

## DAILY NEWS

### **Spotlight On City People: “A Break for Brides” by Bill Bell, Daily News Staff Writer**

#### **Gown: Vera Wang**

*Anne Martin has found the dress that she plans to wear next May, when she marries Mark May at the Oriental Beach Club in Mamaroneck. And for that, she can thank Henry Lambert and his spur-of-the-moment inspiration.*

*Lambert was at a wedding, admiring the bride’s expensive dress when he began wondering what happens to the wedding gown after the wedding.*

*Almost just like that, he came up with one of New York’s most novel charitable fund-raising projects—a boutique that would sell only donated, steeply discounted wedding dresses to benefit underprivileged kids.*

*The boutique is called The Bridal Garden, and this week, Martin found herself there, standing in front of a mirror, dresses in a white Galina slim fitted, silk and satin gown with a tank neckline.*

*“It’s you,” said manager Geraldine Brower.*

*“It’s me,” agreed Martin, who lives in Croton-on Hudson and works as an insurance appraiser. “I can’t believe this,” said Martin. “It’s the first one I tried on, and it looks like it was made for me.*

*The Bride Garden opened 18 months ago, carries about 200 dresses at any given moment and books 35 customers a day by appointment only.*

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*It is located behind a green door at the Sheltering Arms Childrens Service, a 175-year-old nonprofit agency located on E. 29th St. in Manhattan. In its first year, said Brower, the shop netted \$131,000.*

*“Every gown carry has been worn only once,” said Brower, who smiles and adds, “at most.”*

*This is because only about 15 percent of its dresses come from individuals. The rest are donations from designers, among them Carolina Herrera, Priscilla of Boston, Vera Wang, Yumi Katsura, Ulla Maija, Richard Glasgow, and Nancy Issler. In most cases they are floor samples and excessive inventory.*

*It was Brower who named the shop. “I liked ‘Garden,’ ” she said, “because it didn’t sound thrift-shabby.”*