

Ceremony Enhancements





Some examples of Ceremonies
To enhance and personalise
Your special day.



Although there
Are many more

Oathing Stone Ceremony



The Oathing Stone is an old Scottish tradition where the couple place their hands upon a stone while saying their wedding vows. Taken from the ancient Celtic custom of "setting an oath in stone", inclusion of the oathing stone ceremony in the vows can be deeply moving.

During the declaration of wedding vows or civil partnership promises, the couple hold the Oathing Stone, together in their hands. It is believed that holding the stone during the

vows in turn casts or sets them in stone.

Any stone can be used for this purpose. One collected by the couple from a favourite place i.e. beach, local beauty spot etc would be appropriate. The stone should then be washed and scrubbed and treated with almond oil then wiped dry in order to give it a satin sheen (if desired).

The stone can also be engraved with a Celtic knot etching, the date of the ceremony and your initials if you wish, although it isn't necessary.

What you will need to do:

- Collect a stone suitable for use as an oathing stone.
- Prepare the stone and have it engraved if desired.

Example Wording:

Family and friends, _____ and _____, will now make their vows using the Scottish tradition of the oathing stone.

Can I please ask _____ to come forward with the stone.

For those of you not familiar with this Scottish tradition it is when the couple either hold or put their hands together on a stone as they repeat their wedding



vows, as an oath given near a stone or water was considered to be more binding.

Some believe that it is where the phrase 'set in stone' comes from.

Hand-fasting

Hand-fasting is an ancient Celtic/Medieval custom, especially common in Ireland and Scotland, in which a man and woman came together at the start of their marriage relationship to declare of their own free will that they intended to marry.

While facing each other, the couple will join hands while a cloth is tied around their hands in a knot. This is where the term "tie the knot" came from. Couples often choose to use a cloth made of a particular clan tartan or a specific colour of cloth symbolising something important to them.

Hand-fasting is suitable for use in both weddings and civil partnership ceremonies.

What you will need:

- A cloth or ribbon suitable for hand-fasting



Example Wording:

There is an ancient Celtic tradition of binding a couple in marriage by hand-fasting -- literally, tying their hands together with cord or ribbon as a symbol that they are bound together not just for a lifetime, but for eternity.

_____ and _____ have decided to include a hand-fasting in their wedding ceremony to emphasize their eternal bond and reinforce the feeling that they never wish to be parted from one another.

In Scotland, until the mid 1700's, marriages were celebrated by a simple hand fasting ceremony in which the two partners joined hands. The couple would link hands to form an infinite circle, and then, their hands or wrists would be bound together, symbolizing the binding together of their two lives into one. It is from this practice that the expression "tying the knot" probably comes from. _____ and _____ have chosen this day to engage in a traditional hand fasting ceremony.

PLACE THE TARTAN RIBBONS AND TIE ROUND WRISTS

With this cord I bind _____ and _____ to the vows they make to each other.

The knots of the binding are not formed by this cord, but by your vows. You hold in your hands and hearts the making and breaking of this union.

Just as your hands are now bound together, so too are your lives. May you be forever one, sharing in all things, in love and loyalty for all time to come.

May your marriage be blessed with patience and dedication, forgiveness and respect, love and understanding.

Unity Candle Ceremony

This ceremony involves the bride and groom or civil partners, using individual candles which they will in turn use to light one unity candle. Family and friends will then be invited forward to light their own candles from the unity candle flame in a symbolic act of togetherness and the merging of both families. This ceremony is suitable for all civil ceremonies.

The Unity Candle Ceremony is often used in naming ceremonies too as a gesture of unity, symbolising that those present will always surround the child(ren) in a circle of love.

What you will need:

- 1 large candle (this is the unity candle).
- 2 smaller candles (1 each for the bride and groom or two civil partners) and tapers to light them.
- Enough tea-light candles for everyone you wish to light a candle from the flame of the unity candle.

A suitable heat resisting container for the unity candle.



Example Wording:

_____ and _____ have chosen to affirm their love by the lighting of a unity candle. They have also asked their families to participate in the lighting ceremony. In so doing, they signal their desire to not only join as one in their union, but to unite two families together as one.

