

The concrete facts on Medusa Cement

By Sandusky Library History Blog



A historical marker points out the significance of the former Medusa Portland Cement Co. in Bay View.

Register photo/ ANDY OURIEL



From the Tom Root collection of aerial photographs, this picture shows the Medusa Portland Cement Co. in Bay View. Visible in the photo are the company's silos.

Provided photo/ SANDUSKY LIBRARY HISTORY BLOG

BAY VIEW

From 1892 until 1960, the Medusa Portland Cement Co. employed many area residents.

The company, originally named the Sandusky Portland Cement Co., was founded by three brothers in 1892: Spencer, Arthur and William Newberry. The men were all sons of well-known geologist John Strong Newberry.

Marl and clay, key components in the manufacturing of portland cement at that time, were widely available in the marshy land surrounding Bay Bridge.

In its first 50 years, Medusa expanded to eight facilities in five states. The company was very profitable in the early “baby boom” years following World War II due to an increase in demand for cement for use in the building of homes, businesses and highways.

But, by 1960, the Bay Bridge plant of the Medusa Cement Co. closed. Eventually, Medusa was acquired by Southdown Inc.

While the busy days of the booming cement mill town are now a memory, the small village of Bay Bridge once had its own post office and store to take care of the needs of the many employees who worked at Medusa.

“A lot of kids who grew up in Bay View rode their bikes to this place to take a look at the old Medusa cement plant at one time or another,” according to a person posting a comment under this article on the blog. “It was sort of a right of passage for most of the boys in Bay View to take a look at the cement plant at one time or another. Viewing Medusa was like taking a good, long look back at what used to be for the community that once was, especially when accompanied by a boy whose grandfathers or great-grandfathers worked there or built it.”

Making out the historical marker

An Erie County Historical Marker offers a brief synopsis regarding the Medusa Portland Cement Co.’s significance: The Sandusky Portland Cement Co., later known as the Medusa Portland Cement Co. was founded here in 1892 by Arthur, Spencer and William Newberry, sons of geologist Dr. John Strong Newberry.

Portland cement was manufactured at the Bay Bridge plant for 68 years as the result of rich deposits of clay and marl, discovered during Dr. Newberry’s geological survey.

In 1913, thousands of barrels of cement from this plant were used in the extensive work of beautifying Buckingham Palace in London.