

North East London Meccano Club

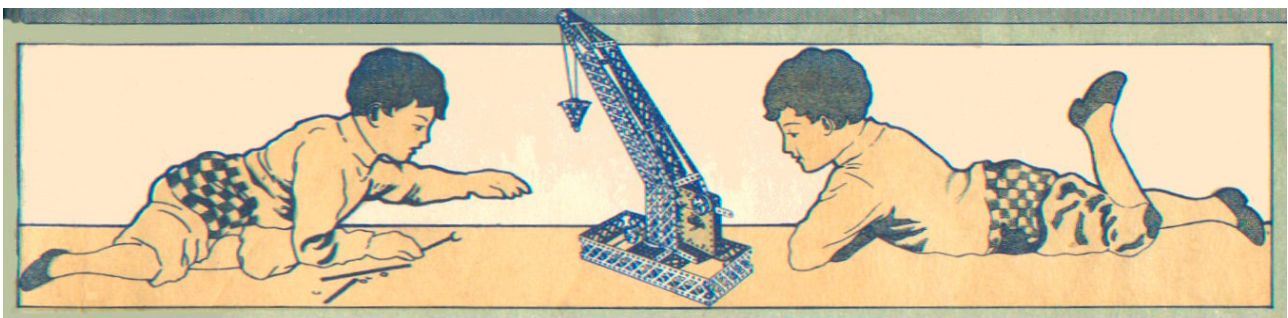
Newsletter - November 2006

**The 72nd meeting of the North East London Meccano Club will take place on
Saturday 2nd December 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.

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CLUB NEWS

You probably don't need reminding that the December meeting will include the AGM, and no doubt there will be much discussion about the future of the Annual Exhibition (see Mike Tebbutt's article below). It is also the occasion of our Annual Competition, so finish off those impressive models!

Don't forget that the club needs a new chairman, as well as volunteers to prepare refreshments at club meetings.

Len Llewellyn takes over as Newsletter Editor after this issue, and I hope he enjoys the job as much as I have. Len introduces himself in this issue.

Seasonal Greetings and some reflections from the Hon Sec.

Hello Brothers (and any Sisters) out there.

Let me begin by wishing you all the Compliments of the Season and a very restful and joyful holiday. I know it can be a lot of fuss, expense and preparation, often seemingly for nothing, but it is a great time for getting the family together and having a good old knees-up and for making excuses to afford things you dare not afford at any other time. Being at the end of the year, it is also a great time for reflection over the past. I'm not going to mention resolutions for the future as making them is about as useful as a politician's promise!

The point of this article is to prepare you for our forthcoming AGM.

Apart from the usual business, which we normally dispense with (having one eye on the tea and mince pies) in our customary, "no-nonsense" way, there is the contentious subject of this September's Exhibition to discuss.

The Exhibition was both a success and a failure, depending upon one's view. It was not unlike a very successful 'normal' meeting. We all had a chance to chat to each other about our models, old brown boots and anything else that came to hand, all at great length and at great leisure. We had a good turn-out of members and a good selection of models that showed off the versatility of Meccano to great effect. The trouble was that we had time on our hands because, for once, the public did not come through the doors. To be precise, only 31 adults and 4 children materialised, and we suffered a considerable financial loss of approximately £217.

OK, this might just be a one-off glitch on our record which our funds (presently standing at about £800) can cover. Obviously, we cannot sustain such a loss repeatedly, not without substantially increasing our annual subscriptions. What would be the point of getting into that vicious circle?

We need to think seriously about this matter right now, at this meeting. We really need to decide whether we want an Exhibition next year and, if so, we need to start planning it immediately.

First, I think we need to get it straight in our heads why we have an exhibition. Three reasons spring to my mind: to earn our Club money, to gain new members (which will also generate new revenue from subscriptions) and PR for our hobby. We did get in a little PR work this time but we sadly failed on the other two counts.

