

Next Member Function

The Christmas Party

CALENDAR

Member Meetings

XMAS Function (Vic)

30 Armadale St, Armadale
16th November 2pm

Did you go ?

Tell us about it please.

Committee Meetings

9th December 8pm

Upcoming...

What will the New Year
bring for you ?



In this issue

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Welcome to the Summer edition of the CAN, the newsletter for our members

Discover Celebrants Australia

Looking for inspiration, insights, or a
spark of celebration?

Visit our beautifully designed website:
www.celebrantsaustralia.com.au

From colourful visuals to engaging
articles, we're serving up fresh content
to keep your celebrant spirit glowing.

Members—don't forget to update your
photo and details so we can shine your
light even brighter.

Got questions? Join the conversation on
our Slack forum, where answers and
ideas flow freely.

Take a peek today—and let your
celebrant journey sparkle.

Also note that the annual OPD through
the AGD is now online for Celebrants to
complete before December but please
don't leave it too late! Complete it now.

Welcome

Our membership continues
to increase with new
members.

A warm welcome to:

Annemarie McDonnell
Boglarka Marffy
Rachael Symmons
Thomas Fleck
Alisha van Bruinessen
Haylee Collins
Joshua Blake
Freddie Povey
Neil Goldsmith

And a welcome back to
Will Pridmore

Funeral Celebrants

We encourage funeral celebrants to join Celebrants Australia.

We have many members who also perform funerals.

It also allows Funeral Celebrants to be included in our Professional Indemnity and Public Liability Insurance.

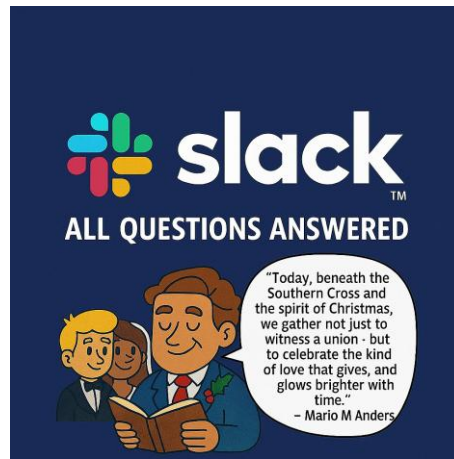
So tell all your funeral celebrant friends and colleagues about this magnificent offer.

Student Celebrants

We did not want student celebrants to miss out.

A student membership is half price (only \$50) and access the member forum is included.

Of course insurance will not apply and no voting rights but students will be offered upgrade to full membership upon registration.



Using Slack

Slack is more than just our messaging app, it's our Celebrants Australia digital lounge, help desk, and idea incubator all rolled into one. Whether you're troubleshooting a ceremony hiccup, sharing a creative ritual, or seeking advice on insurance or compliance, Slack connects you instantly with fellow members who've walked the same path. It's a space where questions get answered quickly, support flows freely, and no one has to reinvent the wheel alone.

By using Slack, you stay in the loop with real-time updates, contribute to lively discussions, and build relationships beyond the inbox. It's perfect for sharing resources, celebrating wins, and collaborating on projects that uplift our profession. So if you haven't jumped in yet—now's the time. Your voice, your insight, and your celebrant sparkle belong in the conversation!

Make sure you are part of this celebrant community. You have a choice of Slack APP or simply Slack in your browser.

Great to see questions from our newest members on the forum. Everyday, everyone learns something new!

Using AI

If you use AI-generated content, you are responsible for how it's applied, especially in professional, legal, or public contexts. That means ceremonies.

That's why it's important to:

- Review and verify any AI-generated material before publishing or acting on it.
- Cite sources when relevant, especially for factual claims or research.
- Consult legal professionals for advice when stakes are high.

If you're using AI in your celebrant work—say, drafting ceremony scripts, news-letters, or policy documents - AI can help make sure that it's polished and thoughtful. But for legal protection, it's always best to rely on human expertise.

Neither ChatGPT nor Microsoft Copilot offers legal indemnity or your defence in court.



Ever wondered what a marriage celebrant actually **does**?

From Trillian B – on Reddit (via Trudy)

At a friend's wedding, the officiant told the groom to "gaze in wondrous awe at her beauty"

Groom said, eyes welling with happy tears: "very beautiful"

Officiant: "Just think, she'll only get more and more lovely as you grow together and your bond gets stronger"

Everybody: ****crying****

Officiant: "Bride, have a look at groom"

Bride: "So handsome" ***eyes welling***

Officiant: "Seriously, take a good look now, because this is as good as it's ever gonna get."

