

## Collected Boxes: Anything but Empty

Since I was a child, I've been fascinated by boxes of all kinds. I like the idea that boxes contain things, and that they hide surprises inside. But more than anything, I love the memories attached to them.

As I've pulled together this collection, I've handled each of these 100+ boxes, many of which sat on a shelf for years. As I open each one, I remember people who are gone now; precious times that have passed; the child, adolescent and woman I have been; and garage sale finds that delighted me.

I hope you find some joy and surprise in exploring these little treasures.

Susan Mardele

If the box contains something, it will be listed. If there is nothing in the box, no contents are listed.



## In Boxes

Open the lid and look inside,  
there's naught for you to see.

Yet truth be told, there's a lot inside...  
If who you ask is me.

I hold in my hand a little box,  
given with love in mind.

There's a world of mem'ry stashed inside  
of the warm and loving kind.

Wood and metal, glass and clay,  
each one different and fine,

I think of the time, the person, the gift,  
feel a warmth that's only mine.

Yet some weren't gifts from someone else,  
I gave them to myself.

A little gem I saw somewhere  
and added to my shelf.

I've cleaned and polished every one  
to show them at their best,

Gave the meaning of some of them  
and let you wonder about the rest.

Who would gather such a batch  
of boxes over the years?

It's kind of silly to have so many  
my inner critic jeers.

Yet here we are, I'm showing you  
some bits of my insides.

And you are here, looking and seeing  
each piece as it confides,

The loves I've had and lost again,  
the child who's grown so tall,

Precious friends who've gone away  
and friends I still can call.

So, lift the lid off your heart and mind,  
and let the journey start,

For a story told in boxes is...  
an adventure of the heart.

Susan Mardele, July 2020



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## Ceramic and Porcelain

1. **Round, white ceramic three-legged box with separate lid, embossed with dots, applied rose and leaves on top as a handle and gold detailing, 3" in diameter. Bottom broken and repaired.**

I don't remember where I got this, but I've had it since I was about 8 years old.

Contains a stone painted with hearts I found walking in McKinney. It originally had a matching vase. When I was 10 or 11, I painted my first non-paint-by-number painting of the two pieces. I thought it was pretty good, except I painted the shadow the "wrong" color. I was so ashamed of my mistake that I wrapped the painting in a paper bag and put it at the bottom of the trash can. I didn't pick up a paintbrush again until 20 years later.



2. **Round, white ceramic box with purple and white flowers and green leaves painted on top and sides, 4" in diameter. Music box inside plays the theme from Cats.**

Garage sale find, 2017.



3. **White porcelain heart-shaped box with applied rose, green leaves and white bells on top, separate lid, 3" across.**

Christmas gift from Steve Miles, 2010.



4. **Square blue ceramic box with separate lid. Blue bird and leaf design on top and sides, 3.5" square.**

Gift from my mother.

Contains shells from the beach in San Diego in 2018 and 2019.

Purchased in Tijuana in the 1960s. I grew up in San Diego. We

would go to Tijuana regularly to buy produce for our six-person family. I believe my mom bought this box on one of those trips.



5. **Dark blue round ceramic jar with separate lid and bird on the top. Made by Sona Knox, McKinney ceramicist.**

Purchased in 2018 in Sona's studio on Kentucky Street during McKinney Artist Studio Tour. The top dropped and broke and I glued it back together.



6. **Light mauve round ceramic box with separate lid, 2.5" in diameter.**

Gift from a fellow art student in the first art class I took as an adult. She was from Sweden and traveled there during the class. She brought this back for me.

Contains information about where it was purchased in Swedish and the receipt.



7. **White Ceramic basket-weave box with applied roses on the top, 2.5" square.**

Garage sale find.



- 8. Red and white ceramic popcorn cart box with hinged lid, 3"x3"x1.5".**

Christmas gift from MJ, 2006.



- 9. Cream-colored ceramic dish with gold butterflies on the top and sides, 3.5" in diameter.**

Garage sale find.

Contains a Jizō rock painted by McKinney artist Sabrina. Jizōs are helper figures from the Buddhist tradition.



