

May 2024

Volume 3, Issue 4

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.



AUSTRALIAN MARRIAGE CELEBRANTS

Inside this issue:

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- Events in May
- Coordinator Comments
- **And so much**

COVER PICTURE
Love is in the air

Are Lithium Batteries safe in your PA system?

Article by Celebrant & Engineer, Phil Timbrell

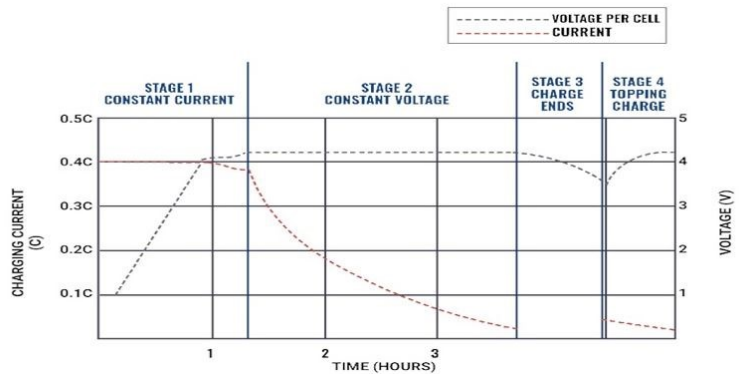


If you have purchased a public address (PA) system in the last few years, chances are it has a Lithium battery fitted. If you don't live under a rock, the chances are you have heard of many houses and units catching on fire due to Lithium batteries exploding. So how safe are Lithium batteries and are they worth the risk?

I will keep this article as least technical as possible, however it is worth understanding the differences between Lithium batteries (LiFePO4) and Lead Acid (SLA) batteries, as we rarely hear of an SLA battery exploding.

I will start with a

simple graph. The dotted line at the top of the graph represents the voltage of the lithium battery whilst it is being charged. Soon after reaching nominal voltage the current being pushed into the battery (the lower dotted line) starts to drop off according to a well defined curve. If the current being pushed in is too high then the battery may overheat and finally catch fire and explode. Lithium batteries do explode more violently than SLA batteries.



Continued next page.....



NEXT MLCS MEETING

The next MLCS meeting will be in May 2024. . If you would like any matters raised, please notify the AMC executive immediately with details.

UPCOMING
Sth COAST
MEETINGS

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

From previous page

The reason batteries are not catching fire and exploding during the charge cycle in people's PA systems, is that they are fitted with what is called an "intelligent charger" which monitors the voltage and time and then gradually reduces the current source. Eventually the intelligent charger will switch off or go into sleep mode. So if you have purchased a good name brand PA from a shop front here in Australia, you can rest easy that your system should not catch fire.

The charge cycle for an SLA battery is quite different. In fact I have an intelligent charger that can be programmed



for LiFePO4 or for SLA .

The charger has a specific charge cycle to work with a Lithium battery and a different charge cycle to work with a Lead Acid battery.

I have found a local company selling replacement lithium batteries for a Mipro 707, 708 and 808 claiming the Lithium batteries (these use a pair of batteries) for \$650 are drop in replacements. I seriously warn against this. I believe if a system is designed for a lead acid battery and you want to change battery technology then change the whole PA system. The nominal voltage for a 4S LiFePO4 battery is roughly 13.5 volts against approximately 12 volts

for a lead acid, and whilst this may not cause any damage to the system it is not the voltage (VCC) the system was designed for and more importantly the battery management system was designed for.

The final question then is, should you embrace the lithium technology when you next buy a PA system or avoid it? I say embrace it if it is purchased from a local reputable dealer. LiFePO4 batteries are lighter, hold a greater charge, charge more quickly and can hold a charge longer than SLA batteries. They can also withstand 10 times as many charge recharge cycles as an SLA battery (see chart below) so will probably outlast your PA system. The only downside is they are more expensive.

So why do so many eBikes and eScooters catch on fire? If you listen carefully to the news, most catch fire early in the morning whilst on charge. Clearly the on line, faceless vendor, is selling a charging system that is not suited to the batteries in order to save cost – the batteries overcharge after a few hours of charging eventually catching fire and exploding early in the morning.

One final word however – **you should never leave any batteries on charge overnight.**

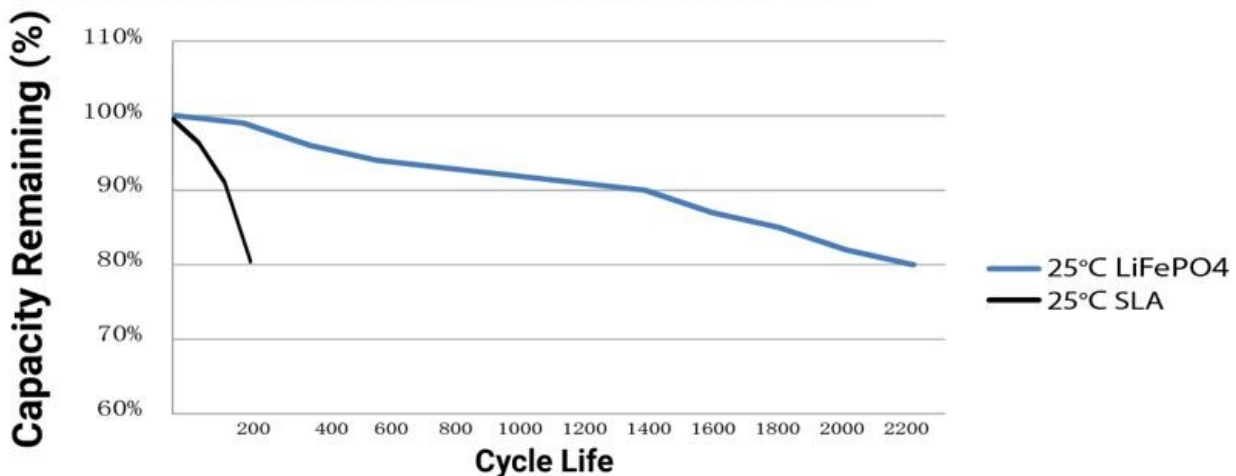
Charging a PA system should be done where you can keep an eye on it. To prolong battery life for both SLA and LiFePO4 batteries, they should be stored with fully charged batteries in a room or garage that does not experience extreme heat or cold. Hope this clarifies the situation.



ALKALINE BATTERY TIP

To extend the life of disposable batteries in microphones and senders, take the batteries out after use and store them in a cool, dry place.

**CYCLE LIFE of LiFePO4 vs SLA at 25°C
0.2C CHARGE/0.5C DISCHARGE @ 100% DOD**



Comparing LiFePO4 vs SLA battery cycle life



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/?pref=share>

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

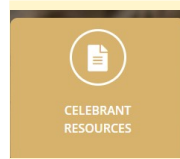
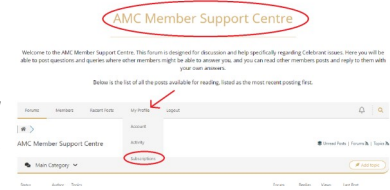
STEP 1

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.



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/>



AMC Committee

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 McDonnell .
- **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:** open
- **Social Media Officer/Reg. Coordinator:** Tanya McDonald
- **Conference Coordinator/Regional Coordinator:** Leanne McKay



There is also a huge list or 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).



Your AMC General Executive Committee

AUSTRALIAN MARRIAGE CELEBRANTS

The AMC (Australian Marriage Celebrants) Executive Committee is a group of dedicated volunteers who have been elected as officials to oversee and manage the affairs of the AMC. The specific members and structure of the AMC Executive Committee may vary over time, as they are elected by AMC celebrants to serve a term of office. Their dedication to our association and to our profession is simply amazing and so they should be applauded. You might wish to send them a note of thanks & congratulations or simply let them know that you appreciate their efforts. They deserve it! Find out more at

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



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Executive Team Members and regional Coordinators are readily available to assist you, so do not hesitate to get in touch if you require support or information.



