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DOLLSHOUSE WORLD

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SCENE

QUICK
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IDEAS

mini
MAKES

- ★ MARKET STALL
- ★ TINY TREES
- ★ ICE SKATES

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welcome

We're full of festive sparkle this issue, and if you think it's a bit early then remember: "Christmas isn't just a day. It's a frame of mind."

The quote from the classic 'Miracle on 34th Street' gives us all an excuse to dive headfirst into the season. In that film Kris Kringle talks to the little girl about a wonderful country called 'the Imagination'. It's a place where miniaturists feel right at home, and is well represented this issue.

From traditional Christmas shops to sparkling rooms and houses there's plenty to inspire you in your own creations. Lots of ideas for different looks with trees too, and we help you make everything from ice skates to a snowman teapot.

We also talk to a couple so in love with miniatures they've given up their jobs - he was an undertaker, she was in the police force - and you won't believe the magical sleigh ride they've created.

We also celebrate the upcoming fiftieth London Dollhouse Festival and give you a chance to win a wonderful Santa.

Hope you're in the right frame of mind now. Enjoy the issue.

Richard.

email: richard@ashdown.co.uk



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Quote of the month:

"Our hearts grow tender with childhood memories and love of kindred, and we are better throughout the year for having, in spirit, become a child again at Christmastime."

- Laura Ingalls Wilder



HOUSE HUNT



Find the little house hidden inside. Last issue it appeared on page 28.



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Shop's still so full of the Christmas spirit

We get into the festive season with a look at a shop that was finished a long time ago, then had rooms for Santa and his wife added above

BY ALICE MONROE

Is there a more exciting and special time of year than the Christmas season? When else is it okay for children to get over-excited and adults to become children again? After months planning and weeks of decorating the day draws near. With a spring in our step, a sparkle in our eyes and magic in our hearts we do crazy things – like wish good will to passing strangers.

Christmas brings out the best in us, and in our miniatures. This month we continue to wallow in the warmth of



Christmas and look back at a special doll's house made by Dorothy Bollen. Dorothy told the story herself.

(Cue music) Oh I wish it could be Christmas every da-

ay. Well that's got the difficult opening sentence over and to many of us the sentiment is so true. That is probably why many miniaturists have Christmas rooms and shops and are able to enjoy the season all year round. I am no exception. I have been collecting for over 20 years and have always



decorated my doll's houses for Christmas.

One year we even had a party going on in my biggest house and I invited my club members to bring along their doll's house dolls to our Christmas meeting so that as well as the group enjoying the fun, our dolls could too.

The evening was a great success and a lot of fun as I had set up the houses with "mistakes" for people to find. Things like pictures turned the wrong way and cooking pots in the bedroom. The only trouble with that was I had to remember to write down all the errors so that I would be able to put things back to rights later.

In 1991 we (the royal we) decided that we wanted a Christmas shop similar to the ones in Lyndhurst, Lechlade and York. Are any of them still there I wonder? It began shortly after the New Year celebrations and I seem to remember that it was very cold with a slight covering of snow when my husband George was outside cutting out the pieces and making the arches





to conceal the lighting. I hadn't exactly goaded him into doing it but after my tantrum he decided that it was what he really wanted to do.

So "Noel Noelle's" was born and it has been brought downstairs from its shelf in the workroom every year since. I just love it and so recently we

decided to build an extension on the top, not a Santa's workshop but a home that he would share with his wife Mary. We were restricted by the size of the shop so the house had to fit onto the top. The two pieces are not joined but they do share the same transformer. Don't ask me how.

Top: The festively decorated shop windows draw in those that walk by.

Above: The inside of the shop is full of Christmas spirit! Tiny decorations hang from the ceiling and fill every shelf.

I am only Quality Control and Supervision not Electrician and Builder.



Above: Mrs Claus tidies up the bedroom that is decorated in Christmas colours. Santa's suit hangs on the armoire. Santa reads his paper by the fireplace while a lazy cat naps on the arm of the chair.

I also wanted to give the illusion that there were other rooms. On the right hand side of the living room there is a door leading to the hall. You can just see the first stair and a grandfather clock and the bedroom door is open to reveal a whatnot with ornaments.

Everything in this house is about Christmas, as I believe that both Father

Christmas and his wife Mary do like this time of year and like the rest of us miniaturists, wish it could be Christmas every day.

The living room has a huge fireplace with a log fire and the garland below the mantle shelf is by Sandi Sadri. She has given up making miniatures now but was a very good flower



artist and her mistletoe was wonderful. I miss her. My husband made the dresser but most of the china is Janice Crawley's work. I emailed her and asked her to bring some of her Spode type porcelain to a London Dollhouse Festival with her to complete the set I had been collecting for a while.

Due to family circumstances she was unable to attend but she very kindly offered to mail the things I needed and I was able to pay her via a relative who lives in England.

We made the two armchairs at a series of workshops I ran for club members and the table was left over from when we used to sell at the Three Counties Fairs. The Christmas tree is by Audrey Johnson. And a lot of the other items I have made or else they have been presents from friends.

Upstairs I have continued the holiday theme. The bed looks particularly cosy. Santa must be so glad to get into it after his ride round the world.

I am a member of minis4all an Internet club for miniaturists started by Hazel Dowd and each month swaps are arranged with other worldwide members. My Christmas swap was with a New Zealand miniaturist who sent a wonderful package of things she had

made, the pretty reindeer ornament on the dressing table, a scrap book, a tin of cookies and two beautiful stockings with our names embroidered on them. Mine also contains a teddy bear.

Most of the furniture is painted green, and as I cannot paint, I have Fray Checked fabrics and glued on cut out motifs to decorate it with. I hope you agree that it has worked. Perhaps not quite as well as proper artistic painting but I believe that anything we do ourselves is worthwhile and, if we gain pleasure from the doing, that is all that is required.

I am still waiting for a front to be made for my first house started in 1980 but this one has a real outside. I am pleased with the curtains and the Ray Storey lights in the windows. When you light up the house after dark the appearance is just magic. George has even made two light bridges that actually work for the shop windows, quite a challenge but they are perfect.

The Christmas house and shop is no longer taken upstairs after the festivities but stands all year round on two sets of filing drawers that contain all my miniature making ingredients so I feel I am the lucky one who is able to enjoy Christmas every day.



Rush to create perfect welcome for Santa

The challenge: to make a mini home-coming for Santa in two months. The workplace: in front of a roaring fire and some Christmas movies

BY AURALEA KRIEGER

Last year I was fully engrossed in building my Kinfeld doll's house from scratch when all of the sudden I was hit with the Christmas spirit. Then I saw that familiar doll's house kit by Greenleaf, The Aster Cottage Dollhouse by Corona in an HBS catalogue. Also in the catalogue were two dolls made by Cindy Cook.

The entire house and story flashed through my mind. Followed by: "Oh no, where will I find the time!" It didn't matter because I knew I had to build.

So I decided to turn it into a chal-

lenge. The majority of the house had to be finished by Christmas Eve. This way when Santa popped out of my fireplace in the middle of the night he would be treated with a wonderful surprise. I worked in my living room with a roaring fire and my favourite Christmas movies.

I made a few adjustments to the kit by having only one door and altering the upstairs opening. I used craft sticks for the floors, painted paper for the walls, and stained wood for the timber and moulding. My other challenge was

to spend as little as possible and get creative with what I had in my stash.

Here is the story as I imagined it: Santa comes home very early in the morning after completing his deliveries. He trudges up the front walk in the cold, happy to see that Mrs. Claus managed to shovel the freshly fallen snow from the steps without the help of the hardworking elves who had been busy assisting him.

Comfy clothes

He walks into his warm home, hangs up his coat and goes straight upstairs to get into his comfy clothes and furry slippers. Leaving his suit about the floor to worry over later, he makes his way back downstairs to join his lovely wife to open their presents. Then they enjoy milk with cookies and their favourite television program. They are both exhausted from the build-up to such an important day so it feels wonderful to unwind together.

By the front door is a bowl of Christmas cards from the elves. They were instructed to only send cards because there isn't room in the house for presents. But one naughty elf has sent some peppermints. Perhaps that little elf is trying to score some brownie points?

At the entry I made the Santa coat and the cards and slipped in a few red and white wires into a tiny bottle. The beautiful phone desk was a gift from a close friend. In the window are some





items from my stash and I made the poinsettia from paper.

A tutorial by Rik Pierce came in handy for the paper clay fireplace, which basically consisted of pressing paper clay onto a wood structure with glue and carving out the stone. I textured it with a coarse paint brush and then painted it with the colours Rik recommended. The stone hearth is wood covered with filler and then painted.

The wreath over the mantel was made from painted paper leaves glued to a ring of paper. The balls are painted polymer and the pine cones were made from brown polymer clay and painted with highlights.





The white deer decor around the house are from the craft store. The beautiful plate on the mantel was made by Marije Ferrero. There is also a photo of Santa with his favourite reindeer, but we won't say who, they are sensitive creatures. The tiny brass fireplace tools are an antique set found for a great price on eBay. The logs were cut from fallen branches found in my backyard.

Fluffed it up

I made the tree from dried princess pine/lycopodium years ago. I just fluffed it up a bit and added some lights. The battery pack is tucked away behind the tree. They can blink slow, fast, or stay on.

To add a sense of home I thought there should be a beloved pet so I added a sleeping Rottweiler. Her name is Bow and it looks as though she received a wonderful Christmas bear and a new bone. Her bed was an easy creation with printed fabric and stuffing.

The tiny advent calendar was fussy but fun to make. I printed out the back board, made a small slit on the left of each image. Then slid the folded doors into each slit and glued a piece of paper to the back. Obviously all the doors are open because it is early Christmas morning. There is a silly photo of Bow above the calendar. I made the white dresser years ago and am happy to still have it.

I asked a non-miniaturist friend, "What would Santa and his wife be watching on TV?" He answered without hesitation, "Dancing with the Stars." This gave us both a case of the giggles.

As for the happy couple, they have on homemade slippers. Santa gave his blushing bride a wonderful assortment of lotions and perfumes made by Syreeta Edwards. While Mrs Claus gave her husband a tin of his favourite midnight snacks. It may seem like an uncreative gift but they are a tradition that started because of a sweet story when they first met.



I drew a reindeer on the handmade pillow and used a snowflake ornament for the coaster. The ottoman was a coffee table; I just added a cushion on top.

The couch was my very first attempt at making a couch from foam board and mat board so thankfully most of it is covered up! The cookies were very easy to make with polymer and then I added some micro-beads. The carpet in the living room was a placemat. As you go upstairs you can see that the runner was a ribbon and the posts are topped with glass beads that look like ice.

The beds were made from scratch using wood and mat board. Then I hand-painted bird designs on them. The duvets were made with tinfoil inside to help them drape properly. On the walls are two vintage style plaques made by Marije Ferrero. The beds are unmade because with all of the commotion over the past few weeks keeping the house tidy was pushed to the bottom of the list. My goal is to con-

tinue to add to this house every year. So there will be much more of a mess and more items to add to the story.

Trying to figure out the effect I wanted for the snow took lots of research and trial and error. In the end I first covered the roof where the snow would be with thin white craft foam sheets. Then I put filler in any cracks and sanded them. I covered sections with white glue and shook snow effects over it. Then I started using Elmer's glue spray instead, covering up anything that wouldn't be snow on the house with newspaper. At the end I sprinkled on some perfect fine glitter (Recollections signature special, extra fine glitter, Glitz, Blanc Rose).

For the frosted windows I used a small brush and dry brushed on some Golden Gel medium in matt. As for the icicles, you can make your own following my tutorial next issue.

If you are ever in need of some Christmas spirit, making a holiday scene in mini will surely do the trick!



Straight from the heart: a tale of love & magic

He was an undertaker, while she worked on the police force. Now this talented German couple are pursuing their passion for creating amazing minis full-time

BY PAM NORTH

The brainchild of Janny and Simon Warnaar, Artofmini.com, is a thriving company devoted to creating atmosphere in miniature, and developing new and innovative products, such as laser-cut and paper kits, and unique individual miniatures related to special themes. What they embrace about miniatures is the philosophy that all is possible, and that a dream world may be breathed into a tiny real world that is alive and able to tell a mesmerising story, evoking memories of past moments of joy.

Artofmini.com is a very specialised emporium for miniatures, and is a site for innovation in the doll's house world.

Their spectrum of products encompasses beautifully crafted furniture, accessories, and materials in twelfth, 1:24, and 1:48 scales, with impressive attention to quality and detail. Their love of the past is evident in the nostalgic styles and themes of their pieces.

All kits come with precision laser-cut parts in twelfth scale, have clear graphics, and instructions in four languages. The prices of their products vary from low, for the easy to make kits, to higher for the more complicated laser-cut kits and the unique special-made miniatures. Their world is full of little stories, fantasies, and precious miniatures, and they constantly are developing new

themes and unique little treasures.

They explained their philosophy: "We love the idea of times gone past, and this is reflected in our miniatures, scenes and themes. When we are working on these this miniature world becomes our 'real' world, one that should be 'alive' and able to tell a fascinating story. We like to think innovatively, and give old materials new life, making 'restyle' a key word."

It had been Janny's long-cherished wish since childhood to have a doll's house for herself. Full-time jobs, Janny's on the police force, and Simon's as an undertaker, had kept both of them from having enough time to devote to the world of miniatures. Their career worlds were very different from what they most wanted to pursue, but happily both are now engaged in their passion of creating tiny, wondrous things.

While their creativity ideals mesh beautifully, their work styles differ somewhat. While Simon's orderly workplace is filled with machines, Janny's workplace flirts with barely organised chaos of all kinds of materials around her.

"Most of the time there is no free

Above: Johnny de Meerkat is waiting impatiently between the snow-covered trees for his bride. Suddenly he hears a sound in the magical forest. It seems like something is coming closer with great speed.

Left: A closer look at the bride.





Above: These white Arctic hares are no ordinary hares, but animals from the royal stables. The coachman is an impressive swan. In the large majestic sled, sitting on a leather couch, is the blushing bride of Johnny de Meerkat. **Right:** The swan driving the sleigh wears a small crown.

space on the floor and on the working tables," Simon said.

Their individual preferences don't hold back their production, however, and beautiful results come from their joint efforts.

"Our skills come straight from our hearts; that's the most pure thing we offer. We are self-taught, with all the inherent mistakes, trials, and errors, but that is also the best teacher in life. By following a training process, we would be influenced, and we find it important just to stay who we are. Our heads and our hands are our most valuable tools, but there are many others we cannot do without: tweezers, magnifying glasses, and various machines. One difficulty with miniatures is time; 24 hours a day is just too little!"

One recent piece is called The Magical Sleigh Ride. "Fairy tales, love stories, wintertime, sweet animals - who doesn't love all those ingredi-



ents?" Simon asked. "We certainly do!

So, in combining them all together, The Magical Sleigh Ride was born. This scene tells the story of Johnny de Meerkat. He is waiting impatiently among the snow-covered trees for his bride. Suddenly he hears a sound in the magical forest, something coming closer with great speed. Soon he sees white Arctic hares, not ordinary hares, but animals from the royal stables, and

the coachman is an impressive swan. In the large, majestic sled, sitting on a leather couch, is Johnny's bride, who gazes rapturously at him. As one may expect, after seeing each other and then being together, they live happily ever after.

Asked why they made the piece, Simon's response was: "It is a love story. During the making of this scene/story, it gave us smiles from the beginning to

SHOW STOPPER



Left: A closer look at the royal Arctic hares.

Below left: With this one special kiss they live happily ever after.

Below: Janny received Best of Show from Greg for her piece titled, *The Magical Sleigh Ride* at the Miniature Show in Chicago in April 2017. A well deserved victory for such a beautiful work of art.



the end. We hope it will give the same feeling to others when they look at it. In viewing it, one might see their own love story, and hopefully personalise it. Every element in this piece has been given careful attention, from the little footprints in the snow to the soft leather couch in the sleigh, from the dreamy look of the bride to the patiently-waiting groom. Each is an important component of the complete scene, and

it turned out exactly as we envisioned it.

