



BOOK OF HOURS
1000 HOURS OF MECCANO
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9

August 2022

In this issue

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Fabian Kaufmann
does it again with his superb Steam Tractor

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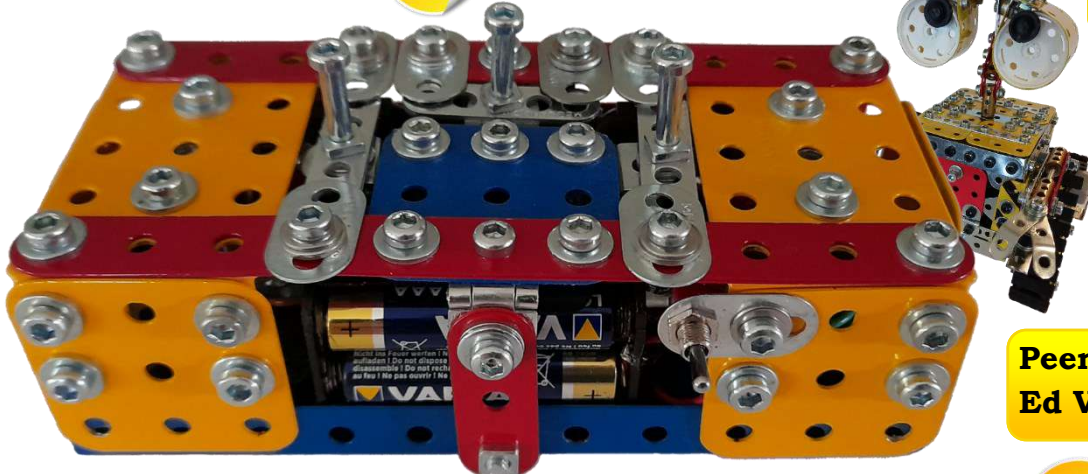


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What does Ozymandias mean?
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On The Road



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Steam Tractor by Fabian Kaufmann - Germany



Steam tractors, or traction engines as they are called in English, are a bit like dinosaurs: long extinct and only to be seen in museums. They are also large and cumbersome. But they are also fascinating. When I saw them for the first time a few years ago at a steam tractor meeting near Hamburg, I immediately wanted to build such a machine from Meccano. However, I had to choose one of the many possibilities, because there are many differences, due to the origin of the vehicles. Based on my research, and because I wanted to save myself the trouble of building a rope drum, as the German and English steam ploughs often had, my model is therefore based on a traction engine for transport tasks on roads. Especially in Great Britain these machines were in use for many decades.

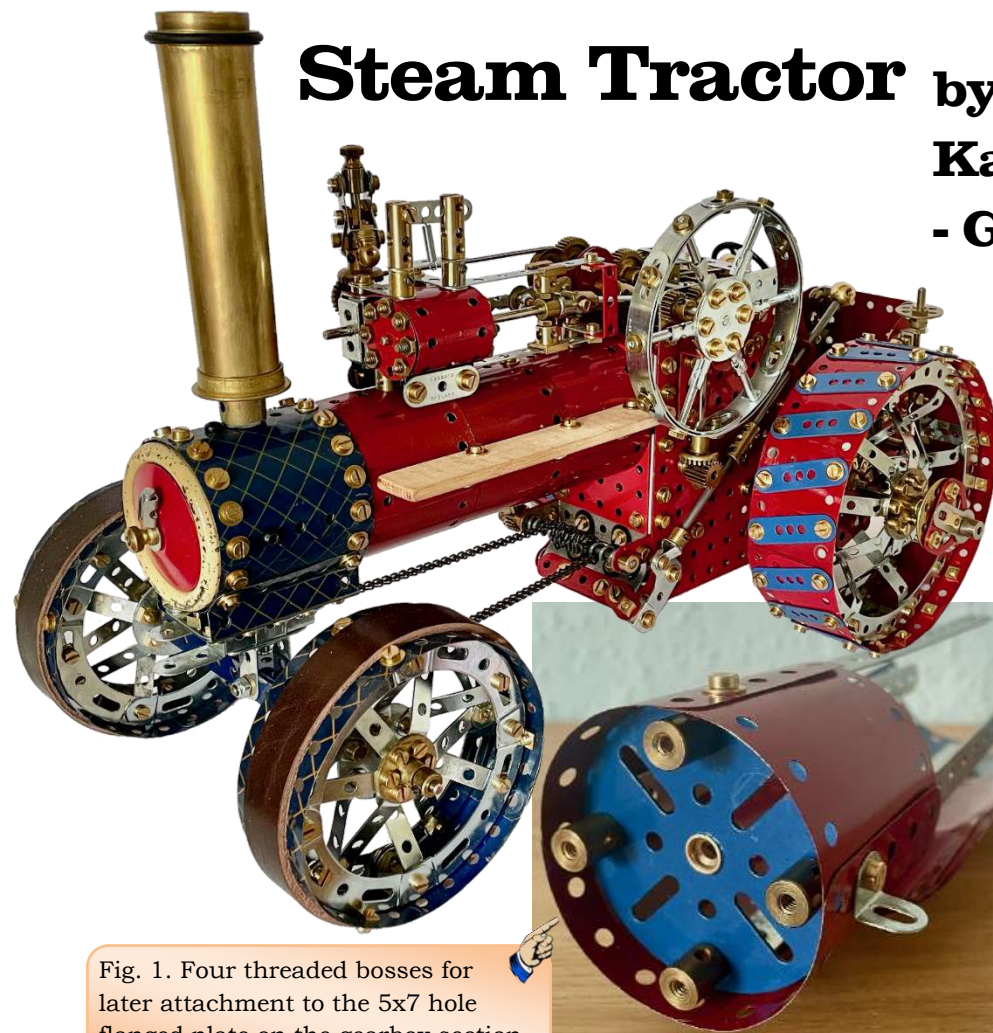


Fig. 1. Four threaded bosses for later attachment to the 5x7 hole flanged plate on the gearbox section.

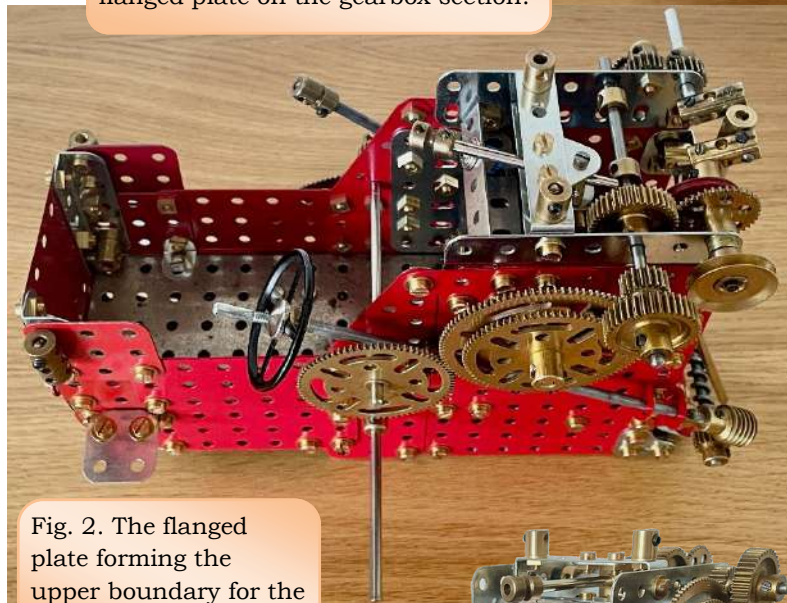


Fig. 2. The flanged plate forming the upper boundary for the battery compartment.

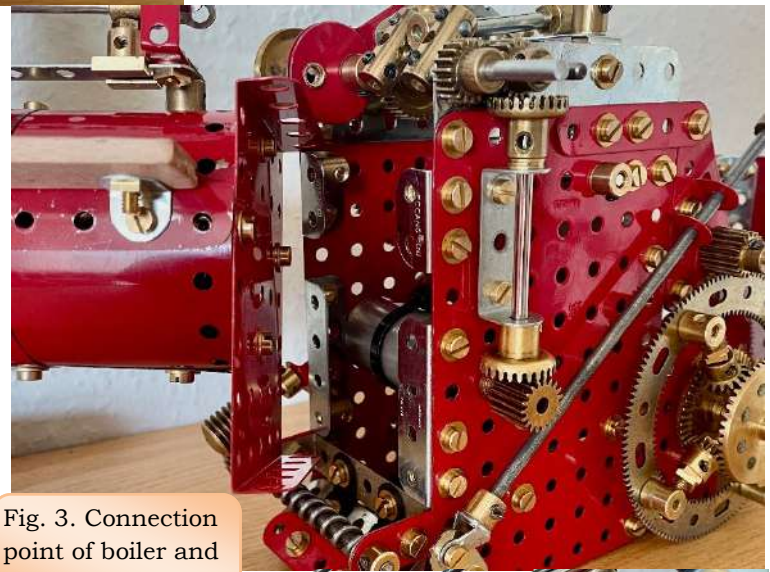


Fig. 3. Connection point of boiler and gearbox.

