





CLUB OFFICERS

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EDITORIAL

As we are about to see the last of 1984, it is encouraging to realise that participation and interest in the Meccano hobby is apparently on the increase, as shown by attendances at the many exhibitions and group meetings. Indeed, this Newsletter itself has gone "international" since we now have a French reader and Robin has gone to some lengths to make him feel welcome.

This issue is somewhat shorter than usual, due only to the need to circulate prior to Christmas. I hope those contributors whose pieces are not included will bear with me until they can be included in the next Newsletter, due for publication in March 1985.

It only remains for me, on behalf of all the Club Officers, to wish you all the very best for Christmas and the New Year.

KEN ASHTON

ONE MOMENT!

Before my friend Mr. Ashton - wait a minute Ken - before my friend Mr. Ashton formally throws this newsletter open to the readers, I should like to say a few words. You, sir, and you, and you at the back, if you will kindly restrain your impatience.....There is no need to jostle. There will be copies for all. Thank you. I shall not detain you long.

Following the recent election of Club Officers I have the honour to act as your Secretary during the coming year. In accepting this high office I am assured that the duties are purely nominal and, to be honest, this has so far proved to be the case. However, I have not altogether been able to shake off a sense of impending doom engendered, in part, by the experience of Mr. Ronald C. Stutter whose work is doubtless familiar to you all. (A flattering likeness of Mr. Stutter appears in MJ.18 - Page 500). His friend Mr. Otis Carmyle of the Bing Structator Group of Ohio had assumed club secretaryship in circumstances very similar to my own and had thought, as I did, that he was in for an easy passage. One may imagine his emotions when, as a result of a nasty accident with a Block-setting Crane, he found himself suddenly saddled in addition with the duties of Newsmag Editor. Should this fate befall me I doubt I would be equal to the task, made to look so deceptively simple by the present incumbent, who is constantly receiving letters on the following lines:-

"Sir, -

On the matter of your recent request for techniques and ideas I wonder how many of your readers are aware that an excellent cleanser for refurbishing K Oilcans may be made from crushed prunes and salad cream....."

and,

"Dear Sir, -

I have never read your Newsletter before, as I have always enjoyed robust health from a boy. But recently, owing to acquisition of second-hand unsterilised Meccano, I became covered with pink spots and my brain power was temporarily affected. A friend lent me your September edition, and I read it with great enjoyment.

Kindly send me your photograph and autographed copies of all previous Newsletters.

Thanking you in anticipation,

I remain,

Yours truly."

Just how he copes with such matters (and builds gate-change mechanisms at the same time) it is difficult to imagine, but long may he continue to do so.

All right, Ken, let 'em in.

ROBIN JOHNSON

DIARY DATES

19th January 1985 North Midlands Meccano Guild, Thurgarton

20th April 1985 Sheffield Meccano Group, Norton

18th May 1985 North Midlands Meccano Guild, Thurgarton

30/31 August 1985 Henley Exhibition

21 September 1985 North Midlands Meccano Guild, Thurgarton

12th October 1985 Sheffield Meccano Group, Norton

MEETING REPORT - 13TH OCTOBER 1984
NORTON CHURCH HALL

This was another of those Group meetings when everyone said how much they enjoyed themselves. Certainly it seems that all went well - the weather was kind, many interesting models were on display and the refreshments were to a high standard. I think about thirty people attended, most arriving by 12 o'clock and after ample opportunity for renewing old friendships we spent an enjoyable period touring the exhibits and later listened with much interest and pleasure to descriptive talks given by five of our members with background information on their own particular models.

The business meeting which followed was our A.G.M. and covered the following matters:-

- 1) The members accepted Peter Mason's report as Treasurer. This revealed a healthy balance on the year's activities of £44.84 in view of which it was agreed that subscription levels remain unchanged.
- 2) Our Newsletter Editor, Ken Ashton, appealed for more material, particularly building instructions and general items of interest (preferably on Meccano-related subjects). Ken was happy with contributions received but requires more in order to sustain four issues per annum.
- 3) The Group Officers (as listed on the front page of this Newsletter) expressed their willingness to stand again and were duly re-elected en bloc with a vote of thanks for their services during the past year.
- 4) The newly-introduced feature of a descriptive talk on selected models was discussed. Everyone appeared to find this a highly enjoyable innovation but it was agreed that in future an earlier start should be made, approximately 2 p.m. if at all possible.
- 5) The members agreed that Group badges should be purchased and authority was given to arrange such purchase to a maximum of £1 per badge.
- 6) In an effort to stimulate membership applications from the Sheffield area Robin Johnson stated that he had provisionally accepted an offer of facilities for a static model display at the forthcoming annual exhibition by Sheffield Model Railway Enthusiasts in Sheffield City Hall. The members approved this action and certain of their models were made available for display (a report on this event appears later in the Newsletter).
- 7) A vote of thanks was given to Rosemary Julian and Sylvia Johnson (Robin's wife) who were complimented on the high standard of refreshments. Without their help our meetings would be poor affairs indeed.

