



Celebrations
By Michele

Wedding Information Kit

Congratulations

Organising your wedding is such an exciting time and I am looking forward to working with you on creating your perfect ceremony.

My Role

Is to ensure you fulfill the legal requirements, make sure the forms are submitted and correct. Work with you both to create a memorable ceremony that meets with your requirements and finally solemnize your ceremony.

Ceremony

I can help you to create a ceremony that is heartfelt, filled with laughter, love and personality, striving to inject your own style and uniqueness, celebrate who you both are as individuals and as a couple.

Legals

Legal Requirements – There are a few legal requirements that I can help you through (this is fairly stress free). You are required to submit some legal forms (see the checklist) and some key phrases that need to be said on the day (see sample texts) but rest assured I am here to help you both through all of this.

In this Information pack you will provide most of the information to help you get started.

If at any stage you need any further information or have any questions don't hesitate to reach out and get in touch.

I will need to get to know you both to make the ceremony unique and memorable and I am eager to start this journey with you.

Michèle

Creating Lasting Memories

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The Purpose of a Ceremony

The Union of two people in marriage is an innate part of all societies. Weddings publicly affirm the private love shared by two people. It's a special time shared with family and close friends.

The most important part of a wedding ceremony, are the vows between the couple, the vows help couples to proclaim their commitment to their relationship. These can also be expressed with Individual vows written by each other in order to express the unique relationship between a particular couple. Even if you just want the basics vows, it's still the most important and memorable part. With all that said no ceremony can create a good marriage only you can do that through love, patience, talking & listening, help & supporting each other

“Your marriage ceremony should reflect your personalities and values”



Outline of a Traditional Ceremony

- **Processional** – The arrival of the bride to the venue, often accompanied by bridesmaids and the person who is giving her away
- **Giving Away**- traditionally this is when the bride is presented to her future spouse, often by a paternal figure
- **The Couple’s Story** – I will talk briefly about your story, how you met, fell in love, funny moments or anything else you feel is something significant to share with your guests
- **Readings or Poems** – This can be some special words from either a close friend or relative, which can be relevant to the couple.
- **Inclusions/Rituals** – Spend some time researching rituals, this can add special some special moments for you both and if you would like to include other family members – I have some suggestions on page xx
- **Monitum (legal parts I must say)** – “ I am duly authorised by law to solemnise marriages according to the law. Before you are joined in marriage in my presence and in the presence of these witnesses, I am to remind you of the solemn and binding nature of the relationship into which you are now about to enter. Marriage, according to the law in Australia is the union of two people to the exclusion of all others, voluntarily entered into for life”
- **The Asking (I do part), Legal Vows** – Both the bride and groom must say (I will help with a repeat after me prompt) “I call upon the persons her present to witness that I ...Adam Summer, take thee, Eve winters, to be my lawfully wedded husband/wife/spouse”
- **Other vows** – you are able say additional vows that may be special to you both, perhaps special words you would like to say to one and other these can be something decided and written together, or could even be surprise words for the other. This could also be a time to reflect on traditional vows from your culture.
- **Exchange of rings** – I can help you with memorable words to say if you would like to exchange rings.- see page (19)
- **Pronouncement** – This is the end of the ceremony and where you traditionally are announced to your guests and “Husband and Wife” “You may now kiss the bride” or it can be your choice of words.
- **Signing of the Register & Certificates** – You and your nominated witnesses must sign the Marriage Register, Certificate of Marriage and Marriage Certificate, and then this is then presented to you both Always allow for some great photo opportunities.

- **Conclusion** – After the signing I say a few words of thanks and goodwill, also relaying any information to the guests about what’s happening next or similar.
- **Congratulations**- “I would like to present Mr and Mrs Summer” or “Adam & Eve” or your choice of words here
- **Recessional** – The newly married couple move to leave the ceremony area and are generally greeted with the best wishes of their family and friends, bubbles and rose petals.

