



GESTA NON VERBA

ISSUE 2 – 25th JUNE 2008

Next issues: 10th September
10th December

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PRESIDENTS NOTES.

Well Ruseters, the time has come again for the end of yet another hectic term. Preparations are well underway for the event a half-century in the making – the 50th anniversary of our old high school, to occur throughout 2009. Celebration events such as a fete, international food fair and a cocktail dinner are on the agenda.

Now comes our turn to contribute old (as in previous, not necessarily aged) Ruseters – we need suggestions of how the ex-students can play a part in this momentous occasion. Some suggestions have already come forward, such as creating a 'living library', a DVD of interviews of past students to be kept as a record of our shared experiences and memories. Volunteers to be on the various planning committees would also be much appreciated, especially as representatives of the ex-students. All expressions of interest should be directed to Robin Legge at the email address above.

Finally, I have created a Facebook group for our union – called the 'James Ruse AHS Ex-Students' Union' (original, I know) – please join and encourage others. Although somewhat bare at this point, I hope in time that the group will play an important role in keeping this community current and vibrant.

Till next time dear Rusians,
PURSUE EXCELLENCE!

Alexandra Streeter (1997)

Unfortunately Alex is moving overseas later this year so will be unable to continue as your President. Alex has held this position for many years and I would like to thank her, on your behalf, for the wonderful job she has done.

If there is someone out there who would like to take over as President please let me know.

As mentioned in the Principal's Message there will be a community business directory published as part of the 50th celebrations. I would encourage you to participate in this venture.

Robin Legge

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE.

Term 2 began with the usual buzz of activities: School Development Day, assembly, Athletics Carnival, Year 12 Information Night, the girls' KO soccer competition and the Year 9 Tocal Field Day excursion.

We had a successful School Development Day, while the school orchestra rehearsed. The staff of Girraween HS were our guests. Our keynote speaker was Professor Jenny Gore, Dean of Education at Newcastle University. Professor Gore is the main architect and researcher of the Quality Teaching Framework which has underpinned best practice in teaching and learning in the Department of Education and Training since 2003. Teachers shared ideas on assessment etc with Girraween HS while our support staff enhanced technology skills.

At assembly, Manbir Miglani reported on his experiences at the State Dance Camp – the first student from James Ruse to be there! He is now off to Singapore – well done!

Congratulations to Xi Chen and Jarrah Lacko who have been selected as members of the Australian Informatics team. They will be off to Cairo in August.

Four of our ex-students who scored UAI's of 100 in 2007 have joined University of Sydney in the Faculty of Science, and their success has been reported in several local newspapers – the Hills Shire Times and North Shore Times . Attached is one of the articles about the students – Kin Lam, Joshua Lau, Karen Lee and Alex Stoyanov . Sydney University has also put the news on the Faculty of Science website: www.science.usyd.edu.au/news/index.shtml

One of our former students, Rebecca Zaman, was part of the UNSW Law Mooting Team that has just achieved second place in the world!

Rebecca and her fellow team mates competed in the Jessup International Law Moot Competition, the most prestigious international moot competition in the world, which took place in Washington DC on 12 April.

UNSW Law students, Tom Levi, Brent Michael, Hernan Pintos-Lopez, Derek Wong and Rebecca Zaman were ranked first out of 100 teams from around the world after the preliminary rounds. The team then faced US law school Case Western in the grand final where they were narrowly defeated to take out second place in the competition.

The competition is a simulation of a fictional dispute between countries before the International Court of Justice, the judicial organ of the United Nations. Representing both sides of the argument, the teams prepare both oral and written pleadings.

The focus of this year's moot problem was the tension in international law between ensuring human rights and responding to acts of terrorism.

In preparation for the world finals Rebecca's team participated in an exhibition moot that was undertaken before the Hon. Justice Michael Kirby, Judge of the High Court of Australia and Ms Anna Katzmann SC, President of the NSW Bar Association.

Another of our ex-students experiencing success is writer-director, Jasmine Yuen-Carrucan, with her first film, *Cactus*. The film stars Bryan Brown and Travis McMahon as "a battler in dire need of cash who kidnaps a professional gambler and drives him west." (S.M.H. 22/4/08).

The 33 members of our school community who went to the UK, Belgium and France in the holidays had a wonderful, very moving, though very cold experience. For me, the World War 1 cemeteries in Flanders and in Normandy, the D Day landing sites and the Winston Churchill Museum were the highlights. The students probably ranked Paris number 1.

I have received three wonderful letters recently.