The hardest part was the connecting of the hares to the sleigh," Simon continued. "We had to make a special wooden piece."

The *Magical Sleigh Ride* has been sold, and it is now a part of the Kathleen Savage Browning Miniatures Collection in Kentucky.



As for the future of miniatures, the Warnaaers feel that the sky is the limit. "With all the new technologies that already exist, those that will be developed in the future, and all the unexplored areas, it always will be a challenge to find ways to apply those technologies to miniatures.

One has to stay constantly alert, with an open mind, always moving forward, opening new doors, and trying new things. Our commitment to developing different miniatures and new kits unlocks the door of imagination, allowing us the opportunity to turn our dreams into reality."

As for what's next, Simon had this to say: "At this moment we are working hard on new themes/kits, and, of course, the Christmas gifts we send to all our website customers every year. The Christmas season is always special for us, a time of warmth, friendliness, gratitude and sharing, so every year, as a 'thank-you', we send all our customers a specially-designed Christmas gift. We feel very privileged to be a small part of the world of miniatures."



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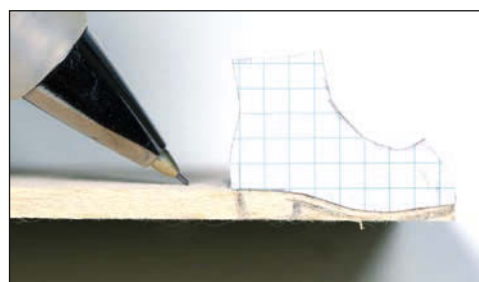


Make ice skates for the winter season

As the cold weather approaches it's time to get the ice skates out for your mini people. What, you don't have a pair? Don't worry, Tanja's here to help

BY TANJA JENSEN

One of the things I love to do in December is to take a walk to the centre of town, when all the shops have decorated their windows for Christmas, and the ice skating rink is up and full of people, simply enjoying the season. For this project we'll be making a pair of ice skates.



Step 1: Attach or hold the stencil for the sides of the skates to the side of the wood and sketch out the shape for the sole.



Step 2: Gently remove the stencil, cut the sheet of wood so it has the length of the boot but is wide enough to become the soles for two boots. Then use a file to sand down the wood, following the shape of the lines you just drew.



Step 3 & 4: Cut the wood into two pieces. Hold the stencil for the sole down onto the wood, draw around it and use a file to sand off excess. Repeat for the second sole (flip the stencil so you don't end up with two right/left feet).

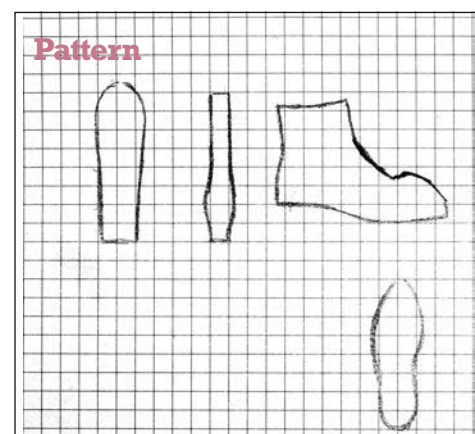
● www.sugarcharmshop.dk

You will need

- Sheet of wood - I'm using a 3mm thick sheet of basswood
- Flat needle nose file – or different type of small file
- Saw or knife – whichever tool you prefer for cutting the wood
- Strong glue
- Needle and thread
- Fabric of your choice – I'm using some pink fabric with a white rubber-like back. But if you have white leather or faux leather that is

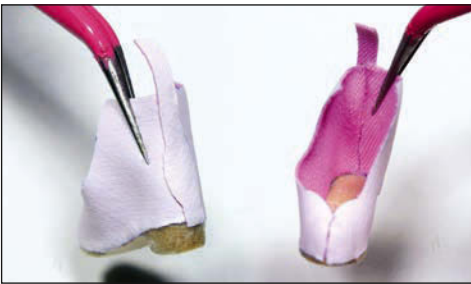
thin enough, that would be perfect

- Pencil and/or pen
- Scissors
- Black and white acrylic paint
- Silver coloured alcohol ink (or acrylic paint)
- Thin sheet of aluminium or similar. The bottom of food tins is a good source
- Tweezers can be very helpful to help hold small pieces or to help press pieces of fabric together when gluing

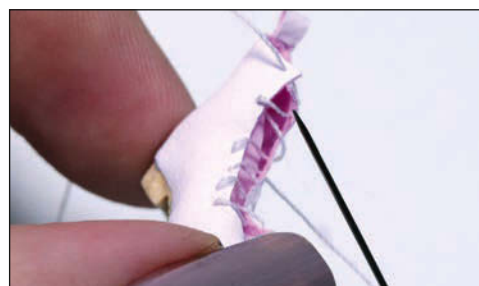




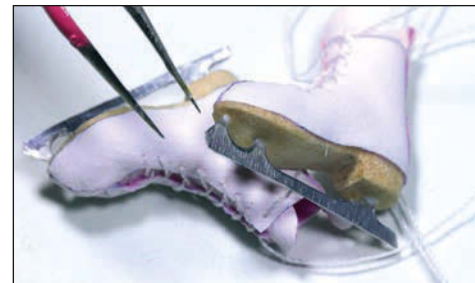
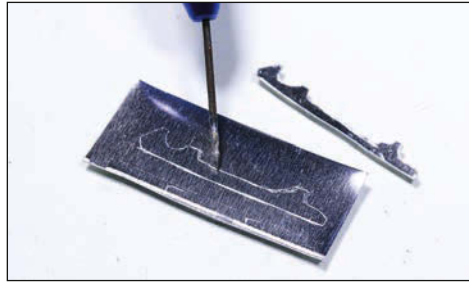
Step 5: Cut out fabric for the sides and glue this onto the soles – I find it's easier to start at the toes and make the fabric line up neatly, but feel free to do it however you find the easiest. At this point, the fabric does not have to meet at the back.



Step 6: Cut out and glue on the strip for the back – the excess length at the top can be cut off or glued down to form a loop.



Step 7 & 8: Glue the tongue of the shoe in place. Then use needle and thread to create the laces – if you're unsure where to thread through the fabric, it's a good idea to make marks for the laces using a pencil before gluing the fabric to the sole.



Step 9 & 10: Using my finished boot as a guide, I sketched the blades onto the aluminium using a needle, cut them out using scissors (do not use your favourite scissors for this) and used the needle nose file to correct the shape. Then I glued it to the bottom of the sole.



Step 11 & 12: Once the boot is done, you can finish off with a few details using acrylic paint. I painted the sole black, added a grey line next to the lacing, added white paint to a few seams where the pink side of the fabric was visible and used silver-coloured alcohol ink for the bottom of the boot.

I have provided a copy of the pattern I used; please note that depending on the fabric you're using, differences in the shape of the soles etc, you may need to make a few adjustments.

Christmas baubles

You will need

- Beads / wooden beads / polystyrene beads
- Glitter glue
- Silver jewellery headpins



Step 1: Glue the beads on to sticks or directly on to the headpins. Cover with glitter glue; vary the patterns. With a little practice your baubles will become perfect.

Step 2: Use matt finished beads otherwise the glitter glue won't stick. The glitter glue takes at least 12 hours to harden so don't be in a hurry. Try and leave your work overnight before making up the finished Christmas baubles.

Step 3: When completely dry – fold the headpin over, just above the bead and cut off. Use a pair of pliers to close the headpin into a tiny ring.



Step 4: Finish by adding tiny bows to each bauble. Other things can be added like roses or tiny beads.

Other bead baubles: *There are many beautiful beads on the market which are suitable as baubles, either in their original finish or by painting and decorating them. Crystal cut beads, for example, will sparkle on your tree.*

Dolly's Daydreams Events

SUNDAY 28 OCTOBER - 4TH YEAR!

The Cedric Ford Pavilion, Newark Showground
Lincoln Road, **NEWARK** NG24 2NY (A46/A1)

SATURDAY 24 NOVEMBER - 15TH YEAR!

The Assembly Rooms, High Street
DEDHAM CO7 6DE (off A12)

SUNDAY 2 DECEMBER - 20TH YEAR!

Holiday Inn Basildon, Festival Leisure Park
BASILDON SS14 3DG (off A127)

SUNDAY 9 DECEMBER - 21ST YEAR!

Portsmouth Marriott Hotel, Southampton Road
PORTSMOUTH PO6 4SH (M27/Junction 12)

SUNDAY 16 DECEMBER - 16TH YEAR!

Felixstowe Leisure Centre, The Seafront
FELIXSTOWE IP11 2AE (next to Pier)

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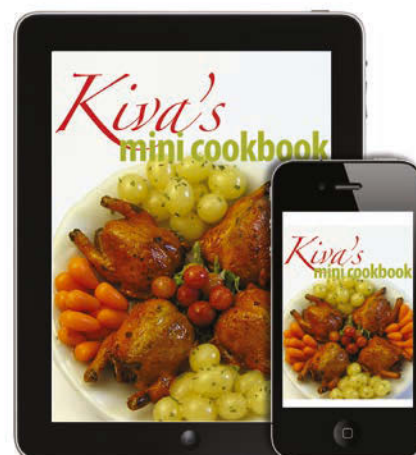
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KIM'S CHRISTMAS HOUSE

BY SANDRA HARDING

I'm going to use Kim Becker's own words to describe this house: "It's very common, as every doll's house addict has one in their collection".

I regret I don't have one, but I had some interesting suggestions on Facebook when I asked people if they could name it. As there were four conflicting answers (any of which might be possible) we decided it would be safer to call it a Chinese imported doll's house.

This is only the second house that Kim has bought on-line and since it was only a two hour drive to collect it, she was happy to give it a new home. It was a simple house, but Kim added the conservatory and the room on the

side and then put windows where she thought windows should be.

Kim then decided that she would turn it into a Christmas-themed house using all the festive things she had collected over the years. I counted, very roughly mind, about twenty different Santas, five garlands and six Christmas trees along with cushions, mugs, cakes, snowmen, stockings and too much more outside to mention.

This was Kim's first venture into wallpapering and, as the house was originally a boring cream colour, it was quite an achievement to create the lovely colourful effects it now has. She used snow from a can for the roof and Hallmark Christmas decorations on the outside. The delicious looking

gingerbread house in the dining room, the puddings in cloths, the cakes on the kitchen table and Santa's big black boots were all made from polymer clay.

The little girl peeping into her Christmas stocking is Becky who lives there with her family. Santa (daddy) is sitting in the conservatory having a cup of coffee, as a break from his busy schedule at the local department store. Mummy is busy feeding the birds in the garden and is waiting for the sun to shine.

Considering that Kim, who lives in Victoria, Australia, is a busy mother-of-five I am astonished that she finds time to enjoy our hobby. Maybe it's because four of her children are grown up and have left home.

WHERE I WORK

WE DROP IN ON JANET CROZIER OF JANET'S MINIATURE HATS IN THE SCOTTISH BORDERS

Hi Janet, we hear you've only just started making hats.

Yes, about six months ago. However, my interest in miniatures goes back to when my youngest son was born (19 years ago now). He was my third son and I decided that if I was to keep my sanity in a household where I was well and truly outnumbered by males, I would need to have a new hobby. It was then that I built my doll's house, a Georgian town house, and I have been adding to it ever since. I re-discovered my love of crafting and sewing and decided to give miniature hats a try. I love designing each one, using beautiful fabrics and trimmings that I find.



Do you keep your workspace private?

My black Labrador, Poppy, is usually by my side while I am working. She will often sleep right underneath the table at my feet. Occasionally she will bring her ball to me which is her way of saying "Enough now – time to play!"

Do you listen to music while you work?

Definitely. I have a very eclectic taste which ranges from Noel Gallagher to Simply Red.

Name one thing that is banned from your workspace.

Negative thoughts.. and sometimes my husband.

Where do you work? I work in my dining room. Fortunately we don't use it often as a dining room, so it is a space I can spread out in and be as creative as I want. Usually this involves some mess. I am not a terribly tidy person when I am crafting and my creative ideas are flowing.

Where do you sell your hats? Primarily on my Etsy shop. Next year I am hoping to take a stall at my first doll's house show. I visited the York fair in the summer and I am planning to take a stand there next year. I have just started creating pictures with miniature hats too and I plan to see if there is a market for these at local Christmas craft fairs.

What makes your space for miniatures so special? I love the light that comes into the room. It has a "shabby chic" style which I love. I painted the dresser and dining chairs myself using chalk paint and I am quite pleased with the way they have turned out. When I am working I can see out into the garden and often I can see the weather changing rapidly – living in the Scottish Borders we often get every season in a very short space of time.

Describe your workspace in five words. Quirky, homely, organised chaos, "shabby chic" style, my space.

That's a tad more than five, but who's counting? What is the one thing that your workspace can't be missing? Coffee in the morning and gin and tonic in the evening.

And your dream workspace? Difficult to answer because I love where I work, but the one thing that would make it even more special would be being able to see sea waves crashing on a shore. Practically, a workspace that has excellent storage for all my beautiful fabrics and bits 'n' pieces would be amazing.

Thanks for sharing your space with us, Janet.

• Janet's Miniature Hats
by Janet Crozier
Email: jacrozier@btinternet.com
Etsy: Janetsminiaturehats.etsy.com



"I AM NOT A TERRIBLY TIDY PERSON WHEN I AM CRAFTING AND MY CREATIVE IDEAS ARE FLOWING."



FIGURES OF FUN AND FANTASY

BY JUDITH A. ORR

I specifically make porcelain dolls, fairies, elves, and characters that are fun, fantasy collectibles. A few other things are Fimo holiday ornaments, accessories, toys, and theatres with figures.

I first became interested in miniatures as a little girl. I was fascinated with things that were small or close to doll's house size. I was fortunate enough to have a doll's house as a child filled with miniatures handed down from my grandmother, aunt, and my mother. My mother's side of the family were scrapbook makers, and I am lucky enough to have quite a few pieces depicting colourful and interesting things that were current for their time, a wonderful source of inspiration for me.

Being as involved as I am with miniatures, I am most appreciative of the artists and their creativity and ingenious skills to create the beautiful things that are presented to collectors at the shows. There has never been an event or show that I have attended that I

didn't become awestruck by the beauty and quality that is presented to the public, as well as the unique variety.

I began as a self-taught artist for most of my miniature-making, and have been involved in miniature shows and events for over 35 years. Through the open-sharing from new acquaintances and the enthusiastic encouragement from collectors, I moved forward, expanding directions from period pieces, authentic as well as re-enactment costuming, and historic facts. I then created my own versions, style, and techniques.

Through the sales of my miniatures, I was able to have in-depth instruction from five well-known teachers that had expertise in different areas of doll making from carving, assembly, painting, carving, detailing, lace-draping, and anatomy refinement.

For the future I would like to continue with more fantasy dolls, expanding my techniques and different materials to continue making more whimsical pieces and themes.



LITTLE LINKS:

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Christmas showca



The festive season really does lend itself to beautiful mini-making and here we showcase some of the imaginative work from top artists who have been inspired by the time of year

◀ Roxanne Fern

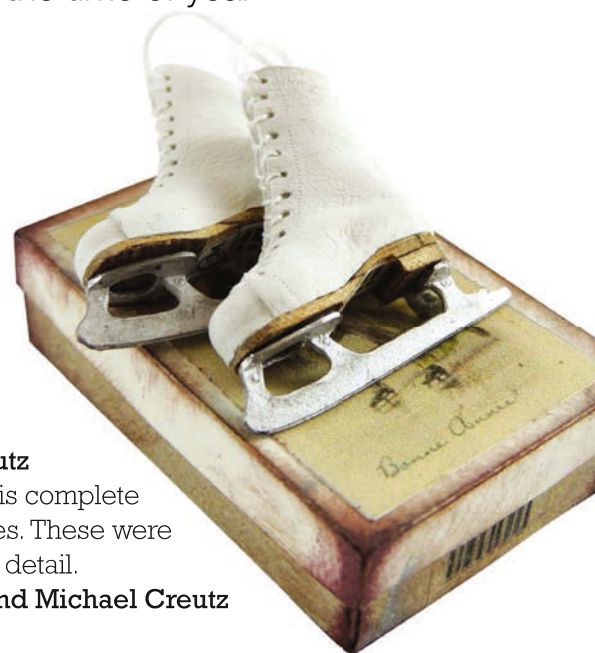
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▼▶ **Jo Bevilacqua -**

This year Jo shares her twelfth scale Christmas trees and a gingerbread house in progress with us.

