

Australian wooden thimbles and sewing tools

This topic includes and updates Chapter 5 of Thimbles of Australia. It completes my Australian topics.

Woodturning is the ideal hobby for retirees. Some men's sheds have lathes for woodturning for their members. Another avenue to further this hobby is joining the local woodturners' group. I have noticed some turners use wood fruit trees, where garden prunings made a cheap source of wood.

What I have noticed over the years is the total lack of woodturners' marks and the wood is rarely named. The occasional turner will supply a certificate with these details – once the thimble is separated from the thimble, the details are lost. Many have printed or hand-lettered stickers – many have since fallen out after forty years

I joined the Western Australian Woodturners Association (WAWA) in 1990. I wasn't a turner but I wanted to meet people who were. Once it was known that I was looking for thimbles made of different wood, the monthly meetings provided great joy for this collector, and my collection grew exponentially. Once I moved to Queensland, I joined the Queensland Woodturners Association (QWA).

One can see which turners knew the purpose for which a thimble is made – there will be indentations or rings on the apex to aid in sewing.

A popular decoration may be lines burnt into the timber. A good finish will show off the timber's grain. I have included handpainted thimbles. Where the maker isn't known I have placed the thimbles under the painter's name.

I have found **182** different woods. Most are local or indigenous woods and there is a selection of wood from other countries. I love seeing burls which turners love as there is no grain to follow in a burl. I have found a couple of turners who used the scientific name when sharing the wood used. Blackboy was the accepted term for grass trees – it is no longer used. Where it was used, I have followed suit.

I have added dates for thimbles when I acquired them – they are not lettered in the thimbles, rather indicating the era.

The first wooden thimble I saw in use was Mum's. She bought after migrating to South Africa in 1931. She made all our clothes, and this thimble was always present – even when she made my wedding dress. It is my most treasure thimble



Mum's stinkwood thimble

At the end please join my journey with my adventure thru Australian trees

[For other wooden thimble topics see](#)
Modern British hand-decorated wooden thimbles
Scottish wooden thimbles

Pat Adam

Kingston Adelaide
Adams handpainted blank Robert Herron thimbles
South Australia lettered on the verso



kangaroo



koala



Keith Adams

Port Macquarie New South Wales
thimbles not signed



handpainted top hat with an opal and silver Sydney Opera House atop made by Peter Grossman, a Sydney silversmith

Roy Aldridge

St George Queensland
stickers accompany thimbles at purchase with name of maker and the wood used – too big to fit into the thimbles



African blackwood
2000



conkerberry
2000



coolibah burl
2000



red cedar



Syd Anderson

Longreach Queensland
 thimbles not signed nor wood named
 1990



David Appleby

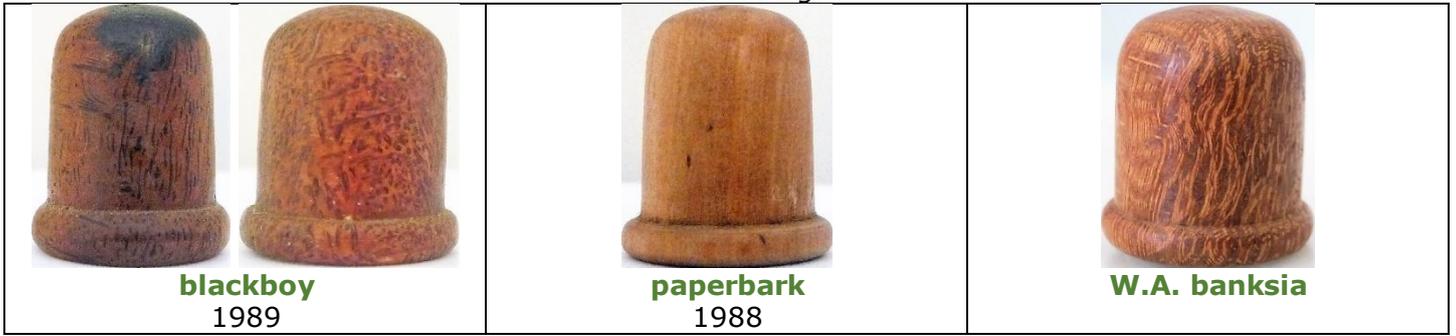
Newcastle New South Wales

Appleby was a Master woodturner who turned wooden thimbles. Encouraged by Barbara Kelly, who was the outlet for his thimbles, David used a wide variety of Australian timbers to create his sturdy range of thimbles. In 1988 this turner had one of his wooden thimbles presented to Queen Elizabeth II during her visit to Newcastle for the Bicentenary celebrations. He died in 1988 before it could be presented to the Queen.

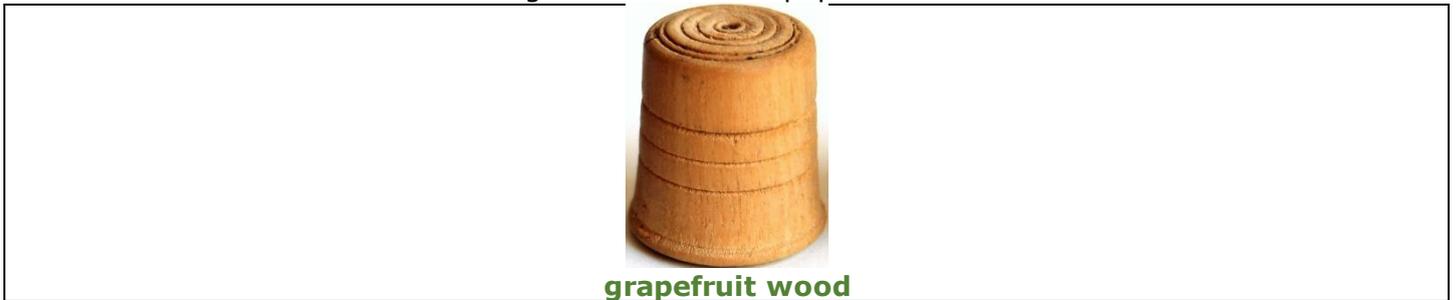
Other timbers used: **brushwood - cedar - colonial pine - rosewood - silky oak**
 thimbles not signed nor wood named



Eric Barnes
Western Australia
thimbles not signed



Vic Bickett
Victoria
signed - wood is on paper insert



Doug Birrell
Melbourne Victoria

Doug Birrell may be familiar to collectors in Australia as the past editor of the *Needlework Tool Collectors Society of Australia Newsletter*. Doug came to needlework tools through his interest in wood turning and carving. He incorporated pyrography in his designs. Doug created many of the wooden needlework tool commemoratives for the biennial NTCSA conferences
Doug died in October 2025
wood named on plain wood





