

# Australian modern silver and gold thimble and sewing tool makers 1950-2019

*Thimbles of Australia* was published in July 1998. 24 years later, this is the update that has been long in coming. It gives me an opportunity to correct unintentional errors that occurred in the original text. There have not been as many new thimbles as I anticipated or hoped for, after publication. Those that were, are integrated here into the original listing of modern Australian sterling silver thimbles, including any era gold Australian-made thimbles.

In 1998, thimbles from around the world with an Australian connection were included in the publication – today they are outside the scope of this topic.

Most of these photos were taken in 1997 – my apologies for the lack of multiple views. I am hoping to find better ones through you or see new thimbles not recorded before.

In 2010 Christine Erratt published *Marks on Australian silver 1950-2005*. Erratt used the full names for the silversmiths – I have used the same form of the maker's name.

Australia has a relatively small number of thimble collectors – so it follows that thimble silversmithing would not be too profitable. Very few thimbles were created in quantity between 1950 and 2019. There have been no silver thimbles made in Australia since 2019.

If you are creating silver thimbles, please contact me to include your thimbles.

There are so few makers of silver sewing tools in Australia, that I have included them with their thimbles.

For other Australian thimble topics see  
Australian advertising thimbles  
Australian handpainted thimbles and sewing tools 1973-2014  
Australia's Elfin thimbles  
Sydney Opera House thimbles

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## Australian modern sterling silver and gold\* thimble makers

### Trevor Blake – South Australia **NEW**

Dorothy Andrews of Thimbella, had these mini sets for sale in the late 1990s: made by Blake who produced these sets



mini sewing sets – with either a sterling silver- or gold-plated mini thimble  
in sturdy purse of blue or maroon velour

**Jean Cameron – Queensland NEW**

In 2001, The Sheil Collection in Brisbane commissioned Jean Cameron of Drayton to make silver thimbles



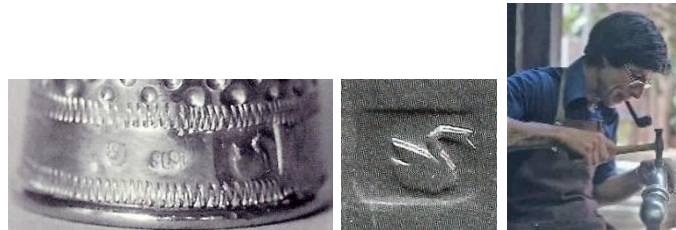
three applied gumleaves – in either sterling silver or copper  
wide-spaced handindented domed apex  
**925** on inner rim  
sturdily created with a good weight

no photo

applied stylised gumnuts band

**Joseph Eric Car – Western Australia**

Eric Car of Fremantle was a gold- and silversmith. He arrived in Australia in 1949. He made silver thimbles in 1979, which were sold accompanied by his maker's card  
Car died in 2008



**ST S** in an oval lozenge – mark is a swan in a rectangular lozenge – Eric Car 1978



heavy in weight with handmade widely spaced indentations  
size mark – M - on band

## Frank Cowan – South Australia



**STG SIL** hopping kangaroo and **FHC** mark



stylised leaf and daisy all-over pattern including apex  
size mark – L - stamped on band  
thimbles sold in Hahndorf in 1980

## \* Stuart Leslie Devlin – Victoria **NEW**

In NTCSA's *Snippets* June 2016, Lee Bateman was featured in an article about enamelled sewing tools ...  
"Australian Stuart Devlin was a silversmith trained in Geelong (born 1931) who continued his studies in London and USA and is considered one of the most important designers of the late 20<sup>th</sup> century"

Devlin designed coins, including the decimal coins for Australia in 1964 and medals for 36 countries throughout the world, including precious coins for the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games and the medals for the founding awards of the Australian honours' system in 1975: the Order of Australia, the Australian Bravery Decorations and the National Medal

Devlin died in 2018



Devlin



gold thimble with enamelled flowers on raised band



this vermeil thimble has marks for Hardy Bros – **HB<sup>RS</sup>**  
 handbeaten surface of thimble is similar enough to the one above – Devlin would have been commissioned to make this for Hardy Bros

### Bryan Frazer – New South Wales

Frazer of Artistry in Brass in Caringbah was the maker of doll jewellery and accessories as well as dollhouse accessories. Frazer placed advertisements in the doll collectors' magazines advertising that he handmade brass miniatures and could make sterling silver, mother of pearl, brass and copper thimbles, as well as old-fashioned finger protectors. None of these have been found for inclusion  
 Bryan died in 1995



mini chatelaine with five appendages  
 silver thimble at L with silver thimble bucket – scissors in their scabbard next to them

