

December 2022

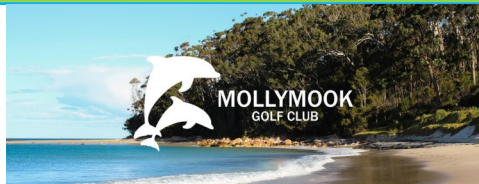
Volume 1, Issue 7

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:

- Face to Face meetings at last
- OPD 2022
- Knowledge Base
- Scam Alert
- Comments
- Traditions
- Fun
- Guest Speakers
- Movie Review
- New Executive
- How to join AMC

You are invited to our last face to face meeting for 2022
Mollymook Golf Club
7:00pm, Monday 12th December 2022
72 Golf Avenue,
Mollymook NSW 2539
Phone (02) 4455 1911

Bistro or Menu

Please RSVP by 9th Dec. 2022

We will either eat at the Bistro, or if we have a 10+ we might move to the function room and so we definitely need to let the club know about numbers attending, especially as the bistro usually close at 8:30pm

There is plenty of nearby accommodation if you are travelling and the golf course, which I am yet to try out, looks excellent, though hilly. The ocean view from the bistro is magnificent and the food is excellent, though the company will be even better, dress up or down, as you like.

This event is for us to get to meet and enjoy each others company.



Cover Photo
Washer Womans' Beach, Bandalong, at sunset. One of the 200 beaches in our area.

OPD REMINDER

ONLY 4 WEEKS TO GO.

You are required to complete your obligatory professional development (OPD) requirements by 31 December 2022, unless you are granted an exemption.

Any application for an exemption, must also be submitted prior to 31st December 2022 and a fee applies but approval is not guaranteed and may be rejected.

The Registrar is unable to accept completed activities after 31 December 2022.

There are no elective activities for 2022, and so only the two (2) compulsory professional development activities for 2022:

- (1) Real Consent Refresher, and
- (2) Knowledge of the Law are only available via the self-service portal or, upon request, via email or hardcopy.

Important Note: there is no pass or fail mark and you have four (4) attempts to answer each question.

Information on professional development and exemptions can be found on the AG website at [Professional development | Attorney-General's Department \(ag.gov.au\)](https://www.ag.gov.au/professional-development).

If you have any questions, you can email M L C S at marriagecelebrantssection@ag.gov.au or phone the MLCS on 1800 550 343 (Tuesday to Thursday, 10am to 12.30pm and 1pm to 4pm Canberra local time)

WARNING

If you fail to meet your 2022 OPD obligations, you may be deregistered.



In mid-November, over 500 Celebrants across the East Coast and in South Australia have received a request from a person identifying as 'Marie'.

Hello. I'm having my wedding next February I would like to book you in advance to officiate my wedding Looking at the photos of your previous weddings makes me think you are a wonderful person My husband and I both like you a lot. Can you add my ins? It would be easier for us to communicate. My Instagram account: moonwee1986 I look forward to hearing from you!
Most came through Easy Weddings, but some also went via ABIA.

I exchanged emails with Easy Weddings, noting that had EW charged for each of the 'referrals' they could have profited over \$12K. EW has apologised and promised to investigate but is yet to fully explain how this actually happened given that they could have profited enormously from 500 referral fees if the scam was not exposed. They have promised not to bill as a result of this scam.

The EW statement is quoted later in this article.

Getting back to the 'referral', the Red flags included:

- only one name given – 'Marie',
- fake phone number - 07145846321
- a (fake) G-mail address vnjduirf1231@gmail.com that doesn't match the name,
- (it is possible that google closed down the account)
- no partner name,
- partner is referred to as 'my husband' and
- two differing dates in the message
- no venue or location
- only willing to communicate via social media

The email address and phone number were fake but 'Marie' was actually seeking followers on Instagram, which went up from 4 to 20, asserting all communication must be via Instagram.

The scam has also been reported to Instagram/Meta.

If you get the request, either delete it or complain directly to the relevant directory (EW, ABIA or anyone other) to ensure you are not charged for the fake referral.

I wrote to EW asking:

- How did this occur?
 - How was someone able to register with fake details?
 - How was someone able to Message 500 celebrants without alarms bells?
 - Has EW notified all the celebrants?
 - We're you hacked?
 - Was EW somehow involved in this scam?
- Had this breach been reported to the ACCC?

