

From the Chair

Judy Brooks writes her first piece for The CAN

Agapazo, Benvenuto, Boas-Vindas, Mottakelse, Accueil, Empfang, Hawddamor, Het Welkom, G'Day

No matter which country you come from and how you say it, it all means the same – WELCOME, and welcome to our first instalment of the CAN for 2007.

The importance of how we welcome the guests and introduce the bridal party in our ceremonies creates the anticipation of the celebration ahead. In the wedding ceremony we are celebrating the relationship of the couple.

So, think about planning your wedding with an introduction that is the couple's own story, and every story is unique. Sadly, almost all of the clergy and many Celebrants don't persevere with this and they go straight to a 'set' ceremony where the only thing that changes are the names of the couple.

Write up a page with the groom's name on one side and the bride's on the other. Ask them about where they met? was it love at first sight?, what is the uniqueness of the couple?, do they have shared passion for something?, what are their individual strengths that will add to a successful partnership. Build up this list so the process should give you enough information to write their story, and to also establish their sensitivities, because it also tells you what NOT to write about, like a parental marriage split etc.

Everyone loves to be told they are special, and they are. Some of the people who you may deal with have never had anyone say anything nice about them, particularly in public. So we set up the couple in their family and the guest's eyes as being the most perfect partnership on the planet, at least on their wedding day.

One of tricks of the personalised ceremony is to ask the family and friends for some applause at the end of the introduction, it breaks down the nervousness, relaxes everyone, and yet adds to the communication process.

In Australia, our market probably places at least equal emphasis on our ability to be entertaining for family & friends, than to be a skilful Celebrant. The idea is to be both. Because our on-going volume relies on referral, the entertaining the ceremony, the more people will remember your name, the more business you may get.

This brings me to write about OPD. I had the 'pleasure' or 'misfortune' to attend one of the OPD sessions run by another association, where I found that the majority of 'older serving' celebrants stated, "that all this OPD was a waste of time" and really didn't participate, were just there to get their certificate. I find this very disturbing, as how can one improve if you just do the same thing over and over and are not prepared to move with the times.

In March, the Attorney General's dept invited associations and OPD trainers to a workshop held in Canberra, on the future viability of the OPD program. We, Celebrants Aust, were unable to have a representative there, but we participated in sending back comments. The AG's dept is looking at streamlining the amount and content of the courses being offered (making sure that they will enhance the marriage celebrant's knowledge and professionalism) and there was a suggestion that courses should be run by RTO's, or TAFE colleges, so there is some sort of assessment process attached. I will keep everyone up-to-date when I hear back from the dept.

On a personal note, being a 'newly registered' celebrant, I have had the pleasure of officiating at 3 marriages so far, each uniquely different in content, culture and venue. Having been trained correctly by AIET and the value of networking within our group, I appreciate that there is more to being a celebrant than just performing the ceremony, thankyou everyone for your assistance.

I look forward to working with our committee throughout 2007 to make our association the one that 'celebrants want to join'.

Judy Brooks
Chairperson 2007
Celebrants Australia Inc



Our CA Committee this year:

Chairperson – Judy Brooks

Vice Chairperson – Gareth Wilding-Forbes

Secretary – Christine Haddrick

Treasurer – Stan Newman

Committee members: Lea Waszkinel, Spencer Flint, Liz Agius-Wiles, Bess Kyriakidis, Peter Hooper, Lesley Birks and Sherinda Shea.

SubCommittees:

Ongoing Professional Development – Sherinda Shea

Marketing - Bess, Peter Lesley

Membership – Liz, Stan

Editorial – Liz, Gareth, Stan

What's goin' on?

A lot happening in **OPD** with changes imminent in the compulsory training requirements for all registered civil celebrants. Sherinda has been busy keeping us up to date with developments, and working on a proposal to the AG for us to offer our own 1 hr activity. We'll keep you informed on this as it develops. We could have our first session in June which will be offered free of charge to members. (More on page 15)

We now have our own **Display Board** for members to use when participating in Bridal Fairs etc. (See Lesley's article Page 13).

