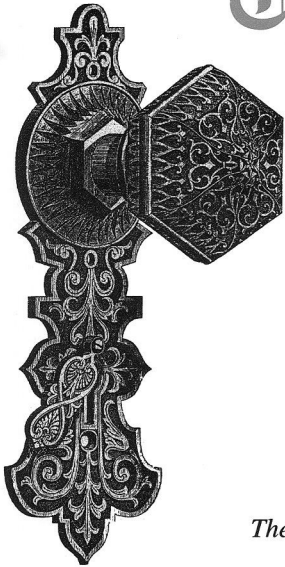


# The Doorknob Collector



Number 115

September - October 2002

A Publication of The Antique Doorknob Collectors of America

## Len Blumin Receives Arnie Fredrick Award

By Steve Rowe

*The Following text is taken from Steve Rowe's Arnie Fredrick Memorial Award presentation given to*

We are privileged this evening to honor a member within our own club. In 1999, The Board of Directors created the Arnie Fredrick Memorial Committee to honor outstanding performance and efforts by members in the club. The Arnie Fredrick Award honors those who have most emulated Arnie's willingness to serve and give of their time to others. Arnie was the key founder of ADCA and a great leader. Liked by everyone, Arnie was the catalyst in establishing the doorknob club. In 2000, the committee presented the first Arnie Fredrick Award to Maud Eastwood. The committee originally requested that she present the award this evening, but unfortunately she was unable to attend. In her absence, I will be presenting the honor.

Let me start by giving some background on this year's recipient. There are many who will know very quickly just who this man is. This simply cannot be helped as his accomplishments are much too frequent to keep his identity secret! This year's award recipient began his collection in 1975. The first knob which "fueled the fire" was a gold plated heart knob, C-111, complete with escutcheon. Over the years, he and his wife have acquired over 3,000 doorknobs and thousands of other hardware items. His favorites are almost always manufactured from 1870-1890. He is also keenly fond of MCCC, Russell & Erwin, Hopkins & Dickinson and Mallory-Wheeler pieces. (Continued on page 6.)



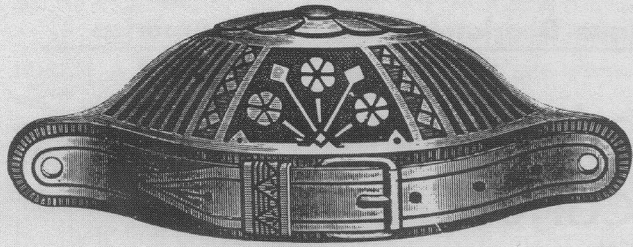
Len Blumin being presented with Arnie Award  
by club president, Steve Rowe

### Newsletter Deadline - Friday, October 18, 2002

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**"PUZZLERS" AND  
"STUMP THE CHUMP"  
(WITH APPOLOGIES  
TO CAR TALK)**

by Allan Joslyn

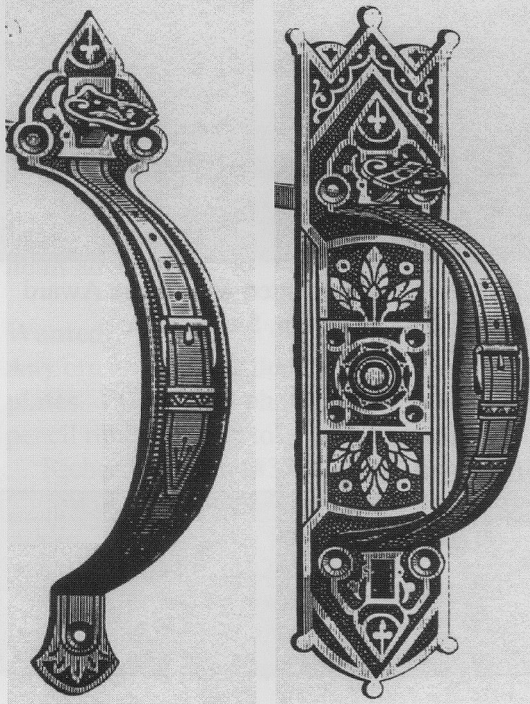
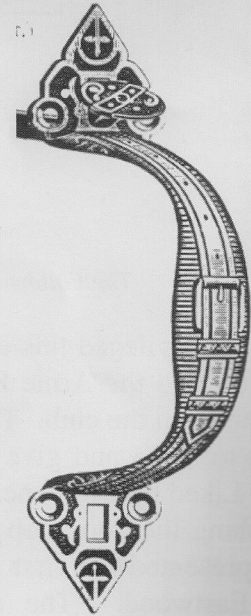


