

Modern British handpainted china thimbles

1978-2022

At the start of the modern thimble collecting era of the late 1970s, some of Great Britain's china houses produced handpainted thimbles. This was a time consuming and costly exercise. The demand avalanche for instant and cheaper thimbles swamped thimble manufacturers as we entered 1980. The porcelain houses realised that creating their own decals or transfers using a skilled artist would speed up production and an unlimited number could be churned out.

Initially companies like Caverswall had their artists hand-touch their designs with spots of paint and you will find artists' names like William Tipton, John Ball, C Nunn, Holmes Gray or Mary Grant named on the thimbles. These are not handpainted thimbles: just hand-touched.

Sutherland, who produced china thimbles the longest, made thimbles in the same way – but didn't even follow the hand-touched route. Some of their thimbles are labelled hand enamelled. Rather a few spots of enamel enhances the design – this is known as champleve. JB, ME and PH Pauline Haughton are initials found on Sutherland thimbles enhanced in this manner.

Royal Worcester, the doyenne of handpainted thimbles from the 1870s, faced the same problem. They did not want to employ more artists and thimbles are time-consuming to paint freehand with at least three firings. In the 1970s, the foreman of the painters' division, Edward Townsend, came up with a solution. He designed a number of outline prints - which were printed onto the blank thimbles. The artists did not have to create an individual painting but merely coloured in the blank design. This speeded up the process noticeably. Even that didn't help as by 1986, the last handpainted RW thimble was painted. They turned to decal thimbles to keep up with demand.

The pendulum did begin to swing back in the 1990s and handpainted thimbles came back into their own in the small numbers as before.

The artists had access to blank thimbles from any source. This would give them creative freedom and some commercial success.

Handpainted thimbles take a while to paint, so they are created in a limited supply.

Many of the artists didn't only paint thimbles – they formed a minute part of their output. They painted vases, plates, brooches, lidded jars, figurines of fauna, paintings, coffee pots, miniatures and handpainted enamel boxes etc.

A few of these artists have painted on wood, glass and silver thimbles and on enamel. They are outside the scope of this topic. Thimbles with handpainted flowers affixed will also not feature here.

[See my topics on specific British painters of china thimbles:](#)

Graham Payne (1981) who employed at least six freelance painters
Gerald Delaney

Jasper's of Yorkshire (Margaret and Mandy Palmer)

Francesca employed at least 16 thimble artists and other character head thimbles makers number 20
Royal Worcester thimble painters

I have featured **30** British thimble handpainters.

When I have fewer than five thimble examples from specific painters – they will follow at the end of the section of thimbles - both in alphabetical order by painter's surname.

Along the way I have learnt heaps – and I can now recognise thimbles painted by these artists.

It takes sheer talent to paint accurately on such a small area of china.

I hope you will enjoy the journey as much as I have.

For other handpainted thimble topics see

Australian handpainted thimbles
Francesca and other character head thimbles
Gerald Delaney handpainted thimbles
Graham Payne handpainted thimbles
Jasper's of Yorkshire handpainted thimbles
Royal Worcester thimble painters

Specific British thimble china painters

Anne Blades

Blades was born in Port Talbot in 1953, grew up in Guildford and returned to live in Wales in 1968 she studied industrial ceramics and china painting became her passion
in 1984 opened her ceramics studio – Anne Blades Ceramics
Anne opened her own shop and gallery, Blades – The Artworks in 1997 in Mumbles (Mwmbwls), Swansea in Wales
her thimbles are distinctive in that they have a daffodil design pressed into the apex
AB with a date letter is her maker's mark on the inside
source: <https://www.anneblades.co.uk/about/>



Caswell Bay



holly



Ich Dien



Mumbles Lighthouse



Three Cliffs Gower



Worms Head

David Bowkett

Bowkett was a Royal Worcester trained artist and worked there between 1948-1962

he moved to Cornwall and bought a pub in the 1970s

David opened his own studio in Devon

he began to paint thimbles in 2002

this is where his RW training came to the fore – using birds and fruit themes painted on bone china

these included the signature on the outside and the traditional sprig on the verso

thimbles have the David Bowkett backstamp and his signature is D Bowkett

Bowkett died in 2009

if there is a small china hook on the back of the item – it is a tiny candlesnuffer – they can be mistaken for thimbles. His figurals have indentations on the head



candlesnuffer



R: his mark for character-shaped thimbles

2nd R photo: Charlotte Goldberg





Gigi Branch

Gigi trained at Limoges in France then settled in Devon
were her thimbles only painted in 1983?

thimbles signed inside Gigi

see also topic Glass and crystal thimbles for her painting on glass thimbles



Christmas 1983
carollers



Christmas 1983
holly leaves
red enamelling on lace-like ground
dated and numbered
limited to 100



Forget me nots
May 1983
b&w photo

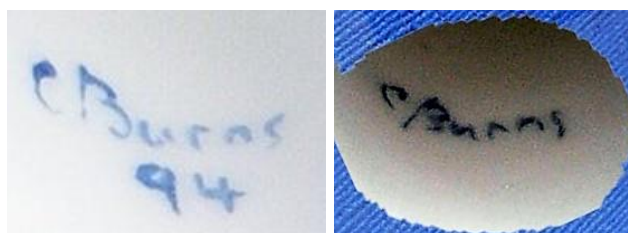


Prince William 1st birthday
21.6.83
royal symbols painted all round



Christopher Burns

Chris Burns is a Royal Worcester trained artist
 in 1987 when RW were no longer producing handpainted thimbles, Burns opened his own studio in the
 Malvern Hills, Worcestershire
 here he established Harcourt China
 before the use of this mark, the thimbles were marked Malvern England
 he provided thimbles to The Thimble Guild (1987-1994, and again in 2005). I have used the catalogue
 dates
 his thimbles are not dated (with one exception in **1994**)
 there is a lovely range of designs capturing the surrounding English countryside. His thimbles evolved to
 sculpt thimbles in relief giving a three dimensional aspect
 thimbles have the Harcourt China backstamp and his signature C Burns is located on the inside
 thimbles are not named – I have used names from the TTG catalogues etc



L: early blue Malvern mark (Type 1) - C: no brand name Handpainted in England (Type 2)

 <p>A stroll thru the woods June 1993 limited to 200</p>	 <p>Autumn fruits November 1990</p>	 <p>Barn Owl August 2005</p>	 <p>bee June 1993</p>
 <p>bird of prey pink ground</p>	 <p>bird of prey pink ground</p>	 <p>Blue tit January 1988</p>	



British garden birds
Blue tit
October 1987
(set of twelve)



British garden birds
Bullfinch
October 1987



British garden birds
Firecrest
October 1987



British garden birds
Goldfinch
October 1987



British garden birds
Robin
October 1987



British garden birds
Sparrow
October 1987



British garden birds
Thrush
October 1987



British garden birds
Wren
October 1987



British garden birds
October 1987



comet Hale-Bopp



Cottage
October 1998



Cottage
October 1998



Cottage
October 1998



Cottage
October 1998

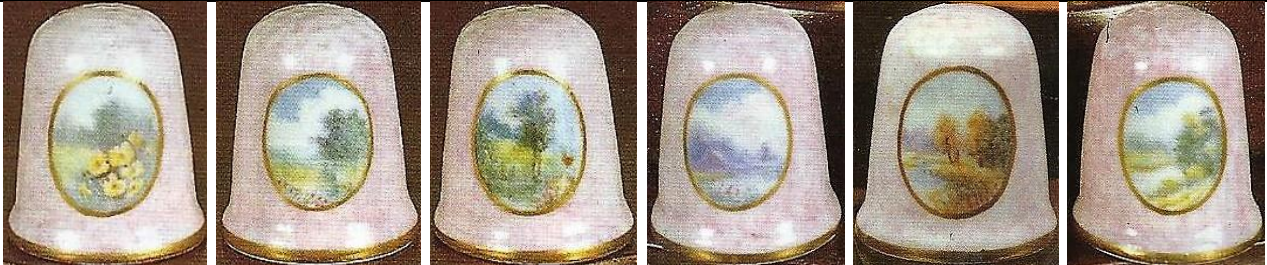


English cathedral
December 1993





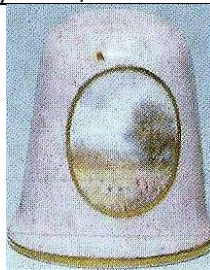
English cathedral
April 1992
limited to 450



English countryside
set of six on pink ground with cameo scenes
July 1989/summer 1989



English countryside
blue ground with cameo scene
summer 1989



English countryside
pink ground with cameo scene
summer 1989



English countryside
pink ground with cameo scene
Type 2 backstamp



Holly
pink ground with champeled holly
Thimble Society of London winter 1989
December 1992
limited to 450



