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REVELRY KC'S ROYAL WEDDING

STORY BY KATHLEEN LEIGHTON
PHOTOGRAPHY BY ISAAC ALONGI

Kansas City has never hosted a royal wedding, but the Dickinsin-Kröss nuptials last summer came pretty close. Wedding coordinator Michael J. Nolte had his hands full last June putting together gorgeous gowns and gathering a team of professionals to execute the three-day affair for 750 carefully chosen guests.

"It was a huge honor to be the planner of the largest wedding ever held in Kansas City," says Nolte. "It truly was a glorious event."

"It was really overwhelming," says Jane Dickinson Kress, who had some basic ideas about what she wanted but needed help with the mountains of details. "Mike [her now husband] and I wanted our wedding to have an intimate feel, but that's hard to do with so many people. Michael really pulled it all together."

The festivities began with a rehearsal dinner at The Webster House, chosen for its unique character and downtown location.

"Lots of our out-of-town friends haven't seen much of Kansas City, and we wanted them to see downtown," says Dickinson Kress.

The next day, the bridal party shared separate quarters at the InterContinental Hotel (where most of the guests stayed) as they prepared for the big event. The women had hair, make up and nails done while snacking on delicacies and champagne from the hotel's kitchen; the men enjoyed cigars and beer after a morning golf game.

Then it was off to Visitation Church, where guests were greeted in the narthex with the heavenly scent of lilies, roses and hydrangeas. Colonial planters held palm trees, and cascades of azaleas circled the entryway. Asymmetrical groupings of potted ivy, azaleas and ferns led the way to the altar, with wreaths of flowers around six silver candle holders. Floral arrangements, done in accent colors of soft coral, tangerine and lemon, were all designed and placed by Studio Dan Meiners.

Jane, escorted by her two brothers, wore a custom-designed couture gown of latte silk satin by Judd Waddell. The strapless bodice was embellished with a triple-strand necklace pattern of Swarovski crystals and bugle beads by Michael Nolte, Nolte's Bridal. That same pattern was repeated at the dropped waist and also circled the ball gown skirt. The chapel-length train was embellished with scalloped crystals that formed a pyramid when bustled for dancing. The veil mirrored the gown's triple necklace pattern of crystals along its edges. Jane wore a tiara of crystals and opera-length kid-leather gloves, and carried a bouquet of Cattleya orchids.

A moving moment in the ceremony came when Jane and Mike lit a candle in memory of Jane's father, Gary, who died 10 years ago. Nine attendants surrounded the couple, wearing Watters and Watters gowns of silver lamé brocade woven on a latte background. Deep silver double-faced ribbon tied the waists, and the looks were completed with necklaces of multi-strand freshwater coin pearls and clear crystals with matching earrings. They carried bouquets of tangerine and lemon roses. Nine groomsmen, two adorable flower girls and four ring bearers, along with five ushers, rounded out the wedding party.

Following the ceremony, the party moved to the new home of Jane's mother, Ann Dickinson, in Sunset Hills, where a cocktail party, dinner and dancing awaited. The formal garden reception featured a seafood bar and was held in a tent with a clear ceiling and open-air sides. All food was catered by the Westin Hotel. Music was provided by "Atlantic Express."

A five-course dinner was served in a larger tent in the front yard—a magical setting created with ivory and crème organza draping the ceiling and walls. Tables were covered in a soft coral-embroidered taffeta and centered with gorgeous flower arrangements. Tall candelabras and hundreds of votive candles added an elegant sparkle to the evening. The bars were upholstered in coral silk and topped with faux marble. Three triple-tiered chandeliers, edged in white orchids, hung, suspended, over the room. On the dance floor, the couples' initials were painted in chocolate.

"The most important thing that happened that day was I got married," says Dickinson Kress. "I wanted to have a big party with lots of family and friends, and it ended up being wonderful and beautiful in every way. It was really an amazing experience."

"The thing I learned from this was that class has nothing to do with money, but with the way you treat people," says Nolte. "The Dickinsons personify that. We worked on this wedding as a team. This was an absolutely wonderful experience." ■

A symphony of silver: The wedding of the century at Visitation Catholic Church.

Bride Jane Dickinson, who wanted as much silver in the ceremony as possible, and new husband Mike Kress greeted their 750 guests after the formal ceremony that featured two flower girls and four ring bearers. A reception followed at the Sunset Hills home of Ann Dickinson, mother of the bride (below left). An enormous tiered cake was simply eye candy; the real wedding cakes looked like small, wrapped gifts and followed a succulent meal of lobster and veal.



