

April 2024

Volume 3, Issue 3

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.



AMC South Coast Celebrants Cheering for each other

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.



AUSTRALIAN MARRIAGE CELEBRANTS

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2024 OPD IS AVAILABLE

The compulsory professional development activities for 2024 are now available for completion.

The AG's department is delivering the two (2) activities **free of charge** and they are set out in the statement [Marriage \(Celebrant Professional Development\) Statement 2024 \(legislation.gov.au\)](https://legislation.gov.au).

The compulsory activities are:

- Real Consent (Including Capacity)
*Compulsory, 60-minute duration
- Knowledge of the Law No 1
*Compulsory, 60-minute duration.

Your obligations

You must complete all your compulsory activities by **11:59pm on 31 December 2024 (Canberra local time)**.

Under s39G(1)(b) of the *Marriage Act 1961* it is a legal obligation for registered marriage celebrants to undertake all professional development activities required by the Registrar of Marriage Celebrants. Failure to do so (subject to any exemption granted) may result in disciplinary measures being taken, which may include a caution, additional professional development activities, suspension or deregistration.



Exemption applications

If you have an exceptional circumstance that will prevent you from undertaking this important obligation for a significant period of the professional development year, you may apply for an exemption: [Guidelines for exemption from ongoing professional development requirements | Attorney-General's Department \(ag.gov.au\)](https://www.ag.gov.au).

Marriage Celebrants Portal

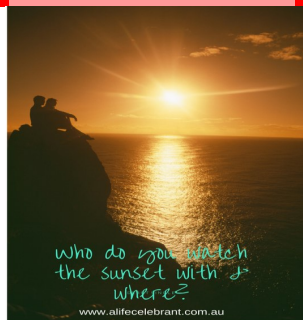
Information on accessing the marriage celebrants portal is available at: [Marcel Portal \(ag.gov.au\)](https://www.marcelportal.ag.gov.au).

Please note that celebrants accessing the portal for the first time since 30 June 2023 will need to set up multifactor authentication using their registered email address.

Please contact MLCS via the details below if you have any questions about completing your compulsory professional development for 2024, or if you do not have access to the marriage celebrant portal.

The MLCS thanks you for your ongoing commitment to professional development.

Marriage Law & Celebrants Section
Attorney-General's Department
3-5 National Circuit Barton ACT 2600
E: marriagecelebrantssection@ag.gov.au
T: 1800 550 343



UPCOMING Sth COAST MEETINGS

7pm, Wednesday 3rd April 2024
7pm, Wednesday 12th June 2024
4pm, Saturday 15th September 2024
(Lunch) Saturday 8th December 2024

2024 OPD

The Obligatory Professional Development (OPD) is ready for you.

Topics this year are:

- ◇ **Real Consent (including capacity)**
 - Compulsory - 24AGD001
- ◇ **Knowledge of the Law No 1**
 - Compulsory 24AGD002



Knowledge
is
power!

What do you need to do?

Step 1: Read the booklet found by following this link which you will also find in the MarCel Portal: <https://www.ag.gov.au/node/6519>.

Step 2: Answer all the questions in the celebrant portal. You will have 4 attempts to answer each question correctly. If you have started but wish to complete the activity at a later time, you may click **Save**.

Step 3 After answering all the questions in each module in the celebrant portal, remember to hit **Submit**.

NOTE: If you have started but wish to complete the activity at a later time, you may click **Save**. BUT please remember that you **MUST** return to the portal and hit **Submit** to complete the activity.

Please note:

- You will not be able to click the submit button *unless* all questions have an answer selected.
- The activity will be submitted automatically only if you have answered all questions correctly, or you have exhausted all 4 attempts to answer each question correctly. *Once submitted, you can no longer access the activity.*
- When you have completed the activity, you will see a confirmation message on your screen. This is your opportunity to **Print** or **Download** the activity for your records (*the Print and Download buttons are available at the bottom of the screen*). Once this screen is closed, you will no longer be able to access this page, or to print or download your results.
- You will be able to see the status on the 'Current Year' page confirming you have 'completed' the activity. *Please check the status to confirm the activity was successfully completed.*
- When the activity is submitted and you see a confirmation message, the department will be notified that you have completed this activity.
- **There is no pass or fail mark.**

Additional Resources

You should familiarise yourself with the following additional resources for a marriage celebrant and have them open on your PC when undertaking to OPD:

1. [Marriage Act 1961](#) a
2. [Marriage Regulations 2017](#)
3. [Guidelines on the Marriage Act 1961 for Authorised Celebrants'](#)

- other information on the Department's website, and
- key forms used in the solemnisation of marriages.

Though you have many month to complete it before 31st December 2024, hesitation is the thief of time, and so, **Get It Done**.

It is perhaps worthwhile looking back at to why we have OPD.

Originally, the Attorneys Generals' office was required to assess the capability of Celebrants but struggled to keep up with the workload and so were often months behind schedule. What became evident from assessment though, was that with celebrants being appointed because of a quasi-quota system and community or political connection, meant that many were not actually familiar with the Marriage Act and as to their own obligations. To correct that failing, a course in celebrancy was introduced (Certificate IV) and applicants to Celebrancy were then required to have achieved competence in some specific units before appointment, while those already appointed were required to attend annual training so as to raise the standard of celebrancy and legal compliances.

The delivery of the annual training was handed over to contracted trainers, usually RTOs, and many Celebrants loved the comradery that occurred when celebrants who were otherwise isolated, got together to discuss the law, procedures and other topics but there were complaints such as the annual cost, or being signed off for attending just 2-3 hours of a required 5 hour session not achieving the necessary goal (though some thought that a positive). I remember attending a very disappointing 'two hour' OPD module session on Wedding Expos which consisted of 'workshopping', that is, the trainer listed the called out ideas on a butcher paper easel, and then closed the session after only ten minutes without any actual delivery of training but signed off for all of the Celebrants on 2 hours of training. **The solution presented to overcome OPD delivery failings. was online assessment.**

There have been glitches in that some of the questions in the past were wrong, out of context or out of purview. An example was the 'legal' question about two years ago: "What advice would you give to a couple wanting to marry on a boat?" – which could fall into the legal framework except that the four options to answer had nothing to do with the law but were instead subjective opinions; and then we had the two factor authority (2FA) login fiasco with many celebrants logging into MarCel without difficulty while many others struggled in frustration for months as they tried unsuccessfully to access MarCel. However all new concepts have teething problems and we seem to have progressed each year. I am confident at this time that all will be well for 2024.

The OPD is a means of ensuring every celebrant does have UpToDate knowledge of the law.

Find out about the AMC Education sessions and support, in this newsletter and/or on the AMC sites.



Are you receiving regular AMC support emails including:

- important information and updates
- forum posts,
- Regional and/or group newsletters,
- AGs and BDM updates
- OPD
- annual registration notifications
- the AMC National AMC newsletter

Subscription to these extras used to be automatic when you joined the AMC but the law has changed and so you MUST now separately subscribe in order to continue to receive those emails direct from the AMC and to also access AMC forums.

If not yet done, as an AMC member, you should act now by followings link to MailChimp and complete the easy form:

- [Subscribe Now - To AMC Emails](#)

It only takes a minute or two and will ensure you continue to receive AMC support.

[Click here or on the image below to go to](#)



AMC ON FACEBOOK

To expand your connections, You should also follow this link to the [AMC Public page](#). Please then like and share.

