



Everything Has a Meaning

I am delighted to once again introduce Bonnie Swanson as a special guest columnist for *Aisle Dish*. Bonnie is the Event Sales Manager at Musket Ridge Golf Club (a sister Club of Stoneleigh), a Certified Event Planner and has a tremendous wealth of knowledge about weddings.

Until you are the bride, you may not give much thought to what it all means. Oh, you've no doubt thought about your wedding wishes, but probably not the traditions. Here is a primer on the origin of some wedding traditions so you can make them your own.

1. **Something Old, Something New, Something Borrowed, Something Blue**

Each item in this saying represents a good-luck token for the bride. If she carries all of them on her wedding day, her marriage will be happy. The OLD symbolizes continuity with the bride's family and the past. The NEW means optimism and hope for the bride's new life ahead. The BORROWED is normally an item from a happily married friend or family member, whose good fortune in marriage is supposed to carry over to the new bride. The BLUE symbolizes love, modesty and fidelity.

2. **The Veil**

In today's world the veil is simply a romantic custom. Originally, it represented the bride's innocence and modesty.

3. **Bridal Showers**

The custom of the bridal shower grew out of early dowry practices. When a poor woman's family might not have the money to provide a dowry for her, or when a father refused to give his daughter her dowry because he did not approve of the marriage, friends would gather and bring gifts that would compensate for the dowry, allowing her to marry the man of her choice.

4. **The Chuppah**

A Jewish Wedding Ceremony takes place under a Chuppah, which is a wedding canopy. It symbolizes the new home the couple will be making together. Long ago the Chuppah was a tent decorated and set up in the yard of the brides' family home. The newlyweds would live in the tent for seven days of feasting after the wedding. As time passed, the Chuppah evolved into a canopy (and the newlyweds opted for more glamorous honeymoon locales.)

5. **Wedding Ring**

This tradition dates back to ancient times. Cavemen would wrap circles of braided grass around the bride's wrists and ankles. They believed this would keep her spirit from leaving her body. Fortunately for today's bride, this tradition evolved into silver or gold bands around one finger. The ring signifies the unbroken circle of the couple's commitment to each other and is a symbol of eternity.

6. **Ring Finger**

The tradition of the ring finger began with the Romans, who believed that the fourth finger on the left hand was connected directly to the heart by a vein called the vein of love. For this reason, the fourth finger of the left hand has been adopted through the ages as the ideal place for the wedding ring.

7. **Throwing Rice**

Another hat tip to the Ancient Romans who would shower a newly married couple with wheat, which symbolized fertility. Eventually, wheat was replaced with rice, which was also considered to be a symbol of fruitfulness. In the modern day, the act of throwing rice is believed to keep evil spirits away from the bride and groom. Nowadays, some consider rice harmful to birds though the National Wildlife Federation says this is simply an urban myth.

Aisle Dish is written by Meredith Thomas, Stoneleigh's in-house Event Consultant. If you would like assistance planning your special day, Meredith offers a complimentary one-hour consultation to all brides hosting their wedding at the Club and is available for further planning services at an additional fee. Contact Meredith at mthomas@stoneleighgolf.com or 540.338.4653 ext. 303.