

The

JANUARY 1984

Doorknob

NUMBER 9

Collector



"Lion"

Designer: Ludwig Kruezing

Patented June 7, 1870

Russell & Erwin Mfg. Co.

MAUDIE'S THANK YOU

I am prompted by events occurring during our last convention - events dealing with me, personally - to ask Lee and Jim to include a "Thank You" note in this issue.

In particular, these events were: the dedication of the convention booklet to me, and the honor of being elected a permanent member emeritus of our board of directors; conferred in that order.

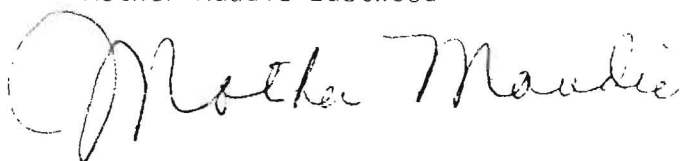
To those of you who are aware of my personal and business-experience background, these happenings give credence to the assumption: "It could only happen in the United States" (in reference to a particular good luck or success story). In some cases, undoubtedly the truth was stretched in order to make a "good" story. I assure you that my good-luck story is every bit the truth and that it is to the credit of my contacts and supporters that there is even a success story.

I find quite mind-boggling, the fact that I was the recipient of those, and other honors. Mind-boggling and thankful. And there have been many more, both before and after the formation of our club. One bears telling in this limited space, with a paragraph of its' own.

A club member--an important business man who is also a member of several boards of directors, active in civic affairs and with family responsibilities, took time out from his busy schedule to place a likeness of my face on a doorknob! He literally carved a very creditable facsimile by hand, having fashioned the wooden knob and then finishing after applying the metal shank. Greater honor, earned or un-earned - has no man received! (His wife stated that he had spent more time on my face than hers!)

My cup runneth over! Surely, the truth has not been stretched; my experiences with doorknob people could only happen in the United States. I love them all.

Mother Maudie Eastwood



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RESTORATION COLUMN

This column, suggested by President Len Blumin, is an outgrowth from ideas presented at the final meeting of our Sept. convention, in regard to the clubs' involvement in restoration projects.

It has been suggested the material be limited to airing the needs for certain pieces of builders' hardware to be used in specific projects, with club members, only, participating. Contacts should be on a one-to-one basis between collector and representatives of the project, which in some cases may be their own.

No pressure to be applied for membership participation in response to the ads in the column, for that would violate a tenet of the club: to collect and to preserve, in our individual ways, without constraint. Donations are not being solicited.

Most restoration projects have built-in hardware budgets. Should a collector wish to participate by providing an "extra" (trading would not be ruled out) from their stock, the business dealings (Correspondence, mailing and payment) may, by mutual agreement, be between provider and restoration official, or through the "contacting" collector--the party who sends in the original information of the need to the column, profit not to be the motive.

Also, considered for insertion in the column would be short articles oriented to the restoration theme. These articles may stem from personal experience or from first-hand knowledge of cases--factual accounts covering either public or private structures.

Maudie Eastwood has accepted the challenge of operating a "clearing-house" for inquiries and replies to the column until such a time as official action is taken. Mail to the following address:

The Antique Doorknob

MAUDIE EASTWOOD
3900 LATIMER RD. N.
TILLAMOOK, OREGON 97141
(503) 842-2244

RESTORATION NEEDS

(Substitutions acceptable as noted)

REFERENCE SOURCES with abbreviations:
Victorian Decorative Art(VDA), Len Blumin
Antique Builders' Hardware(ABH), M. Eastwood

PROJECT: Kamm House (1872), Portland, Ore.
(part 1882 Kanne House hardware.)

Restoration Architect: Wm. Hawkins III

Hardware:

Entry door--hexigon metal, 1 or 2 knobs, FIG. 1



FIG. 1

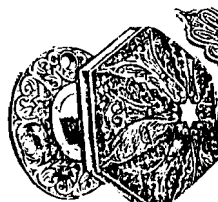


FIG. 2

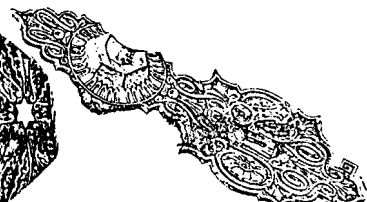


FIG. 3

(May substitute similar ones, pg. C-1, VDA--FIG. 2)
need 1 or 2 escutcheons, FIG. 3, or similar.

Second floor--4 to 8 knobs, No. D-111, pg. D-4

VDA. Same no. of plates--has knob design on end. Fig. 5, basket weave design.



