



The Doorknob Collector

Number 48

July - August 1991



The Hayes Block



See Story on page 3

Rare page found by Richard Hubbard

by Len Blumin



Most collectors know that the field of ornate hardware had its birth with the patented designs and methods of the Metallic Compression Casting Company in 1870, all of which were acquired by Russell & Erwin Manufacturing Company in that same year. (See TDC #30, article by Maud Eastwood). Many of these designs were featured as woodcuts in the 1875 Russell & Erwin catalog, but documentation of the first public offering of such goods has been lacking until now.

In a booklet titled Russwin, The First 125

Years, their historian gives us a clue with the following:

"In (the) 1871 (catalog) an insert page.. entitled 'Real Compression Bronze Door Trimmings' pictured an assortment of extremely ornate knobs and escutcheon plates."

Member Richard C. Hubbard was able to acquire a sample of that very same 1871 catalog, into which some family has carefully pasted a variety of paper ephemera from the 1890's, effectively obscuring almost every page in the catalog! But in

the front of the book was the page you see copied today, perhaps spared the fate of the other pages because of the undeniable beauty of the hardware. The photo, sepia-toned and faded, is reproduced for us all to enjoy. A great "Thank you!" to Rich Hubbard.

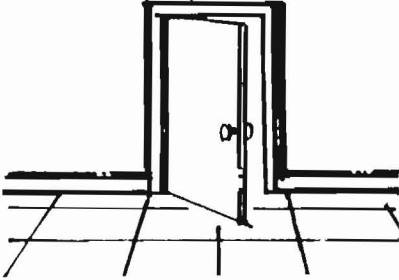
Careful examination of the photo suggests that the bottom two rows are all bellpulls, and in fact it is probable that some of these designs were made only as bellpulls (such as #18 and #23), and may never be found as true doorknobs.●

See Door Trimmings, pages 4 & 5

ADCA Convention at Lake Tahoe, August 11-14

THE OPEN DOOR

by ray nemec



The Lock Museum has announced a date for their 19th Annual Lock Collectors Conference. It will be held at the Terryville, Connecticut, High School on Saturday, October 12, 1991.. Further details will be in the Lock Museum's August newsletter or you may write to the Lock Museum (P.O. Box 104, Terryville, CT 06786). Collectors of all types of locks, doorknobs, keys, antique locks, restraints, etc., are welcome. There will be exhibits along with selling and trading. Write to Tom Hennessy if you are interested in attending.

If your TV viewing habits are similar to ours, the name Rosaria Sinisi flashes on you television screen at least once a week. Yes, Rosaria, who attended the 1990 convention and plans to be at the 1991 convention in Lake Tahoe is the Art Director of the Bill

Cosby show and was Associate Production Designer for the Tony Awards program seen on television recently.

If you happen to be behind a van that has a spare tire cover depicting knob A-104 (the flying bird), you are driving behind Arnie Fredrick. We expect to get a close look at it when we attend the convention.

Speaking of convention, August 11th isn't that far away. Hope you have made plans to attend it. We think a great time will be had by all. It doesn't seem that ten years have passed since we went to Waverly, Iowa, and helped form ADCA.●



Patented June 7, 1870.

REAL BRONZE BELL PULL No. 22, CONVEX KNOB.



Our regular feature, "Ornamental design in antique doorknobs," by Len Blumin, will be resumed in the next issue of "The Doorknob Collector."

The Doorknob Collector

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The prize

by Ray Zyc

It is funny how sometimes when you have been trying so hard with little success and have given up, the prize you sought falls right into your lap. I tried every way I know to obtain a knob from the Historic Hayes Block Building in, Janesville, Wisconsin since the early 80's.

Recently while browsing a local establishment called "Castaways," (a shop where folks bring items to be sold to benefit the local hospital), I entered into a conversation with an elderly lady. somehow we got on to the subject of antique hardware whereupon I revealed my hobby of doorknob collecting and how I had tried to acquire a knob from the Hayes Block Building. To my surprise, she said, "Oh! I have a pair that was given to me and I have no particular use for them. So you may as well have them."

I made an offer which she didn't refuse. I was so happy to make the find. Just one of the knobs has the "H.B." insignia. The other is plain but both have the Bower-Barff finish.●



Historic Hayes Block

The Hayes Block Building is the oldest commercial structure in Janesville, Wisconsin. The building is located on the site where Henry Janes operated a post office and tavern beginning in 1835 in the city bearing his name.