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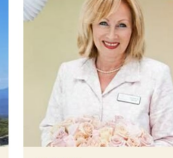
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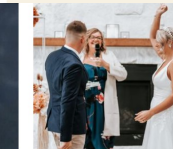
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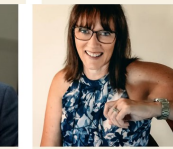
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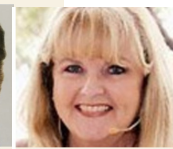
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Your AMC General Executive Committee

Responsibility

They AMC Executive Committee actively shape the direction of the AMC, creating a nurturing environment through strategic policies and programs that benefit both celebrants and couples. By fostering a sense of community, they provide a valuable platform for knowledge sharing and professional growth, benefiting celebrants and couples alike.

Governance

The AMC Executive Committee is responsible for governing the organisation and ensuring that it operates in compliance with relevant laws, regulations, and guidelines. The AMC establish policies, procedures, and protocols to govern the conduct of celebrants and maintain the integrity of the association.

Strategic Planning

The executive committee develops and implements strategic plans to guide the direction and growth of the AMC. They assess the needs of celebrants, the industry, and the broader community to make informed decisions and set goals for the organisation.

Advocacy

The committee represents the interests of celebrants and the celebrant profession to external stakeholders, including government bodies, regulatory authorities including the MLCS & BDMs, as well as industry associations. They advocate for the rights, recognition, and professional standing of celebrants within the wedding and celebrant industry.

Policy Development

The executive committee formulates and updates policies that govern the conduct and responsibilities of AMC celebrants. These policies may cover areas such as ethical conduct, professional standards, code of practice, and continuing professional development requirements.

Member Support

The committee provides support and resources to AMC celebrants. This may include offering guidance on legal requirements, professional development opportunities, networking events, and access to relevant information and updates.

Decision-Making

The executive committee makes important decisions regarding the organisation, including financial matters, membership criteria, accreditation processes, and any other significant matters affecting AMC celebrants.

AMC member support

To access membership support services, you must hold a current AMC membership.



The AMC (Australian Marriage Celebrants) Association provides membership support to its members, offering assistance and resources to enhance their professional journey. Here are some ways in which the association helps support its members:

Guidance and Advice:

The association offer guidance and advice on various aspects of being a marriage celebrant, including legal requirements, ceremony planning, client management, and professional development. They can help answer questions, address concerns, and provide valuable insights based on their expertise.

Resources and Templates: The AMC Association provide its members with resources and templates to assist in their celebrant practice. These resources could include sample ceremony scripts, checklists, marketing materials, and documentation templates, saving time and effort in creating them from scratch.

Continuing Professional Development: The association often offers opportunities for continuing professional development (CPD) to its members. CPD activities can include workshops, webinars, and seminars focused on skill enhancement, industry updates, and staying abreast of best practices in the field.

Networking and Community: Being part of the AMC Association connects members with a community of fellow marriage celebrants. This network can provide support, collaboration opportunities, and a platform for sharing experiences, advice, and knowledge within the celebrant community.

Advocacy and Representation: The AMC Association advocates for the interests and rights of its members. They may engage in discussions with regulatory bodies, government entities, and industry stakeholders to represent and protect the profession, ensuring that the voices of marriage celebrants are heard and respected.

By leveraging the membership support provided by the AMC Association, you can receive valuable guidance, resources, and a supportive community that can contribute to your growth and success as a marriage celebrant.



TIP: Gear Care

We all know that cleaning everything after use, preserves it but are you cleaning everything?. Use your car cleaning & polishing gear to wipe down & polish your tripods to keep them looking new. Apply a plastic cleaner/restorer to PAs with plastic casings to maintain that professional look. Keep feathered pens in a protective box for transport to keep their shape. Run glue or tape over the inside of joins of PA covers to give them extra strength & durability. Rub soap lightly over case zippers to keep them lubricated.



It has often been pointed out that the AMC appears in web searches more than other associations because the name itself lists high in the alphabet and because the words in the name 'Australian and Marriage and Celebrants'—built in SEO, however the webpage directory was in need and some improvement and so the committee has addressed the member requests.

AMC Website "Find Your Celebrant" Search Results

The AMC executive committee is thrilled to announce the recent update to the "find your celebrant" search results, which now includes a member's primary location. When couples conduct a search in a particular region, all celebrants who have selected this region will still be displayed. However, on each celebrant's profile, the member's primary location will be highlighted. This enhancement allows couples searching for a celebrant in a specific region to distinguish between celebrants located in that region and those from other areas.

This update ensures that all celebrants who service the region are promoted, providing couples with the full benefits of finding a celebrant for their wedding in the area. Moreover, they will have access to details about the celebrants' locations directly on the profiles they first encounter. This empowers couples to choose between selecting a celebrant from the searched region or one who services the area but is based elsewhere.

By offering maximum options to couples visiting our site in search of a celebrant, we aim to encourage them to select one of our celebrants rather than seeking alternatives elsewhere. Our goal is to cater to couples, celebrants in selected regions and those who offer services in other areas. While finding a balance has been challenging, we believe that with the new "find your celebrant" search results, we have achieved a happy medium.

Adding your Primary Region

We've streamlined the process of adding your Celebrant's Primary Region by incorporating a dropdown menu. This menu is now conveniently located on your profile page, just below your description section. It's readily visible on your profile page for easy access.

WEB PAGE UPGRADE



To fully leverage the benefits of this new "find your celebrant" search feature, we encourage you to log in to the members' area on the AMC website, navigate to your profile page, and select your Primary Region. Our aim is to provide our couples with the best experience and comprehensive information on the profiles they view.

To assist our members, the AMC Committee has added the primary region to your profile on your behalf. This ensures that all profiles are updated and optimised for enhanced search functionality. However, if the selected region is not your preferred primary region, we encourage you to visit your profile page and make the adjustment to a region that suits your preference.

Remember to save your changes by clicking "update my celebrant profile" located at the bottom of your profile page after making your selection.

Other Celebrant Locations

You can still include all the regions you cover in the "Other Celebrant Service Locations" section situated below your Primary Region. When you choose one of these regions, you will appear in the "find your celebrant" search results for that specific area. On your displayed profile, your "primary location" will be visible, giving couples the choice to select a celebrant situated in that region or opt for your profile as a celebrant serving it despite not being based there.

New Celebrant Regions

Since we received limited additional region feedback from our members, we have reviewed each State and Territory and included some additional regions for each. While we attempted to cover as many areas as possible, our knowledge of these regions may be limited, and we might have overlooked some. If you find that your region is missing, please send us an email with the region you would like to have added. We will compile all these additional regions and submit them for inclusion on the website. If you wish to add a region, please email us before April 30, 2024. Unfortunately, any region additions received after this date will not be able to be accommodated so hopefully you acted on time.

[Email Additional Regions](#)

BUSINESS BASE



Register a Business Name

By Celebrant, Melissa Sheehy



A business name is a name or title under which a person or entity conducts a business

On 28th May 2012 we saw the introduction of ASIC's new national business names register.

This involved the migration of millions of records held by state and territory agencies across Australia and was a huge process that allowed for a business to be

registered nationally.

Before registering a name, the entity must hold an ABN and you are advised to discuss registration of a business name with your accountant, tax agent, and/or finance professional as to the best fit (or entity) for your circumstances, which may involve registering as a sole trader, a partnership, trust, or company etc.

Business.gov.au has a great ['Help me decide'](#) tool that can help you work out the business structure that will best suit your needs and what registrations you should consider.

