



The Doorknob Collector

Number 52

March - April 1992

Elgin is for you in 1992

The 1992 **Antique Doorknob Collectors of America** annual convention will be held from August 1 to August 4 at Elgin, Illinois. This will be the second convention held in Northeast Illinois. A convention was held at Naperville, Illinois in 1983.

Co-chairmen Lillian and Dick Balas have announced the site of the 1992 convention will be The Ramada Inn, 500 West River Road. Complete details will be mailed about June 1 to all **ADCA** members.

Elgin is located on the Fox River 39 miles northwest of Chicago. The manufacturing of watches was once the largest industry in Elgin. The Elgin Watch Company closed its Elgin plant many years ago.

Today, Elgin and the Fox River Valley offer a variety of attractions for visitors. Fox Valley museums are fascinating places to visit.

For example there is a trolley museum in South Elgin and a railroad museum in Union, Illinois. Rides are available at both museums.

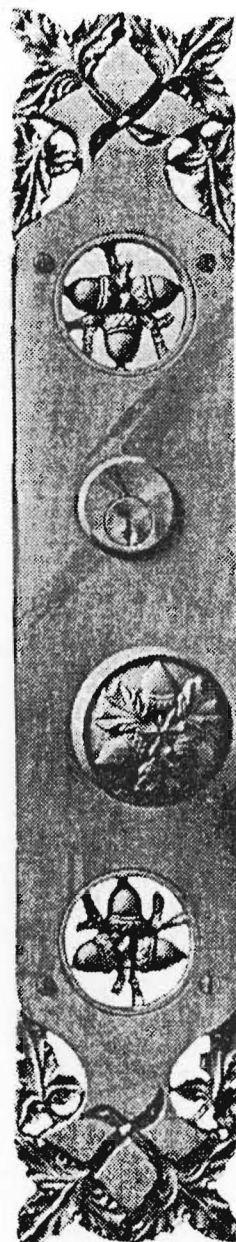
Union also has an Antique Village Museum and Wild West Town with shootouts, a working forge, etc.

Haeger Pottery in East Dundee offers you the chance to see raw clay change into works of art.

Elgin has three museums. The Elgin Public Museum is filled with birds, animals and native American artifacts. Fire Barn No. 5 is scheduled for completion in time for the convention. The Old Main Historical Museum contains the legacy of Elgin.

(continued on page 8)

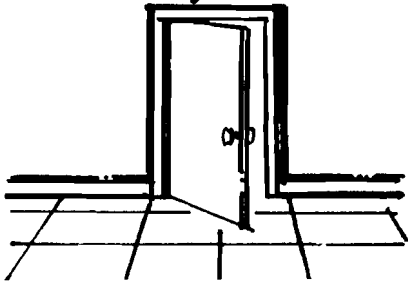
CHICAGO



ACORN DESIGN

THE OPEN DOOR

by ray nemec



On the evening of Friday, February 28th, The Roselle, Illinois Historical Foundation presented "An Evening with Frank Lloyd Wright" by Lyman Shepard. Mr. Shepard, a retired stockbroker, using slides and dressing in Mr. Wright type of clothes, including a cape, assumes the identity of the architect for an hour program.

Our daughter, Jennifer, Loretta and I attended the program and enjoyed it. For one unfamiliar with Mr. Wright's lifestyle and works, the program was interesting and enlightening. For a more serious student of Wright, such as our daughter, the material covered was nothing new. Mr. Shepard took us from the rural beginning of Wright, to his association with Louis Sullivan, through his various love affairs and into his declining years. Mr. Shepard has done the program many times all over the country for various groups.

Perhaps you have seen him?

It is quite a thrill to open up your daily newspaper on a Saturday morning as you get ready to drink that cup of coffee and find a big 9x6 colored picture of seven ornate doorknobs and a hinge. But, there it was, a part of a feature on collectibles entitled "Tiny treasures add to home comforts." The writer, Sharon Achatz, from the Copley News Service, wrote an interesting article about the collectable treasures that are available to us in our own homes. Items such as silver candlesticks, pottery, quilts, etc. Achatz tells us nearly every home contains a cross-section of collectibles.

