



BOOK OF MODELS
VORLESUNG ÜBER MODELLS
LIBRO DE MODELOS
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9

October 2021

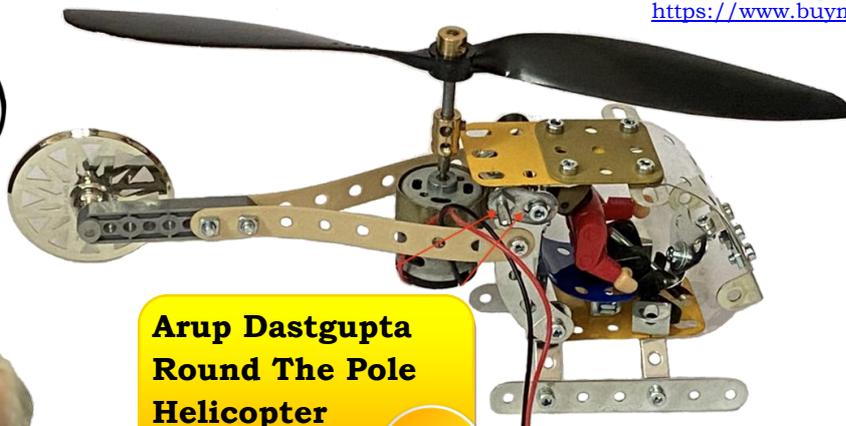
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Helicopter

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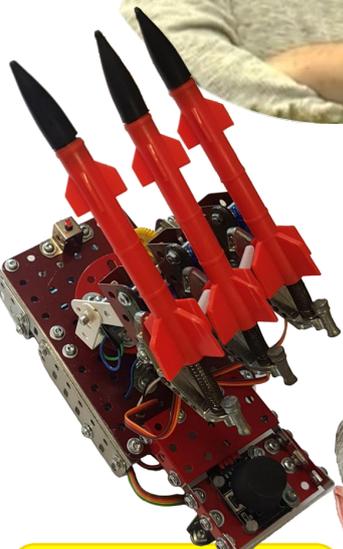
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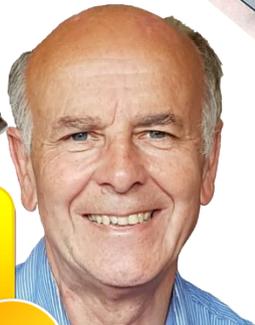


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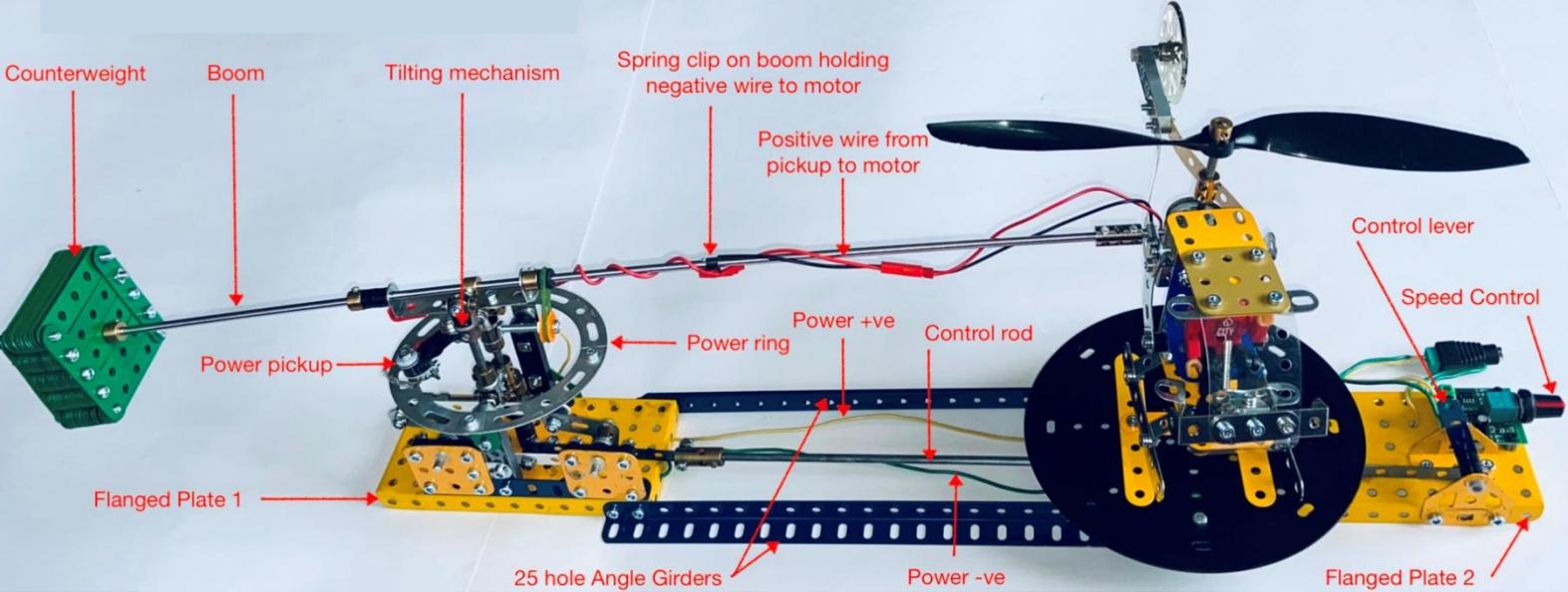


Arup Dasgupta - India

Round the Pole Helicopter

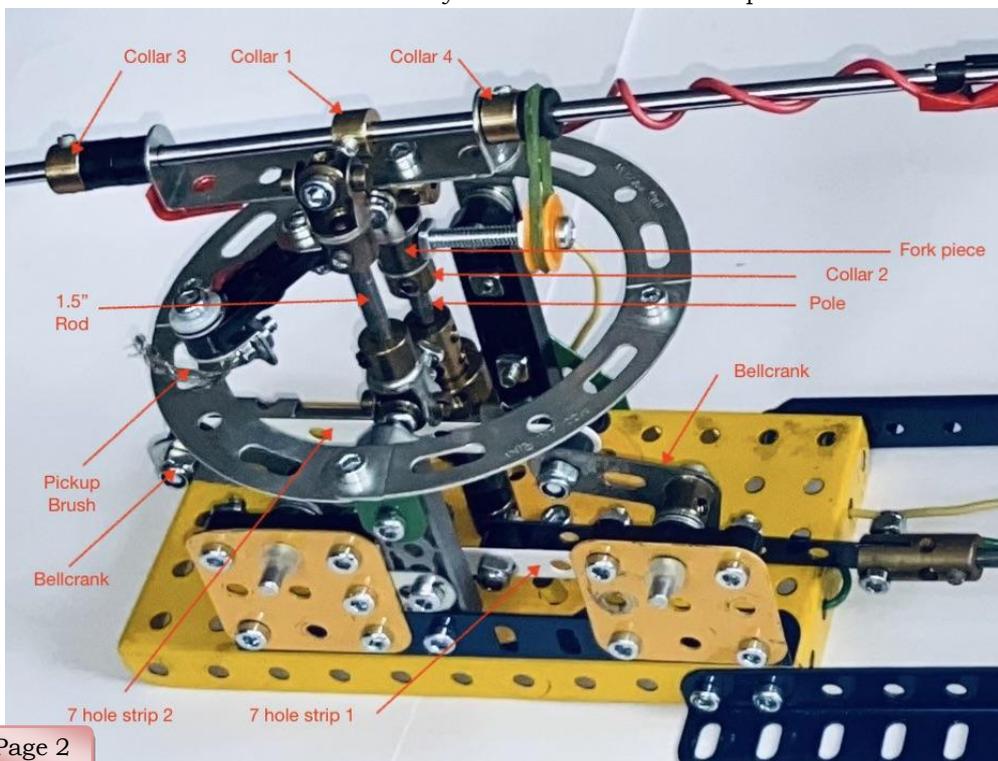
I have always wanted to build this model but never got around to it till a discussion with Paul Dale and John Burke set me on the

path to making one. The catalyst was my granddaughter who wanted a flying helicopter. My model is a mix and match of several designs. The main mechanism is adapted from the article "Flying Helicopter - Mk II" by Mike Hooper as it appeared in Newsmag 88 November 2000. The base consists of two Flanged Plates connected to the ends of two 25 hole Angle Girders overlapped by two holes. The centre hole of Flanged Plate 1 carries the pole, a 5" Rod bolted to a Wheel Disc on the underside of the Flanged Plate and to a Faceplate on the top. The Wheel Disc and Faceplate are further bolted together sandwiching the Flanged Plate to provide a firm base to the pole. A meter long connecting wire is attached to one of these Bolts on the underside of the assembly. Two large plastic Spacers are slipped on to the pole, followed by a Socket Coupling and a Coupling, the latter two being free to rotate on the pole. A Collar 2 is firmly bolted to the pole about 3/8th of an inch from the top. A 5 hole DAS is attached by its second and fourth holes to a Coupling. The Coupling is pivoted through its central threaded hole on a Fork Piece (116a) with two bolts.

