



Miniature Enthusiasts of Edmonton Club

April, 2005 VOLUME 20 NUMBER 4 est. 1982

Box 70045, Londonderry Post Office, Edmonton, AB T5C 3R6

General Meetings: Held on the 3rd Tuesday of the month: 7:30 to 10:00 p.m. at McClure United Church, 13708-74 Street, Edmonton. Workshops are held every 1st and 2nd Tuesday of the month, from 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. There are no meetings or workshops during July, August, and December.

Admission: \$2.00 Membership: \$20.00



Upcoming Club Activities

Workshops: The next workshops are May 3, 2005 and May 10, 2005. The May 3rd workshop will be the third in a series of workshops that will culminate in our all-day workshop on May 14th. On the 3rd, we will continue work on the room box. For this workshop, you will need to have all your walls wallpapered and the box at least partially constructed, with flooring in place. The May 10th workshop will be put on by Monica LaVoie who will help you populate your mini-garden with lovely flowers.

General Meeting: The next general meeting will be held on May 17, 2005. Since the May 24th weekend is rapidly approaching, which celebrates Queen Victoria's birthday, a Victorian theme might be interesting. But, as always, anything you want to display is very welcome. Food for the May General Meeting will be provided by Jan Mann, Lil McPhee, and Sunni Dixon. Anne Spooner will bring the cream.

All-Day Workshop: will be held on Saturday, May 14th at McClure United Church. We will finish the indoor/outdoor room, including electrification. In addition, at the all-day workshop, we will be finishing a wing-back chair or chaise lounge to go in the box. You will need to bring your fabric, upholstery padding and fabric glue.

MEE Fall Show: will be held on September 18, 2005.

Minis On-Line

Since we will be looking at electrifying our roombox at our all-day workshop soon, the links section and the Hints and Tips section of this newsletter will focus on electrification. The following short list of links provides you with some basic information on electrification.

- http://www.dollhousecollectables.com/Dollhouse_Electrical_tips.html - this excellent web page provides an illustrated guide to electrification with copper tape.
- <http://www.cir-kitconcepts.com/> - the masters of dollhouse lighting and electrical systems provide on-line goodies and supplies for you.
- <http://www.minishop.com/shop/Tiplight.htm> - Mott's Miniatures provide a pretty complete list of the supplies, tools and parts you will need to start electrifying your dollhouse.

Printable of the Month – Wine Bottle Labels

This month's "printie" is a set of French wine labels to perk up those cheap plastic bottles you have tucked away (come on... 'fess up – everyone has some!) Each label comes in two parts: a square/rectangular piece to wrap around the widest part of the wine bottle, and a small curved piece (which requires extremely careful cutting) for wrapping around the neck. Paint approximately the top ¼ inch of the bottle gold (for champagne), black or dark green (for other wines), and then glue the small labels to the part where the gold, black or green top meets the rest of the bottle. Since the small top sections are different shapes and sizes, a trial run BEFORE painting the bottle top would be a help to determine the appropriate depth of the gold/black/green paint.

If you are a wine aficionado, put the red wine labels on bottles with deep rose or various shades of red colouration, and the white wine labels on clear, very pale yellow, brown or pale green bottles. If you don't know a Pinot Noir from a Chardonnay, then just paste away! But remember, no-one will believe any serious wine label, like a Chateau Rothschild, on a canary yellow, blue, pink or purple bottle.

Teena's Challenge

At our last meeting, Teena challenged us to find everyday objects that are useful for minis. The illustrated wine rack from my Brooke Tucker kitchen was constructed from sheets of cross-shaped spacers for laying ceramic floor tiles, available at any Home Depot, Rona or Totem store. Just take a sheet of spacers (they come with LOTS of sheets to a package, for just a couple of bucks), and find a diagonal section that is the right size to go in your cupboard/on a shelf. Cut through the crosses to the right shape/size, stack and glue as many as needed to fill the depth you have available, then paint in a dark colour. Fill with your mini French wine bottles. Voila! A wine rack!



