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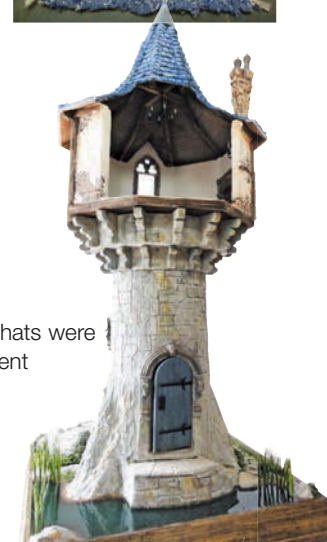
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THE SUN is shining, the birds are singing... it's a perfect day for a bike ride around the beautiful country lanes.

Maybe you could hop onto one of those bikes with baskets that crop up in Miss Marple episodes. Bunches of freshly-picked flowers perched precariously across the front, or even a freshly-baked baguette.

Of course if that all sounds a bit too energetic, then you'll be better off putting the kettle on and reading this issue of DHW with your feet up. You'll be able to admire some pretty bikes, and hopefully be inspired to transform a basic two-wheeler into a romantic ride.

And if we carry on with our mini daydream you'd soon be cycling to The Blue Bird tea room, the lovely Agatha Christie inspired scene, made by Gemma Figueras from Spain. Make sure you order the sandwiches. Gemma particularly wanted to put some, like those she was given by friends on a visit to the UK, on the menu.

This issue, with Royal Ascot looming, we take a look at some beautiful hats and talk to a former police officer who has just returned to doll-making. Plenty of projects too, from making roof tiles (start collecting loo rolls now) to cute little bags and and rag rugs.

So the sun may be shining and the birds may be singing, but cancel that bike ride and get down to the serious business of planning your next mini project.

Richard

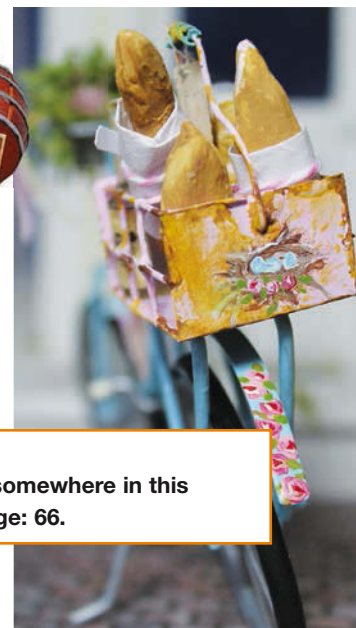
Richard Jennings - Editor. richard@ashdown.co.uk



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Front cover - Flowers, Flowers, Flowers, by Moonyeen Moller. "Most of the flowers and plants were made by me," says Moonyeen. "The project was inspired by a scene shown on Pinterest by Pascale Garnier of France. Pascale has become known for her fine miniature flower kits with instructions in French and English. The doll was created by the talented Melissa Drapeau, Ocala, Florida." More lovely scenes in our showcase on P.56.



House Hunt

FIND THE little house hidden somewhere in this issue. Last issue it was on page: 66.

Make a little time for tea

A miniature artist from Spain was inspired to create a British tea room that was based on a popular television show

By Charlotte Adams



Gemma Figueras has always loved mysteries, so when she decided to create a British tea room, she aptly named it The Blue Bird, after the one in the Agatha Christie television series. "I wanted it to have an early 20th century look so I could play with the textures in the garden and in the façade," explains Gemma.

The tea room actually began as a kit, she says, but she modified it so much that it no longer looks like the original. She added more windows to the structure to let sunlight in and gave it an English cottage feel with window boxes, potted plants, and flower beds. The grass peeking through the cobblestones also sets the scene just waiting for Agatha Christie to venture up to the door. You can almost imagine her pausing at the storefront window to admire the tiny porcelain tea cup and dish (by Teresa Stalbaum) and coffee and tea sets (by Victoria Fasken).

Of utmost concern to Gemma was for the project to achieve realism inside and out. "I did the façade entirely by hand. I think I ended up painting it five times because I couldn't find the colour that I liked," she says. She made the roof with aged tiles and the chimney, although

LEFT: What started as a house kit quickly took on a unique look with Gemma's personal touch.



ABOVE: Gemma enjoyed making the flowers, but admitted the bougainvillea climbing up the wall was the most difficult to complete.

RIGHT: The small chimney actually makes real smoke and Gemma handmade the roof tiles to have an aged and rustic feel.

it can't be appreciated in the pictures, makes actual smoke.

The inside of the café is reflective of an early 1900's shop, as well, with flowered wallpaper and matching fabric curtains. Even the chairs and tables are covered with the printed fabric, complemented by pretty pink lampshades and an old cross-stitch sampler that appropriately has two blue birds on it.

While Gemma envisioned a traditional tea room in her design, she, in addition, wanted to incorporate a retail space. "I didn't want to build the typical café, I wanted a place where, besides drinking tea and eating pastries, you could buy different tea varieties," she says. To accomplish that she constructed the per-





ABOVE: The exterior was made by hand and after five different attempts at painting the exterior colours, Gemma finally came up with a combination she was happy with. The garden is brimming with flowers of all kinds, which add a cheerful mood to the little tea room.

BELOW: Gemma wanted a tea room that also had products for sale such as specialty teas that could be purchased to make at home.



ABOVE: Even the little chairs are adorned with fabric to match the table. The small tea kettle was created by Valerie Anne Casson.



fect piece of furniture with lots of drawers to store all the teas. It's conveniently placed behind the rounded wooden counter for easy access by the shop owner.

"I also wanted to experiment with the interior using different planes to give a sense of depth—like the small kitchen, where you can only wash dishes since the cakes are cooked at home, or the small lavatory at the end of the shop," adds

RIGHT: The display unit that Gemma made was designed with tiny drawers to hold different teas.

BELOW: The Blue Bird tea shop has many miniature sweets on display in the store window as well as a selection of beautifully patterned tea canisters.

BELOW RIGHT: The tiny sandwiches on display in the miniature cafe were handmade to resemble the same delicious sandwiches that Gemma remembers being served by her friends in Britain when she was invited to tea.

Gemma. Her design, which was created in such a way that the roof and the façade can be easily removed to see the interior, worked perfectly to allow viewers to appreciate each tiny space in its relation to the rest of the store.

To complete the interior of the tea room, Gemma handpicked items she found at fairs and ordered custom accessories from her favourite artists. The tea pots are identical to full-size items she owns; the bascule and the weights, the tea bags, and the billboard are from Lugartpetit. Cakes were made by Tiny Ter Miniatures and Oiseau deNim, and the delectable profiteroles (cream puffs) were crafted by Linda Cummings.

For the little sandwiches, Gemma was even more specific in what she wanted.

"I specially ordered the sandwiches to look like the ones that my British friends served me when they invited me for a tea," she says. She sent a picture to Lugartpetit to get the results she wanted and loved the final product. You can't



get any better than that for realism when designing your own tea room. The result is a café Agatha Christie could certainly sip a cup of tea in while contemplating a mystery—and one that Gemma thoroughly enjoyed building. "It has allowed me to learn a lot of techniques, that is what I love the most of this wonderful world of miniature building." **DHW**

A beautiful day for a bike ride

Caroline Dupuis shares a few of her charming bicycles to give you ideas for customising one for your scene

By Helen Rowley

The invention of the bicycle evolved over time and what a wonderful invention it was! Being able to feel the wind in your hair while travelling up a country road or a woodsy trail is a little slice of heaven. But have you ever wondered how they came to be?

It all started in the early 1800s when Baron Karl von Drais and his chief gamekeeper Otto Schillinger of Germany came up with a clever invention known as

the dandy horse. This was the first means of transportation using the two-wheeler principle. There were no pedals, instead the rider would push along the ground with his or her feet to get momentum and the front wheel and handlebar assembly was hinged to allow steering.

Soon after, the idea was built upon by a British coach maker. Denis Johnson of London had his invention patented and it became very popular due to his marketing skills and improved patent protection.

By the mid-1800s, a French metal-worker added rotary cranks and pedals to the front-wheel hub, which turned into the first pedal-operated bicycle as we know it today.

There were also many new trendy designs involving tricycles and quadracycles. In fact, a Starley's Royal Salvo tricycle was owned by Queen Victoria.

Towards the end of the 1800s the safety bicycle was conceived and notably had the most important improvements. There was now a steerable front wheel that had significant caster, a chain drive to the rear wheel, and the wheels were of equal size. With added strides of improving the tire materials and frame design, the bicycle became an important vehicle for transportation for both work and leisure.

As time has passed it has become fashionable to decorate our beloved bikes. Adding a little basket to bring home fresh baked bread from the bakery and a bouquet of flowers is a must! Another fun addition is to put colourful streamers on the handles for fun and flair.

A small bell to say hello or excuse me is also popular, as is clipping on colourful spoke beads around the bicycles tires.

LEFT AND RIGHT: The newest fashion-forward trend is to add fresh flowers to the handlebars. Of course using hand-crafted flowers will also do the trick!







There truly are endless possibilities when it comes to decorating your bike.

Caroline Dupuis is no stranger to the joy of decorating bicycles, but her focus is on a much smaller scale. What started as basic shiny black twelfth scale bikes, which are popular in craft stores, turned into small works of art. Caroline adds a couple coats of primer/paint and then hand-paints her signature roses with acrylic paints. Once they're dry she applies a coat of water-based gloss var-

nish for protection.

What will make your bike extra special? Adding fun decorative baskets that can be put on the front or back of your bike. They can be a basic wood-crate design or a charming wicker basket. And lastly, the fun part of selecting all the little treasures to put into the baskets!

However you choose to decorate your miniature bicycle, be sure to have fun and dream about what you would like to pedal if you were riding with pride! **DHW**



TOP AND ABOVE: Caroline's sister, Sophie, made the French bread from air-dry clay. The basket is hand-painted for added charm.

LEFT: This bike has precious cargo in the back! Caroline made the little wedding cake using air-dry clay. You can imagine that the streamers gathered in the back look lovely when the bicyclist is on her way.



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A living room full of Lundby

Charlene Williams tells the story of one of her Lundby houses and how she has strived to give it the feel of a real home

By Sandra Harding



• I really enjoy looking at, and writing about, Lundby and other sixteenth scale houses as they are so different to our usual twelfth scale, and I hope that you are enjoying reading about them too. This month I'm going to let Charlene Williams' tell her story in her own words, as she has done such a good job of describing her house; but then, she is the expert on it.

This is my four-storey Lisa of Denmark doll's house from about 1979. Lisa of Denmark was a competitor of the Swedish brand Lundby until it was bought out by Lundby in the mid-1980s. Like Lundby, it is 1:16 scale and fully electrified.

My house comprises a two-storey main house and two extension levels, each with two rooms. I found the main house (with some furniture) on eBay some years ago. I was very excited to find it as such houses are not often seen on the site, and it was in very good condition.

I bought the garage level a few years later from a collec-

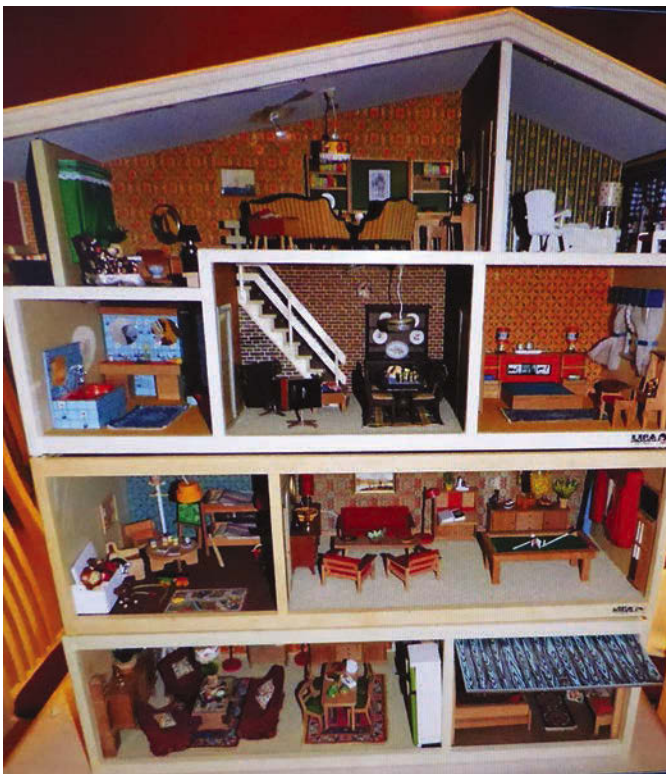
tor in the US, and the other level was acquired last year from a collector in Denmark. The house and levels are completely carpeted, and the rooms boast wonderful retro wallpaper. The garage (sensibly) is the only room that is not carpeted but I have turned it into a 'man cave' because Lisa never produced a car.

I am a purist when it comes to collecting, so I do not alter the original wallpaper or flooring in any way. All the furniture, paintings, rugs and lamps are Lisa of Denmark. There are no residents yet because I have not been able to locate any original Lisa dolls. However, I have added



many accessories from different makers in order to give it the feel of a real home.

My fascination with doll's houses began when I received a Lundby of



“The realistic furnishings and electric lights captured my imagination immediately.”

Sweden Stockholm house for Christmas in 1978. The realistic furnishings and electric lights captured my imagination immediately.

Unfortunately, that house was badly damaged when I was a teenager. But I was able to restore my childhood treasure when I discovered eBay fifteen years ago. The internet has also been a great tool for me to network with other collectors and to learn about many other sixteenth scale doll's house brands. My

collection now includes ten houses: four Lundby, a Tomy Smaller Homes house (from Japan), two Caroline's Home houses (UK), a Hanse of Scandinavia house, the Lisa of Denmark tower and a Lisa of Denmark chalet.

My houses are displayed all over my living room. They always serve as a great conversation starter. [DHW](#)

I hope that Charlene will let us feature more of her collection for you all to see - Sandra.

let's weave a MINI RAG RUG

Kris Compas shows us how to use a beading loom to make miniature rag rugs for our doll's houses and scenes

By Kris Compas

A long time ago I did a tutorial on how to make a mini rag rug using a beading loom. It was so much fun I thought a refresh would be fun to share with you.

I recently went shopping for a new beading loom and found this one at a popular department store in the craft section. Please note that I have added four new screws to the side of the centre screw on each end, on the dowels. It originally had only one screw in the centre of each dowel.



YOU'LL need

- Beading loom
- Embroidery thread 3 colours
- Embroidery floss
- Material
- Screws
- Scissors
- Mat board
- Pliers
- 3/32" thick basswood
- Tape
- T-pin
- 1/16" dowel
- Comb
- Sandpaper
- Drill and small bit



I used embroidery floss for the warp, that's the thread going up and down connecting the dowels. You can use any colours you choose.

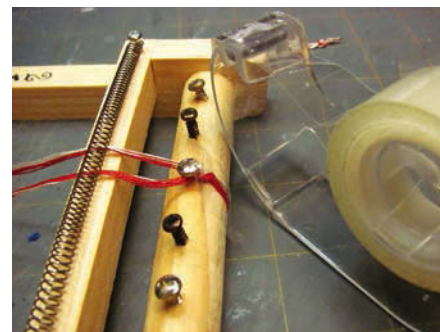
Step 1: Starting with the 8-strand ivory/4-strand red, place the knot behind the centre screw and tape it down. Taping the knot helps hold it in place while you place the strands in the spring. I cut 4 pieces of ivory and 3 pieces of red, each about 15" long.



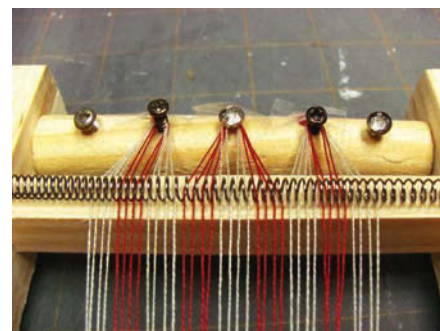
Step 2: Separate the strands so you have 20 strands of ivory and 16 strands of red. Now, put 8 strands of ivory and 4 strands of red together and tie a knot to hold it all together. Next, put 8 strands of red and 4 strands of ivory together and tie a knot in



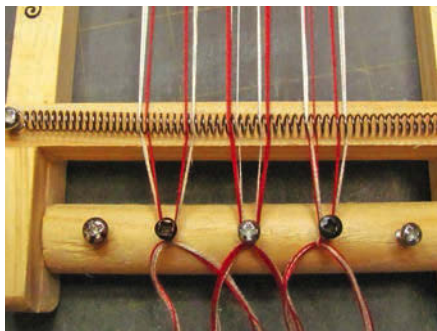
the end. Last, put 8 strands of ivory and 4 strands of red together and tie a knot in the end.



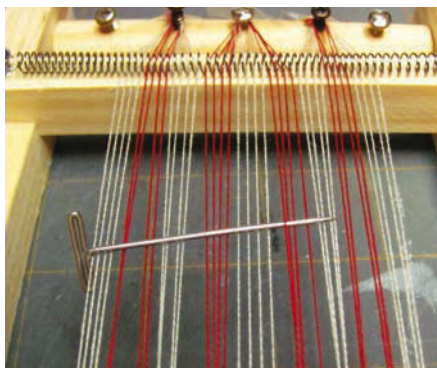
Step 3: Place each strand into each slot of the spring. Put the other sets of embroidery thread onto the dowels as I have in the photo.



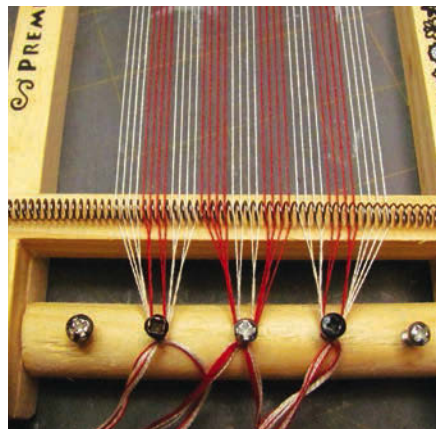
Step 4: You will have to have some pliers to hold one side and tighten the wing nut on the side.



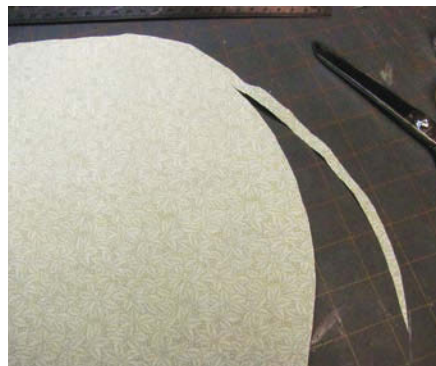
Step 5: Tie off the floss around the screws at the other end of the loom. Ideally you could cut your floss longer and wind it on the dowel and make a couple of rugs without having to re-thread the loom.



Step 6: Use a T-pin to separate and pick up each strand. Take the pin and lift a strand and put it in the spring. Now, I've got all of the strands in their proper places in the spring.



Step 7: I am showing another fabric, not the one I used for the sample. The fabric is 12" square. This gives you plenty of fabric for the rug. The fabric I used was a well-worn 100% cotton chambray work shirt.



Step 8: Fold the fabric into quarters. Round off the corner with a pencil. Cut the corner off so it is something like a circle. Cut around the circle about a 1/4" wide. Cut until you have about 4" left in the centre and stop. The centre isn't good to use, it tends to pull apart easily.



Step 9: Make a needle from a 1/16" dowel. Cut it the width of the warp you've threaded on the loom, plus an inch or two. Sand a point on one end and drill a hole in the other.



Step 10: I want you to make a shuttle, too. I've cut mine from 3/32" basswood, but you could also use 1/16". You can cut this with your craft knife and then sand the ends smooth and make them thinner.



