

# TELFORD & IRONBRIDGE MECCANO SOCIETY

[www.tims.org.uk](http://www.tims.org.uk)

## Christmas 2014 Newsletter

Includes full details  
for Meccanuity 2015



Chairman Chris's 2-rail version of Keith Cameron's Little Joe loco, complete with waving driver, on shop-window duty in Wem. *See p23*

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**Photography in this Newsletter:** Mick Burgess, John Evans, Peter Haigh, Chris Instone, Brian Leach, Chris Shute, John Stark (p22, taken from Melbourne Meccano Club Magazine), Bob Thompson. Many thanks to all.

*Minutes of our AGM will appear in the next newsletter. CS*



# Meccanuity

## Exhibition 2015

**Set-up Friday 1st May.**

**Open to public Saturday 2nd, Sunday 3rd, Monday 4th May.**

*We are delighted to extend Christmas greetings from all at the Telford & Ironbridge Meccano Society. As we relax over the holiday period, modellers everywhere may be working on that special Meccano creation. Our new calendars and diaries get marked-up with all those special dates, like Meccanuity 2015 !*

*Now in its thirteenth year, Meccanuity has become one of the UK's leading Meccano exhibitions. Held in the massive exhibition halls of Enginuity, Coalbrookdale, the exhibition can attract over 2000 visitors during the Spring Bank Holiday weekend. Here in the beautiful Ironbridge Gorge, hailed by many as the birthplace of the Industrial Revolution, visitors come to enjoy the hands-on science discovery centre, and then discover the extra magic of a giant Meccano Exhibition. Steam and radio controlled Meccano models will be most welcome, and will have their own challenge events.*

*In the following pages, for TIMS members and visitors alike, is all you need to plan your time at Meccanuity 2015. **Please book in advance.** We look forward to seeing you!*

*Chris Shute,*

*Chairman Telford & Ironbridge Meccano Society*



## Booking your place

Please complete and return the attached form, or email/phone the details to us. TIMS members, especially, may submit forms at our next meeting on Saturday February 7th. We'll do our best to accommodate you all. It's quite a detailed questionnaire, but it does help to make things run smoothly!

## Getting There

Set your sat-nav for TF8 7DQ. Alternatively, leave the M54 motorway at Junction 4 and follow signs for Ironbridge, then Coalbrookdale Museums, then Enginuity. **Parking is free for exhibitors.** Non-exhibiting visitors might wish to use the Park and Ride bus service near Jiggers Bank TF4 3QE.

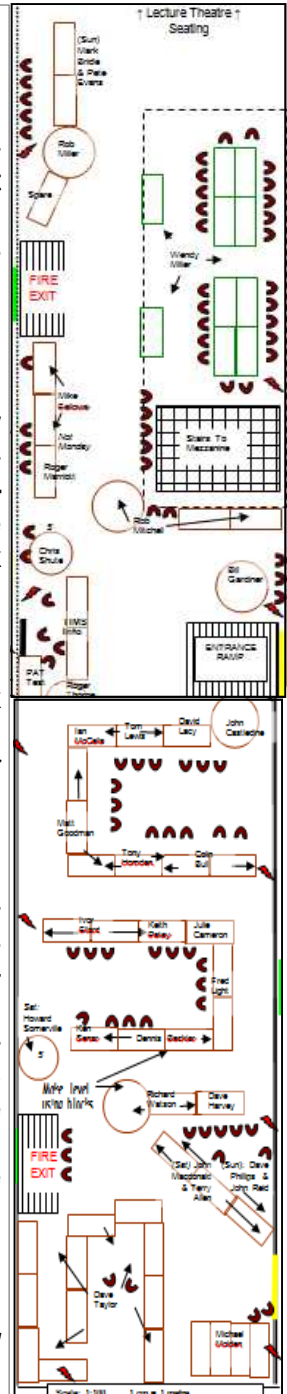
## Registration

On arrival, please collect your Welcome Pack from the TIMS information desk. This will contain your car park pass, voting card and exhibitor badges etc.

## Setting Up

Our tables will be ready for models from 1200-1630 on Friday 1st May. Access to the halls is easy, without steps, via giant sliding doors. Trolleys and helpers will be available if required. During exhibition days (Saturday, Sunday, Monday) the halls can be accessed from 0900. It is helpful (but not essential) if models are in the halls by 1000. After 1000 on these days, when the public are admitted, the external doors are closed, and we enter by the public reception desk.

*Right: About half of last year's layout!*



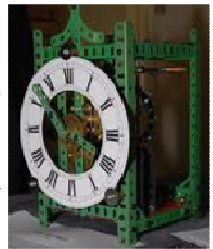
## The John Linder Memorial Shield

Awarded in memory of one of TIMS founders, John Linder, exhibitors are invited to vote for a worthy recipient. Each year, different criteria are suggested, to reflect the range of talents, interests and achievements of those who share our hobby. Ken Senar won the Shield, with *Sum Flars in a Vars* (right) in 2014, which showed the *Most Novel Use Of Parts*. At **Meccanuity 2015** you will be invited to select the **best scale model of a known subject**.