We also still have our Celebrants Australia Banner if you need it. Judy Brooks is looking after them.

We are about to update our **Website**. We have had it up and running for almost a year and we need to update much of it. We have also recently had it assessed by an IT expert and plan to implement a few changes. You are welcome to contribute your original compositions and photos, and suggestions for improvement are always welcome. (More on p.16)

This Newsletter '**The CAN**' is emailed to all members. It seemed natural to include it on our website. We've been advised this is not such a good idea. It should be removed, or kept in a pass-word protected area for members only. We'll act on this shortly, but you will still receive it as an email.

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**2006 Chairperson
Spencer Flint**
had a **few** words to
say at our AGM.....

Welcome to everyone this evening and Thank you for attending our AGM and supporting our Christmas Social Function.

I would like to give a very special welcome to Joe Aguis who has joined us from the United States.

I would also like to extend a special welcome to our new members, who have joined us recently.

This year Celebrants Australia has been on the move.

This year Celebrants Australia has come of age.

This year Celebrants Australia has reached beyond itself and become an identity within a growing industry in Australia.

This growth that we have experienced is not just in numbers within our Association, it has been in our personal experiences, our function as an Association and in the growth of deep and trusting relationships. This growth is the result of the efforts of each and everyone of you. Each member using their talents, giftings and abilities, as individuals, collectively joining together, to achieve a common purpose and goal.

An Association is people – it should never become an Institution.

One of the discussions raised this year in our meetings was “Why have an Association”.

Personally, I am not a supporter of Trade Unions. In 1989, I experienced the destruction of my pilot career by a union that had a political agenda and was motivated by greed. Not only did it have a destructive impact on Airline Pilot’s careers and other Airline workers, it destroyed marriages and families and it crippled so many people’s businesses throughout Australia. They lost their livelihoods, their businesses and their homes. “The innocent collateral”.

However, I do believe very strongly in a collective voice within any Industry, to protect, maintain professional standards and give guidance from collective experience.

Over the past twelve months, Celebrants Australia has grown to be in a position to be a significant voice, in the ongoing development of the Civil Marriage Celebrants Industry. Just as we have experienced exceptional growth, so the Industry has grown exponentially.

In 2008, disciplined guidelines will need to be in place to achieve an Industry that is professional and one that we will be proud to belong to.

We have recently had this opportunity served to us on a platter by the Attorney General's Department. We should embrace this opportunity and use it for the common good of all our members and for the future direction of Civil Marriage Celebrants in Australia.

I would now like to extend a very special thank you, to all the Executive Members, who have worked so hard and devoted so many hours, to develop their areas of responsibility within the Association.

Rob for Professional Development

Bess for Marketing

Judy for Membership and Vice Chairperson

Liz for Editorial of our great Magazine

Christie for arranging our social functions

Stan for his role as Treasurer

Gareth for his wonderful professional experience and talents in our radio ads

Especially, I would like to thank Liz our retiring Secretary for her generosity, her sacrifice of time and giving of herself in the development of advertising and the web site, along with all her other duties that she has so wonderfully executed.

We are also delighted to share this evening with Joe Aguis, who has worked tirelessly, to make our website a great place to visit on the Internet. Joe, thank you for your kindness, your generosity - to people that you have never met, until this evening.

It is with deep regret that I am unable to continue as Chairperson for another year. When one has the privilege of being the Chairperson of such a dynamic group of people, it makes it extremely difficult to retire. Seeing the potential realised in all the members of Celebrants Australia, is an experience and memory that will remain with me forever.

In conclusion,

Go out there and do what you all do so well.

With your kind words;

Bring joy to those who are rejoicing.

Understanding and compassion, to those who are not always accepted.

And bring comfort to those who mourn.

