

Dolls Are For THE YOUNG AT HEART

by *Orma Herman*

Technical Journalism Freshman

DOLLS ARE FOR little girls to love, but grown-up women can play with dolls too. Mrs. W. Paul Jones, wife of an Iowa State English professor, has combined her love of dolls and sewing into a hobby that is also a history of her family wardrobe.

Mrs. Jones makes doll clothes which are authentic replicas of clothing worn by members of her family. Her collection includes dresses from 1853 (her great-grandmother's blue brocade dress) to a 1956 design that is a copy of her granddaughter Kendel's first formal. There are miniature copies of the "Mother Hubbard" dress that Mrs. Jones's mother always wore around the house. Her own baby, graduation and wedding dresses, plus suits, coats, playsuits, cardigan sweaters, underwear, pinafores, ruffled sunsuits, and typical period costumes are preserved in her collection.

Project Beginning

Mrs. Jones began making doll clothes at the age of 10. But it was not until 1945 that she actually started her collection with a design from her granddaughter Kendel's yellow Easter dress.

"I began planning this project when my daughters were small," she recalls. "I saved scraps of their clothing, but I was unable to get suitably proportioned and constructed dolls at the time." Now she has 12 dolls with clothes valued at a minimum of \$350.

Uses Original Design

One of her problems is cutting the original dress design down to fit the dolls which range in size from 8 to 18 inches. She usually goes through a series of



steps including a line drawing, a crude muslin pattern and a first try in some cotton material before she makes the finished product.

The family historian sometimes has to modify the process. "I try to copy every design as exactly as possible," she said, "but sometimes I have to modify it according to the material and size of the doll, leaving out a ruffle or a tuck." She does much of the sewing on the machine but usually sets in sleeves, works buttonholes and adds the finishing touches by hand. Through the years, she has noticed how many of the old fashions come back, usually in a modified version.

A Complete Record

"My goal," says Mrs. Jones, "is to have as nearly as possible a complete record of the family clothing for my granddaughters." In the meantime, she keeps the girls well supplied with doll clothes. The doll collector has outfitted an old-fashioned china-headed doll of her grandmother's time with authentic clothes to be given to her granddaughters on their eleventh birthday.

The doll collection has made many interesting exhibits for the American Society of English Education Convention, the Wool Growers' Association and the Ames Women's Club. Anyone who stops in to visit her home can see an unusual review of 104 years in clothing fashions.

When you plan for the future
Plan to come to . . .

DAVIDSONS
our 70th year of serving Iowa

for the finest in Home Furnishings.
Terms To Fit Your Needs

7th and Walnut

Des Moines, Iowa