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COLLECTORS GAZETTE

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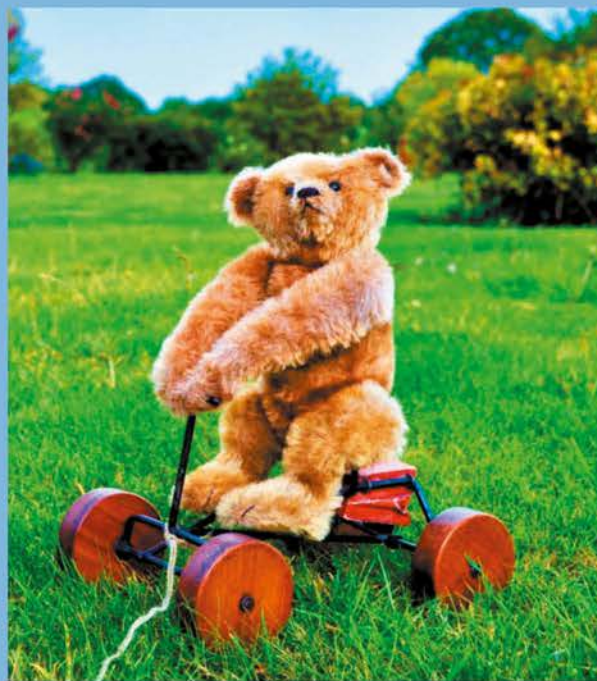
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CONTENTS IN THIS ISSUE...

03 NEWS

The latest news from the world of collecting.

08 SUBSCRIPTION OFFER

Save money and never miss another issue!

09 WHAT'S THE YEAR?

Alwyn Brice looks back on a specific year and asks "what's the year?"

10 HORNBY-DUBLO SETS

Mark Nolan summarizes the rare trains you need to look out for!

12 THE HOUSING MARKET

In the first of a two part feature, Alwyn Brice takes a look at the 'des res'... but in miniature.

14 TRI LOGO STAR WARS FIGURES

James Orwell looks at some of the variations that can be found on card backs.

16 BEST OF BRITISH

Brian Howes examines the history and charm of penny toys and novelties.

18 TWILIGHT OF TRI-ANG

Andrew Ralston remembers the final years of a giant within the toy industry.

20 INTRO TO...

Will Freeman looks at collecting that it out of this world...

22 TOY STORIES

Ed Karswell remembers buying toys on the High Street.

23 EBUYS

Our guide to what's been selling well on eBay this month.

28 PRICE GUIDE

Find out what your toys could be worth in our auction round-up.

36 HAMILTON'S INVADERS

Produced for only a year, Ann Evans delves into the creepy-crawly world of Hamilton's Invaders.

40 FROM THE ARCHIVE

Digging into the past and re-visiting an old swapmeet.

42 OBSOLETE OZ

What gems has Oz uncovered this month on his travels?

44 EVENT GUIDE

Plan your diary for the month ahead.

45 AUCTIONEER LISTING

Sale rooms from across the country, all in one place!

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■ AUCTION REVIEW

SAS Live and kicking!

Along with many other auction houses, SAS moved over to online sales only from 11 May, making use of its SAS Live platform and the saleroom platform, as well as Zoom. Despite the changed environment, the auctioneers were still able to arrange solo viewing, which doubtless helped matters, although this was affected on a rota basis. As the company's Hugo Marsh points out, they were lucky enough to have recently moved to a huge new premises, so that space was not, for once, the final frontier...

He remarks: "The litmus test has been that since 11 May, all our sales have gone really well - there has been lots of pent-up demand. This was particularly true of the toy and train sale on 27 and 28 May. Out of 791 lots and just one unsold, our low expectation figure was for around £60,000; in the event, the lots



Lovely robot from ALPS was one of a set of three and is highly collectable: all are rare, especially when working properly (note the clock on his chest that is often faulty).

realised £122,000. Most of the items came from one superb collection."

Diecasts apparently flew - a Dinky 22b, the Sports Coupe, was in pretty good condition and rolled away to achieve £500, whilst a Foden also went well, selling at at £750. A Spot-on Vauxhall Cresta also featured in the sale, and this made £420, underlining the continued interest in this short-lived range of diecasts. Outer space, though, was what really lit the afterburners: an Alps Moon Explorer robot, with fragile head antenna intact and with a good box, was contested all the way to £2,400. This, though, was knocked

May the force (and the inter-planetary coinage) be with you!

into a cocked hat by Star Wars (surprise, surprise), mainly lot 398, which finally settled at £6,500. For his hard-earned cash the lucky winner secured a blistered example of the Empire Strikes Back Bounty Hunter.

Hugo added that Hornby-Dublo and Wrenn also sold well too. However, perhaps the most curious lot of the entire sale was a collection of Russian/USSR Moskvitch diecast models, in original boxes, ranging from good to excellent in condition, although some exhibited signs of fatigue. Eleven models in all, these were contested to an amazing £1,300: clearly the Iron Curtain has a magnetic pull for some collectors. ■



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■ AUCTION REVIEW

Four sales go down well

Vectis notched up four auctions towards the end of May, encompassing a wide variety of toys and collectables.

A Dinky pre-war 60 Aeroplanes Gift Set included a gold Imperial Airways aircraft, a Low Wing Monoplane in red, a General Monospar in silver, a gold and blue Autogiro, a Leopard Moth in green and a white Percival Gull. Items were fair to good overall, and boxed; the upper estimate of £300 was beaten, the set making £528.

A near mint Dinky Mercedes Covered

Wagon promotional issue (for Fisons) with white cab and back, red chassis and plastic hubs and a grey canopy, came with two boxes. An unusual variant, it realised £504. In contrast, the boxed Corgi 404 Bedford Dormobile Personnel Carrier in pale blue and yellow was only a good plus but was still fought to £648.

As ever, Bing sold well: a gauge 1 British market pre-World War One tinplate station comprised a double storey building and featured lift-off roofing, the whole being fitted for candle lighting. The lot included a number of Bassett-Lowke or similar enamel signs. Despite

some overpainting to the base and other areas, it left punters stunned when it settled on £2,040. A Carette or similar gauge 1 station building also attracted attention: this realised £480.

On to more modern fare: a Lego Creator Modular Series 10251 (Brick Bank) was built and stopped just under £200. Not so the Meccano Star Wars vintage Luke Skywalker figure within a near mint bubble: sourced from an Ex-Palitoy employee, it shot away to make £6,000. An *Empire strikes Back* R5-D4 made

£1,140, while a Lando Calrissian mint figure settled on £1,560. A bid of £1,800 secured the Luke Skywalker model in a Hoth outfit but *The Return of the Jedi* Luke Skywalker X-Wing Pilot proved his exclusivity, making £2,040.

Finally, back to reality: a Meccano Simplified Mechanics Outfit C, circa

1907, with a number of early parts including brassware, in a good tin box with contents label to the underside of the box lid, showed that it wasn't all about space: this made a down to earth £2,040. ■

Below: Hard to find in a really mint state, this set 60 displays well when complete.



■ AUCTION REVIEW

Puppetry up for grabs



Above: Mr Turnip.

Featured in the TV and Film related sale at Vectis on 23 June was a collection of original BBC TV props and ephemera from the children's show, *Whirligig*.

Whirligig was first broadcast in 1950 and soon became a huge success. The show ran for six years and many of certain age will recall Mr Turnip, a

vegetable-based puppet who became a celebrity in his own right. He had toys, dolls, games and even toiletries made in his name, but the greatest accolade was that of being made children's "Man of the Year" in 1951.

Mr Turnip was created and operated by renowned puppeteer Joy Laurey. As the show was broadcast live, Mr Turnip had

many more strings than a conventional puppet, allowing for a greater range of movement.

The original, fully operational, Mr Turnip puppet prop featured in the sale and was accompanied by original scripts, including one dated November 25 1950, the first time the show was aired. There were also working notes from

Joy, studio floor plans, contracts, photographs and correspondence. He was sold for £4,800 to a very happy telephone bidder. Separately, scripts and notes and some magazine clippings relating to *Whirligig* closed on £360, doubling the estimate. Other *Whirligig* items include printer's proof mock-up annuals, and puppet-related literature. ■

**NEW RELEASES
THIS MONTH**



WHITEBOX OPEL COMMODORE A GS

Price: £28.99 Scale: 1/24 Release: out now

Representing superb value, this diecast WhiteBox Opel Commodore features opening doors, a good interior and a fabulous paint job. >> www.ayrey.co.uk

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Price: \$59.00 Release: out now

Special regiments were awarded with the Tsar's own personal flag as shown here. This was to always be carried on parade by the senior subaltern (junior officer) of the Regiment.

>> www.kingandcountry.com



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■ AUCTION REVIEW

On the march at C&T

The Kent-based auctioneers held a toy soldier sale in June, which featured just under 300 lots. And once again, despite all the problems arising from COVID-19, it was a busy day. Looking back over the prices realised and some of the unsold lots, I feel that some collectors are missing out here: for those happy to work online, I think there are some real bargains to be had...

One of the more unusual lots had to be the white metal Glenn Miller band set, which was complete with a US Army orchestra, singer

Rarely sighted (perhaps just as well!), this is the Reynolds Viking contingent.



Dinah Shore with a microphone and seven dancing couples. Sheer 1940s nostalgia, for which someone was happy to pay £140. There was, however, plenty of Britains lead to keep the diehards happy: two sets (reference 2052) of anti-aircraft personnel and associated hardware made £120 and

£130, while a good boxed set of Royal Air Force Display, which comprised a motorcyclist, various chaps in blue uniform and a couple in white overalls, fetched £220. A boxed set (reference 200) of the 21st Lancers (the second version, dating from 1903) closed on £80, something of a bargain.

Just under a score of Benbros and other makers' Robin Hood figures found a new home for £65; elsewhere, a set of six 54mm Reynolds Vikings, figures not often seen and dating from around 1952, and in good condition, sold for £80.

A good many sets of Mignot also came up for

grabs: a Line Infantry set, the troops resplendent in sartorial blue and red, made £130; while just £80 was enough to secure a Zouave band and some allied foot soldiers. On the composition front, one snip at £120 had to be the 75mm Elastolin horse drawn ambulance: this represented a British WW1 item, and included two horses, the ambulance in tinplate, a couple of nurses, two stretcher bearers and patient, two infantry assisting a third and even a fellow with a rescue dog. Another group of British WW1 troops, together with section of trench and a small shelter, closed on £80. ■

■ AUCTION REVIEW

Back on the rails

Trains, Planes and Automobiles in Australia reports a busy couple of months, despite the pandemic. Auctions have moved online but this doesn't seem to have affected the level of interest. The June auction was extremely successful, so perhaps the amended formula is paying off?

Amongst the lots was a Maurlyn O gauge 3-rail "Gold

Chief" VR Passenger Set. This contained a 4-6-2 locomotive and tender and two bogie passenger coaches, in fetching blue with yellow stripes. The bodies and paintwork were in unusually good condition, with only minor blemishes. The loco was untested but in very good condition nonetheless, and in a good original box. It closed on AUS\$600.

An HO/OO gauge Dental Clinic three car set was a little out of the ordinary: comprising a

Dental Clinic Car, Water Tank Wagon and EHG Guard's Van, it was fitted with Kadee couplings. In excellent condition, this almost doubled its estimate, settling on AUS\$550. Two HO/OO gauge NSW TAM bogie Sleeping Cars, finished in brown, with Kadee couplings, also exceeded expectation, selling for AUS\$350.

The Tri-ang HO/OO gauge five-car Pullman Set was an interesting item in very good condition, and

came with a power car, a dummy power car and three trailers.

This was bid to AUS\$100.

There was also a Matchbox G2 Railway Set up for grabs. In excellent shape and contained within a very good box, this realised AUS\$80. And AUS\$70 was the closing bid on a book: the "Handbook for Railway Steam Locomotive Enginemen" ran to 196

pages and dated from 1977, coming from the famous Ian Allan publishing house.

Finally, to tinplate: a Japanese tinplate friction drive Speedboat "No. 1 Sea Gull", around 340mm long, and in working order, caused a bit of a splash, making a creditable AUS\$120. ■



IXO 1972 VW BEETLE 1302 LS

Scale: 1/43 Price: £24.99 Release: out now
Such a simple, yet beautiful car, superbly captured by Ixo in diecast. The paint is excellent and the chrome strips are crisply finished.

» www.ayrey.co.uk



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■ AUCTION NEWS

Parsons' pleasure

With over 100 bidders registered for the June online sale, David Parsons was more than happy with the response to his recent auction.

A good number of diecast went under the (virtual) hammer, with Dinky and Corgi stealing the limelight on this occasion. One of the best from the latter range had to be the E-Type Jaguar in racing trim, with decal No 2 and finished in gold: a gleaming example, complete with its original packing ring, it made £68. Another good Corgi was the ever-popular Thunderbird Bermuda Taxi (as opposed to the Fiat Jolly version), with its

distinctive fringed top: boxed, this found a new home for £80. Best of the Corgi was arguably the early Bedford van, though, in its striking yellow and blue paintwork: in excellent condition, this sold for £285.

As for the Dinky models, they also put on a good show. Top of the list had to be the Jaguar Police Car (£90) but it had competition in the shape of a near mint Bedford Ovaltine Van, which made £82, and a French Dinky Toy Citroen 2CV Fourgon, sporting Fire Service stickers, that ended on the same money. In the smaller scale a Dublo Dinky AEC Mercury Shell petrol tanker was contested to £90, a creditable result.

Aside from the diecasts was a selection of



Corrugated iron on wheels: at least the 2CV van wasn't finished in the common French grey.

locomotives in various liveries but what stood out for some who were bidding was the Tri-ang pedal car: finished in blue over white with vestigial rear wings (very American!), this beauty exhibited some surface rusting and had the outer part of its steering wheel missing. Nonetheless, all four spoked wheels were present, as was the windscreen frame. Enough people wanted it and the winning bid of £300 underlined its desirability.

Finally, a set of eight Tri-ang Minic slot cars, all untested, were taken to a closing bid of £84. ■

■ As some readers will know, Joan Dunk was a long-standing (literally!) stallholder at Portobello Road, having traded there for around 50 years. Her recent demise was a great blow to the collecting world, as she was a true character and one of the "faces", along with her husband Peter, the well-known train collector. Joan's interesting tinplate toys and teddy bears, as well as some amazingly eclectic toys, went under the hammer at SAS in June. The lead figurine section was arguably the most fascinating, with a huge array of subjects. Highlights included a rare Britains Mikado figure (which made £700), a pair of German made lead Alice in Wonderland figures (bid to £800), and two lots of painted German tin flats that were knocked down for just under £2,000. A Charbens seven piece dance band, incredibly still boxed, was bid to £480.

