

All content is created for information only and is not legal advice, and not necessarily the views of the AMC. It is edited by Lou Szymkow and whilst all care is taken, the editor cannot guarantee the accuracy of information. The editor, guest contributors & guest speakers all volunteer their time for Celebrants.



An update from your AMC South Coast Coordinator, Lou Szymkow

To achieve success, we will continue to grow and do what we can to help each other grow.



Inside this issue:

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Next month, November 17, marks 5 years since the Bill for marriage equality in Australia was voted upon in the House of Representatives under the Turnbull government. On 9 December 2017, the *Marriage Act 1961* was updated to allow marriage equality. The Act has since then, defined marriage as *'the union of 2 people to the exclusion of all others, voluntarily entered into for life'*.

The historic change also meant that overseas same-sex marriages were generally recognised in Australia and under Family Law, same-sex married couples were to be treated the same as any other married couples in Australia.

All marriage forms were updated to be appropriate for all marrying couples though there were some initial glitches as despite extensive work in the previous year to redraft the NOIM, the planned design was seemingly forgotten as some hasty changes were made to the existing NOIM which proved problematic but were soon corrected and the NOIM was eventually replaced.

The parts of a marriage ceremony that changed to recognise marriage equality were:

- marriage vows
- The definition of marriage statement made by the celebrant

After Jason and Adrian Tuazon McCheyne, a gay male couple who had married on 23 August 2003 in Canada, sought to have their marriage recognised in Australia. Federal attorney-general [Philip Ruddock](#) introduced the *Marriage Amendment Bill 2004* to incorporate a definition of marriage into the *Marriage Act 1961*. Between 2004 and 2016 politicians introduced more than 20 marriage equality Bills into the Australian Parliament. But none were successful.

After the Marriage Act changed, existing Commonwealth-registered marriage celebrants could choose to be a religious marriage celebrant and so be allowed to marry people in line with their own religious beliefs. After 9 March 2018, only ministers of religion of non-recognised denominations could apply to identify as a religious marriage celebrant.

Religious marriage celebrants were required to identify themselves as such in all advertising.

There are currently 33 countries where same-sex marriage is legal: Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Denmark, Ecuador, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Luxembourg, Malta, Mexico, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, the United Kingdom, the United States of America and Uruguay.

- [New subcategory of religious marriage celebrant – 9 December 2017](#)
- [Recognition of foreign same-sex marriages and divorce – 9 December 2017](#)
- [Family law implications of the recognition of same-sex marriages - 12 December 2017](#)



Scheduled Guest Speakers are once again in this newsletter for your information. Others are planned and will be added in future editions. The circulation of this newsletter is growing as are contributors. Hope you enjoy



Registry of Births Deaths & Marriages

An email with an attached letter authored by Amit Padhiar A/Registrar, NSW Registry of Births Deaths & Marriages, was sent by the NSW BDM on Tuesday 27/09/2022 containing a variety of important information

PARRAMATTA OFFICE HAS MOVED

The NSW Registry of Births Deaths and Marriages (The Registry) was required to vacate their Parramatta premises by 30th September 2022 due to significant redevelopment work at the Parramatta Justice Precinct. The following service and venue changes are now in place to allow the BDM to continue to support customers and partners in the Parramatta region.

BDM Marriage Ceremonies at the Park Royal

The Registry upgraded from their Parramatta Justice Precinct wedding venue to the PARK ROYAL in Parramatta giving customers an enhanced wedding experience at this new premium wedding location. The Registry will provide wedding services at this location every Thursday-Saturday with the option to extend days for key events and special dates.

For information on marriage services & bookings visit <https://www.nsw.gov.au/family-and-relationships/marriages/our-wedding-ceremony-venues>

Counter Services at Service NSW

Service NSW will continue to provide Registry counter services across 101 service centres to BDM customers.

