

Save the Dandenongs League Inc

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Suggested Article Title : Save the Dandenongs League 75th Anniversary celebration at Olinda



The Save the Dandenongs League (SDL) community group is celebrating its 75th anniversary.

President Louis Delacretaz spoke with Star Mail this week and said “SDL was formed in October 1950 to work for the protection and preservation of the historical and natural beauty of the Dandenong Ranges as a national asset for all time”

“Kalorama resident Miss May Moon and Melbourne University Professor of Botany, John Turner who together tenaciously supported the protection of the Dandenongs from inappropriate development”.

“They called a public meeting at the Olinda Hall that was attended by 200 people. At this meeting ‘Save the Dandenongs League’ was formed.

“Professor Turner was appointed to many government and academic advisory boards and was a major influence for entry of environmental science to the Victorian school curriculum,” he said

He continued “May Moon was SDL president until the 1970’s and was also a key advocate for the creation of Karwarra Gardens at Kalorama” he continued.

Mr Delacretaz said “our group built further on the legacy of our founders, notably through decades of work by former longtime SDL President and ex Sherbrooke Councillor Betty Marsden OAM and others towards purchase and transfer of private land now known as Birdsland Reserve to Sherbrooke Council to ensure its conservation” he continued.

“For decades Betty represented the League on various State and local government advisory committees for the management of Dandenong Ranges parks and waterways” he said.

Mr Delacretaz continued “other important SDL campaigns include advocacy for protection and sensitive development of Burnham Beeches, built by the Nicholas family of Aspro fame and advocacy for purchase and reservation of private land to form a link between Lysterfield Park and Birdsland Reserve and which was later purchased with Government funding”.

SDL continues to advocate with Yarra Ranges Council and the State Government on land use planning strategy and applications that affect the Dandenongs.

Most recently SDL along with other community groups and Yarra Ranges Council has been presenting to the VCAT planning tribunal in opposition to a proposed huge landfill on land zoned Green Wedge in the Lysterfield Valley.

Mr Delacretaz said “the Green Wedge zones were established by government to protect these areas from intensive uses and residential development. Strategically those uses must be located within the urban growth boundary.”

He continued that the League believed that “protecting Green Wedge areas was critical in ensuring protection of existing natural and cultural landscapes in the zone and that they were the green lungs of Melbourne that helped ensure the benefits continued for nature, our community and for future generations to enjoy”

Minister Mary Delahunty when announcing the new Green Wedge and Rural Conservation Zones in 2004 said that

“These new zones are the final plate in the armour that will protect Melbourne’s precious Green Wedge areas for all time,”

After 75 years, Save the Dandenongs League, together with the local community, remains committed to protecting and enhancing the unique natural beauty of the Dandenong Ranges.

Pictured The SDL committee celebrates this week its milestone anniversary outside the Olinda Mechanics Institute Hall where the group held its first public meeting in October 1950

For further information please contact Louis Delacretaz on 0407 358 699

See also the history section of [Save the Dandenongs League web site](https://sdl.org.au/sdl/history) at

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