

Thimble Collectors Club Thimbles

Saechsiches (sic) Porzellanwerk <--> Swillington Bridge Pottery

Thimble Collectors Club

Romance

SAECHSICHES PORZELLANWERK, Germany

A sunny day, a handsome youth, a pretty girl, a secluded spot – what could be more charming and natural than a little romance? Our delightful courting couple relax in the leafy shade of a young tree, forgetful of errands or duties, to enjoy a few minutes of each other's company. The couple is now long gone, and the sapling a mighty oak, for their dress proclaims an eighteenth-century setting. Against a background of cobalt blue – surely the most romantic colour of all – the scene is delineated in rich gold on an attractive hexagonal shape.

Our thimble is the very first to carry the mark of Saechsiches Porzellanwerk of Germany. This porcelain house is situated in the foothills of the Saxony mountains, a stone's throw from the very place where porcelain was first made in Europe. Augustus the Strong established his factory at nearby Meissen in 1710, and charged his director, Johann Böttger, with unfolding the mysteries of Chinese porcelain. Böttger, an alchemist who had been hoping to discover how to make gold from base metals, instead developed a wonderfully hard red ware, which was treated as a precious stone, being cut and polished on a jeweller's wheel. This was the beginning of the porcelain we revere today.

TCCFC269

Thimble Collectors Club

Birds of Paradise Thimble



ZEH, SCHERZER PORCELAIN - Germany

A group of parrots, resplendent in their natural plumage, is captured in exquisite detail on this elegant thimble from Zeh, Scherzer Porcelain Company.

Zeh, Scherzer Porcelain was founded over one hundred years ago in the small town of Rehau, in Upper Franconia. The firm is named for its founders, Mr. H. Zeh and Mr. F. Scherzer, who quickly established a reputation for producing fine porcelain dinnerware, beer steins, and coffee services. During World War I, the company was passed into the hands of the Winterling family, who still own and actively manage Zeh, Scherzer today.

This fine porcelain thimble, with its uniquely shaped body and striking motif, is available exclusively from the Thimble Collectors Club.

Thimble Collectors Club

Dragon SCHERZER, West Germany

A vivid green dragon, embellished with gold, flicking his tail and breathing fire, swirls across this striking thimble. The Dragon is an ancient and universal symbol, signifying different functions, qualities or fears in different parts of the world. In the West, dragons were terrifying jailers of maidens, fierce guardians of treasure, and evils to be overcome – it was the standard task of a hero to slay one. But to the Chinese, the dragon is divine, angelic, magical, and a symbol of wisdom. For centuries it was the Chinese imperial emblem: the emperor's throne was called the Dragon Throne, his face the Dragon Face, and when the emperor died he was said to have ascended to heaven on the back of a dragon.

The porcelain house of Scherzer was founded nearly a century ago in the town of Rehau, Upper Franconia, which is today part of Bavaria. It is internationally known for its fine tableware – with a speciality in contemporary design – and for charming and unusual gift items such as decorative wall plates and beersteins, along with boxes, vases and bowls. Scherzer is delighted to have been chosen to produce this distinctive thimble for our Club.

Thimble Collectors Club

Dragon



ZEH, SCHERZER - Germany

Roaring flames from his mouth, an ancient dragon leaps across time to land on this strikingly different thimble from the Zeh, Scherzer Porcelain company.

Zeh, Scherzer Porcelain was founded over one hundred years ago in the small town of Rehau, in Upper Franconia. The firm is named for its founders, Mr. H. Zeh and Mr. F. Scherzer, who quickly established a reputation for producing fine porcelain dinnerware, beersteins and coffee services. During World War I, the company was passed into the hands of the Winterling family, who still own and actively manage Zeh, Scherzer today. With an eye towards contemporary design, the factory produces gift items such as vases, boxes, bowls, and wall plates, for which it has won worldwide recognition.

This fine porcelain thimble, with its unique swirled body design is the first ever produced by Zeh, Scherzer, and is available exclusively from The Thimble Collector's Club.

Thimble Collectors Club

Nouveau Rose SCHERZER, West Germany

Known to have been growing in our world for more than thirty-five million years, the rose is among the very oldest and also the very youngest of flowers, for each year new species are produced. More than any other bloom, it has inspired artists and poets from the earliest of times. The Greek poetess, Sappho, celebrated this most varied of plants in verse in the sixth century BC, calling it the Queen of Flowers, while in Rome under the Caesars, the rose was honoured and revered above all else.

In this enchanting illustration the artist, Angela Mills, has given her pen and her imagination full rein to produce the most glorious and delicate of blooms, softly coloured and variably tinted, growing in heady profusion. This is truly a 'New Rose' – captured for ever on our thimble as a symbol of fragrance and lasting loveliness.

Scherzer was founded in the town of Rehau, Upper Franconia – today part of Bavaria – in 1880. Renowned throughout Europe for its contemporary dinnerware designs, the company also produces delightful gift items, such as vases, boxes, bowls and decorative wall plates, but this beautiful thimble is the very first to be produced under the Scherzer name – yet another first for the Thimble Collectors Club!

Thimble Collectors Club

Playful Kittens SCHIRNDING, Germany

Kittens are such delightful scamps that even when they are at their most destructive you can't help loving them. Flower vases upset, water dripping on to the floor; tablecloths pulled to the ground, perhaps taking a piece or two of china with them; curtains commandeered as a ready-made gym for clambering exercises; and, inevitably, the wool abruptly ending, damp and chewed, between the fingers of a busy knitter, testimony to the stealthy work of a cheeky kitten by her feet. Perhaps the most charming sight of all is when they try to be fierce, and you find you have a tiny lion in your living room!

The Schirnding company is based in the town of the same name, situated in the beautiful forests of north-east Bavaria. Founded in 1902, by 1909 it had already expanded to employ 320 designers and craftspeople. It is now considered to be one of the most modern porcelain factories in Germany, using the very latest technology. Schirnding mainly concentrates upon coffee, tea and dinner services, some created at special request, and it is certain that an example of its giftware such as this delightful thimble will be eagerly seized upon by collectors.

TCCFC281

Thimble Collectors Club

"Kittens" Thimble



SCHIRNDING PORZELLAN - Germany

Two tiny kittens and some balls of yarn. A sure recipe for hours of enjoyment has been mixed upon this lovely porcelain thimble crafted by Schirnding Porzellan as the little cats try to capture the ever rolling balls.

The small town of Schirnding, nestled in the beautiful forests of Northeastern Bavaria near the Czechoslovakian border, has been home to Schirnding Porzellan since 1902. Purchased in 1928 by Herr Henrik Seitzmann, the company quickly grew in prestige and size, at one point numbering near one thousand hard-working employees. Currently considered by experts to be one of the most modern of all current porcelain factories, Schirnding continues to produce the outstanding dinnerware, tea services and gift items for which it has become so renowned.

With its unique "flower-top" design, this "Kittens" thimble is a marvelous example of the creativity and excellence of design which Schirnding brings to each of its wares. It is available exclusively to members of the Thimble Collectors Club.

Thimble Collectors Club

Reichsburg SCHIRNDING, Germany

Could there be a more perfect setting for a fairy tale – a romantic legend of handsome knight, beautiful maiden and happily-ever-after – than an enchanted castle, or Schloss, on one of Germany's magically sparkling rivers? Yet Reichsburg Cochem is not a dream castle but a real Schloss that has stood sentinel over the banks of the winding River Mosel for centuries. There has been a castle here since 1072, and it has seen the days when bold knights fought battles to win the favours of fair maidens. Although rebuilt through the ages, Reichsburg Cochem has lost none of its story-book enchantment, and stands ready today to be once more the scene of a real-life, modern fairy tale.

The Schirnding porcelain factory is situated in a small town in the beautiful forests of north-eastern Bavaria, near the Czechoslovakian border. The natural beauty of the area is the inspiration for romantic scenes such as the one painted on this thimble by Bob Hersey. His attention to detail and authenticity combine with his artistic flair to make this a miniature masterpiece.

Thimble Collectors Club

Parrots

SCHUMANN, Germany

Perching among the luxurious foliage of their tropical home, these Scarlet Macaws are the most brightly coloured of all the large parrots. There are more than 300 species of parrot worldwide, most of which live in forested areas – in particular the steamy rainforests of Central and South America, Australia and New Zealand. The Scarlet Macaw is found from Mexico to Bolivia and is renowned for its magnificent long, pointed tail and its spectacular, shimmering plumage. The strong, sickle-shaped beak is used to help it climb around in the trees as well as to crack open the nuts it loves to eat. Often kept as pets, parrots have a reputation for being easily tamed and affectionate; how wonderful, though, to see them portrayed here, living harmoniously with the other bright creatures of their vibrant natural habitat.

This delightful thimble, with its scene of avian beauty, has been produced for the Thimble Collectors Club by the Schumann porcelain house. Founded in 1881 in the Kingdom of Bavaria, the company proudly upholds its long tradition of fine craftsmanship. Today it uses the most modern methods of production available, and the Schumann logo of a lion with a crown is still the hallmark of excellence.

Thimble Collectors Club

Blue Bouquet

SCHWARZENHAMMER, Germany

While some gardeners like their cherished plots to be hot and vibrant with the eye-catching reds, oranges and yellows of wallflowers, nasturtiums, snapdragons and marigolds, others favour cool borders of blues and whites that provide a balm for the senses. Many of our favourite flowers are blue – think of cheerful little forget-me-nots, tightly clustered bluebells, fragile, nodding harebells and campanulas in all their variety. Perhaps it is because their colour reminds us of the blue skies of sunny days that we love them so much – or maybe it is their special charm at dusk, when the blues gather strength before fading in the twilight, that gives them the extra appeal that brings out the poet in all of us.