Dude had the entire place roaring. It was amazing. (NB: the groom has a wonderful sense of humour, and did not take the slightest offense. He shrugged and agreed.)

Daughter's text to Dad:

Daddy, I'm coming home to get married soon, so get your checkbook ready. LOL! As you know, I'm in Australia and he's in the US. We met on a dating site, became friends on Facebook, and had long chats on Whatsapp. He proposed to me on Skype and now we've had a 2 month relationship through Viber. Dad, I need your blessing, good wishes, and a really big wedding. Lots of love, Lilly.

Dad's reply:

My dear Lilly, Like Wow! Really? Cool! Whatever... I suggest you two get married on Twitter, have fun on Tango, register for your stuff on Amazon, and pay for it all through Paypal. And when you get fed up with this new husband, sell him on Ebay. Lots of love, Dad.

Are you missing out on potential wedding leads ?

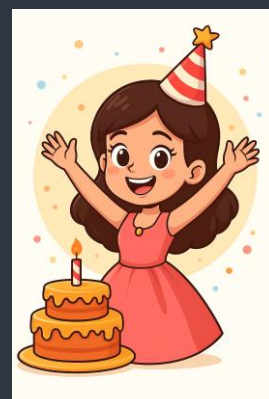
Please check your own entry on the CA website and make sure your details are up to date.

Is your region ok ?
Is your email correct ?
Is your mobile number current?

Do you have a recent image that shows what you really look like?

If you click on your image is the celebrant information still relevant?

- Couples want to see what you look like
- Images show your audience that you are staying relevant
- It keeps you memorable in the minds of your audience
- It's boring to use the same images over and over again
- You don't want to shock people when they meet you





Nine Things You Should Never Include in Your Wedding Vows

When it comes to vow writing, many couples have a handle on what they should *include* but they are not fully aware of what to *exclude*.

Here's my list of the top nine 'do not's' when it comes to writing your vows.

#1: Do Not Include Gross Words...No Matter the Context

This may sound obvious, but I've heard vows that included such words as cockroach, poop, and fart. (Thankfully not all three of these words were found in one set of vows). You two may embrace potty-humour at home but save those jokes for your wedding day letter and not your vows.

Even if you're promising to always point out when they have boogers in their nose, leave it out of your vows. Gross words, no matter how funny they can be, take us and the romance out of the moment.

The vows should include more timeliness material and shouldn't make your guests cringe.

#2: Do Not Mention Exes

Maybe you two met through an ex or perhaps you learned a lot about how to grow into a better partner because of your past relationship. Still, avoid this sort of backstory in your vows.

While the intention might make sense, you won't want past loves mentioned in the words that are meant to frame and ground your marriage.

#3: Do Not Joke Too Much

When we're nervous, we often rely on humour to cope or make us more comfortable. While it's fine to include some playful humour within your vows, keep it to a minimum. When it comes to writing funny wedding vows, I recommend the 80/20 rule. 80% of your vows should be sweet, serious, and sentimental while 20% can be more humorous.

Here are a few examples of humorous promises you may wish to include:

I promise to root for Michigan State with you but only when Michigan isn't playing.

I promise to fight fair, even though I always believe I'm right.

I promise to watch The Bachelor with you every week and to do so without rolling my eyes.

#4: Do Not Highlight Your Partner's Weaknesses or Vulnerabilities

You two may engage in friendly banter where you make fun of each other but this is hard to successfully do in vows.

Writing one playful promise about how you'll never root for your partner's favourite sports team because they're your rival team is cute. However, pointing out how your partner is a terrible cook or driver may evoke more awkwardness than smiles.

Know what your partner can laugh at and what they're more sensitive to and use this information to drive your decisions around questionable content.

#5: Do Not Talk About Sex

Despite what the Salt-N-Pepa have to say, do not talk about sex within your vows. These sorts of intimate details are better reserved for a wedding day letter or card that your partner will read in private. Great Aunt Silvia doesn't want to hear about your steamy sex promises to each other.

However, there are ways to include intimacy in your vows.

Examples:

I promise to kiss you goodnight every night before bed.

I promise to rely on our intimacy as a way to stay close and connected.

I promise to remember that "touch" is your love language.

#6: Do Not Mention Your Divorce

While past relationships can deliver silver linings like your new and happy marriage, you do not need to explicitly mention your divorce or previous marriage within your vows. Instead, you can capture the meaning behind what that past marriage means in the context of your new marriage.

Here are a few examples:

I've never experienced a relationship like ours, a love like this, and a partner like you.

The days leading to this moment have been challenging at times but every tear that has fallen and hardship I endured was worth it because it led me to you.

