hogle family – Hubert, his wife Anne, and two of his daughters, plus a member of his office staff – in preparing the magazine for publication. In recognition of their efforts, they have been awarded the 1997 "Canadian Meccanoman's Award." A full write-up of this announcement appears elsewhere in the issue.

Don took on the post of Editor of the magazine on the understanding that is would be for a maximum of two years. That time is sadly now up, and it means that he will be stepping aside. I am confident that there is not anyone who subscribes to the magazine who is not eternally grateful for what he has achieved in getting this "Phoenix" to arise from the ashes. Don will continue to contribute material for the magazine, so his presence will still be felt. On behalf of everyone, I want to extend a sincere vote of thanks to Don for all that he has done. The magazine's reputation has not just been reestablished in the eyes of the Meccano fraternity around the world, but also it had been raised to a much higher level.

So much for the past-what of the future? As our new Editor, we are welcoming back the man who founded the magazine nearly twenty years ago-*Norm Lacroix*. Norm and his own contributions to the Meccano world are well-known. It goes without saying that Norm will be seeking the cooperation of everyone in providing material for the magazine, be it reports on shows, instructions on new models, or anything to do with the hobby. No-one should feel shy about submitting material; every little bit helps, believe me. So, don't just *think* about submitting an article-do it! If you have e-mail, you can send any written material via that route! Norm's e-mail address is MECWARS@istar.ca.

I would like to pay tribute to another enthusiast this time, someone form overseas who is stepping aside after many years as President of a well-known Meccano group. *Mike Cotterill*, who has headed the North Midlands Meccano Guild for more years than either he or I care to remember, will tender his resignation at the next Annual Meeting of the Group. Mike has led by example, as his outstanding modelbuilding skills are renowned throughout the Meccano world. Under his leadership, we have seen *The Meccano Newsmag* as it is now known, continue to be published ever four months. Other that our own magazine, it arguably provides the best value for money in the Meccano world (and I say that, despite being a great fan on *Constructor Quarterly*!) We hope feature articles about some of the models that he has build will be a new series that will appear in out magazine over the next few years. (It's the old story-yours truly has the photographs-all I have to do is find the time to write the articles!)

IDEAS

Lampholders: Manfred Hammer's version of Keith Cameron's tramcar loops uses a Meccano Junior nut as a lampholder; the screw thread is near enough to that of a miniature screw base lamp. He drills and taps one side of the nut to take a bolt which serves both as ground contact to the shell of the lamp base, and as a mounting bolt. The other wire is soldered to the tip contact of the base. For grain-of-rice bulbs he uses a short piece of square plastic tube and mounts it similarly.

Holding Screws on Drivers: Earl Pitts recommends Stick-Um Candle Adhesive, available in small tins at candle retailers, for holding bolt heads and especially grub screw on screwdrivers.

Long Slot: Hubert Hogle makes 5½in. slotted strips—with a 4½in. slot!—from Lid Stays, meant to hold cabinet or desk lids open. They are Canadian Tire #46-8380-8, (2 for $3.99) or Home Hardware #2358-987 (2 for $2.99), and require a small amount of grinding and filing to match a 5½in. Meccano strip. Suggested uses: crosshead guides and similar reciprocating or sliding parts.

Insulating Circles: Don Pearson has found that industrial pipe gaskets come in sizes from 3 to 10 inches, and can be made into circular insulating pieces for rotating machinery, such as slipring insulation for crane superstructures. Various materials are available including compressed-paper-like, linoleum-like, and asbestos (not dangerous!); some might be too soft to support heavy superstructure mounted on anything narrower than rollers. They can be cut to fit on or inside circular parts from 2½in. to large Flanged Rings. They're not likely to be available from your local plumber; try an industrial supply firm.

Misaligned Shafts: Also from Don Pearson, a suggestion for when two shafts are *almost* in line. Two bush wheels on the opposing shafts are joined by threaded pins *locknutted* on each side of one bush wheel so that the pins have some freedom; they must be threaded pins without integral shoulders.

Concentric Shafts: Propeller shafts for model boats have a central shaft running in a brass tube slightly smaller than Meccano $\frac{3}{8}$in. size. The prop shaft is threaded at each end (SAE size), and they are available in lengths from about 6 to 18in. Not cheap: $12 to $20.

AN ALTERNATE CONSTRUCTION SET: eitech

by Dennis Caswell

I was stationed in Saudi Arabia for about a year and did not expect to find any kind of construction kits there. However, I was mistaken.

In Jeddah, I managed to locate a German-made kit called "eitech Construction". It is very similar to the Binns Road Meccano in that there are perforated strips, flat plates, and these items are bolted together with nuts and bolts. This set is not compatible with Meccano (although there will be some people who would make it compatible) in that the strips have holes on a 1 cm spacing. As everyone knows, Meccano uses a ½in. spacing. I have found only a limited supply of sets, and each of these are intended to build special types of models. One set would build cranes, another motorcycles, another aircrafts.

One good feature of this set is that the nuts and bolts are standard M4 size. This means that replacements would be very easy to locate.

I purchased two sets. One permits the construction of a helicopter, and the other various types of motorcycles. A breakdown of the various parts is set out to the right.

I may have some of the equivalent part numbers wrong, but I did not have access to a full listing of the Binns Road part numbers there. As is apparent from the above listing, the construction kit is very similar to the Binns Road Meccano set.

Exacto: A Nov. 1997 parts price list has a new address; though whether for Sr. A.M. Richini, or an Exacto sales office, isn't clear. It's M.E. Barrio, Gral. J.M. Bustillo 3254, 1406 Buenos Aires, Argentina. (A barrio is a district, not a person; Gral. appears to be the abbreviation of General.) A minimum export order of $2,000 US is required, but various discounts may apply. If anyone wants to make up an order, the Editor has the price list.

Eitech

P/N	Description	Binns Road Equivalent
1001	2-hole perforated strip	10
1002	3-hole perforated strip	6a
1003	4-hole perforated strip	6 (old style)
1004	5-hole perforated strip	5
1005	6-hole perforated strip, slotted	no real equivalent
1006	7-hole perforated strip	4
1041	Curved flat strip	90a, but slotted
1101	2x2-hole flat plate	no real equivalent
1102	3x3-hole flat plate	74
1113	5x3-hole flanged plate	51, but flanges on long sides
1121	trapezoidal plate 3x3-holes	similar to 126a
1125	trapezoidal plate 3x5-holes bent	similar to 126
1151	10mm disc	38
1152	20mm disc	38d
1153	30mm disc	24c, but only 4 holes
1201	1x1-hole bracket	11
1202	1x3-hole bracket	48, but longer
1211	1x2-hole bracket	11a
1221	1x3-hole bracket	48
1251	1x1-hole angle bracket	12
1252	1x1-hole angle bracket, slotted	12, but slotted on both sides
1253	1x2-hole angle bracket	12b, but slotted on single hole side
1262	Z angle bracket	125, but no middle hole
1303	wheel rim 34mm with tyre	20a and 142a
1351	35mm axle	17
1360	65mm axle with threaded ends	16, but with threaded ends
1361	95mm axle with threaded ends	15, but with threaded ends
1362	120mm axle with threaded ends	14, but with threaded ends
1371	29mm threaded pin	81
1372	44mm threaded pin	80c
1381	grubscrew	69c
1401	setting ring	similar to 38e
1402	flexible setting ring	similar to 38e
1501	M4 x 6 bolt	37b
1503	M4 x 16 bolt	111a
1505	M4 x 12 bolt	111c
1511	M4 nut	37a
1541	bearing, 5-hole	no real equivalent
1542	bearing, 5-hole with gear	no real equivalent
1543	friction disc	no real equivalent
1544	120mm axle with gear	14 with 27 welded in place
1546	60mm spring	120b but longer
1547	30mm spring	120b but longer
1554	screw holder	no real equivalent
1570	seat	no real equivalent
	3x7-hole flat plate	74a
	15-hole perforated strip	1b
	15-hole angle girder	8b but slotted
	6x6-hole plastic flexible plate	194 but larger
	6x12-hole clear flexible plate	193e

BIG TEN?

Why is the No.10 Meccano Outfit (as Binns Road always called it) the *ne plus ultra* of the hobby?—just short of the Holy Grail, because it *is* attainable. It serves as some kind of measuring stick, of goal, of achievement in possession. But *what* is it, that it should be so regarded? Seventy–five years ago there was no No.10 set—No.7 was the largest, and even it had just arrived. Up through 1921, No.6 was the largest. Then in 1936, deep in the Great Depression, a new colour scheme (blue–gold) replaced red–green, and new set sizes ran from A to L. No.10 did not appear until 1937—evidently the letter sizes were too hard to remember in order—so we have the No.10 set for sixty of Meccano's 96 years. Or rather, we had it until 1979, when Binns Road was gasping to closure—but new, boxed No.10 sets have still been found even into the Nineties.

But how big is big? What measure can be meaningfully applied to a set? For no reason except that they are the largest common parts, or the most numerous, consider these: p/n 1, 25–hole strip; p/n 8, 25–hole angle girder; p/n 27A, 57–tooth gear (from 1921 onward; p/n 27, 50t, before that); nuts and bolts. And two other measures: total parts in the Meccano range; total parts (except nuts and bolts) in the set. The table below results.

The blue–gold L set wins hands down as largest set; but its contents have a wider range but thinner representation of each part, than the 1922 No.7 set. The No.10 sets over the years have a still wider range of parts, but fewer of each part—though judging from the number of nuts and bolts, they should be capable of building larger models. Is this good?

Well, maybe. Would we like to go back to a more restricted range of parts? Hardly. There has always been a demand for new parts and some few people who (for lack of response from Binns Road or Calais) tinker their own. Would we like *more* of the narrower range of parts? Certainly. But those who have tried model–building with say a 1916 nickel–plated set, however big, while producing some splendid models, have been frustrated over apparently simple things. Such a familiar item as the 90a Curved Strip (there were a couple even in the smallest red–green set) wasn't there in 1916. Models were covered with strips, or with flat perforated plates (which *could* be bent if one absolutely had to), and the famous tri–motored biplane supermodel is the greatest example. But streamlining was a novelty in what the 1933 World's Fair called the Century of Progress—and Meccano was already becoming old hat. Perhaps that, and the hiatus in production during the War, were what greased the skids for Binns Road's eventual downfall forty years later.

But if we look at it another way, No.7 set of 1922 is history, and the L set was a brief episode rather than a standard. The No.10 set has been the largest available package of Meccano for some sixty years. What else do we have to measure our goals, or (for longtime adult enthusiasts) our attainments? Only the No.10 set, and now it is history as far as the factory is concerned. They can be found; so can Cord automobiles. Some people can collect automobiles; others collect Meccano, and measure their success as multiples of No.10. It may be like the Imperial system of measurement: no longer taught in schools; odder than the metric system; officially obsolete; but at the end of the Twentieth Century, most North American adults, and more British, still measure things in inches and feet than in centimetres. Not as permanent a standard as the platinum bars that describe the meter, perhaps. But no one so far has come up with anything in our hobby as generally accepted.

Don Redmond

Set	*Date*	*#1*	*#8*	*#27a*	*N&B*	*Highest p/n*	*Total Parts*
6	1914	48	24	2(27)	465	65	983
6	1921	48	24	2	644	65 (& 94)	944
7	1922	50	24	7	600	138, 301–15	1458
L	1936	38	26	7	650	211, 1583	1919
10	1937	24	16	4	650	219	1361
10	1955	24	16	6	730	226	1445
10	1967	24	16	6	730	235a*	1496

*Representing some 500 distinct parts.

WANTS AND OFFERS

Offer: Two Meccano Action Packs: Texas Wheelie with Sprint motor; Super Dragster with Sprint motor; both in good condition. $30 each. Emile Amirault, Box 42, Vawn SK SOM 2ZO.

Offer: Meccano parts, yellow–blue, red–green, gears, manuals, complete sets. Send for list of parts or send your wants list. G. Earl Pitts 26 Dyer Ct., Cambridge ON N3C 4B8. e–mail 102260,2432 or Internet 102260.2432@compuserve.comBrand.

For Sale: New 1996 stock:
01355 Meccano Jr Dump Truck, 78 pc – $18
01540 Meccano Jr Boat, 180 pc – $27
17201 Meccano Jr Airport, 214 pc – $44
03910 Collection Road Hauler Set, 182 pc – $14
30401 Meccano set 1, 203 pc – $21
30402 Meccano set 2, motorized, 274 pc – $28
30405 Meccano set 5, motorized, 556 pc – $69
32229 9v Geared Motor, bat holders, switch–$23
33105 Crane starter set, 130 pc – $9
33502 Space Warrior starter set, 109 pc – $9
38256 Ferris Wheel set, 440 pc – $65
Prices incl all taxes. Free shipping in Canada with orders over $50. H. Hogle, Box 398 Napanee ON. K7R 3P5 (613) 354–2351.

