

# SCRAP THE WEDDING



Me and Mark



WE SAID I DO TO VINTAGE!



From old and forgotten...



To a wedding staple

## Melissa Drabble, 41, from Buxton, went for something borrowed and not something new for her dream wedding...

**B**rowsing the selection of odd bits and bobs, I couldn't help but fantasise about the previous lives these unwanted items once led.

Who knew where they came from or who they once belonged to?

Picking up antique trinkets at local car boot sales, I searched for the quirkiest items – I gave them a new lease of life in my childhood bedroom.

And I just knew my love for collecting vintage items would stick with me for life, too.

Meeting my husband Mark, 42, in 1999, I was surprised to learn that he was a car boot enthusiast like me.

Instantly, we bonded over our shared love for studying history in school and finding

out the hidden meanings behind the relics and artefacts.

As two curious 16-year-olds with nothing else to do, we were always rummaging through car boot sales and charity shops.

And with Mark's dad being a builder, Mark would always

weigh in heavy metals, curious to know its value or discover its potential new use.

So, it was only natural for Mark and me to set up our own scrapyards named Tin Man Scrap and

Derbyshire Reclamation Centre in 2011.

Meant only to be a brief stop gap in between jobs for Mark, it started as a shed in our garden.

Buying scrap metal and old furniture from the community, we soon outgrew the space and after selling our £2,000 white

Renault 5 Turbo car, we expanded to a larger unit.

Taking in anything we could get our hands on, from antique radiators to eccentric ornaments from decades ago, we saw the value in everything.

We compiled our favourite items into a corner, just in case.

And then, in April 2021, Mark popped the question – overjoyed, of course I said yes!

It was an impromptu proposal as we were driving home one evening, so Mark didn't even have a ring!

But I knew what I wanted...

In one of our daily deliveries to the scrapyards, I spotted an antique, golden, daisy shaped ring, with a single sparkling diamond embedded into the band, amongst the scrap metal.

*I'm having that!* I thought, instantly falling in love.

And so I kept it for my engagement ring – to me, it didn't matter that Mark didn't pick it out.

I knew what I wanted when I saw it and I preferred having something unique

rather than shop bought.

'I didn't want to go ring shopping for hours, anyway!' I told Mark, who was relieved.

And for our wedding, we decided to stay true to what we loved the most – our natural flair for all things antique.

With our wedding date of 18 September 2021 creeping up on us, we had to get cracking straight away on preparation.

As a child, I'd always dreamed of having a big wedding. A church packed full of guests, colourful bouquets –



I chose a retro style

the whole nine yards.

But growing up, I realised all of those things didn't matter.

Instead, I wanted something intimate and meaningful.

So, we leaned into our passion for pre-loved for our dream wedding.

Scouring through our save pile at the junkyard, the items almost gleamed with potential.

*I could paint this,* I thought,

dragging another ornate chair out of the corner.

And it wasn't just the tables and chairs we upcycled either.

With bargains on the brain, I perused Facebook Marketplace and local charity shops for our next hidden gem.

Seeing a roundabout saved from an old park online, dating back to 1910, I knew I couldn't let it go to waste.

Sending it away for the wood to be replaced and its character to be restored to its former glory, I had big plans for it.

Coating it in Tiffany blue and pale pink paint – a colour scheme I picked due to my love for the classic 1950s retro style – the Edwardian relic doubled up as extra seating in our garden where the wedding reception took place.

We even rescued an old wooden phone box from a local stage production, welcoming more quirky additions into our wedding. A lick of paint saw it



As good as new

completely transformed, giving it a new lease of life as a huge cake bar, providing yummy treats for our guests.

We even tried to breathe new life into every aspect of our wedding – this even included some of our clothing.

While I bought my wedding dress brand new, I managed to find my daughter Chloe, 22, a stunning bridesmaids dress, brand new with tags, for just £50 in a local charity shop.

I was shocked to find the same dress online for £400!

Our wedding rings are recycled, too – we saved some scrap gold from the yard and sent it off to be welded into our special bands.

Even our food on the day was all locally sourced from the butchers down the road and a quick trip to Waitrose, with one of our closest friends cooking up a storm in our kitchen at home.

Slipping on my wedding dress on 18 September 2021, Mark and I tied the knot in our local church.

We kept things intimate, inviting just 16 guests to watch us make the ultimate promise.

And Mark looked so dashing, too, in his dark blue suit with a pink handkerchief which matched our retro colour scheme.

Heading back to the house for the after party, I couldn't wait to see everyone's reactions to what we had created.

Our friends and family loved how unique the wedding was, remarking how it just screamed 'us' on the day.

'I've never been to a wedding like this before,' they said.

Knowing that we got to honour our love for repurposing antiques all throughout our big day made

our wedding so special.

My favourite part was the chairs we upcycled – they went from being old and horrible to beautiful and a main feature of the whole day! It just goes to show that with a lick of paint and fresh fabric, you can bring anything back to life.

But for Mark, his highlight was the corner we dedicated to all things vintage, including some polished up old signs and our iconic pink phone box.

We even made a few extra pennies after our big day, too, selling on our upcycled antiques and even the marquee we found on Facebook Marketplace for more than what we originally paid.

Spending just £6,000 on making our big day perfect, we ended up saving a whopping £24,000 – if not for our renovations, we would've been a huge £30,000 out of pocket!

Selling our renovated chairs and tables as well as the bar and China used on the day, we even managed to make back an impressive £4,000!

Who knew marriage could be so profitable?

And while our wedding is the peak of our reclamation mission so far, we don't plan on stopping there.

Since then, I've continued my hunt for more vintage pieces to add to our home.

I recently salvaged a few deer and stag ornaments from the scrapyards which sit beside our reclaimed marble fireplace in the living room.

While some may see our style as too dated, I think it's time to turn back the clock on abandoning antiques.

Follow @melissa.drabble on TikTok for more and visit: [derbyshireclamation.co.uk](http://derbyshireclamation.co.uk)

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