Step 11: From mat board, cut a 1 1/2" thick strip that is as wide as the short side of the loom. There is always a starter stick

at the beginning to beat the fabric to. This is what the mat board is for. I cut it extra wide so we would have enough thread to tie off with.



Step 12: Weave the mat board in and out of the threads by starting with going under the edge thread, over and under and so on. Push the mat board up to the spring.



Step 13: I wound cream embroidery floss onto the shuttle. I used the full 6 strands. I think next time I would like to use only 3 strands.



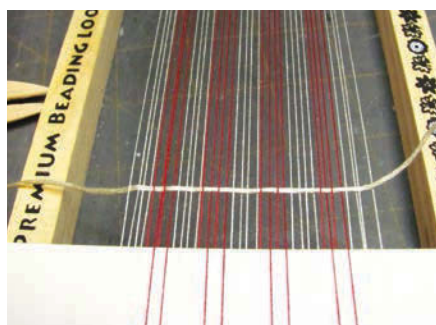
Step 14: This is the end of the shuttle.



Step 15: Weave the shuttle up and down, in and out of the warp threads. Since you started with going under the edge thread with the mat board I want you to now start out by going over the edge thread.

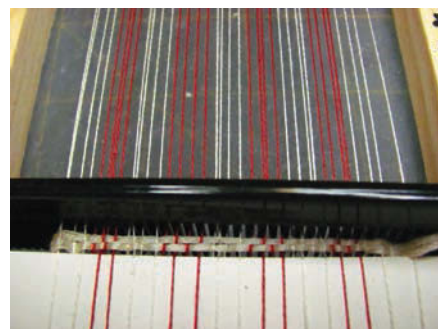


Step 16: We are going use a comb for the beater bar. Being a miniaturist is all about improvising isn't it? Ideally we want a comb with teeth that will separate each strand of the warp threads. I like the red comb on the right. It is a cat-grooming comb, but it makes a good beater bar, too.



Step 17: Start at the top. This helps keep the width of the rug the same. Draw the comb towards you and push the embroidery floss against the mat board.

Step 18: Now, weave the shuttle back to the other side. Pull the thread a little to shorten it up. Take care when doing this

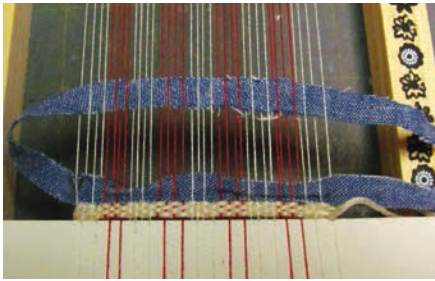


so you don't pull the sides of the rug in too much. Push the comb to the mat board.

Step 19: Now, I mentioned before how I would have liked to use only 3 strands of floss. I originally wove 4 rows with 6 strands, I didn't like it and took out 2 of the rows. I think it would look better with 3 strands of floss woven 4 rows. Once you get the hang of this you can make adjustments for your next project.



Step 20: Thread up your needle with about 36" of the fabric strip you cut earlier. Start weaving.



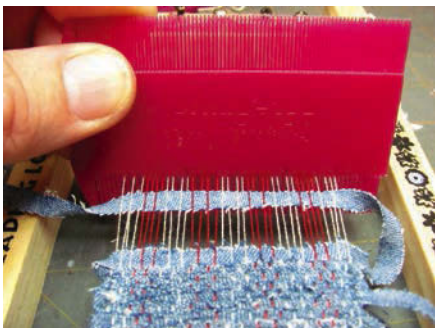
Step 21: This picture was taken before I took the 2 rows of cream embroidery floss out. Weave back with your fabric.



Step 22: Work your fabric down with the comb, pulling the fabric to the side. When you are pulling, hold the other side of the rug so you don't pull too much and narrow the rug.



Step 23: I've woven a few rows and it's beginning to look like something. If you run out of fabric just leave the tail and begin again. If your fabric breaks in the middle of a row, just undo the weaving, leave the tail and begin again.



Step 24: I've switched back to my favourite comb. Do you see how the threads are separated? When you start from the top and push the fabric into place this separation helps keep the rug from getting narrower. It also helps to keep the comb close when you are pulling the fabric strip through. You don't have to hit the fabric hard, just push it all together.

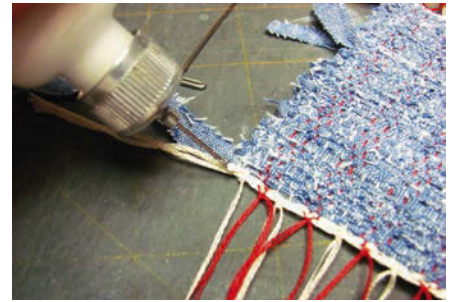


Step 25: As I mentioned before, hold on to the opposite side of the rug when you are pulling the fabric through. I've woven about 3 1/4" of rug.



Step 26: I've woven two rows of the 6 strand embroidery floss on the end. I've taken out the mat board. I've cut the rug loose from the loom.

Step 27: Tie four strands together in a



knot. If you can do a square knot that's good, if not just tie a regular knot. Glue the two rows of embroidery floss together.

Step 28: Trim the ends of the fabric and the 6 strand embroidery floss from the sides.

Step 29: Trim the warp threads and use



a pin to separate the thread to fill it out a bit. Fluff the ends out and iron the ends so they lay nice and straight from the rug. All finished!

I think it really looks like the full-sized jean rugs I buy. It's not thick or bulky at all. I am really happy with the way it turned out. There are lots of possibilities for this, lots of different threads or yarns to use. Hope you try it out.

Have fun, expand on it, make it better, just keep making minis! **DHW**

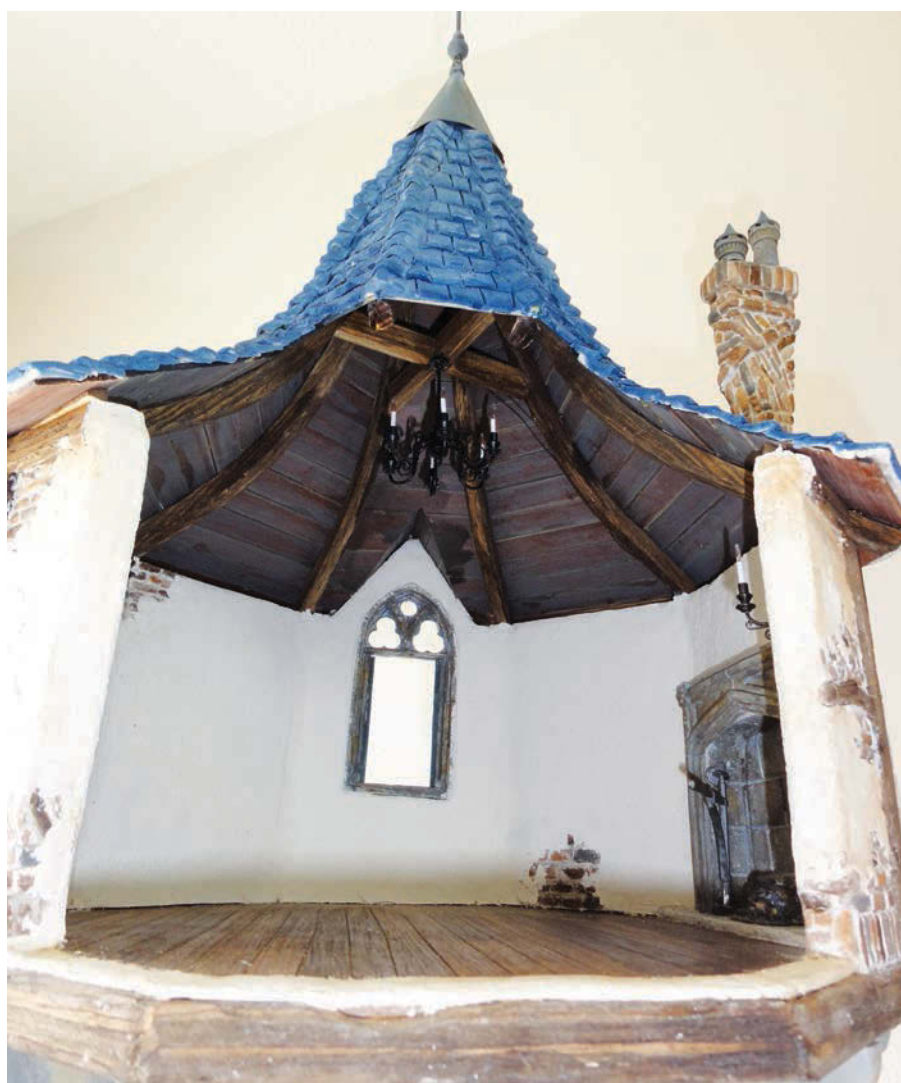


Rapunzel's Tangled Tower

There is no doubt that Rik Pierce's newest miniature creation will awe and inspire you. It's overflowing with whimsy and character

By Martha Puff

PHOTOGRAPHY BY MICHAEL PUFF AND MARCIA PIERCE



Once again, Rik Pierce delights us with an imaginative and fanciful “Once upon a time” storybook structure. “During the 2014 Workshop at the Chicago International Show, the class demanded Tangled Tower for the new project at the 2015 show,” Rik tells us. “That, or my head!”

Rising up out of the lake, the Tangled Tower speaks of magic and enchantment. In twelfth scale, the tower is a majestic 42-inches tall. Here, an evil old witch holds the young and beautiful Rapunzel captive (Grimm Fairy Tales, 1812). A handsome Prince comes to her rescue. And, as with all fairytales, it ends with “they lived happily ever after.” The wicked witch always loses, somehow!

The Tower was designed by Rik as a medieval fantasy structure—straight out of old fairytales. It is full of character, loaded with whimsy, and has an abundance of detail. “I found inspiration in Disneyland’s version of Rapunzel’s Tower, and designed an 8-sided octagon tower room. For added eye appeal, I placed the Tower in a lake.”

“I use Creative Paperclay for all my

LEFT: The plastered walls are 61/2” high, plus 10” to top of the rafters where a chandelier hangs. The broken wall plaster shows exposed bricks.

structures. It is my product of choice as it is clean, lightweight, and produces realistic results. It has about a 45-minute working time, takes paint well, and is remarkably forgiving. For the Tangled Tower, students make plaster, create fanciful brickwork and stonework, and install a cast resin fireplace with flickering fire. They construct a tile roof, build a chimney, add outside steps leading up to the door of the tower, make a flagstone path, and more.”

At the start of each workshop, Rik gives participants everything they need to finish their structure including paints and handmade tools. “All anyone has to do is show-up for class. Techniques are kept simple because of the spread of students’ ability. None of the steps are difficult. I want every student—at all skill levels—to feel good about what they accomplish.”

A believer in the old adage “give them a lot to look at,” Rik strives to provide a whimsical constant in all his structures. “I change textures and detail on exterior walls repeatedly—combining brick, stone, distressed beams and wiggle wood in imaginative ways. The wiggle wood beams going across the exterior walls date back to the earliest half-timber buildings, up until about the Elizabethan period. After that, wiggle wood continued to be used on the homes of poor folks.”

Rik uses Delta Ceramcoat Acrylic Paint for all of his projects. “I like Ceramcoat because most colours are a bit greyed. I teach ageing techniques so that structures appear to have been built centuries in the past. Students use thin paint washes to tone down mortar, as well as to paint stone, rocks and bricks. I show how to highlight random bricks to add a little variety.

I remind workshop participants to use thin paint washes as it is easier to add colour than it is to remove it.”

Utilising his own hand-crafted resin castings, Rik adds considerable architectural detail. Rapunzel’s tower room rests on a base consisting of two round supports made individually out of Styrofoam. The fanciful brackets are cast out of resin, and put on one-by-one by the students. The entire tower room sits very nicely into a round slot and comes off for traveling. Students can glue the room down permanently, if they so desire.

Rik added a fantasy Green Man to the exterior firebox of the fireplace. A nature spirit, the Green Man has a bit of an eerie quality that conveys sorcery and wizardry.

The rustic blue door at the base of the tower has a cast resin surround, which incorporates Medieval mythical beasts. Where the flagstone path winds around at the ground level, there appears to be a whimsical wee entry at the base of the tower. When asked, “Does a teensy creature live in there?” Rik laughingly said, “Your guess is as good as mine!”

While his classes do not include landscaping, Rik shares easy and inexpensive techniques with students. “Landscaping ties the structure to the earth and gives it a natural look.”

In keeping with sto-

LEFT: The Tangled Tower is 42” tall, including 18” x 18” base.



“I change textures and detail on exterior walls repeatedly—combining brick, stone, distressed beams and wiggle wood in imaginative ways.”

RIGHT: Tangled Tower, back view. Cast resin door surround with Medieval mythical beasts.

BELOW: Cast resin "Green Man" firebox. Twisted brick chimney with double chimney pots.

rybook characteristics, students learn simple techniques to make a leaded glass window and build a crooked chimney with double clay chimney pots. "When teaching a workshop a few years ago, one of my students, Matt Evans, wanted to incorporate a twisted and crooked chimney. It needed to ooze rural charm and rustic character. After we worked out how to do it, I blatantly stole his idea for future projects--with his blessings."

For Rik, good lighting is essential, and is an integral part of all his designs. "I teach students how to put in the wiring for lights and make a flickering fire for the fireplace. I use flicker units exclusively for glowing embers, wall sconces, and candleabras. The flicker unit simulates candlelight or gas light and provides a natural look."

Over the last several years, Rik has taught extensively around the U.S. and abroad--England, Germany, the Netherlands, Australia and New Zealand. The workshops are intensive and everyone works hard. "As I see it, my task is to keep everyone on schedule and moving forward. The goal is for workshop participants to go home with their building in one piece. Because of the length of the class, it isn't possible to finish completely. Above all, I counsel students to enjoy the experience and have fun!"



In closing, Rik says, "I want to especially thank my wife Marcia for her help in making my workshops student-friendly. She produces the illustrated, easy-to-understand project instructions given to every student. When I started out, I did not have handouts for my classes. Everyone had to take notes. Marcia is my staunchest supporter, and an invaluable helpmate. I couldn't create what I do without her encouragement and backing." **DHW**

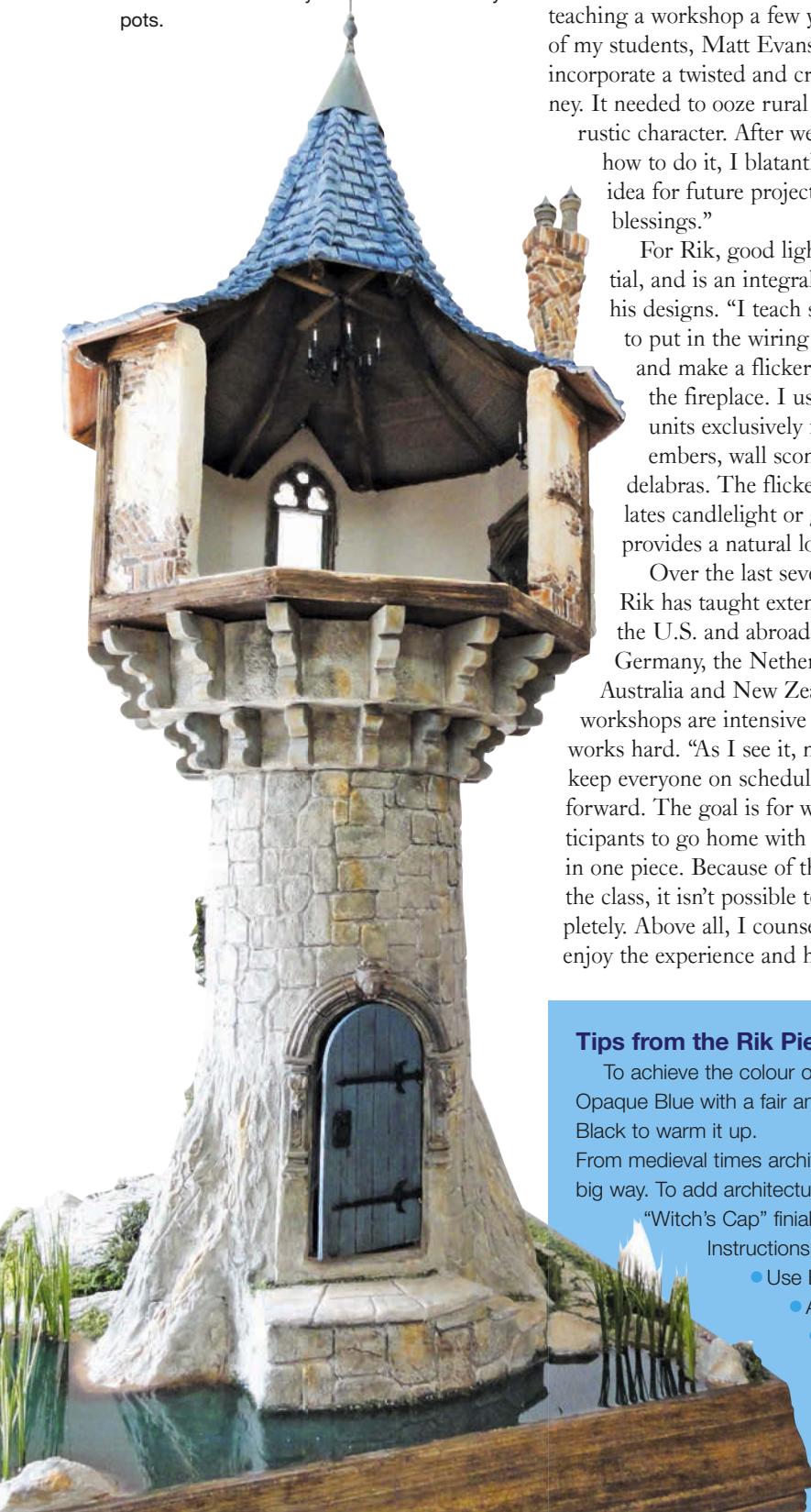
Tips from the Rik Pierce workshop

To achieve the colour of the blue tile roof, combine acrylic paint Delta Ceramcoat-Opaque Blue with a fair amount of water. Then add a little Dark Burnt Umber and Black to warm it up.

From medieval times architects have loved decorative finial roof ornamentation in a big way. To add architectural detail and character to the roof, you can make a simple "Witch's Cap" finial.

Instructions:

- Use Bristol board to make the cone section.
- Add wood or plastic beads on the top for ornamentation.
- Use a round toothpick to make the top skewer.
- For the antique copper effect:
 - Use Delta Ceramcoat-Brown Iron Oxide to paint the undercoat.
 - Use Delta Ceramcoat-Dark Victorian Teal to paint the verdigris accent.



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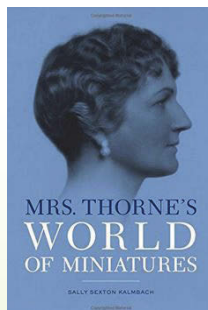
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A flamboyant mini fantasy

Miniaturist Annette Shaw reminds us of the days when fanciful hats were an important necessity in a woman's fashion statement

By Deb Weissler

PHOTOGRAPHY BY ANNETTE SHAW



With Royal Ascot just around the corner many women will be deciding what to wear to the racecourse, particularly when it comes to hats - those fabulously flamboyant fashion statements designed to turn heads.

For women, hats are often considered a nuisance; an unnecessary part of our casual wardrobes we rarely give a thought to, unless we are perhaps going to a wedding or a with church service or lunch party. Easter Sunday often brings out the annual hat parade, but for the most part, millinery has disappeared from the landscape where, in fine department stores and specialty shops, they once occupied a prominent display.

Millinery, as the fashion world knows

it, has existed since 1700. English courts derived the term to describe those travelling haberdashers from Milan, and the well-to-do paid fortunes for exotic, hand-crafted hats. The Edwardians were masters of excess and milliners' flamboyant creations reached new heights; so much so that entire bird species became endangered as they were harvested for their plumage.

