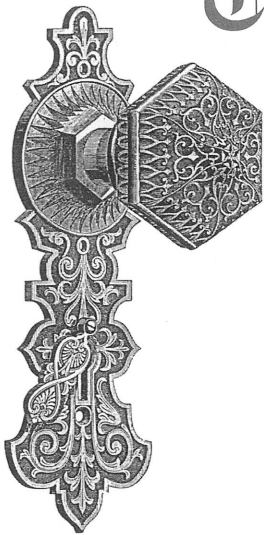


The Doorknob Collector



Number 172

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A Publication of The Antique Doorknob Collectors of America

A Nonprofit Organization Devoted to the Study and Preservation of Ornamental Hardware

EXTRA, EXTRA, EXTRA: SPACE ALIEN FOUND ON DOORKNOB!!

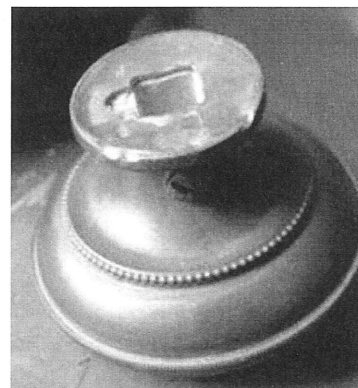
By Allen S. Joslyn

As the Editor, and the website responder, I receive an interesting variety of inquiries and pictures of some remarkable knobs. There is pictured herein one of the most wonderful knobs to surface yet. I have not been able to inspect it, but it appears to be copper-clad and lead filled, which would make it quite early, perhaps prior to 1870.



The shape of the knob and the perimeter have been seen in other early knobs, e.g. A-310. The construction and back of the knob appears to be identical to knobs by R&E. The face of the knob is certainly a unique example.

Does anyone have an idea what manner of creature this could be?



Inside

Business Members	8	Doorknob Exchange	6	R&E A Contemporary Account.....	2
Convention 2012.....	6	Meet Your Board-Kennedys	4	Share Your Favorite Knob	7
Club Information.....	8	Newsletter Archives Updated	5	Wooden Pressed Knobs	5

RUSSELL & ERWIN

A CONTEMPORARY ACCOUNT

(PART 1)

Reproduced below is the first part of an article from the Commercial Pathfinder concerning Russell & Erwin and its operations in 1869. While it does not provide much detail about its builders' hardware, it does describe, inter alia, what must have been a remarkable showroom in New York and extensive manufacturing operations in New Britain.



Its description of the 1865 catalogue was quoted years later in Russell & Erwin 125 Years. While the ADCA focuses on the builders' hardware, the article is a useful indication of the wide range of R&E's products and operations.

The Commercial Pathfinder began publication in New York in 1843, a section of The Pathfinder, published by Park Goodwin, a New York journalist, but it failed after only three months. There as a later "Pathfinder", but it was founded in 1894. It is a mystery who was publishing a "Pathfinder" in 1869. There is no reference to it in WORLD-CAT, which lists the contents of a vast variety of libraries, nor in the Union List of Serials, nor in the standard reference work, Mott, A History of American Magazines.

Maud Eastwood's archives contain a copy of this article, and given its rarity, reproducing it here seems worthwhile. (Your Editor, having retyped the whole thing, suspects the writer was paid by the word.) It will be reprinted in several parts.

By the way, the building pictured above from the Historic Buildings of Connecticut website which it describes as "today New Britain's City Hall, but was first opened in 1886 as the Hotel Russwin. Financed by Henry E. Russell and Cornelius B. Erwin, it mainly served the numerous salesmen and clients of the Russell and Erwin Manufac-

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turing Company, makers of architectural hardware. The Italian Renaissance Revival design was created by Joseph Merrill Wells of McKim, Meade & White (Wells was Stanford White's principal assistant). Wells was a pioneer in the use of terra cotta detailing, as displayed on the Russwin Building. The same firm was hired in 1907 for the building's conversion into City Hall that took place in 1908-1909." The Hotel contained a dozen or so guest rooms, operated by a lessee, as well as offices, a bar and restaurant, etc. By 1907 business had deteriorated so much that a local newspaper reported that the building's owners were "keeping the hotel open out of sheer civil pride and philanthropy". So the City acquired it.