TEMSI

by Charles Shrubsole

TemSi, made in the Netherlands, is finished in old-time Meccano dark green and red and the design of most of the pieces is similar to Meccano 1920's designs. If you need an open-end p/n 52 (part numbers are mostly the same as Meccano) or an 8-hole length p/n 54, here is a source. Brackets are nickel plated. Hole spacing is nominally the same as Meccano but screw threads are M4 (metric) instead of 5/32 BSW. The elegantly-finished nickel plate hex nuts are rather bulky but the cheese-head slotted bolt heads very fine. They can be useful where you want to emphasize the nuts or need extra clearance over a bolt head. The excellent brass gears are compatible with Meccano. Available types are p/n 26, 26a, 26b, 27a, 27d, 28, 30 & 32. There is no 15-tooth pinion to go with p/n 27d. Perhaps because they have flat points, TemSi grubscrews grip tighter than the Meccano ones. (I intend to research this question). The nickel-plated axles are 4mm diameter and have unmachined sheared ends.

TemSi strips are very thick and the spacing and alignment of the holes is highly erratic, the reason, no doubt, some people think that the standard hole spacing is not the same as Meccano. The girders are much better but still leave something to be desired. They have square ends, so can not be used in some applications where girders must be fastened at acute angles. However, they are sturdy and stiff. TemSi's sturdiness is its strongest point. Besides the angle girders, you may prefer to use TemSi angle brackets, double angle strips, and flanged plates (especially p/n 53), often weak spots in Meccano construction. Best not use them where accuracy is important, where axles should be parallel, for instance, or where gears must mesh properly.

Noteworthy Parts: Some parts are worthy of special notice for their quality of good design, or for slight differences from their Meccano equivalents that make them specially useful in certain situations.

Pulley p/n 21 with balloon tire p/n 142 makes a road wheel the same outside diameter as Meccano p/n 187. Besides being much sturdier and more elegant, the rubber tires give better traction than hard plastic. It might be cheaper to get a set of these by buying box "X", which also includes a crown wheel, some long axles, and a selection of low-quality plastic flexible plates. Except for its part number and diameter, TemSi p/n 21 is not at all like the Meccano p/n 21. It is much wider and is made of red plastic with no holes. (Incidentally, the TemSi p/n 187 road wheel is the old-style tin pattern).

Pawl p/n 33 is double-sided like the obsolete Meccano p/n 33. Why did Meccano replace this practical design with one that is much less versatile (p/n 147a)?

Flanged plate p/n 53 is slightly narrower than the Meccano equivalent. If two are bolted together by their flanges a strip can also be bolted to the flat surfaces of both. You cannot do this with Meccano. The difference in width is just enough to allow the TemSi part to nest snugly within its Meccano equivalent, so the two can be combined to make odd lengths or two Meccano plates can be spliced with a TemSi plate to get a length of 11, 12 or 13 holes. The holes in the flanges are not elongated.

Hook p/n 57 is stamped out of sheet metal; not as elegant as Meccano hooks but easier to use in many applications. Double-angle strip 48a is sturdy and square, as befits such an important part. The holes next to the bent ends are elongated.

Windmill sail #61 is punched out in a double-row rectangular pattern with seven holes at standard spacing along one edge. Besides its official use, it could be used for gratings, safety cages, bridge railings, tram doors, and whatever else you could imagine. [Identical to Meccano sails of 1923-34, DMS 1686. Ed.]

There is also a full range of flat and angle girders. Part numbers are the same as Meccano equivalents.

There are a few parts for which there are no Meccano equivalents, such as p/n 53a, a single-flanged plate, similar to Meccano p/n 161 girder bracket, but three holes wide and five long, and p/n 53b, a flanged plate 3x9 holes, obviously a different bending of the blank for p/n 53. There is also a 1x3-hole angle bracket (p/n 12d).

Part numbers for TemSi rigid flat plates are: p/n 70, 7x11 holes (Meccano p/n 52a); p/n 71, 5x9-hole (Meccano p/n 53a); p/n 72, 3x7-holes. These are obviously the blanks for flanged plates p/n 52, 53 & 51 respectively. Some inferior parts, besides the crude perforated strips already mentioned are the flimsy plastic flexible plates and the curved strips (p/n 90a), which have even more offset on the ends that the Meccano equivalent.

Best Buy Boxes: Conversion box No.3a contains (among other things) the following goodies: two 19T pinions, a 57T gear, a worm, all these gears in brass; two collars, and two couplings, also brass; a pawl; four 25-hole angle girders; and four high-quality flanged plates (1x52, 3x53).

Box A (for 'Andrijf') has a 19T pinion, a 57T gear, a 50T contrate wheel, a worm, two collars and a coupling, all in brass, and nickel-plated brackets p/n 126 (ea. 2) and p/n 139/139a.

Box K (for 'Ketting') is a set of nickelplated sprockets the same sizes as the Meccano ones, one each of the two largest sizes and two each of the smaller ones, with a metre of chain.

Box Y contains structural parts: flat plates p/n 70 (Meccano p/n 52a) and 71 (Meccano 53a), one of each; four each of angle girders p/n 8a, 9, 9b and flat girders p/n 103 & 103d; nickel-plated brackets p/n 126 & 126a (two of each), p/n 139 & 139a.

A good feature of the TemSi boxes is their 'what you see is what

you get' packaging. The various parts lie in recesses in vacuum-formed plastic inserts in shallow cardboard boxes. A transparent plastic inner cover keeps parts from being lost in shipping or stolen during display but allows prospective buyers to see everything inside. The package is also useful for keeping the pieces tidy. Meccano could learn from this.

Motor: The TemSi 12-volt DC motor No.300 seems from the picture in a brochure to be similar to the Meccano M5 Power Drive Unit with 6-speed gearbox. I do not have one so I cannot pass judgment on it.

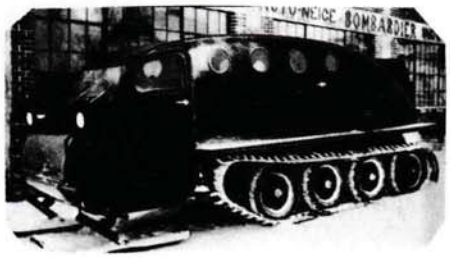
Since writing this article I have found a red Meccano p/n 53 plate the same width as the TemSi ones. It seems this was an earlier plate, for several yellow plates I tried, and another red one, were wider.

[A TemSi dealer in Toronto is John's Photo & Hobbies 2188 Danforth Av M4C 1K3 (416)421-1850 Ed.]

[Charles is quite right about erratic hole spacing. Comparing four TemSi 25-hole strips from a single set, using Meccano threaded pins as test probes, it could be seen that some holes were as much as 1,5mm out of register. As many as eight holes out of 25 were out of standard spacing, usually farther apart than standard, so that two register pins at ½in. (12,7mm) spacing would not fit into adjacent holes. Overall the TemSi 25-hole strips were consistently about 1,5mm longer than a Meccano 25-hole strip. The same irregularity of hole spacing was evident in an 11x5-hole flanged plate, a sector plate and 11-hole strips, from the same set. The pattern of irregularity was consistent in a set of four 25-hole strips, i.e. the four could be placed so that all holes were aligned through the set. This suggest that the fault was in the punching press. The nominal hole spacing of TemSi seems to be 12,7mm (0.50in.) and the errors may be within the tolerance for M4 bolts (0.153in. o.d.) in holes 0.161in. or a trifle larger. Ed.]

A WINTER MODEL: PROBLEMS, PROBLEMS:

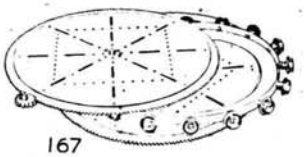
Last year, among ideas for Winter models, was mentioned the Bombardier auto-neige, the original snowmobile. When the Editor went to an industrial town in the St. Maurice Valley, north of Trois-Rivieres on the St. Lawrence, in 1943, they had winter in quantity. One memory is of a bandstand in the public park. It was not until April or May that it was revealed as a two-storey bandstand. Bombardier snow vehicles were common on streets in the centre of town.



So, how does one model a Bombardier in Meccano? There's the Meccano Track-Pack. It runs over rubber-tired wheels, probably 1½in. pulleys. Steering: is it front-steered by the skis (like present snowmobiles) or track steered? If a model is motorized, should it be one motor, and a differential, or two motors to make track steering easy? Remote steering would require a separate motor and remote control by one of the new Meccano units. The streamlined body shape will require some careful plate-work. What about the porthole windows? They could be dummies made of 1in. Rubber Rings, backed by circles of clear plastic plate and black paper (probably better than circles of black plastic plate), glued onto the bodysides. Judging by what seems to be a radiator, the chassis has a front motor. Is the track drive to the front sprocket? Normally, track drive is to the *rear* sprocket, so that the bottom of the tracks which is tight to the road, receives the traction, and the top of the track is slack. But no rear sprocket is evident in the illustration; it's a tired (no pun) wheel. Is there a rear entrance, or do passengers enter the cabside door? Presumably the streamlining and sloped windshield help to prevent accumulation of snow.

There are enormous tracked (and tired—still no pun) snow vehicles in use today, particularly in the Arctic. Is the auto-neige now an industrial relic, or do they still scoot over snow-filled northern roads?

D.A.R.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Spare Parts:

Meccano
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REPAINTING OF PARTS

by Jim Picton

After building up a good stock of parts I soon realized the many colours and shades Meccano has gone through. Selecting a plate became a problem as I now had 5 different shades of red, and flanged plates in red, blue, black and yellow. Time to repaint.

My Binns Road yellows are now red. The new French Meccano has a powdered paint and is very durable. Some parts are really hard to remove the paint from and I have not needed to do so but thought I would try a few just to experiment.

Herein lies another problem: matching the colours and finding a reliable source of paint. This is no easy task. Most of the larger paint stores in this country can match any colour you bring in, but at a considerable cost. This is accomplished by computer analysis. The paint can be supplied in tin or spray can form with the latter ending up costing about $15.00 per aerosol can. This may be o.k. for a few rare parts but to do a whole collection would be too costly.

My decision was to find something that closely matched my existing colours and at least make my models presentable by having all the same reds, greens, etc.

Caution: Protect your eyes and skin al all costs when using the following. Wear protective eye goggles and a good grade of rubber gloves. Rubbermaid kitchen gloves stand up to the task. Work in a well ventilated area, preferably outdoors. **Read ALL instructions on cans.**

I buy all my paint in aerosol cans at Canadian Tire. Most of the newer stores will have two paint departments, one for automotive, the other for general household. This is what I use.

Red	Real Red	#48-0304-6	340g can$3.99
Green	Implement Green	#48-0305-4	340g can$3.99
LtBlue	FM Blue	#47-7543-6	340g can$4.99

The following are available from the automotive section. They come in a smaller can (142g) and are a bit more expensive.

Yellow – Nissan 77–78 Sunburst Yellow is a pretty close match for the "Calais" Yellow.

John Deere Green is almost the same as the Implement Green and can be purchased at most automotive parts stores.

Next comes the decision of how to clean the parts. Some people just rub the parts with steel wool then spray on a layer of new paint. Keep in mind though that an extra layer of paint will be added to the holes as well and might make the insertion of an axle rod a bit tight. I prefer to completely strip the parts and start from scratch. Another problem when painting yellow over red is that you will end up with a darker yellow due to the red bleeding through.

Materials: The following procedure is a bit messy and time consuming but the results are well worth the extra work. You will require the following:

Two metal baking trays, available at your local grocery store. Cost approx. $7.00 for both.

Stripper – I use a gel made by Poly Stripper. About $25.00 per gallon. (Revy Building Supplies)

Some old dish towels – check with the wife/girlfriend/neighbour on this one.

A few rolls of paper towels.

Some cheap 1in. paint brushes.

Old tooth brushes. It's time you bought yourself a new one anyway.

A 1in. putty knife or scraper. Comes in handy for stubborn paint.

Cleaning: In the first tray, pour in about ¼in. of stripper. It is not necessary to cover the entire bottom of the tray if you are only cleaning a few parts. Insert a few parts at a time and brush the gel over the surfaces (this is where a gel comes in handy as it will cling to the surfaces of exposed flanged plates for example). Let the parts sit for a few minutes and you will see the old paint start to bubble. Use the paint brush to remove most of the paint while still in the pan. Gently remove a part and brush off excess gel, then transfer into the second pan that contains water. (The water acts as a neutralizer). Using a tooth brush, remove remaining paint from part. If all paint does not come off, try using the putty knife as a scraper. In stubborn cases place a part back in the stripper pan for a few more minutes and repeat process.

Wipe parts using the old dish towels and let air dry. When you have finished all the parts, rinse them under running water and dry with paper towels. You should now have a whole mess of clean, bare, steel parts.

Now would be a good time to try to remove any kinks or dents in the parts as imperfections will show up a lot more on bare metal.

Slip–joint pliers work well on strips and girders. A rubber mallet and a block of lead as backing sometimes help with the plates.

Painting: Required materials are a wire mesh screen. I use a cheap portable Bar–B–Q that came with 2 grills. Again Canadian Tire – on sale at $16.

Lay the parts out on a wire mesh screen in a suitable well ventilated location and follow instructions on the can. I prefer to lay on a heavy coat (watch for runs) and let dry about 1 hour. Turn the parts over and spray again.

After another hour of drying you may still find the parts a bit "tacky". Lay out a sheet of tin foil and let the parts dry on it for 24 hours.

Baking: This can be a problem for those of you with wives but I am sure you will work things out. A lot of pleading and begging might work.