Although the beautiful picture of door hardware appeared above the article, not once did she mention doorknobs. I hurriedly read through the article to see who's collection had been pictured. But as I read it and re-read it, I could find not one mention of doorknobs.

DEADLINE

All ads, material and articles for the May-June 1992 issue of **The Doorknob Collector** should be in the hands of the editors by April 25, 1992.

President's message

by Win Applegate

Our conventions are so rich and full of experiences and discussions that it is somewhat of a problem to report everything back to our full body. Some items do not make the newsletter for a while.

One such topic is reflected in Arnie Fredrick's upcoming article on the museum fund and mobile displays.

Rich Kennedy's recent letter touched upon regional meetings. This topic was discussed at length in conventions sessions. Local gatherings of collectors appear to have already been held.

Collectors are invited to use the newsletter to announce local meetings. Until legal and insurance issues can be clarified, the ADCA cannot sanction these as ADCA events. You are encouraged to use the newsletter because "local" gatherings may coincide with the travel plans of more distant members.

At the South Lake

(continued on page 10)

The Doorknob Collector

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Tracing origin of an oriental knob

by Vern Eklund

I read with interest Maude Eastwood's article "American Hardware of Oriental Design" in the January-February issue of **The Doorknob Collector**. I recently acquired three real oriental knobs one of which is pictured in the enclosed photos. I obtained these from a

tachment. It's design is a simple but pleasing rice plant baked into the ceramic. Around the periphery and on the back are inscriptions. The translation of these inscriptions became a humorous and difficult affair. I first had our daughter take the

4000 are needed for day-to-day use. Japanese also use about 2000 of the characters in their writing which explains why both the Chinese student and the Japanese businessman could partially translate the knob. It appears that the writing on the periphery is a message of praise to the visitor to the house and says something like: "A works to be done by a great leader makes the world beautiful before long." The back inscription appears to offer appreciation for the visit and has the "date" which is the year of the Sheep. Since the years go in cycles of 12 years this could be 1883, 1895, 1907 or any year that is a multiple of 12 from these dates..



fellow who told me that his grandfather, a Mr. George Stanley, brought them from the orient around 1920. I have no idea of their age, but if turning knobs weren't used prior to the advent of Western influence, these are probably late 19th or early 20th century items.

The knob pictured is 1-7/8 inch in diameter and 1-5/8 inch high overall. It appears to be made of a cast ceramic and is hollow. It is dark gray in color and has an unusual plated brass at-

knobs to college where a Chinese graduate student tried to translate. Looking at the knob pictured she said, "It's Japanese." So next I took the knob to a Japanese businessman and he said, "Oh, it's Chinese".

The Japanese fellow did research for me, however, and the consensus now is that the characters are an "ancient" or older form of Chinese. There are some 50,000 different characters in the written language although only 3000 to



1992 ROSTER

The 1992 **ADCA** membership Roster will be mailed with the May-June issue of **The Doorknob Collector**. Please check the mailing label on the envelope in which you received the March-April issue and if it is incorrect please notify **ADCA** by April 25th with correction.

Chicago's early hardware companies

by Maude Eastwood

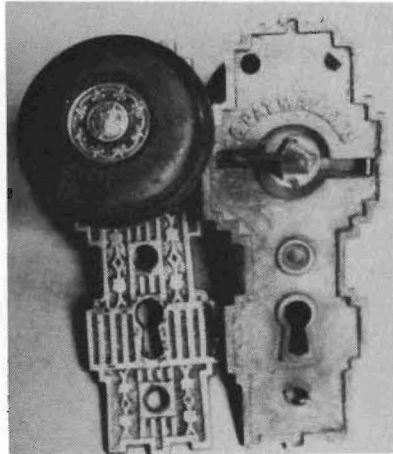
Chicago is a city offering so wide an assortment of attractions that not even a month of viewing could exhaust the list. With Chicago being in the proximity of Elgin, Illinois, site of the 1992 Antique Doorknob Collectors of America convention, choosing between these attractions may prove to be stressful. Not to worry. Mother Maudie is prepared to make a completely biased suggestion: Old buildings and old door hardware.

