

AUSTRALIA'S BEST YOUNG LOCKSMITH AWARD 2016



FIRST FINALIST

Thomas Collins NSW

Archer Locksmiths
7.5 years as a locksmith



I began my locksmith apprenticeship in 2009 at Archer Locksmiths, Chatswood. In 2012, I completed my Certificate IV in Security and Risk Management and Certificate III in Locksmithing and was placed First in Stage 3 Safe Technology. In 2013, I sat the MLAA Apprentice of the Year exam achieving a score of 97% and joined the Master Locksmith association. I am currently working fulltime and studying a Graduate Certificate in Security Management at Edith Cowan University. While working at Archer Locksmiths, I have been responsible for training our apprentices.

What do you most enjoy about your work as a locksmith?

The thing I enjoy most about being a locksmith is the variety of problem solving opportunities I encounter each day – I enjoy a good challenge! It is very satisfying to draw on all areas of my knowledge and skills to solve an interesting and challenging problem. It gives me a great sense of achievement and it is always rewarding to see a satisfied customer. The areas I enjoy the most are impressing locks, fabricating new components for locks, opening safes and creating a well designed master key system. Since studying, I now enjoy considering security as a whole, by combining all areas of physical security and risk management.

What key issues do you think will affect the Locksmith industry in the coming decade and how do you think these should be approached?

In the next decade key issues such as access control, threat detection systems and improvement in WHS practices will become more prevalent. However, I believe a key issue facing the locksmith industry will be the health and safety of locksmiths and their customers, due to the risk of asbestos exposure. Increased awareness, education and safe work practices around asbestos core doors and related products, is a high priority. This is often neglected through lack of knowledge, resources and appropriate identification of materials. Whilst this danger is slowly becoming a topic of discussion, awareness needs to be increased at a faster rate, particularly with our younger generation of locksmiths.



How do you keep current with professional developments in the field?

I am actively engaged in postgraduate study in the security industry. I am studying a Graduate Certificate in Security Management at Edith Cowan University and intend to graduate at the end of 2016. This experience has made me consider a more holistic approach to security and locksmithing in general. I have met other professionals in the industry and now regularly review the most up to date literature. In addition to this, I attend annual security and locksmith conferences, as well as subscribing to newsletters and journals. This keeps me up to date with the latest products and techniques. In addition to this, I have found practical experience, particularly working with a variety of locksmiths and tradesmen from other fields is the best way to continue to develop my skills and learn new techniques.

Tell us why you should be Australia's best young locksmith.

I should be ABYL as I am extremely driven and always trying to better myself to provide the most up to date, quality information and services to my clients and apprentices I mentor. I am continually improving my skills through further education, practical experience with other security professionals and networking with other locksmiths. If I was to win ABYL, I would use the opportunity to increase awareness of the dangers of asbestos containing materials, the liability locksmiths could face and how to increase safe workplace practices among other locksmiths.

**NEXT FINALIST ANNOUNCED
IN SYW SEPTEMBER ISSUE**

