

# **Wedding Ring Heirlooms**

**Weddings rings that have been  
passed down through the  
generations**

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## Evelyn Elliott



The heirloom wedding ring that Evelyn Elliott wears on her ring finger has special sentimental value because she never met the lady who wore it.

“My grandmother was Martha Gibbons, who was born in 1886 in Current Island, which was a resettled community. She married John Dredge in the early 1900s. My mother, Hazel Dredge, was born in Black Duck Cove on February 23, 1923. She married my father, Roland Caines from Shoal Cove East.”

Evelyn never met her grandparents. “All four grandparents were deceased before I was born,” she says. “I was talking to my sister and we don’t have one aunt or uncle alive to talk to about our past.”

Martha, Evelyn’s grandmother, bequeathed her wedding ring to her daughter, Hazel, who wore it until just before her death in 1989. When Hazel, Evelyn’s mother, gave Martha’s wedding ring to her, Evelyn was happy to have something from a grandmother she had never known. Hazel passed her own wedding ring to Evelyn’s younger sister Sharon.



### A tradition continues...

Evelyn Caines met Sam Elliott of St. Anthony in 1976 while attending college. Sam was the son of Fred Elliott of Lock’s Cove (another resettled community) and Jessie Sulley of St. Anthony. Evelyn and Sam were married in July 1979.

Now Evelyn wears four rings: her engagement ring, her wedding ring, an anniversary ring, and her Grandmother Martha’s wedding ring.

Sam and Evelyn have two children, Brad and Shauna, and Evelyn plans to pass all four rings on to Shauna.

## Laura Biles



Figure 1 Laura (Stone) Biles always wore her mother's wedding ring along with her own.

Laura Stone of Henley Harbour, Labrador, married Morris Biles of St. Anthony in September 1955. Laura wears the traditional engagement and wedding rings, but she also wears another wedding ring—a ring that belonged to her mother Eva; long-since dead.

Laura's mother and father were married November 9, 1931. Her parents, Eva and Jonathan Stone, had five children between the years 1932 and 1936.

Unfortunately, their young family was soon ravaged by the disease of tuberculosis, which took the lives of Laura's only brother, her three sisters, and her mother. Laura was just 18 months old when her mother died. Only Laura and her

father survived, but even then they were laid up with tuberculosis for two years. When they recovered, the International Grenfell Association found work for Laura and her father in St. Anthony.

Laura was 16 years old in October 1952 when she and her father sailed to St. Anthony. Just prior to leaving Henley Harbour, Jonathan Stone gave his wife's wedding band, which he had kept for 14 years, to his only surviving daughter, Laura.

Sixty-one years have come and gone and Laura Biles still wears her mother's wedding ring alongside her own.

### Passing an heirloom ring to the next generation

The wedding ring which Jonathan Stone gave to his wife Eva on the wedding day in 1931—which was given to Laura in 1952—will be passed to her eldest daughter, Donna (Biles) Hancock.

## Jane Pittman

My grandmother was Jane (Gibbons) Pittman and she came from Current Island. Grandmother Jane's grandfather, John, was the first Gibbons to come to Current Island and also the first Gibbons to come to this area. Jane's mother, my great grandmother, was born in 1872 and died in 1947. Grandmother Jane was born in 1899 and died in 1973. When great grandmother died, Jane had her wedding ring melted down and made into a little rectangle, which was welded onto her own wedding ring, with 'Mother' engraved on the rectangle. Grandmother Jane always wore that ring.

My mother grew up in Blue Cove; she married Wallace Young from Plum Point. My mother never wore Grandmother Jane's ring because Grandmother wore the ring until she died. Mom was the only daughter in her family and I was my mother's oldest daughter, so I was 25 years old when my grandmother died and left the ring to me.

I wore the ring for a while, but then I hooked the plaque in the storm door, so I took the little plaque off and wore just the plain gold band. But I was worried about losing either one of the pieces, so I gave up wearing the ring and put it away in my jewellery box. I plan to get the ring fixed: put the plaque back on it and have the name 'Mother' re-engraved on it, then it will look the same as when it was given to me.

I don't have a daughter to pass the ring on to; I have two sons. But I have two granddaughters, so I'm going to pass it to one of them.

## **Christy Boyd**

My name is Christy Boyd and I wear my grandmother's engagement ring proudly with my own set of wedding bands. The reason her ring is so special to me is because she gave it to me 16 years ago because she could no longer wear it.

She suffered from rheumatoid arthritis and her severely deformed hands could no longer hold her treasured ring. My grandfather worked hard and saved long to buy the beautiful ring made with white and yellow gold and a solitary diamond in the center.

She was very proud of her ring and being her only granddaughter she wanted me to have it and wear it with the hope that one day I could add my own wedding band and be as happy as she was with my grandfather.

She passed away 14 years ago and I have proudly worn her ring since the day I said, "I do."

I have twin girls so the ring will be passed on to the first one to get married along with the history of the ring. And the good wishes for her marriage that I received when it was passed to me.