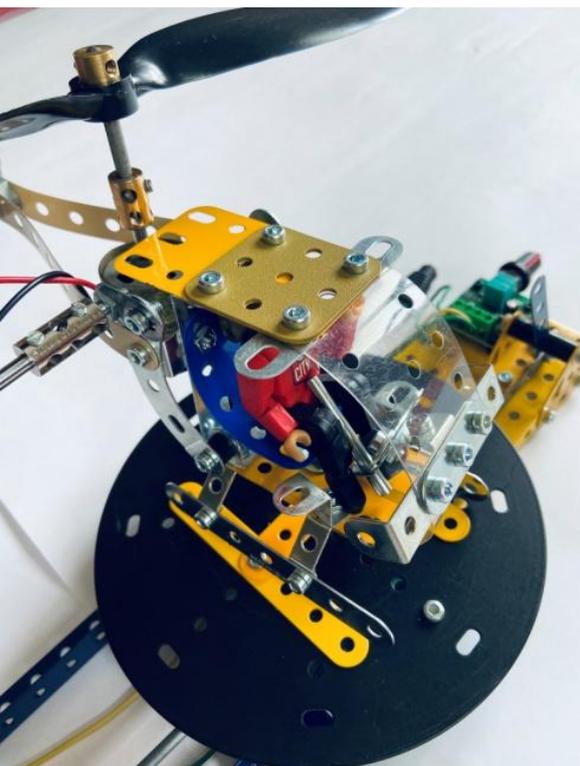
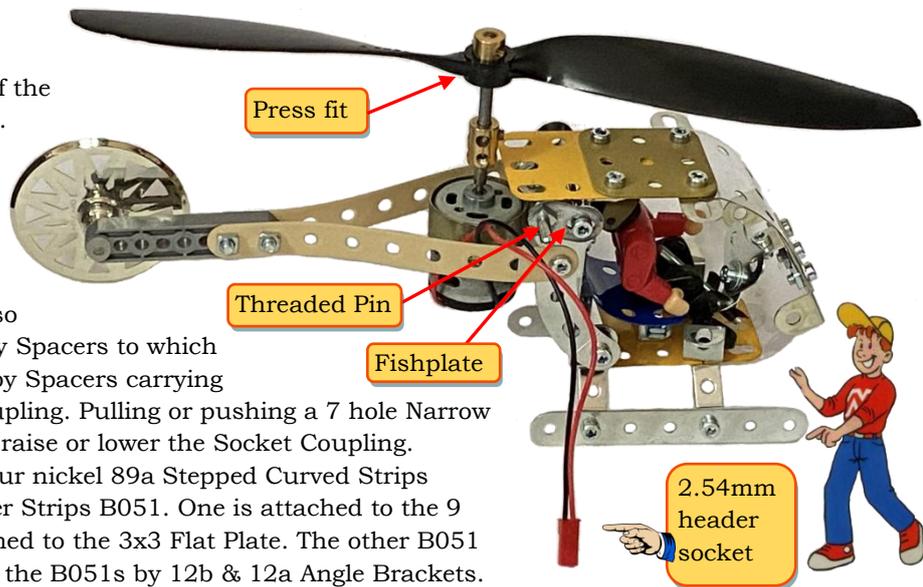


The Fork Piece sits on the Collar fixed to the pole and is free to rotate. The DAS carries the boom, a 500mm Rod, with a Collar 1. The Rod is asymmetrically positioned, with a third of its length measured from the centre position of the Coupling on one side and held in place by two Collars 3 and 4. A Rubber Pulley (23c), carrying a small rubber band, is pushed on the longer side of the Rod up to Collar 4. A 1/2" Plastic Pulley is fixed to a 1 1/8" Bolt which in turn is attached to one of the threaded holes of the Fork Piece and locked into place with a nut ensuring that it allows the Fork Piece to rotate freely. The rubber band is looped between the 1/2" Pulley and the Rubber Pulley.

The opposite threaded hole of the Fork Piece carries an Angle Bracket firmly fixed with a bolt and nut keeping the Fork Piece free to rotate about the pole. A Narrow Plastic Spacer Strip 260c is bolted to the Angle Bracket such that it is at 45 degrees to the axis of the boom. Another Angle Bracket is bolted to the other end of the 260c along with 500 cm length of connecting wire. A pickup brush consisting of a 2" length of bare multi-strand connecting wire is looped onto a Bolt on the free hole of the Angle Bracket. A 1.5" Rod carries at its ends two Swivel Bearings. A 3/4" Bolt is inserted into the Collar of one Swivel Bearing and lock-nutted in place. The screw is inserted in the upper threaded hole of the Coupling on the pole and locked with a nut such that the coupling is free to rotate about the pole. The other Swivel Bearing carries a 1 1/8" Bolt lock-nutted in its Collar. The Bolt is further attached to the Collar 1 such that the Collar locks on to the boom.



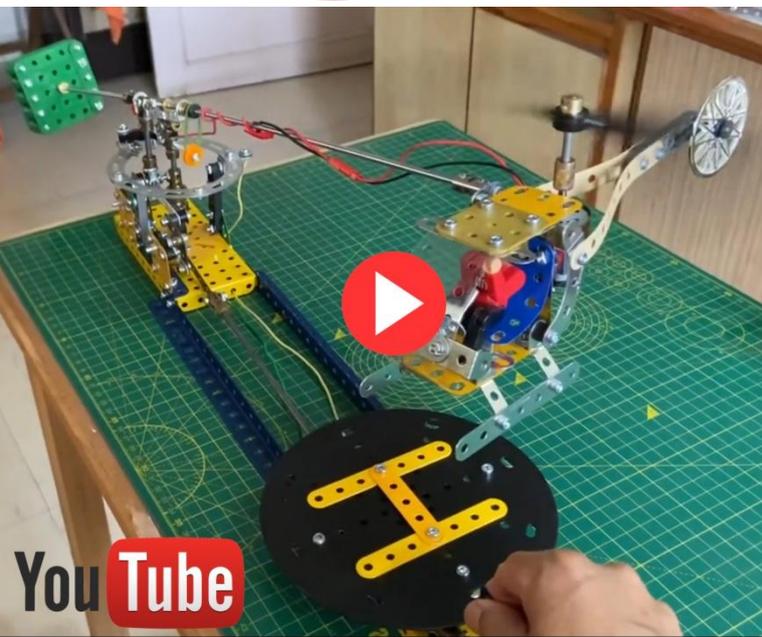
If the Socket Coupling is raised or lowered on the pole, the boom will rotate about its longitudinal axis. A 9 hole Angle Girder is bolted flush to the long side of the Flanged Plate with two 3x3 hole Flat Plates at its ends. Narrow Plastic Spacer Strips (260c) fitted to the top of these Plates form the bearings for two Bell Cranks pivoted on one inch Rods spaced by two Washers and with their upper arms pointed in the same direction. The lower arms of the Cranks carry a lock-nutted 7 hole Narrow Strip 1. The upper arms also carry a 7 hole lock-nutted Narrow Strip 2 separated by Spacers to which is attached 2 x Rod/Strip Connectors also separated by Spacers carrying a 2.5" Rod which fits into the groove of the Socket Coupling. Pulling or pushing a 7 hole Narrow Strip lock-nutted to Strip 1 at the central hole should raise or lower the Socket Coupling. Electric power is supplied via a 4" ring composed of four nickel 89a Stepped Curved Strips mounted concentric to the pole on Thick Plastic Spacer Strips B051. One is attached to the 9 hole Angle Girder and stiffened with a Fishplate attached to the 3x3 Flat Plate. The other B051 is attached to a Flat Trunnion. The ring is attached to the B051s by 12b & 12a Angle Brackets.



A 1 metre connecting wire is attached to the free hole of the 12a. The pickup brush is positioned to wipe the upper surface of the ring. The helicopter is a modified 1970 set 2 model. Landing skids are 7 hole strips attached to the underside of the cabin using Obtuse Double Brackets. The motor is mounted on the back of the cabin with its shaft clear of the overhanging 3X5 hole yellow Plastic Plate. Several Meccano motors - Crane, French with round and tri-axle shafts - were tried but all failed to provide the necessary power to lift the helicopter. Finally I used a 12v non-Meccano permanent magnet motor from an Indian manufacturer, Jagmini, who had provided a sample with a 4mm shaft. The main rotor is a 10 inch drone propeller which comes with an 8mm hole and adapters for 2 to 6mm shafts. A 4mm adapter was used to fix it to a 1.5 inch Rod. Attaching the rotor to the motor has to be firm. Rod Connectors were tried but the rotor just took off sans the helicopter! A Short Coupling solved this problem. Similarly, a Collar prevents the rotor from flying off without its 4mm adapter! The rear rotor is a Plastic Spoked Wheel B159 mounted on one end of a Thick Plastic Spacer Strip B051. The other end is held between two 9 hole Flexible Strips B482 overlapped by two holes. Wire from one terminal of the motor should be attached to the boom by a Spring Clip. The other terminal should be attached to the 500mm wire attached to the brush. A Threaded Pin is attached above the centre of gravity of the helicopter. It is held in a Coupling at the longer end of the boom. The shorter end of the boom has a 500g counterweight to balance the helicopter. An 11.5" Rod is fitted on each end with a Rod/Strip Coupling.

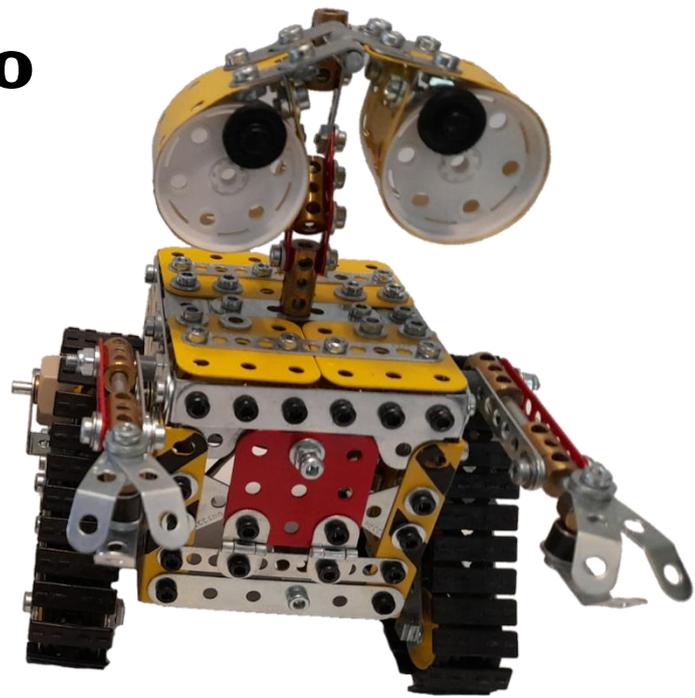
Click the YouTube Link or click on the photo below to see the video

 <https://youtu.be/owHubyULF2c>



One Coupling is attached to 7 hole Narrow Strip used to operate the lifting mechanism. The other Coupling is attached to a 5 hole Narrow Strip which is lock-nutted to another 5 hole Narrow Strip which is pivoted on its hole next to the lock-nutted hole on a one inch Rod held between a Flat Trunnion and a Trunnion on the second Flanged Plate. The connecting wires from the base assembly and the power ring assembly are brought to the second Flanged Plate and attached to a motor speed controller purchased from a local hobby store. The controller can handle up to 3A at 30V. The operating voltage was fixed at 6V after experimentation. To set up the model, first take off the rubber band from the half inch Pulley and adjust the balance by moving the counterweight along the boom. Next loosen the 1/8" Bolt in the Collar 1 and with the Socket Coupling at about the midway position on the pole tighten the 1/8" Bolt. In this position the 1/8" Bolt should be roughly horizontal. Now insert the Threaded Pin on the helicopter side into the Coupling on the boom such that the helicopter is in its horizontal flying position without any external force applied. Tighten the Grub Screw on the Coupling to firmly hold the Threaded Pin. To operate the model slowly increase the rotor speed till the helicopter lifts off the helipad. Push the control lever forward slightly. The helicopter nose should tilt down and it should begin to 'fly' forward. Pulling the lever back will tilt the helicopter nose up and it will fly backward. I added a helipad with a big 'H' and the game is to land the helicopter on the 'H'.

