

# The Micron



The staff newsletter of AJ Engineering and NEWCo

## THE POWER OF TWO PROVES ITS WORTH FOR AJE GROUP



### **NEWCo's staff base has expanded after three employees transferred from Forres HQ to the Fort William base.**

The move means NEWCo now has a 20-strong team including fabricator/welders, project managers, a foreman, storeman and mechanical fitters.

Neil Worsdall, general manager at Fort William said the three additional staff each bring with them their own unique set of skills and experience.

He said: "We are so pleased to welcome David, Robert and George from Forres. Between them they have a huge amount of experience."

Neil who has been at NEWCo since last May said David's appointment as workshop foreman was already paying dividends: "David joined AJE from MacKellar Sub Sea Ltd and him now being here has made a huge difference to the quality and production."

Speaking of Robert and George he added: "Robert has a lot of weld codings which will open up new avenues and also pass his skills to our team and George is an extremely experienced fabricator/welder with years of experience behind him."

AJE expanded into Lochaber in 2015 after buying out NEWCo from husband and wife team, Ron and Denise MacLennan.

Neil said: "Our operation is much the same as at AJE although they handle any structural building works. We carry out a lot of maintenance jobs and work closely with the Liberty Smelter and BSW Timber at Corpach. We have also been doing a lot of work on the fish farms and hatcheries for Marine Harvest."

The partnership between AJE and NEWCo has helped both companies expand geographically, but Neil explained it has also meant that the

workforce pool can help when big jobs come on at either depot: "Now, with the two companies being under one group we have labour back up. In July, we had five staff come down and work from AJE as we were so busy here. Working together has expanded the pool of skilled workforce."

In 2017 the strength of having the two companies showed when the Forres and Fort William teams worked on one project.

The companies were contracted to create a new bridge at Fort William to give walkers and tourists access to Ben Nevis.

The 139-foot long bow arced pedestrian bridge was fabricated by the team at AJE and installed by the team at NEWCo.

"The bridge at Ben Nevis is an absolute perfect example of why these two companies complement each other so well," added Neil.



## Forres partnership “builds” local bonds



### Everyone needs good neighbours and there is nothing like lending a hand to the people next door.

The team at AJE recently completed works for fellow Forres-based business James Jones & Sons Limited who are situated right next door to the firm's HQ.

Contracted by Hardie Engineering, a new client for AJE, the firm has been making steelwork alterations and has fabricated and installed a new steel framed building and cladding at the timber processing facility.

Lead by project manager Andrew Morrison, the steelwork fabrication started in early April with the cladding work scope being added later. The project ended at the end of last month. At the height of the works, a team of 10 personnel from AJE were on site and as Andrew explained some of the firm's apprentices were also involved: “It has been great working with another local business. We have

worked on various projects in and round Forres and it's always good to be forming these partnerships.

“During busy periods we had up to 10 personnel on site including some of the apprentices who were learning from the experienced cladders and erectors on site.”

He added: “There were two main areas of the project. There was the existing building which we have altered with additional steelwork and stripped off the old cladding.

“We have also added an entirely new building which we fabricated and installed. Both the new and old structures were then clad in composite wall and roof panels. This was probably the biggest challenge of the project to ensure it looked like one new building, and it was also quite constrained on all sides. However, we succeeded, and we subcontracted the painting work so that the new and old buildings look like one facility.”

## Pupils on right track with AJE support

**Pupils from a school engineering club put their “home-made” battery car to the test in a racing competition and were put on the right track with support from AJ Engineering.**

The Forres Academy's Young Engineers' 24-volt powered single seater car was pitted against hundreds of others in a mammoth race organised by the Greenpower Education Trust.

AJ Engineering supplied the overalls to the youngsters who needed them to qualify for the challenge.

Design & Technical teacher Paul Daley, who runs the after-school club and accompanied the pupils to the race at the Grampian Transport Museum in Alford said he was proud of the team's efforts.

He said: “The team have been working on the car for the best part of two years. They have built it from scratch. A lot of the teams use kits, but these guys have literally built it from the bare bones. I am very proud of the work they have put in.”

He added: “We are very grateful to AJ Engineering who have provided the overalls. To be able to enter the race, the pupils must wear overalls, gloves and full-face helmets, so getting this form of support has been a real help.

Fifteen-year-old Lewis Stevens who has worked on the car said there were a few challenges along the way: “Luckily we have overcome them, but there have been some ups and downs. It's been a lot of fun though.”



## AJE CHAMPIONED BY LOCAL MP

**AJE was recently highlighted as a Constituency Responsible Business Champion by the local MP.**

The nomination for AJ Engineering & Construction Services recognised the firm's work in the community as well as its working practices. The nomination was made by Moray MP Douglas Ross and Alan James, managing director said he was pleased with the nomination.

Alan said: “The company is delighted to have been recognised in this way. It's a very worthwhile and credible award and there have been some very worthy local and nationwide businesses listed in previous years.”

Alan and Mr Ross attended an All Party Parliamentary Corporate Responsibility Group reception at Portcullis House which is located next to the Houses of Parliament to celebrate all the UK nominations.”



AJ Engineering regularly supports Forres Academy with events and workshops. It has also hosted work experience youngsters from the school.

Graham Alexander, the firm's general manager said he was glad AJ Engineering could get involved once again: “It's very inspiring to see such a young group of enthusiastic engineers. We are always happy to support events and projects such as this one as these young people could be future employees one day. It's so important to encourage and support young people, particularly in the science, technology, engineering and mathematics subjects.”