Kingfisher with fish
L: type 1 mark



Kingfisher
June 1988
limited to 200



Ladybird
July 1994
thimbles have the 1994 dated signature



Little owl
August 1991
limited to 200



Madonna
December 1991



Malvern Hills
1993
panarama scene all round
limited to 375



Mercat Cross
(street in Wyre Evesham)
February 1993
limited to 250



Mr and Mrs Owl
July 1992



Peregrine
February 1990



pig
Thimble Society of London summer
1991



Postbox at Crophorne
(in Evesham)
1993
limited to 375



robin



robin
pink ground with cameo



Rose cottage
January 1992



Salmon
pink ground
December 1991
limited to 250



Shepherd's cottage
January 1992



Snowy Owl
August 2005



St Paul's Cathedral
November 1992
Thimble Society of London spring
1993
limited to 375



Summer Serenity
June 1990



Thatched cottage
January 1992



Village church
September 1991
limited to 250



Wren



Windmill
March 1989 / Thimble Society of
London autumn 1990



woman shopping

Peter Carver

I first came into contact with Peter Carver from Solihull in West Midlands in 2013 thru a Canadian thimble collector

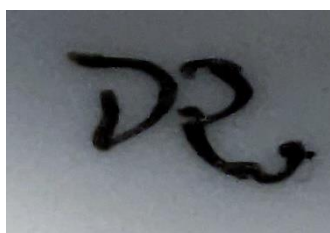
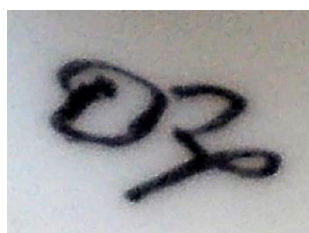
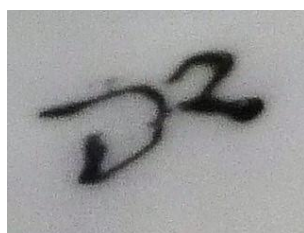
she encouraged Peter to try painting thimbles

Carver's specialty is painting birds – see for yourself his quirky, almost humorous style on his retirement, with interests in professional watercolour painting, furniture restoration and painting enamel boxes amongst many others, with typography and graphic design in his working life, he accepted the challenge

having a kiln, Peter was able to make his own china thimbles – he gilded some of his apexes and these are distinctive as the gold only covers the immediate indentations

he experimented with poly clay, which enabled him to try sculpted thimbles

Carver's thimbles are signed PC (but look like DR): you can see for yourself with three examples the thimble names are those of the painter but not lettered within thimble (2013-2014) but thimbles are not dated



Peter also painted on enamel

			
Badger	bird	Blue tit cutaway to reveal nest inside	Book at bedtime gold painted apex
			
Christmas 2013	Christmas 2013	Christmas 2013 'Deck the halls with boughs of holly'	Christmas 2013



Christmas robin



Cockerel Moon



Corgis – Monte & Ozzie
painted on commission



dolphin



Fox



Hare



Iron Bridge



Leaves and berries



Leaves and berries



London Bridge



Otter/beaver



Owl



Packwood House



Pheasant



Pheasant



poly clay set of six



Rabbits



Robin



Star Dust



Three rabbits



Tower Bridge



William Morris



William Morris



William Morris



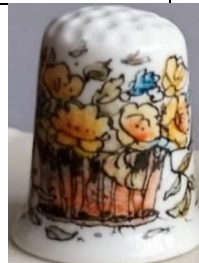
William Morris



William Morris



Wren



Nigel Creed - Ken Russell

Creed is a Master Painter and worked at Royal Worcester in 1963

Russell (1934-2010) was Royal Worcester's last Master Gilder

Thimble Society of London commissioned Nigel and Ken to produce handpainted thimbles for sale thru their thimble catalogues (1987-1999)

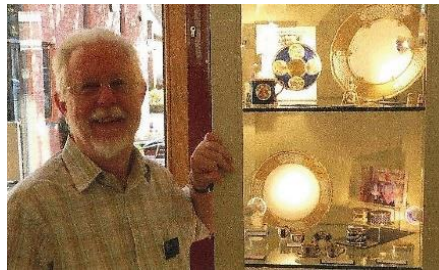
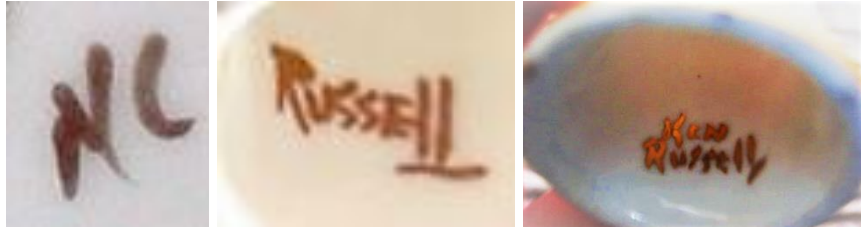
Nigel signed his thimbles with his initials NC on the outside near the painted part

Ken was the gilder and used 24ct gold. Sometimes the apex is gilded. Russell is signed inside

Ken had retired by 2004. He gilded thimbles for other thimble painters

names used are purely descriptive, not being named by the painters – thimbles are not dated

Royal Worcester collectors will recognise many of these designs as those that came from the factory, given a modern look



Ken Russell 2010



Creed also painted on enamel

 <p>Apple blossom Thimble Society of London autumn 1993</p>	 <p>Baltimore oriole Thimble Society of London spring 1994</p>
 <p>Blackburnia bunting Thimble Society of London winter 1994</p>	 <p>Blue bird Thimble Society of London autumn 1993</p>



Blue tit
limited to 50



butterfly



butterfly

Thimble Society of London winter 1992



butterfly



Cactus wren

Thimble Society of London winter 1993



Cherokee rose

Thimble Society of London spring
1994



Christmas

Thimble Society of London
autumn 1990



Chrysanthemum

Thimble Society of London Autumn 1990



Cockerel

Thimble Society of London summer 1991



Crocus
Thimble Society of London summer 1991



Daffodil
limited to 50



freesias?



Gold flower
Thimble Society of London summer 1999



Gold



Gold



Gold
signed Ken Russell



Gold jewels swags
shell pink ground
Thimble Society of London autumn
1996



Goldcrest
Thimble Society of London spring 1993



Goldfinch
L: Thimble Society of London autumn 1990



Imari
Thimble Society of London autumn
1989



jewelled
Thimble Society of London spring
1996



jewelled
in panels



jewelled
Thimble Society of London summer 1996



jewelled



jewelled



jewelled



jewelled



jewelled
Thimble Society of London winter 1989



jewelled



jewelled



jewelled



Jewels with coral
Thimble Society of London autumn 1989



Kingfisher
Thimble Society of London spring 1990



Larch spray
Thimble Society of London winter 1994



Lattice



Lattice gold
black & white panels
Thimble Society of London
summer 1996



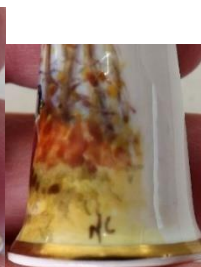
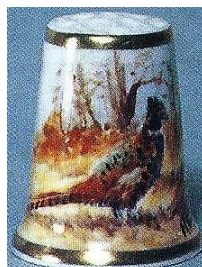
Lattice gold on white
Thimble Society of London
summer 1999



Owl
Thimble Society of London
autumn 1995



Peacock butterfly
Thimble Society of London summer 1992
limited to 100



Pheasant
Thimble Society of London autumn 1991



Poinsettia
Thimble Society of London autumn 1991



primrose



Ptarmigan
Thimble Society of London winter 1991



purple flower



Robin
Thimble Society of London winter 1989
limited to 50



Rose
Thimble Society of London spring 1990



Rose
Thimble Society of London winter 1991



Ruby jewelled
Thimble Society of London summer 1987
limited to 100
with TSL mark for Thimble Society of London



Snowdrop
Thimble Society of London winter 1989
limited to 50



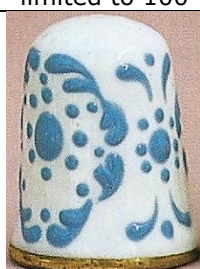
Thistle
Thimble Society of London summer 1992
limited to 100



Tulip
Thimble Society of London spring 1992



Turquoise jewelled
Thimble Society of London summer 1987
limited to 100



Turquoise jewelled
Thimble Society of London summer 1999



Turquoise jewelling
Thimble Society of London winter 1989



Turquoise jewels
Thimble Society of London autumn 1996



Wild lupin
Thimble Society of London spring 1994



Woodcock
Thimble Society of London spring 1992



Wren
Thimble Society of London Autumn 1990



yellow flower



yellow flower
Thimble Society of London spring 1992
rhododendron?



