

Marriage Celebrations with Sue Oliver

An introduction

Hello, my name is Sue Oliver an authorized Australian Celebrant. I have been involved in wedding planning here at our heritage family farm property "White Hill" since 1998, where wedding ceremonies have been held at various picturesque locations around the Homestead, in the garden and historic outbuildings Circa 1860's. For more information and photos of our unique venue, please visit us at: www.oliverscc.com.au.

As a celebrant, it is my role to empower you as a couple to create your own unique ceremony framed on the Marriage Act. Simply and legally the requirements for the occasion are as follows:

- Couple are over 18 years of age
- 2 witnesses over 18 years of age
- Both must indicate that they wish to marry each other
- Signing of 3 certificates by the 5 of us

However you may wish for more than this.....

Consider the following needs:

- 2 witnesses- maybe men, women or parents.
- A table for signing, 2 chairs so that you may be seated whilst signing.
- Flowers for this table?
- Size of table- large enough for 3 certificates and bridal bouquet.
- Check with venue whether rose petals (fresh or dried) are permitted and where.
- Make sure guests arrive before the scheduled time of the ceremony.
- The bride may be a couple of minutes late, but if another wedding is scheduled to follow then it would be inconsiderate to hold up their proceedings as well.

The Ceremony Layout

- Guests standing or seated.
- Can they see or hear you eg. Horseshoe arrangement, eg. celebrant, groom's attendants, Groom, Bride, Parent(s) of the Bride, Bride's attendants.
- Ring(s)- in small bag/ring cushion, on signing table.
- Parents, older/disabled guests.
- Arriving together/separately; is there someone to greet your guests or some other arrangement.
- Your children-involved in the ceremony eg. Reading, 'Giving you away' or ring bearers.
- Photographer's role- discreet is best

My Responsibilities

3 legal documents ready for or signing (ie. The Registry Office copy, my copy and yours).
On time- at least 15 minutes before the ceremony (similarly the groom should be close to arriving around this time).

Check signing table and chairs positioned for the best photo opportunity.

Guide you through your personalized ceremony which we have prepared together (at least 1 month beforehand), and most importantly ensure that the legal requirements are met.

Ceremony Format

Some are short and sweet, others are long and complex - the choice is yours.

Arrival of the Bride

Ensure Groom and Attendants are in place

Check the Rings

Musicians or person placing the CD etc

I wait with the men whilst the bride and her escort and/or attendants walk slowly into position (there is no rush)

Usher the bridal party into position.

Welcome

Again I'll ask your guests to move closer, so that they may hear and see the proceedings. I welcome them to the celebrations that mark the beginning of your married life together, remind them that this is a civil ceremony that has been personally prepared by yourselves. Together we want you all to enjoy and share this most sacred ceremony of your life. Because I like to connect and engage with you both and your guests, I prefer not to read and know the basic ceremony by heart.

The Giving away: Presentation of Bride/Groom

There are many ways of indicating support for a marriage, and you may wish for someone to say something, for parents to indicate support, or you may wish for the Bride/Groom to be given away. I will mention that you both choose to include this part of the ceremony and that you are pleased to have eg. the Bride's father to represent all your family & friends in supporting your marriage.

Poem. Reading. Song etc

If you are interested in having readings in any part of your ceremony then have your chosen piece read by a friend. This makes it more personal for both of you; otherwise I am happy to read if you wish.

The Celebrant Authority- The Monitum

Ladies and gentlemen, and in particular.....&

"I am Sue Oliver, a Civil Marriage Celebrant and I am duly authorized by law to solemnize marriages according to the laws of Australia. Therefore before we proceed, 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 is the union of a man and a woman, to the exclusion of all others, voluntarily entered into for life."

The Vows

I'll mention that these are the formal part of the ceremony and that you have both chosen them and that we ask your guests support in upholding those vows throughout your marriage. Normally, the Groom then the Bride repeats them after me in small segments. You may of course vary this-read them, make them up on the spot, have none, learn them or change the order etc

For example: Traditional Style:

Groom: I call upon my family and friends to witness that I take you.....to be my lawful wedded wife, to have and hold, from this day, for better for worse for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish until death do us part, and this is my promise to you.

Bride: I call upon my family and friends to witness that I.....take you to be my lawful wedded husband, to have and hold, from this day, for better for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish until death do us part, and this is my promise to you.

The Exchange of Rings or other Symbol

I would usually say..... "As a symbol of this marriage,.....andwish to exchange rings", or as a symbol of this marriage..... wishes to present..... with a ring.

The Groom's attendant, and then the Bride's collect the rings and present them in order, to the Groom and then the Bride who will, in turn be asked to place the ring on the other's finger.

Groom: "With this ring, a token and pledge of my love, I thee wed".

Bride: "With this ring, a token and pledge of my love, I thee wed".

Pronouncement of Marriage

Marriage Celebrant: ".....and..... as you have consented together in lawful marriage in my presence, and in the presence of your witnesses, and by the giving (and receiving) of rings, I now declare you to be husband and wife."

I then suggest that you may kiss each other!

Marriage Celebrant: " Ladies and Gentlemen. It is my duty and very great pleasure to inform you that.....andhave freely agreed to be joined in marriage, and I now pronounce them as husband and wife.

We will now sign the marriage certificates. (3 official certificates and 5 individual signatures). This takes about 5 minutes. During this time the photographer will no doubt be busy and you may also have arranged for music to be played.

Presentation

Once we have completed the signing I shall presentand..... to you as a married couple.

Eg. "ladies and gentlemen, we have now completed the formal part of today's celebrations. Enjoy the rest of the reception and send them off into their married life with a great deal of support.

Could I mention that confetti and rice is not permitted within the grounds/buildings, but please feel free to throw flowers (or money) as symbols of your goodwill.

I now give you all, your new friends, and for some of you now your new Relatives.....and.....as a married couple. Congratulations!

Before I leave

This ceremony usually takes about 15 minutes. I then check the certificates for posting to the Registry office, and then say farewell. NB: Alternatives:

Your own vows/ideas/thoughts.

Vow 1: I take you....., as my wife/husband. I pledge to share my life openly with you, and to speak the truth to you in love, I promise to honour and tenderly care for you, and to cherish and encourage your own fulfilment as an individual for the rest of my life.

Vow 2: I call upon these persons here present to witness that Itake youto be my lawful wedded wife/husband.

Vow 3: I want to be with you just as you are. I chose you above all others to share my life with me in marriage. I love you for yourself, and I want you to become all that you can be. I promise to honour this pledge as long as I live.

Also you may vary the words said when exchanging the ring(s). eg:

Rings 1: "With this ring I thee wed"

Rings 2: "With this ring I marry you"

Rings 3: "I give you this ring as a symbol of my love.



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