The first issue of the original,
genuine, authentic and verifiable
FRIAR TUCK THIMBLE
Turned from Hackberry

Friar Tuck
hackbury - sycamore



Hindenloopen style
various grounds



inlaid



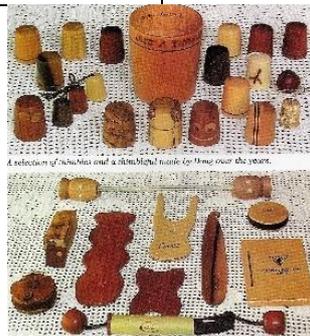
laminated



Love eternal for Vlada
2016



'Just a Thimble-Full'
2000



range of Birrell's output



Minis (his Tom Thumb)

wood used: **black heart sassafras** – **celery top pine** – **huon pine** - **jarrah** - **Otways blackwood** – **Queensland silky oak** - **river red gum** - **silver silkwood** – **Western Australian sheoak**
2000-2002



Runic lettering
F N R



Theo Thimble
R: mini



blackwood



eucalyptus burl
2000



mallee root
2000



pear



silver leaf
2000



tiger myrtle



WA black sheoak



NTCSA Corroboree 1992 pinwheel
silver silkwood



NTCSA Covention 2000 needlebook
huon pine



NTCSA Conference 2002 lucet



pittosporum

bands represent two NTCSA founder members
Helen Cunningham and Nancy Crooks who died in
2006



Queensland sycamore

NTCSA Conference 1994 KNEPS - knitting needle end protectors



NTCSA Conference 2010 needleholder
one end opens with pull tag



needleholder
apricot



NTCSA Conference 1998 thread winder
W.A. sheoak



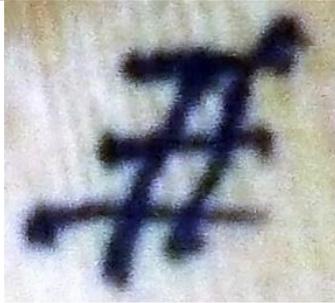
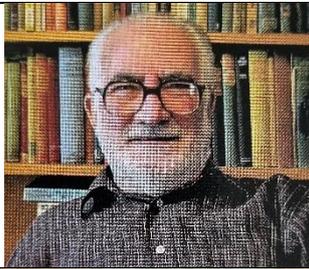
NTCSA Conference 1998 thread winder
W.A. sheoak



thread holder
black heart sassafras



NTCSA Conference 2008 thread winders



Birrell mark

Barry Black

Bungendore New South Wales



needlecase
sheoak

Elaine Boyd

Perth

WAWA member

thimbles not signed - wood named sometimes



koala



carob



cherry plum



mulga



pittosporum

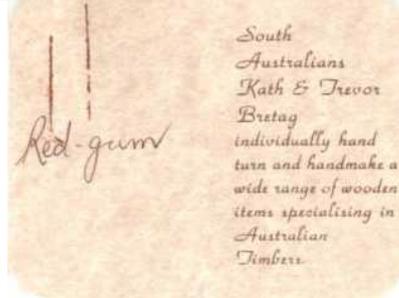


sandplain woody pear

Kath and Trevor Bretag

South Australia.

Small wooden boxes containing mini wooden thimbles in matching timbers are the forte of this couple. thimbles not signed and wood not named tho an accompanying card. Other timber: **hakea**



red gum
1999

Mark Brett



huon pine

Ray Brittain (R.B.)

Brisbane

What began as a part-time hobby, became a passion on his retirement for Ray. He has experimented with different shapes and his quilters' thimbles in local Queensland wood is most useful with their concave apex wood named



carbeen



ironbark



michelia



michelia champach



Norfolk pine
1997



quilter's



silky oak



slash pine



cleek
rosewood



needlecase



needlecase
michelia



needlecase
red cedar



sewing kit
carbeen



sewing kit
ironbark



leadwood

sewing kit



sewing kit
slash pine



sewing kit
Tasmanian blackwood



sewing kit
Tasmanian blackwood



sewing kit



tape measure

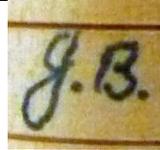


R.B mark

John Brooks
Western Australia



sandalwood
1996



BTW Eco Linea

These souvenir handpainted thimbles have different woods used for the attachments from the thimble.
Most have 'Australia' lettered vertically on verso
thimbles not signed - nor wood named



Kangaroo
2003



koala



flag



penguin



platypus



sheep

Calfra-Leak Products

Tasmania



large travelling kit (92mm high) contains **blackwood** thimble and for glass phials for needles etc
sheoak casuarina
2000

Alan Carmichael

Ravenswood Queensland

no maker's mark



sandalwood

1989

Jim Clarke
Perth
WAWA member
no maker's mark

 <p>tailor's sheoak 1988</p>	 <p>black morel 1990</p>	 <p>quilter's karri</p>	<p>no photo</p> <p>tailor's hickory 1990</p>
 <p>lignum vitae</p>	 <p>lilic 1990</p>	 <p>mulberry 1990</p>	 <p>olive 1988</p>
 <p>peppermint 1990</p>	 <p>quandong 1990</p>	 <p>sheoak 1990</p>	 <p>silver ash 1990</p>
 <p>tuart 1990</p>	 <p>woody pear 1990</p>		
 <p>sewing kit jarrah 1990</p>			

Neville W Clarke
Bongaree Queensland

no photo

needlecase
Tasmanian blackwood

Collings

Whyalla South Australia
one of the few woodturners to use scientific tree names
no maker's mark



Acacia salicina



Callitris glauca



Casuarina stricta



**Eucalyptus
camaldulensis**

Greg Cranwell (G.C.)