Place parts on acookie tray. A sheet of tinfoil placed on the tray seems to calm the women down a bit. Bake the parts at 175° for about 20

minutes or use the Oven Baking Rack I designed. This can be seen on my web–page at http://users.com/~jpicton/

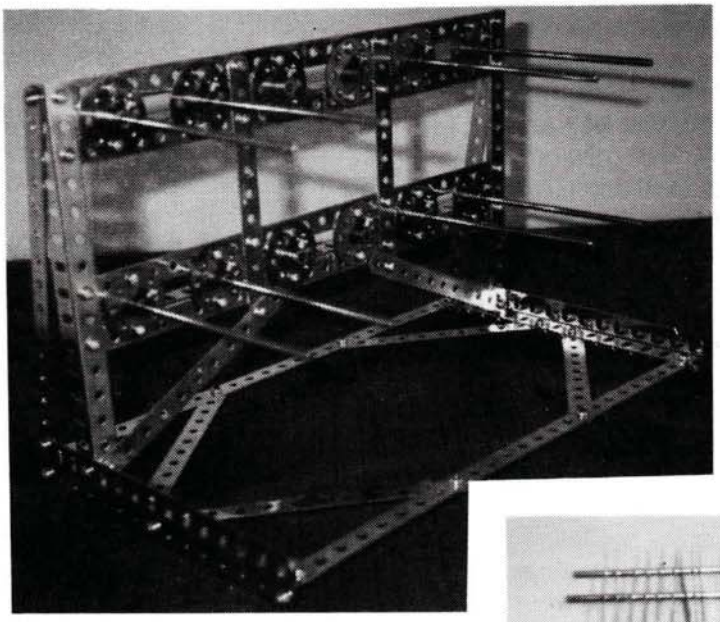
Caution: this does not work too well with yellow paint as the yellow tends to darken.

Remove tray from oven and let cool. The parts will be a bit tacky again so place on another sheet of tin foil. The parts will be ready to add to your parts box in about 15 minutes.

The newly painted parts look good, don't they?

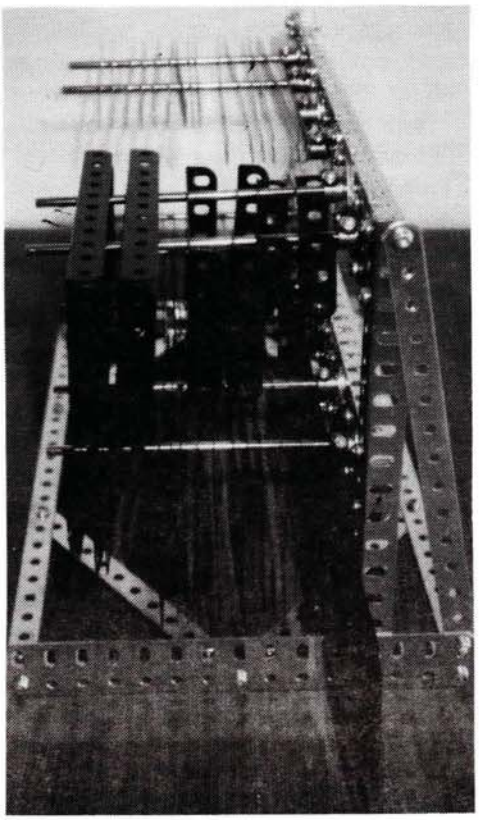
The rack will accommodate up to 100 parts of any combination. This is possible by placing the axle rods in the bushwheels suited to the parts to be painted. Strips, plates or any other parts with a hole in them can be hung leaving just a small space between the parts so they don't stick together.

My reds are baked at 175° for 20 minutes, allowed to cool on the rack for 15 minutes then placed back into my parts cabinet. The rack fits on a small cookie tray for easy placement and removal from the oven.



Parts List:
2x1
2x1b
8x2
4x8
2x8b
8x15
12x24
2x103k

Between paint jobs the rack can be used as a parts picker on your next project.



Oven Baking Rack

by Jim Picton

As I was repainting my stock of Meccano parts this summer I came across a few problems when baking the parts in the oven for curing. I was using a cookie tray covered with tin foil. The parts tended to come out a bit tacky and stick to the tin foil on the tray, removing some pain when they are picked off.

Digging into my Meccano box, I solved the problem by building this Oven Baking Tray. As mentioned above, the painted parts will come out of the oven a bit sticky so I made the rack out of zinc plated parts.

IDEAS

Blue Flexible Plates: Manfred Hammer makes blue flexible plates from Krazy Carpet snow sliders available at Canadian Tire for $2.49 for a piece about 18 x 30in. The colour is close to Meccano blue.

Nylon Nuts, Bolts and Washers: Mechanical–electrical devices are easier to fashion using nylon nuts bolts and washers available in 5/32in. size at some auto supply stores. They are not cheap—about $1.00 each!

Drill Rod for Axles: Water hardened drill rod makes a good substitute axle. Although slightly smaller than Meccano axles, it costs only $3.00 for a 36in. length, and is harder than Meccano axles and less prone to bend.

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ERECTOR®

C.N.R. LOCOMOTIVE

(continued from page 1)

To save weight this part of the engine is made of high-tensile silicon steel. The firebox is very large, 10ft. 6in. long and 7ft. 1in. wide. The cylinders are 23in. in diameter with a 28in. stroke; and the driving wheels are 6ft. 8in. in diameter and fitted with steel hub liners made in a single piece. The axles are of hammered carbon steel, quenched and drawn in oil. The driving journals are 12in. diameter and 13in. long.

The 2ft. 10in. truck wheels are cast iron with forged steel tires. The trailing truck, under the firebox, is fitted with a booster which increases the nominal tractive effort from 43,300lb. to 53,300lb. The cylinders, valves and guide bars are lubricated by six-feed mechanical lubricators; a hydrostatic lubricator in the cab distributes oil to the various auxiliaries.

The 12-wheel tender has a capacity of 20 tons of coal and 14,000 gallons of water, the total weight being 305,600lb. The main frames, including crossties, front coupler beam, rear boiler cradle, cylinders and air reservoirs, are cast in one piece of solid steel.

The model is fitted with Walschaerts valve gear instead of the Baker-Pillo gear fitted to the prototype engine. Close examination is necessary to detect the difference between the two kinds of gear. Reversing is by means of a handle in the cab, and a lever mechanism enables the movement of the reversing link to move the reversing lever of the 6V electric motor which drives the model. In this way the valve gear appears to make the engine reverse. The driving wheels are all sprung and carried on compensating levers.

The boiler of the model is 7in. in diameter, and its fittings include safety valves, steam dome, whistle, bell and headlight. The front of the locomotive carries an air reservoir, pilot (cowcatcher), and steps to the boiler catwalks.

The cab is of the short vestibule type. Boiler fittings include water and steam gauge, power reverse lever, injector control and a brake lever. The interior is lit by a 6V lamp. A battery for supplying this lamp, headlight and tender lamps is carried in the smokebox, with separate switches for each lamp in the cab. Current for the main driving motor is supplied by a 6V transformer. The entire top of the boiler is hinged, and the cab roof is hinged to the cabside to allow space for operating the controls.

The trucks each have six wheels made of Wheel Flanges and Faceplates; the trucks are attached to the tender frame by Ball Bearings. Each axle has spiral springs, and realistic axleboxes are fitted. Dummy brake cylinders add to the realistic appearance. The tender tank is made of 12½in. strips, and its rear is a Circular Plate on which are mounted the automatic coupler, brake connections, ladder and electric lamps. The coupler is built up from Fishplates and Couplings. It is attached to the tender by a Double Bracket and a 1in. rod. The brake connections are springs carried on a 2in. rod and held in place by Collars, and curved slightly for a realistic effect. The ladder is built up from two 7½in. strips held parallel by two Double Brackets; the steps are 1in. Threaded Rods. The electric lamps are Chimney Adaptors secured to the smokebox by Angle Brackets. Small bulbs in these are fed from the battery in the smokebox. The forward end of the tank is cut away in the form of a square well for coal. A wall is fitted around the top edge of the well and finished by handrails. A sliding door enables the coal to be manhandled in an emergency, but normally the firebox is fed by a mechanical stoker. Three manholes (Wheel Flanges) in the top of the tender are mounted on a platform of Angle Girders and Flat Plates.

Condensed from the *Meccano Book of Prize Models*, 1932.)

IRWIN BUYS MECCANO U.S.

According to the Toronto Globe and Mail, Irwin Toy Ltd has bought the American business of Meccano Inc. of New York, most recently known as The Erector Set Company, from Meccano SA, the French parent company. Irwin, the Canadian distributor of Meccano, has current annual Meccano sales of $2.5 to $3 million, while the U.S. subsidiary of the French firm had sales ten times that figure in 1994.

According to Scott Irwin, vice president of the Toronto firm, American sales had fallen off since then, and Irwin were planning on more aggressive North American style marketing for space age kids. The Globe and Mail item was in the Business section of the paper on Saturday, Nov. 15.

Mutilator's Corner

by John A. Wapshott

This is an area I never expected to be in! However I have long admired the usefulness of the, now obsolete, Gilbert Erector strip with holes at ¼in. centres. When I found out that the Märklin constructional system (Meccano-Compatible) has adjusting strips with holes at ¼in. centres I could not stand it any longer.

I bolted a Gilbert Erector strip over a standard 2½in. Meccano strip as a guide and proceeded with a hand held "Whitney" type punch to convert the 2½in. 5-hole Meccano strip into a 9-hole 2½in. strip. This mutilation, in my opinion, does not diminish but only enhances.

CANADIAN TOY COLLECTORS SOCIETY SILVER JUBILEE, OCTOBER 26

The CMAMAS group were invited back to the Canadian Toy Collectors Society annual show—this year, their Silver Jubilee show at the Skyway Centre, Etobicoke (Toronto) Oct. 26. One or two Meccano enthusiasts even attended the Collectors' banquet on the Saturday evening, Oct. 25; on Sunday, a dozen of us helped fill up eight tables of our own display, and attracted compliments from both show visitors and CTCS dealers. Dealers had a number of nice Meccano and Hornby items for sale—show visitors hardly had a chance at those, which went very fast when CMAMAS members saw them! Among the choice items on the sale tables were a New York (Meccano Co. of America) No.1X set of about 1921, complete with an early 6V electric motor. That dealer was a CMAMAS member, Ferdinand H. Zegel.

Numerous Gilbert Erector sets were shown, but attracted few takers. Manfred Leimgardt, our Stayner member, had both a dealer's stall with Meccano sets and steam engines, and display models on our tables, including a Stayner firehose drying and bell tower (which somebody tried hard to buy!), windmill pump in red-green, and a helicopter in Gabriel Erector. A dealer named Jack (wouldn't give his full name) had a number of 3-6V small motors suitable for Meccano, including a Richards 6-speed motor; phone him at (416) 231-9772 if interested. George and Anne Brown had several motors of the type used in Meccano Ltd. display models: Fracmo and other heavy-duty gearhead slow-speed motors, some for 240V; phone them at (705) 769-3021.

Among other items from dealers were several boxes of wooden logs snapped up by CMAMAS members. Surprise here was two boxes of "Canadian Logs" made by Meccano Tri-Ang Ltd., evidently after Tri-Ang bought Meccano Ltd. about 1970! Bill Zimmerman specialized in Dinky Toys tires and parts; if you want small and genuine tires for Meccano models, phone or fax him after 4pm, at (905) 562-7095. Robin Ward had a fine stack of later-period *Meccano Magazines*; at the close of the show someone had expressed interest and they may be gone. See him at the Sunday flea market in Pickering, or phone (905) 836-2271.

The modelers had as usual been busy. The most impressive item was easily Terry Stewart's Kent Smock Windmill, from MW Modelplan 85, a towering (no pun) structure considerably taller than Terry with a massive set of sails having adjustable shutters. The shutter leaves were repainted Stokys strips (aluminum) but the wheel was still so massive it required 2 24V gearhead motors to drive. The entire mechanism was Terry's new design, roughly as complicated as an aircraft engine with adjustable pitch propeller, and about as heavy.

Bernard Champoux had brought Gauge O Meccano railroad rolling stock but went home with decidedly more railroad models than he brought.

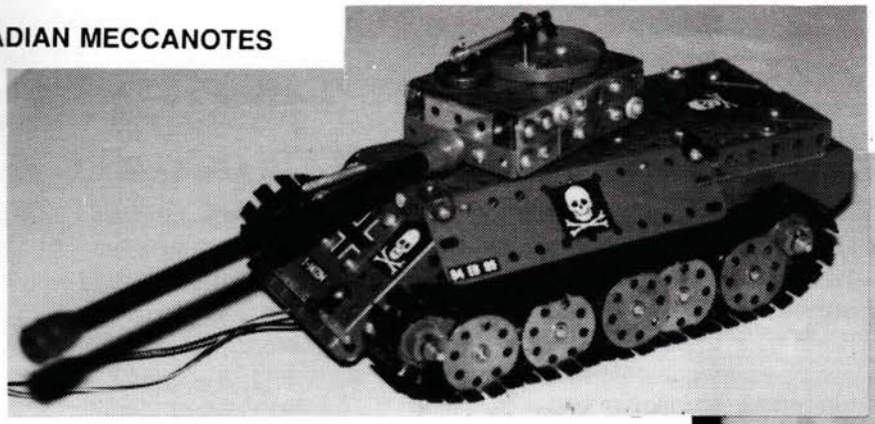
Attila Szakonyi's multi-geared Baldwin Meccanograph intrigued everyone. Hint to Meccanograph constructors: Attila was using a pad of multi-coloured paper; it adds a great effect to the already incredible designs. His Konkoly Ball Roller (which uses a lot of very long rubber bands) was also colourful with multicolored table tennis balls rolling vividly. Erika's fine plastic models are better at every show; pity there were relatively few young visitors at this show. Eric Eisen provided for the young with small crankable models, and a balance beam with trunnion weights which kept adults occupied as well.

