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## History honoured with Box Flat Mine Memorial restored at Stockland Providence

[Link to images](#) \*Caption below

The Box Flat Mine disaster has today been honoured with the opening of Mine Memorial Park on Danbulla Street in Stockland Providence, South Ripley.

Queensland State MPs Jennifer Howard (Ipswich) and Lance McCallum (Bundamba), Ipswich City Councillors Sheila Ireland and Jacob Madsen, relatives and friends of the late miners, members of the Retired Coal Miners Group and the Ipswich Historical Society, school children and teachers from Ripley Valley State School and Ripley Valley State Secondary College, and locals attended the event, showing their respect and support.

On 31 July 1972, Ipswich experienced the worst mining disaster in its history when the Box Flat Mine at Swanbank exploded, leading to the deaths of 18 men.

A fire had started the day before, 900 metres underground, and several efforts had been made to contain the blaze but failed. After the blast, smoke billowed from the wreckage of the mine tunnel entries and associated buildings, which led to the decision to seal the mine, entombing the men inside.

In 2010, former State MP Jo-Ann Miller installed a plaque at Ripley, near the Box Flat Bridge along the Centenary Highway, in honour of the victims and those who were impacted by the tragedy. Eighteen trees were planted to represent the 18 men who lost their lives.

Ipswich Historical Society President Hugh Taylor said the Ipswich community maintains a deep respect for the miners who lost their lives and for those who survived.

“It’s a testament to the resilience of the mining community and its determination not to forget the impact of the disaster on the families and the general community,” Mr Taylor said.

By 2022 the plaque was no longer accessible to the public due to overgrown vegetation, and only 15 of the 18 trees originally planted remained. The plaque was then discovered by architects CUSP Landscape, who were consulting to Stockland at the time.

Stockland Providence Project Director David Franklin said the business has worked alongside the Retired Coal Miners Group and the Ipswich Historical Society for two years to relocate and create a new home for the plaque.

“Mine Memorial Park provides a more accessible area to display this symbolic plaque, giving the community and those impacted by the tragedy a place to remember and show respect for those who lost their lives,” Mr Franklin said.

“We have worked with the Retired Coal Miners Group and the Ipswich Historical Society to design the park, which includes elements that help to tell the story of the Box Flat Mine disaster. The park will include 18 additional trees of the same Brush Box species alongside sandstone seating, and we have kept some of the original memorial trees planted,” Mr Franklin said.

“The opening of the new Mine Memorial Park serves as a reminder to the community and encourages residents to visit the site at Swanbank. We have not forgotten those who lost their lives and the legacy they created in vastly improving safety procedures in the industry which has led to many lives being saved,” Mr Taylor added.

For more information on the Box Flat Mine disaster, contact the [Ipswich Historical Society](#).

**\*Image caption:** Hugh Taylor (Ipswich Historical Society & Retired Coal Miners Group), Jo-Ann Miller – Former State MP, David Franklin – Stockland Providence Project Director, Cr Jacob Madsen – Division 1 Councillor Ipswich City Council, Jennifer Howard – Member for Ipswich, Lance McCallum – Member for Bundamba, Cr Sheila Ireland – Division 1 Councillor – Ipswich City Council

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