

# [***"Barbie Bootcamp:" A Look Inside the Mattel Archive That Inspired the Film***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6BKY-RMH1-DXFS-205F-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Body**

For longtime fans of all things ***Barbie*** - which is currently in the middle of celebrating its 65th anniversary - Greta Gerwig's ***Barbie*** film provided a different level of enjoyment. Filled with references to notable dolls and doll accessories from decades past, Margot Robbie's ***Barbie*** and Ryan Gosling's Ken wore bespoke ensembles dating back to brand's 1959 inception.

Both Mattel's head of design for dolls Kim Culmone and chief branding officer Lisa McKnight have reasons why ***Barbie*** has been special to them. McKnight, who described herself as living and breathing ***Barbie***, offers, "to see the world get to know ***Barbie*** in her current form and for people that no longer play with the doll reappraise their view on ***Barbie*** because of the movie has been incredible."

The filmmakers behind the $1.44 billion grossing movie were briefed on ***Barbie***'s origin story and were taken to the ***Barbie*** archive at Mattel headquarters in El Segundo, Calif.

"We gave them what I call the '***Barbie*** Bootcamp,'" says McKnight of first meeting with Robbie, Gerwig and other members of the ***Barbie*** team. "Full immersion into the brand."

In speaking about the company's process with Jacqueline Durran, the Oscar-nominated costume designer for the film, Culmone says, "My team and I created multiple decks of chapters of ***Barbie***'s fashion history." The costume designer also did her own research, and the team often went back and forth to provide the designer with physical samples and different versions of ***Barbie*** fashion packs.

For McKnight, who has been with the company for nearly 25 years, the ***Barbie*** movie was like a partial scrapbook of her own career history. She says, "Sugar Daddy Ken to Video Girl ***Barbie***, some dolls that I worked on, it was just a kick to see them all larger than life." Sugar Daddy Ken, also known as Palm Beach Sugar Daddy Ken, [*was priced at $82 upon launch in 2009 and was meant to appeal to adult collectors.*](https://wwd.com/pop-culture/culture-news/barbie-sugar-daddy-ken-doll-1235717734/)

Hot Skatin ***Barbie***, 1994

While the Mattel team is arguably the most knowledge about all things ***Barbie***, execs found that they discovered new parts of the doll's long history in the making-of process for ***Barbie***. McKnight says that one ***Barbie*** fact that struck a particular cord with the team: The doll pre-dates women's guaranteed right to a bank account of their own. (***Barbie*** was released in 1959. Meanwhile, the Equal Credit Opportunity Act was signed into law in 1974.)

"***Barbie*** was created at a time when women couldn't even have their own bank accounts and created by a female entrepreneur, working mom," McKnight said. "It's a great reminder when you think about how far we've come."

President ***Barbie***

There was also some other unexpected reminders.

"We had a doll that came with a dog that pooped called Pooping Tanner. It came with a pooper scooper." ***Barbie*** featured a life size Pooping Tanner that wandered around the home of Weird ***Barbie*** (played by Kate McKinnon). Says McKnight, "I will say, it was a bestseller."

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