- 10. Green ceramic box with pink roses painted on it, a hinged lid, four golden legs and lined with golden velvet, 5"x4".**

Gift from my friend Kim in the 1980s. Contains fortunes from fortune cookies and fortunes for my son and I from "Esmeralda," which I believe was an automaton fortune teller.



- 11. Round white ceramic box painted with pink roses, yellow flowers and green leaves. Top knob is gilt.**

Christmas gift in 2002 from MJ and her partner, Chris. They called it a "worry box" to put all my worries in.



- 12. Dark blue ceramic binocular-shaped box with hinged lid and gold detailing, 2"x2"x1".**

Gift from MJ.

Contains a tiny white ceramic bird.



- 13. Round blue ceramic Chinese box painted with flowers and small gold circles, 2.5" in diameter.**

Purchased in San Francisco's Chinatown in 1999 when I was there with my then-7-year-old son.



- 14. Cream-colored, handmade hexagonal ceramic box with pink detail and multicolored flowers painted on top, 1.5" across.**

Mother's Day gift from my son in 1999 when he was 7 years old.

We went to the thrift store so he could buy Christmas gifts. His budget was \$.79. He found and bought this without my help. I was delighted, and still am. He's always been a thoughtful gift-giver.



- 15. Red ceramic fire hydrant box with hinged lid, 2.5"x1".**

Gift from MJ.

Contains a tiny ceramic dalmatian.



- 16. White porcelain butterfly box with separate lid and embossed design, 3.5" wide.**  
Garage sale find.



- 17. Royal blue domed, round ceramic box with separate lid and silver byzantine-looking decoration on the top and bottom, 3.5" in diameter.**  
I don't remember where I got this.  
Contains heart-shaped rocks and a polished rose quartz heart.



- 18. Light mauve, round raku box with separate lid and applied angels on the top and side, 4.5" in diameter.**  
Purchased at a friend's garage sale in 2008.



- 19. Baby blue ceramic heart with separate lid, 3" wide.**

Gift from Eileen, friend and mentor of 21 years who passed away on June 13, 2020.

Contains a round ceramic piece that says "forgiveness," and a marble that looks like the earth from space. She

said it means, "Forgiveness in my heart for myself." The marble meant that the world was mine. The box doesn't quite shut because of the marble.





**20. Round box with separate lid painted with a design on sides and top and a monkey on the top, 2" in diameter.**

Gift from Joanne purchased on her travels to Peru a couple of years before she passed away.

Contains a shell from Peru and a round piece of paper that says "Peru."



## Enamel

Items 1-7 were gifts from Steve Miles. Steve and I met at a Contra dance in Kingston, Oklahoma in 2006. We started a long-distance relationship and he moved here in 2010. Steve was 6'6", a middle school math teacher and a bicyclist. He was also kind, a wonderful dancer, a good friend to my son and a generous and inventive gift-giver. In 2012, Steve and I were riding bikes in the McKinney historic district when he was struck by a drunk driver and killed.

1. **Round Bilston and Battersea enameled box with detached lid, just under an inch in diameter. Light yellow bottom, white top with flowers on and inscribed with Je t'aime (I love you). Made in England.**

Birthday gift from Steve Miles in 2011.



2. **Round Bilston and Battersea enameled box with hinged lid, about 1.5" in diameter. Royal blue bottom, white top with light blue edge and a pink rose and green leaves. Made in England.**

Gift from boyfriend Steve Miles, Christmas, 2010.



Contains three pennies. My friend Bonnie passed away a few years ago, and she loved to give out pennies. She felt like they were a blessing from God. These pennies were from her near the time of her death.

3. **Oval Halcyon Days Enamels box with hinged lid, 2"x1.5". Pink bottom with decoration, white top with blue and pink decoration. Inscribed with "Je t'aime – aujourd' hui plus qu' hier mais moins que demain." "I love you – today more than yesterday but less than tomorrow." Made in Bilston, England.**

Christmas gift from Steve Miles, 2011.

Contains a tiny vial of Steve's ashes.



