

# the **thimble** society

Volume 10, Issue 3

Winter 2008





### Front Cover

1. A delightful late 17th century English silver thimble. Some wear, as appropriate for its age, no holes or repairs. Fine dimpling with engraved border of curling leaves and flowers. £400
2. A pretty, late 17th century English silver thimble. All over dimpling, a border of leaves and small circles – possibly berries. £300

### Inside Front Cover – A selection of antique sewing tools.

3. Red leather ‘book’ shaped needle packet container, with gold tooling ‘Needles’. Inside reveals tiny needle packet ‘Wells and Cos. Grooveless. Drilled Ey’d Sharpes 7 2ins/4cms. £78
4. Tiny silver emery and matching tape measure. Approx 1ins/2cms. Original red silk tape, both decorated with crossed leaves. £185
5. Immaculate mother-of-pearl and gilt mounted needle packet container c.1840. £89
6. M.O.P stiletto with cartouche of enamel pansy 9cms. Palais Royal c.1830. £110
7. M.O.P emery with flower top, 3cms. English c.1840. £55
8. M.O.P gilt mounted Palais Royal scissors – 10cms. French c.1840. £240
9. Ebony with ivory mounts, M.O.P. ‘Aiguillos’ Spanish needle holder c.1840. £85
10. Carved ivory rose pin wheel, possibly Dieppe c.1850. Reverse plain ivory. £110
11. Central foreign silver knitting sheath and fertility charm. Cir 1800 with belt clip showing siren with harp probably made in Sarragossa, Spain. For a similar example see the jewellery section of the V&A. £190

All the above items are in very good condition.

**Regular procedures:** Members will be sent reminders with the winter issue when subscriptions are due. Please pay within **6 weeks** else your name is cancelled on the computer. All subscriptions are due January 1st each year, **£19** (UK), **£21** (Europe) and **£23** (rest of the world). Spring Magazine March 1st, Summer Magazine July 1st, and Winter Magazine November 1st.

**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 ▼

Tel and Fax (anytime): +44 (0)20 7419 9562. Thimble Society, 1 Cathcart Street, London NW5 3BL

### RETAIL SHOP ADDRESS ▼

THE THIMBLE SOCIETY, 72 The Admiral Vernon Arcade, 141-147 Portobello Road  
London W11 2DY. Mobile (only on Saturdays) 07941 455 259.

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



Dear Members,

For any of you living in the north of England, we have taken a showcase upstairs in The Rutland Arms Antiques Centre, The Square, Bakewell, Derbyshire DE45 1BT. Open 7 days a week, Mon-Sat 10am-5pm, Sunday 11am-4pm. Tel. 01629-810-468. By road: to the centre of Bakewell on the A6. By rail: Matlock Station, then 8 miles by bus. By bus: a regular service from Buxton and Derby. The Centre is housed in the stables at the back of The Rutland Arms Hotel, an elegant Georgian building dangerously near 'The original Bakewell Pudding shop.' The puddings [not tarts] are so delicious. They were nearly our undoing whilst setting out our sewing items. If you are making a day of it, then Chatsworth – where they filmed 'The Duchess' – is nearby, as is Haddon Hall. The produce from Chatsworth's farm shop is worth loading into the boot. The Peak District and Dales are beautiful natural areas for walking and packed with stately homes and gardens, Calke Abbey and Melbourne Hall, to name but two, so stop for tea. There is another excellent antiques centre in the village of Elsecar nearby. In my opinion, the area offers a combination of natural splendour, unspoilt villages, antiques and historical buildings, similar to the attractions of the Cotswolds, but with local people still living and working there.



Bridget and Annie

There is a very good Antiques Fair in Buxton about four times a year. I suggest you 'google' it for dates, it is not very well advertised. Harrogate hosts another upmarket fair, and sports the excellent 'Betty's Tea Rooms' which is always visited by hungry actors [myself] on matinee days from the Harrogate Theatre. Leeds has a good auction room, a branch of Bonhams; Manchester has a fine museum featuring painters from the Arts and Crafts period. Manchester Town Hall houses remarkable Arts and Crafts tiles and other period features. Currently, antiques including sewing tables or needlework pictures from the Arts and Crafts period have had a resurgence in popularity because they sit well alongside the ultra modern. Spending the last Bank Holiday driving around Yorkshire and Derbyshire refreshed my ideas on the possibilities of buying 'up north.' Make a date in your diary to visit Renishaw Hall in the spring when the bluebells are out. It is magical if you go early and pretend you own the house as you inhale the perfume walking around the garden.

Have a good Christmas, *Bridget*

P.S Don't forget your subscriptions are now due, unless you have paid for two years.

