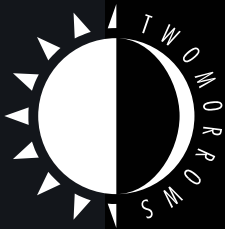


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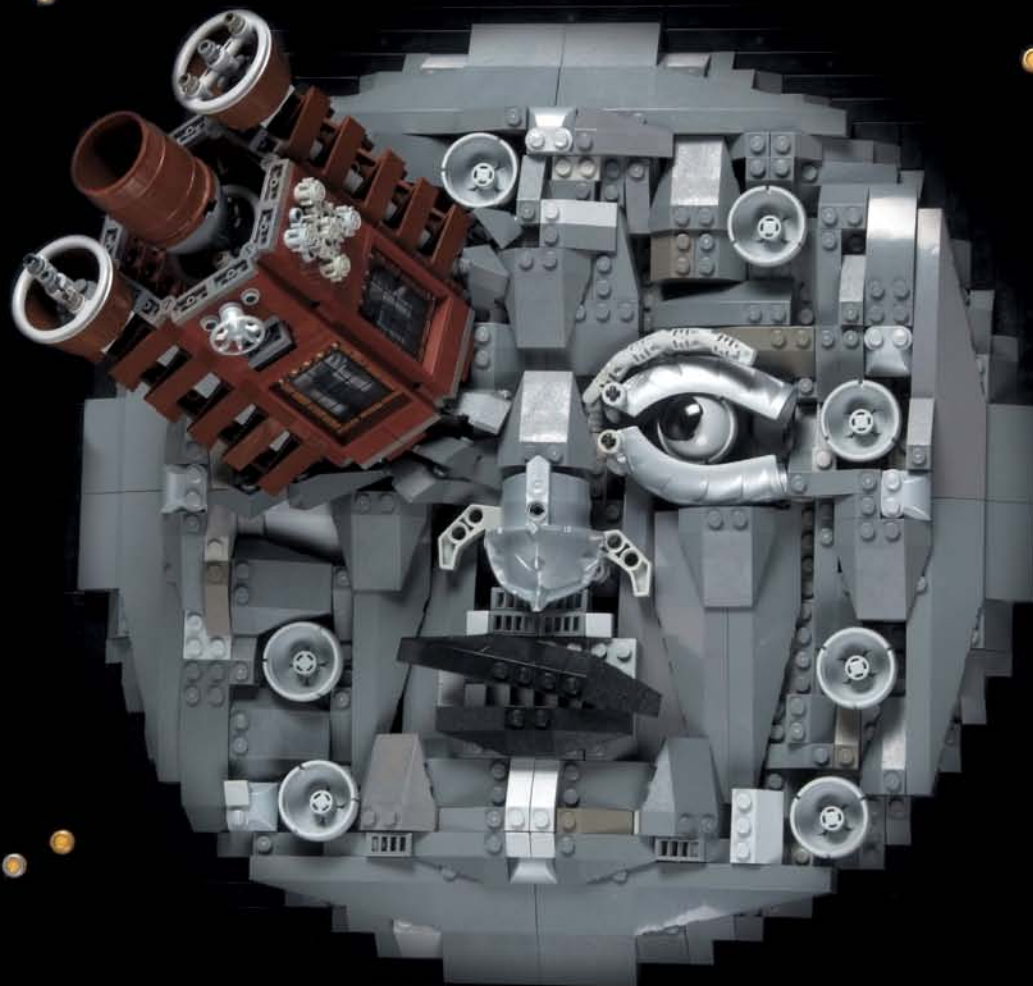


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# Brick Journal

Issue 16 • November 2011

people • building • community



## STEAMPUNK

**Featured Builders:**

**Guy Himber, Rod Gillies and Nathan Proudlove**

**Interview: Kjeld Kirk Kristiansen**

**Instructions and MUCH More!**



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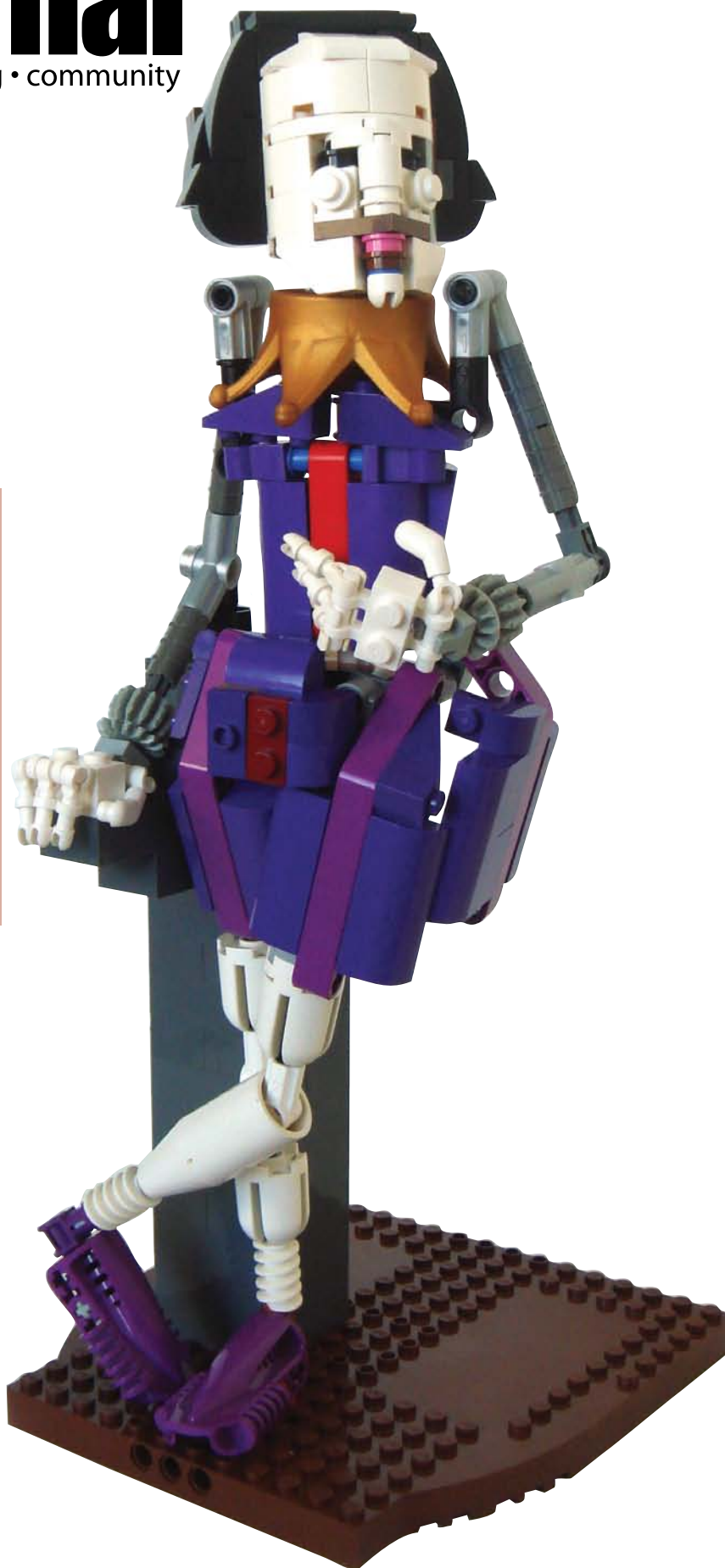
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STEAMPUNK

Right: William Shakespeare, a model from Guy Himber.

Cover: Moon Model by V&A Steamworks,  
photography by Mike Spatola - [www.msdi.com](http://www.msdi.com)





5000 miles from home. No family, few friends, no LEGO collection.  
How can he survive?

