



# The Nigerian Society of Engineers

PORT HARCOURT BRANCH



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website: www.nseph.org

e-mail: info@nseph.org

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## Interview with Engr. Anthony Ogbuigwe FNSChE, on Chemical Engineering Practice in Nigeria.

The E-Newsletter team had a chat with the MD of PHRC. Below is the excerpt of the interview.

**E-Newsletter:** Sir, please tell us about yourself?

**Engr. Ogbuigwe:** My name is Tony Ogbuigwe. I am a Chemical Engineer. I graduated in 1976 from the University of Lagos and we were the first set of Chemical Engineering graduates from the University of Lagos. I did my National Youth Service coincidentally here in the Premier refinery which was the Nigerian Petroleum Refinery Company, as it was called. After that I got a job with Michelin and in December of 1977 I got a job with NNPC on the Warri Refinery project. We commissioned the refinery after it was completed and after then I was transferred to the Kaduna refinery project in 1979. We were trained in Japan on operations and we came back in 1980 and commissioned the Kaduna refinery. Then in 1981 I took a study leave to do Masters in Plant and Process Design in Glasgow. I finished that course in twelve months, got my masters and I was redeployed to the corporate headquarters, in the projects and engineering division of NNPC. At that time the headquarters was in Lagos. There I was put on the new Port Harcourt Refinery project. So we went abroad for the design of the refinery, came back and did the construction and commissioned the refinery in 1989. Then After that there was an unfortunate fire incidence in the old refinery which happened in 1989. So again, I was assigned to fast track the rehabilitation of the old refinery. We took the opportunity to modernize it since it was at that time twenty-five years old. Then I was redeployed as the manager, head of the general engineering and projects. I held that position until 1998 when I was appointed Deputy Manager Process Engineering which responsibility I held until August 2001 when I was



Engr. Tony Ogbuigwe FNSChE

interviewed by Nigerian Liquefied Natural Gas Company (NLNG) for the position of Project Manager on their projects. So I took up that job that year and was appointed Project Manager for NLGN trains 4 and 5 which were completed in 2004 and 2005 respectively. Before that project was completed were awarded trains 6 and I was again made the Project Manager. So I became an Executive Project Manager, managing the construction of three trains consecutively. The last train was completed in 2009. In March 2010 I was appointed the Managing Director of Port Harcourt Refining Company Limited.

**E-Newsletter:** Sir, please tell us about chemical engineering practice in the country right from when you started?

**Engr. Ogbuigwe:** It has grown very much. We had the first chemical engineers coming from University of Ife and they worked in places like Liver Brothers, Bachiter Sugar Company, flour mills, Guinness, the Bottling Plants of Coca Cola, etc. Chemical engineering has grown very much since then. The engineers formed Nigerian Society of Chemical Engineers which is one of the divisions under the Nigerian Society of Engineers and I am a fellow of the Nigerian Society of Chemical Engineers. The chemical engineering profession has grown every much as the oil industry has grown in importance. The chemical engineers were able to function in the traditional process engineering functions as well as at the beginning of petroleum engineering functions because the course involves a bit of petroleum and petrochemical engineering. So they have been very effective in the refineries, petrochemical plants, in the gas division where the gas processes takes place and in all of the upstream companies; Shell, Total, Elf and so on.

**E-Newsletter:** Thank very much sir. Sir considering your wealth of experience over the years, you started from the cradle and now you are the MD of PHRC, what advice do you have for the young chemical engineers that are coming up?

### Fund Launch for ERC

Fund Launch for the Proposed Engineering Resource Centre of the Nigerian Society of Engineers Port Harcourt Branch holds on Thursday, 10<sup>th</sup> November 2011 by 10.00 am at the Royal Banquet Hall of Hotel Presidential, Port Harcourt. Members and corporate organizations are invited to be present.



Proposed NSE PH Branch ERC site layout

**Nigerian Institution of Civil Engineers (NICE)**  
Port Harcourt Chapter  
(A branch of the Nigerian Society of Engineers)

*Cordially invite*

to the **6<sup>th</sup> ENGR. PROF. Y. O. BEREDUGO ANNUAL LECTURE**  
Under the Chairmanship of  
**REV. ENGR. E. I. ETTE** FNSF FNICE

Lecture to be delivered by  
**ENGR. MAYNE DAVID-WEST** SRIF, FNSE FNICE

Guest of Honour  
**ENGR. ADE OMOPELOYE** FNSE FNICE  
(National Chairman NICE)

**DATE:** Thurs. 27th Oct., 2011 **TIME:** 5:30 pm  
**VENUE:** Hotel Presidential, Port Harcourt.  
Rivers State

THEME:  
**EAST-WEST COASTAL ROAD: CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS**

