

2 MINUTES WITH Isaac Stone

Isaac Stone was a student at Tawa College. He is now a Teacher of Music and Choir Director at the college at which he received his own education.

As was stated in our September newsletter, “Tawa College’s Blue Notes (choir) received their first gold award which is a tremendous effort and a real tribute to their conductor Isaac Stone.”

Isaac is performing remarkably well in continuing the grand tradition of excellence in music for which Tawa College is well renowned.



Where were you born? Porirua

Where did you grow up?

I lived in Cannons Creek until I was 11, and then my family moved to Tawa in the house my parents still live in today.

Where were you educated?

Brooklyn Primary School (a long drive from Porirua East each morning!), then Tawa College for my high school years, and then finally Victoria University/New Zealand School Of Music for my degree in Classical Singing and teacher training.

How long have you lived in Tawa?

I haven’t lived in Tawa for a few years, although it feels like I do since I go there every day! We moved to Tawa in 2000 and the last time I lived there was 2013.

What do you like about Tawa?

It’s a close community but incredibly close to the bustle of the city. I felt living at home during my tertiary study I had the best of both worlds – the vibrancy of the ever changing Wellington City, and heart of the people in Tawa. There’s not much I’d want to see changed – but something I’d love to stay the same. It’s wonderful how so many families come back to Tawa to raise their children. Despite the changing housing needs in Wellington to cope with the expanding population, I hope that Tawa remains a place for families to choose to live in their “Forever Homes”.

What about family?

I live with my partner who is much too shy to want to be mentioned here, and my lovely puppy named Bogart.

Work experience over the years

Apart from two years working at a cafeteria while studying, I have been fully immersed in music teaching since I was 19 years old. I taught a variety of singing, piano and brass instruments at Hutt Valley High School, Bishop Viard College and Tawa College before I was appointed a classroom teacher in 2012 at the age of 23, and I have been in that position since.

I took over teaching most of the Year 9 music programme from my former



Listening to words of wisdom at the Mayoral reception for the Blue Notes mentioned elsewhere in this newsletter.

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teacher and mentor Shona Murray, which remains my favourite year group to teach, and I'm blessed to be able to conduct the Dawn Chorus (where I started singing as a student) and our chamber choir Blue Notes as well.

What are your interests and hobbies?

I'm in the extremely privileged position of being able to make my hobby my job – anything involving music at any time! Otherwise I enjoy a good pub quiz (one day I'll be on a winning team) and murder mysteries.

Favourite musical group and/or individual singer?

Elton John, who to my immense satisfaction has returned to considerable popularity amongst many of my students.

What is your favourite holiday destination in New Zealand?

Cape Reinga.

What accomplishments/achievements in your life give you the most satisfaction/pride?

Working with the young people at Tawa College gives me satisfaction and pride every day, but the part that really gets me up on a Friday morning is conducting the Dawn Chorus with my colleagues (and inspirations) Murray Cameron and Martin Burdan. It is an honour to be a part of this tradition. Outside of school, I established a choir in 2014 called Supertonic based in the Wellington CBD and that has turned into a very high quality and exciting group to lead.

(Compiled October 2019)