I had doubts that I'd ever experience a love like ours but then I met you and the idea of a partnership based on trust, faithfulness, and true love became real for me.

#7: Do Not Include Random Quotes

Use quotes sparingly in your vows, if at all, and only use quotes that have significant meaning to your relationship.

For example, if you two do not watch Grey's Anatomy together, do not include a Meredith Grey quote just because you like the meaning of it.

Instead, find a way to express this meaning in your own words. After all, you are writing custom vows. That means your partner gets to hear from you rather than a fictional character.

#8: Do Not Include Detailed Stories

Cute and short anecdotes are fine within vows, especially when these details are used to describe a larger point like what you admire about your fiancé or your relationship.

However, avoid long stories within your vows.

Detailing out all the stops you made during your 6-state road trip might be fun to read and reminisce about but it's not suitable for your vows.

Instead, trim down this idea to a single sentence such as, "I've enjoyed every trip we've taken together and I know that this next chapter will be our greatest adventure yet."

#9: Do Not Write in a Vacuum

An outside perspective is a necessary way of double-checking that you haven't included any questionable ideas. Ask your best man or maid of honour to read your vows before you finalize them.

Source: <https://www.weddingwords.us/blog/9-things-you-should-never-include-in-your-wedding-vows>



A Gentle Goodbye Denied

The Grief Impact of Direct Cremation Without Ceremony — and the Value of Farewells

The Rise of No-Service Cremation

Over the past decade, the Australian funeral industry has seen the rapid growth of no-service, direct cremation models (NSDC). Their marketing often appeals to minimalism, budget-consciousness, and a desire to “not make a fuss” — especially among older Australians.

While affordability and choice are critical components of modern death care, this shift raises urgent questions about what may be lost — psychologically, socially, and spiritually — when we remove communal rituals of farewell.

Why Ritual Matters: Grief, Meaning-Making and Mourning

Grief, as clinical psychologist William Worden outlines, involves a series of psychological tasks, including accepting the reality of the loss, processing the pain, and adjusting to a world without the deceased.

Ritual — whether secular or religious, formal or improvised — helps facilitate these processes.

Funeral ceremonies offer structure and symbols that help mourners begin to integrate the reality of death, publicly acknowledge loss, and initiate healing. Multiple studies confirm that participating in a meaningful farewell — whether traditional or bespoke — improves bereavement outcomes.

When we skip the ceremony altogether, we may delay or inhibit these healing processes.

What Happens When We Don't Gather?

No-service direct cremation may feel like a practical solution, but it risks fostering disenfranchised grief — the kind of grief that goes unacknowledged by society or lacks appropriate outlets.

Funeral celebrants often hear things like:

“Mum didn’t want a fuss, so we just had her cremated and that was that. But something feels... unfinished.”

This “unfinished” feeling has psychological roots, people need opportunities to express grief socially in order to process it internally. When a death is reduced to a phone call and an ashes collection, the absence of ceremony can compound feelings of isolation and confusion — especially for children and other vulnerable mourners.

Additionally, the pressure to “move on” quickly after an NSDC may unintentionally silence grief, sending the message that mourning is self-indulgent or unnecessary. This not only devalues the life lost but also deprives the bereaved of the time and tools to adapt.

It is essential to acknowledge that for many families, NSDC is a financial necessity. The average cost of a funeral in Australia sits between \$4,000 and \$15,000, depending on inclusions. Rising funeral poverty — especially in regional and low-income communities — is a real and growing issue.

But choosing affordability does not have to mean forgoing meaning.

Family-led or home-based funerals can offer a powerful, low-cost alternative. By creating ceremony outside of the traditional funeral industry — in a home, a garden, a community hall — families can reclaim ritual, honour the dead in a way that feels personal, and begin to grieve in the presence of others. These ceremonies can occur days, weeks, or even months after the cremation has taken place.

Importantly, research suggests that involvement in end-of-life care and funeral planning strengthens meaning-making for survivors. When families take an active role — from decorating a coffin to writing a eulogy to lighting candles together — they are not only honouring the person who died, they are also supporting their own healing.

Conclusion: A Better Way Forward

Direct cremation without ceremony may be simple, but simplicity is not always healing. As our society continues to change how we die and how we mourn, we must be careful not to discard the tools that help us make sense of loss.

Ritual is not about tradition for tradition's sake. It is about transformation — for those who remain.

Family-led farewells, supported by celebrants, communities, or even done entirely DIY, are a gentle, flexible, and often affordable way to restore meaning and connection after a death.

