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shabby chic
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4 Shop Around

Jill's shabby chic shop looks just right and Sandra is full of admiration

6 House Proud

How Doreen transformed a free house into a chic boutique hotel

10 Mini Ideas

Miniaturists find French feves inspiring and there are lots to collect

14 Mini Makes

Here's a quick fun project for a winter's evening using a little plastic horse

15 Where I Work

This month we visit the workshop of Kathleen Holmes and her husband

18 Mini Makes

This pretty little book is sew cute to create — Debbie shows you how

20 Mini Makes

Transforming the inside of a book is a popular way to create a mini scene

24 The Tudor House

Sandra and Bob's mad adventure ends by adding life to the house

30 Mini Makeover

Kitty's in love with her colourful creation — and the Grey family agree

35 Shop Visit

Pedlars Tray, a shop in a garden centre, is a mini treasure trove

36 Mini Makes

Bake an assortment of tiny valentine goodies for a rustic bakery display

38 Small Accomplishments

Book opens up to show off fabulous Harry Potter scene

40 Mini Makes

From old-fashioned quill to a modern tablet, Sadie shows you how

42 Miniature Showcase

Here's a selection of gorgeous minis from days when shows were held

44 Open House

Two women bought the same house but decorated them so differently

50 Show & Tell

Peter recycles old clocks with little rooms full of memories inside

54 Cabinet Meeting

How Yvonne converted her shelves into a nine room permanent display

56 Meet the Maker

One of Julie Parrott's loyal customers is also one of her biggest fans



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welcome

If you're a Strictly fan you'll be familiar with the 'J' word. It's shorthand for the 'journey' that the celebrity dancers take on the TV show. They start off as nervous, raw beginners and end as accomplished performers passionate about dance.

The 'J' word came up this month when one reader told us how she was reticent to start on miniatures because "as a mother, I often feel guilty about indulging myself". But Gabrielle did take the plunge and embarked on her very personal creative journey from novice to passionate house-builder. She now declares herself "officially hooked".

Elsewhere Sandra has also had a bit of a journey, re-building a house her sister was going to throw out. She completes the tale of her mad Tudor adventure this issue and has even included a Royal story that reads like an early episode of The Crown.

Sandra also talked to Jill Lucas about her shabby chic skills, and we're delighted to feature the room Jill designed as part of a club project on the front cover.

Scenes in books are still so popular, largely because they don't take up too much room. If you fancy having a go, we show you how to create your own. There's also a Harry Potter book to admire this issue and the woman who made it talked about her workshop as a place where "time stands still" and where she can "be truly happy." Sounds like an episode of Strictly.

Happy New Year from all of the DHW team.

Richard.

email: richard@ashdown.co.uk

Life imitating art in the Jennings household. Window coming out of full-size house at same time as window being replaced in old Sid Cooke shop.



60 House Proud

Fate brought house to Judy's door — now it's a wonderful beach property

62 Quick & Easy

Create a flower dome for a Victorian parlour and some glasses

64 Shop Around

Deri Terry's toy shop was inspired by her own childhood memories

50 House Proud

Foxfield Cottage lead way into mini world for Gabrielle

Quote of the month:

"Do not wait until the conditions are perfect to begin. Beginning makes the conditions perfect."

Alan Cohen

HOUSE HUNT



Find the little house hidden inside.

■ Last issue it appeared on page 65.



12

Caring for the environment: Here at Dolls House World we're as concerned about the environment as you are. We're doing everything we can to ensure the magazine is produced in the most eco friendly way possible. Our magazine is printed using vegetable-based inks on an environmentally responsible paper, which is certified by the prestigious FSC® (Forest Stewardship Council), the not-for-profit organisation dedicated to the promotion of responsible forest management worldwide. Our paper also carries the internationally recognised EU Eco-label. Our local printers, Gemini Print, are just a few miles from the DHW offices. They are one of the leading eco friendly printers in the UK, with both FSC® and ISO 14001 certification. They are backed by a series of environmental credentials that allow them to work under the "Green Printing Label". Our printers are also a sponsor of the Woodland Trust – the UK's leading woodland conservation charity.

74 Vintage Minis

Collector Troy Bettridge shares his Tootsie toy doll's house furniture

77 Cutouts

Lots of great ideas to cut out and add to your house or room box

82 Small Talk

We chat with one reader about her life in miniature



50

Jill's shabby chic shop gets the look just right

Sandra is full of admiration for the distressed look that Jill has achieved in her shop using some creative techniques to make many of the accessories

BY SANDRA HARDING

I have mentioned before my admiration for anyone that can create a shabby chic look and make it appear so effortless, when I know from experience it's not.

That's why I'm pleased to show you Jill Lucas's rather beautiful creation, a shop in the shabby chic style.

Even more impressive is that Jill made many of the accessories in the shop, from the jugs and cushions to the linen bales. Other smaller items such as clocks and mirrors were gifts from friends and, as such, would always have found a place in this scene. And anyway, they were so pretty Jill wanted to use them here.

Coming back to the jugs, which I think are a delight, Jill tells me they are made of card, and glossy photographic card, shabbied up and "rusted"

with burnt sienna watercolour. Jill also downloaded a rose fabric and printed it onto photo paper, and applied this to some of the jugs. Very effective too, and not as easy as she makes it sound I bet!

The signs are made of wood and the pretty lace and flowers have been strategically placed to add to this lovely scene, including around the edges of the trunk and chairs – perfect!

This lady is not new to DHW readers as we have featured her work before, most recently her Jingles toy shop last issue. And there's the same attention to detail in this piece.

The walls and the flooring have been kept pale and simple as you can see, and the colour co-ordinated items in the shop look just perfect. The furniture is purchased, and has been



painted by Jill, who then roughed up the edges, just a little to create "the look".

The chintz chairs were re-covered in her own fabric with further colour co-ordinated materials on the shelves, table and chairs, carrying on the look with handmade cushions. The pink food mixer was red when she bought it from Elf Miniatures and she simply repainted it in nail varnish to match the theme.

This creation was made espe-



cially for a club project which consisted of a department store of twelve different shops, with each club member taking on a different shop. When it was complete the club named it "The House of Lucas" after Jill, who is the founder member of the club: the Rainham and District Dolls House Group. Formed in 1993 and still going strong.

As I said at the beginning, I so admire anyone who can create this shabby chic look, and this is really a lovely example.



How Doreen transformed a free house from Desna

Doreen didn't hesitate when she saw the offer of a free house on Facebook and she has named her boutique hotel after the woman who gave it away

BY SANDRA HARDING

This sparkling house caught my attention recently and you know I love a bit of sparkle so I couldn't resist asking Doreen Porter all about it. The story was really interesting as I know the previous owner, and indeed we have featured her work in DHW before.

Doreen got the house from Desna Tysoe in 2014. Desna had offered it on Facebook free to anyone who could collect it, as she needed the space. Doreen was very happy to collect, of course, and during her visit to Desna's also bought a few other pieces.

Doreen had always planned to turn the house into a hotel but real life, like decorating the real house, got in the way for a while, as it does, and slowed her down a little. It is now finished and Doreen has created a classy boutique hotel from what was a house in need of restoration. As a way of saying thank you to Desna for the gift, Doreen has named the hotel Tysoe House ... a lovely gesture.

Desna is an experienced miniaturist and was keen to know what the house looked like when it was finished and Doreen was only too happy to send her pictures.

The photos would show that the couple who bought the dilapidated old house are bright young things, full of ideas, and enthusiasm — the kind of people that one tries to avoid at parties (or is that just me?). They carried out lots of repairs and decorated the whole

building carefully, with each bedroom themed. There is: A Night in Provence, By Royal Appointment, Gentleman's Club and Honeymoon Bliss, and you can see from the photographs which is which.

In the dining room there are a couple of young ladies enjoying a girly weekend away and planning which night club to visit tonight. Notice their handbags by the table legs, such a realistic touch. The couple on the left are businessman George and his latest girlfriend. They didn't want their photograph taken so they are looking away from the camera.

The mother and daughter at the back live locally and often pop in for dinner to save them cooking. The bride in the honeymoon suite is about to have a lovely relaxing bath ready to go out with her new husband. He is sit-

ting waiting for her in the lounge with a glass of wine (could be a long wait). The sign on the wardrobe in that room was given to Doreen by her granddaughter, on her real wedding day. Lovely touch! Jenny, the lady in black, is in the Gentleman's Club room and she is at the hotel to attend a 30th surprise birthday party for a work colleague. The perfectly lovely dolls are all made by Elaine of Tiny Fairy Tails.

Forgetting the bright young things for now, the real talent here is Doreen, who has made so much in this delightful hotel. In the dining room, for instance, she made the floor tiles, the connecting door, the chairs (which are amazing), tables, the mirrors in the rooms, the handbags, side tables and lamps, the picture frame and bust. The two zebra chairs were cheap purchases, which Doreen recovered, and she also made the window dressings and railings.

In the Provence room Doreen made the bed, bedcovers and pillows, the wardrobe, and the two matching sink units and mirrors in the bathrooms. In the Royal room she made the bedcovers, pillows and canopy and in the Club room made the bed, the sideboard unit, and clock. The animal heads on the walls were toy plastic zoo animals with their heads cut off, and sprayed silver.

In the Honeymoon room Doreen made the bed, wardrobe, mirror, bed linen, and the bath was a bronze







full-size soap dish that she sprayed copper. An Art of Mini sideboard was adapted into a double wash basin unit to which she added the gorgeous mirror. The console table in the lounge is also by Art of Mini and the little boots under the glass dome, along with the new door surround on the front of the house, were by Alison Davies Miniatures.

I realised after writing all this that

it would have saved a lot of time if I had just said that Doreen made almost everything, but I realised that too late. Such clever ideas I am not surprised to learn that this lady once owned an interior design shop.

I told you she was good and you only have to look at the rooms to realise that. Just look at the beautiful lounge area, the pictures, the furniture, the door – just perfection.

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Miniaturists are finding French feves inspiring

What better reward for eating more dessert than to know you will discover a miniature treasure inside each cake? There are more varieties to collect than you can imagine

BY LAUREL BROADFOOT

You never know where creative inspiration will strike - it might just be over coffee and a croissant at the nearest bakery. Miniaturists have recently discovered French fèves – tiny porcelain figurines that are normally baked into cakes. Really! French baking supplies make wonderful doll's house décor and accessories.

Fèves are tiny porcelain charms or figurines that are made to be baked inside a King's Cake for the Epiphany Holiday, which is celebrated every year on January 6th, the 12th day of Christmas. Biblical tradition has this as the day the three wise men or three kings came to Bethlehem, to honour the birth of Christ. Centuries ago in France and other Christian European countries, it was a fava bean that was placed inside the cake. Fève is the French word for 'bean', and is pronounced 'fev'. Whoever finds the fève in his or her slice of cake, is king for the day and allowed to boss everyone else around! Since it was lucky to get the fève in your slice of cake – these little items were saved and treasured as good luck charms.

In the mid 1800s the bean was replaced with small porcelain figurines; good luck charms, animals, religious figures, saints etc, and a collecting craze was started. The oldest fèves were porcelain, with many of the famous French porcelain manufactures and regions, including Limoges, making their own versions of these

tiny treasures. As the years sped by, designs became more elaborate; different glazes were used, and they were hand painted or gilded.

Following WWI, due to supply shortages, plastic fèves were made. Now this tradition of fève production and collecting has been completely commercialised, and there is a vast assortment of porcelain, plastic and metal figures that are made. Designs include everything from Harry Potter and Disney to the high fashion shoes and purses. Collecting fèves is a very popular pastime in France, with collector shows and even several museums devoted to the hobby. The vast array of designs and subject matter is truly astounding.

The fève makers and bakers have stumbled onto an ingenious way to get customers to eat more cake. The fève designs are only produced for a single year and they come in series or collections of 10 or 12 pieces. For instance, they may make a set of unicorns,

vases, Greek statues, kitchen canisters or panda bears. If your local bakery is including a series of kittens you covet in their cakes this season, and you want to collect the entire series, you'll need to buy and eat a lot of cake!

Because of their small size, small enough to fit onto a fork, many fèves work beautifully in twelfth and 1/6th doll's houses.

Fèves can be acquired the traditional way...discovered in a piece of cake or they can be purchased from a variety of retailers and resellers. Each year before Christmas, the new Epiphany season's designs are offered for collectors to purchase. Most retailers sell only the complete 8-12 piece series, but there are sellers that offer the fèves individually. There is a very vibrant collectors market on both Etsy and eBay. Since designs are only made for a single year, there are thousands of vintage designs available second hand from collectors and resellers. Collectors of fèves are known as "Fabophiles"

There are some important points to keep in mind if you are purchasing fèves for your doll's house or miniature project.

Although many fèves work perfectly in twelfth and 1/6th scale houses; since their intended purpose is cake



Above: Two tiny folk art chicken fèves.



Left: Three gorgeous Venetian carnival masks.



Top: Tiny reproductions of several Emile Galle Vases.

Above: Four hand-painted colorful toucan fèves.

Right: Rebecca Stewart built this lovely room featuring three tiny apothecary fèves.

Below right: Becky Dambacher cleverly displays her vast collection of fèves on salesman sample furniture pieces. She says: "Since fèves are about celebration and feasting on King's Day of Epiphany, it is logical and expected that many of the most intricate fèves are feast items and delectable pastries."

Below: Every French country kitchen needs a rooster.





Top left: Nativities are highly collected fèves.

