



The Doorknob Collector

Number 83

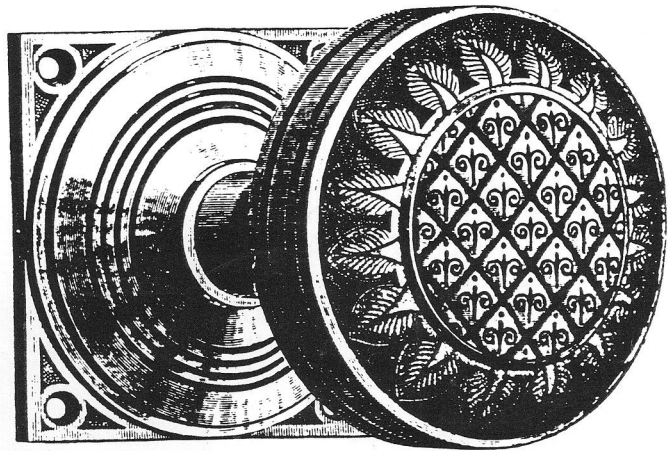
May - June 1997

ADCA Convention, King of Prussia, Pennsylvania August 13-16, 1997

Best Doorknob in Philadelphia

by Bob Rodder

City Paper, a weekly Philadelphia newspaper covering the arts and entertainment, ran a feature called the "City Paper Choice Awards." The awards are City Paper's annual guide to the best (and) worst Philadelphia has to offer and are in a general vein tied to the arts. The most important category, without question, since it landed on the front page of the October 27th edition was "The Best Doorknob on an Art Museum." The winner, on a door leading to the woman's restroom in The Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts in Center City, is a classic Hopkins & Dickinson Floral Pattern (D-113). The building designed by Frank Furness in 1876 has been maintained and restored to its original elaborate splendor. I guess this shows that other people besides doorknob collectors can appreciate the finer things of life. •



Antique Doorknob Collectors of America 1997 Convention

The 1997 ADCA convention is drawing closer. Enclosed with this issue of **The Doorknob Collector** is the registration form and additional information. We urge you to fill in the form and get it in early.

It is the hope of convention chairman Bob Rodder and the committee that you participate in the Souvenir program. If you have not already sent your "ad" to Bob, we are enclosing a form to assist you. If you have any questions about the book or an ad, contact Bob Rodder at 215/885-1488 evenings only.

Make Hotel and Travel plans now!

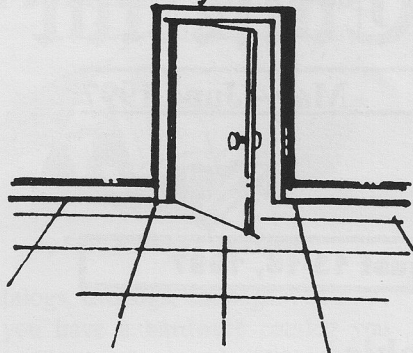
Members can make room reservations at the Valley Forge Hilton, by calling 1-800-TRY-VFPA or 1-800-HILTONS. Mention the Antique Doorknob Collectors of America for special rate of \$81.00 plus tax per night for up to four persons per room prior to July 22, 1997. Deposits can be made with a valid American Express, Diners Club, Visa or Mastercard number and expiration date. To make a deposit with a personal check or money order, use the phone numbers above or mail your deposit to Reservations, Valley Forge Hilton, 251 W. DeKalb Pike, King of Prussia, PA 19406. All deposits for room reservations are fully refundable if a room is canceled prior to July 22, 1997.

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THE OPEN DOOR

by ray nemec



A new board will be elected at this year's annual convention in August. The annual business meeting is a time for discussion of ADCA's future. Like many hobby related organizations membership has been dropping. A look at ADCA's future is in order.

If you cannot attend the meeting, you may still participate by submitting your thoughts by letter or fax.

Topics related to ADCA's future that may be discussed include:

- Name of the Association
- Convention
- Publicity
- Membership growth
- Publications

If you wish to submit thoughts in writing, do so to:

ADCA Future

via fax: 630-357-2391

via mail: P.O. Box 126, Eola, IL 60519

Nemec's Notebook

E.P. Dick, one of our founding members, would like to hear from some old ADCA friends. E.P. can be reached by writing him at 3701 Bryant Ave. So., #509, Minneapolis, MN 55409. Although E.P. has disposed of his collection he still has an interest on how others are doing.

