*his-/her-stories*

No one sees me changing.
But who sees me?
I am my own hiding place.


The teachers had chosen to share with me and each other their own personal journeys. The discussion about this activity shows that their desire to tell these stories was a recognition, by at least some of the teachers, that their stories of becoming-teacher did not begin when they took up their first teaching appointment. While in their stories each teacher notes their decision to take up teaching as a profession, it is done so in the context of their whole life story. In Deleuze and Guattari’s (1988:293) rhizomatic becoming:

a line of becoming is not defined by points it connects, or by points that compose it; on the contrary it passes between points, it comes up through the middle ... a line of becoming has neither beginning nor end, departure nor arrival, origin or destination. A line of becoming has only a middle. The middle is ... fast motion. A becoming is always in the middle ... it is the in-between.

The images and words of the teacher’s stories describe particular places and events (points), but it is in-between these points that becoming occurs. It is in-between that things have speeds and slownesses, that there are directions, trajectories, lines of flight. The teachers’ becomings can be perceived in the in-between, in the movement between.

Enclosed are the stories of the teachers as drawn and told by them.
Neil’s story

this is where I get into computers and I get into the world wide web and develop programming for that sort of thing

this is where I went to school primary and secondary

over here was some army stuff that I was involved with at uni so there was a bit of direction I could have taken to go to Duntroon and that sort of thing

after I finished my degree here I went through to a computing diploma and graduated so these hats represent graduation

this is where I got my accounting degree so I’ve got a a T account and numbers representing accounting

after that finished I started to change slight career deviation I became a bar waiter

the cross is Jesus in my life at that point

and this is Mt M a very prominent feature in the town I grew up in

and then I come through this branch into teaching so another graduation hat

and this is the classroom
Nicola’s story

I was born and then I had a road to education it was pretty well from not quite birth but from early on learning school

then I had a break I had a lot of health problems from early on I missed a lot of time in year 11 and 12 I don’t think I was ready I just don’t think I would have handled it I’d had enough of education I think some of it was due to having been sick

I met my ex-husband and we got married then I got pregnant had kids earlier than was planned which was good

I worked at the Berlei factory making bras for some reason I was good at it I guess I’m that sort of person who tries to do whatever I’m doing properly

back here too year 12 my English teacher told me I should be a teacher that I’d make a good teacher “I’m not going to do that because my English teacher says to” but later on I started thinking …

I realised I actually love learning the whole road was education even the jobs and kids that was part of a growing period and then things happened things changed I decided while I was married that I wanted to be a teacher

I left I couldn’t work while I was pregnant for health reasons the factory closed later on I tried to make my own opportunities I did family day care and worked in preschools we had a business

I wasn’t ready to leave home I worked in some very plain jobs because at that time employment was hard to get it was a really hard time to find jobs especially in a town like my home town so it was take whatever you could get

I was born and then I had a road to education it was pretty well from … not quite birth but from early on learning school
Rick's story

the branch beside that is a representation of where I’ve lived
I was born and grew up on the coast and we’ve got the little ocean and the yellow sand
I moved to the mountains green and purple and back to the coast that’s why the coast is there about 3 times because I’ve lived on the coast more than I’ve lived in the mountains
up on the hill

I have my parents who are a very strong influence in my life on one side on the other side I’ve got my sister who was also a very strong influence in my life and still is
I was always trying to be as good as her at school but I didn’t quite get there

left there and did a few other odd jobs but ended up working for Apple

as we come down the tree the next branch indicates my career choices I had nine years in the Australian army did an apprenticeship with them

(Tuesday 25th October 2005)
I enjoy maths
I wanted to be a maths teacher but they said no we need more computer teachers and you’re more qualified for that ohhh I love maths

as well as doing a lot of truck driving over the years to make sure the that my family always had a roof over their heads and food on the table
I have done about 35 different jobs in my life

when we get down the trunk further I haven’t put anything there to represent it but my wife went to uni first
I was tutoring her and her friends on computers and advanced calculus even though I couldn’t pass it in year 10
I just have this head for numbers
I started looking at going into teaching as a full time career but that didn’t happen until further down the road

I enjoy maths
I wanted to be a maths teacher but they said no we need more computer teachers and you’re more qualified for that ohhh I love maths
The teachers’ stories show how they brought with them, to their schools in unfamiliar places, many varied experiences of different places: different geographic places, different work places; different dwelling places. These experiences of place are cumulative. In Laurel Richardson and Ernest Lockridge’s (2004) collection of place stories each story contains memories and reflections on other times, and other places, which influence the author’s experience of the current place and the current time. It is as if the authors needed to describe other places and other times to enable the reader to understand their current experience. In an unfamiliar place we cannot but adjust and make sense of our place with reference to our past experiences. The teachers chose to tell me about their past experiences. It was as if they too sensed that if I was to make any sense of their current experiences I would need to know something about their past experiences.

The teachers’ stories also tell of many becomings: becomings that were multiple, multiplicitous, and continuing; becomings that have no beginning and no end: becoming-student, becoming-partner, becoming-parent, becoming-sportsperson, becoming-military … Becomings that are transformational but incorporeal (Deleuze and Guattari 1988:80-81); that is, while the teachers remained all the while the same corporeal body, these becomings were movements within and without them. These teachers came to their first teaching appointments as assemblages of many becomings. In Deleuzo-Guattarian rhizomatics an assemblage is a multiplicity—consisting of lines and speeds, of which we ask, ‘what it functions with, … in which other multiplicities its own are inserted and metamorphosed’ (Deleuze and Guattari 1988:4). In the chapters place, teaching, relationships, and teacher, how the teacher assemblages “function” with other multiplicities—with people and places, with the animate and inanimate—is explored through the teachers’ representations of their lived experiences.