

Town prepares for Clinton's wedding

By Michael Hill
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

RHINEBECK, N.Y. — Never mind that the details about Chelsea Clinton's wedding are being guarded like state secrets. The postcard-pretty town of Rhinebeck is ready for its close-up.

The former first daughter and her parents have not even confirmed that her wedding is being held in Rhinebeck. Still, signs congratulating her hang in shop windows, residents are talking to TV crews and officials are bracing for crowds.

Clinton, 30, will wed investment banker Marc Mezvinsky on Saturday, and this little Hudson Valley town of upscale boutiques and pricey homes north of New York City is expecting an influx of A-List guests, reporters and rubber-neckers.

"I think this will put us on the map in an entirely different way," said Ira Gutner, owner of Samuel's coffee shop, which featured a sign in the window congratulating the Methodist bride and Jewish groom with "Mazel Tov, Chelsea and Marc."

"People will say, 'Oh, let's go to Rhinebeck. Chelsea Clinton got married there.' ... We'll forever be known for this," he said.

It's all but certain that the cou-

ple will wed Saturday evening at Astor Courts, a secluded estate along the Hudson River built as a Beaux Arts style playground for John Jacob Astor IV more than a century ago. The estate features the sort of commanding view that once inspired Hudson River School painters, as well as 50 acres of buffer space to shield the party from prying eyes.

The spot is a bit more than an hour north of Bill and Hillary Rodham Clinton's home in suburban Chappaqua and about 90 miles north of New York City.

The Clintons — and the Mezvinskys — have been Sphinxes when it comes to wedding details. The cone of silence appears also to cover contractors, who are as reluctant to talk about their dealings with the Clintons as characters in Harry Potter books are about uttering Voldemort's name.

The agent at the front desk of the Beekman Arms, which reportedly will put up wedding guests, politely said Wednesday he could not comment on anything related to the weekend. The story was the same at nearby Clinton Vineyards — unrelated to the former president — which has in the past bottled special "Victory White" wines for the Clintons during their political campaigns.

"We've been inundated with so

many requests," said Rita Flood, who works at the vineyards.

The silence has hardly stopped the media. The gossip website TMZ reported that the couple's wedding playlist includes Abba's "Dancing Queen." Wedding planners not involved in the ceremony have quoted cost estimates as high as \$5 million. Two Norwegian journalists were arrested last week for trespassing at Astor Courts.

On Wednesday, locals shared the sidewalks with camera crews conducting interviews. People were generally supportive, whether it was merchants expecting a boost in business or residents caught up in the buzz.

A number of shops posted signs like "Congratulations Marc and Chelsea." One shop posted pictures of the Clintons, and a sign on a cosmetics store read: "Oprah! Please make my soap one of your favorite things." (Winfrey was reportedly invited.)

"We're excited, and we're respecting their privacy as much as we can," said Julie Turpin, as she walked her dog Coco.

The official secrecy didn't appear to bother residents too much, mostly because few doubted the wedding was going to happen here. A couple of people said they felt bad that Chelsea went through tumultuous times when



Chelsea Clinton is set to marry boyfriend Mark Mezvinsky this Saturday.

her father was president, and said they didn't begrudge the family a little privacy now.

"If this was my kid getting married and I was as well known as the Clintons, I think I'd do the same thing," said Nancy Amy, of the Rhinebeck Area Chamber of Commerce.

The reaction wasn't totally positive. Some worry about traffic jams; others wonder why the details are being kept secret so close to the wedding. One man waiting to get his hair cut at a barber pointed disapprovingly to a tabloid headline Wednesday referring to residents as "local yokels."

Anthony Bruz, smoking a cigar

along the main street, said he'll be "a little relieved" when it's over, though he already had plans to be out of town this weekend.

A theory that the Rhinebeck activity is an elaborate feint designed to shake off the press faded this week as state police referred calls to the Secret Service and the Rhinebeck Town Council authorized spending \$2,500 for an extra 50 hours of police coverage.

Town Supervisor Tom Traudt said they "expect this event to happen."

"People are very excited," he said. "We're getting used to the TV cameras."