I want to take a moment to explain what the lighting of these candles represents to them:

From every human being there rises a light. And when two souls that are destined for each other, find one another, their streams of light flow together and a single brighter light goes forth from their united being.

_____ and _____ the brightness of the candles that your families have

lit - and the brightness of the unity candle that you will together light - will shine throughout your lives, giving you courage and reassurance in the darkness. May the candle's warmth give you shelter from the cold. May its energy fill your spirits with strength and joy.

As you light the Unity Candle, I want to ask you - and all your friends and family that are present today - to see the brightness of the flame as a symbol of the brightness that your own life brings to this new family. As you lift your candles to light your family unity candle together, so may your love for each other light up your life as a family.

Your mothers have each lit a candle for each of your families. _____ **and** _____, please use those candles to light the Unity Candle together.

The Sand Ceremony

This ceremony requires the couple to provide three containers of coloured sand – one colour for the groom or first civil partner, one for the bride or second civil partner and one for the celebrant.

The three containers of sand are then poured into a fourth larger container at different points in the ceremony, each symbolising a different aspect of the couple, their relationship and their families. The sand then forms a pattern in the container, which is kept by the couple as a keepsake of their day.



What you will need:

- Three containers of sand, a different colour in each.
- One large container capable of holding the sand from all three smaller containers.

Example Wording:

Today, _____ and _____ have sealed the marriage into which they have entered by the exchange of vows and the giving and receiving of the wedding rings. They have committed to share the rest of their lives with each other.

This relationship is now going to be symbolised with a Unity Sand Ceremony, which may be new to many of you. Their relationship is symbolised through the pouring of these individual vases of sand into one. To symbolise the importance of the individuals within the marriage, and the joining of two lives into one entity, three colours of sand will be layered into this beautiful large vase.

_____ and _____, as you each hold your sand, these separate vases of sand represent your lives until today, individual and unique. As you then combine the sand together, so your lives also join together as one.

Love is the eternal force of life and allows us to face fear and uncertainty with courage. Although you are sharing one life, never forget that you are two separate people. Cherish and affirm your differences. Love each other. Together you will laugh and cry, be sick and well, be happy and angry. Grow - sometimes together, sometimes separately.

I will begin with a layer of neutral sand - which symbolises that their marriage is grounded (Registrar to pour all the neutral sand into the vase)

Now we will layer the individual colours. This symbolises that the marriage is based on the strength of _____ and _____.

(Groom pours some in, then same amount by bride)

Finally, we combine the sands to symbolise two lives joined as one together, forever (Bride and Groom both pour remaining sand into large vase together so that they mix)

Just as these grains of sand can never be separated and poured again into the individual containers, so will your marriage be, united as one for all your days.

The Rose



Ceremony

For this ceremony the couple need to give each other a rose.

This can involve the bestman/ witness or other person bringing the roses forward and doing a reading.

A fitting example being Robert Burns' *'My Luve is like a Red, Red Rose'* before handing them to the couple who will then exchange them during this ceremony.

Some couples prefer to opt for a straightforward exchange of the roses during the ceremony and others have even chosen to involve their children in the ceremony.

The rose ceremony is particularly apt for Valentine's weddings but works equally well throughout the rest of the year.

This ceremony is suitable for both weddings and civil partnership ceremonies.

Example Wording:

Your first gift to each other for your wedding today has been your wedding rings - which shall always be an outward demonstration of your vows of love and respect and a public showing of your commitment to each other. In addition, you both have given and received one of the most valuable and precious gifts of life - one I hope you always remember - the gift of true and abiding love within the devotion of marriage.

Registrar hands each a red rose bud/or invites mothers to present the roses

The rose is considered a symbol of love and a single rose always means only one thing - it means, "I love you." So it is appropriate that for your first gift - as wife and husband - that gift would be a single rose bud.

Please exchange the rose buds as your first gift to each other as wife and husband.

