

Modern British hand-decorated wooden thimbles

I have covered quite a few other topics on British wooden thimbles and none of them are covered here again.

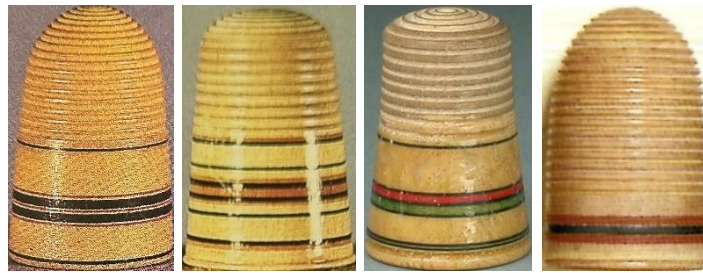
This will be a very small topic showcasing single hand-decorators on wooden thimbles – maybe they were pyrographed – had embellishments affixed – or handpainted – just **22**.

There are no **decaled** wooden thimbles (like those by John and Meg Urwin) included. Here is an example of one of their earliest thimbles (1984) which seems hand painted. In fact, these thimbles have decals made from a handpainted image. The only parts that are handpainted are the apex and rim of silver.



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

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



handpainted 1820s Tunbridge ware thimbles

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

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

Two of the artists below also painted china thimbles – Julie Menzies and Anne Young. Did they begin with wooden thimbles until china blanks became available?

Handpainted Russian wooden thimbles followed by the USA dominate the British output, so it is important to record this group of thimble artists. The British wooden thimbles tend to have more domed apexes – I do hope that thimbles painted in other countries have crept in – please alert me if I have.

I am hoping some of the unknown artists featured at the end will produce maker's names from collectors of these thimbles.

[See other British wooden thimble topics](#)