People



# AN AMERICAN AFOL IN LONDON

TOMMY WILLIAMSON PRESENTS  
A BRICKJOURNAL PRODUCTION  
AN AMERICAN AFOL IN LONDON  
STARRING TOMMY WILLIAMSON  
PETER RIED & THE BRICKISH ASSOCIATION  
ORIGINAL MUSIC BY DJ CLUTCH  
PRODUCED BY BRICKJOURNAL MEDIA, LLC  
ARTICLE AND PHOTOS BY TOMMY WILLIAMSON



## Opportunity Knocks

When the opportunity to live and work in London for several months was presented to me in mid-2010 I had several things to consider. First and foremost was my family. I'm married with two boys, and a long term separation like that would be a real challenge. Another consideration was life in a foreign country. While I had been overseas before, this was far more complicated than just a week supervising a commercial on the beach in Acapulco or doing a press event in Japan. Another thing to think about was the separation of me and my LEGO collection. I have to admit, I underestimated this one. Yes, it was a long time from home, and yes, it was not going to be easy, but Cinesite London was offering me a job on *Pirates of the Caribbean: On Stranger Tides* as stereoscopic supervisor (3D nerd) and this was a very tempting offer.

After weighing the pros and the cons, my family and I decided it was probably worth it. I accepted the position and packed my bags. I arrived in London in late July 2010. My family came with me to see London and help me settle in. I knew it was going to be important for them to all know where I was and what I was doing. They helped me find a flat and we did some of the usual tourist things. After a couple weeks though, it was time to say goodbye. I escorted them to the Heathrow and choked back the tears as they sadly boarded a plane without me.



*Luckily my family was able to come to London for the first couple of weeks there. They helped me find my flat and got to see some of the city.*

## Life in London

I resolved to try and make the most of the trip. I wanted to sample life as a temporary citizen and LEGO fan in the United Kingdom. I was going to live like a Brit, eat like a Brit, travel like a Brit, and play like a Brit. I contacted the Brickish Association, the UK's largest LUG, shortly after I arrived and inquired about signing up. I soon learned that one of their biggest events of the year, the Great Western LEGO Show at

STEAM was coming up. I contacted *BrickJournal's* own Joe Meno to see if there was any planned coverage of the event and learned that there wasn't.



*Dateline: London England. Giant nerd terrorizes central London, film at 11:00.*

I planned to attend the event, join the BA and cover the event for *BrickJournal* all in one fun-filled weekend. (You can read all about it in issue #13.) I made several friends there and met some people I've been in contact with online for some time. It was great to put names and faces to the user IDs I've come to know very well.

I settled in a little village called Blackheath, just south of Greenwich. Blackheath is a fairly quiet area filled with old mansions and Victorian terraced houses all surrounding a very large heath (a meadow or grassland). Contrary to myth, Blackheath's name has nothing to do with the Black Death and there's no bodies there. In fact the name predates the Black Death by nearly 200 years. Its name comes from the rich, black soil that makes up most of it. I found a little studio flat, sort of furnished, on the edge of the village just across from the iconic church on the heath. Every day I would make my way to Blackheath rail station and catch the train to Charing Cross, and from there catch a bus, walk or use Barclays Cycle Hire (rent-a-bikes) to get up to Soho where I worked. Now when I say "catch a train or bus," I have to confess to a slight twinge at the base of my skull and the clenching of my jaw. If I learned anything in London, it was that my day really wasn't complete unless I had been mercilessly throat-punched by Transport for London.



# Kjeld Kirk Kristiansen: Growing Up with the LEGO Group (part 2)

*Interview by Joe Meno  
and Megan Rothrock  
Photography by Joe Meno*

*This is the second and last part of an interview with Kjeld Kirk Kristiansen, the owner of the LEGO Group. Last issue, we began by tracing Kjeld's career with the growth of the company, starting with his building as a schoolboy. Progressing from building LEGO® bricks to building the company, Kjeld told Joe Meno and Megan Rothrock how the LEGO Group entered the digital age with the LEGO MINDSTORMS® sets. This article continues the interview from the launch of the LEGO MINDSTORMS sets in the late '90s, beginning with a discussion of the building aspects of the robotic set.*

**Joe Meno:** It's a nice extension of the building experience, because you build with this (the LEGO brick), and LEGO MINDSTORMS added the building to the digital level with its programming.

**Kjeld Kirk Kristiansen:** That connection between what is going on on the screen and what you build is so fascinating to me. If the model doesn't exactly do what you want it to do, there are two ways to go change it — you can change the program or you can change the model, until you reach the result you want.

**JM:** I've learned to change the model! (laughing)

**KK:** I love both!



**JM:** I still work with LEGO MINDSTORMS, just not as much because of the magazine. But one of the things I learned is that I can build and I'm happy that I'm able to build in a new way. It's the programming that is difficult....

**Megan Rothrock:** It's a whole other type of building.

**JM:** Yes, it's an entirely different animal. It's not like a LEGO brick!

**KK:** I think it is, in a way. It is, of course, a different media, but it's still the same logic. The different building blocks equal different programming modules. You can combine them in many different ways. And when you start on a task you know that there is a solution.

**JM:** You just gotta get there!

**MR:** So tell us about FIRST LEGO League.

**KK:** FIRST was founded by Dean Kamen in the early '90s. When we learned about the FIRST Robotics competitions and what Dean Kamen did in the FIRST Organization, Peter Eio (who was President of LEGO Systems Inc. US at the time) got in contact with Dean. We got involved by sponsoring a LEGO team for the FIRST Robotics competition. This was fairly early, even before we had LEGO MINDSTORMS.

We also worked with the Media Lab and I remember seeing some fantastic robotics competitions FIRST held at MIT using LEGO robots. So when Dean contacted us in Billund to suggest that we should develop a "little league" together using LEGO MINDSTORMS, we jumped on the idea pretty quickly. Where the FIRST robotics competitions were for high school students, we could reduce the entry age from 15 to 9 years. This competition would be fantastic and give children a meaningful task, give them time to build and create their robot, and then compete with each other. So that idea materialized, and we decided to name the new competition for the younger children FIRST LEGO League. We had the FIRST LEGO League pilot in Chicago at the Museum of Science and Industry in the fall of 1998 and then started to roll it out in the US and internationally the year after. We worked closely with the FIRST Organization on the format. It took a little while, but already from the beginning we had a clear idea that this was going to be a learning experience that involved the whole team. It wasn't just a question about building a robot that could solve as many tasks as possible, but also a research challenge given to the team that provided an opportunity to get much more deeply into a very relevant issue, whether it be global warming, or how it is like to live as a disabled person. So it has been wonderful to see how that is going. Now, it is 17,000 teams next year, I think. It has grown almost exponentially over the years — we are in more than 50 countries now.

**JM:** FLL World Festival is a great indicator of what a single LEGO set can do. But also, when you go in there and you come out, the feeling is basically, "you know, when you give a bunch of kids something to think about, they just take off." I hung out with one team during the entire competition and from there I learned so much from them just seeing how the team worked and how they dealt with whatever was thrown at them. It was just amazing.

**KK:** It gives those children who are participants a great collaborative experience. They have a lot of fun together, socialize, and they work hard on finding the best solutions to whatever challenges they face.

It also gives them so much self-esteem — "Wow, we did it!" It's really very good for the children...

**MR:** It gives them teambuilding skills and social skills. It's brilliant.

**KK:** It is. And there is another kind of competition that is going on also using LEGO MINDSTORMS robots which is called the World Robotic Olympiad.

**JM:** That is over in Asia.

**KK:** It's Asian, yes. That's also growing a lot. It's also very interesting. It's a different format, but it has come about a little later. I don't know quite how that came about. It seems also to be growing nicely.

**JM:** FIRST LEGO League is something that I am very much behind.

**KK:** It's wonderful, and the relationships we have enjoyed with Dean Kamen and his staff in Manchester have been fantastic.

