

THE STORY OF PLANNING A WEDDING CEREMONY...

by Ruth Graham, Independent Celebrant

PANIC STATIONS!

Matt and Michelle were let down at the last moment when their celebrant became ill two weeks prior to their wedding.

They came to me in a panic as I was local to them, figuring that our close proximity would at least allow us to meet up a couple of times and pull something together!



THE PROCESS

I met with the couple, and we clicked immediately. No-nonsense Matt, and calm, dreamy Michelle were a lovely couple, who had been through very hard times together. I decided there and then to make their wedding special. We met twice, and had many emails and conversations. The process went like this:



THE DETAIL

I got their **story**
Shaped up their **ceremony** running order
Advised on suggested **reading ideas**
Helped Michelle **write her vows**
Took many **phone calls** as the couple dealt with more problems and changes.
I **liaised with the bridesmaids** and anyone else doing a reading
I **organised entry and exit music**
Then I **sourced a bag for the rings**, and other props, plus **planned their 'surprise'!**

VISITING THE VENUE

The couple had chosen Castle Ring on Cannock Chase – an outdoor space that was special to them. They had no plans whatsoever except to just 'be' there for the ceremony under a group of trees in a shady spot.



Having 'walked the course', I felt it needed more - this is where my attempt to make things a bit better for them came in.

I begged and borrowed (no stealing).. candles, tablecloth, table, photo frames etc. And planned to put together a focal point 'altar' for them to stand by when taking their vows. *But I kept this secret as a surprise* because I knew they'd love it!!!

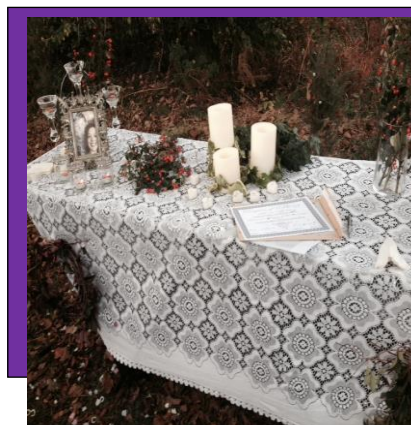
ON THE DAY

Up early to raid my own garden of flowers, creepers and foliage with which to make table wreaths and arrangements.



This is how things looked when I arrived at Castle Ring! Just a trolley, table and chair.

**And 2 hours later,
this was the finished product!**



THE CEREMONY

When they arrived – Matt and Michelle’s faces were a picture! The guests all commented on how beautiful the scene was. They’d been to the registry office for the basic legalities, and now for the ceremony how they wanted it!

The music started – beautiful droning celtic pipes, and then they entered towards the table, with happy tears in their eyes.

The ceremony went off without a hitch – we had readings, remembering those in spirit, releasing of the bride and groom – then the vows, warming of the rings and the final words. The guests who hadn’t been at all sure what they were going to experience, said it was ‘refreshing’/beautiful and moving. And Matt and Michelle couldn’t have been happier.

A beautiful day was had by all!