You can check to see if a business name is available by using the [business name availability](#) search facility.

To register a business name, you will need to have:

- an [Australian Business Number](#) (ABN), or
- be in the process of applying for one with the Australian Business Register (ABR).

Once you're ready, you can apply for an ABN, as well as register a business name, using the Australian Government's [Business Registration Service](#).

Note that depending on the type of business setup and the form of registration, renewal may well be needed. You can choose to register or renew your business name direct or to use a private service provider (PSP). This could be your accountant, your solicitor, or another business that provides online services with ASIC but be warned that some agencies may appear on the surface to be a government body but instead is an agency that charges two, three or four times the fee that you would pay of going direct.

⇒ **Currently, registering a business name costs \$42 for 1 year, and \$98 for 3 years but agencies may charge you in excess of \$98 for one year.**

⇒ **There is no fee to register for an ABN**

However, not all persons operating a business need to have a business name registered.

This depends on what name you are wishing to use. Exceptions may include operating a business using your own name.

Once you have registered your business name you don't have to display a certificate of registration of a business name but Business name holders must include their business name on all written communication. Their business name must also be visible to the public wherever the business owner does business. For example, on their shopfront.

It should be noted that holding a business name does not necessarily mean you have exclusive right or ownership of that name and Registering a business name does not protect you against third party claims for trade mark infringement.

There may be another name identical to yours registered name, especially if it the other was registered in another state or territory prior to ASIC migration. Another business may also be operating but perhaps is not be registered, or a business name like yours may be found online, with a domain name already in place. This can be extremely frustrating if you find someone is running a business with the same (or very similar to) name as yours, especially if it is operating in your region. To ensure your proposed business name doesn't infringe on an existing registered trade mark, you should use [IP Australia's Australian Trade Mark Search](#) to search for existing trademarks.

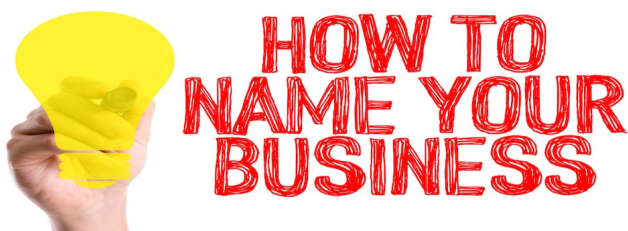
For more information, see ['how to protect your business name'](#).

If your business turnover is under \$75,000 or more in your first year, you **don't have to register for Goods & Services Tax (GST), but you have the option to do so.**

Some Celebrants may feel they do not have enough work to warrant the cost and steps involved in undertaking registration of a business name.

- For further information on business names <https://asic.gov.au/for-business/>
- Starting, operating and closing a business <https://business.gov.au/>
- To protect your business and brand further, contact IP Australia <https://www.ipaustralia.gov.au/>
- [Update your business name details](#)
- [Renew your business name](#)
- [Cancel your business name](#)

BUSINESS BASE



Choosing a business name

A good business name is far more than a name.

Here are 20 tips on choosing a good business name:

1. Keep it short and simple
2. Will it attract customers?
3. Will it create a good impression of your business?.
4. Is it memorable
5. can it easily be passed along to others by text or word of mouth.
6. Does it identify you and/or your services
7. is easy to say, and spell when you answer the phone
8. can it be found by web searches
9. does it allows for growth
10. does it distinguish you from your competitors
11. is it clear and not easily misunderstood
12. is it available and so not already in use- see [business name availability](#)
13. Use online [domain tools WhoIs](#) to [name check](#) if a particular domain name is already registered.
14. can it be easily used in a domain name and email addresses
15. will it stimulate interest in your target audience
16. will it offend or confuse
17. is it available as a social media handle
18. does it breach an existing trademark
19. Can a recognisable logo for use on promotional material be developed?
20. Do you like the name?

References

- * <https://sleek.com/au/>
- * [Crazy Domains: 11 Ultimate Rules for Picking a Domain Name for Your Business](#)



Types of business names

Use a structured, disciplined approach to develop a list of potential names for your business. Some Celebrants register multiple names and URLs that all divert back to a singular, similar or identical webpages to broaden market access

Engage in market research, talk to potential customers, solicit feedback from friends & family and continue iterating until you find the name that sticks. If you already have a business name, review it annually to determine if a new name or even an extra name will help secure more business.

Descriptive names

Specify the product or service. Less susceptible to misinterpretation. Note that it can be difficult to trademark businesses with names containing real words.

Suggestive names

Emotive brand names evoke specific feelings to convey the brand experience. Generally easier to trademark because of their originality.

Arbitrary names

Latin, Greek or other foreign root words modified to embody the brand's personality. They are memorable but take time to reach market share.

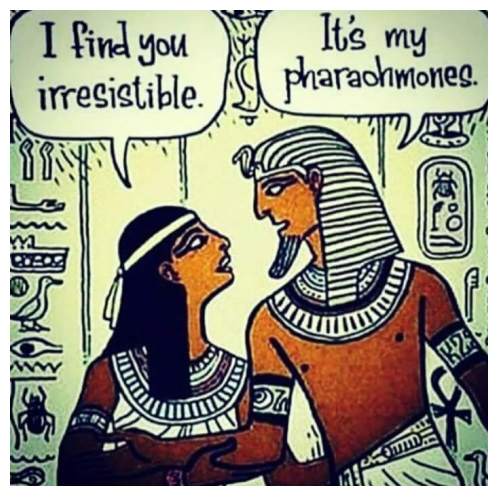
Acronyms/initialisms

Shorten excessively long names that would otherwise be difficult for customers but lack meaning, emotion and imagery.

Names based on other languages

Words from other languages that piggyback on their connotations.

[Ref: BigCommerce](#)





Registry of Births Deaths & Marriages

REGISTER MARRIAGES ONLINE IN NSW

Some Celebrants are still using manual submissions to register marriages in NSW however that can result in unusual delays in both registration and the issuing of BDM certificates.

In case you don't know, or don't use it, the NSW BDM has an online eRegistry portal named 'Lifelink' which the BDM describes this as *"an easy-to-use online portal that allows authorised marriage celebrants to print marriage forms, register NSW marriages online and order certificates"*.

Registering online takes about 10 to 20 minutes however you get an almost instant response confirming the submission and then the registration. A day or three later, you get a further notice that the certificate, if it has been requested, is being posted. This who post or email records for registration, do not get confirmation of receipt and are not informed when the certificate is posted.

The NSW BDM has information on its webpage to assist celebrants which includes information, forms and contacts to help marriage celebrants.