**JM:** Now we get to talk about the dark times.

**MR:** The crisis.

**JM:** Chronologically, we are right now at that point. The big question for me is... I came in literally at the beginning of that and what I saw was as a consumer/hobbyist was really not that much. There was a return to the brick, which meant that we got a bunch more sets in the end that weren't so license-based, but outside of that, if I wasn't a fan, I wouldn't have been terribly aware of what was going on.

**KK:** That's good. (laughs)

**JM:** There was a lot of press at that point coming out about...

**KK:** Following the way our company was going then, it was like a roller coaster. We had some good years, but also some very bad years. After some fantastic years up through the '80s and early '90s, our growth slowed down and we were not meeting our plans so an uncertainty was spreading in the organization. We were launching way too many new products to sort of push more growth, which was not the right approach. Our product program was more or less exploding in terms of numbers of components, for instance.

**MR:** The parts palette was way out of control.

**KK:** Yes, out of control. And we were starting too many new initiatives. As we didn't have enough focus on our core business, and maybe many didn't believe enough in it, so it became very distracting when we then introduced watches and clothes and new LEGOLAND parks and video products and so on.

I was changing my organization quite a lot over those years. I wanted also, after all those years, to hand over more responsibility for the daily operations, but I wasn't too lucky. (laughs)

Until I found Jørgen.



Above: The LEGO version of the Intrepid, photographed by Ian Grieg.

# USS Intrepid meets USS Intrepid

Article and Photography by Ed Diment

*Ed Diment, an ongoing contributor to Brick-Journal with LEGO replicas of a British Airways SST (Issue 2) and the British battleship HMS Hood (Issue 6) this time is asked to contribute a model from his home in the United Kingdom to New York! Here's his story!*

So, it's hardly a news flash that I built a stupid big model of a ship right? My minifig-scale model of the aircraft carrier *USS Intrepid* was a labour of love that many people have seen on a number of blogs, in the press, and at various shows last year. Well, about three-quarters of the way through the build last year, I got an interesting Flickr Mail (a message on the photo-sharing website Flickr, for those of you that don't use it). The message said "Hi, my name's Luke Sacks and I'm the PR director for the Intrepid Sea, Air and Space museum... are you interested in bringing your model out to New York?". OK, yeah, no problem I thought, so I replied in the affirmative... what on Earth was I thinking!

That was all back in June last year and was followed by months of discussions and changed dates. The logistics of fitting in with the timetable of a major museum and their ability to sweet talk UPS into providing free shipping and British Airways into providing free flights doesn't bear thinking about, but finally a date of April 14, 2011, was set. For those who may not be aware, the *USS Intrepid* herself is the museum in question. Launched in 1943, the *USS Intrepid* served during World War II (as I have her depicted) before going into reserve; then it underwent a major refit to fly jets, which she did in Vietnam before finally being used as a helicopter carrier. She was decommissioned in 1974, then bought and turned into a museum in 1982.

Once the date was set, the biggest question was how is this all going to work? Fortunately, since the museum had been in touch before I'd finished the ship, I made what turned out to be the sensible decision of building custom wooden packing cases for the model. A week before Annie (my wife) and I were due to fly out to New York, a man from UPS turned up with a big lorry to take her away (*Intrepid* that is, not Annie!). After a quick chat about what the plan was, the man from UPS sucked in through his teeth before explaining what people who pack aircraft do to packages. After yours truly made several frantic phone calls, followed





*The Intrepid Sea, Air and Space Museum in New York City.*

by printing some hasty additional warning signs, the \$50,000 insurance bond for the ship and shipping was made perfectly clear to all concerned.

April 14 came round, and after a mad dash from South Wales (I do have a real job I have to do sometimes), we flew out of Heathrow on one of BA's lovely shiny new Boeing 777s. A quick cab ride from JFK and we were in our lovely Hotel (Ink48) overlooking mid-town Manhattan and just a block from the Intrepid Museum. A quick stop at a diner the next morning was followed by our first visit to the museum. We met Luke and some of his staff, who were really friendly and gave us the VIP treatment and a fantastic tour of the ship. Then Annie suggested: perhaps we should get the cases up and take a look at the ship. The guys at the museum had a fantastic stand built for us, dead-level and smooth, right by a huge window on the hangar deck, so it all looked set... then we opened the boxes.

The first couple had a little more damage than usual, but nothing that I wasn't expecting. Opening box number five was a different story. Off came the lid and with it the top half of one hull section, leaving the other half behind. On closer inspection, the bit left behind was split in two sideways! Understand that these hull sections weigh about 20kg each and are made of about 20,000 LEGO bricks on their own. At that point an adjournment for beer, dinner, and bed was called for.

We turned up bright-and-early on the Friday and set to. Refreshed by a good night's sleep in our lovely hotel and the obligatory 27 cups of coffee with breakfast, we raced through the repairs, and then the fun started. At about 11 am,

the press descended on us like a paparazzi meltdown. I've had stuff photographed before and even been on TV in the UK, but this was something else. Literally every time I stuck two bricks together the sound of digital SLRs filled the air as cameras blasted away. At one point I thought, "I'll swoosh one of Ralph's (Savelsberg) planes for a laugh," but wished I hadn't — half-a-dozen flash guns practically blinded me. After a barrage of questions from press, TV and radio things finally died down... just in time for the next encounter.

I knew Luke had arranged for kids from a local school to visit and do some building, so I'd taken along a load of loose LEGO bricks. What we hadn't done was co-ordinate what was meant to happen, which went like this:

Luke: "Hey welcome everybody, this is LEGO Monster and he built this fantastic model — take it away Ed." This was followed by a strange bumbling Englishman trying to talk to a bunch of eager and enthusiastic ten-year-old New Yorkers. They weren't without a sense of humor, when I asked where they thought I was from, "China" came the immediate response from one boy, followed by his classmates all saying, no he's British, of course. Once we got stuck into building, the cultural differences melted away, and everyone had a great time.

Then the press and the kids were gone and we pretty much finished getting the ship up-and-together by Friday night. Suddenly one thing struck Annie — we didn't have a flag... arrgh! For dinner that night, we were eating just off Times Square and a quick trawl of souvenir shops afterwards came up with the goods: a lovely little stars and stripes (it only occurred to me later that



## Building

# Minifig Customization 101: Styling Your Figure's 'Do!

*Article and Art  
by Jared K. Burks*



*Helmet hair has been previously examined, as has part color alterations using paint. The final example is a very slight modification to the front of the hair piece to give the shape from the film. The back was also slightly modified.*



One of the greatest challenges with most custom figures is finding an appropriate hairstyle. In the last few years, the LEGO Group has started to create more hairstyles that are more modern, especially in the Collectible minifigure series. These are great, but as we develop as customizers the hairpiece is something else we can customize. Previously this series demonstrated how to combine hair and helmets; this was the tip of the iceberg. Hair can easily be modified to create that custom look that your figure needs. Many times this can be something simple like a hair color alteration or a small change in shape.

However, these types of alterations are not the point of this article. The point of this article is to cover how to grossly reshape or shorten the hair piece to create something entirely new. When we use an existing part to start with, we are limited to what is present or what we can create with the addition of clay. Therefore, the original hair style must be considered; however, some great things can be created and the resulting part is typically more durable as it has a plastic base. The key point to learn from this article is that altering a LEGO hairpiece can be done safely.

Borrowing a line, I am sure, from a film I can no longer recollect the title of, "trim your hair, hippy!" Many hair pieces can easily be shortened. This can be performed by merely removing the length. I recommend this be done using a rotary tool or razor saw if the amount to remove is larger than 1/8 inch or 3 mm. If it is less than 1/8 inch or 3 mm, I would merely sand away the undesired portion by hand. Just remember that once the gross removal is completed, you will need to sand the part back to the high shine that the LEGO hairpiece is produced with, so leave a touch of excess that will be removed during this sanding step.

