

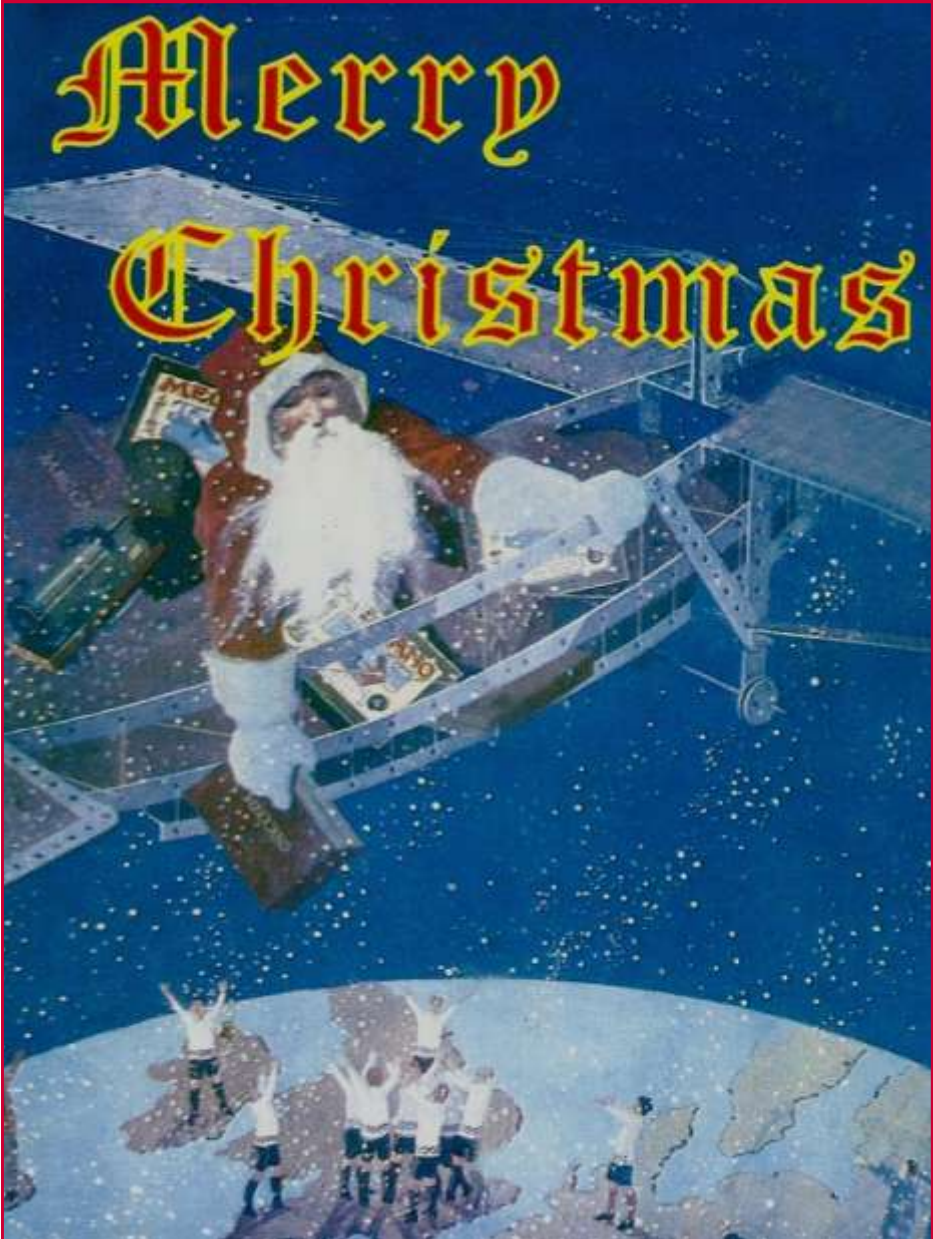
MMG

Issue 44

December 2010

Midlands Meccano Guild Bulletin

Merry Christmas



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DIARY DATES 2011

Club meetings

15 Jan	NMMG Oxton
12 Feb	TIMS Ironbridge
26 Mar	MMG Baginton
9 Apr	S Birmingham MC Hall Green
21 May	NMMG Oxton
6 Aug	TIMS Ironbridge
17 Sep	NMMG Oxton
8 Oct	MMG Baginton

EXHIBITIONS

16 Jan	Abbey Pumping Station Leicester (contact Wendy Miller 01509 844308)
16-17 April	Magic of Meccano Kew Bridge London (contact Jim Macculloch 01252 724703)
29 April/2 May	Meccanuity Ironbridge (contact Janet Way 01902 846235)
1-3 July	SKEGEX

**NEXT MMG MEETING 26 MARCH
2011**

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EDITOR'S CORNER

I hope you enjoy reading this edition of the bulletin. I would like to thank those who have contributed articles and encourage others to send me suggestions for anything you would like to see included and ideally an article written by yourself. Articles for March Bulletin need to be with me by February 1st. Photographs for future editions can be arranged at the meetings.