Steel World vs Meccano



Actual size comparison

Since the inception of Meccano there have been literally hundreds of Metal Construction Systems spawned by competitors. Some that come to mind are the Australian Buz and EzyBilt that were virtually exact copies. There were also many systems that were similar but metric based. Many Chinese copies have 10mm spaced strips which make them appear roughly the same size, however Meccano constructors are well aware that close enough isn't good enough as the holes don't line up. If you look at the [MeccanoIndex](https://www.meccanoindex.co.uk/Other/index.php?id=1629688278) website by Tim Edwards you will see that there are 810 "Other Systems" listed!

Steel World stands apart from the Meccano clones mainly due to its size. Although the fully built models look to be similar in size to Meccano they are in fact much smaller and more intricate. With my fat fingers, and less than perfect eyesight, I struggle to build SW models but I do love the challenge. Of course my loyalties remain with Meccano as it was my childhood hobby and remains so to this day but Steel World isn't the same. It's a different system. So why is the hole spacing 7.8mm? It's the [Golden Ratio](#). (Google it.) Steel World designers wanted something smaller but still with the same ratio as Meccano and so the Golden Ratio was applied. Frank Hornby probably chose 1/2" spacing because an inch was the standard UK measurement. Chinese metric copies probably chose 10mm because it was close enough to 1/2" but Steel World sizing is quite deliberately based on the golden ratio.

MECCANO
ENGINEERING & ROBOTICS



Hex M3

Torx T8

The Steel World bolts are tiny in comparison to Meccano bolts. The early version of SW bolts were hex head but it was soon realised that the hex key supplied was rounding off and this resulted in the hex head in the bolts also rounding off. This was remedied by changing to Torx head bolts. Some of the older SW outfits may still have the hex key and hex bolts but SW tell me that all the new outfits like the tank have the new Torx bolts.

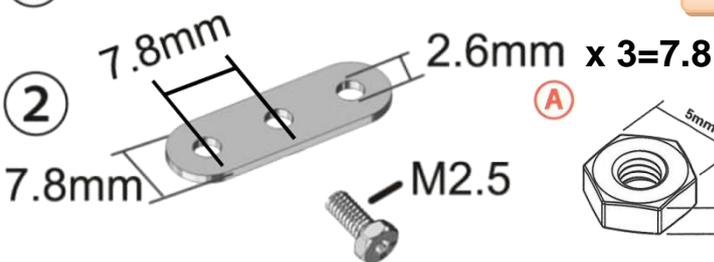


M2.5

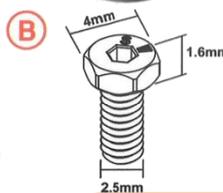
5/32" BSW

Another difference is the use of stainless steel for the strips. No more zinc rot! They seem to be a bit harder and more rigid than Meccano strips although I haven't tried bending them yet. The bolts are most definitely harder as I found out when I tried to cut one to length with a hacksaw. SW specifies the bolts are made from 45# steel.

① 1/2 inch × 0.618 ≈ 7.8mm

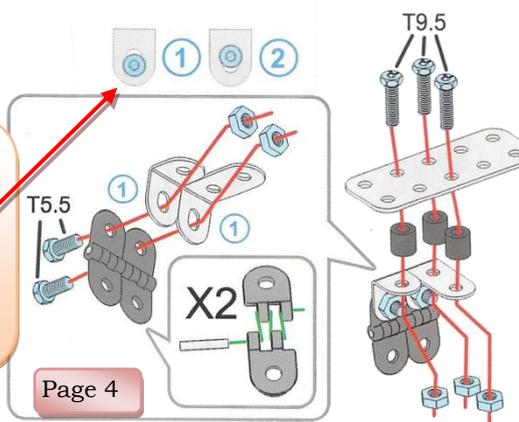


Torx



Steel World is not compatible with Meccano so don't buy it expecting to supplement your existing Meccano. It's a different experience altogether requiring a sharp eye and a steady hand. The quality is excellent and the radio controlled outfits are very easy to use as in my Meccano version of Wall-E. Currently you can only buy SW from Amazon USA and don't search for Wall-E as it's a trademark. Use the link below instead.

The SW manuals are clear and have some innovative features such as showing where to position bolts in a slotted hole.



Triple Trouble



Click on it!

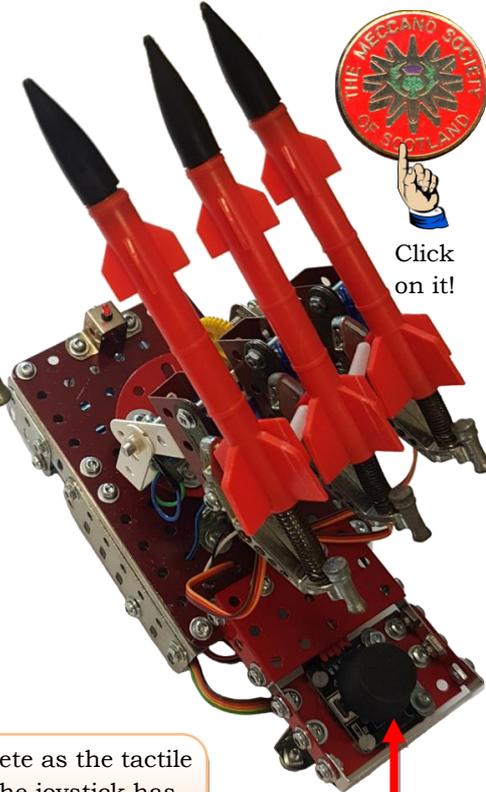
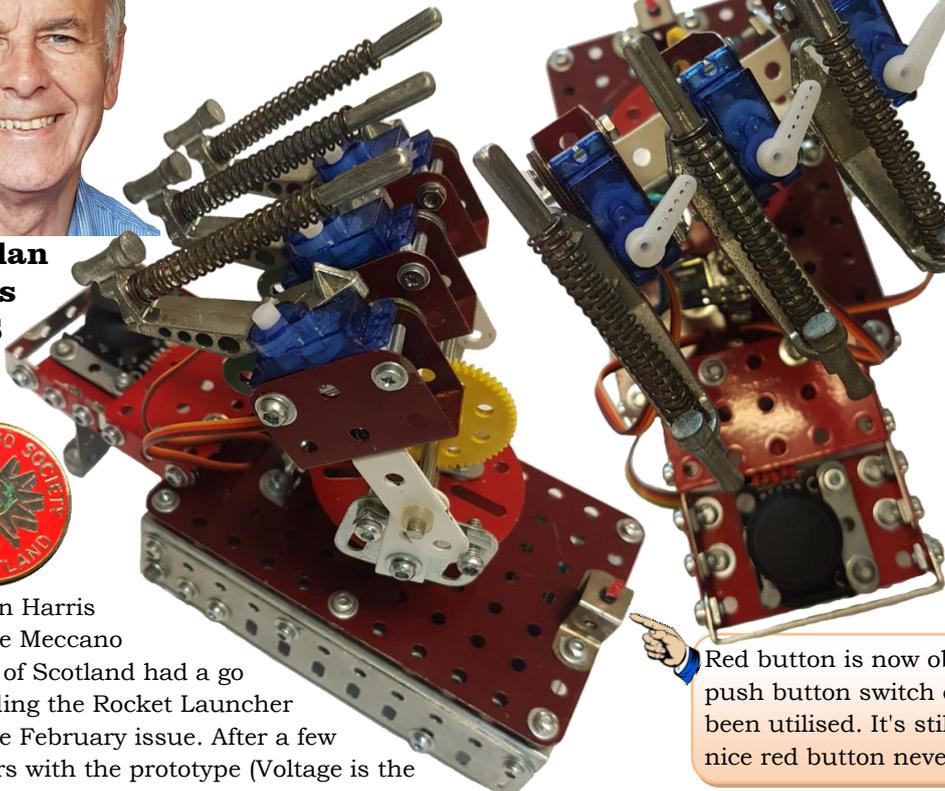
Brendan Harris MSoS

Brendan Harris from the Meccano Society of Scotland had a go at building the Rocket Launcher from the February issue. After a few disasters with the prototype (Voltage is the silent killer!) he then decided to add some rockets to increase the carnage. The rockets fire quickly one after the other and they have been spaced out to prevent that well known condition call 'Fin Fouling'. Lessons learned: 12V destroys servos. Voltage regulators help. Use separate power supplies for motor and servos.

The prototype had a servo for up/down but it was jerky so a geared N20 motor was used instead.

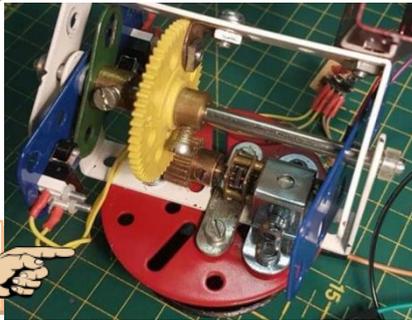
This project is more a work of art than a commercial design and I know that there are a few of you who would go nuts for one. This one cost me \$300 to produce so I'd have to work out a cost if people want them. The design features the small outfits from Meccano manuals with a focus on shape, model and colours. Predominately cranes and plans, this shirt features them all printed onto polyester material that keeps its colour. The images have all been photographed, often dismantled to make the next one and then edited in Photoshop. It's a rather time consuming process to remove all the holes so the white would show through. - Joe Rimmer. Sydney, Australia.

From Joe Rimmer Meccano Modellers Association Sydney



Red button is now obsolete as the tactile push button switch on the joystick has been utilised. It's still there because a nice red button never did any harm!

Tactile switch on joystick. Press to fire!



These shirts aren't yet in production but if you want to contact Joe, details are as follows:

meccanojoe@gmail.com
<http://twitter.com/meccanojoe>

Helicals Hypoids & Herringbones

by Prof Andrew Knox Scotland - UK



The red 2 1/2" Faceplate mechanism, Figs 1 and 2, is an all-helical Pinion differential using 24T Gears. The diff cage is driven and the half shafts are on the left and right. The side-on image shows the spacing between the gears. The left and right-handed pairs of helicals together on the same shaft form what is sometimes called a "chevron" gear or "herringbone" gear. The particular advantage they have over conventional helicals is that there is no net axial thrust on the shaft holding the gears, making the gearbox design easier. When assembling the Faceplates together using the brass spacers I always put a drift through both sides before tightening up the bolts so everything is in line.