### Genesis - Victoria

The thimbles are boxed and Genesis is lettered on the inside lid of the boxes  
 It is possible that the maker is Ian Dunn of Melbourne



engraved design of acanthus leaf all around the body of thimble  
 apex is stepped down from the lip of the thimble giving the sewer extra protection  
**ST SIL** and **925** stamped on band  
 1990s

## Georgina – New South Wales

Miniature silver thimbles were made by Georgina in Sydney



mini silver thimble  
thimbles are handindented all over with loop on the rim  
7mm height – no space for maker's marks  
1990s

## \* Peter Gertler - Victoria

Gertler has his jewellery studio in South Melbourne. He was born in Melbourne and graduated with an associate diploma of art and fellowship in gold and silver smithing from Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology

The thimbles and needlecases below were designed and made by Gertler



**P G** mark in individual diamond-shaped lozenges – Peter Gertler



'The Embroiderers Guild 1960-1990' on band  
design incorporates applied Guild emblem of scissors  
maker's marks stamped on either side of tip of scissors  
limited to **70**



'The Embroiderers Guild 1960-1990'  
gold-dipped thimbles  
maker's marks are stamped on either side of tip of scissors  
limited to **30**



wooden needlecase with intricate silver trim  
created in 2000 to celebrate The Embroiderers' Guild Victoria's 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary

**\* Magnus Goldring - Sydney NEW**

This Sydney jeweller is believed to have made the Elfin thimbles. This is a 9ct rose gold thimble, made in the same era as those silver thimbles



**Adrian Graham-Rowe - Queensland**

Graham-Rowe of Kalbar turning from his creative work of fleece picture making, Adrian began working in silver and handproduced silver buckles. Not being a silversmith Adrian put much thought into making silver thimbles

Adrian also created silver thimble cages to house his thimbles, so that they could be worn around the neck. His output was not large, being a hobbyist. Adrian made thimbles to size on commission



handmade and engraved bright-cut pattern  
handpunched indentations on apex

**Patricia Ann Hagan – South Australia**

Pat Hagan of Yankalilla worked with precious metals from the early sixties. Becoming well-known as a silversmith in around 1985 she turned her hobby into a business

Pat made thimbles on commission, in a range of sizes

Her silver thimbles were often presented by the South Australian Governor to visiting VIPs to the State  
 Pat's thimbles were engraved and virtually had any design on them - her versatility made her range most appealing



**STERLING No** ... numbering for groups who commissioned thimbles on inside of thimbles

 <p>Echidna on a 'lid' atop apex with remaining thimble being smooth              the lid lifts off to make thimble functional for sewing              for sale thru SewMail International catalogues (based in SA)              available in sizes 17mm or 18mm</p>	 <p>Gumnuts on a 'lid' atop apex with remaining thimble being smooth              the lid lifts off to make thimble usable for sewing              for sale thru SewMail International catalogues (based in SA)              available in sizes 17mm or 18mm</p>	<p>no photo</p> <p>Koala</p>
 <p>'Embroiderers' Guild of South Australia' lettered around band              applied Sturt's Desert Pea, South Australia's floral emblem on smooth body              widely spaced handmade indentations              commissioned in March 1986, which was SA's sesquicentenary              limited to <b>100</b></p>		
 <p>Wombat              South Australia's faunal emblem</p>		



Hagan's handmade **red gum** thimble box  
matching thimble has a Cowell jade apex and this can be seen as the thimble fits below the display hole in lid  
also available in **blackwood**



Hagan's handmade **red gum** needlecase  
marked HAGAN on on case's lower rim, with marks on the outside of the thimble the rim has acanthus pattering  
all round

### Diane Hales – New South Wales

Hales of the Blue Mountains crafted silver and brass jewellery, hair ornaments, bracelets and necklaces  
and thimbles all with fine detail of Australian wildflowers and animals



large gumnut on apex with gumleaf 'falling' down the side  
handpunched design on thimble body

## Ian Hannay – Western Australia

Hannay learned silversmithing at the Fremantle Tech and initially repaired jewellery for friends. He then moved into jewellery making. During 1993, Ian responded to the challenge by Yvonne Varey of Gallery One and made a variety of silver thimbles  
 Very small quantities of these thimbles were made

