

A Quarterly Newsletter Published for Members of the We Love Lundby Club

LUNDBY AT A CROSSROADS

By Sue Morse

Decision to Discontinue Lundby Products in US & Canada Stuns Avid Collectors

CITING LAGGING SALES of Lundby items, competition with the 1/12th market, and excessive shipping fees, Larry Hotaling of Hotaling Imports, Inc., Sherrill, New York, expressed regret at his inevitable decision to pull out of the US/Canadian market. He truly is disappointed that the lack of customers for Lundby items couldn't support the expense of distribution (freight costs being the largest).

In a telephone interview, Larry reminisced about the excitement generated when Lundby was reintroduced into US toyshops in 1999 after an absence during the decade of the 1990s. Mothers and grandmothers who had collected Lundby in the 1960s through the 1990s started buying the new houses, furniture, and accessories for themselves and their daughters and granddaughters.

However, the exuberance would last for only about two years. Sales started dropping off sharply. Despite heavy marketing to hundreds of stores, according to Larry, his efforts could not capture the interest of young girls, four years and up. Larry found that, compared to previous generations, young girls of today are much more sophisticated and desire competitive activities (computer games, sports, crafts), causing them to lose interest in dollhouses at earlier ages. The dearth of new collectors prompted the number of stores and websites handling Lundby to drop to fewer than a dozen.

New 2005 Stockholom Offers Optimism

Several of our members have expressed interest in obtaining the new Stockholm house, due to be released in September, so your editors have written the Micki Company to request assistance in obtaining the new house, furniture, and accessories. We hope that more encouraging information will be forthcoming soon.

Larry will continue as an Advisory Member and will keep us apprised of new developments.

Because of the discontinuation of Lundby imports, some US stores are offering sales on Lundby, such as

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Mystery extension from the Garner collection.

MEMBERS SOLVE "WEIRD" EXTENSION MYSTERY

LITTLE DID YVETTE WADSTED, Stockholm, Sweden, and Lis Garner, Plymouth, UK, know that they had separate photos and information that would later come together in *The Lundby Letter* to solve a mystery.

Lis wrote us in late February that she had purchased a "weird" extension unit with an unusual roof terrace, as shown in the photo above. She described it as very "Lundby-ish," but that it was only 24"/61cm long versus the regular 28"/71.1cm size of the extension.

The electrics, windows, doors, and floors were all familiar. It disassembled completely to "flat pack," and it had corner guards that slid on to hold it all in place. The wallpapers looked very much like the 1960s Lundby house with the wooden stair rails at the 2004-2005 Scandinavian exhibition in London. She tested the electrics and they all worked from an older Lundby transformer!

In June Yvette sent several photos from a 1968 post (mail) order catalog showing Lundby furniture and accessories. She suggested that we could publish the photos a few at a time in *The Lundby Letter* to help our members identify early Lundby

furniture. A stunning surprise awaited us when we saw this photo, a "post (mail) order house" showing Lis's same weird extension on top of a flat extension. Mystery solved, thanks to Yvette!



1968 Lundby post (mail) order house from a catalog provided by Yvette Wadsted.

New Optimism—continued from page 1

Nancy's Dollhouses in Naples, Florida which is providing a 40% discount on their entire Lundby inventory (www.nancysdollhouses.com). Larry suggests that Lundby collectors wishing to buy current products not available in the States and in Canada check the UK websites, such as Advisory Member Richard Smith's www.forbigboys.com, or appeal to friends in Sweden to "shop n' ship" for them. ♥



Contemporary is the word for the 2005 Stockholm and its furniture. Shown are examples of the modern furniture design: #60.9001, the kitchen set; #60.9002, the bar set; and #60.9005, the plasma TV set.

Lundby Lore

By Carolyn Frank

COMMEMORATING THEIR 40th Anniversary in 1987, Lundby of Sweden produced two limited editions—the Vision and Classic Collections. The Collections each contained three exceptional pieces, and archivists of the Lundby line will find the items pictured in the 1986 catalog.

The June 2005 issue of *The Lundby Letter* featured the Vision Collection in the present column. The Collection comprised items with working parts – a Television Set (#1050), a Radio (#1051), and a Grandfather Clock (#1052). The pieces, at the time, were considered “innovations in technology,” and

they were “notably unusual” for inclusion in a dollhouse. It is believed that they were made for sale on an individual basis and not as a set.

