



The Doorknob Collector

Number 56

November - December 1992



*A greeting for you,
full of Christmastime cheer*

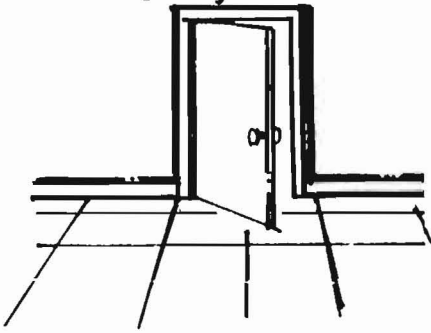
And

*a wish for the happiest
kind of a year!*

1993 convention – see page 8

THE OPEN DOOR

by ray nemec



Although Loretta and I have exhibited our door-knobs on numerous occasions, in September we had the opportunity to make a presentation to a large group of pressed glass collectors.

This necessitated writing a script and borrowing some slides so we would have a well rounded representation on door hardware. With the help of about 200 doorknobs from our collection we were well received.

Doing this program brought into focus what our members need to "talk doorknobs." John Holland has already set up some guidelines for talks but now we must go a step or two beyond.

First, we need a packet of slides, probably about 80, that would represent a facet of collecting that would appeal to the general public. These should be available on a loan basis or, possibly, to be purchased by you.

Second, a generic script, including amusing stories, should be made available to members. The talk could be used as is or, more

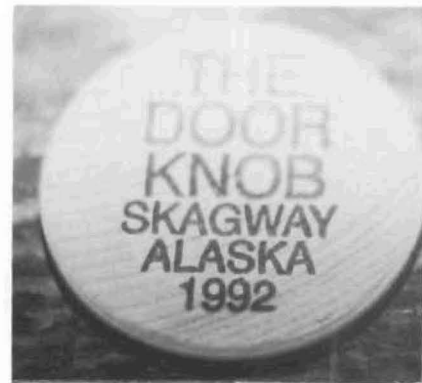
likely, tailored to one's own liking.

The best way to promote our hobby is to feature our "jewelry of a house" in the programs of clubs and organizations in your area.

We need to take a more realistic approach on how ADCA can help you.

NEMEC'S NOTEBOOK. On some unfinished business, we will address the responses to our questions in the last issue in the January-February newsletter. In the listing of Barrows' catalogs, the first catalog should have shown the year as 1920 not 1925.

For some, this will be your last issue of **THE DOORKNOB COLLECTOR** if a 12/31/92 expiration date shows on your membership card. ■



by Debbie Fellenz

Why would there be a shop called "the Door Knob" in Skagway Alaska? that's the question I asked myself as we were on route to there, after seeing their ad in the travel book.

The Door Knob is a shop specializing in Alaskan gifts and T-shirts. Upon entering the store each potential customer is handed a wooden nickle with the Door Knob's name on it.

Several years ago the owner of the shop, Alta Dick, decided to call it the Door Knob since the doorknob is the first thing you reach for in the new beginning. Her 1904 bathroom doorknob graces the sign at the front door.

The shop is being run by Alta's son Bill Burger and two amiable employees. They don't have any doorknobs for sale, though often asked that question. They do have a nice selection of unusual gift items. ■



The Doorknob Collector

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They looked like doorknobs

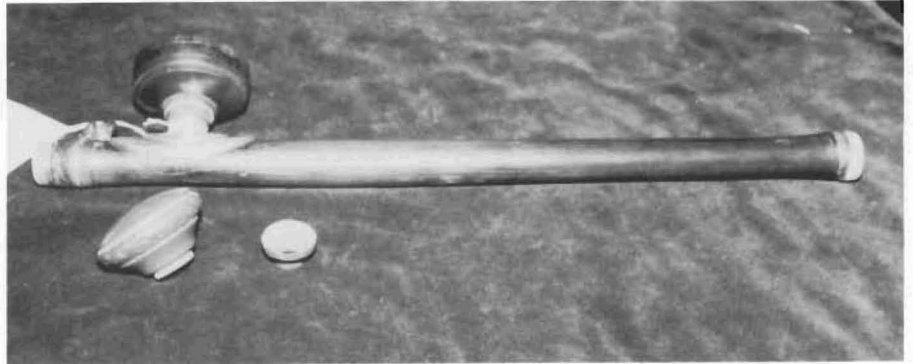
by Vern Eklund

There once was a lady
named Maud
Who just told me my
story was flawed.
So now I write you
That you might know too
And not think that I'm
totally a fraud!