## Meccanuity 2015 Theme Project

Can't decide what to build or bring? We have an optional theme: **Time**. Clocks, calendars, counters and sundials will be most welcome. Your model can be displayed with others on the project tables, or on your main table space.



## Live Steam!

We now have a dedicated area for running live steam engines and steam driven Meccano models. You are welcome to book this space for your main display, but be aware that this 'Covered Bays' area is unheated (except for meths fumes the odd puffs of steam!). Please follow the safety code displayed. There will be a race event for steam-driven buggies on Saturday 2nd May.



## Radio Controlled Vehicles

Our halls can get quite busy, but we have a dedicated area where Radio Control enthusiasts can run their vehicles safely, and still share them with the public. This year we shall also hold a time trial event for radio controlled vehicles on Monday 4th May.





## Trading

Meccanuity is not a commercial event. TIMS aims to showcase as much Meccano modelling talent as possible. Our public visitors pay museum admission charges to our generous hosts, the Ironbridge Gorge Museums Trust, which is a registered educational charity. The museum shop sells some modern Meccano sets. By agreement, TIMS allows only one trader at its events, and we ask exhibitors not to trade on the museum site. But rest assured, our 'resident' dealer, is well stocked with a wide range of items at familiar prices.



## Electrical Safety

We aim to provide a reliable power outlet beneath your table, or the one next to it. Please make sure all your own mains cables and power supplies are tested and passed fit for use. A number of TIMS members are able to



advise or help with testing. Ideally, this should be done in advance. We provide rubber cable covers for use between wall sockets and tables.



## Insurance

We have recently been required to double our public liability insurance to £10 million for events in Ironbridge Gorge Museums. Other Meccano clubs' insurance (normally £5 million) will therefore not be acceptable. However, all guest exhibitors can be given temporary membership of TIMS for a modest fee of £1 per exhibition day. Of course, we all need to observe good safety practice, for everyone to enjoy the exhibition. No other charge will be made for exhibiting.

## Catering

Tea/coffee/biscuits: 1030-1130 and 1500-1545 (cake too!)

Buffet lunch: 1230-1330: All-in £5 daily. To guarantee lunch, please book in advance when you book your table space and pay on arrival.

There is also a museum cafeteria and pub nearby with food. (uphill!)

**Meccanuity Challenge 2015**  
***THERE-AND-BACK-AGAIN!***

*Do you enjoy a light-hearted challenge? Try our ever-popular Meccanuity Challenge, to be fought out on Sunday afternoon 3rd May, in the lecture theatre in front of a baying crowd. Here are the rules:*

1. Devise a vehicle to travel across the arena floor (15 feet) reverse automatically, and return to cross the starting line.
2. Vehicles may not be guided by any means after starting.
3. Vehicles must strike a wide wall at the far end of the course before starting the return journey.
4. Vehicles must be built from recognised Meccano parts or their replicas.
5. Motive power must be on-board clockwork or electric Meccano motors. If numbers permit, there will be a separate contest and prize for each category.
6. Non-Meccano battery-holders, wire and switches are permitted in electric vehicles.
7. Vehicles will start from behind a line, and be released by their handlers.
8. Vehicles will race against each other, in a series of races/heats decided by the Adjudicator.
9. The overall winners of both electric and clockwork contests will receive a small trophy.



# Accommodation Around Ironbridge



A search online reveals plenty of accommodation within a few miles of Ironbridge. The following hotels each had several rooms available for the Meccanuity weekend (Friday, Saturday, Sunday nights) when we searched in mid December. TIMS is unable to endorse any, but we list some here, in no particular order, as a guide for intending visitors who may not have easy internet access. If phoning from outside the UK, dial +44 then omit the first zero of the numbers listed below.

The Tontine: The Square, Ironbridge, TF8 7A	<b>01952 432127</b>
Foundry Masters House: 43 Wellington Road, Iron- bridge, TF8 7DU	<b>01952 433658</b>
Best Western Valley Hotel: Buildwas Road, Iron Bridge, Ironbridge, TF8 7DW	<b>01952 432247</b>
Bridge View Guest House: 10 Tontine Hill, Iron- bridge, Ironbridge, TF8 7AL	<b>01952 432541</b>
Days Inn Hotel Telford Ironbridge: Junction 4, M54, Priorslee Road, Shifnall, Telford, TF11 8TG	<b>01952 238400</b>
Buckatree Hall Hotel: The Wrekin, Telford, TF6 5AL	<b>01952 641 821</b>