Customers can also transact with the Registry using BDM's online services as a quick & convenient way to lodge an application. For online service, go to:

<https://www.nsw.gov.au/births-deaths-marriages>

For counter services locations, find the nearest Service NSW Service Centre at:

<https://www.service.nsw.gov.au/service-centre>

The closest Service Centres to the Parramatta and Chippendale offices are:

- Haymarket - McKell Building, Ground Floor, 2-24 Rawson Place (600m from the Chippendale Registry office).
- Parramatta - 31 Argyle Street, Parramatta (600m from our Parramatta Registry office)

Click and Collect

Click and Collect Services continue to be available at the Chippendale Registry Office. Registry customers can continue to order certificates for collection from the Chippendale Registry or can choose to have the certificates sent by express post, which has a 2-day turnaround after processing.

Customers can apply online for birth, death, marriage and replacement change of name certificates at:

www.nsw.gov.au/bdm

The NSW BDM is exploring a new click and collect solution in Parramatta for urgent certificates.

eRegistry

For Marriage Celebrants using the online portal (eRegistry), known as Lifelink, there are no changes to the way that you interact with the BDM.

If applying for Marriage Certificates on behalf of your couples, you will continue to do so via the Lifelink which remains the quickest way to have a Marriage Certificate issued.

If you use the eRegistry Portal and need to organise for the couple to collect a Marriage certificate urgently from a Registry office, please call the BDM on (02) 6885 9332.

The BDM team can assist you in submitting your certificate request via eRegistry in a way that makes this process as seamless as possible.

Posting of Marriage Forms

There are no changes for Marriage Celebrants posting completed marriage forms and certificate applications to the Registry but be aware that processing times for any documents received by post are significantly longer than via eRegistry.

Couples ordering certificates

Couples can choose to order their Marriage Certificate online once the marriage is registered, or they can visit a Service NSW Service Centre.

Lodging Docs

When registering marriages online, you can either attach scans of the documents at the time of lodgement, or if you are unable to attach documents successfully, you can email docs an attachment to:

online.celebrant@customerservice.nsw.gov.au.

BDM Support Contacts

- **certificates ordered by couple:**
Phone Service NSW on 13 77 88
- **certificates ordered for the couple via Lifelink:**
online.celebrant@customerservice.nsw.gov.au
Ph. 02 6885 9332
- **Registration corrections**
[Correct an entry | NSW Government](https://www.nsw.gov.au/correct-an-entry)
online.celebrant@customerservice.nsw.gov.au
Ph. 02 6885 9334
- **Eregistry support**
registry-support@customerservice.nsw.gov.au
Ph. 02 6885 9332

NSW BDM PRESENTATION HILLS DISTRICT AMC MEETING

As AMC Coordinator for Western Sydney and Blue Mountains, Phil Timbrell attended the Hills District AMC meeting at the Fiddler Hotel on 5th September 2022, representing the Nepean District. Phil found the presentation by 3 members of the NSW BDM team was extremely interesting with many facts and figures presented and he has summarised some of those for our readers.

The team from NSW BDM was led by Ben Finn, Operations CEO who was accompanied by Bryan and Malinee. Many of you will have spoken with either Bryan or Malinee by phone, and to meet them in person and have a relaxing chat was very rewarding.

Some trends due to Covid restrictions on travel, and some due to demographic changes were offered.

In 2019, of the 39,500 marriages registered with NSW BDM, 77% were civil, of which 4,147 or 10.5%, were conducted by the registry office.

Many of the weddings performed by the Registry Office were international visitors, mainly Chinese nationals who flew in for a wedding and a short stay before returning to their home country, having married under Australian law.

In 2020 the percentage of Registry weddings dropped to 9.4% as Covid restricted travel, and by 2021 this had fallen to 6.4%.

The number of registered marriages fell to around 27,000 during 2020 and 2021, mainly attributed to Covid, and so we can expect to see a dramatic rise in numbers now that all Covid restrictions have been lifted.

For religious weddings, there are currently 147 faiths approved in Australia to conduct weddings.

Other points of interest included:

- the closure of the Parramatta Office,
- the planned introduction of digital birth certificates (within the next 12 months), and
- the soon to be followed by digital marriage certificates.