Each ceremony is created for each person individually and as such, the above structure is a guideline only. Hopefully this will get you thinking about some ideas and what you would like for your special day



Questionnaire

Below are some questions to help me to piece together your ceremony. If you can please answer as honestly and in as much detail as you can so that I can get a really good idea on capturing your special day. This is just a starting point, we can develop these ideas as we move closer to your wedding day.

Please reach out if you need any further guidance or have any questions.

1/. How long (approximately) would you like your ceremony to run for ?

.....

2/. Does the venue for your ceremony have any time restrictions ? or particular regulations ?

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3/. Do you have any housekeeping rules – use of mobile phones, posting of photo’s on social media or any special seating arrangements, bubbles, rose petals, QR code check in

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4/. Processional – are both parties arriving together or will one party be waiting with me at the ceremony area ? Will you have a bridal party and how many ? Is anyone giving the “Bride” away ?

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5/. Which way would you like to face ? your guests, each other & myself ?

6/. Do you have any guests you would like to make a special mention to ? – Interstate guests or guests via a video link

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7/. Are there any cultural elements you would like to include in your ceremony ? – Different cultural marriage traditions or marriage rituals (see ceremony options starting on page 15)

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8/. Would you like to include any special poetry, or especially significant words, either to be read out by myself or include a friend or relative.....

.....

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9/. Would you like some help or advice on writing your own vows to be included into the ceremony ?

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10/. Would you like to exchange rings ? (see some example of scripts you can use page 19)

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11/. Do you have any special instructions for your guests at the end of the ceremony ? – Group Photo, moving to reception venue at..., drinks etc)

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12/. Will you be leaving the ceremony area for photo's and returning ?

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13/. Music – do you have a DJ ? Musicians, or recorded choices of music ?

.....

14/. Do you require help in making a play list for your ceremony and for it to be played at the ceremony ? Would you like music played before the ceremony ?

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15/. Who are your two witnesses (both need to be over 18)

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16/. Are you both Australian Citizens or permanent residents ? If not have you sought information from the Department of immigration and border protection.

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17/. Do you both speak and understand English Fluently ? (if no an interpreter may be required, including an Auslan interpreter)

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18/. Do you have a particular theme or colour for your ceremony ?

.....

19/. Do you require a rehearsal at the venue ?

.....

19/. I will need some information on your "Love Story" feel free to write below some things you would like me to include in the ceremony – some ideas are – how you met, your first date, was it love at first sight, proposal, children, homes, holidays adventures and more ! whatever comes to mind and would like to share with your guests as a brief snippet of your relationship.

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.....you need more space and details you can also email your story

20/. Any other information you can think of ?

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Paper work I will require

I will need the following documents in order for your marriage to be legally recognised, I can help you with this, use the information as a guide to check things off as we get closer to the ceremony date.

Official Documents

- "NOIM" – Notice of Intended Marriage – must be completed at least one calendar month prior to the wedding ceremony, but no more than 18 months before * Only to be signed in my presence
- "Declaration of No Legal Impediment to Marriage"- this must be made/completed just prior to the ceremony day (normally say our last meeting before the ceremony) and completed with myself the authorised celebrant.

Identification Documents Required

- Passport (if you have one)

Or

- Birth Certificate and Photo ID (generally drivers licence)

If you are unable to produce a Passport, Birth Certificate you will need to complete a Commonwealth Statutory Declaration – (after every effort has been made to provide a birth certificate)

If you have changed your name -

- Original documents of both names (birth certificate and or previous marriage certificate)
- Deed Poll Documentation

If you have been married before I will require-

- A divorce order/certificate of divorce/decre absolute or
- A court issued decree of nullity or annulment or
- A certificate of death of former spouse

If One party is under 18 years of age I will require –

- Court Order (recent no more than 3 months old)
- Parental consent in writing

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Australian Government
Attorney-General's Department
Access to Justice Division

Code of Practice for Marriage Celebrants – Regulation 37 L

1. APPLICATION OF THIS CODE OF PRACTICE

This Code of Practice applies to marriage celebrants (being persons registered under Subdivision C of Division 1 of Part IV of the Marriage Act 1961).

