

Speech note for Australia Day Award Dinner - 24 Jan 07.

Why Australia – Why Wollongong

It is my honour and pleasure to share with you my thoughts on “Why Australia – Why Wollongong” during the Australia Day Awards Night. I have lived in Australia for 22 years and in Wollongong for 20 of those years. I am fortunate to have visited many countries in Europe, Asia, Canada & America. Within my 22 years in Australia, I have also been to Darwin, Perth, Adelaide, Melbourne and Tasmania and although I came to Australia & Wollongong by chance - I now live here by choice. BTW, the more you travel – the more you really appreciate Australia.

I love Australia! Here are some of many things I love about our country:

- 1) Australia starts with an A and this makes us in front of most countries. This is good when you have to fill out an online form. We don't have to scroll down under to find our country.
- 2) Hey! What about our time zone. We are one of the first countries to celebrate Christmas, New Year, etc. Everyone else has to wait until the next day.
- 3) I really enjoy living in Australia because it is so diverse. Many migrants brought the best with them to this country plus all the good things already in Australia - this makes Australia special. We have a multitude of cultures, plenty of good food, art, music, and so on.
- 4) We have a super sized land here in Australia. I love the space. There is plenty of it to move around in.
- 5) EEO is one of the acronyms that I like. I think the people in this country are fair and everyone in Australia has a chance to fulfil their dreams. Australia is a country of opportunities – make the most of it to achieve your own dreams and to contribute to our beautiful country.
- 6) Australia is a generous country. We give good support to our people and we are among the first to reach out a helping hand in times of natural disaster and suffering around the world. All Australian citizens should be proud of this and appreciate the fact that we have a safe country to live in.

Now – Why do I live in Wollongong?

- 1) We are 5 – 10 minutes from nearly everything! We can go to work, shops, the beach, the mountain etc all in a very short time. We can do much more in a day and this makes our day more productive and creates a more enjoyable lifestyle.
- 2) We are very close to Sydney and this means we can go there whenever we like and back to our lovely Wollongong.
- 3) It is a great place to get educated. We have one of the best universities here in our backyard. I went to the University of Wollongong for both of my degrees and then lectured there for a few years. In fact, I gave a lecture to a group of Korean students on Monday.
- 4) It is a great place to nurture young families. I have 2 young sons and I love the fact that we are close to everything so I can manage work and family without too much stress.
- 5) It is a great place to operate a business. We have access to talented people and can service not only local clients but with the help of technology, we can service clients in Sydney and all around Australia and overseas.

To conclude my speech – I just want to say that I am a proud Australian citizen and I appreciate what Australia has given me. I sing the Australia National Anthem with supreme pride. It is my country and my town. Thanks Australia. Thanks Wollongong.