



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.

**August 2025**

**Volume 4, Issue 7**

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

COVER PHOTO: an iphone snapshot, captures the moment guest throw petals over the couple as they exit a backyard ceremony.



Australian Government  
Attorney-General's Department



## 2025-2026 Celebrant registration charge \$170 invoices issued on 7th July 2025

If you wish to maintain your registration as a marriage celebrant, payment is required by 11:59pm Canberra local time on **5th September 2025** otherwise you will be deregistered.

**Payments cannot be accepted after 5th September 2025.**

Options to pay include:

- 1) MasterCard, Visa & American Express via the MarCel portal or by phone.
- 2) Cheque or Money Order
- 3) Direct Debit/EFT

If paying by EFT, remember to include the reference number on the invoice, followed by your surname.

If you no longer wish to maintain your registration, you may resign via the online self-service portal or contact the MLCS if you require assistance.

If you wish to seek an exemption from the annual fee, please consider eligibility criteria carefully. Guidelines on eligibility requirements are contained on the AG department's website.

Applications should be made via the self-service portal and cannot be accepted after this date.

All exemption applications attract a non-refundable \$30 administration fee. Applications must be submitted, with payment, no later than **21 days** after the day on which the notice is sent.

Applications received without payment, or after the 21 day deadline will not be accepted.

In the Marriage Celebrant (MarCel) portal, you can:

- ⇒ [update your contact details](#)
- ⇒ view your invoices and receipts
- ⇒ [apply to not pay the registration charge for 1 year](#)
- ⇒ [apply to not complete OPD for 1 year](#)
- ⇒ update your OPD activities
- ⇒ [resign as a marriage celebrant](#)

Continued from previous page.....

### Inside this issue:

- AG Renewal
- Letters
- Checklist for Minors
- FCAA & trust?
- All about JPs
- Certifying Docs
- SOT via BDM
- Scam Alert
- Celebrant Profile
- Filipino Divorce
- Marketing
- OPD
- Retiring or Resigning
- The Flu
- SOTs
- Reviews
- Marriage Around the World
- Coordinator Comments
- **And so much more**

**UPCOMING  
Sth COAST  
MEETINGS**

**4pm, Sunday 15th September 2025  
7pm, Tuesday 9th September at 7pm  
(joint meeting & education)**

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You can download tips to help you use the self-service portal via this link:

⇒ [Updating your details – Fact sheet – Minimum and maximum details displayed on the register](#)

You may be allowed to not pay the annual registration charge for 1 year if:

- you live in a remote or very remote area, **and**
- there is not more than 1 Commonwealth-registered marriage celebrant who has the same postcode as you, **or**
- you won't live in Australia at all during the financial year (July to June), **or**
- you won't be solemnising marriages for at least 6 months due to serious illness or caring responsibilities

You must apply within 21 days of receiving the invoice for that year's charge. Include any information or documents to support your claims.

There is a **\$30 fee to apply**. But you won't need to pay the annual registration charge for 1 year if your application is approved.

You must still complete your OPD unless you [apply to not complete your OPD for 1 year](#).

**Complete the 'exemption application' process in the [self-service portal](#) to apply.**

The **MLCS** will write to you and tell you what is decided within 21 days. You won't be deregistered while that decision is being considered.

If your application is successful, you won't need to pay the annual charge for that year. To be exempt from payment in future years, you will need to apply again.

If MLCS tell you that your application is unsuccessful, you will need to pay the full registration charge for the year. If you don't, you will be deregistered.

**To have the decision reviewed**, you can write to MLCS and ask for a review of the decision within 14 days of receiving the decision. You may need to provide more supporting evidence for your application.

Another officer who was not involved in the first decision will review it and will either agree or disagree with the decision.

If they agree, you will need to pay your annual registration charge. If they disagree, MLCS will approve your application and you won't need to pay.

#### **MLCS Contact details**

Marriage Law and Celebrants Section  
1800 550 343

[marriagecelebrantssection@ag.gov.au](mailto:marriagecelebrantssection@ag.gov.au)

3-5 National Circuit BARTON ACT 2600



# Letters to the Editor

Hi Lou,  
Thank you so much for a Wonderful Newsletter for July Always informative and a great read over a cuppa.  
Kind Regards, Kerry Wing

Great newsletter 😊  
Craig Moran

## It's Your Turn!

Thank you Lou.  
Receiving Newsletter from you is an honour.  
Sudesh Johar

Great newsletter  
Mandy Gill

Your newsletter is wonderful.  
I am retired but still look forward to every issue.  
Such a great read and you put so much work into it.  
I have read about people that I have known for years but have discovered things about them I didn't know.  
Barbara Bell



You will find many interesting things on Facebook Marketplace from PAs to wedding decorations but I wondered who had these, who the buyer will be, and how they could be used in a ceremony?

**We are a community of Celebrants and learn from each other. It is your turn to have your say and be published in this newsletter.**

**The more we learn, the more we discover how much there is to learn, and of course we learn from each other.**

**What will you write about in this newsletter?.**

You are unique. Your ideas, experiences, interpretations and creations are your own. Tell us all, about them.

## Checklist For Solemnising The Marriage Of A Minor.

Authorised celebrants should refer to the following checklist when solemnising the marriage of a minor.

- You must have been provided with the order of the Judge or magistrate authorising the marriage of the parties. The order must not be dated more than 3 months before the date on which the marriage is solemnised.
- You must have been provided with:
  - written consent of each person whose consent is required under the Marriage Act, that is witnessed in accordance with section 13(2) of the Marriage Act, OR
  - an effective consent, in writing, of a magistrate or Judge, OR
  - in respect of any person whose consent to the marriage has been dispensed with, the dispensation signed by the prescribed authority.

The consent or dispensation must not be dated more than 3 months before the date on which the marriage is solemnised.
- If the consent is not in English, the celebrant must attach to the consent a translation that complies with regulation 11 of the Marriage Regulations.
- Unless the consent of both parents is produced, you must write on the consent the manner in which you satisfied yourself that the consent is from a person whose consent to the marriage is required by the Marriage Act.
- You must write on the Notice of Intended Marriage form that the consents and dispensations (as applicable) were produced in accordance with sections 13(1)(a) and (b) of the Marriage Act, and that you were given an order made under section 12 of the Marriage Act.
- You must not solemnise the marriage if you have reason to believe any of the following:
  - a person whose consent is required has revoked their consent,
  - the signature of a person whose consent is required has been forged or obtained by a fraud; or
  - a consent has been altered in a material particular without authority, or
  - a dispensation with the consent of a person has ceased to have effect.
- Within 14 days after the marriage has taken place, you must forward the marriage certificate, the court order, the consents (including any translations of the consents if relevant) and any dispensations of consent to the BDM in the State or Territory where the marriage took place.

**The minor and the other party to the marriage must each provide real consent at the time the marriage is solemnised.**



Established in 2007, the **Funeral Celebrants Association Australia (FCAA)** is the only association dedicated to Funeral Celebrancy in Australia and many of us are members. Celebrant Members work to a Code of Practice, undertake professional learning and deliver meaningful Funeral and Memorial Services.

A new FCAA committee was elected earlier this year but suddenly and without notice to members, the committee underwent a complete, unannounced change with the result that the committee was effectively gutted. No meeting was advertised to members and at the time of writing this article, no meeting minutes had been published.

Questions were immediately asked by members who discovered changes to the webpage but communication had been blocked with a standard response of :

*“information will be provided in due course”*

However elected committee members were apparently removed from the FB group, a new smaller committee members was listed with only 4 committee members despite 7 being elected.