This exquisite thimble is made by Schwarzenhammer, a Bavarian porcelain house named after the little mountain village in which it was founded in the nineteenth century. The intricate skills of porcelain making have been handed down through the generations of craftsmen who have created their wares under its aegis, establishing its reputation as one of the leading porcelain houses in the world today. Our thimble bears testimony to the excellence of its products, and will be eagerly welcomed by collectors everywhere.

Thimble Collectors Club

Blue Danube Thimble



SCHWARZENHAMMER PORCELAIN - Bavaria

The world's most romantic river inspired this charming scallop-edged thimble. Its floral motif, which is repeated three times, was taken from the profusion of wildflowers blossoming along the banks of the Danube. The coloration is a delicate blue-on-blue, accented with gleaming gold.

The Danube River actually flows past the sleepy Bavarian village where Schwarzenhammer porcelain is made. In fact, the first Schwarzenhammer pieces were created in the 19th century, about the same time Johann Strauss, Jr. created "On the Beautiful Blue Danube," the most famous waltz melody ever written. Ever since, the beauty and legendry of the river have influenced Schwarzenhammer designs.

The pottery's regal emblem, suggestive of Bavaria's past, also underscores its dedication to centuries-old craftsmanship.

Thimble Collectors Club

The Pride SCHWARZENHAMMER, West Germany

Under the sparse shade of a thorn tree, in the wide open spaces of the African veldt, lies a pride of lions. The powerful, full-maned male – king of the beasts – keeps sleepy guard over his harem of lionesses and their cubs. Every now and then a dozing lioness lazily flicks the bushy tip of her tail, only to have it pounced on by one of her cubs, still too young and playful to want to sleep the whole day away. After hours of dozing and resting in the burning sun, the lioness will rouse herself to find food for her family. Then she is transformed into a keen-eyed huntress, padding stealthily through the beautiful African landscape.

This scene of wild beauty and power at rest, captured on our lovely thimble, is produced by the Bavarian house of Schwarzenhammer, which was founded in the mid-nineteenth century, and which takes its name from the small mountain village where it originated. Dedicated craftsmen have passed on their skills in the art of porcelain making from father to son, so that today Schwarzenhammer is recognized as one of the world's leading porcelain houses.



Thimble Collectors Club

Ladybirds

With the mark of SEACOMBE POTTERY, England

The ladybirds featured here are of the largest British variety, which is bright red, with seven black spots on its back. Endearing for its small size, cheerful colouring and useful habits, this little beetle is a special friend to gardeners. At all stages of its life it feeds on aphids, which left unchecked would chomp their way greedily through our annual crops of roses. This delightful thimble would be a perfect 'different' gift for the keen rose gardener!

In 1851, John Goodwin, a craftsman from the Crown works, Longton, in the heart of the Staffordshire Pottery country, founded his own company, Seacombe Pottery. It was situated on the Cheshire side of the river Mersey, opposite Liverpool, and flourished there for twenty years. In common with most other potters of the time, Goodwin produced stoneware and the ever-popular blue and white china; but he also, interestingly, made good-quality Parian ware – a fine, white, marble-like porcelain which was very suitable for casting in moulds, and was often used for small-scale statuary and other ornamental pieces. This thimble bears Seacombe's attractive printed mark, as a tribute to this almost forgotten small company.

BTCCFC06



Playful Friends SEACOMBE POTTERY, England

This pair of pretty, heart-shaped thimbles features delightful cameo designs of children and animals. Each thimble has two tiny pictures of children with their furry friends. On one, a boy pets a dog and a girl cradles a cat; on the other, a boy carries a rabbit and a girl holds a squirrel. Both show that the love, attention and kindness that children lavish on their pets are amply repaid in fun by animals that have learned to trust and play freely with those who look after them.

The Seacombe Pottery was established in 1851 on the Cheshire side of the river Mersey, opposite Liverpool. Its founder was the craftsman John Goodwin, formerly of the Crown works at Longton, in Staffordshire. Production at Seacombe in the early years included blue printed pottery for everyday use, strong stoneware, and good quality Parian ware for finer decorative pieces and small-scale statuary. The company continues to produce a range of delicate gift ware.

Thimble Collectors Club

Rabbits

SHEER ELEGANCE, England

The rabbit must be one of the best-known members of our British wildlife. The despair of farmers and the joy of children, they make a delightful sight as they go scudding away across the fields at your approach, alerted to danger by the swift thudding of hind foot against the ground by the member of the tribe who has caught sight of you first. In the early evening, you can discern them by their white scuts bobbing jauntily about as they nibble and hop, nibble and hop their way through the sweet, crunchy green growth.

Jim Channell, the painter of this captivating scene, makes natural history his hobby as well as his livelihood; he is an enthusiastic wildlife photographer and lectures on conservation. The accuracy of his illustrations stems from a keen interest in his subject, backed up by a talent for finely detailed brushwork.

Sheer Elegance was established in the grounds of the world famous Gladstone Pottery Museum in the mid-1970s. In 1987 the company moved to Fenton, Stoke-on-Trent, where it continues to build on its reputation of maintaining the high standards of craftsmanship for which the Staffordshire pottery industry is renowned.

Thimble Collectors Club

Imari SHIBATA, Japan

Quality Japanese porcelain was first shipped to Europe in the 17th century from the busy port of Imari. Some of the finest examples were collected by King William and Queen Mary and are displayed at Hampton Court Palace.

Three hundred years on, Shibata stay true to their heritage and use the traditional designs featuring bold colours and gold decoration that are now known simply as 'Imari'. Once only Royalty and the nobility could own the works of a great Japanese porcelain house. Today, it is our good fortune that we too can possess a thimble that is part of Eastern history.

Thimble Collectors Club

Imari Thimble



SHIBATA

SHIBATA PORCELAIN - Japan

Quality Japanese porcelain was first shipped to Europe in the 17th century from the Japanese port of Imari. Some of the finest examples of this porcelain were collected by England's King William and Queen Mary, and are displayed at Hampton Court Palace, in London.

Three hundred years later, the Japanese House of Shibata stays true to their rich heritage, using the traditional designs featuring bold colors and gold decoration that are now known simply as "Imari". Once, only royalty and nobility could own the works of a great Japanese porcelain house. Today, it is our good fortune that we, too, can possess a thimble that is part of the rich history of porcelain and the Orient.

Thimble Collectors Club

Sport of Kings SHIRES, England

There is a special magic associated with horses, and this is particularly true of racehorses. With magnificent stature and proud grace, they give us their strength and obedience as long as we treat them well. With the sound of the thundering hooves approaching, the sight of beautiful animals in the peak of health, a day at the races is truly a thrill for us all. One horse at full gallop is an awe-inspiring sight. To watch several at once, amid all the colour and glamour of the racetrack, must be one of the most exhilarating experiences in the world.

The family-run company of Shires, makers of fine bone china, has been in existence for over twenty-five years, specialising in equestrian products. Skilled artists and craftsmen take great care to reproduce, faithfully and accurately, every detail of the horses they so lovingly depict. Every design is personally approved by the company's owner and managing director Malcolm Ainge, who is himself a renowned horseman. Our lovely thimble, showing all the thrill of the racetrack, is sure to please the horse-lovers and race-goers among our collectors everywhere.

TCCFC293

Thimble Collectors Club

Clipper Ship SHOGO, Japan

A tea clipper in full sail – what a breathtakingly lovely sight! Clippers – sailing ships with raked masts and many small sails – were not only the fastest, but also the most graceful and elegant sailing ships on the seven seas. Surging through the sunlit spray, they could outstrip even the early steam ships, and they competed fiercely in long-fought races to bring exotic cargoes of tea and spices from far-away China to the bustling ports of Britain. Their voyages gave rise to many stirring and romantic tales of the high seas.

The clipper seen here is the famous *Cutty Sark*, built in 1869 and now preserved in dry dock at Greenwich. She is shown both fully rigged and lying at anchor off a palm-fringed South Sea island. Surmounting the thimble is a coiled ship's rope, and between the picture panels is a pattern of tiny gold anchors.

Often included in the earliest cargoes of tea were little teapots – the first pieces of Far Eastern porcelain to come to Britain. Drawing on this centuries-old tradition of Oriental ceramics is the Shogo porcelain house of Mizunami City, Honshu Island, Japan. In 'Clipper Ship' Shogo have produced a striking contemporary example of this ancient craft, which will delight collectors everywhere.

Thimble Collectors Club

Hikari SHOZAN, Japan

This richly decorated thimble depicts in traditional Japanese style the Hikari, better known to us as the Skylark. The call of the Skylark is unmistakable: a beautiful 'treck-o' sound, a song usually given in flight and sustained for long periods. No wonder Hikari is also the name given to Japan's most famous folk-singer!

The porcelain house of Shozan has great ambitions. For Shozan means "flying to the peak of the mountain" – suggesting they wish to be the best in all that they do. Since the beginning of this century, Shozan have lived up to their lofty ambition – producing such high quality porcelain as this fine thimble.

Some scholars believe that Japan's tradition of ceramic making dates back to Neolithic earthenware vessels made in 10,000 B.C. Fine porcelain of the standard of this thimble was only produced from the seventeenth century onwards, but Shozan can be sure that their ancestors are watching over their endeavours.

