

precious moments

CHOOSING YOUR GOWN SHOULD BE ONE OF THE MOST EXCITING AND UNFORGETTABLE STAGES OF YOUR WEDDING PREPARATIONS AND AT Y.A.P BRIDAL BOUTIQUE YOU'RE SURE TO FIND THE PERFECT DRESS TO MAKE YOU FEEL ULTRA-SPECIAL ON YOUR BIG DAY.

FILLED TO the brim with beautiful gowns, and stunning accessories, Y.A.P Bridal Boutique opened its doors on St Mary's Place, in Newcastle, at the end of August.

The elegant store is the brainchild of owner Joanne Stott and the unusual name is an abbreviation for You Are Precious, an endearment that Joanne's parents exchanged throughout their marriage on cards and letters. After the sudden deaths of both of her parents within the last three years, Joanne decided it was time to channel her energy into a new venture – and what better way to honour the memory of her parents' love than with a bridal boutique?

Joanne explains: "Our family had been through such a lot and I thought what's more beautiful than one of the happiest days of your life, so let's celebrate that and bring some of the most amazing wedding gowns to the North East.

"I thought it was a lovely industry to be in; it's fresh, it's exciting and it's all about creating that new start in life for someone. We held a private opening for the shop on August 26, which would have been my parents' 60th wedding anniversary."

Formerly an HR manager for the Theatre Royal, Joanne has been on a steep learning curve over the past year, travelling the globe in search of the perfect gowns and bridal accessories.

"I've researched the industry, looking at designers and what sells, and seeing what sort of experience girls have had," Joanne explains. "We want to offer something completely different. Even though the boutique is very elegant, exclusive and beautiful, the service we offer is very down to earth, friendly and warm.

"We stock gowns from some amazing couture designers, including Johanna Hehir, Lea Ann Belter, Lyn Ashworth, as well as dresses from New York designer Madeline Gardner, which have a great price bracket, and Eternity Bride in Harrogate. There's a dress for everyone and every budget."

Y.A.P Bridal Boutique also offers a wide selection of beautiful veils in different styles and colours, alongside tiaras and accessories from Amanda Wyatt. Her small, new collection of bridesmaid dresses are modern, quirky and are bespoke to your needs. Joanne also intends to introduce prom dresses over the coming months.

The boutique showcased some of its range at Seaham Hall last month after being asked to take part in an exclusive event. Joanne and the team will

also be attending a number of wedding fairs over the coming months, including the Thistle County Hotel in Newcastle on October 10 and The Great North Wedding Show at the Hilton Newcastle Gateshead Hotel on October 24.

Joanne's passion and enthusiasm for her new job are all too clear, and she's created a wonderfully warm and inviting place where brides can have fun finding that special dress for their big day. To add to the enjoyment, brides can also choose to book a Your Night package – for £90 they can hire the boutique for two hours, invite four guests and have a glass of bubbly while trying on dresses. To win the Your Night package telephone the boutique to be entered into a prize draw which will take place each month.

The boutique has already had a great response from clients, with a recent bride-to-be saying: "This is what I dreamed shopping for a wedding dress would be like." And if the business continues to prosper, Joanne admits she would love to open a second store.

"I think You Are Precious is a great brand and if it's as successful as we hope and we deliver what we promise then I'd love to open another store in another city centre location, in the North East," she enthuses.



Visit YAP Bridal Boutique at 6 St Mary's Place, Newcastle, NE1 7PG. Tel: (0191) 340 7983 or visit: www.yapbridalboutique.co.uk