To borrow from the radio commentator Paul Harvey, "Now for the rest of the story."

A few months back I wrote a short article which was printed in the March-April issue of **The Doorknob Collector** as "Tracing Origin of an Oriental Knob." In it I discussed three "doorknobs" I had purchased from a Connecticut antique dealer who said that his grandfather had brought them back from China in the 1920s. I also related the trouble I had in translating the inscription on one of the knobs: A Chinese graduate student said "looks Japanese to me" and a Japanese businessman saying "No, it's ancient Chinese." We finally got an approximate translation and I quickly wrote a few lines for the newsletter...a little too quickly it seems!

I recently got a letter from Maude Eastwood which began... "This will be a great shock to you." She then went on to really "shock" me by explaining that the "knobs" aren't Chinese doorknobs at all. Maude had been in contact with a Seattle antique dealer specializing in oriental



antiques. This gentleman showed her the complete item which includes not only the ceramic knob of the type I have, but also a wooden stem which makes up, (are your ready for this?)... A Chinese opium pipe! The "knob" in fact is a bowl from such a pipe. The little hole in the face which we thought was associated with attachment of the knob, is in fact an air hole. At best these knobs would open some pretty strange doors to what must have been psychedelic rooms. Maude goes on to explain that the Chinese would go visiting and take the bowl (knob) off their pipes, stick the stem up their sleeve to hide it (opium smoking in the 1880's was not legal in China either) and then borrow another bowl at the home that they were visiting. The host would have a rack of bowls from which his guest could select. This would explain the part of the inscription relating to the host's "appreciation for the visit."

Thought I should set the record straight on these "knobs." It only proves that one should do thorough research before putting one's mouth in gear! My only defense is that they looked like doorknobs and the antique dealer said they were doorknobs... but Maude knew better! ■



A report from the business side

President's message

by Win Applegate

I am happy to report that your organization is in good health. Throughout the year, your officers and board members communicate and interact on various projects and ideas, the financials of this non-profit entity are monitored and direct communication to all members in good standing is accomplished via the Annual Convention and an excellent newsletter six times a year.

Still, it is the Convention and associated Board of Directors and Business meetings that pull these activities together. Briefly, the highlights follow:

The topic of "museum" is multifaceted. The range is broad from a building called the ADCA Museum to traveling displays available to museums or libraries to provide displays on permanent loan to other museums. Arnie Fredrick is chairman of the Museum Committee and is cautiously guiding us through these options.

The ADCA has agreed to provide assistance to the Bosco-Milligan Foundation in Portland OR. The foundation is formalizing plans to establish a research center for architectural artifacts. Your organization will help in an appropriate manner by volunteering time and assistance in areas such as sorting, cataloging, and researching as well as offering our archives as a research resource and by possibly donating

hardware. Don Shreve will assist Maude Eastwood, our official liaison.

Request from other start-up museums, primarily lock museums are beginning to surface. You should know that each of these is actively being pursued.

The application for a commemorative postage stamp is being reactivated. The original application by Charles Wardell received a "positive but pending" from the committee. The resubmission will include six color photographs selected by Len Blumin and Arnie Fredrick. For those familiar with Wardell's fine writing, it is not anticipated that changes will be made in that area.

Bill Byington presented the Special Project Committee report. These fund raising activities sell ADCA coffee mugs and laser cut wood doorknobs. Lawrence Bolen competently handled the ADCA sweatshirt "consession." As a net their group reported a profit. Bill and Larry's efforts are certainly appreciated.

After a review of our financial report, the Board of Directors has agreed that ADCA membership dues will remain the same for 1993. A similar review will be accomplished prior to 1994.

