



## A Jewel Isn't Jewelry

by Lois Greene Stone

[Home](#)

[Summer 2014](#)

[Winter-Spring 2014](#)

[Fall-Winter 2013-14](#)

[Summer-Fall 2013](#)

[Spring-Summer 2013](#)

[Winter-Spring 2013](#)

[Fall-Winter 2012-2013](#)

[Summer-Fall 2012](#)

[Spring-Summer 2012](#)

[Winter-Spring 2012](#)

[Autumn/Winter 2011-12](#)

[Summer 2011](#)

[Winter/Spring 2011](#)

[Autumn/Winter 2011](#)

[Summer 2010](#)

[Spring 2010](#)

[Winter 2010](#)

[Autumn 2009](#)

[Summer 2009](#)

[Spring 2009](#)

[Autumn 2008](#)

[Summer 2008](#)

'MG' was the monogram etched into the round gold locket's cover. I don't remember anything else having my mother's initials. I knew there were pictures secured by thin 14k 'frames', and made to fit each of the two small circles.

Time was frozen. On the left was my younger sister, age 9, then me, age 13, then my older sister age 15. I knew the exact date of the black and white photo as I was in my elementary school graduation dress. It was taken on that day. My father's face, same time period, smiled from the other circle. I realized the photos were never replaced as years passed.

At age 18, I wanted a locket and was given a large heart-shaped one. I smiled, fingered the crease and slid my hand down to the pointed bottom, and couldn't bring myself to say I just didn't like the shape or the size. I put a photo of each parent inside after carefully getting the heart-shaped inner frame snapped in place without cutting out anything important being captured. It felt awkward around my neck, but I listened to admiring tones. My initials, able to be put on a pair of dangling earrings, were absent from this gift.

Two months after my younger sister turned 16, my father died. On her 18<sup>th</sup> birthday, I took the chain, handed it to her, and said she should have something touched by our dad and given to me at that calendar year, and it was from him as well. I gently stroked the links before giving it away. I bought myself an ordinary chain, still didn't care for my locket's shape, but it took on a meaning now both emotionally and tangibly. It became an amulet and I believed in its protective power.

If the locket were to go to a descendent, she'd removed photos of people she didn't know. Why not? I so wanted this piece of jewelry left as it was...my wishes, but I couldn't expect anyone to keep faces of unfamiliar.

Objects. Charm bracelets were also sterling or gold bios. A tiny grand piano with a cover that opened was the first affixed to my links; ice skates were added; a palette with circles like where I applied oil paint to my real one came next. Each charm represented pieces or markers of my life. A diploma dangled. I enjoyed the small sounds of each touching one another when I moved my wrist. My widow-mother continued the additions with bridal through a high chair after my first child was born. Each 'bio' became a reminder of the passage of time and the events not shared with my deceased dad; I put the bracelet in a satin pouch lined with velvet.

My mother's charm bracelet was started by my father. Her charms were

---

Spring/Summer 2008

Winter/Spring 2008

Editor's Note

Guidelines

Contact

large. There was a house with some jewels. My parents had grown up in walk-up apartments playing on concrete stoops; the house was a fantasy that became a reality. Her gold items stood for their dreams that came true; mine were 'me'. After she died, I gave the bracelet to my daughter knowing it would never be worn by her, and said she could remove any charms for individual use; she didn't. This was a 'memory' bracelet of her grandmother. I had spoken about my mother's life enough that each charm was part of my mother. I gave my daughter the satin pouch while I am alive with the same instruction yet knowing the item will stay in its lined bag and handed down that way.

Estate Jewelry. Words in a shop window. A case with cameos, odd-setting rings, brooches, and such are inside such shops. None have charm bracelets. And if any had locket, the meaningful- to-the-original-wearer photos would be absent.

We hand-down items, when possible. But, it seems, locket and charm bracelets have special stories and are not just jewelry.

---

**Lois Greene Stone**, writer and poet, has been syndicated worldwide. Poetry and personal essays have been included in hard & softcover book anthologies. Collections of her personal items/ photos/ memorabilia are in major museums including twelve different divisions of The Smithsonian.

---

**Copyright 2014, © Lois Greene Stone.** This work is protected under the U.S. copyright laws. It may not be reproduced, reprinted, reused, or altered without the expressed written permission of the author.

---