Janice Daughters

Daughters is an artist in Leyburn, Wensleydale North Yorkshire trained in graphic design, Janice moved from London to set up her studio in 1986, where she was able to freelance in graphic design she had developed a love for the countryside, with its flora and fauna as an added interest, she began to paint on porcelain and china, including thimbles her signature details are on the inside rim and the date is included (1991-1997)



apples



cottage



Duckling
1991



Duckling
1992



Duckling
1997



Flower garden
1992



Harvest mouse



Poppies



Sheep in Dales
1991



Sheep in Dales

Robert Earwicker

Cornwall

his characters are made of Cornish clay – quirky



Monk friar



nurse



pirate



scarecrow



Teddy bear

Raymond Everill

Everill works out of Lime House Studio in Staffordshire, since he retired from Spode

his trade mark is Raymond Everill & Sons England

you can't mistake his bright pink signature R.Everill

thimbles are not named – some are dated (1988-1989)

the apex is painted with 22ct gold



bird
1989



blackberry
1988



Bullfinch
1988



cherry



Goldfinch



grapes with cherries
1989



grapes



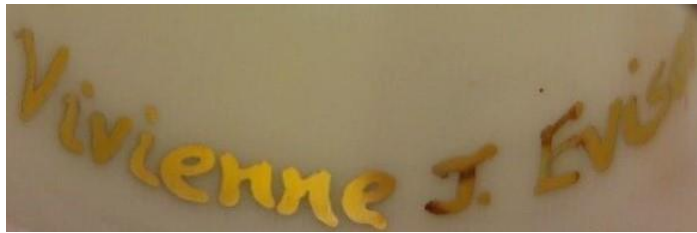
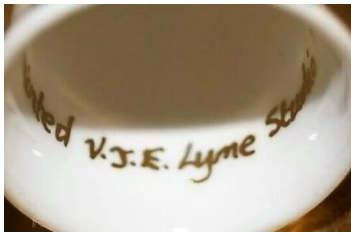
plum



Summer meadow
1989

Vivienne J Evison

Evison runs Lyme Studio in Cheshire with her husband Paul (she was first identified by TTG as Christine)
 her thimbles are of fine bone china finished in 22-24ct gold
 many of her thimbles are painted using precious metals – no two are ever the same
 signed Vivienne J Everill or V.J.E (1992-1997)



After Lowry
June 1996



Earl's golden coronet
September 1995



Lightning
December 1996



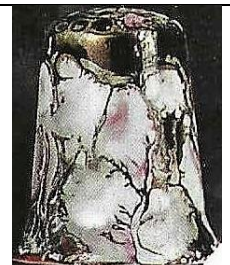
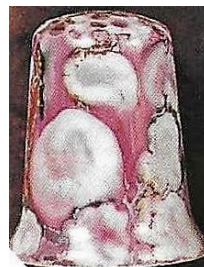
Peacock feather



Petrol

December 1992

(one of the six thimbles in the precious metals lustre set following)



 <p>Weights <u>1/2lb Mushrooms ...</u> October 1995</p>	 <p>Weights <u>1/4lb Tea 125grams (0.275)</u> October 1995</p>	 <p>Weights <u>1lb Tomatoes 1/2 kilo (1.1...)</u> October 1995</p>	 <p>Weights <u>1 oz chillies ...</u> October 1995</p>
 <p>Weights <u>5lbs Potatoes ...</u> October 1995</p>	 <p>gold painted apex</p>		

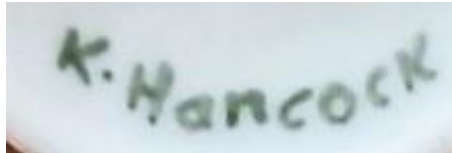
Helen Halloran

Halloran worked for Royal Worcester, Halcyon Days and Elliot Hall Enamels
her bone china thimbles are one-off pieces
apexes are painted with 24ct gold
these six flower thimbles are from 2022
not signed

 <p>Campion</p>	 <p>Celandine</p>	 <p>Cherry blossom</p>
 <p>Primrose</p>	 <p>Speedwell</p>	 <p>Violets</p>

Keith Hancock

Hancock worked for Sutherland in Stoke-on-Trent and Caverswall, handpainting thimbles for their brand these are not decaled as the bulk of the Sutherland and Caverswall thimbles were they are all signed – and numbered inside when they are limited in number The Thimble Guild commissioned two sets of thimbles from Hancock in 1983 signature is K.Hancock or Keith Hancock. The black signature is signed inside



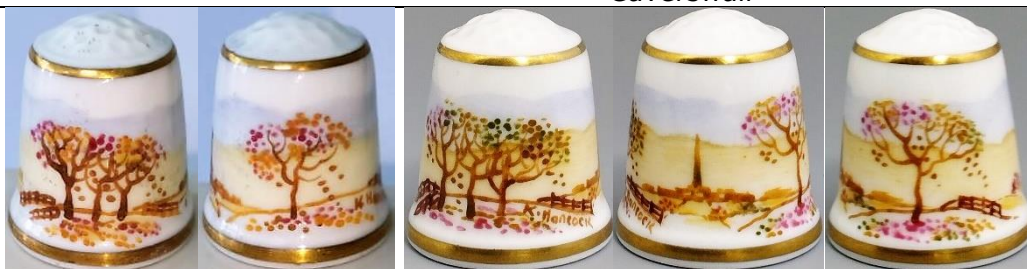
apples

also available with Swarovski crystal apex



apples

Caverswall



Autumn vale (Four seasons)

September 1983

limited to 200



Autumn – reaping

1983



Blue tit
Swarovski crystal in apex



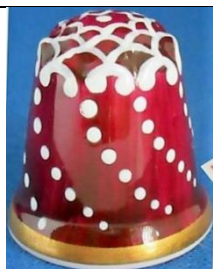
flower
green Swarovski crystal in apex



Robin
red Swarovski crystal in apex



Romany art
September 1983
green with handpainted enamel
limited to 200



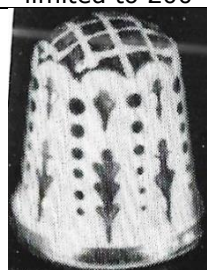
Romany art
March 1983
maroon with handpainted enamel
limited to 200



Romany art
May 1983
pink with handpainted enamel
limited to 200



Romany art
July 1983
blue with handpainted enamel
limited to 200



Romany art
summer 1983
b&w photo



Spring vale (Four seasons)
April 1983
limited to 200



Summer vale (Four seasons)
July 1983
limited to 200



The red dragon
December 1983
more gilding than the TCC Red dragon
issue
limited to 1000



Winter vale (Four seasons)
February 1983
limited to 200



Meissen style – cobalt ground with two different
cameo scenes



Meissen style – terracotta ground with two
different cameo scenes

Agneta Hickley

Rimpton Yeovil

her thimbles all have a scalloped gold-painted rim

Hickley's thimbles have painting all round – except her bird thimbles



Blue butterflies
1988



Country cottage
1988



Goldfinch



Hedgehogs
1988



Kingfisher
1988



Kingfisher
1992



Pink flowers
1988



Red butterflies
1989



Robin
1989

Neil Higgins

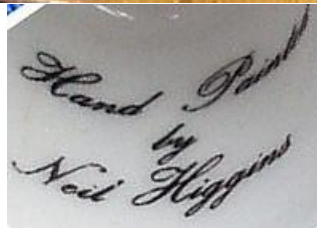
Higgins first came to my attention as the handpainter of the Robin Hood set of six character head thimbles, with the brand name of Healacraft, using the initials of NH inside the thimbles his name has also been associated with Sutherland. I speculate that's where he learnt his skills as a handpainter of thimbles?

