



# GESTA NON VERBA

ISSUE 2 – 25<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2003

Next issues: 17<sup>th</sup> September  
10<sup>th</sup> December

## PRESIDENT'S NOTES.

Welcome to another issue of GESTA NON VERBA!

Well, reunion fever has hit town. The classes of 1993, 1983 and 1968 (!) are holding reunions this year. See elsewhere in this issue for details, or visit [http://www.jamesruse.nsw.edu.au/union/reunion\\_main.html](http://www.jamesruse.nsw.edu.au/union/reunion_main.html).

We're also holding an annual dinner/dance this year on Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> September, to which ALL ex-students, ex-staff and current staff are invited, as well as their families. This is the first dinner we've had of this sort and I hope you can show your support of the Union by coming along. Our special guest speaker is JRAHS Icon, Mr Mick Canty!

As always, if you have anything you'd like to see in the next issue of GNV, please email Robin Legge at [exstudents@jamesruse.nsw.edu.au](mailto:exstudents@jamesruse.nsw.edu.au).

PURSUE EXCELLENCE!

David Streeter

## PRINCIPAL'S NOTES.

It is indeed a great step forward to have set our first general Union Annual Dinner for many years. I believe the last was held at Epping RSL in 1993, ten year ago! The Union owes a debt of gratitude to your new President, David Streeter (1990) and executives David Yu (1999) and Carmen Kong (1998) who have been the prime movers. The Union's membership now stands at 883 not too bad at all when you consider we have had less than 4,000 students graduate from James Ruse. I look forward to rekindling many friendships at the Annual Dinner.

Michael Quinlan

## ANNUAL UNION DINNER.

**Date:** Saturday 20 September 2003  
**Time:** 7.30 pm for an 8.00 pm start  
**Venue:** JC Hoskin Auditorium  
**Drinks:** BYO  
**Food:** A three course dinner will be served  
(Advise if vegetarian meal required.)  
**Guest Speaker:** Mr Mick Canty  
**Cost:** \$39 per head  
**Bookings:** Bookings may be made individually and you will be placed at a table of your graduation year  
**OR**  
by tables of ten.  
**Due to budget restrictions, bookings must be accompanied by the payment in full.**  
**RSVP:** Thursday 11 September 2003  
**Payments:**  
\* By cheque – payee "James Ruse Agricultural High School" marked Annual Union Dinner.  
\* Over the phone via credit card to our Accounts Office.

## REUNIONS.

### 1968

Can you believe that it is 35 years since we left James Ruse?

So much has happened and people's lives and careers have taken them in many directions often far removed from an agricultural education. However there is a strong bond in the friendships that were made in those years of our youth between 13 and 18.

As many will know and have experienced, we have had several re-unions in various locations over the years, and, since it is important to celebrate the milestones, the 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our leaving school is another great opportunity to get together.

Twice before we have had re-unions at Coolangatta Historical Village, Shoalhaven heads on the south coast NSW about 150 kms south of Sydney. This has been a terrific venue in the past as it is an easy drive from Sydney and has excellent facilities including a 9 hole golf course. The motel style rooms are spread around an old village giving a relaxed atmosphere.

We have 25 rooms on hold and from the response so far we may need more.

We plan to start on Friday evening 12<sup>th</sup> September with dinner at the Bistro Restaurant. Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> spent in Village area playing golf, reminiscing or sight seeing. Saturday night Banquet Dinner in the Great Hall. Sunday, more lounging about and BBQ lunch.

So here is what to do:

1. Make the decision to come and be part of the fun.
2. Tell anybody from Ruse with whom you are in contact and make sure they are coming too.
3. Contact Coolangatta Estate and book a room with the Scarlett Mob 02 44487131.
4. Contact Geoff Scarlett or Dave Eadie and let us know you are coming.

If you have any questions or would just like to say G'Day, phone or email:

Dave Eadie:

Work: (02) 9682 0246

Home: (02) 4267 3481

Email: [David.Eadie@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:David.Eadie@det.nsw.edu.au)

Geoff Scarlet:

Work: (02) 4464 1899

Home: (02) 4464 1915

Email: [scarlet@fastrac.net.au](mailto:scarlet@fastrac.net.au)

### 1983

The class of 83 has a 20 year reunion planned for the weekend of October 25-26.

Venue for Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> is the Epping Club.

Anyone interested should visit:

<http://www.classof83.michaelmowbray.net>

### 1993

It's been ten years since The Class of 1993 moved on.

Join former classmates to celebrate your years together.

Saturday 20 December 2003 – 1pm

Moretons on Sussex

20 Sussex Street, Sydney.

Of course, everyone will be expected to wear full school uniform (farm coat is acceptable if blazer is a bit tight). Year 12 jersey's will, of course, not be permitted, except under a farm coat or blazer.

Register at our site for more details, and to catch up with all your old school friends.