Actually, Chicago was the birthplace of the skyscraper, a school of architecture, and architect designed hardware. And all of this by courtesy of the fickle winds of fortune.

The fickle winds of fortune were forever blowing in Chicago and usually for the good, as early on, by location and initiative, Chicago won the title of Hub of the Nation and Great Metropolis of the West. Later, years after the fact, Chicago is right to the title, Architecture Capital of America, was recognized. Even today, Chicago displays a wealth of historic buildings (The Door-

knob Collector, February, 1986) including recent and scheduled restorations.

The Architectural Capital title came about via the winds of 1871 that for Chicago were both



GILBERT LOCK 1881

devastating and energizing. Devastating as they fueled the flames that incinerated 90,000 homes. Energizing as they provided the reason for rebuilding and for birthing a style of architecture later called the Chicago School. Also changed was the concept of builders' hardware from primarily a useful appendage to an ornamental "frosting-on-the-cake" whose design must match or compliment its' host.

This was the first time that architects, dealers and manufacturers had worked in concert to produce hardware that was artistically correct, making it possible to classify designs by school of architecture. Public reaction was positive, and the market for fine ornamental builders' hardware caught fire. Inspiration for the new designs has been credited to the then controversial architects of Chicago: Sullivan, Root, and Mundie, etc.

What companies provided the major share of hardware for the rebuilding of Chicago and for the needs of the settlements in the West that were also served thru Chicago outlets? Largely, the companies were Connecticut based. Established lock and hardware manufacturers with all systems in order and the foresight and ability to upgrade equipment, establish art departments, and meet the demands. This is not to deny the efforts of the myriad smaller companies then in existence or coming into production. Theirs was a vital part of supplying the vast need.

Yale and Sargent and a number of lesser known company's locks were available through agencies in Chicago from 1860. After the fire, a number of Eastern companies made haste to set up their own agencies and ware rooms. Yale Lock established an agency on Lake Street in 1874. Then, as Yale & Towne, opened a branch house in 1880 and a ware room in 1895.

Corbin hardware has handled by an outside agency until they set up their own Chicago office in 1887 and a warehouse in 1895. Russell & Erwin, early jobbers, did not set up a Chicago ware room before 1899. In 1910 Sargent maintained an office on Dearborn Street. Adams and Westlake maintained a main office in Chicago but manufactured at their Elkhart, Indiana, plant some 75 miles from Chicago.

Prior to the fire wholesalers Britnell, Terry, and Belden handled the goods of a number of companies, including Yale, but burned out in the fire and perhaps did not survive. O.H. Gilbert was a lock manufacturer in Chicago in 1875 but then re-

moved to New Jersey where he established his Gilbert Lock Company. Nevertheless, he continued to be represented in Chicago. Interestingly, he gave a Chicago address for



United States Steel
Lock Co,
1907

a 1886 patent (see pages 170-175, Antique Builders Hardware.)

Makers of locks and related builders' hardware in Chicago in the 1870s included Smyth and Wenter, J.L. Layne & Sons, Barlow Lock Company, Andrews Brothers Locks, and the Chicago Lock Company.

In 1892 the Warner Lock Company of Chicago occupied office space in the Manhattan Building. Warner was listed as a manufacturer of locks and latches with emphasis on a burglar proof lock. By 1900 the U.S. Steel Lock Company of Lyons, Iowa advertised as the sole manufacturer of

Warner Locks.

The most widely known of the Chicago manufacturers were Union Brass and the Chicago Hardware Mfg. Co. These two companies were important by the early 1880s. Union Hardware pieces are not plentiful, however Union Hardware ornamental designs have been found on early mid-West Court Houses. This company occupied a large section on Ohio Street in 1884 and a patent date of 1867 indicates much earlier activity.

