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HISTORY OF DOLLS AND DOLL COLLECTING LECTURE FINDING AID & TRANSCRIPT

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Video Description

Learn all about antique dolls with this video of a presentation and discussion held in the Cape Ann Museum Activities Center that featured Betty Nett, who was a curator of dolls and toys at the Wenham Museum with approximately thirty years of experience in the field. Her lecture includes a brief history of dolls from the 1700s to the 1930s that highlights the design, materials, and characteristics unique to each time period. The examples she shows from the Cape Ann

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Museum's collection to illustrate many of these features represent both American and European dolls from the 19th and 20th centuries. She also explains how to distinguish the manufacturer of a doll and resources for identifying dolls without maker's marks. She ends her lecture by speaking briefly about the factors that affect the monetary value of antique dolls and offers tips and recommendations for restoration and care.

Subject list

Antique dolls	Twin Pines of Maine
Betty Nett	Yester-Dolls
Ursula R. Mertz	Dolls Part Supply Co.

Transcript

00:09

Linda Marshall

Thank you for joining us today, my name is Linda Marshall. I'm the Director of Programs here at the Museum. And we are very excited to be able to offer today's talk about the history of dolls and doll collecting, and to sort of give everyone an opportunity to take a closer look at the dolls that we have in our collection here. So we called on a doll expert, which was Betty Nett. She's the curator of dolls and toys at the Wenham Museum. And she's been doing lots of research on antique dolls for over 30 years, so she'll have a lot of great information to share with you today. She's going to be talking for about 20-25 minutes or so. And I'm so happy that many of you brought in dolls today. So we want to make sure there's plenty of time for you to share your dolls and she can answer whatever questions you have. So we'll just get started. Please join me in welcoming Betty Nett.

01:07

Betty Nett

Well, I think everybody got this handout, which summarizes what I'm going to be talking about today. And the first thing I'm going to do is just give you a very brief idea of the types of dolls through history, starting with the 1700s and going up primarily to 1930. But we'll talk briefly about 1950 and beyond. Then, I'm going to give you some ideas about how to identify your family dolls, talk about a few of the factors that determine value of your doll, some hints on preservation and care, and finally, on this handout, at the bottom, are resources. There's five, four or five books and the name of the United Federation of Doll Clubs, which is a national

organization of experts on antique dolls. And my contact information which is down here at the bottom at the Wenham Museum.

So to start with, all dolls, of course, go back to ancient times in terms of, there were ancient objects that have been found that people believe, you know, were played with as dolls. But in terms of commercial dolls, or dolls that were actually deliberately made for, as dolls, for children to play with, that starts in about the 1700s, with wooden dolls. And we don't have any actual examples of dolls this early here today in three dimension to show you. So I brought these pictures and I'll pass them around.

But these were not really mass produced. Most of them were made in England. Some of them were made in Germany. None of this type were made in America, that really, dolls being made in America in the 1700s were pretty much cloth and very, very homemade. But these dolls were made in some quantity, but they were hand carved. It wasn't a—and the sewing was all hand done. It wasn't a manufacturing kind of process, but I'll start passing it around and there's a picture of the doll with and without clothes because, since some of these older dolls are really old, you may have them in your family without their clothes because the clothes tend not to survive, so you can see what the bodies look like.

03:50

Nett

After the wooden dolls were the dolls made out of paper mache. And we don't have a lot of examples of paper mache either because they were made starting around 1800 to 1840. So I'm going to pass this around, but they were actually made out of a paper mache kind of material that was pressed into molds. Again, all of them were made in Germany. And they were made in quite a large quantity. They were actually made as play dolls. And this little one right here is a paper mache. Very tiny. But as you look at this picture, you can see that they were—their shoulders from here up were made of paper mache. Their bodies were made of kid and arms and feet were made of wood. And they were, some of them were elaborate, but a lot of them were very ordinary, such as a little doll this size.

Almost every child maybe might be able to own a doll like that, because they were very inexpensive.

Paper maches, like the wooden dolls, are so early that they haven't survived really well. And so a lot of times the paint's off their face, the paint's off their hair, their faces are cracked, and their clothes are really shredded.

So after paper mache, around 1840, that's when they discovered porcelain in Germany. And the reason Germany in the mountains became such a great place for making dolls was because they had lots of forests and rivers and that combination was what they needed to fire up porcelain kilns. And they also had the porcelain, they had the kaolin, and that what makes the porcelain [?].

This is a picture of a typical what we call a glazed china head doll that was made from like 1840 to the 1900s really. Pass that around. And they were dolls like this. And so some of you might have dolls now that you start to recognize as being like this. So the head is, see if I can show you, the head just goes to here, the porcelain head goes down to the back of the shoulders, almost all of them were black haired until later in the century. Almost all of them were blue eyed. Parents could buy the head, the hands and the feet, sometimes the feet were the same material as the head. And these hands are the same material as the head. The parents could buy the head, hands and feet and then the mothers would take these dolls home and put them on cloth bodies or leather bodies. So if you have a doll like this, it could be on a very odd looking body because it will be homemade. And they were, so there was a wide variety of bodies like this.

07:17

Nett

After the, well around 1850, I'm going to show you this one since we have an example here. Those same kinds of heads that are often the white china with the black hair and the blue eyes, they also made similar ones in what we call Parian or Parian type. And you can see that she's molded in a very similar way to the black haired doll that I just showed you. But she's unglazed so she doesn't have any shine to her. These dolls tended to be mostly blonde haired. And they were also just the shoulder heads as this one is here. That's where her body starts. And a very crude little body. But some wonderful little shoes, little old shoes. So the bodies and the clothes on these dolls could be, sometimes they were commercially made, but more often, it was the mothers that made the dresses and the shoes and the socks and put the dolls together. We date those dolls, those china dolls, you know, just the shoulder heads very much by the hairstyle. So, we know that certain hairstyles were popular in 1840. And we know that other hairstyles were popular in 1870. And so that's how we date how early or late those dolls are.

Now after the glazed porcelain dolls, starting in the 1860s to the 1890s, people came up with what they called bisque: bisque dolls on kid bodies. Now, bisque dolls are like this doll and this doll right here.

I'm going to hold this one up in particular, because this is a little doll who has an unglazed head. It's not shiny. She has glass eyes, they don't open and close. I'll take her hat off. She has a mohair wig made out of goat's hair. And she's on a kid body. And the kid body is the whole body, arms, torso, feet. And again, her head is just, it's just the porcelain part that sits on her body, that is bisque. And these dolls were known as French fashion dolls. And they were made in France.

And I'll pass this picture around, this is a picture of a French fashion, with and without her clothes on, so you can see what the body is like. And here's an example. And they often had these fabulous wardrobes of clothes. That goes around with her. Because these French fashion dolls were kind of the American Girl dolls of their time. And they had many, many stores in Paris, devoted to, the stores that sold the dolls and all their accessories and their clothes. And they were actually like this outfit right here that's on this doll. I think that's an original, what we

would call an original outfit. So it's the doll that came with—outfit that came with the doll, and these were commercially made, and they represented exactly the fashions that were being worn by adults.