Any items for the MECCANO MART will be placed on the reverse of the meeting return form included with the bulletins in March and September. Adverts are free to members. Copy to be with me at the beginning of the month before publication.

CHAIRMAN'S WAFFLE

My grateful thanks to all who made the last meeting come together on the day. It was **unfortunate that the day Roger's daughter was married coincided with a Planning Committee site visit** day for me leaving Paul as the only Officer able to be there in the morning. However when I arrived at nearly noon all was humming as usual. There must be a moral there somewhere.

I hardly had time to say hello to everyone before it was lunchtime and then into the AGM. Fortunately the visit by the Chairman Warwick District Council spared me from the usual style of tour for I had not had time to get round and study all the models first. Bertie MacKay, who lives in Baginton, is a good friend of mine and thoroughly enjoyed meeting so many of you. If you were missed out please forgive me. Indeed it was a good job that there were no really large models on display for we had so many present that space was at a premium. I rather rudely had to grab a space in front of Rob **Mitchell's trolley factory. But then fire engines are allowed to park anywhere.**

I was particularly delighted to see Stephen Wilson at our meeting once again. As many of you will know Stephen has had a very rough time and I know that he was happy to be among such a friendly gathering again. It was not an easy journey for him to make from Huddersfield but I do hope he is able to make future meetings.

Among the apologies was Ken Senar who has recently had an emergency hospital admission due to a cardiac-related problem. I understand he is now on the mend and I have sent him Good Wishes on behalf of all members. I hope we soon see Ken back at our meetings.

The week after our meeting we were showing at the 5-day Midlands Model Engineering Exhibition at the Fosse. This year we put on a varied stand with including wheeled vehicles, trains, aircraft, a ship, a caterpillar tractor and even a sledge not to mention stationary engines, old outfits to ogle and an extended turntable fire escape to give height. There was colour and movement and we were recognised by the award of Second place (for the second time) in the Club Stand Competition. My thanks to all those involved. (see picture on page22).



Report of Annual General Meeting 2010

George Illingworth (Chairman)

Notwithstanding the time notified by the Secretary in the Bulletin the meeting was held at Baginton Village Hall on 9 October 2010 straight after lunch by general agreement.

The President welcomed everyone; The Chairman announced that he had invited the Chairman of Warwick District Council, who lived in Baginton, to visit the Guild in the afternoon. This was in response to a comment from the President that in France the Mayor always visited the meetings.

Apologies were received from 15 members, including the Secretary. The Chairman reported briefly and thanked everyone who had played a part in making the Guild run over the year.

The Treasurer reported and presented the Accounts for the year which had been examined by Roger Nuttall. He explained some extraordinary expenditure and income. He recommended that the subscription remain at £10.00, and the meeting fee at £2.50. This was agreed by the meeting.

A report from the Secretary had been circulated just before the meeting.

The President took over for the election of the officers. The existing officers were re-elected unopposed. Those present thanked the members for their support and confidence.

Trevor Pryce-Jones and John Reid reported on the Birmingham Science Fair which a number of members had assisted with. The Chairman mentioned the imminent Midland Model Engineering Exhibition at which the MMG had its usual stand.

A Vote of Thanks was given to the Ladies for preparing the refreshments and they were presented with the usual token of appreciation.

Under Any Other Business John Reid explained that he had attended the Land Rover event at Stoneleigh over August Bank Holiday, which was seen as a possible successor to the T&C. He recommended that the MMG did not take part.



Treasurer's bit: SUBSCRIPTIONS WERE DUE AT THE MEETING: REMINDERS ARE INCLUDED WITH THIS BULLETIN. PLEASE SEND YOUR SUBS ASAP to Paul Brecknell (address on page2)

The Midlands Meccano Guild – The Early Days Recalled by Jim Gamble



An early meeting of MMG at Esmond Roden's house. Left-right: Bob Faulkner, Esmond Roden, Jack Partridge, David Goodman, Ernie Chandler, Bert Love and Eric Jenkins

When the Editor asked me if I would perhaps write a few reminiscences about the early days of the Midlands Guild I casually agreed and then promptly put it to the back of my mind. I have now, eventually, got round to thinking more about it and doing as I promised - it has proved to be not quite the simple task I had first imagined. **It's all very simple chatting nonchalantly about events of what is now more than forty years ago, but when one tries to put them down on paper in proper sequence and with a little added detail it very soon becomes apparent just how poor the memory is – at least in my case.**

In M.M.G.G. No.2 (1978) founder member, Ernie Chandler, recalled the way it all came about:

“Mr. Esmond Roden did a great deal of the spade work to arrange a Sunday afternoon gathering of adult Meccano model builders. The first meeting was held on Sunday 17th October 1965, when ten chaps displayed their Meccano genius. I am not sure how many times we met at Cheltenham (in Esmond's home) it was ether five or six”

For various reasons, it became impossible to continue the meetings at Esmond's home. Two of the members of the group, Ernie Chandler and Bert Love, got together and found a new venue at the St. John's Ambulance Hall in Stratford. Between them, Ernie and Bert, then selected some of the more local names from the 'Meccanoman's List' and arranged a meeting for Saturday 28th October 1967.