Easy Weddings responded directly but eventually also responded to complaints by issuing a statement:

Unfortunately, this age-old scam hits different industries at different times. We and other providers in the wedding industry appear to be the target this time.

*The best way forward is to **cease all interaction with fake leads**, either on email, Instagram, or anywhere else. While responding on email is thankfully not harmful, we recommend you simply **delete any messages you receive**.*

*Please rest assured that **our system has in no way been hacked or any data stolen**. This is not that kind of scam.*

We have, however, added extra spam protection to our email system to help filter out messages like this.

As a general precaution for scams of any kind, please remember never to give out passwords and personal information, and be wary of clicking on suspicious links.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to reach out to us at this email, or by calling your business advisor on 1800 155 122.



TRADITIONS?

Burying the Bourbon

In the southern states of the USA where bourbon (American whisky) is made, there is a wedding tradition that is the ritual of "Burying the Bourbon".



The belief is that you can prevent rain on the wedding day by burying a full bottle of bourbon, top-down, at the ceremony site either a month before but some say it will work if done on the day, or on a perfect day anytime within the month.

Cutting of the Groom's tie (Spain) – Cortar la corbata del novio

In Spain, during the wedding reception, the Groom will be surrounded by his Groomsmen, who will cut his tie from around his neck. The tie is then cut into small pieces and auctioned off to wedding guests. It's believed that owning a piece of the cut tie will bring good luck.

Ref: <http://goliveitblog.com/experiences/10-wedding-traditions-around-the-world/>



Chuppah or Canopy

A 'chuppah' symbolizes the home that the couple will build together. It is a canopy under which a Jewish couple traditionally stand during their wedding ceremony.

The design and the four chuppah bearers reflect the couple's philosophy, values, and personal connections.

- The cover protects
- The four poles rooted to the ground connect to heritage and a focus on goals;

The sides are an opening to the world, enabling vulnerability and accessibility,



Source: <http://www.chuppah.com/galleries/gal-pf169x.html>

Movies to Watch



"It's A Wonderful Life".

Directed by Frank Capra, this classic movie has an incredible cast including stars, James Stewart and Donna Reed along with other great stars of the times such as Lionel Barrymore. It was released in 1946, runs for 2 hours and 10 minutes and is still, deservedly, one of the most watched Christmas family movies.

In this classic drama inspired by Charles Dickens', *A Christmas Carole*, George Bailey (James Stewart) longs to get away from his small hometown of Bedford Falls but his obligations to his family force him to stay, leading to a crisis of faith at Christmas time. James Stewart is at his very best.

It is available to watch, stream, download and buy on demand on various platforms

Watching it as Celebrants, we see different ways of telling a life story, the differing perceptions we have of life and of each other.

Merry Christmas every one.



MLCS MEETING

As you may know, the Marriage Law & Celebrants Section (MLCS) of the Department of the Attorney General, holds bi-annual meetings with Celebrant Associations and Registration Authorities. Invitations to meetings was apparently expanded to include other interested parties as a number of RTOs and unregistered associations (Celebrant Face Book Groups) now also attend. The meetings are an opportunity for consultation and dissemination of information. The issues discussed at the most recent meeting of 24th November 2022 included:

• OPD

The 2022 OPD MUST be completed before midnight on 31st December 2022 but 25% of celebrants are yet to complete their OPD and so as there are only 4 weeks to go, all celebrants are asked to complete the online OPD questionnaire as soon as possible.

The matter of inaccuracies in OPD questions was also discussed but not resolved.

The Department is already working on the 2023 OPD and it should be ready for release early in the new year.

• MarCel

The Marriage Celebrant (MarCel) portal is your means of managing your profile with the Attorney General and is your means of access to online OPD, authorisation renewals and more. There was an attempt by hackers to access the old (redundant) MarCel interface which is only a hyperlink to the current MarCel Portal and so contains no data whatsoever, hence at no time was any private information at risk. Celebrants concerned about their own security should look at www.cyber.gov.au for advice on how to secure their information.

The frequency of MarCel availability problems was also raised.

• Remote Witness of NOIM

The MLCS is currently seeking an extension into 2023 for the remote witnessing rules.

• The Happily Ever After brochure

The Happily Ever After brochure is being revised for an update.

