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11-PAGES OF SALE RESULTS INSIDE



COLLECTORS GAZETTE

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hobby news
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Matchbox FIREFIGHTERS

A nostalgic look at those classic Lesney fire appliances



PLUS

TOYS OF THE 1970S

Childhood fun
from decades past

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Ideas to fill your collecting
downtime or idle moments



» THE 'L' WORD

Discover one of the
more unusual gauges of
model railways as we
look at LEGO trains

» TOP TRI-ANG

Remembering the more
exotic collectables from
the vintage Tri-ang
Railways range

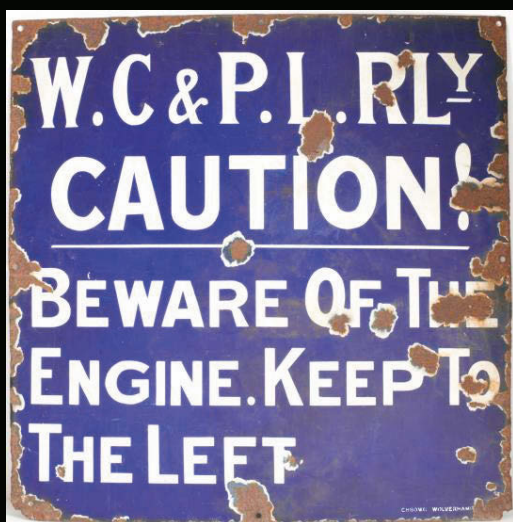


Glorious Trains

13 April and 29 June



Sold in Trains Galore in December for £1,100



A rare enamelled iron warning sign from the Weston, Clevedon & Portishead Railway, a rare early half-flanged BR totem and a Tyer's No. 9 aluminium 'A' key token from the West Somerset Railway, coming up in Glorious Trains

Our Trains Galore auction in December achieved excellent results for railwayana, including £4,930 for a group of Walker's Patent Train Describers that we found in a garage. Our Glorious Trains auction includes these rare signs and other interesting railwayana. We are now taking in entries for this and seven further auctions in 2021, so do get in touch if you would like a visit, following government health guidance of course. Our auctions are prospering online only. We have offered in-house packing and posting for many years and now send out more than 10,000 parcels from 50 sales every year. We also run a rota that allows for safe collection of purchased lots in person, if required.

Please contact: Bob Leggett, Graham Bilbe or Hugo Marsh
on + 44 (0)1635 580595 or mail@specialauctionservices.com

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■ AUCTION REVIEW

Rare bus hailed in Oz



This very scarce Matchbox bus is due to go under the hammer in April: stay tuned for the result!

In Australia, the Trains, Planes and Automobiles auction house was very excited at the start of 2021, for they had been consigned a Matchbox bus. Not any old bus, though: this was a first series No.5a green bus. This particular model was produced expressly for the Australian market in the 1950s and is now considered extremely rare. It sported "Buy Matchbox Series" paper labels on both sides, with No 5 cast on the front destination board.

The auction house's Rob Jones relates that this represents only the third example he's come across in the past decade, and it is in unusually good condition, with its original box. It is being offered for sale in April by the family of the original purchaser. Ramsay's valuation of this item is £4,000-5,000 and Rob reckons that around Aus\$10,000 would be par for the course.

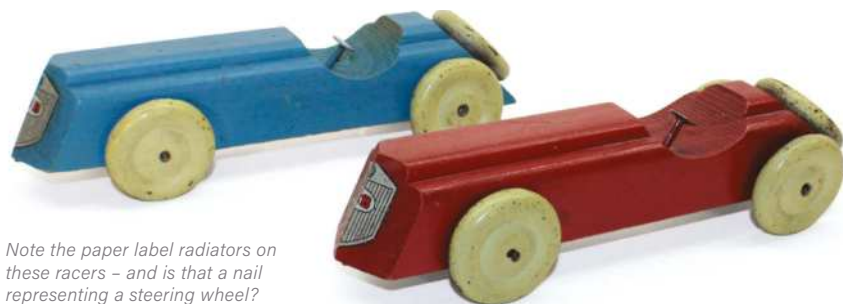
His most recent auction featured no small number of Lesney/Matchbox models. In the Models of

Yesteryear series, a Y2-1 1911 B Type London Bus was the version with 8 over 4 side windows. In excellent shape, and in a good box, it sold for Aus\$100. Another Yesteryear, the Y8-2 1912 Sunbeam Motorcycle with Sidecar, in a chromed finish, also attracted the bidders; again excellent with a good box, this achieved Aus\$90.

Slightly different were the Matchbox Collectibles "Models of Australian Art" Set. This involved two 1926 Ford TT Vans, featuring artwork by Pro Hart and Jenny Kee. In a limited edition (No. 5 of 1,000), the key element was the outer

sleeve that was signed and illustrated by Pro Hart (one of only 20 signed at the launch, and given to dealers). They sold for Aus\$380.

An unusual pair of CB (Belgium manufacture) pre-war wood and metal racing cars sped off to make Aus\$140, neatly exceeding their estimate: each was around 200mm in length. Finally, the big stuff: a Bing O gauge three-rail 18V LNER 0-4-0 Locomotive and tender, numbered 8851 and finished in green, looked lovely – and it worked, too. It went under the hammer for Aus\$260. ■



Note the paper label radiators on these racers – and is that a nail representing a steering wheel?

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Turn to page 8 to find out more...

■ AUCTION REVIEW

Something old... and new!

The Auction Centre's recent sale fielded an array of collectables, ranging from the near antique to the quite modern. All of which simply serves to underline the fact that collectables come in all shapes and sizes, as well as ages.

For old, how about a trusty boxed Meccano No.2 Constructor Car? These models are ever popular on the collecting

scene, especially when in good condition and complete. If the prices of spare parts on eBay are anything to go by, it's possibly more profitable to dismantle the vehicle and sell it bit by bit! The model sold was in red and blue, boxed and complete with instruction leaflet and Hornby ephemera. It made a healthy £850.

Fast forward to something more modern in the shape of a built Hachette 1/12 scale

Routemaster Bus from the Hachette "Build Your Own Classic Routemaster" magazine series. A highly detailed model, it was complete with several figures and was adjudged mint. It was so realistic in the photograph that it could have been mistaken for the real thing. A worthy £420 took this intricate replica home.

As for the 1970s and the 1980s, a collection of over 20 mainly vintage original Star Wars weapons

and accessories made a surprising £240. For comic buffs, an issue of Marvel's "The New Mutants", No.98 dating from February 1991, was deemed to be in excellent condition and featured the first appearance of Deadpool, Gideon and Domino. This closed on £220.

An unmarked golden mohair teddy bear believed to be a 1920s Chad Valley 'Smiler' bear was a cute lot. Standing approximately 46cms in height, the jointed

Only 30 years old but this example was highly sort after.

bear had a m e m b e r a n d b l a c k g l a s s e y e s with a horizontally stitched brown nose. A growling variety and in good condition, he made £150. ■



■ AUCTION REVIEW

Plastic and tinplate do well

Scalextric and Marklin were the big sellers at the last Wallis and Wallis auction, which featured almost 450 lots in all.

Slot car devotees were delighted to see some real gems appear: lot 81, the Austin Mini Cooper in red, sold for £65, whilst another example, this time in green, achieved the same result. A Ferrari 250GT Berlinetta was simply stunning: this model, without lighting, made £60. The big money,

though, was spent on the 1933 Alfa Romeo in blue with red wheels; although not perfect, it was still a very presentable example and realised £100. Elsewhere, £360 was the top bid on the 6-litre Auto Union in the commonly found custard yellow bodywork, with green wheels. The Auto Union, whilst not exactly beautiful, remains very elusive.

Star of the show, though, had to be the early Marklin horse-drawn fire engine. A lovely example of the

metal and tinplate maker's art, the model, dating from around 1902, was complete with spirit burner and plenty of copper finishing. Although it lacked a few small items (which the auctioneers believed could be replicated easily enough), it generated plenty of interest before the hammer finally fell on £6,200.

For the automobilist (or more specifically, collectors of what is termed street furniture), a superb black and white vintage road sign in



This Scalextric Auto Union is coveted by the slotcar fraternity; presumably not too many were made in its day.

aluminium bearing the designation Low Bridge made £240. Such signs as these have usually suffered the ravages of time but this example was exceptional, the more so since all the little reflective studs were in place, items that usually go missing.

And what of the diecasts? One of the more notable had to be a window boxed Spot-On Morris Minor in deep blue. The much-loved Moggy is always collectable, whatever the manufacturer, and this one proved no exception, finishing on £85. ■

NEW RELEASES THIS MONTH



IXO ASTON MARTIN DB4 COUPE RED 1958

Price: £24.99 Scale: 1/43 Release: out now

A great value replica of the beautiful DB4. Great finish and some lovely detail. Superb interior, easily visible through the open window.

» www.ayrey.co.uk

KING AND COUNTRY THE ROMAN WAR DOG SET

Price: \$59.00 Scale: 1/43

Release: late March

In Roman times 'Cane Corso' dogs were used in 'blood sports' such as tiger and lion fighting. This set includes the dog and his handler with sword drawn moving towards the enemy.

» www.kingandcountry.com



More new releases reviewed at ccofgb.co.uk

■ AUCTION REVIEW

Thunderbirds are go at Vectis



The recent Vectis sales threw up some interesting prices for sci-fi collectables, prompting the question whether the sector is on a roll.

Examples? A Dinky 101 Thunderbird 2 first issue, finished in green, was generally near mint and was complete with a great display plinth and packaging pieces. A colour folded leaflet showing *Thunderbirds* models to one side and cars to the other was included. This effectively doubled its estimate, realising £850. The companion model (Dinky 106) in metallic blue is much more common, albeit less desirable.

Again complete and with a colour folded leaflet, this was taken to £320.

Elsewhere, a boxed white Oldsmobile Thrushbaster *Man from UNCLE* car was as good as they come, and contained the Waverley ring, together with a club leaflet. This, the export model, isn't easy to find on these shores, which may have accounted for the £660 finishing bid. As for the Husky Juniors Batman and Robin set, that was in a different league entirely: an early issue with grey knobbly wheels, it received much attention, with the winning bidder's wallet some £1,800 the worse for wear once the hammer

fell. And then there was the bigger version: the Corgi 267 Batmobile was a first issue in black with red bat hubs, featured blue tinted windows and came with Batman and Robin figures. Near mint, with its missiles on the sprue and boasting impeccable packaging, this raised the roof at £3,000, or seven times the upper estimate! Holy smoke!

Finally, old but gold: the Dinky 28e pre-war (Type 1) Ensign Cameras Delivery Van in orange, with gold washed wheels, was only good to good plus but it caused a stir nonetheless. It was snapped up for a resounding £3,360. ■

■ HOBBY NEWS



Sad news at Airfix

We are saddened to report the passing of Hornby's Darrell Burge, who died suddenly on 10th February. Darrell was well-known for working extensively on the Airfix and, more recently, Corgi brands.

Lyndon Davies, CEO of Hornby, described the news as "very sad and very sudden". He commented: "Darrell had Airfix running through his veins, working at Humbrol before he joined Hornby in Margate in 2006. Working with both the Airfix and the Humbrol brands, he was highly respected throughout the industry. He was full of fun and energy, many would have met with him at shows and events across the country. Our heartfelt condolences go

out to his wife, Jane, his children Emily, Martin and Gavin and his granddaughter, Oriana."

Darrell enjoyed a long and successful career at Hornby. As product manager at Airfix, he oversaw the revitalisation of Airfix products, and the brand as a whole over the last decade, and was a popular member of the Hornby team. More recently, we had come to know Darrell and work with him and his team covering the Corgi range. As a keen VW Camper owner, he had personally overseen the recent new tooling – the fruits of which will soon be seen in the shops.

Collectors Gazette, and our whole collecting team, would like to add our sincerest condolences to Darrell's family, colleagues at Hornby and friends. ■



MATRIX SCALE MODELS

1953 DE SOTO ADVENTURER 1

Price: £95.00 Scale: 1/43 Release: out now
Another version of the De Soto, with black interior, and a high level of detail, down to the tiny "Ghia" motifs on the front wings. Another beauty.

» www.matrixscalemodels.com

IXO VOLKSWAGEN POLO GTI R5, 2018 RALLY SPAIN, P. SOLBERG
Price: £35.99 Scale: 1/43 Release: out now
Just look at those body graphics! Another masterpiece of printing by Ixo, with all the usual fine details to the mudflaps, wheel rims etc.
» www.ayrey.co.uk



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■ HOBBY NEWS

1960s Corgi Toys are back



February saw the launch of a new range of reproduction models that was first test-launched late in 2019. Now the range is officially getting under way, with another run of the tester model to set the whole series off.

We all remember the sound on a sweltering hot summer's day. The evocative and hypnotic Wall's jingle accompanied by the pattering sound of a Ford Thames van's hard-working engine as it drives down your street.

Few diecast vehicles have so successfully evoked that sense of nostalgia as Corgi's classic 1966 Wall's Ice Cream Van model. Catalogue No.474, it's

one of the all-time greats. An essential item in any diecast enthusiast's collection.

Original working models are extremely hard to come by and change hands for hundreds of pounds today. But, by popular demand, Blue 14 has teamed up with Corgi to bring you this authentic, 100% accurate replica, complete with reproduction box and colour insert card. Incredibly, the famous wind-up mechanism is also included. Give it a twist and all those golden summer memories will come flooding back as the authentic chimes ring out.

Corgi sold almost 150,000 of this colourful classic from 1966 until its withdrawal in 1968, but precious few survive with working chimes.

This authentic working, musical replica, only available via this new offer, is a fabulous tribute to our great British model-making heritage, and it can be yours for just £1.99. Your officially licensed diecast model will arrive complete with an authentic facsimile box, inner display card, full set of decals and a Corgi-approved Certificate of Authenticity. You could also receive a retro Corgi Model Club Badge.

This is the first of many as there are plenty more classic 1960s Corgi Toys lined up for authentic reproduction over the coming months. To find out more and to order, call 08000 55 77 44 or visit www.corgi199.co.uk. ■

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MAY 2021 ISSUE



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The postal vans which are popular with diecast fans

» GERMAN TINPLATE

Assessing the contribution made by German toy manufacturers

» GUIDES & EVENTS

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ON SALE 16 APRIL
www.ccofgb.co.uk

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FIRE REPLICAS MACK R TANDEM AXLE TRACTOR

Price: \$269.00 Scale: 1/50 Release: out now
Available in 6 different colour combinations, mounted to a base with etched name plate and protective acrylic cover.
» www.firereplicas.com



LEGO CREATOR PORSCHE 911

Price: £119.00 Release: out now

Choose to build either the Turbo model with its turbo-charged engine or the Targa with its iconic Targa bar and a removable roof that stores under the hood. Both cars feature authentic details like the iconic front and rear bumpers, angled headlights, and number plates.