N.B. For more recent enthusiast this latter reference to 'The Meccanoman's List' refers to a list comprising several hundred subscribers to a successful worldwide postal society called 'The Meccanoman's Club'. Founded in 1965 by Mr. G. Maurice Morris, it was run his private address in Abbey Wood, London The club functioned entirely through the pages of a quarterly publication called The Meccanoman's Journal. The club also issued many other interesting and informative publications during its existence 1965 - 1975 – another important story that needs telling.

The first meeting : It was just at this time that I had renewed my own interest in Meccano and had recently made the acquaintance of Pat Briggs, another enthusiast residing in Nottingham. By that time Pat was already in contact with Bert Love and I had also been introduced to him whilst visiting Pat and consequently we were both firmly on the invite list.

Travelling down from Nottingham we were also joined by Lincoln based enthusiast, Alf Hindmarsh; Pat had already been acquainted with Alf for some time. Alf had travelled across to Nottingham that morning by train lugging several Meccano Aeroplane constructor models and a Steam Digger (Super Model No.19a) complete with rails - we really were keen in those days! Pat took along two superbly crafted lantern clocks. I having struggled to make a Meccano clock work at all I remember being immensely impressed by these masterpieces ticking away effortlessly after their long car journey. I have to confess that I just could not remember what I had taken to that meeting. However, reading Bert Love's own report of the days events he records that I had shown 'some cleaned-up brassware and some repainted parts'.

Thus reminded by Bert's record of events it now comes back to me and I feel I must explain the reason for this seemingly meagre contribution.

Repainting - having only recently come to the hobby I had been very frustrated by the apparent unavailability of red and green parts which had been superseded three years previously by yellow, silver and black. I had written to Meccano asking if they were still able to supply parts in the old the colour scheme. By return of post I received a parcel along with a very polite reply regretting that this would no longer be possible, but, perhaps the enclosed half pint tins of red and green enamel might help solve my problem. Adding that on this occasion they were pleased to supply the enamels free of charge. Excellent service!

Cleaned-up brassware - working in the Chemistry Department at Nottingham Univer-

sity I had devised a rapid, all be it rather hazardous, method of restoring the lustre to Meccano brassware and coating them with shellac varnish.

Consequently, I had used the Meccano enamels to good effect and with a clutch of brassware representing ‘before and after’ treatment proudly exhibited them for inspection.

Bert does go on to mention that “Jim would have brought a Giant Block setting Crane but the secretary didn’t get the message properly so we shall no doubt see some of Jim’s Modelling in the future”. Although I do remember building ‘The Block setter’ around that time, I have not the slightest memory of what that was all about?



Left – right Bill Winter, Clive Hine, Jack Partridge, Alf Hindmarsh, Roger Lloyd, Ron Fail, Esmond Roden, Ernie Chandler, Bob Faulkener, Betty Love, Arthur Locke, Bert Love, Dick Hardyman, Pat Briggs, Dennis Perkins, Dick Hardyman's son, Eric Taylor, Jim Gamble, David Goodman

Bert’s report also records the following contributions brought along to the event by each of the above members (Following page from *left to right in the picture*).

Bill Winter - Enthusiastic Support ; Clive Hine - Fairground Ride; Alf Hindmarsh - Meccano Aeroplanes and Steam Digger ; Roger Lloyd - No.8 Outfit Breakdown Crane; Ron Fail - Endless Chain Clock; Esmond Roden - Two Tramcars; Ernie Chandler - Dragline; Bob Faulkner - Gearbox for a Designing Machine; Betty Love - THE CAKE!; Arthur Locke - Traction Engine; Bert Love - Three Window Display Models; Dick Hardyman - Enthusiastic support; Pat Briggs - Two Lantern Clocks; Dennis Perkins - **Enthusiastic Support**; **Dick Hardyman's Son** - Enthusiastic Support; Eric Taylor - Level Luffing Crane; Jim Gamble - Restored Meccano Parts; David Goodman - Marine Steam engine & Clutch Mechanism.



