



Association of Independent Funeral Professionals

# Newsletter

August / September / October 2020

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Hello everyone,

Welcome to our latest newsletter. It's hard to believe we are still so deep in this topsy-turvy COVID-19 impacted environment; I don't think any of us could have anticipated it would linger this long.

Here in Victoria we've been doing it tough but (thankfully) it really is starting to feel like there is a glimmer of light at the end of what has been a very long tunnel. The coming months will be telling, what will the new normal look like, is digital streaming going to be a standard fixture at all of our ceremonies from now on, could it all happen again?

So many questions and so little clarity.

Whatever you are up to, make sure to take some time for self-care as we navigate the way ahead.

In the face of all the uncertainty, we've been working through other options to deliver our conference to you this year. We are workshopping ideas in the digital / virtual space and may even be able to bring something to you before Christmas. You'll see a note from Jacqui further into the newsletter asking for your input on this. As always, we'd love to have you involved, many hands make light work after all, so please reach out if you're interested in contributing.

Our focus for 2021 will be to create an Expo with a focus on the education for the public, opening our doors to inform, enlighten and inspire them about end of life celebrations. You will hear more from us as this develops.

On that note, I'd also ask you to get out there and spread the word about our wonderful community – let's brag a bit, we are worth it. With every new member we get richer, and together we will do great things for the industry and the families we work with.

I'll sign off in the hope that I'll see your smiling faces next week, at our last Ed Session for the year (see below for all the details).

Until then, take care and stay safe,

**Carly, Chief cook and bottle washer**

## MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

### It's Your Association!

With the development of the new membership services package we also launched our new website. [www.aifp.org.au](http://www.aifp.org.au) I'd encourage you to take a few moments to look around as there are many features and benefits for each member.

For the board it provides a membership platform, so we only have one place for all the information we keep on members. In other words, no multiple lists and the problems of keeping them up to date. It is also the place for us to calendar our events and the bookings, again all in one place.

Take a look at the home page and you will see we have two distinct colours, and why you might ask? The colour purple for the public where they will find about our members and the resources our members can provide to them.

The colour blue for the industry and for associated colleagues to find you fast.

I'd encourage you take the opportunity to log in and check your own information. You are in control of it and will need to keep things like phone numbers and emails up to date. We have directories in both the public and industry sections of the site so take a look at the data we are holding about you, especially the fields "About You" and "More About You" as these are widely displayed on our website. As we start promoting the site, running events, expos, conferences and the like we will have more and more people accessing the information, so make sure yours is up to date.

And while you are on the site, register yourself for the next event.

Regards,

**Mario**

### Help us keep the place running...

The AIFP is run by a small group of dedicated people. This is a call out to all members and prospective members to be involved as:

- State based Member Reps; and/or
- Sub-committee Members (*membership and annual industry event*).

In the spirit of *many hands make light work* and *contributing what you can* your involvement in the AIFP can be designed to match the association's needs and your skill sets, interests and availability.

If you are interested in exploring what's possible please contact **Carly Dalton**, President, to discuss what opportunities exist! [president@aifp.org.au](mailto:president@aifp.org.au) 0419 584 424

## Member Profile

### Member Profile

#### Meet Sarah Aird

She's the Owner at Sarah Aird Civil Celebrant. She is also the Secretary for our association.

#### How long have you been a member of the AIFP?

About 18 months

#### How long have you been in the funeral industry?

6 years

#### What did you do before?

Senior administration roles including Office Manager at the National Trauma Research Institute

#### Why did you enter funeral services?

I remember watching the celebrant work when my grandmother died when I was 26 and thinking "that looks like a pretty great job, but I would never be able to do it" - I just didn't think I'd be able to write well enough or perform well enough to really honour a person's life. When I decided to become a marriage celebrant I decided it was probably time for me to grow up and challenge myself by trying to work in funerals too, so I did a course and then waited. I performed my first funeral for an acquaintance's mother-in-law in late 2014 and instantly knew this was one of the things I was supposed to do. I haven't looked back.

#### What's been the most interesting experience you've had in the industry?

I was privileged enough to create and perform the funeral ceremony for Eurydice Dixon; working closely with her incredible family was one of the most interesting and powerful experiences I've ever had.

#### What's one thing you'd like fellow members to know about you?

I'm passionate about ceremony and about creating the perfect send-off - every person has a story, and we should honour that.

#### What's one thing you'd like to see done differently when it comes funerals and death care?

I'd love families to not feel pressured into holding a funeral service 3-5 days after a death. Taking an extra 2-5 days can make a huge difference, giving them time to really think about what they want to include and say in the ceremony.



## COMMUNICATIONS UPDATE

### Show us your stripes!

We've said it before, and we'll say it again - we are proud of our Association! Our goal in the coming year is to get greater public awareness of our Association and its members – as leaders in the industry, businesses with heart, innovators and ground breakers (pardon the pun).