Note: Under paragraph 39I(1)(b) of the Marriage Act 1961, if the Registrar of Marriage Celebrants is satisfied that a marriage celebrant has not complied with an obligation under section 39G of that Act, including this Code of Practice, the Registrar may take disciplinary measures against the marriage celebrant.

2. HIGH STANDARD OF SERVICE

A marriage celebrant must maintain a high standard of service in his or her professional conduct and practice.

3. RECOGNITION OF SIGNIFICANCE OF MARRIAGE

A marriage celebrant must recognise the social, cultural and legal significance of marriage and the marriage ceremony in the Australian community, and the importance of strong and respectful family relationships.

4. COMPLIANCE WITH THE MARRIAGE ACT AND OTHER LAWS

A marriage celebrant must:

- (a) solemnize marriages according to the legal requirements of the Marriage Act 1961 (Cth); and
- (b) observe the laws of the Commonwealth and of the State or Territory where the marriage is to be solemnized; and
- (c) prevent and avoid unlawful discrimination in the provision of marriage celebrancy services.

5. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR MARRIAGE CEREMONIES

A marriage celebrant must respect the importance of the marriage ceremony to the parties and the other persons organising the ceremony. To that end, the marriage celebrant must do the following:

- (a) give the parties information and guidance to enable them to choose or compose a marriage ceremony that will meet their needs and expectations;
- (b) respect the privacy and confidentiality of the parties;

(c) maintain appropriate facilities to interview parties and provide office facilities, including facilities for the secure storage of records;

(d) within a reasonable time before the marriage ceremony:

(i) confirm all details with the parties; and

(ii) ensure the return of all personal documents belonging to the parties (unless it is necessary to keep the documents for the ceremony); and

(iii) sign any necessary declarations;

(e) if requested by the parties, conduct a marriage ceremony rehearsal;

(f) ensure that his or her personal presentation is of an appropriate standard for the marriage ceremony, and respect the expectations of the parties in relation to the ceremony;

(g) make efforts to ensure that the marriage ceremony is audible to all those present (using audio equipment, if required);

(h) ensure accuracy in the preparation of documents, and in the conduct of the marriage ceremony;

(i) arrive at the venue for the marriage ceremony no later than the time agreed with the parties;

(j) if the marriage celebrant has agreed to perform more than one marriage ceremony on the same day:

(i) ensure that the parties to each marriage receive a level of service that meets their separate and special requirements; and

(ii) be available at the venue for each marriage ceremony at least 20 minutes before the agreed commencement of each ceremony (unless, in the case of consecutive ceremonies, the ceremonies are to be held at the same venue);

(k) ensure that all relevant documents are completed and sent to the appropriate registering authority within 14 days after the marriage ceremony, as required by section 50 of the Marriage Act 1961;

(l) in relation to the provision of marriage services, accept evaluative comment from the parties, and use any comments to improve performance;

(m) give the parties information about how to notify the Commonwealth Attorney General's Department of any concerns or complaints they may have regarding the marriage services provided by the marriage celebrant.

6. KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS SERVICES

A marriage celebrant must:

(a) maintain an up-to-date knowledge about appropriate family relationships services in the community; and

(b) inform parties about the range of information and services available to them to enhance, and sustain them throughout, their relationship.

How to make a complaint

If you have any concerns about my service or performance, ideally I would like you to please reach out to me so that it can be resolved in person for the best outcome for all concerned, but if an agreement cannot be reached please follow the guidelines from the Attorney General's Office to make an official complaint.

Web site - <https://www.ag.gov.au/families-and-marriage/marriage/complain-about-marriage-celebrant>

- Complaints must be made within 3 months of first becoming aware of the problem.
- You must use the official complaint form available for download on the web site.
<https://www.ag.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-03/making-a-complaint-about-commonwealth-registered-marriage-celebrant-form.pdf>
- You must agree to the celebrant receiving your complaint otherwise the complaint will not be processed.
- The Attorney General's Office do not have the power to make a celebrant refund money. Further information on obtaining refunds is available on the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission - <http://www.accc.gov.au/>
- Once the complaint has been received by the Attorney General's Office your complaint will be acknowledged, assessed (if found to have ground) investigated and responded to.

