

the **thimble** society

Volume 9, Issue 10

Spring 2006





Front Cover

- 1 The legendary James Fenton 'Bicycle' thimble. Portraying a ladies bicycle, engraved onto a background of blackberries. The hall mark is so close to the border, that only the top half is visible. You can discern J.F. an anchor [Birmingham] but the date letter is unclear. For photos of James Fenton's bicycle thimbles showing both the male and female versions, see page 57 of B.McConnel's 'A Collector's Guide to Thimbles.' There has been some wear on the top of the thimble, but otherwise the clarity of the chased design is excellent. Bids will be accepted over £300. Close of bidding March 12th.

Inside the front cover, left

Modern china, royalty related themes

Top photo, left to right. Caverswall and one Spode

- | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| 2 Prince and Princess of Wales 10th wedding anniversary 1991. Caverswall | £10 |
| 3 Christening of Prince William 4th August 1982. Caverswall | £10 |
| 4 Queen Elizabeth 11 grandmother of Prince William 1982. Caverswall | £10 |
| 5 Charles and Diana's wedding July 28th 1981. Spode | £10 |

Second photo, left to right

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|-----------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| 6 Princess of Wales, mother of Prince William. Caverswall. 1982 | £10 |
| 7 Sandringham [Royal Palace] Caverswall | £10 |
| 8 Buckingham Palace [Queen's permanent residence] Caverswall | £10 |
| 9 H.R.H Prince William of Wales 1982' Worcester | £12 |

Third photo, left to right

- | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| 10 '30th anniversary of the coronation E11R.' Caverswall | £10 |
| 11 'Prince Philip 10th June 1981' Caverswall | £10 |
| 12 'Falkland's Liberation 1982' hand painted by Graham Payne | £30 |
| 13 'E.S.' [Prince Edward & Sophie] with foliage, hand painted Jasper's Yorkshire | £20 |

Fourth photo, left to right

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|-------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| 14 'H.R.H Prince Edward' Caverswall | £10 |
| 15 Queen Elizabeth 60th birthday 21st April. Caverswall | £10 |
| 16 '1952 E11R 1977 Silver Jubilee' enamel on silver | £39 |
| 17 20th cen. Re-issue by St George china. 'May 6th 1935 Jubilee.' | £10 |

Subscriptions – Subscriptions – Subscriptions for all members.

Thanks to all of you who have paid this years dues. If you haven't, then this magazine will be your last one. If you are not sure if your sub is owed, phone or email us at the numbers given at the bottom of the page. We don't want to lose you over a clerical blip.

V.G. Cond = Very Good Condition

Slight A.F. = Slightly Imperfect

Mint = no wear

Circa (c.) = around

Hllmk = Hall Mark

T.M. = Trade Mark

Ct = Carat

Kt = Carat

B'ham = Birmingham

Ches = Chester

Cont. = Continental

Lon = London

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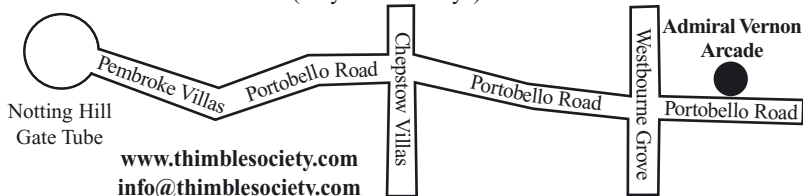
Tel and Fax (anytime): +44 (0)20 7419 9562. Thimble Society, 1 Cathcart Street, London NW5 3BL

RETAIL SHOP ADDRESS ▼

THE THIMBLE SOCIETY, 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





Helmut Grieff's re-issue of 'The Belvedere.' And others

139 Combination of daisy border and daisy top, waffles between, MN&Co Ches 1904	£36
140 20th cen. Re-issue of the 'Belvedere' palace, by Helmut Grieff	£45
141 By JS b'ham 1910. Nice all over small flowers	£28
142 Key pattern, mkd in apex by Simons bros. Late 19th cen USA	£28

Dear Members

I used to be snooty about modern thimbles [exceptions being modern commemoratives] but I am beginning to see the error of my ways. Of course quality hand painted ones have always been worth buying, if only to help a young struggling artist! Gifted young silversmiths turned out excellent examples well worth adding to your collections, but on average the mass produced varieties did not appeal. However

within the last ten years, the price of most 20th century Wedgwood thimbles has nearly doubled. It has become impossible to find the gilded basalt variety. Those of you wise enough to have collected Wedgwood thimbles, especially in the more unusual colour combinations, will see an increase in their value. One reason is their appeal abroad, they are an easily recognisable brand. As sources of antique thimbles diminish, so we must accept the growing importance of good quality 20th century examples.

Collectors have been aware how the world of collecting is shrinking and have wondered if future generations will enjoy our same small passions.

