

The Doorknob Collector



Number 182

November-December 2013

A Publication of The Antique Doorknob Collectors of America

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

A Bison by Any Other Name

BY PAUL WOODFIN

There are three known doorknobs which depict the buffalo, one of which is known to be from the Irma Hotel in Cody, Wyoming (TDC # 19 and TDC # 128), one of which is from the Department of the Interior building in Washington and recently captured (TDC #179), and now the third one is in captivity – a buffalo/bison from the Law Courts Building in Winnipeg, Manitoba. The bison is the provincial animal of Manitoba, symbolizing government programs and organizations¹, which is fitting for the provincial courthouse located across



the street from Manitoba's Legislative Building.



Law Courts Building (photo courtesy of Seth Gaines)

www.flickr.com/photos/sethgaines/6121543003/

The Law Courts Building was designed in 1912 by Winnipeg architect Victor Horwood, completing plans started while serving as assistant Provincial Architect under Samuel Hooper. The building was opened for legal business in 1916, after a significant scandal concerning the Manitoba Legislative Building construction delayed the construction of this building and led to the downfall of the provincial premier and his government, (Continued on . Pg. 3)

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Donation of a Collection

By Faye Kennedy

Bill Varitz (#57) has donated his entire collection to the Bosco Milligan Museum in Portland, Oregon. Bill hails from West Linn, Oregon and has been a long time member. The Antique Doorknob Collectors of America is devoted to the study and preservation of antique hardware. We thank Bill for his thoughtfulness in making his collection available to a greater audience.

For many members who have extensive collections there is the question of where the collection should go eventually. It is worth thinking about. A large part of Bob Rodder's collection was sold at our annual auction so that members were able to add to their collections and it also benefited the club who received a portion of the sales. We all like our hardware to be in the hands of those who really appreciate the workmanship and history attached to the hardware. Our families want us to think about this ahead of time.

Opps, Where is My Address?

By Faye Kennedy

It seems that when I did the last roster, I did not allow enough space for complete addresses for some of our members. Therefore, I have made the corrections on the enclosed roster which should take precedence over the last issue. Please let me know if your information is not correct or complete. Contact me at adcaoffice@aol.com.

ADCA Convention 2014 Austin, Texas

It's never too early to be thinking about the convention next year. Many have to put in for vacations at the beginning of the calendar year so we are giving you plenty of warning. Plan to come and enjoy the fellowship.



July 23—26

Hosted by Susan Kittel
and Margaret Mills

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Published six times a year by
**Antique Doorknob Collectors of America,
Inc**

P.O. Box 803,
Hackettstown, NJ
07840

Annual Membership in US \$25.00
age 18 or younger US\$10.00
Foreign rates on request.

Founded Sept 1981, the **Antique Doorknob Collectors of America** is a non-profit 501 (c)(3) organization devoted to the study and preservation of ornamental hardware.

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the removal of the provincial architect Horwood, and the conviction of the contractor for fraud.² The Law Courts Building remains in use today as the local provincial courthouse with cases heard on a daily basis in its courtrooms, which speaks volumes for the quality of the design of this building more than a century ago.

The Law Courts Building is listed as a National Historic Site of Canada. The beaux arts-style limestone building is ornate and elaborate throughout, with marble walls and floors, oak paneled courtrooms, and a copper clad dome. Of particular interest, the Historic Site listing notes “its quality of materials, maintained to the same high standard throughout the building, including original hardware such as brass door knobs and backplates carved with buffalo, the symbol of Manitoba, the scales of justice on each interior door, and decorative bronze grills screening mechanical systems.”³

Sargent and Company of New Haven, CT manufactured the doorknobs and plates for this building, as Sargent is imprinted on the back of the backplate. Schlage was responsible for recasting missing hardware elements including doorknobs and backplates as part of a restoration of the Law Courts Building. The Schlage of Canada website speaks about their reproduction of the original Sargent hardware in 1980.⁴

Many thanks to Patty Ramey for discovering the identity of this hardware, and to Win Applegate, who wrote an excellent article in TDC #132 describing this doorknob and backplate, but was unable to identify from what building this hardware set came. Eight years later the Law Courts Building in Winnipeg has been definitively identified as the origin of these doorknobs and backplates, and to turn Win’s phrase, that is Gospel and not a Best Guess.

