

BORDERS ON BUTTONS: Introduction

Buttons are enriched by the use of borders. You will discover borders made from other materials, with contrasting or like decorative finishes, manifesting construction techniques, illustrated with patterns/symbols/pictorials, and of varying shapes. This

This series will be written and printed in collaboration with the Minnesota Button Bulletin. WRBA is indebted to the support of the Minnesota editor, Claudia Chalmers, for her time, button wisdom, and technical talent.

Claudia Chalmers and Joy Journey will be authoring and illustrating this series. If you have buttons that you can scan to illustrate these topics, we welcome having them! Please put "Button Borders" in the subject line of an email and send the scans to cjoy@gci.net

As the foundation of our study we shall use the Official NBS Classification (our beloved "Blue Book") and the excellent exploration of borders written by Shirley Hutson and published in the May 1999 NBS Bulletin on Pages 85-104.

As we examine borders, we shall try to understand the contributing aspects and illustrate with multiple examples to solidify our understanding.

If you have border topics you would like addressed, shoot an email or note to Joy Journey (contact info on inside cover) and we will be sure to address it in this series. People's questions help us think and see things in a new light. We welcome your help as we quest for knowledge and clarification!

Through this series, we will explore what qualifies as a border. In preparation for the articles that follow, consider the buttons on these two pages and notice parts of the button construction and design that could be considered a border. Do they meet the criteria from our classification book?" (see below). *Joy Journey*

from the Official NBS Classification 2009/2010 Awards Edition

SECTION 23- 4 Borders Assorted *That portion of a button's face design which lies between the center and the outer edge. It may be any width, but it must "border" a plain or decorative center of any size or shape. Refer to May 1999 NBS Bulletin.*

WRBA Issue	Borders on Buttons Topic
2008 #2 Apr	Introduction
2008 #3 July	Construction Study (outer, frame, rim, edge, interrupted)
2008 #4 Nov	Pictorials
2009 #1 Feb	Symbols
2009 #2 May	Conventional Designs
2009 #3 Aug	Decorative Finishes
2009 #4 Nov	OME (Other Material Embellishment)
2010 #1 Feb	Multiple Borders

Here is an NBS large pearl button with a gilt brass stylized-plant design which forms a circular shape that is bridged from side to side by a plant tendril design.

Ask yourself if this fits the "border" description from the Official NBS Classification. Is there a plain or decorative center? Or is the focus of the button the stylized plant forms?

Is this button best classified as a background button?



On the right is a pierced copper (NBS medium) button with a copper escutcheon with a winged-hat. We see the white metal decorative rim which would qualify as a rim border.

What do we think of the pierced, spoke-shaped piece behind the hat. Are we tempted to call it a border since it mirrors the white metal rim? Or is it a background to the hat escutcheon?

To the right is a one-piece stamped brass, pierced button depicting a fabulous animal—the gryphon. A smooth surfaced ring does encircle the button, and "interrupted" by the platform upon which the gryphon stands, and is partially interrupted by the gryphon's wing. It appears that this button has a simple single border. Would you consider anything else to be a border elements?



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This article appeared in the April 2008 WRBA *Territorial News*.

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Buttons on this page are from the collection of Joni Goldberg, CA.

Here is a lovely united two-layer pearl button. Cut steels hold the two pieces together and also form a six-point star shape in the center of the button.

Do you think the swirl shapes forming the ring about the cut steels constitute a border? Can we say that it borders "a plain or decorative center of any size or shape"?

To the right is a black glass button with paint-filled incised lines. You might view the stylized painted lines as the focus of the button. Can we say that they border "a plain or decorative center of any size or shape"? Then they constitute a border.



Note that a plain black ring encircles the painted line area. Can we say that this button has two borders: the thin plain border and the painted border? Can we say that the button has four borders: plain black, gold line, painted shapes, and gold line?

While we are considering multiple borders, how many are present on these background buttons?



On the left do we consider the rope edge, then the row of cut steels, then the double twisted set? Do we consider the eight star arms part of the central design or a border around the central paste? Questions, questions, questions!!!!

I am sure we all agree that borders significantly enhance the beauty of our buttons!

In the next Territorial News issue, we will discuss border construction.

