



GESTA NON VERBA

ISSUE 1 – 31st MARCH 2004

Next issues: 23rd June,
15th September,
8th December.

PRESIDENT'S NOTES.

Welcome to the first issue of GESTA NON VERBA for 2004.

As the new President of the Union, I would like to thank David Streeter for all his hard work over the last few years as President. His energy in directing the Union and recruiting members has been phenomenal. David continues to serve the Union on the executive.

Mrs Robin Legge continues as our Union Secretary, maintaining the database of ex-students, publishing GNV, and maintaining school archives. Robin can also assist with organising reunions, so we must all make sure we help Robin keep our details up to date! Remember to also email your news to Robin via email: exstudents@jamesruse.nsw.edu.au.

The union cannot exist and function without the participation of its members. I wish to extend a warm welcome to all ex-students of James Ruse to attend any Union functions and meetings, which will be announced in GNV. In addition, I'd like to welcome any members who wish to share their talents by volunteering to be on the Union executive. Volunteers should contact Robin Legge.

I hope to meet many of you throughout the year.

Carmen Kong (1997)

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE.

I am sure we were all proud to be associated with James Ruse Agricultural High School as last years' HSC results were exposed on the front page of our Sydney tabloids on Friday December 19, 2003. (Eight consecutive years at the top). This was our best year ever with a University Admission Index (UAI) median of over 99.2 for 164 students, we had 740 "Order of Merits" (students who achieved more than 90% in a subject), the nearest school was North Sydney Girls High with 539 Order of Merits. Indicators suggest that this year's 2004 HSC Results will even be better again – a marvellous tradition.

Staff changes this year saw the retirement of Mr Rick Kemp (JR for 12 years – Agriculture) and Mrs Sandra Hurst (JR for 14 years – English). New buildings saw the erection of a \$1.8 Million Technology Block and the soon to be demolished, white ant ridden Francis Block (Old Industrial Arts Block).

My congratulations are extended to Carmen Kong for her new role as President of The Union; she certainly deserves your support for a Union which is now 1414 strong.

The Annual School Musical this year is on Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights 27th, 28th and 29th May at 7.30pm in the JC Hoskin Auditorium. This year's musical is a first for James Ruse, "Godspell". On very short notice is our Multicultural Night of Music and Dance - Wednesday 7th April at 7.30pm. "Enjoy an exotic and compelling evening to sooth the cultural cringe.... Fine music, inspiring dance, delectable food and good company. Bring a plate of food to represent your cultural palate". Entry by Gold Coin donation.

Michael Quinlan

EX STUDENTS NEWS

Report on Stephen Dzedzic (2001)

Stephen recently acted in a production entitled "Oedipus, the Infernal Machine" by Jean Cocteau at the Downstairs Belvoir Street Theatre. The play ran from February 17th to March 7th to very appreciative audiences, including about 20 current pupils from Ruse. Stephen showed great talent in his portrayal of the old wise man, Tireisias, convincingly aided by a shaved head with an unattractive combover that added to his hesitant walk and old man's wheeze.

Deeds Not Words – Alexander Nicholas (1993)

With these words in mind I set off bound for the Palais des Nations in Geneva as part of a human rights delegation lobbying against elements of our government's asylum seeker policy. I was first introduced to mandatory detention when I did my internship with the Refugee Team at Amnesty

International Australia. I was disturbed to find that we as Australians were tacitly supporting such a harsh and disproportionate border control regime. Undoubtedly there needs to be an element of border control and security but this must be tempered with an understanding of the fundamental needs of those seeking asylum: those people who are effectively stateless. Obviously the issues are more complex but the message is simple:

The failure to affirm human rights values for any one category of person is a failure of the whole system of mutual obligations and respect through which decent, pluralistic, democratic life is conducted.

Fortunately I was not alone in this belief and it culminated in my journey to the UNHCR in Geneva with the Australian Refugee Rights Alliance (ARRA) and as a representative of A Just Australia (AJA). With patrons such as Malcolm Fraser and Chris Sidoti we represented many individuals, organisations and religious groups that believe Australia's policies toward refugees and asylum seekers should at all times reflect respect, decency and traditional Australian generosity to those in need, while advancing Australia's international standing and national interests. The aim is to achieve just and compassionate treatment of refugees, consistent with the human rights standards which Australia has developed and endorsed.