- **Meetings and appointments should NOT be done in secret.**
- **Secrecy erodes trust and confidence.**
- **The absence of communication erodes trust and confidence.**

Members complained about disturbing lack of transparency within the association and the voice of protest mounted. A belated uninformative email was eventually distributed but it lacked detail and proper explanation.

These things never end well.

It could even be the end of that association.

**ENGAGEMENT RING: Where do I put my engagement ring during my marriage ceremony?**

Wear the ring on your right hand or have someone hold it for you. If you want to wear your engagement ring for the reception, you can put it on after the ceremony. For Jewish weddings, it's fine to wear your engagement ring and then exchange stone-free wedding bands if you want to keep with tradition. Also remember: The band is usually worn closest to your heart on your left hand.

[www.alifecelebrant.com.au](http://www.alifecelebrant.com.au)

pic from <https://www.brides.com/photos/oval-cut-ring-with-baguette-side-stones>

# PROTECTION FOR JP's IN NSW

Monday, 17 March 2025

The NSW Government will introduce legislation to provide Justices of the Peace (JPs) in NSW with protection from liability for carrying out their role in good faith, offering the same protection currently available in other states.

The change – which was requested by JPs – eliminates all civil liability for JPs who are exercising their functions as intended, meaning they will have immunity from suit. The proposed amendment to the *Justices of the Peace Act 2002* (NSW) would:

- cover actions and omissions
- apply where a JP believes they are exercising a JP function, or are purportedly doing so
- provide a complete defence to any action by the recipient of JP services, or another person, in relation to loss or damage caused by the JP
- While this is a broad protection for JPs, protections for the community remain in place:
- The duty of care that JPs owe to members of the public would continue to apply, as would the JP Code of Conduct.
- The immunity would not cover intentional misconduct by JPs, such as cases of fraud or other malicious or dishonest conduct.
- In circumstances where a JP has not acted in good faith, consumers of JP services would continue to be able to have recourse to legal action.

The Department of Communities and Justice has undertaken consultation on the change and found it was supported by all JP associations. Introducing immunity from lawsuits for JPs is consistent with the position in all other states and the Northern Territory. JPs are volunteers who certify documents for official or legal purposes. They provide an important service to the community and legal system and there are approximately 63,000 JPs across NSW.

To learn more about becoming a JP, visit :

[dcj.nsw.gov.au/legal-and-justice/legal-assistance-and-representation/justice-of-the-peace.html](http://dcj.nsw.gov.au/legal-and-justice/legal-assistance-and-representation/justice-of-the-peace.html)

**NSW Attorney General Michael Daley said:**

*“Justices of the Peace play a vital role in the community, and they deserve to be protected from liability when performing their duties.*

*“Whether it’s certifying a copy of an original document, or witnessing a statutory declaration or affidavit, JPs help people at key moments of their life and keep communities ticking.*

*“This legislation brings NSW into line with other Australian jurisdictions, and I hope it will encourage more people from across the state to become a JP – especially people who speak a community language or live in regional and remote areas.”*

***N.B. This protection is for NSW appointed JPs only and so not for JPs from other states and not for Marriage Celebrants who might witness a document.***

# WHAT IS A

# JUSTICE OF THE PEACE?



## Justice and Peace

When Marcus Kroek was asked to witness a document, he had to study it to determine where or not he was authorised as a Marriage Celebrant to do so. Marriage Celebrants are appointed under the Commonwealth Marriage Act but many documents require a Justice of the Peace. So, what is a Justice of the Peace and what does can a Marriage Celebrant witness?

**A Justice of the Peace is appointed by the relevant Justice Department in each state under state legislation and so is limited by jurisdiction of state law and a JP is NOT a Marriage Celebrant.**

**A Marriage Celebrant appointed under the Commonwealth Marriage Act 1961 in Australia is NOT a Justice of the Peace but an individual can be appointed to both roles separately, however who can witness what?**

**While a Marriage Celebrant is not a Justice of the Peace can still be an authorised witness for certain documents.**

Both a Justice of the Peace and a Marriage Celebrant can witness a *Notice of Intended Marriage* and other documents including a *Commonwealth Statutory Declarations* but in most states, a Marriage Celebrant is not authorised to witness Statutory Declarations created under individual state law. The different roles should not be confused as there are legal responsibilities associated with being an authorised witness and that training is not provided to Celebrants even though a failure to execute a document correctly could result in severe penalty.

Examining Statutory Declaration will usually quickly reveal whether it was issued under the *Commonwealth Statutory Declarations Act 1959*, or under a state law. If under a state law, a Marriage Celebrant may NOT be an authorised witness unless specifically mentioned in the authorised witness list on the document or in its instructions.

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Various documents such as insurance and bank applications, will usually list who can witness the document and in many cases, a Marriage Celebrant will be in that list however great care should be taken to ensure the process is correctly undertaken.

**The word 'declaration' appears 53 times, in the Commonwealth Marriage Act 1961 .**

Marriage Celebrants will commonly only concern themselves with Declarations required under the Marriage Act such that signed by the couple, a party to the marriage who is unable to procure proof date & place of birth, or by an interpreter (*see Marriage Act 112 Interpreters at marriage ceremonies*)

The term, **Justice of the Peace**, or simply JP, historically originates from the British legal system where it was a lower court judicial officer elected to keep the peace, dispensing summary justice or dealing with local governmental applications in common law jurisdictions which did flow to Australia but has since changed and so in most states of Australia, a JP is an honorary position that carries very limited responsibility and is now mostly acting as a approved witness on legal documents.

JPs are appointed from the citizens of the jurisdiction where they serve. In most states, a JP does not hold any prior formal legal education while the requirement for JP's training will sometimes depend on the jurisdiction.

Generally, a JP will only attest and witness certain documents such as statutory declarations and affidavits and certifying copies of original documents, and handling other affidavits.

**A Marriage Celebrant should only witness a documents if authorised to do so and MUST follow the law applicable to that document.**

The quickest way of establishing that is by studying the document to see if Marriage Celebrant is listed as an authorised witness and the safest method is to also check the relevant conditions in your location e.g. laws/rules differ from state to state.

### History



The status as "keepers of the peace" goes back to as early as the 12th century, during the rule of King Richard I "the Lionheart" of England. They were ordered by the King and Minister Hubert Walter to preserve the "King's peace" particularly in disorderly areas. It was only

in the 1300s when the title "**Justice of the Peace**" became known, during the rule of King Edward III, where the JPs were upholding the sovereign peace, a duty of the Crown under the royal prerogative.



At this point, all individuals acting as peacekeepers were all men, as women were not allowed to hold such a position of power until 1919 when the Mayor of Stalybridge, Ada Summers became a JP by virtue of her office.

### Justices in Australia

There are no national JPs.

As mentioned earlier, a Justice of the Peace in Australia are an authorised witness for statutory declarations and affidavits as well certifying document copies. In addition to that, they have specific jobs that they play in certain states.

JPs can only exercise their functions in the state or territory they are sworn in; for instance, cannot witness a statutory declaration in another state or territory.

[ramtrainingservices.com.au/what-is-the-role-of-a-justice-of-the-peace-in-australia/](http://ramtrainingservices.com.au/what-is-the-role-of-a-justice-of-the-peace-in-australia/)



### New South Wales

JPs are trusted members of the community, and the purpose of having JPs verify documents is to increase the likelihood that they are genuine.