Richard Bingham

MODEL REPORT

Roy Everitt brought his now completed 1927 Delage Grand Prix racing car, featuring clutch, gear-box and offset prop-shaft transmission to the rear axle. Roy also brought a Single Cylinder Horizontal Steam Engine derived from SML No. 11.

Peter Mason demonstrated his Meccanograph based on an original design by Bill Sangster. Using a Geared Roller Bearing as the turntable, it also had a very neat pen-holding mechanism (write-up please Peter!). Needless to say, this well engineered model produced excellent designs.

Andrew Mason, not to be outdone by Dad, brought along his own Meccanograph based on the 1978 No. 5 Set model.

Dave Penney blew the dust off himself and his Coal Tippler. (Seriously, Dave, nice to see you again). This model works exactly as the prototype and upturns a coal wagon on a racked "pivot" system to discharge its load into a hopper.

Geoff Bennett demonstrated his Westland SRN Hovercraft. This model has a hidden tricycle undercarriage which raises and lowers the superstructure by a scissor-jack principle. Each of the four engine mountings has a driven propellor and swivels independently for steering in conjunction with the fins. Five motors are used controlled by a remote switch panel.

Terry Pettitt exhibited a Gas Engine with working valve gear driven by $\frac{1}{2}$ " helical gears from the crankshaft. The model, driven by a 6-speed motor in the base, ran well with its heavy built-up crank and curved-spoke flywheel. Terry also brought his 1925 Leyland Lion Bus. One excellent feature was the construction of dished wheels built up from curved strips rolled to conical shape and wrapped around $1\frac{1}{2}$ " pulleys.

Vernon Taylor showed a real selection of models: a Highway Multikit Elevating Loader, a Red/Green No. 4 Tank, a Red/Green No. 4 Motor Car, a Blue/Yellow No. 1 Scooter and Blue/Yellow freelance Hand Plate and Strip Rollers.

Alan Partridge brought his superb Orrery and Clock. The "coffee table" size Orrery looks simple but contains subtle epicyclic gear trains with all ratios accurate to 1 in 1000. The clock features John Howe's three-legged gravity escapement and frequent electric rewind giving an accuracy within 2 seconds per day.

Bernard Sage scaled up SML No. 28 by approximately one-third to produce a fine Pontoon Crane in Yellow and Zinc. Bernard has also constructed a Konkoly Steam Engine in Red/Green built from instructions kindly loaned by Alan Scargill.

Julian Coles brought an unfinished, as yet, model of a Twin-Deck Express Coach. When completed it will feature full mechanical details, lighting and seating.

Mike Cotterill demonstrated his Twin Cylinder Beam Engine and Boiler built in Red/Green, based on prototypes in the Kew Bridge Engine Museum and the Papplewick Pumping Station. The engine was scaled to the flywheel constructed from Channel Segments in substantial bearings and featured parallel-link motion for the piston rods.

Robin Johnson just managed to complete his Trix Travelling Gantry Crane in time for the meeting and thereby achieve his life-time's ambition! (I don't know how he copes with all the holes).

Thomas McCallum brought his usual, and very welcome, exhibition. A Fowler Ploughing Engine with beautifully spoked wheels, a Twin Cylinder Steam Engine in Green/Nickel using four sets of original Channel Segments (instructions please Tom - on how to get the parts!) and a Fairground Octopus Ride built to an original machine specification.

Iain McKenzie took over the stage to put on a superb display of Binns Road Products including Meccano, Hornby, Hornby Dublo, Dinkies, Speedboats, Aeroplanes, Mogul, Bayko, Dinky Builder, Elektron and much, much more.

Richard Bingham brought a Konkoly Horse and Chariot in Black/Blue/Zinc/Green/Yellow - keep them coming, Richard.

Ken Ashton brought an uncompleted small-scale Blocksetting Crane and a four-movement reversing gear-box.

John Martin showed a 1953 AEC Regent Bus modelled in Red/Green including full seating, glazing and stairwell details. John actually worked on the Liverpool Corporation prototype, Fleet No. A9, as a student bus conductor! In addition, he brought a small hand operated Mechanical Shovel in mint Red/Blue (after Bert Love's model).