If you need further information –

- Contact the Attorney General's office at – marriagecelebrantssection@ag.gov.au if you have a disability and need help to prepare your complaint.



Pre Marriage Education

Listed below are some contacts for practices that offer Pre-Marriage Education programs.

Helps to define life goals and aspirations and set up the building blocks which will take couples through their married journey well equipped to meet challenges along the way and to stay on the same page. strengthening their love and commitment.

(1) Tea Tree Gully Anglican Church - (08) 8264 3736

Marriage Course - 7 Sessions, physically attending Once a week.

While the course is based on Christian Principles any couple can attend and do not need to be part of the church, a church goer or of Christian faith.

Registration and Booking available from the Web Site or phone

www.ttganglican.org.au/ministries/marriage-course/

(2) The Hart Centre - 1300 830 552

www.thehartcentre.com.au/our-counselling/pre-marriage-insight-program/

Pre Marriage Counselling Course.

Designed using 20+ years of marriage counselling experience, increasing your chance of a happy successful marriage.

Sessions can be taken - in house, phone or Skype (or similar)

Offers appointments in Athelstone, Modbury Heights and North Adelaide

(3) Life Direction Counselling - 0407 711 616

www.lifedirectioncounselling.com.au (Click on My services - click on Life Marriage Coach)

Practice is located in North East of Adelaide (no actual address given)

Web site offers getting started with a Life Marriage Coach before couples take their vows, but coaching can be started at any time.

If you need something closer to your area,
let me know and I can source out some information for you both.

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Ceremony Options

Apart from the Monitum, Legal Vows and the signing the register and certificates, which must be included in your ceremony, the rest is up to you both. It can be as unique as you would like, reflecting your own personal taste reflecting your own personalities and values. I have listed some additional rituals below you may like to consider for your ceremony.

These rituals are symbolic actions or phrases used to represent the bond you are creating by entering into a marriage. You can also invent your own special ritual individual to you both, you can also research more ideas on line.

These are also a great way to include special family and friends into your ceremony



Hand Fasting

Hand fasting is a beautiful element that can be easily incorporated into a wedding ceremony where the couple's hands are symbolically bound in marriage. The term "Tying the Knot" comes from the tradition of Hand fasting.

The Ribbon or cord can either be made by family members or the couple and entwined with a variety of colours with each colour having it's own meaning - I can help you further with these meanings (this can be easily sourced from spotlight stores or online). Some examples of scripts options can include –

"As this knot is tied, so are your lives now bound. Woven into these ribbons, into their very fibers, is all of the love of your family and friends. In the joining of hands and these cords/ribbons now surrounding your hands, so are your lives now bound. As a couple you are now entwined in love, bound by commitment, the joys and the sadness, anger and reconciliation- all of which brings strength to this union. Remember it is not these ribbons or cords but what they represent that will help to keep you as one, strong and together".

"The way the hand of the couple are joined when they are crossed like this to make the symbol for infinity. With this, may your love for each other be infinite and may you draw up on the infinite force of love that flows through the universe to flow through and support you. I can then ask a series of commitment/questions for example -

Do you promise to love each other with all that you are

We do.

May the words you have shared with your family and friends here today, be a reminder of the love and commitment you have made. Through life's up's and down's, challenges and triumphs may these words give you strength just like these ribbons/chords to keep you close, tight and together.



