



All Dolled Up

by Jean Edsall

"Joanie's Story"



A lovely young lady that we have come to know and love at All Dolled Up, first came in about two years ago with her care-giver, Barbara. Barbara knew of Joanie's love of dolls, since she already had a collection of approximately 20 dolls.

Joanie chose her first doll from the two samples we had to show her. The greenware was prepared and ready for the appointed time when Barbara and Joanie would attend their first class.

The day finally arrived. Barbara and Joanie got situated in the classroom. Jean brought out the greenware, a tub of water, and the cleaning tools. As it turned out, when I explained how fragile the doll head is, in the greenware stage, Barbara opted to do the cleaning, painting and assemble under Joanie's close supervision.

When asked, "Joanie, are you working hard?" she always answered emphatically, "Yes!" She was allowed to choose the wig color for her first doll, which determined the color of the paints used. Because the doll is a sleeping baby, so we didn't have to know what color the eyes are.

It takes three classes to finish the first doll, so each week when Barbara and Joanie would come to class, Barbara would fix Joanie a cup of tea and cookies, or whatever goodies we had to offer, so she could keep up her strength during the strenuous job of supervising.

One of the ladies in the class anticipated that the finished baby would need clothing to make the trip home. Mary brought a beautiful hand knit yellow and

white outfit and gave it to Joanie when she was ready to dress the doll.

Every new mommy gets a diaper and a birth certificate, complete with date and city of birth, name of baby, Mother's name, and the name of the instructor and studio.

With all this done and baby dressed, Barbara gently handed the darling little baby girl to Joanie. With tears rolling down her cheeks, (as well as other ladies looking on), Joanie thanked Barbara profusely.

A tradition in the studio is to show everyone your finished doll. Joanie walked all around, so proud. After many "oohs" and "aahs," they prepared to leave Joanie cradling her baby close.

Since that day, Joanie has chosen and supervised the making of several dolls. She loves to pick the wig color and style, the eye color, and finally, clothing. Sandy has sewn costumes for her dolls, too, and gets great satisfaction from seeing how Joanie absolutely adores them.

The most recent doll that Joanie "made" was actually created by her new care-giver, Annette. (I wonder if Annette realized what was involved in taking care of Joanie when she first met her.)

We all so enjoy seeing the ultimate satisfaction Joanie experiences each time a doll is completed. She does not let me forget her "diploma," the final part of the process. And then the process begins again as Joanie chooses her next doll.

Jean Edsall is owner and instructor at All Dolled Up, a porcelain doll studio in Colorado Springs, CO. You can contact Jean through her website: www.alldolledupinc.com

