



Buildings with a 3D Village in the Window

I remember when I first opened my Department 56 Collectors Club House (#54800, introduced in 1998 only) and gazed upon the 3D village display in the window. Oh my, was this ever a special building!



Be sure to check out all the other topnotch and timely columns on TheVillageCollector.com – the always interesting "*Just So You Know (JSYK)*" by David Spears, Brian Vaill's "*The Train Station,*" Thea Heyink's "*The Creation Station,*" "*Phil & Sue's Village*" (from England!), "*From Italy: Villaging in Europe*" by Peppe Apuleo (fascinating!), "*Scratchbuilt*" by Alan K. Rogers, "*Villagers' Café*" for guest columns, and "*Coach is Here*" by webmaster Bill Channell. **Please keep visiting the Village Videos page and watch, watch, watch.** There will be a new batch of village videos starting on the 15th of each month! So many ideas, so little time... and not enough money.

Little did I know that there were more of them out there. The second one of which I was aware happened while watching an interview video of crazy Richard Kemick (of The Benevolent Dictator of the Christmas Village) in:

Calgary man isn't a big fan of Christmas, except for miniature Christmas villages (2:41)

CBC News

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PfmXVPVjtGc>

That building he described and showed was D56's Jackie's Cards and Gifts (#4025317, introduced in 2012 and retired in 2013).



Could there be more? I asked the question on two Facebook groups to which I belonged – Dept 56 Villages and NCC56. The answers soon poured in.

Sometimes you need a small mission. I'm much more of a displayer than a collector (apologies to the "Collector" in The Village Collector), buying and selling buildings and accessories all year long. That way, I can build a different village display each year – the fun part of this positive addiction for me.

But what if I collected **all** the 3D village-in-a-window buildings? Of course, they would make a nice display, too.

My next score was the D56 Studio 1200 Second Avenue (#58918, introduced 2001 only). This is a replica of Architect's and Engineer's Building where D56 was once located in Minneapolis, MN. It has a special event stamp and was only issued for Dept 56's silver anniversary celebration. Was NOT sold at retailers, you had to be at the D56 event in MN to get one. It has interior scenes depicting their products.



eBay has them periodically, and if you're patient you can find one at a decent price. That little window to the right has a small scene with buildings. By the way, this is truly a beautiful building!



I was on a three-to-four-year mission, waiting for both availability and a price point, depending on the building.

My next score was what is probably the "queen" of 3D village-in-a-window buildings – D56's Stillwater Collectibles & Antiques (#55383, introduced in 2005 and retired in 2006).



For some reason D56 assigned this house two item numbers and they are both printed on the box. Item #06430 & #55383. It is thought that this house is considered part of the Snow Village collection #55383 and it is also part of their Giftware Line #06430.

This piece designed to celebrate the 30th Anniversary reflects the tradition of creative excellence that is Department 56. The creativity and detail have exceeded what D56 could ever have imagined since the first Snow Village piece in 1976. The idea of creating "The Original Snow Village" collection was first conceived in Stillwater, MN.

This beautiful piece has an ornate sign, pearlescent balls on the 2nd floor roof, stairway, decks on the rear 1st floor and above the village exhibit window. Unique are three lanterns that actually light up on the front of the building as well as the included 3-bulb lamp post that also lights up. The village display in the window has a lighted tiffany lamp overhead and each separate house has lights emitting from the windows which makes this house truly beautiful.



I had to wait a couple years to purchase D56 Christmas At Grandma's (#808943, introduced in 2010). Grandma's house has a full interior scene highlighting holiday traditions.



Peek into the living room through the big corner window and find presents under the Christmas tree and roaring fire in the fireplace which is complete with a miniature village on the mantle.



But wait, still there's more! D56 for some reason beautifully repainted the popular best-selling Grandma's eight years later and brought out The Other Grandma's House (#6002880,

introduced in 2008 and retired in 2019). It has an identical interior scene.



Then, I discovered that in 2017 D56 introduced the Home for the Holidays Gift Set (#4059386), for only that year. If you gaze through the window of this Queen Anne home, a tiny "Snow Village" decorates the mantel. Outside is a scene that no one can get enough of, a young man returns from proudly serving in the military – to loved ones that have anxiously awaited his arrival.





Whew! Surely, I had found them all... and another building popped up on the radar. How could I have missed this one?

It was another store displaying a village scene in the front window. D56's Christmas Treasures (#59240, introduced back in 2004 and retired in 2006) was a beauty! This building was hard to find but providence was on my side.



This building was the first I'd seen that had display-anywhere battery lighting. It was somewhat difficult to adapt to standard wired lighting.



That is the total series of D56 buildings with 3D village vignettes in the window. If you want to count 2D in D56 you could add the Main Street Gift Shop (#54887, introduced in 1997 only). That building likely got the designers thinking, "Hey, let's put a 3D scene in a special building for the collectors club."



If you were a Department 56 purist, you could stop right here. Once again – but wait, there's more!!

What about Lemax? They joined the 3D bandwagon in 2004 with Vail Plaza (#45075, introduced 2004 and retired 2009). Their Vail Village series is long running and popular in Europe where many village displays are constructed in beautifully landscaped mountain settings (if you watch The Village Collector's videos, and you **should!**).



This building was unusually hard to find and took about 3 years to procure at a reasonable price.



A large animated building named Holiday Hamlet Christmas Shoppe (#55026, introduced in 2015) is part of the Caddington Village series. It has doves flying around above the building, and a large bay window featuring the village display (like we saw in Stillwater Collectibles & Antiques). A sign in front trumpets the world's largest Christmas village selection.





Lemax next introduced a residential building named Christmas in the City (#85432, introduced in 2018), sold exclusively through Michael's. This building is ideal for building vignettes in front of it and seems to find its way into my display year after year. It also has a 3D Christmas tree in an upstairs window, as well as a stained-glass window.

In my 2020 (Covid year) display I made a large city (I guess you could call it a "city display"). D56's Christmas in the City has become wildly popular, and you are seeing more New York City displays on YouTube, both for Christmas and in model train set-ups.

The 3D village-in-a-window buildings were featured from 7:34 to 8:33 in:

Claire's Amazing Christmas Village 2020 (16:51)

Jim Peters

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=afsjGf6as7M>

I received one lone YouTube comment about the village-in-a-window buildings, from an astute "pen-pal" subscriber. The city setting, animated parade, and Chinatown dominated most of the video in the viewers' eyes.



There is still one more village-in-a-window building to collect, which was just discovered as I outlined this column. It's a Lemax façade building called Christmas City (#15739, introduced in 2021), and I don't know how I missed it! I always peruse the façades each year.

Holy moly, it has as a shop named Christmas Villages & More, with what looks to be a 2.5D display (watch the video on <https://www.lemaxcollection.com/villages/general-products/facades/christmas-city-15739>) as well as three buildings placed in front of the window.



I have a few Lemax façades but so far only the beautiful Houses on a Hill (#05617) has made it into a village display. The others

have been displayed hanging on a wall in the hallway leading to the annual 3rd floor display.

In my next column on The Village Collector, I don't know what I'm going to write about. I'm out of words for today and I'll try to do better next time.

Questions, comments and/or suggestions are always welcome. You can contact me at: jpetersgolfpro@gmail.com, 419 Washington Avenue, Newport, KY 41071.