Right: Rare Britains Mikado figure dates to around 1880: he fans himself when the parasol spins.



NEW RELEASES THIS MONTH

OXFORD DIECAST VOLVO P1800

Price: £6.45 Release: out now Scale: 1/76
Another great release of the iconic P1800, this time in Teal Blue. The lines of Volvo's design are nicely replicated and the finish is excellent.

» www.oxforddiecast.co.uk



LEGO STAR WARS A-WING STARFIGHTER

Price: £179.99 Release: out now

The sleek, arrowhead shape is beautifully reproduced in LEGO bricks and fans will appreciate authentic details such as the pivoting laser cannons and new-for-May-2020 removable canopy on the cockpit. A testing building challenge for ages 18+ to enjoy. » www.lego.com

COLLECTORS GAZETTE

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SEPTEMBER 2020 ISSUE



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August 2020 Auction Dates

- ◆ Thursday 13th - Specialist Sale
- ◆ Friday 14th - Specialist Sale
- ◆ Tuesday 18th - General Toy Sale
- ◆ Wednesday 19th - TV & Film Related Sale
- ◆ Thursday 20th - TV & Film Related Sale
- ◆ Friday 21st - Model Train Sale

Auctions commence at 10.00am - dates are correct at time of print but are subject to change

*Catalogues & online bidding at **vectis.co.uk** & **invaluable.com***

PLEASE NOTE DUE TO THE COVID-19 RESTRICTIONS

There will be no viewing or attendance in person at auctions for the foreseeable future.
Bids can be placed online before or during the live auction, also via commission and the telephone.

If you need any assistance with this contact us on admin@vectis.co.uk

Please check our website and social media pages for forthcoming auction dates

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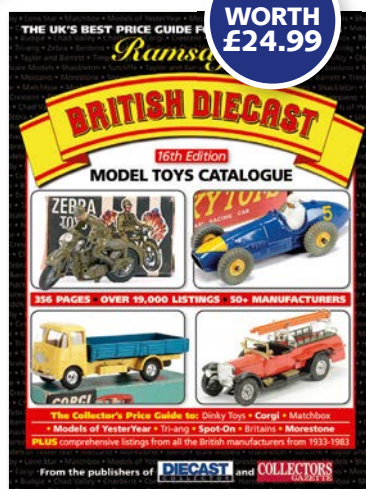


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What was the year?

Alwyn Brice picks another year – and invites you to pin it down.

This time around, the year saw plenty of activity all over the globe, one of the most notable events being the re-opening of the Suez Canal, a vital waterway that had remained closed since the Six Day War.

In the UK, a woman became Prime Minister, marking a huge milestone in the world of politics. Her reign would see her face some seemingly insurmountable challenges – but she came through most unscathed. One political hot potato of the year involved fishing rights around the UK: the famous Cod War broke out between the UK and Iceland, leaving Brits wondering about the fate of their local chippy. Another was the EU referendum: were we in or

should we stay out? We decided to opt in...

There was tragedy in London this year, when the Moorgate Tube disaster made the headlines: a train failed to brake at the station and hit a wall, killing over 40 passengers.

On the broader canvas, the US finally ended its period of hostilities in Vietnam, with the south surrendering to the north. For the Americans, it was the end of a highly charged, brutal campaign that sparked condemnation and protest all around the world. This same year the US also pulled out of the Cambodian conflict.

Sport was also in the news during these 12 months. The 'Thriller in Manila' saw boxer Muhammad Ali beat Joe Fraser, arguably one of the most hyped

fighters in history.

For those who loved cinema, it was not the time to take a dip. *Jaws* was scaring audiences witless, and you only had to hear that introductory music to know that something unpleasant was about to happen. Equally scary was life in a tower block: the *Towering Inferno* did no favours for those living in skyscrapers.

Music lovers tuned into *Bohemian Rhapsody*, which doggedly stuck to Number One; Steve Harley invited listeners to *Make Me Smile* and Rod Stewart went *Sailing*.

On the small screen, that lollipop-loving, bald-headed detective *Kojak* was essential viewing; *MASH* was entertaining viewers with its anarchical take on modern war; while the *Six Million Dollar Man* was

beginning to spawn toys and memorabilia.

This month's year could prove a mite tricky for some readers in terms of toys if you don't remember Gary Dahl. He introduced the famous Pet Rock. For a mighty US\$3.95, the buyer received a stone in a box with an instruction manual. Bonkers? Yes - but it's rumoured that he made a million from it...

Othello was introduced (a bit of an upmarket draughts game) this year; Mr Potato Head was finding a use for mum's old spuds; and Matchbox's Steer n Go game gave youngsters their first taste of driving. Finally, the very first basic computerised tennis game entered the market: a sign of things to come.

So... what was the year? **CG**

RIGHT

Pebbles rock! Dahl also tried marketing Chinese soil in plastic cubes, with a view to undermining the country's infrastructure (literally...)



BELOW

One of the more sought-after Yesteryears was the RAF Crossley: it's still collectable.



RIGHT

Dumb blonde? Certainly not for Pedigree Toys. Here is the funtime hard head Sindy model of the year.



RIGHT

Bionic rebuild meant that Steve Austin could do pretty much anything. He's not cheap today if boxed.



Most collectable: Hornby-Dublo

PART 1:
Locos,
coaches &
sets!

Mark Nolan summarizes the trains you need to look out for to make a killing in the toy business.

You're into trains, aren't you? I know someone you'd really get on with. He's into trains too."

No, we wouldn't get on. I am an expert in my field, having studied trains closely just about since I was born. This acquaintance will have different priorities. We will both be set in our ways. He will prefer freight trains. I'm more a passenger sort of guy. He worships the GWR. I'm an SR man at heart.

Oh, he runs classic Hornby-Dublo? Interesting. Two or three rail? Oh what a pity. Close but no cigar.

Of course if I met my clone, the collector who mirrors my life experience, gets what I get and has the same taste in music, he (or she) would be insufferable; opinionated, self-centred and full of themselves. No, we definitely wouldn't get on.

There is one thing we might bond over though. Money! Some say it's made round to go round. In Scotland they say it's made flat to pile up. Either way, if your friend has some interesting trains for sale, or wants to buy some of mine, we could get on extremely cordially for the duration. Especially if they unwittingly possess any of the following items.

EARLY OR LATE PERIOD

The OO gauge trains launched by Meccano in 1938 set a standard of authenticity and reliability which was unmatched until Tri-ang appeared in the late fifties. The range was not terribly large, but it was well considered and covered a lot of ground. That makes it

an ideal collectable. As we will see, Hornby-Dublo made use of mainly traditional materials like metal, tinplate, wood and card. Therefore, models where plastic was substituted often command a premium.

Dublo roughly breaks down into three periods; early, rump and late. Virtually all pre-war models are highly sought after. Especially rare are the articulated Gresley teak effect coaches to go with the original blue A4 'Sir Nigel Gresley'. Motors with one-piece magnets, known because of their shape as 'horse-shoe' magnets, are another indicator of desirability.

The original 0-6-2 tank also has rare variations, with Southern and Great Western being scarcer than LMS and LNER. Both the Gresley and the 0-6-2 tank had clockwork versions which were dropped after the war, so are now highly prized.

The rump is the vast majority

of 3 rail tinplate Dublo produced during their golden age. Indestructible, reliable and realistic, this is what comprises most bread and butter Dublo collections. Ditto the two rail products from 1958.

Where it gets interesting is the late or end period 1963/4. This is when, in desperation, Meccano were trying to regroup, stem their losses and put the business back on a firm footing. A weird selection of models were launched or relaunched. Some of the models like the Super Detail Restaurant

Car and E3002 electric loco were as good or better than anything that preceded them, but with hindsight it was already too late. It is during this late period chaos that some of the most interesting Dublo collectables were spawned.

3 RAIL VERSIONS OF 2 RAIL LOCOS

When Hornby-Dublo introduced 2 Rail in 1958, they unwittingly created a tranche of their most collectable locos. These were 3 rail versions of the new 2 rail models, necessary to demonstrate



ABOVE
The 3 rail version of the BR standard 2-6-4 tank is only distinguishable from the 2 rail 80033 by the number. However the chassis has 3 rail pickups.

BELOW

Especially rare are the articulated Gresley teak effect coaches to go with the original blue A4 'Sir Nigel Gresley'.



**ABOVE**

'City of Liverpool' is the 3 rail counterpart to 'City of London', both based on LMS Coronation locos.

their commitment to maintaining both systems. Despite being sold off in bulk after the collapse of Meccano, the 3 rail locos have gone on to reach stratospheric prices compared with their 2 rail counterparts. This includes West Country pacific 'Dorchester' (equivalent 2 rail Barnstable), LMS pacific 'City of Liverpool' (2 rail City of London), GW Castle 'Ludlow Castle' (2 rail Cardiff Castle), Deltic 'St Paddy' (2 rail Creppello). Similarly, the 8F 2-8-0 number 48094 (2 rail 48073) and 2-6-4 tank 80059 (2 rail 80033) command a premium.

A few new 2-rail locos were never issued in 3-rail, including the Bo-Bo diesel, the two starter set locos and the two 0-6-0 tank locos. The most valuable of the missing 3-railers is the pantograph 3300 HP electric loco E3002. This was issued at the end of Hornby-Dublo production, so not many escaped into circulation. It had a plastic body with two working pantographs and used the same motor unit as the southern EMU, albeit with different side frames. Many of these models have been 'remanufactured' from a supply of loco bodies which appeared on the market during the 1990s. A genuine original will be worth around £600. The model was later adapted by Tri-ang after the takeover and fitted with their own motor and chassis.

Ironically one of the most valuable locos has no motor at all. The model no. 2230 Bo Bo Diesel Locomotive was issued to the Canadian market to act as a slave unit and is therefore unpowered. It is distinguished by not having buffers.

SUPER DETAIL RESTAURANT CAR

The Hornby-Dublo Super Detail coaches are a quirky blend of materials, with their tinplate

sides and plastic roofs, ends and underframes. The 4070 and 4071 restaurant cars were not the first diners from Hornby-Dublo. Earlier tinplate restaurant cars are not rare, but the Super Detail versions were released at the end of the Dublo production period, so they are the scarcest coaches in the range, with prices hovering around £100. They were available in Western chocolate and cream as well as BR maroon, with the latter being slightly more valuable. Nevertheless an essential part of any Super Detail coach collection.

THE SIX-WHEELED PASSENGER BRAKE

One of the weirdest choices for Hornby-Dublo to introduce to their range at a stage when the operation was in dire straits was the 4076 Six-Wheeled Passenger Brake Van; few potential buyers would be likely to have seen these in the flesh, all of which makes it a rare late-period item which justifies its selling price of around £120.

PLASTIC FANTASTIC

Finally, we come to one of the most bonkers rarities; set no. 2035 the Bournemouth Belle Passenger Set. Marketed as the Luxury Set of the Year, with 2 rail Barnstable locomotive and three Pullman coaches, most sets had yellow card inserts. This very rare late version has a white box lid and a moulded plastic tray for the contents. Imagine the surprise for the seller as a set with loco and track missing, was bid up to £875. The three coaches would be worth about £60, making this possibly the most expensive piece of plastic in the world.

In part 2 we will take a look at the rarer Dublo wagon variations as well as their buildings and infrastructure models. **CG**

**LEFT**

To the untrained eye, this is just an incomplete train set. The seller must have been amazed when this soared to nearly £900. Hornby-Dublo's luxury Bournemouth Belle set usually came with yellow card inserts. Most of the £875 this one sold for was for the moulded plastic insert, which dwarfed the value of the contents.

**ABOVE**

Pre-war EDG7 0-6-2 Tank Goods Train with Southern Railway 0-6-2 Tank Locomotive and wagons, instructions, oil phial, spanner, coupling protection rings, box and contents in exceptional condition.

**ABOVE**

One of the most valuable Dublo locos was only issued in 2 rail. Pantograph 3300 HP electric loco E3002 was issued at the end of Hornby-Dublo production, so not many escaped into circulation. The model was later adapted by Tri-ang and released with their own motor and chassis.

**ABOVE**

GW Castle 'Ludlow Castle' is the sister of the 2 rail 'Cardiff Castle'.

RIGHT

Stanier 8F no. 48094 is the 3 rail version of 48073. It has a tender pickup and a giant ringfield motor poking out of the cab.



The Housing market

In the first of a two part feature, **Alwyn Brice** takes a look at the 'des res'.. but in miniature.

Construction sets have always been popular with children (and indeed, amongst no few adults), and they have continuously evolved over time to the point that today you can actually go out and buy building sets in which you can then cast scale bricks before cementing them all together, just like the real thing. Leaving aside more general construction toys (Meccano, Erector and even Lego), as well as the simple stacking brick toys (like the famous Richter Anchor Bricks), the focus here, in the first of two articles, is on sophisticated house building – and what has been introduced to the marketplace over the years to fuel that creative architectural need.

It's worth remembering at this point that the products about which you are to read were toys and were marketed as such – so any shortcomings seen through adult eyes would not necessarily have been quite so prominent to little Johnny all those years ago.

Let's start with two of the earlier efforts.

RIGHT

Once the tinplate parts are slotted together, buildings can be erected fairly rapidly.

FAR RIGHT

Roofing, whilst a bit fiddly, is worth it – and doesn't fall apart at the slightest touch.

HEAVY METAL BANNED

Wenebrik is one of those toy names that is almost lost in the mists of antiquity. It's hard to grasp, but in that pre-plastic era, toy-making was much more difficult if realism was required. Thus building houses that looked like houses called for a lot of ingenuity – enter Wenebrik.

Wenebrik came about in 1916 but sadly didn't survive the end of World War Two. This peculiarly British construction toy was the brainchild of one William Bailey. Birmingham-based (the industrial Midlands was an ideal backdrop for this kind of toy, one feels), the same company also manufactured Kliptiko, which was an exercise in metal tubing but which aimed more at mechanical models, since sets included pulleys and wheels and

ABOVE

Arguably the first construction toy that demanded a bit of skill in assembly, Wenebrik still works well today. Boxes tend to degrade, though.



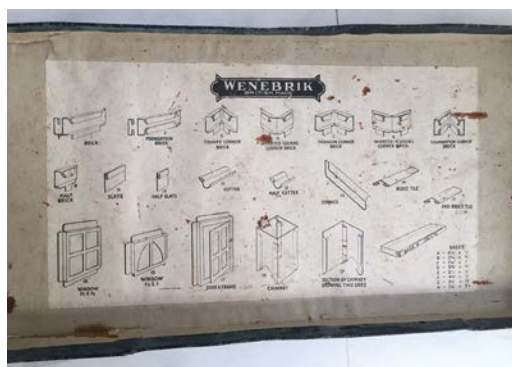
the like. Five sets of Wenebrik were produced in all, the biggest allowing the construction of a factory: that set must have cost a pretty penny back then, but would have allowed one to build all the 70 models shown in the manual. Today, you are most likely to come across the more modest sets 1 and 2, which can be had for £20-40.