Since I have taken over responding to questions from the public addressed to the Club at [antiquedoorknobs@comcast.net](mailto:antiquedoorknobs@comcast.net), I have gotten a number of interesting queries, some of which I have even been able to answer. I have also, however, been stumped more often than I would like to admit. Which brings us to National Public Radio's "Car Talk", where Tom & Ray respond to questions from the public, propose puzzlers, and play "stump the chump" where they check back to see if their prior advice worked. In a

shameless effort to copy their format, from time to time I propose to reprint some questions I (or more likely, someone I consulted) was able to answer. I will also post other questions that I was unable to answer, in the hope that some Club member will be able to help. Any responses to the "puzzlers" will be reprinted here. And if I am wrong in one of my answers, I will publish the correct answer. So if you have information contact me at (973) 783-9411 or [ajoslyn@comcast.net](mailto:ajoslyn@comcast.net)

One question I got was "I have received several antique door latches and some drawer or window pulls that all feature the same design of the belt buckle. Also, all are marked on the reverse side with a sort of diamond-shaped image with a circle on top. Inside the diamond are English letters and numbers. Someone told me that they thought the belt buckle is a Masonic symbol or that of some other fraternal lodge." My response was that, "without seeing a picture, I would say that the belt-buckle design is Russell & Erwin of New Britain, Conn., illustrated in their 1887 Catalogue. The diamond-shaped design on the back is an English design registry mark, and (if you decipher it) it says that the piece was registered on May 9, 1878. [I had one of

these pulls and therefore I could read that] See [www.drexelantiques.com/englishregistry.html](http://www.drexelantiques.com/englishregistry.html). What I do not know is why some of the R&E pieces - a very few - were registered in England." I faxed a copy of those pages of the cata-



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logue to the person with the inquiry and indeed they were the handles in question.

Now the **PUZZLER – The Beaver Plate and Knob** shown here. The two-keyhole plate was in Web Wilson's most recent auction, and the picture of the knob with a one-keyhole plate was sent in by a member of the public from her family home in Ottawa. On the back is a mark which appears to be a Large "C", a "T" inside it, then a smaller "C" and a "O". I would read it as "C T Co." The lock that came with the knob and plate says "CURNEY" or "GURNEY".

One possible source of the hardware is Canada, since the plate shows both the Canadian national animal, the beaver (which also appears on the Canadian 5 cent piece), and maple leaves. But beavers appear elsewhere – for example on the Jamaica, New York Chamber of Commerce's knob (O-109), and on tiles in the Astor Place subway stop in New York City. The connection is that John Jacob Astor made his first fortune from beaver furs. So where did this design come from?

For another, really neat,



Patty Ramey and Debbie Felenz receiving a well-deserved hosting award

September – October 2002



Note the beaver tail peeking out from behind the doorknob. The picture of the plate alone shows the beaver clearly although this plate is a bit more worn.

variation on the Beaver motif, see the door handle at page 63 of Liz Gordon and Terri Hartman's book, *Decorative Hardware*

### Delores Fellenz

Another deserving recipient of the hosting award is Delores Fellenz. The ADCA sends Get Well wishes to her. Delores was a significant contributor to the success of the St. Louis convention but was unable to attend because she was hospitalized for flu and pneumonia. Her contributions are greatly appreciated and her presence certainly missed. Hope to see you next year Delores...