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/jamesruse1993/>

Please contact us for further information:

Veronica Yung ([yung\\_veronica@yahoo.com.au](mailto:yung_veronica@yahoo.com.au))

Nick Chapman ([nick.chapman@reuters.com](mailto:nick.chapman@reuters.com))

Clive Prime ([clive@23s.net](mailto:clive@23s.net))

\*\*\*\*\*

### VALE DAVID GORDON HOGAN (1968 – 2003)

In the last week of term 1, one of our ex-students, David Hogan, was expected to attend an important meeting at Laurent Industries (formerly Bell Laboratories) in the USA. He did not arrive. When an investigation was carried out it was found that at the age of 34 he had died in his sleep probably from heart failure.

David came to James Ruse in 1981 having been the dux of Epping West Primary School. His areas of interests were Electronics, Computing, Science and Mathematics. His level of ability in Mathematics was first indicated by his winning prizes in the Australian Mathematics Competition in Years 8, 9 and 10. However in these years his chief love was, Computing. He had designed his own computer, circuitry and all, by mid year 10, and took it to a Senior Lecturer in Computer Science who lived near his home. To David's disgust he was told that, although his work was outstanding, he would never possess the finances to set up commercial production. He went home and tipped all his computer equipment in a corner and picked up a Maths book. 6 Weeks later he sat for the UNSW IBM Mathematics Competition, successfully attempted all questions, coming first in the State in the Junior Division for year 7 to 10 students. This led to an invitation to try out for the Australian School Mathematics Olympiad Team. To his complete surprise he was chosen to compete in Helsinki in 1985 while in year 11.

His mathematical ability developed rapidly. By early 1986, his classmate, Damian Sullivan, felt that he, Damian, was not good enough to continue with 4 unit mathematics. "Your problem isn't maths," I told him "it's geography. Don't sit next to David all the time". Eventually Damian came sixth in the state in the HSC in 4 unit mathematics. The gap between sixth student in the State and David Hogan was that immense. David spent his time in class reading third year and honours University Text books, taking occasional glances at the board, improving my explanations and level of vigour of showing the class imaginative solutions to problems.

1986 was David's year. No James Ruse student before or since has matched his quadrella. I suspect no one from any other school has either. A bronze in the Mathematics Olympiad in Warsaw, first in the UNSW Mathematics Competition, a perfect score of 150 and a medal in the Australian Maths Competition (25 marks above second in NSW and 17 above second in Australia) and Room Medallist and first place in the State in the Four Unit Maths in the HSC.

David then proceeded to Sydney University where he obtained first class honours in Computer Science as he returned to his old obsession. He then obtained a Ph.D in Computing at Sydney University and eventually finished up involved in research in the experimental computing operating system, Plan 9 and inferno being developed by Laurent Industries. His first task was to produce a compiler for C++ and he completed it superbly well. All his work followed the minimalist

approach admired by software developers. A wonderful career in research beckoned before his unexpected death in early April.

David was a young man who loved life. He was fond of dancing and all types of music, especially industrial music. He thought deeply about the meaning of life and of issues important to the Australian and International Communities. For example in his last email to sister Eleanor, also a James Ruse ex-student, possessing a Ph.D in English Literature, David was strongly critical of the coalitions activities against Iraq. I remember him in so many ways – his polite interruptions to improve explanations given in 4 unit mathematics, his collecting donations at I.S.C.F. meetings for the World Vision child being sponsored by the group, his dancing happily at the school dance organized by the Maths staff to help raise funds for him to represent Australia overseas, his devastating ability in assembler to hide away in the computer all evidence of games programs brought to school by students to play in the library computer, his utter vagueness when not being brilliant and his gentle, humble nature.

His family has lost a greatly loved son, Australian and America has lost an outstanding intellect. James Ruse has lost a former student to which much is owed by those who followed. David was the torch bearer for so many Olympiad Ruse students who followed, the instigation of so much purchasing of materials for talented students by the school, the influence on mathematics programme development and the redevelopment of the 4 unit syllabus for the State in 1988 (still operating). As such, generations of students owe him a debt of gratitude for being himself, and using his abilities while spending 6 years at James Ruse.

But most of all I feel important lessons can be learnt from David Gordon Hogan. He pursued his interests to the greatest depth that his intellect could take him. He learnt for the sake of acquiring knowledge with challenges presented to me so that he could grapple, not for the marks that he might obtain in tests. His learning was very much self directed. He did not feel that his teachers were the main font of wisdom. He did not believe that teachers should be held in any way responsible for his achievement, or for his failures. I suppose, in this new century, he could be considered as somewhat of a dinosaur in his attitude to learning and his lack of interest in financial rewards. But those who taught him, except for his English teachers, who he regularly shocked with the paucity of his written expression, admired him greatly.

