



Lead poisoning of apprentices and lack of blood lead testing of lead smelter and mine workers in Australia in the 1970s

By Les Wellington, 26th February 2019, Queensland, Australia

My name is Leslie George Wellington and I went to All Souls College for six years in Charters Towers. I was a gymnast and I was in the cadets, and I was the junior champion in rifle-shooting.

I could play snooker like a champion and could also bowl like a champion. I could put a coin into a pinball machine and play for four hours for free.

After MIM I turned into a non-talent imbecilic moron, and consequently have been assaulted thirty times (lucky I did not lose most of my boxing skills).

My family organized for me to do an apprenticeship at Mount Isa Mines (MIM) in north-west Queensland in 1971 when I had just turned seventeen.

Half-way through my first year, I was placed in the MIM lead-smelter. Apprentices were made to do the dangerous jobs, for example: Cut bolts off machines that had black sinter covered over all the machinery, and with white lead-acetate crystals growing out of the black sinter (acetate crystals are also found on top of paint and they taste like sugar).

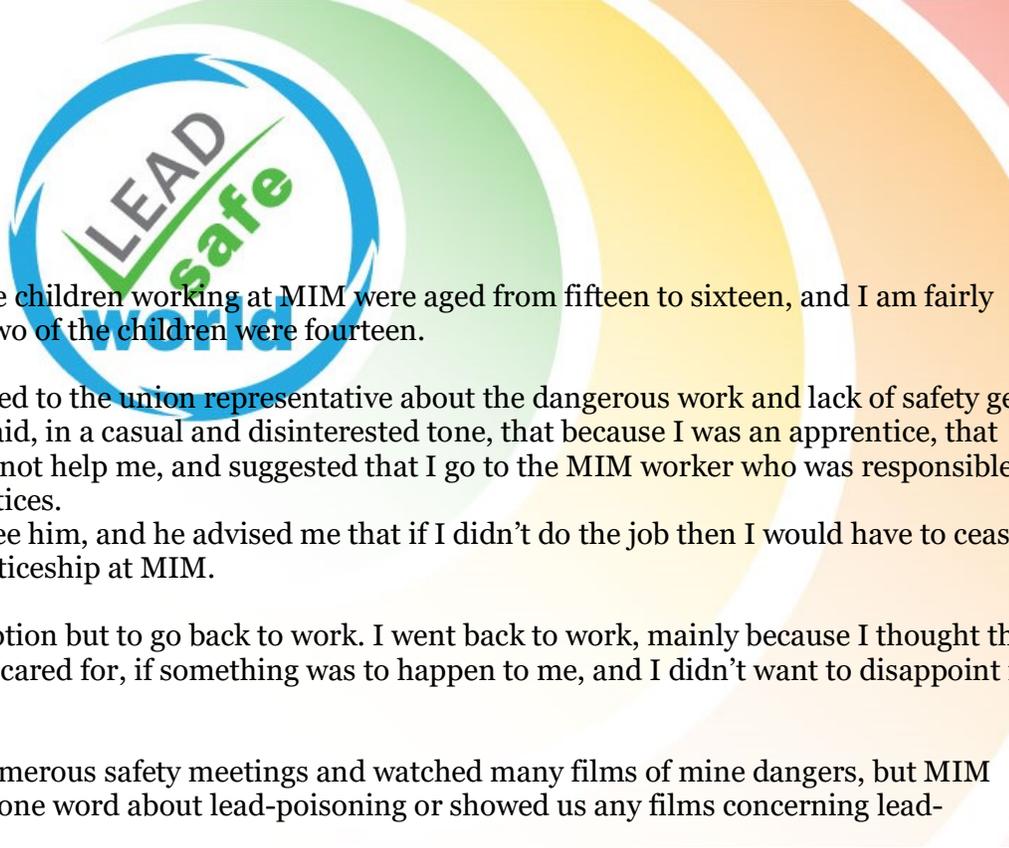
We also had to work on top of the lead-furnace, which was an open hole in the work shop floor. There were no railings around the hole, and when I was working there the extraction fans were malfunctioning up to ten times a day (the extraction fans were to the side of the work shop).