In the seventeenth century, westerners were keen to own exquisite Japanese porcelain. Equally, nowadays, a thimble collection without representatives of all the best 'yubi wa' (the Japanese for thimbles), would surely be incomplete.

Thimble Collectors Club

The Hikari Thimble



SHOZAN
Japan

SHOZAN PORCELAIN - Japan

Renowned for its beautiful song, a skylark soars against a background of stylized flowers on this thimble from the Japanese porcelain house of Shozan. The "Hikari" bird appears throughout the art of Japan, and its name has been given to the country's most famous folk singer.

Just as the skylark inspires joy and hope in the human heart – Shozan, which means "flying to the peak of the mountain," inspires its craftsmen to achieve the highest quality in their work. For centuries, the Japanese people have regarded mountain peaks as symbols of man's highest aspirations. Whenever possible, temples and gardens are placed in a setting where a mountain top can be seen by those who come there to meditate.

Established nearly a century ago, the house of Shozan is located in Gifu province, a center of traditional Japanese porcelain-making. Like the venerable wares made in the historic pottery center at Seto, the porcelain which bears the proud name of Shozan represents the finest traditions of Japanese porcelain-making.

Thimble Collectors Club

"Rose" Thimble

秀和

MADE IN
JAPAN

SHUUWA - Japan

Delicate and beautiful, a single ruby red rose decorates the face of this extremely rare bone china thimble which has been exquisitely styled by Shuuwa of Japan.

Due to the added expense and special expertise required for bone china production, only a handful of Japanese manufacturers are still involved in its production. Located in the world-famous Seto region where porcelain-making has been a way of life for over 5 centuries, this factory specializes in bone china gift items and dinnerware. The talented artisans who work for Shuuwa take great pride in their difficult and labor-intensive craft, treating each step — from porcelain casting to the hand-painted designs to the hand-applied 24kt gold band — as if it were the most important.

Due to limited production facilities, the bone china products that come from Shuuwa are normally sold only to the domestic Japanese market. The Thimble Collectors Club, however, was able to specially commission this exceptional "Rose" thimble for the exclusive enjoyment of its members.

Thimble Collectors Club

Mermaid SIR FRANCIS, Denmark

The famous statue of Hans Christian Andersen's 'Little Mermaid' at the entrance to Copenhagen's harbour has witnessed the passing of the age of sail. In her time she has seen countless graceful bows cleaving the sparkling Scandinavian waves, for Copenhagen is home to most of the Danish shipping lines and has a long tradition of seamanship. Indeed, even before the twelfth century, it was a busy fishing village. From the safety of this haven, ships such as the two-masted Galeas and the smaller Jagt braved the icy waters and terrible storms of the Baltic and North Seas, and for three-quarters of a century returning sailors have felt a lift of the heart as they hove in view of their little mermaid welcoming them safely home.

This delightful thimble is brought to you by Sir Francis of Denmark. The company was originally founded to make porcelain jewellery, and has since expanded its range to encompass all kinds of porcelain, specialising in hand-painted ware. It is based at Rønnede in the rural south of Denmark — an area of great natural beauty from which the artists and craftsmen of Sir Francis draw inspiration for their exquisite products.

Thimble Collectors Club

Festivals

SLAVKOV, Czechoslovakia

Since time immemorial, country folk have punctuated their working year with festivals – and, because of their close bond with nature, these feast days usually marked the beginning of a season, the ripening of the crops and the gathering of the harvest. It was a time to bring out gaily decorated national costumes, to play folk tunes on simple instruments and to jump and sway to the rhythms of country dances. Even today these festivals are still observed, bringing a day of good cheer for all to enjoy. Some, of course, celebrate religious occasions. Late December in Czechoslovakia still brings barrels of carp to the market places where eager buyers gather round to pick the best of this traditional Christmas fare. Once home, the fish is put in the bath to keep it fresh!

This charming thimble with its delicately painted quaint scenes comes from Slavkov, which was founded in 1792 as the first porcelain factory in Bohemia. By 1812 close ties with Meissen and Sèvres had resulted in advanced firing, grinding and glazing techniques which produced richly decorated tableware and exquisite clock bodies bearing raised enamels and gold. Today, Slavkov boasts the most up-to-date technology, yet still retains its old traditions of crafting the finest quality porcelain.

Thimble Collectors Club

Fallow Deer

SOPHIENTHAL, West Germany

In the dappled shade of a leafy glade, the graceful fallow deer with their mottled coats blend perfectly into the background. Motionless, they are hard to spot, and even in movement they are so silent and delicate that they merge into the restlessness of the forest, where breezes rustle the leaves, causing the light to flicker and dance, and myriad small animals squeak and scamper in the undergrowth. Here in the Black Forest, large animals are on the move too; this is one of the last European refuges of the brown bear, who finds the thousands of miles of dense woodland very much to his taste!

This delightful scene, full of dainty detail, is from the brush of artist John Francis, who collaborated with Sophienthal to create a most charming thimble. This porcelain house is named after the little town in which it was founded in 1920 by a group of investors, before being taken over in 1937 by Thomas & Co.

Sophienthal is on the outskirts of Bayreuth, the Bavarian town famed worldwide for its yearly Wagnerian festivals which are held in the theatre designed by Richard Wagner in the nineteenth century.

Thimble Collectors Club

Flower Thimble



SOPHIENTHAL PORZELLAN - Bavaria, West Germany

Delicate flowers in pastel shades of pink and blue, accented with leaves of gold, gracefully extend over the top of this beautiful and unusual thimble — the first ever to bear the hallmark of Sophienthal Porzellan.

Founded in 1920, this prominent porcelain house takes its name from the tiny hamlet of Sophienthal, West Germany. Located in one of Bavaria's most distinguished porcelain-making districts, the firm's talented staff of artisans embellishes its fine, white porcelain with original and strikingly distinctive motifs. Their unique style and extraordinary craftsmanship has earned Sophienthal broad recognition among knowledgeable porcelain collectors.

Available exclusively from The Thimble Collectors Club, the "Flower Thimble", with its breathtaking floral design and beautifully scalloped border, will be a perfect addition to any thimble collection.

Thimble Collectors Club

The 1985 Flower of the Year Thimble – Poppy SPODE, England

The first issue of any new series is always an important event. When it involves an English factory with the reputation of Spode it becomes a very special event.

Like virtually all our thimbles, the Spode Flower of the Year thimble is an exclusive edition for The Thimble Collectors Club. As such it is certain to be a series sought by dedicated thimble collectors.

1985's flower is the Poppy (*Papaver Rhoeas*) a familiar sight at the edges of cornfields throughout the English countryside. It is also symbolic as the flower of remembrance as it bloomed in the fields of Flanders as the First World War raged.

Josiah Spode first produced fine ceramics in the middle of the Eighteenth Century. Possibly his greatest achievement was the creation of the first bone china, a formula that has remained virtually unchanged to this day. Now part of the Royal Worcester Spode Group, Spode remain true to the traditions of quality and style laid down by their founder over 200 years ago.

Thimble Collectors Club

The 1986 Flower of The Year Thimble — Buttercup SPODE, England

The Flower of The Year has been created exclusively for the Thimble Collectors Club by the world famous Spode porcelain house.

Each year, Spode select a different flower to portray on their exquisite bone china thimble, topped with a delightful gold flower motif. 1986's flower is the Buttercup (*Ranunculus Acris*) which brings a splash of yellow to many a British meadow.

Spode's heritage dates back to 1776, making it one of England's oldest china makers. Their founder, Josiah Spode, was responsible for perfecting the process of adding bone ash to china clay to produce English bone china. For strength, whiteness and translucence, bone china is unsurpassed, and Spode still use the original formula to produce their finely decorated china.

Thimble Collectors Club

Buttercup Thimble

Spode

Fine Bone China
ENGLAND

SPODE CHINA - England

The Flower of The Year has been created exclusively for the Thimble Collectors Club by the world famous Spode porcelain house.

Each year, Spode selects a different flower to portray on an exquisite bone china thimble, topped with a delightful gold flower motif. 1986's flower is the Buttercup (*Ranunculus Acris*) which brings a splash of yellow to many a British meadow.

Spode's heritage dates back to 1776, making it one of England's oldest china makers. Spode's founder, Josiah Spode, was responsible for perfecting the process of adding bone ash to china clay to produce English bone china. For strength, whiteness and translucence, bone china is unsurpassed, and Spode still uses the original formula to produce their finely decorated china.

Thimble Collectors Club

The 1987 Flower of the Year Thimble — Bluebell SPODE, England

Josiah Spode's career in the ceramic business began at the age of seven, when he was apprenticed to Thomas Whieldon, the greatest British potter of his time. Thirty years later, in 1770, he took over the management of William Banks' factory, which he subsequently purchased in 1776. His son Josiah II was put in charge of marketing the company's tableware in London and soon the name of Spode became associated with the best quality products.

Spode's reputation was enhanced particularly by the successful transfer-printing of patterns from hand-engraved copper plates onto chinaware. After inheriting the business in 1797, Josiah Spode II perfected the formula for English bone china, setting a standard which remains good to this day, and introduced "stone china", a high quality white earthenware. It was at this time that the Spode company received its first royal appointment, an honour which it has held without interruption until the present.

The Bluebell thimble, Spode's 'Flower of the Year' thimble for 1987, is a fine example of this craftsmanship. This simple piece exhibits the pure white colour and translucence of fine bone china, providing a suitable background to the pretty design which features one of our most popular flowers. The carpets of bluebells in woods are the most distinctive evocation of the start of the British summer. This thimble design, exclusive to club members, is made perfect by the simple gold flower decorating the top.

