

## Traditional - style English Pedlar Doll

I have long been fascinated by pedlar dolls and vaguely considered making one, as the real antique ones are beyond my reach, but it took the “President’s Challenge” to make me bring all the accumulated ideas and artifacts together, to fulfill the dream at last.

My impression is that most genuine English pedlar dolls reflect the costume and likely trade goods of the first half of the nineteenth century, so this is what I have taken to be the “traditional” look and aimed for with my doll, although she is a peg-wooden or “Dutch” doll of a later date, around 1890, when such dolls were in shoddy decline, out of fashion and therefore cheap and expendable.

However, my doll was purchased, naked and with one arm adrift, from English guild member Marilyn David, and that connection, together with her pleasant, if homely appearance and utilitarian construction, seemed to make her a suitable candidate for the pedlar role. Besides, she had waited long enough to be dressed as anything, so did not mind this imposition!

Her clothes were mostly made for her, using vintage fabrics or plausible imitations, but her very practical boots were ready-made, just needing to be dyed black, her apron is a finely-stitched antique from my stash and her black bonnet is on loan from another doll, as I ran out of time to make her one.

Her basket/tray is a thrift store find, propped with a branch that she might have found herself in a hedgerow and is filled or hung with a mixture of modern but old-style miniature household necessities, handmade sewing notions and candies, and a few aged treasure, many gifts from understanding friends.

I ran out of time to make all the appropriate items I thought of, and space to cram any more into the tray, but this gives me the option of adding things as I make or find them, or changing the whole stock on a whim, part of the joy of having a pedlar to play with from now on!

Pam Glew



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PEDLAR