Because the fumes were mainly ammonia a person could not breathe or see and had to run away from the area to obtain fresh air (we were also covered in sweat and the fumes would mix with our sweat).

We also had to wear our overalls home with us, and they were always completely covered with black sinter and acetate crystals powder.

I noticed that where I worked, there were no tradesmen working with us. I asked one of the tradesmen why, and he told me it was too dangerous an area, and that they refused to go into these areas, because MIM did not supply the proper safety-gear.

The cheapest way out of this situation was to have apprentices from the age of fifteen upwards to do the job, and to not tell them of the dangers involved. Also, MIM could cut-back on costs by not treating these children. I was one of the oldest apprentices (I had started at MIM when I just turned seventeen).



Most of the children working at MIM were aged from fifteen to sixteen, and I am fairly sure that two of the children were fourteen.

I complained to the union representative about the dangerous work and lack of safety gear and they said, in a casual and disinterested tone, that because I was an apprentice, that they could not help me, and suggested that I go to the MIM worker who was responsible for apprentices.

I went to see him, and he advised me that if I didn't do the job then I would have to cease my apprenticeship at MIM.

I had no option but to go back to work. I went back to work, mainly because I thought that I would be cared for, if something was to happen to me, and I didn't want to disappoint my family.

We had numerous safety meetings and watched many films of mine dangers, but MIM never said one word about lead-poisoning or showed us any films concerning lead-poisoning.

I knew absolutely nothing about the effects of lead-poisoning. I just knew it wasn't good for you and that I would be cared for if I ever had an accident or became sick. If I had known the facts, I would have left MIM.

We had lead-tests every month and I was informed that my lead-count was high and that I had to go to another area to work. When I perused my MIM medical-files fourteen years later, I found that I had (extreme-exposure) to lead three weeks before I was moved out of the lead-smelter.

I was kept in the lead-smelter for three further weeks before being moved to the copper-smelter and then to the small lead-concentrator, and then to the large lead-concentrator.

I was doing the same type of work as in the lead-smelter (without any further lead-testing). I worked for another three years in the mines without any further lead-testing at all, as is shown in my MIM medical file, which I have a copy of.

Dr Watson, who was my back specialist, sent my MIM files to a toxicologist to examine my MIM lead-testing results. He stated in his extensive report that I had severe exposure to lead; relating to my last lead-test at MIM. I still have this report.

My daughter contracted paranoid schizophrenia at the age of seventeen, which was caused by my lead-poisoning (I obtained this information from industrial toxicology books at the James Cook University).

When she was younger, she was always the teacher's pet, and was very good at school and worked very hard at her studies, but slowly turned into a moronic dropout, which was no fault of her own.



Please Note: If I was given treatment at the MIM Medical Centre or made aware of my lead-poisoning results, then I could have been administered chelating-agents to remove the lead from my body. It only takes injections of these agents for twelve months to clear the lead and other toxins out of the body. Please refer to:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chelation_therapy

As stated above; I have been bullied by fascist and communist Australians all my life (as is the same with my daughter) and I now have severe spinal injuries. For example: I have eight fractured vertebra disks, a fractured hip and a busted tail bone, and I also suffer from osteoarthritis in and along my whole spine, and in my hip and tail-bone. I also suffer from polyneuropathy, which has been caused by my lead-poisoning. Please refer to:

<https://patient.info/doctor/Polyneuropathies>

My daughter and I have been on an invalid pension for decades, and the Australian tax-payers have to foot-the-bill, including unnecessary medical costs etc.

As stated above; if I had been given proper medical treatment, then both my daughter and I would have contributed to society rather than being a burden.

It costs the tax-payers millions of dollars to look after the both of us, and billions to look after other victims of these heinous, murderous crimes. As I have stated above; all it takes is chelating-agent for twelve months to clear the body of these ugly toxins.

I live alone and in constant pain, and I have only one child and no grandchildren. They terminated two of my daughters' pregnancies without informing me until it was over. They killed the only two grandchildren that I had.

I receive no help from my family or caring-agencies. I live like a recluse and have no real close friends. Nobody cares!

Please Note: I can clearly see why we are running out of trades-people in Australia. Australian being the lucky-country is just a lie.