



It was, up until that moment in time, the seminal event for my generation. That beautiful summer day in 1981 when Princess Diana married Prince Charles.

It's really no surprise, in hindsight, that what appeared to be a fairy tale come true would end sadly. The real fairy tales, the ones told by the Brothers Grimm and Hans Christian Andersen – were tales of strife and hard-won contentment, a lot more like real life than

Walt Disney would have us believe.

On that day, though, my friend Laurie and I were 14 years old and earnestly believed we were seeing happily ever after unfold before our wondering eyes. I was the guest of Laurie, her brother Billy and her parents Mary and Bill on a week's vacation in a friend's home on the Jekyll Island oceanfront. On July 29, Laurie's mother woke us before dawn and settled us before the television with snacks and drinks so we could watch Cinderella marry her prince. I never thought Prince Charles was all that handsome, but he was and still is the future King of England, a definite plus in the good catch category.

We oohed and aahed and elbowed one another excitedly as her carriage pulled into view. We gasped at the sheer

volume of that glorious taffeta gown. And we giggled nervously when she fumbled her recitation of Charles' many names.

We watched them wave from the balcony – might have even waved back, I'm embarrassed to admit – and floated through the rest of our summer vacation on the visions of loveliness we witnessed that day.

Laurie and I remained friends through our years at Glynn Academy, then lost touch. I thought of her every time I read news of Diana (and that was at least once a week). Turns out the story of Diana and Charles was closer to a true fairy tale than we knew. They divorced. She died. I cried.

But life went on, and I'm happy to say that I have found my friend Laurie again, and she still has the same beautiful dimples that have framed every smile she's given me since I first met her in middle school.

We've seen happiness and sadness in our own lives, but it's all still good. And although I haven't asked Laurie if there's still a bit of the believer left in her heart, you'll find proof in the pages of this, our 2009 Bridal Issue, that there is in mine. Happiness is love, and love endures all things.

Who cares that I don't have a fairy godmother to grant my every wish, or a carriage to take me to the ball? I have friends and I have family, my own handsome prince of a husband and a marvelous young son. All that adds up to love, and that's all anyone needs.

Amy H. Carter

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Editor



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