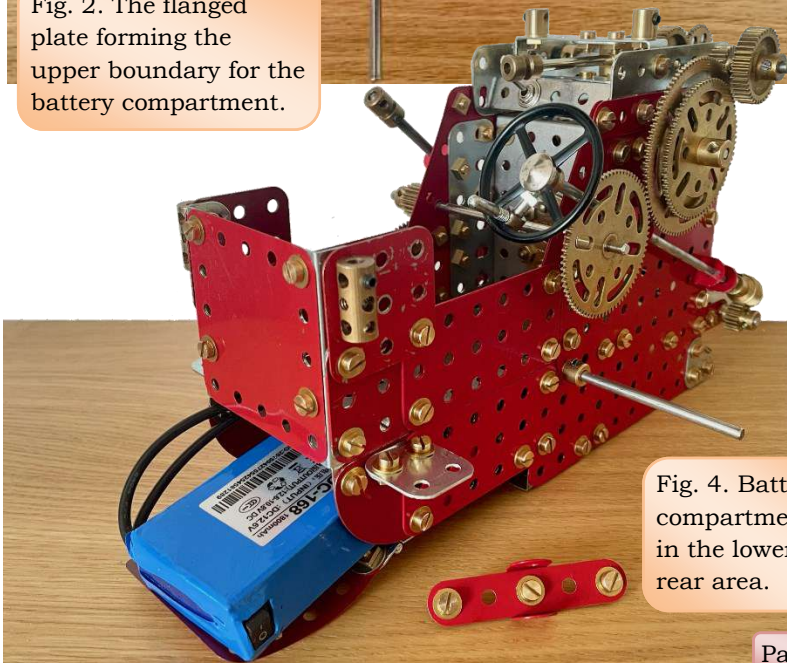


Fig. 4. Battery compartment in the lower rear area.

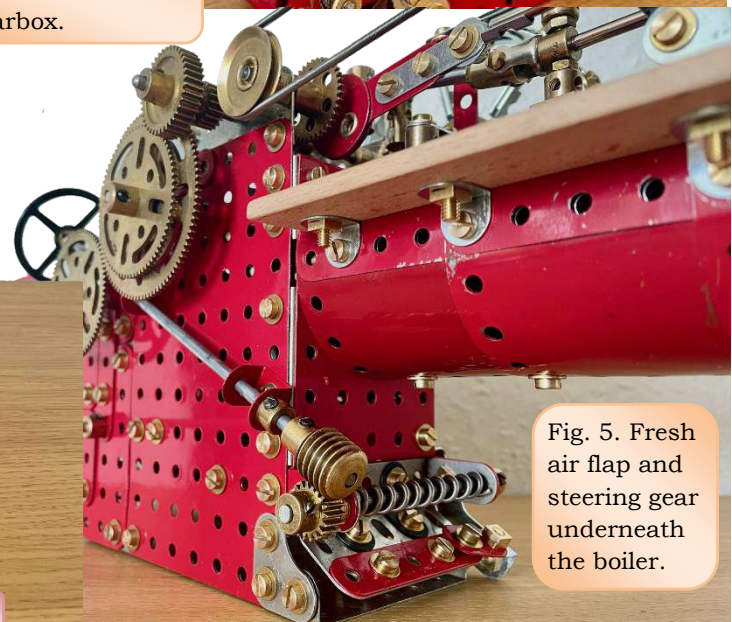


Fig. 5. Fresh air flap and steering gear underneath the boiler.

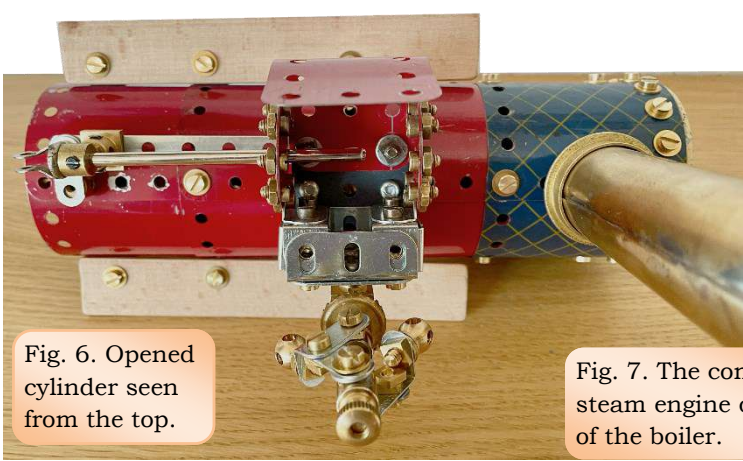


Fig. 6. Opened cylinder seen from the top.

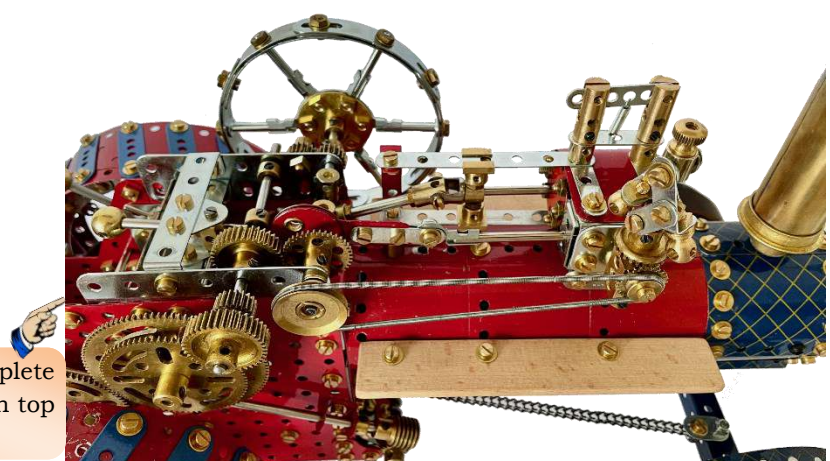


Fig. 7. The complete steam engine on top of the boiler.

Photos and technical drawings of steam tractors are available in abundance on the internet. Depending on which manufacturer the vehicles came from, there were small differences in the proportions regarding the boiler diameters and its length as well as the wheel diameters and widths. In addition, many Meccano models of steam tractors had already been built. Especially for the wheels, I was inspired by a 1917 Fowler bb1 Ploughing Engine of Norman Gilbert from 1978.

The pictures were of course very helpful. For my model, I did not need to make a scale drawing and instead built freely and without a specific model, as my stock of parts and colours allowed.

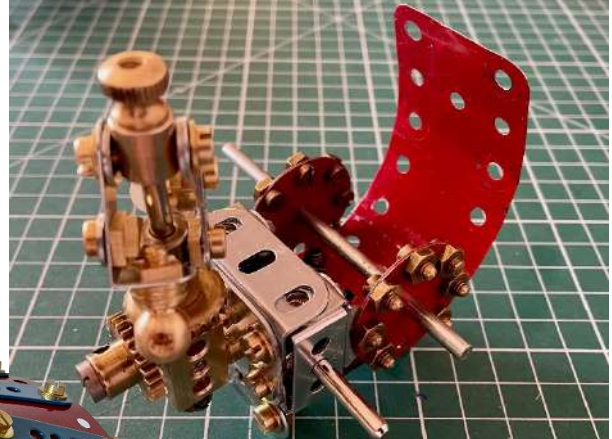


Fig. 8. Open cylinder. Two threaded bosses are hidden under the 3-hole angle girder in the left side.

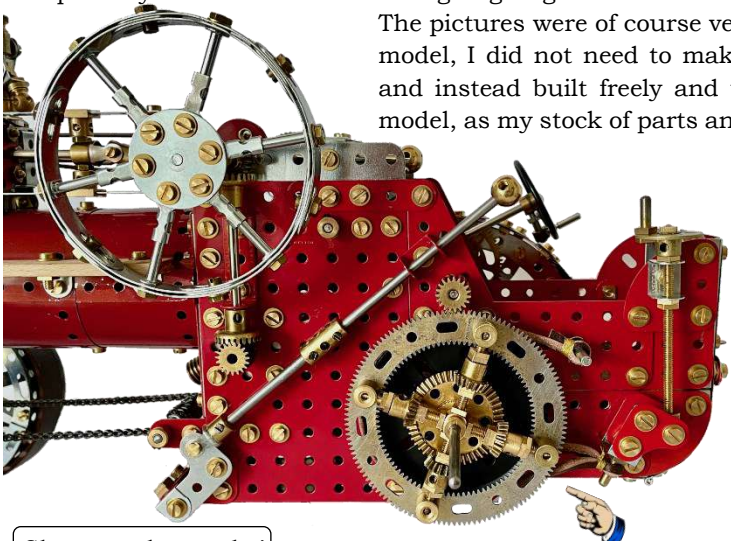


Fig. 9. Rear axle showing the differential and brake mechanism on the left side of the traction engine.



Fig. 10. Right hand rear wheel seen from inside.