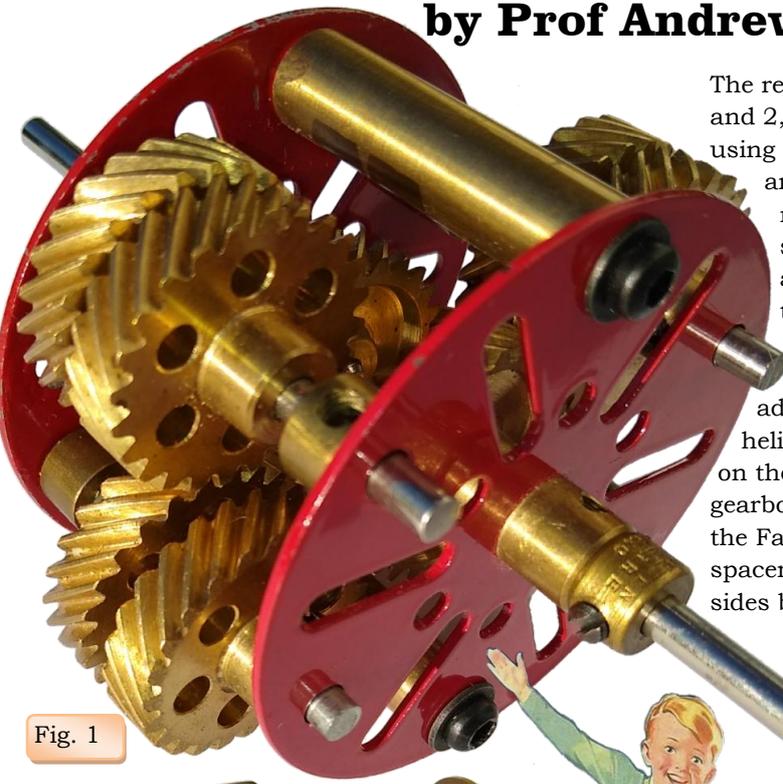


Fig. 1

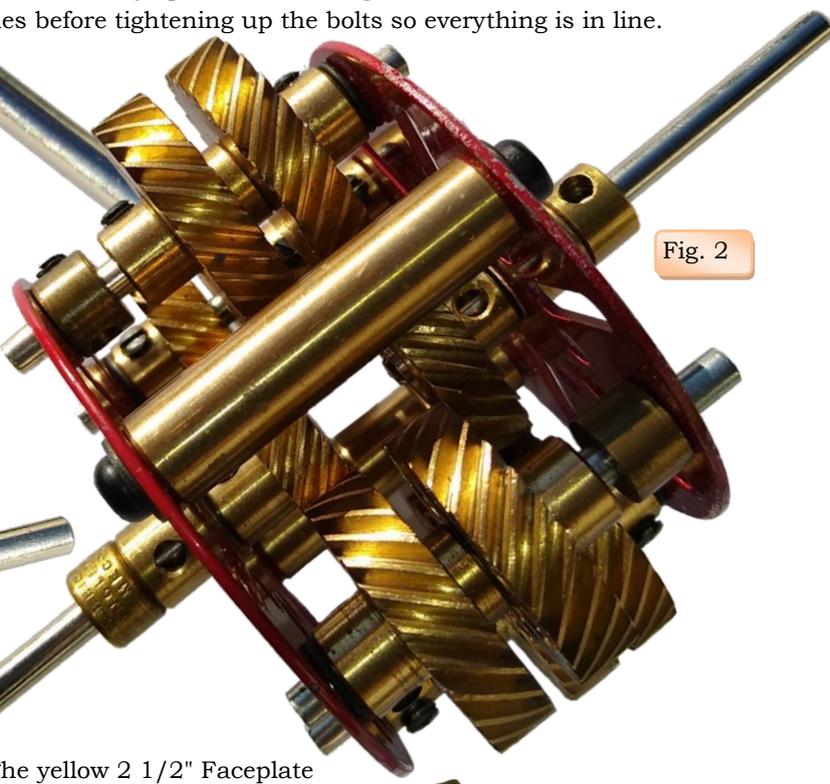


Fig. 2



Build it!

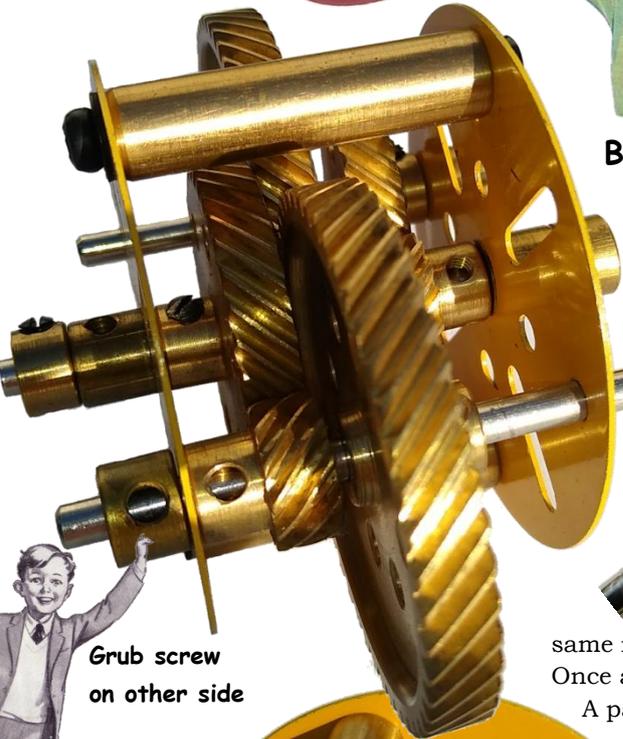


Fig. 3



Grub screw on other side

The yellow 2 1/2" Faceplate mechanism, Figs 3, 4 and 5, is the same idea but this splits the torque unequally. Once again the cage is the driven part.

A pair of 48T gears serve as the idlers. The left hand side has a 35T gear on the half shaft and is driven by a 14T pinion on the same rod as one of the idlers.

On the opposite side the half shaft has a 14T pinion, driven by a 35T gear fixed on the shaft of the other idler. Torque sharing is 9:1. This is quite counter-intuitive when explaining it but when you can pick it up and play with it all is revealed!



Fig. 4

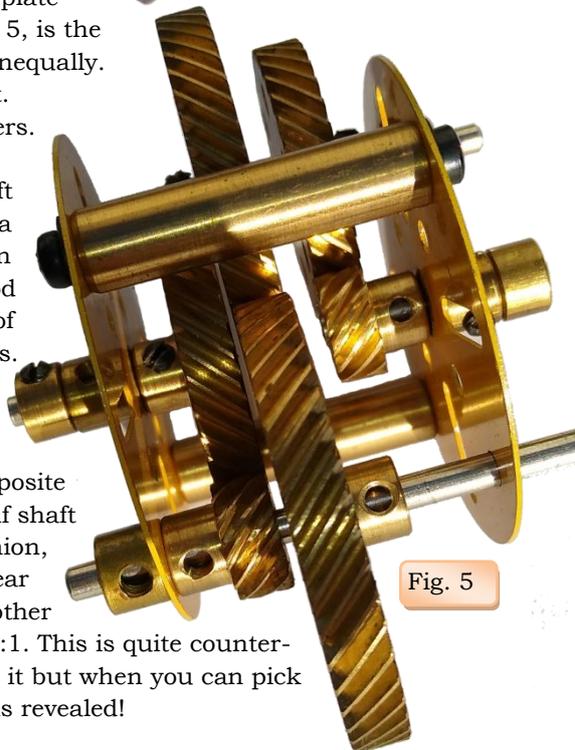


Fig. 5

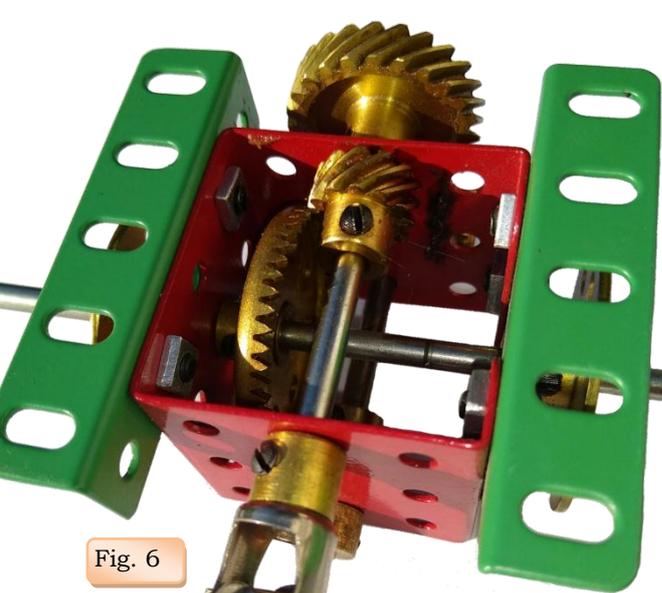


Fig. 6

The red cube mechanism, Figs 6, 7 and 8, was built years ago to move the trolley on my blocksetter crane. Input is on the shaft with the Universal Joint. The pair of 1" Helicals provide opposite rotations to the 1/2" Helicals that mesh with the Contrate. The Bush Wheels were *wee winding drums for the trolley.