- [Register marriages online](#)
- [Register marriages by post](#)
- [Checklist for marriage documents](#)
- [Apply for a marriage certificate](#)
- [Purchase marriage stationery](#)
- [Contacts](#)
- [eRegistry video tutorials](#)

If not already registered for use of Lifelink, you can request a login by email, quoting your celebrant number, also, you can use the same contact for eRegistry technical difficulties and user support contact:

- eRegistry-support@customerservice.nsw.gov.au
- Helpline phone number is [\(02\) 6885 9332](tel:0268859332)

For marriage registrations, certificate application forms and other enquiries contact:

- Helpline phone [\(02\) 6885 9334](tel:0268859334)
- bdm-online-celebrants@customerservice.nsw.gov.au

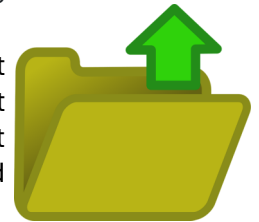
These online video tutorials are available to teach you how to enter and access data

- ◇ [eRegistry: login](#)
- ◇ [eRegistry: creating and saving](#)
- ◇ [eRegistry: Viewing, editing and deleting module](#)
- ◇ [eRegistry: printing a document](#)
- ◇ [eRegistry: adding a document](#)
- ◇ [eRegistry: submitting your notification](#)
- ◇ [eRegistry: how to make a payment for an existing transaction](#)



There are many advantages to using Lifelink which has excellent tech support and they far outweigh the deficiencies which are:

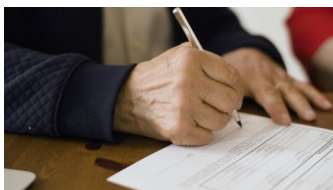
- * Surnames MUST always be in upper case however Lifelink now automatically converts surname to uppercase
- * Occasionally data will be inexplicably erased. If that happens, contact the tech support so that the issue can be identified and resolved
- * Lifelink keeps records in view for the user, for only two months which is the period that the Celebrant can order certificates.
- * Uploaded documents cannot not be deleted by the user i.e. if you upload the wrong file, you have to also of course also upload the correct file but then email tech support to tell them which to delete.
- * Doesn't allow printing of Form !5 using lower case for surnames.



signing



For my very first wedding, I supplied an ostrich feathered pen for the signing but when I displayed a photograph of the pen on a celebrant's site, a couple of experienced celebrants suggested the pen was tacky and outdated and so at the next wedding, I placed an expensive Parker pen on



the table however the Bride's mother rushed to her car and brought back a feathered Ostrich pen. This taught me that I have learned to act on my own instincts and so always have

a feathered pen on hand. and without fail, someone from the wedding party will comment on the pens to the point that I have to count them before and after. To prevent them being souvenired. During Covid, I had sanitiser and multiple pens available to minimise cross contamination however the pen holders that came with the pens, easily fell over in a breeze and spreading the pens across the table looked untidy and so this presented the need for something more stable and tidy. Added to this was the dilemma of where to store vow and reading cards so that they are out of sight until needed.



- **Option 1:** Purchased pen holders on line and adhered them to a laminated board (see above).
- **Option 2:** A desktop pen holder set for two pens but it still left the vow cards exposed.
- **Option 3:** A pen set with matching desk top case into which the pens can be stored during transport but can then be used to store for A5 booklets & vow cars during the ceremony.

P.S. You can also protect feathered pens in transport by repurposing a case from other products.



KNOWLEDGE -OPD



According to section 5.1 of the Guidelines, under the heading of “Time And Place”, a marriage occurring in Australia may be solemnised on any day, at any time, and at any place (Section 43 of the Act).

The Guidelines further explain that the marriage must be registered in the state or territory where the marriage was solemnised though to meet this requirement, and possible requirements of other countries for recognition of the marriage, the Guidelines suggest that marriages in aircraft and ships at sea should be avoided.

The Marriage Act applies to Australian external territories including Christmas Island, Norfolk Island and the Cocos (Keeling) Islands as specified in the Section 8 of the Marriage Act 1961, in that the whole of the Act extends to the following Territories:

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



However, the Marriage Act does not apply to the Australian territory in the Antarctica, so the Penguins pictured have not dressed for a **A u s t r a l i a n**

wedding.

While Section 41 tells us that a marriage shall be solemnised by or in the presence of an authorised celebrant who is authorised to solemnise marriages at the place where the marriage takes place, and that place, according to Section 43, “*Marriage a marriage may be solemnised on any day, at any time and at any place*”.

It Is About You

Infinite diversity in infinite combinations

Yes, it is that Star Trek quote every Star again but is so apt to Celebrancy.

Every Celebrant has their own history, origins, style, cultural background, own ideas and interpretations, likes and dislikes, beliefs and aspirations. We put so much of ourselves into all that we do, so much so that each ceremony is not just a tribute to our couples or families, but a reflection of ourselves.

What you do, what you say, how you look and what you write, influences your next step as well as others around you.

The diversity of ideas is essential to our progress and development. It is very obvious day after day, that the more we learn, the more we discover there is so much more, yet to learn.

That again is also very true for Celebrants. Three years ago, I had never heard of ‘*jumping the broom*’ and two years ago, I had no idea that wedding ‘sponsors’ and wedding coins were common place in some parts of the world. We learn by research, asking questions and by sharing ideas.

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 own value and offer excuses such as “*I’m not experienced enough*”, or “*I don’t know enough about the subject*” but then I discover that they know far more than they realise., or discovering a limit of knowledge, explore and so find and learn so much more.

I am asking you to write an article. It can be on any subject that interests, influences, informs or inspires celebrants.



It can be about OPD, the direction of marriage, ceremony (any ceremony) trends, or it can be about you—what motivates you, what inspires you, why you became a Celebrant and what success and

failures you have had or see ahead.

Submit your article to the editor and every effort will be made to publish it.

Provisos are that no one can be defamed, has to be factual (true), or identified as fiction, and has to be your own work (*not AI or plagiarism*).

You article will be checked before publication and it is highly unlikely to be rejected but, know that it will be valued. If you want help, contact the editor.



There are two weddings, well almost, so bear with me.

Actually, spoiler alert, it is about a wedding or two.

There is also a consideration of consent, independence, and self-fulfilment with a little bit of fantasy. This stars Lindsay Lohan, who we haven't seen for some time, as well as Ed Speleers and Alexander Vlahos. it is light rom-com entertainment.

When the love of her life gets engaged to her best friend, Maddie (Lindsay Lohan) puts her feelings aside to be a bridesmaid at their wedding in Ireland. The scenery is incredible. Days before the pair are to marry in the chapel of a magnificent castle, Maddie makes a spontaneous wish for true love, and the next morning wakes up as the bride-to-be. With her dream seeming to come true, you could contemplate the question of consent and forced marriage relating it to your OPD on the subject though of course you are not likely to encounter a Saint granting wishes.

A little trivia is that the actor playing the role of Paul's friend, Finn, is actually Dakota Lohan, Lindsay Lohan's real life brother and the End Credit song Comin' Home was written and sung by Lindsay's Sister Aliana.

What we do see of the ceremony (or ceremonies) is brief but you'll see some of the process, order of service, setup and design and so pay attention to those bits.

Dream Wedding Design

TV Series 2016 - 2016



An Italian series with English voice over

This series is a travel magazine style tour of European weddings, presenting beautiful and unique wedding locations along with wedding dresses, hairstyles, make-up and decoration but even extends to include dentistry, as well as meal preparation & selection.

There is very little about ceremony as it is more about location, preparation and style, and did I mention location, location, location.

The series claims to be bringing the engaged couple a step closer to the realization of their dreams and making the wedding a really special day for them and the presenter is claimed to be a *"professionally acknowledged, recognized designer for over 20 years, who has made many spectacular wedding decorations and unique bridal bouquets in a number of countries already"*

Styles include the Disney animation, Frozen, a plane gets an important role on another wedding, a vintage antique, a dreamlike night wedding happens in Tuscany, but a Vespa also takes part in an intimate and trendy wedding amongst straw bales.

There is no shortage in extreme weddings either, as to say yes between the sharks is already dangerous enough, but those brides, who prefer a bolder colour combination can take a look into a Halloween-style wedding, too.

I did mention that this is an Italian series and if you are familiar with Italian TV, you will know that it is often about presentation and appearance over substance

Episode 5 is advertised as being about a civil ceremony but there was far more about cooking a beautiful fish dish than about the civil ceremony.

At best, for us Aussie celebrants, it gives an insight into the Italian concept of modern weddings focusing on style and appearance rather than actual ceremony.

A movie you've seen, a book you've read?

How did it help you as a Celebrant?

Write a review and send it in.

CELEBRANT SNAPSHOT

Every month I try to feature a Celebrant to share in their experience and perhaps learn a different perspective finding that we are alike in many ways but different in others. Each has a unique experience and just by reading their story, we may find inspiration, ideas and values not previously considered or understood, or just have our own ideas reinforced. Either way, we find value in each and every person and story.