Neil's signature of N.Higgins is always lettered in brown in his thimbles and may be found lettered on either the inside or outside

thimbles are not dated - earliest date I have found is 1983 (mail order thimble catalogues). He painted thimbles for a short period 1983-1985

always look for his signature

Higgins undertook commissions thru The Thimble Guild – including a few of pets he subsequently painted for Staffordshire Enamels (1995)



'1903 Georges Richard'
July 1983
ltd to 10



'Alpha Romeo BC - 2300'



bird



'Bridge House Ambleside'



'Bronte House'
September 1984



'Carillion Loughborough'



'Chichester'
(Yarn Market)



Choristers
November 1983
with attached pendant loop
limited to 250
b&w photo



cottage



'Derby Cathedral'



'Gloucester Old Spot'



King Charles spaniel



Labrador



'Pershore'
pink wash



'Portland ram'



'Roppon Cathedral'



'Shakespeare's birthplace'



Snowman
November 1983
with attached pendant loop
limited to 250
b&w photo



Snowman



Springer spaniel
March 1985
b&w photo



'The Bell Tower'
June 1983
The Thimble Guild commissioned this thimble of the building
where their thimble business was housed



'Thimble Hall'



'Wells'

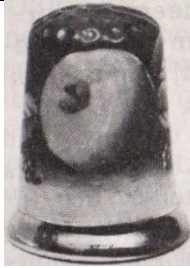


'Womborne Church'

Bruce Higham (BH)

Higham is a ex-Coalport and Staffordshire Enamels (1995) painter
Worcester-based

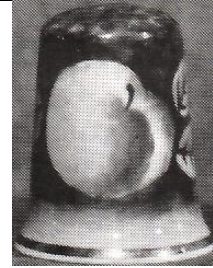
heavily painted gold apexes and thick gold painted rims
some seem to have pale lettering on the cream ground



apple
1988
pale green apple on green ground
b&w photo



apple



apple
1989
b&w photo



blossom



cherry



dragonfly



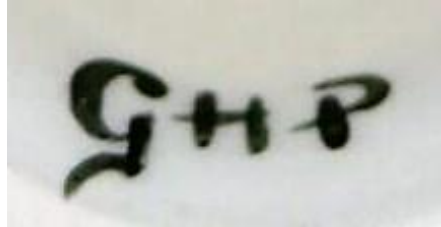
pear

Griselda Hill

Wemyss Ware was founded in 1882 in Fife Scotland. It took its name from a nearby Castle in the 1920s the studio moved to Devon – it closed in 1957

in 1985 Griselda revived the Wemyss Ware® style handpainting to their style at her The Griselda Hill Pottery Ltd® in Kirkcaldy the most recognisable style has a rim of painted blue scallop - signed inside GHP
<https://wemyssware.co.uk>

thimbles are still produced but currently out of stock. They may be ordered



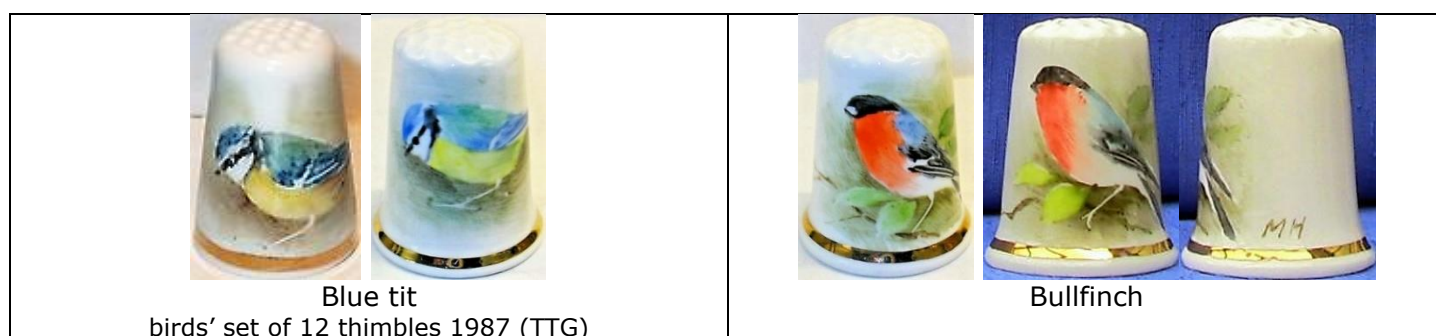
Hill at L

				
beehive		cats		cherries
				
cockerel		cockerel hen		daffodil
				
dragonflies				flower
				
flower	flower	flower	flower	



Milwyn Holloway

Holloway (b.1940) is a Royal Worcester trained artist (1954-1971)
there he specialised in painting birds
most of Milwyn's thimbles since then have no inner markings
some examples have a generic backstamp
the thimble backstamp used is for Claymore Ceramics
Milwyn's bird thimbles are always signed MH near the bird
thimbles are not dated, nor are the birds named





Chaffinch



Firecrest



Goldfinch



Great tit



Kingfisher
not in birds' set of 12



Magpie



Nuthatch



Robin



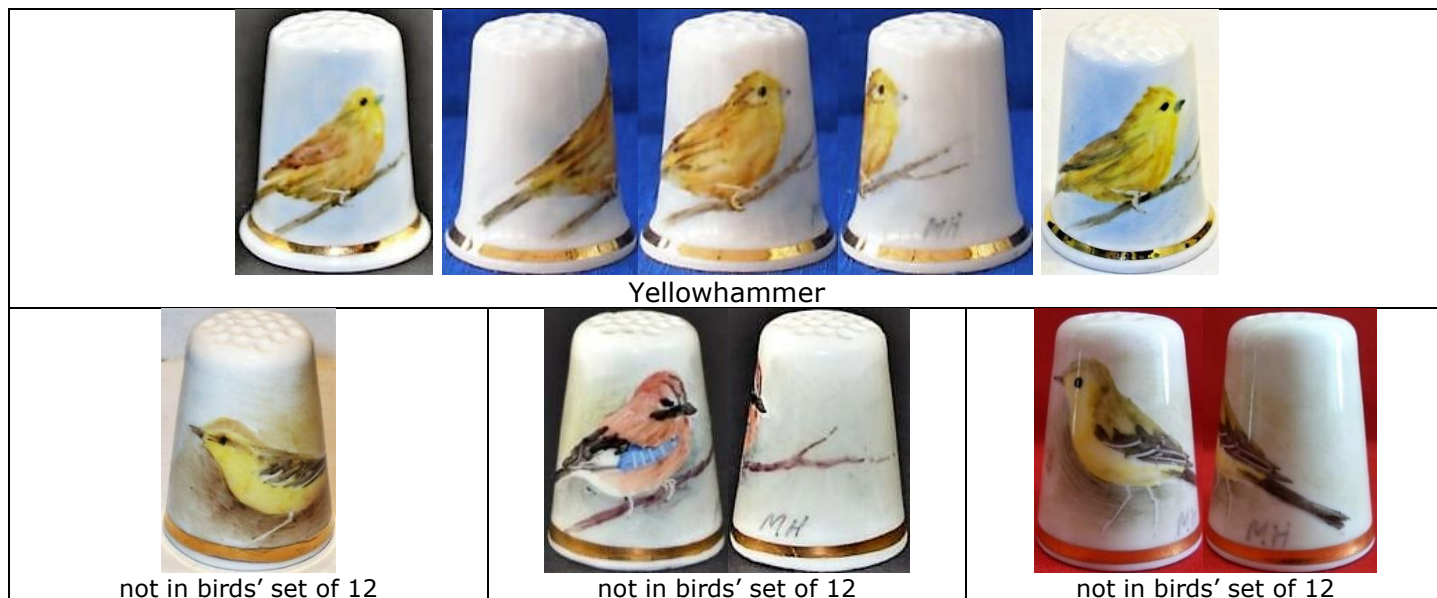
Song thrush



Woodpecker
not in birds' set of 12



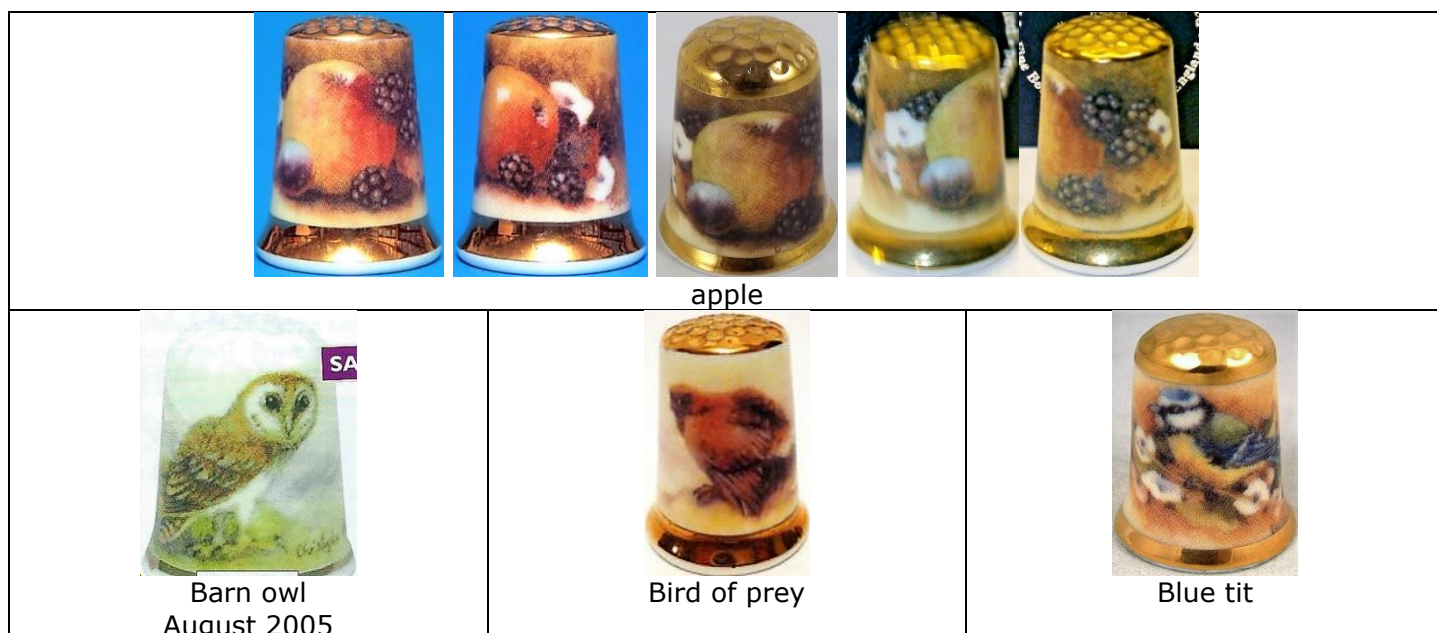
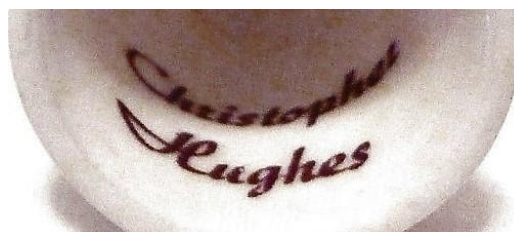
Wren



