

Lee Wilson

IT specialist and musician

I found myself struggling a little to find some succinct language to describe my experiences during the reading of this book.

Firstly, I thoroughly enjoyed Part 1. Despite being married via the services of a celebrant I have never given much thought to the history of the practice. I had never previously heard of Lionel Murphy but Anna's rendering of his story touched my heart.

There were a lot of statements made in that first section of her book that I would like to give further time to consider. The social ramifications of the introduction of this service are incredibly extensive and resulted in significant changes to the society in which we live – not something that I had previously considered as such. I also very much like the fact that civil celebrancy was brought into Australia with very little in the way of guidelines and parameters. It seems unusual (and wonderful) that such a vital practice would be allowed to grow and develop without much in the way of restriction from the governments of the time.

I felt that Part 2 (i.e. her story) gave a good insight into her history and reasons for becoming involved in celebrancy (as well as providing more information about other people who have influenced her directly and indirectly in that world).

However, for me, the vignettes in Part 3 were most revealing of her intelligence, warmth and sense of service to the community. All of the vignettes were enjoyable to read. Such human stories. Beautiful snapshots into vital parts of people's lives that perfectly illustrate the value of celebrants in our society.

I wish her all the best for her book.