

8.4.88

Bronze reminder of a disaster



Picture by RICK STEVENS

The statue revives disturbing memories of one of Australia's worst mining disasters for union president Garth Walsh (left) and treasurer Alan Whyte.

Friends of 12 miners who died in Queensland's Moura mine disaster were in Sydney yesterday to collect a statue in remembrance to their dead workmates.

"It is a memorial to our friends and a stark reminder that it is a tough and dangerous life underground," said Mr Garth Walsh, a Moura miner and president of the Queensland Collieries Employees' Union.

The statue is a life-size bronze sculpture, by Dianna Webb of Sydney, of a coalminer in a hard hat.

The memorial will stand on the main road into

Moura, population 2,800, which lost 12 underground workers in a shaft collapse on July 16, 1986. It was one of Australia's worst mining disasters, and one which still affects the town.

"It is a touchy subject still — just about everybody in town knew the men who died," Mr Walsh said.

The sculpture was paid for by a \$150-a-head donation by Central Queensland colliery workers.

The statue, which will have a brass plaque bearing the names of those who died, will be unveiled on the second anniversary of the deaths.

— DAVID MONAGHAN