

COLLECTOR'S COURIER

T H E B E S T G I F T O F A L L
L o c a l C l u b s P r a c t i c e t h e A r t o f C a r i n g

The joy of collecting Keepsake Ornaments knows no boundaries, and there are certainly no limits to the creative ways local collector's clubs share that joyful spirit through their philanthropic projects.

The generosity of Bradenton, Florida's Hooked on Ornaments Collector's Club reaches all the way to Oklahoma City. Club members went into action when they heard of the bombing in Oklahoma City, raising \$500 through club events. At the suggestion of Carol Jones, president of the Oklahoma Kollector's Club, the donation was sent to the Oklahoma City Disaster Victims and Family Relief Fund. Administered by the office of Governor Frank Keating, the relief effort will help raise college funds for each of the 249 children who lost one or both parents in the April bombing.



*From left to right:
Members of the Long
Island Keepsakers,
Oklahoma Kollector's Club and Greater
Pittsburgh Ornament Collector's Club
share their holiday spirit.*

"We're all Americans whether we're in Alaska, Maine or Florida," says Eva Marie Hysmith of Hooked on Ornaments. "If we can help, we certainly want to."

Members of the Greater Pittsburgh Ornament Collector's Club know their help is appreciated from the hugs they receive when they arrive to help decorate the Wexford House Nursing Home for the holidays.

Santa (alias Marilyn Shuler) and her "elves" trim a tree for the recreation area and distribute individually wrapped ornaments, so residents can also enjoy the holiday cheer in their rooms.

"We don't rush it," says past president Joan Ketterer. "We take our time trimming the tree and visiting with the residents to make it as much fun as we can for us and for them!"

The Nassau County Chapter of United Cerebral Palsy is the beneficiary of the generous hearts of the Long Island Keepsakers. The club's participation in the Festival of Trees earned dollars for Cerebral

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- A VISIT WITH SHARON PIKE
- BARBIE® NEWS



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Palsy, as well as a blue ribbon for the collectors. "Our tree was the talk of the festival," reports Club President Tony Colletti.

"Treasured Keepsakes," trimmed with nearly 700 Keepsake Ornaments donated by Molly's Hallmark of Massapequa, New York, was named best traditional tree of the festival and was one of six trees selected for special mention. "Treasured Keepsakes" came in second in dollars raised only to the New York Jets Christmas tree. "It was a proud moment in our club history," says Colletti.

The Long Island Keepsakers also hold food and toy drives for local churches and community organizations.

"It really makes me proud to be involved with a club that can help others," Colletti says.

Editor's Note: The address for the Oklahoma City Victims and Family Relief Fund is:

Governor Frank Keating
Office of the Governor
State Capital
Oklahoma City, OK 73105



The Long Island Keepsakers' "Treasured Keepsakes" tree was one of the stars of the "Festival of Trees," a fund-raising event for Cerebral Palsy.



WHAT A YEAR!

As I look back on my first year as National Club Manager, I'm flooded with warm memories and amazed that the year is nearly over (this year went faster than the "Wish List" Keepsake Ornament at Premiere!).

I've traveled coast-to-coast, logging in 34,997 miles and meeting hundreds of collectors at EXPO, local club meetings, signing events and collectibles shows. Meeting collectors is the very best part of being Club Manager. I feel privileged to share in your collecting passion.

I had a great time at EXPO '95... working with the Club team to plan the decorations and events, spending time with Clara Johnson Scroggins, and, especially, sharing the day with many of you.

1995 was the first year we welcomed property ornaments into the Club. The Keepsake of Membership Miniature Ornament "Coca-Cola® Santa" was the first property ornament to be offered in the membership kit. And, two very special designs, BARBIE™ "Brunette Debut - 1959" and the "1958 Ford Edsel Citation Convertible," were our first property-related Club Edition ornaments.

It's also been exciting to watch our Club grow. Membership is now over 200,000!

With such a great year nearly behind us, I can't wait for 1996. Thanks to all of you for making 1995 a year to remember.

Happy Holidays!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lynn Wylie".

Lynn Wylie
Manager, National Keepsake Ornament
Collector's Club

MEMBERS EAGER FOR FIRST CANADIAN LOCAL CLUB

With a membership of 46 and growing, the Eager Beavers Collector's Club of Calgary is our first Canadian local club! Club President Lois Barra recently shared the latest news and even sent us the club pin (shown below).