The first letter was from the retired principal of a tsunami-affected school in Sri Lanka, Sri Somananda Vidyala, thanking Kasuni Fernando for organising the sending of a stationary carton to the school. Kasuni had collected money and books and shipped them to the school. Mr Premadasa writes: "It is a great help to our students to start the new year with some more writing books, pens and pencils. Most of our students cannot afford to buy additional books or pencils for schools. A lot of students are from tsunami affected areas with one or no parents surviving. Others are having a very poor financial background." Another student leadership success story!

The second letter was from the Economic Literacy Centre, thanking us for hosting its annual Economics Conference in the M.A. Canty Lecture Theatre on 5/6 March this year. Over 130 teachers attended over the two days. Thank you to Mr Ray Lees for his assistance, and for the paper he shared with me on his presentation - *Ireland: A Case Study of the Impacts of Globalisation*.

The third letter was from Mr and Mrs Miyagawa, expressing their gratitude for having their nephew, Kazuki Ohtake, at the school from 18-20 March. They write: "Kazuki absolutely enjoyed attending classes, joining school events, and mingling with other students. Every morning he could not wait to get to school and could not stop talking about what happened at school after school His face literally lightened up as soon as he started talking about school, commenting that 'The time at the school is the most enjoyable experience I have ever done in Australia'. The experience at your school also gave him the courage to speak even though his English is limited, which I believe is the most important step in learning foreign culture and its language". Thank you to Mr Ian Lowcock and to all the students who looked after Kazuki, treated him as a new friend and made his visit very special.

The students in our Student Leadership Program in Years 9 and 10 have been initiating a range of community service programs. Following is a list:

- Leadership Program for North Rocks Public School
- Cyberbullying Aware – raising awareness in local primary schools
- Operation Renovation - fundraising for Fairfield Hospital
- JRAHS Environmental Action Group – tree planting in the local area
- Helping Sri Lankan orphans in need – material support for Tsunami orphans
- Safety Guide – teaching safety to North Rocks childcare centre
- 5c drive – fundraising for charity
- Build the Line – a petition for extending the Carlingford rail line
- Writing Competition – promote and develop creative writing in the school
- Healthwise – raising awareness and promoting a healthy lifestyle
- Clothing drive for Salvation Army – a clothing drive for the Salvation Army
- Book Club – promoting and broadening reading within the school
- Serving my Community – building talent, teamwork and confidence with Yr 4 Carlingford West PS
- Banaid – organising the 40 hour famine and related activities in school
- Chinese Lessons – teaching Chinese to Beginner Chinese students
- To Write Love On Her Arms Concert – fundraising for TWLOHAC and raising awareness of depression
- The Harmony Festival – working in the Ryde community to promote Multiculturalism
- First Aid – developing first aid knowledge in the junior school

Congratulations to Isabella Kwan. Isabella Kwan has won the Year 9 section of the Sydney Writers' Festival competition, sponsored by the Sydney Morning Herald. An outstanding result!

Last year the University of Sydney received almost 2000 applications for Undergraduate scholarships. There were 59 applications from James Ruse. The Entry Scholarships and the Scholarships with Merit are based on a combination of academic merit, together with a high level of school and community involvement and other skills such as leadership and communication. The Outstanding Achievement scholarships are awarded to any students who received a UAI of at least 99.95 (without requiring application).

Congratulations to the following students who were awarded scholarships at USYD:

Difei Dang – Outstanding Achievement

Boya Han - Merit

Amanda Huen – Merit

Julia Islam- Merit

Mandy Kwan – Outstanding Achievement

Kin Lam – Outstanding Achievement

Joshua Lau – Outstanding Achievement

Aaron Lun – Entry

Kedar Madan – Outstanding Achievement

Vinoth Nandakumar – Entry

Alex Ng – Outstanding Achievement

Karen Nguyen – Entry

Gurfateh Sandhu – Outstanding Achievement

Alex Stoyanov – Outstanding achievement

Vignesh Subramanian – Merit

Jia Wang – Merit

David Wang – Outstanding Achievement

Wen Shi and Emily Wong were awarded Access scholarships, worth \$5000 per annum for the duration of their degree.

These are all outstanding achievements! Thank you to all their teachers, from years 7 to 12!

Congratulations to Billy Huang of Year 10, who has successfully auditioned for the 2008 NSW Public Schools Senior Drama Ensemble. The Ensemble, (gifted and talented years 10 and 11 Drama students) meets once a week on Mondays (5-7pm) at the Arts Education Centre at Lewisham. The major performances for this Ensemble will occur at the State Drama Festival on 6 and 7 November 2008.

Sandra Li, who is a member of the NSW Public Schools Wind Orchestra, will be touring the North Coast on 23 -27 June. What a wonderful experience for Sandra!

Our concert band is preparing to tour and perform at a number of very small schools around Goulburn 9-11 September. I will be joining this tour. We will be staying on a sheep station. The students will be able to integrate work with Agriculture (especially sheep) and Geography (small towns study).