Whilst Wenebrik did not rely upon a base for building, the architect did need to slot together a frame or threshold that would allow the lightweight tinplate tiles to be inserted and

built up in layers, panel by panel. With its red walls, green doors and window frames and green roofs, it rather aped Meccano's famous hues, although the latter were not produced until a decade after Wenebrik's actual launch. Did Meccano, perhaps, take a leaf out of Wenebrik's book?

Its good points lay in the realistic portrayal of an ordinary house; for layout, right angles and more acute angles could be accommodated, whilst the roof section, being built up piece by piece, meant that the builder was not constrained by a set roofing





LEFT
Box lid inside helpfully gives a listing of the parts: this was quite a comprehensive selection for the time.

RIGHT
Comprehensive instructions were included with each set.



ABOVE
Job lots crop up regularly on auction sites: essential for those extending their property!

RIGHT
Highly distinctive packaging of Minibrix is what many recall about this toy.



LEFT
Rubber roofs might have seemed a bit novel at the time but today the real thing can be bought for porches and the like.



area, as would be the case in a later product, that of Bayko. Gutters and chimneys and barge boards were all replicated and the more expensive sets even contained hexagonal parts for the construction of a tower. Interesting to note is the fact that Wenebrik was reflected in real life, in the production of prefabricated metal houses which were often made for overseas destinations, and which were shipped out in kit format.

And you thought Ikea flat pack was novel...?

WELL-HEELED

If tinsplate was unusual for building dwellings, the same could be said of the medium of the next product, that of Minibrix. These rubber construction kits date from around 1935 (if internet sources are to be believed), and, amazingly, they only finally perished in the mid-1970s. This was quite a lifespan, given the mercurial nature of, and interest in, children's toys. The design principles were simple yet effective: small bricks with moulded studs on their upper surfaces that would enable them to be interlocked and build a relatively stable structure. Roofs, incidentally, were made in the same material. Minibrix's success hinged on the fact that since the bricks were cast from rubber, they were also somewhat malleable, so the parts adhered well. At least, they did initially. As most readers will know from their car repair bills, rubber suspension joints have a habit of hardening over time to the point that they become no longer pliable. Depending on where Minibrix were stored or played with, this shortcoming would sooner or later become apparent... Lego,

of course, would (literally) build on this idea, but with hard plastic and refined engineering: Lego buildings didn't suffer warping or drying out!

However, the happy owner initially was somewhat spoiled since he (or she) could build contemporary structures – or even travel back in time to explore Tudor variations: this was indeed an interesting marketing ploy, one that is very unusual in my experience. Sales-wise, these building bricks were typically sighted in tubes, again a novel and eye-catching retail methodology.

History tells us that the Minibrix name was a product of the Premo Rubber Company which, logically enough, was involved in the manufacture of rubber heels for shoes. Whilst it would be tempting to assert that someone at the company one day had the bright idea of turning heels into bricks, the less prosaic reason for Minibrix was arguably down to the presence of Bild-O-Brik, a US-made toy also dating from the 1930s. In addition, the American Erector company had marketed studded bricks made in fibre around that period in time. So, looking back, it's quite possible that the US ideas were borrowed and marketed over here: anyone know for sure?

Speaking personally, my last near-encounter with Minibrix was in Junior School: I say "near" because when we had our weekly knitting class – yes, honestly – those who were doing well with their woollen garments were allowed to play with these bricks. Sadly, my scraggy red scarf made very slow progress indeed – so I never had the chance to enjoy them.

In part two, I shall be looking at later house building sets – so keep that mortar damp! **CG**

Further reading...

If construction toys have gripped your imagination after this short foray, then you might consider some reading material to bolster your knowledge and whet your appetite further.

I can thoroughly recommend

Architecture on the carpet by Brenda and Robert Vale. This quirky tome looks at a selection of construction toys, the authors then tying in the styling and mechanics of the toys with the real architecture of that period.

For those keen to graduate to the real thing, and perhaps derive design ideas therefrom, then John Grindrod's *Concretopia* may well appeal. It's a very personal, eclectic review of post-war building, embracing the changing architectural fashions and how Britain's habitats evolved. Highly readable and nostalgic, it will set you thinking about what might have been – and indeed, what has been.



Tri-logo Star Wars

James Orwell looks at some of the unique and interesting variations that can be found on card back designs of the original Star Wars figure series.



The so called “tri-logo” carded figures were released towards the end of the original *Star Wars* figure period. The triple logo design was first issued in 1984 and coincided with the release of the second wave of *Return of the Jedi* figures. This design was then subsequently used for re-issuing a number of the earlier *Star Wars* and *Empire Strike Back* characters, as well as the “Last 17” figures released in 1985. A slight difference for the last 17 figures is the card front

had a barcode added.

The three logos used at the top of the card were in English, Spanish and French. It was a useful strategy as it allowed all domestically produced packaging in these countries to be consolidated into one template and series of production runs, making costs cheaper. It also allowed figures to be shipped all around Europe using the one standard design. By 1986 Tri Logo figures were in fact also being sold in the US, as huge numbers were shipped over from Europe

to be sold in discount stores and large chains like Kay-Bee.

The first Tri Logo cards for Europe were printed in Macau and released initially to the French market. Subsequent print runs for the rest of Europe were made in Hong Kong.

What is noticeable about the cards is that they are slightly thinner than the earlier cards from Palitoy and Kenner. The bubbles that secured the figure to the card were also larger and slightly thinner. One bubble size pretty much suited all figures,

although a smaller size was used for the smaller characters (R2D2, Yoda, Ugnaught etc) and an extra-large bubble was used for two characters (Gamorrean Guard and Amanaman). The figures bounced around quite freely inside the bubbles and the weapons were also loose inside, dispensing with the tape that used to hold weapons to the inside of the bubble.

The thinner cardstock and bubbles, internal movement of the figures and the fact that, by 1985 many of these Star



ABOVE Miscarded figure. This is the original ESB Lando on a Lando General Pilot card. An attempt to use up old figure stock whilst keeping some relevance to the card. Credit: Vectis.



ABOVE Princess Leia: The photo look like a still from the movie. Despite being grainy, they are interesting variations and unique to Tri Logo. Credit: Vectis.





ABOVE LEFT AT-AT Driver: The control panel details on his chest have been air brushed out. **ABOVE RIGHT** Another card that differs to the Kenner version. This example is packaged with an incorrect weapon, actually a rebel blaster!



ABOVE Bespin Security Guard. This is an example of a 'Hybrid' card - Return of the Jedi front and Tri Logo back. Credit: Vectis.



LEFT Why not try and collect all 70? Note there is no number 22, 24 or 25 though!

Wars figures were being sold off in bargain bins rather than dedicated retail display stands, means that the average condition of 'Tri Logos' is somewhat poorer than other card fronts available. That's not to say that mint condition examples can't be found of course. Another positive is that the Tri Logo bubbles have not yellowed over time, like some of the later Return of the Jedi card front bubbles have, as they used a different type of plastic. And the cards themselves often have a nice glossy sheen to them that displays very nicely on good condition examples.

One of the best things about collecting this type of card is some of the unique character pictures that were used on the

card fronts. The cards for Luke Skywalker, AT-AT Driver, Tie Fighter Pilot, Lobot and Princess Leia Hoth outfit use a photo that is only found on Tri Logo cards. Other characters, whilst using the same basic photo, show it from a wider angle. For example; for Nikto and Klaatu Skiff Guard you can see nearly their whole body, rather than just from the waist up. Other cards use some unusual air brushing to change the design from the traditional Kenner cards, for example Rebel Commander is a brighter green outfit, At-At drivers chest equipment is air brushed out, and IG-88 has even had the whole background greyed out! The Hoth Rebel Commander uses a wider angle shot that actually allows

you to see a second soldier, but the Stormtrooper is a closer shot only showing one trooper compared to the two you are used to seeing on a Kenner card. And some cards such as Lando Calrissian and Jawa have the standard photo reversed.

Kenner had introduced some new backing card photos to their line in late 83, early 84, updating the images for some of the longer running Star Wars and ESB characters. E.g. Boba Fett Tatooine Scene and Luke farmboy

card; a droid mismatch: C3PO on a Zuckuss card; or an Ewok mismatch, Teebo on a Logray card; to name but a few examples.

The back of the cards are the same on all Tri Logos and the way it is presented is somewhat confusing. It says it multiple languages "Collect all 70", shows 70 figures, but numbers them up to number 79, missing out numbers 22, 24, 25, 44 etc. It also doesn't show any of the last 17 figures (bar Lumat and Paploo who are blacked out anyway) even though the "Last

The three logos used at the top of the card were in English, Spanish and French. It was a useful strategy as it allowed all domestically produced packaging to be consolidated into one template

in the Falcon gunner's seat. In nearly every instance the Tri Logo cards used this updated image, with the exception of Darth Vader and Leia Bespin outfit where for some reason they reverted to the older of the two images on offer.

A further difference that is noticeable on the Tri Logos is that they often use a different colour for the bubble background and name plate. So whereas you might be used to seeing Han in Endor trench coat on a red background, the Tri Logo has him on a green background. The Leia Bespin changed from a blue background to a red on Tri Logo. A quirky change which gives quite a different dynamic to the card.

No figures as such are unique to the Tri Logo cards, although among collecting circles a few characters have a recognised "Tri Logo" version, so named because the variation is most commonly found on the tri logo cards. The best known example is the Tri Logo Boba Fett, the paler blue plastic variant with a darker paint scheme and no country of origin stamp. Other examples include Dengar who is found with a darker more metallic purple body armour and Rebel Soldier can be found in a darker brown vest, this one mostly coming out of the PBP licensee factory in Spain.

Miscarded figures are more common on Tri Logo cards than any other card type. However, this was less through factory error and more through a need to use up excess figure stocks towards the end of the Star Wars run in 1985. So whilst figures were incorrect to the card back they were as close as could be managed with some logic to the mismatch, e.g. an outfit mismatch: Han Solo Star Wars (first 12) on a Han Bespin

17's" are available on the card front. Lumat unusually is listed only as Ewok Warrior. Suggesting he'd not yet been named when the Tri Logo proof cards were designed.

Some of the characters not available, such as the Bespin Guards and the Cantina aliens, can be found on what collectors refer to us hybrid cards with regular ROTJ fronts but Tri Logo backs.

As for prices, Tri Logos cover the full spectrum really from some of the cheapest on the market to possibly the most expensive of any example! Partly due to condition and the fact there were so many left at the end of the line, you can pick up examples today for less than £50 if you hunt around and aren't too condition conscious. Main characters can reach figures of £100+ and up to £200 or more if in decent condition. Due to rarity Jawa and Luke Hoth fetch premium prices. Yak Face and Boba Fett are at the top of the scale for sure, Yak Face pushing a four figure price, Boba Fett nearer to £5,000+. But the rarest and most expensive to acquire? That would be the minor ROTJ character General Madine. As a Tri Logo this character was only produced at the very start of the run in very small numbers and was only available in France (the early Made in Macau cards). Should you be able to find one of these at auction you would easily be looking at a five-figure price for an average condition example. One sold in the US a few years ago for over \$20,000.

Tri Logos were for a long time scene as the poor relation to the Kenner and Palitoy carded figures, but as you can see, there are some real gems in the range for those collectors who love acquiring quirky packaging variations. **CG**

Best of British

A peno'rth of fun

Brian Howes examines the history and charm of Victorian and Edwardian penny toys and novelties.

It seems incredible that in today's world of sophisticated and usually rather expensive playthings, that children of the Victorian and Edwardian era expected little more than a small novelty toy as a Christmas gift often purchased for the princely sum of one penny. These toys became known as 'penny toys' or 'street peno'rths' and would usually be bought from street vendors, otherwise known as 'gutter merchants.' They pedalled their wares in the back streets of many large cities and were also to be found at street fairs and markets. While millions of children were delighted to

receive the fascinating little novelties the gutter merchants sold, many of the poorest and most neglected kids would never dream of receiving such a present themselves.

Although a penny seems worthless today and buys nothing, a penny was worth a lot more in Victorian times.

The vast majority of penny novelties were mass produced in Germany, with Nuremburg at the heart of their manufacture. Advances in chromolithographic printing on tin, which was pioneered in Germany, led to the production of penny toys and novelties between 1885 and the

outbreak of the First World War. Known manufacturers included Georg Fischer, J. Meier, Lehmann, Distler, Kienberger & Co (Kiko) to name just a few. Once imported into Britain they were sold to street traders by toy wholesalers by the gross.

As Christmas became more and more commercial it became the busiest time for street hawkers (or hucksters as they were also known) to distribute these cheap toys, but trade was maintained all year round and was by no means just seasonal.

Not surprisingly London developed the busiest trade in penny toys and for many years

ABOVE

Dating from 1910 this amazing Christmas pudding was one of the finest of the penny novelty tins. It contained a sachet of Rowntree's Cocoa. These are extremely hard to find in good condition.

it was the Lowther Arcade in the Strand (opposite Charing Cross Station) which saw one of the largest gatherings of penny toy hucksters. St Pauls was another location noted for its street pedlars but as the city began smartening up its image this harmless squad of pedlars were 'moved on' to new locations in Ludgate Hill and later to Holborn, close to Gamages store. Gutter Lane was another location renowned for its band of ragged street pedlars and one man who got to know them quite well was Ernest King.

King was a company director at straw hat manufacturers Melch and Sons, who were based in Gutter Lane, which provided him with a regular opportunity to view the activities of the hawkers and cast his eyes on their ever-changing wares.

On the 16 February 1893 King bought his first penny toy and began collecting them himself. He stored each one away after carefully logging the purchase date and exact location in which it was found in a notebook. King's simple rules were that he would only spend one penny for each item acquired and that he would only buy one example of each toy. Over the next twenty five years he



Two novelty cachous tins collected by Ernest King from street vendors at London's Ludgate Hill in 1907. Both were made by Barringer, Wallis & Manners in Mansfield, Nottinghamshire.

RIGHT

Clowns were a popular feature.
Credit: www.museumoflondon.org.uk

BELOW

Lehmann bicycle. Credit:
www.liveauctioneers.com

BELOW

This fabulous tin piano was one of around sixty different penny novelty designs produced for Rowntree's of York by Barringer, Wallis & Manners. It contained a sachet of cocoa. The same dies were also used to produce as a novelty pencil sharpener.

