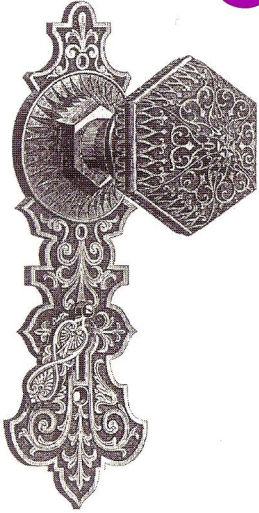


# The Doorknob Collector

Number 128

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## The Opening of The Bosco-Milligan Foundation's Architectural Heritage Center of Portland

BY CATHY GALBRAITH, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

On January 29<sup>th</sup> The Bosco-Milligan Foundation will hold its opening celebration for donors and contributors who have helped to open the doors of its Architectural Heritage Center in Portland. The Foundation is dedicated to preserving the vintage and historic buildings that play an essential role in the Portland, Oregon community fabric and quality of life. The Foundation works to achieve its mission through historic preservation education programs that teach people the importance of buildings and give them the skills they need to maintain and restore the properties where they live and work. The organization's founders, Jerry Bosco and Ben Milligan, were self-taught preservation craftsmen who envisioned a facility where people could come and learn about vintage buildings and how to preserve and maintain them.

### THE COLLECTIONS

Bosco and Milligan salvaged an extensive collection of architectural artifacts over 30 years of rescuing pieces from buildings in the midst of demolition. They also traveled throughout the U.S. and made several trips to Europe, acquiring pieces that were added to their holdings. Of particular interest to members of the ADCA is that they collected approximately 12,000 pieces of architectural hardware. The National Park Service has identified the collection as among the five largest collections of architectural artifacts in the country, the others being Colonial Williamsburg, the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities and two historical societies in New York State. The Architectural Heritage Center building-related heritage programs will be the only programs of their kind in the Northwest.

Next Newsletter Deadline - Monday, January 16, 2005

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The Bosco-Milligan Foundation Collections of 40,000 sq.ft. of historic building elements include – very approximately indeed:

350 stained Glass Windows  
400 Doors  
130 Light Fixtures and 1100 Light Shades  
12,000 pieces of historic hardware  
Cast Iron building pieces  
Innumerable other building pieces

The Center's first hardware exhibit will open in late February in the Hardware Gallery at the Center.

### THE FOUNDATION'S BROADER PURPOSES

The Architectural Heritage Center will be far more than an exhibition venue for the collection (or, given its size, for minute portions of the collection at any one time). it will include:

- An interpretive gallery for rotating exhibitions;
- A gallery devoted to historic hardware;
- Two Classroom/workshop spaces for education programs;
- A Library of historic building-related resources;
- Collections preservation, storage and maintenance facilities;
- Foundation offices; and
- Computer access to the collections.

The Architectural Heritage Center will provide the physical facility and the resources to educate both present and future generations. In The Architectural Heritage Center, people will have the rare and wonderful opportunity to use, interpret, study and appreciate the building artifacts that remain from our architectural legacy.

Even before the opening of its new home, the Foundation has been extremely active. Since 1992, it has offered 165 education programs, serving the needs and interests of nearly 36,000 people. These education programs have fostered a greater understanding and appreciation of vintage and historic houses and buildings and their important role in our history; provided practical preservation education workshops, resources and assistance in order to give people the knowledge and skills they need to maintain and restore historic buildings; and celebrated the extraordinary history of the architecture and traditional building crafts of the Northwest. The Foundation's programs regularly fill to capacity. With the opening of the Architectural Heritage Center, two on-site classroom and workshop spaces will result in a greatly expanded calendar of education programming, from 16 to 50 per year.

#### The Doorknob Collector®



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## A REAL CHALLENGE: FIGURING OUT WHAT WE HAVE

Given the size of Ben and Jerry's collection, gathered from all over the United States and Europe and stored in various warehouses, it is no wonder that cataloguing is a major task. But cataloguing is only one aspect of the challenge; the Foundation also wants to make it available to those who cannot visit it in person, and to make the pieces not on display at any given time (the vast majority of the items) similarly available

The Hardware was stored in wooden crates, with some identification tag numbers, based on a very basic handwritten card index system Ben and Jerry developed. The size of the hardware collection itself is "an educated guess." Maude Eastwood, a long-time comrade-in-arms of Ben and Jerry, photographed some of their pieces for her book *The Antique Doorknob*; in the late 1980s, she estimated their hardware collection at 12,000 pieces.