John Wapshott's three traction engines, of various designs and colours, were on pushbutton-started turntables, whirring in all directions as they turned. John also had a variety of "monster" trucks, all tires and decals. Don Redmond opened a big suitcase and extracted like a conjuror an amazing number of models including a revised version of the "Samson" locomotive of 1838, and his response to Lou Boselli's gift of a bagfull of Sprockets, a disc harrow and tractor.

Dennis Caswell's crane and motor tricycle were eyecatching in brightly plated "Construction" parts featuring slotted girders and curved strips, accompanied by a fine fighter plane from an Evolution Meccano set, and an Army halftrack. Other show visitors included Normand St-Aubin with a Gilbert Erector White Truck with (fragments of!) original tires, and (in a pause in his other activities) CMAMAS President Colin Hoare.

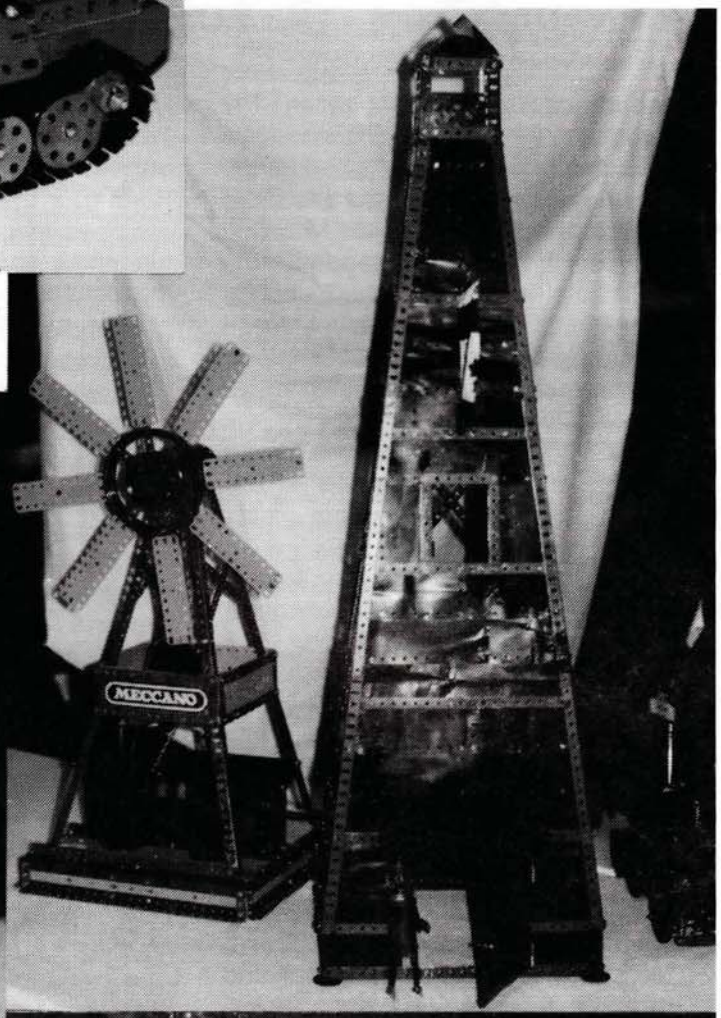
Harold Stobbe, an Owen Sound member, brought samples of a boon to modelers: a 3-hole bearing strip in $\frac{1}{8}$ by ½in. brass, which he proposes to make in some quantity, and which should greatly reduce friction problems of rotating shafts. He also had some puzzling parts: ½in. and ¾in. pulleys, made of two sheet-metal discs peened together at the centre hole and obviously sloppy on any rod—antiques certainly, but from what kind of a set?

Aux Lecteurs de Langue Francais: No.59, the Fall issue of the magazine of the Club des Amis du Meccano, is a 16-page gem, with four pages of colour and the rest picture-packed. Included: an intriguing differential drive for four-wheel vehicles; six small and charming airplane models; an item on the Hartree differential analyzer (nothing to do with vehicle transmissions!); a heavy-vehicle 8x8 chassis from 1962; a couple of new roller bearings for cranes; and a bright report on the Skegness exhibition. Recommended even if you don't read French!

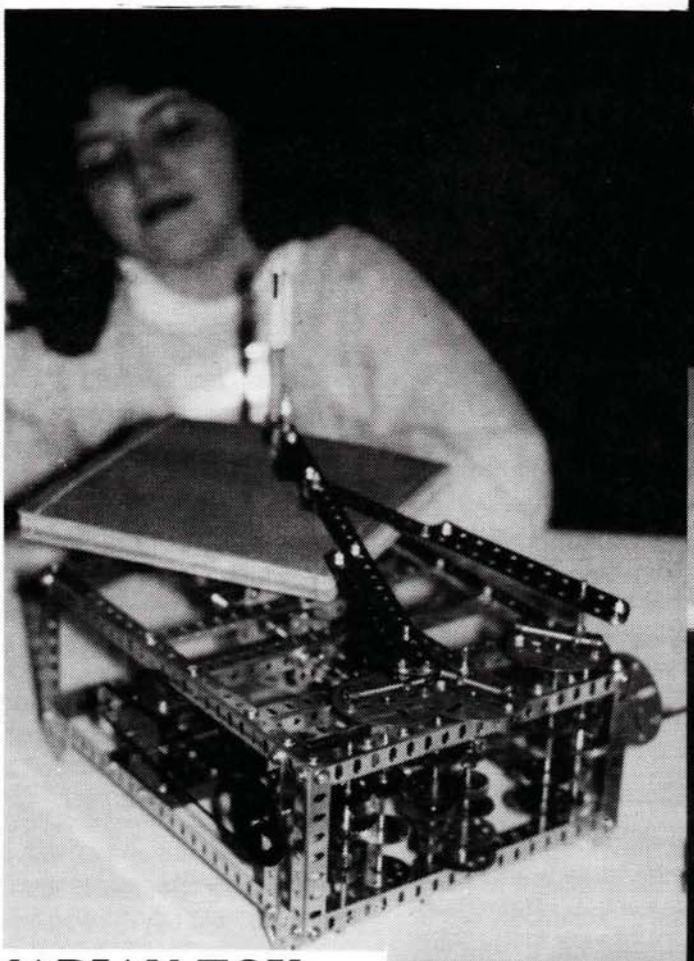


Above: Worfolk's tank.

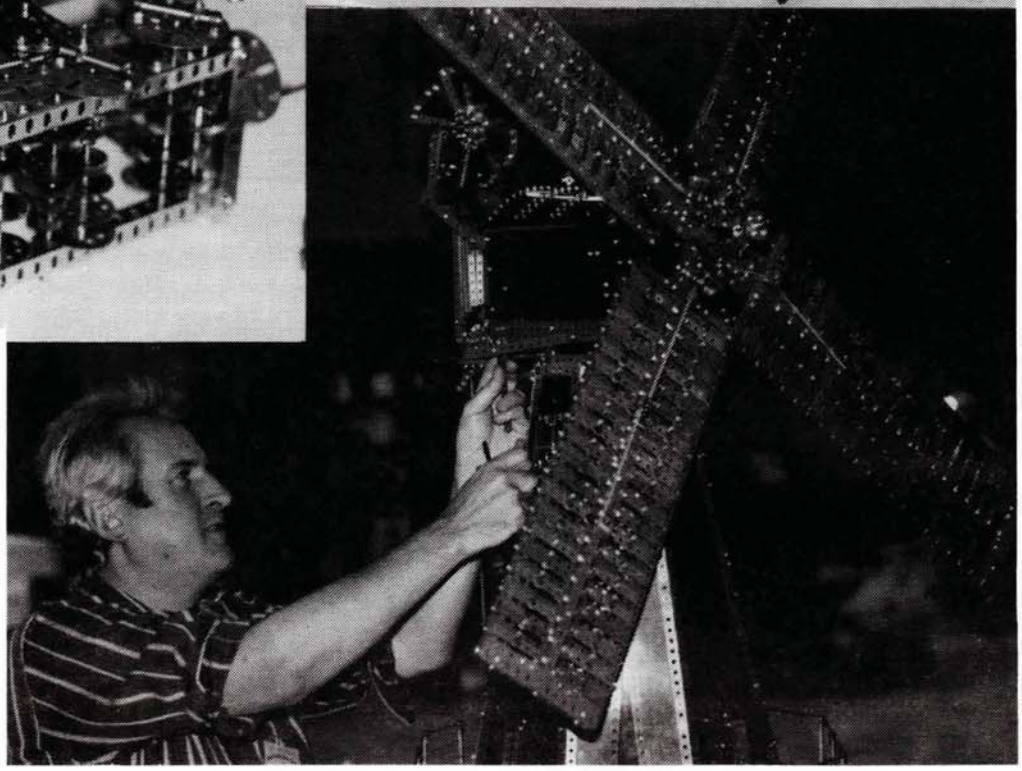
Below: Leimgardt's Stayner hose and bell tower, and windmill



Below: Erika starts Szakonyi's harmonograph.

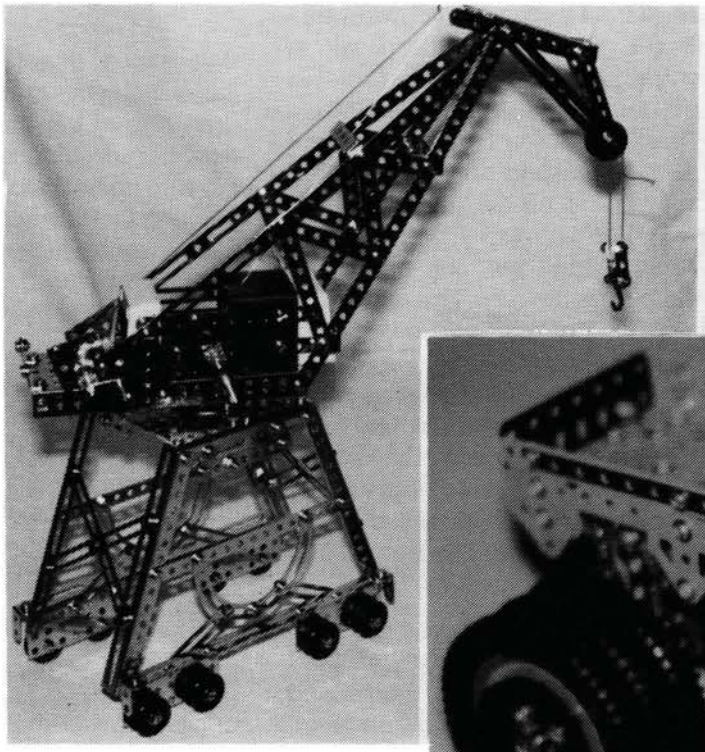


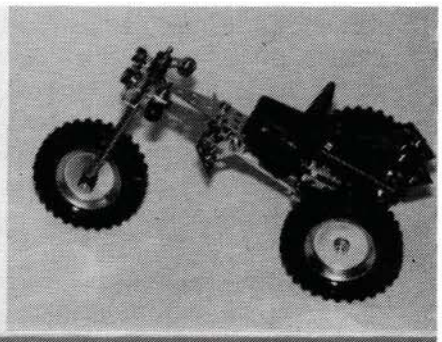
CANADIAN TOY COLLECTORS' SHOW, TORONTO, OCT. 26



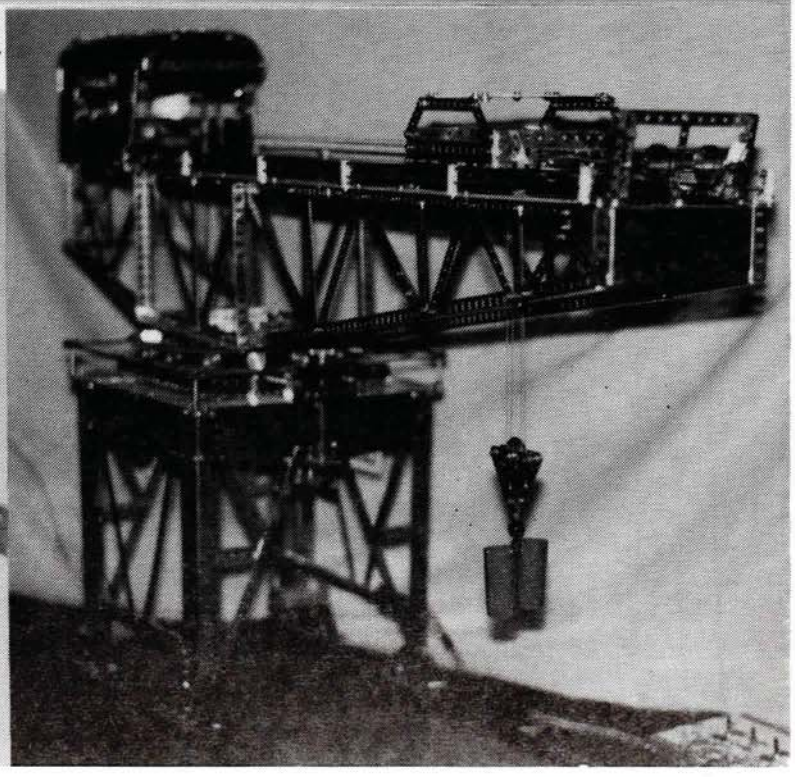
Terry Stewart adjusts his windmill

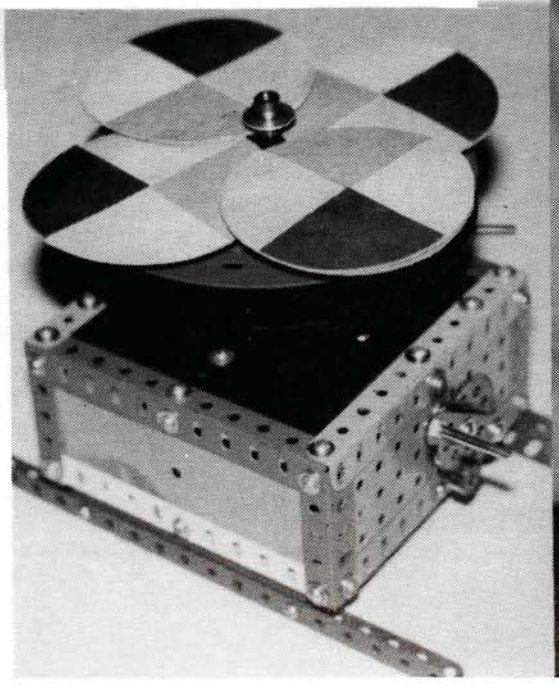
TOY COLLECTORS, OCT. 26:





(1) Caswell's "Construction" crane and (2) ATV trike; (3) Wapshott's monster truck; (4) Lacroix's nickel all-brass blocksetter; (5) Worfolk's color-shifting discs.





