



**I H I E @ 40 Celebrating Excellence**



## **Wyn Roberts EngTech FIHIE MIAT TMICE**

### **Contracts Manager, North Wales, Hanson Construction Projects**

Wyn has had an eventful career, starting his working life on the railway. The Beeching reforms came along and Wyn decided on a new career in highways!

His work with the company opened the door to the experience of world wide travel and challenging assignments in very different environments – social and cultural, as well as physical. As a rule of thumb, he found “that overseas projects ensured that you quickly learn to use your own initiative, to find local solutions for yourself, whereas management in the UK is more regulated, driven by policy and procedures but with the major benefit of being able to pick up the ‘phone and discuss solutions with colleagues.” He was in the Iranian desert, near Pakistan, engaged on building 400 km of carriageway when the Shah was overthrown. The project was closed down not long afterwards. Wyn then transferred to Sudan, to construction work at Port Sudan, and thence to infrastructure works at Ma on Shan New Town Hong Kong. “Probably the best posting of all – definitely the place to be.” His last overseas posting was the surfacing of Baffousam Airport, Cameroun. His children, too, enjoyed the benefits of visiting him and his wife Jackie from school in the UK, and mix easily, are used to travel, new experiences, and have a wide accepting vision of the world.”

A real contrast to his present posting in North Wales, where he is part of a team that manage all Hanson’s surfacing contracts. 2005 was a good year as Wyn was the first EngTech to gain Fellowship of the Institute.

Wyn firmly believes that registration is “the way forward” for anyone working in highways and related areas, and he particularly emphasises the value of IHIE’s work in encouraging, and actively helping, people to develop their careers. Wyn has chaired the North Wales IHIE Branch, and he believes the networking opportunities, and the opportunities to make real friends, through IHIE, are very real. He believes that civil engineering “has a pretty poor image” with youngsters, today. Partly because they “prefer to sit in front of a computer to going out in the cold and the wet to work,” but also “not enough effective work is being done to promote civil engineering as a good career.” Wyn’s own view is that, in his experience, the career “is a great life, with great camaraderie, and the excitement of always having to deal with new challenges. Even the weather can be a major player! It is the opposite of boring!” The sad thing is that he feels that “the infrastructure is under threat now, with a real and growing skills shortage.” In Construction Projects they keep their turnover low, and encourage the interest and ambitions of the youngsters they take on. But “national recognition of the need to further improve the image of the engineering profession is important.” Hanson has done its bit, though: “we got the RoSPA award for having zero accidents last year.” An achievement to be proud of.