Officially, Dale Sponaule will host the 1993 convention in Gaithersburg, Maryland on Columbus Day weekend. With a short hop to the

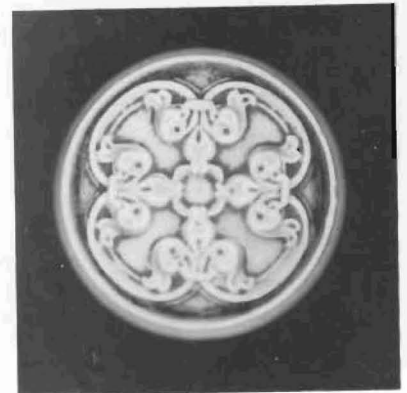
D.C. subway, a low carry-over ADCA hotel rate, and fine fall weather, it will provide a nice opportunity for attendees. ■

Ornamental Designs

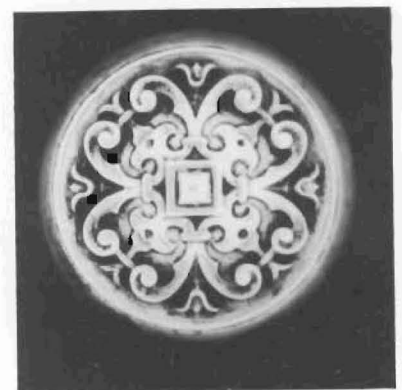
by Len Blumin

(The following 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. Please note, a price increase on all books goes into effect in January.)

Fourfold Symmetry



H-494



H-495

LaVerne and Ida, a love story

by Ray Nemecc

Maud Eastwood, in 1986, issued a folio which pictured some of her most wanted pieces of hardware.

One of these pieces was a door handle, a miniature replica of a monkey (figure 1), shown in a Corbin catalog. The description indicated it was made and used for the Ida Noyes Hall. There was no clue as to where this might be.



fig. 1 monkey door handle.

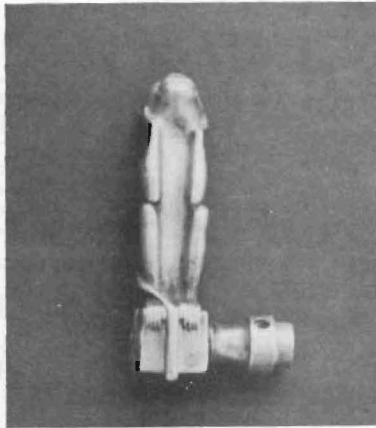
Nearly six years past without any response to the quest for a monkey door handle, or for information about it.

Then in 1992 some unexpected developments occurred. Loretta Nemecc and a former high school classmate, Florence Wachala of Muster Indiana, were invited to join a High School reunion committee. Loretta invited Florence to spend the night at her house and avoid the long trip back to Indiana the same evening. Knowing Loretta's interest in door hardware, Florence brought a monkey door handle that her daughter

in-law had found in a trunk at her parents house. We took pictures of it and forwarded them to Maude. Yes, this was the handle Maude was seeking.

Florence's daughter-in-law decided to keep the handle. How or where it came from, no one seemed to know nor how it got into the trunk.

Once again, solving the IDA NOYES monkey



Underside of fig. 1

handle mystery seemed stalled.

An August 1992 visit to the Nemeccs, by Maud Eastwood brought a strange chain of events that led straight to the IDA NOYES HALL.

A meeting was arranged by Maud where she and the Nemeccs would visit Tim Samuelson in downtown Chicago. The meeting would be limited because of a prior commitment Tim had at Hyde Park. Hyde Park is famous for lavish homes, the site of the University of Chicago and where the Columbian Exposition was held in 1890s.

By driving Tim to Hyde Park we could extend our visit and Maude could see some of the historical architectural buildings she has written about.

Upon arrival in Hyde Park, Tim Samuelson indicated we were close to the Robbie House, a Frank Lloyd Wright creation, and he directed us how to get there.

Going south on Woodlawn Avenue, we passed the Robbie House on the northwest corner at 58th place. With no apparent parking space available we proceeded south to 59th Street. Making a left hand turn on 59th, Maude exclaimed, "IDA NOYES HALL". There it was, in all its elegance, standing on the Northeast corner of Woodlawn and 59th Street.

I barely stopped the car and Maude was literally running across the street with Loretta trailing behind. Yes, she had found the IDA NOYES HALL and its monkey door handles.



Doors throughout the building.

Love Story

(continued from page 5)

The IDA NOYES HALL was developed because of the love her husband had for her. LaVerne Noyes, while attending Iowa State University met Ida Smith, who was born in Charles City, Iowa and enrolled at Iowa State at the start of LaVerne's third year there. They were married in 1877. LaVerne was an inventor and became a successful manufacturer of farm equipment.



