

Glo COAL

BIG PIT: AMGUEDdfa LOFAOL CYMRU BIG PIT: NATIONAL COAL MUSEUM

STREIC!
STRIKE!

1984-2009
25
MLYNEDD
YEARS

STREIC!

“Mae glowyr de Cymru’n dweud – dy’n ni ddim yn barod i droi cefn ar ein cymunedau glofaol, dy’n ni ddim am adael i’n plant fynd i’r ciw dôl yn syth o’r ysgol – mae’n amser taro’n ôl!”

Emlyn Williams, Llywydd, NUM, De Cymru

“Bu rhaid i ni frwydro yn erbyn y gelyn allanol yn Ynysoedd y Falkland, ond rhaid i ni fod yn ymwybodol bob amser o’r gelyn mewnol, sy’n frwydr anoddach o lawer ac yn fwy o beryg i ryddid.”

Margaret Thatcher, Prif Weinidog

Ar 1 Mawrth 1984 cyhoeddodd y Bwrdd Glo Cenedlaethol ei fod yn bwriadu cau 20 o byllau glo a cholli 20,000 o swyddi. Bu’r streic 12 mis a ddaeth yn ei sgil yn gyfrwng i newid hanes gwleidyddol, economaidd a chymdeithasol Cymru am byth.

Pleidleisiodd y mwyafrif o lowyr Cymru yn erbyn streic i ddechrau, ond wedyn fe fuon nhw'n flaenllaw yn y protestiadau a'r picedu. Cododd gwragedd y glowyr eu llais i gefnogi'u gwyr gan godi arian a threfnu i ddosbarthu bwyd, ac aethant ati hefyd i gefnogi'r piced a'r gorymdeithiau.

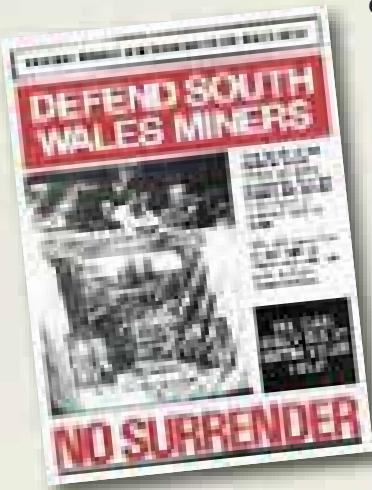
Er na ddioddefodd Cymru'r traist ar y llinellau piced a welwyd ar rai o feysydd glo eraill Prydain, collodd rhai o lowyr Cymru eu bywydau wrth bicedu a chyflawni gwaith diogelwch yn y pyllau glo a lladdwyd gyrrwr tacsi wrth gludo torrwr streic i'w waith.

Roedd da a drwg yn perthyn i'r ddwy garfan a bu ymdrech fawr i geisio casglu hanesion o'r naill ochr a'r llall. Mae'r dicter a ddaeth yn sgil y streic, sy'n dal yn gryf ar ôl 25 mlynedd, wedi gwneud hyn yn dasg anodd oherwydd bod rhai a fu'n cymryd rhan yn amharod i roi caniatâd i'w hanesion gael eu hadrodd.

Mae hyn, a'r ffait fod y mwyafrif o'r straeon wedi'u casglu o Gymru, lle mai dim ond canran fechan o'r gweithlu ddychwelodd i'r gwaith yn ystod y streic, yn ei gwneud yn anorffod bod un safbwyt yn ymddangos fel petai'n cael mwy o sylw. Pe byddai hanesion wedi'u casglu o fannau eraill mae'n dra phosibl y byddai'r safbwyt arall yn rhagori.

Caiff hanes gwthrhychol a chybtwys streic y glowyr ei ysgrifennu rhyw ddiwrnod, ond mae'r tudalennau sy'n dilyn yn cyflwyno hanesion rhai o'r dynion a'r menywod gafodd eu heffeithio gan yr hyn a adwaenir bellach fel ... Y Streic.

Ceri Thompson, Curadur, Big Pit: Amgueddfa Lofaol Cymru



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STRIKE!

“The miners in south Wales are saying – we are not accepting the dereliction of our mining valleys, we are not allowing our children to go immediately from school into the dole queue – it is time we fought!”

Emlyn Williams, President, NUM, South Wales Area

“We had to fight the enemy without in the Falklands, but we always have to be aware of the enemy within, which is much more difficult to fight and more dangerous to liberty.”

Margaret Thatcher, Prime Minister

On 1 March 1984 the National Coal Board announced that it planned to close 20 coal mines with the loss of 20,000 jobs. The year-long strike that followed changed the political, economic and social history of Wales forever.

The majority of Welsh miners initially voted against a strike but later played a major part in picketing and demonstrations. Miners' wives rose to the challenge of supporting their men by raising funds and organizing food distribution, but were also active on picket lines and marches.

Although Wales did not suffer the picket line violence seen in some other British coalfields, Welsh miners were killed on picket duty and carrying out colliery safety work and a taxi driver was killed as he took a strike-breaker to work.

There were rights and wrongs on both sides of the dispute and great pains have been taken to try to collect stories from each side. The passions aroused by the strike, still strong after 25 years, have made this a difficult task, for even now some participants are reluctant to allow their stories to be told.

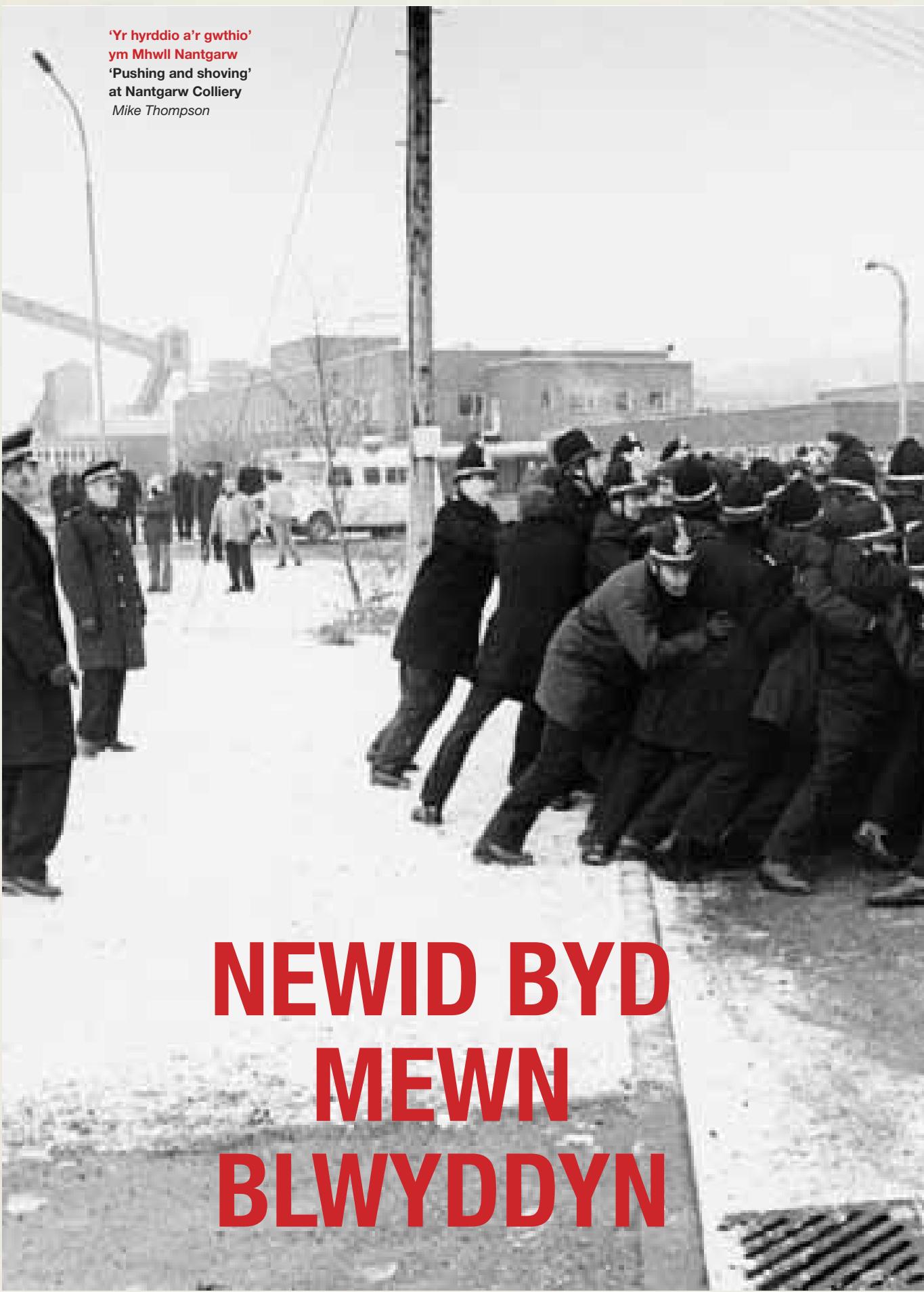
This, and the fact that the majority of the stories were collected from Wales, where only a small percentage of the workforce returned to work during the strike, makes it inevitable that one view should seem to predominate. If stories had been collected elsewhere it is quite possible that the opposite view would dominate.

An objective and balanced history of the miners strike will one day be written but the pages that follow present the stories of some of the men and women whose lives were touched by what today has simply become known as ... The Strike.

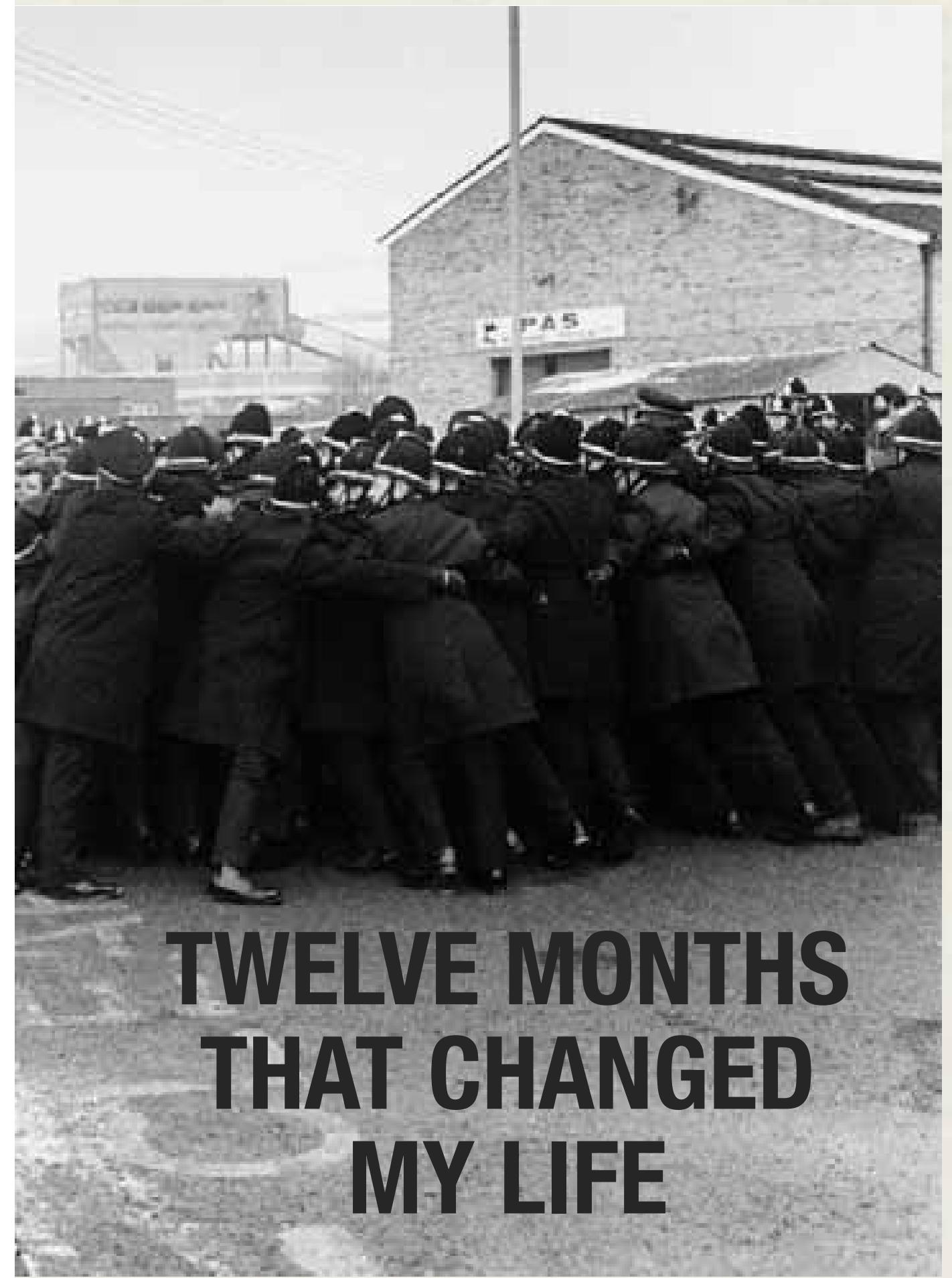


Ceri Thompson, Curator, Big Pit: National Coal Museum

'Yr hyrddio a'r gwthio'
ym Mhwll Nantgarw
'Pushing and shoving'
at Nantgarw Colliery
Mike Thompson



NEWID BYD MEWN BLWYDDYN



TWELVE MONTHS THAT CHANGED MY LIFE

NEWID BYD MEWN BLWYDDYN



Dechreuais i weithio ym Mhwll y National, Wattstown, pan oeddwn i'n bymtheg oed.

Es ymlaen i Bwll Fernhill wedyn, ac erbyn 1984, roeddwn i'n gweithio yng Ngwaith Golosg Nantgarw. Yn Nantgarw yr ymunais â'r 'Streic Fawr'. Roedden ni wedi pleidleisio o blaid cefnogi glowyr Pwll Nantgarw, oedd yn gysylltiedig â'n ffyrnau golosg ni. Roedden ni'n rhannu'r un undeb, yr un baddondy pen pwll a'r un ffreutur hyd yn oed. Ni wyddwn fawr ddim am wleidyddiaeth cyn y streic, heblaw bod ein swyddi yn y fantol. Ond doeddwn i ddim am groesi'r llinell biced ar unrhyw gyfrif. Gofynnwyd i mi fynd i bicedu sawl gwaith, ond gwrrhodais i, doedd e ddim yn apelio at' i. Roedden i'n arfer chwarae rygbi, ac er bod gen i enw am fod yn chwaraewr eithaf caled, roeddwn i'n heddychrw oddi ar y cae ac felly ddim am bicedu. Un diwrnod, gofynnodd cadeirydd y gyfrinfa os hoffen i fynd i Mansfield, Nottingham. "Fydd 'na ddim trwbwl, dim ffwdan, dim ond diwrnod mas i'r teulu yn gwrando ar siaradwyr fel



Arthur Scargill, Tony Benn a Dennis Skinner. Mae'r bws am ddim, felly dere â'r camera a mwynhau diwrnod bant". "Iawn" medde fi.

Roedden ni'n gorfod teithio ar hyd hewlydd cefn yr holl ffordd i Mansfield, gan fod bysiau llawn glowyr yn cael eu troi'n ôl ar y drafodd. Roedden i'n credu mai ni fyddai'r unig rai yno! Ond ar ôl cyraedd Mansfield, dyna sioc oedd gweld y dyfra fwyaf eriod o lowyr mewn un lle. Roedd tua 45,000 o ddynion wedi llwyddo i osgoi'r heddlu ar y ffordd. Roedd yr areithiau'n wych, fe orymdeithion

Os taw fel 'yn maen nhw am ein trin ni, rwy'n mynd i'w gofnodi fe

ni o amgylch Mansfield, ac aeth popeth yn iawn. Aethon ni i chwilio am bryd o fywyd cyn mynd nôl i'r bws. Dyna pryd y dechreuodd pethau fynd o chwith. Roedden i yn y caffi pan welson ni grŵ o heddlu'n mynd am ganol y dref. "Trwbwl?" holais i. "Bydd, cyn bo hir" atebodd perchenog y caffi. "Fe welais i'r un peth yn digwydd yr wythnos ddiwetha'; byddan nhw'n llusgo pobl mas o'r tafardai jyst er mwyn cyflawnhau eu bod nhw yma".

Bum munud wedyn, roedd cannoedd o lowyr yn rhedeg lan yr hewl at y bysiau, a'r heddlu ar eu holau. Anghofia'i fyth beth welais i yn ystod yr awr nesaf – glowyr yn cael eu gwthio yn erbyn bysiau oedd yn symud (gan gynnwys ein bws

*Mike Thompson,
Gwaith Golosg Nantgarw*

Chwith: Gwrthdar yng Ngwaith Furnacite Abercwmbwi Islawr: Mike Thompson yn cyflwyno un o'i rosod i Arthur Scargill De: Yr heddlu a'r picedwyr ym Mhwll y Cwm Left: Confrontation at Abercwmbwi Phurnacite Plant Below: Mike Thompson presents one of his roses to Arthur Scargill Right: Police and pickets at Cwm Colliery Mike Thompson

TWELVE MONTHS THAT CHANGED MY LIFE



I started as a fifteen-year-old at

National Colliery, Wattstown. I later worked in Fernhill Colliery and, by 1984, was working in Nantgarw Coke Works. It was at Nantgarw that I got involved in what they now call 'The Great Strike'. We had voted to support the miners at Nantgarw Colliery, which was joined on to our coke ovens. We shared the same union, the same pithead baths and even the same canteen. I can't say that I knew a lot about politics at the start of the strike except that our jobs were at stake and there was no way that I was going to cross a picket line. I was asked to go picketing on a few occasions but I said no, it just wasn't me. I used to play rugby and was regarded as quite aggressive on the pitch, but off it I was a pacifist so I didn't want to get involved. One day the lodge chairman asked me if I wanted to go to a rally in Mansfield, Nottingham. "There will be no hassle, no trouble, just a family day out listening to speakers like Arthur Scargill, Tony Benn and Dennis Skinner. The bus is paid for so bring your camera and have a nice day out". "OK, I'm in" I said.

We had to take the back roads all the way to Mansfield as we had been told that any buses carrying miners found on the motorways would be turned around. I thought that we would be the only ones

there! But, upon arriving at Mansfield, I was amazed to find the biggest gathering of miners that has ever been. Around 45,000 had made it through the police road blocks. The speeches were great, we marched around Mansfield and everything was fine. We all went looking for something to eat before we were due to return

If this is what they think of us I am going to record it

to the buses. From then everything went downhill. We were in a café and saw hoards of police making their way to the town centre. "Trouble?" I asked the café owner, "Soon will be" he said, "I saw this last week; they will drag all the stragglers out of the pubs to justify them being here".

Within five minutes hundreds of miners came running up the road to the buses followed by the police. What I saw in the next hour will live with me forever – miners being thrown against moving buses (including our bus), a little boy, about ten years old, clubbed on his head by a mounted policeman. Stunned and shocked by all I was seeing, I finally remembered my camera. I pulled it out and

felt my hair being parted by a police baton. I dived through a privet hedge to avoid any more contact. We left Mansfield vowing never to return. On the return journey I told our union officials "If this is what they think of us I am going to record it". The lodge chairman said "I'm glad; you can do it officially for the union", and that's how I got involved in the strike. I had been an amateur photographer for many years and I felt it was my duty to show the public what was actually going on.

I travelled around England for the first six months of the strike; the second six months was spent mainly in Wales. I slowly but surely began to understand that this was not just any strike but a bid for survival, for our future and our children's future. I took many hundreds of photographs. I could have lost my job on at least three occasions if I hadn't had the support of my MP, Mr Allan Rogers, and my under manager at the coke works, Gerry Coles. I could have lost my family if I hadn't had the support of my wife, Kay. There are many other people that I am very grateful to for their support and friendship during those twelve months that changed my life.

*Mike Thompson,
Nantgarw Coke Works*

ANGHREDADWY!

Pan ddechreuodd y streic, roeddwn i'n rheolwr ym Mhwll y Cwm. Siom i fi yn bersonol oedd clywed bod 26 o'r 28 pwall glo yn y de wedi pleidleisio'n unfrydol dros barhau i weithio. Dim ond dau bwll oedd yn erbyn, ac roedd hi'n drist iawn gweld yr holl byllau glo eraill ar gau oherwydd picedwyr y ddau bwll arall fore Llun.

A dweud y lleiaf, doedd agwedd y picedwyr a'm stopiodd i'r bore hwnnw ddim yn neis. Eisteddodd rhai ohonynt nhw ar fonedd fy nghar, ac fe ges i air bach gyda nhw gan ddweud 'mod i'n mynd i'r gwaith beth bynnag. Roedden nhw'n ddigon i godi ofn ar ddyn, oherwydd nid bechgyn y Cwm oedd nhw, ond dieithriaid. 'Bolshies', dynion Scargill – roedden nhw'n eilunaddoli Arthur Scargill.

Roeddwn i'n teimlo bod tactegau Arthur Scargill yn anghywir o'r dechrau. Ni chafodd gefnogaeth ei weithlu ei hun i alw streic, ac ni chawson nhw gyfle i bleidleisio. Yn Nottingham er engraffit, arhosodd yr holl byllau glo ar agar. Wn i ddim beth sydd ynghylch de Cymru, mae hi wedi ymfalchiö yn ei delwedd o fod yn gadarnle i'r undebau llafur erioed – ond mae'n flin gen i ddweud eu bod nhw wedi cymryd cam gwag y diwrnod hwnnw. Hyd yn oed pe bai pob un o'r 26 pwall wedi pleidleisio dros y streic, fyddwn i ddim wedi cytuno â'r penderfyniad, ond fe fydden nhw wedi bod yn unedig o leiaf. Roedd y ffordd yr aethon nhw ati yn anghredadwy!

Pe bai'r NUM wedi cydweithio mwy â'r NCB, byddai'r pyllau wedi aros ar agor yn hirach yn fy marn i. Pe bai rhagflaenydd Scargill, Joe Gormely, yn dal wrthi, fe fyddai wedi trin pethau'n wahanol – ond doedd Scargill ddim o'r un brethyn. Wrth siarad â ni ar y pryd, dywedodd Philip Weekes, Cyfarwyddwr meysydd glo'r de y bydden ni'n difaru gadael i ddau bwll reoli'r sefyllfa yn y de. Doedd dim lle i ddemocratiaeth mwyauch, ac ni allai gredu beth oedd wedi digwydd. Roedd e wedi meddwl y byddai pawb i mewn, neu bawb allan, ond o'dd e'n methu'n lân â deall bod dau bwll yn gallu mynnu bod pawb yn mynd allan ar streic.

Gadewais i Bwll y Cwm a dod yn rheolwr Pwll Ynysowen ar 2 Hydref 1984. Ychydig wythnosau'n ddiweddarach, ar un diwrnod erchyll, 30 Tachwedd

1984, lladdwyd y gyrrwr tacsi David Wilkie wrth iddo gludo glöwr i'r gwaith yn Ynysowen. Roedd pethau wedi bod yn weddol dawel yn y de tan hynny. Ar y pryd, roedd y Bwrdd Glo'n credu fod dynion yn y gymuned eisiau mynd nôl i'r gwaith, ond bod arnynt ofn. Fel rheolwyr y pwall, cawsom ein cynghori i beidio â gwrrthod unrhyw un oedd yn gofyn am gael dod nôl. Dyma sut y dechreuodd y 'dychweledigion' ddot nôl i'r pyllau.

Daeth chwe gweithiwr nôl i Bwll Ynysowen, ac roedd yna awyrgylch annifyr bob tro y bydden nhw'n cyrraedd y gwaith. Allen ni mo'u rhwystro nhw, roedd ganddyn nhw berffaith hawl i ddod nôl. Roedden nhw wedi pleidleisio o blaid gweithio yn y lle cyntaf, ac yn dadlau ei bod hi'n annemocraidd ceisio'u rhwystro nhw. Ond pan ddaethon nhw'n ôl, fe gawson ni'n bygwth o bob cwr gyda rhybuddion fel "Fe dalwn ni'r pwyth nôl y diawled" ac "Fe gawn ni chi pan ddown ni nôl, a gollwng bwa ar eich pen wrth i chi fynd heibio" ac ati. Wnes i ddim cymryd llawer o sylw oherwydd dim ond mynegi eu dicter oedden nhw; roedden nhw'n rhwystredig dros ben, ac os oedd modd iddyn nhw'ch dychryn chi, yna dychryn amdani.

Rhyw dasgau digon pitw gafodd y gweithwyr a ddaeth nôl, a helpu staff personel y rheolwyr. Er engraffit, roedden ni'n gorfol symud y pympiau o amgylch y pwall oherwydd lliogyd. Roedd rhaid i ni ofyn am gymorth gan mai dim ond llond llaw ohonom oedd yn y pwall. Roeddwn i'n siomedig iawn gyda NACODS (*undeb swyddogion pyllau glo*) oherwydd roedden nhw'n gwrrthod croesi'r llinell biced ond eto'n dal i fynnu cael cyflog – a hyd yn oed pan oedden nhw yn y gwaith, roedden nhw'n gwrrthod gwneud dim am taw gwaith yr NUM oedd hi. Bydden nhw'n siarad gyda'r dychweledigion ac yn rhyw fath o ochri gyda nhw yn eu cwmni, ond yn dweud fel arall y tu ôl i'w cefnau. I mi, rhagrithwyr oedden nhw, a dim byd arall.

Staff danddaear oedd y dychweledigion i gyd, ac unwaith roedden nhw wedi croesi'r llinell biced a mynd i lawr y pwall gyda swyddogion BACM (*Cymdeithas Rheolwyr Glofeydd Prydain*), roedden nhw'n ddiogel. Roedd yr heddlu wrth law i ofalu ein bod ni'n cyrraedd y pwall yn ddiogel, a doedd hi ddim yn ►



Desmond Caddy yn archwilio 'Ffas Lo 62', Pwll y Cwm, yn ystod y streic

Desmond Caddy examining '62 Coal Face', Cwm Colliery, during the strike

UNBELIEVABLE!



When the strike started I was a manager at Cwm Colliery. My personal feelings about the strike were that I was very saddened to think that there were twenty-eight pits in the south Wales coalfield and twenty-six of them voted unanimously to stay in work. Only two pits were against working and it was very sad

on that Monday morning when all the other collieries were stopped by pickets from these two pits.

The attitude of the pickets that stopped me that morning was not very nice to say the least. They sat on my car and I said a few choice words to them to get off and that I was going to work irre-

spective of them. I felt a bit intimidated because they weren't the lads from the Cwm, they'd have been much, much better, but these were strangers. They were bolshie, they were Scargill men – they absolutely idolised Arthur Scargill.

Personally I thought Arthur Scargill's tactics were totally wrong from day one. ▶

ANGHREDADWY!