**BINDERS ARE NOW AVAILABLE  
AT A REDUCED PRICE OF £12 EACH PLUS P&P WHILE STOCKS LAST**

**Videos** – The first video is on the history of thimbles, and how to photograph small objects. The second video is on sewing tools, chatelaines and wares such as tartan, mauchlin, madras and sewing boxes. Each video is £12 plus p&p. (UK, £2, Europe £2.50, ROW £3.) We can supply the USA video line system [NTSC] for any members who require it.

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

## Collecting in New Zealand

I started collecting thimbles twenty years ago. I wanted to concentrate on English silver, especially as my husband Hamish was interested in silver makers, their hall marks and researching the man behind the mark. Who were these chaps? Where did they live and work? The personal history behind the marks interested both of us as much as the design.

What I have yet to do, is make a comprehensive list-with photos-of my collection up to date. When I am travelling around and see a nice thimble (which is rare in new Zealand) I can't always remember if it is one I have already got.

Most of the early settlers in the 1840s came to New Zealand well equipped with everything they might need for starting up a new life. They knew there would be nothing here in the way of shops full of the goods they were used to back home in Britain. This was a country for pioneers, so bring your own thimbles as there was going to be a lot to sew. For this reason, Dorcas thimbles are in fairly good supply, although thimble supplies everywhere are drying up. It is very hard to find pretty silver ones, and virtually impossible to find anything rare. Porcelain ones would not have been brought out here owing to the danger of breakages.

Australia has 'The Nifty' which, for a fairly plain little thimble, is now changing hands for very high prices if you can ever find one. The only indigenous New Zealand thimble I know of is the silver one I have attempted to photograph. I think this is a cast silver thimble, it is fairly thick and heavy. The mark tells us that it was made in the 1970s by Ray Haydon. His trademark was always a Tiki or Kiwi symbol, which often denotes a new Zealand item. This is followed by the year mark and 925 which denotes the silver content, which is the same as sterling. The information was given to me courtesy of Evin Titmus, KeriKeri, NZ.

Ray Haydon comes from Auckland and is a well known sculptor who started life as a silversmith. He now makes huge artworks, mainly in steel. If you can find a Haydon thimble, it will become a collector's item.

As my small collection grew (thanks to the Thimble Society) I had to find a way to store them. It must look attractive but be easy to transport to the bank for security when away. We started with small empty boxes in walnut or mahogany, but as it grew we bought bigger cutlery boxes. We took our boxes to a local cabinet maker who fitted them with lift-out trays fitted with thimble compartments, which work well.

We are over here on our first trip to Europe and are having a marvellous time. Just looking at Big Ben and the Houses of Parliament against the sunset reflected in the Thames has given us a thrill we will never forget. Sandra and Hamish.

*Sandra McNeil*



**Nearly all the thimbles in this magazine are from private collections.  
We will sell members thimbles at a price agreed between both parties,  
for a commission of 30%.**



**Silver 'De de la Guerre' and others**

- |  |      |
|--|------|
| 12. Crisp cable style, applied border resembling fleur-de-lys. English c.1870.   | £55  |
| 13. 'De de la Guerre' French c.1914. soldier kissing his girl, reverse a knight. | £200 |
| 14. Long silver finger guard, ribbed, Dutch hall mk of a sword, c.1870.          | £100 |
| 15. Coach and Horses, Queen Elizabeth II coronation commemorative B'ham 1953.    | £140 |

Member Ann Grieger was kind enough to bring me an excellent book [in French] *'Ouvrages de Dames' mercerie, broderie.* Frederique Crestin-Billet. Tana Editions. The above French 1st World War thimble is illustrated there.

Frederique also compiled *'La Folie des Ciseaux'* and *'La Folie des Dés a Coudre.'*



**Rare 'HF' probably Henry Foskett, and others**

- |   |     |
|---|-----|
| 16. Blackberry by JF B'ham 1902. Good all over design.              | £50 |
| 17. Rare hll mark set into border 'HF Lon 1882,' for Henry Foskett. | £48 |
| 18. Crisp variation on a Blackberry, by JF b'ham 1908.              | £50 |
| 19. Good blackberry design, mark rubbed. English c.1900.            | £38 |

JF probably stands for James Fenton. Henry Foskett is listed in 1863 as a thimble manufacturer at 11 Great Sutton St Clerkenwell. He moved to number 32, and was registered working there until 1886. He is not to be confused with gold and silver figure maker and chaser, Henry Foskett of Brecknock Rd in 1880 whose business was continued by Samuel Foskett.