Ms. Bobbi Murray J.P.

Barkindji/ Ngiyampaa/ Malyangapa woman
Cwth Authorised Marriage Celebrant
NSW Central Coast – Darkinjung Country

0435 113 438

murrayceremonies@gmail.com
[Facebook](#) [Instagram](#) [AMC Assoc](#) [The Celebrant Network](#)

I am Bobbi Murray and was authorised as Celebrant on 11 November 2021.

I assisted Denise Markham at a few weddings and she hounded me for years to become one too and then when she retired and moved away, I finally took the plunge and did the training with Rose Training. Denise remains

as a great inspiration and mentor but I now also have Karyn Bridge and Toni Elsley, both AMC members, to mentor and advise me.

I was on Maternity leave with my second baby when I started training and so didn't always find the time to study and so it took me 18 months to complete the Cert IV online before I submitted my application for authorisation. Then there was the wait and it took 4 months before approval.

I still work (3 days a week) in the NSW Community Legal Sector managing a cadetship program for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who are undertaking a degree or further education. I secure paid placements for the students in one of my 41 Community Legal Centres across NSW. On top of that, I am also in Engagement & Development of Aboriginal staff across our Legal Centre membership and undertake some other legal advocacy for the Department of Communities and Justice on a needs basis, hence Celebrancy is supplemental but a great respite and contrast to the stresses and high trauma that I might otherwise encounter. I remain active in many community networks, am a creative thinker, and can think on my feet and so well can quickly adapt language and conduct, to suit my audience.

My very first ceremony was in Terrigal NSW for cousin. It was a rainy day but the sun came out just right for the wedding at the Forrest Chapel.



My Dad was meant to attend my first wedding but he sadly passed away in an accident the day I graduated from my Cert IV in Celebrancy. My Mum though was there with me as was my Mentor Karyn. A special mention about my Mum is that she was also studying to become a celebrant and has since celebrated her FIRST ceremony as well.

I felt so ready and so excited, nervous and happy and freaked out as I prepared my first ceremony but then realised it was all family and so nothing to be nervous about. Now all my couples are treated as my family. I love them all.

My ceremonies are relaxed. I love to include humour, making it a fun memorable day.

I specialise in ceremonies of culture especially Aboriginal as I am an Aboriginal woman but I do love cultural ceremonies of all nationalities.

Being able to learn about ones culture and how to tie that into a ceremony in a traditional or non-conventional way is the best part of my day. I am based on the NSW Central Coast but I will travel anywhere.

Before I was authorised, I attended a wedding of a girlfriend of mine, Emma who was a maid of honour at my wedding. I was a bridesmaid and I loved the dress so much I now use it in all my weddings. It's my uniform. Its earthy and natural and not "showy" but it can be hot. So rarely I switch up to a cooler dress. But this dress gives me confidence, gives me connection to country and I love the fond memories it continues to bring from ceremony to ceremony.

I actually don't think myself to be unique as I believe that I bring what a lot of other celebrants bring to ceremonies. Joy and connectedness, a drive for personalising each one, to bring as much joy and special moments for each ceremony is special.

Being creative but loving the traditional sense as well and sometimes getting the opportunity to blend the two and create something beautiful. Something that is unique for not just each ceremony but each person who attends.

I was married in 2011 in the Woy Woy Anglican Church on the NSW Central Coast and I draw a lot from my own wedding day. What I wished I had done differently and

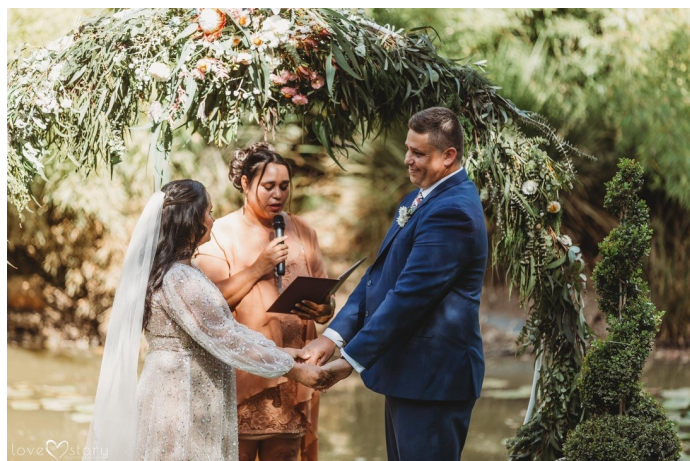
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CELEBRANT SNAPSHOT continued from previous page

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what I loved about the day and what I learned from the experience i.e. the church lost my music, it was the hottest Saturday day on record (still is) and the church didn't have air conditioning or fans, my Dad was wearing a child's tie, and there was karaoke for my reception! The cake, the people, the words (I can't remember) but it was the best day of my life and so now I get to tell the stories to my couples as examples.

As an Aboriginal woman and I mostly preside at



Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander ceremonies; I work a lot with Smoking ceremonies, sand ceremonies, ochre and water blending, all of which unites couples and families. I work with Elders and community of each area I do ceremonies in and build on-going relationships from each connection.

My niece attends to play the music and help me with set up and pack down. I also to take photos of my ceremonies and the different rituals we perform.

I love them all ceremonies. They all bring their own unique way of memorabilia.

I think weddings are my favourite though only because



there are so many more ways to be creative whilst still respectful.

I speak only some of my Indigenous language and so find language experts including family members or professional acquaintances for each ceremony that has a party from a CALD background.

My bookings come mostly from word of mouth from people and families who have attended my weddings and their families and I have performed around 30 so far.

One of my most memorable ceremonies that I loved was for a couple that wanted a ritual around brewing whiskey and how that could be tied into a marriage.

I loved another ceremony that included a Blood Oath (*they did the cutting. Not something I could have done myself*)

I loved performing one of the ceremonies at the [#bigtinderwedding](#) seeing so much culture and sharing of family in ceremony. I loved the culture that the big tinder wedding included. The family and the traditions was just stunning.

I also loved performing a Baby Naming ceremony that had to have a touch of catholic tradition and a mix of culture and new traditions.

It is so very hard to decide on a Favorite but another particularly memorable ceremony was for a young couple that had all their family get up and perform a cultural dance with the bride and

Groom, straight after the signing. It was fantastic and exciting.

My greatest challenge as a Celebrant has been networking with other celebrants to learn experienced techniques. i.e.

handfasting, writing vows and saying no to family members who want to surprise the couple but I have never had to refuse a wedding except when there was a date clash.

I am currently a member of both the AMC and The Celebrants Network and am privileged to be able to now mentor a student undertaking her own training though Rose Training but I had the opportunity of changing



anything in the Celebrant's Program, it would be to include guidance on how to start up your Celebrancy business. i.e. name registration, insurances you need, social media pages, etc I am though working to create a network of Indigenous Celebrants so that we can grow together.



Ghanaian Wedding Traditions

Officially the **Republic of Ghana**, is a country in West Africa. It abuts the Gulf of Guinea and the Atlantic Ocean to the south, sharing a border with Ivory Coast in the west, Burkina Faso in the north, and Togo in the east. Ghana covers an area of 239,567 km² (92,497 sq mi), spanning diverse biomes that range from coastal savannas to tropical rainforests. With over 32 million inhabitants, Ghana is the second-most populous country in West Africa.. It has a rich culture, many languages and its own unique traditions and customs for traditional wedding. Ghana is a country situated in West Africa on the coast of the Gulf of Guinea and is bordered by Burkina Faso, to the east by Togo, the Atlantic Ocean to the south, and by Côte d'Ivoire to the west. Ghana is also the second-largest supplier of cocoa with 70% of the world's cocoa supply coming from West and Central Africa.

