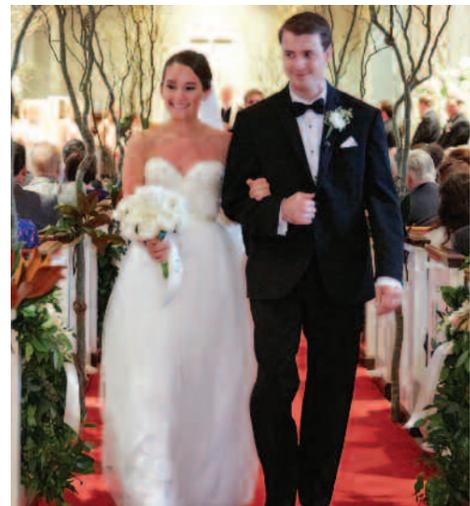
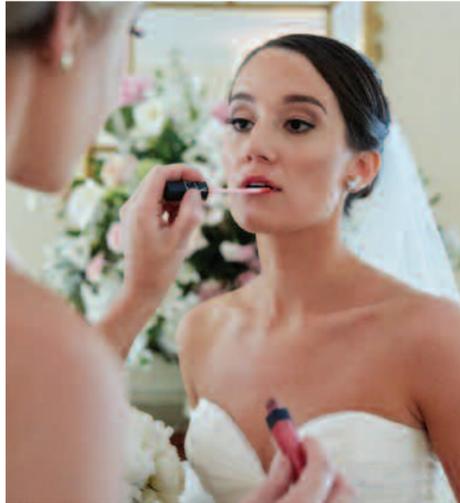


Kendel Todd & Chad Parks... Happily Ever After

Ever since Kendel Todd Parks was a little girl, she dreamed of her fairytale wedding. Kendel's parents, Debby Sacra and Ted Todd, are the owners of The Blossom Shop, Charlotte's premier florist for over 85 years. Kendel and her brother Mason grew up watching and sometimes helping in the family business, so over the years Kendel has seen many a gorgeous wedding and knew all the time, work, effort and love that must go into making the once-in-a-life-time fairytale dream a reality.



TEXT BY HEIDI BILLOTTO PHOTOGRAPHY BY CRITSEY ROWE FLOWERS BY THE BLOSSOM SHOP

For Kendel and Chad Parks the excitement of their story began at the University of Alabama. They knew each other, but not very well. As fate (and luck) would have it, they both ended up in New York after college. Kendel moved to the city first, and then two years later Chad's company relocated him to New York.

Within a week of relocating, Chad reached out, suggesting that they meet for drinks. The couple met at The Bryant Park Hotel one night in December 2012 and the rest, as Kendel tells it, is history...

Chad proposed in Bryant Park, on a Saturday in July of 2014. After a regular weekend lunch at the café in what they both call "Our Park", Chad asked Kendel to pose the middle of the park, so he could take a picture for his mom.

But instead of snapping the shot, Chad got down on one knee, Kendel burst into tears of joy as she said "YES!" and the crowd in the park, which was obviously bustling on such a beautiful summer day, gathered round and cheered in celebration!

The icing on this couple's soon-to-be-wedding cake

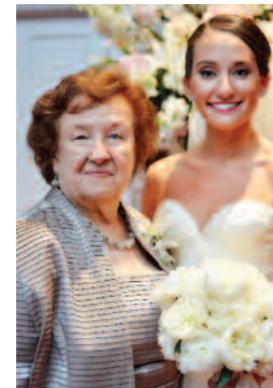
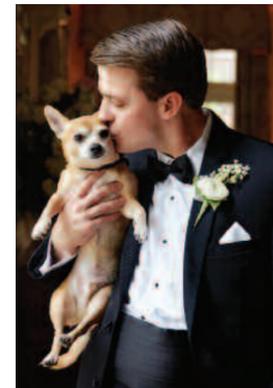
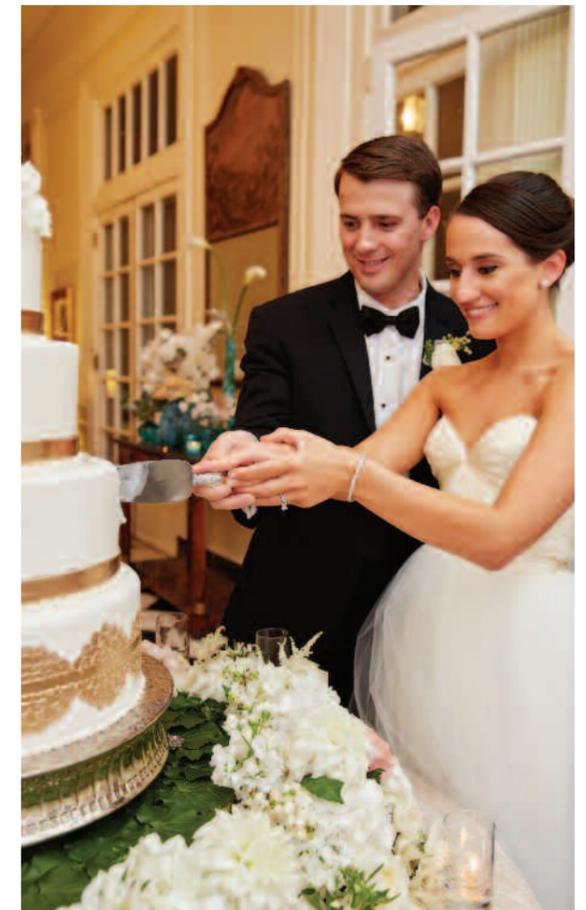
came from a young girl in the happy crowd. She had taken a video of the whole thing! She told Kendel and Chad it was 'like a fairytale to end her trip to the big city.'

