

December 2025

Volume 4, Issue 11

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**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.**



COVER PICTURE. A surprise wedding at a surprise birthday party

Inside this issue:

- Surprise Weddings
- Jodie & Albo making history
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SURPRISE!



We all love a surprise. The fun of something wonderfully and delightfully unexpected. It might be Groom's first look at his bride as she walks down the aisle, but there are many other surprises at weddings that might delight all. It could be Groom entering the ceremony on horseback or perhaps on the back of his Best Man, the jokes made mid-ceremony, or the guests sitting quietly instead are actually into active participation in some fun way.

A Groom who was a Star Wars Fan, was surprised when his bride, who is

not a Star Wars fan at all, began her walk down the aisle to the sound of the Darth Vader March, before the music suddenly switched to a more romantic tune with the groom still laughing hilariously

Some other surprises I've encountered include:

- ◇ a 'Chook Raffle' to choose the witnesses
- ◇ a lizard propping up on the stairs to watch the ceremony
- ◇ a flock of cockatoos arriving in an overlooking tree to watch the ceremony
- ◇ a ring bearer doggy having angel wings under which the rings were hidden

One Celebrant told of how during a ceremony, the nearby grazing table was demolished by a mob of hungry kangaroos. Surprises can be varied, fun and exciting.

As any Celebrant knows, the parties to the marriage ceremony, however, cannot be 'surprised' by the ceremony and at all times, we have to confirm consent; this though, doesn't

Continued next page.....



**UPCOMING
Sth COAST
MEETINGS**

**Christmas Lunch Meeting
1pm, Saturday 13th December 2025
Ulladulla Bowling Club**

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prevent the guests from being surprised.

I had a call from a couple who invited me to their home for a meeting but insisted that I park in the next street and to not have any signage on my car that might reveal my identity or purpose. My initial thought was perhaps there had been a dispute with neighbours but of course it was far more innocent. They wanted everything to be absolutely secret just for fun.—see cover photo.

The couple had become engaged at a surprise birthday party and so when another birthday was on its way, they decided to make that their wedding day, informing just a few people, including the two witnesses who helped with the organisation, and the groom's father and so apart from the Celebrant, only those 5 people knew what was to happen.

The big day came and as I entered the party with a PA, all eyes turned to the door however, as I was posing as a long lost uncle, right on queue, the Dad stood up and complained loudly to all that his terrible brother, who never returns phone calls, has finally arrived for a free feed at a surprise birthday party for his favourite nephew. Dad promptly demanded that this long-lost brother sit with him to have a beer and that was all that was needed to make me invisible.

I quietly congratulated Dad on his fantastic performance.

The groom finally arrived and was, of course, incredibly and appropriately surprised and embarrassed to find a party in his honour. This family deserves Academy Awards.

At an appropriate time, I got up, turned on the PA and gave a captivating *'uncle's speech'* and with all attention then drawn to the front, the couple quietly slipped away to change and prepare.

As my speech progressed, I received a text message that all was ready and so I reminded everyone of the surprise engagement they had all witnessed some time ago and asked if they thought it was time that the couple finally married. They all cheered in agreement, and then the wedding march music began to play. The couple appeared at the back of the room, arm in arm, to process through the now parting crowd who were still unsure of exactly what was happening.

While the couple processed, the hidden registry stand and legal paperwork suddenly appeared, converting a small area into a Ceremonial area, and it all began.

It was all so convincing that when I was packing up, the bride's brother commented on how wonderful it was that a relative could perform the ceremony.

The Bride later admitted that her brother might not

be the sharpest tool in the shed. Every time I heard from the couple, even in a review, they referred to me as Uncle Lou.

Other Celebrants have told of how they have had I have a bride and groom whose guests thought they were attending an engagement party, only to be very surprised to discover it's a wedding.



Celebrant, **Carolyn Clarke** tells us that she has performed quite a few surprise weddings over the years but that one that stood out was from about 12 years ago at the bride's 30th birthday party held at the local Catholic Club. When Carolyn arrived, she slipped out the back and borrowed a spare waistcoat that matched what the staff waitresses were wearing and in that disguise, she started collecting plates and glasses, completely blending in with the crew and so avoiding any questions about her presence in case she should be recognized. A little later, the couple quietly slipped away, and that was her cue. Carolyn grabbed the microphone and casually announced that everyone needed to return to their seats for a few speeches. Once the room was settled and all eyes were front, she took off the waistcoat, put on her jacket, and proudly welcomed everyone to the surprise wedding. The reaction was electric and the room absolutely erupted. She tells us that it was brilliant.

Barbara Gilbery tells us that she had friends who gave everyone a sealed envelope when they arrived but were told that it was not to be opened until directed. When the moment arrived, one envelope contained the message that, that person was to make an important and very loud announcement, that all were about to witness a wedding! ...and the Ceremony began.

Sarah Nerva had an occasion when she posed as the groom's lost aunt from Tasmania. She mingled with the guests until the music started to mark the couple's entrance and the 'aunty' was revealed to be the Celebrant.



With only one meeting, and a couple of emails, no rehearsal and the witnesses made aware half an hour before the ceremony on the night, **Tracey Kelly** tells of a couple who had been together for 20 years and so it was quite an achievement for them to finally marry at their local Bowling Club at the Groom's 50th birthday party. It appeared very ad hoc but flowed beautifully.

Tracey says that it is amazing what you can orchestrate through experience and a flexible plan without being



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controlling. The secret bride, perhaps fuelled by just a couple of unaccustomed drinks but sober enough to continue, seemingly spontaneously decided to step up onto the stage to take the microphone and demand the secret groom’s attention. Once on mic her smile won hearts!

She proposed marriage and his response was “*Why not!*”.

