



Music made for matrimony

*"If music be the food of love, play on."
—Shakespeare, 1602*

By SALLY D. KETCHUM
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"The Wedding March" remains a perennial favorite in music to announce the lady of honor, but often brides are using other music.

Wedding music can vary from a classical trumpet voluntary to bluegrass, from a bride maid's guitar to a music school's tenor.

Similarly, the music in northern lower Michigan weddings varies according to the design and character of the wedding: casual outdoors, formality of a church or the festive atmosphere of a hotel ballroom.

With enough forethought and taste, seemingly conflicting elements can often work magic. For example, a Williamsburg bride was married in her family's cherry orchard. The ceremony and reception were tented; a fine-dining restaurant (Windows) catered the food, preparing on-site; and an Interlochen string quartet periodically provided elegant music into the late hours.

J. W. Arnold of Music Ministries of Christ Church in Capitol Hill, Washington, said that although he has "seen it all" regarding wedding music, he has noticed a few trends over the past few years: "There is a definite return to a traditional, elegant service and corresponding music."

Also, he gratefully noted that "it has been years since I've had to use the bridal march from 'The Sound of Music.'"



Traverse City singer/songwriter Kathleen Kadlec writes and performs songs to order for wedding couples.

Yet many couples feel that the wedding is strictly their affair and they personalize the event as much as possible. Their favorite music pieces or love songs can play important roles in the wedding music.

Traverse City's Kathleen Kadlec is both a singer and a songwriter. When asked to sing at weddings, Kadlec says that she tries to "write the couple a song that would better express the unique love between them than to sing the same old wedding songs."

This philosophy led her to create a business with her husband Joe, called "All Original Wedding Songs." Kathleen, who writes and sings in every musical style from country to pop to classical, creates and performs a song for the wedding couple. Joe then puts the results in CD form with the couple's photos as cover art.

The heritage of the bridal couple often plays a part in the ceremony's music.

Jack Fellows, a bagpiper and part-time journalist, has added Irish and Scottish airs to weddings from Tampa to Mackinac Island.

"Great Highland bagpipes bring a sense of grandeur and majesty to a wedding," said Fellows. "They can also sound defiant, like the primal battle instrument they are."

Played judiciously, bagpipes can enhance all weddings, from lavish ceremonies to simple gar-

den weddings. Fellows has piped everywhere: churches and cathedrals, parks and vineyards, beaches and backyards.

Fellows sees music as "grand announcements" during wedding ceremonies. And Fellows calls the music he plays at receptions "victory struts."

Couples today are choosing more classical music, along with traditional favorites. Good wedding music should be like the ceremony itself: stately, well-ordered, but with energy and brilliance.

The Purcell and Stanley Trumpet Voluntaries, Pachelbel Canon and Mendelssohn Wedding March are always good choices as wedding ceremony music.

"Fewer brides are opting for pop songs which may seem dated in a few years," said Arnold.

Sally D. Ketchum is a local freelance writer.

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