

= Episode 523 (Neighbours) =

" Episode 523 " is the 523rd episode of the Australian soap opera Neighbours . It premiered on Network Ten on 1 July 1987 . The episode was written by Ray Harding , directed by Rod Hardy , and executively produced by the serial 's creator Reg Watson . " Episode 523 " focuses on the wedding of popular couple Scott Robinson (Jason Donovan) and Charlene Mitchell (Kylie Minogue) . The storyline was devised by the producers after some viewers became outraged by the idea of an unwed couple moving in together . They also believed that the wedding would be " the perfect climax " to the character 's long @-@ running relationship and an instant ratings hit .

The episode was filmed in secrecy and with a limited budget three months before it was broadcast . The wedding ceremony was filmed in the nave of The Holy Trinity Church in Doncaster . " Episode 523 " is one of only a few Neighbours episodes to include the entire cast . A new romantic style wedding dress made from ivory silk , organza and chantilly lace was made for Minogue 's character . The ballad " Suddenly " , which was written and sung by Angry Anderson , was chosen as the theme to the episode . Prior to its broadcast , Minogue and Donovan promoted the episode by making several appearances at shopping centres around Australia .

" Episode 523 " became one of the most watched soap opera episodes upon its broadcast in Australia . When it aired in the United Kingdom in November 1988 , it attracted an audience of 19 @.@ 6 million . The episode was well received by critics and viewers . TV Week 's Kelly Bourne stated that the wedding would be the most exciting television soap opera event of 1987 , while Network Ten 's head of drama thought it was " a major turning point for Neighbours " . The wedding has been voted one of the most memorable soap moments and is often included in lists featuring the greatest television weddings of all time .

= = Plot = =

The episode opens with Hilary Robinson (Anne Scott @-@ Pendlebury) bringing breakfast to newlyweds Paul (Stefan Dennis) and Gail Robinson (Fiona Corke) . She is surprised to find that they have spent the night in separate bedrooms . To hide the fact that they only married for business purposes , Gail tells Hilary that she and Paul had an argument the night before . Hilary tells them to sort things out and she tends to the bouquets . At the Robinson house , Scott (Jason Donovan) begins to panic about getting married , while his father , Jim (Alan Dale) , and best friend , Mike Young (Guy Pearce) , set up tables for the reception . Meanwhile , Lucy Robinson (Sasha Close) tries to find her pet mice . Over at the Ramsay house , Scott 's fiancée , Charlene (Kylie Minogue) , is getting ready . Her mother , Madge (Anne Charleston) , asks her brother Henry (Craig McLachlan) not to race up the altar . Hilary brings in the wedding bouquet , while Charlene 's friend and bridesmaid , Jane (Annie Jones) arrives . After receiving a blue garter from her grandmother , Charlene becomes excited about the wedding . Scott arrives at the church with Mike , Paul and Jim . He is greeted by his old school friends and Mike explains that he and Jane arranged for them to attend to make up for the absence of Charlene 's extended family .

After the guests take their seats , Scott starts to worry that Charlene will not show up , but Paul and Mike assure him that she will be there . Reverend Sampson (Howard Bell) then invites everyone to stand as Charlene and Henry begin their walk up the aisle . Scott and Charlene exchange vows and Reverend Sampson pronounces them man and wife . At the reception , Jim tells Scott that he is proud of him and welcomes Charlene to the family . Harold Bishop (Ian Smith) finds Madge crying in the kitchen and he comforts her . They are interrupted by Mrs. Mangel (Vivean Gray) who informs them that the telegrams from Max and Maria , Clive and Rosemary , who all are unable to attend , are being read out . Dan Ramsay (Syd Conabere) spots a mouse and tries to pick it up , but hits Mrs. Mangel 's foot . She accuses Dan of groping her and as he protests his innocence , an argument breaks out among the guests . Scott and Charlene go to his bedroom and Gail brings them a gift from her father . Jane comes to tell Charlene that it is time to get changed for the honeymoon , while Paul takes their bags out to the car . Lucy tells Scott that she will miss him and he gives her his skateboard . Everyone gathers in the street to wave the couple off . Mrs. Mangel

catches Charlene 's bouquet , as the couple drive out of Ramsay Street .

= = Production = =

= = = Conception = = =

By 1987 , Scott Robinson (Jason Donovan) and Charlene Mitchell (Kylie Minogue) had become a popular couple with Neighbours viewers , who dubbed them " TV 's Romeo and Juliet " because they were from feuding families . Following months of dating , Scott asked Charlene to move in with him . After " stuffer viewers " became outraged at the idea of the unwed couple moving in together , the producers decided that they should get married instead . Donovan recalled that the producers thought a wedding would be " the perfect climax " to Scott and Charlene 's long @-@ running relationship , as well as an instant ratings winner .

Speaking to James Oram , author of Neighbours : Behind the Scenes , Minogue thought the marriage would bring controversial subjects , such as pre @-@ marital sex and HIV / AIDS , into focus . Donovan agreed , saying there was " a valid moral point behind it . " Executive producer Reg Watson noted how each character in the show expressed a different point of view about the wedding . Some , like Scott 's father Jim (Alan Dale) , thought it was " stupid " for a couple just out of school to get married , while others , like Charlene 's mother Madge (Anne Charleston) , believed it was romantic . Watson believed the storyline would have repercussions for everyone .

