

# Post-Myer fears unfounded

By CASEY NEILL

DANDENONG Plaza is a "bargain haven" following its \$40 million post-Myer transformation.

Aldi, JB Hi-Fi Home, Daiso and Trade Secret opened their doors last Wednesday, 15 October.

Dandenong Retail Traders Association (DRTA) chairwoman Glenys Cooper visited the following day.

"They had a queue there and a security guard on the door, which was a nice thing to see," she said.

"I've never seen a queue out the front of the shop like that before, it was just great.

"I thought that was a very good sign.

"It had more energy in there."

Ms Cooper said the redevelopment would change the centre's profile.

"It's certainly a bargain haven," she said.

"It's going to be great for most of the traders there.

"Those who aren't used to having their profile like that will need to change their marketing strategy.

"That's the kind of customer that will now be attracted to the centre."

Last September Myer announced that the struggling store represented less than 1 per cent of its total group sales and would close the following month.

It marked the end of a 40-year history and retailers expressed concern that the departure would leave the centre without a drawcard.

Full registers at Aldi from 8.30am, full change rooms at Trade Secret, and lines at Daiso and JB Hi-Fi Home quashed that fear.

"I'm gobsmacked," Committee for Dandenong chairman Gary Castricum said.

Shopper Lauren from Eumemmer-



Mayor Jim Memeti opens the redevelopment alongside GPT Group development manager Paul Neilsen. 128346



Agnes Schild and Mereani Qalovakawasa greet Daiso customers. 128346



Rohit, 2, tries out a new interactive playground. 128346



Sophia grabs a bargain at JB Hi-Fi. 128346



Michelle stocks up her trolley at Aldi. 128346

ring said she'd been waiting for Daiso to open since Plaza manager GPT announced the redevelopment last November.

The Japanese store's shelves are stocked with products priced at \$2.80.

"I love it. It's Christmas time all done," she said.

She said the upgrade looked beautiful and that she would visit the Plaza more often.

Martin from Dandenong had been looking forward to the opening.

"I love everything about it," he said.

"I love the design.

"It's way better than having Myer."

Women dressed in kimonos greeted crowds lined up to enter Daiso when it opened its doors at 9am.

Artist Kenny Chan created anime 'selfies' for shoppers - his red-green

colour-blindness not holding him back.

"These things have numbers on them and tell me the colours," he said, picking up a marker.

"My wife's a big fan of Daiso, actually."

Trade Secret spokeswoman Tessa Buenen said the store would stock brands from around the world at up to 60 per cent off recommended retail prices.

"We don't talk about the brands that we stock," she said.

"That's because they are such great deals. Customers will have to head in-store."

JB relocated from its Cleeland Street, Dandenong, location and expanded to include whitegoods and other home wares.