

**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](mailto:kosmos@kosmos.com.au)



**Two words about me:**

This is very restrictive... 2 words? I have been described as a 'lateral thinker' amongst many other things...

**Where was I born:**

Athens, Greece

**Date of birth:**

9th July 1961

**Family status:**

Single mother of one gorgeous 14 year old girl

**My origins:**

Athenian Greek with a touch of Samos & Skopelos' influence provided by my parents

**Two words about my family:**

Loving, giving

**About my work:**

I am a self-employed agent representing several companies in the Gift & Homewares Industry

**My interests:**

My passion for performing, and visual, arts has enabled me to be actively involved, predominately, in theatre. (I am currently appearing in Bulldog Theatre's production of Alex & Eve – The Wedding). I hold the title of Secretary, for 'Greek Centre of the Arts' (GCA). A non-profit association committed to establishing a structure to house all aspects of Greek-Australian, heritage, Arts. My other interests are numerous: Live gigs or concerts, spectator sports, dancing, scenic walks, animal welfare, socializing with my network of wonderful friends and family, etc...

**About my life in Australia:**

I arrived in Australia, with mum,

# Sylvia Dritsakis self employed agent

dad, and my 2 brothers, late April 1969 moving to Leichhardt, in Sydney, approximately 3 months later. My limited English vocabulary consisted of 2 words: 'Yes' & 'No'. We moved to our family home, Belmore, in 1973. It was difficult, initially, as we had no relatives here but over the years we established many wonderful and lifelong friendships especially through our affiliation with the Greek Orthodox Church of Belmore, in Sydney. An introduction to the Greek amateur, stage in 1989, has not only helped maintain my Greek language skills but also opened the door to new friendships and a passion for theatre.

Regarding work, I have been self-employed, for the past 18 months, as a wholesale sales agent to the retail, gift & homewares, trade, (after 17 years as a Sales Executive in the same industry). Concentrating on Sydney, I travel extensively within NSW, with the occasional interstate trip. My work takes me away from home approximately 16 weeks of the year and I rely on my beautiful parents to look after my daughter whilst away. Being a 'people person' I love my work as it enables me to meet and consult with lots of people from different walks of life. I also love the flexibility self-employment brings so I can be there for my family in case of crisis, as well as continue my love for theatre.

**My relationship with Greece:**

Greece is my other home, although I've lived there for less than a fifth of

my life, all my family are in Greece. It is my birth place. I pride myself on Greece's history, its culture, it's language, its ancient beauty, it's breathtaking islands, and landscape...Is there a more beautiful country in the world?? If I could tear myself in 2 parts one part would live in Greece the other here in Australia...then I would be complete.

**What I like about living in Australia:**

It's natural beauty, it's beaches, it's cleanliness, and most of all it's people! I remember as a child travelling to Australia on the Patris looking back towards Greece and saying 'I will never love another country like I love Greece'. How wrong was I! I love the fact this country embraces multiculturalism whilst offering everyone 'a fair go'. It's also a land of opportunity, free speech, a place that supports those who most need it, medically and financially. A place where disabled, and aged persons are treated with dignity and given as much support as they require. Even our pets have rights.

**What I don't like about living in Australia:**

The main drawback is distance and the expense of it, whether it be sight-seeing within Australia or going overseas. Being an island nation the distance factor, and the cost of it all, prevents the average family from travelling too far from home and thus Australia can be restrictive and, ultimate-



ly, become boring.

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

Yes I would but the only way is if I could spend 6 months in Greece and 6 months in Australia. I love both countries.

**My personal big dream:**

To act in Greece as well as other countries. Financial success so my daughter and I can realize both our dreams.

**My life philosophy:**

I have a few: Do to others as you would have them do to you. Love knows no boundaries. Age is a number not a label. Everything in life has a purpose...let the cards fall as they may and do not question the reasons why but try to understand them. Lastly, I believe in the beauty of human nature, that we all have good within us.

# Oh what a night it was!

VICKY Zafiropoulos took champagne to work, determined to keep the celebration going a little longer after taking out the Business of the Year award at the St George Leader Business Awards last Tuesday night.



**Excellence awarded: The winners of the 28 categories celebrate.**



**Vicky Zafiropoulos, of Hairem Hairdressing, celebrates her Business of the Year award with Leader retail manager Brad Duck.**

The owner of Hairem Hairdressing, at Kogarah Bay, grabbed everyone's attention at the crowded Conca D'ora Events Centre at Riverwood with her exuberant speech about "the secrets of hairdressing". "The secret of any business is not just technical skills, it's

about client communication," she said yesterday. "You've got to find out what they want and give it to them - and you've got to make their experience a good one."

A great believer in the power of positive thinking, compassion for others and the importance of family, Mrs Zafiropoulos treats her salon

as a extension of the lounge room, listening to clients' troubles and dispensing home-ly advice and good cappucinos. Her hairdresser daughters, Cassandra and Elena, work with her.

Several days each week, the family is joined at the salon by husband Peter, also a hairdresser, who has been in a wheelchair

since a stroke six years ago. Along with running the business, full time, Mrs Zafiropoulos is her husband's carer.

"I believe that as a family and as a family business, united we stand and divided we fall," she said.

"You need to be involved in your business and enjoy what you do.

"I motivate myself all the time and try to stay away from anything negative."

Her excitement at winning the major award was echoed by 28 category winners, each representing the best of community business. The list of winners will be published on Thursday July 23.

By Maria Galinovic