

North East London Meccano Club

Newsletter - July 2006

**The 71st meeting of the North East London Meccano Club will take place on
Saturday 8th July 2006 at Hainault Baptist Church Hall,
Franklyn Gardens, Hainault, Essex**

The doors will open at 11 a.m. for setting up the meeting. Help is needed with moving the tables, and also with clearing away at the end of the meeting. All members and their guests will be very welcome.

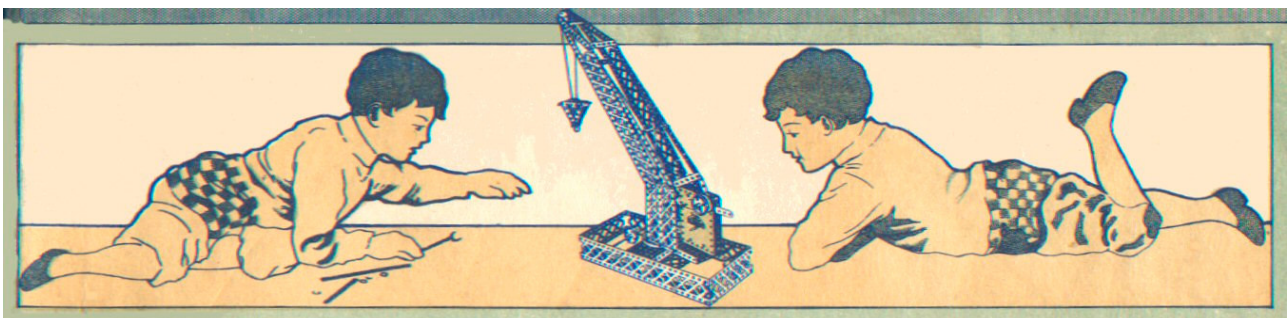
In this Newsletter . . .

A Grand Auction

The Annual Exhibition

Thoughts on recent models, by Mike Tebbutt

Model Report for 13th May



CLUB NEWS

The Annual Exhibition

Don't forget to send Ian Harrison your completed booking form for the Annual Exhibition if you haven't already done so (a spare one is included in this Newsletter). And remember that we will need volunteers to sell tickets, help with catering, take photos and so on. So please contact Ian with any offers of assistance. reminder that the exhibition is on Sunday 10th September at the Dunmow Day Centre from 10 am to 5 pm.

Auction at next meeting

We will have another auction at the next meeting on 8th July. To avoid the lengthy traditional auction system, this year we will try a written (silent) auction at which bidders simply write down bids for Lots that interest them. Valuable items can still have a reserve price, but this must be kept realistic. Keith Patey and Barrie Goodey have volunteered to run the auction, though some additional help will be needed on the day. Keith has drawn up the following rules to help the process run smoothly.

AUCTION RULES

The Auction will only be available to paid-up members who may be able to make bids on behalf of the guest(s) they sponsor by arrangement with the Organiser.

Participants (sellers or buyers) will be given a personal number by the Organiser which must be used when submitting a Lot or making a bid.

Lots (which must be Meccano-related) for inclusion will be accepted, space permitting, until such time as the Organiser announces that a deadline has been reached.

All Lots will be numbered and have a card placed adjacent thereto, containing a brief description of the Lot together with a reserve price (if any), a space to make bids and whether a cheque in settlement will be acceptable. The Organiser will prepare the cards.

Reserve prices should be realistic but in the event of the Lot being withdrawn or failing to reach the reserve price then 10% of such reserve price will be payable to the Club.

Bids (all in multiples of at least 10p) must be made by writing your number and the amount of your bid on the card of the Lot you wish to bid for. You must bid significantly higher than the previous bid as follows:-

Up to £1 at least 10p up; £1 to £5 at least 20p up; £5 to £10 at least 50p up; over £10 at least £1 up.

It is regarded as a point of honour that once a bid has been entered it will not be deleted and that buyers will have sufficient funds to meet their overall bidding commitments.

Bidders may appoint one other person to make bids on their behalf but the Organiser must be informed in advance.

The Organiser will announce when the bidding period starts and will define the time at which bidding will cease. A warning will be given a short time before bidding must stop coupled with a final countdown.

Full payments in cash from successful bidders will be collected by the Organiser and distributed to sellers subject to a deduction of 10% commission (for Club funds) on successful bid prices. Cheques (90% of bid price made payable to seller) from successful bidders will only be accepted by prior arrangement with sellers. Club commission is payable in cash in every instance!