It has to be said that from the very outset of that first Stratford meeting it was clear that Bert Love was running the show. Bert was a man who possessed a natural presence coupled with formidable organisational ability. Looking back it is quite clear that he had organised everything in greatest detail. He conducted this inaugural **meeting, and all subsequent meetings, with sort of 'paternal authority'**. And, I have to say, we were all more than happy to take part and be so organised. I recall at a **later meeting, Esmond Roden stating: "I lit the spark and then along came Bert Love and chucked a bucket of petrol onto it"**. In my personal opinion that was an excellent analogy of what took place

As it so happened the meeting coincided with the imminent re-launch of the Meccano Magazine, due out the following January. To mark this Betty Love had prepared a special Christening Cake in order to celebrate the occasion. The above photographs, which appeared on the editorial page of the new Meccano Magazine, show the cake and records the ceremonial cutting by Betty Love.

The meeting ran from 2.00p.m. – 8 p.m. Bert conducted a tour of the all models and you were expected to talk about your model as a matter of course. Time seemed to **zoom by and it was soon 4.30 when we took a break for ‘afternoon tea’.** **Once again everything was in hand, refreshments were all organised, prepared and served by “Mrs. Chandler, Mrs. Taylor and Mrs. Love”.**

There then followed a business meeting conducted by Bert Love and Ernie Chandler in which one or two notable items were dealt with. What follows is an abridged version culled from the official report of the meeting noting the salient points:

Election of Officers: Officers were appointed: Ernie Chandler as Chairman, Bert Love as Secretary and Esmond Roden, being the founder was elected as President.

Correspondence: A letter had been received from John Franklin, Editor of the new **Meccano Magazine, expressing his interest in the Guild’s activities and requesting a photograph of the Christening Cake for inclusion in the Meccano Magazine.**

Guild’s Name: To avoid any suggestion that the Guild would be limited to Warwickshire members, it was agreed that the name **‘Midlands Meccano Guild’ be adopted.**

Membership: The Guild would be open to all adult Meccano constructors, but no upper or lower age limits were fixed. It was agreed that models and materials on show were to be of a Meccano nature and that generally speaking models of a general model engineering nature would not normally be included in future programmes.

Vote of thanks: A vote of thanks was proposed to Ernie Chandler for organising the premises and catering facilities. Mrs. Love, Mrs. Chandler and Mrs. Taylor were thanked for their hard work in the kitchen.

David Goodman proposed a special vote of thanks from the floor to for the organisation of the meeting carried out by Bert Love. The Secretary replied: *“That nothing gave him greater pleasure than talking about, writing about and building with Meccano and meeting those who were truly keen and enthusiastic. He undertook to answer all correspondence sent to him and promised to publish all useful material in the Newssheet”.*

The Raffle: After Tea Bert had organised a raffle where members were invited to purchase a ticket for 1/- and every ticket won a prize to a value between 1/3 and 4/9

Bert had been much occupied touring the local area buying-up stocks from Meccano dealers who had not sold any loose Meccano parts in years and were glad to see the back of their old spares cabinet. As you might imagine there was considerable duplication of some items and these were the source of the generous raffle prizes. It is interesting to note some of the prizes and how intrinsic values have changed. The 4/9 item I seem recall was a Wood Roller. Others included: four Hanks of Cord, Ships Funnel, Wooden Handled Screwdriver and a Triple Pulley Block.

The Cost: Expenses for the day were meticulously recorded. I know we were all earning less forty years ago and half-a-crown would buy you quite a lot. But, it is still fun to read through the figures and reflect how things have changed. Note particularly the fee for hire of the hall and I love the item 'Sundry fiddles'. I am sure such an entry would not be acceptable these days - but it made it so much easier to balance the books.

Expenses	£	s	p
Early Tea and Biscuits	1	0	0
Afternoon Tea	1	0	0
Postage and Envelopes	1	5	0
Hire of Hall	2	10	0
3 Boxes of Chocolates for lady helpers		15	0
Photographic materials		<u>10</u>	<u>0</u>
	7	0	0
Income			
20 teas at 2/6	2	10	0
18 admissions	2	5	0
Raffle		17	0
Donations by postal orders		15	0
Sundry fiddles		<u>3</u>	<u>0</u>
	7	0	0

Inevitably we were all swept out of the hall and homeward bound at about 8.00 p.m. After arriving in Nottingham poor old Alf Hindmarsh had then to catch a late train back to Lincoln, still lugging his Meccano Aeroplane models and Steam Digger etc. As I said earlier in this piece, we were pretty keen in those days!

The results: What were my immediate, and also, lasting impressions of that first meeting? Certainly I had a sense being generally overawed by the high standard of modelling. You have to remember this was a very early meeting of its kind, whereas these days there are very many such meeting held throughout the country and we can be quite blasé about being surrounded by lots ingenious and spectacular models. I definitely recall being imbued with an urgency of mind that I have got to get cracking and come up with a really decent model for the next meeting in six months time.

The model of the day was without doubt Eric Taylor's Level Luffing Crane. Large and well constructed, with the slewing, luffing, hoist and travelling movements operated from a remote control unit; all were as smooth as silk.

