


6 couples who got married at Pride

More than 100 couples tied the knot during World Pride 2014's Grand Pride Wedding at Casa Loma on Thursday. Here's what they said about the big day.

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TODD COYNE / [TORONTO STAR](#)

Texas residents Craighton Cooper, left, and Bonn Brown. "In my life, I never thought this day would happen," Brown said.

By: Todd Coyne Staff Reporter, Published on Fri Jun 27 2014

Bonn Brown and Craighton Cooper of Dallas, Texas

Texas dermatology consultants Bonn Brown and Craighton Cooper have long been business partners, but now they're life partners in the eyes of the law.

Canadian law, at least.

Despite their 15-year relationship and a newly minted marriage certificate, the couple will return to Dallas next week and continue their lives together as legally “single” under Texas justice.

“In my life, I never thought this day would happen,” Brown said of the ceremony. It was Brown who popped the question, surprising his partner with a clever bit of cloak and dagger.

“We knew we were going to the Toronto Police Pride Ball last night,” Brown said, revealing how he got Cooper’s identification to secure the wedding papers. “I told him I needed his passport for security clearance.”

Don Wiggins and Eddie Pebenito of Toronto

Don Wiggins and Eddie Pebenito arrived to their wedding on a rainbow-bedecked TTC bus.

“It just started to hit me and I thought, ‘I’m going to cry,’” Wiggins said after stepping through the bus doors and posing for photos. The Hawaii natives met while surfing off Oahu 28 years ago, and now they call Toronto home.

“Surfing is not really a gay culture,” Wiggins said. “Especially 25 years ago.”

“Most people back the just stayed in the closet,” Pebenito adds. “But today we’re very, very excited.”

Lisa and Cassie Macaulay of Whitby

Whitby residents Lisa and Cassie Macaulay were together six years before there was a wedding proposal.

“That was 10 years ago,” Lisa joked.

But Thursday’s Grand Pride Wedding sounded like a lot of fun. It was the push the couple finally needed to wed for real.

“Everyone here is in acceptance and that is why we chose to do it,” Lisa added.

In the end, marriage won’t change them, they agreed.

“We’re just here to have fun.”

Inae Lee and Jen Chang Ho of Toronto

Inae Lee just texted her parents in South Korea a photo of her in her wedding dress.

“They immediately said, ‘That doesn’t look good. What is going on?’” Lee said.

Lee’s parents don’t approve of their daughter’s relationship with her now-wife, Jen Chang Ho, she explained.

That didn’t stop them from marrying at Casa Loma.

The pair fell in love more than two years ago after meeting at a workshop for Asian women’s outreach in Toronto.

“I wanted to do the slow way of dating for a long time but I knew right away that she wanted to be girlfriends,” said Chang Ho.

Danette Steele and Lorna Storey of Toronto

It was an event to raise awareness about violence against women that drew Danette Steele and Lorna Storey together 25 years ago.

They lived in Ottawa at the time. In the years that followed, there were many marriage proposals between them — “but no knees involved,” Storey said with a laugh at Casa Loma on Thursday.

Steele and Storey live in Toronto now. To them, the mass wedding made perfect sense.

After all those years, Getting down on one knee proved unnecessary.

“We just thought what better than to do this here at World Pride in Toronto,” she added.

“This isn’t like a second coming out but it’s an interesting time of reflection and deepening. And fun.”

“Yeah. It’s been a lot of fun,” Steele added.

Nora and Erna of Toronto

Nora and Erna, who requested their last names not be published, met at a bus stop in the Philippines in 1965.

Back then, the office manager and the University of Toronto employee were just students themselves. Needless to say, a lot has changed.

“We were teenagers,” Nora said. “Because it’s a very Catholic country and we’re both from very conservative families, we didn’t think we could do it and we actually tried our best not to be in a relationship.”

Nora actually got married, to a man, and had two sons — one of whom was due in attendance on Thursday.

“The other is here in spirit because he is working, and because there is a Blue Jays game,” Nora said.

After her first marriage dissolved, she and Erna got back together in 1993.

The two finally wed for practical reasons, as well as for love, Erna said.

“It’s getting harder and harder to be in just a common-law relationship in terms of the law and what that assures us as far as documents, property ownership, that kind of thing,” she said.