

Tales of wedding day mishaps and mischief are funny... much later

BY SALLY D. KETCHUM

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Seeking to protect her white satin wedding shoes, the bride wore her house slippers to church. When she was finally and fully dressed in full wedding pomp, she found herself in a predicament: One of her satin shoes was lost.

So, she married in slippers.

Weddings often bring mishaps, funny instances and unexpected, but memorable events, right along with the gifts and flowers, music and vows.

Every wedding has a few tales. Often the wedding anecdotes involve colorful

characters or differences among personalities, custom and family rituals.

Guests were appalled at the wedding reception of a country girl marrying a boy whose citified mom is a staid insurance executive. At the reception, the cowboy father of the bride, toothpick in mouth, tried to express the growing affection between families. Instead, he impaled the mother of the groom with a kiss — and a toothpick. The woman recovered from the puncture quickly. Recovering her dignity took much longer.

Outdoor weddings are true gambles, with or without

tents. A Wisconsin bride planned a wedding around a seasonal theme: Autumn. Or in this case, pride goeth before a wedding fall. She was delighted that the fall color was magnificent, the weather warm and sunny, and order seemingly prevailed. Then during the vows, a huge flock of Canada Geese flew over the assembled crowd, honking noisily — and imagine the worst — were determined not to be ignored. Autumn migration, the final seasonal wedding touch.

Children and recently, babies, drawn in flowered wagons, also invite incidents

if not mayhem. A tuxedoed 2-year-old ring-bearer(tux, \$73 rental) was so reluctant to walk down the aisle that guests passed him along the aisle like a hot potato until his mother, a bridesmaid, left the altar to drag him to his place.

Another youngster, full of himself — the only child at an adult party, escaped his parents at the reception, and when the groom left the wedding table for a break, the youngster saw opportunity knocking, ran to the table and firmly seated himself in the groom's place. "You are my princess," he said to the bride.

There is a familiar wedding tale told by seniors, those who remember the days when gas station attendants gassed up cars and wiped the windows. Back then, the men in one wedding party, efficient in their trickery, taped a small note on the gas tank cap of the groom's car. It read: "These folks are newlyweds. Please congratulate them." Red-faced and flummoxed, the couple frantically tried to figure out what about them "showed" that they were newlyweds — what with congratulations repeated at every stop on the honeymoon.

Sometimes reputations are a force to be reckoned with. Often, known jokesters are purposely left out of wedding parties. In one case, known pranksters accidentally brought chaos to the church. Three of the grooms, fraternity brothers, — guests but not ushers — were late for the ceremony. They rushed toward a pew. But the first, a Catholic, genuflected, and the two Protestants behind him careened into him, and the leader not only was pushed onto a plump woman's lap, but the others went down like dominos. Consternation and chaos reigned for a few moments, but then turned merry. Epilogue: The bride still doesn't believe a word of it, and years later will not let her husband's friends in the house.

Weddings often bring out joy in everyone. Members of one wedding party took it even further. Although they were not sweethearts, a bridesmaid and a best man drove back home, a full day's trip. Still full of merriment, they put a "Just Married" sign on the back of their car, added a few streamers and enjoyed the best wishes — blown kisses, thumbs up, waves, grins and honking horns all the way home.

Sally D. Ketchum is a local freelance writer.

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