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

For other handpainted thimble topics see

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

Wendi Abdi 1989



sycamore
handpainted



sycamore
handpainted



sycamore
handpainted

CB



church



cottage



dove



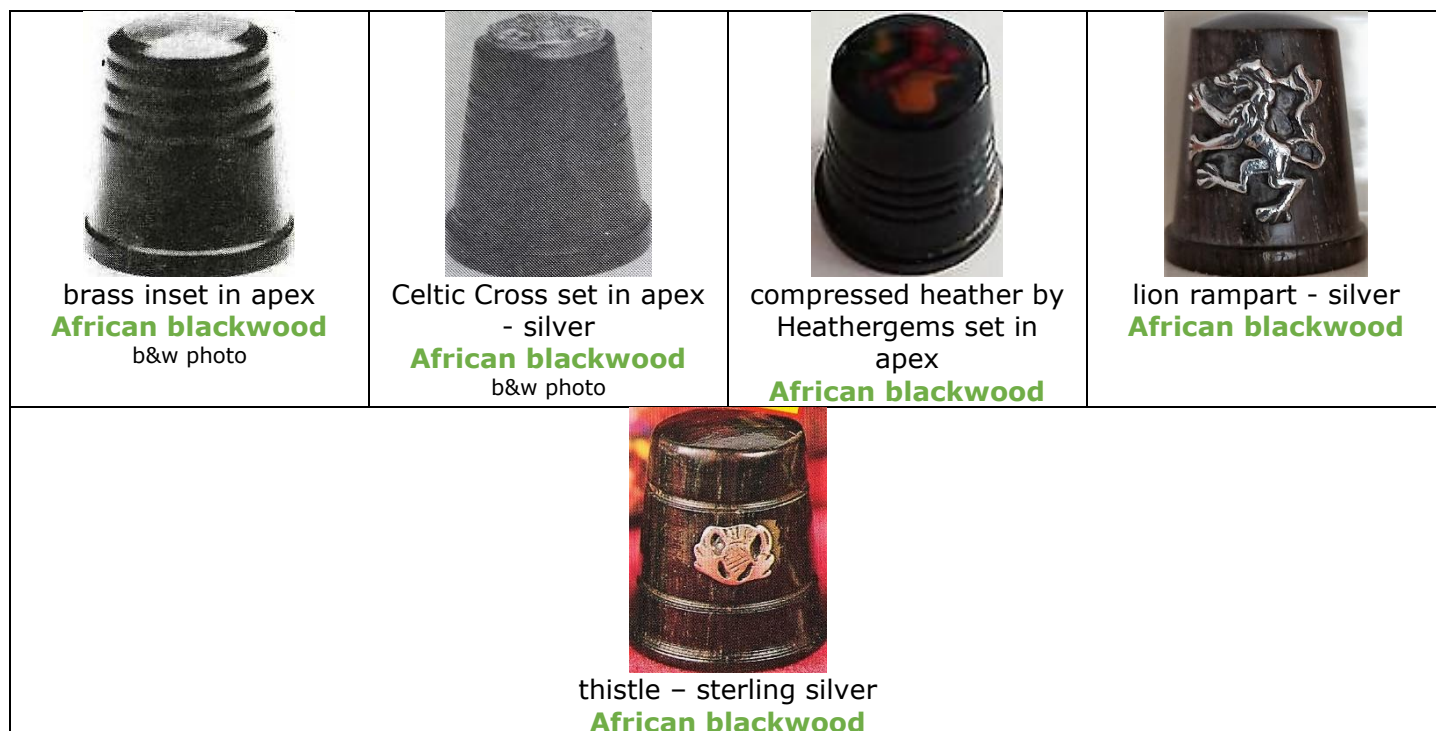
iris



lighthouse



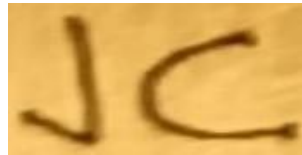
Stewart Buyers Ayrshire Scotland 1983
his thimbles are not signed



Philip Campbell Mull Silver, Tobermory Mull Scotland



Jacqui Carey (JC) 1987-1989



'Christmas 1989'
handpainted



lace
handpainted
matching lace bobbin



'Made from a **maple** which fell in the Great Storm
16th October 1987'
maple flowers



'Made from a **maple** which fell in the Great Storm
16th October 1987'
maple leaves

John and Doreen Castle York



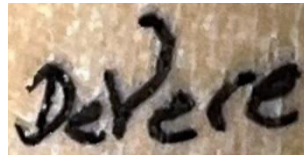
beech with enamelled millefiori apex

D Clarke



thatched cottage
handpainted

De Vere



folk painting
1983

T3



Clover – good fortune

John and Jen Emmersen 'Beautiful Woods' Rotherham



snowdrops
handpainted

Adeline Ford (AF) Hoveton Norfolk



Stella and Charles Gratrix Powys Wales

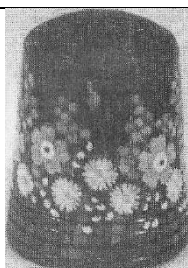
This couple are still in business and take commissions.

<http://www.llanidloesartsandcrafts.org.com>



'Llanidloes'
pyrographed

Yvonne Hayward (YH) 1986-1989



flowers border
handpainted
May 1986



butterflies amongst flowers
handpainted
September 1986



flowers
handpainted
ebony



handpainted
oak



blackberries
maplewood
October 1986

Ann Hickey and David Ball Malvern Worcestershire



canal boat painting

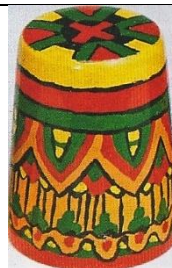
Barbara Hope Scotland
African Impressions – 1996



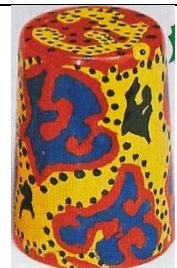
handpainted



handpainted



handpainted



handpainted



hedgehog
pyrographed



rabbit
pyrographed



rabbit
pyrographed
1998



squirrel
pyrographed
1998

R J 1984



kingfisher
enamelled apex



'S'
Cocobolo Nicaragua

L'Etacq Woodcraft Jersey 1985

They produced fine stickware thimbles – they are out of the scope of this topic. Their most well-known thimble is made of a Jersey cabbage stalk
They produced fine wooden thimble racks



mask

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



thimble display stand for 18 thimbles

E Marsh



teddy bear
handpainted

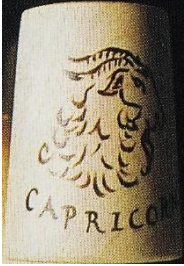
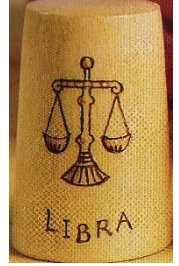
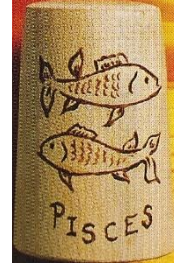
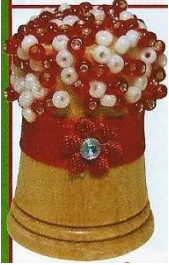
P M