[https://www.facebook.com/search/top?q=australian%20marriage%20celebrants%20\(amd\)](https://www.facebook.com/search/top?q=australian%20marriage%20celebrants%20(amd))

Also, as an AMC Member, you can also join the [AMC Private members support group](#)

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/australianmarriagecelebrantsinc/?ref=share>

To subscribe the Member Support on the AMC webpage, AMC members should follow these simple steps

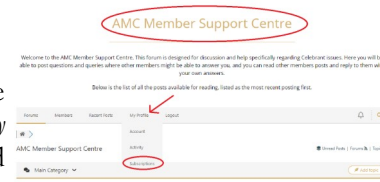
STEP 1

Log into the AMC web page
Select: *'Member Support'*



STEP 2

Scroll down and Open the dropdown menu by clicking on *'My Profile'*, then on *'Subscriptions'* and make your subscription selection.



CELEBRANT RESOURCES

There are about 220 documents in the Celebrant resources section of the AMC webpage ranging from poems to fact sheets, ritual ideas, certificates, and lots more..

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



The AMC committee are all volunteer Celebrants who freely offer their time and energy. It is a compliment to their character that they paid their own accommodation & entry to the AMC Conference and unlike some other associations are not paid any sort of stipend but are of course reimbursed expenses when they bother to claim

Office Bearers

- **President & National Reg. Co-ordinator:** Annemarie McDonell .
- **Vice President/Edu Officer/Reg. Coordinator:** Kelly Lawson
- **Treasurer:** Karen Bridge
- **Secretary/Regional Coordinator:** (vacant)
- **Policies Officer:** Kathleen Dodd

General Committee:

- **Conference Coordinator:** Kamal Al Saliby
- **AG Govt Liaison Officer:** Brian Brennan
- **Liaison/Regi Coordinator:** Paul Guy
- **Newsletter Editor:** Leanne McKay
- **Social Media Officer/Reg. Coordinator:** Tanya McDonald
- **Conference Coordinator/Regional Coordinator:** Leanne McKay



There is also a huge list of Regional Coordinators including of course the Author/Editor of this newsletter.

You can find out more about the committee at:

<https://marriagecelebrants.org.au/about-us/executive-committee/>



If you would like to be more involved in the direction of the AMC or would simply like to offer support to the committee, please contact our AMC President, especially if you would like to assist as Secretary/Regional Coordinator: (vacant).



AMC &
OPD



LEARN MORE

Being a member of an association such as the AMC and attending regional meeting or education sessions gives you access to resources and discussions that were once found in the OPD face to face sessions that had to be paid for. Significantly:

- ⇒ posts containing OPD assistance will again appear in the Face Book AMC Private Members Forum
- ⇒ posts containing OPD assistance will again appear in the AMC support page found on the AMC webpage after member login

But if that still doesn't get you over the line, there is an online education & training session in October run by the AMC for members. [See the Calendar on the AMC website for details.](#)

KNOWLEDGE BASE

UPDATED CERTIFICATE OF FAITHFUL PERFORMANCE BY AN INTERPRETER.

MLCS has provided an updated:

Certificate of Faithful Performance by Interpreter.

This brings the certificate in line with recent changes to Commonwealth statutory declarations.

The revised certificate includes recommendations made by celebrant associations and networks and should now be used.

The revised certificate can be found on the AG website:

[Certificate of faithful performance by interpreter | Attorney-General's Department \(ag.gov.au\).](#)

As always, MLCS welcomes your feedback which can be presented to:

Marriage Law and Celebrants Section

Attorney-General's Department
3-5 National Circuit BARTON ACT 2600
T: 1800 550 343

(Tuesday to Thursday, 10am to 12:30pm and 1pm to 4pm Canberra local time)



Watch out for each other. Love everyone and forgive everyone, including yourself. Forgive your anger, forgive your guilt, your shame, your sadness. Embrace and open up your love, your joy, your truth, and most especially your heart.

Your Article

Infinite diversity in infinite combinations

That is a quote every Star Trek Fan knows but if also applies to Celebrancy in that every Celebrant has their own style, own ideas and interpretations.

The diversity of ideas is essential to our progress.

The one thing that has been obvious to me since childhood, is that the more you learn, the more you discover there is more to learn.

The contribution of articles from Celebrants, or even celebrant clients, can offer a new insight, clarity, confirmation or even an expansion of ideas.

Often I find, there are people who underestimate their value and offer excuses such as "I'm not experienced enough", "I don't know enough about the subject" but then I discover that they know far more than they realise.

Write the article, submit it and every effort will be made in editing or checking before publication but, know that it will be valued.



WEDDING FLOWERS

A Royal Wedding Bouquet Must Contain Myrtle

(Based on an articles by Audrey Kyanova Entertainment, and Juliana LaBianca and Yeu-Gynn Yeung.)

Every flower has a meaning and every bride (well if they wish to be), is a princess.

The English Royal family has a flower that is incorporated into every wedding bouquet and this dates back to the wedding of Queen Victoria. She was quite a trend setter and creator of traditions because it was she who introduced the white wedding gown and she who also introduced that particular flower, the Myrtle is the flower of luck, fidelity, marriage, lasting fertility and love. The fidelity part didn't quite work for Prince Charles and Lady Diana but that is another story.

Myrtle, or properly named, Myrtus Communis, is a flowering evergreen shrub that is native to Europe, West Asia, India, North Africa, and Micronesia but is of course available in Australia.

A myrtle plant was given to Queen Victoria in the 1800s by the grandmother of her husband to be, Prince Albert of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha and then after their wedding in the Chapel of St James' Palace, on the 10th February 1840, she planted myrtles from her own wedding bouquet in her personal garden and the plant has thrived. That same plant or perhaps it offspring, is still used in Royal weddings to this day these 181 years later however when Queen Victoria's son and heir, Edward VII, married Princess Alix of Denmark, according to Jennifer Davies, author of *The Victorian Flower Garden*, Queen Victoria, insisted that the princess carry a sprig of myrtle in her bouquet and then after that wedding Victoria ordered that a sprig of myrtle from her daughter-in-law's bouquet be planted in the grounds of one of her many palaces. to include a sprig from this new flower and brides in the family continue the tradition, passing along a lone stem of myrtle for the next generation of women.

More recently, Queen Elizabeth II created another tradition following her own wedding in 1947, when her bouquet was lost in the middle of her honeymoon before the official wedding photographs were taken. When Lady Diana Spencer married Prince Charles on 29th July 1981 Queen



THE QUEEN'S MARRIAGE TO PRINCE ALBERT, IN THE CHAPEL OF ST. JAMES'S PALACE, FEB. 10, 1840. After the Picture by Sir George Hayter, R.A.; Engraving by permission of Messrs. Groom and Co.



Elizabeth suggested that the Royal bouquet be made in a pair and so not only do Royal brides now have myrtle in their bouquets, which they pass on to other royal brides but they also have a spare bouquet.





Whenever I hear the state name of Alabama, I think of two things, Forrest Gump and the song Sweet Home Alabama, however we are drawn to very different information about

Alabama, USA, Marriage Law as it changed on 29th August 2019, under the Alabama Act 2019-340, removing the need for a ceremony in the process for entering into a legal marriage in Alabama.

You have to be over 18 or have parental consent if one is aged 16-18, and not be divorced within 60 days but from 29th August 2019, persons wanting to marry were no longer required to file an application for a marriage license with the county probate court, and the courts stopped issuing marriage licenses. Probate judges instead began accepting notarized forms completed by couples as the official record of marriage. Once the probate court records the completed marriage certificate form, the marriage is legal.

A wedding ceremony may be performed, but a ceremony is not required.

The onus is upon the couple to declare themselves married. Persons wanting to marry may access a marriage certificate form online at the Alabama Department of Public Health's website at:

alabamapublichealth.gov/vitalrecords/marriage-certificates.html.