MY FATHER'S BLOCK-SETTING CRANE

by Larry Yates

I recall, when I was a youngster and Christmas came around, receiving on different years Meccano outfits No.2 and 4. However the largest set I received was a No.6 outfit at age ten or eleven. My attraction to Meccano was so-so, therefore in an effort to increase my interest, my dad endeavoured to show me what could be done when breaking away from the models in the book of instructions.

We all know (don't we?) that when dads get involved with the kid's toys, they have more fun with it that the child does and so it came to be that my dad got hooked on Meccano.

In any event my dad's building ambitions soon surpassed what could be constructed with the Meccano at hand. Also, he began contemplating the blocksetter model on the cover of the manuals of the time (early 1950's). Such a large model required far more parts than the combined sets that I had as a young boy.

A few of the larger department stores carried a complete line of outfits as well as an important selection of spare parts, but in the early '50s, salaries were low and Meccano was relatively expensive (and still is, especially when shipped air mail from the United Kingdom).

Unusual circumstances and lucky timing permitted my dad to acquire more Meccano. Morgan's department store (now the Bay) in downtown Montreal had on display a No.10 outfit in an oak cabinet. Someone stole parts from the set and instead of replacing them, the store decided to sell off the whole remaining outfit as spares. I don't know if the parts from the set were sold cheaper than the regular spare parts, but my dad got wind of this and for a number of Saturdays, he would take me to the store and buy as many of the parts as he could afford. He must have come up with some pretty strong arguments to convince my mother that this was the opportunity of a lifetime. In this manner, he was able to buy about two-thirds of the No.10 set.

The W.H. Pinyon illustration of the block-setting crane was (and still is) a most inspiring model and with the additional parts now on hand, my dad had his mind set on building this very large crane. To build such an elaborate model called for plans, especially for the hidden portions of the model. At the time, my father had absolutely no knowledge of the supermodel leaflets previously published in the late 20's and early 30's (he passed away in 1976, never having seen or heard of the supermodels), so with the drafting practice he acquired during World War Two, he set out to draw plans for the great blocksetter.

The major proportions were determined directly from the cover illustration by counting holes. The drawings of the model were done in pencil on drafting paper at half scale, i.e. with holes spaced ¼in. apart. The painting by Pinyon included some artistic licence which required imagination to a varying degree. My dad interpreted to the best of his knowledge.

To produce the drawings, he broke the model down into sections which he named:

DRWG 1	Under Carriages
DRWG 2	Corner Uprights Plan
DRWG 3	Corner Uprights & Bracing Side Elevation
DRWG 4	Corner Uprights & Bracing Front Elevation
DRWG 5	Platform for Turntable
DRWG 6	Turntable
DRWG 7	Boom & Operating Cabin Plan
DRWG 8	Operating Cabin Side Elevation
DRWG 9	Operating Cabin End Elevation
DRWG 10	Head of Boom
DRWG 11	Trolley

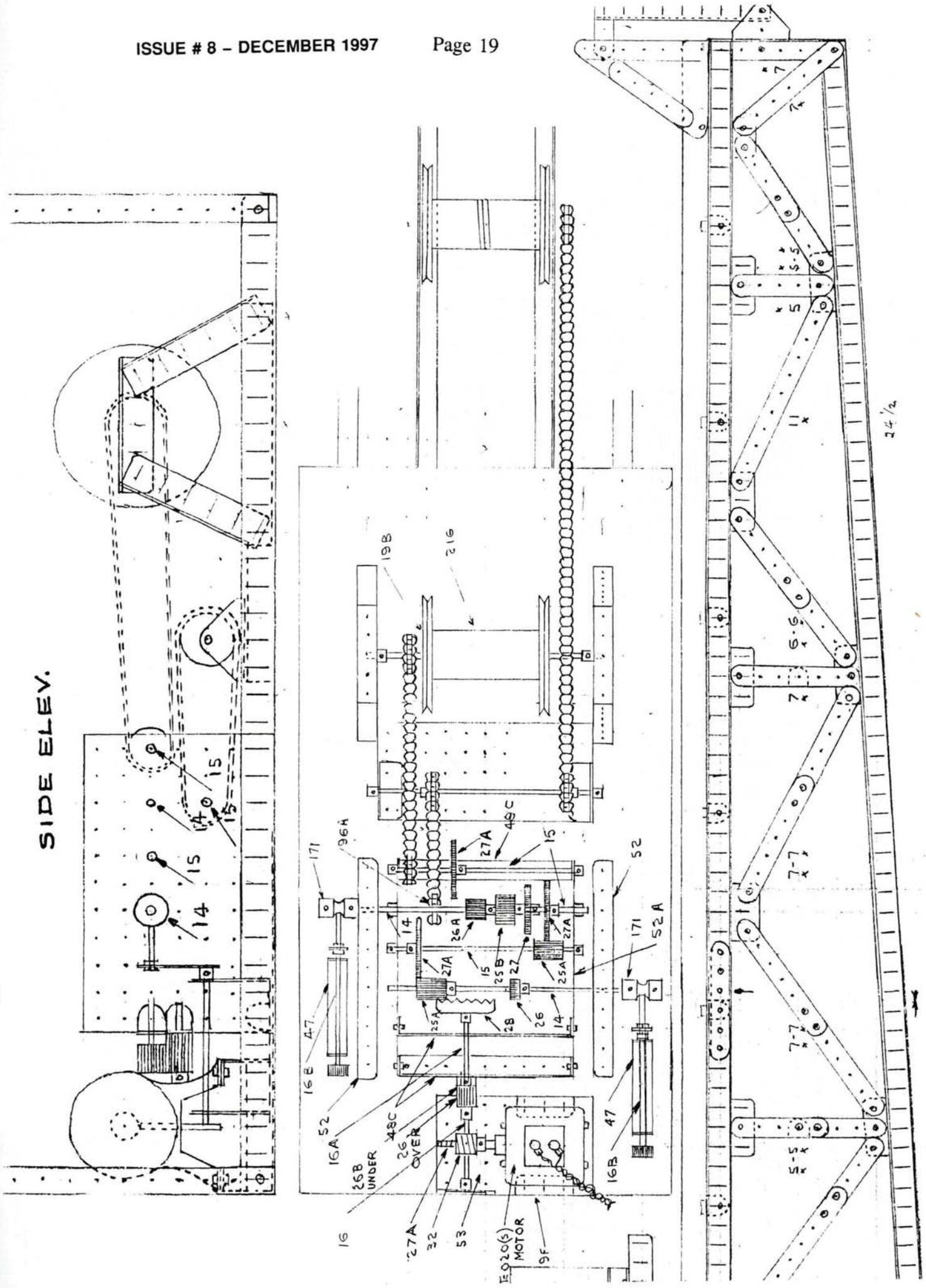
The accompanying repros give some idea of the effort involved and all eleven original drawings are carefully preserved as a reminder of my father's interest in Meccano and the blocksetter in particular. The drawings also represent the origins of my own renewed interest in the Binns Road product.

At some point, my dad realized that the project would be too expensive to carry out and although the total Meccano at hand was by this time more or less equivalent to a No.10 outfit, my father never did accumulate the necessary parts so the crane was never built as per the drawings. There is no way of knowing if the model could be built exactly as shown in the drawings and there are no instructions to guide the builder. The rendition of the gearbox seems sketchy and somewhat incomplete.

From the Pinyon illustration, the details could only be inferred at

(continued on page 20)

The "Pinyon" crane of 1947


SIDE ELEV.
24 1/2
E020(S) MOTOR
26B UNDER
26 OVER

My Father's Block-Setting Crane

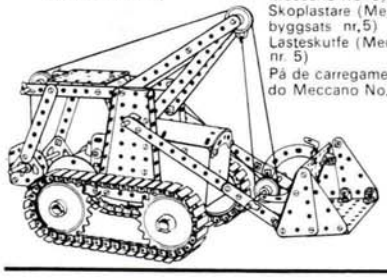
(continued from page 18)

best; all we see is a 3in. sprocket wheel. Also, there is no plan showing the mechanism to allow the crane to travel on its rails. The cover illustration shows the crane nearly completed, but the Fidler's block-setting gear is missing. My dad had no way of knowing that the boy with the blue sweater was in the process of assembling this component.

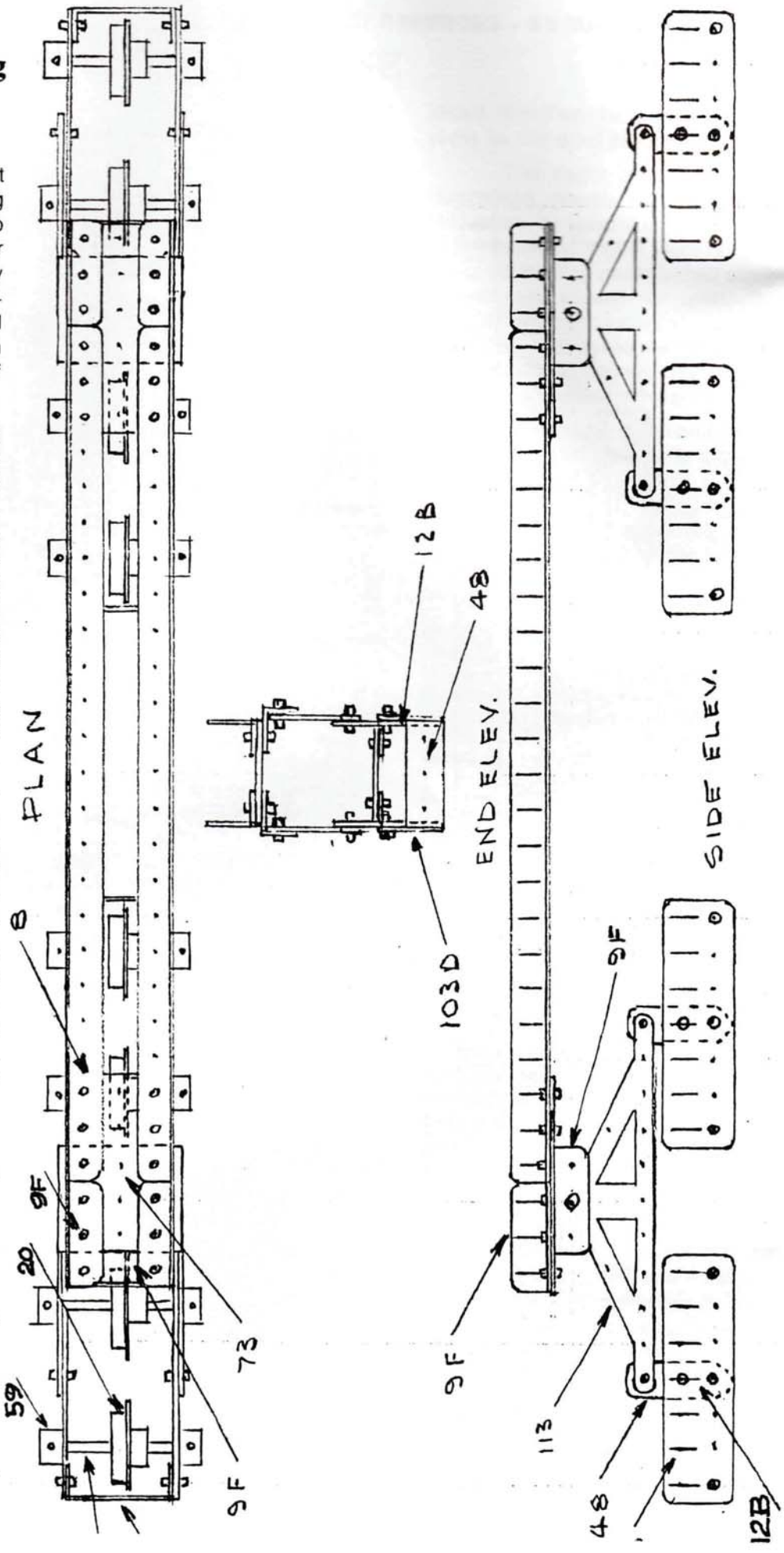
When I started my working career in the early '60s, the Meccano was all put away in a chest my dad had made from a hardwood crate. Fortunately, it was kept in a dry place, and in 1993 I pulled out that chest and it was now my turn to get really hooked on Meccano. As I write this I am still missing some of the parts required to built Supermodel No.4, the 1928 version shown in the Cavendish Books publication. When I accumulate enough Meccano I may try to build the model as per my dad's drawings.