Fellow collectors may remember Eager Beavers club member Joanne Pawelek, the 1991 Keepsake Ornament Collector's Club Convention Costume Contest winner. The 1993 Keepsake Ornament "Look for the Wonder" was created as Joanne's prize. According to the club's newsletter, Joanne has been "...most helpful in getting the club going in Calgary."

The club is sponsored by The Card Shoppe in Calgary, Alberta.

Welcome!



HISTORICALLY SPEAKING

Celebrating the Olympic Tradition

All the world will be watching next summer as the city of Atlanta, Georgia, hosts the 1996 Centennial Olympic Games. Athletes from around the globe will join in the competition, carrying on the Olympic traditions of athletic achievement and international brotherhood.

Although the first Olympic Games in ancient Greece were held to honor the gods, the competitions became less relevant under Roman rule and were eventually halted by Emperor Theodosius in A.D. 394.

It wasn't until 1875, when a group of German archeologists rediscovered the ancient Olympic structure, that Baron Pierre de Coubertin seized upon the idea of a modern Olympics to promote the ideals of athletic excellence and world peace. The first Modern Olympic Games were held in Athens, Greece, in 1896.

Even though the 1996 Centennial Olympic Games in Atlanta won't begin until next summer, excitement for the historic event is already building. The 1995 acrylic Keepsake Ornament, "The Olympic Spirit," is a prelude to the commemorative collection of Keepsake Ornaments and collectibles that will be available at participating Hallmark stores beginning in May of 1996.

"The Olympic Spirit Collection" features six ornaments and five collectibles. "Invitation to the Games," a set of two ceramic ornaments, honors Olympic poster art. An ornament featuring "Izzy," the

... the idea of a modern Olympics [was] to promote the ideals of athletic excellence and world peace.

official mascot of the 1996 Olympic Games, was sculpted by Don Palmiter. Duane Unruh's sculpture is featured in the Keepsake Magic Ornament "Lighting the Flame" which also plays "Bugler's Dream," a favorite Olympic theme. The Keepsake Ornament version of the classically posed "Olympic Triumph," was sculpted by Ed Seale. A handsome "Cloisonné Medallion"

Keepsake Miniature Ornament features the 1996 Centennial Olympic Games emblem.

Collectible figurines include a gymnast sculpted by Joyce Lyle, a swimmer sculpted by Robert Chad, a track and field figurine, and the limited edition "Olympic Triumph" figurine sculpted by Duane Unruh. "Olympic Triumph" is limited to an edition of 24,500 pieces. "Parade of Nations," styled by Diana McGehee, is offered as an ornament and an 8½-inch diameter collector's plate. The design for both incorporates flags from many lands in a colorful salute to the Olympic spirit and to the athletes who inspire the hopes and dreams of all the world.

Collector's Note: Be sure to look for the special holographic sticker included on the packaging for *The Olympic Spirit Collection*. The sticker identifies each piece as an "Official Licensed Product of The Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games, Inc."



SKETCHBOOK

Sharon Pike's Whimsical Touch

When you meet Keepsake Ornament studio artist Sharon Pike, it's obvious she's well-suited for sculpting the lighthearted designs for which she's become known. Her face lights up when she smiles and her delightful laugh bubbles up frequently during conversations. "I love designing whimsical little animals," she says happily, "and I really love sculpting Keepsake Ornaments."

Many of Sharon's creations feature situations or characters inspired by her own life. Like most of the designs in the Forest Frolics series, the 1995 edition portrays a fond childhood memory. "When I was growing up, my neighbor had a wooden swing like that," she recalls. "I remember swinging in it for hours. It was so fun!"

Fun was definitely the idea behind Sharon's 1995 Merry Miniatures™ designs, too. In addition to creating the haughty and humorous Collector's Club Gift Membership Bonus "Cinderella's Stepsisters," Sharon sculpted a lovable "Toymaker Beaver," "Caroling Mouse" and "Santa." As she explains, "I enjoy working on Merry Miniatures. There's always something new."