**ENGR. DR. SOLOMON ORUMU**  
Chairman (NICE Port Harcourt Chapter)  
0802112342

**ENGR. THEOPHILUS ALLAGOA**  
Chairman (Nigerian Society of Engineers)  
0802337571

**ENGR. PLACIDUS OBIABA**  
Secretary (Nigerian Society of Engineers)  
0802337571

**Interview with Engr. Anthony Ogbuigwe FNSChE, on Chemical Eng....**

**Engr. Ogbuigwe:** As you rightly said, I have grown from; you used the term cradle to where I am today. It has taken thirty four years. It takes time for you to gain experience. If you can recall I stated that I started working with Michelin after my youth service but I wanted to grow in my profession, so I accepted the job offer from NNPC when it came in 1977 despite the fact that it was a lower salary job than what I was earning in Michelin. In actual fact at that time, the management of Michelin had decided that they wanted to send me to France to the head office of Michelin to train me as a manager of what was called the product management division which will manage all the processes. It was like a work study department, you study each of the processes that are involved in the manufacturing of tyres and determine how you can improve it so as to make more efficient and improve productivity. But I said to myself, as a chemical engineer, I want to grow in my profession so I accepted the job from NNPC on a lower salary. Incidentally while I was working in NNPC, by 1982 when I came back from my masters, within two months of my coming back, SDPC invited me for an interview and they wanted to employ me as a flow station engineer. By the time we got to the last stage of the interview which is the orals, I asked them what the content of my responsibility as a follow station engineer was going to be. When they detailed it, I found out that what I was doing in NNPC at that time was more challenging. In spite of the fact that again, it was on a lower salary than what Shell offered me I made it clear to Shell that I was not interested in taking up that offer because I wanted to gain experience. I believe that decision was the right one because the experience that I gained all those years prepared me for the work I did later and which I am doing today. So I will advise the young engineers to take time to build up experience and competency in whatever it is they are doing because that is what counts later and it will enable them to go up in their ladder of success.

**E-Newsletter:** *Thank you very much sir. We appreciate the fact that you were able to attend us at a very short notice.*

**Engr. Ogbuigwe:** I will just want to add that what I said to chemical engineers applies to the other engineering disciplines as well. At this stage which I am now, I am functioning not as a chemical engineer but an engineer in a management capacity. The advice I have given to the chemical engineers applies to all of the engineering disciplines. There is a real need for engineers to make an impact in the development of our country today. And it is very important that we put effort to develop that competency up to the extent that we can become experts in what we do. There is so much that attitude in Nigerians that says "it is good enough". "What I have done is good enough". No, I think we should push ourselves and not settle for just "It is good enough". Let us drive for excellence in what we are doing and excellence takes time. It takes diligence and commitments to grow in yourself and in your field and as you become more competent you will be given greater responsibilities because the truth of the matter in the industry responsibility is given to those who demonstrate competence. It might not be so in some government organizations but even in the government organizations and parastatals things are changing. They are looking for people who can make a difference. So I challenge all engineers of whatever discipline, to strive to become experts in what they are doing. Beyond the paper qualifications they have, let them develop competence in what they are doing so that they will be able to make a difference where they are.



Engr. Anthony Ogbuigwe FNSChE & Engr. Otunte Otuenesh

**E-Newsletter:** *Thank you very much Sir.*

**The Nigerian Society of Engineers Port Harcourt Branch  
2011 Engineering Week Activities**

Date	Activities
Monday 7 <sup>th</sup> November	Opening Ceremony
Tuesday 8 <sup>th</sup> November	1. Career talk in selected schools 2. Technical visit to Songhai farm
Wednesday 9 <sup>th</sup> November	Visit to old people's home
Thursday 10 <sup>th</sup> November	1. Fund Launch for the Proposed Engineering Resource Centre 2. Technical Evening lectures
Saturday 12 <sup>th</sup> November	Annual Dinner / Induction of new members
Sunday 13 <sup>th</sup> November	Thanksgiving Service at St. Cyprian Anglican Church, Hospital Road, PH.

**The Nigerian Society of Engineers**



Announces the

**NATIONAL ENGINEERING CONFERENCE,  
EXHIBITION AND  
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**"CANAAAN 2011"**

Theme:

**"EFFECTIVE**

**TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM**

**IN NIGERIA:**

**THE WAY FORWARD"**

Venue:

Main Emporium,  
Tinapa Business Resort, Calabar

Date:

5th - 9th December, 2011

**POINT ENGINEERING LIMITED**

An independent and wholly (100%) Nigerian engineering consultancy company with a strong commitment to proving a POINT for indigenous participation in the Nigerian Oil & Gas and Petrochemical Sector by providing complete, quality assured engineering design, project management and related consultancy services capable of satisfying the most stringent requirements of our clients wherever it is required using the best available technical skills.



**NOTICE! NOTICE!! NOTICE!!!**

All members of NSE PH should pay their **Annual Branch Dues** of N4,500 for **Corporate Members** and N6,500 for **Fellows** to **UBA ACC. NO: 0234-031-0000962 (Port Harcourt Main Branch)**. Also pay **National Annual Subscription** of N7,500.00 for **Corporate Members** & N9,500 for **Fellows** directly to **AFRIBANK ACC No. 1420202215613** & forward all tellers to the secretariat for reconciliation. All payments should be made at the Bank