One thing is certain: the job of organising an exhibition is probably too great a task for one individual to handle, given the timescale and the number of times we get together in the course of a year. This, of course, makes Dave Taylor's organising efforts in the past all the more remarkable. Ian Harrison, who took over the job this year, stepped into the breach at a moment's notice, relatively speaking, and did a grand job. However, he was hampered by time, by financial constraints on advertising and by acting alone.

I think we need to set up an Exhibition Committee of three or four individuals who can be trusted to get on with the task by themselves but, of course, with all the aid the rest of us can offer when called upon to do so. I am thinking of help with pre-publicity, with the setting up of tables beforehand and clearing up afterwards, i.e. not packing up early and clearing off, leaving it all to the few left behind.

We also need to think of the venue itself. Our most successful efforts in the past have been at places that offered their own, relevant, "engineering- type" interests for the public, e.g. the Transport Museum and the Railway Museum. In the past we have also had a more diverse show on offer with a wider representation of Binns Road products in the form of Hornby and Bayko. True we had a small O-gauge layout and our

faithful Bayko Boy this time, but the Day Centre at Dunmow restricts larger layouts. On the other hand, it is cheap, costing £88 for the day. Such venues are fairly rare and need pre-booking well in advance. The Museum of Power at Maldon is one that we may be able to use at shorter notice, but it raises another important criterion, that of accessibility. The Museum of Power is stuck out in the middle of rural lanes where public transport is virtually non-existent, especially on Sundays. Finding it by car can be a bit of a magical mystery tour also!

Something we might also consider is moving the date a bit later in the year because at the beginning of September many people are still on holiday. Plus, the good weather that we enjoyed early in September might have encouraged folk to engage in more outdoor pursuits.

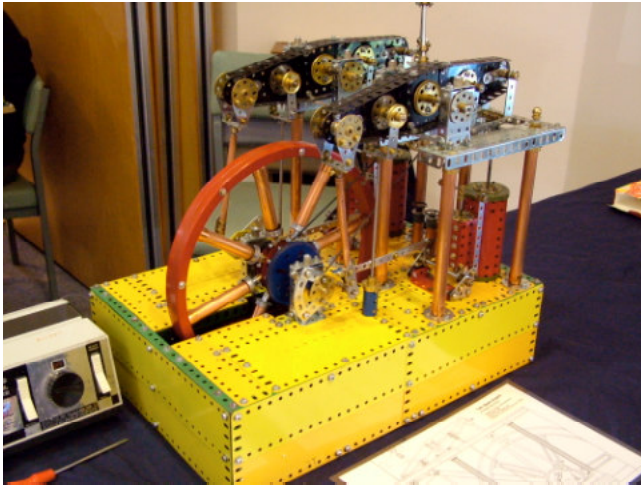
If we do decide to go ahead and keep the timing approximately the same, then we will actually have only nine months and not a whole year to organise ourselves for 2007. Another alternative would be to have a biannual exhibition, which would allow us greater breathing space.

So there are a few things to think about. I know that I am not giving you much time to ruminate over them, but it should be enough to promote a discussion at least.

Mike Tebbutt

The Dunmow Exhibition, 10th September 2006

The following exhibitors attended: Allen Berman (Blocksetting Crane, Steam Shovel, 1905 Rolls Royce); John Cowdery & George Foard (display of various Meccano models and literature); Colin Davies (Beam Engine, Locomotive, Rolls Royce Silver Ghost 1906); Ivor Ellard (Meccanograph); Brian Elvidge; Simon Greatrex; Geoff Hall (Zillertalbahn 0-6-2 Tank Locomotive, selection of Meccano products); Alan Hartwell (O-gauge railway layout); Bryn Jones (jaw, twist and tilt unit for Robot Arm); Stan Leech (Laxey Wheel); Roger Little (Tower Crane); Len Llewellyn (Roundabout and supporting models); John MacDonald (Military Meccano models); Ron Martin (Windmill Pump, Dockside Crane); Eddie Oatley (Paddle Steamer Engine, Dry-Dock Crane); Tony Parmee (Mississippi Steam Boat); Mike Tebbutt (various models).



