

MEMBERS STATEMENTS

Hanging Rock

09:45:00

Mrs MILLAR (Northern Victoria) — No decision has touched my community more deeply than the announcement by Matthew Guy, the Minister for Planning, in conjunction with Ryan Smith, the Minister for Environment and Climate Change, on 16 May that Hanging Rock and the surrounding area will be protected from development and funding will be provided for the upgrade of the park's existing public facilities. As I have reflected in my five speeches in this place that have mentioned Hanging Rock, it was here in the Parliament that the match was ignited to light the flame. Hanging Rock is a place woven into the souls of locals in the Macedon Ranges and many from far beyond. Ethereal, iconic and mesmerising, it is a deeply treasured place which has drawn people to it for generations.

The announcement by the coalition government has been celebrated and lauded. Hundreds of locals have spoken to me about protecting Hanging Rock, and more than 6000 have signed petitions. I thank each person who has acted, and I specifically recognise Luke and Megan Spielvogel, Hilary and Penny Roberts, Natasha Gavfer, Matthew Nickson, Georgie Garvey-Hawke, Nathan Alexander, Stephen Copeland and Richard Hughes.

Our party and our party alone has raised these voices in the Parliament, and our party alone has listened and acted. The day Minister Guy climbed the rock with me, my predecessor in Northern Victoria Region Mrs Donna Petrovich, members of the Hanging Rock Action Group and others was instrumental in the outcome. On behalf of many thousands in the Macedon Ranges, our great thanks go to Matthew Guy and Ryan Smith. To quote Joan Lindsay, who wrote *Picnic at Hanging Rock*:

Everything begins and ends at exactly the right time and place.

Hanging Rock is resting again as a protected place for all to experience. Hanging Rock, as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be.