Christopher Hughes

Hughes (born 1948) began his apprenticeship with Royal Worcester in 1960 and branched out on his own in January 1980

he has a studio in Holly Green Worcestershire where he painted thimbles from 1987
the backstamp inside the thimble is The Christopher Hughes Collection or Christopher Hughes (later)
his thimbles are signed Christopher Hughes on the outer rim
thimble apexes are completely gilded, and sometimes they join the upper gilt line – he uses a thicker rim of gilding than other British painters. All are painted on fine bone china
thimbles are painted all round even if the verso is just a pale matching wash
thimbles are not named, nor dated





Butterfly



Butterfly



Butterfly



Butterfly



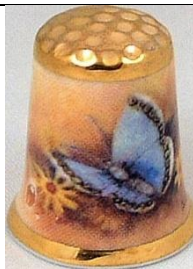
Butterfly
with and without gold apex



Church



Common Blue butterfly
with and without gold apex



Chrysanthemum



Daffodil



Finch



Fuchsia



Harebell



Grouse
April 2003
R: no gold apex with birds positioned differently



Highland cattle
L: April 2003
with and without gold apex



Highland stag
with and without gold apex



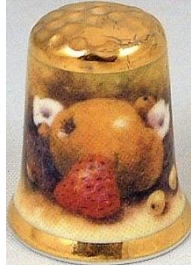
Hollyhock



Kingfisher



Little owl
September 2005



Pear with strawberry



Red plum



Peregrine falcon
September 2005



Pheasants
April 2003
with and without gold apex



Robin



Rose



Sheep
with and without gold apex



Snowy owl
with and without gold apex



Sparrow



White plum



Wren

Julie Menzies

Menzies grew up in the Biggar area in the lowlands of Scotland
 she was never formally trained in art tho painting was a passionate hobby
 Julie worked in the despatch section of The Thimble Guild (TTG) in Biggar until the owner, Arthur Bell, discovered her artistic abilities
 in 1993 she began to handpaint thimbles commissioned and personalised by thimble collectors thru TTG – painting their pets, homes, gardens etc
 she specialises in portraits and for five years Menzies was the TGG's chief thimble artist
 she became their chief designer of art in 1998-2005, which required her to create thimble designs these were translated into lithographs or transfers/decals
 tho her thimbles seem to be handpainted, all Menzies thimbles after 1998 are decal thimbles
 handpainted portraits fill the entire front of thimble – her decal thimble portraits are more cameo sized
 her handpainted thimbles bear the signatures J.M., Julie. M. or Julie Menzies on fine bone china with 22ct gold rims
 Menzies can handpaint three thimbles a day – no wonder they were offered in limited editions
 some thimbles will have the backstamp The Thimble Guild
 Julie was also a designer for Sutherland China



Menzies January 1991 and 1999



90th anniversary 1921–2011
 lettered in gold
 November 2011
 Royal British Legion
 limited to 250



Alexander Graham Bell
 March 1997
 limited to 100



Best wishes New Year 2005
 December 1994



Billy Wright
October 1994
limited to 200



Burt Lancaster
December 1994



Caernarvon Castle
February 1998
favourite ship could be personalised



children's portraits
October 1993
portraits could be personalised



Clydesdale
March 1997
limited to 250



Colin Macrae (rally driver)
January 1996
limited to 250



Cross
March 1994
limited to 200



Donald Pleasance
March 1995
limited to 100



Doris Speed
December 1994



dream home
August 1996
your home could be personalised



E & S (Edward and Sophie)
19.6.99
there is also a decal version



Fred Perry
March 1995
limited to 100



garden
April 1994
your garden could be personalised



'Hale Bopp 1997'



'Hale Bopp 1997'

May 1997

L: first edition which has more detail - limited to 250

R: city scene - lower: country scene

two unlimited editions with less detail



Henry VIII

February 1997

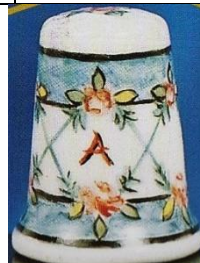
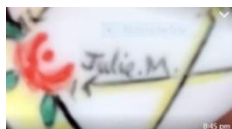
limited to 75



Jose Carreras

May 1994

commissioned by the singer who is a thimble collector



initials

Menzies follows 18th century French designs

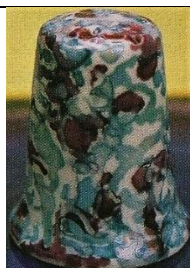
July 1993

your initials could be commissioned

limited to 175



Lustreware



Lustreware

March 1997



Lustreware

September 1999



Lustreware

September 1999



Lustreware
December 1999



Meadow flowers
October 1996
limited to 100



Neil Armstrong
September 1994
limited to 150



Montserrat Volcano 1997



North Sea oil
December 1994
Swarovski crystal in apex
limited to 250



Peace and goodwill
December 1995
limited to 125



Peace in Northern Ireland
March 1995
limited to 150



pet
your favourite pet could be
personalised



Queen Elizabeth II 70th birthday
19.4.96
April 1996



Queen Elizabeth II 85th birthday
19.4.2011
April 2011
limited to 85



Queen Elizabeth the Queen
Mother 95th birthday
August 1995
Swarovski crystal in apex
limited to 350



Rose
April 1997



Roy Castle
October 1994
limited to 250



Sam
symbol of the koalas injured in Victorian 2009 bushfires



Scenes of Jubilation 50 years
April 1995
limited to 500



Snowflake
January 1997
spot of gold paint in each flake
limited to 150



Soufreire Hills Volcano
Montserrat
October 1997



Teddy bear
December 2009
baby's name can be personalised



The Golden Hind
March 1996
limited to 450



The Longest Day 50 years
May 1994
limited to 250



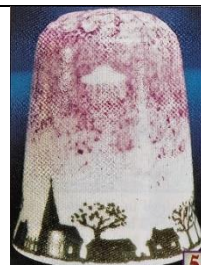
The night before Christmas
November 1996



To a mouse
(after Robbie Burns)
January 1994
limited to 149



Toy train
December 2009
baby's name can be personalised



UFO
May 1998
limited to 450



Viva Espana!
July 1994
limited to 75



West Highland Terrier
March 1998
favourite pet can be personalised



Xmas 1999
November 1999
pontilist style



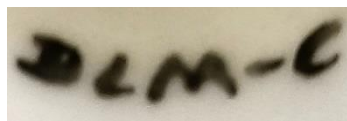
William & Kate 29th April 2011
April 2011
golden lovebirds

Dorothy Mortimer-Coy (DML-C)

Flowercraft
Spondon Derby

former Royal Crown Derby artist

her thimbles are signed inside – further information is on a sticker on base of thimble box



Blue poppy



Buttercup



Daffodil



Forget-me-not



Pink rose



Scabiosa



pink



Wild rose



Yellow rose



Peter Platt

Platt (born 1935) was commissioned by The Thimble Society of London to paint thimbles in 1990s for sale thru their catalogues

he is Royal Worcester trained (from 1951)

Peter's thimbles, once he left RW, are uniquely his own: plenty of gilding and the subjects are set in an ornate cameo

signature is P Platt which can usually be found in the lowest part of the cameo



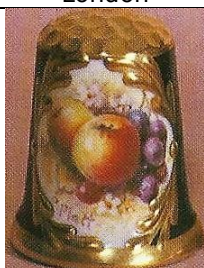
EIIR 1952-1992
commissioned by Thimble Society of
London



