

Children

By Matthew Stubbs

Before starting Oakfield Farm in 1991, Matthew was a primary school teacher for seven years and has a special affection for children.



Photo Patrick Furter

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There is no more momentous occasion for children than a wedding. Despite the desperate clutching of ring bearers in mini tuxedos or tears from angelic flower girls, the children simply revel in being part of such an important occasion.

Some time ago I was driving the carriage into the Conservatory with a beautifully dressed miniature gentleman next to me. As the Quartet swelled in anticipation of the arrival of the bride, he raised his hand in a regal salute and said at the top of his voice, "Hello everybody!" No wedding ever got off to a more memorable start.

My favourite story belongs to my own Godson Tristan, who at two and a half years old, and without tears or tantrums simply refused to deliver the rings. Half a chocolate was eventually given to him and the second delicious half promised once the rings were safely delivered. He started to walk slowly down the aisle, with his eyes getting bigger and bigger, till finally he could bear it no longer and he started to run. When he was about 2 metres away from the minister he threw the ring cushion at him and ran to his Dad. A year later, Tristan suddenly said, "do you remember that wedding I went to, Mum? Well, I didn't want to get married, and that's why I ran."

Being such important guests, most children (boys) seem to delight in leaving chaos and destruction behind them to ensure that we will not be forgotten. The most popular pastime is to remove the thatch from the roof. This is irresistible for children and we no longer even get upset – we just re-thatch from time to time.

More than once our brides have had no doves to release as our fledgling "Free Willy" members have released all the doves from the bird cage. Then again I remember the keen gardeners who left a maze of paths



Photo Irene Quist

through the ground covers whilst they set about aiming every sprinkler into the venue. It was a hot day but the powerful barrage of water through the open window did little to please the guests and the bridal couple. Lastly I remember finding two kids sitting on one of the ponies trying to drag up number three. Oh yes, and number four was waiting in line too.

Not all kids have evil intentions however... Inspired by the romance of the occasion, one gallant little five year old, lovingly picked every new arum lily in the garden. With gracious formality, these rare flowers were presented to a little angel wearing wings and a halo. It was a miracle both didn't get to heaven on that day.

To be fair it must be remembered that most children who come to weddings are abandoned by their parents. At least this is how it appears. When a guilty child is captured and delivered back to the function, nobody seems to know who they belong to.

Either way we wouldn't have it any other way and so, we dedicate these pictures to our special little guests.



Photo Wedding Reflections



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