» www.lego.com



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the vintage Tri-ang

New from Oxford Diecast

OXFORD COMMERCIALS



Bedford CF Ice Cream Van - Jordans
REF: 43CF004 SCALE: 1/43
DUE: Q2/2021 PRICE: £16.95



Mobile Trailer - M. Manze Jellyed Eels
REF: 76TR018 SCALE: 1/76
DUE: Q2/2021 PRICE: £11.96

OXFORD HAULAGE COMPANY

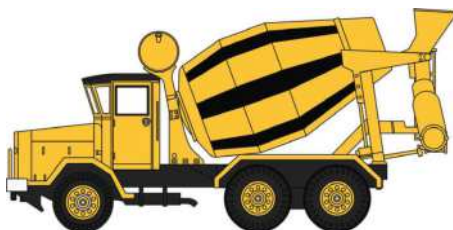


Scania 143 40ft Fridge Trailer - William Armstrong
REF: 76S143005 SCALE: 1/76
DUE: Q2/2021 PRICE: £23.95

OXFORD CONSTRUCTION



Scammell LD55 Dumper Truck - NCB
REF: 76ACD002 SCALE: 1/76
DUE: Q4/2021 PRICE: £21.95



Yellow/Black AEC 690 Concrete Mixer
REF: 76ACM002 SCALE: 1/76
DUE: Q4/2021 PRICE: £21.95



Liebherr LTM1350 Crane
REF: 76LTM001 SCALE: 1/76
DUE: Q4/2021 PRICE: £44.95

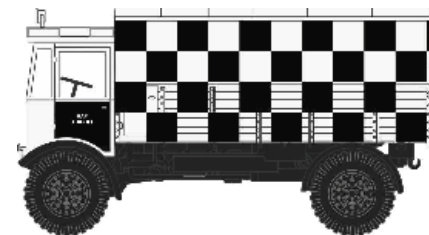
OXFORD MILITARY



Land Rover Lightweight - RAF Police, Akrotiri
REF: 43LRL010 SCALE: 1/43
DUE: Q2/2021 PRICE: £16.95

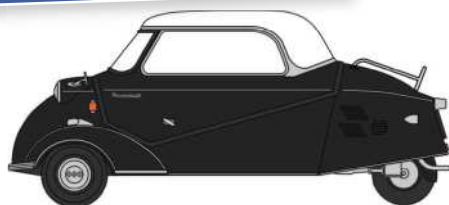


Austin Champ - Royal Military Police, Berlin 1954/5
REF: 76AC003 SCALE: 1/76
DUE: Q2/2021 PRICE: £6.95



AEC Matador - RAF Tripoli, Libya Desert Rescue Team
REF: 76AEC020 SCALE: 1/76
DUE: Q2/2021 PRICE: £12.95

OXFORD AUTOMOBILE COMPANY



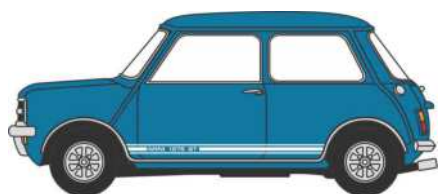
Messerschmitt KR200 Bubble Top - Black
REF: 18MBC007 SCALE: 1/18
DUE: Q2/2021 PRICE: £29.95



Ford Cortina Crayford (Open) - Dragoon Red
REF: 43CCC003 SCALE: 1/43
DUE: Q2/2021 PRICE: £25.95



Jaguar MkIX Imperial - Maroon
REF: 43JAG9005 SCALE: 1/43
DUE: Q2/2021 PRICE: £23.95



Mini 1275GT - Teal Blue
REF: 76MINGT006 SCALE: 1/76
DUE: Q2/2021 PRICE: £5.75



New Defender 110 Explorer - Santorini Black
REF: 76ND110002 SCALE: 1/76
DUE: Q2/2021 PRICE: £7.95



New Defender 110X - Eiger Grey
REF: 76ND110X002 SCALE: 1/76
DUE: Q2/2021 PRICE: £7.95

The most collectable Tri-ang

Mark Nolan trawls through the more exotic products from the Tri-ang Railways range.



ABOVE
Tri-ang Railways Australian NSWGR R450/R451 2-car suburban electric cars, powered and dummy unit in brown with grey roofs, unboxed, sold by Vectis for £280.

In the early 1960s most boys were highly tuned in to the model trains available. For most of us they were invariably OO gauge. Tri-ang was cheap, colourful and well marketed, but there was a certain snobbery about their use of plastic.

Market leader Hornby was part of the Meccano empire. In a time when image and branding was less pervasive than now, Meccano were actually ahead of the game. Their managing director, George Jones, had been their marketing man and understood the business well. The introduction of Hornby-Dublo was one of his successes, though interrupted by the Second World War.

APPROVED STOCKISTS

If you wanted to sell Hornby trains in the early 20th century it was all very controlled. A man would come round to assess your business, and your suitability to be associated with their products. If there was another 'Approved Stockist' close by, you would be

refused, in order to protect the incumbent retailer's sales.

Tri-ang was also part of a toy empire; Lines Bros. As a newcomer to the toy train business, Rovex/Tri-ang may have been more 'gung ho', but they still practised what they called 'maintained retail prices' as it was considered in the best interests of all concerned. Tri-ang prices today are still buoyant thanks to the Boomers who remember them with affection. Let's take a look at what flutters the heart of the Tri-ang Railways collector who has nearly everything.

SYDNEY SUBURBAN

The Tri-ang Sydney suburban was among a number of Australia-specific models made during the 1960s by Moldex in Melbourne after the company was acquired by Lines Bros. The NSWGR suburban electric motor car and driving trailer car used moulds from the discontinued Tri-ang EMU, modified by Moldex. The Sydney suburban was based on 1955 units which were nicknamed

'Sputniks' after the Russian spacecraft. In their final years, these cars were also known as 'red rattlers' due to the way the windows and window shutters rattled in their frames. The Sydney suburban unit is one of the most popular imports for Tri-ang collectors and commands high prices.

DOUBLE-ENDED LOCO

The Tri-ang R257 Transcontinental double-ended loco was a freelance design similar to many North American and Australasian outlines. Part of the Transcontinental range, it was also offered as an overhead electric loco with twin pantographs. They were produced in various colour schemes, including TransAustralia blue and yellow, plus a two-tone green version. However the green and orange version is one of the most rare, selling for £110 upwards.

BLUE TT DIESEL

The smaller range of Tri-ang TT models contains a

disproportionate number of rarities. The T96 A1A-A1A diesel locomotive in blue, as opposed to BR green, is extremely scarce with only 50 believed to have been produced. A few blue versions were produced without BR emblems for the French market, hence the label on the box is in French; 'A1A-A1A Diesel Loco Electrique Habille Bleu'. Blue A1A's are believed to have been produced in two batches during October and November 1961. One reference model sold recently for an unprecedented £2350.

Another TT rarity is any MK1 coach in blue and grey as TT was discontinued around the time of the change to BR's corporate image.

COMBINATION ROAD AND RAIL SET

The first Tri-ang train set to mix trains and Minic Motorways cars was RM.A, priced at 219/6 (nearly £11). It was advertised in a separate leaflet tucked in with the 1964 Tri-ang Railways catalogue.

The set came in an unusual

BELOW

The Tri-ang R254 Steeple cab electric loco was a convincing freelance design. This one made £125. The same model in maroon was only made for a six month period.



upright box with the contents individually packaged. It contained an 0-6-0 Class 3F loco and tender with a BR 1st/2nd Composite and a Brake 2nd coach in maroon livery. On top of this you got a Rolls Royce Silver Cloud and a Jaguar 3.4. The oval of roadway included two level crossings, giving a layout sized 4'6" x 3'9". Otherwise known as the 'Crash and Smash' set, this is very rarely seen complete, let alone boxed. An unused ex-shop set sold recently for £690.

ROCKETS

Tri-ang's original R346 Rocket and coaches was a bold move for the company. Not particularly rare, the tiny model was nevertheless easy to damage, so anything in good condition is likely to be keenly contested.

Battle Space and Nato military models are another rich seam for Tri-ang aficionados. The range of Tri-ang military action models peaked in 1967. By this time they were rebranded as Tri-ang Hornby. The R571 G10 'Q' car was a khaki version of the exploding wagon containing a missile launcher with two rockets; one of the rarest items in the Battle Space range.

COMPLETELY KNOCKED DOWN

CKD stood for 'Completely Knocked Down' and the kits always looked tempting in the catalogue. Mainly featuring pairs of coaches, locos were also offered as CKD. An unmade CKD Princess made £225 recently. Another valuable Princess is the first Rovex version with roller pickups.

THE EMU

The R156 Electric Multiple Unit is based on a Southern Railway

pre-war 4 Sub unit. It featured a working headcode light, which was pretty advanced for a mid 1950s toy, and a fine level of moulded detail. Just as well as the units are spectacularly lacking in design cues apart from the domed roof and bow front. The motor coach and dummy trailer came as a two car set. Later versions featured BR crests and interior seating. Discontinued in the early 60s, it continues to fascinate collectors. The coaches needed to lengthen the train are simply Tri-ang SR green suburban coaches. Normally a Tri-ang coach goes for £5-10, but as they're EMU centre cars, they're worth nearer £35.

STEEPLE CAB LOCO

The Tri-ang R254 Steeple cab electric loco was a convincing freelance design. A switch in the roof allowed the power supply to be changed from the wheels to the pantograph above the cab. A sophisticated model in its day, it has only improved with age. The loco was also made in maroon for a starter set with a non-operating plastic pantograph. There is also a BR maroon version with operating pantograph which was only made for a six month period.

The level of detail with which Tri-ang managed to imbue their plastic mouldings continues to surprise. The steeple cab loco demonstrates this in a small body; the grills and rivet detail could easily have been omitted, but they absolutely make the model. The same applies to the EMU and many other mouldings. Roof detail, coach ends, many Tri-ang products carry more detail than necessary for a mere toy. All in all, these products are a credit to the Margate toolmakers, which means the trains stand up well to close scrutiny over 60 years later. **CG**

**ABOVE**

The R571 G10 'Q' car was a khaki version of the exploding wagon containing a missile launcher with two rockets; one of the rarest items in the Battle Space range.

**ABOVE**

The Tri-ang TT A1A-A1A diesel locomotive was more often found in BR green. The blue version had no BR crest as it was for the French market. This one sold for an unbelievable £2350.

**ABOVE**

Another version of the double ended overhead electric loco in two tone green. The versions without pantographs were sold as diesel locos.

**LEFT**

CKD stood for 'Completely Knocked Down' and they always looked tempting in the catalogue. This unmade CKD Princess loco sold for £225.

TRI-ANG RAILWAYS TIMELINE

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1952 - Start of Tri-ang Railways although Lines Bros. bought Rovex earlier. • 1953 - Track joinings and couplings made universal. • 1954 - Moved production to new Margate factory. • 1955 - Legendary No. 1 catalogue inserted in train sets. • 1956 - Lines Bros. take over Moldex | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ltd to produce trains in Australia • 1957 - Introduction of smaller TT range. • 1958 - Series 3 track introduced. • 1962 - Launch of upgraded Super 4 track. • 1964 - Lines Bros. absorb Meccano. • 1965 - Tri-ang morphs into 'Tri-ang Hornby'. |
|--|---|

Through ^{1970s} the years

Ann Evans continues her journey through the decades. *Images by Rob Tysall.*

The 1970s saw the introduction of some sensational toys that have stayed with us for the last 50 years. Iconic toys from films and TV series with cult followings, sometimes selling for tens of thousands of pounds. Super 70s indeed!

Video games first came into our lives in the 1970s. The concept had been around since August 1966 with Ralph H Baer designing the hardware for such a thing. The Odyssey, manufactured by Magnavox, is said to be the first commercial home video game console. With lots of wires, control knobs and joysticks, we were all fascinated by the fun of batting dots back and forth across the

television screen or landing a little aircraft on a clear runway after destroying a skyline of buildings!

From those early consoles, things as we know, quickly developed as technology improved to the amazing standards we see today. As for those early Atari consoles and the like, perhaps they will be valued in toy museums, but as collector's items they don't seem to have a great deal of value.

Plenty of toys from the 70s are still of great value, however. The 1970s was the era for action figures from the many television series that became so popular: *The Six Million Dollar Man*, *Bionic Woman*, *Charlies Angels*, *Starsky and Hutch* and *Fawlty Towers* to name a few. And soft toys became

collectable for the cartoons of the time, such as *Dick Dastardly and Muttley* which although came out originally at the end of the 1960s, were repeated throughout the 70s and episodes are still being enjoyed by today's generation.

Doctor Who had been sending kids scurrying off to hide behind the settee since 1963, and the show continued to gather fans with the arrival of Jon Pertwee as the third doctor and Tom Baker as the fourth. Plastic figures, models of the Tardis and Daleks and other aliens became the prized possessions of countless youngsters, who for many have continued to be fans through to the present day. For some, collecting *Doctor Who* memorabilia has been a lucrative move.

A *Doctor Who* Dalek made in 1966 was sold off by a private British collector in 2016. It was one of 67 items on sale. Beating off bids from around the world, it sold to a London collector for £38,500, with the entire collection fetching £90,000 in total.

Not quite in that league but nevertheless showing the value of rare *Doctor Who* toys, was a 7-inch Bendy rubber Dalek produced in the mid-1960s. At the time it would have cost 10s 6d and usually played with until it fell apart. However, one that survived fetched £1,500 at auction 50 years later.

The original American TV series *Star Trek* created by Gene Roddenberry, which had run from 1966 to 1969 in the US, gathered British fans through that original series being shown over here and

the subsequent *Star Trek Revival* in the late 1970s and beyond!

Actual props from *Star Trek* have fetched tens of thousands of pounds at auctions over the years. According to Profiles in History, who specialise in auctioning Hollywood memorabilia, two top-selling items have been Mr Spock's season 3 tunic which sold for \$123,250 in 2003; and the command chair and platform from the original series which sold for \$304,750 a year earlier. While a fully working model of the Starship Enterprise with internal neon lighting was sold at Christie's action in 2006 for £452,000.

The 1970s also saw the launch of the phenomenon *Star Wars* created by George Lucas, introducing us to the most wonderful characters of Darth Vader, Luke Skywalker, Han Solo, Princess Leia, Chewbacca, C-3PO, R2-D2, storm troopers, Boba Fett and other classic characters and their spaceships. In 2020 the *Star Wars* franchise was estimated at US \$70 billion, making it the fifth highest grossing media franchise of all time!

The *Guinness Book of World Records* reports that the most expensive *Star Wars* action figure sold at an online auction was a Boba Fett rocket-firing action figure which sold for £144,939. It was auctioned by Hake's Auctions in November 2019. It was a prototype rocket-firing bounty hunter Boba Fett made by toy company Kenner in 1979 but never released. Most of the prototypes had been destroyed in the factory and only a handful have ever come on the market.

Kenner's decision to abandon



LEFT
If you have one of these you could be sitting on a small fortune.
BELOW
A Darth Vader collectable model.





ABOVE
A high valued model van from Dinky.

production of an Obi-Wan Kenobi figure with double-telescoping lightsabre also resulted in a massive sale at Hake's auctions in 2017 where this toy fetched £58,000. The company stopped production because of a safety issue with the telescope. This, along with the fact that it was one of only a few left in the box with a hole unpunched at the top, aided the high bids on the item. Similarly, a Luke Skywalker boxed figure, also with a double-telescoping lightsabre made big bucks at auction, fetching £19,000.

The 1970s also saw the launch of one of the best-selling toys of all time – the Rubik's Cube. This 3-D puzzle was invented in 1974 by Hungarian sculptor and professor of architecture, Ernő Rubik and originally called the Magic Cube. When Ernő first made it, he didn't actually know how to solve it, and it took him a month to work it out.

With six coloured sides, 27 pieces and 54 outer surfaces, there are over 43 quintillion (that's 43,252,003,274,489,856,000 to be precise) different possible configurations. Although it's said that every single position of a Rubik's Cube can be solved in twenty moves or less.

According to the *Guinness Book of World Records*, the fastest time achieved to solve a Rubik's Cube stands at 4.22 seconds, achieved by Feliks Zemdegs. More than 350 million Rubik's Cubes have been sold to date.

Other fun toys that emerged in the 1970s include Weebles – you'll remember the catchphrase, 'Weebles wobble but they don't fall down'. They have been wobbling since 1971. Connect Four officially emerged on the toy market in 1974. And Hungry Hippos have been noisily snapping up those little white balls since 1978.

The *Muppet Show* came to British television from America from 1976-1981. They had been

created by Jim Henson in 1955 and had been rising in fame through adverts, late night TV and appearances on *Sesame Street*. The show won numerous awards and in 1979 came *The Muppet Movie*. The iconic characters such as Kermit the Frog, Miss Peggy, Animal, Fozzy Bear and Gonzo have inspired collectors for more than 40 years.