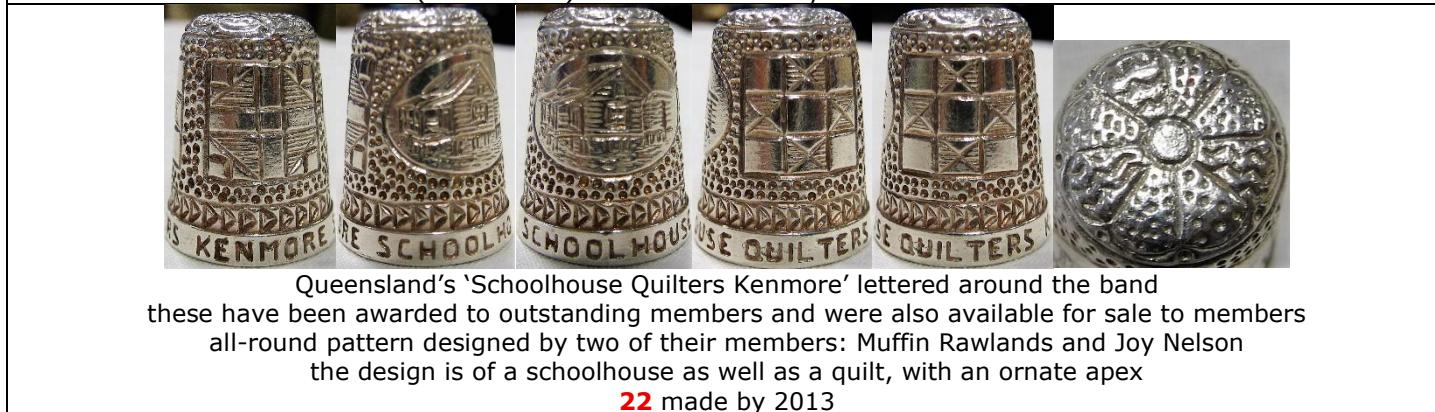


**WAYV** (WA Yvonne Varey) conjoined mark on Hannay thimbles



## Louis Hermann - Queensland

Hermann was an ornamental engraver originally from Hungary, who designed thimbles as a well-known silversmith in Brisbane and arranged to have thimbles cast in 925 silver by Les Hyde



Learn more about Australian modern sterling silver and gold thimble and sewing tool makers

\* Harold Curtis Hine - Victoria

Curtis Hine's main occupation in retirement was restoration and repair of antique and modern metal articles for the antique trade. He was a practising silversmith who, except for a 16-week course he attended in 1973 to learn basic silversmithing skills, was self-taught

From 1973 he handcrafted a number of commission pieces such as jewellery, buttons, tating shuttles, thread winders, photo frames, spoons, boxes and trophy cups, all in sterling silver

Hine of Balwyn North began handmaking sterling silver thimbles in 1989. Working from home his thimbles were never cast

They usually have smooth sides, with those sides being six degrees from the vertical, with an indented apex

According to Hine's records, he made in excess of 250 silver thimbles

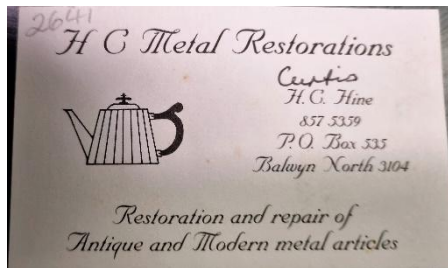
His thimbles were available in ten sizes, being suitable for both adults and children from 14mm to 18.5mm in half millimetre increases - standard stock is size C for 16mm - marked up in apex

He also produced handmade 9ct gold thimbles



mark **H.C.H** and **STG.SIL**

these marks can be found on either outside or inside rim - occasionally up in apex



applied boomerang  
1995



'Federation centenary 1901-2001' in two styles  
fewer than 10 created



embossed geometric and stylised flowers  
1995



embossed hydrangea



applied kangaroo  
1995



applied koala  
L: 1995



applied map of Australia (including Tasmania) with 9ct apex donated thimble for Needlework Tool Collectors Society of Australia's 2004 conference engraved 'NTCSA Conference 2004' on verso



embossed leaves



applied map of Australia with Southern Cross 1995



embossed geometric 1995



applied flower 1995



applied flowers 1995



applied hopping kangaroo 1995



single row of embossed stylised flowers 1995

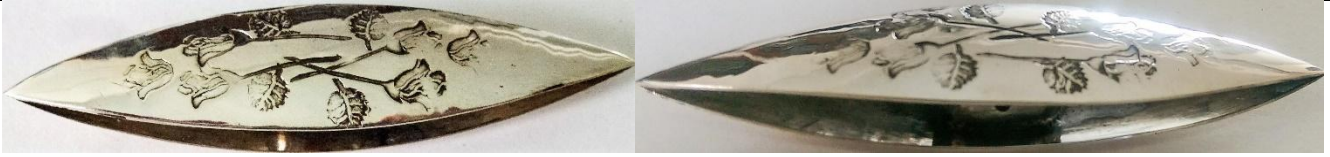


embossed stemmed rose  
some examples have more than one rose - L: has three  
R: applied gilt M monogram on verso which was a commission



tating shuttle - plain

Learn more about Australian modern sterling silver and gold thimble and sewing tool makers



tating shuttle – with embossed roses

### Patricia Holcombe - Queensland

Pat Holcombe was a Brisbane silver- and goldsmith, who created jewellery - now of Gold Coast Hinterland. Pat started silversmithing as a hobby whilst in Albuquerque New Mexico in 1979. Originally a geologist, she became a talented silversmith and jeweller. She produced high quality jewellery which included rings, earrings, necklaces, brooches and bracelets - and trinkets, including spoons and silver pudding charms.