Ring Warming

A ring warming is a lovely way to involve your family guests and they can feel they have given you a little piece of their well wishes on your special day. The rings will get passed to each guest where they can make a wish or blessing or just hold them (warming them) in their hands before they reach you and your partners fingers, which by the time you get them they will be warmed with love, blessings and warm wishes from your friends and family for you both. It's a good idea to have a note or sign near the entrance of the ceremony to let the guests know that this will be part of the ceremony – The rings will generally start from the Maid of Honour, through to the guests and back to the Best Man. I will be able to direct everyone to ensure this works well, ends up at the right place and time ready for the ring exchange at the end . (Some alterations to this may need to happen if you have a large group of guests) Some examples of scripts options can include –

“It's widely believed that precious metals hold love and energy, the more enduring the object the more energy will be absorbed, at this time starting with the Bridesmaids pass these rings between one and other, warming the metals with your good thoughts and blessings. “

“ Adam and Eve – these rings now have all of the warmth, love, positive thoughts and well wishes from all of your family and close friends”



Sand /Water & Wine Ceremony

These ceremonies are lots of fun and can include, if you wish close members of the family like children, and grandparents.

Each participant has a glass container/vessel with different coloured sand . As the ceremony progresses each party will add their sand to a main glass vessel – of which the couple can then keep as a lasting memory of their special day. This completed vase of mixed sand of all different colours can represent the joining together of the couple and their families. You can also do this with wine – mixing two of your favourite wines together and then both of you drinking the mixed wine, or a similar ceremony with water. Some examples of script options can include –

“We now celebrate Adam and Eve’s union with a symbolic sand ceremony. First, we will pour sand from this beautiful beach where Adam and Eve stand today with their family and friends as they commit to each other and blend their lives together.

“As these containers of sand are poured into the main container their lives will be joined together as one. Just as these grains of sand can never be separated, we all wish that your lives together will be blended like the beautiful colours created here today and to always remain as one.



Unity Candle

This is a very simple and easy to organise ritual, that can also involve other loved ones like Children and Parents, or even just yourselves. This is normally done after you have said your vows

Each Couple each have their own candle, which they then use to light the central candle. Symbolising the unity of two individuals coming together as one. It would be advisable to check with the venue as to any restrictions for naked flames, or even perhaps if the ceremony is outside on a windy day may pose some difficulties. Some examples of script options can include –

*“From this day onward, may both be surrounded in the beauty of the light of your love, may its light shine bright and steady upon your path together and may its heat keep **you** warm through all the days of your lives and beyond”*

“ This candle that you are about to light is a symbol of your love and commitment for each other, may it represent the fire and light you have for each other today and always. May the brightness of this flame shine throughout your years together giving you courage, warmth and strength and importantly an everlasting flame of love to light each year on your anniversary”

There are also so many other options and ideas that you can research, or even create your own

Tree Planting, Lasso Ceremony, Stone Ceremony, Rose Ceremony, Releasing Doves or Butterflies



Some Ideas on What to Say

It's your ceremony and it can be as elaborate and imaginative or as simple as you would like, even the simplest of ceremonies can be heartfelt and memorable. But here is a start to some ideas on putting your script together.

The Welcome (1)

Welcome everyone to this glorious venue and what a beautiful and memorable day this day promises to be. My name is Michele Johnston, I am an authorised marriage celebrant and will be officiating today. I'd like to thank you all for coming to help us celebrate the Wedding of Adam and Eve, your presence here is important to both Adam and Eve, to surround them with your love and well wishes.

We also have some very important family members to welcome here with us today, Erin and Damien and their little baby girl Isla, who have thankfully made it across from Queensland to be with us today, I would also like to welcome Jean and Michael who are watching live from our face book stream from Ireland. Both Adam and Eve appreciate your efforts you have made to be with them on their special day.

The Welcome (2)

Friends and Family of the Bride and Groom welcome and thank you for being here on this important day. My name is Michele Johnston for those that don't know me and I will be officiating the ceremony today. Adam and Eve are taking their first steps of their new beginning in their new life together. Each of you are here today as you all share a special bond with Adam and Eve and they wanted to especially share their love with you in a small and intimate ceremony. Their enthusiasm is contagious, their certainty of their destiny together is inspiring and they will share a glimpse of their special connection and love with you all here today.

Words about Marriage (1)

Marriage is a very special place. It's a place where we can safely learn about ourselves whilst in the presence of another. Marriage represents a love that is patient and kind, and does not exist on its own, but blossoms when united together. It's a symbol and celebration of the unique joining of these two cultures and families and the bride and grooms commitment to their love.