It is sad to relate that after a number of years differences did arise which caused a major split in the Midlands Guild. However, that is another story and not at all relevant to these very happy reminiscences.

Further rumination: I think it is true to say that the formation of the Midlands Meccano Guild was in fact a significant event. I believe it ushered-in a totally new era of interest in Meccano and Meccano modelling.

We are all very aware of the fact that since 1919 there have been many hundreds, probably thousands, of Meccano Guilds or Clubs formed in this country and throughout many countries of the world. Their hey-day (along with branches of the Hornby Railway Company formed in 1927), I would suggest, was during the years up until the last war. After 1945 there began a slow decline and by the middle 1960's they were at very low ebb indeed. It was, however, just at this period when a few like minded individuals came together and formed themselves into what would **these days be termed 'an interest group' originally calling them the 'South Midlands Adult Meccano Society'**.



Eric Taylor's superb Level Luffing Crane exhibited at the first meeting of the Midlands Meccano Guild and subsequently featured in Meccano Magazine for February 1969.

The significance is in the term 'adult'. As we all know there have been very many Meccano clubs and guilds formed in the years since 1967. But, in sharp contrast with virtually all those that went before these newly formed clubs and guilds have been overwhelmingly made up of adult enthusiasts. Not only adult, but it has to be admitted, mostly adults of somewhat more mature years.

Jim Gamble.

MECCANO AT THE SCIENCE FESTIVAL

Trevor Pryce-Jones



A GROUP OF HAPPY YOUNGSTERS ENJOYING MAKING MECCANO MODELS

The British Science Association held its annual 'Science Festival' in Birmingham this year, and a very full programme of lectures, discussions and demonstrations was provided, principally at Aston University with a number of the events occurring across the city at the Edgbaston campus of Birmingham University. As always, the **Festival also offered a Young Peoples' programme organised at the Thinktank in Millennium Point.** School groups and individuals booked in to find out more about polar meltdown, how birds of prey perform so efficiently, sound vibrations, the science of skeletons, the power of plankton and much else. Over four thousand young people booked to attend one or more days during the week!

One of the activities on offer was a meccano workshop at which up to 30 youngsters of 8-10 years old could try their hand at building a meccano model in rather less than an hour. The kits used were provided by Meccano and included yachts,

motor-cycles with a sidecar, cranes, quad bikes, tanks and helicopters. When each group arrived at the meccano venue, the children were allocated an activity and invited to see how far they could proceed with their task in the time available. A good deal of help was required, this being provided by any teachers accompanying their group as well as by members of the MMG in attendance.

The programme had four one-hour slots each of the days from which groups could choose to book; three in the morning and one after the lunch break. As the change-over time from one activity to the next was organised on the hour, there was a frantic period at the end of each hour when many of the youngsters tried to complete their task against the clock.

A highlight of each workshop session was the opportunity to look at the range of splendid models provided by John Reid, Sid Becket, Dave Phillips, Bob Thomson, Geoff Devlin and Christopher Bond. Many of these were powered by electric motors and so were shown in full working!

Had all those who had booked into our workshops materialised, more than 270 children would have attempted the meccano challenge. One school had booked three sessions but failed to show up leaving exhibitors and workshop organisers very frustrated. Our reflections were that the model-building exercises could, perhaps, have been organised slightly differently to minimise the time constraint and so enable participants to make more of the opportunity. However all of us who took part found the experience rewarding and interesting and hope that the young people who participated found this introduction to meccano a worth-while experience too.



A GROUP OF HAPPY MECCANOMEN TALKING ABOUT MECCANO MODELS AT THE SCIENCE FESTIVAL

Model Report : MMG Meeting 9 October 2010
Terry Pettitt

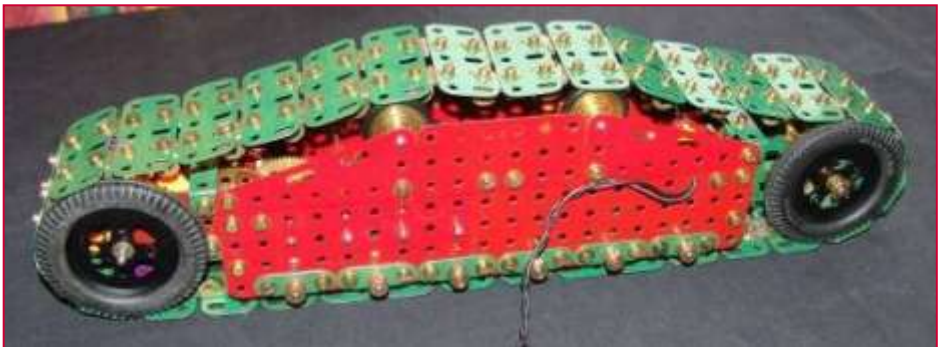
John Macdonald brought a most realistic model of an A.E.C. Matador artillery tractor which featured clutch, 6 speed gearbox driving all 4 wheels via differentials, working lights and steering and a winch powered via the gearbox. This would be used for towing John's next model, a 5.5" artillery piece incorporating the following features; elevation, training, opening breech, manual recoil and working brakes; altogether a great display.