Ida Noyes Building

LaVerne and Ida Noyes moved to Chicago in 1879 where he continued his inventing of haying and harvesting tools and machines. His greatest invention may well be in improvements of the windmill with his aermotor.

Ida Noyes traveled the world extensively. While on these trips her husband wrote her frequently. Their home was at 1450 Lake Shore Drive and Mrs Noyes furnished the home beautifully.

Ida Noyes had always enjoyed perfect health when unexpectedly in early 1912 she became ill and at the time of

her death, December 5, 1912, she was an invalid. She died at the age of 59.

The President General of the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) called her "bright, beautiful, so radiant with glorious vitality".

LaVerne seized the opportunity to perpetuate Ida's memory by building a beautiful structure for the women students of the University of Chicago, the IDA NOYES HALL.

Mr. Noyes, whose ancestors helped found Yale University made many donations to women's organizations and institutions but none meant more to him than this building. Its plans were announced six months after her death.

The corner stone was laid on April 17, 1915. Mr Noyes, wrote a letter to his deceased wife and placed it in the corner stone. He wrote that he had given a beautiful building, in her name, to the University of Chicago, the IDA NOYES HALL. A Gothic structure, he felt it was a beautifully designed building. The dedication of the building took place in June 1916.

In 1918 Mr. Noyes set up a foundation which transferred all his property to the University of Chicago. He died on July 24, 1919.

The actual development of the IDA NOYES HALL interior was done by

several people and the reasons or motivation for the monkey door handles may never truly be known. ■



Monkey carving in newel post.

LAKE LAVERNE

In 1868, LaVerne Noyes entered Ames Agricultural College, now Iowa State University, Ames Iowa. The institution was in its first year and Noyes graduated with the first class.

A rule at the time Noyes attended the school required each student to give the institution three hours a day of service. Noyes' agricultural background soon found him serving as a foreman in the development of the landscaping.

Years later Noyes spent thousands of dollars beautifying the University's grounds. This included the production of a beautiful lake, known today as Lake LaVerne in honor of the man so instrumental in making Iowa State campus beautiful.

MILLEFIORI DOORKNOBS & PAPERWEIGHTS

by Len Blumin

One of the joys of door-knob collecting is to discover the beauty and wonder of related fields of decorative art. The paperweight in its myriad forms has been popular since the mid-Nineteenth century. Since it was most commonly a spheroid about the size of a large doorknob, it's not surprising that some paperweight manufacturers adapted their wares with a spindles and sold them as doorknobs. Earliest examples were produced in the "classic" period of paperweights, 1845-1855, but fine examples of the art are still being made today.

Should the subject intrigue you, I recommend that you search out a copy of "Glass Paperweights of the New York Historical Society", by Paul Hollister (Clarkson N. Potter, Inc., NY, 1974). This superb volume gives a wonderful summary of the field, and is amply illustrated with magnificent color photographs by H. Landshoff.

When most of us think of a paperweight knob, we bring to mind an image of the millefiori type knob. "Millefiori" means "thousand flowers", and refers to a technique of glass making wherein a design is created using many short sections of tiny colored glass rods to create a pleasing

design, which is then encased in glass and fashioned into a specific object such as a decanter stopper, paperweight or doorknob.

The tiny glass rods are called "canes", and it is their delicate and intricate beauty that imparts to the millefiori knob its incomparable charm. The making of the individual cane uses processes that probably go back 2000 years. The secret of forming these tiny treasures is really quite simple. You start by making a big fat cylinder of glass, built up in many layers. The layers are created by dipping the cylinder in different colors of glass, so that you end up with a big fat "sausage". As the sausage is built up it can be pressed in molds so that flutes or ridges of created down its sides, creating a ruffled or star shape when cut in cross section. The artisan in charge, or "gaffer", then directed the stretching of this still hot sausage into a very long pencil thin "cane", sort of like pulling taffy out into long thin strands. Of course the many layers of the sausage became proportionately thinner, so that the pencil thin cane now contained a most delicate pattern. The cane was then sliced into short sections, of which hundreds could be

made from the single cane, all with the same design. Each factory produced a wide variety of different cane designs.