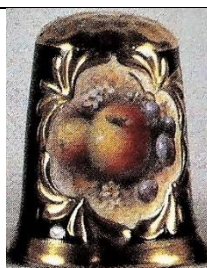
Flowers
gilded by Russell



flowers



Fruit – apples
summer 1991



Fruit – apples



Fruit – apples
summer 1992



Kingfisher
gilded by Russell

Ryoko Ottignon

Ryoko's studio - Ottignons of Norfolk – is in Starston where she is the hand decorator and ceramist
 Ottignon's thimbles are based on copies of Georgian designs from 1780s – designs found on cups and saucers of Lowestoft (1757-1802) and New Hall (1781-1835) porcelain factories
 maker's mark in the form of a sandglass ii burnished gold is painted on the inside
 (it may look like the Roman numeral for ten when the dot isn't clear)

her thimbles require five firings to fix the colours and glaze on the cream porcelain
 thimbles are presented in thimble boxes handturned in mahogany and waxed to give an antique patina
 accompanied by a signed, dated and numbered certificate – the list of what else Ottignons retails is listed
 on the verso of each certificat
 the glaze has crazed with age on her white thimbles



 <p>R: certificate October 1978</p>	
 <p>Ladybird R: certificate July 1978</p>	

Rachel Pugh

Pugh handpainted bone china thimbles for The Thimble Guild from September 2000 she was also a designer at TTG from 2000-2005 where her art was translated into decals Pugh was born in Cumbria. She lives in Cyprus where she still designed thimbles for TTG Rachel's signature R.Pugh is on the inside of the thimble, often using gold paint if the thimble is named, it is lettered inside



 <p>Ambergate daffodil April 2002 gold apex</p>	 <p>Armistice poppy November 2001 gold apex</p>
 <p>Armistice November 2000</p>	



Autumn
October 2000



Christmas rose
December 2000



Cyclamen
October 2002
gold apex



Daisy field
June 2001



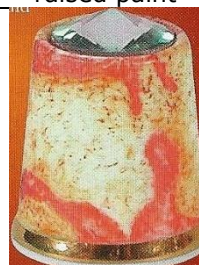
Deck chair
August 2004
raised paint



Dove of peace
June 2003
textured paint



Early snowdrop
January 2001
raised paint



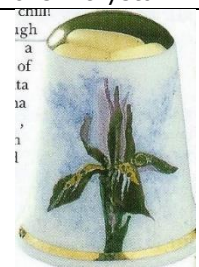
Exploring Mars
April 2004
Swarovski crystal in apex



Frosty snowman
December 2004
raised matt glaze



Giraffe
October 2003
raised patterning



Iris recticulata
February 2002
gold apex



Jungle Flowers
August 2001
after Henri Rpisseau



Leopard
December 2003
raised spots



Keiserskroon tulip
May 2002
gold apex



Lily
September 2002
gold apex



Moorcroft style
May 2004
raised design



'Peace on earth'
November 2003
suede glaze to create sandy
surface



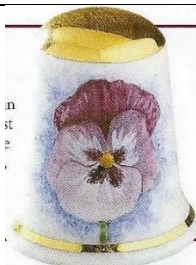
Peacock feathers
April 2004



Poinsettia
December 2002
gold apex



Poppies at Argenteiul
June 2004
limited to 50



Purple pansy
March 2002
gold apex



Rose
June 2002
gold apex



Snowdrop
January 2002
gold apex



Springtime
April 2001



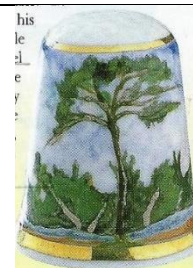
Summertime
September 2000



Sunflower
August 2002
gold apex



Sweetpea
July 2002
gold apex



The Great Pine October 2001
after Cezanne



The Lily Pond
July 2001
after Monet
date next to signature



'Thimble' in Braille
June 2003
in raised writing



Tiger
September 2003
raised painted stripes



Tropical fish
September 2004



Valentine
January 2004



Van Gogh
August 2001



Winter snowflake
January 2003
white glaze



Winter wonderland
December 2003
raised matt glaze



Wintertime
February 2001



Yellow freesia
November 2002
gold apex



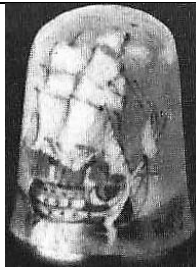
Zebra
November 2003
raised painted stripes

Roger Shufflebotham (R.A.S.)

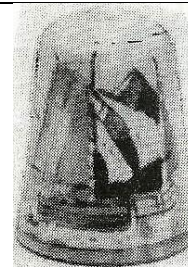
Shufflebotham was an early painter for Caverswall
he is known as a marine artist
his thimbles are signed R.A.S.



fruit



H.M.S Victory
June 1983
limited to 40
b&w photo



Thames barges
April 1983
limited to 40
b&w photo

James Skerrett (JS)

Skerrett trained at Royal Worcester
 in 2012 he was the artist-in-residence at the Worcester Porcelain Museum
 James's J Skerrett signature is found on the outside. Earlier thimbles signed JS
 there are several varieties of decaled marks inside Skerrett thimbles



Autumn fruits
 September 2012



Christmas roses
 with hedgerow berries
 December 2012



Remembrance poppy
 with cornflowers and marguerites
 October 2012



bird



fruit
signed 'JS'



hedgehog



roses

Ann Taylor

Scotland
signed A Taylor



Brig o' Turk
July 1992
limited to 99



Chinese male character
April 1992
limited to 100



Chinese man serenading woman
April 1992
limited to 100



Choirboy
November 1992
limited to 245



Dragon
April 1992
limited to 100



Sewing
July 1993
limited to 150

Bryn Weightman

Gwahaniaeth Crafts, Wales

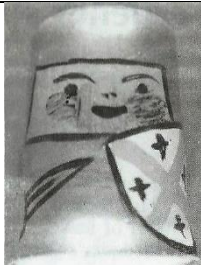
Weightman paints his bone china thimbles mainly as figures – some of his thimbles have caps or hats of polymer clay – they are outside this study
signed Bryn



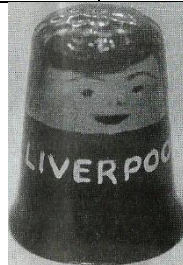
cottage
June 1986



Friar Tuck
April 1986



Crusader
February 1987
b&w photo



Liverpool
June 1987
Bryn would add club of your choice
b&w photo



gypsy



Manchester City



Matrioshke doll
February 1986



sailor



santa
November 1986



snowman



Welsh guard

Sheila Whitcombe

Whitcombe (nee Watson) began painting portraits at 16
she became a modeller for Royal Worcester, so never painted thimbles for them

Sheila paints under the name of Dunheved from Cornwall
signed S Whitcombe on the front of bone china thimbles – sometimes inside, in lower case

Dunheved thimbles are unusually large measuring 30-35cm in height

this gives the artist a larger surface to paint

she needed specialised knowledge of ceramic oxides to paint her historical figures with their jewel colours

the name is lettered on the outside verso

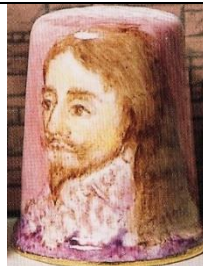
Sheila's painting may creep onto the apex to complete the picture

her artwork is quite pale – the colours here are stronger for clearer pictures

last thimble seen 2005 mail order catalogues



Armada 400th
anniversary 1588-1988



Charles I
October 1994



Cornflowers
with Spring peas
April 2001



Cornish piskey
limited to 84



Devon



First Fleet
departure from England 1787
set of nine painted for Australia's
bicentenary 1988



First Fleet
departure from England 1787





First Fleet
departure from England 1787



First Fleet
departure from England 1787



First Fleet
arrival in Tenerife 1787



First Fleet
arrival in Rio de Janeiro 1787



First Fleet
arrival in Cape of Good Hope 1787



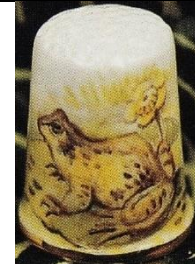
First Fleet
arrival in Australia 1788



First Fleet
arrival in Australia 1788



First Fleet
arrival in Australia 1788



Frog
March 1993



Fruit - berries
May 2005



Goose



Goose



Harebell
with Venus Looking Glass
August 2001



Henry VIII
February 1992



Ladybird
with dog rose



Lorna Doone farm



Padstow



Pansy flower fairy



Polperro



Poppy flower fairy



Queen Elizabeth I
June 1996
limited to 90



Queen Elizabeth II 1993
May 1993



Queen Mother



Queen Mother



Queen of the Meadow flower fairy



Queen Victoria
November 1992
limited to 350



Rabbit



Rabbit



Reindeer
Christmas 1988



Richard III
March 1992



Roses



Roses & forget-me-nots
July 2002



Sir Francis Drake



Strawberry flower fairy



Snowdrop flower fairy



The Cobb Lyme Regis



Thrift flower fairy



Unicorn



Weston Super Mare

Derek Wilson

Wilson is a Royal Worcester trained artist, 1930-1954

he paints under the name of Dunheved from Cornwall, in his studio near Launceston signed D Wilson, often cleverly camouflaged, on the outside of the bone china thimble Dunheved thimbles are unusually large measuring 30-35cm in height ('generously sized')

this gives the artist a larger surface to paint

being a birdwatcher and a wildlife artist, Derek's thimbles are painted around British birds, wildflowers and animals, and some of the Cornish countryside also feature. The latter may have been sold all over Cornwall?

