

Many Loving Stitches Fashion Bride's Gown

By MARGARET MILLER
Women's Editor

Several dozen hours of loving labor went into the shimmering wedding gown Charlene Richardson wore Saturday afternoon when she met Kirk Spencer at the altar of Plymouth's First United Methodist Church.

Her dress was crocheted by her mother, Mrs. James A. Richardson, and a friend, Ann Mark of Livonia.

Arlene Richardson made the skirt, using a lacy fan and feather stitch to fashion its 70-inch sweep.

"I kept track of the hours, and it was 68 for that part of the work," she said. "I had to finish it by the July 4 weekend because we were leaving for our vacation."

Miss Mark, a co-worker of Mrs. Richardson's at the Hawthorn Center, took over then.

A crocheter as far back as she can remember and now a producer of custom apparel and teacher of crocheting and knitting, she had fashioned the bodice with a "simple half-double crochet" stitch with worked-in darts and a shell stitch at the neckline.

Before the holiday weekend was over, she had joined the skirt and bodice with a band of jeweled trim at the empire waistline, attached full, sheer polyester sleeves and even sewn in a perfectly concealed zipper.

Miss Mark also fashioned the satin headpiece, decorated with matching jeweled trim, to hold Charlene's sheer, bouffant veil.

How much time? "One doesn't really keep track," she said.

THE PROJECT BEGAN, somewhat unfittingly, with a christening dress: Mrs. Richardson made it

about a year ago, because she thought it would be nice for some future grandchild.

Charlene, who recently had accepted Kirk's ring, commented that the crochet pattern would make a beautiful wedding dress.

"I repeated that to Ann," Mrs. Richardson said, "and she said it could be done."

The work was begun in February and picked up speed after Charlene and Kirk set the date. The material is an imported synthetic called parfait, and its sheen gives the gown a shimmering effect. Mrs. Richardson said the total cost for materials was \$175.

"It's supposed to be machine washable," Miss Mark said, "but I'd certainly hate to see it go in a machine."

"Absolutely not," said Mrs. Richardson. "We'll handwash it, and hope it will become a family heirloom." Thirteen-year-old Sherylyn Richardson, who was one of Charlene's bridesmaids, hopes so too. She'd like to wear it to her own wedding some day.

THE BRIDE wasn't the only one with crocheted finery in Saturday's wedding.

Mrs. Richardson's mother - of - the - bride dress was light blue polyester with panels of ecru crocheted Queen Anne's lace from high waist to hem.

Two other co-workers, Mrs. Jeanne Stumpf of Livonia and Mrs. Mary Wilson of Plymouth, made it for her as a surprise.

"I really didn't see it until it was all finished," she said. "I had fittings with a bag over my head."

Ann Mark teaches crocheting and knitting at Church Hill High School in the Livonia Adult Education program. She also is working on a book on crocheting and fills all sorts of custom orders for apparel.

"I've made whole wardrobes," she said. "But this is the prettiest."



A PREVIEW PICTURE of Charlene Richardson's wedding gown was snapped by Observer photographer Harry Mauthe. With the bride are Ann Mark (center) and Mrs. James Richardson, who made the dress. Mrs. Richardson is holding her mother-of-the-bride dress, made for her by two friends.

Information Distribution

Jaycettes Have New Mission

A new project for Jaycette auxiliaries is aimed at softening just a bit one of the most shattering blows that can befall parents of babies.

The Jaycettes of Livonia and other Michigan communities are distributing literature and information about "sudden infant death syndrome"-SIDS for short, and also known as "crib death."

In Livonia, police and fire officers, as well as pediatricians, general practitioners, churches and funeral homes are getting kits with facts known so far about the strange disease that kills babies so suddenly.

THE PROJECT is much appreciated by the Michigan Chapter of the National Foundation for Sudden Infant Death, Inc., which had its beginnings in Livonia.

"The tragedy of putting a healthy child to bed and then finding him dead a short time later is much worse when the parents didn't know about the disease," said Mrs. Mary Pearce of Farmington, whose daughter and son-in-law lost a baby boy when they were Livonia residents several years ago.

"My daughter and her husband had heard of sudden infant death, and that helped a little," she added. "But there are so many cases in which nothing is known and couples blame themselves or each other."

MRS. MARGE RIKER, chairman of the SIDS committee for the Livonia Jaycettes, said the drive to inform the public about crib death is a state-wide one.

In this area, the Plymouth, Redford, and North Jaycette groups also have begun information - distribution programs. The Livonia women will have passed out about 300 kits by the time they complete their work.

Each includes a letter from the auxiliary over Mrs. Riker's signature, asking that the recipient take a little time to study the information. There's also a booklet explaining that SIDS is not suffocation, aspiration or regurgitation, is not hereditary and is not even "freakish" since it affects between 10,000 and 15,000 babies every year.

Also in the kit is a letter from the Michigan chapter of the foundation and a list of names and telephone numbers of members who can be telephoned by tragedy-stricken parents any hour of the day or night.



MRS. MARGE RIKER (right) Livonia Jaycette, gives Sgt. Archie Hewett of the Livonia Police Department a kit with facts on sudden infant death syndrome. With them is Mrs. Mary Pearce, a member of the Michigan chapter of the National Foundation for Sudden Infant Death, Inc. (Observer photo by Harry Mauthe)

THE INFORMATION is being given funeral homes Mrs. Riker said, in the hope that some visitors there will find a contribution to SIDS research an answer to the what-ten-I-do question.

The U.S. Congress has appropriated \$10 million for such research, and some statistics have been compiled about how the disease occurs, but no cause has been found.

Mrs. Pearce termed the Jaycette effort another good step in the direction of making facts about SIDS better known.

"After the Muskegon Jaycettes went into action," she said, "the hospital there asked for brochures for all its graduating nurses."

ONLY A FEW years ago, she added there was great resistance to efforts by the Michigan chapter of the national foundation to send speakers out to inform people about the illness.

"It was considered too depressing. Now, as newspaper and magazine articles are published and especially since the Marcus Welby television show on the subject last year, people want to know more about it."

Those in this area wishing more information about SIDS may write to the Michigan Chapter, National Foundation for Sudden Infant Death, Inc., P.O. Box 2223, Livonia, 48151.

m. m. memos

When our youngest came home from camp a few weeks ago, she made a startling announcement.

She was going to put away all her Barbie dolls, she said, because she didn't want to play with them any more.

The sister who shares a room with her was ecstatic. She's had to put up with Barbies and all that goes with them filling the closet and overflowing into the room most of the time.

I wasn't so sure. Maybe I wasn't quite ready for the end of the doll era.

But Barbie and Ken and their friends, even the camper that caused such a scandal a season or two back, did indeed get packed up. Some clothes went to the younger girls next door, and the rest went up the steep steps to the attic.

For about three weeks. Then I had a call one afternoon. She was at a friend's house and she'd been invited to eat supper and stay the night, but first she had to come home and get her Barbies so they could play.

"Well, just sometimes," she finished. "I'm still not going to play Barbies very often."

So Barbie and Co. remain members of the family. Childhood hasn't passed us by - yet.

-Margaret Miller



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