English is the official language of Ghana which achieved independence from the British Empire in 1957 but there are eleven languages that have the status of government-sponsored languages. Language in Ghana include:

- ◇ Akan languages which are Asante Twi, Akuapem Twi, Fante, & Nzema,
- ◇ Dangme
- ◇ Ewe
- ◇ Ga
- ◇ Guan
- ◇ Kasem
- ◇ Mole-Dagbani languages (Dagaare and Dagbani)

Of these, Asante Twi is the most widely spoken but because Ghana is surrounded by French-speaking countries, French is widely taught in schools and used for commercial and international economic exchanges. With language, comes culture and traditions and so there are a variety of influences and hence, after the Traditional Wedding in Ghana has been undertaken, an additional white or western wedding may also occur at the couples' own expense however in Australia, where it may be that

only the western style ceremony is performed, some of the rituals could be incorporated into civil ceremonies especially for LGBT+ couples because in February 2024, Ghana's parliament passed a bill with the support of the country's two major political parties to make it a crime to identify as LGBT+, with penalties of up to three years in prison. Even Funding or forming a LGBT-related group would be punished by up to five years in prison and so couples from Ghana who are of the same sex could not marry in Ghana but could perhaps come to Australia to marry and the traditions described below, could be included.

The traditional process begins with the "knocking" ceremony (kokooko or "Opon-akyi bo") where the groom and his family go to the bride's home and he "knocks on the door" to present the marriage proposal and ask her family for her hand in marriage. It serves as an introduction between families and though in Ghanaian culture this practice is historically done weeks or months before the wedding day, it is often incorporated into the wedding day, performed just before other festivities.

When it is performed beforehand, once the proposal has been accepted, the couple may set their wedding date and present the "engagement" list, which is a dowry that includes gifts like clothes for the bride, jewellery, money, or other items for the bride's parents. The bride's brothers are also given money, called Akonta Sekan, for protecting their sister.

According one source, Okley, a traditional marriage in Ghana the families agree to release the couple to be married and to live separately to their family home.

Historically, according to tradition, the bride and her family will pay for the wedding and reception while the groom and his family cover the rehearsal dinner.

Ghanaian cultural wedding traditions include lots of gift-giving and there is a festive money dance during the wedding reception.

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If not already done, the marriage ceremony may include, introduction of both family and the marrying couple, payment of a bride price, and/or payment or dowry or wedding registry that elaborately lists things she needs to begin her new life and extends to include gifts for the parents and siblings, but primarily comprises personal effects, household items, and other presents for the bride. These gifts are typically presented at the wedding ceremony in a decorative display.

Each culture in Ghana has their own set of regulations during marriage ceremonies so be sure to inquire what is needed for marriage in the culture you are going to marry. Wedding attire includes brightly coloured and intricately patterned or embroidered kente fabric in traditional African fashion, made of handwoven silk and cotton, accompanied by resplendent gold jewellery. The kente cloth will also be used in the décor or table arrangements. The bride wears a traditional headdress or headwrap called a Duku, sometimes resembling a crown for the wedding ceremony. The wedding attire may also feature adinkra symbols that represent concepts, proverbs, and aphorisms. The symbols originated from the Gyaman people of Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire and featured as prints on cloth which royals wore to important ceremonies.

Adinkra have come to represent the richness of Akan culture in particular and African culture in general. They serve as a concise way to convey deep truths in visual form. In fact, many of the symbols have their own associated [Akan proverbs](#).

Popular Adinkra symbols include

- [Gye Nyame](#), which expresses the omnipotence of God,
- [Sankofa](#), which signifies learning from the past,
- [Dwennimmen](#), which represents strength with humility, and
- [Adinkrahene](#), a symbol for authority, leadership, and charisma.

The bride's family will be seated to welcome the groom and his family, who comes in bearing the items on the marriage list or registry known as the "aye-yo-dee" gifts. A long line of family members will come with gifts in their hands or on their heads.

Members of both families will sit across from each other at the wedding venue and spokespersons assigned to each party engage in friendly banter, asking for the bride's hand in marriage. There is some back and forth as jokes are exchanged and demands are made before agreeing to hand over the bride.

The arrival of the bride at a Ghanaian wedding can be a drawn-out process, especially if there's a lot of gifting involved. The bride makes an appearance with much fanfare and goes around greeting the family of the groom, welcoming them to her home, and accepting the gifts presented to her and her family.

A symbolic aspect of the Ghanaian wedding is the bride giving her consent three times, when asked for her hand

in marriage. This is to denote that she is sure of her decision and not forced into an alliance. The bride is then presented to the groom's family after everyone present has borne witness to her accepting the proposal.

The groom will provide drinks to the father, such as palm wine or Schnapps. This is called Tiri Nasa, and in Ghanaian culture, this usually seals the marriage.

During the couple's first dance, the groomsmen or other guests will "compete" to throw money at the couple at the end of the song. This helps to provide the newlyweds with funds for their new life, while also providing some fun and friendly competition for the guests. The couple will cut their cake and give speeches, and sometimes separate events after the wedding will be offered to guests who travelled a long way, such as a luncheon.

Music is a big part of the ceremony, so expect to hear gospel songs, as well as Afro beats. The groom's family enters with music when bringing the bride's gifts, the bride's family enters with music when she makes her grand entry, and there's generally music all around accompanying every aspect of the wedding.

For the wedding, the couple and the wedding party **dress in kente cloth** to give the feeling of royalty.

There is a presentation of **wedding gifts** to the bride and her family at the wedding venue.

There is **dancing and music aplenty**, as entertainment plays a big role in the celebrations.

Traditional food is served buffet-style at the wedding reception party held immediately after the ceremony.

Tiri Nasa occurs

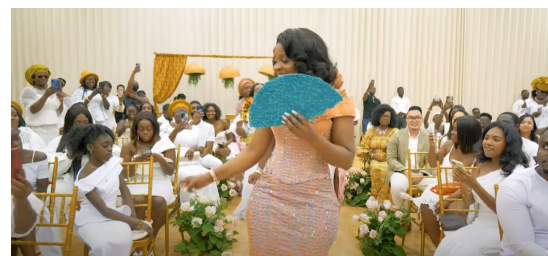
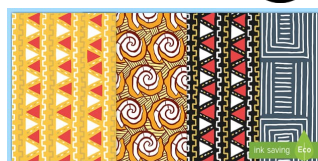
After the wedding, in some Ghanaian cultures, like the Balsa of Northern Ghana, they participate in the Nansunglika or "Closing of the Gate or Entrance." ritual which is believed to be the most crucial, as it is said to join a man and woman together permanently until death. This ceremony may be performed after the wedding, but before a woman is pregnant and may include a hen, cola, a hoe, or sheep, and the acceptance of these items by the woman's paternal family signifies the ritual's completion.

<https://www.zola.com/expert-advice/what-to-expect-at-a-ghanaian-wedding>

<https://www.adinkrasymbols.org/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fHhAOvIX3RQ>

<https://youtu.be/9IyAFrva9-8?si=y2iV2-YPEgg6CvXQ>



THE MARRIAGE OF A CONJOINED TWIN



The twins have separate birth certificates, passports, drivers' licences, teaching licences, and one is married

On their [TikTok](#) account [@abbyandbrittanyhensel](#), a [clip](#) was recently posted showing off Abby's wedding day - and a [Facebook](#) account titled Britt And Abby also featured a [picture](#) of the happy couple.

For the ceremony, which records revealed took place back in 2021, the twins sported a sleeveless wedding dress with lace trim detailing while the

groom wore a grey suit.

A video thought to have been captured by one of their guests and shared on social media showed the twins and the groom enjoying a dance during the big day.

