

*Silver Anniversary issue*

# Rockhard

**25 Years of indestructible paint July 4th 1978 - July 4th 2003**

Diversification - The Name of the game

In these uncertain economic times it's good to be able to report some success.

Since the events of September 11th 2001, in common with most companies, Indestructible Paint Limited had suffered a loss of business amounting, in its case, to about 10% of turnover.

Specialised aero engines coatings and other aerospace primers and finishes are the largest part of the company's business and will remain so in the future.

However, an ongoing programme to widen our industrial and marine customer base was intensified in an attempt to recover lost turnover.

We also planned to strengthen our relationship with existing customers, introduce new ones to our existing products and services and expand our interests in wider world markets.

This programme, I am pleased to report, has been extremely successful and resulted in restoration of the company's business to its previous levels.

Several reports in this newsletter are examples of some of the new business gained.

Brian Norton  
Managing Director

**New environmentally friendly engine system**

Indestructible has reported previously on work carried out to reduce or eliminate chrome while also reducing VOC content by removing the hazardous solvents used in traditional paint systems. One result of this development strategy is the company's latest aerospace approvals for its new IP714/715 aluminium air drying primer /topcoat system. This chromate and xylene/toluene free, low VOC engine coating system meets all the corrosion and heat resistance requirements specified by the world's major aero engine manufacturers.



The new system now replaces chrome and high solvent containing primers and finishes from several other paint producers.

Now being adopted worldwide, its added benefits of easy application and superior finish are regarded as a major plus points by users.

Aero engine showing external parts coated in new IP air drying aluminium paint system.

A special 2-pack low temperature system, part of the company's 33000/37000 range, is now available from Indestructible.

Specially formulated for use on PBT control knobs, buttons and handles on cookers, the system has now been adopted by three major manufacturers, Electrolux, Indesit and Creda.

The success of these coatings with UK manufacturers has also led to the adoption of the system by an Italian domestic appliance manufacturer. Their first order is currently being processed by the paint applicator.

Comprising primer, colour coat and clear lacquer, the system is formulated to resist fats, oils and other 'kitchen chemicals', and prolonged temperatures of at least 150° C.

PBT coating materials are available in customer specified colours. Electrolux currently use 'Stainless' while Indesit and Creda use 'Champagne' and 'Satin Chrome' respectively.



**Appliance handles being sprayed with Indestructible's PBT coating system.**

## **Indestructible win ISO 9001:2000 certification**

Indestructible, one of only a few paint companies to have qualified for the new ISO9001:2000 Business Quality Standard certificate, was presented with its new certificate by West Midlands MEP, Malcolm Harbour recently.

When presenting the certificate, Mr Harbour said: 'The new standard is management led. It will be a part of the day to day running of the firm and will also involve the company's customers.'

I am very pleased to be able to present this to a firm that is responsibly applying these standards in our region.'



**L- R: Dave Chapman; Malcolm Harbour; Alan Norton; Brian Norton, Managing Director and Doug Norton, Chairman.**

Alan Norton, the company's Operations Director, commented: 'The new standard is functional and will ensure better running of the business. We are pleased to integrate it into our operations. While at Indestructible, Mr Harbour also answered questions on European regulations policy

**To all our readers** May we call the attention of our customers, and indeed, anyone who reads this newsletter, to the proposed EU legislation regarding the use and testing of chemicals we use in our everyday lives - the **REACH** proposals.

This is a matter of great concern to both industry and the general public and represents the threat of yet more bureaucracy and rising costs leading, ultimately, to job losses.

We enclose a leaflet from the **British Coatings Federation** (BCF) that explains the position in more detail.

## Indestructible Marine developments



# New products

Under the banner of Rylard Marine Coatings, Indestructible Paint Limited has, for a number of years, manufactured and supplied marine paints including those for use on leisure and pleasure craft. The narrowboats used on canals, rented by holiday makers or privately owned, have been, and still are, a steadily growing market for these products.

Indestructible's Rylard range of coatings for this market is distributed by Mainline Building Products Ltd., a company supplying marine chandlers, specialising in these canal cruisers.

To improve the supply position and enhance the product range, for narrowboats, Indestructible in conjunction with Mainline, have introduced a range of bituminous and polymer based hull coatings.

Based on well tried and tested formulations, the new range compares favourably with competitive materials.

Some of the benefits to retail Rylard stockists include improved presentation, more advertising, ease of ordering and greater economy on minimum order costs. The new product range comprises: -

- **Rytex** satin high build bituminous coating. This product is equivalent to Intertuf and is used on both bare hull and re-coating applications.
- **Premium Protection**, high gloss, reinforced bituminous coating for effective economic re-coating work.
- **Coflex** VT Vinyl Tar matt. The traditional professional coating for new hulls and for re-coating existing vinyl tar. Coflex has excellent diesel and oil resistance.
- **Standard Black** (gloss) the traditional tar based varnish with excellent diesel and oil resistance.

Rytex and Premium Protection are aimed at the retail/DIY market, while Coflex VT and Standard Black are for boat builders and repairers.

These hull protection products were officially launched at the Crick Inland Boat show held over the May Bank Holiday weekend and featured on the Rylard stand alongside its traditional

enamels range. There was much interest in the new products and the ability to obtain both bottom blackings and topside paints from the same supplier was deemed a great benefit.

Overall the Rylard staff reported a hectic three days (see photo) with great interest from the public involved in this rapidly growing leisure pursuit.



## Double at Aston Martin - Lagonda

### Special coating for polyester grill



The solid aluminium grill originally intended for the **Aston Martin DB7 Zagato** proved to be too heavy and was replaced with a specially designed version constructed in polyester.