**Silver English commemorative celebrating the wedding of Queen Victoria and others**

- |  |      |
|--|------|
| 20. Scandinavian 20th cen silver, marked J. Jensen, famous silver designer. Glass top. | £35  |
| 21. Commemorating the marriage in Feb 1840 of Queen Victoria to Prince Albert.         | £420 |
| 22. 'Hovis Bread' by HG&S Ches 1928.   | £48  |
| 23. Marsh Arab, good picture of sailing boats on the delta with palms, c.1940.         | £90  |

The Victorian thimble is in very good, crisp condition. The reverse shows royal flowers, thistles, shamrock, foliage and berries and roses. 'Victoria and Albert' in raised letters around the two profiles.



**Antique handpainted porcelain, probably Worcester, and other**

- |  |      |
|--|------|
| 24. Blush ground, charming Robin or Finch on foliage.                      | £180 |
| 25. Blush ground, two delightful Redcap yellowbreasts flying in blue sky.  | £180 |
| 26. Blush ground, pretty Finch on foliage.                                 | £180 |
| 27. Carved vegetable ivory [corozo nut] English c.1870. Good clear border. | £90  |

Most of you know that a vegetable ivory thimble is quite unusual. They were carved from the Corozo nut, probably imported from South America. Some are a darker brown, and a few are in a Corozo nut case shaped like an acorn.



**Silver Van Dyke border and others**

- 28. Very finely painted redcap/yellowbreast on blush ground. Prob Worcester. £200
- 29. Van Dyke pierced border, hll mk CH Ches 1890. Crisp all over design. £140
- 30. French c.1900. Silver. Design 'La Lecon de Couture' – the sewing lesson. Worn. £120
- 31. Smart clear Blackberry design, hll mkd JF [James Fenton] B'ham 1913. £55

The French 'sewing lesson' has a cooking pot, a grandfather clock and a cat around the border – a little rubbed. The design was first sold at the turn of the century in a department store in Paris called 'Au Bon Marche' for 3.50 fr. with Fable thimbles also illustrated in their catalogue.



**Large letter placenames continued. From Wales**

- 36. 'Llandudno' by HG&S B'ham 1930. £68
- 37. 'Newquay' by HG&S B'ham 1931. £68
- 38. 'Tenby' 'the spa made in England HG&S sterling silver'. £65
- 39. 'Cardiff' by HG&S B'ham 1930. Also a rare name. £75

This particular collection shows a Welsh bias, the 'Newquay' may be in Wales or it could be in the south of England. More thimbles came from coastal resorts than from big towns such as 'Cardiff.'



**Large letter placenames**

- 32. 'Jersey' unusual placename, by HG&S B'ham 1930. £75
- 33. 'Aberystwyth' 'made in England by HG&S sterling' tiny hole repair. £50
- 34. 'Leeds' also unusual. By 'HG&S' sterling silver, 14 The Spa' on rim. £75
- 35. 'Stourbridge' very rare in splendid large applied letters, by JS B'ham 1896. £120

We have never seen 'Stourbridge' before and both Jersey and Leeds are rare. If a thimble has a small repair such as 'Aberystwyth' we will always post on approval for you to judge if it is acceptable to you.



**Isle of Man and others**

- 40. 'Stratford-on-Avon' 'HG&S sterling silver the spa made in England.' £58
- 41. 'Isle of Man' clear large applied letters. By JS B'ham 1906. £80
- 42. 'Blackpool' sparkly applied letters. By JS b'ham 1897. £78
- 43. 'Southend on Sea' by HG&S B'ham 1929. £70

The 'Blackpool' must be one of the earliest souvenir thimbles made, 1897 was long before the usual dates in the 1930s. The maker is either JS or S because, although the marks are very clear, the J is hidden in the design.

## Descriptions for pages 12-13 (overleaf)

### Silver 'Souvenir' mauve top, and others

44. 'Rhyl' hll mkd B'ham 1930. Another rare Welsh town. £70  
 45. Silver 'Souvenir' in decorative letters, engraved rim, pretty mauve glass top. £80  
 46. Gold, English gothic letters. £100  
 47. French, 18ct gold, classic dainty shape, pretty engraving border and rim. £150

The pretty classic French thimbles are just what you need to complete a boxed set when your thimble is missing. Especially the wooden cased, wedge shaped sets. French gold is always 18ct, anything of a lower carat cannot be marked as gold.

### Norwegian enamel and others

48. Worcester, purple trademark inside. Signed 'Powell' hair crack on reverse. £160  
 49. Scandinavian, silver, white and green enamel [some wear] moonstone top. £200  
 50. Dainty silver, prob Italian c. 1890. Alternate coral and turquoise stones. £90  
 51. Eight petal top, prob Gabler c.1890. Silver, border of corals in gilt. £85

The Powell is a delightful example, but the hair crack, though faint, is there. We would send it on approval. The same goes for the Scandinavian, the wear affects the green enamel 'waves.' Sea motifs were popular in Norway in the late 19th century.