bird name is lettered on inside rim – places on the outside verso

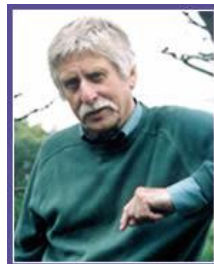
when the number painted is limited, the number is printed on the inside

Derek works on two sizes of Dunheved thimbles – the smaller size thimblette is used in the catalogues. These were used more frequently towards the end of his career

last thimble seen thru TTG was July 2011



green Dunheved mark is from late 1970s when smaller sized thimbles were used - not signed



 <p>Anne Hathaway's cottage May 1992 limited to 250</p>	 <p>Avocet June 2005</p>	 <p>Badger</p>	 <p>Badger and robin January 1998 limited to 195</p>
--	---	--	---

			
Badgers July 1998	Badgers June 2009	Barn owl June 2004	Barred owl July 2004
			
Bearded tit May 2005	Over the Bar Bideford September 1993	Black grouse October 2005	Black grouse January 2007
			
Black redstart	Black tailed godwit	Blackbird December 2002	Blackbirds January 2007
			
Blackbirds	Blackcap February 2006	Blue tit December 2002	Blue tit June 2010
			
Bluethroats October 2006	Brambling September 2003	Bramblings May 2006	Budgerigars August 2004
			
Bullfinch June 1994 limited to 150	Bullfinch June 1998 limited to 200	Bullfinch July 2004	Chaffinch September 1999 limited to 125

 <p>The chaffinch for your artist's display</p>		 <p>use and taking care of a</p>	
Chaffinch May 2005	Chaffinch	Chaffinches July 2007	Cheddar Gorge
 <p>hanc for chi Re £2 E HA</p>			
Chiffchaff January 2011	Choughs September 2005	Christmas rose Christmas 1990	Church with sheep Christmas 1999
	 <p>95</p>		
Cockerel and hen June 2004	Collared (sic) doves August 2007	Comma butterfly February 2011	Corky the Cock October 1993 limited to 200
	 <p>it</p>	 <p>d, he is ig e y r e</p>	
Cornish Tin Mine – Levant 1983	Crested tit March 2005	Curlew June 2007	Dabchicks August 2007
		 <p>2's at m e h s t i Dipper</p>	
Dartford warbler August 2000 limited to 200	Devon estuary – Polperro April 1993 limited to 150	Dipper August 2006	Dormouse March 2004

			
Ducks	Eagle owl September 2002	English cottage June 1991	Firecrest September 2003
			
Fox and robin February 1999 limited to 150	Fruit March 2004	Geese November 1997 limited to 150	Gloucester Old Spot pig April 1995
			
Goldcrests	Golden eagle October 2008	Golden Hind	Golden oriole November 2004
			
Golden plover March 2006	Goldfinch February 2005	Goldfinch March 2009	Goldfinch
			
Goosanders January 2008	Goose	Great crested grebe June 2005	Great spotted woodpecker December 1995 limited to 100

			
Great tit August 2001	Greenfinch April 2004	Greenland falcon January 2007	Grey thrush July 2002
			
Grey wagtail April 2006	Guy Fawkes with children on bonfire night November 1995	Hare July 2011	Hare and robin Christmas 1996
			
Harvest mouse	Hedgehog April 1993 limited to 150	Hedgehog November 1996	Heron June 2005
			
Highland cattle February 1996 limited to 150	Hoopoe April 2005	House Christmas 1998	House martin April 2007
			
House-sparrows May 2008	Jack Russell April 1994	Jamaica Inn April 2002	Jay January 2005

 Kestrels November 2007	 Kingfisher	 Kingfisher June 1993 limited to 200	 Kittiwakes nesting July 2005
 Knot June 2008	 Lapwing	 Lesser spotted woodpecker	 Linnets
 Long eared owl	 Long tailed tit February 2009	 Looe	 Lovebirds June 2006
 Mallard	 Mandarin ducks	 Meadow pipit September 2010	 Meerkats August 2010
 Mevagissey	 Mistle thrush with mistletoe berries	 Mole January 2010	 Mousehole September 1992 limited to 250

 <p>Mousehole August 1996 limited to 250</p>			 <p>Mute swan August 2006</p>	 <p>Newlyn May 1995 limited to 150</p>
 <p>Nightingale April 2006</p>	 <p>Nuthatch August 2002</p>	 <p>Nuthatch September 2004</p>	 <p>Old Spot</p>	
 <p>Orchard blackbird July 2010</p>	 <p>Osprey January 2006</p>	 <p>Otter May 1993 limited to 125</p>	 <p>Otter February 2003</p>	
 <p>Otter November 2009</p>	 <p>Oystercatcher June 2001</p>	 <p>Partridge & rabbit Christmas 2006</p>	 <p>Partridges Christmas 2006</p>	
 <p>Peacock</p>		 <p>Penguin Christmas 1991</p>	 <p>Peregrine falcon October 2004</p>	 <p>Pheasant December 2001</p>

			
Pheasant and partridges Christmas 1989	Pheasant and partridges December 2005	Pheasants December 1992 limited to 195	Pheasants December 2007
			
Pied flycatchers October 2006	Pink cockatoo July 2003	Polar bears Christmas 1992	Ptarmigan October 2005
			
Puffin February 1994	Puffin October 2003	Quail October 2006	R.M.S Titanic sank 2.20am April 15 1912
			
Red fox October 1994	Red grouse August 1993 limited to 175	Red grouse July 2006	Red squirrel July 2009
			
Redstart	Redwing February 1994	Redwings February 1994	Redwings February 2008
			
Reed buntings April 2008	Ringed plovers January 2008	Robin 1986	Robin Christmas 1987



Robin
November 1995



Robin
November 1997



Robin
November 2000



Robin
January 2003



Robin
January 2005



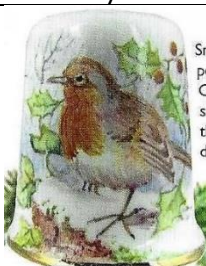
Robin
November 2005



Robin
November 2006



Robin
Christmas 2007



Robin
December 2007



Robin
with house



Robin
with blue tit



Robins
November 2005



Rose-coloured starlings
April 2007



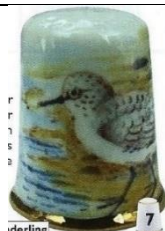
Rock-pipit
September 2006



Ruby throated
hummingbird
May 2003



Ruff
September 2007



Sanderling
June 2008



Sand-martins
May 2008



Scops owl
June 2003



Seals
April 1998



Sheep
September 1996
limited to 145



Shepherds
Christmas 2000



Shore-lark
September 2007



Sidmouth

			
Skylark May 2007	Snipe April 2008	Snow bunting January 2001	Snow goose November 2003
			
Snowman	Snowman Christmas 1990	Snowman Christmas 1997	Snowman November 2000
			
Snowman tobogganning November 1994	Snowy owl November 2003	Snowy owl	Somerset cottage
			
Song thrush May 1994	Song thrush Christmas 2006	Sparrowhawk	Spotted crane October 2007
			
Squirrel November 2001	St Michael's Mount February 1993	Stonechat	Suffolk sheep March 1995 limited to 150
			
Swallows March 2004	Swallows	Tawny owl December 2008	Tawny owl March 2002



Teal
January 1997
limited to 150



Teddy bear



Thatched cottage
August 2009



Thomas Hardy's
cottage



Thrush
January 2004



Tintagel Castle
August 1996
limited to 250



Tomago House N.S.W.



