



Photos by David Lassman / The Post-Standard

Tom Hunter, assistant director and curator of museum collections at the Onondaga Historical Association, looks at a display of G.I. Joe action figures in "Toys From Your Childhood: The Psychedelic Sixties" exhibit. These figures are from the collection of Rick Walton, of Oswego.

HISTORY OF THE TOY BOX

OHA SHOW GATHERS PLAYTHINGS OF THE '60S

By Sara Jean Oliver

Contributing writer

Do you remember playing with your childhood toys, in a time before the Internet, smart phones and video games?

Lots of people do, says Thomas Hunter, assistant director at the Onondaga Historical Association. With the help of collectors from across Central New York, and some of his own toys from home, Hunter has organized "Toys From Your Childhood: The Psychedelic Sixties" at the OHA.

THE DETAILS

What: "Toys From Your Childhood: The Psychedelic Sixties."

When: Through May 2; 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Wednesday to Friday and 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday and Sunday.

Where: Onondaga Historical Association museum, 321 Montgomery St., Syracuse.

Cost: The museum is free, but donations are encouraged.

More information: Call 428-1864 or visit cnyhistory.org.

What's the most common thing he sees and hears as people walk around the exhibit?

"They point and exclaim, 'I remember that!'" Hunter says.

The 1960s was an era of youth, a time when popular culture was gaining influence and TV and outer space were increasingly popular. Baby boomers started

growing up, and popular toys like Barbie and Ken, the game Battleship and Creepy Crawlers were being invented.

Many of the toys on display at the OHA are still around, though some have changed their appearance over the decades. The board game Clue, for example, has had multiple makeovers

since it was released more than 50 years ago.

With more than 100 toys in the exhibit, there's bound to be a favorite for everyone, Hunter says. "Anybody who comes in will find something."

This is the second in a planned series of toy exhibits for the OHA, organized by Hunter, who previously pulled together an exhibit of 1950s toys during the Christmas season in 2008.

Hunter plans to exhibit a decade of toys each year at the OHA.

People of all ages have been coming in for the exhibit, which includes an audio tour accessible by cell phone, Hunter says.

For the girls, there's the toy oven that really did work — the Easy-Bake Oven. According to Hasbro, its designer, the oven was released in 1963. It has gone through a lot of changes over the past 40-plus years, and the OHA is able to show what it looked like from the beginning. For the boys, there is an assortment of action figures — don't call them dolls — including James Bond, G.I. Joe and Johnny West.

Also represented are board games from Candyland to Stratego, dolls like Barbie and Ken, and a vintage toboggan.



Toys in the OHA exhibit include Rock 'Em Sock 'Em Robots and a Show 'N Tell record player (above) and a Ken doll (left).



DO YOU REMEMBER?

Here are some board games from the Onondaga Historical Association exhibit, "Toys From Your Childhood: The Psychedelic Sixties."

▶ **THE FLYING NUN GAME, 1968.**

Based on the late-1960s sitcom starring Sally Field.

Object of the game: Be the first to place flying nun cards on changing board spaces.

▶ **PARK N' SHOP, 1960.**

Object of the game: Drive your car from home to the nearest parking lot. Then move your marker to all the stops on your shopping list and make your way home before any other player.

▶ **THE GAME OF LIFE, 1960.**

The 1960 edition was the "modern" version of this 19th-century board game and is available today.

Object of the game: Make your way through "life" by moving through spaces around the board. Get an education, get married, have kids and make money on payday with your job.

▶ **BATTLESHIP, 1967.**

Object of the game: Try to "hit" and "sink" all of the opponent's fleet before your own is destroyed. Players call out different positions on the board and use pegs to keep track of hits and misses.

