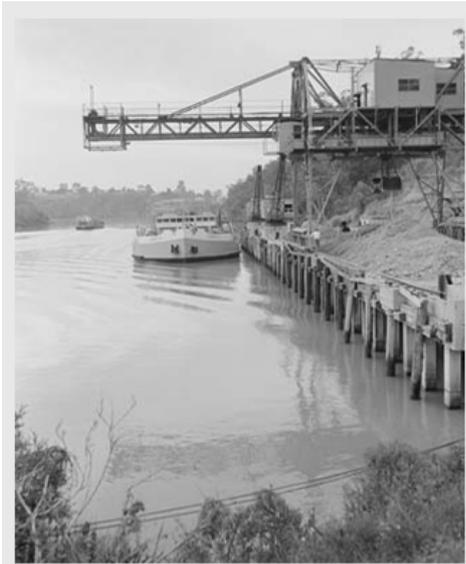


Queensland Cement and Lime Company/Qld Cement Limited



Barge Cementco at wharf
National Archives of Australia - A1200, L32761



Grab lifting coral from river bed
National Archives of Australia - A1200, L32768



Unloading coral on wharf
National Archives of Australia - A1200, L32770

In the early 1930s, Queensland Cement and Lime Company Inc (QCL) acquired land that encompassed both part of the escarpment and part of the riverside flats in what is now known as Rocks Riverside Park. The Company, formed in 1914, had already been operating a cement manufacturing plant at Darra for over 15 years. From 1916, it was using limestone brought from Gore near Warwick. After acquiring the Seventeen Mile Rocks riverside land in the early 1930s, QCL built a wharf at the site. By 1936, coral dredged in Moreton Bay replaced limestone from Gore in the cement manufacturing process.

The company owned a dredge, based at Mud Island, and also carrier vessels. The carrier vessels brought the coral to the wharf at Seventeen Mile Rocks and unloaded it on the bottom of the river beside the wharf. A grab of 2 cubic yards capacity lifted the coral from the river. For many years, the coral was deposited on the wharf then loaded into trucks that conveyed it to the Darra plant along a privately owned bitumen road. In 1969, the Company built a 3.5 km overhead conveyor, supported by concrete pillars, for transferring the coral to Darra. From 1988, after company mergers, the company was known as Queensland Cement Limited, having plants in other parts of Queensland as well. Dredging licences in Moreton Bay were not renewed in 1995. This influenced the closure of the Darra plant, after 84 years, in 1998.

The wharf, some buildings and also parts of the concrete conveyor structure for moving the coral from the wharf to Darra can still be seen in Rocks Riverside Park. Part of the Park has been developed as a historic precinct preserving these structures and the site's historic association with coral dredging and processing for cement. Further information is available on site.

For a history of the company, the mergers and other holdings, see the website of Cement Australia – www.cementaustralia.com.au – in the ‘About Us – A proud heritage’ section.

Additional images of the coral conveying and processing operations in the late 1950s can be found on Picture Australia. These and others are also in PhotoSearch on the National Archives of Australia website.