Thimble Collectors Club

Billingsley Rose

Spode

Fine Bone China
ENGLAND

SPODE - England

This strikingly beautiful rose was named after the British artist William Billingsley, who developed an unusual technique for painting roses. His "secret" was to take out the highlights and mix tar with the rose color to obtain unusual clarity and depth of design. The skilled craftsmen of Spode have perfectly duplicated Billingsley's unique rose on this exquisite thimble, one of the last ever to be produced by Spode.

A glorious chapter in thimble manufacturing and collecting has come to a close. For over 200 years, the house of Spode has been known for the extraordinary quality and artistry of its English bone china thimbles. Over the years, the Thimble Collectors Club has been privileged to offer many beautiful Spode thimbles to our members. So when Spode informed us during the summer of 1992 that they were discontinuing production of thimbles, effective immediately, we convinced them to create a few new designs as a tribute to both Spode and our members.

This thimble, with its breathtaking recreation of the "Billingsley Rose," is one of the designs recreated exclusively for the Thimble Collectors Club, and is a fitting testimonial to one of the most respected porcelain houses in the world.

Thimble Collectors Club

The Butterfly Thimble

Spode

Fine Bone China
ENGLAND

SPODE - England

The magnificent coloration and delicate grace of a butterfly provides the crowning glory to this, one of the last thimbles from Spode China.

Founded in 1776 by Josiah Spode, this venerable English firm has remained in the forefront of porcelain manufacturing for over two hundred years. In fact, Spode was responsible for perfecting the process of adding bone ash to china clay to produce the English bone china renowned the world over. But now, an era of thimble-making history draws to a close as Spode ceases production of all thimbles in early 1993.

Your butterfly thimble, with its fanciful motif beautifully accented by the pristine white bone china and gleaming 22kt gold band, comes directly from one of the last batches of thimbles ever produced by Spode, and is available exclusively from the Thimble Collectors Club.

Thimble Collectors Club

Christmas Tree Thimble

Spode

Fine Bone China
ENGLAND

SPODE — England

Enchanting memories from holidays past are brought to life on this beautiful thimble — the first ever to bear the world famous Spode Christmas Tree Pattern. Produced on creamy Imperial Earthenware, the Spode Christmas Tree pattern has graced American holiday tables since its introduction in 1938.

Spode's heritage dates back to 1776, and has continuously produced their wares at the original factory in Stoke-on-Trent, England. Founded by Josiah Spode, this venerable English firm perfected the process of adding bone ash to china clay to produce the fine English bone china known the world over. Essentially unchanged to this day, Spode's original formula is considered the standard for excellence in fine bone china.

Spode's superb craftsmanship and unsurpassed decorative artistry are exemplified by this lovely "Christmas Tree" thimble. This breathtakingly beautiful design has been carefully reproduced from the original antique steel engravings and is available exclusively from the Thimble Collectors Club.

Thimble Collectors Club

Dandelion Clocks and Butterflies SPODE, England

Surely the only thing lighter than a butterfly must be dandelion down! The manner in which the bold yellow flowers of the dandelion turn to soft grey fluff is one of the wonders of nature, yet we take it for granted. In summer, the breezes puff it in milky drifts across the meadows and there is no lovelier sight than that of butterflies dancing in the downy cloud.

This charming thimble is from Spode, one of the most illustrious names in British porcelain. Josiah Spode began his career at only seven, when he was apprenticed to Thomas Whieldon, the leading British potter. In 1776 Spode, then in his late thirties, purchased his own company and swiftly established a formidable reputation. By 1797 his son, also Josiah, had inherited the firm and begun an innovatory reign, perfecting the formula for English bone china and introducing 'stone china', a high-quality white earthenware. It was during this period that Spode received its Royal Warrant, an honour it still proudly retains today.

Norman Barber is a long-established freelance artist who delights in botanical subjects. Together with Spode, he has created a thimble which will be greatly prized by collectors everywhere.

Thimble Collectors Club

Butterflies and Dandelions Thimble

Spode

Fine Bone China
ENGLAND

SPODE - England

For this lovely bone china thimble, the famous porcelain house of Spode has selected a delicate and fanciful design featuring blue butterflies hovering above a meadow filled with cottony-white dandelion puffs.

Founded in 1776 by Josiah Spode, this venerable English firm has remained in the forefront of porcelain manufacturing for over two hundred years. Spode was responsible for perfecting the process of adding bone ash to china clay to produce the English bone china renowned the world over. Essentially unchanged to this day, Spode's original formula is considered the standard for excellence in bone china.

The unsurpassed whiteness, translucence and strength of Spode's bone china is exemplified in the "Butterflies and Dandelions" thimble. Available exclusively from The Thimble Collectors Club, it is richly crowned with the 22 kt gold flower motif which is a favorite of this celebrated porcelain house.

Thimble Collectors Club

Foxglove – Flower of the Year 1992 SPODE, England

The flower adorning this enchanting thimble has been specially chosen for the Thimble Collectors Club by one of England's most famous porcelain houses as its 1992 Flower of the Year. The foxglove is a joyous sight to all countryside visitors throughout its long summer flowering. Each plant produces a cornucopia of blooms borne of willowy, but strong, stems that may be up to four feet high. The flowers themselves are like long bells, usually a soft, pinkish shade of purple with a wealth of crimson spots peeping out of the frilled lower edges. Just occasionally, you might see a foxglove with creamy white, or almost yellow, blooms, but it is mainly the purple variety which graces our woods and heathlands. The foxglove has been so called since the sixteenth century, and it is easy to imagine a vixen's dainty paws slipping into these soft mittens.

This most English of flowers has been lovingly depicted by David Thelwell, illustrator of the 'Wildflowers of Britain' and 'Herbs of America' books. It is brought to you by the illustrious house of Spode, which has enjoyed a reputation as a producer of the most exquisite, translucent white china for over two hundred years.

Thimble Collectors Club

Iris – Flower of the Year 1991 SPODE, England

Waving like tiny, triumphant banners in a medieval jousting field, the low-growing *Iris reticulata* is one of the first blooms to herald the longed-for arrival of spring. The deep violet-blue flowers grow in profusion, with a glimmering gold spot in the centre of each of their downward-pointing petals – flashes of rich brilliance that glint in the welcome spring sunshine. Originally garden plants cultivated in Asia over two thousand years ago, there are now some three hundred species of iris growing from the Arctic Circle to the Tropic of Cancer. The dainty *Iris reticulata* may be among the smallest, but it tops the list for charm and versatility, whether it is peeping out of an earthy pocket in a rock garden, providing a splash of colour at the front of a spring border or gently scenting the indoor air as it grows in a pretty china bowl.

Each year, the famous porcelain house of Spode chooses a flower to adorn an exclusive creation for the Thimble Collectors Club. These lovely irises, the subject for 1991, have been painted by Richard Bell – wildlife artist, author and naturalist. Spode is one of the oldest and best-known porcelain houses in the country, founded over two hundred years ago, and justly famed for its beautiful, translucent white china.

Thimble Collectors Club

The Marlborough Sprays Thimble

Spode

Fine Bone China
ENGLAND

SPODE - England

The Marlborough Sprays design, originally introduced in 1915, has been carefully recreated in subtle shades of yellow, blue and green, especially for use on this, one of the last thimbles ever to be produced by Spode China.

For over 200 years the house of Spode has remained in the forefront of porcelain manufacturing. In fact, Josiah Spode II, son of the founder, was responsible for perfecting the process of adding bone ash to china clay to produce the English bone china renowned the world over. Essentially unchanged to this day, the cream-white porcelain, lustrous glaze, and colorful motifs signifying a Spode creation have become sought after by collectors worldwide. Unfortunately for thimble collectors, however, Spode decided to cease production of thimbles in early 1993. As a glorious chapter in thimble manufacture draws to a close, we are proud to be able to offer you one of the last thimbles made by Spode.

The "Marlborough Sprays" thimble, with its unusual motif perfectly complemented by the hand-painted band of pastel green, is available only to members of the Thimble Collectors Club.

Thimble Collectors Club

Wild Rose SPODE, England

The Flower of the Year is an exclusive creation for the Thimble Collectors Club by the distinguished porcelain house of Spode. A popular flower is selected and painstakingly translated on to the superlative bone china with which Spode has made its name, to fashion a lasting and evocative souvenir of the year.

The wild rose is the flower chosen for 1990, and there can be few of us unfamiliar with its delicate blooms. One of the sweetest pleasures in the gentle months of May and June is to stroll, towards the end of day, down a winding English lane between hedgerows heavily swagged with honeysuckle and wild roses, their intermingling fragrances borne softly on the cool evening air.

Spode is one of England's most venerable china makers, dating as far back as 1776. Indeed, it was the founder, Josiah Spode, who experimented with and finally perfected the technique of adding bone ash to china clay to produce the strong, white and translucent medium which came to be known as English bone china. Today that very same process is still employed to produce the fine ware which is indelibly associated with the house of Spode.

Thimble Collectors Club

Art Deco

ST DONATS FINE CHINA, Wales

This attractive thimble typifies the streamlined style of Art Deco, which became popular after 1925, when the first examples were seen in the Paris exhibition of 'Arts Decoratifs et Industriels Modernes'. Moving away from the elaborate curlicues of the earlier Art Nouveau, this 'breath of fresh air' used clear, vivid colours, straight lines and uncluttered curves for nearly all decorative and household objects. Many of us have an old possession – perhaps a scarf or a brooch, or something more functional, such as a well-designed jug or tray – that displays the clean lines of Art Deco, and it is to be treasured as an example of an interesting and refreshing style, and, of course, as an antique of the not-too-distant future.