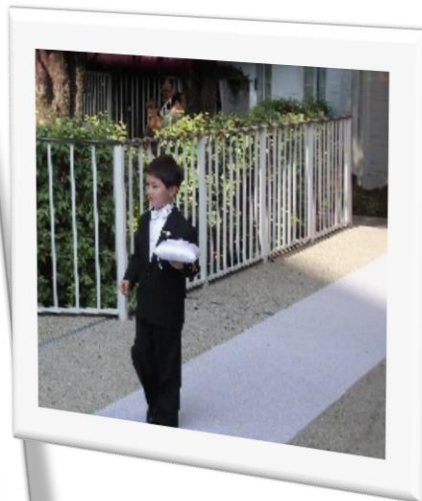
Within these rose buds, if given proper loving care, is the potential for an even more beautiful expression of Life and Love in the form of the mature flower. And so it is with your marriage. At this point your marriage is like these rose buds - ready, with proper loving care - to unfold into a very beautiful expression of life.

_____ and _____, if there is anything you remember of this marriage ceremony, it is that it was love that brought you here today, it is only love which can make it a glorious union, and it is by love which your marriage shall endure. Whatever the situation, love, understanding, acceptance and forgiveness can make everything right.

Including Children in a Ceremony

You may like to involve children in your ceremony in some of the following ways:

- Have them bring the rings forward
- Have them do a reading/poem/song
- Tie the knot for a hand-fastening ceremony
- Giving the child(ren) a ring or gift as a welcome to new family unit.
- Holding the stone in an Oathing Stone ceremony.



Remembering Absent Loved Ones

There are many ways you may like to remember loved ones on your day, the most obvious of which being asking your Registrar to mention loved ones in your ceremony. However you may also wish to include one of the following acts of remembrance:

- The lighting of a memorial candle in memory of an individual or a group of individuals.
- A table of remembrance with a photograph of your loved one(s) – you can also include a memorial candle here.
- Have a friend or family member do a reading or small speech in memory of the person/people.
- Include a favourite song of your loved ones within your ceremony music.



Example Wording:

It is ___ and ___'s wish that as we get started today you all join with them in a moment to remember those who, for whatever reason, could not be here physically, but who are here in spirit and wishing them a lifetime of happiness.



Example Poems:



Although we can't see you
We know you are here
Smiling down
Watching over us
As we say "I Do"
Forever in our hearts
Forever in our lives
And so we say our vows
In loving memory of you

Close to Us

When those we love
have left this earth,
we still can feel them near ~
we'll see a picture, hear a song,
and it's just like they are here.
when we believe and trust,
we know the ones
we care about
are always close to us.



Pinning of the Tartan

Following the proclamation that they were now married, the pinning of the tartan would take place. Each family would customize this, depending on whether the bride or the groom was being accepted into the other's clan.

For instance, if the bride were marrying into the groom's clan, any member of the groom's family would present the bride with clan tartan. This might have been a rosette or a sash fashioned from their tartan. It would be fastened with the clan badge to the bride's dress symbolically accepting her into the groom's clan. Many times the groom himself would pin on the rosette or sash. It can be quite emotional when the groom's mother does the pinning.

Likewise, if the groom is being accepted into the bride's family, the roles are reversed.

Whichever way you would choose, this is one of the wedding ceremony customs that's easy to incorporate in your wedding plans.

Example Wording:

The ancient Scottish Tradition of the Pinning of the Tartan will now be performed by _____ to welcome _____ into the Clan of _____.



The Quaich Ceremony



The Quaich was a two-handled loving cup for the wedding feast. From it the couple took their first communion together as a married couple. They also used the Quaich at the reception for their first toast together.

Symbolic of the sharing between the couple, it's an ancient vessel used by two families or clans, to celebrate a bond, with each leader partaking of the offered drink.

The Groom drinks from the Quaich and then offers it to his bride. The order in which it is then passed is purely a matter of choice although historically it would have been the leaders of each family or clan who would have passed the Quaich around.

What you will need:

- A Quaich (sometimes the couple have this engraved with their names and date of marriage)
- Preferred drink to fill the Quaich

Example Wording:

Example 1

Registrar: The years of your life together are like a cup of preferred drink poured out for you to drink. This Loving Cup contains within it a preferred drink that is sweet - symbolic of happiness, joy, hope, peace, love and delight. This same preferred drink also has some bitter properties that are symbolic of life's trials and tribulations. Together the sweet and the bitter represent "Love's Journey" and all of the experiences that are a natural part of it. As you share the preferred drink from this Loving Cup, so will you share all things in your life.