Then we remember the stone we put in our pocket from the path through the woods, the piece of ribbon from a hair band, the shell from our first holiday abroad. It is a need to have a small object to evoke a beloved place or time or person. On some level, we need to fill the gap of forgetfulness with an object that recalls good memories without effort. That maybe the basis of collecting, and therefore many believe it will always remain part of a human need. Having been through the fashion for minimalism and de-cluttering, all very well when you are young and have no objects holding memories of times past, clutter is returning! People will always collect, but as older sources dry up, we will have to re-evaluate the recent past. What we used to regard as boring – it was something mum had – we begin to wish we hadn't thrown it out!

Bridget



Annie and Bridget

'The Thimble Society' is offering a reduced membership subscription to members under 20 years old. We do have a few! just let me know who you are when next year's subscriptions are due. From this coming year under 20s will pay £15 UK. £17 Europe and £19 RoW.

Mona – the Makers got it Wrong

Most collectors know of thimbles with the word 'MONA' on them and the 'Triskelion' or 'legs', which are the symbol of the Isle of Man, further round the thimble.

I was reading a piece which referred to this thimble name and the fact that it was the old name for the Isle of Man. I couldn't remember whether it was a Celtic or Roman name, so out of idle curiosity I reached for the small encyclopaedia I kept by my desk. What I read had me rushing for Britannica, where I again looked up the word 'Mona'. It said 'Isle of *Anglesey*, ancient Mona, known for its ancient history and Celtic remains. It became a famous Druid centre and later a stronghold of resistance against the Romans, finally falling to them in AD78'. I could hardly believe my eyes as, thanks to the thimble, I had always believed it to be the name for the Isle of Man. I put 'Mona' into Google and there were numerous references to the Isle of Anglesey and I also put in 'Isle of Man' and there were none relating to 'Mona'.

At a Midland Group meeting, I was telling this to a member who said she knew it was the old name for Anglesey as her mother had been and brought up there. She later sent me a note from the old (1812) dictionary by a Reverend Barclay which said 'It [Anglesey] is called by the ancients Mona and was the seat of the Druids of whom there seem to be some monumental remains in the erections of huge stones as at Stonehenge'. She also has an old map that is titled 'Mona, how called Anglesey Island'. I also asked several well-known expert thimble collectors what the word 'Mona' meant to them and, without exception, they all said 'Isle of Man' and some referred me to the Mona thimble.

So, who made the mistake which has misled thimble collectors into wrong thinking for all these years? Obviously, there was need for some research to try to find an answer. All the thimbles noted were registered at Chester. The earliest Mona thimbles noted are dated 1896/7 and have the initials JT&S for John Thompson of 31 Clerkenwell Road, London EC, who appears to be a wholesaler. There are later ones with CH for Charles Horner dating 1906/7/8/9. Then there is a 1904 Mona thimble with the initials HW Ltd who was Henry Williamson a factor (wholesaler) who had marks registered at London, Birmingham and Chester. There is also a Mona thimble with a full set of Chester marks dating 1906., but no maker's initials at all. (This is not legal, as hall marked articles should have a maker's mark as well.) The thimbles all look the same design, although not having held the differently marked and dated ones altogether in my hand at the same time, it is not possible to be absolutely positive about this (photos not only came from this country but as far afield as Germany, South Africa and Australia – I am grateful to these collectors for their help). It has been suggested that Horner may have made all these Mona thimbles, especially those of JT&S, as some other thimbles with these initials (JT&S) on have been noted to have CH registration numbers on them. He could also have made these for HW Ltd as he made thimbles for a number of wholesalers and, again, Horner registration numbers have been noted on HW Ltd thimbles. The thing that is puzzling is that if Horner did make the Mona thimble, why are the ones with his initials on, several years later than the JT&S one? Surely with such an interesting thimble he would have wanted to be known as the earliest maker. Catalogues and books, as well as actual thimbles, have been checked for the CH Mona, but all the dates are those mentioned above – none appear to be pre-1906.

So, was it Horner who got it wrong or did JT&S give Horner the wrong information? Either way, neither of them could have checked to see that it was correct and, through this, collectors have believed them for many years. Incidentally, in the *Times* newspaper's daily 'five question quiz' in November 2005 (at the time I was researching all this), the question was asked 'What is Mona?' and, of course, being the *Times*, they had the right answer!

There are, of course, thimbles by makers such as Fenton, Swann and Horner etc. which have just the Triskelion (no Mona) on them which, quite rightly, allude to the Isle of Man.

If anyone has any more information regarding these thimbles, I would be very interested to hear from them.

