Modern British hand-decorated wooden thimbles

I have covered quite a few other topics on British wooden thimbles and none of them are covered here again.
This will be a very small topic showcasing single hand-decorators on wooden thimbles – maybe they were pyrographed – had embellishments affixed – or handpainted – just **35.**
There are no **decaled** wooden thimbles (like those by John and Meg Urwin) included. Here is an example of one of their earliest thimbles (1984) which seems hand painted. In fact, these thimbles have decals made from a handpainted image. The only parts that are handpainted are the apex and rim of silver.
I have included a British woodturner who was prolific, but the thimbles have no additional decoration.



decaled John Urwin thimble 1984
L: paint has worn off – R: silver apex

The forerunner of British wooden thimbles is the 1820s handpainted Tunbridge ware thimbles.


handpainted 1820s Tunbridge ware thimbles

They came before their more well known stickware thimbles.
Modern stickware thimbles are not included here unless they are embellished.

Many are of the thimbles below are unsigned.
I have included the type of **wood** used, when known.

Two of the artists below also painted china thimbles – Julie Menzies and Anne Young. Did they begin with wooden thimbles until china blanks became available?
Handpainted Russian wooden thimbles followed by the USA dominate the British output, so it is important to record this group of thimble artists. The British wooden thimbles tend to have more domed apexes – I do hope that thimbles painted in other countries have crept in – please alert me if I have.
I am hoping some of the unknown artists featured at the end will produce maker's names from collectors of these thimbles.

See other British wooden thimble topics

Ian Parry (Coventry) thimbles 1984-1989
Innes Mitchell pyrographed wooden thimbles (Scotland)
Morioti of Norwich wooden thimbles 1985-1990
Roger Harrison of Kelso thimbles 1983-1988
Scottish wooden thimbles

For other handpainted thimble topics see

Australian handpainted thimbles and sewing tools 1973-2014
Cornish Enamels thimbles 1995-1997
Francesca character head thimbles
Gerald Delaney handpainted thimbles
Graham Payne handpainted thimbles 1981-1996
Hazrah handpainted bronze thimbles (Mauritius) 2006-2009
Iles' handpainted and decaled plastic thimbles
Jacqui and David Parker of Olivia (Birmingham) thimbles 1983-1996
Jasper's of Yorkshire handpainted thimbles
Merryfield Pottery (Devon) thimbles
Modern British handpainted thimbles
Roger Gibbons pewter thimbles 1984-1990
Royal Worcester thimble painters

Wendi Abdi 1989



sycamore
handpainted



sycamore
handpainted



sycamore
handpainted

CB





church



cottage



dove



iris



lighthouse



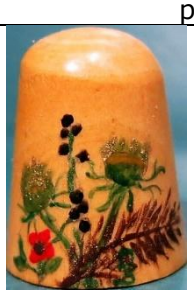
poinsettia



poppy



rose



wildflowers

Stewart Buyers Ayrshire Scotland 1983

his thimbles are not signed



brass inset in apex
African blackwood
b&w photo



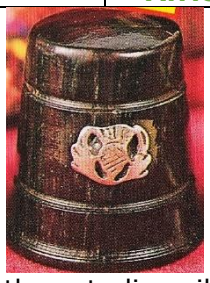
Celtic Cross set in apex - silver
African blackwood
b&w photo



compressed heather by Heathergems set in apex
African blackwood



lion rampart - silver
African blackwood



thistle – sterling silver
African blackwood

Philip Campbell Mull Silver, Tobermory Mull Scotland

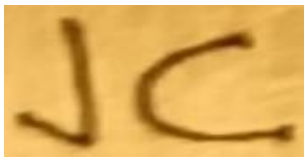


Celtic knot
sterling silver on **ebony**
limited to **250**
1984



Mountains of Mull
sterling silver on **ebony**
November 1983
b&w photo

Jacqui Carey (JC) 1987-1989



 'Christmas 1989' handpainted	 lace handpainted matching lace bobbin
 'Made from a **maple** which fell in the Great Storm 16th October 1987' maple flowers	 'Made from a **maple** which fell in the Great Storm 16th October 1987' maple leaves

Mike Cherry Just Wood Burton-on-Trent

no photo

John and Doreen Castle York



beech with enamelled millefiori apex

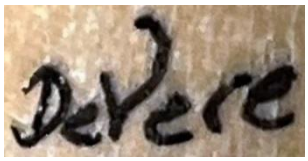
D Clarke





thatched cottage
handpainted

De Vere





folk painting
1983

Robin & Mary Ellis Little Walden Turnery Saffron Walden



100 woods to choose from

John and Jen Emmersen 'Beautiful Woods' Rotherham





cabbsnowdrops
handpainted

Adeline Ford (AF) Hoveton Norfolk





Stella and **Charles Gratrix** Powys Wales

This couple are still in business and take commissions.

