

# anopol newsletter

Surface Treatment for Stainless Steel

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70 Bordesley St  
Birmingham  
B5 5QA  
Tel: 0121 632 6888  
Email: [info@anopol.co.uk](mailto:info@anopol.co.uk)  
Website: [anopol.co.uk](http://anopol.co.uk)

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## **To be (in) or not to be (in)? That is the question**

It's still a long time to 23<sup>rd</sup> June and most of us are already exhausted at listening to the pros and cons of the two alternatives offered to the British people in the forthcoming EU referendum. What makes it difficult for the man (and lady) on the street, is that both sides of the argument appear to have valid reasons for staying in or leaving the European Union.

Understandably, the majority of companies, which are currently importing from or exporting to the EU, will hesitate to rock their boats. However, this leaves a huge number of companies, especially SMEs, whose business is solely within the UK.

One of many opinions is that the EU is a boat slowly sinking and that withdrawal by the UK would hasten the sinking. Should the UK remain in the EU and help bail out the water?

Of course, it is true to say that that companies as such do not have a vote in the referendum. It is down to each individual person to cast their vote for or against continued membership of the EU. The nation and not business will make the final decision. Let us hope they get it right.



### **Anopol – Part 3, the final chapter (for now).**

Having outgrown the modest premises in Birmingham's Jewellery Quarter, the search was now on for larger facilities still in Birmingham. Having viewed several unsuitable premises, the brothers John and Brian hit on an empty factory and offices in the industrial area of Digbeth, a post war building in Bordesley Street, which was originally occupied by a car accessory company and more recently by an Austrian owned company producing rhinestones. The building was rented and the move was made.

Because of time dependant contracts for electropolishing services, the brothers hired a vehicle on a Friday, dismantled the only tank and rectifier, after storing the chemical solution, ready for transporting between the two locations. Over the weekend, the plant was installed in the Bordesley Street factory and the still warm chemical solution pumped into the 600 litre electropolishing tank. Production in the new facility commenced at 8 o'clock on the following Monday morning. The two vital customers had not noted the transition, with no production having been lost.

The workforce was increased and now in 1976, comprised of the two Swain brothers, a chemist, a secretary and three tank operatives. Turnover that year jumped from £40,815 in 1975 to £107, 592, but the net loss was £20,348, a slight fall on the previous year. The following year, the loss of over £20,000 was converted into a profit of nearly £8,000.

In 1979 John Stanley was employed as a non-executive director. He brought with him extensive knowledge of intellectual property and contract negotiation.

In 1980 a full time sales manager, Tony Duell, was employed to assist in expanding the company's activities. He is still with the company after 35 years.

Anopol was on its way up and in 1988, for the first time, annual sales exceeded one million pounds.

In the meantime Anopol continued to pay licence fees to the German parent company. There was dissatisfaction with this arrangement in Birmingham, because little or nothing was being offered by the parent company in return for the licence fees. A buy-out was agreed with John Swain, conditional on Anopol continuing to pay the licence fee for another 7 years. The company was now British owned.

The adjacent company to Anopol in Bordesley Street decided to move to larger premises and the opportunity was taken to acquire the additional space and make points of access between the two premises. A laboratory was installed in the newly acquired premises, which were to be devoted to mixing and storing the large range of Anopol's chemical products. Within a couple of years the company purchased both leasehold buildings in Bordesley Street from the Landlords.

During 1984 Anopol and the one-time German parent company severed relations completely. Two years later the Germans purchased a company in southern England to compete with Anopol. As a result, Anopol bought into a small sub-contract electropolishing company, Stainless and Allied Services (SAS) in Hampshire in 1994. Expansion came rapidly, resulting in two moves into ever larger buildings.



On acquiring all the shares, the company name was changed to Anopol (South) Ltd. And Tony Mustil was employed as Managing Director.

In Birmingham, a freehold factory, in the vicinity of Anopol's facilities, was purchased and substantially renovated in 1994. Large pickling and electropolishing tanks were installed, together with substantial crange. The official opening of the new sub-contract processing factory in 1995 was attended by the then Minister for Trade and Industry, Tim Eggar MP.

