

Dinky toys 75 year exhibition – The Silk Mill in Derby

7 March to 18 September 2009

Report by Theo Alberda

We visited the UK recently to see our first grandchild. It just happened that the 75 year Dinky Toy anniversary exhibition held at the Silk Mill in Derby was nearing the end of its run. We talked our son into taking us on the 250 km round trip from Manchester. This he willingly did, and before we left we also convinced him into taking his video camera along to capture the exhibition showcases in as much detail as possible for the benefit of those folk who could not attend.

The exhibition, held in a section of the museum, about the size of the VCC club, included over two thousand items illustrating the large number of casting and colour variations produced by Meccano at their Liverpool factory from 1934 until production ceased in the late 1970s. Besides cars and trucks, the trains, ships and Dublo were all well represented.

In addition to the well organised display, there were cabinets each with its own theme and era, for example, the 25 series wagons.

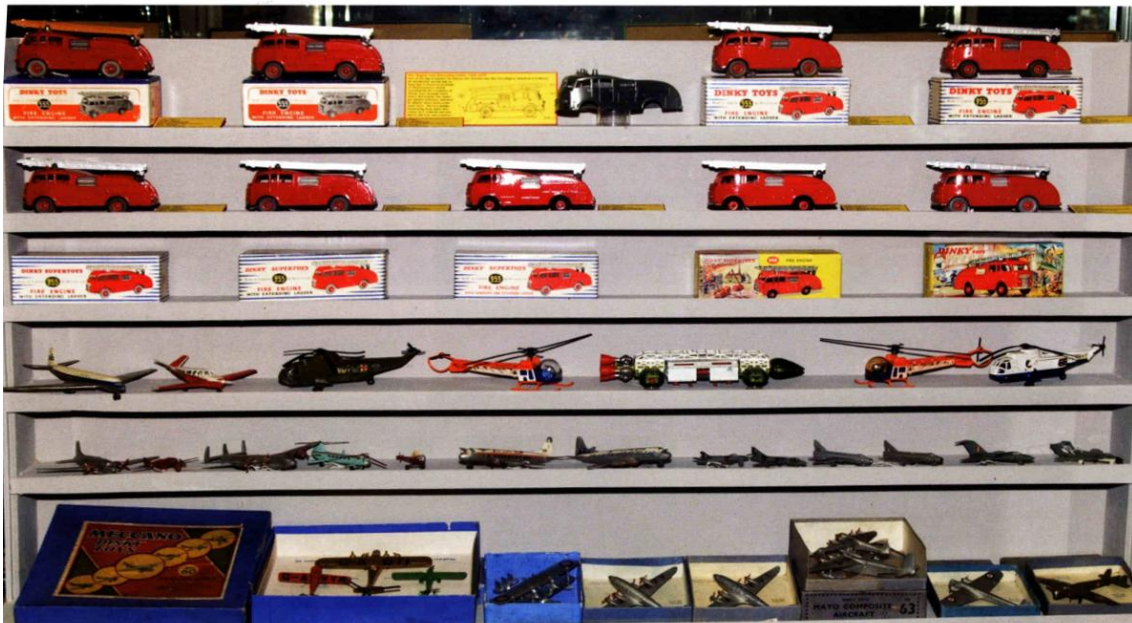
There were many large wall posters on display giving interesting historical facts and extracts from the Dinky catalogues from as far back as 1934.

The French contingent was also very well represented and of particular interest was an actual grill from an early Citroen car that the owner had very cleverly inserted shelves behind a glass face on which he has placed a large collection of Citroen cars and trucks made by the Bobigny factory. The owner had kindly loaned this “masterpiece” to the exhibition and surprisingly for security reasons it was strapped and bolted to the wall! Interesting fact - during the Second World War this factory produced toys for Marklin.



The Citroen grill display cabinet featuring Dinky Citroën models.

As the exhibition was nearing the end the number of visitors had declined which was much to our advantage as there were times when we were all alone allowing us the opportunity to take videos and photographs unhindered. The museum staff was very friendly and helpful allowing us a free reign and even charged the battery of Andrew's video camera as required. All in all, we took more than an hour of video and about a hundred photographs which Andrew, under much pressure from his Dad, edited over several days and placed on a DVD for us. To try and take in all that was on display was impossible. During the editing so much more emerged, and it was clear that much of what we had seen was simply forgotten by the end of the day! To try and give a detailed account would take a book but luckily most of what we had seen is now on the video. Andrew made five extra copies for the club which we hope will get passed around and enjoyed by the Dinky enthusiasts.



An exhibitors approach to specialising in one type features ten Commer fire engines (Dinky 555) with paint finish and casting changes the principal interest.



An example of the many posters on display – this one a reproduction of Dinky's first catalogue October 1934