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◆▶ **Linda Cummings**

"I have been enjoying creating wonderfully small art pieces for the past fifteen years and look forward to many more years. This is the time of year that I love the cosy feeling of sitting in front of a log fire and watching the twinkling Christmas tree lights, while the snow falls gently outside."

● **Linsminis by Linda Cummings**
www.etsy.com/shop/linsminis



House story inspired by classic tale of a rabbit

There is a lot of Christmas magic sprinkled over this wonderful house with scenes based on a well-known children's book, and it's filled with mini treasures too

BY DEB WEISSLER. PHOTOGRAPHY BY MICHELLE BRINN

Christmas is the time for heart-warming stories and cups of hot cocoa, and even though Margery Williams's 1922 tale, "The Velveteen Rabbit" has not typically been included among traditional holiday tales, Joan Warren's latest vignette shows that you can find some Christmas magic just about anywhere.

Most of us are familiar with the tale of the much-loved stuffed rabbit that was given as a Christmas gift to a small boy. Originally snubbed, the rabbit gradually becomes the boy's favourite toy. But the rabbit longs to become a real rabbit.

When the child falls ill with a highly

contagious disease, his possessions are bundled together into a sack and taken to the garden to be burned. Alone and frightened, the stuffed bunny cries real tears, which waters a magic flower from which a fairy emerges. Hearing of his plight, she takes the rabbit to the forest, kisses and turns him into a live rabbit, free to join the other wild rabbits.

Of course like most miniaturists recreating scenes from books or movies, we often take a bit of artistic license, and Joan is no exception. With the classic story firmly in her mind, when she

spotted an adorable little girl asleep in her bed crafted by doll maker Gale Bantock, the book's young boy immediately morphed into a little girl. Now all she needed was a home.

"I commissioned Liz LeBosse to custom build this house for me," says Joan. "She constructed the multi-story room box according to my specifications; the interior decorating and story line portrayed are entirely my own."

Joan, a retired interior decorator who attended the Fashion Institute of Technology in NYC, has an eye and flair for interior design. Every item is beautifully staged to create not only a pleasing palette but a storyline as well. So while the structure was under construction, Joan attended a few miniature shows where she acquired special pieces or commissioned items from several artists with whom she was familiar. The construction took five months and when it was finished Joan was ready to move in!

Filled with treasures from such notable miniature artists was Kerri Pajutee, Penny Thomson, Teresa Layman, Veronique Lux, Phyllis Hawkes, Nell Corkin, and Mark Murphy, the room box positively oozes charm in every corner. One special item, the parlour's

Left: The twelfth scale doll's house shown in entirety with a Christmas reindeer on top! The house is displayed on a old converted sewing machine table. It stands in the room that has all her other room boxes on display.





Top: The tree in this room is very sentimental historically.

Above: The small Japanese dolls are beautifully made nesting boxes and one fits into the other. They are delicately hand-painted in Christmas colours.





Above: The tiny tea set in the room is a treasure that Joan commissioned years ago from Jean Ying Ling. A tiny work of art, it has a hand-painted Beatrix Potter motif on it and the delicate stack of pancakes, plate of cookies and soft boiled egg were made by Leslie Burgess providing good nutrition from the Nanny.

Christmas tree, has a fascinating history.

"It was manufactured in the Sude-tenland of what was once Czechoslo-vakia. When Germany invaded this region during World War II, all the factories ceased production," Joan explains. "The region was famous for its costume jewellery and in 1989 a storeroom was discovered that contained some of this old stock. I made the purchase at an antique show." For Joan, the tree is priceless.

Each room is filled with doll's houses, essentially a tiny home within a home. The nursery is a dream, filled with toys, treasures, and sweet treats guaranteed to thrill any child.

The kindly Nanny is there to care for her tiny charge while the loyal Velveteen Rabbit sits nearby. Out in the garden, on a snow-sprinkled terrace



Top: Joan had the house custom built by Liz LeBosse. Once it was finished she got to work filling it with mini masterpieces.

Above: A close up of some wall decoration.

Right: The patio where all of the magic is taking place.

where all the contaminated toys await their fates, a fairy waves her wand and prepares to turn the tattered Velveteen Rabbit into a live one. Nearby, the forest rabbits wait.

One could spend hours taking in all the details, from each tiny inhabitant to

the small Japanese dolls nesting boxes painted in Christmas colours. There's even a reindeer on the roof! Filled with Christmas magic, Joan says "when night falls, the fairies, elves, and toys come alive throughout the house, visible only to the little girl."

So as you hang your decorations, bake your holiday treats, and gather your family around to enjoy a Christmas film, keep in mind "The Velveteen Rabbit" and its tale of hope and love. After all, isn't that what Christmas is all about? Merry Christmas!

Switch faces to welcome winter

Switching out decorations for the season can be quite a task in our miniature world. This cute little winter door decoration makes it easy

BY AURALEA KRIEGER

This is a very relaxing little project that will stir your creativity. You can take this even further by making spring and summer versions or whatever else you can think of.

Step 1: Cut 5 planks of wood to 3 3/4" long and 1/4" wide. Cut the 5th one in half.



Step 2: If you had to cut with a blade then sand all the side edges smooth. If you have craft sticks just sand the cut tops.



Step 3: Put your hat rim in place and mark on either side lightly with a pencil. This will be the autumn side.



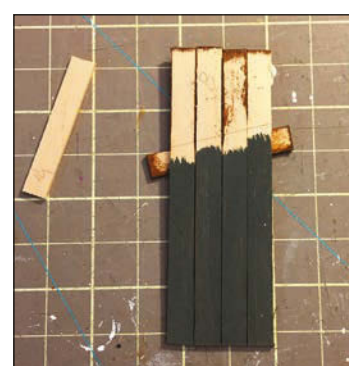
Step 4: Stain the tops and the hat rim dark brown and the lower half light brown.

Step 5: Line up the planks and put something on them to brace them while adding glue to the brim area. Then press the brim down. Let dry.

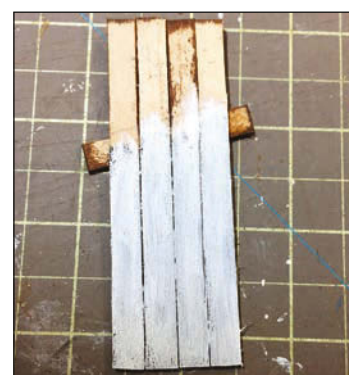


Step 6: If you have any uneven edges trim them down.

Step 7: Mark the hat brim area on the winter side.



Step 8: Paint the base in a grey. Use thin coats so it doesn't seep through. I made the mistake of going thick and it came through the other side through the cracks. If this happens let dry a bit then scrape off with a blade and restain.



Step 9: Once the grey is dry paint on two coats of the white. Let dry, then sand.

You will need

- Planks of wood 1/4" wide
- Fine sandpaper
- Wood stain - light and dark
- Wood glue
- Acrylic paint - grey, white, black,
- Paint brushes
- Metal ruler
- Marker - black and orange
- Pencil
- Pastel stick - pink



Step 10: Paint the winter hat rim and the top of the hat black.



Step 11: Glue on the rim and trim the top even if needed.



Step 12: Draw on the face with pencil then go over it with markers.



Step 13: Use a little pink pastel with a brush on the cheeks. For the autumn side I drew with the pink pastel, blew the dust away, and then softened it with a brush.

Step 14: Fill in the white and black with a tiny brush and paint or use a toothpick.



Step 15: Add some "snow" to the winter hat using white paint. I used a brush for the top and a toothpick for the rim.

All finished! Display in your miniature scene to add some seasonal spice.



Win Santa Claus

Win this wonderful Santa by dollmaker Jan Clarke. All you have to do is find the missing word in the grid above.

Email your one word answer to richard@ashdown.co.uk with 'Win Santa' in the subject line.

Or send a postcard to the UK office address at the front of the magazine. Closing date is: December 4.

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Brigitte's Snow House

BY SANDRA HARDING

Brigitte Brackett from Maine USA, called this a Cotton Batting Snow Baby House when she sent me the details, and I changed it to Snow House because it's shorter and easier to remember. Anyway, I thought this was so unusual that I asked her for details, and I think this is what she told me (I don't speak German you see).

Brigitte designed and made this from wood and it measures 20" high x 22" wide x 8" deep. It is painted in Robin's Egg blue chalk paint, made by Annie Sloan. The roof is covered in vintage cotton batting, with 100

icicles added, covered in the finest white glitter. On the back wall are various scrap pictures, some vintage and some newer, all made in Germany (called Oblaten or Glanzbilder there).

The lovely gold and turquoise die cuts and vintage glass ornaments were also made in Germany. The antique tinsel garland was added for trim and the bouillion wire is silver. The three snowbabies were dressed by Brigitte and the vintage Frozen Charlotte dolls, very collectable nowadays, are made of celluloid.

Brigitte created the angel using a porcelain doll kit to which she added a mohair wig, silk dress with antique metal trim on the bottom. The golden wings were made in Germany and all the other accessories are new from various sources. Even the Christmas trees are painted white while the many hanging baubles simply add to the scene.

Someone who should be mentioned here is Brigitte's grandson Parker, aged 9 who helped his daddy to cut a few pieces of the wood on a bandsaw.





Gather round Jen's market stalls

BY SANDRA HARDING

Jen Gibson sent me these photographs of her gorgeous market stalls last January, and in the excitement of writing about her other lovely things these quite fell off my list. I was so glad that the Christmas issues were looming as it reminded me I hadn't done them.

Anyway, the larger market stall started as a flat pack several years ago but with all the other things she had on the go, Jen didn't get round to

making it up until she got the urge to create something else Christmassy. Although Jen has already made other Christmas creations, they had become rather overcrowded and this was the opportunity to move stuff on to the stall.

Most of the packets and paper items were made from printies, which Jen loves, and there are many other small items which she either made or simply repainted with various colour

nail varnishes. There are tree decorations, candles, stockings, mini trees, boxes of baubles and Christmas crackers, and I know from experience how hard these are to make. I am told the only thing that Jen did not modify were the nutcrackers which she bought in a garden centre.

On the other wonderful stall there are Fimo Christmas cakes, including some ready to ice, together with a wide variety of lovely chocolate logs, mince pies, gingerbread cottages, biscuits and other mouth-watering items, all carefully made by this talented lady.



Jen's Christmas Noel

BY SANDRA HARDING

This is yet another of Jen Gibson's little Christmas treasures that I have had for a few months, thinking that Christmas was way off in the future. How wrong was I, as it is suddenly here (well, in the publishing world anyway)?

It's a little gem of a shop in twelfth scale, Jen's favoured size, and is just packed with goodies to delight every age, from child to child-like (I speak for a lot of us I think). Even the outside is themed and grandpa has taken his three granddaughters out of the house so mummy can wrap some early Christmas presents.

Issy, short for Isabel, and Phoebe are whispering secrets about what they want to get grandpa for Christmas. Their sister Ruby is trying to get another sweetie from him as she knows he has a few left in his pocket. Anyway, she can't keep secrets as she is too young.

The girls have already been in the shop and Phoebe thinks that granddad would like a wrapped surprise men's gift (she is the practical one), and Issy thinks he would prefer to have one of the stockings filled with sweets and biscuits. She hopes that at least she might get some as he is a very generous grandpa.

The shop is so full of wonder for the little ones. There are baskets of shiny baubles, Christmas trees covered in stars and shiny things, balloons and teddies, books and flowers (maybe for mummy) and plates and garlands everywhere, and almost all made in reality (oh dear) by the talented hand of Jen.

In a moment grandpa will be crossing the street with the children as he can't wait to see their little faces when they see Santa and his sleigh on the roof. It took the shop owner three days to stuff the Santa suit to the right size, but the girls don't need to know that!



Christmas bakery

BY SANDRA HARDING

This scrumptious (oo-er, a word I haven't used before) little concoction belongs to Brigitte Brackett. She made it in 2010, and I don't know why I waited this long to show you. It is made of wood and measures 20"x10"x10" and was assembled and painted by Brigitte.

A printed antique tile pattern was used for the floor, and each piece was glued on separately. The gold trims on the shelves, the cash register by Bodo Hennig and the little girl doll by Heidi Ott are all from Germany. The shop assistant may be a local girl, but she is shy and hasn't given her name. All the gorgeous boxes were designed and made by Brigitte, using Microsoft Word.

The green garland at the back is decorated with red silk and lights, which have a battery pack at the back of the store. Most of the cakes and pastries she made using polymer clay. One gingerbread house was from a Canadian miniaturist, and a few cakes were swaps.

Brigitte admits that her biggest love was designing the individual gift boxes using antique German greeting card images, and she simply kept on doing it. (Many dollshousers have a reputation for not knowing when to stop - I know, as I am one!)

I love everything about this delightful little scene and it has been so beautifully displayed, with everything in the right place. I think it was worth the wait; hope you do too.



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Quick and easy ideas

Add sparkle to your festive scene with these simple, fun ideas to pretty up trees and create a card display

BY SANDRA HARDING



So simple Christmas trees

- Add glue and glitter to the white base, or paint in glitter nail varnish. Let it dry.
- Using a large brush, apply glue lightly all over the "branches" of the tree, and sprinkle glitter or fairy dust liberally all over. Let it dry.

something underneath the tree beforehand to catch the falling glitter to use on another tree.

- Glue star sequins, nail decorations, beads, flowers, strings of beads, ribbons or anything you want, evenly spaced all over the tree. Let it dry.

Add a star or something pretty to the top of the tree. Fill in any gaps with more shiny things.

You will need

- Pack of Christmas trees from many garden centre outlets
- Glue, tweezers
- Nail decorations, beads, bows, ribbons, strings of beads, sequins etc.
- Glitter nail varnish, or "fairy" dust from Works or similar.



Make a card display

- Cut ribbon to required length, with a pointy bit at the bottom.
- Cut out Christmas cards and fold them.
- Glue the cards evenly spaced to the ribbon, leaving a little space at the top for decoration, and showing the pointy bit at the bottom. Let it dry.
- Glue on a little decoration at the top.
- Place on the wall of your house with a little white/blue tack.



You will need

- Christmas card cut-outs from DHW Cutouts (See P77)
- Thin satin ribbon, about 3 inches long (silk is too flimsy)
- Glue
- Scissors
- Little gold decoration or bead for the top

MM FAIRS

Dolls House & Miniature Fairs

DATE CHANGE

SUNDAY
25th November 2018

The Civic Hall, Market Street
NANTWICH,
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10.30am - 3.00pm

Please note the change of date for this fair is due to the hall being used for the 100th Remembrance Sunday

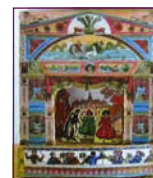
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- ☺ **Sunday 4 November 2018**
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- ☺ **Sunday 18 November 2018 - NEW FAIR**
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Pink fridge is at the heart of a proposal

When Delph Miniatures were asked to make a funky fridge to a deadline, they soon realised this was a commission with a romantic twist

BY CHARLOTTE MERRYMAN

Kath Holden at Delph Miniatures was pleased she didn't give the cold shoulder to a request to make a Smeg-type fridge with working doors.

