

DOLLSHOUSE WORLD

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& inspiring ideas



contents

small details

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To reach us: Call +44 (0)1903 884988

Or write to: Dolls House World,
PO Box 2258, Pulborough RH20 9BA
Great Britain

email: support@ashdown.co.uk

Website: www.dollshouseworld.com

Editor: Richard Jennings

Email: richard@ashdown.co.uk

Feature writer: Sandra Harding

Advertisement sales:

Maria Fitzgerald

Email: maria@ashdown.co.uk

Design: Wendy Crosthwaite

US office: Ashdown Inc., PO Box 219,
Kasson, MN 55944.

Tel: 507-634-3143

Subscriptions:

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US: usoffice@ashdown.co.uk

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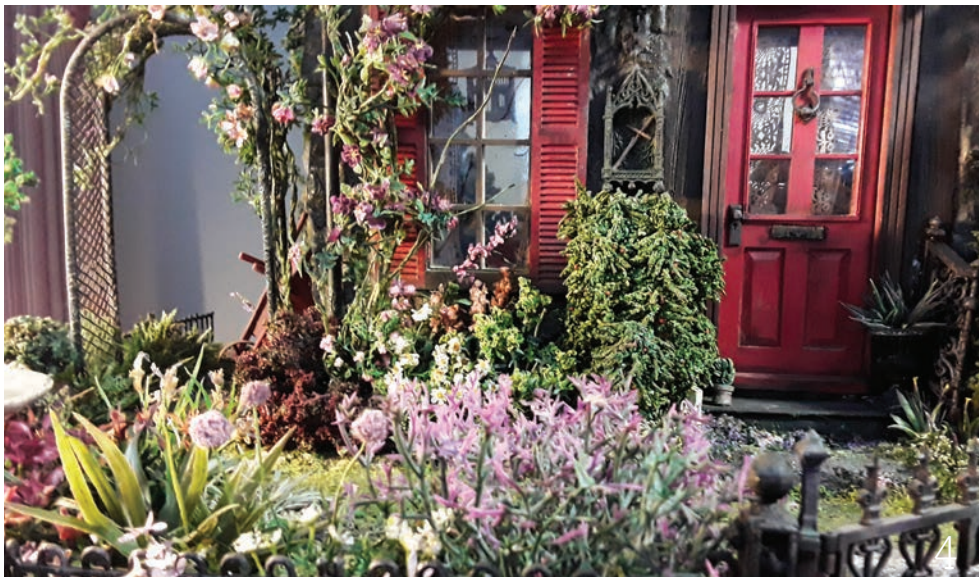
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welcome

Elizabeth Slinn, who made the idyllic cottage that features on our front cover, has some words of wisdom

as she starts on other mini projects: "I'm making a conscious effort to try and make it more about having fun and just being creative."

As I write this, ironically, Sue is in the next room swearing, head in the ground floor of her shop as three recently-fitted hanging lights give a stop-start performance. Is there anything more frustrating than lights that work intermittently? Yes, cutting out a template on your last piece of wallpaper the wrong way round. But we've moved on from that disaster.

You may recall my wife began renovating a Sid Cooke shop she had discovered in her late mum's attic as a lockdown project. At the beginning it was indeed all about the fun and being creative. But the shop has developed from a rundown store where it didn't matter if anything went wrong to looking rather impressive, and it's definitely a case of "less enjoyment, more stress". There's so many things that can now go wrong as Sue struggles to make everything perfect.

Too often as miniaturists, as Elizabeth Slinn realised, we become our own worst critics and fun flies out of the window. If you recognise the signs, it's time to step away from the project, take a deep breath and remind yourself how much you love this hobby.

Am I going to mention that to Sue? Not a flickering chance!

Richard.

email: richard@ashdown.co.uk



Above: The template disaster



Above right: Two out of three working.

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Stumped for making ideas? Then log into some woodland magic

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Monica's romantic house is full of lovely touches as Sandra discovers

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Memories and macarons fill Deri's glorious bakery room box

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Make something simple: shopping bags from fancy paper and card

Quote of the month:

"Spring will come and so will happiness. Hold on. Life will get warmer."

Anita Krizzan

HOUSE HUNT



Find the little house hidden inside.

■ Last issue it appeared on page 37.



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Pamela found miniatures bring her great joy and fulfil a creative need

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Just snip it to make baskets and samplers you don't have to stitch

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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.

Love of a book inspired this stunning cottage

Elizabeth Slinn invites us to explore the miniature gardens that took two-and-a-half years to create with both construction and destruction in the process

BY SADIE BROWN

The exterior of 43 Green Dolphin Street, with its picture perfect garden, encapsulates that idyllic cottage setting many of us dream of. The air is filled with the scent of freshly cut grass and climbing roses in full bloom.

The house was named in honour of the 1944 Elizabeth Goudge novel of the same name. Skilled artisan, Elizabeth Slinn was inspired to pay tribute to one of her favourite books, capturing the connection she has always felt with its main character, Marianne Patourel. "It's not a duplicate of any structure or garden found in the novel, but there are references related to the book scattered throughout," she explains.

Elizabeth knows her flowers well, and the bountiful garden is a garden-er's paradise. From blue delphinium, allium with their striking purple heads, lilies, and marigolds, you'll also find herbs and a holly tree amongst the painstakingly handmade plants and flowers within the walls of this tiny garden.

In addition, beautifully preserved genuine heather takes pride of place, but plays the part of tiny foxgloves. A haven for wildlife, look carefully and you'll find a Monarch butterfly resting on bee balm and a wren making the most of the bird bath as it splashes about in the summer sunshine. There's even a beehive sitting below the kitchen window and, perhaps one

of the most thoughtful details found throughout the entire scene, two spider webs set within the foliage of a climbing plant!

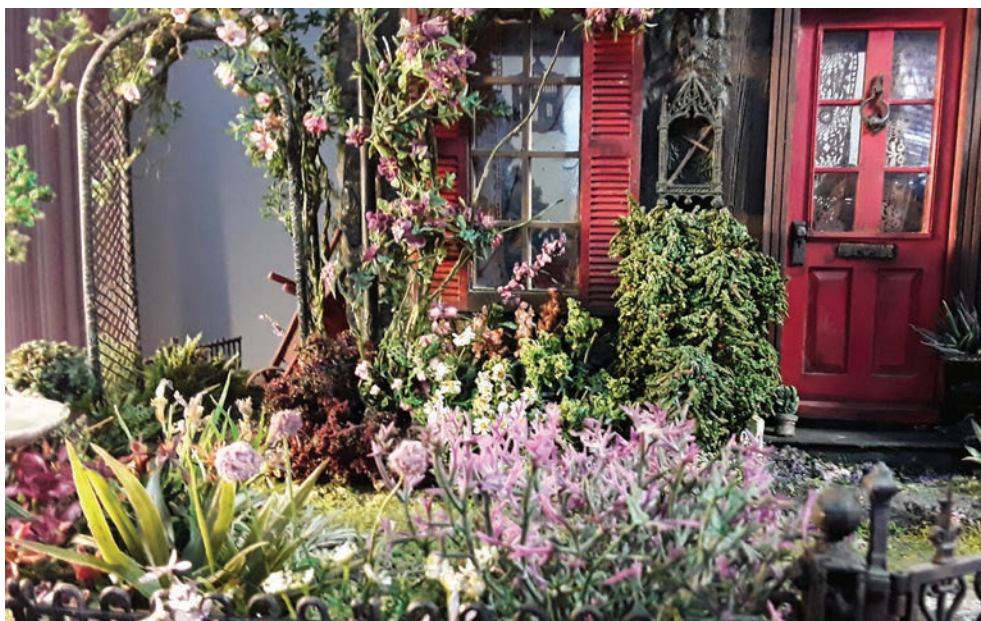
The sheer wealth of detail included by Elizabeth is incredible and when you consider the quantity of different elements, it's easy to see why the project took Elizabeth around 30 months to complete – a time she definitively describes as two and a half years of both construction and destruction!

She points out that the majority of the plants found in the garden were made from plastic plants found in pound stores, which were cut, painted and glued together, meaning it's a skill most of us could enjoy developing. "I love seeing what other people have been able to do with found objects," says Elizabeth. "I love over the top meticulous perfection of artisan work, but most of all I love the transformations of mass produced products creatively changed into uniquely personal expressions by the everyday crafter."

Created using modelling materials and flocking, Elizabeth's lawn achieves a high standard of realism which is second to none. In addition to the plants and flowers she has created herself, the garden also contains some gorgeous white peonies which were made specially for the project by her friend, Fatima.

Elizabeth and Fatima, along with their good pals, Linda and Janine, together form 'The Miniteers', who







Above: A bunny is investigating the gas meter.

Left: As you can see, the wonder of nature abounds at 43 Green Dolphin Street!

ensure they get together regularly to catch up, have lunch and get creative, a haven for sharing new and innovative ideas with one another!

Green Dolphin Street is clearly a hugely special project for Elizabeth, but it wasn't all plain sailing. One area of the garden in particular demonstrates just how those inevitable miniature mishaps we can all count to our name can actually evolve to become integral, delivering delightful character elements the scene just wouldn't be the same without.

"When I was building the garden walls, I didn't have enough foam to extend to the end of the garden, so I glued what I had left in place," recalls



Above: *Sitting beneath the kitchen window, the beehive means fresh honey will never be a problem!*

Right: *Through the garden gate.*

Elizabeth. "Somehow, it slipped out of alignment and rather than try and correct it, I decided to play up the wall's odd position and enhance it as natural decay, a result of the earth shifting and the plants pushing against it." The final effect has resulted in a finish which Elizabeth now describes as one of her favourite aspects of the entire scene!

Aside from minor landslides, Elizabeth, who wonderfully references her workspace as 'a cave of chaos', says her biggest issue was that, like any good miniaturist with a head full of ideas, she kept changing her mind about work once completed. "I'd spend a lot of time building up one area of the garden, and then I'd want to add another element and so I'd tear it all out again!"

Completed and with every detail finely honed to miniature perfection, 43 Green Dolphin Street is currently



at home in Elizabeth's living room. However, not one to stand still, and for those keen to see more of Elizabeth's work, her current project is 'Villa Leone', a Venetian villa converted from the popular Greenleaf Willowcrest kit.

"All my focus is on getting it done,"

she says. "I still have a walled garden to make for it, and the plants!"

Elizabeth knew absolutely nothing about Venetian villas when she began the project, so has spent time researching them online, alongside absorbing herself in the atmosphere



Right: The side of the house is covered with a creeping vine.

of movies such as *The Merchant of Venice* and talking to friends who have spent time in this inspirational city.

"One of the things I find myself doing when I'm unsure about the direction I'm going in is reading novels with characters living in the time period and, or the general location of the project I'm working on," she explains. "I find that reading about how people live and move about within their environments gives me a better sense of how to build and develop the interiors and exteriors of my doll's houses."

Last year, Elizabeth marked four decades since small worlds began to take up a big place in her life and her enthusiasm is something which has only served to grow with the passage of time. "I was a newlywed and my husband and I were living in a small apartment," she remembers fondly. Elizabeth wanted an area to display her handmade dolls which, at that point, consisted of larger dolls, so at the suggestion of her husband she began creating smaller dolls which would fit easily within their bedroom bookcase. These unintentionally turned out



“I’m making a conscious effort to try and make it more about having fun and just being creative.”

to be twelfth scale and while Elizabeth had been initially sceptical of her husband's idea, she was quickly surprised how much she liked it.

The rest, as they say, is history, and now recently retired from a career in retail sales, Elizabeth is aware that, like many fellow miniaturists, she is her own worst critic. "I'm making a

conscious effort to try and make it more about having fun and just being creative," she says, a wonderful piece of advice to end on. Now we close the tiny wrought iron gate of the miniature garden behind us and take one last look back at a project and work of art that has the real heart and brilliance we all aspire to!

HOBBY'S

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Due to the Covid-19 situation we have decided to put the good health of all our customers first and cancel the Spring event. We hope that being sensible now will give us the best chance to run a show in the Autumn. So if all goes well we will see you at:

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Mandy's mansion shows a different point of view

Two miniaturists bought the same house and decorated them in very different styles. Last issue we toured Gill's version.. this time we visit Mandy's imposing mansion

BY CHARLOTTE MERRYMAN

Last month we met friends Gill Rance and Mandy Groves and who had both bought identical models of a Lectromatic Georgian house at a fair many years ago, but had decorated them in very different ways. The house, ten-rooms with central hallways, was a considerable size for a first project, but the amount of interior space, exterior surface area and wooden construction offered a tangible investment that could be enjoyed and furnished with time.

Where Gill had bricked the exterior of her house and painted the window frames, Mandy chose to wax the unpainted exterior of her house to give it the appearance of an antique. It is quite an imposing piece, which occupies pride of place in her front room, yet it never ceases to amaze Mandy how visitors manage to completely ignore its existence, as expressed in 'Is It Me?' issue 130.

"There's a stigma attached to dolls houses," explained Mandy. "Cross stitch is fine but doll's houses - no. It's a bit like the Freemasons; we'll have to start rolling up our trouser legs or something."

For Mandy, doll's houses and miniatures have been in her blood since she was a child, but not without a certain amount of trauma surrounding her first love. Mandy's mother had a wonderful doll's house, which she had



never really appreciated, apparently because it had no interior doors, so it was passed down to Mandy and her sister to play with when they were children.

While her sister expressed no particular interest, it struck a chord with Mandy's imagination and was soon occupied by a doll family who abseiled down the side of the building and mixed potions up in the bath.

Ironically when Mandy left home the house was given to her sister before falling back into the hands of Mandy's mum who set about making some serious, structural DIY 'improvements' to the property.

"She actually made a video of her sawing it up," said Mandy, still with some indignation. "It is a video nasty for me because it was torturous watching her take this doll's house to pieces. It meant nothing to



Left: Both Mandy and Gill have pictures of each other's doll's houses in their respective house.



anyone but me, although it is a wonderful house now."

Having survived the emotional scarring, it was obvious that Mandy was destined for miniatures. Her imagination was just as productive in the creation of this house. In fact she has done a bit of 'structural DIY' of her own and has taken out all five staircases to utilise the space and put in dummy



Above: Seeing an overview of the house shows the full impact of viewing the rooms together. This is definitely a busy and bustling household. The amount of detail and inclusions in each room contribute to the feeling that this household is very much alive.

Above right and right: Much of the paperwork, books and maps were reduced and printed from the internet.





Left: Mandy's children dressed up in period costume for these photographs, before being reduced to miniature

doors to create the impression of more rooms beyond.

Mandy is the kind of miniaturist for whom inspiration strikes at odd times and she is compelled to stop whatever she is doing and act. Like the time when Mandy was due to make a greenhouse kit as a club project but couldn't wait. She opened the kit well before the club meeting, stuck it all together and accidentally threw away the windows because she thought they were packaging, much to the amusement of the rest of the group. By the time the club meeting took place and the others were assembling their greenhouses, plus windows, Mandy's attentions had turned to the garden, followed by a pond.

"I am a terrible insomniac," admitted Mandy. "I get up in the middle of the night to see if the paint has dried all the time. Or if I can't get out to buy wood I think 'oh I could make that out of card'."

As Mandy learns more about the



Above: A perfect green cabbage by Et Cetera. At £4, possibly one of the most expensive items Mandy bought.

Right: Dinner with regular house guest, Hamish McTavish

Below right: Trunks are a great way to show the personality of people who live in your house.



hobby and gets better at doing things, she will re-do elements of her house to continually try to improve upon it.