Thomas Lappin opened a business there in 1839. It was not until 1855 that he constructed the building which still stands at the corner of Main and Milwaukee Streets. It housed most of Janesville's doctors, lawyers and business people.

The four story building was purchased by contractors Dennis and Michael Hayes in 1899. They hired Chicago architect Arthur Peabody to help transform it to

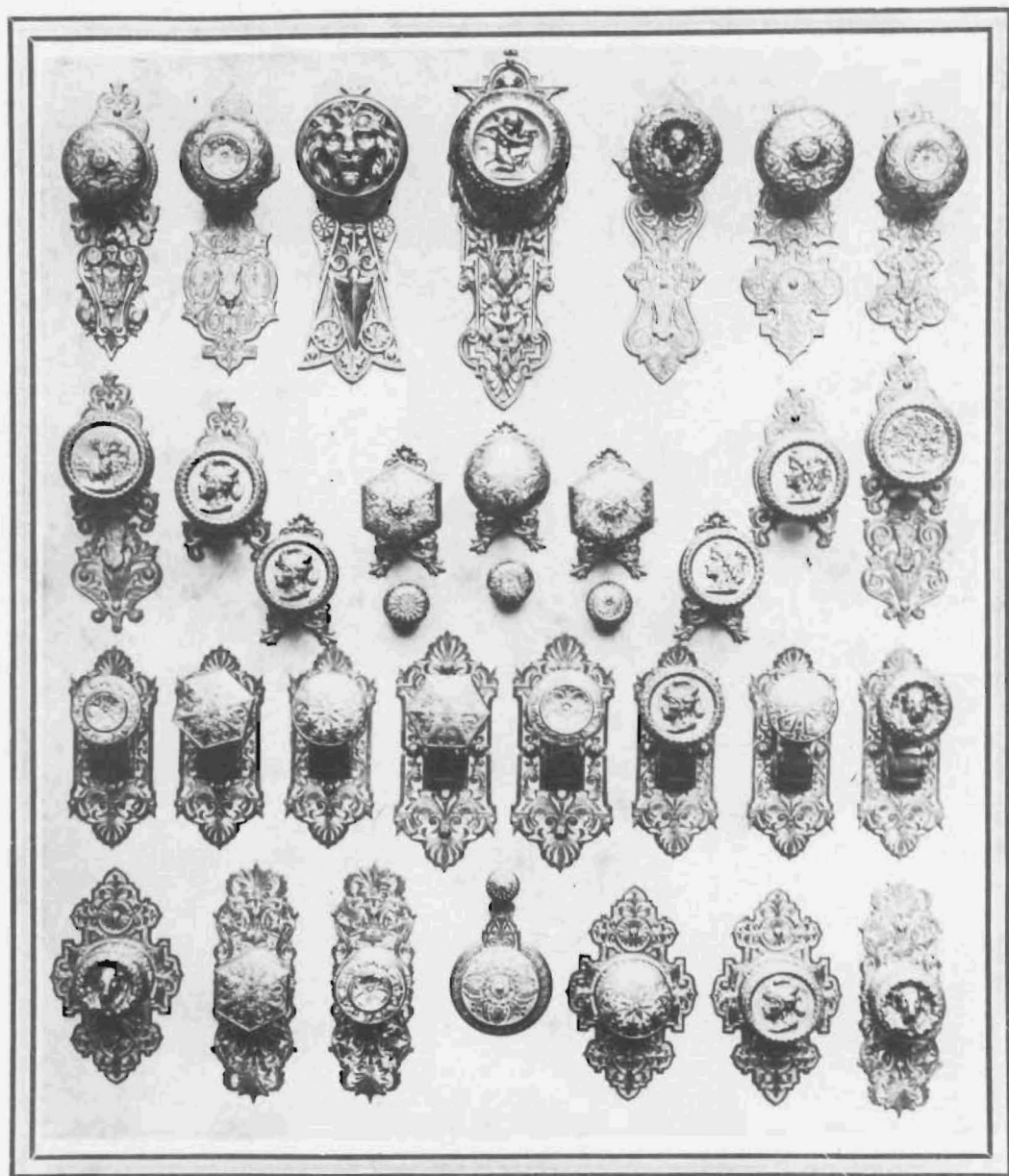
Janesville's first "modern" office building.

