

SCOTTISH WEDDING TRADITIONS

The wedding traditions of Scotland are rich and colorful. From the wooing and courting, through the Scottish wedding ceremony, and on to the home, the traditions abound with blessings, hilarity, and such Scottish-ness.



Scottish wedding traditions started as far back as the thirteenth century. Back of the medieval church. Such announcements were called the banns of marriage.

The practice of proclaiming the banns in the church lasted for more than six hundred years. Finally the banns gave way to a simple announcement of intention to get married and the receipt of a marriage license from the local registrar.

Today it is no longer required to proclaim the marriage of the banns in the church for three successive Sundays, but it is still necessary for all couples wishing to marry to give notice of their intent. In this way the ancient forms are still respected.



Another ancient custom was called creeling the bridegroom. This custom required the bridegroom to carry a large basket (a creel) filled with stones on his back. He had to carry this house and kiss him.



The first service was held in the Scottish language. Once the Scottish ceremony was finished, the priest would lead the whole procession into the church.

At the end of the ceremony, the bride and groom would exchange rings in the front of all their assembled witnesses.

The wedding party would be piped (led by bagpipers) to a family home for a lavish wedding party. Here the pipers would play lively up-beat tunes for the hours on end and the outdoor feasting and dancing and general merrymaking would begin and often last the whole night.

Traditionally the first dance of the night, customarily a reel, was led by the wedding couple, after which everyone joined in and the festivities went on non-stop.



Today the wedding ceremony is not quite so formal or so ritualistic but many of today's traditions still harken back to the traditions of the past. Usually about a week before the ceremony. The mother of the bride will hold a show of presents for her daughter.

This corresponds to the bridal shower in other cultures. During the show of presents. The presents are opened for everyone to see and the brides.

A slightly more raunchy tradition is the groom's stag party. Just before tying the knot the groom and his male friends go out for a wild night of partying and drinking.



The modern Scottish bride will wear a traditional or contemporary white wedding gown, while the groom dresses in traditional Highland kilt, kilt jacket and sporran.

The couple are either bagged the isle or the traditional Gaelic hymns are played as they walk to the alter. The Highland Wedding is played at virtually all Scottish weddings.

The wedding reception is filled with music, signing, much drinking and toasting to the health and happiness of the new couple. The celebrations can go on in the wee hours of the morning.

Modern Scottish wedding traditions are far more relaxed than they were in the olden days, but even today remnants of the ancient traditions still linger making.



