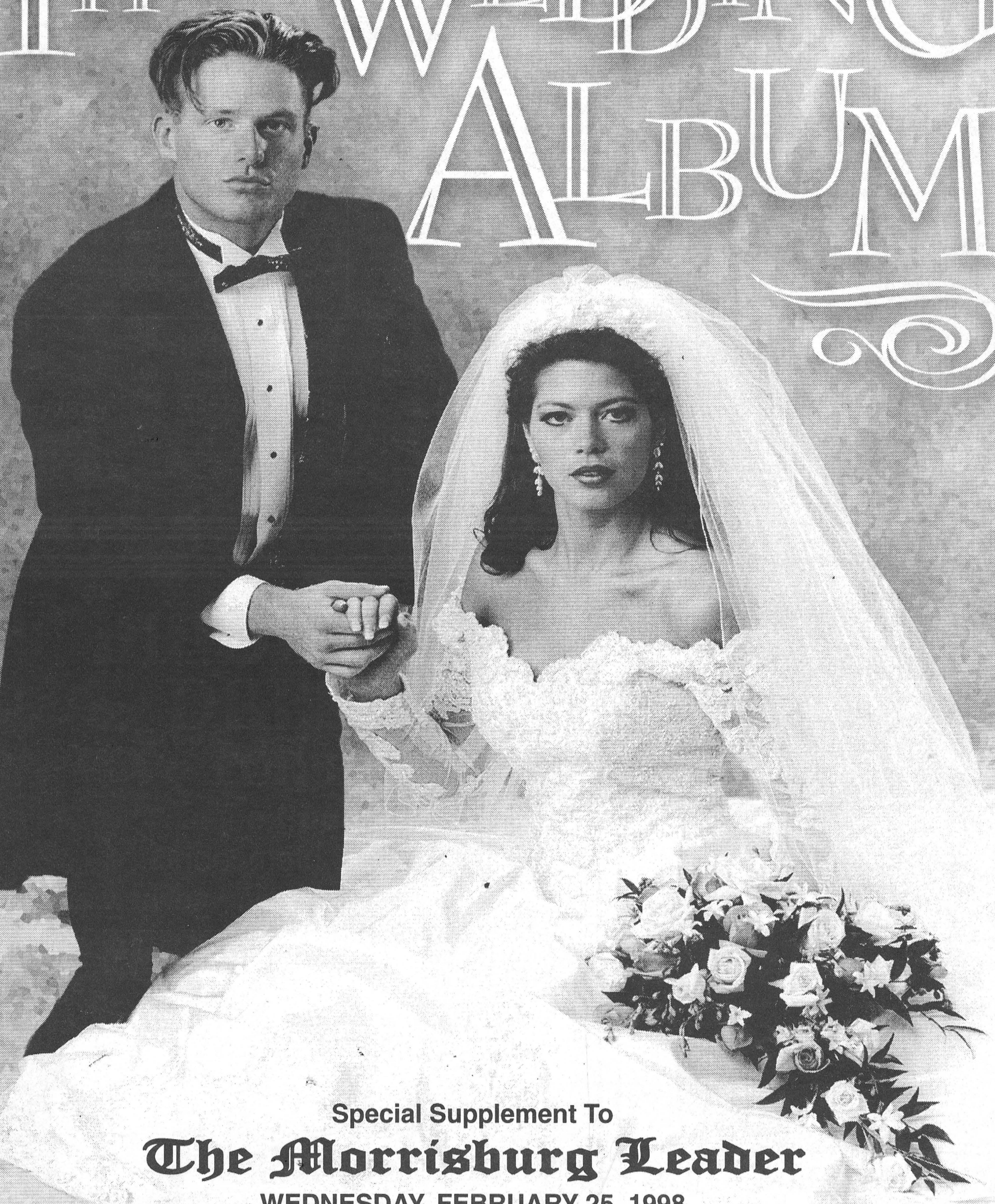
THE WEDDING ALBUM



Special Supplement To

The Morrisburg Leader

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 1998

Wedding customs from abroad

Brides and grooms can customize their weddings with personal touches. Here, Crys Stewart, editor of Weddingbells magazine offers inspirations for personalizing a wedding by adapting wedding customs from around the world.