New Britain also had the Russwin Lyceum, a theatre with 1,138 seats, which was built in 1893, later renamed the Embassy, and demolished in 1964 to make way for – as usual – a parking garage.

FROM THE COMMERCIAL PATHFINDER, NOVEMBER, 1869

"THE HARDWARE TRADE OF AMERICA

THE RUSSELL & ERWIN MANUFACTURING COMPANY

Factories at New Britain, Conn.;
Warehouses: New York, 45 and 47 Chambers Street,
Philadelphia, 16 and 18 North 5th Street,
Baltimore, 17 St. Charles St.,
San Francisco, 294 and 206 Sansome Street

"The Russell & Erwin Manufacturing Company deal exclusively in American Hardware, of every description, from the smallest to the largest, and a great portion of their stock, which is the most extensive of its kind in this country, is of their own manufacture. The sales of the house amount in value to several million dollars annually. As it is generally conceded to be leading house in the hardware trade in America we propose in this article to give a history of its origin and progress and a sketch of its factories and warehouses. Its business originated in 1830 in New Britain, Conn., where William B. Stanley Henry W. Clarke and Lora Waters established a machine shop on Main Street. This was purchased in 1833 by Frederick Stanley, who made, in that year, the first plate locks ever made in this country. In 1835 the concern was exclusively owned by the two brothers Stanley. It was probably the first establishment in Connecticut which employed steam power, and had a wide reputation. In the latter part of 1835 the firm was changed to Stanley, Woodruff & Co. and consisted of Emanuel Russell, of Litchfield County Conn., Smith Mattison, of New York, the Messrs. Stanley, and T. & N. Woodruff of New Britain. They purchased a large lot of land and commenced the manufacture of locks on a large scale. At the beginning of 1839 the Woodruffs, Emanuel Russell, and W.B. Stanley retired, and by the accession of Henry E. Russell, of Litchfield, Conn. and C.B. Erwin of Boonville, N.Y. the firm became Stanley, Russell & Co. At the beginning of 1841 Frederick T. Stanley retired and was succeeded by John K. Bowen, the firm name then becoming Mattison, Russell & Co. About this time the firm opened a warehouse at 92 John Street, New York for the sale of their manufactures in this city, their previous sales having been made through commission. By the death of Mr. Mattison, the firm became Russell, Erwin & Co. January 1st, 1846, Mr. Bowden having sold his interest to the other partners, the name became Russell & Erwin in July, 1850. In the latter part of 1850, several manufacturers in New Britain negotiated with Russell & Erwin and on Jan. 1, 1851, formed the present Russell & Erwin Manufacturing Co., with a capital of \$200,000; and in 1861, the capital was increased to \$500,000. It is a joint stock company chartered under the laws of Connecticut. Mr. Emanuel Russell died in February, 1865, at

an age of nearly 90 years. The steady increase of the business induced the proprietors to remove from the warehouse in John Street to 21 Cliff Street, in 1848; and from there to 87 and 89 Beekman Street, in the spring of 1854; and in November, 1868 to the present spacious double warehouse at 45 and 47 Chambers Street and 23 and 25 Reade street.”
(To be continued).

MEET YOUR ADCA BOARD

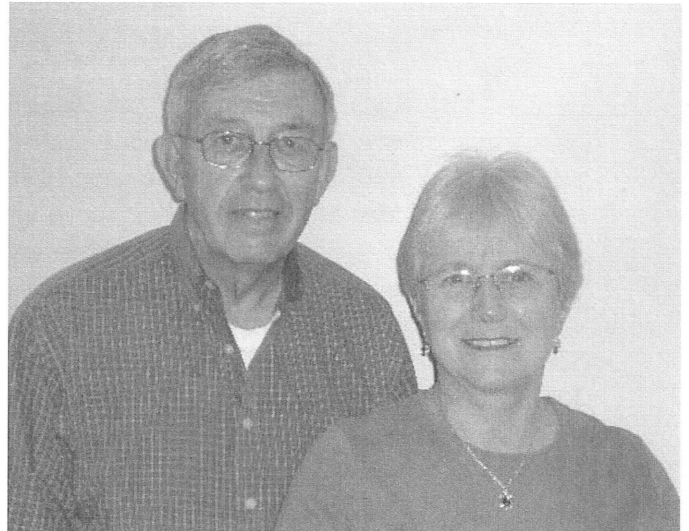
By Vicky Berol

Here Comes The Super Couple!

