

the **thimble** society

Volume 10, Issue 6

Winter 2009





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FINAL ISSUE

PLEASE DO NOT SEND NEXT YEAR'S SUBSCRIPTIONS

Front cover

Gold thimble in a shagreen case. Two coloured gold thimble with tiny French mk for 18ct gold. Made circa 1830, in excellent crisp condition. The green shagreen [shark skin or fish skin] case c.1830, also in excellent condition. The two can be sold separately although the gold thimble fits the case perfectly.

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|-------------------------------------|------|
| 1. Price of the gold thimble alone. | £220 |
| 2. Shagreen case alone. | £220 |
| 3. Price together. | £420 |

'The Monkey and Magic Lantern Show' a rare and famous silver, French Fable thimble.

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| 4. On the front, a monkey and lantern, on the reverse, the three animals watching the show, a turkey, a dog and a cat. Very good condition. The top has been relined inside. | £280 |
|--|------|

Inside front cover. Antique sewing tools.

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|---|------|
| 5. Red leather case 7cms/3ins long. Containing silver waxer, emery and thimble. English c.1840. | £240 |
| 6. Paper covered card box 6cms, containing small M.O.P shuttle. Good condition. | £55 |
| 7. 'Ladies Companion' gilt letters on leather. 4cms thimble case with brass thimble. | £45 |
| 8. Gabler 'eight petal top' silver thimble, elegant cable style border, leather box. | £60 |
| 9. Glass lid, on decorative brass base, four ball feet. Plain silver thimble. 4cms. | £45 |
| 10. Yellow and blue plush 'trunk' thimble case. | £35 |
| 11. Decorative brass thimble 'purse' shaped lining [prob re-lined] | £45 |
| 12. Bog Oak thimble case, [brass thimble.] Irish, c.1900. | £45 |
| 13. Bone thimble holder, egg shaped, holding Bakelite thimble. | £45 |
| 14. Mother-of-Pearl thimble purse, 'Dieppe' engraved on front. 4cms. | £45 |

All items in this issue are from private collections. In some cases the thimbles contained in the cases are not the items of value.

Posting: UK: We recommend 'Special Delivery' for goods valued at over £50. Rates for UK 'Special Delivery' items are £3.85 plus £2 for p&p, in total £5.85. This rate insures goods valued up to £500. Europe and Rest of the World: We recommend 'International signed for' and insurance for goods valued over £50. We cannot be held responsible for loss of goods which are uninsured. All items in the magazine are described in good faith and we cannot be held responsible for errors. Minimum order £12.

We would be grateful if members paying in euros would calculate at the current rate when actually paying and also add the equivalent of £3 to cover bank charges. Credit cards are easier. Please do not pay in Sterling on a USA Dollar bank account as we pay double charges.

We cannot reply to our members in the UK wanting advice etc., unless a stamped addressed envelope is included as our postage costs are getting so high. It also saves so much time. We cannot hold a thimble or post one off unless the full price is paid within one week. If members wish to return a thimble, please do so within two weeks, money refunded if thimble not satisfactory.

TELEPHONE ORDERS AND POSTAL MAILING ADDRESS ▼

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Open Fridays
10-1pm
by
appointment
Saturdays
7am
to 3pm



www.thimblesociety.com
info@thimblesociety.com

Dear Members,

All good things must come to an end, and so it is with the Thimble Society in its present form. This will be the last Thimble Society printed magazine, although the shop and the web site will still be functioning. So instead of reminding you to send in your subscriptions, please don't send us any money for next year. For the few of you who have pre-paid, we will send a refund. Thimbles and items of sewing interest will now be shown on the website but for those of you who don't have access to a computer and who have been regular customers please let me know by letter that you would like a leaflet/list sent to you showing you any new items when they come in. Please keep in touch by phone, letter, email or Skype, for advice, information or just a chat. Annie and I will still be behind the counter every Saturday in the Portobello Rd shop to welcome you in person. I shall miss editing the magazine complete with your letters and articles, it has been a rich source of pleasure and education. A big thank you must be given to all members who have travelled the road with us to put sewing tools on the map internationally. Thanks for your wonderful letters, advice, information and involvement in our 28 years of thimbling. Can you believe it has been that long!