"I am not sure why hats have fallen out of favour," says miniature hat maker Annette Shaw, The Little Hatter, "except we live in a very casual world now and we like to show off our hair instead. Of course ladies love a good wedding and hats come out in force then. And we love to watch the hats at Ascot."

Fortunately for Annette, miniature hats are as popular as ever; the more flamboyant the better. The Georgian,

Regency, Victorian, and Edwardian eras were famous for their gorgeous hats, and period television series have highlighted the importance of a proper hat in society.

As a keen golfer, gardener, and pet lover living in Devon, Annette gave absolutely no thought to hats until she began making miniatures for her doll's house twenty years ago. Her neighbour made all sorts of miniatures in her spare time in her cosy kitchen, and Annette would join her. Her neighbour's daughter, doll maker Judith Laird often dropped by to see their latest creations, and soon noted the growing inventory far exceeded the capacity of their respective doll's houses. She suggested they try selling some.

"We applied for tables at

Miniatura, we were accepted, and sold out our entire stock," Annette laughingly recalls. "That's how it all began, and none of us have looked back." As a miniature milliner, her success has been such that her Sid Cooke double-fronted emporium that began it all, now serves as a set for her haberdashery and hats that she sells at shows and online.

In a household filled with rugby-playing men, hats allow Annette to explore her feminine side. "I've always had a fascination for historical clothing and, since hats can be as flamboyant or as plain as



TOP RIGHT: This cotton hat is trimmed with a rosebud bow and silk roses. It fairly shouts "spring!"

ABOVE RIGHT: A stylish black mourning hat and veil in twelfth scale.

LEFT: A luxurious full length fur-trimmed coat and a short, fur-trimmed jacket over silk blouses, with matching fashionable hats in a variety of different styles.



ABOVE: Silk shoes with matching shoe boxes are displayed in a custom painted dresser and atop stacked hat boxes.

ABOVE RIGHT: Small felt hats for modest occasions when less is better.

BELOW RIGHT: This straw hat is trimmed with chiffon and feathers.

BOTTOM: Silk hats alongside a wooden screen, which comes in all sorts of papers, with matching hat boxes. On a mannequin, made wood and resin, is displayed an antique lace blouse and silk skirt with silk shoes.

you like, one can lose oneself in fantasy. I love to create, using the old fashion plates, and try making my miniatures as historically correct as possible."

And hats are just the beginning. Hats require hat boxes in order to protect all that delicious frothiness; and matching shoes with their respective boxes. Parasols, fans and Venetian masks; fur coats and jackets; couture clothing; silk corsets; manikins and dressing screens; even top hats for the gentlemen. Everything the well-dressed individual would need for every occasion.

Annette recommends displaying hats at various heights to create visual interest; as props on hat stands and boxes to dress a scene; or piled upon a chaise to create an eye-catching collage. Unless one is creating a vintage or antique clothing shop, hats of like-style should be displayed, keeping in mind the era you are re-creating.

Totally self-taught, the very first hat Annette made was a straw hunting hat with real pheasant feathers. "I'm still

learning all the time, especially when a customer asks for a hat that's outside my comfort zone. But I go for it!"

Her hats mostly represent the Regency, Victorian, and Edwardian periods, but Annette admits she really doesn't have an absolute favourite era. They all represent challenges, as she is constantly inventing new products to attract buyers. From cloche hats and boaters of the Roaring Twenties; trillies and tilt hats that were the rage of the 1940s; even deer stalker hats and tweed flat caps, along with smoking paraphernalia, for the gent's.

She sources material and feathers from all over the world, and there's never been a drapery shop she could pass by without being drawn inside. Silks, felt, lace, ribbons, braid, seed beads, and feathers are all part of her ongoing shopping list.



Annette's studio overlooks her garden, amid fields of sheep and corn. Her tools consist of silk scissors, fine dental tweezers, a rose maker and bow maker, moulds, pegs, and pots of glue. "I

start with a picture, or perhaps a character from a film. Then

two pieces of silk are bonded together,

“In a household filled with rugby playing men, hats allow Annette to explore her feminine side.”



providing material for both the brim and the crown, which is formed on one of my custom moulds." Once the hat takes shape, the fun begins, as she picks and chooses from a variety of trims and colours. It may take an hour or more to create a hat, and each one is created with its usage in mind.

Annette always ask her customers where and how the hats are going to be used, because she makes them in different sizes, depending on how they will be displayed—a single hat placed upon a bed or hat stand, hung upon a hall stand, or arranged amid others in a shop display. Some vignettes are modest; others are quite grand, and so her hat designs must be taken into account so as to neither overwhelm the scene nor become lost amid the clutter.

"I always make up custom orders immediately. I tend to work at night, watching a good, old fashioned drama and often take inspiration from the hats I'm seeing. I especially spend hours just before a show, as I like to create a new line for every show I do."

Aware show attendees may not be shopping for a hat, unless they are creating a hat shop or need a special hat, she reminds miniaturists that 19thc millinery shops sold not just hats but a full complement of custom offerings

"The miniature world has changed so much, as many of the custom makers are no longer with us, there are more Chinese imports, miniature magazines have done a good job offering patterns and how-to projects, and the Internet has widened the selections available. I am able to reach many more customers and I've sent hundreds all around the world." For The Little Hatter, the demand for hats will live forever. **DHW**

Amanda adds touch of glamour to her Triang

How Amanda and her mum had the imagination to see how an eBay purchase could be transformed into a pretty house

By Sandra Harding

I suppose I shouldn't be surprised to find that Amanda Kennedy has many Triang houses from the Thirties to the Fifties, as most of the collectors I have met rarely stop at the sensible number one. Maybe it's catching, as I have also noticed that Lundby collectors are the same.

Mind you, this hobby is very addictive and I have already told you about a lady on the Isle of Wight with over 60, and there are some collections in the

hundreds. On the other hand I am very sensible, as I only have ten or so houses. Did I say sensible?

Coming back (eventually) to Amanda's lovely little Triang. It was made between 1935 and 1940, measures approx 23 x 33 x 19 inches, and cost £50 from eBay. It was the first Triang that Amanda has 'done up', although she had lots of practice on her numerous other houses.

Looking at the photograph of the



state it took some imagination to see the pretty little thing it was to become, but Amanda obviously has that gift. The window was sourced from auction sites, and the chimneys and door were made by Amanda.

The paint on the outside was matched to the original colours as near as possible, and there were no internal decorations to speak of. The house took Amanda and





her mother, Sally Cooper, about twenty hours to get it back to its (almost) original state.

Aided and abetted by mum, Amanda scours auction sites, boot fairs and charity

shops for many of the items she uses in her houses, and then she simply updates them to her taste.

I want to point out the unusual mirrored items around this house, including

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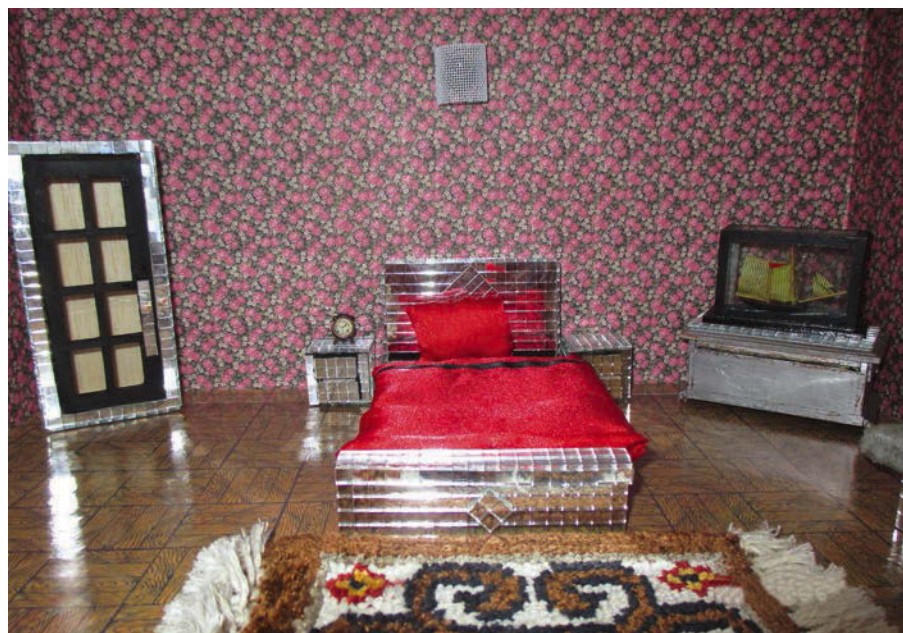
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those in the bedroom and bathroom as well as the console table and chair. These were mostly all cleverly made from balsa wood, which Amanda covered with stick-on mirror tiles and silver paint to create a rather glamorous effect. A clever idea which I plan to try later, maybe in my bride's shop display cabinet.

The people in the house are random dolls, and all made by Amanda from Premo Sculpey. They include one based on her sister's father-in-law (I wonder if he knows), an old lady as a tribute to her late Nan (who liked a little tippie), a flapper who wonders how she got there, and a pregnant lady who wonders the same thing. I dread to think which one of these people drive the lovely old Morgan in the garage?

I am told that there are at least another twelve Triang houses waiting to be given the Amanda and Sally treatment, and I for one can't wait to see what they get up to next. [DHW](#)



Weaving a tiny secret keeper

These beautiful little baskets are handwoven using natural and home grown materials and then adorned with exquisite artistic detailing

By Jan Stuart

Monica Graham's words are as interesting and inspiring as her miniature basketry designs. Just ask her what it is about baskets that people are attracted to and her passion for the work becomes obvious. "Baskets are secret keepers. They have a wonderful variety of shapes, colours, and sizes to appeal to everyone, and they are hollow!" she says. "We can hide stuff in them, make things peek out of them, fill them with gifts, or tell an entire story in just a tiny little space."



Monica's baskets are a fascinating combination of earthy and artsy style. They're highly detailed and each has its own diminutive nostalgia, charm, and historic correctness. Most are influenced by the artisan's love of nature. She often utilises natural materials to evoke a memory. One basket is reminiscent of a day in the brown autumn woods when the first pheasant of the season is spotted. Of course, the exact materials, such as pheasant feathers, may be represented by other materials, but miniatures are like that. Sometimes the art does not lie in exact reproduction or in sameness of material, but in drawing to mind memories.

No matter what the primary materials that are used may be, Monica's miniature baskets all have their beginnings in traditional shapes and patterns. The baskets pictured here range from woven, traditional, and Nantucket- and Market Basket-styles to Native American coiled baskets and Woodland Fairy designs with embellished bowl shapes. There are baskets in soft, natural tones and vibrant, rich colours finished with artful sprigs, dangles, ties, coils, knots, wrappings, and stitches.

Many are both organic and shining—blue iridescent beads do not seem out of place in one of Monica's designs. And even those in shades of brown, tan, or grey are far from dull, allowing just the



ABOVE: Tiny gourd with feathers, fungus, dried seed pods, and pine needles.

BELOW RIGHT: A beautifully woven splint basket with lavender cording and multi-coloured beads.

texture of the weaving or coiling material to speak for itself. Though Monica says twelfth scale is natural for her, her baskets can also be found in 1:24 and 1:48 scales. The smallest basket she has ever made was about 1:144 scale, formed on the point of a ball-point pen.

Basketry beginnings and beyond

It's not surprising to learn that Monica made full-size baskets off and on (mostly off, she says) for about 20 years before creating mini versions. "My Mom took me to museums when I was younger and showed me examples of handicrafts, baskets, and weavings; she said I had a creative spirit and that I just needed to find the right outlet," explains Monica. "She bought me my very first basket kit. She was my inspiration!"

Later, during classes at Delaware's First State Mini Club, Monica tried her hand at making miniature baskets using the usual methods of thread, wire, and cloth. It wasn't long before she decided to transfer her full-size basketry skills to



ABOVE: A woven splint basket decorated with cording and accented with tiny feathers and beads.

RIGHT: Monica grows and dries these tiny heritage Tennessee Spinner Gourds in her garden to use for her miniature baskets.

BELOW: A basket made from a tiny dried gourd with coil work decorating the rim.



miniature. Monica had already learned to value black ash and white oak splints for weaving and was experienced in making Native American coiled baskets, as well as baskets created with gourds, but she found that no one seemed to be making miniature baskets with those materials.

With practice, she began using traditional materials to make smaller and

smaller pieces. When she could not find anyone to teach her to go even smaller, she invented her own techniques. She also began to incorporate her beloved materials from nature. "My home is decorated with abandoned bird nests, dried marsh reeds, and winter weeds. Using them in my tiny baskets just seemed the next natural step," she says.



Letting nature take its course

Monica has been making miniature baskets for about four years, yet feels she has only just scratched the surface of the potential miniature basketry holds for her. She constantly finds new materials to work with ("Right now, I'm working with hollowed insect galls!" she says gleefully) and is always experimenting with new ways of handling them. "I've only just begun this part of my life and have a lot more exploring to do," she says.

Lately, she has begun growing her own materials, miniature heritage Tennessee Spinner Gourds, and is currently waiting for a new crop of acorns to start coming down.

Since Monica lives close to the Delaware shore, shells are easy to find and she likes to collect her own materials whenever possible. "Three hours on the beach to collect a couple hundred little





ABOVE AND BELOW: These little baskets are delicately adorned with beads as well as treasures found by the sea side.

ABOVE RIGHT: This platter basket barely, one inch in diameter, is perfect for a doll's house.

shells is just, ok, well, backbreaking—but still fun!”

The nearby environment also provides a wooded area to find acorns and pine needles, while meadows and marshes yield reeds and weeds. Monica does buy

more obscure items, like shark's teeth and starfish, and has been given gifts of tropical shells and beads which she also incorporates into her baskets. Base materials are simple: wood, wire, thread, black ash, reed, gourds, and Monica owns “boxes and boxes” of feathers, acorns, dried mushrooms, lace, beads, and semi-precious stones.

“The list is endless and growing all the time,” she says. “There are literally hundreds of different materials for weaving and adornment.” And she's not afraid



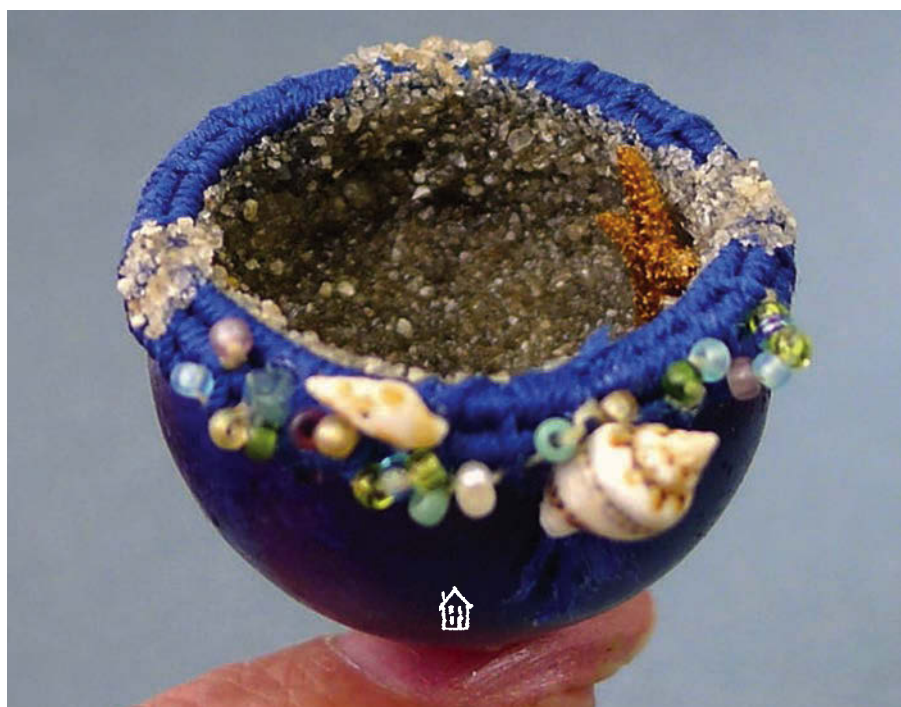
“Inspiration for Monica comes from the natural world and from a more intangible place—her dreams.”

to forge the elements, confessing to once spending an abominably frigid half hour on the Georgia coast in below freezing temperatures with 45 mph winds howling around her head in order to gather a few handfuls of sand loaded with tiny, naturally orange shells for her wreath work.

Dreaming up designs

Inspiration for Monica comes from the natural world and from a more intangible place—her dreams. “I see images all the time, day and night. I'll awake at 3:00 in the morning with a new treatment, a colour scheme, a way to mix two media—which hounds me until I attempt to create it,” says Monica.

She goes on to explain how her mind works: that she will gaze at a tiny dried gourd, see a tinge of blue and remember a tidal pool, then sand, stone, shells, and beach glass scattered across the shore until they all come together to form a





ABOVE: Monica admits, “I do stab myself repeatedly with needles.”

RIGHT: A tiny button and loop secures the lid of this one.

BELOW: These little baskets are delicately adorned with beads as well as treasures found by the sea side.



future basket.

When she’s not dreaming, Monica gets inspiration while shopping. She’ll imagine full-size baskets in miniature with changes and additions to better suit their form in small scale. And she often finds unique materials at flea markets, thrift stores, and garage sales, citing that many of her basket bases come from recycled vintage buttons.

“In a local antique shop recently, I found a lovely cache of amazing vintage

soft, silk button thread in colours I’ve called chocolate, vanilla, strawberry, and caramel—about one full little spool of each. From these were born my ‘ice cream’ series of baskets (limited in number due to my limited amount of thread).”

Monica has also been known to harass her local bead shop, her jewellery-making friends, and dealers at both bead and mini shows challenging them to find her the tiniest beads and gemstones around.

It’s led to a great stash of mini freshwater pearls, drilled rubies, garnets, and other precious and semiprecious gems and stones.

Her latest serendipitous discovery, paper floss, was stumbled onto in a scrapbooking store. “It comes pre-twisted; the biggest problem is to keep it twisted.” She names sweetgrass as her most challenging material. “I have to hand-split each stalk into 6 or 8 smaller strips . . .” with gourds being a strong second due to having to cut them without breaking their thin shells.

No matter how difficult some projects have proved, Monica (who made IGMA Artisan status in 2011) says the secret to success is perseverance. “Never accept that it can’t be done. Never believe that you can’t do it. Just go prove them wrong, and have fun doing it!” [DHW](#)



roof tiles MADE EASY

Deana Tritch shares an affordable way to make a terracotta roof for a twelfth scale house roof using recycled materials

By DHW reporter



Saving money on a project usually means spending a little more time to get the desired results. If you love a good DIY project then you will enjoy the satisfaction of completing this tutorial.

Step 1: Search for a photo of aged terracotta tiles on the Internet. This will give you a good example for the colours and texture that you will want on your tiles. All of the paint colours may not be necessary, but the variety may help make your finished tiles look more aged. For a more uniformly coloured roof, just use the oranges, burnt umber, cream, and light brown.

Step 2: You should have a large collection of toilet paper tubes. One tube makes 18 tiles. My roof took over 400 tiles to finish. Put out a social media plea and you will have all you need before you know it. Save a roll for the tiles that will go along the very top of the roof peak. These will need to be cut a bit wider than the rest.

Step 3: On a paper plate put blobs of several different



YOU'LL need

- **Craft paint:** Dark orange, medium orange, burnt umber, cream, soft white, light brown, dark brown, black
- **Cardboard tubes**
- **Corrugated cardboard**
- **Chopsticks or skinny dowels**
- **Scissors**
- **Tacky Glue**
- **Matte Mod Podge**
- **Paintbrush**
- **Paper plates**



colours. Include the oranges and burnt umber and any other colours you want. Dip the paintbrush into one or two colours and brush onto the cardboard tube. Don't clean the brush while you are painting. Continue to randomly paint the tubes. Paint several tubes and set them aside to dry.