DEEDS NOT WORDS

We were extraordinarily well received in an agency whose primary purpose is to safeguard the rights and well-being of refugees and strives to ensure that everyone can exercise the right to seek asylum and find safe refuge in another State. The UNHCR also defends the option for refugees to return home voluntarily, integrate locally or to resettle in a third country. We met with Ruud Lubbers, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. He spoke of the launch of Convention Plus. In line with the Agenda for Protection, this is about strengthening and complementing the Convention through the development of multilateral special agreements aimed at enhancing burden sharing and sharpening the focus on achieving durable solutions. He spoke of the shared interest that the international community has in finding durable solutions for refugees. He expressed concerns though that over the past 50 years experience has shown that international cooperation has not always been as effective as it could have been. As a result we have seen too many protracted refugee situations; too many young refugees becoming child soldiers; too many refugees becoming victims of human traffickers.

Unfortunately Australia's efforts in multilateral arrangements in the Asia Pacific region have been overshadowed by intense politicising, manipulation and distortion of the central issues which have resulted in Australia embracing extraordinarily strict reception standards for asylum seekers who enter the country illegally. While we were in Geneva the UNHCR along with other government representatives and non-government organisations were all critical of Australia's stance.

Are there any alternatives? Of course there are. There are many pertinent references in: *Protecting Refugees: Alternatives to a Policy of Mandatory Detention* found at <http://www.arts.uwa.edu.au/MotsPluriels/MP2102an.html>.

An amended version of this paper was published in the Australian Journal of Human Rights.

For so long I had only spoken of my country with pride. Yet it seems there are underlying issues in Australia's development (and this is just one of them) that must be resolved in order for us to play a meaningful and constructive role in the global community. Highly educated, well-rounded and highly motivated individuals are needed:

C'MON RUSEANS – YOUR TIME HAS COME!
DEEDS NOT WORDS

Life in Sakhalin, USSR (Part 2) – Andrew Legge (1991)

I can't multi-task. It is as simple as that. I thought I could for awhile until someone pointed out that holding a knife, fork and a conversation didn't count. I am one of the reasons why speaking on a mobile phone whilst driving was banned.

Where is this going? Well I have now been on the island long enough for a second haircut. Yes it was back to Svetlana to order myself another follicle masterpiece. After deciding on a Fydor special I sat back to enjoy a pleasant hour of haircutting bliss.

And then the phone rang. Now standard salon protocol states that if the phone rings the floor sweeping apprentice answers and either takes the booking or hands the phone to your hairdresser, who excuses themselves, takes the call and returns promptly to the job at hand. I don't think Svetlana has seen this protocol.

Svetlana takes the call, which is of course some friend and she begins to chat.....whilst cutting my hair. Yes, phone wedged under the chin snipping away. For the first few minutes I was assuming that she would end the call very soon and get back to concentrating on the hair. But no, Svetlana continued to cut and chat, cut and chat for the whole hair cut, all 45 minutes of it.

So I'm sitting there, far from relaxed, seeing my hair style changing with the mood of the conversation, knowing that if I had attempted to cut someone's hair and talk at the same time whilst driving a car we would end up with something like Billy Idol meets Smash up Derby.

At the end I thought I was happy with the cut, and was going to tell Svetlana that, but she was still on the phone. I now realise I was happy to get out of the salon. The cut, well, I keep getting these puffs of hair sticking up for no good reason. Lucky for me I am currently living under a beanie full time at the moment so this bad haircut should pass relatively unnoticed.

So the jury is still out on female multi-tasking hairdressers and I want my Richmond barber back!

REUNION – HSC CLASS OF 1972 Dooralong Valley Resort 12-14th March 2004

Reunion of the 1972 HSC class has just been held at Dooralong Valley Resort. And what a weekend it was! 22

people arrived Friday, another 32 on Saturday plus 10 day-trippers on Sunday. This gave a total of 57 ex-students and 7 former teachers (plus 30 wives/partners and children) in attendance on Sunday afternoon.

Sadly the years have taken their toll – the search for the old gang revealed that at least 5 of those hopeful young men, who did their HSC in 1972, have failed to make it to 2004. Another dozen are not on the Australian electoral roll and cannot be accounted for – although some are suspected to be overseas.

But for all that it was a magical weekend. The tone of things was set on Friday evening when the early arrivals, relaxing with drinks on the Lodge verandah at Dooralong, were treated to the sight of a young kangaroo hopping across the lawns, followed a few minutes later by one of the Dooralong Deer.

Apart from a few drops of rain (nowhere near enough to cheer the farmers among us) the weather was benign: mild and humid throughout the weekend.