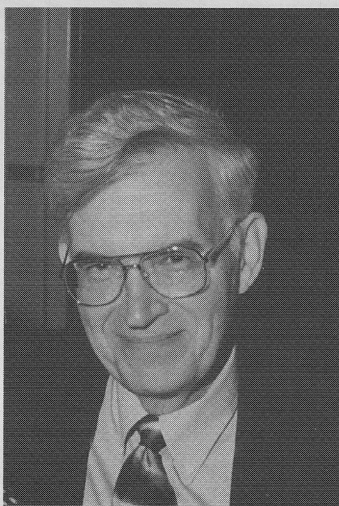
We had a chance to visit with Rich Kennedy for several days in early April. Rich attended a wedding in Naperville and set aside some time to be with us. We took him to a couple of antique shops and architectural places. I think Rich found a couple new knobs.

On one of the days we had Rich Wise with us for awhile and a number of hardware subjects were discussed.

The publicity we have gotten in recent antique publication has resulted in a number of inquiries. The most common question is probably the one, "I have these real old white porcelain doorknobs. They came from a house over 150 years old. How much are they worth?" •

Meet Your Board of Directors

Each issue *The Doorknob Collector* will feature the picture of an ADCA member who is on the Board of Directors. In this issue we present:



Raymond Nemec

Raymond Nemec became involved in collecting doorknobs when his wife, Loretta, took up the hobby. Nemec has been Secretary/Treasurer of ADCA from 1986 to 1991 and 1993 to 1997. He has been co-editor of *The Doorknob Collector* since 1986. •

Doorknob Raffle

Two figural doorknobs, an Oval Lion's Head and a Columbus Head, have been donated to ADCA for a fund raising raffle at the upcoming August convention. Tickets for the raffle will be sold Thursday, August 14 and Friday, August 15. The drawing will be held at the banquet Friday evening.

Lock Museum Marks 25 Years



During 1997 the Lock Museum of America is celebrating its 25th anniversary. Charles Stuttig, president of the museum, has announced they are offering a 25th anniversary commemorative Best Logo Padlock.

Stuttig points out that Best Logo Padlocks have long been sought after collectors item. The commemorative lock is approximately 3.25 inches high and has chrome plated steel shackle and a brass body.

For details how you may obtain this handsome lock write to The Lock Museum of America, P.O. Box 104, Terryville, CT 06786. •

All ads, material and articles for the July/August 1997 issue of *The Doorknob Collector* should be in the hands of the editors by June 15, 1997.



The Doorknob Collector

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Founded in September 1981, the *Antique Doorknob Collectors of America* is a non-profit organization devoted to those interested in collecting and preservation of Antique Doorknobs and related hardware.

The opinions expressed in this publication are those of the individual writer and not necessarily reflect those of the Board of Directors of ADCA or the editors of *The Doorknob Collector*.

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Care of 1930-1940 Plastic Knobs

by Maude Eastwood



WARNING! Do not blanketly subject early-day plastic doorknobs to dampness in storage, wiping with a damp cloth, or rinsing or washing with water. Read on if you value your plastic knobs.

If the above warning sounds far-out, consider the results when some (not all) types of 1930's-40's plastic knobs were exposed to moisture. Not only did the metallic parts of the knob corrode, but the plastic part shrank, cracked, and exuded a most unpleasant gaseous odor.

The knobs referred to are those plastic cream or black colored specimen usually associated with tubular locks of the era given. That is, knobs of plastic and metal combination, having a metal core and shank and an interchangeable, metallic, pop-out top disk. Removing the disk reveals the manner of assembly of the knobs parts.

Several late 1930's companies offered this type of knob with small differences in configuration, especially in the shank. What is not known is what companies produced the vulnerable types. An example is shown on page's 87-88 of *The Antique Doorknob*. An early plastic manufacturer may have provided material for a number of hardware outlets, later substituting an improved product.

Tests run on expendable duplicate knobs of both colors show the light color to be more "allergic," nevertheless both emitted a gas damaging metal. Therefore, the advice: Use only a dry cloth to clean plastic knobs. (this does not refer to later acrylic knobs.)

Recently, an c.1850 knob resembling tortoiseshell was taken from storage

with damage to one side as if eaten away. Packing had slipped allowing it to rest on a copper finish wrought metal knob, causing a hard-to-remove green and wine-red tarnish.