4. **Rectangular Halcyon Days Enamels box with hinged lid, 2"x1.5". White with red roses, yellow flowers and green leaves. Inscribed, "With Love on Your Special Day." Made in England.**

Birthday gift from Steve Miles, 2009. He was living in Reno, and my son and I came to San Francisco. He met us there to celebrate. He had a huge box full of presents for me, and each gift was part of the "12 Days of Susan."



5. **Oval Halcyon Days Enamels box with hinged lid, 2"x 1.5". Medium blue bottom, top with flowers, wine glasses, fruit, sheet music, books and a straw hat. Inscribed "The best is yet to come." Made in England.**

Graduation gift from Steve Miles. I returned to college in 2006 and graduated from Texas Woman's University in Denton in December 2008.



6. **Oval Crummels & Co. enamel box with hinged lid, 2"x 1.5". Medium green bottom, white top with flowers and leaves. Inscribed "Let this convey my Love to You." Made in England.**

Birthday gift from Steve Miles, 2009. Contains an apology note and a bit of green ribbon. "Dearest Susan, I will forever regret saying anything that would make you feel bad..."



7. **Oval Crummels & Co. enamel box with hinged lid, 2"x 1.5". Ochre bottom, white lid with a vase of flowers and decoration. Inscribed "Congratulations."**

Gift from Steve Miles on my son's high school graduation, May 2010. Contains a graduation card that has his name printed on it, an oval cutout of my son's face and the invitation to his graduation party.



8. **Rectangular brass box with enameled corners and side decoration, top inlaid with a vine and semi-precious stones. 7" x 3".**

Gift from a dear friend now in her 80s. She purchased the box in India in the 1960s.



9. **Round brass box with separate enameled top decorated with a rose. Side inscription is "Sandal." 1" in diameter.**

Origin forgotten.

Contains a sandalwood-scented candle.



## Fabric

1. **Red velvet heart-shaped box with hinged lid and top with beaded heart design, 4" across.**

Garage sale find.

Contains crumpled tissue paper.



2. **Oval Midnight blue sparkly fabric box with separate lid, 2-3/4" x 2".**

Gift from my then-husband,  
Christmas 2000.

Contains a bug in a cowboy hat he  
made of Sculpey clay.



3. **Domed rectangular white fabric worry box with tassel, 3" x 4".**

Birthday gift from best friend MJ  
and her partner Chris for my  
birthday in 2000.

Contains three glass angels on  
clouds and the following:

### **Your Worry Box**

*This box is for your worries,  
The aches within your heart.  
A place to tuck away your fears,  
Where love and hope can start.  
So keep this box beside you,  
And know how much they care.  
For when you need peace and joy,  
The angels will be there.*



## Glass

1. **Round cut-glass box (dish) with separate lid and hearts, 4-3/4" in diameter.**

Garage sale find.



2. **Rectangular cut glass box with separate lid, about 1-1/2" x 2-1/2".**

Garage sale find.



3. **Heavy round glass box with hinged lid about 2" in diameter. Off-white shaded with purple, top decorated with light blue, white and purple flowers.**

Birthday gift from my mother in 2016.



4. **Heavy round glass box with hinged lid about 2" in diameter. Off-white with purple flowers and green leaves on top.**

Birthday gift from my mother in 2016.



5. **Frosted glass heart-shaped box with separate lid decorated with a pink silk flower and small pink bow, 3" across. Top says "My sister, My friend."**

Birthday gift from my sister Celia in 2000.

Contains potpourri and three tiny ceramic bluebirds.



6. **Heart-shaped glass dish with separate lid embossed with a rose. Scalloped edge where the bottom and top halves join. [Enlarge](#)**

Garage sale find. I love the rose theme. My dad grew beautiful roses, and my middle name is Rose.

Contains tiny people and donkeys,

two stones, an acorn cap and lots of cut-up pieces of paper. A friend gave the contents of the box to me in a glass tube around 2002 or 2003. She said the tiny people represented fairies. That night, I accidentally dropped and broke the tube on the walk between the two sides of my front garden. I've always secretly believed that the fairies really wanted to live in that garden, and that they made it beautiful. I brought the fairies with me from that remodeled barn in Princeton we lived in for 16 years to my home in McKinney. They live in my garden today, and it is always beautiful.



## Leaves or Grass

1. **Round box with separate lid and a fish on the top, 2" in diameter.**

Christmas gift from Joanne in 2006.