The purpose of this recollection is to bring to light the determination that my father had as a Meccano enthusiast and perhaps inspire me to follow in his footsteps. Thank-you dad for showing the way.

[In 1947 Meccano Ltd. commissioned W.H. Pinyon to produce the first postwar Meccano box label and manual cover, the famous "Pinyon" blocksetting crane. It is at least doubtful that the crane was ever actually modeled.—Ed.]

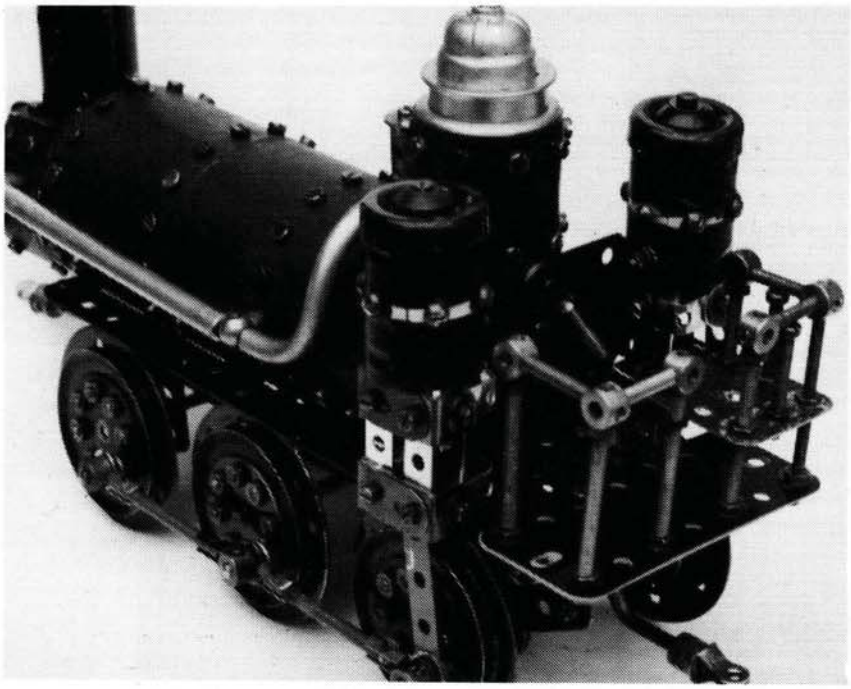


Loading Shovel (Meccano Set No. 5)
Pelleteuse-chargeuse (Meccano No. 5)
Ladeschaufel (Meccano Baukasten Nr. 5)
Laadschop (Meccanoset No.5)
Pala caricatrice (scatola Meccano No. 5)
Pala cargadora (Juego Meccano No. 5)
Skoplastare (Meccano byggsats nr.5)
Lasteskutfe (Meccanosett nr. 5)
Pá de carregamento (estojo do Meccano No.5)



"SAMSON" LOCOMOTIVE MARK II

The "Samson" 1838 locomotive model, described in the September *CMN*, has had further development by its Nova Scotia owner. The vertical cylinders, using Sleeve Pieces, were slightly our of proportion, and the new Cylindrical Girders from Exactor (Argentina) provide cylinders more in proportion to the size of the steam dome. Three 3-hole ½in. radius Exacto Cylindrical Girders are joined along their middle holes by *two* curved Fishplates of ½in. radius, and the cylinder formed is wrapped (for appearance) in black plastic tape. The cylinders are topped with the matching ends, and finished off by suitable parts to give a slightly domed appearance; large domed rubber faucet washers were used here, The tops are held on by 1x2-hole Narrow Angle Brackets opened out slightly.



As these cylinders are slightly shorter that the Sleeve Pieces, piston rods must be made slightly shorter. A 1½in. Meccano rod is slightly too long, but the piston rods must not be shorter than 1¼in. An inside guide in each cylinder is made from a 1in. plastic pulley with one flange of the V-groove carved off. These pulleys are a snug fit in the Cylindrical Girders, and are pushed up from the bottom with the curved side snugly against the circle of bolts.

The driving wheels should have the crankpins (Threaded Pins) attached to the Wheel Disc and 2in. Pulley without Boss by using *thin* nuts. These can be found in old Meccano and are probably wartime (I or II) production. This will ensure that the Faceplate and the 2in. Pulley do not have a gap between them at the crankpin side which may cause derailments.

A display base for "Samson" was made from a metal tray from a Gilbert Meccano set. Two rows of holes 3in. apart hold the rails, each made from three *straight* 12½in. Strips sandwiched with 1in. Corner Brackets as stops at each end. Rigidity at the middle is ensured by Angle Brackets with the slotted holes inserted under the Strips from the outside, and clamped against the rails inside by bolts carrying several small washers. Bolts through the rails will interfere with the driving wheel flanges.

From a model-engineer-tourist in Nova Scotia this fall had come a report and photos, that the original "Samson" is now located in the Industrial Museum of Nova Scotia, in Stellarton; and the wooden boiler lagging has been restored. Unfortunately these new photographs do not show the valve gear.

The painting of Samson, and the photos from the Nova Scotia museum, show a "stepped" chimney. Using the idea (on page 6 of this issue) of plastic hair-roller cylinders, this stepped effect has been reproduced. A plastic cylinder, 2½in. long and $1\frac{1}{8}$in. diameter, had one end wrapped with narrow strips of plastic tape until it is a slip fit in the end of a Meccano Cylinder. The two are joined using Gilbert Erector narrow strips (with ¼in. hole spacing). The bottom ends of the narrow strips are shimmed with small washers so the plastic cylinder remains centred. A 5-hole Meccano Narrow Strip is bent to a square U shape so that it just slips into the bottom of the Meccano Cylinder. A $1\frac{1}{8}$in. bolt is placed in the centre hole of the strip so that it projects below the bottom of the Cylinder, and a collar is used as a nut inside the smokebox to hold the chimney in place. The effect of a brass cap on the chimney is lost, but the open top of the chimney compensates for the loss.

Item in *The Independent* for Sep. 22/97: (BBC) Radio One is 30 years old this month, which is a bit strange given that its been at least 40 for half its life. The archive footage of the first transmission, which kicked off The Radio One Storey (BBC1, Sat), summed up the generational paradox. As Tony Blackburn opened proceedings with his smiliest voice, the Controller at the time, Robin Scott, beamed down at him with avuncular pride. It was like something off the top of a vintage Meccano box-brilliantined age staring adoringly at the enthusiasm of youth.

NEPEAN MEET, SEPTEMBER

First of the Fall Meccano meetings, the Toy & Train Show at the Nepean Sportsplex (Ottawa area) on Sep. 20–21 found an enthusiastic group not only of Meccano exhibitors but of visitors interested in the hobby—several prospective members of the Meccano group among them!

Bernard Champoux brought some of his O–gauge railroad models in Meccano, including a 4–wheel shunter and an electric–outline engine; but Bernard's most intriguing display was a handful of brass pinions of Meccano 38 pitch, from 8 to 18 teeth, which he had manufactured. He also displayed a fine Condor No.7 set, manufactured in Italy. In a wooden box with three trays, its parts were much like Märklin or old Meccano. While its small gears were of 38 dp like Meccano, it had 1½in. and 2½in. cast gears with large teeth. Models in the manual were well thought out. "Braced" girders were intriguing, much like Märklin girders except with solid centres to the bracing. He also had a bubble blower, a commercial model with Meccano gearing. Norman Lacroix showed his all–brass (except the Giant Roller Bearing) blocksetting crane, now brightly nickel–plated. An eye–catching feature were the illuminated handrails on the boom: mounted on white nylon insulated 4–hole couplings, two bright handrails carried current to grain–of–wheat lamps inserted through the couplings. He showed a No.2 Special Aeroplane Constructor set, and among his parts–stock–in–trade were new Handrail Supports with short threaded base. Norm recommended them for making doorknobs on models: two could be joined through a plate by a long grubscrew.

Larry Yates had his splendid Port of Montreal container crane (which he has to take to pieces to get in his car), and his fine British–style railway breakdown crane, based on the No.10 set model but with entirely new gearing driven by an ex–calculator 120V motor. He also had a set of drawings for the Pinyon–drawn blocksetting crane (never built) done by his father Lawrence Sr. ca. 1954. Normand St–Aubin brought his Gilbert White Truck, a scarce item still with the original white rubber tires.

Roger Burns, a new member for CMAMAS, showed a Meccano/Mamod horizontal steam engine, driven from a neat tabletop air compressor.

Mike Shaw and Jerry Dubois had side–by–side Meccanographs producing delicate and colourful designs, and Jerry also had a version of the No.10 set articulated lorry (semi–trailer flatbed truck), with tilt cab and plenty of detail.

Don Redmond had a table full of smaller models, including a number of those which have appeared in *CMN* in 1996–97., while Doug Armstrong had two "long little trucks" and lots of glistening Collection models.

Charles Shrubsole had a European–style tramcar, a motor scooter, and other small models.

LEGO MANIAC? NO!

by John Wapshott

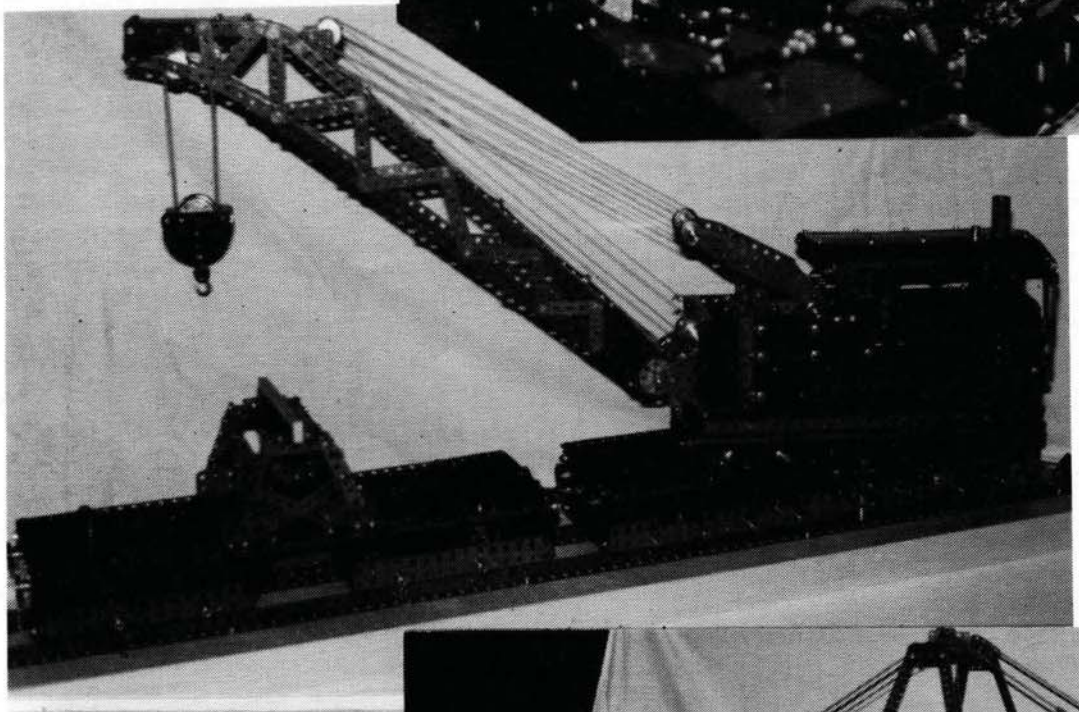
I like most construction toys, but my addiction is to the ones that bolt together. It does no harm to check out the competition, and things well done should be appreciated for their own worth—so I visited the Ontario Science Centre to see "Invention Adventure", the Lego exhibit. This is a Canadian Premiere, although it has been travelling around the USA since 1994. There are several interactive displays, such as a light–seeking robot that moves from light to light as you switch them on and off. There is a voice–command robot that responds to your commands of "forward", "stop", "left", "reverse", "right", etc. There is an android for which you make a sequential program, such as raise left leg, turn head, raise right arm, etc., then play the program. There is a display of city skyscraper buildings, to inspire you to construct your own structure on the earthquake pad, and then start the earthquake!

