

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

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GLO COAL

THIS COLLIERY IS NOW
MANAGED BY THE
NATIONAL
COAL BOARD
ON BEHALF OF THE PEOPLE
JANUARY 1st 1947

'NC Bloody B'

1947 - 2007

60

MLYNEDD YEARS

'Y BWRDD GLO CENEDLAETHOL' 'NATIONAL COAL BOARD'

*Roedd Levi Emmanuel yn edmygu arwydd newydd sgleiniog
yr NCB y tu allan i Lofa Bute, pan ofynnodd un o'i gydweithwyr
iddo 'Am beth mae NCB yn sefyll?' Atebodd heb sychu ei geg,
'NO COWING BOSSES!'*

DILWYN MORGAN



*Levi Emmanuel was admiring the gleaming new NCB sign
outside Bute Colliery, when his workmate asked
'What does the NCB stand for?' he immediately responded with
'NO COWING BOSSES!'*

DILWYN MORGAN

'NC Bloody B'



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Gwladoli - a oedd e'n werth y drafferth?

Wrth ymchwilio ar gyfer y llyfryn hwn, prin oedd y ganmoliaeth a welais nac a glywais i waith yr NCB. Ym 1947, ar ôl chwalfa'r diwydiant glo yn y 1920au a'r 30au, roedd y rhan fwyaf o'r glowyr yn croesawu'r cynlluniau i wladoli gan eu bod yn falch o gael gwared â pherchnogion amhoblogaidd y pyllau. Credai'r glowyr y byddai'r gwladoli'n rhoi terfyn ar y cynlluniau i gau llu o byllau glo, y byddai'n arwain at amodau gwaith diogelach a gwell ac yn rhoi mwy o lais iddynt yn y ffordd roedd eu diwydiant yn cael ei redeg.

Chwalwyd y freuddwyd honno cyn pen dim: roedd glofeydd yn dal i gau ac, er gwaetha'r ymdrechion i wneud y gwaith yn fwy diogel, roedd damweiniau'n dal yn gyffredin. Felly, pylwyd brwdfrydedd cychwynnol y glowyr a dechreusant deimlo bod yr NCB mor bell o'u bywydau bob-dydd ag oedd y perchnogion gynt. Fodd bynnag, beth fyddai wedi digwydd i'r diwydiant glo pe bai wedi aros mewn dwylo preifat? A fyddai perchnogion y glofeydd wedi buddsoddi cymaint mewn gwella diogelwch a hyfforddiant? A allent fod wedi gwario miliynau o bunnau ar dechnoleg newydd, glofeydd newydd a'r llu o brosiectau ad-drefnu? Ac, yn bennaf oll, a fyddai'r diwydiant wedi llwyddo i oroesi tan ddegawdau olaf yr ugeinfed ganrif a dod yn un o'r diwydiannau glo mwyaf diogel a chost-effeithiol yn y byd?

Wyddon ni ddim, a does dim gwahaniaeth bellach. Mae diwydiant glo Cymru fwy neu lai'n farw a nifer y gweithwyr yn gostwng o flwyddyn i flwyddyn. Fodd bynnag, mae gan y cyhoedd ddiddordeb yn y maes o hyd fel y dengys nifer yr ymwelwyr sy'n heidio i Big Pit ac atyniadau treftadaeth glofaol eraill. Rydyn ni yn Big Pit yn ceisio adrodd ein stori trwy lygaid y bobl a oedd yn byw yng nghysgod yr offer pen pwll a'r tomenni glo, ac mae'r llyfryn hwn yn dilyn y traddodiad hwnnw. Hoffwn ddiolch i bawb a anfonodd straeon a lluniau atom; hebddynt ni allem fod wedi llunio'r llyfryn o gwbl.

Ceri Thompson CURADUR, BIG PIT: AMGUEDDFA LOFAOL CYMRU

FOREWORD

Nationalisation - was it all worth it?

During research for this booklet, it has been difficult to find much praise for the work of the NCB. In 1947, following the collapse of the coal industry during the 1920s and 30s, nationalisation was broadly welcomed by the miners, who were pleased to be rid of the hated coal owners. The miners believed that nationalisation would bring an end to mass pit closures, produce safer and better working conditions and give them a greater say in the running of their industry.

The dream was soon shattered: collieries still closed and, despite efforts to improve safety, accidents were still commonplace. Thus the miners' initial enthusiasm waned and they began to see the NCB as being as remote from their daily lives as any of the former coal owners had been. However, what would have happened to the coal industry if it had remained in private hands? Would the coal owners have invested so heavily in improving safety and training? Could they have poured many millions of pounds into new technology, new collieries and the many reorganisation projects? And, above all, would the industry have managed to survive into the last decades of the twentieth century and become one of the safest and most cost effective coal industries in the world?

These questions are now largely academic; the coal industry in Wales is all but dead and the numbers of those that worked in the industry diminish year by year. However, public interest is still strong as the numbers of visitors flocking to Big Pit and other coal-based heritage attractions prove. At Big Pit we have always attempted to tell our story through the eyes of the people who lived under the shadows of headgears and coal tips, and this booklet follows that tradition. I would like to thank all those who sent us their stories and images; without them this booklet would not have been possible.

Ceri Thompson CURATOR, BIG PIT: NATIONAL COAL MUSEUM

GLOFA LEWIS
MERTHYR, 1947
LEWIS MERTHYR
COLLIERY, 1947



*'This colliery is
now managed by the
National Coal Board on
behalf of the people.'*

HYSBYSFWRDD A GODWYD AR 1 IONAWR 1947 YNG NGLOFEYDD PRYDAIN
NOTICEBOARD ERECTED ON 1 JANUARY 1947 AT BRITISH COLLIERIES



Y Bwrdd Glo Cenedlaethol

O ganlyniad i hanes digalon y diwydiant glo rhwng y ddau ryfel byd, rheolaeth y llywodraeth drosto yn ystod yr Ail Ryfel Byd a'r angen am lo ym Mhrydain ar ôl y rhyfel, roedd hi bron yn anrffod y byddai'r diwydiant yn cael ei wladoli ar ôl ethol llywodraeth Lafur ym 1945.

Croesawyd y 'Diwrnod Breinio', l Ionawr 1947, i raddau helaeth yng nglofeydd Cymru. Daeth maes glo de Cymru yn rhan o Ranbarth De Orllewin y Bwrdd Glo Cenedlaethol ynghyd â meysydd glo bychain Gwlad yr Haf a Swydd Gaerloyw.



The National Coal Board

The dismal history of the coal industry between the world wars, government control during the Second World War and the need for coal in post-war Britain made the coming of nationalisation almost inevitable after the election of a Labour government in 1945.

'Vesting Day', 1 January 1947 was largely welcomed in Welsh collieries. The south Wales coalfield became part of the South-Western Division of the National Coal Board along with the smaller Somerset and Gloucestershire coalfields.

Mae'r Bwrdd Glo Cenedlaethol wedi dod â newidiadau mawr i ddiwydiant glo De Cymru ac wedi agor drysau newydd iddo.

DATGANIAD I'R WASG GANYR NCB, 1954



Ymhlith yr asedau a ddaeth i ddwylo'r NCB yn y Deyrnas Unedig roedd dros 1,400 o byllau glo, 30 o weithfeydd tanwydd gwneuthuredig, 55 o ffyrnau golosg a gweithfeydd sgîl-gynhyrchion, 85 o weithfeydd brics a pheipiau, 225,000 erw o dir amaethyddol, 140,000 o dai glowyr, siopau, swyddfeydd, gwestai, pyllau nofio, ceiau, depos gwerthu glo, rowndiau llaeth, un gwersyll gwyliau ac un trac seiclo!