Two sources, Adon Brownell's *"Taking the Mystery out of Builders' Hardware"* (1940) and *Kovels On Antiques and Collectibles* (April 1996) warn of adverse results when combining certain man-made plastics and metals in close proximity or where dampness may be a factor. •

Bits and Pieces

by Win Applegate

One reason I liked Arnie Fredrick was that, except for one ADCA auction where, in a frenzy, he acquired a "doggie" bell pull "at all costs," he appeared to have a rather controlled and 'even' personality.

In the world of doorknobs, he was, first of all, dedicated to the ADCA as an organization. Its purposes of preserving, educating and promoting were some of the paramount interests where he directed much of his energies.

As a collector, his collection was nice, but modest. Unlike yours truly, his collection was of a reasonable size and all knobs were cleaned and on display. He appeared to collect only knobs he liked, regardless of supposed value (how many of us can say that)?

Knobs that he liked, he **REALLY** liked! This was evident in his superb carvings on plaques, small clocks and jewelry boxes and with the painting of the "Flying Bird (A-104)" on the spare wheel cover of his van.

Upon his passing, his wife Tedi and their daughter honored Arnie's interests forever with a carving of one of his favorite knob designs on the family cemetery monument.

As the photo indicates, it is not the A-104, but the A-105 showing two birds flying freely together forever; something that in years, hopefully many years from now, will have deep meaning to the family and those who will pass by.



Monument the family designed in honor of Arnie as a lasting tribute to this aspect of his life. Resting place Harlington Cemetery, Waverly, Iowa.

Computer overload

Between the newsletter and the task of adequately serving our membership, the ADCA office is finding the demands placed upon it in this technical age more demanding all the time.

An anonymous angel has come to the rescue! A brand new (no hand-me-down) computer is now humming in the ADCA office. This Dell computer has the latest of everything and is the absolute current state-of-the-art (at least for the next week or two).

This is doubly exciting as it not only solves a problem. But more importantly it shows the spirit that exists within your organization. It is this type of dedication and conviction that will ensure your organization's future.

Thank you Mr. or Mrs. Calabash, whomever you are! •

Doorknob Raffle

Two figural doorknobs, an Oval Lion's Head and a Columbus Head, have been donated to ADCA for a fund raising raffle at the upcoming August convention. Tickets for the raffle will be sold Thursday, August 14 and Friday, August 15. The drawing will be held at the banquet Friday evening.

Baseball Caps

Good quality convention souvenir baseball caps will be available at the convention. They are U.S. made, of twill fabric with an adjustable band in the rear to fit all sizes. They will be printed on the front with the logo and some copy. Be the first on your block to have one.

Ornamental Design in Antique Doorknobs

Following is an explanation of the numbering system used in **The Doorknob Collector** which was originated in Len Blumin's excellent book, *Victorian Decorative Art*. In addition to the explanation, a summary of numbers that have been assigned is also given. A Total of 1002 different knobs have been assigned numbers.

DOORKNOB NUMBERING

A. Representational

A-100 Series: Animals	A-101 to A-117
A-200 Series: Scenic	A-201 to A-210
A-300 Series: Faces	A-301 to A-325

B. Asymmetric

B-100 Series: Vernacular (c. 1880's)	B-101 to B-138 (also B-104a, 104b, 106a, 129a)
B-200 Series: Schools of Arch.(post-1890)	B-201 to B-224 (also B-205a, 218a)

C. Odd-shaped (Hexagonal, irregular/unusual form)

C-101 to C-132	(also C-109a)
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D. "Field" or Diaper Patterns

D-101 to D-136	(also D-102a)
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E. Swirl or Pinwheel Designs

E-101 to E-157	(also E-127b, 134a, 137a)
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F. Twofold Symmetry

F-100 Series: Vernacular	F-101 to F-127, plus F-103a
F-200 Series: Other	F-201 to F-246

G. Threefold symmetry

G-101 to G-142	
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H. Fourfold Symmetry

H-100's: Classical	H-101 to H-119
H-200's: Vernacular	H-201 to H-286 (also 219a, 219b, 220a, 220b, 220c, 241a, 249a, 250a, 254a, 256a, 261a, 267a,)
H-400's: Schools of Arch.	H-400 to H-499
H-500's Schools, cont'd.	H-500 to H-501

I. Fivefold Symmetry

I-101 to I-123	
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J. Sixfold Symmetry

J-100's: Classical	J-101 to J-112, plus J-106a
J-200's: Vernacular	J-201 to J-224
J-300's: Schools of Arch.	J-301 to J-312