**Let us not forget grief does not end at cremation.
But it can begin to heal through ceremony.**

Article in the AFHA email newsletter by Karen Brady



A journey of Memories – Scattering my ashes in 3 cherished places – V Brooks

Before my husband Viv passed away, we had discussed what he would like as the final chapter of his life. He wanted the comfort in the idea of his ashes being scattered in 3 places that held profound significance to him.

Where laughter echoed, love blossomed and dreams took flight.

What 3 locations did he choose?

1. The MCG (Melbourne Cricket Ground)
2. His favourite fishing spot – Loch Sport
3. Sunrise at Sanur Beach in Bali – where we spent our honeymoon

The first 2 had been carried out, even though I had to smuggle a small amount of ashes into the MCG, it was OK as I was working there as event staff and Viv was an avid Tigers Supporter.

So what about taking his ashes to Bali?

I thought it would be easy as I could just put some in a Ziplock bag and pop them into my carry on.

No, rules have changed and you must now have a letter from the crematorium, copy of death certificate and the correct sealed container.

So it was fitting that I was going to Bali in May this year to celebrate a special birthday on 23/5 and I thought, yes – I need to honour Viv's wishes, as 25/5 would have been our 40th wedding anniversary.

I obtained the scattering container from the FD, got the letter from Springvale Crematorium and had a copy of his death certificate, all good.

Going through customs at Tullamarine Airport, my carry on bag was taken aside after going through Xray and directed to a customs official.

"Did you pack your bag yourself today Madam?" he asked.

My reply "Yes"

"There seems to be organic materials inside, can you open your bag"

No problems as I knew I had all the right criteria.

The customs officer checked everything, gave me the thumbs up and said "Enjoy your trip and I hope your husband behaves himself"

By this time, my daughters, who had gone through before me, were thinking – Mum's going to be on Border Force!

On the morning of 25th May 2025 at dawn, I conducted a small ceremony and scattered Viv's ashes into the water just as the sun came up, a testament to life he lived and the connection we cherished.



Bringing your loved one's ashes on a Virgin Australia flight:

You can bring cremated ashes with you on Virgin Australia flights, either in your carry-on or checked baggage. However, there are some guidelines to follow:

- The ashes must be in a sealed container, like a funeral urn, to prevent any accidental spills.
- The container must be securely packaged to protect it from breakage during shipping.

If you want to carry the urn in the cabin as carry-on baggage, it must meet the following conditions:

- The ashes must be in a sealed container (funeral urn) that won't accidentally spill.
- You need to have a letter from a funeral director or crematorium confirming that the contents are human remains.
- The urn must go through security screening along with you.
- If the urn is stored inside another bag, the outer bag will need to be opened to see the actual container holding the ashes.
- The urn, along with the carry-on bag it's in, must comply with the size and weight limits for carry-on baggage.
- Both the bag and the urn should remain closed during the flight.



Reference: 722520

Date: 27th March 2025

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

On the 14th March 2008 the late Vivian Leslie Brooks was cremated at Springvale Botanical Cemetery.

The cremated remains were placed in a plastic container and we verify that at the time they were collected from this office the container held only the cremated remains of the late Vivian Leslie Brooks.

Yours sincerely

Nicky Taylor
Customer Experience Manager
Springvale Botanical Cemetery

VICTORIA BIRTHS, DEATHS AND MARRIAGES REGISTRATION ACT 1996 DEATH CERTIFICATE																			
1 DECEASED	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Surname Given Name(s)</td> <td>BROOKS Vivian Leslie</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Date of Death</td> <td>06 March 2008</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Place of Death</td> <td>Epworth Hospital, Richmond</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sex and Age</td> <td>Male 64 years</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Place of Birth</td> <td>Carlton, Victoria</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Period of Residence in Australia</td> <td>Life</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Place of Residence</td> <td>42 Kingston Road Surry Hills</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Usual Occupation</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Marital Status</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	Surname Given Name(s)	BROOKS Vivian Leslie	Date of Death	06 March 2008	Place of Death	Epworth Hospital, Richmond	Sex and Age	Male 64 years	Place of Birth	Carlton, Victoria	Period of Residence in Australia	Life	Place of Residence	42 Kingston Road Surry Hills	Usual Occupation		Marital Status	
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Thanks to Judy Brooks for this article.

School Holiday Safety: Keeping Families and Kids Safe Online

School holidays change the rhythm of family life. Kids swap classrooms for gaming, scrolling, and streaming. Whilst parents juggle extra free time while worrying about what their children are doing online.

Cybercriminals know this too and see the holidays as an opportunity to target younger users who are more active and less supervised.