▶ beth anghyffredin gweld plismon am bedwar o'r gloch y bore, neu sathru ar droed un o gŵn yr heddlu. Roedd hynny'n ddigon i godi ofn, am nad oedd nhw wedi cael bwyd ers pymtheg awr, ac ro'n i wedi clywed pob math o straeon! Er bod yr heddlu ar ddyletswydd ym mhob pwll, ni chawson ni drafferthion tebyg i'r rhai yn Lloegr. Roedd y naill ochr a'r llall yn ymddwyn yn well o lawer yma. Cymry oedd llawer o'r heddlu, a llawer ohonynt o gefndir glofaol, felly rodden nhw'n tuedd i amlaen i'r ffordd.

ond dilyn eu harweinwyr oedd nhw! Ryw'n credu bod Neil Kinnock wedi taro'r hoelen ar ei phen wrth ddweud bod yr NUM yn ei atgoffa o lewod yn cael eu harwain gan fulod. Roedden nhw'n bobl dda fel unigolion, ond roedden nhw wedi dilyn y bobl anghywir. Er hynny, fe fentrodd nifer fach i'r gwaith. Fe gadwes

Roedd hi fel ffair erbyn y gaeaf.
Wrth siarad â phobl yn unigol, doedd
llawer ohonynt nhw ddim yn gwybod
pam eu bod nhw ar streic mwyach – dim

Dy'n ni ddim am weithio gyda'r bradwyr yna

i mewn cysylltiad â chriw Pwll y Cwm, a deall fod rhai o'r bois a aeth nôl wedi cael amser ofnadwy ar ôl y streic. Mae hanes yn dangos fod dychweledigion y 1980au a bradwyr 1926 a'r 1930au yn dal i gael



Jack London's definition of a Scab.

After Good was finished this conversation, the crowd and everyone, the local towns people gathered around him and he made a speech:
"A speech by a hero! He spoke with a determined voice, a voice laced with fire, a commanding leadership of fully convinced. When all were home in heart, the leaders of business of various professions. When a speech comes along that impresses,震撼人心 like that, the leaders need to listen, and the crowd who are the pillars of society to listen like that.
"The men have a right to stand up during our times in a place of power to do what has to be done, of a type that's appropriate to doing their duty. Society respects men of great character regardless of wealth, the ones who are carrying out their duties are held in high esteem enough to being honored. A speech like that.
"They add the last right that is meant of prestige, prestige indicates another because they are passed off as heroes. These heroes should be honored for the promotion of a reconstruction in the French Army. The members of the army should be honored, the members of the navy, the members of the air force, the members of the national guard, the members of the police force.
"There must be honor to heroes, heroes deserved more or less than the others. Mathematics should use a higher level of the economy. A business should try to A PROFOUND TO THE ECONOMY, the economy, the one, the family and the others. A school, there should be a profound to the economy."

eu galw'n fradwyr. Yn anffodus, anghofian nhw fyth mo hynny.

Ailagorodd Pwll Ynysowen ar fore
Llun y 5 neu 12 Mawrth 1985, a'r peth
cyntaf ddywedodd y gyfrinfa wrth y oedd
"Dy'n ni ddim am weithio gyda'r
bradwyr yna", a dywedais i, "Wel, dwi'n
flin, ond bydd y dychweledigion yn
gweithio, hoffwch e neu beidio". Aeth
pawb i lawr i'r pwll ac i'r lamparwm, a
dywedodd yr oferman wrtha i "Bos,
mae'r bois yn gwrthod gweithio gyda'r
dychweledigion". Atebais i "Fe gewn nhw
bum munud i newid eu meddyliau" a
gofynnodd ysgrifennydd undeb y gyfrinfa
i mi "Dy'ch chi ddim yn mynd i'w
hanfon nhw gartref ydych chi?"
Dywedais i "Os na fyddan nhw'n
gweithio, does dim dewis 'da fi."

Anfonais i bawb gartref. Wedyn daethon nhw'n ôl ata i gan ddweud eu bod nhw eisai gweithio, ac fe ddwedais i "Wel, byddwch chi'n gweithio dan yr amodau y soniais amdanyn nhw'r bore 'ma, sef bod gan y dychweledigion yr hawl i weithio yn y pwll 'ma. Cyn belled â'ch bod chi'n derbyn hynny, iawn. Os nad ydych chi'n derbyn hynny, ac os ydych chi'n disgwyl i mi gadw'r chwech draw o'r pwll, meddyliwlch eto". Ac fe wnaeth y bois gydweithio. Ond cawson nhw eu trin fel baw ar y ffas lo. Er enghraifft, os oedden nhw'n gofyn i'r staff cyflenwi am goed i ddal y to uwch eu pennau, bydden nhw'n gwrthod – gan dynnu'r coed o'r clufelt cyn iddo gyrraedd atynt. Doedd hynny ddim yn cyd-fynd ag arferion gweithio diogel, ac fe wnaethon ni roi stop ar hynny ar unwaith!

Daeth pethau'n ôl i drefn yn y man, ond doedd gan y dynion ddim ffydd yn y dyfodol, a datblygodd rhyw hen deimlad o ddifaterwch. Gadewais i Ynysowen ym 1985 a symud i weithio yn Oakdale. Caeodd Pwll y Cwm ym 1986, a Phwll Ynysowen ym 1989. Rwy'n credu bod Swyddogion Gweithredol yr NUM yn y de yn amau bod y sgrifen ar y mur yn ystod misoedd ola'r streic, yn enwedig ar ôl marwolaeth David Wilkie. Rwy'n credu bod trasiedi 30 Tachwedd wedi rhoi hwb o'r newydd i Mrs Thatcher hefyd. Roedd hi'n barod i sefyll dros ei hegwyddorion, yn wahanol i lawer o'i chyfoedion gwrywaidd. Dwi ddim yn Dori o bell ffordd, ond roeddwn i'n edmygu sut lwyddodd hi i reoli'r cyfan.

*Desmond Caddy,
Pwll y Cwm a Phwll Ynysowen*

UNBELIEVABLE!

and, if they could upset you, upset you
they would.

The returnees did menial tasks and assisted management personnel, for example, when we had to move pumps around the pit because of flooding. We had to ask them to give us a hand because there was only a hand full of us at each pit and we needed every pair of hands we could get. I was very disappointed with NACODS (*the colliery officials union*) because they wouldn't cross a picket line but still wanted to get paid and when they were actually in work they still wouldn't do a thing because they would be doing NUM work. They would speak to the returnees and sort of sided with them when they were in their company, but when they were away from them they would say the opposite. To me they were hypocrites, full stop.

**We're not working with
those scabs**

The returnees that came back were all underground personnel and once they got past the pickets it was a matter of going down the pit with BACM (*British Association of Colliery Managers*) officials and the minute they were down the pit they were safe. The police were on hand to ensure our safe arrival at the colliery and it was nothing to come across a bobby at four o'clock in the morning or step on a police dog's foot. That was scary in itself as they hadn't been fed for fifteen hours and I was told where they go to pull you down! There was police presence at every pit but we didn't have the sort of trouble you had up in England. Both sides behaved a lot better. The fact that the police were Welsh, often from mining stock, made them more sympathetic.

Towards the winter things did get a bit more hectic. A lot of people you spoke to individually didn't really know why they were out on strike – they were just following their leaders! I think that Neil Kinnock summed it up when he said that the NUM reminded him of 'lions being led by donkeys'. They were good people individually but they had followed the wrong people. However, a very small number of people did dare to return. I kept in touch with Cwm and heard that a couple of lads that went back there had a horrific time after the strike. Historically you'll find that the returnees of the 1980s and the scabs of 1926 and the 1930s are

still called scabs. Unfortunately, they will never, ever, be forgotten.

Merthyr Vale came back to work on the Monday morning of the 5th or the 12th I think of March 1985 and the first thing the lodge said to me was "We're not working with those scabs", and I said "Well I'm sorry but those returnees shall be working whether you like it or no" and they all went down to the pit and they went to the lamp locking stations and the overman came on to me and said "Boss these lads are not going to work with these returnees". I said "I'll give them five minutes to make up their mind" and the union lodge secretary said to me "You're not going to send them home are you?" I said "If they don't go to work I've got no alternative."

I sent them all home. They came back to me then and said that they wanted to work, and I said "Well you will work under the conditions that I stated this morning, the returnees deserve the right to work in this mine. As long as you accept that you can return, if you don't accept that, if you expect me to keep these six returnees out of the pit then you've got another thing coming". And they worked with them. But whilst they were on the coal face they were treated something terrible. For example, if they wanted supplies to put the timber over their roof supports they wouldn't give them any, they would be taken them off the conveyor before they reached them so they wouldn't have any roof support. That was not conducive to safe mining so we stopped that a bit sharp!

Eventually things settled down but the men weren't at all positive about their future and apathy started to creep in. I left Merthyr Vale in 1985 and went to Oakdale Colliery. Cwm Colliery closed in 1986 and Merthyr Vale in 1989. During the last few months of the strike, I think that the NUM Executive in south Wales realised, particularly after the death of David Wilkie, the taxi driver, that the writing was on the wall. The 30 November tragedy gave Mrs Thatcher, 'the Iron Lady', all the ammunition she needed. She had the courage of her convictions, which many of her male colleagues didn't have. I'm not a Tory man but I admired the way she handled the whole thing.

*Desmond Caddy,
Cwm and Merthyr Vale Collieries*



BRWYDR ARWROL

Dechreuodd y streic yng ngwanwyn 1984. Doedd Cyfrinfa Undeb y Glowyr yng Nghynheidre ddim yn barod am frwydr mor fawr. Roedd llawer o swyddogion allweddol y gyfrinfa wedi ymddeol o'r diwydiant neu wedi colli eu lle yn y Gyfrinfa ddechrau'r flwyddyn. Heb os, cafodd colli dynion mor brofiadol effaith ddifrifol ar ein hymateb i'r streic yn y cwm, yn enwedig yn y dyddiau cynnar. Roedd ambell un yn teimlo'n chwerw ar ôl colli grym, a 'sdim dwywaith mai dyna sbardunodd yr ymgrych i ddychwelyd i'r gwaith yn ystod y misoedd nesaf. Roedd sefyllfa'r gweithlu yng Nghynheidre'n gymhleth hefyd, gan fod bechgyn Morlais, Brynlliw a Chwmgwili wedi symud i weithio i'r pwall. Doedd y gweithwyr ddim yn nabod ei gilydd yn dda a phawb yn ddiethir i bob pwrpas.

Roedd y gweithlu'n hanu o lefydd mor bell â Llanpumsaint, Port Eynon ar Benrhyn Gŵyr, Caerfyrddin ac Abertawe! Doedd 40% o'r gweithlu ddim yn gallu siarad Cymraeg mwyach, sef iaith draddodiadol Cwm Gwendraeth. Roedd byd o wahaniaeth rhwng Pwll Cynheidre

a'r sefyllfa ym mhyllau glo eraill y cwm, lle'r oedd y gweithlu'n adnabod ei gilydd yn dda a phawb yn dod o'r un filltir sgwâr. Roedd ysbryd cymunedol Cynheidre ar goll.

Ychydig flynyddoedd ynghynt, roedd Undeb y Glowyr De Cymru wedi gweithredu'n ddiwydiannol yn erbyn bygythiad i gau Pwll Tŷ Mawr/Lewis Merthyr yng Nghwm Rhondda. Ni chafwyd fawr ddim cefnogaeth gan byllau glo Lloegr, heblaw am un pwall bach yng Nghaint chwarae teg. Felly, pan ddaeth yr alwad am weithredu diwydiannol dros gau Pwll Cortonwood yn Swydd Efrog, roedd llawer o lowyr Cynheidre'n anfodlon dros ben. Cynhalwyd cyfarfod penpwll, a phleidleisiodd pawb dros barhau i



weithio a gweld sut byddai pethau'n datblygu. Y bore canlynol, roedd llinell biced y tu allan i Bwll Cynheidre a'r streic wedi cychwyn. Er gwaetha'r honiadau, doedd gan neb o'r undeb unrhyw syniad beth oedd o'u blaenau. Roeddem ni ar y chwith yn honni taw'r Llywodraeth Geidwadol oedd wedi cyffroi'r gweithwyr i streicio. Ond doedden nhw ddim callach na ni o ran beth fyddai penllanw eu penderfyniadau i'r diwydiant ac i'r wlad i gyd am hynny.

Wrth i'r wythnosau droi'n fisodd, trodd pethau'n fwylwy chwerw a chefnodd pobl ar y gyfraith i bob pwrpas. Gwelwyd yr heddlu'n hebrwng lorïau o harbwr dŵr dwfn Port Talbot i fyny'r M4 i fynd â glo i waith dur Llan-wern. Roedd llawer o'r lorïau hyn wedi dod yn syth o chwareli a safleoedd glo brig heb ddisg treth, yswiriant na thystysgrif MOT! Roedd yr heddlu'n stopio dynion ar y briffordd ac yn eu rhwystro rhag teithio i'r llinellau piced. Weithiau, roedd hi'n teimlo fel petai'r wladwriaeth yn rhyfela yn erbyn yr undeb. Ni oedd 'y gelyn mewnol'.

Aeth y gwragedd ati i sefydlu ▶



AN EPIC STRUGGLE

The strike began in the spring of 1984. The Cynheidre NUM Lodge was ill-prepared for such an epic struggle. A number of key lodge officials had either left the industry on retirement or been voted off the Lodge at the start of the year. This loss of experience at such a time certainly had an effect upon the way the strike was handled in the valley, particularly in the early days of the dispute. Certain individuals were bitter at their ejection from office and without doubt therein lay the seeds of the back to work movement which took a grip in the months to come. The manpower at Cynheidre Colliery also had a complex composition. Workers from Morlais, Brynlliw and Cwmgwili had all ended up at the pit and the workforce had yet to gel; many of the workers were literally unknown to each other.

The workforce came from as far a field as Llanpumsaint to Port Eynon on the Gower or Carmarthen to Swansea! It would be fair to say that 40 per cent of the workforce no longer spoke the traditional Welsh language of the Gwendraeth Valley. The situation at Cynheidre was a

million miles away from some of the valley's other mines where the workforce were well known to each other and all came from a catchment area a few miles from the pit. Community spirit at Cynheidre was in short supply.

A couple of years previously, the South Wales Area NUM had taken industrial action over the closure threat to the Ty Mawr/Lewis Merthyr Colliery in the Rhondda Valley. Support from the English coalfields had not been overwhelming, with the honourable exception of the tiny Kent coalfield. Therefore, when the call came for industrial action



over the closure of Cortonwood Colliery in Yorkshire there were many dissenting voices at Cynheidre. A pithead meeting was convened and voted to continue working and await developments. The following morning there was a picket line outside the pit and Cynheidre was on strike. Despite what has been claimed, no one on the union side had the faintest idea what lay ahead. We on the left would claim that the Tory Government provoked the strike. However, I believe that they had no more idea than we did where their actions would lead the industry and, indeed, the entire country.

As the weeks turned into months, things got increasingly bitter and the 'Rule of Law' was effectively suspended. We had the spectacle of the police force escorting lorries from the deep water harbour at Port Talbot up the M4 to keep Llanwern Steel Works supplied with coal. Many of the lorries had been taken straight from quarries or opencast sites and had no tax, insurance or MOT certificates! Men were stopped on the public highway and prevented from travelling to picket lines. At times, it was felt that the state was at ▶

BRWYDR ARWROL

► grwpiau cymorth, gan greu canolbwyt i'r gymuned gyfan. Datblygodd y peth yn ddiwydiant cartref o'r iawn ryw. Sefydlwyd canolfannau dosbarthu bwyd, a dosbarthwyd parseli bwyd – oedd yn dipyn o gamp o ystyried safle daearyddol Cynheidre a'r ffaith nad oedd unrhyw beth tebyg wedi digwydd ers streic 1926. Heblaw am ymdrechion y gwragedd, byddai'r dynion wedi gorfol dychwelyd i weithio dan lugu – does dim dwywaith am hynny.

Dechreuodd y Llywodraeth ddefnyddio pob math o driciau i gael y dynion nôl i'r gwaith. Crëwyd ymgrych 'nôl i'r gwaith' gydag un o gyn-swyddogion cyfrinfa Cynheidre yn rhan allweddol ohoni. Erbyn Hydref 1984, rodden nhw'n teimlo'n ddigon cryf i geisio 'mynd nôl i'r gwaith'. Aeth rhyw ugain nôl i'r gwaith yng Nghynheidre. Mae beth ddigwyddodd wedyn yn anodd iawn i'w gredus. Daeth heddlu o bob man i sicrhau bod llond llaw o weithwyr yn llwyddo i fynd nôl i'r pwall. Hawliwyd parc gwyliau ar lan y môr fel llety i'r heddlu oedd wedi teithio o bell, a hynny o boched y trethdalwyr. Yna, cyflwynodd rhai o'r

gweithwyr writ yn erbyn yr undeb yn yr Uchel Lys er mwyn atal picedu ar raddfa fawr ym Mhwll Cynheidre a phyllau glo eraill.

Un peth diddorol am y rhan fwyaf o bobl a groesodd y llinell biced neu a lofnododd y gwrit yn erbyn yr undeb, oedd na wnaethon nhw weithio'r un shifft arall ar ôl i bawb arall ddychwelyd i'r gwaith. Fe gymron nhw daliadau diswyddo yn lle.

Yr unig beth wnaeth y dynion a groesodd y llinellau piced oedd loetran ar wyneb y pwall drwy'r dydd!

Ni chloddiwyd yr un darn o lo ym Mhwll Cynheidre nac yn unlle arall ym maes glo'r de adeg y streic. Yr unig beth wnaeth y dynion a groesodd y llinellau piced oedd loetran ar wyneb y pwall drwy'r dydd! Doedd neb yn gallu gwneud dim, roedd rhaid i reolwyr y pwall lleol adael llonydd iddyn nhw a phedio â'u

pechu. Un peth am y dynion hyn – roedden nhw wedi bod ar streic am wyth mis, ac ni effeithiodd eu penderfyniad nhw ar ganlyniad y streic yn y pen-draw, yng nghanolbarth Lloegr y collwyd y dydd. Ond bydd y teimladau chwerw rhwng y dynion aeth nôl i'r gwaith a gweddill y gweithlu yn para am byth – chwalwyd sawl priodas a chyfeill-garwch oes.

Rhygnodd y diwydiant ymlaen am rai blynnyddoedd, ond fe gaeodd y pyllau fesul un. Buddsoddwyd £30 miliwn i ddatblygu gwythien Carwe Fawr yng Nghynheidre, ond ym 1989 caeodd Glo Prydain y pwall heb i'r wythien gynhyrchu'r un talp o lo! Dyna chi ffodd o redeg diwydiant!

Mae'r gweddill yn hen hanes. Rhywle ar silfleoedd di-ben-draw'r Archifau yn Kew, mae papurau'r Llywodraeth a fydd, rhyw ddiwrnod, yn dangos pa mor agos y daeth Undeb y Glowlwr i drechu'r Llywodraeth Dorfaidd. Hon oedd brwydr fawr ola'r dosbarth gwaith yn yr ugeinfed ganrif.

Phil Cullen, Pwall Cynheidre

AN EPIC STRUGGLE

► war with the union. We were branded the 'enemy within'.

Women's support groups were formed and provided a focal point to the whole community. It turned into a cottage industry in its own right. Food distribution centres were established and food parcels distributed. Given the geographical position of Cynheidre Colliery this was no easy feat as nothing had been seen on this sort of scale since the 1926 strike. There can be no doubt that the men would have been starved back to work without the efforts of the women.

The Government began using every trick in the book to get the men back to work. A back to work campaign was formed with a former official on the Cynheidre lodge playing a prominent role. By October of 1984, they felt strong enough to try a 'return to work'. A group of nearly twenty men returned to work at Cynheidre. There followed scenes which had to be witnessed to be believed. Police were brought from all over the place to ensure that this handful of men got into work. A holiday park on the coast was req-

uised and police officers from distant locations were accommodated there, all at tax payers' expense. Some of these men who returned to work then issued a writ in the High Court against the union to prevent the mass picketing at Cynheidre and other mines.

The men who crossed the picket lines just sat around on the surface all day!

Interestingly, most of the men who crossed the picket lines or signed the writ against the union did not work a single shift after the rest of us returned to work, taking redundancy.

No coal was mined at Cynheidre or anywhere else in the south Wales coalfield during the strike. The men who crossed the picket lines just sat around on the surface all day! They were untouchable, local colliery management were told to leave them well alone and they were not to be upset in any way. It must be said that the

men who did return to work had been on strike for eight months and their return had no bearing on the outcome of the strike, the dispute being lost in the English Midlands. The bitterness between some of the men who returned to work and the rest of the workforce will never be reconciled – marriages were broken and friendships forgotten.

The industry staggered on for a few years but one by one, the mines closed. Cynheidre got its thirty million-pound development of the Carway Fawr seam, however, the mine was closed by British Coal in 1989 and the Carway Fawr sealed without ever producing a single lump of coal. What a way to run an industry!

The rest as they say is history. Somewhere within the miles of shelving at the National Archives in Kew are the government papers that will one day prove how close the National Union of Mineworkers came to defeating the Tory Government. It proved to be the last great working-class struggle of the twentieth century.

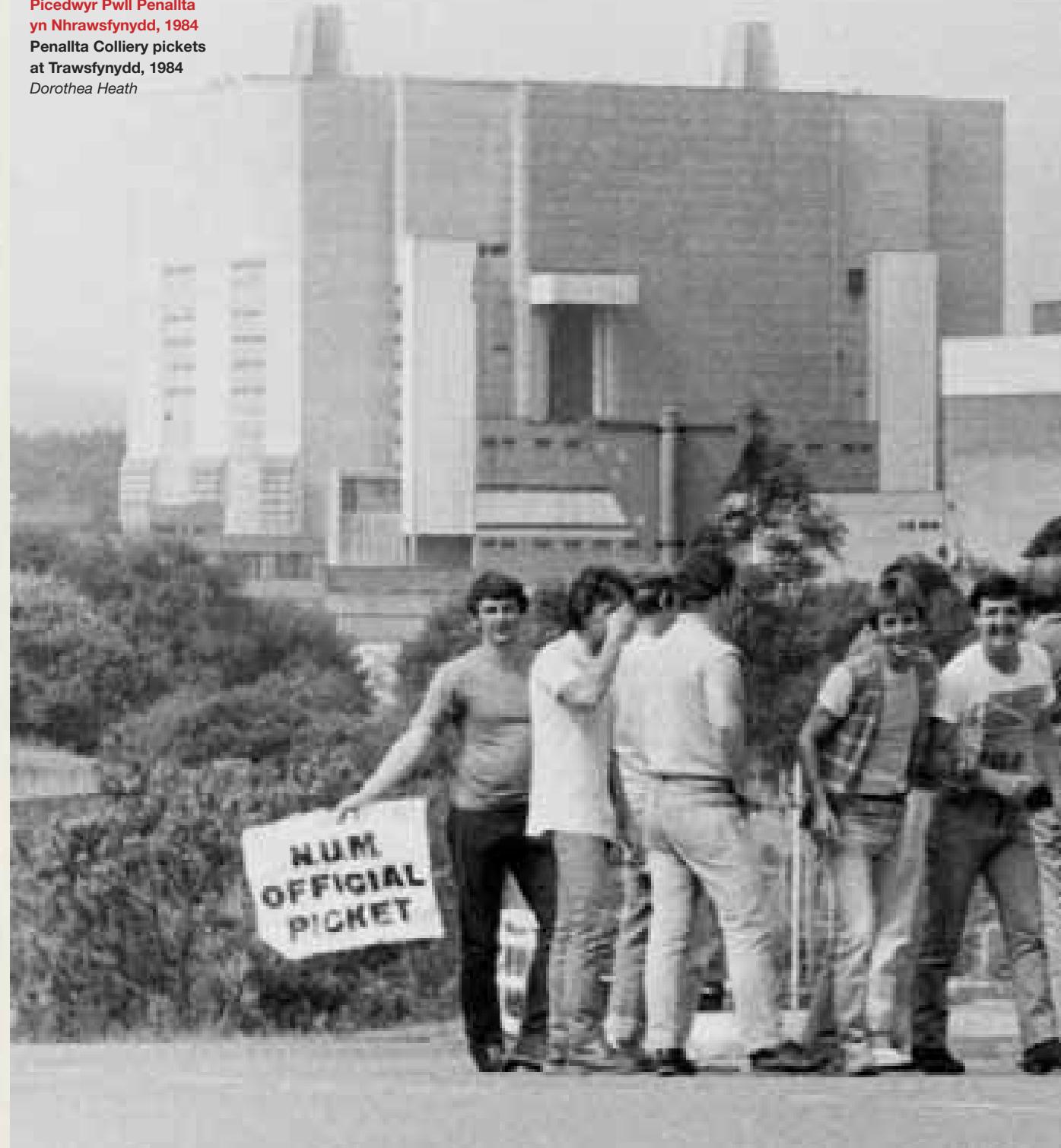
Phil Cullen, Cynheidre Colliery

'Portread o bicedwr'
'Portrait of a picket'
Dorothea Heath



A TITHAU'N FRAWD

Picedwyr Pwll Penallta
yn Nhrawsfynydd, 1984
Penallta Colliery pickets
at Trawsfynydd, 1984
Dorothea Heath



COURAGE

I MINNAU...



AND COMRADESHIP

A TITHAU'N FRAWD I MINNAU...



Gorymdeithio trwy Flaenau Ffestiniog, 1984

March through Blaenau Ffestiniog, 1984 Dorothea Heath

Roedden ni'n gweithio i'r *Guardian* a'r *Observer* yn ystod streic y glowyr, ac yn treulio amser yn sgwrsio â'r glowyr a'u harweinwyr ar y llinellau piced. Roedden ni'n byw ym Mlaenau Ffestiniog ar y pryd, ac roedd dynion o'r de yn dod i fyny'n aml i bicedu y tu allan i or saf niwclear Trawsfynydd. Roedd dynion o byllau'r Tŵr, Penallta, Blaen-nant a Blaenserchan ymhli th y rhai a deithiodd 180 milltir o'r cymoedd. Cawson nhw groeso mawr ar sawl aelwyd, a byddai cryn dipyn o sgwrsio diddan tan yr oriau mân. Ffurfiwyd sawl cyfeillgarwch oes. Fel newyddiadurwyr, buom yn ymweld â sawl pwll fel St John's, Maesteg, y Maerdy yng nghwm Rhondda yn ogystal â'r Parlwr Du, un o'r ddau bwll olaf yn y gogledd. Ym mhob man, roedd yna deimlad arbennig o gymuned ac ymroddiad sy'n nodweddiaidol o'r ardaloedd glofaol fel rhimyn o oleuni mewn byd drwgdybus a hunanol.

gaeaf mor oer fel bod angen gwisgo dillad
ychwanegol i gadw oerfel y Moelwyn
draw. Daeth picedwyr Blaenserchan i
sylw'r wasg pan orweddodd dwsin
ohonyn nhw o flaen trêñ oedd i fod i
gasglu gwastraff niwclear o Drawsfynydd.
Gwrthododd gyrrwr y trêñ, aelod o
undeb ASLEF, groesi'r llinell biced. Bu'n

rhaid i'r trêñ aros am oriau cyn dod o hyd i yrrwr arall, a galwyd yr heddlu. Aeth glowyrr Penallta ati i naddu eu henwau ar lechfaen ym Mlaenau Ffestiniog, a phan ddaeth y streic i ben, fe wnaeth pawb gyfnewid cofroddion.