RIGHT

An Edwardian Christmas.
Credit: www.museumoflondon.org.uk

managed to collect around 1700 individual items, making his final purchase on 11 November 1918. His log book details all his finds, not just in and around Gutter Lane, but all over London. He collected the toys not just during the festive season but throughout the whole year and his note books give a fascinating insight into the wide and varied range of penny toys and novelties that appeared on the streets, many of which gave an insight into our social history mapping changes in transport, leisure activities and royal and political events.

In 1918 the whole of Ernest King's fascinating collection was presented to the Museum

by the poorest children but also by the disabled and elderly who appeared desperate to benefit from the growing commercialism of Christmas. What they earned from the sales they made was not recorded. Ernest King's personal crusade of meticulous cataloguing of all of the penny toys he bought, coupled with his scrapbooks did, however, provide a fascinating insight into the plight of London's street sellers who it seems maintained little more than a life of poverty. Many of the newspaper clippings report humanely on the wretchedness of the Penny Toy hawkers who it states were left 'harassed and hopeless' in Holborn, from where

and road vehicles of many types portrayed the rapid advances in transport through 25 years of development. Racing cars and limousines, emergency vehicles, delivery vehicles and motor buses were all represented as penny toys and are all now highly prized by collectors.

Also, highly prized today are examples of the various penny novelties containing sweets such as cachous, which were small ball-bearing size lozenges, often used to freshen the breath. One of the leading exponents of sweet container novelties was the German firm of Stollwerck who's imported examples date back to around 1900. Around sixty

November 4th 1907, also from the Ludgate Hill area. Other Rowntree's novelties included a wonderful little piano and a finely lithographed Christmas pudding both of which contained small samples of drinking cocoa and are now rare collectors' items. Other penny sweet novelty tins by Rowntree's included a Houseboat, Dog Kennel, Grandfather Clock, Punch and Judy Show with working mechanism, Spinning Top and various footballs. Over twenty similar penny novelties were also made and distributed by J.S. Fry & Sons of Bristol in Edwardian times including an interesting Royal Mail Hand Cart and a Grandfather Clock.

Around sixty different penny novelty sweet tins were also manufactured in Britain by the firm of Barringer, Wallis & Manners of Mansfield (BWM) made chiefly for Rowntree's of York.

of London, although little background knowledge about Ernest King himself came along with it and it appears that little about him was asked at the time. By this time King had filled two notebooks and also compiled a scrapbook containing press clippings relating to the lives and struggles of the street sellers. He appeared to be constantly drawing attention to the plight of the gutter merchants, especially at Christmas which saw the ranks of the sellers swelled not only

they were finally banished into oblivion as London went about its 'civil progress.'

Examples of the extensive range of penny toys collected by Ernest King include a baby carriage moulded from lead and a tinplate spring-loaded 'jack-in-the stove' which was a type of jack in the box. There were fairground Ferris wheels and circus performers with clever mechanisms bringing them to life at the press of a lever. Steamboats, railway locomotives

different penny novelty sweet tins were also manufactured in Britain by the firm of Barringer, Wallis & Manners of Mansfield (BWM) made chiefly for Rowntree's of York. It is known from his own meticulously kept records that Ernest King purchased a penny 'cricket bat' made by BWM for Rowntree's, on January 22nd 1907 from a street hawker in Ludgate Hill and also a novelty 'tennis racquet' produced by BWM for the London based confectioners 'Clarnico' on

Penny toys and novelties are now coveted by collectors' all over the world with handsome sums of money being paid for some of the rarer examples. The great thing about them is that you never know when a previously unrecorded example will turn up? As with most sought-after collectables prices can be high and at present are still on the rise. Who would have thought that these toys from the 'gutter' would one day become so valuable? **CG**

Tri-ang: the Twilight Years

Andrew Ralston remembers the final years of a giant within the toy industry.

For decades Lines Brothers (Tri-ang) was the UK's largest toy company – or it would be more accurate to say toy empire, as it consisted of so many different brands and factories, and had manufacturing and distribution facilities all over the world. In 1965 a toy trade journal reported that more than a third of the toys belonging to the average British child were made by Lines Bros. And yet, just six years later this multinational toy company had collapsed. This article will seek to explain why Lines Brothers ended up in such difficulty as well as surveying what Tri-ang was offering the toy

market in its final years.

1969 was a significant milestone as it marked the fiftieth anniversary of the foundation of Tri-ang by the three Lines brothers, Walter, Arthur and William – the idea behind the name being that three lines make a triangle. A fascinating souvenir publication from that year celebrates the hugely diverse range of products sold by the firm. As had been the case throughout Tri-ang's history, the emphasis remained on large items suitable for outdoor use, such as tricycles, pedal cars and prams. The booklet claims that "Children through the years have enjoyed the same toys as their parents and their

parents' parents before them and our 1919 range contained many lines from which today's toys are direct descendants" – a statement that some within the toy trade interpreted as an indication of a certain amount of complacency and, perhaps, a failure to move with the times.

Yet Tri-ang could also boast of more modern products. The Scalextric slot racing system had been a big success though it had ended up as a Tri-ang product through the acquisition of another smaller business, Minimodels, in 1957 – something that was typical of Walter Lines' approach to business. In 1964, an even bigger take-over occurred when Meccano

Limited became part of the Lines Bros empire, one consequence of this being the demise of the Spot-On range of diecast vehicles in favour of the much more successful Dinky range. Under Lines' ownership, much effort was put into making Meccano run more efficiently, but few genuinely new product lines appeared. While plastic Meccano was an attempt to appeal to younger children and counteract the growing popularity of Lego, other items like a jigsaw puzzle maker or a toy sewing machine had little impact. When it came to toys for girls, the Tri-ang Pedigree range of Cindy dolls was again a reaction to a competitor's product, in this case the Barbie



Of tough pressed steel and diecast construction, the Mini-Hi-Way cars were designed for toddlers to play with. These racing cars are seven inches in length.
(Photo: Vectis Auctions).



ABOVE

The Big Big Train, again made of plastic, was claimed to be weatherproof for outdoor use. The thinking behind such products was probably to introduce youngsters to trains in the hope that they would progress to Triang-Hornby model railways. (Photo: Vectis Auctions).

doll. Nevertheless, Sindy was designed to appeal to British consumers and sold well.

Most of Tri-ang's sales of bigger toys would, of course, occur over Christmas and it had been the custom for many years to issue a comprehensive Christmas catalogue, copies of these being very collectable now. One of the last issues, dating from 1970, gives a snapshot of what Tri-ang was making in the final years, and it shows a preponderance of traditional toys with a more up-to-date slant. Even in 1970, it seems, traditional male/female roles remained: boys are shown playing with the new electronic Meccano sets and the Johnny Astro space age vehicle with launch pad for moon landing while 'girls aged six years and over' could have a wide selection of dolls' prams and the 'senior ironing board', claimed to 'make ironing a pleasure even for this young mum with her pile of washing'. However, production methods had moved on, with plastic largely replacing metal for the pedal cars such as the trendy 'Carnaby' car, covered in floral decorations representing 'flower power at its most powerful'. The plastic 'Chubby' pedal car for infants was so popular that the Tri-ang plant at Merthyr Tydfil was turning out no fewer than 1500 of them per week.

The model railway market was dominated by the Tri-ang-Hornby railway system which emerged after the Meccano takeover. This contained far more Tri-ang items than Hornby-Dublo ones, though some of the latter models continued to be available under the Wrenn label, which was by this time another Lines' subsidiary. And, even though Corgi had eaten into Dinky sales, it was claimed that 'in '68 Dinky Toys achieved the highest sales in their profit-packed history.'

All of this begs the obvious question: what went wrong? The issue has been researched in

some depth by Professor Kenneth D. Brown, formerly of Queen's University, Belfast and author of *The British Toy Business: A History Since 1700* and the shorter Shire Album on *Tri-ang Toys*. Brown explains how the company was felt within the trade to be too much under family control, with little use being made of professionals in marketing and finance – something unusual in such a large organisation. Walter Lines, who remained at the helm until the age of eighty, was, says Brown, "almost incapable of turning down a business opportunity" and Tri-ang ended up owning so many factories that it became too large and dispersed to operate efficiently. With so many products being large outdoor toys, it had made sense to establish subsidiaries in different countries to avoid crippling shipping and import charges, but Lines were left with impossibly high operating costs as a result. In spite of frequent attempts at reorganisation and rationalisation, this vast and complex empire with 63 agencies all over the world had failed to get a grip on spiralling costs and by 1970 losses amounted to £4.6 million. The banks were owed £19 million and demanded the liquidation of the Group, which was then split up in 1971 and sold off to other players within the toy industry; Meccano, for example, was taken over by Airfix. Walter himself died at the age of 90 the following year.

All of this was part of a bigger picture: many famous British firms would go to the wall during the economically difficult era of the 1970s. Tastes in toys were changing, too, and the way ahead lay in electronic toys and, later, computer games.

Tri-ang may have disappeared nearly fifty years ago, but millions still have happy childhood memories of playing outside with a Tri-ang dolls' pram, tricycle or pedal car. **CG**

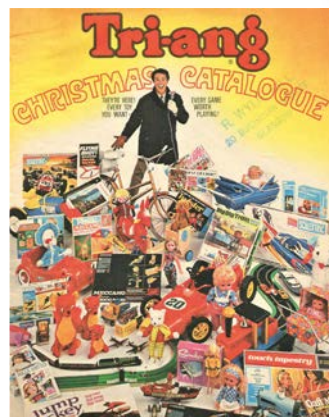
RIGHT

Walter Lines, one of the three brothers who founded Tri-ang. He was still involved in the toy business in his eighties.



LEFT

"They're here! Every toy you want – every game worth playing!" – all to be found in the Tri-ang Christmas catalogue. This is one of the last issues, dating from 1970.



RIGHT

"50 Tri-ang Years" was published in 1969, but the writing was already on the wall.

Tricycles & Bicycles

The Unique & Unity Cycle Co., "U & U" to everyone, has been the hub of the Tri-ang tricycle and cycle range for many years. The Birmingham Works produced the first-ever two-wheel children's cycle and a new word was added to the English language – "Faircycle".

Over the years, Tri-ang have developed new production techniques and mechanical improvements. Thanks to this know-how, tricycles and bicycles now come within everybody's reach. Every pocket and every age is catered for.

Even the very young can enjoy two wheel cycling on the Bantam while older children can enjoy the beautifully engineered Junior 195 and Golden Arrow. But there are many, many more to choose from.

Tri-ang Toys Ltd.
Cycle Division,
Birmingham.



The Big Toy Makers

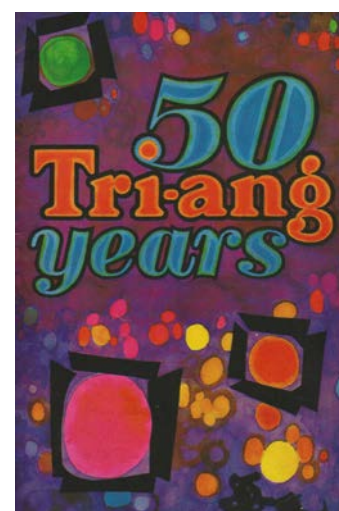


ABOVE

1969 Tri-ang trade advertisement for the latest cycles stressed the link to the original 'Faircycle', claimed to be the first-ever two-wheel children's cycle.

RIGHT

The takeover of Meccano Ltd brought Dinky under Tri-ang ownership. Prospects for Dinky still looked promising in 1969.



'68 WAS
DINKY TOYS
BIGGEST YEAR...

'69 WILL BE EVEN BIGGER!

In '68 Dinky Toys achieved the highest sales in their profit-packed history. You noticed it in the increased demand; those extra sales. '69 promises even more from the Dinky Toys' stable. New character merchandise hot on the heels of Captain Scarlet plus exciting new developments. Make sure you get the full value of these money-spinning Dinky Toy winners. Order stocks early.



Further reading...

• Kenneth D. Brown: *Tri-ang Toys: the Story of Lines Brothers* (Shire Publications, 2012)

An introduction to... Vintage robot toys

Will Freeman looks at collecting that it out of this world...

For all the rich variety of toys that are made, it is the simplest that tend to be the most iconic. The ball, the block, the teddy bear and the doll; these are the objects that come to mind when we are asked to consider the true classics.

But not far behind them comes the toy robot. Such playthings may speak of modernity, futurism, complexity and the advance of technology in a way that seems to distance them entirely from the millennia-old simplicity of the ball, but such was their presence throughout the 1950s and 1960s in particular, they have grown to be considered among the most defining of toys. That, in turn, has made them highly collectable.

Of course, many toys have taken the form of – or referenced – robots, so let's zero in just a little. Here we'll be discussing the kind that likely sprung to mind when you first read the words 'toy robot' above. That is to say, metal and plastic robots that are generally wind-up or battery powered, that typically offer a handful of functions; usually walking, making sounds and perhaps emitting a few sparks. Sorry Transformers, but we're not touching on robot in disguise here – though we may return to you one day in the future.

As with the toy ray gun, robots became wildly popular as playthings at a time when space travel, conflict and technological advance were on the minds of almost everyone. By the coming of the 1950s we had entered the 'golden age of science-fiction'. WWII had both ramped up technological progress and installed fear of all out nuclear



war, with the latter inspiring increasing interest in science itself. Invasion and otherness were also pressing talking points for the layperson, while in the domestic setting automation was increasingly becoming a reality. It was a perfect storm for sci-fi, and

with a boom in future-facing films, comics and novels, increasing numbers became obsessed with space travel, incursions by distant visitors, science losing its way, UFO sightings and interstellar adventuring. Everything was in place for the rise of the toy robots.

ABOVE A taste of just a fraction of the characterful vintage robots out there. Credit: The Weapon Shop.

It is tricky to be entirely confident about what was the very first toy robot. Many of the earliest high-quality metal robots



ABOVE
Before Robby the Robot (and Robie the Robot and R.O.B the robot), there was 1954's Robert The Robot. The best of all the robots named Rob, surely? Credit: The OldRobotsDOTCOM.

came from Japan through the 1940s. The most desired might well be the beautiful, charming Robot Lilliput, which is variously dated as being from 1939 or some point soon thereafter in the 1940s. Many consider it the earliest toy robot, and it was certainly a highly influential early work from the inventive and innovative Japanese toy designers and makers who were perhaps the first to spot that space toys would be the next big thing following on from cowboys and the frontiers.

As such, they made some of the earliest examples of wind-up metal robots, and went on to produce many of the finest, while providing models to other toy distributors all over the world.

Before you fall for a Lilliput, though, be warned – they go for towering prices at auction, even in the range of £2000-to-£11000. That said, you can easily find a new reproduction from £10 and up. Quality varies, but they are everywhere. You'll even see Lilliput repros on Amazon.