These digital marriage certificates will be similar to the digital Covid vaccine certificates in that they will employ a moving icon, making them more difficult to copy.

The presentation concluded with a live demonstration of the Lifelink system, including the process for ordering ceremonial certificates.

Many attendees were not aware that you could attach a single 5 page pdf containing NOIM, DoNLI and OCM all in one document! In case you are not aware, you will find the option on the drop down menu in LifeLink, where it is clearly identified and speeds up the paperwork submission.

Question Time, Phil received a round of applause when he asked that the process of entering duplicate data such as addresses and the Current Name & Birth name of a parent be improved. Phil suggested this could be achieved by a simple tick box being added on LifeLink to indicate when the data is the same. Malinee agreed to raise a ticket to investigate if this modification to Lifelink could be made.



A PERSONAL NOTE FROM PHIL TIMBRELL

AMC Coordinator for Western Sydney & Blue Mountains

Thank you to Simone Lewis-Cocks for arranging the Hills District AMC meeting at the Fiddler Hotel on 5th September 2022, from which the article on this page stems. I trust it has been of interest.

As the AMC Coordinator for Western Sydney & Blue Mountains, I extend a warm invitation to Celebrants from all other areas are always welcome to attend any of the Western Sydney / Blue Mountains meetings, should you be in town at the time.

Our Face to Face meetings are held on the 3rd or 4th Monday of the month and I am aiming for February 2023 for the next. It will be at the wonderful Emu Plains Sports Club, which has excellent facilities including great dinners available for purchase.

Lou will include the date in his bulletin once it has been set. Phil Timbrell 0418 65 45 25

COVER PHOTO

You may have recognised Phil Timbrell from the cover of this month's Newsletter. The photo is from the Marriage Equality Picnic at Parramatta in 2018, when Phil Timbrell, Rhyan Andrews, and the writer, Lou Szymkow, attended the event at the invitation of organisers to provide information on Marriage and Marriage Equality including the legal requirements for marriage.

It was an educational day for us all particular as we got to meet one of the 78's. while distributing important equality information. Some seeking information may well have gone on to marry.

Having my PA on hand to play wedding songs from our stall, I became an impromptu MC when guests speakers could not be heard and so required my PA and was able to speak on marriage equality and introduce & interview event participants.

KNOWLEDGE BASE

We need knowledge at our fingertips to ensure we can confidently respond to challenges. I will endeavour to provide information in each newsletter to expand our personal knowledge base.

What law or regulations covers the solemnisation of marriages in Australia?

The Law regarding the solemnisation of marriages is [The Marriage Act 1961](#), as amended and the regulations forming a part of that Act are the [Marriage Regulations 2017](#) (from 1/4/2018).

- The Marriage Act 1961 is the law.
- The Guidelines to the Marriage Act, explains the law
- The Regulations prescribe the practice, procedures and penalties.

More information relating to questions on legal aspects of marriage can be found at these links:

- [The Marriage Act 1961](#)
- [Guidelines On The Marriage Act 1961 For Marriage Celebrants](#)
- [Code of practice for Marriage Celebrants](#)
- [Marriage Regulations 1963](#) (up until 31/3/2018) and [Marriage Regulations 2017](#) (from 1/4/2018);
- [Marriage Act 1961 and Marriage Regulations 2017 Newsletters issued by the Attorney General's Department](#)
- [Fact sheets issued by the Attorney General's Department](#)
- [Guidelines on conflict of interest and benefit to business for Commonwealth-registered marriage celebrants – Updated April 2018 \[DOCX 189 KB\]](#)
- [Guidelines on advertising for Commonwealth-registered marriage celebrants – Updated April 2018 \[DOCX 85KB\]](#)
- [Maintaining your registration as a Commonwealth marriage celebrant – Updated April 2018 \[DOCX 100KB\]](#)
- [About the Marriage Celebrants Programme – Updated April 2018 \[DOCX 98KB\]](#)
- [Celebrants obligations when solemnising marriages – Updated April 2018 \[DOCX 96KB\]](#)
- [Complaints against a Commonwealth registered marriage celebrant – Updated April 2018 \[DOCX 87KB\]](#)

Copies of legislation and regulations can be viewed online or downloaded from [ComLaw](#).