Roedd haf 1984 yn un cynnes – mor gynnes fod picedwyr Penallta wedi diosg eu crysau i chwarae criced ger mynedfa Gorsaf niwclear Trawsfynydd. Roedd y

rhaid i'r trêñ aros am oriau cyn dod o hyd i yrrwr arall, a galwyd yr heddlu. Aeth glowyr Penallta ati i naddu eu henwau ar lechfaen ym Mlaenau Ffestiniog, a phan ddaeth y streic i ben, fe wnaeth pawb gyfnewid cofroddion.

Mae'r *Guardian* a'r *Observer* yn adnabyddus am fod yn wrthrychol a theg, llawn sic y Rhyl.

Y bore wedyn, roedd golygfeydd emosiynol iawn ym Mhwll y Maerdy. Roedd ffotograffydd un o bapurau tabloid Llundain yn awyddus i gael llun o wynebau dagreul a siomedig y menywod a'r cefnogwyr oedd wedi dod o Rydychen, er mai dagrâu o falchder ar ddiwedd brwydr fawr oedd nhw mewn gwirionedd. ►

COURAGE AND COMRADESHIP



Graffiti'r picedwyr ar wal yn Llanberis

Pickets' graffiti on wall in Llanberis Dorothea Heath

During the miners' strike we were working for *The Guardian* and *The Observer* and spent time on picket lines talking to both miners and miners' leaders. We were living in Blaenau Ffestiniog at the time and miners from south Wales came up regularly to picket the Trawsfynydd nuclear power station. Men from Tower, Penallta, Blaenant and Blaenserchan Collieries were among those who made the 180-mile journey from the Valleys. They found hospitality in many homes and animated conversation would continue late into the night. Friendships that have lasted to this day were formed. Our work as journalists took us to collieries such as St John's, Maesteg and Maerdy in the Rhondda as well as Point of Ayr, one of the two remaining collieries in north Wales. Everywhere there was that spirit of community and dedication that defines mining areas as bastions of hope in a world of doubt and self interest.

The summer of 1984 was hot – so hot that pickets from Penallta played cricket stripped to the waist at the end of

trance to Trawsfynydd nuclear power station. The winter was so cold that extra layers of clothing were needed to keep out the chill of the Moelwyn mountains. Blaenserchan pickets hit the headlines when half a dozen of them lay down in front of a train sent to collect nuclear waste from Trawsfynydd. The train

**Everywhere there was
that spirit of community
and dedication that
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self interest**

driver, a member of ASLEF, refused to cross the picket line. The train was delayed for several hours before a replacement driver could be found and the police brought in. Penallta miners carved their names on a slate slab in Blaenau Ffestiniog and, when the strike ended, mementos were exchanged.

Both *The Guardian* and *The Observer* have the reputation of being fair and objective and, as members of the National Union of Journalists, we followed a code of conduct that seemed to elude the anti-trade union publications. There were attempts in several newspapers, such as *The Sun*, *Daily Mail* and *Daily Express*, to rubbish the miners' concerns for the future of their industry and their communities. The night before Maerdy Colliery returned to work in March 1985 we were in Maerdy Workmen's Institute talking to men who were preparing for the traumatic march up the valley to the colliery. Journalists from London had descended on the coal-field and were preparing to write of the miners' 'defeat'. Several of these attempted to enter the Institute but were told by the miners, in no uncertain terms, to "shove off!"

The next morning there were emotional scenes at the Maerdy pithead. A photographer from a London tabloid was intent on capturing an image of a group of women supporters from Oxford 'crying in defeat' although they were actually weeping openly with pride at the end ▶



Trwy lwc, llwyddodd ffotograffydd y *Guardian* i 'lithro' o flaen y camera a difetha'r llun! Gydol y streic, ceisiodd y ddau ohonom gyflywyno darlun cywir o'r hanes yr oedd carfanau eraill o'r wasg yn benderfynol o'i gamliwio. Rydyn ni'n credu bod gan y wasg ddyletswydd i edrych, gwrando, pwysa a mesur a chyfleu'r un ddelfryd.

Y flwyddyn ganlynol, ym 1986, bu chwarelwyr Blaenau Ffestiniog yn streicio

dros well cyflogau ac amodau gwaith. Yr un hen stori oedd hi, gyda'r gweithwyr yn dioddef caledi tebyg ac agwedd styfnig eu rheolwyr. Daeth bysiau mini'n cludo bwyd o'r cymoedd. Ac amser Nadolig, trefnodd cymunedau glo'r de barti ac anrhegion i blant y streicwyr. Dyna i chi enghraift o frawdgarwch pobl sy'n rhannu'r un ddelfryd.

Tony a Dorothea Heath, Y Gelli Gandryll

Chwith: Casglu arian y tu allan i siop y Co-op Maesteg
Uchod de: Arthur Scargill yng nghwm Rhondda, 1984
Isod de: Gorymdaithio trwy Blaenau Ffestiniog, 1984
Dorothea Heath



of an epic struggle. By some chance a photographer working for *The Guardian* 'slipped' and got in the way! During the strike we both tried to present the truth during a passage of history that some in the press were intent on distorting. We both have the belief that the press has an obligation to look, listen, evaluate and try to ensure that the truth is actually told.

The following year, 1986, saw Blaenau Ffestiniog quarry workers striking for better



Left: Collecting money outside Maesteg Co-op
Above right: Arthur Scargill in the Rhondda, 1984
Below right: March through Blaenau Ffestiniog, 1984
Dorothea Heath



Binny Jones, Blaenau Ffestiniog, 1984
Binny Jones of Blaenau Ffestiniog, 1984
Dorothea Heath

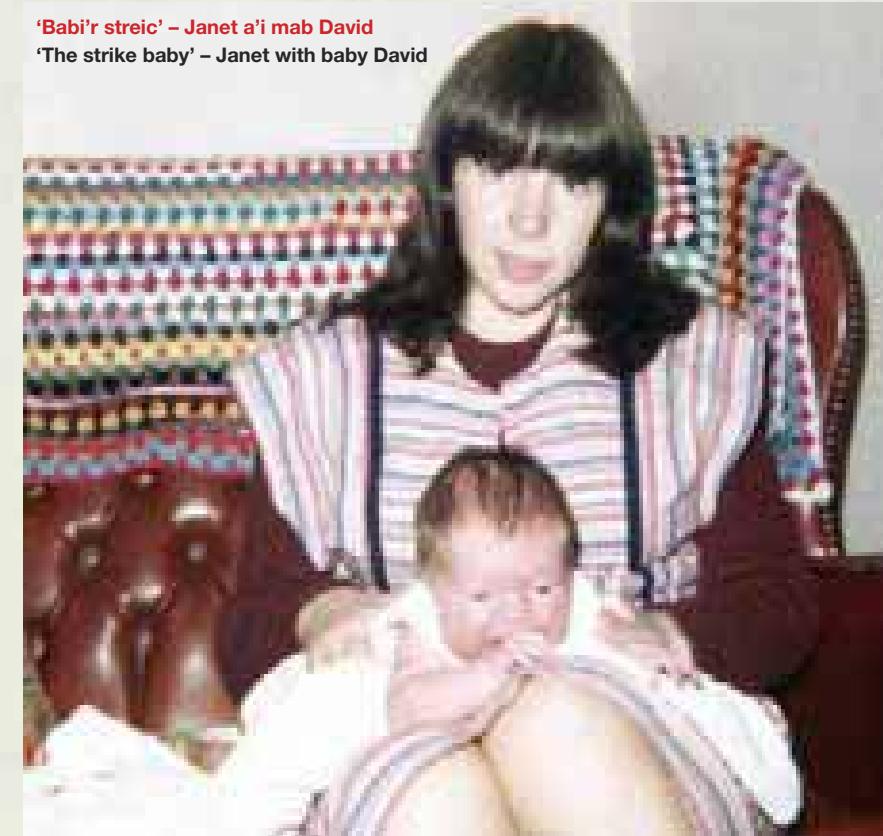


Roeddwn i'n byw ac yn gweithio yng ngorllewin Llundain yn ystod streic glowyr 1972. Roeddwn i yn fy ardegau hwyr ac yn mwynhau noson mas gyda ffrindiau. Fe benderfynon ni fynd i'r sinema, ond hanner ffodd drwy'r ffilm, aeth hi'n dywyll. Roedd y cyflenwad trydan wedi methu, ac roedd rhaid i bawb adael y sinema gan nad oedd neb yn gwybod pryd cai'r cyflenwad ei adfer. Rwy'n cofio meddwl ar y pryd "Blydi glowyr! Beth sy'n bod arnyn nhw, d'yn nhw ddim yn sylweddoli eu bod nhw'n difetha bywydau pobl eraill?" Doedd gen i ddim syniad bryd hynny y byddwn i'n priodi glöwr, yn symud i fyw mewn pentref bach yng Nghymru, ac yn rhan o streic a fyddai'n para blwyddyn.

Roedd David a fi wedi bod yn briod ers 11 mlynedd pan ddechreuodd streic 1984. Roedd ein dau fab, Ian a Neil, yn yr ysgol gynradd. Roedden ni'n gwybod bod streic ar y gweill ac wedi cynllunio ymlaen. Fe brynon ni rewgell a'i llenwi i'r ymylon cyn dechrau'r streic. Roedd hynny'n help mawr. Doedd hi ddim yn hawdd byw ar fudd-dal o £16 yr wythnos, ond dysgais sut i fod yn ➤

BLYDI GLOWYR!

'Babi'r streic' – Janet a'i mab David
'The strike baby' – Janet with baby David



BLOODY MINERS!

During the 1972 miners' strike I was living and working in west London. I was in my late teens and on a night out with some friends. We had decided to go to the cinema and halfway through the film all the lights went out. We were informed that there had been a power cut and we would have to leave the cinema, as they had no idea when the power would be restored. I remember at the time thinking "Bloody miners! Why don't they go back to work, do they realise what they are doing to other people's lives?" I had no idea then that I would marry a Welsh miner, move to a small village in Wales and become involved in a strike that would last for over a year.

David and I had been married for

eleven years when the 1984 strike was declared. We had two sons, Ian and Neil, who were both in primary school. We knew the strike was coming and we had planned ahead, we purchased a chest freezer and by the time the strike came we had managed to fill it to capacity. This helped us enormously. It was not easy trying to manage on £16 per week benefit from the state, but it taught me how to be resourceful in the kitchen and I soon learned how many meals you could make out of a tin of corned beef, and to make a chicken last for three meals, roast one day, curry the next and then boil the carcass for chicken stew. We had to cut out any luxury items and the children soon found the difference in the supplies in our cup-

boards, no more chocolate biscuits, crisps and sweets. Our family members who were not involved in the strike were very supportive and helped us as much as they could. There were other miners who were not so lucky. The single miners had no money coming in whatsoever and they were really struggling.

It was at this time that my friend Kay Bowen, whose husband Phil was the Blaenant Colliery Lodge Chairman, contacted me to ask if I would be prepared to help with a support group to help feed the single miners. Following several meetings a committee was formed and the Dulas Valley Miners Support Group developed. We had enormous support from the community and other unions and soon ➤

BLYDI GLOWYR!

■ ddyfeisgar yn y gegin – sawl pryd o fwyd gawn i o dun o gornbiff, sut i wneud tri phryd o un cyw iâr trwy ei rostio un diwrnod, gwneud cyrrî'r diwrnod wedyn, ac yna berwi'r carcas i wneud stiw. Bu rhaid i ni roi'r gorau i brynu danteithion, a chyn hir, fe welodd y bechgyn wahaniaeth yng nghynnwys y cypyrdau – dim bisgedi siocled, dim creision a dim losin. Roedd aelodau eraill y teulu'n gefnogol dros ben, ac yn gwneud eu gorau glas i'n helpu ni. Doedd eraill ddim mor lwcus. Doedd y glowyr dibriod ddim yn ennill dim, ac felly'n ei chael hi'n anodd dros ben.

Roedd gen i ffrind o'r enw Kay Bowen. Ei gŵr Phil oedd Cadeirydd Cyfrinfa Pwll Blaenant. Gofynnodd Kay a fyddan i'n fodlon helpu grŵp cymorth i fwyd'r glowyr dibriod. Ar ôl sawl cyfarfod, sefydlwyd pwylgor i ddatblygu Grŵp Cymorth Glowyr Cwm Dulais. Cawson ni lawer o gefnogaeth gan y gymuned ac undebau eraill, a chyn hir, roedd yr arian a'r cyflenwadau'n llifo i mewn. Sefydlon ni wasanaeth dosbarthu a phrynu bwyd gyda'r rhoddion ariannol. Dim ond glowyr dibriod oedd yn cael y parseli bwyd i ddechrau, ond bu'r cyfraniadau mor hael nes ein bod ni'n gallu cyflenwi parseli bwyd i holl lowyr y cylch oedd ar streic.

Bob bore Mawrth, bydden ni'n mynd i Abertawe i brynu pethau sylfaenol ar gyfer pob parsel, fel bara, llaeth, tatws, wyau, llysiau, cornbiff, te, siwgr ac ati. Dydd Mercher oedd ein diwrnod dosbarthu, a byddai'r grŵp yn cyfarfod yn y Belt (Clwb Cyn-filwyr Banwen), gan osod byrddau yn y neuadd. Yna, bydden ni'n llenwi'r bagiau bwyd ac yn eu rhoi i'r glowyr a'u teuluoedd. Cyn hir, roedd 1,000 o bobl yng Nghwm Dulais, Cwm Nedd a Chwm Tawe yn derbyn parseli bwyd.

Roedd pethau'n galed adeg y streic; roedd hi'n anodd ymdopi â'r prinder arian a'r ffraith nad oedden ni'n gallu prynu pethau angenheidiol i'n plant. Mae gennyl gof arbennig o Neil y mab: roedd ei treinyrs ysgol wedi dechrau cwmpo'n ddarnau, a doedd ni ddim yn gallu fforddio prynu pâr newydd iddo. Cafodd yr hanes sylw yn y papur newydd lleol, ac roedd un hen wraig wedi'i chyffwrdd i'r byw a benthycodd arian i ni brynu treinyrs newydd iddo. Cawson ni gymaint o ddillad ail-law gan bobl eraill, aethon ni ati i sefydlu siop yng nghefn y clwb dan ofal gwragedd y glowyr. Roedden ni'n gwerthu'r dillad

am ychydig geiniogau'r un, ac yn defnyddio'r elw wedyn i brynu mwy o bethau ar gyfer y parseli bwyd.

Erbyn hyn, roeddwn i'n feichiog eto. Fe brynais i fy nillad mamolaeth i gyd o siop ddillad y Grŵp Cymorth. Roedd rhai ohonynt nhw'n ddillad designer, a fyddwn i byth wedi gallu eu fforddio nhw cyn y streic. Cafodd David, fy nhrydydd mab, ei eni yn Ysbyty Cyffredinol Castell-nedd yn Ionawr 1985. Roedd dwy wraig arall i lowyr yn rhannu'r un ward â mi, ac fe'i halifedyddiwyd yn 'Arthur Scargill Suite' gan y nrysos.

Amser Nadolig, doedd dim syniad da ni sut i brynu anrhegion i'r plant, ond

Roedd yna deimlad anhygoel o gymuned adeg y streic, gyda phawb yn helpu'i gilydd

unwaith eto, cawsom ni gymorth amhrasiadwy gan rai fel 'Brenin y Gelli Gandryll' (*Richard Booth*) ac Undeb y Newyddiadurwyr. Fe gyfrannon nhw anrhegion a llyfrau i holl blant y glowyr, a thalu am barti Nadolig gyda Siôn Corn. Roedd yna deimlad anhygoel o gymuned adeg y streic, gyda phawb yn helpu'i gilydd. Roedd hi'n gysur mawr gwybod nad oedden ni ar ein pennau ein hunain. Sylweddolais i pa mor lwcus oedden ni i fyw mewn ardal lle'r oedd y streic yn gadarn. Roedd hi'n drist iawn gweld y sefyllfa mewn rhannau eraill o'r wlad.

Bob dydd, roedd y newyddion yn dangos glowyr yn gwrthdaro â'r heddlu ar y llinell biced. Fe welson ni lowyr wedi'u hanafu gan bastyna'u'r heddlu wrth geisio amddiffyn eu swyddi a gwellau hamodau byw. Doedd Banwen, ein pentref ni, ddim byd tebyg i hynny diolch i'r drefn.

Pan ddaeth y streic i ben, penderfynodd y menywod nad oedden ni am ddychwelyd i fod yn wragedd ty. Cynhalwyd cyfarfodydd yng nghartrefi pobl, a sefydlwyd gweithdai D.O.V.E (*Dulais Opportunities for Voluntary Enterprise*). Bwriad y cwmni cydweithredol hwn oedd helpu menywod i gael hyfforddiant a dysgu sgiliau newydd er mwyn rhoi cyfle iddynt chwilio am waith a datblygu eu gyrfaedd. Mae D.O.V.E wedi mynd o nerth i nerth fel Prifysgol Gymunedol y Cymoedd erbyn hyn. Heddiw, lleolir y Brifysgol yn hen swyddfeydd Pwll Banwen, sydd bellach wedi'u moderneiddio a'u hymestyn.

Mae carreg goffa gerllaw yn cofio glowyr y cylch. Ar y garreg, mae enw merch ifanc o'r enw Katie Jones oedd yn gweithio danddaear ym 1878. Mae pethau wedi newid cryn dipyn erbyn heddiw, gan fod merched ifanc Banwen yn gallu ymrestru yn D.O.V.E., astudio am radd ac edrych ymlaen at fywyd gwell. Efallai bod y pyllau wedi hen gau erbyn hyn, ond mae syniad gwreiddiol criw o fenywod penderfynol yn ystod y streic wedi rhoi rhywtheth i'r gymuned gyfan ymfalchiö ynddo.

Janet Thomas, Duffryn Cellwen



■ cash and supplies were coming in. We set up a distribution service and purchased food with the financial donations received. To begin with the food parcels were given only to single miners, but eventually the donations became so generous that we were able to supply food parcels to all the miners in our area who were on strike.

Tuesday morning we would go to Swansea and purchase basic items for each parcel, i.e. bread, milk, potatoes, eggs, vegetables, corned beef, tea, sugar etc. Wednesday was our distribution day, our group would meet in The Belt, (Banwen Ex-Servicemen's Club) in the hall and set out the tables and one by one the carrier bags would be filled and given to the miners and their families. Eventually the food parcel scheme was feeding 1,000 people in the Dulais, Neath and Swansea Valleys.

Times were hard during the strike; it was difficult coping with the shortage of money and being unable to give our children the things they needed. One particular memory was of my son Neil: his training shoes for school had started to fall apart and we could not afford to buy him a new pair. This story was printed by a local newspaper, and it touched one old age pensioner so much that she sent us some money to buy Neil a new pair of training shoes. We had so many donations of second-hand clothes that we set up a shop in the rear of the club manned by miners' wives. We sold the clothes for a few pence each and all the funds raised were used to purchase more items for the food parcels.

I discovered by this time that I was pregnant. My maternity clothes were all purchased from the Support Group clothes shop. Some of these clothes had designer labels and I would certainly never have been able to afford to buy them before the strike. My third son David was born in Neath General Hospital in January 1985. I was in a ward with two other miner's wives and the nurses named our room the 'Arthur Scargill Suite'.

When Christmas was approaching we had no idea how we were going to buy gifts for the children, but again the support we received from everyone including the 'King of Hay' (*Richard Booth*) and the National Union of Journalists helped us to overcome this. They supplied gifts and

Casglu arian yn Nhonympandy
Collecting money in Tonympandy
Mike Thompson

BLOODY MINERS!



Parti Nadolig y plant yng nghanolfan 'The Belt'
Children's Christmas party at 'The Belt'

books for all the children of the miners and paid for a Christmas party with Father Christmas in attendance. The community spirit at the time of the strike was unbelievable, everyone helped each other and it was comforting to know that we were not on our own. I realised that we were very lucky to live where the strike was solid. It was very sad to see what was happening in other parts of the country where this was not the case. Every day on

The community spirit at the time of the strike was unbelievable, everyone helped each other

the news we would see miners in clashes with police whilst on picketing duty. We saw baton charges and miners being hurt whilst trying to protect their jobs and improve their standard of living. Our village, Banwen, luckily seemed to be a very long way from there.

When the strike finished the wives decided they did not want to go back to just being housewives. Meetings were held in people's houses, and eventually the D.O.V.E (*Dulais Opportunities for*



Voluntary Enterprise) workshops were set up. This was a co-operative to help women to learn new skills and training to give them the opportunity to seek employment and develop their careers. The D.O.V.E has grown and developed and is now the Community University of the Valleys. It is housed in the old Banwen Colliery offices, which have now been modernised and extended.

There is a standing stone that commemorates the miners of this area. The stone bears the name of a little girl called Katie Jones who worked underground in the mines in 1878. How times have changed, the young women of Banwen today can now enrol at the D.O.V.E., study for a degree and look forward to a better future. The mines may be closed now but the idea that was conceived by a group of determined women during the strike has now given our community something to be proud of.

Janet Thomas, Duffryn Cellwen

DAN GLO!

Fe dreuliais i 24 awr yng nghelloedd yr heddlu yn ystod y streic. Roeddwn i'n un o 101 o lowyr a dorrodd i mewn i'r dociau yng ngwaith dur Port Talbot. Roeddwn i'n gyrru un o'r faniau, ac wrth i ni nesáu at y tri chraen, rodden ni'n gallu gweld gweithwyr y dociau'n dadlwytho llong o Sbaen. Aeth pawb i fyny i'r craeniau. Dechreuodd y docwyr fynd i banig o weld hyn, a gadael ar hast! Pan oedden ni i gyd yn y craeniau, fe glymon ni ddarn o weiar bigog o amgylch y llwybrau er mwyn atal neb rhag dod ar ein cyfyl ni. Unwaith rodden ni'n rheoli'r craeniau, rodden ni'n ddigon uchel i weld unrhyw un oedd yn dod i fyny. Oddi tanom, roedd criw'r llong yn gadael!

Roedd gynnon ni duniau o ffa pob, sbaget, fflasgiau dŵr poeth a llond côl o fwyd yd eraill. Doedd dim tŷ bach yn y craeniau, felly gallwch ddychmygu beth oedd rhaid i ni ei wneud 120 o droedfeddi uwchben y dŵr! Cyraeddodd yr heddlu gan weiddi "Dewch i lawr" drwy'r uchelseinyddion, a ninnau'n ateb "Ewch i graful!". Yn ddiweddarach, fe ddeallon ni fod rhywun wedi gwneud tyllau yn nheiars ein ceir a'n faniaw, ond roedd yr heddlu'n gwadu unrhyw gyfrifoldeb. Erbyn y diwrnod canlynol, roedd yr heddlu wedi cael llond bol, ac wedi gosod gwrit wrth fôn y craen. Fe ddringais i lawr i'w nol hi; roedd Llys y Goron yn ein rhybuddio i ddod i lawr neu wynebu'r canlyniadau.

Y dydd Sadwrn canlynol, roedd y radio'n dweud fod yr NUM wedi'n cyngori ni i ddod i lawr, felly fe bleidleision ni dros adael. Wrth i ni ddod i lawr fusel un, fe gymrodd yr heddlu ein henwau, a chawsom ein twys i'r bysiau gan ddau blismon yr un. Dychmygwch hynny! Wedyn fe gawson ni'n hanfon i wahanol gelloedd yr heddlu yn yr ardal. Tynnwyd lluniau ohonom gyda'r plismyn arrestio (heb ein caniatâd). Cawsom ein cadw dan glo gyda phum dyn arall, tan 4 o'r gloch y prynhawn canlynol.

Er na gysgon ni fawr ddim, roedd pawb mewn hwyliau da. Ymhen hir a hwyd, cawsom fwyd o westy'r Dunraven ym Mhen-y-bont ar Ogwr y diwrnod wedyn. A ninnau heb fwyta ers dyddie,



Louise, merch Allan, gydag Arthur Scargill
Allan's daughter, Louise, with Arthur Scargill

roedd hi'n flasus dros ben – bacwn ac wy, bara menyn a phaned o de – felly roedd pethau'n gwella bob munud (ha! ha! ha!). Dywedodd y llys na allen ni bicedu eto am ein bod ni ar fechniâeth. Pe baen ni'n picedu, yna carchar amdani. Daeth ein cymrodyr i'n hebrwng nôl adref lle'r oedd ein teuluoedd yn ein disgwl ni.

Er na gysgon ni fawr ddim, roedd pawb mewn hwyliau da

Gofynnwyd i mi fynd i Weriniaeth Iwerddon gyda glöwr arall er mwyn gofyn i'r Gyngres Lafur yno am arian. Y bwriad gwreiddiol oedd mynd am dridiau, ond roedd ein hymgyrch codi arian mor llwyddiannus fel yr arhoson ni draw am dair wythnos. Tra'r oedden ni'n aros i ddal y llong nôl i Abergwaun, roedd plisman Prydeinig yng nghwmni'r capten. Fe welais i'r plisman yn pwyoñtio'i fys aton ni, a meddyliai i, "aros di nes y byddwn ni ar y llong!". Ond ddigwyddodd dim byd nes i ni gyrraedd Abergwaun. Cawsom ein harwain i gyfeiriad gwahanol i bawb arall a chael ein stopio gan bobl mewn dillad cyffredin, ein chwilio a'n holi – "Beth oeddech chi'n ei wneud yn ne Iwerddon?", "Wnaethoch

Allan Price, Cymer Afan

IN THE CELLS

During the strike I spent 24 hours in a police cell. I was one of the 101 miners who broke into the docks in Port Talbot Steelworks. I drove one of the vans and when we approached the three towering cranes we could see the dockworkers unloading a Spanish ship. We all made our way up into the cranes. The dockers, when they saw us scampering up the crane, all panicked and got off ASAP! When we were all up the cranes we strung barbed wire around the walkways to stop anyone coming up behind us. Once we were in control of the cranes we were high enough to see anyone who approached us. We could also see down on the ship below us – the crew by now were getting off!

We had taken tins of beans, spaghetti, flasks of hot water and lots of other foods. There were no toilets up the cranes so I will leave it to your imagination what we had to do while we were 120 feet up above the water! Then came the police with loudhailers telling us to "Get down!" and us shouting back "Get stuffed!" We found later that the

Allan Price

tyres of our vans and cars had been punctured, but the police denied responsibility. By the next day the police had had enough of us and put a writ on the base of our crane. I climbed down to get it; it was off the Crown Court and said that we had better come down or face the consequences.