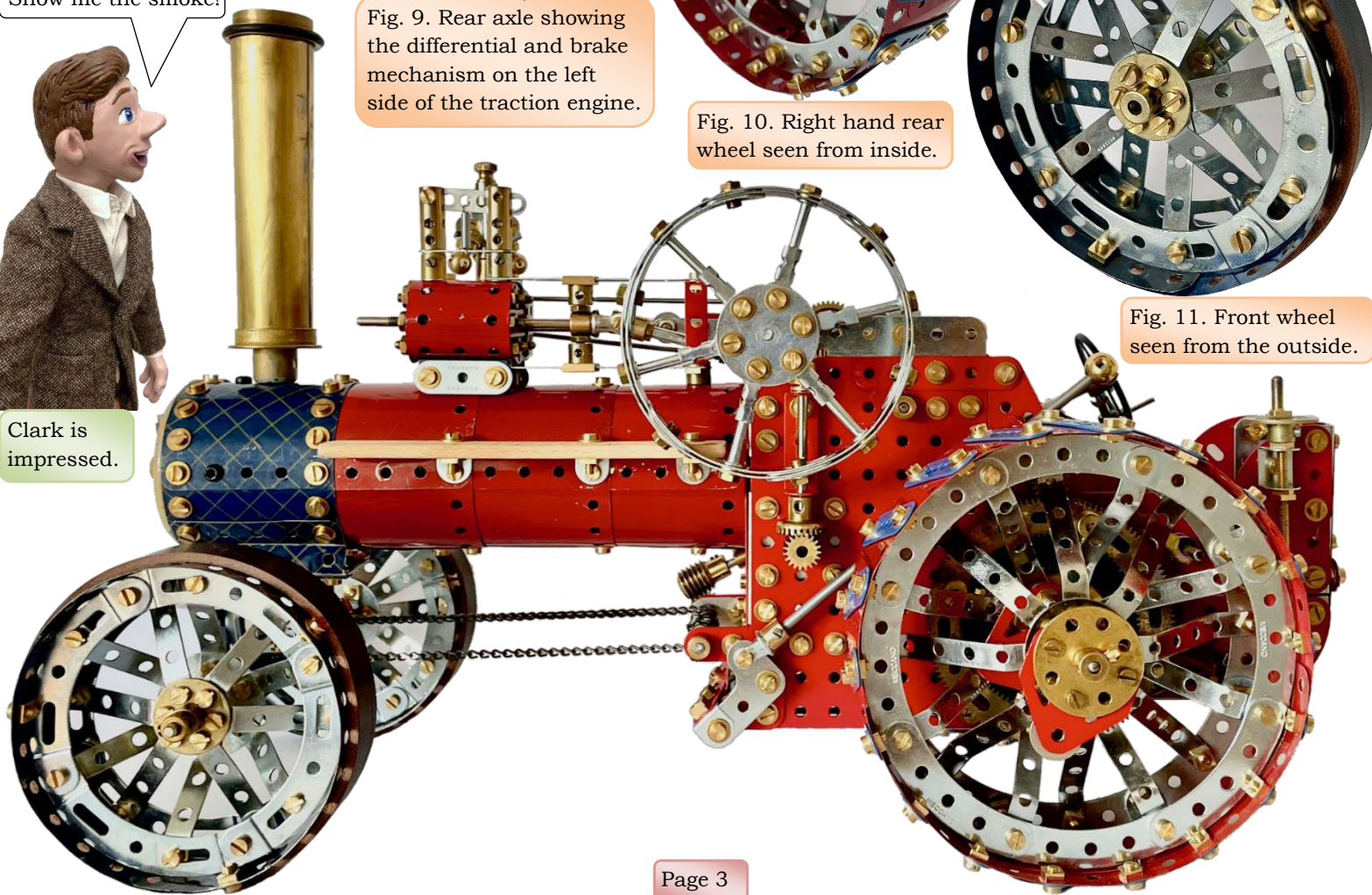


Fig. 11. Front wheel seen from the outside.

Show me the smoke!



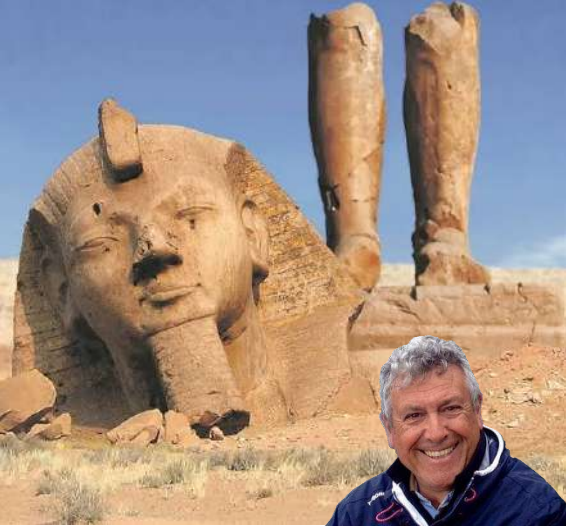
Clark is impressed.



Ozymandias

A recent discussion on Spanner raised the subject of the future of Meccano and the relevance of a sonnet by Percy Shelly (1792-1822).

Adrian Williams – UK, wrote: After carrying out some rudimentary restoration and repainting in rather brighter colours than the dark-green-and-burgundy that still comprises most of my Meccano collection, I began to perceive that people were giving more attention to my models than I had earned previously. So, I resolved to send the rest of the collection into the caustic-soda vats, in a planned programme that will take several years to complete. But I thought that, before I did so, it would be amusing to put a chunk of it on display, in a context that would play to the strengths of the dull, dowdy, scratched, bent, chipped, twisted, rusty parts that still form the bulk of my collection. What to model? The idea of Ozymandias began to form in my mind – Ozymandias being a poem by the English poet Percy Bysshe Shelly (1792-1822): a poem so famous that it finds its way into every anthology of English poetry; and deservedly so, too.



José Carlos Vilches Peña – Spain, wrote:

Visiting the Ramesseum temple in nearby Luxor, one can see the remains of the incredibly large, beautiful, and supposedly durable statue of Ramesses II, scattered on the ground. Seeing what the inexorable passage of time has done with the colossal Egyptian constructions, it is not difficult to think about what our wonderful hobby will end. It is normal, usual, and in a way, it is desirable that different generations have different interests. The dangerous thing would be not to have any, and that is the fear that invades us when we look at the generation of our grandchildren, for example, assaulted by so many centres of interest that they do not delve into any of them enough to ensure the permanence of any of them. While time flows at its own pace (by the way, Einstein showed that we travel in time to the future at the fastest possible speed, a pity!) we have had the immense luck of living through a splendid time (obviously, in the West above all) and thoroughly develop a glorious activity such as Meccano. In recent days / weeks I am much more than happy and happy to read the illusion that is observed with the theme of the Hachette crane, we are really alive if we are still capable of being interested and excited about such a thing. And I cannot be more grateful to all of you who make us part of that illusion. With all my heart, thank you!

John Stark – New Zealand, wrote:

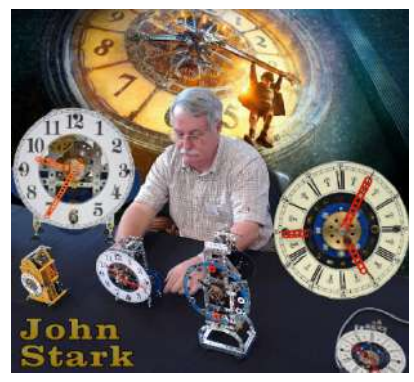
I am not quite so positive about the future prospects for Meccano. There may well be ups and downs, but the trend in the last 60 years has been down for sure. While there are five active clubs in NZ, in general their memberships are declining and dominated by older persons. At nearly 68 (and a remote club member of CMC) I expect my age might be a little below average for all NZ Meccano club members (although CMC with a number of younger members might be an exception). I do agree that there must be a fair number of people collecting or building with Meccano who are not members of any clubs. Even so, their numbers must be a lot less than in the 1960's despite NZ's increased population. Apart from my neighbour David Couch, I know of only one other Meccano enthusiast in Nelson. I find that many young people don't even know what Meccano is. Older people, who do know about it, often ask me if you can still buy Meccano. Certainly, there are far fewer shops in NZ where Meccano can be bought and often not a great variety or large number of sets in the shop displays. Meccano sales these days MUST be a fraction of the volume in, for example, the 1960's and 70's. The number of different 'owners' of Meccano since Binn's Rd closed in 1979 (and even a little before that) is testimony to the fact that Meccano has struggled and no longer dominates the construction toy business as it once did. – John Stark.

I met a traveller from an antique land
Who said: 'Two vast and trunkless legs of stone
Stand in the desert. Near them, on the sand,
Half sunk, a shattered visage lies, whose frown,
And wrinkled lip, and sneer of cold command,
Tell that its sculptor well those passions read
Which yet survive, stamped on these lifeless things,
The hand that mocked them and the heart that fed.
And on the pedestal these words appear --
"My name is Ozymandias, king of kings:
Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair!"
Nothing beside remains. Round the decay
Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare
The lone and level sands stretch far away.

I met a Scouser from a northern land
Who said: 'Two vast and trunkless legs of red
And green Meccano stand there in Binns Road.
And near them, rusting slowly in the sand,
Half sunk, a shattered visage lies, whose frown,
And clipped moustache, and sneer of cold command,
Tell that its sculptor well those passions read
Which yet survive, stamped on these lifeless things,
The hand that mocked them, and the heart that fed:
And on the pedestal these words appear:
"My name is Francis Hornby, Engineer:
Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair!"
Nothing beside remains. Round the decay
Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare
The streets of Liverpool stretch far away.