Can a Celebrant receive documents electronically?

Yes. Marriage documents including the Notice of Intended Marriage (NOIM) and original supporting documents, such as passports (scanned original *not* certified copies), birth certificates (scanned original *not* certified copies) and divorce certificates (scanned original *or* certified copies), can be provided to a celebrant in electronic form.

A scanned copy of an original Commonwealth statutory declaration can also be provided to a celebrant.

Electronic form' includes an email (scanned), text messaging a photo of the document, or facsimile.

Can a Celebrant sight evidence of identity electronically including by video conferencing?

Yes. The Marriage Act does not prescribe how a celebrant is to satisfy themselves that the parties signing the Notice are who they say they are. An authorised celebrant must not solemnise a marriage unless the celebrant is satisfied as to the identity of both parties to the marriage. If an authorised celebrant is satisfied as to a party's identity using video conferencing media, then this is consistent with the Marriage Act.

This might be achieved by a video conferencing call whereby the party presents a drivers licence to the celebrant by holding it up to the camera during the video conferencing call.

A celebrant should however, ensure that evidence provided to establish date and place of birth can be reconciled to the identity of a party prior to the solemnisation of the marriage. For example, if a party produces their birth certificate by email to the celebrant as evidence of their place and date of birth, the celebrant needs to reconcile that evidence against photographic or other identity documents to confirm their identity.

TRADITIONS?

We are often asked, "What is the tradition?"; according to the dictionary, in the context of a ceremony, it is the handing down of custom from generation to generation by practice but when we explore some practices, we find that they can carry with them unwanted connotations or even be redundant and so couples often wish to create their own, new traditions. One is the titles given to participants in the 'wedding party', previously referred to as the Bridal Party, but that is one of the redundant phrases as some weddings will not have a bride at all, and so what titles can we use. Of course we have Bride, Groom, Partner in Marriage and Spouse but those assisting and supporting them. What ideas do you have?

These are recent suggestions or options:

2IC	Deputy	Lieutenant
Administrator	Endorser	Mate of Honour
Aide or Aid	Extras	Observer
Aide-de-camp	Father	Onlooker
Assembler	Fixer/s	Personal Assistant
Assembly	Flower Carrier	Party
Assistant	Footman/Footmen	Party Leader
Attestor	Foreman	Person of Honour
Band	Foremost	Petal Person
Best Attendant	Friend/s	Primary
Best Friend	Friend of Bride	Right Arm
Bestie	Friend of Groom	Ringer
Best Maid	Gang	Ring Guard
Best Man	Guardian	Ring Holder
Best Mate	Groom's 1st	Sergeant at Arms
Best Sis/Bro	Groom's Aide	Soul Sister/Brother
Best Sister/Brother	Groom's Attendant	Squad
Best Woman	Groom's Crew	Squad Leader
Bride's Man	Groom's Helper	Staff
Bride's Slaves	Groom's Main	Stewart/Stewardess
Bunch	Groom's Slaves	Supporter/s
Bystander	Groom's Support	Support
Chief Attendant	Guy Who Holds Rings	Trouble Shooter/s
Chief of Operations	Guy with the Rings	Valet
Circle	Helper	Watcher
Corroborator	Lady in Waiting	Witness
Crew	Leader	Work Party

Jill-Ellen Fuller



In 1973, **Jill-Ellen Fuller**, was modelling and teaching at the June Dally-Watkins Model Agency and Department School.

When she was appointed as the first Celebrant in New South Wales. Just nine months after her appointment, she obtained a list of the thirty authorized celebrants in Australia, from the Attorney-General's Department containing the names of and extended an invitation to them to attend a meeting in Sydney to create *'The Association of Civil Marriage Celebrants of Australia'* (ACMCA) personally financing the association for the first year. Jill was elected, National President and Maureen Barron, Murphy's personal secretary, was appointed as National Secretary and later succeeded by Dally Messenger.