*Before and After: Shortening hair can be easy, just use care when holding the part. Use a razor saw, rotary tool with a sanding attachment, or sandpaper when possible.*

## What is Steampunk?

It's a world WITHOUT plastic! (OK, LEGO lovers, sorry about planting that cruel idea in your head.)

Art Donovan, Curator of the Steampunk Collection at London's Museum of History and Science, described the genre best. He said, "It is a celebration of the arts and sciences of the Victorian Era... turned into physical form." The style is a very broad discipline, essentially based on all of the technology of the Victorian Era and the pre-Industrial Revolution of the late 19th Century. Electricity has just started to enter the realm of the common inventor, but steam-powered machines are the tools of the day. Clockwork gears and mechanisms are often exposed for ease of service and ease of appreciation. Daring inventors float through the skies and roam the countryside in their fantastic contraptions. Explorers and Admirals use the latest innovations to discover ancient civilizations and conquer them for fame and glory.

The term "Steampunk" was inspired by the science-fiction writings of K. W. Jeter, Tim Powers, and James Blaylock. Collectively, the authors started the "gonzo-historical manner" that has become Steampunk. Their inspired books set in the early 19th century of Victorian England show a clear tip of the top hat to the earlier works of Jules Verne, H.G. Wells, Mark Twain, and Mary Shelley.

LEGO, by its very nature, is Steampunk. Although not created from beautiful woods, or riveted brass and gold, LEGO brick is the perfect embodiment of the Steampunk philosophy, LEGO builders don't want mass produced, generic things (although the bricks themselves fit that description), but tools from which they can build their own unique and individualized expressions and ideas. Let the common man have his line up of matching toys and cookie cutter distractions, I shall be the creator of my own personalized MOCs! Don't like the toys on the shelf? Then you are encouraged to make some toys that you DO like! Conformity is discouraged, whimsy and creativity are the heroes of the day. Invention and innovation are gods!

*Guy Himer in Steampunk attire.  
Brass top hat by Tony Swatton  
([www.swordandstone.com](http://www.swordandstone.com))*



## Steampunk: An Introduction

*Article and Photography by Guy Himer*

What started as a literary footnote by some upstart authors has grown into an inspired genre with a unique style and aesthetic all it's own... a special brand of complicated, sometimes cheesy, kitsch in which inspired builders value the "clank" factor. We cherish the complicated and fascinating, we embrace quirkiness with open arms and celebrate the joy of the mad scientist. Grab your brass goggles and join us!

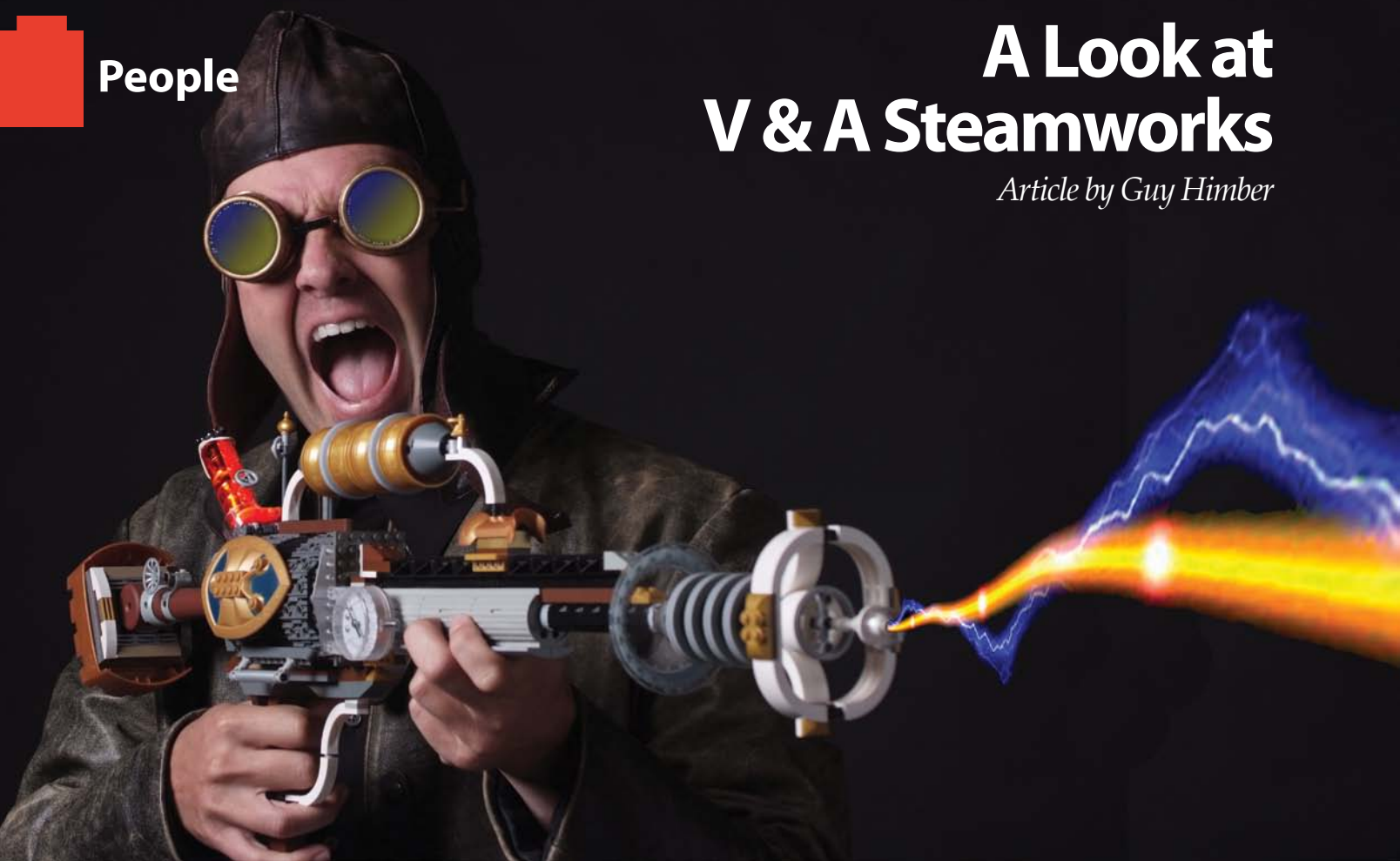
I hope you enjoy this special issue of *BrickJournal* as much as I enjoyed putting it all together for you. A huge "Thank You" to Joe Meno and all of the many builders and contributors who have been so generous with their time and resources!

Yours in Steampunkery (don't worry, plastic is allowed...),  
Guy Himer aka V&A Steamworks



# A Look at V & A Steamworks

Article by Guy Himber



Above: A demonstration of the Infinity Rifle. Photograph by Mike Spatola, [www.msdi.com](http://www.msdi.com)

*V & A Steamworks, named after the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, is the alias of Guy Himber. One of the leading Steampunk builders in the LEGO fan community, his work is regularly seen on not only his Flickr account but on leading blogs. BrickJournal got to talk to him about his work.*

**BrickJournal:** When did you first start building?

**Guy Himber:** From the age of 4 or 5, I received a steady stream of LEGO and Erector sets from family and friends. I have always had a passion for building and deconstructing things in order to see what makes them tick. My childhood friends and I would usually take our LEGO vehicles into the pool, so we often had to deconstruct them poolside, shake all of the air bubbles out of them, and then rebuild them underwater so they could sink! Initially, I would keep full sets all together, there was some magic to collecting them this way, but once the first set took a big crash, I gave that up and started to take them apart after building.

**BrickJournal:** Did you have a Dark Age where you stopped LEGO building? If so, why?

**GH:** Eventually real life took priority and the bricks went to Goodwill via Mom. As I got older, I bought a few of the very first Technic sets for fun and later used many of these parts to prototype items in my design work for film projects. That was about it until my son was born and then we started buying him LEGO sets. As he got into building, it reawakened my love of the bricks.