The Chicago Hardware Mfg. Co. produced special design hardware for Chicago architects, too, as did Yale & Towne and Corbin and other leading manufacturers. An 1895 catalog (copies are available from club archives) list the plant as North Chicago and a general office in Chicago. Niles & Son of the Oak Park district before the fire are presumed to have been the originators of the Niles lock later featured in the Chicago line.

A later day Chicago brass and iron foundry was the Schlangen Mfg. Company. Schlangen's No. 10 catalog of Artistic Builders'

(continued on page 8)

Ornamental design in antique doorknobs

by Len Blumin

(The following regular feature is a supplement to Len Blumin's excellent book, *VICTORIAN DECORATIVE ART*. Copies of the book are available from ADCA for \$11 per copy.)

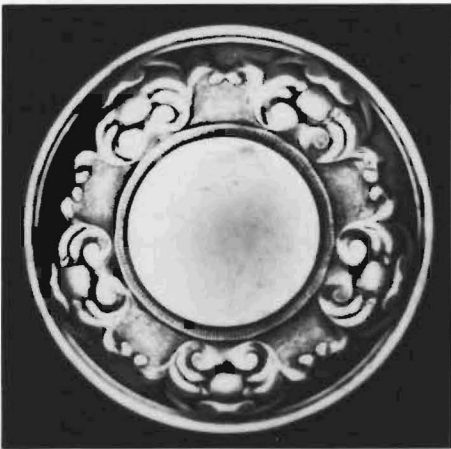
FIVEFOLD SYMMETRY

- I-119 Vernacular, circa 1880. Fivefold symmetry rare at this time.
I-120 Wrought. Good detail.
I-121 Bold fivefold swirl, pleasing.

