

September 2000

Volume 1, Issue 6

Acting Editor  
Dianne Smith

## Take This Doll and Stuff It!



# Stuffits' Newsletter

### Leader

Betsy Dunkle  
201 Tamassee Dr.  
Clemson, SC 29631  
(864) 654-5662  
Edunkle@mindspring.com

### Inside this issue:

<i>Dollie Mamas' Tea Party</i>	2
<i>Member Updates</i>	2
<i>Birthdays</i>	2
<i>Classes at Folkschool</i>	3
<i>What Other Clubs are Doing</i>	3
<i>Changes and Corrections</i>	3
<i>What Works</i>	4

- Stuffit's Schedule
- Sept 20 Meeting at Blue Ridge Art Center 10:00 am
- Oct. 18 Meeting at Blue Ridge Art Center 10:00 am
- Nov. 15 Meeting at Betsy Dunkles
- Dec. 9 Meeting at Betsy Dunkles
- Christmas Luncheon

## September Meeting At Blue Ridge Art Center

The Summer is over and it is time to get back to Doll Making. The Stuffits' will hold their September meeting at the Blue Ridge Art Center 111 East South 2nd St. in Seneca. Lois Bro will be our leader for the next two months. The program will cover various types of armatures. Several of our members will demonstrate different styles of armatures to produce lifelike self standing dolls. We are asking that each of you bring a sample of your favorite armature, you may bring wire cutters, needle nose pliers, wire, coat hangers, pipe cleaners, tape and other materials. Bring your ugly fabric dolls for unveiling. It will be a fun and interesting meeting. We will start a **bag doll project** with the name of your "**Character Doll from Classic Literature**," put your name on the same paper and place it in a brown paper bag.. Go to the Library and ask if you are in doubt. You will make a body for the name you draw and we will exchange these bags in Oct. Then the faces, hair, are completed by the November meeting. You will dress the doll you receive in November, completing it by the Dec meeting. All finished dolls will be shown and given to their owners at the Christmas Luncheon, Saturday, December 9, 2000.

**Coming from Clemson** on 123/76 toward Seneca. It is about 10 to 13 miles from the Ramada and Comfort Inns. Go under RR overpass, Ingles Grocery will be on your right and Eckerd's on your left. Turn left on S 130. Go to second light, turn left at Walnut, go about six blocks over the RR tracks to 2nd Street turn right. The Library will be then be on your left. Go two blocks to the Blue Ridge Art Council building on the right.

**Coming from S28/59/123 Intersection** (just past Staples & Pizza Hut) go south from 123 you will pass Big Lots on to your right. Go for 1 1/2 miles until you see a sign for right turn (traffic light) onto S 59. There will be signs: Blue Ridge Art Council and Library. Go six blocks, signs will indicate left turn for Blue Ridge Art Council and Library. Council on left at the end of the block.

Bring any books or magazines you want to donate to our new library. We will have books and magazines available for you to borrow at the October meeting.

**These are a few questions that need to be brought before the membership for consideration. FIRST:** Newsletter and slush fund fee to be changed from \$15.00 to \$20.00 for members. Associates will move to ??? We are able to print in color again. The color cartridges are expensive and we need to off set this cost..

**SECOND:** General meetings to be changed to third Saturday of the month at Betsy Dunkle's home. This would allow our working members to attend. It is your pleasure.

**THIRD:** Mini-workshops ( 2 to 3 hours) given once a month at Blue Ridge Art Council on Wednesdays. Council not available on weekends.

**FOURTH:** Invitation to Virginia Robertson for next year. And do we want a full one day session with another teacher in January? Such as Nancy Laverick, Dee Triplett, etc. Any other business that needs to be addressed.

**Bring a snack and a drink. See you there!**

## *Dollie Mama's Tea Party by Leigh Anne Dabbs*

The Tea Party at Martha Dudley's home was just too much fun! When we arrived at Martha's home, we distributed our dolls everywhere. They were all out on every available surface and the floor for us to touch and fondle and ask a thousand question of the makers. After much visiting, talking, hugging old friends, renewing friendships and tours downstairs into Martha's studio and upstairs to her Doll Gallery (to die for), we settled down with a buffet lunch, followed by Show & Tell. We all showed our dolls and told something about them. The Tea Party was very casual and just plain fun.