For the twelfth scale replica was at the heart of a customer's romantic marriage proposal.

Kath said: "At first we thought it was just an interesting commission from a gentleman - a pink version of our trendy fridge/freezer with a bottle of HP Brown Sauce in the door."

The man gave her a specific date he needed the fridge by, and eventually told her: "Not to put undue pressure on the deadline but it's for a slightly elaborate (and in-joke) marriage proposal whilst we're away on holiday."

Kath said: "It was all quite exciting to be involved with, and there was a very anxious wait after delivery, even though we didn't know them."

The special pink fridge even had a heart inscribed onto the back, complete with the couple's names: 'Paul and Ash'.

Paul told Kath that "Ash is obsessed with brown sauce" when he asked if it was possible to add a bottle of HP in the door.

She was only too delighted to oblige, especially as Kath herself has a fond sauce memory. She said: "I'm obsessed with tomato

sauce. When my husband asked my dad if he could marry me, my dad said as long as he could keep me in tomato sauce he could have me."

Kath set to work in good time to complete the order, pouring the resin (with its white pigment in, so that the inside of the fridge/freezer would be white) into her mould, as always trying to make sure that she had as few bubbles as possible. Then she poured the doors too.

She said: "I repeated the pouring as back up, should I mess up. Insurance is always good on these occasions."

The fridge went well, but the sauce was causing more of a problem.

Kath said: "I created two perfectly shaped HP Brown Sauce bottles from plastic. I know that sounds weird, but I can carve and sand the plastic to just how I wanted."

"When they were painted brown they looked great. Now for the label.

An internet search came through and I had images galore of HP Brown Sauce labels, but they all seemed to be on bottles. I needed a label image that was flat so I could shrink it and wrap it around three sides the bottle. Eventually having scrolled past what seemed like thousands of HP bottles I found a flat one.



Jackpot.

"I copied the label into my design program and shrunk it down to the correct size, but I still needed the 'collar' label that goes around the neck of the bottle. I'd not seen anything I could use on the search engine, so I copied just the HP Logo and then matched the colour to create the blue 'collar'. Printed out they looked great, and on the bottle, fantastic! It was a shame half of it would be in the shelf unseen."

She added: "I was proud of how it had all turned out, but placing the SMEG letters was a heart-stopping moment; one slip of a tweezer and ping, I could lose a letter, or drop it in the wrong place on the door. In the end it went just as I'd hoped."

On delivery Kath couldn't resist asking what was the reason behind the fridge proposal. Was Ash a miniaturist? Apparently not (for now). She's just "very into pink Smeg fridges".

The Delph team waited with baited breath with their fingers crossed for Paul. Then an email arrived from Croatia, where they were holidaying.

"Hi Kath, Just to let you know that it all went brilliantly and the fridge was perfect. And thankfully she said yes."



LITTLE LINKS:

Delph Miniatures
Tel: 01274 882391
email: info@delphminiatures.co.uk
web: www.delphminiatures.co.uk



JEN'S SHABBY CHIC BOX

BY SANDRA HARDING

I've noticed a few times recently that I have used the word 'adorable' in my writing, and I make no apologies for using the word again, as adorable is what Jen Gibson's shabby chic room box is.

It's a Dolls House Emporium box, measuring 12" wide x 12" deep x 10" high, and Jen, who lives in Kendal, near the Lake District, really wanted to do something different with it, after spending ages on the usual red and green themed Christmas items.

Now, I personally find creating "shabby chic" quite difficult, rather like making things dirty, which sort of goes against the grain for many of us I think. But Jen has managed to create that "soft" look which is hard – if you see what I mean.

The walls were covered with wallpaper from the internet and most of the

plates are paper, with printies stuck on. One exception is the plate on the back wall, which was a gift. Most of the plastic items in this box have been "doctored" (Jen's word), and many others she made herself.

The trees and wreaths are decorated with pink, white and pale coloured beads, sequins and other shiny bits. The teapots are Fimo which were



painted, and although she found them fiddly, Jen actually enjoyed making them. The little houses were printed from the internet and the candles are either real birthday cake candles or painted wooden skewers.

The ribbon display is made from card and even the Christmas ribbon is paper. The little scene on the left is in a bottle top, with small wooden Christmas trees, a Santa and deer which were painted, with a mirror added to create a lake. The painted church on the same table was used by Jen's mother to decorate her Christmas cakes when Jen was a child. My mum had one of those too, Jen (it's long gone).

I am so envious of Jen's ability to create this look and the amount of lovelies she has crammed into this box. There are even more of Jen's creations in the pipeline I am glad to say.

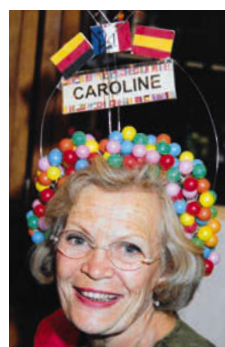
How little things led to one big Festival

A friend had £300 in the bank and an electric typewriter. She had a passion for miniatures and a hatful of new ideas. The London Dollshouse Festival was off to a flying start

BY CAROLINE HAMILTON

When it became embarrassingly obvious that I was spending a lot of the house-keeping money on my hobby, I started making little framed scenes called 'shadow boxes' for sale and traipsed off on Sunday mornings to sit in the cold at Covent Garden craft market with my dollmaker partner Judith James.

This led to joining the British Toy-makers Guild and also finding out that, while there were a few specialist doll's house fairs in various parts of the country, in London miniaturists struggled to be noticed amongst large antique dolls and teddy bears.



I got to know Sue Atkinson of Sunday Dolls and she thought we should start a miniatures-only fair in London. She had £300 in the bank and an electric typewriter so we took a deep breath and in May 1985 we hired Kensington Town Hall for a one-day Dollshouse Festival.

With no experience in this field at all, I just tried to do everything I would like to find as a keen collector myself: I aimed for a balance of different crafts, to celebrate the best quality work I could find worldwide, a proper catalogue with clear floor plans with tables named not numbered, decent refresh-

ments and room to sit down and, above all, some finished doll's houses in a display section to show off and inspire –not just a fair, but a festival.

Hobby mate Jane Fiddick took charge of the display and every year we laboured to finish another project, offered each other whatever papers or mouldings might come in handy, ran around the corner late at night to borrow the fret - or the tabletop saw - and consulted at length. Finally we had to wax everything down in the houses so that we could bubble-wrap them and load them into a transit van that I drove with considerable trepidation.

The Festival quickly expanded to a three-day weekend, became a great international success and our lim-



Book by KDF regular Miniature Boekenbinden



Arabian room set by previous KDF exhibitor Ron Hubble



Winner of the KDF Cup 2018 Nikki Nakki Nu



Doll by KDF regular Gale Elena Bantock



Painted furniture by Summer Show exhibitor Janet Reyburn



Fish tank by Summer Show exhibitor Fatima Dona



Spring Onions by KDF regular Mouse House Miniatures



Overview of Kensington Dollhouse Festival

ited number preview tickets sold out months in advance. When I passed the show to Charlotte Stokoe, twenty years later, she took it onwards and upwards, adding more shows to the calendar, with the original Kensington Town Hall making its fiftieth appearance in its thirty third year. It has been immensely rewarding to see so much talent blossom from Scholarship Table (our free place for rising talent) to top of the tree and to share the delight of fellow collectors.

It's celebration time as Festival hits fifty mark

When show organiser Charlotte Stokoe did the maths, she was left with one thought.. it was time to celebrate fifty shows run under the London Dollhouse banner

Charlotte Stokoe is stocking up on the gold and the glitter this December when the London Dollhouse Festival celebrates its fiftieth show.

She took over the organisation of the world-famous Festival in 2005 and is finding it hard to believe that she has since run 30 shows in the past 13 years.

"This fact dawned upon me very suddenly," Charlotte said. "I can't remember why I was adding up the number of shows. I was probably trying to find something more important to do than my VAT return, but as soon as I had done the maths a few times to make sure I hadn't made a mistake..14 summer shows plus 11 Christmas shows plus five City of London shows, I realised that, with the twenty shows Caroline Hamilton had run before me, that it was time to celebrate fifty shows."

Charlotte has lots of exciting things planned for the anniversary show. She said: "I don't need much encouragement to celebrate so we have some great ideas to make the show special on December 1st. I

guarantee there will be lots of gold, glitter and balloons involved."

50th Show celebration cards

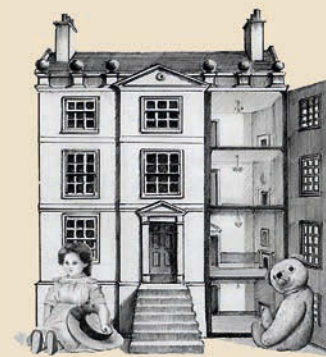
The current LDF logo is a version of the original logo from back in 1985, but this year

Charlotte wanted to add a new-look doll's house. She turned to Robin Hunter, multi-talented LDF Team member, who has 'artist' listed as one of his many skills. Charlotte said: "He pictured the house perfectly, and 300 special 50th Show Celebration cards featuring the house were posted to our most regular visitors."

Limited edition book

Liza Antrim has just published another wonderful book about her doll's house collection and Charlotte has asked Ellie de Lacy, one of her regular exhibitors, to produce a mini version.

An edition of 50 copies launched in November and will be available at the show. Charlotte said: "Ellie's work is always accurate and detailed so I am sure the finished book will be something all collectors want."



A doll's house doll's house by KDF regular Geoff Wonnacott



Doll's house by KDF regular visitor Debra Kirby



Tudor house by Christmas Show exhibitor The Workshop

FESTIVAL AT 50



Shop scene by previous KDF exhibitor Jethro's Barn



Ham House by KDF regulars Mulvany & Rogers



Venician palazzo by Paul Wells



Room interior by previous KDF exhibitor The Georgian Dolls House Co



1:144 scale house by KDF regulars Small Time



Parisian Boutique by KDF regulars Mulvany & Rogers



Treasured memories

Jan and Paul Brownhill of Country Treasures are another couple who haven't missed a single Festival. Jan tells us about their experiences, including a very noisy start

Q: You've been at every show since 1985. What's your secret? There is no secret, but it's hard to believe we've done 50 shows. Time stands still when you're doing something you love.

Q: Clearest memory of that first show? Waking up the residents of Kensington early Sunday morning when the exhaust system broke in half, and having to return home on the back of an AA recovery vehicle at the end of the show. The amazing day in-between made up for the inconvenience.

Q: Has your range changed much over the years? Hopefully it's improved. Paul continues to add to the list of copperware and kitchen ranges. My range of preserves and food displays are constantly changing and now we have Laura, our granddaughter, with her amazing wildlife and detailed food items.



Q: If you hadn't been at the fairs, how would you have spent the time? Most likely some other creative activity, or nosing around antique fairs, getting away in our little motor home. Certainly not sitting twiddling our thumbs.

Q: What changes have you noticed? New faces behind the stands as others retire or move on to new ventures. The biggest change is the instant access to social media. There wasn't much of that around back in the day.

Q: What do you love most about the Festival? The wonderful atmosphere. Meeting up with old friends and customers. They lift our spirits with their lovely comments and joyful faces.

Q: What do you least like? Getting out of bed in the early hours to travel to London when the country is asleep.

Q: Do you have a set unpacking routine? Paul has his routine. I sit back and let him get on with it. He does allow me to put the cloth on the table and carry the bags to and from the car. Happy days!

Q: What's the strangest thing that's happened to you at the Festival? It was at one of the early shows. We found ourselves pinned between the wall and our stand. It was like the January sales. We couldn't persuade the visitors to move back enough to push the stand into its original position.

Q: What makes you pull your hair out at shows?

It takes a lot to get me to that stage. Paul hasn't any left to pull.



More memories



Karen Griffiths and Peter Armstrong of Stokesay Ware have exhibited at every Festival. Here Karen gives us a flavour of what it's been like.

Q: You're one of only two makers to have attended all 50 shows. What's your secret? Luck. We were in the right place at the right time when Caroline invited us to the first show.

Q: What do you remember about your first show? It was tremendously successful, Peter and I were elated.

Q: How has your range changed over the years? The biggest change we made was quite early on when we stopped using commercially available patterns and started drawing and making our own exclusive designs. More recently the innovation of full colour

printing in ceramic enamels which can be permanently fired into the glaze has opened up a whole new avenue to explore with the the exciting possibility of new ranges of colourful china.

Q: What would you have been doing if you hadn't been spending all those weekends at fairs? I would have been decorating and furnishing my own doll's house which has stood untouched and neglected in the corner of my living room for 30 years.

Q: How has the Festival changed? In some ways I don't think the Festival has changed that much in that it maintains the same high standards that Caroline insisted on. It still has the same buzz and excitement and Charlotte has successfully grown it to two shows a year, plus the Tower show, without compromising the original vision.

Q: What do you love most about the Festival? It is our local show.

Q: What do you least like? London Transport engineering works

Q: Most memorable moment? My most memorable moment really was the unexpected success of that first show. I went home thinking that if I never did anything else again I would

Q: You love making miniatures, but do you love selling them? We love the look of happiness on customers' faces when they purchase something they've wanted for ages. Especially when they return to show photographs of our work displayed in their doll's houses and room settings.

Q: How many more Festivals do you have in you? Who knows. Can't imagine life without miniatures. Luckily, our granddaughter has joined us. She has great enthusiasm and lots of new ideas, so even when we are not around Country Treasures should be for a long time to come.

● www.countrytreasures.co.uk



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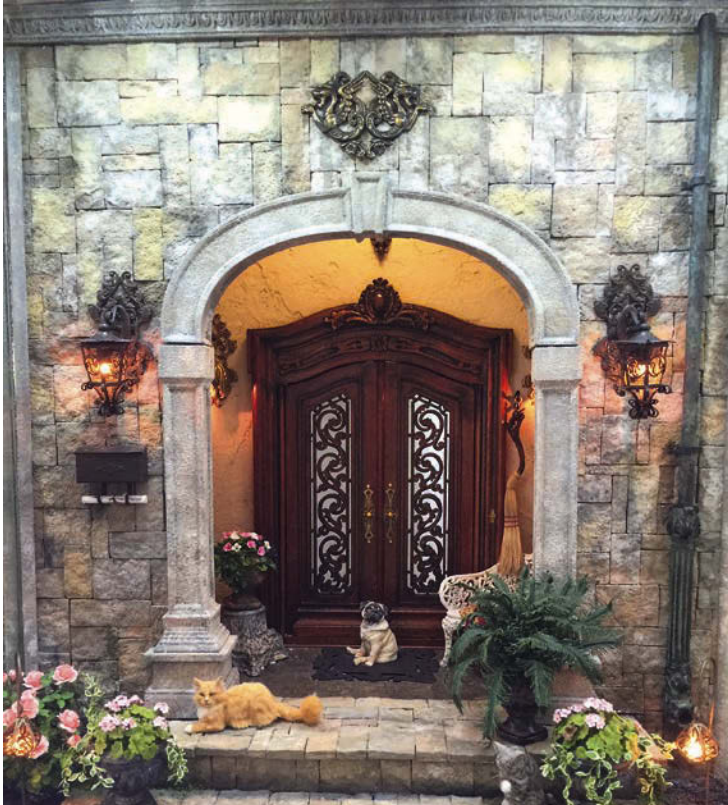
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at least have done something that was an unqualified success.

Q: Do you have favourite customers?
We have so many customers who have been visiting us for decades that they have become like old friends, but the amazement on the faces of new visitors is a joy too.

Q: Do you have a set unpacking/packing routine?
We still carry the check list my late father made for my first show, although we now leave out the mole grip wrench, string and ashtray. It was 37 years ago!



Q: Does anything surprise you each year? The skill and ingenuity of our fellow exhibitors is a constant source of delight. I collect myself so fully appreciate the exquisite pleasure of unpacking a new treasure when I get home.

