

Accountant Figures Way To Build Dream House

It's not uncommon for all of us to have a mental picture of our own dream house.

Donna Patterson, a Clinton accountant, not only has that dream, she's doing something about it! Only this house can be occupied by miniature characters and furniture.

For Donna, Saturdays and Sundays are spent hammering away at a multi-story Victorian "doll house"—a complete replica of those built by the upper class citizenry around the turn of the century.

The home, complete with lighting system, mouldings, pine flooring, doors and windows that actually open, wallpaper, oriental rugs, and other household features is being constructed to house, "built-to-scale," furnishings to show off "handi-work" which she is making in hopes of penetrating a growing "doll house" market.

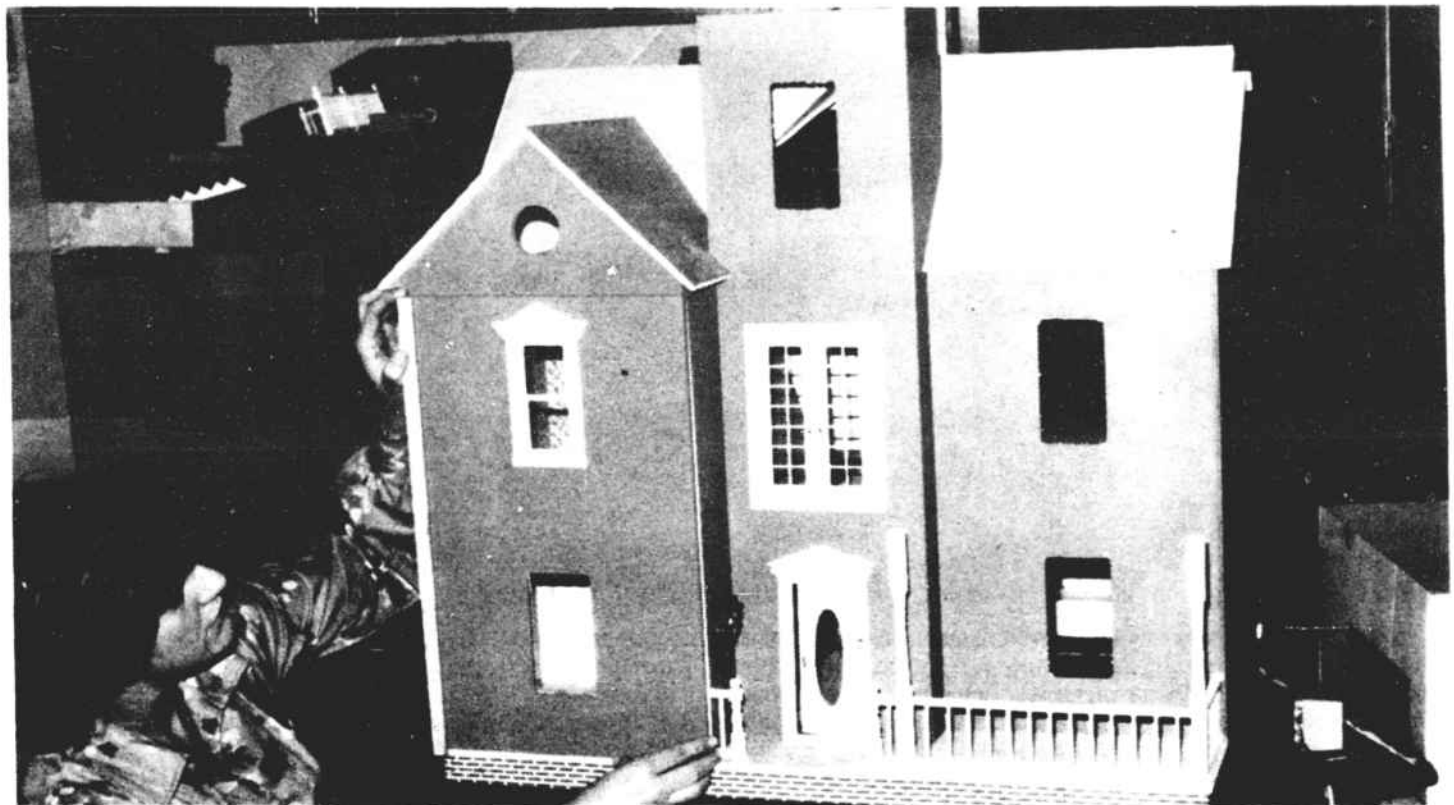
Patterson, using some of the smallest cross stitch and crochet needles available, spends countless hours making miniature parasols, door pulls, place mats, quilts, picture frames and other items for marketing to the "doll house" trade.

At the present time, she has an arrangement with Trader John's in Newberry to market the items under the trade name of Donna's Mini World. "The number of hours required to produce a bedspread in miniature form is almost as great as one for a full size bed," she noted. "The intricate design in a small scaled down item requires hours and hours of patience and skill. Many of the items have to be produced under a magnifying glass because the stitching is so minute."

Miniature homes are growing in popularity among the adult population. Custom built mini homes require an enormous amount of skill to build.

"The house I'm building often takes weeks to complete just one room. The actual wiring, painting, installation of windows, baseboard, chair rails, and ceiling mouldings require as much time to finish as a regular size home."

Once completed, the model home will



Victorian home will take a year to build.



Patterson needs a magnifying glass to make many items.



Market is growing for small scale doll house items.



"I hope to compete successfully with imported miniature furnishings. . ."

—Donna Patterson

serve as a show case for the numerous articles Patterson intends to produce for sale to the public.

"Over the past few years, I've produced hundreds of craft items for sale at craft shows, only to find the profits eroded away because I couldn't compete with church, social, and charitable groups who were willing to sell at any price."

"That's when I decided I'd better seek another marketable item. With so many items being imported in the scale down form, I'm hoping consumers will purchase mine because of their quality and because they, too, are American-made."

"As for the spacious Victorian home, it will be months before all of the intricate details are completed and furnished for dis-

play," stated Patterson as she hammered away at the roof line of the structure.

"As you can see," noted Patterson, "even the nails are to scale—approximately 1/8 to 1/16 of an inch—too small to be held except with needle nose pliers."

"In order to perform many of the construction tasks, I have to use special tools similar to those used by a watchmaker or dentist. Even the smallest mistake in sawing, drill-

ings, hammering, or installation can cost you valuable building materials if improperly done."

The young accountant has a real feeling of accomplishment in the work she has done. Everything done here is a direct duplicate of regular construction, except that few homes have the superb craftsmanship and furnishings planned for the Patterson home.