Swan At Forton: Eccleshall Road, Newport, TF10 8BY	<b>01952 812 169</b>
Springhill B&B: 2 School Rd, Coalbrookdale, Iron-bridge	<b>01952 433225</b>
Premier Inn Telford North: Donnington Wood Way, Donnington, Telford, TF2 8HH	<b>0871 527 9084</b>
The White House Hotel : Wellington Road, Muxton, Telford, TF2 8NG	<b>01952 603603</b>
The Raven Hotel: 30 Barrow Street, Much Wenlock, TF13 6EN	<b>01952 727251</b>
Premier Inn Telford Central : Value Deal Euston Way, Telford, TF3 4LY	<b>0871 527 9082</b>
Gaskell Arms: High Street, Much Wenlock, Much Wenlock, TF13 6AQ	<b>01952 727212</b>
Park Inn by Radisson Telford: Forgegate, Town Centre, Telford, TF3 4NA	<b>01952 429988</b>
The Stanage B&B: Dawley Road, Lawley Village, Telford, TF4 2PG	<b>01952 507742</b>
Sytche Caravan and Campsite: A4169 Much Wenlock	<b>01952 726701</b>
Poolview Camping, Buildwas, Ironbridge TF8 &BS (Campsite and holiday lodge cabins)	<b>01952 433182</b>

TIMS Chairman: Chris Shute. [chris.shute@tinyworld.co.uk](mailto:chris.shute@tinyworld.co.uk)

Phone: 01939 236299

TIMS Secretary-Treasurer: Roger Thorpe [roger.w.thorpe@gmail.com](mailto:roger.w.thorpe@gmail.com)

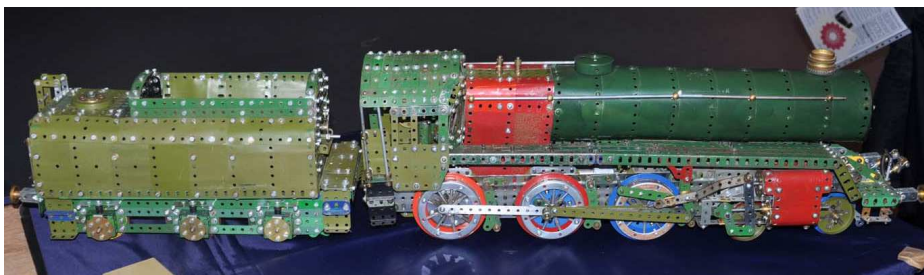
Phone: 01780 754537

Our website: [www.tims.org.uk](http://www.tims.org.uk)

# Model Report: November 2014

By John Evans

About 30 members turned up with models, along with a few who came along to support. Starting in the corner, we had **John Evans** with a small Evolution All Terrain Vehicle (some aspects of which he found very difficult) and a small Bulldozer – Bruce Geange design featured in CQ. Unfortunately he forgot the transformer so was not able to demonstrate it in action.



Next came **Janet Way** showing Keith's BR 4-6-0 Standard Class loco 75000. A splendid reminder of Keith's modelling skills and a fitting tribute to his memory. **Tony Clapperton** showed a Tank – a John Linder design, now motorised by Tony. There was also a tracked vehicle with 2 pdu motors demonstrating the Gleasman system of steering tracked vehicles. **Chris Shute** gave us another viewing of his poetry machine, but no steam this time! The steam engine, on loan from Chris Instone, has now been removed from the rear of the machine, and the epicyclic clutch mechanism has been reinforced.



**John Nuttall** has built the famous Quebec Bridge. It was splendid in Blue and Gold.

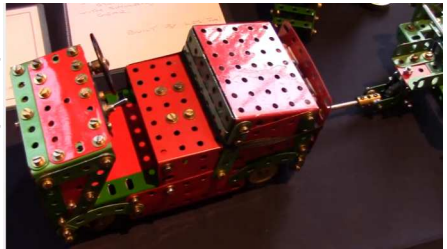
**Tom Lewis** had a whole table full of models. I counted 9 Army models, two Concorde, a Spitfire, a Red Arrow Jet and four other planes and rockets, seen on the next page.



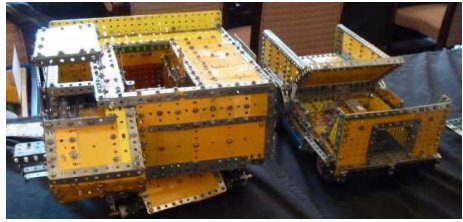
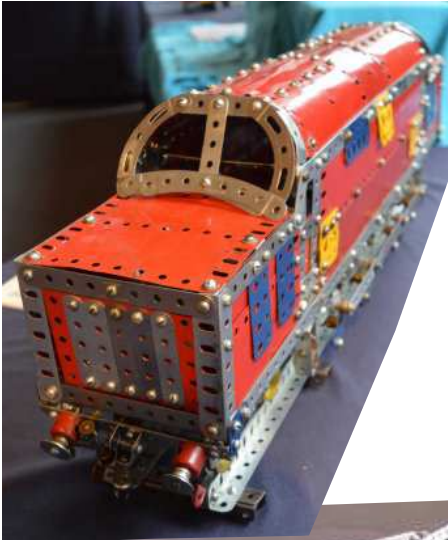
**Ken Senar** gave us another chance to admire his Shield winning Vase of Flowers and also a tantalizing look at part of his new model, below – a Russian plane called Orlyonok. Shades of the Cold War, I think. The completed plane, at a scale of 1:27, will be huge, it seems.