And that is the thing with vintage toy robots. They were

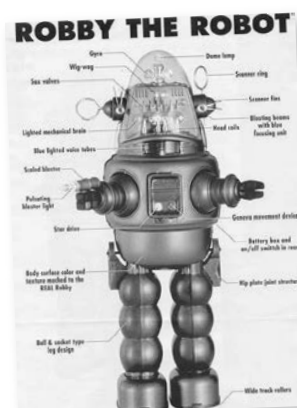
made, copied, and remade in such large numbers, it's almost impossible to be definitive with regard to quantities, official lines and original models. Indeed, the early Japanese metal robots were often simply branded 'robot' or 'toy robot', leaving today's collectors to make up names so as to distinguish and discuss the different versions.

That does mean that value is often set by the somewhat esoteric notion of having 'some kind of magic'. Many of the more expensive robots from this era are costly simply because they have a charismatic design. Equally, what is wildly appealing to you might not interest many others and vice versa. The result is that prices vary wildly and are consistently inconsistent. Still, look to Japanese makers like Horikawa, Nomura, Yonezawa and Yoshiya for quality, but expect to pay higher prices.

Over in the US – another great maker of vintage toy robots – companies Marx and Ideal Toy Company produced the models that continue to be seen as some



ABOVE
A rather brilliant advert from Tomy, perhaps assuring parents that its toy robots were safe.



of the finest and most influential. Indeed, a certain Robert the Robot that debuted in 1954 became a sensation. He was the first ever plastic toy robot made in the US, and tempted youngsters with a tantalising offer; a remote-controlled talking robot that could be guided around on a wired controlled. His line 'I am Robert Robot Toy, mechanical man. Drive me and steer me, wherever you can' must have been heard millions of times across the US in the 1950s. Perhaps it wasn't as popular with parents.

Robert trumped Forbidden Planet's celebrity automata Robby the Robot by two years, and must have been made in seriously large numbers, because you can still get a boxed, working example for around £100-to-£150. Countless



ABOVE
The original and best? Made from 1939 or thereabouts, Lilliput Robots can easily command four-figure auction prices. Credit: Paul Fraser Auctions.

non-working examples can be claimed for £50, and still make for a captivating display piece.

Here we have only really scratched the surface of these wonderful toys. There are likely thousands of distinct models across the wealth of original and reproduction wind-up and battery-powered vintage toy robots. If you're a completist, it may not be the ideal collecting realm for you, because it might as well be infinite. But if you want to start building a toy robot collection, look no further than Japan or the US through the 1940s to the 1960s. And as long as your wallet agrees with you, go with the robots you love, rather than worrying too much about how desirable or iconic they are. Because robots are individuals too. **CG**

RETURN OF THE ROBOTS

The 1940s through to the 1960s make up the classic era for collectible toy robots, but in the 1980s and 1990s they had a rebirth thanks almost entirely to a single company. Star Wars' droids and Nintendo's R.O.B personal robot gaming accessory might have had a part to play, and there were myriad other robot toys at the time. But there was something about the line of robots from Japanese company Tomy that evoked a powerful sense of the likes of the famed Lilliput Robot.

Tomy's efforts were much more advanced, variously incorporating clocks, radios, cassette players, microphones

and more, but in spirit, size and even form, they clearly shared a DNA with their wind-up forebearers. In fact, Tomy's Robie the Robot – manufactured for Radio Shack under that name – offered remote control walking and talking. It's form, function and name could only be seen as a nod to Robert the Robert (see main article).

There were a great many different Tomy robots, presenting a collecting space all of its own. Prices vary from low double figures to a good way into the hundreds. So if the classic era is too vintage for you, Tomy's fleet of plastic automatons might be just the thing you're looking for.

A handful of the myriad Tomy robots available through the 1980s and 1990s.



Toy Stories

Ed Karswell takes a trip down the High Street.

As a child of the 1970s, when it came to purchasing toys you needed good retail knowledge to hunt down and acquire the toys you so desired. Talking to my kids today, with their access to the internet and huge toy mega stores, they can't really comprehend how I managed to make it through childhood with these constraints. Back then toy departments and toy shops stocked their own specific lines depending on what concessions they held; in my own home town, it paid to know things like this. The large Co-op store, to take one example, held a pretty comprehensive range of Britains items but nothing from the likes of Palitoy. Youngsters, a medium sized toy shop had a full complement of *Star Wars* figures but literally no toy guns. (I know, unbelievable!). Albert Lists, a small independent, had lots of Action Man accessories but no dolls. Nightingale's, a small

enterprise on the way out of town stocked the largest selection of Airfix kits I've ever seen, plus all the latest Matchbox superfast issues. I'm sure you get the picture before I get too OCD and start listing the sub categories.

Aside from all these was my own personal Mecca, F. W. Woolworth, known to almost all in the UK by the moniker 'Woolies'. A big part of the allure was the number of toys it stocked that were exclusive to the stores. This was hardly surprising as Woolworths were an American company albeit with a long presence in the UK. When I wasn't being dragged around the latest pet hair removing gizmos from K-Tel I would be left to my own devices in the toy department which was a dangerous move as it gave me time to ponder forthcoming purchases.

My first pick of these 70's delights would be the 8-inch 'Official World-famous Super Monsters' dolls made by AHI Azrak Hamway. Cheaper than

Mego, they were sold bubble packed on lurid pink backing cards with equally lurid graphics. I bought them all: *Frankenstein*, *Dracula*, *Wolfman* etc, all to the abject horror (no pun needed) of my mother. When I last looked these £1.25 bargains were now selling, to my horror, for hundreds of pounds.

Alongside all this they also stocked strangely mature things such a Polistil scale motorbikes. These were fine models but I couldn't even pronounce Polistil let alone ask at the counter for a catalogue... (you had to go to Nightingales for catalogues and they were always freely given).

Then there was the aforementioned Action Man. Woolies stocked a comprehensive range of boxed dolls and a fair few carded outfits. A lot of shops only stocked accessories so I'm guessing there was a pecking order when it came down to stockists. Seeing the full range of dolls was exciting, the Adventurer,

the Sailor, the talking Commander and of course the Soldier. I bonded with a boxed Action Man Soldier whom I coveted for what seemed like a full year before I received it as a surprise Christmas present. It's also easy to forget that Action Man was never a cheap toy. Like Meccano, quality was always expensive.

Woolies metier was always its selection of toy firearms. Recently viewed as politically incorrect toy guns were a rite of passage for many boys (and a few girls!). Woolworths stocked all the big names such as Lone star, Crescent, Marx and a few obscure Italian makes. My own personal weapon of choice was The Replicast Remington Army pistol which was a thing of pure beauty to my young eyes. It looked and felt how I imagined a real frontier pistol to look. No crass nickel plating or Liberace style rhinestone encrusted grips here. It was satin black with a white hand grip. Even the box eschewed the usual gratuitous dramatic artwork featuring instead a simple line drawing of the gun inside. I worked my way through six of them as the gun caps I copiously fired off quite literally blew the insides of the guns apart!

Having said all this one of my abiding memories of Woolworths came just after the closure of the Meccano factory in 1979. My father, a child of the 50's was of course, in mourning, it was a sad time. Venturing into the store one rainy afternoon I was faced with wooden pallets piled high with unsold Dinky toys, all priced to clear. I remember thinking, who on earth would want a Thunderbirds lady Penelope's FAB 1 for 99p? How old fashioned... **CG**



eBuys

From collectables of the future to old favourites, eBay always manages to produce some amazing finds... and even more amazing prices!



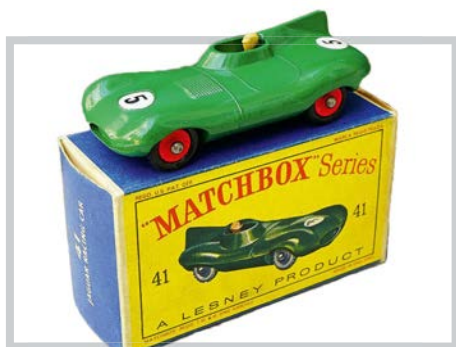
♣ **Vintage Palitoy Star Wars Snowspeeder vehicle** from *Return of the Jedi*. Dating from 1983 it was sold in mint condition (UKG80) and was still in the packaging. **Sold for £1684 (28 bids).**



♣ **Brought for the seller as a small child in the early 80s**, this plush Green Humpty from BBC Playschool was an expensive toy and kept on a shelf out of reach. It had no fading, tears or rips or pieces missing. A bargain for one lucky fan. **Sold for £410 (17 bids).**



♣ **This challenging Par jigsaw puzzle was cut by John Henriques** between the 1930 and 1950. It had 791 5-ply pieces and was cut from a poster showing parts of modern-day DRC, Rwanda and Tanzania. **Sold for £2020 (31 bids).**



♣ **This Matchbox Lesney No.41 Jaguar D Type**, with 72 tread tyres, red hubs and five decals, was in very near mint condition and had its original box. **Sold for £1615 (40 bids).**



♣ **An original Horikawa Machine Robot from the 1960s**. Battery operated, he needed a little attention in order to bring him backing to his former glory. A great project to the final winner. **Sold for £377 (48 bids).**



♣ **A rare first edition LEGO No.10179 Ultimate Collector's Star Wars Millennium Falcon**. The lot included the original LEGO shipping notes and certificate. It had only been built once! **Sold for £915 (6 bids).**



♣ **This Corgi Toys No.464 Commer Police Van was a rare export issue**. It was in original condition with all the odd scuff showing. It was sold with its original box. **Sold for £789 (24 bids).**



♣ **Twenty antique glass marbles with a selection of colourful swirl patterns**. Ranging from 1.5cm to 2.3cm in diameter, this collection was in good condition with only the odd mark or scratch. **Sold for £560 (30 bids).**



♣ **Despite being advertised as 'suitable of repair or spares' this 1/18 scale CMC Aston Martin DB4 Zagato** from 1961, caused a bit of a stir when it came to bids. Someone walked away very happy indeed. **Sold for £700 (68 bids).**



♣ **Spot-On No.0 Presentation Set in 1/42 scale.** Included were 6 cars and an Austin truck – a previous owner had added to the original set! All the models were in near mint condition. **Sold for £660 (14 bids).**



♣ **Another item that was being sold for spares; this time a Shackleton Foden** from the 1950s. Included in the sale were a tipper lorry body and cab, mudguards, springs and wheels with tyres. **Sold for £657.80 (15 bids).**



♣ **A Matt Major Matt Mason figure from 1966.** Complete with his original helmet, the seller had owned the space man from new and was selling him off as part of a larger collection. **Sold for £350 (35 bids).**



♣ **Warm enough for an ice cream!** The Corgi Toys No.447 Ford Thames Wall's Ice Cream van was here to help. Sold in mint (flavour?) original condition. **Sold for £420 (37 bids).**



♣ **The seller had this Dinky 100 Thunderbirds Lady Penelope FAB1** in his collection from new. It was in mint condition, with only a small piece of tape to one corner. A rare sale item! **Sold for £405 (37 bids).**



♣ **Who you gonna call?** Whimpy and its promotional Ghostbusters 2 Ghost In A Can model. From 1989 the can was unopened and was presented like new. The seller was reluctant to sell the prized item. **Sold for £79 (22 bids).**



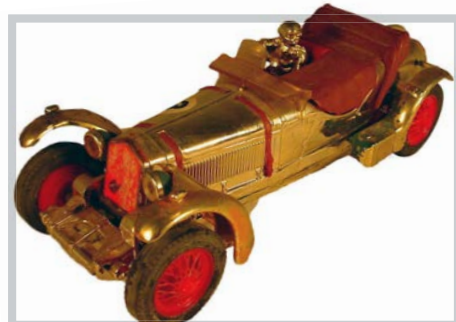
♣ **This friction drive Captain Scarlet Spectrum Patrol Car was in stunning condition,** having probably never been removed from its packaging. It contained the original instructions and accessories, 4 missiles, jet pack, radio and some suitcases. **Sold for £420 (15 bids).**



♣ **A very nice example of a hard to find Matchbox Lesney No.55 Fairlane Police Car.** It had excellent paintwork, very good decals and only minor nibbles to edges. The box was also in crisp condition with no tears or repairs. **Sold for £733 (32 bids).**



♣ **This Scalextric 1/32 scale slot car was an original 1965 MM/C71 1936 6 Litre Auto Union Type C.** The car was in very good condition and ran well. The seller noted that the tyres would need replacing if you wanted to race it. **Sold for £361 (20 bids).**



♣ **An original Scalextric C65 1/32 scale Alfa Romeo slot car from 1964/5.** The car was chromed many years ago, possibly as a prize, but the seller knew little else about the history. An unusual model. **Sold for £265 (24 bids).**



♣ **This Scalextric James Bond Aston Martin DB5 C97** had been bench tested and ran well with a strong motor. The bullet-proof shield and ejector seat all worked too! **Sold for £391 (16 bids).**



♣ **A complete Wentworth wooden jigsaw with about 70 Whimsie pieces.** In tip top condition with a clean box and bag this was definitely good enough to give as a present. **Sold for £201 (30 bids).**



♣ A scarce Yoshiya battery operated **Mighty Robot**, made in Japan made in the 1960s. This skirted robot was the last one in this series - the head and arms were made out of plastic while his older brothers were all made out of tin. **Sold for £1008 (20 bids).**



♣ Who doesn't love a skiing animal?! This vintage clockwork panda from China was in good working order and in excellent condition for its age. **Sold for £821 (21 bids).**



♣ A very nice example of the **Corgi Gift Set 41 GS41, Transporter Set with 6 Cars**. Issued between 1966-68 the set contained a Ford Car Transporter, Morris Mini Minor, Morris Mini Cooper, Austin Mini-Cooper, Hillman Imp Monte Carlo and a Rover 2000. **Sold for £599 (28 bids).**



♣ A rare Sutcliffe Boat **Grenville** model destroyer. The boat was in good condition for its age, however the box had damage to the edges and corners. The clockwork mechanism worked but was missing its key. **Sold for £520 (25 bids).**



♣ Matchbox Lesney No.25a Bedford (Dunlop) **12cwt van**, very near mint and in an original B1 box. It certainly caught the imagination of collectors, with plenty of bids. **Sold for £1031 (23 bids).**



♣ All 3 2013 San Diego Comic Con figures; Spiderman, Green Arrow and Black Superman. All were sold in original packaging, and had been kept inside a custom-built display unit. **Sold for £4300 (41 bids).**



♣ The Batmobile, Bat Boat and trailer models had never been removed from the **Husky Gift Pack**. Dating from 1966, all seals were good and there were only slight crease marks to the cardboard backing. **Sold for £920 (27 bids).**



♣ The seller of this **Timpo Confederate Officer**, with red hair and white gloves, freely admitted that he was in such good condition because he preferred others in his collection! Hopefully he will be appreciated in his new home. **Sold for £422 (43 bids).**



♣ A vintage French Scalextric **Ferrari Berlinetta 250GT C69**. In striking yellow, this model dated from the mid 1960s and was made in the Calais factory. It was in good condition and ran well when tested. **Sold for £773 (42 bids).**



♣ Having been part of a display layout, this 1/30 scale **King and Country German Atlantic Wall Bunker** was sold with three soldiers. There was the odd chip but it would still make a fine addition to any scene. **Sold for £1550 (33 bids).**



♣ Because this **Timpo Knight** had been stored away in a tin since the 1960s, he really is quite rare today. It also meant that he was in great condition and made one lucky bidder very happy. **Sold £1550 (6 bids).**



♣ This tinplate **Nomura Police Patrol** was in excellent condition. It was in full working order and with a clean battery compartment. **Sold for £350 (22 bids).**

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PRICE GUIDE

This month we visit popular toy sales at C&T Auctioneers
Special Auction Services and Vectis.