He also stepped up onto the stage where they hugged as the MC (Tracey) wished the secret Groom a very happy 50th, thanked everyone for coming, and congratulated the couple on their decision to marry before pausing for a moment and then going on to say “*Well, since we’re gathered here today*”. There was a Standing Ovation! as all of the guests roared with laughter and cheers voicing their approval.

The Marriage Registry was handed to the MC, who was finally revealed to be a Marriage Celebrant. All the documents were hidden until that moment and Burger rings were used as ‘the rings’, provided by the best man to add to the illusion of spontaneity.

Robbie Fincham had also introduced herself as a couples’ MC for an evening function and at the appropriate moment revealed she was not a Master of Ceremonies but their Marriage Celebrant!!



Phil Timbrell and **Peggy Moyes** have contributed their memories.

Phil Timbrell



Q: What Makes a Surprise Wedding Different?

A: Everyone laughs Why?

Surprise weddings are memorable because the emotional response of the guests being tricked, (at the time of the reveal), is something that any celebrant will remember forever.

In my opinion, comedy is about leading the audience in one direction, and then revealing a more logical truth that they had not considered. It’s about tricking them. Magic tricks, or illusions as I prefer to call them, are about revealing an outcome that was totally unexpected, once again tricking the guests. And the response to a magic trick, or to comedy, is the same as the response to a surprise wedding – the guests laugh.

I recall 2 surprise weddings that I have officiated at, and will draw comparisons with the statements above.

The first was a backyard wedding approaching the end of the year. When I first met the couple they explained that the bride was pregnant, even though

at this stage it was not showing, and no one knew. They planned to invite both sets of parents for a New Year’s Day barbeque – just the 2 sets of parents, plus the bride and groom. I had to arrive down a narrow path between the garage and the fence, and secretly wait until called. When I stepped out wearing a suit, I had to announce that the couple were marrying right there and then, that I was the celebrant, and with that the bride made an entrance. While she did that I threw a length of tulle over their clothes line and we were ready to start. Suddenly both sets of parents burst into laughter and embraced. A special moment. But not as special as the gift the couple gave each parent, after we had signed the F15.

The gift was a sealed envelope – and in the sealed envelope was an ultra sonic photo of the baby in utero. Then the tears ran, but only after some huge smiles and more laughter.



The other surprise wedding, (see photo above), was a pair of high school sweethearts who tied the knot 10 years after leaving school. Most of the guests were mutual school friends. They had been invited to the home the bride grew up in for an engagement party. The wedding took place in a bush setting at the back of the backyard which we accessed from the neighbour’s back yard. The bride and groom dressed in the neighbour’s house. We then made our way to the backyard of her home and invited the guests to gather around. I then introduced myself as a marriage celebrant and a round of laughter broke out for a good few minutes followed by whoo hoos, whoop de doos and any other noise you like. The guests had been tricked into an unexpected outcome – just like in a magic trick or a good comedy routine. That is my take on surprise weddings.



Peggy Moyes

I think my best Surprise Wedding was definitely one which had been organised at the engagement party. The couple approached me literally 32 days before the party and decided due

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to the loss of some very key family members as in grandparents they didn't want to wait 12 months and wanted to do a surprise wedding at their party as everyone was going to be there. We rallied and as it was before we had the BDM portal, everything was done by hand. The paperwork was completed within 24 hours to get the one month pre-wedding notice. The night of the engagement obviously we got there early and set up before any guests arrived and just mingled as engagement party guests for the first two hours. The couple were dressed in their engagement clothes. They mingled were enjoying their party. Then we had organised for them to slip out for twenty minutes to prepare for their 7pm Wedding. The couple quietly disappeared to change into their wedding attire.

Just before 7pm I stood up on the stage as MC for the engagement party welcoming everybody to celebrate the engagement of this couple and of course asked for the couple to come and join me. Clearly they were not there but with perfect timing we heard the roar of a car engine behind us.

The venue was a great big old shed in the country and was fantastic.

The boys all dressed in their wedding suits stepped out from the 165 guests and the penny dropped as I announced that MC actually meant Marriage Celebrant.

The crowd just roared and cheered with approval.

It was amazing.

Once the noise began to settle down, the huge double doors at the opposite end of the shed opened and a Rolls-Royce drove in to deliver the bride with her attendants.

We pulled it off perfectly. It was electric.



It was exciting. Everybody had the best night. A perfect blend of engagement Wedding and a surprise.



A similar one we had at a couples 30th birthday party in a restaurant we have here in Adelaide which has a massive great fish aquarium in the middle. It's pretty impressive. Same deal at the other surprise wedding, I was posing as the MC.

They were a same sex couple and we had the birthday girl with us but we were missing her partner for the speeches. We had some conversation with their best friend about killing time while the partner was being found and the conversation turned to what I did for a living and how I was a celebrant. The friend said "wow wouldn't it be great if we could make this a wedding tonight?" and of course I responded with "we can do that!" The room erupted as the bride entered wearing a beautiful wedding gown .. again we pulled it off and it was amazing!



I think the key to one of these as a celebrant is to get to the venue early and while yes, it makes a longer evening being an all day event, it is well worth it when nobody sees you arrive to set up.

I would definitely recommend it to couples wanting to save money and only have one big Event and just the atmosphere it's amazing. It even made the Adelaide Sunday Mail's wedding section.



Jodie & Albo got married

Fifty two years after a previous Labor government created the Civil Celebrancy program, history was again made when the sitting Prime Minister Prime Minister Anthony Albanese and his beautiful bride Jodie Haydon, were married by a Central Coast Civil Celebrant, at the official residence, The Lodge, in Canberra on Saturday 29th November 2025



The ring bearer was none other than their dog Toto with some 80 close friends, family, and political allies in attendance. Among guests was of course the Prime Ministers' own son, Nathan.