Courts, government agencies and other public bodies and organisations rely on these documents to be accurate and truthful.

Before verifying a document, the JP must also have either known you for 12 months or more, or seen your photographic identification, such as a driver licence, and compared it with your face.

Unless an exemption applies, facial coverings must be removed before a JP can verify a document. Exemptions may be given for medical reasons, but not religious reasons.

The main functions of JPs are:

1. To witness statutory declarations;
2. To witness affidavits; and
3. To certify that copies of original documents are true and accurate.

The JP in New South Wales witnesses affidavits and statutory declarations, and certifies true copies of original document.

Anyone who is honest, living within the state, and knowledgeable of the responsibilities of a JP is able to serve the position for five years when reappointment occurs subject to a competency assessment.

A NSW JP is not permitted to charge a fee and cannot coach the writing an affidavit or statutory declaration, and cannot offer legal advice.

No. Regulation 3 of the Code of conduct for justices of the peace prohibits JPs from accepting payment or gifts for their services.

They are also prohibited from promoting their status as JPs to further their commercial or business interests.

JPs must be over the age of 18, Australian citizens or

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entitled to vote, and undergo a criminal record check.

Certain crimes will exclude a person from becoming a JP, although not all offences will render an applicant ineligible. Undischarged bankrupts are excluded.

JPs are appointed if there is a community based need for the appointment, or if it is a component of the applicant’s job.

You can locate JPs online using the public register, which searches for JPs by postcode.

Keep in mind that since the position is voluntary, JPs may only be available at certain times and dates.



**Victoria**

In Victoria, JPs, alongside bail justices, who are volunteers, are responsible for serving semi-judicial functions, such as witnessing affidavits, powers of attorney, and statutory declarations, as well as hearing bail applications within the state. A bail justice hears bail matters, under the Children and Younger Persons Act 1989 and Bail Act 1977.

JPs are endorsed by the state attorney general and appointed by the governor in council.



**Queensland**

As of 2017, there are 4,800 justices serving in all areas of Victoria.

<https://www.vic.gov.au/justices-peace>

**Queensland**

A JP undertakes qualifying studies. A JP course covers all of the responsibilities of Commissioners for Declarations, as well as several judicial duties, both ‘non-bench’ and ‘minor bench’. Unlike other states, a qualified JP in Queensland is able to issue arrest and search warrants. In conjunction with another qualified JP, they can also adjourn court hearings and grant bail. Even without supplementary education or qualification, a lawyer can become a JP and possess the full powers of a JP in the Magistrate’s Court.

Note that a Commissioner for Declaration in Queensland is NOT the same as a Commissioner for Declarations appointed under the Commonwealth *Statutory Declarations Act 1959*;



**South Australia**

[https://www.agd.sa.gov.au/documents/justice-of-the-peace/OATHS-ACT-1936\\_Code-of-Practice-in-Relation-to-Statutory-Declarations.pdf](https://www.agd.sa.gov.au/documents/justice-of-the-peace/OATHS-ACT-1936_Code-of-Practice-in-Relation-to-Statutory-Declarations.pdf)

The main duty of a JP is to act as an independent and objective witness for legal documents and

proceedings. This includes witnessing or attesting to the execution of a document, taking an affidavit or statutory declaration, certifying a true copy of an original document and certifying the identity of a person. For more information and to download key documents including the Justice of the Peace Handbook and the Code of Conduct, visit the Attorney-General’s Department website.

A Justice of the Peace must not provide legal advice when acting in their capacity as a JP [Justices of the Peace Regulations 2021 (SA) Schedule 1 clause 6].

*Code of Conduct*

JPs must comply with a Code of Conduct [contained in the Justices of the Peace Regulations 2021 (SA) Schedule 1]. This includes always acting within their powers and the conditions of their appointment, not charging a fee for services, not divulging confidential information and not acting where they have a conflict of interest. Importantly, they cannot administer an oath, witness an instrument or take a declaration from a person they believe does not hold the mental capacity to do so. To learn more, read the Justice of the Peace Code of Conduct.

A retired JP must not use the title “JP (retired)” to advance their business or commercial interests [Justices of the Peace Regulations 2021 (SA) Schedule 2]. A justice of the peace (JP) in South Australia acts as an independent and objective witness to documents people use for official or legal purposes. For example, a JP may:

- certify a true copy of an original document
- certify a person's identity
- witness an affidavit for use in court
- witness a statutory declaration
- witness the signing of a document.

Witnessing a statutory declaration is an important public service and provides a positive benefit to the community. However, you have no legal obligation to witness a statutory declaration - even if you are an authorised witness.

Marriage Celebrants are on the list of Authorised witnesses for South Australia. As an authorised witness, you are not responsible for the truth or



accuracy of what the declarant is declaring. The declarant holds the liability for making an intentional false statement.

**Western Australia**

[https://www.wa.gov.au/system/files/2024-04/authorised-witnesses-for-statutory\\_0.pdf](https://www.wa.gov.au/system/files/2024-04/authorised-witnesses-for-statutory_0.pdf)

In Western Australia the *Oaths, Affidavits and Statutory Declarations Act 2005* (the OASD Act) provides for the manner in which oaths, affidavits and statutory declarations are administered and witnessed.

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The Justice of the Peace (JP) training course, funded by the WA Department of Justice, is only available to people who have been recommended for appointment as a JP by the WA Attorney General.

In certain circumstances, it may also be available for current JPs. The course is designed to prepare successful applicants for the community work they will undertake and includes training in:

- issuing search warrants
- processing bail, and surety applications
- attesting documents including affidavits and statutory declarations.

Once appointed as a JP, ongoing training is required under the Code of Conduct for JPs, to maintain your skills and knowledge expected by the community.

Marriage Celebrants are on the list of Authorised Witnesses.

### Tasmania



A Justice of the Peace (JP) acts as an independent and objective witness to documents people use for official or legal purposes.

JPs are volunteers who provide their services to the community. While JPs make themselves available as much as

possible, remember that they have the same work and personal commitments as any other person. As such, you will need to discuss a mutually acceptable time and place for an appointment.

A JP can:

- certify a true copy of an original document
- certify a person's identity
- witness an affidavit for use in court
- witness a statutory declaration
- witness the signing of a document

In Tasmania, there is also a list of Commissioner of Declarations who are also authorised witnesses and Marriage Celebrants are on that list.

<https://www.justice.tas.gov.au/justice-system/justices-of-the-peace-and-commissioners-for-declarations/professions-employment-groups-for-cd>

### Northern Territory



A Justice of the Peace, also known as a JP, and Commissioner for Oaths are volunteers who help the public with administrative legal matters.

Both a Justice of the Peace and Commissioner for Oaths can do all of the following:

- certify copies of documents such as birth certificates and passports to confirm your identity
- witness affidavits
- administer an oath.
- A Justice of the Peace can authorise the issuing of a search warrant if requested by the Northern Territory (NT) Police.

A JP or Commissioner for Oaths however does not have to witness and sign a statutory declaration as in NT, it can be witnessed by anyone who is 18 or over.

### Australian Capital Territory



JPs serve different roles in different jurisdictions.

JPs in the ACT serve the community primarily by:

- administering oaths or affidavits, witnessing statutory declarations and taking affirmations
- witnessing signatures
- attesting and certifying documents.

For more information, read the *[Justices of the Peace \(Role\) Guideline 2016](#)*.

