



KISS A FROG Tyler Mycoskie '06 and Nancy Brittany Campbell '07 share a kiss after they were married last year at Robert Carr Chapel. Photo by Sara Donaldson '02 (MS '04).
Photo facing page: The groomsmen and ushers wore Horned Frog ties and cumberbunds when Crystal Victoria Jones '07 and Kelly Roe Tipton '07 (MAC '08) married in 2011.



Purple Passion

Alumni find creative ways to show TCU pride when walking down the aisle.

BY KATHRYN HOPPER

When it came time to plan her wedding, Laura Gore Wright '06 considered a Southern, springtime theme.

Then things turned TCU purple.

"The more we started personalizing it, the more we decided to play up TCU," says Wright, the assistant director of TCU alumni relations who married Todd Wright '06 in Robert Carr Chapel in May.

It started with the engagement announcement, which featured a photo of the couple at Amon G. Carter Stadium, the site of their second date. Then there was video filmed on campus highlighting their common Horned Frog heritage, which was shown at the rehearsal dinner.

But it was at the reception was where their school pride really took over. Super Frog was there to congratulate the happy couple as they flashed the Horned Frog hand sign on the dance floor. Later, as they exited the festivities, wedding guests showered them with purple and white confetti as the band played the TCU Fight Song.

"It was like a little TCU pep rally," she adds.

From subtle touches like Horned Frog cufflinks on the groom's tuxedo to over-the-top additions like having Super Frog help cut the Frog Fountain-inspired wedding cake, TCU



alumni are looking for creative ways to incorporate purple pride into their wedding celebrations.

It's part of a national trend away from cookie-cutter weddings to ceremonies that reflect the couple's unique history and heritage, says

Angela Thompson, assistant professor of sociology and author of the book *Unveiled: Secrets of the Wedding Industry*.

"You have the idea of what a wedding is supposed to look like, but then you want to add something that's uniquely yours," she says. "Your personal wedding bling."

Thompson said it's only natural for couples, particularly those who both went to TCU, to incorporate that into their big day.

"People are proud that they went to TCU and want to show that off," she says. "It's a nice touch, particularly if you have family that have been here over the years. There's that special connection that exists."

This summer Thompson is again teaching her popular upper-level sociology class, "Unveiled: The Sociology of Weddings," which examines industry trends and issues such as the role of family dynamics and how women's workforce participation plays into the weddings couples create.

For example, the average age of brides and grooms has edged up



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CHEERS Laura Gore Wright '06 and Todd Wright '06 enjoyed a photo op with SuperFrog at their wedding reception in May.

as couples postpone marriage until after they have completed their education and started their professional lives. Today, the average age of first

marriage is almost 27 for women and 29 for men, up from 20 and 22 in 1960.

That means couples are better able to financially contribute to the bill for the festivities, a responsibility that traditionally fell to the parents of the bride.

"Mom and dad are looking toward their retirement and they have to have to rebuild their nest egg, or they may have several kids to put through college or have several weddings to pay for so they're saying they need to look at this differently," Thompson says.

It also means couples want more of a say in crafting a wedding that reflects their personalities and history, even down to their courtship. For example, Stefanie Adams Petet '05 and Kevin Petet '05 made custom-crafted cowboy boots as part of their wedding reception attire.

"It is really interesting how they detailed them," says Trudy Tooke Baade '01, who assisted the couple with their wedding and operates Lagniappe Weddings with her sister Sarah Nyman Pittman '01. "The groom wanted the custom logo on the back and they had their wedding date, their initials and where they met on them, as well as their fraternity and sorority because they had parties together."

For the recent wedding of Sarah Kate Taylor Jones '06 and Zach Jones '06, Emily Eagle Clarke '04, who operates Emily Clarke Weddings and Events in Fort Worth, enlisted the help of Frosted Art in Dallas to create a one-of-a-kind groom's cake that captured Jones' rock-and-roll side and his band's gigs playing the Aardvark (photo on page 43).