The main reason we are closing is a lack of good thimbles to present to you. There are so few about. All the high quality items have found comfortable homes and are being handed down in the family. They are not venturing into the cold world of commerce. Most of you have got all the current thimbles and are just looking for 'specials' which we all want and can't find. Auction houses have closed their specialized 'Vertu' and 'Sewing' sales for the same reason. Our thimbles and sewing tools have become rare articles. Small collectables don't take up much room, are personal, and less subject to the vagaries of fashion, so people hang on to them.

If and when any member wants to sell their collections, you can get in touch with me for advice and use our website [for a commission of 25%.] Otherwise you can ask your local auction room, or try Ebay. Antique items always sell, the modern varieties of thimbles are harder to place. Those are best advertised in your local paper. Thimble Society members can also buy and sell at the forthcoming sewing tools sale run by Robert Bleasdale, see page 9 for details. Robert is hoping to replace the cancelled dedicated sale offered annually by Bonhams of Knowle.

If you would like your order cards returned to you, please send a stamped addressed envelope. If we may, we will keep the cards of members who have been ordering over the years, then we can let you know if we get anything special that you might like. I shall still be buying good thimbles and sewing tools when I find them. They are my first love, even if I have to diversify now. But it's not easy to hunt the thimble as many of you have found. We wish you every good wish, and many enjoyable years sharing your passion of thimbles and sewing tools with friends, including us.

Bridget



Bridget and Annie

BINDERS

WE WILL BE SELLING OFF OUR BINDERS FOR £7 EACH [PLUS £3 P&P]

V.G. Cond = Very Good Condition

Hll. mkd. = Hall Mark

B'ham = Birmingham

Slight A.F. = Slightly Imperfect

T.M. = Trade Mark

Ches = Chester

Mint = no wear

Ct = Carat

Cont. = Continental

Circa (c.) = around

Kt = Carat

Lon = London

EQUITY SHOES

When, as a long time wearer of Equity shoes, I saw the photo of the Equity thimble and Bridget's request for information, I thought I would write a piece of all I know about them. I have to say that they are shoes for the more mature lady who wants comfort and a good looking shoe – no vertiginous heels here! The heel heights are high enough to look smart in a 'court' shoe but not too high for comfort and balance. They are priced in the higher end of the shoe market but I can testify to their long lasting qualities.

Equity Shoes was a Leicester company, with a factory in Western Road, which began in 1886 and lasted for 123 years. At some time in its history the Company became a Co-operative, owned by its workers. The Company advertised the shoes as being for 'Ease, Elegance, Endurance' and for those to whom quality appeals being the perfectly balanced shoe. In its lifetime it must have shod thousands of women.

However, about 3 years ago the Company bought Elmdale Shoes and this appeared to have been their downfall, as it is thought that they may have overstretched themselves – they went into liquidation in January 2009.

Mention must be made of the shoe box the shoes were sold in. It is a little work of art. The box is covered in cream paper and on three sides it has little sketches in black ink of various shoe styles with their dates, elegant ladies of the 1920s and 1930s posing in their shoes. The lid of the box has the name and start date of the company and in fainter grey colour their logo of two overflowing cornucopias of a sunburst – the address is around this in a circle.

I mourn the passing of Equity shoes. I still have several pairs in my cupboard and my winter pair will come out for its sixth season when the weather turns cold and wet and the well worn sandals may come out yet again next 'summer'.

The brass thimble probably came out in the early 1920s, to be given to the purchase of a pair of shoes. The shop where I buy my shoes did not know about this custom, but have a small metal dish which was given to them on the 100th anniversary of the company in 1986.

I don't have the thimble, unfortunately for me, it had been sold by the time I phoned Bridget so if anyone has one they would like to part with, please get in touch with me (01933 359618).

Norma Spicer

**Nearly all the thimbles in this magazine are from private collections.
We will sell members thimbles at a price agreed between both parties.**

Don't forget you can log onto our website at www.thimblesociety.com



American silver, cir 1900/1930.