The next step involved placing the short canes into a pleasing design and enclosing the whole in a clear glass dome. Sounds almost simple, doesn't it? Yet the delicate techniques and craft secrets were carefully guarded, and works from the master studios are easily discerned by the student of this wonderful field of decorative art. It is interesting to note that paperweight designs are grouped together in categories of design not unlike those chosen for doorknob designs, including concentric, paneled, swirl, garland, and others. Fine examples are available today, many from Scotland, and are eagerly sought by collectors of both doorknobs and glass. ■



D. C. in 1993

The 1993 **Antique Door-knob Collectors of America** annual convention will be held from Friday, October 8, 1993 through Monday, October 11, 1993, at Gaithersburg, Maryland.

The Holiday Inn, Two Montgomery Village Avenue, will be the site of the 1993 convention according to chairperson Dale Sponaugle. The location is about 25 miles, or 30 minutes northwest of Washington, D.C.

A tentative schedule has a hospitality room open Friday evening and a board meeting for that night. Saturday morning and afternoon will be for setting up, trading, etc. Sunday afternoon will include a period open to the public. The

auction will be held Monday morning. The evening programs are still being developed.

Sponaugle is working on various tour options. They would probably be scheduled prior to the convention, possibly Thursday and/or Friday.

Complete convention details will be mailed in August to all **ADCA** members.

This will be the first time **ADCA** will have a convention in October. For the past three years it has been held in August. Prior to that, September had been the month.

The Washington, D.C., area usually has wonderful weather in October and it should be an ideal time to visit the nation's capitol. ■

AVAILABLE NOW!

Revised Edition of the First Supplement to the **Antique Builders' Hardware, Knobs and Accessories** has just been released. Visual impact and content of this popular, 40 page out-of-print booklet have been significantly up-graded. Limited supply. \$5.25.

ADCA

P.O. Box 126

Eola, Il 60519-0126



Front Page Photo

Eucalyptus wreath with gold braided cord, tapestry and green velvet bows along with the traditional brass door-knobs grace the Nemec's front door to greet you during the holiday season.

Letters

Dear Editors:

I have recently obtained the Cook County (Illinois) Court House doorknob (see photo) and thought it would be of interest for the newsletter.

A friend picked it up at an auction in Southern Indiana conducted at a private house. She paid \$4.00 and got the knob plus a couple of other items. Not a bad deal.

I was surprised to see the agricultural theme. I thought maybe it would reflect Chicago's industry, even in the late 1800s.

Don Pearson
Canton, NY





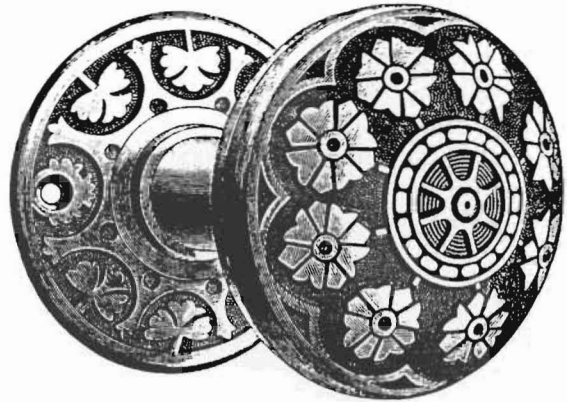
**FROM THE ARCHIVES
WITH ARCHIVISTS
Steve/Barb Menchhofer**

There are so many great catalog copies in the Archives that it is hard to choose one to tell about. This time we have chosen *HOPKINS & DICKENSON MANUFACTURING COMPANY-LOCKS, BUILDERS' HARDWARE, CAST BRONZE AND BRASS WORK* - October, 1879, 28 knob design pages to highlight.

If you are a person who likes doorknobs but does not have an interest in the related hardware that goes with the knobs, the knob design pages are for you. In Hopkins & Dickenson's catalog there are pages and pages of gorgeous Victorian designs to catch your eye. Have you ever seen a swan on a doorknob? well, H & D made one.