**BrickJournal:** What inspired you to start building again?

**GH:** After a fateful father-son trip to BrickCon in Seattle, I decided to formally start focusing on building a few things. Once I discovered BrickLink for buying LEGO elements online, it was pretty much "Game Over, Dude." The idea



that you could get almost any part in any color and any quantity was like finding out the Earth was round.

**BrickJournal: What was your first MOC?**

**GH:** As a child, I am sure they were numerous and unnamed. As an AFOL, I hit the Flickr community strong with a series of 4 Steampunk-inspired builds (the HMS Vern, the TESLA Man/Machine, the KENSINGTON Pipe Organ, and the Victoria Steam Carriage). These all got quickly featured on the Brothers-Brick and numerous Steampunk blogs and I just figured that was normal! Coming from a non-theme biased background, I am known for combining parts from all kinds of mismatched LEGO elements. I especially take great joy in using previously “useless” elements and turning them into something fantastic. Bionicle elements are some of my favorite Steampunk parts to work with. Please don’t ask me to name any of the Bionicle characters, I truly have no idea!

**BrickJournal: Why do you like to build?**

**GH:** I just like to build things of interest to me. There is something appealing about having a MOC or idea chase around in the back of my mind. It also helps that other people like what I build too! I have done lots of intense work building wild things for film projects under the direction of some highly creative folks, but it’s always nice to design things where the only eyes you have to please are you own.

**BrickJournal: Favorite Set?**

**GH:** I like ALL of them! Anytime I build an official set I always learn something new in technique or connection possibilities. Most of my bricks I buy via Bricklink aka “Cracklink.”

**BrickJournal: Tell me about your Cabinet of Curiosities project...**

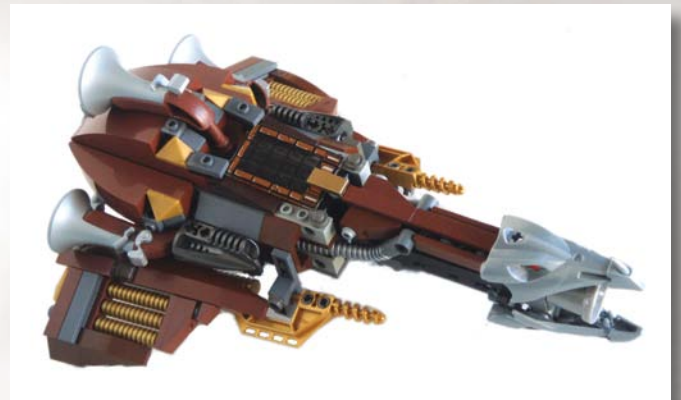
**GH:** One day I thought to myself, “Hey, self, wouldn’t it be curious if there was some kind of sentient Curio Cabinet that wandered about and collected rare and beautiful artifacts of great interest from around the world?” I decided it should have legs to walk around on and hands to collect objects with. Once gathered, the Wunderkammer would place them within its shelves. As I developed the idea, I started making some noteworthy items to fill the shelves and then I decided it would be even BETTER if my LEGO pals each created an artifact for the cabinet. At present, there are over 30 different objects in the collection. The curiosities have been gathered from great builders all over the planet! I even created a second freestanding Curio Cabinet to help hold them all! It’s been really amazing seeing all of the great ideas people have developed from my simple concept. I am currently collecting objects for the third wave of artifacts.

Contact me if you would like to be a part of the project!

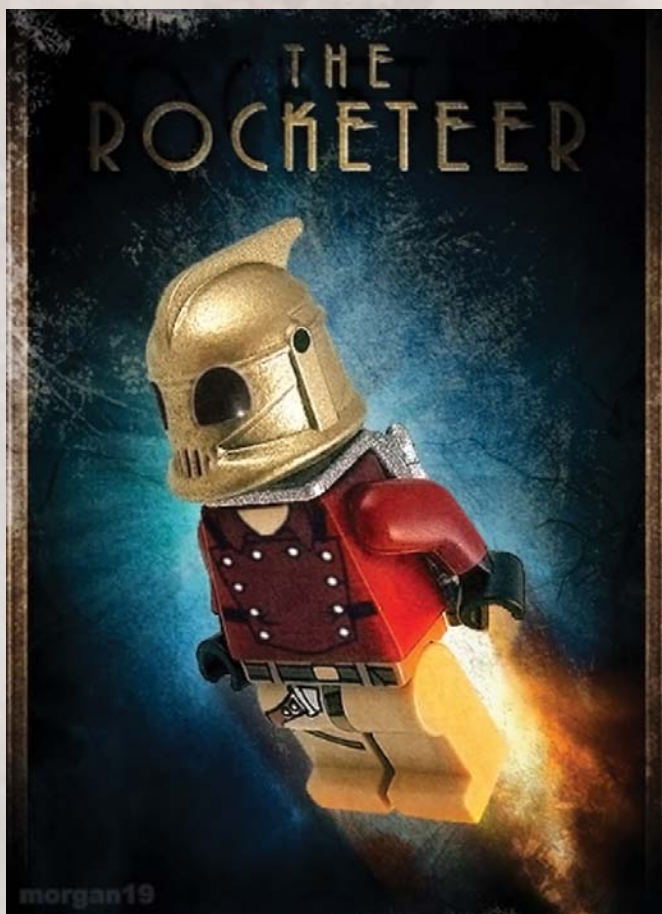
*Top: The Kensington Pipe Organ.*

*Center: When V&A Steamworks combined a Battlestar Galactica Viper and Steampunk, it got a Steamviper.*