• Guidelines

The Guidelines are being reviewed and the Department feels it is on track to have the changes completed early next year when it will seek some feedback from associations before final release.

• 50th anniversary Celebration

Next year is the 50th anniversary of the launch of the civil marriage celebrants program in Australia. The MLCS has a number of ideas to celebrate and will finalise these early in 2023. The AMC committee is also working on ideas which will enhance those of the AG Department.

• Celebrant Numbers

As of 1st July 2022 there were 9,728 celebrants authorised in Australia which is down from the 9,982 at the same time last year.

• NSW BDM

A representative of NSW BDM spoke to the meeting about LifeLink and Shortening of Time requirements. SOT applications differ from State to State and the NSW BDM is in discussions with other State BDMs to standardise the process.

• Notice Periods

The notice period was discussed but no resolution or outcome was determined.

Originally the notice period was just 7 days but after his 1975 appointment, Attorney General Bob Ellicott lengthened the time of the notice period from seven days to a month in an effort to combat the rising divorce rate at the time. Whilst in Australia that minimum notice period remains, New Zealand, currently has a notice period of just 3 days.

• Next MLCS Meeting

The next MLCS consultation meeting will be held on 18th May 2023.

Overheating PA's

As we enter summer, we have to be cautious that we don't allow ourselves to suffer sunburn and overheating, but the same applies to our electrical equipment such as Public Address systems (PAs), microphones, and cameras. Phil Timbrell, engineer and Celebrant explains his novel solution.

One Way to protect your PA

It was Saturday, 17th March 2018, and the temperature at Winmalee in the Blue Mountains had already reached 45°C by the time I had set up my PA system for a venue wedding.

I was dressed in a dark suit, which of course absorbs heat – as did my PA system which was also clothed in a black material. I do not understand why all PA systems are covered in black material but they are (*probably to make them invisible during a stage performance*). It is worth noting that commercial grade active electronic components, such as power transistors and integrated circuits, will not operate as intended as if their temperature exceeds 90°C, and this temperature is quite likely inside a fully enclosed PA box, painted black, left in a 45 degree ambient temperature, and fully exposed to the sun which is directly overhead in Summer.

On this occasion I was lucky enough to find a small piece of shade for my PA system although it was no longer in the ideal position acoustically.

After the wedding, I started to think about a portable shade for my PA.

An umbrella is the obvious choice however a golf umbrella would not look good at a wedding, especially if it had advertising on it (*which many do*).

So after a search of a few retail chains, I found a small fold up umbrella, that looked as if it would provide sufficient shade without being too obvious, and in a not too obvious colour. To my surprise, there was one small fold up model that had a screw on handle at only around \$10. These are readily available. The photo in Fig 1 shows the threaded end of the main shaft.

A few modifications to the screw on handle and I was able to screw that to the timber case of my Roland PA. Roland's use a timber box covered in a black material and it gives a sound that many experts consider superior to that from a plastic case as it has a lower resonant frequency. Timber has the obvious advantage that one can screw into it. And so the modified handle of the umbrella was screwed to the timber case (see Fig 2).

If your PA uses a moulded plastic case and you can find a flat area on the top, 5 minute Araldite® correctly mixed and applied to a roughened surface of the case will also support the umbrella.

It is then a simple matter to fit the umbrella to the case (see Fig.3).

I have used this system at a number of weddings held during the heat of summer, and each time I do I am

confident that my PA will not overheat. I am also grateful for the experience I had and the lesson learned in Winmalee on that very hot day back in 2018.

Fig 1—umbrella base

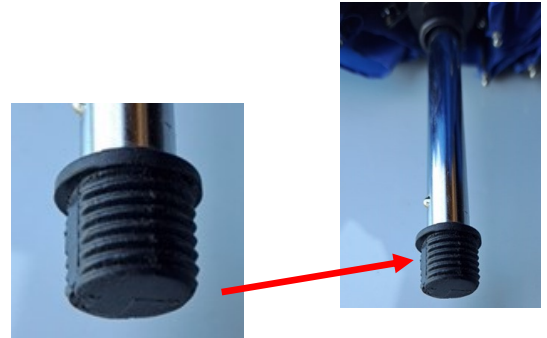


Fig 2.