handpainted

Julie Menzies Biggar Scotland 1993-1999

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

			
Aquarius	Aries	Cancer	Capricorn
			
Gemini	Leo	Libra	Pisces
			
Sagittarius	Scorpio	Taurus	Virgo
			
dog handpainted sycamore	Nessie handpainted limited to 250	Russian warrior handpainted limited to 100	
			
church for Christmas 1994 sycamore	Madonna for Christmas 2000 maple	beads for Christmas 2011	



thistle
'Scotland'
1999

Susan Moore 1991
each flower accompanied by handpainted insects



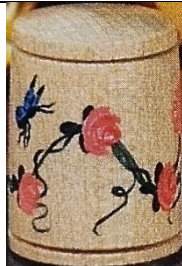
blue irises



blue rambling roses



lilypond



pink and red rambling roses



Red orchids



roses

H A Power 1987



'Mothering Sunday 1987'
handpainted violets

Sarah



Think of me

John H Shepherd York



acacia

Somer Combe Studios 1988



dried flowers under Perspex in apex
box wood

Sterling Classic Malvern, Worcestershire 1994



'Crafted in England'



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



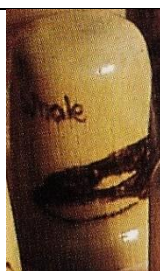
oak

Christine Swift 1993

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



bottle-nosed dolphin



killer whale



otter



marten



red squirrel



Scottish wild cat

Terry



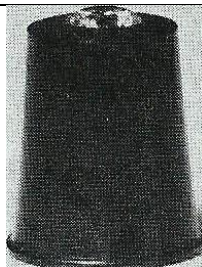
lupins
'Mystic'
handpainted

Ted Tolson



mini **yew**
1988

John Urwin



cubic zirconia
African blackwood
1983

R W



Corris Wales
sycamore
pyrographed

Anne Young



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

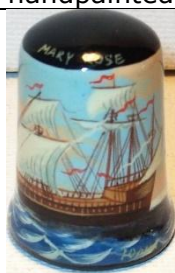
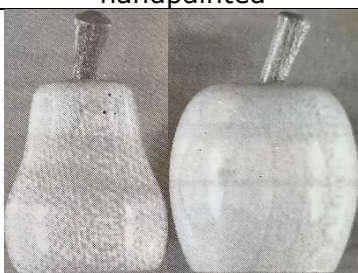


1990
handpainted in canal boat style
thimbles by John Urwin

Unknown artists

Maybe you received a certificate with the maker's details - or yours still has a sticker with the maker's details. Please share

I don't even know if they eventuated in Britain

 bee Brazilian rosewood	 puffin handpainted	 cat			
 bagpipe chanter African blackwood and ivory August 1985	 clematis handpainted February 1989	 brass apex			
 1940s handpainted			 mallard and duckling handpainted		
 'Mary Rose' handpainted looks more like a Russian lacquered thimble?			 pear- and apple-shaped		
 signs of zodiac sterling silver Aries – Sagittarius - Virgo			 coin set into apex sixpence		



'The Alnwick Garden'
pyrographed



holly
handpainted



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



paper quilling roses



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



cask with bung
March 1987
b&w photo



halfpenny affixed



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



'Cropredy'



African blackwood
sterling silver thistle



pyrographed
'Sue'



cathedral etched
'Sue'



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



child's in barrel-shaped holder
rosewood



cats



witch



wildflowers



needlecase
jarrah thimble – **apricot** case



coffee pot
ruby knob and brass handle



finely ridged thimble



sheep



spider - pewter



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

Contributors

Eva B | Rita Bayley | Yolanta Bogdziewicz | Pawel Brzyski | Micky Garvey | Andrea Griffiths | Linda Heggs
Norma Shattock | Jean Taylor

This listing of Modern British hand-decorated wooden thimbles does not purport to be complete or accurate in all aspects.

Rather it invites comments and contributions to add to our knowledge. My thanks to the contributors.

EMAIL thimbleselect@bigpond.com TO SHARE YOUR KNOWLEDGE

© **Sue Gowan**
July 2025