

Interview with Mr Bryn Davies

The interview was carried out on the 15.2.14. The aim of the interview was to gain an understanding of the working conditions within the phurnacite plant. Also I strived to establish what social activities were available to the workers and what impact the plant had on the local community, and its residents. Mr Davies signed an agreement form, which stated he was willing for me to share the given information with third parties.

Key

- Question.
- Answer.

- What was your job at the plant?
- I was an electrician within the plant.

- How long did you work at the plant and at what age did you start working there?
- I started work at the plant in 1956 and worked there for 33 years. I was 15 ½ years old when I started and was employed as an apprentice electrician. My first wages as an apprentice were £4 a week.

- What are your memories of working in the plant? By this I mean working conditions and the comradeship amongst workers?
- I have more good than bad memories of working in the plant. There was very good comradeship between the workers. Because of my trade I was involved with other electricians. There were many other tradesman working at the plant and they too seemed to bond within their groups. However the working conditions within the plant were very poor, due to the dust and fumes which were produced. There were also a few fatalities over the years I worked there.

- Were there any social events for the workers, such as football teams or days out?
- There was a football team and a plant darts team. There were regular social events, organised within the trade structures of the plant. So the electricians would have an events evening for example. There was also summer days out to the beach and Christmas parties to, which were family orientated.

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- What impact did the closure of the plant have on you? Also how about the surrounding community, in regards to job losses.

- I took redundancy 9 months before the plant closed. I was 48 years old when I finished. The closure of the plant had a negative impact as regards to local employment, because it provided a lot of jobs for local people. The plant also generated work for companies further afield. Things like haulage to transport the produce were needed. Although the plant was a dirty place to work, many people were happy to work there, because it was regular money and work.

- What did you do after the plant closed?

- I finished work in the phuracite in the August and didn't start back work until the following November. I had a temporary job until Christmas with Hitachi electrics. I was lucky enough to be kept on after this period with a full time contract of work.

- And one last question, were there any women employed by the phuracite?

- There were women employed within the plant, but not as far as manual work goes. Their main work involved time keeping, working within the canteen and cleaning the various offices.

Thank you for your time Mr Davies and the valuable insight you have given me into the working conditions and social aspect surrounding the phurnacite plant Abercwmboi.

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