

Wedding

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In contrast, a large throng of Royal Wedding watchers spent hours — even days — lining the London streets awaiting the wedding procession, Brown said.

"Many people had been camping either outside Westminster Abbey or along the Mall near Buckingham Palace since (Thursday) night, just to catch a glimpse of the action live," he said.

Brown noticed an unabashed display of national pride in the days before the wedding.

"What has been notable from my perspective is the outward display of patriotism in the days leading up to the wedding," he said. "Unlike Americans, for example, who tend to readily display the flag, the British are more typically understated about such things. Consequently, it was rather nice to see more Union Jacks and red and blue bunting on display than is usually the case."

The Royal Wedding has united the British, Brown said.

"The feel around London is not unlike the feel of Washington, D.C., on Inauguration Day — though here (in Britain), everyone is supporting the same group versus just the winning political party," he said.

"London has been filled with lots of parties and even a few street fairs, and even some fireworks displays now that the sun has set (Friday evening). In smaller villages, local citizens and school children dress up to re-enact their own version of the Royal Wedding."

Many comparisons have been made between the 1981 wedding of Prince Charles and Lady Diana and Friday's wedding of their son and his bride.

However, Brown sees the two weddings as much different affairs.

"Although Kate is viewed as having much of the beauty and glamour potential as Diana had, that is probably where the similarities begin and end," he said. "The Willam-Kate wedding was viewed as being a relatively low-key affair in the context of royal weddings — intentionally modeled after the Queen's wedding in 1947 which occurred as Britain recovered from World War II. The Charles-Diana wedding was a state affair and by far more flamboyant."

Brown also sees many differences between the two royal couples wed 30 years apart.

"Both William and Kate have known each other at university (and) for many years, and Kate has apparently had more of an opportunity to integrate within the royal scene," Brown said.

Flood Damage To Homes May Fall Short Of Federal Aid Requirements

PIERRE — Spring flooding in South Dakota has damaged many homes and other private property, but the concentration and severity of the damage may fall short of standards for individual assistance from the federal government.

Starting Monday, joint federal-state teams are assessing flood damage to public infrastructure in counties that have passed disaster resolutions. That review of damage to public property could prompt homeowners to wonder about the possibility of federal assistance for damage to their private property, says Kristi Turman, Director of the South Dakota Office of Emergency Management.

The flood assessment next week focuses on damage to roads, culverts and other public infrastructure, Turman said. Gov. Dennis Daugaard has said he anticipates the assessment will provide the information necessary to support a request for a Presidential Disaster Declaration.

However, to qualify for a similar declaration for individual assistance to homeowners, a large number of homes — generally in a concentrated area — must be destroyed or damaged so badly they are uninhabitable. They must be primary residences with losses that aren't covered by insurance.

"We know flooding has caused damage to many homes this spring, but we don't want people to get their hopes up about federal assistance for those losses," Turman said. "South Dakota has experienced damage to private homes in past disasters and been turned down for individual assistance. It takes quite a significant amount of uninsured damage to qualify. We certainly will be reviewing it closely."

The last time South Dakota qualified for a Presidential Disaster Declaration for individual assistance was in 2007, when early-May storms caused sudden, widespread flooding in the Aberdeen area.

"She is also probably a more self-confident and mature individual than Diana was — (Kate's) ease with the crowds (Friday) seems to attest to that."

Many Brits are watching with interest the newlyweds' future plans, Brown said.

"William and Kate will continue to live in North Wales where William is an RAF (Royal Air Force) rescuer," he said.

"(William) is also apparently trying to model the early years of his marriage to that of the Queen's, when she and Philip lived on Malta while he was in the armed forces.

"The objective for this is to give Kate more time to adjust to Royal life, which was probably not the case for Diana."

The grandeur — and cost — of Friday's wedding has raised questions about the Royal Family's relevance and its future in the 21st century. However, Brown looks for the royalty to remain a prominent part of British society.

"It is difficult to live here (in Britain) and not have some level of sentimentality towards the Queen and the Royal Family," he said. "Some are cynical about (royalty's) purpose, but my view is they miss the point: The monarchy is an embedded cornerstone in this (English) country's psyche."

That doesn't mean that the Royal Family and government are without critics, Brown said. Security was ratcheted up for Friday's ceremonies, and England has been rocked by unrest.

The most notable action was the December event when the car carrying Prince Charles and Camilla was attacked, Brown said.

"There has definitely been a surge in protests and strikes in recent months, primarily in response to austerity measures

being laid out by the coalition government," he said. "The most recent event occurred roughly a month ago. While intended to be family-oriented solidarity protests among different unions, events were overtaken by actions of a minority sect of anarchists. This has been a common occurrence with most protests."

Brown has managed not to become too personally affected by the demonstrations.

"If anything, I alter my commute route to avoid assemblies as they occur," he said. "Other than a few odd animal-rights protesters who noisily demonstrate outside my offices on Fridays, (there is) little impact."

Friday's pomp and circumstance hadn't ended and the public was already speculating about a Royal Wedding for William's brother, Prince Harry, Brown said.

"Harry has had an on-again, off-again girlfriend. There are no known prospects in view that he will marry soon," he said. "Amusingly, a recent article in the Sunday Times discussed how 'Harry spotting' has become an art among American girls who want to snag the Prince in marriage."

"I am not sure whether that will yield anything, but it makes for comical reading," Brown said.

Parks

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28 with the assistance of inmate labor, and wrapped up the process about a month later. Earlier this spring, the Yankton Fire Department did a controlled burn of the former maintenance shop in Riverside Park. The location will now be used as green space.

"The day they burned the shop, it didn't bother me too much," Snook said. "But after walking in there for 30 years, it was a little sentimental."

After several months of working in the new facility, Snook said things are coming together.

"It's going to be trial and error for a while until we figure out what works and what doesn't," he stated. "One of my main goals was to split things up so people could be working on something in one place and not be getting in the way of someone else. At the old shop, we were always working on top of each other."

Painting, sawing, welding and whatever else parks staff needed to do occurred in one general work space at the old shop that was also adjoined by office space.

FAST FACTS:

- Number of employees located at the new city parks maintenance shop: 10
- Number of parks maintained by parks staff: 13
- Number of ball fields maintained by parks staff: 12
- Number of bathrooms maintained by parks staff: 10
- Number of boulevards maintained by parks staff: 2

Now, the shop area is separate from the offices and work can be spread out.

Furthermore, there is room to store much of the department's equipment indoors at one location. Previously, much of that equipment sat outside or was

stored in other facilities around the city.

"A lot of times people will come down and ask, 'Where did you put all this stuff?'" Snook said. "I can't believe all we had in that shop. It saves a lot of time now. Before, you had to wait for people to back equipment up and get it out. Now, we can jump in and go."

As part of the new arrangement, Larson moved his office from the Summit Activities Center (SAC) to the former school administration building. He said it created room at the SAC for a childcare program for those who have kids and want to exercise.

"We needed to free up that space to provide something for our membership that no other fitness facilities in town have," Larson said.

It also allows him to have more contact with the parks staff.

"It just made sense that I would move out with them," Larson said. "That way I'm seeing them in the morning, I'm seeing them at coffee, lunch and the evening. We can meet and talk about the day."

The improvement over the old parks maintenance shop is unbelievable, according to Larson.

"It's a million times better than the situation at the old building, whether you're talking about room inside the buildings or outside," he said.



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