

# Byers' Choice® Ltd. *Caroler Chronicle*



Edition II, 1992

Pam Byers, Editor



## *Retired Choir Children*

Choir boys and girls like the ones pictured above were first created by Byers' Choice Ltd. in 1982. Men and women dressed in matching attire were also available during the introductory year. This family of four was sold first by Sturbridge Yankee Workshop, a catalog based out of Westbrook, Maine. All of these pieces were dressed in red satin robes and white tunics trimmed in cluny lace. Each choir costume was accented by a large black bow at the neck.

This was one of Byers' Choice's first experiences with the use of man-made fur as hair. Synthetic fur

had to be used for hair because the choir figurines wore no hats to cover the backs of their heads. The coiffures proved to be more than our limited styling skills could handle. The men in particular, received very peculiar haircuts. Consequently the adults were dropped from the line at the end of the first year. We continued to make the choir children for four more years until 1986.

When the parson joined our group in 1990 there was a renewed interest in choir figurines. Perhaps we will see the return of these cheerful harmonizers some time in the future.



## *New Victorian Mother and Child*

Our newest mother and child pair, dressed to match in Victorian garb, can be seen gaily tripping through the dressing department toward shipping and right into the UPS trucks for delivery to your favorite Caroler® dealer.

Mother holds her toddler up to help steady those first uncertain steps. Mother and toddler are dressed to match in the Victorian style. Mama's little one wears an eyelet-trimmed frock and a hooded cloak tied with a satin bow. Mother's wide-brimmed hat and lacy collar frames her rosy-cheeked, happy face. We think she makes a perfect gift for Moms with children of all ages!



## *Knock, Knock...*

Now you can arrange your Caroler collection around this pretty front door. With their little mouths open to sing, you can imagine the surprise and delight of the lucky one who answers the Carolers' knock.

This ivory-painted resin door was designed in the Colonial style by Joyce. Byers' Choice friend, Ernie Fauth, constructed the original door out of wood. (Ernie also builds props for the miniature sets in which the Carolers are often photographed.) The doors are cast from a mold which was taken of the wooden door. Measuring 20-1/2" high by 14" wide at the base, our door has a brass knob and a wreath with apples and a red bow. Graceful fan-shaped detailing above the portal and slender columns at its sides adds a stylishly decorative touch that is sure to complement your holiday display.







## *Hints for keeping your Carolers Happy and Healthy*

*For this issue of the Chronicle, we have assembled a few tips to help you keep your Caroler collection in tip-top shape.*

- Avoid bright sunlight when choosing where to display your Carolers. Sunlight will fade the clothing and face paint. If the cheeks on your Caroler have faded, apply some powder blush with a soft Q-tip. A faded lip can be touched up with a natural looking shade of nail polish.
- Your pet may be attracted to the fur used in dressing the Carolers. Dogs and cats have been known to completely devour a Caroler, leaving behind only broken fragments of its head and base. So make sure your Carolers are out of the way of these potential mischief-makers.
- When storing your Carolers between the holidays, avoid damp areas. High humidity can cause metal parts to rust or mold to grow on some fabrics. Also, keep them away from areas that can flood during a thunder storm (or when the washing machine overflows). Water damage comes in second only to pet damage in destroying a Caroler beyond repair. If your Caroler should get wet, quickly blot the excess water with a clean towel and dry with a hand-held hair dryer.
- A hand-held clothes steamer is great for taking the wrinkles out of a skirt, jacket, or paper scroll. Roll the ends of the paper around a pencil to curl it.
- A lint brush or the small crevice attachment to your vacuum cleaner is useful in removing loose fur and dust from clothing. A small, soft cosmetic brush can be used to dust off the face, hair and base.
- Beware of mice. They are quite fond of the felt and tissue paper for building their nests. Wrap your Carolers in tissue paper and add a few moth balls in the packing box to keep them away.
- Avoid storing your Carolers in cedar; it has been known to dissolve the paint on their faces.
- A little hairspray can calm down a frizzy hairdo.
- A small chip in the base can be smoothed with a nail file and then touched up with a dark green felt tip marker. Likewise, a scuffed shoe can be polished with a black laundry marker.

## *Do You Have a Favorite Caroler?*

When Joyce designs a new figurine, the editor of the Caroler Chronicle gets to write a descriptive paragraph about the newest addition to the Byers' Choice line. Now we're turning the tables: we want you, the collectors, to describe your favorite Caroler in 75 words or less.

Be funny or sentimental...add a personal perspective...whatever you do, originality counts! Three winners will receive a pair of signed Caroler figurines that are to be designed by Joyce.

Send your 75-word-or-less description of your favorite Caroler to

**Byers' Choice  
"My Favorite Caroler" Contest  
P.O. Box 158  
Chalfont, PA 18914**

Remember to include your name, address, and phone number. Hurry and drop us a line, because deadline for contest entries is July 15, 1992.