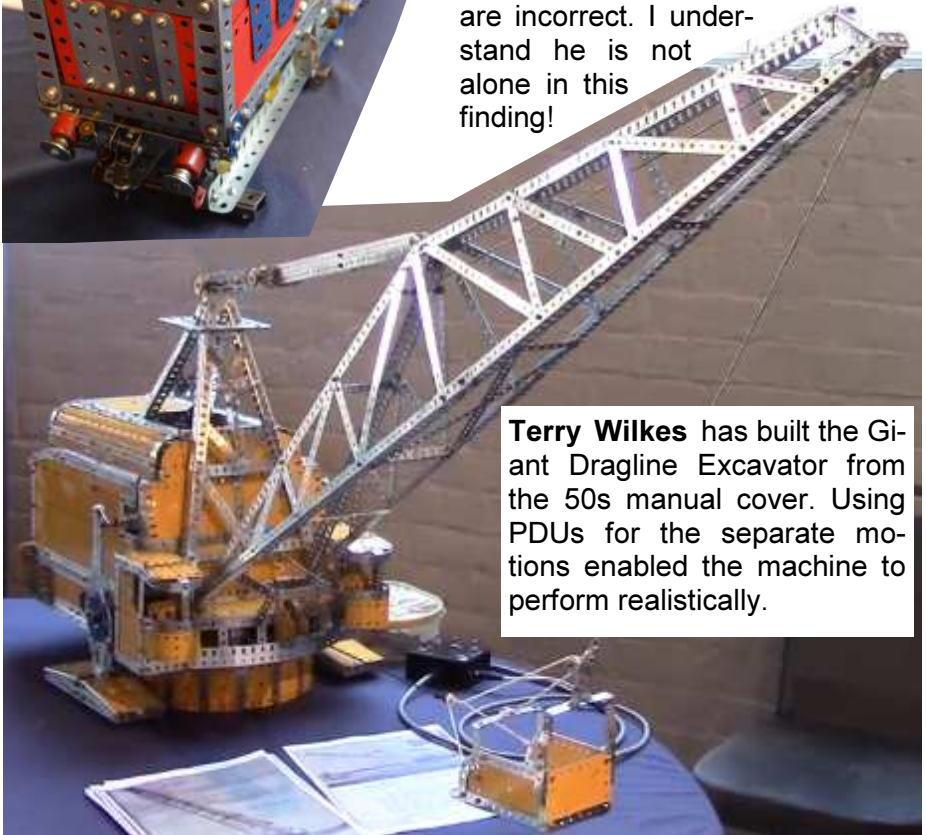
As usual, the **Nightingales** were out in force. **Anne** showing the O-Line and Direct Line Meccanograph; **Les Junior** had made the MM Baggage Handling Truck (seen right) and a Vertical Steam Engine; **Les Senior** had a Tracked Vehicle.



**Sid Beckett** showed a Diesel Express loco from a 1955 Meccano Magazine.



As usual, **Paul Hubbard** was working on a model and also showed a Coles Mobile Crane modified to run on tracks and a 10 Set Dumper Truck. Paul found he had to modify the front axle as the instructions are incorrect. I understand he is not alone in this finding!

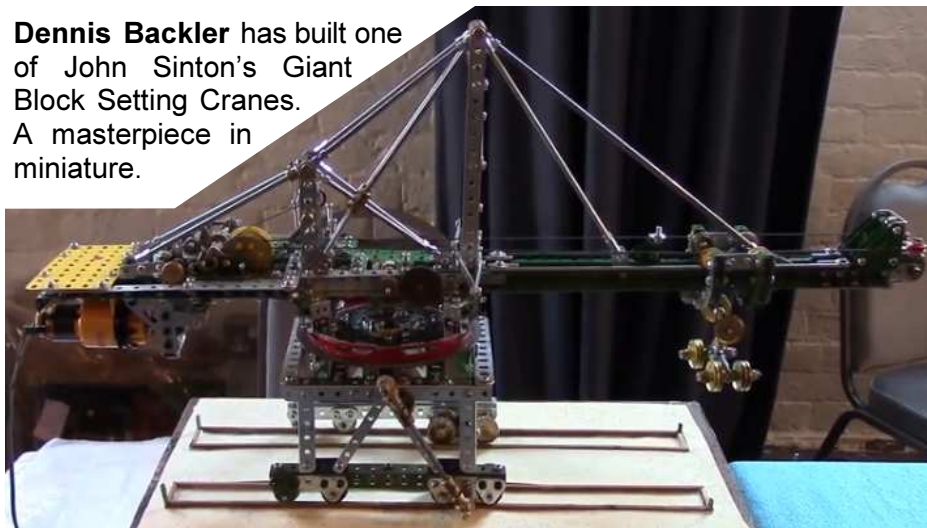


**Terry Wilkes** has built the Giant Dragline Excavator from the 50s manual cover. Using PDUs for the separate motions enabled the machine to perform realistically.