- | | |
|---|-----|
| 15. Charming engraved border, small maiden's size. | £25 |
| 16. Delightful engraved leaf border. Maiden size. | £25 |
| 17. Pretty lotus shaped flower border. Prob. By Stern Bros. | £25 |
| 18. Engraved 'Rosa' one side and HP on the other. | £25 |

Four delightful examples of turn of the 19th century American silver thimbles. USA silver is sterling quality, the same as ours. Most of these thimbles come from one of our American members, also one of the original TCI members as well.



American silver continued.

- | | |
|--|-----|
| 19. Nicely engraved with grapes and foliage. 'Tice' engraved in tiny letters. | £30 |
| 20. Decorative engraved border, clear leaves and berries. | £35 |
| 21. Interesting scenic view of house by a river with a sailing boat. Prob Stern. | £40 |
| 22. A bigger version of the same, with sailing boat. | £42 |

The scenic thimbles are particular to America. They are so well executed, clear and detailed. These have nearly disappeared on the open market. It is probably your last chance to find one.



Antique brass and plated brass, turn of the 19th century.

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|---|-----|
| 23. Brass, engraved 'Her Majesty's thimble England'. | £30 |
| 24. Plate 'Domestic sewing mach' England. Small hole in the top. | £12 |
| 25. Brass 'Colonial Quality Samstag's New York' Made in England.' | £20 |
| 26. Plate. Isles and Gomme trade mark, scroll work. | £15 |

The 'Samstag's thimble is interesting because it was advertising an American product, but was made in England. When thimbles are described as 'plate' it means a coat of silver has been applied to a base metal, often brass or copper.



Antique brass continued.

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|---|-----|
| 27. 'Cable Louis d'Or' Brass French advertising. | £25 |
| 28. 'Lessive Phenix' french. Brass, blue enamel worn. | £20 |
| 29. Pretty grapes and leaves all around. English brass. | £12 |
| 30. 'The Prudential Life Insurance' plate on brass. | £12 |

These brass advertising are good fun to collect because you can research the products online. If your thimble has a local business on it, the research will tell you a lot about the history of your area.

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Antique sewing tools. (page 8)

31. Fine carved ivory, standing thimble holder. 21/2ins-5cms high.	£95
32. Carved corozo/vegetable ivory egg in ebony egg cup. Unscrews to reveal thimble.	£95
33. Tunbridge stick ware waxer and pin cushion. 3cms.	£75
34. French, silver [tiny mk] standing Lady needle case, opens at waist. 3ins/5cms.	£180
35. Carved shamrock covered bog oak pin holder.	£55
36. Shagreen 18 th century thimble case. See front cover.	
37. Ivory thimble [inside] and needle holder, c.1830. gilt mounts. Chinese scene.	£220
38. 'Tailors Persian thread,' original paper label on ivory and wood reel.	£30
39. 'Globe' metal paper covered little sewing set, all reels complete. Approx 2ins.	£78
40. Bakelite pig tape set with paste stones. C.1920s. tape working.	£100
41. Bakelite flower tape, c.1920s. tape working.	£80
42. 'The Berry' green pins.	£25
43. Fern ware bottle, thimble, needles and thread holder. Ex cond.	£75
44. 'A Casartelli' little wax apple in box	£35

All sewing tools from a private British collection.

Auction of Antique Sewing Tools, Boxes and related items.

To be held on December 2nd 2009, the venue will be the Lord Leycester Hospital in Warwick. The web site www.sewingsales.co.uk or www.bleasdalesltd.co.uk goes live on October 1st and will feature a number of items in the sale and further details. A brochure will be going out shortly to all those who have registered an interest in the sale. The sale closes for entries on November 7th.

A special deal for Thimble Society members. Free postage (worldwide) for the Sewing Sale catalogue so £10 not £12. Please quote membership name on catalogue request when ordering.

Also a free tea or coffee, at the viewing or on auction day on production of current Thimble Society magazine or T.S. card with your name. Bridget McConnel will check the names.