Meanwhile, Dinky Toys had been manufacturing the entire spectrum of vehicles, real and fictitious from passenger, sports and racing cars to buses, farm vehicles, military, emergency vehicles, aeroplanes, spacecraft and vehicles from TV series. But despite all that, they couldn't compete with Corgi, and Dinky Toys ceased in the 1970s. Corgi continued their successful production of rally cars, film and TV-related cars and more, and in 1970 introduced their Whizzwheels range.

Both Dinky and Corgi have seen amazing sales of rare models over the years. A pre-war Dinky WE Boyce delivery van was sold at a Vectis auction in 1994 for more than £19,000.

On the model railway scene, Z scale railways were introduced by Marklin in 1972 at the Nuremberg Toy Fair. Marklin's head design engineer, Helmut Killian was the man behind the idea, calling it Z scale as that was the last letter of the German and English alphabets, and there never would be a smaller commercial model railway scale.

In 1978, a Märklin Z scale locomotive pulling six coaches made its entry into the *Guinness Book of World Records* by running non-stop for 1,219 hours, and travelling a distance of 720 km (450 miles) before the train stopped due to failure of the motor.

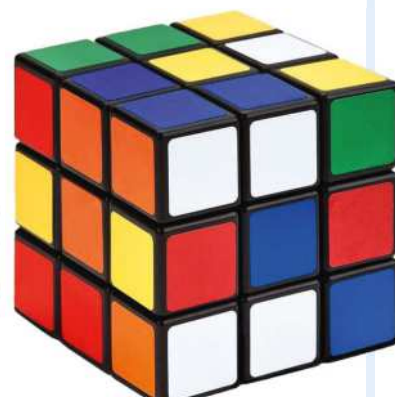
The 1970s certainly was a decade for some iconic collectable toys! **CG**



ABOVE
A model from the iconic comedy series.



ABOVE
Wacky Races' Dick Dastardly and Muttley.



ABOVE
Definitely a top toy, the Rubik's Cube.



ABOVE
One of the Muppets more popular characters, Animal.



ABOVE
The Bionic Man.

RIGHT
Kids (and adults alike) still love Hungry Hippos today!





Slots of fun

In part two of his mini-series, **Alwyn Brice** catches up with some of the lesser-known makers who flourished in the 1960s, arguably slot racing's golden decade.

As the Sixties got into their stride, under a haze of sweet smelling smoke and heady incense (not to mention embroidered jeans and Cuban heels), so slot car racing increasingly seized the public's imagination. For "public", read adolescent boys in the main, although certain grown-ups were also very interested in this new development. And if it was Scalextric that dominated the headlines and comics (PR was evidently the company's long suit), that wasn't to say that others weren't also making hay.

The main competition for the UK, though, was from across the Pond: Revell, Monogram, Strombecker and Russkit were all active proponents.

Of the four companies Russkit (founded by Jim Russell, in 1963) was the most cutting edge. The company gained immense kudos through introducing lightweight, vacuum-formed bodies for its cars but is also credited with being the first to bring to market a hinged chassis, the trigger controller and perhaps most important of all, a drop-arm guide that led to better track behaviour. The company rode the US slot car wave until the end of the 1960s.

KITS AND BITS

Like Airfix, kit supplier Revell

also saw the value in transferring its injection moulding skills to serve the racing track, and it entered the fray in 1964. Both 1/32 and 1/24 scale models were offered although the latter scale was less popular and typically the preserve of the bigger club racetracks that were to be found up and down the country. Kicking off with the most American car of all, the Shelby Cobra, Revell would later add the likes of Aston Martin, Chevrolet and Mercedes. Kits were easily assembled and contained everything for the aspiring racer; they were also competitively priced. For Revell, though, the star's ascendancy was brief and by 1968 it knocked on the head its 1/24 production line.

If Revell was likely to be found

in your local model shop, so too was Strombecker. The Illinois-based company (originally Strombeck-Becker) was actually started by Swedish immigrants in the 1920s. Its hobby arm acquired by Dowst Brothers in 1961, there followed a very successful slot car output, commencing with the Maserati 250F. By 1963 some 500,000 units had been sold and interesting to note, the company's cars were offered in both ready to race (RTR) as well as knock-down format, which required assembly. Again, both 1/32 and 1/24 scale models were marketed, although the latter production died in 1964.

As for Monogram, another company with a kit-building background, it brought out its first slot racers in 1964, again

in two scales. Both brass and aluminium were used in the chassis and anyone with average modelling skills was able to assemble the product. The company went on to market its own track and accessories but like Revell, by 1968 it had given up manufacturing these lines.

FLYING THE FLAG

In the face of the US invasion, several British companies picked up the gauntlet.

One enterprise that many will have forgotten was our very own railway expert, Wrenn: its Formula 152 was being marketed around 1960. Wrenn was the joker in the pack, for it eschewed the adopted scales of the time, preferring instead to



Tiny, as befits the company's moniker, Wrenn was quite a force in the slot car world.



ABOVE

This pair of Wrenn Formula 152 pair of Slot Cars sold for £60 recently. Credit: Vectis.

manufacture to a scale of 1/52 (hence the moniker). Track came with a unique twin conductor rail on each side of the slot and the system permitted three cars to run simultaneously on each lane. Also developed was a section of track that would allow mechanical lane changing: all very futuristic for the time. The benefit that the system fitted into a smaller space was doubtlessly endorsed by parents tired of tripping over buzzing tracks. Moreover, Wrenn also produced buildings and other accessories for that extra degree of realism.

However, because of the diminutive scale, Wrenn was obliged to manufacture its own motors. The company also established the 152 Drivers Club: a metal badge was offered and there was even a newsletter. On that note, a Wrenn 152 enamel badge went through eBay recently and made over £60, perhaps an indication of its rarity.

THE MOTORWAY AGE

Tri-ang/Minic was another company eager to get in on the slot car scene. Strictly speaking, the Tri-ang Minic Motorway sets were not slot racing sets but that didn't stop youngsters from indulging their need for speed.

Aimed at complementing the pre-existing Tri-ang railway range, the addition of the motorway genre was a logical one. What made the toy stand out was the quality of the cars and the interesting types that Tri-ang chose to model, like the E-type Jaguar, Rolls Royce, Mercedes Benz 300SL and the Ford GT Mk2. Added to that was the great thought that had gone into the actual track. Anyone with a set could marvel at the realism of a fully functioning roundabout or Y-shaped intersection and, of course, spare parts and track were also available. The Minic product was also very inventive, for it allowed the railway enthusiast to drive a car on to a freight train or take an excursion in a ferryboat. Finally, since it was made in 1/76 scale, the Minic system was compact enough for use in small 1960s houses, or the ubiquitous flat of the period.

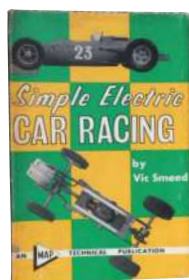
MODEL ENGINEERING

If, however, you were to differentiate your product in the early 1960s, a period which was, by all accounts, awash with companies each trying to capitalise on slot racing, then you needed some solid expertise. Enter homegrown Cox, whose background was one of flying aircraft and tethered race cars. Engineering was definitely the company's forte, and this was the foundation stone upon which it built its slot car range. Strange to relate, though, Cox opted for the bigger scale (1/24) for the bulk of its range and in fact produced very little in the popular 1/32 size. Amongst its claims to fame were the use of magnesium in the chassis (which equated to around a 50% weight saving when compared with aluminium); a flexible front end suspension and high quality gears. Appealing perhaps to the more discerning racer (and probably a club racer at that, given the 1/24 focus), Cox enjoyed success before the bubble burst towards the end of the decade.

Next time, we'll take a look at the wild side of slot racing – the scratch building community. **CG**

WHEN SIMPLE IS BEST

If this short series has you hooked, then you might want to wallow in 1960s period nostalgia in the shape of a good read. Not too many books were published on slot racing during that decade but one you might like to try is *Simple Electric Car Racing* by Vic Smeed. The author's credentials were impeccable: Editor of *Model Maker*, he was interested in slot cars from the start. It's all there, from motors and electrics to making your own car body from a mould. Truly, this was the age of skill, endeavour and patience.



LEFT
Neat and perfectly formed, a Wrenn racing set. Not too easy to find today, though.

RIGHT
Underneath of a Monogram racing saloon shows compact arrangement of the hardware. Note the slicks on the rear axles!



ABOVE

Russkit's Maserati "Birdcage": the quality of mouldings would improve as the years passed.



ABOVE

A great line from Revell was the plastic DIY kit that came complete with all the necessary running gear.



LEFT

Like many companies, Wrenn also produced a line of accessories for its slot car range.

Images courtesy of eBay and author's collection.



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Time on your hands?

Need a little inspiration for those idle moments or maybe a little something to avoid the DIY?

Ed Karswell has some ideas to fill your collecting 'downtime'.

Global pandemics, as a rule, don't generally have many positives. However, one thing that we have all discovered over the last year is 'time'... and having more of it! Here we give you some suggestions as to what to do with it:

CATALOGUING

I now a number of collectors don't keep any records of when or where they bought their acquisitions, some don't even recall the price they paid, but that could be for entirely different reasons!

It's a good idea to catalogue your collection for several reasons. For one, for insurance

purposes. It's provident to have a written record of your collection and preferably a photographic one too. If you have specialist cover this would be essential should you need to make a claim. On a lighter note, it's also a handy reference as to what you have already have in your collection. More than once I've heard collectors moaning about purchasing a model only to find a similar one languishing in a drawer once they returned home.

MAINTENANCE

So, how long has it been since you moved anything on those shelves? Many cabinets are not entirely dust proof and occasionally

models need a gentle clean. Now is also a good opportunity to check if any of your models have developed flat tyres. It's not always older models that can suffer from this malady either.

Whilst it's devoid of models clean out the cabinet too. It's not only models on display that need checking on. Anything that has been wrapped up and put into storage can also deteriorate. Not all wrapping paper is acid free and I've witnessed bubble wrap wreaking havoc on a models paintwork in whilst packed away.

CHANGE THINGS UP

Now you have everything out do you really want to reassemble the

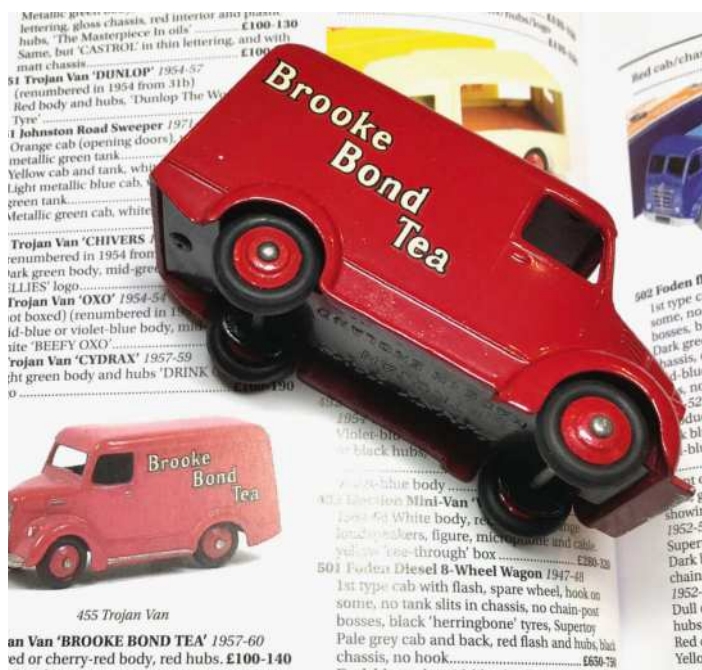
same display? If you have space why not compose a diorama or adding some petrol pumps and oil bins to break up the scene. Or try putting up some of the miniature tin advertising signs, they make a highly attractive backdrop to vintage models and they're in scale to boot!

CABINET MEETING

You should also ask yourself if your models are displayed in the right place. Be mindful of where you display your collection too. Avoid putting them above radiators or in direct sunlight. It's often easy to overlook sunlight as it may only fall on your collection at certain times of the day. The

These miniature tin advertising signs really add visual interest as a backdrop to a collection.





last thing anyone wants are pink fire engines. And if those models are stashed away in a cupboard, bring them out!

GET IT SORTED

Now could be the time to take stock, maybe literally. I always find it therapeutic to have a good sort through the collection, either to weed out anything that's not really up to the grade or indeed anything I've doubled up on. It may also be time to take a new direction in which case it might be time to move on some of your collection or at least thin it out. It's good to routinely evaluate where your collection is heading as it stops things going stale and keeps your enthusiasm up.

NEXT STOP THE SHED

Then there maybe the 'odds' box. This box can contain anything from a collection of restoration projects to models you no longer want but don't have any real value to move on. So, get restoring or selling. You'll soon wonder why it took so long to get around to it. Lose yourself in the shed for a few hours, preferably with the radio on and a strong cup of tea.

CODE 3 FOR ME?

If you restore or refinish models, now may be the time to try your hand at 'chops' or code 3s as they're known. With the advent of Atlas Dinky toys, you can construct all those models you wish had been issued back in the day. This can open up a whole new thread of collecting and I've seen some great examples such as a re-liveried Dinky Bedford car

transporter in a Vauxhall livery carrying a compliment of Cresta saloons.

It all takes a certain level of skill but there is a lot of fun to be had in the journey and a great deal of satisfaction in the finish.

BOXING CLEAVER

There are two ideas here; if you are computer savvy you can access lots of repro box templates online which can really make a cabinet display. I've similarly seen early Matchbox step stand displays posted flat packed for home construction which are fantastic in the cabinet. The skills needed to construct the boxes can be picked up quickly and the outlay for material modest in comparison to the satisfaction and the displays that one can create.

SWOTTING UP

Whilst you're on the PC you'll also know how it's possible to waste an awful lot of time doing nothing at all. Well, with a bit of time on your hands why not join and drop into some of the great toy forums and sites. With a little tenacity, it's possible to track down some great articles and variations listings. Collectors Club of Great Britain and Vintage British Diecasts being two such sites.

Alternatively go on to Amazon or eBay and track down some of those books you always promised yourself. Good second-hand reading copies can often be bought for very little and as we all know it's nice to grab a bargain. Whatever you decide to do now is the time to enjoy this great hobby of ours. **CG**



ABOVE

If you've ended up buying two identical models it may be time to do a proper inventory.



ABOVE

Petrol pumps may be obvious accessories but they look great and don't have to cost a fortune either.



ABOVE

There are so many routes one can go down. Where would we be without projects?



Flat tyres on static models are all too common but can be easily avoided.

The 'L' word

We discover one of the more unusual gauges of model railways as we look into the history of LEGO Trains.

If you're a model railway collector, it's more than likely you've heard of the various gauges of miniature locomotives. From N to OO and even potentially lesser-known scales like TT (Tri-ang) and ScaleSeven. However, have you heard of something called L Gauge? This is the scale that collectors of LEGO Trains use to refer to their area of interest and, although it may not be an officially recognised scale, it's an increasingly popular and interesting variation on traditional model railways. Here we'll look at the history of L Gauge and some of the sets produced by LEGO.

But first it's worth exploring the history of LEGO a little to see where it all began. Although the LEGO Group was first formed way back in 1932 it wasn't until 1949 that the company began producing those famous little plastic bricks. Originally called 'Automatic Binding Bricks' the blocks were based on a design by a company called Kiddicraft. The initial blocks were simple affairs that lacked versatility and in 1958 they were redesigned slightly into the shape we see today. They've remained almost the same ever since and modern bricks released today still slot together with those

made in 1958.

In 1965 LEGO ventured into the world of railways with the release of the imaginatively titled 323 Train – although it had no track and ran on ordinary wheels. Resembling an American steam loco, the model was made from a mix of mainly red bricks with white/blue detailing and a grey roof. The 323 only lasted a year and was quickly replaced by model 080, which came with a simple blue and white track along with a small village of four houses to give some colour to a layout. However, it didn't have a motor, so required 'people power' to get the wheels moving. Being one of the earlier examples means that 323 can trade for a couple of hundred quid, when it's in good condition.

