



Miniature Enthusiasts of Edmonton Club

November, 2006 VOLUME 21 NUMBER 9 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: 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. Meeting only (no workshops) in January (assuming temperatures of over minus 25C)

Admission: \$2.00 Membership: \$20.00



Upcoming Club Activities

Workshops: The next workshops are February 6, 2007 and February 13, 2007. They will be focused on building shelving for our millinery shop.

General Meeting: The next general meeting will be held on January 16, 2007. The MEE Christmas Party will be held on December 5th, 2006. Please sign up for pot luck, and bring three mini Christmas ornaments if you want to enter the draw for a miniature Christmas tree and all its ornaments. There will be a present exchange. Bring one to get one.... Value should be about \$10.00.

E-Bay Seminar – there are still some places left in the December 2nd seminar for selling your miniatures on E-Bay. Please contact Tina if you are interested.

Printable of the Month – Miniaturist's Ruler

After featuring several types of measuring devices over the last two months, as the "Tool of the Month", I purchased some Scale Cabinetmaker magazines. Now, I really needed a ruler in scale inches! So, I made one. Thought you all might like one too, so that is what is attached to this month's newsletter. The smallest increment on the ruler is 1/24th of an inch, so this rule works for both 1:12 scale as well as 1:24 scale. That is, one of the smallest increments is one inch in 1/2 scale or half an inch in 1/12 scale.

Cut carefully OUTSIDE the black edge, using a sharp X-Acto knife and a steel straight edge. Use the ruler only for measuring. If you try to use it as a straight edge, you'll get wobbly lines, and will just cut slices out of the side of the ruler. To make mine a little more substantial, I used aerosol glue to fasten it to a piece of thin Plexiglas.

Minis On-Line

- If you need plastic shapes for miniature construction for any reason, try <http://www.plastruct.com/>.
- For those of you that are into smaller scales, such as 1/2 inch scale, check out these furniture kits at http://www.oakridgehobbies.com/g_scale/g_116a.html. They also sell 1/2 scale accessories and food at http://www.oakridgehobbies.com/g_scale/g_126-127.html and 1/2 scale assembled scale furniture at http://www.oakridgehobbies.com/g_scale/aztec_half_scale_furniture.html. 1/2 scale figures can be found at: http://www.oakridgehobbies.com/g_scale/g_woodlandscenics_figures.html. Lamps and lights in 1/2 scale can be found at: http://www.oakridgehobbies.com/g_scale/g_130-131.html.
- 1/4 scale furniture kits are at http://www.oakridgehobbies.com/o_scale/o_8-9.html. 1/4 scale animals and figures are at http://www.oakridgehobbies.com/o_scale/o_47-48.html. Check out their HO scale furniture at http://www.oakridgehobbies.com/ho_scale/ho_furniture.html. A little too big at 1/87 scale, but manageable for some items. They also make figures and animals in HO scale (1/87) at http://www.oakridgehobbies.com/ho_scale/ho_woodlandscenic_figures.html.
- You can find Houseworks catalogue pages at <http://store.dollhousecollectables.com/houseworks.html>. If you don't want to shop with these suppliers on-line, just get the catalogue number and then order them through Luba or Maureen.
- If you are looking for equipment or tools, you can't go wrong at <http://www.micromark.com/>.
- For decals to apply to your furniture, walls, plates, clock faces, accessories, etc. check out http://www.microscale.com/Merchant2/merchant.mvc?Screen=CTGY&Category_Code=DOLL.

Techniques – Stencilling

Over the next few months, this newsletter will be presenting a series of articles taken from the November 1995 **Nutshell News** on decorative painting techniques for miniatures. This month's topic is stencilling. In the months to come, there will be short articles on spatter painting, verdigris, rubber stamping, spongework, stippling, and crackle.

Stencilling is accomplished by cutting a pattern out of a piece of thin material such as paper, acetate or brass and using this stencil along with paints to apply this pattern to another surface. The patterns themselves may be simple or very complicated ones applied using a number of stencils with different colours applied one after the other to the same area, in a composite method. Freehand designs may be added to stencil patterns to embellish them, such as adding stems to leaves. Stencilling has a long history. With a bit of research you should be able to do a stencilled piece to fit into just about any miniature setting. Stencilling can be worked on a very small piece, such as a dish or plate, or on large surfaces such as a wall or floor. Colours can be as subtle or as gaudy as desired or needed. Designs can range from a single flower to imitation wallpaper. Check out Michael's for brass cut stencils. Some of them are small enough in scale to be useable in miniature settings.

You will need:

- A stencil. You can make your own or purchase ready made ones. Depending on what you are doing, some full size stencils may work. Miniature stencils are usually of metal and can be found in miniature shops, craft shops, rubber stamp suppliers and in some country decorating stores.
 - Paints (there are paints sold especially for stencilling that work well). For stencilling in miniature, Plaid Paint Crayons work well.
 - Smallest of stencil brushes (stiff bristled round, flat-topped brush). You should use a different brush for each colour.
1. The item to be stencilled needs to be reasonably flat. It can be of almost any material, porous or non-porous, soft or hard. But whatever it is made of, it should be clean or freshly painted and dry. If possible lay it on a flat work surface.
 2. If you desire a precisely placed pattern, it will probably be necessary to mark out grids or guidelines lightly with pencil.
 3. Use a piece of wax paper for a palette. Rub crayon on palette, Pick up paint with brush. Do not load paint on brush – it should be rather “dry”. Apply paint into cut-out areas of the stencil. It is best to use a circular stroke to stencil, but the tiny openings in many of the stencils may require you to use an up and down dabbing motion. Change brushes when you change colours. Colours may be blended with each other. Use several coats of paint rather than one heavy one for darker colours. To remove stencil, pull it straight up – do not slide it off, or paint may smear.
 4. Let paint cure for several days. It may be heat set up after 24 hour (check paint packaging for directions).

