



PIEDMONT WEDDING *Country Style*

Memories are made from a spectacular setting,
artistic flourishes, and a Jeffersonian context.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROBERT LLEWELLYN

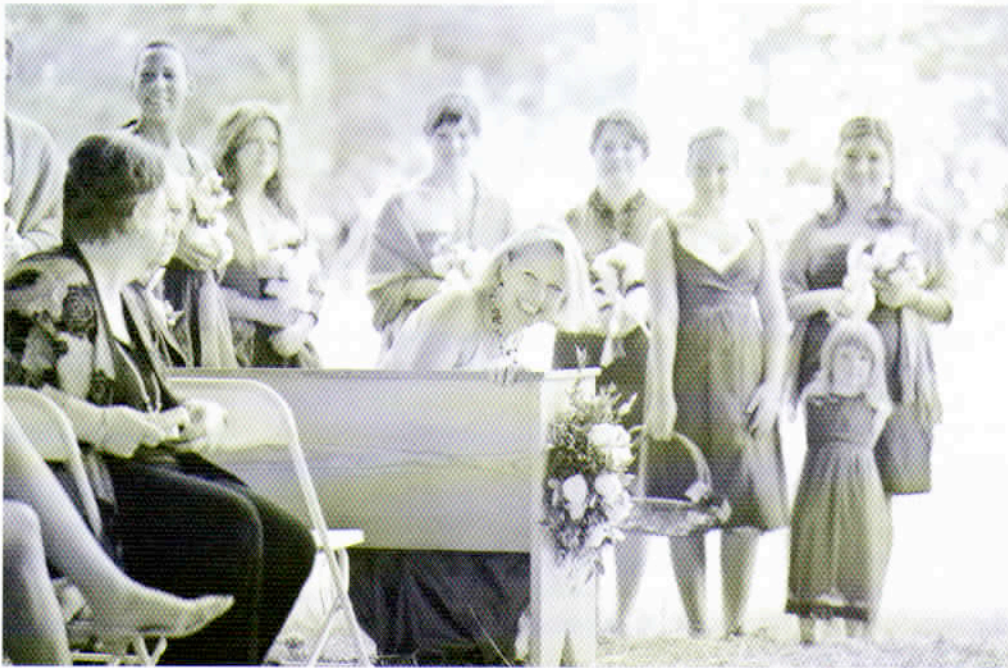
ON SEPTEMBER 20, 2008, Erin Crowe and Emmett Cawley tied the knot at the hay barn at Erin's family farm. The setting could not be more spectacular: Firnew Farm overlooks the luminous violet edge of the Blue Ridge near where the Middle River divides Greene and Madison Counties.

Erin hoped to create a "Jeffersonian Wedding" akin to commencement at Mr. Jefferson's University: Students face the Rotunda on UVA's Lawn as they begin their academic journey and then, as graduates, turn to face the mountains as they embark on their "real lives." With the sun dropping low in the sky, the bride and her father arrived via horse and buggy to the classical sounds of local musicians, The Wagner String Trio.