Above left: Adorable tiny rocking horses.

Below left: Exquisite miniature sculptures

Bottom left: Every French country kitchen needs a rooster. Four hand-painted colorful toucan fèves.

Above: Marianne Krasucki loaded a mini child's room dresser with fève toys.

Below: The fève mermaid and swimmer work wonderfully in this shell shop by Maura Dartley-Rocco.



Make a pull-along toy for bedroom or shop

Here's a quick fun project for a winter's evening using a little plastic horse. Just the thing to add to a child's bedroom or toy shop



BY ALICE MONROE

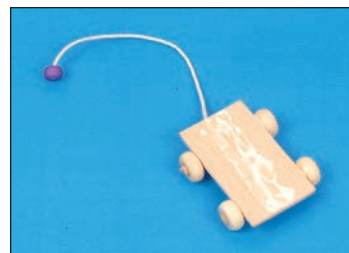


Step 1. Measure and cut out your basswood to 3/4in by 1 1/2in in size. Cut out two cocktail sticks for axles 1/2in wider than your base on each side. Paint the truck and axles in the colour of your choice.



Step 2. Take your four bead wheels and glue them in place. Cut off any protruding cocktail stick on each side. Paint the end of the axles in the centre of the wheels.

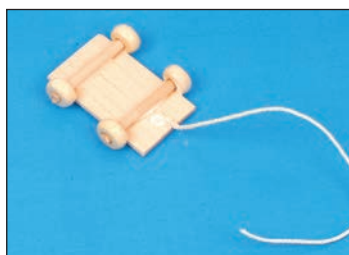
can be a plain bead that you paint yourself, or one already painted in a bright, primary colour.



Step 5. Before gluing the horse in place, put a strip of glue down the centre of the truck.



Step 7. Gather a handful of sprinkle grass and shower it all over the glued section. Gently press the grass on to the glue and leave to dry, but be careful not to knock the horse from his position.



Step 3. Cut your piece of string or chord to 3in in length and glue it to the underside front of the truck.



Step 6. Whilst the glue is still tacky, glue the horse in place on the truck.



Step 8. I used a small plastic horse, as you might find in a model train store, but you could use any other animal as there are many different creatures in various sizes available from toy shops.

You will need

- Small horse (or any other animal)
- Basswood 3/4in x 1 1/2in (any piece of spare wood can be used)
- 4 x beads for wheels
- 2 x cocktail sticks
- Thin string or cord approx 3in long
- Tiny bead
- Sprinkle grass – available from model train stores



Step 4. Glue a tiny bead on to the end of the string. This



WHERE I WORK

THIS MONTH WE VISIT THE WORKSHOP OF DHW WRITER KATHLEEN HOLMES AND HER HUSBAND TIM O'DELL

Hi Kathleen, we know you've been making minis for a long while but exactly how long is it?

I built my first small doll's house from a kit over 25 years ago and collected and made things to go in it over the years. I got my husband Tim interested in the hobby 5-6 years ago when I asked him to build me the shell of my current doll's house. He made me some specialty items like a utility pole and fire hydrant to add to the landscaping. He started making miniatures to sell a couple of years ago and I have started making miniatures to sell just a few months ago.

Where do you create? Tim and I recently converted a guest bedroom into our craft room which we share together. We both also use the garage at times.

Do you always make your minis in the same place? Yes, we mostly use the craft room. Sometimes I bring small projects (like making books) downstairs and sit by the window in our kitchen nook.

Do you create at set times? No, just whenever one of us feels in the mood. Sometimes it might



be in the middle of the day if we're hanging around the house. Other times it might be late in the evening before we go to bed.

What makes your space for mini making so special? We no longer have to work at the kitchen table or in a hot (or cold) garage. We have an

entire room that is designated just for the creation of our miniature art. This allows us to leave our projects in place and work on them as we wish.

Do you keep your workspace private? No. If we have friends or family coming over we usually invite them into our workspace to see our latest projects.

Describe your workspace in five words. Comfortable, imaginative, productive, inspiring and inviting.

What is the one thing that your workspace can't be missing? Plenty of storage space.

What would be your dream workspace? Probably a space that would be about twice as large as we have now with a big walk-in closet for storage.



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This pretty little book is sew cute to create

Debbie takes you step-by-step through the process of making a small sewing needle book and we know you'll love the pretty piece when finished

BY DEBBIE BOOTH

Follow along and make a cute little sewing book for your doll's house with me. Find the cutest fabric you can with a fun tiny pattern.



Step 1. Cut the main body - 2" x 2". Take the 2" x 2" square of fabric and fold in half with the right sides together. Pin together.



Step 2. The body will be sewn leaving

an opening so you can turn it right side out. So leave one end open. Pin and then sew the two sides.



Step 3. Remove the pins, trim the threads, and turn it right sides out. Snip the corner on the bottom to reduce fabric bulk.



Step 4. Fold in the opening 1/4" and pin. Sew across the opening to sew the needle book closed. Trim the threads and carefully press it flat.



Step 5. Looking at a sample of a finished needle book as a guide, a tiny pocket needs to be added next. The measurements are 1/2" x 1/2" of wool felt. It needs to be smaller than the wool piece that will be sewn into the needle book.

Pin the pocket to the right side of the 7/8" x 1 7/8" wool felt piece. The centre of the wool felt rectangle will be sewn to the needle book. The pocket will be placed on the right side so that it is far enough away from the centre seam so that it isn't accidentally sewn into the seam.

You will need

- Cotton fabric.
- Wool or wool felt
- 5 straight pins
- Small needle
- Wire cutter
- Tiny ribbon, or lace
- 1/8" wide ribbon
- Tiny decorative sewing accessories



Step 6. Pin the pocket and slowly sew around the three sides forming the pocket.

Step 7. Next, cut the prettiest design from the fabric that is being used. A small piece 1/2" x 1/2" (cut it to fit page) for the left side of the wool page. Hand sew a couple stitches at the top to adhere it to the page.



Step 8. Next we will make a tiny ribbon bow. Make it big at first, then pull at the ribbon ends, back and forth, until the bow becomes smaller. Always start bigger and work it until it is smaller. Hand sew underneath the bow and attach it to the square.



Step 9. Making the tiny pins and needle is easy. First, thread the needle and set it aside. Insert a regular straight pin to the decorative fabric. Using wire cutters, cut the ends off the straight pins. They need to be short enough so that the needle book will close.

Note that I tried cutting the pins first and then inserting them and struggled off and on until I was frustrated and that



was how I came up with this part of the process.

Insert the pin and then cut it to the desired length. Follow the same direction when you add the needle, then wrap the thread from the needle around the eye and the tip of the needle. This is a common look for threaded needles in a needle book.



Step 10. Last step is to sew the ribbon down the centre and on the inside of the wool page. First, pin the centre of the ribbon in place on the needle book. Turn over. Pin the centre piece in place so there is no shifting or moving while sewing.

Step 11. Use a pencil if needed to mark the centre line for sewing. I lightly marked the outside of the needle book with a pencil so that the seam line for sewing is visible. Sew down centre seam. Remove the pins and trim the threads.

Step 12. Cut small pieces of trim (less than 1" long). Fold and fit inside the pocket. Little pieces may need to be cut down to fit.



Step 13. Fold the needle book closed, and tie the ribbon in a small bow. Trim off some of the ribbon but not too much.

The needle book will be opened and closed, so there needs to be enough ribbon to tie in a small bow again. The little needle book is now complete! Put it in a special place.

■ Visit *Ribbonwood Cottage* at www.etsy.com/shop/RibbonwoodCottage

Old book opens up to reveal a new chapter

Transforming the inside of a book is a popular way to create a mini scene that won't take up too much space and is easy to put away

BY BONNIE LAVISH

It seems that areas of the house for showing minis are fast filling up, but everyone has a little bookshelf space left for a hidden treasure.

This little porch-in-a-book project also helps use up some of those odd leftover scraps from bigger projects, and uses a recycled book.

Large old books are available everywhere from second-hand bookshops to charity stores and flea markets. Try customising your own. A book with a special greeting is a great gift for a birthday, or a special occasion.

Porch instructions

Each volume varies in size, so no measurements are given.

Carefully cut the entire page bundle from the back binding, leaving only

the binding. Measure the thickness of the bundle of pages. If old paper lining is patterned, cut cardstock to cover it, and attach with an all-purpose glue - I used Granny Stover's.

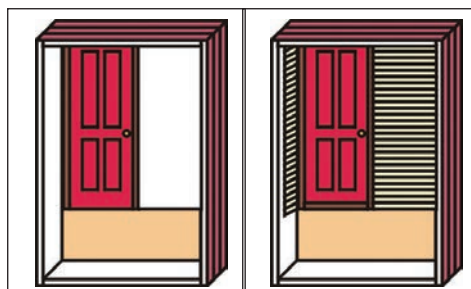
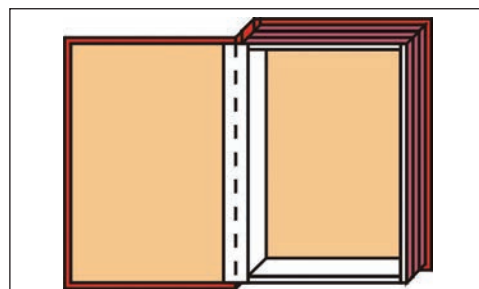
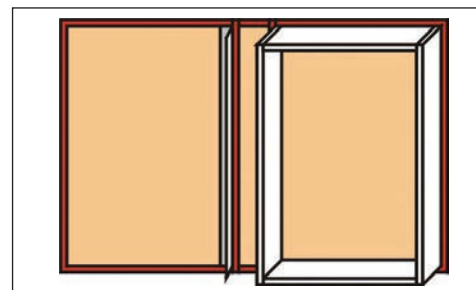
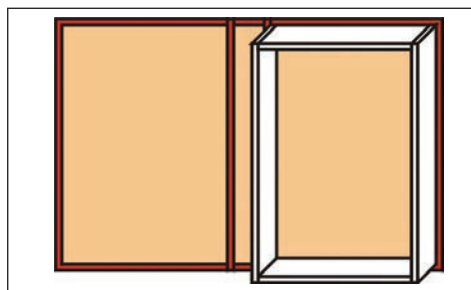
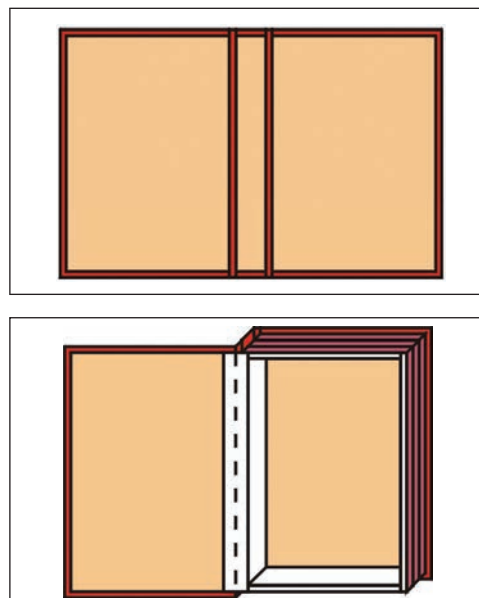
A sharp craft knife works best when cutting foamcore board. Use a steel ruler or metal straight edge, and apply gentle pressure to the blade. Do several light cuts, first through the paper, then the foam, and finally through the backing paper. Cut foamcore board into strips the width of the bundle of pages. Cut the strips into lengths that will form box sides the same size as the back lining paper. Form box and attach to binding using tacky glue.

Cut a strip of cardstock the length of the box height. Fold in half and glue one side to front of book, lining up the

fold with the edge of the cardboard on the front. Allow this to dry completely.

Apply glue to the other half of the folded card-stock strip. Close book and align cover so it looks straight. Open carefully and rub strip down on the top edge of the foam box. Strip edge may be trimmed when dry, or just folded over into box. Cover exposed foam edges with a strip of cardstock for a more finished appearance. Edges, front cover, and cardstock strip can be painted. I used the siding colour, antique white.

Cut corduroy scrapbook paper to fit the outside of the foam box. Attach the strips with the grain running around the box, and closed box will appear to have pages. I painted the corduroy paper maroon to match the bookbind-



You will need

- Large book
- Foamcore board 3/16"
- Scrapbook paper with corduroy ribs (1 sheet)
- Cardstock (2 sheets) Strip wood 1/4" x 1/8" (two 24" pieces)
- Strip wood 1/16" x 1" (one 24" piece)
- Siding (1 sheet) Door (Houseworks #6007)
- Posts or turnings
- Doorknob (Houseworks #1114)
- Florist wire (30 gauge wrapped)
- Terracotta flowerpot
- Pencil Craft knife Steel ruler
- Tacky glue (Aleene's)
- Paper glue (Granny Stover's)
- 527 Bond
- Acrylic craft paints Tweezers
- Mouse pad
- Ball stylus
- Large pin or needle
- Paper punches (sun- shine, star, leaf, small flower)
- Decorative edge scissors (Fiskars' Victorian)
- Wire cutters
- Scissors

ing and the door.

Paint door and frame. Temporarily place door in upper left corner of box. Don't glue it in. Draw a line around door-frame. Measure a piece of foamcore board to fit right side of box. This will raise the siding, so it fits nicely behind the door trim.

Remove door. Cut and glue siding to back wall over foam insert. Glue siding to sides of box, but cut them short enough so there's room for the trim wood (1/8"). Paint siding, and then glue in door.