McLaren Vale South Australia
wood not named
1987-1988



mulga



myall



native apricot



swamp oak



James Cumberland Brown

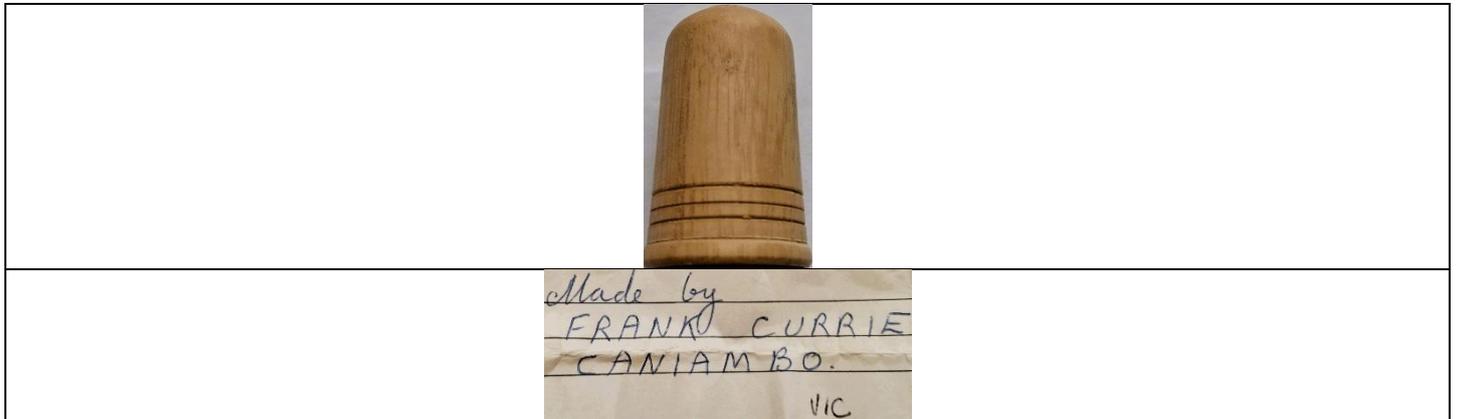
York, Fremantle WA

thimbles are unsigned nor wood named



Frank Currie

Caniambo Victoria



Gay Day



Val de Vries
 Clare South Australia
 De Vries sold principally thru The Thimble Guild
 signed on rim

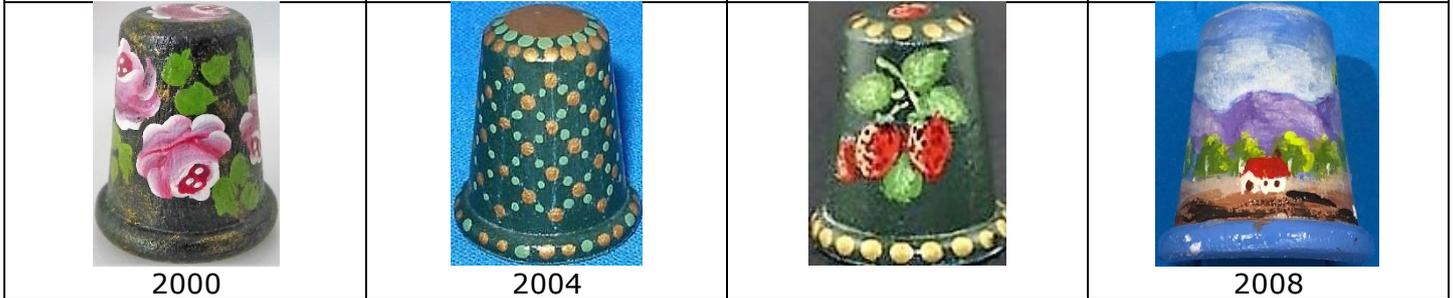


2003



2003

2008



2000

2004

2008



sewing set



Andy Dmytryk



mahogany

Dave Dunn

McLaren Vale South Australia
thimbles not signed - nor wood named



apricot



ash



blackwood



cotoneaster



mulberry



oak



osage orange



quandong



red gum



she oak



silky oak
1990



tallow



teak



walnut

Harry Ellison
 South Australia
 died in 1989
 wood is named



cotoneaster



peach

Bridget Fairchild

Perth

<https://www.lacebobbins-findthemaker.com/bridget-fairchild.html>



lace bobbins – unsigned, scenes named and dated

Peter Filmer

Tharwa ACT

thimbles not signed – wood named on stickers inside
 other woods used for shuttles: **cedar – jarrah – native olive – tallow**



King Billy pine



rosewood



sheoak



tiger myrtle



tating shuttle
silverash



tating shuttle
tiger myrtle

Ruth Floth

Central New South Wales coast
Floth has handpainted them in a folk-art style
signed



teddy bear
b&w photo

Rosalyn Forster (RF)

Warrandyte Victoria
thimbles made by Doug Birrell
wood named



Sturt's desert pea
1999

sycamore



violets



native cherry



lace bobbins – detail at R



Lyn Foster

Newcastle New South Wales

Lyn Foster is an internationally recognised folk artist. She runs the Foster Folk Art Studio teaching her craft and she has classes in Sydney and lectures and teaches overseas thimbles made by Robert Herron of Tasmania.



huon pine
dated '93'
signed

no photo

pink rose and ribbons and lace on black ground
unsigned

Ian Garth

Horsham Victoria

some signed - thimbles marked with numbers



African bean 5



blackheart sassafras
3



concald alves 1



red river gum 2



Victorian blackwood 4



WA buloke
named

Peter Gertler

Melbourne

made for The Embroiderers Guild Victoria 2000



workbox
jarrah

Gil



needlecase
silver ash

Ross Godden

Tamworth



tape measure
walnut
1999

Sue Gowan (SJG)

Brisbane

made under the tutelage of Col Ward

signed and wood named



rosewood
1993

Neil Goyen

Warrnambool Victoria
 thimbles not signed – nor wood named
 2006



banksia



Murray pine



thimble holder

Bob Greschke

Born in Germany, Bob settled in Australia. Margaret Greschke (MG) handpainted his thimbles featuring a range of different designs for The Thimble Guild
 thimbles not signed – nor wood named



Santa with kangaroo sleigh
 1993



possum



Aborigine
 didgeridoo scene
 all round



'Kangaroo Paw
 WA'



possum



'Scarlet Robin'



'Superb Blue Wren'



koala



'Ashes 93'
 'Australia'
willow



bush cottage



platypus
b&w photo



nesting thimbles
jarrah



nesting thimbles
myrtlewood



nesting thimbles
sassafras



'Frog a wooing go'
handpainted nesting thimbles by Ann Wallace of
Pan Arts, Sydney
b&w photo



koala
handpainted base by Ann Wallace of Pan Arts,
Sydney
pewter koala with opal Peter Grossman
b&w photo



Margaret Hagan

South Australia

As well as being a well-known silversmith Hagan is a woodturner and she incorporates her silver work into her turned thimbles.