**DIECAST
RESULTS**



♣ **Dinky Mercedes Covered Wagon**
Promotional Issue "Fisons", white cab and back, red chassis and plastic hubs, grey canopy with "Fisons The Garden People" labels to sides, with 2x correct "Fisons" load boxes. Near mint in good to good plus standard window box with "Fisons" label to front and sides. **Sold for £420, Vectis, May.**



♣ **Corgi Toys No 268 "The Green Hornet"**
Black Beauty, black, spun hubs, green tinted windows, complete with sealed secret instruction pack containing folded leaflet, spinners and missiles. Good plus, excellent plus inner pictorial stand, good plus to excellent outer blue and yellow carded picture box. **Sold for £240, Vectis, May.**



♣ **Dinky pre-war No 60 Aeroplanes Gift Set,**
gold Imperial Airways ("G-A BTI"), red Low Wing Monoplane (G-A VYP), silver General Monospar ("G-A BVP"), gold Autogiro with blue rotors, green Leopard Moth with white flashes, and white Percival Gull ("G-A DZO"). Fair to good in good blue lift-off lid box, good plus inner tray. **Sold for £440, Vectis, May.**



♣ **Corgi Toys No 404 Bedford Dormobile**
Personnel Carrier, pale blue, yellow, silver trim, flat spun hubs, with collectors club and colour folded leaflets. Good plus in good blue carded picture box. **Sold for £540, Vectis, May.**



♣ **Dinky pre-war No 42 Set,** Police hut, Motorcycle Patrol and 2x figures. Good to good plus in fair to good blue presentation lift-off lid box. **Sold for £260, Vectis, May.**



♣ **Dinky pre-war No 50 "Ships of the British Navy"**
Set, HMS York, HMS Hood and HMS Nelson, plus others. Good to excellent in fair early lift-off lid box. **Sold for £170, Vectis, May.**



♣ **Dinky pre-war 22 Series Open Back**
Truck, blue and red, with Hornby Series base. Fair. **Sold for £280, Vectis, May.**



♣ **Dinky pre-war 22 Series Delivery Van,**
orange and blue, with Hornby Series base. Fair. **Sold for £300, Vectis, May.**



♣ **Dinky Toys No 920 Guy Warrior "Heinz 57 Varieties",** red cab and chassis, yellow back and Supertoy hubs, with black treaded tyres. Good plus to excellent. **Sold for £700, Vectis, May.**



♣ **Dinky No 29b Streamlined Bus (group of 5 pre-war issues),** yellow and cream with blue smooth hubs, blue with red flashes and black smooth hubs, plus others. Fair (some have been partially repainted/restored). **Sold for £320, Vectis, May.**



♣ **Dinky No 501 Foden (1st Type) Diesel 8-wheeled Wagon,** grey cab and back, black chassis, red ridged hubs and flashes, herringbone tyres. Good to good plus in good buff lift off lid box with correct colour spot. **Sold for £320, Vectis, May.**



♣ **Dinky No 902 Foden (2nd Type) Flat Truck,** yellow cab and chassis, green back and Supertoy hubs with grey treaded tyres, and silver trim. Good plus in good blue and white striped lift off lid box with correct colour spot. **Sold for £500, Vectis, May.**



♣ **Dinky Trade Pack No 750 (12c) Public Telephone Call Box**, six examples, finished in red and silver. Good plus to excellent in good yellow lift off lid trade box with original dividers. *Sold for £200, Vectis, May.*



♣ **Dinky No 700 "Diamond Jubilee of the Royal Airforce" Spitfire Mark II**, chrome plated finish with black propeller, RAF roundels, with marble style display stand. Near mint in good plus presentation window box. *Sold for £90, Vectis, May.*



♣ **Corgi Toys No 214 Ford Thunderbird Hardtop**, graphite grey, red hood, lemon interior, silver trim, spun hubs. Good to good plus in good plus blue and yellow carded picture box with collectors club folded leaflet. *Sold for £100, Vectis, May.*



♣ **Corgi Toys No 211S Studebaker "Golden Hawk"**, gold plated finish, white flashes, red interior, flat spun hubs. Good plus in good plus blue and yellow carded picture box with collectors club folded leaflet. *Sold for £80, Vectis, May.*



♣ **Corgi Toys No 213S Jaguar 2.4 "Fire Service" Car**, red body, lemon interior, spun hubs, silver trim, plastic aerial, roof box. Good plus in good blue and yellow carded picture box with collectors club folded leaflet. *Sold for £80, Vectis, May.*



♣ **Corgi Toys No 214 Ford Thunderbird Hardtop**, pale green, cream hood, silver trim, flat spun hubs. Good plus in good plus blue and yellow carded picture box with collectors club folded leaflet. *Sold for £80, Vectis, May.*



♣ **Matchbox No.27 Mercedes 230SL**, mint in fair box, yellow. *Sold for £49, Pro Auctions, June.*



♣ **Matchbox Superfast No.37 Cattle Truck**, orange cab, grey trailer with cattle. *Sold for £63, Pro Auctions, June.*



♣ **Matchbox Superfast Diecast #33 Lamborghini**, in very rare yellow colour. Model in near mint condition, in excellent box. *Sold for £252, Pro Auctions, June.*



♣ **Matchbox No.74 Fiat Abarth**, white with black interiors, mint on open card. *Sold for £98, Pro Auctions, June.*



♣ **Rare Eaglemoss No.2 1/43 scale Batman Automobilia: The Definitive Collection**. In mint condition, in presentation case. *Sold for £98, Pro Auctions, June.*



♣ **Rare original 1966 Spot-On Tri-ang Magicar Batmobile**, in box. Fitted with a small and powerful Wrenn Maximiser electric motor. *Sold for £290, Pro Auctions, June.*



♣ **Dinky Toys No.104 Spectrum Pursuit Vehicle**. Produced from 1968 to 1976. Offered with Meccano magazine in May 1968, depicting the vehicle on the front cover. *Sold for £84, Pro Auctions, June.*



♣ **Dinky Toys No.106 Thunderbirds T2**. All blue version with yellow legs. Mint model no box. *Sold for £168, Pro Auctions, June.*



♣ **Dinky Diecast No.100 Thunderbirds FAB 1 Lady Penelope**. Mint model no box. *Sold for £224, Pro Auctions, June.*



♣ Corgi Toys boxed 216 Austin A.40 Saloon, light blue with dark blue roof, smooth hubs, boxed with Corgi club leaflet, excellent to mint condition, box very good. **Sold for £100, C&T Auctioneers, June.**



♣ Corgi Toys 218 Aston Martin D.B.4, red body, yellow interior, flat spun wheel hubs, in near mint condition, with correct Corgi club leaflet, self-adhesive hubs sheet. **Sold for £100, C&T Auctioneers, June.**



♣ Corgi Toys 266 "Chitty Chitty Bang Bang" complete with Caractacus Potts, Truly Scrumptious, Jeremy and Jemima figures. In near mint condition, with back and front wings. **Sold for £150, C&T Auctioneers, June.**



♣ Corgi Toys 269 James Bond Lotus Esprit "The Spy Who Loved Me", white body, in mint original condition, instruction leaflet, 10 rockets, still on plastic sprue, early 1st issue window display box, which is good, some age wear. **Sold for £280, C&T Auctioneers, June.**



♣ Corgi Toys 303 Mercedes Benz 300SL Open Roadster, white body, blue interior, flat spun wheel hubs, in mint original condition, early blue box is in good original condition, with some wear, vintage 3/6 price label on one end flap. **Sold for £130, C&T Auctioneers, June.**



♣ Corgi Toys 337 Customised Chevrolet Corvette Stingray, yellow body, red interior, cast wheels, in mint boxed condition, chrome plating is mint, Corgi Tv21 club leaflet, vintage US Dollar price label on one end flap. **Sold for £100, C&T Auctioneers, June.**



♣ Corgi Major Toys 1107 Euclid TC-12 Tractor, with lever operated blade. Complete with original black rubber tracks, driver, in very good original condition, some paint chips. **Sold for £150, C&T Auctioneers, June.**



♣ Corgi Major Toys Boxed 1112 'Corporal' Guided Missile on Mobile Launcher, white/red missile, military green launcher, in excellent original condition, rubber nose cone has perished, with leaflet. **Sold for £160, C&T Auctioneers, June.**



♣ Corgi Major Toys 1113 Military 'Corporal' Guided Missile On Erector Vehicle, military green body, white/red missile in very good to excellent condition, in a good yellow and blue lidded box, some age wear, with internal packing. **Sold for £220, C&T Auctioneers, June.**



♣ Corgi Toys 107 Batboat and Trailer, 1st issue with tinplate fin cover, complete with Batman & Robin figures, gold trailer, cast wheels, plastic trailer coupling to fit Batmobile, in near mint original condition, with an excellent original box, complete with all end flaps and a Corgi club leaflet. **Sold for £300, C&T Auctioneers, June.**



♣ Scarce Corgi Toys Rocket Age Models Gift Set No 6, Bristol Ferranti "Bloodhound" guided missile, R.A.F. Landrover, English electric "Thunderbird" guided missile on trolley, radar unit, R.A.F. Standard Vanguard III staff car, and Decca airfield radar van. Overall condition is excellent to near mint. **Sold for £760, C&T Auctioneers, June.**



♣ Corgi Toys Gift Set No 3 "Thunderbird" Guided Missile On Assembly Trolley and R.A.F. Land-Rover, RAF blue Land Rover, flat spun wheels, in excellent original condition. RAF blue trolley, with silver missile, original rubber nose cone. **Sold for £110, C&T Auctioneers, June.**



♣ Corgi Toys James Bond 336 James Bond Toyota 2000GT from the film 'You Only Live Twice', 2 figures, rocket launchers in boot, in near mint original condition. With opened secret instructions envelope, leaflet and cloth badge. In a near mint to mint original box. **Sold for £440, C&T Auctioneers, June.**



♣ Boxed Corgi Toys Gift Set 3 Batmobile and Batboat, 1st version, contains 267 Batmobile and figures, model is in near mint condition and 107 Batboat & Trailer, 1st issue with tinplate fin cover, complete with Batman & Robin figures. Complete with instructions leaflet. **Sold for £1750, C&T Auctioneers, June.**



♣ Dinky Toys Pre War Set No 43 R.A.C. Hut Motorcycle Patrol and Guides, including motorcycle patrol, 2 figures and tinplate hut, in original fair condition, with inner card, outer blue box is fair, some blue paper covering is missing from lid of box. **Sold for £150, C&T Auctioneers, June.**

FIGURES
RESULTS

♣ Reka and others, a Specimen Collection of early British hollowcast cavalry 1900-1930 including five in gilt finish. Condition good, one plume and one tail missing. **Sold for £65, C&T Auctioneers, June.**



♣ Britains Set 39, Royal Horse Artillery Gun Team, 1st version, shafted limber, team and limber only. Condition fair, one head loose, two plumes and three horse legs missing, one damaged, 1900. **Sold for £100, C&T Auctioneers, June.**



♣ Britains Set 49, South Australian Lancers, 3rd version, dated 1.1.1901. Condition good, officer, one arm, one lance head and three helmet spikes missing, 1905. **Sold for £50, C&T Auctioneers, June.**



♣ Britains Set 144 Royal Field Artillery Gun Team, 2nd version, two seated men, with mounted Officer, fumed metal finish to gun and limber. Condition very good, one seated man helmet ball bent, 1919. **Sold for £220, C&T Auctioneers, June.**



♣ Britains Set 2 Royal Horse Guards, 3rd version, tin swords, with Officer. Condition good, 1901. **Sold for £65, C&T Auctioneers, June.**



♣ Britains Set 100 21st Lancers, 2nd version, dated 12.2.1903 in original early printers decorated box. Condition good, box poor, 1905. **Sold for £80, C&T Auctioneers, June.**



♣ Britains Set 1 Life Guards, 3rd version, tin swords, with Officer in original printers typeset box. Condition good, box gair, end repaired, 1901. **Sold for £75, C&T Auctioneers, June.**



♣ Britains Boer Cavalry two Officers and a Rifleman, Boer Infantryman, South African Mounted Officers and Riflemen, 21st Lancers, Omdurman, Trumpeter and four Privates running. Condition good to very good, 1901. **Sold for £440, C&T Auctioneers, June.**



♣ Britains Set 39 Royal Horse Artillery, 2nd version, collar harness, with limber, Officers and four mounted Gunners, short carbines dated 12.12.1902. Condition very good-good. **Sold for £260, C&T Auctioneers, June.**



♣ Britains Set 153 Prussian Hussars with Officer, in original printers type box. Condition very good, box good, insert card missing, 1930. **Sold for £320, C&T Auctioneers, June.**



♣ Britains Set 201 Officers of the General Staff, in original Whisstock box. Condition very good, box good, insert missing, 1935. **Sold for £70, C&T Auctioneers, June.**



♣ Britains set Drums and Bugles of the Line, 4th version, gaitered drummers in original Whisstock box. Condition good, four helmet spikes missing, box good, insert missing, 1930. **Sold for £50, C&T Auctioneers, June.**



♣ Britains Set 1901 Cape Town Highlanders with Officer, in original Armies of the World box. Condition very good, two bayonets missing, box good, 1949. **Sold for £65, C&T Auctioneers, June.**



♣ Britains set 2152 Waterloo Artillery. Condition very good, one plume missing, five Waterloo Infantry and three Waterloo Highlanders with Officer, Scots Guards Drums and Fifes, and two Coldstream Buglers, neatly repainted. Condition very good. **Sold for £120, C&T Auctioneers, June.**



♣ Britains Set 2052 Anti-Aircraft Display with leaflet, khaki finish to instruments and gun in original ROAN box. Condition very good, box fair, one lid edge missing, repaired with sticky tape, 1952. **Sold for £130, C&T Auctioneers, June.**