Antique thimble cases, some with thimbles. (Page 10)

45. Silver thimble mkd HG&S B'ham 1923. Card box printed 'Solid Silver thimble hall marked silver. Made in England.'	£38
46. Silver thimble 'Made in England' in leather egg shaped box, lettering inside Vickeray Regent St.W.	£35
47. Leather case 'Botley & Lewis. Jewellers & watchmakers. Reading.' Silver thimble with large letters 'Reading' hll mkd HG&SB'ham 1929. (reverse shown)	£85
48. Card box, picture of mountain chalet. Printed inside 'h. Tappe. Goldschmied. Burgdorf I.H.' silver Gabler thimble, pretty engraved flower border.	£45
49. Cream bakelight case. Printed on top 'A Present from the Crystal Palace.' Inside a silver thimble, probably not the original. By JS B'ham 1942.	£45
50. Plain silver thimble in red leather case.	£40
51. Silver Gabler well decorated rim of flowers. Cream Bakelite case.	£50
52. Cable silver, probably French, in brown plush box.	£40
53. Lighter brown plush box, USA silver thimble with gilded border.	£35
54. Round orange plush case with lovely silver thimble. English, sparkly detailed engraving of feathery foliage and berries. Central blank cartouche.	£65
55. Green Bakelite hussif, with unusual fish and sea weed decoration.	£35
56. Silver USA hem measure circa 1910 engraved Chicago	£48

The Wedgwood Museum Stoke- on-Trent

The above is a new excellent museum members might like to visit. There was a write-up about it in The Times by David Putman, chairman of the judges of The Art Fund Prize for museums and galleries 2009. The Wedgwood museum won the prize, it houses the extraordinary archive of Josiah Wedgwood and charts the history of the brand. It is written up as the most exciting display of pots and history the judges had seen, demonstrating what the firm has meant to the people of Stoke-on-Trent and the Potteries in general.

All pottery/china companies have been having a hard time due to the credit crunch. They need your support, so please go and visit them.





Aluminum advertising thimbles, c.1940s/50s/60s.

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| 57. 'Hoover. Home. Happiness' Blue band. | £12 |
| 58. 'Big D. flour' red band. | £12 |
| 59. 'White Sewing .Machines' blue band. | £12 |
| 60. Brass, black band. '1840 Charles Isles 1990. | £12 |

It seems a very 1940s message to women 'Hoover. Home . Happiness' that was all we needed then apparently! If any of you watched the excellent USA 'Mad Men' about advertising in the 50s, you will see how far we have come in perceptions of female needs.

There is still a long way to go.



Silver, small letter British advertising.

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|---|-----|
| 61. 'James Walker the London Jeweller' 'Sterling'. | £30 |
| 62. 'Fowler and Oldfield Bradford' hll mkd HG&S B'ham 1932. | £35 |
| 63. 'Hovis' by HG&S ches. 1932. | £40 |
| 64. 'W.W. Watts.9. Market place. Derby. H.G.&S B'ham 1926. | £48 |

The last thimble by W.W.Watts is rare. I don't know that we have had this one before. Probably a member will put me right, I could put the answer up on the website.



'Watson Hastings' and others.

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|---|-----|
| 65. '50 th Anniversary Malta George Cross' 20 th century, silver. | £25 |
| 66. American silver, engraved with delightful bird in reeds. By Simons. | £28 |
| 67. 'Watson, Hastings' hll mdkd. HG&S B'ham 1930. Large letters. | £55 |
| 68. Egyptian profile, on reverse 'limited addition from Israel'. | £20 |

The commemorative thimble made to celebrate the Malta George Cross is interesting and unusual. It would be useful to know if it was an honour that was awarded to both sexes ?
If it was just a male military honour it is curious to find it on a thimble ?