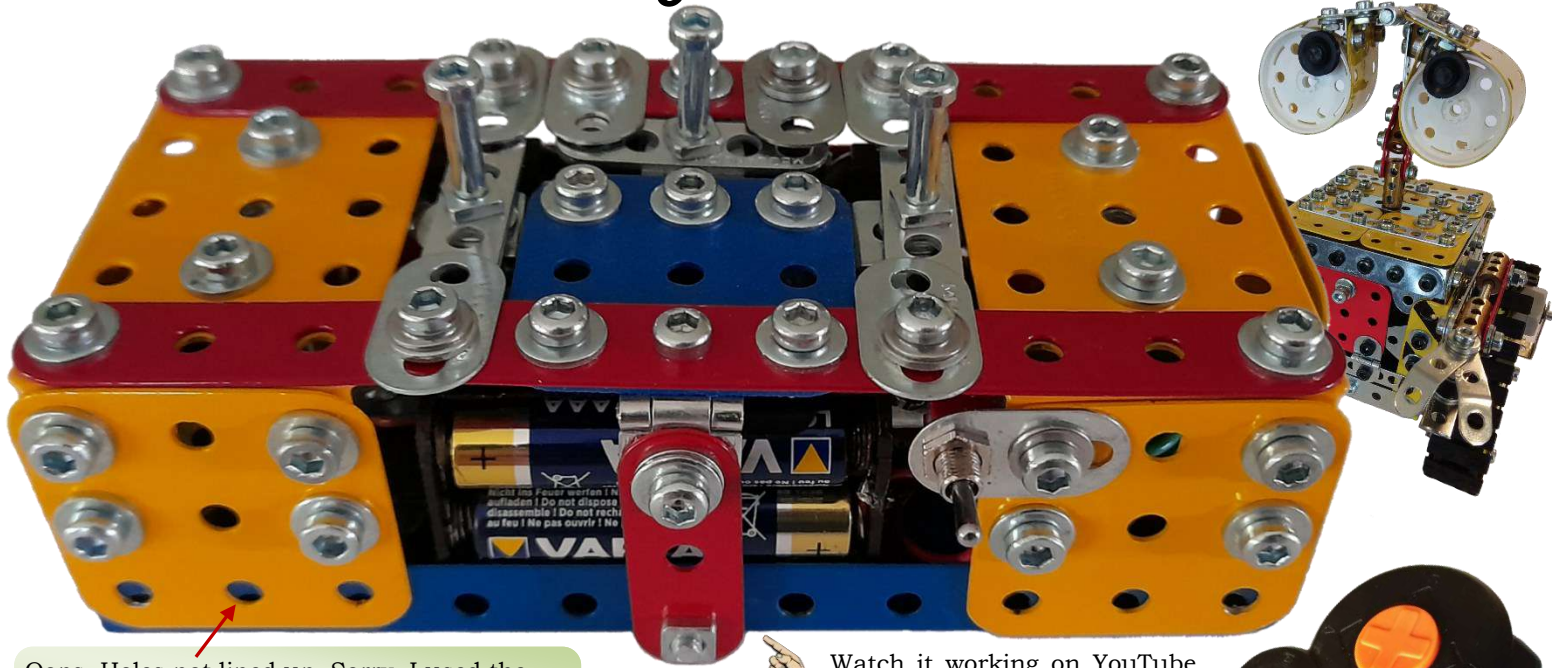
Ornbymandias by Adrian Williams.

Why is Ozymandias a fine poem? It's a fine expression of mankind's folly in thinking that anything once powerful and grand should have any sort of enduring future. Ozymandias was the name the Greeks used for Ramesses II; the imminent arrival in England of a statue of Ramesses II shipped from Egypt and bound for the British Museum is thought to have been the stimulus for Shelley's great poem. There were resonances here, I thought, with the history of Meccano. But first I needed to make some adjustments to the text. This is what I came up with.



Adrian and Norma Williams at SkegEx 2013

Build this sturdy remote control



Oops. Holes not lined up. Sorry. I used the minimum number of bolts to secure the Base Plate to make access easy in case of trouble.

Watch it working on YouTube. Click on the image or link below.

 <https://youtu.be/uDrcGZTfZ0g>

When exhibiting WALL-E at the Sydney Expo, the kids had fun driving him around the table using the Remote Control but as I'd used the original Steel World RC plastic unit, it didn't stand up to the rough treatment dished out by some. First the orange plastic buttons got pushed under the black plastic case and had to be painstakingly popped back into place which required dismantling the case. Then one little boy forced the button down so hard with a grimace on his face that he destroyed it completely. When I got home, I discovered that the microscopic Surface Mount Device, SMD, microswitch had gone open circuit and had to be replaced. Even though I was able to solder a new SMD microswitch in place, I resolved to make something more sturdy and Meccano parts with the strength of steel seemed the logical solution. It wasn't easy and after a month of thinking and trying various ideas I finally succeeded with a Meccano Joystick Controller similar to my Thunderbird 2 controller but more compact and stronger, with the added feature of wireless connectivity. The Steel World RC units work very well, so it was just a matter of using the Steel World transmitter Printed Circuit Board and bypassing the SMD microswitches with parallel microswitches connected with jumper wires.



These buttons can be pushed under the black plastic case if pushed too hard.



At first, I used 3-hole Strips but changed to doubled up 1/4" 5-hole Narrow Strips.



Fig. 1.

1. Mount the microswitches on 12b Brackets using M3 bolts. Note: The levers have been removed as we only need the button.



3. Mount the microswitches with careful adjustment to make sure you hear a click when the lever is pushed.

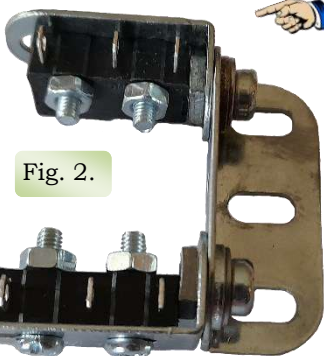


Fig. 2.

2. Bolt the 12b brackets to the Angle Girder.

2 x 6a under

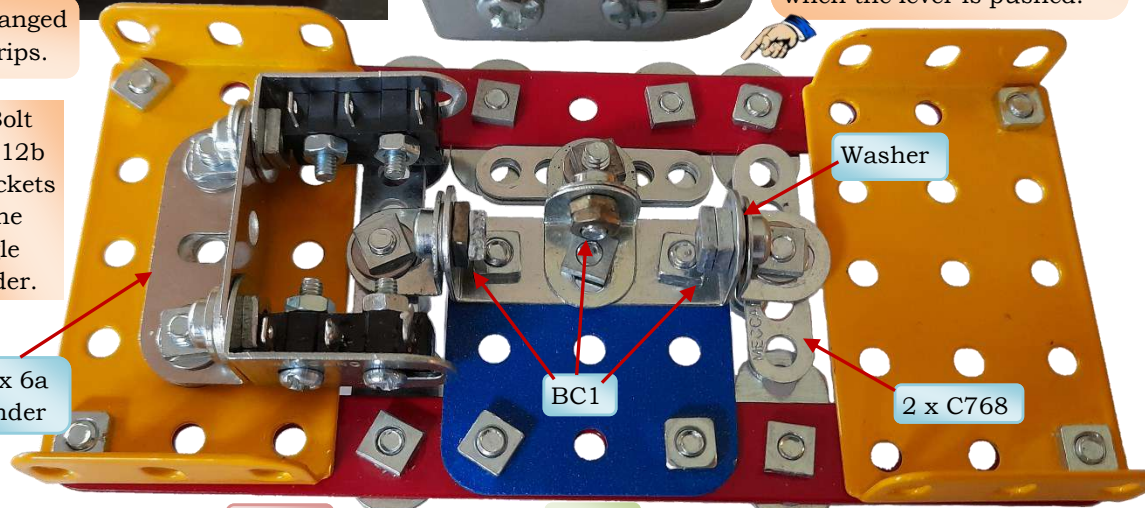


Fig. 3.

Notes on mounting the microswitches.

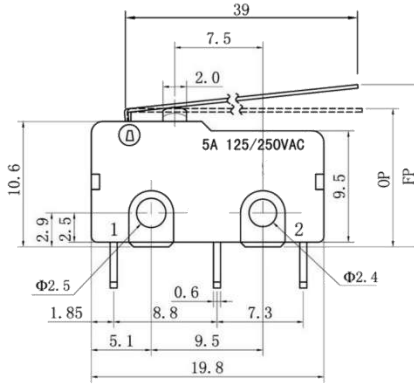
Most microswitches that look like the type I used have the exact same dimensions. The mounting holes are generally 2.5mm, so to fit them to the 12b Angle Brackets, drill them out to 3mm and use M3 bolts. You will be pleasantly surprised to see that the gap between the hole and the slot on a 12b is exactly the correct distance.

The lever can be wedged off using a small screwdriver.

Take care to orientate the microswitches correctly. Use the Common and Normally Open tabs as shown at right, Fig. 4. Common is always under the lever pivot point.

Mount the microswitches so the button is furthest from the bend in the 12b as shown in step 1.

The levers are doubled up 5-hole QI Narrow Strips bolted to an Angle Bracket with the 147g Pivot Bolts. It's important that they can swivel freely in the direction required only. To get the friction exactly right, I tighten the locknuts so that it's not easy to turn the Angle Bracket. Then I hold the inside Nut with a Spanner and very slowly loosen the Bolt until the Angle Bracket moves freely without being sloppy. Remember, the spring inside the microswitch is all that's used to return the joysticks to centre so they must be free.



Part No.	Description	Qty
2	Strip 5½"	2
3	Strip 3½"	1
6a	Strip 1½"	7
9f	Angle Girder 1½"	2
10	Fishplate	6
11	Double Bracket	1
12	Angle Bracket	6
12b	Angle Bracket 1" x ½"	4
23c	Rubber Pulley ¾"	4
48	Double angle strip, 1½"x½"	1
51	Flanged plate, 2½" x 1½"	2
52	Flanged plate, 5½" x 2½"	1
74	Flat plate, 1½" x 1½"	7
147g	Pivot Bolt ¾"	3
C329	QI Narrow Strip 3 hole	1
C768	QI Narrow Strip 5 hole	1
	Sub miniature Toggle Switch	1
	AAA Battery Pack	1
	Microswitches (no lever)	3

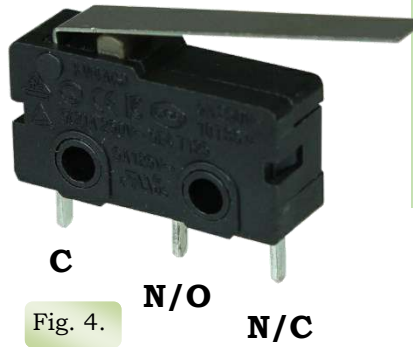


Fig. 4.