You can help us in that aim by using our very cool Membership logo on your website and promotional materials.

We encourage you to promote your membership, to use the logo. [Click here](#) to access the various digital logo files and read through our usage policy. You'll need to be logged in as a member to see the information.

If you have any questions about how / when / where to use the logo, please don't hesitate to shoot us an email at <mailto:comms@aifp.org.au>.

### Help me diversify the AIFP Newsletter

There are so many of you, doing such great things in death education and death care. So let's start sharing! You may have articles you publish through your work in the industry or articles you would recommend as great reading. Maybe you've done something that worked really well whilst navigating the COVID-19 restrictions... or maybe you just have a books or podcasts you'd like to recommend. Whatever it is, we'd love to hear about it.

So don't be shy, shoot me an email why don't you? Help me make this Newsletter a real page-turner... not that it isn't already ;-). Please email your ideas or article to me at [comms@aifp.org.au](mailto:comms@aifp.org.au) for consideration.

Regards,

**Alison**

## EVENTS

### 'Ed Sessions'

#### The Final 2020 Ed Session... 7pm, Wednesday 7 October 2020

In our final Ed Session for 2020 you'll hear from Ashby Redward from Payright and celebrant turned Funeral Advocate Robyn O'Connell.

#### About Ashby and Payright...



Founded by brothers Piers and Myles Redward in 2016, Payright is an Australian-owned payment plan provider. Intended for larger and more considered transactions, Payright allows merchants to offer their customers a buy-now-pay-later payment solution across a wide variety of sectors, including the funeral industry.



Payright provides flexible payment terms allowing families, for example, to pay tribute to their loved ones without worrying about funeral expenses. Our non-invasive, 3-min, instant approval process allows individuals to complete an application privately on their mobile phone. Merchants are paid in-full within 24 hours of the completed application.

Ashby Redward joined his brothers, Piers and Myles, at Payright in 2017 and is available to answer any questions you have.

### About Robyn...



Robyn O'Connell has been a funeral celebrant for close to 20 years. Having worked for most funeral companies in Melbourne at some point in time and having written over 2,000 services, she has a good grasp of the sorts of questions and answers people need to know. She is passionate in people understanding how a great funeral can reflect exactly who that person was.

Robyn O'Connell is forging a different path in the funeral industry, starting a new business called Your Wishes Funeral Advocacy. Now working as a funeral consultant, she provides a fee for service, where families can get completely independent advice on how to choose the right funeral director for them. As a consequence, Robyn has revamped her booklet *Some Things I Might Not Have Told You...* but you might like to know, from being a 12 page A5 booklet in 2004 to a 32 page A4 booklet for people to be able to record not only important information, but their memories as well. She has now made that available to the funeral industry, come along and hear about it.

Ensure you're registered [via the AIFP website](#). Members' Attendance is Complimentary. \$15 for non-members.

We hope to see you there!



## Online Networking | Members Only Event

### What's hot? What's not? Who's who? What are you doing?

Don't forget, our AIFP online networking session provides members (this event is not open to the public) the opportunity to gather online and talk all things end of life, death care and funerals. These Zoom sessions allow you to connect with your peers over a glass / cup of your favourite beverage, all via the magic of the world wide web.

Held bi-monthly, our next session will be held at 7pm on 4 November 2020.

Click [here](#) to register - those registered will be sent the link to access the Zoom Meeting.

## All Things Death and Dying Expo 2021

### We haven't given up on this...

The ongoing COVID-19 uncertainty has pushed us into re-examining our plans for this year's Expo. We are working in the background on options to deliver a "virtual" conference to you.

At this stage we remain hopeful of producing something for you before Christmas. But we'd appreciate your thoughts, is this something you'd like to see? Will you have time / interest to participate in a virtual conference (esp those of you based in Victoria) once the weather turns to sunshine and more of our individual freedoms are restored?

You'll here more from us on this and we'd love to hear from you if you have any thoughts, contributions, suggestions... or even better, if you'd like to get involved with the planning.

Regards,

Jacqui

## UPDATES AND REMINDERS

### Banging the drum...

In our last newsletter, we talked about growing our community. Growth is a great way to deepen our network, our knowledge, our referral base, and to become a force in the greater community.

And we need your help to grow.

We need you to get out there and talk about our Association - to your colleagues, partners, other businesses you work with. Tell them about us, encourage them to join, and together we will all benefit from a stronger Association.

The nitty gritty to share with them – there is an application process. All successful memberships to the Association are individual, at a flat rate per person of \$150 per annum. As you know, that is payable each year on July 1<sup>st</sup> (members joining outside of that time period will have their dues calculated pro rata).

If you have anyone interested in joining, please send them our way.

**You can find out all you need to know about joining here!**

## CONTACT US

If you have any questions, suggestions, ideas or input please let us know via email.

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