"People loved it," Clarke says of the cake of SuperFrog rocking a guitar. "It really reflected him in a fun, creative way."

Wedding guests, even those who aren't Frogs, can get into the purple-fueled fun as well, says Shannon Lukowiak Schultz '04, founder and owner of Shannon Schultz Events in Fort Worth.

"I feel like everybody has to have purple props — purple boas and sun glasses and glow sticks," she says.

"Everybody wants their party to be really fun, so they're moving from a more formal reception to a focus on the parties and the fun."

While many TCU couples are ready to go all-out purple, Clarke cautions a little can go a long way.

"You'd be shocked by how many people want everything purple," she says. "But sometimes, depending on the time of year, it may not make sense. I like to play up white to soften it or have purple pop out in unexpected places."

For example, she likes the understatement of a bride wearing purple pumps under her wedding dress, or the groom



MEMORIES SWEET The cake of Kendall Kirkham Sloan '07 and Jason David Sloan '07 was a replica of Frog Fountain. Photo by Tracy Autem Photography.

showing a hint of purple socks under his tux.

When it comes to selecting the time and place of the big day, TCU's Robert Carr Chapel has been the favored site for generations of Horned Frogs and is typically booked a year in advance, particularly for popular weekends in spring and early summer, says chapel coordinator Brittney Smith Luby '06.

TCU's entry into the Big 12 is impacting TCU wedding plans as well, with many couples avoiding fall dates altogether rather than risk conflicting with conference football games.

"You have to plan around football or you're not going to get hotel room blocks," Schultz says. "You're going to have parking and traffic issues. It's added a new degree of difficulty to TCU weddings."



FAMILY TRADITION Stacey Forrester Kirkham '82 and Kenneth Donald Kirkham '83 walk down the aisle of Robert Carr Chapel in their 1982 wedding (far left). Their daughter Kendall Kirkham Sloan '07 married Jason David Sloan '07 on Dec. 4, 2010 in Robert Carr (center) and daughter Mallory Kirkham Towe '10 married Ryan Christopher Towe '10 on March 31, 2012 in Robert Carr (right). Photos by Tracy Autem Photography.

Picking the right day can also help assure more guests can make it, including one of the most coveted TCU guests these days — SuperFrog. TCU Spirit Coordinator Lindsay Shoulders '06 says three years ago she had one or two requests per year for SuperFrog to appear at local weddings, but now it's grown to six or seven.

Stacey Forrester Kirkham '82 invited Super Frog to the reception of her older daughter, Kendall Kirkham Sloan '07, to help cut the cake. The purple-clad Santa and Mrs. Claus (Howard '48 and Mildred Erby Payne '48 the rest of the year) also made an appearance for the Dec. 4, 2010 event.

"They were just wonderful," Kirkham says. "They greeted the guests as they made their way to the reception. It was a great photo opportunity and the kids loved seeing a purple TCU Santa Claus and Mrs. Claus."

Kirkham had also hoped to have SuperFrog show for the recent wedding of her younger daughter, Mallory Kirkham Towe '10, but he regrettably couldn't make it. Instead, he was able to greet the couple at the airport as they returned from their honeymoon. Since it was Easter Sunday, he came bearing an Easter basket of goodies, including a football signed by Gary Patterson.

"She was totally surprised to see SuperFrog in the baggage claim," Kirkham said of her daughter. My son-in-law (Ryan Christopher Towe '10) is a huge football fan and loved getting the signed ball."

In another TCU touch at the couple's March 31 wedding, Mallory wore a purple TCU garter that Ryan tossed to his brother at the reception.