In 2004, the Foundation received a modest state grant to conduct an inventory, evaluation, and training program for four areas of the historic Collections – Stained Glass Windows, Light Fixtures, Wallpapers, and Hardware. The "match" for the grant is provided by staff time, and the time spent by volunteers who were able to sign up for the collection area of their choice; a day of lecture-training in each area is provided, followed by hands-on inventory documentation, overseen by the expert in each area. The objective is to have a group of people with a particular interest and some knowledge of at least one area of the collection, which can assist the Foundation long-term. For example, Maud Eastwood is the head of the hardware "task force", working with a small group of interested volunteers starting to catalogue the hardware, focusing initially on the doorknobs.



A major decision was selecting the software to be used in cataloguing. Homegrown solutions, directed to particular types of objects, simply would not work. After looking nationwide, PastPerfect (a museum collections program) was selected since it is used by hundreds of institutions with a great variety of collections, including multiple different collections at some places. It allows the flexibility for multiple use collections: display, public education programs, study-only (no display, due to condition), long-term but not necessarily permanent (like materials that would be "used up" in training workshops), etc. The Foundation intends to complete this inventory, evaluation, and training program by December 31<sup>st</sup>. With the lessons learned from the work on lighting fixtures, wallpapers, and stained glass windows, the hardware inventory will be limited to the collection's knobs at this time (given the magnitude of the hardware collection.) For the ADCA, the doorknobs may be of greatest interest, but the Foundation will eventually need to inventory a much larger hardware collection that includes hinges, doorbells, knockers, locks, latches, pulls, escutcheons, fasteners, etc.

Every knob will be inventoried using a two-sided form, numbered, and tagged with that number. Each will be photographed. No hardware will be refinished or polished; all artifacts are left in their current condition, which is the Foundation's policy (excluding needed repairs for exhibition.) The Foundation will produce a CD ROM of the inventory, for access beyond the Architectural Heritage Center, which is planned to open to the public in mid-February, 2005. This CD ROM will be available for purchase.

## A QUICK GUIDED TOUR

Set forth below is what a tour of the Center will be like when it opens, a scant two months (Gulp!) from now.

The Architectural Heritage Center is housed in the West's Block Building, a stately Victorian-era commercial building which has been beautifully restored. Exhaustive research uncovered an 1885 lithograph of the building published in *West Shore Magazine* and it was used to produce the restoration plans. As construction proceeded, original materials were repaired and/or reproduced to restore the facade to the highest historic preservation standards. The ground floor features large store-front windows and finely detailed woodwork; the second story is brick with a richly detailed wood cornice. In the center of the cornice, you see the year the building was constructed, 1883, gold-leafed as it originally appeared. An innovative solution was developed to return the second story brick to an unpainted surface: the brick wall was dismantled, the unpainted inside surface was turned to the outside and the brick was reset. At the same time, structural steel was added behind the facade to meet current seismic standards.

You will enter the Architectural Heritage Center through tall glass doors into the reception area where exhibition, lecture and workshop schedules are available. Visible through the next pair of doors is an exciting interpretive exhibition. The first exhibition will focus on the multi-ethnic neighborhood displaced by the Auditorium Urban Renewal Program. A commercial building exterior, parts of the facades of various lost houses and other historical artifacts will be displayed along with early photographs. All of the exhibit's doors, stained glass windows, hardware and light fixtures were originally located in this neighborhood and drawn from the Foundation's collections. The combination of building elements, images and labels that explain the items on display make it possible to grasp the daily lives of people in this neighborhood in an earlier time.

Today, in the classroom north of the gallery a hands-on program on historic hardware is underway with a group of elementary school children. Various historic door knobs, some with animal motifs, are being examined along with school and other public building hardware. By displaying such building elements, the Architectural Heritage Center is able to add drama and reality to programs.

You may notice that future programs include the "History of Decorative Tile" and its use in houses from the 'teens and 1920s and a slide lecture on the magnificent "Cast Iron Buildings of Portland." With the materials provided at this later lecture you could easily cross the Morrison Bridge to downtown Portland and enjoy a self guided walking tour of Old Town. Also scheduled are hands-on workshops on plaster repair, historic painting techniques, and maintenance and repair of wood-sash windows. Other workshops provide homeowners with the skills they need to either appropriately preserve or repair their own home or to know what to look for and expect when hiring a contractor.

