

THE TAYLOR TOUCH

A COMMEMORATIVE ARTICLE
DEDICATED TO THE LATE
ERIC TAYLOR ■ BY BERT LOVE

At a time when the fortunes of Meccano Ltd were going through a sticky patch some ten years ago, a few adult enthusiasts exchanged letters with a view to injecting some new interest in the hobby. After a nervous start, when many an adult was wondering if he might be considered either childish or senile for getting out his long-cherished Meccano Outfit, the Midlands Meccano Guild was formed at Stratford-On-Avon, in 1968.

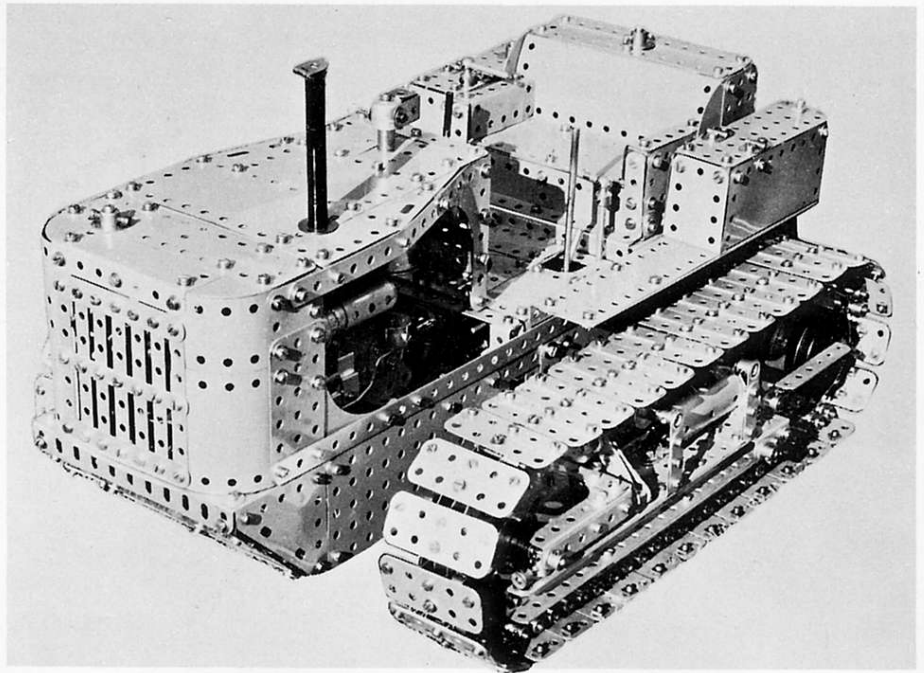
One of the founder members of this Guild was Eric Taylor of Nuneaton in Warwickshire, and I will never forget his breezy reply to my invitation to attend the inaugural meeting: "... be delighted to attend, ... quite handy with a broom, putting up tables etc ... I'll bring a model along, but it's nothing very special ..." Eric's 'nothing very special' model turned out to be the focus of the meeting, giving us all a lesson in how to build a model along engineering lines.

It was, of course, his well-known (now world wide) Giant Level-Luffing Crane. Its general outlines were taken from a thumbnail picture appearing on the cover of an old French magazine, but its construction was all Eric Taylor.

Before seeing the crane erected and operating, one enthusiast was foolish enough to remark in Eric's hearing that good supermodels could no longer be built because all the best parts were obsolete. When Eric put his crane through its paces, he soundly disproved such fallacies with his own model, making the case for obsolete parts so ridiculous that the unfortunate enthusiast concerned still has a red ear to this day!

Even a gentle wiggling for the use of the occasional non-standard part brought a ready reply from Eric, who would sketch an alternative section of the model using only standard parts, and anyone with the patience to test this, soon found that he knew what he was saying.

As a trained engineer, Eric could



BELOW: An underside view of the late Eric Taylor's Giant Level-Luffing Crane. Elegant but sturdy portals supported the Crane on four power-driven floating bogies. All movements from the four independent motors were remotely controlled via a trailing 12-core cable.

ABOVE: A general view of Eric Taylor's Heavy Duty Crawler Tractor, in which all four gears were reversible, the tracks were spring-loaded for tension, and the track frames were compensated for chassis tilt by an ingenious equalizing beam mechanism.