"All my rooms are being redecorated all the time," said Mandy. "I only decorated the bathroom again because Gill came round and said, 'that's hideous'."

Both Mandy and Gill based their houses in the Victorian era, but when

you're blessed with a fertile imagination 'eras' have no boundaries.

"Mine has got all sorts of things in it that it shouldn't have. But you can always get round it by saying they've got a relative who is an inventor," said Mandy.

Equally, stories can be, and are made up to account for unusual room themes and inclusions. The attic floor





Above: *The lady of the house is a bit messy, which is a wonderful excuse to add lots of little extras.*

Left: *The maid is also a suffragette.*

contains a splendid art studio, which was built around Mandy finding some nude photos that she reduced to miniatures. A box of paints, an easel and a model followed and so the room grew.

The maid's room is a bit out of the ordinary too as she appears to be a suffragette about to deliver some leaflets. The music room is set ready for a performance, but the musicians have



Above: Mandy's dreaded water heater kit - the devil in disguise.

Above right and right: Toys can be dear to buy but some things, such as yo-yos, kites and hobby horses, can be cheaply and simply made. Model railway animals can also be adapted to make effective toys.



just gone to the dining room to eat in the company of Hamish McTavish, who Mandy's mum made from Sculpey, and who lives in everybody's house because everybody borrows him.

In the ground floor hallway a young chap has just returned from the war, his trunk, which Mandy made from cardboard, contains his uniform among other things, although he seems to have found time to play an awful lot of tennis too.

The reason for a funeral parlour is

even more off-beat. "My man of the house was going to be a dentist," explained Mandy. "I looked everywhere for a dentist's chair and found one at a fair, but it was really expensive. I thought how can I go home and say I've spent £200 on a dentist's chair - even if it is beautiful. So my man died."

It is great fun to look around the house and takes some time to peer into all the rooms and take in all the wonderful little details. Much of the contents Mandy has made herself, probably in the early hours of the morning when an idea presented itself.

Like Gill's house, the furniture has either been made from scratch or kit-bashed and the Internet has proven an invaluable source for appropriate book covers, documents, maps and packaging. There's no underestimating





Above: Mandy's attic studio was built around finding nude photos and postcards.

Top right: The furniture in the art studio has been cleverly distressed and adapted to look the part.



"I whisper to it as I pass now," said Mandy. "I hate it. It even gave me grief sticking it to the wall."

Even so Mandy insists that there is nothing more satisfying than knowing you've got no money and you can get a load of rubbish and make it into something.

"I've often wondered when people are buyers and not makers, what do you do if you can't find the exact thing you want? Does that mean you can't have it?"

It's a good point. Fortunately her family got used to coming down to breakfast and finding that the corn-flake box had been savaged for an alternative use. Mandy even managed to persuade her family, including the kids, to dress up in period outfits and have their photos taken, which were then reduced in scale and pasted on the doll's house wall.

Some family members used to hinder, not help. The cats learnt to reach in through the basement and swipe things with their paws - a string of sausages and fire extinguisher went missing once.

For the most part her family did prove very helpful during the decorating of the this house particularly when gluing in front of the telly. "I handed them something and said, 'Hold that for an advert'," remembers Mandy. "Although it did mean you could never watch BBC."



the effect of using space well by filling it with the additions and accessories found in most active households. It breathes life into the occupants.

There are often two distinct types of miniaturist within those who prefer to make their own; sewers and stickers. Gill is a sewer with a neat and tidy style, whereas Mandy is a sticker, who errs on the grungy. Both are equally as talented and are supportive of each other's strengths, often swapping miniatures they have made.

"I love Gill's soft furnishings - they're lovely, whereas in mine you can see my agony," admitted Mandy.

Despite experience, it doesn't mean that the hobby is without its challenges. Readers of Mandy's old diary column will be familiar with her fight with a particular water heater kit, which hangs menacingly in the kitchen.

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Combined talents light up an inspired cabinet collection

Get ready to be enchanted as the unique collaboration between Sean Valentine and Micro Miniatures comes up with ever-more challenging miniature scenes to delight collectors

BY LOUISE HOFFMAN

It was back in 2016 when the light bulb moment came for Kevin Baker, co-owner of doll's house lighting and electronics specialist Micro Miniatures. A burgeoning friendship with cabinet-creator extraordinaire Sean Valentine was about to become a business partnership.

Sean had been a loyal customer of Kevin's for many years, sourcing the key electronic components and lighting accessories he needed for his spellbinding Harry Potter and Disney-inspired miniatures. Internationally renowned, with a growing social media fan base, his unique cabinets have become the

stars of any collection, with customers clamouring for commissions.

And so it was that, with Sean's miniature-making skills and Kevin's electronics support, this enterprising pair came together to collaborate on two enchanting cabinet collections.

The duo first embarked on the Magical Miniatures Collection of Harry Potter-inspired cabinets, each one utterly unique – as with all of Sean's creations. The charming scenes feature carefully curated pieces from specialist artisans, items skilfully made or rebuilt by Sean's expert hand, and Micro Miniatures' sophisticated, remote-con-

trolled lighting systems – all housed in tailor-made cabinets with decorative mouldings, chrome feet and finials.

So far, there have been 15 cabinets in this range – and they've sold like hot buttered beer. "Hermione's Bedroom and Harry's Bedroom went up for sale first," Sean enthused. "By the time we'd added Ron's, Hermione's had sold, and literally days later the other two had been snapped up. Since then, every time we've listed one it has actually already been sold."

The list now includes The Twin's (Fred and George's) Bedroom; Honeyduke's sweet shop; Dolores Um-





bridge's Office; The Common Room; The Potions Classroom; The Herbology Greenhouse; The Tapestry Room; Borgin and Burkes (which featured light-up skulls!); and two different views of the Weasley's Kitchen.

"The second view, which we called The Burrow, was a custom design for the lady who bought the other half of the Weasley's Kitchen," explains Sean. "She's got five or six Warner Bros licensed stores in Australia, and so of course we quickly explained that these are only 'inspired-by' pieces, but she assured us that they weren't going up for sale – she was buying them herself to put on display in the different themed sections of her main store in Sydney, which is wonderful!"

This also highlights the global audience that Kevin and Sean are reaching with their Magical Miniatures. "I don't



think we've actually sold a cabinet from the collection in the UK so far – they've all gone overseas to Australia and America. Taiwan too – that's where The Potions Classroom ended up," reflects Sean.

Another creation, Flourish and Blotts the bookshop, is an example of one of the higher-end cabinets in the collection. "Some of the cabinets are more expensive because they contain more

handmade items," says Sean. "For that one, we commissioned Andrew Martin of Martin's Mini Mart to make 500 books! Altogether, including the ones I'd bought beforehand, I think there were more than 650 books that went into the Flourish and Blotts cabinet."

Indeed, the craftsmanship involved in creating these cabinets was recognised in a recent episode of the American television series *Collector's Call*,



“Every time we’ve listed one it has actually already been sold.”

in which world record-holding UK collector Victoria Maclean had her Sean Valentine ‘Defence Against the Dark Arts Classroom’ and ‘Dumbledore’s Office’ cabinets valued at a whopping \$15,000 and \$20,000 respectively! The cabinets were originally purchased at a fraction of these values and proved to be a fabulous investment.

Delighted with the success of the Magical Miniatures cabinets, Sean and Kevin are now taking on a new – and equally as magical – challenge: classic fairytales, inspired by Disney films.

Meanwhile, Kevin has got some electrifying new tech lined up for the new cabinets. “We’ll be bringing a completely new perspective to the

traditional cabinet for the 2020s, with Sean’s flair and my expertise working with the latest technology and micro electronics,” Kevin enthuses.

The new cabinets are set to feature the latest ATmega32 8-bit AVR range of microcontrollers; surface-mounted and multi-layer board technology; and lighting with tiny micro LEDs and fibre optics.

“Not only this, but I’ve been working on computer-controlled robotic animations and movements inside the cabinets, incorporating micro technology, holograms and special effects,” he adds.

We can’t wait to see them. Watch this space.



■ Head over to microminiatures.co.uk or search for Fairytale Miniatures and Magical Miniatures on Facebook for the latest updates on these enchanting collections.

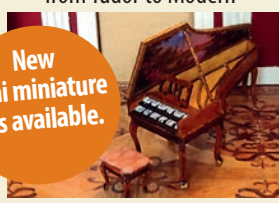
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Due to the Covid-19 Pandemic and more stringent government regulations in various parts of the UK, we have had to cancel our Dolls House Fairs up to June 2021.

Because of the uncertainty and indecision on whether the rest of our 2021 shows will be going ahead, we would ask our customers to check out our website at www.mgmairs.co.uk

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

We hope everyone stays safe in these trying and difficult times.

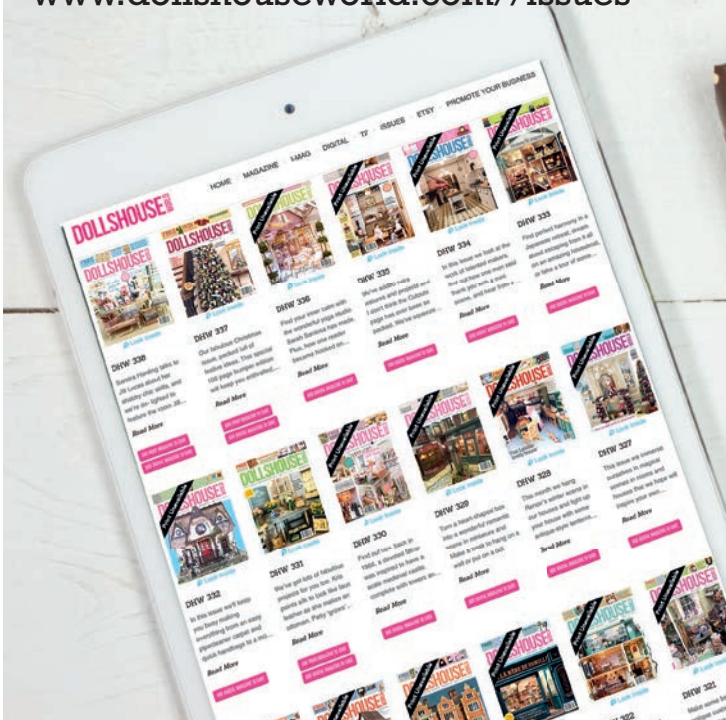
Gail Tucker

Fair Organiser

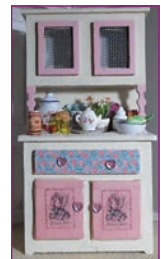


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Have fun making these cute little birdhouses

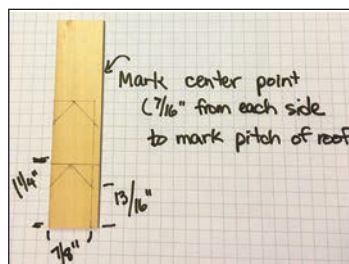
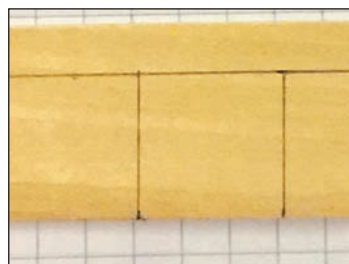
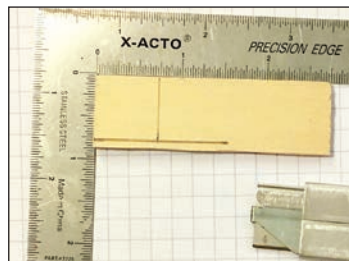
These tiny birdhouses are simple to create but you can make so many different kinds. Make a display in a tree or just one for the side of the house

BY KAREN HRTZ

Making tiny birdhouses can become addictive. Each can have its own design and when they are all together it's magic!

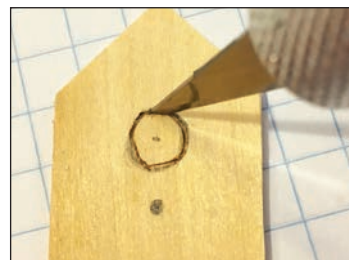


Step 1. From 1/8" thick wood, cut a square that is 3/4" on all sides. This is the floor of the birdhouse.

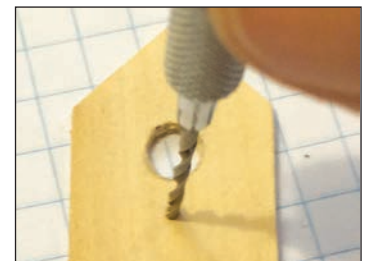


Step 2. From the 1/16" thick wood, cut 2 square pieces that are 3/4" on all sides. These will be the side walls.

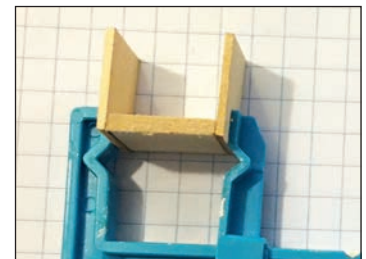
Step 3. From 1/16" thick wood, cut 2 pieces that measure 7/8" wide x 1 1/4" long. Mark a spot that is 13/16" up each side. Mark the centre point of the short side, draw a line connecting these 3 spots. This marks the pitch of the roof. Cut on these lines – these are the front and back of the house.



Step 4. Mark the centre point of the front piece and draw a circle 1/4" wide for the opening. Carefully cut the hole out.



Step 5. Mark place for perch 1/4" below hole and drill a 1/16" hole.



Step 6. Glue to side to bottom. Use a toothpick to spread a bead of glue on the cut edge of the bottom and place one of the sides, making sure the side is flush with bottom edge.

Repeat on the opposite side. Clamp together.

You will need

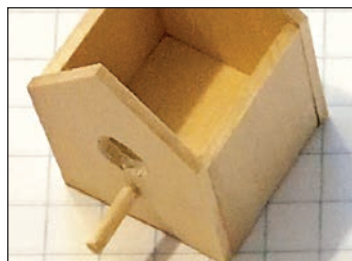
- Strip wood – 1/16" thick x 1" wide x at least 6" long
- Strip wood – 1/8" thick x at least 3/4" wide x at least 3/4" long
- Metal sheet for the

roof

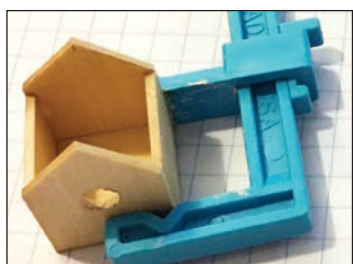
- 2" long wire
- Toothpick
- Craft paints
- White glue
- Metal
- Ruler
- Craft knife
- Sanding stick



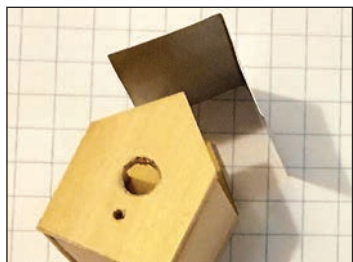
ing 1 1/8" x 3/4" and one measuring 1 1/8" x 13/16". Glue the larger piece to the smaller piece to form a right angle.



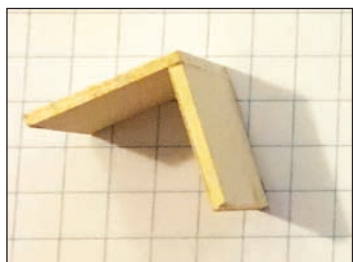
Step 10. Perch – Cut a 5/8" length from a toothpick. Glue in the hole.