= = = Filming = = =

Ray Harding wrote the script for " Episode 523 " . Bruce Andrews from Charles Sturt University noted that it is one of only a few Neighbours episodes to include the entire cast . The producers asked Rod Hardy to direct the episode , due to his experience of directing other television weddings . Hardy believed that " the magic of the episode " is captured best in two close @-@ up shots of Scott and Charlene . The director recalled " The image that stays with me is the close @-@ up of Kylie as she arrives and then the close @-@ up on Jason 's face , and those two looks epitomised what the whole scene was about . " The episode was shot " in great secrecy " three months before it was broadcast on Australian television . The shoot was initially delayed due to bad weather . Due to a limited budget , there were very few extras on set and crew were asked to stand in at the church instead . The scenes were shot in soft focus , creating " a halo effect " around Charlene as she walked up the aisle .

The Holy Trinity Church in Doncaster was used as the location for the wedding . The scenes were shot in the old nave of the church , which was surrounded by " rough @-@ hewn sandstone and glowing stained glass windows . " Liz Guiver , the former vicar 's secretary and administrator , revealed that many of the church 's parishioners were excited at the prospect of seeing the actors on set . Speaking to Guy Blackman from The Age , Guiver recalled " The person who played the vicar , and wore the vicar 's robe , he smoked cigarettes , so we had to be careful that they were dry @-@ cleaned before services on Sunday . Then we waited for months until the episode was aired , and most parishioners were glued to the set . " Scenes featuring the character 's family homes and Ramsay Street were shot at the show 's studio in Forest Hill and at Pin Oak Court in Vermont South respectively . Recalling the shoot , Donovan told the Herald Sun 's Nui Te Koha , " I don 't remember that particular day well , but when you do set ups like weddings it takes a long , long time to put things together . "

= = = Costumes and music = = =

Charlene 's new romantic style wedding dress was designed and made by Isis of Melbourne , a local bridal salon . A writer for the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery 's website observed that it was " in keeping with Charlene 's character as the suburban girl @-@ next @-@ door . " The dress

was made from ivory silk , organza and chantilly lace . When asked what made the dress memorable , fashion designer Alex Perry , stated " There are so many things going on that it 's hard not to remember it ! The see @-@ through sleeves with a hint of lace , the romantic era @-@ style shoulders , the high neckline and hem . " Knowing how popular Minogue and Charlene were at the time , Perry was sure that the dress would have been copied by viewers . Charlene 's bridesmaids wore peach taffeta dresses , while the groom and his ushers wore charcoal grey tails .

Minogue was asked by the producers to choose a romantic song to be played in the episode and she chose " Suddenly " by Angry Anderson . Anderson had written the song a long time before it was used in " Episode 523 " . He explained that it is about a man coming to a certain point in his life when he realises that he does not mind being vulnerable . Minogue told Anderson that she loved the song and how the lyrics resonated with her . She later revealed that she wanted the song played at her own wedding . After " Episode 523 " was broadcast in the UK , " Suddenly " reached number 3 on the Singles Chart .

= = Promotion and broadcast = =

Network Ten 's national publicity director , Brian Walsh , believed the wedding episode would be an ideal marketing opportunity . He arranged for Minogue and Donovan to attend a wedding breakfast at the Park Royal Hotel in Parramatta and invited four hundred competition winners to join them . Minogue and Donovan later made an appearance with the wedding cake at Westfield Parramatta . Walsh recalled " I 'd never seen anything like it ; there would have been 6000 people . Security had to prevent any more going inside . It was as simple as Jason and Kylie and a wedding cake on stage . There was a speech and the cutting of the cake . Then there was this near riot . We had to stop the appearance at this point to prevent people getting crushed . " The actors made several more appearances with replica cakes in shopping centres throughout Sydney and Melbourne . They would cut the cakes and then hand out slices to thousands of fans . The episode later become the main focus on covers of TV Week and the Australian edition of Time magazine .

" Episode 523 " was first broadcast in Australia on 1 July 1987 . Just over a year later , the episode aired in the United Kingdom on 8 November 1988 .

= = Home media = =

In 1989 , Scott and Charlene 's wedding was included on a VHS titled The Neighbours Wedding Collection . In 2002 , FremantleMedia included the episode on the Neighbours : Defining Moments DVD box set . The episode was also featured on the Neighbours : The Iconic Episodes Volume 2 DVD box set and the collector 's DVD The Charlene Years ? Volume 1 released in 2009 and 2012 respectively .

= = Reception = =

= = Ratings = =

" Episode 523 " was seen by two million viewers upon its broadcast in Australia , making it one of the highest rating soap opera episodes . When it aired in the United Kingdom , the episode attracted an audience of 19 @.@ 6 million , making it the third most watched programme in the country that year .