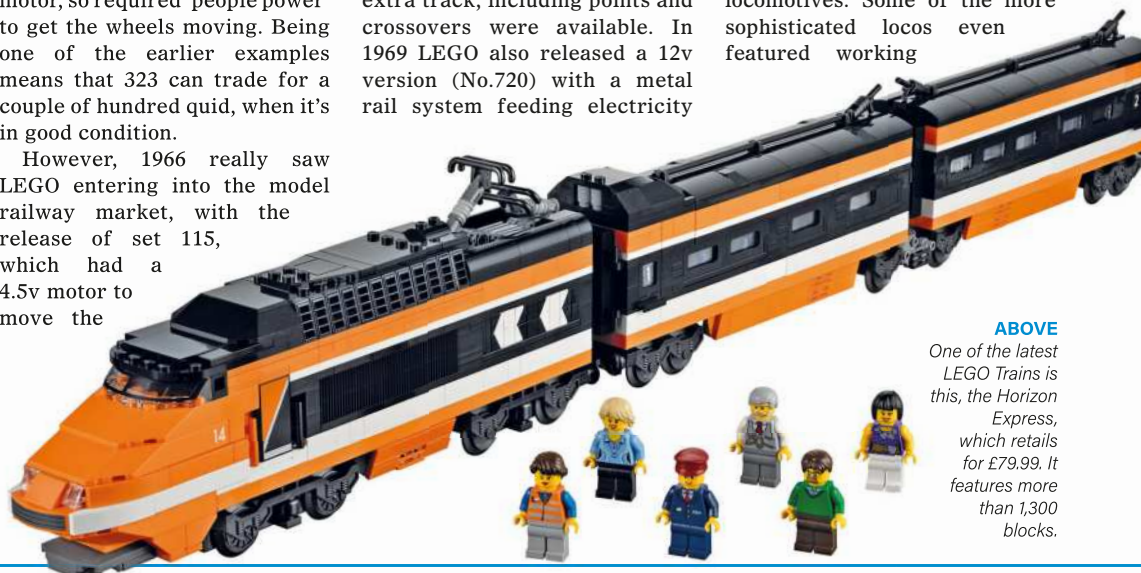
However, 1966 really saw LEGO entering into the model railway market, with the release of set 115, which had a 4.5v motor to move the

loco. This new kit came with a blue power pack and large black motor that was placed inside the locomotive. The wheels were further developed and now came flanged with rubber rims for traction. Although not as nice to look at as its predecessors, the 115 still included the blue/white tracks and three simple wagons to tow along – initially the wagons could only be hooked on but in later sets the hooks were replaced by magnets.

In the early days of L gauge, users were fairly limited by the products available, although extra track, including points and crossovers were available. In 1969 LEGO also released a 12v version (No.720) with a metal rail system feeding electricity

to the engine, rather than a battery with an ugly wire on. The initial 4.5v and 12v trains were released between 1966 until 1979 – a period which is called the 'blue era' because of the blue track used.

After the blue era came the grey era, which is more exciting than it sounds. Between 1980 and 1990 LEGO made new model railway sets with dark grey sleepers and light grey rails, while the wheels were red or black. Arguably this was the golden era for collectors, as LEGO released a huge selection of accessories and locomotives. Some of the more sophisticated locos even featured working



ABOVE
One of the latest LEGO Trains is this, the Horizon Express, which retails for £79.99. It features more than 1,300 blocks.

**RIGHT**

Another addition to the range, the LEGO Passenger Train, uses new flexible tracks, along with a four-channel, seven-speed infrared remote control, which can run up to eight different trains at once - perfect for those with a large layout featuring numerous different trains.

LEFT

Modern LEGO sets include a number of different accessories and figures, as shown here with the 7937 Train Station set... or should that really be Railway Station?

BELOW

Early LEGO sets are sought after by L gauge collectors.



lights for the front and rear but, more importantly, the wheels now tilted, which allowed for tighter turns and more realistic movement.

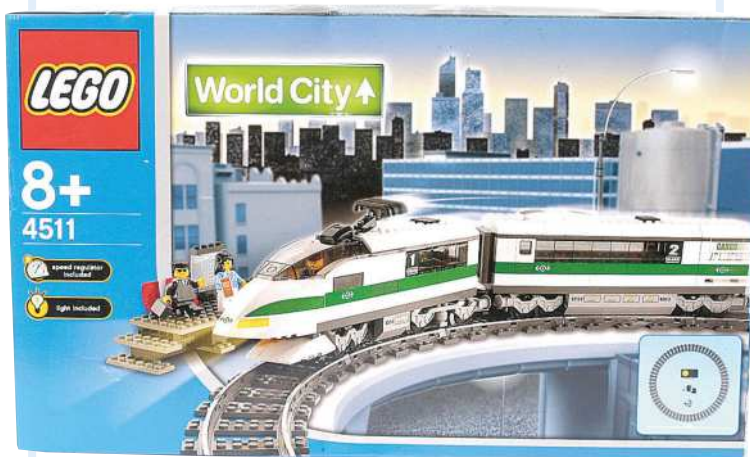
In terms of accessories, enthusiasts were certainly spoilt for choice with a great variety of items - many of which LEGO has never produced again. These included remote controlled points, remote controlled signals, automatic uncouplers, working station lights, flashing lights, a level crossing with automatic barriers and lots more. Compared to the basic sets of the late '60s, the grey era was a revolution and is probably the closest the LEGO Trains have got to being just like standard model railways.

One of the more impressive LEGO trains released during this period was No.7740 the Inter-City Passenger Train Set. Sold from 1980 and featuring more than 780 LEGO bricks it was one of the few grey era sets that could carry passengers and 10 Minifigures were included. You could even expand the impressive train with the addition of the Postal Container Wagon (7819) and Passenger Carriage/Sleeper (7815) to create a truly standout model.

In 1991 it was all change, as LEGO scrapped the 4.5v and 12v ranges and replaced them

with a new 9v system. Tracks changed again, with power now being transmitted directly through metal strips on the two running rails. This meant previous 12v releases were no longer compatible without modification and LEGO reduced the amount of accessories with no remote control functions or automatic signaling products. Despite all this, the actual design of the trains did improve, like the futuristic-looking Railway Express (4561) with vehicle carrier and passenger car that has a movie screen/seats.

The 9v system lasted for 16 years before it was scrapped for a new line of remote-controlled trains with all-plastic track (to save on costs). However, the RC Trains range only lasted for two years before LEGO launched Power Functions (PF) Trains with the release of a new train called Emerald Night, as part of the LEGO City series. The benefit of the Power Functions Train is that they're compatible with other powered sets from LEGO, such as vehicles and even dinosaurs - ensuring there's plenty of scope for interesting tracks. So the future certainly looks bright for L gauge enthusiasts. **CG**

**ABOVE**

In the late '90s LEGO Trains officially became part of the City range, so you can run them alongside your various emergency vehicles, offices, shops and other buildings, which are also in the ever-growing City series.

**ABOVE**

Although colourful, some of the earlier LEGO Trains sets didn't look particularly realistic... although we would love to see this speeding through Clapham Junction.

**ABOVE**

Emerald Night, seen here, heralded the latest developments in the L gauge range and was launched in 1999.

Best of British

Matchbox Firefighters

Brian Howes takes a nostalgic look at those classic Lesney fire appliances.



For some reason it took Lesney quite some time to think about producing a diecast toy fire engine, which seems strange as most small boys simply love them. The early post-War years saw Leslie and Rodney Smith and toolmaker Jack Odell focus heavily on earthmoving and roadmaking vehicles, and it was not until the Matchbox Series had entered its second phase of production that they released the first Lesney fire engine which was shown in the first Matchbox trade catalogue alongside eleven other toys.

It was a Dennis F.2 fire escape of 1948 vintage which was numbered 9a. It was an attractive little toy sporting a pair of free turning 16 spoke winding wheels at the rear and the first examples were finished with gold trim to

the radiator grille and ladder edges. It was fitted with grey metal wheels and proved to be an extremely popular seller. A couple of years passed by before the early casting was updated and re-issued as 9b. The major change being the addition of a front bumper and application of the model description to the casting. 9b sported grey metal wheels for most of its production run although a very small number did appear with grey plastic wheels right at the end and these are highly sought after today. There were two variations to the size of the rear winding wheels on both 9a and 9b models which can be found in large or small sizes. At this point it is worth mentioning that the 9a Dennis F.2 was also reproduced with silver wheels as one of the models in the G.1 Matchbox 40th

Anniversary gift sets issued just before Christmas of 1988. It also appeared on its own in a blister pack sporting yellow winding wheels in the 1980s.

In 1959 the Dennis was replaced by a much more modern looking Merryweather Marquis fire pump tender based on an AEC vehicle chassis. Originally priced at 9d, it carried a brown diecast

we must take a diversion to the Yesteryear range to highlight what many collectors consider to be one of the finest models Lesney ever made. The Y-4 Shand Mason horse-drawn fire engine was a fabulous little toy although more adults seemed to buy it than small boys! I suppose those early Yesteryears were aimed as much at adults as they were children.



It was not until the Matchbox Series had entered its second phase of production that they released the first Lesney fire engine



ladder on its roof and proved extremely popular until replaced by a boat on a trailer after seven years of production in 1966.

1963 saw the arrival of a splendid Matchbox Fire Station with fully working doors and a fireman's pole. This modern red and white plastic building came fully assembled for 10 shillings and sixpence. It also featured in the G-10 Gift Set and can be found with both a red or green roof. The green roofs were made to be fitted to the Matchbox Ambulance Station which was planned but never actually put into production.

Moving back to the early 1960s

I found them fascinating as a child but also quite strange as horse drawn and steam powered vehicles had all but disappeared from British roads by the early 1960s. The Shand Mason sported three plastic firemen which were easily lost once out of the box and there are many different variants for collectors to look out for.

Lesney's 1963 offering came as a great contrast to the Shand Mason as it looked across the Atlantic for inspiration, introducing a Ford Fairlane Fire Chief's Car based on the same casting used for the 55b Ford Fairlane Police Car which had replaced the Singer Sewing Machines van.



BELOW
Matchbox Regular
Wheels 9c Merryweather
Marquis Fire Engine -
Stannard Code 3.



LEFT

This Dennis F2 was Lesney's first diecast fire engine and first arrived in toy shops as number 9a.

On to 1964 and April of that year saw a very welcome and quite unusual addition to the Matchbox Series in the form of the Alvis Salamander 'Foamite' Airport Crash Tender 63d. I'll always remember the first time I set eyes on this toy in the local newsagents shop window, I wanted it as fast as possible and eventually saved the 23 pennies required to buy it for 1s/11d (one penny short of two bob to those of us of a certain age!). 63d replaced the military ambulance and was a superb six-wheeler made even better by the fact that you had to fix the white plastic letters in to place yourself... happy days indeed!

In 1965 Matchbox released another Merryweather fire appliance as K15-1 in the King-Size range. Released in August the extending and fully revolving ladder gave this toy bags of play value for a mere 6/11d. Much cheaper than a Dinky Toy.

1966 saw a trio of Matchbox fire related vehicles emerge and also saw England win the football World Cup. 29c Fire Pumper Truck was based on an American appliance which initially carried Denver decals but which were later removed. This fire tender sported blue plastic windows with white plastic ladder and hoses. It was followed by a truly British classic in the shape of the forward control Land Rover

57b in Kent Fire Brigade livery. Early versions of this modern lightweight Land Rover had a lever which de-activated the suspension although this feature was later removed. Black plastic wheels were the norm on this vehicle although a small number were known to have been fitted with grey plastic wheels. It was later fitted with Superfast wheels and these scarce versions now sell for over £100 mint and boxed. The rarest Superfast version to look out for had a black plastic ladder but these are super rare!

The final offering of 1966 was the Ford Galaxie Fire Chief's car 59c which, like the Ford Fairlane, was also issued as a police car.

Although fire engines were not best suited to the speed orientated Superfast range the previously mentioned forward control Land Rover 57b was produced for a few months with Superfast wheels and the Merryweather Fire Engine 35c launched in time for Christmas of 1969, was also fitted with superfast wheels. There exists a very rare versions of the latter which was made in 1972 embellished with 'Flame Proof Wool' names and logos which make serious money when they appear on the market.

There's no doubt that after a slow start Lesney certainly made up for lost time with its firefighting vehicles. **CG**



BELOW

Matchbox models of Yesteryear Y4 1905 Shand Mason Horse Drawn Fire Engine. Credit: Vectis.



ABOVE

Matchbox Accessory Pack MF-1 Matchbox Fire Station with red roof & red background labels. This version sold for £160. Credit: Vectis.



ABOVE

Matchbox Regular Wheels 59b Ford Fairlane Fire Chief Car - Stannard Code 1. Credit: Vectis.



ABOVE

Matchbox Regular Wheels 2 x 63b Alvis Salamander Airport Crash Tender. Credit: Vectis.

An introduction to... Argos Catalogues

Will Freeman flicks through the pages of a childhood (and retail) classic!

When the comedian Alan Carr chose the Argos catalogue as his book choice on *Desert Island Discs*, his decision seemingly chimed with a great number of people.

"At least there's pictures," he is quoted as saying. "I feel it would help me through."

The reason his less than conventional decision made so much sense to so many was because the weighty catalogue makes for a surprisingly comforting read. From its initial publication in the early seventies until its effective cancellation last summer, the retail bible defined the build up to Christmas, birthdays and any other occasions where there was a chance of toys.

If you spent your childhood in the period of its publication you likely spent at least a few afternoons leafing through its pages, dreamy eyed about the toys that might soon be yours. The Argos catalogue is affectionately known as *The Book of Dreams* for good reason.

Looking back through old archives of the iconic volume, it is strikingly apparent how well it serves as a recent history of toys and play. In fact, the first two-page spread for youngsters in the debut Argos catalogue dated '1973/4' is like a photoshoot of defining toys brands of the time. Matchbox, Merit, Action Man, Palitoy and Pedigree all star, as does the familiar system of numbered images that match curt descriptions that each left ample room for the imagination to fill in the gaps.

Over the following pages



ABOVE
Original Argos catalogues can now cost between £40 and £160 an issue.
Credit: RetroMash.

of that same issue Hornby, Scaletrix, Tonka, Corgi, Airfix, Revell, Reeves and Parker all jostle for attention. In just a few pages of vanishingly thin paper, all that is classic toys of the era is captured, right down to the prices, marketing lines and details that whisper at the wider cultural, social, political and economic context of the time. In that first catalogue, for example, it appears toys are so commonly manufactured in the UK and Ireland that it is assumed. Only items made overseas are marked as such, and they are very few in number.

Argos catalogues are not just about toys, of course. Like a primitive prelude to Amazon, in the early 1970s they felt like they contained just about

everything. And in doing so they capture each year in terms of its fashion trends, interior design fads, contemporary technology, popular activities and pastimes, and much more besides.

A few pages beyond the toys of the 1973/4 edition, for example, you'll find a fascinating glimpse into parenting young children at the time, when things like wireless video baby monitors were far from everyday, and more basic tools got people by.

Back over in the toy pages, you can also look across several catalogue editions to track trends and developments in everything from how toys were made to the things that most interested children of the time. In that first issue, for example, there are but a handful of toys based on the likes

of film, TV and book properties. Rupert Bear is present, along with characters from the *Magic Roundabout* and *Tom and Jerry*, but there is little more than that.

Fast forward to the 1977 summer issue, and as well as the toy-focused pages jumping in count from 11 to 23, suddenly they are plump with signs that marketers of playthings have found a surefire way to sell more toys. *Star Trek*, Disney, Kermit the Frog, *Spiderman*, *Batman*, *Space 1999*, *Doctor Who* and even Morecambe and Wise get a generous share of the available column inches. Notably, while the *Star Wars* film arrived in 1977, related toys do not appear until the second of Argos' 1979 catalogues; a hint, perhaps, that the machinery of the retailer took a little while to respond to cultural phenomena at the time.

