

Assuring ample eclat for your Victorian Wedding

In keeping with the onset of the June wedding prime-time season, and as a public service to my readers, this and my last column have been devoted to assuring that the proper people who wed in Cape May (the only sort of people who do so) achieve maximum eclat from their gala event.

Since a Victorian wedding is both a marriage and a merger, both designed to elevate the socioeconomic status of the families involved, all must be properly done. Remember also the nobles oblige of people of the better sort to model proper behavior at all times for those of the lesser sort so that they will know how to behave properly should they ascend the socioeconomic ladder to your lofty status. All of these objectives will be nullified should your wedding reek of the rancidness of commonness. Thus my reminders below.

Last week we focused on both the reasons for the wedding and the bride, as they are the most important factors in a Victorian wedding. Remember this is the



fulfillment of the bride's prime ambition and that of her family. Her mother has raised her, groomed her to use a pun, for this moment when she will simultaneously assume her proper role in life as a wife, mother and family social director while elevating her family's socioeconomic status. Thus we reviewed the rules for the date of the wedding (a Wednesday in June), time of the wedding (between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m.) and bride and groom's attire (milady must "Wear her Worth").

The list of invitees to the wedding should reflect its dual purposes. The more attendees, the more the impressiveness and the greater the opportunities to establish

increased social and business contacts (networking, you moderns call it). All respectable members of each family should attend. So, too, should all important business and social associates and some especially profitable prospective ones as well. The importance of the families and event will be in large part judged by the importance of those who attend.

The post-ceremony meal is another chance to impress. It should either be at the bride's family's mansion or one of the finest dining establishments in town. The refreshments should be plentiful and tasteful (and expensive) enough to please the most discerning guest. No entertainment or dancing is



needed. Simply being invited and being able to mingle and network with the assemblage of august attendees is honor and reward enough.

After the reception, the couple departs for their honeymoon. This is the first time they are allowed to be unchaperoned together. The former practice of having a female companion of the bride accompany them has been relaxed. To seek to learn their whereabouts during their honeymoon reeks of rancid commonness.

Equally rancidly common is the contemporary search by the groom for milady's garter, the tossing of it and the bridal bouquet, and the smearing of the wedding cake in the groom's face by the bride. The latter practice reeks also of insubordination.

The derivation of the term "honeymoon" is fascinating. In less-civilized times, a man often captured and kidnapped his bride (willingly or not) and spirited her away to a secret place where her

relatives couldn't find them. They spent a full cycle of the moon drinking mead and honey whilst consummating the relationship. Thus the term honeymoon.

When the hopefully happy and definitely more prosperous couple returns from their honeymoon, they should publicly announce that they are receiving pre-arranged calls at their new residence. Beyond family, the order of calls received should reflect the socioeconomic status of the callers in relationship to that of the couple.

Ah, now you can proceed with your Victorian wedding in the Queen of the Seaside Resorts. You can be confident that the immeasurable esteem you have earned by selecting our locale will be enhanced by the eclat of the event itself.

A retired history teacher, school administrator and university professor, R.E. Heinly writes this column weekly on the Victorian Era, highlighting its foibles and fascination. He is the author of the book "Victorian Cape May."

Mad Batter to host photo exhibit Other Side

CAPE MAY — The Mad Batter will host a solo exhibit of Cape May native Cyndie Burkhardt's photos of Havana, Cuba, from June 9 to July 6. An opening reception is scheduled for 3 to 5 p.m. Sunday, June 11.

Burkhardt is a New York City-based photographer and digital storyteller, working across video, podcasting and still photography. She's passionate about travel and exploring issues related to culture, lifestyle, tradition and place, and she's dedicated to creating thought-provoking work that affects positive social change.

Her exhibit, "Farolitos de Havana," explores Cuba's overwhelming pulse of life, song and warmth. Taken just before the turn of the century, these photographs depict an "older Cuba" prior to recent political changes both there and in the U.S. and new questions about the



Cape May native Cyndie Burkhardt will display her exhibit, 'Farolitos de Havana,' June 9-July 6 at the Mad Batter.

island's future. "The Cuban people embrace life with seeming disregard for underlying hardship and unremarkable conditions," Burkhardt said. "A palpable vitality rises to the top and their spirit leaves the biggest impression."

The root word "farol" signifies something that brings light. In this usage, "farolitos" refers to the Cuban people, suggesting they are the stars or lights of Havana. The Mad Batter is located at 19 Jackson St. in Cape May.

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capsize. Disoriented under the water, she figured that her time was up. She was surely about die.

Out of nowhere, strong hands grabbed her and pulled her up out of the water. She next remembers sitting in the back of an ambulance, wrapped in blankets and surrounded by a crowd of people. To this day, she does not know who saved her from drowning. Pleading with the crowd, she kept repeating her friend's name and begged them to call the Coast Guard because her friend was still missing at sea, but the Coast Guard was already searching.

"I continued to shake uncontrollably for about an hour after my rescue — from nerves, or a bit of hypothermia, maybe both," she added.

When Karla finally got to see her family, her brother hugged her so hard she thought she was going to

burst. It was one of the few times she has ever seen him cry.

"We were all bawling like babies and trembling; I was terrified knowing that the Coast Guard was still out looking for her," Karla said.

After what seemed like an eternity, she heard someone say that a fisherman had found a woman up on the rock wall nearby. The woman's legs were cut up and she was horribly shaken, but she was going to be fine.

Her friend had been found. The fisherman who had found her had given her his coat; a token of his kindness that she still has to this day.

Karla still vacations at the same beach a few times each year with her family, and although she didn't think she would, she continues to kayak in the bay but with a completely different approach. Looking back, Karla recognizes most of what they did that day was wrong and they are lucky

to have survived. She hopes others can learn from her mistakes.

Yes, the weather was beautiful when they headed out, but weather changes quickly. She wishes she had worn her lifejacket instead of tossing it aside. She realizes she should have taken a cell phone so she could have called for help and she wishes she were in the right type of kayak or at least had a kayak skirt to keep her boat from flooding when the waves splashed over her.

Most importantly, she now knows not to head out on the water assuming that something bad couldn't happen to her.

Sound familiar? *Mark Allen promotes and markets fishing tournaments for South Jersey Marina, edits "On the Rips" magazine and is a retired lieutenant colonel with 27 years' flying experience with the U.S. Marines and Air Force National Guard.*

Jazz Brunch at the Estate honors dads

CAPE MAY — Dads can enjoy brunch and jazz for Father's Day during Jazz Brunch at the Estate at the Carriage House Café & Tearoom on the grounds of the Emlen Physick Estate from 10:30 a.m. to noon Sunday, June 18.

Join in this popular American tradition made famous in great American jazz cities such as New York, Chicago and New Orleans. Jazz Brunch at the Estate for Father's Day features Mary Lou Newnam, of Ocean City, on

saxophone, clarinet and flute, and Sonny Troy, of Maple Shade, on guitar. These renowned jazz musicians have long, successful careers and perform regularly in the Philadelphia, New York and south New Jersey region.

Free parking is available on estate grounds. Advance purchase is suggested. Limit 50. Admission is \$30 and includes buffet brunch and music.


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