In late 1988 Pat created silver thimbles, handmaking two or three a year

After exhibiting her silver thimbles at the Brookfield Show in Brisbane (where quilting forms 80% of the needlework section) the demand from quilters for Pat's thimbles grew. Available in two sizes they were made with two different apexes - flat for quilter's use and more domed for embroidery: both are handindented.



Pat's mark and **STERLING** inside the rim  
mark is a decorated boomerang that forms her name: a P forming her name Pat



red and green inset enamel

## L G Humphries & Sons – Sydney **NEW**

A silver thimble by this jeweller was purchased in 2004

no photo

four koalas on a branch affixed  
thimble pattern is of berries with a band of leaves  
marked size 11 925 and a map of Australia with an unknown symbol within  
heavy in weight



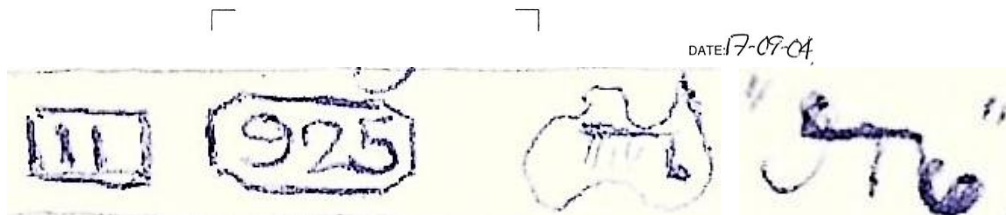
**L.G. Humphries & Sons**

ABN 169 8288 1556  
Watchcase Specialist Jewellers  
Established 1939

TAX INVOICE No.

2583

Shop 14, Level 2, Queen Victoria Building  
Sydney 2000 Phone: 9267 7691



I have finally been discarding all files kept after the publication of *Thimbles of Australia* in 1998 and these details supplied by its owner Fay need to be recorded (2022)

## Richard Ivey – South Australia

Ivey was a well-known silversmith in Laura, and his jewellery was sold in 'Metal and Stone' Adelaide and in Melbourne

Being a silversmith, it was not difficult for Richard to make silver thimbles. His first known thimble was created in 1988.

By 1999, Ivey was no longer producing thimbles

In 2003 a sterling silver chess set was bought by a Brisbane collector, which was attributed to Richard Ivey - some of the pieces are impressed with an **IV** mark



scrolled engraving design  
stamped **925** on outside  
handindented on rounded apex  
1988

## Daniel Jenkins - Victoria

Jenkins was born in the USA. Moving to Melbourne, he worked as a silversmith in Maling Road  
Having seen the beautiful silver and brass tatting shuttles made by Jenkins, Beryl Warne of  
Thimble Collections in Toorak Melbourne commissioned him to make silver thimbles for sale in her shop  
An advertisement for these thimbles that appeared in *Australian Women's Weekly* December 1984  
brought his thimbles to the attention of a wider audience  
Warne also advertised them for sale in *TCI Bulletin* July 1984



For a needleworker, this sterling silver thimble is decorated with a sand of gumnuts. At \$55, plus \$2 postage, from Thimble Collections, 412 Toorak Road, Toorak 3142.

**DJ** conjoined mark, kangaroo and **925** with kangaroo in different positions – original advertisement

*R: Australian's Women's Weekly*



gumnuts and gumleaves border  
finely stippled indentations all over – available in a matt or polished finish  
Jenkins and Beryl Warne worked together on the design  
1983

## Anthony Kean – Victoria **NEW**

In 2006 a sterling silver thimble by Kean was brought to my attention – described as quite small and fairly heavy with a kangaroo applied to front. The maker is Tony Kean – Artist in Metal

He took up silversmithing professionally in 1979

In 1988 he became an inaugural member of the Gold- and Silversmiths Guild of Australia

His workshop was then in Malden

In 1995 he moved the workshop to Bendigo and operated from 2007 as Tony Kean Jewellers



no photo

kangaroo

Learn more about Australian modern sterling silver and gold thimble and sewing tool makers

## Rod Kranz – South Australia

Kranz of Enfield was an instrument maker before his retirement in 1982. He decided to take up silverwork and jewellery making. His first silver thimble was made for his daughter in late 1983