Highlights of the Reunion included the memorabilia display and the trivia night on Saturday. The memorabilia display featured (among many other things):

- Copy of the 1971 document that ended the “short back and sides” era forever and made the wearing of hats optional for Senior students,
- Display of biographical material re James C Hoskin, including his Sydney Morning Herald obituary,
- Bound copies of James Ruse Gazettes of the time and extensive photo albums containing class and sporting photos (both thanks to Robin Legge at James Ruse),
- George Jackson’s school hat in authentic condition (only students of the era will understand exactly what that means) and
- Several letters to unsuspecting 12 year olds informing them of their selection for the 6 challenging years at Ruse.

The trivia night covered all aspects of the 6 years including sport, the musicals, personalities (teachers and students), academic achievements and 1960’s/1970’s music. Special questions were included throughout the night to maintain the interest of wives/partners.

Other activities included tennis and cricket competitions and a Cryptic Clue Hunt on Sunday morning for those who had not “kicked on” too late the previous night.

Former students came from as far away as Oxford, England to attend and others from Perth, Melbourne, Brisbane and far flung rural parts of Western and Northern NSW. One was found in the oil and gas industry in Indonesia but was unable to get here.

Sunday afternoon was the planned climax of the weekend with a Buffet BBQ followed by presentations and speeches and a mini concert by former JR English Teacher Mike McClellan (the “Song and Dance Man”).

Popular Agriculture Master Earl Walters presented the Cricket prize to Jonathan Woodward and Grant Kennedy. Former Maths teacher June Spencer (nee Ash) presented the Tennis

prize to Andrew Carson and Roy Shore. June was surprised that we still knew where she lived – perhaps she did not quite realise just how many teenage boys were in love with her circa 1969-1970! 1972 School Captain Dave Tucker presented the prize for the Cryptic Club Hunt to Coffs Harbour Radio DJ Terry Daniel on behalf of “Lisa’s Lost Souls”.

Legendary English Teacher Colin Anderson had the job of presenting the Trivia prize to “Jim’s Macadamia Nuts” led by Michael Miller. The “Macadamia Nuts” thanked Col with an impromptu performance of the Can Can, recalling Col’s hilarious 1970 Musical “Orpheus in the Underworld”. “Orpheus” was a daring production for a school in those days.

A surprise visitor was Matthew Ward, a member of the James Ruse HSC class of 1973. He is presently headmaster of Dooralong Public School, a few kilometres from the resort. Founding James Ruse Headmaster James C Hoskin actually attended Dooralong Public for a time in his youth. Matthew read a letter that his school had received from Mr Hoskin acknowledging the connection with the Dooralong Valley. Matthew was then given the task of presenting a James Ruse flag to Ron Lovitt, the initiator of the reunion.

Short speeches were given by Colin Anderson who explained and re-enacted his part of the classic “School of Barbarians” episode from 1964, Dave Tucker who recalled some amusing anecdotes and Ron Lovitt who suggested, rather unkindly, that the hale and hearty teachers who attended the reunion “couldn’t have been as old as we thought you were” when they taught us 30 years ago.

A big thank you is owed to classmate Grant Kennedy who is now the manager of Dooralong Valley Resort. Grant gave us discounted accommodation rates, a free buffet dinner on Saturday night and free use of the venues used for the trivia night, the memorabilia display and the Sunday afternoon BBQ and speeches.

It should be noted that on the previous weekend Grant had hosted a grand opening for Dooralong under its new ownership. People like John Singleton, radio personality Alan Jones, businessman Ross Turnbull, Telstra boss Bob Mansfield, Wallaby Steve Finnane, former Rugby League boss John Quayle and Prime Minister John Howard were entertained by John Farnham and Kamahl. Not a bad “warm-up” for a JR reunion, I guess!

The reunion was a magical experience. The teenage years from 13 to 18 are a highly impressionable time. As the weekend progressed people were astonished by just how much came back as memory after memory was triggered by contact with the companions of their youth.

If you get a chance to go to the reunion of your own year group, then go. You’ll be astonished by the way some of your mates have changed, amazed at how little time has affected others and you’ll laugh and laugh and laugh at the memories of how your mates and yourself jumped over, around or through the obstacles on the road to the HSC.

Next Reunion for 1972 class is proposed for 2009. If any of the years close to 1972 are planning a reunion let me know and I can help you out with contact details for a dozen or so teachers. They probably taught you too. Also contacts for

guys who might have had a brother in your year. Get me at ronlovitt@hotmail.com.

Website for 1972 6th form will continue to be maintained. Reunion photos are being added now. Address is:

<http://groups.msn.com/JamesRuseAHS-6thForm1972>

Ron Lovitt

CLASS OF 1993.