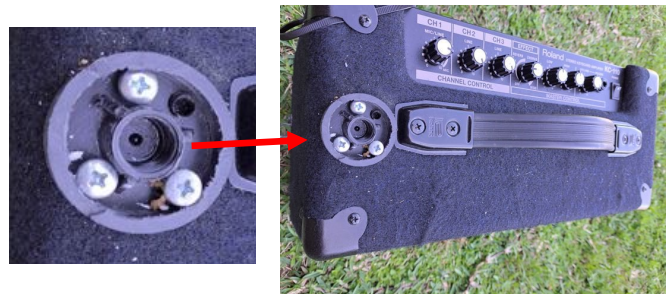


Fig 3.



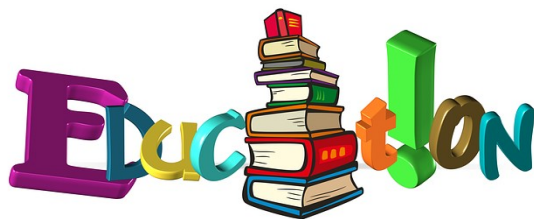
Please note this system will not work in very windy conditions as these umbrellas are not designed for such conditions.



Are you missing out on business because your AMC profile is not UpToDate?

Here are YouTube instructions for Members on how to Setup a Profile.

- First time logging on. <https://youtu.be/xKfvCOEIBNo>
- Creating Your Profile: <https://youtu.be/j9uWeYrCjaw>
- Changing size and adding gallery photos: <https://youtu.be/qohdCKNNBPA>
- Resize profile photo & add to website: <https://youtu.be/0DWIwXQFO4o>
- Overview of members section.: <https://youtu.be/nRieInbuyck>



To see what other great education sessions and meetings are coming up, log into the [AMC Membership section](#)

A Celebrant walks into an outback cafe at Christmas time with a full-grown emu behind him. The waitress asks them for their orders. The truckie says, 'A hamburger, chips and a coke,' and turns to the emu, 'What's yours?' 'Sounds great, I'll have the same,' says the emu.



A short time later the waitress returns with the order 'That will be \$19.40 please,' and he reaches into his pocket and pulls out the exact change and pays.



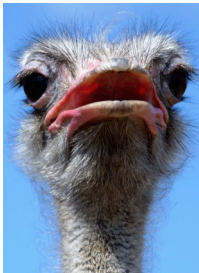
The next day, the man and the emu come again and he says, 'A hamburger, chips and a coke.' The emu says, 'Sounds great, I'll have the same.'



Again the Celebrant reaches into his pocket and pays with exact change. This becomes routine until the two enter again. 'The usual?' asks the waitress.

'No, it's Friday night, so I'll have a steak, baked potato and a salad,' says the man.. 'Same for me,' says the emu.

Shortly the waitress brings the order and says, 'That will be \$42.62.'



Once again the man pulls the exact change out of his pocket and places it on the table.

The waitress cannot hold back her curiosity any longer. 'Excuse me mate, how do you manage to always pull the exact change from your pocket every time?'

'Well, love' says the Celebrant 'a few years ago, I was cleaning out the back storeroom and found an old Christmas lamp. When I cleaned it, a Christmas Genie appeared and offered me two wishes. My first wish was that if I ever had to pay for anything, I would just put my hand in my pocket and the right amount of money would always be there.'

'That's brilliant!' says the waitress. 'Most people would ask for a million dollars or something, but you'll always be as rich as you want, for as long as you live!'

'That's right. Whether it's a gallon of milk or a Rolls Royce, the exact money is always there.' says the man.

Still curious the waitress asks, 'What's with the bloody emu?' The Celebrant pauses, sighs, and answers, 'My second wish was for a tall bird with a big arse and long legs, who agrees with everything I say!!'



The AMC IS GROWING. It has a new committee and many new members. AMC is one of the largest and oldest marriage celebrant associations in Australia with a dedicated, caring, experienced and very professional Executive Committee. [Click this link to discover the benefits of membership;](#) or join the excitement & [follow this link to join the AMC](#)



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.

LAMINATED DOCUMENTS



Lamination is the sandwiching and sealing of a document between clear plastic sheets.

In tropical countries such as Indonesia, people are sometimes advised by officials to laminate official documents to preserve them in the humid

conditions whilst in the Northern Territory some official documents are printed using plasticised paper similar to that used in passports and which is less likely to be affected by humidity and does not require lamination for preservation.

