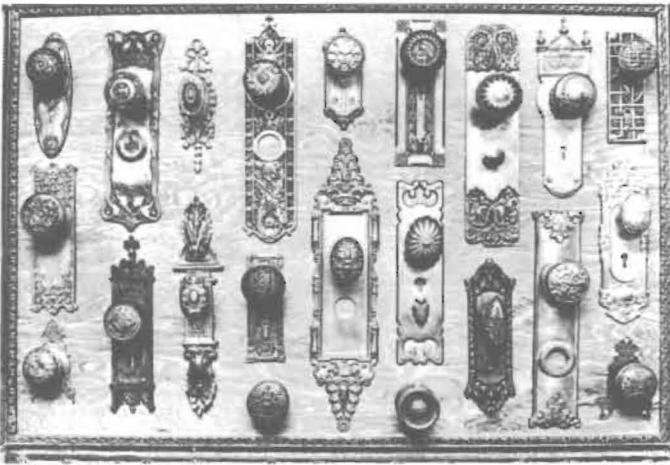


# The Doorknob Collector

SEPTEMBER - OCTOBER 1987

Number 25



Part of John Holland's collection. See Page 3.

## President Maud Eastwood's Pre-Convention Message

My desire and considered opinion is that every doorknob collector, at least once, should experience the stimulating and satisfying rewards of 'going to a convention.' Whatever the primary reason might be; to acquire, trade, learn (as stated in the last newsletter), the possibilities for fulfillment are there. You need the total experience. We need and will continue to grow through educated input.

Newer members will be delighted with the opportunities to gain a fast insight in the values and grades of hardware, the "at hand" sources of hardware offered through dealer members, on the spot trading with

others members and the opportunity to diversify their collections through trading or selling duplicates.

For members interested in becoming involved in club matters, seize this excellent opportunity to stand up and be counted....add your voice. Your ideas may well result in positive action and your interested attendance in consideration for membership on the board or in a role of club leadership.

Personally, I would like to meet each of you in DesMoines in September. You are family, we have a right to meet you. And I can guarantee you that once you have come to a convention you will come again.

## We Go To Six Issues

In December we announced **The Doorknob Collector** would be changed from a quarterly to five issues annually. Our plan was to do this for a year and then evaluate the response, the availability of material and the time needed to put together an issue. The question was; is it possible to do six issues a year?

The response has been gratifying and the material has come in better than expected. The time.....well, what is

time when it is a labor of love.

Thus the answer to our question is that we feel it is possible to do six issues a year and we are going to try to do it. The contributions of Maude Eastwood, Len Blumin and all our members has helped make our decision. **THE DOORKNOB COLLECTOR** is now bi-monthly. We hope you will continue to support your publication now that it will come to you six times a year.

# Historical Notes On E. Robinson & Co.

by Maud Eastwood

Due to the availability of research material and a wealth of artifacts from the 40 year span of 1870-1910, we rightly regard that era as the "golden" years in fine builders' hardware. The vary lack of like material and artifacts from the preceding 40 years (1820's-1860's) may well have prevented our appreciation of the influential efforts of the men and companies of that day. Enoch Robinson was a man of influence and examples of his hardware for that era are extant.

Enoch Robinson's name was prominent in the annals of Massachusetts Glass and Lock manufacturing in the 1800's. He was an innovator--a forerunner.

While with the New England Glass Company of Cambridge in 1826, he and Thomas Whitney, plant manager, obtained a patent for pressing glass knobs. The next year he "succeeded against the ridicule of the craft, in moulding salt dishes and other objects of table ware."

In 1836 he and F. Draper, listed as mechanics, and Joseph Lord, Boston Agent for the company, were awarded two patents for attaching glass knob bodies to sockets and ferrule's (1836). He may then have severed his connection with the glass company, for his 1837 patent for the use of a shell shank for glass knobs co-signed by G.W. Robinson, was entered from Boston, where he later had his company, rather from Cambridge, as were the two 1836 patents.

In 1841, ROBINSON & HALL (William Hall, manufacturer of mortised lock, later [1843] of the firm, William Hall and Company, Brass Founders, Hardware specialties, Glass Knobs, etc.) secured an invention covering the latching mechanisms of locks. Established in 1837, the years of operation of the E. Robinson & Company manufactory at #4 Washington Street in Boston are in question.