Why extra care is needed during school holidays

When routines shift, kids spend more time online. Games, social apps, and streaming platforms keep them entertained, but also expose them to more risks. Without the structure of school hours, children are more likely to click on new links or accept requests without thinking twice.

Scammers and cybercriminals are well aware of this. They deliberately target children and teens during school holidays, using tactics designed to grab attention fast, from free offers to fake friendships.

Red flags to watch out for

Not every risk looks obvious. Many scams are designed to feel like harmless fun or everyday online interactions. Here are the most common red flags parents and kids should keep in mind:

Too-good-to-be-true offers

Free skins, bonus levels, or giveaways that pop up in games and apps can be bait. They often ask for clicks, downloads, or even credit card details.

Fake friend requests

Cybercriminals pose as classmates, teammates, or fellow gamers. Once accepted, they can send dodgy links, trick kids into sharing personal info, or even bully and scam them.

Suspicious downloads and links

Pop-ups offering “faster play,” “unlock codes,” or “watch for free” can install malware in a single click. These hidden downloads can steal data, hijack accounts, or slow down devices.

Pressure tactics

Messages that say, “act now,” “limited time,” or “you’ll miss out” are classic scam signals. The urgency pushes kids to click before they think.

How to safeguard your family

Protective steps don’t need to be complicated. Focus on a mix of boundaries, conversations, and tools:

Set family rules

Device-free times at dinner, no screens before bed, and keeping devices in shared spaces.

Talk before you click

Encourage kids to pause and check with you if something looks unusual.

Protect privacy and money

Turn off auto-pay, set spending limits, and explain why not all online offers are safe.

Use digital protection

Update devices regularly, install reliable antivirus, and activate parental controls.

Model good behaviour

Kids copy adults — so show them how to balance online and offline time safely. Use scam software such as ScamCheck to get complete protection against identity theft, scams, and protect your privacy.

Information courtesy of Trend Micro

Welcome to our special series, this time on remote access scams

We are sharing tools and tips to stop a scammer getting access to your device, your information and your money.

Four ways to stop the scammer in their tracks

Scammers often get creative with their tricks and techniques, and not all remote access scams are going to follow the same script. However, there are some steps you can take to stop even the craftiest communicators:

Stop if it's unsolicited: Has someone asked for access to your device out of the blue? It's simple: stop there.

Pause if you see a pop-up: Did you receive an unexpected notification on your device, pressuring you to download software? When in doubt, don't download.

Don't share your details: Never give your personal or banking details away over the phone if you didn't make the call. Even then, make sure it's to a legitimate service provider or store you know and trust.

Check to protect: Independently verify any calls or notifications you've received about your device and its security, using professionals and contact information you trust and have sourced yourself.

Worried you've experienced a remote access scam?

It's important to know you're not alone. Unfortunately, scams are common in Australia – many people experience them each year. If you think you've experienced a remote access scam, it's important to follow these steps.

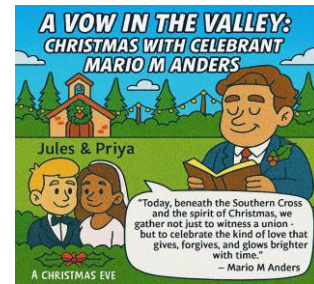
- Contact your bank or financial institution immediately.
- Seek help and support from your service provider, or a qualified and trusted technician, who you trust and have independently verified.
- Report the scam – you may want to contact the police, and you can also report it to ScamWatch to help protect other Australians.
- Take steps to recover and protect your identity. Resources are available via ScamWatch to help you get started.

Security tip

Avoid saving passwords to your browser. It might be convenient, but it also makes it easier for someone with access to your device to log into your accounts, and can be a target for malicious software.

compiled by Mario M Anders

A Vow in the Valley



It was Christmas Eve in the hinterlands of Byron Bay, and Mario M Anders - Celebrant and Master of Ceremonies. was preparing for a wedding unlike any other.

The couple, Jules and Priya, had chosen the date not just for its sparkle, but for its symbolism: a celebration of love, generosity, and new beginnings. They'd met at a carols-by-candlelight event three years earlier, where Jules had spilled mulled wine on Priya's hymn sheet and offered a sheepish smile that turned into a lifelong promise.

Mario arrived early at the venue—a rustic chapel nestled between macadamia groves and misty hills. He wore a tailored navy jacket with a sprig of holly pinned to the lapel, and carried his leather-bound script, freshly edited with a touch of poetic flair and a dash of humour. The altar was framed with native blooms and fairy lights, and the pews were filled with guests in linen, sequins, and Santa hats.

