

# of love

is another slab hut, it's beautiful," Connie says. "You become sort of captivated really."

Connie found a bag of turn of the century clothes and brought them back to Melbourne, where the couple is based. There she has spent each weekend sewing, bleaching and starching the clothes so they can be displayed.

"I also found bags of beautiful laces which we've displayed and some beautiful black-beaded gowns from around 1910," she says.

"And we bought old mannequins from old antique shops in Victoria and sent them up, so now they're all frocked up."

The pair have also been gathering old toys for the village toy shop from auctions, antique fairs and the internet.

"We want to concentrate the collection from 1880 to 1940 at the latest," Craig says.

He is particularly excited about an old toy limo he found, a 1920s tin-plated plane and the old schoolhouse.

But the biggest surprise for Craig and Connie has been the sheer size of the collection.

"We can't believe what's there," Craig says. "Harry was a chronic collector."

And there is more yet to be displayed.

"There's about 12 sulkies and there's all old cars we haven't even looked at as yet - they're in the shed," Craig says.

"In the next three or four months, the jails will open and another tool room; in another three or four months, a pub, and the cars."

Cairns Chamber of Commerce president Jeremy Blockey says the historic village should be a wonderful attraction.

"I reckon it's great there is a benefactor prepared to put money into something which is more of a community benefit than a real business concern," he says.

It may grow to be bigger than a local attraction if the couple have their way.

They are already planning for school excursions, a bed and breakfast, a coffee shop, and more. And whether it stays small or grows, Craig says they are certainly enjoying themselves.

"We're having fun and we feel the village could bring a lot of opportunities for everyone."



**Lessons to learn:** Craig Kimberley has developed a fascination with the old schoolhouse. PHOTOGRAPHY BY CHRIS HYDE



**Rustic charm:** The old buildings have been lovingly restored, right down to furniture and crockery.

## Only in Queensland could the hail do more damage than a prang.



Suncorp protects more Queenslanders from the kind of stuff only Queensland can throw at you. Insure for the moment you need insurance most. Call 13 11 55 or visit your local branch.



CALL 13 11 55

Comprehensive Motor Vehicle Insurance issued by Suncorp Metway Insurance Limited ABN 83 075 695 966. Read the PDS before making any decisions regarding this product. Contact us for a copy. s506098ct BSUNGI4086\_HA\_CP