



Contrasts and Continuity

The ICI site at Deer Park Victoria Australia

Contrasts

Birds, bunkers and beads

The ICI site at Deer Park contains and recalls many contrasts. The 550 hectares of land have been used continuously for manufacturing or related purposes since the late Nineteenth Century and as we step into the Twenty-first many aspects of business, markets, products and lifestyles have changed dramatically.

The site was chosen because it was on the outskirts of Melbourne, near a reliable water supply and on the road to the goldfields of Ballarat and Bendigo. Mining was booming and as it developed it needed explosives to wrest the precious metal from deeper and deeper reefs.

The Kororoit Creek still winds its way through a corner of the property but it's now valued more for its environmental qualities than as a commercial resource. Nearby, colonies of plovers flourish and their well-being is of real concern and interest to the wide variety of ICI businesses that now share the land.

ICI at Deer Park is committed to a clean environment. It was the first Australian site to publish full environmental disclosure annually. Setting standards that are tougher than EPA requirements, we challenge the notion that environmental responsibility is uneconomic.

The landscape has seen many changes over the years. An aerial photograph reveals the vast open spaces that were and still are necessary for the safe production of explosives. Small, expert teams worked carefully, even cheerfully behind concrete walls 10 feet thick in bunkers spaced 50 yards apart in case of accidents. Even then the businesses on the Deer Park site were setting safety records and clocking millions of hours without serious accident.

It may be hard now for us to understand just how important their work was, in a world often at war, in a land still forging its way, scientifically, economically and socially.

On foundations laid throughout a century, new products, reflecting changing needs and knowledge emerged and continue to emerge. Without the efforts of all the researchers, engineers, administrators and ordinary workers, particle board would remain pulp, roads would still be unsealed, cables uninsulated and wasteful packaging would be out of control. Mining would be more hazardous and much less productive. Airbags wouldn't exist, adhesives wouldn't stick, and the only nappies available would be the ones you wash.

Tiny coloured polymer beads produced at Deer Park are often the starting point for a host of useful, even vital products and components that support companies in the agricultural, automotive, building, manufacturing, and mining sectors.

The site is shared by many ICI businesses producing key components which enable other companies to bring you shampoo in containers, plastic food wrap, aluminium foil, the soles of shoes, and many of the things in your car and home.



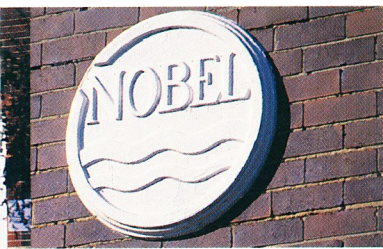
Left: The shot tower, a local landmark, was built in 1960. It is a valued reminder of one of the many business enterprises to which Deer Park has been home.



Above: The Masked Plover is but one of many bird species which, nurtured by employees, breed happily on the site.

Continuity

The place, the people and the development of useful products.



Above left: The ancestor of ICI's famous roundel, Nobel's plaque still looks down from the wall of the original Nobel Division's headquarters.



Right: The Kororoit Creek as it looks today. A haven for all kinds of plant and animal life.



The people at Deer Park have changed over the years. Generations of families have come, grown up and moved on. Many lives have been enhanced because of the industries on the flat lands beside the creek. Apart from providing a livelihood for thousands of people, a local railway station was commissioned and housing estates and recreation clubs constructed. We still sponsor local sports teams, support employment programs and show a keen interest in education at all levels.

The story began in 1874 when Jones, Scott and Co, merchants and importers of explosives established their business on the Kororoit Creek. In 1875 they decided to manufacture their own explosives and did so successfully as 'Australian Explosives and Chemical Co' until 1897. In that year they were bought out by an international company founded by the Swedish inventor of dynamite, Alfred Nobel who also founded the famous Nobel prize.

Nobel retained the company name and in 1900 diversified into fertilisers. A large factory was built, and the brand 'Federal Manures' was visible from Ballarat Road. Soon, the enamelled sign 'Please close the gate, and use Federal Manures', adorned farm gates across Australia.

In 1926, Nobel in Europe merged with Brunner Mond, United Alkali and British Dyestuffs and Imperial Chemical Industries was created. Two years later Imperial Chemical Industries of Australia and New Zealand (ICIANZ) was registered as the local subsidiary.

A new 'Leathercloth' factory in Deer Park opened in 1929 under the cloud of the Wall Street crash. Although the Depression years brought mixed fortunes, record-breaking sales of explosives were achieved.



