



Return to the romantic is achieved in this rose petal gown by Ron LoVece with 44 hand-made silk pink roses at \$1,150. (Staff photo by Dick Kelley).

## Oh, happy day...

*Marriage is on the upswing, according to reports from the U.S. Office of Vital Statistics. The current rate of marriage is about 10 for every 1,000 people. This is up from 8.5 just a decade ago. Happy news, too, is that conventional-type weddings are again predominant. Wedding travesties in a swimming pool, on a golf course, or baring-it-all in a nudist camp nuptial are happily limited to publicity seekers. Both major bridal magazines say the trend is definitely toward romantic, elegant and exquisitely planned event.*

# Brides are in a romantic mood



Shades of the 1940's are captured in this Briddalure gown featuring a pleated front, sheer yoke and lace-trimmed bodice with high neck and matching headpiece.

The wedding scene changes with the times and 1979 will see the emphasis on the romantic and a return to the traditional.

Although the styling of today's wedding gown has changed considerably in the past 150 years, the pendulum, has swung back to the traditional wedding. The 1979 bride, looking for quality and creativity in her bridal gown, considers her wedding dress a symbol of the new lifestyle which follows the wedding day.

When Sue Gordon of Birmingham presented her recent spring-summer bridal show, she selected the classic setting of the new Gorman's Drexel Heritage show room, combined with the music of Detroit's Pastiche Wind Quintet to serve as background for her classic, contemporary bridal gowns.

According to Pam Collins, Bride magazine coordinator who was a special guest at the bridal showing, "Most people don't realize that the bridal market is a \$12 billion a year business."

"The average bride is 22 years old while the groom's average age is 25," said Ms. Collins. "The couple is engaged for 10 months and they spend about \$4,500 furnishing a home, spending an additional \$800 for table top items."

The interest in quality and tradi-

tion being exhibited by the soon-to-be-wed couples extends far beyond the clothing they select, Ms. Collins added.

"It is important for the bride to select fine china and sterling patterns. Most couples have discovered that if they don't acquire these things at the very beginning of a marriage, they will never have them," she said.

In keeping with the return to more traditional weddings and the new lifestyle to follow, brides are selecting fine china, often the classic floral patterns, and are insisting upon sterling silver as an investment.

"They know these things will appreciate in value," said Ms. Collins.

Today's bride and groom are more sophisticated, more conservative in taste, and more interested in quality and tradition than in years past, she added.

"The average bride and groom begin their marriage with a combined annual income of over \$22,000 a year," Ms. Collins said.

Although the average cost of a bridal gown is \$200, the selection at Sue Gordon's is priced from \$300 to \$3,000. Ms. Collins said the Sue Gordon bridal shop in Bir-

(Continued on page 15)



Hooded innocence by Ron LoVece at \$825. (Staff photo by Dick Kelley)