We didn't sleep much but our spirits were high

On the Saturday afternoon we heard on the radio that the NUM had advised us to come down, so we had a vote and decided to leave. As we came down one by one we had our names taken and

there were two policemen for each one of us to take us to buses, so you can imagine what it was like! Then we were scattered to different police cells all around the area. We had our pictures taken (without our permission!) with the arresting officers. We were then locked up six in a cell until 4 pm the next day.

Well, we didn't sleep much but our spirits were high. When food eventually arrived it was

next day and it came from the
Dunraven
Hotel in
Bridgend.

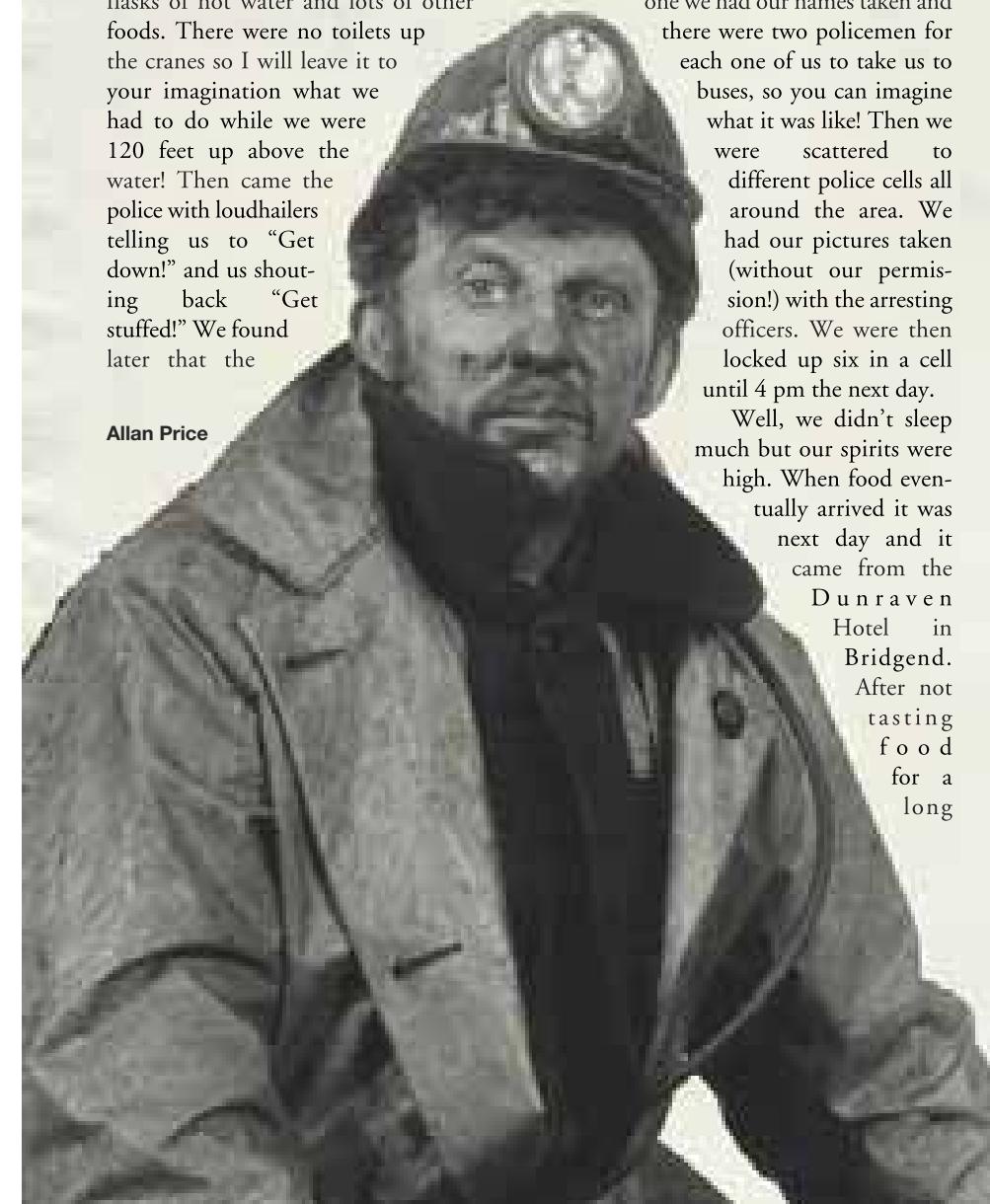
After not
tasting
food
for a
long

time, it was good – egg and bacon, bread and butter and tea – so it was getting better every minute (ha ha ha!). We were told by the court that we could not picket again because we were on bail. If we did then they would sling us in jail. We were picked up by our comrades and back home to the hills where our families were waiting for us.

Well, I was asked to go southern Ireland with another miner to ask the Irish Trade Congress for funds. I was only supposed to be there for three days but stayed for three weeks because of the success we had raising funds. When we were waiting for the ferry to take us back to Fishguard, there was a British policeman on it with the captain. The policeman pointed to the two of us and I thought "wait until we get on the boat!" But nothing actually happened until we got to Fishguard where we were directed to go a different direction than any one else and we were stopped by plain clothes people, searched and questioned – "What were you doing out in southern Ireland?", "Did you meet 'the boys'" (they meant the IRA!). We simply said we were there to get funds for our families and they let us go. We were later told that they were MI5. On the way home we called back in Gorseinon miners' strike headquarters and dropped off a cheque for £7,000. We were also promised toys for Christmas for the children, a promise that was honoured by the Irish.

I only just got back in time to appear with my mining brothers before the Crown Court in Swansea. We were told that, if we didn't plead guilty, we would be charged with inciting a riot, which carried a twenty year sentence. We were advised by our lawyers to plead guilty and all got a three-year suspended sentence. This meant that if we were in any more trouble with the police we would be jailed. Also on our minds was the fact that we could lose our jobs for what we had done. This worry went on for months after, but thanks to God, we were able to go back to work with all our other comrades. If I was ever faced with the situation again, I would still do the same, but with even more vigour and determination for my people and country of Wales.

Allan Price, Cymer Afan



AWYRGYLCH GYFEILLGAR AR Y CYFAN

Cefais fy ngeni yn Aberystwyth ym 1947. Gadewais i'r ysgol ym 1966 ac ymuno â Heddlu'r Metropolitan. Ym 1973, ymunais â Heddlu De Cymru a chael fy anfon i Abertawe. Cefais ddyrchafiad fel sargant ym 1980. Ymunais ag Uned Cymorth yr Heddlu lle cefais hyfforddiant rheoli terfysgoedd (oedd yn golygu cyflawni dyletswyddau arferol yr heddlu a mynchy sesiynau hyfforddi am bedwar diwrnod y flwyddyn). Ym Mawrth 1984, roeddwn i'n gweithio yn ardal Treforys/Pontardawe oedd yn frith o byllau glo fel Aber-nant a thoreth o byllau llai. Roeddwn i'n nabod rhai o'r glowyr lleol, yn gwybod am eu gwaith ac yn ymwybodol o'r materion arweiniodd at y streic, y tu hwnt i'r cefndir gwleidyddol. Y mis hwnnw, cefais alwad ffôn gartref tua 11 o'r gloch fore Sul. Clywais fod posiblwydd y byddai'r glowyr yn streicio yn Lloegr, ac felly roeddwn i fod i fynd i Orsaif Heddlu Canol Abertawe, lle'r oedden ni'n cadw ein hoffer gwrderysg. Bu rhaid i mi bacio dillad nos hefyd, 'rhag ofn'.

Yn y diwedd, cawsom ein cludo i Coventry a'n hanfon yn syth i bwll lleol, lle buon ni'n aros drwy'r nos am unrhyw wrthdaro rhwng y picedwyr a'r dynion oedd yn dal i weithio. Cyraeddodd criw'r shifft dydd am 6 y bore, gyda'r picedwyr yn gweiddi arnyn nhw ond ddim yn achosi trwbl. Yn ddiweddarach y diwrnod hwnnw, fe gawson ni'n hanfon i wersyll milwrol gyda gwelyau cynfas yn y gampfa - roedd hi'n rhewi. Ychydig oriau o gwsg, yna'n ôl â ni ar y llinell biced am 6 y bore. Fe dreulion ni wythnos gyfan ar shifft nos yno, heb unrhyw derfysg.

Fe dreuliais i weddill y streic yn gwneud dyletswyddau cyffredin a chael fy anfon i ffwrdd ar fyr rybudd. Ar un adeg, arhosais ym Marics y Fyddin yn Chilwell, Nottingham, a chawsom ein hanfon i



**Roedden ni'n
cydymdeimlo â'r glowyr,
ac ni welais unrhyw
gasineb a dweud y gwir**

gymorth ychwanegol. Ymosodwyd ar y peirianwyr wrth iddyn nhw geisio mynd i mewn i'r pwl, ac arestiwyd chwe phicedwr am ymosod a chyflawni troseddu yn erbyn y drefn gyhoeddus. Roedd rhaid i ni fynd i'r achos llys yn Chesterfield, a chawsom ein synnu pan anfonwyd nhw i'r carchar - er mwyn gosod esiampl yn fwy na thebyg!

Bues i'n plismona y tu allan i waith dur Port Talbot er mwyn cadw'r llwybr yn glir i'r lorïau glo gael mynd a dod.

Dave Savage, Castell-nedd

A BIT OF PUSHING AND SHOVING

I was born in Aberystwyth in 1947.

I left school in 1966 and joined the Metropolitan Police. In 1973 I joined the South Wales Police and was posted to Swansea. I was promoted to sergeant in 1980. I joined the Police Support Unit where I was trained in riot control (this meant that I did my normal policing duties but attended training sessions for four days a year). In March 1984 I was working in the Morriston/Pontardawe area surrounded by collieries such as Abernant as well as a number of smaller mines. This meant that I was well aware of the issues leading up to the strike, not so much the political background, but I knew the local miners and the work that they did. During that month I had a phone call at home on a Sunday morning about 11 am. I was told that there was a possibility of a miners' strike in England and to report to Swansea Central Police Station where our riot equipment was kept. I was told to pack an overnight bag 'just in case'.

We ended up travelling to the Coventry area and were sent straight to a local colliery where we stayed all night awaiting possible confrontations between pickets and men who were still working. The day shift at the colliery came in about six in the morning, they were met with a bit of shouting from the pickets but there was no real trouble. Later that day we were sent to an army camp and given camp beds in the gymnasium - it was freezing. A couple of hours sleep and then back on the lines at six next morning. We spent a week there on night shifts but didn't experience any violence.

I spent the rest of the strike doing my normal police duties interspersed with being sent away at short notice. On one occasion we stayed in Chilwell Army Barracks, Nottingham, and were sent to a mine in South Derbyshire by the name of Daw Mill. There were lots of pickets there waiting to 'greet' some engineers coming in to do some maintenance. It was obvious there was going to be trouble but we weren't given any reinforcements. When the engineers tried to enter the pit they



Chwith: Sarjant Dave Savage yn archwilio car am bicedwyr, Sir Derby, Mehefin 1984.
Uchod: 'Aros i rywbeth ddigwydd', Sir Derby, Mehefin 1984

Left: Sergeant Dave Savage checks a car for flying pickets, Derbyshire, June 1984.
Above: 'Waiting for something to happen', Derbyshire, June 1984

a lot of sympathy for the miners and I never saw any nastiness. To be honest the politics didn't interest me I was just doing my job. I don't think that policing was quite the same after. We never really got back to the situation as it was before the strike because of the amount of men who were away on picket duty. It definitely affected policing at the community level as some people had got away with doing naughty things for a year and we lost control a bit.

Dave Savage, Neath



Chwth: Tony Popple, canol y rhes flaen, ar ôl chwarae pêl-droed gyda'r picedwyr, Pwll Creswell, Sir Derby
Canol: Yr Arolygydd Will Evans (oedd yn gwybod dim am yr arwydd y tu ôl iddo!)
De: Uned Cymorth yr Heddlu Rhanbarth Abertawe, Sir Derby, 1984



Left: Tony Popple, centre of front row, after playing football with pickets, Creswell Colliery, Derbyshire
Centre: Inspector Will Evans (who was unaware of what was on the sign behind him!)
Right: Swansea Division, Police Support Unit, Derbyshire, 1984



BYW MEWN FAN

LIVING IN THE BACK OF A VAN

Ym mis Mawrth 1984, roeddwn i'n gwnstabl ym Mhontardawe. Roeddwn i'n ymwybodol iawn o'r sefyllfa ar y pryd gan fod fy nhad yn lôwr yn Aber-nant a llawer o'm ffrindiau naill ai'n lowyr neu'n gysylltiedig â'r diwydiant. Glo oedd asgwrn cefn y pentref. Pan ddechreodd y streic, roeddwn i'n than o Uned Cymorth yr Heddlu, oedd yn cynnwys 25 i 30 o ddynion oedd yn atebol i arolygydd a dau sargent.

Bob bore Llun, byddwn i'n pacio bag am yr wythnos, ac yn cyflwyno fy hun ar ddyletswydd yng Ngorsaf Heddlu Canol Abertawe. Rodden ni'n aros mewn barics y fyddin yng ngogledd Lloegr yn ystod yr wythnos ac yn gwneud dyletswyddau diogelwch mewn pwlle lleol. Roedd rhyw faint o'r gwaith braidd yn ddiflas. Doedd dim llawer o bicedwyr ym mhrrif bwll Markham er engraffit, ond roedd llu ohonynt nhw pan fyddai'r glowyr yn cyrraedd y gwaith mewn lleoedd eraill fel Creswell - ond dim trwbl go iawn, heblaw am eiriau drwg. Doedd

y picedwyr ddim yn wirioneddol gas tuag aton ni, fel Cymry o ardaloedd glofaol a allai uniaethu â nhw. Er bod gennym ni'r offer gwrrt-derfysg diweddaraf, ni fu angen eu defnyddio nhw.

Doedd y picedwyr ddim yn wirioneddol gas tuag aton ni, fel Cymry o ardaloedd glofaol a allai uniaethu â nhw

Cefais fy anfon i ffwrdd i weithio'n rheolaidd tan wyliau blynnyddol y glowyr ddechrau Awst. Ar ôl hynny, es i nôl i'm dyletswyddau arferol ym Mhontardawe nes i rai o'r glowyr ddechrau mynd nôl i weithio. Yna, fe ailymunais â Thîm Cymorth yr Heddlu ym Mhwll Abernant a heblaw am y Nadolig, roeddwn i yno bob dydd neu'n barod i dderbyn galwad i ran arall o'r maes glo fel Cwm

Garw neu ardal Pontypridd. Buon ni'n byw yng nghefn fan am fisoeedd i bob pwrpas – doedd dim barics i ni yn ne Cymru! Ond doeddwn i ddim yn teimlo dan unrhyw fygithiad. Rodden ni'n gwbl deg wrth gadw'r heddwch yn y pyllau glo, doedden ni ddim yno i ochri â neb.

Fi oedd capten tîm rybgi Cwm-gors ym 1984, ac ynghanol y gwthio a'r tynnu ar y llinell biced rwy'n cofio rhywun yn gweiddi, "Oi, Popple – gobeithio byddi di'n gallu gwthio'n well dydd Sadwrn!" Rodden ni yng nghanol ein cymuned, a gan fod gennym 'cbuck wagon' y tu fas i Aber-nant, ni fyddai'r cynta' i gael cawl, a'r picedwyr wedyn. Ond fe aeth y cyfan yn drech na ni erbyn diwedd y flwyddyn – o ran ein horiau gwaith, ein ffordd o fyw – rodden ni wedi blino'n lân. Wn i ddim os lwyddodd y streic i gyflawni unrhyw beth yn y diwedd. Gaiff rhywun arall benderfynu hynny.

Tony Popple, Rhydaman

In March 1984 I was a police constable in Pontardawe. I was well aware of the situation at the time as my father was a miner in Abernant Colliery and many of my friends were also either miners or associated with the coal industry. Coal was the lifeblood of the village. During the start of the strike I was part of a Police Support Unit (PSU) which consisted of 25 to 30 men under an inspector and two sergeants.

On a Monday morning we would pack a bag for a week, and report for duty at Swansea Central Police Station where we would be told where we were going just before we set off. You would end up in an army barracks in the north of England for a week being deployed on security duties at a local colliery. Some of it was a bit boring, for example we never saw many pickets at Markham Main Colliery but other places, such as Creswell, there were plenty of pickets on hand when the working miners went in but no real trouble apart from verbal abuse. We didn't have any

We didn't have any real animosity from the pickets because we were Welsh boys from a coalfield area and had some sympathy with them

real animosity from the pickets because we were Welsh boys from a coalfield area and had some sympathy with them. We were fully equipped with riot gear but never actually used it.

I was deployed regularly on these 'away trips' until the annual miners' holidays at the beginning of August. After that I went back to normal policing in Pontardawe until some miners started to return to work. I was then put back into a PSU deployed at Abernant Colliery and, apart from Christmas, was there every day or on standby to go to another part of the coalfield such as the Garw Valley or the

Pontypridd area. We were virtually living in the back of a van for months – no barracks in south Wales! I never felt intimidated at all, we policed the collieries firmly and fairly, we weren't there to take sides.

I was captain of Cwmgorse RFC in 1984 and I remember a bit of pushing and shoving on a picket line when someone shouted at me from the back of the pickets "Oi, Popple – I hope you shove better than that on Saturday!" It was our community, so when the police had a 'chuck wagon' outside Abernant, the first batch of soup went to us and the second to the pickets. But at the end of the year it had taken its toll on the police, the hours we were working, the lifestyle – we were physically shattered. I don't know if the strike actually achieved anything in the end, someone else will have to judge that.

Tony Popple, Ammanford

BECHGYN YN ERBYN DYNION

Roedden ni'n disgwyli Orgreave fod yn frwydr a hanner, ac rwy'n credu mai dyna oedd bwriad yr heddlu o'r dechrau. Pan fuon ni'n picedu llefydd fel Pwll Daw Mill yn Sir Warwick, fe fydden nhw'n eich stopio chi filltiroedd o'r pwll, ac roedd rhaid i chi barcio a cherdded yno. Ond fe gyrraeddodd ni Orgreave heb unrhyw drafferth.

Dywedwyd wrthym ble'n union i barcio yn y pentref bach, a chawson ni rwydd hynt i benderfynu ble i sefyll ar y llinell biced. Roedd llinellau'r heddlu'n gwbl agored, a gallech chi gerdded o'r naill ochr i'r llall o'r gwaith. Dim problem o gwbl felly. Ond roeddech chi'n gallu synhwyro bod rhyw ddrwg yn y caws yn syth, ac wrth i'r diwrnod fynd rhagddo, roedd hi'n amlwg bod rhywbeth ar droed. Roedden ni wrth fôn rhyw glawdd, ac o'n

blaenau ni, pedair neu bum llinell o heddlu'r holl ffordd ar draws y maes, a llinell o geffylau y tu ôl iddyn nhw. Yn eu plith, roedd y garfan gipio ('snatch squad'), sef y rhai â tharianau byrion yn barod i dorri trwedd. Ar y dde, roedd cae llawn heddlu ar geffylau, ac mewn cae

**Roedden nhw'n
bwrw dynion a'r rheiny'n
methu amddiffyn eu
hunain o gwbl**

arall, roedd heddlu â ch n oedd yn edrych fel pe baen nhw heb gael bwyd ers dydie! Roedd yr heddlu wedi trefnu hyn i gyd. Roedd hi'n debyg i faes y gad, ond bod un fyddin yn drefnus a'r llall ddim!

Rhyw wthio digon diniwed a gafwyd i ddechrau, a phawb yn cael dipyn bach o sbort. Ond pan ofynnodd ni i fois Sir Efrog "Sut byddwn ni'n gwybod bod y lorïau ar y ffordd?", yr ateb oedd "Byddwch chi'n gwybod, achos byddan nhw'n anfon y cafalri," a dyna'n union ddigwyddodd.

Dechreuodd rhai o'n hochr ni daflu cerrig ond dim ond ar ôl i'r heddlu ddechrau ymosod arnon ni. Roedd popeth welsoch chi ar y teledu yn y drefn anghywir; nid fel 'na ddigwyddodd pethau, roedd y bois yn taflu cerrig i amddiffyn eu hunain rhag yr holl geffylau a'r heddlu oedd yn cipio dynion ar hyd y lle.

Trwy lwc, roedden ni'n ddigon pell i ffwrdd yn y cefn pan ddaeth yr hyrddiad cyntaf. Roedd trwch o heddlu'n sefyll mewn tair neu bedair rhes. Roedd y plisynn yn y rhes flaen yn taro'u tarianau ▶

LIKE MEN AGAINST BOYS

Orgreave was going to be the big battleground and I think it was what the police wanted as well. When we had picketed places like Daw Mill Colliery in Warwickshire they would stop you miles away from the pit and you'd have to park up and walk. But we got right to Orgreave with no trouble.

We were told exactly where to park in the small village and they let us decide which end of the picket line we were going. It was open police lines and you could walk either side the plant. No problem, nothing at all. You could smell a rat as soon as you got there and, as the day

went on, something obviously was. At our end of the line there was a bit of banking, right in front of us were four or five lines of police right across the breadth of the

They were hitting men who had no protection. They were just wild and over the top

area and behind them there was a line of horses and in amongst them were the snatch squads, the ones with the short

shields waiting to come through. On the right-hand side was a field with police on horses, and in the other field there were police with dogs that looked like they hadn't been fed for a while! It was totally organized by the police, it was like looking at a battlefield but one army was organized and the other one wasn't!

At first it was the usual pushing and shoving and everyone was having a laugh. But when we turned to the boys from Yorkshire and asked "How do you know when the lorries are coming?" they said "You'll know because they'll send the cavalry out" and that's exactly what happened. ▶



BECHGYN YN ERBYN DYNION

► gyda'u pastynau, a'r rhai y tu ôl iddyn nhw'n defnyddio'r pastynau arnon ni. Roedden nhw'n ein gwthio ni'n ôl gyda'r tarianau, ac yn torri trwoddy pan fyddai'r llinell yn chwali. Yna, bydden nhw'n anfon y cefylau i wasgaru pawb cyn i'r garfan gipio arestio dynion gyda'u ffyn a'u tarianau bach. Roedden ni mewn cornel i bob pwrrpas, ac roedden nhw'n ein hel ni'n ôl dros bont y rheilffordd a'r lein ei hun.

Ddaethon nhw ddim yn agos at y

lein reilffordd rhag ofn iddyn nhw gael eu cau allan. Roedd y carfanau cipio'n defnyddio'r pastynau fel ffyliaid ar ben y clawdd. Roedden nhw'n bwrw dynion a'r rheiny'n methu amddiffyn eu hunain o gwbl. Roedden nhw mas o reolaeth, dros ben llestri'n llwyr. Roedden nhw eisiau chwali'r streic yn y fan a'r lle, beth bynnag y bo. Wel, roedd hynny'n ein gwneud ni'n fwy penderfynol byth, ac yn fwy crac fyfth.

Erbyn diwedd y dydd, roedd y cyfan wedi chwythu'i blwc. Rhoddwyd hawl i'r

lorïau fynd a dod, ac roedd yr heddlu'n ein gadael ni i fynd yn syth drwy eu llinellau fel petai dim byd wedi digwydd. Roedden nhw wedi gwneud eu gwaith! Roedd y cyfan yn rhyfedd iawn, fel profi brwydr fawr, ac yna "bant â chi bois, mae'r diwrnod ar ben!". Dynion yn erbyn bechgyn oedd hi yn Orgreave, gyda nhw wedi'u harfogi a ninnau mewn jîns a trenrys. Roedden ni wedi ein twyllo ni'n lân!

Meirion John, Pwll De Celyn



LIKE MEN AGAINST BOYS

► There was stone-throwing from our side but that was after the charges. Everything that you saw on the telly was all out of synchronization; it didn't happen like that because the stone-throwing was in defence of all these horses and snatch squads just picking up stragglers.

Luckily, when the first charge came, we were pretty far back so you could get out of the way. The police were three or four deep. The ones in front with the big shields had their truncheons out because they were banging their shields with them, but the ones behind them were actually using their truncheons on us. They first locked shields to push you back and once

you were in disarray they would come through. They would then send out the horses next to spread everyone and then the snatch squads with sticks and the small shields just picking people up. Basically we were boxed in and they could funnel us back through a railway bridge and onto the railway line.

They wouldn't come down the railway line in case they got cut off themselves. You could see all these snatch squads going wild with their truncheons at the top of the bank. They were hitting men who had no protection. They were just wild and over the top. They were going to smash the strike there and then,

whatever it took to do it. Well, it made you more determined, it made you more angry.

At the end of the day it kind of just died a death. The lorries had been in and the police let you walk straight back through their lines as if nothing had happened. They'd done their job! It was strange, just like going through a battle, then "It's the end of the day, off you go boys!" Orgreave was men against boys, they were all kitted up and we were in trainers and jeans. We were totally out-foxed!

Meirion John, South Celyn Colliery

Y GELYN ODDI MEWN



Penallta Lodge
banner, Ron Stoate is
second from right

THE ENEMY WITHIN!

Baner Cyfrinfa
Penallta. Ron
Stoate yw'r ail
o'r dde

Y GELYN ODDI MEWN

O'n ni'n picedu ym Mhenallta ganol gaeaf, mis Ionawr neu Chwefror efallai, ac o'dd hi'n ddigon ôr i rewi brain, ag eira ar y llawr. O'dd hi'n gynnar yn y bore, tua 3 neu 4 o'r gloch. O'dd rhaid bod yna ben bore am y bydden nhw'n dod â'r scabs i mewn unrhyw bryd ar ôl 4.30 er nad o'dd y shifft yn dechrau tan 6.30. O'n ni wedi cynnau Tân mewn drwm pum galwyn er mwyn cadw'n gynnes â'r heddlu wedi ymuno â ni o gwmpas y Tân. Ond dim ond chwe phicedwr o'dd yn cael bod yno ar un adeg. Wrth i'r picedwyr gyrraedd fesul tipyn, o'n nhw'n cael eu denu at y Tân fel gwenyn i bot mêl. Dyma un picedwr yn cyrraedd, a'r plisman yn dweud wrtho, "Chei di ddim sefyll fan hyn – cer draw fan'na" ac atebodd e, "Olreit, wy'n mynd nawr", ac aros wrth y Tân. Dywedodd y plisman, "Cer, nawr!" a'i daflu ar draws y ffordd.

Nawr, dyw John fy mrawd h n ddim yn becso dam amdanyn nhw, a bydde' fe'n rhoi proc mawr i'r coed bob hyn a hyn. Byddai sbarcs yn mynd i bobman a lludw gwyn dros iwniifform y plismyn i gyd. Nawr chi'n gweld, o'dd e'n gwneud hyn yn fwriadol, ac o'dd yr heddlu'n gwybod 'ny'n iawn. Yn sydyn, dyma nhw'n neidio arnon ni. Ar ôl sgarmes, cefais i a John ein taflu i gefn fan, a John yn cal cwpwl o belts. Roedd Don Evans, Cadeirydd NACODS, yn cadw llygad ar y llinell biced, a dda'th e draw i brotestio am hyn i gyd cyn i'r heddlu geisio ei arrestio fe! Fe fydden nhw wedi'i arrestio fe hefyd, oni bai am ymyrraeth Terry Hathaway, Ysgrifennydd NACODS.

