

## Royal Wedding: from Diana to Kate

Friday 29 April 2011

Despite some surprises during the hotly anticipated wedding of Prince William and Kate Middleton, tradition still prevailed. But how did it compare with Charles and Diana's marriage 30 years earlier?



A million people gathered in London on Friday to celebrate the "fairytale" wedding of Prince William and Kate Middleton in Westminster Abbey.

Sealing their love with a kiss on the balcony at Buckingham Palace, the couple charmed the enormous crowd gathered to watch them wed.

Thirty years earlier the Prince's father and mother - Prince Charles and Lady Diana Spencer - married at St Paul's Cathedral to a congregation of 3,500 and an estimated global TV audience of 750 million.

Despite the wedding being the most popular viewed programme in 1981, William and Kate gave their vows to an estimated two billion people across the globe.

### The dress

Kate Middleton's dress was designed by Sarah Burton at Alexander McQueen. The bridal train was exceptionally modest compared to many former royal brides, measuring just two metres and 70 centimetres.

The train of Lady Diana Spencer's dress was 7.6 metres long when she wed the Prince of Wales in her Emanuel creation.

Sarah Ferguson's train reached 5.2 metres and was emblazoned with the letter 'A' in 1986.

Even the Queen, then Princess Elizabeth, had a four-metre star-patterned train in 1947 which was inspired by Botticelli's figure of Primavera, symbolising rebirth and growth after the war.

The Carrickmacross lace-making technique used on Kate's wedding dress also featured on Diana's wedding dress.

The technique, used for the delicate lace applique flowers on the train and bodice of Kate's dress, is named after the market town in County Monaghan, Ireland, where it originated.

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## The ceremony

Kate's bridal procession music - "I Was Glad" by Sir Charles Hubert Hastings Parry - was used as The Anthem for Charles and Diana's wedding, but Diana walked up the aisle to The Trumpet Voluntary by Jeremiah Clarke.

Following the ceremony, the newly-wed Kate curtsied to the Queen before leaving the Abbey with her husband.

Members of the Royal Family, including her grandchildren, always curtsy or bow to the Queen.

Diana, Princess of Wales also curtsied to her new mother-in-law following her wedding ceremony.

William and Kate - newly titled Duke and Duchess of Cambridge - emerged from the Abbey to peals of bells and huge cheers from the crowd and climbed into the 1902 State Landau.

The open-top, horse-drawn carriage was used by Charles and Diana for the journey back to Buckingham Palace in 1981.

## The balcony

Thirty years ago it was Charles and Diana who began the tradition of the kiss on the balcony of Buckingham Palace.

On Friday the new royal couple delighted the 500,000 people gathered outside the Palace by sharing two kisses on the balcony.

Body language expert Elizabeth Kuhnke remarked that the bride and groom seemed far more "connected" than William's parents who "moved much more awkwardly".

The "grace" that the couple displayed was perhaps testament to their long-term relationship. Diana was aged 20 when she married Prince Charles, while Kate was nine year older.

## The departure

Perhaps the most drastic difference of the royal wedding was the departure of the couple from Buckingham Palace.

To the surprise of the crowd **William and Kate** left their lunchtime reception in a classic open top Aston Martin with 'JUST WED' on the number plate as colleagues from the RAF flew overhead in a yellow rescue helicopter.

In 1981 a "just married" sign attached to the landau by Princes Andrew and Edward raised smiles as the married couple were driven over Westminster Bridge to get the train to Romsey in Hampshire to begin their honeymoon.