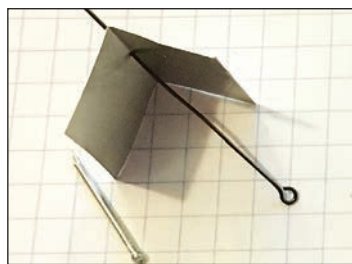
Step 7. Glue the front and back, making sure the bottom edges are flush then clamp them together.



Step 8. For the metal roof, cut 1 piece to 1 1/2" x 1 1/8". Fold in half to form right angle. This is easiest when done against the edge of a metal ruler.



Step 9. For the wood roof, cut 2 pieces – one measur-



Step 11. Hanger – For the metal roof, use a nail to make a hole for the wire hanger. For the wood roof, drill hole. Bend the end of the wire into a small loop. This will keep the hanger from slipping through.

Step 12. For the roof, put the wire through the hole in the roof and glue the roof in place. Bend the other end of the wire to form a loop to hang the birdhouse with.

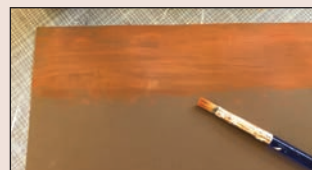
Step 13. Decorate using paint, stain, paper, etc. Use your imagination! And then hang or place where ever you desire.

Weathered copper

BY AURALEA KRIEGER

After playing around with some paints I managed to come up with a formula for making the illusion of weathered copper in a smaller scale.

Step 1. First find a reference photo of the texture you want to simulate. Copper ages in many ways so yours will not look like mine in the end. It will be closer to your own realistic inspiration.



Step 2. Paint a horizontal application of orange/brown paint onto a brown piece of card stock.



Step 3. Dab on a light brown (like rust) with a semi-dry brush. If you

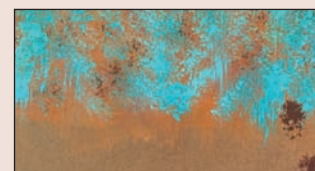
have too much paint on your brush, dab it off on a scrap piece of paper.



Step 4. Dab on some bronze metallic paint with a semi-dry brush.



Step 5. Dab on some aqua paint that matches the tone in your reference photo. I started with a medium and then mixed some with white and went back over certain parts. Then I made downward strokes in certain spots. This is where you really have to study your photo. The tarnish can grow in many different ways. So you need to emulate it in the same way.



Step 6. For a finishing touch I dry brushed on some darker rust brown to tone down the aqua.

Play around with this technique and you will find your perfect formula.

You will need

- Paint - orange/brown, light brown, medium brown, aqua, and white. I used Delta Ceramcoat
- Metallic bronze paint
- Paint brush
- Brown card stock

Ideal team take on the restoration challenge

How a niece and her uncle became the perfect pair to rescue sad-looking house, bringing it back to life in time for her fiftieth birthday

BY DEB WEISSLER

Few things in life are more rewarding than for two like-minded individuals to team up on a challenging miniature project. As someone who had longed for a doll's house since she was little, Michell Bryant couldn't believe her luck when she spotted the perfect doll's house in an antique shop. She had promised herself she would get one before she turned 50 and that birthday was looming just around the corner.

"My husband and I love to visit antique shops and I was always keeping an eye open for one," Michell recalls. "I saw many over the years but none of them seemed just right. I even looked at kits but those never interested me. This visit was different. Someone had started building it years ago, never finished it, and cast it aside. It still had some parts and pieces in a tattered box. It needed lots of work and lots of



love, but this was the one!"

Michell comes from a long line of builders and she knew there was only one other person in the world crazy enough to help fulfil

her life-long dream – her uncle, Lamon Small. A college professor with a talent for construction, restoration, and art, Lamon couldn't wait to get started.

The pair spent months working on the house, adding walls and doors, replacing old doors, building a chimney, painting, and caulking. Lamon created windows that open because Michell envisioned a pie cooling on the window sill. He even made the crank handle on the water wheel turn. Michell spent hours online looking for items and ideas. Lamon would get a kick out of telling people he was helping his niece build a doll's house and then watching their faces when he told them it would be finished for her 50th birthday!

"I was inspired to model the doll's house after my own home," Michell explains. "I live in a white, two-story country home and the doll's house has the same overall feel as my own home. My real house was in pretty bad shape when we bought it because it had been a rental house. I spent many years remodelling it to make it my own. Over the years, several family members, friends, and visitors commented that it looked just like a doll's house. When I saw the old doll's house in dis-



repair in the antique shop, I decided I would do the same to it that had done for my own home."

Always fascinated with tiny things, Michell had previously made dioramas inside lanterns that she gave away as gifts or used to decorate her own home. Like many of us, she loves the idea of creating perfect little worlds inside perfect little spaces. With a love for home renovations, an uncle who could take apart and restore classic cars, paint, and draw, they made the perfect team to bring this doll's house back to life.

For Michell, the biggest challenge was trying to make the spaces and furnishings look as realistic as possible. She envisioned a house so real a miniature family could move right in. Of course there had to be room for Mickey Mouse too!

"My first love was Mickey Mouse," Michell laughs. "I have added a Mickey into every single project. Some are hidden, some not so much. I like it when kids look at my projects because they are always looking for the hidden Mickeys. Inside the doll's house there is 1 inch tall 3D printed bust of Walt Disney. The maker of that usually makes 6" miniatures but I talked him into trying a 1" version. By the time I painted it bronze and photographed it in the mini living room, the creator of



Above: The rescued doll's house stands proud after the re-build.



Left: The living room fireplace has a Mickey Mouse clock.

Above: A cosy kitchen with fresh flowers and rooster pillows.

Below: The kitchen is full of details like a wooden spoon and a decorative roll of paper towels.



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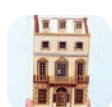
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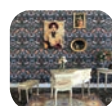
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Top: Cookies and some chocolate chip cookies are ready to nibble on.

Top right: The master bedroom looks cosy with lots of pillows.

Above: Summer watermelon is ready to eat.

Right: A few books on the night stand.

Below: A peek into the busy attic office shows open drawers and stacks of newspapers.

Inset right: Michell is a true Mickey Mouse fan and adds this into her doll's house as much as she can.



the bust did not recognise it as his own work."

Using wood, glue, paint, caulk, paper, fabric, egg cartons, wire, and Mod Podge, the doll's house of her dreams slowly emerged.

Since they started with a partially built structure that was not fully constructed, in many instances not constructed correctly, with no instructions other than what they learned online, and two people that had never built a doll's house before, there were a multitude of challenges. But nothing they could not overcome. If plan A failed, they moved on to plan B, C, or D. Construction took place in Lamon's workshop, while the interior doll's house work was done on Michell's din-

ing room table.

Michell loved crafting cobblestone stepping stones from an egg carton, curtain rods from wooden skewers, and a shower curtain rod from stripped electrical wire. Whatever had existed before was changed, re-imagined, or refurbished. For Michell, the result is a charming three-story Victorian that became simply "The Dollhouse"; for Lamon it is fondly called "The White House".

Despite some good natured ribbing from Michell's husband and grown sons, her three grandchildren adore the doll's house, especially when she makes seasonal changes to the décor.

That's quite a reward for their amazing efforts.



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WE CHAT TO SOME OF THE PEOPLE BEHIND OUR FAVOURITE SHOPS & STALLS



Kim Dorrance takes time off from running Kim's Collectables in Plymouth Market to tell us about the little stall that stocks a big amount of minis

Hi Kim, you run a market stall rather than a shop. When did you start?

I have been in Plymouth City Market for over 30 years and have been selling doll's house miniatures and accessories for about 15 years. It's only a little stall, but I have an awful lot of stock which is growing all the time. I keep everything except doll's houses due to lack of space, but I can order them and can usually get one the next day.

What do you sell? Besides all the furniture, figures and accessories I also sell windows, doors, wood for coving, skirting, electrics, carpets and wallpaper. Basically, almost everything. If I have not got it in stock I go out of my way to get it for the customer. My main suppliers are Streets Ahead, The Wonham Collection and Hobby's. Sometimes I have used/pre-owned

items, especially the Lundby/Barton/Caroline's Home in 1:16th scale which is harder to purchase new.

And you make a lot of pieces too?

I do make curtains, bedding, cushions and the like, sometimes to the customer's requirements. I also have a go at making picnic hampers, sewing baskets, dolls' clothes (not always successfully!) and Christmas boxes. I like making topical scenes like Easter, Halloween and Christmas. Last year I was preparing to make a scene for the Mayflower 400 Celebrations (in Plymouth) and a VE day scene but both were cancelled. However, I still have all the pieces for when it happens.

Do you stock mainly twelfth scale?

One twelfth is the most popular, especially the Victorian era. But I

have a small selection of 1/24th, some of which is popular with customers making fairy gardens. Cake decorators are good customers too.

And you love talking to your customers?

As miniatures is something I enjoy and love doing myself I can help and advise customers. I welcome any tips from them too and love seeing photos and the progress they have made. I have a wide variety of customers, from the very young to very old — enthusiastic ladies who always wanted a doll's house as a child but never got one. Eager grandparents too, who want to make a doll's house for their first grandchild. As far as I know, I am the only doll's house shop in Plymouth, in fact in this part of the world. I have a lot of customers from Cornwall and tourists from all over the UK, and indeed all over the





world. Many have found me via the internet.

Are you on your own on the stall? I am a sole trader although my husband helps when he can, especially if I need an order picking up.

When did your love of the hobby start? My love of all things miniature started as a child when my sister and I would play for hours with my mother's doll's house, which her father made for her when she was about five. I still have that house, plus The Mountfield, which I have based on my own real house.

This last year must have been tough? It has been very difficult this year. Footfall generally is well down. But if I am not busy I can usually be found making something. Thankfully,



a lot of my customers can contact me via phone, Facebook or the internet. I do not currently sell from my website (www.kimscollectables.co.uk) but I do take phone orders and am usually able to post the next day. I can fill a shoe box for the minimum postage (currently £3.10). I take card payments as well as cash or PayPal.

And it must be difficult to compete with the internet? It is very challenging but I find a lot of my customers like to see the actual product. If they buy something they are unsure of they can always bring it back and change it. Sometimes what they had in mind does not always look as good in situ when they get it home and place it in their house.



Sounds like you really enjoy running your stall? Yes, I love my job. Doing something you enjoy and making a business of it is a wonderful feeling. I love Plymouth Market and the people and have made some lovely friends along the way. It is also very handy having a haberdashery stall very close by when I and customers are working on a project.

Good luck for the future Kim. We need more stalls like yours bringing minis to a wider world.



LITTLE LINKS:

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Cherrell's repair ends with a Fairway to Heaven

BY SANDRA HARDING

I just love it when someone sends me interesting pictures and I love it even more when they give me a free hand with the story behind the characters in their house.

My mind starts playing tricks and goes into overdrive and I have

Cherrell Knowles to thank for that. This house is actually a Wentworth Court which Cherrell bought from a chap who thought it was a good idea to keep it in his garage. What could possibly go wrong there you might well ask, and we all know the damp

answer to that, don't we – lots of TLC needed.

Not being faint-hearted Cherrell set to work right away, cleaning, drying and repairing it where needed, with plans to turn it into an hotel. Not just any old hotel though as it had



to be golf-themed, mainly as her husband Stephen is mad about the game.

In this day and age most hotels have en-suite bathrooms so Cherrell added doors to the back walls to create that impression. Each room was simply decorated as golfers don't waste much time in their room when there is a golf course next door. It was then given a grand re-opening and renamed the Fairway to Heaven Hotel.

The three rooms are occupied this weekend and the three couples are busy getting ready for bed after their evening meal. They are all friends, or at least they were when they left

home this morning, but Len Duswan is fed up with Major Foparr as he got a hole in one today and Len's jealous. The Major always does seem to come out on top, but as he's a nice chap the others don't usually mind.

The third couple are Neil and Pat Downs who are not a bit tired, and are sneaking down into the bar for a nightcap soon. Neither of them are very good at golf but love their friendship with the Major and Len. However, the Major and Len bicker, so they want a quiet few minutes on their own, with a stiff drink.

What they had forgotten is

that the pub, called the 19th hole, is open to the public. A couple of the locals have got drunk, celebrating their golf day, and Phil Over is distinctly below par and has fallen down. Luckily, the barman is big enough to pick him up again before Neil and Pat come down.

Cherrell made the flowers, bedding and the barrel tables and she feels the people bring it to life. I have to agree and I am quite pleased to tell you that Len, Phil, and indeed Pat all got a hole in one the next day and went home happy.

NOTE: I have just been told by Cherrell that she had a new doll made in the image of her husband Stephen. Stephen (the doll) decided he wanted to be photographed so he can show his workmates what he does at the weekends (he is in the buggy).

So, all's swell that ends swell!





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Brenda's vivarium nursery

BY SANDRA HARDING

We have shown you Brenda Hodges' vivariums before (or should that be vivaria – help!) and here is another little delight for you: a children's nursery measuring 11" high x 12" wide and 13" deep.

Brenda's patient husband Roy wallpapered the walls and ceiling for her while Brenda did most of the painting using match-pot eco-friendly paints, as she is allergic to normal paints and chemicals. Roy also stuck the panelling, coving, frieze, skirting, door and window on using Brenda's design, which she then painted in toning colours. The coving, door frieze and fireplace are from Sue Cooke, and she believes the delightful frieze around the wall and the pictures were from the US.

Most of the lovely Bespaq furniture comes from her original grand doll's house, as it was too lovely to languish in a box, and the chandelier was a fair

purchase which was also once in her main house. The curtains, soft furnishings, and the baby in the cot were purchased as was the nurse, this time from eBay, and the rocking horse was a private purchase.

The two delightful little children were also bought privately, and were originally made by Sue Atkinson from her Sunday Series. Brenda has had them for about 15 years, and they don't look a day older. The general mix of toys, ornaments and accessories are mostly from stock.

This is another delightful little scene from Brenda which shows her talent for interior design I think.



■ Susan Keller is missing her holidays in Italy so much she decided to make a cafe scene as a reminder. Susan loves to create scenes in different styles and she also loves to give them away to people. You can read more about her approach to making minis in Small Talk on P82.



Bake a different type of mini carrot cake



Roll into spring with a twist on the traditional carrot cake that will add a special touch to your doll's house table this Easter

BY SADIE BROWN

Every Easter feast scene will need a fun dessert. Follow along and add this tasty looking cake to your miniature party!

Dark Cadmium Orange and brown grated pastel until you have a shade you feel happy represents a carrot cake base colour.



Step 1. Mix 1 part white clay with 1 part translucent, adding Golden Ochre,



Step 2. Roll the base colour out to around 2mm in thickness. Repeat with a ball of white clay the same size. Cut an oblong from the base colour mixture and a slightly shorter oblong from the white clay. Place the white clay on top of the base colour and roll into a tube 8mm in diameter. Place in the freezer for a few minutes, allowing the clay to harden up before removing and cutting a 1.3cm length.



Step 3. Use a sewing pin or needle tool to texture the cake at each end, taking care to avoid the cream cheese filling. Use an old toothbrush to add a little texture to the 'outside' of the cake.



Step 4. Mix some orange polymer clay with a very tiny amount of brown. Make tiny holes in both the ends and 'outside' of the cake roll, adding tiny pieces of 'carrot' with a pin or needle tool. Bake the cake and allow to cool thoroughly.



Step 5. Use an old butter knife to mix Sculpey Bake & Bond or similar with white clay, creating a cream cheese consistency. Use a pin or needle tool to spread the mixture across the top of the cake roll. Grate a little white pastel over the cake.