### French Fable of the Two Pigeons and others

52. Stamped CJM hll mkd B'ham 1977. All over well designed daisies. £38  
 53. By HG&S Ltd B'ham 1906. Panels of vertical flowers and waffles. £30  
 54. 'Les deux pigeons' – two pigeons fable illustrated in Au Bon Marche 1902. £250  
 55. Russian, silver, Kokoshnik head facing right.84. [1908-1917] Engraved with leaves and flowers. Hatched top. £160

Not all Russian thimbles are marked. As a guide, from 1896-1907 the woman's head wearing a peasant scarf called Kokoshnik faces left. From 1908-1917 the head faces right. After 1927 the .84 changed to .88 or .875. Or others. The more important thimbles have maker's initials as well.

### Wedgwood thimbles, 20th century

56. Reindeer, white on blue basalt. On reverse '1984' 'Wedgwood England'. £35  
 57. White horse on terracotta basalt. On reverse 'Wedgwood made in England'. £38  
 58. The Spinner, white on blue basalt. On reverse 'Wedgwood England'. £35  
 59. Dancing girl, white on pink basalt. On reverse 'Wedgwood England'. £38

It is probable that Wedgwood thimbles with 'Wedgwood England' stamped on the reverse were made for the British market, which practically ceased production by the 1990s with the exception of some private orders. However, Wedgwood continued in the USA with 'Wedgwood made in England' until much later.

### Blue enamel and others

60. USA by Simons, c.1890, silver with richly engraved gold band. £65  
 61. Child's silver Scandinavian with Carnelian top. Engraved 'Else' in leaf surround. £70  
 62. Scandinavian. Exc. Cond. Squares under blue enamel, blue stone top. C.1890. £180  
 63. Hll Mkd HF B'ham 1909, silver with attractive cushion design. £48

The Scandinavians excelled in enamel thimbles, exporting many to Russia. Some enamel thimbles we regard as Russian often started their life in Scandinavia. See Helmut Greif's 'Talks about Thimbles.' No. 62 is enamelled using the 'basse-taille' method.

### Magnet top and others.

64. Foreign lower grade silver, stamped '825' well made, possibly Mexico? £25  
 65. SJR B'ham 1981 well made modern silver, hammered decoration. £25  
 66. Metal, with a magnet top which picks up needles/pins. £15  
 67. Stamped 'GS 925' and a foreign trademark, sterling quality, glass top. £30

Some foreign silver is stamped '825'; British sterling silver is always '925' in order to be called silver. There is no difference in the silver content in a hallmarked thimble, from a thimble marked 'Sterling.' In general, Sterling came later in the early 20th cen.

### Mexican with turquoise and others

68. 'Recordacao de Portugal' with a cockerel and foliage. Silver. £25  
 69. Mexican, well made silver with turquoise coloured stones. £35  
 70. By silversmith Kay Thetford, mkd DWK London. £38  
 71. A goat or ibis in foliage, foreign silver. £25

It is difficult to read some modern hallmarks because they are much smaller. However, the Thimble Society first showed the frog and other similar silver thimbles in the late 1980s.

### Early Dorcas and other

72. Rd 127211 pat.10 with crisp decorative stars all over. £30  
 73. Unusual early Dorcas with an engraved border of flowers marked Pat 8. Damaged top. £38  
 74. A faint border of leaves marked 'pat.6' £25  
 75. Silver, mkd WHL Ches 1917. Pretty border of small roses. £35

It is interesting to note how many patent pattern designs were tried out before the final Dorcas patterns were chosen. Some are very pretty, but perhaps were more expensive to mass produce.



### Vertical daisies and waffles

76. By HS B'ham 1901. Attractive vertical alternate design, crisp daisy top. £30  
 77. Silver with elegant chevron design, London 1978. £25  
 78. Lovely engraved rose border, decorative rim Hll mkd RE Lon 1901. £40  
 79. Double tier of diamonds, mkd SF London 1915. £30

If you want to revive the shine on your Tartan or Mauchlin ware, buy a can of artist's '101 gloss spray for artwork'. Just spray a little and let it dry before touching it. Then turn over and do the other side. It helps take out tiny surface scratches.

