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History of gifts

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at state fairs. In the late 1940s, he sold the idea to Wham-O, a toy company.

THAT FASHION plate, Barbie, reached her 30th birthday in 1989. Since she was introduced in 1959, the Barbie doll has had numerous careers and lifestyles — a model, 'flower child,' doctor and astronaut. Named after the daughter of the inventors, Ruth and Elliot Handler, Barbie is the best-selling and possibly best-known fashion doll in history.

More than 500 million dolls representing Barbie and her clan have been sold, and Mattel Toys, which makes Barbie, says it sells over 20 million Barbie fashions each year.

THE FLEXIBLE Flyer, the classic snow sled for children, is 100-years-old this year — a creation growing out of a business necessity.

A Pennsylvania farm equipment manufacturer, Samuel Leeds Allen, invented it to occupy his factory workers during the off-season months to keep them from leaving for other jobs.

ACCORDING TO market research by Binney & Smith, the smell of Crayola Crayons is among the scents most recognized by American adults, along with coffee and peanut butter.

Their research also indicates that 65 percent of children in the United States ages 2 to 7 color or draw at least once a day, for an average of 27 minutes.

Alice Stead Binney coined the Crayola trade name for her husband Edwin's crayons in 1903. It derives from the French word "craie," for colored chalk, and "oleaginous," for oily.

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Credits

SOMETHING for everyone is included in this second Gift Guide appearing today in all editions of the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers.

There's even a Christmas story to enjoy and perhaps read aloud to youngsters you know. Included, too, is a special recipe that accompanies the story. Maybe a family baking project could be the result. Tell us what you think.

The section was coordinated by Marie McGee, special sections editor. Advertising coordinators were GiGi Gondek and Peg Knoespel. The cover was done by Glenna Merrillat, creative services supervisor.

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