BUDDSODDIAD A SIOM

Buddsoddwyd swm sylweddol o ganlyniad i'r Gwladoli. Dim ond 16 y cant o weithwyr glofeydd Prydain oedd yn Ne Cymru ond cafodd yr ardal 21 y cant o gyllideb yr NCB. Rhwng 1948 a 1953, buddsoddwyd bron £32 miliwn yn ardal Caerdydd. Costiodd gwaith ailadeiladu Glofa Nantgarw yn unig £4½ miliwn. Bu cynnydd yn y mecaneiddio ar y ffas lo ac ymgyrchoedd i wella iechyd a diogelwch; codwyd baths pen pwll a chantins am y tro cyntaf mewn rhai glofeydd. Er bod llawer i anghydfod lleol o hyd, gwelwyd gwelliant mewn cysylltiadau diwydiannol ac ni chafwyd streic genedlaethol tan 1972.

Ar y llaw arall, erbyn canol y 1950au, roedd y glowyr yn dechrau meddwl bod yr NCB mor bell oddi wrthynt â pherchnogion y glofeydd gynt. Roedd y gyfradd absenoldeb (tua 17 y cant ar gyfartaledd yn ne Cymru) ymhell dros y gyfradd trwy weddill y DU. Surwyd y berthynas rhwng y gweithwyr a'r NCB gan anghytundebau dros gyflog a'r bygythiad y byddai pyllau'n cau. Yn aml, hefyd, ni lwyddai'r buddsoddiad i ddwyn ffrwyth a bu prosiect costus Glofa Nantgarw yn siom fawr gan mai dim ond 100,000 tunnell y flwyddyn oedd yn cael ei gynhyrchu yno.

CAU PYLLAU A THRYCHINEBAU

Hyd yn oed yn nyddiau cynnar yr NCB, roedd tuedd i gau pyllau bach nad oedd yn talu'r ffordd ac i ad-drefnu'r rhai mwy. Fodd bynnag, erbyn y 1960au, dechreuwyd gadael i faes glo'r de ddirywio'n fwrriadol. Ni fu i'r un maes glo arall ym Mhrydain ddioddef y fath grebachu mileinig - ym 1960 roedd 106,000 o lowyr yn ne Cymru, erbyn 1970 doedd dim ond 60,000. Bu'n rhaid arafu'r broses o gau'r pyllau yn ystod argyfwng olew'r Dwyrain Canol ynghanol y 1970au.

Cafwyd nifer o drychinebau difrifol yn y 1960au hefyd. Ym 1960, lladdwyd 45 o lowyr gan danchwa yng Nglofa Six Bells. Ym 1965, lladdwyd 31 o lowyr



Y DRAM LO OLAF, GLOFA WATTSTOWN, 1968

THE LAST DRAM OF COAL, WATTSTOWN COLLIERY, 1968



‘The National Coal Board has instituted great changes in the mining industry in South Wales and has opened new prospects for it.

NCB PRESS RELEASE, 1954

Assets taken over by the NCB in the UK included over 1,400 coal mines, 30 manufactured fuel plants, 55 coke ovens and by-products plants, 85 brick and pipe works, 225,000 acres of farm land, 140,000 miners’ houses, shops, offices, hotels, swimming baths, wharves, coal-sale depots, milk rounds, a holiday camp and a cycle track!

INVESTMENT AND DISAPPOINTMENT

Nationalisation brought in considerable new investment. South Wales employed only 16 per cent of British mineworkers but received 21 per cent of the NCB’s budget. Between 1948 and 1953 nearly £32 million was invested in the Cardiff region - the reconstruction of Nantgarw Colliery alone cost no less than £4½ million. There was increased mechanisation at the coal face and drives to improve health and safety; pit head baths and canteens were built at collieries that had previously lacked them. Although there were still many local disputes, labour relations did improve and there was no national strike until 1972.

On the other hand, by the mid-1950s, the NCB began to be seen as remote as any of the previous coal owners. Absenteeism averaged around 17 per cent in south Wales, well above the UK average. Conflicts over pay and the threat of pit closures all soured industrial relations. Investment had also often failed to bring results, the expensive Nantgarw Colliery project proving something of a white elephant with a disappointing output of only 100,000 tons a year.

CLOSURES AND DISASTERS

Even from the early days of the NCB there was a tendency to close smaller, uneconomic pits and reorganise the larger ones. However, during the 1960s a deliberate rundown of the south Wales coalfield had begun. No other British coalfield suffered such a savage contraction - in 1960 there were 106,000 south Wales miners, by 1970 there were 60,000. The pace of closures only slackened off during the Middle East oil crisis of the mid-1970s.

**HYFORDDEION
YR NCB TUA
1960
NCB TRAINEES
C.1960**

Mewn gwirionedd, 'welodd y gweithiwr cyffredin ddim newid yn y pwll ar ôl y Gwladoli. Yr un swyddogion oedd yno, yr un rheolwyr. Yr unig beth y gallen ni ei ddweud oedd, 'Ein pwll ni yw e!' Ond nid ein pwll ni oedd e o gwbl. Sai'n credu ei fod ei wedi gwneud lot o wahaniaeth i ni.

VINCE COURT, GLOFA PENALLTA



Y GLŌWR DELFRYDOL - CERFLUN A LUNIWYD AR GYFER ARDDANGOSFA CYMRU DDIWYDIANNOL, OLYMPIA YM 1947. THOMAS IDRIS LEWIS O LOFA SEVEN SISTERS OEDD Y MODEL AR GYFER Y CERFLUN.

THE IDEAL MINER - A STATUE PRODUCED FOR THE INDUSTRIAL WALES EXHIBITION, OLYMPIA IN 1947. THE MODEL FOR THE STATUE WAS THOMAS IDRIS LEWIS OF SEVEN SISTERS COLLIERY.

gan danchwa arall yng Nglofa'r Cambrian. Yna, daeth trydedd drychineb, a honno o'r fath nas gwelwyd erioed o'r blaen mewn gwlad a oedd yn hen gyfarwydd â marwolaethau yn y diwydiant glo.

Ar fore Gwener, 21 Hydref 1966, llithrodd darn mawr o domen rwbel Glofa Merthyr Vale i lawr y bryn i bentref Aberfan, gan ladd 144 o bobl yn cynnwys 116 o blant. Dyfarnodd y Tribiwnlys Ymchwiliad a gynhaliwyd wedyn mai'r Bwrdd Glo Cenedlaethol oedd yn gyfrifol am y drychineb. Nid oedd gan yr NCB bolisi ar domenni glo a honnwyd ei fod yn ddifater ynghylch yr angen am gamau diogelwch.

Ar nodyn hapusach, yn y 1960au y datblygwyd 'arch-byllau' mawr newydd Glofeydd Aber-nant, Brynlliw a Chynheidre ac y buddsoddwyd symiau sylweddol yn ad-drefnu glofeydd fel Coegnant, Deep Navigation a Merthyr Vale. Dyma'r degawd pryd y rhoddwyd y gorau, fwy neu lai, i 'waith wrth y pen' neu 'waith ar hur' pryd y cyflwynwyd y Cytundeb Llwyth Gwaith Cenedlaethol, a oedd yn golygu bod holl fwynwyr Prydain yn cael yr un gyfradd dâl. Ar y cyfan, roedd y rheolwyr a'r undebau llafur yn croesawu'r cytundeb hwn er i lawer o ddynion weld cwmp sylweddol yn eu hincwm. Daeth y Cytundeb â theimlad o undod rhwng holl feysydd glo y DU ac fe arweiniodd hynny, mewn ffordd, yn y pen draw, at streiciau cenedlaethol 1972 a 1974, a ymladdwyd dros gyflogau. Anghydfod 1974 a arweiniodd at gwmp y llywodraeth Geidwadol.

