



November 2021

Welcome to THE CAN, the newsletter of Celebrants Australia Inc. Since our last edition there have been many things happening and we will try to give you a snapshot here. And as an Interim Editor, I am trying to come to grips with Publisher, so please bear with me.

But one new section is Letters to the Editor, so if you have any suggestions I will be pleased to include them in our next edition. Meanwhile, I hope you find this of interest.

Grant Johnson

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NEW LEGAL DOCUMENTS FOR MARRIAGES

Many of you attended excellent workshops run by Sarah Aird regarding the new forms issued by the AG's Department.

The new forms are:

- Notice Of Intended Marriage (NOIM)
- No Legal Impediment to Marriage (NLIM)
- Official Marriage Certificate (OMC)
- Combined NLIM and OMC.

If you missed the workshops it is essential that you are aware of the new requirements. Your Association is planning some refresher training in this regard in the near future.

WEDDINGS COMING OUT OF COVID-19 LOCKDOWNS

POSTPONEMENTS AND CANCELLATIONS

By Judy Brooks, Vice President, Celebrants Australia

Should I postpone my wedding?

As each day passes, we're hearing of more and more couples making the voluntary choice to postpone their weddings. There are several reasons why:

- Their guest count is more than the allowed number in order to abide with any 4-square-metre rule at their venue
- They had overseas family and friends attending their wedding that can no longer make it
- They don't want to bring together a large group of people and put their loved ones at risk
- They don't want a day that they've invested a lot of time, energy, and resources into to be anything different to what they imagined
- They don't believe the social distancing that's currently recommended is conducive to weddings (no hugs, kisses, close dancing, shared food, or normal seating, which tends to be within 1.5 metres)

They don't want to put guests in the awkward position of deciding whether or not they're comfortable to attend in the first place

PROCEEDING AS PLANNED

Each state has different rules about how a wedding may look right now, and they're constantly evolving. Many couples are forging ahead with their wedding and if there is a change in restrictions that means their wedding cannot continue in the way that they had hoped, then they are reassessing as and when needed.

However, that's not to say that your couple can't make things paper-official on their original wedding day, even if a postponement needs to happen.

There are plenty of couples that are getting officially married on their original date with an intimate ceremony, with a big reception-style party planned down the track when they and their loved ones can let down their hair restriction-free.

Another suggestion for couples proceeding with their wedding is to live stream the ceremony via video for those close family members and friends who are not able to attend due to the restrictions.

What if the guests I invite to my wedding don't want to attend?

We really feel for our couples here – of course they want to get married surrounded by all the leading people in their life, let alone a select couple. But given the covert nature of COVID-19 and the fact that it's impossible to know who has the virus until they're symptomatic, it's reasonable to expect that guests may not feel comfortable to attend your wedding. They may have contact with kids, the elderly or immunocompromised people, or they may just be conscious of wanting to distance themselves from people until authorities say it's safe to do otherwise. While it can be heartbreaking to hear, our advice is to be completely understanding of your guest's choice and to not let it influence your relationship with them. This is a time where we all need to respect each other's autonomy.

EMOTIONAL BURDEN

We know it's likely that our couples been looking forward to this day for ages. Putting time, emotions, money and more into bringing an epic celebration together, only to have the rug potentially pulled out from beneath them.

But also know this: no matter what happens to your wedding day in the short-term, it's more important than ever to reflect on the things that are important to us as people, and that's our relationships. **The beautiful thing here is the very fact that you're planning a wedding means you've found a life partner that you can depend on during the toughest times.**

Focus on loving each other, keep communicating and know that when your wedding day does happen, it's going to be so much more special having gone through this challenge to get there. If there's anything we can take away from this pandemic, it's the importance of taking stock of our loved ones and looking out for our community. This means when you're smashing cake in your face at some point in the future and raising a glass of sparkling with those special people around you, there will be no better feeling.

The future

Don't stop planning your wedding. Life will go on post-Coronavirus and there are so many people in this industry more excited than ever to help you celebrate your love.

We know it's a nerve-wracking time for both couples and industry alike, but we will get through it together. This is a situation where we all need to work collectively to be as compassionate and supportive of each other's positions as possible.