## FOREIGN INVESTMENTS

Everything Russian is in huge demand owing to more Russians having increased spending possibilities enabling them to come on buying trips. Russian objects and paintings are going far beyond their auction estimates because of the Great Bear's buying power. We probably see at least one Russian collector per week in our Portobello shop, one of their passions is for fine beadwork. At present, Russian, Chinese and Indian antiques are being bought back by those countries who are enjoying greater prosperity. My advice is to extend your collecting field to countries that made items for their own, and for the European market. The Japanese are still strong buyers, they love objects made in mother-of-pearl, tortoiseshell, and ivory. At the moment, Japanese dealers have been hampered on buying trips because of the huge hike in their airfares owing to the petrol/oil prices. The Russians don't have that problem.





**Silver bird thimble and others**

- 80. A charming hill mkd 1980s decorated silver, with sprays of flowers. £25
- 81. Smooth silver, with hardstone deep mauve stone top. Prob custom made. £25
- 82. Charming bird on foliage with berries, well made foreign, silver. £28
- 83. Silver, mkd WM B'ham 1959. Sparkly Abstract design. £25

It may be worth buying thimbles with designs that represent their era. Do not buy modern thimbles that hark back to earlier designs, the same goes for buying reproduction furniture instead of the designs that are of your era. Think of a typical 'modern' Deco set and how attractive that is to us now.



**Antique Russian silver. First three mkd .84**

- 84. Niello decoration, engraved with flowers and foliage. Alternate flowers and leaves around the sides and over the top, are recessed. This is to hold the needle. £380
- 85. Similar to above, but deeper recesses in pattern. Child's size. Suspension ring. £300
- 86. Same as first one, with a tiny ring in the suspension ring. £380

These three thimbles are beautiful quality, the recessed flowers give a sparkle to the thimble when turned. Each one is marked .84, with Kokoshnik head [unclear which way she is facing in the pattern] and Cyrillic initials possibly of the maker. In a society where thimbles were precious, they were often suspended around the neck for safekeeping.

- 87. Turquoise enamel on silver, Russian. Kokoshnik Head facing right, [1908-1917]. And .916 [I think]. After 1927 the .84 changed to .88 or .875 and others. Silver content number followed by 3 Cyrillic initials. The work looks genuine, but not top quality. £150



**Modern china and other**

- 88. Plastic, painted with little trees. £12
- 89. Poppy Flower of the Year by Spode [mkd inside] Printed design. £20
- 90. Spode [mkd inside] a printed design of blue butterflies. £25
- 91. Wedgwood white on grey dancer. On reverse 'Wedgwood England'. £38

The printed Spode thimbles, mainly brought out during the 1980s, had especially nice designs. They are distinctive with their gold leaf flower petal tops. Trademark 'Spode' always printed inside in red or black.

Member Anne Grieger had visited 'The Thimble Museum Creglingen' finding it very interesting, she has provided the following details for members visiting Germany.

The Thimble Museum in Creglingen was opened on 8th August 1982 by Thorvald and Brigitte Greif. The foundation for this private museum, which is unique in its way, was the inheritance of the Gabler brothers in Schorndorf, which was taken over by Helmut Greif.

Unfortunately, a fire destroyed the whole factory, so Helmut Greif carried out intensive research about the origin of thimbles. The knowledge he gleaned formed the basis for the museum. The museum also wants to pay tribute to thimble manufacturers who tried hard, so hard to protect women's hands from pinpricks, using design and innovation.

**Thimble Museum Creglingen, D-97993 Creglingen, Kohlesmühle. Tel: +49 (0)7933 370 Fax: +49 (0)7933 443 Email: [fingerhutmuseum@web.de](mailto:fingerhutmuseum@web.de) Web: [www.fingerhutmuseum.de](http://www.fingerhutmuseum.de)**



**Booklets for Sale**

**Diane Pelham Burn**

- Thread Winders A Collector's Guide (58 pages, 77 colour plates) £14 + postage
- Early Thimbles (68 pages, 55 colour plates) £12 + postage
- Identifying Steel-Cored Thimbles + Supplement (37 pages, black/white) £6.50 + postage
- Postal address: *Diane Pelham Burn, Widgenton House, Beaconsfield, Bucks HP9 1XA*
- Email: *dpb@widge.co.uk*

**Norma Spicer**

Henry Griffiths and Sons, James Fenton, Isles, James Swann and 'the Nanny Brooch' are some of the booklets available from Norma Spicer. Please write to Norma direct at 19 Martin Close, Rushden, Northants NN10 6YZ. Norma will give you current prices plus postage and she will tell you if any are out of print. Norma and Di Pelham Burn have collaborated on 'British Registered Designs.'

