

On Jan. 21, 2007 @ 07:58, Dave (dbarden@tiscali.co.uk) wrote:

I managed to get a response from a very kind lady at Chalwyn, although very limited or even no knowledge exists now about the detailed history of specific lamps & lanterns, she did send me a potted history of the company, which I copy below for general interest;

"The original title of the company was Chalwyn Lamps Limited and was formed with the primary object of manufacturing and marketing of Hurricane Lanterns.

Originally the lanterns were manufactured by James Croll Limited (a Chalwyn company) on a sub-contract basis, but in 1946/47 premises were acquired in Parkstone and a specialised production unit was established. Sales were controlled through an **associated company Chalwyn Wild (Sales) Limited in London.**

Muss heißen George Wild Ltd., London

During the early 1950"s the company moved ahead rapidly and made good profits and in 1951 it was decided to concentrate all activities in Parkstone and the London sales office was closed.

The factory premises in Parkstone were acquired from Mass Products Limited, then in liquidation. The manufacturing facilities were organised on a mass production basis, the assembly lines being particularly efficient.

The range of lanterns comprised of four models (Tropic, Far East, Tempest and Pilot) available in all major world markets and supplied a demand in post-war years of some 50,000 lanterns per week, indeed over a period of about 20 years some 30,000,000 lanterns were produced and the Chalwyn brand image firmly established.

The principal markets were the West Coast of Africa, East Africa, the French Territories, Middle East, Ceylon and many other countries. The company employed some 120 agents in all parts of the world, India, originally a main market, operated a complete import ban to protect local products.

During this period it was decided to commence manufacture in South Africa to take advantage of local conditions and a subsidiary company was eventually set up and commenced operation in 1954. This company was sold to the South African shareholders in 1970.

In 1955/56 sterling was made convertible and Chalwyn's existing markets were immediately opened up to competitors from European and Eastern Communist countries, the principal markets in West Africa were lost to this competition and therefore sales efforts were re-directed to the lesser markets.

It had been realised that Hurricane Lanterns would have a limited 'life-span' and thought was given to introducing a measure of diversification, this was not easy in view of the specialised nature of plant and machinery and with the introduction of new products it was felt that the name of Chalwyn Lamps Limited was somewhat restrictive and the name was changed to Chalwyn Limited on 1st July 1958.

During the early 1960's trade in lanterns continued on a gradually reducing scale but it was increasingly evident that Hurricane Lantern manufacture was uneconomical, demand had fallen and competition had forced prices down below a reasonable level. Costs of labour and material were rising and the decision was made to phase out **lantern manufacture and production finally ceased in Parkstone on the 15th April 1970.**

After that date we were the sole distributor in the UK for Feuerhand Lanterns from Germany.

This carried on until the mid eighties when we sourced lanterns from the Czech Republic and the brand names Tropic and Far East were produced under licence there on our behalf. During the nineties we decided to buy these lanterns from a company in China for sale mainly in the African countries but the logistics and quality made selling these somewhat difficult, so that business has ceased.

We still supply Chalwyn Tropic and Far East Lanterns made in the Czech Republic to the home market, but due to competition from China and the ever increasing cost of raw materials once our stock here has run out trading in lanterns will finish and we will be concentrating on other products.

I hope that the information given above will be of assistance to you."

As you may be aware Chalwyn have now ceased trading in all oil fired lamps / lanterns / heaters etc.