Sculpting was something new to Sharon when she first joined the Keepsake Ornament studio in 1983. "Ken Crow and former

Keepsake Ornament artist Peter Dutkin taught me how to sculpt," she remembers.

"Until then I had done some acrylic designs, but I mostly did sewn fabric ornaments, banners and tree-toppers."

The 1995 "Dudley the Dragon™" Keepsake Ornament was yet another milestone. The friendly dragon, with his Santa cap and bag of toys, is the first licensed property ornament Sharon has sculpted.

When she's not sculpting, Sharon enjoys fabric design, knitting, book collecting and spending time at home with her cat, "C.C." Although her other beloved cat, "Skunky,"

passed away in May, his likeness lives on in "Meow Mart," one of Sharon's designs from the 1990 Keepsake Ornament collection.

Even the birds and squirrels she loves to feed at home seem to sense Sharon's gentle compassion. Smiling broadly, she describes how a furry friend took advantage of her

generosity. "One squirrel used to come to my door and snap the screen when he was hungry," she says, laughing. "He wouldn't give up until I came out and gave him something to eat."

Sharon's

humor and fondness for animals, celebrated in seven years of Forest Frolics, is sure to turn up again in future designs.

© Dragon Tales Production Inc. 1995



Sharon's sculptures of "Santa," the Forest Frolics series and "Dudley the Dragon™" bring smiles.

A FOND FAREWELL

Through the years, the Mr. and Mrs. Claus series has depicted how Christmas is celebrated in the Claus household. Although 1995 marks their tenth and final year, you can be sure Mr. and Mrs. Claus will remain favorite subjects of the Keepsake Ornament studio for years to come!

Keepsake Ornament studio artist Duane Unruh began the series in 1986 with "Merry Mistletoe Time," followed by "Home Cooking," "Shall We Dance," "Holiday Duet," "Popcorn Party," "Checking His List," and "Gift Exchange." John "Collin" Francis sculpted "A Fitting Moment" for 1993. Duane returned to the series with "A Handwarming Present" in 1994 and the touching, 1995 farewell design: "Christmas Eve Kiss."



First in the series:
"Merry Mistletoe Time"



Tenth and final in the series:
"Christmas Eve Kiss"

When Fred Flintstone and his family and friends debuted, their show was the first animated situation comedy on nighttime television. Who would have guessed that 35 years later the “original stone-age family” would still be considered one of television’s best-loved animated sitcoms?

“Fred and Barney,” the first Keepsake Ornament based on the Flintstones®, was sculpted for 1994 by Keepsake Ornament studio artist Dill Rhodus. Dill, who has always loved The Flintstones®, enjoyed sculpting Fred and Barney in the “Flintmobile.” As he explains, “I grew up with the Flintstones. I just love them.”

Dill sculpted three more designs for 1995, including “Fred and Dino,” a Magic Ornament with light, motion and sound. The sight of Dino (wearing reindeer antlers) chasing Fred around the Christmas tree is sure to bring smiles. When the button is pushed, Fred’s voice calls out: “Yabba-Dabba-Doo! Down, Dino Down! Have a Happy Holiday!”



Sculpting the Keepsake Miniature Ornament, “Pebbles and Bamm-Bamm,” was a special challenge for Dill. “When you’re working with such well-known characters in such a small size, you’ve got to get it right,” he says. “They had to be easily recognized as Pebbles and Bamm-Bamm.”

Sculpting a Dino-shaped snowman was Dill’s biggest challenge. “I had to work really hard to make sure that snowman looked like Dino!”

For “Betty and Wilma,” Dill sculpted a classic Flintstones® element—a shopping cart “powered” by a turtle! “I think that’s what makes The Flintstones so unique,” Dill explains. “It’s fun to see the stone-age technology applied to modern inventions.”

That unique blend of old and new has given birth to some



The Flintstones®
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truly imaginative creations. Where else but Bedrock could you find split-level caves, woolly mammoth vacuum cleaners and buzzard garbage disposals? Such clever ideas are a big part of the show’s ongoing popularity. As “the first family of animation,” The Flintstones® are known and loved by millions of viewers around the world—even after 35 years. Yabba-Dabba-Doo!