The department's website includes instructions for completing and filing the marriage form.

The couple must sign and date the document to confirm their consent to marry however the parties can sign the document separately and/or at different times, but both signatures must be notarized by a notary public for the state of Alabama.

So in Alabama, a marriage is valid or "legal" when the properly completed, signed and notarized Alabama Marriage Certificate form is recorded by an Alabama probate court.

The law in Alabama removes the requirements for a Celebrant, minister or witnesses to sign the marriage license and there is no specific wording required for a legally binding ceremony.

There is no waiting period in Alabama from when a couple complete the online form until the wedding can take place. It is possible for the couple to print the paperwork and sign it on the same day. The couple may record an Alabama

Marriage Certificate form in any Alabama county probate court.

The only legal requirements are that they both sign the marriage license document, provide their social security numbers, get the document notarized, and submitted to the Probate Court office to be filed within 30 days of the last signature.. for the marriage



to be valid. The license does not expire, but if it does not get filed within the 30 day time window, the couple will have to fill out another form.

So in summary:

- Not divorced within 60 days
- Over 18 or have parental consent if one party is aged 16-18
- The parties can sign separately at different locations.
- **A ceremony or celebrant is not required.**

Despite the change of the law, wedding ceremonies are still taking place in 2024 indicating that people do still want to celebrate the marriage event and to do that with a Celebrant.

So even though couples 'marry' by simply signing and lodging their form they still then have a 'wedding'. The Celebrant though does NOT need to have any training or qualification.

Venues are still operating, Wedding Officiants (Celebrants) are still in business as are wedding photographers, wedding dress designers, and other vendors. Alabama still has numerous websites and magazines dedicated to weddings

<https://www.alabamapublichealth.gov/blog/2019/08/20.html>

<https://files.ecatholic.com/23758/documents/2019/8/NewMarriageLaw-ChurchProcedures-08-23-2019.pdf?t=1566828891000>

Next month:



Weddings in Ghana



SCAMWATCH is warning Australians to be wary of websites that appear official but fail to deliver on promises to provide birth, death, marriage or divorce certificates in return for a fee.

How the scam works

You visit a website which falsely claims to provide fast and reliable birth, death, marriage or divorce certificates. In reality these websites cannot directly provide certificates as they are only available through [official Government registries](#).

- Website may look genuine and use images such as Australian flags, altered copies of Government crests and logos, pictures of Australian landmarks and links to genuine Government websites.
- Whilst you may think you're paying for a certificate, you are actually paying for information, forms and/or web links which are freely available from official Government websites. In some cases you may receive nothing at all.
- Scam websites commonly ask for personal and financial details such as your credit card number. Providing your credit card and personal details to scammers can lead to identity theft and credit card fraud.
- The sites may provide a shopping cart or payment gateway which they claim is secure but is actually unsecure and unencrypted.
- Some sites may subscribe you to ongoing payments which you weren't aware of.

Protect yourself

If you want to use a third party service when applying for certificates, make sure you research the provider first, look online for reviews written by other consumers and read all the terms and conditions on their website.

The Australian Government website www.australia.gov.au is a safe portal for finding government services, and will help to avoid unauthorised third party providers.

- ◆ Remember that official Government registries may charge a fee for certificates but will not charge for information and forms provided freely on their website or at their customer service centres.
- ◆ Be alert to imitation websites which misuse logos, trust marks and seals of approval also check the web address thoroughly as most Australian, state and territory government websites use the '.gov.au' extension – never .org, .net or .com.
- ◆ Never enter your personal, credit card or banking details on a website unless you have checked it is authentic and secure. Legitimate websites which ask you to enter sensitive personal details are commonly encrypted to protect your details.
 - ◇ This is usually identified by the use of "https:" rather than "http:" at the start of the internet address.
 - ◇ This can also be identified by a closed or unbroken key icon at the bottom right corner of your browser window. If these are missing or there is an open padlock or broken key icon, the website is not secure and could be a scam site.



Phone scams | Scamwatch

According to Scamwatch, 1 in 3 reported scams happen by phone. Scammers call, claiming to be from well-known organisations. This includes government organisations, law enforcement, investment and law firms, banks, telecommunication providers.

They make it sound urgent to get to you act quickly. They may try to convince you to give them your personal or bank account details, or remote access to your computer. The caller may already have some details about you, such as your name or address.

Warning signs it might be a scam

Stop and think. It's probably a scam call if the caller:

- ◆ Asks for personal or financial information:
- ◆ payment, or for you to move money between accounts
- ◆ your password, pin, one-time code, or some other security information
- ◆ credit card or banking details to process a refund or other 'overpayment'
- ◆ Wants you to install software or access a secure account on your mobile phone or computer
- ◆ Threatens you with immediate arrest, deportation, or blackmail etc.
- ◆ Suggests you or your accounts have been hacked or involved in fraud
- ◆ Tells you about a way to make quick, easy money with little risk or effort

Be scam aware

- * Let calls from unknown phone numbers go to voicemail.
- * If you are not sure if a caller is who they say they are, it's ok to hang up.
- * Never use contact details given by a caller or written in an email or SMS
- * Call the organisation or person back on a phone number you have found yourself (on their website)
- * Use the organisation's secure, authenticated portal or app (never via a link)
- * Immediately hang up on anyone who tries to threaten or intimidate you.
- * Never give anyone remote access to your computer.
- * If an offer appears too good to be true it probably is.
- * Research any investment opportunity fully before investing money. Visit [MoneySmart](#) for advice.
- * NEVER pay a bill using a prepaid card such as an Apple card or similar

Protecting Equipment

Both rain and heat can play havoc with electrical equipment. On a cool mountain day, a PA can still cut out because of overheating from direct sunlight and the weather can change anywhere for a calm day to a blustering storm. Hence we need to protect our expensive equipment.

An all weather cover is available for Mipro systems but whilst it shades the PA while also protecting it from rain,, the insulation could contribute to overheating on a hot day. So what are the option?

Placing the PA in a shaded area always helps but is not always possible. A portable gazebo or sun shade can work but are not usually the best option for a ceremony.

Plastic PC covers can sometimes be found at budget stores for under \$4, they perhaps best described as a plastic bag that is shaped to fit over a personal computer but the size is also suitable for many PAs

In the December 2022 Newsletter, Phil Timbrell told us how he made a small modification to an umbrella so that he could attach it to his Roland PA. He simply connected a plastic threaded attachment to the stem of his umbrella and screwed a corresponding connector to his PA.



Phil warned that the system is NOT suitable for windy conditions and of course we cannot always predict when a gust of wind will arrive. I recall one ceremony in the mountains that started and ended with beautiful clear blue skies but in between we has a huge gust of wind that blew the lectern and other things over, and 10 seconds of heavy rain that dried out in the subsequent sunshine.

Another umbrella option is a golf umbrella holder which can be purchased for \$4 to \$60 but average around \$25. There are basically two types that have many variations, one that has a highly adjustable longer arm, and the other that is essentially an adjustable clamp base. Either can be mounted onto the upright of your PA tripod but of course you have



to buy an umbrella as well. A good quality Golf umbrellas is best because not only are they bigger, but they have vents or a double canopy, with top layer overlapping the lower section so as to allow for wind and so are very slightly less prone to be uplifted in a light breeze though any umbrella will still uplift in a strong gust.

Golf Umbrella

- Double Canopy
- Non-slip Foam
- Waterproof

VS

Single Canopy Umbrella* vs Double Canopy Umbrella

Over 500 Sold



The cheaper alternative to the golf umbrella holder, is the camp chair umbrella which, like the golf umbrella holder, has a clamp to attach to your PA upright, and it has a flexible arm to allow you to tilt toward the sun.