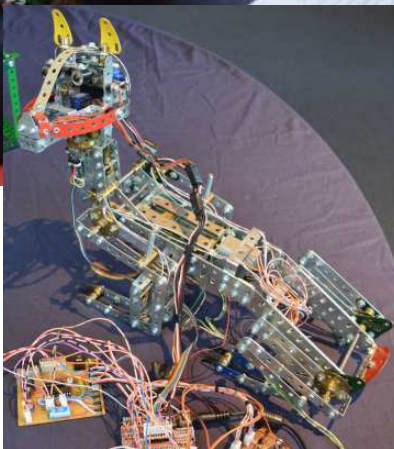
**Tony Evanson** was busy working on Set 9 “Art Deco” clock and also showed a Set 10 Dumper Truck and a Mercury Orrery (with an elliptical orbit).



**Dennis Backler** has built one of John Sinton's Giant Block Setting Cranes. A masterpiece in miniature.

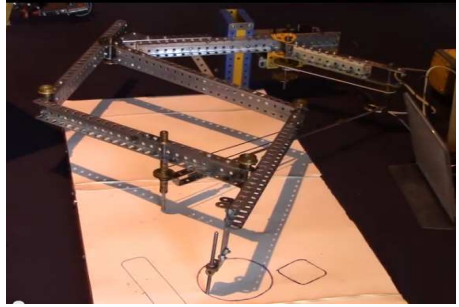


**Michael Sharps** gave us a last showing of his "Electronic Cat" as well as his progress with a Gottwald AMK 400-93 telescopic crane; it will be big. Only 4 of these cranes were built in the early 1980's.





**Bill Gardiner** had a table full of models including a Gantry Crane, a Tank, the rarely seen Pantograph, right, a small windmill, a drag motorcycle, a Bagatelle and Ferris Wheel, the last two being operated by a crank handle.



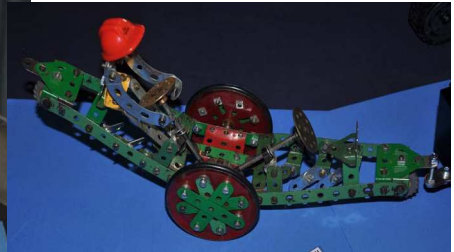
An Austin-Healy 3000 sports car in 1:4.5 scale was the chosen subject for **Tony Wakefield**. He has caught the lines beautifully. Wire Wheels set of the appearance and it was equipped an engine and 4 speed gearbox in one removable unit.



**Dave Bradley** also had a vehicle, this time a radio controlled VW People Carrier.



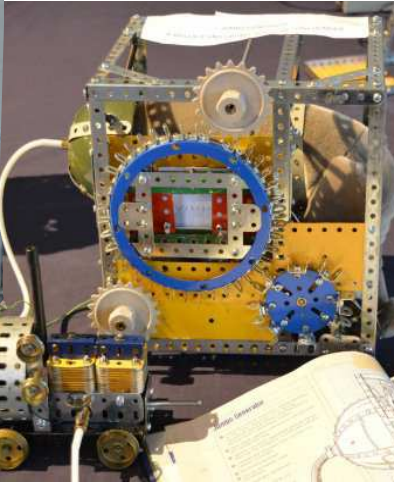
**Mick Burgess** is always a welcome visitor with his carefully prepared displays of fully described models; this time they were all in Blue and Gold. Among his models were a Petrol Tanker, Streamlined Electric Truck, Motor Launch, 3 Sports Cars, an Aircraft Carrier, a French Camion a Benne Basculante (Tipping Lorry), Bluebird, Sewing Machine, a Two Wheeled Trap, a Tricycle, an Organ Grinder with Monkey, an Army Lorry, a Farm Tractor, a Canadian Pacific Loco and an Aerodynamic Car, pictured here with Mick's wife, Frances.



**Chris Instone** combines Meccano with Mamod steam in clever ways. A TE1A Traction Engine has been fitted with Meccano steering; also a TE1A kit fitted with a Meccano ploughing winch and a small Meccano Balance Plough, above. He also had a comprehensive display of the latest sets and of the "Rabbids" range.

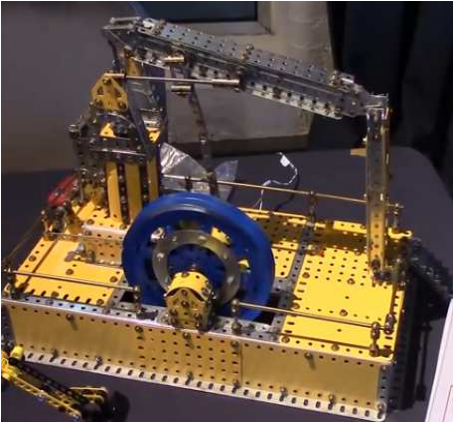


**Greg Worwood** had a magnificent model of the Volks Electric Railway from Brighton.



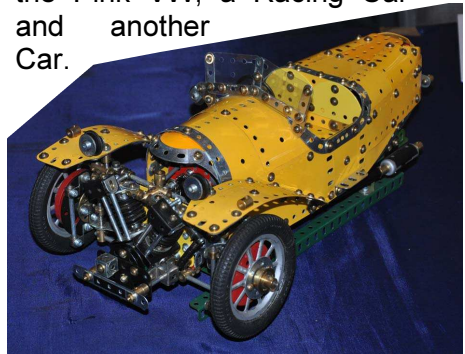
**Tony Homden** recently saw a Flying Flea and decided it would be a suitable subject for a model. Apparently a tricky plane to fly, it was realistically displayed. Tony also had two Wallace and Gromit models – the NASA Techno Trousers, left, and a Jumbo Generator (above, connected to an elephant's rear end) potentially a smelly model!