Another showed Josh's daughter sporting a floral bridesmaid's dress and walking down the aisle, holding a sign that read: 'Daddy... Here Comes Your Bride'.

The twins, who have their own birth certificates and passports, were raised Christian by their parents, a nurse and a carpenter.

Abby and Brittany are now both fifth grade math teachers at an elementary school in New Brighton, Minnesota, where they were born and raised.

'Obviously, right away, we understand that we are going to get one salary because we're doing the job of one person,' Abby previously said.

'One can be teaching and one can be monitoring and answering questions,' added Brittany. 'So in that sense we can do more than one person.' The twins also have two teaching licenses.

There is only one of set of twins living in the world with the same condition - brothers Ayşe and Sema Tanrikulu who were born in Turkey in 2000.

Abby and Brittany first **captivated the world** in 1996 when they appeared on The Oprah Winfrey Show and the cover of Life Magazine.

They then lived a quiet, normal life with their family, keeping away from the media spotlight until they agreed to appear on a documentary for TLC when they turned 16.

When the Hensel twins were born on March 7, 1990, doctors warned their parents Patty and Mike that they were unlikely to survive the night. But that prediction was to prove wildly wrong.

The twins are also a different height, with Abby 5ft 2in and her sister 4ft 10in. Brittany has to stand on tip toe to ensure they maintain their balance.

When they travel, the twins - who refer to themselves as 'I' when speaking, rather than 'we' - only need one ticket because of taking up just a single seat.

Abby Hensel is married! Conjoined twin who rose to fame in reality show Abby & Brittany secretly tied the knot with an army veteran in 2021 | Daily Mail Online (this is an extract from the Daily Mail article, follow the link to the Daily Mail UK to read the full article)

Conjoined twins occur when siblings have their skin or internal organs fused together. Just one set of twins in every 40,000 is born connected in some way to each other and only 1 per cent of those survive beyond the first year. Conjoined twins are caused by a fertilised egg beginning to split into two embryos a few weeks after conception, but the process stops before it is complete. The most common type is twins joined at the chest or abdomen.

The **Daily Mail UK** has reported that an American teacher who shot to fame on a reality TV series with her conjoined twin quietly married three years ago - 28 years after captivating the world with an appearance on Oprah.

Abby Hensel, now 34, from Minnesota, tied the knot with Josh Bowling, 33, a nurse and army veteran in 2021, according to public records obtained by TODAY.

Abby and her sister Brittany, one of only a few sets of dicephalus twins in history to survive infancy, rose to fame on their eponymous TLC show which chronicled their major life events, including their high school graduation and job hunting.

The pair share a single body, and from the waist down, all their organs, including the intestine, bladder and reproductive organs, are shared.

In a documentary filmed when the girls were teenagers, their mother said they were keen to have children of their own one day, explaining: 'That is probably something that could work because those organs do work for them.'

In a 2001 interview with Time, the twins' father Mike said his daughters had already then asked about finding husbands one day.

Knowing that other conjoined twins have married, he explained, why not? 'They're good-looking girls. They're witty. They've got everything going for them, except they're together,' he added.

THE HISTORY OF CEREMONIES

DIVORCE CEREMONY

By AMC member: Dally Messenger



Now, I'll venture a bold claim. I believe I pioneered the concept and execution of the first secular divorce ceremony conducted by a professional celebrant anywhere in the universe.

Here is the story: Back in 1995, at an AFCC celebrant conference, a colleague celebrant named **Jurgen Malina** proposed the idea of promoting a divorce ceremony. The aim was to help individuals cope with the grief of a failed marriage and to facilitate closure on that chapter of their lives. However, his suggestion was met with ridicule by the other attendees, who deemed it absurd.

Perchance, shortly after, a woman approached me with a request to conduct such a divorce ceremony. She confided in me, explaining her profound shyness and inability to express her feelings directly. Her primary desire was to reassure her children that they were not to blame for the divorce—a common concern among young minds when parents separate. Additionally, she wished to express her gratitude to her husband's mother, who had been a tremendous source of support throughout their marriage, particularly during the early years when their children were young. I agreed to conduct the divorce ceremony for her. Reconstructing the details from an email dated back to 1995 proved to be challenging, as it was cluttered with various irrelevant content. Nonetheless, I managed to piece together the essence of the original message using Text Edit.

It's worth noting that over the course of three years, I officiated around five or six divorce ceremonies. Another celebrant, **Beryl Shaw**, who I believe passed away a few years ago, also championed the idea of divorce ceremonies, advocating for their therapeutic benefits and encouraging others to consider them for similar reasons.



Please note that I've altered the names in the ceremony that follows.

Ceremony of Divorce - 25 Aug 1995

Celebrant : Dally Messenger III

Song and Poem

Everyone should note that we are playing this song for its general sentiments, and not every word applies literally to Ada and Les.

It's over, Goodbye,
 can't say that we didn't try
 in all of those years
 hiding our tears
 and sorrows we felt deep inside
 standing so close to you
 yet we were alone
 never had the life that we knew
 you know that its true - we only grew apart
 and it hurts so bad to find the love you lost
 you never had
 and it hurts so bad to find the love you lost
 you never had
 there's children you know
 that makes it so hard to go
 and I'm sure it comes as no
 they must have seen it in our eyes
 a hundred times or so
 Its over, goodbye
 time was never on our side
 though I may live to forget
 I never will regret
 the days I spent with you
 and it hurts so bad
 to find the love you lost
 you never had
 and it hurts so bad
 to find the love you lost
 you never had
 It's over, Goodbye
 It's over, Goodbye

Introduction

Friends,

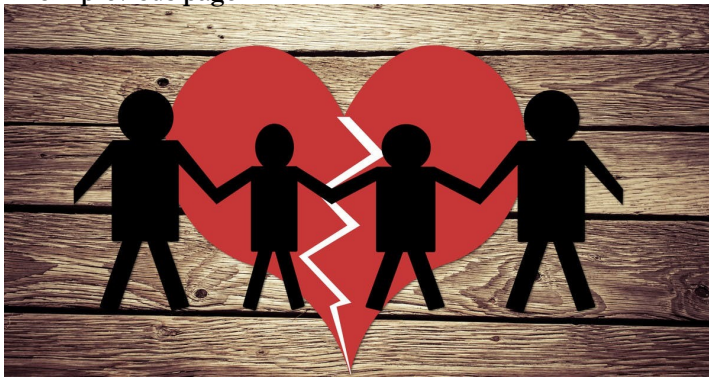
We come together this evening not in joy but in acceptance. The purpose of tonight's ceremony is to heal hearts, forgive the past, celebrate the past, but, most importantly, release the future.

Ada and Les have decided to separate and divorce, and so we are meeting here to mark this important transition. The great breaks in life's pattern, major changes in life, take a great emotional toll. From such change we do well to retain as much love, forgiveness and courage as possible. From such change we do well to strengthen ourselves inwardly, re-enforce our positive attitudes, and realise the truth that "when one door shuts, another one opens". Sometimes better ones open.

Ada and Les, it is clear that your marriage is over and finished. Even though this clearly is, you should see it not as an ending, but a new beginning.

Continued next page.....

From previous page



To the son and daughter

Stewart and Caroline,—this could not have been a pleasant experience for you, and everyone knows it. You know that your parents love you, they are deeply sorry for any harm you may have been caused.

No one person has the wisdom to judge the causes of a marriage breakup. They especially thank you and call on you to continue to show understanding, tolerance, support and love to both of them.

You will always be part of both milieus in which Ada and Les, as individuals, have developed and will now develop.



To the mother of the husband

To Monica McDowell, both Ada and Les want to thank you fully and sincerely for everything you have done for both of them, and

for Stewart and Caroline, all through the marriage. You have always been there with your love and support and tonight they wish to place this on record, and express the hope that it will continue.