The event is historic because this is the first time an Australian Prime Minister has married while in office and it was the first marriage to take place at the nation's official PM residence.

In a brief statement following the celebration, the newlyweds shared their delight: *"We are absolutely delighted to share our love and commitment to spending our future lives together, in front of our family and closest friends."*

The couple, wrote their own vows, and both walked down the aisle to the sound of Ben Folds' romantic ballad, The Luckiest. Ms Haydon, accompanied by her parents, wore a bespoke gown by Sydney fashion house Romance Was Born. The groom looked wore a suit by MJ Bale.



The couple exited to Stevie Wonder's Signed, Sealed, Delivered and planned to take their first dance to Frank Sinatra's timeless The Way You Look Tonight.

Mr Albanese, 62, and Ms Haydon, 47, began dating in 2019 after meeting at a Melbourne business event where they bonded over a shared passion for the South Sydney Rabbitohs. Since then, Haydon has been a constant presence throughout the prime minister's 2022 and 2025 election campaigns, and their partnership has quietly flourished. Mr Albanese, known to most of us as Albo, proposed on Valentine's Day last year, becoming the first PM to get engaged while in office.

Reflecting on their relationship, Albanese has spoken lovingly about how he knew Haydon was the one:

"When it became clear to me that Jodie was the person I wanted to spend the rest of my life with, and that I couldn't imagine a life without her, I made the decision."

Before proposing, Albo sought the blessing of his son Nathan who offered his full support, and shares a warm relationship with his father's new wife.

As many couples now do, they paid for everything themselves. **Jodie Haydon** incidentally is an Australian financial services professional and women's advocate. She was born in Bankstown, her parents are teachers, and she was raised on the Central coast where the couple plan to eventually reside, to be close to family.



We wish the newlyweds every happiness.

* [Wedding bells for Anthony Albanese! – OverSixty](#)

* [First photos: Anthony Albanese marries Jodie Haydon at The Lodge | news.com.au — Australia's leading news site for latest headlines](#)

* https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jodie_Haydon

Marriages and Divorces, Australia

Key statistics

- 120,844 marriages were registered in 2024, 2.0% more than in 2023.
- The most popular date to marry was 24/02/2024, with 1,773 marriages on that day.
- The number of divorces granted in 2024 fell 3.0% to 47,216.

Marriages

After 2021 saw a reduction in weddings due to the pandemic restrictions there was an upsurge in 2002 which became a record year current with 127,161 marriages registered across Australia.

2023 then saw a saw drop by 5% to 118,439 marriages registered.

In 2024, there was a slow climb of 2.0% with 120,844 marriages registered in Australia.

The crude marriage rate in 2024 however, (*the number of marriages divided by the population aged 16 and over*) was unchanged from 2023 at 5.5 marriages per 1,000 people but this is still slightly less than the pre-pandemic rate in 2019 of 5.6 marriages per 1,000 people.

The median age at marriage for males in 2024 was 32.8 years, which is a slight decrease from the 32.9 years recorded in 2023, but higher than the 32.5 years in 2022.

The median age at marriage for females was unchanged at 31.2 years in 2024.

So the average couple marrying are aged 31 for women and 32/33 for men.

Marriage between people of the same sex or gender was legislated from December 2017. In 2023, for couples of the same or non-binary gender, there were 4,558 marriages registered and that increased in 2024 by 4.1% to 4,746 marriages

registered

Selected marriage indicators, 2020-2024 (a)(b)(c)(d)

a. Restrictions put in place during the first two years of the COVID-19 pandemic had a direct impact on marriages in 2020 and 2021.

b. Crude marriage rates reflect the number of marriages registered during the year per 1,000 of estimated resident population aged 16 years and over, as at 30 June for the same year.

c. In September 2021, marriage registration forms were updated to record gender including male, female and non-binary. Prior to 2022, sex was collected on marriage registration forms. Comparisons should be treated with caution.

Refer to the [methodology](#) for more information.

Number of marriages registered and crude marriage rate, Australia, 2004-2024 (a)(b)(c)

GraphTable

Download

Number of marriages registered and crude marriage rate, Australia, 2004-2024 (a)(b)(c)

Line chart with 2 lines.

View as data table, Number of marriages registered and crude marriage rate, Australia, 2004-2024 (a)(b)(c)

The chart has 1 X axis displaying Year.

The chart has 2 Y axes displaying Rate (b) and Marriages (no.).

End of interactive chart.

a. Restrictions put in place during the first two years of the COVID-19 pandemic had a direct impact on marriages in 2020 and 2021. Comparisons to other years should be treated with caution.

b. Crude marriage rates reflect the number of marriages registered during the year per 1,000 of estimated resident

Selected marriage indicators, 2020-2024 (a)(b)(c)(d)	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Total marriages registered (no.) (a)	78,987	89,167	127,161	118,439	120,844
Crude marriage rate (b)	3.8	4.3	6.1	5.5	5.5
Median ages					
Median age at marriage, male (years)	32.2	32.1	32.5	32.9	32.8
Median age at marriage, female (years)	30.6	30.5	30.9	31.2	31.2
Marriages of the same gender					
Male marriages of the same gender (no.) (c)	1,116	1,075	1,767	1,735	1,893
Female marriages of the same gender (no.) (c)	1,785	1,770	2,667	2,619	2,622

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Marriages and Divorces, Australia

population aged 16 years and over, as at 30 June for the same year.

Refer to the [methodology](#) for more information.

Marriages by state and territory

For marriages registered in 2024:

- New South Wales, Victoria and Western Australia registered more marriages in 2024 than in 2023, with the other five jurisdictions registering fewer marriages.
- Victoria recorded the highest increase with 2,234 (7.5%) more marriages in 2024 than in 2023, while New South Wales had the second highest increase with 641 (1.6%) more marriages. These increases follow substantial declines in 2023 from the record high numbers for these states in 2022.
- Western Australia registered 246 (1.9%) more marriages in 2024 than 2023, which followed a 16.8% increase in marriages in 2023 from 2022.