• Update the Quaker tradition of

having every guest sign the register as witnesses by requesting that guests sign a calligraphic poster of your wedding vows.

• In Britain, it's considered good luck if a charwoman appears and begs a coin from the bridal couple on their way to their reception. Celebrate your joy with a donation to your favourite charity. Have your best man send it on your wedding day.

• Follow the Bermudian tradition of using a tiny evergreen tree as a cake topper. Plant the tree in your back yard after the wedding.

• A new take on the Scottish tradition of the groom gifting his bride with an engraved "wedding spune" is to give the mothers of the bride and groom silver serving spoons engraved with your initials and your wedding date.

• Symbolically binding the bridal couple immediately after the ceremony is an ancient rite that's honoured around the world. In Africa, some tribes will tie the bride's and groom's wrists together with plaited grasses; in the Philippines and Mexico, a white silken rope is looped around the couple. A new interpretation of this rite has the bride and groom simply joining hands, rather than the bride taking the groom's arm, when walking back down the aisle.

• At Muslim weddings, the groom gives symbolic gifts (anything from a rose to livestock) to his bride, and the bride's family gives symbolic gifts to the groom. A groom of Scottish descent recently translated this tradition for his wedding by giving his bride a sash in his family's tartan, which he helped her put on during the ceremony to symbolize his welcoming her to his family. Symbolic gift-giving works well in a variety of wedding ceremonies and venues.

• In Fiji, the groom gives his bride's father a gift symbolizing wealth and status. A Canadian groom might want to pay his respects to the bride's father, and kick off a good relationship, by asking him out for lunch or dinner.

• The German tradition of giving kerchiefs to wedding guests so that they can wrap up leftover food to take home can be updated by having your caterer send leftover reception food to a needy shelter or open kitchen.

• Carry a special personal memento on your wedding day. A charming Belgian tradition has the bride embroidering her name and wedding date on a handkerchief which she keeps with her throughout the ceremony and reception. Later, she frames it, to be kept for her daughter and future generations to add their own names and cherish on their wedding days.

• Many French wedding ceremonies include the charming tradition of having the groom walk his mother down the aisle just prior to the main procession.



