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COUNTRY HOMES

· AND INTERIORS ·

HOME THOUGHTS

*Bloomsbury style
in Somerset*

*How to create a
dream nursery*

*Who are Agatha
Christie's heirs?*

GREAT OUTDOORS

All time favourite roses

Glorious picnic party menus

John Humphrys on farming today





Sam's nursery floor is painted mustard to remind his mother of Provence, where she was brought up



Sam Young's nursery is full of fascinating antique toys that his parents, Josyane and Robert, find for him in the course of their business – they collect and sell country furniture and folk art.

Cream walls give a lovely light setting for his myriad of treasures and the wooden floor is painted mustard – the colour his parents use as a business trade mark (it reminds Josyane of Provence

where she grew up). Sam's seventeenth century cradle has an unusual crescent shaped space in its hood, which holds his grandfather's watch, given to him as a christening present by his grandmother. Sam, too young to share his nursery with a real cat, has instead one made for him by Josyane from late nineteenth century American cat print material she happened to find in a drawer. ▷

Most of the contents of Sam's nursery come from Robert Young Antiques. His father paints to commission screens, fireplaces, boxes and pictures in the naive manner, incorporating the customer's own house, cats, dogs or other pets into his compositions.

Sam's cradle is late seventeenth century English but his blue cotton duvet cover is nineteenth century, from Alsace. There is a half moon rag rug in front of the old nursery fender. At the end of Sam's cradle is a Welsh child's chair dated about 1770. The red wooden train was a Christmas present. To the right of the fireplace is a child's Welsh

stick chair, still with its original dark green paint, and an old Pyrenean whey bowl now used for holding Sam's toys and teddies. (The dolls' house in the corner was bought by his mother who was sure she would have a daughter.) The cut out silhouette of a bunny, on the right, is an old bean bag target, which came from a fairground. His house moneybox, on the extreme left of the mantelshelf, is still empty – he has no savings yet, but he will have soon. Inset: another of Sam's old wooden trains; two battered but much loved teddies; rabbit and yet another old teddy in a basket