Congratulations to Irene Lo and Sampson Wong who have been invited to be members of the Australian Team who will attend the 49th International Mathematical Olympiad (IMO) The IMO will be held in Madrid from 14-22 July. The team will depart Australia on 7 July for a 5 day preparation school in Lisbon, Portugal, where they will participate in a group training program with the UK IMO team.

Congratulations to our 2007 Vice Captain, Aolai Chi. Ms Billing and I were present when Aolai achieved her Gold Duke of Edinburgh Award, at Government House. The award

was presented by the Governor, Her Excellency Professor Marie Bashir. Thank you to Ms Billing and Mr Iverach for their efforts in assisting Aolai achieve this goal.

Last week Ms St Louis represented the school at an afternoon tea organised by Baulkham Hills Shire Council, to celebrate teachers in the shire. We were presented with another rose plant, to add to the hundreds BHSC has already donated to us. The mayor, Councillor Sonya Phillips, made a wonderful speech acknowledging the work of teachers in shire schools. We were also presented with a book, *Kokoda*, by Peter Fitzsimmons, which is signed by the author. This is now in the library.

Next year we are celebrating our 50th anniversary. One of the major events, the fete, will be on Saturday, 4 April 2009. Please put this in your calendars now. We will run into the evening, and end with a short multicultural concert and fireworks. Other performances will take place during the day.

We are investigating the possibility of producing a community business directory of current parents and ex-students, as part of the 50th celebrations. To pay for the printing of this directory to be available free to the school community and for distribution at the fete and the mail out to ex-students, the cost of entry will be \$20 for a plain entry (ie the details supplied on the form) and \$50 for a quarter page advertisement. The booklet will be A5 size. At the front, there will be an index by occupations, by alphabetical list of names and by year groups. Therefore, this will be a convenient way of locating friends as well as locating a service. Please support this venture. Fill in the form and return it to the school. Please spread it to as many ex-students as you know. If there is support for this idea, we will go ahead with it.

I received news from Mrs Shellard, that her son, Professor Paul Edward Shellard, Dux of the class of 1977, has just been appointed to the Chair of Cosmology at Cambridge University. Professor Shellard has been doing lots of work with Professor Stephen Hawking.

Larissa Treskin

Class of '88 Reunion

Change of Venue

We are looking for the class of 1988 for a 20 year reunion planned for Saturday 27th September 2008 – 7pm at **Pennant Hills Golf Club**. This is the first Saturday of the school holidays.

For expressions of interest please contact:
Meredith (Anderson) Pireh 0414 335 860
Julianne (Young) Lawson 0412928029
Janis (Yuile) Hancock markandjan@optusnet.com.au
0414 821 796

The reunion organisers would like help to find the following people. Do you recognise any of their names? Please let us know ASAP.

David Cahill, Scott Craven, Andrew Duthie, David Fisher, Alex Holver, Jenny Law, Tanya Lee, Jacqui Lees, Karen

Lennard, Ann Lisle, Stephen Maze, Melissa Norris, Haritomeni Papahatzis, Natalie Robinson, Gavin Rowland, Stephen Spencer, Jeanette Vos, David Wenzel.

Too Right – it's a “cause for worry”.

As recent arrivals to the James Ruse Union's web site we were somewhat surprised, even taken aback, to find the contribution by Alan Stephens, *Once we were Worriers (or cause for worry!)*, within 'Your Pages /1963'. There are errors in his contribution and much is not as we remember those early years.

We arrived at Felton Road in 1957. It was then, and for the following year, an annex of the Carlingford District Rural School which was located on Rickard Street, Mobbs Hill. Due to the Rickard Street school's elevated location, overlooking much of west and southwest Sydney, to us it was always known as 'The Top School'.

In 1959, with the arrival of its first principal James C Hoskin, the Felton Road annex became autonomous as Carlingford Agricultural High School. During that same year the name was changed to James Ruse Agricultural High School.

We arrived at the school as first year students in 1957. Also there were other 2 years, of course, both senior to us. These 2nd and 3rd year students transferred to Felton Road from 'The Top School' when the annex first took students in September 1956. Following completion of the Intermediate Certificate, at the end of 1957 for one and 1958 the other, these students left the school.

Alan Stephens is correct when he says that on his arrival in 1959 there were “other years in residence”. Like us in 1957, it was another 2 years both of which were senior to his. However, he is wrong when he says “these were students transferred from other schools and had not served their “Fresher” year at the school”. At the start of 1959, we had already been at the school for 2 years and were to remain for another three. Our 1957 intake year was the first year to complete 5 years of schooling, and so the Leaving Certificate, at Felton Road.

