

**J**anet Paulger, her daughter, Emma, who helps at shows and handles the website, and Janet's sister Carol Audis, collectively known as "Lullaby Dolls," say that working together does have its advantages.

"We love to work together when possible," says Janet, "and thanks to the Internet, we are always sending progress pictures to each other."

Judging from their output, they've been burning up the cable wires, although the two women say they only began sculpting four years ago. In fact, after discovering artist dolls, they were so impressed with the work of Lorna Miller-Sands, but unable to buy it, that they did what seemed logical - at least to them.

"I was amazed to see my first Lorna Miller-Sands baby," says Janet. "At that time, I was unable to buy something of that value, so Carol came up with the idea of sculpting our own, just like that!"

The sisters happily went to work, although their venture was almost over before it began. They first made a papier mache' head form, which they covered with air dry clay. "What we didn't do was vent it in any way and it soon began to smell," says Janet. "We didn't know what it was for quite some time, but we never did that again."

Then there was "Ruth," Janet's first, er, "baby" created when her sister came to stay for the week. "We were very productive with air drying clay," she says. "I was going to go all the way with mine, so I made limbs, and even my first body, the night we finally put her "together," ...my son Steven came home that night with his friend Paul (who finds anything that resembles a real baby very spooky). He was introduced to Ruth, well, the tears rolled down his face, he couldn't stand or speak, I will never forget how we all laughed... Ruth (now) resides in a box in the loft."



Chance and Bliss



Hattie and Madeley



Kendel



Cherish



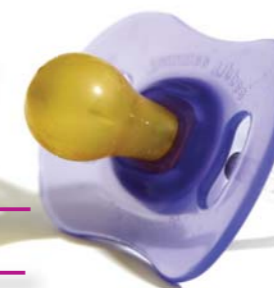
Janine

Carol discovered polymer clay, and Janet says, "wow, no turning back now." A past series of articles on sculpting in DOLL gave them ideas and introduced them to the polymer head and limbs forms. They sculpted, and perfected, and tweaked, finally participating in their first show.

"We had so much fun and shared in each other's excitement as each head was becoming a little more human," says Janet. "Eventually we did our first show, and we will never forget the moment we sold our first dolls - pure magic. We had actually made something that someone wanted to buy; that feeling is so special."

"We practiced for a long time, wasting a lot of clay, but having a lot of fun along the way," says Carol. "Being sisters, we could be brutally honest with each other, so if Janet thought my baby was revolting she would tell me, and I would oblige her in the same way. Finally we reached the stage where we considered taking our babies to the public. We went to one show armed with a couple of samples just to get some feedback. Penny from

# BABY LOVE



By Christine A. Verstraete

Clockwise from top:

Two shades of Modelene are mixed to get a soft olive skin tone for the biracial babies, Chance and Bliss. Chance is a full size baby, 20" long, 5 lbs. 3 oz, with baked-in hair. Bliss is a mini baby, 14 1/2" (they usually are 14-15"), weighing 2 lbs 3oz. She also has baked-in hair. Hand-knit clothes by a customer, Sue, and her mum.

Preemies: Hattie is 18 1/2" long, weighs 3 lbs. 11 oz and wears a hand-knit outfit by a friend, Gloria. The boy, Madeley, is 19" long and weighs 3 lbs. 7 oz. Mini babies are £225.

Janine is 19 1/2" long and weighs 4 lbs. 13 oz. She has baked-in mohair, £495.

Janet says preemie Cherish "stole my heart," so she hasn't been able to sell her.

Kendel was finished in April. The 20" long boy is made of Modelene and weighs 5 lbs. 3 oz with baked-in mohair.



Eleanor

Cat's Whiskers was very encouraging and we decided to take the plunge and book a table. They did like our babies, so much that we sold three at our very first show, and we were overjoyed to think that someone could appreciate our work."

Since then, they've learned, and improved, but above all, they are still having fun. They produced their first silicone babies in 2004. And yes, they still do weekly get-togethers as warranted, proving that family members really can work with each other successfully. They say it helps that other family members are understanding, too.

"The main thing we have learned in all this is to be very patient," says Carol. "We have tweaked until the early hours of the morning, knowing we could scrunch it up and redo it the next day, My husband Alan is also on hand to critique," she continues. "He is very patient and knows when he comes home in the evening it's not always his dinner that is in the oven cooking, more often than not it's either

a head or limbs. This usually means his meal may be a little late."

"Occasionally one of us will visit the other and stay for a week, we sculpt together and

really enjoy that," adds Carol. "We also manage to fit in some shopping, which we also enjoy. However we have learned to be careful of what we say when we are out shopping. One time when we were both getting weary I said to Janet, 'oh let's just go home and make some more babies.' We

got some very strange looks from the people who were within earshot!"

The women still enjoy getting together - (they even get some work done!) The best part? Even with six children between them, plus grandchildren, the women say they can't wait to make more babies!

"Carol and I feed off each other, and are always moving the goalposts," says



Liam

Janet. "She did a wonderful crying baby just recently, and so I played catch up with a yawner. We love this!"

END



Caitlin

Clockwise from top:

Eleanor is a silicone baby, 21" long, weighing 7 lbs, with glass eyes and mohair that is micro-rooted in a natural growth pattern. She is Carol's second silicone baby. LE 15, she comes with a choice of eye and hair color. £800.

Liam, completed in May, is 21" long, weighing 5 lbs. 2 oz. He is made from Modelene, with hand-applied hair, baked into the clay. He has full arms and legs. £495.

Caitlin is a 20" long oak, weighs 5 lbs and was "born" in June. She is £495.

Liam, completed in March, is Carol's first crying baby. He is 17" long, weighs 4 lbs. 8 oz, and is sculpted from Modelene. His hair is hand-applied and baked into the clay. He has full arms and legs. Sold.