In most Australian states however, official documents have official seals and embedded heat sensitive security, and so consumers are advised by those states to not laminate.

The lamination, by its nature, prevents examination of the quality and feel of the paper used in the document and so it may not be possible to establish authenticity of the document though examination alone.

A safe means of preservation of documents is to store them in an acid free document holder however it is still wise to air the document about every 6 months to ensure there is no moisture contamination.

There are two common types of lamination:

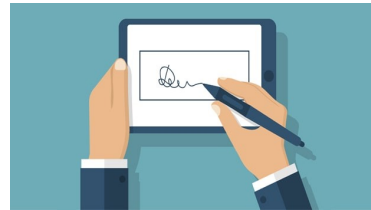
Heated Lamination:

This is the most common process. Heated lamination involves the passing of the sleeved document between heated rollers, under pressure, so that the front and back plastic sheets are fused where they meet, without the sleeves actually adhering to the document itself, hence heated lamination can sometimes be removed simply by

trimming the edge resulting in little or no damage to the original document. However as both heat and compression are used, this process can flatten or melt official wax seals, voiding them, and can destroy any embedded heat sensitive security, which can also void the document.

Cold lamination:

A less common process is which usually includes the use of adhesives plastic sheets that extend across the entire document on both sides and any excess plastic may then be trimmed away, leaving the document sealed inside the plastic enclosure. Adhesives and plastics used in Cold lamination, are very difficult to remove without damage to the document and as both the adhesive and plastics may be acidic, they may actually damage or even destroy the document over time.



Electronic signatures on marriage documents—Guidelines 4.17

Available technology enables documentation to be completed electronically, including using electronic signatures. The *Electronic Transactions Act 1999* applies to the Marriage Act. As such, it is acceptable for couples, celebrants and witnesses to complete marriage documentation electronically, for example, using an iPad, provided that the recipient of the electronic document/s, such as the registry of births, deaths and marriages, consents to receiving the documents electronically.

This does not include the Form 15 certificate of marriage, which must be in hardcopy because the Marriage Act requires that it is handed to the couple by the celebrant.



You are invited to our last face to face meeting for 2022 at the wonderful on Mollymook Golf Club :

7:00pm, Monday 12th December 2022

72 Golf Avenue, Mollymook NSW 2539 Australia

Phone (02) 4455 1911

Bistro or Menu

Please RSVP by 9th December 2022

We will either eat at the Bistro, or if we have a 10+ we might move to the function room and so we definitely need to let the club know about numbers attending, especially as the bistro usually close at 8:30pm

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This event is for us to get to meet and enjoy each others company.



Diary Dates 2023



REVIEWS GROW YOUR BUSINESS

To secure the trust and confidence of potential buyers, you need good reviews. Put simply, success breeds success and buyers rely heavily upon reviews to guide their choices.

According to Easy Weddings in its latest newsletter, as Weddings are generally a one-time only service, reviews are vital, and they explain that their data shows that just a single customer review increases your chances of a booking by 25%, however, 11+ reviews can increase your results up to 200% and 40+ reviews, increases chances by a whopping 300%.

To get great reviews you must not only provide great service, but you will get more reviews if you make it easy for clients to provide reviews, that is, try sending links in an email or text so that customers can easily click & add.

If you receive a bad review, respond professionally, NOT emotionally. Be positive with a thank you and if you feel it necessary, maybe provide an assurance of improved service. You could perhaps ask the reviewer to remove it or challenge the review online. If your bad review is on Google, it will be very difficult to remove as Google does not follow its own guidelines of ensuring reviewers are genuine and so just move on and drown the bad review with a lots of positive information.

Never argue with the bad reviewer online as that just draws more attention to it and besides, some media experts suggest that a single bad review produces a positive result in itself because it shows that all the other great reviews are genuine.

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

Dinner on Monday 12th December 2022 at Mollymook 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 members of the Funeral Celebrants Association of Australia (FCAA) will be invited to join us.

The February newsletter will have a funeral & memorial theme.

Meeting Dates:

- Wednesday 8th February 2023 – Guest Speaker/Mark Simpson
- Wednesday 10th May 2023
- **Thursday 19th July 2023 -50th Anniversary**
- Wednesday 9th August 2023
- Wednesday 8th November 2023
- Friday 8th December 2023, Tentative date for Dinner at the Mollymook Golf Club

Marketing

TIPS FOR NEW & SUCCESSFUL CELEBRANTS

It is a question often asked, “How do I start” and “How do I get more business”.

