

# Wedding Customs

By Faye Ruehling

Weddings are magical, enchanting, whimsical, fanciful, beautiful, tried and true, small, large, traditional, timeless, but always romantic, and eternally memorable, as the recollections of these Golden Islanders attest.

## Catherine and Rick Caauwe

*“There is silver and there is gold.  
The colors of love so I am told.  
But if to Caesar goes the silver and to Caesar goes the gold,  
These colors of love I may never hold.  
For I reach into my pocket and the coffer is bare.  
Yet I reach to my heart and find that you are there.”*

*“For Caesar has his silver and Caesar has his gold.  
Of these I have none.  
But with you I have more than can ever be told.”*

*“For you are my lady and you are my life.  
And on this, our first Christmas, you are my wife.  
A gift from me is a gift to you.  
And the gift of love, no more can I do.”*



Rick Caauwe wrote this piece of prose, burned the edges of the paper, and attached it to a handmade plaque to give to his new bride, Catherine, on their first Christmas after their wedding on December 21, 1983, in the British Virgin Islands. Shades of the '60s? Well, look closely at the wedding picture of this bride and groom – see the bare feet? Theirs was a “homemade”

wedding, by economic necessity. Catherine made Rick's shirt and her own wedding cake, a fruitcake. Married on the veranda of their home, they shared the open space with the geckos and a blooming century plant.

As the ceremony was closing, Catherine remembered the customs in her homeland, New Zealand, and hoped that she had made a wise decision by leaving them out of her ceremony. In New Zealand, as the bride leaves the church, a handmaiden greets her and gives her the first two gifts as a married lady: a satin-wrapped horseshoe and a miniature rolling pin. The horseshoe is for good luck and the rolling pin is to remind her who is in control of her household.

## Betty and Fred Davis

Betty and Fred Davis described their wedding in 1968 as traditionally lovely but uneventful. It was anything but traditional for a Southern Baptist young man from Georgia to be marrying a Yankee girl from Pittsburgh. It wasn't until six years later that Betty's mother finally allowed that the marriage “might last.”



It was Betty's father who had the final word on arrangements for the festivities and he did it with the background of an old and established family who insisted on the tried and true. Both the rehearsal supper and the reception were sit-down formal dinners. Betty's father was a well-known physician in the area. In fact, her extended family eventually grew to include 27 physicians and received recognition as the largest medical family in Pennsylvania.

Even so, Betty was thrifty. Fred just didn't realize how thrifty until they were on a plane, leaving from Chicago and headed to Acapulco for their honeymoon. He had made all of the arrangements and Betty was totally in the dark about their destination. When he finally revealed that they were staying at Las Brisas in Acapulco, Betty, who was employed with American Airlines, asked: “Did you get the 40 percent discount for American employees?”

## Laura and George Nies



There is a saying that dynamite comes in small packages and that aptly describes the courtship and wedding of Laura and George Nies in 1995 in Augusta. This was a second marriage for both of them, but they were (and still are) deeply in love.

They met at a Retreat for the Divorced and Separated, held in Savannah. According to George, Laura ignored him and wouldn't give him the time of day. So, he showed up at the retreat the following year and pursued her again. This time when he asked for her phone number, she reached into her jeans pocket and surreptitiously handed him a piece of paper on which she had previously written the number. Can you believe that after all that synchronicity, he didn't call her for two weeks?