Construct a small porch box in lower right corner, using foam board or wood scraps. Box should touch the bottom of the siding, and the edge of the doorframe. Make sure box sits back 1/8" to allow for trim. Paint box trim colour.

Paint turnings and trim wood before



installing. Cut three strips of 1/8" x 1/4" wood to the height of the inside of the book box. Glue one to the right side of the porch, and one to the left side of the porch. Cut three strips to fit between them for the top support, and the bottom and top railing. Glue top support and bottom railing between posts. Book size may make the number of turnings vary. Spacing can be figured by folding a piece of paper and marking divisions. Then the markings can be copied to the top and bottom rails. Glue turnings and top rail.

Unless book is very deep, step treads will be narrow, but, even narrow steps give the illusion of depth. Measure the distance between the top of

the door's threshold strip and ground level. See how many steps you can get that are approximately 3/4". Divide the number of steps into the distance. The door's threshold strip will count as the top of the first step. Divide the distance by the number of steps to give the height of the remaining steps including the treads.

Paint strips of 1/16" x 1" wood. Cut to length of distance between porch and wall. You will need two for each step and one extra. Glue one strip under the door, flat to the back of the box. Trim risers to height of step minus 1/16" for tread. For each step, glue one riser to one tread, leaving a slight overhang. Overhanging edge can be

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rounded with sandpaper.

The left corner of the bottom step's overhang must be trimmed off to allow left trim board to fit in place in front of it. Glue bottom step into box, keeping front of tread even with trim wood on porch.

Glue some foamcore scraps under step to keep it stable. Next step will sit on top of first step. The back of this tread must be trimmed off until both treads have the same distance showing when viewed from above.

Glue the second step on top of the first and up to the board that is under the door. If more steps are needed, width of tread showing should be divided among them.

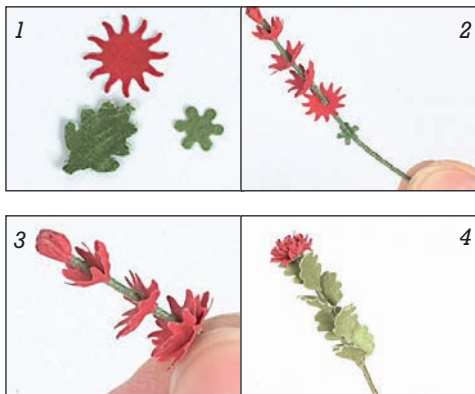
Glue last front trim piece to left side. Glue doorknob to door using 527 Bond.

Chrysanthemums

For each flower, five sunshines, one 1 small green floret, and several leaves are required (1). Place petals on mouse pad and push down in centre with a ball stylus. Form graduated V shapes from tight to almost flat. With a large pin or needle make a hole in the centre of each petal and small floret. Cut wrapped wire into 1-1/2" pieces. To prevent fraying, seal both ends of wire by rubbing a small bit of tacky glue into fibres.

Slide tightest V to top of wire. Put a dot of glue on wire tip, and squeeze petal tightly to form centre of flower. Allow this one to dry before proceeding.

Slide other petals onto the wire stem, tightest V first (2). Put a tiny dot of glue on stem just under the flower centre, and slide each petal up snug-



gly to the first (3). Spin petal so the tips aren't directly under the tips above. Repeat until all petals are glued in place. Slide green floret up stem and glue flat to bottom of flower. Crimp leaves down the centre and along vein with tweezers.

Squeeze out a little pile of tacky glue. Pick up leaf with tweezers and touch the tip of the leaf to the tacky glue. Attach leaf to stem (4). Two leaves should be opposing. Repeat until stem is filled with leaves about 1/8" to 1/4" apart.

Use two or three sunshine petals to make small buds. Touch leaf tips with a light wash of different shades of green for more interesting leaves.

The steps were too narrow to fit a large terracotta pot, so this pot (5) was cut in half with wire cutters. Just one snip down the side and the pot should crack well. Glue to step and fill with Chrysanthemums.



Make a door knocker

Use decorative scissors to cut an interesting shape from cardstock. Glue this shape to another piece of cardstock, and cut again slightly larger than first shape.

Add cardstock stars for extra decoration and dimension. Attach a jump ring near the bottom by gluing a star over it. Paint with gold acrylic paint.



Grapevine wreath

The wreath is made using wrapped florist wire, together with nylon netting.

- Cut netting into a 1/4" strip, slightly longer than wire. Rub wire with a generous amount of tacky glue.
- Spin wire and netting together so netting spirals around wire. Set aside to dry. Paint with shades of brown.
- Draw a five-pointed star with one continuous line (as we did in school).
- Lay the grapevine wire on star drawing, starting in the middle of any straight line and follow the lines around twice, bending wire at the star's points. Wrap excess wire around the places the wire crosses to hold it together.
- Arrange some loose green leaves and chrysanthemums around centre. Clip stems short so flowers can be glued flat to wreath.

Make the gold star decorations

- Punch stars from cardstock and glue to both sides of wrapped florist wire.
- For garland, space several stars along the wire. For plant stick-ups, just glue the stars to the tips of the wires. Paint with gold acrylic paint.



Mad adventure ends by adding life to the house



As we learned in previous issues Sandra and husband Bob have been re-building a house abandoned by her sister. This is the final part of the mysterious journey



BY SANDRA HARDING

I always wanted the people in this house to be different as I find many of the usual male dolls are not very manly, and I wanted manly!

A trip to a car boot sale solved that when I bought a bag full of Lord of the Rings dolls — just perfect. One of them reminded me of King Charles II and so the story was formed. After research I decided that the King was visiting one of his ladies who lived at Castle House in The Square, Petersfield, Hants, (where the post office now stands). This also happens to be my home town.

Her name is Louise de K rouaille and she is in bed recovering from the

birth of the king's son, Charles Lennox, Duke of Richmond, born in 1672. Interestingly, both Princess Diana and Camilla, Duchess of Cornwall, are descended from him, as are the owners of Goodwood. The King is visiting Louise to read her the proclamation making her Baroness of Petersfield, Duchess of Portsmouth, and Countess of Fareham in 1673. Mind you, she is more overwhelmed by the gift of a diamond necklace in a silver casket, as any girl would be.

The King's bed in this room was the one made by my sister, Pat, while the Knowle sofa was from friend Tanya and the furniture was from various shows

over the years. The fireplace is also Pat's original. The large chest was a car boot find, which I filled with jewels because the King, Louise, and I all like jewels.

There's also a priest hole in this room, but he has been there for so long I am the only one who knows, apart from the rats. In the ante room is another of the original fires, and warming themselves are two of the king's henchmen, or guards as they prefer to be called. The tapestry was a handbag and the chair was from Masters Miniatures. Other furniture and accessories were from shows.

On the top floor the baby is asleep







in Louise's bedroom with the wet nurse, one of Pat's original dolls. The bed was made by friend Ellen, the chaise by friend Tanya, and I made the triptych from a Christmas card catalogue. The musical instrument is a brooch and other accessories were from stock.

The furniture was from various places, including lovely gifts from friend Tanya. In the ante room are straw mattresses and pillows where the servants sleep and the blankets are in various chests. The spinning wheel was from a car boot.

In the main meeting room is another of Pat's fireplaces and the garderobe door can be seen on the left. The table and benches were made by my husband and the lovely mule chest at the back was a very early buy from Pear Tree Miniatures. Two of the nice cupboards were bought at a junk shop, and I think are Barton, and the shields around the walls are cutouts from DHW glued onto card.

In my stash I had barrels, log baskets, cauldrons, stools, leather tankards and several pieces of pewter, all of which have found their way into the



different rooms. The wooden dishes are cheap plain wood, which I stained, and the shield and swords above the fireplace I made for Dollshouse.tv. Two more henchmen are studying maps for some reason as they had to be doing something useful as well as drinking I decided. There is a sword box full of swords, and a map box, full of maps. In the ante room is another of the king's henchmen chatting to the servant, another car boot lady. The chest is a plain cheap wooden one which Pat covered with a cut up studded belt, and the settle was previously in my big house kitchen.

In the kitchen is my favourite fireplace — made by Pat — and in it are the fire irons by Tony Knott, plus a hog roasting, bread cooking and pots of things keeping warm. On the floor is sawdust to soak up any fats and mess and the chickens love to mess about in it, looking for scraps. The benches and tables were either bought or made by my husband, the chopping block was a gift from Tanya and the many food items were all bought from various fairs.

The cook is busy and the chap on



the left is one of Pat's original dolls, who feels rather out of place amongst all these ruffians, and he wishes he were in a nice clean dining room somewhere. The boy in the entrance hall is the cook's son who has been collecting the day's eggs. He is now getting the chickens back into their pen, made by my husband.

This area, and the worn stairs, are as Pat made them. The lovely dole cupboard on the right, the food and other

items are from various sources. I was unsure about the kitchen, but originally Pat intended to have this as a tavern and I wanted to at least give one room the feeling of a more social place. Maybe when the King is not here Louise lets the locals use it for a tavern. Unlikely, but a nice thought.

So, to summarise all that in a logical manner, we have been on a mysterious journey where we didn't know where we were, which direction we



were heading or even quite where we were when we finished. Initially, we were working backwards without a plan where we were starting with a detail (fireplace, piece of furniture) and creating a room around it instead of the usual way of building a room and

dressing it. It was a long thin structure, two stories high, 48" wide and about 17" deep.

Far too wide for its eventual resting place, we had to cut off 16" from each of the two separate stories and hoist them on top to make a third storey.

Because the guiding principle was "use as much as possible of my sister's work" this was not straightforward.

Rooms had to be re-configured and details re-orientated to make it all work. We then, to cap it all, added a roof and roof space as a fourth storey,



with the lighting put in right at the end. Fortunately, in Tudor houses there are lots of hiding places for wires and things. As we went along, we filled in new details following the general theme and style of the original bits – just going where the music took us.

We built it in modular form, where each floor is separate and nests on the one below. So there we have it: a 1930's house transformed into a Jacobean tavern, and then into a Tudor house set in the Stuart period.

Building and conversion followed my mind's eye concept rather than a plan, but we got there – not sure how! Several times during this mad adventure we said: "It would have been so much easier to start from scratch." But I have to say that if we had, the result would not have been anywhere near as interesting.





Kitty's in love with her colourful creation

Kitty loves the way the Grey family have decorated their Lisa/Lundby combination house, but after a bright overhaul it's hardly surprising their tastes match

BY KITTY VAN MEURS



M eet the Greys. They met in a bar shortly after Richard got divorced and it was love at first sight. So they got married three months later on 02-02-02.

The two of them love the opera, travelling and have a weak spot for modern life in general.

And they both like to work on their old time Volkswagen Beetle. Richard stayed in touch with his ex-wife and she became good friends with Richard's husband Fred. So every now and then she stays in their house for the weekend.

This is their second home. They bought it in 2019 and I was asked

to help with the renovation. A Lisa of Denmark doll's house with two Lundby floor extensions, that's what I had to work with. They had been in someone's attic for ages, had a strong odour of damp and nicotine and had the ugliest makeover ever! I kept it for weeks on our veranda so the smell would disappear.

Black, white and grey were going to be the base colours but that would be pretty boring so I decided to add a specific colour to every room. At first I had to remove a wall downstairs because I had planned an open plan kitchen. I also made two new modern doors with frosted windows for the bathroom and guestroom. I'm not a huge fan of those standard doors; they remind me more of front doors than internal doors.

The starting point of the green living room was the modern Pastil chair, designed in 1967, that I bought at a doll's house fair. That, and the photo of a painting that my brother-in-law made. There's also a yellow guest room, a plain black and white bathroom, a red kitchen and a blue dining room. And



TOPTIP

- Before I start decorating the inside walls of any house, whether I paint them or put wallpaper onto it, I apply three layers of magnetic paint first. That makes it possible to hang almost anything onto the walls with small magnets without damaging the new decor.





“I absolutely am in love with this doll's house; it's a keeper.”

there had to be an outside living area. Why else would one want a big house if they can't enjoy the outdoors?

Because I like realistic doll's houses I faked an imaginary hallway on the back of the house with stairs that lead to the different floors and had to make two extra (fake) doors for that reason.

I absolutely am in love with this doll's house; it's a keeper. Not just because I love the look but also because of the sixty or more things that I crafted or re-upholstered myself that combine

so well: the curtains, the plants, rugs, blankets, cushions, the paintings, a lot of the lamps, the modern fireplace, the little balcony, the trendy side table, the kitchen — and the dining tables. I can't decide which room I love best. I just wish that I could shrink to sixteenth scale and live there with the Greys. Funny enough, they share exactly my taste.

■ *Kitty lives in Almere in the Netherlands with her husband. They have two adult daughters who left the nest. She works in a home furnishing store, sings in a pop-choir, and the couple love camping with their tent trailer. Kitty's been addicted to miniatures since November 2016, has three former GDR doll's houses but prefers sixteenth scale.*





MGM FAIRS

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Due to the Covid-19 Pandemic, and more stringent government regulations in various parts of the UK, we have had to cancel our Dolls House Fairs for the rest of 2020.

We have a fair schedule in place for 2021, but because of the uncertainty and indecision on whether some of our earlier 2021 shows will be going ahead in the New Year, we would ask our customers to check out our website at www.mgmfairs.co.uk

or go to our Facebook Page, to find out the latest situation and information.

