

EDITORIAL This time I would like to remember two 'Other Systems' men who died recently, Karl Debik in July, aged 82, and Josep Bernal Moreno in February, aged 87.

Karl was a well known German collector of constructional sets, and while always a STABIL-boy at heart, in his working life he became a university professor of child psychology. He will be best known to most readers for his contributions to Baukästen, which drew on his in-depth knowledge of the history and development of all types of constructional toys. After his retirement he achieved a dream by founding the Bauspielhaus museum, (www.bauspielhaus.de) in his home town of Löbau. It has a display which includes many rare items but children can also play with 'old-fashioned' toys. Karl regarded toys as a bridge to connect people of different ages and of different countries.



Josep was a great MECCANO and Other Systems enthusiast and his models will long be remembered by those lucky enough to have seen them. Many were of conventional subjects but my favourite was a very large model of an ornate, wrought iron, street lamp bracket standard, beautifully detailed and finely modelled, a joy to behold. In lighter vein I'll also remember the bottle of his 'Hornby' whisky (left) that he once gave me - I said I'd keep it and we'd drink to Meccano in its centenary year. For one reason or another that didn't happen but as a happy result I still have it as a souvenir of a great guy. Here's to your memory Josep.

Shorter NOTES, with thanks to all contributors.

1. The two **DAN DARE** Noses below are identical except for their 'windows'. The one on the left is probably the original type & the 15 pane pattern is painted on (or perhaps it is 3 transfers). This is the type shown in: the 1953 advert announcing DAN DARE; in all the models in the manual; & in the Illustrated Parts



(the drawing in the latter is identical to the one shown for AJET elsewhere in this issue). The second type with 9 impressed panes is the one much more commonly found, and is the pattern shown in the Patent (see 14/366). The parts that contained the first type of Nose were the remains of a Spaceship set and apart from the Nose, were entirely as would be expected.

DAN DARE: S1

[37/1100]

2. David Hobson showed me an unused, still strung, No.2 **KWIK BUILDER** set. It corresponded almost exactly with the one described in 28/827, including the manual, but the N&B were different with an M4 thread instead of 5/32" BSW. The details of the N&B were as before except that the CH Bolts had 6.9mm Ø heads and the Nuts were only 2.0mm thick.

KWIK BUILDER: S3

[37/1100]

3. Another item from David, a 1920 **PYFYL** Price List. The sets are listed on the front, and are as on the 28/840 Leaflet prior to the 1921 overprinting. On the back is a list of extra parts packs Nos.1-12 and A-Y. #1-6 contain various mixes of straight Strips, plus Sleeves, and #7-12 likewise but with curved instead of straight Strips. The lettered packs have selections of the metal and all the other parts. Even a summary would take too much space but I can send details to anyone who needs them. #W-Y deserve mention though: they are the fabric covered parts for Chairs, Armchairs, & a Table, and each is said to be 'recouverte en soie impression exclusive' which I take to mean 'covered in rayon (or possibly silk) with an exclusive pattern'. Though hand stitched they were not particularly expensive, Fr.2.50 maximum compared with the other Packs at Fr.2 or Fr.2.50 for most, and up to Fr.5.50 for a few. Sets 1-3 cost Fr.19.95, Fr.49, & Fr.99 at the time.

PYFYL: S6

[37/1100]

4. **Snippet: MECANEX** This Swiss system was said to have aluminium parts and it no doubt dates from WW2 or soon after. The makers name on the lid below is E. Musitelli & Cie.,



of Fleurier, a town some 40km north of Lausanne. The parts in the box below mostly have a MÄRKLIN look to them though the slotted end holes in the DAS are not echoed in the top



edges of the Flanged Plate. Scaling from the size given for the box, 40*23cm, the hole pitch is, as might be expected, 1/2", or very near it.

Initially I thought MECANEX was a 'new' system but I find that it is in fact listed in my Database. I can't now trace the source of the entry but the additional points of interest there are that the hole pitch is 12.65mm, the Axles are 4mm Ø, but the N&B are only 3mm.

MECANEX: S1 [37/1101]

5. Snippets: BILDAL First, a correction to the **Set 1 Contents** given in 33/983. From the manual & set to be described, and Ebay photos of two apparently unused sets, only the stated quantities of Strips & Angles are in the No.1, and none of the other parts.

Next, recall (see 33/983) that BILDAL was made by Bettchers in Cleveland and that there were Sets 1 & 2. A No.1 set on Ebay took my eye - the box had No.1 on the lid and with just Strips & Angles the contents were as above. But the manual cover, below, a design not mentioned in OSN



previously, has No.3 in the top left corner. (The same cover without the No.3 is in MCS.) The No.3 looks too neat to have been made by a youngster's printing set, so was there ever a No.3 set? Something

to look out for but the Ebay ad said that the Set was 'made in Westmont, Illinois, so that might be a clue. Did another company produce BILDAL after Bettcher? Westmont is near Chicago & some 300 miles from Cleveland.

The manual with one of the other Ebay No.1's had the OSN 13/358 cover but only the Strips & Angle were shown & listed in the Illustrated Parts, just the parts in a No.1 that is. The Ebay ad included 3 pages of models, those on two are identical to models on OSN 13 pages (#1-5, & 15-18). One of the models on the last page, #21, was also identical but the other two, #19 & 20, had had the Wheels in the OSN 13 version removed, though they were still entitled Wagon & Box Car! All the pages had small typographical changes and p3 differed in having no reference to H.W.Graves as Licensor.

BILDAL: S2 [37/1101]

6. Snippet. SOLID A brief note on this small German system, based on a Model Sheet, appeared in 22/647. In the next column, the Ebay photo, courtesy Thomas Morzinck, of an actual set, and as can be seen the parts, apart from the N&B, are black. The maker was given as G. Schmidt & Co., of Oberbarmen (a suburb of Wuppertal). By scaling from the box, which was said to measure 17*12cm, the pitch of the holes in the Strips is at least 15mm and possibly a little more. But in the Wheel Disc it much less, 11mm or so.

The small print on the Model Sheet can't be read but it differs from the one in OSN 22 in that 16 parts are listed against 15 before, and the Ebay ad spoke of 11 models, 2



more than previously. Also if all the parts in the box were from one set there are more Wheel Discs and 'Half

Wheels' than the two of each listed on the OSN 22 Sheet.

SOLID: S1 [37/1101]

7. Snippet. 'New' System: DER KLEINE TECHNIKER There is a simple electrical outfit of this name but almost certainly not related to the set below. All that can really be



seen of the parts are some brightish Strips, and the blue Plates which, apart from their colour, look like STABIL. There was the cover of an early SCHEFFLERS manual shown in the Ebay lot but as far as is known early SCHEFFLERS parts were similar to later ones and quite unlike the blue Plates.

DER KLEINE TECHNIKER: S1 [37/1101]

8. Snippets. 'Matchbox' Sets These are the little outfits with their parts packed into a normal, small 'matchbox', and details of the two types then known were given in 6/131.

A further variant was made in America by Louis Marx and is shown in MCS under MATCH BOX CONSTRUCTION SET (2).

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