While modern miniaturists, primarily those working in 1/12th scale, have dimmed the uniqueness of the Vision grouping, the pieces in the Classic Collection have retained their timeless quality and excellence of design. The Breakfront Cabinet (#1001) and the Desk with Chair (#1004) are diminutive works of art.

The items in the Classic Collection were entirely handmade from

Philippine Mahogany; the grain of this tropical evergreen tree approximates the correct proportion for furniture and accessories constructed in 1/16th and 1/12th scales. The Collection was sold in numbered Sets, and only 500 Sets were made for distribution worldwide.

The Breakfront Cabinet stands 5"/12.7cm high, 4 1/2"/11.42cm in width, and slightly over 1"/2.54cm in depth. The doors and drawers of the Cabinet are functional. The Desk with its nine working drawers is 2"/5.08cm in height, 3 1/4"/8.24cm in width, and the depth is slightly over 1"/2.54cm. The swivel-based Chair is in true proportion to the Desk.

The workmanship is exquisite on the items in the Classic Collection, and I was most privileged to view the Set belonging to Sue Morse, my partner and friend.



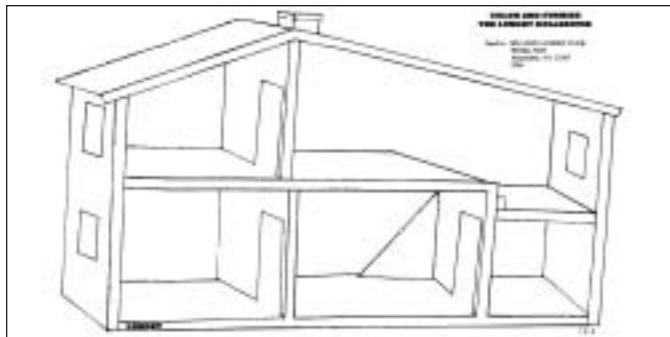
Post Scriptum: The Lundby Home Journal, printed in Swedish and written for children, published a mail-order offer for the Classic Collection in their Autumn 1999 issue. The copy read, “The set of 3 pieces costs 249 Kronor plus postage. On page 4 you can find an order blank — hurry and fill it in and mail it.” 249 Kronor in 2005 US dollars is \$31.00! *The Lundby Letter* is indebted to our invaluable Advisory Member, Patricia Harrington, for the English translation of the above referenced article.



Classic Collection

House Decoration Contest

Calling all Children in the We Love Lundby Club! We are sending you a special drawing so you can show us how creative you are! Submit your Lundby house decoration entry by November 1, 2005, to We Love Lundby Club, P.O. Box 7429, Alexandria, VA 22307 USA.



Drawing by
Carolyn Frank.

NEW DESIGN FOR THE CHILDREN'S PLAYROOM

Ann Morsing and Beban Nord have created a dollhouse for 21st Century children.

By Cia Wedin, copyright© 2005, and translated from the Swedish by Patricia Harrington¹

The following article, written in Swedish, appeared in *Elle Interiör* #4/2005. Permission to translate and print it has been granted by the Deputy Editor, Lotta Lewenhaupt, and the author Cia Wedin. The translator provided the footnotes.

FOUR FLOORS UP in an old industrial building in Södermalm, Stockholm, Ann Morsing and Beban Nord have their architects' office. Together they constitute the successful duo "Box Design/Arkitekter," well-known for the quality of the smallest details in interior furnishings and the extraordinary international sense in their furniture designs. Lundby/Micki Leksaker AB thought this was the perfect combination and contacted them: "We need a modern house with several play areas." Of course, thought the Box Design women, and they began what would turn out to be one of the most fun-filled projects with which they have been involved.

"It has meant a completely new way of thinking during this process," said Beban. "We have tried to transport ourselves back to our own childhoods and to remember what triggered playing!"

Ann and Beban have had the help of Lundby's long experience with dollhouses, which first came out in 1945, but their own children have also acted as a field-test group.

"We used the children to help us check every part, to make sure it aroused a desire to play with it, and



Photo courtesy of Richard Smith.

that it was experienced as something fine in the children's eyes."

Opportunities for playing have been expanded to several levels; instead of children only playing in front of the house or inside the rooms, there are new play areas on the roof, on a deck in the middle section, on the stairs, and in a drawer which contains a patio and a pool and can be pulled out!

It is important that the house is clearly a toy, sturdy enough to be used, and not just a model for adults interested in it for the sake of design. So it has become a toy, which presumably some adults will also long for, because the house is very good-looking. And who doesn't want to have a pool to pull out!