What else can you add to this list and how many can you check-off?

1. Create a Business Plan

- i) set some goals and deadlines – a goal without a deadline is just a dream.
- ii) How often to you wish to work?
- iii) Is Celebrancy second to your full-time job/career or your primary income?
- iv) Can you work weekdays, weekends or only set days of the week.
- v) Do you want a ceremony or more every week, or is one a month is fine?
- vi) What area will you cover ie How far are you honestly prepared to travel?

2. Most business collapse within 3-5 years. Use your business plan to determine your fees to make your business sustainable:

- i) List & Calculate all your business expenses including fee, taxes, depreciation, vehicle, advertising, printing, forms, etc.
- ii) Determine what it will cost you to deliver a single ceremony
- iii) Add a profit margin that will fund your next ceremony
- iv) Start as you wish to continue i.e. don't discount to get business because the discounted rate will be your benchmark for all future booking
- v) DO NOT set your fees by what others charge as they may not have a business plan, may be a hobbyist, may not provide the same level of service, and could be operating at a loss.
- vi) Remember that you are not a charity, but that you are in business
- vii) Will you include the BDM Certificate or charge extra for it
- viii) Charge a non-refundable 'lodgement fee' or similar remembering that 'deposits' and 'booking fees' are usually legally refundable upon cancellation but a Lodgement Fee is not as it is for a service already conducted.

3. Manage accounts, keeping a record of enquiries, bookings, expenditure and income.

- i) This is fundamental to being in Business.
- ii) Look at obtaining an accounts management system or CRM, or create one of your own in a spreadsheet program such as Excel

4. Read all your assignments and review all of your studies.

- i) Some fundamentals are at the start of your course, but many forget those by the end.

5. Download the Act, Regulations, Guidelines, Certificates, Tip Sheets and Fact Sheets.

- i) Have them ALL on hand for any questions
- ii) Read a section or document every day, even if just a paragraph.

- iii) Keep UpToDate

5. Read the NOIM and other documents, front to back and practice completing them.

- i) One of the most frequently asked questions is about who can witness a NOIM even though the answer is on the NOIM, Act, Guidelines and Tips sheets

6. Have a complete blank set of documents in a protective folder in your care for emergencies e.g. damaged, faulty or lost certificates etc

7. Have a change of clothes in your car in case of wardrobe malfunctions

8. Create an emergency kit of sort including stapler, scissors, take, sewing kit, bobby pins, breath freshener etc.

9. Practice: write sample ceremonies and practice delivery

- i) Record on video for a self-critique

Every time a question is asked, write it down and research the answer and you'll be an expert in no time

If you don't know the answer to a question:

- i) say “I'm not sure about that but will check it and get back to you”
- ii) Never ‘create’ an answer as it could be wrong

Create draft email and text responses for potential client so that you are not reinventing the wheel at every enquiry.

Join an association such as the AMC, which provides Public Liability, Professional Indemnity and Copyright Insurances and has useful directory and resources. (TIP If the association directory has ‘marriage’ in its title, it will appear more often in web searches)

- i) Join your associations' online discussion groups to study question asked and then research the answers noting that the answers given online may not always be correct and if you get something terribly wrong, “I got the answer on FB” is not a defence however quoting for the Guidelines or Act can be.

Meet with other celebrants and find a mutual backup.

- i) It gives you credibility if you are unable to attend a ceremony for any reason e.g. health or accident,
- ii) It may get you a job or two by cross referral.
- iii) You'll have someone to debrief with.

Let people know you exist.