ARTIST’S FAVORITE RETREATS

We asked the Keepsake Ornament studio artists where they would spend the holidays if they could go anywhere they wished. Here’s a sampling of their terrific answers:

JOHN “COLLIN” FRANCIS: On the south side of Casper Mountain in Wyoming is an area called “Crimson Dawn.” When the sun comes up, the colors against the red bluffs are dazzling. Being there in a cabin for the holidays (there’s sure to be snow!) would be truly wonderful.

KEN CROW: I’d take a ride in a time machine to the early 1970s on my grandparents’ farm in Fulton, Missouri. One year Grandpa went out, cut down a tree and dressed in a Santa hat and beard to make a Christmas fantasy real for me and my family.

LADENE VOTRUBA: I would return to the Christmases of my childhood on our Kansas farm, which are treasured memories. To once again experience the family gatherings, the delicious food, and the sharing of Christmas traditions would be wonderful!

PATRICIA ANDREWS: ...on the pink beaches of Bermuda...

ANITA MARRA ROGERS: Anywhere in the world is all right with me as long as I’m with my family.

ED SEALE: I’d go “down under” when it’s summer in Sidney, Australia, for an exotic Christmas. Or, have a totally alpine Christmas in and around a village in the Swiss Alps!

ROBERT CHAD: I’d like to go to Santa’s Workshop and spend Christmas with the rest of the elves.

DUANE UNRUH: There is nowhere I would rather be than in my own home with my wife, five grown children, their husbands and wives and my 19 grandchildren.

THE WINNER

In the May *Courier*, Club members were invited to write—in 25 words or less—what they thought the elf was whispering to the reindeer in the 1995 Club Edition ornament, “Home From the Woods.” The Club received hundreds of entries, making the choice delightfully difficult!

Holly Bern of Mequon, Wisconsin, was chosen as the winner for this entry:

*This tree I’ll trim
And with what’s left
Of berries, twigs and pine
I’ll weave for you
A glorious crown
To wear at Christmas time!*

She will receive the 1995 Folk Art Americana Collection as her prize. Congratulations to Holly, and many thanks to all who participated!

WHAT A GOOD IDEA!

Decorating With Magic Ornaments



As you welcome friends and family into your home for the holidays, why not greet them with a bit of magic?

You can begin the magical transformation by wrapping your tree in a beautiful fabric ribbon, adding white lights, colored glass balls, and your favorite Keepsake Magic Ornaments.

Such delights are sure to spill over onto the mantle. Combining evergreen with objects from around your home, such as a wire basket and candles, creates a personalized display. Domed Magic Ornaments are a real treat when placed in a basket like fruit.

In the dining room, gold ribbon, fresh fruit, and Magic Ornaments tucked in an urn celebrate the season's bounty.

Our centerpiece rests on a bed of magnolia leaves, but any sturdy, broad-leafed greenery will do.





Magic "Do's and Don'ts"

DO use Keepsake Magic Ornaments with midget-style, series connected light strings with 20, 35, 50 or 100 lights.

DON'T operate more than three Magic Ornaments on the same light string at once.

DO remember that, on 1994 and 1995 motion ornaments with the new quiet motor, there is sometimes a short delay after turning the "on" switch before the motion starts. Just wait a few seconds before turning the switch again.

DON'T use a plug-in, Class 2 power supply to operate the ornaments.

This list was provided by
Product Development Engineer Ron Carlson,
one of the "wizards" behind Keepsake Magic Ornaments.

Spritzing the leaves—and a few terra-cotta pots—with gold paint adds a festive touch.

To avoid problems with the electrical cord showing or getting in the way, try using a buffet table set against a wall.

Crown the newel post of your staircase with favorite Keepsake Magic Ornaments, greenery and festive ribbons. Or, highlight a friend or loved one's hobbies or interests by topping their gift with a Magic Ornament.

Have a magical holiday season!



FAMILY, FRIENDS AND MEMORIES

Sharing the Joys of Christmas

In honor of their first "Keepsake Ornament Christmas," National Club Manager Lynn Wylie and Assistant Club Manager Tex Ann Kraft share some holiday memories:

Favorite Christmas Traditions

Lynn: My family kicks off the holidays by



Lynn Wylie and her sister Ann still have the stockings their Grandma made for them when they were children. "We couldn't wait to dig into them!" Lynn says.