In an age before the internet, online forums and social media, state and regional associations soon developed and on the 6 November 2008, at its Annual General Meeting, *'The Association of Civil Marriage Celebrants of Australia'* (ACMCA) changed its name to *Australian Marriage Celebrants Inc (AMC)*.

Jill-Ellen Fuller, is not currently registered as a Celebrant and her webpage simply says that she is taking a break.



If you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head. If you talk to him in his language, that goes to his heart.

— Nelson Mandela —

AZ QUOTES

FIND RESOURCES ON OUR AMC WEBPAGE

<https://marriagecelebrants.org.au/member/resources/>

THE HISTORY OF CELEBRANCY



By September 2022 NSW Fireman, Robert Smith QFSM, CMC, JP. Was the 5th longest serving celebrant in Australia but the longest serving in NSW, was appointed as the 273rd Celebrant on 27th July 1975.

According to Robert, after his appointment he joined about 20 celebrants meeting at the Greek Theatre in Darlinghurst in an unregistered group created by Kath Buttriss and named the Civil Marriage Celebrants of NSW & ACT . When interviewed by phone on 30/8/2022, Robert recalled that upon appointment:

- only 7 days' notice was required before marriage.
- permitted to charge \$20.00 per wedding however should the travel distance be more than 30 kms, radius, an agreement could be made between the celebrant and the bridal couple.
- All official paperwork to enable conduct of a marriage ceremony, other than the purchase of the official Marriage Certificate from the BDM,
- The BDM posted to each Celebrant, a list of the total number of ceremony the Celebrant had conducted, to ensure the register was up to date.

There was a limit on appointments of celebrants it depended on the community demand

Robert only charged a fee for his Celebrancy services to those who could afford it and this led to complaints from other celebrants, and a telephone call was received from the Attorney General's office reprimanding him for doing so, insisting that he if he continued to not charge for his services, he would be deregistered. Robert said he then commenced charging for all ceremonies but donated fees to various charities.

When Robert Smith retired from the Fire & Rescue New South Wales as the Personal Superintendent (now equivalent to the position of Assistant Commissioner), after 32 years of service, on 26th November 1990, he

continued his Celebrancy however, prior to retirement, he founded the *Employees of New South Wales Fire Brigades Relief and Welfare Fund* to assist fire fighters and their families in their times of hardship. Robert was the Chairmen of the fund for fourteen years, and holds the honours of Life Membership and Patron for Life; and in 2021 was a finalist in the Fred Hollows Humanitarian of the Year Awards in 2021 for his work. On 2nd December 1993, discontent with the management of the Civil Marriage Celebrants of NSW & ACT group operated by Kath Buttriss, Robert Smith and fellow celebrant Tom Nash took decisive action by registering two associations. The first registered association was the: 'Association of City of Sydney & Suburbs' That same day, they then registered the '*Association of Civil Marriage Celebrants of NSW & ACT Incorporated*', under registration number Y1861513 and in so doing, obstructed Kath Buttriss from further using that name. John O'Carrigan, and Robert Smith then took office to operate the newly registered associations. Robert Smith, John O'Carrigan and Tom Nash were subsequently both bestowed Life Membership of the Association of Civil Celebrants of NSW & ACT Incorporated, and were bestowed with Patron for Life honours.

During 1993 , according to Robert Smith, it was John Smith from Perth, Ashley Berg from Queensland and himself from New South Wales who founded the National Council of Celebrants Associations which was to become the peak body of Celebrancy Associations conferring with the Attorney Generals Department. The National Council of Celebrants Associations later became [Coalition of Celebrant Associations \(CoCA\)](#)

In 1996, Robert Smith, sat on an advisory panel along with Barbara Bell, on to assist the NSW BDM to create Lifelink, the online registration system that set a standard of other states to follow.

In February 2000 Robert Smith was elected President of the Association of Civil Marriage Celebrants N.S.W. & ACT INC. and held that position of four years until he elected to retire from office.

