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I am an Australian citizen and have lived in the UK since 1992 when I came here to study a for masters degree in international law.

At the time I left Australia I intended to return. However my career and family arrangements resulted in me staying in the UK. I remain a proud Australian with an interest in Australian domestic and international affairs. I regard myself as an ambassador at large for Australia.

I do not have British citizenship although I do have the right to reside here permanently because of marriage.

I was not aware as an expatriate, after I left Australia, that I had a right to vote in federal elections. I have not voted in any elections since leaving although I retain strong links to Australia through my family of birth - 5 siblings, and return to visit at least every two years. I read Australian newspapers daily and listen to the ABC online.

My submission is that I would like the right to vote while I retain my connection to Australia even though I do not reside there. To this end, it is important that the electoral system takes account of expatriates and, particularly, that it publicises the fact that expatriates can vote if they register within 3 years of leaving. I have lost that right as I did not register. I accept that ignorance of the law is not an excuse but I do consider it necessary that such a fundamental matter as the right to vote is included in information published to persons leaving the country and at exit ports.

John Nugent