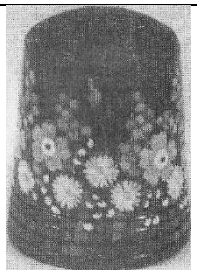
http://www.llanidloesartsandcrafts.org.com



'Llanidloes'
pyrographed

Yvonne Hayward (YH) 1986-1989





flowers border
handpainted
May 1986



butterflies amongst flowers
handpainted
September 1986



flowers
handpainted
ebony



blackberries
maplewood
October 1986

Ann Hickey and **David Ball** Malvern Worcestershire



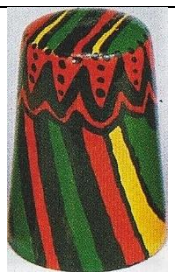
canal boat painting

Barbara Hope Scotland

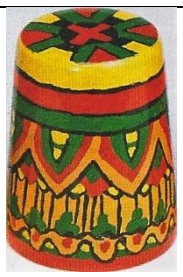
African Impressions – 1996



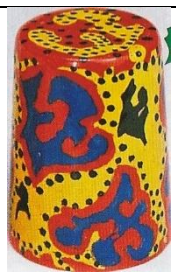
handpainted



handpainted



handpainted



handpainted

Paul and **Christine Howard** Wilburton Cambridgeshire



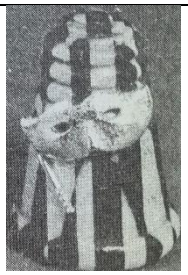
 hedgehog pyrographed	 rabbit pyrographed
 rabbit pyrographed 1998	 squirrel pyrographed 1998

R J 1984

 kingfisher enamelled apex	 'S' **Cocobolo Nicaragua**

L'Etacq Woodcraft Jersey 1985

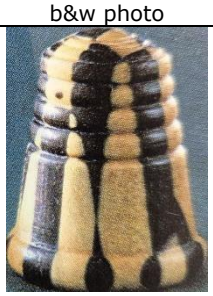
. Their most well-known thimble is made of a Jersey Giant Cabbage Tree (they can reach up to 20 feet). They produced fine wooden thimble racks



mask
gold-plated on **Brazilian rosewood** and **satinwood** stickware
b&w photo



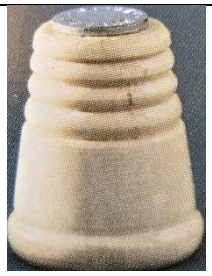
stickware
1985



stickware
1985



beehive shape
gorse



giant cabbage tree
discarded stalks turned after leaves used



stickware



stickware



thimble display stand for 18 thimbles

E Marsh



teddy bear
handpainted

P M

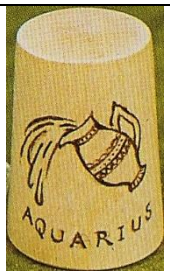
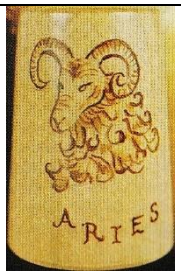
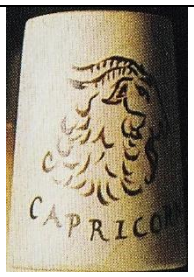
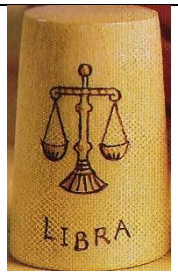
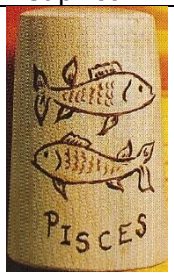




handpainted

Julie Menzies Biggar Scotland 1993-1999

Julie used **sycamore** blanks made by John Urwin. Her zodiac thimbles may seem pyrographed, but they are handpainted

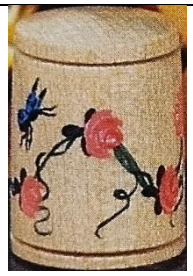
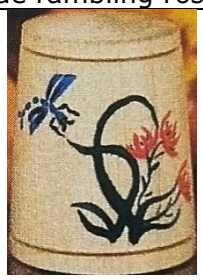
 Aquarius	 Aries	 Cancer	 Capricorn
 Gemini	 Leo	 Libra	 Pisces
 Sagittarius	 Scorpio	 Taurus	 Virgo

Learn more about Modern British hand-decorated wooden thimbles

 dog handpainted **sycamore**	 Nessie handpainted limited to **250**	 Russian warrior handpainted limited to **100**
 church for Christmas 1994 **sycamore**	 Madonna for Christmas 2000 **maple**	 beads for Christmas 2011

Susan Moore 1991

each flower accompanied by handpainted insects

 blue irises	 blue rambling roses	 lilypond
 pink and red rambling roses	 Red orchids	 roses

H A Power 1987





'Mothering Sunday 1987'
handpainted violets

John Rawnsley Yeadon Leeds

no photo

Sarah





Think of me

John H Shepherd York



acacia

Somer Combe Studios 1988



dried flowers under Perspex in apex
box wood

Sterling Classic Malvern, Worcestershire 1994



'Crafted in England'