Norma.Spicer@ukgateway.net

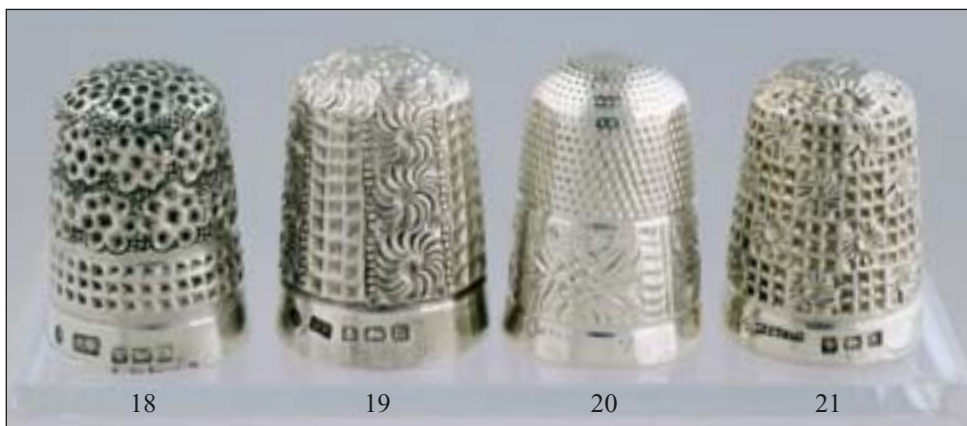


Two views of the same thimble date letter 'O'



A non slip patent and other domed tops

- | | | |
|----|---------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| 46 | Clear all over daisies, to grip the needle, mkd GS B'ham 1906 | £35 |
| 47 | By SB&S B'ham 1912, pleasing crisp daisies | £35 |
| 48 | By JC B'ham 1894. Another version of charming daisies | £35 |
| 49 | Mkd 'Non Slip' with a patent no. By AB&Co Ches 1908 | £36 |



Two unusual Blackberries and others

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|----|----------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| 18 | Blackberries in circles above waffles and over top. By JF B'ham 1905 | £60 |
| 19 | Alternating vertical daisies and waffles. By JF B'ham 1911 | £30 |
| 20 | Border of blackberries and leaves. Mark half hidden on ri | £35 |
| 21 | Alternating waffles and daisies. Pat Rg. B'ham 1901 | £35 |

All the above silver examples are in crisp condition. No 20, the blackberry with a border of flowers and leaves is too clean to photo without glare affecting definition. If you find a silver thimble that looks too bright, then dilute some house hold bleach, dip in some cotton wool and gently waft it over the surface. Then wash and polish off.

Rona Katz

The Thimble Society are sad to announce the death of Rona Katz. Rona was an eminent member of the USA's own Thimble Collector's International, as well as a member of the Thimble Society of London. We feel our members will wish to convey their heart felt condolences, and every sympathy to her family and friends.



Unusual all over flowers and diamond borders

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|-------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| 22 Unusual all over well defined flowers by JC B'ham 1916 | £39 |
| 23 Crisp diamond on etched border, by JF B'ham 191 | £30 |
| 24 Similar diamond border on daisy background. By HG&S B'ham 1888 | £30 |
| 25 Crisp all over waffles by JF B'ham 1900 | £30 |



Side Spring Corsets and others

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|------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| 26 'J.B. Side Spring Corsets' by HG&S Ches 1923 | £55 |
| 27 'From Llundudno' by GS B'ham 1930 | £75 |
| 28 'Ceylon Tea'. Early advertising example Ches 1906 | £55 |
| 29 'Royal Spa' clear example by HG&S B'ham 1911 | £38 |

All the above are forms of advertising, Ceylon tea in 1906 seems one of the earliest examples. There does not seem to be much information regarding the history of silver advertising thimbles, maybe some enterprising member might like to take it on ?



Dorcas with flowered border and others

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|----|--------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| 30 | Mkd 'Dorcas. CH 7. With flowered border | £35 |
| 31 | Very crisp swirled flowered border. By JF B'ham 1921 | £30 |
| 32 | Very crisp cut daisies, all over flower top. By CH Ches 1900 | £38 |
| 33 | Very crisp flowers and waffles. By CH Ches 1904 | £40 |

Nearly all the thimbles in this issue are from two private collections. If the Thimble Society did not have access to private collections, we would not be able to offer you such interesting items, and in good condition.



Tall early English silver and others

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|----|------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| 34 | A deep richly chased border on this elegant early item, cir 1830 | £68 |
| 35 | Unusual cushion style pattern, by JF B'ham 1903 | £36 |
| 36 | Charming combination of flowers and waffles, mkd CH Ches 1895 | £30 |
| 37 | Daisy rim, flower border, all over flowers. By CH Ches 1911 | £35 |

Notice how few of our silver thimbles have hall marks that are pre 20th century. Your true Victorian 19th century thimble is getting hard to find now.



Different applied borders and cherub

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|----|----------------------------------------------------------|------|
| 38 | Delicate applied border, mkd JF B'ham 1890 | £65 |
| 39 | Different version of an elegant applied border | £55 |
| 40 | The rare and beautiful 'Cherub' design by CH Ches 1906 | £240 |
| 41 | Another rare border of 'bleeding hearts' by CH Ches 1901 | £90 |

The silver 'Cherub' design seemed to have been used in America as well in the late 19th and early 20th century. Although the USA designs favoured the cupid.