Q: What makes you pull your hair out at shows? Very little - but if it does we recite the 'Serenity Prayer'! There are some things that we just have no influence over.

Q: You love making miniatures, but do you love selling them? It is the sincerest of compliments when customers part with their hard-earned money for something we have made, so yes.

ments when customers part with their hard-earned money for something we have made, so yes.

Q: How many more Festivals do you have in you? This is so much more than a job for us, it's a way of life and we can't imagine doing anything else. We are excited about the new projects and in view of this we plan to review your question after the next 50 shows!

● Karen and Peter sell their current ranges through their website www.stokesayware.com and at shows. Their previous ranges and vintage work will be available on eBay under their user ID stokesayarchive

Why Caroline's stunning headdress was created

When the Festival was under Caroline's command, first-time visitors and exhibitors were often taken aback by her eccentric headdress.

There was certainly no missing the show organiser. And that was the point. Caroline recalls: "Partner Sue Atkinson was stuck at her Sunday Dolls table and worried about seeing where I was; all this was well before mobile phones and such.

"So I wore extra-thick-soled trainers, a bright red sash and made a Caroline sign above my head. I included my languages in case a foreign visitor was stuck.

"Stall holders made a mock and said: 'It'll never fly Caroline'. So I said: 'But it'll have flashing lights on it next year!' And it did, with a small battery down my bra.

"In the Millennium dome year it was an inverted plastic pudding basin and for our 18th year I made the birthday balloons version. It was incredibly useful and looking at the old photos I still admire it."



See the houses

The book 'Our Dollshouses at Newby Hall', by Caroline Hamilton and Jane Fiddick, will be on sale at the Festival. The book features many of the houses that will have been displayed at the Festival over the years. You can still see the houses too, perpetuated in a permanent home at Newby Hall, near Ripon, North Yorkshire.



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These tiny trees make perfect little presents

It's time to make some miniature Christmas trees with the talented Anna Wybranowska. Trimming a holiday tree has never been so much fun

BY ANNA WYBRANOWSKA

There are no better Christmas gifts to give friends or family members than the ones we make ourselves. Each year I prepare small packages for my closest friends including baked and decorated gingerbreads, caramelised nuts, and marzipan pralines. But besides sweet treats, I like to add a small decoration. A miniature Christmas tree, wreath, or gingerbread house are the perfect addition!

Miniature Christmas trees are also a great way to decorate our doll's houses. And these little gems are very easy to make.



You will need

- Miniature pot 1" tall
- Aluminium foil
- Dry twig or stick
- Craft paints
- White glue
- Green miniature landscaping foam
- Florist foam
- Beads, chains, ribbon, small ornaments

Step 1. Roll the aluminium foil into a cone shape (2 1/2" tall). Make a small hole for the tree trunk/twig to be inserted into.



Step 2. Place the foil form onto the twig using glue.

Step 3. Now paint your pot in the colour you wish.

Step 4. Use green paint to cover the aluminium foil forms.



Step 5. Once the tree paint is dry cover it with glue.



Step 6. Then cover it with green miniature landscaping foam. Let everything dry.



Step 7. Now fill the flowerpot with a florist foam and, using glue, apply some sand or some dry coffee/tea grinds on the top.

Step 8. Place the stem of the tree into the pot using glue. Let dry.

Step 9. It is time to decorate your tree! Add a bow on the trunk and use beads, small Christmas decorations, and jewellery chains to dress it up.

You can also create your own decorations from polymer clay such as sugar canes, baubles, stars and much more.

Raven Rose changes into a romantic lady

You don't need any experience to make this beautiful outfit, complete with dress, wiggling and hat. So what are you waiting for, start snipping with those scissors?

BY DANA

This doll is simply beautiful and the skill level is aimed at beginners. The tilted hat showcases a soft, romantic style of hair.

Raven Rose has had quite an adventure. She started off as a barefoot geisha and then went steampunk and was too pretty so I changed her to this romantic lady.

You will need

- Doll and doll stand
- Pipe cleaner/cotton
- Viscose
- Scissors
- Needle, thread, pins
- Zap-A-Gap gel Super Glue
- Curved glue syringe
- Tweezers
- Toothpick
- Aleene's Original Tacky Glue
- Lace to decorate dress
- Plant mister with distilled water for wiggling
- Nail polish/decor for shoes
- Ruler to measure rectangles
- Black thread
- Silk materials
- Insert lace
- White florist tape for arm strength
- Hair spray for draping
- Index card for hat base
- Corsage pin for combing
- Plastic baggie

Step 1. Paint the doll's shoes the colour of your choice and assemble the doll.



Step 2. Make a basic pair of pantaloons in a tube and put her on a doll stand.

Doll's skirt



Step 1. Cut out a 9" x 4" rectangle from white silk. Turn the bottom edge under to the wrong side and then glue the hem.



Step 2. Gather the waist, slide on the doll, and then sew it shut.

Bodice

This bodice is made by taking a rectangle, gluing it around the back of doll with both edges meeting near front. The "V" shaped stomacher is then glued over this front gap.

Step 1. Cut a 3" x 1" rectangle from white silk. Cut a sample from paper towel to test fit first! I adjust the chest on each and every doll to create this pushed up look. Some dolls maybe more endowed then others. So if you cut the sample piece first you can make sure the bodice fits nicely.

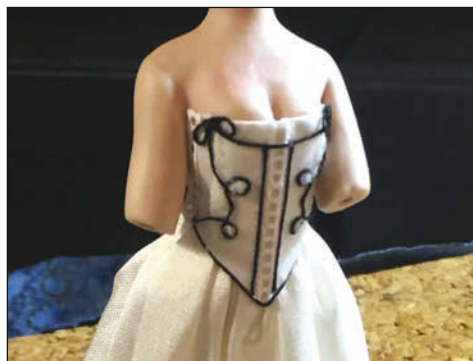
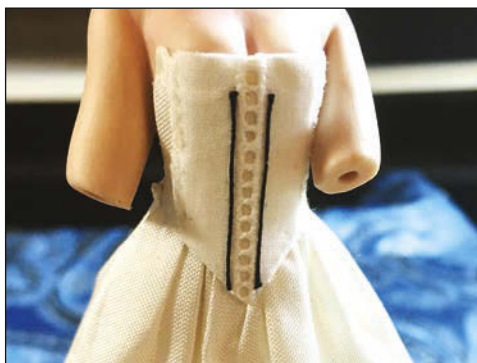
Step 2. Once the bodice size is determined, turn the top and bottom to the wrong side and glue to make the finished edges.

Step 3. Starting at the back, glue and wrap the edges around to the front.

MINI DRESS-MAKING



Step 4. Cut out the stomacher from an index card and glue it to the white silk. Be sure to cut the silk a little larger than the index card so you have a small seam allowance to turn and glue on the backside of the index card.



Step 6. Glue on two pieces of black thread as shown. Then add a design. You can create a simple design or decorate as your heart desires. Since the thread glues so easily the designs can be intricate.

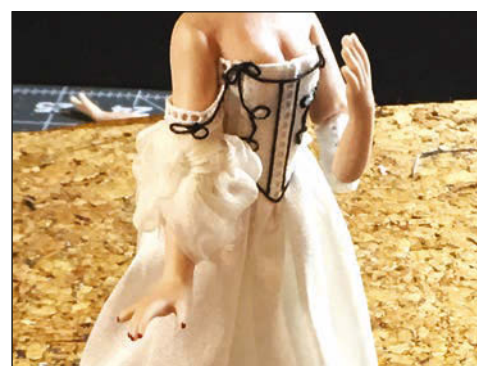
Sleeves

Step 1. Glue your porcelain arms onto pipe cleaners. I use a Tacky Glue, and a drop of Super Glue, in the arm hole. Then insert the pipe cleaner.



Step 2. Next, wrap the arm with white florist tape to give it a bit of thickness. It will also act as a bandage to help hold the tiny porcelain arm to the pipe cleaner.

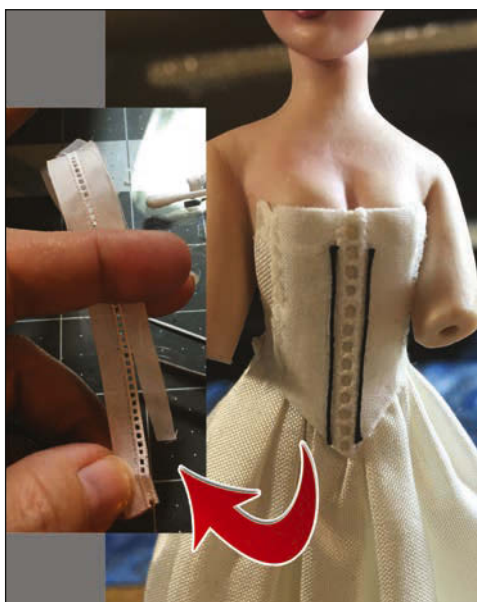
Step 3. Insert the pipe cleaner into the upper arm hole. Glue and let dry. Position as desired.



Step 4. Now cut a strip of 1" x 5" silk gauze and literally tie a knot, and a knot, and a knot until you get the desired puff effect. This is how I created her. How simple, right? After you spray with hair spray to drape her skirt, any little frizzies can carefully be patted down.

Step 5. If this bothers the sewers among you, turn the edges of the 1" x 5", piece to the wrong side and gather tightly for the effect.

Step 6. Once the sleeves are on the doll, simply cut a tiny bit of the insertion lace and glue it over the top of the sleeve to make it looked draped. Remember you can also tie the sleeves in larger loose knots and then run a couple of stay stitches through it to shape if necessary.



Step 5. Glue the strip of insertion lace up the front of the stomacher.

MINI DRESS-MAKING



Step 7. When the sleeves are finished, glue a tiny bit of lace around the neck for added decoration.

Wigging



Step 1. Gently spread your viscose out, so it is smooth.

Step 2. Lightly mist both sides with distilled water and run through your fingers so hair is smooth.

Step 3. Place a little plastic bag around the doll's dress to prevent the black hair from sticking to her beautiful silk taffeta.

Next, we will be making a basic wiggling cross. I have a video on YOUTUBE. www.youtube.com/watch?v=DpA-TwH2DpI



Step 4. Glue realistic hairline on the doll's head, then lay a strip of viscose

from the nose to the neck. Let the glue dry.



Step 5. Next, put a line of glue from ear to ear, add another strip of viscose from ear to ear. When done, lift up all the hair to back of head.



Step 6. Separate the hair into three sections. I always lightly mist the hair and smooth it so it is a nicer non-frizzy

braid, then braid hair into one side braid.



Step 7. Now simply roll and glue to the side of her head. Not tightly. Make it soft and pretty! If you need to smooth her hair down, simply take your small hair straightener and gently pat the hair to shape and smooth it.

“Now simply roll and glue to the side of her head. Not tightly. Make it soft and pretty!”

MINI DRESS-MAKING



Step 8. I curled a small curl to glue around her face to soften her up. You are now ready to create a pretty hat to add to this romantic hairstyle!

Hat

Step 1. Cut a circle out of index card that is approx. 2" x 2".



Step 2. Glue card stock to a piece of silk, with a small allowance to turn under to the wrong side.



Step 3. Gather the piece of silk gauze and glue to the inside of the hat. I did this where the hair wouldn't cover to make it seem fuller without bothering the doll's hairstyle.

Step 4. Glue the hat to the doll's hair/head.

Step 5. Glue a tiny bit of lace to half of the inside of the hat to add contrast.

Step 6. I also glued a few feathers and flowers to her hat to make it fancy.

Step 7. Glue on a few pearls for her earrings.

That is it! You are all set. I had so much fun making this simple doll and hope you do too!



Mix of minis blend together to create a room with character

This comfortable family room is warm and glowing at Christmas time, and shows the benefits of the 'less is more' approach. It also shows off a lovely rug you can make



BY FELICITY PRICE

It was a busy evening for Sir Rupert T Lyttle. However, aided by the Ambassador's charming wife, Sir Rupert was able to retrieve the secret formula, keep his rendezvous with the British Agent and arrive with seconds to spare before the start of the Arctic dog sled race.

Having won the race with ease, he was put out to have his return hampered by a broken runner and fierce snowstorms. He was however surprised, but pleased, to spot the welcoming lights of a small hunting lodge across the frozen wasteland.

The home of Mr and Mrs Claus and their six enchanting daughters appeared to be a small toy workshop. Although Mr Claus offered to transport Sir Rupert in his huge red sled, drawn by seven reindeer, Sir Rupert would not hear of putting the old chap through so much trouble and insisted on mending his runner.

Warm, well fed, and waited on hand and foot by the six Claus daughters, each prettier than the next, Sir Rupert took an inordinately long time to make his repairs and despite tactful enquiries, was never able to establish quite how and why the Claus family came to be living in such a place. With understandable regret Sir Rupert left the many charms of the little lodge and, on his return home, decided to recreate the magic of his idyll in one room of his ancestral home – a room that would always have happy memories.

Creating the look

Making a Christmas room is lots of fun. I like to use a mixture of widely available commercial items, specially made pieces, and odds and ends from garage sales, partly to demonstrate that doll's houses are not just for the well-off, but also because that hybrid blend is what gives a doll's house its quirky character.

For Sir Rupert's room I wanted a look that would be warm and glowing but not tacky, a comfortable family room where he can sit and have a cigar and a glass of port. The carpet design gave me a strong starting point with the red and green of the poinsettias echoed throughout the room. The strongly contrasting colours are softened by introduction of a softer green in the needlework and a peachy-pink shade.

Originally I had intended to use wrapping paper for the walls but have you ever tried to buy Christmas paper in August? Some shopkeepers gave me quite odd looks. I was tempted to tell them it was for a doll's house but felt that it might have made things worse.

We found some poinsettia and holly

motifs online and made some perfectly acceptable wallpaper, arranged it in panels and added a log fire.

My husband decided it was grand enough to warrant panelling and spent his evenings fiddling with little bits of wood for the next few weeks. The floor is wood strip stained to match the panelling. The red mahogany both tones with, and provides a foil for, the reds, creams, peach and greens giving the whole room natural warmth. Although there are several light sources in the room they are kept low key.

The two lights, which cast a lovely amber glow, light the back room and the log fire provides a focal point. On the mantelpiece are two dainty porcelain Christmas trees. Two strings of tree lights twinkle on the Christmas tree and the enchanting nativity scene made by Veronica Pickup also lights up for the added 'ah' factor. A table lamp shines some light on the tea table, which was chosen simply for its look.

You can use any furniture in a room like this but the comfortable leather armchair and the bright splash of the red wing chair are most inviting. Who wouldn't want to sink into that old leather chair by the fire, drape the tartan wrap about their shoulders and settle down with a good book?

Accessories for this room are also very easy to buy. Christmas food can adorn the table and the gifts on the floor waiting to be wrapped can be

‘Have you ever tried to buy Christmas paper in August?’



toys, food, bottles of wine, ornaments and books.

Christmas decorations can be bought very reasonably or home made and if you wish you can fill your room with glitter and colour but do beware of ending up with an untidy look. A neater look is achieved if colours are coordinated.

Before starting this project I collected together an immense pile of festive "stuff", which I felt sure I would definitely need to decorate this room, but after several experiments I realised that actually the whole room looked much prettier if I kept it all very low key and simple. As with a real tree, if you add too much to it the lights are obliterated, so I compromised by leaving further baubles and tinsel on the floor as if it was a task in progress.

A few strands of tinsel with red bows complete the room.

I did indulge myself by purchasing a working grandfather clock for this room and while working on the room one quiet afternoon, I realised that I could actually hear it ticking. With the lights on in the room and the glowing log fire, it almost felt real. Now if I could just find a way to give it an authentic Christmas smell.