You will need

- Polymer clay - white, orange, Sunflower Yellow, brown, Apple Green
- Pastels - Golden Ochre, brown, Dark Cadmium Orange, white
- Metallic acrylic paint - gold, Mother of Pearl, Bronze, green
- Sculpey Bake & Bond
- Small paintbrushes
- Cutting knife
- Old butter knife
- Roller
- Old toothbrush
- Sewing pin or needle tool
- Small ball tool
- Matt varnish
- All-purpose glue
- Self-adhesive landscape flower tuft (yellow)

MINI MAKES



Step 6. Mix Apple Green clay with Sunflower Yellow and brown to create a colour which replicates that of pistachio nuts. Add a little additional brown to half the mix to create a slightly darker shade. Take a small piece of the lighter mixture and put to one side. Roll both pieces of clay out to around 2mm in thickness and brush one side of each with a Golden Ochre/brown grated pastel mixture before baking. Once cooled, cut into tiny little nut pieces and sprinkle liberally over the cake's cream cheese topping.



Step 7. Create two tone rose petals by putting a tiny ball of orange clay with an equal size ball of Sunflower Yellow clay, blending the two together while still retaining the two separate colours. Repeat until you have enough petals for a single rose. Flatten the balls of clay with a fingernail and use a needle tool to carefully lever each petal from your work-surface. Roll one petal into a cone shape. This will form the central core of the flower.



Step 8. Add the other petals around the centre core of the rose until you are happy with the size and shape of the overall flower. Next, take a 2mm ball

of orange clay and roll into a carrot shape. Use a small ball tool to flatten the top of the carrot, creating a tiny round hollow. Next, roll the side of a needle tool around the carrot to create natural markings all the way up and add a small ball of brown clay, flattened with a fingernail to the hollow in the top. Roll a thin rope from the green clay put to one side in step 6 and cut three small lengths, putting them together and sticking them to the top of the carrot with a little Bake & Bond. Add both this and the rose to the top of the cake.



Step 9. Roll a selection of very tiny eggs from some spare clay and bake alongside the cake, which needs to be returned to the oven at this point to bake the cream cheese topping and decorations. After allowing everything to cool, paint the eggs with acrylic paints in a variety of metallic shades such as gold, Mother of Pearl, Bronze and green.



Step 10. Once the eggs have dried thoroughly, use all-purpose glue to stick them to the top of the cake. Coat the cake with matt varnish, add more grated white pastel if required, and allow to dry before adding a small piece of self-adhesive landscape flower tuft to complete the look.

Happy Easter!



Painting by numbers

1 What are we hanging in our houses this issue? This elegant portrait of Evelyn Farquhar from 1906.

2 Who's it by? Sir John Lavery, a distinguished Irish artist in the late 19th and early 20th century. Both he and his second wife, Hazel, were well-known throughout Ireland, England, and America for his artwork, their A-list friends, and their work with the Anglo-Irish Treaty in 1921.

3 Did he do a lot of portraits? Yes. He struck lucky when he was commissioned in 1888 to paint the state visit of Queen Victoria to the Glasgow International Exhibition. He managed to get a sitting with the queen herself, and his career as a society painter was launched. He painted portraits of George Bernard Shaw, J.M. Barrie, Winston Churchill, Lord Asquith and even, during a brief stay in Hollywood, he even painted a self-portrait with Shirley Temple.

4 Did he have an artistic background? Far from it. When he was three his father drowned at sea while emigrating to America. His mother died shortly after and he was raised by relatives on a farm in North Belfast.

5 What do they say? "From humble beginnings he rose to become one of the greatest artists of his age."

6 What do we say? A vase of matching white hydrangeas would look good next to the painting.

Hang it in your house. See the Cutouts on page 77.

WHERE I WORK

THIS MONTH WE TALK TO JANET CROZIER OF CRAFTY CROW ABOUT HER WORKSPACE

Hi Janet, tell us what you do in your workspace. I have been making miniature hats for a couple of years now. I am always trying new techniques to get my hats as detailed as possible and I like to make different styles, using various fabrics, from Victorian bonnets to pillbox hats. I have recently started revamping doll's house furniture in a shabby chic style with decoupage papers and Farrow and Ball paint. I also create shadow box pictures (full size!) and I like to incorporate miniatures into these.

Where do you do all this? I am lucky to have a craft room I can work in which allows me to have all my hat trimmings and fabrics close at hand. I keep different coloured ribbon and lace in tiny glass jars and my doll's house is handy for taking photographs. I also have a big table in the centre of the room which allows me to spread out when I am working. I tend to be quite messy when I am being creative.

Do you work at set times? I love what I do and the time flies by. I try and make the most of the light that is available so always work later in the summer months when the days are longer.



What makes your space for mini making so special? My craft room is at the front of the house, is south facing and overlooks a green open space, so I get a good view of the changing weather outside. It has a shabby chic style with a vintage sewing machine on display and I store a lot of my craft bits and pieces in an old wardrobe that I have painted and decoupaged to give it a new lease of life.

Do you keep your workspace private?

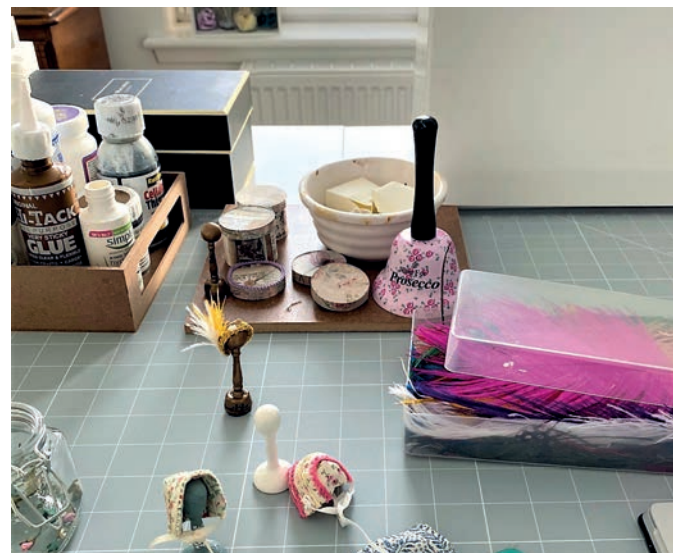
My black labrador, Poppy, likes to be my side most of the time and sleeps on a settee in the room whilst I am working.

Do you listen to music or the radio while you work? I am an avid Radio 2 listener and enjoy music when I am working.

Name one thing that is banned from your workspace. Superglue – I have discovered that I get a very severe allergic reaction!

That's a good reason for keeping it out. But what is the one thing that your workspace can't be missing? My phone.

It's essential for social media and taking pictures.





Describe your workspace in five words. Cosy, unique, personal, quirky, organised.

What or where would be your dream workspace?

I wouldn't want to change my craft room at all. I am lucky to live in beautiful East Lothian in Scotland and am within walking distance of the sea. A sea view would be amazing but I wouldn't get anything done.

Well on that note, we had better let you get on Janet. Thanks for sharing your workspace with us.

• Email: Janet@craftycrow.co.uk
www.craftycrow.co.uk



"I STORE A LOT OF MY CRAFT BITS AND PIECES IN AN OLD WARDROBE THAT I HAVE PAINTED AND DECOUPAGED TO GIVE IT A NEW LEASE OF LIFE."



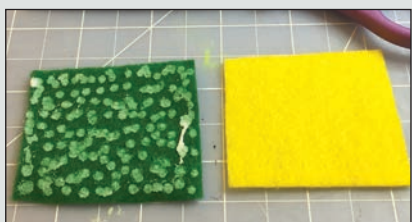
Scrubby sponge

Simple scrubby sponges for your doll's house sink

BY AURALEA KRIEGER

You will need

- Yellow and green felt
- Tacky glue
- Scissors



Step 1. Glue a piece of yellow and green felt together with tacky glue.

Step 2. Press under a book and let dry.

Step 3. Carefully cut tiny rectangles out. You could attempt a curved shape to mimic the fancier ones as well.

Step 4. Place by your doll's house sink. Adding a bottle of dish soap next to it really sets the scene.

House was wrong but the hobby turned out right

Toni Malin's love of the hobby began in ignominious circumstances — striding into a building to see the doll's houses only to find it was somebody's home, not a shop

BY TONI MALIN

Picture this. It is summer 1997 and I am holidaying in Norfolk. I discover a lovely little shop with a gorgeous spiral staircase leading down to the basement. It is called Curios and inside is an Aladdin's cave of miniatures which opens up a whole new world for me.

I was a little girl again and taken in by the detail and wanted to buy it all. However, we were holidaying in a small caravan and I knew I wouldn't have room for everything.

So I made a decision and bought a Welsh dresser along with a miniature dinner set to display on it. I was so happy I couldn't wait to get back to the caravan to show my friends. I visited the shop three more times that week but I should have seen the warning signs, especially when my friend informed me there was another doll's house shop in Holt.

She took me there and we looked in amazement at the three doll's houses in the window. We opened the door and walked inside. We were shortly confronted by a bewildered lady asking what we thought we were doing. We had walked into a private house and were looking at her doll's houses (if this was your home, again, I'm sorry).

I was well and truly hooked; this was the start, my initiation into the miniature world and the beginning of a hobby that I turned into a business.

I have a small collection now. I have

a Georgian house that has had some personal renovation work carried out on it. But my collection of shops is my favourite part of the hobby, especially my teddy shop. I would love more as I thoroughly enjoy collecting but I need to find more time as it is a business for me now. This sadly relegates my collecting into second place.

Smallsorts is me — a name I conjured up from my love of all things small and a certain liquorice based confectionary. I mainly create twelfth scale character dolls from polymer clay, and have done for about 30 years. I am self-taught and enjoy creating these characters as much today as the day I made my very first doll.

My day "in the office" always starts with connecting via FaceTime to my good friend Jane of Thimblemins. We support each other through our day of miniature making, bounce ideas off each other and generally have a laugh.

I also enjoy dressing furniture, making clothes and other accessories. More recently I have started making miniature teddies.

Working alongside me is my husband John; he has supported me from the start in anything I have wanted to do. He helps with the building side of the miniatures, making accessories for my characters, decorating my shops and house and does all the printing for me. He is also my driver to get me to the fairs and is quite a character at my table. But his best asset is he makes a



lovely cup of tea when I'm busy.

I'm also a qualified nail technician. I run that from home; and when I am not being a mum, foster mum, a wife, housewife, a miniaturist and a nail technician I do really enjoy spending time with my family. If there's time I'll grab a bit of sleep.

What do I love about the hobby? All of it. What is there not to love? It's really nice to go to a show to be on the other side of the stand, to be able to buy for my hobby and see what the public see; this doesn't happen that often for me, but when it does I'm in when the doors open and I'm there until they close.

Then, when I'm Smallsorts, and I'm standing at fairs I love every moment of it. I enjoy the buzz, I enjoy meeting people, I enjoy listening to others talk about their collections. I have made so many friends through this hobby, not only at the fairs but online too. It may be over 30 years since I was first hooked on miniatures but for me it seems like I have only just started.



LITTLE LINKS:

Smallsorts by Toni

email: smallsorts@hotmail.co.uk

etsy: www.etsy.com/uk/shop/Smallsortsdolls

facebook: Smallsorts Dolls



Miniature show

This selection of skilled and creative miniature artists share a variety of miniature furniture that was made with care and precision



▲ Kamilla Długowolskan

Kamilla told us: "This pastel mint coloured bed was weaved with hand-dyed cotton thread. When I started to work on this bed my idea was to make it look delicate and elegant, somewhat like a bed for a fragile princess or a young Victorian lady from a wealthy family."

◀ Ferd Sobol

The Federal Dresser offers six drawers with petite gold hardware for storage, and is crowned with a mirror appointed with floral detailing. Slender carved legs hold the dresser via petite florets at the front corners.



▼ Maritza Miniatures

A gorgeous gold chair with a delicate design on the fabric and a cabinet with ornate doors.



Wcase



◀ **Uncle Ciggie Miniatures**
All of Uncle Ciggie's wicker doll's house pieces are meticulously handcrafted. This chair and ottoman set are no exception.



▲ **Lars Mikkelsen**
This twelfth scale Mission style sofa was handmade with clean lines from wood.

▶ **Kris Compas**
This twelfth scale French Country sofa is handmade and is Kris' own design. *Make an armchair in Compas style on P58 this issue.*

◀ **Fernando Setien**
"This is a replica of the Paola sideboard made by Oswald Vermaercke in 1959," Fernando told us. "In this piece the selection of the grain is very important, as it becomes part of the decoration of the piece. One of the most difficult parts for me was to find and make the right angle for the inclination of the front legs."



▲ **Mel Sebastian**
The copper bed is constructed from Tasmanian Oak wood, copper foil, and metal findings. Mel told us: "I wanted to create a Bohemian Chic feel to this piece so the timber was left lightly sanded to allow for the grain to show through."

▶ **Pat Sweet**
This world globe was made with care from wood and jewellery findings.



Mini treasures revealed at Trust's historic abbey



Sandra visits Calke Abbey in Derbyshire and discovers two little houses that are filled with wonderful miniatures. Join her tour of the National Trust's house and doll's houses

BY SANDRA HARDING

The site of the house was originally founded between 1115-1120, and had several owners until the priory (as it was known then) was dissolved in 1538 at about the same time as the monasteries.

In about 1575, the new owner, Richard Wendsley, built a lovely Elizabethan house, which was remodelled in the early 18th century, and which now has 19th century interiors. In 1622, Sir Henry Harpur purchased the house and it remained in the Harpur family until ownership was transferred to the National Trust in 1985 by Henry Harpur-Crewe.

Very little had been done to the house for well over a hundred years,

and the decision was made by the Trust that they would carry out all necessary remedial work, but no restoration. This means that when you enter this little gem, it is as if time has stood still, and one is transported back to the 1880s.

Sir Vauncey Harpur Crewe lived there at the time and, if he were to see it now, he would very likely recognise much of his home. The building, and many of the contents and interiors are the same, obviously with changes through the years made by members of the family.

The rooms are really very beautiful. They are fully furnished, filled with furniture and fabrics, glass and china,

paintings and all the little accessories that make up any home, which this was of course. I was delighted to learn that they also had, hidden away, two little miniature treasures which I could not resist showing you.

In the school room there is a mid 19th century doll's house which is believed to have been made on the estate. As Sir Vauncey Harpur Crewe had four daughters, it may be that the house was made for one, or all of them. I like that idea — four girls learning how to run a household maybe?

During WWII the school room became the officers' mess, and the air of abandonment dates from that time as the room was never really used again. Luckily, the doll's house remained intact.

I was very excited when I was given a list of items that are in this doll's house with quite a history attached. In 1852, The Ladies Guild was set up to provide employment for women facing hardship, which included a group of about 24 girls, aged from 8-17 years of age. The girls were taught methods of making doll's house furniture, devised by Miss Mary A.P. Smith.

The girls used bonnet wire covered in silk or cotton thread, and then covered it with a composition of whiten-ing, mixed with glue or size, making it strong but light. Ornamental emboss-ing could be attached and the whole thing painted, varnished and gilded. Scraps of fine cloth were used for up-





holstery and hand painted glass table tops were provided by the women of The Ladies Guild. What a pleasure to know that there are nineteen items in this house made by these girls, from the period 1852-1858, when production ceased.