<https://www.accesscanberra.act.gov.au/business-and-work/justice-of-the-peace>

## How to certify documents

<https://www.resources.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/fact-sheet-certifying-documents-and-verifying-identity.pdf>



A NSW Government Fact Sheet stipulates that a certified copy of a document is a photocopy of the original document that has been certified as a true copy of the original by an authorised certifier. To have documents certified:

- Make a photocopy of the original documents. Ensure the copies are clear and legible.
- Take the copies with the original documents to one of the authorised certifiers listed below.
- An authorised certifier must ensure the copy is an identical copy of the original document.
- The preferred wording for the certification is as follows: *'I certify this to be a true copy of the document shown and reported to me as the original.'*

- \* JPs will usually have a stamp with that wording
- The certification must be on each page of the document and accompanied by the certifier's signature, full name, profession (*for example, Justice of the Peace*), registration number (if applicable) and date.

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- Certification must be made by an independent third party.
- Avoid using an approved certifier where a perceived conflict of interest may exist (*for example, spouse, family member, or a party to the examination process*).
- The Resources Regulator reserves the right to refuse to accept documents on the grounds of incorrect certification or request an independent certifier where a perceived conflict of interest may exist.
- If the original document is not in English, the applicant is to provide a certified copy of the written translation (*by an authorised translation service, such as an appropriate embassy or a professional translation service accredited by the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters Ltd*).

**Authorised certifiers**

There are many people from a broad spectrum of professions who can certify copies of original documents.

The Regulator will accept any of the following:

- Justice of the Peace (with a registration number in the State in which they are registered)
- police officer
- judge of a court
- Sheriff's officer
- barrister
- Solicitor
- health professional registered with the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (e.g. doctor, pharmacist, optometrist, nurse)

What the fact sheet does not stipulate is that the above is in regard to dealing with a NSW state government bodies and that the private sector and other states, may have different requirements. It even carries a detailed Disclaimer:

*The information contained in this publication is based on knowledge and understanding at the time of writing (March 2025) and may not be accurate, current or complete. The State of New South Wales (including the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development), the author and the publisher take no responsibility, and will accept no liability, for the accuracy, currency, reliability or correctness of any information included in the document (including material provided by third parties). Readers should make their own inquiries and rely on their own advice when making decisions related to material contained in this publication.*

Hence it boils down to “check the document” and who is it for. If a party asks a Marriage Celebrant to certify a document, read the requirement and maybe check with the organisation requiring the certification because some insurers accept the Commonwealth list of Authorised Witnesses, on which Marriage Celebrants appears however Certification protocols should, be followed precisely because severe penalties may apply.



**ARE YOU A VICTIM OF CYBERCRIME?**

**ReportCyber**  
is the place to securely report cybercrimes

[cyber.gov.au/report](https://cyber.gov.au/report)

If you require translator services, visit [www.tisnational.gov.au](http://www.tisnational.gov.au)

**Your report:**

- Will be referred directly to the relevant state or territory law enforcement agency.
- Provides vital information to help target cybercriminals; and
- Helps make Australia the most secure place to connect online.

Developed as a national policing initiative with:

Learn how to better protect yourself or your business. **CYBER.gov.au**

Australian Government Australian Signals Directorate **ACSC** Australian Cyber Security Centre

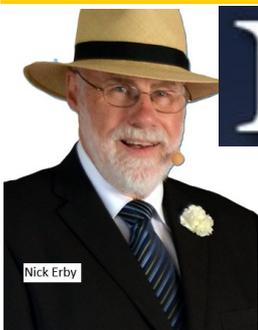
**Australian Cyber Security Hotline**  
**1300 CYBER1** (1300 292 371)

**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.**

**Don't give up control of your screen**

Some scammers claim they can improve your technology or fix an issue with a quick remote access session with your computer. It's a trick designed to let them in.

**Never install new software at a stranger's request and never give anyone remote access to your screen.**



# NICK ERBY

## Gold Coast Celebrant

Celebrants come from diverse backgrounds but did you know that one recently retired Celebrant and former Vice-President of the AMC

is in the Australian Country Music Hall of Fame?

Let's look at how that occurred well before he became a Celebrant and why he was better known as a country radio Celebrity before he was the Gold Coast Celebrant.

Nick Erby was born in back in 1945 but by 1964 was an 18 year old radio announcer at Radio 2VM Moree, when he joined Charlie Perkins on his historic Freedom Ride, bus tour through regional NSW. The following year Nick made it into the Guinness Book of Records for the longest continuous live broadcasting after 53 hours on air.

With such dedication and it was not unexpected that he would succeed as a Program manager, at the leading Sydney station, Radio 2UE, from 1970.

In 1973, Nick sat on the first Board of the CMAA with Chairman Slim Dusty, John Williamson, Max Ellis, Anne



Kirkpatrick and others. Then in 1975 he took on the role of the General Manager, at Radio 2CC, in the nations capital, Canberra ACT until 1981. It was in that period, in 1977 that he initiated Nick Erby's National Country Music Jamboree, which was a syndicated program broadcast on over 70 stations Australia-wide and continued for twenty years and in 1979, Nick received the Country Music Capital Award at the Australasian CM Awards.

Never resting on his laurels, from 1980-1982, he hosted a TV show, Nick Erby's Country Close Up and from 1983 to 1985 was the General Manager, back at United Radio Services (2UE) before moving on to be the Operations manager, at Radio 3UZ, Melbourne for a year when it operated as a fulltime country music station. Radio 2TM Tamworth's country music station

welcomed Nick in 1987 to host a nightly program Hoedown which was later renamed CMR (Country Music Radio), for 13 years.

During that period, in 1993 he Received the inaugural Warner-Chappell CM Award and still found the time to host the Nick



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1975 Picture taken post the Golden Guitar Awards in 1975 is (standing L to R) **Nick Erby**, David Douglas, Johnny Chester, Slim Dusty, Ron Tudor, Ron Adsett, (seated L to R) Bob Lipman and Max Ellis.

**Nick Erby was manager of Radio 2CC in Canberra (he later became host of Country Music Radio at Radio 2TM Tamworth which replaced Hoedown).**

David Douglas, of David Douglas and Associates, was the publicist. He also undertook PR for both the festival and Star Maker for a time.

Johnny Chester, who had been better known in the rock world, wins his first Golden Guitar for Best Male. He went on to win the award in 1981, 1982 and 1983. In 1964, he was the opening act for The Beatles when they toured. Slim Dusty, a legendary Australian country music artist who won a total of 38 Golden Guitars.

Ron Tudor, was the owner/producer of Fable Records which Johnny was on.

Ron Adsett was with EMI Records and went on to own The Country Music Store in Brisbane and Bellbird Music.

Bob Lipman was a presenter at Radio 2TM and long-time host of the early awards.

Max Ellis was the former general manager of 2TM and one of the founding members of the festival and awards and still involved to this day.

Continued from previous page.....

Erby's Country Music Video, TV show for a year. It was no surprise that in 1997, he won the inaugural CMA International Country Broadcaster Award and the following year at the CMAA Australian CM Achiever Awards was named Industry Achiever of the Year. From 2000 Nick was the Program Manager, at fulltime country station, 4AAA, Brisbane but in 2003 he returned to Tamworth to produce and host CMR for 2TM and 13 Super Network stations on Saturday and Sunday nights.