Beautiful craftsmanship shows through in this catalog. Maybe you should have it. ■

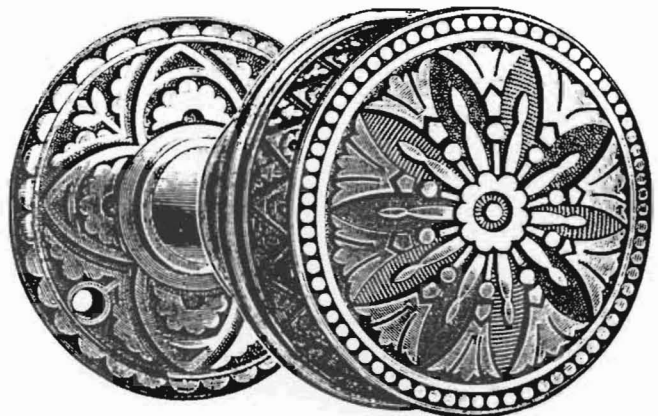
**Hopkins & Dickenson Manufacturing Company
October 1879 Catalog**



Knob No. 939.



Knob No. 932.



Knob No. 942.



The doorknob exchange

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

WANTED. Three #B-104 knobs; Two #B-106, F-116 w/tightening ring; Two #K-204, #K-208 and #H-233, any or all, brass only. Stephen Rowe #287 85 Jasmine Ave. Clovis, CA 93612 PH: (209) 299-8863

WANTED. Two Lockwood Broken leaf #B-125 pocket door plate escutcheon. One Sargent thumb latch with excutcheon, One thumb latch only (p.177, TAD). One Mortise Lock, #B-205. Two knobs, #B-101. Any or all brass only. Stephen Rowe #287 85 Jasmine Ave. Clovis, Ca 93612 PH: (209) 299-8863

WANTED. The party who purchased the two art prints at the ADCA auction in August. Please call, Lillian Balasa (708) 695-4254 and advise her on how you want them handled or they will be disposed of.

Roster Update #3 New Members

#312
Donna J. Sumera
3829 Oakhurst Lane
Zepherhills, FL 33541

#313
Gilbert R. Dominguez
1318 N. LaSalle Drive
Chicago, IL 60610

#314
Vi Franklin
3833 Ellington
Western Springs, IL 60558

#315
William E. Ellinger III
516 So. Oakland Ave. Suite 3
Pasadena, CA 91101-3330

#316
Thomas Dulac
73 Bingham Street
Forestville, CT 06010

#317
John J. Bleakney
3904 S.W. Mesquite Drive
Lawton, OK 73505

The following are changes to the 1992 ADCA roster.

#116
C. David Miller
The Broadway Collection
1010 W. Santa Fe
Olathe, KS 66051

#153
Brian M. Tanner
3701 El Campo Ct.
Concord, CA 94519-1826

#262
L.W. Gardner
931 S. Ridge View Trail
Suttons Bay, MI 49682

#264
Michael L. Jones
204 Southern Heights Blvd.
San Rafael, CA 94901

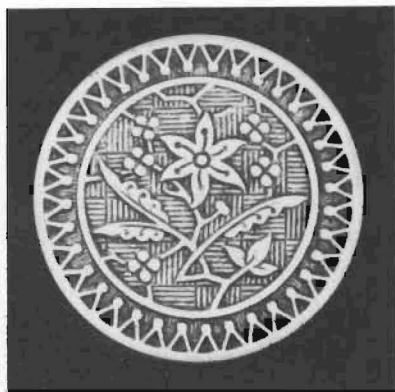
#133
Claude & Pat Knox
4675 N. Park Acres Dr.
Oak Harbor, WA 98277

#132
Maurice Onraet
163 Jenkins Ave.
Lansdale, PA 19446

#265
Marilyn Hunt
6909 Danwood Drive
Austin, TX 78759



B-104



B-106

HARDWARE CATALOGS

The following is a list of Sargent & Company catalogs, prior to 1940, known to exist. They are in the hands of collectors, museums and/or libraries. If you have a Sargent catalog not listed below, please furnish us the year, catalog number (if there is one) and the amount of pages.

SARGENT & COMPANY

YEAR	CAT.#	PAGES
1880		1129
1884		882
1888		1105
1910		1320
1922		900
1926		748
1936		658



B-125

DEADLINE

All ads, material and articles for the January-February 1993 issue of *The Doorknob Collector* should be in the hands of the editors by December 25, 1992.