Partners included William E. Robinson and James R. Bugbee. A listing of their wares was extensive and included all types of locks; drawer and desk fittings; knobs of silvered glass,

glass, mineral, wood, plate and Argillo stone; all manner of window and sash fastenings; plated and bronzed butts and many other pieces.

The high regard of Architects for E. Robinson locks was spelled out in Blackall's 1890 volume on architecture. "There is no denying the excellence of Robinson locks--at least it would be difficult to convince a Boston builder that they were not the best to be had".

It was pointed out that in comparison to other leading locks of the day, Robinson locks were of higher quality, more expensive--yet in demand. Perhaps this accounts for the purchase (invoices and vouchers are extant) for the Federal Treasury Building additions in the 1860's--the South and West wings--of large number of locks, plates and knobs from the E. Robinson Company.

Robinson's designs for ornamental hardware were geometric in nature according to illustrations in Blackall's volume. Also see the Robinson knob illustrated in **THE DOORKNOB COLLECTOR**, Number 20, page 10 and the set (Paholke Collection) in issue 14, page 5.

Our "Collective" salute goes to Enoch Robinson, machinist, inventor and hardware great.

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The first issue of THE DOORKNOB COLLECTOR was dated March 10, 1977. It was edited and published by Richard & Faye Kennedy of Chatham, New Jersey.

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## The Doorknob Collector

Published six times a year by Antique Doorknob Collectors of America, Inc, P. O. Box 126, Eola, IL 60519-0126.  
Printed by Sun Printing, Naperville, IL.  
Phone: 1-312-357-2381.  
Raymond and Loretta Nemecek, Editors.  
Annual Membership in USA: \$20.00.  
Lifetime Membership in USA: \$150.00  
Rates on Request for inserts.

## CONVENTION SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

	Wednesday September 23	Thursday September 24	Friday September 25	Saturday September 26	Sunday September 27
Morning		9:00 a. m. - 3:00 p. m. Tour of Des Moines. Points of interest - Salisbury House, State Capitol, etc. (By bus or car pool, depending on how many plan to attend)	9:00-11:00 a. m. Set up displays, register auction items etc., No trading please. (Windsor room) 11:00 a. m. - Noon Trading, buying, selling	9:00 a. m. - Noon Trading, buying, selling, etc. (Windsor Room)	9:00 a. m. - Noon Business Meeting & Reports (Windsor Room)
Lunch		on your own	on your own	on your own	on your own
Afternoon		Tour of Des Moines continued, until 3:00 p. m.	1:00-5:00 p. m. Trading, buying, selling, etc. (Windsor Room)	1:00-5:00 p. m. Open to the public. Jan Still will take anyone interested to the Valley Junction antique shops in West Des Moines	Noon-1:30 p. m. Pack up displays 2:00-5:00 p. m. Wine & Snacks at the Stills
Dinner		on your own	6:30-7:30 p. m., in the Colony Room	5:30 p. m. Cash bar, 6:30 p. m. dinner (Colony Room)	
Evening	7:30 p. m. Refreshments in Hospitality Room (Room 605)	7:30 p. m. Refreshments Hospitality Room (Room 605)	7:30 p. m. - President's Message	7:30 p. m. Auction	

### The Picture On Page One

The picture of doorknobs on page one, representing part of John Holland's collection, was featured in a story on John in the **ARIZONA REPUBLIC** (Phoenix daily newspaper) recently.

Holland, **ADCA's** first President, retired from a career in finance. He and his wife, Chlorene, have been active at all the **ADCA** conventions.

He owns about 800 door openers. In the article, titled "A Fine Handle on History", he is quoted as saying, "I've never really counted them because people say, 'Why do you have so many?'"

Holland's collection is one of the foremost in the country. According to the story, which appeared in the Arizona Republic's Sunday 'Sun Living' section, "he has been gathering unusual

doorknobs for a dozen years since he bought one mounted on an escutcheon plate in a Sedona (Arizona) gift shop as a conversation piece."

The fine article describes many of John's knobs, material they are composed of and how he displays them. He also attempts to research the history on the knobs.