Registrar pours drink into the Loving Cup and holds it up

Registrar: This cup of preferred drink is symbolic of the cup of life. As you all share the preferred drink from the Loving Cup, you undertake to share all that the future may bring. All the sweetness life may hold for each of you will be the sweeter because you drink it together. Whatever challenges it may contain will be less difficult because you share them. Drink now from this cup, and acknowledge to one another that your lives have now become one

Registrar hands the Loving Cup to Bride and Groom.

Registrar: Now drink to the love you've shared in the past.

The Bride and Groom sip from the Loving Cup.

Registrar: Drink to your love in the present, on this your wedding day.

The Bride and Groom sip from the Loving Cup

Registrar: And drink to your love in the future and forever more!

The Bride and Groom sip from the Loving Cup and hand it back to the registrar.

Registrar: As you have shared the _____ from this Loving Cup, so may you share your lives. May you explore life's mysteries together and find life's joys heightened, its bitterness sweetened, and all of life enriched by the love of family and friends.

(The Loving Cup may be passed around family and friends if desired)

Example 2

The Quaich which I am holding is a traditional drinking cup which is unique to Scotland. Drinking from a Quaich was part of a long established tradition of hospitality. If you shared a cup like this with somebody, you couldn't do harm or injury to the other; so you got the term 'loving cup'. King James VI (sixth) gifted this to his bride Anne of Denmark and thereafter sharing a Quaich became part of Scottish ceremonies. [name1] and [name2] would like to continue with this tradition today. As their first act together as a married couple, they are going to drink from this Quaich. In doing so they are symbolising their commitment to sharing everything in life and sealing the bond between them, whilst signifying the blending of their families."



Registrar fills the Quaich with whisky, wine or other preferred drink and says:

Strike hands with me, the glasses brim,
The dew is on the heather.
For love is good and life is long,
And two are best together.
Bless the union of these two,
Eager for marriage, eager for love.
May they begin life together,
Live that life together
And come to the end together.

_____ and _____, it is now time to complete your bond.

Registrar steps forward and presents Quaich to _____ and _____, then to the wedding party.

Registrar: The Quaich will now be passed between the families whilst _____ and _____ sign the marriage schedule.

Ring Warming Ceremony

A ring warming is when you give your loved ones the opportunity to hold and imbue the couple's wedding bands with a wish, blessing or prayer for your marriage. By the time your rings make it on to the fingers of the couple they will be saturated with the love of their friends and family.

What you will need:

- Wedding ring/s
- Run a string or ribbon down the rows of seats, then as part of your ceremony you can have someone introduce the ring warming and start the rings on their voyage through your sea of guests
- Other options would be to simply tie the rings together or to use a little dish to pass the rings along the rows

Example Wording:

Later during the ceremony _____ and _____ will exchange rings as a physical symbol of the vows they are making to one another.



As the ceremony proceeds, will family and friends please warm these rings by passing them down the row. As you hold them in your hands, pause for a moment, and make your wishes for the couple and for their future together before you pass them on to the next person.

These rings will not only be a gift from one to another, but will be given with the love, support and wisdom of their loved ones.

Guest Vows



Some couples have been asking their guests to join in on the vows. After the couple makes their vows to each other.

Example Wording:

Now that you, beloved friends and family of _____ and _____, have heard them recite their vows, do you promise, from this day forward, to encourage them and love them, to give them your guidance, and to support them in being steadfast in the promises that they have made?

Guests respond: "We do!"

Children's Gift Ceremony

Many couples like to acknowledge children they bring to the marriage. Here are some examples.

(name(s)) you are the most important part of your mum and dad's life – today they are making a promise to one another; this promise is also a promise to you. You are already a family. They love you with all their hearts, and no matter how big you get or where life takes you, they want you to know that that's forever!



During a wedding ceremony, rings are exchanged with a promise. (name) and (name) thought it appropriate that their children should receive a token of their promise. They wanted to find a way to let them know how special and wonderful they are in your own way, and how blessed they feel to be their parents. They also wanted them to have a physical reminder for the future as they grow and become young men and women in their own rite. There may come times when there are things going on in their lives

that they feel no other human would ever understand – (turn to the children) – but there is nothing that any of you can ever say that will not be met with unconditional love. So is the bond of trust that your parents establish with one another, and extend to all of you this day. (Children step forward to receive their gift).



