

Much Ado About



A GROOM'S PERSPECTIVE ON HIS WELLFLEET WEDDING

BY TOM KEER | PHOTOGRAPHY BY KIM REILLY, STUDIO K

"I Do"



Keer and Simmerman families, and friends gathered outside the Chequesset Country Club, overlooking Wellfleet and Great Harbor. Tom and Angela Keer, née Simmerman, are a picture-perfect bride and groom.

ACCORDING TO THE STEREOTYPE, A BRIDE OBSESSES ABOUT EVERY detail of her wedding. If you surveyed their fiances, however, the men would likely fall into one of three categories: Very Involved. Moderately Involved. Or, Tell-me-when-and-where-to-show-up.

In my particular case, I was totally into it, because this Yankee was engaged to a Southern Belle.

Having spent lots of time below the Mason-Dixon line, I knew the difference between Wampus Kitty and the Side Hill Hooper. I knew that red-eyed gravy was made with coffee, and I knew that grits were both a breakfast food and an acronym (*Girls Raised in the South*). It goes without saying that the plural form of y'all is all y'all. A linguistic authority on those regional nuances, I figured planning a wedding in our town of Wellfleet would be a walk in the park.



The bride and groom with Ocracoke, their English Setter.

My fiancée, Angela, and I chose April, in order to time the celebration of our marriage with the arrival of spring. Everything made sense . . . until we broached the idea with family and friends.

"Ah, April, that dicey month," some said. "The weather can be beautiful or miserable, with no points in between."

"It'll rain for sure. April showers bring May flowers," said others.

"You live in a summer-destination area. Nothing is open off-season."

By the sounds of it, I'd have an easier time finding sweet tea in New England than planning an early-spring wedding on the Cape. Balderdash!

Necessity, that sweet mother of invention, was a guiding force in our planning. We played to our strengths and combined Yankee Ingenuity with Southern Charm.

Angela and I were already members at Wellfleet's First Congregational Church, so asking our friend and pastor Ken Roscoe to officiate was the first order of business. A fringe benefit was that the church itself is as old and as beautiful as any. Add to that a couple of incredibly talented mu-

sicians from our church choir, organist Brad Williams and harpist Thom Dutton, and the sacred part of our wedding was covered. We'd even get to ring the bells to announce our marriage.

Ever the vigilant writers, Angela and I sharpened our pencils. We wrote our own invitations and announcements. With the help of Pastor Ken, we composed our wedding vows and customized our ceremony in keeping with liturgical traditions. We even wrote and printed programs so our guests could follow along.

We wanted our reception site to overlook the water, and

*"We played to our strengths:
Yankee Ingenuity and
Southern Charm."*

the Chequessett Yacht and Country Club was the perfect location. An added bonus was that my friends and I could see one of our favorite fishing and hunting spots through the window. Reven Oliver, the director of operations, was almost a wedding planner. In addition to coordinating our reception, she recommended us to Shannon Mahoney of Sumptuous Catering and Kim Reilly at Studio K Photography.

Our once scoffed-at off-season wedding now worked to our advantage, as our vendors had plenty of free time to spend with us. Sumptuous Catering prepared delicious appetizers, including maki rolls, grilled baby lamb chops with minted garlic oil, and scallion crêpes with roasted duck, followed by an entrée of grilled lobster tails and tenderloin.

In keeping with our natural surroundings we chose to adorn the church and reception hall with locally scavenged items, namely sand dollars, sea stars, and sea scallop shells. At the suggestion of Sheila at Kelley's Flowers, we added sweet peas, delphiniums, asters, and hydrangeas to the wedding decor and for replanting later on. Many of these flowers now grow in our yard.

Tradition calls for white wedding cakes, but we were conflicted. Our love of chocolate knows no such boundaries, so we turned to Marc at the Cottage Street Bakery whose expert sleight of hand disguised true chocolate decadence with a classic butter cream frosting. Tradition prevailed, and we had our cake and ate it, too.

Angela is thoroughly high-tech, a distinct advantage



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Southern bride Angela Keer basks in the local scenery. Many flowers from the wedding were replanted in the couple's yard. The newlyweds danced to their favorite tunes.



when it comes to music for dinner and dancing. She downloaded tracks that ranged from classic Big Band, Swing, and Classical to Rock and Pop, and she arranged it all thematically with all phases of the reception in mind.

With no lodging available and lots of out-of-town guests, we turned to our friend Judi Peters, owner of Wellfleet Real Estate. She found us an enormous cottage overlooking Wellfleet Harbor, perfectly suitable for entertaining and accommodating. Angela and I orchestrated a rehearsal dinner for our guests that combined outdoor activities with foraging for ingredients—freshly dug and shucked oysters and littlenecks, fried clams, scallops wrapped in bacon . . . you get the picture.

When it came time for our wedding day, we favored a natural approach to photography. Kim Reilly has a knack for capturing the essence of a wedding, and she picks up on even the smallest details. The week before our wedding, Angela had an atypical portrait taken by Kim: fancy hair, wedding dress, and cowboy boots, shot at the local fishing pier.

The only hitch in the wedding was when Angela and I took our vows. Even our bird dog, Ocracoke, joined us. She dressed for the occasion, adding a corsage to her blaze orange hunting collar.

As for the weather? The days before and after our wedding were cold, gray, windy, and rainy. The flight for our honeymoon was the last to leave Logan before high winds shut down the airport. But on the day of our wedding we had 65 degrees, blue skies, and sun. The wind, of course, blew from the South. 🏠