thimbles not signed – nor wood named



thimble and matching thimble case
thimble has a slice of Colwell jade as the apex which fits into
a hole in the lid of the box
red gum
also available in **blackwood**



needlecase with sterling
silver thimble marked
HAGAN
red gum

Margaret Handley

This doll artist handpainted her thimbles with apex and the inside of the thimbles being gold painted
thimbles not signed – nor wood named



b&w photo

Roy Hardie

Brisbane

QWA member

thimbles not signed – nor wood named



silky oak



quik-unpick
red cedar
1997

Lewis Harper

Geelong Victoria

thimbles are signed - wood not named

1991



boxthorn



cyprus



English walnut



grey gum



liquid amber



nyorta



pear



peppercorn



vergilia



zebrano



Lewis Harper Geelong

John Hartwig

Sunshine Coast Queensland



matching needlecase
2012

South American cherry

Robert Herron

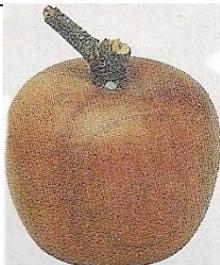
Riverside, Tasmania

Herron has been turning thimbles from Tasmanian timbers since 1980 and he was still actively creating thimbles in November 2018. He is our most prolific and innovative and worked mainly in **huon pine**. thimbles are hand decorated by [Lisa Clarke](#) - [Thea Peschar](#) - [Joanna Wigzell](#) - [Dianne Williams](#), all with the Herron sticker inside

Herron also sold his thimbles thru [The Thimble Guild](#) and [Gimbels](#) (Maine)



'1788-1988'
huon pine



apple
huon pine



apple and pear
huon pine on blackwood



breaddough
huon pine - sassafras



convict
handpainted ball and chain
huon pine



grandmother and
granddaughter
sassafras



gumnuts
R: **eucalyptus**



history thimble
burmese teak from railway carriage
with a history note



'Just a Thimbleful'
huon pine



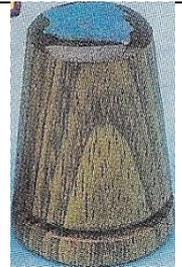
laminated
R: 2018



mouse
huon pine on **blackwood**



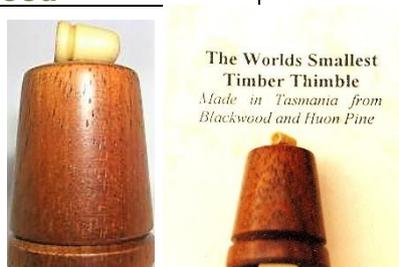
one cent coin on apex



opal in apex



pear
huon pine



smallest timber thimble in the
world
huon pine on **blackwood**
1999



stickware
made with 100 pieces
1989



tailor's
huon - sassafras



camphor laurel



camphorwood



casuarina



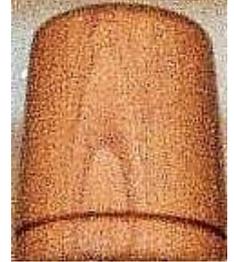
huon pine



Tasmanian goldey wood



Tasmanian huon pine
strangely named as
huon is only found in
southwestern corner of
the state



Tasmanian myrtle



Tasmanian horizontal
with a tree note
1989



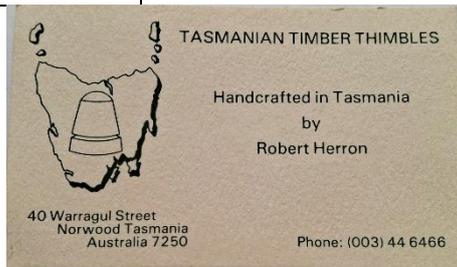
Tasmanian waratah
1990



needlecase
huon pine and blackwood



pincushion combined pintray



card 2006

Lisa Clarke

In her Thimbella catalogue of 1994, Dorothy Andrews offered these handpainted Herron thimbles for sale. The topics are named along the outer rim, in lower case lettering. The thimbles are unsigned



Frea Peschar

Herron commissioned Frea as an artist to pyrograph Australian fauna on his thimbles. Not many of these sets were produced some are signed





echidna – feather-tailed possum – wombat – platypus – sugar glider – wallaby – koala – kangaroo
1990



Joanna Wigzell

Some of Herron's thimbles were handpainted by his daughter Joanna Wigzell. They depict native Australian fauna. Each thimble has the name of the subject in upper case lettering along the outer rim. Some have J Wigzell lettered on Herron's gold sticky labels inside. Occasional thimbles signed





'wombat'



'Clarendon House'
(near Launceston)



Dianne Williams

Herron's thimbles were handpainted with wildflowers by this former Tasmanian artist. Robert's gold sticker is sometimes inside – only identifying the wood used unsigned



wattle



wattle



wattle



wattle
**Tasmanian
blackwood**



Christmas bells



Tasmanian
eucalyptus
1987



waratah



waratah





heath
myrtle wood



black-eyed Susan
celery-top pine
1990



1987



Adrian Hunt

thimbles not signed - nor wood named



blackwood

Indonesian

It seems sad that it takes painters from foreign shores to produce these Aboriginal-type dot painted thimbles. They were imported into Sydney by a small company in Sydney and sold at The Rocks They have also sold by Pan Arts who also sold them to The Thimble Guild in late 2003 they are similar to those handpainted by Aboriginal artist Vicky Winters of Sydney in 1990s Handpainted all over, including the apex, the fauna seems hidden amongst the dots There is a cockatoo with the Spanish 'cacatua' some designs include 'Australia' as well



Aboriginal ...



Ayers Rock



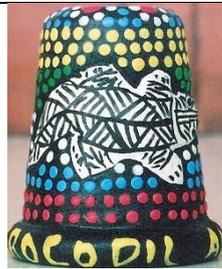
cacatua



cockatoo



cockatoo



crocodil (sic) Australia



crocodile



echidna



echidna



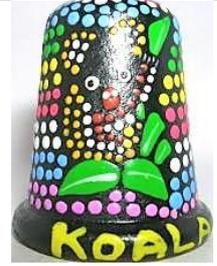
emu



kangaroo



kangaroo Australia



koala



koala and baby
Australia
2001



kookaburra



platypus



Sydney Opera House



Sydney Opera House



wombat

Jim
Western Australia



karri

T W Kettle

Western Australia

thimbles not signed - nor wood named



jarrah
1989

Don Keynes

Busselton Western Australia

thimbles not signed - wood named

1991



karri hazel



persoonia



York gum burl

Anga Kooiwind

Groningen Netherlands



'Congratulations bicentennial Australia 1788-1988'

