

Wedgwood bone china thimbles

It is four years now since I started my 'Learn More About...' topics and I have come a full circle by returning to Wedgwood thimbles - this page is not about the Jasperware Wedgwood thimbles, which I cover separately. It is about those made of Wedgwood bone china. Originally, I listed these with the Wedgwood jasperware thimbles topic but there were no accompanying photos and it's time now to remedy that.

Like the other iconic English china manufacturers such as Royal Doulton and Royal Worcester, Wedgwood has a large range of bone china decorative and serviceable ware and some of their thimbles are decorated with these patterns. These are decal or transferware. Some of the dinner service or tableware patterns are replicated on thimbles - like the Kutani Crane and Osborne designs.

The later thimbles seem to have no gold trim at the rim and the shorter Wedgwood backstamp is black.

There are far fewer thimbles to collect in this range than in the Wedgwood jasperware thimbles range. The most recent bone china issue from Wedgwood is their Wedgwood Museum Collection. They are no longer producing bone china thimbles.

The first handpainted china Wedgwood thimble ever, has just come to my attention. It is handpainted by Jon French to commemorate the bicentenary of Lord Nelson in 2005. Others have followed.

It was sad news indeed to read in this first week of 2009 that the Waterford-Wedgwood are group being placed into liquidation. What will now happen to the Wedgwood factory in Barlaston? Only time will tell. This group included Royal Doulton with all their merged china partners, Royal Albert, Johnson Brothers, Coalport and Rosenthal. So much merchandise of all of these brands is already being made offshore.



L: earlier stamp – C: used towards the end of production – R: Kutani Crane, with additional Portland Vase trademark

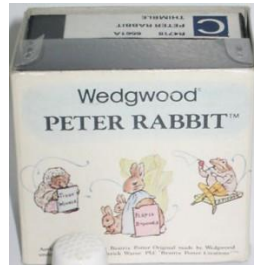
See also "[Learn more about Wedgwood **Jasperware** Thimbles](#)"

Beatrix Potter characters

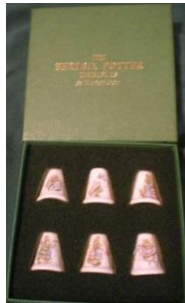
this set of six thimbles featuring Beatrix Potter characters was issued by Wedgwood in 1983
each character is named on the character on the front

they are marked with © Frederick Warne 1983 on the verso, with the Wedgwood Bone China backstamp
there is no gold trim at the rim

the thimbles were also marketed by the Thimble Collectors Club [TCC]



example of the specialised box



example of a composite box for six



this is the verso of each of these thimbles



Benjamin Bunny



Flopsy Bunnies



Jemima Puddle Duck



Peter Rabbit



Tailor of Gloucester



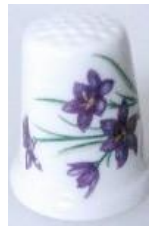
Tiggy Winkle

Flowers

are any more of these from the tableware patterns? None of these floral designs have gold painted trims at the rim



Kutani Crane flower



violets



Tableware designs



Hathaway Rose

L: gold trim at the rim - with brown backstamp
R: no gold trim at the rim - with black backstamp



Ice Rose

no gold trim at the rim



Kutani Crane



Mirabelle



Osborne



Rosedale



Rosehip
no gold trim at the rim



Wild Strawberry

R: no gold trim at the rim – shorter backstamp

The Wedgwood Museum Thimble Collection

This set of 24 thimbles, commissioned by [Thimble Collectors Club \[TCC\]](#), Chessington, UK, prior to 1997, contains 22 bone china and two jasperware thimbles [these two are featured in the Wedgwood jasperware topic]. The designs are from classic designs in the Wedgwood archives.

Do you know exactly when they were issued, as there is no date on the certificate?

The thimbles were named by TCC on their advertising material and issued in batches of four, every two months. Only a few are named in TCC's advertising blurb - do you know the names of the rest?

A distinctive feature of this set is the thicker than usual band of gold handpainted trim at the rim.



Indian



Hawthorn Sprig

Lindisfarne

Frog crest

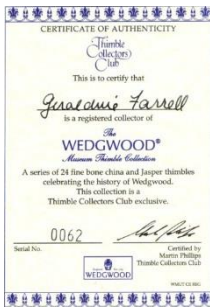


Etruscan

Old London Grape



Chinese Figures



certificates of authenticity and invitation to purchase

Handpainted

A new addition (2005-) to the Wedgwood china thimble suite for collectors, are the handpainted thimbles that are painted at the Wedgwood Visitor Centre and only available for purchase to visitors to the WVC.

Jon French is a master painter, who specialises in painting thimbles, miniature portraits and enamel boxes. He is employed in the Visitor Centre and visitors can watch these miniature wonders evolve. Being handpainted, no two are the same.

He has developed a wonderful handpainted range of the portraits of the Kings and Queens of England, done in the same way as the Nelson portrait below.



Jon French's signature – on shorter Wedgwood backstamp



bicentenary of Lord Horatio Nelson 2005

the first handpainted Wedgwood china thimble ever



HM Queen Elizabeth II's 80th birthday 2006

photo [The Thimble Guild](#)



Abolition of slavery 2007

there was an exhibition at the Wedgwood Visitor Centre during 2007 to commemorate the Abolition of Slavery's Bicentenary 1807

[Am I not a Man and a Brother?](#)



'Rough seas'
2007



fairies scene
2007
lustre



Henry VIII



Francis Drake?



George III

Celtic Designs

This pair of thimbles has a very non-Wedgwood shape. Their cream coloured background also makes them very different from earlier Wedgwood bone china thimbles.