Above left: Cartridges for sporting shooters were produced by ICI at Deer Park until 1979.



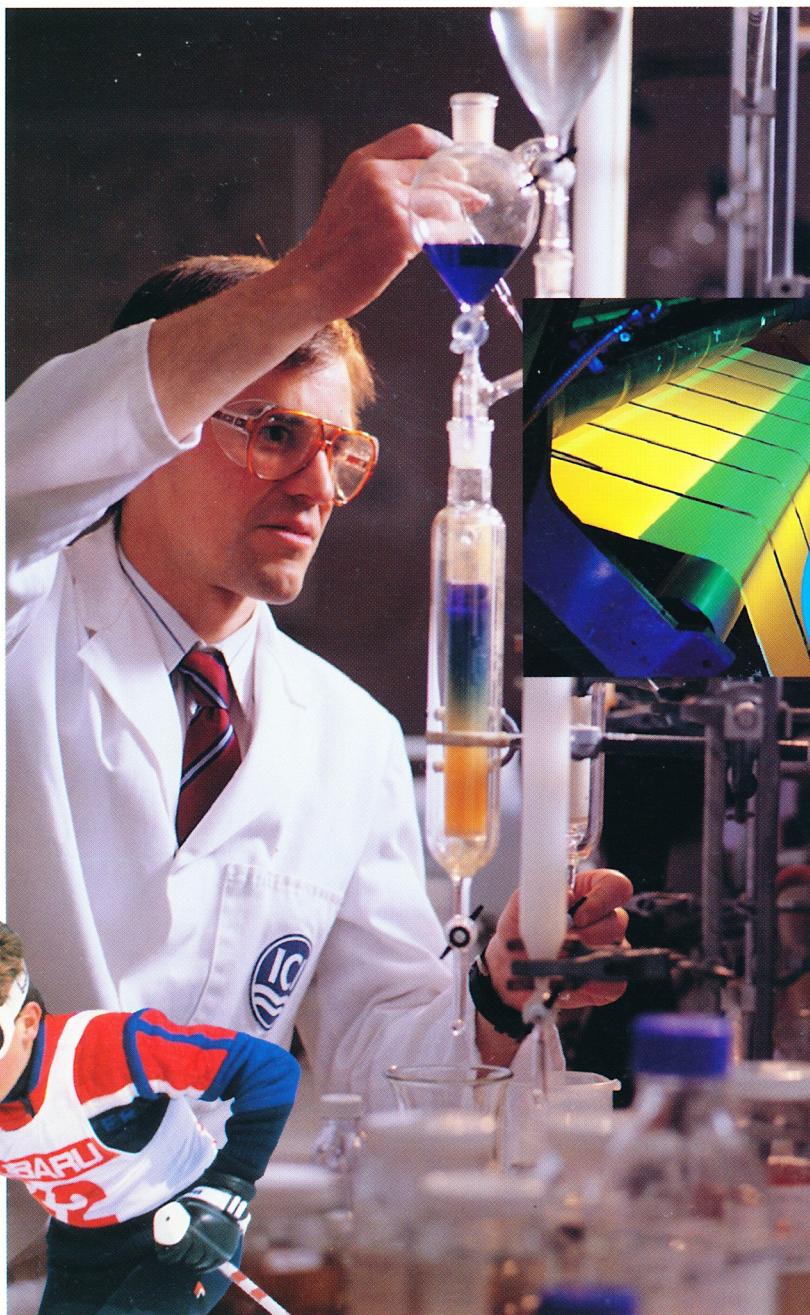
Above: Young working ladies of the Nineteen Thirties made their cheerful contribution to the history of ICI at Deer Park.

More offices and manufacturing facilities followed, to facilitate a growing range of products such as sporting ammunition, slide fasteners (zippers), detonators, fuses and nitrocellulose. Australia's first synthetic ammonia plant commenced production in 1940.

Production sky-rocketed during the Second World War, as did the demand for our technical expertise. ICIANZ built and managed the 'Albion No. 5' Explosives Factory across Ballarat Road, and several other chemical plants for the Commonwealth Government.

The 1950's saw the refit and mechanisation of many factories, particularly explosives, as the post war economic boom increased demand. In 1950 urea formaldehyde, a vital ingredient in building and household products, began production. In 1954 the 'Visqueen' factory opened, and until 1967 produced the entire national output of polyethylene film.

Left: ICI has always been a major employer in the Deer Park region. Nine business units now operate from the Deer Park site.