When two interior-design architects create a dollhouse, there is well-thought-out interior decoration, of course, and the classical dollhouse furniture doesn't necessarily fit well. Consequently, they took their own designs and re-drew them in mini-format. As cute as can be, and thus connects Lundby/Micki to the design collections of the 1960s, when this author, among others, played pretend with Jacobsen's sofa "Svanen" [The Swan] in red felt and his turquoise swivel-chair.²

www.boxdesign.se³



Danish Lisa and Hanse Dollhouses Vied for Lundby's Market during 1960s

FIRST IN A SERIES

By Sue Morse

THE COMPETITION MUST have been fierce among Scandinavian dollhouse manufacturers in the 1960s. Not only were Swedish firms Lundby, Brio, and Micki vying for the dollhouse market, there were also two Danish firms, Lisa and Hanse, offering dollhouses, furniture, and accessories.

Lisa and Hanse houses were so similar that it's difficult to tell them apart unless you find them marked, or you are fortunate to obtain furniture or accessories in marked packages. It's even probable that accessories firms, such as Lillbo and Sufa, the lamp and picture makers, provided the same pieces for some or all of the dollhouse makers.

Nevertheless, any of these 1/16th scale pieces, no matter the manufacturer, are highly sought after by collectors. Once the Scandinavian bug bites, the collector is hooked!

My search for information about Lisa and Hanse is ongoing, and I would welcome even a tiny piece of substantiated data from any of our members. I'll share in this article what I do know about Lisa dollhouses and leave my discussion of Hanse for a later issue.

The Hanse Toy Company survives to this day, but, despite considerable research, no helpful information has surfaced regarding the manufacturing of its 1960s dollhouses and fur-

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¹ Please contact Patricia Harrington for permission to use the translation, at newswepepat@yahoo.com.

² Photos of Arne Jacobsen's furniture may be viewed by accessing his work at www.google.com. The miniature versions were manufactured by Brio and some of the items can be seen in the Brio catalogs posted on <http://dollhouse.mine.nu>.

³ The architects, Ann Morsing and Beban Nord, may be reached at www.boxdesign.se.

HOW I FIRST FELL IN LOVE WITH LUNDBY

By Judy Mosholder



Photo by Bob Hanlon

Judy Mosholder (at left) shares her enthusiasm for her unique 1960s Lundby house with fellow club member, Linda Hanlon.

A FEW YEARS AGO when I was antiquing in New England and searching for more Renwal, Ideal, and the other plastic dollhouse furniture that I collect, I spied a dollhouse that was unfamiliar to me. Upon further inspection, I realized that it was a Lundby dollhouse because it had the original Lundby hangtag attached. At the time I had no interest in collecting Lundby, but my fascination with collecting items in original packaging and with other identifying features sold me on the Lundby house. I took the dollhouse home and stored it away for another day.

After I met Sue Morse and read her column, "Calling All Lundby Lovers," in the *Dollhouse Toys n' Us* newsletter, I remembered my Lundby dollhouse stored in the garage. All it took was a little dusting off to help me decide that I should ask Sue for assistance in furnishing my house. During the last year or so, with Sue's help and my own pursuits for Lundby furniture, my house is almost completely out-

Lisa and Hanse Houses—continued from page 3

niture. If any of our members has information about Hanse to share, please contact us so we can inform our readers.

Anna-Maria Sviatko, Mauka, Australia, owns the pictured Lisa house. The house's structure is much like Lundby's except that the sunken room with balcony feature is flipped to the left side. The stairwell also reaches up to the left.

For the most part, collectors feel that the construction and products used in the manufacture of Lisa houses and furniture were inferior to those used by Lundby. However, some of the Lisa pieces, particularly the fireplaces and the blue rustic furniture, are charmingly irresistible.



Photo from the Sviatko Collection

Anna-Maria Sviatko has furnished her Lisa house with an enviable collection of hard-to-find Lisa furniture and accessories.

fitted with 1960s furniture and accessories.

When fellow collector and friend, Linda Hanlon, Virginia/USA, came to visit my home in Pennsylvania last fall, I was very pleased to show her this exciting addition to my collection for the first time. I'm very pleased that I purchased this wonderful Lundby dollhouse. Who knows? Since this house is almost complete, is it time to start another?



Patricia Harrington, Maine/USA, recently purchased another Lisa design, an open A-frame house named the 525, on German eBay.

To the best of my knowledge, Lundby acquired Lisa of Denmark in the early 1980s after the investment group Karlsten purchased Lundby from the founding Thomsen family in December 1982. Several new Lisa designs, called the Bungalows, were created during the Lundby period and sold under the Lundby trademark. We will discuss these Bungalows in a future article.