11:08

Nett

The other thing about the dolls so far, starting with the wooden dolls, the china dolls, and now the French bisque dolls, is that you'll notice they've all represented grown up ladies. And some of that had to do with attitudes towards childhood. During all the early times, children really weren't seen as children; they were seen as little adults. And so, there were very seldom any dolls made in the image of children. All that changed, in about 1870, when they started to make dolls like this, also made in France. But also in Germany. And these dolls—pass this around—these dolls, for the first time have a bisque head that sits into their body. And the socket part of their body is – I'll see if I can show you in this. Well, just her little head here, sits in the top of her body. And she's got what we call a composition body. So it kind of feels like a wooden body, but it's not quite really wood, it's composition. And their hands were all composition and their legs and their feet. So instead of a cloth body now, or a kid body, there's an attempt to make a more realistic looking body, a body really like a child. And you can see that this little girl looks like a little girl. She's not an adult.

12:55

Audience member

Do her eyes open and close?

12:56

Nett

Yes, she does have glass sleep eyes. And, here's another example. This little doll here, this doll and that one I just showed you were made in Germany. The German dolls weren't quite as fancy nor quite as expensive as the German ones. But they had the mohair wigs again. And they were made in the image of children and they were dressed like children, and often their bodies were jointed. I don't know if you can see this one - she has joints in her knees and she has the same little ball joints in her elbow. So these dolls really started to have some playability as we think of playability for children today. And they were popular through 1929 - dolls like I just showed you.

Then around the 1900s, they really got to thinking about children as children, and came up with the first real baby doll. And this doll is made out of the same materials as this little German doll and these two dolls over here, but it's in the shape of a baby and it has what we call a "bent limb baby body." And they started to put more character into the faces so that they started to see dolls that really had a personality. They weren't just kind of a stare-y adult kind of doll. So here's what one of those looks like with the with and without the clothes on. I don't think we have any baby dolls to show you.

After the baby dolls, the bisque baby dolls, came composition - that was the next technological innovation in terms of materials. And this is a composition doll here. And composition was popular starting in the 20s, 30s and 40s. And one of the most popular kinds of dolls during that time was called a "mama doll." And sometimes those dolls had just shoulder heads, arms and legs out of a hard material. And then their bodies were cloth. But we don't have a lot of examples of those kinds of dolls here today, although some of you may have been brought examples of those kinds of dolls. We have more of the antique examples. Of course after competition was hard plastic. That was in the late 40s, 50s, 60s. And then pretty much in the early 60s, with the advent of Barbie, vinyl came along. And it's been vinyl ever since. Now, how would you go about identifying a doll that you had in your family that was an old doll? And you wondered, well, you know, just what is this? The first place you start – I'll pass this around - is each one of these things here is one mark. And these marks show up on the back of the doll's neck. So on this doll right here, it would be on her bisque head across the back of her neck, and they're not in black and white. They're etched into the bisque. So sometimes they're a little bit hard to see. But that's where those marks come from. And the reason why this is an important place to start is because this is the manufacturers' mark. And once you identify who made your doll, then you can go to books and references or individual people and find out the rest of the history of your doll - when your doll was made, find examples of dolls in early good condition to know what your doll should look like when it's restored. And find examples of you know, what their clothes were supposed to look like and that sort of thing. And then you can also find out what their value is in today's market. So I'll pass this around. These happen to be marks from one particular company, a German company called Armand Marseille. But it just gives you an example of you know, the kind of thing you might look on the back of the neck for.

17:58

Nett

So as I said, on the bottom of the thing here I've got references and resources. So once you identify that maker, then you can—you can use books, resources and the Internet to find out about your doll. Now factors determining value, when you, if you're interested in the value of your doll. The number one thing is rarity, how few of the dolls were made. And the second thing is condition. Condition is very important, because just like with any antique if there's any damage to any part of the, especially the breakable part of the doll, that can take 50 or 60% off the value of the doll. So if there's a crack in the hand, if there's a chip in the eye, if it's a porcelain hand and the hand's broken off - any kind of problems like that, then that devalues the doll. But she may still be very satisfying to you as a family doll. And the third thing is demand and popularity and just how popular certain types of antique dolls are at the time. And right now, for example, in the collecting world, well, many, most antique dolls are popular, but for the old ones, a doll like this one right here, the little French fashion - these are very popular collectors and they are very expensive, especially if they have their original clothes.

Dolls from this period, this early period, what I call the Civil War period, basically 1850s-60s. Again, there's a variety of hairstyles that show up on these dolls and some of them were very

elaborate. And so, some of the early hairstyles tended to be the more elaborate ones. And dolls with those kinds of, those particular hairstyles tend to be the most in demand by collectors. This is what we call a common hairdo - it's a 1860s classic, 1860s hairdo - we call it a highbrow because there's no bands on the forehead. And this was just how they all wore their hair back then.

20:33

Nett

Of course, doll collecting is so vast today. There's—just everything is popular really, if you have a good example of it, that's probably a good example, a really nice example of just about anything even from the 50s and 60s and 70s is considered very good. So that's, that's just the end of my formal talk. And then, so many of you brought dolls and probably have questions. Why don't we start with that part of the program. And first of all, is there anybody that just has a question that didn't bring a doll? Yes?

Audience member

When did emotion come into dolls?

Nett: Motion?

Audience member: Emotion.

21:19

Nett

Well, that was actually, again, that was probably more around the 1920s, when they started making the baby dolls and the character faces. And this, we do have an example of a doll up here. The Germans did make what we call character face dolls, which looked like actual children. And supposedly, this is an example, but this is an unusual example because this is made out of a, you might almost consider this a prototype of what eventually the German porcelain manufacturing companies made so many of. Well, they never made a lot of these character faces. Because, actually, these weren't as popular. But this doll is, was a doll made by somebody named Marion Kaulitz in Germany. And she made a number of dolls like this. She and some several sculptors, and they base their sculptures on the peasant children in the streets in Germany. And they did have, some had glass eyes, some had painted eyes, but the painting of the eyes rather than using the glass eyes gave them more personality. And it was really, it was really more around maybe 1910 and on that we started to see faces being put on dolls that were more individualistic, rather than what we call the typical “dolly face doll,” which was just, you know, kind of a generic face that you know, all your friends had the same face. But when these kind of dolls came along, you could conceivably have a doll that was much different than what your friends had. Yes?

Audience member

I have a big talking doll. It's from the 1950s. She's hard rubber and she's very sticky. Is there a way to...[?]... is there anything you can do to take off the stickiness?

23:15

Nett

Well, yeah, the hard rubber is a little tricky. There is some material, I should have put it on my list. There's a company in Maine called Twin Pines, T-W-I-N P-I-N-E-S. And they make a whole lot of products for cleaning different kinds of dolls – plastic, vinyl, rubber, cleaning wigs. They're on the Internet at Twin Pines, I think it's twinpines.com, but if you just search Twin Pines, it would come up. And the fellow that founded that company is a chemist that had worked with, you know, regular chemicals for a long time and then got interested in making these things for dolls. And so I think that might be a good place to contact. And sometimes they're very willing to visit with you too about the problem. The hard rubber is, sometimes I know I have some vinyl dolls of my own, but they're from the 60s, and they've gotten sticky. And there's really nothing you can do - you just have to toss them. They're just... That's just what happens—the technology just made the materials in that way. Yes?

Audience member

I have a question. I'd like to know whether you know somebody that can restring my doll. She was restored 20 years ago, and I have the clothes that I got with her.

Nett

Would you like to stand up and show everybody your doll?
That's a very cute little doll. She's a German, German made.