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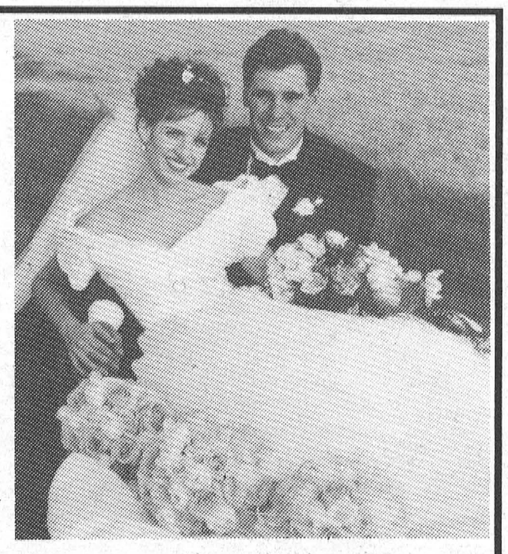
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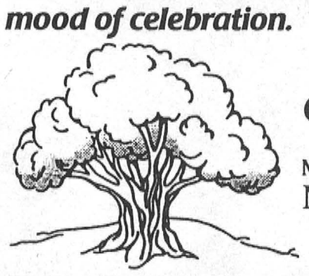
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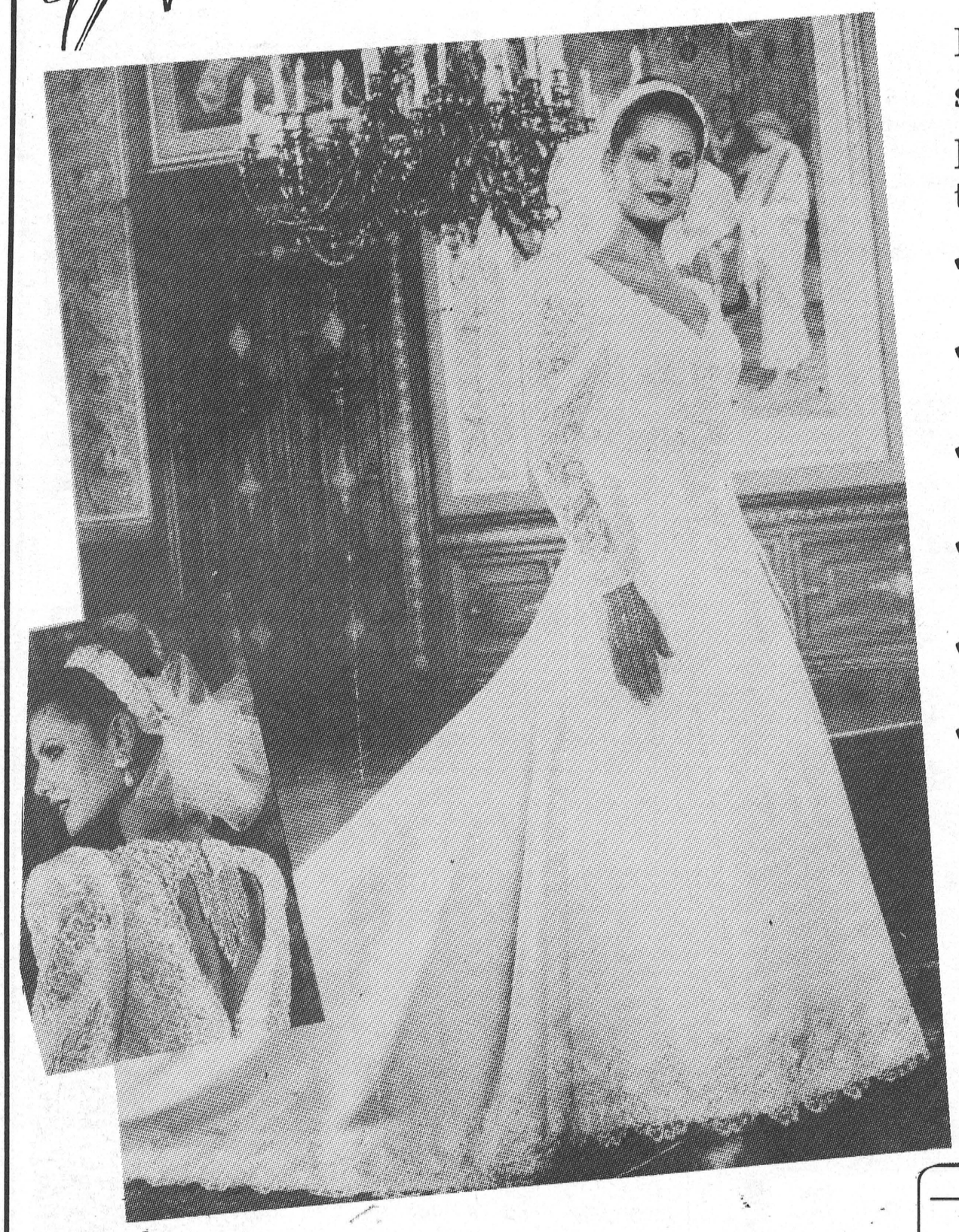
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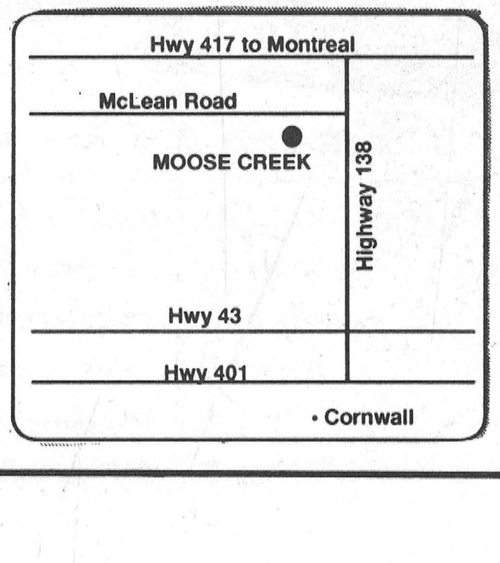
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What you should know about buying jewellery

(CJA)-Shopping for jewellery can sometimes be confusing. For this reason, your professional jeweller and the Canadian Jewellers Association offer this advice.