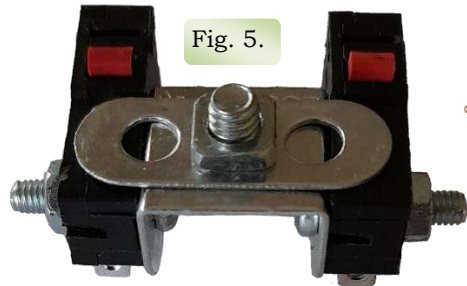


Fig. 5.

The microswitches on the 12b have 2 Bolts but the microswitches on the part 11 Double Bracket for the head left/right movement only have 1 Bolt which means they can move out of alignment. To solve this problem, I've used a 3-hole QI Narrow Strip overlapping them as shown left, Fig. 5. The Bolt is temporary while the M3 bolts are tightened.

Fishplates are used to limit the travel of the 5-hole QI Narrow Strips.

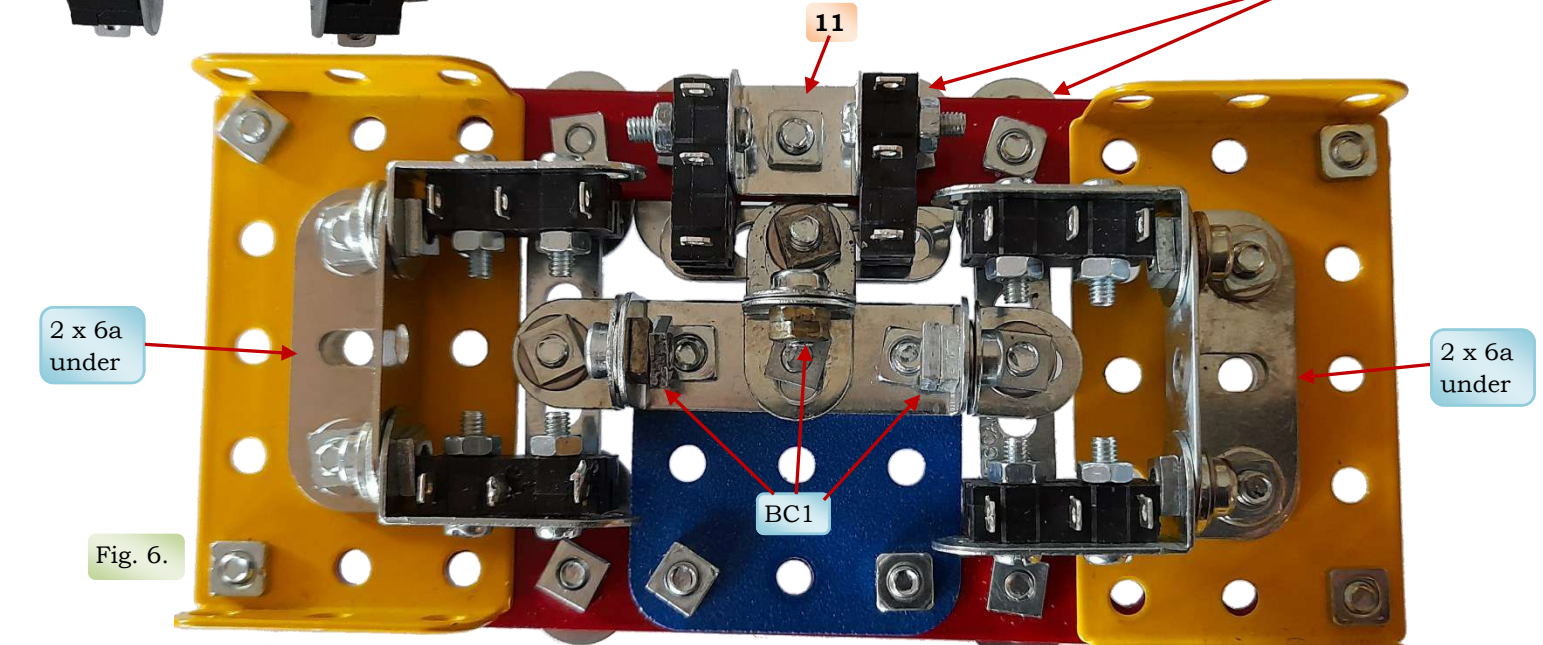


Fig. 6.



Fig. 7.

Use 2 jumpers the same colour for each microswitch so you don't get confused.

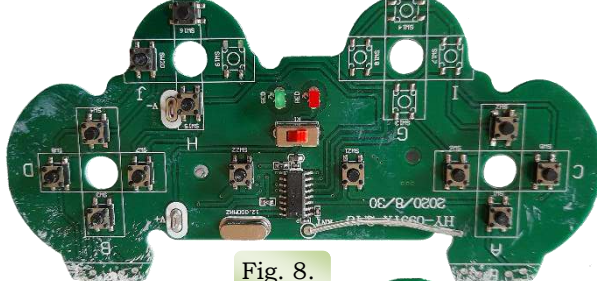


Fig. 8.

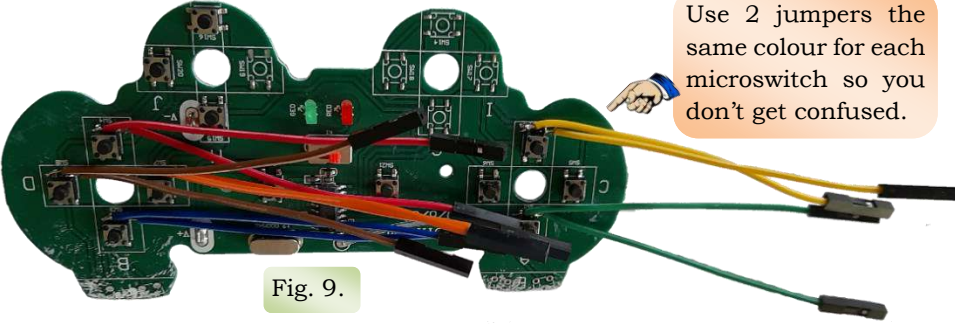


Fig. 9.

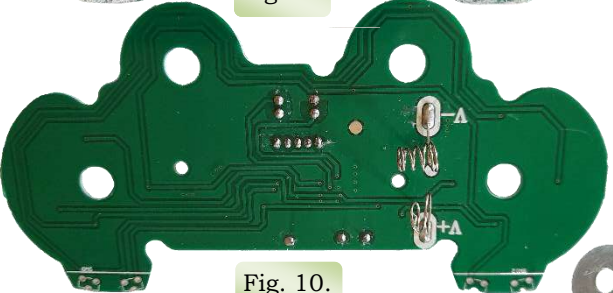


Fig. 10.

Solder Header pins horizontally to the microswitch tabs. If you solder them vertically, it takes up too much room and the PCB won't sit on top nicely. (I found this out the hard way so don't judge my soldering too harshly as this was my 2nd attempt).

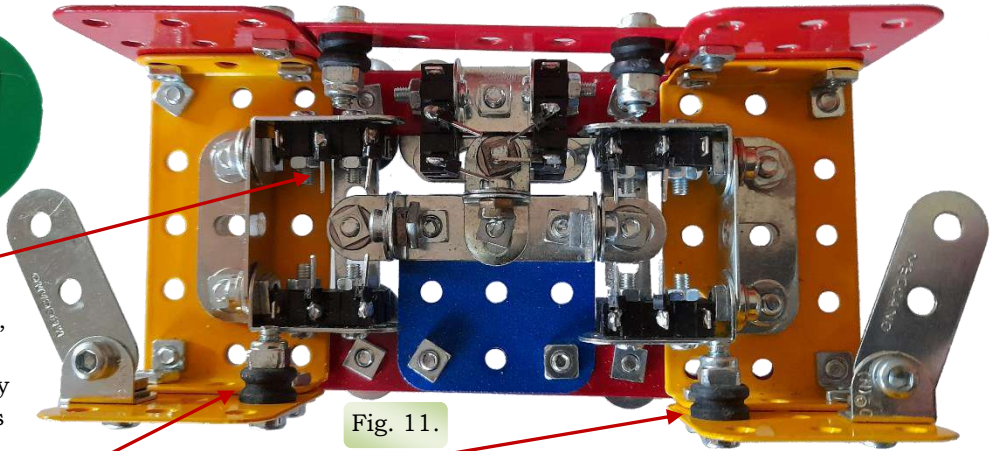


Fig. 11.

Use 4 x part 23c Rubber Pulleys to seat the PCB in place, then lock it down with 3-hole Strips as shown right. Locknut the Strips so that they are firmly held in place when you swine them over the PCB.



Fig. 12.

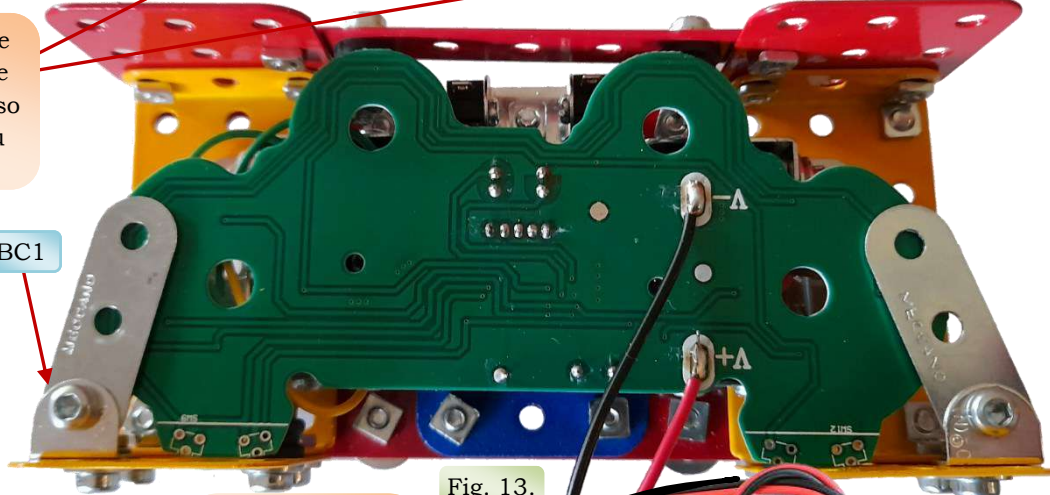


Fig. 13.