Rich Kennedy (#238) and Faye Kennedy (#406) adcaoffice@aol.com

The Kenedys: Rich and Faye, Faye and Rich. Whichever way you say it - they are ADCA's dynamic duo!

In the 1970's Rich began collecting Victorian door-knobs before there was an ADCA. He was always scouring flea markets, antique malls, garage sales and sometimes even doing dumpster diving, always looking for the perfect knob, continuing to add to his diverse collection. Until they heard about Maud Eastwood he and Faye feared that they were the only people in the world with such a strange fixation on hardware. However, in 1977, using a list of people who purchased Maud's first book, Rich and Faye wrote, typed, published and mailed a two page newsletter, hoping to connect collectors of doorknobs. And from this fledgling newsletter, "The Doorknob Collector" was born.



Since its inception, TDC has been under four editorships: Jim and Lee Kaiser, Ray and Loretta Nemec, Rich and Faye Kennedy and Allen Joslyn, ADCA Treasurer and the current editor. They continue to help in the production of the newsletter, formatting, getting it to the printer, stuffing and mailing the final product.

A member since 1983, Rich's first convention was in East Windsor, CT in 1990, and he has been involved ever since, bringing his unique talents and skills to the ADCA. On a regular basis, Rich contributes articles to the TDC that are a mix of humor and solutions (for a while, "Kennedy's Kommentare"). After conventions you may read articles emphasizing the fun we had and the knowledge we acquired. Whenever and wherever possible, and always for the benefit of promoting ADCA, he and Faye have displayed their collection at local libraries and museums and Rich has spoken before historical and other interested groups. They worked alongside Allen Joslyn and Win Applegate to bring the very successful 2001 convention to Bethlehem, PA.

And then there is Faye! She is the voice and front office of the ADCA, sending out new member packets, reconciling the membership roster and dues, maintaining the web site, including web listings for our busi-

ness members and - Oh! and so much more. Whatever is needed, or whoever calls upon her, Faye is there. At convention time, Faye works closely with the hosts in preparing for the convention, including putting together the convention packet, printing name tags for attendees and tables and membership numbers, and running the accounting for the all-important auction. While ably handling all these tasks, Faye still finds time to regularly write articles for the TDC.

Although Faye fully shared Rich's peculiar interest in doorknobs, she didn't formally join ADCA until years later, attending her first convention in 1994. Both Rich and Faye are members of the ADCA Board. Rich was invited to join the Board in 1993 and in 1997 he was elected Secretary, and continues to serve in that capacity. Faye joined the Board in 2010.

Deeply committed, Rich and Faye continue to give tirelessly to ADCA. My, but we are lucky!

WOODEN PRESSED KNOBS



An important article by Donald G. Tritt on, among others, wooden pressed knobs has been published in The Numismatist, February, 2012 entitled "An Introduction to Die-Pressed Wooden Exonomia" The latter term is defined as "numismatic items (such as tokens, medals, or scrip) other than coins and paper money", i.e. coin-like stuff other than legal tender. The same techniques used to produce wooden metals (for example, for the 1876 Centennial Exposition) were also used to produce doorknobs. (If the concept of "wooden metals" causes a headache, think of wooden nickels). Wood was either cross-cut or cut with the grain, treated and softened, and then subjected to high pressure with heat between metallic dies. Based upon impressive research, Tritt traces the production of such items from the 17th century Germany up through the 20th century. The arti-

cle also includes striking color illustrations. Copies of the magazine can be ordered from Cydney Jones at the American Numismatic Association, 1-800-514-2646, Ext. 110 for \$ 5.95, which includes shipping. Incidentally, Mr. Tritt is now working on a catalogue of pressed-wood exonomia and would welcome any examples, catalogues, etc. You can contact him at dtritt@roadrunner.com.

