

hallie swearingen & stephen gostkowski

April 19, 2008

Photographed by Studio J Photography



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Ceremony Independent Presbyterian Church • **Reception** Dixon Gallery & Garden •
Wedding Director Angela Dacus, Southern Event Planners • **Caterer** Cindy Krag Catering •
Cake Peggy Montgomery Cakes • **Flowers** Teri Hannah • **Gown** Low's Bridal

Q: How did you meet your husband?

We went to college together at the University of Memphis. Stephen was in Anatomy and Physiology class with me and I always thought he was cute. He played baseball with my sorority sister's boyfriend who knew I wanted to meet him so he introduced us one night. Stephen was a sophomore and I was a freshman when we met.

Q: How did he propose?

He completely surprised me. A friend asked me if I had time to go to the mall with her. On our way, she made a wrong turn- blaming her mistake on the fact that she was talking on her cell phone. Instead of turning around, she parked at the next street, which just 'happened' to be the entrance to Audubon Park. I looked into the park and there was Stephen across the lawn at a picnic table. I was so surprised because he wasn't supposed to be in town until the next day. Then it occurred to me that I had once told him I would like to be proposed to in a park so I became very nervous. I went over to the picnic table, where I tried to open the picnic basket. He told me "no, no just wait." That made me think surely the ring was in the picnic basket and he didn't want me to find it yet. However, we went through the whole picnic with no proposal. When we arrived back at my house, I opened up the garage and the floor was covered with red rose petals and a huge sign stretched the width of the garage fell down that read "Hallie, will you marry me?" Of course, I screamed yes!

Q: What traditions did you want in your wedding?

We chose not to see each other before the ceremony. We are both so glad we made that decision because when the double doors opened during the ceremony and we saw each other for the first time that day the wait was well worth it. The emotions that we felt when we saw each other as I walked down the aisle is a feeling that I wouldn't trade for anything and the look on his face is a memory that I will remember throughout our life together. I also had the something old (a beaded lace baby bonnet that turns into a handkerchief) wrapped around the stems of my bouquet, something new (my dress), something borrowed (my Mom's veil), and something blue (a blue bow stitched inside my dress).

Q: What was your favorite part about planning your wedding?

We were engaged for a year, but during the first few months I could not make a single decision on anything from the date to the place. All I had was my dress! I hired Angela in July and it was smooth sailing from there. The planning definitely wasn't the most fun part, but the finished product was well worth the work! And of course now I love looking back at all of our beautiful photos to remember the day!