"Collecting doorknobs has been a great thing for me," Holland told the Arizona Republic. "I would hope that other people who retire collect something, even if they have to collect matches."

"You may not think of doorknobs as an art, but after you've seen these, you'd have to agree it is an art form."

ORNAMENTAL DESIGN IN ANTIQUE DOORKNOBS

by Len Blumin

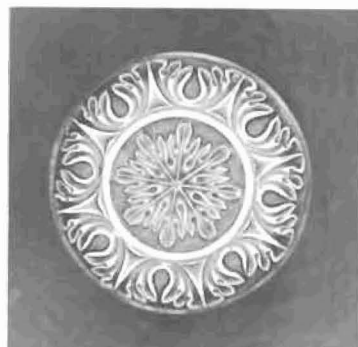
EIGHTFOLD SYMMETRY

- K-113 Classic. Russell Erwin. Design patent number 7020 to William Forman, December 9, 1873. See K-104 to compare, also by Gorman.
- K-114 "Star" Classic. Mallory Wheeler. Design patent number 7378 to Burton Mallory, April 14, 1874. Cast bronze or iron.
- K-115 "Grecian" Classic. Branford. 1879 catalog number 2324.
- K-116 Classic. Mallory Wheeler. 1882 catalog numbers 1143/1183.
- K-219 "Tunis." Niles-Chicago. 1895 catalog. One of their best designs.
- K-220 Unknown maker. Vernacular. Reminiscent of Branford/Norwalk. c 1882.

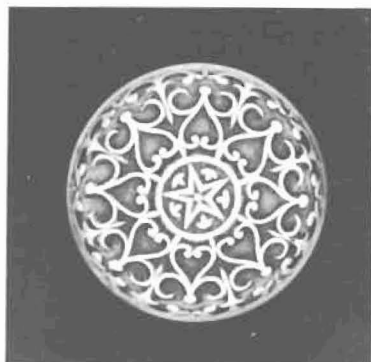
K-113



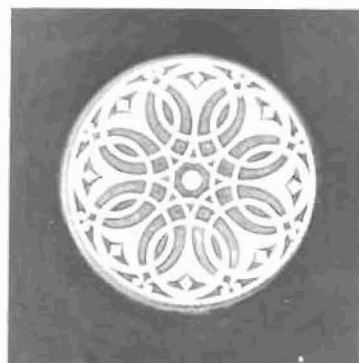
K-116



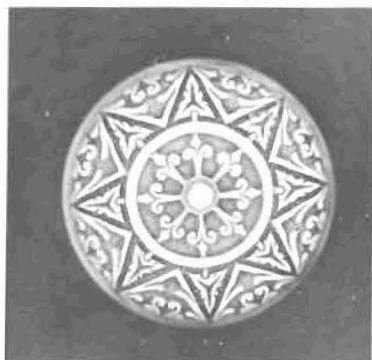
K-114



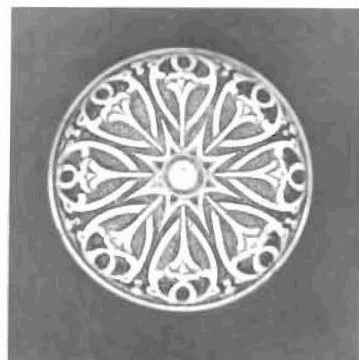
K-219



K-115



K-220



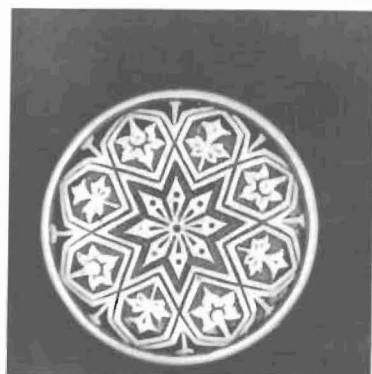
EIGHTFOLD SYMMETRY  
(continued)

- K-221 Vernacular. Center has six fold symmetry, versus eight for edge.  
 K-222 Vernacular. Found in St. Louis (on Debbie's tour in 1985).  
 K-223 Vernacular. c. 1885. Eclectic design.  
 K-224 Vernacular. c. 1885. Note alternating flower design. Nice knob.  
 K-225 Vernacular. ? Norwalk. Cast back design same as K-301.  
 K-313 "Ferrara." Italian Renaissance. Yale & Towne. 1893 catalog.  
 Still offered in 1910 as Ferrara and "Treviso."

