



Joyce Daams (65) is a Dutch brocante enthusiast and avid collector who lives in Belsele in Belgium. Joyce has a great deal of knowledge and background information about various brocante pieces and accessories. In every edition of *Loving Brocante*, she highlights a topic and talks about its history. Photography: Chantal Groenen. Text: Joyce Daams. Editor: Margreet Frens.

Tripartite



What could be nicer than being occupied with embellishing your house? But once you start, the end is often never in sight. As I have so often experienced. It seemed so easy; move some furniture about and give a lick of paint here and there. But nothing proved less true. Take the walls of my living room for example. These were white but are now mainly gray and are also combined with wallpaper. It turned out to be quite a task to figure this out and combine it well.

Embellishing your house is not only from our time, since it was also going on in the Victorian period (1837-1901). A wealthy middle class emerged during this era. These 'nouveau riche' spared no cost or effort to display their wealth in their homes. The salon was the most important room; that was where they received visitors. Hence this room was filled with personal treasures and souvenirs. Warm, rich colours and an abundance of motifs; it was an eclectic mix. The most striking feature in the salons was the layout of the walls, called tripartite. This three-part layout consisted of panelling at the bot-

tom, called dado rail (up to the height of chairs), a middle section - also called a field - and a cornice; an ornamental moulding round the wall just below the ceiling. The panelling was often made of wood which was quite a costly investment in those days. But people could also have these marbled, varnished or even stencilled.

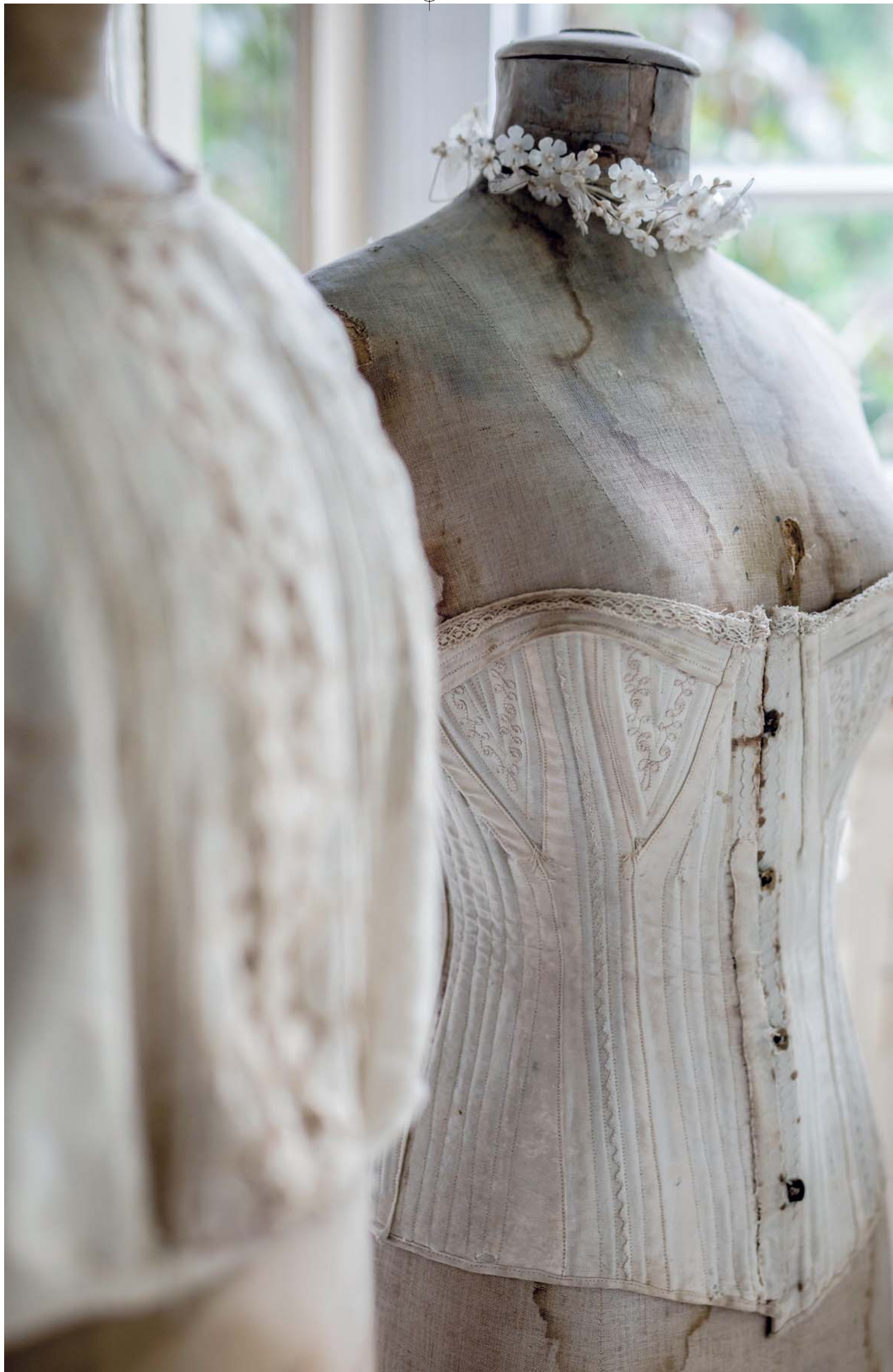
Through the discovery of linoleum and other products at the start of the Art Nouveau period, wall coverings were also manufactured later. The substrate often consisted of cotton or linen with embossed paper, fabric or leather. This was true craftsmanship which people used to create wonderful rooms. The appearance was overwhelming. Current wallpaper companies such as Cole & Son still regularly go back to replicas of these gorgeous designs. You rarely see old pieces of wallpaper at markets: you would have to be extremely lucky. That's why when I do come across it, I always buy it and use it to wallpaper the walls of my doll houses or make paintings from it. It brings out your creative side and that is exactly what you need to turn your house into a contemporary palace.