Joyce and John Sleaford's

models included an excavator built by Joyce from the 6515 set actuated by cables. John showed five small engines based on a No 5 set: a showman's engine fitted with a motor and lights then followed a steam roller, a crane engine, a portable engine and a ploughing engine all to the same scale.

Richard Payn displayed his superb Crawler Tractor in blue and yellow, based on Eric Taylors model from the 1970s but incorporating Richard's own design of drive, based on a main motor for driving with a second motor for steering. The two drives are combined by a double differential system which transmits the required drive



speeds to the respective tracks. Richard also showed a prototype track assembly **incorporating 2.5" flat girders connected by standard hinges with angle brackets on the inside** to provide drive and guidance, it will interesting to see how this progresses.

Michael Walker brought a model of the L.N.W.R. Locomotive Cornwall. This model was built in 1944 by Roger Meadowcroft in blue and gold and has been retrieved from a museum where it



was on display since that time. The model a won second prize in the MM 1944 summer model building contest and was recently featured in CQ (90). At that time there was clearly a shortage of Meccano parts causing the builder to fabricate many of the plates from tin cans! Frank Hornby would have approved. *(I think I have also spotted this model on ebay .Editor)* Michael also showed a realistic model of a Maserati car.

As usual Alan Covel managed to find another unusual subject: in this case an Art Deco style car based on an ornamental paper weight of a 1930s racer, The model was immaculately built in bright zinc strips, is **approx 32" long and used 6.5" diameter non meccano wheels**. Alan's other model was a 1933 Bugatti railcar **62" long x 9" wide** in yellow. This model runs back and forth on a 14 ft. track powered by 2 power-drive motors.



Tony Wakefield had a most ingenious display model of a car race. Each car in turn is raised to the top of a pivoted ramp which tilts down under the weight of the car meanwhile the second car is being lifted from a position below the pivot end of the ramp by which time the first car has run off the bottom of the ramp which immedi-

ately lifts and allows the car to be conveyed back to the lift position whereupon the whole sequence is repeated. It was good to Stephen Wilson again after his injuries and we can only congratulate him in making the effort to attend as I understand he had to come alone by rail. Stephen was also able to bring a model of an Articulated lorry with load.

Mark Rolston was showing his very realistic A.E.C. Matador lorry somewhat larger than John Macdonalds and a traction engine. Colin Reid brought a ball roller type clock and a Mamod traction engine and car. Tony Knowles model was a very nicely built version of Michael Adlers Sinclair Harding Navigation Clock {modelplan 139} John Bland brought along a very nice realisation of Supermodel 19, the steam shovel, with some small alterations, always an impressive looking model. The other models were a small gas engine which ran merrily away throughout the meeting and a small prototype fairground ride.

David Hobson's deviant tendencies has taken him from Meccano to Stokys this time. He showed five very nice models : a potters wheel, railway bridge supporting a railway breakdown crane, a rack and pinion railway incline in which a clockwork powered trolley successfully climbed to the summit and finally a Bell Boeing tilt rotor helicopter.

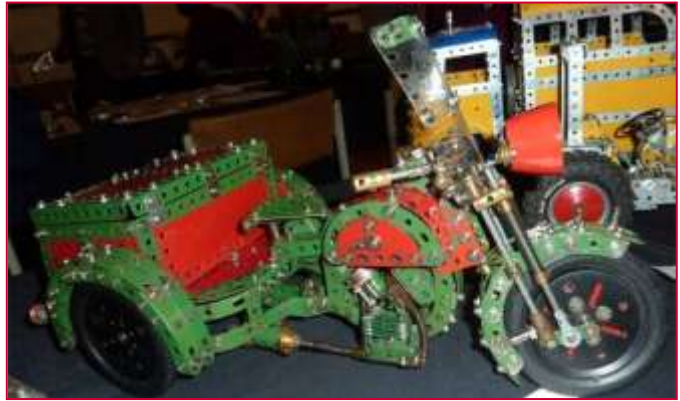


Terry Pettitt gave a repeat showing of the crawler tractor shown at the last meeting. The model is still incomplete, the main area of work has **been devoted to the tracks. These are built using 2.5" flat girders hinged together** with fishplates modified to form a hinge similar to the rod and strip connector. The fishplates are formed using a small Meccano forming tool which rolls the end around a Meccano rod and just requires squeezing with pliers to complete the process. This enables them to be produced quickly and accurately. Angle brackets on the inside of **each track plate engage with a sprocket fitted between the 4" circular plates that** form the drive wheels. Merion Jones brought an impressive display of cranes, one **from each set from No1 to No10. These were built as an extension to Mel's Imagi-**neering involvement at his local school and were first shown at the Summer Fete.