Elisabeth Lantz, Åkersberga, Sweden, has informed us recently about a possible Lisa house design link to Brio Mobilia, one of Lundby's Swedish competitors in the 1960s. We're looking forward to doing more research on this astonishing revelation.

Unfortunately, the Lisa line went out of existence when Lundby fell into bankruptcy in the 1990s.



Photo from the Mosholder Collection

Judy's Lundby house is the only one that we have seen with a hangtag. Since the tag is tied with a cord around the upper level doorframe, it must have served as identification. Do any of our other members own a house with a hangtag?

Members in Focus

THIRD IN A SERIES OF INTERVIEWS

By Carolyn Frank

LISA BOUTRY, a true Renaissance woman, has combined numerous fields of endeavor with a warm affection for dollhouses to create a vital and interesting life. Although she is still quite young, her previous employment experiences have included working as a Human Resources Officer, a Fashion Industry Manufacturer/Owner, a Pharmaceutical Representative, and a postal lady. Presently Lisa has perhaps the most important of professions. She is an “in-the-home” mother to her 2 1/2 year-old daughter, Madlen.

A native Canadian, Lisa was born in Vancouver, British Columbia, however, she was raised in the United States. She attended high school in Florida and university in Tennessee. Lisa’s husband, Tony Klingbell, is an electronics technician, and they reside in Kamloops, BC. She told us that she is now fluent in both “Yankee” and “Southern” speech patterns.

Lisa’s love for miniatures began when she was ten, and her first Lundby house, a Gothenburg, was purchased at Eaton’s department store in Vancouver. At last count, her collection comprises twenty-four vintage doll homes. They are mostly displayed on shelves in the family’s recreation room. Six of the houses are Lundby models, and she has other houses, similar to Lundby construction, from the following makers: Lisa (Denmark), Micki Gemla (Sweden), Brio (Sweden), and Caroline’s Home (United Kingdom). Lisa has plans to present an exhibit of her houses at a local museum in the near future.

Her favorite Lundby pieces are the modular Lido units, and she is actively seeking the rare pink floral sofa (shown in the 1981/82 UK catalog) and the dark wood cabinet with doors/shelves/two drawers (component of #9423/1987 US catalog). Other items on her want list

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Lisa Boutry takes time from her busy schedule to pose with her dollhouses and her “doll of a daughter,” Madlen.



The Children’s Corner

By Camryn Long

Hello Readers:

My Grammy Sue Morse asked my friend **Caitlin Butchart** to write a review of the cute book, *Salame & Signor*. This book will also be awarded to the grand prizewinner of the House Decoration contest described on page 2. All children are encouraged to enter the contest because all entrants will win a special prize! Try it and see!

Special thanks to Caitlin for her nice review of *Salame & Signor*.

SALAME & SIGNOR is a long and very entertaining book. It has great pictures, and it’s very, very imaginative!

My favourite bits of the book are the pictures (because it’s fun to spot doll’s house furniture you have! And the doll’s houses you have!). And the mystery of it all!

It’s a bit of a dull start, but if you’ve got a great imagination, you’ll soon get into it!

The rough story is this—a girl and boy’s Nan is coming to sleep at her grandchildren’s house. Nan is going to stay in the girl’s room (the girl has the balcony of the Stockholm bedroom). The girl has to sleep outside on the balcony, so the boy says, “I want to sleep on the balcony with sis!” After a little argument as you might have guessed, they both sleep outside on the balcony that night.

When the clock strikes midnight, the boy wakes suddenly from his dream about frogs (he absolutely loves frogs! Even keeps them in the bath) and stares in wonder at a giant swan on the balcony. He wakes his sister to see it too. They hear their Nan coming and pretend to be asleep.

Nan comes to the swan and strokes his beak. When Nan talks to the swan, and he talks back. Nan suddenly sees both the girl and the boy staring with wide eyes at Nan. They are awake.

After another little argument and some explaining, Nan takes the children on an amazing adventure . . . involving princes, princesses, motor bikes, and of course FROGS! But you’ll have to read it for yourself! I hope you enjoy it as much as I did.

I am very glad to be part of the We Love Lundby Club and I look forward to getting the newsletters and reading them! I think it’s incredibly clever! I never thought people outside my family could love doll’s houses as much I do.

Love from *Caitlin Butchart.*

Lundby of Sweden published the book, Salame & Signor, in 1988. Viveca Sundvall, author, and Gunilla Wårnström, illustrator.