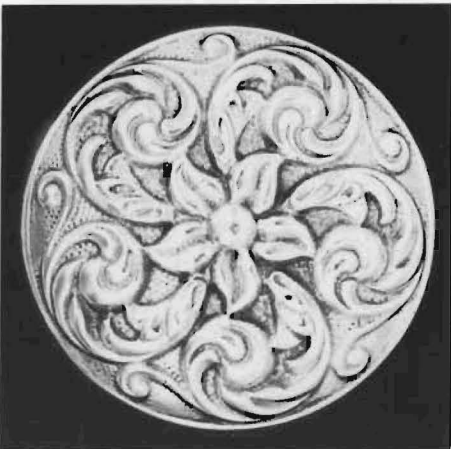
I-119



I-120

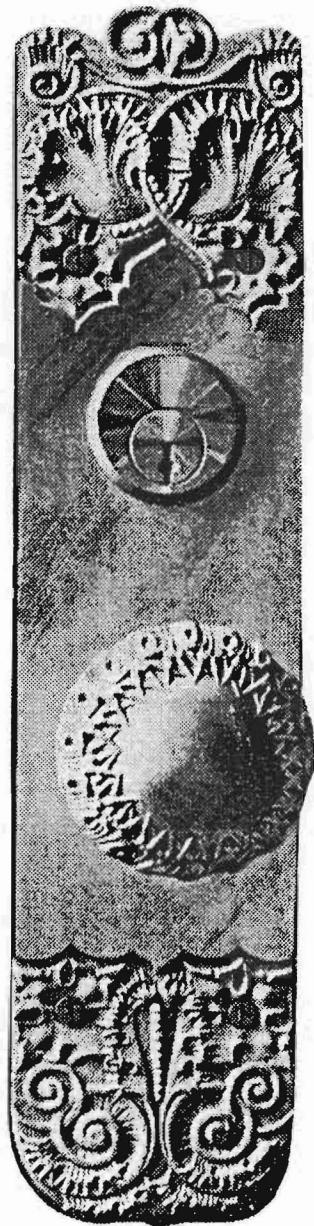


I-121



THISTLE DESIGN

CHICAGO



Restoration, Chicago style

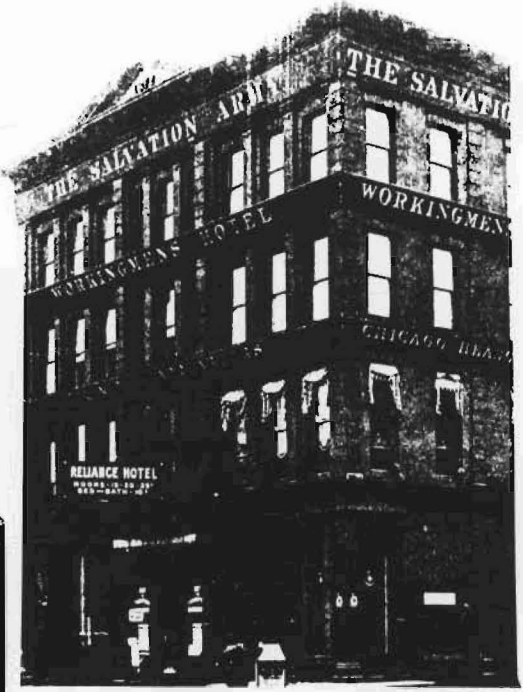
by Maude Eastwood

Collectors who have filed their back issues of *The Doorknob Collector* (and **WHO** hasn't?) will want to refresh their memories on the Chicago buildings that appeared in the February 1986 issue, as they look forward to the 1992 convention at Elgin, Illinois. Nearby Chicago features a number of historical buildings in various stages of restoration. Three examples are illustrated.

The restoration of the *Rookery Building*

was started in 1988, the buildings' centennial, and should be completed by convention time. When the Rookery was finished in 1888 it was the largest and most costly office building in Chicago, The architect was John Welborn Root.

era are within a three block span: The Manhattan, Marquette and Old Colony.



on La Salle Street received major coverage in the current issues of *Historic Preservation*. The Rookery was built to last and has endured both renovations, reconstruction, and restoration to complete its 100-plus years. The restoration

The 1892 *Monadnock Building* on South Dearborn Street has recently been under restoration and is due to be completed in 1991. This restoration has been one of the most extensive of all Illinois restorations. Of particular interest to our group would be the builder's hardware that required custom crafting. Burnham and Root was the architectural firm for the Monadnock. Three other buildings of the same

The 1895 *Reliance Building* has long been a target for restoration and finally the pieces seem to be falling together. This will be a major job, costing ten to 15 million dollars. The building is currently in sad shape on North State Street, with hope of a brighter future. ■

Pictures above, left to right: The Rookery Building, The Monadnock Building & The Reliance Building.

Chicago cont'd from p.5

Hardware was issued c.1928. The office and factory were located on Irving Park Blvd.

The names of a number of Builders' hardware Manufacturers located within ten to 125 miles of Elgin and Chicago appear on manufacturers list for the early 1900s. Included are: The Stover Mfg. Co. and the Freeport Hardware Mfg. Co. of Freeport, Illinois, Barrows of Lockport and later of North Chicago, The National Mfg. Co. of Sterling, Illinois, The National Lock Company at Rockford, Allith-Prouty in Danville, and Richard Wilcox in Aurora, Illinois.

The considerable role mail-order houses played in Chicago's builders' hardware trade should not be overlooked. Four such ventures: Montgomery Ward, Sears Roebuck, Charles Williams, and John W. Smyth severally retailed hardware produced by Sargent, Branford, Penn, Reading, and Corbin. Suffice to say, mail-order firms caused considerable concern among established hardware wholesalers as they made inroads in the outlying markets.

The first mail-order in Chicago was Montgomery Ward on North Clark Street in 1872, the year after the fire. Sears Roebuck, with a previous background in Minnesota, incorporated in 1893



Front Door Lock Sets.

SEARS, ROEBUCK & CO.
CATALOGUE NO. 111
1909

Sears entry into the sale of order-by-mail houses may have contributed significantly to their astounding rise to a record sales total of five billion dollars in 1967.