Above: Polypropylene film is used by the thousands of kilometres in packaging and consumer products.



Above left: Many of our plastics and polyurethane products are used by our customers to make footwear and sporting goods.

Above: Constant research enables ICI to keep pace with changing customer requirements.

1956 saw the the installation of the world's largest and safest Biuzzi nitroglycerine plant which served the Snowy Mountains Hydroelectric Scheme. And the Melbourne Olympics were celebrated by the Ammunition Factory with the launch of the 'Gold Seal' shotgun cartridge.

In more recent times, the site has gone through changes which mirrored shifts in our markets. Ammunition, built in 1935, has long since closed down, and Nitrocellulose closed in 1989 along with many of the functions of the Chemicals Section.

A chapter of ICI's history ended in 1989 when nitroglycerine manufacture was shut down after 115 years of continuous production. However, a new chapter is being written as ICI's involvement in explosives continues to expand using safer and more efficient products.

Landmarks



Key

- | | | | |
|----|-------------------------------|----|---------------------------------|
| 1 | Films | 11 | Gate 3 Ballarat Road |
| 2 | Specialty Chemicals | 12 | Western Ring Road |
| 3 | Engineering Plastics | 13 | Conference Centre |
| 4 | Vinyl Plastics | 14 | Kororoit Creek |
| 5 | Polyurethanes | 15 | Station Road |
| 6 | Adhesives and Resins | 16 | Mt Derrimut Road |
| 7 | Initiating Explosives Systems | 17 | Fitzgerald Road |
| 8 | Quarry Services | 18 | Melbourne-Ballarat Railway Line |
| 9 | Site Engineering | 19 | Shot Tower |
| 10 | Gate 6 Tilburn Road | 20 | Nobel Boiler Stack |
| | | 21 | Old magazine site |

Deer Park. How we mean to go on.

Quarry Services now occupies the refurbished building that began life as Australia's first synthetic ammonia plant in 1940. The landmark sign, 'Federal Manures', which once faced Ballarat Road has gone and a new one heralds 'ICI Quarry Services' to travellers on the new Western Ring Road.

Plastics and films manufacture has risen to dominance over the last twenty years. Urea formaldehyde resin and other products such as polyurethanes and specialty chemicals also continue to meet increasing consumer demands. Output of 'Welvic' PVC, 'Propafilm' polypropylene film and modern initiating explosives expand to meet growing markets across Australia and South East Asia.

The world will keep changing, often in unexpected ways. ICI at Deer Park will keep up with these changes and aim to take a leading role in domestic and export markets. Innovative products will continue to be developed and our support for the local community will go on.

This unique site which has been the backdrop for a host of business and human activities will continue to be cherished, protected and sensitively utilised for the benefit of all.



Above: Modern plant has replaced many of the original buildings at Deer Park, ensuring the highest levels of safety, efficiency and environmental performance.



For more information please contact the Site Manager,
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ICI businesses at Deer Park

Adhesives and Resins

Designs and produces technically advanced resins for use in plywood, particleboard and fibreboard manufacture. Formaldehyde (the main resin raw material) is made on site.

Engineering Plastics

Manufactures a broad range of customised specialist compounds of polypropylene, nylon and polyethylene to meet the highly demanding needs of the automotive, wire and cable and export appliance markets.

Quarry Services

Mobile manufacturing units and operators based here provide bulk and packaged explosives, initiating systems and blasting services to mines, quarries and construction sites across Victoria.

Films

The factory produces polyethylene and polypropylene films. These films are mainly used for diaper and personal care products as well as consumer product packaging.

Initiating Explosives

Manufactures detonator caps, detonating cord and primers for the safe, reliable initiation of bulk explosives in the mining and quarry industries in Australia and overseas.

Polyurethanes

Manufactures polyurethane compounds for insulation and structural stability for the appliance, wood panels and construction industries as well as flexible polyurethanes for the footwear, furniture and transport markets.

Site Engineering

Professional engineering services for the project management, design, procurement, construction and commissioning of plant and equipment. Servicing mainly Deer Park and nearby ICI sites.

Specialty Chemicals

The plant manufactures detergents, surfactants, emulsifiers, paper dyes, agricultural chemicals, plastics additives and other specialty chemicals widely used in all industries.

Vinyl Plastics

The "Welvic" factory designs and manufactures customer specific vinyl compounds for applications such as footwear, water pipes and fittings, automotive parts, industrial and garden hoses and electrical cables.