However, to us the most disturbing aspect of Alan Stephens' contribution was the treatment he describes that he and his fellow “Freshers” received from the senior students. As part of 3rd year, which was the senior year when Alan arrived in 1959, we cannot let his version of events go unchallenged. Not only were we the senior year in 1959, we remained so for 1960 and 1961.

Alan would have the reader believe the 1959 intake were subjected to systematic forms of bastardization. He talks of “initiations”, of how “to these older boy students we were the ‘fags’ – placed at the school to respond to their bidding, to bear the brunt of their school pranks and to provide amusement to their otherwise mundane existence”, as well as “some Freshers were particularly targeted – nothing life threatening, mind you, but far beyond the bounds of today's legal tolerances” and describing ‘a set of stocks in which an initiate's head could be securely held while butter, lard, flour or water was applied to selected parts of the body’.

We reject completely the suggestion junior students being initiated, or treated as ‘fags’ (what ever this might be), during our tenure at the school. We are not suggesting individual cases of junior students being bullied did not occur but we don't believe this was common. Equally, we believe such behavior was as likely to occur between students within the junior year itself as it did between years.

When the 1959 intake arrived we, although the senior year, were mostly 14 year olds to turn 15 during the year. We were just 2 years older than these first years and hardly the age, particularly in those times, which would perpetrate the type of behavior described by Alan Stephens. Also, as first years, we had had a good relationship with our senior years never having experienced significant bullying, any form of bastardization or initiation. In our time at the school there had never been a culture of this type of behavior.

Has time dulled our memory of the events described by Alan Stephens? We don't think so. If we had perpetrated these acts, on his 1959 year, it was likely we would have continued through 1960 and 1961 as we were still the senior year. If we had been involved in initiations, potentially for three years, you would think one of us would remember their involvement. We can't. Yet some of us can remember being initiated the year after leaving JRAHS at tertiary institutions we elected to attend.

On reading Alan Stephens' contribution our general reaction has been “this was not the school we attended”.

Instead, we remember those early years as exciting. Growth and development mushroomed around us. New buildings were built. We were the first to use many of these including the manual arts block, the library, the science block and canteen. We were there when Barrengarry House and the old stables were renovated and occupied by the school for the first time. We were there when the first Howard rotary hoe and Massy Ferguson tractor arrived.

We participated in this change. All students assisted in creating the school assembly area, we helped to raise the flag pole, to plant the oval, to develop and plant lawns and gardens around the school buildings, establish tennis courts, a cricket practice wicket and the farm. Teachers and students worked together to get things done. It was hardly a “mundane existence”.

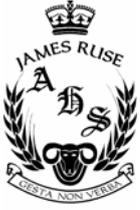
Our involvement in the early development of the school contributed to, what we now consider, a well balanced education. For a young school we excelled on the sporting fields, participated in debates, cadets and the Junior Farmer organization. Academically, at the school's first tilt at the “big time” 72% of those gaining the Leaving Certificate received honors in agriculture, one coming second in the State. We set the academic foundations on which the school grew.

We are proud of our involvement with the early development of the school. We are proud of the fact we were there when the school became James Ruse Agricultural High School. We are proud to have worn the school uniform for the first time.

Finally, speaking of the school uniform, there is one other issue we wish to address from Alan Stephens' contribution. Felt hats were certainly part of the school uniform but not a

compulsory part. However, during our time at JRAHS, the “straw boater” was not. In those days, and it’s probably still the case, only GPS and CAS schools wore straw boaters. Maybe it happened after we left but it’s difficult for us to imagine James C Hoskin linking JRAHS in any way to these groups of schools. Also, it would be fair to say that should anyone, during our tenure, had worn a straw boater they undoubtedly would have attracted ridicule.

Alan Bell, 1957-1961
Barry Dennis, 1957-1961
Ian Fowler, 1957-1961
Richard Henry, 1957-1961
Dennis Loughhead, 1957-1961
Ross Patane, 1957-1961
David Sandoe, 1957-1961
Kevin Swann, 1957-1961



JAMES RUSE AGRICULTURAL HIGH SCHOOL COMMUNITY BUSINESS DIRECTORY DETAILS

1. YOUR NAME

First Name

Surname

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2. YOUR PROFESSION

Your Industry

Your Occupation

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3. YOUR RELATIONSHIP TO JAMES RUSE AGRICULTURAL HIGH SCHOOL

Current Parent

Ex-Student

4. YOUR BUSINESS NAME

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5. YOUR BUSINESS ADDRESS

Street number and name

--

Suburb

State

Postcode

--	--	--

6. YOUR BUSINESS CONTACT DETAILS

Phone

Fax

--	--

Your Email Address (please print clearly)

--

Business/Company Web Address

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No personal information will be disclosed outside the School without your express consent, except where required by law.