Use 6 F-F jumper leads and chop them in half, then tin the leads and solder them to the PCB microswitches as shown in Fig. 9.

Solder the AAA battery pack to the V+ and V- on the PCB via a toggle switch to turn it on and off as the slide switch on the PCB is no longer accessible.



Fig. 14.

The last step is to bolt a part 52 Flanged Plate to the bottom. I only used 2 Bolts as this made it easier to remove in case of trouble. The PCB has a total of 18 push button microswitches but not all of them are used. Some of them don't even have the microswitch but you can see where it would be soldered on if it was required. This means that the same transmitter/receiver units can be used for larger models that require more channels. In the case of WALL-E, I need only 3 motor controls.

Left tracks: forward and reverse.
Right tracks: forward and reverse.
Head: left and right.
There are 4 pins on each switch. 2 on each side. A quick test with a screwdriver showed that shorting out 2 on the same side was the same as pressing the button so it was a simple matter of soldering 2 wires onto each microswitch and extending them to my own microswitches. Fig. 9.

Steel World Transmitter/Receiver. These are 2.4Ghz Wi-Fi units, so no line-of-sight is required, and they will work over a 3-metre range with no problem at all. You can download the 36-page FCC report with all the details from the link below.



Fig. 15.

Watch it working on YouTube

Note: This will download a 5mb file.



Show Us Your Meccano Room



Keith Burston – Meccano Modellers Association Sydney.



Doug Hedgley

Neat and inexpensive storage by Doug Hedgley - UK.

I started work at a Radar, Machine Tool and Nucleonic laboratory which had associated stores. So, an overhaul project would be started, a list of components required generated and put in with a 'chit' to the stores. So far so good! However, that was as far as the 'good' bit went, because the bloke who ran our stores (known as Jobsworth) would announce with some glee after a couple of hours that, as per bloody usual, they only had about 25% of the requested parts and always gave the impression he was paying for the components out of his own pocket! (Amazing the 50-year-old memories that are stirred when writing!) This meant that you could have five or six projects on the go all waiting for parts, which I detest, and still do. With a decent store of parts, you can start a project and work uninterrupted to completion. To that end I have built up a large amount of Meccano parts so that late on a Saturday night and needing part XYZ, (a right angled hardly worth it) it is very nice and good for one's inner being, to be able to wander over to a bin and pull out the very part you require and within minutes it is forming a part of your ever-growing model. To organise, I built some shelves just 150mm apart, across the end of the workshop and, numbered sequentially as per the Meccano part numbering system, I populated the shelves with flat pack cardboard bins in two sizes. 100 x 100 x 300mm and 100 x 100 x 400mm. These accommodated most of the parts up to 12.5" strips and girders. I keep brassware in old dealer cabinets.

Pros: Relatively cheap, (compared with plastic boxes) at 75p to £1 each.

Cons: In a damp environment they, in turn will absorb some of the damp.

Make: K Bins. Source: Ebay.



CAM 2022 - ANSE



Preparations for the exhibition started well in advance, not without some trepidation as this was my first attempt showing for a Meccano event! The show opened to the public on the Ascension Thursday,

47^{ème} Exposition Internationale
Du 26 au 28 mai 2022
MECCANO
ANSE 10h / 18h - Salle Ansolia

Thomas Rothenhausler



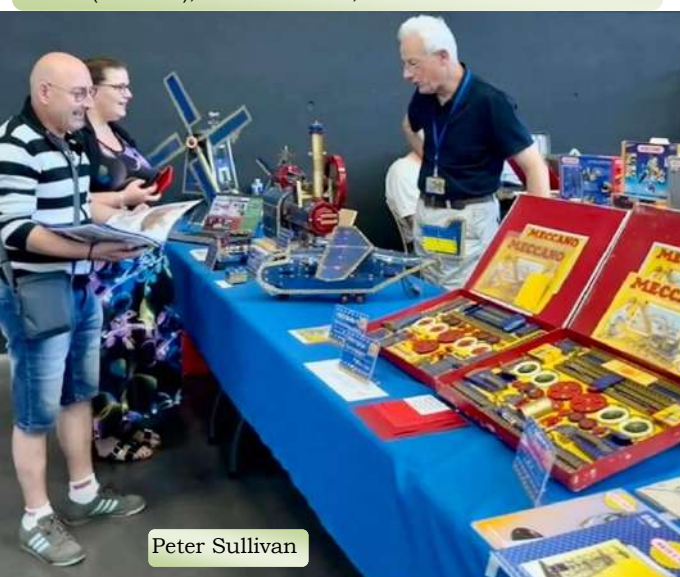
setup being the afternoon before. After finishing work on the Tuesday in Geneva, I zoomed off to my French place where my models are stored, ready to load up the car in the morning for the journey to Anse in the Beaujolais region. The Ansolia hall where the event was to be held wasn't that easy to find, but Jean-Louis Canavy, the CAM exhibition organiser, had kindly thought to put up some signs in the town to show the way!

With a beach-cart everything was soon inside the hall and following my layout plan, I was quickly setup ready for action and had time to meet some of the other exhibitors. Apart from the French contingent,



1st

Richard Faitot



there were international exhibitors from at least the UK, Switzerland, Belgium, Holland, and S. Africa. I was lucky to book Air B&B lodgings in the historic old town of Anse, 10 mins walk away from the hall. Visitors arrived in waves, with some quiet periods, but I felt pretty tired at the end of the day dealing with two or more languages and talking about the models & displays to the public, young and old. On Thursday evening a Gala dinner event was held where we were treated to some local gastronomy, also the chance to have an evening's Meccano chinwag! In all the event was a great success for all - many kids & adults had fun looking, pushing buttons and betting with my Meccano Dice wheel. Attendance could always have been better, but at Ascension you are competing for time with families who travel away for a four-day break! A big thanks to Jean-Louis Canavy for his tireless organisation. Looking forward to next year's expo in Larmor Plage, Brittany. – Peter Sullivan

Peter Sullivan



Marcel Rebuschung



Eric Champeboux



Jean-Pierre Veyet



Anthony Els: How much?
€800?
Parts changed hands.
I'll give you €200

Philippe Bovas



Marc Bizet



Bernard & Jean Garrigues

YouTube
<https://youtu.be/scwMm5Ajygg>

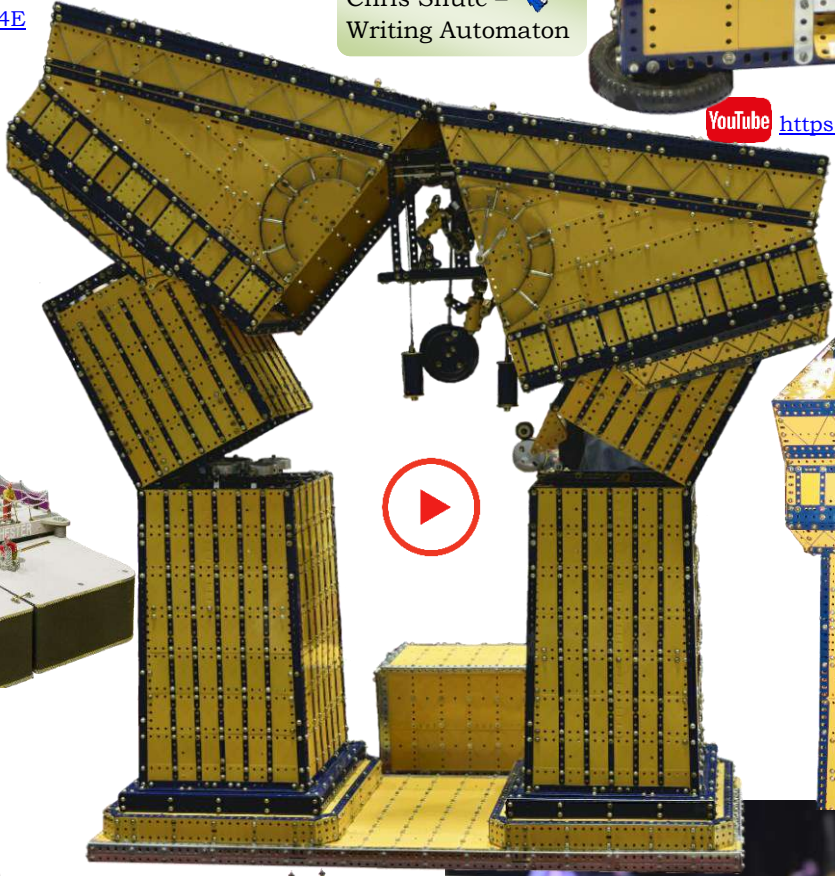


1st Writing Automaton - Chris Shute, 2nd Newport Civic Clock - Howard Somerville
 3rd Blocksetter - Norman Brown, 4th Lock Lifter Crane - Geert Vanhove
 5th Schmidt Tychsen Derrick John Hornsby
 Presentation <https://youtu.be/ills20-2Y4E>