St Donats Fine China produces a range of giftware of particular quality and unique design. The studio takes its name from the nearby St Donats Castle, part of which dates from around 1300. Now updated to the twentieth century, the castle houses Atlantic College, the world's first international sixth-form college, which enjoys the patronage of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, and which welcomes boys and girls from more than sixty countries.

CTCCFC300

110

Thimble Collectors Club

Spring Garland Thimble

St. Donats Fine China

MADE IN WALES

ST. DONATS FINE CHINA - Wales

As if quietly announcing the arrival of spring, a garland of flowers – rendered in soft pastels and breathtaking detail – flows gracefully around the sides of this delicate thimble from the Welsh firm of St. Donats Fine China.

A relative newcomer to the ranks of England's esteemed porcelain manufacturers, St. Donats Fine China takes its name from nearby St. Donat's Castle, home to Atlantic College. The firm's emergence as a notable porcelain house can be attributed to its founders' meticulous attention to detail. With their mastery of handcrafting methods and their knowledge of fine English bone china, the owners themselves inspect every item before it leaves their factory. This ensures that only the finest collectibles and gift items – those that meet the highest standards of quality and endurance – leave their factory.

Available exclusively from the Thimble Collectors Club, the "Spring Garland" thimble with its pure white bone china, delicate motif, and glistening band of 22kt gold, exemplifies St. Donats' dedication to quality. It is sure to be a treasured addition to your collection.

Thimble Collectors Club

Strawberries ST DONATS FINE CHINA, Wales

Surely the favourite fruit of all the world, the strawberry is unrivalled for its luscious flavour and almost melting, juicy texture. One of the greatest pleasures of a summer's day must be to spy the rich, red glow of a newly ripened strawberry hiding beneath its leaves, and to stoop, pluck and bite into the fragrant, sun-warmed berry straight from its bed of straw. To eat more later with cream and sugar may be sheer luxury – but that first, private taste is a very special moment. This slender thimble of pure white porcelain shows off to perfection the cluster of plump, scarlet strawberries with their spray of delicate, gold-hearted flowers.

The thimble is brought to you by the little Welsh porcelain house of St Donats Fine China. The company takes its name from the nearby St Donat's Castle, home to Atlantic College, an internationally famous Sixth Form college with origins in America as well as Britain, which enjoys the patronage of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales. The St Donats studio produces an exciting range of giftware, and has quickly established a reputation for good quality and unique design.

Thimble Collectors Club

Welsh Poppy Thimble

St. Donats

Fine China

MADE IN WALES

ST. DONATS FINE CHINA - Wales

A delicate Welsh poppy springs to life off the pure bone white background of this thimble from St. Donats Fine China.

Located in Wales, St. Donats Fine China takes its name from nearby St. Donat's Castle, home to Atlantic College. A relative newcomer to the esteemed ranks of England's porcelain manufacturers, the firm's emergence as a notable porcelain house can be attributed to its founders' meticulous attention to detail and the beautiful watercolor paintings they commission from highly talented local artists. Designed by Jean Evans of Glyn Coch studios, this flower was one of the five Festival Flowers selected for the Garden Festival of Wales held in 1992.

Finished off with a glistening band of 22kt gold, this thimble's fine artistry is a testament to St. Donats' dedication to quality. Available exclusively from the Thimble Collector's Club, the "Welsh Poppy" thimble is sure to delight.

Peacock Perfection ST. ILLTYD FINE CHINA, Wales

Peacock feathers have a mystery and beauty all their own – they must surely be the most splendid, colourful and decorative feathers in the world. Designed by Nature to attract the peahen to her mate in the sandy deserts of north-western India, these magical, romantic feathers have charmed us all.

St. Illtyd Fine China takes its name from Llantwit Major (Llanilltyd Fawr), where it is situated, not far from the site of an important monastery and centre for Christian education established by St. Illtyd in the twelfth century. There is a local legend that both St. David, patron saint of Wales, and St. Patrick, patron saint of Ireland, stayed at this monastery. A church now stands on what is thought to be the very spot. The porcelain house of St. Illtyd, founded by a skilled professional sculptor, makes all kinds of decorative gift wares, such as figurines, trinket boxes and thimbles, and is delighted to present us with its latest design, 'Peacock Perfection', from South Wales.

Thimble Collectors Club

Kite Flying STUDIO FINE ARTS, England

To fly a kite – to watch and feel it soar and dive, turn and twist, and then soar again as the breeze catches it – is not only to enjoy one of life's quiet pleasures; it is also to take part in one of mankind's oldest pastimes. Kites were invented by the Chinese, at least as early as the fifth century BC, who used them both for military purposes and, more peaceably, as an aid to meditation. In Japan, brightly painted kites, taller than a man, are flown each year at a festival that is over 400 years old, and kites flying over a house are believed to keep evil spirits away. Named after that graceful member of the hawk family, kites remind us of the bird's majestic movements – wheeling across the empty sky with effortless ease and speed.

This gentle scene, painted by Lawrence Taylor, will doubtless evoke happy memories in all of us. The thimble comes from Studio Fine Arts, a recently formed porcelain house situated in the heart of the Malvern hills of Worcestershire – perfect kite-flying country. This small company, with its dedicated team of highly trained craftsmen, has already established a fine reputation and is sure to grow over the coming years.

Thimble Collectors Club

Shobu – Iris SUIZAN, Japan

Here in Britain we love flowers for their beauty, freshness and fragrance, but in Japan they bear a greater significance. There, they are emblems of life itself. The symbols contained in Japanese paintings can be read by the people in a way that has been lost to European art for many centuries. The exquisitely painted irises on our thimble, their velvety blooms emerging from a host of sharp, protective leaves, would be instantly interpreted in Japan as a symbol of bravery and resistance to tyranny. Irises grow near water and are consequently a favourite flower – for water, in lakes, streams and waterfalls, is a constant feature of the Japanese garden. All over the country one may see their proud, purple-blue flowers and pale green leaves reflected in the still surface of an elegantly constructed pond. This wonderful flower is often presented to children as a symbol of strength and good health.

Leading Japanese designer Nobuo Matsubara was commissioned to design our thimble in collaboration with Suizan, a porcelain house which is renowned for its perfectly executed miniatures. The result of this collaboration is a small masterpiece which we are confident will find pride of place in the homes of thimble collectors everywhere.

Thimble Collectors Club

Arctic SUNRISE, Canada

Sunrise Fine Bone China of New York, Ontario, has scored a first as Canada's only manufacturer of fine bone china, having been established in 1983 by Dennis Salt, who has gained extensive experience of the industry with Royal Doulton, Royal Albert and Royal Worcester.

The company has become known for the high quality of its products and its success is something of which the workforce is justly proud. Sunrise tea and coffee services and giftware are sold in Canada, the eastern United States and New Zealand, whilst there is a booming business in special commemorative orders and collectors' items. Although the raw materials must be imported from England, the designs are chiefly the work of Canadian artists who draw on local scenes for their inspiration.

The "Arctic" thimble is a fine example of the company's wares. Against a background of translucent white, one side of the thimble depicts that most magnificent of beasts, the polar bear, whose size and beautiful coat keep it warm no matter how cold it gets. Here, a mother bear is taking her young cub on its first expedition from the den. The other side shows a team of powerful but friendly huskies pulling a sledge, a traditional form of transport for the people of Northern Canada.

Thimble Collectors Club

Arctic Thimble



SUNRISE CHINA - CANADA

The translucent, icy white of fine bone china provides a singularly appropriate background for scenes from the Far North on this unusual thimble from Sunrise China of Ontario, Canada. Founded in 1983, Canada's only manufacturer of bone china has already received acclaim for its tea sets, coffee services and giftware among porcelain collectors in Canada, the United States, and New Zealand.

Sunrise China's founder, Dennis Salt, brought his extensive experience with Royal Doulton, Royal Albert and Royal Worcester to his new Canadian firm. Using raw materials imported from England, Salt has produced a superior bone china which achieves the standards set by English porcelain-makers at the end of the 18th century — and still adhered to almost 200 years later. The distinctly Canadian character of Sunrise bone china designs is attributable to Salt's almost exclusive use of Canadian designers and artists, who draw on their country's vast and spectacular range of scenery for their decorative motifs.

One of the most magnificent of Canada's Arctic creatures, the great white polar bear, is depicted as she ventures forth from a snowy den, where she had spent the long, frigid winter months, to take her cub on its first outing. The other side of the thimble depicts a Canadian Eskimo driving his team of powerful huskies over the frozen landscape. This fine bone china "Arctic" thimble by Sunrise China is available exclusively from The Thimble Collectors Club.

Thimble Collectors Club

Barn Owl SUTHERLAND CHINA, England

This fine bone china thimble depicts one of the most beautiful birds of the farm and countryside, the Barn Owl (*Tyto alba*). Nesting in hollow trees, haystacks and the roofspace of barns and old farm buildings, it emerges at night to prey on the small rodents and birds which are its staple diet. It hovers, quartering the ground, its long wings outstretched, occasionally emitting the long, sustained, shrieking call which sends shivers down the spines of nervous visitors to the country on long dark nights.