Step 4: Use your scissors or

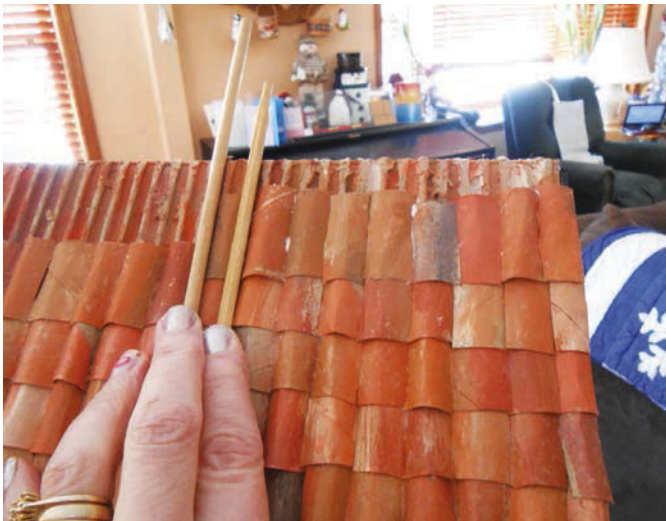
the handle of your paintbrush to remove the paper from one side of the corrugated cardboard.

The simplest way is to put the paintbrush handle into the end of the cardboard in a valley and push the brush down the length of the cardboard at a slight angle to loosen the paper. Do this for each valley until you can peel the paper off completely.

Step 5: Cut the corrugated cardboard into pieces to cover the entire roof of your doll's house with the ridges running perpendicular to the height of the roof as show in the photos. The ridges and valleys will be the guides for you to attach the rows of barrel tiles.

On the larger sections of roof, I folded the cardboard over the roof peak to give my roof some added strength. Glue the pieces of cardboard to the doll's house roof with glue. Spread the glue evenly over the cardboard. You want it to adhere securely to the doll's house roof.

Step 6: Now it's time to cut the tiles. Cut each tube lengthwise into 6 even strips. Don't worry if there are slight



variations in the widths, it will just add to the aged look of the finished tiles. Cut each strip to tiles that are about 1 1/2" long. Once you've cut several tubes, mix the tiles up in a pile.

Step 7: Finally, it's time to start tiling! Each tile is glued over two

of the cardboard ridges. I used chopsticks to hold the edges of the tiles down until the glue set. Unlike shingles, barrel tiles are applied in a straight row rather than offset rows. Working horizontally, glue each tile in place over two ridges.

Start the next tile in the same valley as the previous tile so they are side by side. Line the bottom row of tiles up with the bottom edge of the roof. The valleys act as the upside down tiles on a real roof. Place a few tiles, then let the glue set, then place a few more tiles, and so on.

Periodically remind yourself that the finished roof is going to look great and that it's worth all the time. I worked several hours over several days to get all of the painting, cutting, and gluing finished.

Step 8: Start the next horizontal row, overlapping the previous row by about 1/2". Continue to glue, and hold the edges down, etc. row by row.

Step 9: Once all of the tiles are glued in place, it's time to finish off the roof peaks. I cut the tiles for the peak just a bit wider than the other tiles to make it easier to cover the tops of the tiles on each side.

Using the same process as the rest of the tiling, glue a tile in place over the peak and the top of the tiles on each side of the roof, overlap the next tile slightly and glue into place. Continue to glue the tiles until you have covered the end of the peak. In places where the peaks intersect, cut the tiles so

TIP: Where the adjoining roof areas meet (not the roof peaks) you have a couple of options. My house was purchased as a partially built shell and there were gaps where the roof parts met so I used strip wood to cover the gaps. I painted the strips with some of my paint mix from the tile painting and then trimmed the tiles to meet in the joint just as you would with regular shingles. You could also use card stock to cover the joint or just cut your tiles to meet closely in the joint.

that they butt up against each other neatly. Study the photos you found online to see how your roof tiles will need to fit.

Step 10: When the glue is thoroughly dry then coat the tiles with matte Mod Podge. A adding a second coat will add strength to the cardboard tiles if desired.

Now stand back and admire the results of your hard work and think about the money you saved with this recycle and reuse miniature project! **DHW**



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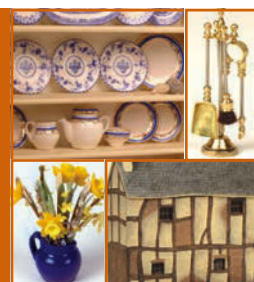
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MONDAY 28 MARCH

Holiday Inn Milton Keynes East M1/J14
NEWPORT PAGNELL MK16 OJA

SUNDAY 10 APRIL

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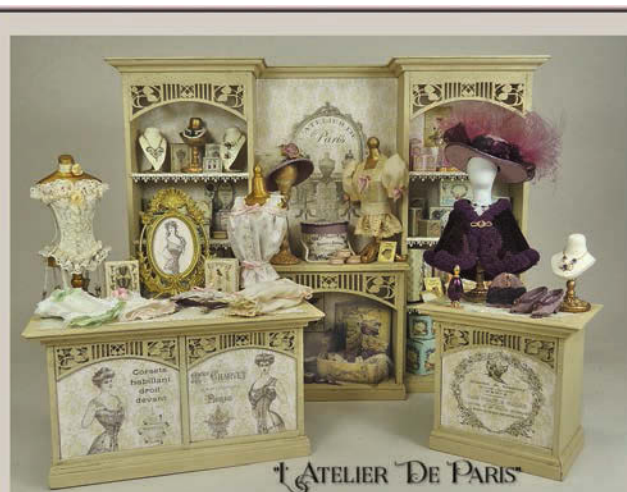
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make a mini BLANKET CHEST

Julie Warren of Little Bits & Pieces by Julie completes her three-part bedroom furniture tutorial with this useful miniature blanket chest

By Julie Warren



In issues DHW280 and DHW281 Julie showed us how to make a twelfth scale armoire and a twelfth scale chest of drawers to match. In this issue she will share how to make a little blanket chest.

YOU'LL need

- Clamps
- Compass
- Craft knife
- Masking tape
- Paint (the little sample pots of emulsion you can buy from your local DIY store are ideal)
- Paintbrush
- Pencil
- Sand paper
- Scrap of glove leather
- Steel ruler
- Varnish
- Wood glue
- Wooden beads for feet

Step 1: Once all of your pieces are cut to size, begin by gently sanding all the edges using a fine-grained sandpaper.

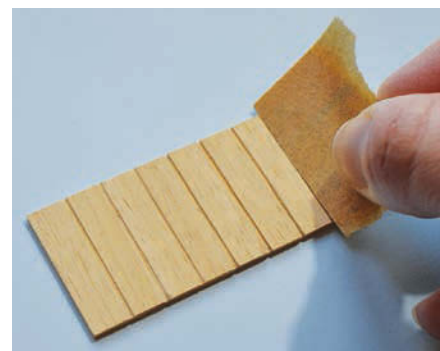
Step 2: Begin by bevelling one long edge and both short edges of the LID and BASE pieces, by gently sweeping the piece across a sheet of sandpaper on a flat surface.

Step 3: Glue a wooden bead to each cor-



ner on the underside of the BASE piece, about 1/8" from each edge.

Step 4: Varnish both sides of the LID and BASE pieces.



Cutting List

From 1/16" thick wood

- Cut 1 – 3 x 1 1/8" – BOTTOM
- Cut 1 – 3 9/32" x 1 3/16" – FRONT
- Cut 1 – 3 9/32" x 1 3/16" – BACK
- Cut 2 – 1 1/8" x 1 3/16" – SIDES

From 3/32" thick wood

- Cut 1 – 3 1/4" x 1 3/8" – LID
- Cut 1 – 3 1/4" x 1 3/8" – BASE

From 1/32" thick wood

- Cut 1 – 3 9/32" x 9/16" – Large horizontal moulding
- Cut 1 – 3 9/32" x 3/16" – Small horizontal moulding
- Cut 2 – 3/16" x 13/32" – Vertical moulding



Step 5: Draw vertical lines across the FRONT piece, at $5/16$ " intervals, then, using a steel rule and a flat head screwdriver, score grooves into the wood.

Step 6: Fold a piece of sandpaper and sand along the grooves to remove the pencil marks and any untidy edges.

Step 7: Make a vertical pencil line down the centre of the LARGE HORIZONTAL MOULDING and $3/16$ " from either edge.

Step 8: Make a horizontal pencil line $1/4$ " from the top of the LARGE HORIZONTAL MOULDING



Step 9: Use a compass to draw an arch between the two outer pencil lines and beneath the horizontal pencil line. You will need to keep re-positioning the point of the compass, until the pencil falls between the marked lines.



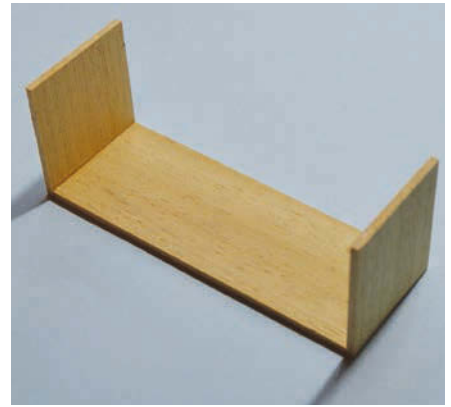
Step 10: Use a craft knife to score lines about $1/8$ " apart, up to the curved line, then carefully remove each section.

Step 11: Once all pieces are removed, sand by wrapping a small piece of sandpaper around your finger and running it back and forth across the arch.

Step 12: Glue the mouldings into place on the FRONT piece, starting with the LARGE HORIZONTAL MOULDING, followed by the VERTICAL MOULDINGS and finally the SMALL HORIZONTAL MOULDING.

Step 13: Use small clamps to hold in place while the glue dries.

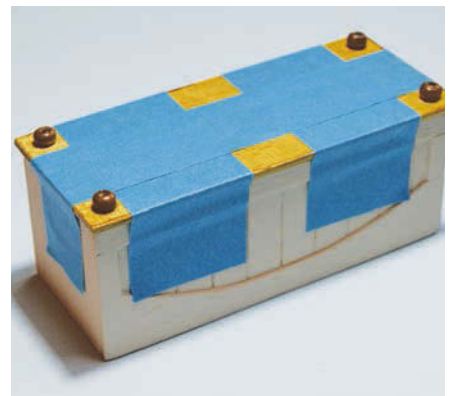
Step 14: Glue a SIDE piece to each outer edges of the BOTTOM piece.



Step 15: Next, glue the FRONT and BACK pieces into place.



Step 16: Paint the chest inside and out using cream coloured paint. Paint two coats, sanding in between each coat once the paint has fully dried.



Step 17: Glue the chest onto the BASE piece and use masking tape to hold it in place until the glue has set.

Step 18: Cut two strips of brown glove leather, 1 " long by $1/8$ " wide and glue one inch from either edge of the wrong side of the LID (the non-beveled side) and along the non-beveled long edge.



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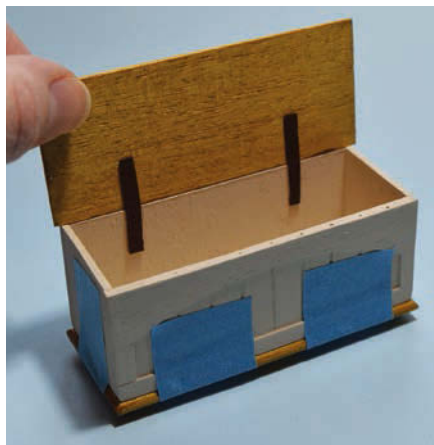
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Step 19: Apply glue to the backs of the leather strips and attach to the inside of the chest leaving a 1/16" overhang on either side.

Step 20: Close the lid of the chest so that it sits evenly on top of the chest and let the glued strips dry.

Step 21: Use a dark varnish and place the chest in your doll's house attic, filled with bric-a-brac as an old storage chest, or paint using pastel colours and distress the edges with sandpaper as a shabby chic chest for the entrance hall.



Julie showed us how to make an armoire and chest of drawers in the last two issues of DHW.



All the Wright stuff in the store

Jan Stuart fondly recalls the general stores of yesteryear in America, then lets Mary Ann and Grover Ledyard tell the story of their own general store as well as their own pieces

By Jan Stuart

PHOTOGRAPHY BY MICHAEL PUFF AND CONNIE SAUVE

Do you love the atmosphere of a big old general store, with its worn board floors and heavy oak counters and shelves of an earlier day, filled to the brim with so many good and memorable things of our American past? Then, for us, Mary Ann

and Grover Ledyard's General Store scene, done in twelfth scale, is a feast for the eyes. Enjoy with me this happily filled, three-dimensional cornucopia of American history at its nostalgic best (which is perhaps the best way to enjoy history). Within are seemingly all the good things of yesteryear, both needed and dreamt-over by early generations of families, beginning when going to town in a wagon was a big event!

Here, at some village crossroads, our pioneering ancestors traded their home-harvested goods for store-bought necessities like ammunition, sugar, beans, glass oil lamps, and most of the staples of log-cabin living, hunting, and trapping. Later, these same stores (and new ones, too) supplied the growing turn-of-the-century towns of our great-grandparents' day, adding more civilized things like factory-made boots, ribbons, and pocketknives with two blades (among other wonderful things)!

Bulk goods were still scooped and forked from wood barrels and lifted from wood crates, which existed right alongside a growing choice of bottled foods, tinned spices, peanut butter in tin buckets, and much, much more. Before long, even a rare crate of oranges, coconuts, or an iced barrel of oysters could show up at Christmas time and still be fresh! Right alongside were the perennial wood crack-

er box and pickle barrel; on the counter, the ever-present wheel of golden cheese; overhead the smoked hams, all presided over by the potbellied wood stove and checkerboard—so well remembered, we claim them as a “national memory!”

Finally, those same general stores struggled through the Great Depression, adding “groceries” like sliced bread, packaged butter in a paper box, and bananas on the stalk (while they carried our grandparents on credit until they could “do better”). The lucky ones survived and evolved into mom-and-pop grocery stores of our parents' day, adding among the original old counters and shelves new lunch meats (then, often called “cold cuts”) in a big, glass-fronted, white-enamelled meat case.

I was one of the lucky ones of my generation, for the general store I frequented and loved as a child (nickel in hand), creaky board floors and all, had such a history and continued on, still selling pop by the bottle from its big, red cooler and bread and chips from the old rack for my entire childhood and beyond. It's closed now, like most others, so to get my nostalgia “fix” I travel to whichever miniatures show Mary Ann and Grover will be doing next, where I'll find them listed as Wright Guide Miniatures (named after their family's earlier hometown newspaper, *The Wright Guide*). I've spent many



hours at their three tables over the years, absorbed in the happiest and fullest parts of a past I can partly imagine, partly remember. I began as a fledgling hobbyist when they began as dealers, meeting at a 1970s show in Kansas City, Missouri, when I had just \$50, saved from the family's grocery money, and spent it all on Wright Guide miniatures for my very first project—a reproduction 1910-era general store.

Over the years, I never stopped buying or loving Mary Ann and Grover's work, so my interview with this special couple (whom I count among the true pioneers of our hobby's "modern" years) is a joy to publish. As in every setting they create for their show tables, all is drawn from their own real-life, small-town, farm, and country experiences. Any times of hardship that our ancestors, grandparents, and parents experienced have been conveniently forgotten so that we are wrapped warm and secure in the best of our American past. Here, then, in their own words, are their stories and memories, and some sage advice for creating your own miniature general store.

Mary Ann's store memories

I have always enjoyed the old, peaceful way of life, when things were slow and easy going—when you knew the old-time grocer at Mason's Store in our town of Waldron, Mich., and he knew you. As a child, I had the chance to experience the old general stores where folks bought most of the needs for those days. The farm families grew most all of their foods and meats, but we did need other things from the store, which were sold from a barrel or in bulk.

The wooden floors would creak as you walked down the aisles, but everything



was neatly placed on each shelf, and the grocer or clerk always came to assist my mum with anything she might need.

Most of the time, we were the only family in the store, but occasionally a neighbour or friend would come by and visit for a while right there in the store.

They had just about everything you needed to set up housekeeping and more, from dynamite to horseshoe nails and fresh eggs to salves. You might see Pine Tar Soap and Fels Naptha Soap for scrubbing clothes on a washboard, tacks and hammers, sewing thread, pots and pans, mouse traps and beaver traps, canning supplies...everything! They kept the milk in glass jars, there in the same case as the meat, which had big glass

doors on it. My mum would buy the oilcloth by the yard for our kitchen table, from a rack like the one in our miniature store (oilcloth was similar to vinyl on a cotton mesh backing and was a durable table and shelf covering which wiped clean with a wet cloth; women sewed highchair and laundry basket covers and lined their husbands' lunch boxes with it, too).

It seems that all the old stores had a smell of their own. It must have been those wood floors stained with food spills, or paint spills, or even just "age." The past years of the old stores seem to still be fresh in my memory—it's too bad that we can't pass these thoughts, memories, and feelings along to the new generation. But, maybe we can, through the vignettes of years ago.

Grover's memories

They sold rope by the foot, some from a big roll of rope in the basement, which was pulled up through a hole in the floor, and a knot tied in the end so it wouldn't disappear downstairs between sales. I remember the seed racks, too; you would buy the seed by the scoop-full. And the nail bin—I liked to look at the different-

A timeless pursuit

Miniature general stores became a tremendously popular "first project," beginning in the 1970s when miniatures shops began to open across the country, because the more expensive Victorian furnishings were not needed to create a satisfying scene. Our older generation, then in their 60s and 70s, fondly remembered the general stores of their own childhoods, when all goodies—even Christmas gifts, in the form of cast-iron toys, books, and sleds—came from the general store, for no specialty shops existed in small towns. Their appeal, in miniatures, was nearly universal at the time. "Oh, I remember this!" was a common expression of our first "modern" miniaturists.

size nails while my dad would buy them by the pound. They were weighed in a hanging scale, then put in a paper sack for him.

Mary Ann's notes on creation

We have reproduced many general store things in miniature. Most of our research is done by looking at the antique itself, photos and antique books, and sometimes museums. Most of the labels are authentic; some of them we do get out of catalogues, too.

Most of the cardboard boxes we have in our personal collection and have reduced them down to be printed and assembled. It makes a good evening job. I believe we made about 150 different box items for the General Store alone, and we have still more at home we have not yet reproduced. If we must buy an original antique one, most run \$30 to \$50, depending on their condition. The Fun-to-Wash box was the highest priced antique box we bought—we paid \$150 for it! One box that is hard to make is the Buttermilk Carton. It is a tall, tapered cylinder and the glued edge is very small at the top; we need to clamp every one of them with two small clamps. Some items may look simple to make, but can surprise you when you go to put them together. Goofs do happen; this past



“Most of our research is done by looking at the antique itself, photos and antique books, and sometimes museums. Most of the labels are authentic; some of them we do get out of catalogues, too.”



summer, I had to throw away 40 little boxes because I scored them too deep along the fold lines.

Grover saws out and assembles most all of the wood furnishing pieces, and then I antique them and fill them with the bulk goods or other items. I don't think any of the wood items are hard to

make, as most of them are flat pieces to cut, and I make jigs for all my items. They're just time-consuming is all. If I had to choose something I would say is difficult, it would be the cigar boxes, as the pieces are very small and hard to hold onto. We use our antique, hand-fed Chandler and Price Printing Press



to print those and other wood boxes, as the modern offset press will not work on wood. We also have, over time, designed about 15 different kits and sold many throughout the years, but now most people like to have the item already assembled. Our printed seed rack started out years ago as a kit that we printed on cardboard first and then later printed on wood. Today, we have discontinued those and make them up ourselves from wood.