More Teena's challenge stuff --- since I am adding some IKEA cabinets to my home, I started really looking at all the different packing materials. Nothing better than free stuff that you normally don't even notice except for the mess it makes!!! Here's what I found useful:

- Extremely dense and stiff blue Styrofoam (1 inch square cross-section) that cuts cleanly with a saw (separating glass doors for a cabinet). These would be useful as supports and braces in roomboxes.
 - Very rigid tubes (supporting external packing from rubbing on drawer fronts). These would make great umbrella stands, stacked as columns, turned into bird bath and sundial bases, etc.
- Fine padding (to protect textured door fronts). This will make great underlay in mini-upholstery, softly rounding corners while adding minimal bulk.

I guess the lesson learned is to pay attention when unpacking stuff. I wonder if IKEA would think you were nuts if you just wanted to buy parts of the packing material. And what would they charge for stuff they expect you to throw away?

Here's another "find" – Sunni found, at Home Outfitters, an 18" turntable with non-skid surface and stainless steel ball bearings for \$19.99 and a 12" one for \$9.99. And Michael's has a selection of shadow boxes, some with nice framing, which could be useful. The prices were \$24.99 and \$27.99.

What have you found unexpectedly? Let me know for future newsletters by calling Tina at 487-8943 or emailing me at tina@camacdonald.com.

Hints and Tips – Electrifying Your Dollhouse

Why bother to electrify your roombox???

It's lit by the lights in the real room it resides in, right? Wrong! There are many reasons to go to the trouble of electrifying your dollhouse or roombox, including:

- **To set a mood.** Flickering candles focused on a romantic table set for two can speak volumes about the intimacy of the moment. Or perk up a grungy 1950's motel room with the red on-again/off-again "neon" light of the motel/hotel sign outside the window.
- **To add to the verisimilitude of a particular period in time.** Electric lights, oil lamps, gas fixtures, candles, tallow dips and firelight (including coal, peat and wood fires, all with different fireplace grates) have distinct time periods where they were the primary source of lighting. A Tiffany lamp belongs in a Victorian room, not a Tudor parlour! Art Deco fixtures look silly in an Edwardian house. Make sure you match the light colour to the type of fixture. Candle light is yellow, while electric and gas light is white. Do your research!
- **To set the stage for a celebration.** Nothing says Christmas better than a Christmas tree strung with garlands of lights! A "lit" Halloween pumpkin looks fantastic as well.

- **To evenly light dark corners.** Particularly if your dollhouse or roombox is relatively deep proportionately to its height, the back corners can remain dark even displayed in the brightest full-size room. A light fixture or two in the back corners evens out the ambient light coming in the front of the setting and makes sure that all of the room and its appointments can be seen. This is very important if you are displaying a shop with a closed front.
- **To bring attention to those “special” minis.** If you just spent your children’s inheritance on an original miniature oil painting of your dog, why let it languish in obscurity? Add a picture light or mini spot-light above that special item with the light positioned directly on the item that you want the viewer to focus on.
- **To improve photography of your room.** Flash photography in close-up is a skill many of us just do not have. There is a tendency for a flash to over-expose close features while the back remains relatively dark. Light fixtures within the room coupled with good outside lighting means that with a fast film (ISO 400 or 1000), the need for a flash is minimized. Make sure the larger room lighting does not cast your shadow onto the room or dollhouse when taking your picture.
- **To indicate the time of day.** Room-boxes can be effectively lit from the outside to show light coming through the windows to illuminate the room. The colour of that light can help set the time of day. Light can be coloured by putting coloured acetate/plastic between the light source and the room it is illuminating. A breakfast room lit with the orange/reds of evening light just doesn’t look right. Neither does a sexy boudoir lit by the direct white/yellow glare of noon. Stormy or rainy weather needs a blue tint to the light, and starlight/moonlight can be simulated by a dim glow behind a small moon-shaped cut-out or tiny stars/pin-pricks pierced through a deep blue velvet “sky”.
- **To be true to the subject.** A contemporary bar must have a “neon” Budweiser Light sign, today’s shop fronts require advertising in lights, and gravestones look great spot-lighted from a low position so that they cast long shadows.

Developing a Wiring Diagram

- The first thing to do before wiring a dollhouse or roombox, regardless of the type of wiring system you will use, is to draw a wiring diagram of the inside of your house/roombox. On this diagram or road map, you are going to indicate where all of your wiring must be run. Now is the time to decide if you want ceiling lights, outside coach lights, sconces, a door bell, lights streaming through your windows, a table lamp, etc.
- When developing your wiring diagram, be sure to allow for additional wiring at the baseboard and sconce level in case you want to add some additional lights in the future.