Contains a shell from Tahiti and a circle of paper that says "Tahiti."

Joanne loved to travel and brought back several boxes for me. She passed away from breast cancer a few years later.



2. **Hexagonal box with separate lid and a flower on top, about 3.5" across.**

Purchased at a garage sale in 2002.





## Metal

1. **Chicken box in silver plate with hinged lid, 5"x4.5".**  
I don't recall where I got this. I just thought it was fun.



2. **Silver pumpkin box with separate lid, 2" in diameter.**  
Christmas gift in 2014 from a close friend, now in her 80s, who bought it in Cambodia in 1965.



3. **Silver plate heart with gold-tone bow and separate lid, 5" across.**  
Gift from sister Celia in 2000.



4. **Old oval Sharps Super-Kreem Toffee tin with separate lid and picture of a village in winter on the top. Edward Sharp & Sons, LTD., Maidstone England.**  
Garage sale find, 2020.



**5. God box necklace and earring set.**

Gift from best friend MJ, probably 2017.

I've known MJ since 1989. She was at my son's birth and has come for every one of his birthdays except one when she and her partner were adopting a baby.



**6. Silver-tone box with curved, hinged, detailed lid and latch, 4"x3".**

Gift from a friend now in her 80s. The box was given to her on her first communion in 1947-48 in Revel, Haute, Garonne, France.



**7. Silver plate God box necklace with bow, no chain, .75"x.5".**

Gift from MJ, I don't recall the date.



**8. Silver plate Santa Claus box with gift sack and hinged lid, 2" high.**

Gift from MJ. I don't recall the date.



9. **Brass and mother-of-pearl round box with separate lid and top handle, 1.5" in diameter.**

Christmas gift from MJ and her partner, Chris, in 2003.  
Contains a pearlescent blue glass heart that says "Perfection."



10. **Square metal box with hinged lid and butterfly, lady bug and leaf detailing on top, 1.5"x1.5". Created by hand in Pompano Beach, Florida and purchased in Dallas at Mullanium Designs.**

Christmas gift from a girlfriend in 2010.

Contains paper in the bottom with cursive writing on it and a little metal circle with a heart embossed on it. Also contains a description of where it came from and who made it.



11. **Square silver box with decoration on the top and sides, multi-colored stone in the top and separate lid, 1.5"x1.5". Lined in purple velvet.**

Birthday gift from friend Sue in 2016.



12. **Heart-shaped, silver-plate heart with separate lid, 2.5" wide. Lined in turquoise velvet.**

Christmas gift from MJ and Chris in 2003.



13. **Round silver plate box with separate lid, 3" in diameter.**  
Garage sale find 2014.



14. **Brass vintage gold dust box from Mali, Africa in a chicken coop design, 1"x2".** Purchased at a gift shop in Arkansas.  
Gift from a girlfriend in 2018.



15. **Silver plate round box with separate lid and rose detail on top, 3" in diameter lined in purple velvet.**  
Garage sale find, 2014.



16. **Silver plate God box necklace without chain .6"x.4"x.4".**  
Gift from MJ.



**17. Round silver box with detail on the sides, separate lid and a silver dolphin set in amber domed resin on the top, 1.5" in diameter.**

Birthday gift from my son in 2009.



**18. Miniature breadbox with flower detail made in England.**

Garage sale find, 2020.

Contains potpourri from the previous owner.



## Miscellaneous

1. **Purple and white polished cowrie shell box with brass trim, hinge and latch, 2.5"x2".**

Christmas gift from MJ in 2008.



2. **Bone box with brass trim and latch and velvet-lined inside, 2"x1.5".**

Gift from my son in 2000. He picked it out at the State Fair of Texas.



3. **Magenta box with separate lid made from Sculpey clay with "S" and a white flower on top. [Enlarge](#)**  
2002 Christmas gift made by my son when he was 10.

Contains a note from him that says, "Mary Crismas mom. How Doo you like your Box?" His spelling is much better now.



## Paper and Cardboard

1. **Maroon box - cardboard covered with fabric with a snap closure in front, 3"x 4"x5".**

Gift from my father.