The largest percentage declines in marriages registered in 2024 were in the Northern Territory (7.1% fewer), Tasmania (5.7% fewer) and South Australia (3.6% fewer).

Number of marriages by state and territory of registration, 2020-2024 (a)(b)(c)

[Download](#)

- Marriage data is based on the state or territory of registration rather than usual residence.
- Restrictions put in place during the first two years of the COVID-19 pandemic had a direct

impact on marriages in 2020 and 2021.

Refer to the [methodology](#) for more information.

Marriages by date of occurrence

- In 2024, marriages followed a similar pattern to 2023. Higher numbers of marriages occurred in autumn and spring, while lower numbers occurred in winter and over the Easter and Christmas periods.
- The most popular date to marry in 2024 was 24/02/2024 with 1,773 marriages.
- Other popular dates were 20/04/2024 (1,605 marriages), 06/04/2024 (1,580 marriages) and 12/10/24 and 26/10/24 (both with 1,579 marriages).
- Close to 55,000 marriages occurred on a Saturday. The top 42 dates to get married fell on a Saturday.
- Friday is the second most common day to get married, with just over 20,000 marriages occurring on this day. The most popular date to get married on a Friday was 08/03/2024 with 655 marriages occurring.

Popular dates that occurred on days other than Fridays or Saturdays were 29 February (Thursday and 457 marriages occurring) and 24 April (Wednesday and 515 marriages occurring).

Number of marriages by date of occurrence, Australia, 2024 (a)(b)(c)

[GraphTable](#)

[Download](#)

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
NSW	27,609	27,314	44,953	39,018	39,659
Vic.	16,628	18,740	33,231	29,816	32,050
Qld	15,917	21,627	25,014	23,826	23,595
SA	5,429	6,778	7,268	7,782	7,500
WA	9,561	10,305	11,237	13,120	13,366
Tas.	2,016	2,328	2,821	2,506	2,364
NT	549	796	819	794	738
ACT	1,278	1,279	1,818	1,562	1,554

Same Gender marriages	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
TOTAL SAME GENDER	2,901	2,845	4,434	4,354	4,515
Male marriages of the same gender (no.) (c) %	38%	38%	40%	40%	42%
Female marriages of the same gender (no.) (c)%	62%	62%	60%	60%	58%

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Marriages and Divorces, Australia

Number of marriages by date of occurrence, Australia, 2024 (a)(b)(c)

End of interactive chart.

- a. Data is presented by the date the marriage occurred. A proportion of marriages occurring in a year are not registered until subsequent years.
- b. This graph includes marriages registered and received by the ABS in 2024. Totals will differ to data by year of registration.

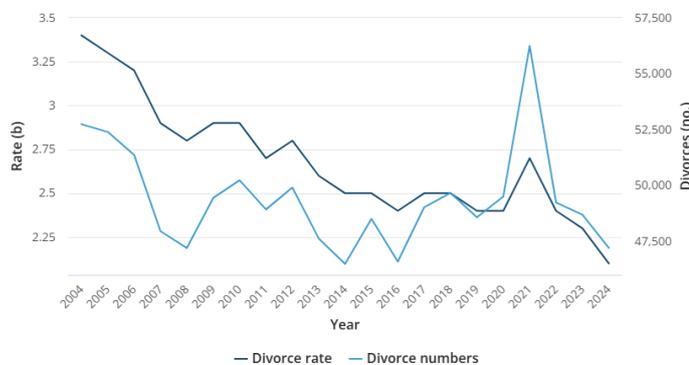
Refer to the [methodology](#) for more information.

Divorces

In 2024:

- 47,216 divorces were granted in Australia, down 3.0% from the 48,700 divorces granted in 2023.
- The crude divorce rate was 2.1 divorces per 1,000 people, down from 2.3 in 2023.
- The median duration of marriages (from marriage to divorce) increased to 13.2 years (from 13.0 years in 2023).
- The median age at divorce has remained the same compared with 2023 at 47.1 years for males and 44.1 years for females.

Selected divorce indicators, 2020-2024(a)(b)(c)



a. The Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia have advised that the high number of divorces finalised in 2021 is in part related to administrative changes. This constitutes a break in time series and any comparison with earlier years should be made with caution.

b. Crude divorce rates reflect the number of divorces granted during the year per 1,000 of estimated resident population aged 16 and over, as at 30 June that year. Refer to the [methodology](#) for more information.

Number of divorces granted and crude divorce rate, Australia 2004-2024 (a)(b)(c)

GraphTable

Download

Number of divorces granted and crude divorce rate, Australia 2004-2024 (a)(b)(c)

Line chart with 2 lines.

View as data table, Number of divorces granted and crude divorce rate, Australia 2004-2024 (a)(b)(c)

The chart has 1 X axis displaying Year.

The chart has 2 Y axes displaying Rate (b) and Divorces (no.).

End of interactive chart.

a. The Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia have advised that the high number of divorces finalised in 2021 is in part related to administrative changes. This constitutes a break in time series and any comparison with earlier years should be made with caution.

b. Crude divorce rates reflect the number of divorces granted during the year per 1,000 of estimated resident population aged 16 and over, as at 30 June that year.

Refer to the [methodology](#) for more information.