May he rest in peace.

**Michael Canty**

## **NEWS & COMMENTS**

**Grant Mitchell (1990)**

Grant is marrying Carolyn Smith on 19<sup>th</sup> July 2003. He is currently teaching at Pacific Hills Christian School as a Maths/Science/Biblical Studies/Studies of Religion teacher, teaching years 6, 7, 8 and 11.

**Dhananjayan (Danny) Sriskandarajah (1993)**

Danny will be marrying Suzanne Lambert on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> August 2003 in Trinidad, West Indies.

**Natalie Bates (1997)**

Road cyclist Natalie is now based in Spain with her sister Kate (Commonwealth Games gold medal cyclist) who has been taking on some of the world's best riders racing on circuits throughout Europe for the 2003 season. Both girls are preparing for this year's World Track Cycling Championships.

**Eileen Mak (1999)**

I'm currently completing my final year software engineering degree at UNSW. Over the last few months, I have been working with Sony AIBO robots, on a project known as RoboCup. The next few paragraphs are an official description of the project:

“RoboCup is an international joint project to promote AI, robotics, and related field. It is an attempt to foster AI and intelligent robotics research by providing a standard problem where a wide range of technologies can be integrated and examined. RoboCup chose to use soccer game as a central topic of research, aiming at innovations to be applied for socially significant problems and industries.

The ultimate goal of the RoboCup project is by 2050, develop a team of fully autonomous humanoid robots that can win against the human world champion team in soccer.

In order for a robot team to actually perform a soccer game, various technologies must be incorporated including: design principles of autonomous agents, multi-agent collaboration, strategy acquisition, real-time reasoning, robotics, and sensor-fusion. RoboCup is a task for a team of multiple fast-moving robots under a dynamic environment. RoboCup also offers a software platform for research on the software aspects of RoboCup.

One of the major applications of RoboCup technologies is a search and rescue in large scale disaster. RoboCup initiated RoboCupRescue project to specifically promote research in socially significant issues.”

Our team, named rUNSWift, has been participating in the competition since 1999, and has been world champion twice and came 2<sup>nd</sup> twice. Our team is made up of undergraduate computing students, researching Robocup as our honours year thesis, so annually the core team consists of new students, supervised by UNSW and NICTA (National ICT Australia) staffs.

This year, the competition will be held in Padua, Italy from 5<sup>th</sup> July to 11<sup>th</sup> July. There're only a few more weeks until the competition start, and our robots are under 'intensive training'.

## **The Wheel Goes Round... By Scott Copeman (1994 & currently a member of the Music Staff)**

When I left James Ruse for the final time after signing out in 1994, I couldn't possibly have imagined the path the next ten years would take me down, let alone the place I find myself now. What career options does a regular cricket-loving 17 year-old have after six years in such a sheltered environment? I remember at the time there was far less consternation about what the next few years had in store. I was determined to be a musician, and the early months of 1995 were spent parading from audition to audition, somehow convincing myself that I was invincible and any University Music Department would be privileged to have me.

The next six years are a blur, I don't think I made as much out of my time at university as I should have. But should-haves and could-haves are laughingly redundant. I floated between ambitions of world famous concert pianist to supremo conductor to iconic tortured composer.

Ian Lowcock, my year adviser at Ruse, would smirk at the irony. At the infamous Year 11 Health/P.E. camp at Vision Valley in 1993 he informed me that he and Katrina Jenns had decided that I would make a good teacher. As a supremely confident 16-year-old I scoffed at the idea. So when in 1999 I entered the Master of Teaching degree at Sydney University, my immediate thoughts pondered how Ian knew this before I did! I had the opportunity to ask him myself when I took up a position at Ruse as a music teacher in 2002. I still haven't asked him.

I suppose I'm in a unique position. Although many students go on to teaching careers in the school they themselves attended, to do so in such a unique and thriving environment is both rewarding and frustrating. So much of the school has changed immeasurably since 1994 yet the same energy is constantly flowing through the staff and students. In one sense there is wonderful feeling of acceptance amongst the staff, many of who taught me, the poor souls. At the same time, however, an enormous chasm of memories distances me somewhat from the school as it is now.

I haven't kept in touch with many people from Ruse. If I did, I can imagine bringing them down to the school again and spending hours remembering how many shades of brown David Heffernan wore on one particular day, or just how the tractor ended up on its side at the farm fair. I thought that coming back to Ruse would be extremely difficult. I thought that working with the people who taught me would be unusual and awkward. Instead I have found that my ideas and suggestions have been welcomed and encouraged, and I learnt more about teaching in my first week here than I ever did at university.

The Ruse I attended as a student and the Ruse I work at today are, to me, two very different places. Memories as a student are very precious, especially of the music department where I spent much of my senior years. The School Musical, the trip to Adelaide, the trip to Japan, singing with the Jazz Ensemble and of course the unforgettable (for too many reasons) Year 12 Formal reminds me of such a happy time, and mostly outside the classroom.