**Colin Bull** had the Grasshopper Beam Engine (in memory of Bob Ford) as well as a WWI Tank, a Bernard Perrier Land Rover, Evolution models, Excavator, Skid Steer Loader, Recovery Vehicle, two Cranes and a Liebherr Telescopic Mobile Crane.

**Bob Seaton** left his locos at home and brought a Morgan 3 wheeler, based on the Peter Mathews leaflet as well as an Evolution 3200 model. **Anne Seaton** had several small models including a helicopter, a tractor with low-loader, a swivel chair, the Pink VW, a Racing Car and another Car.



**Tony Seed**, below left, chose an unusual subject for a model – a Canal Barge, resplendent in Red/Green. The barge was accompanied by a hard working horse. Tony also had a 50s style petrol tank and a period petrol pump. How many of us remember the attendant turning the handle to deliver the petrol?



*Photos: Mick Burgess, John Evans, Peter Haigh, Chris Instone, Bob Thompson.*

# Spreading The Word

By Chris Instone



Just after Meccanuity, back in May this year, I was asked if I could put on something using Meccano for a local Beavers group in aid of their "Creativity Badge". Of course I accepted as, so I've heard time and time again, "I didn't think they still made it". So an opportunity was here to, at least start to put this phrase to bed.

I gave it some thought, asked a few questions, then gave it some more thought. The conclusion? I needed some Meccano! As the average age of this particular Beavers group was around six, I needed a lot of plastic Meccano! After all, it's easier to learn, and of course more fun, if you can actually have a go at something.

So, we fast forward around five months to early one autumn morning. The doorbell rang and I was greeted with two large cardboard boxes. OK, I have seen larger boxes, but lets just say it would have been easier for me to move my flat into the boxes, rather than the other way around! Tubs of plastic Meccano do stack rather well, but they don't half take up some space. Still, there were only 16 tubs to find space for!

The following evening, I gave a little more thought as to how to go about things on the night. I dismissed the idea of using notes, as, so I've found with my videos, notes mean hesitation, or rather, more hesitation, and as I was told that the attention span of the Beavers was pretty short, I couldn't waffle too much.

Come the evening I made my way to the Scout hut with my Land Rover loaded up, not only the tubs of plastic Meccano, but with many models too. I tried to show a decent 'timeline' of Meccano, although not totally complete, from the 1914 London bus, some late 50's stuff, some 70's, 90's and right up to the present day. As usual, the Rab-bids were very popular.





Whilst I was setting up, a few helpers asked about Meccano, and the oo's and ahh's started when the Ferris wheel was carried in. I did have a bit of bother: The belt on the Ferris wheel was missing. It was found in the back of the Land Rover, but broken. Well, it was something like 40 years old. Fortunately a suitable elastic band was found.

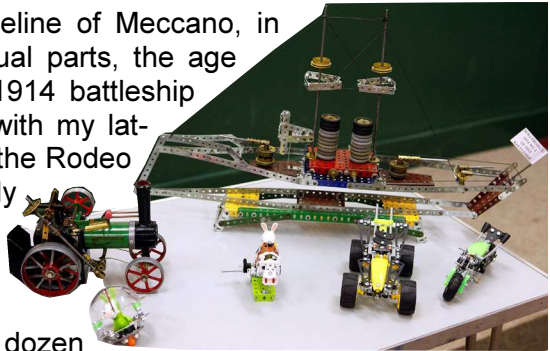
Before the Beavers arrived I'd already been asked where Meccano could be bought. When they did arrive it was nice to hear the word Meccano (no *R*). I started my chat about Meccano with a question: "How long do you think Meccano has been around?" I started with the bus and went through the display, rather quickly, including firing up the Ferris wheel, showing some of the Rabbids and new models in action, including the R/C Turbo set car.

I then opened one of the 150 piece tubs for some nuts and bolts, handing them out, with the help of my assistant, youngest nephew, Joefish. A nut and bolt each. By the time they'd been handed out, several kids had already put them together. I then showed them how to sandwich parts together using the bolts.

Then it was time to play! Needless to say it was a great night. The only sad bit was when one young chap came over to the display with his half made model, a sword. He asked politely if he could, take it home with him. I felt so awful telling him that he couldn't because the parts were going to be used again. I still do.

Still, overall a fine evening with much building fun. It was a little bit of a concern that except for three aircraft, all models were either swords or pistols. However, it was such a success that we did the same again the following week. For the second evening I took a different set of models to show, quite a few less than the first night. I still had to bring back ten tubs of plastic Meccano.

Again I took a bit of a timeline of Meccano, in model design, if not in actual parts, the age range stretching from the 1914 battleship almost to the present day with my latest two Rabbids set builds: the Rodeo Machine and the UFO. My display also tried to show what else you could build, other than set models.