*Bottom: The Cabinet of Curiosities.*

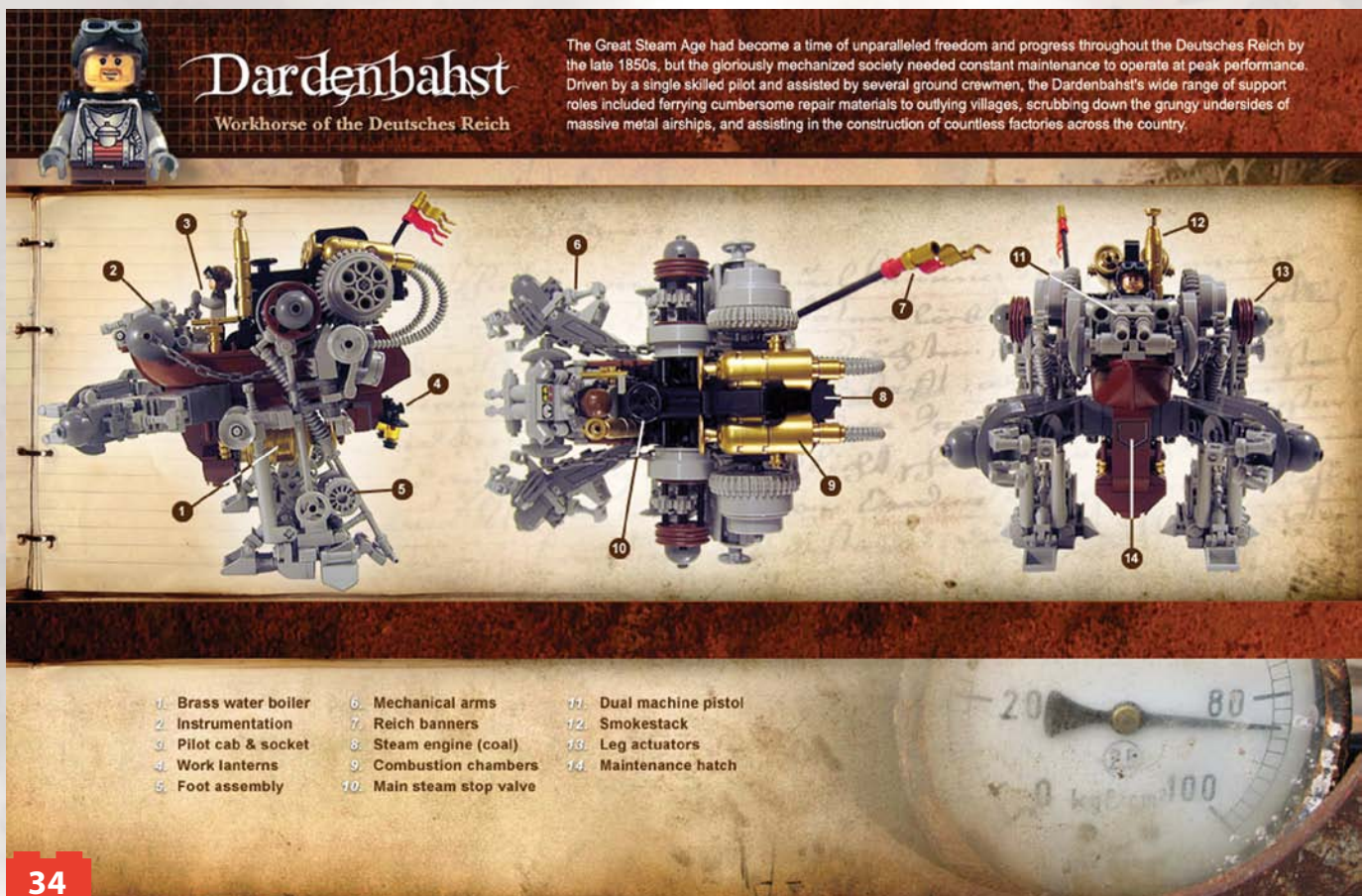






### *Jamie describes his creations:*

Within my Steampunk world, the Deutsches Reich (literally meaning the “German Empire”) has become one of the world’s major superpowers during the hypothetical Great Steam Age. Though inspired by Germany’s historical name during the first half of the 20th century, this Deutsches Reich instead has its existence firmly rooted one hundred years earlier, around the mid- to late-19th century. It came about by shifting the usual Victorian Steampunk traditions and themes into a new culture. Utilizing the genre’s specific construction traditions like cast iron and bronze components, but tempering them with a more utilitarian construction ethic, the Empire produced machines such as Dardenbahst (the Workhorse), Kriegerhund (the Sentinel), and Obenwolken (the Eyes). Whether they were assisting in the construction of new factories, managing far-flung border patrols, or providing aerial reconnaissance alongside hulking metal airships, each machine produced by the Empire served to expand and strengthen its presence throughout the Great Steam Age.

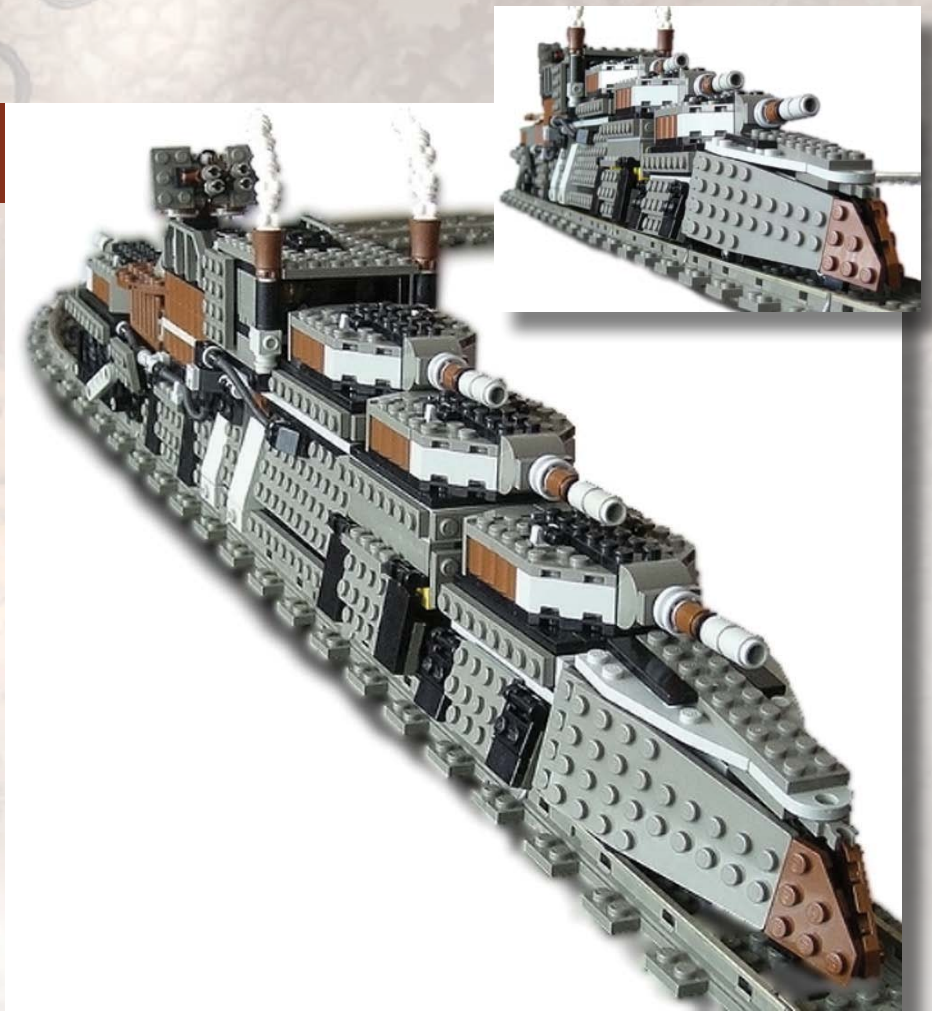




# Portfolio

## *Dreadnought Class Heavy Steam Railship*

My signature style amongst the Flickr Steampunk community seems to be the original concept I call the "railship," essentially a sort of train/battleship hybrid. These railships are rated as my most interesting items, this one occupying the top of the charts. In addition to bounding my creations to the laws of physics, I also try to make them as playable as possible; trains curve around corners, pistons pump, walkers walk, ornithopters flap their wings, etc.



## *Ironclad Class Light Double-Gauge Steam Railship*

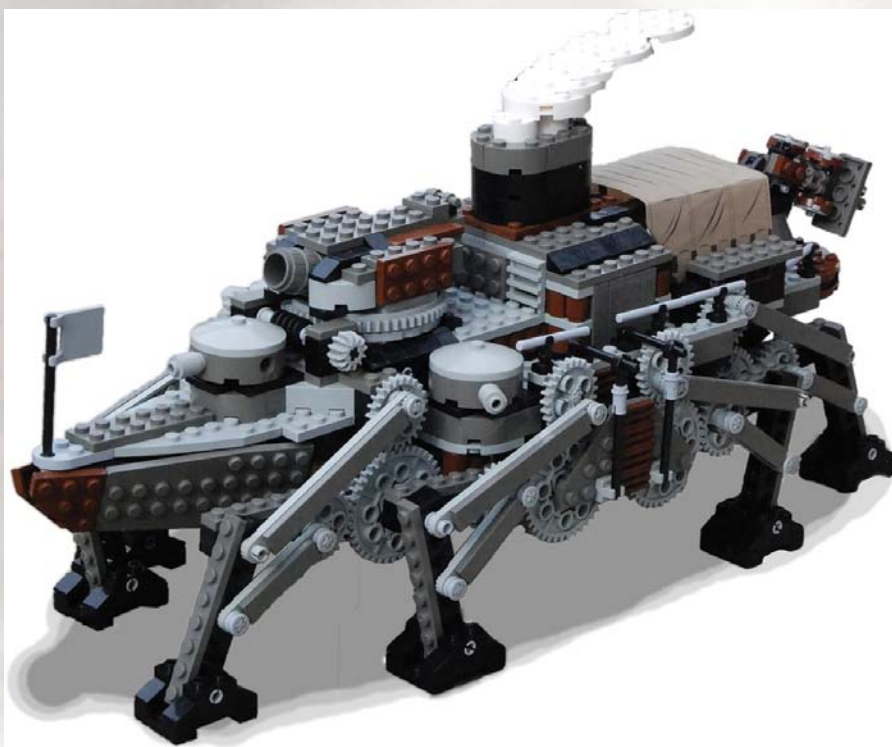
Thought the concept of the railship couldn't get any more ridiculous? Well, you're wrong. In order to make my creations as realistic as possible, I almost always account for their interior functions. For instance, inside this behemoth are minifigure crewmen; firemen stoke the boilers, a loader hand shells up the hatch to the turret gunner, and the engineer looks out between the "pontoons" and pilots the vessel while the captain plots the course.





