

MOM'S JOY ROOM

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Certificate of Provenance

"Bonnie Babe" — Antique Bisque Character Baby Doll



Bonnie Babe, designed by Georgene Averill, circa 1926 — shown as acquired, prior to redress

Item:	Bonnie Babe — Antique Bisque Character Baby Doll
Designer:	Georgene Averill (Madame Hendren / Georgene Novelties)
Manufacture:	Bisque head made in Germany for Averill Manufacturing Co., New York
Circa:	1926
Size:	20 inches
Incised Mark:	"Copr. by Georgene Averill 1005/3652 13G52 Germany" <i>(as read from the back of the head/neck)</i>
Special Feature:	Rare working chime crier — original mechanism, confirmed functional

CURRENT MARKET VALUE	COLLECTOR REPLACEMENT VALUE
\$700 – \$950	\$1,000 – \$1,350
<i>Based on comparable Bonnie Babe auction and dealer sales, adjusted for the rare working chime crier</i>	<i>Reflects cost to replace through a comparable specialty antique doll dealer</i>

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Values reflect the doll's condition, the rarity of a genuinely working crier mechanism in this line, and current comparable sales. See Valuation Notes for full reasoning and caveats.

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Identification

This 20-inch character baby doll is attributed to the Bonnie Babe line, designed by American doll artist Georgene Averill (also known by the trade names Madame Hendren and Georgene Novelties) and produced in Germany beginning in 1926 for distribution in the United States through Averill's own company and associated importers. Bonnie Babe is among the most sought-after American-designed character babies of the 1920s, prized by collectors for her distinctive dimpled, smiling expression and lifelike modeling — a marked departure from the more solemn bisque baby faces common to the era.

The bisque socket head bears the incised mark “Copr. by Georgene Averill 1005/3652 13G52 Germany,” consistent with documented Bonnie Babe examples, which typically carry the 1005/3652 mold number along with additional size and factory codes. The doll has blue glass sleep eyes, a softly modeled smiling open mouth showing two lower porcelain teeth, and gently blushed cheeks characteristic of the line. The bisque is in lovely condition with rich, warm coloring.

The body is the original cloth torso construction, paired with composition arms and legs. As is typical for dolls of this age and type, the composition shows expected crazing and some paint loss to the arms and feet — honest wear consistent with nearly a century of life, and not treated as disqualifying to authenticity or desirability. The doll no longer retains her original clothing; she is shown here as acquired, prior to being freshly dressed for display.

A Chance Discovery: The Working Chime Crier

The great majority of surviving Bonnie Babe dolls that retain a crier mechanism at all have criers that are silent or non-functional after nearly a hundred years — period listings and dealer descriptions routinely note criers as “non-working” even when the doll is otherwise choice. It was during routine cleaning and redressing that this doll's crier was discovered to still work — and rather than the flat single-note cry typical of standard mama/papa criers, hers produces a chime-like, musical tone when the body is tipped. This is the rarer of the two crier types used in dolls of this period, and its survival in working order is a genuine and largely unexpected find.

Careful examination of the torso shows no evidence of a replaced or aftermarket crier box; the mechanism appears to be original to the doll. A working original crier of any kind adds meaningfully to a Bonnie Babe's collector desirability, and a working *chime* crier — sound and voice mechanisms being one of the most fragile and failure-prone elements of antique dolls — is a premium feature rarely encountered in the marketplace today.

Condition Summary

Bisque head: excellent, no cracks, hairlines, or repairs noted; rich original coloring. Sleep eyes: functioning. Mouth/teeth: intact. Cloth torso: original, sound. Composition limbs: expected crazing throughout, with paint loss to the arms and feet consistent with age and play history. Crier mechanism: original, confirmed working, chime-type. Clothing: not original; doll is currently being freshly dressed.

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Valuation Notes

Comparable 19–22 inch Bonnie Babe examples in good condition with original or appropriate period costume have realized auction estimates in the roughly \$900–\$1,200 range at established doll and toy auction houses, with retail and dealer asking prices for well-presented examples often landing similarly or somewhat higher depending on costume completeness and bisque quality. Examples lacking original clothing, or showing more pronounced limb wear, typically trade at the lower end of the range or below it.

This doll's excellent bisque and functioning sleep eyes support solid mid-range comparability, while the absence of original clothing and the expected composition wear are factored conservatively into the base figure. The confirmed working chime crier is treated as a genuine premium: period dealer and appraisal sources consistently note that a functioning voice or sound mechanism “would significantly raise value” over an otherwise comparable doll with a silent or missing crier, since intact mechanisms of any kind are the exception rather than the rule in surviving examples.

Caveat: Direct sold comparables specifically documenting a working chime-type crier on a Bonnie Babe are scarce in public auction records, so the premium reflected here is a reasoned, conservative estimate rather than a figure drawn from an identical sale. Should Sandy wish to pursue a formal third-party appraisal, the working chime crier would be worth highlighting explicitly, as it is the kind of detail that can move a piece from a solid character doll into true collector-grade territory.

She kept her secret for nearly a hundred years — a small chime of music folded quietly beneath cloth and years, waiting for a gentle hand to find it. Bonnie Babe smiles the same soft smile she wore the day she was made, and now, at last, she sings a little too.

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