John MacDonald brought his Halftrack and Leander Frigate. The former features elevating, traversing and recoiling guns, three differentials, disc brakes, power winch, etc. The latter, of course, won the Sir Alec Issigonis Award at Skegex '84. Its working features include propellers, rudder, guns, radar dishes, gun directors, bomb throwers, helicopter and Sea Cat Missiles.

Mick Burgess showed a Dealers' Display Board of Blue/Gold Meccano parts and a display of Meccano small partstins and boxes through the ages. Also on offer in his "Mobile Shop" was a comprehensive range of spares, literature, sets, catalogues, replica parts, etc., at bargain prices.

**SHEFFIELD MODEL RAILWAY EXHIBITION
SHEFFIELD CITY HALL- 2ND/4TH NOVEMBER 1984**

Richard Bingham

At the invitation of Sheffield Model Railway Enthusiasts we provided an unmanned display of models at their annual exhibition in Sheffield City Hall.

On the main table were Vernon Taylor's illuminated display model Big-Wheel and Chris Thomson's Giant Block Setting Crane. A rear stand carried Richard Bingham's Walking Horse and Chariot, Robin Johnson's Motorcycle and Sidecar and a selection of Meccano Magazines. All available spaces remaining were filled with Meccano advertising literature.

On a table in front of the display was a pile of promotional leaflets giving details of Sheffield Meccano Group and interested potential members were invited to leave their names and addresses in a letterbox provided for the purpose. Fourteen names were left and approximately 120 leaflets taken.

All enquiries are being followed up and we are optimistic that our membership will increase as a result of this event - certainly many more are now aware of our existence.

SMG DISPLAY STAND (PHOTO: PETER MASON)



A WORD TO THE WIVES

ROBIN JOHNSON

With the advent of the festive season it seems appropriate to drop a hint or two to our nearest and dearest on the matter of what constitutes an acceptable gift. And what I do feel strongly is that, if we are to be given a Christmas present, it may as well be something we really want. It is perfectly possible, no doubt, to get by with socks and monogrammed handkerchiefs or, indeed, nothing at all: but I like to think this country contains wives of spirit who will not rest content till they have dug down into the old oak chest and fetched up the sum necessary to secure our total happiness.

Of course it may be that their reluctance is born of an innate lack of self confidence in the matter of ordering spare parts. If so, let me hasten to dispel this illusion. Meccano is available at laughably modest prices and the method of acquisition is simplicity itself. All you have to do is to go to your nearest Toymaster store, when the following dialogue will take place:-

YOURSELF : Good morning, Mr. Toymaster
TOYMASTER : Good morning, Mrs. Everywoman.
YOURSELF : I want thirty-two Meccano channel segments, two geared roller bearings and a K Oilcan.
TOYMASTER : Certainly, Mrs. Everywoman. You just leave your address and credit card number and they will be delivered to your door in a plain van.
YOURSELF : Good morning, Mr. Toymaster.
TOYMASTER : Good morning, Mrs. Everywoman.

Or take the case of a Hoboken visitor to Henley whom, for want of a better name, we will call Marcel Fortescue de Wilde. In this instance the little scene will run on these lines:-

AU MAGASIN DE JOUETS

DE WILDE : Bonjour, Monsieur le Joujou-maitre.
JOUJOU-MAITRE: Bonjour, Monsieur. Quel beau temps aujourd'hui, n'est-ce-pas?
DE WILDE : Absolument, Eskervous avez le Meccano nombre dix, du maitre Frank Hornby?
JOUJOU-MAITRE: Oui, par exemple, morbleu. Et aussi le Trix, le Marklin et le Stokys?
DE WILDE : Je m'en fiche de cela. Je desire seulement le Meccano.
JOUJOU-MAITRE: Pas de Lego, de Fisher Prix, ou les Stickle-briques?
DE WILDE : Seulement le Meccano, je vous assure.
JOUJOU-MAITRE: Parfaitement, Monsieur. Donnez-moi tout votre argent. Voici la boite dix.
DE WILDE : Bonjour, Monsieur.
JOUJOU-MAITRE: Bonjour, Monsieur.

As simple as that. See that the name Meccano is on every part!

SALES AND WANTS

WANTED : Pre-War Meccano products i.e. Nickel, Blue/Gold, Aeroplane Outfits, Motor Car Outfits, long side plate motors and manuals. Tom McCallum. Tel. Ripley (0773) 813060

FOR SALE : Bound Facsimile Reprint by Michael Bentley of Jan-June 1939 Meccano Magazines. Mint condition. (List £15) Price £7 (plus postage if incurred) Robin Johnson. Tel. Sheffield (0742) 661251