Jorgen Kristensen

Hawthorn, Melbourne

Born in Scandinavia, Margareta Kristensen moved to live in Victoria. In 2003, her husband's thimbles are handpainted with naïve designs



bride
2003





needlecase



Margaretha's initials

Jim Lalor



robinia

Tim Legg

Timbo's Shop

Browns Plain Queensland



Shaker workbox

Bob Malacari (BM)

Perth
1990

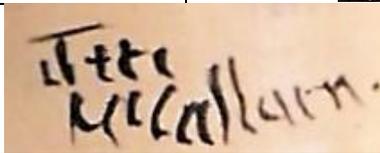
 <p>banksia nut</p>	 <p>blackboy</p>	 <p>coastal banksia</p>	 <p>jam</p>
 <p>jarrah</p>	 <p>jarrah burl</p>	 <p>mallee</p>	 <p>morrell</p>
 <p>mulga</p>	 <p>needlewood</p>	 <p>sandalwood Embroiderers Guild of WA 1969-1990</p>	 <p>she-oak quilter's</p>
 <p>she-oak Embroiderers Guild of WA 1969-1990</p>			
			

Dean Malcolm
Albany Western Australia



needleholder in woman's shape
jarrah

Jen McCallum
Strathalbyn South Australia



Heather McLean
Balandra Crafts
Scotland
signed



male convict
'Bound for Botany Bay'
1988



female convict
'Bound for Botany Bay'
1988



Keith McQueen

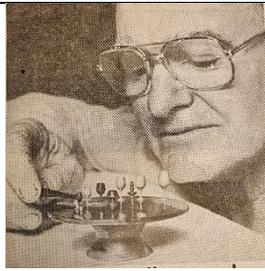
Perth

WAWA member

thinly turned thimbles – Mrs McQueen did the lettering
signed inside – wood named on outside

1990

			
beefwood	Brazilian purpleheart	carob	gimlet
			
grevillea candelabroides	hakea	jam W.A.	marri
			
Moreton Bay fig	native cyprus	Norfolk Island pine	N.W. almond
			
Plane tree	poplar	robinia	salmon gum
			
W.A. christmas tree	woody pear	yellow tingle	York gum burl
			



1988

Sandra Menger

Brisbane

Sandra has been practising pyrography (poker work) for over 25 years (by 1998). Since 1996, she has used her skills to burn the tiniest floral designs on Brisbane's Col Ward's plain thimbles. She also commissioned thimbles in shapes she required. Menger carved into the wood and then used her pyrography skills



carved



'Christmas bush'



Grevillea glauca 'Bushman's peg'



gumnuts

R: **hoop pine**



laminated



mini size
gumnuts - wattle
1999



mushrooms



pencil top



outline shape of Australian
'The Australian Institution usually known as 'The Dunny''



outline shape of Australian
 gum nuts with border of Australian flowers
 b&w photo



PRISON ISSUE No, 3246071
 with convict stripes
 1998



red rose



shell



stones



Swagman with billy tea
 handle and teabag inside
camphor laurel
 1999



thimble threaded needle gilt
 scissors affixed



thimble
 gilt scissors affixed



toilet with redback spider



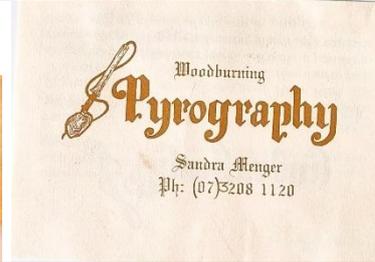
wattle



'Fix-it' sewing kit



tape measures

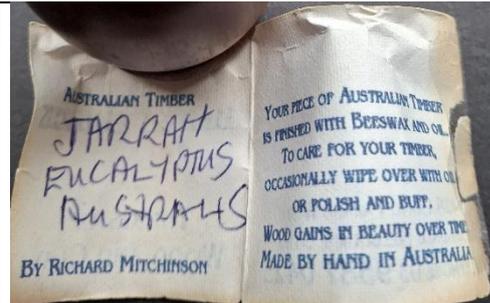


MH or NH



Tasmanian huon pine

Richard Mitchinson
The Beach Shack Melbourne



needlecase
jarrah

J Mills



Toni Neve
Benalla Victoria



red gum



1991



lace bobbins
1992

Garth Osmond – Wood “n” Things
Victoria



Bullo buloak
tape measure



George Pearce
Cooroora Queensland



camphor laurel

Platypus Gallery

Melbourne

this is the wholesaler who only assembled the thimbles
thimbles not signed (sometimes intertwined PG)- nor wood named



Ray Pope



iroko wood

John Read

Perth



Geoff Riley
Melbourne
died in 1986



Needlecase with plastic thimble
'blue wren'



needlecase
'Greetings from Castlemaine'

Trevor S



sassafras

Georgia Seitz
Alaska USA



tating shuttle
'Miss Norma Benporath, OAM 1900 - 1998'



'Queensland Tatters'
Cooktown orchid

Sew Creative
Gatton Queensland



buttons

Don Shiel
Melbourne



blackwood

Ron Smith
Perth
WAWA member
thimbles not signed
1992



blackwood



boree

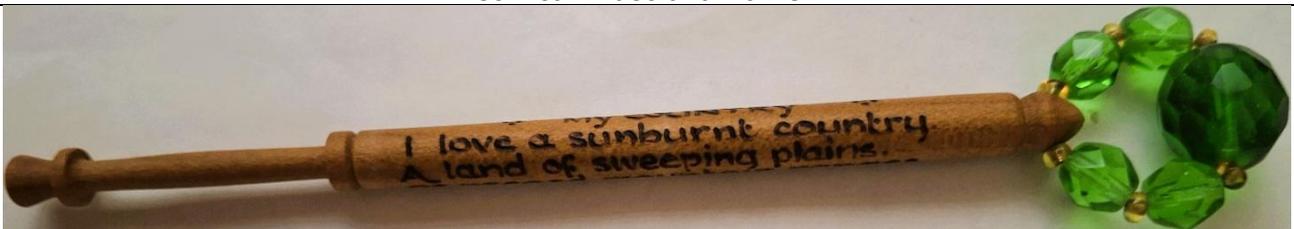


olive mangrove

Janet Soo
bobbin not signed



lace bobbin
'I still call Australia home ...'



lace bobbin
'I love a sunburnt country ...'