If today's exhibition has raised some additional questions in your mind concerning light fixtures used in houses built in the early 1900s, you could head upstairs to the extensive library of historic building related books, slides and photographs. Using the computer inventory, you will be able to search the collections for further examples. The computer will display a photograph of each light fixture in the collections as well as the date of manufacture, the original building where the fixture was used and other useful information. You can push a key on the computer to have the records on the fixture you are interested in printed and then fill out a request to have the light fixtures pulled from the collections stored in the lower floor of the Center.

You may also notice volunteers assembling and packing a traveling exhibition from the collections stored in this same lower floor. The Foundation offers traveling exhibitions to be used throughout the region, to present educational opportunities to as many people as possible.

## MANY THANKS AND A SUGGESTION

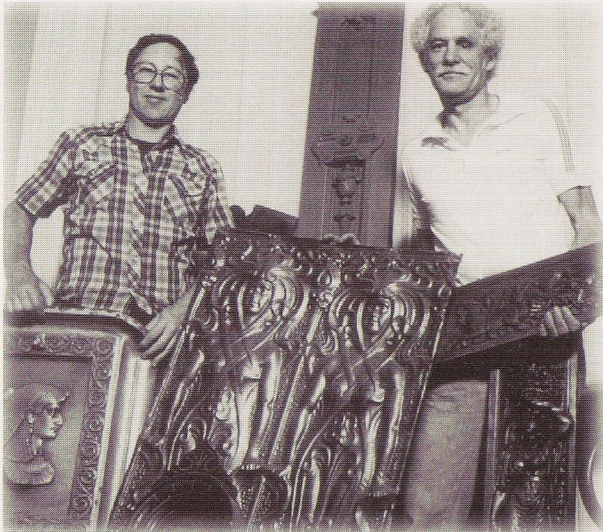
As you know from the last issue of TDC, the ADCA is donating two display cases to the Foundation, dedicated to Florence Jarvis and Barbra Menchhofer, for which the Foundation offers many thanks. Now for the suggestion: if any ADCA members want to provide a loving home for their collections, the Foundation would be glad to be of assistance. We promise they will get warm milk and be lovingly tucked in bed every night, after, of course, a bedtime story.

### LOCATION AND CONTACT INFORMATION:

**The Architectural Heritage Center**  
701 SE Grand Avenue – Portland, Oregon  
Mailing Address: PO Box 14157; Portland, OR 97293-0157  
Telephone 503-231-7264 Fax 503-231-7311  
email: [info@architecturalheritagecenter.org](mailto:info@architecturalheritagecenter.org)  
Website: [www.architecturalheritagecenter.org](http://www.architecturalheritagecenter.org)

### THREE WHO MADE A MUSEUM – AN APPRECIATION

By Maud L. Eastwood



Museums are not created single-handedly. It takes several types to create a museum. It takes a collector or collectors, driven by a desire to acquire the best and to leave a lasting heritage. But it also takes an organizer, who manages to make the collection into an entity, with a building, a following and supporters. In the case of the Bosco-Milligan Foundation the three were Ben Milligan, Jerry Bosco and Cathy Galbraith.

#### Ben and Jerry

I first met Ben and Jerry in 1975 when I visited their glass making operation, Geneses Glass, in the old Davidson Bakery in Portland. I arrived there after hearing of them from antique shops in the area when I was looking for antique hardware.

Imagine my astonishment and joy, as I made my way across the ground floor of that huge old building, when I saw several long showcases containing antique hardware. Ben and Jerry were upstairs making stained glass (they produced glass to fill both European and domestic orders), but quickly came down to meet me when they learned of my passion for doorknobs.

Ben and Jerry were “driven” characters in the fields of salvage, preservation, reproduction and restoration. Once they mastered the technique of reproducing a specific item in the building art trades, they would shift their enthusiasm to a different type of article. They thus mastered the manufacture, through all its stages, of stained glass, metal door hardware (from design to finish), copper roofing, and wood-graining, to name a few.

