

= Cindy =

Sindy is a British fashion doll created by Pedigree Dolls & Toys in 1963 . A rival to Barbie , Sindy 's wholesome look and range of fashions and accessories made it the best selling toy in the United Kingdom in 1968 and 1970 . After Marx Toys ' unsuccessful attempt to introduce Sindy in the United States in the late 1970s , Hasbro bought the rights to Sindy and remodelled the doll to look more American . As a result , the doll 's popularity declined and Barbie manufacturer Mattel filed a lawsuit for copyright infringement , which was settled when Hasbro agreed to remodel Sindy 's face . During the 1990s , Barbie 's share of the doll market continued to grow while Sindy 's diminished , which led to Sindy being delisted from major retailers in 1997 . Hasbro returned the doll 's licence to Pedigree , and the doll was relaunched in 1999 , manufactured by Vivid Imaginations . Sindy 's 40th anniversary in 2003 saw a new manufacturer , New Moons , and another relaunch and redesign .

= = Development and launch = =

After 20 years of producing dolls , Pedigree Dolls & Toys , a British company located in Exeter , sought to expand its product range to include a trendy fashion doll . American toy manufacturer Mattel offered Pedigree a licence to produce Barbie , which Pedigree declined due to market research showing Barbie was unpopular with British buyers . Instead Pedigree manufactured its own doll based on another American doll , Tammy . With permission from Tammy 's manufacturer , the Ideal Toy Company , Pedigree also borrowed Tammy 's slogan , " The doll you love to dress " . The name " Sindy " was chosen after a street poll where young girls were shown a photo of the doll and asked to choose their favourite name from a list of four . The most popular choice was " Cindy " , and the spelling was made more distinctive for trademarking .

The Sindy doll was launched in September 1963 , and London retailers were sent a promotional 45rpm gramophone record to introduce the doll , which included Pedigree 's marketing text below .

Sindy is the free , swinging girl that every little girl longs to be . Sindy has sports clothes , glamour clothes , everyday clothes ? a dog , skates , a gramophone ? everything ... Every genuine Sindy outfit is a child 's dream come true . Each one is designed for today 's fashionable young women by today 's leading women designers . They are authentic miniature replicas of the latest adult clothes .

= = Brand and doll evolution = =

= = = Developing accessories and American release = = =

Pedigree Toys ' market research was correct ? Sindy 's " girl next door " look made her more popular than Barbie in Britain . Sindy 's boyfriend Paul was released in 1965 , and her younger sister Patch in 1966 . Sindy 's friends Vicki and Mitzi , and Patch 's friends Poppet and Betsy debuted in 1968 . Sindy was the best selling toy in Britain in 1968 and 1970 . Sindy 's success in the 1960s was partly due to the increasing range of accessories , with up to 70 % of Sindy 's turnover from sales of accessories . Mattel did not greatly expand Barbie 's accessories until the 1980s , and this was a significant difference between the dolls .

During the 1970s , Pedigree focused on developing more Sindy products and neglected advertising and market research , risking Sindy 's " girl next door " image becoming old @-@ fashioned . In 1978 , Sindy was introduced to the United States market by Marx Toys . Child star Susan Olsen , who played Cindy Brady on the popular family sitcom The Brady Bunch , was featured in a U.S. produced commercial for the doll . Most of Sindy 's accessories and fashions were similar to those sold in the United Kingdom , except for the addition of a friend , Gayle , and a McDonald 's @-@ themed Sindy . Marx Toys went into receivership in 1980 and Sindy was withdrawn from the US market .

= = = Focus on relaunches , fashion and advertising = = =

During the 1980s , Pedigree 's new marketing director David Brown made several changes , including increasing advertising and market research , and consulting often with fashion experts to ensure the doll 's image was kept up to date . Pedigree produced a number of evening dresses designed by The Emmanuels , famous for designing Princess Diana 's wedding gown , shortly after Mattel released gowns for Barbie designed by Oscar de la Renta . Due to its success , a second collection of designs was released the next year , including a bubble dress and lingerie . An older @-@ looking Sindy doll was released in 1985 , with male and female companions Mark and Marie . The advertising campaign was worth £ 1 @. @ 5 million .