Audience member

She had ringlets. But I thought her hair needed to be washed even as an adult.

Audience member

Is she made of china? What is her composition?

Nett

This one is made of—

Audience member

You can touch her.

Nett

I don't really want to, I'm putting my gloves on. This one is made of the same thing that this little doll right here is made of. She's made of that unglazed bisque. So this doll was probably made between 1900 and 1925.

Audience member

It says '09 on the back of her head.

Nett

Okay, 1909. Okay, and here's a really good example of this maker's mark. She's got this wonderful maker's mark right up here underneath her wig. And we can tell by what's here that she was made by a company called Simon & Halbig K*R, which is a very well-known German company. And we have reprints of their catalogs that show all the dolls they made and how they looked right coming off the factory line. So if you wanted to restore a doll like this, as it looked when, as much as possible as it looked when it was first purchased, you could do that by looking at the resources. And she has the little [?] eyes.

26:27

Nett

So if you wanted to restore a doll like this, like to have it restrung, that was another place I probably should have put on the thing, but if you call me at the Wenham Museum, I can give you this information. There's a place in Chelmsford, which isn't too far from here. And it's a mother and her daughter and they do a lot of restoring of dolls and they are capable of restringing the old dolls and they sew beautifully. And but they, you could trust them to take good care of your doll and you know, not hurt your doll if you wanted to take it and have it restrung or something like that. They're very, very nice people. And they call themselves Yester Dolls. And so, but if you, if you want to call me in particular at the Museum and I should have I should have put their name on the list, but they're a good place to start. And if you brought them something that they felt was beyond their capabilities, they would let you know.

27:28

Audience member

What about dolls that are not valuable, but have lost, the rubber band has given way? So their arms have fallen out and their legs have fallen off?

27:41

Nett

So this would be dolls from the 50s?

Audience member

Dolls from the 70s 80s and even maybe the 90s. Okay, but I mean, I've tried to do it myself. Yeah, take the rubber band and yeah, on these little things, but without the right implement, I can't do it.

27:53

Nett

Okay. Oh, that brings up another good resource I should have put on there: Dollspart Supply. Again, you can find them on the Internet: Dollspart, it's all one word Dollspart Supply, and they're located in New York. And they sell the tools that will help you pull those little rubber

bands, and I know what you're saying; it's really hard and you really need the right tool, otherwise you'll drive yourself crazy.

Audience member

I thought maybe the dentist would have something.

28:24

Nett

[Laughs] I you know, I don't even think the dentist would; they're just you know, they're just tricky.

Audience member

A crochet hook?

28:31

Nett

Oh possibly a crochet hook. But they're very tricky because you have to have a certain amount of hook there in order to maneuver the rubber bands because sometimes the rubber bands are very, very tough to pull.

And I was just going to say something else—about the place in Chelmsford, if you had some, you know dolls that you wanted to have restrung. Now it sometimes depends on the doll, how easy it is. Some Madame Alexander dolls are very difficult to restring, some Madame Alexander dolls, you can't restring them yourself. You have to think about sending them back to the factory to see if they'll do it.

29:10

Audience member

But you have to, don't you?

29:13

Nett

Again, it depends on which doll it was and which model and how it was put together. But some of those are pretty difficult. Yes?

29:21

Audience member

How do you store and care for your doll?

29:26

Nett

If it's an antique doll, and it has some old cloth on it, the first thing is you want to keep it out of the light. You want to keep it someplace that's climatized. So you don't want to... you could

keep it in a cold room if you kept it in a cold room all the time. But what you really want to do is, you want to avoid the hot and the cold going back and forth. So you don't want it in an attic where it will be really humid in the summer and then freezing in the wintertime. Because that will tend to be hard on the fabric and on the materials that the doll is made out of. The best way to keep dolls is really like the museum has here - is you can enjoy them by putting them in glass front cases, and just putting them in a place where there's not a lot of light. And if you, if you want a light in your cupboard, you would want that to be a light that you turn on infrequently. Because basically you wouldn't want them under any fluorescent lights. But it's alright to keep the old dolls out as long as they're not in direct sunlight. And as long as they're not in direct artificial light. And the care of the rest of the dolls... in a way it really depends on what material the doll is made out of. So those are just the general...

30:51

Audience member

Are those domes good?

30:57

Nett

Glass domes, yes. Glass domes are fine, as long as you don't have, you know, sunlight coming in on them, yeah. Yes?

Audience member

How do you go about identifying a doll that doesn't have a mark on the back of the head, and the other thing is, do they have available vinyl arms and legs that can be restored on a doll?

Nett

Yes. The Dollspart Supply has some vinyl, they have some vinyl arms and legs. I don't know which ones in particular, but that'd be a good place to start.

Audience member

But how do you identify a doll that doesn't have...?

Nett

Well...

31:35

Audience member

I have one here.

Nett

Okay, why don't you show it to us and maybe we can help you with it ...

Audience member

She's an amputee right now.

Nett

This is the first book on the resource list. And this is a really good book to get. Oh, okay. This is a really good book to get because it has a lot of dolls in here. And, and so you might be able to tell by the pictures. Your doll is, let's see. Your doll is a composition doll, from the.... Oh, okay, this is interesting. This is a really good example of a problem.

Let's see, this was actually, I think this might have been rubber even, like a certain kind of rubber on this doll, for the legs. But the head is composition and the body is made out of... let me see [indistinct].

The head's composition and the body is made out of this... you can see how thin it was when you look closely at it - very, very thin rubber. And this was typical of rubber bodies in the 40s and the 50s. And these bodies just deteriorate, they just disintegrate and there's really nothing you can do about it.

They might have some substitute legs and arms that you could use. And you might be able to just make cloth legs and arms for her, as just a way, if you wanted to preserve her. Can I hold her up and show her to people?

Whoops. She's losing herself as we speak. You have to be very careful with her. And this is one of those dolls that I mentioned - the mama type dolls that were made in the 1940s and 1950s. Very sweet little baby. And actually, you know her face is in good shape. And her hair, you could just fix exactly as it was if you took her to somebody. They would just... 'cuz her hair's all here and it's in very good shape. And her dress would clean up nicely, too. So you could, if you just made her some little cloth arms and cloth legs, you could really put her back together again.

Audience members

Can you turn her around? What do you mean by cleanup?

Nett

It'll turn from dingy and brownish to just white.

Audience member

But how?

Nett

There's a material that the Twin Pines sells called Perk, P-E-R-K.

Audience member

Do you take the outfits off?

Nett

Yes. You take the dress off and the Perk is designed not to rub or scrub, but to just soak the cotton clothes in. And you can leave the clothes in there for two weeks if you want to and it

won't hurt them. And ultimately, all this dust, and I mean that dress really isn't too bad that she's in. So I think that one... it really isn't. So you could put that in Perk.

This is another nice little composition doll. I believe this was... I'm not sure, okay.

34:54

Nett

Yeah, this is made by the Schwartzman's Company. They were an American company. She has a cloth body. And then these composition arms and the little composition feet. And this doll has a name. I want to say Bubbles, but I'm not sure that's it.

Audience member

I think my grandmother said it had a name.