= = Critical response = =

Kelly Bourne from TV Week described the episode as " the television wedding of the year " and " a fairytale ceremony . " Bourne observed that the wedding would be the most exciting soap opera event of 1987 . The head of drama at Network Ten , Rick Maier , stated " Scott and Charlene 's

wedding was the biggest television event of 1987 Not only a major turning point for Neighbours , but a wedding that stopped a nation . " The Sydney Morning Herald 's Michael Idato observed that " Australians packed the aisles for the nuptials of star @-@ crossed teenagers Scott and Charlene " and added that " the nation wept " while " Suddenly " played . Sarah Megginson from SheKnows quipped " Scott and Charlene 's wedding episode is practically the defining episode of what Neighbours was all about in the 80s . This episode featured the entire cast , and audiences loved watching the romance of off @-@ screen couple Jason Donovan (Scott) and Kylie Minogue (Charlene) spill over on to the small screen . " Andrew Mercado , author of Super Aussie Soaps , called the episode " The biggest event ever in Aussie soap history . "

Elizabeth Day , writing for The Guardian , commented " For many , the quintessential on @-@ screen wedding remains the 1987 marriage of Scott and Charlene in Australian daytime soap Neighbours . It was the apotheosis of a romantic teenage love story which brought together two feuding families ? the Robinsons and the Ramsays ? in much the same way as the Montagues and the Capulets , albeit with fewer deaths and more shoulder pads . " The Birmingham Post 's Gemma Quade named the wedding one of her five most memorable Neighbours storylines , calling it a " tearjerker episode " . Josephine Monroe , author of The Neighbours Programme Guide , wrote that the episode showed the " soap wedding of the century ! " , adding " Teenagers Scott and Charlene tied the knot in a traditional and emotional church service " . During a feature on how to celebrate a wedding ceremony in the style of a soap opera , Tom Cole from the Radio Times said " Who needs Mendelssohn and Bach when you can process down the aisle to power ballad ' Suddenly ' by Australian rocker Angry Anderson ? Sounds unorthodox , but it put pep in the step of Scott and Charlene in Neighbours . Note to groom : we can 't all swan around like we 're Jason Donovan , so give the feathered mullet a miss . "

= = = Impact and legacy = = =

The Holy Trinity Church experienced an increase in interest after the episode aired , with some viewers holding their own weddings there . Backpackers also visit the church during their holidays to see the nave where Scott and Charlene were married . The church has since been used again by Neighbours to film the weddings of Harold and Madge , Libby Kennedy (Kym Valentine) and Drew Kirk (Dan Paris) and Vanessa Villante (Alin Sumarwata) and Lucas Fitzgerald (Scott Major) . Charlene 's wedding dress was donated to the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery by Grundy television in 1989 . It has since gone on display in the Powerhouse Museum and travelled to Victoria and the UK . A copy of the episode 's script , autographed by Harding , fetched £ 2 @,@ 000 when it came up for auction in London .

In October 1997 , the serial 's longest serving character , Helen Daniels (Anne Haddy) , was seen watching a video of Scott and Charlene 's wedding , before she died . Kathleen Morgan from the Daily Record commented " The wedding video brought back memories of the soap 's golden years " . Footage of the wedding was later shown during the soap 's 20th anniversary episode , " Friends for Twenty Years " . Charlene became an iconic bridal image , and when Jane Turner and Gina Riley were writing the 2004 season finale of Kath & Kim , they asked Minogue to play the character of Epponnee Rae who was due to get married . Executive producer , Rick McKenna , thought that it would be funny for Minogue to dress up as Charlene and the singer agreed . She appeared as a futuristic version of the character , complete with a lacy dress and 80 's style hair .

In October 2006 , Australia Post brought out five stamps celebrating fifty years of television . Network Ten 's stamp featured Charlene and Scott in their wedding attire . In 2007 , Herald Sun readers voted Scott and Charlene 's wedding as their top Neighbours moment . A Herald Sun reporter said " No other wedding in soap history in Australia has captured the attention like Scott and Charlene 's nuptials late in 1987 . " The episode became FremantleMedia 's seventh most requested television clip in 2008 . To celebrate the soap 's 25th anniversary and its 6000th episode , producers decided to " recreate the magic " of Scott and Charlene 's wedding through the marriage of Ringo Brown (Sam Clark) and Donna Freedman (Margot Robbie) . Robbie said " People are saying that my wedding is this generation 's Kylie (Minogue) and Jason (Donovan) wedding ? that

's big shoes to fill . "

Scott and Charlene 's wedding ceremony has often been included in lists about the best television weddings or soap opera moments . It was voted the " Most Romantic TV Nuptials of all Time " and the " Top TV Wedding of all Time " in a Radio Times poll . The following year saw the wedding place ninth in a list of the most memorable soap moments . In 2011 , the wedding placed third in Channel 5 's Greatest TV Weddings programme . It also came third in Virgin Media 's " 10 Best On @-@ screen Nuptials " list . Sky Living included the ceremony in their 2012 feature on the best TV weddings , with a reporter noting that it is probably Neighbours ' most iconic moment . After including the ceremony in their list of best TV weddings , a writer for MSN New Zealand stated that " it set the standard up to which TV weddings (and terrible mullets) are held . "