Mike St Clair
Canberra
thimbles not signed
1989



blackwood



sassafras



silky oak

Olga Stack

Perth

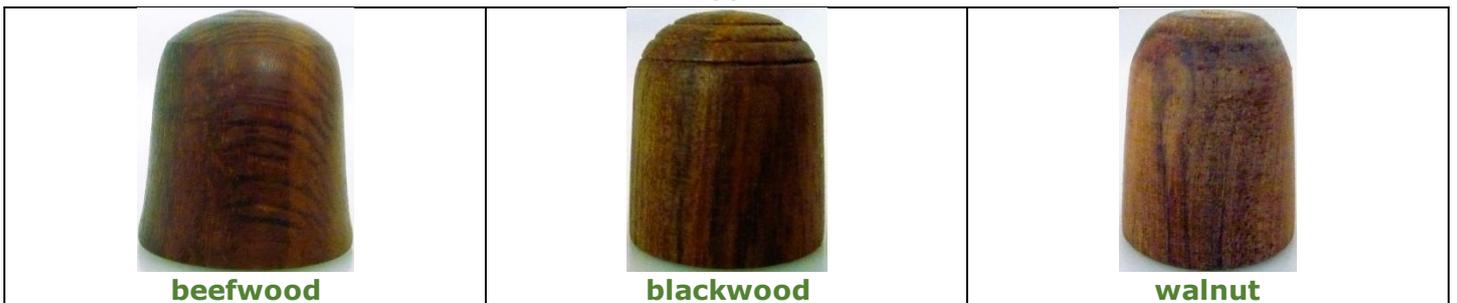
Olga Stack was enterprising enough to place an advertisement for her folk-art thimbles in the Kalgoorlie Airport, Western Australia. Her floral thimbles are all designed over a painted background and dated 1997



Alan Start

Victoria

thimbles not signed - nor wood named
1997



Raie & Trevor Summers

The Spindle Tree
Hobart Tasmania
wood named on sticker



sassafras



Lynn Syme

Queensland
thimbles not signed



rose alder

GJT



black heart sassafras



lemon-scented gum



olive



huon pine



huon pine
'Adelaide - Adelaide'



maker's mark is sometimes on the outside (L) – mainly signed on the inside (R)

The Deepings Woodturner

Nicholls Rivulet Tasmania

thimbles not signed – nor wood named

 <p>'Corroboree 90' (NTCSA) handpainted by <u>Fiona Curry</u> (FC) huon pine limited to 150</p>	 <p>gumnuts handpainted by <u>Fiona Curry</u> (FC) huon pine mini size</p>	 <p>gumnuts handpainted by <u>Fiona Curry</u> (FC) huon pine mini size</p>	
			
 <p>blackwood</p>	 <p>leatherwood</p>		
 <p>clown darner- needlecase sassafras handpainted by <u>Jill Roberts</u> 1992</p>	 <p>embroiderer darner- needlecase handpainted by <u>Jill Roberts</u></p>	 <p>darner-needlecase handpainted by <u>Jill Roberts</u></p>	 <p>happy birthday darner- needlecase handpainted by <u>Jill Roberts</u></p>



violinist darner-needlecase
handpainted by Jill Roberts



fairy darner-needlecase
handpainted by Jill Roberts



Mac Thomas



coachwood



huon pine

Scott Thompson

Tasmania

thimbles not signed – nor wood named



pincushion
'N.T.C.S.A. 1987-2012'

Paul Tiernan

Newcastle

signed – wood unnamed
1999



cedar



rosewood



1990

Ian Trafford-Walker (ITW)
Murwillumbah

With an abundance of fallen timber on his property in northern New South Wales Ian encouraged his sons to utilise small pieces of bloodwood and carve out thimbles. No two are the same shape but the smoothness has taken hours of finishing to bring out the marvellous colours. This was in 2000, and a strictly limited number were produced



bloodwood
2000



bloodwood
carved by his sons



David Tulloch
South Australia

Malcolm Walter of Stirling South Australia commissioned Tulloch's wooden thimbles for applying his sterling silver pewter or brass motifs



farm scene

L: sterling silver = R: pewter



gumleaves
silver



kangaroos
brass



Koala
brass



possum
silver



huon pine



purple heart



sassafras



silky oak

E.W.



'Epacris Australia'

Beryl Ward (BJW)
Brisbane

using her husband Col's thimbles Beryl turned to handpainting them in 1990s



Col Ward
Brisbane

Ward being passionate about the timbers of Australia he was searching for a medium to showcase his hobby of wood collecting. From when he turned his first wooden thimble in 1991, by 2000 he had turned over 3000 thimbles from more than 650 timbers. Through his membership of the International Wood Collectors Society Col actively sought out pieces of timber that would reflect the beauty of the grain and used ten different shapes to showcase this

1993-1997
Col died in 2004

 acacia	 acacia cambage	 African mahogany	 Algerian briar 1999
 alka	 American bloodwood	 American oak	 Amish timber
 avocado	 bamboo	 black locast	 black wattle
 bloodwood	 budgeroo 1999	 bugwood	 bush oak
 calantas	 coach wood	 coastal cypress	 cockspur

 conkerberry	 corkoak	 cottonwood	 crows ash
 gelong-gang	 golf gum	 grevillea (dyed)	 jacaranda
 jarrah burl	 Jelutong (dyed)	 kwila	 lawyer cane
 loquat	 mango	 moringa	 mountain ash
 mulga	 New Guinea rosewood	 padauk	 pine (Amish farm)
 Port Hacking fig	 radiata pine	 red ash	 red cedar



Wayne
Work of Art
Toowoomba



needlecase
rosewood

Dick Weaver



gidgee

N West
NSW



gidgee

Frank Willcock
Goomalibee Woodworks
Benalla Victoria



Redgum
1990



Yvonne Winspear (YW)

Sydney

there is a gold foil map of Australia up in each apex



L: taller - over china



1986

around **600** of these thimbles were handmade
paperbark over leatherwood



'1788-1988'