Both Montgomery Ward and Sears Roebuck offered houses by mail. Sears models ranged from \$95.00 Portable Houses, needing only a hammer, monkey wrench, and screwdriver to assemble, to custom one-of-a-kind mansions. No amenities were spared with Sears houses, including colored art glass windows, buffets, medicine chests, oak and maple floors, cast bronze hardware, fireplaces, etc. Elgin has a

SEARS, ROEBUCK & CO.
CATALOGUE NO. 111
1909



number of Sears houses still in good repair, many being restored.

This is not to project a picture of Chicago resting on her 1800s architectural laurels. Hardly, Chicago does not rest. She opened her second hundred years after the fire by giving the 1974 world its tallest building, the 110 story SEARS TOWER. Salute!

See you in Elgin (and Chicago). ■



Sears Tower, the world's tallest building

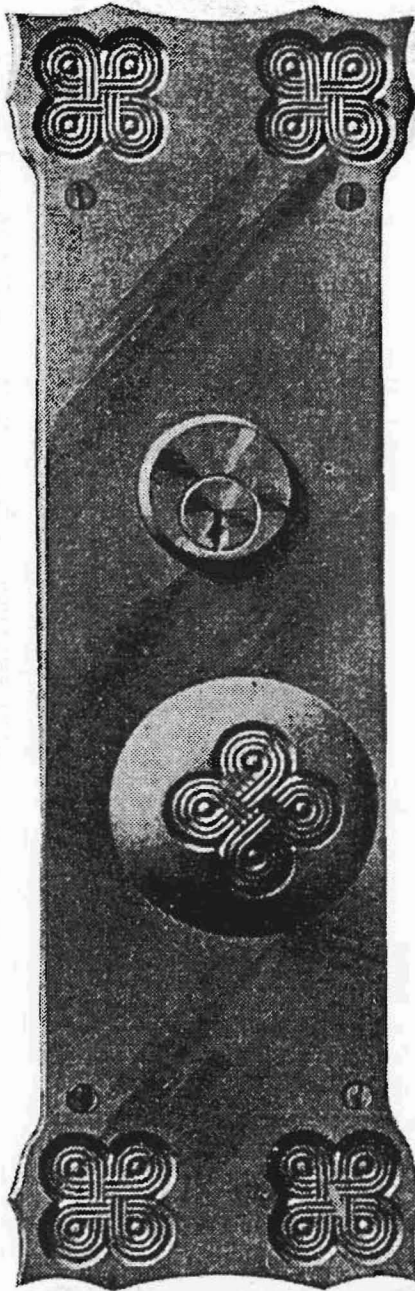
(continued from page 1)

Fabyan Villa, in Geneva, has among many attractions a Dutch Windmill, a lighthouse, and a Japanese garden. Another Geneva attraction is the famous Kane County Flea Market on the first Sunday of the month and the Saturday afternoon preceding the first Sunday.

There are many fine places to dine along the Fox River. The Mill Race Inn in Geneva is one restaurant you may want to try. Located at the edge of the Fox River, the restaurant lives up to its claim, "the restaurant that is a landmark with food that is a legend."

For everyone who likes to buy, trade, sell or learn more about doorknobs and related hardware, the annual ADCA convention is the place to be. If you have never attended an ADCA convention or have attended them all, you will want to arrange for a grand time at Elgin, Illinois, from August 1 to August 4. Don't forget, Elgin is the place for you in '92.

CHICAGO



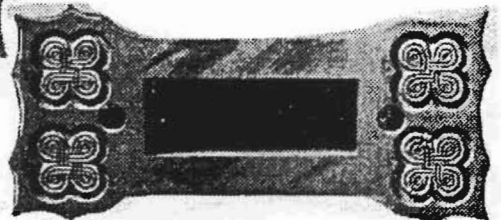
445 DESIGN

HARDWARE CATALOGS

The following is a list of Yale & Towne Mfg. Co. Catalogues known to exist. They are in hands of collectors, museums and/or libraries. If you have a Yale & Towne Catalogue not listed below, please furnish us with the year, catalogue number and the amount of pages.

