

## The Right Royal Wedding: The DownUnder Take on What Happened in Windsor the Other Day

Christine Stewart

*I wasn't even going to watch it, but then recalled that I had always had a sneaking appreciation of British royal pageantry—the funerals rather than the weddings, to be sure, but why not this too, it promised to be a bit different. And I was not disappointed.*

We here in Australia DownUnder got a rather pathetic commentary, but fortunately they gave up after burbling on about The Beard and The Dress, and let the ceremony itself take over. And what a ceremony!

First thing to note: Harry bawled his eyes out for most of the proceedings, closely followed by Meghan's mother. They only stopped for the occasional hymn (is this why they have hymns in church services?). Meghan on the other hand was positively enchanted by it all. She nailed her colours to the mast immediately, making her entrance down the aisle alone. 'I'm a strong independent woman who can definitely do this on my own.' Go Girl!

No wonder Harry fell so hard for her. She so resembled his mother (taking on wildly unpopular causes like hugging AIDS patients), and his grandmother Her Majesty (doing her father justice by declaring to the world that she would take on the running of the whole Empire). Each so strong, so determined to show and live the way. Go Girls, all!

Meanwhile, our commentator was panicking about a twenty-foot-long veil and ten tiny tots running around, but we DownUnder didn't need to worry, Britain's royals are made of centuries of sterner stuff, and the two beaming little boys did a wonderful job of keeping it all under control. Then Charles stepped up for the last lap to deliver her to the altar. Her idea, her choice. A lovely way to introduce herself to her new family.

And then it was game on. New World vs Old World. Old World kicked off, garbed in the usual plain white surplices, with the usual traditional recitations and procedures, some lovely singing, the soprano was superb. Okay, all good. But then it came to the Episcopalian Bishop's turn, and wasn't he a knock-out! There were quite a few murmurs about his going on for too long, but hey, when was he going to get another chance anyway—and what a wonderful message he delivered: LOVE.

And here's something I noticed. While the Archbishop and the Dean etc. delivered their messages to the altar, i.e. to Christ, the Bishop delivered his straight to the assembled multitudes of the guests—to the people who might need or want to hear it and be inspired by it.

And meanwhile, who was that sitting behind him almost out of sight, hunched over, back turned, his body language exuding some kind of amazement. The Dean, just amazed that people could express so much decidedly un-British emotion. Where was the stiff upper lip?

No matter, because in my book, it was already score one for the New World. But there was so much more to come! A swish of the curtains and it was on! The Freedom Choir, ablaze with colour from top to toe—sequined clothes, glittering jewellery, hair of blue, pink, purple, silver, launching into the most wonderful rompin' stompin' deep-south version of *Stand By Me*, punching it out, and my only disappointment was that they didn't actually start clapping and bursting out with a few Hallelujah's. That chapel rocked! Definitely score one for the New World, all the way back to its Old World invasion roots.

And finally it happened. William didn't fumble the rings. Harry went on crying, Meghan went on sparkling. Everybody who could stepped up to the plate to declare them married: the Archbishop, the Bishop and the guy in the turban—Orthodox Copt? (Yikes, last I had heard or read of the Copts was in Lawrence Durrell's *Alexandria Quartet*!)

And then when all the relevant parties had tromped off stage right for the legalities, the signatures on the paperwork ... then came the climax of the whole event: following on from that glorious performance of the Freedom Choir, the New World cellist playing decidedly Old World music, centuries of traditional British and continental pieces. It was an absolute winner, a perfect lay-down mise-à-repos.

And I learned later from family who had watched the whole thing in New Zealand, where they saw the BBC commentary, that Meghan had brought her beloved little dog with her, and when the open carriage set off for its round-Windsor parade, Her Majesty stepped straight in to take care of it. Dogs, horses and grandchildren, roughly in that order—those are her best loves! We can assume that the New World puppy had a great time meeting, greeting and romping with the Old World royal corgis!

MAIN

---

Published with the support of Gender and Cultural Studies, School of Culture, History and Language, College of Asia and the Pacific, The Australian National University.

URL: <http://intersections.anu.edu.au/issue42/stewart.html>

© Copyright

Page constructed by [Carolyn Brewer](#)

Last modified: 11 August 2018 1415