The Hands Ceremony

(Partner 1) and (Partner 2) – please face each other and take each other's hands, so that you may see the gift that they are to you.

These are the hands of your best friend, young and strong and full of love for you, that are holding yours on your wedding day as you promise to love each other today, tomorrow and forever.



These are the hands that will work alongside yours as together you build your future.

These are the hands that will passionately love you and cherish you through the years, and with the slightest touch will comfort you like no other.

These are the hands that will hold you when fear or grief temporarily comes your way.

These are the hands that will countless times wipe the tears from your eyes; tears of sorrow and tears of joy.

These are the hands that will tenderly hold your children.

These are the hands that will give you support and encouragement to chase down your dreams.

These are the hands that will hold you tight as
You struggle through difficult times.



These are the hands that will give you strength
When you need it.

These are the hands that will lift your chin and brush your cheek as they raise your face to look into eyes that are filled with overwhelming love for you.

And lastly, these are the hands that, even when wrinkled and aged, will still be reaching for yours, still giving you the same unspoken tenderness with just a touch.

ADDITIONAL SUGGESTED CEREMONY ENHANCEMENTS



LOVE KNOT CEREMONY

This is usually done after ring exchange. Suggested wording is:

_____ and _____ you have just sealed your relationship with the giving and receiving of rings. Now we shall celebrate your new union as it is symbolized by the tying of a fisherman's knot; a true lovers knot, for it is the strongest there is; its bond will not break, becoming ever stronger under pressure.

(Officiant or groomsman/designated person will hand the couple each a piece or cord, they should be 2 different colours) These two cords represent your individual selves and the unique and special gifts you bring to your marriage. Will you please tie this knot. *(The couple takes the end of each other's cord and ties them together with a fisherman's knot)*

As you fasten your pieces together, this represents the joining of your two lives into one common purpose. The completed knot represents your future, secure in the knowledge your relationship will continue to be strong despite the inevitable changes life brings. Although the fisherman's knot is one of the simplest to tie, it is also one of the sturdiest. As stress is applied, the knot becomes ever stronger. It is the goal of marriage to achieve a blending of hearts and lives, but like the spaces between these cords formed by the knot, let there also be spaces in your new life together, so each may encourage and nurture the individual growth of the other. I ask that you now pull on this rope to see it strengthen under pressure while still allowing us to see the individual cords - just as your support of one another as beautiful and blessed individuals strengthens your union. *(Pull on the rope together)* As you hold one another in mutual concern and shared respect, may you continue holding each other tightly in your hearts and form a strong bond, now and forever. May this love knot be a reminder of the strength of your love and the binding together of your two hearts. EF (April 2018)

LOVE LOCK CEREMONY



The story goes that once a couple close a padlock together, just as the lock cannot be unlocked, nor can their love and commitment to one another. If the padlock comes with a key, the key is tossed into a river (or ocean), or tied to a helium balloon and released during the wedding ceremony. Suggested wording is:

(Names) have just pledged their lives to one another, symbolized with the giving and receiving of rings. They wish to further symbolize the strength of their commitment with a Love Heart Lock Ceremony. These two padlocks represent their recognition of the dedication and courage necessary for securing a strong and healthy marriage. I invite them to now attach their locks to the chain which is in the form of a circle, symbolic of unity, wholeness, and completion. (Names) have united in love and trust for a common purpose, for what was separate will now become whole and complete. (Names), please take the keys and secure your locks. As their hearts, bodies, and minds are joined together in a bond that constitutes the sanctity of marriage, these locks demonstrate that (Names) are forever joined together in a lifelong partnership and an abiding friendship, a promise between two people that they will forever strive to both complement and complete one another. At this time I ask (Names) to dispose of the keys, for what their love has brought together, let nothing ever break this.

PINNING OF THE TARTAN

This is where a groom would pin his tartan (as in rosette or ribbons) to his new bride as a way of welcoming her to his clan. If the groom is marrying into a Scottish clan he would have received a tartan and then a small sword for his son. In many cases, the Mother in Law of the bride does the pinning, however any other female relative can stand in where this is not possible.

