



The Button Doll

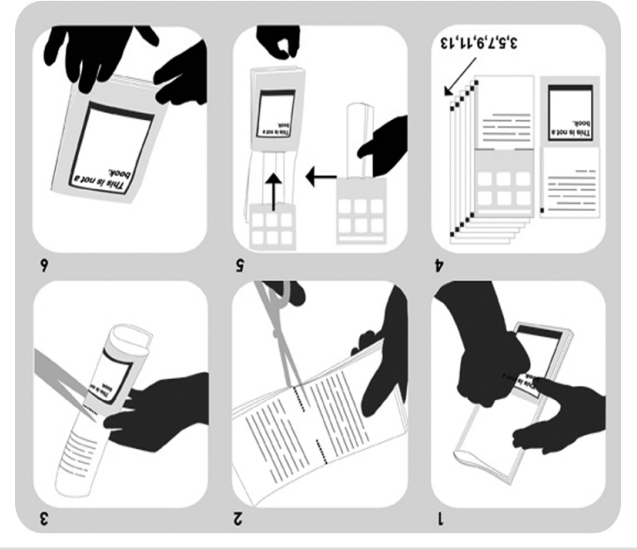
Community Story Telling Project

The Dundas Museum and Archives is home to a rich and diverse collection of artifacts and archival materials. In addition to the regular care and feeding that such a collection normally requires, one of our most important jobs is to make our collection available to our community. We do this through exhibitions, publications, lectures and facilitating research. What all of these activities are about, at heart, is telling stories. Often, these stories are grounded in factual information, such as names and dates or verifiable, accurate data. Other times, they are about the equally important memories we hold or connections we make.

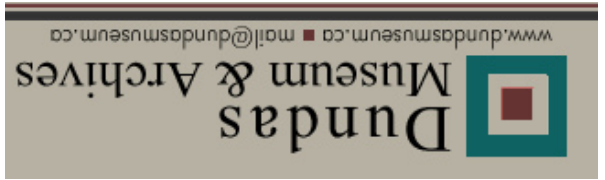
Like our community, history is a living thing. It grows, changes, and can be experienced in a wide variety of ways. In the Community Story Telling Project, we invite you to interpret, reflect on, and respond to specific objects in our collection. Your contributions will help us to consider objects and their relationship to our community's history in ways that we might not have thought of.

This little book is about the button doll, a unique and popular artifact in our collection. We invite you to tell us what you think about her.

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Thank you for participating in our Community Story Telling Project. We value your contributions, and welcome you to share your stories with us as often as you wish.

was always carefully preserved in a curtained off area of Emma Lewis' home. In 1964, Mrs. Lewis decided the museum would be a good home for her creation, and donated it to us in that year.



What the Dundas Museum and Archives knows about the button doll.

This doll was created by a woman named Emma Lewis, who lived in Hamilton. Between the years 1929 and 1932, she sewed more than 2,060 buttons on her creation. The doll's head is made from papier mache. Her dress is cotton green and white gingham, and is the style commonly found on dolls from the late 1900s. The doll is about 23 in ches tall, and is mounted on a wooden stool-like stand.

Mrs. Lewis was the mother of sprinter and Olympic bronze medalist Ray Lewis. "Rapid Ray," as he was nicknamed, worked for the Canadian Pacific Railway as a porter during the Great Depression, and was known to frequently run along the railway tracks during stopovers on the Canadian Prairies. If you look carefully at the button doll, you can see a few of Lewis' porter uniform buttons, marked Pullman or C.P. R.

A recent visitor to the museum was pleasantly surprised when she saw her grandmothers button doll in the museum. She told us that she had never been allowed to touch the doll, and that it

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