'Amsterdam and others'

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| 69. '1980 30 th April' with portraits of Queen Willhelmina and her daughter Beatrice. | £25 |
| 70. Possibly plate. Well made enamel plaque 'Amsterdam-Muntplein' a cathedral. | £25 |
| 71. '1993 Freunde des Fingerhuts' '1985-N-1987' silver. 8 petal Gabler trade mk top. | £30 |
| 72. 'John Jones Audubon' Bird on branch. Reverse '1977 limited edition Reed Barton'. | £25 |

There are certainly some unusual continental silver thimbles in this collection. It seems that American collections contain a number of European thimbles acquired during tours of Europe. Not so in British collections. Perhaps we are less adventurous ?



Silver Jubilee Crown.

- | | |
|---|-----|
| 73. Could be South American, or Mexican. Well made, applied leaves/flowers, silver. | £20 |
| 74. Six star top, silver 800 quality, prob 20 th cen. From Germany. | £20 |
| 75. Hll mkd silver by TPG Lon. 1952 Queen's head. engraved thimble '1952 E11R 1977'
The crown lifts off to reveal thimble. Crown same hll mk. Silver gilt, glass 'stones.' | £88 |
| 76. 'Birthplace of old glory Betsy Rose house' in raised letters around house. | £25 |

We will all want to know who 'Old glory Betsy Rose' is ? When we find out, it will be revealed on the Thimble Society website. This will annoy those who don't have access, our apologies. Try to get the help from a young friend or relative. Use your thimble passion as an incentive.



Silver Cherub and others.

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| 77. Attractive design of bleeding hearts around border, central initials. Silver, unmarked. | £35 |
| 78. 8 petal top, prob Gabler. Central Cherub with wings, border of stars. | £45 |
| 79. Silver, clear star petal design, possibly 'embroidery' thimble. | £35 |
| 80. Prob. Worcester, blush ground, red breasted bird. | £200 |

This charming cherub is leaning out into the sky stargazing. It is a pretty design, and probably made by Gabler at the turn of the 19th century. The fourth item, American silversmiths sometimes made very decorative designs, calling them 'embroidery thimbles.'



Wedding of Victoria and Albert and others.

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|--|------|
| 81. 'Andrews Liver Salts' hll mkd HG&S B'ham 1932. | £35 |
| 82. 'Victoria and Albert' two royal profiles. On reverse, royal flowers. Poss. tiny repair in the top and poss. tiny repair at the side. Commemorative for royal wedding Feb 1840. | £290 |
| 83. 'G R' with a crown. Coronation commemorative for King George V1 in 1937. | £150 |
| 84. 18ct gold classic French 19 th cen. Pattern of little dots. Empty central cartouche. | £130 |

The classic gold thimbles are useful if you have French set or box, missing its thimble. There are a few very popular patterns and it is worth saving your single thimbles that might come in useful.



Blackpool and others.

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|---|-----|
| 85. Cable silver, with central hll mk B'ham date letter indistinct. | £50 |
| 86. Tiny silver, child's or doll's.hll mkd JF. B'ham 1906. | £35 |
| 87. 'Blackpool' large letters. Hll mkd. HG&S B'ham 1930. | £55 |
| 88. Sparkly clear design, hll mkd JD Ltd B'ham 1904. | £30 |

The date letter is not clear on the cable, but the cartouche for the letter has four chamfered edges, so it falls between 1814-1866. Then the cartouche becomes an oval.



Plastic cupids and others.

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|--|------|
| 89. USA silver, mkd 'Sterling' prob. Stern bros. | £25 |
| 90. 'England The Cupid' flanked by cupids. Colour and transfer in excellent condition. | £45 |
| 91. Silver, hll mkd Ches. 1901. Sharp clear cond. Pretty engraving. | £35 |
| 92. 'Exposition 1889' French exhibition commemorative, clear raised letters. | £120 |

The early plastic 'Cupid' thimbles are amongst the most popular in the less expensive range. The problem is the transfer print is often worn, in this case it is nearly mint.



Enamel border on silver and others.

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|---|------|
| 93. Waffles and big daisies, hll mkd 'B.F. B'ham 1903'. | £35 |
| 94. Pretty daisy rim, hll mkd 'C.H. Ches. 1903'. | £38 |
| 95. Lovely enamel border of roses on silver. Hll mkd 'J.F.Bham' | £75 |
| 96. 'E crown R' hll mkd 'H.G.&S B'ham 1953' for Queen Elizabeth's coronation. | £130 |

Silver commemoratives made during the reign of our present Queen Elizabeth II are becoming very collectable. The silver ones are the best because they have the hall marking system to prove the date they were made.



