

BRIDAL GROOMING: Hundreds of prospective brides and their



STUNNING: The bridal displays at the Abbey House Hotel gave local couples plenty to choose from in planning their romantic big day. The boutiques showing their gowns were: Romantique

PUT ON YOUR RED

THERE'S A



A STUNNING hand made crystal-encrusted wedding invite which will set you back £135, a castle in Cumbria to use exclusively for your big day, or a dress made to measure from a Lakes-based designer. CLAIRE HIGH was dazzled by the Designer Wedding Show in Barrow

ROMANTIC PAST: Another unusual bridal design

JOE RILEY REF: 0450643

WITH couples spending an average of £20,000 on their big day, it is no surprise that they want every detail to be perfect.

With a dress to choose, a venue to book and menus to decide on, it is no wonder that organising a wedding can be one of the most stressful times in a couple's life.

But the Designer Wedding Show on Sunday, organised by *Brides in Cumbria* in conjunction with the Evening Mail, at the Abbey House Hotel, aimed to take the stress away.

Hundreds of visitors crowded into the exhibition at the Abbey Road hotel to check out services on offer from more than 40 local companies - including bridal wear boutiques, photographers, venue stylists, bespoke stationery designers and many more.

Three catwalk shows at the event, which ran from 11am to 5pm, showcased the latest styles from six bridalwear specialists - including Family Affair, Marrime and Frothimoon, in Kendal, as well as Ulverston's Bells and Thistles and Barrow's Emporium. But it was the bespoke fashions from designer Angy Morton of Romantique Couture, which left the crowds gasping - especially the 'Wild Fire' red silk dress.

Angy, who is based at Newby Bridge, takes inspiration from the four seasons and the changing scenery of the Lakes in her dress designs.

Stephanie Ryan, owner of Iris Lingerie of Queen Street in Ulverston, was very impressed by the catwalk shows. She said: "They were brilliant, and it makes a big difference to actually see the dresses on."

Honey Ashworth, the owner of Marrime bridal wear boutique in Kendal was showing off a selection of stunning accessories, tiaras, jewellery and veils, in addition to many of her designer gowns.

She said: "We've run out of all our brochures. I will definitely have to bring more next time. It's been a really good day and I have booked in lots of appointments for brides-to-be."

Honey said that the trend this season in her gowns is "really traditional, very sparkly and young".

She added: "We have a lot of ladies from Barrow, Ulverston and Dalton coming to us in Kendal to look for a dress - because they know they are guaranteed something a bit different."

Deciding on a venue is the first step for any couple, once they have decided on a date. And what girl hasn't dreamed of getting married in a castle?



WEDDING DAZE: (l-r) Joanne Thornton, Reece Mossop and Jamie Bull won the Evening Mail's Win Your Wedding competition

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Susan Dent, wedding coordinator at the Muncaster Castle, was there to highlight the premises' spectacular views over the fells, but couldn't resist admiration for the backdrop to our show.

She said: "The Abbey House Hotel is a fabulous venue for the show and a very popular wedding venue here in Furness, but it has been great to be able to show people what we have on offer up the coast."

Muncaster Castle has five distinct rooms licensed for civil marriages and partnerships, including the medieval grandeur of the Great Hall, which can seat 100 guests, and the elegant library which overlooks the River Esk and seats up to 50.

The nearby Pennington Hotel can also help to accommodate guests or provide an alternative venue for a wedding reception. While the 2009/10 booking form at the hotel shows that the price per head for a wedding at Muncaster is £90, Susan said: "We don't have wedding packages. We try to offer what the bride and groom want from their day - a bespoke wedding."

Kerry Horn, the wedding coordinator at Chequers Hotel and Restaurant, Dalton, manned the venue's stall at the show, handing out glasses of Champers

TOMORROW: Turner prize winner Keith Tyson talks about how a

families attended the Evening Mail's wedding show



Radio presenter spotlights tourism

TOURIST hot spots will be featured in a glossy ad campaign.

Ardent Lancastrian and voice of BBC Radio 2, Stuart Maconie, has agreed to channel his enthusiasm for all things northern into a new campaign to promote tourism in the North West.

The autumn campaign by the Northwest Regional Development Agency, Stuart's *Short Stories for Short Breaks*, will see a series of travel diary style pieces appear in national magazines and glossy newspaper supplements over the coming months, following Stuart on his travels across the region.

Focusing on city culture and the region's outstanding cultural offer the campaign is backed by a new website, www.stuartstories.com, where visitors can read all of the short stories or download podcasts narrated by Stuart.

All of the stories will be available in a specially bound book which can be ordered through the website.

Stuart Maconie, radio DJ, TV presenter, journalist and author, said: "This is my part of the world, so I might be biased, but the North West is full of fantastic places to visit and I'm more than happy to bang the drum for them. We have some fascinating history and our popular culture is second to none, so it's not really a very difficult job."