Choosing Your Wiring System

- There are many different methods available depending on the look you want to achieve. The most common and in-scale methods are known as tape wiring (using copper tape) and hardwiring (also known as round wiring) using common household electric current. Other methods use batteries and life size lights. There is no right or wrong choice here. A little research, and talking to friends, may be required before you can make a decision. But, for those who are scared of live electricity and do not want to learn how to solder wires together (like me), copper tape wiring seems a good choice.

“Tool” of the Month – Devilled Egg Plate

OK, so this isn’t exactly a tool, but it’s one of the most useful mini-friendly items I own, and fits with Teena’s challenge to make use of everyday objects in mini-life. The pictured plate is made for serving devilled eggs, and my first plate of this kind was a family heirloom handed down from my grandmother. I thought you could only find them in antique stores and junk shops. Then, I ran across this new version at ***Linens and Things***, for \$6.99. Not as pretty as grandma’s plate, but equally effective.



This “tool” is useful for two main purposes... 1) for separating multiple colours of paint, various glues or other liquid things that can run all over and mix themselves up if not separated, but that you need all at the same time, and; 2) for keeping things separated, but easily moveable (just pick up the plate and relocate), when constructing mini-furniture (one depression for the nails, one for the drawer handles, one for the hinges, one for the fiddly little pieces that you know will stick to the undersurface of your arm if you leave them on the counter, one for the wood stain, one for the glue, etc.) The plate is porcelain, and washes right off when you are done.

Remember when.....

A complete furnished "electric" 8-room dollhouse cost \$10.98???
 And 33 pieces of furniture were \$1.19? Five dressed dolls for 99¢?
 How about a working greenhouse with flower pots and seed for \$1.00?
 Sunni found the following ad on the back of very old comic book.

GIANT PLAY INSIDE ELECTRIC..... DOLL HOUSE

Big Enough For A Child To Get Inside And Play

FABULOUS FEATURES

- STURDY 200 LB TEST MATERIAL
- 8 ROOMS
- 33 PC FURNITURE SET
- ELECTRIC LIGHTS
- GREENHOUSE
- POTS
- SEEDS
- "PLAY INSIDE"

only **\$10.98**

5 pc Doll Family
 33 pc Full of Furniture
 Greenhouse with Pots
 Seeds and Pot

SIZE
 30" x 34" x 36"

PLAY INSIDE

10 DAY FREE TRIAL

If your youngster is not happier and more thrilled than she's ever been before, simply return the Magic Doll House for full refund of your purchase price.

MONEY BACK GUARANTEE

HONOR HOUSE PROD. CORP. DEPT. 53-DD78
 Lynbrook, New York 11583

Please, rush the following on your money back-if-not-delighted guarantee.

<input type="checkbox"/> Play Inside Electric Doll House \$10.98
<input type="checkbox"/> Complete 5 piece Dressed Doll Family99
<input type="checkbox"/> Full Assortment (33 pc) Furniture Sets 1.19
<input type="checkbox"/> Working Greenhouse with 2 Flower Pots and Seeds 1.00

I enclose \$_____ in full payment including \$1.75 for shipping charges.
 Send COD, I enclose \$2 deposit and will pay postman the balance plus COD and MO fees.

NAME _____
 ADDRESS _____
 CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

NY State residents add sales tax.

This is your little girl's dream a giant doll house which she can decorate with 33 pieces of attractive, colored plastic doll furniture, people with a five piece doll family, play inside with its easy entry swing-open feature, and grow live flowers from seeds in the working greenhouse.

This 8 room, two story Colonial Doll House is fully 30" x 34" x 36" large enough to fill her imagination and sturdy enough for many delightful hours of play. Safely lit by two battery powered lights to add comfort and reality. The Greenhouse provides the thrilling experience of seeing her own plants grow. Make her the proud owner of this beautiful house the envy of her friends for the low price of \$10.98. (Batteries not included) plus \$1.75 shipping charges.

We can only dream about the good old days!

Enjoy Your All-Day Workshop!!!

THIS NEWSLETTER IS ON-LINE AT: <http://www.camacdonald.com/MEE/>

Contact Tina (487-8943) if you have something you want to sell, or to place an ad or an announcement.