Silver versions of daisy patterns

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|----|--------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| 42 | Alternating flowers and waffles around the border, by JFB'ham 1901 | £32 |
| 43 | All over charming crisp daisies, domed top. By CH Ches 1887 | £36 |
| 44 | Deep daisy border, by JF B'ham 1913 | £34 |
| 45 | All over crisp daisies, flatter top. By HG&S B'ham 1903 | £28 |

If any of you are interested in new printing processes, I take the magazine photos using tungsten [artificial light balanced] transparency slide film. I still believe the detail achieved is finer than using a digital camera. The rolls of trannies are then scanned onto a disc for £26 per roll. You can then print direct from your disc.

Opposite, Top photo, left to right**Antique, gold with turquoise and others**

54	Probably Italian c.1880, silver, silver gilt rim set with turquoise	£85
55	Exquisitely chased gold, applied border with turquoise, English c.1870 Exclusive limited edition of 60 made for the Thimble Society. 9ct gold engraved with a picture and	£330
56	'Raising of the Mary Rose 1982' full hll mks	£220
57	Elegant French c.1850, 18ct gold with blue enamel set with classical leaves	£490

Second photo, left to right**Antique Worcester's and other**

58	Delightful chaffinch on this possible early Worcester c.1860	£180
59	Similar to above, only with a posy of flowers	£150
60	An unknown maker, hand painted [some wear] on opaline [milk glass]	£85
61	Beautiful delicately painted bird on detailed foliage, prob. Worcester	£200

Third photo, left to right**Silver British Victorian commemoratives and others**

62	'GM 1911' applied gold crown commemorative of the coronation of King George & Queen Mary	£220
63	'Windsor' in raised letters over a clear raised picture of the castle, c.1850	£440
64	Empty central cartouche, linked hands, rope twist border	£220
65	Lovely raised flowers on a deep border, c.1840	£220

Fourth photo, left to right**Antique brass peep and others**

66	Very rare antique brass peep, six clear views of the 'Isle-of-Wight' c.1860	£295
67	18ct gold, carnelian top, elegantly chased Scandinavian, engraved 1916	£230
68	Gold, with handsome applied border, central initials on cartouche. C.1860	£170
69	Elaborate central Celtic design, 18ct gold, carnelian top, Scandinavian c.1890	£200

Centre pages, left hand side**Top photo, left to right****Antique silver 'Souvenir' and gold**

70	14ct gold, 19th cen.USA. Plain with central initials L.F.Y.	£85
71	French, 19th cen silver, raised letters 'Souvenir' a border of stars	£70
72	19th cen English, prob 15ct gold, raised tiny bead pattern called Etruscan	£220
73	19th cen USA prob 14ct gold. Engraved 'Ella' in cartouche	£90

Second photo, left to right**Two 20th century enamel on silver and others**

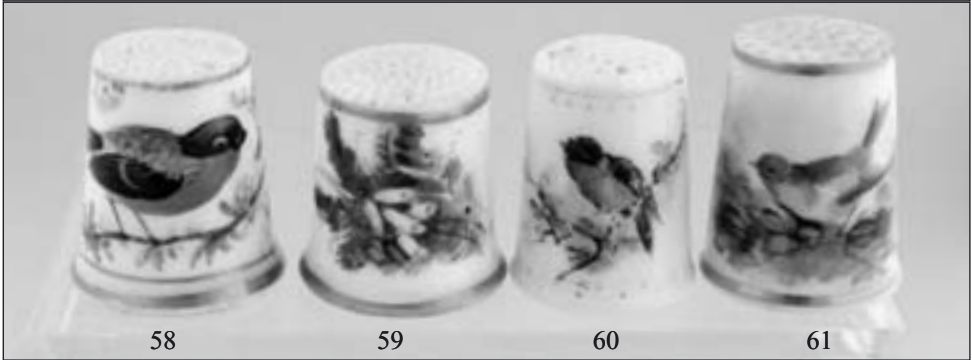
74	19th cen, USA, prob 14ct gold, delicately engraved, 'Earle' in central cartouche	£90
75	Prob. 20th cen, silver with blue enamel	£30
76	Prob 20th cen. Silver with blue enamel border showing a bow	£45
77	19th cen, silver with amethyst glass top, central shield, poss German	£48

Third photo, left to right**Antique enamel, ivory, and others**

78	19th cen. Gabler eight petal top, silver with enamel border of roses	£145
79	Elegant scalloped border, with applied frieze, gold, English c.1860	£220
80	Ivory, 19th cen Chinese made for European export	60
81	Scarce border of raised thistles and leaves, mkd JS&S Ches 1896. Green top	130