At the 2005 Australian Bush Laureate Awards he received a certificate of appreciation for his support of these awards since their inception in 1996 and in 2007 was presented with the Tex Morton Award from the Tamworth Songwriters' Association in acknowledgement of his support of Australian songwriters and received the CMA International Broadcaster Award being the first person to be



presented with this prestigious global award twice. In 2008 he received a certificate of appreciation from the Tamworth Regional Council at a civic reception in recognition of outstanding dedication to Tamworth and the CM industry and from 2008 to 2014 he pioneered internet streaming with CMR Online, a continuous feed of country music, which included the Country Tracks Countdown, which was syndicated to dozens of commercial and community radio stations. He was deservedly inducted into the Broadcasters' Hall of Fame in 2009 and in 2010 was inducted into the Hands of Fame, Tamworth.

Retiring from radio after such an illustrious career, in 2011, Nick moved from Tamworth to Banora Point in northern NSW where he became a successful civil marriage celebrant but did still remained connected to a life of country music, in 2015 received the Barry Thornton Memorial Award for services to the Mildura Country Music Festival.

Nick enjoys interactions with people and thought that Celebrancy was the perfect pathway in his retirement. Wanting to build professional connections within Celebrancy, Nick joined the AMC and then the committee and was even the Vice-President to Ann Dally with whom he maintains contact. Having over 50 years of business and marketing in media, he was

disappointed to find that although most celebrants are lovely people and that many go into Celebrancy because of a desire to assist others, some have little or no business expertise or experience, and so were struggling to manage their own business and remain financially viable, not understanding that under-cutting on pricing was not being competitive but was instead, harming the industry. He even concluded that some who volunteered onto committees might have had more ambition than ability.

When Celebrants inexplicably focused on absurdly low pricing just to get bookings, it meant they were operating at a loss and harming the industry by creating unrealistic expectations.

Nick now spends his time enjoying the sunshine and still listening to country music while catching up with close friends, some of who are still Celebrants.

- <https://ehive.com/collections/200851/objects/1461371/nick-erby>
- <https://www.nickerbycelebrant.com.au/>
- <https://www.discogs.com/artist/2317007-Nick-Erby?srltid=AfmBOoqUcwynkMN8D-NZWQPF6Tb7rrJuQu14atk7-8bZCNIG2f07cl1>
- <https://themusicnetwork.com/country-radio-legend-nick-erby-racks-up-50-years-on-air/>
- <https://themusicnetwork.com/country-radio-legend-nick-erby-racks-up-50-years-on-air/>



As Celebrants, some write their own funerals and in this regard, three Celebrants were asked:

*"When you're in your casket, and friends and family are mourning over you, what would you like them to say?"*

Artie said: *"I would like them to say I was a wonderful husband, a fine Celebrant, and a great family man."*

Eugene commented: *"I would like them to say I was a wonderful Celebrant who made a huge difference in people's lives."* Al said: *"I'd like them to say, "Look, he's moving!"*

# CENOMAR, DIVORCE & THE PHILIPPINES

## UPDATE: Divorce Will Continue To Be Illegal in The Philippines

### The Philippines Remains The Only Country In The World Without A Divorce Law

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, Migration Australia, at the end of June 2020, there were 310,050 Filipino-born people living in Australia, 68.7% more than the number (183,770) at 30 June 2010.

This is the fifth largest migrant community in Australia, equivalent to 4.1 per cent of Australia's overseas-born population and 1.2 per cent of Australia's total population.

For Australia's Filipino-born migrants:

- The median age of 40.1 years was 2.3 years above that of the general population.
- Females outnumbered males—60.9 per cent compared with 39.1 per cent.

Hence there is a high probability that you will be asked to conduct a marriage ceremony where at least one party is Filipino and as with all couples, both parties to the marriage must provide evidence of eligibility for marriage. which may be as simple as proving identity and date/place of birth, but if married before, proof of the termination of that previous marriage must also be provided.

For a new marriage to occur in Australia, after the first has terminated, the Celebrant must sight either an Australian Certificate of Divorce as proof of divorce, or sight the Philippine issued Cenomar as proof of annulment.

**A year ago, an article in this newsletter outlined that the Philippines and the Vatican were the only two sovereign states in the world that continued to prohibit divorce but that changed was proposed. This article is an update..**

**As you know, when a previously married Filipino wants to marry in Australia, instead of a Certificate of Divorce, they have had to produce a Certificate of No Marriage (CENOMAR) which is only issued** by the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA), once an annulment is achieved in court. The Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) serves as the central statistical authority of the Philippine government on primary data collection and is mandated by law to keep and preserve the birth, marriage and death certificates of a Filipino citizen.

The Cenomar is the basis for establishing the legal status of each and every Filipino, in legal definitions for interpersonal status in the Philippines:

- a **single person** is someone who has never been married.
- A person who was previously married and was divorced or widowed is usually considered an "unmarried" person.
- If a marriage is annulled, however, or it is found to have been void ab initio (i.e. not valid in law to start with), and assuming the person was not married previously, that individual is single, rather than unmarried.

When requesting a Cenomar, the interested party must provide the following information to facilitate verification and issuance of a **Cenomar (Certificate of No Marriage)**:

- Complete name of the person
- Complete name of the father
- Complete maiden name of the mother
- Date of birth
- Place of birth
- Complete name and address of the requesting party
- Number of copies needed
- Purpose of the certification

On 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2024, six years after a similar law stalled in the Senate, the Philippine House of Representatives approved a bill that legalizes divorce in a limited range of circumstances.

[www.abc.net.au/news/philippines-divorce-battle-looms-to-free-women-from-abuse/103828284](http://www.abc.net.au/news/philippines-divorce-battle-looms-to-free-women-from-abuse/103828284)

Anita Baleda from the Philippine Commission on Women was quoted as saying that the divorce ban allowed former partners to continue to wield power over their exes.

*"Even if they are physically separated, there are still instances where the ex-husband continues to inflict pain on the woman or continues to harass her," she said.*

On 15th May 2024, the House of Representatives in a plenary session presided by Aurelio Gonzales Jr. via voice vote approved on a "Second Reading" "Edcel Lagman" House Bill 9349, the proposed "Absolute Divorce Act".

Congressman Edcel Lagman was quoted as saying:

*"These are for the less fortunate couples who, despite the fact that they say that marriage is solemnised in heaven, many marriages plummet into hell, and we have to rescue them."*

A strong opponent to the divorce law was Father Jerome Secillano, of the Philippine Episcopal Conference, who persistently argues that *"Marriage is a lifetime union so even with its ups and downs, the good times and the bad, the sickness and healthier part, they have to live with each other as husband and wife for the rest of their lives."* He asserted that



there were already legal avenues for unhappy couples to split including filing for legal separation, which doesn't allow parties to re-marry, or an annulment, which in effect means the marriage never existed and he went so far as to argue that divorce "would double" the number of victims of domestic abuse as divorced men would have the opportunity of becoming violent again in a new marriage.

**The Philippine House of Representatives approved the Absolute Divorce Bill, on 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2024 legalizing divorce in a limited range of circumstances and the Bill was to have a second reading in 2025 but according to AFP News Agency, the attempt to legalize divorce in the Philippines on**

Continued from previous page.....

6th February 2025 was unsuccessful, as it was not supported by the nation's Senate. Even though the Philippine Congress passed the bill to legalize divorce, the Senate adjourned without hearing it.