Words about Marriage (2)

Marriage is Love and Commitment at its very core and it's a decision to normally to commit to one person. It's also today the celebration of a second chance of love for these two and what is more beautiful than that ! It's where your new Lives will begin and love never ends. Today it also a commitment to the blending and love of their new family. There are those that who will say love comes only but once, and yet we are all so glad that these two have met and fallen in love. Your decision to marry is one of the most important decisions in life that will influence your happiness, growth and success and most of all it's a choice that will plant a fire in your hearts for each other and your families and bring peace to your minds forever.

Giving Away (1) –

“I ask the parents to please stand, Adam and Eve thank you for all of your love and support you showed in raising them. Your love for them is unconditional and this has inspired them to be who they are today, without you all they would not be here today. As their parents you have watched them grow, enter this relationship with each other and seen their love grow. With this in mind I ask firstly Eve’s parents “ will you bestow your blessing on their union here today” –We will – and Adam’s parents “ Will you bestow your blessing on their union here today” – We Will

Giving Away (2) –

I ask everyone to please stand – “ Do you support this couple and affirm that these two should be married today, Will you surround this couple with love, friendship and support in their relationship, offering them counsel, comfort and nourish their love for one another” – We Will

The Asking (1) –

Bride/Groom – Do you Adam/Eve present yourself here today to be joined in marriage with Adam/Eve, do you promise to be supportive, faithful and honest and love him/her for the entirety of your days together – if so Answer – I Will

The Asking (2) –

Bride/Groom – will you take your bride/groom to be your partner on this day, to love her/him, respect him/her as a person, understand their needs, ensure their everlasting happiness and actively grow together through out all the changes of your lives together if so answer – I will

The Asking (3) –

Bridge/Bride Groom – do you choose Adam/Eve to be your life companion do you promise to open all jars and pretend that she/he loosened them, to quickly and efficiently extinguish all spiders with hairy legs and promise to empty the vacuum once all bugs have been sucked up, if so please answer – I Will

Ring Exchange - These wedding rings will be your last gift to each other before you become husband and wife, this gift to each other will also be the most important. The physical structure of these wedding rings and the metals used to make them are tough enough to resist breaking and will last forever. May it be placed on your finger where the vein from this finger runs straight to your heart and moves as one.

Ring Exchange (1)- Two rings

Bride/Groom – “I give you this ring as a symbol of my love for you, as I place it on your finger may it be a reminder of my everlasting love for you. Know that I’m always with you, behind you and by your side.

Ring Exchange (2) – Single ring vow

Bride/Groom – “ Let us both hold this single golden ring, let it symbolise that my love for you is the most precious element in our lives, this ring has no beginning and no end, this is a symbol of eternity and was chosen to reflect the unending nature of our love.

Presentation of the newly married couple (1) –

Ladies and gentlemen it is now my pleasure to present to you Mr and Mrs Sunshine, you may kiss the bride.

Presentation of the newly married couple (2)

May the blessings of life, the joy of love, wisdom and strength be with you today and always as partners for life, you may seal this union with a kiss !! it is at this time I pronounce you Adam and Eve Sunshine !

My Details

About Me – I am brand new to the celebrancy business, I have really enjoyed everything I have learnt so far. I have been involved in dance and theatre for most of my life and being a celebrant is almost a natural progression for me – It's a lot like being on stage! I've choreographed and produced a fair few shows in that time to, so I'm confident in getting things moving in the right place. I'll ensure everyone feels confident and rehearsed on your special day. (I can also help with that first dance if required).

I am married to my beautiful and supporting husband Darren who works in the building industry and have 3 beautiful children with 2 girls having successful careers in the Dance and Theatre Industry, and my son who is in his last year of school who studies music.

I am a celebrant who is fun and engaging and I really want to capture your ideal day. I will strive to ensure a fresh and personal approach to all ceremonies which will be created and customised for each client.



Let's Celebrate Life !

Michele Johnston

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