**wee Scottish for small.*

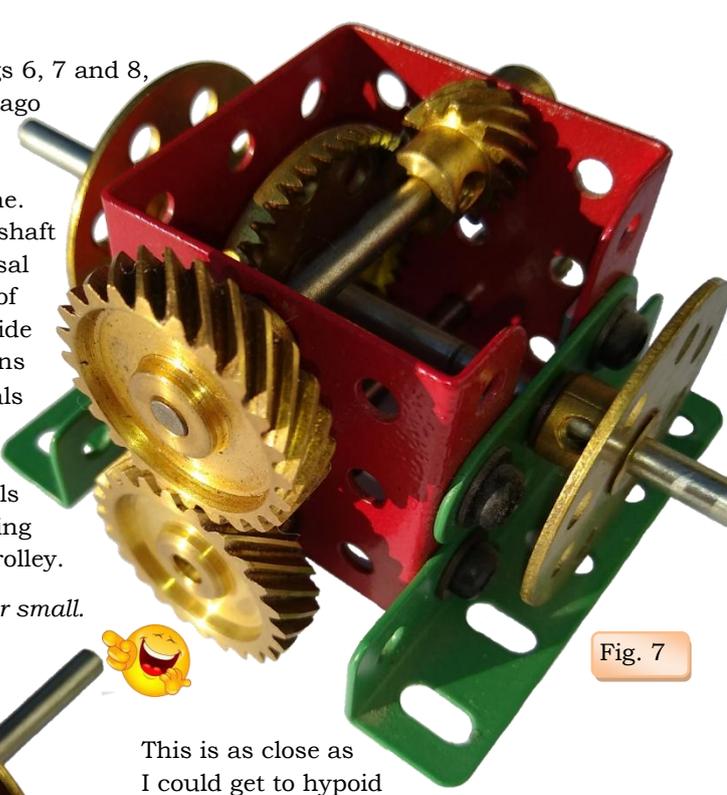


Fig. 7

This is as close as I could get to hypoid gears in Meccano. The spacing of the Helicals on the Contrate is fiddly to adjust but when set up properly it works really smoothly.

For the red cube, it's necessary to use short Grub Screws on the 1/2" Helicals because of the very close running tolerance between the bosses of the Helicals and the teeth of the Contrate gear. Short Grubs are also needed on the 1/4" 19T Pinions on the ends of the halfshafts buried inside the all-pinion differentials.

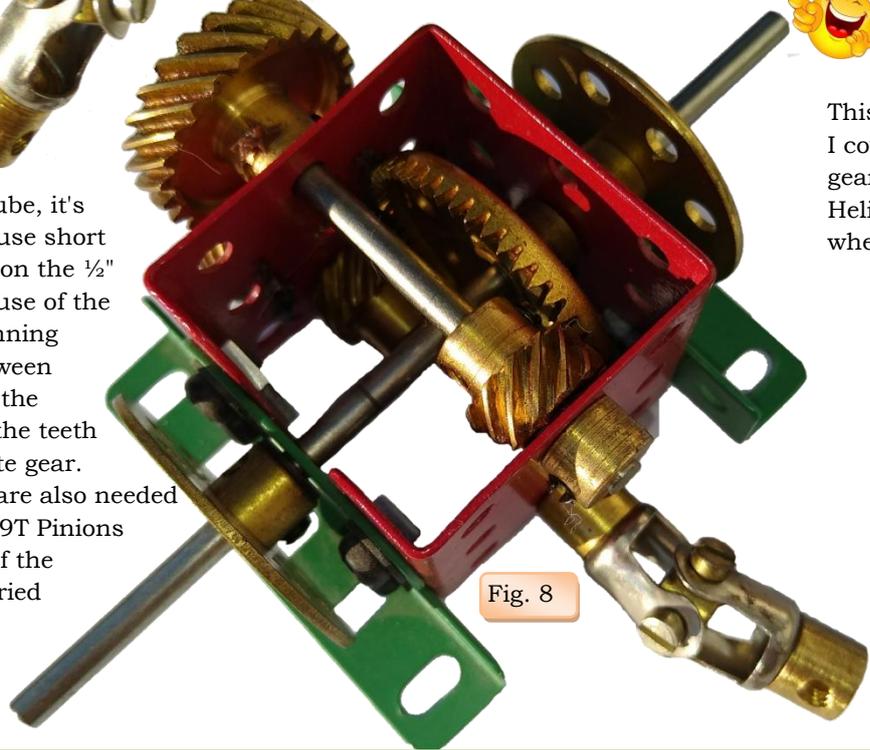


Fig. 8

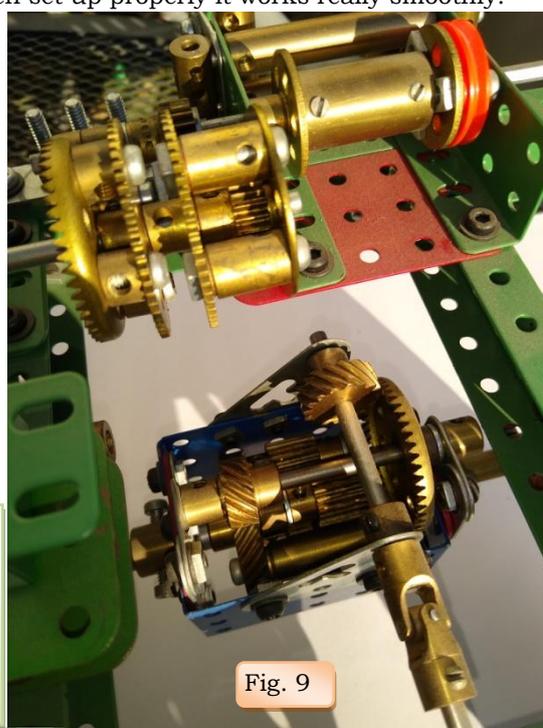


Fig. 9

Figs 9 and 10 are non-locking differentials of a truck chassis I really ought to finish! They're all Pinion diffs with Helical crown wheel and Helical / Contrate reduction on the drive shafts. The rear diff has a 2 speed & reverse winch mechanism on the chassis above it. Figs 11 and 12 show the rack and pinion steering driven by Helicals. The steering column is at 45 degrees with a 10T Helical meshing perfectly with a 19T Pinion. This gives a really positive motion to the wheel steering.

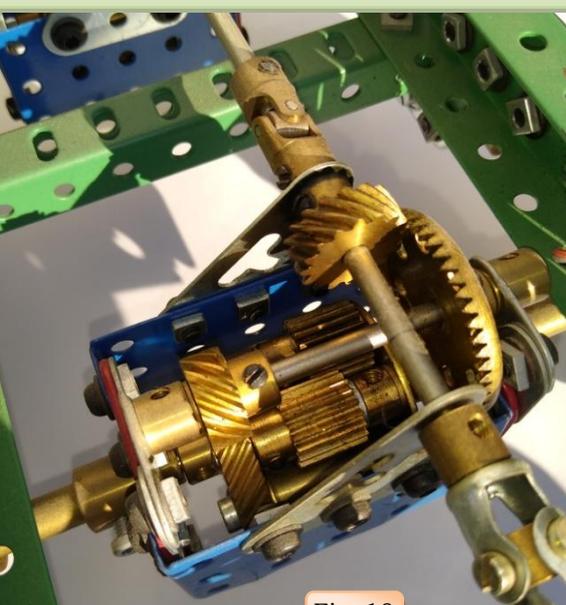
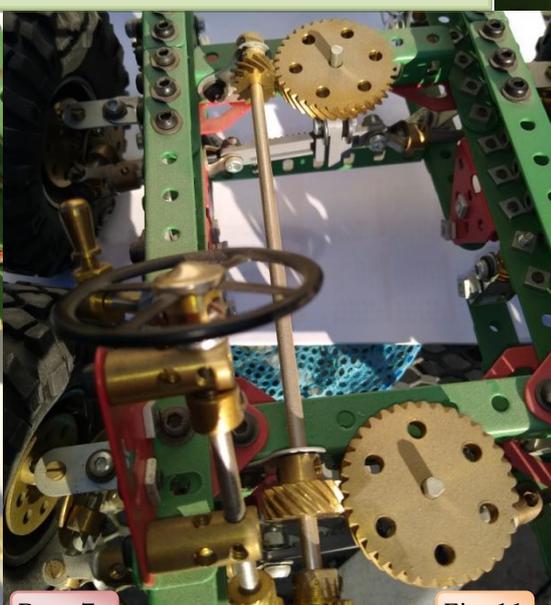


Fig. 10



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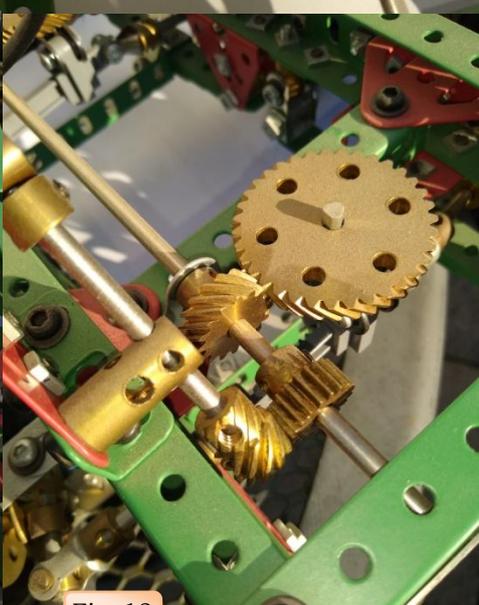


Fig. 11

Fig. 12

50th Henley Gathering

by Richard Payn

The first Saturday after the August Bank Holiday has been a happy day in the Meccano calendar since 1972 when the first Meccano show was held in Henley-on-Thames. We have been lucky to have had a continuous run so it was business as usual on the 4th September 2021 when we met for the 50th Gathering. Despite a 05:30 alarm, I was keen to be on my way to meet friends in the car park at 07:45 for our breakfast treat in a small cafe in town. Six of us sat down for a traditional

Breakfast



full English breakfast, augmented by fried potatoes that Tim Gant grows and brings for the owner to cook for us.

The Gathering's doors open at 9am, so a hasty exit was made to be there on time after much Meccano banter. There was a great turnout of modellers and visitors. I was delighted to see Geoff Wright there in the afternoon and express my gratitude to him for starting the show all those years ago. He was very grateful for the sentiment. The time flew by but I was able to get good photos of most of the models which you can view in the NZM Gallery.

Good to see Geoff Wright from MW Models at 91!



www.nzmeccano.com/image-161418

Plus 2 great YouTube videos.