Since we shared common interests in vintage door hardware, Ben and Jerry generously offered the loan of invaluable research material, and also suggested that I visit the research and “crows-nest” patent sections (up a steep and narrow staircase) of Portland’s Multnomah County Library. Thus began our long friendship and ultimately – with much urging and assistance from them – publication of my book, The Antique Doorknob, in 1976.

Since his youth, Jerry had been a pack-rat of interesting parts of the Victorian houses being demolished by the hundreds in Portland. At age 14, Jerry was packing home bits and pieces of buildings that he could balance on the handlebars of his bicycle, sometimes trading a pack of cigarettes for them with a workman. Ben was also a salvager at heart and had gained experience as a construction worker. It was natural that they teamed up, as they did in 1964, rather than competing.

An example of their generosity was their response to an inquiry from the restorer of the old Maryland State Capital about the possibility of acquiring a knob of the original pattern used on the building. The knob is pictured on page 185, lower right corner, of The Antique Doorknob. It was found in their collection and, without hesitation, Ben and Jerry sent it on to a better life in Annapolis. When I visited the old Capital later, the knob was still there.

To quote the Ben half of this remarkable duo, "Jerry and I spent our lives educating people. A collector likes to share. If you collect and hoard everything at home, it's not so much fun." And, "We're not collectors as much as caretakers. You start out as collectors and later on, you are caretakers."

Jerry died in 1987, and Ben the next year; they were aged 49 and 51. But before their death, they took steps to preserve their vast collections, establishing the Bosco-Milligan foundation in 1987. And that is where Cathy comes in.

Cathy had met Ben and Jerry when she was President of the Historic Preservation League of Oregon, and they became good friends. Ben and Jerry bequeathed their collections, as well as the building where it will be housed, to the foundation, which was established under the umbrella of the League. Several years later the League decided that developing the foundation would require too large a commitment of its resources, and the Foundation became independent. At the time Cathy was Executive Director of the Historic Seattle organization and when the office of Executive Director of the Bosco-Milligan Foundation was created in 1992, she was asked to apply. She did so and was selected as Executive Director from some 100 applicants.

There followed years of fund raising, repairing and stabilizing, moving parts of the collection into storage while renovation of the building proceeded, more fund raising, etc. The challenges were incessant and varied, but Cathy pressed on, and the Foundation, about to open its doors to the public after all these years, owes as much to her as to the two original "pack rats", Ben and Jerry. Cathy continues numerous other activities as well, including serving as a Director of the ADCA.

## HURRAH FOR THE CONVENTION

The San Francisco Convention was not only fun and educational, but also turned out to be financially successful. The Convention itself was in the black by \$1,453. In addition, the ADCA received donations in connection with the Convention of \$7,125. The donations included \$5020 received on the sale of Florence Jarvis' knobs, \$1550 donated in memory of Florence Jarvis, \$350 donated in memory of Barbara Menchhofer, and \$205 from the sale of other donated knobs. These donations will be invaluable in assisting the Club in the



Sargent, Greenleaf  
Catalogue, 1895

major undertaking of updating Len Blumin's Victorian Decorative Art, 2d Edition, and publishing, in addition, a voluminous update.

And now Vicky and Patty will read the awards, after the drum roll:

To: Win Applegate, for providing us with the Guidelines so we didn't have to "reinvent the wheel".

To: Bob Rodder, for ably handling and tallying all the reservations, as well as producing the brochure.

To: Marshall Berol, for acting as Tour Guide.

To: Loretta Nemec, for again assuming responsibility for the Display Contest and Awards Program.

To: Len Blumin, Rhett Butler and Faye Kennedy for the Educational Presentations.

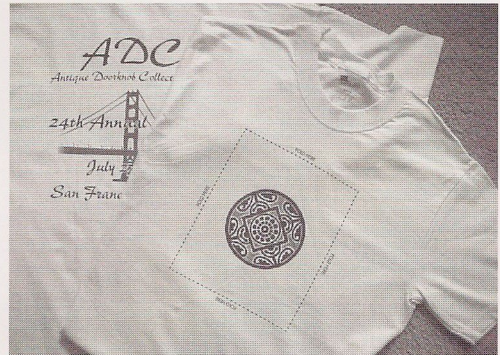
To: Jackie Rode, auctioneer, and her assistants – Marshall Berol, Fraser Butler, Joe Bornino, Betti Martin, Patty Ramey and Steve Rowe.

To: Faye and Rich Kennedy, two people who did just about anything and everything...and well.

