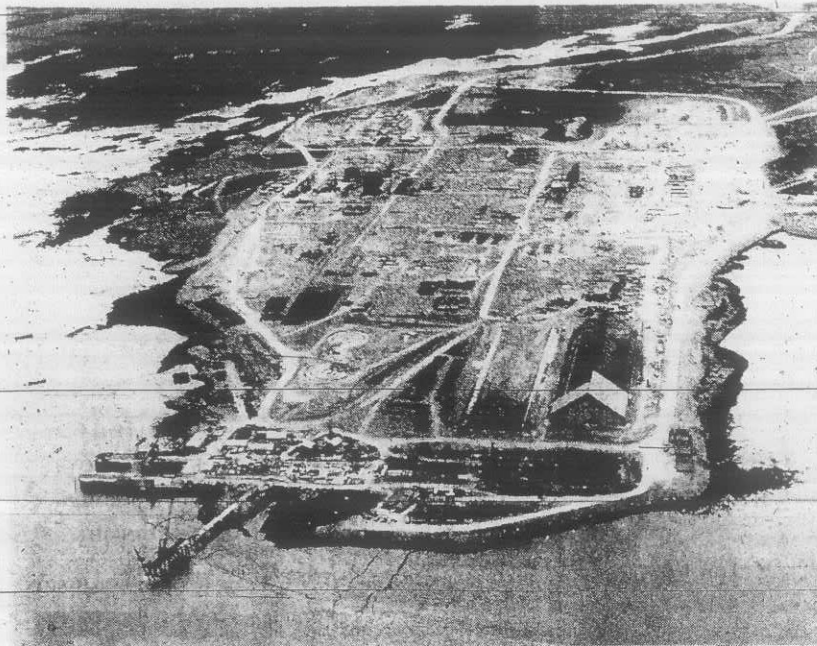
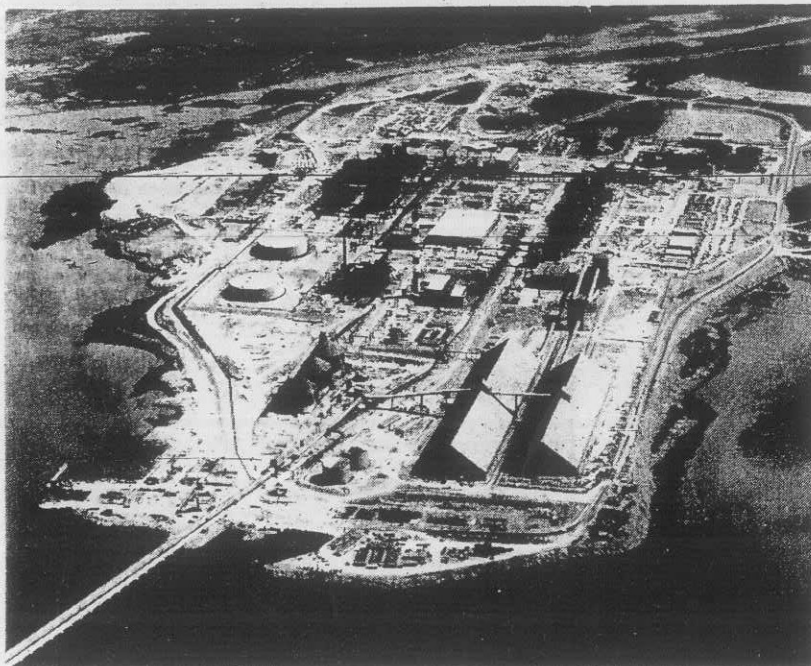


ALCAN 2 YEARS AGO



ALCAN THIS WEEK



Pictures: SEAN COOKE

All systems go at Aughinish

By DYMPHNA BRACKEN

THE Aughinish Alumina plant—now 90 per cent completed—is scheduled to commence operation in mid-1983, with a workforce of 700. The final cost will be £630m.

In production, Aughinish Alumina Ltd. will join the world-wide aluminium industry processing bauxite to provide over 800,000 tonnes of alumina for smelters abroad.

Bauxite ore, the plant's main raw material, will be shipped to Aughinish Island from West Africa and Brazil. Ocean-going vessels of up to 70,000 tonnes will dock at the island's new 900 metres jetty, one of the largest ever built in Ireland.