"If this campaign helps people to see the north west as the wonderful place that it is, then I'm pleased to be able to help."

Astronomer to talk about sun

SCHOOL pupils are encouraged to attend a fun lecture by a top astronomer about the sun.

The free illustrated lecture, open to the public, will take place at Forum 28 on Wednesday October 1 at 7.30pm. It will be the seventh lecture about space and the planets given in Barrow by Dr Robin Catchpole in recent years.

Entitled "Our Sun - How it Works; How it Affects Earth's Climate" will be packed with startling facts and has been arranged by professional organisations including Professional Engineers South Cumbria.

Dr Catchpole is from the Institute of Astronomy in Cambridge.

Dr Catchpole will cast a little light on our prime source of energy and how it affects us all. He will explain how, in early 1997, the Solar and Heliospheric Observatory spacecraft was launched to monitor the Sun. It was designed to last for two years but is still going strong after 11 and continues to give new data.

For further information call Ian Palmer on 01229 832847.

PICTURES: JOE RILEY

Couture, A Family Affair, Bells and Thistles, Emporium, Marrime and Forthimoon

DRESS, HONEY WEDDING ON



SHOWSTOPPER: The red silk dress from designer Angy Morton of Romantique Couture REF: 0400640

WATCH THE VIDEO
online at nwemail.co.uk

and delicious hors d'oeuvres to passing visitors. Since 2006, Chequers has been licensed for civil wedding ceremonies for up to 120 guests. Kerry also had a laptop on her stand showing a slide presentation of weddings at the hotel and in its private, pretty chapel. Kerry wanted to emphasise the importance of planning ahead to ensure you get the venue you want, on the date you want for your wedding. She said: "As soon as you decide on a date, I would advise couples to get the venue booked. We are already taking bookings now for 2010 and it is mainly the Saturdays that get booked up." Many of the visitors were surprised to find a designer at the show offering bespoke invitations locally. Nadine Montaghami, the creative powerhouse behind A Wedding To Talk About, was showcasing a couple of new lines at the show - which had already attracted a lot of attention. The bespoke wedding designer from Barrow, who's had her work featured in the national *You and Your Wedding* magazine, says she can cater for every budget. She said: "Invites start from as little as £2.20 and go up to £135 each for the Hollywood crystal encrusted range which comes in a handmade pouch, and RSVP card presented in a silk covered box. "Most of my orders come through the internet site from all over the country, and even from Holland, Italy and America. But this show is a great way to reach the local market. "I have had so many people looking at the stationery today who have said they had no idea that anyone in the area did this kind of thing." One visitor who was impressed by the handmade invites was Jenny Noonan, 20, of Barrow, a sales administrator at Princess Bedrooms and

Kitchens. She said: "I loved the handmade cards with crystals and it was really useful to find out that they could be made locally." She is marrying her fiancée, Gary Anderson, 24, next July 4 at St Mary's Church in Duke Street, and then the couple are having their reception at the Abbey House Hotel. She read about the show in the Evening Mail and was keen to attend to check her bookings. She explains: "I wanted to make contact with the people at Marrime that I have ordered my dress from. Also we found out some information about suit hire for the groomsmen from Greenwood's." While many brides attended the event with their mums or bridesmaids, Jenny's fiancée had come along earlier in the day. She said: "We have booked our cake with the Cake Crusader and he couldn't resist coming along to try the cake - but then he left!" She said: "It is nice to have a fair like this on your doorstep and it was a chance to have another look at the hotel - as it's where we are having our reception." Gillian Pearson of Paul & Gillian Pearson Photography of Windermere, says it is important to book your photographer as early as possible. She said: "We are taking bookings now for 2011 - to get the date you want you have to think ahead." Brides looking for inspiration for their hair and make-up for their big day headed straight to the Review hair and beauty stall - manned by owner Karen Johnson. The salon, in Crellin Street, Barrow, offers an all-round package for brides and on the day were doing hair and make-up demos on two models. Karen said: "This is a great way for us to promote what we have on offer at the salon. We do hair ups for brides or, if you have short hair, we can do wefts to add some length." When it comes to make-up, Karen says the new buzz word is "minerals". She says: "We use the Jane Iredale mineral make-up which gives a really flawless, natural finish." Review offers a wedding hair and make-up package, including a trial for both and a complementary bottle of bubbly, for just £100. But Karen added, that beauty starts from the inside out, and her partner Gary Johnson, now

offers an advanced nutrition programme for brides at Review. Karen said: "It is a new niche for us and it is all about feeling good on the inside and looking good on the outside." One bride who is sure to look stunning on her big day next July is Laura Bray, 25, of Barrow, who attended the Designer Wedding Show with her mum Elaine. They were very impressed by the standard of organisation at the show.

local shipyard worker inspired him to greater things