Of all the things we sell, the most are barrels, and we also come out with new products in the barrels! Grover gets them ready for our “assembly line,” then I fill them (we work on most big items together like that; we have always worked together planting a garden and growing crops, so when we got into this business,

it was no different). When I needed barrels for the miniature general store, the wooden ones needed so much work to prepare them; it worked better to design one and have it cast. It took us a while to figure out how to paint them to look like wood but, after many coats of paint, we acquired the “wood look” for them. An unusual one is the “broom barrel display,” a reproduction of a real one—the labels were taken from an antique book.

During the summer months, we slow down on our hours of work to maybe four or five hours a day, depending on our inventory. Most of our serious work is done in the winter months, with our workday starting at six in the morning and ending at ten in the evening. We can work as much as 15 hours a day on some

days. Our general store on our website offers over 1200 different items! We try hard to keep caught up on the website orders and also get ready for shows. We usually don't do special orders because they are very time-consuming, but we try to help our customers as much as we can with things bought and sold during the time period they are working in.

Grover's notes on minis

We try to make at least 50 of an item, and those can last for almost a year of shows and orders. But, if it doesn't, then we need to work them in again. I feel blessed to be able to enjoy my work every day that I am working on miniatures; I never get tired of my job. I like what I do because you can work on many projects



at one time: while something is drying, I can work on something else. I guess I don't have a favourite item, but if I did, I would pick the old-fashioned seed rack. I like it because it looks so nice when it is finished. I like the look of the tiered steps that the jars set on, and I like the green finish best of all, and the little pouch that the bags are in and the spoon for measuring the seeds. I like the little wooden boxes, too. They look nice when we get them done.

I always enjoy the vignettes that relate to our families and our past. Some people have come to us as they are making their grand- father's general store; they were told that we have a lot of the old boxes. They have an old photo of the store that they want to reproduce and we try to help

them with the period of time that they are doing.

Mary Ann on making a store

Plan on plenty of enjoyment, as you can put about anything into your store that pertains to the "old-time days." The General Store was one of the first vignettes I did, and through the years, I have updated it when we made new boxes and items to put in it. The only thing readers need to remember is to use "old-time" items—and also it helps to do a little antiquing of each item you use. That will give it an aged look. We use Ceramcoat brand acrylic paint; brown with a little black is good for antiquing. It is a thick water-based paint and works nicely for dry brushing it on. For

wood shelves and things, we use Minwax brand Special Walnut stain, as it gives an "old" look.

Your store will look better and more realistic if you go two or three boxes or cans deep on the shelves, as that is the way you see them in a real general store. But, if you can't spend the money, then arrange the bigger boxes in the back and small items in the front—that's okay, too. You can also print your labels and make your own boxes by using a piece of wood and gluing a label onto the front. It can save you money and still allow you to make a good general store and have fun. Farrow brand cans and bottles are very important; their shapes add a special look to your shelf. Pewter items are good to have for other things they sold in the general stores (paint them). And you can make oilcloth, too, by decaling half-inch-scale wallpaper with an appropriate pattern used for oilcloth. Soak it in water, then peel off the back, making it very thin. Glue it onto a small dowel or cylinder and place it on your rack.

We have a real, life-size general store display in our basement and we are now in the process of re-doing it and adding our latest boxes to the shelves and also making room for our vignettes so that they can be viewed by our miniature guests, who can also shop as well (by appointment only). We do like to keep busy and sometimes we bite off too much—Grover is farming my dad's 40-acre farm, too, and it makes lots of long hours. Most of our neighbours are farmers, too, and we also help each other. Our miniature work is a lot easier for me, but the farm life is a wonderful life that we have both enjoyed.

Grover's final notes

I know that God has blessed us. I believe that if anyone has the ambition, he will eventually acquire the skills that he needs. But we don't want to feel too "proud" because it is the people that make you what you are. We have slowed down somewhat, but we still enjoy the shows and the people that we have met throughout the years. We like to see people enjoying the hobby, see their projects that they have finished, and see that they are proud of their accomplishments. **DHW**

Likely Ladies meet to make and chat

Group tucks into tea and cake while making simple projects ranging from hats to plates

By Sandra Harding

This time it was Julie's turn to play host to a few ladies who get together occasionally just to enjoy each other's company. They also enjoy a nice cup of tea (or two), a slice of lemon cake made by the hostess and, of course, get to make a few things to add to their various doll's houses.

Talking houses, Julie showed us her latest projects which are beautiful little 1/48th scale buildings. These include a Tudor house, an old rectory, a Tudor pub and a cottage, nearly all furnished and detailed. Hope to show you them later in the year.

The ladies, Ellen, Jan, Paula, Sharon and Julie are all fast workers, so I am always prepared for them to get through at least three, if not

four little projects. This time they were going to make an oil lamp, decorate a hat, and then paint paper plates.

To make things easier I try to prepare the kits beforehand. I always have lots of stock items from the days when I was making things for Dollshouse.tv and, of course, from my 'Quick & Easy' tips for DHW.

The hats were white, ready-made hats, from a batch I bought from the pound shop. They are used to decorate cards and are flat-backed. All they needed was a few flowers, feathers, net, beads, ribbon and picot braid and they were ready to lay flat on a counter or table.

The oil lamps are a pretty bead, a clear push pin, a flat pin, and a couple of findings



from Tee Pee Crafts or similar. I got quite carried away with these when I started and ended up with at least ten. I bet you will too once you start.

The plates were easier than the ladies thought they would be, as only one of the them is a painter, the talented fantasy artist Sharon Hurst. It's easy to pick hers out from the batch (third row down). Furthermore we're delighted that Sharon has offered to give us a simple painting lesson on our next get-together, and we can't wait.

The plates are actually paper and the black outline

and painting is all done using felt tip pens. They are finished off with a quick coat of clear nail varnish and, once dry, look great on the wall or in a shop display. The rose pieces in the photograph are pieces of a paper napkin, stuck on the plate and then cut out and varnished. These were just added as extras as the ladies had already created their plates.

Hope you have as much fun with these as we did. Look out for our works of art in a few months' time. That might be a difficult one, but luckily I am not in charge. **DHW**

How first house took over Louise's life

From a Justin Bieber bedroom to an old-fashioned living room Louise Homer is very happy with the way her first house has turned out

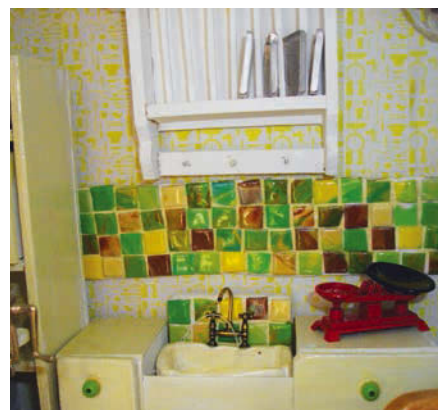
By Sandra Harding

Louise Homer had always wanted a doll's house but life, children and various hobbies always seemed to get in the way of fulfilling this desire.

However, a couple of years ago she happened to see a handmade house for sale in a charity shop for the bargain price of £12.99 and she just couldn't resist. Although the inside was painted cerise, bright blue and white, Louise

quickly covered it in three coats of white before planning what to do with it.

As a newcomer to doll's houses the first thing she did was to start looking at lovely pieces to buy, and the first thing she wanted was a beautiful mahogany table and chairs for £176. After that initial shock at the cost (which we have all experienced at one time or many) she decided to try to make as much as she could herself. Then began the learning



curve which, as we all know, never ends.

Louise began searching online for tutorials and found one for a bed, which she made successfully. This was followed by shelves, cupboards, chairs, and even a sink in the kitchen complete with plug-hole and plug. The pretty spotty cups and plates were also made by Louise



from Fimo, although she does say they were very fiddly to do.

A Justin Bieber theme was chosen for the teenager's bedroom as eldest daughter Lucy is a great fan, and everything in here was made by Louise - apart from the tops and shoes. In the master bedroom daughter Sophie made the cross on the mantel and the cosy, girly sort of room was especially created by Louise to include her favourite book – the Bear Grylls autobiography.

In the colourful kitchen is the sink mentioned earlier. The delightful tiles were made from mixing different coloured Fimo, which was then cut into 1cm squares and the tiles glued onto perspex. These were then grouted and glued onto the walls. The wall units were made from



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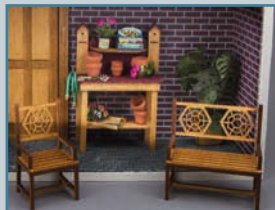
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old tables, all altered to make shelves and drawers.

In the living room the dresser is in fact an old thimble holder, and Louise loves the old-fashioned look she has created. The bathroom is orange, just because she likes it.

Louise's work space is a lovely summer house in her garden, where there is no interference, just peace and quiet. It wasn't always like that, and the art room she has created is to remind her of the days before she had the summer-house. Being unable to resist anything



with strawberries on, she painted them on the clock, chair, sewing table and pencil holder. The gargoyle on the wall was made by her mother Liz. They are considered good luck charms and Liz wanted to make something for the house, so made four. The other three are in other houses.

Louise admits that when she started, she didn't realise how this hobby can take over your life. But now she says, she much prefers playing with her mini houses to her real one. **DHW**

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a clasp for a MINI BAG

A fancy clutch or bag is fun to make in miniature thanks to this simple and creative tutorial. With a few supplies you can make something great!

By T. A. Gozeski

Handbags today are made of a large variety of materials and the creative designs range from the elegant to the whimsical. This results in an endless array of choices for the fashion conscious.

Here are some of my ideas for miniature couture handbags using metal jewellery findings; box clasps, metal chains, jump rings, and also ribbon, beads, and odds and ends. Your

own imagination will no doubt expand on my own. Enjoy!

Step 1: Prepare your individual box clasp set by removing the pinch plate first. On each of the separate pieces, remove any unwanted loops with your jewelry clippers. Hold each individual piece in one hand, and with the other, close the clipping tool flush where you want it. Clamp firmly and bend the unwanted section back and forth until it releases. Smooth any rough

edges with your metal file (or hand motor tool with smoothing attachment). I then like to glue the pinch plate back in place, to keep stationary. You may want to keep removed jump rings for future use.

Step 2: Decide whether you would like to paint it or add patina. To just add patina, you simply brush on the colour wanted and then gently swipe or pat the painted area with a balled up tissue. How lightly you do dab it up will determine how dense the patina will be. Let dry.

Step 3: Add any embellishments you like with a touch of craft glue. I find that using a toothpick to add a tiny bit where you want it is the easiest way. Let dry.

Step 4: If adding any drops to bottom loops, use tiny jump rings. Hold one opening end of the ring with pliers, grasp the other opening end with a second pair of pliers, and gently bend one end towards you and one end away, only enough of an opening to attach drop and add to loop. Once added, use both pliers again to place



YOU'LL need

- Choice(s) of metal box clasps and metal jump rings in same colour of metal if attaching chain
- Choice(s) of narrow metal chain, ribbon, or braid for straps
- Jewellery clippers
- Pliers
- Metal file or hand motor tool
- Craft glue that dries clear
- Craft paint(s) and craft varnish (optional)
- Paint brush
- Embellishments (optional): tiny beads, cabs, ribbon, charms, etc.
- Toothpick





TIP: Craft paints are inexpensive and come in so many colours and finishes. They come in opaque, gloss or matte finish, and my very favourite, metallics. I love them because they have a pearly look. And although optional, I also like to add a final coat of craft varnish to protect the piece. You can use matte for a softer or aged look, or use gloss for a brighter, shiny look.



through the purse loop and gently bend back to form a closed ring.

Step 5: When adding ribbon or braid, cut the desired length, and add just a touch of glue to the ends. This will prevent any fraying. Let dry.

Glue one end of the ribbon to the one side of your box

purse. Let dry.

Once dry, glue the other end to the other side of your box purse and let it dry.

When adding chain, cut the desired length with your clippers. You can attach jump rings to the bag for loops or glue them where you would like them to be and let them dry. **DHW**

READER'S TIP

1960s Sunburst clock

Anne Cunningham shares her idea of making an easy clock



You'll need

- Cocktail sticks cut to required size (12)
- Small piece foam board
- Small shallow bottle cap
- Ball headed pins (12)
- Black paint
- Gold paint
- Card

● Cut a piece of foam board to required size (to fit snugly into the bottle cap) leaving enough foam board at the back to take cocktail sticks and pins.

● Evenly place the cocktail sticks around the foam board, glue the bottle cap onto the front, and paint it all black. Let it dry.

● Paint the pins gold, or a colour of choice, and let them dry.

● Attach pins between cocktail sticks.

● Cut out two "hands", paint gold and attach to the face of the clock.





Off the hook miniatures

April Haswell's miniature crocheted toy animals and costumes add a creative fresh twist to an age-old art form

By Mary Holden

April Haswell can be sure of one thing when she purchases embroidery thread for the miniature animals she crochets: she'll get cautionary advice from the salesperson.

"Every time I go in to buy Mettler #60 cotton, I am always told that the thread I am looking at is very fine," says April. Each time she kindly acknowledges the warning and then shows the well-intentioned assistant what she does with the thread. The reaction is pretty much always the same, as well. A look that says "You are crazy!"

Disbelief is common in the world of miniatures. If you were to have told April 40 years ago that she would be making miniature crocheted animals as she ventured into the 21st century, she probably never would have believed it.

"I became interested in the hobby

about 40 years ago when visiting one of my husband's aunts. She had a doll's house and I was fascinated by the quality of the items she had in it. I didn't know that such a world existed," says April, now an IGMA Artisan and president of the Tampa Bay Miniature Enthusiasts, a NAME club.

After pouring over her aunt's magazines, she began to dream of creating her own miniature world—one that would be

far different than the shoe box she had filled with people and furniture from the Sears catalog when she was a little girl.

Later her husband would buy her a doll's house kit, which she completed—but like many miniaturists, April found room boxes to be more practical when it came to space.

One of the styles April liked to recreate included elegant table settings with fine china and crystal atop crocheted tablecloths, but she was unhappy with the selection of the textiles she found. "Most tablecloths were just full-size doilies thrown over the table and not to scale," she explains. "Being an avid crocheter, I decided to try to make my own. I bought some hooks and tatting thread and started experimenting. I got smaller and smaller hooks, switched to machine embroidery threads and, as they say, the rest is history."

ABOVE: A tiny dolly sleeping in a bed.

BELOW LEFT: A playful family of sock monkeys in vests and army gear.

BELOW: A family of mini teddy bears and a micro sock monkey. "What is more endearing than a doll sitting on a bed or a teddy left on a rocker?" says April. Many of her pieces are made to be toys for doll's house children. Wooden toys are made by David Krupick.

BELOW RIGHT: A Christmas couple for December.





ABOVE AND ABOVE RIGHT: April makes wonderful treasures with the thinnest threads and smallest hooks. Bears, bunnies, and little people are in full outfits.

LEFT: April crocheted a bridal gown that took nearly a year to complete. The gown has a 6" train and contains over 100 seed pearls.

BELOW: This little clown is pulling his friends in a wagon.



April soon found out that she could crochet just about anything in miniature.

"I wanted a little bunny for a doll I had dressed in a bunny sleeper, so I crocheted it. I had so much fun making it, I then made a teddy bear and a little dolly."

The items became so popular, says April, that she decided to concentrate on making them and today her Etsy shop and Facebook page are filled with all types of hand-crocheted animals and dolls which sport separate crocheted outfits. She also crochets costumes and accessories for doll's house dolls and is currently working with doll makers Laura Collum and Lee Silverstein and selling pieces through IGMA's Gallery of the Guild.

April's mother, who dressed 18-inch dolls with her own crocheted costumes, was amazed to see what her daughter could create with the same medium she used. April's first room box, which contained a bedspread, tablecloth, and lamp shade she crocheted, as well as furniture she made, were among her mother's

prized possessions.

The rest of the family is pretty smitten, too. Her daughters are currently waiting for their sock monkeys dressed in camo and April's grandsons are looking forward to getting their puppy dressed in the colours of the University of Florida and Florida State University, colleges in April's home state.

They may have to wait longer than anticipated, though, as April has a lot of ideas she wants to develop over the next year. In addition to new crocheted critters and dolls, she has doll dress patterns from the early fifties that she plans to adapt to twelfth scale porcelain dolls she's accumulated.

"The fifties was a post war era and I think women were looking for something special to grace a room in their house. They wanted to create something beautiful after all the pain and suffering of the war years. I am hoping I can re-create these special dolls," says April.

And when she does start the project, it won't be from a pattern. "I just try

to picture the toy in my mind," explains April of her process. And it will more than likely be from the comfort of her couch with her trusty 0.4mm crochet hook within reach.

"I usually sit with my feet propped up and relaxed," says April. She does have an office with a computer, bins of thread, pompoms and fibre fill, and bookshelves of old crochet patterns, miniatures magazines, and paper doll books, but being able to design and create from her station of choice is all part of the fun. "The best part is that miniatures are portable. I can travel anywhere with hooks and thread in my purse. I can slip several finished pieces into an Altoids Smalls tin and simply slide it into my jeans' pocket."

From wherever she creates, April is certain to get lost in her work, one of her favourite parts of the trade. "I love miniatures because you can create a world to get lost in, a fantasy world where there is harmony. A world where my little dolls, sock monkeys, and teddy bears hopefully bring joy and a smile to someone's face."

We're smiling just thinking about it. **DHW**

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ERA PEARCE

"This Pomegranate is created in the traditional Bonsai root-over-rock planting style," says Era Pearce. "In the 1970s, I took classes in life size Bonsai from the late John Naka, a Master in the art of Bonsai. Last year, I decided to try creating Bonsai in twelfth scale, following traditional Japanese bonsai standards. This year, I will continue to research and add new varieties of flowers and plants (particularly Bonsai) to my present line up."

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SUE VEEDER

Sue Veeder, IGMA Fellow, offered a Friday morning class to paint a cat. "Each student received a hand-sculpted, Super Sculpey cat. Class participants learned fine painting details, including the eyes and paw pads. I also taught a technique for adding a longer fur look to the cat. They each adopted a cat and gave it the personality it was asking for, so it was a lot of fun."



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PHYLLIS NISHIMORI

"The Three Bears B&B is the fifth quarter-scale kit in the Fairy Land series," says Phyllis Nishimori, Grandt Line Products. "It was inspired by The Tony Brice Picture Book, which mum read when we were growing up. It has great illustrations and all my favourite stories. I'd like to continue on with the fairy tales. Next on the list is the Three Pigs Builders Emporium."



DEB LAUE

"My inspiration for the garden patio kits came through an on-line chat group," says Deb Laue, Dragonfly International. "The theme was gardening and we did flower kits and gift exchanges throughout the year. The patio chairs and gardening bench were designed to display my projects. I hope to do more twelfth scale furniture kits—girl's bedroom, boy's bedroom, and additional toy kits to furnish the rooms."

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JUDITH ORR

"The Fairy Queen is an original porcelain sculpture in a silk gown dyed to my specifications," Judith Orr says. "Her gown and crown are covered in Swarovski Crystals with fine Crystal Points from Tibet. The fairy wings were made in England. More Crystal Points and Amethyst pieces were used for the Throne. Inspiration came from fantasy creations in Art books, Children's Literature and Fairy films."



LAURA CRAIN

"This shabby chic cabinet is full of flowering plants and flower arrangements—including potted hydrangeas, roses and violets," Laura Crain says. "I just love flowers and gardening. I am working on more floral painting and faux finishes on mini furniture. I also want to make more elaborate floral arrangements."

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CYNTHIA HOWE

"Dutch Baby House in quarter-inch scale." Exhibitor Cynthia Howe of Santa Maria, CA shares, "This 17-inch Dutch Baby House was made by Bespaq exclusively for Cynthia Howe Miniatures. All furnishings are from my new quarter-scale kits. The lighting includes several of my new 3D printed quarter-inch scale lamps."