There are balloon backed chairs, velvet armchairs and chaise longues, a prayer chair, and glass topped tables spread throughout this house. There is also a large and interesting collection of late Victorian furniture and accessories. There are some fine pieces of Schneegas from around 1880, and some Erzgebirge or Saxony chairs which have been re-covered, from the same time. Another Erzgebirge delight is the Victorian Noah's Ark.

There is a lovely ebonised display cabinet and chair by Kestner Walther-haus from Germany and dating from the 1880s. A Tunbridgeware pin cushion has been used as a piano stool and a pine table has been stained to match



“The Ladies Guild was set up to provide employment for women facing hardship, which included a group of about 24 girls, aged from 8-17 years of age.”



other pieces of furniture. There are plates of food, tea services and china all made in Germany, as are the dolls, which date from the late 19th century. They all have porcelain heads and shoulders, stuffed bodies and pipe-clay limbs.

The four poster beds are from the 1840s and are commercially made English beds sold in London shops like Hamley's. There are several more pieces thought to be made on the estate for the house. All the tin fireplaces date from the 1850s and were made by Evans and Cartwright of Wolverhampton. The "Diaper" design wallpapers are also from about that time.

The kitchens for the house are in a separate annex, which is also full of delightful miniatures from that time. I am told that there are 210 items in this doll's house, and it takes the staff fifteen hours to clean them, so please forgive me for not mentioning them all.



I did try and gave up.

In Sir Vauncey's childhood bedroom there is another miniature delight: a weathervane house, which is thought to have been converted from a Georgian style doll's house, as the front used to open up.

■ To see this lovely collection for yourself, and indeed visit the Abbey, when restrictions allow then please check their website for opening times.
www.nationaltrust.org.uk/calke-abbey
 Calke Abbey, Ticknall, Derby, Derbyshire, DE73 7LE. Tel: 01332 863822

Create a beautiful bouquet of flowers

Don't worry if you find making flowers from polymer clay too tricky or time-consuming. Here's an easy way of creating mini bunches for a vase or a bouquet

BY LORRAINE COOPER

The earliest Mother's Day celebrations can be traced back to the ancients Greeks in honour of Rhea, the mother of the gods. However, since the 1600s it has traditionally been a day for giving thanks for all the things our mothers do for us.

No one is absolutely certain exactly how the idea developed, but it is known that during the 17th century people who lived in small villages made a special point of going to their mother church in the nearest town, rather than to their local church on this day. Here they would celebrate the period between Lent and Easter to give thanks to the spiritual power that gave them life and protected them from harm. This special trip was called 'going a mothering.'

In addition, young people in household service were only allowed one day off each year to visit their family, and it was usually on this day. Often the cook or the housekeeper would allow the maids to bake a cake to take home for their mother, the most favoured of which was a Simnel cake; this is now more commonly made for eating on Easter Sunday.

Some servants were also allowed to take home flowers from the garden or hothouse, and others, having no other gift to give, would gather wild flowers as they walked home through the meadows.

These simple and obtainable offerings are now the traditional gift for

Mother's Day.

These days many churches also give children a little bunch of flowers during the Mothering Sunday service, to give to mothers as a thank you for all their care and love throughout the year. So it is with this in mind that I dedicate this article about how to make a vase and bouquet of flowers in miniature to my own mother, who I will not be seeing on Mother's Day this year. Thanks mum for all the love and care you have given me throughout the years.

Vase display

Step 1. Cut the stems of the flowers to varying lengths according to the depth



of your vase. I tend to use smaller buds at the back in the vase, medium

You will need

- A twelfth scale ceramic vase
- Several stems of tiny mulberry type paper flowers (you will need the smallest you can find with heads no more than 1cm in diameter) these can be found in craft shops, eBay scrap booking suppliers, Hobbycraft etc (Fig.1)
- Tiny stems of Gypsophila or dried buds. I get these from floristry shops.
- Small grasses and greenery such as synthetic Lycopodium/ Princess Pine (I sometimes use the imitation grasses and plants found at most aquatics shops as

you can cut branches or stalks of these)

- Narrow green floral tape or masking tape can also be used.
- PVA glue or similar
- Pair of scissors
- Air-drying modelling clay
- Clear florist's film, or similar clear stiff film will suffice, such as the wrapper of a greetings card.
- 3mm ribbon (the type you might use on gift packages) or raffia, as I have used in the main picture for a tied bouquet; this can be cut to 3mm width



in the middle and larger at the bottom otherwise the display may look top heavy.

Step 2. Roll a small ball of air drying clay into a tubular shape between your fingers and then press gently into the vase using a dowel or other similar craft object.



Step 3. Begin to arrange your flowers, fern and grasses as you might with a real floral display. I find that later when the clay is hardened the flowers do not loosen and fall out if you dip the end of each stem in a little PVA glue before inserting into the clay.



Step 4. It is recommended that you make the final adjustments to the arrangement once the clay is hardened which normally takes around 24 hours, otherwise the clay becomes too loose around the stems and they might adjust themselves!

Bouquet



Step 1. Firstly lay out a short strip of florist's tape (approx 1 inch long) sticky side up on your work surface.

Step 2. Cut your flowers, fern and grasses to varying lengths ranging from 6 cm for the longest and 3 cm for the shortest. Lay the flowers on top of the florist's tape in the arrangement that you require before wrapping the tape around the stems to secure them in place.

TOPTIP

- ⋮ If you are unable to get hold of florist's tape you can simply use the stem of one of the front flowers.



Step 3. Cut a 7 cm square of clear florist's film and lay your secured flowers across the corner. Fold the

corner up onto the end of the stems and then fold the sides in across the flowers and pinch between fingers securely. With your free hand, arrange the film to your desired finish. It might be helpful to hold in place with a tiny piece of florist's tape of approx 1 cm to prevent this slipping whilst you prepare for the end stage.



Step 4. Now take your 3 mm ribbon or raffia and wrap around the film, tying into a bow, or ruffling using the back of a sharp object as you might to decorate a gift. I sometimes add an outer layer of coloured tissue paper for a different effect.



Dress a doll inspired by Bridgerton period drama

The fabulous costumes that featured in the hit TV series were a highlight for anyone interested in period dress. Time to join the fun and frolics

BY DANA

Ever since the Bridgerton series hit our screens on Netflix, Regency style dresses have been in the limelight. Here's how you can create a costume for your own period drama in twelfth scale.

Step 1. Paint and decorate your doll's shoes.

Step 2. Assemble the doll using your preferred method. Leave the arms off for now.

Step 3. Add a small slip to cover the assembly, then glue the doll to a stand.

Underslip

Step 4. Cut a 8" x 4" piece of embroidered silk. Turn the bottom edge under to the wrong side and glue for a finished hem.



Step 5. Hand pleat the under slip around the doll to make a close-fitted waist and flared skirt. Glue the pleats in place.

The skirt

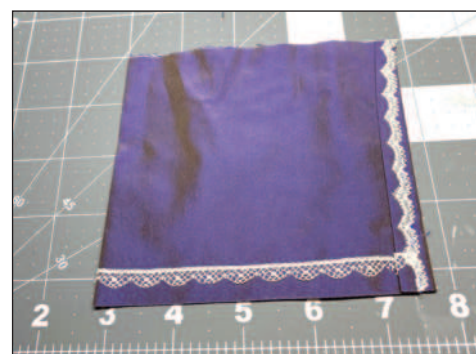
Step 6. Cut a 6" x 4" piece of purple silk taffeta.

Step 7. Turn under the very bottom edge for a finished hem.

Step 8. Piece cut a 7" piece of scalloped lace into two.



LIAM DANIEL/NETFLIX © 2020



Step 9. Glue the scalloped edge across the bottom section of skirt as shown.

Step 10. Turn both side edges to the wrong side and glue (I used a 1/2" seam).

Step 11. Now turn that side edge to right side and glue. Iron flat and glue on the remaining lace design.



Step 12. Pin both decorative edges to the front of the dress.

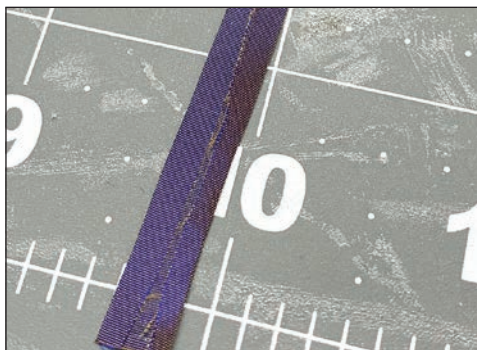
You will need

- A doll head and torso. I used a Lily head by Patricia Rose and a Stacy Hoffman doll torso
- Doll stand
- Assembly materials
- Dress silks, cotton (for slip)
- No-hole beads, flowers, lace for decoration
- Viscose
- Aleene's Original Tacky Glue
- Glue syringe
- Zap-A-Gap gel Super Glue
- Pins
- Needles and thread
- Tweezers
- Scissors
- Wire nippers
- Ruler
- Paint for shoes
- Index card
- Plant mister
- Water
- Knitting needle for curls
- Gold thread for braid

DRESSING DOLLS

Step 13. Invert the remaining material and pin/glue into place. You can also gather if it is easier for you.

Bodice



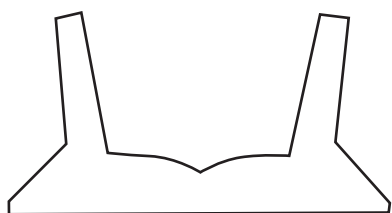
Step 14. Cut a 1 3/4" x 3/4" rectangle. Fold the long ends (top and bottom) and glue.



Step 15. Glue this back bodice around the back of the doll (over the raw skirt edges) and to each side.

Step 16. Cut out the front bodice pattern on an index card. Check the shoulder strap length/fit for your doll before cutting from the dress material.

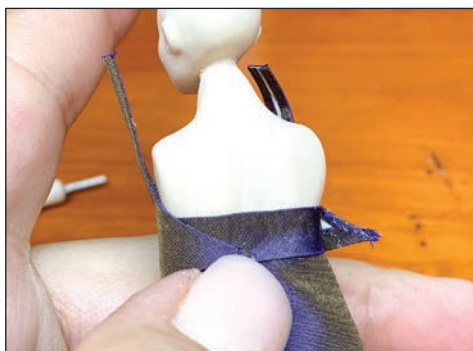
Bodice pattern



Step 17. Lightly spread a thin layer of tacky glue on the bodice pattern and let the glue get tacky. Then gently press the bodice index card pattern to the purple silk. Cut out pattern with an extra 1/4" seam allowance.



Step 18. Fold over the allowance onto the back of index card, cutting off any excess material.



Step 19. Lastly, glue the finished bodice to the front of the doll's torso over her raw skirt edges and over the top of the back bodice strip.

The sleeves

Each sleeve is made up of three strips that are lightly gathered at the top and glued around the arm and under the bodice shoulder strap. It is much easier to do the bottom layer strip (brown/lace) then the top. Now glue the middle strip in-between like a sandwich layer.

Step 20. Insert the doll's arms into her torso and check the fit. Glue the arms into the doll's torso.

Step 21. Cut out a 2" x 1" strip of the underskirt material and glue the lace around the bottom edge.



Step 22. Gather the strip lightly and glue around the doll's arm. If you prefer you can dress the doll's arm and THEN insert the finished sleeve/arm into the torso.

Step 23. Cut out two 2" x 1" strips of purple material. Fold each strip in half and glue at the top. When dry, pleat or gather this rectangle and glue it onto the arm.

Dress decoration

Now we are ready for decorating! Use tiny snips of purple bunka, glue it into circles with a pearl in the middle for each scallop down her skirt. Glue on some beautiful Mari Smith-Welch flowers.





Doll wiggig

Step 24. Take a thin section of viscose and lightly mist with a plant mister filled with water. Slide the viscose between your fingers to smooth.



Step 27. Make lots of tiny loose curls. Cut and glue around the hairline as shown in the photos.



Step 29. Braid three sections of viscose and one strand of gold thread. Glue the braid into a cornet (circle) and glue it onto the doll's head.



Step 25. Put a thin layer of glue on the front half of the head. Lay the viscose across the glue and lightly press. Cut off excess hair for a neat chin line.



Step 30. Lastly, twist a thicker section of the viscose (lightly misted of course) and glue into the cornet top for added decoration.

That's it! You can now enjoy your doll and continue decorating her. Add a veil and some flowers and make her your own design.



Step 26. Put a thin line of tacky glue on the doll's head. Fold back the remaining section of viscose and cut off excess then glue in place.

Step 28. Repeat the process for the other side of her head.

“Add a veil and some flowers and make her your own design.”



Don't miss **dollhouse.live**

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.

Fifteen traders keep New Forest tradition alive

The Lyndhurst Fair in the New Forest is one of the longest running in the country, so fittingly was one of the last shows to be held before lockdown

BY GAIL TUCKER OF MGM FAIRS

We were lucky enough to hold the Lyndhurst Dolls House Show last October, between the two national lockdowns and we were delighted to welcome 15 resilient traders selling a huge variety of wonderful items, some newly made in the last lockdown, and seeing the light of day for the first time.

MGM Fairs took over the show early in 2020 from Wendy's World Fairs and it is one of the longest running doll's house fairs in the UK. It has been held continually for over 38 years, so even in these trying times, it was great that the show was able to go on.

Since it was touch and go whether we would be able to hold the show, we were incredible grateful to the venue who did a fabulous job of making the venue covid-secure for both the traders and the customers attending.

Downsizing Miniatures had their

super display of silver items and cranberry glassware for sale, plus new and individual items made by Pauline; Criss Cross Miniatures brought out several new pieces for the customers and David demonstrated his skill at making the screen frames and applying leather to furniture pieces.

Dawnys Designs travelled over from the Isle of Wight and had a splendid selection of dressed furniture, with some unique themes. Mary Stokes a regular at this fair, had made some perfect Christmas items and they just flew off her stand.

It was a pleasure to see Hodges Haberdashery who brought ribbons, lace and other materials, that every miniature house needs, plus a super fabric advent calendar. Jan Southerton, The Flower Lady, brought her beautifully created flowers and shrubs, each one a true work of art.



Criss Cross Miniatures

Audrey Johnson, another long term regular at the show, also brought special cushions and hand made accessories whereas C. J. Miniatures brought their 1/24th and 1/48th scale kits, for the customers that have moved on to smaller things.

A new trader attending this show, their very first doll's house fair, was G & S Miniatures. Both Sandra and Geoff were making items for their table and bringing humour and attention to detail to their new dressed pieces of furniture. Next to them was Boulton Bears, who has been a collector longer than a trader and who started making small bears and moved into doll's house miniatures. Carol makes intricate items that add style and interest to all rooms in your miniature home.

ABC Miniatures, who are also a regular trader at nearly all the MGM Fairs, brought their wide selection of



G & S Miniatures



ABCMiniatures



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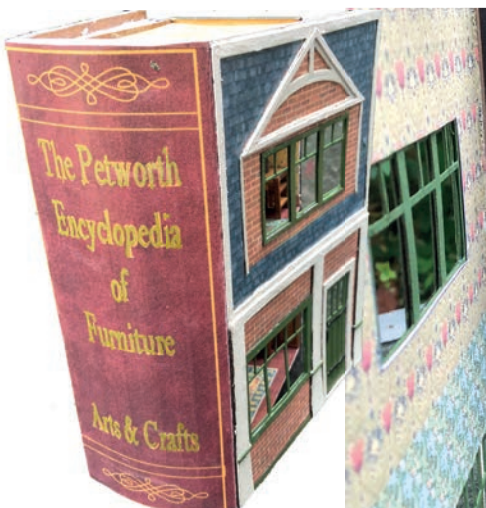
See advert on P81.

miniature lights and wallpapers, along with a huge variety of furniture and nik-naks.