It was renamed the "Hayes Block." Each floor had about 25 offices, and doorknobs were embossed with the initials "HB."

As the years passed, the popularity of the Hayes Block building waned. There were vacant offices, the facade deteriorated and by 1978 the last tenants left.

The building was named to the National Register of Historic places in 1976. In 1983 the building was rehabilitated with seven stores on the first floor and offices on the remaining three floors. The hardware with an intertwined "HB" was refurbished and used again.●

REAL COMPRESSION BRONZE DOOR TRIMMINGS.



We are the Pioneers and only Manufacturers of this Line of Goods.

By the Patented process, *which we own exclusively*, we combine perfection, elegance of finish and durability, as well as an order of designs that are unsurpassed.

They have been in constant use for over two years with entire satisfaction, and competent authority concedes all that we claim for them.

Descriptive Illustrated Catalogues, with Prices, will be furnished upon application, without charge.

RUSSELL & ERWIN MFG. CO.

REAL COMPRESSION BRONZE DOOR TRIMMINGS

ROW ONE

1. Threefold. Design Patent #4133 size 2-1/4+" VDA G-125
2. Sixfold. Design Patent #4144 size 2-1/2-" VDA J-101
3. Lion. Design Patent #4097 size 3" VDA A-102
4. "Cupid and Dog" 3-1/4" NO.27 in R&E 1875 Catalog, \$15/pr. Knob not shown in catalog pages. Very rare. Sample can be seen at the Lock Museum of America, in Terryville, CT.
5. Dog. Design Patent #4098 size 2-1/2" VDA A-101
6. Threefold. Design Patent #4137 size 2-1/2" VDA G-126
7. Same as #2 above. VDA J-101

ROW TWO

8. Stag. Same perimeter as Madellion knobs. 2-1/2". No examples known.
9. Knight ("Plumed Helmet") Des. Patent #4100 size 2-1/2" VDA A-302
10. Knight. See #9. size 2-1/4"
11. Hexagon. Design Patent #4135 size 2-1/2" VDA C-101
12. Fourfold. Design Patent #4134 size 2-1/2" VDA H-116
13. Hexagon. Design Patent #4107 size 2-1/2"
14. Lady ("Lady With Bonnet"). Design Patent #4099 size 2-1/4"
15. Lady. See #14 Rare. size 2-1/2"
16. "Charter Oak". Note Medallion perimeter. Size 2-1/2". Rare.

ROW THREE

17. Fourfold. Bellpull, Size 2". New design.
18. Hexagon. Design Patent #4115 size 2"x2-1/4". Shown in 1875 catalog, #31, as bellpull.
19. Sixfold. Bellpull, Size 2". New design.
20. Hexagon. See #18.
21. Fourfold. See #17.
22. Knight. See #9. Available as bellpull in 1875 catalog.
23. Fivefold. Size 2". Available as bellpull #22 in 1875 catalog.
24. Dog bellpull. Size 2". Rare. See #5.

ROW FOUR

25. Dog bellpull. Size 2". Available in 1875 catalog as bellpull #29.
26. Hexagon. See #18.
27. Sixfold. See #17.
28. ? Bellcrank. Size 2-3/4".
29. Sixfold. See #19.
30. Knight. Size 2-1/4". See #9.
31. Dog. Size 2". See #5.

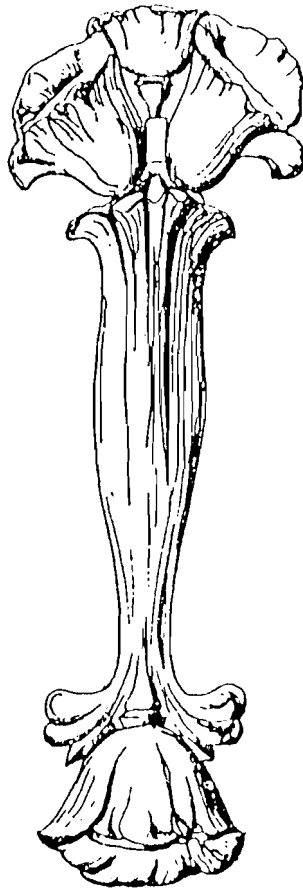
Searching for patents

by Maude Eastwood

Hardware researching compares to fishing: you will never know what lies beneath the surface unless you break water. NO SEARCH, NO FIND.