The Barn Owl is distinguished by the light golden colour of its upper parts, with white, silver and black markings, contrasting with its pure white under-parts. Unfortunately the British population of this splendid bird has been declining, leading to its official designation as an endangered species. This is probably due to the gradual disappearance of its preferred nesting sites due to increasingly intensive farming methods.

Created by the skilled potters and artists of Sutherland China, this flawless thimble reproduces the subtle colours of the Barn Owl. Although Sutherland China is a relatively young company in Stoke-on-Trent, amongst the giants of the Potteries towns, it has already gained great credit with collectors for the excellent quality of its collectors' pieces.

Thimble Collectors Club

Cherry Blossoms SUTHERLAND CHINA, England

The combination of fine bone china and sparkling crystal is an inspired notion which has produced a truly outstanding thimble. Not content with having made a thimble decorated with beautiful pink cherry blossoms, Sutherland China adds, by hand, touches of enamel to give a raised effect to the flowers. As a crowning glory a fiery Austrian crystal was set into the top of the thimble and ringed with fine 22 carat gold.

Sutherland China are relative newcomers to the Stoke-on-Trent hall-of-fame. However, they have drawn together some of the most talented craftsmen in Staffordshire to quickly establish a name for themselves as makers of high quality collectors' items.

Thimble Collectors Club

Cherry Blossoms Thimble



SUTHERLAND CHINA - England

The combination of fine bone china and sparkling crystal is an inspired notion which has produced a truly outstanding thimble. Not content with having made a thimble decorated with beautiful pink cherry blossoms, Sutherland China adds, by hand, touches of enamel to give a raised effect to the flowers. As a crowning glory a fiery Austrian crystal was set into the top of the thimble and ringed with fine 22 kt gold.

Sutherland China is a relative newcomer to the Stoke-on-Trent hall-of-fame. However, it has drawn together some of the most talented craftsmen in Staffordshire to quickly establish a name for itself as a maker of high quality collectors' items.

Sutherland's main expertise lies in creating special multi-dimensional works such as this Cherry Blossoms Thimble.

Thimble Collectors Club

Christmas 1994 SUTHERLAND CHINA, England

The busiest day of the year continues into the small hours of the night for Santa Claus, as he harnesses Donner and Blitzen to his sleigh, throws in his sack of toys and takes to the air. Sailing over the rooftops, he must be careful not to miss a single house where a child is sleeping. Down the chimney he goes, puffing and panting, to fill every expectant stocking with tiny toys and games, puzzles and dolls, fruit and sweets. Then up again – perhaps fortified by a mince pie or a glass of sherry – and on to the next chimney. One of the most attractive myths of Christian childhood, Father Christmas comes back to us every year in the excited faces of our children and then our grandchildren.

Sutherland China is well known to members of the Thimble Collectors Club, for it has made many of our best-loved thimbles. Established in 1961 in Stoke-on-Trent, in the heart of the Potteries, its founders brought with them many years of experience gained in the houses of Spode and Wedgwood. Sutherland's skilled artists and craftsmen follow the traditions associated with these great names to produce a lovely range of fine bone china gift items and collectables.

Thimble Collectors Club

Christmas 1995 SUTHERLAND CHINA, England

Christmas is a time when our thoughts take a nostalgic turn – nostalgia for our own childhood excitement at the rustle of a jam-packed stocking at the foot of the bed, tangerine tucked in the toe, for winters that were snowier than today, for an era when pleasures were simpler and toys were made of sturdy wood or metal, to be treasured all year long. Most of all, of course, we think of the great Victorian Christmas, with a Yule log ablaze, paper chains pinned along the beams, a huge fir tree bedecked with presents and a large family gathering together to celebrate the birth of Christ.

Sutherland is still a relatively young company which is growing from strength to strength. Established in 1961 in Stoke-on-Trent – the heartland of British pottery – it set out to emulate the proud traditions of the porcelain houses of old, and indeed its founders brought to the task many years of experience gained at the illustrious houses of Wedgwood and Spode. Sutherland has already built a considerable reputation for its gift items and collectables, and our Christmas thimble demonstrates all the quality that porcelain collectors have come to associate with its name.

YCFPC29

Christmas 1996
SUTHERLAND CHINA, England

ROBINS are the central motif on our Christmas thimble this year. With his bright red breast, exultant song and friendly, trusting nature, the robin has uniquely endeared himself to us. He darts companionably around the gardener, perching on the handle of the spade, collecting a worm from the overturned earth and swallowing it with a warble of satisfaction. When garden stocks are low, he is not too timid to come into the kitchen for food, and he can sometimes be heard singing in the winter evenings, long after other birds have quietened down for the night. Perhaps it is these habits as much as his red breast which have caused his adoption as one of the emblems of Christmas. Two bands of gold, a sprig of holly and a pretty frieze of Christmas roses complete the decoration of this superb thimble.

For the third year running, we have asked Sutherland China to make us our special Christmas thimble. Sutherland is a flourishing company based in Stoke-on-Trent, in the heart of the Pottery country. Since its foundation in 1981 by experienced workers from Spode and Wedgwood, it has built up a strong team of dedicated craftsmen, and richly deserves its reputation for high-quality work. It has produced many lovely thimbles for our Club.

Thimble
Collectors
Club

Christmas 1997
SUTHERLAND CHINA, England

Christmas is here again, and the carol singers are at the door! In this traditional snowy scene, Mother holds the lantern, Father sets the note, and five young voices join in merry Christmas celebration. Their song is echoed by the sweet tones of Robin Redbreast, one of the only English birds to sing at night. Our cheerfully coloured Christmas thimble is finished with a festive border of holly and mistletoe at its base.

For the fourth year in succession, the small porcelain house of Sutherland China has been selected to make the Thimble Collectors Club's specially commissioned Christmas thimble. Sutherland China was established in 1981 in Stoke-on-Trent, in the heart of the English Potteries. Its founders brought their expertise in ceramic techniques from the famous houses of Spode and Wedgwood, and Sutherland has made a respected name for itself for its fine bone china gift items and collectors' pieces. With the quality of its workmanship, it exemplifies all the attention to high standards and delightful detail that is an abiding characteristic of wares from the Potteries.

A Merry Christmas to all our collectors, everywhere!


CTCCFCFO1



Christmas 1998 SUTHERLAND CHINA, England

For the fifth year in succession, we have asked Sutherland China to produce our Christmas thimble for us, and once again they have presented us with a highly attractive and colourful design. It is full of interest, for each time we look at the snowy scene we notice more. We can see boys on a toboggan, and a jolly snowman complete with hat, striped scarf and broom. We see a little girl posting a last-minute card – or is it perhaps an invitation to an after-Christmas party? Santa Claus himself dashes above us on his sleigh, and at that moment we spot a little church in the background, bells ringing merrily to summon us to celebrate Jesus's birth. A Happy Christmas to you all!

Sutherland China was established seventeen years ago in Stoke-on-Trent, in the centre of the pottery country. Its founders were previously associated with the illustrious houses of Spode and Wedgwood, and they brought with them their knowledge and experience of the finest ceramic and porcelain techniques. Thus Sutherland's skilled craftsmen today are able to produce fine bone china collectibles and gifts in the very best traditions of the English potters.



Christmas 1999 – Carol Singers SUTHERLAND CHINA, England

Once again we have commissioned Sutherland China to design our Christmas thimble for us, and as usual they have responded handsomely to the challenge. For Christmas 1999 we have chosen the subject of 'Carol Singers', and we are sure that all our Club members will appreciate this festive addition to their collections. Four Victorian songsters, warmly wrapped against the chilly night, sing merrily to us while, in the background, a cheerful party of villagers makes a snowman. Cottages and church nestle snugly around, and the world is covered by a blanket of snow – a white Christmas, and a merry one, is assured!

Sutherland China, of Stoke-on-Trent, is situated at the very heartland of the English Potteries. The porcelain house produces collectable items of all kinds, and has built a solid reputation for fine-quality wares and enviable artistic talent. The Sutherland craftsmen are delighted to have been selected to work on our Christmas thimble for the sixth year in succession, and join us in wishing a very merry Christmas to thimble collectors everywhere!

Christmas 2000
SUTHERLAND CHINA, England

Midnight strikes! Father Christmas waves merrily from a chimney-pot as he begins his annual trip around the rooftops. Every boy and girl is fast asleep by now, dreaming of the moment when longed-for presents become a reality. Waking up on Christmas morning, stirring to feel the mysterious weight of the bulging stocking, and hearing the rustling paper at the end of the bed, are among the most thrilling of our childhood memories. The happy mixture of traditional goodies – tangerine, apple, nuts and sweets – with the most up-to-date little toys and knick-knacks brings a glow to every child's cheeks. Merry Christmas, one and all!

For the seventh year running, Sutherland China has created our special Christmas thimble. This flourishing company is based in Stoke-on-Trent, the mother town of the Potteries. Since its foundation nearly twenty years ago by skilled craftsmen from Spode and Wedgwood, Sutherland has built up a strong team of dedicated workers, and richly deserves its reputation for top-quality china wares. It has produced many other lovely thimbles for our Club.

Christmas 2001
SUTHERLAND CHINA

CHRISTMAS is here again – but what is this? Can it really be Father Christmas, relaxing against plump cushions, goblet in hand, and cheerfully toasting his feet before a blazing fire? The answer is, of course, that it is Christmas Day itself, and his work is over for another year!