Y BLYNYDDOEDD OLAF

Erbyn dechrau'r 1980au, roedd diwydiant glo Prydain ymhlith y mwyaf diogel a'r mwyaf effeithlon yn Ewrop. Fodd bynnag, roedd llywodraeth Geidwadol newydd wedi'i hethol ac roedd cynlluniau ar y gweill i gau rhagor o byllau. Roedd meysydd glo Cymru yn fwy tebygol o ddioddef gan fod y glofeydd yn hen a'r ddaear yn achosi problemau. Er bod y cynlluniau i gau glofeydd wedi'u derbyn yn anfoddog yn y gorffennol, y tro hwn galwyd am weithredu diwydiannol gan nad oedd swyddi eraill i'w cael ar gyfer y dynion.

Cychwynnodd streic fawr olaf y glowyr ym mis Mawrth 1984 a pharodd flwyddyn. Gorchfygwyd y glowyr a chwalwyd diwydiant glo Cymru. Caewyd 28 o byllau glo Cymru dros y deng mlynedd nesaf. Yn y cyfnod hwn, hefyd, peidiodd y diwydiant glo â bod yn ddiwydiant gwladoleddig. Newidiodd y Bwrdd Glo Cenedlaethol ei enw i Glo Prydain ym 1986 ac aeth yn ôl i ddwylo preifat wyth mlynedd yn ddiweddarach.

In reality for the ordinary workman Nationalisation changed nothing at the pit. It was the same officials, the same management. The only thing we could say was, 'It's our pit!' But it wasn't our pit at all. I don't think it made a lot of difference to us.

VINCE COURT, PENALLTA COLLIERY



SLANT
RHYDAMAN,
EBRILL 1975
AMMANFORD
SLANT,
APRIL 1975

The 1960s were also a period of major disasters. In 1960, an explosion at Six Bells Colliery killed 45 miners. In 1965, another explosion killed 31 miners at Cambrian Colliery. A third disaster was of a type not previously seen in a Wales well used to experiencing deaths in the coal industry.

On the morning of Friday, 21 October 1966, a large section of the spoil heap of Merthyr Vale Colliery slid down the hillside onto the village of Aberfan, killing 144 people including 116 children. The subsequent Tribunal of Inquiry found the National Coal Board responsible for the disaster. The NCB had no policy regarding coal tips and was claimed to be indifferent to the need for any safety measures.

On a happier note, the 1960s did see the development of new 'super pits' at Abernant, Brynlliw and Cynheidre Collieries as well as sizeable investment in the reorganisation of existing collieries such as Coegnant, Deep Navigation and Merthyr Vale. The decade also saw the virtual elimination of 'piecework' with the introduction of the National Power Loading Agreement, which brought all British mineworkers onto the same pay rate. This agreement was broadly welcomed by both management and trade unions although many men saw a substantial fall in their

incomes. The Agreement forged a greater sense of unity between all the UK coalfields, which paved the way for the national strikes of 1972 and 1974, which were fought over wages, the latter dispute bringing about the fall of the Conservative government.

THE FINAL YEARS

By the early 1980s the British mining industry had become one of the safest and most efficient in Europe. However, a new Conservative government was in place and a new round of pit closures on the horizon. The Welsh coalfields were especially vulnerable due to the age of the collieries and the difficult geology. Although closures had been reluctantly accepted in the past, the lack of alternative employment led to calls for industrial action.

The last great miners' strike began in March 1984 and lasted a year. The defeat of the miners paved the way for the final destruction of the Welsh coal industry. Twenty-eight Welsh pits closed over the next ten years. This period also saw the end of coal as a nationalised industry. The National Coal Board changed its name to British Coal in 1986 and was returned to private ownership eight years later.



IVOR DAVIES (AR Y DDE)
YNG NGWISG YR RAF, 1942
IVOR DAVIES (RIGHT)
IN RAF UNIFORM, 1942



Gweithio i PDs

**IVOR DAVIES,
PEIRIANNYDD
TRYDAN,
GLOFA
WINDSOR**

Roedd fy nhad yn golier yng Nglofa Bargoed o dan gwmni Powell Duffryn. Un diwrnod fe anafodd ei fys mor ddrwg nes ei fod yn cael trafferth i weithio.

Dyweddodd ei feddyg wrtho am beidio â gweithio ac felly aeth at feddyg iawndal cwmni Powell Duffryn ac fe gafodd dâl iawndal. Gwaetha'r modd, cafodd gangrin yn ei fys ac roedd rhaid ei dorri i ffwrdd. Ar ôl iddo wella, aeth nôl i'r gwaith ac fe gafodd 'waith ysgafn' yn gwrthio dramiau glo ar waelod y pwll. Ar ôl rhai wythnosau, penderfynwyd talu lwmp swm o £4 iddo am ei fod wedi colli ei fys - a rhoi'r sac iddo! Dyna enghraifft o agwedd Powell Duffryn - allai e ddim gweithio ar y

ffas ac roedd ganddyn nhw ormod o weithwyr ar waelod y pwll - felly roedd yn rhaid iddo fynd!

Newidiodd pethau o dan y Bwrdd Glo Cenedlaethol. Roeddwn i'n gweithio yng Nglofa Windsor ac rwy'n cofio'r stormon yn dweud wrth y peiriannydd 'Mae dy amser di ar ben, y bobl biau'r pyllau nawr a fydd dim cymaint o bwysau i wneud arian ar gyfer y cyfranddalwyr'. Roedd hynny'n dda ond fe aeth pethau o'r naill eithaf i'r llall. O'r blaen, roedd peiriannydd yn Windsor a oedd yn gofyn bob dydd beth oedd cost tunnelli o lo o'r olchfa a byddai'n chwarae'r diawl pe bai wedi codi geiniog neu rywbeth. Wedyn, o dan y Bwrdd Glo, roedd llai o bwysau ar y gweithwyr i boeni am y ceiniogau hynny.

POWELL DUFFRYN GROUP OF COMPANIES

COKE · MANUFACTURED FUELS · BRIQUETTES,
AND METAL PRESERVATIVES · OIL · LIQUID FUELS · PARAFFIN WAX,
ASPHALTUM · PITCH · BITUMEN · TEXTILE WATERPROOFING,
ROOFING FELT · ROAD CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS.



Working for PDs

**IVOR DAVIES,
ELECTRICAL
ENGINEER,
WINDSOR
COLLIERY**

My father worked as a collier in Bargoed Colliery under the Powell Duffryn Company. One day he injured his finger so badly that he had difficulty in working. His doctor told him not to work so he went to the Powell Duffryn Company compensation doctor and was put on compensation pay. Unfortunately his finger became gangrenous and had to be amputated. When it had healed he returned to work and was put on 'light employment' pushing drams of coal around on pit bottom. After some weeks it was decided to pay him a lump sum of £4 for the loss of his finger - and give him the sack! That was an example of what Powell Duffryn's attitude was, he

couldn't work on the coal face and they were overmanned on pit bottom - so he had to go!

Things changed under the National Coal Board. I was working in Windsor Colliery and I remember the storeman telling the engineer 'Your day is over, the people own the pits now and there won't be the drive to make money for the shareholders'. That was good but it went from one extreme to the other, you used to have an engineer in Windsor who would ask every day what the cost per ton of coal was from the washery and would play hell if it had gone up a penny or whatever, now, under the Coal Board, you didn't have the same pressure on the workmen to worry about those pennies.

