

Mom's Joy Room

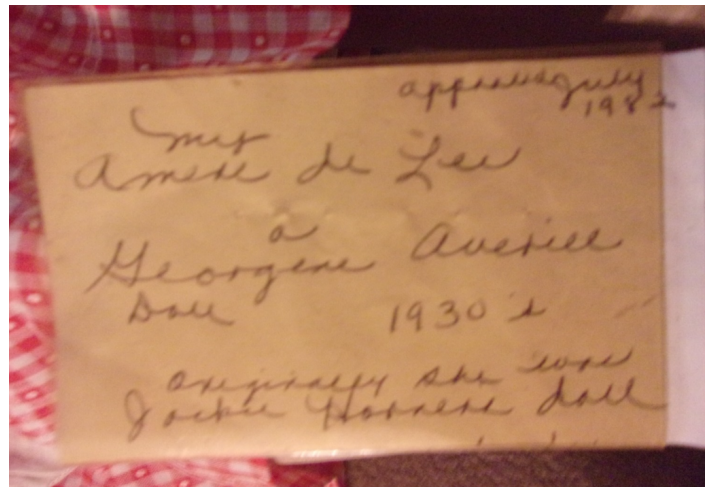
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“Amie de Lee” — 1930s Georgene Averill Mask-Face Doll

With Original Hand-Written Provenance Card & Early Hollywood History • 26 Inches

ESTIMATED WORTH

\$75 – \$175



Left: Amie de Lee in her red gingham dress, provenance card pinned at her lap • Right: the hand-written card, close-up

“Honey, I’ve got 200 scrapbooks, 500 pictures on the walls, 300 pairs of shoes, 185 pairs of earrings and four closets. I live in a museum!”

— Jackie Horner, honored by the Sullivan County Legislature, August 2019

History

The doll. Georgene Averill was one of America’s great doll designers — the driving force behind the Georgene Novelties and Madame Hendren names, and the creator of the famous Bonnie Babe. Through the late 1920s and into the 1940s she designed dolls with cloth mask-faces dressed in a wide variety of styles; in the 1930s the majority of her dolls were all-cloth pieces with pressed, painted mask faces, standing 12 to 26 inches tall. This 26-inch doll is classic Georgene of that era: a soft cloth body, a pressed mask face with hand-painted blue eyes, lashes, and red lips, and a blonde yarn wig beneath a ruffled bonnet. She wears a red-and-white gingham dress with puffed sleeves and white ruffles, long beige leggings, white socks, and black Mary Jane shoes — clothing in period style, added around 1982 when a later owner gave her a new life.

The name. Pinned at her lap is her own hand-written provenance card, in faded ink on aged paper, which reads: “my Amie de Lee — a Georgene Averill Doll — 1930’s — originally she was Jackie Horner’s doll — approximately 1982.” That loving “my” tells us “Amie de Lee” is not a factory name but a christening — a storybook name, French for “friend,” given by the family who re-dressed her and wrote her history down so it would not be lost.

The story. The card records that this doll originally belonged to **Jackie Horner** — and Jackie Horner was a real child performer of the 1930s, exactly the age a little girl would cherish a Georgene doll. She appeared in the famous *Our Gang* shorts of Spanky’s cellar talent shows, then danced for MGM in films like *Smilin’ Through* (1941) and *Panama Hattie* (1942). She grew into a television dancer with the June Taylor Dancers, and in 1954 landed at Grossinger’s, the legendary Catskills resort, where she taught dancing for over thirty years and inspired the world immortalized in *Dirty Dancing* — the film’s “Baby” was patterned on a young student of hers, and its makers drew on her memories and her famous scrapbooks. Jackie Horner was a lifelong keeper of her own history; when the Sullivan County Legislature honored her with its Distinguished Citizen Award in 2019, she laughed her now-famous words: “Honey, I’ve got 200 scrapbooks, 500 pictures on the walls, 300 pairs of shoes, 185 pairs of earrings and four closets. I live in a museum!” Dolls that passed through such famously careful hands often carried their stories forward in notes exactly like this one. Around 1982, someone who loved this doll re-dressed her in red gingham, gave her the name Amie de Lee, and pinned her history to her dress. She joined the Mom’s Joy Room collection in October 2026.

“She belonged to a dancing girl of the 1930s — a girl who lived in a museum of memories. And somebody loved this doll enough to write it down.”

Features & Description

- 1930s all-cloth mask-face doll by Georgene Novelties (designer Georgene Averill), 26 inches tall
- Pressed mask face with hand-painted blue eyes, dark lashes, and red lips
- Blonde yarn wig beneath a tied ruffled bonnet
- Red-and-white gingham dress with puffed sleeves, white ruffle trim, and pocket; beige leggings, white socks, black Mary Jane shoes (period-style re-dressing, circa 1982)
- Original hand-written provenance card: “my Amie de Lee — a Georgene Averill Doll — 1930’s — originally she was Jackie Horner’s doll — approximately 1982”
- Named “Amie de Lee” by the family who preserved her — the name is her own, given in love around 1982
- Attribution to Georgene Averill confirmed by the card and by construction consistent with her documented 1930s mask-face lines

Collector’s Notes

The Jackie Horner provenance is recorded on the doll’s hand-written card as family tradition. It is historically and chronologically consistent — Horner was a genuine 1930s child performer (*Our Gang*, MGM) who became the Catskills dance legend behind *Dirty Dancing*, and she famously preserved her own history — though original documentation establishing the chain of ownership has not survived, so the provenance is offered as the card records it, not as independently verified. The card itself, the re-dressing, and the naming are original to the doll’s modern history and add real charm and collectible interest. Cloth dolls display best out of direct sunlight; dust gently and leave the card attached — it is part of her.

Mom's Joy Room — *Where Obsolescence Ends and Wonder Begins*

Sandy Wade, Proprietor