If you want to try cutting your own stencils, thin acetate works fine. A pattern may be drawn or traced on card stock and taped under the acetate so it shows through. Use a thin knife blade or a tiny X-Acto pen knife for cutting (see Tool of the Month). Paper punches also work well for cutting stencils – there are some corner punches on the market that have interesting patterns that would make a variety of stencils for walls or floors.

You can find stencilling supplies on-line at: <http://freespace.virgin.net/stencil.craft/supplies.htm>.

Tips and Hints – Miscellaneous

- Dr. Scholl's insoles (any large drug store in the foot care department) are just the right thickness and texture to use for upholstering chairs and sofas. No gluing is necessary, just peel off the backing and it is ready to apply. You can also tuck the material under the cushion where it would be held by the adhesive, leaving enough “stickum” to attach it to the chair.
- Butcher block counter tops or tables in miniature can be created by sawing 1/8” thick strips off the end of a good quality plywood, then gluing the strips side by side. When dry, sand thoroughly then varnish. Beautiful!
- A really smart idea borrowed from jewellers is to use thumb tacks to attach the bottom of an apron to the underside of your workbench. When you sit down to work, tie the straps around your waist, and any small parts dropped or accidentally swept over the edge will be caught by the apron and eliminate the need to

grovel among the sawdust and shavings. But be warned – make sure the telephone and coffee pot are within reach!

Tool of the Month – X-Acto Knife Kit

I tripped over an ZX-Acto knife set that I hadn't seen before, and thought you all might be interested. It includes: Perfect set for anyone interested in miniatures or scrapbooking! The three knives are packed in an attractive wooden box. Kit includes:

- Stencil Knife with 5 blades--Easily cuts heavy-duty materials such as cardstock, heavy bond paper, canvas, cloth, and more. This is a very narrow (about 1/8" blade) knife for tight corners.
- Swivel Knife with 3 blades--Precision swivel blade turns 360 degrees for accurate cutting when using stencils and templates. Perfect for freehand shape cutting or put in a compass and cut perfect circles.
- Gripster Knife with 5 blades--For precision cutting and trimming of photos, construction paper, and more. Ergonomic comfort-grip handle. This is the standard knife we all use, but with a textured surface. Takes #11 blades.



Available at Michael's in the Scrap-booking section.

Sunni's Best Recipe – Aging Liquid

1 pint (450 ml.) alcohol
1 ½ tbsp. black India ink
1 ½ tbsp. brown India ink

Mix together and use to paint on any wood to grey it to an aged look. Test on scrap wood first and adjust degree of grey by adding drops of whichever colour will give the desired result..

To age furniture or buildings, attack the project with a strong wire brush sold as a "file cleaner" by scratching and/or pounding wherever wood rot or heavy wear look is desired. For a piece of lawn furniture, like a lawn chair, it is more effective to attack the wood before it is glued up into the chair. Use a knife to simulate cracks and breaks. Make some actual breaks in slats of seat or an arm and repair with another piece of wood glued underneath, but add some pins cut off to look like nails.

Paint the project with aging liquid and allow to dry even if it is to be painted. If the project is to be painted, then paint it all over with rubber cement (not contact cement) and allow to dry. Use a foam brush, and a daubing motion to paint project desired colour using acrylic or latex paint. Because of the rubber cement, the paint will tend to look lumpy and bubbled as old paint applied in many layers does. When project is dry, some paint can be removed in wear areas using sandpaper. Use a knife to lift paint off some places too. If the colour looks too new, apply a wash using burnet umber, raw sienna, and, perhaps, some yellow ochre paint in a lot of water and paint it all over the project. If it is a building, allow this wash to dribble down wherever rain might run.

How to Stay Organized

Contributed by Luba

It's very easy. Start with several large tables in your work room. Spread out. Luxuriate in the space. As one table starts getting cluttered spend a few minutes each day spreading the clutter around to the other tables until you have enough space to work where you want. When all the tables are so covered you can't find a spare inch, pick up your current project and move it to the dining room table. When you've cluttered that area too much to ever serve dinner there again, drag the next project over to the coffee table, spread things out on the floor and warn the kids not to come into the family room any time soon. There's always the kitchen counters, bathroom counters, your bed etc. When all spaces are filled, move to a new house.

What is a Miniaturist?

Contributed by Sunni

A Miniaturist is someone who:

- Debates for an hour over buying an \$11.00 roast, and five seconds over a Rik Pierce building;
- Cancels the bridge club if it's raining, but will drive twenty miles through a blizzard to get top a miniature meeting;
- Has trouble remembering how many ounces in the pound, but can scale down the measurements of any given object in 10 seconds flat;
- Has an attention span of 23 minutes for spring cleaning and 6 hours and 49 minutes for making a mini;
- On holidays, only gets to see the tourist sites if they happen to be near a mini shop;
- Lives in a home that boasts the interior decorating savvy of Goodwill Industries, and furnishes room boxes worthy of Better Homes and Gardens;
- Discards a shirt that has lost a button, but can petit point on 40 mesh silk;
- Has trouble operating the can-opener, but turns out 48 identical spindles on a mini-lathe;
- Can't think of any way to serve leftovers, but knows three uses for sawdust;
- Will spend time making a home look like new, and a mini-house look old;
- Hopes that at least one of the children will move out soon, so that the spare room can be converted into a workshop;
- Files away everything small enough to hold in the hand that comes through the house "just in case"; and
- Remembers the origin of every mini collected – and the price – but forgets anniversaries.

Merry Christmas!

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.