'Powell Duffryneiddio'

**GWILYM
JONES,
WELDIWR,
DRIFTY
GARN A
BIG PIT**

Doedd gan Gwmni Blaenafon ddim enw da iawn; nhw oedd biau'r cwbl lot ym Mlaenafon. Fyddai hynny ddim yn cael digwydd heddiw, fyddai'r genhedlaeth yma ddim yn goddef hynny. O'r blaen, roedd ganddyn nhw asiant a oedd yn marchogaeth o gwmpas y lle ar farch gwyn ac roedd disgwyl i bawb ddangos parch ato. Roedd rhaid i'r merched wneud cyrtsi o'i flaen a'r bechgyn gyffwrdd â'u capiau. Ond roedd fy mam i'n dipyn o rebel ac roedd hi'n gwrthod gwneud cyrtsi. Roedd hi'n benderfynol o beidio ac roedd fy nhad-cu yn grac iawn â hi am hynny.

Roeddwn i'n gweithio ar Lethr y Garn ar y Diwrnod Breinio ym 1947 ac roedd e'n dipyn o achlysur. Roedd y glowyr i gyd wedi crynhoi y tu fas i'r baths pen pwll. Gawson ni araith gan ddyn o'r enw Jack Carter a oedd mewn swydd uchel yn yr undeb ac fe godwyd y faner. Roedd e'n ddiwrnod emosiynol iawn achos roedd y dynion wedi brwydro dros y gwladoli ers blynnyddoedd a doedden nhw ddim yn disgwyl iddo ddod mor glou. Roedd y faner yn hedfan dros y baths am dipyn o amser ac rwy'n dal i gofio'r araith 'Rhaid i chi gofio mai ni biau hyn i gyd. Ni biau'r pyllau glo nawr!'

Wel, pharodd hynny ddim yn hir. Yn hytrach na chael ein gwladoli, fe ddywedwn i ein bod wedi cael ein 'Powell Duffryneiddio'. Roedd popeth yn cael ei

reddeg yn ôl trefn Powell Duffryn achos eu dynion nhw oedd yn rhedeg y Bwrdd Glo. Roedd y dynion yn disgwyl newidiadau mawr ond ddaethon nhw ddim felly roedd pawb yn siomedig. O feddwl yn ôl, symudwyd llawer o'r gwaith peirianyddol o Flaenafon i weithdai Tredegar a Thredomen. Roeddwn i'n teimlo bod hynny'n bychanu'n sgiliau ni ac roedd llawer o'r dynion yn chwerw iawn am hynny. Dim gwelliant oedd hynny. Roeddwn i'n teimlo mai newid er mwyn newid oedd e. Roedd y glowyr eu hunain yn siomedig hefyd. Glowyr oedd fy nhad a 'mrawd. Roedden nhw'n disgwyl amodau gwell ond ddaethon nhw ddim. Cafodd llawer o arian ei arllwys i rannau eraill o'r maes glo ond roeddwn i'n teimlo ein bod ni ar ein pen ein hunain a bod y Bwrdd Glo wedi anghofio amdanon ni ym Mlaenafon.

Un peth roedd y Bwrdd Glo yn ceisio'i wneud oedd gwrthio'r hen reolwyr allan a rhoi rhai newydd i mewn gan ddefnyddio'r hyn maen nhw'n ei galw'n system 'llwybr cyflym' heddiw. Roedden nhw'n cynnal cyrsiau yng Ngholeg Crymlin ac fe es i ar un mewn meteleg ond roedden nhw eisau i mi lofnodi ffurflen yn dweud mai dim ond i'r NCB fyddwn i'n gweithio ac fe wrthodais i wneud hynny. Roedden nhw'n gwrthio dynion trwy'r cyrsiau hyn cyn gynted ag y gallen nhw. Roedd rhai o'r dynion roeddwn i'n teithio i lawr i Grymlin gyda nhw o dan bwysau ofnadwy ac fe gafodd un 'nervous breakdown' hyd yn oed, ond roedd y Bwrdd Glo yn benderfynol o gael eu dynion eu hunain i swyddi o awdurdod.

'Powell Duffrynised'

**GWILYM
JONES,
WELDER,
GARN DRIFT
AND BIG PIT**

The Blaenavon Company didn't have a very good name; they owned Blaenafon lock, stock and barrel, that wouldn't happen today, the modern generation wouldn't put up with it. They used to have an agent who rode around on a white charger and everyone would be expected to show respect to him, the girls had to curtsy and the boys to touch their caps. However my mother was a bit of a rebel and refused to curtsy, she was determined not to do it and got into trouble with my grandfather over it.

I was working in Garn Slope on Vesting Day, 1947 and it was quite an occasion. All the miners were assembled outside the pithead baths and a man called Jack Carter who was high up in the union made a speech and the flag was raised. It was a very emotional day because the

men had fought for nationalisation for many years and didn't expect it to come as quickly as it did. The flag flew for quite a while over the baths and I can still remember the speech 'You must remember that this is all ours, we own the collieries now!'

Well that didn't last long, I would say that rather than being nationalised we were 'Powell Duffrynised'. Everything now was run on Powell Duffryn lines because men from that company were in charge of the Coal Board. The men expected big changes and they didn't happen and they were very disappointed. Thinking back, a lot of the engineering side was taken from Blaenafon to Tredegar and Tredomen workshops, which I felt rather belittled our skills, there was a lot of resentment over that. It wasn't an improvement; I felt that it was change for the sake of change. The miners themselves were also disappointed, my father and

FIGURE 1. AVERAGE OF 1990-1991

Chlorine No. 14, 15 Chloride, 125. Fluoride of 125. Silver Chloride

Chairman: **Alfred Evans, J.P.,** Gladly
 Commencing at 2 p.m. Do not fail to attend.

DR. ALBERT T. THOMAS, Vice-Chairman of the South Western Division Coal Board

SUPPORTED BY THE COFF WORKMEN'S LEAGUE
 (Reverend Captain H. H. Nichols, Commanding Officer, Silver Lake Station)