Mich. theater refurbished by filmmaker

By John Flesher and Mike Householder
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITERS

TRAVERSE CITY, Mich. — For generations, Americans viewed films in stately, single-screen theaters that were pillars of city business districts — an experience that faded with the rise of suburban multiplexes and the decline of downtowns.

Michael Moore wants to bring those theaters back. The Academy Award-winning documentary filmmaker has a plan to refurbish or prop up downtown movie houses in his home state of Michigan — and eventually nationwide.

Such efforts have been made before. But Moore's approach has a twist, modeled on the successful resurrection of the State Theatre in Traverse City, his adopted hometown in northern Michigan.

The way to rescue downtown movie houses, Moore says, is to run them as non-profit ventures staffed mostly with volunteers. That slashes costs and gives the community a stake in the theater's survival, he says.

Moore plans to provide grants and training to theater operators who use those methods. The money would come from a fund he's creating with his rebate from a state film tax credit earned by producing his documentary, "Capitalism: A Love Story," in Michigan. He expects the refund to total about \$1 million.

"One of our goals is to create an economic boost, particularly in struggling downtown areas," he told The Associated Press this week during the annual Traverse City Film Festival, which he and others established six years ago. "Another is to save the art of cinema and encourage great films to be made."

The Flint native moved to the Traverse City area in 2003 and took an interest in the State Theatre on the resort town's main street. Opened in 1916, it had become a shuttered relic.

"I just felt bad every time I passed it," Moore said.

His team made the State the primary



Director Michael Moore explains his vision of creating the State Theatre.

venue for the initial film fest. Moore eventually convinced the owner to hand over the \$1.2 million facility for free so it could operate full-time as a nonprofit.

It began doing so in November 2007, after a dramatic facelift. Its high, blackened ceiling sparkles with tiny lights resembling a starry sky.

Thick draperies adorn the walls. The 534 seats are wide and comfortable; the sound system is state-of-the-art; the screen is 50 feet wide.

There's even an old-style organ. The theater has paid employees, but volunteers handle the box office, concessions and ushering. An adult ticket for the typical movie costs \$8; a large popcorn and soft drink combo is \$7.

Because of a contractual hitch, the State can't show many first-run movies.

Its screenings consist largely of art-house fare: documentaries, foreign films, classics, along with second releases of newer films.

Yet it's one of the nation's top-grossing theaters and something of a community center, with opera broadcasts and sporting events.

"The State Theatre, with its bright lights on the marquee, acts as a sort of beacon for the downtown area," said Steve Fairbanks, manager of Red Ginger, a restaurant next to the theater. "There's buzz and energy coming off that building."

Skeptics might question how aging, single-screen theaters can compete with glitzy multiplexes where audiences watch the "Transformers" and "Twilight Saga."

Wahlberg receives Hollywood star

By The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Rapper-turned-underwear model-turned-Oscar-nominated actor Mark Wahlberg has been enshrined in the Hollywood Walk of Fame.

The 39-year-old actor was presented with a star Thursday on Hollywood Boulevard's famed sidewalk monument.

Will Ferrell, who stars with Wahlberg in the action-comedy "The Other Guys," being released next week, was on hand for the ceremony. The comedian got in a couple of digs.

"I'm glad to be here," Ferrell said. "I first became a fan of Mark's when I bought his workout video. And I love all your 'Bourne' movies."

The 'Bourne' series was played by actor Matt Damon.

Wahlberg first gained fame in the 1980s and '90s with the group New Kids on the Block, then quit to form Marky Mark and the Funky Bunch.

That was followed by a ubiquitous ad campaign featuring him in Calvin Klein underwear.

He then turned to acting and got attention with his breakout role as Dirk Diggler in 1997's "Boogie Nights." Wahlberg got a supporting actor Academy Award nomination in 2006 for "The Departed."

His wife and four young children were on hand for the sidewalk ceremony.

"I'm so happy my kids are sitting through this," Wahlberg said. "When I heard I was getting this star, I felt like it was a practical joke."

His other movie credits include "Three Kings," "The Perfect Storm," "The Italian Job," "Invincible," "The Basketball Diaries," "Fear," "Shooter," "Max Payne," "The Lovely Bones," "Planet of the Apes," "The Happening," "We Own the Night" and "Date Night."

Wahlberg is also an executive producer of the HBO series "Entourage," and "In Treatment," along with others.

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