Listen, Look And Read Carefully!

For example, when a diamond is advertised by carat weight only and the price seems unbelievable low, it may likely be that other aspects of the gem which affect price (colour, clarity and cut) are very poor. Here it is especially important when you are comparing prices to be certain that you are comparing similar merchandise.

A diamond advertised as weighing ".25 points" can be misread as being 1/4 carat in weight. In fact, 1/4 carat is ".25 carat" while ".25 points" is equal to 1/400 of a carat. Be wary of this tactic, which may be seen in mail order advertising.

Inexpensive gold chains can be lightweight and very delicate. As a result, they may break easily and be difficult and costly to repair. When comparing prices, compare quality as well.

Be wary of the "liquidation sale." It could consist of only a few pieces left over from a company gone out of business long ago, supplemented by new merchandise at regular or so-called "discounted" prices.

Finally, once again, don't believe extravagant claims. If it sounds too goodto be true, it probably is too good to be true.

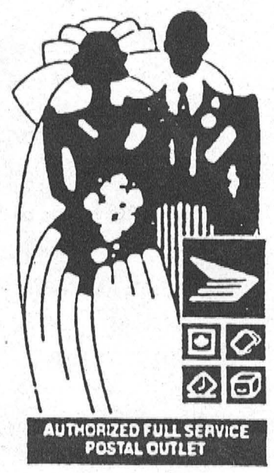
After You Buy

Be sure you get a proper receipt with a description of the jewellery (including stones) that you are purchasing.

It's always wise to keep a record of your purchases, especially when they are major ones. This includes your receipt and any guarantee, certificate of appraisal, cancelled cheque and a copy of the advertisement, if applicable.

Following your purchase, treat your jewellery with care. Do not wear your jewellery when you are doing rough work or playing sports. Nor should you attempt to repair or otherwise tamper with your jewellery. Instead, visit your jeweller periodically to have it checked and it will usually get a professional "shine-up" then, too.

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Ways to make a wedding personal and unique

Focus on the unique perspectives of your five senses to find ways to make a wedding personal and unique, suggests Crys Stewart, editor of Weddingbells magazine.

Here are tips for planning a truly sensual affair, inspired by two of the five senses.

Hearing

• Fill the day with music in unconventional ways. Give favourite music tapes to your limousine driver so the rides to the ceremony and reception are accompanied by your best-loved romantic melodies.

• Have a joyous fanfare start your procession stirringly. Look into hiring university music students or professional musicians to provide a real trumpet fanfare. Alternatively, have a Scottish piper get the celebrations off to a rousing start by having him play as you walk back down the aisle and meet guests outside or as you make your grand entrance into dinner at the reception.

• If you want to hear the peal of bells after your ceremony but aren't getting married in a church with a bell tower, don't let that stop you.

If the building has a good P.A. system, you may be able to play a recording of ringing bells, timed to start directly after the music for your recession has ended and you're about to step outside.

• One recent bride and groom walked the short distance from their ceremony site to the reception, leading a joyous parade of guests playing tambourines, homemade rattles, toy drums and kazoos.

Taste

• Ask your caterer about honouring your heritage by including a traditional dish in your menu.

• For a garden wedding, garnish hors d'oeuvres, salads, even desserts and drinks with edible flowers for a taste sensation (usually very mildly spicy, peppery or sweet) that's also colourful and delightful to smell.

• Choose a wedding cake that will be as delicious as it is beautiful to the eyes. If you can't decide on a flavour, ask your baker about having a tiered cake with a different flavour (chocolate, carrot, lemon, etc.) for every layer. For a different, sophisticated alternative to the traditional white wedding cake or as a tasty addition, do as the French do: Offer a croquembouche-a tower of cloud-light cream puffs.