Ethon nhw â ni i orsaф heddlu

Caerffili wedyn, a da'th plisman ata' i a dweud, "Ti, y b*****" a rhoi ei ddwrrn dan fy ngân. Meddai John fy mrawd, "Www, 'smo fe'n lico ti!". Pan aethon ni i'r llys, roedd e'n honni 'mod i wedi torri un o'i asennau fe. Do'n i erioed wedi ei weld o'r blaen cyn iddo fe bwno 'ngân! Ta beth, fe wnaethon nhw ein cadw ni dan glo.

Y peth nesaf o'dd eu bod nhw 'isie tynnau llun. Fe ofynnon nhw i mi sefyll yn erbyn wal wen. A dyma un ohonyн nhw'n dweud, "Dere mlaen nawr Ron,

Ma' hyn dros ben llestri braidd on'd yw e?
Nage'r Great Train Robbers y'n ni!

rhaid gwneud hyn" ac un arall yn dweud, "Os na sefi di'n erbyn y wal, gei di glatsien yn dy wyneb". Un yn neis, a'r llall yn gas. A chriw o blismyn yn sefyll wrth y drws yn gwylio'r cyfan. Ta beth, synnwyr cyffredin enillodd yn y diwedd. Fe ges i dynnu'n llun.

Pan ethon ni i mewn i'r llys, o'n i'n teimlo cywilydd mawr wrth gael ein hebrwng drwy'r holl bobl. O'n i'n sownd wrth blisman mewn gefynnau, a dywedais i, "Ma' hyn dros ben llestri braidd on'd yw e? Nage'r Great Train Robbers y'n ni!". Ddywedon nhw ddim gair. Dim ond edrych arnon ni fel baw. Yna, ddeallais i eu bod nhw am wneud cais i 'nghadw i a'r ddau frawd yn y ddalfa. Y peth cyntaf ddaeth i'm meddwl

i nawr oedd fy ngheffyl. A dyna fi'n trio dweud wrth fy mrawd Brian i drefnu bod rhywun yn edrych ar ôl y ceffyl am nad oeddwn i'n gwybod pa mor hir fydden i bant. Mae'r peth yn chwerthinlyd! Dyna fi ar fin mynd i'r carchar, ac yn becso mwy am y ceffyl na dim byd arall.

Ethon ni i mewn i'r llys, a sefyll o flân tri ynad. O'n i'n nabod un ohonyн nhw. Reit, mae o leia' un ffrind gen i fan hyn, meddyliais i. Roedd rhaid cael penderfyniad unfrydol i'n cadw ni yn y ddalfa a doedd e' ddim yn cytuno. Yn y diwedd, cawson ni'n rhoi ar gyrrifiw o 9 y bore tan 9 y nos i'n hatal ni rhag picedu. O'n ni'n gorfod mynd lawr i orsaф heddlu'r Coed-duon am 10 o'r gloch bob bore a 6 o'r gloch bob nos, saith diwrnod yr wythnos, i lofnodi darn o bapur. O'dd rhaid i ni wneud hyn am wythnosau yn yr oerfel. Do'dd hynny ddim yn jôc.

Os na fydden ni'n gwneud hyn, gallen ni gael ein harestio a'n cadw yn y ddalfa, a bydden ni'n colli'n swyddi ar ôl y streic. Digwyddodd rhywbeth doniol pan o'n ni yn swyddfa'r heddlu un bore. Sais oedd y plisman y tro hwn, "Ry'n ni wedi dod i lofnodi ein taflenni cyffriw" medden ni. "Ydych chi? Rhaid eich bod chi wedi gwneud rhywbeth difrifol iawn i haeddu hynny. Beth wnaethoch chi te?". "Wel, ni yw gwehilion y ddaear, ontife" o'dd ein hateb. Roedd papur newydd y Sun wedi'n galw ni'n "scum of the earth". "Beth chi'n ei feddwl?" holodd y plisman. "Ni yw'r gelyn oddi mewn". Dealodd o'r diwedd. "O! glowyr ydych chi!".

Ron Stoate, Is-gadeirydd Cyfrinfa'r NUM, Pwll Penallta

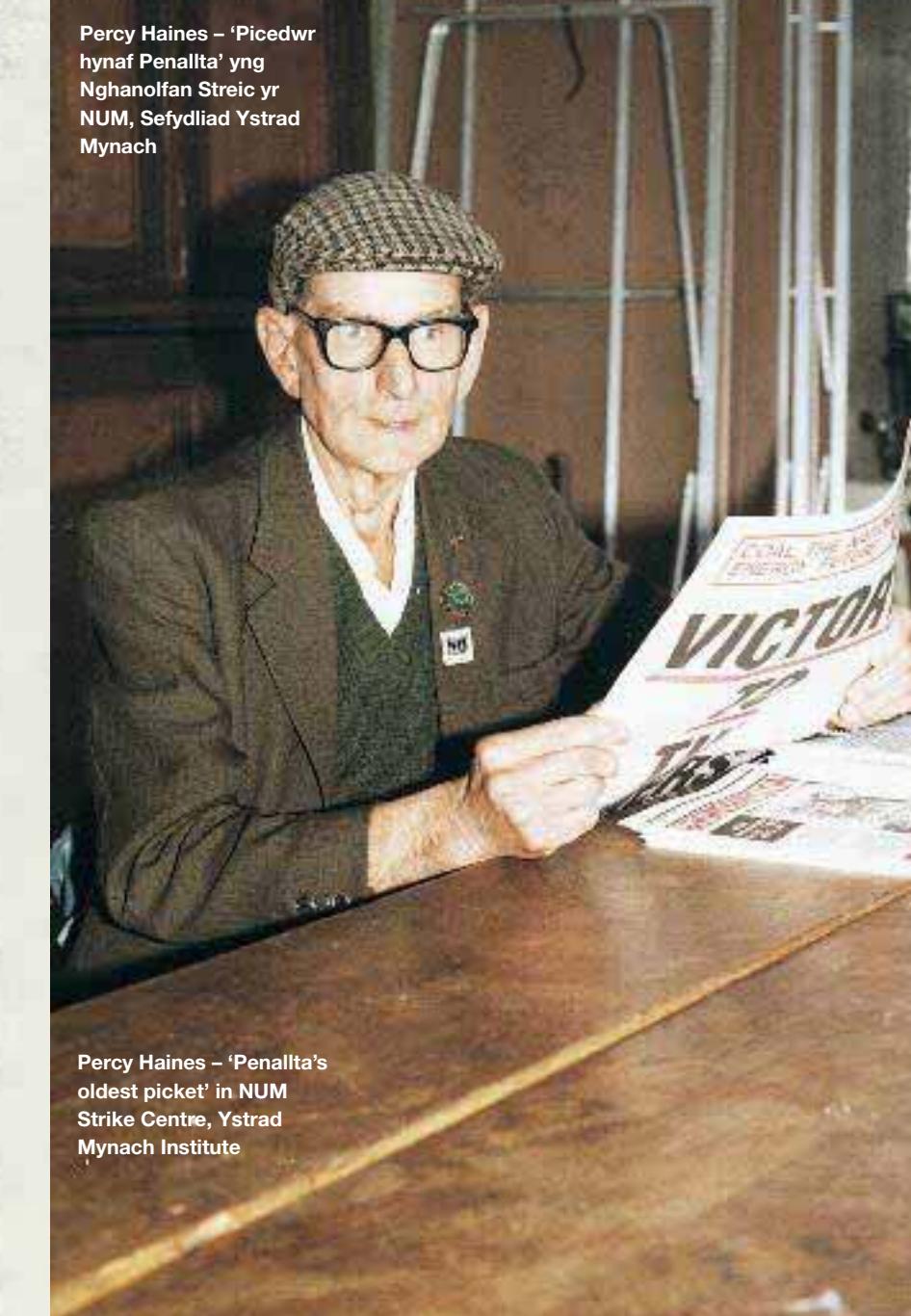
THE ENEMY WITHIN!

We were picketing outside Penallta and it was winter, perhaps January or February, and it was bitter cold, with snow on the ground. And it was the early hours of the morning about three or four o'clock. You had to be there then because they'd bring the scabs in anytime after 4.30 even though their shift start time was 6.30. We had a fire lit in a five-gallon drum so we could keep warm. Now the police were around the fire like us. But they would only allow six pickets around it. As the pickets

were arriving, they were coming to the fire like moths around a light. This one picket comes over and the police says to him, "You can't stand here – get over there!" and he went, "Oh all right, I'll go now", and just stood there warming his hands by the fire. The policeman said, "You'll go now!" and threw him across the road.

Now my older brother John, he don't give a f*** for them and he was shaking the wood about in the brazier. So all these sparks were going everywhere and the police were getting this white soot all over

their uniforms. Now he was doing this deliberately, see, and they know he's doing it deliberately. All of a sudden they jumped us. After a struggle, they threw me and my elder brother John in the back of the van and they are giving him a good roughing-up. Now Don Jones, the NACODS Chairman, who was on the picket line observing, came over to protest at all this and the next thing the police tried to arrest him. They would have too if Terry Hathaway, the NACODS Secretary, hadn't intervened.

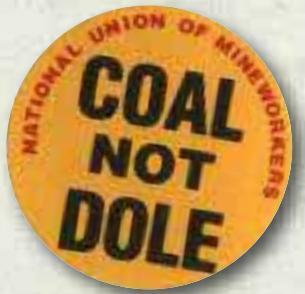


Percy Haines – 'Picedwr hynaf Penallta' yng Nghanolfan Streic yr NUM, Sefydliad Ystrad Mynach

They took us to Caerphilly police station and this policeman came up to me and said, "You, you b***** you" and he put his fist under my chin. My brother John said, "Ooh, he doesn't like you!" It turned out, when we went to court, that he reckoned I'd given him a hairline fracture of the ribs. I'd never seen him before he shoved his fist under my face! Anyhow, they locked us up.

The next thing now is they want to take my photo. They had a white-painted wall and they wanted me against this wall.

THE ENEMY WITHIN!



said, "This is a bit strong isn't it butt? We're not the Great Train Robbers!". They don't answer. They just look at you like you're s*** on their shoes. We were then told that they were after a remand in custody for me and my two brothers. First thing that comes into my mind now was

**This is a bit strong
isn't it butt?
We're not the
Great Train Robbers!**

my horse. So I'm trying to tell my brother Brian to make arrangements for someone to look after my horse because I don't know how long I'm going to be gone. Ridiculous isn't it? I'm on the verge of going down and here I am worrying about my horse.

They took us into the court and there were three magistrates on the bench. But one of them I knew. So I thought right I've got at least one friend here. In order to remand us in custody they have to have a unanimous decision and he wouldn't have it. So they put us on a curfew from 9 am to 9 pm. The reason for the curfew was to stop us picketing. We had to go down to Blackwood police station at 10 am every morning and 6 pm every night, seven days a week, and sign a sheet. We had to do that for weeks and weeks and weeks in the bitter cold. And that was no joke.

The thing was if we didn't do it they would have arrested us, remanded us in custody and we would have lost our jobs after the strike. One amusing thing happened when we went to the station one morning. There was this English policeman there. We said, "We've come to sign our curfew sheets". "Have you? You must have done something serious for this. So what have you done then?", "Well we're the scum of the earth". Now if you remember, *The Sun* newspaper had branded the miners that. "What do you mean?" "Well, we're the enemy within". A flash of recognition then, "Oh you're miners!"

Ron Stoate, NUM Lodge Vice-Chairman, Penallta Colliery

CYWILYDD I FOD YN AELOD O'R NUM



Cafodd y pum llythyr dienw canlynol eu hanfon i swyddfa cyfrinfa'r NUM ym Mhwll De Celynen yn ystod y streic.

■ Annwyl Syr a holl swyddogion eraill yr undeb. Hoffwn ymateb i'ch bygythiad i adael i Bwll Celynen orlifo os na fydd y glowyr sydd wedi dychwelyd yn rhoi'r gorau i weithio. Gwnewch fel y mynnwch, ni fydd pobl Prydain yn i ddio i flacmel. Gadewch i'r pwll orlifo a gadewch i'r glowyr fod heb waith, a chollai unrhyw arian diswyddo na allent ei hawlio. Rydyn ni wedi cael hen ddigoneg dorcyfraith ac ati. Rydyn ni wedi hen flino ar y glowyr sy'n meddwl eu bod uwchlwm cyfraith gwlad. Rhyw ddydd, bydd pob un ohonoch yn rhoi cyfrif i'r Arglwydd Dduw. Ac mae'r diwrnod hwnnw'n nes nag yr ydych yn ei feddwl.

Dinesydd sy'n parchu'r gyfraith

■ Dwi'n gweithio ym mhwl De Celynen yn ardal BU. Dwi'n dymuno ac yn gobeithio'r canlynol i Emlyn Williams - Llywydd, Terry Williams - Is-llywydd a'r ffwl Dutfiled 'na, twpsod y gyfrinfa. Gobeithio y byddwch chi a'ch teuluoedd yn byw mewn tlodi am weddill eich oes am helpu'r cythrel gwirion Scargill i arwain glowyr de Cymru i bwll anobaith. Fy unig freud-dwyd nawr yw eich gweld chi gyd yn syrthio'n farw ar ben y pwll.

Dienw

■ Dwi'n gweithio ym Mhwll De Celynen. Faint mwy o'r streic chwethinllyd hon dan law'r Comiwnyddion sy'n rhaid i lowyr Gwent ei

ddioddef? Caeodd 130 o byllau dan y blaid Lafur, ond ni soniwyd yr un gair. Chafodd yr un dyn yr un geiniog o iawndal. Daethon ni mas dros Bwll Lewis Merthyr ym 1983. Dywedodd y Comiwnydd Scargill a'i griw wrthon ni ble i fynd. Eleni, ry'n ni mas eto am fod un pwll wedi cau yn ardal Scargill. Beth sydd mor arbennig am ardal Scargill? Mae gen i gywilydd o fod yn aelod o'r NUM oherwydd y pethau sy'n digwydd. Dwi ddim yn Gomiwnydd, a dwi ddim yn fodlon bod allan o waith oherwydd y diawled 'na. Mae'n hen bryd i'r dynion sydd am weithio ddefro a dweud hynny wrth y picedwyr.

Dienw

■ Hoffwn i a fy ngwraig ddiolch i aelodau cyfrinfa De Celynen am ein harwain i fywyd o dloidi. Hoffem ddiolch hefyd i ddau byped Scargill, Emlyn Williams a Terry Thomas, am helpu'r cythrel Scargill 'na i wneud hynny. Bob nos, rydyn ni'n gweddio y bydd damwain ddifrifol yn taro Cyfrinfa De Celynen, a bod eich gwraggedd a'ch plant yn dal rhyw fath o frech sy'n arwain at farwolaeth araf a chreulon. Mae pwys bynnag sy'n dweud ei fod yn cytuno â'r streic naill ai'n dwp neu wedi'i gyflyri i feddwl felly. Pe bai pwll wedi cau yn ne Cymru yn hytrach nag yn ardal y cachgi Scargill 'na, fydd ni ddim ar streic. Pan oedd y ddau byped E. Williams a T. Thomas yn codi chwe mis o gyflog iddyn nhw'u hunain a'u teipyddes cyn y streic, a'n galw ni allan am ddiawl o ddim, yna mae'n hen bryd i rywun ymchwilio i hynny. Mi fentra' i eu bod nhw'n chwerthin nerth eu pennau yn eu swyddfeidd yng Nghaerdydd. Y twpsod diawl.

Dienw

■ Dwi'n gweithio ym Mhwll De Celynen. Faint mwy o'r streic chwethinllyd hon dan law'r Comiwnyddion sy'n rhaid i lowyr Gwent ei

■ Unwaith eto, hoffwn i a 'ngwraig ddiolch i Gyfrinfa De Celynen am helpu'r Comiwnydd gythrel Arthur Scargill i'n rhoi ni ar y clwt. Dydyn ni ddim yn hoffi Margaret Thatcher nac Ian Macgregor, ond am Arthur Scargill a Mick MacGahey, wel - ry'n ni'n eu casáu nhw â chas perffaith. Dyw Ilywydd arall y glowyr, y comiwnydd diawledig arall 'na, Emlyn Williams, ddim gwerth sôn amdan. Terry Thomas, Dr Kim Howells - dau gle-brwr wast, hunanbwysig. Os na allwch chi weld mai'r comiwnyddion sy'n rhedeg y streic a bod glowyr Gwent yn cael eu harwain i ddifancoll, rhaid eich bod chi'n ddwl. Dylai Emlyn Williams gael ei ddiswyddo heb geiniog o iawndal.

Anhysbys

CAS PERFFAITH

Llythyr i'r NCB gan 'löwr sy'n gweithio' ar ôl diwedd y streic

■ Dwi'n ofni am fy mywyd oherwydd yr holl gasineb sydd tuag ata i'n bersonol. Er 'mod i a'm cydweithwyr yn derbyn y byddai rhyw faint o elyniaeth yn ein herbyn, mae'r holl ddrwgdeimlad sydd wedi dwysáu i lefelau LLOFRUDIAETH yn cadarnhau eu bod nhw am fy ngwaed i - dwi'n dweud hyn wrthych gan y byddai parhau i weithio dan y fath amgylchiadau gyfystyr â hunanladdiad.

Dienw

ASHAMED TO BE A MEMBER OF THE NUM

The following five anonymous letters were sent to the NUM lodge office at South Celynen Colliery during the strike.

■ Dear Sir and all the other union officials. May I say this to you concerning your threat to allow Celynen Pit to flood if miners who have returned to work do not stop again. Do your worst, the people of Britain are not giving in to blackmail. Let the pit flood and let all the miners be without work, plus lose any redundancy money which they could not claim. We are fed up with law breaking etc. We have seen enough in this country of miners thinking they are above the law. One day the whole lot of you will give an account to the Lord God. And that is nearer than you think.

Law abiding citizen

■ I work in the South Celynen in the BU area. It is my wish and hope that Emlyn William - President, Terry Williams - Vice President and that other nut Dutfield also you stupid lodge men. It is my wish and hope that you and your families live in poverty for the rest of your natural lives for helping that stupid b***** Scargill to take the south Wales miner into despair. My only real dream now is to see you all drop dead on top of the pit.

Anon.

■ I work in the South Celynen Colliery. How much longer has the Gwent miner got to put up with this Communist run farce of a strike. The labour party closed 130 pits, not one word was said, not one man received compensation. 1983 we came out over Lewis Merthyr Colliery. That Communist Scargill and his bunch told our boys where to go. This year because they shut one pit in Scargill's area we are out again. What is so special about Scargill's area? The things that are going on make me ashamed to be a member of the NUM. I am not a Communist and object to being put out of work by the b*****s. It's about time that the men who want to work woke up and told the pickets that.

Anon.



Left: Graffiti, tai bach cyhoeddus Abercarn.
Above: Gweithwyr wnaeth dorri'r streic yn cael eu cludo gartref mewn tacsi ar ôl shifft ym Mhwll y Cwm, hydref 1984

Left: Graffiti on public toilets at Abercarn.
Above: Strike-breakers being driven home in a taxi after a shift at Cwm Colliery, autumn 1984

■ My wife and I would again like to thank the South Celynen Lodge for helping that communist b***** Arthur Scargill to take us into poverty. We don't like Margaret Thatcher or Ian Macgregor but Arthur Scargill and Mick MacGahey - we hate their guts. That so called other president of the miners, that other communist b***** Emlyn Williams, isn't worth a mention. Terry Thomas, Dr Kim Howells - just two bags of wind, full of their own importance. If you lot can't see that this strike is communist run and that the Gwent miner is being led to despair you must be dull wasters. Emlyn Williams should be sacked out of hand without any compensation.

Anon.

SHEER INTENSITY OF HATRED

Letter from a 'working miner' to the NCB after the strike ended.

■ The sheer intensity of hatred against myself personally, leaves me in fear of my life. Although my work mates and I appreciated that there would be some animosity, the degree of hostility, which has escalated to MURDEROUS pitch, verifies that they are out for blood - I am bringing these facts to your attention as for me to continue to work under such circumstances would be suicidal.

Anon.

FE WNAETHON NI BOPETH POSIBL



WE DID WHAT WE COULD

Brian Hibbard yn *One Big Blow*

Cefais fy ngeni yng Nglynebw y, ac roedd dad-cu yn lôwr. Ar ôl gadael yr ysgol, y dewis oedd naill ai mynd 'lawr y pwll neu i waith dur Glynebw y – felly dewisais i'r gwaith dur. Roeddwn i wedi bod yn sosiolydd mawr erioed, a chefais i 'ngwaith actio cyntaf gyda chwmniau theatr gwleidyddol. Fe wnaethon ni sioe wedi'i seilio ar Ddeddf Cyllid Tai 1972, gan werthu pob tocyn a theithio am flywyd yn gron. Yna, fe ymunais â chwmni theatr o'r enw '7:84' sef '7% o'r boblogaeth yn rheoli 84% o'r cyfoeth'. Aethon ni ati i greu sioe *One Big Blow* am fand pres y glowyr. Roedd hi'n llwyddiannus dros ben, a buon ni ar ddwy daith yng nghymoedd y de. Bydden ni'n cael cwpwl o beintys ar ôl pob sioe, ac yna'n neidio i gefn y fan a chael hwyl wrth ganu.

Gofynnodd theatr gymunedol yn Deptford a fydden i a'r bois yn fodlon canu mewn cyngerdd i godi arian at achos da. Bu trafod mawr dros enw'r band. Yn y diwedd, fe benderfynon ni alw'n hunain yn 'The Flying Pickets' oherwydd ein cysylltiad â streic y glowyr ym 1972 a 1974. Fe wnaethon ni sioe i ddathlu gwrthryfel y werin gyda Tony Benn a llawer o fudd-gyngherddau eraill

(fel rhw fath o hobi) nes i'r band ddechrau dod yn llwyddiannus. Roedd yn gwybod fod galw mawr am 'The Flying Pickets', a chofiwch mai ym mlynnyddoedd cynnar Thatcheriaeth oedd hyn, a bod cryn dipyn o ymgyrchu yn ei herbyn, 'yn erbyn yr ast!' Fe wnaethon ni lawer iawn o gyngherddau – ymddangos mewn sioeau cabare gyda phobl fel Alexei Sayle, Ben Elton, Rick Mayall, Keith Allen moel – y criw yna i gyd; ac roedd hi'n llwyddiant rhyfeddol. Aethon ni ar deithiau mawr gyda phobl fel Dionne Warwick a llwyddodd ein record *Only You*

Fe benderfynon ni alw'n hunain yn 'The Flying Pickets'

i gyrraedd rhif un y siartiau pop. Dyma ni, yn gysylltiedig â'r theatr wleidyddol ers blynnyddoedd, yn canfod ein hunain ar lwyfan *Top of the Pops*, yn meddwl "yffarn dân, syniad pwy oedd 'yn bois?'"

Pan aeth y glowyr ar streic, fe ffonias i swyddfeydd yr NUM yn syth i ofyn "Beth allwn ni ei wneud?" Felly, aeth tri

I was born in Ebbw Vale, my grandfather was a miner. I had the option of going down the pit or into Ebbw Vale Steel Works when I left school – so I went into the steelworks. I suppose I have always been a socialist and my first jobs in the acting profession were in political theatre companies. We actually did a show about the 1972 Housing Finance Act, which we toured for a year and sold out. I later joined a theatre company called '7:84' which stood for '7% of the population control 84% of the wealth'. I joined them to do a show called *One Big Blow* which was about a miners' brass band. It was incredibly successful and we did two tours of the south Wales valleys. We'd have a couple of pints after, and then we'd all jump into the back of the transit van and start singing for our own amusement.

There was a community theatre in Deptford asking if I could get the boys to sing in a benefit concert. We debated what we were going to call ourselves. Because of our involvement in the 1972 and 1974 miners' strike up in Yorkshire we decided to call ourselves The Flying

Pickets. We did a show celebrating the Peasants Revolt with Tony Benn and after did a lot of benefits (as a kind of a hobby) until The Flying Pickets really took off. We knew that there was a demand for The Flying Pickets, you're talking now about the early years of Thatcherism, and

We decided to call ourselves *The Flying Pickets*

there was an obvious movement against her, you know, 'against the bitch!'. So we did lots of gigs – we did a cabaret circuit with people like Alexei Sayle, Ben Elton, Rick Mayall, bald Keith Allen – all that gang; and that was incredibly successful. We ended up doing tours, very large tours, with people like Dionne Warwick and then we had the number one hit record, *Only You*. We had all been involved in political theatre for years and then to suddenly find ourselves on *Top of the Pops*, thinking "***** hell, whose idea was this boys?"

ohnom i Orsaf B er Drax, seyll ar y llinell biced yno, a chael sylw cenedlaethol. Doedd Virgin, ein cwmni recordio, ddim yn hapus iawn, ac yn gwrthod gadael i ni fynd i bicedu. Felly, fe ddywedon ni "Beth chi'n mynd i wneud 'te, trefnu llinell biced yng ngorsaf Kings Cross i'n rhwystro ni thag dal y trêñ i Sir Efrog?". Yna, cafodd ein hail sengl ei rhyddhau, sef *When You're Young and in Love*. Ges i'n synnu gyda'r ymateb pan aethon ni ar y teledu i roi cyhoeddusrwydd i'r gân, a dweud ein bod ni'n cefnogi'r glowyr. Diawch erioed, roedd W.H. Smiths yn gwrthod gwerthu'r albwm oherwydd ein cysylltiad â'r 'hwliganiaid' hyn. Byddai pobl fel Henry Kelly a Harry Carpenter yn ein gwawdio ni ar y teledu. Efallai ei bod wedi gwneud drwg i'n gyrfaoedd ni, ond nid dyna'r pwyt. Grŵp gwleidyddol oedd ni, ac roedd yn rhaid i ni ddilyn y trywydd hwnnw.

Roeddwn i'n byw yn ne-ddwyrain Llundain ar y pryd, ac un noson, roeddwn i'n cerdded o amgylch y Cutty Sark yn Greenwich pan gwrddais iâ rhoi a fois pwll y Betws, Rhydaman. Roedden nhw'n chwilio am rywle i aros, felly fe ➤

When the miners went on strike, I was immediately on the phone to the NUM offices saying "What do you want us to do?" So three of us ended up going up to Drax Power Station and standing on the picket line there and it got national coverage. The record company, Virgin, weren't happy with us and told us we couldn't go. So we said "What you going to do then, have a picket line at Kings Cross Station to stop us jumping on the train to Yorkshire?" Then the second single came out called *When You're Young and in Love*. I was amazed at the reactions when we went on television promoting the single and said that we supported the miners. God, WH Smiths wouldn't stock the album because of our association with 'thuggery'. People like Henry Kelly and Harry Carpenter would make jibes at us on television. I suppose career-wise it was probably detrimental. But that wasn't the point, we were political animals and we had to go the way we did.