Whilst the Organiser and the Club will take every care to ensure participants follow the rules, neither will accept responsibility for any loss resulting from them failing to do so.

Other news

Our club needs a new chairman, so someone with a loud voice and authoritative manner is required to chair (and control) meetings! Any volunteers should make themselves known to the Committee.

We will also need volunteers to prepare refreshments at club meetings. Simon Greatrex and Brian Maunder have done an excellent job for two years, and now wish to stand down. So again, contact the Committee if you are interested.

The Henley Gathering is on Saturday 2nd Sept 2006 (10am-5pm) at the Christ Church Centre in Reading Road, Henley-on-Thames.

Some thoughts on recent models, by Mike Tebbutt

I have, at last, finished Concorde with various improvements (including a stand), incorporating the ideas of five other modellers besides myself. How can Calais expect to compete with such talent when designing models? One of the improvements was so minor and yet so necessary, i.e., the wing tip navigation lights. Two red ones were supplied in the kit, why? It was so easy to obtain a green, starboard one from David so why couldn't they supply one? Since then I have tackled two Multi Models from the Marks & Spencer outfit kit 3501, the mountain bike and small crane. These have been reviewed in the Runnymede Journal and the author, Nick Rodgers, came to the same conclusions and criticisms as myself. Both were good models, the crane actually having some play value but, with unclear plans, were not easy to construct at first. The bike, as with so many of these modern kits, had a fair amount of forcing and distorting to be done in order to get things to fit. With most of these kits, I usually have bits left over at the end but with the mountain bike I had to add bits, namely pivot bolts, nuts and ordinary long bolts. For some unknown reason, it had been designed to fix most bolts with those small, clear, plastic O-rings. The result was that things kept flying apart and flopping about during construction. This more than tried my patience let alone that of an eight year old! As far as I could see, there was no reason not to use nuts and tighten things down properly. Where an O-ring was of use was in the fitting of the front forks to the main frame. Following the instruction book to the letter produced a very loose and floppy fit. An O-ring fitted in the centre of the retaining pivot bolt cured all that and actually dispensed with the need for a nut at its end. Aesthetically, the pedal cranks were too long (useful as a stand though) so, being made of a common plastic part of little value, I cut them down. Here, because of space, the pedal retaining bolts had to be fixed using the O-rings and to prevent them continually coming adrift; a little super glue was used. Hafix is the stuff I use, it's the real thing!

I have become quite disillusioned with super glues over the years, as they never seem to do the job they were supposed to. I could never stick the cat to the telly or my fingers to my eyelids until, out of sheer pity for an unappreciated salesman's efforts in trying to sell to a sceptical public, I bought a small bottle of Hafix one year at the Southend-on-Sea Model Engineering Exhibition. It really is vicious stuff and does all that is claimed of it. You can have as much fun with this as with a box of Swan Vestas. I use it on models in very confined spaces where I cannot get a finger, toe or what ever implement to hold a nut in place whilst inserting a bolt. A little dab on the end of a pin produces the effect of a captive nut. Simple!

Finally, I have just finished one of the new R/C sports car models. It has a reasonable amount of constructional value but a great deal of play value. It really is fun to drive. The plans take a bit of working out in places and there is some bending requiring a fair amount of finger pressure with the likelihood of nuts flying about like shrapnel if one releases one's grip. But there is nothing a

resourceful and experienced adult cannot cope with. I say, adult, I don't know about young children. Here a good plate rolling machine would help, especially in getting the four plates to look symmetrical. The shape of the car is quite pleasing and realistic being that of a modern car, thus it would not seem odd to youngsters of today. Me, I'm locked into the shape of MG TCs, XK Jags and the like, real car shapes. There are not many parts in this outfit in actual fact. It comprises a few bits of Meccano tacked onto one of Nikko's base units. The car has lights (light being transmitted through fibre-optic rods from the base unit), a nice touch. It also sports realistic revving noises and tyre squealing sounds but annoying, loud music which one cannot turn off by itself. At Kew Bridge recently, I did see some innovative use of these Nikko base units in a tank and a bulldozer and very nice they were too but it seems an expensive way to achieve a desired result. On the negative side, there was the need to force bolts into holes that had poor alignment. Long strips, both straight and curved had to be made by bolting two together in a step joint which throws things out of line giving the car a lop-sided appearance. This was the practice in the Renault F1 racing car which lead me to a wholesale replacement and redesigning of the suspension units using off the peg, dark blue narrow strips. Why couldn't the folk in Calais have thought of this? In the case of this new model however, there are no available standard Meccano strips to use as substitutes. The most awkward and oath-provoking bit was the final stage of construction, the marrying of the body and base unit. The four short fibre-optic rods had to be placed in holes in both halves, and retained in place whilst gently pushing top and bottom together. Long bolts and spacers went in from the side to fit nuts pre-placed into slots in the base unit. The problem was keeping spacers on bolts on the inside of the body work in an almost unseen position. If the model is tipped to any degree in order to see or get one's fingers in, then the nuts fall out. B*****!