• If the idea of a set dinner menu leaves you yawning, ask your caterer about the new trend of food stations, more fun than a buffet (and less apt to create guest traffic jams). Each station can feature a different course or dish. For instance, for a Mediterranean-inspired dinner, one station could offer a variety of exotic breads, butters, pickles and condiments; another, cheeses, sliced meats and olives; another, pasta with a variety of sauces to choose from; another, tempting salads; and yet another, roast lamb, sliced to order by the chef stationed there, as well as seafood kebabs, terrines, etc.

The most recent issue of Weddingbells magazine is the Fall 1997/Winter 1998 issue. Crys Stewart is the editor of Weddingbells magazine and www.weddingbells.com, the Weddingbells Web site.



The groom's traditional duties

Some of these may no longer be solely the groom's responsibility; for instance, the modern bride will probably want to have a say in the honeymoon plans and participate more actively in the toasts/speeches.

• Choose your wedding party (best man and ushers).

• Organize your family's part of the guest list.

• Organize and pay for the marriage license.

• Buy thank-you gifts for the best man and ushers.

• Organize the honeymoon.

• Make sure the best man has the checks, in envelopes, to be given to the officiator, the musicians and anyone else rendering a service to be paid for immediately after the ceremony.

• Get to the wedding ceremony on time.

• In the receiving line, stand at your bride's left and accept congratulations graciously and with brevity.

• The groom is usually the second person to propose a toast. After the master of ceremonies has toasted the bride and groom, the groom rises, thanks the MC, and then proposes a toast to his bride. He also responds to toasts to the bridal couple.

• Cut the cake with your bride. (The groom usually holds the cake knife, with his bride's hand poised on top of his.)

• Join your bride for the first dance, then dance with various relations: first your mother-in-law, then your mother. (After that, as you dance with the maid of honour, the best man should dance with the bride, and the ushers should join in with the bridesmaids.)

Information courtesy of Weddingbells Web site at www.weddingbells.com.

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Start off your wedding engagement in style

"When a couple decide to marry, it's an intimate moment they'll cherish forever. When it comes time to let family and close friends in on the exciting news, they'll want to make their announcement in a memorable way, too. That's the time for an engagement party," says Weddingbells magazine editor Crys Stewart. "Whether large or small, formal or informal, the engagement party serves a number of functions: It's the official kickoff to the whirlwind of activities leading up to the wedding day; it's a personal way to spread the good news; and whether subtly or with fanfare, it sets the tone and style for all the wedding-related activities."

Planning the party is usually left to the discretion of the bride and her parents (or to the groom's parents if the bride's parents are deceased, can't afford it or live too far away). There are no hard-and-fast rules of etiquette on the ideal number of guests to invite or location for the party, although limiting the guest list to family members and close friends and holding the event in the home of the bride's or groom's parents seem to be most popular choices.

How the couple decide to surprise their guests is up to them, in consultation with the hosting parents. They may agree to keep guests in suspense until the bridal couple have made a speech at the height of the party; publish their news symbolically through party decorations emblazoned with their names or entwined initials; or simply greet each guest at the door with a welcome and a "Guess what?..." It's a time-honoured tradition that the father of the bride acknowledge the announcement with a toast to his daughter and her fiancé. Then the groom-to-be stands and acknowledges the toast, graciously thanking first his fiancé's father and then the guests for their good wishes.











Involving his Mum in the wedding

How to make sure you get off to a good start? Involve her in the planning, no matter how far away she lives. Taking the initiative and inviting assistance before it's offered will strengthen the bond between you and your new family for years to come.

Here are some easy ways to make the groom's mother feel wanted:

• If she enjoys gardening, ask her expertise in selecting flowers and designing centerpieces. If she's well-organized and the wedding is taking place in her area, she could help make arrangements for out-of-towners' hotels and activities.

• Strike the right chord. Find out your future mother-in-law's sentimental favourites in music; incorporate those tunes into a list for your musicians or DJ to play at the reception.

• Help her feel involved. Make sure she's invited to the shower and other prewedding gatherings. Another welcoming idea: Arrange a "females only" family luncheon to discuss wedding details.

• Don't forget something borrowed, something blue. Your mother-in-law may be a perfect source for these traditional necessities, providing an adornment for you to wear on your wedding day (perhaps an accessory she wore at her ceremony, or a family heirloom).