[Camp Chair Umbrella - Navy - Kmart](#)

WARNING

Do not use an umbrella in windy conditions as the umbrella can become a sail, tipping over your PA, or it could snap off and become an airborne projectile, so be careful

KNOWLEDGE BASE-OPD

DESTINATION WEDDINGS

If you love to travel or receive couples in your own exotic locality, such as the beautiful South Coast of NSW you need to know just where you can perform ceremonies. National Parks, though on the coast, may fall within the Australian Capital Territory and so lets look at territories.

In Section 5 of the Marriage Act 1961 we see that Territory means:

- (a) the Australian Capital Territory; or
- (b) the Northern Territory; or
- (c) Norfolk Island; or
- (d) the Territory of Christmas Island; or
- (e) the Territory of Cocos (Keeling) Islands.

Section 8 Extension of Act to Territories etc. goes on to be more concise in that it explains the following:

(1) **The whole of this Act extends to the following Territories:**

- (a) Norfolk Island;
- (b) the Territory of Christmas Island;
- (c) the Territory of Cocos (Keeling) Islands.

You will notice however that the Australian Antarctic Territory is not a part of this list

(2) **Part V Marriages of members of the Defence Force overseas**, applies both within and without Australia.

(3) **Part VII – Offences**, applies to and in relation to:

- (a) marriages solemnised, or intended or purporting to be solemnised, in Australia; and
- (b) marriages solemnised, or intended or purporting to be solemnised, under Part V; and, in relation to such marriages, applies both within and without Australia.

(4) **includes:**

- ◇ **Section 73-Validity of marriages refers to a marriage solemnised under this Part**, being a marriage which, if it had been solemnised in Australia in accordance with Division 2 of Part IV would have been a valid marriage, is valid throughout Australia and the external Territories.
- ◇ **Part VA Recognition of foreign marriages** and section 111 extend to all the external Territories.
- ◇ **111 Certain marriages and legitimations to be valid in all the Territories**
 - (1) A marriage solemnised in accordance with Division 2 of Part IV that is a valid marriage in Australia is valid in the external Territories.
 - (2) A person who is, or is deemed to be, as from a particular time, the legitimate child of that person's parents by virtue of section 89, 90 or 91 is, or shall be deemed to be, for all purposes the legitimate child of that person's parents as from that time in the external Territories.
 - (3) The operation of subsection (2) in relation to a child to whom section 89 or 91 applies is subject to a like qualification to that provided by subsection 89(5) or 91(4), as the case requires.
 - (4) Subsection (2) shall not be taken to operate in relation to a child so as to affect the validity or effect of an adoption of the child, whether the adoption took place before, or takes place after, the commencement of this Act.

TRANSPORTING EQUIPMENT

The easy way to transport all your gear from car to ceremony.

Carrying a PA, speakers tripod, lectern, signing table and other nick-nacks can be troublesome, especially if you cannot get your vehicle close to the ceremonial area.



A few years ago I stumbled upon the Kmart beach trolley for just around \$50 and it was great but still a little cumbersome as it only folded in one direction

and was tough to pull in some locations. Kmart then began selling a trolley with handles at both ends for around \$20-\$30 more, and it was very manoeuvrable. It even came with a canopy to protect your gear and a large zipped pocket at one end that was perfect for certificate folders.



More recently, Kmart seems to have stopped selling the later but still sell the original and now a model that collapses in two direction, so that it takes up less room in your car however, like the very first model, with just a pull handle, it can be difficult to manoeuvre in confined spaces.

The wheels on all the Kmart trolleys are not great in that although they are described as beach trolleys, the wheels easily bog in soft sand on the beach and you have to get it across to firm, wet sand to easily pull it along.

The plastic wheels, though reasonably durable, can deteriorate over time, especially if you carry a lot of weighty gear.

A canopy trolley though can however be purchased online and though they can have similar wheels to the Kmart models, seem to be stronger and better quality. The pull handle is definitely stronger, but the handle adjustable pram handle is the winner as the trolley can be turned easily and manoeuvred even through restaurants spaces and so is great at wedding venues and reception venues as well as in a field or a firm beach. Beach trolleys vary greatly in quality and price ranging from the \$50 or so at Kmart up to hundreds with tougher frames and pneumatic wheels



KNOWLEDGE BASE

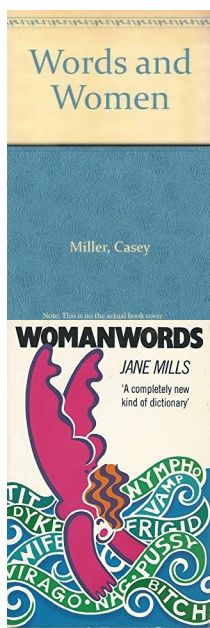
Ms. vs Mrs. vs Miss:

What is the Difference?

Today we associate the prefixes of Mrs with a married woman and Miss with an unmarried woman or girl., but how did that come about?

The historical specificity of ‘titles of politeness’, as the Oxford English Dictionary terms them, and the changing use of Mrs and Miss, were explored in some detail in Una Stannard’s 1977 book, *Mrs Man*, which presents, in great detail, the struggles of a few married women to keep the names with which they were born, and the difficulties that befell women who don’t. The book was reviewed by [Alexandra G Kaplan](#) who described the book as essentially an historical portrait of married women’s names from the mid-eighteenth century to the present and so tapped into an issue of some concern for contemporary feminists seeking to insure a freedom from excessive, undue dependency upon men, and to disavow the patriarchal culture of which women’s name change upon marriage is a symbol. Kaplan went on to explain that Women’s change of name, in this context, is usually considered as representative of a larger social issue. Una Stannard argued strongly for the importance of women keeping their maiden name after marriage, or at least having a constant, readily identifiable name throughout their adult lives. ([PsycInfo Database Record \(c\) 2022 APA, all rights reserved](#))

Other publications, books of note, are:



◇ Casey Miller’s and Kate Swift’s, *Words and Women* (1977) which details evidence of sexual prejudice in the English language, examining the unconscious messages transmitted daily through words at home and at work and

◇ Jane Mills’s *Womanwords* (1989) which is an exploration of the histories and meanings of over 300 words relating to women. It shows how words like "hysteria" and "hussy" acquired pejorative meanings, how words like "slut" and "frigid" were formerly used of men, and how women are likened to food and animals. The abbreviations of Mrs, Mis, and Miss are covered in pages 162-163



Returning specifically to MRS, MISS, MS, & MRIS, research published in the 2014 Autumn issue of *History Workshop Journal*, by Cambridge University historian [Dr Amy Louise Erickson, Professor of Feminist History](#) at the university of Cambridge, goes on to reveal that the title of Mrs, pronounced ‘mistress’, was for centuries applied to all adult women of higher social status, whether married or not.



Notably, forms of address for women ‘Mrs’ and ‘Miss’ are both abbreviations of ‘mistress’ and Miss was reserved for young girls until the mid-eighteenth century while Madam appears to have been the title used

for married/widowed women of social standing.

The term Mistress in early modern England was the designation of the female equivalent of a Master who was a person with capital, who directed servants or apprentices.

Prior to the mid eighteenth century, common abbreviations of Mistress were Mrs, Mrsis, or Ms.

Mrs did not indicate marital status but was applied to any adult woman who merited the social distinction.

