

The things from our childhood are something memories that we hold dear. Whether the things are objects or memories they tend to remind us of a simpler time in our life when our time was more carefree and our responsibilities were few. Many of the complicated, battery-operated toys of today are more technical than we had as children. Many of these toys are quickly discarded when the bigger faster better model is released. The toys that people hang on to into adulthood are often the least technical ones.

Many children in our neighborhood have received dolls that were made by my mother. There is nothing technical about her cloth doll patterns. The dolls are special because each one is unique and specially made for the recipient. My mother first made a cloth doll for my sister for her sixth birthday. My sister took her doll to a friend's house and her mother wanted the cloth doll patterns so she could make dolls for her children. These dolls did not have the character that my mother's did because my mother was a complete stickler for details. She used the cloth doll patterns to get the shape of the dolls, but it was creativity that brought them to life. Mom had a way of capturing the spirit of the person and bringing the dolls to life. Soon people were asking her to make dolls for their children. My mother would not make a doll for anyone unless she met him or her.

As the children in the neighborhood grew up and left my mother put an end to making the dolls. When my brother and his wife had their first baby she made them one of the dolls. She found infant cloth doll patterns. This kept her busy as each of us started having children. She created additional dolls as the children got older and started developing their personalities. One day one of the neighbors asked my mother if she would make one of the cloth dolls that would look like the neighbor's husband. She wanted to give it to him for a gift for his sixtieth birthday. At first my mother did not think she would be able to do this, but as she started the project she realized that it was as easy to capture an adult's personality in her cloth dolls as it is for children. If she would take all the requests for dolls that she gets she would have a full time job. She would rather share the cloth doll patterns and let people have the fun of making their own.