Then we did a pin doll swap with each doll being shown by the new owner and the maker. We all wanted Martha to show us more of her beading. She is working on beaded faces right now. The following Stuffit's were in attendance: Shirley Barr, Linda Campbell, Jean Anne Cooper, Adrea Hughey, Martha Hutton and myself, Leigh Anne Dabbs.



## *Member Updates by Dianne Smith*

Our members have been busy traveling this summer. Betsy made a trip to Israel with her folk dancing group and had a wonderful time. At the time this letter is being put together, she is touring England with her brother.

Dianne went on a River barge trip from Budapest to Amsterdam .One of the highlights of her trip was a visit to an art museum in Hungary to view the work of Hungarian ceramic artist Margit Kovacs. Her work is exquisite! It is hard to explain how beautifully this artist interpreted the human figure in clay and captured such love in all of her faces. I wish I could have shared this experience with you.

Kim Duke exhibited some of her dolls in a local doll show this summer

We are saddened to hear of the passing of Dee Dee Triplett's father. Our prayers are with her and her mother. She will probably remain in Virginia with her mother for a while.

News from Martha pours in, she writes : "My doll news is that Marian Burton looked on "Doll Street" on the internet and found a club in Eureka Springs, a town about an hour North of here, and a favorite place to go to eat and visit quaint shops. It has a new club called **The Shady Ladies** and was started in March by Judith Leswig from Northern California. She has been making dolls for 8 years. Fayetteville, AR. my nearest shopping area, has a new small fabric store that is bringing Eleanor Peace Bailey in the middle of October for classes . The Shady Ladies have already had Christine Shively here once and she is coming the first Monday in October to do the Beast work shop, the one I missed" Martha, We hope you get to attend.

### Sept. Birthdays

#### **Members**

10 Jean Gilbert

28 Dianne Smith

#### **Associates**

8 Wanda Hizer

## *Doll Classes At the Folk School* by Charlie Patricolo

Linda Stockton - **Cloth Dolls** - Oct 1 - 6 Express your creativity through cloth doll making. Choose from many patterns or develop your own original pattern. You will be making one-of-a-kind dolls. Watch your doll take on its personality in front of your eyes as you learn how to stuff, create faces, design hair and costume. This class is suitable for any level of doll maker, including beginners.

Charlie Patricolo - **Tips and Techniques** - Oct 7 - 14 Investigate a variety of techniques for creating cloth dolls. Expand your definition of doll-making as we explore color, shape and fantasy. Focus on basic patterns to create several dolls: rag dolls, character, seasonal, serious or whimsical, sitting, posable or fixed. body fabrics will be supplied but students need to bring the costuming fabrics and basic sewing skills.

Dee Dee Triplett - **A Doll of your own** - Nov 5 - 11 Learn to design and sew a doll of your own, translating your idea into a 3-dimensional figure, even if you've never made a doll. Construction methods vary from simple shapes embellished with paing, beads or embroidery, to very complex, realistic figures with darts, gussets, and wire armatures. come with the ability to operate a sewing machine.

Sandy Webster **Dolls on the Loom** - Nov 26 - Dec 2 - Students will warp looms in various patterns to weave an assortment of fabrics manipulated on and off the loom to create a wide selection of figures. We will make clay faces and embellish each one with the appropriate accessories. No weaving experience is necessary.

For more information on any of these above classes - contact John C. Campbell Folkschool at 1-800-folksch

Also, I have a doll makers retreat scheduled for October 21 - 28 here in the mountains of western North Carolina and have space available at this time. All room and board (home cooked - mostly Italian influence - since hubby was Italian and we used to do in-home-catering) is included and costs \$350 for the week. It will not be structured classes - but more of a sharing experience. Call or email me if you would like to receive information about this retreat or future dates as they come up.