## *Ben Franklin Visits Byers' Choice*

Byers' Choice received a "revolutionary" guest this winter in the form of Benjamin Franklin impersonator, Ralph Archibald. But forget his real name, this man not only looks and acts like Ben Franklin, he *is* Ben Franklin! Ben toured the factory, greeting the Byers' Choice family of employees, and then treated everyone to an amusing monologue of famous Franklin quips and quotes.

In honor of this illustrious guest, Joyce presented Ben with a Caroler figurine in his own likeness, complete with paper kite and tri-cornered hat.

In addition to the surprise appearance from one of this country's most beloved founding fathers, Bob and Joyce planned a few other activities to enjoy with their employees this spring.

While Halloween is the big fall event here, with everyone coming up with original and often outrageous costumes, spring brings its own special fun

with the annual Easter egg "hunt" and company luncheon. Although not a true hunt (no eggs can be found among the bolts of fabric or in the rows of cats and dogs), each employee gets to pick a prize-containing egg from the Easter basket.

A very special event is planned for later in the spring, when Byers' Choice makes an outing to the theater to see the widely acclaimed "Phantom of the Opera." Everyone is looking forward to enjoying this world-famous musical.

Company activities extend beyond the frivolous and fun to include community service. Byers' Choice sponsors a stretch of Pennsylvania highway which we are responsible for keeping clean.

"Doing things like this together in a family atmosphere is one of my favorite things about Byers' Choice," says Bob. We hope he and Joyce plan some more activities soon!

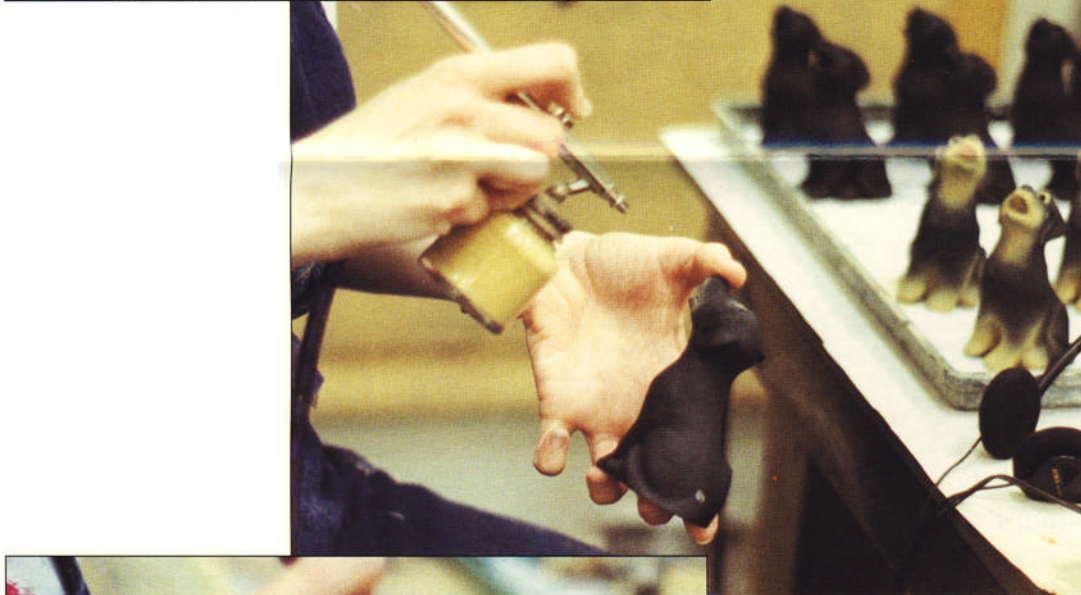




## Dogs and Cats

When Joyce comes up with a new singing dog or cat, she insists that she's not thinking of getting down the likeness of a particular breed. Rather, she tries to capture the essence of a wide variety of garden-variety mutts and assorted barn and house cats. While Joyce develops the original clay animals from which the plaster molds are cast, the air brush painters at Byers' Choice get to put their personal mark on each dog or cat, too.

Racks of dogs and cats of sundry breeds, in various stages of airbrushing and accessorizing, occupy a cozy corner of the Byers' Choice building. There's Peaches the dachshund, Abby the sheep dog, and the illustrious basset hound, Lucy, winner of the Byers' design-a-singing dog contest, just to name a few.



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It was 1986 when someone suggested to Joyce that singing pets could be whimsical companions for the Carolers. So she gave each employee a lump of clay and announced the contest: the best singing dog would win. When Joyce sifted through the wide array of pure and mixed breed entries (and a few clay frankfurters), Lucy emerged victorious.

After Joyce worked out the production side of things, she designed a few more canines to keep Lucy company. The cats came a bit later in 1988. Now there are roughly 24 different dog molds and 5 cat molds. Unique air-brushing and accessorizing means that there are literally hundreds of variations on the singing dog and cat theme.





*Byers' Choice® Ltd.*

P.O. Box 158, Chalfont, PA 18914  
(215) 822-6700

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