And as much as Argos' *Book of Dreams* speaks to how toys and interest in play shifts with the passage of time, so to it serves as a reminder of what does not change. Just as it was in 1973, in the last ever full Argos catalogue from 2020, plenty of attention is given to working vehicles, childcare-themed items, tool sets and play weaponry. A reminder that a core function of toys and childhood itself has remained the same for decades, if not hundreds of years. Playing with toys is a practice run at adulthood. Certainly, there are toys that offer a blank canvas for the imagination, such as building blocks or drawing contraptions. And there have always been toys set in fantastical realms. But so often even those toys are about letting youngsters explore roles, tasks, tastes, skills and themes

**ABOVE**

Some of the first toy pages in the first ever Argos catalogue showcase a range of iconic brands and toy themes. Credit: RetroMash.

ABOVE RIGHT

A spread of construction and educational toys in the Autumn 1978 catalogue, including some forgotten gems like the Tente building system. Credit: RetroMash.

that might define their futures.

Ultimately, then, Argos catalogues are valuable volumes of recent history; a peephole into 48 years of ordinary life across the UK and Ireland. As such, that means Argos catalogues themselves have become rather valuable as collectables in their own right.

Today an original 1973/4 Argos catalogue will cost you about £80-to-£160 today. Many more from the 1970s and early 1980s are commonly found sold in the £40-to-£65 range. Some of that value, however, may come from the fact that while they were printed in vast quantities, many were well thumbed to the point of oblivion by hopeful and overexcited children eagerly tearing back and forth through the toy pages.

Alternatively, a collector at the website RetroMash.com has uploaded scans of every page of each issue from the first through

to 1991, and several specials thereafter. It's a resource very much worth a browse.

But if you do consider putting down a three-figure sum on a single classic Argos catalogue, you might want to double check with the seller what kind of condition the toy section is in. And if you still have a 2020 copy - which included over 240-pages of toys and games, marking a huge ramp up from the issue 48 years previously - you may want to look after it. Though save the laminating for the in-store copies.

Indeed, if you can get yourself one of the iconic versions that were displayed in ring-bound form in store, you may have secured the ultimate Argos collectable. Just be sure to display it with a small stock of stubby Argos pencils and perhaps a pad of the forms customers would take to the counter, before sitting down for what could feel like the longest wait in retail. **CG**

BELOW

Tomy's Turnin' Turbo Dashboard was available elsewhere; but it felt so at home in the Argos catalogue. Credit: eBay.

**ABOVE**

By 1991's catalogue, the rise of electronic and video-game related toys was well established. Credit: RetroMash.

**LEFT**

For years Mr Frosty was a star of the Argos catalogue, and captured its knack for making unusual toy concepts mainstream obsessions. Credit: eBay.

DEFINING THE ULTIMATE ARGOS TOY

To many of us, thinking of the Argos catalogue will bring up visions of very specific toys. The most powerful memories of all might be the toys on offer that we never received as youngsters - memories that might also motivate adult toy collectors to purchase what once was just a dream.

But what are the defining Argos toys? The answer to that question is highly subjective, and will likely vary depending on when individuals read the catalogue as youngsters. One nostalgist's Action Man is another's Tamagotchi. Yet there is a certain kind of toy that many will associate with the

Argos catalogue in particular - oddities that didn't fit into any other toy category.

By which we mean that curious preparer of iced drinks named Mr Frosty, Tomy's Turnin' Turbo Dashboard driving simulator, or the doll house shaped like a beverage dispenser that was the Big Yellow Teapot - and its Fischer Price cousin the Family Tree House set.

You may have different choices, but for some reason, it was the less readily classified toys and games the Argos catalogue its magical appeal, and thus defined its toy pages.



eBay

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



♦ An original Palitoy Star Wars Return of the Jedi Boba Fett figure. He was sold in mint condition, on his card and had been AFA Graded 85. **Sold for £1800 (36 bids).**



♦ A tinplate Scalextric Austin Healey in blue/cream. Overall a pretty car, with original paint, original driver and a strong working motor. Would benefit from some care and attention. **Sold for £480 (21 bids).**



♦ A McDonald's Drive Thru toy kitchen, with working sound effects and play food (burgers, nuggets and fries). All items were original and the instructions were included too. **Sold for £232 (32 bids).**



♦ This 1993 Hasbro My Little Pony figure had been found in the stock room of an old toy shop. Obviously forgotten about this Baby Candy was in excellent condition, with a mint carded back. **Sold for £785 (21 bids).**



♦ A Tri-ang Spot-On No.117 Jones Crane, in excellent condition for its age. This rare version also came with a collector's card. **Sold for £570 (3 bids).**



♦ This LEGO Galaxy Explorer Set 928, from 1979, was in its original box and complete with all parts and instruction leaflets - it had never been opened or played with! **Sold for £1852 (20 bids).**



♦ A LEGO Green Grocer Building Set 10185 dating from 2008. The owner had never got around to building it so all the pieces were still bagged. **Sold for £1020 (8 bids).**



♦ A Matchbox Lesney No.74 Mobile Canteen, sold in excellent condition and with the original box. Sadly, some of the decal was missing. **Sold for £909 (26 bids).**



♦ We don't often see tractors in these pages but this Universal Hobbies Case IH Maxxum MX150 in 1/32 scale is a great example. There were some light marks to the box, but otherwise in great condition. **Sold for £1500 (18 bids).**



♣ A mint condition Matchbox Lesney Superfast No.32 Leyland Tanker, in a rare red and white NAMC livery. It was the nicest one the seller had ever seen... **Sold for £870 (28 bids).**



♣ Thundercats! Hooo... A Lion-o action figure from the TV series, in mint condition on its original card. He was UK graded AFA 80 overall. **Sold for £850 (18 bids).**



♣ This Corgi Toys Gift Set 36, Oldsmobile Toronado, speed boat and trailer dates from the late 1960s. The model had the odd scuff mark, as did the original box. **Sold for £474 (33 bids).**



♣ Originally purchased in 1984 for £1.59, this Star Wars Yak Face figure was part of the 'Last 17'. He had been in a display case all his life so was still in mint condition. **Sold for £1375 (9 bids).**



♣ A Dinky Toys No.903 Foden Flat Truck, in a rare red and yellow colour variation. Dating from 1954 it was in near mint condition with only a small chip to the paint. **Sold for £535 (25 bids).**



♣ This 1/18 CMC model of a 1961 Ferrari 250 GT Berlinetta SWB was in very good condition. It was sold in the original packaging, but had no certificate or paperwork with it. **Sold for £520 (17 bids).**



♣ Old MacDonald had a farm... or rather a Corgi Toys Agriculture Gift Set No.5! The seller had owned this set since childhood and it was in excellent, complete condition. **Sold for £491 (18 bids).**



♣ A rare plastic Britains Super Deetail Kneeling Paratrooper. The figure was in a very good, although used, condition. **Sold for £271 (27 bids).**



♣ A rare Hornby Meccano vintage tinplate duck toy, complete with its original key and box. A very different speed boat to add to your collection. **Sold for £910 (30 bids).**



♣ Made in Spain this Scalextric Ferrari GT330, in blue, was in full working order. It was in used condition with some brown spotting to the top of the car but no splits or cracks. **Sold for £5100 (10 bids).**



♣ A rare Lili Ledy Star Wars Removable Hood Jawa, graded UKG 85 Graded and with its authenticity certificate. A great buy for the lucky winner! **Sold for £1209 (35 bids).**



♣ A vintage Scalextric C70 Bugatti Type 59, in beautiful green. Overall the body work was in good condition, however, the top half of the aero windscreen had broken off. **Sold for £408 (15 bids).**



♣ **A French Scalextric Alfa Romeo 8C C65 #14 from the 1960s.** In excellent condition with only a tiny amount of discolouration to the front bumper. The box, liner and instructions were included. **Sold for £310 (23 bids).**



♣ **Released for the 2013 San Diego Comic-Con this Funko Pop Vinyl Ned Stark** was marked piece number 1008. He was in used condition with light crease marks. **Sold for £1000 (16 bids).**



♣ **All aboard this Timpo Wild West Freight Train set.** It was sold in a used condition but all the parts were present and correct. **Sold for £367.95 (37 bids).**



♣ **The seller didn't include much information about these Timpo Mexican figures,** but as you can see they were in good condition and looked ready for action! **Sold for £276 (25 bids).**



♣ **A Dinky Toys No.100 Lady Penelope's FAB 1 Thunderbirds, from 1967.** In 1/43 scale it was in super condition, with its original picture box and stand. **Sold for £551 (28 bids).**



♣ **More Paras, this time in the shape of a 1st issue Airfix British Paratroops set.** One of the 29 figures had gone AWOL leaving 28, all of whom were in great condition, with no bent weapons. **Sold for £256 (48 bids).**



♣ **Made in Japan during the 1960s this KO Yoshiya Mighty Robot,** was all original and in fully working order. Unfortunately, the original box had water stains, some distortion and small tears. **Sold for £1250 (26 bids).**



♣ **Someone got lucky with this rare boxed Airfix F.N. Rifle.** The box was in reasonable condition, while the rifle was in excellent, working condition complete with bayonet and 9 bullets. **Sold for £460 (31 bids).**



♣ **A vintage Pelham Puppets seahorse marionette,** which had never been displayed or played with. It came with the original box and receipt of purchase, dated 1990. **Sold for £640 (3 bids).**



♣ **An antique tinplate Gebruder Bing miniature train set made in the early 20th century.** The penny toy, originally from Germany, showed some light wear but was otherwise in good condition. **Sold for £563 (54 bids).**



♣ **Another tractor, this time an excellent Matchbox Lesney No.50 John Deere Lanz.** It had rare orange hubs but also some small paint chips to the bonnet and wheel arches. **Sold for £591 (23 bids).**



♣ **An original Disney Pixar Buzz Lightyear featuring a chrome utility anti-gravity belt.** This toy might not have made it to 'infinity and beyond' but it did attract a reasonable number of bids. **Sold for £680 (18 bids).**

PRICE GUIDE

This month take a look at sale results from Lacy Scott and Knight, Special Auction Services, Warrington & Northwich Auctions and Vectis.



◀ A Matchbox Major Series No. 5 Massey Ferguson 780 special combine harvester, comprising red body with silver plastic hubs, yellow tines and driver figure, housed in the original card box, very good to near mint. **Sold for £70, Lacy Scott & Knight, February.**



◀ A Matchbox Lesney No. 5 Routemaster bus, comprising of red body with grey plastic wheels and Players livery, with the original B type card box, very good. **Sold for £45, Lacy Scott & Knight, February.**



◀ A Matchbox Lesney No. 13 Thames Trader wreck truck, comprising red body with grey plastic wheels, red hook and jib, housed in the original type B card box, good. **Sold for £50, Lacy Scott & Knight, February.**



♣ Matchbox No. 51 8 wheel tipper, orange body, Douglas Logo, BPW, Box Type D, mint. **Sold for £40, Lacy Scott & Knight, February.**



♣ Matchbox No. 51d 8 wheel tipper, Pointer logo, yellow body, fair box, mint. **Sold for £35, Lacy Scott & Knight, February.**



♣ Matchbox No. 51d 8 wheel tipper, orange body, Pointer logo, fair box, rare issue, mint. **Sold for £220, Lacy Scott & Knight, February.**



♣ Matchbox 59b Ford Fairlane fire car, bright red with "fire chief" decals in picture box mint. **Sold for £110, Lacy Scott & Knight, February.**



♣ Matchbox 38a Karrier refuse truck, in mid grey slight wear to department decal on one side see picture otherwise nice in b box, mint. **Sold for £30, Lacy Scott & Knight, February.**



♣ Matchbox No. 1 Aveling Barford Diesel road roller, green with D box, mint. **Sold for £70, Lacy Scott & Knight, February.**



♣ A Corgi Toys No. 485 The BMC Mini Countryman Surfing Model, comprising of green body with lemon yellow interior and spun hubs with two surf boarders and figure, housed in the original card box, near mint. **Sold for £150, Lacy Scott & Knight, February.**



♣ A Corgi Toys No. 251 Hillman Imp, comprising of metallic blue body with a yellow interior, spun hubs and luggage load, housed in the original blue & yellow card box, near mint. **Sold for £80, Lacy Scott & Knight, February.**



♣ A Corgi Toys No. 211S Studebaker Golden Hawk, comprising of gold body with white side flash, spun hubs and red interior, housed in the original blue & yellow card box, very good. **Sold for £50, Lacy Scott & Knight, February.**



♣ A Corgi Toys No. 210S Citroen DS19, comprising of red body with lemon interior and spun hubs, housed in the original blue & yellow all-ard box, near mint. **Sold for £75, Lacy Scott & Knight, February.**



♣ A Corgi Toys No. 54 MF50B tractor with shovel, comprising yellow body with red plastic hubs and driver figure, housed in the original window box, mint. **Sold for £40, Lacy Scott & Knight, February.**



♣ A Corgi Toys No. 342 Lamborghini P400GT Muira, with fighting bull gift set comprising red body with white interior and bull figurine, housed in the original box, near mint. **Sold for £55, Lacy Scott & Knight, February.**



♣ A Corgi Toys No. 808 Basil Brush, car housed in the original window box with sound box and laugh tapes, box window split otherwise complete, near mint. **Sold for £50, Lacy Scott & Knight, February.**



♣ A Dinky Toys promotional issue Joseph Mason Paints Minivan, comprising of dark red/maroon body with Joseph Mason Paints livery, fitted with spun hubs and red interior, good. **Sold for £60, Lacy Scott & Knight, February.**



♣ A Corgi Toys Gift set No. 31 Buick Riviera, with Dolphin 20 cabin cruiser and Brooklands trailer, complete with water skier and two figures complete with leaflet and inner sliding tray interior, very good. **Sold for £160, Lacy Scott & Knight, February.**



♣ A Corgi Toys Gift Set 19 Land Rover Nipper aircraft and trailer, housed in the original window box comprising of blue Land Rover with matching trailer and orange Nipper aircraft, housed in the original box. **Sold for £70, Lacy Scott & Knight, February.**



♣ A Corgi Toys No. 391 James Bond 007 Diamonds are Forever Ford Mustang Mach 1, comprising red body with white base plate and black bonnet, housed in the original Whizz Wheels window box. **Sold for £75, Lacy Scott & Knight, February.**



♣ A Dinky Toys gift set No. 4 racing cars, comprising of Cooper Bristol, Alfa Romeo, Ferrari, Maserati, and HWN Race Cars, all housed in the original blue & white Supertoys gift set style box, fair. **Sold for £260, Lacy Scott & Knight, February.**



♣ A Dinky Toys No. 986 Mighty Antar low loader with propeller, comprising of red tractor unit with grey low loader trailer and matching grey Supertoys hubs, with pallet and turbine load, housed in the original blue & white striped lift-off lid card box with two packing pieces, very good. **Sold for £180, Lacy Scott & Knight, February.**



♣ A Dinky Toys No. 50 Ships of the British Navy gift set, comprising of 13 various diecast battleships, some examples have had minor overpainting and have been repaired, examples to include HMS Nelson, HMS Hood, HMS Rodney, and others (a/f) housed in the original labelled card box. **Sold for £100, Lacy Scott & Knight, February.**



♣ A French Dinky Toys No. 889 Parisian Urban Autobus, comprising of red and cream body with Dunlop livery, complete with red hubs housed in the original lift-up lid, blue & white striped Super Toys box. **Sold for £120, Lacy Scott & Knight, February.**



♣ A Corgi Toys No. 1111 Massey Ferguson 780 combine, comprising red body with red plastic hubs and yellow tines, housed in the original lift off lid blue & yellow card box with two interior packing pieces, very good. **Sold for £130, Lacy Scott & Knight, February.**