In October 2001, the title of Fellow Member was bestowed upon Robert Smith by Dr. Laura Ethridge who at that time operated a Training College in Melbourne.

The Association of Civil Marriage Celebrants N.S.W. & ACT Inc. appointed Robert Smith as a '*Patron for Life*', 2009 and he held the role of that Association's Education Officer.

July 2022 Robert officiated at his granddaughter's wedding in Sydney and 12 people, including himself, were diagnosed with Covid resulting in his hospitalisation with Covid and shingles but he fortunately recovered. Today, Robert continues his admirable work as a Celebrant

OCTOBER 2022 GUEST SPEAKER 1 - NORA DEVAI

COAST WEDDING & FAMILY PHOTOGRAPHER

nora devai



www.devaiphotography.com.au

nora@devaiphotography.com.au

Ph: 0418 640 067

www.southcoastweddingfair.com



Nora is not just the Marketing Coordinator for the South Coast Wedding Fair but is an accomplished and awarded career photographer working across the NSW South Coast for since 2007.

After a cadetship at a Sydney Newspaper she became a Photojournalist before succumbing to the call of the sea when she and her husband, with their two children moved to the beautiful Jervis Bay area.

She has since photographed hundreds of weddings specialising in natural, relaxed, candid, and fun photos in an unobtrusive and documentary style that truly reflect personalities. She aims to evoke emotion enabling couples to relive the moments of the day.

Generously sharing her skill & vast experience, she will guide us on how to work with the photographer to achieve the best results for the couple and the Celebrant to boast client satisfaction and your own image.

Her awards include:

- 2014 Earned my Associateship with the AIPP for outstanding photographic excellence
- 2013 Silver Award – Wedding – AIPP Australian Professional Photography Awards
- 2012 2 x Silver Awards – Australian Professional Photography Awards (APPA)
- 2012 Bronze Award – International Loupe Awards
- 2011 Silver Award – Australian Professional Photography Awards (APPA)
- 2011 Silver Award – International Loupe Awards
- 2010 Bronze Award – International Aperture Awards
- 2009 1st Place Winner – Shoalhaven Packers Photographic Prize
- 2006 Honourable mention – Picture of the Year Award (POY)

Diary Dates



Currently 7pm meetings for 2022 all have guest speakers scheduled:

Wednesday 26/10/2022 – 2 Guest Speakers

Tentative – Dinner on Monday 12th December 2022 at Mollmook Golf Club

In 2023, Zoom 7pm meetings will be held on the second Wednesday of the third month from February 2023. February has an incredible guests speaker (details in this newsletter) and may members of the Funeral Celebrants Association of Australia (FCAA) will be invited to join us.

Wednesday 8th February 2023 – Guest Speaker

Wednesday 10th May 2023

Thursday 19th July 2023 -50th Anniversary

Wednesday 9th August 2023

Wednesday 8th November 2023

Tentative Friday 8th December 2023 for Dinner at the Mollmook Golf Club



OCTOBER 2022 GUEST SPEAKER 2 - JORDAN WEAVER

Jordan, is an event planner, stylist and coordinator.

But she wasn't always in the business of weddings. After 12 years working in Sydney and London as a corporate publicist, planning events, launches and tours for international film stars, chefs, authors, sports men and women and some of Australia's best-known TV personalities, the job that captured her heart as a 21 year-old had lost its shine.

Wedding planning had always been her dream career 'to-do' list so while juggling her 9 to 5 job (with a young family in the mix!) she dipped her toe into the wedding planning waters, planning and styling events as her 'side hustle.'

After 6 months of working



Saturday and Sunday on weddings with her 9-5 corporate job during the week, she learned two things. Firstly, she has an extremely patient husband (thanks Matt!) and, most importantly, wedding planning and styling was where she wanted to be.

It allowed me to combine her creative styling side with project management skills, and have the honour of working with

Jordan Weaver

Creative Director

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w: jordanweaverevents.com.au

a: PO Box 37 Wahroonga NSW 2076

truly beautiful couples and their families.

