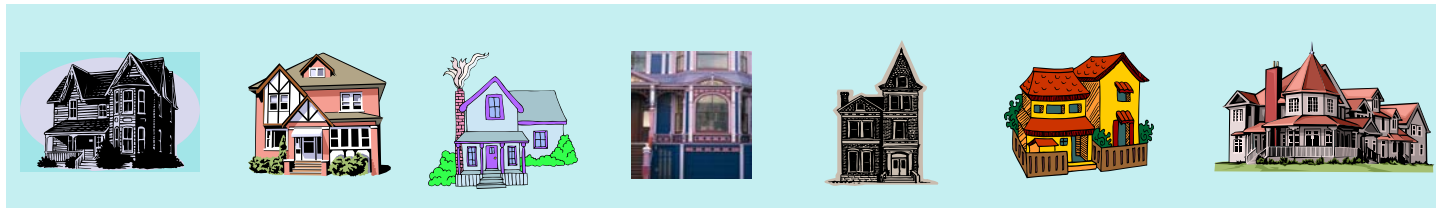


# Vintage Home renovation tips column *by Marjorie Lewis*



Volume 10 September 2009

## Win a prize! Details on back

### Brief History of Antique Doorknobs and Door Hardware

Are you a **Knobber?** (Someone who study's and collects antique doorknobs). If not, perhaps this article will pique your interest in learning more about how the basic doorknob was turned into an artful form that became available to most households beginning around the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century. Prior to the second industrial revolution, which began around 1860, door hardware was handmade. Many households used pottery, glass or porcelain knobs. It is important to note that **prior to 1860, the emphasis was on function over style.**

### Eastlake Style Hardware: 1865-1890

Then during the Victorian era, the **emphasis geared toward decorative style.** The primary design influences were imported from England when an Englishman, Charles Eastlake, published a book in 1868 called "*Hints on Household Taste In Furniture, Upholstery and other Details,*" which was very influential in Britain and later in the United States where the book was published in 1872. The first mass produced style of decorative hardware was named after Charles Eastlake, which was ironic, since he detested mass production. The decorative hardware was fashioned after the Eastlake style furniture which was known for it's elaborate, **stylized geometric forms** pictured above.



### Victorian Style Hardware 1865-1915

In 1869, design patents for escutcheons, hinges and decorated knobs were made. Furthermore, a new casting technique which removed the obstacles that kept artists and designers from mass producing their work was created and patented in 1870 during the Victorian Era. Hence consumerism of these products exploded. The major companies – all based in Connecticut – that were responsible for this era of decorative hardware: were: Russell & Erwin (R & E), P.F. Corbin, Sargent and Yale & Towne, plus about 6 other smaller companies in the field. The Victorian style was different from Eastlake in that the designs were of swirling, lavish patterns with floral backgrounds and also whimsical creations, such as the most famous door knob in history called the **"doggie" knob**, designed by Ludwig Kreuzinger in 1870 and manufactured by R & E. A rare version of the "doggie knob" sold for \$8,000 at auction. You can buy a reproduction today for approximately \$200.00.



### Birds in Door Hardware

When Americans saw the beautiful Japanese displays at the 1876 Centennial in Philadelphia, they fell in love with their illustrations of exotic birds. So, in 1879 Russell & Erwin introduced into their decorative hardware motifs of geishas, cranes, bluebirds & hummingbirds.

**R & E hummingbird, Circa 1880**



Since the wealthy and middle class of the 1880's embraced opulence, and were excited by Oriental and Japanese influence, other companies followed suit and soon objects were being added to the Victorian-busy designs. This was also ironic as it was the opposite of the Japanese concept of art. One famous design by Phoenix Lock works, 1894, was an escutcheon (door plate) that illustrated an owl, crane, sparrow, butterfly, shooting star, plants and star & crescent.



### Aesthetic Movement 1850-1900



The influence of elegant Oriental imports, the ideas discussed by the "Intelligentsia" of the times and a revulsion towards high Victorian style caused the reaction that resulted in the Aesthetic Movement which began around mid 1800's and ended in the 1880's. Naturalistic, Asian, Middle Eastern and Gothic themes were applied to decorative hardware as illustrated above on the door set by Corbin. The word "Aesthetic" means "purely beautiful" and was a precursor to the Arts and Crafts movement and Art Nouveau.

### Arts & Crafts Style Hardware 1895-1920



Hammered egg shaped knob

This style featured **function over form** and first began as a philosophy protesting the excesses of the industrial revolution and prefers to look to the past with a simple, stylized handmade appearance. devoted to producing handmade, artistic handicraft. By the **1920s**, machine-age modernity and the weakening of interest in individual designs had increased and thus brought to an end the handcrafted nature of the Arts and Crafts movement in America.

### Revival Style 1895-1945

Manufacturers mass produced simple, handmade, historical iron and brass pieces by the millions. "Hardware for the Revival styles was rustic, quaint, old world and romantic" and themes were borrowed from the past.



### Art Deco 1925-1940

"This was the first style that originated in France, not in Britain, and the first time a style looked to the future—not the past. It used geometric motifs and was usually chrome plated or steel.



Phone: 909-844-0348

Website: [www.RedlandsVintageHomes.com](http://www.RedlandsVintageHomes.com)

Email: [Marjorie@RedlandsRealEstate.biz](mailto:Marjorie@RedlandsRealEstate.biz)



## Old house repair tip newsletter

Newsletter for vintage homeowners

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### Marjorie Lewis

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### \*Win a Prize!

**New Rules for more winners!** Call in with the **correct address** of the Redlands home featured below by October 15, 2009 to be entered into a drawing. There will be two prizes awarded, **1st place is a \$25 gift card** and **2nd place is a \$15 gift card**. Drawing will take place on October 16, 2009. The gift card will be for a local merchant of the winner's choice.



**Good Luck!**

### Last Month's Winner-

**Congratulations** to Vicky Williams. She is the winner of the last contest. The correct address was 806 Cajon St. She chose a \$25.00 gift certificate to **Gerrard's Market** to purchase Celebrate Redlands items as her prize. The second place winner was **Christina Washburn**. Be sure to call in with the address of the property to the left to be entered into the drawing for the next contest!

### I Just Sold this home in your Neighborhood

119 S. Buena Vista

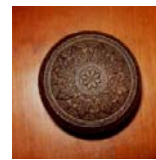


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### Antique Hemacite Doorknob

One type of doorknob from the 1870's **was made from an unusual material from sawdust and the blood of slaughtered cattle and pigs**, combined with chemical compounds, under hydraulic pressure of forty thousand lbs to the sq. inch. A Dr. W. H. Dibble, patented the process in 1877 and called it "**Hemacite**" (refers to blood and minerals). The Hemacite Manufacturing Co. turned Hemacite into everything from doorknobs to roller skate wheels, and cash register buttons. There was even extensive use in Victorian Jewelry.



References: Door knob Collectors of America.; 2003 Cabinet magazine; OHJ; LA Hardware

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