• Say it in writing. Send your husband's mother a thank-you postcard from the honeymoon to let her know you appreciated her ideas and assistance with your wedding. You're sure to return to a warm family welcome!

Choosing groom's wedding party

You can have your best friend (male or female), your brother, your sister, your father, even your grandfather as your best man (or "honour attendant," if female) if you so desire. You can even have two honour attendants, rather than one best man. This role entails a lot of responsibility, so choose someone who is reliable, hard-working and a real swell guy (or gal). He (or she) will be a lot of help to you with some of the bigger jobs requiring a good second opinion and/or another pair of arms or set of wheels. Two-man tasks might include checking out formalwear, limousines, catering equipment and hotel accommodations for out-of-town guests; picking up liquor orders; and helping to decorate the ceremony and/or reception sites.

The traditional rule of thumb is that there should be one usher for every 50 guests. However, it is not necessary to have an equal number of ushers and bridesmaids. Not always do good friends and honoured relatives measure out equally between bride and groom. Every wedding procession can have its distinctive style. If there is one more usher than maids, for instance, perhaps one maid can precede a pair of ushers, or the ushers can both escort the maid, one on either side of her. Don't comprise your wedding party selection for the sake of symmetry.

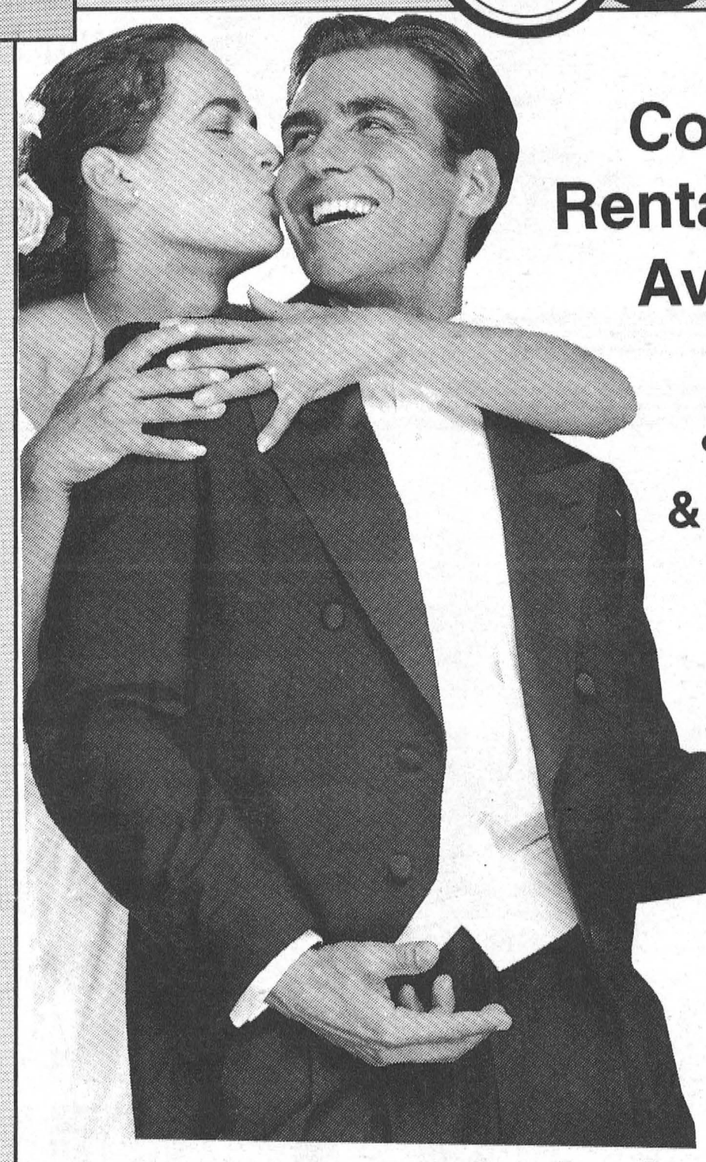
Shower Power Punch

This delicious "punch for a bunch" will serve up to fifty 125 millilitres (4 oz.) servings. Easy to put together, it is ideal for a bridal shower or can be served at the wedding as is, or as an nonalcoholic punch by omitting the vodka.