Contains six volumes of Shakespeare plays printed in Great Britain by the John C. Winston Co. sometime between 1905-1910,



each wrapped in its original waxed paper. This set belonged to my paternal grandfather, a redheaded one-legged man who managed a traveling carnival and owned some of the attractions. He carried this miniature Shakespeare set on the road with him. The carnival was in Texas and "Red" was in the hospital with pneumonia. His boss told him to get the carnival out of the mud or he was fired. He did, the pneumonia worsened, and he died. He was buried in San Angelo next to my grandmother who had died six years before. My father was 14. The first volume contains a newspaper clipping of a poem by Richard Henry Wilde, "My life is like the summer rose..." His signature is scrawled inside the bottom flap – F.E. Lawley.

2. **Original box of tiny playing cards from the 1960s or 1970s**

Origin forgotten

I've had these since I was a kid, and they're well worn. I remember playing with them, but not the details.



3. **Red and Gold hexagonal box with curly ribbon – 2.25"x 1.5".**

Origin forgotten



4. **Box made out of book pages - 2"x2"x1".**

Birthday gift from my friend Mary Jo in 2018.

Contains a pair of book earrings with actual paper pages. This friend and I met one morning walking in the historic district. We were both out

early every morning, so we became walking buddies until she moved to Fredericksburg in 2019. She and some friends started a book club in 2014, and she invited me to join. I did, and am still a member today.

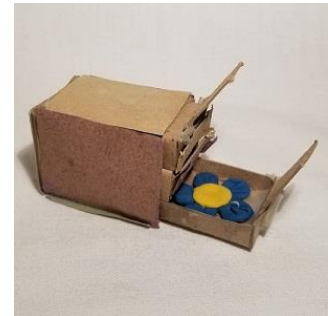


5. **Cardboard box with three drawers and pulls - 2"x1"x1.5".**

Gift from my son, age 7 or 8.

Bottom drawer contains a blue and goldenrod Sculpey flower. My son knew I loved boxes and made a few for me. He has always thought well in 3D, so building something like this

was natural for him. He also loved working with Sculpey clay when he was little.

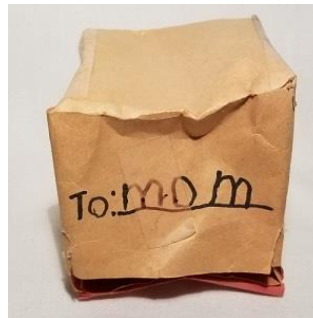


6. **Construction paper cube box, originally pink, 3"x3"x3" that says "To: Mom" in black marker on the front. [Enlarge](#)**

Gift from my son, age 7 or 8.

Contains two giraffes, a panther, a bird and a fish made out of pipe cleaners. Giraffes are my favorite animal, so I imagine that's why there are two.

His art teacher in high school said, "Kenny can make art out of anything." It started when he was small, and he is a graphic designer today.



7. **Hexagonal box constructed of cardboard, 4"x4"x1.5". Construction-paper heart that was originally red with the letter "M" for mom taped on the top. [Enlarge](#)**

Gift from my son, age 7.

Contains a piece of green ribbon; a red, green and yellow macaroni necklace; a 2"x1"x1" box constructed of cardboard that says "From: Kenny to Mom" on top and

contains a mood necklace on a chain and a teeny, tiny greeting card; also contains a 2"x4" card





with a peekaboo front that says “me” and when opened shows a picture of my son. It has hearts inside and also has a pocket that contains a small handmade envelope.

8. **China Toy Tea Set made in Japan.**

[Enlarge](#)

Purchased in the 1960s at Newberry’s 5&10 for 52 cents.

Gift from my parents.

Contains a complete set of six cups and saucers and five plates (I broke one when I was a child), teapot with top,

sugar bowl with top and cream pitcher. Prized childhood possession in the original box with the original packing materials.



9. **Pretty light green Laura Ashley box decorated with birds and flowers, 3"x4"x2.5".**

I ordered a Laura Ashley watch from Macy’s, and it came in this sweet box.



## Plastic

1. **Black Barbie Doll case from the 1960s with Barbie pictured on the front, 12"x10".** [Enlarge](#)

Gift from my parents.