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1-2-4-8-16-32-64-128-256-512-1024-2048-4096-8192-16384-32768-65536-131072-262144-524288-1048576-2097152-4194304-8388608-16777216-33554432-67108864-134217728-268435456-536870912-1073741824-2147483648-4294967296-8589934592-17179869184-34359738368-68719476736-137438953472-274877906944-549755813888-1099511627776-2199023255552-4398046511104-8796093022208-17592186044416-35184372088832-70368744177664-140737488355328-281474976710656-562949953421312-1125899906842624-2251799813685248-4503599627370496-9007199254740992-18014398509481984-36028797018963968-72057594037927936-144115188075855872-288230376151711744-576460752303423488-1152921504606846976-2305843009213693952-4611686018427387904-9223372036854775808-18446744073709551616-36893488147419103232-73786976294838206464-147573952589676412928-295147905179352825856-590295810358705651712-1180591620717411303424-2361183241434822606848-4722366482869645213696-9444732965739290427392-18889465931478580854784-37778931862957161709568-75557863725914323419136-151115727451828646838272-302231454903657293676544-604462909807314587353088-1208925819614629174706176-2417851639229258349412352-4835703278458516698824704-9671406556917033397649408-19342813113834066795298816-38685626227668133590597632-77371252455336267181195264-154742504910672534362390528-309485009821345068724781056-618970019642690137449562112-1237940039285380274899242224-2475880078570760549798484448-4951760157141521099596968896-9903520314283042199193937792-19807040628566084398387875584-39614081257132168796775751168-79228162514264337593551502336-158456325028528675187103004672-316912650057057350374206009344-633825300114114700748412018688-1267650600228229401496824037376-2535301200456458802993648074752-5070602400912917605987296149504-10141204801825835211974592299008-20282409603651670423949184598016-4056481920730334084789836917632-8112963841460668169579673835264-16225927682921336339159347670528-32451855365842672678318695341056-64903710731685345356637390682112-129807421463370690713274781364224-2596148429267413814265495627284448-519229685853482762853099125456896-1038459371706965525706198250913792-2076918743413931051412396501827584-4153837486827862102824793003655168-8307674973655724205649586007310336-16615349947311448411299172014620672-33230699894622896822598344029241344-66461399789245793645196688058482688-132922799578491587290393376116965376-265845599156983174580786752233930752-531691198313966349161573504467861504-1063382396627932698323147008935723008-2126764793255865396646294017871446016-4253529586511730793292588035742892032-8507059173023461586585176071485784064-170141183460469231731703521429715681216-34028236692093846346340704285943136432-68056473384187692692681408571888268864-136112946768375385385362817137775372928-272225893536750770770725634275550745856-544451787073501541541451268551101491712-1088903574147003083082902537102202983424-2177807148294006166165805074204405966848-4355614296588012332331610148408811933696-8711228593176024664663220296817623867392-17422457186352049329326440593652477344-34844914372704098658652881187304954688-69689828745408197317305762374609909376-139379657490816394634611524754919818752-278759314981632789269223049109839637504-557518629963265578538446098219679275008-1115037259926531157076892196439358550016-2230074519853062314153784392878717100032-446014903970612462830756878575743420064-892029807941224925661513757151486840128-1784059615882449851323027514302973680256-3568119231764899702646055028605947364512-7136238463529799405292110057211894729024-14272476927059598810584220114423789458048-28544953854119197621168440228847578916096-57089907708238395242336884457695117832192-114179815416476790484673768915390235664384-228359630832953580969347537830780471328768-456719261665907161938695075661560942657536-913438523331814323877390151323121885315072-1826877046663628647754780302646243770630144-3653754093327257295509560605292487541260288-7307508186654514591019121210584975082520576-14615016373309029182038242421169950165041152-29230032746618058364076484842339900330082304-58460065493236116728152969684679800660164608-11692013098647223345630593

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Chairman: George H. Hamilton, Jr. (NY)

• JOIN IN THE CELEBRATIONS

15

Weithiau, 'dyw breuddwydio

GEORGE
BRINLEY EVANS,
GLOFA
BANWEN

Y cyntaf o Ionawr, 1947. Tri diwrnod o 'ngwyliau ar ôl ac yna byddwn i'n mynd i lawr i Southampton i ddal y llong i fynd yn ôl i'r Dwyrain Pell.

Peth arall oedd yn digwydd ar y diwrnod hwnnw, er ei fod yn llawer llai pwysig i mi ar y pryd, oedd bod pyllau glo Prydain yn cael eu gwladoli. Roedd pob glöwr ym Mhrydain wedi bod yn edrych ymlaen at hynny, wedi bod yn breuddwydio amdano ac, yn wir, wedi bod yn gweddio amdano. Roedd y ffordd greulon a milain y bu perchnogion y pyllau a'r rheolwyr yn trin y glowyr dros y blynnyddoedd wedi arwain at ddirmyg a oedd bron iawn yn gasineb llwyr. Roedd tri glöwr yn cael eu lladd ym Mhrydain ar bob diwrnod gwaith ar y pryd.

Felly, roedd yna wir lawenydd.

Roedd baner Bwrdd Glo Prydain yn cyhwfan yn falch ar ben pob pwl ag arno logo aur yr NCB ar gefndir glas. Ni fyddai trychineb fel un Gresfford yn digwydd eto - dair blynedd ar ddeg ynghynt, cafodd 266 o lowyr, yn fechgyn

a dynion, eu llosgi i farwolaeth yn y pwl yn y gogledd; dim ond 16 corff a godwyd ac ni chafwyd hyd i eiddo neb. Felly, roedd pobl pob maes glo ym Mhrydain yn llawenhau o waelod calon.

Es i 'nôl i weithio yn y diwydiant glo ym mis Rhagfyr 1947.

Ar ôl bod i ffwrdd am bedair blynedd, fe welais fod llawer wedi newid. Roedd y rheolwr, Mr John Williams, yn meddwl y byddai'n well i mi ddechrau gweithio gydag Alf Ashley a 'nhad, dau ddyn profiadol yn ardal Grey's yn Onllwyn Rhif 3 (Glofa Banwen). Roedd yr ysbryd yn dda - ond, wedyn, roedd yr ysbryd ym mhob glofa'n dda achos byddech chi'n colli ffrindiau fesul dwsinau pe baech chi'n conan yn y gwaith.

Doedd neb yn disgwyl gwyrthiau ar ôl y gwladoli ond, yn raddol, sylweddolodd y bobl fod yna anghymhwyster ar raddfa fawr, rhyw fath o daith anhrefnus i rywle ond 'wyddai neb i le yn union.

Rwy'n cofio un achlysur sy'n profi hyn. Roeddwn i'n



'AROS AM GOLAU' GAN GEORGE BRINLEY EVANS
'AROS AM GOLAU' BY GEORGE BRINLEY EVANS

Dreaming

GEORGE
BRINLEY EVANS,
BANWEN
COLLIERY

First of January, 1947. Three days left of my leave then I had to proceed to Southampton to take ship for my return to the Far East.

Also happening that day, although of much less importance to me at the time, was that the coalmines of Great Britain were being taken into public ownership. It was something that every miner in Britain had wanted, had dreamt about indeed had been praying for. The often callous and brutal treatment of coalminers over the years by both mine owners and management had nurtured a contempt that bordered on hatred. There were three British miners killed every single working day at the time.

So there was genuine rejoicing.

The National Coal Board standard flew proudly at every pithead, the NCB gold logo on a blue field. There would be no more 'Gresfords', only thirteen years earlier 266 miners, man and boys, had been burnt to death in the north Wales pit and only 16 bodies were ever recovered and no one properly brought to book. So the rejoicing was truly heartfelt in every coalfield on this island.

ddim yn ddigon

gweithio yn lle gyrrwr yr injan dan ddaear yng ngwythien Eighteen Feet. Roedd y rhaff ar y brif injan ddirwyn bedair troedfedd tua modfedd a hanner ar draws a rhyw filltir o hyd. Roedd y rheolwr, John Williams, yn cwmpo mas yn ffyrnig â rhyw ddynion o HQ. Roedden nhw eisïau rhoi rhaff oedd lawer yn fwy trwchus ac yn hirach yn lle'r rhaff honno ac roedd y rheolwr yn esbonio bod popeth yn gweithio'n iawn fel yr oedd. Roedd John Williams yn cael ei gyfrif yn un o beirianwyr gorau'r diwydiant glo trwy Brydain ond fe gollodd y ddad!!

Gosodwyd y rhaff newydd ond yn fuan iawn gwelwyd ei bod yn rhy drwm i'r jyrni (trên o dramiau) i'w thynnu ar hyd y lefel. Dyn a wŷr faint gostiodd hi i gywiro'r camgymeriad dwl yna. Ac roedd y math hwnnw o gamgymeriad hanner-call ac eithriadol o gostus yn digwydd ddwsin o weithiau bob dydd ym mhob maes glo trwy'r wlad.