♣ A Dinky Toys No. 236 Connaught Racing car, comprising of light green body with green hubs, racing driver figure, and racing No. 32 to sides and bonnet, housed in the original all-card picture sided box, near mint. **Sold for £70, Lacy Scott & Knight, February.**



♣ A Dinky Toys No. 132 Packard Convertible, comprising of green body with red interior and red hubs, complete with driver figure and housed in the original correct colour spot box, near mint. **Sold for £80, Lacy Scott & Knight, February.**



♣ Wrenn N Gauge Micro Model Set 2, a boxed freight set includes electric Bo-Bo E3185 with pantograph, four goods wagons, track and controller, good, box good. **Sold for £70, Special Auction Services, February.**



♣ Hornby (China) OO Gauge East Coast Express Train Set, R1021 set, complete with Britannia Class, John of Gaunt Steam Locomotive and tender, coaches and accessories. Excellent, box good. **Sold for £100, Special Auction Services, February.**



♣ Hornby (China) OO Gauge Atlantic Coast Express Train Pack, a limited edition set R2194 includes Merchant Navy Class Holland America Line steam locomotive and tender, three coaches, excellent. **Sold for £110, Special Auction Services, February.**



♣ Hornby (China) OO Gauge Atlantic Coast Express Train Pack, limited edition set R2194 includes Merchant Navy Class Holland America Line steam loco/tender, three coaches and certificate 472/2000, excellent. **Sold for £110, Special Auction Services, February.**



♣ Hornby (China) OO Gauge The Pines Express Train Pack, limited edition set R2436 includes West Country Class Coombe Martin steam loco/ tender, three maroon coaches and certificate 1386/3000, excellent, box good. **Sold for £130, Special Auction Services, February.**



♣ Hornby (China) OO Gauge Torbay Express Train Pack, limited edition set R2090 includes Castle Class Llanstephan Castle steam loco/ tender three crimson and cream coaches and certificate 1172/2000, excellent, box good. **Sold for £100, Special Auction Services, February.**



♣ Hornby (China) OO Gauge Thames-Clyde Express Train Pack, a boxed R2392M matched set factory packaged includes Dornoch Firth steam locomotive and tender and three maroon coaches, excellent, box good. **Sold for £100, Special Auction Services, February.**



♣ Hornby (China) OO Gauge Devon Belle Train Pack, limited edition R2568 set includes West Country Class Watersmeet steam locomotive and tender, three Pullman coaches and certificate 1072/2000, excellent, box good. **Sold for £150, Special Auction Services, February.**



♣ Hornby (China) OO Gauge Golden Arrow Train Pack and Coach Pack, R2369 set includes Battle of Britain Class Golden Arrow steam loco/tender, Pullman coaches, R4196 Golden Arrow Coaches, Pullman coaches, excellent. **Sold for £200, Special Auction Services, February.**



♣ Hornby (China) OO Gauge Bournemouth Belle Train Pack and Coach Pack, R2300 set includes Merchant Navy Class New Zealand Line steam loco/tender, three Pullman coaches, R4169 Bournemouth Belle Pullman Cars, excellent, boxes good. **Sold for £210, Special Auction Services, February.**



♣ Dapol OO Gauge Virgin Trains Pendolino Set, a boxed D390-7 limited edition Pendolino four car EMU with tilting action Virgin Lady, good, box good. **Sold for £140, Special Auction Services, February.**



♣ Heljan OO Gauge Diesel Electric Locomotive, a boxed 4798 limited edition Class 47/7 47787 Windsor Castle locomotive in EWS livery with certificate 54/1000, excellent, box good. **Sold for £80, Special Auction Services, February.**



♣ Heljan OO Gauge Diesel Electric Locomotive, a boxed 4701 Class 47 D1662 Isambard Kingdom Brunel, locomotive in BR green livery, excellent, box good. **Sold for £80, Special Auction Services, February.**



♣ Heljan OO Gauge Diesel Electric Locomotive, a boxed 3500 Class 35 D7017 locomotive in BR green livery, excellent, box good. **Sold for £80, Special Auction Services, February.**



♣ A Boxed Formo (Graham Farish) OO Gauge 3-rail Goods Set, with 'Q'-type 0-6-0 loco/ tender, wagons, track, in original box, very good. Loco appears never run, box good, a little discolouring to label. **Sold for £100, Special Auction Services, February.**



♣ Hornby R3461 DCC Digital (Tested OK) #07 LNER Thompson L1, boxed with instructions and detail pack. **Sold for £65, Warrington & Northwich Auction, February.**



♣ Hornby R3663TTS DCC Digital (Tested OK) #09 Tornado, with sound, boxed with instructions and detail pack. **Sold for £80, Warrington & Northwich Auction, February.**



♣ Hornby R3603TTS DCC Digital (Tested OK) #05 BR Lord Nelson, with sound, boxed with instructions and detail pack. **Sold for £120, Warrington & Northwich Auction, February.**



♣ Hornby R3385TTS DCC Digital (Tested OK) #06 BR Class 5 45116, with sound, boxed with instructions and detail pack. **Sold for £110, Warrington & Northwich Auction, February.**



♣ Hornby 'Flying Scotsman' Train Set 'Locomotive', boxed. **Sold for £55, Warrington & Northwich Auction, February.**



♣ Hornby R2108 Class 155 BR Sprinter, boxed. **Sold for £50, Warrington & Northwich Auction, February.**



♣ Hornby R1183 'Master of the Glens' Train Set, boxed with instructions, and an upgraded black/red controller. **Sold for £85, Warrington & Northwich Auction, February.**



♣ Hornby R1169 'Tornado Pullman Express' Train Set, boxed with instructions. **Sold for £85, Warrington & Northwich Auction, February.**



♣ Hornby R3285TTS Gadwell, boxed with instructions and detail pack. **Sold for £90, Warrington & Northwich Auction, February.**



♣ Hornby R2141 'Isambard Kingdom Brunei' BR, boxed, detailpack already fitted. **Sold for £60, Warrington & Northwich Auction, February.**



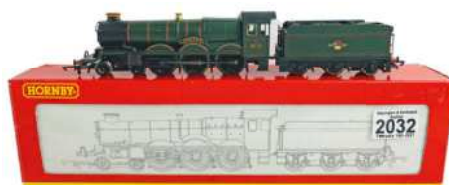
♣ Bachmann 31-475 G2A BR Early NRM Issue, boxed with instructions, but lacking detail pack. **Sold for £55, Warrington & Northwich Auction, February.**



♣ Bachmann DCC Digital (Tested Set to #03) #32-000DC 'Guild Hall', boxed with instructions and detail pack. **Sold for £60, Warrington & Northwich Auction, February.**



♣ Hornby R2204 Merchant Navy, boxed (but box torn) with instructions, but lacking detail pack. **Sold for £70, Warrington & Northwich Auction, February.**



♣ Hornby R2280 'Blenheim Castle', boxed with instructions, but lacking detail pack. **Sold for £50, Warrington & Northwich Auction, February.**



♣ Bachmann 32-479 Class 40 169, Centre Head Code (w/o tanks), boxed with instructions and detail pack. **Sold for £60, Warrington & Northwich Auction, February.**



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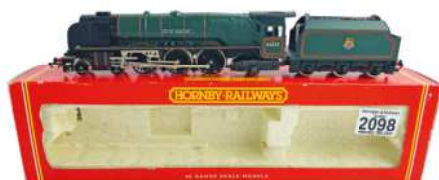
♣ Bachmann 32-426 Class 24, plain BR green loco with detail pack, instructions and box. **Sold for £65, Warrington & Northwich Auction, February.**



♣ Bachmann 31-554 V2 Double Chimney Loco, boxed, no detail pack or instructions. **Sold for £50, Warrington & Northwich Auction, February.**



♣ Bachmann 31-552 V2 Durham Light Infantry BR Green Loco, in great order, boxed, but lacking instructions and detail pack. **Sold for £40, Warrington & Northwich Auction, February.**



♣ Hornby R2015 'City of Hereford' Loco, with detail pack, instructions and boxed. Lacking a handrail on boiler. **Sold for £45, Warrington & Northwich Auction, February.**



♣ Hornby R2170 'Holland - Afrika Line' Merchant Navy Loco, boxed, no detail pack or Instructions. Side step missing. **Sold for £70, Warrington & Northwich Auction, February.**



♣ Hornby R2201 'Robert the Devil' Loco, with detail pack, no instructions and boxed. **Sold for £60, Warrington & Northwich Auction, February.**



♣ Bachmann 32-301 2251 Collett Goods 2260, BR Black E/Emblem loco with detail pack, instructions and boxed. **Sold for £40, Warrington & Northwich Auction, February.**



♣ Hornby R2550 BR 0-6-0 Terrier 32678 Loco, with detail pack, instructions and boxed. Lacking a handrail on boiler. **Sold for £35, Warrington & Northwich Auction, February.**



♣ Hornby R2094C BR 0-6-0ST Class J94 68080 Loco, with instructions and boxed. **Sold for £35, Warrington & Northwich Auction, February.**



♣ Bachmann 31-862 J39 BR Black L/Crest Loco, boxed. **Sold for £40, Warrington & Northwich Auction, February.**



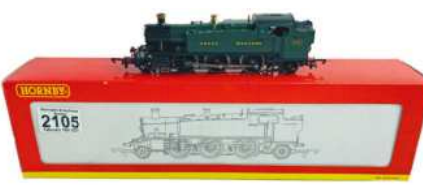
♣ Bachmann 31-854 J39, BR Black E/Emblem weathered and detailed loco, with instructions and box. **Sold for £40, Warrington & Northwich Auction, February.**



♣ Bachmann 32-302 Collett Goods Loco, boxed with detail pack, instructions. **Sold for £45, Warrington & Northwich Auction, February.**



♣ Hornby R2102B Class B12/3 Loco, coal added in tender. Detailed with instructions and box. **Sold for £45, Warrington & Northwich Auction, February.**



♣ Hornby R2098E GWR 2-6-2T Prairie 61XX Loco, boxed, no instructions. **Sold for £40, Warrington & Northwich Auction, February.**



♣ Hornby R2152 '60085 MANNA' Loco, with detail pack, instructions and box. **Sold for £65, Warrington & Northwich Auction, February.**

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♣ **Schuco 1/18 scale Mercedes L322 Fire Truck with Turntable Ladder**, impressive large scale model is in the blue livery of "Technisches Hilfswerk" - near mint in a excellent clear perspex case and illustrated box with inner packaging. **Sold for £90, Vectis, February.**



♣ **Minichamps 1/18 scale 1958 Opel Rekord P1 Fire Service Staff Car**, red, well detailed diecast model with opening doors, steerable wheels etc - near mint in excellent packaging. **Sold for £80, Vectis, February.**



♣ **Autoart 1/18 scale BMW 502 Fire Brigade Staff Car**, orange-red with white wings, would benefit from further cleaning owing to having been on display otherwise excellent plus to mint in excellent packaging. **Sold for £90, Vectis, February.**



♣ **Fire Brigade Models 96 1/48 scale**, professionally built white metal and resin London Fire Brigade Mercedes Atego Rescue Unit, excellent plus to near mint in an excellent box. **Sold for £90, Vectis, February.**



♣ **Fire Brigade Models 97 1/48 scale resin and white metal Dennis Merryweather Turntable Ladder Fire Engine**, highly detailed model of this pre-war appliance with 2 seated Fireman figures. Good plus to excellent impressive example that comes in an excellent box. **Sold for £90, Vectis, February.**



♣ **Fire Brigade Models 76 1965 Commer Pump Escape Fire Engine**, professionally made resin/white metal model with wheeled escape to rear - excellent plus to near mint and comes in an excellent card box. **Sold for £150, Vectis, February.**



♣ **Fire Brigade Models 04 1/48 scale white metal/resin Fordson 7V Heavy Unit**, complete with Tangye pump, ladders and radial branch. Based on a Utility Fire Engine from the 1940s. Excellent Plus. **Sold for £45, Vectis, February.**



♣ **Fire Brigade Models No.10 1/48 scale white metal and resin professionally made Fordson 7V Mobile Dam Unit**, this rare National Fire Service Appliance is finished in Wartime Battle Ship grey. Near mint. **Sold for £70, Vectis, February.**



♣ **Fire Brigade Models No.81 DAF 55 in Lancashire Fire & Rescue Services**, fluorescent red livery, modelled as a Pump Ladder, some minor glue assembly marks. Generally near mint. **Sold for £80, Vectis, February.**



♣ **Fire Brigade Models No.14 1/48 scale Leyland FKT Pump Escape Fire Engine**, finished in dark red London Fire Brigade livery with Firemen figures to the front seats, carrying a 50' wheeled Escape Ladder. Excellent plus in a excellent box. **Sold for £120, Vectis, February.**



♣ **RSH or similar resin/white metal 1/48 scale 4x4 Green Goddess Bedford Fire Engine**, painted as an ex AFS Local Authority Appliance in red livery with single piece ladder - near mint. **Sold for £45, Vectis, February.**



♣ **RSH or similar white metal/resin 1/48 scale Green Goddess in Auxiliary Fire Service**, green livery 4x4 version. Comes with 2-piece extension ladder - near mint to mint. **Sold for £120, Vectis, February.**



♣ **Fire Brigade Models Volvo FL6 Fire Engine in Hampshire Fire & Rescue Service livery**, comes with 13.5 metre ladder and other ladders including a roof ladder - unchecked for completeness but appears excellent. **Sold for £60, Vectis, February.**



♣ **Fire Brigade Models white metal/resin Dennis F7 Pump Escape Fire Engine**, in London Fire Brigade livery, carrying wheeled Escape Ladder, first floor ladder and 2 x hook ladders. Unchecked for completeness, appears excellent plus. **Sold for £80, Vectis, February.**



♣ **A. Smith Automodels or similar Austin 6-wheel RAF Airfield Crash Tender No.323245**, with Water Tank and monitor to rear. Chrome plated searchlight and bell to cab. Unchecked for completeness but appears excellent plus. **Sold for £60, Vectis, February.**



♣ **Scratchbuilt Austin ATV National Fire Service Auxiliary Towing Unit Van**, approx 1/24 scale, finished in grey, towing trailer pump with hose detail, carrying a modified Airfix ladder and the crew of 3 fire fighters to interior, excellent. **Sold for £40, Vectis, February.**



♣ **Ashton Models (USA) 1/43rd 1919 American LaFrance Water Tower "New Orleans"**, of white metal limited edition construction, a previously unopened model - mint. **Sold for £110, Vectis, February.**



♣ **Ashton Models Chicago Fire Department Pumper**, red with black cab top, one left hand drivers mirror detached but present. Includes 2 ladders and 2 suction hose - otherwise good in excellent packaging. **Sold for £20, Vectis, February.**



♣ **Ashton Models No.20A 1951 Mack Pumper "Chicago Engine No.1"**, red, with black cab roof, 2 ladders to one side and 2 suction hoses to the other, fitted with rear monitor and bell to front. Excellent plus to near mint including packaging. **Sold for £45, Vectis, February.**



♣ **Ashton Models No.52 1941 Mack Fuel Tanker FDNY**, scarce model of this New York Fire Truck Support Vehicle in 1/43 scale. Rear mounted ladder, would benefit from further cleaning and unchecked otherwise near mint in excellent packaging. **Sold for £60, Vectis, February.**



♣ **Ashton Models (USA) 1/43 scale white metal model "Detroit Fire Department" Mack Recovery Service Truck**, dark red with black booms, excellent plus to near mint. **Sold for £35, Vectis, February.**



♣ **Original Classics 1/18 scale Dennis F8 1950s Pumping Appliance Fire Engine** based on an actual model from Leeds City Fire Brigade registration number RUM966, highly detailed. Lacks nearside drivers mirror otherwise excellent plus. **Sold for £70, Vectis, February.**



♣ **Franklin Mint Models approx 1/32 scale Pierce Snorkel 6-wheeled Fire Engine**, highly detailed with twin operating booms and cage, the extension ladders to each side. Excellent in a fair box. **Sold for £140, Vectis, February.**