In an article from ZENIT News (Manila, 14.03.2025) it was revealed that supporters of the divorce law have vowed to continue their plan to promote divorce. The divorce bill obliged courts to give free legal and psychological assistance to low-income plaintiffs, limit attorneys' fees to 50,000 Philippine pesos and require divorce petitions to be resolved within one year. Arlene Brosas, one of the bill's authors, said it was "unacceptable" that the Senate refused to address the measure given the "strong public demand" and that her Party will present it again when the next Congress is convoked in July after the elections, because there are many women that are mistreated by their husbands. Francis Escudero, President of the Senate, argued that the bill "would create division" and suggested that the reason for nullity be broadened avoiding the word "divorce." Senate members face midterm elections in May and fear a strong reaction from the Catholic Church on the issue. Has political interest in the elections been the main reason for the Senators' votes to reject the bill?

According to the website of attorney's Respicio & Co, as of 18 June 2025, the Philippines remains the lone United Nations-member state without a general civil divorce statute, although Muslims have long enjoyed divorce rights under Presidential Decree 1083. The 19th Congress (2022-2025) has brought the country closer to enacting an "Absolute Divorce Act" than at any time since 1950, yet final passage still hinges on Senate floor deliberations.

## References

- \* [Status of Divorce Legislation in Philippines 2025](#)
- \* [Divorce Will Continue To Be Illegal in The Philippines | ZENIT - English](#)
- \* <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1943563/house-approves-divorce-bill-on-final-reading#ixzz8fMf2v7YT>  
<https://www.loc.gov/item/global-legal-monitor/2021-09-06/philippines-house-of-representatives-bill-on-divorce-approved-in-committee-referred-to-house-plenary-for-debate/>
- \* <https://psa.gov.ph/civilregistration/requesting-civil-registry-document/cenomar>
- \* [Acknowledgment of Divorce in the Philippines - HG.org](#)
- \* [https://mb.com.ph/2021/08/18/cbcp-official-saddened-by-passage-of-divorce-bill#google\\_vignette](https://mb.com.ph/2021/08/18/cbcp-official-saddened-by-passage-of-divorce-bill#google_vignette)
- \* [www.abc.net.au/news/philippines-divorce-battle-looms-to-free-women-from-abuse/103828284](http://www.abc.net.au/news/philippines-divorce-battle-looms-to-free-women-from-abuse/103828284)
- \* [Philippines takes step towards legalising divorce - CathNews](#)
- \* [House approves divorce bill on final reading \(inquirer.net\)](#)

# Marketing

Here are some marketing tips from the NSW Government:

- ⇒ [Attracting new customers \(5 minutes\)](#)
- ⇒ [Market research and competitor analysis \(10 minutes\)](#)
- ⇒ [Pricing strategy \(9 minutes\)](#)
- ⇒ [Understanding financial statements \(9 minutes\)](#)
- ⇒ [Product and market expansion \(6 minutes\)](#)
- ⇒ [How to start a business: The mindset \(6 minutes\)](#).

**If you were born in the 50s, raised in the 60s, and made it to 2025, you've lived in eight different decades, two centuries, two different Millenniums; and you aren't even 80 yet.**

Before you speak,  
let your words pass through  
three gates.

At the first gate, ask yourself,  
'Is it true?'

At the second ask,  
'Is it necessary?'

At the third gate ask,  
'Is it kind?'

—Rumi

# KNOWLEDGE OPD

## SIGNING THE NOIM



Authorised witnesses are listed in the “Signatures of parties and witnesses” section of the

### Notice of Intended Marriage.

Section 42 of the Marriage Act stipulates that a Notice to be given and declaration made

Under that section, it is stipulated in Paragraph (2) A notice under subsection (1):

- (a) must contain such particulars in relation to the parties as are prescribed; and
- (b) must be signed by each of the parties; and
- (c) if a party signs the notice in Australia, must be signed in the presence of:
  - (i) an authorised celebrant; or
  - (ii) a Commissioner for Declarations under the *Statutory Declarations Act 1959*; or
  - (iii) a justice of the peace; or
  - (iv) a barrister or solicitor; or
  - (v) a medical practitioner; or
  - (vi) a member of the Australian Federal Police or the police force of a State or Territory; and
- (d) if a party signs the notice outside Australia—must be signed in the presence of:
  - (i) an Australian Diplomatic Officer; or
  - (ii) an Australian Consular Officer; or
  - (iii) a notary public; or
  - (iv) an employee of the Commonwealth authorised under paragraph 3(c) of the *Consular Fees Act 1955*; or
  - (v) an employee of the Australian Trade and Investment Commission authorised under paragraph 3(d) of the *Consular Fees Act 1955*.
- (3) However, if the signature of a party to an intended marriage cannot conveniently be obtained at the time when it is desired to give notice under this section, a notice duly signed by the other party and otherwise complying with the provisions of this section shall, if it is signed by the first-mentioned party in the presence of an authorised celebrant before the marriage is solemnised, be deemed to have been a sufficient notice.



Section 42 of the *Marriage Act 1961* (the Marriage Act) requires that a marriage shall not be solemnised unless a notice in writing of the intended marriage (this form) is given to the authorised

celebrant solemnising the marriage.

From 12 June 2024 the Notice of Intended Marriage may be witnessed remotely:

The Marriage Act was amended to permanently provide couples with the option

to have their Notice of Intended Marriage (NOIM) witnessed in person or remotely by means of a facility that enables audio and visual communication between persons in different places.

The requirements for authorised witnesses will remain unchanged and location-dependent.

If the couple is in Australia then the person remotely witnessing the NOIM (which can include an authorised celebrant) must also be in Australia.

If the couple is outside Australia, the authorised witness (which cannot be a celebrant) must also be outside Australia. To be clear, a Celebrant cannot witness a NOIM online for a person or couple outside Australia.

<https://www.ag.gov.au/families-and-marriage/publications/notice-intended-marriage>



### Authorised celebrants should remember the following key information about consent:

- The parties must consent at the time of the marriage. Prior consent is not a substitute for real consent at the time of the marriage.
- **A third party cannot provide real consent on behalf of a party to the marriage, even if that third party has power of attorney or is a guardian to the relevant party to the marriage.**
- If you are concerned about whether a person's consent is real consent, you should speak to the person in the absence of any other party. You may also speak to third parties but should first seek permission from the person involved.
- You should thoroughly document any conversations you have about consent, in case called upon to give evidence in court as to the consent of the parties.

[1] Section 23B(1)(d) of the Marriage Act.

# RESIGNING OR RETIRING AS A MARRIAGE CELEBRANT?

Each year, when it comes time to renew Marriage Celebrant registration:

- ◆ some retire,
- ◆ some ‘forget’ to renew, payig late or maybe confusing the deadline for registration renewal payment with the OPD deadline or with their payment of association membership (these do happen annually).



As this year, once again a few Celebrants are choosing to retire, a reminder about the process might be useful however let’s firstly look at what happens if you fail to pay on time:

- ⇒ The AG has no option but to cancel your registration as per the Marriage Act.
- ⇒ To resume work as a Celebrnat, you must reapply to be registered and that may entail completing a new Cert IV in Celebrancy if your existing qualification is outdated.
- ⇒ Any outstanding Ceremonies must be referred to an authorised Celebrnat.

**If you are retiring, resigning or becoming a minister of religion, You must advise the AG to remove you from the register of marriage celebrants .**



You can also tell the MLCS (AG) if a family member who was a marriage celebrant has passed away.

Requests must be in writing (email) or you can resign by using MarCel, the self-service portal.



MLCS will tell you in writing when they have processed your request.