Dr Erickson wrote: *“Few people realise that ‘Mistress’ is the root word of both of the abbreviations ‘Mrs’ and ‘Miss’, just as Mr is an abbreviation of ‘Master’. The ways that words derived from Mistress have developed their own meanings is quite fascinating and shifts in these meanings can tell us a lot about the changing status of women in society, at home and in the workplace.”*

A Dictionary of the English Language, (Johnson's Dictionary), was published on 15 April 1755 and written by [Samuel Johnson](#).^[2] and defined mistress as:



1. A woman who governs; correlative to subject or servant;
2. A woman skilled in anything;
3. A woman teacher;
4. A woman beloved and courted;
5. A term of contemptuous address;
6. A whore or concubine.'

Neither ‘mistress’ nor ‘Mrs’ bore any marital connotation whatsoever for Dr Johnson.

According to Dr Erickson, when in 1784 Dr Johnson wrote about having dinner with all three women who were unmarried friends, he identified them as “Mrs Carter, Miss Hannah More and Miss Fanny Burney”. Elizabeth Carter was a distinguished scholar of similar age to Johnson himself and was invariably known as Mrs Carter; while Hannah More and Fanny Burney were much younger and they used the new style prefix of Miss which was adopted by adult women for the first time in the middle of the 18th century. Before that, Miss was only used for girls, in the way that Master is only ever (today increasingly rarely) used for boys.

According to Jane Mills's, *Womanwords*, Dr Johnson defined Miss as an 'infantine' term for female children or schoolgirl who had recently left school.

To refer to an adult woman as a 'Miss' had previously implied that she was a prostitute.

Dr Erickson explained that until the 19th century, most women did not have any prefix before their name. Women on the bottom rungs of the social scale were addressed simply by their names while Mrs and, later, Miss were both restricted to those of higher social standing. Thus, in a large household the housekeeper might be Mrs Green, while the scullery maid was simply Molly and the woman who came in to do the laundry was Tom Black's wife or Betty Black.

Dr Erickson suggests in her publication says that "Mrs was the exact equivalent of Mr as either term described a person who governed servants or apprentices.

In Dr Johnson's understanding which was how it was used in the 18th century, 'Mrs' was more likely to indicate a businesswoman than a married woman. So the women who took membership of the London Companies in the 18th century, all of whom were single and many of whom were involved in luxury trades, were invariably known as 'Mrs', as the men were 'Mr'. They were literally, Masters and Mistresses of their trades."

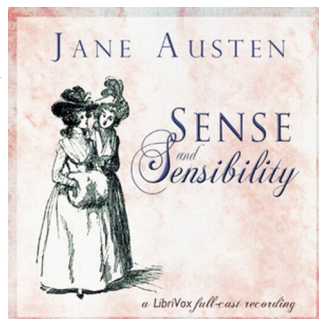
Dr Erickson comes to the conclusion that it appeared that it was not society's desire to mark either a woman's availability for marriage (in the case of 'Miss'), or to mark the socially superior status of marriage ('Mrs') which led to the use of titles to distinguish female marital status but rather, socially ambitious young single women used 'Miss' as a means to identify their gentility, as distinct from the mere businesswoman or upper servant.

Casey Miller's and Kate Swift's, in *Words and Women* linked the change to the increasing participation of women in the industrial revolution when women left their homes where they were identified as wives, mothers or daughters, to work in new industries where their marital status or availability for marriage and ties to whom she 'belonged' was obscured.

In the course of her research, Dr Erickson looked at the way in which from the early 19th century married women acquired their husband's full name such as in Mrs John D a s h w o o d (J a n e Austen's *Sense & Sensibility*, 1811). Austen used this technique to establish seniority among women who shared the same surname.

England in the early 19th century was the only place in Europe where a woman took her husband's surname.

Mrs did not definitively signify a married woman until around 1900.



The introduction of Ms as a neutral alternative to 'Miss' or 'Mrs', and the direct equivalent of 'Mr', was proposed as early as 1901. Dr Erickson wrote:

"Those who objected to 'Miss' and 'Mrs' argue that they define a woman by which man she belongs to. If a woman is 'Miss', it is her father; if she is addressed as 'Mrs', she belongs to her husband,"

"It's curious that the use of Ms is often criticised today as not 'standing for' anything. In fact, it has an impeccable historical pedigree since it was one of several abbreviations for Mistress in the 17th and 18th centuries, and effectively represents a return to the state which prevailed for some 300 years with the use of Mrs for adult women – only now it applies to everyone and not just the social elite."

In Australia, women are under no obligation to change their name or to use a prefix that denotes their marital status. It is a matter of choice.



* Dr Amy Erickson's paper, 'Mistresses and Marriage', is published in the autumn 2014 issue of *History Workshop Journal*.

* The text in this work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Licence](#).

* <https://www.cam.ac.uk/research/news/mistress-miss-mrs-or-ms-untangling-the-shifting-history-of-titles>

* *Mistresses and Marriage: or, a Short History of the Mrs*, by Amy Louise Erickson, *History Workshop Journal*, Volume 78, Issue 1, Autumn 2014, Pages 39–57, <https://doi.org/10.1093/hwj/dbt002>, Pub. 02 September 2014

* <https://muse.jhu.edu/article/555989/summary>



"I accept ... but do not accede naming rights."

KNOWLEDGE BASE

CHANGE OF NAME IF MARRIED IN AUSTRALIA



By Celebrant, Melissa Sheehy

In the early 19th century England was the only place in Europe where a woman took her husband's surname and up to that time, the use of the prefixes of 'Mrs' and 'Miss' indicated social status rather than marital status however that gradually changed and according to

Dr Amy Erickson's paper, *Mistresses and Marriage*, published in the autumn 2014 issue of History Workshop Journal, "Those who objected to 'Miss' and 'Mrs' argue that they define a woman by which man she belongs to. If a woman is 'Miss', it is her father; if she is addressed as 'Mrs', she belongs to her husband." In the 19th to 21st centuries it became commonplace for married women to no longer be known by their Christian (forename) name, but rather by their husband's name e.g. Mary Joan BLACK, upon marriage to Robert BROWN, became known as Mrs Robert BROWN, or simply as Mrs BROWN.

Now though, in Australia it is *NOT* a mandatory requirement for a bride to take on the surname of her husband, i.e. change her name. It is instead a personal choice for either party to a marriage, to take on the other parties' surname. That is, either party may wish to take the surname of their partner in marriage, (husband or wife) or even combine both surnames with a hyphen. Hence, in the marriage of *Mary Joan BLACK* and *Robert John BROWN*, the surname options are:

- No change, or
- Mary Joan BROWN and Robert John BROWN, or
- Mary Joan BLACK and Robert John BLACK, or
- Combined & hyphenated, BROWN-BLACK or BLACK-BROWN as the surname

Some couples find it advantageous to keep their pre-marriage surname as qualifications and diplomas may have been issued in their original name – think doctors, lawyers, medical professionals and teachers. In these instances, a person may opt to continue use of their original name in their professional life and take on the surname of their partner in other aspects of their life. This needs to be carefully and personally considered and researched as identification could become confused if documents are in different names.

Looking at some Facebook wedding group pages it appears that many couples and Celebrants are a bit confused regarding what happens with change of name. Although Celebrants must be cautious about giving advice, and should never offer legal advice in particular, it is important that we direct our couples to the right agencies for assistance. as change of name requirements vary across BDMS. It is recommended that celebrants check with the relevant BDM for information on change of name as it may have implications for a married person seeking identity documents following a marriage. It can be very helpful if Celebrants have an understanding of the process as well.

Change of Name by Marriage Process

The Official Marriage Certificate (Form 15) issued at solemnisation of marriage (the ceremony) is proof of marriage but not of identity however the certificates issued by registering bodies, such as the NSW BDM, contain far more personal detail, and so are both proof of marriage and proof of identity.