♣ **Franklin Mint approx 1/32 scale 1965 Seagrave Articulated Fire Engine with Aerial Ladder**, "Ladder Company No.5" livery, steerable wheels to front axle. Highly detailed, excellent example. **Sold for £50, Vectis, February.**



♣ **Franklin Mint 1/32nd scale ALF American LaFrance Fire Truck with Aerial Ladder**, opening cab doors, fitted with turntable ladder and additional ladders to rear, unchecked. Excellent plus. **Sold for £40, Vectis, February.**



♣ **Code 3 Collectables 1/32nd scale Chicago Fire Department Luverne Pumper Fire Truck**, highly detailed with opening doors and side lockers. Unchecked, excellent including packaging. **Sold for £70, Vectis, February.**



♣ **Code 3 Collectables 1/32 scale FDNY Pumper type Fire Engine**, finished in livery of the Fire Department of New York, highly detailed model, the chrome ladders. Excellent plus including packaging. **Sold for £70, Vectis, February.**



♣ **Corgi Toys Marks & Spencers Buick Regal Promotional model**, scarce example produced exclusively for Marks & Spencers Stores but unmarked in red "City Fire Department Fire Chief" livery. Excellent plus to near mint. **Sold for £35, Vectis, February.**



♣ **Roxley Models 1/50 scale white metal Leyland Sherpa Fire Tender** in "Jaguar Fire Service" livery, red, with aluminium finish to rear and 2-piece ladder to roof, professionally made. Excellent plus. **Sold for £35, Vectis, February.**



♣ **Mini Vehicules Incendies (France) K14 Forward Control Land Rover Fire Appliance**, in "Vichy" livery, well detailed with loose spade and ladder accessory, unchecked but appears excellent plus, approx 1/50 scale. **Sold for £50, Vectis, February.**



✦ Corgi Aviation Archive 1/32 Scale D Day 60th Anniversary Mosquito, a boxed limited edition AA34602 DH Mosquito PR XVI-NS502 544 Squadron RAF Benson 1944, appears as new, excellent, box good. **Sold for £100, Special Auction Services, February.**



✦ Corgi Aviation Archive 1/32 Scale Supermarine Spitfire, a boxed limited edition AA33901 Spitfire MK 1A RAF 609 Sqn, appears as new, excellent, box good. **Sold for £70, Special Auction Services, February.**



✦ Corgi Aviation Archive 1/32 Scale Supermarine Spitfire, a boxed limited edition AA33902 Spitfire MK 1 in battle scarred livery, RAF 19 Sqn, Squadron Leader Brian Lane, appears as new, excellent. **Sold for £70, Special Auction Services, February.**



✦ Corgi Aviation Archive 1/32 Scale Supermarine Spitfire, a boxed limited edition AA33903 Spitfire MK11A Tangmere, Wing Commander Douglas Barber, appears as new, excellent, box good. **Sold for £70, Special Auction Services, February.**



✦ Corgi Aviation Archive 1/32 Scale 70 Years of The Spitfire, limited edition AA33908 Spitfire Type 300- Prototype K5054 Eastleigh 1936, with book Sigh For a Merlin, factory sealed, appears as new, excellent, Boxes good. **Sold for £110, Special Auction Services, February.**



✦ Corgi Aviation Archive 1/72 Scale Europe and Africa Bomber and Fighter Set, limited edition AA99133 set, Avro Lancaster 635 Squadron and DH Mosquito 109 Squadron Pathfinder Force, appears as new, excellent, box good. **Sold for £100, Special Auction Services, February.**



✦ Corgi Aviation Archive 1/72 Scale Battle Of Britain Memorial Flight Set, limited edition AA32602 set, Avro Lancaster Mickey The Moocher, Spitfire MKIIA and Hawker Hurricane, appears as new, excellent. **Sold for £140, Special Auction Services, February.**



✦ Corgi Aviation Archive 1/72 Scale Blitz Set, a boxed limited edition AA99127 set including Heinkel He 111, Messerschmitt Me 109E and Supermarine Spitfire MK1 611 Sqn Rochford, appears as new, excellent, Box good. **Sold for £100, Special Auction Services, February.**



✦ Corgi Aviation Archive 1/72 Scale War in the Pacific Set, limited edition AA99126 set including Boeing B-17F Miss Minookie, P47D Thunderbolt Rozzie Geth II/ Miss Fire and P51D Mustang, as new, excellent. **Sold for £120, Special Auction Services, February.**



✦ Corgi Aviation Archive 1/72 Scale War in the Pacific Boeing B-17 G, a boxed limited edition AA33307 B-17 G Confederate Air Force, Arizona Wing, Sentimental Journey, appears as new, excellent, Box good. **Sold for £110, Special Auction Services, February.**



✦ Corgi Aviation Archive 1/72 Scale War in the Pacific Liberator, a boxed limited edition AA34001 Consolidated Liberator B-24J The Dragon and His Tail, Le Shima 1945, appears as new, excellent, box good. **Sold for £90, Special Auction Services, February.**



✦ Corgi Aviation Archive 1/72 Scale Lancasters, two boxed limited edition models, AA32601 Avro Lancaster 467 Squadron and AA32603 Avro Lancaster No 44 Rhodesia Sqn RAF 1942, both appear as new, excellent, boxes good. **Sold for £150, Special Auction Services, February.**



✦ Corgi Aviation Archive 1/72 Scale 70 Years of the Spitfire and Lancaster, two boxed limited edition examples AA99189 Johnnie Johnson three plane set, MKI, MKVB & MKIX with display plinth and AA32603 Avro Lancaster No 44 Rhodesia Sqn RAF 1942, both appear as new, excellent, boxes good. **Sold for £130, Special Auction Services, February.**



✦ Corgi Aviation Archive 1/72 Scale Europe and Africa Liberator and Flying Fortress, two boxed limited edition models, AA34003 Consolidated B-24D Liberator Strawberry Bitch Libya 1943 and AA33301 Boeing B-17F Flying Fortress Memphis Belle, both appear as new, excellent, boxes good. **Sold for £170, Special Auction Services, February.**



✦ Corgi Aviation Archive 1/72 Scale Europe and Africa Lancasters, two boxed limited edition models, AA32604 Avro Lancaster I Admiral Prune 106 Sqn Guy Gibson 1942 and AA32605 Avro Lancaster 419 Sqn, both appear as new, excellent, boxes good. **Sold for £160, Special Auction Services, February.**

What was the year?

More armchair reminiscing, from **Alwyn Brice**.

Welcome back, dear reader, to another brain-racking foray into the past.

Let's kick off this month with education. Hands up if you recall those types that appeared on the small screen, giving lectures, and seemingly always dressed in turtleneck sweaters or tweed jackets? Yes, I'm referring to the Open University and this year saw the first Open University degrees awarded, a breakthrough that gave aspiring students the chance to gain higher qualifications while studying at home... Funny thing, but that seems to be par for the course these days, too!

This year also saw the European Economic Community gain three

new members: Britain, Ireland and Denmark. Elsewhere in the world there was grim news, with the OPEC countries restricting oil supplies to any country supporting Israel's policies: in fact, the price of crude escalated by 200%, triggering all sorts of problems for the UK, which included a three day week, restricted television hours and a lowering of the speed limit to 50mph.

In the architectural world, the triumph that was the Bosphorus Bridge took the headlines: joining Europe to Asia, it was a significant achievement. Architecture also dominated in the US, the mighty Sears Tower being completed. This skyscraper contained 108 floors and stood 1,729 feet high. It was the tallest building in the world, along with the World

Trade Centre, until the twin Petronas Towers in Malaysia were built in 1988. The Watergate hearing also got underway in the US, as President Nixon defended himself; and in Vietnam, the last US troops pulled out of the conflict, bringing to an end an emotive and bloody conflict. The Americans also launched the first space station during this year: Skylab marked another milestone in the conquest of space.

At the cinema, the must-see film was arguably *American Graffiti*, which was directed by George Lucas (who would go on to have no little success with a series of inter-galactic tales). A combination of youth, cars and social mores, it garnered an enviable array of awards.

For those into pop music, it was

a fertile year. Elton John, with his trademark big glasses, was teaching the world the *Crocodile Rock* while the wild boys of pop, the Rolling Stones, were lamenting *Angie*. More cerebral stuff came from Pink Floyd, who released the *Dark side of the Moon* this same year. Meanwhile, at home, we were tuning into *Colditz* on the little screen, as well as *Are you being served?* Sitcoms came no camper than that set in the Grace Brothers' emporium.

As for toys... Ideal brought out its homage to Evil Knievel and his stunt-performing Harley motorbike this year. A strange choice, perhaps, but young boys, thrilled by the daredevil who broke more bones than was good for him, snapped it up. **CG**



LEFT
Mattel's baby doll was in the shops, which must have given Barbie some sleepless nights...



BELOW
Airfix took over the rights to manufacturing these strange rolling Weebles this year.



LEFT
Well - it's a card game. Honest. Infernally hot property during the mystery year!



ABOVE
Riding high with Mr Knievel!

Images courtesy of Etsy and Ebay.

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Toy Stories

Ed Karswell remembers the hand-me-down toys that started his collecting habit.

I love people's stories regarding hand-me-down toys as they often elicit the most sentimental and vivid of memories. There may be those who recoil at the thought of second hand, believing only new will do, but as collectors we of course know better.

Growing up I was quite lucky in respect of hand-me-downs as my brother was six years older than me and the toys he grew out of automatically came to me. There were also members of the extended family who would, on occasion, present me with a battered Family Circle biscuit tin full of well-worn playthings waiting to be re-discovered by yours truly. I well remember being given an incomplete Bayko set which by the Lego obsessed 70s looked positively archaic. Of better stock were the two Corgi Cadillac ambulances which at that time were only a few years old. My brother plumped for the red and cream example whilst I got the blue and white one. Their battery carriers and bulbs had long since

departed but the all-important tyres were still on. Their recent obsolescence was negated by the fact that there was a Sunday morning TV re-run which featured similar vehicles screaming up and down the highways.

Now, it being the very early 70s it wasn't unusual to see some 50s Dinky toys knocking about, most being devoid of both paint and the afore mentioned tyres. The oldest toy I can recall being handed down I only got to see years after the event. My father had owned a large tinplate saloon by Marx when he was a child. He duly passed this childhood gem to my brother, who then buried it in our garden in an unmarked grave. It was later exhumed, by which time there was little left. It was one of many toys lost in the garden so its discovery was no real surprise.

Being a 60s child my brother's toys were greatly influenced by his TV diet so anything by Gerry Andersen featured heavily. There was also the omnipresent Corgi *James Bond* Aston Martin, the second version no less, in silver

with revolving number plates and detachable wheel spinners - not that I took any interest you understand. There were however some rare jewels, one being the *Man from Uncle* attaché case which was annoyingly incomplete. The other was a tinplate robot that no matter how many times I shook it resolutely refused to work. One had to be careful though as not everything was ripe to be handed down. I particularly recall being warned off even looking in the general direction of a Dinky *Joe 90* car which of course I wanted so much it hurt.

Annuals and books were another thing that were regularly passed down. The only problem here was that they rarely made sense to me as by the time I got the *No Hiding Place* annual, the TV show hadn't been on for 5 years and as for *Freddie and the Dreamers*... I was much more excited by some of the artwork which although dated, was in retrospect fairly recent. For instance, the 1958 *Lion* annual featured some very *Quatermass* style rockets and space men,

which by the time of the moon landings looked decidedly quaint. The *Topper* annual of the same vintage was unusual in that it was a landscape format which intrigued me. It was also interesting to see earlier incarnations of well-known characters such as Beryl the Peril and the like. These fired in me an interest in art as much as anything else.

Some events really were a sign of things to come. One afternoon I was dragged along by my mother to visit an auntie so I could watch them gossip for two or so hours. To keep me quiet, I was given a small box of toy cars which to my glee I was allowed to keep. The toy cars were all from an earlier era so along with my Superfast Big Banger and Mod Tractor I now added a Jaguar S Type, a Karrier 'Coca-Cola lorry and an Austin A50. To my eyes these models looked so much more refined than a tractor that could plough up Santa Pod or an ambulance that resembled a fish tank. I was hooked, I just didn't know it.

After this, along came Action Man, more Matchbox, a few Majorettes, toy guns and of course *Star Wars*. As time went on toys were either sold or given away, save for the ones that, forgive me, ended their days in the back garden. That small nucleus of vintage Matchbox items remained though and formed the basis of a collection I started to build. I began to find out about them and as a hobby it sat well with a growing interest in classic cars of the same era.

Fast forward 40 years and I can still see where it all began. I don't get handed down toys any more these days, more the pity as there's a few gaps I'd still like to fill! **CG**



Lucky dip

David Boxall was swimming in collectables at the Poole Model Toy & Train Collectors Fair.

First featured:
August 2015!

The Poole Toy and Train Fair is held at the Poole Grammar School, Gravel Hill, on the A349. This event and the Wimborne venue are currently the two main toy fairs in Dorset and both are organised by David Rees and Jason Davies. At a time when some are reporting that smaller toy fairs like these are very hard work to sustain, the Poole show admirably soldiers on. Over many years the show has gathered together a very loyal following of traders and collectors.

First stop of the morning was with Malcolm Ambrose who is a very enthusiastic collector. Malcolm had a very balanced mixture of diecast in good to near mint condition. Saloon cars and the larger commercials were all catered for. There were some harder to find models on the table, such as the Dinky Corsair, model No. 130 and the Chevrolet El Camino Pick-Up, model No. 449. The early version of the Vanwall Racing Car, model No. 150 by Corgi Toys was parked alongside the later model, No. 150s. The early version in green was released in 1957, and the later Vanwall in red with bonnet flash and RN 25 transfer was released in 1961. Both models were on sale for £40.

Along the back row of the table display Malcolm had parked a number of very tidy Foden lorries by



ABOVE Mike Cooke was in attendance with lots of excellent tinplate models. I particularly liked the cars, especially the Frog Eye Sprite.



ABOVE There were lots of trains – mostly boxed, together with other railway equipment on display for sale with Ian Shave.



ABOVE The beautiful red engine with tender was the 'Royal Scott' of the LMS line, No. 6100.

Dinky. The all blue Foden Truck with the first type cab carried a price tag of £150, while the yellow and green Leyland Octopus Wagon, released in 1956-58, was priced at £60.

Terry Jenkins is a regular at the Poole show and always has an excellent display. This

time Terry and his friend Tom had a good deal of O gauge railway stock. I saw a small engine with tender priced at £25, together with a number of very early carriages priced at around £100. There were a number to choose from to suit every pocket. There was also a large tinplate

biplane – just sold, waiting for collection... or should that be take-off?

Next door on Tom's table, I noticed a beautiful red engine with tender, it was the 'Royal Scott' of the LMS line, No. 6100. This particular engine carried a note explaining that it was made by

Burnett Ltd, "established in 1905, British makers of tinsplate vehicles". There were many other O gauge railway items to choose from, including signals and track. Many of the items also had boxes.

Mike Thorne had some really excellent Dinky diecast. I spotted a fabulous Bedford 'Ovaltine' Van model No. 481, priced at £42, which was amid a whole car park of Dinky vans. These included the Post Office Van, the 'Shell BP' Van, the 'Chivers Jellies' Trojan Van, and the yellow Bedford 'Kodak' Van, to name but a few. There were plenty more, plus Mike also had a line of Foden lorries by Dinky. The red USA Export Foden was there, priced at £375, as was the red and fawn Foden tanker, priced at £125. Both these models were first cab issues and boxed. I particularly liked the second cab Flatbed Foden with orange cab and chassis and green rear, model No. 902, carrying a price tag of £115.

There is always a large selection of diecast – boxed and unboxed – on Colin Jackson's stall. One such item was the Corgi Rover 2000 Monte Carlo Rally, model No. 322, priced at £185. Not far away in the same tray I saw the Corgi MGB GT, model No. 327, priced at £110 – both these cars were boxed.