Additions to the Newsletter Archives

By Faye Kennedy

We have recently updated the newsletter archives. All newsletters through December 2009 are available for download. These documents are searchable when opened and I have made an attempt at an index, some titles and some as subjects, to help you find what you are looking for. Visit our website, Antique-Doorknobs.org.

The Doorknob Exchange

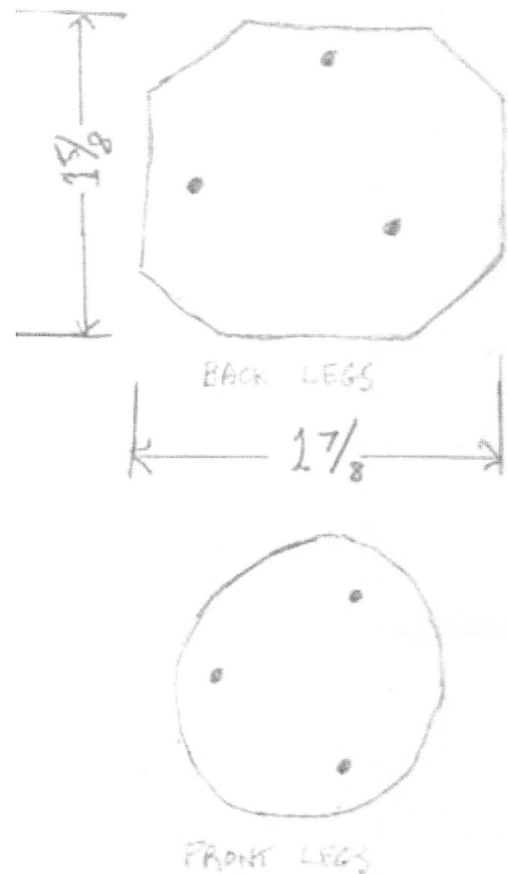
Members are reminded that your dues entitle you to advertise items for sale, trade, or wanted at no charge. ADCA is not responsible for any transaction or the condition of the items advertised.

Wanted: rollers for a Victorian chair, polished brass frame with wheels of wood, porcelain or brass. Wheels should be at least 1 inch, and preferably more, in diameter.

The plates (which attach the wheel mechanism to the legs) are pictured below with screw holes indicated. Top Piece, 3 screw holes, 7/8" to 1" apart.

Bottom piece, about 1 3/5" diameter, 3 screw holes about 7/8" to 1" apart.

Contact Vicky Berol (#450), (415) 771-9899, sfgofer@yahoo.com.



CONVENTION, CONVENTION!!

Get Out Your Calendar Now and Save the Date

The 2012 Convention will be held in Buffalo, New York, September 12-15. There will be two tour days, September 12-13, and members are free to do one day, two days or none. The Convention itself will be September 14 (buying, selling, trading) and September 15 (buying, etc., auction, banquet and membership meeting). We will stay at the same hotel as we did in 2006, the Holiday Inn Buffalo Amherst in Amherst, New York. Further details will follow.

This Year's Theme:

"Flora and Fauna" and "Lesser Known Hardware Companies"

Share Your Favorite Knob

By Faye Kennedy

Each of us has a favorite knob. Send pictures and stories to Faye Kennedy (see mailing address on page 8) or email adcaoffice@aol.com.

Ken Zion (#483) – Four Special Knobs.

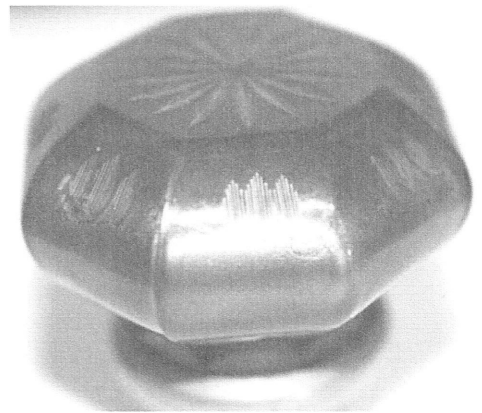
Ken Zion comes from Long Beach, California and shares his collection with us. Unfortunately it is difficult to show the beauty of the two glass knobs, as the black and white photos can't begin to show the color or clarity of the knobs, but we put the pictures here for you, so use your imagination.