**Some images from the
Dunmow exhibition, by
Peter Barnard**





Man behind the Meccano - Len Llewellyn

Early in the year I had a conversation with Peter Barnard about the future of this Newsletter; basically Peter told me that he wanted to leave the post of Editor and get on with more Meccano building. In return I said that I had shown an interest in doing the job when Nigel Lynn took it on and was still interested if he wished to put my name forward.

Following the old adage of "one willing volunteer" being worth more than "half a dozen press-ganged men", Peter has agreed to hand the editorship of the Newsletter over to me for the next issue, with the members' consent of course.

So just a little bit about me to bore you all to death.....

Now the wrong side of 60 I have been involved in printing and publishing for all of my adult life and for most of the last thirty-five years have also been involved in non-league football, much of it at Ilford Football Club where my main job is edit the programme on a weekly basis.

Like the vast majority of members who read this I had Meccano as a boy, went away from the hobby for much of my adult life and then came back after picking up a 1961 No. 5 set in a secondhand shop and promptly making all the models in the leaflet therein.

I got more involved by going to a toy fair and coming across Mike & Carole Rhoades. There I offered Mike my professional printing services and have ever since produced his Price List and "Specials Lists" which was where I think I really got hooked again. Ever since I have not really stopped buying from a variety of sources including our member Dave Taylor and of course the dreaded Ebay. But I can boast at least one 1953 ten set, a well as a nine drawer cabinet that could probably make up another one, various sevens eights and nines in Red & Green as well as a definitive copy of each of the 0-6 sets in those colours. An eight (I think) - all made up from the various sources in Blue and Gold. Almost a ten set in 70's blue and yellow, many of the 1-5 sets in Dark Blue and Yellow as well as lots of French and Nikko sets, all of which has made walking through my hallway a bit difficult. There are also large piles of boxes of the East German "Construction" or "Constructo" sets, and very recently an Ebay acquisition of Märklin 103, 103a and 104a sets making up to their biggest set, the 105.

I do build, but not as often as I would like mainly because of the commitment to football, but I am looking forward to getting to grips with more Meccano in the next few years, as at least semi-retirement takes hold. I'm also looking forward to the challenge of editing the Newsletter which with majority consent I will produce in an A5 rather than A4 format (but keeping the text and picture sizes the same). It will be in the region of eight to twelve pages initially as I don't want to run before I can walk, so to speak.

I'm also looking forward to working with Allen Berman on the production, and feel that between us we may be able to move from club newsletter to club magazine depending on the costs involved of course. I have a few ideas ticking around in the old brain box and "The man behind the Meccano" is one of them

Hope I can manage to keep up the good work that Peter has put in over the past few years and look forward to getting to know the membership of the club a little better in the years ahead.

Len Llewellyn

MODEL REPORT

8th July 2006

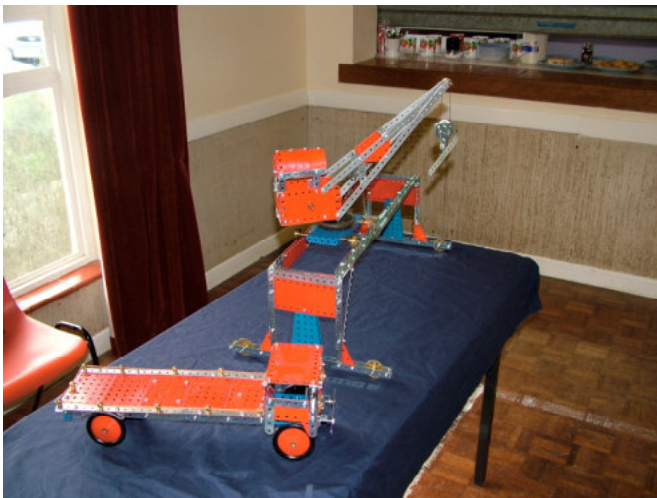
Photos: Peter Barnard

Peter Clay

T-form Meccanograph, adapted from plans published in RMG, incorporating extra gears and guilloche and straight-line attachments. Turntable is on a roller bearing, driven through a 2½" gear to reduce backlash. The result is a very accurate mechanism that can be driven by hand or electric motor.