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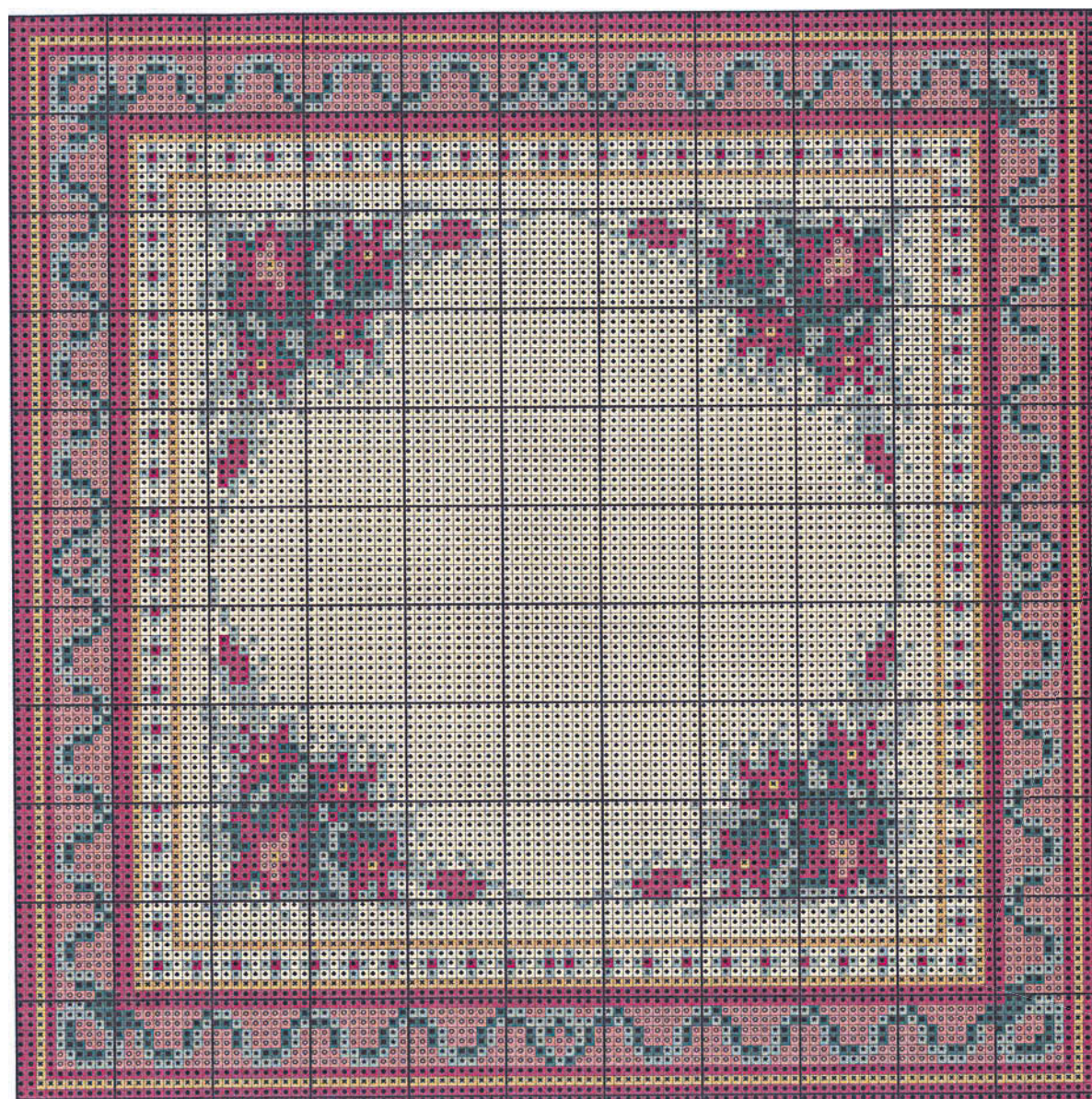
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The needlework designs

Poinsettia and ribbons were the inspiration for this design, which is appropriately named Noelle. However, they are not so obviously festive that they cannot be used all year round. The design has been varied to make an appearance as a carpet, cushion, stool top and framed picture. It looked so pretty when made up that I have also produced a version in violet.

Needlework, also shown in this room, is the red tartan design rug in front of the fire, a little Christmas "Welcome" mat by the door and a snow teddy cushion which I have added some extra sparkle to using silver thread. The finished size of your carpet will be about 5" square.

You may use half cross, petit point or tent stitch. I prefer to work in basket weave stitch, which is tent stitch worked diagonally across the canvas.

You will need

- Canvas 22TPI 20cm x 20cm
- Size 26 Tapestry Needles
- Anchor Stranded Cotton as listed:

- 275 off white
- 214 pale green
- 311 gold
- 19 red
- 9 coral
- 210 dark green

Step 1: Use three strands of the thread in the needle. When you have finished all the stitching, trim the canvas to about 3/4" all around your stitched work.

Step 2: Fold the excess canvas back, mitre the corners and iron a piece of Vilene to the back of the carpet, which hides untidy ends and keeps the carpet flat on the floor.

Step 3: If you have a needlepoint carpet, which just will not lie flat, and pressing with a steam iron does not do the trick, try a little piece of grip wax in the corners.

Enjoy your new festive creation!



A miniature Christmas

Felicity Walker shows her love of the season and miniatures
by putting together this festive scene

BY PAM NORTH

People become miniaturists in all sorts of ways. With Felicity Walker, it happened in 1994 when she attended a presentation, given by a group of members from the Miniaturia Guild of Cape Town, at the craft club to which she belonged.

While that was the pivotal moment to steer her into miniatures, other influences had blended to guide her direction. "My Mum always was do-

ing craft work when I was growing up, and I'm sure my interest stemmed from that time. I joined a craft club, and began making porcelain dolls, which led to my getting involved in restoring and authentically redressing antique dolls for museums and other clients for 25 years.

"In 1994, I had resigned from the craft club to concentrate on my newfound love of minis, but all those

crafts that I had learned over the years were put to good use, just in a smaller form. I am a stickler for authenticity, and this plays out in my 21-room Victorian doll's house, which took me nine years to complete. I also have completed three Dutch Canal Houses, set in the Regency period, and many room boxes."

Her latest piece is her Christmas room box, a gradual accumulation



"I always have loved Christmas, and I wanted a room box for my collection that reflected that."

The majority of the items were made by me, but there are other artists whose work is included in this piece; there are two of Pam Jones' tiny Christmas ornaments on the mantelpiece, Glasscraft's Bristol decanter, and Sue Cook Miniatures' boot scraper."

She describes some of the techniques and materials she used in the piece. "The room box is divided into three areas - the main section in the middle, and two narrow side pieces.

"On the left side there is a sleigh piled full of presents, as well as Santa's sack of toys. The right side holds the postbox, and a goose wearing a Christmas hat looking up at the robin perched on the top. These small vignettes are visible through the windows of the main section.

"I used a pair of Sue Cook wall brackets to create a fireplace fender; from an ojime bead I created a lamp with a silk shade; and I used a broken wine glass upside-down to create a dome for a 3mm high toy soldier.

"There were no major difficulties in creating the piece; I just held my breath that all the lighting would work, and that the floor medallion (a Brodnax kit) would all come together. I always have loved Christmas, and I wanted a room box for my collection that reflected that.

"My favourite part about this piece is Father Christmas, with his puffed-out tummy and a hole in his sock, as well as the chair in which he is sleeping. I also loved making the Christmas tree from lycopodium, and then

decorating it with all sorts of ornaments." She has no plans to sell her piece, preferring instead to keep it for personal display.

Looking to the future

Always looking forward to new challenges, she describes what she plans next: "I am very excited to be starting a steampunk room box, but it is going to take awhile. I already have made a couple of items for it."

Love of miniatures often permeates families, an influence that helps to promote and expand the hobby. Felicity had interrupted a career as a legal secretary almost 40 years ago to get married and focus on raising a family in South Africa.

Now they have become her best critics on her new hobby. "I have an incredibly supportive husband and daughter. Our sons live in the UK, and our granddaughter is very keen on minis, something I am trying to nurture, albeit from afar."

vignette

of ideas that finally came to fruition. It is not set in any particular era, but a considerable amount of planning was involved to incorporate items she either had created herself over the years, or those made by others and gifted to her.

"Richard Ferguson made the box for me, together with the fire grate and a beautiful postbox which I painted and accessorised with a tiny robin perched on top. Father Christmas was a doll kit made by a friend, and there are beautiful embroideries on the wall, as well as the embroidered door stop, all gifts from friends.



Make a market stand to suit any festive fair

Christmas markets will soon start to spring up all around the country and across Europe, but you can make your own busy stall closer to home

BY ANNA WYBRANOWSKA

The inspiration for this project came from classic German Christmas markets. The stand is full of decorations, handmade items, mulled wine, pretzels, hot sausages, and all kind of gingerbreads that are a feast for the eyes.

These market fairs are often accompanied by carousels and festive music. They look most beautiful in the evening, shining with thousands of colourful lights sparkling in the snow. This project was my idea for a Christmas gift to give to my parents.

The stand itself is easy and quick to build. It took me three days to make. But the decorations are very time consuming. I had been preparing them

during long weeks since summertime.

Once I had everything ready I made the stand. You could make the stand now and stay in the Christmas spirit by making the accessories through the New Year. Maybe even add more every Christmas.



Step 1. We will be starting with the floor. Cover the base with glue and ap-



ply the thin pine slats. Keep in mind the thinner the slats you have the easier it will be to cut them. I was able to use scissors. Let dry then use sandpaper and oil/paint the floor. You can add darker shading at the end, to make it look even more realistic. Finish each step of painting with matt varnish: it will protect your stand in the future and will be easier to clean.



Step 2. Now cut the counter base from plywood or very thick cardboard. It's just a base, but has to be strong enough to hold all the decorations. The counter from the front and left should be all along the stand. On the left, leave space for an entrance. Right: 7 7/8" long x 3 1/8" high
Front: 1 7/8" long x 3 1/8" high
Right: 4 7/8" x 3 1/8"

Step 3. Cut the 1/16" pine sheet for the countertop. The top should fit into the bottom wall and have a 2 3/8" depth.

Step 4. Now apply the countertop to the base and cover the walls with thin slats. Again use the sandpaper and paint it.

You will need

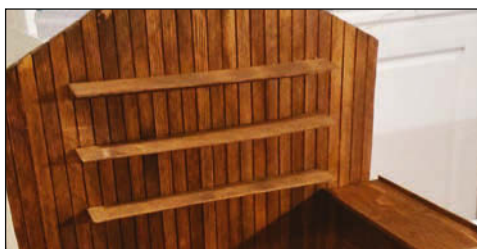
- Base - wooden board 300mm wide x 200mm deep – approx. 11.5" x 7 7/8". Thick and strong to hold the stands weight
- The thinnest pine slats 1/16" or 1/32" x 1/12" for floor and walls
- The thinnest pine slats 1/16" or 1/32" x 1/8" for finishing wooden elements
- Square pine bar approx. 3/8" x 3/8" for columns
- Plywood or very thick cardboard for the roof, rear wall, and counter
- 1/16" or 1/32" thick pine sheet

- for counter top
- Yellow wood glue
- Craft knife
- Grey acrylic paint
- Dark wood oil
- Raffia for roof
- Small strand of LEDs - can be powered by batteries
- Sandpaper
- Matt varnish
- Brushes for oil, paint, and varnish
- Accessories - imitation tree twigs, beads or balls, snow, icicles, stars, signboard, decorative chain, garland, sugar canes, wreaths, and a Christmas tree

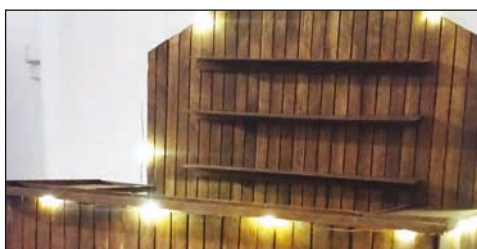
PROJECT



Step 5. It's time to add the back wall, which is also covered with pine slats. The rear wall is approximately 11 7/8" high (to the top) x 7 7/8" long.



Step 6. Cut, paint, and add some shelves. Add smaller slats as finishing for the countertop.



Step 7. When all the walls are ready then install the tape with LED lights. The switch and batteries should be located at the back of the stand.

Stand roof



Step 1. Cut two of the same boards (7 7/8" x 9") and the triangular element under the roof peaks. The triangular element is finished the same way as the other walls. Glue all parts together. It should match up with the back wall.



Step 2. Cover the roof with raffia using glue. Paint it with gray acrylic paint. You can cover the roof with fake snow and add icicles too.



Step 3. Cut four joists to connect the counter to the roof. Then put all the elements for the stand together.

Step 4.

The last step is decorating the stand, which is the most fun! I used imitation Christmas tree twigs, beads, sugar canes made from polymer clay, and tiny wooden stars to decorate my stand.

Now your Christmas stand is ready to fill with all sorts of Christmas items. How wonderful would it be to create a grand miniature scene with these stands? And fill your coffee table, window sill, or mantelpiece with them. Be sure they are filled with gingerbread treats, holiday decorations, poinsettia, toys for children and whatever else you can think of to make them extra special.

This could even be a tradition for you club members out there. Every year a new Christmas stand with a new theme. And of course this could also be a wonderful gift for someone special.

However you decide to do this I hope you have fun and that your Christmas is full of love and laughter.



SHOW DATES

A ROUND UP OF PLACES WHERE THE MINI FLAGS WILL BE FLYING AROUND THE COUNTRY



OCTOBER

SUNDAY OCTOBER 28TH DOLLS HOUSES & MINIATURES FAIR

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

DOLLS HOUSE & MINIATURES FAIR

Lyndhurst Community Centre,
Main Car Park, LYNDHURST,
Hants SO43 7NY
Open: 10.00am - 4.00pm
Organiser: Wendy's World

CHARITY DOLLS HOUSE FAIR

Shaw Farm, MARLBOROUGH,
Wiltshire SN8 4LU
Open: 10.30am - 2.30pm
Organiser: Pat Cutforth

NOVEMBER

SATURDAY NOVEMBER 3RD LEEDS DOLL'S HOUSE FAIR

Pusey Civic Hall, Dawsons Corner,
PUDSEY, Leeds LS28 5TA
Open: 10.30am - 4.00pm
Organiser: Doreen Jeffries

SUNDAY NOVEMBER 4TH DOLLS HOUSE & MINIATURES FAIR

The Digby Hall, Hound Street,
SHERBORNE, Dorset DT9 3AA
Open: 10.30am - 3.00pm
Organiser: MGM Fairs

SUNDAY NOVEMBER 18TH DOLLS HOUSE & MINIATURES FAIR

Bentley Heath Community Centre,
Widney Road, Bentley Heath,
SOLIHULL, West Mids. B93 9BQ
Open: 10.30am - 3.00pm
Organiser: MGM Fairs

DOLLS HOUSE & MINIATURES FAIR

York Racecourse, YORK YO23 1EX
Open: 10.30am - 4.00pm
Organiser: Warners Exhibitions

SATURDAY NOVEMBER 24TH 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 NOVEMBER 25TH DOLLS HOUSE & MINIATURES FAIR

The Inn on the Lake Hotel,
GRAVESEND, Kent DA12 3HB
Open: 10.00am - 2.30pm
Organiser: D&M Fairs

DOLLS HOUSE & MINIATURES FAIR

The Civic Hall,
Market Street,
NANTWICH,
Cheshire CW5 5DG
Open: 10.30am - 3.00pm
Organiser: MM Fairs

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FAIR ORGANISERS:

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Wendy's World: 01895 834348

www.wendysworldfairs.co.uk

E: wendyhobday@wendysworld.co.uk

DECEMBER

SATURDAY DECEMBER 1ST KENSINGTON DOLLS HOUSE FESTIVAL

CHRISTMAS SHOW

Town Hall, Horton Street,
Kensington,
LONDON W8 7NX
Open: 11.00am - 6.00pm
Organiser: Kensington Dolls
House Festivals

SUNDAY DECEMBER 2ND DOLLS HOUSES AND MINIATURES FAIR

Holiday Inn Basildon,
Waterfront Walk,
Festival Leisure Park,
BASILDON, Essex SS14 3DG
(off A127)
Open: 10.30am - 4.00pm
Organiser: Dolly's Daydreams

SATURDAY DECEMBER 8TH DOLLS HOUSE & MINIATURES FAIR

The Shoreham Centre,
2 Pond Road, SHOREHAM-BY-SEA,
West Sussex BN43 5WU
Open: 10.30am - 3.00pm
Organiser: MGM Fairs

SUNDAY DECEMBER 9TH DOLLS HOUSES & MINIATURES FAIR

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

SUNDAY DECEMBER 16TH DOLLS HOUSES & MINIATURES FAIR

Felixstowe Leisure Centre,
The Sea Front, FELIXSTOWE
IP11 2AE (next to Pier)
Open: 10.30am - 3.00pm
Organiser: Dolly's Daydreams

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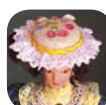
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Fatima's Victorian home is the ultimate kit bash

This house started life as a basic kit nearly twenty years ago, but major amendments meant it has only recently been completed to win 'Best of Show'

BY FATIMA DA PONTE

Vitoria was put together from a very large kit my mother gave me when I decided to start miniatures back in 1998.