In the nineties, a plan was conceived to promote more vigorously the sale of treatment plant and chemical products. An agreement with Delmet in Italy for the sale and distribution of their surface finishing plant in the UK and Ireland proved to be the required stimulus. Plant and the supply of chemicals used in the plants now form a significant part of Anopol's sales.

Meanwhile in the south the business continued to expand, requiring the purchase of a large building on the Borden Trading Estate. In 2005 Anopol (South) moved into the state-of-the-art factory with extensive facilities for electropolishing, pickling and passivating all sizes of stainless steel items. The official opening was attended by Lord Hoyle of Warrington.

In 2014 the company was the subject of a MBO by David Cass (MD), Adrian Dalloway (Finance Director) and Philip Spears (Engineering director). John and Brian Swain continue as consultants.

### LEMA Apprenticeships

February saw the official launch of the opening of the expanded engineering facilities at LEMA (Lean Engineering & Manufacturing Academy). Anopol's

Managing Director David Cass, Chairman John Swain and Group Operations Manager Judy Bradley were in attendance on behalf of the company. Lord Digby of Birmingham officiated, stressing the importance of engineering training for young people for the ongoing success of the West Midlands.

The LEMA Apprenticeship Programme, partially financially funded by Westminster, is designed to support manufacturing and engineering companies in the West Midlands.

Anopol has employed one apprentice from LEMA, who is going through an intensive training programme both in the

company and at LEMA, and one from Halesowen College, who is completing a HNC in chemistry. Both are excelling in their roles at Anopol. With skills shortages now a significant issue for many employers, there has never been a better time to invest in young people



## New Girl on the Block

Sharon Baker joined the team at Anopol (South) in January this year. She will deputise for Laura Miller, 16 years with the company, while Laura is on maternity leave. Sharon's duties encompass dealing with incoming phone calls, raising delivery notes and invoices and some credit control. Sharon was previously employed by Babcock International for 9 years. She has been married for 32 years and has 2 daughters and 4 grandchildren. She likes reading crime novels, walking and gardening. She also finds time to help behind the bar of the local working men's club



## Midlife crisis? It's downhill from there until you're 65

If you are trudging through your 40s in the grip of a midlife crisis, beware. There is worse to come. The years between 50 and 54 are officially the most miserable and dissatisfying. The Office for National Statistics has discovered that not only does life satisfaction and happiness fall to its lowest in the early 50s, but levels of anxiety soar.

It had previously been thought that the late 40s were the most miserable phase of life as child rearing collided with career disappointment and marital problems. The same factors are at play but coming later, the ONS said.

The good news, however, is that life improves after 65. The happiest years are between 65 and 75, with many people enjoying good health, wealth and the freedom to travel or pursue their hobbies.

A more positive attitude may also have a bearing, with older people known to have a greater sense of perspective about their setbacks. The ONS said that the amount of free time was a vital ingredient too.

"Those in their younger years and those who are retired may have more free time to spend on activities which promote their well-being," it said. "Those in their middle years may have more demands placed on their time and might struggle to balance work and family commitments. Evidence shows that people are having children later. Another possible reason for lower scores for the middle-aged groups could result from the burden of having to care for parents and children at the same time.

Those aged 75 to 79 also reported high levels of happiness, although this declines as they move into their 80s and 90s. Poor health and loneliness as people are widowed and lose friends can make these years more trying,

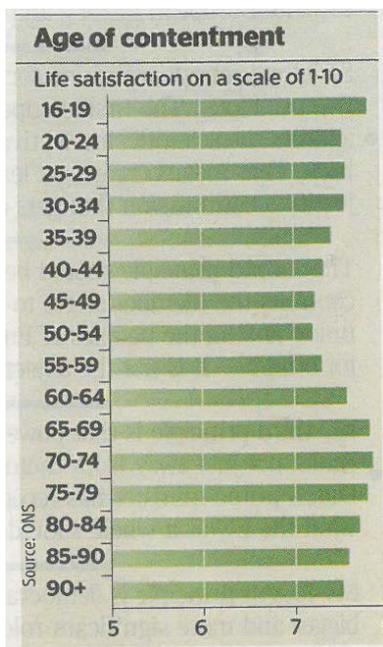
The data comes in the ONS's Project to measure national well-being, now in its fourth year. It found that atheists were less happy than any group with religious belief. Hindus were the happiest of all. Married couples and civil

partners reported the highest levels of happiness while the divorced and separated were the most unhappy, more miserable even than widows. People of Indian heritage were the happiest ethnic group. Those from Bangladesh and of Chinese origin also reported high levels of happiness.

