

Re: Amlwch and Hayle Plants.

My father, Reginald Bywater, was a Chartered Chemical Engineer who spent most of his career with Simon Carves of Stockport.

I have childhood memories of him being very much involved in both the Hayle and Amlwch plants and I believe he would have commissioned the sulphuric acid facilities at both sites and may have had responsibility for other processes.

In later years he continued to be very active with acid plant installations around the world (India, Turkey, etc.) and also polythene plants.

I have distant memories of our family having a holiday stay at The Old Quay House on the outskirts of Hayle which I think is where my father would have been staying whilst working at the plant. I also recall a stay at Gadlys Hotel in Cemaes Bay probably around 1951/2. Amlwch was closer to home (Bramhall in Cheshire) and we seemed to spend quite a lot of family weekends around Moelfre.

He retired in 1975 and passed away in 1997.

My own career was in the motor industry in the course of which I met Leo Kuzmicki of Norton and Vanwall fame, but then at Rootes in Coventry, and who later took charge of the Octel Research Centre at Milton Keynes.

For time I was a development engineer at Jaguar working on exhaust emissions and engine development. I therefore became quite familiar with the technology of fuels and additives such as TEL although we were using lead free gasoline for US emissions test procedures from 1972.

One of your contributors remarked that lead was phased out from UK gasolines for health reasons, which is a common belief, but only partly true. What was probably more compelling at the time was that lead free fuel became essential to obtain satisfactory service life from catalytic converters for exhaust treatment as introduced in USA and Japan from the early mid-1970s.

About 30 years ago I became involved in supercharging projects with Dennis Priddle who had been a leading dragster race driver and he had a chemical engineer colleague, Alan Robson, who had helped with blending nitromethane based racing fuels for him. Alan was a specialist with hazardous chemicals and he told me that he had been involved with decommissioning at both Hayle and Amlwch. What his exact involvement was I have no idea and he died suddenly some years ago.

A number of years ago a friend of mine who was a senior figure at BP Research, Sunbury, suggested flippantly one day that with the health issues suspected for MMT and other anti-knock alternatives we might soon hear cries of 'come back lead, all is forgiven'.

At the age of 73 I am still producing special parts for classic Jaguars as you will see from my websites below.

Roger Bywater - 07/03/2019

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