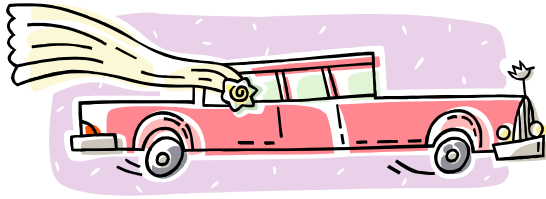
Thank you all for the privilege of being your Chairperson in 2006.

Spencer Flint

Retiring Chairperson.

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Thanks to Lea Waszkinel for these little perceptions on Marriage:



HOW DO YOU DECIDE WHO TO MARRY? (Written by kids)

You got to find somebody who likes the same stuff. Like, if you like sports, she should like it that you like sports, and she should keep the chips and dip coming.
-- Alan, age 10

No person really decides before they grow up who they're going to marry. God decides it all way before, and you get to find out later who you're stuck with
-- Kristen, age 10

WHAT IS THE RIGHT AGE TO GET MARRIED?

Twenty-three is the best age because you know the person FOREVER by then.
-- Camille, age 10

HOW CAN A STRANGER TELL IF TWO PEOPLE ARE MARRIED?

You might have to guess, based on whether they seem to be yelling at the same kids.
-- Derrick, age 8

WHAT DO YOU THINK YOUR MUM AND DAD HAVE IN COMMON?

Both don't want any more kids.
-- Lori, age 8

IS IT BETTER TO BE SINGLE OR MARRIED?

It's better for girls to be single but not for boys. Boys need someone to clean up after them.
-- Anita, age 9 (isn't she a treasure?)

HOW WOULD THE WORLD BE DIFFERENT IF PEOPLE DIDN'T GET MARRIED?

There sure would be a lot of kids to explain, wouldn't there?
-- Kelvin, age 8

And the #1 Favourite is.....

HOW WOULD YOU MAKE A MARRIAGE WORK?

Tell your wife that she looks pretty, even if she looks like a truck.
-- Ricky, age 10



Who are you?

Christine Haddrick talks to
our CA Treasurer
Stan Newman



Hello Stan. I believe readers would be interested in knowing a little more about our illustrious Celebrants Australia Treasurer..

.. I'm not sure about the illustrious bit!

At this time of the year it is important to confirm that you follow the right footy team. It IS Richmond isn't it?

I don't follow a footy team, but I am running second in the office tipping competition!

Oh well, you do such a good job as treasurer we won't hold that against you. If I was to offer you a weekend away, fully paid with a loved one, where would you choose?

Ah! A romantic weekend! I'd choose Queenstown in New Zealand. We have been to the South Island several times and the scenery around Wanaka and Queenstown is stunning.

Who would you take with you?

Sophia Loren! Whoops, just joking. Of course, I would take my wife Elaine.

Have you known each other long?

45 years!

Would you like to tell us a little more about your relationship?

We met playing tennis for the Methodist church team in Wangaratta. Elaine had just left high school and I was newly arrived from the U.K. We were married five years later (a long and patient courtship). We have three wonderful daughters, Karen, Helen and Alison who are more like younger sisters. They have added three great sons-in-law and seven delightful grandchildren to our family.

.. (cont.)

..and on this weekend away, what activities would you be engaging in? What drinks and foods would you be choosing? It's fully paid remember!

I love French food so it would be brioche and coffee for breakfast then any of the classic French dishes for the other meals as long as Escargot Provencale with truffles was in there somewhere. Elaine would order prawns, oysters and crayfish then more of the same. All washed down with copious glasses of good champagne. Activities would depend on how much energy we had after the meals, but a swim and a massage would be high on the list, followed by me slipping off to ice climb and bungee jump while Elaine cruised the shops. An intimate dinner on the balcony looking across the lake to the mountains would cap off the day.

Sounds yum! So Stan, what about your childhood and schooling – happy? What was outstanding in your memory?