Saamah Abdallah, of the Centre for Wellbeing, told *Sky News*, "Decades of research by economists and psychologists have shown that this data is meaningful. Your wellbeing predicts how likely you are to stay in your job, how likely you are to stay married, how long you can expect to live."

## Hard workers are rewarded with.....More work

Psychologists have confirmed that reliable people are their own worst enemies. Not only do colleagues pile work on them in the office, but when they get home so does their other half. A study by psychologists at Duke University, North Carolina, has investigated the downsides of quiet competence: no one thanks you for it and it just gets you more work. For the research, experiments were performed on competent people who were defined as those found in a questionnaire to have high self-control, a trait correlated with being reliable and good at your job. "In general, we found that people not only have higher expectations of these people, but tend to assign them more work," said Christy Koval PhD at Duke University. He said these people resented the extra work and deserved more recognition and rewards.



## THE JOYS OF EPIC FAILURE (Number 23)

### The Least Successful Sound Effect

In 1944 King Haakon of Norway delivered a rousing wartime address to his beleaguered people on the BBC World Service. As his Royal Highness was running forty seconds short, the producer sent to the library for a fanfare to round things off. At this point the talk came brilliantly alive.

Haakon had just commended his country to God, made a few Nordic grunts and laid down his script, when the air was suddenly alive with the sound of roundabouts and ribaldry and cockneys shouting, 'Roll up , roll up, ladies and gentlemen.' The library had sent a funfair. Afterwards the King said it was 'the sort of thing that happens,'

## THE JOYS OF EPIC FAILURE (Number 24)

### The Longest Errata List

A booklet entitled *The History of Cornish Pubs* gained extreme popularity in 1978 on account of its impressive errata list. It contained 140 corrections to a 70-page survey. High spots include:

page 3, line 1: for 'assuming' read 'unassuming'

page 8, line 54: for 'White Hart' read 'White Horse'

page 13, line 49: for 'major' read 'minor'

page 32, line 19: for 'Mews' read 'mess'

page 33, line 44: for 'Bishop and Wool' read 'Bridge on Wool'

page 63, line 6: for 'Queen's Arms' read 'Queen's Head'

page 73, line 5: for 'ship' read 'moulded ceilings'

page 73, line 6: for 'Batallick' read 'Botallack' and for 'Bosliwick' read 'Boslowick'

In the book, which is subtitled 'Pubs with a storey to tell', the engagingly modest editor says, 'We must apologise for the minor mistakes which have cropped up between correcting the proof and printing, Some are my fault, others, like a car one takes in to have repaired, the fault is repaired, but others occur! A few we have not corrected, especially punctuations! It should be possible to insert these in the text.'

### Did I really say that?

The world of science got very excited by the apparent discovery of the remains of a human giant found by workmen near the town of Cardiff in New York State in October 1869. Could this be the body of one of those giants the Bible said once walked the earth? A professor of palaeontology James H Drayton, who led a team of researchers who examined the remains declared it: 'The most remarkable object yet brought to light in this country.' The artist and sculptor Cyrus Cobb, who thought he knew a thing or two about the human form, looked at it and stated: 'Any man calling this thing a humbug brands himself a fool.'

Alas, the ancient 'giant' turned out to be a statue made of gypsum a few months before. It had been buried in a field next to a well by a hoaxer called George Hull who then called in the workmen who unearthed it.

Pop stars are not noted for their brains, which may explain the former Beatles drummer Ringo Starr saying: 'I love Beethoven, especially the poems.'

The director Francis Ford Coppola was less than pleased about having to make a certain movie that a film studio was urging him to do. He told his father in 1970: 'I was at Paramount all day yesterday and they want me to direct this hunk of trash. I don't want to do it. I want to do art films.'