Rod's domed thimbles are made to be used and available in four different millimetre sizes, 14-17  
Being handmade the thimbles are all different



**RK** conjoined mark and **925**



## Zygmunt Libucha – New South Wales

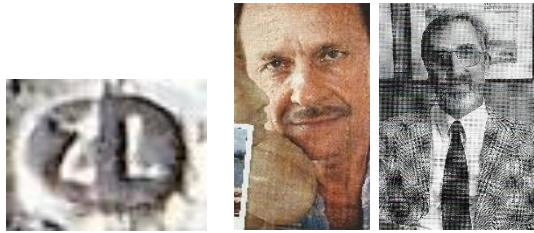
Libucha was born in Poland in 1952 and migrated to Sydney in 1982

Being a gold- and silversmith Libucha began making sterling silver thimbles in 1980

Paul Weir conceived the designs for these thimbles and commissioned Zygmunt to create the designs for collectors, in response to demand for thimbles with Australian motifs

Libucha moved to Brisbane in 1988 during Expo

He stopped working as a silversmith soon after to concentrate on creating large sculptures



**ZL** mark on verso of thimble and **925** – Libucha in 2007 – Paul Weir in 1997

 AUSTRALIA		 kangaroo
	 Sydney Opera House	 Waratah
 Wattle		
cast thimbles with Australian motifs affixed – one size only – 55 grams each		

Learn more about Australian modern sterling silver and gold thimble and sewing tool makers

### Tony Lievesley - Queensland

Lievesley of the Gold Coast handcrafted thimbles of sterling silver. Tony was an industrial electrician who turned his hand to stone cutting and faceting, gold- and silversmithing. As well as making thimbles, Tony made a silver medallion on commission for the Gold Coast City Council that went up in the Challenger shuttle in 1997.



**TL** inside with consecutive number of thimbles made **925** on onside



quilter's thimble  
indentations made in concave apex for quilting use

### Irene Marshall - Queensland

Marshall from Buderim was a silversmith during the 1970s and 1980s. Fewer than six thimbles were made, as she felt that the work involved was not worth the return.



stamped inside **925 STG.SIL**

## Rudi Paul August Matho-Dudare - Queensland

Matho-Dudare was an artist jeweller, designer and maker of creative jewellery and artefacts. He has worked in gold and silver since 1968

His thimbles are handmade and heavy in weight

The variety that Rudi brings to his thimbles is in the shape and apex - innovative and never made in quantity, rather as one-off creations: more for his own pleasure than for a commercial market

Since he started making thimbles, Matho-Dudare created about fifty thimbles (to 1998)

Matho-Dudare used several maker's marks



Rudi's marks are as varied as his thimbles

1: **St.Sil** and conjoined **MD** and mark's sketch by Betty Maloney

2: signature used in story sets and date created

3 and 4: others



domed rose design on apex stippled surface with wide band



creamy ivory apex - from old piano keys  
stippled surface with very wide band



with 'SILVER' and his 2 mark



set of six Aboriginal-themed story thimbles  
each with differing pattern on apex  
taller thimbles with applied figures  
'Silver' lettered on band



set of five Ned Kelly story thimbles  
with variety of apices including stones  
L>R: 'Kennedy's death' - 'Stringybark Creek' - 'Glenrowan' - 'Our Ned' - 'Ned's capture'  
taller thimbles with the applied characters  
'Silver' lettered on band - with date 8/97 alongside his maker's mark in cursive lettering

no photo

set of 12 story thimbles featuring Bacchus and wine-themed thimbles  
taller thimbles



buttons

\* Liuxin Newman – New South Wales **NEW**

This Chinese-born Australian silversmith from Sydney took the quilting world by storm when in 1998 she produced handmade and handpolished sterling silver thimbles. Liuxin (pronounced Lou-shin) travelled to the United States to promote her thimbles on the television show 'Simply Quilts' in November 2002. Her method of quilting and articles appeared in the Australian quilting magazines. Her trademark and business name is Thimblelady™ and owned and run by Liuxin and Keith Newman:

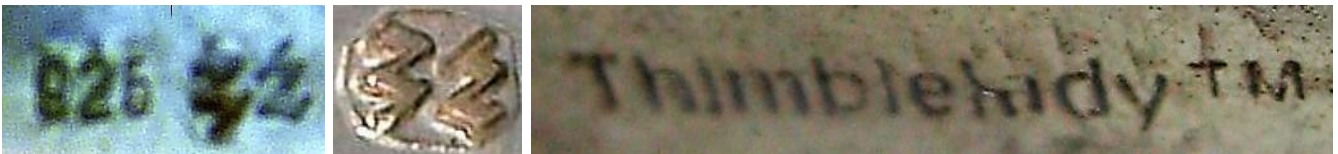
"This trademark under which we manufacture and trade our thimbles and conduct quilting classes teaching Thimblelady's no pricked finger quilting technique. All our products are designed by me and initially made by Keith and myself as Liuxin is a silver- and goldsmith. Her New Zealand-born mother-in-law was a silversmith and Liuxin inherited her silver workshop"