K. Eightfold Symmetry

K-100's: Classical	K-101 to K-116
K-200's: Vernacular	K-201 to K-236, plus 213a, 213b, 214a, 214b
K-300's: Schools of Arch.	K-301 to K-313

L. Radial Designs (Elements radiate outward from center)

L-101 to L-131	
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M. Concentric Designs (Elements arranged to one or more circles around center)

M-101 to M-149	
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N. "Oval" Knobs (Includes other shapes where the frontal diameters vary)

N-101 to N-173	
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O. Emblematic Knobs

O-100's: Assorted (schools, hotels, govt, etc.)	O-101 to O-199 (plus 162a, 162b)
O-200's: Fraternal Orders	O-201 to O-211 (plus 210a, 204a, 205a)
O-300's: Assorted (schools, hotels, govt. etc.)	O-300

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 \$12.00)

Concentric Symmetry Knobs

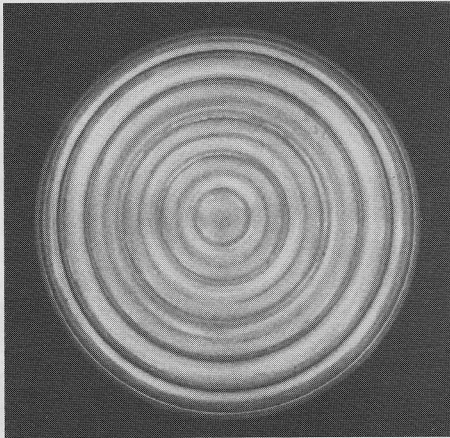
M-137 Concentric circles, bronze.

M-138 Similar to M-137. Flattened center.

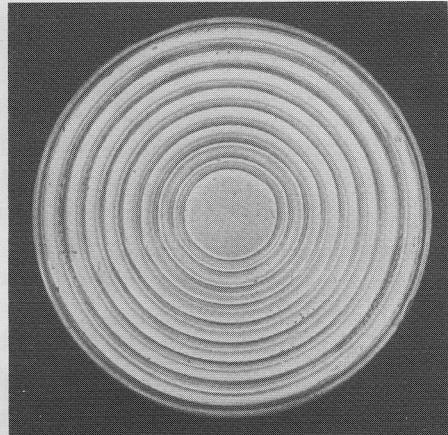
M-139 Plain shiny center reflects the camera.

M-140 "Bank" style knob, so-called perhaps because of the solid well-made 'commercial' quality. Similar knobs with a plain center are common.

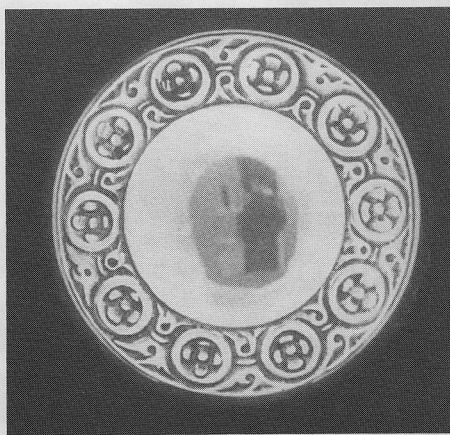
M-137



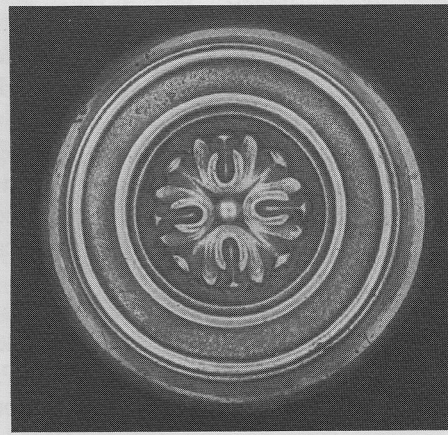
M-138



M-139



M-140



Welch Made is Well Made

by Ray Nemeo



Lee Bettenhausen

We would like you to meet Lee Bettenhausen, an ADCA member for over five years and owner of Al Bar Wilmette Platers in Wilmette, Illinois.

Originally established in 1937 as a silversmith shop, Al Bar-Wilmette Platers was purchased by the Lee Bettenhausen family in 1979. They have grown to a complete metal restoration facility, providing customers the best of metal conservation.