Wikipedia, *Symbols of Manitoba*. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Symbols_of_Manitoba

Winnipeg Realtors, *Manitoba Legislative Building scandal*. <http://www.winnipegrealestatenews.com/Resources/Article/?sysid=805>

Canada’s Historic Places, *Winnipeg Law Courts National Historic Site of Canada*. <http://www.historicplaces.ca/en/rep-reg/place-lieu.aspx?id=12789>

Schlage of Canada website. http://www.doorsecurity.ca/content/handcrafted_design



Courts doorknob and backplate, in situ (photo courtesy of Nils Vik)



Doorknob and Backplate Photo by Paul Woodfin

WHY I COLLECT DOORKNOBS

By Nancy Hocker

The door knobs that started my collecting came from an 1880's Victorian house in Mansfield, Ohio. In 1976 the ad agency that was in that house was remodeling and going to store a door in the attic. My husband Mike, who worked there, brought home the ornate knobs, escutcheons, and lock set. I could not manage to put the plates or lock on our bedroom door, but the humming bird knobs were put into use. As I admired them I began to realize that these were not the only ornate knobs in existence and over the years started looking at other knobs when we toured historic homes or visited friends who owned older homes. When we moved from Mansfield to Galion the knobs came with us. A few years later a friend gave me another ornate knob off a door they were replacing. I was hooked; but this was before E-Bay, so finding knobs was only occasional at garage sales and flea markets.

Then my husband came home with a magazine article about door knobs. It ended with a web site for ADCA. A few weeks later my husband, not me, input my information to join. It's been a great learning experience with the newsletters and even better now

that we've had the opportunity to attend two conventions and meet many of the other members.

The sad ending to this story is that in June 2013 my husband was talking to a minister in the church across the street from the Victorian house and when he turned around to point out where his office had been in the house, he saw a newly bulldozed vacant lot! The minister advised him the house came down the day before and nothing in it was saved. It was demolished and hauled away to make room for a discount store. Mike is now so glad he salvaged those knobs and hardware! There were at least two dozen other doors in that house that had ornate hardware that are now in a landfill! The bird knobs are still on our bedroom door.



BE CAREFUL, THAT DOORKNOB MAY BITE!

The latest entry in the category of strange critters is shown here. It appears to be either a dragon or an especially vicious insect. The construction suggests the late 19th century. Needless to say, any information would be gratefully received.



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: Trying to find a finale for a 6" X 6" Geisha top hinge, would like a finale with pin attached but could make a bottom finale work without the pin in a pinch. Finale unscrews from pin. Only really need the finale.

The height of the actual finale needed is :1-3/4"
Would buy either a single hinge to obtain, or only the top finale. Would trade for something exceptional or buy, either way..



Tom Iannucci (#638) antiquehardware@verizon.net or call 240-595-1115

Wanted: Need a bail handle 2 1/4 inches wide by 1 inch deep. I do not need the back plate, just the hanging handle. It is a single piece with the thin rod across the top of the handle connected to the drawer by cotter pins. Cotter pins are 2

inches apart. Faye Kennedy (#406) adcaoffice@aol.com or 908-684-5253

Wanted: I'm hoping to add the four pictured doorknobs to my collection. Please contact Paul Woodfin (#829) at paul.woodfin@sbcglobal.net or (254) 722-7353 if you have any available for sale, or if you know of someone who might.