Data downloads

1. Marriages and Divorces (Australia) 2024

[Download xlsx\[186.91 KB\]](#)

Previous catalogue number

Selected divorce indicators, 2020-2024(a)(b)(c)	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Divorces granted (absolute) (no.) (a)	49,510	56,244	49,241	48,700	47,216
Crude divorce rate (b)	2.4	2.7	2.4	2.3	2.1
Median duration					
Median duration of marriage to separation (years)	8.4	8.4	8.9	9.0	9.3
Median duration of marriage to divorce (years)	12.1	12.2	12.8	13.0	13.2
Median ages					
Median age at divorce, male (years)	45.6	45.9	46.7	47.1	47.1
Median age at divorce, female (years)	42.8	43.0	43.7	44.1	44.1



CARTIER, VAN CLEEF & ARPELS JEWELLERY ARE RENOWNED FOR QUALITY & VALUE, BUT THAT CANNOT BE SAID OF THE FAKES.

Many brides might love an impeccably designed ring or bracelet from a famous house for their wedding day but it appears that a Gold Coast Jeweller, may have taken advantage of that because a man was charged with 22 counts of selling (fake) replicas of Cartier and Van Cleef & Arpels jewellery.

According to the Australian Federal Police (AFP) a Gold Coast man, Stephen Mckean, a 40 year old jeweller, was expected to appear before Southport Magistrates Court, on 20th October, 2025, accused of selling counterfeit copies of Cartier and other high-end jewellery totalling more than \$100,000.

According to the Gold Coast Bulletin, Mr Mckean is the founder and former director and former shareholder of Drip City Jewellers Pty Ltd, which trades out of James Street in Burleigh Heads.

In December, 2023, the Gold Coast Joint Organised Crime Task Force (JOCTF), comprising of AFP and Queensland Police members, executed a search warrant at a Burleigh Heads jewellery store where the man gave access to a safe that contained jewellery, gold bullion, and a sum of cash.

Police seized the jewellery after a search of the store, safe, and business records could not determine the origins of the jewellery and their legitimacy.

Investigations by the AFP determined that a number of counterfeit jewellery pieces were

allegedly presented for sale as genuine Cartier and Van Cleef & Arpels pieces in the store with a total sale value in excess of \$100,000. An AFP valuation showed the true value of the jewellery to be about \$28,000, and so he was profiting over \$72,000.

The man has been charged with 22 counts of possessing or exposing for sale goods with false trademarks, contrary to s148(1) of the *Trade Marks Act (Cth)* 1995, which carries a maximum penalty of five year's imprisonment and/or a \$181,500 fine.

AFP Detective Superintendent Adrian Telfer said attempts to sell counterfeit luxury items took advantage of customers who believed their purchase was genuine.

"Selling counterfeit items and products is a deception and fraud that preys upon the goodwill and the back pocket of the customers involved," Det Supt Telfer said.

"The AFP has a zero-tolerance approach to anyone allegedly committing an offence that seeks to gain an unfair financial advantage via illegal means."

- [Gold Coast man charged with 22 counts of selling fake replicas of Cartier and Van Cleef & Arpels jewellery | Australian Federal Police](https://www.goldcoastbulletin.com.au/subscribe/news/1/?sourceCode=GCWEB_WRE170_a&dest=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.goldcoastbulletin.com.au%2Ftruecrimeaustralia%2Fpolice-courts-gold-coast%2Fstephen-mckean-gold-coast-man-before-court-over-counterfeit-luxury-jewellery%2Fnews-story%2F17b809dba5f44b0a3d8ed1b1e218031e&mimetype=anonymous&mde=premium)
- https://www.goldcoastbulletin.com.au/subscribe/news/1/?sourceCode=GCWEB_WRE170_a&dest=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.goldcoastbulletin.com.au%2Ftruecrimeaustralia%2Fpolice-courts-gold-coast%2Fstephen-mckean-gold-coast-man-before-court-over-counterfeit-luxury-jewellery%2Fnews-story%2F17b809dba5f44b0a3d8ed1b1e218031e&mimetype=anonymous&mde=premium



easy weddings

Easy Weddings has launched their annual survey of the Australian wedding industry and you are invited to participate. They even write that they'd love to hear your perspective.

The **Australian wedding industry survey is now open** — and This isn't just about stats — it's about **helping your business thrive in 2026 and beyond**. Your input will feed into:

- The EW 2026 Australian Wedding Industry Report
- PR opportunities and industry insights
- Helping our industry anticipate trends and challenges

As a thank you, you'll go in the draw to win **\$500 cash**.

There's also **\$1,000 for one lucky couple** who completes the **couples survey**.

Team Easy Weddings says thanks for being a crucial part of the wedding industry and look forward to receiving your insights!

BUSINESS NAME

REGISTER A BUSINESS NAME

You need to register a business name if you conduct business under a name other than your own. A business name, also known as a trading name, is a name or title under which a person, or other legal entity, carries on business.

When you register a business name, you register it nationally. This means you can operate your business in any state or territory in Australia.

At [the Australian Government's Business Registration website](#) you can register a business name using one online form. The form will also:

- tell you what information you need to complete your registration
- allow you to save your progress and come back later
- give you other helpful information related to business names
- lets you make other business registrations you may need.

Registering a business name will prevent others from registering the exact business name, but not from trading with a similar business name or likeness. For that, you'll need to [register a trademark](#).

Business name registration fees

There is a fee to register a business name. The current fees are:

- application to register a business name for one year: \$45
- application to register a business name for 3 years: \$104.

Be careful of fake sites of which there are many. Just perform a websearch for business registration and you will see scams like those to the right of this page. They are permitted to operate and will usually have a disclaimer identifying them as a business, but they simply use the same real links as above, to register your chosen business name and charge a steep, unnecessary fee, for acting as your agent.

It is much cheaper and safer to do it direct.