"His brother David Andrew Towe '09 is also a TCU grad, and ironically got engaged the morning after he caught the toss," Kirkham says. "His new fiancé, Sara Anne Phares '09 is also a TCU grad, so the tradition continues." 🦊

ICING ON THE CAKES

Mallory Kirkham Towe '10 and Ryan Christopher Towe '10 included their photo, plus another cute horned frog couple, on their cake. Photo by Tracy Autem Photography



The groom's cake for Sarah Kate Taylor Jones '06 and Zach Jones '06, created by Frosted Art in Dallas reflected Jones and his band's gigs at the Aardvark. Photo by Andrea Polito Photography.



TOP NATIONAL WEDDING TRENDS

Angela Thompson, assistant professor of sociology and author of the book *Unveiled: Secrets of the Wedding Industry* sees the following national trends:

COUPLES ARE TAKING A MORE HANDS-ON APPROACH

Looking for ways to cut costs, more couples are taking a do-it-yourself approach, but Thompson says it's easy to get in over your head.

"You might watch a video online and think you can do a centerpiece you see. Well, one centerpiece may not take that long, but 20 will take some time," she says. "You need to be careful with your time and make sure you are not getting overwhelmed."

ECO-FRIENDLY WEDDINGS ARE ON THE RISE

"People are concerned about the cost of their wedding, but also that their footprint on the planet is not any larger than it has to be, so they're looking for venues that offer some sustainable options or something eco-friendly, like an outdoor setting," Thompson says.

Wedding guests may be asked to contribute carbon offsets for their travel to the ceremony and the reception fare will feature organic, locally grown foods, Thompson adds.

DESTINATION WEDDINGS REMAIN POPULAR

Thompson says destination weddings not only combine the celebration with a vacation, but also can be a solution for couples dealing



with complicated family dynamics.

"They may not want different sides of the family together if mom and dad had a nasty divorce and can't be in the same room together," Thompson says. Or they might not want the drunk uncle there. They may want just to go someplace else and have a quiet, low key ceremony."

SOCIAL MEDIA IS PLAYING A BIGGER ROLE

She says women are turning to sites such as Pinterest to select the dress, cake and bouquet of their dreams, sometime even before they have a ring.

"We're seeing people who have constructed a wedding reality, but don't even have the groom yet," she says.

INCREASE IN CIVIL UNIONS

Gay couples are increasingly tying the knot and becoming a potentially lucrative segment of the wedding industry, Thompson says.

"This is going to be something the industry is going to have to deal with," she says. "Vendors are going to have to decide if they are comfortable serving this market." 🦊 — KH



Going to the *Chapel*



Robert Carr Chapel has provided the perfect venue for generations of TCU couples.

When Stacy Forrester Kirkham '82 got engaged during the spring of her junior year she knew what she had to do.

"I went right over to Robert Carr to book my date," says Kirkham. "Even back then there was a year's waiting list."

She got her date, May 22, 1982, and was able to walk down the same aisle as generations of Horned Frogs who have married at the chapel since it opened its doors in 1953.

"The thing I love about Robert Carr is it's so beautiful you really don't have to invest in a lot of flowers," she says. "You don't need anything else."

For almost six decades, Robert Carr Chapel has been the preferred wedding venue for generations of TCU brides and grooms. Earlier this year, the chapel was nominated by the American Association of Certified Wedding Planners as one of the best ceremony venues in the Dallas-Fort Worth area.

Each year the chapel sees more than 13,000 guests and hosts more than 400 events, including about 115 weddings, says Robert Carr Chapel and Events Coordinator Brittney Smith Luby '06.

"About 60 percent of our weddings are TCU alumni, faculty or staff and the rest are people from the Fort Worth community who think we have a beautiful space. We're happy to welcome them as well," Luby says.

The old adage that brides-to-be need to book their wedding date in their freshman year to be assured of a date after graduating are exaggerated, Luby says. But, she adds, the chapel is generally booked a year in advance.

During the peak wedding months of May and June, the

chapel will host four weddings each weekend. Prices vary from \$695 to \$1,295 for a three-hour weekend rental, plus one hour's rehearsal time on Friday. Alumni, students faculty and staff get a discounted rate.