Nett

Yeah, it's Bubbles, or... I'm just not sure, but that book that I just held up, with the Jan Foulke's doll, the first one that's on here. This one right here, the first book on your list. You probably could find information about your doll in here. Also, there's another book you could- do you have internet access? Search on the internet, at amazon.com; put in the author's name, Ursula, U-R-S-A-L-A Mertz; M-E-R-T-Z is her last name. And she's written two books on composition dolls and she has like two encyclopedias of composition dolls, and I know you would find a picture of that doll in her book and information about it.

36:13

Audience member

How old would you say what year?

Nett

I would say 40s. Yeah.

Audience member

Is perk commercial or you can get it [indistinct]...

Nett

I can't hear you, I'm sorry.

[indistinct conversation]

Nett

Oh, okay. You want to show everybody your doll? [indistinct] This is a gorgeous example of one of those French fashion dolls, like with the little black dress that I held up. Absolutely beautiful. It's a very special doll. And these do seem to, appear to be her original clothes, she's got a kid body, kid feet.

And yes, I think you could do Perk with this.

Audience member

And you just soak it?

Nett

Yes, and just put it in very, very carefully [indistinct] ...take these off. That's the only thing. You have to very carefully take these off, and the ribbons. You could probably do that but very carefully, and then you'd have to sew them back on again. I wouldn't do anything to the hat. [indistinct]. And if you were a little hesitant to do this on your own, I think if you took it to somebody, like the people in Chelmsford. Maybe they could... [indistinct]. Because you've got to be careful not to lose the [indistinct].

Audience member

Yester Doll?

Nett

Yester doll.

Audience member

What year is that?

Nett

This is probably 1870-1890.

[Indistinct conversation]

38:50

Nett

This doll is a papier mache doll, and somebody has tried to restore her, because they tried to repaint her face. One of the rules about restoration is you don't want to do something that you can't undo. That's really the first very important rule. So she was one of the earlier, she was one of the earlier types of materials. [indistinct] Could be 1860? [indistinct]. There is a fellow in Marblehead that restores papier mache. [indistinct]

39:56

Audience member

Are all of these dolls made in Europe originally, because I mean these dolls just have numbers.

Nett

This is German and this is German. Yup.

Audience member

My wife was told this was a mannequin doll and I've never heard of that.

40:16

Nett

Well, by mannequin, what they mean is that she's big enough that she could be used to wear children's, to wear little girls' dresses. And so because she's that size, there probably were stores back then that used some of these great big dolls to model the children's clothes of the day. She's really a play doll and that's really what she was made for.

[indistinct conversation]

Nett

...She has one of those nice original mohair wigs and again, if you... you could find somebody, perhaps at the Chelmsford place to fix her hair up. It's surprising what they can do with it, really.

41:39

Nett

But she's a very nice example. One of the things about this doll that's interesting to see, she has what we call her original body finish. If you hold her up and show her arms.

Audience member

They're wood.

Nett

Yeah, and the [Kestner?] company in particular, the composition of arms sometimes is kind of yellowish and it had a nice sheen to it. Sometimes you see dolls that turn all white—their bodies are all white, that kind of composition. And that's a shame because somebody has used water on the body to clean it and that's destroyed the value of the body because the paint's off. Yes?

42:18

Audience member

Can you tell me what kind of glue I might use to put her top of her head and her hair on?

Nett

She's a cutie. Okay, so this is another German, a bisque doll made in Germany, a little composition body. And, you know, there's a couple of thoughts on gluing the wig on. One of the things about not gluing the wig on - you don't really have to glue at all. You could just put a little tape up in the crown there, just a little scotch tape or something just enough to give it a little grab, so that when you pick her up, to show her to people, her hair doesn't fall off. But, these dolls had these kind of crowns, like this, the top of their heads. That's how they got the eyes in. And this doll has sleep eyes. And so you really, if you were to go, for example, to sell the doll, the people who bought it would want to take the wig off and look inside the head

because that's how they can tell if the eyes are in good shape and if it has any damage to the head. So I wouldn't glue the wig on. I'd just put a little tape on here. And just you can enjoy her that way.

Audience member

She has a speaker in the back.

Nett

Does she?

Audience member

I don't know if she was a mama doll. And she also walks when you hold her, her legs move so that she walks. It was my mother's when she was a small child. And she said it was her walking doll. But I don't know if it used to say mama when you... because it seems like...

Nett

Yes. Is it a pull string?

Audience member

No, it just, you tipped it I think. I'm not sure.

Nett

Oh, okay. Yeah, some of the dolls they did make with litte—oh, I can feel the little circle. I don't know if you can see it. No, you can't really, but in her back here, there's a little, like it's almost like a little microphone. It's a little circle. You can feel it in her back. Yeah. And what these dolls did was, I don't know that I actually heard one saying "Mama," but they made a noise.

Audience member

I have one and it was making a noise all the way over here and now it's stopped. Now I can't get her to... she was crying all the way.

[indistinct conversation]

44:48

Nett

Let me just take one question at a time. What did you want to tell us about...?

Audience member

No, I just, when we're talking about the "mama," I was wondering if this was a mama if she cries "mama."

Nett

Yes.

Audience member

But this one wasn't working, only this one was chattering all along, and all of a sudden nothing.

45:11

Nett

Again, you know, if you want to get those mama mechanisms fixed, I think one place you could start is possibly Dollsparts Supply, because they do have voice speakers that they sell through the Dollsparts Supply company. But if you didn't want to attempt to do it yourself, I'd take them to the place in Chelmsford and see what they have to recommend.

Audience member

Do you think that the cold weather could affect this? Because I came on the train with all of these.

Nett

I don't know. It's possible, you know, it could be that after a while, they just give out, you know, and they just don't work anymore. But because those are more recent dolls, I think there's a good chance you could get the voice mechanisms replaced in those. Yeah, definitely.

Audience member

Are there doll shows?

Nett

Yes, there are doll shows, in fact there's one tomorrow in Dedham, Massachusetts, which is the biggest doll show in the area at the Holiday Inn.

Audience member

Where is it?

Nett

It starts at 10 o'clock, the Holiday Inn in Dedham, Massachusetts; it's right off Route 128.

Audience member

When?

Nett

Oh, tomorrow. Tomorrow starting at ten o'clock. Yes?

Audience member

I have a very young doll collector here who would like to show you her doll.

46:30

Nett

Oh, would you come up and show us? Let's see, what do we have?

Oh, this is a beautiful doll. Oh, isn't she pretty? This is a very pretty doll. Is this Barbie or a Barbie type? Is she called, does she have a name?

Child

Oh, I didn't name her yet.

Nett

You didn't name her yet. No? I'm not sure which... this is probably made by Mattel— a nice little Barbie type doll. And what's so wonderful about these dolls is they're making them better and better. This one has even jointed elbows, jointed elbows and jointed knees. And that just, you know, they can pose so much better that way, can't they, if they're modeling fashions, or if they're singing on stage. They can move around a lot when they wear their rock star costumes. Right? Or if they want to be a model on the runway, you can put them in really pretty poses. And so this is a wonderful play doll. She is very special. Thank you for bringing her in.

And you have a teddy bear. And a teddy bear with a necklace.

Another child

It's a polar bear.

Nett

A polar bear, thank you. It is a polar bear. And it's very cute. Does it have a name?

Child

Her name is Poley.

Nett

Poley, isn't that a great name. Oh, that's wonderful. Thank you for showing her. Yes?

48:05

Audience member

Can you get clothes restored? Do they remake clothes?

Nett

Yes, that you would just have to take to somebody who could take a pattern off of it and then make a dress that was similar.