Sutherland China is well known to all of us in the Thimble Collectors Club, having made so many of our most attractive thimbles for us over the years. In fact, this is the eighth year in succession that we have invited them to make our special Christmas thimble. Sutherland China joins us in wishing –

*'A Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year
to All our Members!'*

Christmas 2002
SUTHERLAND CHINA, England

A crisp, snowy 25th December sees Santa Claus in a carefree holiday mood! His busiest night of the year is over, and all toys have been safely delivered, so he can relax and enjoy a perfect white Christmas. What a lovely Christmas gift this delightful thimble would make!

This year Sutherland China, which once again has created our special Christmas thimble, celebrates its twenty-first birthday. Situated at the very heartland of the English potteries, this well-respected porcelain house has built a solid reputation for fine-quality wares and enviable artistic talent, and produces collectable items of all kinds. The Sutherland craftsmen have produced many lovely thimbles for us, and are delighted to have been selected to work on our Christmas thimble for the ninth year in succession.

A Very Merry Christmas to you all!

Thimble
Collectors
Club

Classic Rose
SUTHERLAND, England

In this 'Classic Rose' thimble, Sutherland have created for the Thimble Collectors Club an exquisite piece which combines the floral emblem of England with a uniquely English form of porcelain decoration. Lustreware was first produced around 1800 and all manner of items were lustred, from goblets and Toby jugs to cottages and animals. The basic lustre effect is achieved by adding tiny amounts of gold or platinum to the pigments to produce 'copper' and 'silver' lustre respectively, and further embellishments can be made to give different finishes, such as 'splashed' patterns made by dropping oil on to a wet copper lustre, and the mother-of-pearl effect chosen for this exclusive thimble. Lustre is applied to bone china, creamware and other kinds of pottery, and most of the great English porcelain houses have at one time or another employed this beautiful technique, notably Wedgwood, Sunderland, Swansea, Davenport and Spode.

Sutherland is as yet a comparatively young member of the illustrious family of English houses, but the skill of its craftsmen and the excellence of its products have brought it swift recognition as another future English classic. This delicate thimble, with its white fluted body and delightful ornamentation, is a fine example of its high quality ware.

Thimble Collectors Club
Ring of Roses Thimble



SUTHERLAND — England

Gracefully fluted in a gentle bell shape . . . delicately decorated with a ring of tiny roses . . . and accented with hand-applied bands of luxurious gold, this delightful bone china thimble has been created by Sutherland China exclusively for the Thimble Collectors Club.

Sutherland China was established in 1981 in Stoke-on-Trent, the historic hub of England's Staffordshire ceramics district. The firm's rapid emergence as one of the world's most distinguished porcelain houses can be attributed to its founders' former associations with the renowned English houses of Spode and Wedgwood. With their mastery of hand-crafting methods and their knowledge of fine English bone china — Sutherland's small staff of skilled artisans concentrates on producing fine collectibles and gift items.

The practiced hand and expert eye of an individual craftsman shapes and guides the quality of every piece of bone china which bears the Sutherland hallmark. A level of artistry rarely seen today is evident in every aspect of the exquisite "Ring of Roses Thimble."

Thimble Collectors Club

Convolvulus SUTHERLAND, England

The beautiful trumpet-shaped flowers of the sweet-almond-scented convolvulus charmingly complete a summer flower bed. These generous flowers, borne high on the plant's leaf axils, usually open early in the morning to provide a glorious midday display. The blooms range across the colour spectrum; here pink-tinged buds open to reveal petals of white and pink. Other varieties may be a startlingly vivid pink, deep blue or purple. The convolvulus is a beautiful, cultivated cousin of the white-flowered wild bindweed, but unlike its 'ill-mannered' relation it brings joy to all those who take pleasure in a garden's colourful display.

This unique thimble has been created in the shape of a heart, with a rich band of gold around its rim. It comes from Sutherland China, a firm established in 1981 in Stoke-on-Trent, which has rapidly become one of our most distinguished porcelain houses. Its founders were previously associated with the houses of Spode and Wedgwood, gaining from them knowledge and experience of the finest ceramic and porcelain techniques. Sutherland's skilled craftsmen concentrate today on producing fine bone china collectibles and gift items in the very best traditions of English potters.

Thimble Collectors Club

Heart-Shaped Flower Thimble



SUTHERLAND FINE CHINA - England

Summer lives on eternally as the golden sun shimmers across a field of Morning Glory on this heart-warming bone china thimble from Sutherland Fine China.

In 1981, after completing apprenticeships at the world-famous porcelain houses of Spode and Wedgwood, Sutherland's founders sought to create a new hallmark which could join the elite ranks of their former employers. Opening their factory in the historic Staffordshire porcelain-making district in Stoke-on-Trent, the owner's quickly built a reputation for producing only the highest quality china and porcelainware. With an unending desire to supply the finest porcelain collectibles, the Sutherland founders personally inspect each and every hand-crafted item that leaves their kilns.

Available exclusively from the Thimble Collectors Club, the "Heart-Shaped Flower" thimble with its hand-painted design on pure white bone china, exquisite shape, and gleaming band of 22kt gold embodies Sutherland's dedication to quality.

Thimble Collectors Club

Dragon SUTHERLAND CHINA, England

A snaky, sinuous, red and gold Chinese dragon stalks his tail around this dramatic thimble. Will he catch it? No, he won't! He will chase round, charming us with his playful grace, for ever.

The Chinese dragon, an ancient, magical power of the air, is a divine emblem of wisdom, and for many centuries symbolised Imperial China itself. The Emperor was understood to be endowed with dragon-like qualities, and when he died, he was said to have ascended to heaven on a dragon's back.

Sutherland China, situated in the heart of Pottery country at Stoke-on-Trent, is a relatively young company, having been established in 1981. Its founders had been associated with the famous and old-established houses of Spode and Wedgwood, and brought with them a wealth of experience and expertise in ceramic techniques. Sutherland China has already become known for the excellence and fine quality of its wares. Their latest addition, this attractive and colourful thimble, with its prancing dragon, floral decoration and three golden bands against a pure white ground, is sure to appeal to collectors everywhere.

TCCFC260

23

Thimble Collectors Club

The English Garden Thimble



SUTHERLAND FINE CHINA - England

Like a bright spring afternoon, flowers from a country garden lift the spirits and chase the shadows away on this exquisite bone china thimble from Sutherland Fine China.

A relative newcomer to the ranks of England's esteemed porcelain manufacturers, Sutherland Fine China was established in 1981 in the historic Staffordshire porcelain making district in Stoke-on-Trent. The firm's rapid emergence as one of the world's most distinguished porcelain houses can be attributed to its founders' former association with Spode and Wedgwood. With their mastery of hand-crafting methods and their knowledge of fine English bone china, the owners themselves inspect every item before it leaves their factory to ensure that only the finest collectibles and giftware, meeting the highest standards of quality, leave their factory.

Available exclusively from the Thimble Collectors Club, the "Country Garden" thimble with its quaint motif, scalloped edges, pure white bone china, and glistening band of 23kt gold, exemplifies Sutherland's dedication to quality and will surely be a treasured addition to your collection.

Thimble Collectors Club

Golden Geisha Girl SUTHERLAND CHINA, England

The Geisha is the personification of female elegance, charm and grace in Japan. Long training in the gentle arts of music, singing, dancing and dressing has turned these pretty young girls into beautiful and cultured women. They are to be found in the tea-houses, serving, from lacquer trays, tiny eggshell-thin porcelain cups filled to the brim with fragrant, amber-coloured tea, and entertaining the customers with their many accomplishments. On a fine day, one of life's pleasures is to relax in the tea-garden with its flowers, shrubs, pavilions and bridges. The scene on this attractive thimble is depicted entirely in a beautiful shade of gold, making this a subtle and unusual collector's item.

Sutherland China is a small porcelain house which was established in Stoke-on-Trent in 1981. Its founders had been associated with the houses of Spode and Wedgwood, and brought with them wide knowledge and experience of the best and most exacting of ceramic and porcelain techniques. Sutherland's skilled craftsmen concentrate today on producing fine bone china collectables and gift items in the very best traditions of English potters, and are justly proud of their excellent wares.

157
Thimble Collectors Club

"Red Poppy" Thimble

SUTHERLAND
ENGLAND

SUTHERLAND FINE CHINA - England

Numerous bright red poppies, all in full bloom, seem to jump off the creamy white background of this delicate thimble crafted by the experienced artisans employed by Sutherland Fine China.

Located in the historic Staffordshire porcelain-making district, Sutherland Fine China was founded in 1981. Its founders, schooled at the legendary houses of Spode and Wedgwood, set as their goal the production of bone china ware which is of the highest standards of quality and endurance. With a full-time staff of twenty talented artisans, every article bearing the Sutherland hallmark is individually crafted. While only in existence for fifteen years, the creativity and quality of work that go into every Sutherland product have quickly gained the factory worldwide acclaim.

The expert knowledge, superb workmanship and scrupulous attention to detail that make Sutherland Fine China so popular are beautifully evidenced by this exquisite "Red Poppy" thimble. Finished with twin bands of 24kt gold, this exclusive masterpiece is sure to be a treasured addition to your collection.

Thimble
Collectors
Club

Still Life
SUTHERLAND CHINA, England

Art galleries abound with 'still lifes' painted so perfectly that you long to lean forward and smell the fresh aroma of a pear, touch the shiny skin of an apple or taste a glossy cherry. The Western tradition of still life painting can be traced back to ancient Greece and Rome, with wonderful examples surviving in Pompeian murals and Roman mosaics. Following the symbolism of Christian medieval art, realism returned to painting during the Renaissance, and still life re-emerged, in the glowing masterpieces of seventeenth-century Holland. It has delighted us ever since. The style of painting tells us much about when and where the artist was working, and we always find the same loving attention given to the depiction of nature's glorious harvest.