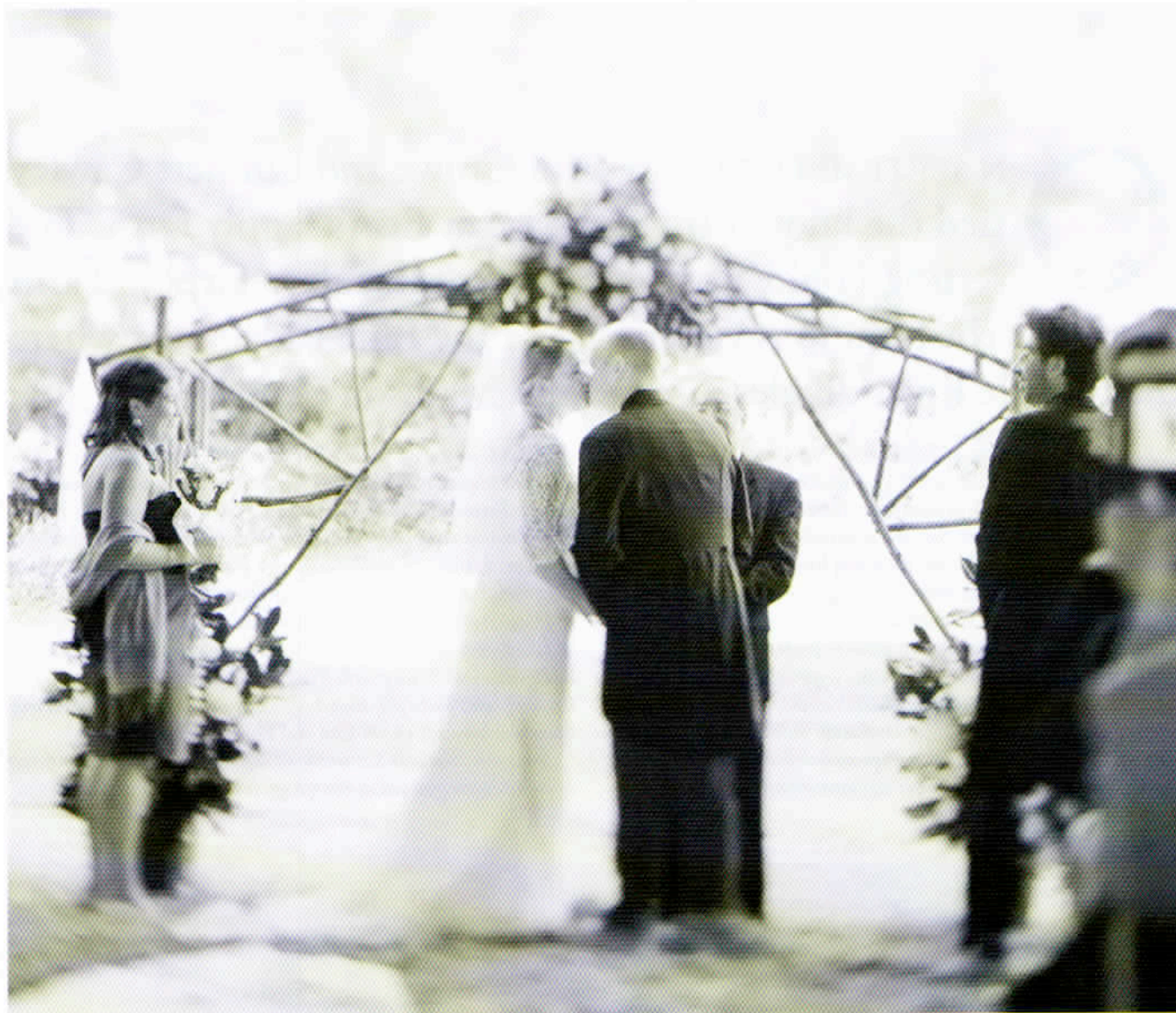
It's little wonder that such a picture-perfect event was conceived by two artists: one, the bride, a portrait artist, and the other, the mother-of-the-bride, Trish Crowe, an illustrator and graphic designer. "I knew the challenge would be two artists putting their very individual stamps on her farm wedding," says Trish Crowe of the engagement announcement.

Indeed, all the decorative elements were designed by the artists who participate in The Artist Circle that meets in the Studio at Firnew Farm. The table decorations were simple branches buried in cement in terra cotta pots. The branches were adorned with a nest and cascade of fresh flowers by Gail Trimmer Unterman, a dear friend of Trish Crowe who just launched her flower business, My Best Buds. The cocktail tables were designed from the trunks of fallen trees, and even the ice cooler was a trunk carved out and lined with a steel insert and filled with local wines and beers. The Crowes' farm manager, Alex, built the hoopa from reclaimed tree branches, beneath which Erin and Emmett were married.

And the flowers? Courtesy of friends of the mother-of-the-bride who camped out in the garage for days prepping and assem-



Awaiting the bride, Trish Crowe, mother of the bride, smiles broadly (above). She made the flower girl dresses. The bride and her father arrive by horse and carriage (facing page).



"You may now kiss the bride." Erin and Emmett get hitched under the hoopa built by the Crowes' farm manager.

bling the colorful bouquets. L'équipe de fleuristes comprised representatives of four regional Garden Clubs: Greene County, Albemarle, Madison, and Dolly Madison in Orange.

One could say that "going local" was a theme of the wedding, as even the food—catered by the acclaimed C & O Restaurant in Charlottesville—was locally sourced: trout from Ragged Mountain Trout Farm, cheese from Iron Rod Farm's French Alpine dairy goats, and veggies from Eden Farms. To start, guests were tempted with mouth-watering nibbles; the passed appetizers included figs broiled with Stilton, Shrimp shu mai, Fresh Melon wrapped in Prosciutto, and Vietnamese summer rolls.

The tables were set with gorgeous saris that Erin bought in the street markets of Bahrain, where she and her husband now reside. When seated for the family-style dinner, the guests tucked into grilled buffalo flank steak with port stilton glaze, served with roast-

ed potatoes. A platter of grilled summer vegetables included zucchini, eggplant, Vidalia onions, red peppers, asparagus, and mushrooms. There were also broccoli flowers with red pepper rouille, and roasted corn and a black bean salad. The wedding cake was made by the Crowes' very own Postmistress, Mary Hood, whose family has manned the Hood Post Office for over 150 years.

After much dancing, the wedding guests were treated to a mid-night snack. The Taco Truck arrived from Charlottesville so that hungry dancers could chow down on delicate tacos served with grilled chicken, shredded beef, or fish on corn and flour tortillas. Gourmet accoutrements included red beans, rice, sliced peppers, onions, tomatoes, manchego, goat and monterey jack cheeses, along with guacamole, chipotle salsa, and salsa verde. Did we mention the S'mores? Or the late-night swim in the pond? ■

—MARY WINSTON NICKLIN