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The team at Dolls House World weren't sitting idly by during lockdown. As well as producing the magazine we also came up with an online newsletter to serve the mini community.

But the good news is that **Dollhouse.live** has been such an amazing success that we've decided we have to keep it running.

Dollhouse.live is full of fascinating features, projects and videos, and all totally free — little wonder the site has become incredibly popular with miniaturists in the UK and around the world.



The newsletter began as a way of keeping miniaturists in touch with the hobby during lockdown, and also letting people know how makers and others were coping with isolation.

But it has grown incredibly. Now our mini mad team add new features every week. We are sharing articles from the magazine, but are bringing you a wealth of exciting new content and up-to-the minute news on shows and makers.

So don't miss out. Go to **www.dollhouse.live** on your computer or phone now to read the site everyone's talking about.



GARDEN CENTRE SHOP IS A MINI TREASURE TROVE



BY CHARLOTTE MERRIMAN

The Pedlars Tray is a family business that started in a small shop in 2004 in Hereford city centre.

They outgrew that first shop very quickly and moved to larger premises in the centre. But ten years later they were persuaded to make a move to Blue Diamond Garden Centre.

Jane Ammonds, a director of the business, said: "The garden centre enables us to have a bigger space along with free parking and the venue has a great restaurant and also sells good quality plants and gifts which makes it a destination for all."

But it is the wonderful range of doll's house items that bring miniaturists flocking to the centre. The shop sells the work of leading makers like Tony Knott, Duncan White, Diane Gould (formerly Harfield), Cobweb Miniatures, Carodoug Miniatures, Katie Tetley Artist in Miniature, Rosie Burton, Ken

Martin, JJ Miniatures, Delph Miniatures, McQueenie Miniatures to name but a few.

Claire James, also a director of the business, said: "We have searched far and wide to uncover the hidden talent of artisans and specialists so that people can make the most of their passion for miniatures."

She added: "Our shop is found in a quiet corner of the centre where we can display our collection of quality handcrafted miniatures. We also offer a service of selling other people's collections when they downsize or move house or belong to a family member who can no longer look after their cherished hobby. We also accept houses donated for charity as we raise funds for Acorn's Children's Hospice and Cancer UK."

Pedlars Tray are now open again and welcoming visitors but if you're too

far away do pay a visit to their website where you can order online.

The shop has put in place all the government guidelines for social distancing and wearing the correct PPE for the safety of their customers. Workshops are run in smaller numbers and they have a stringent cleaning regime inbetween classes.

They normally run an annual doll's house fair on the second Sunday of October but had to cancel that for 2020. Now plans are underway for staging the fair in the spring of 2021 all being well.



LITTLE LINKS:

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Bake an assortment of tiny valentine goodies

Make a selection of natural looking Valentine's Day miniature cookies for a rustic bakery display. Or wrap them up as a homemade/handmade gift!

BY AURALEA KRIEGER

I have been working on my tree elf bakery and wanted to make some spacial sweets for Valentine's Day. I would imagine they can only get colour from berries and don't have all the florescent artificial colours that are used in our world so these treats are made to look all natural! If you prefer artificial coloured treats, just make adjustments as needed.

Step 1. I started with the jam filled cookies by rolling out some dough coloured clay to about 1/16" thick. I used a straw that I snipped down as a cutter.



Step 2. Texturise with a small coarse brush by gently dabbing the clay all over.

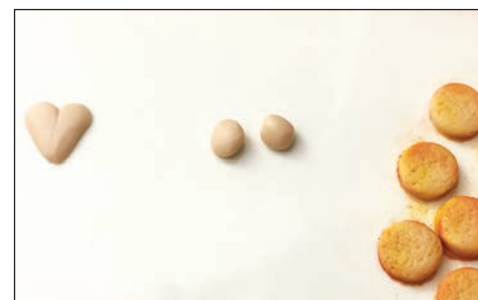
Step 3. Rub some yellow, orange and brick red coloured pastels sticks on paper so you get chalk dust.



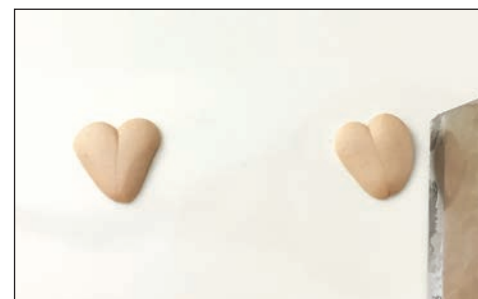
Step 4. Brush the colours on the cookie with a small brush while referring to a real baked cookie for colour placement.



Step 5. Now move to another section of your tile and roll out a tube of clay and slice it into equal sizes. You may want to do a test heart first so you know how big to roll the balls. I just guessed.



Step 6. Roll the slices into balls and place two side by side.



Step 7. Flatten them out by pressing your finger on them and then gently

You will need

- Polymer clay - dough colour, dark brown
- Straw
- Coarse and soft paintbrushes
- Clay roller
- Artist pastels - yellow, orange, brick red
- Baking tile
- Craft paint - white, brown, reddish-pink
- Tacky glue
- Toothpick
- Ball stylus tool
- Tiny paintbrush
- Gloss varnish

use your finger to merge them together to make a heart shape.

Rub out the crease in the centre.

Step 8. Texturise with a small coarse paintbrush.



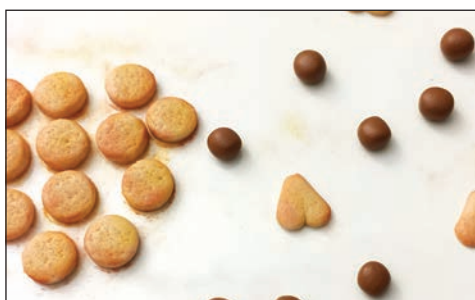
Step 9. Brush the pastel dust on them as you did the circle cookies.

Step 10. Next up are the chocolate biscuits! Roll out a clay tube and cut even pieces as shown.



Step 11. Then press down with your finger and round the corners.

Step 12. Texturise with a small coarse brush.



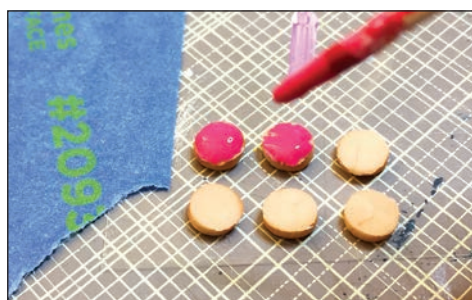
Step 13. Now roll some tiny balls with the brown clay and gently press them into the tile just enough so they won't roll away.



Step 14. Bake every thing following the product directions. Let cool. Keep on the tray so they stay stuck for painting.

Step 15. Put down some tape, sticky side up, and lay half of your round cookies on it inside facing up.

Step 16: Mix up a little tacky glue and some jam coloured paint. Mine came out a little pinker than I wanted, but once it was sandwiched it looked pretty good.



Step 17. Use a toothpick to put the jam on the cookies. Let it get a little tacky.

Step 18. Gently press the lids on each one and let dry.

Step 19. Dip a fine tipped ball stylus tool into white paint and draw squiggles on the chocolate biscuits and candy balls. Let dry.



Step 20. Dip a fine tipped ball stylus tool into brown paint and draw the inside of the hearts on the heart cookies. Let dry.

Step 21. Put gloss varnish on the chocolate icing and white chocolate icing with a tiny brush.

Step 22. Arrange in a little basket or box!



HARRY POTTER



SMALL ACCOMPLISHMENTS



BOOK FULL OF SPECIAL EFFECTS

BY SANDRA HARDING

I'm sure many of us have read the Harry Potter books and probably seen at least one of the fabulous films made about the young wizard. His continued popularity means that we have shown you a lot of impressive great halls and rooms made by talented miniaturists and here is another for you. This time it's a book created by Charo Valle, who lives in Spain with her husband, daughter and two dogs.

When is a book not a book? It's when it's made of several thicknesses of cardboard, which is lighter than wood, easy to work with, and affordable. The book measures 32cm (12") wide x 43cm (17" high) x 10cm (4") thick and I love the effect on the outside, as much as the inside. The front is covered in wet paper and liquid glue, which gives a rough appearance similar to leather. What a clever idea. The wand is a chopstick covered in air drying clay, modelled by Charo to resemble Dumbledore's original wand.

Creating a fabulous front window with its own display as a front cover is a really cool idea I've not seen done before. Each square of the window is cut into the cardboard and reinforced

with thin card to simulate decorative mouldings, as is the door. It was then painted and given the aged look. Brilliant! The shop name is based on the image of the real store which was featured in Harry Potter and the Secret Chamber, JK Rowling's second book, where Gilderoy Lockhart appears, and whose portrait and book collection is shown in the front window.

Charo's use of simple recyclable materials and her own handmade items continues throughout this creation. For example the walls, including King's Cross station, are constructed from egg cartons and, although time consuming, they give just the right

texture. All it needs for perfection is a good paint finish.

Dobby, the owls, the mandrakes, pumpkins, candles and even some of the picture frames are made from Fimo. Charo made the other items using whatever simple items she could find such as fabrics, wooden off cuts, pictures from magazines and printed books. The one very special element she made is a small wooden box with the name Harry Potter added in pyrography. It contains a musical mechanism, one of the few things purchased online, which plays the melody theme of Hedwig.

Charo has been creating miniatures since 2006 and finds the hobby very rewarding especially when she manages to realise in miniature an object that was just a picture in her head. Luckily she has a large workshop where she spends a lot of her time and is surrounded by her many creations including a Victorian scene, a motorcycle workshop and a fairy tree, and I do hope we get to see some of them soon. Charo calls it a place where time stands still and does not run, and where she can be truly happy.



From old-fashioned quill to a modern tablet



Whether you want a letter written in ink on paper, or a modern tablet, Sadie shows how to create different ways of communicating in the mini world

BY SADIE BROWN

In days gone by the art of letter writing could make conversation a lengthy business, as family news traversed the seas, but nowadays technology allows instant communication from one side of the world to the other. Here we take a look at how the way we communicate with each other has evolved across the centuries, creating both a miniature quill writing set and a state of the art tablet.



Step 1. Have fun handwriting a letter. Scan the letter and reduce it in size using photo editing software, before printing as many copies as you need using standard plain white paper and cutting them out. Cut out some extra, blank sheets of paper as well.



Step 3. To make the quill stand, take a tiny ball of dark brown clay, roll it into a carrot shape and, with the thick end of the carrot against a flat surface, press down on the other end with a fingernail. Make a hole in the centre top with a needle tool.



Step 2. Print a tiny 'Ink' label and, after cutting that out too, make a mug or cup of tea and allow to cool. Use the cold tea bag to lightly add colour to the label, letters and the blank paper. Once dry, scrunch one or two sheets of blank paper up – after all, even Shakespeare wouldn't get it right every time!



Step 4. Roll a small tube of dark brown clay and, again placing one end against a flat surface, press down on the other end with a fingernail to form a basic shape for the bottle. As with the stand, use a needle tool to make a hole for the top to slot into. Create the bottle top very simply by rolling a tiny carrot of clay.

You will need

- Polymer clay - dark brown, and white
- Tea bag and a cold cup of tea
- Faux peacock feather
- Craft knife
- Roller
- Small brush
- Scissors
- Needle tool
- Acrylic paint: silver, black
- Gloss and matte varnish
- Super glue
- Glue stick
- Plain white paper and high gloss photo paper
- Access to a computer, scanner, and printer



Step 5. Bake the stand, bottle, and the bottle top. Once cooled, coat the stand with matt varnish and both the bottle and bottle top with gloss.



Step 6. Fasten the bottle top to the bottle with super glue and use a glue stick to attach the 'Ink' label to the front of the bottle.



Step 7. Take two tiny ends from a faux peacock feather. Remove some of the tiny feathers to reveal a length of each stem.



Step 8. Cut the stems to the desired length. Fix one of the quills into the stand using super glue. Dip the end of the stem on the other quill into black acrylic paint and allow to dry.



Step 9. To make the screen for the tablet I designed an email screen using publishing software, but you could also use a photograph or screen shot of something special. As with the letter, I reduced the picture in size and printed it out, this time on high gloss photo paper.



Step 10. Cut out the screen, and roll some thin white clay. Place it on top and cut all the way around, leaving a small border.

Step 11. Put the screen to one side. Round the four corners of the tablet slightly with your fingers and bake the clay. After allowing to cool, paint with silver acrylic paint. You may find this requires a couple of coats.



Step 12. Add dots of black paint using a needle tool to give the impression of buttons down the side, alongside USB and earphone slots. Once the paint has dried thoroughly, finish with matt varnish and stick the screen to the front with a glue stick.

TOPTIP

- If you don't have a computer scanner you can take a photo with your camera or phone. Or see the Cutouts on P77 (we're good to you!)

“Use the cold tea bag to lightly add colour to the label, letters and the blank paper.”



Miniature show

Well we've had quite a few months with no shows, so while we wait excitedly for their return in 2021 it's good to remind ourselves what we've been missing. Here's a selection of gorgeous minis from a past Good Sam Show.

ARTICLE BY SUZIE JONES. PHOTOS BY MICHAEL PUFF



▲ Bridget McCarty
This duo by Bridget McCarty are hanging out in style on a Victorian inspired couch. We love all the lace and patterns on display.



▲ Lola Renner
This fruit platter and cupcake duo by Lola Renner includes a pineapple with leaves applied one at a time. It's the details that make a difference with her handmade fruit and sweets.