"Showstopper Knob" of the 2002 convention.  
"Standing Elk"  
by Russell & Erwin

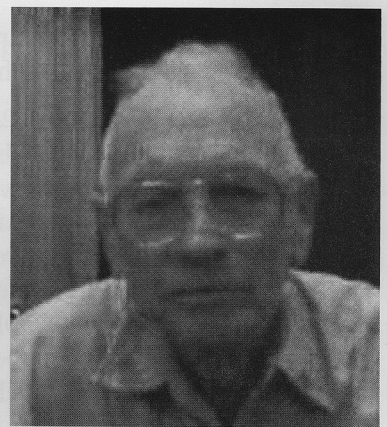
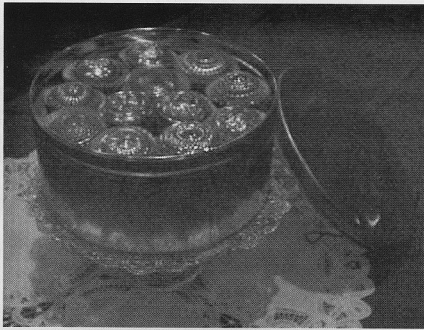
### Lock Collectors Show

October 11-12, 2002 will be the 30<sup>th</sup> annual Lock Museum of America Show. It will be held in Terryville, CT. Contact Tom Hennessey (#164) at (860)582-6897.

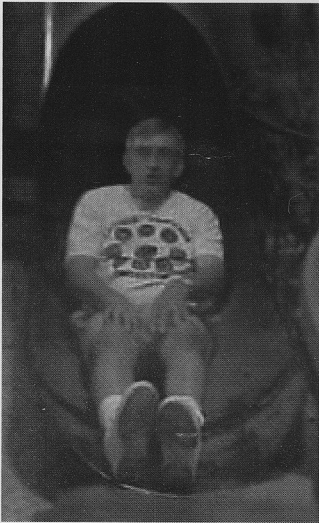
### Martha Stewart Living

See the article in the Sept. 2002 issue about doorknobs and featuring ADCA members.

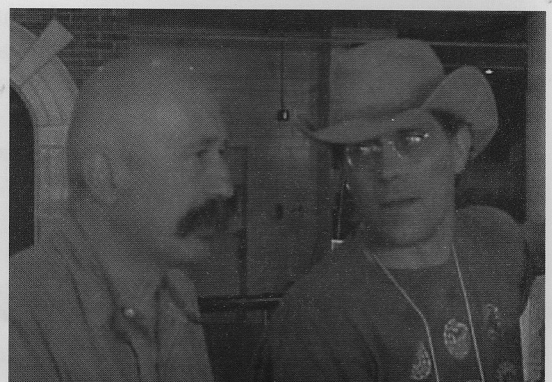
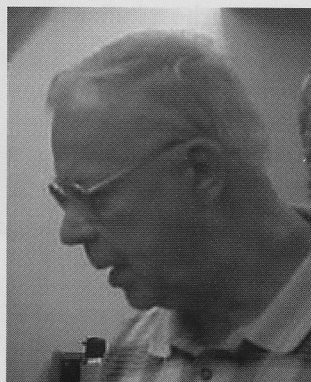


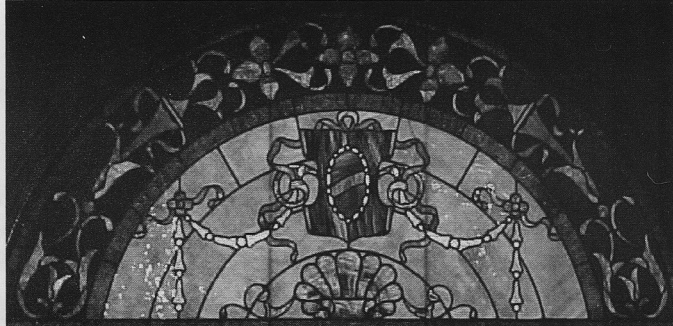
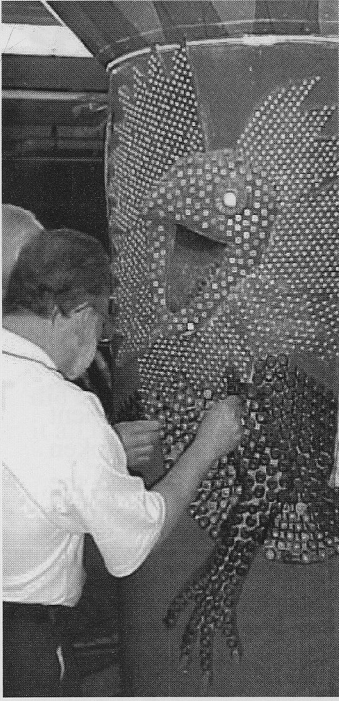