Wedyn, un tro roedd Dai Hop a minnau'n newid ac yn dyblu'r coed ar shift brynhawn yng ngwythien Eighteen Feet. Roedd un neu ddau o'r glowyr dros 70 oed ond roedden nhw'n llenwi cymaint o lo â'r rhan fwyaf o'r

dynion ac yn ennill cyflog iawn, tua £11 neu £12 yr wythnos ar y pryd, rwy'n credu. Un dydd lau, fe orffennon ni shift y prynhawn a chodi'n pecynnau pae. Roedd casyn yn sownd wrth becynnau pae'r dynion hynaf a nodyn bach anniben ynddo yn dweud eu bod yn cael 14 diwrnod o rybudd. Dim pensiwn, dim tâl diswyddo, dim - ac roedd un neu ddau o'r hen ddynion wedi dechrau gweithio'n 13 oed!

Roeddwn i wedi bod yn paentio ac yn tynnu lluniau erioed a'r dydd Sul hwnnw fe wnes i gartŵn oedd yn beirniadu'r rheolwyr a'r undeb a'i anfon at bapur Llais Llafur ac fe wnaethon nhw ei gyhoeddi.

Trefnodd John Williams i ddod â'r hen ddynion nôl am ddiwrnod, cyflogodd nhw a'u cadw yn y cantîn tan ddiwedd y shift. Roedd hynny'n golygu eu bod yn cael punt yr wythnos yn bensiwn o'r lofa ar ben pensiwn wythnosol y llywodraeth. Hyd yn oed wedyn, roedd eu hincwm wythnosol dros 70 y cant yn llai nag y bu.

Roeddwn i mor grac â'r ffordd roedd y Bwrdd Glo Cenedlaethol yn ymddwyn fel y gwnes i gerflun o löwr yn

sometimes is not enough

I returned to mining in December 1947.

Because I had been away four years, and a lot of things had changed during that time, the manager, Mr John Williams, thought I had better start work with Alf Ashley and my father, two experienced men, in the Grey's district of Onllwyn No 3 (Banwen Colliery). The atmosphere was good - but then the atmosphere in any colliery was good because whingeing at work lost you friends at a mile a minute.

No one expected miracles from nationalisation but people became slowly aware of a giant incompetence, a kind of disjointed progress to somewhere, but no one knew exactly where.

One instance that I witnessed was at the time I was standing in for the underground engine driver in the Eighteen Feet seam. The rope on the main four feet winding engine was about an inch and half in diameter and perhaps about a mile long. The manager, John Williams, was having a heated argument with some blokes from HQ. They wanted to replace the existing rope with a much thicker longer rope and the manager was pointing out that things were working fine as they were. John Williams was regarded as one of the most competent mining engineers in the country but he lost the argument!

The new rope was fitted and proved to be too heavy for the weight of the journey (train of trams) to pull the length of the drift. What it cost to put that stupid blunder right goodness only knows. And that sort of crack-brained, hugely expensive blunder was happening a dozen times a day, in every coalfield in the country.

Then there was the time Dai Hop and myself were changing and doubling timber on afternoon shift in the Eighteen Feet seam. One or two of the colliers were over seventy years of age but filling as much coal as most and earning a tidy wage, I think about £11 or £12 a week at the time. We came out one Thursday off afternoon shift and picked up our pay dockets. The old timers had an envelope attached to theirs with a crude little note inside telling them they were on 14 days notice. No pension, no redundancy, nothing - and one or two of the old chaps had started work at 13 years of age!

I had always painted and drawn and that Sunday I drew a cartoon, a criticism of both management and trade union, and sent it to the Llais Llafur (Labour Voice) newspaper which published it.

John Williams had the old men brought back for a day, signed them on and kept them in the canteen until the end of the shift. That meant that the old fellers qualified

DOWTY HYDRAULIC PIT PROPS

The Miner's Friend



EASY TO SET
EASY TO WITHDRAW

After a good day's work for Britain



-that's when beer is best



Weithiau, 'dyw breuddwydio ddim

eistedd mewn twll arbennig i ddisgwyl i'w lygaid gyfarwyddo â'r tywyllwch. Roedden ni'n arfer galw hynny'n 'aros am golau'. Mae mwgwd am lygaid y dyn yn fy ngherflun i ac fe wnes i ei alw'n Aros am Golau. (Mae i'w weld yn Big Pit erbyn hyn). Roedd y dynion wedi brwydro dros y blynyddoedd i sicrhau bod y diwydiant yn cael ei wladoli - roedd rhai hyd yn oed wedi'u carcharu! Roeddwn i eisiau i'r cerflun ofyn 'A ble uffern rydyn ni'n mynd o fan hyn?'

O ddydd i ddydd, daeth yn fwyfwy amlwg nad oedd modd rhedeg diwydiant glo Prydain o ryw gyfeiriad swanc yn Belgravia, Llundain. Roedd diffygion mawr yn y gwaith cynllunio a threfnu ym mhob man. Ond, roedd y gwaith yn mynd ymlaen fel arfer ar y ffas.

Gwnaeth yr Athro Dai Smith gyfres o raglenni teledu o'r enw *Wales! Wales?* Yn un ohonyn nhw, roedd actor ifanc yn darllen o araith a ysgrifennodd dyn gwirio a phwyso tua dechrau'r 1930au. Ynddi, roedd yn rhybuddio yn erbyn gwladoli'r diwydiant - 'Os ceir anghydfod, byddwch wyneb yn wyneb â'r llywodraeth ac yna'r heddlu, pa blaid bynnag a fydd yn llywodraethu'.

Roedd yn hollol iawn! Gallai mentrau cydweithredol fod wedi gweithio gan y byddai'r holl benderfyniadau gweithredol yn cael eu gwneud yn y glofeydd eu hunain. Roedd hyn yn bwysig gan fod yr amodau o dan y dddear yn newid o funud i funud.

Cyn y Gwladoli, teulu Evan Bevan oedd yn berchen ar y rhan fwyaf o'r tai yng nghwm Dulais ac yn eu cynnal a'u

Dreaming sometimes is not enough

for one pound a week colliery pension to add to their weekly old age pension. Even so their weekly income was still cut by more than 70 per cent.

I became so disgusted with the behaviour of the National Coal Board that I made a sculpture of a miner sitting in a manhole waiting for his eyes to get accustomed to the dark. We called the practice 'waiting for light'. The figure I sculpted is blindfolded and called *Aros am Golau* (it's now on display at Big Pit). Men had struggled over the years to bring about nationalisation - they had even gone to prison! I wanted the sculpture to ask 'And where the hell do we go from here?'

With each day that passed it became more and more apparent that trying to run the coal industry of Britain from a posh address in Belgravia wasn't working. Everywhere you looked there was disorderliness in planning and organisation. Still, work went on at the coal face in spite of it all.

Professor Dai Smith made a series of television programs called *Wales! Wales?* In one episode he had a young actor read from a speech that a check-weigh

yn ddigon

cadw. Fel pobl oedd yn byw mewn meysydd glo eraill, dioddefodd pobl Cwm Dulais ddwy glatshen - daeth yr NCB yn berchnogion ar eu tai!

Roedd gan y teulu Bevan dîm o ddynion i gynnal a chadw tai yn y dyffryn. Pe bai llechen yn rhydd, byddai un arall wedi'i gosod yn ei lle cyn diwedd y dydd. Roedd pob tŷ'n cael ei baentio bob pedair blynedd. Pan gymerodd yr NCB drosodd, chafodd Roman Road, Banwen, sef stryd o 64 o dai, ddim ei phaentio am ryw ugain mlynedd. Roedd safon y gwaith cynnal a chadw mor ddrwg nes bod un o'r tai wedi dymchwel - rhif 63.