● Lola Originals by Lola Renner
836 Riviera Court, Woodbridge, CA 95258
Email address - lolaoriginals@aol.com
Tel: 001 530 448 3467
eBay: [lolaoriginals eBay](https://www.ebay.com/str/lolaoriginals)



◀ Bobbie Johnson
Bobbie Johnson loves shabby chic. This distressed stroller with dolls and a lace blanket is a perfect example of the look and feel of her style.

► Jim Larson
"Old Meets New" with this butcher block table by Jim Larson of Jim Larson Designs. Jim goes for the "If no one else is doing it, I'm going to" philosophy with his miniatures. If it works for him, it works for us.



▼ Jack Cashmere
Jack Cashmere loves reproducing classic pieces. These two majolica vases with applied flowers and foliage are based on French styles and are gorgeous.



Wcase



▲ Jane Harrop

Jane Harrop is inspired by the retro 1970's look. These art deco shelves in twelfth and 1/24th scale have that fabulous retro vibe.

● Tel: +44 (0)1625 873117
Email: janeharrop148@outlook.com
Web: <https://janeharrop.co.uk>



▲ Paula Gilhooley

Paula Gilhooley takes note from Italy with this fruit and veggie table, with a cat for company.



◀ Betsey Bradley

Betsey Bradley's "Lady in Blue" is inspired by her desire to represent life-size artwork in miniature.

▶ Carlene Brown

Carlene Brown loves making themed items. This sideboard with country cross stitched pillows and accessories will brighten up any kitchen scene.



▶ Jasmin Schwarz

Jasmin Schwarz is inspired by vintage designs and materials. We certainly see that influence with this classic winter dessert.



▼ Laura Crain

This breakfast and night stand by Laura Crain of Dollhouse Land is shabby chic fun. Her attention to detail brings this piece to life.

● Dollhouse Land by Laura Crain
Tel: 001-949-496-9841
Email: lauracrain2@aol.com
Facebook: facebook.com/Dollhouse-Land



Friends buy same house but styles are so different

We couldn't resist taking another look at the fascinating story of how two women bought the same house but ended up decorating them in such contrasting ways

BY CHARLOTTE MERRYMAN

This is the tale of two houses, at least part one of it. Over the next two issues we'll meet friends, Gill Rance and Mandy Groves, who bought the same Lectromatic house model many years ago at a fair but decorated them in quite different ways.

Gill and Mandy first met and became friends when their children went to the same school in Hemel Hempstead and a teacher, who knew of their mutual interests in doll's houses, suggested they talk to each other. They haven't stopped talking since, as DHW discovered when we visited a long while ago.

Looking at two houses that are the same may not be exciting under normal circumstances, but I'm sure Gill and Mandy won't mind me saying that there's nothing normal where they're concerned. It was obvious within seconds of meeting the two that they are very good friends, but they are also opposites of each other in some aspects of their personalities. Their work is highly indicative of their different personalities. Gill; methodical, logical, calculated; Mandy impulsive, imaginative and, quite honestly, barking, all traits reflected in their different approaches to projects.

"Before Gill makes anything she gets all the things that she should have and goes and buys what she needs, then follows the instructions by the book," said Mandy.

"In the meantime Mandy's built a



castle out of cardboard and Polyfilla," joked Gill.

The tale of two houses began when the pair visited a fair in 1998 and cornered the poor chap on the Lectromatic (Kendrew) stand into striking a deal for the sale of two identical, large, Georgian houses with ten-rooms over five floors and a central hallway. Gill would have preferred a Victorian double fronted property but was persuaded, perhaps wisely by Mandy, that the Georgian house offered more for their money and was well-made in wood, as opposed to MDF.

Such big houses deserve a proper nose around so we'll look at Gill's house and compare it with Mandy's next month.

When Gill got her Lectromatic home she went about decorating it methodically, doing the exterior first with brick, then painting the window frames, something she now wishes she'd left as wood. That alone took 18 months.

"I don't enjoy the decorating side of it," admitted Gill. "I like the collecting and the making and the arranging."



Above: In the study much of the books and paperwork have been printed off of the internet. Ornaments and swaps fill the room and an old pencil sharpener makes a believable scale globe.

Far right: Having a games room was a way to include lots of fun accessories and do something a bit different.

If decorating is considered the necessary evil to get to the fun part, it doesn't show. However, Gill would rather live with mistakes or changes in taste than rip it all out and do it again – unlike Mandy who is prone to bouts of inspiration to improve on her dolls house on a regular basis.





Left: This bedroom is full to brimming with life through having plenty of bits and bobs to enjoy looking at.

Right: All that remains is to find suitable occupants!

Far right: Gill knew she wanted a kitchen, pantry and nursery in her house; the other rooms developed gradually.

Some of the rooms are decorated with wallpaper samples and borders. Gill's hand stitched rugs also feature prominently.

Below right: Gill has an obvious talent for making and hanging curtains in miniature.

times in the winter I put the lights on and look through the windows. It all looks lovely and cosy.'

Finding the balance between enjoying the hobby and responsibilities to family can mean making items themselves, partly because it is fun and partly because it saves on buying expensive miniatures. Why fork out a lot of money when you can either make something yourself or buy cheaper furniture and kit bash it? This principle is what has helped to give Gill's house a really strong sense of style. Each room looks consistent because many of the items in it have been made or adapted by her. It lacks that 'shop bought and filled' look that can make all the difference to a house looking cold and impersonal, as opposed to inhabited, like Gill's.

The other lovely thing about Gill's

„So many people don't put enough in their houses and leave important corners and walls bare.“





Above: Gill is most proud of her rugs and stitching and plans more needlework projects in the future.

Left: After being played with by a small child poor cook's legs keep falling off, so now she stands propped up at the sink.

house is that she loves to include other people's work, not necessarily well-known makers like her Glasscraft glass and paintings by Just Anne and Bill, but swaps with friends and contacts. There are items that Mandy has made and other pieces, such as the Jack-in-the-box and plane in the nursery, that were swaps from Minis4all.

"I like seeing other people's work in my house," said Gill. But she warns that there is no guarantee of a fair swap, although she has been very

happy with most of them.

By far the majority of items in Gill's doll's house she made herself and as anyone who has been involved in miniatures for some time will agree, it incorporates so many other hobbies; sewing, patchwork, needlework, and carpentry - they just take up less room than their full-size versions. Of all these disciplines needlecraft is Gill's favourite area of expertise. She has made rugs, samplers and stitching and ideally would like something in every room. Curtains are not the easiest of furnishing to get to hang properly but Gill has managed with the aid of Pamela Warner's book on techniques.

"You have to tack them and pull tight then spray them so when you remove the tacking they stay in place."

The hobby opened up a whole new world of learning for her, particularly through the Internet, which has proved an invaluable source for researching styles and facts, getting ideas and locating documents, books, packaging and pictures that can be adapted into making miniatures. There have also been numerous trips to National Trust properties in the name of research,



Left: Many items of furniture have been effectively kit-bashed, rather than buying new or expensive pieces.

which she might otherwise have never visited.

It is a lovely house and all the rooms are full of personality with wall-space well-used and surfaces covered in interesting trinkets and items. So many people don't put enough in their houses and leave important corners and walls bare.

"For me it's my dream house and where I'd like to live," Gill told us.

"Mandy will move on to other projects even though she knows her house isn't finished, but I like to know 'right that's done'. Then I'll move on to the next thing. That's my logical mind."



No time like the present

What better way of recycling an old clock than creating a little room full of memories inside? We catch up with a maker who has been doing just that

BY ISLA GREEN



Peter Iles started to make mini scenes in antique clock cases over 30 years ago as a result of his wife Carol's interest in miniatures.

His first clock contained a sitting room scene of an elderly lady in front of a flickering coal fire whilst her faithful cat kept her company. Her room was dominated by family possessions and photographs. This is a theme that Peter has maintained over the years, always trying to include family memorabilia from people who have commissioned him to create scenes important to them.

Peter is retired and lives in Tuffley, in Gloucester. He creates his clocks in a workshop in his garden. The clocks he uses are always redundant and no longer in a working condition. He

stresses that he would never consider dismantling a working clock, but sees reusing old cases as a way of recycling them for a new and special purpose. Some clocks that he has worked on have been in their owners' families for decades and have a history and sentimental value of importance to them.

Peter has produced well over forty clocks with a wide variety of scenes, with many going to other countries such as America, Australia, and Japan.

Producing scenes in such a limited space that is often no more than 10 cm x 15 cm x 15 cm can be very challenging. He likes to pack as much interest into each one as possible by creating a sense of depth, and including many points of interest. Each clock is also lit with LED lights as well as decorative



t for Peter's mini scenes



lamps and lights appropriate to the scene.

Peter said: "I have produced clocks commemorating birthdays, anniversaries, and retirements, and some scenes that just bring back fond memories. If done well, such clocks will be treasured by their owner, not for their financial value, but what they mean and represent to them."

Peter enjoys producing scenes from his imagination and testing how creative he can be. His clocks are displayed and available to buy at the Gloucester Antiques Centre under the working title of Storyclocks.





“I have produced clocks commemorating birthdays, anniversaries, and retirements, and some scenes that just bring back fond memories.”





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Yvonne converts shelves into nine room display

Yvonne Lundov wanted a permanent feature in her home to display her collection of miniatures and she came up with the idea of transforming an old cabinet

BY SANDRA HARDING

It's obvious that Yvonne Lundov from Silkeborg, Jutland, Denmark, is a lady on my wavelength as she can't resist a set of empty shelves either.

It started off as a cabinet with two glass doors, and measures 6 feet long x 38 inches high x 10 inches deep — that has now become nine separate rooms. The rooms vary in size to suit what Yvonne wanted to show off, the largest three being 19.5" x 12" to create the best displays. All it needed then was the very creative mind Yvonne has, and lots and lots of lovely accessories of course.

Yvonne is no newcomer to our hobby. She has been a miniaturist for nearly 12 years and began by building her houses. They somehow seemed temporary to her so she decided that she wanted a more permanent feature in her home, to be part of the furniture.

That's where the cabinet came in. Yvonne begins by deciding what each room will be and adds the overhead and wall lighting accordingly. Then wallpapers and colour schemes are worked out before the playing with furnishings and accessories begins.

With twenty or so years of collecting Yvonne has plenty to choose from, and most of her items are purchases from doll's house shops and miniature fairs. The negligee and pretty underwear on the back wall is from Miniseum and the dresses on the back wall were Facebook purchases. In the tea room,

the vast amount of cakes are from Inge Jacobsen from Denmark, and china accessories are from Reutter. The white wire furniture is from various places in Denmark, which Yvonne painted gold to create just the right look.

The food hall is crammed with bread, cheese and vegetables, from many suppliers, mainly Inge Jacobson, while the busy dressmaker's room is full of fabrics and items made by the dear lady sitting at her sewing machine. These include pieces from Heidi Ott and Bodo Hennig as well as many more made by Yvonne.

The clocks and further homewear items are from Reutter and Heidi Ott, including the gold tables and older ones, and all painted by Yvonne. I love the Turkish bathroom, with its geyser, brass bath and interesting collection from Bodo Hennig, Reutter and Jeff Myers. The basin in black is made of slate with a lacquer surface and painted in gold and copper.

The top room on the left is the gentlemen's salon with a hairdressers and the top room on the right is the ladies salon where they also do pedicures. There is also a nice supply of ladies' wigs for those bad hair days, as well as make up and posh hats.

This really is a delightful creation and I bet Yvonne's visitors make a beeline to see it whenever they visit. Every time I look at the photographs I see something new to look at, and I bet they will too.



Joan finds good home for Julie's perfect pets

One of Julie Parrott's loyal customers is also one of her biggest fans. Here Joan shares her cute dog collection and introduces us to a very talented UK miniature maker

BY JOAN MCKENZIE

For some people, a doll's house is only filled with furniture, positioned perfectly in place with everything to exacting standards. For others the preference is to have that furniture messy with newspapers, dishes in the sink and 'shabby chic'. For my own vignettes that I enjoy assembling the house must be teeming with children, sometimes three and four to a bed, combined with elderly, yet obviously kind grandparents, and most of all each room should have at least one dog! I'm not certain why this has become my Utopia, because I am terribly allergic to pets, but I have always loved dogs. A few years ago, I found a wonderful artist who has astounded me time after time when I behold in my hands what she creates.

I have become completely smitten with miniature animals created by Julie Parrott. It all began when I won my first auction on eBay for her tiny yet perfectly scaled sheepdog with white and grey faux fur. When this puppy arrived I was thrilled by the details. The little paws, the soft pelt of fur, the eyes, the teeth and especially the tiny tongue! Something compelled me to look at this little work of art closely so many times, which eventually left me wanting to know more about Julie the artist. Fortunately, she has shared her story with me.



Julie (left) grew up with two older brothers who were interested in action figures, motorbikes, and airplanes. As a young girl she may have been a bit of a tomboy. Dolls had no place in her toy box, but she always had a fascination for dogs and animals of all categories. Julie found herself yearning to create as she wished that one day she could use her dreamed of creative skills in some way.

