

**PEOPLE
LIKE US...**

Every week, "Kosmos" newspaper will be presenting stories of Greeks in Australia. If you would like to share your story with us, send us an email and your favourite photo at: kosmos@kosmos.com.au



Two words about me:

This is a difficult question to answer...However, if I had to narrow it down to a few words I would say that I'm determined, pragmatic and gregarious.

Where was I born:

I was born in one of the most infamous cities in the world- Sydney, Australia.

Date of birth:

20 September 1983

Family status:

My family and all live in Sydney. I have two siblings- an older sister and a younger brother. Yes I am the middle child and the so-called "middle-child-syndrome" does exist!

My origins:

Both my parents immigrated to Australia over 30 years ago. My father is from Karpenisi, Greece and my mother is from Akaki, Cyprus.

Two words about my family:

Well, we all physically look different and funnily enough so are our personalities. I would consider us to be individual characters. We each have our own way of approaching certain things in our daily live, nonetheless we're a family. We're all entwined with many unforgettable experiences and loving memories. I have been blessed to have had such solid moral groundings.

About my work:

I am a High School teacher. I always dreamed of becoming a teacher, when I was a child. The beginnings were slightly difficult. But I came to

Connie Zagrimanis High School teacher

accept that every day makes a new, challenging experience. Teaching is a great way to stay sharp and keep learning throughout one's career. By constantly having to impart information to young people, teachers enjoy the benefit of retaining large amounts of information about the subjects they most love as a matter of necessity and habit.

My interests:

I love reading, researching, travelling, socialising and I must admit I do enjoy working- many may consider me to be a workaholic- I'm not though- honest!

About my life in Australia:

Life in Australia is quite busy yet it is peaceful and trouble-free. It is home. Greek- Australians many years ago had managed to consolidate their position in a distant, new environment and the same time contribute to present day development of a new homeland. I only came to appreciate this once I begun to travel. We all truly a should be thankful.

My relationship with Greece:

The geographic distance between Greece and Australia is nullified. Greece will always be apart of me- after all we carry Ulysses spirit within us. I am connected to Greece and it too is my home. I regularly have this

wave of nostalgia which I'm sure equally possesses other Greek Australians like myself. Greece my home away from home.

What I like about living in Australia:

Other than the fact we're the world's largest island? Australia is where I was raised up and came to appreciate the best of both worlds- being Greek in a country that allowed me to practise and learn my mother-tongue, my customs and traditions beliefs. And at the same time appreciate the Australian way of life too. What's not to love? Not to forget we have unlimited opportunities for young and old and live in a country that respects (almost all the time) different nationalities and carry the motto "to have a go".

What I don't like about living in Australia:

As I mentioned earlier the geographical location of Australia seems to be some what of a disconnection between us and the "rest of the world".

If I would like to live in Greece one day and why:

I actually have travelled back and forth to Greece whilst I was in university. I absolutely loved it and I did consider many times over making that transition. However, I never followed through. I grew up with merely with



my parents and siblings. I didn't experience the "big" festive occasions with the over crowded house, the smell of souvlakia and lamb on the spit whilst mum was calling out from the kitchen to the front of the house for me to set the table. So that thought was always playing in the back of my mind each time I sat and sipped on my coffee whilst admiring the pleasant view in a Greek cafe. I want that for my family and it can only be done if I am home.

My personal big dream:

To reunite my father with his mother country and family. That's another story in itself.

My life philosophy:

What you think you create, what you feel you attract, what you imagine you become.

Faith based schools bond but don't bridge: AEU president

Australian Education Union president Angelo Gavrielatos says that faith based schools promote bonding but not bridging after Independent Education Union boss Chris Watt accused him of a "head high tackle" on non-government schools.

The Age reports that Mr Gavrielatos was quoted in a newspaper as saying: "Education should ameliorate rather than exacerbate social divisions ... When we start to enter the

realm of educating along ethno-religious lines, that should ring some serious alarm bells for us as a society."

Independent Education Union boss Chris Watt described the comments as an extraordinary "head high tackle" on non-government schools. He said almost 40 percent of students in Australia attend ethno-religious, or faith based schools, including those of the Catholic tradition, Greek Orthodox, Jewish and Islamic schools.

"He seems to be suggesting that only public schools can deliver social cohesion and anything else is about creating different ethno-religious enclaves," Mr Watt told The Age. "It's inflammatory and divisive."

But Mr Gavrielatos said he was not backing down from his view that "public schools remain the key to a vibrant, socially cohesive multicultural Australia."

"Schooling is about not only bonding, but bridging. In private faith schools, there's certainly a lot of bonding within their communities, but there's not much bridging across communities."

SOURCE (The Age)