◀ A Britains 'The Mikado' flywheel-driven toy from the 1880 catalogue, complete with original paper fan (very good original condition with only few minor paint chips or rubs). **Sold for £700, Special Auction Services, June.**

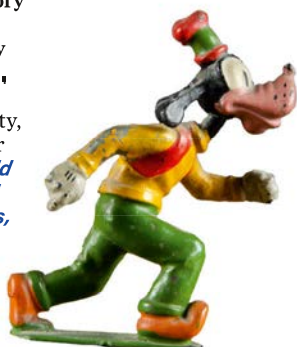


◀ A Britains Donald Duck figure from the pre-WW2 Disney character series, with movable head (a little dirty, otherwise good original condition with only minor wear). **Sold for £70, Special Auction Services, June.**



◀ A Britains Clarabelle the Cow figure, from the pre-WW2 Disney character series, with movable head (a little dirty, with some paint loss). **Sold for £180, Special Auction Services, June.**

➔ A Britains Goofy figure from the pre-WW2 Disney character series, with movable head (a little dirty, with some minor paint chips). **Sold for £120, Special Auction Services, June.**



➔ A rare Phillip Segal large figure of Disney character Minnie Mouse, unlicensed figure, made in the late 1940s (some paint loss, part of the base missing, but stands unaided). **Sold for £80, Special Auction Services, June.**



➔ A Pixyland Kew Edward Trunk from the Bruin Boys series, 1920s (good condition with only minor wear). **Sold for £70, Special Auction Services, June.**



◀ A Pixyland Kew Bobby Bear from the Bruin Boys series, 1920s (paint loss and a small hole to front of left leg, otherwise good condition with only minor wear). **Sold for £40, Special Auction Services, June.**



◀ A Pixyland Kew Tiger Tim from the Bruin Boys series, 1920s (small hole to rear of left leg, otherwise good condition with only minor wear). **Sold for £90, Special Auction Services, June.**



◀ A Pixyland Kew Joey the Parrot from the Bruin Boys series, 1920s (good condition with only minor wear). **Sold for £60, Special Auction Services, June.**



➔ A German Alice in Wonderland character, the Mad Hatter, 75mm. high, good. **Sold for £400, Special Auction Services, June.**



➔ A German Alice in Wonderland character, the White Rabbit, 85mm. high, good. **Sold for £460, Special Auction Services, June.**



➔ A Pixyland Kew 'Quenchie Sn'ice' seated girl, consuming ice cream, promotional lead figure, pre-WW2, very good. **Sold for £80, Special Auction Services, June.**



➔ A rare Pixyland Kew 'Mr Vimto' 74mm high promotional figure, pre-WW2 (generally worn with slightly faded paint). **Sold for £190, Special Auction Services, June.**

➔ A Stoddart 'rat faced' Mickey Mouse figure, good condition. **Sold for £110, Special Auction Services, June.**



➔ A rare Charbens seven-piece 'Dance Band', on original yellow chairs which are possibly unique to this set, in original rare shallow rectangular box and tie-card, very good. **Sold for £480, Special Auction Services, June.**



♣ Wrenn W2228 4-6-2 Loco and Tender BR green Princess Coronation Class "City of Birmingham" No.46235. Excellent to excellent plus with instructions in good plus to excellent box. **Sold for £120, Vectis, June.**



♣ Wrenn W2270 2-6-4 Tank Loco BR lined green Standard Class 4 No.80135. Light marking to offside Tank side otherwise near mint in good plus to excellent box with instructions and base stamped 06324. **Sold for £100, Vectis, June.**



♣ Wrenn W2226 4-6-2 Loco and Tender BR maroon Princess Coronation Class "City of London" No.46245. Excellent to excellent plus in good plus box. **Sold for £130, Vectis, June.**



♣ Wrenn W2211 4-6-2 Loco and Tender BR green A4 Class "Mallard" No.60022. Excellent plus to near mint in excellent box, base stamped 90625. Includes instructions. **Sold for £130, Vectis, June.**



♣ Wrenn W2221 4-6-0 Loco and Tender BR green Castle Class "Cardiff Castle" No.4075. Excellent plus in excellent box. **Sold for £110, Vectis, June.**



♣ Wrenn W2245 2-6-4 Southern lined Tank Loco No.1927. Excellent to excellent plus in good to good plus box. **Sold for £70, Vectis, June.**



♣ Wrenn W2239 4-6-2 Loco and Tender BR green rebuilt Merchant Navy Class "Clan Line" No.35028. Good plus to excellent in good box with over labelling to both ends "W2238 West Country Clan Line". **Sold for £90, Vectis, June.**



♣ Wrenn W2239 4-6-2 Loco and Tender BR green rebuilt West Country Class "Eddystone" No.34028. Good Plus to excellent in good plus box with labels to both ends "W2239 West Country 4-6-2 & Eddystone". Includes instructions. **Sold for £130, Vectis, June.**



♣ Wrenn W2237 4-6-2 Loco and Tender Southern green rebuilt West Country Class "Lyme-Regis" No.21C109, slight tarnishing to handrail otherwise excellent plus, tender excellent plus box with tear to one end otherwise good plus with instructions. **Sold for £140, Vectis, June.**



♣ Wrenn W2236 4-6-2 Loco and Tender rebuilt West Country Class BR green No.34042 "Dorchester". Excellent to excellent plus in good plus to excellent box with instructions. **Sold for £90, Vectis, June.**



♣ Wrenn W2242 4-6-2 Loco and Tender LMS maroon Princess Coronation Class "City of Liverpool" No.6247. Excellent plus to near mint in good plus box. **Sold for £120, Vectis, June.**



♣ Wrenn W2237 4-6-2 Loco and Tender Southern green rebuilt West Country Class "Lyme-Regis" No.21C109. Loco with chip to cab roof, good plus to excellent, tender with marks to side good plus all contained in good box. **Sold for £80, Vectis, June.**



♣ Wrenn W2225A 2-8-0 Loco and Tender LMS black Class 8F No.8233. Near mint in excellent box with instructions, box stamped to the underside 07625. **Sold for £190, Vectis, June.**



♣ Golden Age Models O Gauge Ref 3-B Devon Belle "Pullman Observation Car". Appears unused near mint to mint box. **Sold for £420, Vectis, June.**



♣ Golden Age Models O Gauge Ref 1-A 1st Class Parlour Car Pullman Coach "Lucille". Appears unused near mint to mint box. **Sold for £480, Vectis, June.**



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Now you see them now you don't

Produced for only a year, **Ann Evans** delves into the creepy-crawly world of Hamilton's Invaders.

Iwonder how many readers collect, or even remember, Hamilton's Invaders? Those monster science fiction playsets with their giant plastic bugs and blue uniformed soldiers? Probably very few, as they were manufactured for just one season in 1964.

Hamilton's Invaders were manufactured by Remco Industries Inc., and while there's no explanation for the name 'Hamilton', it's thought that the inspiration for the toy came from the popularity of 1950s giant insect invasion movies being re-run on TV in the early 1960s. Films such as *Tarantula*, *Monster from the Ocean Floor* and *Them*. In fact, comments from people who remembered Hamilton's Invaders likened Horrible Hamilton – the biggest bug in the

box, to the creature in *Them*.

Remco gave their playsets exciting names such as *The Battle of Horrible Hamilton*, *The Battle of the Beetle* and *The Battle of the Spider*. As for the bugs, there was Horrible Hamilton which was a large green bug with huge eyes, pinchers and leg articulation so that when the pull string spring motor was deployed he scuttled across the floor in a way that would delight lots of little boys! Horrible Hamilton came with some equally nasty friends. There was Yellow Spider which was black and yellow with red spines; and Yellow Beetle which was black and yellow with red bumps – described in the adverts as Spooky Spider, Gruesome Beetle or Brutal Beetle. 'Here come the monstrous insects

Hamilton's Invaders by Remco,' it says on the box.

Hamilton, the largest bug, measures 10.5" and certainly was an aggressive monster with those fierce-looking pinchers around his jaws – and he did actually bite! The child would open the bug's jaws, which was explained in the instructions, then when its tongue hit an object those jaws would snap shut! Smaller bugs in the sets would roll on a wheel, and others had to be moved by hand. The fact that Hamilton's Invaders only lasted a season could have been due to mums everywhere not wanting giant bugs crawling under their feet and snapping at their ankles!

The little plastic soldiers are around 2.7 ins tall and their light blue uniform appears to be based on the late WWII / Korean War US Army uniform. They were called True Blue



ABOVE

The Battle of the Spider playset.



ABOVE

The Battle of the Beetle playset.



ABOVE

The Battle of Horrible Hamilton playset.

RIGHT

A Hamilton's Invader!



LEFT

Hornet Helicopter.
Credit: Rick Keene

TheGalleryofMonsterToys.com



RIGHT

Dwarf tank. Credit: Rick Keene,
TheGalleryofMonsterToys.com

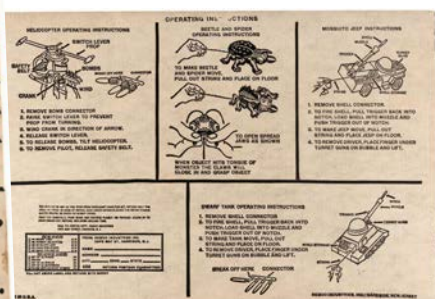


FAR RIGHT

Spring Motor
Dwarf Tank.

RIGHT

Giant Hamilton's
Invaders set.
Credit: Cool and
Collected website.

**LEFT**

Operating instructions.
Credit: Hakes Auctions.

FAR LEFT

Packaging. Credit: Hakes
Auctions.

**LEFT**

Hamilton's
Invaders set.
Credit Cool
and Collected
website.

RIGHT

True Blue
Defenders.
Credit: The
Soldier Guy,
ww2pts.
blogspot.com



Defenders. In order for the child to strategically position the soldiers ready for battle against the bugs, they came in six different poses. There was a master sergeant firing a pistol, a buck sergeant with M-1928A1 Thompson sub machine gun throwing a pineapple hand grenade, one firing a M-1928A1 Thompson, one firing an M-1 rifle, one charging with an M-1 with fixed bayonet, and one kneeling firing a bazooka.

The True Blue Defenders were equipped with artillery and vehicles – a 6.75in Hornet Helicopter with a wind-up rotor and 3 small bombs; a spring motor Dwarf Tank measuring 9.5 ins with shells with an elevating gun that fired shells; and a 9in long wind-up Mosquito Jeep. Different playsets came with different bugs, soldiers and vehicles, so a

child could build up quite an army of invaders from outer space and brave defenders, and stage a fantastic battle defending earth from these monsters from outer space.

These toys came out back in the day when large retail department stores had 'exclusive' toy items and as such some playsets were only available at Sears. As for the lucky youngster whose parents could afford the asking price of \$8.89 for a 17-piece playset or \$4.89 for a 12-piece set, they could also get kitted up for total emersion into the battle with a bug-eyed helmet with shatterproof goggles in silver or black and wield a grenade pistol which fired grenades. There was a choice too – a chrome pistol with yellow grenades, a green pistol with red grenades and a yellow light projecting pistol.

Remco Industries

Inc. was an American toy company based in New Jersey from the 1940s until it went into bankruptcy in 1971. It was later acquired by Azrak-Hamway International in 1974. Remco Industries Inc was founded by two cousins, Isaac 'Ike' Heller and Saul Robbins. Their company began in a New York basement in the 1940s and their style of toys was post-War inspired with battleships, aircraft, motorised and remote-controlled toys. In its day, Remco manufactured a wide range of toys such as the Johnny Reb Cannon, Mighty Matilda Atomic Aircraft Carrier, Beatles figures and the tethered Electronic Falcon Plane. As remote controlled toys was its forte the company name was derived from those two words – remote control.

They acquired licences for various T V programme

franchises including *Star Trek*, and they made good use of Hamilton Invader figures and vehicles by re-packaging them in their *Star Trek* series with the word 'Astro' placed in front of the original product name. It was a practice known as 'label slapping' and something true Trekkies disapproved of. The spider and beetle were reissued by Remco with the large Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea playsets in the late 1960s. Remco's slogan was: *Every boy wants a Remco toy... and so do girls*. But seeing as Hamilton's Invaders only lasted one year, perhaps the girls didn't really want scuttling spiders.

Because Hamilton's Invaders were around for such a short period of time, you would be lucky to find very much in the way of collectables at toy fairs or even on the

internet. It's suggested that even damaged Hamilton's Invaders or items that don't work can still fetch a good price. In 2017 a collection of Hamilton's Invaders playsets were auctioned off at Hakes Auctions fetching good prices – especially a Giant Hamilton's Invaders set which sold for \$2,596. The set included the helicopter, the jeep, the tank, the bug and spider and six defenders. Other sets were also highly sought after. A boxed set featuring the Invader's cave fetched \$649; The Battle of Horrible Hamilton set fetched \$1,270; the Dwarf Tank fetched \$908 as did the Mosquito Jeep. Another set featuring a Dwarf tank and three defenders fetched \$384.

So it's definitely a good idea to keep a look out for those giant space bugs – even if you don't like creepy crawlies! ■

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The men behind the O gauge layout, left to right, Fred Phillips, Eric Harvey and Geoff Sanders. Photographs by Rob Tysall.

First featured:
JULY
2014!

Marvels in Malvern

Ann Evans goes in search of rarities at John and Julie Webb's toy fair.

John and Julie Webb held their first toy fair of the year on a bright Spring day in March in the picturesque countryside of the Malvern Hills. David Webb who runs the popular fairs was expecting their first show for 2014 to be a busy one and he wasn't disappointed. With 180 tables selling a fantastic array of toys, trains and collectables, there was plenty to see and buy, with stallholders reporting they'd had a good day.

Collectors and toy enthusiasts certainly had lots of choice and the *Gazette's* team of Ann and Rob was immediately

drawn to Roger Warren's stand. Local man, Roger had many fascinating and unusual items on offer and my beady eyes went straight to a boxed quiz priced up at £12 called Eamonn Andrews presents the Great Marvello. This was a real blast from the past, as this was a favourite toy from my own childhood that I'd totally forgotten about.

The questions and answers game was manufactured by Bell Toys and Games in the 1950s. The aim was for the Great Marvello figure to point to questions on one side of the board with his wand,

and the players would try and answer unaided. They could then check their answers by putting the magician on the circular mirror on the other side of the board and hey presto, the Great Marvello points to the correct answer as if by magic - hours of fun!