120 thimbles of this design were made



THIMBLE COLLECTOR



Yvonne Winspear
 40 Mackenzie St., Revesby 2212
 N.S.W. Australia (02) 773 3698

1980s

Vicky Winters

Sydney

Vicky used Robert Herron's huon pine thimbles for her Aboriginal designs they are the only thimbles handpainted by an Aboriginal artist approximately **30-40** of each design

unsigned
 1989





needlecases

Peter Wyer

Brisbane

QWA member

thimbles not signed – nor wood named



mangrove cedar

N Wyndham

Brisbane

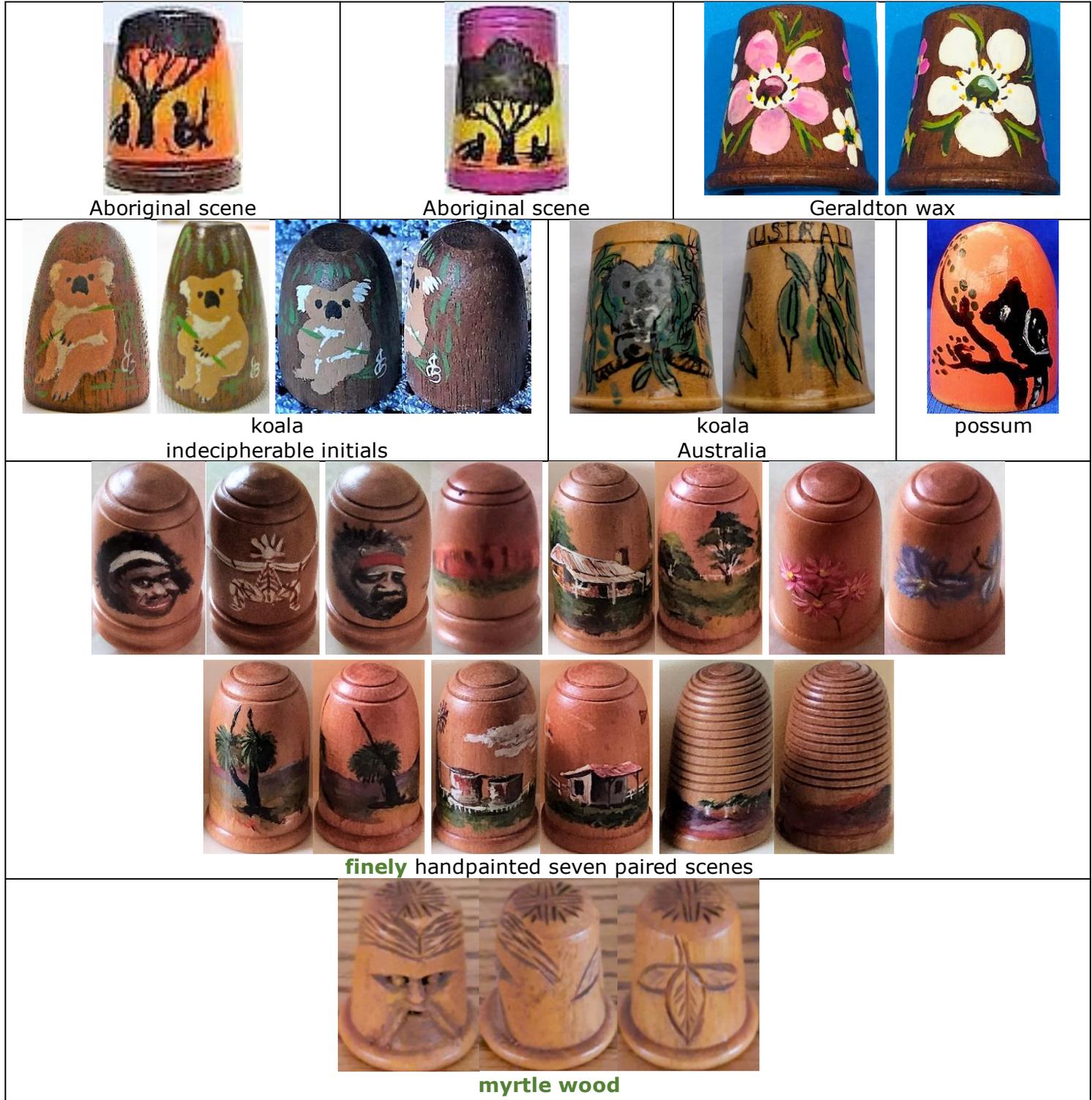


pincushion

banksia nut

Handpainted thimbles and sewing tools – unsigned

I am including this batch of unknown Australian painters' thimbles – hoping that your similar thimble is signed – or you recognise the painter. I have added any lettering or my clues that are associated with these thimbles.



Unsigned thimbles and sewing tools

 <p>Acacia pyncnatha South Australia</p>	 <p>Australian rosewood</p>	 <p>banksia</p>	 <p>beech</p>
 <p>button Ross Tasmania classwood</p>	 <p>buttons McLaren Vale SA</p>	 <p>coachwood</p>	
 <p>coat-of-arms</p>	 <p>coin</p>	 <p>darner</p>	
 <p>darner</p>	 <p>darner</p>	 <p>darner</p>	
 <p>darner</p>	 <p>Gulgong NSW Burdekin plum</p>	 <p>huon pine</p>	 <p>huon pine</p>



jarrah burl



Jondaryan Woolshed
Queensland



karri



needlecase
jarrah



needlecase
Peninsula Wood Turners Guild Frankston Victoria
blackwood
2000



needlecase
Peninsula Wood Turners Guild
Frankston Victoria
2000



nundoo



pincushion
mulga
Trust in Him at all times



pincushion



pincushion
Queensland threadybark oak



needle gauge
Tasmanian horizontalis



pincushions



pine - rose



red gum



Tasmanian



Tasmanian bush buttons



thread winder
HP Sydney 1925
plywood



weaving shuttles



weaving shuttles
Victoria
signature unclear



Western Australia



woolwinder
Christmas 1904
huon pine



workbox
Souvenir of Sydney



silky oak



My Australian trees journey

We have visited botanic gardens in all Australian states – not to be missed on any trip to Australia. My first visit to Perth’s Kings Park in 1988 was my introduction to trees of WA. The road with gums planted in memory to our fallen soldiers, as you enter is breathtaking.

Australia’s red dirt is recreated at Cranbourne Botanic Gardens.

There are several treetop walks – at Geeveston Tasmania – Lamington National Park in the gold Coast hinterland. Climb the Gloucester fire lookout tree in Pemberton WA.

Western Australia has the greatest diversity of trees, and the south-west corner has tuarts lining the road. Smell the scent of a lemon-scented gum or sandalwood. I have worked with camphor laurel and that scent is addictive.

I attended the Small Tree Farm in Balingup in south-western Australia for a weekend of learning about trees and had a tree planted in memory of my father.

Only the banksia grandis that grows in Western Australia has nuts suitable for turning.

I am not into scientific names of my beloved trees – just the names I’ve learnt.