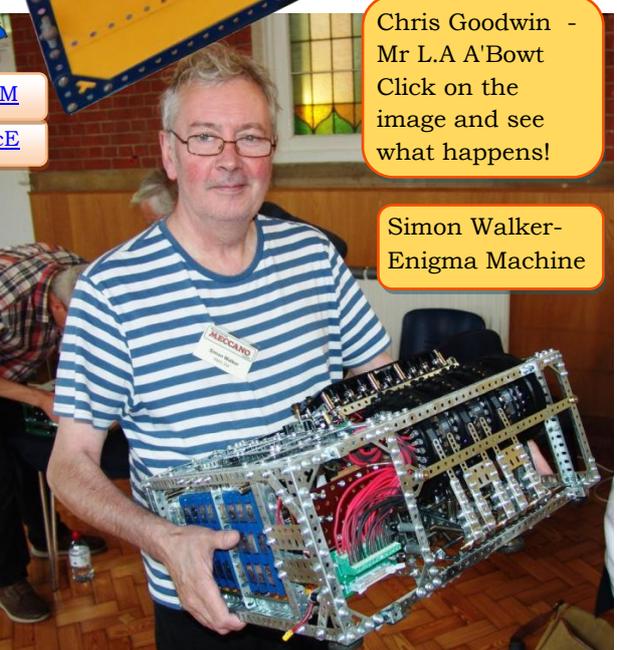
<https://youtu.be/5MUZTvlMoiM>

<https://youtu.be/BICHzn3CGcE>

Cliff Maddock – Dealer Table



Chris Goodwin - Mr L.A A'Bowt Click on the image and see what happens!



Simon Walker - Enigma Machine

Pete Evans & Eddie Oatley



Richard Smith on the right discussing his half track with Tony Homden who I met at my very first meeting in April 1977

Chris Warrell – Rogue Bot



Alan Esplen – Caledonian loco

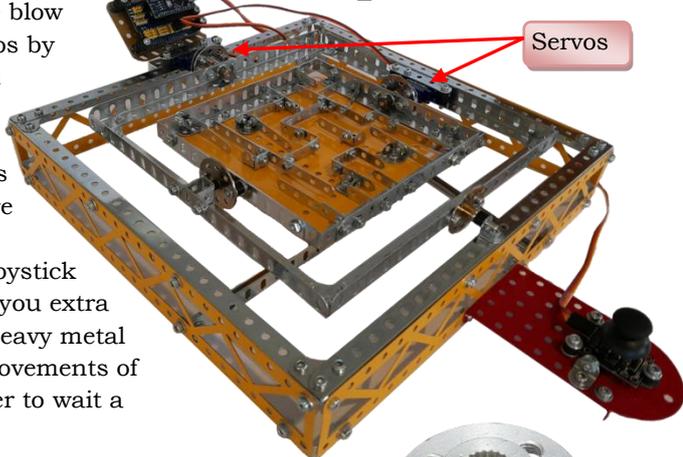
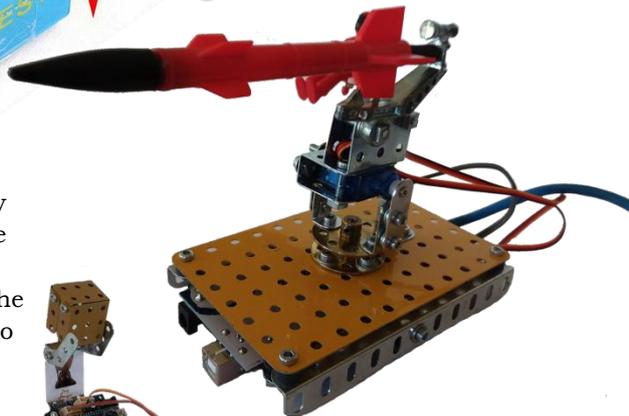


Using servos with Meccano

Let me start by pointing out it's not that difficult. There's more than one way to control a servo. If you're not into microcontrollers there are other options such as the servo tester which is just a plug and play box the size of a matchbox and costing as little as two bucks.

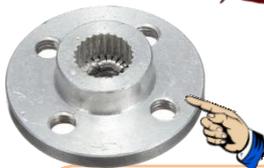
I was amazed at how easy these little gadgets are to use. You simply connect 6V to the pins labelled + and - on the input. It labelled IN 4.8-6V with + - and S for Signal but you don't need an input signal. On the other side are 3 rows of pins for 3 servos which allows you to control up to 3 servos at once.

Servos can be used in different ways. Sometimes you want to push or pull something such as in a model aircraft where you connect thin steel rods to the horns to push the wing ailerons up or down. Horns are the name for those white plastic levers that slip onto the splined servo shaft. Another way is to rotate things like in my Marble Maze, pictured right. The servos are turning the frames. This puts more pressure on the servo than using thin steel rods to push and pull the frames. Sometimes it may be better to use a motor but then you need limit switches. The Rocket Launcher uses a motor to turn the mechanisms left and right, a servo to turn them up and down and a servo to push the rocket fin away from the retaining catch. So all 3 methods are used there. There are also servo savers that are similar to horns but they have a spring mechanism to soften the blow when things go wrong. And things do go wrong! I've destroyed a few servos by accidentally using 12V and jamming the horn while still sending a signal to turn it. Eventually the gears strip or they go up in smoke. They are rated to run from 5V to 6V and any higher you will smell that fried Bakelite scent that modellers and makers are so familiar with. The servos in these models are controlled by microcontrollers using Arduino software but you could just as easily use servo testers. You would have 2 knobs instead of a joystick but a clever Meccanoboy could build a mechanical joystick to operate both knobs. The microcontroller with Arduino approach gives you extra functionality that I used to advantage in the Marble Maze. Because the heavy metal frames had inertia, the servos were struggling to keep up with sudden movements of the joystick. This problem was solved by programming the microcontroller to wait a moment during the loop thus making the movement sluggish.



Servos

There are many shapes and sizes of servo horns. The servos have splined shafts and the number of teeth vary so make sure you check that the horn matches your servo. The most common type seems to be 25 teeth which is what the Futaba servos use. There are many ways to interface servos into your Meccano models. The first method I tried was simply bolting the supplied plastic horn to a Bush Wheel using 2 Fishplates. (Top left.) Then I discovered that there are thousands of different horns to be found in hobby shops or eBay. The key was to search for "servo horn". The 20mm diameter circular horns seemed like a close match for the 1" Bush Wheel. These horns come with M3 bolts and M3 threaded holes but the holes don't quite match up. Ever so close but unless I resorted to filing, I just couldn't get the bolts in. I had success with the 1/2" spaced Strips though. You can bolt any Strip to the horn and use it to push/pull or if you want a Boss and Grub Screw to rotate your mechanisms then you can bolt the Strip to the larger part 24 Bush Wheel as shown below. I had to use hex Nuts to clear the M3 bolt head. I'd still like to figure out how to bolt the 1" Bush Wheel to the 20mm horn.



Circular Metal Horn
20mm diameter
M3 threaded holes
Hole spacing 15mm
25t spline
10 for \$10 on eBay

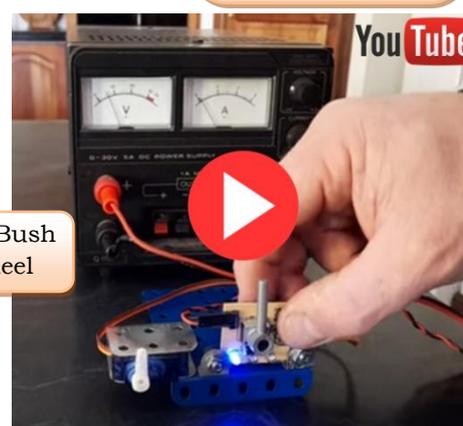


Part 24 Bush Wheel

Perhaps slot the holes on the horn?



1" Bush Wheel



<https://youtu.be/MN8yZtVmVWU>
See the video

Show us your Meccano Room

Rob Beeken - UK



To call the space in which I do Meccano-based things a 'Meccano Room' is something of a misnomer. All I have is our family dining table, a swivel chair, a shelf I made at work, an old Anglepoise lamp I rescued from a scrap bin at work and refurbished, an array of 'Really Useful' plastic boxes (www.reallyusefulproducts.co.uk), a self-written Excel spreadsheet.....and a VERY understanding wife! My recent return to Meccano started in 2020 with the purchase of a Ten Set from a UK dealer, sadly without a cabinet (but I'm working on that!) The ubiquitous 'Super Models' book soon followed and an ambition was born to amass enough parts to assemble the SM4 Block Setting Crane. Parts purchasing started in earnest and was given a major boost when a rogue offer on a No.9 Set (in its wooden case) was accepted. All I now need to complete my SM4 wish list are 2 Geared Roller Bearing Plates from John Thorpe.....but I can't decide whether to have Blue, Yellow or one of each!



All of the aforementioned left me with something of a storage dilemma, especially given that I needed whatever I used for storage to be easily stowed away just in case we actually needed the table for eating at! I happened across the 'Really Useful' boxes following a trial run by the stores department at work. I was immediately impressed and after trialling some of the different sizes I consequently ordered several including the proprietary dividers for the smaller parts. I then had the issue of not knowing where all my bits were within the selection of boxes and this is where my BASIC understanding of Microsoft Excel came in handy. A spreadsheet was soon under construction. The sheet details every part number (I've had to add bits like Elekkit parts), how many I have and its location in the storage system. I also integrated lists of all the parts required to build each of the models in the Supermodels book and 'conditional formatting' has allowed me to immediately see which parts I need to purchase to build a particular model. Having the laptop on the table also has other advantages for filling in the gaps that we all know have been left in the original Meccano build instructions. Google usually has an answer if I can't find a workaround myself!



Pinion type clutch for a nuclear power plant currently under construction in the UK

My interest in things mechanical started at a young age. "How does this work, Dad" soon moved on to 'I'll take it apart and see what's inside' (and I mostly got things back together again and working. Mostly!) Dad's poor petrol lawnmower bore the brunt of my interest and was apart more often than it was together until I received a Meccano set 3M one Christmas with the 3X the following birthday. Many a weird and wonderful 'invention' followed over the ensuing years but, as is normal, interest eventually waned without realising the ambition of owning a coveted Set 10.... Little did I know that I'd eventually own one, then some! Working life started out with a mechanical apprenticeship in the UK Coal Industry, a great starting block and life experience but I'm so glad I'm not still doing it. Jobs came and went, including military service and I now find myself in the lofty position of Chief Technician for a company manufacturing bespoke power transmission equipment for predominantly power-generation and marine applications. With us being the only company in the world making these clutches on this scale my services are (under normal, non COVID circumstances) required worldwide. This is good news for my air miles balance! I could harp on for ages, I enjoy what I do for a living. It's big boy's Meccano!