This ceremony is a reminder that you must accept the separation, the finalisation of the marriage fully and completely. It should be done carefully and peacefully and in a civilised manner. You should care for yourselves so that any hurts will heal, just as one cares for oneself at the time of any physical illness. Your union was an important part of your lives, it produced the two children of whom you are proud, when it is looked back upon, it should be done with respect and honour.

Your marriage was a time of achievement, it had many times of happiness and joy and love, and in this positive way it should be pleasantly thought about.



Statement of Divorce

Ada to Les: [read from card]

I release you from our marriage.
Please forgive me any hurts
I have caused you,
as I forgive you.
I wish you well for your future.
I now divorce you.

Les to Ada: [read from card]

I release you from our marriage.
Please forgive me any hurts I
have caused you, as I forgive you.
I wish you well for your future.
I now divorce you.

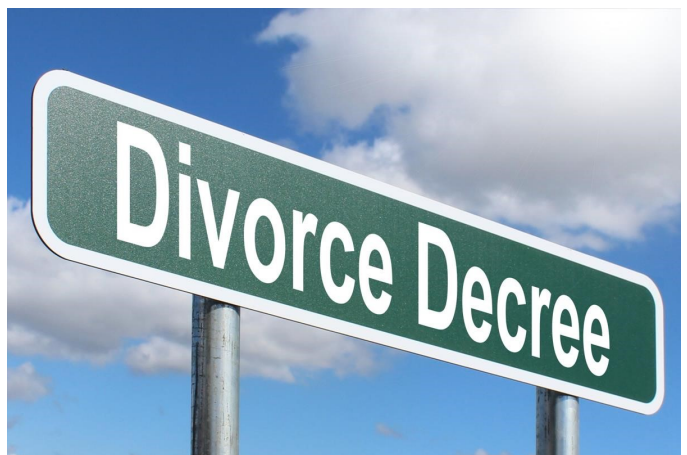
(The marriage certificate is then burned in the bowl by the celebrant. Ada lights her candle from the main candle. Les lights his candle from the main candle. The celebrant extinguishes the main candle)

(A FEW MOMENTS OF SILENCE)

(The celebrant declares the couple divorced, and wishes them well for the future.)

Declaration of Divorce

When time establishes new futures for both of you and when emotions are settled, you will hopefully be able to communicate easily as friends and parents. I now declare you divorced, and wish you both the happiest possible future.





The South Coast of NSW is a paradise. Is it any wonder that people want to marry and live here! There are always wonderful things happening on the south coast and some couple like to link their events to festivals or perhaps avoid particular dates to ensure transport and accommodation is a breeze. Here are some dates & events to consider.

3–4 May

Narooma Oyster Festival, Narooma. It's time to discover the distinctive flavours of NSW's rock oysters and sustainable seafood at [Narooma Oyster Festival](#), known as southern NSW's largest food and wine event.



4th May

Star Wars' Day (may the 4th be with you)

Sat. 11 May 2024 to Sunday 26 May 2024 [Kiama Picnic Train \(Weekly event\)](#)

12th May

Mother's Day



20–26 May

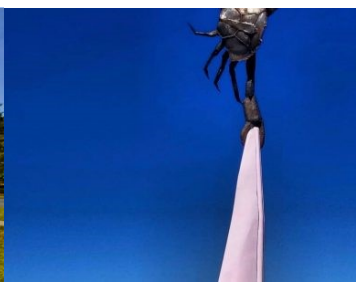
Sydney Writers' Festival

23rd May??

Awaiting announcement for **AMC Education** session for May. Keep an eye out for the event.

Saturday 25 May 2024 to Sunday 02 June 2024 [Sculpture for Clyde](#). A ten-day free event

held on the Batemans Bay Foreshore highlighting original Sculptures from Australia and overseas. The event includes an outdoor sculpture exhibition, indoor sculpture exhibition and a student sculpture exhibition, with regional high schools partaking in this part of the event.



Sunday 26 May 2024 to Friday 27 June 2025 (Monthly event) **Moruya Jockey Club** Thoroughbred Racing, at the Moruya Jockey Club will include some great racing action as well as on-site facilities inclusive bookies, a bar, hot food, a coffee van and a TAB in operation. Marquees are available on the day, please contact the club should you wish to book a marquee.

31 May – 3 June

Shoalhaven Gourmet Getaway, Shoalhaven. The Shoalhaven Food Network has curated an itinerary designed to inspire visitors to eat and drink their way around the NSW South Coast region. The [Shoalhaven Gourmet Getaway](#)

COORDINATOR COMMENTS



There was a recent suggestion that bookings are down for many because of Covid. The explanation being that couples are together for some time before their relationship develops to the point of considering marriage but that because of the Covid lockdowns, people couldn't meet or build their relationships. There is however a

strong argument that the opposite occurred in that being in isolation, made many realise the importance of the joy of having a life partner and that marriage was a culmination of that increased awareness and developed a strength of relationships. One of my couples told me that, they had spent a weekend together before the lockdown was announced and ended up spending months together, mostly dancing in the privacy of a home and going for romantic walks along the waterside away from all distractions. Their love blossomed and they are now very happily married.

That couple met online through a dating app and it is interesting how community perception of dating apps has changed in just a few short years. About 5 years ago, couples were often embarrassed to admit they had met via a dating app and so we would focus on the first date



avoiding mention of how they actually met, but now couples often joke and even boast about which app they used or how many dates they had before hand. I had one bride mention a somewhat surprisingly large number of dates before choosing the one partner.

There are a variety of ways dating apps can be incorporated or mentioned into the ceremony. The rings could be carried in on a smartphone or just be a photograph on a phone, or the arbour could be the shape of a phone. Some mention in their vows, how they *"swiped in the right direction"* or *"with a swipe to the right, comes the future Mr. and Mrs"*. Some simply mention that they met online while others mention *"we had a modern twist is that we met online"*.

I like to say something in jest with a grin, like: *"they searched the world for love and found it right here on the south coast, or rather it was the world wide web, but still it was a search across the world"*.

It is interesting that various dating apps have different reputations and that alone can influence what is mentioned. One app in particular raises eyebrows when it's mentioned because although it is apparently extremely popular, some regard it as the app that is used for a 'one night stand' and not a relationship, regardless it doesn't really matter how the couple met or even why they are marrying because as long it is not fraud, people, only have to be over 18, able to prove who they are, that they are eligible to marry, are in Australia for the ceremony, and are consenting. Whether it is a huge event with a huge numbers (my largest was 500 attending), or just a couple on a beach with two witnesses, as long as we and they comply with the law, it is a legal marriage and we as celebrants do our best to make it beautiful.

It is just so very important that as Authorised Civil Celebrants that we know marriage law and that is why OPD is vital to keep us on our well trained, professional toes. Running a Celebrancy business is a bit like playing golf, because you may be on the same course, but you are not competing against other as you are actually only competing against yourself from yesterday. Make your game better each day and the score will improve.

22 things to say to your spouse

1. I love you
2. What can I do for you?
3. Thank you
4. The world always feels better when we are together
5. You are my best friend
6. You make my world better
7. You look fantastic
8. I love being married to you
9. While you were out, I cleaned the house and have made dinner
10. You are such a good cook and so clever
11. I'm sorry/I forgive you
12. Time for a hug
13. Your smile warms my heart
14. I'm listening
15. You are such an interesting and wise person
16. Let's do this together
17. I've been looking forward to seeing you all day
18. You are beautiful
19. I'm impressed with how you handled that situation
20. You are the most beautiful person I have, or could ever meet and brighten the room when you enter
21. We are better together
22. My life is wonderful because you love me