

Vintage Whine

Tulle Death Us Do Part

Something happened to weddings while I was out of the loop.

Back in the day, before the role turned into a lucrative career option, my wedding planner was my mother. She booked the venue, and with the help of three or four close friends, produced the entire feast for the Wallethead nuptials. As far as I remember, our photographer was the only one in the immediate vicinity and took routine shots of us shivering outside the church (it was early March, in England) and lined up with the usual suspects from both sides of the family.

My dress was made by Mum's friend from a Butterick pattern for a grand total of £10, which would not buy you a square centimetre of veil nowadays. My shoes were standard issue white satin with kitten heels and my bridesmaids were my best friend Lindy, my lovely sister-in-law Valerie and our adorable 6-year-old niece, Caroline. I still feel guilty for making them wear matchy-matchy pale turquoise silk dresses, demurely buttoned to the neck, which they would clearly never, ever wear again. In my defence, however, they didn't get stuck with the bill, because in England the bride's family ponies up for her fashion crimes against bridal party members.

We got married in a church in Epping Forest, which was miles from where we lived, but which we had to attend for six months to prove to the vicar we were serious about living up to our vows. It was also quite far from the reception, and we lost a

couple of guests on the way, but the setting was perfect and it didn't rain. The vicar was rather dour, and spent more time cajoling the congregation for donations than blessing our union, but we're still together, so he must have done something right.

I was reintroduced to the wonderful world of weddings, 2014 style, when I went dress shopping with my daughter. Entering the hushed, chandeliered world of the bridal salon, I felt as out of place as Stephen Harper at a climate change symposium.

After a lifetime of mother/daughter shopping trips covering a motley crew of emporiums ranging from Bargain Harold's to Bravissimo, I found myself in a hitherto unexplored universe of poshness. Fabulous frocks were lined up around the walls, some festooned with flounces, others artistically austere. They came in a bewildering array of styles: A-line, ball gown, empire, mermaid, sheath and short; with or without straps, lacy and vintage-inspired, scooped and sweetheart-necked. In my unbiased view, my daughter looked gorgeous in all of them, but once the tulle settled, I had to figure out what I was going to wear that wouldn't frighten the horses or make my family want to disown me.

I spent the next few days exploring suitable mother of the bride outfits online. It turns out that while brides are generally marrying later these days, mother of the bride models appear barely old enough to have left high school, never mind given birth themselves. Many look as if

they are graduates of the Kardashian College of Understated Elegance or the Miley Cyrus Academy of Subtle Sartorial Style. Plunging necklines, teetering stilettos and slashed up the thigh skirts are de rigueur, along with vampy makeup and hair bigger than the Ontario deficit. It was a look that my granny would have called mutton dressed as lamb, and that would be a charitable assessment.

Meanwhile, I'm sticking with the sound advice of British TV comedian Mrs Merton. "Never forget that what looks good on an 18-year-old fashion model in the catalogue is not necessarily right for a 66-year-old bookie's clerk from Chorley with elephantitis in her left knee."



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Your Library Needs You

By Carolyn Nordheimer James

Pre-school literacy, teen engagement, current business resources, newcomer integration, cutting-edge technology - are these issues important to you and your family?

If you answered yes to any of these, the Whitchurch-Stouffville Public Library needs you. Please consider joining the library board and working with the board and staff to ensure that these strategies continue to be part of the library's mission and vision.

The Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville and the library are seeking applicants for the volunteer position of trustee of the board.

A board member must be at least 18, a Canadian citizen and a resident of Whitchurch-Stouffville. They may not be employed by the library or the municipality. Prospective members should be:

- interested in the library and its importance in the community;
- prepared to devote an average of approximately three to six hours a month

over 10 months of the year and be willing to participate fully in the board's work;

- well connected to the community and aware of its social and economic conditions and disparate groups;
- able to work well with others, have an open mind, intellectual curiosity, and a respect for the opinions of others;
- familiar with the process of establishing policies for the successful operation of the library and impartial service to all its patrons;
- committed to fiscally responsible management; and
- should have initiative and courage to plan creatively and carry out plans effectively.

If this description fits, the Whitchurch-Stouffville Public Library needs you! Application forms and a recruitment brochure are available at www.wsplibrary.ca. The deadline is Nov. 7, 2014.

Carolyn Nordheimer James is CEO of Whitchurch-Stouffville Public Library



Join the election conversation online. Visit election.stouffville.com to ask questions of your candidates and receive up to the minute news on everything you need to know about Election 2014 in Whitchurch-Stouffville. Check back often to keep yourself informed, and make your voice heard by exercising your right to vote on Oct. 27.



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