Speaking of nuts and bolts, those supplied in the recent modern outfits seem to be greatly improved in quality and finish over their predecessors but are more chunky. However, in the case of the sports car, it would have been nice to be supplied with more black painted ones or even some painted orange. They would enhance the appearance and look less conspicuous than the bright plated types.

Let us hope that these recent forays of Meccano into R/C models are a sign of better things to come for us constructors. The system is certainly more reliable and powerful than the old infra-red but it should be, given Nikko's experience in this field. It would be nice, though, if Meccano developed some models that were more sophisticated, construction-wise. But at least we are seeing some thought in the design stage at long last.

MODEL REPORT

13th May 2006

Photos: Peter Barnard



Chris Warrell

Two models from 1940s 2 and 3 manuals:
Bluebird in blue and gold, with an aeroplane kit pilot in the driving seat, and Thunderbolt Racing Car in red and green.

Ivor Ellard

German WW2 Armoured Train, an 0-gauge model carrying tanks and armoured personnel carriers. The 2.10.0 loco has a pickup for third rail operation.

Eddie Oatley

Eddie brought a display of literature by Meccano and Stokys, including the rare 1939 Meccano Dealer's Leaflet.

Peter Clay

Excavator with built-in digging movement; a Meccano graph spiral line mechanism; and a mini-sports car.

Ron Mumford

Twin Marine Engine and Fire Engine, both from the 1961 No. 5 manual, with extra parts added for realism.

Bryn Jones

Bryn's Twist and Jaw unit has servo-operated parallel jaws driven by an opposed rack and pinion mechanism. Spring-loaded limit switches indicate to the controlling program when the load is secure. The twist action is provided by a pinion and large toothed ring combination which is motor controlled. Potentiometer control of the two functions is implemented via a Motorvator unit.

Brian Elvidge

Tony James's 10-set Sliding Bed Car Recovery Truck (MP 159); modified with different gear ratios and with the under-powered PDU replaced by a more powerful EM-1 motor from Dave Taylor.



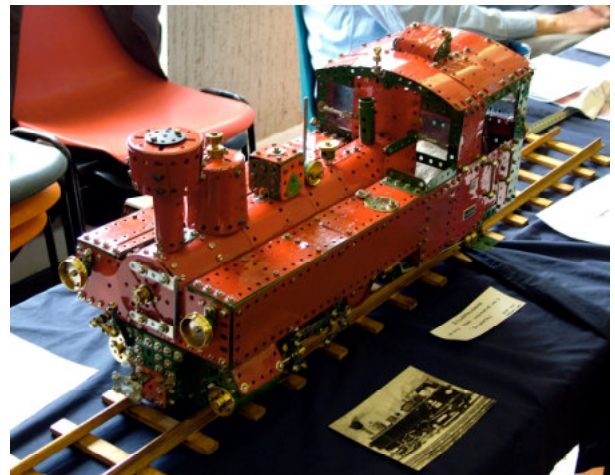
Also a tipping lorry loosely based on a 6x4 quarrying contractor's heavy vehicle to Brian's own design. This featured a simulated hydraulic tipping mechanism using cord and a hand crank, and working steering controlled from the steering wheel by a rod, crank and gears. The model has an articulated rear driven bogie using pivoted 5.5 inch double angle strips and double 2" pulleys and tyres.

Ron Martin

A medium red/green Bradford Tram, c. 1903, fitted with two motors, a Windmill Pump from no. 7 set, built in light red/green and motorised.

Geoff Hall

Geoff's 1:12 scale model of Zillertalbahn 2' 6" gauge 0-6-2 tank loco, shown at the last meeting, is now complete.

**David Smithers**

A level-luffing Crane, which is prompting David to commit further thoughts to paper (we hope!), plus a simple windmill made from the Pocket Meccano set in response to the SELMC secretary's challenge at their last meeting.

