

# BOOM GOES BUST IN CALAVERAS

## AMONG LAST VISIBLE REMNANTS OF HEAVY INDUSTRY DEMOLISHED

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The 100-foot silos at the old Calaveras Cement factory are demolished last week along Pool Station Road outside San Andreas, the last reminder of the long boom years that started in the 1920s. Some county leaders hope the demolition will pave the way for new development. "Economically, I sure would like to see that piece of property productive again," county Supervisor Cliff Edson said.

*CALIXTRO ROMIAS/The Record*

**SAN ANDREAS** - Crews this week are demolishing and hauling away one of the last visible reminders of the Calaveras Cement plant that provided material for construction of such major landmarks as the California Aqueduct, the Bay Bridge and Pardee Dam.

A row of 100-foot silos that once stored cement was left behind when most of the rest of the old plant was removed in 2005. The Calaveras Cement factory last operated in 1982.

The silos were visible just off Pool Station Road south of San Andreas. They were a last reminder of the long boom years starting in the 1920s when the factory employed hundreds of people.

Cliff Edson, the Calaveras County supervisor whose district includes the former factory site, hopes the demolition means the location can be part of a new boom.

"Economically, I sure would like to see that piece of property productive again," said Edson, who noted that the site has utilities heavy industry needs, including electricity and a large-diameter natural gas line.

Ted Allured, the last manager of the factory before it closed, said Heidelberg Cement, the current owner of the property, has no plans for new development and is not trying to sell the land.

Allured, who was hired to oversee the demolition, said the silos needed to come down because they are an attractive nuisance.

"People have seen kids running around on these things," he said during a recent visit to the site.

A search of YouTube found at least two videos in which trespassers documented their visits to the silos.

Calaveras Cement, backed by Stockton investors, was founded in 1925 by a mining engineer named William Wallace Mein, according to the company's website.

The silos being crushed and hauled away this week were built during a plant expansion in the 1950s, Allured said.

Whether heavy industry will ever return to Calaveras County is a mystery. Allured noted that the county has plenty of land zoned for industrial use that has been sitting vacant for years.

Still, he agrees the former Calaveras Cement site has potential.

"The sooner this gets cleaned up, the sooner it might be used for something else," Allured said.

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