

Giant Meccano Bridge Secures World Record

BELFAST, UK, Sept. 19 2015 /CNW/ - Today, Officials from Guinness World Records have confirmed that The Big Bridge Build – a bridge spanning almost 100 feet across Belfast's Clarendon Dock – is the world's largest Meccano structure.

The Big Bridge Build, a year-long project, is the brainchild of the University's School of Planning, Architecture and Civil Engineering. Academics and students created the bridge, with the help of local school children, as part of the university's outreach programme to encourage more children to think about careers in STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics).

The Bridge is on display as a temporary installation in Belfast's Clarendon Dock, where hundreds turned out to marvel at the stunning construction as they waited to hear the official announcement at 12.30 pm. The project was made possible with the help of [Spin Master Corp.](#), the proud owner and producer of Meccano, as well as McLaughlin & Harvey and Aecom who gave valuable advice to the students as well as assisting with the construction and installation of the bridge across the Clarendon Dock.

The students celebrated their achievement by walking across the bridge for the first time, which was officially declared open by Meccano's Meccanoid Robot, much to the delight of attending youngsters.

The project has also attracted the interest of some notable figures, including Dame Athene Donald, (next President of the British Science Association) Lord Richard Rogers (world renowned architect) and Kevin McCloud (Grand Designs) who all sent messages of support.

Members of the public who attend the event had the opportunity to speak to students and academics, as well as the event sponsors, who were on hand to discuss the bridge build and civil engineering in general. Youngsters were also able to create their own Meccano structures in a dedicated Gazebo sponsored by Smyths Toys Superstores.

Speaking about the achievement Danny McPolin, Senior Structures Lecturer at Queen's School of Planning, Architecture and Civil Engineering, said: "This event has been a fantastic way to celebrate the student and staff's incredible work over the past year, but also a chance to show local children more about the exciting courses we offer here at the Queen's University."

He continued: "With a growing skill shortage in Civil engineering, we hope that our work will encourage more children to consider the study of civil engineering and other STEM subjects at University level."

Ben Varadi, Executive Vice President and Chief Creative Officer, Spin Master Corp., said: "We are truly in awe of this remarkable achievement. Spin Master is incredibly proud that this timeless and iconic toy, invented over a 100 years ago, continues to inspire the world's future architects and engineers."

Paul McCormick, Managing Director, Highways & Bridges, EMEA & India at AECOM, commented: "We are proud to have been involved with the Big Bridge Build project and it's wonderful to see young people getting excited by the fantastic opportunities civil engineering can offer. We hope this event inspires more young people to take up STEM subjects at university level and pursue careers in engineering."

John McCarey, Chief Engineer at Civil Engineering contractor McLaughlin & Harvey Ltd added: "It has been a pleasure to work with Queen's to support these engineers of the future with this exciting project. We have been involved from the start of their world record attempt, providing them with a contractor's insight and bringing our technical expertise to the very particular challenges of this brilliant third year design project. To gain the World Record is the icing on the cake!"

The Guinness World Record 'Big Bridge Build' in Numbers!

Length of Bridge - 28.5 (96ft)

Longest Span of Bridge - 14m

Height of Bridge - 6m (26ft)

Weight - 600kg

Pieces of Meccano – 11,000

Nuts, bolts, washers – 60,000

Total length of Meccano pieces (laid end to end) – 3,835m

*This is equivalent to the length of **341** Routemaster buses or the height of 10 Empire State Buildings!*

***SUPPORTERS**

Professor Dame Athene Donald - Master of Churchill College and Professor of Experimental Physics, University of Cambridge, also announced as the next President of the British Science Association

"Inspiring the engineers of tomorrow - boys AND girls - is so important for the future of the UK's economy, innovation and productivity. Getting these students involved, hands-on, with an exciting project like the Meccano Bridge is an excellent way to achieve this. Good luck with the project!"

Lord Richard Rogers - Rogers Stirk Harbour + Partners

"Sadly, I won't be able to come to Belfast to view the bridge, but it looks amazing.

It's fantastic to see academics, students and children working together on projects like this. Good luck with the rest of the project."

Kevin McCloud MBE

"I was excited to see what must be the first life-size Meccano bridge in the world. An exemplary feat of engineering. Congratulations!"

Media Links

[Time-lapse footage](#) – please credit McLaughlin and Harvey

[Aerial Footage](#) – please credit Queen's University Belfast

[Project Background](#) – Video

[Photo Gallery](#) – set up / build images

[Photo Gallery](#) – Opening / World Record Announcement

More Information

About the Queens University Belfast Civil Engineering Department

Queen's University Belfast is a member of the Russell Group of the UK's leading research-intensive universities. It is among the top one per cent of global universities and ranked 8th in the UK for research intensity. Founded by Queen Victoria in 1845, as one of three Queen's Colleges in Ireland, it became an independent university in its own right in 1908 and, today, combines an international academic reputation as a leader in innovation and education. The university has won five Queen's Anniversary Prizes for Further and Higher Education and five Times Higher Education Awards. Leading research facilities include: the Centre for Cancer Research and Cell Biology; the Institute of Electronics, Communications and Information Technology; the Institute for the Study of Conflict Transformation and Social Justice, and the Institute for Global Food Security. For more information visit www.qub.ac.uk

About Spin Master Corp.

[Spin Master](#) (TSX:TOY) is a leading global children's entertainment company that creates, designs, manufactures and markets a diversified portfolio of innovative toys, games, products and entertainment properties. Spin Master is best known for award-winning brands including Bakugan Battle Brawlers™, Air Hogs®, Spin Master Games™ and the 2015 Toy of the Year, Zoomer™ Dino. Since 2005, Spin Master has received 58 TIA Toy of the Year (TOTY) nominations with 14 wins across a variety of product categories. Spin Master has been recognized with 11 TOTY nominations for Innovative Toy of the Year, more than any of its competitors. Spin Master is among a limited number of companies that not only develop and produce global entertainment properties, characters and content, but also monetize that content through the creation, sale and licensing of products. To date, Spin Master has produced five television series, including the 2007 hit series Bakugan and its current hit PAW Patrol, which is broadcast in over 160 countries and territories globally. Spin Master employs over 850 people globally with offices in Canada, United States, France, Italy, United Kingdom, Bratislava, Germany, Holland, Mexico, China, Hong Kong and Japan.

About McLaughlin and Harvey

McLaughlin and Harvey were founded in 1854 and are a privately owned Building and Civil Engineering Contractor with a wide portfolio of successful projects across the UK. Based in Mallusk, near Belfast, Northern Ireland we carry out a wide range of civil engineering projects with particular expertise in marine, road, bridge and rail projects. With approximately 700 employees and

annual turnover in excess of £400m McLaughlin and Harvey are one of the leading contractor's in Northern Ireland. This project builds on a long standing relationship between ourselves and QUB having worked together on numerous research projects and student development. McLaughlin and Harvey have supported this project through the provision of advice and technical support to the QUB team in addition to developing the safe construction and installation methodology.

(Please click to email [PRESS OFFICE](#) to request updated images)

SOURCE Spin Master Corp.

For further information: For further information, comments or quotes, images or to speak to those involved in the project, please contact: The Meccano Press Office / Spin Master Corp., Fosbury PR, Contact Caroline Fosbury, E: caro@fosburypr.com or T: +44 (0) 7973 318973; Queen's University Belfast, Andrea Fordham - a.fordham@qub.ac.uk - Tel: 0790 4015169 and comms.officer@qub.ac.uk, 02890 975310

<https://spinmaster.mediaroom.com/2015-09-19-Giant-Meccano-Bridge-Secures-World-Record>