Roger Little

A Tower Crane with nine electric motors, all independently operated from a remote control box. Roger brought along pictures of the world's biggest tower crane, on which his model is based.

Stan Leech

Stan showed a selection of modified and special tools he uses for model construction, including ball-ended hex screwdrivers and allen keys; also spanners with the sides ground down for limited

clearance, and one with a washer araldited to each end to hold a nut.

Geoff Carter

Various models from recent sets, including the Crazy Inventor's Walking Steamship, and a Seaplane and Go-cart from Collection sets. Several members drooled over Geoff's boxed Gearing Roller Bearing in grey. He also brought along a copy of Bernard Périer's book 'Zkwyx Meccanaut' published by CQ, as well as an intriguing Masterbuilder Technik LPE set, which seemed to consist of two Evolution 2 sets with extra parts.

Mike Tebbutt

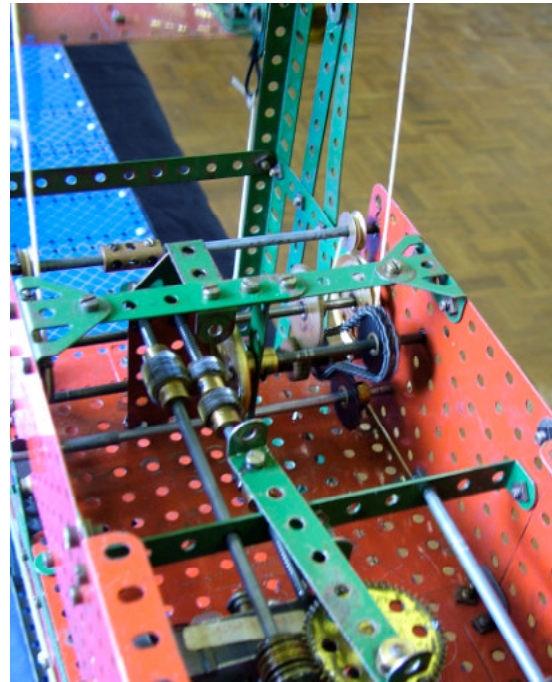
Mike's description of the remote-controlled sports car is elsewhere in this Newsletter.

John Gay

Two windmills: the red and green Smock Mill from the 1950s no. 6 outfit, and a blue and yellow Post Mill from the 2/3 outfit.

Tony Parmee

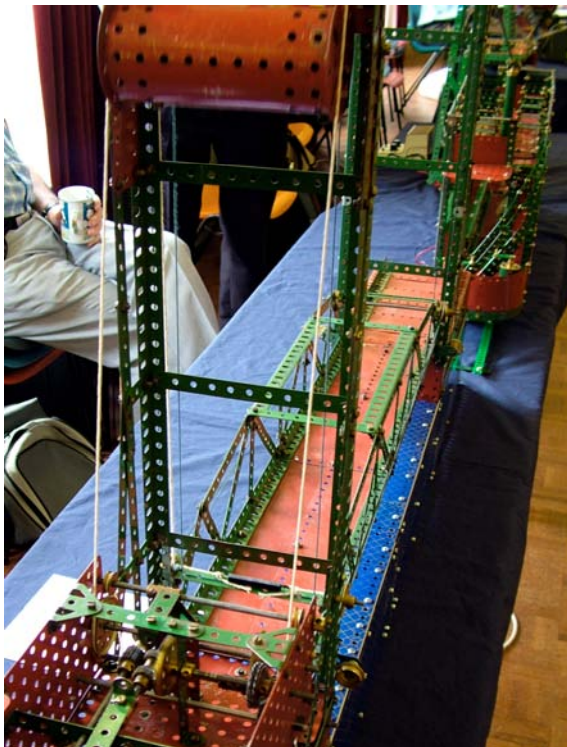
Vertical Lift Bridge, rebuilt from the set 9 model so that it can lifted from one end only, like the Rotterdam Bridge of the 1970s, using a special system of stabilising cables. The automatic reversing lifting and lowering mechanism can be built with the no. 9 outfit, though the base mounting is extra.



Dennis Backler

In response to a challenge Dennis has built his first miniature Meccano model, based on a Märklin model of a Fuchs 301 front shovel.

Dave & Marilyn Taylor had their usual stall of irresistible Meccano and related parts.



SMALL ADS