We all know that this is not always the cleanest of jobs, and not everyone enjoys climbing over and under dirty pipes and around structural steelwork in order to take a batch of readings (men included), so what kind of a lady would want to do such a job?

You may think it is the ideal sort of work for a tomboy type, whereas you may be quite wrong.

When asked why his insurance company preferred female inspectors, a European director said that it was because they had such an eye for detail. Ask any lady what her husband wore on their first date ten years ago, and she will describe everything, and very accurately too! They have such an eye for detail, and they miss absolutely nothing at all.

Shei Simpson was thrilled to qualify as a coatings inspector in 2011 and it changed her life. Although she is every bit a well-spoken young lady, she does not hesitate to climb into her overalls and begin to scale the side of a ship or some steel structure in order to begin her work.

Shei has always been a hands-on type of person, and just enjoys the challenges that are thrown up on each project. When working on ships, which she really loves, she finds each project totally different from an inspection point of view. Whether it is salt-testing a blast-cleaned surface, or checking the viscosity of a high-build coating, she finds it an interesting challenge where each step forms a small part of the overall project.

She finds that things like the chemistry aspect of copper-sulphate testing for mill-scale, or checking the cathodic-protection level of a steel-hulled boat are always interesting tests to carry out, as the results are never obvious or predictable before testing, so this keeps things interesting for her.

Shei was thrown in at the deep end of the industry, and was left working totally on her own with a blasting and painting crew in a Malaysian shipyard for three weeks after the two other inspectors flew home for Christmas.

She worked on the “Rainbow Warrior” ship in Bern in northern Germany and has worked on a few smaller boats plus structural steelwork and coated rail track.

In order to progress to the next level, Shei needs to get more projects behind her and so she is looking to working with experienced inspectors to hone her skills and improve her knowledge.

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