Take the case of the daffodil - shaped door handle. I was riffling the pages of the Patent Gazette to see what would come up (leads are always coming up) and here was a daffodil in the shape of a door handle. A "keeper." Matching the patent number of the illustration with the number on the specification, I found that G. Cawthron of Redwood City, California, (a Westerner) had designed the piece for Axford & DeShields in 1924. Here was a transition piece, Art Nouveau to Art Deco.

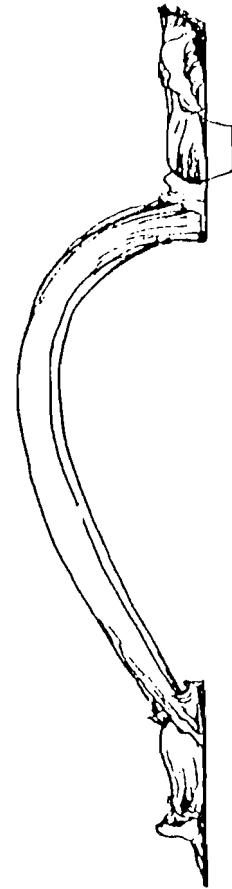
My interest was piqued. Who were Axford and DeShields? This information could be a matter of public record. I contacted the State Library in Sacramento to run a check on Cawthron and the company. Their files and special sources found nothing on the inventor, but a wealth of material on Axford & De Shields in the San Jose City Directories for the years 1920-1954. More than one file would benefit from this find.



The ornamental design for a door handle as shown.

However, I was a confirmed Patent Gazette 'browser' long before the above incident. I had learned years ago that the U.S. Patent Office, the same government bureau that issued 19th Century patents for door hardware, stand ready to feed name, dates, and processes to 20th Century collectors and that if you did not already have clues to follow, Patent Gazettes could supply.

I had also learned that other original source material lay in the public domain at state and local levels, such as tax and census records, directories, and manufacturers listing and records. Regional histories and Historical Society holding
continued on page 7



PATENT #64,296. DOOR HANDLE. George Cawthron, Redwood City, Calif., assignor to Axford & DeShields, San Jose, Calif., a Copartnership comprising H.W. Axford and A. DeShields. Filed May 31, 1923. Serial No.6.354. Term of patent 3-1/2 years.

Searching

continued from page 6

were invaluable research aids and more so when located in areas of early hardware manufacturing.

Patent copies, however, are perhaps the single most important research document in doorknob collector's files. To have patent copies for your knob is the equivalent of having papers on registered stock. At least try to associate your specimen with a patented process, if not by specific application.

Are you yet familiar with the processes of ordering full patent copies from the U.S. Patent Office or abbreviated copies bound in Gazette form from certain libraries? If not, because of inexperience, wait no longer. Spend a few minutes with a Document section librarian in a Main or Regional Library for an introduction to Patent Gazettes or send a request to the Patent Department in Washington, D.C. for the manual, "Obtaining Information from Patents, Box 9, Washington, D.C. 20231.

The cost of ordering full patent copies has risen to \$1.50 per patent with an increasingly less personalized service. Expect delivery to take from ten day to four weeks. There-

fore, searching Gazettes in a local or regional library is an attractive alternative. If adequate for your purposes, these short forms save space and often obviate the need to order full copies.

A call to your local library should establish the location of the nearest facility that can help you with your patent searching questions and needs. Such a facility may also list other helpful Government Bulletins in their files. Some cover patents issued before the numbering system and before the publishing of Gazettes. Inquire about their Reference Section. Do they list directories, census records, trade magazines or hardware catalogs?

Interaction with these bodies can be more or less productive, contingent on varying policies, personnel, retrieval system and luck. Be patient and firm. Institutes specifically oriented to architecture and related trades can be most helpful though they may require research to be conducted on the premises by qualified persons. Inter-library loans are sometimes granted.