FIG. 5

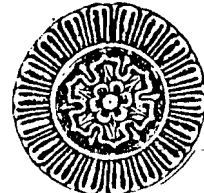


FIG. 6

(May substitute FIG. 6--No. L-111, pg. L-6, VDA
also shown pg. 55 in ABH, No. 7, with plate,
plate also comes with knob design on both ends)

Second floor, 4 or 5 knobs

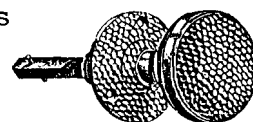
Hammered metal

No. 1105-H, pg.

65 in ABH

FIG. 7

Long plates preferred



No. 1105^H

FIG. 7

PROJECT: Bennet House (1899), The Dalles, Ore.

Restorationist: Don Williams, owner-resident

Hardware: 2nd floor

8 knobs and plates, "Clifton" design

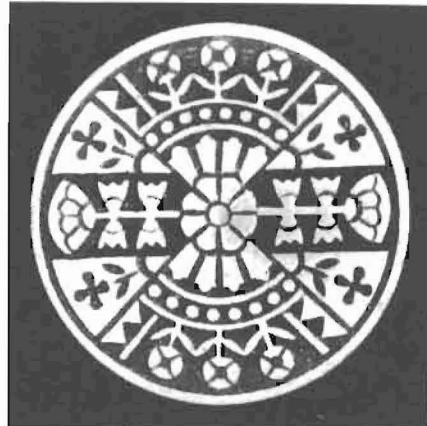
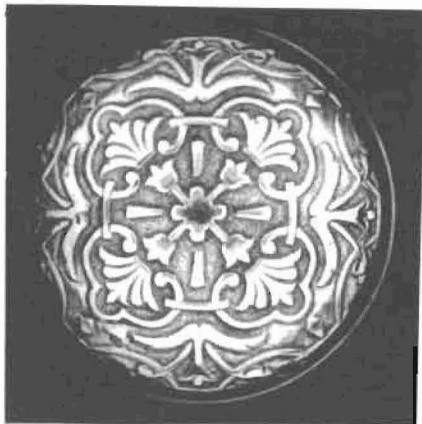
FIG. 8, VDA, pg. I-5, No. I-113. Inside
sets only (no cylinder lock plates). See
pg. 137, ABH for plate illustration.



FIG. 8

VARIATIONS

One of the joys of collecting is to find a variation of a knob that you have in your collection. Some changes in design are so subtle that it would be easy to overlook the variation unless you have the knobs side by side to compare. Below are a few examples.

[illegible]

Jerry Johnson, at 830 East Southport Rd.
Indianapolis, Ind. 46227 - is in need of
10 pairs of the knob shown below on the
left. He wants the rounded top version,
not the flat top as illustrated.

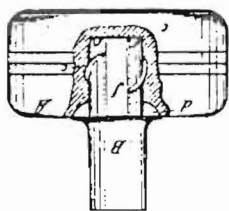
Jerry also needs 15 pair of the wooden knob shown below.

It is interesting to note that the "Lion" featured on the front page is listed in the 1875 Russell and Erwin catalog at \$8. per pair and the male and female profile knobs in Len's favorites went for \$6. per pair. That seems like a tremendous bargain today, but I'm sure in those days it seemed like a real extravagance.

We are a bit late in getting the newsletter out this time due to end of the year deadlines at work.

It is not very comforting, but after this last month, at least we know that Minnesota is not the only cold place in the country.

The Editors



FAVORITE KNOBS - LEN BLUMIN

In collecting knobs over the past 8 years we have chosen to concentrate in the area of ornate metal knobs. Among these, I much prefer the older designs (1870 - 1890), and with one exception my favorites are chosen from this group. Maybe someday I can get Patti to write about her choices.



"EAGLE" I literally gave away my heart (knob) to get this beauty. The construction of this fine cast bronze knob places its origin around 1875.

The way it is made, the perimeter design, and the knob it was found with, all suggest that Mallory Wheeler may have been the manufacturer. The U.S. seal motif makes it one of the earliest known "emblematics".

"LADY WITH BONNET" VDA: A-301 We found a pair at a flea market some years ago, and were fortunate to trade one of them to Charlie Wardell for her mate, A-302. They were both designed by Ludwig Kreuzinger for the Metallic Compression Casting Company, and were issued design patents on June 7, 1870.

