



FOR THE MEDIA/PRESS

Now celebrating over 80 years as a society, with membership on four continents, the National Button Society (NBS) is actively represented by state and local button clubs in 39 states and 16 countries.

NBS members engage in a fascinating journey of discovery, involving history, art and fashion, that encompasses centuries of clothing button usage. With a passion for studying, displaying and trading buttons and related items, members may create art or jewelry using clothing buttons without harming them.

NBS promotes educational research and exhibitions, publishing and disseminating information about buttons, and the preservation of their aesthetic and historical significance—all for the enjoyment of current and future generations.

HISTORY OF BUTTON COLLECTING

Button collecting was first recognized as an organized hobby through the founding of the National Button Society in 1938 after a collector's appearance on the radio show "Hobby Lobby." The regional show sparked real interest in this unusual hobby—which just about anyone could afford during those lean years—and it sparked a national search of attics, basements and sewing rooms for buttons.

The first national button show was held in Chicago in 1939. Many state and local button clubs were established during the 1940s, and many of those clubs sponsored their own button shows—a tradition that continues today with button shows held throughout the United States, Canada and Europe.

LEADERSHIP AND CONTACTS

NBS President: Louella (Lou) Yeargain, Missouri president@nationalbuttonociety.org

Lou Yeargain has collected buttons since 1994, and is a member of the Gateway Club in Missouri. Using her experience as a retired educator, she has served in several leadership capacities. Lou began her two-year term as president in August 2020.

1st Vice President: Joy Journeay, Alaska vicpresident@nationalbuttonociety.org

Joy has sewn for 60 years and collected buttons for 30. With both undergraduate and postgraduate study in the fine arts, she is drawn to the beauty and fascinating history of buttons. Researching a button's story provides hours of satisfying discovery of our social evolution.



PHOTOGRAPHS

Photographs are available upon request (susan@wein.ca) and from the website of Kent Sweitzer if proper credit is given.

<https://www.kentsweitzerphotography.com/Events/National-Button-Society-Annual-Show-2017/>



Lucy Carriero Traverse Collection



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FAQS FOR A COLLECTOR

Q: What do you look for in a button?

A: The historical significance; the subject matter of the button; condition; the material it's made from, intricacy of design & manufacture... does it fit with other categories; ... Yes, the list is long.

Q: Where do you find your buttons?

A: There are several button shows each year. Sometimes a local antique shop will have buttons; there are online sales and auctions; even telling friends that you collect—they often have their grandmother's button box tucked away.

Q. How do you display or keep your buttons?

A: NBS recommends 9"x12" mat boards organized in categories—materials, shapes, plants, animals or objects. There are dozens of categories in the NBS Blue Book—the official *NBS Classification & Competition Guidelines*. Also, collectors are innovative with display and storage ideas—hanging creative “button pictures” on their walls, storing buttons in wooden printer trays and other handy systems and always paying attention to the safe preservation of those buttons. For example, celluloid buttons have to breathe—so no closed containers, please.

Q: What is your favorite?

A: Every collector will have a favorite or more than one! Story buttons; china buttons; pearls (shell); black glass; Jacksonians; lacy glass ... or just pretty buttons ... you get the picture.

Q: What are buttons worth?

A: Prices range from pennies to many hundreds of dollars.

Q: What advice would you give to a new collector?

A: Join the National Button Society and a state and/or local button club. There are local and state button clubs in 39 states as well as clubs in Canada and international locations.

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