In order to change a name by marriage, the couple must obtain their BDM Official Marriage Certificate, as issued by the registry of Births Death and Marriage in the Australian state or territory state in which the marriage was registered. The party wishing to change a name must then take that certificate, together with the rest of their identification, including drivers licence, passport, birth certificate, and attend the BDM, or other state/territory equivalent. In NSW, this can be done at a Service NSW office and as we on the South Coast are of course situated in NSW, we will concentrate on the NSW process.

The couple may wish to also take with them, vehicle registrations, boat licence as well.

Once the evidence is presented, Service NSW can start the process of updating records and reissuing relevant documents. Once this has been done, further changes to Centrelink, ATO, Passport, Medicare etc can be done directly with those government agencies and changes can also be made at banks, insurers, superannuation organisations, investment brokers, share brokers and/or other organisations etc.

It is also worth noting that even if the couple do not wish to change any name after marriage, it will still be necessary for them to notify certain agencies and businesses of a change to marital status, including:

State Government

- NSW Land Registry, for home owners
- NSW Rental Bond Board, for renters
- NSW Pet Registry, for pet owners

Federal Government

- Australian Electoral Commission
- Australian Passport Office#
- Australian Taxation Office
- Centrelink

Other businesses

- Banks and building societies
- Insurance and superannuation providers
- Mobile phone and internet providers
- Utility providers
- <https://www.nsw.gov.au/family-and-relationships/name-changes-and-corrections/change-your-surname-after-marriage>

#If married in Australia, there is no charge for your new Passport but if you married overseas, a formal name change may be needed for a name change on a passport



KNOWLEDGE BASE

ADULT CHANGE OF LEGAL NAME IN NSW AUSTRALIA

Register an Adult Change of Name

It's not necessary to register a change in your name after you get married in Australia as most government departments will accept your official BDM marriage certificate or your divorce document as [proof of your name](#).

Please do not confuse this legal process with the change of a name by an Australian marriage where your original name remains with you. The legal process outlined here, removes all previous names from your 'current identity'.

Please note also, that if you are an Australian citizen who has married overseas and wants to change to your married name on your Passport, a legal name change as described here, may be required.

The '*Register a Change of Name*' [application](#) is a complex process, and is not to be undertaken lightly as it effectively draws a line meaning that once approved, you are known by the new name only, and by no other.

The complex application includes questions of (but not limited to) criminal history, police checks, and includes a list of persons restricted to apply. As this process changes the name legally and completely, it is not a simple step to reverse it or to change it again. A person may only change their name through this process (NSW) once in a twelve month period, and only three times in a lifetime (strict exceptions apply).

Sadly some people have been told this is what needs to be done to use their partners surname, but if married in Australia, this undertaking is NOT necessary. For more information, see:

<https://www.service.nsw.gov.au/transaction/register-change-name-adult>

You **do not need to register a name change** if you:

- get married in Australia and take the surname of your spouse or partner, or add their surname to your name
- have divorced, did not register a name change with BDM when you married, and now wish to:
- revert to your maiden name or former surname, or
- remove your spouse or partner's surname from your name.

You **do** need to register a name change if you:

- registered a change of name with BDM when you married, or
- your name has changed or been altered for another reason.

You can register your name change with BDM, online but fees are attached to the application with the total amount varying depending on your choice of certificate.

Eligibility

You're eligible to change your name online if:

- you're not a [restricted person](#)
- your birth is registered in NSW (*if born in another state, you will need to apply there*)

- your birth is not registered in NSW and a protection order has been made to protect you and/or your children from domestic violence
- you were born overseas and have been a resident in NSW for 3 consecutive years immediately prior to your application.

Restricted persons

The BDMR Act restricts certain groups of persons from changing their name without the permission of a supervising authority. It also restricts people from making a change of name on behalf of a restricted person.

Restricted persons in NSW are:

- ◇ an inmate of a correctional centre.
- ◇ a person on remand.
- ◇ a parolee.
- ◇ a periodic detainee.
- ◇ a person subject to a supervision order.
- ◇ a forensic patient.
- ◇ a correctional patient

What you need

- a current email address
- your personal and contact details
- the reason why you're changing your name
- digital copies of:
 - * 3 [proof of identity documents](#) including a current [photo ID](#)
 - * [evidence](#) of your current residential address
- All identification and supporting documents must be certified by an [authorised witness](#) i.e.
 - ◇ Justice of the Peace
 - ◇ notary public
 - ◇ legal practitioner (holding a current practising certificate)
 - ◇ a person authorised to administer an oath under section 26 of the Oaths Act 1900.
- your [payment](#). to NSW BDM

Born overseas

For an adult born overseas, you will also need to provide the following:

- evidence of your Australian citizenship or visa
- evidence of your place of birth
- Australian certificate of registration by descent
- ImmiCard
- New Zealand citizenship certificate
- New Zealand birth certificate.

Passports

If you marry or enter a registered relationship overseas and wish to assume your partner's family name or add it to your own, you may require an Australian RBDM name change certificate, because your marriage or entry into a relationship overseas cannot be registered by an Australian RBDM.





#TheMatchmakers #SBSOnDemand

How did your couples meet? A few years ago, people were embarrassed to mention that they met online through a dating app. That changed with many now boasting of that avenue to love however, couples with very specific cultural or religious backgrounds have, according to this SBS series, have returned to the tradition of the Matchmaker.

On Valentine's Day, SBS launched its book of love with The Matchmakers, a heart-warming yet confronting documentary series which dives into the unique and private world of three of Australia's most successful cultural matchmakers. In an age of online dating, profile pics, swipe-rights and high divorce rates, many hopeful Australians are turning to the ancient traditions of matchmaking to find 'the one'. The Matchmakers goes behind the scenes of Australia's traditional Jewish, Muslim and Hindu matchmakers as they help singles in the universal quest for love in contemporary Australia.

Subscribe to SBS Australia on

YouTube:  / [sbsaustralia](https://www.youtube.com/sbsaustralia)



WARNING: reference is made to very disturbing scenes and parallels found in the TV series.

Bones of Crows is a 2022 Canadian drama film, written, produced, and directed by [Marie Clements](#). The film stars [Grace Dove](#) as Aline Spears, a [Cree](#) woman who survives the [Indian residential school system](#) to become a [code talker](#) for the [Canadian Air Force](#) during [World War II](#). [⚠](#) Though the series begins with a wedding, we see very little of that wedding ceremony but yet this is an important series as it takes the viewer on a journey of revelation that is vital for any celebrant, enhancing an understanding of generational trauma. This is the true story of the indigenous people of Canada from the perspective of Cree woman Aline Spears who became a war time code talker and who survived her traumatic past in Canada's residential school system to continue her family's generational fight against systemic starvation, racism and sexual abuse. This is not easy to watch particularly as we see children being stomped on, tortured, molested, dying, and then watch their adult selves funnelling all that trauma into behaviour guaranteed to further compound their suffering and disenfranchisement. It is also hard to watch as there are obvious parallels to the systemic traumatising treatment of Australian indigenous people particularly when we consider the 'stolen generation' as the attitudes, language and actions were virtually identical as is the impact of similar horrific abuse, encountered generation after generation. There is also the clear example of the complicity of government, welfare bodies, Police and the Catholic church (though others were involved) in destroying language and culture, and the church moving paedophile priests from parish to parish to conceal their perverse activities and so perpetuating the trauma onto other children and generations. This series is disturbing because it's true and because it happened in Australia as well.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bones_of_Crows