It's a Victorian style home with both modern and antique furnishings, inhabited by a modern day family on Christmas Eve with lots of baking, wrapping and TV watching going on.

The family depicted is my family prior to their weddings. Male figures are hard to find and don't seem quite right unless you spend a lot of money - hence why the hubby is sleeping face down. I never thought I would have characters in the house until I found the lady on the couch.

The kit was a Greenleaf Garfield but after I'd put the basic foundation together it was left to gather dust for a number of years. Then came some serious kit bashing, starting with a staircase I built in hardwood. It was a bit of a problem as it spanned three floors and all the walls were up.

I did not use any of the windows included with the kit so the exterior walls had to be adjusted to allow for the thickness of the new windows. I used foam, glued to the outside of the house, to add the thickness I needed with little extra weight. I added dormers for additional roof interest, and moved the front door to the other side of the house in order to showcase the



stairs, also changing it to a double entry.

Some windows became balconies while others were shut off to allow for bigger furniture. I opened up a little bay window over the kitchen sink to add interest and a place to put little vases and herbs.

Another major change was to the roof which I cut away to allow for viewing into the rooms. The bathroom was too deep so I made it smaller and placed a hallway leading to the girl's room as well as to the rest of the second floor. There is a sliding door leading to the hidden hallway. I love to know that there are little hideaway spaces places in the house, like the closet under the staircase. The turret was a lot of fun to do using copper which I aged first and then made the copper wind vane and window roof sections.

Fun to do

The exterior wood siding, shingles, brickwork and rendering were all lot of fun to do. The pattern on the peak sections is textured craft paper, and the rendering on the feature windows was created using large grit sandpaper. The brick is egg carton, painted in various shades, then cut and individually worked into the house.

I've made a lot of changes to the house over the years and also had a constant battle with the electrics. I

used flat tape wire but if I had to do it over I would choose round wire. Even though I documented where the wire was, once the wallpaper went over it the little brads pulled up and caused loose connections as well as shortages. This was a a real struggle and many repairs and substitutions were made.

I made all window treatments and printed some carpets. I created the linoleum floor in the kitchen and tiles in the bathroom from tile internet images pieced together to make a design. Some light fixtures were purchased while others were made by me, like the wall sconces in the dining room and parlour which were made from earrings found years ago at a thrift store. I love furniture pieces and probably have enough for another house. Bespaq are my favourite and I can't seem to resist a good piece.

Vitoria was completed in time to be displayed at the West Coast Dollhouse Miniature Show and Sale in 2017 and, I'm very proud to say, was awarded Best in Show. However, while I have loved putting the house together I doubt very much that I will build another.

It was with the encouragement of my miniature mentors and friends that I completed this house and I want to thank them for their generosity of time and many miniature gifts. Not to mention the friendship which helped me believe that, I too, could be a miniaturist.





Above: Fatima built most of the cupboards and built-ins. The onion and garlic on display were her own makes too.

Right: Blue dishes on the shelf are by Stokesay Ware purchased in 2000. Over time Fatima bought other sets of china which are displayed here on the table waiting to be set for Christmas dinner. She admits: "I love to collect silver and cranberry glassware."



Top left: Complete view of the bath showing the sliding pocket door. The hallway behind it is lit and featured one of Fatima's own plant stands, along with wall pictures and a rug. "Not visible but I know it is there," she says.

Top right: Bathroom fixtures were acquired from an estate sale. You can see the fanlight Fatima added to make a hallway and shorten the length of the bathroom.

Above: On the chair a fundraising project she started to provide blankets for the homeless, called "Sew-Warm", has been recreated in miniature. Blankets were made from felted wool sweaters. Actual Instructions and picture are on the table.

Above far right: Madame, who wears beautiful petit point slippers by Linda P, has fallen asleep before the wrapping was finished. But come morning it will all be done as it is every year.

Right: Many dolls that have been collected over the years along with hats, bags and shoes feature.





Top left: The ceiling treatment was done using cork and whitewashed wood strips

Top right: Fatima's first attempt at making a furry dog was based on her labrador "Luna" using her own hair. Fatima said: It wasn't my own idea but was enjoyable to do."

Above and right: In the master bedroom Fatima scanned and re-sized wallpaper to create the textured ceiling. She then added matching fabric she had collected many years ago. Resting on top of the Sonya Messer chaise lounge is one of Studio E's beautiful breakfast trays and on the floor is a leather bag made by Janine of Minworks. The picture on the dresser is "hubby and me". Many Goeble figurines and perfume bottles add to the look.

Make a cute snowman teapot for any scene

Follow the steps to create this delightful little teapot that will look just as good hanging on your real tree as it will on a shelf in your doll's house

BY REBECCA MICALLEF

A few years ago I had created a miniature Santa's Work Shop which was inspired by my child-like imagination. I guess the little girl within me still believes in Santa Claus and the wonders that Christmas brings.

Since then, every year I tend to add a miniature of my own to that project. I love Christmas and being a miniaturist I get to make my own miniature Christmas decorations. Some I use to decorate doll's houses and some look just as sweet hanging from the Christmas tree.

In this tutorial we will be making a miniature snowman teapot using polymer clay, and just a few tools.

form a ball of 5mm diameter and shape it to look like the body of the snowman. The bottom part should be flattened and the top more rounded.



Step 2. Form a small ball no bigger than 10mm diameter using the same white polymer clay you used to make the snowman's head.

Step 3. Also make a small log that is approx. 1/2" long, making one of the edges thinner and cutting the thicker end slightly slanting for the teapot's spout. If you wish you can cut a "V" shape at the thinner part of the spout to give it more detail.



Step 1. Using the white polymer clay

You will need

- Polymer clay - green, red, white, black, and orange.
- Craft knife
- Needle tool
- Millimetre ruler



Step 4. Now add the small head to the body of the snowman. Either score the clay for both pieces where they attach or use liquid polymer adhesive.

Step 5. Add and shape the spout to the lower side of the snowman's body. Here you can see that the teapot is already taking shape.



Step 6. Take the orange clay and roll a tiny piece into a cone shape to make it look like a tiny carrot for the snowman's nose.

TOPTIP

- Use baby wipes to keep the dust off your fingers when working with polymer clay.

MINI MAKES



Step 7. Using the black clay make a very thin log and cut tiny bits to form the coal pieces for the eyes and mouth of the snowman and also for the buttons on the body. The tinier the pieces the better.



Step 8. Add the nose and the black pieces to the snowman. I first start by adding the nose right in the centre of the snowman's face. Then I add the eyes and the mouth. Finally, I add the buttons to the centre body of the snowman. Press gently to adhere.



Step 9. To make a tiny hat for the snowman I used the green polymer clay. Form a tiny log of 5mm long and flatten a tiny ball for the hat's brim. Adding the 2 pieces together, shape a tiny hat

and position it on the snowman's head.



Step 10. Using the red polymer clay roll a very thin long log to make the scarf for the snowman. We will also use this for the handle of the teapot.



Step 11. Taking half of the log start from the right and go clockwise around the snowman's head until the piece falls in front like a scarf.



Step 12. Cut the front part of the scarf in any length that you prefer. The other end of the scarf should be hidden underneath.



Step 13. Taking the other half of the red log, form the teapot's handle starting from underneath the scarf going

down to the snowman's lower side. This will make the handle look like it's part of the scarf.



Step 14. When you are happy with how the teapot looks, you can add more detail to it. I have added a small holly on the snowman's hat and added a green pocket on the front.



Step 15. Bake the snowman tea pot according to the specifications of your polymer clay package.

Once baked you can add your teapot to your doll's house scene or just add a golden thread to the handle and hang it on your Christmas tree

You can use similar techniques with polymer clay to make all sorts of Christmas themed tea pots. Maybe a snowman's wife tea pot with a larger hat?

Whatever you create I hope you have found this tutorial useful for creating your special miniature Christmas projects.

“ I first start by adding the nose right in the centre of the snowman's face. ”

Trimming ideas gives your tree special look

Even the barest of trees can be made to look special with the addition of a decorative base and a few touches of sparkle

BY ÁUREA SEGURA

Christmas is a feeling of joy and happiness when families come together to celebrate this festive season full of charm and magic. Children's faces light up with anticipation of what Santa Claus will have prepared for them under the Christmas tree. But it's not so much what's under the tree that matters, it's who gathers around it that does.

This year Áurea Segura's Christmas collection aims to bring memories of the warm and intimate feeling of this season. Choosing the highest quality materials, she creates unique and so-

phisticated Christmas trees which aim to bring light to every doll's house. She does a seamless combination of the lively colours of the Christmas season with the elegant colours characteristic of her pieces.

The tree skirt



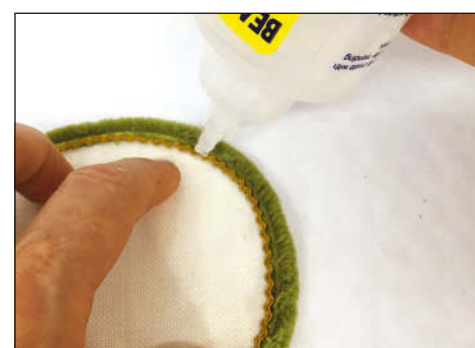
Step 1. With a pencil, draw a circle on two linen cloth pieces. Then cut around one of them leaving half an inch of margin. Make small cuts around this piece. Fold the margin under.

You will need

- 4" x 4" piece of linen
- Trim of your choice
- Fabric glue
- Acrylic paint
- Paint brushes
- Scissors
- Scalloped scissors
- Twelfth scale tree
- Small coloured jingle bells
- Glue gun (Dremel Dual Temp)
- Small golden bead rope
- Metallic pipe cleaner
- White glue
- Plastic pearls beads
- Miniature Christmas balls
- Small box for tree base
- Decorative paper
- Grass
- Christmas lights



Step 2. Cut out the second linen piece along the drawn line. Glue this piece to the under side of the other piece so it is on the side with folds.



Step 3. Use fabric glue to attach the trim of your choice to the skirt. You can also sew it to the linen pieces. This is optional.



Step 4. Once you have the plain tree skirt finished, it's time to decorate it! Use acrylic paint to make a Christmas theme design around the skirt.

Christmas tree



Step 5. Wrap the base with decorative paper of your choice. Then glue the base of the tree to the inside.



Step 6. Set up the Christmas lights around the tree.



Step 7. With a Dremel Dual Temp (glue gun), glue the mini jingle bells, Christmas balls, and pearl beads to the Christmas tree.



Step 8. For a finishing touch you can then add the metallic pipe cleaner around the tree as well as the small golden bead rope.



Finally, you can place the tree on the tree skirt and add miniature presents around it along with a few fun toys.

This miniature Christmas tree will definitely bring holiday light to your doll's house and fill you with the joy of this season that is full of magic.

Add a pretty pillow to your seasonal scene

You can create your own personal message to add to a pillow that will look good whether on the bed, or on the couch. So get stitching

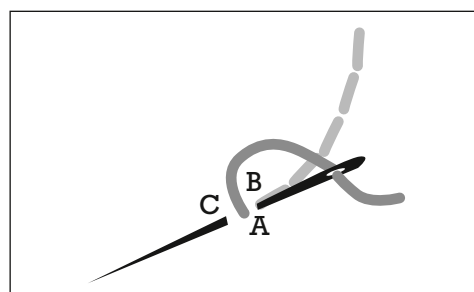
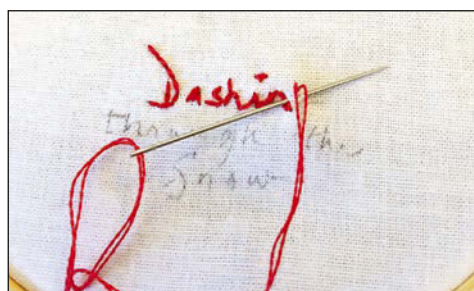
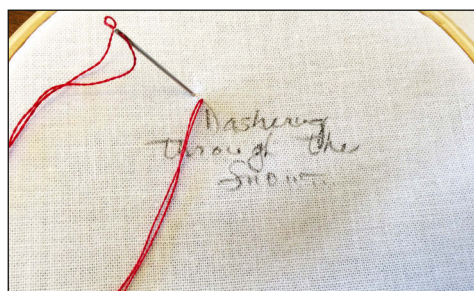
BY DEBBIE BOOTH

Make a special accent pillow for your holiday bed along with Debbie.

Step 1. Centre the design and put in embroidery hoop.

Step 2. Cut an 18" length of red embroidery floss. Pull one strand from the 6 strands of embroidery floss.

Step 3. Thread needle, bring both ends down together and make a small knot.



Step 4. From behind the fabric/hoop bring the needle upward on a traced line. Follow the A,B,C diagram.

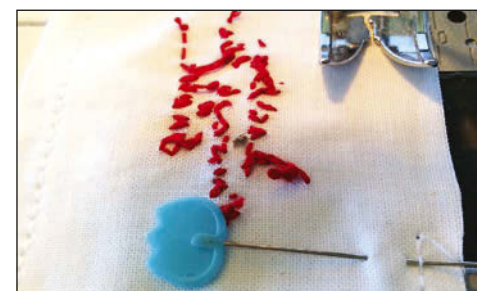
Step 5. Come up at A, down at B, and back up at C. This makes a back stitch which is also a continuous outline stitch. Very simple to do and is great for stitching any design.

Step 6. Once the embroidery is com-

pleted, remove fabric from the hoop and press.

Step 7. I usually measure 1/2" from the stitching on the top, the sides, and the bottom. Trim the fabric with that thought in mind.

When stitching and making the pillow, the seam allowance will be a small 1/4". That would leave 1/4" between the embroidery and the finished edge of the pillow.



Step 8. Once the front of the pillow has been cut down, with the stitchery on the front, cut a matching piece for the backing. With right sides together, pin, and sew the pieces together leaving 1" opening for turning.

Step 9. Remove pins and trim threads. Turn the pillow right side out. Work on corners with a straight pin to form a nice corner point.

Step 10. Stuff with a very small amount of stuffing. Turn edges in and hand sew opening closed.



You will need

- 10" x 10" white cotton fabric (stitch on a larger piece then once the stitching is complete, trim down to the size that the pillow piece needs to be to sew it into a pillow)
- Red embroidery floss
- Scissors
- Embroidery needle
- Embroidery hoop 4" or 6"
- Pencil for tracing
- Make a copy of the design, place white cotton fabric over it and carefully trace with a pencil. Not too dark and not too light.

Tassel for pillow

If desired, you can make a small fringe tassel for the top corner of the pillow.



Step 1. Take 30" or so of embroidery thread, wrap around 2 fingers till it has been wrapped around 3 or 4 times. Leave a 3" or so tail of end threads. Carefully remove circle of embroidery thread from your fingers.