I understand that this pair was commissioned by Charterhouse Mint



Book of Kells



Lindisfarne

Prince Andrew and Sarah Ferguson

Royal wedding July 1986
there are six thimbles in this set
the photos show the fronts and backs of the full set



photo S Burt

Thimble Collectors Club



Playful Kittens
with black kitten on the verso



Otters

Wedgwood Hidden Treasures Collection

This special Wedgwood thimble container for a sewing set is entitled The Bayeux Box and was made as part of their 'Hidden Treasures' series of luxury collectables in 1980.

The thimble holder is made of bone china in hues of ivory, gold and several blues - with a sterling silver band on the rim of the two halves. According to the booklet ...

"The most famous tapestry in the world was the inspiration for this Hidden Treasure as beautiful as it is practical. Ivory and gold complement a handmade sterling silver fitment and gold plating while inside is a rich blue velvet cushion and a gold-plated thimble which lifts to reveal a petite storage space."

The silver gilt thimble which has no markings - sits on a silver gilt plinth where the inner base is a royal blue velvet pincushion. The outer patterning continues inside the cover, with a blue matching inner trim.

The sterling silver upper rim is marked with JW 925 and the Birmingham assay mark.

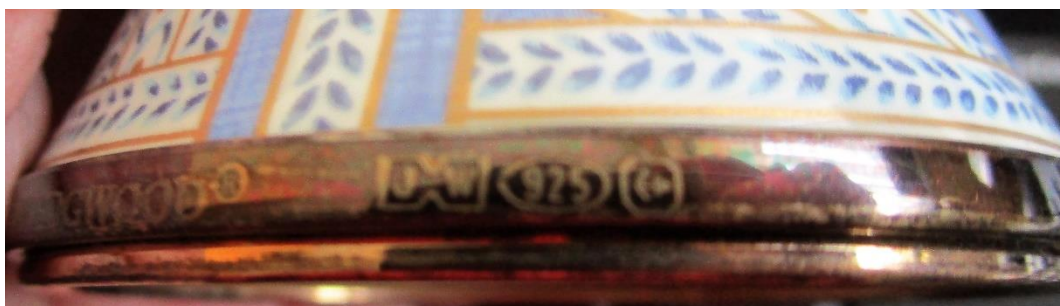
[the mark is presumably for John Wedgwood & Sons Ltd but I have not been able to find this exact mark] **'Wedgwood ®'** is lettered on the silver band. There are no marks on the inner side of the holder.



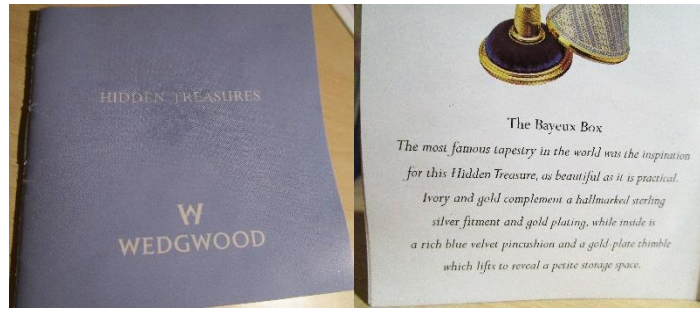
closed sewing kit container, including the base
assembled height 80mm and 65mm diameter at the base



open sewing kit with thimble and pincushion



marks on sterling silver rim



'Hidden Treasures' The Bayeux Box booklet



full Wedgwood sewing set with box

In 2020 I have been made aware by a Russian thimble collector, that this is one of a series. The other six exquisitely made and sumptuously decorated gold treasures from the Hidden Treasures Collection are titled:

- The Alexandria Candle – cobalt blue box holds a small gold tealight
- The Florence Frame – navy blue locket to hold two photos
- The Greenwich Clock – turquoise box holds a gold clock
- The Monaco Box – cream box holds a pack of cards
- The Venice Mirror – blue striped cameo box holds a compact mirror
- The Windsor Box – multicoloured box stores small treasures

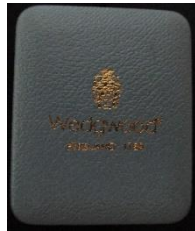
These remaining six Treasures were not created to hold or display a thimble, rather to house and display other luxury collectors items. Only The Bayeux Box is pertinent to thimble collectors. Even its title relates to sewing – the beloved Bayeux Tapestry in France.

Wedgwood thimble boxes

All thimble boxes not featured above with their specific thimble issue are included here – used for presentation for both Wedgwood jasperware and bone china thimbles
If keeping your thimble boxes – mark them in some way to be able to match them up with their original thimble when needed



white square
Wedgwood®



**oblong grey-blue
hard-case
rougher surface
Portland Vase logo**
Wedgwood
England 1793



**oblong grey-blue
hard-case
smoother surface
Portland Vase logo**
Wedgwood
England 1793



**oblong navy hard-
case
Portland Vase logo**



**square navy hard-case
Portland Vase logo**



**square navy hard-case
gilt Portland Vase logo**



**square cardboard case with
clear plastic top**
Wedgwood®

Contributors

Linda Bennett | Linda Brown | Sue Burt | Sarah Constantine | Jim Farrell | Kathy Isbell Funk | Evgenia Gorelova
Betty Gerrits | Lydia Hamilton | Linda Heggs | Margaret Hickling | Debby Hoover | Susan Johnson | Maria Kaye
Olga Malyshkina | Kathleen Rastall | Gai Sdao | Paul Smith | Hans Vogel

This listing of Wedgwood bone china thimbles does not purport to be complete or accurate in all aspects.
Rather it invites comment and contribution to add to our knowledge. My thanks to the contributors.

EMAIL thimbleselect@bigpond.com TO SHARE YOUR KNOWLEDGE

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