## NEW BOOK

For those of you interested in French thimbles, and sewing tools in general, I recommend 'Ouvrages de Dames' by Frederique Crestin-Billet [published by Tana editions] kindly brought to me by Anne Grieger. Even if you do not speak French, you can understand a lot by looking at the illustrations. There are pages showing old catalogues from shops at the turn of the century, illustrating thimbles and sewing tools for sale. I imagine the book can be bought somewhere on the web if you google all the details, unless you are going to France. The shop 'Au bon Marche' is still going I believe. At the turn of the 19th century, it seemed to specialise in selling everything connected with sewing, advertising good quality sewing sets and all the best silver thimbles. Women were obviously more discerning over what they would put on their finger, not just any old silver thimble, it had to have a fine design. Delicious pin and needle holders and hatpin holders in the shape of animals, especially cats, dogs and rabbits in coloured painted velvet. Adorable silver elephants with pins in Howdahs. The imaginative creativity is endless. Oh, where are they now.

## SUBSCRIPTIONS

Your subscriptions are now due, please send in cheques or current credit card details, with permission to take your card. We need subs in before January 1st unless you have already paid for two years. It saves us so much time and money if we don't have to send reminders. If you don't want to continue, please let us know. We may have to make a small increase next year, owing to rising posting costs, so please only send the amount for one year.

Don't forget you can log onto our website at [www.thimblesociety.com](http://www.thimblesociety.com)



### Modern wood and others

- |   |     |
|---|-----|
| 92. Modern wood thimble in two colours, prob 1980s.                   | £12 |
| 93. White on green girl dancer, reverse 'Wedgwood England'.           | £35 |
| 94. Possibly bone, well painted with birds on foliage. Dimpled top.   | £38 |
| 95. Plastic, decorated with printed scene from 'Alice in Wonderland.' | £15 |

There was a tradition of decorating early plastic thimbles with children's themes. The best were the sturdy Bakelite versions with scenes of cupids. These are very hard to find, especially with the picture intact.



### RAF thimble, and others

- |  |     |
|--|-----|
| 96. Modern 'Peep' showing a woman in a bustle playing golf.          | £15 |
| 97. Modern coating resembling enamel, flowers.                       | £12 |
| 98. Interesting 'RAF' thimble on painted metal, made for servicemen. | £60 |
| 99. Another version of a modern wood thimble, horizontal stripes.    | £12 |

Apologies for giving out the same information again, but remember that old peeps work the opposite way round to modern ones. The modern ones view the picture from the outside. The old ones from the inside. The old ones are brass [not pewter] and much heavier.



### Brass Hudson's soap and others

- |   |     |
|---|-----|
| 100. Brass 'Use Hudson's Soap' engraved around the border, c.1920.                | £20 |
| 101. Crisp nearly mint, mkd 'Pat 10' it responds to my magnet, rare early Dorcas. | £45 |
| 102. Pretty pierced silver, modern foreign red glass top, flower border.          | £30 |
| 103. Green hard stone top, mkd HG&S B'ham 1972.                                   | £30 |

The early Dorcas, which is what I think it is, is in such bright condition it looks like silver, only slightly thicker. If you want to test a silver against a Dorcas, use your magnet topped thimble. It will attract the metal in the Dorcas.



**Tiny hll mkd silver and others**

- 104. Mkd Y830S inside apex, silver, amber glass top, prob 20th cen Scandinavian. £35
- 105. Delicate enamel border with roses, pink glass top, foreign c.1960s. £68
- 106. Moss agate stone top, hll mkd C&C B'ham 1964. £38
- 107. Hll mkd B'ham 1906, tiny decorated silver for doll or child. £40

These tiny thimbles are adorable, how any survived is a small miracle. They are very useful if you have an incomplete child's set. We have so many collectors, please give a second choice to avoid being disappointed.



**Rare steel advertising and others**

- 108. 'The Queen's Record the best of all' referring to Queen Victoria. Brass. £38
- 109. 'Fil au Chinois' advertising fine Chinese thread in France, rare steel thimble. £65
- 110. 'Coronation May 1937 King George VI Queen Elizabeth' very rare metal commemorative for the King who replaced his brother who abdicated. £140
- 111. Silver 'Royal Spa' hll mkd HGS B'ham 1911, smart condition. £33

We have never seen the George VI and Queen Elizabeth [the late Queen Mother] coronation thimble before. There must have been so few made owing to the haste and confusion after the abdication of the later Duke of Windsor for Mrs Simpson.



**Antique gold with stones and others**

- 112. Charming silver bright engraving, un mkd, poss early Charles Horner. £35
- 113. Silver gilt, hll mkd JS&S B'ham 1932. Set with alternate pearls and corals. £160
- 114. USA by Simons c.1890, excellent scrolled engraved silver. £38
- 115. Gold 15ct beautiful setting of turquoise and pearls, nearly mint. £350

It is a pleasure to look at a bright gold thimble with such a pretty stone setting. They are scarce now, and rarely come the way of the Thimble Society. Gold thimbles can make more in jewellery auctions than sewing sales.