"Sure of winning a bet with Rhett

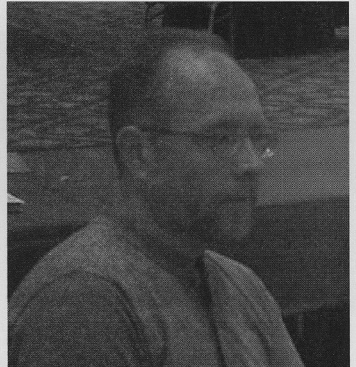
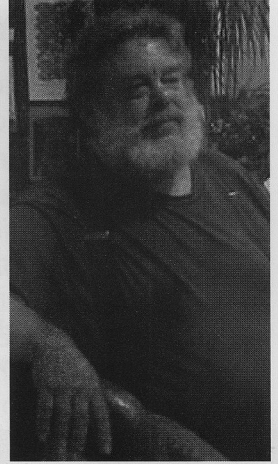


L-R, top to bottom:  
Sweet knobs, Patty Ramey, Larry Bolen, Rich Kennedy,  
Roy Prange, Jean Doto, Gunilla Joslyn, Susan Kittel, Helen  
and Bill Byington, Marge and Joe Bornino, Grace and Sam  
Skibicki, Bruce Gerrie and Brad Kittel.

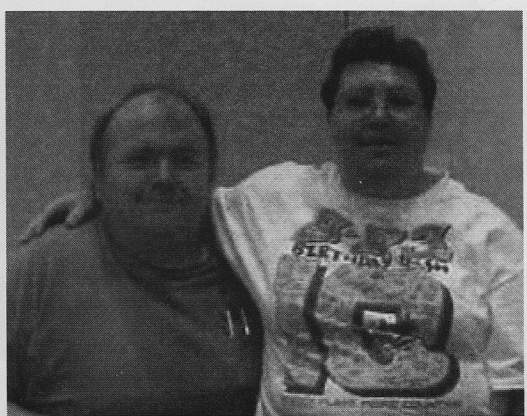
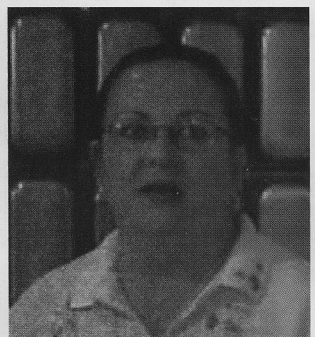
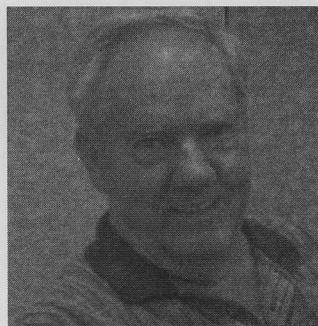




Stained glass in private home of Inge Hynes in St. Louis,



L-R, top to bottom:  
Marshall Berol, stained glass, Steve Arnold,  
Jackie Rode, Cathy Galbraith and Liz  
Gordon, Dale Sponaugle, Carlos Ruiz and  
Vicky Berol, Joe Mueller, Bonnie Otte, Ray  
Nemec, Winn Applegate and Steve Rowe,  
Craig Phillips and Lori Weems.