K-221



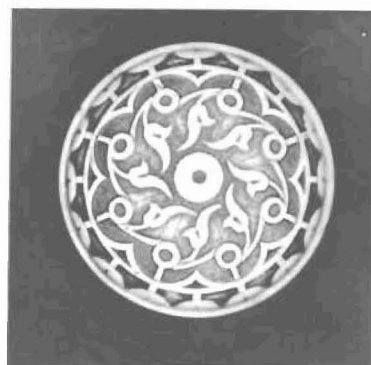
K-224



K-222



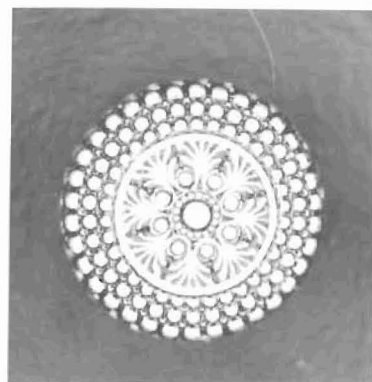
K-225



K-223



K-313



## Salvage One Like A Museum

A visit to Salvage One, Inc., 1524 South Sangamon Street, in Chicago, is almost like a visit to a museum. The former warehouse has five floors of all types of architectural pieces and parts. Among the items found are thousands of doors, fireplace mantels, gates, light and household fixtures, stained glass, wall mouldings and door hardware. There are thousands of doorknobs and escutcheon plates.

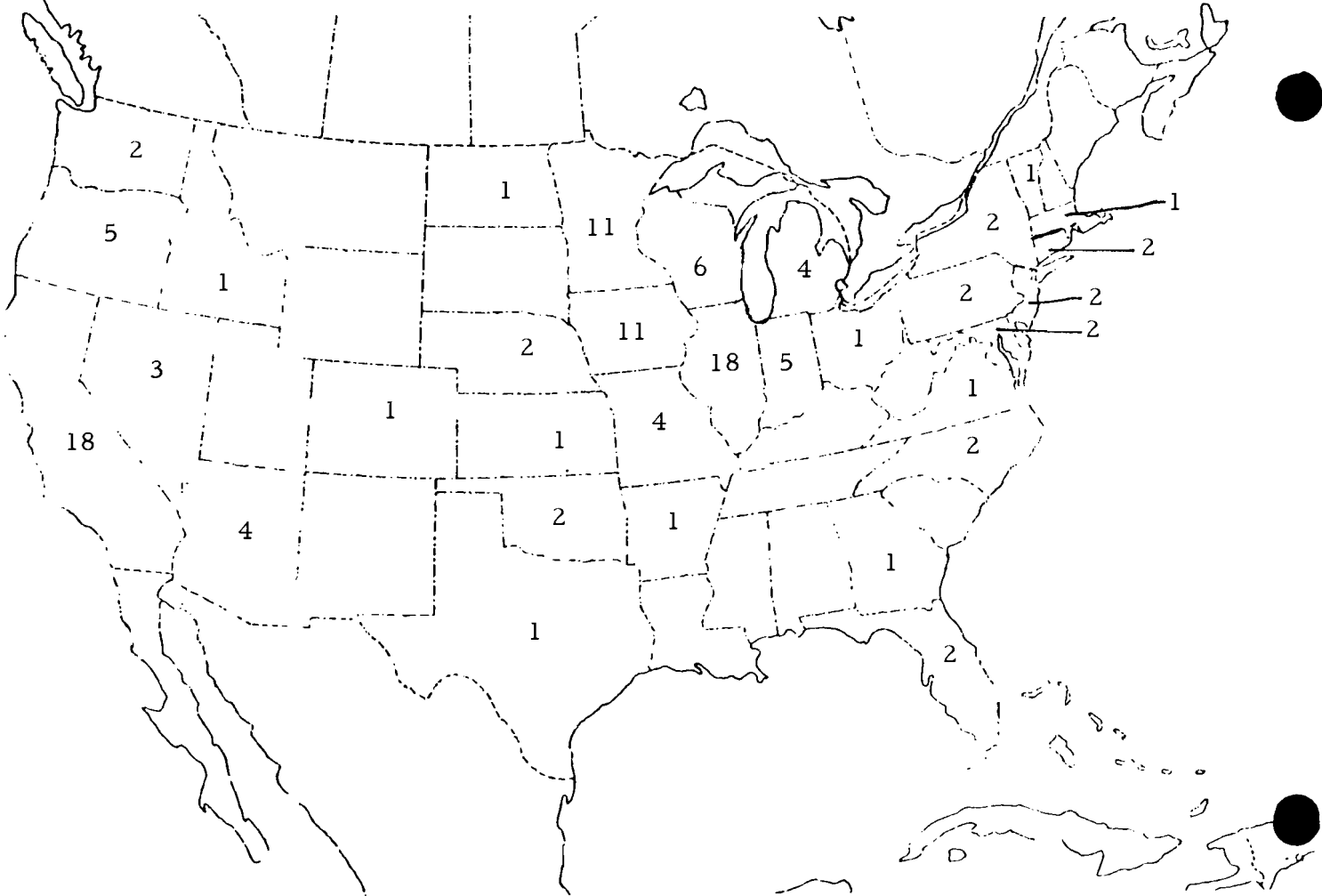
Salvage One, which lays claim to being the world's largest source of architectural artifacts, has been a favorite stop for antique doorknob collectors for many years. Collectors found that Walter Rattner, then the owner, could be a hard man to bargain

