

## The staff newsletter of AJ Engineering and NEWCo



Front page news in the Forres Gazette covering the opening of AJ Engineering, and above, a more recent photo of Alan!

## HAPPY 25TH BIRTHDAY AJ ENGINEERING!

**AJ Engineering is celebrating 25 years in business and will mark the year by opening its doors to the public and introducing staff awards.**

We are also going to create a timeline of key business achievements and developments over the 25-year history.

AJ Engineering was founded by managing director Alan James in 1999. Alan started the company as the sole employee after being made redundant from William Reid Engineering which was also located in Forres.

Alan said: "I am very proud of this business birthday, and we are looking forward to being able to celebrate throughout the year. Twenty-five years in business is a massive achievement. When we celebrated our 20 years in 2019, I did not expect that a year later to face the start of significant and unique destabilising challenges of leaving Europe, COVID, the Ukraine War and then the consequential recession. So no matter how

established a business is, there are always challenges that have to be faced.

"However, there have also been many highlights and I think it's really important, that at key moments like the 25 years in business, that we take a step back and acknowledge that."

In the last few years, AJ Engineering has had many highlights.

In 2020, despite Covid, it announced that it was expanding its premises to Waterford in Forres in a £2.5 million investment which has allowed the company to increase production and employ more staff. The new site was then officially opened by The Princess Royal, a year later.

Also, in 2021, Alan was announced as regional director of the year in the Institute of Directors (IoD) Scotland awards and it was the first year, that a team were deployed to work in Antarctica.

Alan added: "There's been a lot happening, but I think that all these developments have been key to the success of AJ Engineering. We have a very experienced, formidable team that are always looking for new opportunities for the company based on the underlying primary focus of customer service whatever and wherever the challenge. More recently we have expanded AJE into England with a senior marketing representative based in London and a team located in Carlisle and there will be a further development at our Waterford site this spring when new equipment is installed which will make us a key player in the production of galvanized steel electrical transmission towers."

As in 2019, AJ Engineering plans to become part of Moray Doors Open Day on Saturday, September 7, as Alan



HRH Princess Royal opening the Waterford site in 2021



Many young people got an insight into AJ Engineering at the 2019 Doors Open Day

explained: "We loved opening our doors to the public in our 20th year, so we hope to do it again this September, but this time it will be the facility at Waterford which people can visit. This has never been opened to the public before. The previous Doors Open Day was a huge success especially for the interest shown by young folk and maybe we inspired another generation of engineers and maybe we will do that again

"We also want to hold a staff service awards ceremony at our Christmas celebration outing which will acknowledge the dedication of our long-serving members of staff. As well as that, we also hope to have some kind of visual fixture located at our HQ here in Forres which shows the highlights and developments of the company since it was founded."



Graham Alexander and Alan at Waterford



Ross Jack in Antarctica

## MSP visits AJE in Apprenticeship Week

**A Scottish politician has visited AJ Engineering as part of Scottish Apprenticeship Week which was celebrated last month.**

Highlands and Islands Green MSP, Ariane Burgess, was welcomed to AJ Engineering to learn about the company and its passion for investing in young people.

She met a number of employees including trainee apprentice James O'Neil (see picture) and Frazer McBeath from Nigg Skills Academy.

Ariane Burgess was joined by Nina Crocombe from Skills Development Scotland to mark Scottish Apprenticeship Week which is held to show how apprenticeships are unlocking potential and helping people develop skills. They also support economic priorities and renewal, including Net Zero ambitions to help Scotland to become a stronger, fairer, greener and wealthier economy. Foundation, Modern and Graduate Apprenticeships are supporting over 43,000 apprentices and 12,000 businesses across the country.

Trainee apprentice James O'Neil met Green MSP Ariane Burgess



## SITE VISIT HELPS IT ALL ADD UP FOR FINANCE MANAGER



A birds eye view of the Herricks site

**Visiting sites isn't just restricted to project managers, fabricators and cladding specialists, group finance manager Louise Munro is also partial to an outing.**

Recently, Louise who has worked at AJE for 13 years visited the Herricks Water Treatment Works where the team has

been working to supply and install a new portal frame building and cladding, 10 process tanks, all secondary access steel work and mechanical install including all S/S pipework.

Louise said: "I was delighted to be invited to site by project manager Wilson Burnett. My role is obviously predominantly office based, and I hear about all the projects but I never actually get to see what it all means, but being on site has given me a greater understanding of the whole picture. It was really helpful being able to get a real insight to what the project managers and on-site teams do and how this all relates to other departments in AJE. One department can't exist without the other."

Whilst onsite, Louise was also treated to a bird's eye view of the ESD site, located

just outside of Keith with a 'trip' in the MEWP.

"It was a real treat getting up in the MEWP and seeing the whole site. It was certainly different to being in my office."

More directly related to Louise's job is her upcoming trip to NEWCo where she will be meeting auditors.

"NEWCo is really important to me, as I have been involved in it since the start, when Alan purchased the company," explained Louise, "I was involved in all aspects of getting the new company set up from financial procedures and new software systems for the day to day running of the business, to the corporate side dealing with solicitors, accountants and the bank. I'm really looking forward to the visiting the team there and working with the auditors."