

Family Affair

STORY BY NICK BRANDI
PHOTOGRAPHY BY LEAFO PHOTO



It's not every man who not only gets to walk his daughter down the aisle but also preside over the actual ceremony in a town over which he also presides. But that's exactly what happened on July 3, when the Honorable James Ford III of Lewes officiated the wedding ceremony of his only daughter, Maren, to Ryan Langford at the Lewes Canalfront Park.

Established in 1961, the Lewes Historical Society (LHS) is a sprawling complex that is actually more like a compound for all its structures and newly designed, impeccably manicured landscape. Teeming with lush arboreal life that includes everything from the familiar American holly, blue spruce pine, white oak and magnolia to the more exotic crape myrtle, kousa dogwood and pomegranate, the pristine rustic verdure of the LHS makes it one of the uniquely beautiful tracts on the entire Eastern Shore.

The innate good taste of the couple-to-be and consummate expertise of Make My Day Event Planning made for a day to remember... make that *cherish*. It began with a 5 p.m. ceremony at Canalfront Park, the groom having arrived by boat — and Beatle — as John Lennon's "Grow Old With Me" played in the background. After Mayor Ford walked Maren down the aisle as his little girl for the last time, he summarily took his position before them as the officiant. The mayor married the two in a sweet and genteel ceremony that saw Funsters musician Keith Mack provide accompaniment on the acoustic guitar. As a two-canon salute rang out from the Lightship Overfalls to commemorate the couple's first kiss as husband and wife, it was clear the tone was

about to shift. George Harrison's sunny and hopeful ballad "Here Comes the Sun" lit the way acoustically as angel-faced children with overflowing buckets of hydrangea led 170 guests to the reception area for the commencement of the 5:30 p.m. festivities.

To further set the tone, Leanne Silicato of Make My Day Event Planning had arranged for strands of delicate bubble lighting to be strung among the treetops and elsewhere, weaving a gossamer web of magic as day transitioned into night.

Lewes mayor James Ford III officiates his daughter's breathtaking wedding on the grounds of the town's historical society





Ryan Langford and Maren Ford
Married July 3, 2011

Waiting for the guests on the grassy back lawn with century-old trees were two 20-foot-long king's tables, assorted round tables, high-top cocktail tables and a sprinkling of picnic tables and raw-wood benches — all in good proximity to the two open bars. Pierson's Comfort Group in Federalsburg provided VIP comfort trailers for the convenience of the attendees.

Touches of simple elegance permeated the day, as mason jars of locally grown flowers dotted the scenery and homemade packages of Maren and Ryan's favorite Alfajores cookies were affectionately distributed among the guests.

A majestic 40' x 80' white, peaked tent provided by CRH in Bethany served as the main dining area and housed one of two buffet tables, guest tables, a sweetheart table for the bride and groom and a portable parquet dance floor, also supplied by CRH. The dinner — expertly executed once again by the incomparable Plate Catering of Bethany Beach — started out with the mayor and Mrs. Ford ringing the old schoolhouse bell so that guests could dive into the shrimp and scallop dumplings with sesame, soy-and-ginger dipping oil along with prosciutto-wrapped melon and fresh tomato and basil bruschetta.

A summer salad with mixed greens, sliced strawberries, goat cheese, shaved onion and toasted almonds in a strawberry vinaigrette teamed with freshly grilled and marinated kebobs featuring well beef and chicken led the entrees, with support from chilled orzo with shaved asparagus, lemon zest, olive oil, parsley, sun-dried tomatoes and shaved red onions. Freshly baked bread and butter capped the light summer fare.

The delicious and beautiful two-tiered chocolate-and-buttercream wedding cake, embellished with hydrangea and sunflowers, was baked by Maren's good friend Lauren Crandall, who is also her teammate on the USA National Women's Field Hockey team. Maren, meanwhile, has to be discreet around things like rich chocolate cake and Alfajores, as she is considered by those in the sport to be a legitimate Olympic hopeful.

When all was said and done, the event was a stellar conflation of good taste, fun and love. So much so, in fact, that the bride herself remained to bask in its luminous glow, even after the deejay had packed up his equipment, hoping that her special day would never end.



Mayor James Ford III has the privilege of presiding over a town with a rich 380-year history that also embraces the virtues of modernity.

"One reason these events always come out so well," said renowned local entrepreneur and master chef Matt Haley of SoDel Concepts, parent company of Plate Catering, "is because Plate Catering strives to provide nothing less than greatness for every one of its clients. Another key is the amazing relationship we have with Make My Day Event Planning. We work together so seamlessly, so cohesively, it's as if we were partners without actually *being* partners. I can tell you honestly that I have never seen anyone work an event like Leanne Silicato of Make My Day Event Planning. They are simply the best."

"I think the many, many comments I'd heard from first-time visitors about the lovely charm and character of [the Lewes Historical Society] is a very positive reflection on the City of Lewes and its 380-year history," offered Mayor Ford and his wife, Teresa.

There can be no doubt that the LHS is a venue steeped in tradition and rich with history. How fitting it is that on July 3, 2011, Maren Ford and Ryan Langford chose that location to make some of their own. 🌊