

Greg Cave:

It is good that we finally get a chance to do this. Two years of disruption have meant that many of you don't know what Warwick and I look like.

People often mix us up – several weeks ago someone even put a letter addressed to Warwick in my pigeon hole. True story. I never learnt how to lie, so none of what I'm going to say needs fact checking.

Warwick started here in 1972 – ten years earlier he struggled up Mountain Road to begin his five year sentence as a student at AGS – he seems to have recovered from that experience and I've seen no evidence of post traumatic stress syndrome for quite some time. Put it down to MAGS Pride. Early in February 1972 Jack Marshall became our 28th prime minister. For the quizzers here we had three prime ministers that year.

Warwick arrived in February in his Fiat Bambina. It took less than \$3 to fill the tank from almost empty. The roll was 1164 and Greg Moyle now chairman of the board played centre for the 1st XV – Greg didn't bother turning up for the team photo that year. Sixteen years later Warwick was manager of the 1st XV and he was the only adult who did turn up for the photo. The things an archivist learns.

in 1972, there were only two people in the front corridor, the

headmaster and the DP, there were no deans or guidance counsellors, and Miss Quail was the only female teacher.

Students were usually called by their surnames and teachers were known as masters. There's no record of how Miss Quail felt about that. Most masters were given nicknames – Warwick's fondness for a navy blue sports jacket and a white shirt earned him the title penguin. I was called zombie and sasquatch. Corporal punishment was quite common (both of us guilty by the way) and beginning teachers were pretty much thrown in at the deep end.

Warwick was employed to teach French and English but he is best known as the German teacher. Several weeks ago I gave a much more detailed account of his achievements but since John said I could only have ten minutes I'll have to limit myself to some highlights. Warwick has always represented the four pillars of the school. In sport he coached or managed cricket for 36 years, and in 2010 he was the first to receive from College Sport the award for service in cricket. He also coached rugby and managed golf and chess teams.

In the arts, Warwick has been the school pianist since the 1970s. He was heavily involved in the series of musicals produced during the 80s with Marist and with Auckland girls, attending every rehearsal and every performance. The Arts were strong even in those days and

the boys saw the musicals as a good way to meet girls. Many of them went to rehearsals straight from rugby practice. More recently he was known to students as the piano man – the guy who played the school song and various other pieces at assembly. In the 90s at the end of assembly he would play a recessional, usually of his choosing – this turned out to be a good way of drowning out the noise of the boys as the headmaster walked out. One day he played Chopin's funeral march as DP Mike Schwass walked out – Mike couldn't keep a straight face – no one could.

Warwick's whole time here has been one of service but most of you probably don't know that he was the staff rep on the board in the 90s when the decision was made to admit girls. He did the donkey work on the community survey that showed the degree of support for admitting girls and he regularly kept the staff informed on progress. I'm not sure that he has ever been thanked for this work. The few of us left from last century when we were a single sex school certainly appreciate what a positive change was made in 2000.

Warwick has excelled in the classroom and this was his one ambition – to be the best teacher he could be. He never had any desire for higher office but for a long time he has done stuff that headmasters used to do. Right from the start he put his students first – something

that didn't always sit well with his older colleagues. He was a mentor to me, not because he was given the job but because that is what he does.

None of this was recorded in appraisal documents or whatever they're called now but through constant sharing of ideas we both became better teachers. We may even have been the original PLG. He was twice awarded Goethe society scholarships to Germany in the days before the fall of the Berlin wall and he also received a Woolf Fisher award. He has set and marked external exams, and in the days before ERO he was seconded to the ministry as a languages advisor. In 2018 he received a national excellence in teaching award. He came with me to Greece and Italy on the first classics tour in 2006 and the following year he took his first group of students to Germany. Warwick organised three trips to Germany and we started a bit of an avalanche in overseas trips to France, China, Japan, Australia and the United States. Covid has put a halt to that for now.

Warwick is a true bibliophile and his book collection would put many school libraries to shame. He is an avid reader and regularly reads in German and French as well as English. He is fluent in French and German, gets by in Spanish and took the time to learn some Japanese and Chinese when these languages were introduced under his watch. He and I used to speak in Latin when we didn't want others to know

what we were talking about – on more than one occasion students accused us of speaking Klingon. He is a qualified piano teacher, plays professionally and if you visit him be careful not to bump into the grand piano.

Later on this year you will be receiving emails from Warwick asking for comments about students applying for university scholarships. I know your first impulse is to bin them but behind these emails lie hours of work preparing testimonials even for students who have no chance at all of gaining a scholarship. He turns no one away even when they turn up ten minutes before the closing date. As a result of his work, students regularly receive about half a million dollars towards their university expenses – something not to be sneezed at.

Most of Warwick's students idolise him and his reputation has spread far and wide in the community. It is a matter of pride to him that he learns the names of all his students during the first lesson, and that he pronounces their names correctly. He is visited regularly by former students and remains in touch with many going back to the early 70s. Students have been known to take German just so they could be in Warwick's class. A few years ago a young man offered \$50 so he could be in 9 Gibbs, and when Dale Burden resigned some

students set up a Facebook page called Warwick Gibbs for Headmaster.

A few weeks ago Warwick was honoured as the Albertian of the year for 2021. He is just the third person to have reached the 50-year mark but his 50 years are unique – they have been in the classroom, full time and without a break. I tried to work out how many lessons he's prepared, how many tests he has set and marked, and how many young people's lives he has influenced for the good. I gave up.

At University Warwick and I both struggled with the Roman writer Cicero and neither of us is a great fan of him. However, a quote from Cicero, which I confess I have not verified sums, up Warwick's 50 years.

What nobler employment, or more valuable to the state, than that of the man who instructs the rising generation?