

MATHEMATICS

IN SCHOOL



Editorial

It has been a great privilege to have been charged with guest editing this most special of special issues of *Mathematics in School* in honour of the great mathematics educator Professor Malcolm Swan. Malcolm's legacy over 40 years of active research and development is vast, and I would like to thank the editorial team for agreeing to expand the number of pages in this issue beyond the usual allocation, so as to allow space to represent a greater number of Malcolm's achievements (Note 1).

It is extremely rare for a mathematics education academic to be a household name among mathematics teachers, as Malcolm was. Malcolm managed what is often thought to be impossible – to combine an academic research career with sustained, serious engagement with teachers and classrooms. Throughout his time, he continued to develop highly creative materials of outstanding quality, which have been taken up enthusiastically by mathematics teachers across the world. Something of the international flavour of Malcolm's legacy is represented in the articles in this issue and, had space permitted, contributions from many other countries could also have been included.

The accounts in these articles reflect Malcolm's personality, his humour, his genius for invention and his passionate belief that thinking about mathematics can be pleasurable and powerful. He could take a tired, hard-to-teach topic and breathe life into it by adding a twist, turning an idea on its head or posing a novel problem, which would engage even the most cynical of students. In sessions with teachers, they always wanted to *do* Malcolm's tasks, not just talk about them. They knew that those tasks were gold and that time doing anything with Malcolm was the greatest of professional experiences. There was always laughter and excitement in any room where Malcolm was speaking, and everyone would be buzzing with the ideas.

Malcolm had the ability to speak to anyone within mathematics education, whether teacher, professional development lead, fellow designer, school leader, policy maker or university academic, and communicate compellingly the value of the approaches he consistently advocated. He transformed the teaching in my own classroom, as he did for countless other teachers. We and, most importantly, the students owe him a great debt.

Note

1. I would also like to thank Shell Centre Publications for funding the extra pages.

Colin

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