As with many wedding venues, couples have to abide by rules and regulations. For example, pets, other than service animals, are prohibited, as is the use of wagons, motorized vehicles, or strollers as part of the ceremony.

No food or drink is allowed in the chapel and smoking and alcohol consumption is not permitted. According to the chapel's regulations, "Per-

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WEDDING MARCH Left: Stefanie Adams Petet '05 waits outside Robert Carr Chapel before her big walk down the aisle in her March wedding to Kevin Petet '05. Photo by Carter Rose with f8 Studio. Top: The wedding of Kendall Kirkham Sloan '07 and Jason David Sloan '07. Photo by Tracy Autem Photography. Above: The first Carr Chapel wedding, uniting Nancy Miller Goessling '54 and Frank Goessling '53, from the 1954 *Horned Frog*.

sons who arrive intoxicated or become intoxicated while getting ready for the ceremony, during the ceremony, or rehearsal will be ticketed and escorted off the property by TCU Police.”

And forget having a shotgun wedding — TCU also prohibits the carrying of licensed or unlicensed guns or weapons as defined by Texas State law onto its campus. “Anyone found in violation of this policy will be escorted off campus,” according to chapel rules.

The chapel is open to all denominations, but wedding music must be “of a sacred, religious or classical nature.”

The chapel, which holds approximately 320 people, was built and dedicated in 1953, thanks to a gift from the Carr family of San Angelo and the architectural design of Joseph R. Pelich.

Designed in a Georgian Colonial Revival style, it was modeled on early-American churches. For exam-

ple, the spire is an exact replica of the one atop the famous Old Lyme Church in Connecticut, and the brass chandeliers are after the design of those in St. Michael’s Church in Charleston, S.C.; the pulpit is patterned after those in King’s Chapel of Boston and Christ Church in Cambridge, Mass.

The chapel’s 137-foot-high spire is intentionally the highest point on campus. Its carillon plays the alma mater every hour throughout the day, uniting the TCU community as it reminds students to get to class.

When it came time for her daughters to wed, there was no question

that Robert Carr would be the venue, says Kirkham. When her daughter Mallory’s fiancé told Kirkham and her husband of his intentions to propose in a few months, she went ahead and called the chapel coordinator.

“I wanted to get a jump start on it so I asked what’s the first available date. It was July 15. I knew my daughter wouldn’t want to get married in the heat of the summer, but I said O.K.

“Then a few months later, Brittney called me and said we just had a spring date fall through, you could do it in March. The engagement was a little shorter than expected, but it was beautiful day.” — KH



KARI CROWE



For better or worse

Since the doors of Robert Carr Chapel opened in 1953, organist Emmet Smith has played the organ for more than **2,600 weddings.**

Some really stand out in his memory.

When it comes to weddings, it’s fair to say that Emmet Smith ’54 (DM ’12 Hon), emeritus Herndon Professor of Music, has seen it all.

“I’ve seen individuals become violently ill, and I’ve seen people fall to the floor,” says Smith, who spent more than 45 years as professor of organ and church music at TCU. “Of course I’ve seen a lot of people faint — brides, grooms, mothers and fathers. I think more men have fainted than women.”

While Robert Carr Chapel has provided a picture-perfect setting for hundreds of Horned Frog couples, unexpected catastrophic events linger in Smith’s memory: Like the bride who defied the rules and placed lighted candles in the chapel windows with artificial flowers surrounding them. The bouquet in the front window near the pulpit burst into flame.



CAROLYN CRUZ

“It burned the shutters and blackened the window frame,” Smith says.

There was also the wedding rehearsal where the mother of the bride, a woman Smith described as “a disciple of the bottle,” was in a fair state of inebriation when she saw her ex-husband walking their daughter down the aisle.