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JOHANNES LANDMAN

"Windfalls, after Sophie Gengembre Anderson" (mid-1800s) on a handcrafted easel of Western Yew wood by IGMA Artisan Johannes Landman, Canada. "Like any artist, I need a certain trigger to do a painting--whether it is composition, contrast, theme, or (in this case) colour combination. I aspire to design new frames for my paintings and hope to create new works of art that might surpass previous pieces."



BRIAN & KATHY TEPPER

Teppers - From Brian (Rainbow Hand) & Kathy Tepper: "The focus of this grouping is Brian's painting 'Snowy Mountain Pass'. Our kid leather chairs are accessorised by Paris Renfro's little stacking bookcase on the wall and small cube table. Two faux stainless steel cases hold an Ammonite and a hefty chunk of wood. The wood-turnings are by various fine turners. Our new ideas for 2015 are coming up Contemporary!"



BRUCE AND JUDY STEINKE

"We are quarter-scale specialists," explain Bruce and Judy Steinke, BJ Miniatures. "Our Miss Elvira structure for Halloween has been very popular. Miss Elvira needed a way to get to the Potion Store. So, up popped the Witch Wagon kit. It comes completely furnished. Our main goal is always to have fun and create quality items at reasonable prices that others have fun with and enjoy."



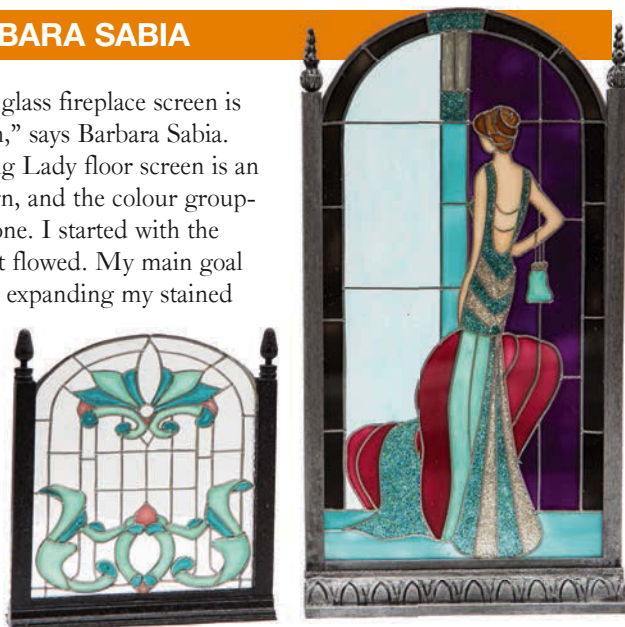
CRISTINA NORIEGA

"This is a reproduction of Marie Antoinette's bed in the Palace of Versailles," says IGMA Artisan Cristina Noriega, Spain. "The reproduction of her portrait (Meytens, c.1767-1768) is by Chiqui Cueto, Spain. I also made the replica of Madame Du Barry's commode. My inspiration was a research trip to Paris to visit its palaces, Versailles, and the Louve Museum."



RUTH STEWART

"The stained glass fireplace screen is a fresh design," says Barbara Sabia. "The Standing Lady floor screen is an original design, and the colour grouping is a new one. I started with the aqua, and rest flowed. My main goal is to continue expanding my stained glass lighting selection."



Ruth Stewart of Stewart Dollhouse Creations, offered a morning of fun making Sliceable Pumpkin Cakes. "Students made pumpkin vines, leaves, and learned some basic cake decorating," Ruth says. "I had a wonderful time with friends--teaching and learning from them."

Everyone did a fabulous job making cakes, and my class was an utter joy to teach."

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small accomplishments

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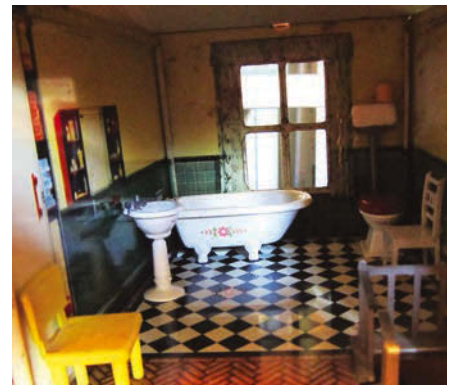
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We want to feature readers' projects every issue. So whether you've dressed a doll or decorated a mansion, send us the photos. Don't be shy. Email richard@ashdown.co.uk with Small Accomplishments in the subject line. Or send photos to Small Accomplishments, Dolls House World, PO Box 2258 PULBOROUGH RH20 9BA Great Britain



Poppy's houses range from tin to sugar

We have featured some of Poppy Higgin's diverse collection before, and here are a few more of her fascinating houses for you to see



By Sandra Harding

Droford – Tinplate

This little tin house is such a delight, as it is a 1/24th scale house by Mettoy made in the 1950s with all outside and inside decorations lithographed.

It was given to Poppy by friend Barbara, and in honour of that one of the two ladies living here is called Barbara. The other lady is her friend, Janet, and by the stern look on their faces it is obvious that they don't like their photograph been taken, so I must apologise for that.





In the kitchen there are a painted plate rack, kitchen tools, a clock and an ironing board, plus shelf and curtains. The 'real' furniture kitchen set appears to be either original Mettoy or Kleeware. In the child's bedroom there are many soldiers painted on the walls and a painted fire with a fire guard. Even the cupboards and carpet are lithographed on.

The bathroom suite is fairly modern but even in the smallest room there is a bathroom cabinet, full of bathroom things, with more lithograph curtains and carpet. In the bedroom there is a fire, clock picture and another carpet, plus more modern furniture.

The sitting room has a blazing fire with a shelf above with clock and picture. The two ladies gaze out at us, with that look on their face saying "is this a dream we are in or are we really here in this strange tin house". They know there is the original car in the garage, but even that is made of tin, so they can't escape, and anyway, neither of them can drive. Inside the garage by the way, there is



a workbench and many tools (all lithograph). The ladies both love gardening but the painted flowers and things outside are stuck firmly on the tin, so have no perfume.

Swan's Nest

This is another unusual house as it is part-open, and the style rather reminds me of Caroline's Home. It is mostly all open plan and you can see from one room into another, which makes it different. I could not find the maker of this little gem, but if you recognise it, please let me know. I do, however, recognise the windows and door as Hobbies, and maybe this was a homemade house for

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These couple of little oddities could simply not be left out of the picture, as it is unlikely I will ever acknowledge the fact that I ever wrote about them, and I bet I never will again.

The icing sugar house was from the top of Poppy's seventieth birthday cake which, knowing Poppy, does not surprise me. However, the knitted houses, which include furniture inside (yes, really) leaves me wondering if there is nothing this lady will not do for a doll's house, whatever it's made of. Mind you, I have seen one made completely out of perspex, but I am not telling her where it is. She has enough ideas of her own. [DHW](#)



a little one who loved swans. There are even swans above the internal doorways.

Poppy has turned this into a student's house, with a mixture of young people from the 50s 60s, and even the 70s I think. The rooms are communal, even down to the bathroom, which means the students must be very good friends indeed.

The furniture throughout is an interesting mixture, as I spotted some Barton, Kleeware, homemade sofas, Playmobil bunk beds, 1970's wooden furniture and Mettoy beds.

The students are either rubber or plastic and one of the girls is definitely dressed for a night out, wearing a pretty dress and 1980's glitter platform boots. Another girl is coily hiding on the balcony, which has sliding doors leading into another bedroom.

Knitted and icing sugar house

The name of this house is not something I ever thought I would be saying out loud, and certainly not in public, but can you see what Poppy has forced me into.

Mary turns to dolls after police force

Welcome return of talented doll maker who loves the Edwardian period, but is nodding towards the modern

By Sandra Harding

Mary Williams first started making her lovely dolls more than fifteen years ago after falling in love with some of those she saw for sale at doll's house fairs.

Then, after retiring from her 'real work' as a police officer, which she did for thirty years, she decided to turn her doll making into a business.

She became a regular exhibitor at Miniatura and Thame doll's house fairs, but had to take a break of 2-3 years for family reasons. We were delighted to learn that Mary has started making again and, keeping up with modern trends, she now sells only on her website.

The dolls are made from porcelain slip using commercial moulds from the USA.



They are then cleaned and fired in the kiln which is a painstaking and time-consuming process. After firing, they are painted with china paints and fired again in the kiln, with the process being repeated several times. Mary also uses kits from the late, great Marcia Backstrom, as well as resin Mini Doll Kits, and finds it nice to have a change of medium occasionally.

Inspiration comes from her

huge collection of costume books, the occasional old painting or television series. Mary also loves just browsing antique stalls for lace and fabrics and admits to having a huge stash in her workshop.

Her favourite era is Edwardian as the costumes were so feminine during that period, but this is closely followed by Art Deco.

In the last couple of years, Mary has noticed that people



by producing doll-making kits which are available on her website. There are also several tutorials available including How to Dress a Georgian Doll, A Flapper Dress, and How to Dress a Gothic Style Mannequin.

Mary has regular customers from as far afield as Australia and Brazil as well, of course, as many closer to home in the UK.

To see more of Mary's work take a look at her website: www.dollshousedolls.co.uk **DHW**

are leaning towards a more modern look in their houses so she is planning a range of the 'modern miss'. She has also started catering for the budding DIYers amongst us

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construct a GRAND ENTRY



In the final part of Jo's set-by-step tutorial to create a grand entrance, she turns her attention to the electrics and trim. There's lots to learn from even if you don't make the entrance

By Jo Bevilacqua

This tutorial is a continuation from Jo's step-by-step creation of a twelfth scale framed entrance way. Part one of this tutorial was in DHW281, part two was in DHW282 and part three was in DHW283. This is the final tutorial for this project. If you have been following along, you now have your structure built with the electricity started.

YOU'LL need

- Supplies from previous steps
- Wax paper
- Scrap strip wood
- Card stock
- Scissors
- Clamps
- Brown primer
- Liquid electrical tape
- Permanent marker
- Solder gun and solder
- Flux
- Heavy nail file
- Screwdriver Phillips
- 4 small screws to attach terminal blocks, 2 opposite ends only
- 4 spade connectors #CirKit Concepts
- 1/2" x 1/2" door beam (for above the back side of the doors-door unit width)
- Mulch for flowerbeds

Now it is time to finish up this project! Let's start with a little dry fitting.

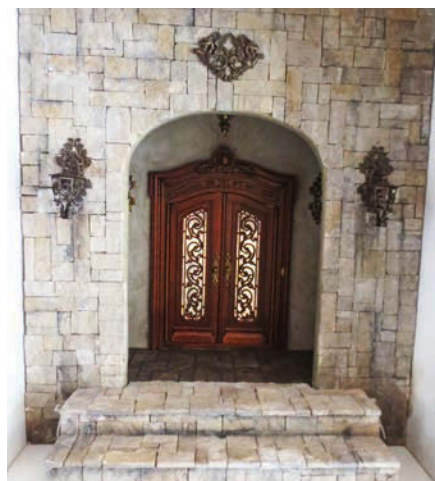
Step 1: Dry fit the wall in place adding the steps to see if there are any problems at this point.

Installing the wall-electrical



Step 1: Drill 3 holes on each side of the back wall, on each side under the alcove floor (unless you already have done this step). One set will be for the front lanterns on the arch wall, another set will be for the landscape lights, and if you added two more extension outlets in the alcove then you will drill the 3rd hole per side in the back.

Step 2: Begin to dry fit the entire box only gluing the door at this time. This is to make sure everything fits well before gluing, you don't want to have to take it apart to adjust it once glue is added.



Step 3: Thread the alcove extension wires in one of the holes, one on each side and leave the alcove floor laying in the front. Do not install the alcove floor just yet.

Step 4: Insert the arch wall only partially, have help in doing this, be careful not to touch the front lanterns. Lean the top away from the box opening and insert the lower part inward into the box.

Step 5: The wires of the landscape lights need to go under the loose alcove floor, thread into the holes in the back on both sides. Then lay the alcove floor over them.

Step 6: The last wires to be threaded through are the lantern wires from the arch wall. Thread them into the last hole on both sides. They will have to be extended on the back side later.



Step 7: Add wood glue to the tops of the stays for the alcove floor and set in the floor.

Step 8: Gently pull all 3 wires taut as you set the alcove floor in place.

Step 9: Add wood glue to the top stays facing you and the front edge of the alcove floor, left and right. Then add glue on the lower stays fronts. Avoid the notched area where the lantern wires will pass unless the wires are in a channel.



Step 10: Gently pull the lantern wires back as you line up the front arch wall, inserting the bottom of the arch wall up to the stays in the bottom of the box. Then slowly push the wall upward until it touches the top stays. Lay the box on its back, let the front wall dry.

Step 11: We will dry fit the 2-sided mirrors now. Use blue tape to secure them into the slots on the stone wall sides. This will space the stone arch wall to dry centred.

Adding the arch pieces

Step 1: While the box is on its back, dry fit the arch pieces using blue tape. Begin with the arch and add the side columns using blue tape to hold the sides in place. You want to see where the centre will be and this is the step to take before you install them.

Step 2: When the 3 pieces are fitting, add the bases to the bottom of each column. This takes time; so do NOT hurry with this procedure. You will not be installing the bases, this is only to see how they will balance the arch.

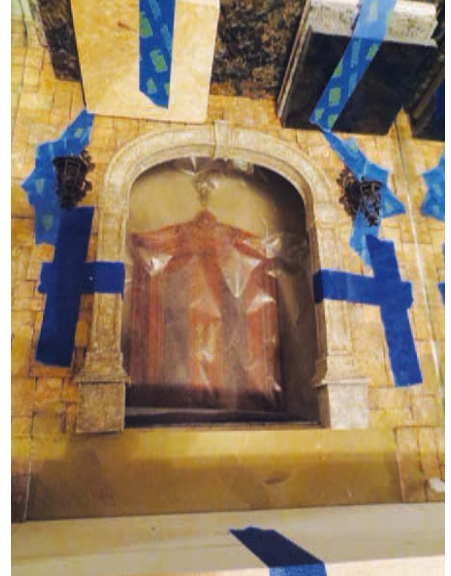
Step 3: If the bases fit too tightly, grind both bases down on very coarse sand paper to get it ripped down to fit loosely so it won't bow the archway pieces. Keep the bases level to one another. It is important that your arch is level!

Step 4: When the archway fits well with the bases then put a piece of wax paper over the entire front of your alcove wall to protect it. Use scrap strips of wood to make up the difference on the columns inside. Use craft glue on the strips to make them fit level.

Step 5: Use tub and tile caulking to fill it the rest and set it in place using the blue tape to secure it.



Step 6: When all 3 pieces are glued in place, check periodically on the line up as it is setting. Glue the embellishment centred over the arch. Use blue tape to perimeter the setting. Keep in mind that the frame hides most of the wall, so put it close to the arch centre. Do not glue the bases.



The front subfloor and mirrors

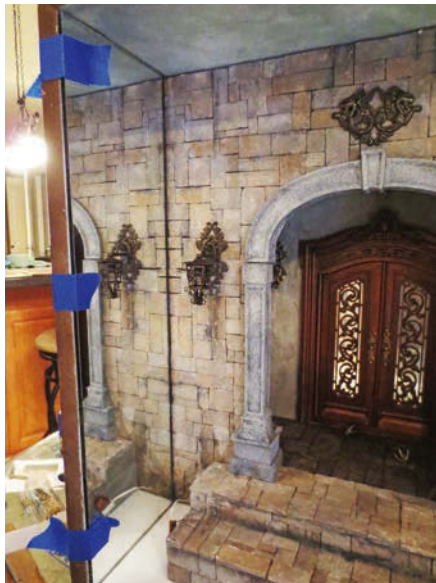
Step 1: Dry fit the front subfloor to be sure it fits and then remove. Add wood glue to the bottom of the subfloor risers and slide it into place, make sure everything is all the way back, you don't want the wall and the front subfloor holding off the frame!

Step 2: Let it set up, then dry fit the steps, adjustments can be made now. Remove the steps until later.

Installing the mirrors



Step 1: Lay the box on it's top on a towel to protect the finish of the box. Dry fit the mirrors, taking them out as you check the fit. **BE SURE TO STAY OFF THE LANTERNS, THEY WILL BE IN THE WAY.** If you need to cut or sand the stone so the mirror fits better, use a box cutter to knock off any stone in the way and then use the artificial nail file to file it smooth so the mirror will fit. Blow away the dust. Add silicone to the wall in dots.



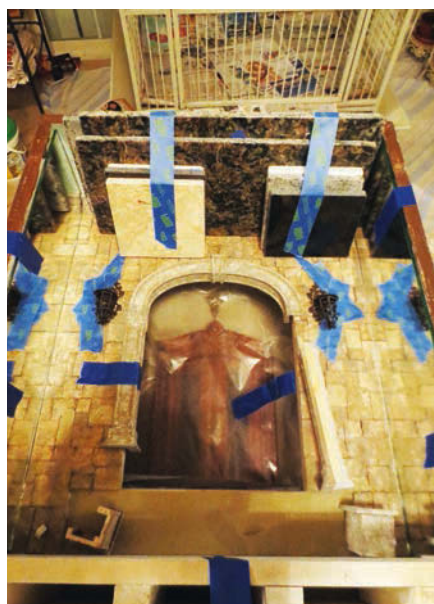
Step 2: Carefully insert the mirror all the way in. Slide it all the way back by pushing then press the mirror to the wall tightly. Use blue tape to hold it in place. Repeat on the other side and let it set up overnight.

Step 3: I placed a thin shim of balsa wood under the gap at the bottom of the mirror, the area that will almost touch the front subfloor, so when it is turned right side up the mirrors wont drop.

Installing the top trims

Step 1: Lay the box on it's back. Use the small spacers to hold off the top balsa wood ceiling strip. Fit the 2 spacers until it's level and glue it in place with craft glue. This will extend the balsa trim further outward so it will show up above the detailed UM28 trim piece.

Step 2: Get the measurement of the width of the top and cut the balsa wood the correct length to fit into the top of the box. When that measurement is correct, cut the UM28 trim and make sure they both dry fit in place at the top of the box.



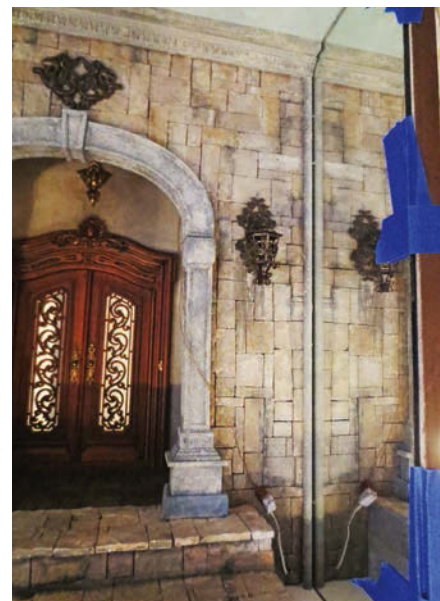
Step 3: Glue the balsa strip in, then glue the UM28 trim in just under the balsa trim.

Step 4: You may have to weigh these trims down to fit properly, I used stacked granite tiles and blue taped them to the sides of the box to protect them from falling onto the lanterns.

Step 5: Get the measurement for the half round. It should fit to the ceiling of the box to the front subfloor. If it is short of fitting in, move it to the ceiling of the box. The landscape bed will hide this trim.

Step 6: Glue the steps in using wood glue. Let them set up.

Step 7: Glue the stones held aside to lay across the threshold area between the step and alcove vinyl floor.



Fitting the bases and trim



Step 1: When the archway has set up, flip the box upright and dry fit the bases on both sides under the columns. If you need to add strip wood to support the fit, do so as you did with the columns.