If your couples are preparing to get married in the next several months or even weeks, our hearts are right there with you as you adjust to the rapidly changing requirements surrounding gatherings in Australia.

The important thing we want to say is that when their wedding does happen, there will be a new meaning to it. And we'd bet our bottom dollar that the dancefloor moves their guests will pull will be even more impressive.

WHO ARE OUR MEMBERS???

You may be surprised to know we now have over 100 members, and we actively promote our services to newly-registered celebrants, encouraging them to join and share the benefits.

One of the projects your Committee is working on is a monkey survey to find out a little more about our members. Things such as other special skills you may have, such as languages, special services you offer, checking that your contact details are correct, and finding out what would help you to undertake your role better in the future.

So you will hear more about this in the near future, and we hope you assist us by participating.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Many of us are still daunted by social media, and yet it remains a great way to promote our services. Celebrants Australia regularly places professionally produced articles on Facebook and we would ask you to “like” and “share” them. This ensures they go to all your own contacts, and further promotes the availability and skills of our members. It also profiles all our members, and anyone can scan through and see who might meet their needs.

All our members are also encouraged to re-view their own profile on the Celebrants Australia website, and ensure it includes your social media details, as well as an up-to-date summary of what you offer. If you would like to update your profile email:

info@celebrantsaustralia.com.au.

OPD CHANGES FOR 2022

On 15 October 2021 the AG's Department wrote to all celebrants advising of changes to OPD requirements for 2022. In case you missed it, the following is a summary:

- OPD will be reduced from a minimum of 5 hours, to consist of an annual compulsory activity or activities for a minimum of **1 to 2 hours**.
- All compulsory OPD activities will be delivered free of charge by the Attorney-General's Department, and will be available through the celebrant online portal (and other means for celebrants who cannot access the online portal, for example, by email).

There are no regulatory changes to the exemption provisions for OPD, and celebrants will be able to continue to apply for an exemption from OPD obligations in exceptional circumstances.

The department will provide further information and guidance to marriage celebrants about their 2022 OPD obligations when the list of OPD activities for 2022 is finalised. Please visit our website at <https://www.ag.gov.au/families-and-marriage/marriage/resources-marriage-celebrants/ongoing-professional-development-opd> for the latest information on OPD obligations for marriage celebrants.

CELEBRANTS' AUSTRALIA CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION



Due to a number of hiccups the CAI Committee has decided to reschedule the Members' Xmas Get-Together to **TUESDAY 7 DECEMBER.**

It will be a zoom meeting, same time, 7pm—8.30pm, with an Agenda that will prove to be interesting and fun.

Watch this space for further information.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

This is your opportunity to raise matters of special interest to you, things you're not sure about, maybe training sessions which you would like your association to facilitate. Or perhaps you've had a particularly great wedding lately which you'd like to share with others, or something out-of-the-ordinary happened.

Whatever. We would also appreciate any feedback you have on the Association, or The Can, or any other suggestions.

Email your letters to the editor at
armadale3143@gmail.com

RESOURCES FOR MARRIAGE CELEBRANTS

Don't forget there are regular updates to guidelines for celebrants on the AG's website, ag.gov.au.

Then simply click on "Families and Marriage" and then on "Marriage."

There is then a special section on "Resources for Marriage Celebrants, where you will find a wealth of information, and you are encouraged to check it regularly for updates.

COALITION OF CELEBRANT ASSOCIATIONS

Celebrants Australia is represented on this Coalition by Judy Brooks, our Vice President. The Coalition comprises members from all the celebrant organisations across the country. It meets quarterly, and also includes representatives from the Marriages Section of the AG's Department, so any matters of concern can be raised. Minutes of these meetings are available on the AG's website in the Resources section. The next meeting is 24 November.

SLACK

Our new communication portal, Replacing Samepage

Just in case you missed the email on 1 October 2021 regarding our new communication platform, Celebrants Australia has now moved to SLACK. If you missed it please check it out and set up your account and password. It is the easiest way to share information, ask questions, seek advice from others, load documents etc.

Your new Committee

Our AGM was held on 20 September 2021, and I am pleased to advise that your organization is in good hands, led by an enthusiastic team. The main office bearers remain the same, so there is stability, but there are three new committee members to assist with the workload. The new Committee is as follows:

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