I was born just outside London during the war. My earliest memories are after we moved to the south coast. We lived in a village between the New Forest and the coast, so I had a great childhood with lots of friends and the freedom to go off and play all day at the beach or in the forest. My outstanding memory is spending a year in hospital with my leg in traction after getting a wooden arrow in my knee while playing one of the forest games! ..and I was the only kid in our street to pass the dreaded 11+ exam and go to high school. I don't know how, because I definitely was not a scholar. I enjoyed high school. Apart from the lessons I was good at sport, reaching county champion level in several sports.

What about your young adult life? Would you mind telling us some of your memories and experiences.

Like most kids I had a part-time job when I was 13. Mine was washing glasses in the *Cat & Fiddle Inn* – an 11th century thatched roof pub in the New Forest with a history of smugglers and highwaymen! My family came to Australia a year after I left school, to join a brother who had emigrated earlier and settled in Wangaratta. We left England on a day there was ice in the sea and six weeks later arrived in Melbourne on a 100 degree day – quite a change! I started work at the local textile mill as a lab.assistant and found life here to be much better than in the U.K. I did all the usual things country boys did: shooting, fishing, sport, country balls.

..(cont.)

Stan continues:

I just loved everything about Australia. I worked at the mill for 30 years in various production and technical roles. We moved to Berwick after I was approached in 1990 to set up a new textile plant at Hallam.

Has this caused you to have strong feelings in regard to any social issues in the world?

Not particularly. However, I do think the drugs issue needs a new approach. Maybe if we knew why young people feel the need for drugs we may be able to come up with some answers.

As a Celebrant, will you have any sway in changing these things?

As a Celebrant I have to remember I am not a counsellor and should not try to impose my standards and beliefs on my clients. My influence is limited to their attitude to marriage and family.

It's a responsible position isn't it? What are your plans in this regard ...I believe you will be authorised for weddings soon?

I hope my number comes up this year! I intend to provide all of my clients, whatever occasion, with an individual ceremony which they will enjoy on the day and will recall with pleasure in later years.

What's your favourite number Stan?

My favourite number is five. It starts 50 which is the age when I did my first triathlon; and 55 when I did my first marathon. It reminds me that age is no barrier to new challenges.

A deeper question – Which of the worlds big issues concerns you most – the war in Iraq, the drought and climate change, or America's global position – and what's the answer? Go for it Stan!

Climate change affects the whole world and needs a whole world approach to the problem. Our problem as laymen is sorting out the facts from the fiction so that we can do our bit. For every argument for action there is a counter-argument for different action. How do we fix it? Let's face it, if I knew the answer I wouldn't be a semi-retired textile worker.

..and on a lighter note – getting back to your earlier tantalising suggestion of a romantic weekend away – It's going to happen – in fact it is actually going to be a two-week South Pacific Cruise in August when Elaine and I celebrate our 40th wedding anniversary!

Congratulations! and thankyou for telling us about Stan the Man!

Gareth Wilding-Forbes submits:

TOP TEN FUNERAL SONGS

A recent survey commissioned by The Bereavement Register ((UK) in ENGLAND found the top ten most requested songs for funerals in the U.K. are:

Goodbye My Lover	James Blunt
Angels	Robbie Williams
I've Had The Time Of My Life	Jennifer Warnes & Bill Medley
Wind Beneath My Wings	Bette Midler
Pie Jesu Requiem	
Candle In The Wind	Elton John
With Or Without You	U2
Tears In Heaven	Eric Clapton
Every Breath You Take	The Police
Unchained Melody	Righteous Brothers

Now my own personal contribution. The ideal tombstone for a much married woman: **Alone. In Bed. At Last**

Cheers GW-F

Editors note:

We could compile our own selections of readings for funerals too.

My mother Molly Wiles composed the following last week for a recently bereaved friend:

WE HAVE A NEW DISPLAY BOARD for you to use when you need it



Thanks to Lesley ...

Well, I suppose if you go to a meeting and suggest that money should be spent on a convenient display unit for the use of members, you can expect to get the job of organizing it! So I did, and here it is.