Fourth photo, left to right.**Antique French silver, and gold with amethyst.**

82	Decorative repousse raised flowers on this 19th cen French silver in leather case	£120
83	Extremely beautiful 19th cen. Gold set with amethyst lozenges	£380
84	Highly decorative chased 19th cen french silver, tiny L mk ? hidden in bow	£135









Centre page, right side, Top photo, left to right**Antique Scandinavian silver with stone top, and others**

85	19th cen silver with stone top, prob. German. Chased border	£30
86	19th cen French, 18ct gold, classic little dots border, useful for a set	£170
87	19th cen Scandinavian, initials ELW alongside silver mk. Mauve stone top	£79
88	Hll mkd 15ct gold by JS&S B'ham 1932	£80

Second photo, left to right**15th-16th century Medieval brass and brass Nuremberg. All good condition.**

89	Rare 15th/16th century brass, with trefoil divisions containing dimpling	£350
90	Rare 15th/16th century brass with quatro foil divisions, each with cut out trefoils	£350
91	14th cen brass acorn cap, bare tonsure and twin side nicks from the mold release	£90
92	15th/16th century brass Nuremberg, note elegant border and regular dimpling	£130

Third photo, left to right**Gold commemorative E11R, and others**

93	20th cen. Silver, gold wire and garnets made by Helmut Grief	£45
94	Gold commemorative of Queen Elizabeth II coronation, with coach & horses	£465
95	Brass 'Her majesty thimble, England' [for Queen Victoria]	£75
96	Mkd HG&S, unusual silver, with rose gold flower chased border	£39

Fourth photo, left to right**Probably 19th century Worcester porcelain**

97	Charming blue tit in foliage, a branch on reverse	£180
98	Inside purple Worcester trade .mk. A delightful chaffinch	£190
99	A well painted blush ground bull finch on coloured foliage	£250
100	Lovely detail of colourful bird on blush ground, on blossom branch	£270

Left page**Top photo, left to right****Silver with enamel, and others**

101	Prob. Early Worcester, charming colourful bird	£160
102	Modern Meissen porcelain. Mkd and numbered inside	£80
103	Pretty painted flowers on enamel on silver, milk stone top. Prob 19th cen German	£80
104	Very similar, with blue glass top	£80

Second photo**Modern Wedgwood and hand painted Worcester's**

105	Wedgwood white on blue swan	£35
106	Signed D.Sparks. Black tr.mk inside. A blue tit	£30
107	Signed D.Sparks. black td.mk. Yellow breasted bird	£30
	Signed P.Platt. no td.mk. Platt was a famous painter for Worcester, and moon lighted	
108	using their un marked thimbles to paint on, his work is excellent	£60

Third photo, left to right**Bakelite finger guards and others**

109	Cream expandable bakelite 1920's guard	£20
110	Bakelite tortoiseshell guard	£20
111	Very rare unscrewable ivory/bone 19th c. Chinese thimble, made for export	£85
112	Pretty chased floral border, 19th cen continental brass	£28

Fourth photo, left to right**Modern porcelain, two hand painted**

113	Spode, blue hare bells	£12
114	Worcester black.trade mk	£12
115	Hand painted, signed by Jaspers of Yorkshire	£24
116	Hand painted, signed by S.Bupas	£24



French decorative items, one with Doves

117	Clear ornate trailing flowers and foliage, French cir.1880	£70
118	Charming arches containing flowers, French c.1880	£70
119	Love birds or doves, surrounded by raised garlands, French c.1880	£180
120	Classic design of elegant engraving, useful to complete a set	£45

The Love Birds are beautifully modelled, they are works of art. The French thimble makers must have employed some fine artists to model their thimble designs. I don't think we took such pains to delight English ladies.

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 £500. 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.

A diamond border and others

50	A diamond and daisy border, by JS B'ham 1902	£30
51	By CM B'ham 1910, pretty circles and flowers	£28
52	Sharp star shaped flower border, by HG&S B'ham 1899	£28
53	Elegant tiers of daisies, by HG&S B'ham 1906	£35

To clean very stubborn tarnish or stains, use silver dip for a short while. I put the dirty thimble on my finger, then dip it in, up side down. That way you can keep checking it before it becomes over clean and looks too new.

Welcome to the 2006 Thimble Society Silver Jubilee Weekend.

Most importantly, the conference will now be held at the Worcester Whitehouse Hotel. The Fownes hotel were not able to honour their commitment owing to a complete change of management.

Address the Worcester Whitehouse Hotel, Foregate St, Worcester WR1 1EA.

Telephone. 01905 24308. Fax. 01905 23440. Web site. www.whitehousehotels.com

e-mail: enquiries@worcswwhitehouse.com Please quote the following reference number 13741 to the hotel for all conference enquiries.

Rachel Mitchell is the General Manager. Verity Blunt is the Conference Co-ordinator.