Fortunately his father persuaded him to take the job, and *The Godfather* went on to become one of the most successful and critically acclaimed films in history.

The great singer Frank Sinatra saw little future for certain types of modern music. He declared in 1957: 'Rock 'n' Roll is phoney and false, and sung, written and played for the most part by cretinous goons.'

## The Old Ones are the Best.....

**The couple had been happily** married for 50 years. Following the death of his wife, the husband contacted the Yorkshire Post newspaper regarding an obituary. When informed of the cost, the man uttered, in true Yorkshire fashion, "How Much?!!!" He reluctantly produced his wallet. "I want summat simple," he explained, "my Gladys was a good-hearted and hard-working Yorkshire lass but she wunt ave wanted owt swanky." "Perhaps a poem," suggested the woman at the desk. "Nay," he said, "she wunt ave wanted anything la-di-da, just put: Gladys Braithwaite died." "You need to say when", he was told by the receptionist.

"Do I? Well, put died 17<sup>th</sup> January 2016. That'll do." "It is usual for the bereaved to add some meaningful phrase about the dearly departed.." The man considered for a moment. "Well, put in, 'Sadly missed'. That'll do."

"You can have another four words," the woman explained. "No, no", he cried, "she wouldn't ave wanted me to splash out." "The words are included in the price", the woman informed him. "Are they? You mean I've paid for em? In that case, if I've paid for em, I'm 'avin em." The obituary was duly printed as follows: Gladys Braithwaite died, 17<sup>th</sup> January 2016. Sadly missed. Also Tractor for sale.

**A priest entered his donkey** in a race and it won. The priest was so pleased with the donkey that he entered it in another race and it won again. The local paper read: PRIEST'S ASS OUT FRONT. The Bishop was so upset with this kind of publicity that he ordered the priest not to enter the donkey in another race. The next day the local paper headline read: BISHOP SCRATCHES PRIEST'S ASS. This was too much for the Bishop so he ordered the priest to get rid of the donkey. The priest decided to give it to a Nun in a nearby convent. The local paper, hearing of the news, posted the following headline next day: NUN HAS BEST ASS IN TOWN. The Bishop fainted. He informed the Nun that she would have to get rid of the donkey, so she sold it to a farmer for £10. The next day the paper read: NUN SELLS HER ASS FOR £10. This was too much for the Bishop so he ordered the Nun to buy back the donkey and lead it to the plains where it could run wild. The next day the headlines read: NUN ANNOUNCES HER ASS IS WILD AND FREE. The bishop was buried the next day. The moral of the story is.....being concerned about public opinion can bring you much grief and misery, even shorten your life. So be yourself and enjoy life. Stop worrying about everyone else's ass and you'll be a lot happier and live longer!

**A man is recovering** after major heart surgery. The surgeon comes to see him and gives him strict instructions, places him on a diet, tells him he mustn't drink or smoke and advises him to get at least eight hours of sleep a night. Finally, the patient asks, "What about my sex life though? Will it be all right to have intercourse?" "Yes," says the surgeon, "as long as it's just your wife. Nothing too exciting you understand."

**When you're three** years old, success is not peeing in your pants. When you're eleven, success is having friends. When you're seventeen, success is having a driving licence. When you're twenty, success is having sex. When you're thirty, success is having cash. When you're fifty, success is having money. When you are sixty, success is having sex. When you're seventy-five, success is having friends. When you're eighty, success is not peeing in your pants.

**A police officer** is driving along one day when he sees an elderly lady in her car, driving along while knitting at the same time, The police man attempts unsuccessfully to get her attention, but to no avail. Finally he drives alongside her, winds down his window and calls out, "Pull over, madam!" At which point the lady turns to him and says, "No, Socks actually".

### IN BRIEF

Even when I am right, my girlfriend is prepared to forgive me *Italian Saying*

I am a marvellous housekeeper, Every time I leave a man, I keep the house. *Zsa Zsa Gabor*

I like long walks. Especially when they are taken by people who annoy me. *Noel Coward*

Time is a great healer, but a terrible beautician.

