

TIM KITCHEN

I am usually quite an organised person who tries to get things done reasonably in advance – but I kept putting off preparing for this moment that I am currently in. I guess this was my way of burying my head in the sand. So I sat at my computerand didn't write a thing, just caught myself trying to remember when Tim actually joined the staff at Strathcona. I COULD NOT REMEMBER. And I was quite puzzled as to why I couldn't remember. As I kept mulling on this, it occurred to me that it seems as if Tim has been at Strathi for ever - at least as long as I have. Now I know that that is not possible because Tim remembers me when Carey and Strathcona had combined concerts in Mayand he was in Primary school.

So what makes someone so much a part of the tapestry of a school where it doesn't occur to you that he hasn't always been there? There are so many things that I could say as Tim and I have shared a lot over the years but I will just mention a few.

I remember Tim as a young man with a boyish smile - full of dreams and ideas – awful lot of them about IT and Multimedia

Nothing has really changed here. Well, he does now have a few grey hairs!

I remember when Talana was born, when he to chose stay home and look after her and study at the same time. I remember when Tim got his doctorate.....and I remember Blackboard commencing.

Tim was the one who introduced me to Blackboard – actually Tim has introduced me to most things to do with IT except for Word Processing. And it is also because of Tim that I now seem to have all things from the Apple company – I still occasionally wonder whether he is on Apple's payroll!

I remember Tim's 40th birthday party, and thinking he can't be 40 yet!

So, getting back to this tapestry – Tim the teacher and colleague.....because you cannot separate the two really!

Tim is a brilliant teacher and I think that all students will vouch for that. He is incredibly creative, always looking for innovative ways to propel his and ALL students along the path of learning. He is tireless in what he will do for students and I am sure that this has always been his way, even when he was a primary teacher.

And it has been no different when he has been working with staff. Tim is always looking for ways that will make teaching more effective, that will help us, as a staff, to be the best we possibly can be. He has infinite patience, is generous with his time to a fault

and never ever does he make you feel inadequate or stupid because you cannot do something or don't understand something.

Khalil Gibran in his book 'The Eye of the Prophet' says:

'Before teaching others begin by educating yourself.
Teach by example before teaching by words'

Tim does this.

He is an incredibly supportive colleague – I have lost count of the number of DVDs he has made of performances over the years. Of countless visuals I have asked him for in performances, and he has gone away and just done it in his inimitable way – and if he thought something wasn't going to work that I asked for he would do something else.....and it always worked.

He would give up his free time to come and play electric guitar with Glee because he knew that it would spur them on – that free time was not just at lunchtime but well before school starts in the morning.

A few years ago I realised that Tim often does things in the background without anyone knowing. Situations where there are challenges, or something is not going smoothly, or someone needs help he will have a quiet word in someone's ear that resolves the situation or he fixes it himself. If you find out, it is always well after the event.

Tim the Friend

I have never known anyone so ready to help. When I broke my ankle is an example. It was report writing time – a Sunday and the reports were due on line by Monday morning. I had them done, so I went to pop them in on Sunday morning and couldn't for the life of me log on to school. Had internet, got everywhere else but not school. I texted Tim and he replied that he was at a conference but he would check when he got home after 5. I thought that was great. Rang me 5.30ish to say he could get on – have I triedthe usual. Said he would make a few calls couldn't get on to anyone, by the time he rang back I am sure he heard the panic in my voice – I hate anything being late! – his response was 'I will be there in 30 minutes'. And he was.It was Sunday evening at 8pm when he arrived.

I am quite sure that there are many of Tim's friends that can recount similar stories.

Tim - the SOUL

Tim lives his Christianity – he witnesses by example

There is a quote that I rather like, by Mitch Albom – the question was about finding a meaningful life.

'Devote yourself to loving others, devote yourself to your community around you, and devote yourself to

creating something that gives you purpose and meaning. Only an open heart will allow you to float equally between everyone.'

Tim I think that you have done all these things and that you will continue to do them.

I believe that we are All connected – that people come into our lives to teach us lessons or for us to teach them lessons and when those lessons are learnt they move on, sometimes out of our lives permanently, sometimes just for a period of time. We have all learnt so much from you – and not just IT. I also know that you will not be disappearing from our lives permanently, but that you will take on the role of 'parent' at Strathy as Talana comes into Year 7 next year.

I will miss the early mornings when I hear you go into the kitchen getting your cereal out, me calling out from my office 'is that you Tim' and you replying 'morning Georgie' and then me bounding in complaining about what I can't do or what is not working and you calming telling me to bring my computer in and you having a look at itover breakfast.

I will miss you at the Annual Concert, at Presentation Night, at the Performing Arts Festival, seeing you with camera and students in tow at the Swimming Sports at the Athletics and the list goes on.

In CPAC, we will all miss seeing you have your vegemite rolls / bread - You should see the size of the vegemite jar in the fridge. However, we will not miss the tuna rolls.

A chapter in all our lives at Strathy is coming to a close. We celebrate all that you have established and all that you have enabled us to achieve and to become. You are stepping onto a wider path, one where you are still able to be creative, where you can still share your expertise and influence but with a global community.

My prayer for you is that you have every success in this new phase of your life – that you continue to be creative and innovative as you introduce current and future educators to new ideas that will enable students to become successful, creative learners.

And that God keeps you safe as you globe trot

I will finish with a quote from Henry Adams:

‘A teacher affects eternity; he can never tell where his influence stops’