In 1986 , Sindy manufacturers took advantage of new colour @-@ changing technology and released Magic Moments Sindy , a doll whose hair and swimming costume changed colour when immersed in warm water . Sindy 's senior designer Jane Braithwaite travelled to Paris each month to research fashion trends for Sindy 's clothing in an attempt to reverse declining sales . As an example of Sindy 's continually updated fashions , during this period the doll 's footwear included kitten heels , sandals , knee @-@ high boots , ankle boots , trainers , slippers , court shoes and slingbacks .

In 1987 , Sindy 's product manager Edward Machin announced that Sindy would reclaim the lead over Barbie within two years . Hasbro redesigned Sindy and spent approximately £ 1 @. @ 5 m on advertising . A Sindy magazine was also launched in this period to challenge the fortnightly Barbie magazine . A £ 1 million advertising campaign was introduced in 1991 with five advertisements highlighting Sindy 's collection of beach and pool wear . The advertisement showed footage of Sindy combined with live action sequences from a look @-@ alike .

In 1993 , Sindy was featured in a £ 500 @, @ 000 advertising campaign for the fashion company Alexon Group . Sindy was used to contrast her childish fashion with the sophistication of Alexon 's fashion range . Each double page spread showed Sindy in a typical outfit superimposed on a real @-@ life setting . The opposite page showed a real woman dressed in Alexon 's clothes above the line ' Dressing up for grown ups ' .

= = = Brand decline and lawsuits = = =

Hasbro introduced Sindy in France and continental Europe in 1994 after minor facial modifications to reduce her resemblance to Barbie . A Neilsen study suggested Sindy could obtain 20 % of the ? 500 @-@ 600 m market in France alone . The chief executive of Hasbro France , Paul Audouy , said recent innovations such as the ability for Sindy to swim and walk a small dog would strengthen her market position . Hasbro invested ? 5 million in the first week of her advertising launch . A new black friend for Sindy was released in 1995 , named Imani , 30 years after Sindy 's American friend Gayle was withdrawn after low sales . Hasbro released the new doll in response to " overwhelming demand " .

Hasbro withdrew its £ 5 @. @ 5 m advertising support for the Sindy doll in 1997 amid rumours that major retailers were planning to delist the doll . The editor of UK Toy News , Jon Salisbury , said , " This is Hasbro taking Sindy out of its main range . But she is running so far behind Barbie it is almost a non @-@ issue . If delisted by bigger retailers , which seems to be happening , then the brand will lose momentum " . In 1994 , Sindy had a seven percent share of the £ 70 m doll market , and Barbie held 16 % . By 1996 , Barbie 's share had increased to 30 % , estimated by Mattel to be worth £ 100 m per year including licensing deals , and Sindy 's share had only climbed to eight percent . Sindy 's popularity had also been overtaken during that period by Polly Pocket . One explanation for the large variation in market share is the unpopular Americanisation of the Sindy doll in the mid @-@ 1980s . The Sindy doll was still available to retailers during this period , but had to be ordered in bulk from the Hong Kong manufacturer .

= = = Return to Pedigree Toys and further doll makeovers = = =

Sindy and Barbie went head @-@ to @-@ head in August 1999 , when both manufacturers created large advertising campaigns for the dolls and Sindy was relaunched . The manufacturers updated the dolls ' images and revamped them with a " millennium look " . Sindy was transformed into a younger @-@ looking doll with " new themes , new friends and a new family , fitting today 's environment and in tune with the street @-@ cred concerns of today 's young girls " , according to Vivid Imaginations ' marketing director , Paul Weston , from the company then producing Sindy . Pedigree , which owns the rights to Sindy , licensed the doll to Vivid Imaginations after Hasbro ceased production of the doll . The doll market in the United Kingdom during this time was worth £ 77 million , with Barbie holding a share of over 75 % .

The Sindy doll entered the digital world in 2000 when Pedigree Toys introduced an official website . Monitor Media , the website design company , said , " Sindy.com brings Sindy to life for six @-@ year @-@ old girls just getting to grips with computers while sitting on their Mum 's knee . They can dress her up , paint her bedroom in different colours , read her secret diary , chat with other Sindy fans and send her e @-@ mails " .

