Snake Run makes history

Albany's gnarly downhill skate run in Hare Street was the world's first community-built skate park and has been a pilgrimage site for generations of skateboarders around the world.

Built in 1976, The Snake Run inspired many of the early skate parks in the US and four decades on it is creating history again.

On the eve of its 40th anniversary celebration which will also launch PIAF's 2016 Great Southern Festival, The Snake Run has been State heritage listed after the City of Albany nominated the skate park to the Heritage Council for inclusion in the State Register of Heritage Places.

Heritage Minister Albert Jacob visited Albany on Friday, February 12, to make the announcement before The Snake Run Project event on Saturday.

Albany Mayor Dennis Wellington said the heritage announcement made the skate park's anniversary even more significant.

The Snake Run under construction in 1975.

"The Snake Run is the first skate park to be heritage listed in Australia and one of only three in the world and the timing couldn't be better," Mayor Wellington said.

"Our community is very proud of The Snake Run and this recognition as a State heritage asset is recognition of the rich history it has and the influence it has had on the skating community across the world."

The idea for the Snake run was born in 1975 at a meeting between the then Town of Albany and students from Albany Senior High School. Land on the corner Hare and Hay streets was acquired and funds were raised and the rest, as they say, is history.

The Snake Run quickly gained a reputation as one of the most challenging skate parks in the world, even attracting American skateboarding champion Russ Howell who has returned for its 40th anniversary.

"The Snake Run has claimed a lot of skin over the years – it's not for the fainthearted," Mayor Wellington said.

The Snake Run Project will be on Saturday, February 13 from 11am to 8.30pm. It is a free community event.

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