https://www.imdb.com/title/tt21342838/?ref_=tt_mv_close

Interesting facts about Australia

1. Australia is the only continent covered by a single country.
2. 90% of Australians live within 50 kms of the coast.
3. 80% of West Australians live in Perth
4. **In 1973, Australia was the first nation in the world to introduce a Civil Celebrancy Program and remains a world leader.**
5. Australia has 19 World Heritage Listed sites.
6. 91% of our country is covered by native vegetation.
7. 33% of Australians were born in another country.
8. Over 300 different languages and dialects are spoken in Australia including 45 Indigenous languages, and 21% of Australians don't speak English at home. But previously there were an estimated, over 660 indigenous languages.
9. Both kangaroos and emus lack the ability to walk backwards. This was the reason they were chosen for Australia's coat of arms, to symbolise a country always moving forward.
10. North West Tasmania has the cleanest air in the world. <https://www.cleanairtas.com/air-monitoring/factsheet-cleanest-air-in-the-world.pdf>
11. The Great Barrier Reef is the largest ecosystem in the world. It is made up of nearly 3,000 individual reefs and can be seen from space.
12. Before coming to office, during his time as a Rhodes Scholar studying at Oxford, former Prime Minister Bob Hawke set a world record for sculling 2.5 pints of beer in 11 seconds.
13. Bob Hawke holds the highest approval rating for an Australian Prime Minister; it reached 75% during his second year in office in 1984 and is the third-longest-serving Prime Minister in Australian history with a term of eight years.
14. Australia has over 60 separate wine regions and the wine cask (aka Goon!) was invented in Australia.
15. Fraser Island is the largest sand island in the world.
16. The Indian Pacific train has the longest straight section of train track in the world.
17. The Great Ocean Road is the world's largest war memorial.
18. There are 1 million camels that roam wild in Australia's deserts, the largest number of purebred camels in the world, and are exported to the Middle East.
19. 80% of Australian animals are unique to Australia.
20. You can fly from Perth to Melbourne faster than you can fly from one end of Western Australia to the other.
21. There are over 60 different types of kangaroos and a baby kangaroo when born is only about two centimetres long.



22. 5kms of Uluru is underground.
23. Mount Augustus (pictured) in Western Australia being twice the size of Uluru, is the world's largest.



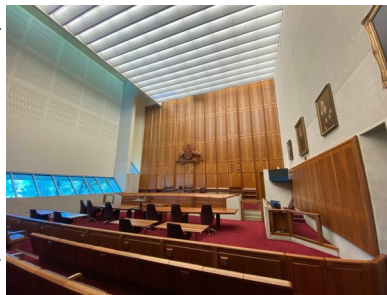
24. Australia has the world's longest golf course measuring more than 1,350 kms long.
25. The largest cattle station in the world is Anna Creek Ranch in South Australia and it's bigger than Israel.
26. The first Police Force in Australia was made up of the most well-behaved convicts.
27. It would take around 29 years to visit one new Aussie beach every day – there are 10,685 of them!
28. South Coast NSW has over 200 beaches.
29. AFL, based on a game played by Indigenous people, was invented to keep cricketers fit in the off season,
30. Australia is the 6th largest country in the world.
31. Australia is almost the same size as mainland USA.



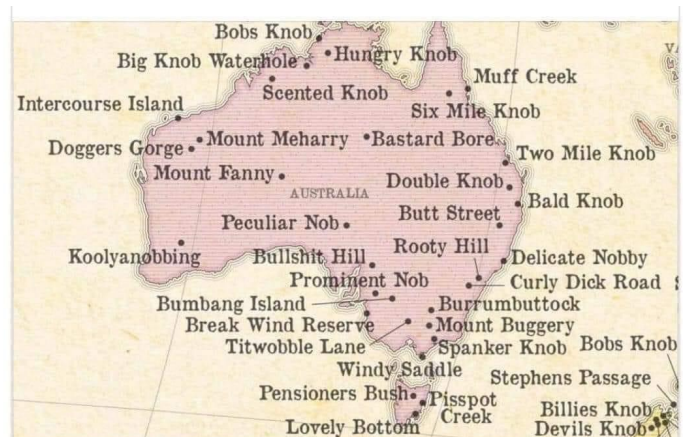
32. The First Nation people (Aboriginal) culture is the oldest continuous culture on Earth and is estimated to have existed for 40,000-60,000 years.
33. In Aboriginal culture women are not allowed to play the didgeridoo.
34. Before the arrival of humans, Australia was home to megafauna, three-metre tall kangaroos, seven-metre long goanna's, horse-sized ducks and a marsupial lion the size of a leopard.
35. Western Australia is home to what is believed to be the oldest evidence of life on Earth – the Stromatolites.

Interesting facts about Australia

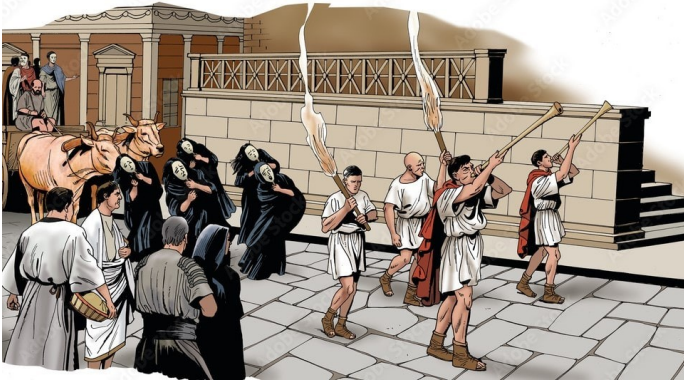
36. The world's oldest fossil at 3.4 billion years old was discovered in Australia.
37. Australia is the only continent in the world without an active volcano.
38. In 2020, as has been the case in many previous years, sheep outnumbered people 2.5 to 1.
39. Though New Zealand beat us by a few years, giving women the right to vote in from 1893, and the colony of South Australia allowed women to both vote and stand for election in 1894, as a nation, Australia was the second country in the world to give women the right to vote in 1902, by introducing equal federal suffrage with the enactment of the *Commonwealth Franchise Act 1902*, which enabled women to both vote and stand in federal elections. New Zealand didn't allow women to stand for election to parliament until 1919. It should also be mentioned though, that some states continued to exclude indigenous Australians from voting regardless of gender.
40. It was not until 1983 that all Indigenous Australians were given the right to vote when a Commonwealth Parliamentary Committee recommended that compulsory enrolment should apply to all Australians. 'Aboriginal natives' were then, no longer referred to in Commonwealth electoral legislation.
41. It was not until 1980 that the right of appeal to the English Privy Council against judgments made in Australian courts finally ended and the High Court of Australia became the highest court of appeal in the Australian judicial system.
42. Per capita, Australians spend more money on gambling than any other nation, with over 80 percent of Australian adults engaging in gambling of some kind.
43. Canberra was selected as the capital because Sydney and Melbourne could not agree on which city should be the capital. The Australian Capital Territory was created and located, midway between the two cities.
44. Australia is home to the longest fence in the world, the Dingo Fence. Originally built to keep dingos away from fertile land, the fence is now 5,614 km long.
45. The Australian currency is considered to be the most advanced currency in the world as it is colourful, each note has a different size, notes are waterproof, being made of polymer and with several additional security features, are notoriously hard to counterfeit.
46. Australia has around 600 varieties of eucalypt trees.
47. Australia was one of the founding members of the United Nations.