Wanted: Desperately seeking 3 of the four inch original R&E bronze/brass Stork hinges to complete my house. Will buy one or a group. Willing to pay above market price as I need these as soon as possible. Also looking for Nashua store door pulls with the Owl pictured in the design. Please contact: Russell Barnes (#288),

512-799-6076, tallcase@flash.net, P.O. Box 4695, Lago Vista, TX 78645



Wanted: A pair of Odd Fellow (O-207) emblematic door knobs and plates for the interior restoration of the Victoria, B.C. Odd Fellows Hall. Mark Aitken (#442) mark.aitken@telus.net

GREAT BUILDINGS AND THEIR HARDWARE: THE MINNEAPOLIS CITY HALL AND THE HENNEPIN COUNTY COURTHOUSE

By Allen S. Joslyn and Bradley Widseth

In the later part of the 1890s, the Governmental buildings were bursting at their seams as Minneapolis grew. That meant that both the Minneapolis City Hall and the Hennepin County Courthouse badly needed space. The solution? A building which was divided in half and housed both of them. And it had to be a beautiful building of which people could be proud.

The combined building was constructed between 1899 and 1905. It was designed by the Minneapolis architectural firm of Long and Keys following a vigorous competition, and adopted a “westernized” interpretation of the Richardsonian style of Allegheny Courthouse and Prison in Pittsburgh – rough exterior and massive stone, arches more than one story high, steep roofs. The interior is fitted with quarter-sawn oak in the offices and former courtrooms, marble wainscoting in the halls and tiled and mosaic floors. The interior features a five-story high light court, in the middle of which is a famous statue of “Mississippi, Father of the Waters” by Larkin G. Mead, [see photo, pg 7] which was presented to the City in 1904.

So here the detective story starts. Examples of the City Hall knob (marked with “MCH” and manufactured by Yale & Towne) were known, but what did the escutcheons and related hardware look like? And that is only one half of the building – what about the other half, the one housing the Hennepin County Courthouse?

Inquiries were made to the Municipal Preservation Office for Minneapolis, but it reported that it was busy – “busy, young man, busy, I said” – and suggested a new inquiry could be made in six months.

Time to dispatch an undercover operative with a camera. (For reasons of National Security, his identity will not be disclosed).

It turns out that all the knobs have been replaced with



handicapped-friendly levers. Our operative was concerned that the police and other security forces would perceive a security threat from this guy taking pictures outside the Mayor's office, but he persisted, gathering many fine photographs. But still no Hennepin County Courthouse knobs.

Our operative proceeded according to plan, contacting (very discretely, of course) the property office, which escorted him to various rooms, but all knobs had been replaced. As a last resort, they approached a maintenance man who was working nearby. He had samples of both knobs in his cart, and the operative took them to a window ledge and photographed them. Success!



Escutcheon Plate with new style latch.



“Mississippi, Father of the Waters”
by Larkin G. Mead



The knobs for the two sides of the building

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: savgelady.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: Discoverys.net Email: swk@discoverys.net</p>	<p>The Brass Knob Owners: Donetta George 2311 18th St. N.W. Washington, DC Phone: 202-332-3370 Fax: 202-332-5594 Web Site: theBrassKnob.com Email: BK@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 Web Site: auroramills.com Email: auroramills@centurytel.net</p>
<p>American Antique Hardware Owner Keith and Sarah Chilcote Phone: 503-399-8009 Web Site: americanantiquehardware.com Email: contact@americanantiquehardware.com</p>		<p>Liz's Antique Hardware Owner: Liz Gordon 453 South La Brea Los Angeles, CA 90036 Phone: 323-939-4403 Fax: 323-939-4387 Web Site: lahardware.com/ Email: Shop@LAHardware.com</p>
<p>Albion Doors & Windows Owner: Larry Sawyer PO Box 220 Albion, CA 95410 Phone: 707-937-0078 Fax: (call first) 707-937-0078 Web Site: 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>	<p>Bill's Key & Lock Shop Owner: Andy Streenz 127 E. Beaufort St. Normal, IL 61761or 401 N. Main St. Bloomington, IL 61701 Phone: 309-827-5522 Web Site: billskeyandlockshop.com Email: locksmith@billskeyandlockshop.com</p>

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