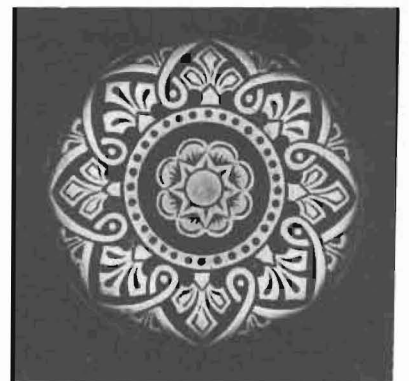
Kreuzinger also designed the famous "Doggie", A-101 and "Lion", A-102, making him my favorite doorknob artist.



"PLUMED HELMET" A-302 See above. When these knobs were produced by Russell and Erwin, having acquired MCCC around 1870, they were referred to in the 1875 catalog as "Medallion Pattern, Lady" and "Medallion Pattern, Knight".

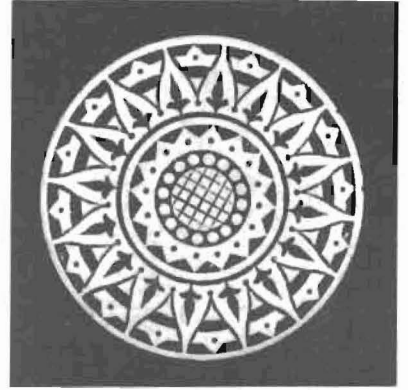
VDA: K-104 Some of my favorite knobs are common. This one, designed by William Gorman for Russell and Erwin and patented Jan. 6, 1874, remained popular for the next 30 years, and can be widely found today. We have selected this classic beauty for the restoration of our home.

(VDA: "Victorian Decorative Art" by Len Blumin)



FAVORITE KNOBS - LEN BLUMIN

VDA: L-107 It seems most of my favorite knobs turn out to be made by Russell and Erwin. This design was also fairly popular and is perhaps one of the finest sunburst patterns.



VDA: J-202 Sold by Trenton, but certainly with a Corbin influence. I have always felt this design combines the best features of what I have in my book referred to as the "classic" or "vernacular" styles. Produced in cast bronze and fine cast iron.

"PRIEST" VDA: A-205 Fascinating enigma in terms of design.

The following erudite analysis, by a drama professor from the University of Denver who wishes to remain modestly anonymous, is the most interesting speculation on design origin that we have seen so far. Perhaps it will inspire others to make a similar analysis on other interesting designs.



"The figure was so strong a reminder of other and similar figures I have seen, that I investigated for a possible coincidence. I first began by checking a book by Emile Gale, translated from the French, 'The Gothic Image'. I found things suggestive of A-205, but nothing like it. My wife suggested that the priestly figure reminded her of the Atlas supporting the remains of the stage in the Theatre of Dionysus in Athens. You will note that A-205 IS a priest, and he is leaning over his ambo (a large pulpit) and above him is what appears to be something like a large inverted metal disk...a kind of resonating device. But, also it makes the priest an Atlas figure, supporting something, a column, a capitol, or whatever. Also, the effect produced in compressing the priest is humorous, and produces the effect of gargoyles seen in medieval churches. An Atlas is the male counterpart of the caryatid, a female supporting figure - the most famous are seen supporting the Erechtheum on the Parthenon. You will get a decent enough effect of the crouching Atlas, or at least a bent one, by seeing the illustration that goes with 'Atlas' in Webster's International Dictionary. You can also see the crouching Atlas in the Theatre of Dionysus in any respectable encyclopedia. So, taken all in all, you can find a source for the doorknob. It's quite likely the knob was made for a monastery, church, or seminary, and it might even have been designed to show the over-burdened vicar of Christ, stooped with the weight of cares for his parishioners".

MY STORY
OR
HOW I STARTED COLLECTING
DOORKNOBS

In about 1940 I was visiting my brother-in-law, Sam Black, in the executive offices of the Stanley Works in New Britain, Conn., which at the time was an old frame house (circa 1900) and was to be replaced shortly with a modern executive office building for all officials of the company

Prior to that time, like most of us, I had never noticed how I opened any door, whether by pressing a thumb latch or turning a knob and never noticed what kind, ceramic, brass, iron, glass or wooden.

The doorknobs on all doors in this old house were of matched bronze design with large escutcheon plates to match.

I was so impressed by their beauty and design and after commenting on them, Sam told me that if possible he would try to get me a pair from one of the doors after the old house was torn down.

Incidentally, I was never able to get my knobs as all were taken to their museum to add to the history of the Stanley Works thru the years, although I feel certain that a few were lost or kept as mementoes.

En route home, the "collecting bug" bit me hard and I decided to attempt finding a source of old doorknobs similiar to those that I had just seen.