This is a wonderful, early original dress. But when this happens to it, do you all see, when this silk, this just melts, it just melts and there's just really nothing you can do to...because it will just, it's just going to continue to melt. And with this dress, now see that the back of it, is in... the color is much better. And the silk is in much better condition. And so what you might even do with this is, I wouldn't... you might even just possibly just have a piece, somebody piece the

front with a matching piece of silk. Because the rest, well, the arms are a problem. So you might, you might have to do that too. But the back of the dress isn't too bad. The people in Chelmsford sew very nicely.

Audience member

They're getting a lot of business.

Audience member

When you talk about the people in Chelmsford, do you have a rough idea when they would bring something like that, what the cost would be?

Nett

Gosh...

Audience member

A dress. Like, hundreds of dollars?

Nett

Oh, no, it's not that much. No, it's not that much. I can't tell you what it would be, but maybe around \$100, but don't quote me, but I think it would be something like that.

Audience member

Could it still have a mark... [indistinct]?

49:41

Nett

This one does not have a mark unless it's at the bottom of the shoulder plate. Yeah.

[indistinct conversation]

They didn't. And you know this one...I think this was—I'll tell you what I think that was. That was originally a wax over composition doll. So the reason her face looks so pale, and her eyes kind of hit you, you know, they kind of like jump out at you, is because she originally was a wax coated doll. And the wax was more pinkish and more natural looking. And so the eyes blended, made a more natural face to begin with. So what's happened is the wax has come off of her, because the wax dolls often cracked. You know, they'd get these really bad, they get these really big cracks and then a whole piece of the wax just comes right off the face. And so that one probably cracked very badly and somebody just...

Audience member

What's under the wax?

Nett

It's a composition. It's actually a material similar to...

Audience member

Because I know it's 1880s.

Nett

Yes, but they were using a composition back then, but they weren't using it in the same way that some of the dolls from the 40s were used, but it was a kind of composition, and then they just, they put wax over it. So the complexion changed dramatically when it had the wax on it. And they were really very pretty, and very soft looking.

And I don't know of anybody that actually re-waxes dolls, so you might just have to enjoy her the way she is. Yeah. Yes?

Audience member

I have a doll, it was my grandmother's and her body's made of kid. A little repair... looks like she's been repaired. Here are some patches. I think she's porcelain.

51:41

Nett

Okay. Sometimes the dolls, on the, they have shoulder plates, had an engraving down here on the shoulder plate. So if you don't find it on the back of the neck, check here. And this is a really nice example of what the kid bodies look like on the early child German dolls. And here's the shoulder head, the unglazed bisque. And they make the kid bodies in different ways. Sometimes they have joints. And this is what we call pin-jointed arms. [Indistinct]. And she's lost her eyes.

Audience member

Her eyes are there. They may be repaired. I looked in with a flashlight. That was one of my questions.

Nett

And it can definitely be repaired if you took her to somebody that knows how to do it.

Audience member

And she has a trunk full of clothing.

Nett

Oh, this lady has brought some darling clothes.

Audience

Awww.

Audience member

Look at this with the train. And there's a...my mother was very good at preserving things. She put all the clothes inside a trunk which I couldn't bring, but these are just a couple of the outfits. My grandmother was an only child, and I think she was a little spoiled. At least the doll was. I think these were commercially made.

53:15

Nett

What's interesting about this doll and her clothes is you'll notice that she really has a child's face. And she really was made as a child and as a child's plaything. But even after 1900 which is, oh no, I'm sorry, that one was before 1900 – that was probably 1890s because of her shoulder head. But they were, still often, as little girls, like Barbie today, dressing child dolls in grownup ladies' costumes, because that's what they wanted to be. Because those costumes, some of them look like they're, you know, like stylish ladies of the period.

Audience member

Yes, I think my grandmother was born in 18–, oh, maybe 1885.

[indistinct conversation]

Nett

Uh huh. Okay this lady is asking about the age of these dolls. Okay. These dolls, it says Yolanda on the back of their neck. These dolls are very recent—they were made probably in the 80s or 90, I would say. And their faces are porcelain. So they sort of reproduce the look of the old dolls and they have little glass eyes. And both of these are, both of these have character faces in the sense that, again, you can see these are really sculpted on a real child. The artist sculpted on a real child.

Audience member

Where were they made?

Nett

They were made in China. Most everything is made in China today, but most likely they were made in China. But the designers were here in this country. Yeah, well, Yolanda's a fairly well known modern doll designer that specializes in making baby dolls, sculpting baby dolls. You can just sit that on top. Oops, there we go.

[indistinct conversation]

Does this say Yolanda also? [indistinct] This one may not have a... This is another little doll that's porcelain, made to reproduce sort of the look of the old one. But she's very modern, probably within the last 20 years.

Audience member

Can we see it?

Nett

Yes. Sorry.

Audience member

Thank you.

56:14

Audience member

I have two dolls from the 1950s that are very, very different, and they've been keeping company in the same box for probably four years and I don't want to display them, but I don't know how to take care of them properly.

Nett

Oh, these are darling. Okay. Oops. Okay, this is a little storybook doll from the 1950s. Probably early 1950s. And she has a hat, a beautiful hat. And this doll was made by the Nancy Ann Storybook Doll Company, very popular dolls in the 1950s. I wouldn't, you know, again, if you wanted to enjoy this doll, it's okay to keep her out behind glass, as long as she's not in direct sunlight.

The dress—I'm not sure what to tell you about the dress, this particular dress. This may have been one of the dolls that—there was a, there was a lady who did what they called— this is, the waist pattern is actually painted on to this netting. And the paint that she used was actually to make, was supposed to glow in the dark. And the paint, since then we've discovered has some sort of, you know, it wasn't an ecologically friendly kind of thing. It was like the lead paint in China. You know, if we'd known about it, it wasn't the thing you wanted your kids to be playing with. And I just don't know of any way that you could restore it. You could repaint it, I suppose. But I don't think you'd want to do that. It's very tedious and that would destroy your value. If you wanted her to look a little prettier, you'd have to just get a real lace skirt and put it over but that would kind of destroy her value.

Audience member

But how do I, how do I keep it from getting worse? I mean, if you look closely at her hair, which nobody else can see from this distance, you will see little bits of dandruff in there.

Nett

Actually, her hair is not in bad shape at all. It really isn't. You know, you could just smooth it over a little bit but her hair, this is typical, what they look like. You know that their hair was set just a certain way. And you have to be very careful with the storybook dolls - you can't take it out and redo it because it'll never go back the same. So I really don't think her hair's that bad and when you, if you put her hat on, it won't show that much.

Audience member

And should I keep acid free tissue or something underneath it? Put it in a box?

Nett

You really don't have to, if you're going to, well if you were going to keep your box you could do acid free tissue. It's hard to get. I think it's fairly hard to get a small quantity of acid free tissue. But just regular tissue changed from time to time would be okay. If you want to have her out and enjoy her, it just would just be fine too. When you display her you don't really need to keep the tissue under her skirt. I think the paint that they used at the time to do this imitation lace was just very... they just weren't thinking about it lasting for a long time. So I just don't know any way that you can keep it from crumbling. It's just, eventually she probably won't have any of the paint left on her skirt. But she might even look better because it'll just be netting instead of, you know, funny looking.