To: the 69 ADCA members and guests, who made the 24<sup>th</sup> Annual ADCA Convention such fun and a success.

### Shirts, Shirts, Shirts

The ADCA purchased shirts to commemorate the Convention and we still have some shirts available for purchase. They have a clever four-fold design. Four-fold was the theme of the convention and describes the knob's design that is repeated four times. Note the knob pictured on the shirt. Then note the four dotted fold lines, they are just for "pun". On the back of the shirt is the Golden Gate Bridge to remind us that the 2004 Convention was held in San Francisco.



These would make great gifts. The larger ones are wonderful sleep shirts for your college bound kids. That way they won't miss all the doorknobs you have around the house. The shirts are available in four sizes. The chest width indicated below is the front of the shirt, not your chest size. I did it this way so you could measure a tee shirt of your own to determine the size you want to order.

The price is \$15 for one and \$25 for two. Sale of these shirts supports the ADCA. When you make out your check please indicate shirts in the memo line.

Size	Chest Width	Front Neck to Hem
Small	18 in.	24 in.
Medium	20 in.	26 ½ in.
Large	22 in.	27 in.
X- Large	24 in.	28 in.

Send your check to:

ADCA

PO Box 31


Chatham, NJ

07928-0031

### FROM THE EDITOR

The Club received a very appreciative note from the Menchhofer clan (all of them, Julie, Joe & Megan, Steve and Mike) expressing their gratitude for the plaque in memory of Barbara Menchhofer on a display in the Bosco-Milligan Architectural Center. We all miss her.

Now, for something from the past, an article on the rare buffalo knob from the TDC of July, 1986, Issue 19.

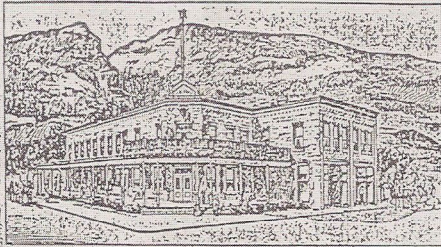
  
**COLONEL W. F. CODY**  
 EARNESTLY DESIRES YOUR PRESENCE ON THE  
 OCCASION OF THE OPENING  
 OF HIS NEW HOTEL  
**"THE IRMA"**  
 AT CODY, WYOMING  
 ON THE EVENING OF NOVEMBER EIGHTEENTH  
 NINETEEN HUNDRED AND TWO  
 DANCONG

A D C A President, John Holland is the happy owner of a buffalo knob from the Irma Hotel.

The Hotel was named after Colonel Cody's daughter



*LINCOLN Trade Review*



*The New Cody Hotel, Cody, Wyoming*  
(Irma)

This hotel, costing upward of \$65,000, to be completed Oct. 1st, 1902, is situated 900 miles from Lincoln, at the terminal point of the Burlington Yellowstone Park line. This hotel is notwithstanding its distance, entirely a Lincoln-built building, for in its entire construction Lincoln contractors and Lincoln business houses are represented. Alfred W. Woods, of Lincoln, is the architect; Stephen Bros., of Lincoln, are the general contractors; the L. W. Pomerene Plumbing company of Lincoln, are contractors for plumbing, heating, and wiring; Searles & Chapin company, of Lincoln, furnish lumber; R. S. Young, of Lincoln, furnishes cement and plaster; the Western Glass and Paint company, of Lincoln, furnish the glass; N. Westover & Co., of Lincoln, furnish the steel; Reddig Mossholder & Co., of Lincoln, furnish the iron columns; the Geiser Manufacturing company of Lincoln, furnish the cornice; the Nichols Roofing company, of Lincoln, furnish the roofing; the Rudge & Guenzel company, of Lincoln, furnish the nails, and the Lincoln Hardware company, of Lincoln, furnish the other hardware, while Lincoln bricklayers, stonecutters and carpenters perform the labor.

	Newsletter and Other Questions	Web Site
ADCA Box 31 Chatham, NJ 07928-0031 <a href="mailto:Knobnews@aol.com">Knobnews@aol.com</a> Phone: 973-635-6338	<a href="mailto:Antiquedoorknobs@comcast.net">Antiquedoorknobs@comcast.net</a> Phone: 973-783-9411 Fax: 973-783-8503	<a href="http://www.Antiquedoorknobs.org">www.Antiquedoorknobs.org</a>