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IVANHOE RESIDENT WINS STATEWIDE ENVIRONMENT AWARD

The woman dubbed “the Mother of Darebin Parklands”, Ivanhoe resident Sue Course, has received the 2007 Victorian Environmental Friends Network Best Friends Award for her outstanding contribution to conservation.

The award, which will be presented to Sue on at a Darebin Parklands Association Park Care Day on Sunday 25 November, honours Sue’s pivotal role in transforming a former tip and quarry into Darebin Parklands, now one of Melbourne’s best urban bushland reserves.

“This is a fitting tribute to an environmental visionary, someone who dared to dream that the Darebin Creek could be something other than an urban drain or a freeway,” the president of the Darebin Parklands Association, Ingrid Svendsen, said.

“Sue and her contemporaries, including her late husband Laurie, began the campaign for the park in 1973.

“Thanks to their efforts today’s generation has inherited a unique wildlife haven that is home to 50 species of birds, as well as echidnas, flying foxes, native frogs and fish.”

The FriendsNet citation reads:

“Committed, tenacious and always energetic. This is how Sue Course was described by one of her referees. For almost 35 years Sue has played a vital role in the Darebin Parklands Association, dedication that has earned her the title the “Mother of Darebin Parklands”.

Sue was a foundation member of the Rockbeare Park Conservation Group, the forerunner of the DPA. In 1973 Sue mobilised her neighbours when the then MMBW brought in bulldozers and began knocking down trees along the Darebin Creek. She passionately convinced a Victorian Premier and an Australian Deputy Prime Minister to back her goal of turning a degraded former quarry and tip into one of Melbourne’s best urban bushland reserves.

Sue has held many roles including honorary park ranger, newsletter editor and publicity officer. She remains an active committee member and still keenly pursues funding for projects to improve the park.”

For further information and photo opportunities please phone Sue Course on 9499 6770.