"...my favorite tradition is Cookie Day, when Mom, my sister Ann and I get together to bake our favorite Christmas cookie recipes..."

watching the Plaza lighting. Every year on Thanksgiving Eve, Kansas City's Country Club Plaza Christmas lights are turned on in a dramatic ceremony. But, my favorite tradition is Cookie Day, when Mom, my sister Ann and I get together to bake our favorite Christmas cookie recipes all day long.

Tex Ann: I really enjoy spending time with family and friends, Christmas Eve church services, baking Christmas cookies, sending holiday greeting cards, and hearing "O Holy Night" performed on the French horn.

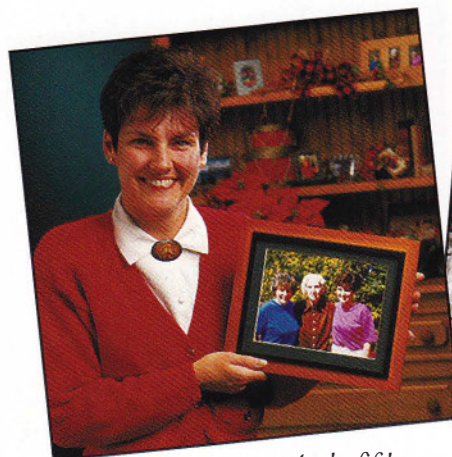
Most Memorable Christmas

Lynn: I cherish the last Christmas I spent with my grandfather when he was 102 years old. He was a very wise person who inspired me to enjoy the holidays by slowing down and remembering the holiday's true meaning.

Tex Ann: Fifteen years ago, when I was working as a floral designer, I met a sorrowful woman who said she was looking for something special for her young son

who was hospitalized and couldn't be home for Christmas.

I assured her I had the perfect idea and she was so relieved, she cried. I decorated a Norfolk Island Pine with red bows, berries and small, brightly colored glass ball ornaments. I topped the tree with a



As the fifth member of her family to have Margaret as her first name, Tex Ann Kraft cherishes the photo of her grandmother, mother and herself—each named Margaret. "If I have a daughter she'll be Margaret—the sixth in the series!" she says.

"guardian" angel and had it delivered on Christmas Eve day. Later that day, I snuck into the boy's hospital room and left a present under his tree from "Santa."

A week later, I learned he had passed away. But in my heart, I knew he must have smiled when he awoke on Christmas morning to find a cuddly teddy bear wearing a red bow under his Christmas tree.

A few years later, I found a teddy bear ornament with a red bow. It has an honored place on my tree every year.

Holiday Wishes for Club Members

Lynn: I wish every Club member a safe and happy holiday, filled with family, friends and special memories.

"I really enjoy spending time with family and friends, Christmas church services, baking Christmas cookies..."



Tex Ann: Spread Christmas cheer and your joy of collecting with someone you don't know. Volunteer to serve refreshments at the local senior center and bring part of your ornament collection to show.

Happy Holidays!

EASTER ORNAMENTS PARADE INTO VIEW

More series! Another great BARBIE™ ornament! The return of classic characters! And, most importantly, designs that reflect the meaning of the season! That's what enthusiastic collectors told us they wanted to see in the 1996 Keepsake Easter Ornament collection. And that's just what you'll find when 18 designs debut this spring at Hallmark Gold Crown stores.

Three new series join the collection, bringing the total number of series to nine. The Beatrix Potter™ series leads off with 'Peter Rabbit™'. Sculpted by LaDene Votruba, the famous rabbit will be the first of the characters from Beatrix Potter's illustrated storybooks to be featured.