For many years Julie worked as a landscape gardener. A few years back Julie made character clay sculptures of people's beloved pets. There was even a time when she was housecleaning



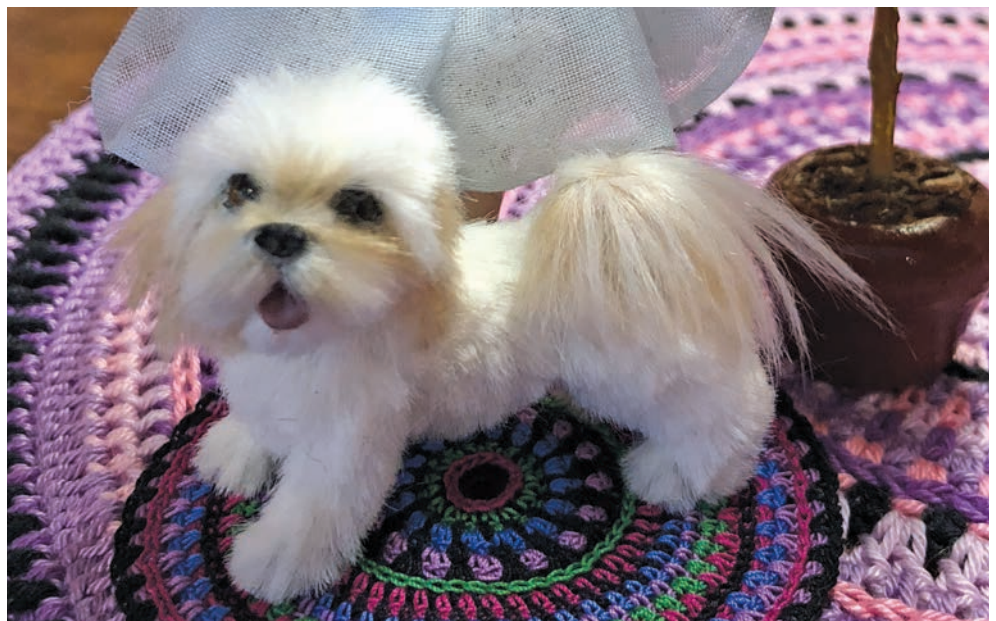
as a means of income. When I learned this, I showed my first few puppies to my husband and he just shook his head and said: "Imagine all of this talent could have been wasted if she had not found her way to this career choice." I agree with him most wholeheartedly.

In 2013 Julie discovered Kerri Pajutee's miniature animals. Impressed with the lifelike miniatures, Julie decided to try to make miniature pets using a tutorial created by Kerri.

Within two years Julie developed

Above: *Nobert is a registered therapy dog with a big heart and this is his twelfth replica.*

Below: *An adorable white and cream Lhasa Apso.*





Above: "Shake" is this old hound's favourite command.

Above right: A sweet Basset Hound with his tongue hanging out.

Right: The postman is greeted with much enthusiasm.

Below: No armchair is complete with out a handsome Scottie sitting on it with loving eyes.

Bottom: This little Spaniel makes the perfect best friend.

Below right: A loving pair of St. Bernards have the mellow personality that is perfect for dress up time.







Above left: *This Portuguese water dog lays faithfully at the foot of the bed.*

Above: *A handmade twelfth scale German Shepherd.*

Above right: *Pinkie is a mongrel, which tend to make the best pets!*

Below far left: *A post man with his beagle helpers.*

Left: *"Ruh-roh" looks like someone is a bit big to be climbing furniture.*



her own technique and in 2015 was awarded IGMA Artisan status.

Julie's family is very supportive of her choice as a miniaturist. She considers her mother to be her greatest fan. Julie has two daughters and 11-year-old Mia also likes to create with clay. Mia has an acute eye for detail and if Julie is making a miniature but just can't seem to get the results she desires, little Mia will instantly tell her what needs to be changed.

Julie works on miniatures five days each week, interspersed with school

runs, dog walks, cooking and housework. She enjoys working from home and feels quite fortunate to have a workshop in her back garden which her husband built. The workshop is detached from the house, which allows her to escape and work in peace, staying focused on the creations. Sometimes it can be a little lonely with no work colleagues but most days she is happy with the peace, quiet, and the multiple glories of nature from her flowers, trees and the woodland creatures playing outside her windows.

Much of her inspiration comes from the antics of her own pets, a lovable cocker spaniel, a respectable 20-year-old tabby cat and a one-year-old Maine Coon cat. Julie often takes photos of them for reference poses to use in her future miniatures.

Making miniatures can be quite therapeutic most of the time, but sometimes it can be frustrating. She enjoys the sculpting process more than anything. The furring is a very precise

component to the creation which can be quite complicated. Julie often tends to end up covered in merino wool, alpaca fleece, and faux-fur during the process, but this final step in her process allows her to see the animals transform into the desired result which is highly satisfying.

Julie lives in a quiet but ever-expanding village on the east coast of the UK. She feels quite lucky to have a beach nearby. There are also wonderful countryside walking areas brimming with wildlife. These are strongly inspirational factors in her miniature making. A brisk walk with the sea air or rolling landscapes refreshes Julie's ideas for miniatures. Life is at a steady pace on the east coast of England and that's exactly how Julie loves it.

My own restored doll's house has quite a variety of Julie's miniature puppies that I consider to be masterpieces, every single one of them. I hope you will enjoy meeting them in this feature.

Fate brought treasured house to Judy's door

Cash in a card from her husband made Judy's day, especially when she found a house for sale online just hours later. Now it's a wonderful beach property

BY SANDRA HARDING

We first featured one of Judy Riggs's glittering, frothy concoctions in issue number 326 in November 2019 and I simply couldn't resist showing you another of her collection of seven buildings, collectively called Fishermans' Wharf.

The story behind this particular house is rather charming. It started on Mother's Day when her husband gave her a card with a hundred dollars inside.

Later that same day, whilst glancing through Facebook Marketplace, she saw a very large Georgian Colonial doll's house for sale, close to her home. The price was a hundred dollars. Fate or what?

Within 45 minutes it was delivered to her door, with its own custom-made table on wheels. The house was made by DollHouse Inc in 1975, and Judy was beyond excited to find such a treasure.

A quick refurbishment began as she added her own colour scheme of white and hints of the delicate colours of the sea and sky. As the house overlooks the ocean the back is open to get the best views and sea breezes, of course.

Some of the floors and walls are stencilled beautifully by Judy, and are so delicate. She dreams of living in somewhere like Kennebunkport, Maine, as she is a regular visitor there but, as she can't live there in the real

world, she has created her own sea-side world in her dining room.

What I find so fascinating about this lady is that she somehow manages to create houses that seem to be part of her real world, instead of a house shut away, and which only appears once the front doors are opened. Her houses have become somehow real, and this is such a clever thing to create. I am not sure how she did it.

Maybe it's because of her knack of arranging full-size pieces, scattered amongst the twelfth scale items, which leaves me in awe. There are full-size flowers and leaves, placed as if by magic in egg cups, which shouldn't look right, but does. Pretty coloured glass vases in full size, blend in with twelfth scale white furniture, some of it scattered with glitter fairy dust, and the edge of each floor is decorated with white lace. More magic.

The houses Judy creates are always designed so that she can display some of her late mother's jewellery in them, and this one is no exception. There are pearls draped across the bed, and several very pretty brooches scattered around in pride of place and, do you know, I can't think of a better way of displaying them. It helps keep her mum's memory alive, and I am sure she would be pleased to know that she was part of this magical world created by her daughter.

‘It helps keep her mum's memory alive,’



BRING ON THE BLING



Quick and easy

Create a flower dome for a Victorian Parlour

BY SANDRA HARDING

You will need

- Glass thimble holder and base
- Florist's oasis or similar
- Knife, glue, tweezers, cocktail stick, scissors
- Green Flowersoft, maybe dark and medium green
- Tiny "best" flowers preferably with wire stems, and some smaller for just gluing on
- Tiny leaves, greenery and moss — Fimo, paper, dried or plastic flowers all work. These can be matching or just any colours you have.

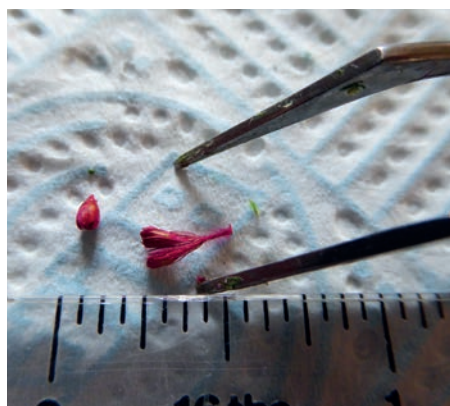
● Cut/carve a piece of oasis to a dome shape, to fit either on top of the base, or sitting inside. If inside, the oasis will need to be taller. Make sure that either way, it's small enough to take the flowers and foliage without hitting the top or sides of the glass cover.

● Tip out some Flowersoft in a dish, and mix colours if wanted. Place a cocktail stick under the oasis (to hold). Cover the oasis dome well with glue then immediately put it into the Flowersoft, covering it all over, except for the base. Let it dry, and then fill in any little gaps.

Decide what are your "best" flowers, and cut them to ¼ inch or

less. Have a finished picture in your mind, and start by pushing one in at the top of the oasis, and decide if that's where you want it. Carry on arranging your main flowers around the whole thing, but stop when you have the main flowers in and don't be disheartened as it can look odd at this point

● Now the fun part starts as you start gluing on all the little bits of greenery, flowers, and anything tiny that just looks right and adds to the effect. Start at the top and work your way down, inbetween your "best" flowers, holding onto the cocktail stick, but keeping it all slim enough to go under the dome. It's very im-





portant to keep checking this! Don't rush, and maybe let different areas dry a little as you go.

- In the photographs there are a couple on top of the base, and a couple inside the base. Either way is fine. The lilac one is made up of plastic and dried statice flowers which work very well. The one on the blue base is made up entirely of dried statice. The yellow arrangement is made up of Fimo flowers and green Flowersoft, and the pink one is Fimo flowers and dried flowers.

- Don't be tempted to leave the glass dome on your arrangement until it's completely dry, as the glass will spoil and you'll be cross.

- Place in your Victorian parlour and be pleased with your effort.



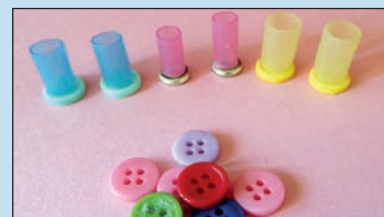
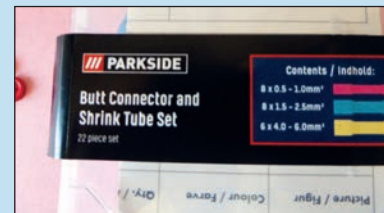
Quick and easy glasses



- Cut off both "soft" ends of the connector and smooth any rough edge until flat
- Glue one to the inside edge of the button

Or: glue it to a round finding

Or: glue it to a piece of card and cut to shape when it's dry.



You will need

- Butt connector and shrink tube set (the sizes are slightly different)
- Small buttons to match, findings or matching coloured card
- Glue
- Sandpaper or emery board

Memories are evoked in Once Upon a Time shop

Deri Terry was filled with her own childhood memories and memories of her children and grandson growing up while creating this twelfth scale magical toy shop

BY DERI TERRY

Who doesn't remember being a child, staring into the window of a toy store, dreaming of owning that special toy? It is a magical feeling that I hoped to capture while designing this room box. The definition of a toy is, 'an object for a child to play with, typically a model or miniature replica of something'. Being a miniaturist, no wonder toys hold such an appeal to me.

This project is entitled, Once Upon A Time, and incorporates toys from my own childhood, as well as those from my children's and my grandson's.

When planning this project, my first thought was a period French toy store, filled with vintage toys, but it was important to me to include toys that were special to my children and myself. As a mother and grandma, I feel so sentimental about the toys my children loved, as each is connected to specific memories. So, I compromised, deciding to create a specialty toy store, filled with heirloom toys, alongside modern and classic favourites, such as Mickey Mouse. In order to achieve the look of a boutique toy shop, the focus became all about the mix.

Creating a shop is a practical solution to housing a collection. My large doll's house includes a nursery, but it is not nearly large enough to accommodate all of the toys I wanted to display. I planned on designing a toy store for some time, so I had been collecting toys over the last couple of years.

I typically purchase items long before I have a permanent home for them, filling little drawers and tiny boxes with special treasures. My philosophy is that if you buy what you love, you will always find a home for it. I believe a collection curated over time, is much more interesting than buying everything needed for a project at once.

I purchased the room box kit and assembled it quickly. It is the first room box I have completely made myself, and I really enjoyed the process.

I painted it inside and out, ageing it with multiple colour washes of grey and brown. I wanted to give the illusion of a historic building.

The inspiration for the interior was the Beatrix Potter toile wallpaper, in blue with a cream background, which was finished with crown moulding and baseboards. The wooden letters used for the name of the shop were purchased from a craft store.

The large fairy tale book on the hanging sign, is a metal charm. The outside walk is mat or mount board covered with a grey, flagstone paper. The lamp post standing on the corner, not only sheds light onto the scene, but also serves as a prop for the naughty spaniel.

I ordered the shelf units, thinking they were adjustable, but that was not the case. One of the frustrations I faced, is that although the shelves are created in twelfth scale, the spacing



between the shelves did not accommodate the majority of the toys available. Instead of trying to remake the shelf units, I decided to work with them. This meant not being able to use many of the toys originally planned.

I had to get creative and find exceptionally short toys. In fact, some of the figures and animals lining the shelves, were part of a Noah's ark set purchased several years ago. Also, two sets of 1/144 scale doll's house furniture fit nicely on a shelf, displayed alongside Noah's wife.