Sponsored

abn-registration-australia.com.au

<https://www.abn-registration-australia.com.au/company/registration>

ASIC Registration Australia

Register Business Name Today - Register Your Company, Business Name, ABN And ACN Online. Start Your Application Today. Improve ATO Compliance. Your Application Is Reviewed By Our Licensed Tax & ASIC Agent.

ABN Registration

Sole Trader ABN

Register Company ABN

Contact Us

Register Partnership ABN

Register a Business Name

Sponsored

abn-register.com.au

<https://www.abn-register.com.au/business/registration>

ASIC Business Registration

Register Business Name - Business Name Registration. Fastest and Easiest Way to Register Your Business Name. Find out what it is, why you need one, and the advantages of having a Business Name. Money back guaranteed.

Sponsored

businessnameregistry.org

<https://www.businessnameregistry.org/register>

Business Name Registration - Register Business Name Online

Register Your Official Business Name Online. Free Name Search. Simplified Form. Free Name Search. Instant Business Name Application Processing. 100% Online. Business Name Lookup. GST Registration. 24/7 Support. Instant Registration. Simplified Online Forms. ABN Registration.

Sponsored

Registry Australia

<https://www.registry.com.au/>

Business Name Registration - Registry Portal



ASIC

Australian Securities & Investments Commission

Record of Registration for Business Name

Business name information for:

Have I Been Pwned

This Record of Registration contains information recorded on the Australian Securities and Investments Commission's (ASIC) register under section 33(8) of the Business Names Registration Act 2011.

Date: 29 November 2016

Next renewal date: 29 November 2019

Record of registration issued by the Australian Securities and Investments Commission on 29 November 2016

Rosanne Bell
Senior Executive Leader
Registry

DALLY HAS A NEW BOOK



Every Celebrant knows of or has benefitted from the work of pioneer Celebrant Dally Messenger III, though he is also well known to fans of Rugby League, as the grandson of HH Dally Messenger after whom the *Dally M* awards are named.

Our Dally, the Celebrant is a teacher, pioneer civil celebrant, and author of many Celebrancy articles, books and courses but he also annually presents the Dally M Awards, and has now authored a new book on his equally famous grandfather.

Dally Messenger III was educated at St Bernard's College, Katoomba, and Marist Brothers, Parramatta.

He left school at 15 and worked at ANZ Bank before studying for the priesthood in 1959. Ordained in 1966, he left the priesthood disillusioned less than two years later.

He taught at Haileybury College (1969–1975) and worked in journalism and radio. He led international tours and was founding editor of Dance Australia magazine.

He was the first ever to apply to become a Civil Marriage Celebrant under the provisions of the new Commonwealth Marriage Act of Australia (1961), but his application was refused by then Attorney General Sir Garfield Barwick. Later, on 27th February 1974, having heard of the earlier refusal, the new Attorney General, Lionel Murphy, finally appointed Dally Messenger III as a Civil Celebrant. In the over 51 years since, Dally has championed Civil and Funeral Celebrancy and has travelled to educate Celebrants in the United Kingdom and USA and so is without doubt and very obviously a pioneer civil celebrant, active in the movement for over 51 years. In 2024, he was once again nominated for an OAM for services to Celebrancy but we are yet to hear of the progress of that nomination. A key to developing professional funeral celebrancy and celebrant education, he founded the International College of Celebrancy and created numerous specialist courses.

His published books include:

- Ceremonies and Celebrations (2008 edition),
- The Master 2008,
- Murphy's Law and the Pursuit of Happiness (2002).

Dally's latest book though, is not about Celebrancy at all but will certainly be of incredible interest to all rugby league fans, and it is published just in time for Christmas, so he would dearly love you to buy it!!

This book is the H.H. Dally Messenger' story

Dally's grandfather, [Herbert Henry "Dally" Messenger](#), was an all-round sporting genius and the original Australian rugby league superstar who led Eastern Suburbs to their first glorious premiership, led the first rugby league game onto the Sydney Cricket Ground and Captained the First Kangaroos. Harry Sunderland, a towering, entrepreneurial figure of the game once wrote: *"Without Messenger's magical appeal...there would be no league."*

Dally Messenger

The Beginning of Rugby League

Dally Messenger



The story of "The Master", his rise in Rugby Union, and his pre-eminence in the newly formed Australian Rugby League.

Dally Messenger III

His outstanding and thrilling achievements on the field of play are the stuff of legend. The **Dally M Awards**, named in his honour in 1998, are the official annual player awards for the National Rugby League competition. As well as honouring the player of the year, the [Dally M Medal](#), awards are also given to the premier player in each position, the best coach, the best captain, representative player of the year and the most outstanding rookie of the season.

At 335-page, it is easy-to-read book is full of interest and all the important facts. it is \$35 AUD + \$8 p&p (\$22 USD) and will be delivered to you within 4 to 5 days whether you are in Australia, the USA, New Zealand or Great Britain.

www.books.by/books-from-dally-and-friends

[Books from Dally and friends on Books.by](http://www.books.by/books-from-dally-and-friends)



Australian Government

Attorney-General's Department

Consultation on revised 'Guidelines on the Marriage Act 1961 for authorised celebrants'

The Attorney-General's Department is seeking Celebrant views on a revised version of the 'Guidelines on the *Marriage Act 1961* for authorised celebrants' (the guidelines).

The guidelines are a key resource to help authorised celebrants understand their legal responsibilities under the *Marriage Act 1961* (Cth) and the Marriage Regulations 2017.

MLCS has updated the existing guidelines to reflect recent legislative changes and make information clearer and are seeking feedback from celebrants and other relevant stakeholders on the updated content and structure of this important document.

The department uses 'Citizen Space' to conduct consultations. This consultation is in the form of a survey with free text boxes and radio buttons to provide your views. The draft guidelines document is available for download on the first page, as a PDF or Word document.