As the ceremony began, Mario stood tall, his voice warm and resonant:

"Today, beneath the Southern Cross and the spirit of Christmas, we gather not just to witness a union—but to celebrate the kind of love that gives, forgives, and glows brighter with time."

He guided the couple through their vows with grace and wit, pausing for laughter when Jules accidentally said "I do" before the question was asked. The crowd chuckled, and Mario winked: "Eager hearts are the best kind."

After the kiss and the applause, Mario joined the guests for pavlova and peppermint punch under the stars. A choir of kids sang "O Holy Night," and someone handed him a gingerbread cookie shaped like a celebrant holding a microphone.

As the night wore on, Mario reflected on the year—its challenges, triumphs, and quiet moments of connection. This wedding, wrapped in candlelight and community, was a reminder of why he did what he did: to honour love, in all its forms, and to make each ceremony a story worth telling.

The above passage was written by AI, as was the cartoon, drawn by AI.

It is so amazing what can be done but this is scratching the surface only.

I asked AI to design a holiday for me, gave parameters and I received a full itinerary of places of interest. And I leave mid January.

AI is a powerful tool that can be used across countless fields—from creative storytelling and medical diagnostics to financial planning and community engagement—but always remember to cite any references when using AI-generated content.

Interesting Facts on Australian marriages

The primary source for this data is the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), which publishes annual statistics on marriages and divorces.



In 2024, Australia recorded 120,844 marriages

This represents a 2% increase from 2023 but still lower than the post-pandemic peak in 2022. The marriage rate of 5.5 per 1,000 people remained consistent with 2023 and was comparable to the pre-pandemic rate of 2019. The median age for males was 32.8 years, and for females, it was 31.2 years.

Key Statistics (2024)

- **Total Marriages:** 120,844
- **Marriage Rate:** 5.5 per 1,000 people
- **Median Age at Marriage:** 32.8 years for males and 31.2 years for females
- **Same-Sex/Gender-Diverse Marriages:** 4,746 (a 4.1% increase from 2023)

Trends & Context

- **Post-Pandemic Rebound and Dip:**

The 2022 record of 127,161 marriages reflected pent-up demand after pandemic restrictions were lifted. The 2023 and 2024 figures show a continuation of the long-term downward trend, returning to pre-COVID-19 levels.

- **Median Age:**

The median age at marriage has been steadily increasing, with 2024 showing slightly younger ages compared to the record high years of 2022 and 2023, but still significantly higher than pre-pandemic averages.

- **Same-Sex Marriages:**

Marriages for couples of the same or non-binary gender increased in 2024 but were still lower than the numbers recorded in the initial years after same-sex marriage legislation was introduced in 2017.

Dad Joke



Why do people say "surname" instead of "last name"?

Why do people say "surname" instead of "last name"?

Because “surname” - or sometimes “family name” - is the correct term for it.

To us here in the UK the term “last name” just sounds like something someone would say when they are not grown up enough to remember educated words like “surname”.

More importantly, the surname is not always the last name. In Chinese names, for example, the surname is given first followed by the given names. The same is true of Hungarian names. In Spanish names, the last name is not necessarily - or indeed usually - the surname the person goes by. For example, Juan García Jiménez would usually be routinely referred to as “Juan García” and not “Juan Jiménez”. In many Eastern European countries, people often give their surname first, followed by their given name.

When I worked at a major UK airport, arriving foreign nationals had to complete a landing card which asked for “surname” (this was later changed to “family name” for the benefit of a small number of Americans who couldn’t handle basic English terms) and forenames, which is standard English everywhere - or nearly everywhere - for given or first names. I was approached more than once during my 40 year career with puzzled looking passengers - most, but not all of them, Americans - saying “this form asks for forenames - but I only have two names...”

[Graham Howe](#) Worked at UK Border Agency

How Celebrants Can Use Social Media to Grow Their Business and Connect Authentically

In a world where couples and families turn to social media to find inspiration, recommendations, and reassurance, celebrants have an incredible opportunity to connect, educate, and inspire through their online presence.

Whether you officiate weddings, funerals, or both, social media is more than a marketing tool — it's a storytelling platform. It allows you to share your voice, values, and energy long before someone reaches out to book you. And in a profession built on trust and personal connection, that's powerful.

I would like to explore how you, as celebrants, can use social media with heart, authenticity, and strategy to grow their business and strengthen their reputation.

