BITS & PIECES

Fire-Flies Convention

The 15th Annual Convention of Fire-Flies Golden Age of Dolls, "Lost in the 50's", is planned for May 25-28 in Orlando, Florida.

Attendees will enjoy: Souvenir doll by Vogue Dolls, Fire-Flies handcrafted souvenirs, two banquet dinners, Sunday Brunch and Thursday evening Welcome Buffet and workshop, special Saturday Ginny Luncheon, sales room, workshops, programs, speakers, exhibits and more scheduled for the 4 day event.

Absentee packages are available and the Sales Room will be open to the public on Saturday from 1 to 5 p.m. and Sunday from 11 to 3 p.m.

Registration is $300.00. A registration form is available online at: fire-fliesdollconvention.com.

Marlene Update

In the May & June 2016 issue of Doll Castle News, writer Stephanie Strunk Baker presented a wonderful article, Surviving the Holocaust: The Story of a Girl and Her Doll, that so many of you let us know you thoroughly enjoyed. The doll in the article was Marlene, and Stephanie invited readers to request to see her when visiting the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, DC. We have received information from the museum that Marlene is no longer available to be seen there. Because of her age and fragile condition she is kept in climate controlled storage at another site. We pass this information along to hopefully avoid any future disappointment among readers.

Special Dollhouse at Winterthur

In celebration of the extraordinary dollhouse recently gifted to Winterthur Museum, Garden & Library, Winterthur, Delaware, Yuletide at Winterthur will highlight the holidays through a child's eyes in the 19th and 20th centuries and feature the exquisite house-in-miniature as a central attraction. Winterthur is the former home of Henry Francis duPont, nestled in the heart of the Brandywine Valley in Wilmington, Delaware. Winterthur received this remarkable gift from Jack D. McDaniel, husband of the late Nancy B. McDaniel (1932-2015), designer of the dollhouse, which will be on display in the Galleries Stair Hall through January 8, 2017.

To celebrate the house’s debut, Yuletide at Winterthur highlights the holidays as experienced by children from 1850 to 1950 and features museum room displays that include Winterthur's own collections of miniature objects.

The late Nancy McDaniel of Connecticut and Florida was an interior decorator who operated her own home decorating and holiday design company. During a family trip to England, she was captivated by Queen Mary’s dollhouse at Windsor Castle and inspired to have her own. The dollhouse, custom built in England in 1985 to McDaniel’s specifications, is impressive: 6’4” x 3’9”, slate-roofed, and fully electrified. It houses over 1,000 objects lovingly assembled by creator McDaniel over 30 years. These include over 100 pieces of sterling silver, and a rug in each room that McDaniel needlepointed herself. Just in time for the holidays, the 18-room house is fully decorated with wreaths, candles, trees, and more miniature delights.

The dollhouse is planned for display each year during the Yuletide season, and there is every expectation it will become an eagerly anticipated part of Winterthur’s holiday offerings. Its restoration was completed by Karissa Muratore and Amanda Kasman, University of Delaware Art Conservation undergraduates doing a summer internship at Winterthur, whose time was generously funded through the University of Delaware Undergraduate Summer Scholars Program. During their time at Winterthur, these interns built a following for the house through their popular blog posts, and they welcomed many repeat visitors returning to check on the house’s progress.

For more information visit the Winterthur website, Winterthur.org, or call 800-448-3883.

Adults love to color too!
(see opposite page)

18th Century Dollhouses were made primarily to entertain adults, however some doll houses were made as playthings for children. This dollhouse for you and/or your grandchild to color was made in 1744. It is the earliest known doll house that was made in the United States. There are two main floors and two more rooms under the roof. Notice that below the ground floor there is a drawer where children could store additional dolls, furniture or toys. It was a very sturdy structure that served well to house a family of dolls and held up for several generations of children to enjoy.

It is from a book Stephanie Hammonds sent to me called Toys Through The Ages, written and illustrated by Nancie Swanberg, published by Troubador Press, San Francisco. I do not find any date.