Four New Members Update WLL Club Membership to 55

A special welcome to our new members **Paige Baird** (London, UK); **Susan and Peter Klopperman** (Maryland/USA); **Susanne Hjelm** (Stockholm, Sweden); and **Jennifer McKendry** (Ontario, Canada). For contact information, please see the New Members/September 2005 list in the enclosures. ♥

NEW SWEDISH EMBASSY IN NATION'S CAPITAL TO PROMOTE CULTURAL EXCHANGE

According to the 2004 Annual Report of American Swedish Institute, based in Minneapolis, Minnesota, a momentous groundbreaking ceremony took place last year on the banks of the Potomac River in Georgetown, a section of Washington, D.C. The construction of a new Swedish Embassy was begun. Designed by Gert Wingårdh, the new Swedish chancery's design will feature modernistic glass construction accented by natural wood veneer. It will open in 2006.

A modern art gallery and cultural center are planned as key spaces, enabling the embassy to host major exhibitions and cultural programs from Sweden. Your editors hope to report on the Grand Opening next year! ♥

Lisa Boutry—continued from page 5

are the “modern” items from the 1940s and 1950s.

Lisa would also like the Micki Company, the current owner of the Lundby name, to expand the line with additional houseplants, do-it-yourself art (interchangeable paintings/frames), small kitchen appliances, flooring sheets, and wall panels.

An avid craftswoman, Lisa is currently working on her “make-your-

own-Lido” units. She recently upgraded to a full-size table saw for the project, and she hopes to have her Lisa-Lido system in production by early 2006. However, as she wrote us, “Hobbying with a toddler, you measure projects in months and years, not weeks.”

Members should check out Lisa's auctions on eBay, as she often has Lundby and other vintage miniatures up for bid. Her User ID is: *jaybaby*. ♥

Calling All Lundby Sleuths —

Help Us Date 60 Years of Lundby Houses and Furniture

Your editors received a letter from **Rita Goranson**, Iowa/USA, with the following questions: “Does it make a difference as to age, rarity, etc., where Lundby furniture was made? Some pieces in the packages that I own say, ‘Made in Sweden’; some say ‘Made in Hong Kong’; and some say ‘Made in China.’ If places of manufacture indicate a way to date pieces, I would be interested in knowing. Another question, “Did the Lundby Company ever make a castle?”

Thanks, Rita, for launching a quest that will hopefully motivate our

readers to join our detective team. Presently your editors do not have all the exact answers for you, but we would like to produce in upcoming issues an ongoing response to your questions about identifying and dating Lundby.

At least four of our members have already done abundant research—**Marion Osborne**, Nottingham, UK, has compiled 18 pages of items in numerical order entitled “Dollhouse Items Sold by Lundby from circa 1970–1986”; **Anna-Maria Sviatko** has contributed an article on “Dating Your Vintage Doll's House” to the Australian Lundby Toys website, www.lundby.com.au; **Peter Pehrsson**, Nybro, Sweden, has created a website with a wealth of pictorial information about Lundby at <http://dollhouse.mine.nu>; and **Yvette Wadsted** plans to release a book on Scandinavian Dollhouse design.

The 60th anniversary of Lundby dollhouses will soon be upon us! Our proposal is to celebrate the upcoming event with a publication, “A Sixty-Year Timeline for Dating Lundby Dollhouses and Furniture—1947–2007.” We will need your help for this ambitious undertaking. ♥

Lundby Connections

Lis Garner answered **Geraldine Scott's**, Florida/USA, query about the square Masonite piece on her Lundby roof. Yes, it is the base for a detachable chimney. The house was much easier to pack without the chimney protruding. ♥



The Lundby Letter is published quarterly for members of the We Love Lundby Club. If you have any inquiries about an article, or if you are interested in submitting a story or project of your own, please do not hesitate to write or email us.

THE LUNDBY LETTER
We Love Lundby Club
P.O. Box 7429
Alexandria, VA 22307
Email: welovelundby@aol.com

Editor: Sue Morse
Associate Editor: Carolyn Frank
Advisory Members: Patricia Harrington
Larry Hotaling
Marion Osborne
Richard Smith
Yvette Wadsted
Design: Don Christian

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Coming Up in the December 2005 Issue

- Report on Mini-Convention
- New Website
- The *Salame & Signor* Lundby House
- Announcement of House Decoration Contest Winner
- Holiday Memories
- Member Interviews
- And much more.