Rare Gabler enamel of Egypt and others.

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|--|------|
| 97. Poss. Armenian, gilt niello style decoration on metal. Similar design to Caucasus. | £240 |
| 98. Silver 'Royal Spa' by HG&S. B'ham 1934. Smart clear design. | £32 |
| 99. 'Dura' engraved on this ex.cond crisp all over design. | £60 |
| 100. Rare enamel design showing Egypt. 8 petal top, prob Gabler. Ex.cond. c.1890. | £120 |

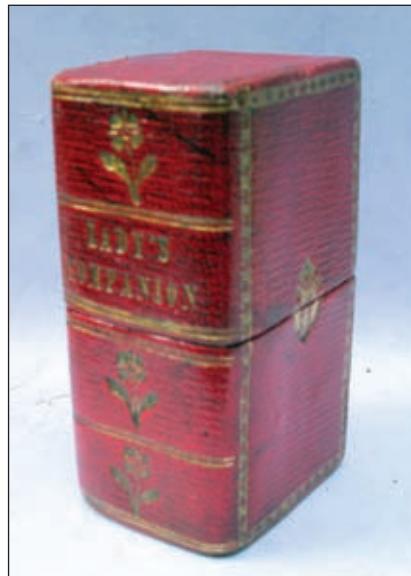
The enamel and silver Gabler has immaculate enamel border showing a pyramid, a Sphinx and the Nile with dhows sailing. It is a beautiful thimble and one we have not had before.



Princess Anne and Mark Phillip's wedding and others.

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|---|-----|
| 101. Delightful border of geese walking all round this USA silver Simons 20 th cen. | £25 |
| 102. 'Princess Anne Nov 14 th 1973 Mark Phillips' enamel hll mdk JS&S B'ham 1973. | £40 |
| 103. Silver mdk HG&S B'ham 1918. Crisp pattern of star daisies. | £30 |
| 104. 'The Mary Rose Henry VIII 1545-1982 Flagship' hll mdk JS&S B'ham 1982.
Made in a limited edition of 50 for the Thimble Society. | £39 |

The Mary Rose was the flag ship of Henry VIII's navy, which sank in 1545 and was re-discovered in 1982 with much of its precious cargo preserved. The Thimble Society brought out a limited edition of commemorative thimbles in silver and in gold.



105. 'Ladies Companion' gilt tooling on red leather. Approx 4ins-8cms high. Containing a silver thimble, silver propelling pencil [working order] mother-of pearl and steel pen knife [working] notes leaf, pin cushion, leather needle case slip. Good condition. English c.1870.

£150

106. Boxed pair of Wedgwood Christmas 1989 thimbles.
The three Magi on one
thimble and the Virgin and
child Jesus on the other. £60



Please make sure we have the last three digits on the reverse of your credit card. When you are ordering or paying your sub we need the card number, the current expiry date and the last three digits on the reverse of your card. We cannot process your orders without this as we have been issued with new high security PDQs. [Pretty Damn Quick machines!]

A few of the sewing related items on show at our Bakewell outlet.

The Rutlands Antique Centre is situated in the heart of the Peak district in The Square, Bakewell. It is part of The Rutlands Arms Hotel. Located on two floors, it has about forty dealers offering top quality items. Open seven days a week from 10am-5pm, Sundays 11am-4pm. Telephone 01629 810-468.

There will be a party at the Centre on Friday November 27th from 6-9pm. Local Thimble Society members are invited. To receive an invitation, please send a S.A.E to the Thimble Society address.





107. 'Ladies Companion' c.1870. Approx 5ins-
10cms high. Dark red tooled leather, polychrome
colours. Containing a silver thimble, mother-
of-pearl pen knife [working] Original mirror
[cracked] mother-of-pearl tools, stiletto,
corkscrew, tweezers, button hook. back pad
with bodkin and scissors.