Step 2. Cut another piece of embroidery thread 5" and tie this through the centre of the circle of thread and tie the tie in a knot.



Step 3. Next squeeze the circle of thread together and tie another tie around the top 1/3 of the circle of thread. Tie in a knot and trim it. Cut through the circle. This creates a small tassel.



Step 4. Trim the ends of the tassel so they are even. The tails of the extra thread can be tied into a bow, or knot.

Step 5. Sew the tassel to the edge of the pillow and place on your bed.

● Make a festive headboard and wonderful bedding next issue.



CLUB NEWS

New venue proves a hit for club fair

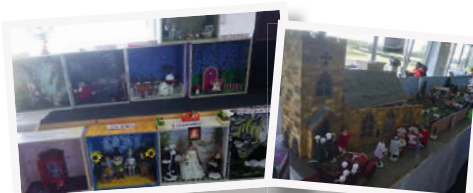
Cleveland Miniaturists held their third Dolls House and Miniatures Fair at a new venue - Sedgefield Racecourse, County Durham - earlier in the year.

The fair attracted 24 exhibitors selling a wide range of houses and miniatures and more than 150 people attended.

Cleveland Miniaturists, together with Sunderland Dolls House Group, sold a range of miniatures made by members of both groups.

The Cleveland group also held a successful tombola in aid of the Great North Air Ambulance, which is their chosen charity. The club's exhibition was a wedding party complete with a church and a cemetery, all depicted in twelfth scale, as well as an exhibition of small room boxes based mainly on the titles of childrens' books.

Linda Innes, Chairperson for Cleveland Miniaturists UK, said: "Club members were extremely busy on the day with not a moment to breathe."



Top tips to put a new house kit together

You've got your first ever doll's house kit and can't wait to get started on putting it together. We asked the experts at RGT for their advice on how to begin

BY REAL GOOD TOYS

Imagine a spacious three story, nine room doll's house with a variety of front panels from which to choose, and different window layouts to create your own unique doll's house! Do you prefer Victorian components? How about Queen Anne style windows and door? The choice is yours. The New England Collection of doll's houses by Real Good Toys has five different component sets each with pre-assembled windows, shutters and doors. Add a front porch, an extension or conservatory and make it yours!

You've made your decision and chosen the doll's house of your dreams. But where do you start? It can be intimidating when you open that box. So many parts and pieces!!

Our Construction Pro gives this new doll's house kit series a 3 on a construction difficulty scale of 1-10, with 10 being the most difficult. He advises that you should follow these basic first

steps when building this doll's house kit.

1. Prepare your space. Before you open the box, prepare a large, flat, clutter free, well lighted work space. Have some smaller boxes ready to keep parts organised, and some trays lined with wax paper for small parts to dry after painting.

2. Read the instructions carefully. Look at each of the illustrations. Pick up, measure, identify and label each part, using the parts list as your guide. Become familiar with the assembly process. If you are missing something, now is the time to request a replacement, not when you are ready to install it.

3. Test fit. Before you glue any piece, take the time to test fit the pieces. When you glue, don't be stingy with the glue. It is OK to use generous



amounts of glue, just wipe off any excess immediately.

4. Paint the house. Paint all of the parts the first coat. Use a high quality semi-gloss latex paint. Our Assembly Pro advises that the order of assembly and painting is a back and forth process of test-assembly, marking, painting, and final assembly. Remember that the quality of your paint job depends on sanding after the first coat only. Bear in mind that glue doesn't stick to paint, but it will stick to a part that has been first coated and sanded.



The Stockbridge



Charlotte's Manor



Oak Hallow

NEW BUILD

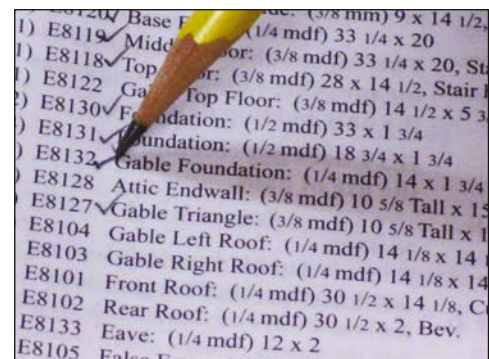


The Jamestown doll's house kit shown with additions.

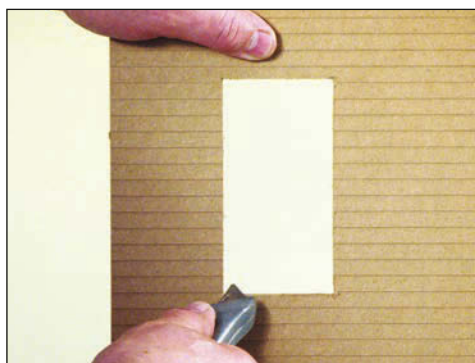


The Foxcroft

It can be intimidating when you open that box. So many parts and pieces!



NEW BUILD



Rest assured that when you purchase this kit, you will receive the same top notch quality that Real Good Toys is known for. Some of the classic features of this kit are 3/8" thick Milled MDF exterior walls complete with grooves for ease of assembly and step-by-step instructions with detailed drawings. You can customise these kits with Banister & Landing Rail sets to dress up the stairs, and 6 panel interior doors to finish the inside. Add fancy trims to put the finishing touch on every room. Don't forget electrical supplies to bring light into your doll's house. We also carry a great selection of miniatures to furnish your new doll's house.

Okay now hold your horses! We know you are getting anxious to start building, but there are a couple more steps before you begin assembling.

5. Square the corners, of the window, door and stair holes. Each cutout has rounded corners that need to be squared. You can use a utility knife or a double cut coarse file for this job.

6. Stain your shingles. You need to do this several days ahead of using them. They will need to be good and dry before you glue them on.

7. Clean the edges and grooves before



Above: Jamestown doll's house kit exterior and interior.

assembly. A little paint always gets on edges and grooves and will make assembly harder and the glue joint less strong. Test your floors in the grooves to see if they need cleaning. This can be done with a Cabinet Scraper or the back edge of a utility blade.

Bottom line: Real Good Toys wants you to succeed in your doll's house build. If care and attention is given to the preparation and assembly, you will create an heirloom that will provide years and years of enjoyment. Because of that, we offer a couple of very good websites, complete with tips, techniques and detailed tutorials. They



are www.realgoodtoys.help and www.dhbuilder.com. These sites are valuable resources for doll's house assembly and finishing. You also can call and speak to our Assembly Manager for some expert help or advice.

For more information or to place an order for one of these new and exciting doll's house kits, please get in touch!



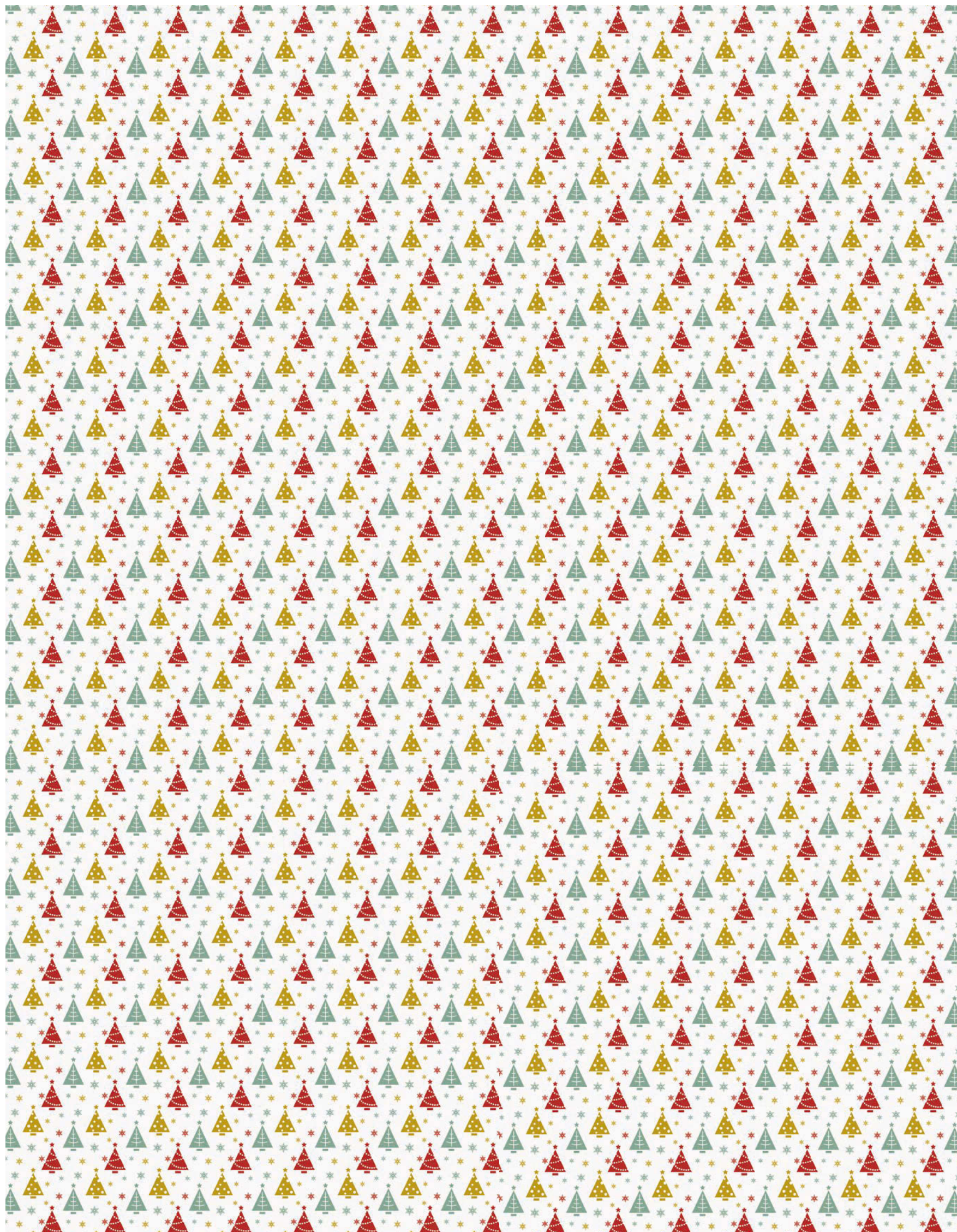
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SMALL TALK

WHERE WE CHAT WITH READERS ABOUT OUR HOBBY. THIS MONTH WE CHAT WITH JAN CLARKE

Hi Jan, we know you're always busy creating your dolls, but tell us what else you're working on.

At the moment I am working on my latest doll's house, a Sid Cooke Georgian that I've been working on for 10 years. It was a birthday present from my family and is the only house I have now.

What was the first house you ever had?

My first doll's house was one I shared with my eldest sister. It was a Triang Elizabethan with a huge Bakelight switch which controlled the lights.

How did you begin working in the hobby?

I really began being involved in the miniatures world more than 40 years ago. I was visiting the Isle of Wight and went to Brading - there was a museum there run by a lovely lady called Margaret. I began talking to her and told her about my interest in antiques and miniatures. From that we became friends and I started dressing and restoring her dolls.

That was a fortuitous holiday trip.

Very much so. I also started making miniature material characters and dressed some Parker-Levi dolls for her. Then Margaret introduced me to Sue Atkinson, of Sunday Dolls, who I then started designing and dressing dolls for.

And very popular they were too. What happened next?

When Sue retired James Carrington, the doll artist, helped me to start sculpting my own figures,

for which I will always be grateful. That is how Jan Clarke Dolls began.

And you've always love making things?

Yes, I have been so lucky that I have been able to create things I love all through my life. Even at college I would make miniature figures wearing costumes from material we had woven. And along the way I have met some wonderful and interesting people in the miniature world. I will always be grateful to them. All have been so full of encouragement and, of course, I'm also grateful to all my ladies who write and buy from me.

What do you do when you're not making your dolls?

I also paint and stitch miniatures for my own pleasure. I love my garden but mostly my spare time is taken up with looking after my two grandsons, so my life is very full with not much spare time. I know I should be retired but, if I were, I would be bored not doing the one thing I love most - sculpting, painting and dressing miniatures.

● Jan Clarke Dolls

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Facebook: Jan Clarke (Jan Clarke Dolls)

Top: The first doll Jan ever made. It was made for her doll's house when she was 9 or 10. Jan found it in her late mother's things, not realising she'd kept it all those years.



"My life is very full with not much spare time."



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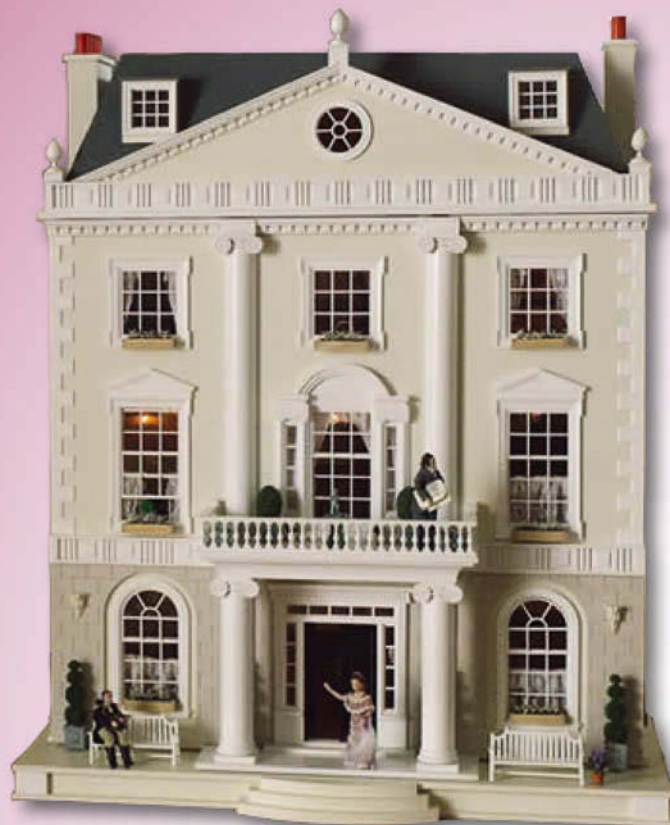
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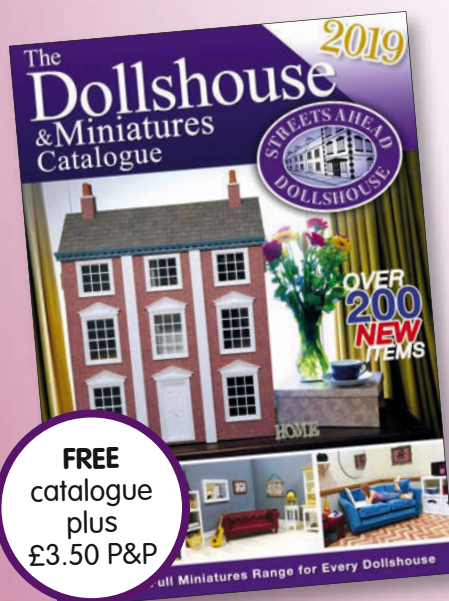
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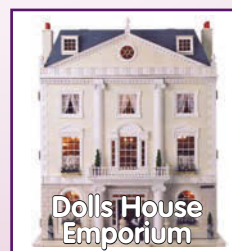
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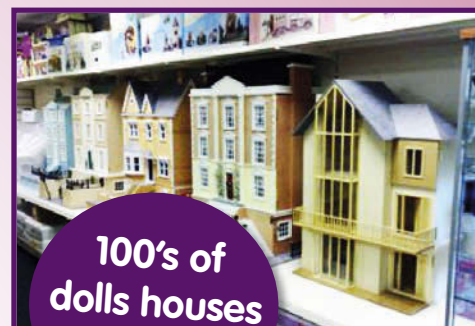
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