

THIS WEDDING BUSINESS...

Well, September and October are **the** favourite Wedding months and usually booked far ahead. There may always be cancellations... [sob] Or you could consider these possibilities.

1 LONDON

For a Wedding with all the trimmings, London is an attractive option with classic settings and luxury hotels and restaurants. You can hire parts of the **Tower of London**, with views of London Bridge in the background. Just don't turn up dressed as Henry VIII with his Six Wives, as one American tourist did. They were turned away. Whereas the Best Man who came dressed in executioner Black and carrying an axe is still in a Dungeon.

Westminster Abbey is an historic Thames-side site with a Viking Skin Door and is the resting place of many poets you never heard of. It is much sought-after due to centuries of Coronations and Royal Weddings. (Though Non Smoking, post-1952.)

Ay, there's the rub: Only Members of the Royal Family, Residents of the Abbey Precincts, and Members of the Order of the Bath can marry there. Which excludes nearly everyone on the planet. Deliberately so.

(Talking of Americans, legend has it that in 1968 Ken Kesey, of Merry Prankster and Acid Test fame, rocked up at the Abbey and insisted on being married to his Harley-Davidson by the Archbishop of Canterbury. Kesey claimed Membership of the Bath Order by producing his Loofah, Rubber Duck, and a Grey Sheet which he said was his personal Charter which had got soaked in orange juice and shed all its ink. Impressed by his eloquence and liberal gifts of orange juice, Archbishop Garcia agreed to bless Kesey and his motorbike in Latin, which he said was far better than a wedding. A happy Kesey roared away but couldn't resist jumping a rising Tower Bridge roadway and had to be fished out of the Thames. The Harley remains below to this day.)

2 SHAKESPEARE LOTTERY NUPTIALS

If all this is beyond your budget or pedigree but you can wait till next Spring... There are rumours that both the National Theatre and Shakespeare's Globe will pioneer Lottery Special performances. The lucky Winners will substitute for professional actors as Bride and Groom in the finale of plays which involve a Wedding. No acting experience is required. Lines will be broadcast through loudspeakers. Winners must turn up in advance for costume fittings, make-up, and publicity photos. It is not clear if they will take curtain calls. (The ceremonies **will** be legally binding, except for the interrupted one in "Much Ado...")

It is hoped that this project will have very wide appeal given the gender fluidity promoted by Shakespeare in "Twelfth Night" and "As You Like It."

3 WEMBLEY STADIUM - "A DAY TO REMEMBER FOREVER."

Imagine... 90,000 people are trooping into Wembley Stadium to the theme tune of 'Match of the Day' to celebrate your Wedding!

It could happen... Since it is rumoured that the Stadium also has plans for what it calls CHANCE-BASED MASS WEDDING 'FIXTURES'.

Couples will be chosen (selected as a couple, not matched) by winning a ticket. They will then travel to North London and plight their troth on the pitch with up to a thousand other lucky winners. With the new-found popularity of Women's Football the Stadium expects to be filled to capacity with up 90,000 relatives eager to cheer the lucky winners.

Ceremonies will be grouped by Denomination and ordered alphabetically. (Except for Atheists and Agnostics who will be treated as Zs.) During change-over the Crowd will be entertained by Screens displaying Golden Goals of the Golden Years and Recordings of Best Chants and Cheers. Aggressive Displays of Partisanship will be sanctioned on Yellow Card Basis. ALL Celebrants must wear football boots to protect the Sacred Turf. Ceremonies will not be cancelled due to rainfall unless the stewards judge there is a risk to life.)

Other theatres & sports are rumoured to be considering similar schemes.

4 **BUT IF YOU FANCY SOMETHING MORE UNUSUAL.**

And you want your Wedding photos to have that Dark Feeling...

Gothic Sensations has a guide to locations that may suit. Though they may not be licensed for Weddings. Not that that will bother you since you'll want to conduct your own bespoke Ceremonies at, among others:

ORFORD NESS, SUFFOLK: Famous for nuclear weapons testing and bomb aiming.

SELLAFIELD: large multi-function nuclear site close to Seascale on the coast of Cumbria. Members say "*Famous for changing its name after problems. Close to Golf Course and A595.*"

PORTON DOWN: Wiltshire. Famous for biochemical weapon research. Though in Black Suits dispute this. Members say, '*Nice long wire mesh fence. But don't hang around too long.*'

WUTHERING HEIGHTS – Pennine moorland of West Yorkshire. Members say "*A haunting experience. Thanks, Kate Bush!*"

5 **Try an Unusual and Economical Holiday that will Stay with You...**

To save money why not crew a fishing trawler and be married by the captain at the end of the voyage? Experience usually required – of sailing, not marriage. Though that might help. (May not be suitable for ichthyophobic.)

6 **Out of this World**

Rumours about that the First Wedding in Outer Space will happen next year. But who will it be? We can only Guess. Who would want to celebrate closeness in a space the size of the Universe?

Only the Lucky Few...

Or are they?