While I originally had visions of handmade plush animals such as Winnie the Pooh, filling the shelves, the compromises I made added charm to the overall effect. If I have learned one thing as a miniaturist, it is to be flexible.

Creating a back story for the project helped bring the scene to life. The owner at the cash register was the perfect choice to manage the store. He is a very kind gentleman who has tended the store for many years. He could hire help, but this is more than just a business to him—it's his life's work. He works tirelessly to maintain the store, and in the evenings when the store is closed, he runs a doll hospital repairing broken dolls. Nothing fills his heart like seeing the sparkle in a child's eyes, when he returns a beloved doll, fully restored, back into their loving arms.

The old-fashioned cash register is





Left: A little girl peeks inside the shop as the owner checks the cash register drawer.

still being used, lending nostalgia to the shop, and the money inside is from a kit that I found online.

Continuing the Beatrix Potter theme is a collection of plush, animals, including Peter Rabbit in various sizes, along the back wall. These are needle-felted by a Russian artist. Also from Russia is the toy theatre in the display window and the game boards inside the display counter, handmade by Larissa Shtanko.

The vintage style block sets in the display windows are made by Andrea Thieck of Germany. There is a selection of readable books by Lee Ann, and other sources. Although there are many pieces created by amazing miniature artists, they are displayed with



Above: *Paddington Bear is in the store window waiting for his new best friend.*

Right: *It's tea time in the corner of the toy shop, then maybe some skipping rope after.*

inexpensive pails from the craft store, plush toys sold as charms for clothing, miniature Disney toys, as well as many unfinished metal cars, planes, cannons and Tinkerbell fairies that I painted myself.

All one has to do is look at a toy from childhood and memories come flooding back. A simple item on a shelf, can conjure memories, and moments of contemplation.

For instance, my young son loved making figures out of modelling clay and did so throughout his lifetime. Wherever we travelled, I always made sure I had clay in my bag. Anytime we had to wait at the doctor's or an office, Ricky could channel his energy through his wee sculptures. Therefore, I included a box of modelling clay on the art supply shelf in the store. Just an ordinary item to an onlooker, but to me, it conjures multiple memories throughout my late son's life. Some of his favourite toys were Lego, Play-doh, Star Wars figures and dinosaurs. And each doll, Easy-Bake Oven, teddy bear and Madeline book was loved by my daughter. Every item I chose for the store has meaning to me.

A surprisingly fun item was not



made to be used in a doll's house scene, but instead came in the form of earrings. My sister-in-law found the pair in a pound store. She is always looking for interesting miniatures for my projects. As Gumby was one of my favourite toys, it was thrilling to disassemble the tarnished findings and add them to the inventory. It was amazing that they were actually small enough to fit perfectly on the shelf.

Another item that was not a doll's house miniature, is the carousel horse in the display window. It was a Christmas ornament owned by my husband's mother. She loved Christmas, and when she died, my husband kept the ornament as a keepsake. Including it in the store, filled with so many memories, seemed a fitting tribute.

A shelf unit holds British soldiers made by English artist Valerie Casson. There are two Heidi Ott dolls and several Angel Children dolls by Ethel Hicks. A bunny Jack-in-the Box and seal pull toy were purchased in the gift shop at the Miniature Time Machine Museum, in Tucson, Arizona last year.

There are three pieces in the miniature collection that are truly special to me: The Bebe Jumeau doll, by Lea Frisoni, the Hitty doll by Auralea Kriegler, and the Paddington Bear, by Dave Pennant, of Teeny Weeny Teddies. I am so grateful to have them.

When I went to the 2018 Chicago miniature show, I hoped to purchase a Paddington Bear by Dave Pennant. It was my first time at the show, and when I finally found his booth, he only had





Left: The shop window is full of wonder for any child. The beautiful carousel horse was an ornament.

Above: Teddies and baby dolls fill the display sofa.

Above right: Deri had to search for extra small toys to fill the extra small shelf spaces.

Right: Games and dollies fill the toy shop shelves.

one Paddington, but he could not sell it, as his suitcase had been lost somewhere during the trip from England. He asked me to come back the next day because it might be found in the hotel room.

I explained I was only there for that day and asked him to please sell me the bear without the suitcase. He was so accommodating and decided to make a new suitcase. He sent his assistant back to his hotel room for the materials, and I was able to watch him create the little suitcase as we visited. Now, when I look at the bear in the display window, I don't just see a bear, I relive memories of an artist that took the time to fulfil my wish, at my first

Chicago miniature show.

I love creating beautiful miniatures, but it is also interesting to inject some humour into a scene. The dog lifting his leg on the lamp post lends a light-hearted feeling. I created the puddle and stream using yellowish hot glue sticks made for woodworking. From the front, one just notices a dog, but the view from the side captures a comical moment of a dog relieving himself. Hopefully this room box stimulates many senses because, after all, laughter is the best medicine.

I don't always add dolls to my miniature scenes, but this project, being a toy store seemed to call for them. Just as the shop keeper seemed appropriate tending the register, so did the girl doll peering into the window. There seemed no better way to convey the feeling of wonderment than the gaze of a child, pressed against the glass.

Toys teach us and help shape us into the adults we become. My hope is that as people view this little store, memories from their own childhood will be triggered. Although this room



box holds many sentimental elements for me, my goal is that it will touch each viewer, young or old, by sparking a happy memory of their own, Once Upon a Time.

Foxfield Cottage leads way into mini world

Gabrielle takes us on a tour of her first doll's house build and explains how her dream came together despite her feelings of guilt as a mother

BY GABRIELLE FORGUES-HOLLAND

I am a proud Ontario, Canadian girl, stay-at-home mother and new to the art of miniatures. I first stumbled upon a miniaturist's doll's house three years ago and fell head over heels marvelling at the little world they had created.

I then began stalking other miniaturists' work and dreaming of trying my hand at the craft. But I was hesitant because, as a mother, I often feel guilty about indulging myself. That was until I came across an ad for a doll's house kit a local man was selling at a bargain price. I purchased the kit a twelfth scale Greenleaf Arthur, and so the adventure began.

I knew the house I envisioned would need a nice big front porch and a front peaking roof, both of which this house had to my delight.

Though no champagne bottle has been smashed upon it I have christened the home Foxfield Cottage. I wanted to create a modern farmhouse style.

For the exterior I absolutely love the look of large wooden gable brackets and wanted to incorporate them into this home. I omitted all the original gingerbread detailing and was able to make my own custom gable brackets using small square wooden dowelling and craft sticks. I also love board and batten style siding and I was able to achieve this look using long wooden match sticks.

I changed the front windows and

front door from the standard round top ones to traditional 12 pane window frames and added a wooden screen door to help modernise and give the house some country charm.

I changed the porch railing balusters and extended the railing to the stairs. I decided to paint the house a deep murky blue with dark stained wood details and painted the door white to make it stand out from the rest of the house.

Lastly, I added planter boxes to the front and filled them with one of my very favourite flowers: blue hydrangeas (I found white flowers at a craft store and painted them).

Building this kit was wonderful because it gave me the ability to add and subtract features to create the look that I wanted. I modified the interior by omitting the staircase and first floor partition wall to create a cosy open concept space which allowed more working room.

On the top floor I repositioned the wall and cut an opening to create a set of ornate sliding doors separating the bathroom and bedroom. The flooring was done using wood veneer edging tape and I left the walls a crisp white, also keeping most of the decor neutral to create a clean and cohesive feeling.

I found these great copper wire fairy lights that I think give off a nice soft realistic glow.

Unfortunately, I discovered them late in my build and had already installed



wooden dowel ceiling beams, so I wasn't able to hide my wires. But I was able to hide the battery pack on the first floor by tucking it into the hollow portion of my fireplace. Upstairs, I simply wrapped it around the suspended ceiling beam. There is also a front porch light.

I have really enjoyed the decorating aspect of this project. I wanted to create spaces that felt cosy and somewhere you could see yourself cuddled up with a book and a warm cup of cocoa.

I decided to make all the furniture and decor myself. Most of the furniture is made simply using foam board, poster paper, joint compound, cork board and wood bits (craft sticks, matchsticks, toothpick and BBQ skewers). I made my large fireplace using foam board for the structure, bricks from cut up cork board while the mantel is a piece of square dowel.

I repurposed many pieces to create elements of this home. A baby bottle nipple has become an industrial ceiling light. An old pocket watch is a wall clock, a baby food lid is a bathroom mirror frame, while a dish detergent cap became a toilet. Plastic toys were painted to replicate bronze and concrete statues. I made my rugs by finding photos of actual rugs I adored and printed them onto iron-on transfer paper which I ironed onto light canvas material.

This journey has also opened







me up to try my hand at other creative skills. I tried weaving to make a little basket and a throw blanket for the couch. I also dove into clay sculpting, making some items like a mug, baked goods, pumpkins and apples.

I added touches to my house that are little nods to my actual life. I built a replica of a grey triangular plant stand in the bedroom that in real life my father built me as a birthday present. One of the throw pillows in the kitchen has the phrase *Que Sera Sera* a special song my mother sings to my babes.

The only items purchased so far have been a set of tiny amber glass jars I have used in the bathroom and kitchen, clear plastic pumpkins for the living room, a metal scrapbook embellishment I used for wall decor, fairy lights and various greenery items.

I have dressed the house to have some autumn touches, my very favourite season. I like to think of the resident of this house taking in the scent of pumpkin spice, enjoying the fall foliage. My two-year-old son has been very interested in 'Mummy's house', seeing it all coming together and so far has been treating the house very gingerly, thank goodness.

I hope you enjoyed my first-time doll's house building project as much as I did. I am officially hooked.



Indestructible Tootsietoy doesn't live up to claims

Collector Troy Bettridge shares his vintage Tootsietoy doll's house furniture collection and also brings us some fascinating background about the company

BY TROY BETTRIDGE

Tootsietoy is known for its die-cast toys. It is said that Charles and Samuel Dowst were as foundational to the toy industry as Henry Ford was to the automobile. The brothers made a good living in Chicago in the laundry industry and even founded a publishing company which produced the first laundry trade magazine before they started making toys.

Charles attended the Columbia Exposition of 1893 and saw a presentation of the Line-O-Type machine. He applied this process to manufacture small die-cast items and in 1910 was producing metal toys. The Dowst Brothers Manufacturing company started producing small trinket items including Cracker Jack toys and later producing Monopoly game pieces. They produced planes, trains, cars, trucks and even battleships.



As the company grew, they decided to add a line of 1/24th scale doll's houses and furniture for girls and named the brand after Theodore Dowst's own daughter Catherine, aka 'Toots.'

The company started producing doll's house furniture under the Tootsietoy brand in 1920, but didn't actually apply for its trademark until 1924.

Tootsietoy doll's house furniture was produced from 1920 until 1937. In 1923 the company appeared in the Sears Roebuck and Co. catalog and sales soared. The company advertised the items as 'Pewter' although the actual make-up was a soft alloy of zinc and aluminium. It was stated in advertisements that the special composition metal would not break as easily as wood and was 'almost indestructible.' Collectors today will point out that these toys don't quite live up to those

claims. Most Tootsietoy pieces found today have bent or broken feet or legs and the paint used has not stood the test of time.

One of the main competitors for Tootsietoy was Arcade cast iron toys. Tootsietoy sold to a larger market share due to its smaller scale versus Arcade's 1/16th scale. This was appealing to consumers because the smaller half inch scale pieces could fit into a smaller doll's houses, could be more easily stored and of course didn't cost as much as the Arcade cast iron furniture. Both Arcade and Tootsie created promotional children's books to promote their products. The marketing department at Tootsietoy featured the "Tootsietoy Tots" and illustrations of the company's doll's house furniture on each page.

The company also produced litho-printed doll's houses made from cardboard that could be stored easily and were inexpensive to produce. They were printed with both exterior and interior details and could be put together with folding tabs and metal brads

Left: Items in later years were more complex. The dresser has working drawers, the radio door opens and closes, and the icebox door opens to reveal drawers and shelves.

Above: The original bathroom sets included a mirrored medicine cabinet, a towel bar (not pictured) a stool, the toilet, the claw foot tub, and the pedestal sink.



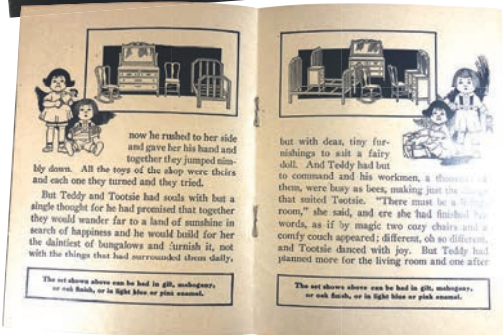


Above right: The kitchen furniture is from the early 1920s and has an ice-box, a gas range and a cabinet. Note the rare Tootsie toy step stool.

Right: The blue Tootsie bedroom has a mix of items. The floor lamp and the matching chair and chaise lounge have a velvety flopped finish and were produced in the 1930s. The bed is from the early 20s and features a metal bedspread.

Bottom right: This pink bedroom set is from the 1930's and features flopped metal bedspreads while the chairs date from the early 1920s.

Below: The cover of the promotional book "The Story of the Tootsie Tots" featured a doll's house and Tootsie furniture. Shown are pages of the promotional storybook featuring pictures of Tootsie furniture.





Above left: A set of gilded original parlour furniture.