Audience member

Can you give us a rough idea of what those dolls are worth?

Nett: Those storybook dolls?

Audience member: Just a rough idea?

60:30

Nett

Oh, it really depends. It depends again, on how old they are with storybook dolls, how old they are, how rare they are, and what kind of condition they're in. The first little storybook dolls that were made in the early 1930s can sell for as much as \$500. Because they're just, there's certain things that are special about them. And these from the 1950s can go from, anywhere from 25 to 35, I would say, something like that. That's about what they go for. And the later your dolls are, for example, this storybook doll, the better condition they have to be in. So you know this, these dolls up here, like this china headed doll or that French fashion, that beautiful French fashion that the lady held up. And some of these other bisque dolls that people have held up from before 1900, people will tolerate some imperfections in those dolls, that their clothes have fallen off that their wig is not in mint condition, but they won't tolerate that with dolls from the 50s and later. They have to be in mint condition to get their full value

[break in film]

...with him, but over the long time, you know, 50 years from now, it's probably not a good idea to store him with that nut in his arm because it will deteriorate the fabric. This is a really interesting kind of doll. Can't you just see, 100 years from now, somebody will find this and they'll say, Oh what a fabulous folk doll. And it is. A really neat folk doll representing the lifestyle in the area that it came from. It's adorable.

Audience member

Thank you very much. I'll take the nut out.

62:20

Nett

Anything like that, you know nuts or apple heads or something. Even if they're in baskets your dolls are holding, you don't really want to keep them with the doll. You just wanna store them separate. Yes?

Audience member

A lot of these people probably would like to know where they could have their own dolls evaluated or appraised. Are there appraisers around that could do that for them?

Nett

If you call the museum, I can give you the name of some appraisers. If you want your dolls appraised for tax purposes, you'd only probably want to do that if it's a pretty expensive doll because, of course, you do have to pay if you get a legitimate appraiser to appraise your dolls. And I can tell you some people in the area who are appraisers and would appraise your dolls for you. If your dolls less expensive and you want to get an idea of the value, then this is a good resource for you - this is the first book on your resource list.

Audience member

Excuse me, I can't read the title from here.

Nett

Oh, it's *Jan Foulke's Guide to Dolls* and it's the first reference on your resources.

63:32

Audience member

How old are these dolls?

Nett

Well, this one is from the 1930s. She's asking about these dolls up here on the table. This one is from the 1930s probably and it's another example of a folk doll. It was made in, we believe Tennessee. But we don't know the maker.

Did anybody else bring dolls or have questions?

Audience member

Oh yeah.

Nett

Okay. All right. **Audience member:** This is from Hungary. **Nett:** Yep, this is from Hungary. We didn't talk about what is called international dolls today, but a lot of people have those in their collection. And what's nice about this one is her condition. She's in beautiful condition - her

dress isn't faded and her costume is made quite typically of what the people at one time in history wore in their festival costumes. This hat's particularly unique, and she's in very nice condition. So that makes her a very nice souvenir of the country that she's from. Thank you for sharing her because nobody's had one of those. Yes?

64:41

Audience member

I don't know what this is all about. But I'm just wondering if it looks like it has plastic fingers attached to it. They say it's very old ... it says Germany on there.

[indistinct conversation]

65:14

Nett

This doll is made out of material we haven't talked about so far. It's called celluloid. It's a very thin, fragile plastic. And they made dolls in Germany out of celluloid. And I think they probably made the same mold out of porcelain, but sometimes the same mold they made out of porcelain, they also may out of celluloid. But it's a nice little baby doll. And all the parts are here, you just have to get the, what we call a flange that just was sewed into the body. The top of the cloth body just came up around the neck. And you just have to get that reattached, and then you'll have an all original doll. And it looks like her head is in good shape.

Audience member

How old? **Nett:** 1930s. Probably 1930s. **Audience member:** Thank you. I had no idea.

[indistinct]

Nett

Okay, who else brought a doll?

Audience member

She's losing her wig, her eyes opened and closed and are wrapped in the foil there.

Nett

Okay. All right. So this is a nice little what we call all bisque, the whole doll. These are made after 1900 and the whole dolls is made of bisque, that unglazed porcelain. She's got jointed arms and legs and a little blond mohair wig and glass eyes. And the lady is saying that the glass eyes are in here. So this is a very sweet little doll and what you want to do is probably take her to the people in Chelmsford or somebody like that, and see if they could reset the eyes for you and then she'd be very sweet. And if you, if you look on the internet or on eBay, or if you come to the museum...Let's see if we've got any up here...

You know, I don't see one here as an example. But if you look in some of the reference books or you can go on the internet and go on eBay, and search "all bisque dolls," put in "all bisque dolls," that's the title you put in the search, and you'll see, if you watch for several weeks, you'll see examples of these come up, and you'll find some that have their original clothes and then you'll know how to dress her.

Audience member

How old would you say she is?

Nett

Well, these were popular over a period of time, I would say this was like 1910 to 1929.

67:56

Audience member

I don't know about these guys. When I was a child, I put the hair on them. My own hair. And it was blond.

Nett

They're cute. And they were dressed like this?

Audience member

Well, no, I used to make doll clothes when I was a little kid.

Nett

These are little, again, these little dolls in the basket, they're all bisque, and they're jointed at arms and legs, and their arms and legs are put on with little knotted string. And they have little homemade clothes for them, and one's a boy and one's a girl. And, you know, I'm not sure, but I want to say just by virtue of the fact that they have these little, it looks like there's a little black paint on the feet. Yeah, these might have been originally Asian, little Asian, dressed as little Asian children. And so, and the little boy, as an Asian would have hardly had any hair, maybe just painted on or maybe just a little queue, a little ponytail. And they put very cheap, you know, just teensiest, little bit of hair on them. So you might have, you know, taken them off and... **Audience member:** oh, I very well might have. **Nett:** ...evolved them into the little characters they are now. But those are very precious.

69:18

Audience member

I don't see a mark on this doll, but I know it's 1940s.

Nett

Yes. [indistinct] Oh, you know, it might even be; I should be able to tell you what this is, but I put it. [indistinct]

This looks like a doll made by the Ideal Company. She's got an all cloth body. Her little body is sort of ... I don't see a mark on her and I just off-hand can't tell you what she is. She's lost a lot of color from her vinyl. And it looks like what might have happened with this -somebody's scrubbed and scrubbed her face, trying to get something off that they didn't want on there. And so...

Audience member

So never wash them with soap?

Nett

No, it's not advised, especially the vinyl dolls because, you know, the paint was just painted on. The china, the glazed china dolls, you could probably wash their face a lot and it wouldn't come off because that's just fired right in. Well, you wouldn't want to make a habit of it, but, but the vinyl dolls, you have to be very careful about what you use to clean and that's why it's good if you have a vinyl doll to get in touch with this Twin Pines company, because they have something that you can put on the vinyl and you don't have to worry about it taking the paint off, but it will take some of the other residue off you don't want so. [indistinct, laughter] Just enjoy.

Audience member

You didn't talk about homemade rag dolls. So this was my mother's so it's early 1900s.

Nett

71:04

Oh, she's cute. Yeah. I didn't talk about ragdolls - they're kind of a whole history in and of themselves. There were some commercial manufacturers of rag dolls. Some of them that are the folk-art type rag dolls, commercially manufactured in America, are some of the most expensive antique dolls that are in existence today. But there's sort of, again, a lot of times except for about four to eight, maybe, styles of rag dolls that we recognize and can identify by a maker. A lot of rag dolls are you know, unknown makers, we don't know and they the folk doll sort of get their value sometimes based on just you know, variable amounts of factors.

