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Helpful staff makes wedding go off without hitch

JILL SUMMERHAYES, PIECE OF MIND

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After two really hectic weeks with family happenings, life is getting back to normal at our house.

One of the things I most appreciated during this time was the professionalism of the staff at the new civic administration building and the Centre for the Arts. One person after another went out of their way to ensure my daughter Helen's wedding to Mark Fisher - which took place in the Bowman Room at the civic administration building - went smoothly.

The facility lends itself to a perfect setting for weddings, dinners, festivals and other celebrations. It, and the Civic Square, had been used the weekend before, with crowds from the Mill Race folk festival appreciating the green wall, the light and general ambiance of the building.

Our overseas and out of town guests were duly impressed, and more than a little surprised that the city the size of Cambridge was a leader in the field and had won the LEED gold award. It seems fitting that the staff of the community services department behave like gold medallists and go beyond expectations to please. Everyone from the front desk reception to the custodian and cleaners were helpful. On Friday afternoon, the Bowman Room, catering to folk who wanted to be married on 08/08/08, was filled with celebration. Our rehearsal for a wedding on the Saturday followed.

Those not directly in the wedding party were setting up for the reception, arranging flowers, clothing tables and covering chairs with fancy silk covers. Every step of the way staff were co-operative. After one of the Friday weddings, where popcorn was used for confetti, which is discouraged, it was cleaned up immediately. The next morning we used bubbles, which after handing out to the guests, made no mess and looked pretty.

The staff work as a team and, while sometimes the bureaucracy may irritate citizens, from my perspective I would say we have one of the finest municipal staff one could wish for. Special thanks to Mary Doucette, Tamara Louks, Gwen Stott and others for their assistance. Of course, I thought the wedding was wonderful. The rain held off for photos and did not start until the reception.

If local newspaper columnists were allowed to commend local businesses there would be many that I would thank. Current restrictions from the *Times* on writing about my travels, family or naming local businesses are now topics that management request I avoid. Those of you who have read about my family for the last two decades, and have shown an interest, and asked about grandchildren, please ask me personally as I will not be sharing information in this newspaper. My column will be about items of more general interest.

Now, gearing up for the artists' Studio Tour and other community commitments will be back on my agenda.

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