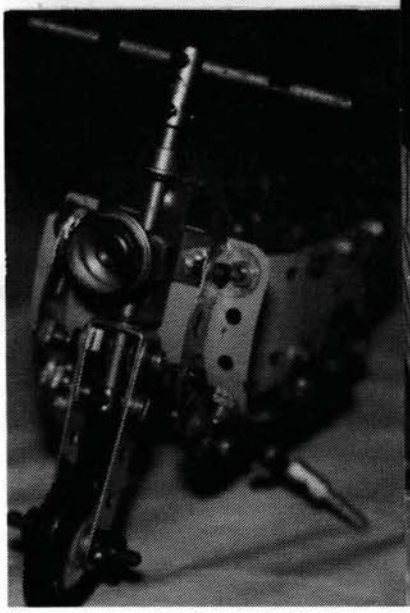
The models that impressed me include the "Crazy Clock"—none of the gears mesh, but all moved, and the hands on the clock face moved at warp speed. There is an enormous 4–5 meter–tall stationary android, and a 3–meter–tall model of the CN Tower in grey. A Perpetual Ball Machine 1 by 2 metres and 2½ metres tall is the best I have seen since Ed Barclay's "Government Operations" in Meccano. My favourite was the 2½ meter Statue of Liberty in white. Lady Liberty never looked better!

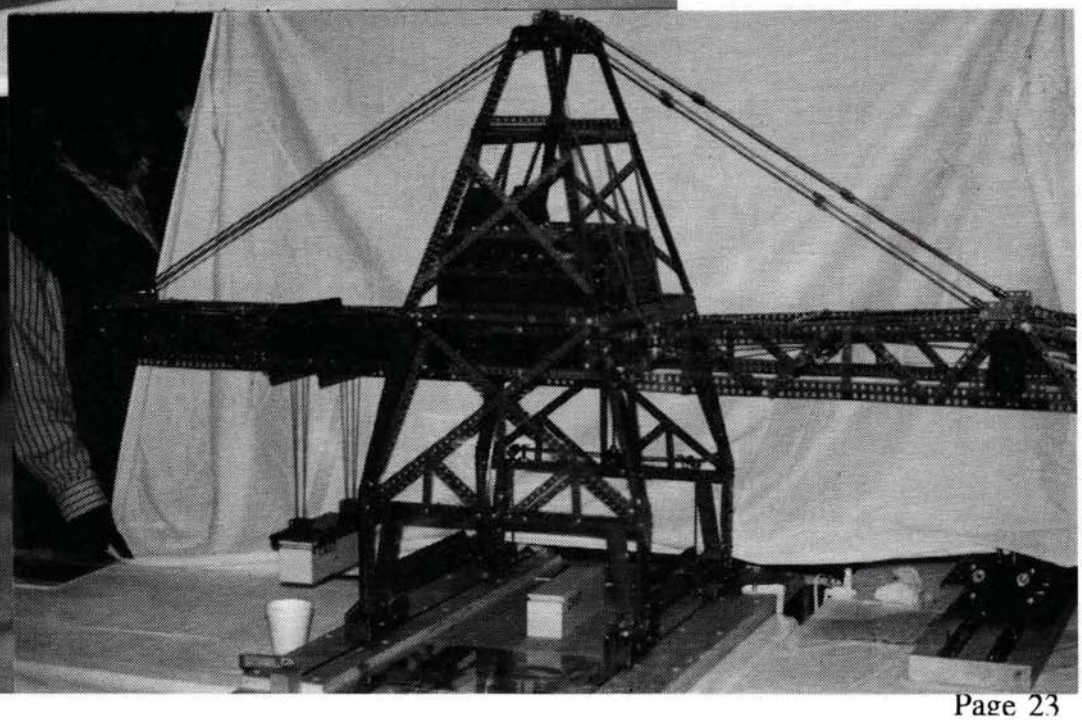
Everything was "factory" modeled; some things were tricked up with electrics, pneumatics, computers, steel support rods, industrial roller chain in the elevator part of the ball machine, and hidden motors. I am not a Lego "maniac" but I was impressed by the presentation, the public relations and the venue. I have not seen anything of "factory" Meccano, my first love, to compare. If Lego is competition to Meccano, then "factory" Meccano's display department should wake up and smell the plastic.

NEPEAN SHOW, SEP. 29:

Top: Jerry Dubois and Lacroix share a joke: was it something I built? Centre: Yates's Breakdown crane, and (below) Champoux looks at Yates's Montreal container crane. Bottom left: Shrubsole's neat motor scooter.







HOBBY SHOW, NOVEMBER 7-9 (INTERNATIONAL CENTRE, TORONTO)

The 1997 Hobby Show was in Mississauga; the 1998 one will be in the City of Toronto, without straying from the International Centre—because of the provincial draconian amalgamation Jan. 1. But the show did move from one end of the giant convention centre (once an aircraft factory) to the other. Meccano groupies had been warned that the space available this year might be smaller than in previous years as the hall was smaller, but in fact there were 12 tables or 96ft (about 30m) of space, filled by some twenty comers. People came and went during the three-day event, but fifteen were on hand for the CMAMAS annual general meeting on Sunday afternoon (Nov. 9), and three big spreads of Meccano-Erector parts were on offer: new parts from Lou Boselli, used and replica ones from Norm Lacroix, used and Korean parts from Earl Pitts. In addition there were numbers of boxed sets—Gilbert and Gabriel Erector, Meccano, and you-name-it—available and changing hands. Across the aisle Hubert Hogle had set up his own booth with a wide stock of boxed sets (bought from Irwin Toys and elsewhere) and parts, a huge illuminated sign and Martha the robot (who wasn't a very good salesperson, Hubert says) and also Dr. Anne Hogle who spelled Hubert off while he kept the giant Möbius Strip, on the CMAMAS side, making necks crane.

Manfred Hammer had motorized the Trislander aircraft (*CMN* No.3, Sept. 1996) with miniature 12V geared motors (from Active Surplus in Toronto), slow and nearly synchronized! He also had Keith Cameron's motorized tank truck and looping tramcars, and a motorized dumptruck.

Kirk Roth had several of the new and eye-catching Calais models in orange, black and white, a startling change from the traditional colour schemes, and a Modelplan 84 motor chassis. John Wapshott brought a stable of six "monster" trucks, the ones with half-ton chassis and forty-ton tires, each different.

Terry Stewart had two superlative monster models, his "Evening Star" 2-10-0 British Railways steam locomotive in red-green, and his Swannington Winding Engine also in red-green, particularly notable for what appeared to be a diamond-studded flywheel (bright bolt-heads) and fine pipework (using 1in. plumbing parts for the Ts and elbows)—both slow and impressive. Next to Terry was Earl Pitts's giant orrery of the solar system, also slow and impressive, and faster and more eye-of-small-boy-catching, the aerial cyclist and racing car on a sloping runway, a massive Caterpillar tractor and a smaller bulldozer and more.

Attila Szakonyi had re-wired his horserace, which kept large crowds (no betting!) happy, and also had his "optical illusion" whirler and Spirograph of many gears. Norm Lacroix had his classic double Ferris wheel in red-green.

John Worfolk's early nickel classic model motorcar with clockwork motor and red spoked wheels was an immaculate touch of bygone years.

Bernard Champoux brought his railroad cars, without nearby railroad competition--the RR layouts were well around the corner past the slotcars.

Colin Hinz had his "chatterbox" machine (with rotating wheel flanges full of ball bearings), his noise (?) making machine that clanked and shook, a nice music-box machine with your choice of four tunes, and the "motor chord", a long track with a stretched music wire and a motorized chariot that produces a constantly changing pitch.

Phil Edwards and Charles Pack were in from California, Phil with the start of a motor chassis with a 3-and-reverse epicyclic gearbox using 2½in. gear rings, Charlie with (was it?) the start of a chassis with a 3-and-reverse conventional gearbox. Joe Long from Long Island dropped in briefly with samples of his renovated and replica Gilbert Erector parts, and a shining renovated 1912 Meccano (Lionel-made) electric motor; but Joe was called away because of a report of bad weather at home.

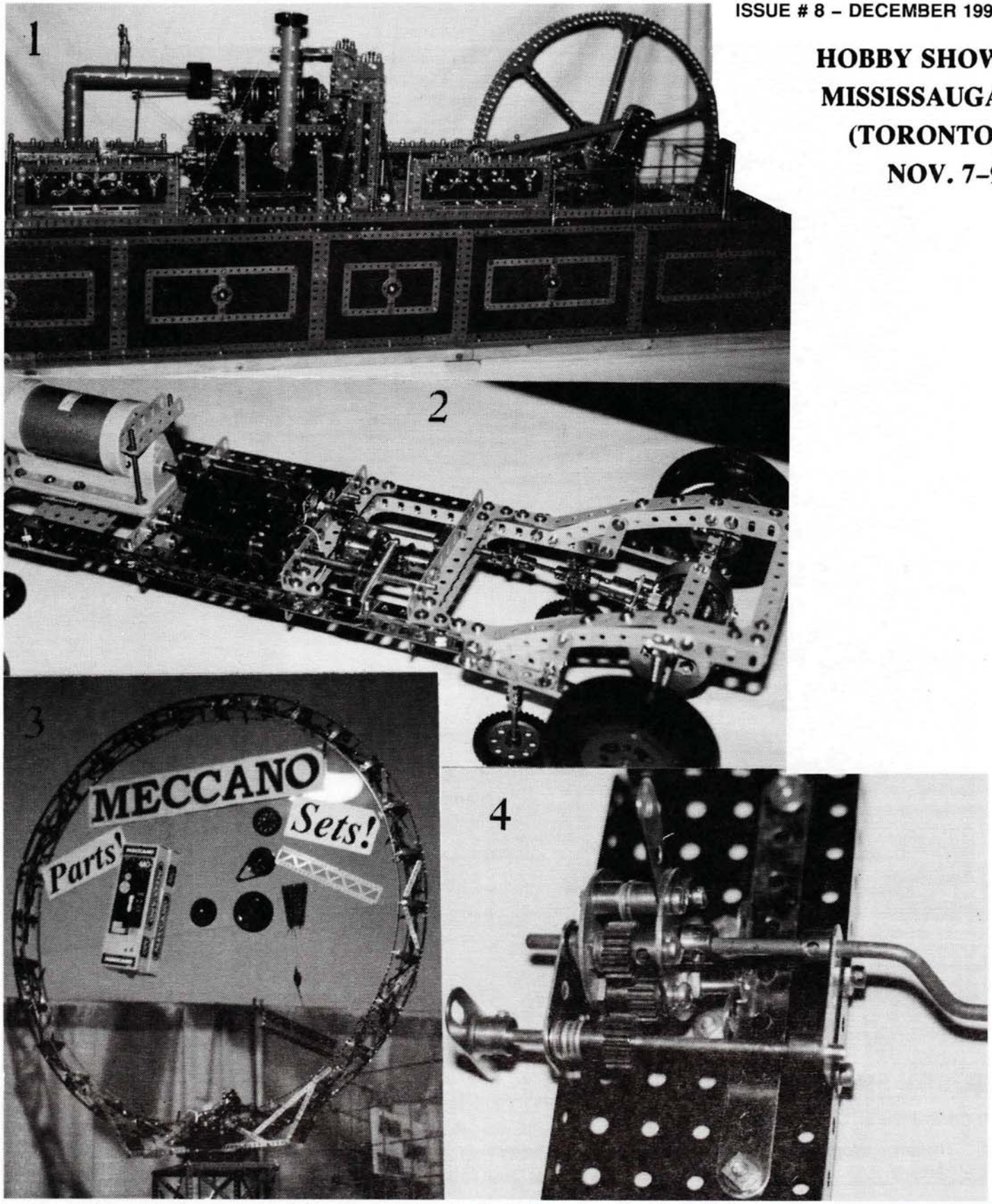
Don Pearson had the Kearney Railplane model, and a No.1 Meccano Aeroplane, almost all original parts. Don Redmond's seven-foot three-rail incline railway and Hubert Hogle's Möbius Strip nearby both made visitors look upward. Don's 5in.-guage railway caboose pleased many, and got a return invitation to the Train Show on Nov.30, as did Terry Stewart's "Evening Star". Neil Fraser had his computer-driven "Spirograph."

Jim Henderson has an inconspicuous item which modelers, especially of motor vehicles, should think about. It was a plate bender—not a set of rollers, but a machine for curving a plate in two dimensions. A heavy ⊏frame (welded from bar or square tubing) carries on the upper arm a heavy steel roller or wheel with cylindrical face. The lower arm carries a convex-faced small roller on an adjustable screw, such that considerable pressure can be exerted against the upper roller. A plate even as thick as light aluminum can be worked back and forth patiently and will gradually become curved, convex side upward.