After the MLCS processes your request, you cannot solemnise marriages in Australia anymore and your registration is not able to be reinstated.

### You Must Keep Your Records

When you retire as a celebrant, any Form 15 marriage certificates must be:

- Destroyed, given or sold to another authorised marriage celebrant
- They cannot be given to someone who is not an authorised marriage celebrant.



If you give or sell them to another authorised marriage celebrant, you should write:

- the authorised marriage celebrant’s name
- the number of each Form 15 you gave them
- You should also write the number of each Form 15 that you destroy and make a note that it was destroyed.

After you stop being a marriage celebrant, you must:

- keep these records for 6 years
- Update your ‘record of use form for Form 15 certificates’
- completed official certificates of marriage, unless you are a minister of religion

Ministers of religion need to add their official certificates of marriage to either the:

- parish or district where the marriage was performed
- records of the church where the marriage happened
- **records of the religious body or organisation**

Remember also that it is an offence to advertise as a Marriage Celebrant if you are not an Authorised Celebrant and make certain you:

- ◇ Prepare a list of everywhere that you are advertised, and cancel the advertisements and any listings.
- ◇ At least one month before retiring, post an advertisement on your webpage and social media of your pending retirement
- ◇ Do NOT accept any marriage ceremony bookings that would fall outside of your retirement date.
- ◇ Contact your webpage host and close it down.
- ◇ Notify all couples that still have you booked, that there can be no postponement
- ◇ If you have a booking outside the retirement date, refer it to another Celebrant.

Well before you return, prepare a retirement plan. You will find some retirement advice on the ATO webpage:

<https://www.ato.gov.au/individuals-and-families/super-for-individuals-and-families/super/growing-and-keeping-track-of-your-super/super-and-planning-for-retirement#ato-Lostandunclaimedsuper>





*Influenza isn't as scary if you're vaccinated*

As Celebrants, we engage both with individuals, and with groups that may vary significantly in size at moments of their joy, anxiety, grief, and/or stress & distress at occasions and events that people may see people kiss and hug to offer congratulations, thanks or commiserations or condolences; and so Celebrants can be more at risk of transmissible infection than some others sectors of the community. However practising safe hygiene can limit transmission of disease and viruses. NSW Health has offered this advice to the community about the flu..



***Influenza (flu) is serious.***

Getting a flu vaccine is quick, easy and recommended for everyone aged 6 months and over.

Your yearly flu vaccine offers the best protection from getting really sick and is **free** for:

- children aged 6 months to under 5 years
- pregnant women
- Aboriginal people aged 6 months and over
- anyone aged 65+
- people with serious health conditions

Book your flu vaccine at your GP, pharmacy, or Aboriginal Medical Service. Everyone aged 2 years or over, can get vaccinated at a pharmacy. Parents or carers with children aged 6 months to under 2 years old should see their GP for their flu vaccine.

- ◊ [About influenza \(the flu\)](#)
- ◊ [Book your flu vaccine](#) [Learn more about flu](#)



*How To Apply For A Shortening Of Time At NSW BDM*

If a couple hasn't met the minimum one-month notice period to marry, you can request a **Shortening Of Time (SOT)** from a Prescribed Authority such as the Registrar at a local court or the NSW Registry of Births, Deaths & Marriages.



There are only 5 circumstances applicable and a shortening of time will **ONLY** be granted if there is sufficient evidence to show that the couple's personal circumstances satisfies the criteria :

1. employment-related or other travel commitments
2. wedding or celebration arrangements, or religious considerations
3. medical reasons
4. legal proceedings, or
5. Error in giving notice



**To apply**, for an SOT at the NSW BDM, the celebrant or parties of the marriage should email [bdm-marriages-syd@customerservice.nsw.gov.au](mailto:bdm-marriages-syd@customerservice.nsw.gov.au) with the following information

- 1/ A letter from the couple include:
  - ◊ Full names of both parties
  - ◊ Proposed marriage date
  - ◊ Circumstances for the late Notice of Intended Marriage (NOIM) or why the ceremony cannot be postponed
- 2/ A completed and signed NOIM lodged with an authorised celebrant
- 3/ A statement from the celebrant that will perform the marriage including on the proposed date, the celebrant's full name, phone number, email address, and registration number
- 4/ Supporting documentation that provides clear evidence (e.g. plane tickets, employer letters, letters from medical specialists).

The NSW BDM Registry aims to provide a decision within **2 business days**, pending sufficient documentation.

Alternatively, celebrants can apply to other NSW prescribed authorities listed on the Attorney General's website:

<https://marriage.ag.gov.au/stateofficers/authorities>.

**For more information on how to prepare a SOT submission, go to:**

<https://www.alifecelibrant.com.au/shortening-of-time/>

**NSW BDM Marriage celebrant webinar**

Join NSW BDM for their next live webinar, featuring updates and insights relevant to your role as a celebrant:

**12pm - 12:40pm**

**Wednesday 20 August 2025**

Webinar Agenda

- Understand how NSW BDM register marriages
- How to apply for a Shortening Of Time
- Marriage trends & statistics
- Guest speaker

**Register here**



## BALANCING BREAD



## Wearing a Crown to Deflect Evil Spirits

Norwegian brides wear a crown to ward off evil spirits.

Traditionally, the Brudekrone, is a silver Bridal Crown worn in Norway, Sweden and Serbia and the bride will often wear a silver wedding dress to complement the crown.

The tiara is usually an ornate diadem made of silver and gold that is decorated with small charms. Whenever the bride moves, the charms create a tinkling sound that is supposed to scare off the spirits.

Bridal crowns vary in design from place to place. In the Black Forest, bridal crowns are known as *Schäppel*, and have pearls, glass balls, mirrors and ribbons or paper roses. In Hungary and Slovakia, many Bridal Crowns feature artificial flowers and beads but in Bridal crowns worn in Bavaria and Silesia are made of gold wire, glass stones and glittering metal flakes.

In Scandinavia today, a Brudekrones is usually made of brass, silver or gold, fashioned like a smaller type of coronet of a princess and will often have gems and ornate decorations. They are often attached to long veils. Scandinavian church parishes keep their own Brudekrone to loan to brides for their wedding ceremonies and receptions.

The crown's origin relates to the Virgin Mary, and is a statement of a young woman's purity and virginity at her wedding, fending off evil.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bridal\\_crown](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bridal_crown)

[50 Fascinating Wedding Traditions Around the World](#)



When a newly married Armenian couple enters their wedding

reception, typically at the groom's house, they break a plate for good luck. Then, the mother of the groom gives them lavash flatbread and honey. They eat spoonfuls of the honey to symbolize happiness, and they balance the bread on their shoulders to counteract evil spirits.

[50 Fascinating Wedding Traditions Around the World](#)

## Don't Smile In the Congo

Throughout the entirety of their wedding day, Congolese

couples are not to smile at the ceremony or reception, as a smile, or grinning is evidence that they aren't serious about marriage.