YALE & TOWNE MFG. CO.

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>CAT.#</u>	<u>PAGES</u>
1884	(10)	383
1885	11	100
1889	12	564
1893	14	299
1897	16	202
1905	18	207
1910	20	915
1912	(21)	494
1917	22	373
1917	24	515
1918		353
1921	25	450
1929	26	517
1929	27	234
1937	28	473
1938	29	470
1941		446
1946		350
1960		450
1962		600



ADCA Convention, Elgin, IL, August 1-4, 1992

KENNEDY KOMMENTS

by Rich Kennedy

I think there has been an article written on every aspect of doorknob collecting from identification to cleaning, but I would be willing to bet there hasn't been an article written on how to install doorknobs on the doors in your house. It isn't easy matching old doorknobs to new hardware and vice versa. This article was prompted after a real-life experience, and with the following dialogue only the names have been changed to protect the innocent (me).

Wife to husband; "dear, since you have all those extra doorknobs around why don't you put them on a few of the doors so if Win Applegate (ADCA President) shows up again we can show off this ole house."

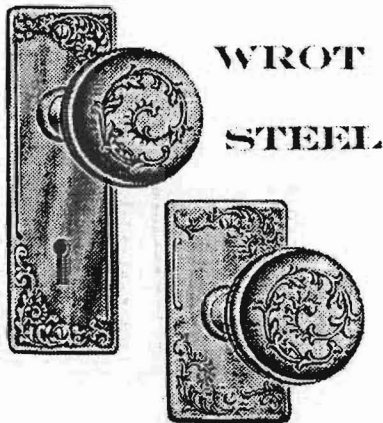
Husband to wife; "that's a great idea, it will only take a few minutes."

Husband to himself; "but I don't remember this being one of the top 12 'honey-do' jobs." One hour has passed. Wife to semi-irate husband; "how are you coming dear? I think I like the glass one better than the wooden one. Maybe the brass one would look better on the bathroom door."

Very irate husband to wife; "I just don't understand this. How I'm suppose to fit this square shank into this round hole? I think some fiendish person invented this hardware knowing 100 years later someone like me would be going nuts trying to get it to fit together."

If you have ever been through the experience, you know it takes more than ten minutes. It take a machine shop and a patient wife. One more thing, don't start on the bathroom door, there could be many interruptions. ■

LYONS DESIGN



WROT
STEEL

President Message
(continued from page 2)

Tahoe meet, an absolutely superb display was arranged by John Holland. John is one of the strongest proponents of education in our organization. The theme dealt with knobs of different materials. Museum quality knobs ranging from leather to turquoise were lent by members.

A folio covering the various materials was given to the attendees. Plans are being made to make this available to the general membership. Hopefully, a similar display can be assembled for the East coast convention in 1993.

Some other topics? There are a number of things under consideration ranging from commemorative postage stamps (better than Elvis) to a mail auction for large collections.....more another time. ■

ANTIQUA DOORKNOB COLLECTORS OF AMERICA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President, Win Applegate #110, Hamilton Square, NJ
Vice President, Dale Sponaugle #85, Buffalo, NY
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Board Member, Len Blumin #3, Mill Valley, CA
Board Member, Dean Campbell #11, Newberg, OR
Board Member, Maud Eastwood #2, Woodinville, WA
Board Member, Arnie Fredrick #1, Waverly, IA
Board Member, Carlos Ruiz #52, Alameda, Ca



Escutcheon 7876LE
with Knob 1621LE

From The Archives ---- LORD ESSEX DESIGN

by Steve & Barb Menchhofer

We recently purchased 5 catalogs and among them was one that contained several interesting pieces of door hardware. We're speaking of the 1941 Sargent catalog No. 42. In this catalog we found a page describing some unusual specially made hardware. There was one of these doorknobs with the escutcheon displayed at the 1988 convention.