Since making the leap into wedding planning and styling she has worked with countless couples from Australia and around the world to create exquisite once-in-a-lifetime celebrations across Sydney, the South Coast, the Southern Highlands, the Hunter Valley and beyond.



I'm here to take the stress, confusion and overwhelm out of planning your wedding day. Simple as that!

Marketing

Be seen!

Sounds a bit obvious but we can all easily fall into the habit of NOT being seen. Not advertising, not updating webpages, not adding to social media, not encouraging reviews, avoiding expos, and so simply not being seen. One of my advertising methods is simple magnetic signs. I occasionally drive different cars but the magnetic signs are easily transferable. The template for my signs is pictured but the final sign also has a QR code and people are able to scan the code to go to my webpage and contact details though I've had customers who have simply photographed the sign in a carpark and then call me later. It is fun seeing the faces when people read the sign and then look up and see the same face behind the wheel :)

What are you doing to be seen?



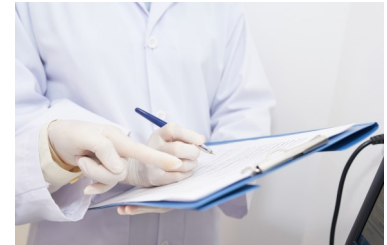
MAGNETIC SIGN CARE

The warmer months are just around the corner and that is when sign and care become crucial. Though even in cold or rainy months, care is still required.

Weather can damage the sign and leaving it for too long can damage the car paintwork as mud and grime can surround the sign and if it is too hot, the glue can seep into your paintwork

- When you wash your car, wash the sign.
- Use a sun resistant vinyl protector to keep them like new
- Polish the car regularly
- Dry and clean the door and back of the sign before you apply the sign to your car panel.
- Don't let the signs bake in the sun as it can dry them out and the glue can melt onto paintwork..

FEBRUARY 2023 GUEST SPEAKER—Mark Simpson



Mark Simpson Principal Educator
 B.Med.Sc(Hon.Clin.Pharm)B.Med.Ed.BN (Psych.Int.Care)
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www.medicaleducators.com.au

This is an excellent opportunity for new and experienced funeral celebrants to gain a detailed insight into the funeral industry.

Mark Simpson Principal Educator is a retired lecturer in medicine, who has close personal & professional ties to the funeral industry (incl training as an embalmer) but has no allegiance to any funeral company/organisation. He has been involved in public education for 30yrs & 15yrs ago joined with Jan Field (embalmer/mentor, FD & funeral home locum to form the **Australasian Funeral Industry Training Services (AFITS)**, a national training, education & support service.

He and Jan, are very happy to take your questions personally or during the presentation.

(ABN) 74 850 690 713
 (reg.education provider)

Mark has written presentations/articles for the BIE (UK), AIE, ASE (US), AFDA (Aust), NFDA (US), Dodge mag, The Mazwell Group, UK Funeral Director/Funeral Service Times



Prior to the meeting you will be surveyed on topics of greatest interest including;

- The Aust Funeral Industry its functions & disfunctions, regulations/lack of regulations
- The new ACCC Aust. Funeral Industry report – what were the serious concern re: deceptive behaviours.
- The extremes of the funeral industry...from multi-nationals through to shop fronts (only)
- Deceased preparation – what is done/can be done, why, why not
- Coroner’s investigations when, why, why not, autopsy, non-interventional autopsy
- Voluntary euthanasia

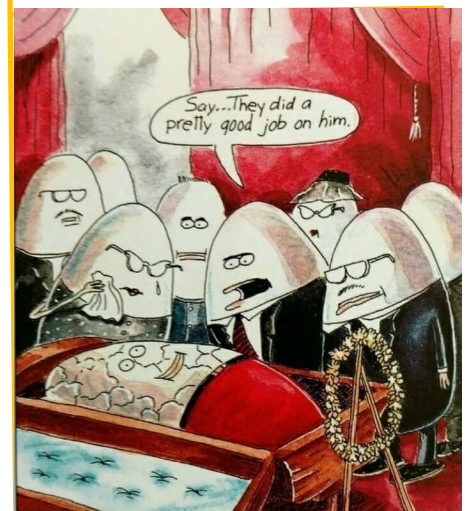
If you would like to engage in one of the courses at AFITS, here are some links:

