

One-stop weddings

Country Heritage Park offers unique services

BY JENNIFER ENRIGHT

Weddings can be something of a headache in terms of preparation, especially if you go through the process of getting married at a church, visit a park to have photos taken, and then go to an entirely different location for the reception.

Country Heritage Park (CHP) offers something different for couples that have decided to tie the knot. The park provides nuptial services that can cover all aspects of a wedding from the service to the photos to the reception. The park's manager, Reg Cressman, and Darlene Roach, who oversee wedding services, think of the park as a "one-stop wedding shop."

As a venue, Country Heritage Park has a lot to offer wedding parties. Situated on an 80-acre site, close to the 401 and minutes from larger urban centres in the GTA, CHP offers free parking without the hassles of securing parking in a more densely populated area. As well, much of the wedding ceremony can take place under one roof.

When couples use the Gambrel Barn, an impressive 4000-square-foot facility constructed of white pine and featuring high ceilings, they can hold their wedding services in the upper section of the barn, in what is known as the loft, and the reception in a spacious area in the lower level of the building. Pictures don't pose a problem either, as Ms. Roach says the site offers a lot of scenic



Country Heritage Park offers a lot of services for wedding parties, including the use of a landau owned by local residents Bill and Jill Stokes. Here a bride and groom take a ride in the landau around the park.

spots for taking wedding photos. Ms. Roach says Country Heritage Park has obvious advantages when it comes to wedding preparations. For guests there isn't the need to travel from one location to another; for couples there's information they can obtain in one simple wedding package. "We offer services such as bartending, a disc jockey, photographers, ministers. This information is all contained in the wedding package. They (couples) just pick up the phone and call to check out the prices

"WEDDING SERVICES HAVE PROVEN TO BE MUCH SOUGHT AFTER AT THE PARK"

and availability."

Bookings are already full from the first weekend in April 2005 to the end of the year for Fridays and Saturdays, but there are other days, such as Sundays, that are still available. Wedding services have proven to be a much sought after service at the park, and Ms. Roach says it isn't hard to find people interested in holding a wedding at the Gambrel Barn. Usually, Ms. Roach says someone hears about the park's wedding facilities by word of mouth. Sometimes it's an acquaintance or a relative of someone who got married at the park that was happy with the ceremony.

Or it could be someone that's checked out the information on weddings available at the park's website.

Once a couple makes the initial contact with the park, Ms. Roach will send



them a wedding package and then she meets with the prospective newlyweds to discuss what they are looking for in terms of a ceremony. When arrangements are finalized, she puts together a confirmation package containing an agreement signed by the bride and groom.

The ceremony itself can be customized to suit the couple's tastes. Ms. Roach has a photo album in her office that includes pictures of a wedding that had a Renaissance theme, for example. The bride worked at the Ontario Renaissance Festival in Milton and the groom was employed by a similar festival in New York State. They opted for an old style heavy brocade material for their tablecloths, dressed in attire from the period, and even placed a suit of armour at the entrance.

But Ms. Roach says people shouldn't be concerned if they choose a less fanciful approach when it comes to the trappings for their wedding. The Gambrel Barn in itself is what makes Country Heritage Park an attractive facility for people that want to get married. "The barn has so much character it doesn't need a lot of decorating."

Anyone interested in wedding services at the park can call Darlene at 905-878-8151 or 1-888-307-3276 or sales@countryheritagepark.com.