[50 Fascinating Wedding Traditions Around the World](#)



## Shooting the bride

Forget about Cupid in China, during the ceremony to ensure their love is everlasting, the groom shoots his bride with a bow and three (head-less) arrows. The bride doesn't actually get hurt and afterwards, the Groom breaks his bow in half, collects the fallen arrows and snaps them in two, He collects each arrows and breaks each of them

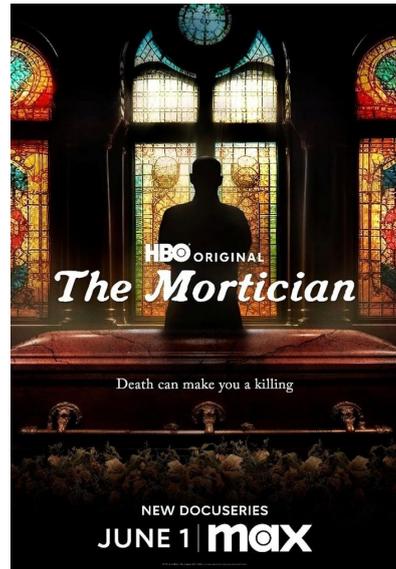
[50 Fascinating Wedding Traditions Around the World](#)

[7 Unique Chinese Wedding Traditions | Wedding KnowHow](#)



Erica Durance

Paul Popowich



Funeral Celebrants and ceremony are not mentioned in this documentary concerning a seemingly all American wholesome family who have for three generations, kept hidden that they were actually criminals defrauding families, while operating a prestigious family, funeral home in Pasedena USA. **This three part documentary on Max, is not for the feint hearted.** It however

highlights why there are strict regulations in regard to how the deceased and 'body parts' are handled. It all began with a family funeral home in the 1980s. The promo says that it was all under David Sconce's leadership, but the documentary reveals how he and his family exploited trust and betrayed the bereaved, perhaps in excess of 20,000 families, and it reveals the despicable treatment of deceased people placed into their care. Criminally unethical practices were the norm to maximize profits.

You are left wondering just how many people received stolen body parts because that part of the story was not fully explored, just the practice revealed. Each criminal interviewed tells just part of the story in a manner that protects their own interests. Lamb Funeral Home was a trusted, reputable business. David Sconce's mother in particular was described as angelic, caring and always helpful even playing the organ at funerals but slowly, chronically and meticulously the horrendous truth is revealed.

Celebrants may be attracted to the documentary simply because of an interest in the funeral industry but be warned that once you've started, it is hard to draw away however, as said earlier, this retelling of true heinous events is horrific and so not for the feint hearted.

Despite strict laws now in place, criems such at this still occur:

[Funeral home owner who stashed nearly 190 decaying bodies sentenced to 20 years in prison](#)



A Muse Entertainment / Sound Venture Production "I Me Wed"  
 Erica Durance Paul Popowich  
 Executive Producer Michael Propas Executive Producer Robyn Snyder  
 Producer Neil Bregman Produced by Rie Nish and Jesse Propas  
 Written by Julie Sherman Wolfe Directed by Craig Pryce



Last month, you read about sologamy, well it turns out that self-marriage was the subject of a 2007 comedy-romance telemovie which the editor has not watched and so reviews here are based entirely upon what appears online.

Isabel ("Izzy") Darden, an attractive 30-year-old woman who is a successful and seemingly happy house renovator, doesn't want a relationship with a man. She grows tired of people, including her mother and close friends, asking her *"when are you going to get married,"* and so with the help of her gay friend and despite her mother and close friend's consternation, decides to honour the person she loves the most, by marrying herself.

Ratings on IMDB show 4.9/10 and so some loved it but others didn't. Whilst one reviewer described it as *"funny, cute and not as silly as it sounds"* other reviewers wrote *"the film itself struck too deep a chord in demonstrating the cult of narcissism today"* and *"sadly crosses the line between funny and silly and ends on the wrong side of it"*

There is a wedding planner and the 'wedding' does go ahead but you will have to watch it to see if there are any useful ideas or concepts Celebrants can use.

[https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0991164/?ref\\_=mv\\_close](https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0991164/?ref_=mv_close)

What movie or TV show have you seen, or what book have you read that has inspired a client, or you as a Celebrant? Tell us about it and your article will appear on this page.

## COORDINATOR COMMENTS



Let's be realistic; being a Celebrant is absolutely wonderful but bookings can be a rollercoaster, you might have four calls in a day but then none for the days, weeks or even months after and to turn that around, you must engage in marketing which can be extraordinarily time consuming if not addressed methodically and persistently.

There can be difficult times when motivation itself can be a challenge especially when bookings are down or they are not reaching expectations. To top it off, when there are gaps between ceremonies, it can be difficult to maintain consistency, the flow of ideas, and to being apprised of current rules, systems & regulations. When the work is consistent, systems and processes become habitual, but when there are time gaps between events, creating checklists and your own systems & processes, can be invaluable to ensuring you keep on track. Here are some tips:

- ◇ If not already a member, join the AMC Private Members Group where you will find ideas, questions & answers, information, and resources. Each member can ask or answer a question.
- ◇ Check your profile on the AMC Webpage.
- ◇ Find support and many resources on the AMC webpage
- ◇ Attend the AMC Education sessions and Regional Meetings, or Conferences.
- ◇ Make a connection with another AMC member for mutual support
- ◇ Read this and each newsletter, cover to cover
- ◇ read the Marriage Act, Guidelines and Regulations to ensure you are UpToDate.

Find a Celebrant Buddy and meet for coffee and a chat. Not only will you have someone to hold you accountable, to your plan and schedule but you'll also have someone to bounce ideas off of. Plus, it's always more fun when sharing achievements with a friend!

### Practice

If however there is a gap between ceremonies, you should hone your skills with practice.

- ◇ If you don't have a script to work on, create a scenario and write a script for a fictional but possible future ceremony.
- ◇ Save and Categorise the script so that it can later be easily found when needed.
- ◇ Practice completing and finalising forms
- ◇ importantly, hone your elevator pitch.

To find the best path forward, make some lists:

- ◇ advertising methods and possibilities,
- ◇ venues
- ◇ potential sources of work,
- ◇ What features identify your target client



### Promotio & Marketing

Prepare a presentation folder and visit each local venue for inspiration as well as to meet and greet.

Create a plan and schedule to stay organised and motivated.

Remember to include physical exercise and mental health or energy breaks to keep yourself energised. Have a nap if you need to so that you are productive and alert.

A simple marketing practice used by retailers is for staff to look busy even when the shop is quiet because people are attracted to activity. The retailers know that if there are no customers in the store, staff have to look busy by shuffling stock around the store so that when repeat customers come in, they see different stock, and when potential customers look in, they are drawn to the activity.

The same applies to online marketing.

Post images as often and you can and provide frequent updates to demonstrate activity.. Search for your own webpage anonymously so that search engines also see activity.

### Keep fit in Mind & Body

Keep up your energy by keeping fit.

Schedule regular walks or runs, do some chair exercises, watch a funny or inspiring video, or listen to music or a motivational recording, garden, follow the AMC support and Facebook page, and

Remember to set a timer so you don't get too caught up on a specific task.

### Rewards

Always reward yourself for an achievement whether it's a favourite healthy snack, a new book, or a relaxing bubble bath, rewarding yourself for a job well done can be a great way to stay motivated. Just make sure to set realistic goals and rewards so you don't get discouraged.

### Care of Self

Staying motivated can be tough, but by setting goals, making a schedule, taking breaks, finding a Celebrant buddy, and treating yourself, you'll be on your way to success. Remember, it's important to take care of yourself both mentally and physically. So, grab a water bottle, set a reminder to stretch, and get moving

- Plan a way forward
- Create a schedule with deadlines
- Set realistic deadlines and reward yourself for meeting them
- Break down big goals into smaller, manageable tasks
- Find a Celebrant buddy for sharing thoughts as well as accountability, helping to keep you on track.
- Know that you are not alone.

**So, make a plan and get it done.**