Some more wonderful old toys that brought back memories were Roger's marionettes because, as a child, I loved my Swiss mountain girl stringed puppet. Roger had one that was similar and another of Mr Turnip—a character from BBC children's television programme *Whirligig*, which was the first TV variety

programme specially for children and ran from 1950-1956. Mr Turnip was valued at £50 - £80.

Photographer Rob, who loves all things from the 1960s honed in on a wonderful Fantasy Island toy made by Japanese manufacturer, TPS. At £155, it was a collector's dream as the toy had been with the owner since she was a child and had never been played with. The wind-up bug was in full working order and, when operated, three squirrels being towed on a leaf at the rear would turn around.

"I like the weird and wacky," said Roger, proving

the point by showing us a boxed lime green plastic dodgem car, again from the '60s, made by Remark of England which he was asking £45 for. "To find something like this in its original box is unusual. And I think that's what makes my stand so interesting. Some of my toys are rare, some are not. I like to have a real mixed bag."

Another rare boxed game we found was a 007 Underwater Battle Tri-ang board game. Roger told us: "This is extremely rare, particularly as it has the James Bond figure. One recently sold for £400 because of its rarity value.



ABOVE Stall holder Roger Warren.

RIGHT Stringed puppet Mr Turnip.

TOP LEFT Stingray's Terrafish.

LEFT Fantasy Island wind up bug and twisting squirrels.



The box needs a little bit of repair but these hardly ever turn up in mint condition. If it was mint it would fetch around £800, so I'm asking £350 for this one."

Other delightful toys that caught our eye as we browsed the stalls included teddies, Corgi Toys, robots, motorbikes, Subbuteo, lead figures, lovely old tinsplate railway signals and a stack of Meccano magazines dating from the early 1960s when they would have cost one shilling and threepence (1/3d).

We also chatted to Paul Slater from the Black Country who runs Toy Time Models. Paul is a keen enthusiast of all things to do with Gerry Anderson and had some great collectables from the various futuristic programmes that kept us all glued to the television back in the '60s.

Among the delights on

his stand was a *Stingray* Terrafish made by Lakeside in the 1960s. This was a Japanese tinsplate, fiction drive toy that opens its mouth and wags its tail as it's pushed along. Paul was feeling quite pleased as he was eagerly awaiting delivery of a much wanted *Stingray* model manufactured by the same company. "I've been after one for quite some time and never seen one. Finally got one coming in the post," he commented.

He also had some wonderful old *Fireball XLS* annuals and a rare *Thunderbirds 5* battery operated craft that was still in good working order. Not surprisingly, photographer Rob had one of these when he was a boy, and it seemed unanimously agreed that while the toy bore no resemblance in scale to the TV craft, it was something

ABOVE LEFT All the fun of the fair.

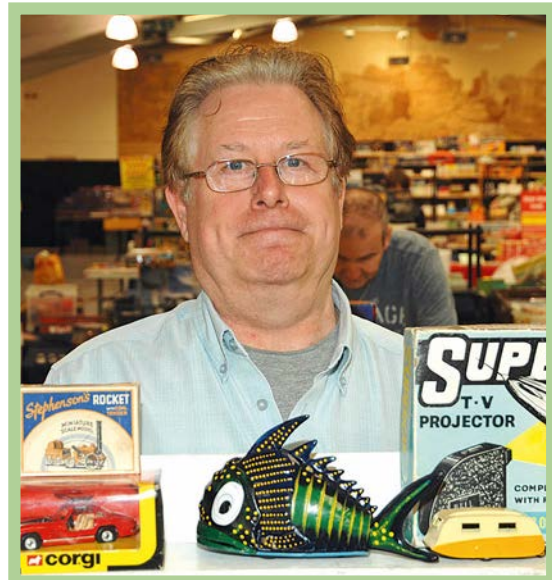
ABOVE Popular toy from the 1960s.

ABOVE RIGHT 18 x 8ft LMS pre war O gauge layout.

RIGHT Stall holder Paul Slater.

keenly played with by kids back in the day and no doubt sought after by certain collectors these days. Another delightful toy on Paul's stand was a *Supercar* TV projector complete with films and a projector. Made by Bell Toys, it was on sale for £65.

Amid all the stalls, was a superb 18ft x 8ft train layout, brought along by three model railway enthusiasts, Fred Phillips, Eric Harvey and Geoff Sanders. "This is a Hornby O gauge," Fred told us. "We all collect different regions but always make the layout specific to one railway. In



this case it's LMS and it's all pre war – the locos, the coaches, the signals and the big buildings."

The three friends have been into model trains for 32 years. They are

all engineers by trade although none of them ever worked on the railways. Their efforts in setting up the layout was certainly appreciated by visitors on the day. **CG**

Obsolete Z Best buys!

Hi folks! As our regular readers know I am a big fan of car boot sales and have bagged a fair few bootiful bargains over the years... hence the phrase 'lucky old Oz' has appeared regularly on these pages. With COVID-19 still greatly affecting the collecting scene I thought it would be nice to bring you a selection of some of my best car boot bargains while we wait to get back out there buying and selling again... which hopefully will be quite soon?

Enjoy this eclectic mix of my past joys and see you again next month...

1 This great little Victorian tinsplate change tray or tip tray was one of my best ever boot sale bargains, snapped up for a few quid around twenty years ago at a Leicestershire boot fair. It proved to be a very rare piece as little is known to exist from this relatively small back street brewery. Located on Lichfield St, Burton upon Trent, John Bell & Co was founded in 1840 and taken over by Salt & Co in 1902. It was then sold on again to Magee, Marshall & Co who transported the water from its well in Burton all the way to Bolton. How this delicate object survived in such good condition is truly amazing. Must be worth a hundred quid or more today?

2 There's little doubt that old diecast toys are rare to find with boxes at boot sales. In fact old toys are now hard to find full stop. You can imagine my delight therefore, when I set eyes on this classic Matchbox King-Size Scammell transporter at a boot sale near Grantham. With a very purposeful lean over a few shoulders I soon had it in my grasp and was pleasantly

surprised to hear the words. 'I'd like twenty pounds for that young man' from the old fellow sitting behind the stall - which really made my day as I think he was all of my age. Needless to say a crisp twenty pound note was soon flying in his direction... lucky old (or should I say young?) Oz!

3 Although I knew it was of little value I simply had to buy this little Kodak Instamatic and happily parted company with a couple of quid to own it back in the 1980s. It was a matter of pure nostalgia having been treated to one of these very cameras back in the mid-1960s to take to the Isle of Wight on a Scout camp. The first shot I took with it was the magnificent RMS Queen Mary docked in Southampton just before leaving for California. The Instamatic was a revolutionary camera designed by Kodak's chief designer Dean M. Paterson in 1963. They were so easy to load with fifty million of them being sold between 1963 and 1972. Still only worth a few quid!

4 I rate this little Lyons toffee tin showing HMS Rodney as one of the best tins I have found at a boot sale. It got me started on collecting the full set of six that appeared in this series in the mid-1930s. I'm only one short of that set now and although this little beauty came in at a remarkable ten pounds the other four have set me back just short of a grand which is why its not always a good idea to start collect sets!

5 July 30th 1966 remains one of the most unforgettable days of my life. It was the day when millions of folk saw England proudly lift the World Cup at Wembley Stadium. This

plush toy lion by Chad Valley is 'World Cup Willie,' the first ever official mascot of a World Cup tournament. He was designed by Reg Hoye who had previously illustrated books for Enid Blyton. He was commissioned by The Football Association to design a suitable mascot for England. I found Willie lying forlornly and on a table amongst a host of lesser known soft cudly beings around thirty years ago and gave him a loving new home. He cost 20 pence... those were the days! A good fifty quid's worth now I reckon?

6 To be honest I never really knew I'd bought this scarce Lesney milk cart, it appeared from nowhere. It was part of a job lot which I just took a gamble on. There was little time to examine the full contents of a box of toys discovered in an attic but judging by the bits I could see I sensed that it was all good stuff and handed over twenty five quid for the lot. I'm no gambler at all outside of collecting but I knew this was a no brainer. It was great fun sorting through this box of treasures and seeing so many toys come together. All in all one of the best boot sale buys I have ever made! What price is that milk cart today?

7 I saw a guy carrying this Wills's Woodbine enamel sign past my stall one sunny Sunday morning back in the 1990s and quickly dashed over to ask him if it was for sale. 'It might be mate, how much are you offering' he replied. 'I'll give you a ton for it - straight cash' I said and he replied 'It's yours'. I still have it on the wall today and still regard it as a great find. Mind you I later found out that it had been bought that day for a tenner so somebody had a nice little earner!

... worth about £450 now.

8 Everyone knows I love my badges and this one was worth every penny of the 50p I handed over for it at a boot sale in Derby many moons ago. It's a badge that I've always been keen on hanging to as it has such a great history. Bobby Bear first appeared as a cartoon character in the Daily Herald in 1919 and pre-dates Rupert Bear by one year. His erstwhile chums were Ruby Rabbit and Maisie Mole along with others. When the Bobby Bear Club was launched in the 1930s over 400,000 children signed up. Only worth about a tenner but still a lovely badge.

9 Tinsplate toys very rarely turn up at boot fairs and this is the only one I can say I've discovered from a genuine clear out stall. Short of a box and in played with condition it still works and was well worth a fiver. I later discovered that these 'Bluebirds,' which came in a variety of colours, were made for Chad Valley by Metal Box of Mansfield at its Sutton-in-Ashfield based factory. I'd guess its worth about £50 today.

10 So small, so delicate and so cheap. This tractor had spent its entire life on a model railway layout which, like so many others, finally ended up at a boot fair. I really couldn't believe its condition plus the fact that the tiny driver was still sitting there in his seat. No original box but hey, what can you expect for a pound? I really love these Lilliput series models made by Britains after WWII. The Lilliput Fordson tractor first appeared in 1950 numbered LV604 and was the first in the series to sport a box with a colour illustration... all I need now is the box! **CG**



6



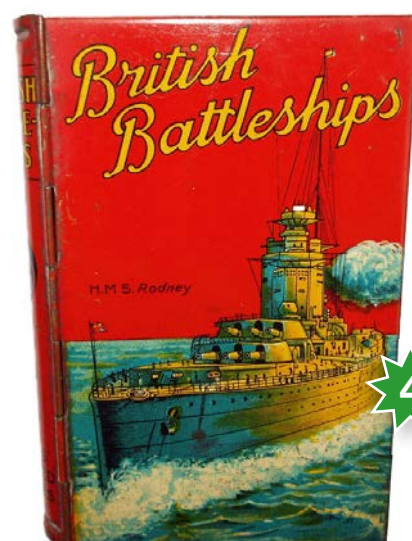
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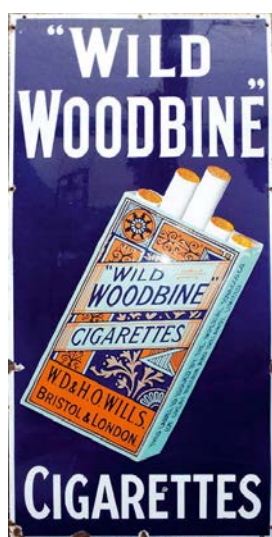
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4



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9



2

»EVENTS THIS MONTH

Due to the on-going situation and in accordance with Government advice, some swapmeets and auctions are now taking place. Please contact the auction houses and organisers directly for up to date information.

FAIRS

6 SEPTEMBER

- **Malvern**, Bulldog Fairs
01373 452857

20 SEPTEMBER

- **Exeter**, Bulldog Fairs
01373 452857

18 OCTOBER

- **Shepton Mallet**, Bulldog Fairs
01373 452857

AUCTIONS

17 JULY

- **Stockton-on-Tees**, Vectis
01642 750616

22 JULY

- **Warrington**, Warrington & Northwich Auctions, 01925 65883
- **London**, ProAuction
01761 414000

23 JULY

- **London**, ProAuction
01761 414000

24 JULY

- **Taunton**, Greenslade Taylor Hunt
01823 332525
- **Stockton-on-Tees**, Vectis
01642 750616

25 JULY

- **Hanham**, East Bristol Auctions
0117 967 1000

30 JULY

- **Stockton-on-Tees**, Vectis
01642 750616
- **Newbury**, Special Auction Services
01635 580595

31 JULY

- **Stockton-on-Tees**, Vectis
01642 750616

1 AUGUST

- **Canterbury**, The Canterbury Auction Galleries, 01227 763337

2 AUGUST

- **Canterbury**, The Canterbury Auction Galleries, 01227 763337

5 AUGUST

- **Leyburn**, Tennants
01969 623780

7 AUGUST

- **Bedford**, W & H Peacock
01234 266 366

10 AUGUST

- **Lewes**, Wallis & Wallis
01273 480208

12 AUGUST

- **Runcorn**, British Toy Auctions
01928 579032
- **Washington**, Toovey's
01903 891955

13 AUGUST

- **Stockton-on-Tees**, Vectis
01642 750616

14 AUGUST

- **Stockton-on-Tees**, Vectis
01642 750616

18 AUGUST

- **Market Harborough**, Gildings Auctioneers,
01858 410414
- **Stockton-on-Tees**, Vectis
01642 750616

19 AUGUST

- **Warrington**, Warrington & Northwich Auctions, 01925 65883
- **Stockton-on-Tees**, Vectis
01642 750616

20 AUGUST

- **Stockton-on-Tees**, Vectis
01642 750616
- **Sheffield**, Sheffield Auction Gallery
0114 281 6161

0114 281 6161

21 AUGUST

- **Stockton-on-Tees**, Vectis
01642 750616

22 AUGUST

- **Bury St Edmunds**, Lacy Scott & Knight
01284 748 623

25 AUGUST

- **Newbury**, Special Auction Services
01635 580595

29 AUGUST

- **Poole**, Cottees
01202 723177

5 SEPTEMBER

- **Amersham**, Excalibur Auctions
02036 330913

9 SEPTEMBER

- **Runcorn**, British Toy Auctions
01928 579032
- **Newbury**, Special Auction Services
01635 580595

10 SEPTEMBER

- **Chippenham**, Wessex Auction Rooms
01249 720888

11 SEPTEMBER

- **Taunton**, Greenslade Taylor Hunt
01823 332525
- **Chippenham**, Wessex Auction Rooms
01249 720888

16 SEPTEMBER

- **Warrington**, Warrington & Northwich Auctions, 01925 65883
- **Warwick**, Warwick & Warwick,
01926 499031

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Visits by our valuers are possible anywhere in the country or abroad, usually within 48 hours, in order to value larger collections. Please telephone for details.

ADVISORY DAYS

We are staging a series of advisory days in all areas of the UK, please visit our website or telephone for details.

EXCELLENT PRICES

Because of the strength of our customer base we are in a position to offer prices that we feel sure will exceed your expectations.

ACT NOW

Telephone or email Richard Beale today with details of your property.



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