For those who have never opened a Gazette, Gazettes are bound volumes of patent specification and illustrations, abbreviated and entered weekly in order of issuance. Some years required but one volume. Others years, multiple volumes, depending on the number of patents granted. Do not expect to find all Gazettes uniformly

continued on page 8

INFORMATION FROM SAN JOSE CITY DIRECTORIES 1920-1954

1920	no mention of Axford
1921	book missing
1922	Axford, Harry W. works for G.C. Foundry
1923	lists Axford and DeShields Brass Foundry (HW Axford and Albert DeShields) Successors of Garden City Brass Foundry, 61 S. 4th.
1924-25	Axford and DeShields Brass Foundry
1926-27	Becomes Axford Art Bronze Co., University corner of Chestnut
1928-29	Axford Art Bronze Co., 550 University
1930-45	Axford Art Bronze Co., 610 University
1946	no directory
1947-51	Axford Art Bronze Mfg. Corp., RM Sherman president, FE Finley treasurer, HW AXFORD NO LONGER MENTIONED.
1952-53	same company name, FE Finley president
1954	same company name, Robert D. Regan president.

END OF SEARCH

Searching

continued from page 7

formatted. Specifications were sometimes housed in the same volume as illustrations, sometimes separately. Helpfully, each weekly section included, besides and alphabetized listing of patentees and inventions, sections for design patents, re-issues, copyrights and litigations, etc..

For you who really get caught up in patent searching, a manual for ordering patent number lists by Class and Sub-Class, by the yard, is available. For you who will be satisfied to order or look up a nominal number of patents, arm yourself with a patent number that may have been found on the reverse of a knob, or on the shank. Were-ever. Address an envelope to U. S. Patent Office, Box 9, Washington, D.C., 20231. Enclose the patent No. or the Inventor's full name and the approximate date. Payment will be \$1.50 per patent. A postal money order will expedite the process, eliminating the time required for a check to clear.

If you prefer to make your own copy from a Gazette, match your clues to corresponding information in the Gazette, as: Patent number. Search for a Gazette whose

inclusive numbers contain the number in question, then numerically track the number. If you also know the date, the problem has already been solved. Any combination of clues that includes a date or patent number simplifies the search.

When only the inventor and , or the



D. Pat. No. 4107
Chas. Kunze, designer
MCCC/R&E June 7, 1870

company name is known and approximate date, a systematic search must be made to locate those names in the alphabetized lists for the weeks around the approximate date, unless that particular Gazette had a three month or yearly index. Compare the invention for verification, in the chance the inventor obtained more than one patent in that time frame. Copy the patent for your files. Now for your exercise and an invitation to ask unanswered question that might arise, and you are on your own.

EXERCISE: Locate and copy B. Porter's patent for a "Doorfastener and Pocket - knife, combined. Patent No. 70,609, dated 11-5-1867.●



D Pat. No. 4113
J. Ruff, designer
MCCC/R&E June 7, 1870



D Pat. No. 4115
J. Ruff, designer
MCCC/R&E June 7, 1870



D. Pat. No. 4117
J. Ruff, designer
MCCC/R&E June 7, 1870

A D C A NEEDS YOUR
ACTIVE PARTICIPATION
TO INSURE ITS FUTURE.

Obituary



TECLA A. SNOW

Tecla A. Snow, an ADCA member who attended the last three conventions, died April 24, 1991, in Nashville, Michigan, after a long illness with leukemia. She was 63.

Mrs. Snow was born May 25, 1927, at Naples, Italy. She met her husband, Homer, during World War II while he served with the U.S. Army Air Force there. She came to the United States in 1947 and they were married in Battle Creek, Michigan on April 6, 1947.

The past 17 years she co-owned the Snow Locksmith in Nashville with her husband. Their interest in hardware had led them to join and become active members of the **Antique Doorknob Collectors of America.**

In addition to her husband, Mrs. Snow is survived by three sons, a daughter and five grandchildren. One daughter preceded her in death. ●

ROSTER UPDATE No. 2

The following are additions to the 1991 ADCA roster which was enclosed with the last issue of **The Doorknob Collector:**

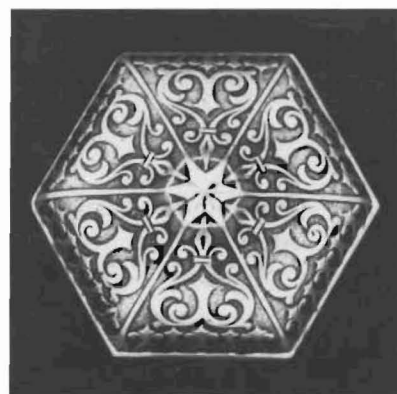
#170
Judith Stogner
Warren Pritchard
795 Clemont Drive NE
Atlanta, GA 30306
PH: 404-874-1821