with. This has all changed. In July 1986, Salvage One was purchased by Leslie Hindman Auctioneers. Hindman said her auctioneer business will not auction off any of Salvage One's inventory.

One major change at Salvage One has been the pricing of all items. Price tags are attached to many of the stained and beveled glass windows, doors, terra cotta tiles, stairways, columns and corbels. A price list for doorknobs is prominently displayed. You will find on volume purchases, they are willing to offer a discount.

Salvage One, managed by Peter Earley, is open 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday.

## Geographic Distribution of ADCA Members



(The following article is reprinted by permission from THE OLD JUDGE, a newsletter for the Encyclopedia of Baseball Cards and for Baseball and Sports Memorabilia)

John Steinbeck wrote that Cannery Row in California was, among other things, a "stink, a grating noise." He went on, it's "the gathered, the scattered, tin and iron and rust and splintered wood, chipped pavement and weedy lots." It's not perfect, but it's an apt description for Brimfield, Massachusetts, where collectors fantasize about finding treasures. There's not much to Brimfield. To say it's a small town is an overstatement. It doesn't even make the AAA tour book. Located about 10 miles north of the Connecticut border in mid Massachusetts, it can be categorized as an open field.

"How much is that?"

"What do you need for this."

"Is this the best you can do on this?"

"What are you getting for it?"

Actually, to be more accurate, it's an endless procession of open fields on north and south sides of Route 20. It's usually filled by flea marketeers who are marketing their varied, and I do mean varied, wares. Each field is an individually run market with names such as "Heart of the Mart," "Antique Acres," "Auction Acres," and "Faxon's Treasure Chest." Within each market are areas marked off by stakes in the ground. In these the dealers set up. They set up in spots where they put their campers....or vans....or trucks....or buses. They sleep right there and within 100 yards is a bath house where the dealers can take a shower for \$2.00. They live like this for a week and longer if they move to the new spot the following week.

"I need \$30!"

"I have it marked \$50, but I'll take \$30!"

"Make me an offer!"

"I have \$25 into it!"

The parking is awful if you don't want to get there early in the morning. The traffic is equally bad when you leave. It can take fifteen minutes to crawl a mile in mid-afternoon on a busy day. There are 5,000 dealers and 50,000 customers. Still, they come looking and the diehards are there at five in the

morning when the dealers are still setting up. These hardy souls apparently use flashlights to see where they're going. And yet, even for those who get there during setup, there can be disappointment, as some dealers take a couple of days to set up.

"Will you do a little better on it?"

"I only have \$22 left and I need \$2 to get home!"

"Would you consider \$20?"

"It's the last one I need."

"Do you take trade?"