“She leapt up and became a human windmill with her arms flailing, hitting him in the nose,”

Smith says. “The blood was spurting everywhere.”

The chapel hostess arrived at a compromise; the father could walk the daughter down the aisle, but then had to leave the chapel, missing the vows completely.

And there was the mother of the groom who didn’t like her son’s choice of a bride and tried to derail the ceremony at the last minute, claiming the flower girl needed a better dress. She said she would have to go back home to Irving to retrieve it.

“The preacher was not the suavest, most urbane minister I have met,” Smith says. “He came out to the guests and said ‘It’s going to be awhile, why don’t you all go down the street and get a hamburger. Come back in an hour or so and we’ll be ready.’”

By the time the 2 p.m. wedding got under way at 5 p.m., the 6 p.m. wedding party had been waiting since 4 p.m. to prepare the chapel for their ceremony and the situation was nearly out of control. The mother came back and it didn’t surprise Smith that the flower girl’s dress was in the chapel dressing room all along; she had just been trying to sabotage her son’s wedding.

“It makes you feel sympathetic toward a young couple who begin married life under such a cloud,” he adds.

He’ll always remember the wedding of Betty Buckley ’68. The Tony Award-winning actress had specifically selected a beautiful piece by Bach for her processional music. On the May afternoon of the wedding, the skies darkened, the clouds turned black, green and purple, and the rain fell in blinding torrents. Guests were unable to leave their cars for nearly 30 minutes so the wedding began after about 50 minutes of pre-nuptial organ music. Just as Smith played the first note of the Bach piece, lightning struck the chapel, the organ fell silent and everyone was in total darkness.

“The electricity was out for 48 hours,” he says. “So she had a real candlelit wedding.”

The ubiquitous unity candle has brought numerous disasters, Smith notes. He remembers the florist who used a bu-

tane candle, perhaps to make certain it would ignite at the proper moment. When the bride and groom touched it with their individual candles it went up like a blowtorch with a hissing flame that shot 2 feet in the air.

Another couple thought it would be nice for the mothers to each light the bride and groom side candles, but they did not practice doing it at the rehearsal.

“As I was playing ‘Jesu Joy of Man’s Desiring’ I could see the mother of the groom coming down the aisle shaking with nervousness as she carried the brass lighter with its wick burning. She negotiated the five chancel steps safely, but she was unaware that one more step was between her and the table with the candles. Her right foot hit the carpeted step with a resounding thud and she lost her balance. In an effort to save herself she brought her brass lighter down with a loud crash onto the altar table, breaking off the bell-shaped snuffer and leaving a deep dent in the mahogany top. An usher raced to her side as she lay on the floor and assisted her to her feet and lighted the candle for her. The congregation was whispering sympathetic words as she walked back to her pew.

“As I continued to play, I fervently hoped that the bride’s mother was a witness to that disaster and would be aware of that lethal step. Not so! When she fell, she hurled her brass lighter with such force that it struck the wall, and as she went down she tried to stop her fall by grabbing the edge of the table. It turned her so that she came to rest with both feet splayed out toward the guests. They roared with laughter this time.”

The selection of music for weddings is a delicate subject. Music from Broadway musicals, movies and popular hits are not appropriate in a sacred ceremony, and from the days the doors of Carr Chapel opened, have not been allowed. Smith says it can take a good deal of patience to work with couples who are disappointed that they can’t include a favorite popular song.

“I try to make tactful suggestions so they can have an elegant ceremony that stands the test of time,” he says. “I have had couples come to me, years after their weddings, and say ‘Thank you for guiding us in the right direction.’” — KH

Tell us your chapel wedding story at tcumagazine@tcu.edu.



SARA DONALDSON

With this Frog,

It's easy to add a TCU touch to your nuptials. We surveyed wedding planners — who are also TCU alumnae — for interesting ways to show your school spirit on the big day.