Step 2: The bases should be loose enough to fit in level. You may have to cut the stone out to make the bases fit level.

Step 3: Add any strip wood inside the base to make it fit onto the stonewall evenly as you did with the columns. Glue in place using the tub and tile caulk.





Step 4: When the bases are dry, mitre the floor trim around the base beginning by using a piece of card stock. Insert the card stock to the back side of the stone wall and mark on the card stock where the base stops on it.

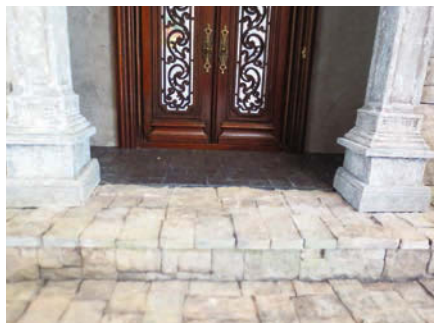
Step 5: When you transfer that line to the floor trim cut the end that will touch the stonewall and make a pencil line of the mitre angle you will be cutting. You will not glue any of these pieces until both sides are all pre cut. There will be adjustments to make after they are finished.



Step 6: The second piece will be the front piece, so use card stock to measure that width, Cut the one end of the floor trim in the correct angle then make a mark from the inside of the mitre to the end where the card stock mark is. Mark the angle of the needed mitre on the top of the trim and cut it off.



Step 7: The inside arch pieces have flat backs (inside the alcove) so make the needed mitre first that will fit into the front piece corner mitre. Then mark the inside of the trim where the base ends. Cut it off straight. Test fit the 3 pieces on each base.



Step 8: Once the 2 bases are cut, check if they are level. If there is a difference in the floor from stone to the vinyl alcove floor sand the bottom of the floor trim until it is level. When you have them level press until they hold and let dry. Repeat on the other side.

Landscape beds

Step 1: Cut foam core (½ thick) into two pieces for each side (4 pieces total). They will be glued together in pairs and should insert easily on each side of the steps.

Step 2: Dry fit them into the sides first then use the glue gun to glue them together up to the edges. Clamp all around to prevent the edges from curling up.

Step 3: Once the landscape foam core pieces are set, dry fit again on each side of the steps. Use the box cutter to make cuts to trim them if needed.

Step 4: Angle cut from the top to the bottom and fronts, angling towards the steps on each side then facing ends of the landscape beds.

Step 5: When the desired shape is achieved, spray 2 coats with brown primer paint. This dries much faster and does not get the foam core wet.

Step 6: Dry fit again into the sides of the steps. Pencil in or use a white marker to mark how far to apply mulch on the beds. Avoid the sides (against the mirrors). The mulch should roll over the front and sides of the step where the side is showing.

Step 7: Spread craft glue over the areas of the top and front sides, roll in the mulch material. Let dry and trim off edges before dry fitting again with scissors. These beds will remain loose.



Step 7: A stain can be applied over the mulch to make the mulch darker. Use the same instructions as on the stucco, use brown and black to make this stain. When dry, install landscape lanterns and add a plug on the end and install.



Step 8: Notch out the back of the foam core when you see where the extension plug will bump into it. This will be an alcove for the plug and outlet to fit in when the landscape bed is pushed in. Never glue the beds in place, leave them loose for maintenance.

Front step pathway

Step 1: Remove the landscape beds. Add a brown paint to surround the areas that the beds will set into and all along the front. I used a wash of avocado, brown, and black.



Step 2: Begin pre-laying the stone along the front of the first step. Dry lay them first then once placed, glue them down using craft glue. Moss can also be added.

Electrification hook up

Step 1: When the box is completed you are ready to extend wires that are too short and hook up the daylight and night lighting options. I used 2 terminal blocks and 2

clicker cords so that my students could turn on day light from night lighting separately.

Step 2: Using strip wood that is stained or painted to match the door, cut and fit it around the back of the doors. This is to keep the light from coming through.

I used the outside door trim that came with the door unit to block off the cracks and seal the door. I cut the trim with my hand mitre cutter and fit a strip over the middle of the doors, 2 pieces above the doors, and 2 on each side of the doors using a glue gun. Additional lighting was added by using a block of wood 1/2" x 1/2" the width of the door unit (beam to install over the door in the back).

Step 3: This 3 bright light led strip was glued with craft glue to the beam and then the beam can be glue gunned (wood to wood) into place over the door. You want it to be really close to the doors so after sealing, the doors first.

NOTE: When using the glue gun on the door finish the hot glue sets quickly.



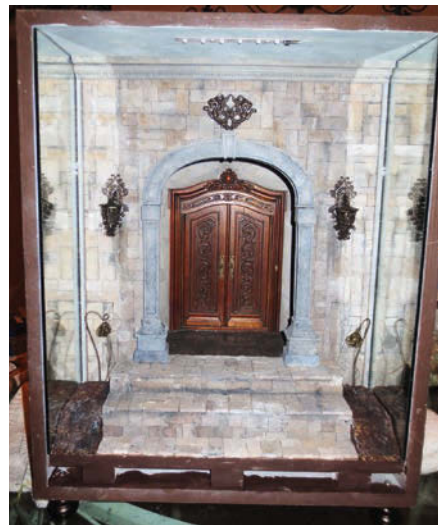
Step 4: Dry fit to see how far down you can move the light block to come on the night light option. Mark the area with blue tape so you know where to install the beam if you use this option.

Step 5: Screw in the 2 terminal blocks at the bottom of the back of the box (under the door). I used a screw on each opposite end, only 2 each.

Step 6: You will need to have 4 spade connectors at the end to insert the wires into each one to install into the terminal block.

TIP: When extending wires, I use doll's house wire by CirKit Concepts. Attach the wires together after splitting the negative/positive, solder the wires, tape over individually with electrical tape then hold those together with tiny strips of masking tape.

This will keep the connections separate. Also, if you use liquid electrical tape over the tintured reconnected wires, this will hold the electrical tape more secure. I tab the electrical tape sticky side to sticky side, not wrapping it. It will hold better, but makes it more like a tab. Then trim off the excess. Add tiny sections of masking tape that's cut narrow to contain the 2 leads together for each set.



Club exhibits at Botanical Gardens

West Glamorgan Dolls House Club will be exhibiting at The National Botanical Gardens of Wales (Llanarthney) on May 28, 29 and 30 from 10am to 4pm. The exhibition will be located inside Principality House Conference Centre, an impressive building set within the grounds.

An amazing variety of doll's houses, roo boxes and miniatures will be on display together with items for sale. Monies raised via raffles and donations will be given to a local charity.

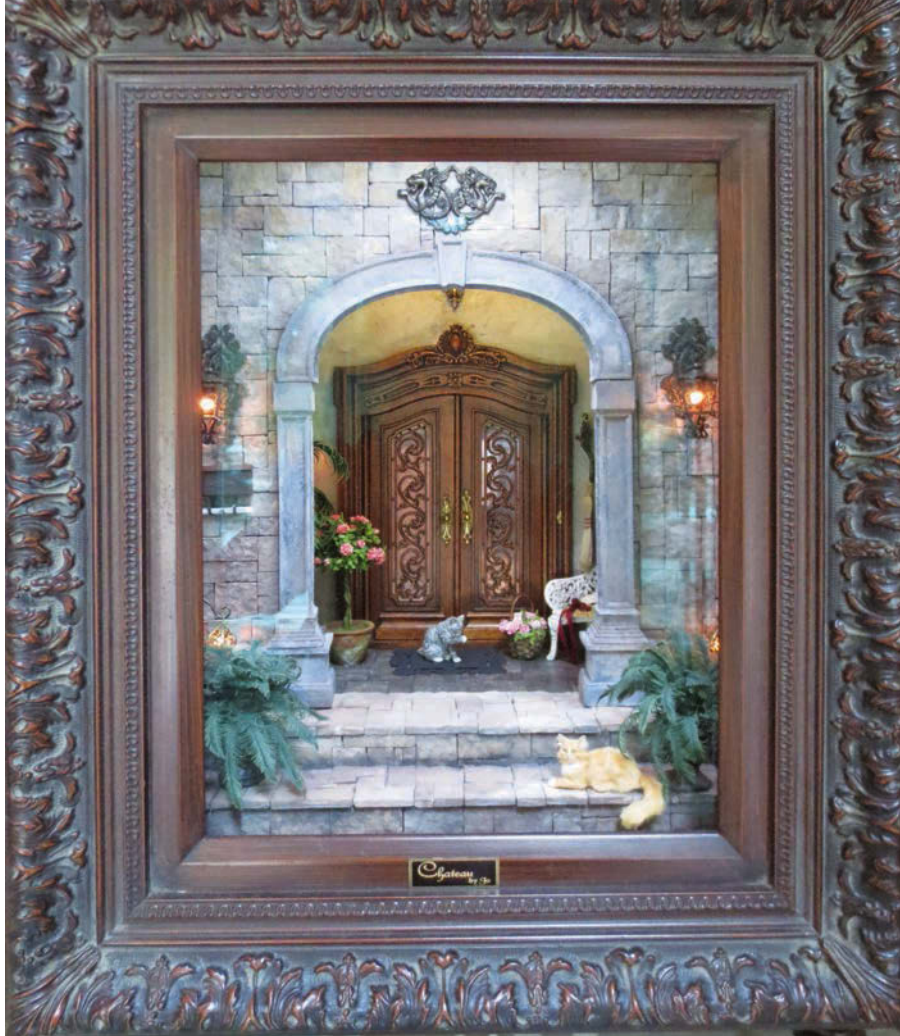
Sew small exhibition

The Miniature Needlework Society's exhibition runs until April 24 at the Forge Mill Needle Museum. There will be over 200 items to see: a fantastic variety of stitching and exquisite craftsmanship, created by over 30 members of the society.

The exhibition is sponsored by Miniatura and Madeira UK Ltd and is hosted by the Forge Mill Needle Museum, Needle Mill Lane, Riverside, Redditch, Worcs B98 8HY.

The museum is set in beautiful countryside next to the rushing stream which powered the machinery used to give needles their final polish, and is well worth a visit. The Sew Small exhibition takes up a whole floor of the museum and features a doll's house (kindly donated by Barbara's Mouldings) full of all kinds of needlecraft: upholstered furniture, fire screens, bedspreads, curtains, carpets, cushions and pictures, complete with a garden entirely made with stitchery!

In another showcase are dolls wearing clothes made from knitting, crochet, lace, beading, smocking or just plain tailoring. During the show there will be demonstrations of miniature lace making, crochet, knitting and needlepoint. More details from the museum on 01527 62509.



Step 7: Pull all the lights that will be turned on at night. Try to map the routes neatly so you can find or trace a wire if needed. The extension cord wires are long so I wind them into a loose loop and blue tape them down for maintenance later. You will do this on the extension outlets in the alcove floor if added and on the landscape extension outlets.

Step 8: Mark with a permanent marker the identification of each hole that the wire comes out of. There will be a set of 3 holes at the back lower bottom of the box, then 2 holes for the alcove lanterns and one hole for the daylight LEDs.

Step 9: Route the lights that are all night lights, and tape them down neatly with masking tape. You can identify these by writing what they are on top of the tape.

Step 10: When all the night lights are gathered, clip them to be the same length and then strip the wire down, twisting them together. Keep all the negatives with the negatives and all the positives with the positives. Repeat on the other side. Join those 2 groups by running the 2 separated negatives and positives together and tincture the

end of each bundle with solder.

Step 11: Clip off enough that it will fit into the spade connector and then slide the wires up into the connector. Add the heat to the connector, Flux, then add the solder until it fills inside the hollow where the wires are.

Step 12: Let it cool and then crimp it with pliers if needed. Repeat the daylight set using the same technique.

Step 13: Attach the clicker cords to each of the terminal blocks as shown and hook those up to a transformer. You only need one transformer, just add the 2 lines per contact on the transformer.

Enjoy! Fill your beds with plants, pots, and critters! A special thanks to Konnie, Debbie and Jacque for their help with this wonderful project! [DHW](#)

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To glue or not to glue

If you are looking for a way to “stick it” then this article may be of some help. Here are some things to think about when making your choice

By Auralea Krieger

One of the most popular debates in miniatures is do you glue it or tack it? I have heard many different debates and preferences over the years, but there is no right or wrong answer because there are too many variables to consider, which makes it more of a case-by-case situation.

When contemplating how you want to approach your decision to glue or tack, you must first ask yourself several questions.

- Do you want to move the item in the future?
- What surface material will the item be adhered to?
- How valuable is the piece to be adhered?
- Does the item have an artist signature beneath or behind it?
- How do you prefer to clean your miniatures?
- What room temperatures will the final project be exposed to?

The most important consideration is to determine what needs to be permanently glued into place and what needs to be removable. The best way to learn anything is by experience, but luckily miniaturists are a generous sort.

After doing much research online and speaking with various artists and crafters, as well as using my own experience, I was able to put together these tips and

facts on the preferred methods of gluing and tacking. Keep in mind this article is based solely on decorative items and furnishings, not construction.

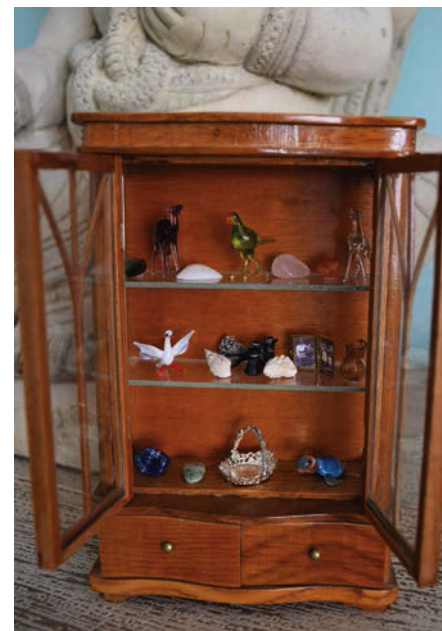
Permanent solutions

Because I am someone who embraces change, for me nothing is really ever permanent. So when I say, “permanently glued” what I mean is that the glued item will not let go without causing some sort of damage to the surface it is adhered to.

I have listed some of the favourites for miniaturists from the most permanent to the least: Super Glue, The Ultimate! glue, wood glue, Fabri-Tac, Tacky Glue, PVA glue, and hot glue. A few may be easier to “unstick” than others by prying the item up with a knife, but most will securely hold items in place even when turned upside down.

These are ideal glues to use for room boxes that will be picked up and looked at with a closer eye, or mini projects that will need to be transported. If you are blessed with a curious cat that can't resist trying to squeeze into your little doll's house rooms, then permanent glues will be a heaven-sent solution for you!

There are many people who feel each mini project is a work of art and have no intention of ever adding or taking away anything from it once it has been declared complete. In this case, perma-



nently gluing things in place is a must. Another great reason to glue is if there is a heavier piece of furniture in the room that, if accidentally tipped over, could damage smaller more delicate pieces, such as a curio cabinet full of wee treasures.

How you prefer to clean your doll's house is a conversation in itself, which I will be discussing in a later issue. If you use canned air or compressed air to spray the dust out of your doll's house, than permanently gluing things in place will make it easiest for you. If you are not familiar with canned air, it's compressed air in a spray can, which is typically used to clean computer keyboards. It is great for doll's houses as well.

Non-permanent solutions

There are a variety of products to use for non-permanent sticking. They all seem to have pros and cons, so finding the right one for you will depend on a few factors. The most popular in no particular order are: Blu-Tack, paintable movable glue, sticky dots, glue dots, clear bathtub caulking, museum wax, and tacky wax. These products are ideal for those who are working on an ongoing doll's house or a project that is always being added to, or for those who enjoy rearranging rooms and decorating them for holidays.

If you happen to be a collector and have many pieces in your miniature collection from all of your favourite artists, then you would not want to permanently glue them down, especially if there is an artist's signature on the bottom. Personally, I would have issue putting anything under it for fear it would stain or damage the signature, but this is only a personal choice.

So let's go through some of the options available for removable adhesives, starting with the most well-known adhesive, Blu-Tack.

Blu-Tack

This is a reusable putty-like adhesive that is pressure sensitive. It now comes in a variety of colours, but the most common colour is blue. While this is a quick and easy way to adhere an item in place, there are a few drawbacks. The most obvious is that it seems no matter how small of a piece you use, there is still that small relentless amount of blue sticking out from under your magnificent vase that's sitting atop your exquisitely made corner table. It's much like walking out of the restroom with toilet paper stuck to your shoe—it can be a bit unsightly!

The other issues are that it is a challenge to get an object to sit level on putty, and it does have a tendency to stain and turn brittle over time.

There is similar putty called QuakeHold! that is an off-white colour. Some miniaturists swear by it and claim it is stronger than other putties. They say even a small amount is still strong.

Paintable movable glue

Moveable Miniatures Glue is a tacky adhesive. If you paint it on the base of an item and then place the piece on a clean, smooth surface it will do the trick. Hot temperatures have no effect on its strength. This product will need to dry for one hour between coats and three coats are needed. It is water based, non-toxic, and can be removed with alcohol. Dirt, dust, and moving the object over time will take the tack away.

Adhesive dots

Sticky dots and glue dots are double-sided adhesive circles that stick instantly



to almost any surface. Be warned that they can be very sticky. To apply, it is easiest to remove

them from the wax paper by pressing the item you want to stick directly on the dot. Then pull it off and place the item where you desire. There are also mini dots available.

These dots do tend to be troublesome to remove. They leave a sticky residue and can sometimes damage a piece because they are so strong. They can also ruin fabric. These are not helpful in hanging frames, as they will give way over time. This product also tends to move over time if it is not used on a flat surface. It is still a good solution for the right item if you have loads of patience.

Another similar solution is double-sided sticky Scotch tape or mounting squares. You can cut a very small piece and place it under your item. But beware, over time there may be residue when you attempt to remove it and it may rip wallpaper.

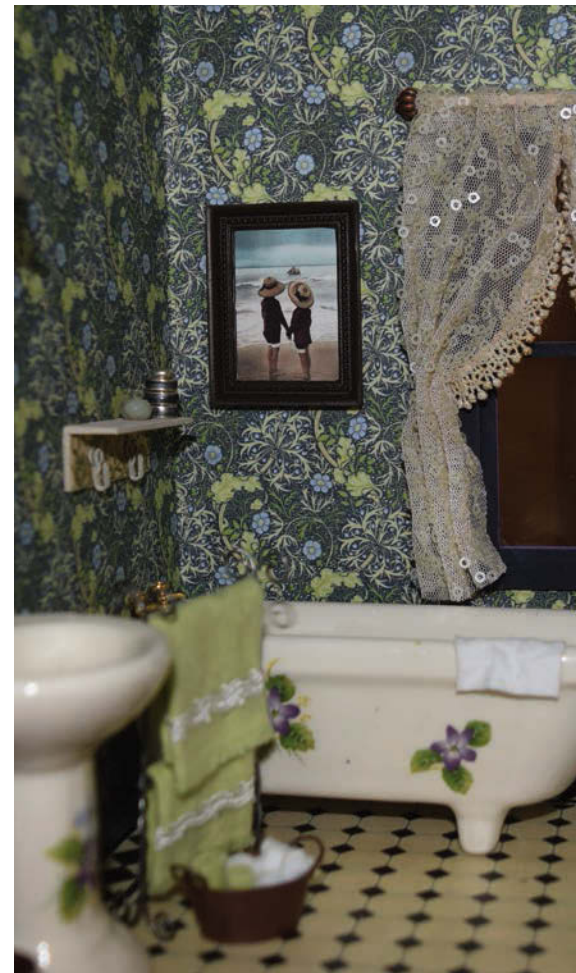
Clear bathtub caulking

I was excited to hear about this one and am curious to try it. Apparently, it doesn't leave a stain and only a very small drop is needed. The drawback may be the drying time, which would be 12 to 24 hours. I would love to hear from anyone who has tried this!