In 40 years , nearly 100 million Sindy dolls were sold in Britain alone , and in 2003 , Sindy was relaunched for her 40th birthday . Her figure was changed to more closely resemble the girls the doll is marketed towards . Denise Deane , the head of design and development at New Moons , the new Sindy manufacturer , said , " She 's lost the big breasts and very long legs , and we 've completely changed her face . She 's totally unrecognisable . Sindy 's still very popular , but she has been neglected over the last few years , and we don 't think people are identifying with that look . She 's going to look like a 15 @-@ year @-@ old , and we 've designed her to wear trainers . " The doll was released in two versions : six @-@ inch and full @-@ size .

Sindy was relaunched again in 2006 , this time resembling a 12- to 14 @-@ year @-@ old . Jerry Reynolds , chief executive officer of Pedigree Toys explained , " If you take the Sindy of yester @-@ year she was between 12 and 14 years while Barbie was twenty @-@ something . She got too close to Barbie in the ' 80s and ' 90s and has now effectively returned to that younger positioning . " The doll was again released in two sizes , with the standard @-@ size Sindy a Woolworths exclusive , after Woolworths had not stocked a Sindy doll for four years . The 2006 Sindy was aimed at three- to five @-@ year @-@ old girls , younger than the audience targeted by Bratz dolls , and mothers who wanted a more innocent @-@ looking doll for their daughters than Barbie or Bratz dolls .

= = Controversies and lawsuits = =

The January 1989 redesign made Sindy look more similar to her rival Barbie . In response , Mattel sought and won an injunction against Hasbro after claiming the new Sindy doll was easily confused with their product . After a French court decided that the Sindy doll infringed on Mattel 's copyright in early 1992 , the case was settled in December when Hasbro agreed to alter Sindy 's face . Mattel and Hasbro released the following joint statement , " Hasbro has remodeled the head of Sindy in a way which Mattel and Hasbro have agreed is acceptable . As a result , Mattel has agreed to drop all outstanding lawsuits relating to Sindy and Barbie around the world . Each party will be responsible for its own costs " . The case was previously ruled in Hasbro 's favour in Spain and Greece .

Similar to many fashion dolls , including Barbie , Sindy has been criticised by feminist groups who said her figure set an unrealistic standard for young girls . After Hasbro returned the brand to Pedigree Toys , Pedigree responded to the backlash against " cosmetically enhanced bimbo " dolls by making Sindy more wholesome and less shapely .

A minor controversy occurred in 1998 when Hasbro expressed a desire to make a Sindy doll that looked like Princess Diana , shortly after former prime minister John Major recommended sensitivity when making commercial deals to honour the late princess . The Princess ' Memorial Fund denied Hasbro 's request , but did not rule out the possibility of a future doll , " if it met the requirements of the trustees and was judged acceptable to the public " .

= = Collecting = =

The Sindy doll is popular among collectors , and websites provide advice on how to re @-@ root the doll 's hair and replace parts . Mint condition dolls are the most sought after . Many collectors shunned the " American look " Sindy developed by Hasbro , while the value of the Pedigree dolls increased . In 2003 , a first @-@ edition Sindy , complete with original Foale and Tuffin " Weekenders " outfit (jeans and a striped sweatshirt) , box and fashion booklet was worth approximately £ 160 @-@ 200 . Sindy 's rarer friends Gayle (a doll made for the American market in 1975) was worth up to £ 400 , and Mitzi (her French friend from 1968) up to £ 500 .

December 2006 saw the launch of a collectible version of the original Sindy , one called " Classic Sindy " and manufactured in porcelain . Created by Anne Zielinski @-@ Old , distributed by the Danbury Mint and still licensed by Pedigree Dolls & Toys , the " Weekender " was the first in a series .

With Sindy doll 's 50th birthday approaching in 2013 , Pedigree toys are designing a new range of merchandise . This will include laptop covers , notepaper , mobile phone cases , gift tags , shoes and accessories aimed at teenagers . A new doll has been reported to be in the design stages . Pedigree Toys say an announcement will follow .