£250

'Must haves' for thimble collecting.

When you set out for an antiques fair or auction, make sure you have the following to hand. Some cash! If not, a debit card. From next year banks will not honour cheques with a cheque card. A magnifying glass, or 'loup' which you can buy in most good fairs. I hang mine round my neck on elastic. A plastic carrier bag in case the dealer hasn't got any. A small silver hill mk book. A notebook and pen with which to write your purchase and the price you paid. If you are good with modern technology take a photo on your mobile phone or camera. I put all this in a small separate bag slung over one shoulder. If you put it in your handbag it gets lost. When you get home, you can download your photos onto your computer in a file marked 'thimbles.' Then you will have a good record of your collection. Then, if you want to check against buying duplicates, you can make a black and white printout or keep the images on your mobile/blackberry/iphone when you next go buying.



108. Shell thimble holder. Approx 3ins-6cms long. 'Bournemouth' written inside the shell.
An aluminium thimble inside a pretty metal leaf shaped holder. English, c.1920.

£35



109. A ship thimble holder. approx
7ins-13cms high. 'A present
from Margate' on this decorative
thimble holder c.1920. A
delightful ship in full sail, the
sails made from mother-of-pearl,
as is the shell boat.

£50

Please may we have any members
email addresses whom we
don't have. This is so we can
contact you via email in the future.

Don't forget our website
www.thimblesociety.com. New items go
on about every two weeks. There are so
many sewing tools, sets, fitted boxes and
other small items that do not get into the
magazine because of lack of space and the
fact that this is a thimble periodical.

Thimble Society members' lunch

We met as planned on September 27th in the foyer of the Ramada Jarvis Hyde Park Hotel. We were a small group, but most of us are founder members. Coffee was served in the lounge whilst waiting for the ones who got off at the wrong tube station ! Then we got down to the serious business of eating an excellent three course lunch discussing thimbles and the stories related to their purchase. Some of us had brought items to show, and much useful information was pooled. We rattled on nearly without pause for about four hours. Then Annie and I went off to the fantastic antiques fair in Berkeley Sq, leaving the others still chatting until I believe, six o'clock. We have decided to make it an annual event. A coffee/lunch/tea time with thimbles enjoyed, shared, shown amongst friends. So next year, look out for notice on the website, or phone us. Because some of the stories told by members were so delightful we thought you will want to hear them. So here they are some of them in the Bee-Line.

Dear Bridget – Thanks for the follow-up on the bottle thimble at the Berkeley Square Antiques Fair. Very useful and interesting to get this additional information. Also the contact re the gilt frames. I will ring Cynthia Walmsley during the week to find out more.

It was most enjoyable meeting for the lunch although a pity more members did not come. At least there were enough of us to make a good group and, as you know, we were delighted to get the opportunity to meet up with Joan. I don't think she would have made the journey without the added attraction of the Thimble Society meeting. I am sure she is delighted with her new purchase too.

Thank you again for making the arrangements and am looking forward to the next magazine even though it may well be our last.

Kind regards

Helen Kehoe

Inside back cover. Antique sewing tools.

110. Tartan McBeth shuttle. 3ins/6cms. ex.cond.	£95
111. H.Millwards & Sons patent fan needle case, with fan. Ex.cond.	£85
112. Scrap paper covered egg thimble [plain silver] case and needle holder.	£75
113. Tartan ware 'Caledonia' needle holder. Ex cond. 5cms.	£120
114. Beaded egg [bone base] thimble holder plain sil. thim.	£78
115. Beaded vase shaped thimble case. Ex . cond.	£85
116. Bakelite pansy tape, all working.	£80
117. Tartan ware 'Albert' pin wheel. Ex Cond.	£80
118. Brass golf ball and sticks tape measure, cloth pull out tape. Legs wind back.	£95
119. 18 th /early 19 th cen ebony, burr wood, gilt, needle and thimble holder.	£200
120. Bakelite tape measure, fruit basket. Ex.cond.	£85
121. Tunbridge stick ware acorn shaped thimble holder.	£95

Back cover. Palais Royal French thimble, c.1820.