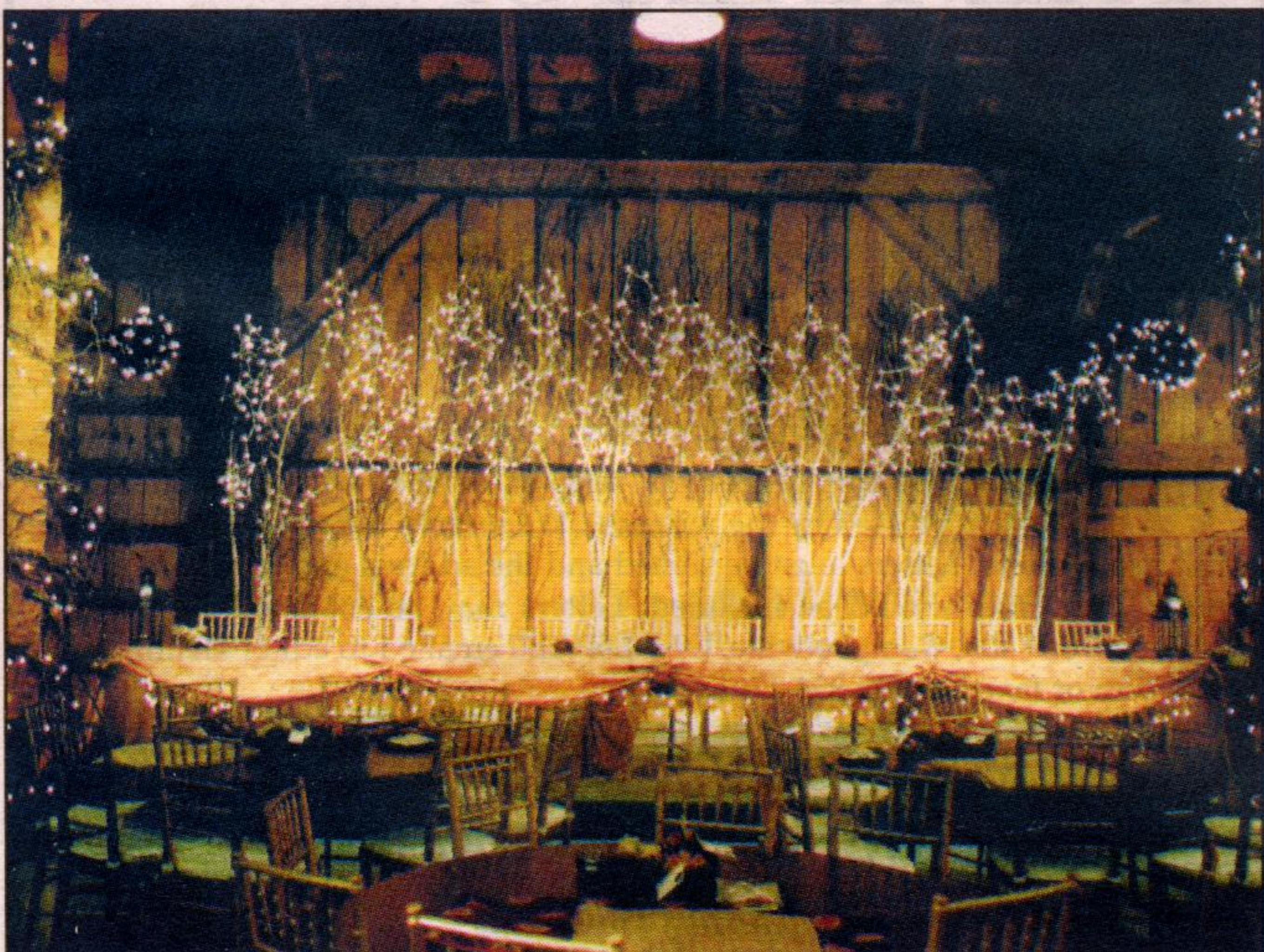
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The Gambrel Barn, situated at Country Heritage Park, is the location for many weddings each year. Darlene Roach, who oversees wedding services at the park, says the spot is ideal for small or large weddings. The 4000-square-foot facility includes a dance floor, seating for a reception, and a loft on the upper level where wedding services can be held.

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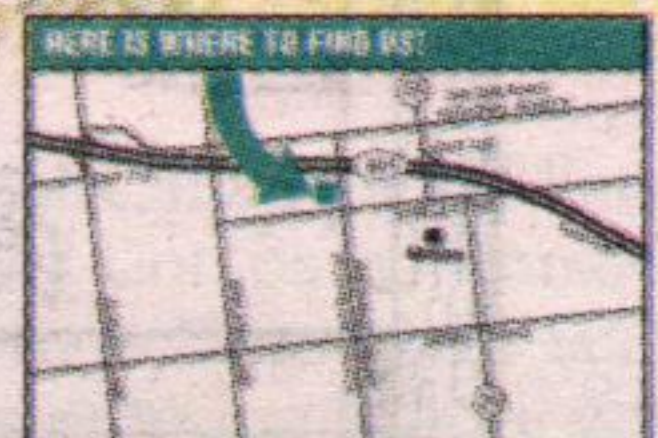
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