Runnymede Meccano Guild - UK

Liphook gathering July



Pete Evans - L
and Mark Bridle



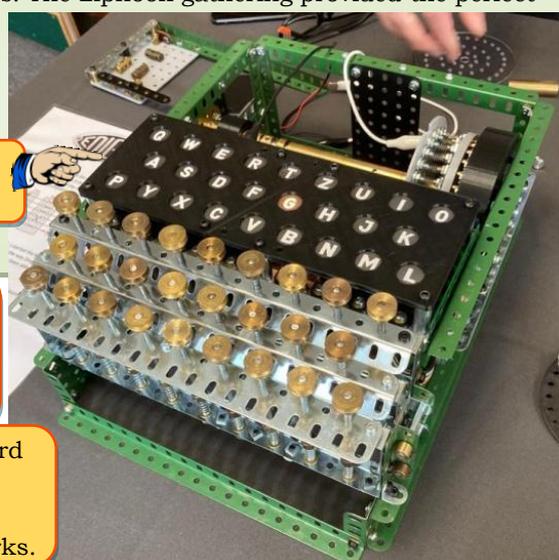
When Robin Schoolar posted a notice on the [Runnymede Meccano Guild website](http://www.nzmeccano.com) proclaiming the perks of the Liphook gathering, I knew it would prove popular. And so it was. Who could refuse free entry, four traders, walk from the station and the most welcoming statement "We'll do our best to find space for anyone who turns up with a model on the day". What a wonderful approach to have. Plus Simon Walker announced he was bringing his magnet rejuvenator to put some life back into those ailing ElektriKit magnets that are lacking in pull. (Bit like most of us these days!) And so it was that about 40 eager Meccano aficionados made their way to one of the most convivial meetings of the year.

<http://www.nzmeccano.com/image-160443>

Link on the left is to all the photos in the NZMeccano gallery.

Craig Longhurst and Simon Walker have both been building Enigma Machines. The Liphook gathering provided the perfect opportunity to exchange ideas.

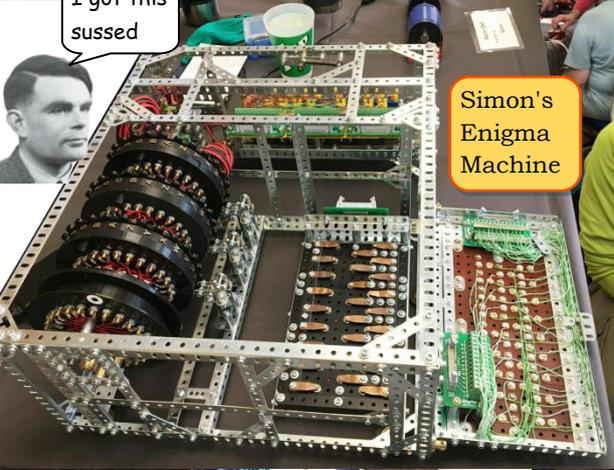
Craig Longhurst's Enigma Machine



L-R. Simon Walker, Stephen Jeavons & Craig Longhurst



I got this sussed



Simon's Enigma Machine

Neil Bedford trying to remember how it works.



CLICK HERE **YouTube**
RMG Meeting Montage
31 July 2021

<https://youtu.be/f28x1Da00-E>

Terry Allen
1938 Bugatti
57sc Corsica



Richard Smith
Combine Harvester



Nick Rodgers Snow Groomer



FROM OUR GOOD IDEAS DEPARTMENT



Use for broken Fork Pieces to make a compact double UJ by Richard Payn - UK



Broken Forks



Clamp Washer in bottom



Use a bossed part to force the Washer down if it's a tight fit



Lock 2 together



Flatten Forks with Washers



Add 165 with additional Shoulder Bolts to make a Constant Velocity Joint.



Part 806b 1" Narrow Strips joined by 3/4" Bolts passing through the plain bores of the 4 hole Collars in the 165.



Meccano motors sometimes have these Brawa type connectors that are commonly used in model trains. You can add Brawa sockets to those Chinese geared motors by carefully folding the lugs so that they fit inside the Brawa socket and then tighten the screw.



Tip! These Brawa type plugs and sockets are still in common use so check your local model train shop.



This Month's Meccanoboy Fabian

Kaufmann Germany

Recent discussions on the building of a Meccano Enigma Machine and the fate of Alan Turing got me thinking about a non-stereotypical Meccanoboy who has recently come to the forefront with some stunning Meccano creations including RoboDog who was featured in the last issue. I hope you will enjoy this rather fascinating story of Fabian Kaufmann from Germany.

When and where were you born?

September 8th 1967 in Braunschweig (Brunswick is the medieval name), Germany.

Where did you go to school?

CJD campus in Braunschweig which is a private secondary school with a focus on artistic subjects.

I planned to take my high school graduation but after suffering badly from pneumonia in that year and because I wanted to become a tailor, I dropped out of school in the 11th grade.

Did you have a Meccano as a boy?

Well mainly Märklin but it's much the same.

When and why did you move to Hamburg?

Because of my job as a tailor at the Hamburg Opera in 1991.

What did you do for a living? List your jobs in order.

Training as a men's tailor 1985-1988

Alternative military service in a nursing home of the Red Cross 1988-1990.

Tailor at the State Opera in Hamburg until now.

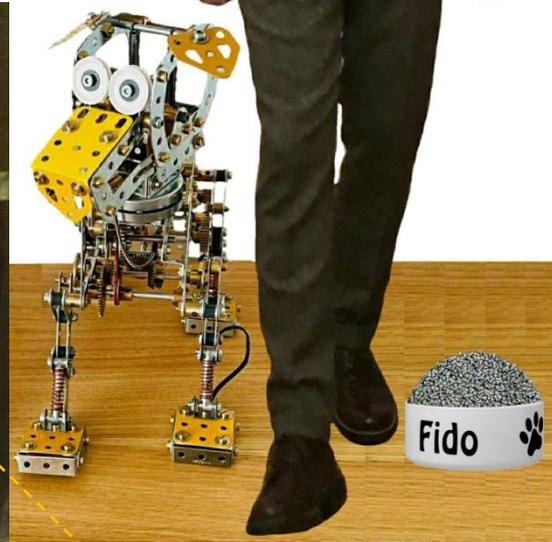
Foreman since 1998. Trainer between 2004-2016.

Did you always build with Meccano or was there the usual cars, girls, party hiatus in your teenage years?

Lego Technic came on the market in 1978 when I was 10 years old and since then I had almost only played with it. Nevertheless, my grandparents always gave me Märklin. Probably because they knew it from the past. However, the constructive possibilities of Märklin hardly really opened up to me at the age of 10. Apart from that, I constantly

What was your first model?

Apart from the little tractor that rekindled my love, the first larger model was a Rolls Royce Phantom I, mainly built with Märklin, but a few Meccano parts were already there. The 3 1/2 " wheels, for example, immediately appealed to me because you can build with them on a slightly larger scale than with the large Märklin wheels. I didn't finish the Rolls Royce because I had so many other ideas in mind.



hurt myself when I slipped with the screwdriver. Also I didn't understand the manuals. So I mostly stayed with Lego until I was about 15. At the age of 18, my first car was more important to me and then there was also my coming out. I then went clubbing every weekend for many years. Once in my 30s, I had bought



out my old Märklin parts again and built a 50s racing car. I had a lot of fun with that at the time but the parts were pretty worn out and there was no source for new or even used parts at the time. The internet for shopping didn't exist yet and you couldn't buy Märklin in the shops around the year 2000 onwards. So it stayed that way for the time being.

So what rekindled your interest 6 years ago?

At a flea market I found a box of unused Märklin parts. This reminded me that I still had my old Märklin in the attic. When I resumed building with Märklin, I suddenly and unexpectedly found it very simple and in every respect better and more stable than my earlier constructions with LEGO. Especially what I like to build most, namely car chassis, worked better and looked much better built from metal. This was such a strong experience that I immediately decided to buy more Märklin. Thanks to the internet, that was no longer a problem.



When I was looking for more parts, I first came across Meccano and was thrilled by the many additional parts and colours that Märklin didn't have. I decided to switch from Märklin to Meccano. When I first typed Meccano into Google, my eyes were lit up by all the fairs over the English and French speaking world. I had no idea that there was a world that had remained hidden from me until then. From then on, there was no stopping me and I bought Meccano parts "a la carte", so to speak, as often as I could afford it. At some point I asked myself where to put all the metal and decided to order a replica Ten Set Cabinet from Great Britain. And it's now in my room and contains everything I own in Meccano. Even when I'm not building, I like to open one of the drawers in passing and enjoy the parts.

Are you married?

Yes, I married my boyfriend, Frank in 2016. When we met in 2005 he lived in Ravensburg, in the south of Germany near Lake Bodensee. We had to travel by train between Hamburg and Ravensburg twice a month for 3 1/2 years. In 2009 he finally moved to Hamburg, which I am very thankful about. Otherwise I would have had to give up my beloved job at the Hamburg Opera House after nearly 20 years.

Does your husband share your interest in Meccano?

No, he has other hobbies. Luckily he's a very open minded person and he has to look at my progress quite often when I am building. I think he likes to do that.

Do you mix and match the Märklin with Meccano?

Yes I mix the parts, although of course I would prefer to build only with Meccano parts. On the other hand, there are actually a few Märklin parts that I wouldn't want to miss. Especially the Märklin axles and gears I continue to use, of course, because they are of very good quality and Meccano is hard to get and expensive in Germany. So I'm a bit inconsistent on this subject.



What was your first model?

Apart from the little tractor that rekindled my love, the first larger model was a Rolls Royce Phantom I, mainly built with Märklin, but a few Meccano parts were already there. The 3.5" wheels, for example, immediately appealed to me because you can build with them on a slightly larger scale than with the large Märklin wheels. I didn't finish the Rolls Royce because I had so many other ideas in mind.



1950s Tractor based on Richard Smith's model.

Watch the tractor on YouTube  <https://youtu.be/mCGakaql1jY>

Have you travelled much?

When I travel, I am always overly excited. I don't like that at all. Once I'm away, it's all right. But I get homesick very quickly. I'm actually more of a homebody. So I didn't really travel very much in my life. But I did get around a bit. Cuba and Nepal were my farthest journeys. It was through my husband that I first got to know mountain hiking and we have done a few hikes together in the Alps. I like it when you hike above the tree line and there are only rocks and sky. I also like to go from hut to hut equipped only with a backpack and good shoes. Nepal was the most impressive hiking.

Tell me about Nepal?

Nepal is a very poor country, but the people are rich at heart. That made a lasting impression on me. The journey was planned as a round trip to Annapurna Basecamp at 4300m. Unfortunately, we couldn't go there because of the danger of avalanches. But the Himalayan foothills are still beautiful. And Kathmandu as a big city was also a great experience for me. I found the difference between a rich country like Germany and a poor country like Nepal shameful. The journey showed me that being happy does not depend on the number of things you own.