The quote from the manufacturer puts it succinctly; a “free-standing pinboard unit, hinged, with aluminium trims and a restraining chain”. It opens like a book, though as a safety measure the chain across the top prevents it opening so far that it would become unstable.

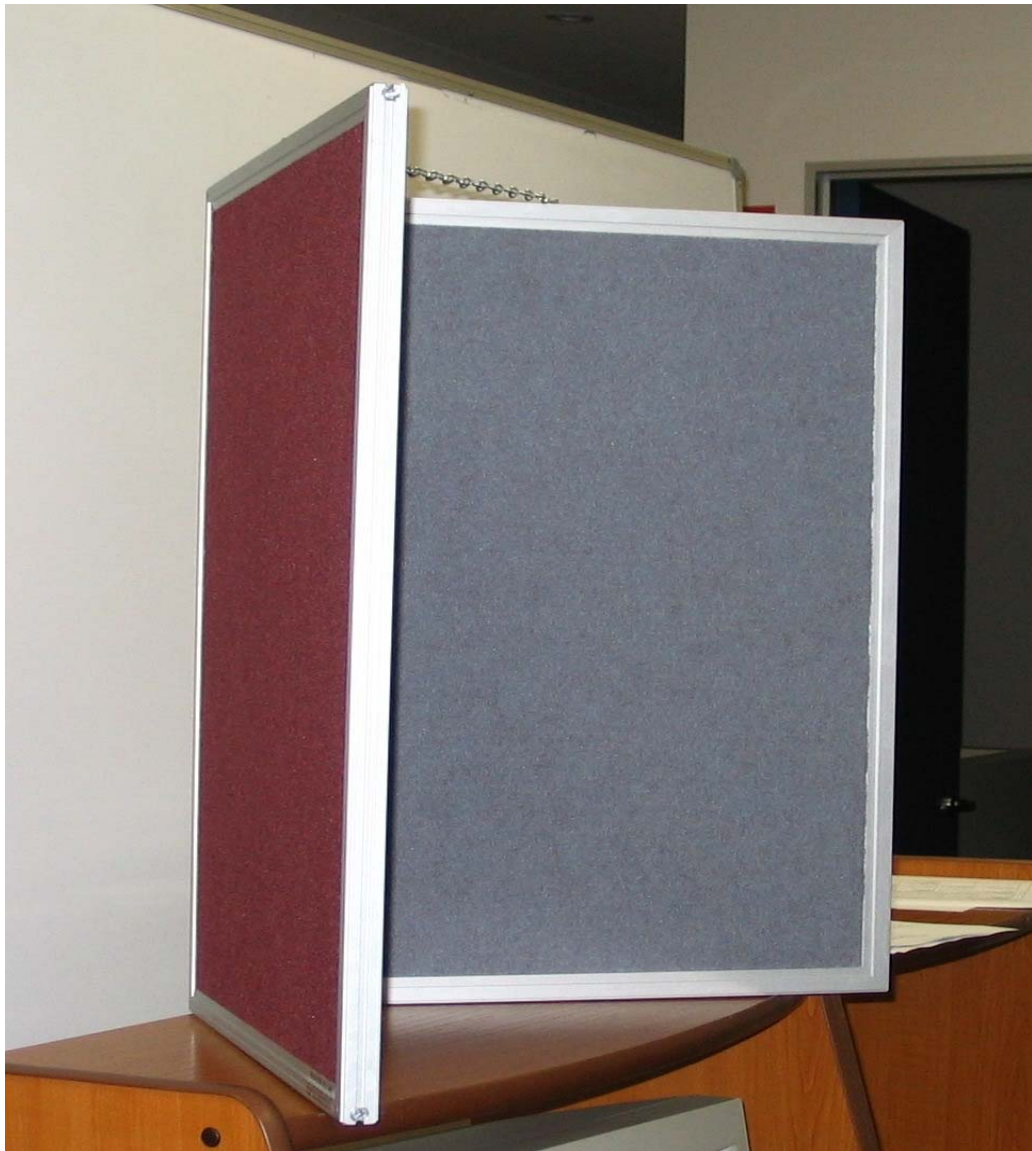
The outside is burgundy red, and the inside, where the display would be, is grey with a subtle fleck of dark red. I chose these colours as I felt they best complimented the range of colours in wedding photographs. The particular shade of grey also has a little warmth to it, so it seemed to me to hit the right note. ..(cont)