48. Stonemasons in Australia instituted the 8-hour working day back in 1856 making Australia the first country in the world to do so.
49. Australia is home to 21 of the world's 25 most venomous snakes.
50. Australia's most deadly marine animal is the Box Jellyfish and is responsible for more deaths per year than snakes, sharks and saltwater crocodiles.
51. The only two mammals in the world that lay eggs are found in Australia, being the echidna and platypus.
52. The venom of the elusive platypus can kill a small dog.
53. The termite mounds that can be found in Australia are the tallest animal-made structures on earth.
54. Australia is home to more than 1,500 species of spiders.
55. The Great Victoria Desert is bigger than the whole of the United Kingdom.
56. In May 1951 gold was found near Orange NSW and in July was found in Ballarat and other regions followed. Melbourne became the wealthiest city and Australia soon became the wealthiest country on earth.
57. The gold rushes caused a huge influx of people from overseas and Australia's total population increased nearly four-fold from 430,000 in 1851 to 1.7 million in 1871.
58. Such was the exodus to the gold fields in 1951, that only two constables were left in Melbourne as all others Police officers had left for the goldfields in search of their fortune.
59. The map below shows location names that may appear on a marriage certificates



THE HISTORY OF DEATH RITUALS



Ancient Roman funeral with professional mourners. Imgur

HISTORY COLLECTION

According to an article that appeared on the History Collection webpage, [\(link\)](#) The ancient Romans saw themselves as serious and stolid types, and frowned upon excessive displays of emotion. The article went on to assert that the Romans made an exception for funerals, however. On the one hand, the more people attended a funeral, and the showier the funerary procession was, the more respected the deceased was. On the other hand, an excessive display of grief by the deceased's relatives, especially when it came to upper class Roman families, was seen as undignified. To solve that conundrum the ever-practical Romans hired professional mourners who were women paid to weep, wail, grieve loudly, and engage in other emotional displays that well-born Romans were not supposed to demonstrate in public. To seriously sell their sadness and impress the crowds, professional mourners threw dust and dirt on themselves, tore out their hair, ripped their clothes, and scratched their faces until they drew blood. Eventually, such ostentatious displays became too much. So laws were passed to prohibit the hiring of professional mourners because their antics *"invoked strong emotions and were incompatible with the idea of the quiet life of the citizen"*.

According to [Wikipedia](#) though, the practice originates from Egyptian, Chinese, Mediterranean and Near Eastern cultures. Professional mourners, also called **moirologists**^[1] and **mutes**, are compensated to lament or deliver a eulogy and help comfort and entertain the grieving family. Mentioned in the Bible^[2] and other religious texts, the occupation is widely invoked and explored in literature, from the Ugaritic epics of early centuries BC to modern poetry. Female professional mourners, called *Rudaali*, were common in many parts of India, especially in the Western Indian state of Rajasthan.

Professional mourning is still practiced in China and other Asian countries. Chinese professional mourners in particular have survived dramatic cultural shifts such as the Cultural Revolution, though not without having to adjust to the times. For example, in an interview published in 2009, one professional mourner, who [wailed](#) and played the *suona*, recounted how, after the [Proclamation of the People's Republic of China](#), he

and his troupe began playing revolutionary songs like "The Sky in the Communist Regions Is Brighter" during funerals.^[3] In fact, some cultures even think that the use of professional mourners brings a certain religious and historical application to funeral processions.^[4]

According to DW, in countries like Ghana, Nigeria, and Kenya on the African continent, the practice has grown into a flourishing business bringing in a lot of money.

You can listen to an audio interview of a professional mourner in Ghana on the [DW website](#).

[According to GhanaWeb](#), there is even a Kumasi Funeral Criers Association and a funeral may cost \$US15,000 - \$US20,000, with as many mourners as possible.



You can watch an advertisement posted on [Facebook here](#).

The advertisement reads:

Professional Mourners in Africa. You lost a grandma/grandpa but can't don't know how to intensify the burial event with the sounds of Mourners? You can't find the Strength to Cry? They Got your Back! They help Everyone who can't find the tears to cry.

Whilst in most countries, the professional mourners are female, in Kenya are reportedly becoming more popular and is described on Kenyan TV as hiring actors to come to a funeral and pretend to care. But like in other countries, professional mourning is now a source of employment. You can view the interview of 21 year old, Daniel Ochieng, a professional mourner from Migori county, [here](#) or on the image below.



Quote from the web

Just before I die, I'm going to swallow a huge bag of popcorn kernels just to make the cremation a little more exciting

COORDINATOR COMMENTS



How are you?

These simple words are often said by habit but are intrinsic to relationships. We all have our ups and downs, *“that is life”* it is said. I was however reminded recently of how important those words are: *How are you?*

We cannot know what another person is going through or

dealing with. We can sometimes see clues in their eyes which are the window to the soul, their faces, behaviour, gait or words and even if we ask, sometimes are not told. When waiting on information from a groom, recently his response was delayed because he was in grief. The dog that he grew up with, was a much loved family member to him and when he met his fiancé, the furry family member, travelled with them everywhere and so when the dog died, he was shattered and distraught with grief. Many may not understand that the loss of a furry family member can be, and often is, as devastating as the loss of any other loved family member. I immediately sent him a link to the [Grief & Loss](#) tab on my web page. It took him a week to respond but when he did, he explained that reading about how grief can be disabling, gave him an understanding of his own state and so helped him considerably. After getting off the phone with him, I received two funeral bookings in succession. My standard response emails again included the same link and again both families expressed their gratitude at being understood by being given a resource that helped them understand their mind state. Loss can take many forms, divorce, moving house, sudden poor health, retrenchment, income reduction and more. Even a loss of confidence can be a triggering affect on conduct. I sometimes explain to people in grief that when they overreact to tiny events such as a minor coffee spill, it is the anger stage of grief, the overwhelming emotion, that is manifesting but will pass.

As Celebrants, we see and sometimes feel grief when assisting families at funerals, but we can also see the same reactions in a parent who feels the loss of the close relationship with a son or daughter who is marrying. They may already love the partner as a family member but subconsciously they know that the relationship with their own child has changed forever.

So where am I going with this?

The insidious aspect of grief and loss is that it can creep up on you. When I planned my mothers' funeral in 2016, it was weeks after that I allowed myself the luxury of engaging with my own overwhelming grief.. Understanding my emotions and reactions didn't take away the grief, but helped me deal with it.

Understanding grief & loss in our family members helps us be better family members while understanding grief & loss in our clients, helps us be better, more professional Celebrants who are supportive and of value to our clients. However just as importantly, we have to recognise when those same symptoms or stages of grief are personally experienced. The last few years have been very challenging for many Celebrants. Covid and social isolation destroyed incomes for many, and then there were the challenges of MarCel, law changes, OPD requirements, fires, floods and interest rate hikes, as well as a variety of other life challenges that may have occurred such as the loss of health, the loss of agility & energy through aging, the loss of a job or career, and for some, that meant they had to surrender (or maybe have removed) their authorisation to be a Celebrant. It is especially frustrating when the cause is out of our own control. Some desperately struggle to cope and so please be kind when you discover a Celebrant who goes off on a rant about a rule or procedure change, and perhaps more importantly, be kind and gentle with your self.

Make certain that you have someone that you can debrief with. It may be in a phone call or a meeting over a coffee but keep in contact because it is another Celebrant that will understand the nuisances and challenges of a difficult client meeting or ceremony.

Some tips:

- Stop for a minute and just breath
- Be positive in attitude
- If having a bads day, know that tomorrow will be better
- regularly meet or communicate with another Celebrant
- Keep up to date with changes to minimise stress
- Utilise the free consultations funded by the federal government if you need additional support
- Exercise regularly
- Nurture a hobby that relaxes and energises you
- Socialise
- Read a book rather than spend hours on the net
- Meditate or pray
- Get plenty of regular sleep
- Walk among nature and admire the beauty that surrounds you

Look after self and occasionally that may mean looking into the mirror to ask *“How are you?”*