Annapurna range in the Himalayas



Lotus Elan chassis

I see a figurine called Clark in your photos. Where did the Clark character come from?
That was more by chance. I wanted to sew a Tweed suit on a very small scale as I have this suit for myself too. But for that I also needed a very small man. I built him out of plasticine and painted him - in short. When the figure was finished and had the brown Tweed suit on, my colleagues in the tailor's workshop called him "Clark" because he looks so very British.

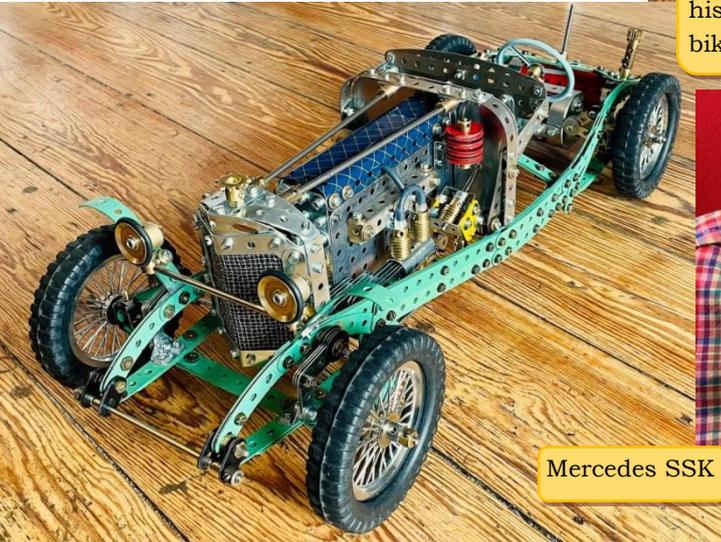


What other interests do you have?

I like cycling. I built my own mountain bike and the frame was welded for me by Chas Roberts in the UK. I also love vinyl records and old record players. Sometimes I buy old record players at the flea market and repair it to give it to someone else. I love old things in general and like to go to flea markets accordingly. I am also working as a volunteer for a social organisation in Hamburg for several years now. There I take care of donated records and DVD's and then resell them in the shop for a little money.



Clark rides his cargo bike.



Mercedes SSK



How do you look back on your life? Any regrets?

The only thing I regret is that although I am actually a trainer in my profession and have also trained for a few years, I don't have the opportunity anymore at the moment. I really enjoy passing on my knowledge as a tailor. But unfortunately this is not possible in my company at the moment.

What was your crowning achievement?

Spontaneously I would say that my Meccano models have been admired by so many people for a year now. I would never have expected that. Since metal construction kits are hardly known in Germany, I thought I was completely alone in this and it was only through the Meccano groups on Facebook that I discovered that there are lots of people out there who have the same hobby as I do. Professionally, the honour for my 30th anniversary. Since I started in the opera at the age of 23, I will probably make it to my 40th, if nothing comes up.

Has Meccano helped you in life?

Meccano helps me to relax completely. Music or going for a walk also helps to relax, but only when I immerse myself into a model for hours and the axles and gears turn before my eyes do I forget time and space. That's a great experience.

What's your best model?

Hard to decide. I think RoboDog because it was all my own idea.

With so many social media platforms available today, how do you connect with fellow Meccanoboy's?

Since there are no people in my area who I could meet without a long journey, the only contact I have is via the various groups on Facebook and the German mailing list. This October I will take part in a fair for the first time. It's in Bebra and I'll be taking a few of my models there to meet the people I've been virtually connected with for almost a year now.

What are your plans for the future? Any new models on the horizon?

Professionally, I want to teach the historical men's suit to the master students as a teacher in a textile school in this autumn. Concerning Meccano, at the moment I have a lot of ideas, but no concrete plans. I would like to try out a steam engine by James Watt and I also want to try to build a two-legged robot at some point.

What's your advice for young people today?

Smart phones and computers are practical and seductive at the same time. So are most electronic gadgets like smart homes or driving e-scooters etc. But don't forget to use your hands and feet. I don't think life in virtual reality has the same quality as in real life, as great as the possibilities may be. Most people who work with their hands both professionally and for pleasure, be it cooks, tailors, locksmiths or gardening at home, are very satisfied at the end of the day because they can look at their day's work, even if they don't earn that much money.

Watch **RoboDog** on YouTube  <https://youtu.be/jlkfykP5UoU>



We are John & Johnny. A father and son team who like Meccano. We're nothing to do with Spin Master who own the brand. Contact us at

MeccanoNews@gmail.com

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UK

<http://www.internationalmeccanomen.org.uk>

<https://londonmeccanoclub.org.uk>

<https://tims.org.uk>

<http://hsme.org.uk>

<https://nelmc.org.uk>

<https://runnymedemeccanoguild.org.uk>

<https://www.selmec.org.uk>

<http://www.hsomerville.com/wlms>

<http://www.midlandsmeccanoguild.com>

<https://southwestmeccano.org.uk>

<http://www.northwestmeccano.co.uk>

<https://northeasternmeccano.org.uk>

<https://www.meccanoscotland.org.uk>

<http://www.corlustmeccanoclub.co.uk>

<https://nmmg.org.uk>

Other Countries

<http://club-amis-meccano.net/>

<http://www.meccaninfos.com.ar/>

<http://www.meccanogilde.nl>

<http://meccano.free-bb.fr/>

<https://www.aceam.org/es/>

<http://www.la-roue-tourne.fr/index.php/le-meccano/notices-et-plans>

<https://www.metallbaukasten-forum.de/>

<http://www.amsclub.ch/> **NEW!**

USA and Canada

https://www.spinmaster.com/brand.php?brand=cat_meccano

<https://www.usmeccano.com>

<http://www.meccano.com>

<http://www.cmamas.ca>

<http://www.bcmeccanomodellers.com/meccano-in-canada.html>

<http://www.meccanoquebec.org/index2ang.html>

<http://www.melright.com/meccanosales/>

New Zealand

<http://www.nzmeccano.com>

<http://www.nzfmm.co.nz>

<https://www.facebook.com/MWT-Meccano-Club-1476153515979522/>

Australia

<http://www.mmci.com.au>

<http://www.sydneymeccanomodellers.org.au>

<http://www.webjournalist.com.au/maylands/index.html>

South Africa

<https://www.facebook.com/Meccano-Club-of-South-Africa-464753870326296>

<http://www.mecworld.co.za/cmpr/>

Personal pages

<https://www.alansmeccano.org>

<http://www.users.zetnet.co.uk/dms/meccano>

<http://www.dalefield.com/meccano/index.html>

<http://www.meccano.us>

<https://www.meccanoindex.co.uk>

<http://www.meccanokinematics.net>

<https://neilsmeccanoandstuff.jimdo.com/neil-s-meccano-models>

Meccano suppliers

<http://www.meccanohobby.co.uk>

<https://www.meccanoshop.co.uk>

<http://meccanoman.co.uk/catalog>

<https://www.meccanospares.com>

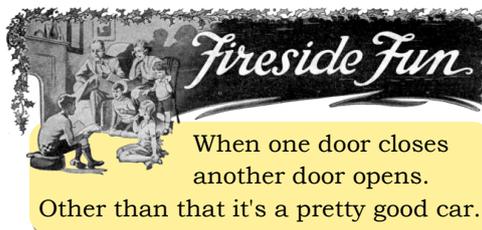
<https://ralphsshop.com>

<http://www.hsomerville.com/mwmailorder>

<http://www.metalconstructiontoys.com>

<http://www.meerlu.com.au/>

<https://tinyurl.com/AshokBanerjee>



My wife just said, "You weren't even listening, were you?" I thought, "That's a pretty weird way to start a conversation."

One day a florist went to a barber for a haircut. After the cut, he asked

about his bill, and the barber replied, "I can't accept money from you, I'm doing community service this week". The florist was pleased and left the shop.

When the barber went to open his shop the next morning, there was a 'thank you' card and a dozen roses waiting for him at his door. Later, a cop comes in for a haircut, and when he tries to pay his bill, the barber again replied, "I cannot accept money from you, I'm doing community service this week."

The cop was happy and left the shop. The next morning when the barber went to open up, there was a 'thank you' card and a dozen doughnuts waiting for him at his door.

Then a Member of Parliament came in for a haircut, and when he went to pay his bill, the barber again replied, 'I cannot accept money from you. I'm doing community service this week.' The Member of Parliament was very happy and left the shop.

The next morning, when the barber went to open up, there were a dozen Members of Parliament lined up waiting for a free haircut.

And that, my friends, illustrates the fundamental difference between the citizens of our country and the politicians who run it. - Graeme O'Neill - NZ.



To the optimist, the glass is half full.
To the pessimist, the glass is half empty.
To the engineer, the glass is twice as big as it needs to be.

A woman was having an affair during the day with her secret lover while her husband was at work.

Her nine year old son Johnny comes home unexpectedly, sees the illegal lovers and hides in the wardrobe to watch.

A few minutes later her husband comes home. She hides her lover in the wardrobe, not knowing Johnny is in there already.

Johnny whispers: "It's dark in here."

The man replies. "Yes it is."

Johnny: "I have a soccer ball, do you want to buy it ?

Man: "No."

Johnny: "My Dad's outside, I'll call him if you dont buy it."

Man:" Ok, how much?"

Johnny: "\$200"

A few weeks later it happened again.

Johnny: "It's dark in here. I have soccer boots, wanna buy them?"

The man remembering last time asks, "How much?"

Johnny says, "\$400."

The man sighs and says, "Fine" and pays.

A few days later Dad tells Johnny, "Grab your soccer ball and boots son, lets go outside and have a game."

Johnny says, "I cant, I sold them for \$600."

Dad says, "That's terrible to over charge your friends like that.... \$600 is way more than what those two things cost, I'm going to

take you to church tomorrow and so you can confess your sins." The next day they go to church and Johnny is made to sit in the confession booth.

Johnny says, "It's dark in here."

The priest replies, "Don't start that again boy!"

Mecgear Jeff Clark New Zealand

sales@mecgear.co.nz Link to price list below.

<http://www.nzmeccano.com/image-151916>

Bespoke parts from Corlust Meccano Club

Ian Wilson bespokecraftshack@gmail.com

Mike Rhoades .Link to price list below.

<https://www.nzmeccano.com/image-153670>



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Doctor! I snore so loud I keep waking myself up!

Sleep in another room, then!

Riot Machine Mark5

Groan. C'mon Michael. Lift your game.