Merry Gourmet Miniatures had their delightful collection of food through the ages from medieval up to WW1, along with their special Victorian advertising china. Len Martin, brought his range of doll's houses and shops, although room boxes and accessories were flying off his stall. Carol Humphries, who usually would come to help Wendy Hobday, the previous organiser, brought an assortment of doll's house furniture and accessories and last, but certainly not least, James Whitehead, was there with his stunning hand crafted furniture.

As per social distancing rules, traders were all spread over two rooms, with cleaning stations and a one-way system in place to abide by the government guidelines. Face masks, social distancing and hand sanitising might all become the "norm" at the fairs; we may never get used to it, but it shouldn't stop us.

We have been luckier in the south, in that both the Lyndhurst and the Exeter Shows were able to go ahead in October but now that we are again in lockdown, and all fairs have been cancelled, we are keeping our fingers crossed for shows returning soon.



C J Miniatures

jcm.gabbey47@btinternet.com

See advert on P22.



The Flower Lady,

jantheflowerlady@gmail.com

See advert on P22.



Margit's cellar reveals magic of miniatures

The old doll's house was filled with happy memories but it was only years later, with the aid of a tea-trolley, that its true potential was uncovered

BY ALICE MONROE

When Margit Otto's two boys were young they loved playing with their doll's house while mum would happily join in creating scenes and making accessories.

But when the children grew up the house and the Playmobil toys were sent into hibernation in the cellar. Margit, who lives in Germany, only discovered it one day when she decided to clean up the cellar and sort out the old toys.

She remembers: "I couldn't bring myself to give it away. I put it on an old tea trolley, cleaned it, placed the furniture and the accessories in the rooms and ever since I have completely succumbed to miniature fever."

She started work updating the house, making railings for the stairs and a balustrade on the first floor. She then changed the bathroom floor covering, put carpets in the rooms, took out some of the play furniture, enlarged rooms and added a self-made

integrated shower unit to the bath.

She went on to build and add several additional rooms: a nursery, a youngsters' room, a laundry, a pet room, a storeroom, a combined craft and storage room, not to mention a small front garden, a garage and a lake diorama.

On the lower floor of the tea trolley is a garden with a terrace, a greenhouse, an open garden shed, flowerbeds, a little fishpond, as well as a vegetable garden and a play area.

Margit, 67, who used many Playmobil items in her scenes and rooms, said: "My house is not based on style. It's a modern, colourful fantasy house that combines some aspects of children's play with many true to life details and accessories of higher value.

"It's a house full of colour, joy, fun and life for my dolls letting me, and hopefully any other observer, be whisked away into another wonderful world."





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Your paper round ends in a comfy armchair

Kris takes you step-by-step through her novel way of making a lovely armchair. Just choose a patterned paper to match the style or period you want

BY KRIS COMPAS

I've been messing around with using paper to upholster a chair. Fabric is sometimes hard to come by. So if you can't find the right fabric, scrapbook paper can be a great alternative.

Step 1. Trace your patterns. Always dry fit your parts. This is important to do before you commit to gluing.



Step 2. My paper was double sided. The best method to get the two layers apart is to wad up the paper a few times to loosen the layers. The ball on the left has both layers together. The ball on the right is after I carefully wadded and un-wadded the paper. You will have to spend time on the wadding and un-wadding to get the paper soft and pliable.



Step 3. Then carefully pull the layers apart. If you have single layer paper, skip this.



Step 4. After I got the paper soft and pliable, I ironed it with steam on a cotton setting. This ironing took a lot of the wrinkles out. I would think that paper has its differences and this method may not work on all scrapbooking paper.

Step 5. To build the chair, begin by cutting four layers of foam core and two layers of mount board for the seat base.

Step 6. Glue them together with tacky glue. I place a weight, a book, on top of the stack until the glue dries for a couple of hours.



Step 7. Trace and cut out the back and the front from mount board. The back is not as wide as the front. Centre the back over the front.

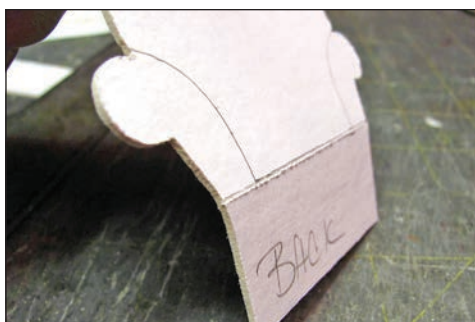
You will need

- Foam core
- Craft knife
- Batting
- Scissors
- Tacky glue
- Patterned paper
- Pencil
- Mount/mat board
- Ruler
- 1/2" diameter dowel
- Saw
- Clamps
- Glue stick
- Thermolam Plus
- 20 gauge covered

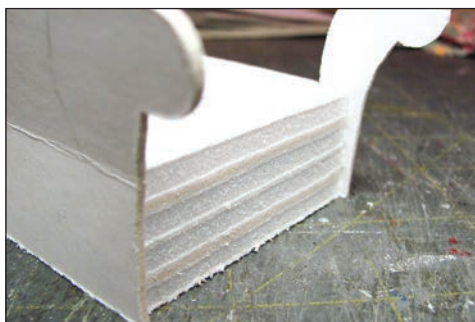
MINI MAKES



Step 8. Turn the set over and then trace the front onto the back.



Step 9. To keep the chair from looking too boxy I tipped out the upper back. Use a ruler and the back edge of your craft knife to score a line all across the back on the line you just drew. Don't cut through. Carefully tip the upper back to bend it slightly.



Step 10. Centre the back onto the back of the seat base and glue them together. There should be about a 1/16" left on each side.

Step 11. Centre the front onto the front of the seat base and glue them together. There should be about 1/16" left on each side.

Step 12. I used a 1/2" diameter dowel for the arms. They were cut with a 7 degree angle on one end (the back). I set my saw to 2 1/4" and cut the dowel pieces. I then set the angle of the blade

to 7 degrees and re-cut them. If you have an adjustable mitre saw you can do this. I measured my arm dowel and the short side is 2 3/8". The long side is 2 1/4". If you can't cut the angles, cut the dowels to 2 1/4" long.



Step 13. Glue the arm dowels between the front and the back. Hold onto the chair until the glue tacks or use clamps. Leave this to dry, really dry.

Step 14. Next, cut a strip of foam core 1/4" wide for the braces.

Step 15. Cut two strips to fit between the front and back and glue them in.



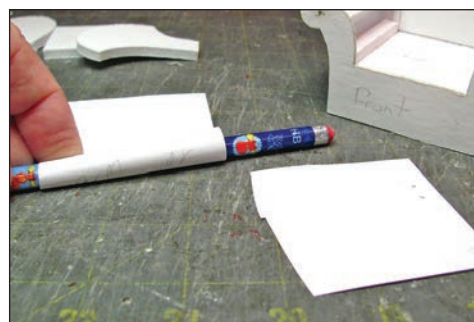
Step 16. Cut two more strips to fit further up the arm and glue them in. These will support the card stock arm covers.



Step 17. Cut two end/side patterns from mount board. Bend slightly at the top. Apply glue to the chair.



Glue the end/side into the sides of the chair. This fits between the front and the back.

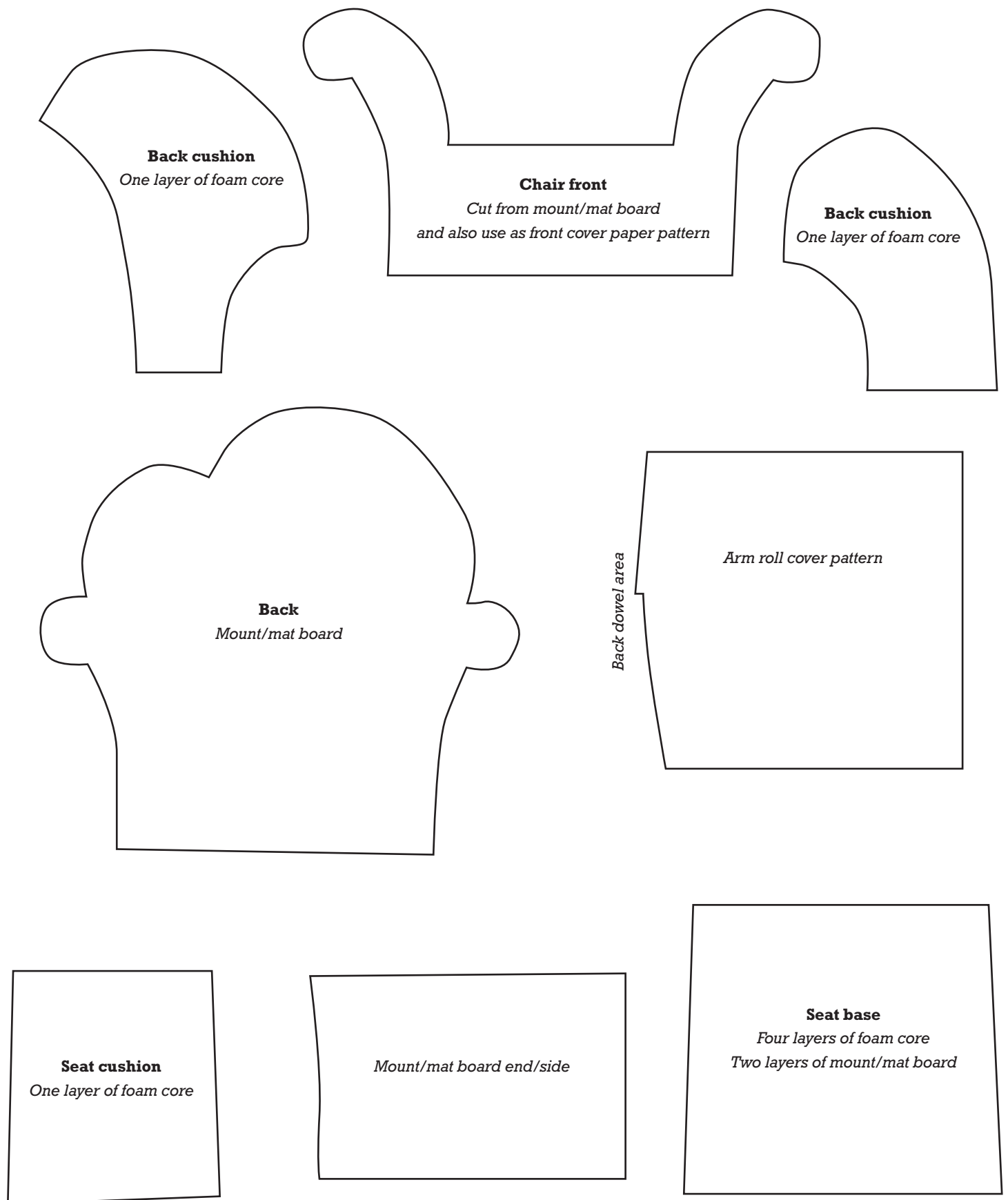


Step 18. Paper has a grain just like wood does. I cut these two pieces laying opposite ways. You can see that the bottom piece was easier to bend and also looks nicer. Experiment to find the grain of your mount board. This also holds true for card stock. Be sure to dry fit and trim if needed.



Step 19. Use the arm cover pattern to trace two arm covers onto card stock. To make gluing easier, I run the top of the cover over the edge of my table and then I roll it using a pencil. Apply glue to the foam core braces and the dowel.

Step 20. Apply the glue all around the dowel.



Step 21. This piece fits between the front and the back mount board pieces. The cut out area fits at the back. Glue the arm roll cover to the arms.



Step 22. Glue the card stock over and onto the dowels. Your chair is built.

Step 23. Place the chair onto card stock and trace around the bottom edge for your bottom cover.



Step 24. Cut out and apply glue stick and glue to the wrong side of the paper.

Step 25. Trim the paper leaving about 1/4" extra.

Step 26. Use tacky glue to glue the card stock covers to the chair. Glue the bottom cover to the bottom.

Step 27. Apply tacky glue to the bottom edge and glue the extra paper to the chair. Trim off the triangles at the corners.



Step 28. Use the arm roll cover pattern to cut your batting. I use Thermolam Plus, no iron, from Pellon.



Step 29. Apply tacky glue to the arm cover. Gently press your batting onto the arm. Leave about an 1/8" gap under the arm. This will ensure a crisp line of paper.

Step 30. Cut out enough paper to fit over the arm. Use the arm roll cover pattern as a guide.

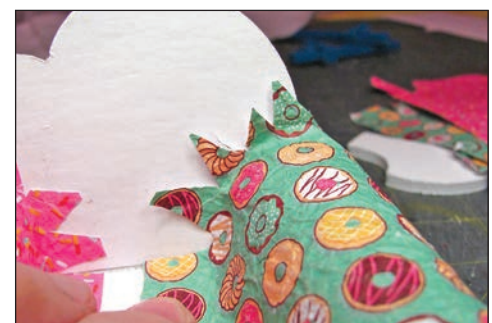


Step 31. Begin gluing under the arm. You can do both sides now. Leave this to dry for a while. You will pull on this a bit, not as much as you would if using fabric but you will pull and this needs to be dry. After the glue is dry you may begin to cover the arm.

Step 32. Pull the paper over the arm. Cut a slash at the beginning of the back.



Step 33. Carefully pull the paper over the arm and mark the corner with a pencil. The firmer the pull the less wrinkles you will have at the front and back of the arms.



Step 34. Cut out a square from the corner that you marked. Cut some notches in the paper so it can fit over the curve.



Step 35. Glue the paper to the seat base and to the back of the chair

Step 36. Cut a slash into the corner. Trim off the extra paper at the end of the arm to about 1/8".

Step 37. Cut notches around the curve of the arm.



Step 38. Glue the paper down to the front of the arm.



Step 39. Cut a piece of foam core 1/4" wide to fit into the back of your chair seat. Glue this piece into the back of the chair seat. This piece will help to tip out the bottom of the back cushion to an angle.



Step 40. To make the side covers for the chairs, we will use card stock. Place the card stock on the chair, lining up the top with the bottom of the dowel and the side with the front of the chair.

Step 41. Trace around the bottom and the back. Cut this out. Dry fit.



Step 42. Apply glue stick to the side cover and press onto the wrong side of the scrapbook paper.

Step 43. Glue the top and the bottom to the card stock. Then glue the side cover onto the chair and around the front and back

Step 44. Dry fit the back cushions. You can round out your pattern if you do not want to make a two part back cushion.



Step 45. The top edge of the back cushions needs to be softened. I do this with my thumbnail.



Step 46. The backs will have 3 layers of batting. The first layer is about a 1/4" smaller all around. Apply tacky glue to the foam core and glue the first layer on.

Step 47. The second layer is the size of the cushion.



Step 48. The third layer is cut to size everywhere but the top.

Step 49. The top is pulled over the top of the back.



Step 50. Apply a little tacky glue to the edge of the batting on the sides and bottom. Not at the top.



tom. Trim as shown in the photo then glue all around.



Step 53. Glue the second back cushion into the chair.



Step 54. Trace the back pattern onto card stock to make a back cover. Apply glue stick to the back cover and glue it to the wrong side of the paper. Cut notches along the curved areas.



Step 51. Place the cushion into the chair and trim off the extra. I've got both cushions with batting. They have both been trimmed. Cut paper large enough to cover the cushion.