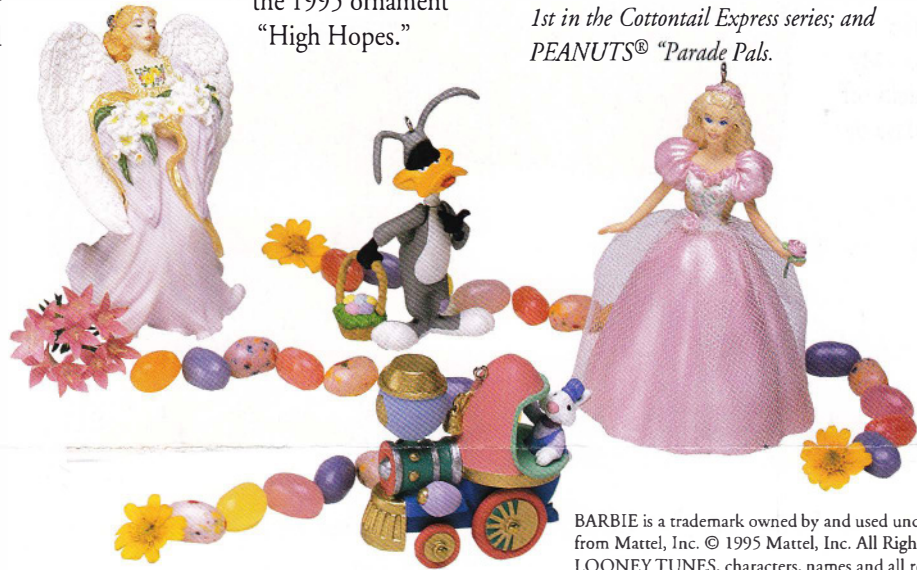
The Cottontail Express pulls into the line with its "Locomotive." This whimsical series is by Ken Crow, who delights collectors with imaginative vehicles in the Here Comes Easter series.

Joyful Angels, presenting graceful angels with bouquets, is the third new series. Sculpted by Joyce Lyle, the design is one to be cherished well beyond the springtime season.

Springtime BARBIE™, returns for the second year. Dressed all in pink, she wears a rose at her waist and carries a second rose in her hand.

Other series returning this year are Apple Blossom Lane, Garden Club, Here Comes Easter, the Collector's Plate and Springtime Bonnets.

Collectors will be pleased to find PEANUTS® pals SNOOPY and WOODSTOCK returning, along with a Crayola® Crayon design. Daffy Duck™ of LOONEY TUNES™ makes his first appearance, following his friend Bugs Bunny™ from 1995. And there's a new Tender Touches design by Ed Seale. Entitled "Eggstra Special Surprise," it complements the 1995 ornament "High Hopes."



Editor's Note: Collector's Club members who attended EXPO were among the first to preview the 18 designs in the 1996 Keepsake Easter Ornament Collection and select five favorites. The following ornaments topped the list: Springtime BARBIE™-2nd in the series; Peter Rabbit™-1st in the Beatrix Potter™ series; Joyful Angels, 1st in the Joyful Angel series; Cottontail Express "Locomotive," 1st in the Cottontail Express series; and PEANUTS® "Parade Pals."

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Treasuring the Art of Beatrix Potter

Imagine writing a letter to a child that was so appealing that, 100 years later, it would be the best-selling children's book in the world.

Helen Beatrix Potter accomplished just that with her remarkable story, *The Tale of Peter Rabbit*.

As the child of wealthy parents in Victorian England, she loved to draw and often sketched the many pets in her London nursery. In the summers, Beatrix and her family vacationed in the Scottish Highlands. There she and her younger brother explored the woods and sketched the plants and animals.

Her drawings of rabbits were first published on greeting cards when she was only 15 years old, and Beatrix Potter began her professional career at 24. Her now-famous illustrated letter was written to the ailing five-year-old son of a friend. "Dear Noel: I don't know what to write you,

so I shall tell you a story about four little rabbits whose names were—Flopsy, Mopsy, Cottontail and Peter ..." The mischievous Peter was based on her favorite pet rabbit, Peter Piper.

Later she borrowed the letter, and added more text and artwork. Printed in book form in 1902 by Frederick Warne & Co., it was an instant hit. An additional 22 beautifully illustrated "little books" were to follow.

The talented watercolorist was also a dedicated conservationist and the skilled manager of a working farm. She purchased the Hill Top farm in England's beautiful Lake District, and worked with the National Trust of Britain to protect the countryside against the effects of industrialism and tourism. At her death in 1943, at the age of 77, she left a bequest of more than 4,000 acres of land and 15 farms to her nation.

To all of us, she left a treasure by the name of Peter Rabbit.



Barbie® YOU BEAUTIFUL DOLL!

