

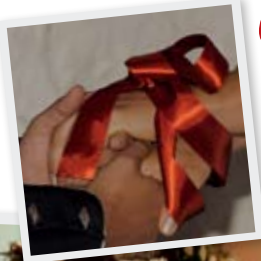
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The most comprehensive WEDDING DIRECTORY for the Hunter Region.

# Bound by Love

BY PHILIP GREENTREE



## What are the types of handfasting?

Traditionally handfasting can be performed with either a satin ribbon, or more authentically with braided cord or rope. Hand fastening can also be performed with six strands of ribbon, each in a different colour equating to a particular emotion. Whether you decide on a single or six strand handfasting, it is a beautifully emotional act that enables any couple to add a spiritual element and emphasise their commitment to each other.

To some, handfasting may seem an anachronism in today's society; however, handfasting is not just from the days of the ancient Celts. Handfasting has once again gained momentum and is rapidly growing in popularity throughout Australia.

In its simplest form, handfasting is the binding of a couple's wrists during their marriage ceremony. In Celtic society, handfasting was actually an act of trial marriage. A couple would have their wrists bound (fasted) and then live together for a year and a day. At the end of this period, they could elect to marry or go their separate ways.

Over time, handfasting changed from being a trial marriage to become an act of legal marriage. Outlawed circa 1940, Scotland's Free Parliament has been moving towards reintroducing handfasting as a legal act of marriage.

As a celebrant who performs in excess of 70 handfasting ceremonies each year, I see a client base that exhibits extraordinary levels of interest in spirituality. While these couples may have rejected Christianity, they acknowledge a master entity and are inclined towards the ancient Celtic belief of the immortality of the soul. For these couples, they look upon handfasting as the moment when they commit themselves to each other on the spiritual level. Handfasting has become the act by which their souls are merged ceremonially.

For more information on handfasting and all your ceremony requirements see Greentree Ceremonies details on page 67.