Audience member

She's a homemade doll.

Nett

She is a homemade doll, but she's, you know, I would guess what she's made out of a pattern that came from it, because of the nice designing of the stitches and everything. So this was probably a commercial pattern that a mother sewed up and made the dress for the doll. And the eyes are stitched on, embroidered on, and you might be able to identify what pattern was by doing some research about different kinds of rag doll makers. She's very nicely stuffed, very, very solid. Yes?

72:42

This is nice. I needed to hold these up very carefully. These are two little Indian, Native American dolls is the politically correct thing we say now. And these dolls were made in Germany, the dolls themselves were made in Germany. And they were dressed, they may have even been dressed in Germany. This is I think this is their original commercial clothes. So, I think this is how they were made from the factory.

And I think the beads may have been added later on. You can see the beads don't, they kind of jump out at you, they're not quite, you know, go with the rest of the dolls. But those are their original factory costumes. And their heads are glazed bisque. And they made these Native American dolls in different sizes. I can't see the neck mark on the back here. But these were probably made by a company called Armand Marseille, which sounds French but he was actually, manufactured his dolls in Germany and he was one of the biggest makers of children's bisque play dolls, from about 1890 on.

But these are, you know what's wonderful about these is they have their original factory clothes. And we see that, very few dolls that we've seen today have their original factory clothes. It's very...

Audience member

I noticed that the boy has teeth.

Nett

Yeah, so he's what we call, when they made these bisque dolls, some of the times they had closed mouths. [indistinct] And the little girl is actually rare because she has a closed mouth. So, open mouth was much less rare than closed mouth. **Audience member:** Thank you. **Nett:** Yes?

Audience member

This doll was given to my aunt by her brother during World War I, from Paris.

75:01

Nett

Oh, isn't that nice. Here's another example of an all original doll. Isn't that wonderful? And she even has her original tags. And you said, what's her history?

Audience member

Her brother sent it. It was sent to my aunt by her brother during World War I, from Paris.

Nett

Okay. Sent to her aunt by her brother during World War I from Paris. And the little tag here has the name of the doll and the name of the company in French. And she's in her factory original dress, and stockings and shoes and everything, and her hat. And, you know, you know with this style in terms of restore, well she's got a few spots on her dress. She's also got joints in her

knees and her arms So this was very, very typical play doll for children in France at that time. And you know, you could perk up her little socks, maybe even just putting them in mild detergent. You could get those to come back in color. The dress is... I don't know. The dress is kind of a different kind of fabric and you know, it really isn't bad at all. So I wouldn't really do anything to her. I would just kind of you know, push her hat back.

Audience member

[indistinct] I mean, what kind of doll, what would you classify that as?

76:41

Nett

She you know, she's, kind of a composition kind of face. She's on what we call the composition body.

Audience member

Is she an SFBJ? A late SFBJ?

Nett

Yeah, she probably is something like that. Her little tag says *bebe* and [Kiernen?]. I'm not saying that right; I'm not a French person.

Audience member

Maybe you can explain SFBJ - that was a formation of a bunch of really high-end French manufacturers who came together at one point. They formed a company to compete with the Germans who are blowing them out of the water. Pretty much.

Nett

Yes. You know, this one is what we call, I think, painted bisque. So, you've got to be very, very careful about cleaning her face. I think you could clean, there's some surface dirt on her face and I think you could clean it up a little bit. And this place called Twin Pines makes something called [compo?] cleaner. And it's totally non-water based. And we use it at the museum and it's really reliable. It's not very expensive and it comes a little jar. So, if you wanted to do something like that with her.

But she's one of the later French dolls, you know, as compared to the French fashion types.

[indistinct]

Okay, this doll was given to this lady by her godmother. And it's a wonderful example of the German bisque baby, which was the first time they really started making babies, for children to play with that look like real babies. This one's on... Now this one.. You know what's interesting about this one, and I'm not, I don't know the history of your doll in particular, but this is just a point of interest for you all in terms of bodies and dolls. This head, this baby doll, is a baby

head. And the babies were almost always on the bent limb baby body. So that's a body like this lady has on this big doll right here, which is you know, the arms are bent, the legs are bent. You can't make the doll stand up. It's made to be in a sitting position. Now this baby doll is on what really is a body for a child antique doll. So it's on a body, that is the body, for example, this kind of a doll, which is a little girl doll or a little boy doll.

It could be that this head... it could be that this body's head got broken. And then the baby head was, they got a baby head and put it on.

Audience member

I had one like that with a broken head, same body, a child body, with the same head [indistinct]

Audience member

I have a little one like that, too.

Nett

Okay, well, what's interesting is, usually they didn't make what we call toddlers, but the toddler bodies have what we call a slanted leg joint. So, ordinarily, the baby heads when they made them into a little bit older children, they did put them on bodies that would stand up, but the hip joint here is much different. So, I wouldn't, I don't know what to say to you about it, except that I would suspect that the head and the body might not be original to each other.

Audience member

I thought that one I had was a mismatch. But it's like that. So, I think it's right. Odd as it is, I think it's right.

Nett

And you know it could be, just as a rule, that that's just as a rule, that's what usually happens. But it could be, and you can see, this doll is very cute on this body. It's got a long dress, so I wouldn't change its body. And this is a wonderful little baby head. It's got a real character face. It was made by the Kestner Company. And it has brown eyes, which is another really nice thing. Often the dolls have painted blue eyes. Yes?

81:19

Audience member

[indistinct] She got it when she was 11 years old and her mother brought it with green stamps. [indistinct] very little about it and I thought you could identify it.

Nett

I can't identify it for sure...[indistinct]

Audience member

Is it a composite?

Nett

It's a composition but you know... this is really hard [indistinct]

Audience member

There's no, I didn't see any labels. I have no clue. There's nothing on the clothing. And she would always change the outfit on this thing

[indistinct conversation about internet search]

Audience member cont.

Do you feel that she should be restored or left in her condition? I mean, her eyelashes are very, very sparse, but, she has a few cracks on her neck but other than that, I don't think she's in too bad a shape.

Nett

I have this question about this doll. She does have a few cracks around the eyes, but it's very hard to get people to restore composition and not make them look really garish because they overdo it.

So, I just I don't think she's bad enough...

[indistinct]

These are wonderful examples of dolls that are being currently made. They're just as sweet and adorable as they can be. This one, is this called [Gumdrop?]?

84:06

Audience member

No, that's Jasmine.

Nett

Jasmine okay. Ashton Drake is a company that makes... And this is hard vinyl, isn't it?

[indistinct]

They make wonderful dolls, kind of high-end dolls, not necessarily for kids to play with but for collectors. And this is just an adorable – she's got a little cloth body, and her limbs and her face are made of what we call now hard vinyl versus a more squishy and kind of soft vinyl.

Wonderful wig and wonderful sculpting. Very nice detail. Wonderful little character.

And this one is Lee Middleton, the Lee Middleton Company, and that's another company that's currently making modern dolls. [indistinct] When you push on her stomach, she breathes like a real baby. And they're also doing ... if you look closely, this hair, it's just like it was, it's so sparse and thin, and they put the hairs in one at a time. And it looks like real infant hair, real baby hair, it just makes them look so real. And this is this is a really nice example. [indistinct] A kid would love her.