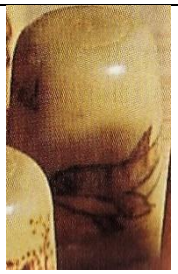
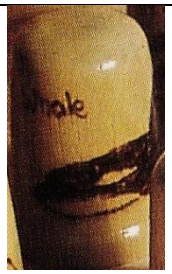
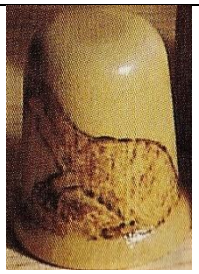
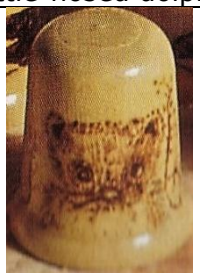
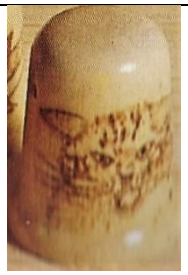
set of six with applied pewter fruits and leaves of the trees of the forest
horse chestnut – **yew** – **oak** – **cherry** – **sycamore** – **London plane**
each is made from the wood of the named fruit



oak

Christine Swift 1993
endangered species of the Marshes and Wales – pyrographed
each animal name is lettered on the verso



 bottle-nosed dolphin	 killer whale	 otter
 marten	 red squirrel	 Scottish wild cat

T3





Clover – good fortune

Terry





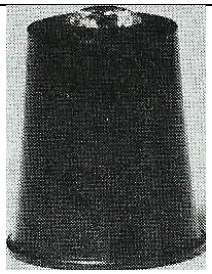
lupins
'Mystic'
handpainted

Ted Tolson



mini **yew**
1988

John Urwin



cubic zirconia
African blackwood
1983

R W





Corris Wales
sycamore
pyrographed

Anne Young





'The Thimble Society of London'
handpainted in canal boat style
thimbles by John Urwin



1990
handpainted in canal boat style
thimbles by John Urwin

Unknown artists

Maybe you received a certificate with the maker's details - or yours still has a sticker with the maker's details. Please share
I don't even know if they eventuated in Britain



bee
Brazilian rosewood



puffin
handpainted



cat



bagpipe chanter
African blackwood and ivory
August 1985



clematis
handpainted
February 1989



brass apex



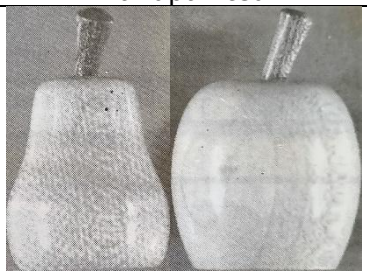
1940s
handpainted



mallard and duckling
handpainted



'Mary Rose'
handpainted
looks more like a Russian lacquered thimble?



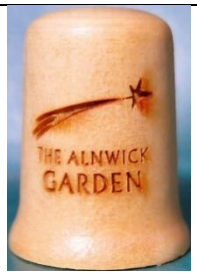
pear- and apple-shaped



signs of zodiac
sterling silver
Aries – Sagittarius - Virgo



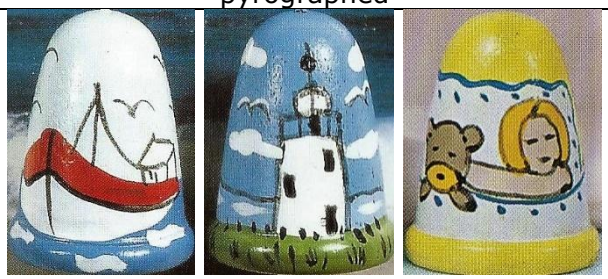
coin set into apex
sixpence



'The Alnwick Garden'
pyrographed



holly
handpainted



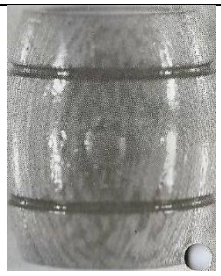
Fishing boat – lighthouse – teddy bear
shape links these to the same artist
May & July 1993



paper quilling roses



'Llynnon'
pyrographed (Anglesey Wales)
piece chipped off surface



cask with bung
March 1987
b&w photo



halfpenny affixed



thistle
handpainted and pyrographed
'Scotland'
thimble made by John Urwin



'Cropredy'



African blackwood
sterling silver thistle



pyrographed
'Sue'



cathedral etched
'Sue'



'A woman's work is never done'
Mrs Santa handling all the Christmas toys
1992



child's in barrel-shaped holder
rosewood



cats



witch



wildflowers



needlecase
jarrah thimble – **apricot** case



coffee pot
ruby knob and brass handle



finely ridged thimble



sheep



spider - pewter



set of six with sewing notions
button with pin – iron – safety pin – scissors - sewing machine - thimble



handpainted elf, seated santa, santa with double base



pyrographed squirrel



warbler



Jersey
purpleheart

Contributors

Eva B | Rita Bayley | Yolanta Bogdziewicz | Pawel Brzyski | Micky Garvey | Andrea Griffiths | Linda Heggs
Sue Pickles | Diane Poesk | Jean Rose-Miss Mouse | Norma Shattock | Jean Taylor

This listing of Modern British hand-decorated 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
July 2025