Contains Barbie, Midge and Ken and a variety of clothing, including an astronaut outfit and helmet for Barbie. When I left home at 18, I



took only a few mementos from childhood. I went back to college in 2006, and graduated in 2008 from TWU in Denton. My family came to celebrate, and my sister brought my Barbies for me. The funny thing was that the clothing from the 1960s included a peasant-type dress and a graduation robe. My sister dressed Barbie in these clothes for my graduation. The celebration included a contra dance, and we wear "swirly skirts" for this type of dancing. Barbie was properly dressed for the occasion.

2. **Rectangular black padded plastic box with hinged lid, 14.5"x6".**

[Enlarge](#)

Discarded award box from my last job.

Contains many gifts from my son when he was small, including cards he made or bought, jewelry, origami he created, a handprint in plaster, a red clay bowl and many other things I treasure as memories of his childhood. I stored these keepsakes in a shoebox for years, but transferred them to this box in 2019.



## Resin

1. **Triangular fan box with separate lid and applied roses, 4" wide.**  
Christmas gift from my son in 2012.



2. **Rectangular navy-blue box with separate lid and silver top pane embossed with a lizard, 1.5"x2".**

Gift from long-time friend Shirley in 2002 (we met in 1980).

Purchased in Arkansas.

My then-husband and I, along with Shirley and her husband, remodeled a barn on their property in Princeton, Texas. My son and I lived there for 16 years. It was a European-style house barn with the animal stalls below and the living quarters above. It was a beautiful and magical place.



3. **Turquoise box with separate lid, lace around the bottom, ribbon and bow embossed with a white rose 2.75"x2".**

Gift from Shirley in 2001.

Contains a card from the shop it came from – Misty Mountain Home Décor Shop. The location is not shown.



4. **Beige box with separate lid and turquoise and beige fish, 2.5"x4".**  
Garage sale find, 2014.



## Stone

1. **Square stone box with separate lid and carved pattern. About 2.5x2.5".**

Gift from Yvonne and Tom when I lived in San Diego.

This couple loved to travel, and when they went to Morocco in the 1970s, they brought this box back for me.



2. **Striated green, round stone box with separate lid and knob handle, about 4" in diameter. [Enlarge](#)**

Gift from my then-husband in 2000, purchased at the State Fair of Texas. We separated in 2001 and divorced in 2003.

Contains a necklace made of bone and what looks like garnets. The necklace was also a gift from him.



3. **Gray-blue round box with separate carved lid, 3.5" in diameter.**

Gift from Renee, a long-time, dear girlfriend.

Contains tissue paper.



4. **Pinkish-beige etched stone pedestal box with separate carved lid, 2" diameter.**

Birthday gift from my son in 2001. Purchased from Alfalfa's in Denver.



## Wood

1. **Dome-topped wooden box, hinged top painted with white flowers and green foliage. Metal human profile pull to open top. Bottom has crinkled paint, about 2"x2".**

Gift from Joanne purchased on her travels to Ecuador a couple of years before she passed away.

Contains a small stone from Ecuador and a rectangular piece of paper that says, "Ecuador."



2. **Rectangular raw early-American-looking wooden box with metal catch, hinged lid and hearts carved in the front, 3.5"x1.5".**

Purchased at a hobby store.



3. **Heart-shaped purple wooden box with separate lid and silver heart on top embossed with a bird design, 2" across.**

Gift from Shirley in 2002.



4. **Round wooden box with separate lid. Label inside says "Colophane Superirure, Maison Bernard, fondé en 1868," 2" in diameter. [Enlarge](#)**

Birthday gift from my sister, Celia, in 2002.

The box originally contained a cake of rosin for a violin bow. The box

was made in Belgium, and the rosin was made by Maison Bernard in France. Celia is a violinist, fiddle player and musician who plays all different genres of music. She lives off the grid outside San Diego, California, on an organic farm on top of a mountain.



5. **Round greenish wooden box with separate lid, silver metal flower-shaped plate on top and three tiny bells, 3.5" in diameter.**  
Gift from a friend on my birthday in 2006.