Please note that this is a 'private' consultation, which means that it is only accessible to those who have been provided with the relevant URL which is contained in an email sent to Celebrants.

**Submissions closed at 11.59 pm (ACT local time)
on Monday, 24 November 2025.**

For all inquiries relating to this consultation, please contact us using the email address listed on the survey: marriageconsultation@ag.gov.au

MLCS thanks you for your participation in this consultation.

Marriage Law & Celebrants Section
Attorney-General's Department
3-5 National Circuit Barton ACT 2600
T: 1800 550 343 (Tues-Thurs – 10am to 12:30pm –
1pm to 4pm Canberra local time)

- ◇ [Record of use of Form 15 Marriage Certificates](#)
- ◇ [Marriage forms](#)
- ◇ [Newsletters](#)
- ◇ [Downloads](#)
- ◇ [Contact details](#)
- ◇ [Related links](#)

Attorney-General's Department and Marriage Celebrant Associations/Networks Meeting Minutes

You can access the minutes of meetings at this link on the AG webpage:

<https://www.ag.gov.au/families-and-marriage/publications/attorney-generals-department-and-marriage-celebrant-associationsnetworks-meeting-minutes>

OPD REMINDER

ONLY 4 WEEKS TO GO.

You must complete the compulsory professional development activities by 31 December each calendar year.

If you do not complete your compulsory professional development activities disciplinary measures apply unless you were granted a professional development exemption. Disciplinary measures may include:

- a caution
- additional professional development
- suspension
- deregistration.

There are no elective activities. However, you can undertake further professional development if you wish to do so.

Any additional training you undertake will not be counted towards your compulsory professional development activities and will not be carried over to the next calendar year.

If you received a Certificate IV in Celebrancy in the 12 months before you registered as a celebrant, you are exempt from professional development for the calendar year of your registration.. Exemption may also apply if you registered towards the end of a calendar year. Those celebrants don't have to apply for exemption and the registration email will explain exemption for those reasons.

If you don't meet either of these criteria, you must complete your professional development activities or [apply for an exemption](#).

WARNING

If you fail to meet your 2025 OPD obligations, you may be deregistered.

REVISITING NEW BDM PASSWORD & MFA



NEW BDM PASSWORD REQUIREMENTS ARE PROGRESSING

Some Celebrants have already been receiving notices to update their Lifelink password and have acted upon that. Note that whilst you can change your password at any time, you do not have to update to the new password requirements until advised to do so. Celebrants who have an email received notice have discovered that they cannot update until the specified date and that once that date arrives, the update is compulsory as they cannot complete the login otherwise.

An Authenticator app is required.

The new password requirements are:

- ⇒ Minimum of 15 characters in length
- ⇒ Must not contain your account name or parts of your full name
- ⇒ Must contain three (3) out of the following four (4) categories for complexity
 - ◇ at least one number (0-9)
 - ◇ at least one uppercase characters (A - Z)
 - ◇ at least one lowercase characters (a - z)
 - ◇ at least one special character e.g.
!@#%&*+=`|\(){}[]:;'"<>.,?/

⇒ [Click her for the Tutorial video on how to update your password.](#)

⇒ **N.B. the video is outdated as it does not include the necessity for the Authenticator App. When asked to enter a code, you will find that on your chosen app**

MULTI-FACTOR AUTHENTICATION FOR LOGIN

In addition to changing your password, the NSW BDM is introducing Multifactor Authentication (MFA) for when you log into the Lifelink.

In addition to your username and your new password, you will use an authenticator mobile application (app) on a separate device e.g. your phone

NSW BDM recommends your downloading one of the supported authenticator apps below if you don't have one already:



Okta Verify



Google Authenticator



Microsoft Authenticator

WHAT IS MFA & 2FA?

- **Two-Factor Authentication (2FA)**
- **Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA)**

Identity theft and hacking (*unauthorised account access*) has become a serious threat. To combat this, an additional layer of security is being added by most businesses and government bodies.

- Single layer identification requires a password or code but not both
- Two-factor authentication (2FA) requires users to present two types of authentication, e.g. password and a code
- MFA requires users to present at least two, if not more types of authentication. e.g. password, a code generated by an independent device/fob or an app.

This means that all 2FA is an MFA, but not all MFA is a 2FA.

Whilst a hacker might somehow access one device or an account, they would have to gain access to two of your devices in order to bypass 2FA and may have to hack three devices to overcome MFA, which is far more difficult., hence, you can (and should) use 2FA/MFA for all of your online accounts.

At first we simply needed to enter a short and

uncomplicated password, usually about 6-8 numbers or letters. Then passwords necessarily became more complicated requiring letters, numbers and symbols.

We have now moved on to a second level.

This second layer is two-factor authentication (2FA) otherwise known as Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA).

Quite simply, when your password is entered, the webpage automatically sends a random code to your chosen device, fob, or app, or may send a signal to your app to cause it to generate a random code

You then have to enter that random code on the login screen to verify your identity.

[9 Cybersecurity Tips to Stay Protected in 2023](#)

[Use Two-Factor Authentication \(2FA\)](#)

[Use Strong Passwords and a Password Manager](#)

[Double-Check That Link Before You Click](#)

[Use a VPN When On Public Wi-Fi](#)

[Keeps Apps and Devices Up-to-Date](#)

[Don't Jailbreak Your iPhone](#)

[Don't Store Sensitive Info on Your Phone \(and Always Use a Passcode Lock\)](#)

[Use Privacy-Focused Apps](#)

[Secure Your Local Network](#)



When searching the web, Kerry Fisher, decided contribute some poems of her own after she came upon the considerable poetry on

- <https://www.alifecelebrant.com.au/poetry-readings/> She offers a bit of her story below but as this a first ever publication for her, she would dearly appreciate any reviews of her poetry.