[indistinct conversation]

Did you want to show yours? [indistinct] Oh, look at this. Isn't this wonderful. Now, here's a fabulous example of folk [?] dolls. These are really two wonderful examples of black folk dolls. Do you know anything about the maker?

Audience member

No, I don't know anything. They were in my grandmother's living room when I was called by the [?]. That's all I know.

86:20

Nett

They're wonderful. You know, there's a group of two ladies in particular that are...I think these are probably quite genuine. I'm not a real expert on them. They're wonderful examples. There are two ladies in the Boston area here, we're very fortunate, that have done all the real research on that kind of black folk doll. And they're going to be exhibiting their dolls at the Wenham museum. We're having a folk toy exhibit and I think it's gonna be next September. But anyway, if you wanted to call me at the museum, I can put you in touch with them. And if you sent them a picture of your two dolls, I think they would be able to give you some information about them - more than I can. One of the things they've done is they've, they've collected and they've looked at a lot, they've looked for these black dolls...They've categorized them into early, middle, and late dolls. And they've been able to see enough of them that they've been able to see similarities so that they can look at a certain doll and say, oh, that was made by, you know, at a certain period of time. I don't know that they have very much in terms of the way who actually made them but they can, they can say to you, well, that was made before 1900 or that was made in 1920, something like that, but those are those are wonderful.

Audience member

Thank you very much.

[indistinct conversation]

88:10

Nett

Now this is a wonderful example of the china doll 1840 on, and this hairdo...she could be 1840 because that was an early hairdo. Wonderful molding on the hair. Brown eyes, which makes her very rare. Brown eyes are very rare on China dolls. The shoulder plates very sloping, three sew holes. These were things that were indicative of earlier dolls. This one we don't know who made it - we just recently found out who made a lot of the china dolls. It looks to me like this could be. It could be Kestner, the Kestner company in Germany, which was a very famous company and they made beautiful china dolls.

And, she's got this damaged shoulder plate. But if you dress her, or if you, you know, chose to dress her or something, she's a head well worth keeping because she's such a beautiful

example. So, here's an example of a doll that, especially since you already have it in your family, it's worth keeping, even though she has damage to her, because she's such a, she's such an early example and she's such a nice example.

Audience member

She's got a little dent. Is that supposed to be there? Is that an imperfection?

Nett

That was probably something that happened - It looks to me like it was something that happened in the firing process, and she might have even been considered a second. She's also got some little dents on her nose and you know, it could be something that happened to her in play. But she's still a really nice example. If she didn't have the damage, she probably, with this kind of damage, it takes probably about 40 to 50% off of her value. But she's still a very nice example of an early china doll. [indistinct]

How are we doing for time? It's about 25 to five so should we should wrap it up.

Okay, this is another little doll that was probably that was bought, you know, a trip somewhere, a foreign trip. And I can't tell you specifically about this doll except that I think she's pretty wonderful.

Audience member

Her shoes are made out of...[indistinct]

Nett

Interesting. Yeah, I can't identify her as being made by anyone in particular. But she's almost a folk doll type of China. She's very nice, the details and everything - with a little research you might be able to find out a little more about her.

And these little dolls here are gonna be hard for you to see. But this little family of dolls were a kind of doll that was made in - I can't pronounce it - [?] Lutheran mission, a something like that, in China, and they were made by the people in the mission to give the people a way to earn a living. And they're quite detailed, and they have the authentic hairstyles and clothes of the people and they're considered a very nice example of these dolls. And they're quite early because we have dolls like this that were given to Mrs. Horton in 1900 when Miss Colombia travels around the world, so they're quite - the Lutheran mission is still actually operating, but they're not in China any more.

92:33

Audience member

[indistinct] I got her from her original owner... I was a child ... Amy is 1870, we know exactly when the lady got her. But if you look at her leg, she has a different body, she's jointed and kid arms, but her legs are jointed with buttons. I didn't know whether it was a [Mott?] body or a Robinson body. Or neither.

Nett

I've never seen that jointing before, but it looks like it could it certainly could be original to the doll.

Audience member

Yeah, she's all original. She has two kinds of clothes, her bedding, her quilt, her pillows.

Nett

She's wonderful. She's actually I think the same head as the big doll up here that we talked about, and she's a wonderful example. So, I think those legs, oh look at her wonderful arms. And that's an example of a mother who really went to a lot of trouble to make a wonderful body for the doll and make it very playable.

Audience member

Do you think that the mother made the body? Because the mother made all the clothes. She had summer clothes, winter clothes, morning clothes, afternoon clothes, clothes for when she was a child, clothes for when she grew up.

Nett

Those are very nice hands, too.

Audience member

She had hankies and shawls and shoes.

Nett

Yeah, usually the commercial hands weren't made like that either. So I think it's possible somebody just, you know, really, really she was a great doll designer. She was ahead of her time. [indistinct]

Audience member

All right. She was made for this little girl when she was a year old. Ellen Fisk. And the doll's name was Amy. And Ellen immediately broke the original head. And immediately, so this is the second head on the body. We don't know what the first one was like. But this lady kept her all her life, until she went into a nursing home. And I have the provenance that she wrote in 1930, with pictures of her with the doll. **Nett**: Oh, that's wonderful. **Audience member**: And then after she went to the nursing home, she found a couple of her hankies and sent them to me in a card. So, I have this ongoing provenance of this. **Nett**: So charming. **Audience member**: and tons of clothes, tons.

Nett

Wonderful. She's wonderful. Very, very nice.
Yes. [indistinct]

95:02

Here's a cute little doll. This is a wonderful, certainly was a wonderful size for kids to play with. This is a little unglazed bisque head. On the little jointed composition body, the knees bend and the arms bend. And you've been able to tell from reading the back of her neck that she's a Simon and Halbig? **Audience member:** Well, I got her on eBay this past summer. **Nett:** Oh, okay. All right. **Audience member:** early 1900s... **Nett:** Yep. Uh huh. She's adorable. [indistinct] Nice wig. This is what her little, one of her legs is unstrung and this is what they look like, unstrung. And again, because these have the balls, you know, do you know how to restring these? Are you going to do this yourself? **Audience member:** No. **Nett:** I would take this to somebody to see about restringing it, because these little legs that have what we call the balls in their knees are a little bit trickier than just regular ones because you can't get to, you can't get in there so easily.

Audience member

I've got three dolls that gotta get to the hospital.

Nett

But she's very sweet, sweet eyes.

Maybe we could take just two more questions and I think we're going to wrap up.

[indistinct]

Okay, this is another kind of a, sort of a folk doll, on a wooden body. Boy, I can't really tell you anything about her. She looks to me like she is... **Audience member:** Is she Indian? **Nett:** She's definitely Indian and she's definitely [?] **Audience member:** Do you think she was made for the tourist trade? **Nett:** I think that is a possibility. **Audience member:** My husband brought her home. **Nett:** I just really don't know.

Audience member

[indistinct]... time period?

Nett

I don't know [indistinct] might have been. It might have been in the 30s and the 40s that they were making them like this. She's not like a really early one.

Audience member

She's got really great silver conches. Yeah, her bracelet. Nice little detail stuff.

97:42

[indistinct]

[tape ends]