I don't know if anyone else has already written about our 10 year reunion for the Class of '93, which was held last year at Moretons on Sussex, but I wanted to say that it was absolutely fantastic to see so many people after so many years. Amazingly enough, most people had not changed very much at all, but everyone had interesting stories to tell of where they had ended up and how they got there. It was great to meet everyone's partners and kids as well, even though I was quite surprised at how many little ones there were!

I would like to send a big thank you to the organisers Veronica, Nick, Alex and Clive. It was great fun and I hope it is less than 10 years before we all meet again.

Carina Chow

OBITUARY

Dr Frank Ellison: 1945 – 2002.

Dr Frank Ellison, a member of the Faculty of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources and one of Australia's leading plant breeders, died on 12 September. His sudden death shocked the Australian wheat industry and the Narrabri community, where he had lived for more than 30 years.

Frank Ellison grew up in Lindfield, Sydney and his secondary schooling was completed at James Ruse Agricultural High School. He moved to Narrabri soon after completing a Bachelor of Science in Agriculture with Honours in the University of Sydney in 1967. He undertook postgraduate research in association with (now Adjunct Professor) Nick F Derrera AM in the North West Wheat Research Institute (subsequently renamed the IA Watsons Grains Research Institute) of the Plant Breeding Institute.

He was awarded a Master of Science in Agriculture in 1971, and a PhD in 1977. During this time Frank held the position of assistant wheat breeder in the Plant Breeding Institute, Narrabri. He undertook postdoctoral research in wheat breeding at the University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, in 1976 and 1977, before taking up an appointment as plant breeder in the Plant Breeding Institute Narrabri in 1978. He was promoted senior wheat breeder in 1988.

Frank was acting director of the Plant Breeding Institute Narrabri from March 2001, and was principal wheat breeder and a leading member of the SunPrime Seeds Pty Ltd wheat breeding business.

Frank's plant breeding efforts were particularly directed toward the release of Prime Hard wheat varieties for the north eastern grain belt, and he was regarded as one of the most successful breeders of these varieties that Australia has seen.

More recently, his wheat breeding interests expanded into other market classes and growing areas.

He had strong interaction with the Plant Breeding Institute's National Cereal Rust Control Program at Castle Hill and then Cobbitty, and also had research interests in other cereal diseases and in breeding for pre-harvest sprouting tolerance.

Frank's Prime Hard wheat cultivars had, and continue to have, a significant role in the marketing of Australian wheat production, especially to the higher return premium markets, such as for domestic bread production, and for yellow alkaline noodles for Asia. Throughout his career, Frank emphasised the practical aspects of plant breeding. He firmly believed that delivering robust plants with reliable yield and grain quality was the cornerstone of a successful plant breeding program. Frank established himself as one of the leading wheat breeders in Australia with an enviable international reputation.

Frank was devoted to his family and with them derived much enjoyment from pursuing shared interest in the diverse native flora and fauna of Australia. He was active in community life through his involvement with Apex and Rotary. Frank is survived by his wife Anne and sons Michael and Sean.

Article published in The University of Sydney News – 25/10/02

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At New York's Kennedy Airport today, an individual, later discovered to be a public school teacher, was arrested trying to board a flight while in possession of a ruler, a protractor, a set square, and a calculator. Attorney General John Ashcroft believes the man is a member of the notorious al-gebra movement. He is being charged with carrying weapons of math instruction.

Al-gebra is a very fearsome cult, indeed. They desire average solutions by means and extremes, and sometimes go off on a tangent in a search of absolute value. They consist of quite shadowy figures, with names like "x" and "y", and, although they are frequently referred to as "unknowns," we know they really belong to a common denominator and are part of the axis of medieval with coordinates in every country.

As the great Greek philanderer Isosceles used to say, there are 3 sides to every angle, and if God had wanted us to have better weapons of math instruction, he would have given us more fingers and toes.

Therefore, I'm extremely grateful that our government has given us a sign that it is intent on protracting us from these math-dogs who are so willing to disintegrate us with calculus disregard. These statistic bastards love to inflict plane on every sphere of influence. Under the circumferences, it's time we differentiated their root, made our point, and drew the line.

These weapons of math instruction have the potential to decimal everything in their math on a scalene never before seen unless we become exponents of a Higher Power and begin to factor-in random facts of vertex. As our Great Leader would say, "Read my ellipse." Here is one principle he is uncertain of – though they continue to multiply, their days are numbered and the hypotenuse will tighten around their necks.

Author Unknown