Their primary goal is to restore metal articles from days gone by to their original splendor. These include door and window hardware, plumbing fixtures, ceiling light fixtures, wall scones and much more.

They work in bronze, copper, nickel, chrome, silver and gold. Al Bar does all they can to replace missing hardware either from their large inventory or through architectural salvage. Where original hardware is unavailable, they will cast new pieces.

The quality of their work shows a passion for excellence. They accept the challenge to do today what was done so beautifully decades ago. When one visits the Al Bar facility, there is the feeling that their statement, "we are simply the 'best' at hardware restoration" is not an idle boast. •

When door hardware historians and collectors see or hear the name of North Chicago, Illinois, they are most apt to think of the Chicago Hardware Manufacturing Company and/ or Sager Lock Company. However there was another builders' hardware company located in the city of North Chicago.

Records show that three brothers, H. Irving, James G. and Michael E. Welch opened a pattern shop at 2134 Grove Street in North Chicago. The year was 1919 and after two years at this location and now known as Welch Brothers, they moved to 1625 Sheridan. City directories for that period list them as wood and metal pattern makers.

The Welch Brothers Company issued their first catalog in 1926. It stated they were manufacturers of high grade locks and builders' hardware. The catalog was 22 pages. A price supplement along with a hardware supplement were issued in 1930.

The three brothers remained active in the company. Michael was President, James Vice President and H. Irving was Secretary/Treasurer.

They issued a second catalog, number 39, in 1939. This catalog, with 102 pages, replaced catalog number 1. The company's slogan throughout this period was simply stated, "Welch Made Is Well Made." They were still located at 1625 Sheridan Avenue.

The three brothers left the business in 1954 and Henry C. Wood became president. In 1957 they moved to 1140 Elizabeth Street. This was also the year they issued their third catalog, number 57. It had 28 pages. A price list, dated May 1, 1957 replaced the price list that appeared with catalog number 39.

The name was changed to Welch Incorporated in 1959. Wood was still president and Victor A. Mills was Vice President.

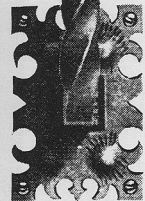
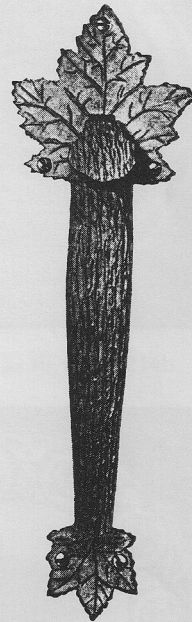
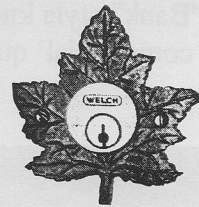
A fourth catalog, number 64, was issued in 1964. It contained 32 pages

and indicated the catalog replaced number 57. This was the last catalog issued from the Elizabeth street address.

In 1975 Welch Incorporated relocated to 5510 Mercantile Row, Dallas, Texas. A catalog, number 76 containing 12 pages, was issued in 1976.

Our research on the company stops at that point. The three Welch brothers started a company that survived in the North Chicago-Waukegan area for over 55 years. They had continued a tradition of hardware manufacturing that had started at North Chicago in 1895. •

(Bud Wolski and the Waukegan Historical Society contributed to this story.)



The President's Message

by Win Applegate

"SAY, I'VE GOT AN IDEA. . . let's put on a show!" I am not really a fan of classic movies, but I know that there are several films where that line is mentioned between the two stars who are usually Mickey Rooney and Judy Garland.

A good idea can be a great thing . . . something that may look good for a few weeks, or perhaps has the leverage to do something like improve the standard of living or change the whole world for ever and ever.

I had a boss one time that said of one of our coworkers "Bernie gets an idea a second and every ten minutes he gets a good one." I don't know how many ideas Web Wilson has gotten in his lifetime, but if his auction idea can be measured by its effect on the pricing/collecting side of our interests in doorknobs, then it has to be judged a significant one.

Anyone who has read my random writings in this newsletter knows that one of my favorite quotes is from Victor Hugo . . . "Greater than the tread of mighty armies is an idea whose time has come."

A great idea? No, I didn't say that; . . . only time will tell. But Web Wilson's Auction certainly has churned things up to the point where many things will never be the same. In just three letters-to-the-editor we have seen three sides to this multifaceted topic that effects members of our organization, and separately, the ADCA itself. Need I say that if all of our thoughts on the subject were printed in the newsletter, this would go on for many, many issues.