#258
Ruth Lee
18317 Green Willow Dr.
Baton Rouge, LA 70817

#259
Mr&Mrs Victor Millonzi
54-C Kirby Close
Yorktown Heights, NY
10598

#260
Steve Arnold
7901 Michigan
St. Louis, MO 63111

#261
Julie Stocker
Old House Journal
435 Ninth Street
Brooklyn, NY 11215



C-101

Convention schedule

	Sunday August 11	Monday August 12	Tuesday August 13	Wednesday August 14
8 a.m.			Buying, selling and trading.	Finish dismantling displays and pack up.
9 a.m.		Set up displays, trading, buying and selling.		General meeting for all members.
10 a.m.		Welcome address from President.	10:00 is deadline for voting on displays.	
11 a.m.		Trading, buying and selling. Register items for auction.		Borninos Tahoe Paradise to see Marge's collection and creativity.
12 Noon		Lunch on your own.	Lunch on your own.	
1 p.m.		Buying, selling and Trading.	Awards will be placed on winners' display.	Italian style Luncheon at Borninos.
2 p.m.			Displays open to the public.	
3 p.m.				
4 p.m.	Hospitality room will be open to hand out information concerning the convention and Tahoe.	Convention hall will be closed at 5 p.m.	Start to dismantle displays.	
5 p.m.		Meet in lobby for transportation to Harvey's Casino. Casino will furnish transportation.		
6 p.m.			Outside Bar-B-Q	
7 p.m.		Buffet dinner at Harvey's Casino	ADCA Annual Auction	
8 p.m.		Educational Program		
9 p.m.				

The doorknob exchange



**FROM THE ARCHIVES
WITH ARCHIVISTS**
Steve/Barb Menchhofer

ARE YOU READY?

The 1991 ADCA Convention is fast approaching. You've gotten your display together and your doorknob traders ready and you're all set to go...but wait! Do you know what catalogs you have and what catalogs you need to order? Wouldn't it be a good idea to check out your library of doorknob information and bring a list of your catalogs to compare with the order blank offered at the convention? Maybe you'll want to browse through the copies we bring and place an order. This is an ideal time to preview some of the catalogs before ordering.

If you have a catalog that the Archives has not yet copied and would be willing to share it, this would be an excellent time to make arrangements with us about copying it.

See you in Tahoe!

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

FOR SALE. A photostatic copy of SARGENT'S BOOK OF DESIGNS. A onetime offer, only \$5 which includes postage. Maurice Onraet, (#132), P.O. Box 605, Newtown, PA 18940



A-301

FOR SALE. If you are passing thru San Diego, stop in and see Liz's Antique Hardware, at the Unicorn Antique Mall, 704 J Street in downtown San Diego. Inquires by mail: Liz Gordon (#111), P.O. Box 16371, San Diego, CA 92116. PH: 619-284-1075

FOR SALE. Books by Maud Eastwood. The Antique Doorknob \$10.00. Antique Builders Hardware, soft cover \$18.50; ring binder with hard cover \$20.50. Supplement Number One to the Antique Builders Hardware \$5.25. All prices include postage, ADCA, P.O. Box 126, Eola, IL 60519-0126.



A-302

FOR SALE. Doorknobs and related hardware in good quality and quantity as well as almost any type of door to place it on. Also parts of house of almost any vintage. David Olafsen, 20048 Free Church Road, Caledonia, IL 61011. PH:815-389-2728.

FOR SALE. ADCA club doorknobs (0-150). Walnut body, brass stems, design in club logo. Laser engraved. \$27 each includes shipping. ADCA, Dept. D, c/o Bill Byington, 415 Magowan Ave., Iowa City, IA 52246. PH:319-338-0982.

WANTED. I am looking for a smooth, clear, leaded glass doorknob. It is the shape of a sphere (see p8, March-April 1991 issued of TDC). Inside the ball is a helix of bubbles. It is called Pairpoint glass or "controlled bubbles." Mike Chace, (#234), R.D. No. 2, Bayberry Lane, Mt. Kisco, NY 10549. Ph:914-234-3984.