## Len Blumin (cont'd)

Our recipient has endeavored to be involved with the club from its' beginning. He is one of three people who have never missed a convention. His abilities were quickly recognized and he was soon involved in many areas of leadership within the club. In 1982, he hosted the second ADCA convention in San Francisco, CA. By 1983, he was elected President and was soon to have great impact in the club.

In *The Doorknob Collector* # 50 John Holland stated; "The second convention was held in San Francisco and hosted by Len and Patti Blumin. Through Len's leadership ADCA took a great step, as he engineered the establishment of the library and archives. He also started the first auction, which became a fundraiser, as well as an opportunity for conventioneer's to buy and sell, and enjoy the fun of a lively auction!"

1983 was a great year for Len and ADCA as his book, *Victorian Decorative Art* was published. Known as the "Blue Bible of hardware," this manual

for collecting doorknobs has been carried thousands of miles and read countless times over. Win Applegate, while commenting on the re-issuance of *The VDA* stated, "Len Blumin was the author of the original book and we will always be grateful to him for the organization that he brought to the art of collecting."

Len has continued to serve in ADCA's leadership throughout the years. He served as Vice President in 1982, 1987 & 1988. He served as President in 1983, 1984, 1989 & 1990. He has been a member of countless committees and has chaired the nominating committee for many years. Len has also been very active in helping to distribute information and education to others in the field of hardware. He is known for his extensive research and has been a long time contributor of articles for *The Doorknob Collector* (TDC). In December 1986 Len began publishing updates on his book in the TDC. This regular feature was entitled "Ornamental Design in Antique Doorknobs" and was eagerly looked forward to with each issue. Len has also

been the key speaker at many different conventions. He has created numerous hardware displays and won many awards. Most recently, he exhibited hardware at the City Museum in St. Louis, during their "Jewelry for Buildings" exhibition.

It is clear by now that anyone can see that Len Blumin is qualified to receive this award. There is one more element though that I have not spoken about. That is, Len Blumin the human being. Len has many friends in this room tonight. Like Arnie, he is well respected and loved for the man he is. I believe it is fair to say that many of us are pleased to count him as a friend. Charlie Wardell, in a quote from the June 1984, TDC #11 stated; "For the first time in my collecting experience I parted with a knob of which I had no duplicate. It is a rarity and I traded with one of the finest collectors."

On behalf of ADCA, I want to thank you Len for your years of valuable service to the club. Please stay a bit longer as we wouldn't be the same without you! Will you please come forward and receive the Arnie?



**Display Contest winners** are proudly holding their plaques. From left to right: Marge Bornino, Steve Menchhofer, Bonnie Otte, and Win Applegate

## St. Louis Revisited

By Rich Kennedy

As I returned from our convention in St. Louis, I kept asking myself, "could it have been any better?" And, of course, the answer was NO!

Debbie Fellenz and company did an outstanding job of putting it all together.

Those first-timers to St. Louis were awed by the Arch. And those, including myself, who dared to go up to the top were treated to a spectacular view.

Wednesday was our bus tour and the first stop was the St. Louis City Museum. All must agree it is unlike any museum you have ever seen before. Bruce Gerrie is a curator at the museum. He reminded us that the museum is a "work in progress". Architectural and almost any other kind of salvage items are always welcome and will be reincarnated into some form of visual art. Even an old bus and airplane are worked into the façade of the building.

The next stop on our "back-in-time" tour was the Chatillion-

DeMenil Mansion. This is a masterpiece of Greek revival architecture that was saved from the wrecking ball. Then it was a walk up the block to the Lemp Mansion for lunch. The food remained on our plates and no ghosts were seen in spite of the fact that the house is considered one of the ten most haunted houses in America by *Life Magazine*.

The tour continued along the side streets of St. Louis. As we drove along our eyes were rewarded with lovely Victorian, art deco and arts & craft homes. But

nothing was more spectacular than entering Compton Heights, an enclave of Victorian homes. It was like going back in time. Each was more splendid than the last and the restorations were of the highest quality.