Joyce

HOUSE OF LOVE

It was German Ramona's dream to someday live - with her family - in the countryside in an old farmhouse. During their search, however, they came across a completely different house in which they are still exceptionally happy to this very day. Photography: Ramona Kohler. Text: Margreet Frens.







Ramona has three beautiful daughters - Yvonne (30), Natasha (28) and Anne (26) - who have left home. Furthermore, she is the proud grandmother of 7-year-old Sophie-Marie. "And to top it all," she says, "I am also married to Bernd. The most wonderful man to be found walking this earth. He supports me in absolutely everything. When it comes to the shop, our home or the garden; I have been able to realise all my ideas and dreams thanks to him." Among all this loveliness, they also have no less than six cats and a dog (Joey).

FRENCH AMBIENCE

Ramona and Bernd bought the house where they now live in 2007. "We needed a larger living space for our family. Moreover, we wanted to move to the countryside. My dream was to live in an old farmhouse, but we couldn't find anything suitable. When we had almost given up, I met an elderly couple who wanted to sell their house. And so on a beautiful summer day I drove to Dettingen to look at their house and when I entered the hall I was instantly smitten. Even though I actually wanted an older house, I immediately saw that I could create a French ambience here. All I then had to do was convince Bernd," she laughs.







CONSERVATORY

Ramona and Bernd's home is located in the middle of a plot boasting no less than 1800 square meters, surrounded by hydrangeas, lavender, clematis, English roses and a tree that is more than thirty years old. "That makes it feel like we're living in a park," says Ramona. The conservatory that Bernd built 3 years ago is directly adjacent to the living room. It is romantically decorated with mannequins, light furniture (which she often renovated herself) and lots of mirrors. Ramona has a weakness for romance. "The interior of our house is very feminine, which Bernd had to get used to at first. But he did. He had no choice really, let's just leave it at that," Ramona laughs.





'The dining area
is situated in a round
corner of the house'





CABIN TRUNK

Behind and next to the conservatory is the living and dining room. This room is also furnished with French furniture and has a snug seating area. Ramona has removed the fabric from the armchairs, which has given them a nice faded look. A large cabin trunk serves as a coffee table. The dining area is situated in a round corner of the house. The made-to-measure bench provides enough room for the whole family and, if necessary, even

more people. In front of it are two antique dining chairs with a high back. In this room we also come across several worn mannequins that complement the ambience perfectly. From here we make our way into the kitchen via a passageway. The kitchen cabinets brimming with old crockery have been pieced together over the years. Everything radiates the typical French atmosphere that Ramona loves so much.







‘The kitchen cabinets have been pieced together over the years’





PRINCESS ROOM

On the other side of the house is the guest room and Ramona and Bernd's bedroom. "I have decorated the guest room very romantically. Especially because our granddaughter Sophie-Marie sleeps here when she stays with us. She loves this room and calls it her Princess Room." No wonder, I can easily imagine that a 7-year-old girl feels special here among the antique shutters, lace curtains, tutus and ballet shoes. Ramona and Bernd's bedroom – which is also the epitome of romance - is next to the guest room. Hydrangeas in old pitcher jug vases are dotted here and on top of the antique cupboards, which are all lightly painted, we find gorgeous pieces of brocante.



'Hydrangeas in old pitcher jug vases are dotted here and there'





There have been numerous renovations to achieve the old atmosphere throughout. Like the summer house outside - furnished with antique furniture - that exudes a 1920s atmosphere. "You look outside through the old Jugendstil windows that Bernd put in. And thanks to the glass roof you can also sit on the terrace and keep dry when it rains."





‘The summer house exudes a 1920s atmosphere’



SHOP

In 2008, the couple connected the house and the garage with a glass partition, making a dream come true for Ramona; her very own shop. In that shop, customers can find a mix of brocante, vintage and clothing from the romantic brands Ewa i Walla and Les Ours. What's more, Ramona is a florist and there is also a flower section where she produces fabulous bridal arrangements. Several times a month, Ramona and Bernd go in search of wonderful finds for the shop and their home in the Netherlands, Belgium and France. "I have loved flowers and brocante since I was a child. That is why I've made it my profession. An old treasure has that piece of magic that it will never lose. It doesn't matter what it is; a piece of furniture or a porcelain saucer. I've always felt that these old treasures take me by the hand and lead me on a journey back to a past filled with wonderful stories. I also like to wear clothing in the Scandinavian style and even prefer to walk barefoot. Sometimes I feel like I was born in the wrong century."

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Wax heads

Wax heads; fortunately there are still a lot of them to be found. Probably because they are so appealing and are cherished by their owners who have found a good place for them in their homes. These heads are often the subject of a collection, as is the case with Resi whose collection we were allowed to admire. A collection of beautiful women with their unique wigs, glass eyes and porcelain teeth. Photography: Chantal Groenen. Text: Joyce Daams.