Start With Your "Why"

Before you post a single photo or caption, ask yourself *why* you want to use social media. Are you looking to attract more bookings, build your professional reputation, or simply share your love for the work you do? Having a clear purpose will guide everything you create and help your audience connect with your message. For wedding celebrants, your "why" might be about helping couples craft meaningful, personal ceremonies that reflect who they truly are. For funeral celebrants, it might be about honouring life, offering comfort, and helping families celebrate the stories of those they love.

Example post:

"Every ceremony is a reminder that love and connection come in many forms —

whether it's a wedding filled with laughter or a memorial that brings people together to share beautiful memories. It's a privilege to tell these stories."

Your authenticity is your superpower. When people feel your sincerity, they remember you.

2. Choose the Right Platforms for You

You don't need to be on every social media platform — you just need to be where your *ideal clients* are.



Instagram is perfect for visuals — photos of ceremonies, behind-the-scenes moments, and short videos where you speak directly to your audience.



Facebook is still the heart of many local communities. It's great for building connection, sharing reviews, and posting stories or reflections.



TikTok offers a space for creative, short-form video — whether that's a touching moment from a ceremony or a light-hearted take on celebrant life.



LinkedIn is ideal for professional networking — connecting with venues, photographers, funeral directors, and other industry partners.

I suggest to start with one or two platforms and post regularly rather than spreading yourself too thin. Quality and consistency matter more than quantity.

3. Show Up Authentically

As a celebrant, *you* are your brand. People aren't just booking your services — they're booking you as a person.

Show your personality, voice, and values in everything you post. Share what inspires you, what makes you smile, and even the little behind-the-scenes details that make your work special.

That might mean a photo of you setting up at a ceremony, a quote that resonates with your philosophy on love or life, or a reflection after a moving service.

Example post:

“There’s always a moment in every ceremony — a look, a pause, a tear — that reminds me why I love this work. It’s in those quiet moments that you feel the real magic of human connection.”

The more genuine you are, the more people will feel like they already know you — and that’s exactly how trust begins.

4. Tell Stories, Don’t Just Advertise

Social media isn’t about selling — it’s about storytelling. Every ceremony you lead is filled with emotion, meaning, and humanity. Share that (always with permission and respect).

Instead of saying “Book me for your ceremony,” try something like:

“Last weekend’s ceremony reminded me how beautiful it is to see two families become one. The laughter, the nerves, the tears — it’s such a joy to witness love in all its forms.”

For funerals, storytelling can be just as powerful:

“Every life tells a story. Today we celebrated a man who loved his garden, his grandchildren, and Saturday afternoons at the footy. What a legacy of love.”

These stories draw people in and help them imagine what their own experience with you might feel like.

5. Build Connection Through Engagement

Social media isn’t a one-way conversation — it’s about community. Respond to comments, reply to messages, and thank people for their kind words.


Engage with other celebrants, wedding vendors, and funeral professionals too.


A supportive comment or share can strengthen professional relationships and lead to future referrals.

Building relationships online mirrors the connection you create in ceremonies — it’s about empathy, kindness, and genuine interaction. For example, through Facebook and Instagram I ensure I follow and comment on vendors I have worked with. Be it venues, photographers, stylists, MCs etc.

6. Use Visuals That Reflect Your Energy

A picture really is worth a thousand words. Invest in good-quality photos or videos that capture the feeling of your ceremonies — the laughter, the tears, the joy, the warmth.

If you don’t have professional images yet, use your phone to record short clips or reflections. Apps like **Canva** make it easy to create quote posts, graphics, and  slideshows that look polished and on-brand. The other app I use extensively is Mojo this is an app that allows me to create reels.

There are already established templates with music  attached. All I have to do is select which template will meet my needs. Sometimes I use my own music as I believe the music adds a great deal to the story I wish to share.

Remember: your visuals should reflect your personality — soft and heartfelt, vibrant and joyful, or calm and grounded.

7. Plan, Reflect, and Grow

You don't need to post every day, but you do need a plan. Create a simple schedule: perhaps one post a week that shares a reflection, a photo, or a story. Check your platform insights every month to see what's resonating. Are people engaging more with personal reflections or ceremony snippets? Adjust your content accordingly.

Social media success isn't about overnight growth — it's about consistent, meaningful presence. Over time, those small, heartfelt posts build trust and recognition.

Final Thoughts

As celebrants, we're privileged to stand with people in life's most profound moments — beginnings, endings, and everything in between. Social media allows us to extend that connection beyond the ceremony, to reach hearts and share the deeper meaning behind what we do.

When you show up authentically online, you don't just promote your business — you share your humanity. And that's what people remember most.

So, start posting with purpose, speak from the heart, and let your love for your work shine. The right couples and families will feel that — and when they do, they'll know you're the celebrant for them.