Tony Parmee's models were a "Lovely Load Of Balls" which consisted of three spheres built from 2.5" strips in Geodetic form placed inside each other and rotated by epicyclic gearing, a neat and pleasing display model. The second model the

“Observation Coach “ as shown in the 1954 manual as model No. 9.7. Tony first built this model 52 years ago. The model incorporates several pleasing features such as sliding door, folding steps, sliding roof and opening boot providing a use at last for that part we all wanted as kids, the hinged plate. The steering provides a really good steering lock and altogether a very nice model. Terry Wilkes models were a realistic representation of a Massey Ferguson 135 tractor and a breakdown lorry. Paul Hubbard had a very nice shop window display model of a Ferris Wheel and also some small kit models including an excavator. Dave Phillips showed his No 9 manual Triple Expansion Engine, much modified and running very smoothly. A nice model and always interesting to see working.

As always Brian Edwards produces a very neat and realistic model usually of an unusual object and in this case it was a Harley Davidson **“Service” Motor Tri-cycle** as used by the American Police forces. The model was built in red and **green using 3” pulleys** and tyres and incor-



porated a small motor housed in the body situated above the two rear wheels and then the motor drove straight down to the input to the differential.

John Reid showed his model of Scotts Antarctic Sledge party now equipped with a support caterpillar tractor and sledge. One hundred years ago on the 15th June **1910, Scott’s ship “Terra Nova” set sail from Cardiff for the Antarctic and the South Pole.** The sledges were to be hauled by men, ponies, dogs and motor tractors. Scott took with him three Wolsley motor sledges. One was lost immediately after being off-loaded from the ship when it went through the ice. The remaining two were used to assist in transferring stores from the ship to the base hut. The tractor was powered by 4 cylinder 12 HP in line air-cooled engine encased in a wooden box driving the rear sprockets. After the first winter when they were put into storage, they were used on the initial depot-laying parties. The tractors were plagued by carburettor and overheating problems. In the end, they both failed due to broken big ends. As repair facilities on the march were very limited, they had to be abandoned. No steering was built into the control of the tracks. Turning was achieved by means of pulling on ropes attached to the pole protruding from the front of the vehicle causing excessive wear on the track components.

Richard Gilbert appears to be cornering the market in rare parts as he displayed his realistic 8 wheel lorry loaded with no less than 9 digger buckets and several loaded sacks.



Trevor Pryce Jones had on display six nicely constructed models all built by children at a recent exhibit at the B.S.A. Science Festival at Millenium point

Sid Beckett brought along a nicely built Dumper Truck from the Super Highway kit.



As always John Ozyer-Key had built a great model this time a County FC 1174 Tractor. This has 4 wheel drive and includes an 8 speed and 2 reverse gearbox, differential lock,

power take off, 3 point linkage, correct drive to all wheels and of course steering. The tractor was fitted with a double sided plough which could be rotated to the alternative position by power operation by a lever in the cab. All mechanisms are controlled from the cab and are driven by a single motor. John had brought along his fellow SMG member: Rob Mitchell (visiting from Sheffield MG) brought along a large model of Servetti's Trolley Factory. I think this is the second time this model has been seen at MMG, the first one I believe was built by Ken Wright in the late 70s early 80s. It's always an intriguing model to watch and of course Rob's version is just as appealing as ever, an excellent model. (a bit more about this model will appear in the next bulletin!)

John Molden's model was an 8 wheel "T" cab Scania lorry which is used in conjunction with the Wild Mouse Roller Coaster. It is 8x4 with a 4 over 4, 8 speed and 2 reverse gearbox, clutch, double drive to rear axles via an interactive lockable differential with final drive via hub reductions. Also included are extending stabilizing jacks. As if the chassis was not enough John has then fitted it with a HI-AB crane



which can extend to 6 ft. The workings and power to the crane are still to be completed. **At present it has 3 swivel “up and out” sections but when complete will also have 4 telescopic sections plus the main hoist cable.** Even without these it is a great model.

Tom and Matthew McCullam had a very nice display consisting of two motor car chassis in red and green and an Aero Constructor model. Trevor Franklin built a small 4 cylinder petrol engine with all the cylinders represented by Meccano solenoids which resulted in a very quiet and smooth running model. Roy Whitehouse's display consisted of two Dinky Builder sets and an immaculate version of Supermodel No 28 in blue and gold, a very pleasing collection.

Ken Wright provided us with a welcome return of his Beyer Garratt narrow gauge locomotive K1. This is a great looking model finished throughout in black and is most impressive when seen running at exhibitions.

