

Club on The Rocks

Sunday the 21st of June turned out to be perfect weather for a change. Rhondda and I had been to the Rocks Riverside Park many times since it opened in December 2003 and have seen the change from 26 hectares of small seedling trees to a great place with many secluded or open spaces among the now large trees. Features include a water play area, a flying fox, shelters, lawns, bushland, community gardens and electric barbecues. There are also adventure playgrounds, a climbing web, bikeways, a basketball court, a liberty swing for children with disabilities, an amphitheatre, a pavilion, and open spaces for lawn gatherings and games. Have a look sometime if you haven't been there.

The Rocks Riverside Park area has had many different uses over its lifetime. Irish immigrants bought the land and cleared the dense scrub and vine thickets and crops were grown on the site from 1920 to 1960. Queensland Cement and Lime (QCL) eventually set up their operations in the area, as the site was a good source of fresh water, gravel and sand. Dead coral was brought up the Brisbane River from Moreton Bay as this was found to be a good substitute for lime. The coral was then sent to the nearby Darra Cement Works for processing. In 1995, the Queensland Government decided not to renew QCL's licence to remove coral from Moreton Bay. The last shipment was received in 1997 and most of the coral used by 1998, resulting in the closure of the plant in 1999. Scattered around the park are many relics of the old QCL operation including part of the overhead conveyer belt.

We arrived around 10 am and were scanning the huge area for the group when we spotted Anzac, sorry, Kivin, in the car park getting a chair from his truck, just as Carol, Vic, Amber and Jayden also arrived. He led us to the Power clan and Colin who had claimed a shelter shed and BBQ for our group and they were already relaxing in the sun. It was not long before Carwyn and Susan arrived with Cayden, Taran and the hyper active Amity. We mainly sat and talked with some doing a lap of the park. Rhiannon was doing a great job of amusing the younger kids looking quite like a teacher and her pupils. We were later joined by Charles and Anne, followed by Matt then Linda and Sarah also arriving from the outer suburbs. We even had a couple of bikies join us. Ok! It was Graham and Irene. They were on push bikes and fortunately not in Leather and Tatts or even worse, Lycra. The BBQ's got a work out and we all found plenty to talk about during the afternoon and the mobile phones only appeared briefly to show a small video clip and some again went exploring the largest park on the Brisbane River. Eventually after a pleasant day we started packing to head home and started to look for Rhiannon and Jayden who had been missing for a while. Search parties were sent out with no luck so we again set off in different directions but with the same result. It was eventually Danny's bellowing that got a result. They had been exploring the bush on the nearby steep slope and had not strayed far as per instructions but were invisible to the increasingly concerned search parties.

Our thanks go to Danny and Heidi for organising yet another great day exploring an interesting park.

Ron N Rhondda