Liuxin no longer handmakes her thimbles: she outsourced their manufacture

[www.thimblelady.com](http://www.thimblelady.com)

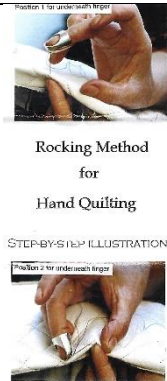
Liuxin will have initials and monograms engraved on request on her thimbles

Newman's thimbles were also available in gold-plated silver and 9ct gold



L: Liuxin's mark and **925** – R: mark for **Thimblelady™**

her first mark is the zigzag-like or lightning symbol, representing the Chinese character 'Xin' which is her Chinese name in Cao script



sturdy quilter's thimble with nail opening  
 deep set indentations – R: later more clustered indentations  
 R: size mark lettered on surface opposite nail opening  
 Liuxin's thimbles are made to size: sizes range from 14 to 21mm  
 two thimbles are used in Liuxin's rocking method of quilting - one on the long finger and the other on the thumb  
 use of these thimbles for rocking-method quilting gives six stitches to 1cm  
 1998-2002



sturdy quilter's taller thimble with opening at top  
 this is second version once first method of quilting was abandoned  
 thimbles are not round in shape but oval following the finger's natural shape and Liuxin described them as cone-shaped  
 vertical band of two rows of deep indentations, which allows quilting finger to remain straight whilst quilting, which is kinder on the hands  
 these thimbles are available in S M L etc. and these sizes are marked on the bottom rim  
 lettered Thimblelady™ vertically alongside indentations  
 also available in stainless steel and clear plastic



Liuxin's latest sterling silver creation for more comfortable quilting is for use on the thumb  
 sturdy quilter's shorter thimble with opening at top

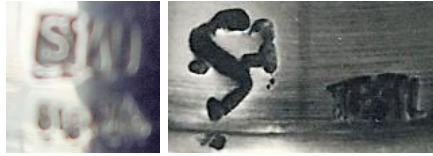


sterling silver thimble holder

## Raymond Norman – New South Wales

Norman, from the Sturt Workshop in Mittagong, made heavy sterling silver thimbles in the mid-1970s

Being handmade, no two of Norman's thimbles are identical  
Some examples have been found on wooden or marble plinths



L: mark **SW** for Sturt Workshop and **925** – R: Norman's mark and **925**



heavy thimble



heavy thimble with pronounced rim



thimble on silver thimble holder on silver plinth on white marble base



thimble on silver thimble holder on wooden plinth – two accompanying silver hands, one holding a needle the other silver spool of thread  
**SW** mark



## Sydney Oats – South Australia

Syd Oats of Beaufort in Victoria, turned silver thimbles over a period of ten years. Originally from England, Oats brought his silver punches with him

Oats' thimbles were available for sale at the Soho Foundry at Sovereign Hill and in Ballarat from the second half of the 1980s. Syd was receiving \$6 each for these thimbles – no wonder he gave up making silver thimbles in 1994

Oats moved to South Australia where in 1998, after a long bout of ill-health, Syd recommenced silversmithing and made further quantities of silver thimbles after reading about himself in *Thimbles of Australia*

From 2000 his designs incorporated hopping kangaroos around the rim and his thimbles had unbacked semi-precious stones set into the apex

His maker's mark had to change, as he no longer possessed his original punches

In December 2003 Syd again sold his equipment for making thimbles


It's estimated that he produced between 200 and 250 thimbles



1<sup>st</sup> mark: **STG.SIL** anchor and stemmed rose – 2<sup>nd</sup> mark: **Stg.Sil** and eye

			
no kangaroo stamps	suspension loop	no kangaroo stamps	no kangaroo stamps
			
		no kangaroo stamps	no kangaroo stamps
			
no kangaroo stamps	no kangaroo stamps		
			
no kangaroo stamps stemmed rose mark		threepenny 1925 coin L: no kangaroo stamps	
			
			1931 coin in apex

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 <p>amethyst</p>	 <p>amethyst crystal natural crystal jagged edges</p>	 <p>apple green quartz</p>
 <p>azurite</p>	 <p>black jade</p>	 <p>blue agate</p>
 <p>blue opal no kangaroo stamps</p>	 <p>blue tiger's eye</p>	 <p>chrysoprase</p>
 <p>cubic zirconia</p>	 <p>dark opal</p>	 <p>fancy lace agate</p>
 <p>goldstone</p>	 <p>paua shell flat apex no kangaroo stamps</p>	
 <p>lapis lazuli</p>		 <p>malachite</p>