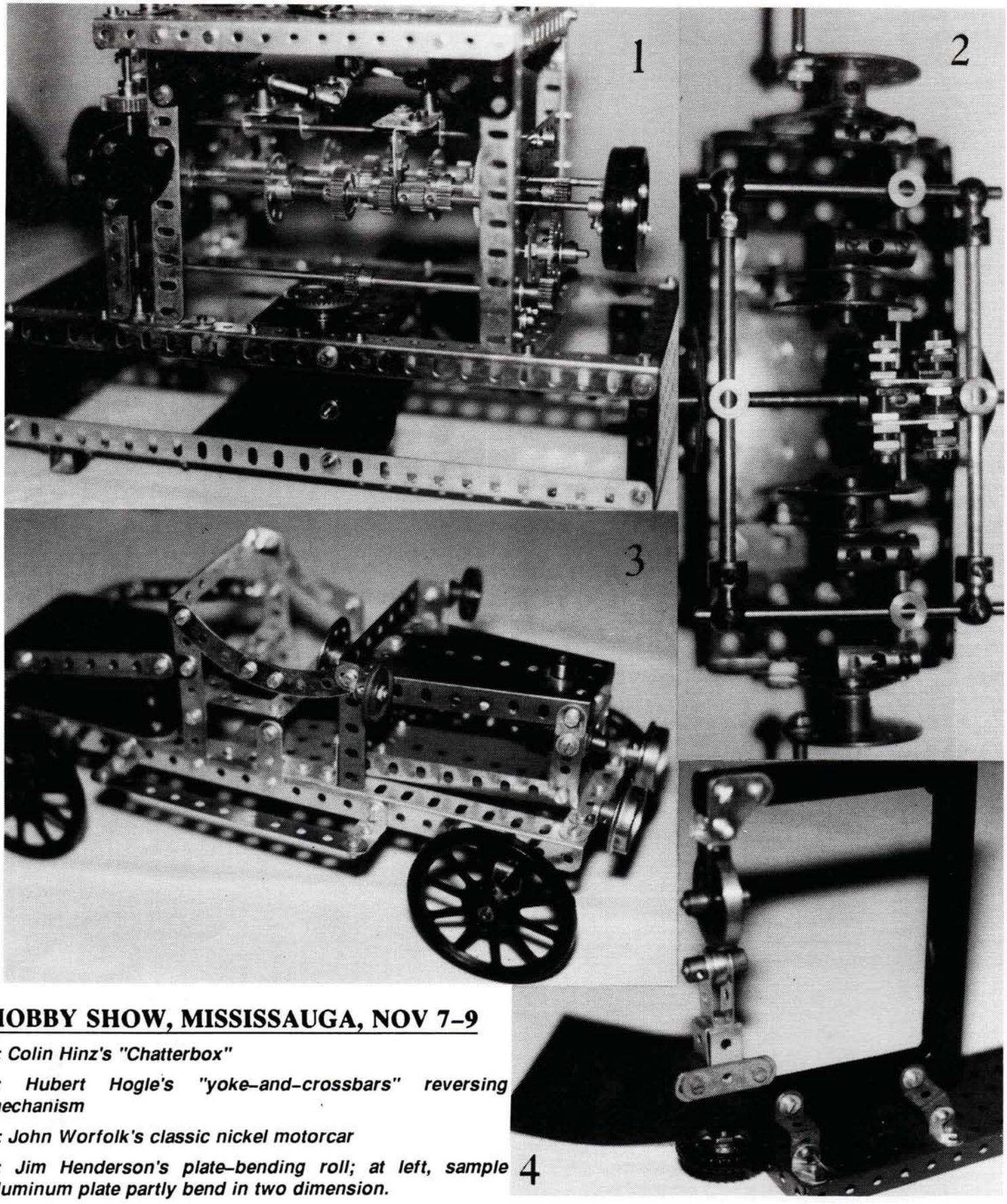
A new CMAMAS member, Jean-M. Deveault, attended the show for the first time, having travelled with M. and Mme. Champoux. Copies of CANADIAN MECCANOTES, and subscription forms, were prominently displayed and a number of memberships taken.

Eric Eisen filled the place which Jack Smith used to undertake, with a number of small models for small people, including the balance beam using trunnion weights, and that very old but still fascinating model the Cum-Bak—especially when an incantation was said to make it come back across the table!

HOBBY SHOW MISSISSAUGA (TORONTO) NOV. 7–9



1: Terry Stewart's Swannington Winding Engine. 2: Phil Edward's chassis with 3–speed and reverse epicyclic 2½in.–diameter gearbox. 3: Hubert Hogle's sales booth sign; rotating atop an 8ft. tower. 4: Hubert's "differential"–style reversing mechanism.



HOBBY SHOW, MISSISSAUGA, NOV 7–9

1: Colin Hinz's "Chatterbox"

2: Hubert Hogle's "yoke–and–crossbars" reversing mechanism

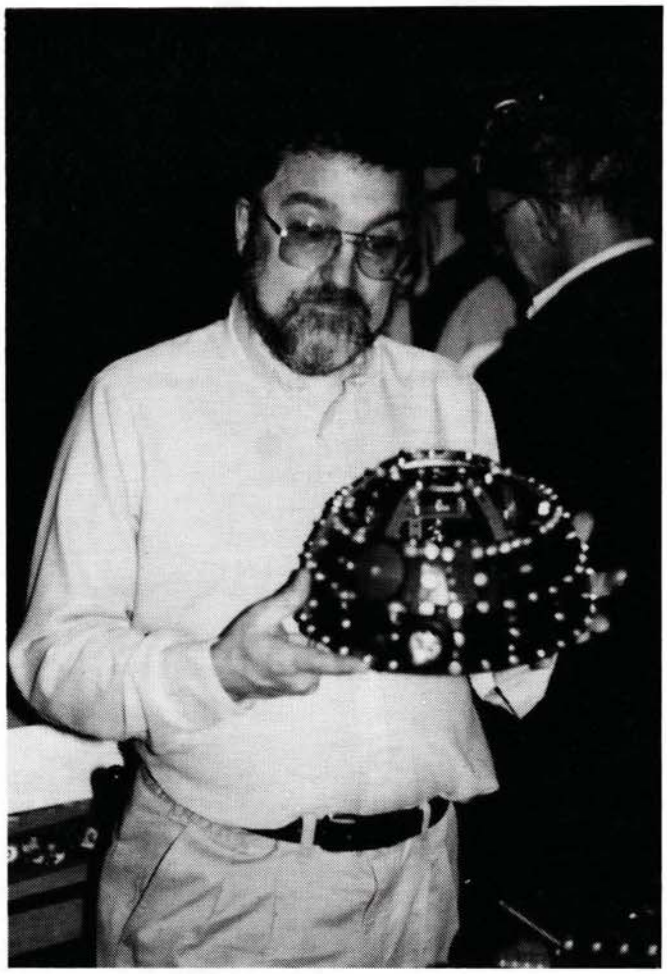
3: John Worfolk's classic nickel motorcar

4: Jim Henderson's plate–bending roll; at left, sample aluminum plate partly bend in two dimension.

MECCANOMAN OF THE YEAR AWARD

At the Annual General Meeting of CMAMAS, at the Hobby Show Nov.9, President Colin Hoare announced that the award for service to the hobby would go this year to not one person, but to a family: the Hogle family, Hubert, his wife Dr. Anne Hogle, daughters Janet and Susan; and to Cathy Foster, of Hubert's office staff; for their unstinting work in the physical production of the two years of *Canadian MeccaNotes* . During 1996 and 1997 Hubert and members of his family have keyboarded the input copy from the Editor's typing, and been instrumental in producing a crisp and effective finished newsletter.

Hubert's attendance at Meccano exhibitions has been accompanied by major models of his own design. In 1996 he produced the Mobius Strip, a large and novel model of simple structure but ingenious theoretical mathematical principle. His large robot Martha III is a continual crowd-pleaser of complicated structure (15 motors!). In 1997 he has produced models of novel mechanical design, including a torque amplifier which has been praised by a well-known British constructor, and demonstrations of unusual non-linear drives. He has also been instrumental in making the hobby better known by displays at popular events, such as the Brockville Youth Theatre.



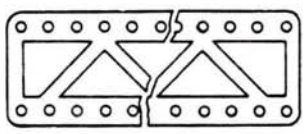
Alas, poor Artoo Deetoo; I knew him well! Hubert Hogle with the head of the robot, a model still to be finished.

Hubert W. Hogle is of Pennsylvania Dutch and United Empire Loyalist ancestry. Descendants of Capt. John Hogle of the British Army, killed at the
Battle of Bennington (Vermont), settled in Ernestown Township and Addington County, north of Lake Ontario. He received the BA and LLB from Queen's University and has been a lawyer in Napanee since 1970; he was Vice-President , then President, of the Lennox & Addington Law Association in 1974-86. Senior partner of the law firm of Hogle & Doreleyers, owner of Hogle Development Corporation, he is a developer and landlord, renovator of historic properties including the Old Napanee Post Office, and winner of the Local Architectural Conservation Award in 1991.

He is married to Dr. Anne (McElroy) Hogle, who practices as an anesthetist on the staff of Belleville General Hospital. Their children are Janet, Karen, Jeffrey and Susan. Janet and Susan have been instrumental in assisting with*Canadian MeccaNotes*.

Assistance of staff members of Hogle & Doreleyers, particularly Cathy Foster, as well as family members, must also be recognized in the production of the newsletter, particularly in acting as couriers between Napanee and Kingston, and handling faxes and cryptic telephone messages.

D.A.R.



BRACED GIRDERS

The Book Man

Advises former librarian Don Redmond, "If you don't keep interested and busy you're going to deteriorate quickly. If you don't have other interests, it's your own blooming fault!"

By Jessie Deslauriers

A former librarian, a member of the Baker Street Irregulars, and a Meccano addict, Don Redmond finds his retirement days are too short.

Born of Canadian parents who had left in search of work, Don came into the world in 1922 in Michigan. He went through his first year in high school in Chicago.

"That was in the Depression. The family then came back to Stewiacke, Nova Scotia, to live with my grandparents. I graduated from Mount Allison with a science degree, and 1943 I went to work in Shawinigan as a chemist. When the war ended, I had seen the error of my ways and went back to college."

He soon acquired a degree in library science at McGill, where he met Ruth whom he married in 1948, and earned his Master's in librarianship in 1947 at the University of Illinois.

Next came a temporary project in Halifax helping war-devastated libraries in Europe. In 1949 he started a library for the Nova Scotia Technical College. An invitation from "what is now CIDA" led to a year-long stay in Ceylon as a technical librarian at the Ceylon Institute of Scientific and Industrial Research, followed by a year-long stretch of teaching at an English language university in Ankara, Turkey.

A science librarian at the University of Kansas from 1961 to 1965, he then came to Queen's University to ultimately retire as chief librarian in 1987.

Photo: ROB MOODY

Don Redmond holds an antique Meccano set fire engine.

The virus of Holmes addiction infected him when he was twelve.

"My father's family had a big old house in Dartmouth to be demolished. In the process of emptying it I found my father's copy of 'The Sign of Four,' and spent the rest of the day reading it."

He claims he was never a really avid follower of Holmes until son Chris discovered the stories in high school about 1963.

"That got me back into the activity," he says. Things have gone from bad to worse ever since."

He became a member of the Baker Street Irregulars and of the Toronto Bootmakers group, formed about 1972 "just after the Metro Toronto library acquired its Sherlock Holmes collection" at Don's urging. While at Queen's he organized two Sherlock Holmes weekends at the Donald Gordon Centre, "an interesting undertaking for the Centre, but we don't have the catchment area here."

The Holmes stories are still successful, he says, "because they're good and exciting stories. People see the Victorian era as being a settled, established, secure time without troubles. In fact it wasn't. England was either fighting with its neighbours or conquering colonies, and there was a good deal of unrest because of the depressed lower class, which the Holmes stories don't reflect.

"They show the upper middle class conception of a stable middle-class culture. The stories are of middle class worries, the fears that someone will disturb their orderly and peaceful structure. There is relatively little murder."

Some depictions of Holmes on film and TV are excellent, he thinks.

"Basil Rathbone was an excellent actor, but his movies were awful wartime propaganda films. Jeremy Brett, I think, gave a great deal more detail, much more like Doyle described Holmes. It is the biggest corpus of faithful depiction of Holmes that we have."

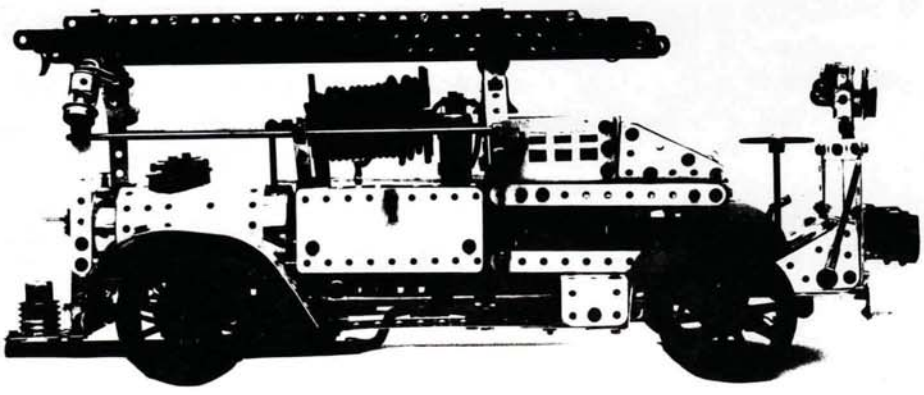
He can't remember when he first became a Meccano set devotee.

"It happened so long ago. I sold my sets when I was in college, but in Ceylon in one of the old-time department stores I discovered a hoard of prewar Meccano sets and bought some of that. I've been involved with it ever since, but I haven't had the time to do much until I retired." He is now part of the Canadian Meccano group and edits their quarterly newsletter.

His largest construction is a 1/12 scale model of a 200-ton wrecking crane "from the 1930s in the Winnipeg CN yards. It's so big and weighs so much I have to leave it in the carport."

His advice to seniors: keep busy and keep active.

"One feels sorry for people who don't have interests. If you don't keep interested and busy you're going to deteriorate quickly. If you don't have other interests, it's your own blooming fault!"



Right: Canadian Special Model 2, Seagrave 1909 chemical engine.

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