6. **Oval wooden box with leather handle and separate lid, 6"x4".**  
**Finish bubbled with age or heat in some areas. Bottom could be leather.**  
Gift from my mother in 2006.



7. **Round wooden box with black native characters carved into the top and sides and painted black, separate lid, 3" in diameter.**  
Joanne, a friend who loved to travel, brought this back for me from Easter Island in 2006. She passed away a couple of years later.



Contains a piece of porous volcanic rock from Easter Island and a round piece of paper that says "Easter Island."

8. **Hexagonal wooden box with colorful painted design on top and hinged lid, 4"x4".**  
Gift from my sister, Celia, in 2000.



9. **Rectangular wood box inlaid with wood, mother-of-pearl and bone, hinged lid, 5.5"x4". Purchased in Libya between 1965 and 1973.**  
 Gift from a friend now in her 80s.  
 My friend's geologist husband owned this box. He traveled all over the world for Mobil Oil. He passed away in 2019.



Contains arrowheads and other stone tools he found on his geological journeys.

10. **Cylindrical wooden box with separate domed lid and knob handle, 4"x2".**  
 Gift from a friend, John, on my birthday in 2007.



11. **Rectangular wooden box with hinged lid, metal detailing on top and sides and metal catch, 5"x2.5".**  
 Gift from a friend who is now in her 80s.  
 Her husband went to Mauritania, Africa, in the 1970s and brought this back as a gift for her.



12. **Oval wooden box with yin/yang hinged lid in two pieces that swings open in opposite directions. "Colombia" is carved in black cursive into the front, 3"x2.5".**  
 Gift from long-time friend Shirley in 2014.



Shirley and her husband, Horacio, traveled to Colombia to visit Horacio's family. Horacio was born and grew up in Colombia.

13. **Hexagonal wooden box with separate top inlaid with a geometric and flower pattern, 4"x4".**

Birthday gift from my sister, Celia, in 2005.

Contains potpourri made of flowers she picked.



14. **Rectangular wooden box with hinged lid and brass sun and stars embedded in the top, 2"x4". [Enlarge](#)**

I took my son and his best friend, Bridger, to Turner Falls, Oklahoma, for a camping trip in August, 2002 and bought this at a gift shop close by.

Contains a small piece of Oklahoma Rose Rock and a piece of paper explaining that it is a natural crystal of barite and sand formed in significant amounts only in Oklahoma.



15. **Rectangular wooden box with hinged lid and a scene of a house, fence, tree and sky on top. The design is made out of leaves, wood or straw. Colombia is spelled out in the same material on the front, 1.5"x2".**

Gift from Horacio, friend and landlord at the barn in Princeton. He visited his family in Colombia in 2000 and brought this back for me.



16. **Rectangular antique Chinese wooden box with hinged lid, metal latch, three Chinese people painted on the top and gold trim around the lid, 4"x2".**

Birthday gift from my son in 2009.

Purchased in San Francisco's Chinatown when we visited.





17. **Rectangular wooden box with hinged lid, metal clasp and flowers painted on the top and front, 5"x4".**

Gift from my son in 2000. I've used it as a "God box."

Contains slips of paper with notes telling God the worries and life situations I'm letting God handle. It sat on my windowsill for years, and has faded a little. (Notes not included in exhibit.)



18. **Rectangular wooden box with hinged lid, music box, bling on the top and a drawer that pulls out, 8"x5". [Enlarge](#)**

Gift from my sister, Celia, in the 1990s.

Celia decorated this box and sent it to me. The little green oval on top opens up to show a tiny angel. My nickname when I was growing up was Suzy, which is spelled out in rhinestones on top (my family still calls me that.) The music box plays Lara's Theme, my dad's favorite song.

The drawer contains a piece of petrified wood from my long-time friend Carol's property in College Station; a piece of red fabric tied with blue yarn that contains ceremonial corn from a women's weekend my mom, sister and I went to together a few years back; a tiny purple drawstring bag that contains quartz crystals from my friend Renee; and a couple of pieces of old broken glass from Princeton that turned purple in the sun.



19. **Half-circle cedar box with hinged lid, metal latch and "Tijuana, Mexico" painted on the top, 7.5"x4".**

Gift from my mother.