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mother-of-pearl  
R: flat apex



obsidian



optic fibre cable  
bundles of very fine fibres – it  
gives a shimmery effect



quandong  
naturally holed seed as apex  
last thimble: no kangaroo stamps  
R: native plum with seed  
showing different patterns



rhodonite



rutilated hair crystal



simulated opal



snowflake obsidian



sodalite



speckled jade



speckled lapis lazuli



St Christopher medal



tiger's eye

white doublet opal

white opal  
L: no kangaroo stamps – stemmed rose mark

### N Parker – Western Australia

John Harris & Son was a firm of silversmiths of Perth who specialised in making jewellery and native flowers for their spoons and other small silver items  
In 1988 Mrs N. Parker, John Harris' daughter, made a sterling silver thimble. It isn't known whether this was a one-off thimble

**925 N.C.P. 88.**

sketch Betty Maloney



gumnuts and gumleaves with **B** monogram

### Jenny Richardson – Queensland **NEW**

Richardson created this unsigned silver thimble – handmade and handindented – with an accompanying silver cage for wearing. Jenny never created thimbles in any quantity as her silversmithing was a hobby - she had no maker's mark (1997)



**925** on outer rim

Learn more about Australian modern sterling silver and gold thimble and sewing tool makers

## William Robinson – Western Australia

Bill Robinson was a mould maker for chocolates and crafts. He also made silver charms. Gallery One of Fremantle persuaded him to create silver thimbles and from 1992, he handmade his thimbles. Robinson's thimbles are the only silver thimbles to have opals incorporated into the design.



**WR AUSTRALIAN MADE** on inner rim



applied Australian map



applied Australian map with opal apex showing each state's 'name'



applied kangaroos



applied scissors on two different backgrounds

**Libby Savage – Queensland NEW**

Libby began experimenting with sterling silver thimbles in Brisbane in late 2010. She is a jeweller with eight years of experience, who specialises in one-off pieces, which often incorporated enamel, created in the plique-à-jour method

Her silver thimbles were made to the average finger size ie 16mm

The plique-à-jour method is very time consuming. Using 999 silver for the thimbles, the fine silver frame is created from scratch. It is then filled in with vitreous enamel with no backing, which allows light through showing its translucence. The flat apexes are as ornate as the body

They were all one-off designs, and they are not marked in any way, but her designs are so distinctive

In 2019 Libby was no longer silversmithing



**925 and LS mark**





needlecase with swivelling top

### Tor Gordon Schwanck - Victoria

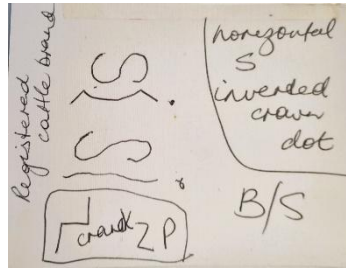
Tor Schwanck operated as a silversmith as Tor Design in High Street Malvern in the 1970s. He was born in Helsinki and arrived in Australia in 1961  
Schwanck died in 2005



**STG SIL** on inside

**Brian Scott – Queensland NEW**

Brian was a silversmith in Brisbane who enjoyed turning his hand to anything that could be made in silver – eg belt buckles and undertaking silver jewellery repairs  
When he first encountered thimble collectors in the early 1990s, Scott began to experiment making silver thimbles and would make thimbles on commission: names or dates inscribed with a series of dot hand indentations  
Brian died in 2001



**925** on outside – **Brian** inscribed inside with diagrammatic explanation



1995



**Silver Moon Jewels by Jaap van Schie – Victoria NEW**

Jaap had a stall at St Kilda markets on the Esplanade Melbourne between 2000-2013  
his thimbles are of copper, silver and brass

no photo

\* **John Storm – New South Wales**

Storm enjoyed jewellery making as a hobby and after he made a probable one-off gold thimble in Newcastle in 1995, he was commissioned to make two sterling silver thimbles in 2001.



L: **J STORM** and **HAND MADE** and **SILVER** and **MAY 2001** – R: **9CT JS** and **1995**



\* **John Tarasin – New South Wales**

Tarasin a manufacturing jeweller in Sydney was commissioned to make this thimble

**JRT**      **9ct**  
**S/S**

sketch Betty Maloney



**Ian Trafford-Walker – New South Wales**

Trafford-Walker an artist from the Murwillumbah area produced the drawings for two thimble designs  
He had these designs transferred into thimbles by silversmiths in Indonesia  
Only a few were made



kangaroo  
sterling silver and gold  
Indonesian wirework - in two sizes - R: smaller size b&w