2.5L (80 oz.) cranberry juice
187.5 ml (61/4 oz.) can frozen orange juice
187.5 ml (61/4 oz.) can frozen grapefruit juice
187.5 ml (6 1/4 oz.) can frozen lemonade juice
2 - 750 ml (24 oz.) bottles soda water
2 - 750 ml (24 oz.) bottles ginger ale
1 1.2 L (40 oz.) bottle of vodka (optional)

Serve in large punch bowl. Decorate with floating slices of oranges and limes. This punch can be made ahead of time, leaving only the soda water and ginger ale to be added at the last minute.

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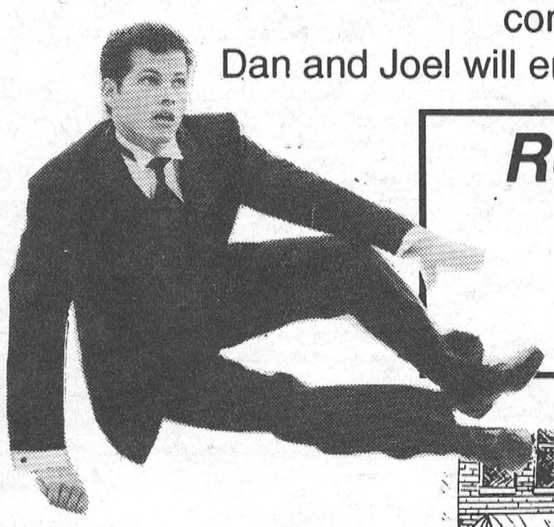
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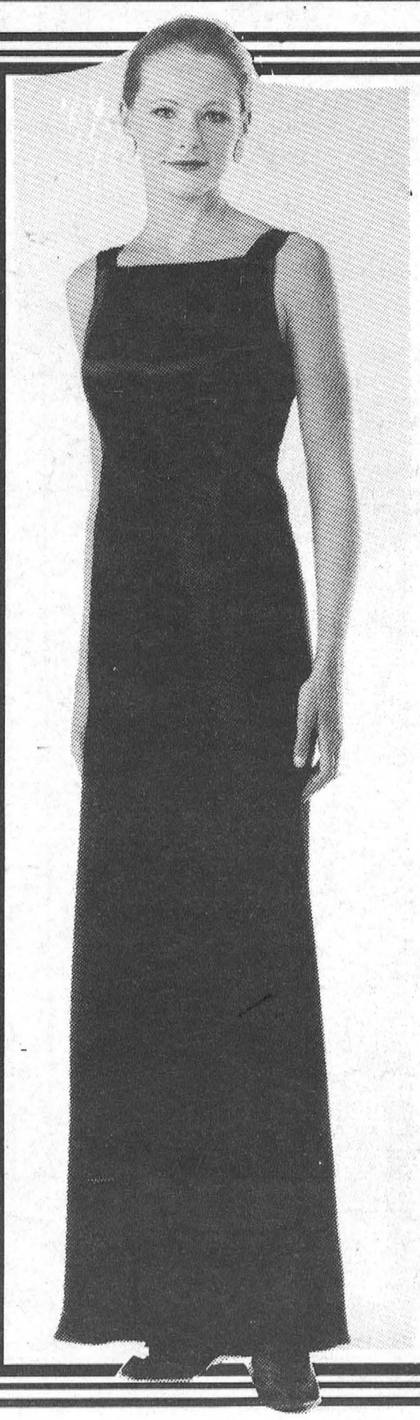


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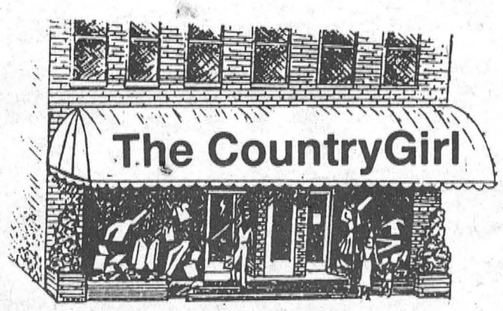
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