- i) Tell family, friends and co-workers of your registration
- ii) Advertise in any way you feel comfortable.
- iii) If you remain invisible you will never get a booking.
- iv) Create a means for others to find you e.g. signs, website, Facebook page, Instagram, Pinterest or other Social

AMC South Coast Celebrants Cheering for each other

Media, online directories etc

- v) Take photos at every ceremony for your advertising

If you post a photo at a location, credit the location and vendors and suggest they do the same to get cross promotion

Plan your business and promotional strategy to get the business that you want:

Decide on your ideal couple

target that specific couple in all marketing

Disclose your location in advertising, especially on your webpage. It saves time, money and effort while stopping irrelevant enquiries

Research constantly and learn trends while discovering innovative ideas and methods

Review your ceremonies, methods, processes and templates regularly or at least every 3 months to keep them fresh and efficient:

Debrief after each and every ceremony you perform and evaluate how to improve:

- i) What worked very well?
- ii) What needs to change?
- iii) What should you not do?
- iv) What could be done better?
- v) What mistakes were made and how to you correct them?
- vi) What obstacles did you encounter & what is the best was to overcome them?
- vii) Were the clients happy with your performance and why?
- viii) Were the PA, signing table, etc well placed or do they need better locations?

Prepare for each Ceremony:

- i) Create checklists for each step
- ii) Look into a full length mirror before you step out

Be careful not to plagiarise or appropriate another's work and always give credit to authors or sources of poetry or readings etc.

- i) Failing to credit an author or source could result in your prosecution and a prosecution could result in deregistration.
- ii) Don't use photos that you don't own or have no authority or permission to use
- iii) It is inappropriate to read or use religious acts and rituals if you are not religious or do not understand the purpose of the ritual (research it and ask a believer to perform the reading or ritual)
- iv) Appropriation of religious acts, particularly if out of context, can offend and embarrass and in some instances may be illegal
- v) Don't use terms or words that you don't understand e.g. Godparent is a religious title

Check the spelling for key words e.g. aisle instead of isle

Practice using inclusive language and look for alternative phrases

Decide what method you will use to register ceremonies and practice it

Create systems, methods and habits for common functions to avoid errors

Create checklists

Practice smiling for photos

Look into a full length mirror every time you dress for a ceremony or ask another to look you over to avoid wardrobe malfunctions

Have a mint or similar to freshen your breath before ceremonies

Have a hand sanitiser freely available and sanitise between handshakes if possible.

Be alert to dangers (based on real events) - Always examine the area for hazards:

- i) If under a tree, examine the tree for snakes, potential bird dropping, wasps nest etc
- ii) Will the arbour withstand a gust of wind?
- iii) Is there any wet paint?
- iv) Are there any ant-nests in the ceremonial space
- v) Are you far enough from water & waves
- vi) Are there any territorial animals in the vicinity e.g. magpies, bulls, geese etc.

Create and determine your style:

- i) what sort of Celebrant do you wish to be
- ii) just what you point of difference
- iii) What is your look and character, (and it's ok if you don't wish to stand out)?

Review your equipment after each ceremony:

- i) Did you need/use everything
- ii) What can be discarded to make it easier?
- iii) Will adding an item make it easier and more efficient?
- iv) How do you transport everything i.e. do you need a trolley?

Review your office setup, stationery, filing, computer file backup, secure storage (safe).

- i) What changes can you make to streamline or to make better use of space & time.



COORDINATOR COMMENTS



SONG CHOICES

Music creates a mood, energy or atmosphere. We commonly have mood music as people gather, entrance songs for wedding parties, background for signing and of course an exciting song at the wedding exit.

Couples will choose songs because of a memory, a chorus, a current popularity, or a melody but the

choices are not always what they seem. The song of course could have a special meaning to the couple but it can also be argued that the wrong song could in theory invalidate the ceremony if it contradicts the vows or meaning of marriage. The Righteous Brothers' classic You've Lost That Lovin' Feeling, or *Don't Marry Her* by Beautiful South as well as U2's, *I Still Haven't Found What I'm Looking For* or *It's Not Right But It's Okay* by Whitney Houston are more obvious examples just by the titles, but some are not so obvious.

Marry You by Bruno Mars is an example. The title and chorus of "Hey baby, I think I wanna marry you" seems appropriate and fun but the song is actually about a drunken couple at a casino looking for something "dumb thing to do" with the intent of just spending one night together.

Some popular song choices are about stalkers such as *Every Step You Take* by Police or that James Blunt's song "You're Beautiful" which is actually about a drug affected stalker who becomes infatuated by someone else's girlfriend on the train, and then suicides. Not the memory you really want for your wedding.

Then there are the break-up or infidelity songs such *Unfaithful* by Rhianna, or *I Was Only Kidding* by Weird Al Yankovik, or *Neither One of Us* by Gladys Knight & the Pips, *Saving All My Love For You* by Whitney Houston, or *You Are The Reason* by Calum Scott.