Here's what Sargent wrote about this hardware:

"For people who build their homes in the European traditions of the Late Gothic, the Elizabethan or the Jacobean -- for people who like to seek out the unusual, yet in keeping and good taste -- we developed this line of specially made hardware. The unique manner in which the decorative features, taken from historical records, are handled, gives it an interesting personality that sets in apart from the "commercial", yet it retains the dignity so essential to buildings of this period."

Sargent offered a choice of ten different doorknob designs to be used in their Lord Essex series. The escutcheon was offered with a choice of ten different shields, thus giving the customer a choice of one hundred knob and escutcheon combinations.

CATALOGS CAN BE INTERESTING!!!!



Escutcheon 845LE
with Knob 1620LE



Cylinder Rosette
1LE



Door Knob 1620LE
with
Rose 175LE



Lever Handle 1155LE
with Rose 275LE



Typical of the shields forming part of the Escutcheons. Ten shields make ten different Escutcheons.



Three of the ten designs available for use on the Knobs making ten combinations of Knobs.

The doorknob exchange

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

FOR SALE. Six Rooster knobs. \$40 each, includes postage. (see N-129 TDC #23, April 1987)

Lee Kaiser (#5),
6040 Morgan Ave. South
Minneapolis, MN 55419
PH: 612-861-6215.

FOR SALE. Seven sets Russwin lock set, \$25 per set. (see photo)
Bill Hart (#108),
1937 Moser Drive
Henderson, NV 89015
PH: 702-565-4752.

FOR SALE. "The Doorknob Collector" (newsletter) by Rich & Faye Kennedy. Ten issues, covers period of March 1977 to February 1981, a period prior to the formation of ADCA. Complete your reference library by adding these 42 pages of reference material. \$12. ADCA,
P.O. Box 126,
Eola, IL 60519.

WANTED. Mechanical doorbells and parts, ornate letter slots, fancy peep holes, and any type of door pushes with writing on them, especially advertising. Also interested in colored glass doorknobs (blue, green red, etc.)

Russell Barnes (#288),
203 W. Caddo,
Austin, TX 78753.
Ph: 512-835-9510.

WANTED. Victorian door bell of nice design and in working condition.

David Olafsen (#43),
20048 Free Church Road
Caledonia, IL 61011.
PH: 815-389-2728.

WANTED. Sample of your doorknob calling cards (before May 1, 1992) for unique convention display.

Send to: ADCA-Dept LN
P.O.Box 126
Eola, IL 60519



N-129

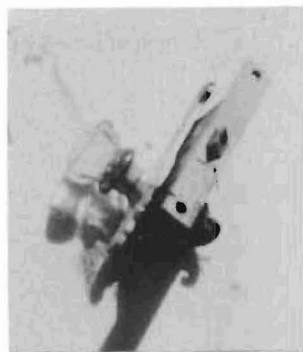
Roster Update No. 6

The following are additions to the 1991 ADCA roster which was enclosed with the May-June 1991 issue of **The Doorknob Collector.**

#103
Louis Vittori
3318 S. Lowe
Chicago, IL 60616

#279
Sharon Lins
3102 S. Woods Ave.
McHenry, IL 60050

#280
Jim Bennett
Rt 3 Box 300
Marietta, OH 45750



#281
Lee Bettenhausen
AL BAR Laboratories
127 Green Bay Road
Willmette, IL 60091

#282
Jerry Visek
P.O. Box 91395
Los Angeles, Ca
90009

#283
Archie Tempel
614 Hunters Ridge
St. Louis, MO 63135

#284
Hills'Bros.
Lock/Safe
9177 Garden Blvd.
Garden Grove, CA
92644-1397

#285
Steve Isaac
730 Woodbridge Pl.
Longwood, FL 32750

#286
Steven Champlin
323 "A" Street S.E.
Washington, DC
20003

#287
Stephen Rowe
85 Jasmine Ave.
Clovis, CA 93612

#288
Russell Barnes
203 W. Caddo
Austin, TX 78753