

The brides fathers speech

As the father of the bride I have the pleasure of making the first speech and paving the way for the star speakers, the groom and best man.

I would like to welcome every one of you here as you have all played some part, however small, in the lives of Paul and Linda and are valued because of that. Your presence here is important to them.

So important in fact that in the run-up to today Paul and Linda had a bit of an issue with the seating plan, because they really couldn't decide who to put where. So as father of the bride, I offered to step in and help work something out. What we finally decided was to use the wedding present list, and put those who bought the biggest items nearest the front, and work back from there. So if they can hear me at the back there, thank you to Tony and Sue ... for the oven glove.

You know, if you want to make time fly, have a daughter. It seems not long ago I was holding a newborn eight-and-a-half pound baby girl with blonde streaky hair in my arms. It was my proudest moment, until of course, today. One only has to look at the centre of the table to see the radiance that I hope is a reflection of Carol's and my own contentment.

Linda always claimed that she would never get married, but she never reckoned on meeting my new son-in-law. In Paul she has found the perfect partner, and I am delighted he has become a part of our family. There are many things I admire about Paul: he is level-headed, conscientious and, along with his generosity and determination, it's clear that he appreciates the finer things in life. Well, he married my daughter, didn't he?

And when it comes to talking about Linda's qualities, where do I start? She's intelligent, generous, hard working and popular – she's her father's daughter all right! Over the years I have seen Linda develop many talents. She has won awards for music, for sports, learned how to surf, followed her interests in travelling, as well as finding time to help out in the family business.

Paul, if Linda is half as good a wife as she is a daughter, then you will have left here with a woman who epitomises honour and respect both for herself and for those she loves.

Having been in the wedded state for much of my life, I am in a position to offer our newlyweds some timely advice: give and take. That's the secret of a happy marriage, I have found. Give and take. They're the key words. The wife gives the orders and Paul, that's right ... you take them.

Linda was a little apprehensive about what I might say during this speech and truly terrified when I mentioned that I intended to end with a few verses of 'Take good care of my baby'. But don't panic, I can't sing, and in any case we have no doubts whatsoever that Paul will take very good care of our baby as he has always done.

Ladies and gentlemen, we have a radiant bride. We have a charming and handsome groom. Please join me in a toast to Paul and Linda.