Wax

Finally, there is museum wax and tacky wax. These are my personal favourites, but there are still a few things to be aware of. If the temperature is too warm it will melt. I would not recommend using it for permanently hanging frames on walls because over time it will give way and will also stain wallpaper. It will, however, easily wipe off of wood finishes and accessories. A quick and easy way to clean wax off a miniature item is to use a candle wax remover similar to Weiman Wax Away. Wax may stain unfinished wood or woods with a flat finish.



ABOVE: The shelf has been permanently glued with Tacky Glue. The items on the shelf have a tiny amount of wax under them. The frame, in this case, was adhered with wax because it is an extremely light wood frame and I may want to switch it out someday.

This is a perfect solution for a scene with many small items on display. It only takes a very small amount and once you press the item into place you're done! If you bring in a few more items or need to rearrange, no problem. Just pick up the item, wipe away any residue left behind and wax tack down your new items.

Wax is a perfect solution for projects that are ever changing and evolving. It is also ideal for valuable or expensive items that you don't want to damage.

So there you have it! There are many products, but it all comes down to your personal preference and your needs. If you have any comments or know of more solutions I would love to hear from you. [DHW](#)

Pour a glass of mini wine

Danielle Muller built this mini wine cellar for her husband as he patiently waited for the one in their real house to be built

By Danielle Muller

In December 2005, we moved into our new house. During the construction phase and even earlier—during the planning phase—my husband Ronny told me he wanted his own wine cellar. Not only was this because he loves and knows lots about wine, but also because it has been one of those dreams he'd had for a long time. So in the end, that's what we planned and did. Since Ronny had to wait a while before having his own

wine cellar ready (there are a lot more important things to finish first when you're building a new house), I thought it might be fun to make one for him in miniature.

The first thing I did was plan the entire thing. I always have a lot of extra wooden pieces lying around in my workplace, so I had the floor and the walls put together quickly. In order to make the stone effect on the floor and walls, I used the "Magic Stone" effect kit avail-

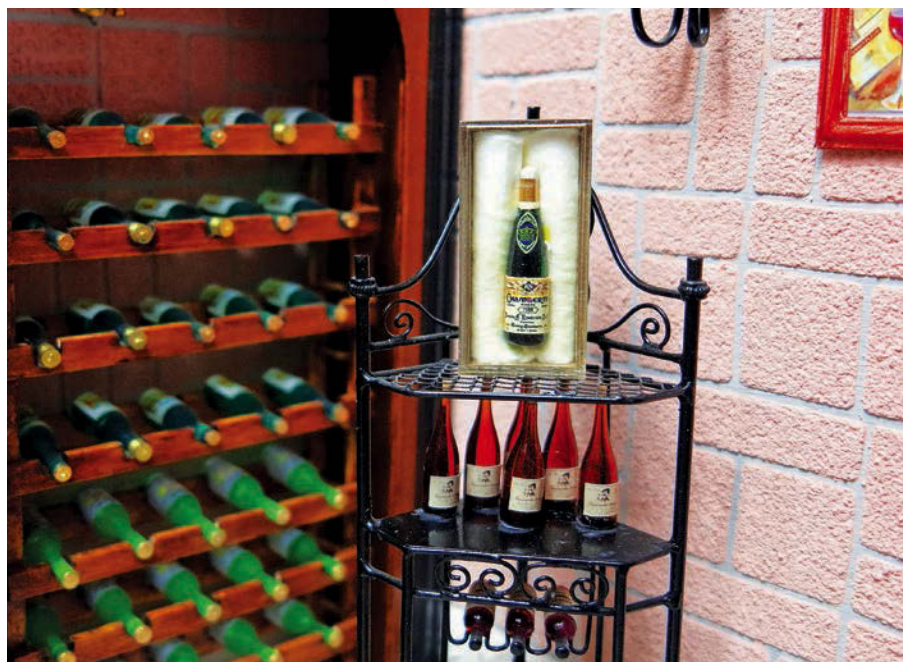
able at many doll's house shops. You can create wonderful stone, brick, stucco, or slate effects with these kits from Magic Miniature Masonry by Magic Systems.

I also tried out Cir Kit wiring system to light up the room box, which is great because there are no wires visible, if you do it correctly. I usually use the traditional wiring system, with the wires coming out at the back of the house, where they are plugged into socket strips. For my wine cellar, though, I wanted to try out the Cir Kit system. I have to say, I found that I prefer the traditional system, as I think it's easier to install. But that's, of

LEFT: A prized bottle of wine packed in its box while on display.

ABOVE: The beautiful miniature wine cellar include its own wine bar.

FAR RIGHT: Cheese and grapes are the perfect match for a glass of wine.





course, a personal opinion. Both systems to light up your doll's houses are great; you just have to find out for yourself which one you prefer.

Except for the two chairs, all the furniture in my wine cellar was made from scratch. I keep a box with all the leftover pieces of wood from my miniature projects, and this is like a little treasure box to me. I had to purchase a lot of wine bottles and glasses of course, but since I didn't spend any money on the furniture, I guess that's okay. There is one wine bottle in a little box that came with a certificate because it does actually contain real wine. It was quite expensive for such a little thing, which is probably the reason why there's only one in my wine cellar.

Next, I continued with the wine racks

because there was a lot of cutting out to do there to place all the wine bottles.

Once those were finished, I glued all the bottles in place.

After that came the bar.

Adding the mirror and the lights gave it quite a nice "real" look. The idea of adding the stairs leading to the house wasn't something I thought about in the beginning. In fact, while I was looking through all the boxes I have stored in my





ABOVE: The luxurious cellar includes a wine bar and plush chair to relax in while you sample many wines.

BELOW RIGHT: Miniature wine bottles look especially real when you add a bit of dust on the bottle, making them look like they've been waiting patiently in the cellar for years.

workplace to see if there might be something useful in there, I discovered that staircase. I had planned to use it in one of my previous projects, but didn't use it in the end, and it was perfect for my wine cellar as it wasn't too big.

The wall on the right is decorated with all sorts of wine labels, which I found on the internet. I just saved them to my computer, downsized them to twelfth scale, and printed them out. They give a cute little touch to the wine cellar.

At that time I hadn't yet tried out my hand at making polymer clay food, so I bought all the food items. The scene itself shows the new wine cellar ready to have guests for the first party to take place, that's why there is a lot of food around and opened bottles, filled glasses, etc.

I also bought the wine barrels, because at the time, I didn't know how to make them myself. After I finished the wine

cellar, I did some research and tried making them myself. I realised it wasn't that difficult after all, but unfortunately the ones I managed to make couldn't be used in the wine cellar, as I had finished it already.

This was a fun project, and my husband really loves his little wine cellar, even though he has a "real" one today. It took me more or less 10 months to finish

this room box, and it is one more project where my little treasure box with leftover pieces came into use. My little advice is to never ever throw anything away. My workplace is a little recycling centre, and even though sometimes I might wonder what I could possibly do with some of those things, believe me: the day comes, sooner or later, and I know what I can do with it. **DHW**

“ This was a fun project, and my husband really loves his little wine cellar. ”



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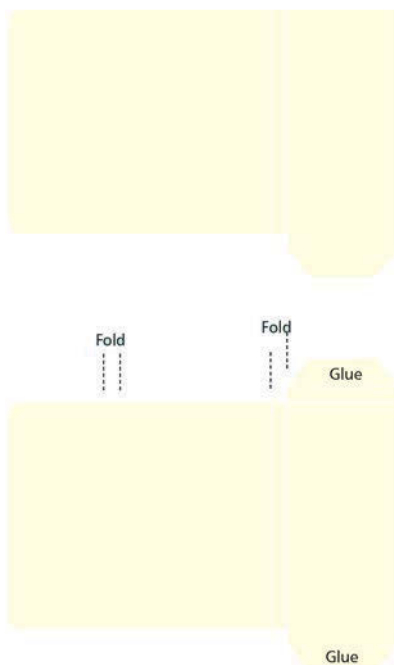
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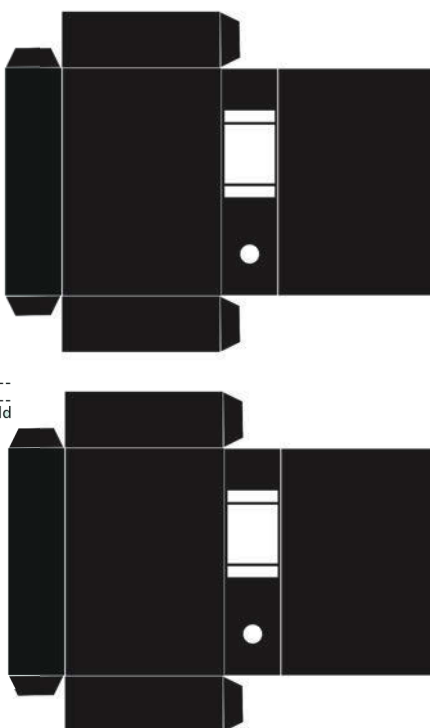
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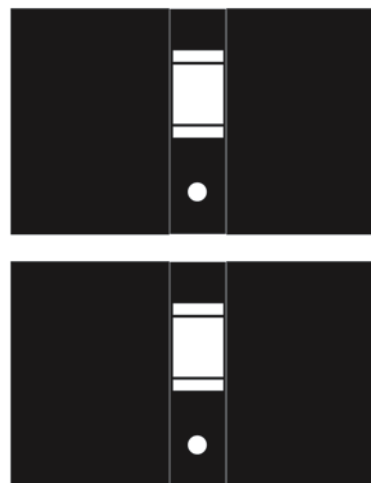
DOCUMENT FOLDERS



BOX FILE



LEVER-ARCH FILES



minifunPAGES

MINI WORDSEARCH

This month's Wordsearch is based around Victorian writers. Which one of the names listed below doesn't appear in the grid?

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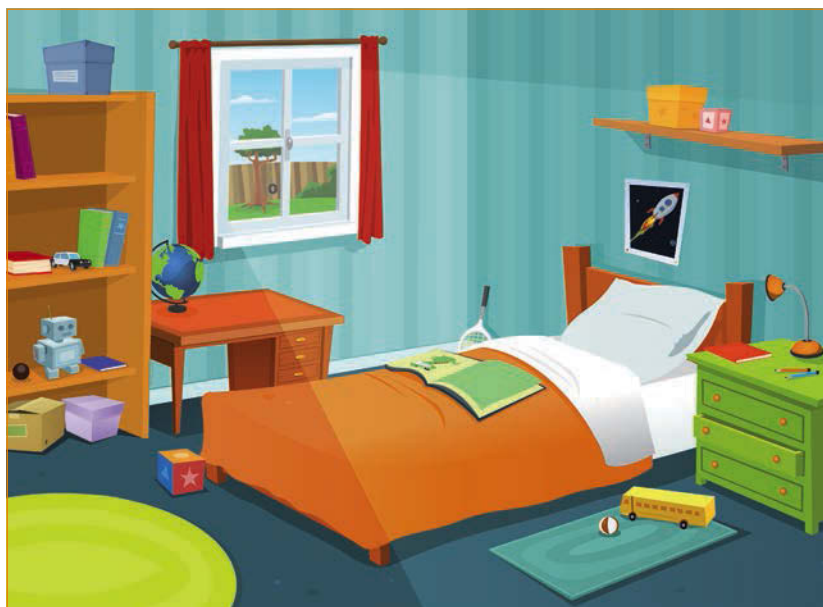
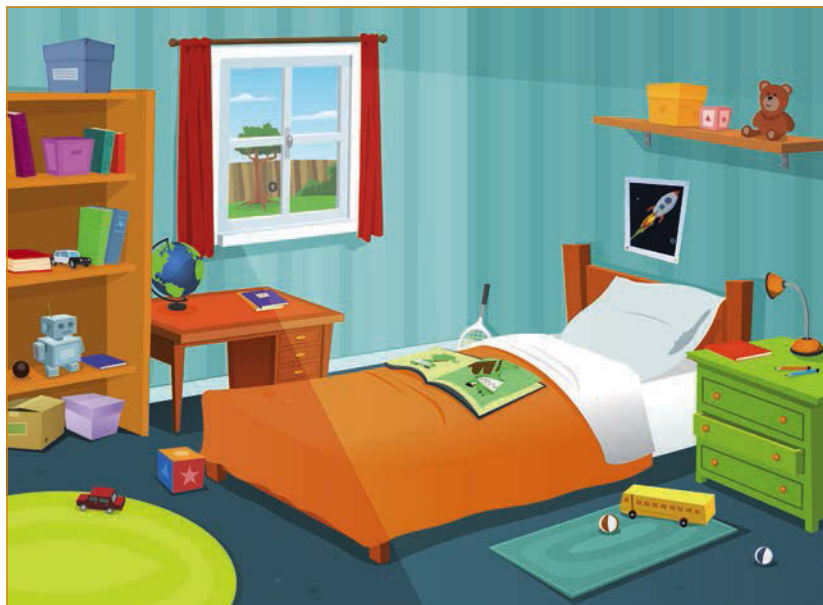
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O B B N K O Q N S A T P
W R G M X E W Q R I T B
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BRONTE
BROWNING
TENNYSON
HARDY

SHAW
WILDE
ELIOT
DICKENS

SPOT THE (SMALL) DIFFERENCE

Can you spot the difference in these two pictures? There are six small differences between the pictures for you to find. Answers next issue.



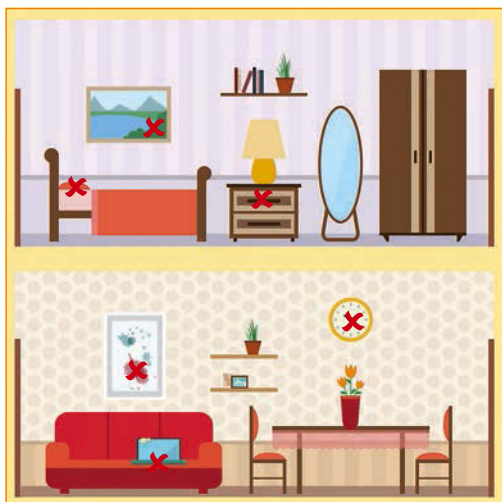
Quick quote:

When one door closes another door opens; but we often look so long and so regretfully upon the closed door, that we do not see the ones which open for us.

Alexander Graham Bell

Last month's answers

The answers to last month's mini wordsearch was BUNNY. Spot the (Small) Difference (left).



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Unit 8, Blake House Craft Centre, Rayne, Braintree CM77 6SH. 01376 335111. www.minibijou.com

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fairDATES

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MARCH

SUNDAY 27TH MARCH

DOLLS HOUSES & MINIATURES FAIR

The Cedric Ford Pavilion,
Newark Show Ground,
Lincoln Road, NEWARK,
Nottinghamshire
NG24 2NY (A46/A1)
Open: 10.30am - 4.00pm
Organiser: Dolly's Daydreams

MONDAY 28TH MARCH

DOLLS HOUSES & MINIATURES FAIR

Holiday Inn Milton Keynes
East M1, Junction 14,
London Road, NEWPORT
PAGNELL, Buckinghamshire
MK16 0JA (on A509)
Open: 10.30am - 4.00pm
Organiser: Dolly's Daydreams

APRIL

SATURDAY 2ND & SUNDAY 3RD APRIL SPRING MINIATURA

National Exhibition Centre,
BIRMINGHAM B40 1NT
Open: Saturday 2nd 10am - 5pm, Sunday 3rd 10am - 4pm
Organiser: Miniatura

SUNDAY 10TH APRIL

DOLLS HOUSES & MINIATURES FAIR

The Charmandean, Forest
Road, WORTHING, West
Sussex BN14 9HS (on A27)
Open: 10.30am - 4.00pm
Organiser: Dolly's Daydreams

DOLLS HOUSE & MINIATURES FAIR

The Woodland Suite, The
Petwood Hotel, Stixwold Road,
WOODHALL SPA,
Lincolnshire LN10 6QG
Open: 10.30am - 4.00pm
Organiser: MGM Fairs

SATURDAY 16TH APRIL

DOLLS HOUSE & MINIATURES FAIR

Pudsey Civic Hall,

Pudsey, LEEDS, West Yorkshire
LS28 5TA

Open: 10.30am - 4.00pm
Organiser: Doreen Jeffries

THURSDAY 14TH - SATURDAY 16TH APRIL USA MINIATURES SHOW

Hyatt Regency Schaumburg,
1800 E. Golf Road,
Schaumburg, IL 60173
Open: Thurs 3pm to 5pm
(Preview); Fri 10am to 5pm;
Sat 10am to 3pm.
Organiser: Greg Madl

SUNDAY 24TH APRIL

DOLLS HOUSES & MINIATURES FAIR

Knights Hill Hotel & Spa,
SOUTH WOOTTON, near King's
Lynn, Norfolk PE30 3HQ
(Junction A148/A149)
Open: 10.30am - 4.00pm
Organiser: Dolly's Daydream

SATURDAY 30TH APRIL

DOLLS HOUSE & MINIATURES FAIR

The Heyn Hall at St Marks
Church, Holywood Road,
BELFAST, Northern Ireland
BT4 1PB
Open: 10.00am - 4.00pm
Organiser: MGM Fairs

MAY

SUNDAY 1ST MAY

DOLLS HOUSES & MINIATURES FAIR

Felixstowe Leisure Centre,
The Seafront, FELIXSTOWE,
Suffolk IP11 2AE (next to Pier)
Open: 10.30am - 4.00pm
Organiser: Dolly's Daydreams

SUNDAY 22ND MAY

DOLLS HOUSE & MINIATURES FAIR

The Inn on the Lake Hotel,
DA12 3HB
Open: 10.00am - 3.00pm
Organiser: D&M Fairs

SUNDAY 29TH MAY

DOLLS HOUSE, MINIATURES & CRAFT FAIR

The Dunes Complex, Central
Promenade, MABLETHORPE,
Lincolnshire LN12 1RG

Open: 10.30am - 4.00pm
Organiser: Little Mermaids
Dollshouse Club

JUNE

SATURDAY 11TH JUNE

DOLLS HOUSES & MINIATURES FAIR

The Assembly Rooms,
High Street, DEDHAM,
near Colchester, Essex
CO7 6DE (off A12)
Open: 10.30am - 4.00pm
Organiser: Dolly's Daydreams

SUNDAY 12TH JUNE

DOLLS HOUSE & MINIATURES FAIR

The Imperial Rooms,
Imperial Road, MATLOCK,
Derbyshire DE4 3NL
Open: 10.30am - 3.00pm
Organiser: MGM Fairs

SUNDAY 19TH JUNE

DOLLS HOUSES & MINIATURES FAIR

Portsmouth Marriott Hotel,
Southampton Road,
PORTSMOUTH, Hampshire
PO6 4SH (M27/Junction 12)
Open: 10.30am - 4.00pm
Organiser: Dolly's Daydreams

SUNDAY 26TH JUNE

DOLLS HOUSES & MINIATURES FAIR

Holiday Inn Ashford-Central,
Canterbury Road (A28),
ASHFORD, Kent TN24 8QQ
(M20/Junction 9)
Open: 10.30am - 4.00pm
Organiser: Dolly's Daydreams

DOLLS HOUSE & MINIATURES FAIR

Locomotion, The National
Railway Museum,
SHILDON, Durham DL4 2RE
(Ample free parking)
Open: 10.30am - 5.00pm
Organiser: Cleveland Miniaturist
UK

MAY

SATURDAY 13TH & SUNDAY 14TH MAY

KENSINGTON DOLLHOUSE FESTIVAL

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Kensington Dollhouse Festival: 020 7812 9892
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Little Mermaids' Dolls' House Club: Tel: Mary Trembeth
01507 477188

MGM Fairs: Tel: 01225 466533 Mob: 07818 462448
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