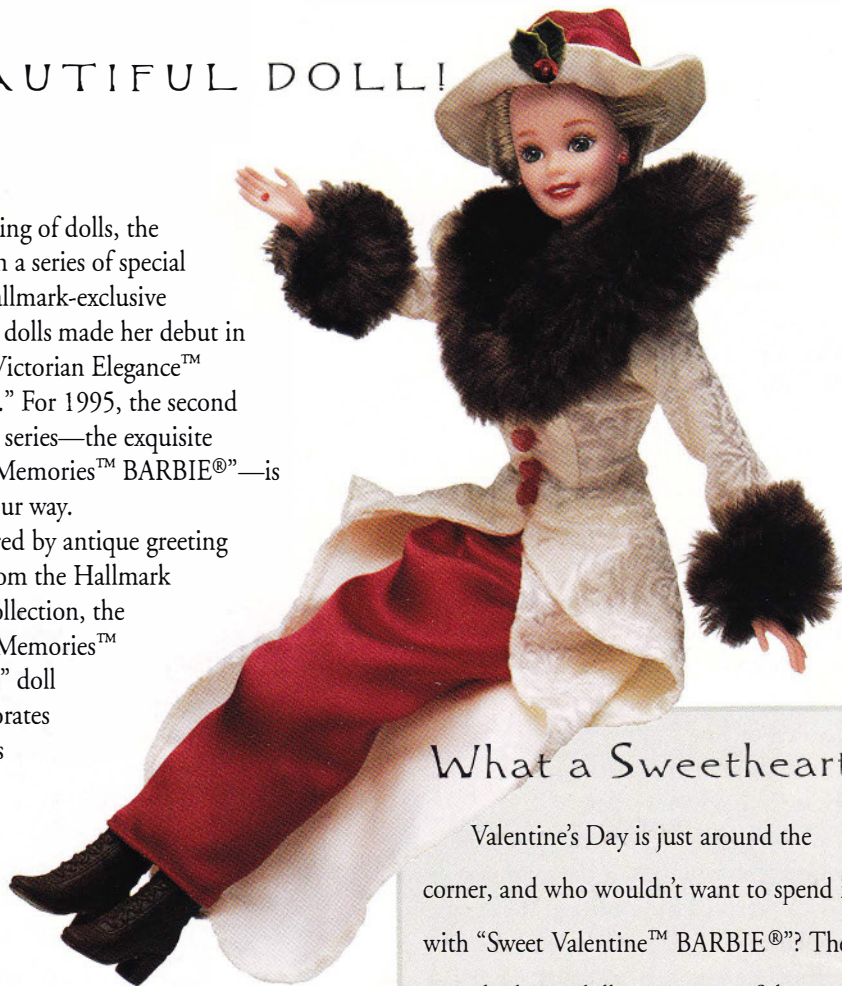
If you love BARBIE® like we do, you'll be pleased to hear that a dazzling array of BARBIE™ products is available from Hallmark this year.

In addition to the glamorous third edition in the Holiday BARBIE™ Keepsake Ornament series, BARBIE® is featured in the breathtaking "Solo in the



Speaking of dolls, the very first in a series of special edition Hallmark-exclusive BARBIE® dolls made her debut in 1994 as "Victorian Elegance™ BARBIE®." For 1995, the second doll in the series—the exquisite "Holiday Memories™ BARBIE®"—is coming your way.

Inspired by antique greeting card art from the Hallmark Design Collection, the "Holiday Memories™ BARBIE®" doll commemorates Hallmark's



What a Sweetheart

Valentine's Day is just around the corner, and who wouldn't want to spend it with "Sweet Valentine™ BARBIE®"? The special edition doll wears a graceful gown from the 1830s—the dawn of the Golden

Age of Valentines. Delicate roses made of ribbon are included on her gown to symbolize love. Roses are also found on the miniature reproduction of a nineteenth-century

valentine enclosed with the doll. "Sweet Valentine™ BARBIE®" is the first in the Be My Valentine Collector's Series™, a series of special edition BARBIE® dolls for Valentine's Day available exclusively at Hallmark Gold Crown stores.



Inspired by antique greeting card artwork from the Hallmark Design Collection, the "Holiday Memories™ BARBIE®" doll commemorates the 85th anniversary of Hallmark Cards.

