

"So whenever things got a little dull, the Professor was there with a funny remark or something to perk up the proceedings. It was all good fun and rather unique."

Bryan's innovative approach to ventriloquism and its applications have been applauded by the International Brotherhood of Ventriloquists, which recently asked him to be the association's Canadian representative.

And Bryan is known throughout the United States as Canada's doll carver.

The art is one which demands patience, often half a year of patience to complete one figure.

"The first thing to do is get an idea of the character you want to make," Bryan says. "I try to get a feeling for the character I'm trying to create . . . he could be based on a real person, or perhaps developed from material I've already got on hand. For instance, my material might call for a weirdo doctor, so I'd make a character to match the description. But usually, I get the character first and develop the material after."

The idea portion of doll-making, according to Bryan, can be instantaneous or may take months.

Once the idea has been conceived, the carver will then try to draw the character conjured by his imagination. Bryan says he often graduates to this stage in the middle of a meal in the restaurant.

"I doodle on napkins," he says. "I'm always drawing

faces or figures."

Depending on the availability of either bass wood or cedar, Bryan then laminates the pieces, and traces a drawing of the doll profile onto the wood.

After roughing out the design with a band saw, he begins chiselling and carving the face and once the outline has been established, starts to hollow out the head.

Fine carving is the finishing touch, fitting real dentures, affixing hair, developing and inserting the controls.

The body, according to Bryan is a fairly simple construction of aluminum and wood with stuffed plywood arms and legs which are usually jointed with cables and wires.

Throughout his quarter-century of doll-carving, Bryan says he has created 18 different characters for himself.

"Clarence, for instance is the one I went through high school with and with whom I toured Europe. There was a lady doll Auntie June which I shipped to New York for a youngster. Then there's Barney, whom I use for my children's shows, which, by the way, I considerably alter for their taste. And of course, there's the Professor."

Carving dummies, he says, usually takes four months and he often makes individual characters for ventriloquists world-wide.

Bryan charges approximately \$500 for one of his models, but he has the credentials to prove his vent figures are worth the investment.

Among the hordes of clippings and souvenirs Bryan has collected from his shows, he has a hand-written note from Edgar Bergen in which the master of ventriloquism highly praises Bryan's dolls.

"I try to keep them simple," the Mississauga resident says. "There are other dolls with all kinds of electrical gadgetry; remote control dolls with eyes that cross, noses which light up, fright wigs and eyelids which wink, but I don't go for that. I figure if I can get up, just me and the Professor, and be funny, that's good enough."

A relative newcomer to Mississauga, Bryan is still establishing contacts and brushing up his act for possible television appearances in the new year.

He's continuing his novel approach to the art of ventriloquism by hatching numerous ideas for commercials the Professor could star in.

"Couldn't you just see the Professor in a commercial for the Workmen's Compensation Board? He'd be dressed up in overalls with a hammer, safety goggles and tools. He'd be great! And of course the gist of the commercial would be that as a figure made of wood, the Professor is indestructible . . . but men aren't."

Bryan hasn't overlooked other products which could benefit from Professor Noseworthy's attention.

"Just look at that nose," Bryan says. "What a perfect set-up for a Kleenex ad!"