### **Far-Eastern Light Steam Bi-Walker**

One of my "Far-Eastern" themed creations and an excuse to break out my ninja-type pieces. When you turn a knob in the back of this one, the mechanism makes the legs walk. In addition, I use these to experiment with new colors and unorthodox designs.



### ***Sleipnir* Class Medium Steam Octo-Pedalship**

Another battleship hybrid, this time on legs. It looks cool, but sadly this attempt at a motorized walker that also housed the battery pack fell just short.





## Building

# Steampunk Minifig Essentials!

*Article by Guy Himber with help from Sodagoat  
Photography by Christine Marie Photography*

We love minifig accessories. WE LOVE THEM! Be they utensils, weapons, or costumes we can't get enough. In recent years, the nice LEGO folks at have realized the enormous appetite we have for custom minifig items (just look at the success of LEGO's Collectible minifigures series). Do a quick search at Bricklink and there are easily over a 1,000 different official parts identified that you might add to your collection. But it's still NOT ENOUGH!



As the fourth largest toy maker in the world, LEGO is a huge company with a huge overhead. Large companies can't take too many risks when they create new parts for the toy market. The costs to design, prototype, license, and manufacture a new part need to be profitable many times over to justify releasing a new minifig item. This doesn't allow our favorite toy company much room for risk.

Enter the faithful businesses and hobbyists who have come to our rescue. A small designer/producer can be adventurous. They can have a specialized stock of just a few items or create a high-risk prototype that might only appeal to a few hundred collectors. As a result, there is some amazing custom and specialized gear that is waiting for your discovery!

This article features items from the many dedicated suppliers of custom equipment for your minifig characters. The focus is on Victorian and Steampunk-inspired designs. Some of the pictures are complete ideas while others are just suggestions to get your creative juices flowing. Rather than specify each custom part, I leave it to you, the reader, to have some fun and do some detective work. Visit these great vendors! Also you can check my Flickr stream (V&A Steamworks) for detailed information about the many custom items featured.







## Building

# Steampunk Through the Brick Ages

Article by Dan Sabath

### Links:

#### Brothers Brick Steampunk Archive:

<http://www.brothers-brick.com/category/lego/themes/Steampunk/>

#### Flickr Steampunk Photopool:

<http://www.flickr.com/groups/24604222@N00/pool/with/3977982604/>

#### Flickr Steampunk Group:

<http://www.flickr.com/groups/24604222@N00/discuss/>

#### From Bricks to Bothans Steam-Wars Archive:

<http://www.fbtbforums.net/viewtopic.php?t=25231>

#### "Ages of Steam" Archive:

<http://www.flickr.com/groups/24604222@N00/discuss/72157624241078494/>

#### "Agents of the Imperial Crown" Archive:

<http://www.flickr.com/groups/24604222@N00/discuss/72157612024473276/>

#### "100-Piece Challenge" Archive:

<http://www.flickr.com/groups/24604222@N00/discuss/72157621884216604/>

#### "Empire of Steam" Webblog

<http://empireofsteam.blogspot.com/>

Nigh on the years of yesterbrick, I and several other hearty adventurers had a vision of a world where steam was king and science was Victorian. Since that first publication in *BrickJournal* (#3) back in January of '06 describing the newly formed theme, we have travelled far and wide to adventures beyond belief. The theme has seen builders stretch their skills to build wild wonderful machines and delve into dark and dangerous waters. The Brothers Brick has been blogging about our theme nearly as long as they have been in existence and part of my research into who and what has come along since then has been by digging through the archives of the Brothers and through the Flickr photo pool. The Brothers-Brick have reported on over 185 Steampunk-related stories since their inception.

There are many builders who now classify their work as Steampunk and their diversity is a joy to behold. We have everything from the classic monowheels and walkers to Jules Vernian clockwork crabs and fish. Several contests have run, with From Bricks to Bothans being the first in which a LEGO theme was re-envisioned in Steampunk with their Steam-Wars (spotlighted on page 74). In this contest, we saw a Victorian take on the Y-wing, the Tie Fighter, R2D2, the Naboo starfighter, and my favorite, General Greivous' monowheel. Since then, we have had contests covering "Ages of Steam," "Agents of the Imperial Crown," and a 100-piece Steampunk Challenge.

The Steampunk Flickr group started in March of 2006 and has 916 members and 2,345 photos of MOCs. Active membership runs the gamut from (Flickr name) Jonesy, whom I wrote about in *BrickJournal* 3, to the most prolific, Beau Donnan (Raillery on Flickr), followed closely by Jordan Schwartz (Sir Nadroj), Rod Gilles (2 Much Caffeine), and Guy Himber (V&A Steamworks) as well as many others. The group has hosted three of the contests previously mentioned and is the main gathering site for the online community. In addition to the Flickr pool, there is also Rod Gilles' "Empire of Steam" blog and for a while we had the Rustyclank, my own blog dedicated to the genre.

Since at least 2005, Steampunk has had its own coordinator at BrickCon and other AFOL conventions. These displays have brought together MOCs from builders like Dave DeGobbi, Nathan Proudlove, and Kevin Heckel. BrickFair will be showing Steampunk for its third consecutive year. BrickFest has had several contests and the most recent Brickvention in Australia had the *HMS Hyperion* make its debut.

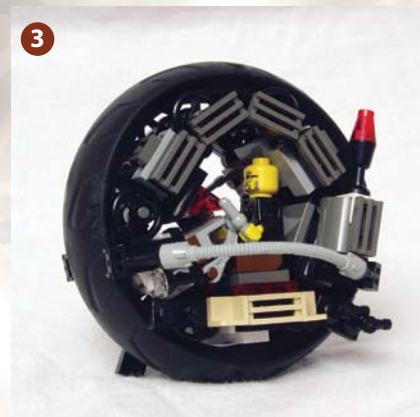




It is only apropos that as I write this as today would have been Jules Verne's 183rd birthday. In fact Verne's *Nautilus* inspired our own Joe Meno to create and post a rendition in 2003. And while submersibles have played a part, builders have also focused on building monowheels, walkers, clanks, zeppelins, and other flyers.



Monowheels are really what drew me into building in this theme. My first exhibit was a zeppelin but even then I was looking for the best wheel to use. Over the years we have seen wheels **1** built with tread, **2** hellfire droid wheels, and **3** motorcycle tires. The first that I know of was **4** Jamie Neufeld's SteamWheel, one of the only that can take more than one driver. Most have the driver inside the wheel but **5** Gorazd Vahen's Stinger is a lovely build that balances everything on a car tire.





# You Can Build It

Steampunk Model


## Steamplane

Design by Rod Gillies

Instructions by Pascal

(pasukaru76 on flickr)



This model of a personal steamplane is a good example of the creativity behind the theme builders. There's a lot going building-wise, from SNOT (Studs Not on Top) built wings to a spinning prop and landing gear! With a little thought, this plane can also be modified to have a larger wingspan or even be a biplane, so have fun building! 