This required a paint finish that was indistinguishable from chrome in appearance. It also had to have good stone chip and mar resistance while being impervious to antifreeze and brake fluid.

Indestructible provided the answer and won the business with one of its specialised coatings, a low bake 2-pack spraying Chrome Effect finish.

### Under-bonnet epoxy

Indestructible also obtained business to replace and match the expensive electroplating on an under-bonnet air filter housing, in this case for the **Aston Martin Vanquish** saloon, with a stoving spraying epoxy gunmetal grey.

The coating has to withstand a cycled 140° C heat test.

## **Late News Items**

### **Rolls-Royce Allison**

Indestructible Paint Inc., the US distributor for Indestructible Paint Ltd., is now supplying a low VOC spraying 2-pack polyurethane engine enamel and silicone engine sealants to Rolls-Royce's Allison division in the USA.

### **International expansion**

With existing outlets in the USA, India, Malta, Italy and other Mediterranean countries already firmly established, Indestructible, as part of its development drive, is now appointing further agents and distributors worldwide.

Areas to be covered include China and the Far East, Israel, Eastern Europe and Russia.

Major projects are also currently underway in Sweden, Finland and Hong Kong.

**Further** - The company has just received its first order from Israel for plastics paints.

In addition three orders have been supplied to China for a bright silver metallic for use on PBT plastic used in the production of smoke alarms. These will be on sale in the UK through the major DIY outlets.

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Supplement

1978

# Indestructible

## 25

2003

## Years of Indestructible Paint Limited

A family owned company, Indestructible paint Ltd., values its customers and combines all the traditional virtues of a relatively small paint company - caring service, tailor-made coatings and quick reaction times - with its modern, high tech facilities and products.

The original Indestructible Paint Company dates back to about 1867 and was located at Park Royal in London. It acquired Pilchers, established circa 1757, who used the trade name Cleopatra. This name stemmed from a Royal request to provide paint for Cleopatra's Needle on the Thames embankment.

It was subsequently taken over, around 1940, by Gittings & Hill Ltd., once the oldest paint company in Birmingham. This company was in turn, acquired by Ault & Wiborg Ltd., in 1958

The name 'Rockhard', currently over 100 years old, was used by Gittings and Hill for a range of epoxy coatings developed in 1952 for the first magnesium skinned Westland helicopters, and also used on the first hovercraft.

The names Indestructible and Rockhard were ultimately acquired, along with formulations, by Doug Norton - otherwise Douglas K. Norton .

B.Sc. A.T.S.C - who had joined Gittings and Hill as a laboratory assistant in 1956 and subsequently became Ault & Wiborg's Chief Chemist.

The present Indestructible Paint company was established by Doug, still its current Chairman, as Indestructible Paint (1978) Limited, on July 4th 1978. Initially working from home with a part-time secretary, Doug later, in 1979, bought a piece of waste land and lock-up garages for £5000 and turned these into the first humble premises of his new company.

There followed a period of years during which, as a result of much hard work by Doug and his small but increasing number of staff, a number of key products gradually established the company's reputation. During this time Doug was joined by his younger



**The Indestructible team 2003**

son Alan.

A significant event in the fortunes of the company was its approval by Rolls-Royce Aero Engines Ltd., as a supplier and also as a licensee to manufacture some of that company's very specialised aerospace coatings. This was a major step into the aerospace market.

The aerospace industry became, and is still, the key market area for Indestructible Paint Ltd.

It is now a major supplier of organic and inorganic aero engine and other types of coating materials to most of 'big names' in the aerospace sector worldwide.

In 1989 a much expanded Indestructible Paint Company moved to its present address, a single but much larger factory unit, at Sparkhill in Birmingham. During this period Doug's eldest son, Brian joined the company and took over as managing Director.

Shortly afterwards the adjoining unit was purchased to double the company's floor space. Further expansion has since taken place with the acquisition of two more neighbouring units.

The range of Indestructible aerospace products continued to grow, as did its general industrial coatings output, but a new avenue opened in 1996. A nearby old and established paint company, Llewellyn Rylands Ltd., - where Doug Norton had served his initial apprenticeship in the paint trade from 1947 to 1951 - changed its marketing strategy and decided to sell its very well known Rylard range of marine finishes.



Indestructible purchased the name, formulations and various pieces of equipment from Rylands and entered the marine market.

Whilst retaining traditional Rylard paints, Indestructible have since added new finishes to the range, many of these being derived from high tech aerospace products.

### **The Paint Shop 1983**

Two types of paint were quite significant in the early success of Indestructible Paint Ltd., Agricoat and Rockhard.

Agricoat, an acrylic water based air drying paint was formulated for brushing or spraying, as required. It was originally intended for use on or in agricultural buildings such as barns, stores and dairies but later became widely used, along with its derivatives, in a multitude of other applications.

Rockhard coatings, are a range of very high performance epoxy products, providing high corrosion and chemical resistance and were the key to Indestructible's initial penetration of the aerospace and industrial markets.

Developed and continuously improved over the years, the product remains an important part of Indestructible's armoury of high performance coatings.

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**Section of current warehouse facility**

It is interesting to note that after 40 years or so, some companies still order Rockhard using code numbers previously initiated by Gittings and Hill. These code numbers still exist on Indestructible's product list and the materials in question are still made to the original formulations.

Indestructible Paint Limited continues to evolve. It has a very active development laboratory that has produced a number of advanced coatings of widely contrasting types.

These include, amongst many others, the very high temperature corrosion, erosion and chemical resistant inorganic coatings used on jet engine turbine blades, a range of advanced coatings for plastics and low surface friction coatings.



All paint products today have to conform to stringent environmental requirements, and an enormous amount of work in this respect has been successfully applied to updating older formulations as well as to the development of new.

### **Indestructible factory., today**

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