My mom bought this cedar box in Tijuana sometime in the 1960s.

We lived in San Diego when I was growing up, and would go across the border to purchase produce to feed our family of six. We were health nuts and ate a lot of fruit and vegetables. I remember my parents trying to find out from the various vendors at the open-air market whether the fruit and vegetables had been sprayed with pesticides.



- 20. Set of three wooden, nested, oval, Shaker reproduction boxes with separate lids and detail on the sides including copper nails, 10"x7", 8"x5.5", 6.5"x4.5".**

2015 gift from a friend who is in her 80s, purchased in Pennsylvania because she liked the craftsmanship.

My friend was reducing the number of things she had, and gave these to me. I love that they are boxes, but I particularly love that they nest.



- 21. Colorful square wooden box with hinged lid, beads on top and a metal latch, 2.5"x2.5".**

Gift from my niece, Ariel, in 2007.

Contains a small baggie of sand from Spain. Her mother, my brother's wife, is from Spain and her family visited their Spanish relatives. Ariel collected the sand on that trip.



- 22. Square wooden box with hinged lid and rounded corners. Has etching on the top that says, "Susan," "Muir Woods," and trees. The bottom says, "Susan, from the Hebrew for 'Lily.'" "You are Pleasant and Patient," 1.5"x1.5".**

Gift from Steve Miles, 2009.

Steve, Kenny, my brother Freddy and I, hiked the Muir Woods trail in San Francisco. There is a gift shop at the bottom of the trail, and Steve bought this for me there. He was always a wonderful gift-giver.



- 23. Egg-shaped wooden lacquered red box with separate lid and an elaborate design painted on the top in white, gold, orange and green. Bottom says, "Handmade in Kashmir," 3"x2".**

Garage sale find.



24. **Kidney-shaped wooden box with hinged lid, carved top and small round brass decoration.**

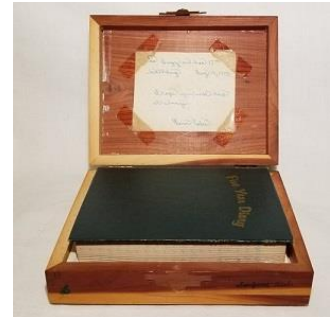
Garage sale find.



25. **Rectangular cedar diary box with hinged lid, locked lock with detached metal latch, two gold diagonal stripes on top, "Dear Diary" carved into the top and "Sandpoint Idaho" inscribed on the front edge, 6"x5".**

Gift from my sister, Celia, in 1973.

Contains a 5-year daily diary from my high school years with about two months of entries. The note inside says, "To Suzy on her 17<sup>th</sup> birthday, August 19, 1973. I hope you will keep it always, Love, Celia." This is pretty much always! (Diary not included in exhibit.)



26. **Square dark wooden box with hinged lid and glass inlaid in the top, 4.25"x4.25".**

Birthday gift from my dear friend Renee's daughter Natalie for my birthday in 2007.



27. **Rectangular light wooden box with hinged lid, gold-tone decoration, dark metal decoration on each corner of the lid and around the keyhole, 10.25"x7.5". Inside has patterned paper lining and there is a crack lengthwise across the top.**

Gift from a friend now in her 80s. This box, probably from the late 1800s in Germany, belonged to her husband's mother and to then her husband who passed away in 2019. She gave the box to me when she was downsizing in 2016.

Contains a lovely thank you card from my son upon his graduation from college telling me how



much he appreciated all my help and support. Also contains a Christmas card he hand-made for me one year with the graphic design skills he was learning in college.

- 28. Square dark wooden box with separate lid and etching on the top of flowers and “A friend is one who listens with the heart,” 2”x2”.**  
**Music box; I don’t know the tune it plays.**

Origin forgotten.



- 29. Blonde cantilevered box with black handle, legs and trim, 15.75”x8”x18”, including handle and legs.**

Purchased at Princeton flea market in the late 1990s or early 2000s. The flea market is no longer there.



I used this as my sewing basket for a long time, then needed more space, so I retired it and it became part of my collection.

Museums interested in the collection can email at [info@susanmardele.com](mailto:info@susanmardele.com).