It is a good size to sit atop a table, being 60 cm tall, and each side is 45 cm wide. It makes an attractive and useful backdrop to your presentation at events such as bridal fairs, giving definition to your space, and providing an eye-level (and therefore eye-catching) display . The unit had to be easily portable, and it is light enough for even the slightest among us to carry .

Velcro dots would eventually degrade the covering material (and getting staples in and out would be similar), so the committee have stipulated that materials should be pinned to the board. Then of course the unit could be ‘dressed’ by draping material over and around it to suit your individual taste.

It is being kept at Judy’s place, so we always know where it is, and members should contact her to arrange to borrow it (and return it to her, of course). The regular CA meeting would be one opportunity for this exchange, if you live a fair way away from her. If you know you have a fair coming up, it would be a good idea to book the display unit well ahead, as I hope (no, no, I’m sure) that once members see the potential, demand will grow.

Lesley Birks



Thanks to Sherinda Shea, CA is now moving ahead with its Ongoing Professional Development program.

Here's Sherinda's latest update:

More on Discussion with AG about Ongoing Professional Development Activities

Our Association has been in discussion with the Attorney General's Department to explore the possibility of becoming a provider of the second one hour compulsory activity. Currently this second one hour compulsory activity must be completed by registered marriage celebrants by 31 August 2007. The activity focuses on *Knowledge and understanding of marriage celebrant obligations*. Marriage celebrants can complete this activity through one of three ways: attendance at a presentation delivered by the AG Department (which occurred on 13/14 March 2007 in Melbourne); attendance at a presentation by an AG Department approved provider or by completing a questionnaire from the AG's Department.

We can report a successful outcome to our discussions and we now have to submit our Application for Approval of an Ongoing Professional Development Activity..

For those of you who have completed this requirement, remember, you will still need to complete your other activities totalling a minimum of another three hours to fulfil this registration year's ongoing professional development requirements. Refer to the AG's website for approved activities and providers.

Feedback to AG's Department about OPD

In addition to the above, our Association was recently invited by the AG's Department to participate in a meeting in Canberra about short and longer term OPD developments. However attendees were required to cover their own travel costs to attend the meeting. So, we did the next best thing - i.e. we provided written feedback

We will keep you informed of progress.

Sherinda Shea.

Ongoing Professional Development

Get on our website.

www.celebrantsaustralia.asn.au/yourname.htm

There are 23 members currently loaded on our Celebrants page. That means several members have still not taken advantage of this free service to have their photo and information on their own page within our Celebrants Australia website.

It costs nothing for members who were registered before July 1 last year (our website launch day) to have their pages loaded. We decided to make it a special deal for members as we created our new website. Members who have joined us after that date are charged \$75 (which is still quite a reasonable cost).

Our webmaster Joe Agius, has given his time and expertise willingly to help Celebrants Australia establish a presence on the world wide web. We decided to pay him a retainer of \$250 a year to continue the service.

Joe has also offered to expand anyone's single page to a multiple page, so you can give a more comprehensive picture of the services you offer. Christine Haddrick is the first member to do this. . The cost for expanding pages to multiples is \$200.

While our website is still in relative infancy, there are many ways available to us for expanding it, making it more visible, and incorporating other features. We're treading slowly – but surely!

Take advantage of the services which are offered to you at such low cost. Email Liz for more information:

lizagiuswiles@bigpond.com

The CAN is an independent newsletter of Celebrants Australia Inc.