Each spot is like a traveling antique store. They have everything from pins to large pieces of furniture. Yet, if you go to Brimfield looking for doorknobs, you're likely to be disappointed. To find anything in Brimfield, it helps if your interests range a bit. You'll need good legs, good walking shoes and a lot of patience, but at the very best it's an experience.

"I paid more than that for it!"

"Come back Sunday, if I still have it we'll talk!"

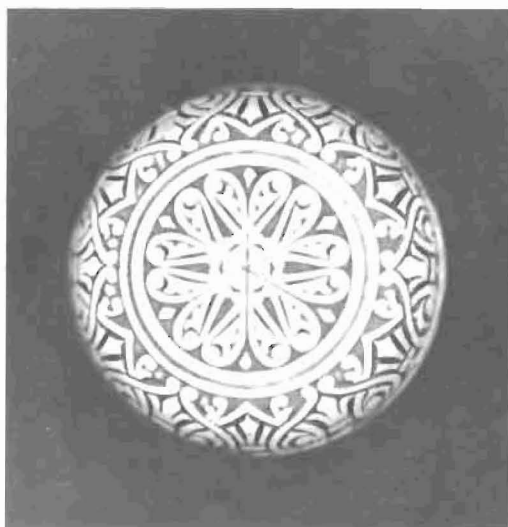
"Trade? I wouldn't collect anything!"

"I can't buy food with trade."

"You want bargains, go to a flea market!"



ADCA Convention Reminder,  
September 24-27 at Des Moines.



FROM THE ARCHIVES  
by Dorothy Miller



It is a pleasure to be able to report to you that the "**Emil Miller Memorial Library**" has been increased in size by the addition of three catalogs. This brings our total to fifteen volumes.

The following are the titles of the latest additions and the names of their generous donors:

A.G. Newman Hardware, 1876 - donated by ADCA member, George Clark, Milford, Connecticut.

History of the house of P.F. Corbin, Issued in Commemoration of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Founding of the House on the Fourteenth Day of February in the Year 1854, Copyright 1904 - donated by Maud Eastwood in memory of Emil Miller.

Nashua Lock Company, 1872 - donated by Maud Eastwood in memory of Jim Kaiser.

On behalf of the Club, let me offer sincere thanks and appreciation to these members for their generous gifts. We are, indeed, most grateful.

We hope that others will follow the example set by those who have donated. Our library represents a very important part of the basis of our organization and its goals. As our members continue to strengthen their interest in researching their collections, the library continues to grow in importance.

**ZIGGY**—by Tom Wilson



## CLASSIFIED AD SECTION

Members are reminded that your dues entitles you to advertise items for sale, trade or wanted at no charge.

**FOR SALE.** Having moved from a house to an apartment, we now have a shortage of space. A nice collection for beginning collectors, up to 300 knobs, mostly brass and iron, some glass and wood. Also escutcheons, key hole plates, locks, two old door bells mounted for display, and other miscellaneous items. We live about half way between Minneapolis and Des Moines on Hwy. 69 or 15 miles west of I-35 (on Hwy. 9). Eugene Morris, 237 North 4th Street, Forest City, Iowa 50436. (2nd Apt. from south end of four apartments). Stop by anytime. Phone 515-582-3557.

**FOR SALE.** Victorian Decorative Art (book) by Leonard Blumin. \$10.00 plus \$1.00 shipping and handling for each book. ADCA, P.O. Box 126, Eola, IL 60519-0126.

**WANTED.** Large quantity of H-110 doorknobs (shown on page H-4, Victorian Decorative Art). Debbie Fellenz, 2216 Cherokee, St. Louis, MO 63118.

**WANTED.** One H-221 knob, large size for front door. Debbie Fellenz, 2216 Cherokee, St. Louis, MO 63118.

## ROSTER CORRECTIONS

Lee Kaiser has moved and her address should be changed to: 6040 Morgan Ave. So., Minneapolis, MN 55419.

Loretta and Ray Nemeč's Zip code number should be corrected to read 60540.

## NEW MEMBERS

The following have joined ADCA since our last issue:  
Bernie Hobin, Woodwright Antiques, 1920 N. Wisconsin Ave., Peoria, IL 61603.

Patrick Hughes, 1111 High Ridge Road, Lombard, IL 60148.