Suggested wording is:

On this day you make two families one. Clan joins clan creating one larger and stronger, and cementing family ties. You have also created your own, new family within your clans. May you continue to strengthen and build your future together -- through all its hopes and disappointments, its successes and failures, its pleasures and its pains, its joys and its sorrows -- a future filled with the warmth and love of the family and friends gathered with you to celebrate your union today. May the pinning of these tartans not only be a symbol of the love and support you have had from your family and friends but also symbolize the love and support you will have from your new family and friends by uniting your lives together. EF (April 2018)

LOVE BOX CEREMONY

A *Love Letter and Wine Box* ceremony will serve as a lasting reminder of the commitments made to one another. Heartfelt letters, encapsulating your thoughts and feelings are locked away in a wine box to be revealed several years into your marriage. Whisky, Scotch or Tequila can easily be switched out for the wine. Suggested wording is:

BRIDE and GROOM have chosen as a couple to perform a Love Letter & Wine Box ceremony.

This box contains a bottle of wine, two glasses, and a love letter from each to the other.

The letters describe the good qualities they find in one another, the reasons they fell in love, and their reasons for choosing to marry.

The letters are sealed in individual envelopes and they have not seen what the other has written.

You have created your very own “romantic” time capsule to be opened on your 5th wedding anniversary.

I recommend that you keep the box in a place of honour prominently displayed in your home as a constant reminder of your commitment to each other.

BRIDE and GROOM should you ever find your marriage enduring insurmountable hardships, you are to as a couple, open this box, sit and drink the wine together, then separate and read the letters you wrote to one another when you were united as a couple in marriage.

By reading these love letters you will reflect upon the reasons you fell in love and chose to marry each other here today. The hope is, however, that you will never have a reason to open this box. And if this is the case, you are to open this box to share and enjoy on your 5th year wedding anniversary!

BRIDE and GROOM, you may now seal the box. EF (April 2018)

JUMPING THE BROOMSTICK

Jumping the broom is a time-honored wedding tradition in which the bride and groom jump over a broom during the ceremony. The act symbolizes a new beginning and a sweeping away of the past, and can also signify the joining of two families or offer a respectful nod to family ancestors. For all of these reasons, jumping the broom is an increasingly popular part of many modern wedding ceremonies. Suggested wording is:

Registrar: _____ and ____ has chosen to conclude their ceremony with the tradition of jumping the broom. Today we honour and celebrate the transition from two separate lives into one life united by love. We place a broom for jumping, which symbolizes the entrance of the couple into a new life together. *(At this point designated person-parent, family member best man...whomever you wish, places broom on ground in front of couple)*

Registrar: Sharing a life with another person requires many “leaps of faith.” The leap they take together over the broom is also symbolic. By taking the leap, they make a gesture of dedication to working together through the tough times ahead, as well as the easy times. They sweep behind the past and jump into the future together secure in their love.

Everyone please count with me - 1, 2, 3... Jump, as they perform their first act of working together as husband and wife; 1, 2, 3, jump! *The couple jumps over the broom, and then kiss. Immediately, the music begins and the couple recesses down the aisle to the cheers of family and friends!*



JUMPING THE SALT

Suggested wording is:

_____ and _____ has chosen to conclude their ceremony by jumping the salt.

In honour and celebration of their lives being united by love, we place this row of salt.

Salt is a preservative and therefore symbolises a long-lasting marriage.

It melts in ice so it is hoped that your relationship will not get frosty.

Salt adds flavour and zest to food – therefore may your marriage never become dull or flavourless.

Everyone please count with me - 1, 2, 3... Jump, as they perform their first act of working together as husband and wife; 1, 2, 3, jump! *The couple jumps over the line of salt, and then kisses. Immediately, the music begins and the couple recesses down the aisle to the cheers of family and friends!*

RING WARMING/WISHING

A ring warming is a special way to involve all of your guests in your ceremony. Suggested wording is:

..... and will exchange rings as a physical symbol of the vows they are making to one another. As the ceremony proceeds, will the families & friends of and please warm these rings by passing them down each row.