Keith Franklin had a fantastic large-scale



ABOVE Colin Jackson had a Corgi Rover 2000 Monte Carlo Rally, model No. 322, priced at £185.

scaffold crane, made in orange plastic. There was no maker's name to be seen on the model and it was priced at just £15. Keith also had an excellent selection of very colourful board games, including Big Game by Chad Valley, which involves shooting at targets. Sadly, we were all a bit too busy to give one of the games a try – could be the start of a new club!

There were lots of trains – mostly boxed – together with other railway equipment on display for sale with Ian Shave. His prices seemed very competitive, with engines and accompanying tenders around the £50 to £75 price range. A typical example was the 'Tornado' No. 60163, as new and priced at £75, and I did spot an engine with a price tag of just £25.

Meanwhile Tim Baker had a good deal of boxed items on his stall, including a 'wall of models' banked either side of his main display case. All sorts of vehicles were available, from haulage giants to saloon cars. A number of different scales and types of vehicles were catered for, including Oxford Military, and Classix Transport Treasures. He also had a fine display of early racing cars, and a row

or two of Jaguars.

If you were looking out for the longest sales table at the show, then Stephen King was your man. Lots of everything was the order of the day – models to restore, parts for replacement, figures to complete that set and railway equipment for almost any layout. Stephen will also look out for items you may require, though he probably has one already, somewhere at home in his cavernous storage depot... so it's always worth asking if you're after something.

Mike Cooke was in attendance with lots of excellent tinplate models. I particularly liked the cars, especially the Frog Eye Sprite, priced at £265. It appeared to be in near mint condition and had an air of sporty mischief about it – a wonderful model. Mike always has a number of really desirable toys, and his display usually has a few rare pieces waiting to grab your attention.

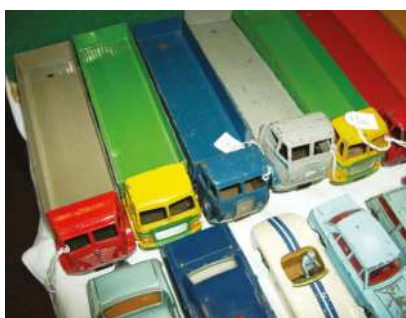
As usual, I had enjoyed my visit and the various conversations around the two school halls within the venue. I had bought a couple of interesting models and took lots of photos. As I left, I was pleased to see more visitors appearing at the door, even in the afternoon. **CG**



ABOVE Stephen King had lots of everything – models to restore, parts for replacement, figures to complete that set and railway equipment for almost any layout.



ABOVE Mike Thorne had some really excellent Dinky diecast, such as the fabulous Bedford 'Ovaltine' Van, model No. 481.



ABOVE Along the back row of the table display Malcolm had parked a number of very tidy Foden lorries by Dinky.



ABOVE Terry Jenkins had a small engine with tender priced at £25, together with a number of very early carriages priced at around £100 each.

Obsolete

Our monthly gaze into the weird but wonderful world of collector/dealer **Obsolete Oz**. Buying and selling since the 1970s, Oz has developed a great knack for unearthing some amazing finds from flea markets, antique fairs, car boot sales, rubbish skips and even the local tip.

Hi folks! Another month goes by and it is still a question of hanging on and digging deep to survive.

For me digging deep has required an in-depth search for stock and boxes that have stood at the back of the garage for years (mainly because I couldn't get at them for all the junk!) have finally been liberated. The garage has never looked so tidy although there's still no hope of getting the car in there... and there probably never will be!

Selling has been slow due to the lockdown but you simply have to do your best during these testing times.

Despite all the antique centres and outside events being closed I have managed to do some private buying from individuals I know and a few trusty friends in the house clearance business.

An interesting Baker Street enamel sign came my way as part of a small collection of transport memorabilia I bought from my old mate Andy who had had a clear out prior to moving house. It's a nice sign and looks great in its black frame but I'm sure it's a copy. Reminds me of one of my all-time favourite singer songwriters' Gerry Rafferty, who belted out that fantastic song *Baker Street* in the winter of 1978 reaching No.3 in the hit parade. It might not be original but this sign has to be worth the twenty quid Andy wanted for it. It might be yet another sign I keep for the man shed?

On the subject of great songs another splendid discovery was made in a box of records discovered in a house clearance. They were fresh to market and

looked clean and a quick glance through them indicated that they were well worth the forty quid the guy was asking for them. Later inspection revealed a brilliant single by the one and only Dusty Springfield who I really rate as a soul singer. *What's it Gonna be* was never a hit, in fact it never even entered the charts and was a total flop until it was re-discovered and adopted as a Northern Soul dancefloor filler in the early 1970s. Now a good copy on the original Phillips label could easily make twenty quid or more and this copy is in excellent nick. What a great find!

Another great find came my way when I got a call from an old mate who collects biscuit tins, to ask if I'd be interested in a tin that once held Victory V Gums. He'd bought it as part of a job lot but doesn't collect sweet or toffee tins as I do. When he said the lid had pictures of kids flying down a snowy hill on sledges I knew which one it was instantly and it was a no brainer at £45. When I got the tin it was better than the one in my collection so I'll replace that and sell it.

A cardboard box full of unbuild plastic kits was another recent lockdown purchase. The guy I bought them from had suffered with his eyesight and had decided that he'd never get chance to assemble them so it was best pass them on. He was more than happy accepting £100 for them and I was pleased to get my hands on one of the M-19 45-ton tank transporters which are extremely hard to find and sell for £25-£30. The Diamond T tractor will become a fairground model when I get around to doing it – which may be never!

Ironically it will now reside in my own box of unmade kits!

As part of my garage rummage I decided to do a bit of thinning out of the hollow cast collection I'd stored away years ago which included a couple of Pixyland Kew reptiles both in excellent condition. I know I originally bought them to sell on but, like so many things, I rather liked them at the time and they remained in the box. However, needs must and its going to be tricky getting my hands on nice stock for a while so every little helps. You might call them 'rainy day' boxes and we've certainly had our fair share of those recently.

On the selling front it has been a question of a few private sales combined with a few sales on click and collect.

A nice little Mazawattee Tea sample tin found a happy buyer willing to pay my asking price of £40 which was really reasonable for this scarce tin.

A Corgi Guy Arab taken from

one of my 'rainy day' boxes sold for fifteen quid, a fair price considering only 10,000 of them were made. These buses were great models with superb detail and accurate livery but will they ever go up much in value I wonder?

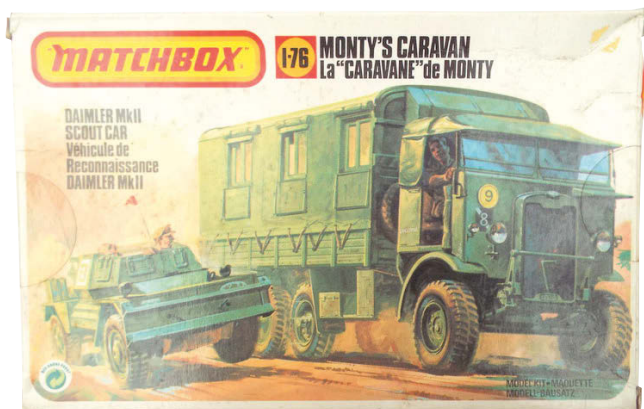
Still on the subject of diecast a MOKO crawler tractor in play worn condition sold for a tenner and will probably end up being restored.

A tough plastic London Bus of unknown origin also made a tenner and Monty's caravan, one of the kits from the previously mentioned plastic kit collection I purchased as a job lot sold for £25. Like the tank transporter, this is quite a hard kit to find these days.

Well that's about it for another month of lockdown folks. The vaccine roll out is well under way which gives us some hope for the future. Will many of the big shows return this year? Watch this space. **CG**



ABOVE
This Baker Street enamel sign is well made and convincing but probably dates from the 1970s.



ABOVE

In and out in a flash, this Matchbox Monty's caravan construction kit soon found a buyer willing to hand over £25.

BELOW

Discovered in one of Oz's rainy day boxes during lockdown these cute Pixieland Kew reptiles were bought a few years ago.



LEFT

Another discovery in Oz's rainy day boxes was this Corgi Southdown Guy Arab sold for £15 which is a snip for such a superb model.



BELOW

This attractive Edwardian Victory V gums tin was offered to Oz by a fellow collector and he didn't hesitate to buy it.



ABOVE

This fine example of a small Mazawattee tea sample tin didn't hang around for long, soon selling to a keen tin collector.



LEFT

The wonderful soulful sound of Dusty Springfield at its best. But for some reason this rare record was not a great hit... now it is highly sought after.



LEFT

Play worn and in need of a driver, this MOKO crawler attracted a buyer willing to hand over ten pounds for it.

RIGHT

This plastic London bus is of unknown manufacture (possibly Tudor Rose) but still has lots of play value. It was bought by a Japanese student for a tenner.



ABOVE

One of many kits Oz bought in a job lot this Matchbox Diamond T M19 tank transporter was of specific interest to Oz... will it ever get built though?

»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

11 APRIL

- **Malvern**, British Toy Fairs, 01691 32857

25 APRIL

- **Exeter**, British Toy Fairs, 01392 32857

AUCTIONS

19 MARCH

- **Stockton-on-Tees**, Vectis, 01642 750616
- **Beccles**, Durrants, 01502 713490
- **Runcorn**, British Toy Auctions, 01928 579032

24 MARCH

- **Bourne**, Golding, Young & Mawer, 01778 422686

25 MARCH

- **Lymington**, Lymington Auctions, 01590 679487

26 MARCH

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

27 MARCH

- **Kings Langley**, Excalibur Auctions, 02036 330913

30 MARCH

- **Stockton-on-Tees**, Vectis, 01642 750616
- **Cheshire**, Warrington & Northwich Auctions, 01925 658833

31 MARCH

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

8 APRIL

- **Sheffield**, Sheffield Auction Gallery, 0114 281 6161

9 APRIL

- **Runcorn**, British Toy Auctions, 01928 579032

10 APRIL

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

11 APRIL

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

12 APRIL

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

13 APRIL

- **Newbury**, Special Auction Services, 01635 580595
- **Cheshire**, Warrington & Northwich Auctions, 01925 658833

14 APRIL

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

16 APRIL

- **Bury St Edmonds**, Lacy Scott & Knight, 01284 748623
- **Leyburn**, Tennants Auctioneers, 01969 623780

18 APRIL

- **Sydney**, Trains Planes & Automobiles, +612 4787 7974

22 APRIL

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

23 APRIL

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

24 APRIL

- **Hanham**, East Bristol Auctions, 0117 967 1000
- **Ilkley**, Hartleys Auctioneers, 01943 816363

27 APRIL

- **Cheshire**, Warrington & Northwich Auctions, 01925 658833
- **Stockton-on-Tees**, Vectis, 01642 750616

29 APRIL

- **Stockton-on-Tees**, Vectis, 01642 750616
- **Lymington**, Lymington Auctions, 01590 679487

11 MAY

- **Cheshire**, Warrington & Northwich Auctions, 01925 658833

12 MAY

- **Kent**, C&T Auctioneers, 01233 510050

14 MAY

- **Runcorn**, British Toy Auctions, 01928 579032

19 MAY

- **Warwick**, Warwick & Warwick, 01926 499031



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Items shown taken from 16th February 2021 auction

April 2021 Auction Dates

Wednesday 14th - Diecast & Tinsplate Sale

Thursday 22nd - General Toy Sale

Friday 23rd - Model Train Sale

Tuesday 27th - Diecast Sale

Thursday 29th - TV & Film Related Sale



Auctions commence at 10.00am unless otherwise stated - Dates are correct at time of print but are subject to change

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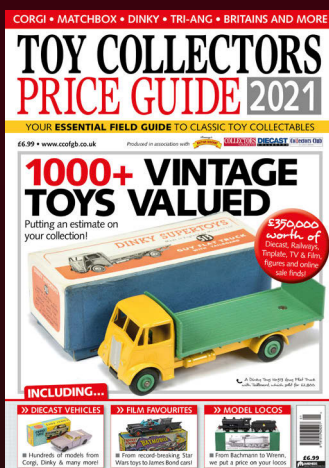
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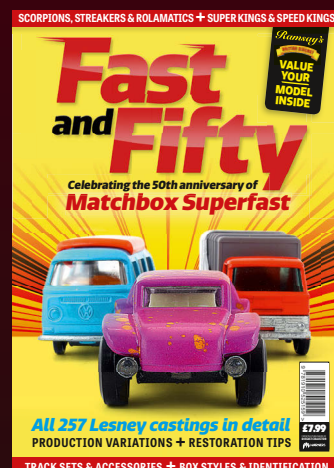
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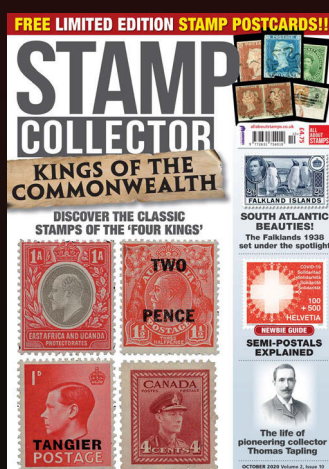
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The Battle of Britain

IN COLOUR



“Praise where due. This is the best magazine available which I have read - I am very impressed. I thoroughly enjoyed reading each chapter and it was written in such an easy style. It covered every aspect and I was saddened when I reached the end.”

This 164-page special collector's edition commemorates the 80th Anniversary of the momentous Battle of Britain, making it the perfect gift for any aviation or Battle of Britain enthusiast.

THE BATTLE OF BRITAIN IN COLOUR



The Battle Looms

The Battle of Britain was one of the most iconic battles of the Second World War, embedding itself indelibly into the nation's consciousness. Earlier, the Battle of France could easily have spelled defeat before the air battles got underway in July 1940.

As for the outbreak of war in September 1939, there followed eight months of what became known as the 'Phoney War'. It was clear that large-scale fighting would ultimately follow, and a British Expeditionary Force was sent to France before the end of that year. As part of the BEF, a large Air Component was supplemented by an Advanced Air Brigade. In total, there are forces amounted to six squadrons, six of which were Hawker Hurricane fighters, and four were Spitfires. The remainder of the RAF force in France comprised largely light bombers and Army Co-operation squadrons. Eventually, however, the 'sitting' became the 'fighting'.

On 10 May 1940, German forces launched their all-out assault on France and the Low Countries and what followed in Belgium, the Netherlands etc, was the complete collapse of those countries under the overwhelming might of German military power. Across France, German forces rolled inexorably towards the English Channel and while the French and British tried desperately to stem the advance, the situation became ever more desperate.

Predicted Catastrophe
When the fighting had broken out in France, the BEF's Air Component was in almost certain trouble, and it was to be destroyed.

BACKGROUND TO BATTLE



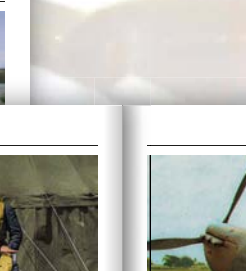
THE RAF FIGHTER PILOT

Left: A Hurricane of 501 Squadron, sent to France for an operational sortie at Bethune, France, May 1940. An RAF Hurricane High Dive bomber (right) was sent to France to deliver incendiary bombs against further wave of the German High Dive bomber. The Hurricane was sent to France to deliver incendiary bombs against further wave of the German High Dive bomber. The Hurricane was sent to France to deliver incendiary bombs against further wave of the German High Dive bomber.



THE RAF FIGHTER PILOT

Right: As the anticipated approach of German military might advanced across Europe, the steady stream of Hurricanes sent to France to deliver incendiary bombs against further wave of the German High Dive bomber. The Hurricane was sent to France to deliver incendiary bombs against further wave of the German High Dive bomber. The Hurricane was sent to France to deliver incendiary bombs against further wave of the German High Dive bomber.



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