Most of these timbers have been turned into thimbles

 <p style="text-align: center;">boab Kimberleys 2009</p>	 <p style="text-align: center;">bottle tree Anzac Square Brisbane 1993</p>	 <p style="text-align: center;">bunya pine Bunyas Queensland they shed their massive fruit in January 2005</p>
 <p style="text-align: center;">bushman’s peg Currumundi Queensland 2011</p>	 <p style="text-align: center;">celery top pine Geeveston Tahune Tasmania 2017</p>	 <p style="text-align: center;">desert oaks Uluru 2013</p>
 <p style="text-align: center;">fig Mary Cairncross Maleny 2025</p>	 <p style="text-align: center;">grass tree Cranbourne Botanical Gardens Melbourne 2012</p>	 <p style="text-align: center;">grevillea candelabroides Eneabba Western Australia 1990</p>



grey myrtle

Maleny Botanic Gardens
Queensland
2014



gums

I have 100s of photos of these amazing tree trunks



hoop pine

Kelvin Grove
these came to my attention
where Christie's unit has a grove
of these 85 year old pines
metres from her deck
2025



huon pine

it's illegal to cut down huon pine
Geeveston Tahune Tasmania
2017



illywarra flame

their colours light up a whole
forest
2017



jacaranda

Kelvin Grove Brisbane
2023



lancewood

Longreach
2021



marri nuts

Cranbourne Botanical Gardens
Melbourne
1989



Moreton Bay fig

Kelvin Grove Brisbane
2022



myrtle

Geeveston Tahune
Tasmania
2017



paperbark

Swan River Perth
1988



poinciana
New Farm Park Brisbane
1990s



river red gum
Murrumbidgee Wagga Wagga – Fitzroy WA



rose gums
Mary Cairncross Maleny Queensland



salmon gum



sausage tree
landsborough Queensland
2025



scribbly gum
Murrumbidgee Wagga Wagga
2025



sheoak
brown male flowers – Kimberleys
2009



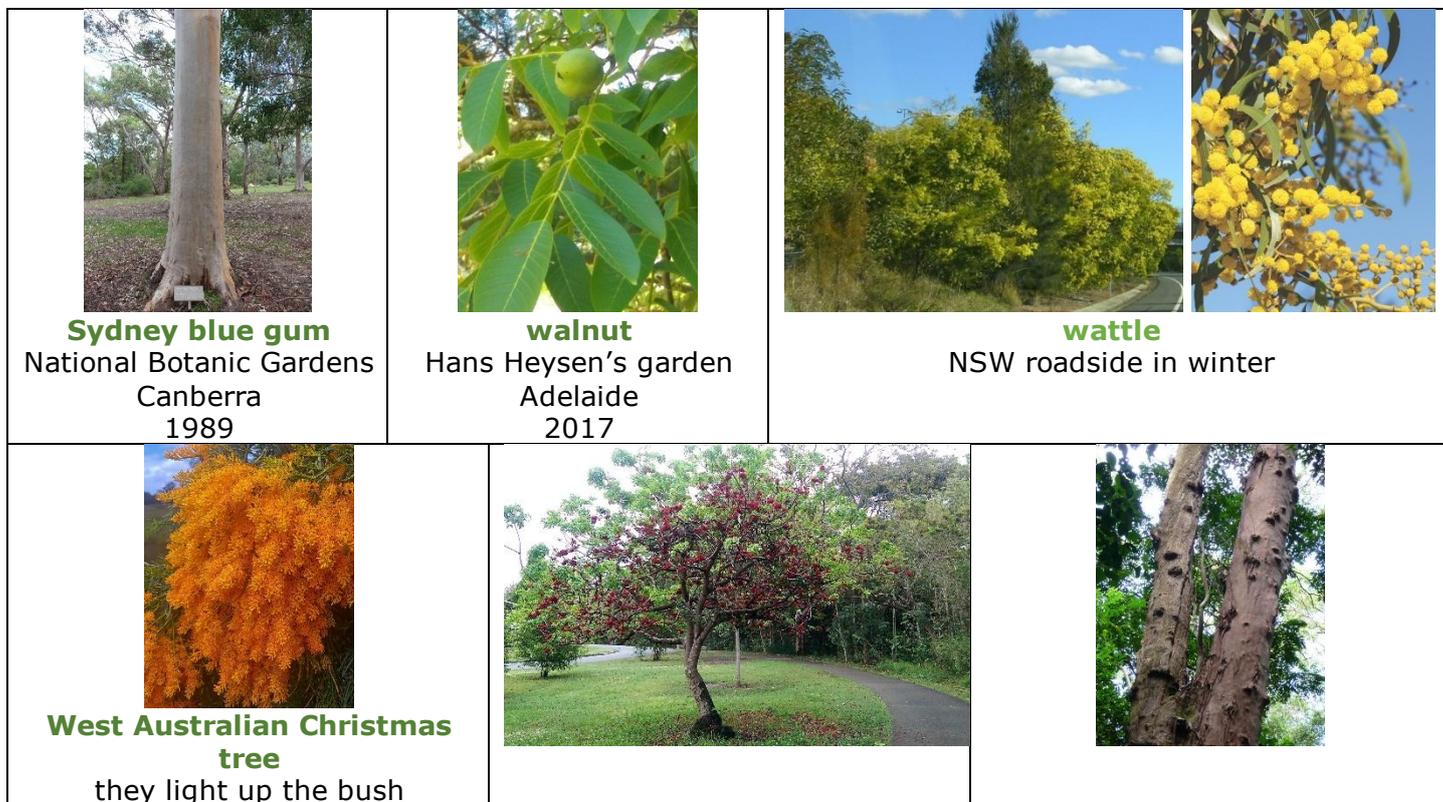
silver princess
Kings Park Perth
silver branches show off the gum blossoms
1988



snottygobble
Currumundi Queensland
2011



snow gum
Cradle Mountain National Park Tasmania
a more exotic trunk you'll never see
2019



References

- Doug Birrell *Wooden thimbles – possibilities for collectors* Needlework Tool Collectors Society of Australia Newsletter May 1999
 Susan Jean Gowan *Thimbles of Australia* 1998
 Norma Shattock *Doug Birrell: wooden thimbles and tools* Needlework Tool Collectors Society of Australia Newsletter April 2005
Thimble maker: Doug Birrell Australia TCI Bulletin fall 2007

Contributors

Lee Bateman | Wendy Brittain | Beverley Dimmick | Joy Earles | Ros Forster | Andrea Griffiths | Margaret Harland
 Sybil Harland | Margaret Hickling | Nicola Kissane | Diane Poesk | Norma Shattock | Jean Taylor | Erin Titmus
 Krystyna Zagajewska

This listing of Australian wooden thimbles 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.

EMAIL thimbleselect@bigpond.com TO SHARE YOUR KNOWLEDGE

© Sue Gowan
 September 2025