Step 55. Apply tacky glue to the back of the chair and glue the back cover to the chair.



Step 52. Begin with gluing up the bot-



Step 56. Do the front chair panel the same way but leave the top unglued. After you glue the front to the chair then glue that tab down on the seat.

Step 57. The first layer of batting for the seat cushion is about a 1/4" smaller all around. The second layer fits all around. Apply tacky glue and glue the first and second layers onto the seat cushion.



Step 58. Glue the third layer to the cushion bottom. This will go up the front and then over the top (no glue).

Step 59. Cut enough paper to cover the cushion. Glue the front and back to the bottom of the cushion.

Step 60. Make sure the batting is trimmed to the foam core. Fold the sides and glue down.



Step 61. Fold the paper down and glue. Trim off extra. Remove any glue before trying your cushion.

Step 62. For piping, apply some Tacky Glue to the paper edge. Smooth the glue.

Step 63. Use size 10 crochet thread. Press onto the glue. Fold the paper over the thread.

Step 64. Set a ruler down, without sliding it, and press thread into the fold. Flip the paper over and do it on the other side. Do this a couple of times.



Step 65. Cut your piping away from the paper. Apply glue to the seam where the back cover meets the chair. Start at the bottom back and over the arm, over the top, over the other arm and down to the other back corner. Cover the cushion around the top edges and the front bottom.



Step 66. Cut 14-16" for the ruffle. I had to glue two pieces of paper together. Make the overlap about a 1/8". If it is larger, it will interfere with your gathers.

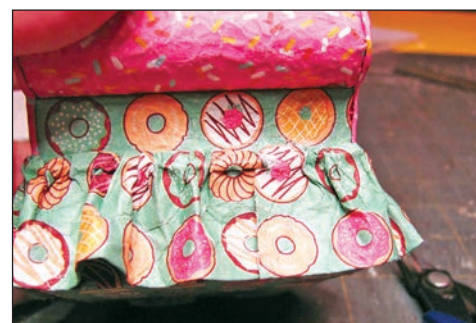
Step 67. Turn a hem and glue it down. Measure 1" from bottom hem. Draw a line on the right side of the paper. Fold on line. Trim off the paper to 1/2". Apply glue to the edge. Smear the glue towards the cut edge.



Step 68. Push 20 gauge covered wire in the fold.



Step 69. When you have the length and the amount of gathers that you like, cut the wire and bend it back.



Step 70. Apply tacky glue along the front edge. Press the ruffle into the glue, holding it a bit to tack.

Step 71. When I came to the end I straightened out my ending wire and glued the paper to it. I then cut the wire so that it butted up to my beginning ruffle.

I hope you enjoy this new medium. I liked the experiment and can see using the paper again if I found something that was 'just the thing'.

■ See more at linchminisbykris.blogspot.com



Stumped for ideas? Then log into woodland magic

An old tree stump is a wonderful place for finding all sorts of wildlife. Why not create your own mini scene using a resin model. Here's some ideas for getting started

BY MOLLY WILLIAMS

Tf you take a visit to your local aquarium centre you will find a selection of resin stumps that could be the centre of an amazing miniature scene. There are dozens of wonderful shaped pieces to choose from.

They are made of a resin material but they are very well produced and the colours are perfect. You could even paint them to suit your needs if you would like to add a bit of moss to them. You can also cover them in actual moss or lichen, with 'ferns' growing around the base.

They would also make wonderful places for mini children to play, as the

piece I bought was hollow with two lovely large holes in the sides, a great place to hide!

There are a number of different materials on the market that can be used to create the moss effect. Your local model railway store will have an assortment of green sprinkles that are used for landscaping, or you can use Flower Soft. Just run glue into the cracks and crevices and sprinkle on the moss. Do mix several different greens together as plants are never all the same colour.

The miniature ferns used are from a kit made from brass. These require painting before detaching the leaves



from the frames and then, when arranged together, they can be bent into whatever shape you wish.

Again the daffodils are from kits, and to finish the toadstools are an easy and fun thing to make with some polymer clay and acrylic paint. You can also add some woodland creatures, from squirrels to birds and owls. If you don't have an aquarium shop nearby, try searching for these resin stumps online. There are also ones that are actual pieces of drift wood.

So the next time you're feeling stumped over what mini project to start on why not go out to the woods.



Above: The original tree stump – it was hard to choose as they were all interesting shapes.

Left: The perfect place for little woodland creatures, ferns, moss and Shaggy Ink Cap toadstools.



Monica's romantic house

BY SANDRA HARDING

I hadn't spotted this pretty house on Facebook but luckily one of my Lundby friends tipped me off. Originally, these were two houses from about 1957, made by Per Bjornfelt.

Monica Nyberg from Sweden bought them from Tradera, with plans to rebuild them to create one romantic style house, and looking at the photographs, the plan worked.

Monica is not a newcomer to Lundby as she already has three Stockholms, three Smaland, and five Lundby extensions plus of course furniture and accessories. To create the look that she wanted Monica first redesigned the layout, painted the woodwork and some of the furniture white, and added pretty delicate wallpapers throughout.

I love the flower theme and especially the painted flowers on the front of the stairs — such a nice feminine touch. The flower-filled balcony, the

porch and garden add to the effect.

Having so many rooms meant that the owner, Maria, has the luxury of a dedicated sewing room, where she spends many happy hours. She loves to make clothes for herself and her twin daughters, Linda and Susan, who can be seen playing with their toys in their room. They have twin beds, made by Monica, and they swap beds and change around as they want.

Many of the other items Monica also made, including the wicker chairs and wicker bedside tables, the hat and shoe shelf, and all the shelves in the sewing room. In the bedroom she made the dressing table, shelves and the bed curtain as well as the basin in the bathroom.

All the carpets, apart from one, she made with tablecloths, and pretty lace was used for all the curtains. In the kitchen Monica made the wooden stove and cooker hood and all the fab-

ric on the furniture Monica replaced with her own.

In the garden sitting on the swing chair (made by Monica) is Maria's sister, Elizabeth, who is chatting to two friends who have called in to keep Maria company. However, she is exhausted after spending hours in the garden and she knows that they are concerned about her overtiring herself. She is sitting quietly for a few minutes before she gets changed from her working clothes, and she will join them shortly and enjoy a glass of ice cold orange juice.

Maria is a widow, and her sister and friends are planning to introduce her to a nice fellow they know, and I think that any man would be jolly glad to live in such a perfect little house. We will never know the outcome of the chat the girls are about to have so we will leave them quietly to their ministrations.



is full of lovely touches





“I love the flower theme and especially the painted flowers on the front of the stairs — such a nice feminine touch.”



Memories and macarons fill Deri's glorious bakery

Deri Terry just had to realise what her strengths are in this wonderful hobby to fully realise her potential. This bakery room box shows how far she's come

BY PAM NORTH

Deri's interest in miniatures began in her childhood when her father built a doll's house for her and her younger sister. Complete with a red brick exterior, a white columned porch, and a lawn cut from a doormat, his creation had the effect of, in her own words, "igniting a lifelong love for doll's houses and miniatures."

Her childhood memories of her sister, and the hours they spent with their doll's house, are priceless to her. "I told her stories of tiny people playing in our doll's house, and living behind our real-life house walls," she reminisced. "I did everything I could to make her believe it, including trying to stamp the tile walls behind our bath-

tub, with tiny footprints.

"In 2007, my sister died at the age of 40. My wonderful memories of our times playing with the doll's house our father had made for us inspired me to start a doll's house project. I had no idea, at the time, that it would be the therapy I needed to help me cope.

"I am still working on that doll's house. I keep adding to it, and perhaps I will never truly finish it! My lifelong passion with tiny things has provided me a hobby and a collection, but, more importantly and surprisingly, the hobby has been a therapeutic means to memorialise my loved ones."

In middle school, Deri looked for possibilities of transforming ordinary

items like toothpaste caps into cute, decorative flower pots for tiny room settings. It was the mini-edibles that particularly caught her fancy. Seeking more realism, she turned to polymer clay to create them, but found that she wasn't achieving that hallmark of artistic expertise.

As she explained: "After trying my hand at making my own little desserts, and seeing that mine didn't measure up, I realised that my greatest talent lay in bringing things together. The pressure I had felt that a miniaturist had to personally make almost everything had held me back for years.

"In real life, I was a designer, and I created beautiful rooms. I didn't make the furniture, the draperies, or the art.

"I then looked to artists and craftsmen for the items, and used my talents to combine all the components. My message to other miniaturists is that you don't have to be a carpenter, seamstress, lighting engineer, etc. We all know our own strengths and weaknesses. Don't let anything keep you from collecting and enjoying miniatures. Make what you can, and find others to create the items you can't."

Terry calls one of her favourite projects Miniature Bakery On Cake Stand. She had amassed a collection of real-



Left: A closer look at the amazing detail in the tiny layered cake.

Above: The bakery shown with the glass lid in place.



Above: There are so many delicious mini treats to fill the display cases.

Right: The small dresser is filled with French delicacies in twelfth scale.

istic tiny cakes and pastries from Paris Miniatures, and had displayed them on a French dessert table in her largest doll's house until she ran out of room for them. She decided to feature the mini baked goods in a bakery roombox instead, and ultimately she envisioned a cake stand as the perfect display.

"Ladurée, a French luxury bakery and sweets maker house, created in 1862, was part of my inspiration, because when my children were younger, their uncle, on his frequent travels to Paris, would send them chocolates and double-decker macarons from there. I found a seller on Etsy who made macarons, and other items similar to





Top: A close up of the tiny works of art in the bakery's display case.

Above: Deri has fun changing out the pieces as she collects them.

‘Every time I look at it, I see him enjoying Christmas as he sampled the macaron flavours, so for me, a special memory has been preserved.’

those sold at Ladurée, and I decided to fill a Welsh dresser, behind bakery cases of goodies.

“I refinished the Welsh dresser with a distressed look, using chalk paint, and then added a glass dome, twelfth scale bakery cases, and the tiny baked goods made from polymer clay. Everything just came together as a commemoration of my children's happy memories of Ladurée items from their uncle, and a memorial to my son, who was killed a few years ago in a car wreck five days before Christmas.

“Every time I look at it, I see him enjoying Christmas as he sampled the macaron flavours, so for me, a special memory has been preserved. This project turned out just as I imagined it would, and I hope my bakery will inspire collectors, both old and new, to enjoy the hobby.

“The cake stand is an unconventional display, but it makes perfect sense to

me. Thinking outside the box results in some of the most creative ideas. Why not a candy shop in a gum ball stand, or a scene from Cinderella inside an artificial pumpkin? I always have believed that if you can visualise it, you can achieve it. Picturing something in your mind, and knowing in your heart that you can do it, is 75 per cent of the battle to me.”

Terry continues to come up with many ideas for creations. “I am working on a big doll's house, and I have made a classroom roombox, inspired by Harry Potter, for my daughter.

“I also would like to make a story-book castle, and a scene inspired by Brambly Hedge books - both for my grandson. I am absolutely fascinated by anything miniature, whether it be for a doll's house, or scaled-down furniture for children. I always seem to be thinking about the two worlds at the same time.”

Quick and easy

Make something simple: shopping bags from fancy paper and card

BY SANDRA HARDING

Cut an oval base the size you want from thick card. 1" by 3/4" is about right. The cream and green bag above was made to these measurements.

I did try a larger size of 1 1/4" x 3/4" but it seemed too big, as you can see in the red and cream bags.

Cut length of paper to go all around the bottom of the base. 1" wide is about right, but it's your choice.

Roll the paper around a finger to take on the shape of the bag, and then add glue all along the base of the paper. With the cardboard base on end, carefully glue the paper around the edge of the base, starting in the middle of the wider side. This can be fiddly but keep on checking the base is level and glue is sticking. Make sure the back joins neatly. Hold it until it is holding firm, and then let it dry.

Cut a length of your suede, ribbon or pre-cut leather. You need a length for the base of the bag, one for the top, and two pieces for the handles, which go inside the bag.

Glue the base trim on first and let it dry, making sure you keep

it straight, level, and joined at the back. Glue the top trim on, keeping it level with the top of the bag, and joined at the back. Let it dry.

Glue the handles inside the top of the bag, making sure they are matching and even. I added a little green flower, because I had some.

For the alternative style, cut a length of suede, ribbon or pre-cut leather to fit along the bottom of the bag and two pieces for the long handles.

Glue the base trim on first and let

it dry. Glue the handles on the outside of the bag, one either side, making sure that the trim meets the base trim, and they are evenly spaced. Let it dry.

Everything used here was made from stuff I had, and was very easy.

Thanks to Julie Warren and Madeline Baker for the idea.



You will need

- Thick card
- Thick fancy paper. I used small samples from B&Q
- Glue
- Thin ribbon, or thin strips of leather or suede. My suede strips were from Works, ready cut. Leather can easily be cut to the right width.



Gift prompts Pamela into a Victorian theme

Pamela Nelson retired as a graphic artist several years ago but she has found that miniatures brings her great joy and fulfils her creative need

BY PAM NORTH

Love of doll's houses often has its seed in childhood, and so it was with Australian Pamela Nelson, whose father made one, complete with an electric light, for her.

Later, she decorated one for her two daughters. It wasn't until Nelson retired in 2010, from a career as a graphic artist for an advertising agency, however, that the passion finally took hold, as she searched for something to fill her leisure time.

Remembering how much she had enjoyed her prior experiences, she embraced doll's houses again, work-

ing with an A-frame house made by a friend. "I have no idea what scale it actually was," she remembers. Turning a spare bedroom into a craft room, she then started working on a Greenleaf kit, the Harrison model, knocking out windows, and adding walls and doors.

"I have no formal training," she said, "just a brain that likes to solve stuff."

Her family doesn't get involved much with her hobby. "They don't care much; they cannot see the joy I get out of creating. Not to worry, though, it's for me." Her husband bought her an Ozolo scroll saw and a Dremel drill



to help her turn her ideas into reality. After three years of working on and finally completing the Harrison, she started another house, a simpler one with a beach theme. She knocked out windows, added walls, and made doors to customise it. Another Greenleaf model, the Garfield, also was added to her acquisitions as a future project.

Pamela finds that she has some difficulty obtaining kits and materials where she lives, and mostly has to order what she needs from eBay and local miniature stores.

"I'd like to buy things from the overseas," she said, "but the postage is so horrendously expensive." She has joined a local miniatures group to share her interest with others, and to learn from their experiences and acquired information.

The club has annual exhibitions, which serves as inspiration for Pamela to complete her own houses for those displays.

The Harrison has a Victorian theme, which took some time for her to decide upon, and her choice was dictated by a gift of a special cooker that she had received as a gift from her daughter.

It became the central focus of the kitchen. She made curtains, kitchen cabinets, doors, and a chimney for the





Top: After receiving a cooker from her daughter as a gift, Pam decided to go with a Victorian theme for this lovely doll's house.

Left: This cosy sitting room has purple accents and a sleeping pup in front of the fireplace.

Top right: The doll's house bathroom.

Above right: The finely furnished upstairs hall of Pamela's doll's house.

Right: Lavender and pink make for a sweet nursery on the top floor.

cooker, and the kitchen is her favourite feature of that doll's house. The project turned out well. "My friends want to move in!" Pamela joked.

She continues to find tutorials to help her to increase her skills in making furniture from bits and pieces of wood. "I love those light bulb mo-





Top left: The sitting room is accented in red for a touch of drama.

Top right: The master bedroom is decorated in florals and pleats.

Above left: The doll's house attic hall.