Thanks to Frank Servello for this article

I had a couple that barracked for different football sides and this is what they said

*"I promise to love you as fiercely as we love our AFL teams.
I vow to cheer for them, even when they are playing against each other.
I'll make sure never to steal the last chip or pie from you at the game."*

Cheers, Judy Brooks

Dictionary

Fun [fuhn] *noun*: The latest buzzword

Young [yuhng] *adjective*: Translated Gen Y speak

Yesterday [yes-ter-day] *noun*: Alternatives to tired clichés

Fun



Knobstacle (noun)

A person who consistently gets in the way, either through incompetence, arrogance or unhelpful behaviour and makes situations more difficult than they are.

"The project was going well until we encountered a knobstacle."

Young



IYKYN (acronym)

"If You Know, You Know" used when referring to an inside joke or something only a specific group would understand.

Yesterday



Bootstraps (noun)

The term bootstrap originates from the impossible phrase to pull oneself up by one's bootstraps, appeared firstly in 1834 to describe a self-evident impossibility.

The meaning bootstrap evolved from this impossible feat to achieving something out of nothing, a company growing on its own resources or a computer booting itself up from basic hardware to a functional state.

From Elizabeth and her team at [Heusler Public Relations](#)

Standing Out in a Crowded Celebrant Market by Frank Servello

How to shine with authenticity, purpose, and presence in today's celebrant world

It's no secret that the celebrant world is growing fast. Every week, new celebrants join the industry—each with a passion for love, storytelling, and connection.

It's wonderful to see, but it also means one thing: **the market is more crowded than ever.**

So, how do you make sure *your* name, voice, and work stand out in the noise? Not by trying to be louder, or fancier, or flashier—but by being **clearer, more consistent, and deeply authentic.**

Here's how you can truly shine in your own unique way.

1. Know What Makes You Different

Before you can stand out, you need to *know* what makes you stand apart.

Think back to the feedback you've received from couples or families. Do they describe you as calming? Warm? Funny? Grounded? Passionate?

Those words are gold—they reveal what people *feel* when they're around you. That energy is your personal brand.

Tip: Write down three words that describe how you make people feel. Use those words everywhere—from your website to your social posts—and you'll naturally attract people who connect with your energy

2. Build a Clear, Consistent Style

A recognisable style builds trust.

It's not just about colours or logos—it's about the *feeling* your brand creates. From your tone of voice to the imagery you share, make sure everything reflects your essence

- Are you elegant and poetic?
- Relaxed and conversational?
- Warm and heartfelt?

When your tone, visuals, and language align, your audience instantly recognises you.

3. Show, Don't Just Tell

Instead of saying, "I create personal, meaningful ceremonies," **show it.**

Share real, heartfelt moments (with permission)

- The laugh during vows.
- The quiet tears during a tribute.
- The moment two people realise, *this is it.*

People connect with emotion—and those genuine moments speak louder than any marketing line ever could.

Include testimonials or short ceremony stories to let others *feel* the impact of your work.

4. Be Visible and Engaged

Standing out doesn't just happen online—it happens through *connection*.

- Attend expos and local wedding fairs.
- Build genuine relationships with photographers, florists, and venues.
- Engage with others on social media—share tips, comment thoughtfully, and celebrate your peers.

When people see you as generous, approachable, and professional, they'll think of you first when a ceremony opportunity arises.

5. Keep Evolving

The best celebrants never stop learning.

The couples and families we serve are constantly changing—so it's important to stay fresh, creative, and informed. Attend workshops, refine your storytelling, explore cultural rituals, and expand your skills.

Growth not only improves your craft—it keeps your passion alive.

6. Lead With Purpose

At the heart of every great celebrant is **purpose**.

It's the reason you do what you do—to celebrate love, honour lives, and help people express emotion through ceremony.

When you stay connected to that purpose, your authenticity shines through naturally. You don't need to compete. You simply *connect*.

Because people don't just choose a celebrant for what they *do*—they choose them for how they *make them feel*.

Final Thoughts

Standing out isn't about being different just for the sake of it. It's about being *you*—unapologetically, consistently, and wholeheartedly.

When your purpose, personality, and professionalism align, your presence becomes unforgettable. The right couples and families will find you, because your authenticity will speak directly to their hearts.

Quote to Remember:

“In a world full of voices, there's only one that sounds exactly like yours.”

**I'M CONFUSED HOW A CEMETERY
CAN RAISE ITS FUNERAL PRICES
AND BLAME IT ON THE COST OF
LIVING!**



And finally.....