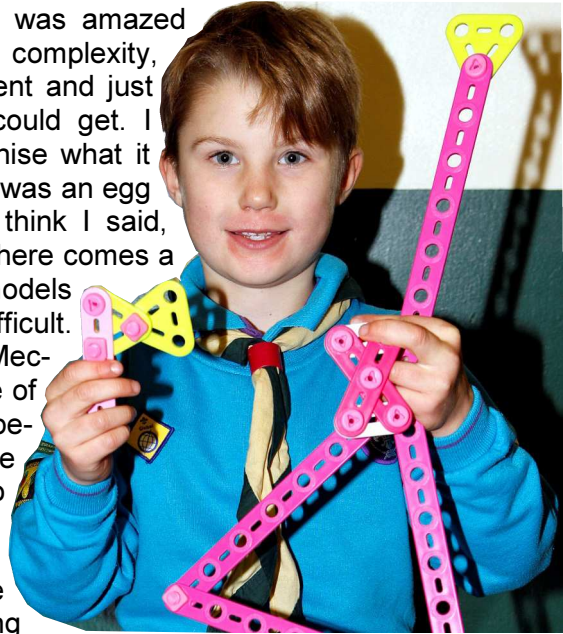
There were around half a dozen early arrivals, who all began examining the display. Soon after, everyone was getting stuck back in to building with the plastic stuff. Some very smart models being created. There was far more variety this week, with a fishing rod, walking sticks and crutches, guitars, rockets, and aircraft, although there were a few swords and pistols again!

I didn't know until about half-way through the night that there would be prizes. I was asked to pick the top three, which by now was difficult, because word of the first rocket had spread. Others were being built. In reverse order, third placed model was a Hex Bug (<http://www.hexbug.com/>) seen right, Second was the first rocket made. This was a difficult choice, as by now there were a few rockets, but I chose this (below, opposite page) because the chap had had some difficulties the previous week. Nuts and bolts had been coming loose because he hadn't been using the tools. However,

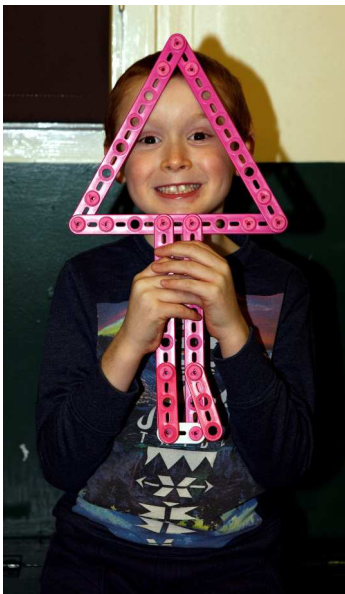


he did the right thing and asked for help. This week he asked again and then everything fell in to place and his rocket took off (sorry!). The attention to detail, even in this basic form, was excellent. OK, we are not talking rocket science, err, hang on, yes we are, but it was the thought about the basic detail that was great to see.

The First placed model I was amazed with. Not because of its complexity, but because it was different and just about as small as you could get. I must admit I didn't recognise what it was, but after I was told it was an egg timer I thought, in fact I think I said, WOW! As you will know, there comes a time building very small models when it can get very difficult. Using the chunky plastic Meccano, with a smaller range of parts, this difficulty soon becomes apparent. So the egg timer, right, was, to my mind, a worthy winner.



Mind you, I wish I'd have known about there being prizes for the top three models as I could have gone out and bought some sets, but, again, thanks to the Experiential Marketing Manager at Meccano UK, I had a certain red hat to go with the First place choccies prize!



What was also rather good was that neither the kids or myself had to put the Meccano away, although I do have ten tubs to go through and check!

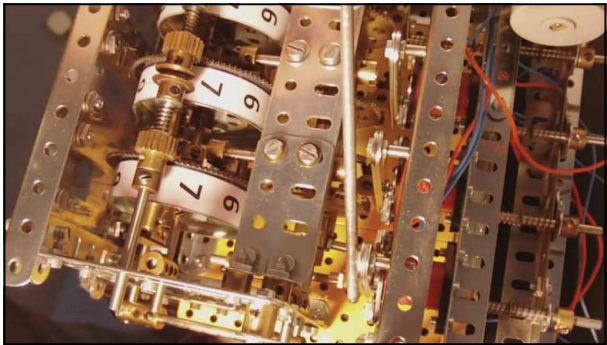
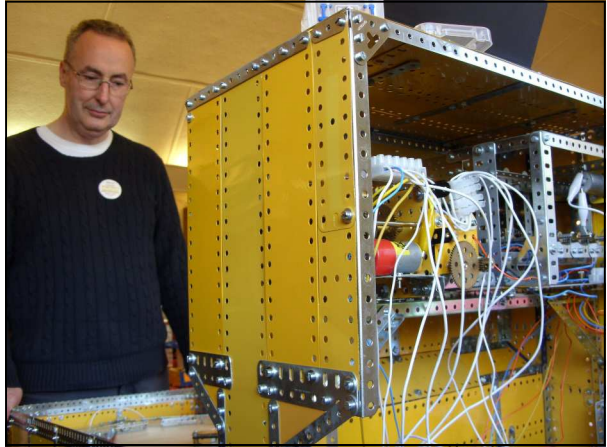
I'd like to thank the Experiential Marketing Manager at Meccano UK, and, of course Meccano, for the loan of all the tubs of plastic Meccano; Roger Thorpe for the extra copies of the TIMS newsletters and Chris Shute for the TIMS info' sheet (put together to form an info' pack for both parents and the kids). There's no doubt that without the help of the above it would have been a much more costly and difficult evening to put on. Many, many thanks indeed! Lets hope they carry the hobby on!