For Kendel and Chad it marked a remembrance of the beginning of the pre-wedding excitement to come.

Kendel describes her wedding as a dream – every aspect had a special meaning, from the church and reception venue, to the music and, of course, the flowers. The couple credits Kendel's parents and The Blossom Shop team with taking the vision and



Celebration at The Duke Mansion



making it a reality with an attention for amazing detail at every turn.

Kendel grew up minutes from The Duke Mansion, and it had always been her dream to get married there one day. Knowing that preparation is key to planning the day of your dreams, booking the venue was the first thing on the agenda.

The couple was married at Avondale Presbyterian,

the church Kendel grew up in, by the pastor that baptized her, Dr. John Earl. Photographer Critsey Rowe used the church and The Duke Mansion as beautiful backdrops before, during and after the ceremony, for this gorgeous portfolio of wedding photographs which included the couple's dog Prince. Prince wasn't a part of the ceremony, but everyone agreed he had to be a part of the photo sessions!

Even the rain, not planned for but deemed a sign of good luck, made for extraordinary photos as it sparkled like stars around this happy couple.

After the nuptials, the wedding party loaded up in picturesque trolley from Rose Transportation, and motored over to the reception, champagne glasses in hand, raised high to toast the happy couple. It was a rainy day, but flowers were everywhere from the

The wedding of their dreams came true...



rectangular wreaths on the church windows, to the tall arrangements on the tables inside and out on the covered porch at the historic Duke Mansion. Buffets and bars were set up in several rooms, and the stunning wedding cake by Cake Expressions by Lisa served as the centerpiece in the main hall.

In arranging the flowers and wreaths for the reception inside and outside of The Duke Mansion, The Blossom Shop contracted with Wink Lighting to help set the tone. In the right light an event goes from sensational to spectacular. It's the fine details – the ones no guest is ever aware of – that turn an ordinary event into a unforgettable memory.

A band and dance floor in the large side ballroom was the center for most of the fun at the reception. The Emerald Empire Band had the crowd on their feet and enjoying the festivities. After the formality

of toasts, the cutting of the cake and the first dances, men's jackets and ladies' shoes quickly went by the wayside, and women traded their heels for fun silver-colored flip flops provided for each of the guests.

At 10 pm the bride's brother Mason Todd was surprised with a birthday cake, and all joined the band in with a rousing round of "Happy Birthday." Guests put silver and gold monogrammed koozies to good use; and the party favors – grey t-shirts with the "I Heart NY" logo – were a special remembrance of the city where their romance began.

The wedding party and the bride and groom stayed in The Duke Mansion's upstairs rooms, but the couple still wanted to make a fun exit. Kendel disappeared upstairs to change as guests were handed shakers in the Crimson Tide colors of Kendel and Chad's alma mater to send them off in style. The

photo of the kiss that swept the bride off her feet is one of the couple's favorites! ■

Kendel and Chad would like to thank everyone who made their dreams come true on their special day:

Wedding Party – Bride: Kendel Todd; Groom: Chad Parks; Parents of the Bride: Ted Todd and Debbie Sacra; Parents of the Groom: Alex and Kathy Parks; Maid of Honor: Nell Parsons; Matron of Honor: Meghan Tcherkezian; Bridesmaids: Katie Feemster, Marla Lawson, Logan Morse, Meredith Sargent, Adrienne Knowlton, Kelli Froleich; Best Man: Grant Backe; Groomsmen: Mason Todd, Robert Parks, Philip Ratliff, Will Hollingsworth, Jim Wills, Ross Lowe, Cooper Berry; Flower Girl: Natalie Bookout. Kendel's Grandmother: Sidra Sacra (pictured); Reception and Catering: The Duke Mansion; Flowers by The Blossom Shop; Photography by Critsey Rowe; Wedding Cake: Cake Expressions by Lisa; Lighting by Wink Lighting; Music by Carolina Strings, Tom Billotto, Jimmy Bookout and the Emerald Empire Band; Gown by Sarah Seven; Bride's Shoes by Jimmy Choo; Bridesmaids' Dresses by Lela Rose at Bella Bridesmaids NYC; Tuxedos by Michael Kors at The Tuxedo Shop