Where does your ADCA "stand" on Web's auction idea? At the 1996 Convention in Grand Rapids, Web was kind enough to give an address to the Convention that covered a series of topics including comments on his auction. Since that day, your Board of Directors has been discussing Web's presentation because it touched on several areas that addressed issues with which the Board has been dealing for some time.

The name "Antique Doorknobs Collectors of America" is not an ideal name. In the ten years that I have been a member of the Board of Directors, on more than one occasion, the subject of name change has arisen. The name was even challenged the day the ADCA was formed. Yet, it is probably the collecting aspect that is both the glue and the life blood of our organization.

What are the true interests of members of the ADCA? The answer here is probably related to our "hats." How many "hats" do members wear? Well, that is difficult to say, but attend a convention and see how many "hats" some of us can wear and how quickly we can change them. Sometimes it depends upon which side of the table we are standing on whether we are a collector, a dealer or a trader. When we give a presentation, we are a researcher or educator.

And what is the most overlooked "hat" that many of us wear? The researcher hat! The charter of the ADCA is defined, not by collecting, but by wordings that lean towards education, preservation, and re-search. There is even a segment of our membership that apparently has joined only for the research opportunities available through our archives and the wealth of priceless knowledge of a select number of individuals in our organization . . . I hesitate to begin mentioning their names.

Each of the three letters-to-the editor made valid points when one is standing under a certain hat. It is comforting that they were written by two very knowledgeable charter members and a highly respected younger member.

I am glad that Steve Rowe wrote to the editors. Steve is an example of one of our younger members who not only collects, but is respected both for his knowledge on the subject of hardware and his intensity for preserving it. Steve was correct in echoing the fact that Web's auction will probably have, at least sporadically, an impact on the acquiring side of collecting.

Where does the ADCA stand on publishing auction prices? The Board of Directors has a true concern regarding the non-profit status of your organization. As Maude Eastwood has so aptly put it, our charter is founded on other aspects of the world of doorknobs and your organization can not be a primary vehicle for pricing information.

We wish Web and Jill Wilson well as they pursue, in a very professional way, their idea. While it may, at times, impact us in an uncomfortable way, we respect their right to carry it forward.

Is there a need and a strong desire "out there" for a pricing compendium? It certainly looks that way, so just give it some time until someone picks up on it. After all, Victor Hugo predicted it over a hundred and fifty years ago. •

ADCA Board Candidates Sought

Regularly scheduled offices to be elected in 1997 are President, Vice President, Secretary/Treasurer and Directors. The elections will be held in August at the annual ADCA convention. Although there is no deadline to run for office or nominate a candidate, names should be submitted by July 1st. Contact Nominating Committee Chair:

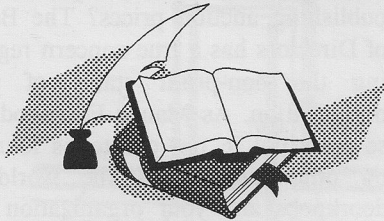
Len Blumin
382 Trockmorton Ave.
Mill Valley, CA 94941

A description of duties of ADCA officers appears in the March/April 1994 issue of *The Doorknob Collector*. They can also be obtained by contacting Len Blumin or the ADCA office.

The term for the officers and directors begins at the conclusion of the 1997 annual business meeting at the ADCA convention in King of Prussia, Pennsylvania. Terms run from the 1997 meeting to the 1999 meeting. Candidates for all positions must be active members of ADCA. •

Don't Delay!
Send your ad in today
For the convention souvenir book.

From The Archives

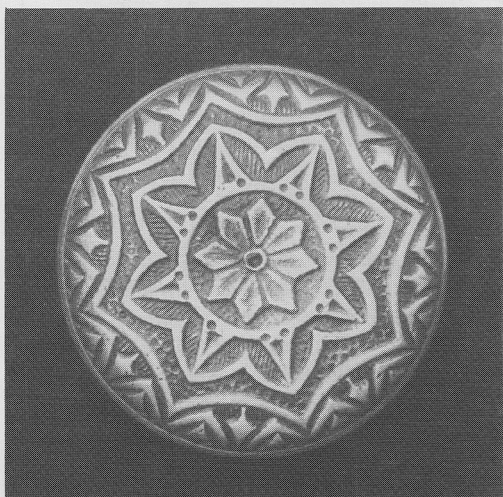


by Steve & Barbara Menchhofer

Catalogs, catalogs, catalogs.
Do you have a hardware catalog you would like to share with other ADCA members? Perhaps you have one you would like to donate to the **Emil Miller Memorial Library**. We, as archivists, are always searching for additional catalogs for the library.