Above: These pieces from the late 1920s and early 1930s show the variety of finishes that were used on pieces. A crackle paint finish was used on some pieces while a soft flocking was used on others. The floor lamp is from later designs.

Left: This pink bedroom set is comprised of pieces from the 1930s. The chairs date from earlier sets. The table lamp stayed consistent through the production of the furniture.

Below: The dining room furniture is an early set that has been repainted at some point. This room houses a Tootsietoy grand piano and a radio. The grandfather clock is not Tootsietoy.

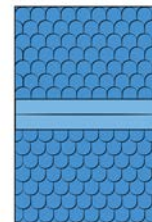
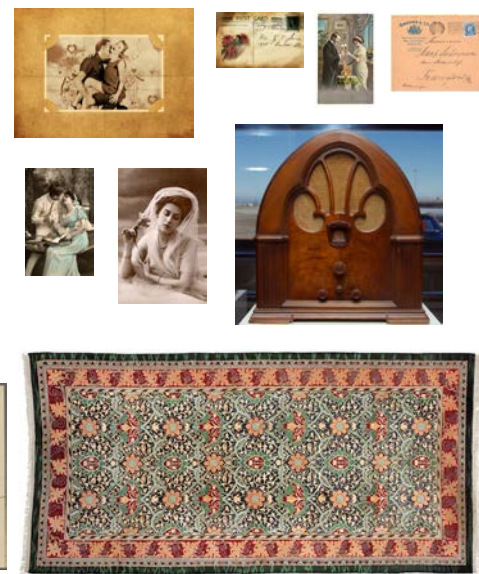
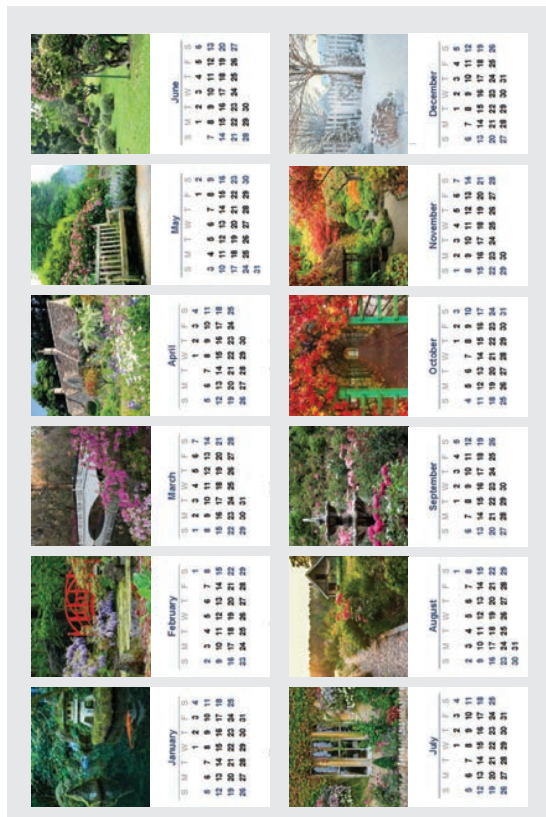
Tootsietoy doll's house furniture was sold in box sets. Early sets included a living room, a kitchen, a dining room, a bathroom, and a couple of different bedroom styles – all with twin beds.

Advertisements from the early 1920s show the box sets selling for 83 cents (62p). The cardboard houses from that same era sold for \$3.79 (£2.83), however the price dropped in the late 1920s to just \$1.98 (£1.48). The style of the toy furniture changed over the years to match the times. The ice box was replaced with a G.E electric refrigerator complete with a monitor on top, the clawfoot bathtub was replaced by a tile front version and the rigid looking parlour furniture was replaced by flocked armchairs, wing chairs, couches and a even a chaise lounge. The furniture also became more complex in the later years with working doors and drawers versus the earlier ones that were just impressed into the metal. At the height of production in 1930, Marshal Fields sold a cardboard house called the "Spanish Villa" for \$5.00 (£3.73) by itself or for \$11.65 (£8.68) fully furnished.

“The furniture became more complex in the later years.”

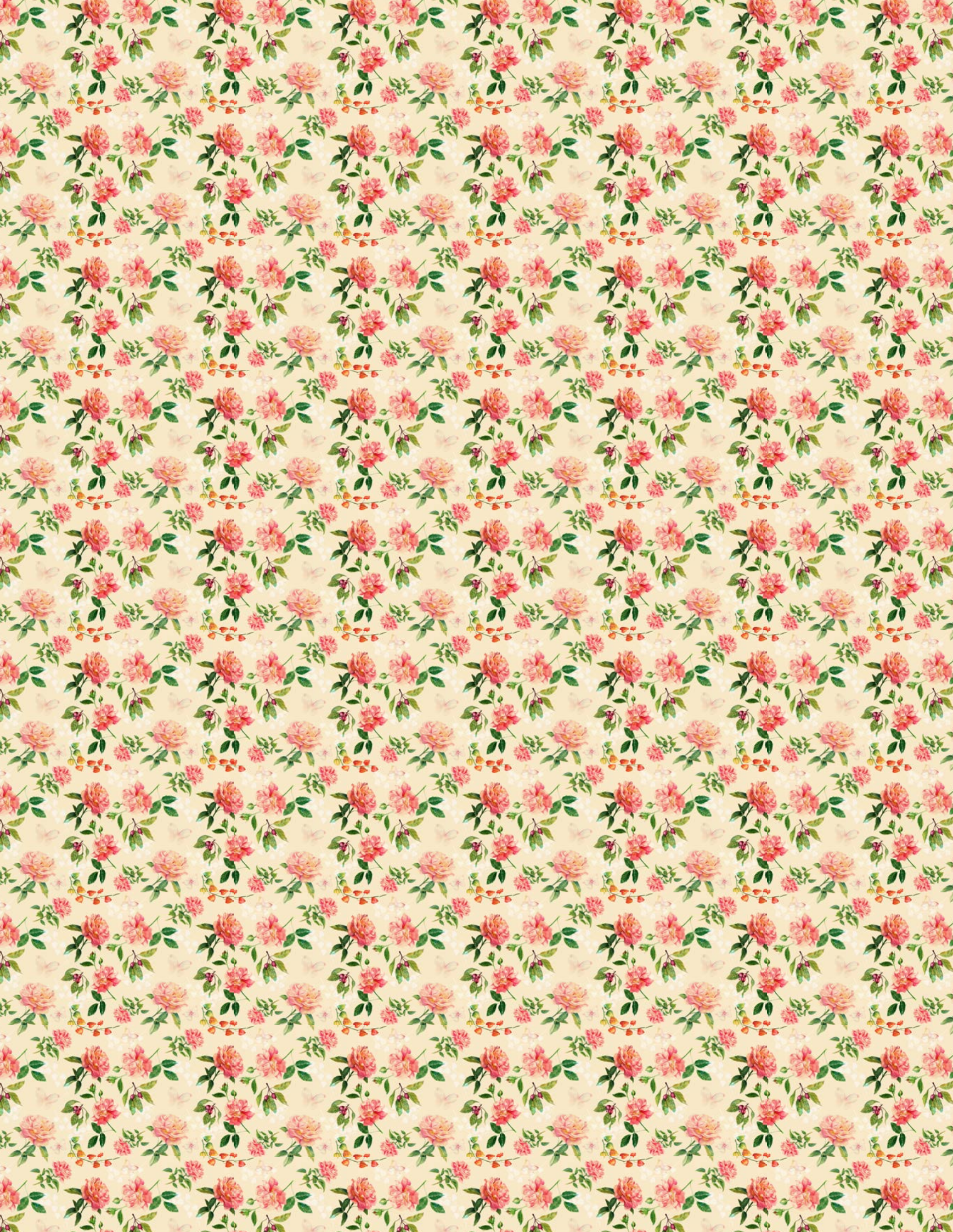


THE CUTOUTS PAGE



Oliver Richard,
I have a confession to make. Be-
lieving that I have fallen in love,
With uncertainty, You cannot
things have happened positively in me
that I have felt had passed me by.
I have the feeling with all my heart,
In uncertainty, I spend all nights, as
the candles have been blown, according to
my old's heart. I am very young
have not been for me in a while,
but uncertainties are to be done.





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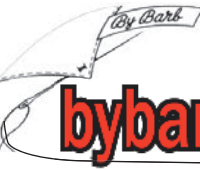
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SMALL TALK

WE CHAT WITH CAROLINE MANSELL OF CRAB POT MODELS ABOUT HER LIFE IN MINIATURE

Hi Caroline, what mini project have you got on the go at the moment? Not such a 'mini' project. I purchased a second-hand York Street shops and basement that had been badly put together and painted.

That will keep you busy. And do you have a doll's house?

My original house has become a little box of memories — things that I remember from my childhood or when my boys were little have been found or made in miniature. I was never going to have dolls in it. However, the wonderful Susan Emsell made me a hippy me. It had so much character that I have added ones that remind me of family or growing up.

Do you collect as well as make? I make a lot of items but cannot resist the odd purchase from an artisan. Working in the mini world does give me the opportunity to buy large lots of pre-loved and I have been really lucky in discovering some really nice pieces in the bundles: an Escutcheon table, some Squirrel Chairs and some Stokesay Ware china are among some of my treasured finds.

How enthusiastic is your husband about your hobby? My husband Richard is fantastic. Whilst he doesn't have an interest in doll's houses he appreciates miniatures. He is also my rock as far as the business is concerned and laser cuts the furniture



I have designed. He is also well loved by the ladies at the numerous fairs we do as he is a total gent. Definitely my best asset.

When did your mini madness start? When I was a child my brothers used my doll's house as a Man from Uncle hideout or it got bombed by tanks. After reading *The Borrowers* I started making little mice and scenes that I would hide in a cupboard or under my bed. It wasn't until we moved to Flamborough in Yorkshire 14 years ago and opened a small shop at the back of our B&B that I had the opportunity to rekindle that childhood interest. We closed the shop in 2015 and now work from home.

Your most outrageous purchase? The York Street shops. We had just moved and were having the bungalow completely stripped and rewired. We were living out of boxes and the last

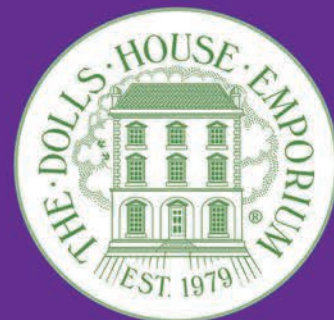
thing we needed at the time was a massive doll's house.

What do you love about our hobby? I love that my hobby gives me an income whilst doing what I love. It is hard to make enough money to live on but I also take in marketing work to make ends meet. I am very lucky to have the support of my husband, to run a business doing what I love and living in a beautiful part of the country.

"I make a lot of items but cannot resist the odd purchase from an artisan."

● We want to feature more readers in *Small Talk* and we would love to hear about your life in minis and your passion for making or collecting, or both. Just send a quick email to richard@ashdown.co.uk to express an interest.

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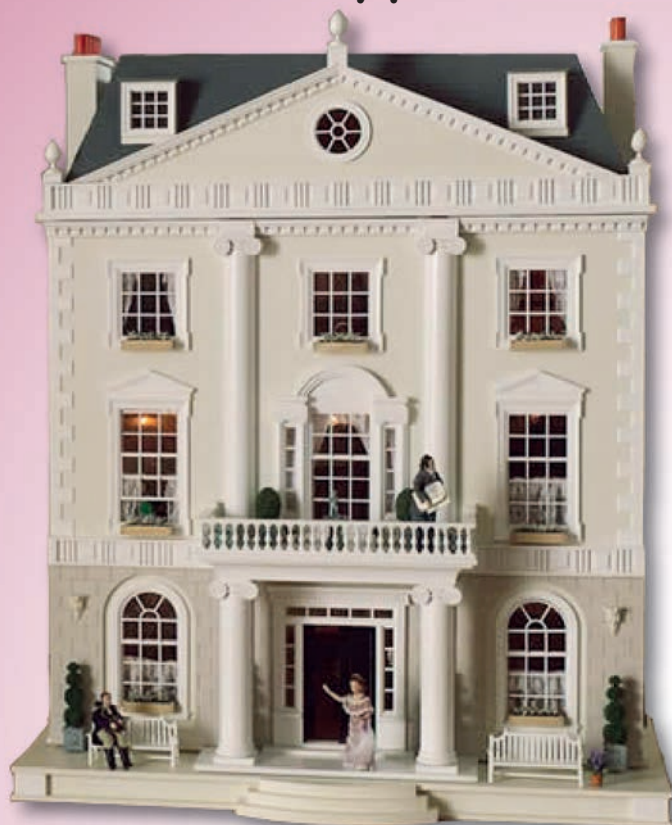
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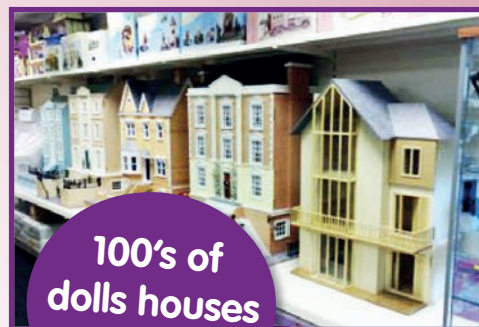
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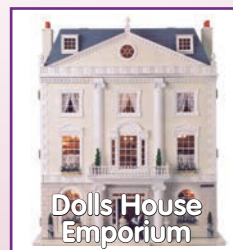
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