

Reunion of the century

By Cam Lucadou-Wells

It's billed as a 'once-in-a-lifetime' school reunion.

Marking the centenary of Dandenong High School, ex-students from around the world are converging for a weekend of celebrations at the school.

Among the highlights is a buffet luncheon held by Dandenong High School Ex-Students Association, welcoming the school's vast numbers of alumni.

Secretary Gary Matthews was a student in the late 1950's-early 1960's. It was a time when the school transitioned from a vast catchment from Tynong to Murrumbeena to a more metropolitan character.

"We were still getting people coming in from Beaconsfield and Berwick and even Pak-enham."

Mr Matthews, a former SEC and Hazelwood Power manager, says ex-students still hold a strong affection for the school.

"As you get some distance from it, you start to realise the very good standards that it had.

"I've just got the strongest regard for it and

how it set me up - with its values and grounding me in the basic ability to express myself."

It's evident from the notable list of ex-students, which include a virtuoso concert violinist, an opera singer, an Anglican Bishop, a Chief Scientist, a State Treasurer, Federal Court Judges and league footballers.

Barry Jones, former Science Minister, quiz-show champion and sage, was a history and politics teacher at the school.

"A lot of people became more aware of the wider world from hearing him speak."

The association has 200 paid-up members including some interstate and overseas, with up to 400 following its Facebook site.

Ex-students as far away from Germany have booked in for the centenary luncheon.

"It's a chance for the older ones who aren't going to the evening (centenary) function at the school the night before."

The ex-students luncheon is at Mulgrave Country Club, cnr Wellington and Jells roads, Wheelers Hill on Sunday 24 November. Bookings close 31 August.

Details: www.dhs-exstudents.synthasite.com or 0448 556 154.



Dandenong High School Ex-Students Association committee of Ruby Constable, Dawn Harris, Philip Harris, Greta Jungwirth, Gillian Weber, Gary Matthews, Russ Weber and Margaret Haywood. 196376
Picture: STEWART CHAMBERS

School merger marks 10th anniversary

Dandenong High School has marked 10 years since a momentous merger of three schools.

Back in 2009, Doveton and Cleeland secondary colleges merged into Dandenong High School. It has since followed a dramatic expansion of students and upgraded facilities.

Education Minister James Merlino and Dandenong MP Gabrielle Williams opened the school's \$3 million library with a specialised visual arts and media centre for senior school students on 7 August.

"I'm exceptionally proud to be here to celebrate Dandenong High School's 10th anniversary with students and staff," Mr Merlino said.

"I'm also delighted to see the continuation of the building journey the school has been on ever since the Dandenong schools merged together to form this fantastic campus."

The final stage of building is a \$8.4 million Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) centre.

Dandenong MP Gabrielle Williams said the

new facilities would "open even more doors for our students".

"Our local schools are doing a wonderful job educating the next generation of leaders."

Gabrielle Williams, school captain Morgan Hamzaei, SRC president Gentian Lamaj and James Merlino during the visit. 196419

Picture: GARY SISSONS