You can either have your catalog copied and the copies sent to us or send us the original and we will copy it and return it to you. Whichever you prefer, we can arrange it. Or maybe you have one for sale. We also purchase catalogs. For more details please call us at 317/291-6043 or write us at 5538 West 25th St., Speedway, IN 46224.

Lets enhance our archives and the **Emil Miller Memorial Library** by sharing our catalogs. Education on hardware is important and what better way to become educated than to use your archives. •



K-229

Published in issue #45 of TDC (hopefully this picture will come out sharper).

The Doorknob Exchange

Members are reminded that your dues entitle you to advertise items for sale, trade or wanted at no charge. ADCA is not responsible for any transaction or the condition of the items advertised.

Auction: Web Wilson announces his phone/fax Antique Hardware auction #4. Full color catalogs will be mailed June 1. Figural, colored glass, aesthetic, bells, knockers; plus 11 different lions. All items guaranteed. Send \$12.50 to:
Web Wilson (#266)
P.O. Box 506
Portsmouth, RI 02871
PH: 800-508-0022

Wanted: Need doorknobs with an "R" and an "M". (one for baby present). I have traders or will buy.
Debbie Fellenz (#31)
2224 Cherokee Street
St. Louis, MO 63118
PH: 314/772-2225

Wanted: Large (18 or 25 inch) store entry set in the Columbian pattern by Reading Hardware.
Frank H. Brown (#475)
5501 Elgin St.
Pittsburgh, PA 15206-1432
PH: 412/441-1285
FAX: 412/359-6616

For Sale: Entire collection of hardware. Well over 150 brass knobs all different plus knobs of other types, wood, glass, porcelain. If interested, send SASE for copy of inventory and asking price, or phone.
Ray Zyc (#23)
1042 Milton Ave.
Janesville, WI 53545
PH: 608/754-2643

Hardware Service: Free hardware Matching Service (furniture and house hardware). Send photo-copy and SASE along with description.
Robinson's Antiques (#460)
170 Kent St.
Portland, MI 48875
PH: 517/647-6155

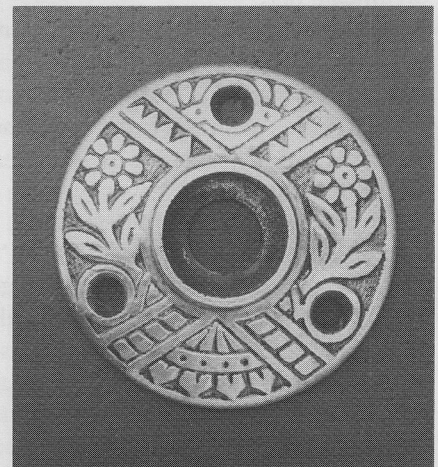
Wanted: Cast Iron Hinges 5 x 5 or 4-1/2"x 5" with acorn finials.
Patty Maclay (#389)
3511 Highway D
West Bend, WI 53095-8621
PH: 414/338-4096

Service: If you are thinking about selling your hardware collection, we would like to talk with you about our custom auction services.

Web & Jill Wilson (#266)
P.O. Box 506
Portsmouth, RI 02871
PH: 800/5008-0022

Wanted: Different styles of sash (lock - lifts) For more information contact.
JR Helget (#355)
Anderson Corporation
100 4th Ave. N.
Bayport, MN 55003
PH: 612/430-5352
FAX: 612/430-5306

For Sale: 37 brass roses (see photo below)
Lee Kaiser (#5)
6040 Morgan Ave., So.
Minneapolis, MN 55419-2011
PH: 612/861-6215



Correction:

The gremlins have been at it again. The cover photo in issue #82 of TDC mysteriously appears as "Cremona". The proper Reading Mfg. name should read "GEMONA". The editors suggest you make the correction.

This popular Flemish design, made in both cast iron, bronze plated and in cast bronze, was shown on p. 307-309 in the 1910 Reading catalog with 21 different pieces listed.

ALSO NOTE: In issue #82, p.4 of TDC, Vittoria, is a Corbin design not Russell & Erwin, for verification of the manufacturer, consult Corbin 1895 or 1905 catalog.