Chris Shute -
Writing Automaton

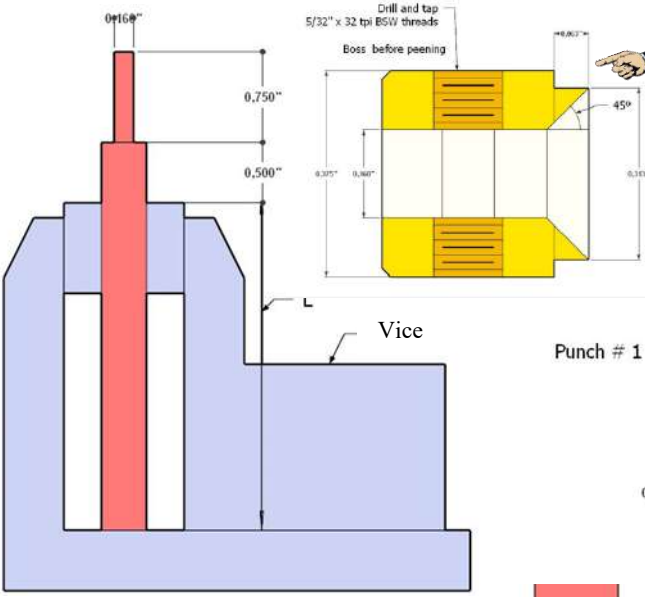
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Howard Somerville -
Newport Civic Clock
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YouTube <https://youtu.be/P7NF0eA1oyv>

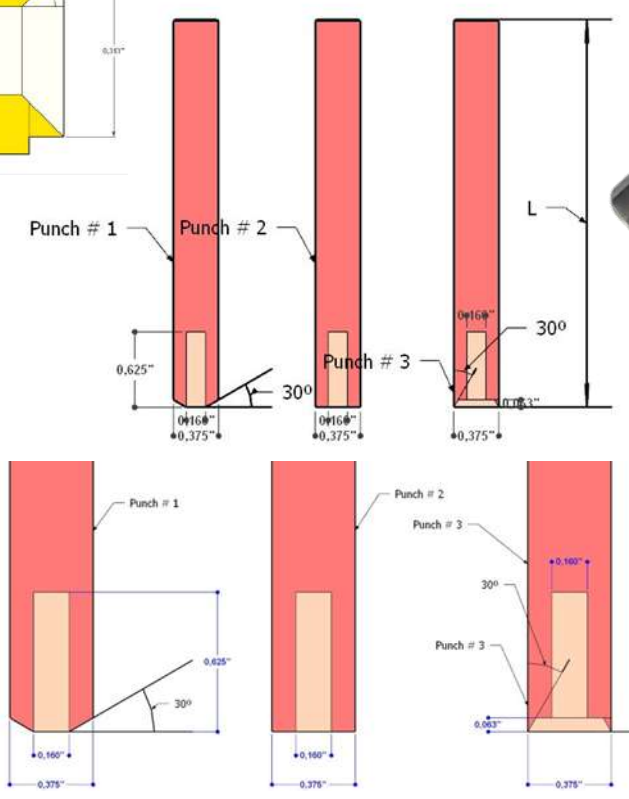


Peening Bosses as per Mike Dennis' teachings

Reproduced by Ed Veiga



BOSS: For standard parts a boss can be turned from 3/8" brass stock as seen in this drawing.



Ed doesn't really recommend a sledgehammer!

TOOLS: One should turn from 0.375" steel rods or larger. I use segments of re-bars for concrete structure. The 4 tools below detailed where one is the anvil and the other three are punches to be used in sequence.

The first is the holding anvil, held up by the lips of a bench vice. I like to flatten two opposing faces on the anvil to enhance the vice grip. It will hold the boss by the central hole.

Punches 2, 3, 4, as described, will peen a boss on a hole on the desired part by hammering each numbered punch in sequence to bend outwards the lip of the pre turned boss. Do not drill the transverse holes for grub screws before the peening operation or they will be crushed during the punching operation. They should be drilled and threaded after peening. A jig can be useful to help to drill the boss in the proper position at 90°. The part that will have the peened boss has to be opened out with a 0.313" (5/16") drill bit.



Boss over anvil



Spur gear with the boss inserted



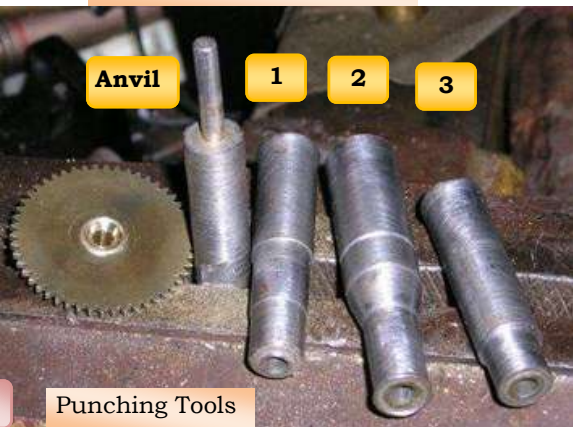
After hammering punch 1



After hammering punch 2



After hammering final punch 3



Punching Tools

FROM OUR GOOD IDEAS DEPARTMENT

Centrifugal Clutch

From Larry McEwan - Canada



Larry McEwan at home in Deep River, Ontario with his latest eBay find.



Fig 1. I've used a part 162a Boiler End as the drum. Long Bolts are fixed to the part 24 Bush Wheel then journaled through the Boiler End and into the holes in the outside Bush Wheel thus sandwiching the Boiler End in-between the Bush Wheels.

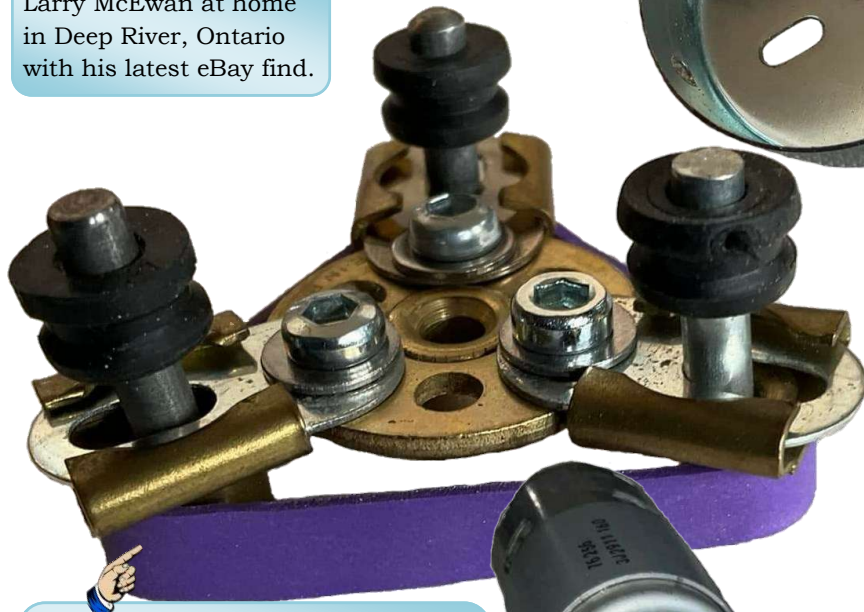


Fig 2. The motor drive side made from a small Bush Wheel, 3 Fishplates, 3 Slide Pieces, 3 x 1" Rods and 3 x part 23c Rubber Pulleys.

Fig 4. Details of the framework showing how the Boiler End is secured.

You can see one of the Long Bolts protruding in Fig. 4.



Fig 3. An elastic band from asparagus packaging is used to keep the Rubber Pulleys retracted at slow speeds.

Fig 5. As the RPM of the clutch increases, the centrifugal force pushes the Slide Pieces outwards thus engaging the Rubber Pulleys with the inside of the Boiler End.



Fig 6. More details of the framework.

This Month's Meccanoboy

Ashok Banerjee - India



When and where were you born?

1952 in a picturesque small town 38km north of Kolkata by the River Ganges.

Where did you go to school?

I did my primary schooling in a missionary school in the next town about 41 km away from Kolkata. I did middle school and high school in another missionary school in Kolkata.

Did you have Meccano as a child?

My association with Meccano started in 1958 at the impressionable age of 6, when my father bought me a 00 Outfit for the princely sum of Rs.5 (that is 7 US cents today!) From that point on I was hooked to the hobby. More sets started coming my way by way of gifts from parents and relations, and my joy knew no bounds. The largest set I was given (by my uncle) was the MG/MR Outfit 7. I have now completed 64 Meccano years and still my passion for the hobby continues unabated.

Did you go to university?

I did. I earned a master's degree from the Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur. (Look it up on Wikipedia and iitk.ac.in)

Are you married? Any kids?

Yes, my wife, Daksha and I have been married for 44+ years now. We have just one son, Shardul Raj, a Marine Engineer, now working as the Head of Tanker Charter in a large, established shipping company in Mumbai.

Did any of your kids share your interest in Meccano?

Sadly, not really. In the 1980s, when my son was growing up, Meccano had almost vanished from the planet.

My son, Shardul Raj, playing with my Meccano.

You're well known for selling Meccano. How did that start?

Living in a part of the world that became increasingly remote from the Meccano mainstream, I had always been frustrated by the lack

of availability and the unaffordable prices of original Meccano spares. So about 35 years back, I started in a small way to have parts made to supplement my own collection for model-building. In 1997 I joined Spanner and mentioned this in a post. The late Prof. Dr. Engineer Paolo Caravani of Italy asked me to post a brief write-up. I did and received many positive responses.

