



The photographer

Helen Redman makes them for fun

Life-like 'poppets' show painstaking detail

There are some interesting people in residence at the Midland Public Library this week. There's a woman furiously working her way through a basket of ironing, a merry butcher with a basket over his arm, a bespectacled school teacher, a clarinet player, a tailor, a photographer....

The life-like little dolls are the work of Helen Redman, and they will be on display at the library for two weeks. A diminutive and sprightly woman, Mrs. Redman bears an uncanny resemblance to the amiable and cheerful little people she makes out of cloth and yarn. She calls the bright-eyed, rosy-cheeked mannikins 'poppets' and she learned the art of making them from Renate Weitzenbauer. Since last fall, Helen has made two dozen poppets, and at the moment she has commissions for another seventeen. Yet, she insists it's only a hobby.

"If it ever became a chore—an assembly line operation—she says, "the fun would go, and I just wouldn't want to do them any more."

So, although a gallery in Toronto's Yorkville has offered to sell all she can produce, she's not interested. "I'd rather do them for friends."

Her creations have gone out to some fairly distant points. "One is on its way to England," says Helen. "Several of them have wound up in Toronto. There's one in the Maritimes, and one is due to go to Vancouver."

Helen's dolls are special because they are really three dimensional caricatures, and most of them are of people she knows personally. She makes a point of putting her dolls into settings that reflect a particular hobby or interest—thus the stamp collector, the clarinet player, the photographer are each shown doing their special thing.

The greatest delight for the observer is the painstaking detail that goes into each character. The school teacher wears a blue shirt and a tailored blue blazer. The shirt has buttons about as big as the head of a pin, and the carefully knotted four-in-hand tie is complete with a tiny stick pin. At his feet, there is an over-

flowing wastebasket. He holds a pointer in his hands, and there's a globe on the desk behind him.

The butcher's basket is overflowing with parcels wrapped in butcher's paper and string. The stamp collector is hunched over his album, and there are small stamps on the pages. The clarinet player, modelled after a militant young non-smoker, wears a tiny non-smoking button pinned to his sweater.

While the doll making absorbs a lot of Helen's time — each doll takes about 24 hours to complete — a great deal of effort and imagination goes into what she calls "the fiddly stuff".

How, for instance do you make a small magnifying glass? Helen's answer was to use the top of a Bufferin bottle. The clarinet was fashioned from the top of a Sucaryl bottle, covered with black electrician's tape and studded with keys made of silver gift wrap.

So far, the only accessory that has stumped her is a small cutting block for her butcher. Helen's passion for detail is so intense that she

insists that the butcher's block be laminated, and that's hard to do when you're working in miniature.

One might think that creating her custom made dolls and managing a home family and garden would fill all of Helen Redman's time. She still finds time to design and make costumes and accessories for the staff at Penetanguishene's military and Naval Establishment. "The Government has me

designated as 'Seamstress I,'" she says with a twinkle, "but on my better days I like to think of myself as a costume consultant and production person."

As well as clever stitchery, there's a sharp sense of humour at work when Helen Redman is creating one of her little character dolls. Her father is an avid painter; her mother a fond gardener. Helen made the pair of them, and the tableau shows Father hard at work in front of

his easel while Mother poses prettily with some of her favourite flowers.

The joke becomes clear when you examine the canvass on the little easel. Father, it turns out, is not painting a picture of his helpmate after all. But he has produced an excellent likeness of her bouquet of flowers.

It seems that for Helen Redman, the fun will never go out of her hobby.

Anyone who delights in miniature perfection should make a point of getting down to the

Midland public library some time in the next two weeks to see this remarkable collection of Redman's original poppets.

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Tay park plans presented

A new park to include picnic areas and eventually soccer fields and a large clubhouse is in the works.

Hans Meyer, representing the German-Canadian Club presented a site plan for the proposed recreational facility to the Tay Planning Board. The site plan was approved in principle but the board suggested revising the layout of the park.

The 25-acre park is to be located between Old Fort Rd. and the Fifth Concession of Tay. The land is zoned as recreational and has too many boulders to be used as agricultural says Meyer.

The German-Canadian Club has \$18,000 for a downpayment on the \$25,000 site and will borrow the remaining \$7,000. Meyer stresses the park is open to all, not just the members of the German-Canadian Club.

This is the third location the Club has tried to get for the park. By holding beer gardens and numerous other events each year the club has

been able to raise the funds.

Once the park site receives approval from the Ontario Municipal Board, the next step will be buying the land. Then the club members will be clearing the bush to put in a picnic area and parking. A 25-foot strip of bush will act as a sound and sight barrier between the park and the road.

The club intends to send soil samples from the site to Waterloo to find what kind of trees it should be planting as part of their reforestation.

The second phase of the park will be the building

of soccer fields. "Naturally, as Europeans we would like to see soccer promoted," says Meyer.

Phase three is the building of a clubhouse for dances and banquets which will hold 250 to 300 people.