I lived in south-east London at the time and I was walking around The Cutty Sark in Greenwich one night and met some boys from Betws Pit, Ammanford. ➤

FE WNAETHON NI BOPETH POSIBL

► rois i allwedd y fflat iddyn nhw. Buon nhw'n defnyddio'r fflat wedyn bob tro ddaethon nhw draw i gasglu arian. Dwi'n credu eu bod nhw wedi cael eu synnu gan y croeso gawson nhw yn ne-ddwyrain Llundain. Doedd dim angen iddyn nhw brynu peint mewn sawl tafarn. Fe wnaethon ni gig i'r NUM yng Nghaint, budd-gyngerdd yn yr Albert Hall gyda Dennis Skinner, Alexei Sayle a band reggae o'r enw Azwad – fe wnaethon ni bopeth posibl i gefnogi'r glowyr.

Roedden nhw'n trefnu raffl er budd yr NUM yng Nglynebwya, a gofynnwyd i mi gyfrannu rhywbeth. "Iawn", atebais i, "fe gewch chi un o'r cotiau gwaith gyda'r geiriau 'The Flying Pickets' ar y cefn". Roeddwn i'n perfformio mewn sioc yn Birmingham ar y pryd, ac roedd rhaid i mi sicrhau bod y gôt 'ma'n cyrraedd Glynebwya rhywsut. Ges i lifft i lawr – a dwi erioed wedi cyrraedd yno mor gyflym! Roedden ni newydd ryddhau record lwyddiannus, ac roeddwn i'n eithaf amlwg gyda'r locsys mawr 'na! Dyna lle'r oeddwn i'n sefyll ar ochr y ffordd, pan stopiodd rhyw gar mwya' sydyn â'r gyrrwr yn dweud "ff***n 'el mêt, dwi newydd glywed ti ar y radio, ble ti'n mynd?" ac atebais i "Dwi'n mynd â chôt gwaith i Lynebwya" ac fe es i yno a nôl mewn pedair awr – dim ond er mwyn mynd â



Brian Hibbard yn Big Pit, 2008
Brian Hibbard at Big Pit in 2008

chôt waith i godi arian ar gyfer y glowyr!

Dwi'n credu bod Thatcher wedi cynllunio'r gwrthdaro gyda Scargill ac wedi 'milwreiddio' yr heddlu ym

mlynnyddoedd cynnar ei 'theyrnasiad'. Fe gawson nhw flas arni yn ystod terfysgoedd Brixton a Handsworth ym 1981. Dwi'n cofio'r bechgyn yn mynd lan i Orgreave a chael eu llorio gan drais yr heddlu yn erbyn glowyr diarfog oedd yn brwydro dros eu swyddi. Dwi'n credu bod Thatcher yn benderfynol o sicrhau na fyddai beth ddigwyddodd i lywodraeth Heath ym 1974 yn digwydd eto. Pan ddywedodd hi nad oes y fath beth â chymdeithas, beth roedd hi'n ei olygu mewn gwirionedd oedd nad oedd y fath beth â chymunedau dosbarth gwaith.

Wrth drechu'r glowyr, cafodd mudiad undebau llafur Prydain ei chwalu'n rhacs hefyd – ac fe lwyddodd Thatcher i greu cenhedlaeth hunanol. Hi greodd ddemocratiaeth o bobl oedd yn berchen ar eu cartrefi eu hunain, a gwerthu tai cyngor. Sut ar wyneb y ddaear oedd disgwyl i blant tai cyngor oedd yn gwneud gwaith bôn braich, allu fforddio prynu t? Roeddwn i'n gweithio yn Llundain, ac yn gweld pobl yn slochian poteli siampêr wrth aros am y bws nos yn Sgwâr Trafalgar. Dyma'r genhedlaeth "fi, fy arian i, a thwll eich tinau chi". Roeddwn i'n eu casáu nhw bryd hynny, ac yn dal i wneud heddiw.

Brian Hibbard, Caerdydd

WE DID WHAT WE COULD

► They were looking for somewhere to stay so we gave them the key to the flat. They used to use it as a base to come up collecting. I think that they were surprised by the reception they got in south-east London as they were welcomed with open arms. In a lot of the pubs, they didn't have to buy a pint. We did gigs for the NUM in Kent, we did a benefit in the Albert Hall with Dennis Skinner, Alexei Sayle and a reggae band called Azwad – we did what we could to support the miners.

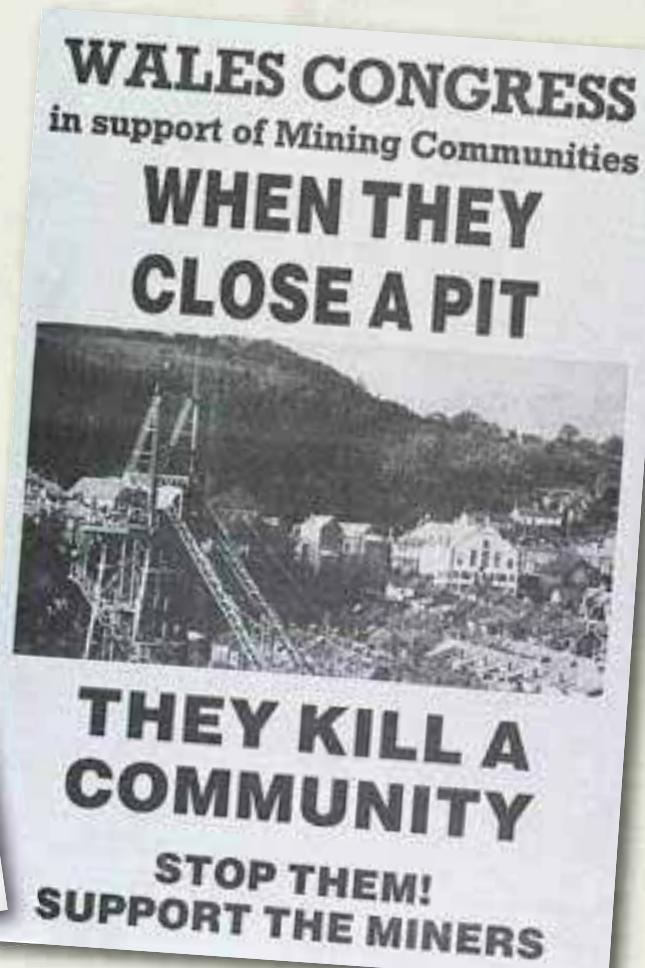
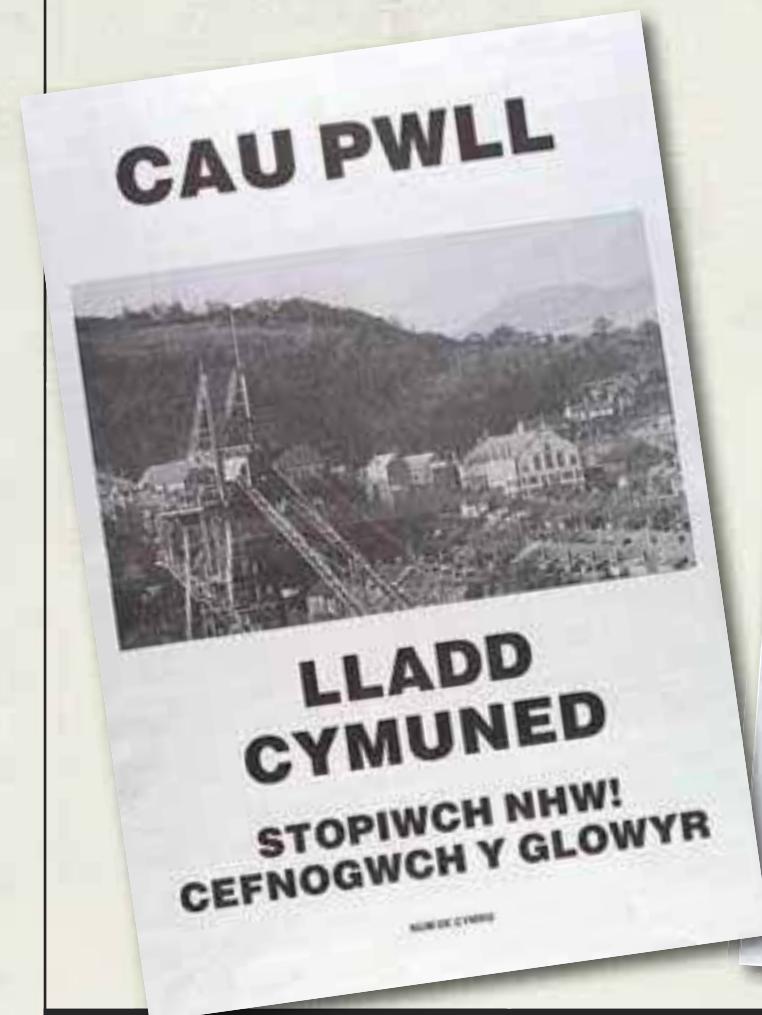
They were organizing a raffle for the NUM in Ebbw Vale, so they asked me if there was anything I could raffle. I said "Yes, you can have one of the donkey jackets with 'The Flying Pickets' on the back". I was in Birmingham at the time doing a show and I had to get this donkey jacket down to Ebbw Vale. I hitched down – and I've never got there so quickly! We'd had the hit record and I was

quite distinctive with the side burns and I was standing beside the road and all of a sudden this car comes to a halt and the driver says, "***** hell mate, I just had you on the radio, where you going?" I said "I'm taking a donkey jacket down to Ebbw Vale" and I got to Ebbw Vale and back in about four hours – just to drop a donkey jacket to raise money for the miners!

I think that Thatcher engineered the confrontation with Scargill and 'militarised' the police force throughout the early part of her 'reign'. They practiced in the Brixton and Handsworth riots of 1981. I remember those boys going up to Orgreave and being just blown away by the violence of the police against unarmed miners just fighting for their jobs. I think that Thatcher was determined that what happened to the Heath Government in 1974 was never going to happen again. When she said that there is no such thing

Brian Hibbard, Cardiff

CAU PWLL LLADD CYMUNED



WHEN THEY CLOSE A PIT THEY KILL A COMMUNITY

CAU PWLL LLADD CYMUNED

Ar ddiwrnod galw'r streic, daeth fy ngŵr, John, adref o'i waith ym Mhwll y Twr a dweud, "Y'n ni mas. Ond wy'n dweud'tho ti nawr, nage streic 'nôl ddydd Llun fydd hi'r tro 'ma, mae hon am fod yn un hir". Ond doedd dim syniad gyda ni pa mor galed oedd Thatcher am fod ar y glowyr.

O fewn mis, fe ddechreuan ni gasglu arian ar gyfer y parseli bwyd. Roedden ni am fynd ar yr orymdaith fawr yn Llundain, ond doedd ein gwyr ni ddim yn fodlon. Roedd rhaid i ni wthio'n ffordd ar y bws ac i'r orymdaith. O hynn ymlaen, roeddwn i eisiau mynd i bicedu a dynion wedi methu, sef mynd i mewn i'r chael cyfle i ddweud ein dweud. Gofynnwyd i mi siarad mewn cyfarfod yn Neuadd y Brangwyn, Abertawe, a dyna ddechrau'r cyfan.

Bues i'n annerch pobl ac yn casglu arian ar gyfer y glowyr ar hyd a lled y wlad. Mae hyn yn swnio braidd yn od, ond roedden ni'n gorffod brwydro'n ffordd drwy'r llinellau piced i ddechrau – ac nid yn erbyn yr heddlu chwaith! Ond pan welodd y dynion ni yno, fe ddechreuan nhw ein derbyn ni. Roedden ni'n sefyll ochr yn ochr â'n dynion yn hytrach na'r tu ôl iddyn nhw. Roedd hi'n gyffrous dros ben, ac erbyn hyn, roedd menywod yn casglu ar gyfer parseli bwyd, yn siarad ar Iwyfannau, yn mynychu raliâu, picedu. Ffurfiwyd grŵp 'Women against Pit Closures'. Hwn oedd un o'r grwpiau merched mwyaf erioed. Bydda i'n falch am byth mai fi oedd un o'r rhai cyntaf a ddechreuodd y grŵp yn y de.

Ar ôl i ni ffurfio Grŵp y Menywod, cynhaliwyd cyfarfod yn Aberaman. Doedd y glowyr ddim am i ni wneud dim mwy na chasglu a dosbarthu'r bwyd! Ond roedden ni eisiau picedu, a chawson ni fws i gludo'r menywod. Anghofia'i fyth mo'r diwrnod hwennw, roedden ni mor browd o'n bws! Aethon ni o bentref i bentref, i Aberaman, Aberpennar – yn codi menywod o bob man. Ymlaen i Bort Talbot, drwy'r giatiau mawr 'na, gweld yr heddlu'n edrych arnon ni a meddwl "Grêt, dy'n nhw ddim yn stopio'r bws". Roedden ni wedi llwyddo ble'r oedd y dynion wedi methu, sef mynd i mewn i'r

Roedd hi'n flwyddyn anodd, a'r blynnyddoedd wedyn yn anoddach fyth

gwaith dur! Ond yn yr amlosgfa oedden ni mewn gwirionedd – aethon ni drwy'r giatiau anghywir! Gyrhaeddon ni'r llinell biced yn y pen-draw, a'r bois yn gweiddi'n galonogol arnon ni. O'r diwrnod hwennw ymlaen, cafodd menywod fynd ar y bws picedu.

Doedd yr heddlu ddim yn trin y menywod dim gwahanol i'r dynion. Bydden nhw'n dal dynraig o bapurau pumpunt i fyny ac yn dweud "Dere 'ma Cariad, ti eisiau un o'r rhain?" neu "Diolch i dy wr am fy ngwyliau i" neu "Wy'di llwyddo i dalu'r morgais i gyd". Fel tân gron. Roedd hi'n frawychus ym Mhort Talbot gyda'r holl bobl oedd yno

– glowyr a heddlu. Daeth criw o menywod Comin Greenham aton ni. Roedden nhw'n hen lawiau ar rwystro'r traffig trwy eistedd ar y ffordd. Doedd yr heddlu ddim yn becso amdanon ni, roedd ganddyn nhw fwy o ddiddordeb mewn gwneud enw iddyn nhw'u hunain trwy arrestio un o menywod Greenham.

Fe gawson ni lawer o gymorth gan bobl, yn enwedig SOGAT, undeb yr argraffwyr. Aethon nhw ati i drefnu parti Nadolig, ac mae'n od dweud hyn, ond dyma un o'r partion Nadolig gorau gafodd plant yr ardal erioed. Cawson nhw fwy o bethau'r flwyddyn honno na fydden nhw erioed wedi'i gael ar gyflog glöwr. Roedd cwmniau'n anfon 200 o flwyddylfrau Nadolig a llyfrau a gemau o bob math, yn ogystal â bocsys o fisgedi a phethau da eraill.

Roedd hi'n flwyddyn anodd, a'r blynnyddoedd wedyn yn anoddach fyth. Roedd Thatcher wedi'i gwneud hi go iawn. Pan lwyddodd hi i chwalu'r glowyr, fe chwaloedd yr undebau hefyd, oherwydd nid mater glo oedd hi go iawn ond mater o chwalu'r undebau'n deilchion. Fe dalodd y cymunedau'n ddrud iawn am hynn. Wrth gau pwll, mae cymuned gyfan yn cau. Dim ond pentref noswylio sydd yma bellach, lle mae pobl yn byw ac yn cymudo i'w gwaith. Dwi ddim yn credu y gwelwn ni'r un fath o ymrwymiad byth eto, lle'r oedd pawb yn dod ynghyd i sefyll yn erbyn annhegwyd y byd.

Ann Jones, Hirwaun



WHEN THEY CLOSE A PIT THEY KILL A COMMUNITY

The day that the strike was called, my husband John came home from work in Tower Colliery and said "We're out. But I'm telling you now, this isn't going to be a 'back in work Monday' strike, this is going to be a long one". But we didn't know just how hard Thatcher was going to be with the miners.

Within a month we started to collect for the food parcels. At that time there was going to be a big march in London and we wanted to go on it but the men wouldn't let us. So we forcibly pushed ourselves onto the bus and we went on the march. After this I really wanted to go picketing and put our case forward. There was a meeting in the Brangwyn Hall in Swansea and I was asked to make a speech there, and that was the start of it.

I went all over the country speaking and collecting for the miners. It sounds daft but we had to fight our way on to the picket lines at first – and it wasn't only the police against us! But when the men saw us there they started to accept us. We weren't just behind our men, we were standing beside them. It was phenomenal, by this time women were collecting for food parcels, speaking on platforms, going on rallies, picketing. 'Women against Pit Closures' was formed. It was one of the biggest ever women's groups. I will always be proud that I was one of the first who started it in south Wales.

After we formed the Women's Group, we held a meeting in Aberaman. We were still at the stage where the min-

ers didn't want us except to collect the food and give it out! But we wanted to go picketing and we had a bus donated for the women to go. I'll never forget that day because we were so proud of our bus! We went from the village, went to Aberaman, Mountain Ash – picked the women up from all over. Got to Port Talbot, go in through these big gates, and there are police looking at us, and I thought this is great they're not stopping our bus, we did what the men couldn't do, we'd got into the steelworks! We were actually in the crematorium – we'd gone in through the wrong gates! Well we eventually got to the

It was a hard year and the years that followed were harder

picket line and the boys were all cheering and from that day on the women were allowed on the picket bus.

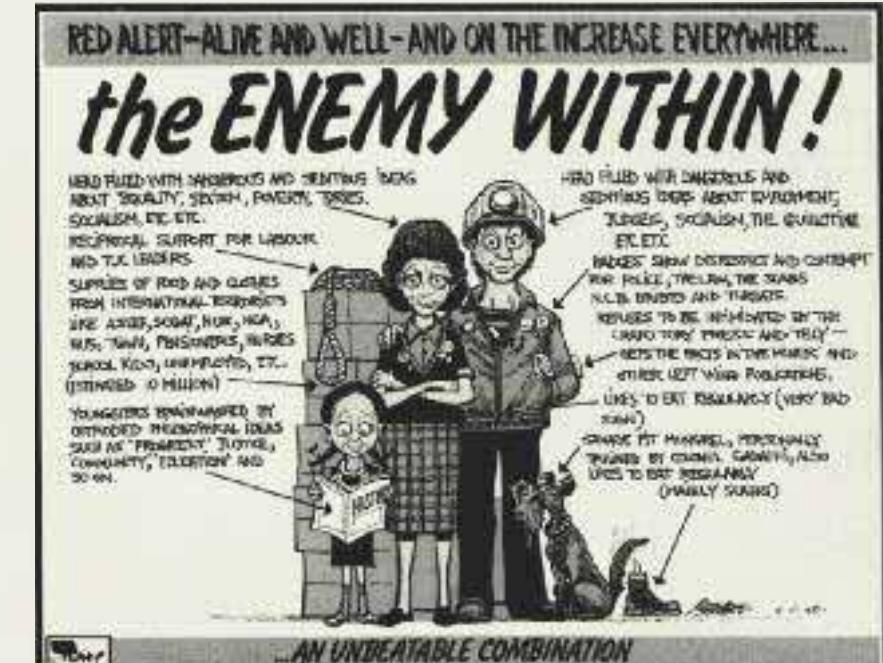
The police didn't treat the women any different from the men, they would hold up five pound notes and say "Come behind here love, do you want one of these fivers?" or "Thank your husband for my holiday" or "I've paid my mortgage off." It was constant. It was really frightening at Port Talbot because there were masses down there – miners and police. A group of women from Greenham Common came down. These women knew how to block a road, they lock and

they sit. The police weren't interested in us, they just made a beeline for them; they wanted to make their name arresting Greenham women.

We had a lot of help from people, especially the printers' union SOGAT. They provided a party here at Christmas time which, I know sounds odd, was probably the best Christmas some of the children ever had. They had more that year than they would have ever had on a miner's wage. There were companies sending 200 Christmas annuals down and every sort of book or game you could think of as well as boxes of biscuits and other luxuries.

It was a hard year and the years that followed were harder. Thatcher really did her job. When Thatcher smashed the miners, she smashed the unions, because it was never about coal, it was about breaking the unions and the communities paid a high price for it. When you close a pit you close a community and this is now a dormitory village, people just live here and commute. I honestly don't think that there will ever again be that kind of commitment to get together and stand up against what is wrong in this world.

Ann Jones, Hirwaun





Baneri'r NUM ym Mlaenau Ffestiniog, 1984

NUM banners in Blaenau Ffestiniog, 1984 Dorothea Heath



xxx

Marching back to work, 1985

YN GAETH I'R GWIRIONEDD

► o gael eu corddi a'u cythrudo. Ond trwy lwc a synnwr cyffredin, ni chafwyd terfysgoedd tebyg i'r rhai a welwyd mewn rhai rhannau o Loegr.

Serch hynny, cafodd gyrrwr tacsi oedd yn cludo glöwr i bwll Ynysowen ei ladd ar ôl i streicwyr daflu darn o goncrit at ei gar. Er ei bod yn ddigwyddiad unigol, roedd yn drasig dros ben, ac yn dangos pa mor beryglus o eithafol oedd pethau'n dechrau mynd yn y de. Roedd pobl yn ystyried gwneud pethau gwallgof na fyddai wedi croesi eu meddyliau dan amgylchiadau arferol. Dwi'n credu bod llawer o drafodaethau'n cael eu cynnal yn y cefndir, a llwyddwyd i osgoi'r math o helyntion a welwyd mewn lleoedd eraill. Roedd gan y ddwy ochr barch mawr at Philip Weekes, cyfarwyddwr yr NCB yn y de. Doedd e'n bendant ddim byd tebyg

i gadeirydd yr NCB Ian McGregor – hen ymyrrwr Americanaid. Dwi'n credu bod dylanwad Philip Weekes yn allweddol wrth atal terfysgoedd yn yr ardal.

Cafodd colli'r streic effaith anferthol. Mae'n anodd mesur maint y golled a'r effaith yn union, ond cofiwch mai'r diwydiant glo oedd diwydiant cymunedol mawr olaf Cymru. Roedd gennych chi'r elfen ddiwylliannol a chymdeithasol gyda sefydliad y glowyr, a'r elfen weleidyddol yn y ffaith fod gan yr NUM dylanwad mawr ar y Blaid Lafur. Bu colli'r streic yn ergyd farwol i'r undebau llafur fel yr oeddyn. Mae Thatcher yn enwog am ddweud nad oes y fath beth â chymdeithas, a doedd hi'n bendant ddim yn gweld unrhyw bwrpas i undebaeth lafur. Efallai nad oedd hi'n

gweld unrhyw bwrpas i'r Siartwyr a roddodd ddemocratiaeth etholedig i ni chwaith. Fe gollais i bob parch ati wedyn.

Mae cymunedau'r cymoedd wedi newid ers y streic. Trideg mlynedd yn ôl, rodden ni'n nabod y rhan fwyaf o'n cymdogion. Heddiw, rydyn ni'n lwcus os ydyn ni'n nabod deg y cant ohonyn nhw. Rydyn ni'n gweithio mewn lleoedd gwahanol, yn addoli mewn lleoedd gwahanol, yn teithio i'r gwaith mewn bocys bach ac wedi colli llawer o'r ysbryd cymunedol oedd gennym bryd hynny. Dim ond gobeithio y bydd rhai o nodweddion gorau Cymru fy ieuencnid yn dychwelyd eto.

Wayne Nowaczyk, Trecelyn

A SLAVE TO THE TRUTH

► petrol! There were occasions when the strikers would hit back at the working miners and vice versa. Policemen drafted in from England would wave £50 notes at miners who were on the breadline and in those circumstances emotions are going to over-run. It was only by good fortune and common sense that we didn't see the violence they saw in some parts of England.

In spite of this, it was here that some strikers threw a piece of concrete on to a taxi taking a working miner to Merthyr Vale colliery and killed the driver. This was a very tragic, but isolated incident, which showed just how near the edge things were getting in south Wales. There were crazy ideas coming from people who would never have dreamed of such things in normal circumstances. I think there was a lot of discussion going on behind the scenes which prevented the type of violence seen in other coalfields. Philip Weekes, the director of the NCB in south Wales, was well respected by both sides. He certainly wasn't like the NCB chairman Ian McGregor – an American interloper. I think that his influence played a big part in the general lack of violence in this area.

The loss of the strike had a massive effect. It's difficult to quantify really but you must bear in mind that coal mining was the last great communal industry in Wales. It had a cultural and social aspect

in the miners' institutes, an industrial aspect in the fact that men had to work together as a team and also a political aspect in that the NUM had a great influence within the Labour Party. Further to that it was the death blow to trade unionism as we knew it. Margaret Thatcher once famously said that there was no such thing as society and she definitely didn't see the point of trade unionism. Well she probably didn't see the point in Chartism which gave us our elected democracy either. At that point I lost all respect for her.

Our valley communities have changed since the strike. Thirty years ago we would have known most of our neighbours. Now we probably know less than 10 per cent of them. We all work in different places, we all worship in different places, we travel to work in our little boxes and we have lost much of the sense of community we had then. I only hope that one day some of the good elements of the Wales I knew as a young man will return.

Wayne Nowaczyk, Newbridge



'I'd like to see someone ask me the bloody time now.'

GWALLGORWYDD ECONOMAIDD

Roeddwn i'n aelod seneddol dros etholaeth Iofaol Chesterfield ar y pryd. Cefais fy ethol ar ddiwrnod cynta'r streic, a chefais 299 o gyfarfodydd ar ran y glowyr. Rwy'n credu bod Thatcher wedi trin y glowyr yn warthus. Pobl grefftus yw'r glowyr sy'n gwneud gwaith peryglus dros ben. Mae'r glöwr yn gymeriad diddorol. Ewch i Lundain, ac mae llawer o bobl yn y Ddinas yn elwa ar fod yn gyfrwysach na'u cymydog, ond os ydych chi'n löwr a bod ffrwydrad nwy neu gwypym yn y pwll, rhaid i chi ddibynnu'n llwyr ar y dyn agosaf atoch chi, ac mae hynny'n meithrin teimlad o frawdgarwch.

Cyfeiriodd Thatcher atyn nhw fel y gelyn mewnol. Mae'r ffaith ei bod wedi dweud hynny am y bobl a adeiladodd y wlad, gyda threnau a llongau wedi'u gyrru gan lo, yn anhygoel! Fe drodd hi'n

erbyn y glowyr am ei bod hi eisau cael gwared ar yr undebau llafur. A'r pethau ddywedon nhw! Dywedon nhw fod Arthur Scargill yn defnyddio cronfeydd y

Rwy'n credu bod Thatcher wedi trin y glowyr yn warthus

glowyr i dalu ei forgais – lol botes! Un Calan Mai, roeddwn i gydag e yn Derby pan neidiodd dyn ar y llwyfan a'i daro yn ei stumog â bar dur. Roedden nhw'n dweud mai "un o'r glowyr" oedd e, ond celwydd noeth oedd hynny – plision wedi ymddeol oedd e. Roedden ni yng nghanol tyra fawr, braidd yn swnllyd, felly fe gododd ei law, a dyma'r Sun yn dweud mai cyfarchiad Natsiadd oedd e!