Mike Edkins continues to show great ingenuity in getting as much detail as possible in his Birmingham Corporation Tramway truck bogies. Mike described the four wheel Preston truck bogies in MMGG21. He is now developing a model of the Burnley maximum traction bogie built to a scale of 1.125inches to the foot. As is



always the case with Mike's models everything must work, so far wheel brakes are operational however attempts to construct a magnetic track brake has not yet been successful. I am sure they will be and await the final version with much anticipation. The bogies will go under a model of the Birmingham tram.

Roger Burton had two models, a simplicity concrete mixer making ingenious use of the Muzzle Brake from the Army Multikit as the rotating drum. The other model was a helicopter which together with two more helicopters will form part of a Fairground ride.

Mick Burgess brought two small but realistic lorries: a 6wheel version very neatly motorised the other fitted with caterpillar tracks.

John Nuttall's model was a re-



production of “The Blue Bridge” in Maryland U.S.A. This was built in nickel and consists of two 18” arch spans constructed of 5.5” curved strips and fitted with abutments looked most realistic.

Hamish Ross (a welcome new member) has made a return to Meccano after 50 years and built the following manual models that he intended to build in his earlier days : model 6.20 from 1947 number 6 outfit , and from 1948 model 3.8 and model 7.1.



Geoff Devlin brought a collection of small model motorcycles and a model of a Hitachi TDH S60 Rubber Crawler Tractor.

Tony Homden's model of the BMW high speed bomber built from mechanised army parts supplemented by parts from the M&S spitfire kits exhibits his usual novel approach to meccano modelling. An article on this interesting model will appear in the next edition of the bulletin.



Chairman George Illingworth brought two models, the first a welcome return of H.M.S.Campanula , ploughing through a heavy sea actuated by a mechanism devised

by Tony Parmee. The second model was a M.A.N. Hytrans high volume pump unit with demountable pods. This was a highly detailed and realistic model including many mechanical features and well worth another look.



MMG stand at the Midlands Model Engineering exhibition showing models by Ken Wright, John Reid, Roy Whitehouse and chairman George's fire engines including the Hytrans pump. See report under Chairman's waffle p3.

Apologies to any who have been missed from the above report and for the concise but I hope reasonably accurate reporting.



The Midlands Meccano Guild in the late 1970s (about 1978 ?) taken at Alcester. (This was the second venue for the guild from the mid seventies). Photograph provided by Mick Burgess.

Power Drive Unit Repair Service
Roger Burton

In 1990 at Skegness I found a Power Drive Unit (PDU) for sale for £2. It was clearly labelled as a non-runner. Liking a challenge, I bought it and stripped it down at home. The motor was lacking brushes and springs. I made the brushes from modern Hornby 00 locomotive brushes and the springs from springy steel. On reassembly, the motor ran well and, to my delight, the 6-speed gearbox was in good order.

On mentioning my success to fellow modellers at club meetings I was asked to have a look at their non-running PDUs to see if they could be repaired. Gradually, word spread about this repair service and, most importantly, I was offered various PDU components to build up a supply of spare parts.

There are now many dozens of PDUs running again in their “second life”, and at a cost to their owners of a fraction of the price of a good second-hand one.

As far as I know, it is not possible to buy new spares for PDUs. I have a collection of most components but am always short of two things: one particular gear in the gearbox and motor brushes. If anyone knows of a spares supplier, please let me know.

Meanwhile, should you have a faulty or dead PDU, I would be pleased to try and breathe new life into it. Contact Roger Burton (tel no 01367 850074) .

MY FAVOURITE MECCANO PART

Roger Augur **writes** “**I was reading your postscript about favourite parts, mine is that wonderful and useful part that no meccanoman should be without, the " loaded sack "**, I have a few back in oz and I was shocked at the price they go for on ebay.

John Reid advised that his favourite had to be the nut and bolt (part no. 37) as models would not be possible without it. (*That would be a challenge — models which do not use nuts and bolts . Perhaps at the next meeting members will exercise their ingenuity and bring along models that do not use nuts or bolts*).

WANTED ARTICLES FOR THE BULLETIN

SEND YOUR MATERIAL TO THE SECRETARY

FOR PUBLICATION IN THE MARCH BULLETIN



Secretary's Notes

I am pleased to be able to continue as your secretary for another year. However a small gripe about meeting returns—I understand that in October we were close to running out of food due to too many members not advising of their attendance. Would you ensure that you advise me of your intention to attend meetings.

I hope to have the MMG website up and running soon. However thanks to Bob Thompson you can access pictures of MMG meetings on the New Zealand MC website <http://www.nzmeccano.com/image-34374>

ADDRESS BOOK AMENDMENTS

New Members

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Corrections:

John Nuttall revised email: john.nuttall2@tesco.net

Roger Thorpe revised email: roger.w.thorpe@gmail.com

WE WISH ALL OUR MEMBERS A HAPPY CHRISTMAS
AND NEW-TIME FOR MECCANO IN 2011
BEST WISHES FROM
JACK, GEORGE, PAUL AND ROGER