Commenting on recent reports of a glut of alumina on world markets, and its affect on the County Limerick plant, Mr. Cathal O'Shannon, Public Affairs manager of A.C.L., this week told the Limerick Leader: "There is no doubt, but the owners of the plant are keeping a close eye on the world picture, but we are still gearing our operations for mid-1983."

Continuing, he said: "Preparations for start-up will be further discussed at a project meeting in September."

"With nearly 12 months still to go it is difficult for anybody to predict the future position."

With the plant now just 90 per cent complete, there are at present 4,650 persons working in various capacities on the site.

Alumina Constructors Ltd., the company responsible for the building of the plant at present, have a total of 4,400 people on the site.

Included in that number are 3,400 hourly-paid workers comprising contract workers, security men, catering staff and consultants. In addition to that number there are still over 1,000 working in the capacity of engineers, supervisors, clerical and technical.

Involved

With various parts of the plant completed or nearing completion, the number of workers involved on the construction side is decreasing

weekly. A total of 1,500 workers have already left the site, which employed 6,000 in peak times. At that time it was the biggest construction site in Europe.

Recently Chicago Bridge and Iron Ltd., the company who built the precipitators on the site completed their work and Wimpey Hegarty, the contractors on the site, will be winding up at the end of the year.

Aughinish Alumina Ltd., who will operate the plant at present, have 250 people on site, which will increase to 700 in the next 12 months.

Mr. Ed Lank, a Canadian, who has been present on the site from the beginning, is involved in establishing his management team consisting of engineers, technical and clerical staff and security men.

From the beginning, Aughinish Alumina Ltd., embarked on a comprehensive training programme which entailed the sending of a number of Irish graduates to Jamaica and Canada for two years.

Those people have now returned to the site, and with other highly skilled staff are preparing for "start up" with some still involved in induction courses.

Private

Commenting on the recruitment of staff for the new plant, Mr. O'Shannon said the majority of the 700 workers would be recruited within the country.

Continuing, he said: "We have set high standards for our staff, but our working conditions are good, and our re-location benefits are among the best in the country."

Because the Alumina plant is the first of its kind in this country, and few people are aware of its operations, it will be inevitable that some senior management personnel will have to be recruited abroad.

Mr. O'Shannon envisages that the majority of the 700 workforce will be recruited from the Mid-West region, with only specialised people coming from elsewhere.

Conscious of the difficulties for workers moving to the area, Aughinish Alumina Ltd. have signed contracts for two housing schemes in West Limerick.

These private sites are at Newcastle West, where McInerneys are

building 16 houses, and at Pallaskey, where the local firm of Dineen and Company are building 18 houses.

The serviced sites for the houses were sold by Limerick County Council.

In broad terms, the Newcastle West and Pallaskey houses are available on a first come first served basis for those who qualify under the removal policies of the company. In other words, only those who have moved a distance of 40 miles or more to take up residence are eligible. The houses range in price from £25,000 to £30,000, and are all two-storey.

In addition, the company have appointed their own housing officer, Mr. Mark Downey, who is now available to advise and counsel on housing and help those seeking mortgages from banks and building societies.

Advise

To advise wives and families of workers moving to the area, the company earlier this year appointed Rosemary Hartnett as Welfare Officer.