Popular songs for weddings still seem to be *All of Me*, by John Legend, acoustic versions of *A Thousand Years*, by Christina Perri and almost any song written by Ed Shearen, except of course his poor attempt at rapping.



This newsletter is a little later than some as the author has been a little busy. Apart from a wonderful rise in local bookings, one of which was a complicated Shortening of Time, there were a few personal demands that needed to be managed but next year looks magic. Special thanks to Melissa Sheehy for covering one of my weddings and for being the MC at another. I hope and trust that you all are getting an abundance bookings yourself for 2023 which is sure to be the best year yet!



Congratulations and thank you to both the outgoing, and the new executive committee who are from across the east coast of Australia but have already been very active in encouraging engagement for all of Australia.

The generosity of time, effort and energy cannot be underestimated. And yet they are on call, volunteering their valuable time and talent for us all. You will find more information on the [AMC webpage](#) as well as on the Facebook [AMC Members Forum](#)

President/National Regional Administrator

Annemarie McDonell

(St Clair, NSW) Ph: 0433 930 352

Email: ceremony4u@gmail.com

Vice President/Education Officer/Regional Coordinator

Kelly Lawson

(Glendale, NSW) Ph: 0401 067 181

Email: kelly@homebrandweddings.com.au

Treasurer Lesley Fazzolari

(Tahmoort, NSW) Ph: 0411 397 556

Email: lesley_fazzolari@hotmail.com

Secretary Alison Pringle

(Chandler, QLD) Ph: 0413 636 596

Email: alison@alisonpringlecmc.com

Public Officer Kathleen Dodd

(Eight Mile Plains, QLD) Ph: 0408 788 191

Email: kathydoddcelebrant@gmail.com

Conference Coordinator Kamal Al Saliby

(Kirrawee, NSW) Ph: 0417 299 929

Email: kamal@whiteswancelebrations.com.au

Rep-AG Govt Liaison Officer/

Conference Coordinator Brian Brennan

(Ngunnawal, ACT) Ph: 0412 711 811

Email: brian.brennan.amc@gmail.com

Contact Liaison/Regional Coordinator Paul Guy

(Wilton, NSW) Ph: 0417 133 599

Email: paul@yesido.net.au

Newsletter Editor Jacqueline LeGrand

(Noosa Heads, QLD) Ph: 0449 161 647

Email: jjblends@gmail.com

Social Media Marketing Officer/Regional Coordinator

Tanya McDonald

(Millthorpe, NSW) Ph: 0400 522 199

Email: buildingforevers@gmail.com

Conference Coordinator/Regional Coordinator

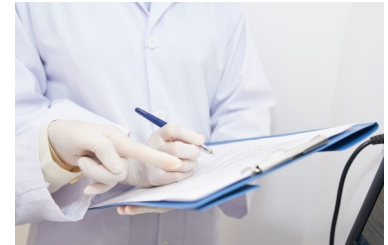
Leanne McKay

(Albion Park Rail, NSW) Ph: 0438 564 217

Email: Tearsofjoyweddings@gmail.com



FEBRUARY 2023 GUEST SPEAKER—Mark Simpson



Mark Simpson Principal Educator
 B.Med.Sc(Hon.Clin.Pharm)B.Med.Ed.BN (Psych.Int.Care)
 (m) 0431 396 417
mark@medicaleducators.com.au
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



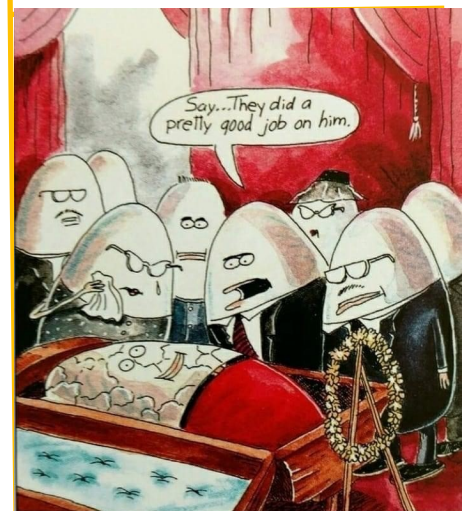
Prior to the meeting you will be surveyed on topics of greatest interest including;

- 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