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FAMILY PLUMBING THE DEPTHS OF DANDENONG

PROFILE

A family whose history is entwined in Dandenong's early days is celebrating the 60th anniversary of its business this month.

Shinners Plumbing managing director Kevin Shinners has endless fond memories of growing up in Dandenong. He even remembers, as a boy, having to stay indoors to avoid being trampled when livestock were herded along the street on their way to the saleyards.

Mr Shinners' grandfather, Paddy, managed the Pines estate, off Power Road, and the property that is now home to the Dandenong Club.

"My grandfather managed the farm which is now Endeavour Hills," Mr Shinners said. "It was owned by a military gentleman who came out every weekend to inspect his landholdings. He owned all of the land up to Narre Warren."

Paddy Shinners would ride his horse to St Mary's Catholic School in Dandenong, which was also later attended by Mr Shinners and wife Jeanine's five children.

At 15, Mr Shinners' father, Jack, joined

CL Godfrey Plumbing in Dandenong, and in 1953 set up JP Shinners and Sons. In 1960, a young Kevin Shinners began his apprenticeship.

"Dandenong was just being sewerred and there was a lot of development going on," Mr Shinners said. "We would dig sewers with a pick and shovel. It was pretty solid work for plumbers in those days."

Mr Shinners said times were tougher for his father, who used to ride a bicycle to Narre Warren North with heavy tools to work on windmills.

"Those are the things you can't believe would happen these days," he said.

Mr Shinners, who played football in Dandenong, was picked up by Richmond before travelling to Sydney to complete national service and returned to Dandenong Football Club in 1971, just in time to play in a VFA premiership.

In the same year, Mr Shinners and brothers Brian and Daryl took over their father's plumbing business and began more industrial jobs for well-known Dandenong companies such as International (Iveco) Trucks.

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Siblings: (from left) Daryl, Pamela, Brian and Kevin, with their father's photo and his plumbing work bag, celebrate 60 years of Shinners Plumbing in Dandenong. (WAYNE HAWKINS)

Today, son Matthew – who is a father of four – runs the business.

"Whether the grandchildren will become plumbers or not, I don't know," Mr Shinners said. "The only thing they're interested in is football."

"We've been around Dandenong almost

since its inception and have seen tremendous change. We've had a lot of assistance along the way from various people who are important to the city."

This year Shinners Plumbing will hold a function to celebrate its 60th anniversary.

ALECIA PINNER

SHINNERS PLUMBING
FAMILY STORY ON 60 YEARS OF PLUMBING IN DANDENONG