Treecreeper
September 2004



Treecreeper
October 2007



Turkey
Christmas 1994



Turnstone
May 2007



Turtle dove
September 2006



Twite
January 2009



Valley of Rocks Lynton
limited to 83



Venice



Witch
October 1995
limited to 150



Water-rail
June 2007



Water shrew



Waxwing
April 2003



Wells Cathedral



Wheatear
February 2006



Whinchat
February 2007



White stork
June 2006



Whitethroat
March 2005



Willow tits
November 2007



Willow warbler



Windsor Castle
December 1992
limited to 350



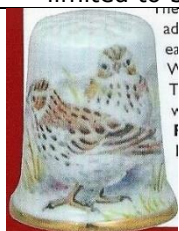
Winter
December 1996



Winter partridges
October 2002



Woodcock
August 2005



Wood-lark
December 2005



Woodlark
March 2007



Wren
July 1997



Wren
January 2003



Wren
May 2005/February
2008



Wren
March 2007



Yellow wagtail
September 2008



Yellow hammer
April 2003



Yellowhammer
February 2005



Field fare



bunny

Anne Young

Young's barge or canal ware painting is uniquely British
 she certainly mastered this folk art form in the miniature size required to paint on thimbles
 most of her thimbles are signed and some are dated – they range from 1980s-1990s
 Anne's thimbles are signed on the inner rim Anne Young – lettered upside down
 dates when included are also inside
 there are traditional background colours and the lovely gloss adds to their appeal
 it's the trim around the rim where one sees the details
 the main design is replicated on the verso
 Young also paints wooden thimbles



1998

 <p>black 2003</p>	 <p>black</p>	 <p>black</p>
 <p>black</p>	 <p>black</p>	 <p>black</p>
 <p>blue 2003</p>	 <p>green 1993</p>	 <p>green</p>
 <p>green</p>	 <p>green</p>	



green
distinctive yellow rim



red
1998



red



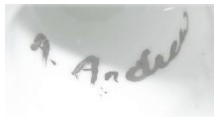
red



white

Other painters - named

A Andrew

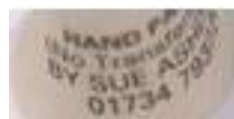
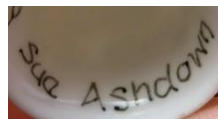


Poinsettia

Sue Ashdown

Reading

'handpainted - no transfers or decals used'



'Welsh Thimblers
September 1990'

Daffodils with their thimble emblem on verso
limited to 30



daffodils

Lorraine Bates

born 1964

graduate of Bath Academy of Art 1986

daughter of Gill and David Bates of Woodsetton Peeps

set up her own pottery, Woodsetton Arts Pottery, alongside that of the family business
handpaints some of their enamelled brass thimbles



For Mum
February 1986
b&w photo

M Bates

painter for Caverswall



blackberries
circa 1977

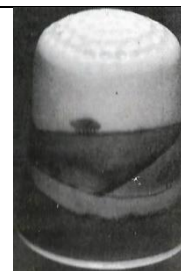
Monica Bowron



Highland landscape
October 1985
limited to 150
b&w photo

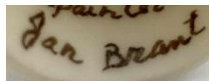


Stonehenge
May 1986



Wiltshire Downs
September 1986
limited to 150
b&w photo

Jan Brant



Blue tit

D J Coggan



The Queens 60th birthday 21 April 1986
commissioned by Thimble Society of London
limited to 800



A S (Andrew and Sarah) married 23 July 1986
commissioned by Thimble Society of London
bee is Sarah's emblem
limited edition



Ruby wedding of H.M. Queen Elizabeth II & Philip, Duke of Edinburgh 20 Nov.1947-1987
gold apex

Harry Colclough

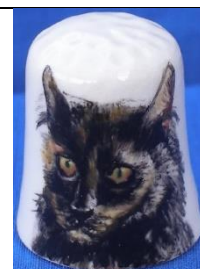
worked for Royal Grafton for 30 years



cat



Horse and cart
June 1985
b&w photo



'Tuppence'

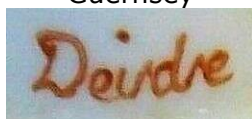
Anne Dalton

Ottervale China Company Devon
Anne also painted character head thimbles



Deirdre

Guernsey



Goldfinch



Linnet

V Fawcett

Ilkley



flowers

D Fuller



Wren

Shelly Gardner



Unicorn

Irene Glendining



Wren

Patsie Griggs



chick



flowers

Ann Hickey



Barge ware

J Humphries



Leslie Lamb

Ross-shire Scotland



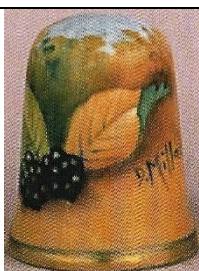
Goldfinch
July 1984



D Miller (DM)

painter for Caverswall

some thimbles have the full signature, others the initials



fruit c.1985



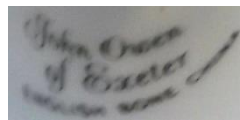
dragon

Clare Montgomery (CM)
Ballymena Northern Ireland



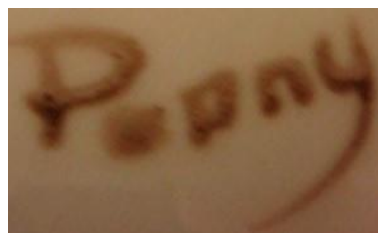
Wildflowers of Ireland

John Owen of Exeter



Devon W.I.
1920-1995
violets

Penny

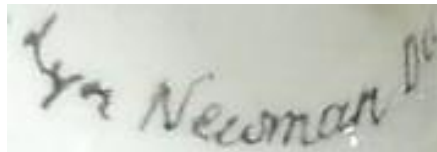


Rachel Munday



Kingfisher
September 1999
limited to 245

Lyn Newman



Dorothy Newsome



DTS 2nd International Conference 7.8.9 June 1991

Dorset Thimble Society

their 3rd Conference thimble was made by Birchcroft probably with the design by Newsome
limited edition



DTS 1985 – 2005
limited edition



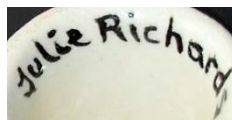
A F Pinxt



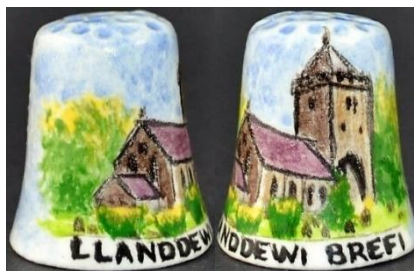
Embroiderers' Guild 1906-1981
limited to 100

Julie Richards

Wales



lettered upside-down



Llanddewi Brefi

Sylvia Smith

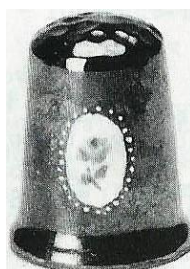


Latticed flowers – mauve
November 1990



Latticed flowers – turquoise
November 1990

Sheila Southwell



Rose
on lustreware
August 1983
limited to 50
b&w photo

Steffie



watchtower

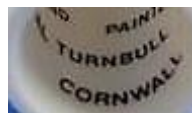
E Trillsam



chickens

Val Turnbull

Cornwall



Fuchsias

H Wall

Locke & Co in Worcester is a forerunner of Royal Worcester – 1900s



Pheasant

D Wallace (DW)

Claytondale China Stoke-on-Trent



Fruit

Susan Ware



Snowman
1986

Other painters – initials only

NA



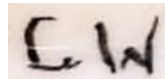
pottery

CTW



ladybirds

C W



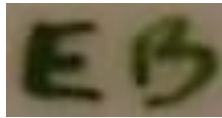
Seacombe Pottery 1852-1864

D.C.



1997

EB



'C'

E M B



signed on outside



Blue tit
inscribed 'Anne'

H.S.B.



Harebells - heath

J.K.

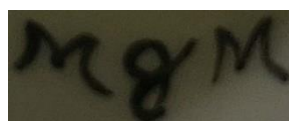


signed on outside



Harebells

M&M

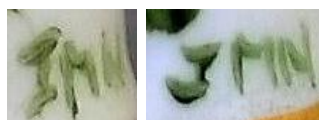


signed on inside



Swans

JMN



signed on outside



pansy



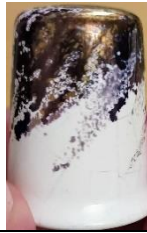
primrose



rose



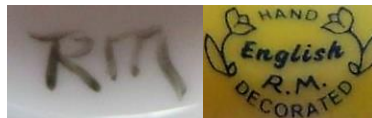
NJ



P.W.



RM



Blue tits



Kingfisher
'25'



Mouse



RMCK



Harebells



Snowdrops

RS



References

- Bleasdales *catalogues*
Charlotte Goldberg *David Roy Bowkett former Royal Worcester artist 1948-1962*. [TCI Bulletin](#) summer 2014
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Friedy Kamp *Vingerhoed Nieuws catalogues* 1993-2008
Coilin Millett *The wonder of Worcester: an illustrated history*. 2020
Museum of Royal Worcester
Thimble Collectors Guild (TCG)/The Thimble Guild (TTG) *catalogues* 1983-2005
Thimble Society of London (TSL) *catalogues* 1981-2013
Bertus van den Dikkenberg *Het Vingerhoedje*. 1998

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

EMAIL thimbleselect@bigpond.com TO SHARE YOUR KNOWLEDGE

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