### Parts List (Parts can be ordered through [Bricklink.com](http://Bricklink.com) by searching by part number and color)

No.	Color	Part no.	Part name	No.	Color	Part no.	Part name
1	Dark-Blue Grey	30374.dat	Bar 4L Light Sabre Blade	2	Dark-Blue Grey	4085c.dat	Plate 1 x 1 with Clip Vertical Type 3
6	Dark-Blue Grey	30071.dat	Brick 1 x 1	1	Dark-Blue Grey	3023.dat	Plate 1 x 2
4	Red	3062b.dat	Brick 1 x 1 Round with Hollow Stud	1	Dark-Blue Grey	3794.dat	Plate 1 x 2 with 1 Stud
2	Dark-Blue Grey	4733.dat	Brick 1 x 1 with Studs on Four Sides	1	Dark-Blue Grey	2540.dat	Plate 1 x 2 with Handle
2	Dark-Blue Grey	47905.dat	Brick 1 x 1 with Studs on Two Opposite Sides	2	Dark-Blue Grey	4032b.dat	Plate 2 x 2 Round with Axlehole Type 2
4	Dark-Blue Grey	3004.dat	Brick 1 x 2	1	Black	4617.dat	Propellor 3 Blade 5.5 Diameter
1	Dark-Blue Grey	3009.dat	Brick 1 x 6	2	Red	54200.dat	Slope Brick 31 1 x 1 x 2/3
2	Dark-Blue Grey	6091.dat	Brick 2 x 1 x 1 & 1/3 with Curved Top	3	Dark-Blue Grey	3665.dat	Slope Brick 45 2 x 1 Inverted
1	Dark-Blue Grey	3941.dat	Brick 2 x 2 Round	1	Dark-Blue Grey	3660.dat	Slope Brick 45 2 x 2 Inverted
1	Dark-Blue Grey	6222.dat	Brick 4 x 4 Round with Holes	2	Dark-Blue Grey	4460.dat	Slope Brick 75 2 x 1 x 3
1	Dark-Blue Grey	4589.dat	Cone 1 x 1	2	Dark-Blue Grey	4599.dat	Tap 1 x 1
1	Dark-Blue Grey	6259.dat	Cylinder 2 x 4 x 4	1	Dark-Blue Grey	6587.dat	Technic Axle 3 with Stud
2	Dark-Blue Grey	30377.dat	minifig Mechanical Arm	1	Dark-Blue Grey	3700.dat	Technic Brick 1 x 2 with Hole
2	Red	3024.dat	Plate 1 x 1	6	Dark-Blue Grey	4274.dat	Technic Pin 1/2
2	Black	6141.dat	Plate 1 x 1 Round	1	Dark-Blue Grey	62462.dat	Technic Pin Joiner Round with Slot
1	Red	6141.dat	Plate 1 x 1 Round	1	Dark-Blue Grey	4185.dat	Technic Wedge Belt Wheel
7	Dark-Blue Grey	6141.dat	Plate 1 x 1 Round	3	Light-Blue Grey	3070bp07.dat	Tile 1 x 1 with Dial Pattern
3	Dark-Blue Grey	6019.dat	Plate 1 x 1 with Clip Horizontal	2	Dark-Blue Grey	30039.dat	Tile 1 x 1 with Groove
				1	Red	3069b.dat	Tile 1 x 2 with Groove
				5	Dark-Blue Grey	3069b.dat	Tile 1 x 2 with Groove



# Steam-Wars: Star Wars in Steampunk!

Article by Guy Himber

Photography by the Steam Wars Entrants



TIE Fighter reimagined by Rocko — one of the models that tied for first place!



General Grievous' wheelbike, built by Nelson Yziarry.

In 2008, there was a contest on the website From Bricks to Bothans (FBTB.net) that combined *Star Wars* and Steampunk. Called Steam-Wars, this contest was a first for Steampunk builders. Ace Kim, owner of FBTB, talked to *BrickJournal* about the website and the contest.

**BrickJournal:** What is Bricks to Bothans? How long has it been around?

**Ace Kim:** From Bricks To Bothans has been around since 1999, ever since the beginning of the LEGO Star Wars line. It was a subsection of a general Star Wars site known as Yakface Collectibles. After a few months, it was decided by the then-head cheese Tim to splinter off and form our own site. When Tim started the section at Yakface, he polled his friends for suggestions and someone came up with From Bricks To Bothans. And thus, history was made.

I was in college at UCLA working on my design degree when I volunteered to work on the site. And at the time I was taking a web design class so it was a good way to experiment and apply what I learned in class. After I graduated, I got a job as a web programmer, so I continued to learn more about programming languages through the site. After a few years, I want to say around 2002, Tim decided to step down from managing the site. It was only him, his friend Denise, and me. Not wanting the site to disappear, I stepped up and decided to try to keep things going. We've had our fair share of ups and downs. One of the more interesting aspects of our evolution was our community forums. We went from using ezboard, to having a separate domain (fbtbforums.net) using phpbb.. A few years ago, we underwent another forum reset along with a site relaunch and finally put everything under one domain name. I was thrilled to finally have it all unified.

**BrickJournal:** Who are the key players and admins?

**AK:** Over the years people have come and gone, and the current group of guys that volunteer on the site are the best. I honestly don't know what I'd do without them. Don (donsolo <http://www.flickr.com/photos/donsolo/>), Ryan (lights <http://www.flickr.com/photos/lights/>) and Nick (dwhisper <http://www.flickr.com/photos/dwhisper/>) are my three administrators on the forum and writers for article content. David (draykov) is our one and only moderator for our forums and does a fantastic job. I also have Rick, John, and Pete as staff writers.

**BrickJournal:** How did the idea for Steampunk Star Wars Contest come about? Who was in charge? How did you feel about the community response? Any surprises in the voting or contestant turnout?

**AK:** The contest was actually labeled "Don and dw's Steam-Wars contest." They were the brainchild of the contest. It drew a ton of responses, more so than any other contest before it. Here's a gallery of the entries: <http://www.brickshelf.com/cgi-bin/gallery.cgi?f=298852>. The whole sci-fi movement of Steampunk was at its height when the contest came about, so I think that was one of the reasons why it was so popular.

**BrickJournal:** Any negative feedback?

**AK:** None that I was aware of.





Jabba's sailship, redesigned as a steamship, by AC Pin.

**BrickJournal:** Any feedback from LucasFilm?

**AK:** No, but they did fe

**BrickJournal:** Who feat

**AK:** There was a ton of  
sites include Gizmodo,  
blog, Geekologie, Make  
Superpunch, Neatoram

**BrickJournal:** Any surp  
contest?

**AK:** Just the tie.

**BrickJournal:** Who won

**AK:** The contest actually  
TIE Fighter (<http://www.SteamWarsContest/Entry/MarkStafford'sNabooN-1/>)  
cgi-bin/gallery.cgi?f=29  
But even though the res  
tiebreaker determined t  
Mark Stafford for his N

Prizes were given out to  
LEGO Star Wars sets th  
are some relevant threa

<http://www.fbtbforums.net/viewtopic.php?t=25231>  
<http://www.fbtbforums.net/viewtopic.php?t=26058>

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#### BRICK JOURNAL #16

Focuses on Steampunk! Feature editor Guy Himber will give you a tour of them with a look at his work, as well as Dave DeGobbi, Nathan Proudlove, and others! There's also a look at the history of LEGO Steampunk building, as well as instructions for a Steampunk plane by Rod Gillies! Then, look for our regular columns on minifigure customization, building tips, event reports, our step-by-step "You Can Build It" instructions, and much more!

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Y-Wing, built by Larry Lars.