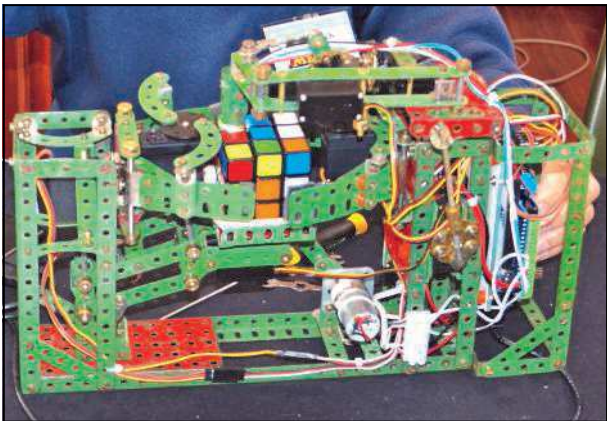
# Clever and Complex

A couple of Meccano milestones to look out for!

**Brian Leach**, right, has created a full-size traditional pinball machine, demonstrated at the recent Hainault Meccano Exhibition in Northeast London. As in a bagatelle, steel balls are catapulted around a plywood surface, trying to hit various targets. At either side of the machine, the player has buttons to operate 'flippers' to re-launch an exhausted ball. Seen right is the electromechanical counter, which keeps score, as the targets are struck. The counter resets itself automatically.



**David Couch**, the man who brought us French knitting machines, has now made a Meccano machine to solve a Rubik's cube. Helped by a computer, the machine has four servo motors and one geared motor to manipulate the plastic cube.



# A Shop Window Display Train

by  
Chris Shute



The loco is based on Keith Cameron's *Little Joe* (MM April 1979). For 2-rail power, the shop-side wheels are plastic, and power is collected by a pair of wipers mounted on a 2" threaded rod stood-off from the chassis in an Insulated Boss. Micro-switches front and rear each strike a nail in the baseboard, causing the train to stop at each end of the line until the polarity of the track supply is reversed by a motorised switch elsewhere.



A 137 rpm Meccparts motor is angled to drive a 50t plastic Con-tate: smoother than the original Worm drive. The slack tri-axes allow the plastic wheels to sit properly on the imperfect girder rails, joined by 2" Brass Strips.



The shop-side wheel linkage is extended rearwards to a Crank whose rod carries a Cord Anchoring Spring, which pulls a short length of wire attached to the Driver's arm, making him wave constantly. Happy Christmas!



At last, a new use for Elektrikit sleeving (the lips!) and Girder Frames.



## Some Dates For Your Diary 2015

January 16-18	London Model Engineering Exhibition. Alexandra Palace, London
January 17	N. Midlands Meccano Guild, club meeting, Oxton.
<b>February 7</b>	<b>TIMS Meeting at Enginuity TF8 7DQ. Exhibitors' access from 0900</b>
February 14	North East London Meccano Club, meeting and AGM, Hainault Baptist Church Hall, Essex
March 14	W. London Meccano Soc. Meeting, Greenford
March 28	Midland Meccano Guild, Club Meeting, Baginton
March 28	South East London Meccano Society meeting Sherard Hall, Court Road London.
April 11	Sheffield Meccano Guild, Meeting, Competition and Auction, Laughton-en-le-Morthen, Rotherham
April 11	S. Birmingham Meccano Club, AGM & Club Meet- ing, Hall Green Baptist Church.
April 19	Magic of Meccano Show, London Museum of Wa- ter & Steam. Jim MacCulloch 01252 724703
<b>May 1</b>	<b>Set up models from 1130-1630 at Enginuity. No public.</b>
<b>2-4 May</b>	<b>Meccanuity Exhibition.</b> Exhibitors' access from 0900. At Enginuity TF8 7DQ Public from 1000-1630.(normal admission charg- es apply). <i>Please pre-book your tables!</i>
May 14-16	Club des Amis du Meccano, 42nd annual exhibi- tion, Vence, South of France.
July 3-5	Skegex 2015, Embassy Centre, Skegness
<b>August 15-16</b>	<b>TIMS Exhibition at Blists Hill Victorian Town TF7 5DU</b> <b><i>Come either or both days, please book with Roger.</i></b> Public admitted from 1000-1630 (admission charges apply). <i>Victorian costume optional!</i>