I found this knob at a small antique store in Seaside, Oregon. Actually, there are two of them I bought as a pair. I found it listed in the reference book as N-130. When viewing up close, it almost looks like something from an Egyptian pyramid. The slightly flattened nose suggests it has been bounced into a adjacent wall on more than one occasion. Interesting knob.

the inside with some sort of gold paint. This is one of my favorite knobs. I have never seen another one like it.

I was wandering through an antique store in Newport, Oregon when I found this knob. At first, before I picked it up, I thought it was just another glass knob. Once I picked it up, I knew it was special. It is very light weight and coated on



I found this elks knob many years ago at an antique store in Bay City, Oregon. I almost overlooked it in the bottom of a box of mixed hardware. Although it is not rare, it remains one of my favorites.



Another one of my favorite knobs is a beautiful emerald green glass knob that I spotted it at Liz's Antique Hardware in Los Angeles. It complements my other knobs I own of black, brown, red, and blue colors. Very nice knob.



Our Business Members

These are paid advertisements. The ADCA assumes no responsibility. For further information about these businesses see the Resource section on our website: www.AntiqueDoorknobs.org.

<p>Materials Unlimited Owner: Reynold Lowe 2 W. Michigan Ave. Ypsalanti, MI 49197 Phone: 800-299-9462 Web Site: MaterialsUnlimited.com Email: Materials@MaterialsUnlimited.com</p>	<p>Antique Door Hardware Collector Owner: Tom Iannucci 16624 Frederick Rd. Mount Airy, MD 21771 Phone: 240-595-1115 Web Site: antiquedoorhardwarecollector.com Email: antiquehardware@verizon.net</p>	<p>Architectural Salvage, Inc. Owner: Elizabeth Werhane 5001 N. Colorado Blvd. Denver, CO 80216 Phone: (303) 321-0200 Web Site: savagelady.com/</p>
<p>Discovery Architectural Antiques Owner: Suzanne Kittel 409 St. Francis Gonzales, TX 78629 Phone: 830-672-2428 Fax: 830-672-3701 Web Site: Discoveryys.net Email: swk@discoveryys.net</p>	<p>The Brass Knob Owners: Donetta George 2311 18th St. N.W. Washington, DC Phone: 202-332-3370 Fax: 202-332-5594 Email: BK@theBrassKnob.com Web Site: theBrassKnob.com</p>	<p>Aurora Mills Architectural Salvage Owner: Mike Byrnes 14971 First St NE Aurora, OR 97002 Phone: 503-678-6083 Fax: 503-678-3299 Email: auroramills@centurytel.net Web Site: auroramills.com</p>
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<p>Albion Doors & Windows Owner: Larry Sawyer PO Box 220 Albion, CA 95410 Phone: 707-937-0078 Fax: (call first) 707-937-0078 Website: knobsession.com Email: bysawyer@mcn.org</p>	<p>House of Antique Hardware Owner: Roy Prange 3439 NE Sandy Blvd./PMB 106 Portland, OR 97214 Phone: 888-223-2545 Fax: 503-231-1312 Web Site: HouseofAntiqueHardware.com Email: Sales@HouseofAntiqueHardware.com</p>	

Antique Doorknob Collectors of America

The Doorknob Collector Editor: Allen Joslyn,
Phone (973) 783-9411
Email: ajoslyn@comcast.net

Web Site: AntiqueDoorknobs.org

Officers

President: Steve Rowe
Vice President: Rhett Butler
Secretary: Rich Kennedy
Treasurer: Allen Joslyn

Membership Office: Faye Kennedy

ADCA
PO Box 803
Hackettstown, NJ 07840
Email: adcaoffice@aol.com
Phone: 908-684-5253

General Questions
Antiquedoorknobs@comcast.net

Email Addresses:

4narowe@sbcglobal.net
butler-newyork@msn.com
ADCAoffice@aol.com
ajoslyn@comcast.net