Byron Bay lighthouse with whale  
sterling silver and gold  
Indonesian wirework

## Marylyn Ann Thorgood Verstraeten - Victoria

Verstraeten worked in the Meat Market Craft Centre in Melbourne. Her jewellery and sculptures were purchased and commissioned privately by Australian businesses, state and federal governments as presentations to royalty and visiting dignitaries

She worked in silver and gold. The thimbles are cast, heavy in weight and available in one size



AUSTRALIAN MADE engraved inside – conjoined **MV** mark and **STG.SIL** outside (both well hidden in ornate band) – accompanying thimble card – the label was part of her merchandising

<p>no photo</p> <p>echidna</p>	 <p>frill-necked lizard</p>	 <p>gumnuts</p>
<p>no photo</p> <p>kangaroo</p>	 <p>kangaroo Paw</p>	<p>no photo</p> <p>koala</p>
 <p>Leadbeater's possum</p>	<p>no photo</p> <p>platypus</p>	

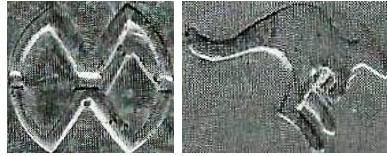
**Robert Malcolm Walter – South Australia**

Malcolm Walter was a gold- and silversmith, who made fine quality jewellery. He trained as a teacher and taught for nine years. Once he gained his Diploma of Art in gold and silversmithing, he worked in London's Hatton Gardens for nearly four years

On his return to Australia in 1980 he settled in South Australia where he became the Goldsmith-in-Residence and by Appointment to Birdwood Mill

In 1991 he approached Pan Arts about making silver thimbles

Thereafter these crowns in silver were affixed around Ullmannsglass clear crystal thimbles – they are not in the scope of this topic



**MW** conjoined and hopping kangaroo

 <p>applied gumnuts and gumleaves crown cast limited to <b>30</b> 1991</p>	 <p>hats - Bishop's mitre</p>	 <p>hats - bowler hat</p>
 <p>hats - deerstalker</p>	 <p>hats - flying helmet</p>	 <p>hats - policeman's helmet</p>
 <p>hats - top hat</p>		
<p>set of six sterling silver hats - limited to <b>10</b> sets - 1994</p>		
 <p>accompanying leaflet</p>		

Learn more about Australian modern sterling silver and gold thimble and sewing tool makers

\* **Ward – Queensland** **NEW**

A surname is all we have for this Brisbane silversmith, who made a one-off gold thimble for his mother, Pat's fiftieth birthday. It is handmade and studded with diamonds around the rim

no photo

\* **H K Wendt – Adelaide** **NEW**

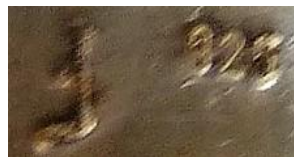
This South Australia silversmith is part of the firm of silversmiths W H Wendt who opened their store in Rundle Street in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century



applied 9ct gold flowers with semi-precious stones forming their centres, on a wide band

**Frances West – New South Wales** **NEW**

This silversmith was based in Lightning Ridge



West's mark inside - intertwined **FW** and **925** – mark seen more clearly lettered on backing card



handmade quilting thimble

Learn more about Australian modern sterling silver and gold thimble and sewing tool makers

## Other Australian thimbles – with unknown makers

The following information is everything we know about these seven thimbles



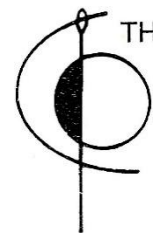
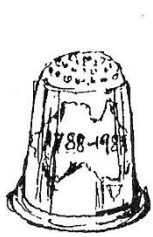
**925**  
engraved commemorative date of  
1977  
**NEW**



handmade in Tanunda  
1997  
16mm



**925**  
**NEW**



The Embroiderers' Guild NSW  
'1788-1988'  
embossed Guild logo and map of Australia commissioned to commemorate Australia's Bicentenary  
**ST SIL** outside  
limited to **200** – last sold in 1996  
L: sketch from Guild 1987 – R: Guild logo



from Mittagong

## References

- Kenneth Cavill *Australian jewellers: gold and silversmiths makers and marks*. 1992  
Christine Erratt *Marks on Australian silver 1950-2005*. 2010  
Susan Jean Gowan *Thimbles of Australia*. 1998  
Sue Gowan Syd Oats – *silversmith Needlework Tool Collectors Society of Australia Newsletter* September 1999

## Contributors

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Ray Nimmo | Syd Oats Les Page | Lee Perry | Libby Savage | Norma Shattock | Ann Shuttleworth | Jean Taylor  
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This listing of Australian sterling silver thimble makers does not purport to be complete or accurate in all aspects.  
Rather it invites comments and contributions to add to our knowledge. My thanks to the contributors.

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