**BOOK LIST**

- 'The Story of the Thimble' by Bridget McConnell. price £39.
  - 'The Story of Antique Needlework Tools' by Bridget McConnell. price £45
- postage and packing UK £6, Europe £7, Rest of world £9 per book.

**Don't forget you can log onto our website at [www.thimblesociety.com](http://www.thimblesociety.com)**

**NEW MUSEUM**

For members visiting France, there is another museum to add to your list, the Mother of Pearl Museum. 'Musee de la Nacre et de la Tabletterie Meru', 51 rue Roger Salengro, 60 110 Meru, tel. (+33) 3 44 22 61 74 or web [www.musee-nacre.com](http://www.musee-nacre.com) It is between Calais and Paris. Not worth a big detour as buttons in mother-of-pearl are its main exhibits, but worth going if you are driving to Paris. There are a few items such as fans, opera glasses, and a few sewing items made in mother-of-pearl. The Oise area supplied the Palais Royal shops from their inception. The museum sell a book which has some interesting details about the growth of the trade in fine objects made in M.O.P., the earliest records are of religious objects made from ivory, and various natural materials. They also made small portable games such as dominoes, later branching into sewing items including thimbles.



**Blackpool and others**

- 116. Celtic knot design on this 1980s British silver thimble. £25
- 117. 'Blackpool' in splendid applied letters. Mkd JS&s B'ham 1924. £80
- 118. Nearly mint waffle and daisies, mkd GWH&co Ches 1911. £35
- 119. Delightful French silver c.1900, illustrated in Au Bon March 1902. £38

As you can tell, the old catalogues give us so much information, dates of fabrication, original prices and descriptions. Also a sense of what women liked to use and the value they put on wearing a well designed sewing item in their world of work.



**Light coloured vegetable ivory and others**

- 120. Unusual foreign silver, all over daisies in English style. £25
- 121. The famous Prudhomme 19th cen French silver. The Pelican and Woolf fable. £120
- 122. Intriguing cast design of cats playing. Silver mkd MG Ltd London. £28
- 123. Light coloured vegetable ivory with charming carved border, c.1870. £80

A dealer I know was burgled, unfortunately she had left her sewing tools wrapped up in a locked box. Thinking they had got jewellery, they took the box. If you display your thimbles/sewing items, most burglars leave them as too specialised to re-sell.



**Silver key pattern and others**

- 124. By SF Ches. All over daisies. £20
- 125. 'James Walker the London Jeweller', hll mkd JW Ltd Ches 1924. Crisp. £35
- 126. Pretty turquoise enamel on silver, with bunch of roses both sides, glass top. £80
- 127. French c.1890, silver, well made applied key pattern. £40

Do try to buy thimbles in good condition. Tiny 'air' holes are acceptable and can be plugged, rims can be rounded if you wish, however when the pattern is too worn there is nothing to be done.



**'Enamel on silver commemoratives and others**

- 128. '1981 Charles and Diana' 'Ich Dien.' Engagement. £35
- 129. 'Commemorating their marriage Sarah and Andrew'. £35
- 130. 20th cen Russian, handpainted on porcelain. Silver filigree base. £30
- 131. St Paul's Cathedral 'Charles 1981 Diana' commemorating their marriage. £45

Modern silver thimbles are important to buy. In the last Summer magazine, some of you were quick to spot no 84 as a very rare commemorative for Princess Anne's second marriage to Timothy, hence the 'A clasped hands T.' I didn't realise what it was!



# The Bee-Line



Dear Bees,

I was upset to read the Thimble Society meeting has had to be cancelled. I was looking forward to the exciting speakers and outings you had arranged. I can understand why – insufficient members and ones who cancel at the last minute. I have some of this when booking outings for the National Trust. Bakewell is near me, so I will go along and look at the showcase. I have been threatening to visit the town for some time, so now have an excuse. Maybe I will visit Portobello Road soon as I am coming to London to pay my son a visit.

Regards  
Molly, Yorkshire

*I was so sorry to have to cancel, but the financial climate was such that some members that had intended to come felt it was an extra expense they could do without. So it seemed better to cancel than hold a small meeting.*

Dear Bees,

I am very disappointed that we will not be meeting in Worcester. I think people are pulling their horns in in this economic climate. I thought that it might be helpful if I sent you the leaflets I picked up in Meru. If people are going to Giverny, it is not that far to Meru but I do not think it is worth a special journey. I don't think I shall be visiting Bakewell in the near future but it will make an interesting stop to see your showcase if we are in the area.