122. A Mother-of-pearl thimble with plain gold oval insert, gilt bands. Very good shiny condition. You will always find some hair cracks, but they are to be expected and don't show unless you use a loup.	£300
123. Gold, with tiny 'granule' decoration. English hll mdkd 15ct B'ham 1850. Excellent condition. The 'granule' design was originally used by the Etruscans, and Romans. The Victorians revived the style.	£250
124. Continental silver needle case, c.1850. Approx 4ins [7cms] by 3ins [6cms] excellent cond. A parrot on a grape vine, chains holding a 'key' which pulls apart in the centre to hold the needles.	£260
125. Bone thimble, French or English, with gilt band, very good condition, c.1830.	£200
126. French silver, cir 1880, with flying swallows swooping all around this thimble, in excellent condition.	£230



The Bee-Line

Conversations over Thimble Society lunch.

Joan. I had been recently widowed when I heard about the Thimble Society meeting soon to be held in Gonville and Caius College Cambridge. We were married when we were about 18. I dreaded going to places on my own. I looked at the leaflet, but decided I couldn't face it.

My son came over for tea. 'Why don't you go mum?' 'I can't, all on my own, no one to talk to.' 'At least you'll have something in common with everyone.' So I got on the coach, and I'm afraid felt a bit tearful on the journey. On arrival, I put on a brave face and some lipstick. I was greeted by two women. 'Are you on your own?' 'Yes' I replied. 'Well come and join us.' From that moment on, I enjoyed every minute. I made friends that I've kept for 25 years.

Helen. We go to fairs, go up to London, stay with each other, all because of those meetings. I'm so glad you came.

Shirley. We've all met again today, a few more walking sticks, specs that we can't find, and uncomfortable shoes, but we're going strong. The idea of finding something new, the excitement of the hunt is still there.

Rita. Collectors are people who have walked miles, been all over the UK. Been to all the London markets for donkeys' years. That's real collecting, not buying over ebay. It's not buying up other people's collections. It's making your own, travelling about. It's how we've made friends, seen new places. We joined the Thimble Society 28 years ago – my Lord – can't be!

Shirley 'We've got so many stories about the finds. What about David spending the night with a lady member and me ! In fact 'a threesome !'

David. [*Shirley's husband.*] I know, that was nearly a scandal. We were booked in at the Ramada Jarvis for a Thimble Society weekend. Joan arrived and the hotel staff hadn't allocated her a room. So I said, being a gent and all that, 'share mine' she looked a bit shocked. Then my wife came up and told her it was alright. So they made her up a camp bed. Then there was the problem of getting undressed. Well, we made out a rota to go into the bathroom. I was told I had snored, but we have laughed about it for years.

Annie. Especially when at breakfast you commented to another member how you'd spent the night with Joan...and your wife.

David. I wasn't as bad as the husband of a member who took a swipe at the lady behind them who he accused of queue jumping! I never collected anything at first. But taking Shirley, and later Rita to fairs I started selling bits of bric-a-brac and did quite well. I now specialize in RAF Sweetheart brooches.

Helen. I met Rita and David at a meeting, they came and stayed with me in Dublin. I made them all real Irish Coffee, they were a bit nervous of trying it and becoming unruly at the Dublin antiques fair. David had already acquired a reputation of being a ladies' man.

BUYING ADVICE. Sometimes it is worthwhile viewing any jewellery sales coming up at your local auction. To my surprise, I have often seen thimbles included in the items. More often gold ones, and if you are very lucky, gold set with stones of some sort. Because thimbles are small, but costly, they are included in jewellery rather than general where they might get lost.

If you are a Northern member, remember we have a showcase in the Rutland Antiques Centre at the back of the Rutland Hotel in the centre of Bakewell, Derbyshire DE45 1BT. Opening Monday to Saturday 10-5pm and Sunday 11-4pm. Tel 01692-810-468.

There is a coffee shop, or have a Bakewell pudding at the café opposite. It is a beautiful market town in the heart of the Peak district.





£4.50