Meyer says it may take five to ten years to complete the three stages. The club intends to begin the park development with the inexpensive phases first and save toward the clubhouse.

"I think it's going to be a nice spot," says Meyer. "I think we need something there."



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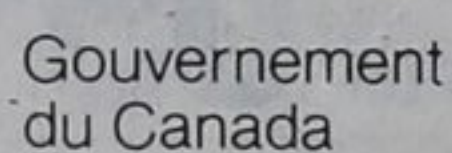
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You'll also need secondary identification. It can be something official with your name on it, like a driver's licence or a school report card. Here photocopies are fine.

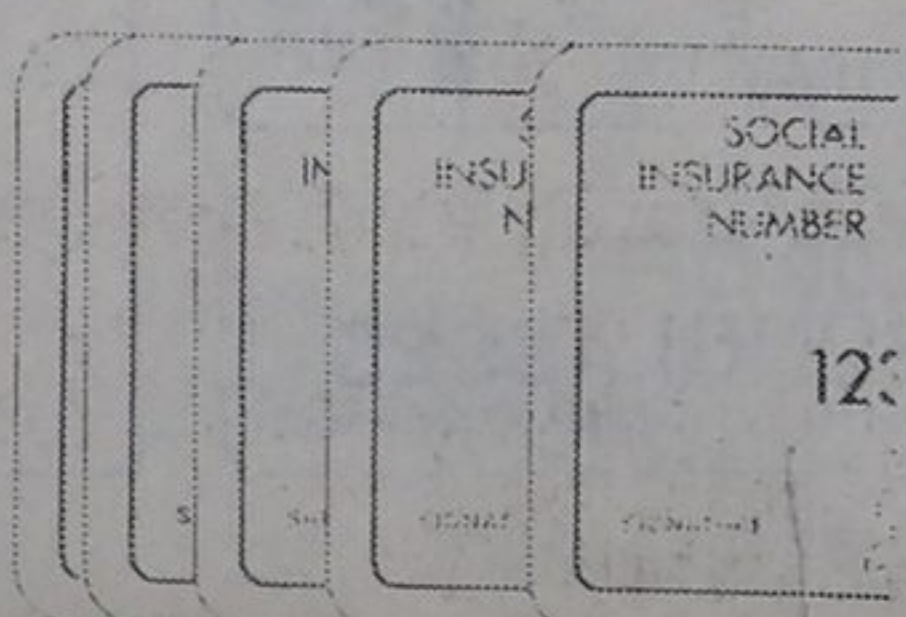
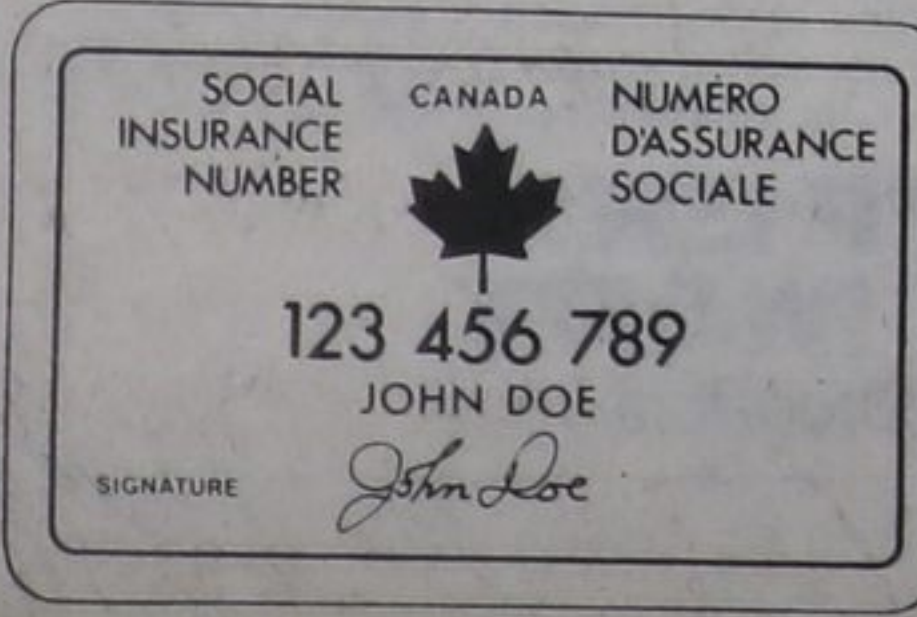
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If you can't get to a UIC office you can go to a Canada Manpower Centre or you can mail your application direct to Ottawa. But you'll have to send original documents or certified copies. And if there are problems with your application or documents it's going to take longer to iron them out than it would face to face in a local office.

