

Case Study: Outside the box – The Japanese Doll

Ed Ram, Steve Privett, Scott Keiller & Martin Charter

Farnham Repair Café (FRC) is a collaborative project between The Centre for Sustainable Design® at the University for the Creative Arts and Transition Town Farnham. FRC is held on the second Saturday of each month at Farnham United Reformed Church and is run entirely by volunteers. It offers a place for local people to get free advice and assistance in repairing a wide range of household items including mechanical, electrical and electronic equipment, clothes and textiles, bicycles and furniture.

Since FRC was launched in February 2015, volunteers have helped to successfully repair one hundred and twenty-two items for local people. Here, FRC repair volunteers Ed Ram and Steve Privett recount a successful repair from the most recent FRC session on March 12th

FRC volunteers Ed Ram (right) and Steve Privett (left) had to think and work Outside the Box when they teamed up to restore a delicate and much treasured Japanese ornament for local resident Tina Proctor.



FRC furniture repairer Ed Ram describes what was an irresistible repair challenge!

“Steve, a new recruit to the FRC volunteer repair team was lending a hand at my *Furniture Repair Table* when owner Tina Proctor, brought the item to February’s FRC. The lacquered wooden and glass display box for this attractive c. 1950’s porcelain Japanese doll was in pieces. Tina had carefully wrapped the delicate glass panels, wooden back and upright frame sections in cloth and asked if we could help bring the piece back to its former glory. Although it was not strictly a piece of furniture the challenge of repairing such a delicate piece was irresistible! Steve and I worked together on the repair back at my workshop and it soon became clear that Steve had exactly the meticulous approach that was needed and I became the "gopher"!

Steve found a similar item for sale on eBay which helped to confirm the correct orientation and reassembly of parts in the display box prior to starting the repair.

According to Steve “The main issue was that the wooden parts and original glues had undergone shrinkage causing the display structure to fall apart. It was therefore necessary to repack and re-bond the wooden uprights, refit and pack the side-glass before bonding the upper frame and top glass into place. The decorative wooden rear insert panel had deteriorated to such an extent that it could no longer be reattached to the frame. The solution was to pin it discreetly to the frame by sandwiching it between a number of fine dressmaking pins inserted into the rear wooden uprights. Not something Ed had in his workshop so we raided his wife’s sewing basket!”



Ed carries on the story “As the photo shows we succeeded in reassembling the frame and inserted the glass sides at the back board, applied a fast setting wood glue to all the areas and placed a weight on the top to ensure rigidity while the glue was setting.

After Steve left I painted the base board and placed the reins of the horse into her right hand and the head of the hobby-horse into the left hand as shown in an image we had downloaded from the Internet.

It was a fascinating item to repair, I learned a great deal in the process of getting the project completed and could not have made the owner so happy without Steve Privett's skilful approach to complete the reconstruction”

Notes to Editors

Farnham Repair Café is collaborative project between The Centre for Sustainable Design® at the University of the Creative Arts and Transition Town Farnham. Part of the global repair café movement led by Repair Café International Foundation. Supported by Farnham Town Council, Farnham United Reformed Church and University of the Creative Arts

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http://cfsd.org.uk/events/farnham_repair_cafe/ or watch our video at

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4uxiPsgob2Y&feature=youtu.be>