Well, the musical is still thriving, but producing and directing proves to be very different. I have only the deepest appreciation for what Alan Best went through for so many years! I am currently trying to reincarnate the excursion to Adelaide for 2004, and Ian Lowcock is still taking students to Japan. This year I am leading the Jazz Ensemble, not singing in it and now come to think of it, the Year 12 Formal is better left alone...

Sometimes it feels like worlds colliding. Sometimes my mind will wander while teaching HSC Music, listening to Benjamin Britten, and I'll remember sitting on the other side of the desk listening to the exact same piece of music for the very first time. I'll picture myself sitting there listening and wonder if I was anything like the students in front of me. In the scheme of things I suppose it wasn't all that long ago that I was sitting there, and I suppose some of my views towards music, school and life haven't changed all that much.

I had planned to travel in 2002, after a few years of toiling in the timber yard of the now defunct BBC Hardwarehouse. I had plans to spend months wandering through Tuscany and eventually find a job teaching in London. The only thing that would hold me back would be if a fantastic career opportunity reared its ugly head. I told my parents my intentions and when quizzed about what a fantastic career opportunity entailed, I told them that teaching at James Ruse would probably meet my expectations. Next week Ian rang me to offer some casual work.

Well, my dreams of travelling are still vivid and beckoning me strongly. I've been told that once you teach at Ruse you don't want to leave. I like to think that other challenges await me in far off lands. The great thing about teaching is that the challenges never stop. (The bad thing about teaching, however, is that the challenges never stop!)

In hindsight, becoming an educator was the best decision I made at university, and having the opportunity to educate some of the most intriguing and talented students in the state is certainly a challenge. To be entrusted with helping them shape their views about life and living is a daunting task. I think that's where the excitement of being a teacher lies.

## **Copy of email received from Bruce Cuneo (1975)**

Is anyone concerned that James Ruse AGRICULTURAL High School was unrepresented in anything at this year's Sydney Royal Easter Show?... or has it just become accepted that JRAHS is now just another selective high school within the NSW Department of Education & Training?

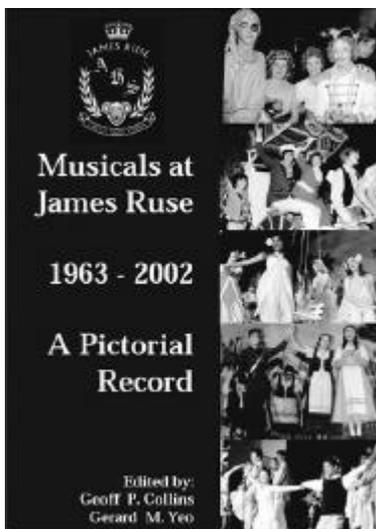
## **40 Years of Musicals at JR**

2003 saw the 41<sup>st</sup> successful musical "Crazy for You" performed by students of James Ruse. It was a pleasure meeting many former students. Some former students even attended more than once!

The reaction to the publication, "Musicals at James Ruse", was interesting – ranging from "Why am I on the front cover?" to "Do you recognize this young lad" by a parent of a former student who celebrated his birthday on the closing night and also played in the orchestra on all nights! and (the

parent) was distressed that she wasn't available to celebrate her now big boy's birthday due to another engagement. Needless to say, a "special" cake was organized so he wouldn't feel left out!

Many former staff and students were delighted in seeing and remembering "old times"



The publication "Musicals at James Ruse 1963-2002", coedited with **Geoff Collins** is available for you to purchase.

The Cost of the publication is \$15 (collected from the school), \$18 (posted within Australia) or \$25 (posted overseas). Please complete the following form and return to the Accounts Office.

Currently, we are at cost recovery stage and any surplus will contribute towards the Music Department's quest to purchase a new Piano.

**Gerard Yeo**  
**Co-Editor.**

**40 Years of Musicals at JR  
1963-2002  
A Pictorial Record**

The Principal  
James Ruse Agricultural High School  
Felton Road, Carlingford, NSW, 2118  
Tel: +612 9871 7126  
Fax: +612 9871 3874  
Email: jr\_yearbook@email.com

I am interested in purchasing the publication "Musicals at JR 1963-2002 : A Pictorial Record".

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

My postal address is: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**CREDIT CARD INFORMATION**

**Musicals at JR 1963-2002 : A Pictorial Record**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Amount:  \$15.00\*.

\$18.00\* including postage and handling within Australia

\$25.00\* including postage and handling outside Australia

*\*Prices are inclusive of GST*

Cash                       Bankcard                       Mastercard                       Visa

Credit Card No.                      |                      |                      |                      Expiry Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Cardholder's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ (as shown on credit card)

Cardholder's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_