Best wishes for the next few difficult months  
Pam Stow, Kent

*The only alternative to a full-time day meeting, with concomitant costs, might be a Sunday lunch for members at a London hotel next year? It would be informal, but allow old friends/members to meet and chat, swap stories, bring thimbles and have one informal talk around the table? How about that?*

Dear Bees,

With reference to the Dolphinton House thimble, my thimble is marked S (T), which is the mark of Frank Jones. He was the former business partner of Ray Coggle. The partnership ended in 1986. The thimble is marked for 1988.

Best wishes  
Mary Ive

*Thank you very much for the information on the Dolphin thimble in the last magazine.*

Dear Bees,

Enclosed a photograph of a thimble with BERMUDA engraved around the side. Being a Scandinavian country thimble, why BERMUDA? Thought you would be interested.



Best wishes  
Mrs R Brook

*It is extraordinary, any ideas fellow members?*

Dear Bees,

Thank you for the Summer 2008 issue, which awaited me on return from holiday.

On page 17, number 89, you suggest that the 'Royal Spa' might also stand for Cheltenham. While Cheltenham's best known and most significant visitor was King George III who, with Queen Charlotte and three of their daughters, spent five weeks here in 1788 to take the waters (which failed to restore his health!), the town has never ranked as Royal Cheltenham Spa.

I think Leamington Spa is possibly a more likely bet. They do have the Royal prefix. Just a thought.

I did find a rather nice little brass advertising thimble in Annecy. (Our holiday coincided with the monthly Brocante.) Cable LOUIS D'OR. The D'OR presumably means 'of gold' but I'm not sure of the full meaning. Any ideas?

Yours sincerely  
Daphne Pennell

*CABLE is thread Louis d'Or is a trade name, probably for gold, or gold coloured?*

Dear Bees,

What a wonderful surprise to see a cabinet from Bridget in The Rutland Arms Antiques Centre in Bakewell, Derbyshire. Many of the beautiful items I have seen in the books and catalogues came to life. I know where I will be going with my birthday money!

Best wishes and Happy Collecting to you all.  
Josephine Pearson, Yorkshire

Dear Bees,

Thank you so much for the needle holder which arrived today. I'm so glad that you opened a website, as without the power of Google trying to find something from my great great grandfather and his cousin, James Asser and Charles Sherwin's sports and fancy goods shop would have been like looking for a needle in a haystack.

As that part of the Strand has since been rebuilt, the relief of their shop on the needle holder is an added bonus.

Once again, thanks.  
Dick Sherwin

*The order was for a brass pop-up Avery style needle case from our website.*

Dear Bees,

Books we have for sale:

*Thimble Magic* – Jean Hugard. Unusual 44 page page booklet of thimble tricks.

*Thimbles Three* – Ken de Courcy. 16 page booklet of thimble tricks.

*Fantastic Thimbles* – Lewis Gamson. Unusual 35 page booklet of thimble tricks.

*Thimbles* – Edwin F Holmes. Second impression of first edition.

*The History of Needlework Tools and Accessories* – Sylvia Groves.

*Antique & Collectable Thimbles & Accessories* – Averil Mathis.

*Old Time Tools & Toys of Needlework*

– Gertrude Whiting.

*Sewing Accessories. An Illustrated History*

– Victor Houart.

John & Sylvia Branfield

Enquiries c/o Thimble Society



#### Enamel windmills and others

- |   |     |
|---|-----|
| 132. Beautiful Simons USA silver gilt with gilded grapes around border.     | £55 |
| 133. Handsome cable style, with rich applied border, hll mkd JF B'ham 1898. | £65 |
| 134. Luscious Blackberry in horizontal rings. Hll Mkd JF B'ham 1921.        | £65 |
| 135. Silver, six petal star top-Gabler-enamel border of Dutch windmills.    | £65 |

#### Back cover

- |  |        |
|--|--------|
| 136. Near perfect 'Palais Royal' sewing box, French c.1810 | £2,200 |
|--|--------|

Beautiful casket in light figured fruitwood, with ormoulu mounts, including delicate feet and a lion's head central handle. Inside, a mirror in the top, and a silk pad bound with chenille to protect the tools. Red velvet and gold work embroidery in near perfect colour and condition.

Containing matching mother-of-pearl and gilt mounted fitments. All near perfect. Stiletto, bodkin, thimble, scissors, needle case and scent bottle.

These boxes, complete and in good condition, are nearly impossible to find now. This one came in via a friend travelling in France, who carried it home for me with great loving care for which I am very grateful.



£4.50