Wrth edrych yn ôl, fe welwn ni ddiwydiant anferthol, wedi'i dan-ariannu'n ddifrifol am flynyddoedd lawer, ac wedi'i roi i wleidydd i gael trefn arno. Efallai nad oedd y dyn hwn wedi rhedeg Clwb Cynilo Nadolig, hyd yn oed, erioed yn ei fywyd! Efallai ei fod yn meddwl bod dawn dweud a'r gallu i fygwth a bwlio yn ddigon. Ond heb y gallu i redeg busnes doedd dim gobaith i'r diwydiant.

Efallai pe bai rhywun wedi meddwl am ofyn, neu pe bai rhywun wedi bod yn ddigon dewr i ofyn i rywun fel pennaeth Boots the Chemist neu bennaeth cwmni ceir Austin i ofalu am y diwydiant, neu wedi mynnu bod mentrau cydweithredol yn cael eu sefydlu, y byddai'r freuddwyd wedi'i gwireddu.

Un peth cadarnhaol a ddigwyddodd o ganlyniad i'r gwladoli oedd bod trefniadau iechyd a diogelwch wedi gwella'n sylweddol iawn.



GEORGE EVANS YN AROS I DDECHRAU
EI SHIFFT YNG NGLOFA BANWEN
GEORGE EVANS WAITING TO GO ON
SHIFT AT BANWEN COLLIERY

man had written in the early 1930s. In it he warned against nationalisation - 'A dispute will bring you into direct confrontation with the government and subsequently the police, no matter what party holds office'.

How right he was! Co-operatives could have worked with all the operational decisions being made at the pithead. This was a must because underground conditions change from minute to minute.

Until nationalisation most of the houses in the Dulais valley were owned and maintained by the Evan Bevan family. Like people living in other coalfields, people in the Dulais valley suffered a double whammy - the NCB became their landlords!

The Bevan family kept a team of house maintenance men in the valley. If a slate blew off it was replaced before the day was out. Each house was painted once every four years. When the NCB took over, Roman Road, Banwen, a street of sixty-four houses, wasn't painted for about twenty years. So bad was the standard of maintenance that one house actually fell down - number 63.

With the advantage of hindsight we are now able to see an industry, colossal in size, massively underfunded for many, many years and generally very badly managed, handed to a politician to sort out, a man who perhaps had not even run a Christmas Savings Club in his life! Perhaps thinking that the gift of the gab and able to huff, puff, bully and bluster would be enough. But without the ability to run a business it was down the plug hole for sure.

Maybe if someone had thought of asking, or if someone had had the courage to ask, say the head of Boots the Chemist or the head of Austin Cars to take charge, or demand co-operatives to be set up then perhaps the dream would have become reality.

The one positive thing that the miners got from nationalisation was that health and safety improved out of all recognition.

Dynion a hyfforddwyd gan y Bwrdd Glo

STEVE
GRIFFITHS,
GLOFA
PENALLTA

Ddechreuais i fel prentis mwyngloddio ond roedd 'na brentisiaid crefftau mwyn-gloddio hefyd - ffiter neu drydanwr oedd y prentis crefft mwyngloddio. Pan oeddech chi'n mynd i Britannia [Ysgol Fwyngloddio] roeddech chi'n cael gwneud prawf - er mai fel prentis mwyngloddio roeddech chi wedi cychwyn - a mynd am brentisiaeth crefft mwyngloddio. Hyd yn oed bedair neu bum mlynedd yn ddiweddarach, pan o'n i'n 22, allwn i fod wedi mynd at y swyddog hyfforddi a gofyn 'Ydi hi'n bosib mynd ar gwrs un diwrnod yr wythnos?', ac, os oedd modd, bydden nhw'n eich anfon chi i'r coleg un diwrnod yr wythnos a byddech chi'n gwneud prentisiaeth yno.

Felly, byddech chi'n gwneud eich gwaith bedwar diwrnod yr wythnos ond byddech chi'n cael hyfforddiant un diwrnod yr wythnos. Roedd nifer o'r bechgyn yn gwneud hynny gyda hyfforddiant ffeiarman ... Felly, wrth i'r hen ffeiarman roi'r gorau iddi, roedd y rhai ifanc yn dod trwodd yn eu lle. Roedd ganddyn nhw dipyn bach o brofiad ymarferol

yn barod ac roedd ganddyn nhw wybodaeth lan stâr am nwyon a chlyw a'r holl reolau roedd angen eu cadw.

Pan fydda i'n siarad â phobl nawr, peirianwyr ac ati, maen nhw'n dweud bod cynllun prentisiaeth y Bwrdd Glo yn ardderchog, yn wirioneddol wych. Pan fydd y cwmni dw i'n gweithio iddyn nhw nawr eisiau cyflogi trydanwyr neu ffitters, maen nhw bob amser yn cymryd rhai gafodd eu hyfforddi gan y Bwrdd Glo. I ddweud y gwir, dim ond pum ffiter sydd yn y ffatri ac mae pedwar wedi'u hyfforddi gan y Bwrdd Glo. Mae yno bum trydanwr ac mae tri ohonyn nhwythe wedi dod o'r Bwrdd Glo. Fe ddwedith y peiriannydd wrthoch chi y bydd e bob amser yn barod i gymryd dyn gafodd ei ddysgu gan yr NCB. Dwi'n meddwl mai'r rheswm yw bod y rheolau dan ddaear mor gaeth oherwydd beth allai ddigwydd os nad oedden nhw. Tanchwa ac ati. Mae'n wahanol i ddy. Pe bai tŷ'n mynd ar dân, fe allech chi redeg mas trwy ddrws y bac. O dan ddaear, does dim unman i ddianc. Felly roedd yr hyfforddiant yn gorfod bod yn dda. Dw i'n meddwl ei bod yn drueni bod y math yna o brentisiaethau wedi dod i ben.

Coal Board trained men

STEVE
GRIFFITHS,
PENALLTA
COLLIERY

I started as a mining apprentice [but] you had a mining craft apprentice as well - the mining craft apprentice was a fitter or an electrician. When you went to Britannia [School of Mines] you could still sit a test - although you had started as a mining apprentice - and go for a mining craft apprenticeship. Even later on, four or five years down the line, when I was 22, I could still have gone to the training officer and said 'Look is there any chance on getting on a one day a week course?', and if there was anything going, they'd send you to college one day a week and you would do an apprenticeship there.

So you would be doing your job four days a week but you'd have a one-day release then. A number of boys used to do it for fireman training ... So as the older firemen finished they were blooding the youngsters to come through. They had a bit of practical experience under their belt you know and they had it upstairs as

well for their gas and hearing and their rules and regulations and all that.

I talk to people now, you know engineers and things, and they say that the apprenticeship scheme with the Coal Board was excellent, it was absolutely outstanding. And the firm I work for now whenever they are taking on electricians or fitters will take Coal Board trained men. In fact there are only five fitters in the factory and four of them are ex-Coal Board. We have five electricians and three of them are ex-Coal Board. The engineer will tell you he will take a Coal Board man anytime. I think that's what it was, the regulations underground were so strict because the consequences if it wasn't, was, you know explosions, whatever. It's not like in a house where if a house goes up in flames you could run out the back door. Underground it was big-time, like. I think that was it, the training that was given was so good. I think that it was a shame that they stopped those sorts of apprenticeships.