Beth bynnag, collodd y glowyr eu gwaith. Heddiw, mae gwerth 300 mlynedd o lo dan ein traed, heb unrhyw lowyr i'w gloddio, ac rydyn ni'n rhifela dros gyflenwadau ynni. Mae costau a gwerth glo mor uchel fel y byddai pob talp ohono'n gwneud synnwyr economaidd. Dwi'n credu bod criw gwych o bobl wedi'u trin mor warthus, a bod hyn yn wallgorwyd economaidd. A dwi'n gandryll ei bod hi wedi cyfeirio atyn nhw fel 'y gelyn mewnol'. Roedd hynny'n beth ofnadwy i'w ddweud ac wedi fy nghorddi i. Un o'r pethau gorau ddigwyddodd i mi erioed oedd cael fy ngwneud yn aelod anrhyydeddus o'r NUM. Fy rhif aelodaeth yw 001 – nawr, does dim modd rhagori ar hynny os e!

Tony Benn

ECONOMIC INSANITY

I was a member of parliament for Chesterfield, which was a mining constituency. I was elected there the day the miners' strike began and I did 299 meetings for the miners. I think that what Thatcher did to the miners was criminal, that's my opinion. Miners are highly skilled people doing extremely dangerous work. The thing about a miner is interesting, many people in the City of London make profits by outsmarting their neighbour, but if you're a miner and there's a roof fall, gas or an explosion, you have to rely 100 per cent on the guy next to you and it breeds solidarity in the mining industry.

Thatcher said that they were the enemy within. To say that about people who built the country with coal fired trains and ships – incredible! She turned

on the miners because she wanted to break the trade union movement. And what they said! They said that Arthur Scargill was using the miners' funds to fund his mortgage – a bloody lie! I was with him in Derby on May Day when a guy

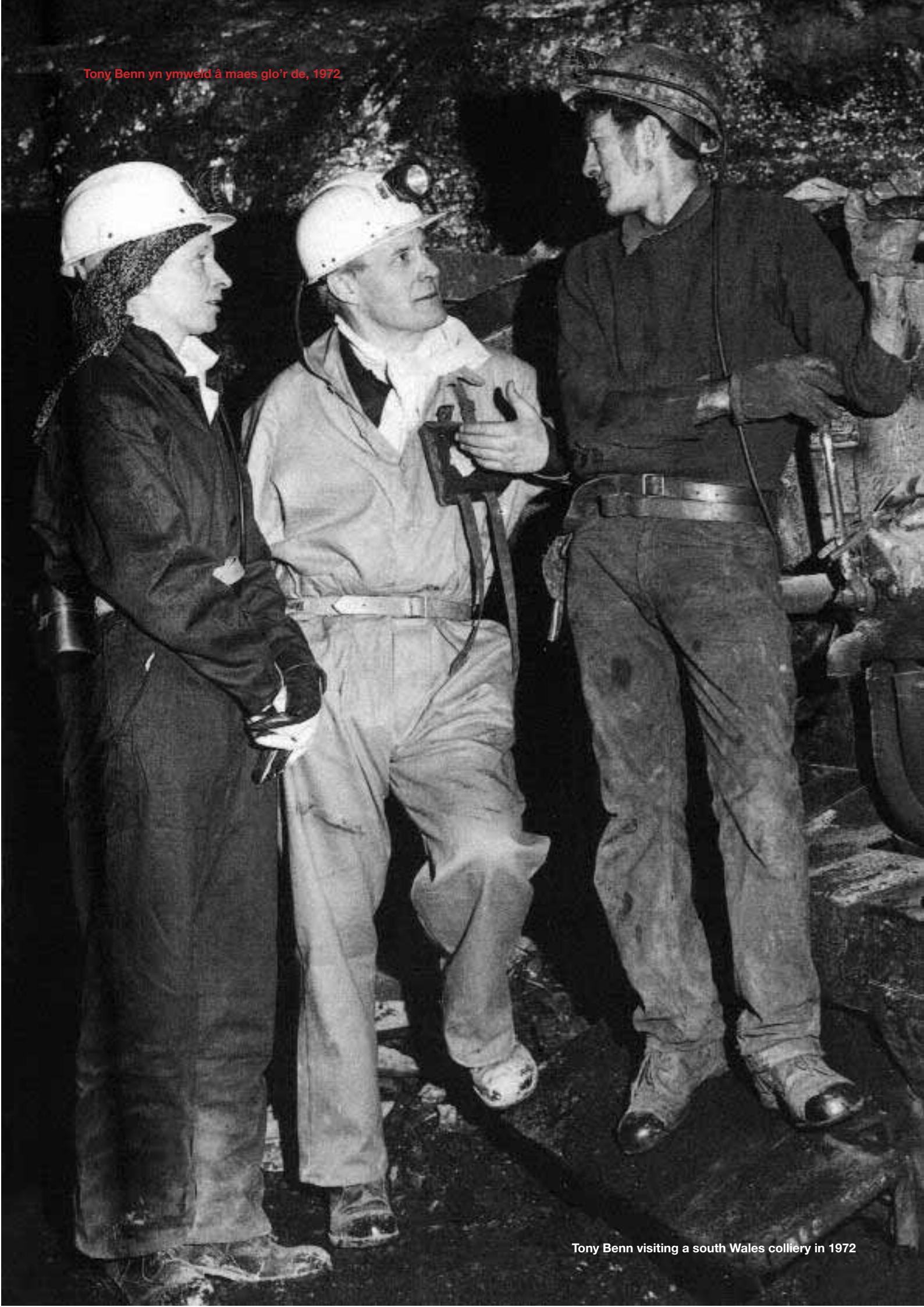
I think that what Thatcher did to the miners was criminal

jumped up on the platform and struck him in the stomach with a steel bar. They said it was a 'working miner', it was a bloody lie – it was a retired policeman. We were in a big crowd and it was a bit loud so he put his hand up and *The Sun* said it was a Nazi salute!

Anyway, the miners were sacked. We now have 300 years of coal under our territory, we have no miners to dig it and we're having wars about energy. The cost of coal, the value of coal, is so high that every bit of coal would be economic. So I think that it was not only a criminal treatment of a wonderful group of people but also an economic insanity. To add to it all, calling them the 'enemy within', it really chewed me up about that, I'm afraid. It was a terrible thing to have done and one of the proudest things to have ever happened to me was that I was made an honorary member of the NUM and my honorary membership number is 001 – you can't get much better than that!

Tony Benn

Tony Benn yn ymweld â maes glo'r de, 1972



Tony Benn visiting a south Wales colliery in 1972

MYND YN GROES I'R UNDEB? BYTH!

Ar y dydd Sadwrn, roedd Pwll y Cwm wedi pleidleisio yn erbyn y streic, ond erbyn dydd Llun, roedden ni wedi cael ein cau allan gan bicedwyr o Bwll y Maerdy. Fe wnes i bleidleisio o blaidd streicio, ond roedd e'n benderfyniad anodd o feddwl sut fydden ni'n ymdopi. Roedden ni eisoes wedi bod yn gwahardd goramser ers tri mis, ac roedd pethau'n galed. Fe gadwes i'n brysur gydol y streic, yn coginio, smwddio, golchi llestri, mynd mas i gerdded a phicedu rhywfaint! Roedd y dyletswyddau picedu'n cael eu trefnu drwy ganolfan streic y Cwm yn y Neuadd Les, ac roeddwn i'n mynd yno'n rheolaidd i gael y newydion diweddaraf. Roeddwn i'n un o dîm o bedwar oedd yn picedu yng Ngwaith Sment Aberddawan a Phwerdy Aberddawan. Es i ddim i Nottingham na Derby, felly welais i mo'r helyntion mawr a ddangoswyd ar y teledu. Er hynny, fe es i lobio Cynhadledd y Blaid Lafur yn Brighton. Roedd hynny rhyw wythnos cyn i'r bom ffrwydro yng nghynhadledd y Ceidwadwyr yno. Roedd y glowyr dan amheuaeth i ddechrau, ond dwi'n cofio un o'r bois yn dweud, "Os taw ni oedd e, fydden ni wedi'i chael hi", sef Thatcher.

Roedd pethau'n eithaf tawel ymhlið picedwyr Aberddawan. Yn y dechrau, byddai rhai o'r gyrwyr y lorïau'n stopio i wrando ar ein dadleuon ni, ond roedd y rhan fwyaf yn gyrru'n syth heibio.

Weithiau, byddeni'n targeduar lorïau a byddai llawer o bicedwyr yn cyrraedd i geisio cau'r ffordd. Byddeni'n gwthio yn erbyn yr heddlu, ambell un yn cael ei arrestio, a phopeth yn ôl i drefn y diwrnod wedyn. Er mwyn lladd amser, roedden ni'n casglu coed ar gyfer y drwm tân, yn toddi plwm sgrap i wneud pwysau pysgota ac yn mynd i gerdded yn ein tro.

Nos Wener oedd yr amser gorau, achos roedd un o'r staff diogelwch yn Aberddawan yn dod â chaniau cwrw i ni. Roedd e'n gyn-aelod o'r Gwarchodlu Cymreig ond yn dipyn o gomiwnydd, a byddai hyd yn oed yn gyrru draw gyda chaniau cwrw i ni os nad oedd e ar



**Chwith: Pwll y Cwm ym Mhwerdy Aberddawan – George yw'r un ar y dde Canol: Lorïau ar y ffordd i Bwerdy Aberddawan.
De: Glan Jones, picedwr ym Mhwll y Cwm**

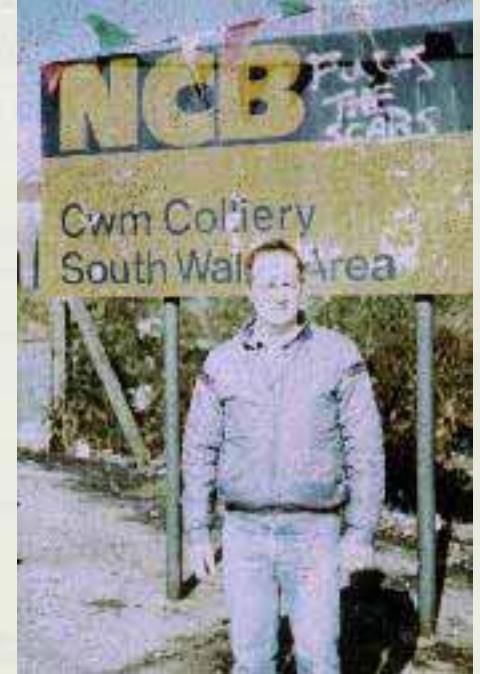
pŵr dab. Ond gan ei fod e'n ddigon da i redeg o flaen y car, wnaethon ni ddim oedd bwyd, hyd yn oed os oedd e braidd yn galed – fel bwyta graean! Roedden ni'n chwarae gwyddbwyl i basio'r amser,

Yn y dechrau, byddai rhai o'r gyrwyr y lorïau'n stopio i wrando ar ein dadleuon ni, ond roedd y rhan fwyaf yn gyrru'n syth heibio

ac yn ceisio dal un o'r cannoedd o gwningod oedd ar hyd y lle wrth fynd am dro, ond yn ofer. Un diwrnod, fe yr onni dros ffeasant ar y ffordd adref. Es i â fe gyda fi, ei bluo a'i goginio, ac fe gawson ni frechdanau ffeasant y diwrnod wedyn – ond dwi'n meddwl eich bod chi i fod i'w hongian nhw am sbel yn gyntaf! Roedd e'n blasu'n iawn, er ychydig yn gresniog oherwydd yr holl esgyrn oedd wedi torri,

Dechreuodd pethau boethi erbyn yr hydref wrth i rai o'r 'scabs' ddychwelyd i weithio yn y de. Roedd si ar led fod rhai am ddychwelyd i Bwll y Cwm, ac fe benderfynon ni geisio'u rhwystro nhw. Er mwyn cau'r ffordd, fe wnaethon ni 'fenthyg' lori o'r gwaith golosg, a ➤

I WOULD NEVER GO AGAINST MY UNION



**Left: Cwm Colliery pickets at Aberthaw Power Station – George is on the right
Centre: Lorries heading for Aberthaw Power Station
Right: Glan Jones, Cwm Colliery picket**

Cwm Colliery initially voted against strike action on the Saturday but we were picketed out by Maerdy Colliery men on the Monday morning. Personally, I had voted for the strike but it was a difficult decision as I wondered how we were going to manage. We had already been on a three-month overtime ban and times were hard. I kept busy during the strike, I did the cooking, ironing, dishes, went out walking and I also did a bit of picketing! Picketing duty was arranged through the Cwm strike centre in the Welfare Hall and I'd call in there regularly to find out any news. I was part of a four-man team that picketed the Aberthaw Cement Works and Aberthaw Power Station. I never went to Nottingham or Derby so didn't see a lot of the violence that they showed on the TV. I did, however, go to lobby the Labour Party Conference in Brighton. That was a week or so before the bomb exploded during the Tory Party Conference there. They initially thought that it was the miners who had done it, but I remember one of the boys saying "If it had been us we would have got her", meaning Thatcher.

In the beginning, some of the lorry drivers would stop to hear our arguments but mostly they just drove past us

the time we used to collect wood for the brazier, melt scrap lead to make fishing weights and take it in turns to go for a walk. The best night was Friday when one of the security men at Aberthaw used to bring us cans of beer. He was ex-Welsh Guards but a bit of a communist, even when he wasn't on duty he used to drive over to give us our cans. Other people

used to stop and give us pies and pasties, one lorry driver gave us a bottle of whisky and we had a wonderful afternoon! During the summer we 'borrowed' a load of sweet corn from a farmer's field. I think that it was actually grown as cattle fodder but it was food even if it was a bit hard – like eating ball bearings! We played chess to pass the time. When we went off walking we tried to catch rabbits, there were hundreds about, but we never actually managed to catch one. However, we ran over a pheasant going home in the car one day. I took him home, plucked and cooked him and we had pheasant sandwiches the following day, although I think that you're supposed to let them hang a bit first! It tasted all right though, except it was a bit crunchy because of all the broken bones. Anyway, as he was good enough to run in front of the car, we didn't waste any of him.

We had help from a lot people. My ➤

MYND YN GROES I'R UNDEB? BYTH!

► llwyddo i yrru i ffwrdd tra'r oedd y porthor yn cysgu'n sount! Roedd un o fois yr undeb yn sefyll ar ei ben ei hun ar waelod ffordd y Cwm, ac yn meddwl "Sneb 'ma, 'chan, dim ond fi a'r scabs sy'n dod miwn!" Yna, fe glywodd s n bang mawr wrth i deiars y lori ollwng gwynt. Edrychodd i fyny'r ffordd, a gweld lori ar draws yr hewl a phopeth yn wenfflam – ac meddai'n falch "Da iawn chi bois!" Ond doedd dim scabs mewn gwirionedd, yr heddlu oedd yno'n ymarfer ar gyfer yr hyn oedd i ddod. Pan ddaeth y gweithwyr i mewn yr wythnos wedyn, roedd y lle dan ei sang o heddlu – roedd hi'n amhosib mynd yn agos at y fynedfa. Roedd hi'n draed moch yno, gyda'n bois ni y tu ôl i'r cloddiau gyda cherrig ac ati, a'r heddlu ar eu holau. Fe ges i' nghwrs reit dros y clawdd.

Pan ddechreuodd y scabs ddychwelyd i'r Cwm, bydden ni'n mynd yno ben bore i weiddi arnyn nhw. Ges i helynt wrth wneud hynny. Un bore, dyma dacs i'r

I WOULD NEVER GO AGAINST MY UNION

► mother was very good and we had good neighbours especially Reverend Price next door. The NUM provided weekly food parcels which mainly consisted of tinned foods (some with no labels – they were always interesting!), loaves of bread and potatoes. I used to scavenge on the tip and come back with interesting things. I got a fish tank, a Great Western Railway station bench, and lots of other stuff; I used to do it up, paint it, just to have something to do. I also used to make walking sticks.

By the autumn things had hotted up when some scabs started to go back in south Wales. We had heard rumours that some were going to go back in Cwm and decided to try and stop them. We 'borrowed' a lorry from the coke works to block the road and got it out of the works because the man watching the gate was fast asleep. One of the union men was down the bottom of the Cwm road on his own, saying to himself "There's nobody here mun, there's only me and the scabs are coming in!" Then he heard a bang as the lorry tyres were let down and looked up the road and saw the lorry across it and the road going up in flames – he flushed with pride and



scabs yn stopio i ni gael siarad gyda nhw,
a phan agorodd y ffenest, fe es i drwyddi
gan geisio gafael yn un o'r scabs, cyn cael
fy hun yng nghefn fan yr heddlu. Roedd
rhaid i ni ddweud wrth yrrwr y fan sut i
gyrraedd gorsaf yr heddlu – doedd dim
clem ganddo am ei fod yn dod o Fryste!
A ninnau'r twpsod yn rhoi'r cyfarwy-
ddiadau iddyn nhw. Dylen ni fod wedi'u
hanfon nhw i'r cyfeiriad anghywir! Ond,
fe ges i'r pryd o fwyd gorau ers sbel yn y
carchar – cinio cig eidion rhost.

Scabs! Alla i mo'u diodde' nhw!
Do'n i ddim yn credu bod angen iddyn
nhw fynd nôl achos roedd llawer mewn

sefyllfa waeth o lawer na nhw. Fe gawson
nhw amser caled pan aeth pawb nôl i'r
gwaith wedyn; roedd pobl yn poeri arnyn
nhw ac yn eu gwthio wrth fynd yn y caets
i lawr i'r ffas. Wnaeth y rheolwyr ddim
edrych ar eu holau nhw o gwbl; roedden
nhw'n gorfod delio â phopeth eu hunan.

streiciau ar ôl gwneud rhywbeth tebyg mewn ffatri ceir yn Rhydychen. Cafodd ei symud o'r pwll ar ôl y streic am iddo golli ei bwyllog braidd gyda'r holl gasineb oedd yn ei erbyn. Mae'n ddigon rhwydd lladd ar bobl eraill ar y teledu a phan fo'r heddlu mewn ceir yn gwarchod eich cartre' chi 24 awr y dydd. Ond mae pethau'n wahanol pan ddewch chi wyneb yn wyneb â'r bobl roeddech chi'n arfer eu pasio bob bore! Cafodd ei anfon i bwll yn y gogledd oedd yn gweithio gydol y streic, ond rodden nhw'n gwrthod cydweithio ag e am ei fod wedi bradychu

ei gydweithwyr lawr fan hyn!
Wn i ddim a oedd y cyfan werth y
drafferth wrth edrych yn ôl. Efallai y
gallai pethau fod wedi cael eu trefnu'n
well. Ond pe bai rhywbeth tebyg yn
digwydd eto, byddwn i'n dal i gefnogi fy
ngydweithwyr i'r carn, a byth yn mynd
yn groes i'r undeb.

George Winorgorski, Pwll y Cwm

thought "That's my boys!" However, it was only a test run by the police to see what they were up against; they didn't come in until the following week. When they actually came in a week later there were police everywhere – you couldn't get near the entrance. It was chaos, our boys were behind hedges with stones and what have you and being chased away by the police. I was chased right over a bank.

When the scabs started coming into Cwm we used to go up there in the morning and shout at them. I got into a bit of trouble doing that. One morning the scabs' taxi stopped for us to speak to them, when the window was wound down I went through it trying to grab a scab and ended up in a police van. We actually had to show the van driver the way to the police station – they didn't know because

they were from Bristol! Like fools, we told them. We should have sent them the other way! The best meal I had in a long time was in jail, I had a nice cooked beef dinner.

Scabs! Didn't like them at all, rubbish people! I didn't think that there was any need for them to go back as there were a

CHWARAE GWYDDBWYLL A BOULES

**Deuddeg oed oeddwn i pan aeth
y nhad ar streic ym mis Mawrth**

1984. Roedd gen i ryw syniad o'r hyn
oedd yn digwydd ar y pryd – nid y
problemau ariannol a phethau felly, ond
roeddwn i'n gwybod ei fod e allan o
waith a ddim yn ennill cyflog, a'u bod
nhw'n brwydro dros eu swyddi. Hefyd,
roeddwn i'n arfer mynd lan i'r Neuadd
Les i'n ôl parseli a hamperi bwyd. Yn
ystod yr haf, fe dreuliais i ychydig
wythnosau ar y llinell biced gyda dad.
Roedden ni'n aros mewn carafán ym
Mhwerdy Aberddawan, ac roedd hi'n
dawel yno'r rhan fwyaf o'r amser.
Roedden ni'n arfer â mynd am dro rownd
llyn, ac i'r traeth cyfagos. Fe ddysgais i'r
erw sut i chwarae gwyddbwyllyn iawn
hefyd, oherwydd roeddwn i'n eithaf da
ac er eu bod nhw'n arfer chwarae drwy'r
amser wedyn, doedd nhw ddim yn
gallu ennill yn fy erbyn i!) Dwi ddim yn
cofio fawr o sôn am y streic yn yr ysgol, er

bod sawl un o'n tadau ni ar streic.

Fe es i dramor gyda'r NUM ym 1984; dwi'n credu mai undebau llafur Ffrainc dalodd am y trip. Aeth llond bws ohonon ni i dde Ffrainc, ac aros ar fferm yno. Roedden ni'n cysgu mewn cwt pren, mas yn y caeau drwy'r dydd ac yn mynd i'r ffermdy i gael ein prydau bwyd i gyd. Doedd e ddim yn agos i'r traeth na dim, ond dwi'n cofio nhw'n mynd â ni i ryw lyn mawr lle'r oedd pawb yn hollol noeth! Byddai'r bechgyn i gyd yn edrych a dweud, "Www, edrych arni hi, 'sdim dillad 'da hi!" Doeddwn i ddim yn hoffi defnyddio'r ty bach, sef twll yn y llawr. Doeddwn i ddim yn rhy hoff o'r bwyd chwaith, ac fe gollais i stôñ o bwysau. Fe gawson ni stêc cig ceffyl un noson, oedd yn iawn, doedd dim llawer o wahaniaeth o ran blas. Buon ni yno am dair wythnos i gyd. Wythnos a hanner ar y fferm, wedyn cawson ni ein gwahanu, ac fe es i a bachgen arall i safle gwversylla. Penderfynodd

perchen nog y safle gwersylla adael i ni
aros yn ei gartref, oedd dipyn mwy gwâr
a llawer gwell na'r fferm. Buon ni'n
chwarae boules hefyd. Ar ôl cyrraedd
adref, y peth cyntaf wnaeth fy rhieni oedd
coginio wŷ a tsips – am hanner nos!

Mae'r Nadolig yn amser arbennig iawn i fachgen deuddeg oed, ac er bod arian yn brin, fe ges i bopeth posibl gan fy rhieni a mam-gu. Wnes i ddim colli mas chwaith, gan fod pobl wedi cyfrannu llawer o bethau i Ganolfan y Streic, ac fe ges i lwyth o deganau.

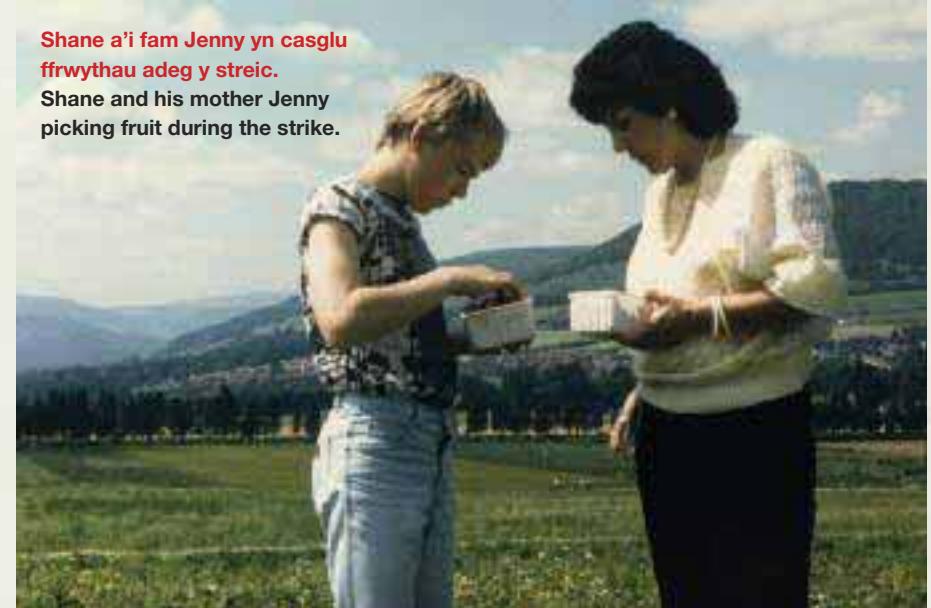
Erbyn heddiw, dwi llawer iawn mwy ymwybodol o bwysigrwydd y streic nag oeddwn i 25 mlynedd yn ôl. Dwi'n gwybod fod dad wedi cael ei arrestio ar ôl cau'r ffordd i Bwll y Cwm gyda lori. Ond roeddwn i braidd yn ifanc i ddeall y cyfan ar y pryd.

*Shane Winorgorski,
Llanilltud Faerdref*

CHESS AND BOULES

I was twelve years old in March 1984 when my father went on strike. I was vaguely aware of what was

STRIKE. I was vaguely aware of what was going on at the time, not to the extent of the money problems and stuff, but I knew that he was out of work and they weren't getting paid and I knew that they were fighting for their jobs. I also used to go up the Welfare hall to pick up the food parcels and hampers. During the summer I also had a couple of weeks on the picket line with my father. We were in a caravan in Aberthaw Power Station and it was mostly quiet. There was a lake there, where we used to walk and if we walked the other way we went on to the beach. I also taught them to play chess properly as I used to be quite good at it (they used to play all →



CHESS AND BOULES

► the time afterwards but they still couldn't beat me!) I don't remember the strike being mentioned much in school although quite a few of us had fathers on strike.

I went abroad with the NUM in 1984; I think that it was paid for by the French trade unions. There was a bus full of us and we stayed on a farm in the south of France. We slept in a wooden hut and during the day we would be out in the fields and went to the farmhouse for all our food. It wasn't near a beach or anything but they took us out to a big lake once and there were all people in the nude – I remember that! All the boys would look and say "Woo, look at that she's got nothing on!" The toilet was a hole in the ground which I didn't like using and I wasn't too fussed on the food, so I lost

After getting back home, the first thing my parents did was to cook me egg and chips – at twelve in the night!

about a stone. I had horse steak once and it was alright, couldn't taste much difference. We were out there three weeks in all. One and half weeks on the farm and then we got split up and another boy and myself got moved on to a camp site. The guy that owned the camp site took us on and we stayed in the house there. It was better than the farm, a bit more civilised. We also got to play boules. After getting back

home, the first thing my parents did was to cook me egg and chips – at twelve in the night!