Ron Mumford

Heavy Good Vehicle from 1974 no. 5 manual, with spikes and chain to add interest; Travelling Gantry Crane from 1961 no. 5 manual.



Bryn Jones

Robot Arm still under construction; a clamshell containing a tilt unit is supported on a temporary stand. The unit is intended to support a twist and parallel jaw unit made earlier, but there are some problems with the gearing of the tilt drive.

Geoff Hall

Geoff's 1:12 scale model of Zillertalbahn 2' 6" gauge 0-6-2 tank loco is now complete.

David Smithers

Dockyard Crane from 1970s set 9 manual, built for the SELMC 30th anniversary meeting. It has an effective motorised hoist and luffing system, and the slewing is very good, using the centre mast system instead of the usual two 3" pulleys.



Geoff Carter

One of the new radio-controlled sets (6950) which looks good but needs some careful bending and extra bolts to fit together; an Entech helicopter (Entech is an Indian Meccano clone); UK and Japanese Magic Motors; a copy of Famous Trains (Meccano Library no. 1).

Tony Parmee

Mississippi Steam Boat (*not* a no. 10 set model!), first shown at the May meeting, and now fitted out with lights and model figures.

Dennis Backler

The pulley/flywheel for the steam engine "Caroline" is now under construction, and when completed will be 19½" in diameter!

Simon Greatrex

A 1951 5A set in mint condition with instruction manual, the crank handle with the rare black grip. Also a F-L manual showing some interesting models, including a strip-bending machine.

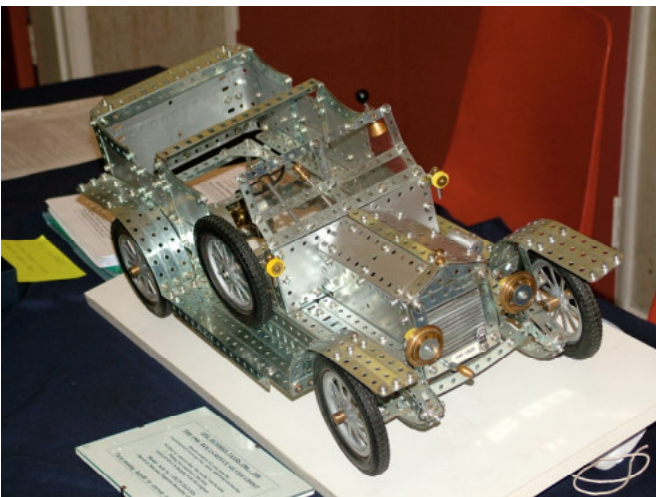
Len Llewellyn

Articulated Lorry from the 1954 no. 9 set; and a Roundabout from Meccano Magazine Quarterly featuring appropriately multi-coloured parts.



Colin Davies

1906 Rolls Royce Silver Ghost, modelled to 1/8 scale, based on MM December 1964. Features include a 3-speed gearbox, clutch, differential and steering; turning the starting handle drives the transmission. All the plating for the coachwork is sprayed silver in keeping with the original.



Allen Berman

An “as found” Meccano “X” Series outfit No.2 complete with original instructions, red/green magic motor and the rare half-inch threaded pulley. An excellent copy of “Engineering For Boys” by Ellison Hawkes (editor of Meccano Magazine) dated June 1st

1923. A Stuart 10V vertical slide valve steam engine, complete with Stephenson’s reversing gear. This model was machined from castings and will make an excellent power source for a Meccano model.

Brian Elvidge

Furnace Charging Machine from 1950 set 9, with some necessary modifications, notably in the travelling undercarriages.