We have reserved standard rooms at £80 per night for a twin or double room.

£60 per night for a single room.

Members may share a double room, which works out at £40 each. The above rates are inclusive of vat. All Room prices include full English breakfast. Meals and the bar will be paid as consumed. There is a £2 charge per person per serving of tea and coffee. Morning coffee and afternoon tea will be served on Sat and Sunday.

Sales tables are £5 per person, members and dealers.

Urgent. Please let us know if you want to attend as soon as possible, if you have not already done so. We already have 45 bookings, and the hotel want to know by the end of March if we will need more rooms.

There is an attendance charge of £20 for the meeting to cover the costs of the conference rooms and equipment. This will be paid by all members. Those attending on a one day or three day basis, or staying at the hotel.

We require a booking deposit of £20 Please send in by March 12th. we accept UK cheques or credit cards. This deposit is returnable up to June 1st 2006.

The hotel will require the guarantee of a credit or debit card. Please give us your card details with a current expiry date if you wish us to book for you.

Rooms are available from 2pm on the day of arrival and must be vacated by 12 noon day of departure.

The hotel is opposite Foregate St Station, no need for a taxi. If you arrive at Shrub Hill Station, it is a short taxi ride. The hotel car park is large, and operates a one way system as you drive in from the main road. You take a ticket to gain entry, which you exchange for a plastic pass to leave. All the rooms have excellent facilities, air-conditioning, iron, safe, coffee/tea maker, hair dryer. I advise you to check if any of these are vital to you. All rooms have a TV and bathroom. There are 5 rooms and 5 car park spaces allocated for the disabled, please let the hotel know if you have special requirements.

The reception area is small, but there is an adjacent bar to meet in. There is a swimming pool, whirlpool and gym. The dining room is made up of tables that seat 8. So no member will be alone, unless requested.

Friday afternoon is the coach trip to the needle factory at Redditch. Charge for coach trip approx £10 per person. Museum charge [includes refreshments] £4.50 per person.

Saturday morning guided tour of the Dyson Perrin museum and factory. Approx £10 per person.

There is a frequent direct train service to Worcester. The famous Worcester Cathedral, shops, antiques market, the brilliant Royal Worcester factory seconds shop, Museum, and Clearance Shop are all a few minutes walk. If you are willing to talk, please send us your name and subject matter and we will be delighted to fit you in.

Program of events so far.

Arrival at the hotel, followed by lunch in the buffet or restaurant.

A visit by coach to the historical Redditch needle museum, with a guided tour.

Back to the hotel, drinks and a chat from a member on her collection.

Dinner, followed by groups of members who want to 'show and tell' their thimbles.

Saturday morning, a five minute walk to the Dyson-Perrin Worcester Museum.

A guided tour finishing with a talk in the museum theatre, by the curator Wendy Cook. Bring your Worcester thimbles, Wendy will tell you more about them.

Lunch, followed by a panel of experts and a question and answer session.

Betty Aardewerk from Holland will be giving a talk with slides 'A life of Luxury, at the 18th century French Court' featuring 18th cen sewing tools, thimbles and scent bottles.

Di Pelham Burn will be talking with slides on 'What every doll should have' featuring the 19th century.

McConnel. A programme with slides on a collection of hussifs and 'Fifi' thimble from the 20th century.

Sunday. Other talks to be arranged. Afternoon, The International sales mall.



French and German 19th cen. Silver

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|-------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| 121 Waffle top, flower border, central shield | £30 |
| 122 Probably German, flower petal top. Pretty niello frieze | £25 |
| 123 Attractive fleur de lys applied border | £30 |
| 124 Large, elegant French, classic tiny flower border | £39 |



Silver Thailand and others

- | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| 125 Silver Thailand, early 20th cen. Mermaid and reverse river god | £49 |
| 126 Hill Mkd. B'ham 1992. Central initials HIS on an urn? | £38 |
| 127 The 'Grippa' made by JF. Pat no 103216 | £38 |

We do not know much about 'the Grippa' other than that was it's trade name, it was meant to grip the needle and stop it slipping about.

Please let us know if you have moved. We get magazines returned to us from members who have paid their subs, but forgotten to give us their new address. We do not want you to miss an issue.

Inez Oaktree

It is with great sadness that The Thimble Society announces the death of Inez Oaktree.