I sent samples to friendly Meccanomen around the world, and they encouraged me to develop this further so that many can get the benefit of my efforts. I too thought it would be fun, so I did. My first direct sale was to Wes Dalefield of Australia, and my first trade order was from Joel Perlin in the USA, both in 1998.



Ashok, Shardul Raj, Daksha.



How big is your factory? How many staff?

The factories I did have had nothing to do with Meccano. All my repro parts are manufactured and finished by contractors who run their own small and medium-size workshops. There are about 19 of them, all owned and run by qualified engineers or vastly experienced craftsmen.

Do you build models or just make parts?

I actually don't make any parts like Jack Parsisson or Stuart Borrill. I get them made. I only provide accurate samples and drawings to the workshops. I also make small to medium-size models when the time and mood favours. My advantage is that I have no shortage of parts.

Aladdin's Cave

Did covid take its toll on you or your business?

Personally speaking, my family and I have never tested positive for COVID but the parts activity went to a virtual standstill, with workshops closed, and international postal and courier services practically shut down. I actually welcomed the break.

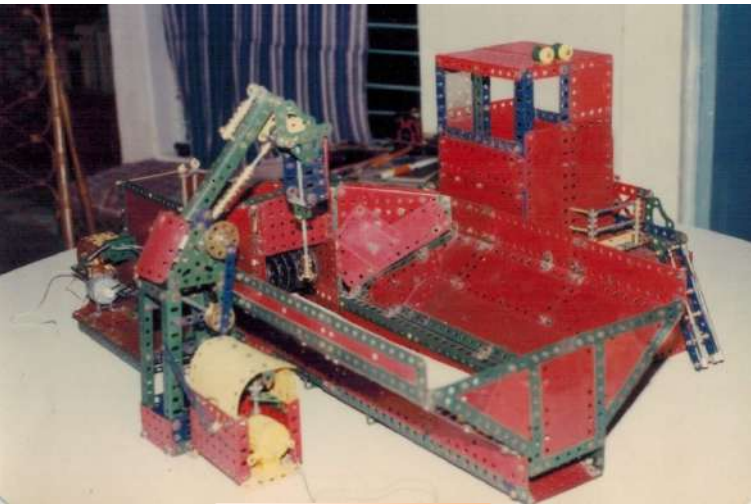
Link to Ashok's website below:

http://ashok_banerjee.tripod.com/Meccanoville/Welcome.htm



What was your best model?

To my mind, the best model I have built was the second model ever constructed by me. It was the Wheelbarrow from the 00 Set. It actually trundled! The most ambitious model I have built was a motorised Quarry Rock Crusher, based on photographs and drawings supplied by the manufacturer.



Quarry Rock Crusher

Where are most of your sales?

I'm afraid that's a question I cannot answer. I can tell you though that I have supplied my parts to some 39 countries on all continents, the latest being Saudi Arabia.

Tell me about your worst customer.

About 20 years ago, there was this elderly dude in England, who placed a small order, and after paying, from THE VERY NEXT DAY, started bombarding me with e-mails, demanding to know why his order had not arrived. Immediately, I refunded him.

Sounds like you have a few stories to tell.

Oh yes. For instance, in 1979 I acquired DB/DY sets 3 & 5. One Multi-purpose Gear Wheel is found without a tapped hole. Write a complaint to the MD of Meccano. Within a week get a replacement in a jiffy bag. A week later, get a larger jiffy bag with 6 of 27f in a polythene sachet with Meccano promotional literature and an apology letter from the Customer Services Manager. The company folded soon after.

Then in 1980, taking a short-cut through a narrow street in an old shopping area of Kolkata, I noticed a shop window with a sticker "Authorised Meccano Dealer" affixed. I entered to find a store that had obviously been established in the 19th century. When I asked about Meccano the elderly owner brings out a brown paper wrapped package. "This is a #6 Set from 1957. You want to buy it?" he says. Twenty years later, the same gentleman sold me two mint Meccano X1A sets.

In 1988, responding to my newspaper ad a wealthy real-estate developer from Kolkata, sold me his entire collection of 1953 Outfits, from 0 to 10, plus extras, and a tea chest crammed with Bayko, for the princely sum of US\$110. The 9 and 10 Sets were unused, and in the Meccano wooden chest/cabinet with lift-out trays.



My wife, Daksha and son, Shardul Raj in 1992.

A sneak look inside one of my parts drawers.



In 1995 I was working in the Emirates and bought a Techno 6 set, then the largest. I faxed Meccano France for an MR motor to power some models. A lady, Jeanne SERROR, replied that the motor had been discontinued long back, BUT they still had one trade pack of 6 which they would be happy to send me with the compliments of Meccano SA. Within a week I received the package of motors.



Are you in any Meccano clubs?

I subscribe to many Meccano club journals in the UK, France, Canada, South Africa, and New Zealand. That automatically makes me an overseas member. I am also in regular contact with Meccano clubs and people all over the world, as that is the basis of my business. So, I feel I am part of a worldwide 'club'.

Have any Meccano friends travelled to India to meet you?

Yes, several. Two of them have been my house guests. Also, three Meccanomen came to my son's wedding reception from the US, England, and New Zealand.



L-R Tim Robinson, Stan Baker, Ashok, Daksha, Lisa, Abhijit and Howard Somerville.

Have you travelled much to attend Meccano expos? Sadly, no. Many reasons prevented me, but I have travelled a lot around India. My wife and I visited the Taj Mahal.



Daksha and Ashok at the Taj Mahal



Neighbor's son playing with my fairground ride.

Below are some of Ashok's smaller models.



Nativity Cradle



Our home. Prestige Towers in Ahmedabad, India.

Grandpa asked me to 'dial' a number for him. What does 'dial' mean?



Modern Antique Telephone



My Plate/Strip Roller

My Family. Ashok, Shardul Raj, Deepti and Daksha.



What are your plans for the future? I am now 70 and have been at this for over 23 years. I plan to wind down this activity over the next few years.

Do you have any advice for kids today? Meccano is no longer an activity for kids. It's an adult hobby now. Today's children are under too much pressure to earn degrees, become smart, acquire commercial skills and become employable. How much free time do they have? Most of the time building a decent Meccano model is spent on tightening and re-tightening nuts and bolts. Push-fit Lego is much simpler. I would like to record my gratitude to the many Meccanomen around the world who provided me with an immense amount of help to join the adult Meccano community.

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

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UK

<https://tims.org.uk>

<https://nelmc.org.uk>

<https://nmmg.org.uk>

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

<https://southwestmeccano.org.uk>

<https://londonmeccanoclub.org.uk>

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

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

<https://northeasternmeccano.org.uk>

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

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

<https://runnymedemeccanoguild.org.uk>

<http://www.midlandsmeccanoguild.com>

Other Countries

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

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

<http://www.meccanogilde.nl>

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

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

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

<http://www.amsclub.ch/>

<http://www.meccanoweb.es/>

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

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/cmnp/>

Personal pages

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

<https://www.alansmeccano.org>

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

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

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

<http://www.meccanokinematics.net>

<https://meccanocreations.in>

<http://www.meccano.us>

Meccano suppliers

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

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

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

<https://www.meccanospare.com>

<https://ralphsshop.com>

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

<https://tinyurl.com/AshokBanerjee>

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

<http://www.metalconstructiontoys.com>



Earth's first science fair

I was in a long line at 7:45 am today at the grocery store that opened at 8 am for seniors only. A young man came from the parking lot and tried to cut in at the front of the line, but an old lady beat him back into the parking lot with her cane.

He returned and tried to cut in again, but an old man punched him in the gut, then kicked him to the ground and rolled him away.

As he approached the line for the third time he said, "If you don't let me unlock the door you'll never get in there."

There are two unwritten laws.

- 1.
- 2.

A farmer named Sam was overseeing his herd in a remote hilly pasture in Hereford when suddenly a brand-new BMW advanced toward him out of a cloud of dust.

The driver, a young man in a Brioni suit, Gucci shoes, RayBan sunglasses and YSL tie, leaned out the window and asked the farmer, "If I tell you exactly how many cows and calves you have in your herd, will you give me a calf? Sam looks at the man, who obviously is a yuppie, then looks at his peacefully grazing animals and calmly answers, "Sure, why not?" The yuppie parks his car, whips out his Dell notebook computer, connects it to his 5G iPhone and surfs to a NASA page on the Internet, where he calls up a GPS satellite to get an exact fix on his location which he then feeds to another NASA satellite that scans the area in high resolution photo. The young man then opens the digital photo in Adobe Photoshop and exports it to an image processing facility in Hamburg, Germany. Within seconds, he receives an email on his Palm Pilot that the image has been processed and the data stored. He then accesses an MS-SQL database through an ODBC connected Excel spreadsheet with email on his Blackberry and, after a few minutes, receives a response. Finally, he prints out a full-colour, 150-page report on his hi-tech, miniaturized HP LaserJet printer, turns to the farmer and says, "You have exactly 1,586 cows and calves." "That's right. Well, I guess you can take one of my calves," says Sam.

He watches the young man select one of the animals and looks on with amusement as the young man stuffs it into the boot of his car.

Then Sam says to the young man, "Hey, if I can tell you exactly what your business is, will you give me back my calf?" The young man thinks about it for a second and then says, "Okay, why not?"

"You're a Member of Parliament", says Sam.

"Wow! That's correct," says the yuppie, "but how did you know?"

"No guessing required." answered Sam. "You showed up here even though nobody called you. You want to get paid for an answer I already knew, to a question I never asked. You used millions of pounds worth of equipment trying to show me how much smarter than me you are; and you don't know a thing about how working people make a living or about cows, for that matter. This is a herd of sheep.

Now give me back my dog!