

# Eric Jones

Shy, no - retiring, yes. RS teacher, deputy Head of Middle School and of course the energy behind everything from *Godspell* to *Barnum*, Mr Jones is off to a well-earned Welsh cottage. Mr Esmond Lee sends him off



AS ERIC HIMSELF freely confesses, in the days when he first went to school, "there was no typing allowed, word-processors had not yet been conceived of, school caps were worn by all and boys could still face corporal punishment." I can't think of a more telling way of paying tribute to Eric than to start with his own words and a fitting comment of his to follow: "We don't teach by fear anymore." What a fabulous philosophy to celebrate - the joy of helping young individuals to delight in their upbringing and be surrounded by a warm, caring community!

Eric has made it his business to give to every pupil he has come across their basic birthright by showing respect for every boy, helping them on their way. This has been so clear from the very first days when Eric came to Trinity some 10 years ago. His

presence has been inescapable. An inspirational teacher, a loyal colleague and a friend to all his students, we shall miss him very sorely. And we shall miss him for his style and flair - not just the sartorial flamboyance but in the classroom and for all that is theatrical - coloured handouts, posters and costumes galore.

Eric's great forte, of course, has been to bring colour into our lives. Not for him - not for us, therefore - a grey world of second best and making do with life's lot. Eric has made his commitment so clear: to see that any student gets the chance to become an enlivened individual and a confident, generous adult. I should like to pay tribute to Eric's work in RS, or in Drama or as a Form Tutor and more lately as Deputy Head of Middle School. Or in Kidscape, in dealing with bullying. But this

would not be enough, for actually, Eric's great gift is to have inspired literally scores if not hundreds of children and helped them become the confident, happy individuals they are now.

No wonder that Eric has been held with such affection by his tutees, his pupils and his fellow actors, so much so that at home Eric and Viv have seemed to hold open house for Trinity students and there is no shortage of pupils for whom Eric has been, in a way, a kind of second family.

And there's a reason for this. Eric believes passionately in the individual rights of every child and of seeking the best for everyone. I've seen this in the enthusiasm of Eric's teaching, of his comments to pupils - the constructive words, the encouraging advice, practical

tips on how to cope, how to improve.

Eric has been a brilliant support to so many people who all owe him a great debt of gratitude for all his encouragement over the years.

So, Eric, there are very few ways in which we can adequately thank you, but the only real gift that any teacher can really hope for is to know that he or she leaves behind them lives which have been transformed. This you have done in spades. You are an inspiration to so many people; you'll be sorely missed and I'd just like to pass on our deepest thanks and best wishes to you and to Viv and your family as you leave us - I know that you will be a blessing to any community you settle in: please, keep in touch.