Christmas time is quite a big deal for a twelve year old and there wasn't much money about but my parents and grandmother gave me all they could. I didn't lose out much, there were a lot of donated toys and stuff in the Strike Centre so I still had loads of presents.

Twenty-five years later I know a lot more about the strike and its importance than I did back then. I know that my father blocked the road leading to Cwm Colliery with a lorry and he later got arrested. At the time I was just a little bit too young to understand it all.

Shane Winorgorski, Llantwit Fardre



FEL RHYWBETH ALLAN O FFILM

Roeddwn i'n ddirprwy ym Mhwll Blaenserchan, a newydd ddod i'r wyneb ar ôl shifft nos, pan glywais i fod y streic wedi cychwyn. Ym Mlaenserchan, roedd y pwll ar un ochr i'r cwm, a'r baddonau pen pwll yr ochr arall; roedd e fel rhywbeth allan o ffilm – ro'n i'n gallu gweld dynion (o'r Rhondda dwi'n credu) yn gadael y bysbs yng nghanol niwl y bore i bicedu ein dynion oedd yn aelodau o'r NUM. Dyma'r cof cyntaf a chliriaf sydd gen i o'r streic. Roedd aelodau NACODS Rhanbarth De Cymru (Cymdeithas Genedlaethol y Dirprwy Oruchwylwyr a'r Tanwyr Pwll) wedi pleidleisio dros fynd ar streic, ac fe es i'r gwely'r bore hwnnw gan feddwl 'mod i ar streic hefyd. Ond ar ôl deffro'n ddiweddarach, fe wyliais i'r newyddion a deall fod aelodau NACODS yn Lloegr wedi ein trechu ni trwy bleidlais. Ffoniais fy nghynrychiolydd undeb i gadarnhau'r sefyllfa; roedd rhaid i ni ddilyn cyfarwyddiadau'r undeb a pharhau i weithio.

Fe wnaeth yr NUM adael i ddynion

Es i'r gwely'r bore hwnnw gan feddwl 'mod i ar streic hefyd

pethau'n flêr oedd pan ddechreuodd y scabs ddod i'r gwaith, a'r heddlu gwrth-derfysg yn cael eu galw. Ond doedd y picedwyr ddim yn ein poeni ni, hyd yn oed yn wedyn. Doedden ni ddim yn gwneud llawer gyda'r scabs yn y gwaith gan fod y tîm rheoli'n edrych ar eu holau, felly roedden ni'n dueddol o fod yn ddiplomatig a'u hosgoi bob tro. Ar y pryd, roedd gen i wraig a dau blentyn

John Scandrett, Pwll Blaenserchan

LIKE SOMETHING OUT OF A FILM

I was a deputy in Blaenserchan Colliery and had just come up the pit after a night shift when I heard that the strike was on. In Blaenserchan the pit was on one side of the valley and the pithead baths on the other; it was like something out of a film – I could see men (I think they were from the Rhondda) coming off buses in the early morning mist to picket out our NUM men. This is my earliest and clearest memory of the strike. The South Wales Area of NACODS (National Association of Colliery Overmen, Deputies and Shot firers) had voted to strike and I went to bed that morning thinking that I was on strike as well. However, after getting up from a day's sleep I watched the news and found out that the English areas of NACODS had out-voted us. I phoned my union representative who confirmed the situation; we had to follow our union's instructions and work.

The NUM allowed NACODS and certain NUM men to do safety work during the strike. This was mainly making

I went to bed that morning thinking that I was on strike as well

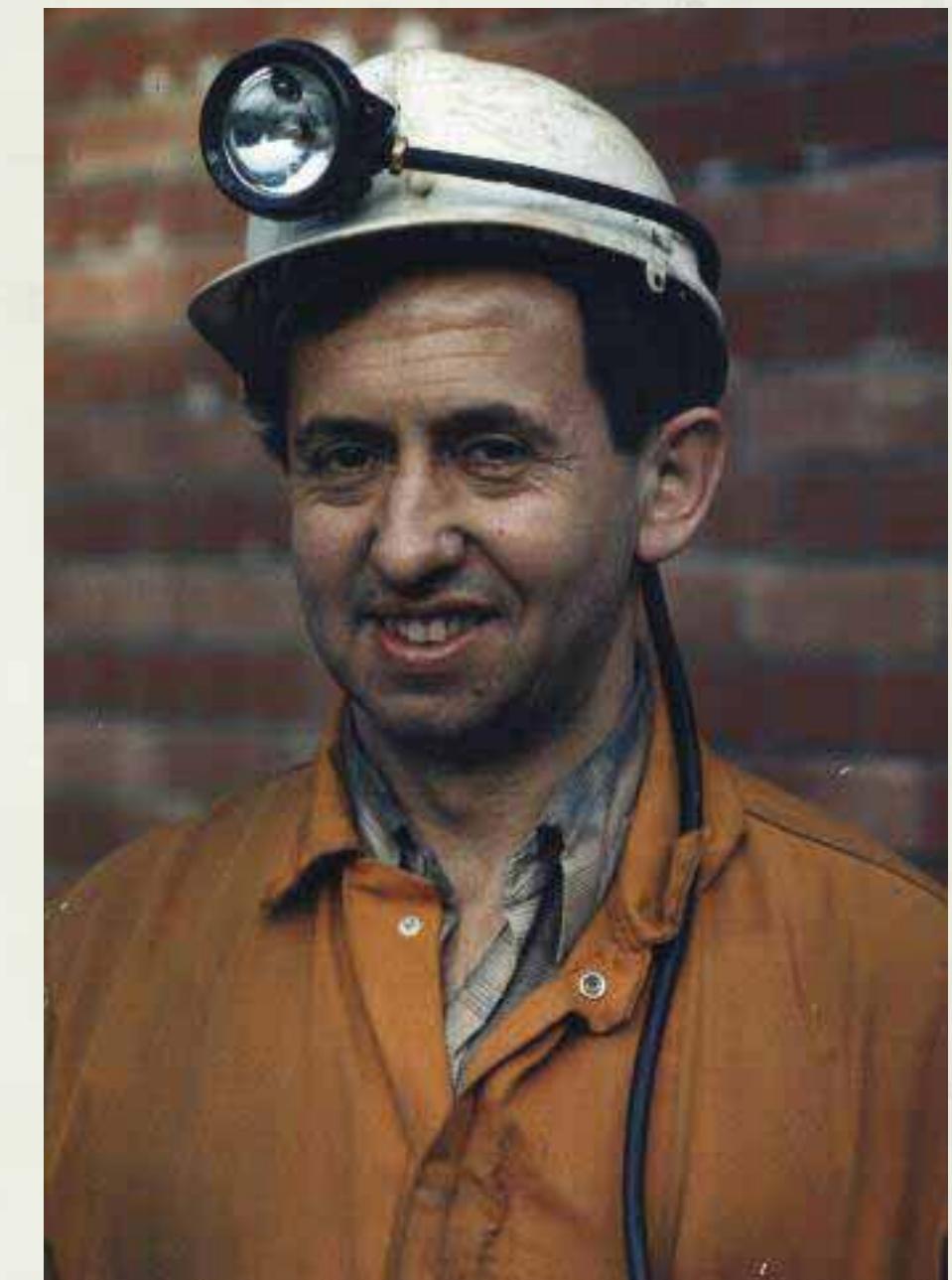
sure that the pumps were working so that the pits wouldn't flood. I never had any trouble going through the picket lines as the Blaenserchan boys knew the situation and accepted it. The only time things got hairy was when the scabs started coming to work and the riot police were called in, but even then the pickets didn't hassle us. We didn't have much to do with the scabs in work as they were looked after by a management team, so we tended to be diplomatic and gave them a wide berth. At the time I had a wife and two small children to support. The token pay was just enough to feed the family but the mortgage payments had to go on hold and we went without luxuries. However, it was a lot worse for the NUM boys, al-

though some of them managed to find little jobs outside the coal industry, but most suffered hardship, marriages broke down and houses were re-possessed. I am not defending what the scabs did, but given the choice how many men wouldn't put their family before their principles?

When the strike ended I was expecting that the anger of the NUM boys would be directed at us. However, the

feeling against the scabs was so strong that they got the full brunt. There were attempts to protect them but they still got spat at and received the occasional fist or elbow when they weren't expecting it. After twenty-five years I still think that the NUM was right to strike. However, I think that they went about it in the wrong way.

John Scandrett, Blaenserchan Colliery



MULOD YN ARWAIN LLEWOD

Wnes i ddim dechrau gweithio fel glöwr tan o'n i'n 26 oed. Cyn hynny, ro'n i'n aelod o'r Gwarchodlu Cymreig ac yn gweithio ar safleoedd adeiladu. Dechreuais i fel gyrrwr injan gyda'r Bwrdd Glo ym 1977. Wedyn, ces i swydd yn cario ceblau trydan ar hyd y llwybrau a'r siafftau. Roeddwn i ar gyflog trydanwr llawn, felly doeddwn i ddim yn cwyno! Yn ystod haf 1983, pan oeddwn i ar wyliau gyda fy rheul, prynais i lyfr am hanes yr SAS i'w ddarllen ar y traeth a dechrau ymddiddori yn yr uned. Roeddwn i'n dal yn aelod o'r fyddin wrth gefn ar y pryd, ac yn gorfol mynd i Ganolfan y Fyddin yng Nghrucywel bob blwyddyn i lofnodi a derbyn fy siec. Beth bynnag, fe welais i boster o Fyddin Diriogaethol yr SAS (Catrawd 21) yn y Ganolfan, a chysylltais i â nhw. Roeddwn i'n meddwl 'mod i braidd yn rhy hen, ond fe ddywedon nhw y byddwn i'n cael fy nerbyn cyn belled â 'mod i'n pasio'r broses ddethol. Dechreuodd hyn ychydig cyn i'r streic ddechrau.

Roedd y broses ddethol yn para 12 mis, felly roeddwn i bant gyda'r Gatrawd bob penwythnos. Â minnau ar streic, cefais gyfle i golli rhywfaint o bwysau a

dod yn ddigon ffit, oedd yn hollbwysig gan fod y broses ddethol yn galed ofnadwy. Roedd llawer o bobl eisiau ymuno â'r gatrawd yn sgil rhyfel y Falkland a'r gwarchae ar y Llysgenhadaeth, felly rodden nhw eisiau chwynnu'r rhai llai heini allan. Roedd pymtheg ohonon ni o'r de i ddechrau, a chan ein bod ni'n edrych ar ôl ein gilydd, cafodd unarddeg ohonom ein derbyn – sy'n gyfran uchel o

Ond ar ôl i'r cyfnod hyfforddi orffen, roedd llai o wahaniaeth ryngom ni, a phawb yn dechrau parchu'n gilydd

gymharu â rhai o'r ardaloedd eraill. Mae'r glowyr ar y cyfan yn perthyn i'r adain chwith tra bod y Fyddin Brydeinig ar y dde. Roedd rhai o aelodau'r gatrawd yn tynnu 'nghoes i am fy mod i'n löwr ar streic, yn enwedig pan fu Thatcher bron â chael ei lladd gan fom yn Brighton a'r ffaith mai'r glowyr gafodd y bai ar y cychwyn. Yr NCOs oedd fwyaf uchaf eu

cloch yn hytrach na'r swyddogion (oedd hyd yn oed yn fwy adain dde o bosibl, ond yn rhy gwrtas i refri ymlaen am y peth).

Cofiwch chi, mae bechgyn yn ymuno â'r fyddin yn ifanc iawn, heb wybod llawer am ddim byd arall. Dim ond y rhai mwyaf gwladgarol sy'n ymuno fel arfer, felly pan rodden nhw'n gweld glowyr yn streicio a'r wasg a'r teledu yn eu beirniadu, dim ond un ochr o'r stori roedd y milwyr yn ei chlywed. Roedd ambell un yn dweud wrtha i'n gwbl agored y dylai'r streicwyr gael eu saethu yn erbyn wal! Ond ar ôl i'r cyfnod hyfforddi orffen, roedd llai o wahaniaeth ryngom ni, a phawb yn dechrau parchu'n gilydd. Er bod rhywfaint o dynnu coes diniwed, rodden ni'n dîm erbyn hynny. Bues i gyda'r gatrawd am 11 mlynedd.

Roedd fy ngwraig yn gweithio ychydig ac rodden ni'n derbyn parseli bwyd. Roeddwn i'n gwneud rhywfaint o waith plastro bob hyn a hyn, ond yr arian a dderbyniais i fel 'milwr penwythnos' a'n helpodd ni drwy'r streic yn fwy na dim. Doedd neb o'r pwll yn gwylod am fy 'mywyd arall' ar y pryd, ond pharodd hynny ddim yn hir iawn. Bob tro roeddwn i eisiau amser bant i fynd i hyfforddi gyda'r fyddin, roedd rhaid i rywun o'r pwll lofnodi ffurflen gydag 'SAS' arni – fe greodd hynny dipyn o st'r am ychydig a dweud y lleiaf! Roedd y streic yn cyd-fynd i'r dim â'r hyn roeddwn i'n ei wneud ar y pryd, ond wrth feddwl yn ôl, mae'n edrych fel gwastraff amser – gyda glowyr Lloegr yn mynd yn llu yn ôl i'r gwaith, a Scargill yn dweud wrthon ni'r Cymry i ddal ein tir. Roedd Emlyn Williams, llywydd yr NUM yng Nghymru, yn iawn wrth drefnu bod pawb yn mynd nôl gyda'i gilydd. Ond roedd y tactegau'n anghywir y flwyddyn honno, ac rodden ni'n bownd o gael ein trechu – rodden ni fel 'llewod wedi'u harwain gan fulod', fel y dywedodd rywun unwaith.

Dienw

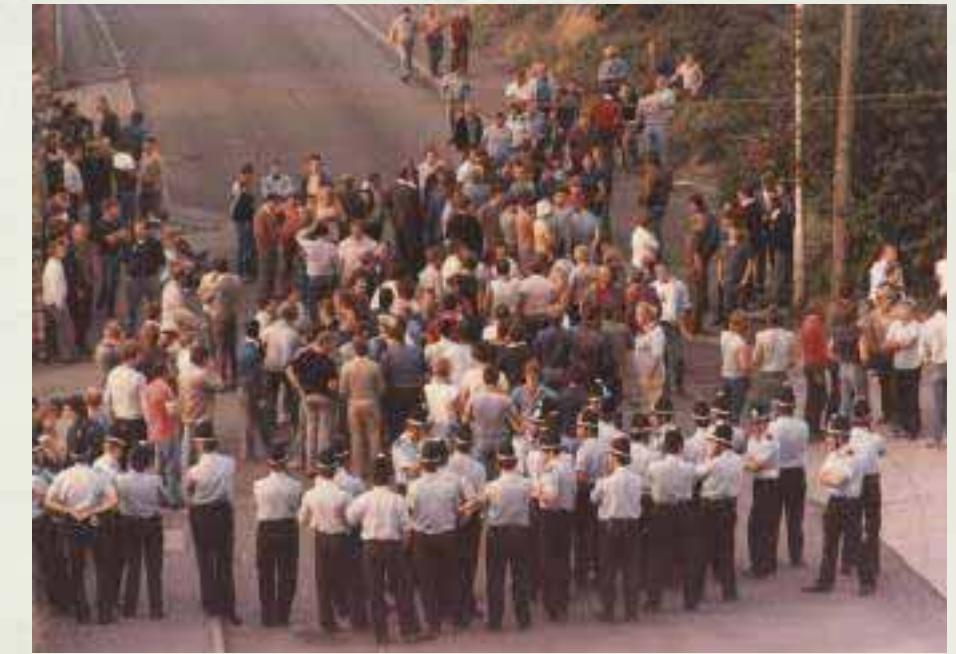


LIONS LED BY DONKEYS

I didn't start work as a miner until I was over 26 years old, up to then I'd been in the Welsh Guards and, later, worked on building sites. I started with the NCB in 1977 as an underground haulage engine driver. Later I got a job humping electric cables through roadways and down shafts. I got the full electricians rate so I wasn't arguing with that! Anyway, during the summer of 1983 I was on holiday with my family and bought a book about the history of the SAS to read on the beach and became interested in the unit. At the time I was still in the army reserves and had to go along to the Army Centre in Crickhowell every year to sign on and receive my payment cheque. Anyway, there was a poster for the SAS Territorial Army unit (the 21 SAS Regiment) on the wall in the Centre and I got in touch with them. I thought that I was a bit old but they said that, as long as I passed the selection process, I would get in. I started all this just as the strike began.

The selection process took twelve months, so every weekend I was off with the regiment. By being on strike I had the time to lose some weight and become extremely fit which was vital because the selection process was very vigorous indeed. A lot of people wanted to join the regiment after all the publicity it had received during the Falklands campaign and the embassy siege so we were very rigorously exercised to weed the numbers down. There were fifteen of us from south Wales to start and, because we looked after each other, eleven of us got through – a high proportion compared to people from other areas. Miners are generally very left wing and the British Army is generally right wing. So, as a striking miner, I took a lot of stick from some in the regiment, especially after Thatcher was nearly blown up at Brighton and it was initially blamed on the miners. This was mainly from the NCOs rather than the officers (who were probably even more right wing but too polite to keep on about it!).

You have to understand that soldiers join the army at a young age and don't re-



After the training period the differences between us lessened and turned into mutual respect

ally know about anything else. You don't normally join up unless you are patriotic, so when they see miners striking and the television and newspapers are all having a go at them they tended to only see one side. A few openly told me that all striking miners should be put up against a wall and shot! After the training period the differences between us lessened and turned into mutual respect. There was still banter but it was light-hearted, we were all part of the same team by then. I remained in the regiment for eleven years.

My wife had a small job and we had food parcels and I did a little plastering on the side, but it was the money I received as a 'weekend soldier' that really helped us get through the dispute. Nobody in

the colliery knew about my 'alternative life' during that time but it came out soon afterwards. When I wanted to take time off for army training I had to have a form signed at the pit and that form had 'SAS' on it, which caused some surprise to say the least, but it all died down quickly. The strike fitted in with what I wanted to do at that time but, looking back, it seems to have been a waste of time – miners in England going back in droves and Scargill

telling us in Wales to hang on. Emlyn Williams, the Welsh NUM president, was right in getting us to all go back together. The tactics were all wrong during that year and we were bound to be beaten – we were 'Lions led by donkeys' as someone once said about another little confrontation.

Anon



DYNA BETH OEIDD ADDYSG!



Ym 1984, roeddwn i'n briod â John, fy ail wr, oedd yn gweithio ar wyneb pwall y Maerdy. Glowyr oll oedd fy nhad, fy nhad-cu a'm llystad, ac roedd fy ngŵr cyntaf yn llowr yn Lewis Merthyr. Dwi'n meddwl ein bod ni'n ymwybodol iawn o fwriad Thatcher i ddinistrio'r mudiad undebau llafur, felly rodden ni'n disgwyl i bethau fod yn wahanol i streiciau 1972 a 1974 – oedd dros gyflogau ac a barodd ychydig wythnosau'n unig. Roedd y menywod yn fwy cefnogol y tro hwn gan ei bod hi'n frwydr dros swyddi a chymunedau. Ond yn y pen-draw, bwydo'r plant oedd y peth pwysicaf i mi. Aeth Sandra, un o staff ffreutur Pwall y Maerdy, ati i drefnun cyfarfod i weld beth allen ni ei wneud dros y plant. A dyna ddechrau'r stori.

Fe synnais 'mod i'n gallu sefyll ar Iwyfan a siarad gydag arddeliad

o ymgyrchu yn y Maerdy eriod, a'r ffaith fod llawer o'r menywod yn gweithio yn ffreutur y pwall ac ar streic eu hunain. Ymhenech ychydig wythnosau, rodden ni'n griw trefnus dros ben. Aethon ni ati i geisio codi arian, ond perchnogion

Cawson ni ganiatâd i ddefnyddio Canolfan Streic y Maerdy, a dechreuon ni wneud pecynnau cinio i'r plant. Dwi'n credu mai ni oedd un o'r grwpiau cyntaf i fynd ati yn y de, gan fod traddodiad cryf

siopau'r Maerdy a Blaenllechau wnaeth fwrw iddi go iawn. Ar ôl dechrau trwy wneud pecynnau cinio i'r plant, rodden ni'n llenwi bagiau bwyd i restr o bobl bob wythnos erbyn diwedd y streic.

Un gegog fues i eriod. I dad-cu mae'r diolch am hynny dwi'n credu, gan ei fod e'n fachan adain chwith cryf iawn. Roedd e'n casáu'r Ceidwadwyr a'r teulu brenhinol â chas perffaith, a wiw i mi ddweud beth oedd e'n galw Dug Caeredin! Cafodd fy nhad ei ladd yn y pwall yn 29 oed, 'Gweithred Duw' yn ôl ei dystysgrif farwolaeth. Felly dwi wastad wedi teimlo rhyw anghywfiawnder dros y glowyr. Doeddech chi ddim yn pleidleisio Tori AR UNRHYW GYFRI! Hyd yn oed os nad oedd gennych chi reswm go iawn i'w casáu nhw, roeddech chi yn eu ➤

IT WAS AN EDUCATION!



In 1984 I was married to John, my second husband, who worked on the surface in Maerdy. My father, my grandfather and my step-father had been miners, and my first husband was a miner in Lewis Merthyr. I think we were very aware of Thatcher's determination to destroy the trade union movement, so we were prepared that it wasn't going to be like the 1972 and 1974 strikes, which were about pay and only lasted a couple of weeks. Women were more supportive this time because it was over jobs and communities. But, at the end of the day, I just wanted to feed the kids, so when Sandra, who was working in Maerdy Colliery canteen, called a meeting to see what we could do for the children, that's where it all started.

The Strike Centre in Maerdy agreed that we could use the Centre and we started off with packed lunches for the kids. I think we were one of the first groups to really get going in south Wales

I was surprised that I was able to stand on a platform and speak with conviction

and raise some money and we did collections but it was really the shopkeepers in Maerdy and Blaenllechau who got the ball rolling. We went from doing packed lunches for the kids to having a huge number on our books for bags of food every week by the end of the strike.

Well, I was always a gobby mare. I think that was because my one grandfather was very left wing. He hated the Conservatives and the royal family with a vengeance and I won't tell you what he called the Duke of Edinburgh! My father had been killed in the colliery when he was 29 and it was an Act of God according to his death certificate. So I had always had this feeling of injustice for the miners. You didn't vote Tory WHATEVER! Even if you had no real reason to hate ➤

DYNA BETH OEDD ADDYSG!

► casáu nhw beth bynnag. Er 'mod i'n barod i ddweud fy nweud bob amser, fe synnais 'mod i'n gallu sefyll ar lwysfan a siarad gydag arddeliad.

Bues i'n annerch cyfarfod cyhoeddus yng Ngholeg Ruskin unwaith – o flaen torf anferth – bron i 300 o bobl! Siaradais fel pwll y môr am awr a hanner, gan sôn am y cymoedd, marwolaeth fy nhad – popeth dweud y gwir. Erbyn mis Medi/Hydref, roeddwn i'n mynd lan bob wythnos. Fe wnes i dri chyfarfod gyda Tony Benn, oedd yn wych. Roedd pethau'n wahanol iawn i'r hyn roeddwn wedi disgwyl ei wneud, ac fe dreuliais grym dipyn o amser bant adeg y streic.

Mae'n hawdd byw bywyd bach digon cysgodol yn eich cymuned, yn gwylia'r bocs a chredu popeth sy'n cael ei ddweud. Yna, rydych chi'n cwrdd â ffoaduriaid o Chile a phobl o Wlad Thai sy'n ceisio

Aeth y dynion yn ôl i weithio ym mis

Mawrth 1985. Fe draddodais i'r arraith olaf ar do Canolfan y Streic, a llefain y glaw drwy'r dydd. Roedd gen i ben tost ofnadwy drwy'r nos wedyn, a bues i'n gorwedd yn fy ngwely yn meddwl beth rodden ni wedi'i gyflawni, ac am y bois oedd yn methu mynd nôl i'r gwaith. Rodden nhw wedi cael eu diswyddo neu eu gwahardd o'u gwaith, ac roeddwn i'n ceisio meddwl am ffordd o'u helpu i gael eu swyddi'n ôl. Er hynny, roedd pawb yn falch nad oedd criw'r Maerdy wedi ildio dim, a'u bod yn dychwelyd cyn gryfed ag y gadawon nhw. Nid dim ond streic y glowyr oedd hon, ond streic y menywod hefyd. Roedd y streic yn gyffrous, yn drist, yn emosiynol, ond fe ddysgais i gymaint!

Glynys Evans, Blaenllechau



► them, you hated them anyway. So I had always been quite vocal, but I was surprised that I was able to stand on a platform and speak with conviction.

I did a public meeting in Ruskin College – there was one huge crowd – nearly 300 people! I just ranted away for an hour and half. I talked about the valleys, I talked about my father dying – talked about everything really. So that was the start and by the September/October I was going up every week. I did three meetings with Tony Benn, which was fantastic. So it was a big difference to what I

expected to be doing and I ended up spending a lot of the strike away.

You can become quite cloistered in your own little community and you listen to the box and believe everything that's said. Then you meet refugees from Chile, you meet people from Thailand who are trying to set up a working union for the clothing industry. Compared to parts of the world, we don't know what the term oppression means. One Sunday afternoon I had two South Africans sitting in my house. The woman was in national costume with the turban and a fantastic

coloured dress and he was dressed in white shirt and tie and they were very strong in Nelson Mandela's party in South Africa. They were telling us what they had been through and the kids were sitting on the floor listening to them and my daughter was stunned by this beautiful woman. There were two boys from Nottingham staying with us who were on strike, so they were really having a very hard time up there, and there was a girl from Thailand – all sitting in my living room, on a Sunday afternoon, eating sandwiches and talking about life. Now what better education could I give my kids!!

The boys went back to work in March 1985. I gave my last speech on the roof of the Strike Centre and just cried all day. Then I had a stinking headache all night and just laid in bed thinking what we had accomplished and about the boys who weren't able to return to work. They had been sacked or suspended and I wondered what bargaining tool we now had to get them re-instated. However, there was a lot of pride that Maerdy hadn't folded and was as strong going back as it was coming out. I think in the end the women felt that it hadn't just been the miners' strike it had been our strike. The strike was exciting, it was sad, it was emotional but, above all, it was an education.

Glynys Evans, Blaenllechau

Baner Cyfrinfa'r Maerdy wrth i'r glowyr ddychwelyd i'r gwaith, Mawrth 1985

Maerdy Lodge banner during return to work, March 1985
Dorothea Heath





**BIG PIT: AMGUEDDFA
LOFAOL CYMRU**

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Chwefror – Tachwedd:
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Teithiau tanddaearol:
10 am – 3.30 pm.
Ffoniwch am amserau agor
dros y gaeaf.
Mynediad am ddim

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