

# Kay Thetford-Kendall (DWK and KE) sterling silver thimbles

This English silversmith designed and made her silver thimbles during the early 1980s, with a few new designs in the 1990s. The Thimble Society of London regularly stocked her thimbles - with moulded small animals around the thimbles and rounded apexes - from 1983 onwards. In 1998, the Society obtained the last examples of Kay's collectable thimbles for sale, as Kay had by then moved on to sculpting life-size figures.



original DWK domed apex  
L: 1986 – R: 1990

Kay's maker's mark is DWK and it is registered at the London Assay Office. It seems that her husband Donald W Kendall registered the mark, hence the confusion, as her mark doesn't feature Kay's initials. The first hallmark date was 1982 and the last one was 1997.

There are many "ring-ins" - poor, cast copies of Kay's popular designs - the apexes are always flat and the maker's marks are very indistinct or missing, with poor definition of the horizontal stripes. These thimbles were being reproduced in Turkey in the 2000s.



two 'doctored' examples of fox thimble with amber inserted onto apex (ebay 2022)

Look for noticeably clear hallmarks with good indentations on the rounded apex, to know you have a genuine DWK thimble.

Designs have changed over the decade, but her themes recurred - I have tried to indicate the first year these were made. Some designs have indentations, others have elongated striped indentations.

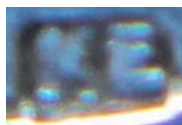
There were three commemoratives made by Kay Kendall – all in 1986.

The thimble names ascribed are mine alone and are purely descriptive.



Kay Thetford-Kendall's maker's mark DWK

Recently a second maker's mark for Kay has been discovered, which was used on her later commemorative thimbles Royal Wedding of Prince Andrew. This is her own mark KE



Kay Thetford-Kendall's second maker's mark KE



**teddy bears**  
1983



**bee on a flower**

this is the only description in summer 1989 issue of Thimble Society of London  
the partial indentations which one associated with Thetford-Kendall's work



**butterfly**  
1988/1990



**cats**  
1984/1986





**dogs**

Spaniel, Afghan and beagle/dachshund  
1984/1986



**fish**

1984/1985

R: Turkish reproduction in 2000s



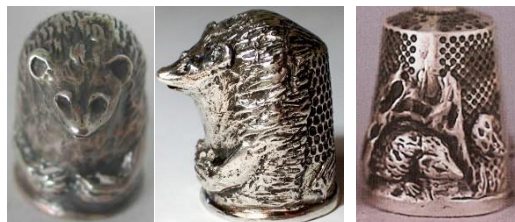
**fox**

1984 R: Turkish reproduction of 2000s



**frogs**

1984/1986/1988



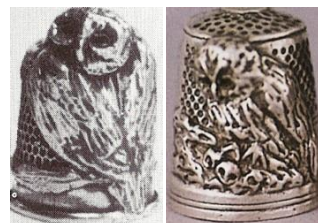
**hedgehogs**

1984/1997



**mice**

1983/1993



**owl**

1983/1997



**Halley's Comet 1886**

1986

commemorative  
showing Edmond Halley, the comet with tail  
commissioned by Thimble Society of London



**Statue of Liberty 1888-1886**

1986

commemorative  
showing Liberty's head, her torch and date tablet  
commissioned by Thimble Society of London



**Wedding of Prince Andrew and Sarah Ferguson  
July 23 1986  
1986**

commemorative  
showing a helicopter for Prince Andrew and a skier for Sarah  
commissioned by Thimble Society of London  
this thimble has the later maker's mark of **KE**

---

## **Contributors**

Carolyn Meacham-Elegant Arts | Ray Nimmo | Holger Preusz | Jean Taylor | Thimble Society of London

This listing of Kay Thetford-Kendall sterling silver thimbles does not purport to be complete or accurate in all aspects.  
Rather it invites comment and contribution to add to our knowledge. My thanks to the contributors.

EMAIL [thimbleselect@bigpond.com](mailto:thimbleselect@bigpond.com) TO SHARE YOUR KNOWLEDGE.

**© Sue Gowan  
2011**