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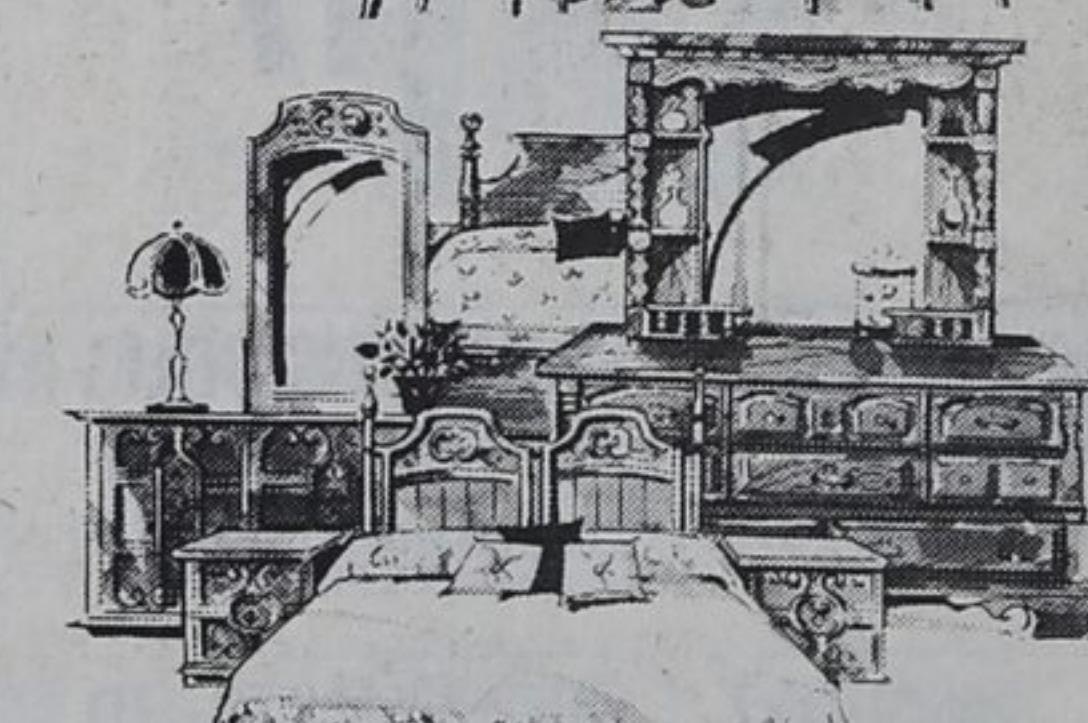
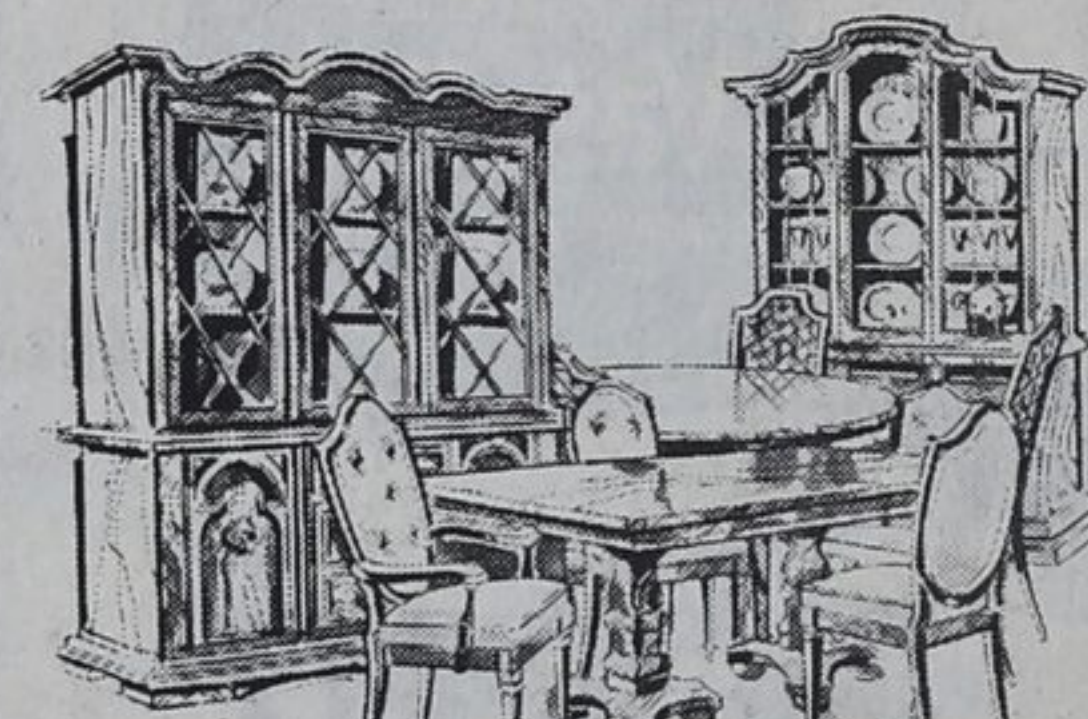
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