Above right: The foyer is a decorative entrance into the house.

ments, like how do I make a copper range hood for the stove? By beating copper paper with a meat mallet."

She is always on the lookout for new ideas, and said that when she makes something, she usually "has several goes at it" until she is happy with the result. She learns from the process. "I used a glue gun with great gusto on the roof of the Harrison, and it's going to be hard to eliminate the excesses. I don't fancy doing the roof of the Garfield in shingles, so I sourced some fake corrugated iron for that purpose.

The theme for it will be a Victorian Australian homestead."

She thinks creatively, sometimes using cut-up egg cartons for shingles, and pop-sticks for flooring. Her method is mostly trial and error to achieve the effects that she wants. She finds that the hardest part of making a house from a kit is deciding what to do first, and that often involves making changes from the kit's design. Altering room sizes, getting walls straight, adding features such as fireplaces, chimneys, and other extra features take added time and effort, with attention to detail.

Luckily, her concepts and changes seem to mesh, and she is satisfied with the results. Determination to think it through and get it right seems to be the formula for success for her.

Pamela described what making

doll's houses means to her: "It fulfils a creative need inside me, to make stuff, and it's so much quicker and more enjoyable than doing a real-sized house."

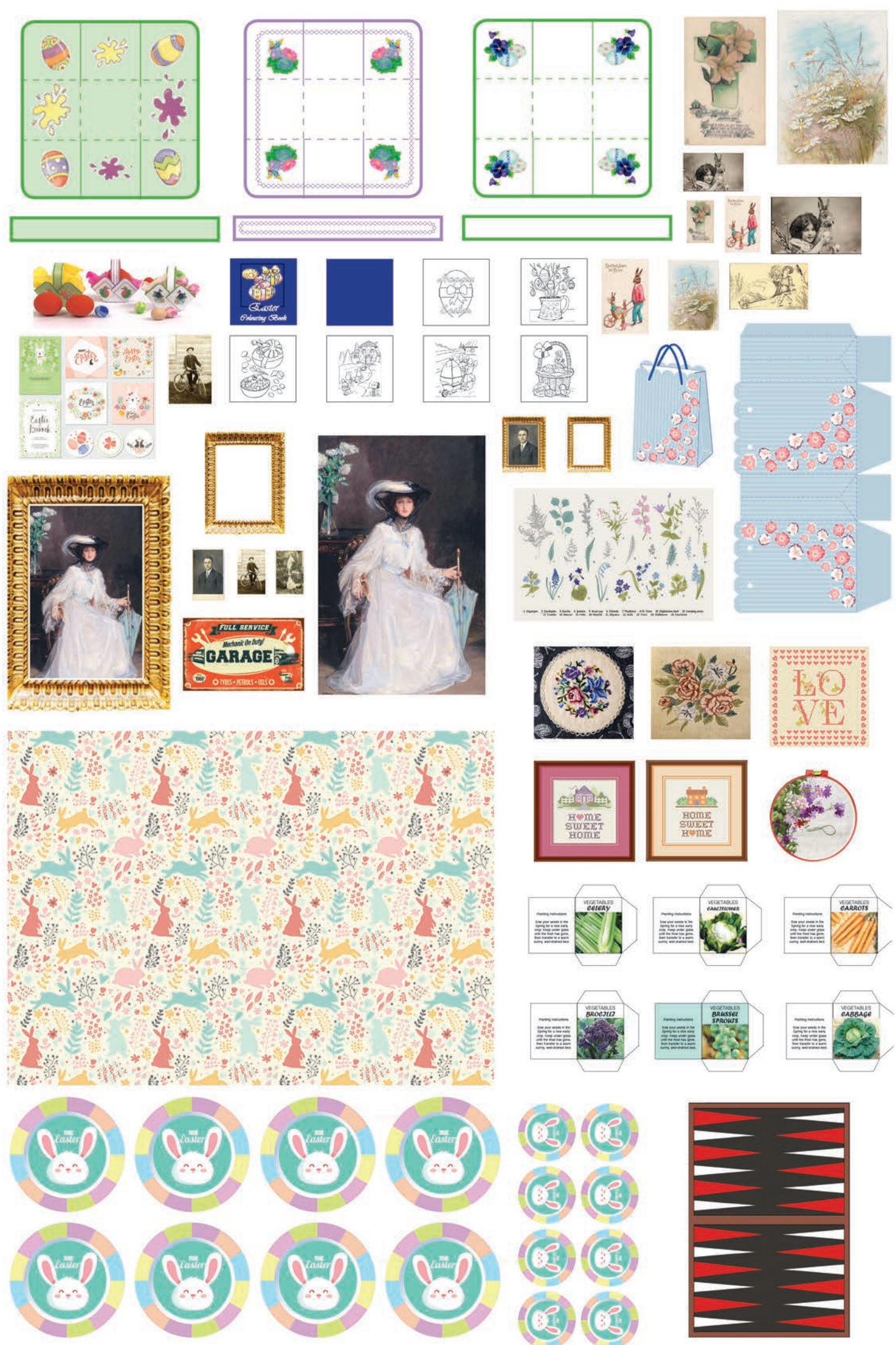
When asked if she intends to sell her Beach House, she replied: "That's what my family ask. I have no grandchildren, so I cannot save my house for them. At the moment, it's on display, but when I finish it, things might change. I have no idea how much I might sell it for, or if there's a market for it."

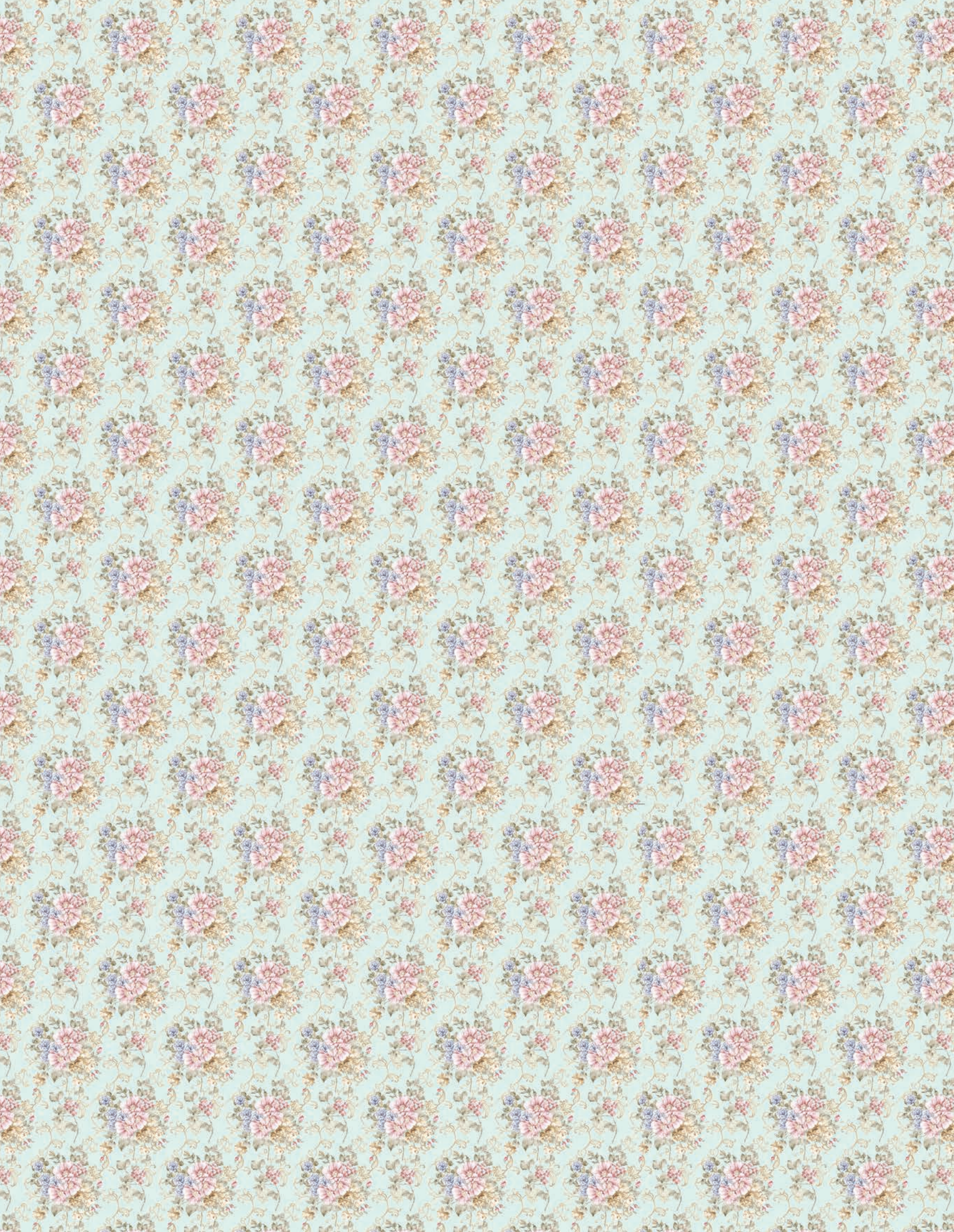
Pamela has reached the stage that many hobbyists do. "I really would like to build a studio out in the garden," she said. "I am finding that the room I use at the moment is getting a bit crowded. I also have a very sneaky suspicion that the Garfield will not fit through the door when it's finished! I am on the lookout all the time, for houses to redo, and they take up room!"

From our house to your house

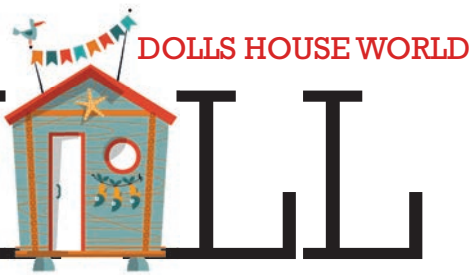
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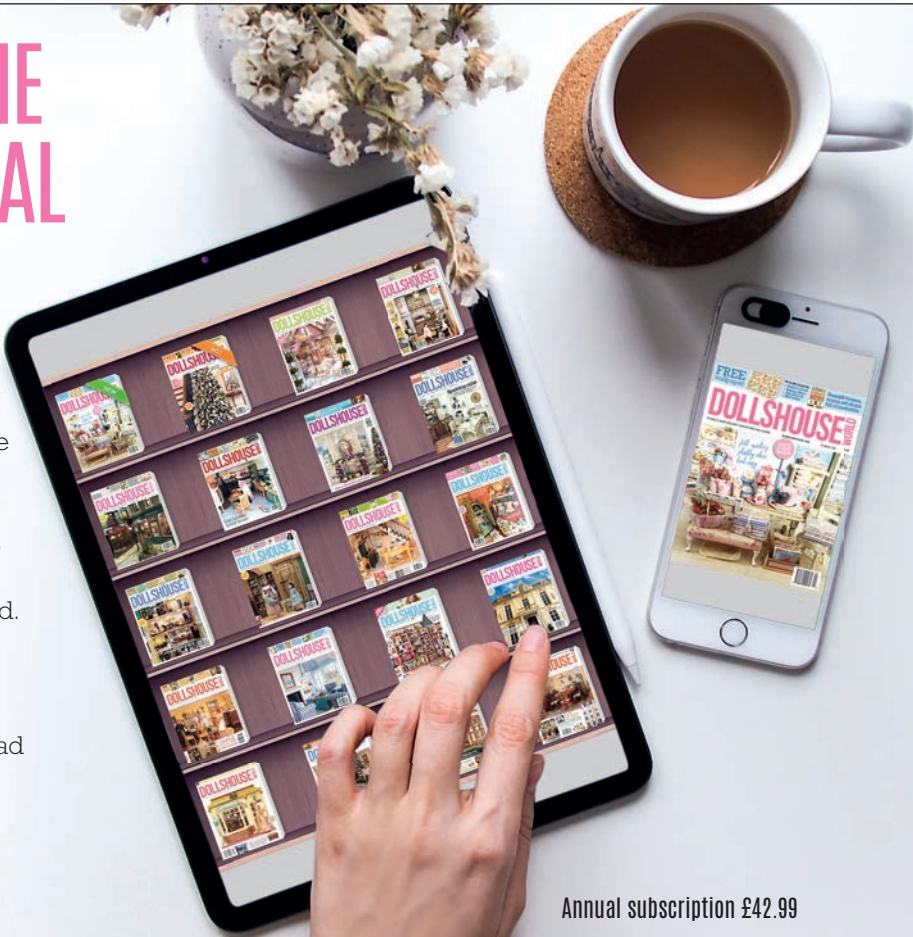
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SMALL TALK

WE CHAT WITH SUSAN KELLER ABOUT HER LIFE IN MINIATURES

Hi Susan, we hear you make things and then give them away. That's unusual.

At the moment I have three to be taken. I usually give them away to people who I'm sure will take proper care of them. They're not for sale. However, I accept donations so that I can continue making them. It's kind of like an artist support. I was recently given £80 for one and a pint of beer for another.



the film industry. I love stories and sets, and I love making my doll's houses as kind of a set – breakfast ready to eat, book left open on the table, milk spilled out while a kitty drinks it.

What other hobbies have you tried? Making sculptures from clay. I did a few, but then lost

interest. I tried to make one, but it just didn't work out. I thought I'd lost my craft skills, but then minis came.

How did you start making minis? I found out I am good at art and crafts, so I thought why not try to make my own minis? I went to a craft shop, bought a box as a base, along with some colourful papers, glue, wood, and textiles... and it couldn't be stopped from happening. At the time I lived in Edinburgh and had plenty of time. Boredom helps you a lot in being creative. My boxes are all hand-made. I seldom buy ready-made items but rather make it all myself – the walls, the floors, the furniture, accessories, decorations... everything.

How enthusiastic are your family about your hobby? My family likes what I am doing, especially my dad who was a model-maker, putting together buildings and airplanes, when he was younger.

When did you first realise you loved minis? I have always been amazed by miniatures. I loved my Barbie dolls and house and accessories when I was a little girl. Whatever small item I found I made sure it fitted into my Barbie world. When I was a kid I spent lots of time at the countryside so I made many of my doll's houses in a vintage village style. It helps me remember those good times.

What are your interests outside miniatures? I studied make-up artistry and my goal is to work in

What do you do when you're not in mini mode? I work. I love swimming, yoga and nature. Also travelling.

Do you buy too much stuff? Usually I am pretty good at measuring what I buy. However, sometimes I go to a craft shop and spend £50 and couldn't even tell you what I bought. But nothing is wasted; everything will be used later on. And I don't just buy things. Once I went to the forest to collect sticks for my wooden doll's house. I also use items that could be rubbish. Last time I used the top of a nail polish as a bin. It worked out pretty well.

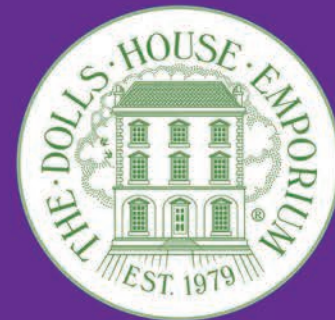
What do you love about our hobby? I love to create different scenes and styles. I love Italy and I travel there as much as I can. This year made travelling complicated, so I just made an Italian Cafe with pizza and wine. Because I missed it. So much.

● Email: susan.keller.mua@gmail.com
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You can see more pictures of Susan's work on Small Accomplishments on P35.

● 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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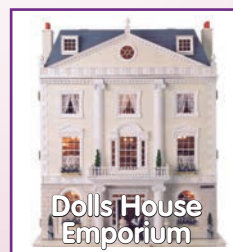
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