As you hold them in your hands, pause for a moment, and make your wishes for the couple and for their future together before you pass them on to the next person.

These rings will not only be a gift from one to another but will be given with the love, support and wisdom of their family and friends. EF (April 2018)

QUAICH – TO SIGNIFY BLENDING OF THE WHISKY

This is suggested wording you can incorporate into your own quaich ceremony:

Marriages are a blending of lives and of families. and
..... have decided today to symbolise this joining with a quaich ceremony.

These individual whisky's also represent the two families that will be joined today. By combining the two and express their willingness to join these families and to take their values and traditions.

Each individual whisky holds it's own beauty and character, and can stand on it's own without needing anything else. However, blended together, they create a new and extraordinary entity.

Please pour the whisky together into the quaich to symbolise the union of our two lives and families.

As with any glass of whisky, you will each have tasted something different.

Let the drink you shared today serve as a reminder that although you may perceive things differently, you will remember that marriage requires compromise and you will be able to blend the differences you each have just as you have blended the whisky to create a new whisky.

With this always remembered, your lives together will become deeper, richer and more satisfying – just as a rare fine whisky.

CROSSING OF SWORDS

Masculine equivalent to 'Jumping the broom' ceremony.

Also a symbol of clearing away obstacles. This can also be done using 1 broom and 1 sword – your lay them across each other and invite the bride and groom to hold hands and step over them, signifying obstacles in your path to your future.

LOG CUTTING CEREMONY

An old German wedding custom, the tradition of cutting a log represents the first obstacle that the couple must overcome in their marriage. They must work together to "overcome the obstacle" by sawing through the log. Using a large, long saw with two handles, the couple demonstrates their teamwork to friends and family, and their willingness and ability to master the difficulties that inevitably arise in a marriage. EF (April 2018)

JUMPING THROUGH LOVE HEART CUT OUT OF MATERIAL

It's believed this signifies taking a leap of faith into their marriage and into their new lives as husband and wife.

CHINESE WEDDING TEA CEREMONY

In China, serving tea when guests come is a very traditional propriety. It's a significant way to show respects. In a wedding, this act is to show respect and gratitude to parents for all the years of love and care.

A tea ceremony is also meaningful in many other ways: it's a symbol of purity, stability and fertility. The purity of the tea signifies the love is pure and noble; the stability of the tea stands for faithful love; the fertility of the tea means that the new couple will have many children.

The couple kneel down while serving tea to their elders. The groom should be on the right with the bride on his left. The male elder should sit in front of the groom while the female elder should sit facing the bride. It's suggested to have a 'fortune woman' or maid of honour, and 2 bridesmaids to assist during the tea ceremony: 1 person to hold the tea and gifts on the serving plate while the other person hands the tea. Another person can stand behind to ensure there is always enough warm tea to refill the small tea pot.

After everything is ready, the bride & groom will start serving tea to their relatives in order seniority. This is usually parents first, followed by grandparents, uncles & aunts, elder siblings then elder cousins. Some families may prefer to serve grandparents before parents.

For each serving, the groom is the first to serve tea, then the bride takes her turn. They should serve to the father and then the mother. For every couple they serve, there should be 4 cups of tea on the tea tray. Always serve the tea with both hands and greet them by their formal title in the family e.g.

"Father, please drink the tea."

After drinking the tea, the parents will present gifts in the form of red packets or jewellery to the couple. At the same time, they will give words of blessing and put the jewellery on the bride and groom. The tea ceremony is finished when all relatives of both families are served.

PIPERS NIP

A popular tradition at Scottish weddings is for the bride and groom to offer a dram to the piper once they have been 'piped' to the top table. The piper will then perform a toast to the newlyweds. The groom will then toast the piper before they pipe their way out of the room. This toast is usually done using a quaich of whisky. EF (April 2018)

ALTERNATIVE HANDFASTING

Instead of the customary handfasting, family and friends bind the hands of the couple together with a personally picked ribbon to symbolise their bond to each other and to family. The guests help out by handing the registrar their piece of ribbon therefore each contributing to the handfasting.

EMBLEM SWAP

This is a nice way to welcome the bride and groom to each other's family.