Spotlight" (second in the BARBIE™ series) and as a Keepsake Ornament Collector's Club Edition in BARBIE™ "Brunette - Debut 1959." The Club Edition, available exclusively to Keepsake Ornament Collector's Club members, is based on the rare, brunette version of the BARBIE® doll first introduced in 1959. This Club-exclusive ornament is now shipping.*

85th anniversary.

Like the first doll in the series, she comes with her own miniature replicas of holiday postcards from Hallmark's antique card collection.

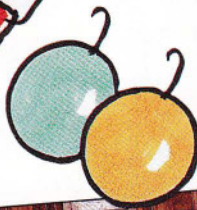
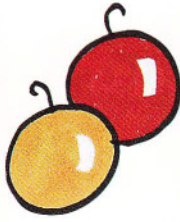
Her flocked coat with faux fur collar and sleeves add the finishing touches to her stylish ensemble.

Be sure to look for other BARBIE™ products at your participating Hallmark Gold Crown store, too. A Holiday BARBIE™ handle bag, stocking, stocking hanger and lapel pin (both sculpted by Patricia Andrews), a wall calendar, stickers, and a collection of die-cut greeting cards are among the items in this special offering.



*To place your order, please take the preprinted order form that came with your 1995 membership kit to your local Hallmark store.

W A R M H O L I D A Y W I S H E S
From the Keepsake Ornament Team



A special thanks to our friends at Inn the Park Bed and Breakfast in Kansas City, Missouri, for hosting our party.

Not pictured: Patricia Andrews, John Francis, Carol Kobza, Darla Link, Danny McDonald, Anita McWhirt, Dill Rhodus, Lezli Shelton, Linda Sickman and Nello Williams



New Contest!

If you'd like to see a favorite photo in one of the 1997 Keepsake Ornament photo holder ornaments, you must be a 1996 National Club member.

Send us a good quality, clearly focused, color print in one of the following categories: Baby's First, Our First Christmas, Family Christmas Memories and Pet photo holder. Include your name, address, phone number, membership number, local club name and retail sponsor. Label the outside of your envelope "1997 Photo Contest" and send your entry to the Club address listed on this page. Keep a copy of your photo as photos cannot be returned. **Entries must be postmarked by February 29, 1996.**

Note: Because we work far in advance, photo holder categories could change. We'll do our best to keep you informed. We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause.

MAILBOX

When Club member Carol Byington of Florida went ornament shopping last year, she came home with more than she expected! Carol writes that, while waiting for the Hallmark store to open, she saw a young kitten wandering by. "I made a mental note that if the kitten was still there when I came out of the store, I'd take her home," Carol writes.

Sure enough, when Carol came out, the kitten was there. On the way home, Carol set some house rules: "I told her she was welcome to come to my home, but she had to promise to leave my Christmas tree alone!"

Although DJ (named for the Hallmark store where she was found) ignored the tree for the first two weeks, she became "very inquisitive" when Carol began taking the tree down. DJ ended up about three-quarters of the way up the tree, peeking out among the ornaments. "I figured she decided that in order to get any attention from me, she would have to disguise herself as a Hallmark Keepsake Ornament!"

We're glad DJ has found such a good home. Thanks for writing, Carol!

Q & A

Q. I love Santas, and have been collecting the Merry Olde Santa series since it began. This year I also purchased "St. Nicholas," the first in the "Christmas Visitors" series. Will you offer more Santas in this new series?

A. We won't spoil the surprise by disclosing the identity of future "Christmas Visitors," but here's a hint: Every year, youngsters in many lands eagerly await the arrival of a special gift-bringer (not necessarily Santa!). Their appearance may vary according to local tradition, but each beloved visitor has a long tradition of kindness. We hope you'll enjoy collecting these classic designs as much as we enjoy bringing them to you!

We're Growing!

The Club has really grown! We're thrilled that so many people are discovering the joys of collecting with us.

With this growth, we're experiencing growing pains! We realize that many of you have had difficulty reaching us at the Club telephone number. We're sorry we're not able to respond to requests and questions as quickly as we'd like. At this time, we'd like to request that you write to us rather than call.

Rest assured we are working on improving service to our Club members. Thanks for your patience as we adjust to our new size!

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Collector's Club # 216
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