Our Still Life thimble is a tribute both to this much-loved art form and to the great tradition of English porcelain manufacture. It has been created for us by Sutherland China, a porcelain house at the heart of the china industry in Stoke-on-Trent, whose highly skilled and dedicated craftsmen have gained wide recognition for the quality of their work.

Thimble Collectors Club

Tropical Fish SUTHERLAND CHINA, England

The myriad different tropical fish, swimming lazily through the waving fronds of a coral reef, are truly the jewels of the ocean. Shimmering tangerine and white coral trout picking gently at the age-old reef, a little seahorse stopping now and again to curl its tail round a strand of seaweed; dashing striped yellow and black moorish idols, their long snouts busily investigating all around them – these are just some of the inhabitants of the ocean's tropical gardens. To look at this thimble conjures up dreams of those limpid, turquoise waters where time moves as slowly and easily as the fish riding the gentle current.

This enchanting thimble, moulded in the shape of a scallop shell, and reminiscent of the rococo style of the period, is our tribute to the eighteenth-century English decorative porcelain tradition – a tradition to which the innovative factory of Longton Hall in Staffordshire made such charming early contributions. The skills have been handed down through the generations, and to this day Staffordshire has remained the production centre for English bone china, famous all over the world for its delicate whiteness and fine ornamentation.

Thimble Collectors Club Valentine Thimble



SUTHERLAND CHINA - England

A charming couple enjoy a midsummer picnic amidst a bower of roses on this unusual heart-shaped bone china thimble from Sutherland China. To the romantic Victorians, Valentine's Day was especially meaningful. A scene from this sentimental era of hearts and flowers is singularly appropriate for this specially designed thimble — now available exclusively from The Thimble Collectors Club through special arrangements with Sutherland China.

Sutherland China, located in the historic Staffordshire porcelain-making district, was founded in 1981. Its founders, schooled at the legendary houses of Spode and Wedgwood, set as their goal the production of bone china ware which is of the highest standards of quality and endurance.

With a staff of twenty talented artisans, every article bearing the Sutherland hallmark is individually crafted. The expert knowledge, superb workmanship and scrupulous attention to detail are beautifully evidenced by this exquisite "Valentine" thimble.

Thimble Collectors Club

Victorian Lovers Thimble



SUTHERLAND FINE CHINA - England

A warm spring afternoon's breeze carries the soft scent of blooming lilacs, reminding the Victorian couples that, yes, indeed, love is in the air. An elegant scene which is expertly captured upon the face of this "Victorian Lovers" thimble from Sutherland Fine China.

A relative newcomer to the ranks of England's esteemed porcelain manufacturers, Sutherland Fine China was established in 1981 in the historic Staffordshire porcelain-making district in Stoke-on-Trent. The firm's rapid emergence as one of the world's most distinguished porcelain houses can be attributed to its founders' former association with Spode and Wedgwood. With their mastery of hand-crafting methods and their knowledge of fine English bone china, the owners themselves inspect every item before it leaves their factory.

The outcome of such meticulous attention to quality is evident in the "Victorian Lovers" thimble. From the brilliant, creamy white bone china to the hand-applied band of 22kt gold, this magnificent thimble displays a level of artistry rarely seen today.

Thimble Collectors Club

Wisteria SUTHERLAND CHINA, England

This fine bone china thimble is brought to you by Sutherland China, who are comparatively new members of the exclusive band of Stoke potteries. Using the finest craftsmen and artists, they have swiftly established themselves as makers of high quality items for collectors. Bob Hersey, who painted this charming illustration of wisteria, is an artist who has met with such wide acclaim that his work may now occasionally be seen in the auctions of Sotheby's and Christie's.

Since it was introduced to Europe in Victorian times, many varieties of the fragrant and spectacular wisteria have been produced. The two most popular species, *Wisteria floribunda* (Japanese wisteria) and *Wisteria sinensis* (Chinese wisteria) are easily distinguished by the fact that the stems climb clockwise in *floribunda* and anti-clockwise in *sinensis*! Wisteria may be found gracing stately homes where peacocks make their majestic parade on emerald lawns; it adorns the walls of mellowed houses, arching over pergolas and twining on bridges. Its drooping flowerheads can be up to 3 feet long, providing a glorious shower of white or mauve blossom. Surely no-one can pass by wisteria in full bloom without pausing to admire its beauty?

Thimble Collectors Club

Peacock Thimble



SUTHERLAND CHINA — ENGLAND

Noted for its expertise in creating crowned thimbles, Sutherland China's breathtaking thimble complements the resplendence of a peacock's plumage with a brilliant crown of Austrian crystal, reflecting the iridescent colors of this exotic bird.

Sutherland is a newcomer to the roster of famous porcelain houses located in England's historic ceramics center at Stoke-On-Trent. Since its founding in 1981, Sutherland's name has become nearly as familiar as those of Spode and Wedgwood — the two houses where this firm's founders apprenticed in their craft. Favoring the hand-crafting methods of the Staffordshire district's past, Sutherland's staff of twenty expert artisans individually creates fine bone china gift items and collectibles.

The outcome of such meticulous craftsmanship is evident in the "Peacock Thimble." The detail of its decorative motif is remarkable. The finely-faceted crystal has been carefully set into the top and the two bands of gleaming gold have been applied by hand. This magnificent thimble is available exclusively from The Thimble Collectors Club.

Thimble Collectors Club

A World of Thimbles SUTHERLAND, England

It seems that people the world over just cannot manage without thimbles! No matter what their nationality, as soon as they pick up a piece of needlework, ladies (and some gentlemen too!) reach for something to protect their fingers – and a little china hat just fits the bill. Once upon a time thimbles had to stand up to rough wear – and a real task their users must have had, for the items they sewed would have been made of coarse fabric, leather and fur. Along came the refinement of velvets, silks and satins, and no doubt it was a double pleasure to sew these with a silver thimble. Today, when all the world has a sewing machine and darning is a diminishing craft, you might think thimbles would be losing their place in the home – but no, they are put proudly on display, their purpose simply to delight the eye!

This thimble, with its name in many languages, is brought to us by Sutherland, one of the porcelain houses that is part of the great tradition of the Stoke-on-Trent china industry. With the fine quality of its workmanship, it exemplifies all the attention to high standards and delightful detail that is an abiding characteristic of wares from the Potteries.

Goblin

SWILLINGTON BRIDGE POTTERY, England

Goblins are small demons that live in the woodlands, and enter houses at nightfall – mischievous spirits that make sudden noises, overturn milk jugs, pull the cat's tail and frighten the children in their dreams. Nocturnal goblin visitors can be warded off by using charms and potions, but if you are pursued by goblins during the day, the best way to escape is by jumping over a stream flowing north to south. The goblin on our thimble may look friendly enough, sitting cheerfully under his toadstool – but beware! He is full of tricks.

The attractive lion-and-unicorn mark seen on this thimble was used on ceramic wares made at the little village of Swillington, in Yorkshire, in the mid-nineteenth century. The Swillington Bridge Pottery made ironstone china, basalt, and blue-printed and banded earthenwares. Located within a stone's throw of the famous Temple Newsam House, it is perhaps not too fanciful to suggest that the pottery was established to provide the many kinds of china bowls, jugs and dishes needed for the great Victorian kitchen there.

Hummingbird

With the mark of SWILLINGTON BRIDGE POTTERY,
England

The tiny, jewel-like hummingbird is one of Nature's most glorious miniature masterpieces. Hovering in the air by beating its tiny wings at thousands of times a minute – and thus making the humming noise which has given it its name – it feeds on nectar, inserting its long, needle-like beak into the depths of the trumpet-shaped flower head to reach the honeyed treat within. Hummingbirds are found in the wild in South and Central America – and can also be admired in aviaries all over the world.

The village of Swillington, in Yorkshire, was home to a small pottery from about 1820 to 1860. It produced all kinds of wares – blue printed earthenware, ironstone china and basalt ware, and many pieces have been found bearing the attractive impressed mark of a lion and unicorn supporting a shield. Located within a stone's throw of a grand house, Temple Newsam, it is possible that Swillington Bridge Pottery was set up to provide china for a great kitchen – such as the vast bowls, tureens, cheese dishes and jelly moulds which we marvel at today. Our enchanting Hummingbird thimble is dedicated to the memory of this little pottery.

50

Thimble Collectors Club

"Hummingbird" Thimble



SWILLINGTON BRIDGE POTTERY - England

Practically floating in the air, an adorable hummingbird samples the nectar of a new group of flowers on this unusual thimble from Swillington Bridge Pottery.

This tiny Yorkshire-based pottery, founded in 1820, earned world-wide acclaim for the blue printed earthenware which it produced. By early 1850, the factory had expanded its production capacity, and was now creating elegant giftware fashioned from ironstone china, basalt and banded earthenware. Following a number of years of inactivity, Swillington Bridge recently began producing porcelain and bone china gift items under the watchful eye of new owner Simon Westwood, one of England's finest potters.

One of the first gift items produced by the brand new kilns of Swillington Bridge Pottery, this "Hummingbird" thimble, with its distinctively bright colors and band of 22kt gold, is a spectacular addition to your collection. The Thimble Collectors Club is proud to make this thimble available exclusively to its members.