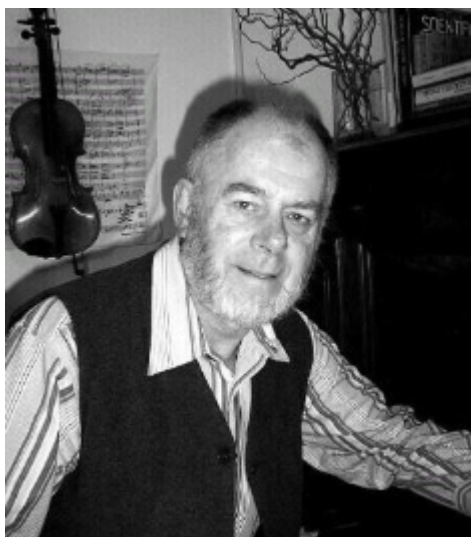




THE MATHEMATICAL
ASSOCIATION OF VICTORIA

In memory of Ian Lowe

A life spent lifting mathematics teachers and their students



Ian Lowe devoted his career to helping teachers make mathematics accessible, challenging, and joyful. Across classrooms, conferences, and staffrooms, he was a steady, generous presence who turned abstract ideas into experiences that sparked curiosity. A length of string could become a network, a circle, or a conversation; a favourite workshop task like *Hunting for Stars* could turn a roomful of adults into eager learners again. The ‘penny-drop’ moments he engineered for teachers rippled outward to countless students who began to see themselves as capable mathematicians.

A maker and a sharer



Ian’s instinct was always to build resources, and then give them away. He was famous for his love of spreadsheets, transforming simple cells and formulas into dynamic demonstrations that revealed patterns and structure. He also embraced CD-ROMs as a fast, affordable way to place materials in teachers’ hands.

He produced 17 CD-ROMs as part of his well-known Teach Maths for Understanding program, and contributed to 20+ mathematics teaching books, including Active Learning and the much-loved *RIME (Reality in Mathematics Education)* series. Even before joining MAV, he had authored 38 publications (1988–2004) - a clear sign that this was a vocation, not just a job.

Service to MAV and the profession

At MAV, Ian served as a Professional Officer from 2005 to 2017, continuing on projects thereafter. He led professional learning across the state, including a long-running series of Saturday workshops for beginning teachers. He helped design and then led the TMfU online resource, innovative for its time, which curated exemplar tasks from multiple sources and aligned them to curriculum.

Ian's work was consistently outward-facing. He secured rights from the Department of Education and Training for a second edition of RIME, co-authored with Charles Lovitt, and donated many resources for MAV to sell without taking royalties. He presented regularly at MAV conferences – including the keynote *VELS and a new direction for mathematics education*– and published widely in MAV proceedings.

National and international impact

Beyond MAV, Ian helped prepare preservice teachers at La Trobe University. Nationally, he was a lead author of *Mathematics at Work: Modelling Your World* with the Australian Academy of Science, a landmark contribution that helped embed real-world applications into secondary mathematics.

Ian also collaborated with Rob Money and Donald Smith on a five-year initiative (2013–2018) for the Victorian Responsible Gambling Foundation, producing resources that unpacked the mathematics of gambling, vital support for VCAL students making high-stakes decisions.

His reach was international. Introduced by Professor Susie Groves to Willy Mwakapenda, Ian's work in Malawi grew from an early visit into years of training hundreds of primary teachers in hands-on methods. With his wife Jan and many supporters in Victoria, he fundraised to help emerging mathematics educators, and as musical director with the Diamond Valley Singers he used music to support schooling and professional development in Malawi.





Enrichment and recognition

Closer to home, Ian volunteered for nearly 20 years at Somers Mathematics Camp for senior students, one of Victoria's pioneering enrichment programs. In recognition of his sustained service and leadership, he was awarded MAV Life Membership in 2017.

Ian Lowe's professional accomplishments were outstanding; his manner was humble; his expectations were high, of himself, for colleagues, and for the profession. His legacy lives on in the tasks teachers choose, the questions they ask, and the delight they cultivate in their classrooms.

Thank you, Ian, for the hands-on tasks, the spreadsheets, the CD-ROMs, your patience, and your joy.

We will carry your work forward.