



Speech By
Hon. Steve Minnikin
MEMBER FOR CHATSWORTH

Record of Proceedings, 18 September 2025

ADJOURNMENT

Tingalpa Pioneers' Chapel and Cemetery

 **Hon. SJ MINNIKIN** (Chatsworth—LNP) (Minister for Customer Services and Open Data and Minister for Small and Family Business) (9.25 pm): As the state member for Chatsworth, I am honoured to have been invited by the Friends of Tingalpa Cemetery Heritage Group to adopt two graves of great historical significance. These are far more than resting places: they serve as a bridge to our past and are a lasting reminder of the vision and dedication that have shaped our local community. They preserve a vital part of our state's story and embody the values and spirit of two remarkable pioneers: Charles and Elizabeth Coxen.

For those who may not know, Charles Coxen was key to the creation of the Tingalpa Pioneers' Chapel, a landmark that still graces my electorate today. He chaired the original building committee and stood proudly on 27 October 1868 as it was consecrated. Beyond our local history Charles was a passionate naturalist, the founder of the Queensland Museum in 1855 and, of historical significance, a member of Queensland's very first parliament. He also championed the railway line from Ipswich to Dalby, and the first train to travel that route was named, appropriately, *The Pioneer*. Elizabeth Coxen was equally extraordinary. A trailblazer in her own right, she was a skilled meteorologist, conchologist and the Queensland Museum's first female curator. Together, Charles and Elizabeth embodied the pioneering values of curiosity, resilience and service that helped shaped our wonderful state.

There is no greater honour than to be remembered and no greater gift than to be the one who remembers. Today we reaffirm the truth. The Coxens left no direct descendants, so the care of their graves and the preservation of their memory has become a responsibility for the community. I am deeply honoured to help carry their legacy forward. By embracing this symbolic duty we give new life to the Coxens' story and ensure their contributions are forwarded to future generations.

Since my election in 2012 I have proudly served as the state patron of the Friends of Tingalpa Cemetery Heritage Group. I would therefore like to give a special acknowledgment to this remarkable team of volunteers. Since 2002 they have devoted countless hours to caring for these sacred grounds—gardening, maintaining, promoting and educating visitors of all ages to bring our history to life. Their tireless efforts ensure that the stories of those who rest here and the heritage of this place are not only protected but cherished and celebrated. They remind us that community is built by people who quietly give their time and skills, often without seeking recognition.

On behalf of the people of Chatsworth and all who cherish this sacred place, I extend my heartfelt thanks to the Tingalpa Cemetery Heritage Group for entrusting me with this responsibility. Your integrity, your heart and your respect for the past are an inspiration to us all. Together we will ensure that the lives of Charles and Elizabeth Coxen remain in perpetuity.