Kerry Fisher

My name is Kerry and following is a bio of how I , personally have dealt with Death!

Death is inevitable and unfortunately it has become a part of my psyche and how, over the years I have learnt to deal with it.

At the age of fourteen I lost my father and grandfather in the space of three months, my mother in my twenties, my niece and my older brother not long after and in the last five years, my husband and my siblings.

I have two sons, one whom I care for with a genetic disease, the other with five children and am most grateful for them.

If it's one thing I have learnt, it is to stay in the Present, life can become messy and if one is stoic, resilient and yields to Providence you will survive and be happy.

Am I sad.. sometimes – do I miss them absolutely. One more thing, one must travel, I've been privileged to have travelled extensively, still do and have the most amazing Memories from Cuba to the Amazon, Antarctic and the amazing Italy. Maybe my escape, not sure, be grateful and live in the presence!

Kerry

**IF AT FIRST YOU
DON'T SUCCEED,
SKYDIVING IS
NOT FOR YOU.**

Cathedral Cave – Akaroa

By Kerry Fisher

Down into the deep blue sea seems a fitting place
for you and me
As I watched the waves devour our rings into the
mouth of the cave
Forever more to rest on the bed of sea
Memories started to re play in my head
Dolphins frolicked nearby as if they too knew
One caught my eye and remembering
Wept

MY GRIEF

By Kerry Fisher

They greet you with tilted heads and ask,
Are you sleeping and eating?
Now your lover holds another,
Are you socialising?
Now your lover holds another,
Are you still cooking for two?
Now your lover holds another,
Are you pruning roses and propagating
lavender?
Now your lover holds another,
Are you still waiting for him to come home?
Now your lover holds another,
Do you miss his kiss?
Now your lover holds another,
Do you miss his passion for life?
Now your lover holds another,
Do you miss his smile?
Now your lover holds another
.....I say yes, now my lover holds another,
Death.

Two solitudes who protect and touch and greet
each other Rilke – poet.



Smiling is infectious,
You catch it like the flu,
When someone smiled at me today,
I started smiling too.

I passed around the corner,
And someone saw me grin,
When he smiled I realised,
I'd passed it on to him.

I thought about that smile,
Then realised it's worth,
A single smile just like mine,
Could travel round the earth.

So if you feel a smile begin,
Don't leave it undetected,
Let's start an epidemic quick,
And get the world infected.

Spina Milligan

COORDINATOR COMMENTS



Let me start off by plugging Dally's book again. If you have a loved one who loves rugby league, rush to buy [HH Dally Messenger book \(2025\)](#).

Next, for those of you who know I have been unwell, thank you for your kind messages. I am pleased to report that my health is improving and that I now have a great doctor who has devised a great treatment plan to restore my health.. Just glad I didn't have any bookings for October and that most of my November bookings were postponed. Life is good, and I have lost 10 kgs.. Yahoo.

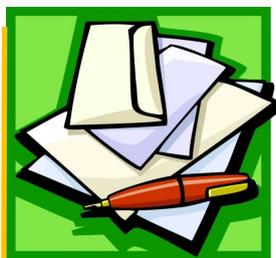
I was saddened that at least one other Celebrant who is a dear friend, has been unwell but is recovering and that one of my mates who had a very serious off-road bicycle accident on 7th October, has finally been released from hospital and is now progressing at home. It is astounding just how many close friends and acquaintances were seriously ill in October and November. Dally and a couple of others are now in much better health. But all this reminds us that we must never take life, friendship and love ones for granted. It just highlights how much we need and rely on each other.

On to another subject. As Celebrants, we must always promote a happy and healthy marriage. The fact that our Prime Minister created history by being the first sitting Australian Prime Minister to become engaged and then furthered that landmark by being the first to marry at The Lodge in a Ceremony led by a Central Coast Civil Celebrant just 52 years after the Celebrancy program was started by a previous Labor government is certainly worth Celebrating. We should all take every opportunity to congratulate the happy couple.

You probably saw on Social media that a huge number of Australians appreciate the romance and historic significance of a man who loved his single parent mother who was a disabled pensioner, becoming the PM, not once but twice, and then marrying a self made business woman from the Central Coast, in the presence of the PM's son, and with a small dog being the ring bearer. Can't get more Aussie than that!

Social Media also saw a huge number of trolls and bots relentlessly attacking the happy couple and seeking fault. Sadly, among them was at least one Celebrant who I shall not name and shame.

Let's instead Celebrate the goodness and the joy of love and marriage and collectively wish the happy couple, every joy and happiness., now and into the future



Letters to the Editor feedback

Have you enjoyed reading this newsletter? Have you disagreed or agreed with an article. Do you have another idea to contribute? We are a community of Celebrants and learn from each other. 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.

Email your contribution to: alifecelebrant@gmail.com

Thanking you for your dedication to us all, your expertise and your time.

Leanne McKay

Thanks again Lou for another wonderful newsletter.

Much appreciated

Alma Anderson

Wow! Another Newsletter packed full of interesting and informative information, thank you Lou.

Just wondering if there is a date for the Sth Coast Xmas get together, I didn't see it in the Newsletter.

Thanks again for your wonderful work and just for being you.☐

Warmest regards,

Mandi Gill

Wonderful newsletter, Lou. Just went through reading bits and pieces, especially the bit about myself! I am on the mend and life should resume as normal soon.

Great stuff mate

Please buy: HH Dally Messenger book (2025)

<https://books.by/books-from-dally-and-friends>

Dally Messenger III

Hi Lou

A superb Newsletter which encapsulates the heart, mind and capacity of our dynamic industry. It is an array of fact, education, instruction and progress .

Congrats Lou

Barry Young O A M.

Author_”The Funeral Celebrants Handbook” and “ Saying Farewell To Those We Love”.