




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR IPSWICH

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PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT

Ipswich Rosewood Coalminers Memorial Trust

 **Ms HOWARD** (Ipswich—ALP) (2.34 pm): Recently it was my great privilege to represent the Premier at an important event at Limestone Park in my electorate. For a city built on mining like Ipswich, the unveiling of the Ipswich Rosewood Coalminers Memorial was a significant day indeed.

It was an especially poignant day for the many family members in attendance who lost loved ones in the most tragic of circumstances. They included Keith Terry and Bill Perry, who I believe were the oldest direct descendants in attendance at the unveiling ceremony. Both were infants when they lost their fathers in the Hart's Aberdare explosion in 1936. It was also an emotional day for the survivors of the Box Flat mine disaster who, 43 years ago, lost 17 of their mates. It was an emotional day for the many people in my electorate who have worked tirelessly to see this memorial built.

This was a day that has been many years in the making. The Ipswich Rosewood Coalminers Memorial is the culmination of seven years of concerted campaigning by a group of retired miners who started out with nothing more than an idea. In the best Anzac tradition, they resolved to never give up on their mates—mates who went to work one day and never came home. So, while born out of tragedy, ultimately the memorial is a triumph—a triumph of mateship and true grit.

The coalmining industry was not only the lifeblood of Ipswich, but the lifeblood of the colony. It was coal that powered the steamers, the power station and industry in general. As well as paying tribute to the 186 miners who lost their lives between 1859 and 1997, this memorial commemorates an industry that laid the foundation for our state's economic prosperity.

Ipswich owes a great debt of gratitude to the members of the coalminers committee and coalminers memorial trust. Their determination and impressive fundraising skills have ensured that this city's place on history's stage will not be forgotten.

I would like to make particular mention of Beres Evans, who led this group, John Walker and Keith Chicken for their hard work and persistence in making the idea of the memorial a reality. Thanks to the mighty efforts of the trust, we now finally have this permanent and fitting tribute to those boys and men who lost their lives while working on the Ipswich and Rosewood coalfields.

Alongside the books and powerful documentaries that bear witness to the human cost of coalmining, we finally have a place in Ipswich that everyone can come to to reflect on and honour our fallen miners and our coalmining past. It was my great honour to unveil the memorial with the capable assistance of Ipswich Mayor, Paul Pisasale.

This was a particularly moving day for the 400 people who attended. Particularly in Safe Work Month, it is important for us to remember all those who have made the ultimate sacrifice at work. As long as workers are getting injured and dying, there is more each of us can do, especially if we want to see workplaces in our state become the safest in Australia.

The Ipswich Rosewood Coalminers Memorial in Limestone Park now stands as a legacy for those who have lost their lives at work in the coalmines of Ipswich. It was my great pleasure to be part of its unveiling.