828-837-6180 Charlie@dnet.net

Great source for fiber for doll hair (or felting/spinning/weaving/knitting) - Southeastern Animal Fiber Fare will be October 28 and 29 in Asheville, at the North Carolina Agriculture Center More information <http://www.naub.nc.us/staff> or phone 828-891-2810

## *What Other Clubs are Doing*

The Dollie Mamas had a Christmas in July Party and Doll exchange. Liz Casey of that club is moving to Ireland for a few years, and Sharon Frisbie is doing their newsletter.

The Flying Phobes Cloth Doll Show takes place September 23 and 24 in Haywood CA.

The Cotton Bottoms and The Dollie Mamas are trying to schedule Rhonda McGinnity for January 2001. Her patterns are on her website <http://www.icenet.com.au/~rmdesign> They are wondering if we might be interested. It would be cheaper if two or three clubs shared the expense.

## *Changes and Corrections*

Change Address for **Jeannett Schmeichel** to  
117 Hummingbird Lane, Columbus, NC 28722  
828- 894- 5364

Email Address for **Leigh Anne Dabbs** [leighadabbs@home.com](mailto:leighadabbs@home.com)

**Heirlooms and Comforts** is now in Central, 104 Madden Bridge Road, they have a full schedule of classes, fabric and sewing supplies.

## The Stuffits' Staff

*Dianne Smith*

*djsadbs@innova.net*

*(864) 944- 2122*

*Leigh Anne Dabbs*

*leighadabbs@home.com*

*Jean Anne Cooper*

*Jacoop@blueridgenet.vcom*

*(864) 882 4578*

## What Works

*Martha Hutton*

### Letter from the Editor

Dear Stuffits'

It has been a very busy summer and we have managed to find one new Staff Member, Leigh Anne Dabbs. We still need at least one and maybe two permanent staffers. We need a large enough staff to rotate the editor's job and we could use all of your help for contributing articles and information about what is happening with our members. It is hard to let you know what is happening if we don't know ourselves. I plan to try to put the Newsletter on line this fall. This means we need your correct email address. This will cut the cost of printing and mailing. It will make printing your own letter possible the day we put it online. It is good to be back, we have so much planned for the year. I know we are all looking forward to making dolls, learning and sharing.

Dianne

The very first day Lois Bro gathered the group together to see if there was an interest in cloth dolls at least enough to start a club; she showed dolls standing on their own without the benefit of a stand. I thought that this was wonderful and in the first assignment, as "Today's Woman", I attempted this intriguing feat. I accomplished this with my first doll knowing nothing except that it could be done. It wasn't perfect, but then I didn't exactly know how to drill a hole or make a base either! The supplies available in any home, I refer to as "middle of the night supplies" and that night, I used the versatile coat hanger. I sewed the skin first as we were given a pattern and told that it was okay to modify it. The coat hanger was cut with needle nose pliers that had a special section for cutting, which is not true of all needle nosed pliers. I did not realize that both feet do not have to be wired. One hole drilled in the base may be enough. Sometimes you will want two. The weight bearing leg/foot does have to hold the body up just as it does if you are standing on one foot. I liked the idea of putting wire inside my doll because I could get a more natural pose, and quickly realized that the shoulders follow where the weight goes. You can figure this all out by using a full length mirror.

(If you are new or have never taken the opportunity of taking Lois's sculpting classes, I would strongly advise you to do that. You learn much more than just sculpting!) The use of dowels as part of the armature gives strength enough to hold a heavy polymer clay head securely. She also teaches a technique of a wrapping an armature with quilt batting a quick method of covering the body with simple underwear or pants as in my Santa with long handles and then dressing the top quickly with holiday robes.

This method develops into a one of a kind doll each time, if you go one step further and cover the padded wire with a skin of knit. This requires more hand sewing than I enjoy and I have not been as successful with this as others because I like to control the outside shape with skin to begin with and reverse the process. I use combinations of all methods to come up with an armature that accomplishes the body, stance, and sturdiness that I want.

#

If you did not give a doll an armature and later desperately needed to make it free standing for a show, all is not lost. I have taken a coat hanger, cut it to a length which I think will stabilize the doll and leave one end to go into the drilled hole for the base, then sharpened the other end "needle sharp" on the sidewalk, a brick, or a file if I had it. I then carefully twist and force it up through the stuffing and insert the other end into the base .