

Antique doll collector can't stop searching

"It all started with just one doll," said Kathy Brennan, whose collection now boasts some 300 antique dolls. Some of these are on display at the Troy Public Library during October. The collection includes a tin head doll from 1822, a 1830 Princess Elizabeth, Victorian dolls, baby dolls, fashion

dolls and even a tiny doll's doll. But it all began with a doll the former Troy resident found among her husband's childhood keepsakes eight years ago. Shortly after, an old doll at a neighborhood antique store caught her eye and she bought it.

"Then I asked my mother whatever

happened to my old dolls," she said. Her mother discovered Mrs. Brennan's doll, a Christmas gift when she was about five, up in the attic and presented it to her as a surprise.

FASCINATED BY HER FINDS. Mrs. Brennan visited some antique shows. She has also found some dolls at doll hospitals and bought others from private owners.

"Gradually I kept getting more and more dolls," she related. "I see a doll that's damaged and I feel sad for it, so I buy it. Then I talk my husband into repairing it."

Marvin Brennan repairs cracked or broken bodies and heads, and touches up the painted finish on doll faces when necessary.

Mrs. Brennan collects all kinds of dolls, buying those which catch her fancy. But she said she specializes in the bisque dolls, favoring the older ones still dressed in the original costume. A large "Kathy" doll is her collection's mascot.

"I try to get a little history on each one," she said. Each doll has an identifying number on the back of its head. The number can be looked up in a doll book to place its model, maker and year.

Mrs. Brennan won first place in a Saginaw doll competition with one of her five entries. That doll can not be presented in competition again for three to five years, she explained.

MRS. BRENNAN first displayed her dolls in a corner of her daughter's bedroom. But as the collection grew, "I found myself encroaching on my daughter's room," she said, smiling. The family recently moved to a new house, with a special room, devoted entirely to the dolls.

"Each doll has a place and a special setting," she explained. "Some are sipping sodas around an ice cream table. One is playing a little piano, with several others behind it singing." Some of the dolls are displayed in antique cribs or carriages, some dating back to the 19th century. The largest doll is a 34-inch bisque holding a parasol. Mrs. Brennan estimated her value at \$900-1,000.

"The value of a doll is a good investment, too," interjected her husband. A Rosemary doll she purchased several years ago for \$35 is now worth about \$50, he said.

"The doll collection is a sort of backup for when the kids are ready to go to college," he explained.

The Brennans have a son, Michael, 6, and two daughters, Stacey, 3, and Bridgette, 1. With the christenings of the two girls, the family began a tradition of presenting a doll from the collection to their daughters for every birthday and Christmas. The girls know the dolls are meant as keepsakes and not as playthings while young, Mrs. Brennan added.

"WE HAVE SERIOUS intentions, when the children are older, of setting up a sort of museum, so others can see the dolls," she said. "Then children will be able to see the kinds of dolls their mothers and grandmothers played with."

She has also been invited to return to the Troy library in the future with a different set of dolls for another display, Mrs. Brennan said.

Plans for the future may also

include a new house, she said. They have already discussed with a builder the plans for a special doll room.

Celebrity dolls in her collection include replicas of Jane Withers, Sonja Henie, the Campbell Soup Kids, the Gerber baby and Margaret O'Brien. Also depicted in doll form are Howdy Doody, Emmet Kelly and Deanna Dur-

"I prefer the big bisque ones, dressed in those frilly outfits."

Those who specialize in doll repairs are very secretive about their method, according to Brennan.

"It's difficult to find out how to do most of those things," Marvin Brennan said. "Once in a while someone lets something drop: the kind of paint

they use or what sort of filler. You have to pick up a little bit here, a little bit there."

Doll collecting is the first or second most popular hobby in the world, he stated.

"Just about everybody has one after all. And the doll shows are just packed."



Kathy Brennan's collection of antique dolls includes this modern reproduction of a French fashion doll. She also has doll replicas of celebrities, including Deanna Durbin, Princess Elizabeth, Sonja Henie and Howdy Doody.



When Kathy Brennan began collecting dolls seven years ago, it was her personal hobby, but now the whole family gets into the act. Daughters Bridgette, 1, and Stacey, 3, admire the Madame Alexander doll from the mid-40s that their mother holds. It was Mrs. Brennan's childhood doll.

bin. Boy dolls, though, are extremely rare, Mrs. Brennan said.

"If you ever see one," she advised, "don't hesitate. Buy it. It will double in value."

Mrs. Brennan said her collection includes dolls small as three inches, but she admits she likes the larger ones best.



This Sears Roebuck and Co. doll, made in the late 1820s, is among the collection on display this month at the Troy Public Library. Its composition is a sort of pressed wood, and straw. Her clothing is all original.

Staff photos by
Charlie Kidd

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Contract documents including necessary plans may be examined at the office of the City Clerk or may be examined or procured at the office of the Engineers.

A deposit of \$10.00 will be required for contract documents and plans necessary for bidding. Entire deposit will be refunded to bidders only on return of plans, to the office of the Engineers, in good condition within twenty (20) days. \$5.00 will be refunded to non-bidders after return of contract documents and plans in good condition to the office of the Engineers, within ten (10) days. Additional copies of contract documents will be furnished to prime bidders at \$5.00 per set, not refundable. Plans and specifications will be mailed upon receipt of separate check in the amount of \$5.00, per set, not refundable. Bids may be rejected unless made on forms furnished with contract.

A certified check, bid bond or cashiers check acceptable to the Owner in the amount of 5 percent of bid, made payable to the City Treasurer, must accompany each proposal. The deposit of the successful bidder shall be forfeited if he fails to execute the contract and bonds within fourteen (14) days after award.

The City reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive informalities or accept any bid it may deem best.

Floyd A. Cairns
City Clerk

Published: October 23, 1978

Vecore enlists

James Vecore, of 27996 Bayberry, Farmington has entered the U.S. Air Force's Delayed Enlistment program. Vecore, 17, is a senior at North

Farmington High School. After graduation, he will receive weapons mechanic training and be assigned to an Air Force duty station.



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SAT. Open at 6pm for Dinner. Cover Charge after 8pm. No cover for Dinner Patrons.

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