



# Simply amazing

**T**hese were the words that greeted the models on the catwalk and the audience at the Anna McDonald Bridal Gallery fashion show on 19th October at the Oxfordshire Golf Club this year. It was a truly amazing show, one that the organisers of the Berkshire Bridal exhibition and the managers at the Golf Club said was the best they had ever experienced at their venue. Pop singer Seal's Amazing seemed such an appropriate introduction to the six models who took to the stage to reveal the first of five parts to Anna's fashion show, which went on to display over 25 gowns from her beautiful collection.

It is almost five months since the Anna McDonald Bridal Gallery opened in Thame in July 2008. "To say things have been busy is an understatement," laughed Anna. "It is hard to believe that I was organising my first ever fashion show, involving 17 models as well as choreography, scripts for the compare, music selection and the hair styles and make-up for the excited friends and friends of friends who were helping. There was also the small matter of the exhibition that was taking place in the main room that day, showing off the shop and the gowns."

How did she carry this off to a tee at the Golf Club? Anna still can't answer that: "It was a whirlwind experience, but maybe one the reason for its success was because I did what I do best – keep cool

under pressure, be very organised and above all have fun." Meticulous planning was needed to transport most of the contents of the Bridal Gallery to the Oxfordshire, bearing in mind that Anna was fully booked with appointments the day before the show. "But once things had been set-up and models started arriving, it was clear who the boss was as the ladies were put into small groups and practice started on routines," recalled Anna. "Whilst this was happening, other models were being made-up by professional wedding hair and makeup artists, Kelly and Melissa, who are friends of mine."

Anna was asked to deliver two shows. With the first show due to start, there was a full house with standing-room only. "What was really special about the occasion was that all contributors to the event were Thame based," said Anna. As a new local business, Anna McDonald Bridal Gallery was supported by local friends and other local businesses, including Fore Golf who supplied male models to add some variety.

The show went like clockwork, as the exhibition floor in the larger main hall filled with models wearing designer gowns such as Justin Alexander, Sophia Tolli, Alfred Sung and Bridesmaids by Olivia Mae. Another fashion show followed later in the afternoon with the Deputy Mayor, Jeanette Matelot present to enjoy it.

Since the launch 4 months ago, Anna has been overwhelmed by the early success of the business but is not resting on her laurels. She has been fully booked every Saturday and has had exhibitions to display on most Sundays. Her husband, Andy, and children, Alex and Amy, enjoy helping at weekends.

She has recently put the Gallery forward for three categories at the Bridal Buyer awards to be judged in March 2009. She is confident with the feedback that she has received from suppliers and clients that she will have a fighting chance of being short listed for Best New Bridal Retailer, best retail display and best retail website. Who knows, she may be a winner. Now wouldn't that be simply amazing.

To view pictures of the girls at the show see Anna's website at [www.anna-bridalgallery.com](http://www.anna-bridalgallery.com)



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