The very next week I visited a House and Building Wrecking Co. near my home in New Jersey and inquired of the yard manager what they had in the way of old doorknobs for sale and I received a very queer look along with his comment that they did have doorknobs but they were of course on doors and if I wished to purchase the doors that I could have the knobs.

I ended up that day buying four doors with attached knobs which were rather non-descript, leaving the doors and taking the knobs, and starting me on my newly acquired and unusual hobby.

My next step in my exciting quest was to find other sources such as old abandoned factories, houses, school houses that had been closed in my travels.

My job as sales manager of my firm was indirectly very helpful in my "search" as it entailed travelling from city to city and in this way made it a little easier to locate additional sources both by inquiry and observation.

Swapping or trading in addition to purchasing became another means of acquiring and 2 or 3 pairs of "run of the mill" doorknobs and a medium size screw driver became a part of my equipment carried in my car so that any exchange might be made on the spot, plus money in most instances.

Family and friends contributed greatly to my hobby and my daughter-in-law, Ann, presented me with quite a few additions to my collection from closed homes formerly occupied by the early lumber barons in Wisconsin and Michigan.

Also my son, Robert, while living in Detroit heard of a special ruby glass knob in an old glass shop in Montreal and he drove there and bought it along with three other matched sets that are on the doors of our home.

Continued

MY STORY (Continued)

Another specific instance of friends contributing to my collection is one when travelling, brought me a thin metal Chinese knob, purchased in an old antique shop, with the Lotus pattern around the edge and three Chinese characters on edge stating name of manufacturer and unheard of "guaranty" to perform properly, making this one of my unusual ones.

I sincerely believe that the hobby of doorknob collecting affords a combination of challenge, satisfaction and reward.

Speaking of the "reward" aspect, one instance personally was being invited to appear on "Whats my Line" and stumping the panel with my unusual hobby.

Another instance of "reward" through financial profit occurred when an item purchased in 1945 for 25¢ increased in actual value in 1983 500 times in value to \$125.00. - Believe it or not - it happened to me, and a very rare happening.

Fred L. Magnus

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FROM THE ARCHIVES

In the October issue of "The Doorknob Collector" our President, Len Blumin, announced both the new goal of establishing a permanent club archives and also my appointment as archivist.

I appreciate the confidence shown by honoring me with this appointment, and look forward with much enthusiasm to having a part in the development of this very important project.

Since the club is still new, probably all of you will agree that this is the proper time for our archives to be officially started, thus enabling us to have as complete historical records as possible. Some of our previous convention materials are already filed in their proper places in our history. Any items that you may have of historical significance are needed and will be most welcome.

In view of the many facets of interest involved in ADCA, our archives will need to contain a wide variety of information. This information will all be collected and maintained for the exclusive use of ADCA members.

One of the many important phases of our interests is research. We are already in the process of trying to assemble a library of old manufacturer's catalogs to enable all members to learn more about their knob treasures.

For instance, what about that knob you found in the bottom of a bucket of old knobs and plates in some antique shop? Who made it? When? What building did it grace? What is the name of the design? Who originally patented the design? Is the building still standing? Who was the architect? The knob can't tell you, even though it no doubt has quite a story behind it. As we progress with our archives, this interesting information will be available for you to pursue...Exciting thought, isn't it? No wonder I am so proud to be a part of this project.

Emil Miller

Doorknob collectors do come from a diverse vocational background. Following is a listing of present or former occupations of members and spouses who responded to our inquiry.

Accountant 2	Electrician 1	Pharmacist 1
Antique Dealer 9	Engineer 2	Physician 2
Assoc. Athletic Dir. 1	Farmer 1	Property Manager 1
Bakery Worker 1	Furniture Worker 1	Public Utilities 1
Beauty Shop Oper. 1	Homemaker 11	Railcar Inspector 1
Bookkeeper 1	Insurance Exec. 1	Real Estate Agent 1
Business Man 1	Lawyer 1	Registered Nurse 2
Carpenter 4	Library Aide 1	Retirement Home Dir. 1
Carpet Cleaning 1	Locksmith 1	Sales 2
Casework Supervisor 1	Manufacturers Rep. 2	Savings & Loan Exec. 1
Cemetery Manager 1	Mayor 1	Secretary 5
Chemist 2	Music Teacher 1	School Principal 1
City Treasurer 1	Nursing Home Admin. 1	School Teacher 5
College Administrator 1	Nursing Home Act. Dir. 1	Stripper (furniture)
Contractor 3	Open Heart Surgery Tech. 1	Translator 1

[illegible]

If there is an X in the circle, this is the last issue of the DC you will receive until your dues are paid.