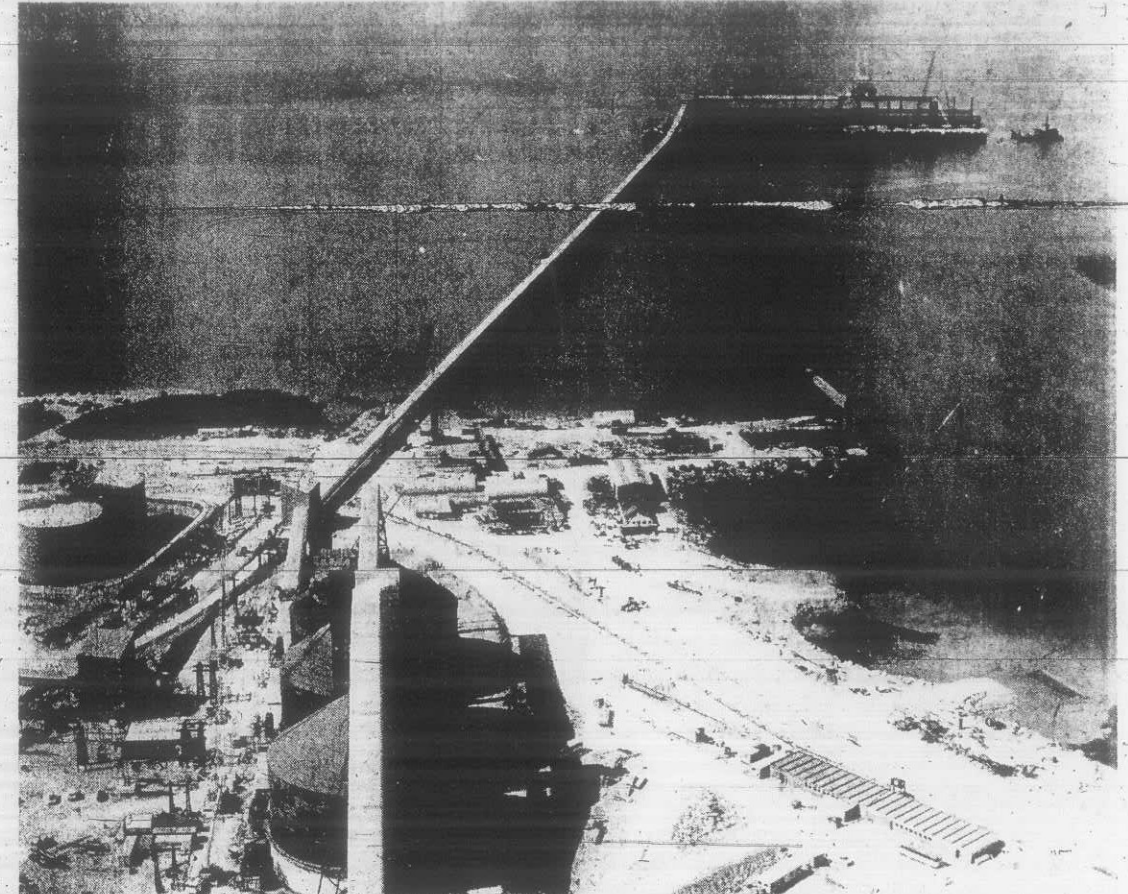
Rosemary Hartnett, who is married to the well-known poet, Michael Hartnett, joined the company in January and her job could very possibly be unique in Irish industrial concerns.

English-born Rosemary declared: "I visit the wives as soon as I can and tell them about social events and what is available in their area, and I also introduce them to each other."

Earlier this year, Aughinish Alumina Ltd. reached an important milestone in its development with the formal signing of the comprehensive company/union agreements covering the terms and conditions of employment and compensation for all of its industrial employees.

Built on a 360 acres of the 1,000 acre island, the plant is owned by Alcan Ireland Limited (40 per cent), Billiton Aluminium Ireland Limited (35 per cent) and Anaconda Ireland Ltd. (25 per cent).

Mr. O'Shannon described the plant—the largest single private investment in Ireland's history—as being very important for this country, and in particular for the Mid-West region.



The 900 metre long pier at Aughinish Island.

'NASHVILLE' SOUND AT BUNRATTY

COUNTRY and western scenes at Bunratty Folk Park will be beamed to millions of television viewers across the world in the coming months, in a promotion of Philomena Begley's new album, which goes on world wide release.

The commercial, which Philomena has been filming at Bunratty this week, will be shown on Irish, Dutch, Swiss, Canadian, British, German and U.S. networks.

While in Limerick, Philomena was presented with a platinum disc by Mr. Brendan Harvey, Managing Director K-Tel Ireland, at the Two Mile Inn, Limerick. The disc was awarded to mark the sale of 50,000 copies of her last record,

"The Best of Philomena Begley".

"We picked the folk park for this commercial because we felt it was an ideal place to make a film depicting country scenes", said Mr. Harvey. He thanked Shannon Development for their help and co-operation in making the commercial.

The commercial is costing £12,000 to make but the organisers are confident it will be worth every penny. Country and western singer, Susan McCann, who was recently voted European female Country Artist of the year, is also expected to film a commercial featuring her new record, "The Best of Susan McCann", at the folk park this week.



Philomena Begley at Bunratty Folk Park with the platinum disc which was presented to her by Mr. Brendan Harvey.

KILKEE FAMILY FESTIVAL

KILKEE

Friday, August 20, to
Sunday August 22