And then when we thought we had seen it all, the bus stopped at the Fellenz house.

Little did we know that waiting inside were the most outrageous desserts one could imagine. We all overdosed on chocolate and ice cream.

The Fellenz family outdid themselves with their hospitality. Many of us had a chance to talk on the phone to Dolores Fellenz from her hospital bed. After all the planning she was un-

able to attend. We wish her a speedy recovery.

Then we moved into Thursday and the beginning of the convention in the hotel. As always the buying, selling and trading was fast and furious. By the afternoon we had all settled down to enjoy the great slide program, "The Last 50 Years in the History of Door Hardware"



presented by Liz Gordon .

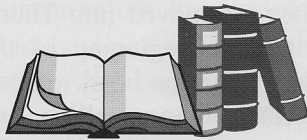
The public open house was well attended and questions were as numerous as the hardware. Later in the evening many of us wound up in the hospitality suite (aka the Bragging Room) to show off our recent acquisitions.

Friday morning came early with more bargains as more hardware magically appeared. Len Blumin had an informal round table discussion. By the evening we were all tired, some of us out of money, others out of energy, and all of us out of time. We did try to squeeze in just one more deal.

The banquet was wonderful, but the highlight of the evening was the presentation of the Arnie Award to Len Blumin. It was well deserved. Awards were also given for the wonderful displays that we all enjoyed.



## From the Archives



By Steve and Barbara Menchhofer  
 If you weren't there, you missed a great convention. It was good to see friends we hadn't seen for a few years, be with ones we see each year and meet members who were attending their first convention. Many members stopped by the Archives table to look over the sample catalog copies that were on display. This gave them a first-hand look at what is available from the Archives. The catalogs contain a wealth of information about doorknobs and related door hardware.

The orders for copies placed by members are now in the process of being filled. They will be mailed as soon as possible. Thanks to everyone who ordered.

## 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.

### Wanted:

Any ornate **exterior door strike plates**. Please send photos, pencil rubbings, etc. to  
 Richard Zillman (#370)  
 280 Davisadero St.  
 San Francisco, CA 94117  
 (415) 861-1026

### For Sale or Trade

One **complete set** of transitional

cast iron doorknobs and bennington type complete. All set to display or use \$110 (or interesting trade)

Craig Phillips #297  
 204 Trowbridge St.  
 Allegan, Michigan  
 (269) 673-2815  
 email info@b-c-e.biz  
 web site www.b-c-e.biz

### For Sale:

**Entire collection** of The Doorknob Collector newsletters in 3-ring binder. Issue #1 to current issue. Price \$100.00 plus shipping charges.

Kae Zyc #23  
 375 Highway 67 Apt. #108  
 Dousman, WI 53116-9645  
 Phone: 262.965.9342

### Wanted:

**One pair** Yale & Towne "Holly" Doorknob (B-213)

**Two pairs** white porcelain knobs; on one knob is a brass button, on the other knob is a brass screw.

Still looking for **two types** of plastic knobs shown in May-June 2002 issue.

Vicky Berol (#450)  
 2527 Gough Street  
 San Francisco, CA 94123  
 (415) 771-9899  
 sfgofer@yahoo.com

## ADCA Board of Directors

### Officers

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- President: Steve Rowe
- Vice President:  
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- Cathy Galbraith
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- Carol Meermans

- Barbara Menchhofer
- Stephen Rowe
- 2002-2004**
- Win Applegate
- Norm Blam
- Len Blumin
- Liz Gordon
- Brad Kittel
- Steve Menchhofer
- Loretta Nemec

## New Members

We extend a warm welcome to our newest members who have joined the ADCA since our last newsletter.

688	Donald Weinberg	Quincy, IL
689	Delbert Chafey	Martinsville, IN
690	Daniel Cica	Lakewood, OH
691	Jerry Lute	Lucasville, OH
692	Philip Austin	Portland, OR
693	Elvin Gum	Hurst, TX

## Keep in Touch



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