

Secondary entry #4: Lake Munmorah High School



Munmorah Memoirs



STAR GAZER: Robert Crosdale is drawn by the wonders of science.
Picture: Keira Egtberts

Sparks fly for inspiring multitasker

By KEIRA EGTBERTS

EXPLOSIONS, fires and the wonders of space are all in a day's work for Robert Crosdale.

He is the perfect example of a busy person: he is a volunteer firefighter, a science teacher – and he works with NASA.

Mr Crosdale is very wise about the wonders of science; he shares his knowledge with the younger generation at Lake Munmorah High School, inspiring an interest in the world of science.

With practicals about sodium and water, it's no wonder he also serves as a volunteer firefighter.

He has always been passionate about the mysteries of the universe and is a step closer to knowing more.

Working alongside NASA, he is helping to unravel the wonders of space. He has been working with the departments of astrophysics and aeronautics, aiding them in their studies.

After he finished high school and before he began university, he decided to join the NSW Rural Fire Service to get involved with and help his community. That was 15 years ago, and he continues to serve at the Gwandalan Fire Station.

He is referred to as an officer and helps to co-ordinate his fellow firefighters when attending fires, car accidents and other life-threatening situations.

By KEIRA EGTBERTS

IN 2013, for the first time, Lake Munmorah High School is trialling the new three plus three model for its Higher School Certificate students.

The new model is a system for students in year 11 and 12 to get their HSC over two years.

Instead of doing six subjects for two years, they do three subjects for one year, then complete the exams in those subjects at the end of that year.

They then study the other three subjects in year 12 and do their exams at the end of that year.

Their results from the two years are collated and that is counted as their HSC.

Lake Munmorah High School principal Lindsay West said: "When this is fully operational the senior classes will actually have a combination of year 11 and year 12 students in the same class. That means that there is going to be greater subject choice."

"One of the main aims was for us to offer all our kids in year 10 going into year 11 the opportunity of selecting their subjects from a bigger range."

"This means that if students can choose subjects that they are more suited to they will be happier and more successful in what they are doing."



INNOVATIVE: Lake Munmorah High has adopted the new HSC study system. Picture: Keira Egtberts

"It is better for the students to be focused on three subjects for one year, rather than being confused by having to study six subjects. This is called 'immersion'," he said.

The differences seen within the school have so far been a mixture of good and bad.

Positively, the students are forming better relationships with their teachers because they are seeing each other twice as often as they would have in the past.

This makes for more effective teaching.

A negative outcome has been the students' impression that the course is moving along a little too quickly for them, with less time to grasp concepts.

Schools are taking on this model for a variety of reasons.

Because of the new requirement that students stay at school until they are 17 years old, the model encourages students to stay on and

finish the rest of their HSC, having already completed half of it.

In essence, because the students are concentrating on their chosen subjects for a shorter period of time, they are more likely to receive a better mark in their HSC.

Another advantage for Lake Munmorah High School is that students from other schools, where the model has not been introduced, will be likely to transfer for these benefits.



INDEPENDENT: The school canteen has a private operator with an updated menu. Picture: Keira Egtberts

Serving a hungry horde of teens

By ADAM MURPHY

SALAD wraps, chicken burgers and chocolate milks.

The canteen menu goes on and now includes many of the students' favourite foods.

Lake Munmorah High School canteen recently changed to new management, adding an array of student favourites to the previously existing options.

The canteen is now run by

an independent vendor, which means a non-school affiliated body now feeds the students.

There are many benefits from the new arrangement: a boon is not having to rely on parent volunteers to run the canteen, freeing them up for other activities.

It now runs smoothly with staffed employees who work in the canteen cooking and serving throughout the day.

Students line up eagerly during their break, keen to purchase and get stuck into new options such as chicken burgers, hamburgers and flavoured milks.

Tom, a student of Lake Munmorah High School, mentioned how he buys a chicken burger and chocolate milk from the canteen every day, describing it as "delicious and one of his all-time favourites".

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