[Funeral Industry Courses - Medical Educators](#)

[Funeral Industry CPD & Educational Seminars - Medical Educators](#)

Email: support@medicaleducators.com.au

Phone: 0431396417



At Humpty’s funeral

COORDINATOR COMMENTS



For Celebrants, the need for constant diligence and study is unquestioned. If we do not learn, we cannot grow and improve. Laws and procedures change and so we have to keep up to date.

If one of us fails, it reflects badly on all of us. Education can come in a variety of

forms, including but not limited to mentorships, self-assessment, reading, interactions with the successful, accessing AMC Resources, attending conferences, and of course attending regional and national meetings.

Convenient ways of learning & interacting are of course keeping in touch with other celebrants by:

- phone, email, and coffee meets,
- reading newsletters such as this,
- taking an active part in regional meetings and
- accessing the AMC education programs.

Celebrancy online forums are also valuable but they can produce mixed results as we do see a variety of questions raised in Celebrancy Forums, ranging from the commonly asked question about which PA system to buy through to what poem or reading to use in specific circumstances but we also get some questions surrounding basic legal aspects such as what constitutes the lodgement of a NOIM or who can be a witness. If we see the same or similar question frequently from one individual, others will usually rally around and offer to mentor that Celebrant as it is in the nature of Celebrants to help others.

While many celebrants prefer that the question be asked and correctly answered so that our profession is enhanced, and the uncertain Celebrant supported to a level of competence and quality, there are others who express shock & horror or even offence by anyone having a lack of specific knowledge or experience perhaps because if a Celebrant fails and a marriage is declared invalid, it reflects badly on our profession overall.

I am also reminded of an instance where an unsure Celebrant asked a basic legal question to which a highly experienced Celebrant of many years standing, declared the person to be an incompetent suggesting they should resign and expressed

despair at the current level of training before then proceeding to offer an incorrect answer to the question. It turned out that the experienced Celebrant had made an error a few years earlier (we are all human) and when the error went by unnoticed, repeated the error time and time again until the experienced Celebrant thought the action to be correct when in fact it wasn't. Hence it is always recommended and indeed very important, that if lacking in confidence, read the Guidelines, Fact Sheets, Act and/or Regulations, and ask the questions, but when answering a question for another, quote the relevant source to demonstrate and ensure accuracy. In other words. don't guess the answer, give the correct answer.

With all that in mind, let's look back to 1st September 2008, which was only a year after the first qualification titled, *Certificate IV in Marriage* was introduced on 9th September 2007. A report was published on the review of 1,967 Celebrants, under Section HOH (1) of the Marriage Act, and of the 1,967 reviews, with 835 reviews yet to be finalised, only 753 of the 1,967 celebrants were at the time identified as being fully compliant in their obligations. That result highlighted the clear need for better and on-going training such and that is why training standards were created and why we have annual OPD.

I do believe that that the online OPD needs improving but it is a work in progress. Hopefully next year will be better.

We now have over 9000 civil celebrants, but it is my understanding that since the introduction of training programs, and particularly annual OPD, the compliance standards are much higher.

The obvious solution is for us to keep standards high, for us to keep informed, and to all work together for constant improvement.. My suggestions are:

- ✓ Keep a link to the Guidelines, Regulations, and Act on your device for ready access.
- ✓ Download Fact Sheets and keep them readily available.
- ✓ Make it a routine to read a section of the Guidelines on a regular basis
- ✓ Read the questions on Forums and research the answers even if you believe you know the answer
- ✓ If you don't know an answer to a question, research it and then write the answer down for future reference
- ✓ Attend meetings to learn and to exchange ideas
- ✓ Keep in contact with other Celebrants to debrief and exchange ideas