I first met her many years ago, in the late 1980's. My mother and I had attended an antiques fair at one of the London Hotels. There was Inez, at the bottom of the stairs, with all her beautiful sewing tools and thimbles spread around her. She had the air of foreign royalty, even with the cigarette dangling from her mouth. There were coffee cups and crumbs scattered amongst the elegant silver chatelaines. A box of cigarettes perched on the lid of an enamel sewing etui. A slice of cake was revealed in a silver boxed set. She presided over the exquisite and the detritus with equal affability and nonchalance. How kind and helpful she was, because at that time she was the foremost in her field of continental tools. Each of the many boxes of thimbles was opened, with clucking noises, and a hoarse giggle when they didn't contain what she expected. I came away much poorer in financial terms, because Inez was a skilled saleswoman, but enriched by a friendship that has lasted until her death last year. Inez possessed a combination of great knowledge, especially regarding the history of Continental sewing items, and a kindness and humanity which rose above her physical sufferings. I shall miss her phone calls about business matters, always punctuated by enquiries about friends love lives. Her raffish kindly presence will be with us, who knew her, as long as we collect thimbles.



Three important cir 1890 silver French fables, all in excellent condition

128 The girl with the broken pitcher, surrounded by sheep and chickens. Mkd Sem	£300
129 The two doves in the dovecote, surrounded by trees, and a bird in flight	£250
130 Wolf in girl's clothing, surrounded by sheep. SEM mk under sleeping dog	£300

As explained in a former magazine, SEM is the famous designer of thimbles and other small silver items in late 19th century France. Amongst others, he worked for Lenain, where his thimble designs were known as 'fables' inspired by the 17th century French tales 'Les Fables de la Fontaine.'

Thimble E-mailing List – the Bee Chat Line.

If you would like to receive occasional e-mails of interest to members from Bridget, please send your name and email address to mailing-list@thimblesociety.com



Silver ‘Great Yarmouth ‘ and others

- | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| 131 Sparkly near mint crisp waffles and flower border, mkd CH Ches 1900 | £48 |
| 132 Charming roundels on this 19th cen USA border | £28 |
| 133 Rare version of ‘Torquay’ by JF B’ham 1910 | £95 |
| 134 ‘Great Yarmouth’ mkd HG&S B’ham 1930 | £90 |

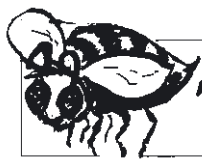
This is the first time we have shown the version of ‘Torquay’ pictured. Obviously one of the earliest form of advertising town name thimbles.



Daisy rim, and others

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|--------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| 135 Pretty all over daisies and domed top, mkd JF B’ham 1899 | £35 |
| 136 Pretty daisy rim, all over flowers, by CH Ches 1898 | £35 |
| 137 Mkd JS B’ham 1897, charming version of diamond border | £35 |
| 138 By CH Ches 1895, nice crisp daisy border | £35 |

Another plea to members to think twice before they have their thimbles ‘rounded.’ It is understandable if the rim is wavy and dented, but if it is just oval instead of round, that is because a finger is oval and your thimble should be left that way.



The Bee-Line



Dear Bees,

I wish I could have afforded that Rosherville thimble! Perhaps I shall come across one for 50p in a rummage sale next time I visit the family in England. Who knows?

If you read the piece in the mag, you will see that in the third paragraph Dr Warrington lists several Victorian literary references to Rosherville including 'The Sorcerer' which was the first full length Gilbert and Sullivan operetta. 'The Sorcerer' (John Wellington Wells, a Dealer in Magic and Spells) is trying to deflect the amorous attentions of an elderly aristocratic lady by explaining what a miserable lowdown person he is: 'Hate me, I often go to Rosherville', to which she replies: 'Love me, I'll go with you.' This was our local G&S society production this autumn. It is equally as tuneful and funny as the better-known G&S operettas, but not so frequently produced.

Lesley, USA

'Hate me! I spend the day at Rosherville!'

'Love me! That joy I'll share!'

'The Sorcerer' was first produced in 1877 and was the first G&S operetta.

Dear Bees

This time I sent the fax just as the postman was departing – I could not be quicker!

You were asking about the Journal.

The 'Story Journal' Thimble was made and assayed in 1909 when the weekly magazine of that name was launched. It was available to subscribers who had to collect tokens. The magazine ceased publication in 1914 at the outbreak of World War I.

William J.S. Bister??????

Dear Bees

Yes, you are welcome to print my last letter (or this one) if you wish. You may be right that ebay has caused a drop in the number of people attending shows and antique shops, but I would always rather see and handle something than risk buying on ebay. Besides, it's really annoying to be outbid!

I am still a member of TCI and really enjoy their publication. It would be great to attend each convention but, of course, it's more of a time/money commitment to travel to the meetings here than it would be for British TS members to attend your meetings. Sometimes I'd just rather spend the money on a few new treasures – from you, ebay, whatever.

Your magazine is wonderful and I can't imagine what you could do differently that would increase orders from the US. Well, you; could send it to me a couple of weeks before anyone else! I especially enjoy the little comments you pit in the middle and at the bottom of the pages – hope that will always continue. You already do this, but it's important to me that a

dealer list country of origin, probable date, marks, condition and type of metal. It would be nice to have the prices listed in both pounds and dollars but, frankly, I'd rather you spent your time finding the thimbles and putting out the magazine.

