

# Two-way learning street

By hayley Williams

DON Linegar will tell you it's impossible to sum up a 36 year teaching career, especially one that's had so many highlights.

"I've had so many memorable moments and every school has brought something special," says the retiring deputy principal of Chatham High School.

"I've enjoyed the lot of it, I honestly can't think of a down side."

The popular school executive has been with Chatham for 13 years after teaching at a range of towns across NSW, including Punchbowl, Kingsgrove, Engadine and Hay.

He began in 1998 with Chatham, assuming the role of deputy, and has also stepped in as principal over the years.

Don is well liked around the school community and has always been known for his affability and openness, offering advice and wisdom to both students and staff.

But it's what the students have taught him that he will take into retirement.

"I just love that schools are a two way street for learning," he says.

"You learn as much from the kids as they do from you and I'm going to miss their spontaniety. Teaching has kept me young at heart."

The self-confessed golf fanatic is looking forward to days on the course working on his handicap, and hopes to take on a nomadic lifestyle for a few months of travel.

Although there's plenty of things he will miss, he says he's not someone to dwell and is optimistic about going forward.

"I think you know when it's time and I want to go out on a high," he says.

"I have no regrets, I've had a great life and I've been lucky to have a long career doing what I love."

He's witnessed many changes throughout his career, the most influential being the change in



Farewell to school, hello to travel: Don Linegar is retiring from Chatham High School, where he has been stationed for the past 13 years.

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technology over the last five years.

"The evolution of language and communication because of things like facebook and social networking has been the most significant in my whole career."

"The kids are at the cutting edge of technology and they're more adept to using technology as a tool," he says.

However, one thing that has disappointed Don is seeing the students take for granted, the vast opportunities on offer in our area.

"Coming from somewhere remote like Hay you realise how

lucky these kids are and it's disappointing when some students don't realise what they've got here, there's endless opportunities for them."

But at the end of the day he is extremely proud of Chatham High School and says it's been a great part of his life.

"I love the school, I'm proud of the school, by and large the kids

try their best and I know the majority of them will go on to become great citizens," he says.

"The staff work hard at pushing the social and welfare aspects of schooling, as well as the educational parts and they continue to go that extra yard to make sure the students' lives are the best they can be inside these walls."

Don will be missed by the entire school community, with well wishes and fond farewells flowing through during his last couple of days.

It's a bittersweet farewell, but he says the time is right because "when you know, you know."