Shannon Schultz '04
of Shannon Schultz Events
shannonschultzevents.com

Off the cuff

Brides often give TCU cufflinks to their groom as a special wedding day gift. It's personal, practical, and can be passed down to future generations. I encourage brides to shop local for these final touches in order to support our TCU community and the alumni that own local boutiques.



Take the cake

The groom's cake can be outrageous. We often see purple cowboy boot cakes, football stadium cakes, and of course, cakes shaped into Horned Frogs. Get creative with the cake stand;

I like to put a horned frog cake on a rustic wooden cutting board surrounded by wheat grass to give it a realistic setting.



Lighten up

Invest in lighting. We suggest an amber-candlelight hue for dinner and halfway through

the evening change your wall color to a total TCU purple wash. It kicks the party into high gear and draws your guests to the dance floor. A purple lit room is the perfect backdrop for your *The TCU magazine* photo op.



Giving back

We are seeing more brides wanting to make a difference and they are turning to charity-inspired wedding favors. Fill pretty apothecary jars with personalized TCU silicone wristbands. Your guests can wear them to football games and remember that you chose to give back to the school instead of handing out those old-fashioned monogrammed matchbooks.

Doing favors

Favors are a great way to sneak in a little purple and white. I suggest purple and white gum-balls in favor boxes. For special



guests, pop in a metal Horned Frog paper-weight for a big surprise.

Petal power

Freesia, brunia berry, hydrangea, and orchids are very complimentary with the bold TCU purple and white — and look brilliant against black bridesmaid dresses.

Tie one on

The purple linen bow tie is a must for the classic outdoor wedding.



Sweet treats

Setting up bars for popcorn and candy are all the rage. Don't forget purple M&Ms and lavender macaroons for some TCU flair.

Prop it up

A party is not a party without props. Halfway through the evening, have your band hand out purple sunglasses, glowsticks and boas. You'll be amazed at how it keeps the party going!

Amanda Harvey Dale '03
of High Fire Designs
www.highfiredesigns.com



Show your colors

Use the color purple in an elegant way. Add colored water, violet floral, purple linens, or even purple lighting.



Nostalgia nod

Use photographs from your college years to add a personal touch to your reception. Name tables after TCU buildings or symbols instead of just numbering them.

Hidden purple

Lots of brides have been subtly adding TCU pride to their wardrobe by incorporating a layer of purple tulle among their petticoats or a vibrant purple garter with TCU embroidered on it.

History book

Instead of the typical guest book, try a book about the history of TCU. Let your guests sign on their favorite page and then you have a fun coffee table book.



I thee wed.



Emily Eagle Clarke '04 of Emily Clarke Events
emilyclarkeevents.com

House divided

If you are marrying outside the TCU family, get creative with a groom's cake that mimics the popular House Divided signs, or have a miniature football field that has the two teams playing each other.

Shoe thing

Wedding guests will appreciate purple flip-flops for tired feet so they can ditch their pumps and party on at the reception.



TV Time

If the reception conflicts with a Frogs game, build a viewing

area on an outside patio by adding a flat screen and a make-your-own s'mores bar.



Sarah Tooke Pittman '01 and Trudy Tooke Baade '01 of Lagniappe Weddings
Lagniappeweddings.com

Campus couple

If you met each other at TCU, get creative with a photo taken on campus to use for the save-the-date card or your engagement announcement.

Purple potions

Craft a purple-hued signature drink or several. If you're having a destination wedding, there are



multiple opportunities to serve purple drinks. Welcome arriving guests with lavender margaritas and serve blackberry lemonade at the reception.

Booting up

Show your TCU pride with custom made boots to really make a statement at the reception.



PHOTO CREDITS:

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Are you in the wedding business?

We're putting together a list of Horned Frogs who help couples on the big day. Let us know what you do and we'll add your business to our wedding vendor list. E-mail us at tcumagazine@tcu.edu go to magazine.tcu.edu/webextras to see the list.