So, I don't have any answers. Maybe thimble collecting just isn't as popular as it was a while back. Or maybe there is less disposable income. I will certainly continue looking in person for my next 'treasure' and then order (or bid for) it when I get frustrated at not finding something I can touch. Loene McIntyre, USA

I think ebay has taken some business away from traditional sources. It has also increased some prices obtained and yet other good thimbles fetch next to nothing. It is an uneven source and must be used with care.

Dear Bees

I don't know how British vs. USA thimble collecting differs – I've been to only one TCI meeting several years ago and they really seemed like hard-core collectors. One thing that strikes me is how hard it is to find anything here in the US besides American silver thimbles c1900 (not my favourite). And being in Colorado, I have to wait for the big antique shows before I can find anything. There is one dealer from California who used to come once or twice a year, but may not be back. She was my only source for seeing (fondling) English or French thimbles. We were in the northeast last month and I did find a nice German thimble. I think the good antiques here in the US are more apt to be on either coast, not in Middle America.

I have bought a few on ebay, but only from dealers who know what they're talking about. I much prefer to be able to handle sewing tools before I buy. Your thimble pictures are very good, so it's almost like handling them. I did like being able to email you on the last order, as phoning can become expensive and it's hard to get the timing right. Also, I wonder if for some people here in the US, the currency makes a difference. Europeans would be more used to the conversions and such.

For me, the thimbles that I would like to own are hard to find and expensive. So, rather than just buy more silver thimbles because they're there, I'm trying to buy one example of each type that appeals to me. I didn't have the daisy rim and, unfortunately, still don't have that pretty OA&S blackberry! I don't collect modern thimbles, or porcelain ones, but do love the old English and French ones. And all sewing tools – I love it when you have pictures of tools other than thimbles.

Anyway, keep finding the 'good stuff' and keep sending your catalogue – I love seeing it, whether I order or not.

I'll email you when the daisy rim thimble arrives. Thanks so much.

Loene McIntyre, USA

Colour page opposite. Lower row, left to right

- | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| 147 French early 19th cen. Silver needle case in the form of a lady, waist opening | £360 |
| 148 Spa ware, wood painted needle case, English c.1840. Roses and pansies very good condition | £90 |
| 149 Wood fern ware domed thimble holder, excellent cond. English c.1860 | £75 |

Second row, left to right

- | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| 150 1920's bakelite needle case. Unscrews half way. Head in black with diamond glass eyes and fez | £70 |
| 151 Miniature bone/ivory sewing set, including tiny ivory thimble, needle case, crochet hook, bodkin, contained in a walnut. The top lifts off. English c.1840 | £250 |
| 152 Wonderful English wood carved lion needle case, central opening, c.1840 | £275 |
| 153 Wood and metal novelty windmill thimble holder, 19th cen, poss Dutch | £75 |
| 154 Adorable miniature work basket, tin, painted with cats [a little worn] cir.1840 | £49 |

Back Cover

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|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| 154 Important gilded bronze clamp shaped as a dolphin style sea monster. Blue silk pin cushion on top. Excellent condition, all original gilding. Measures 7ins/18cms. probably English, cir 1790. | £450 |
| 155 Silver gilt Sphinx inspired French needle case, cir 1830, celebrating Napoleon's Egyptian conquests. | £120 |
| 156 Gold stilleto, very finely chased, with immaculate steel shaft. French c.1840 | £90 |
| 157 Silver gilt fine filigree needle book in excellent condition. English cir 1790. Possibly replaced blue silk interior leaves | £180 |



Child's and finger guards

- | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| 143 Tiny child's with bright cut rim and engraved border | £35 |
| 144 Bright cut rim, elegant chased border on this silver guard cir.1850 | £78 |
| 145 Bright cut rim, and charming border, cir 1850 | £70 |
| 146 Unusual applied dots border, ribbed body, clear hall mk SF.Lon 1898 | £85 |

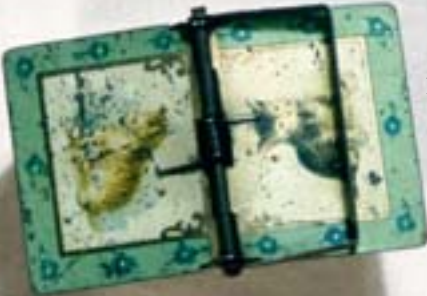
Interesting to see the elegant finger guard marked 'SF' which probably stands for 'Samuel Fosket' a London silversmith who made small objects of good quality.

BINDERS ARE NOW AVAILABLE

Any members wanting to order binders to keep their catalogues clean and in order, let us know. We have been a long time waiting, because the manufacturers had mislaid our design. Now however, we have a large box of splendidly bound blue binders. Now designed to hold 9 magazines in each binder, as we issue three magazines a year. One binder will hold three years' worth of magazines.



153



154



152



151



150



149



148



147

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