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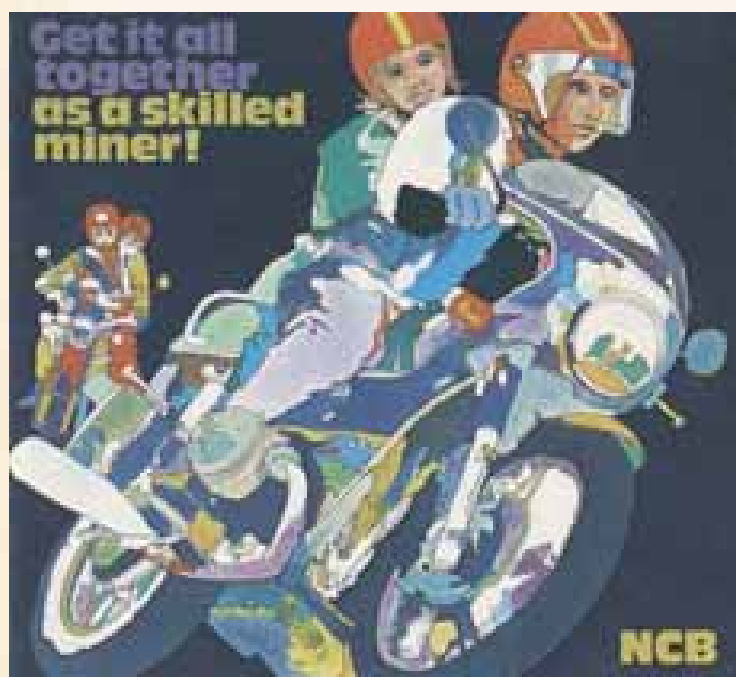
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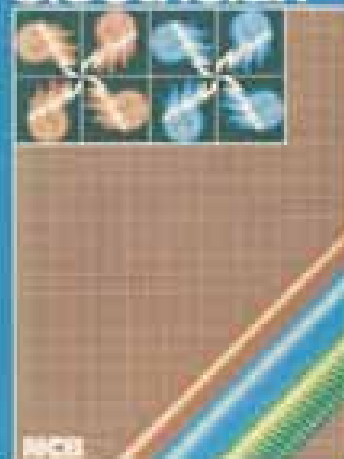
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Disgyblaeth ac ofn

**BILL
RICHARDS,
GLOFA
CAMBRIAN**

Pan ddechreuais i weithio yng Nglofa Cambrian, Clydach Vale ym 1953, roedd y diwydiant wedi'i wladoli ers chwe blynedd. Powell Duffryn Associated

Collieries oedd biau'r lle cynt ac roedd ganddyn nhw enw drwg iawn am y ffordd roedden nhw'n trin y gweithwyr.

Dysgu mwynloddio oeddwn i ac, ar ôl gwneud gwahanol bethau am rai misoedd, cefais i waith clarc mesur. Roedd hynny'n golygu mesur a chofnodi cynnyrch deugain o goliers ac ugain o gryts bob dydd. Roedd hon yn swydd gyfrifol ac roeddwn i'n gorfod cydweithio'n agos â swyddogion y lofa, o'r ffeirmyn i'r goruchwylwyr, yr is-reolwyr a'r rheolwyr ac rwy'n credu bod y rheiny i gyd wedi dechrau gweithio o dan gwmnïau preifat. Roedd y ddisgyblaeth, neu'r ofn, a gawson nhw gan y perchnogion gynt yn dal i'w weld ynddyn nhw ac roedd llawer ohonyn nhw'n gyndyn o roi unrhyw gonsesiynau i'r gweithwyr. Y gweithwyr ar dasg oedd yn dioddef fwyaf oherwydd hyn gan fod y ffeirmyn a'r goruchwylwr yn gyndyn o ganiatáu mwy na swllt neu ddwy'n ychwanegol am weithio ymlaen neu weithio o dan amodau gwael.

Un enghraifft o hyn oedd bod glöwr ar dasg yn gallu gweithio'n galetach o dan amodau gwael nag un oedd mewn lle da. Ond, gan nad oedd taliadau

penodol am weithio mewn lle sâl, byddai heb ennill digon o arian ar ddiwedd ei shift. Yn aml, byddai ei gais am dâl shift oedd yn debyg i'r hyn fyddai wedi'i ennill mewn lle arferol gan ei fod wedi gorfod gweithio'n galetach yn cael ei wrthod a byddai'n cael ei dalu yr isafswm statudol am y diwrnod - nad oedd yn dâl teg am ei holl waith.

Enghraifft arall o'r ffordd yr oedd ffeirmyn a goruchwylwyr yn dal i ofni'r rheolwyr ers y blyneddoddd cyn 1947 oedd y ffordd yr oeddent yn aros o dan ddaear am dair neu bedair awr ar ôl diwedd shift pryd na chloddwyd cymaint ag arfer o lo, gan fod darn mawr o'r to wedi syrthio efallai. Yn aml, fe welais i swyddogion y shift yn eistedd yn y caban ar waelod y pwll am ryw awr ar ôl i'w shift ddod i ben yn hytrach na mynd i'r wyneb gan eu bod yn gwybod bod yr is-reolwr neu'r rheolwr yno o hyd ac y byddai'n eu beirniadu am gynhyrchu cyn lleied. Trwy osgoi'r rheolwyr, roedden nhw'n gobeithio y byddai'r bosys yn meddwl eu bod nhw yn dal wrth eu gwaith yn datrys y problemau. Dw i ddim yn gwybod a oedd y dacteg hon yn gweithio achos roedd y rheolwyr a'r is-reolwyr wedi bod yn ffeirmyn ac yn oruchwylwr eu hunain rhyw dro!

Pan oeddwn i'n 16 oed, doeddwn i ddim yn sylweddoli bod newid araf ar droed; newid a fyddai'n cyflymu wrth i'r swyddogion a fu'n gweithio mewn pylau preifat roi'r gorau iddi ac i rai a ddechreuodd

Discipline and fear

**BILL
RICHARDS,
CAMBRIAN
COLLIERY**

When I began work at Cambrian Colliery, Clydach Vale in 1953, the industry had been nationalised for six years. The departing coal owners had been the Powell Duffryn

Associated Collieries, a company with a particularly notorious record regarding the treatment of its workforce.

After a few months carrying out various jobs I was, as a mining student, directed to the job of measuring clerk, which entailed measuring and recording the daily output of forty colliers and twenty boys. This was a responsible position that saw me work closely with colliery officials from the rank of fireman through to those of overmen, under managers and managers and I believe that all those officials had first held their positions under private enterprise companies. The discipline, or fear, their former employers had instilled in them was still apparent and many of these officials were reluctant to make concessions of any form to workmen. Pieceworkers suffered most in this respect through the

reluctance of firemen and overmen to authorise anything more than the nominal couple of shillings allowance for additional work or bad conditions.

An example of this was when a collier on piecework might work harder in bad conditions than one in a good work place. However, as there were no set payments for geologically disturbed workplaces he usually found that he had not earned enough money at the end of his shift. Often his request that he be paid a shift rate equal to, or slightly below, what he might have earned in a normal workplace to reflect his greater efforts was dismissed and he would receive the statutory day wage minimum payment - poor reward for his efforts.

Another example of this fear of management, which carried on from pre-1947 years, was the practice of firemen and overmen staying underground three or four hours after the end of a shift during which low production had been experienced perhaps because of a large roof fall. Often I became aware of shift officials sitting in the cabin at pit bottom for an hour or so after

ar eu gwaith o dan yr NCB gymryd eu lle. Roedd rhai o'r swyddogion hyn yn feirniadol iawn o'r rhai newydd ac yn dweud na fydden nhw byth wedi llwyddo i gadw'u swydd o dan y drefn breifat, ac mae'n rhaid dweud bod llai o ddisgyblaeth a mwy o anghydfodau ac achosion o wrthod gweithio. Hyd yn oed ar ôl y gwladoli, roedd yn arfer cyffredin ar un cyfnod i oruchwylwyr a ffeirmyn anfon gweithwyr o'r man gweithio i'w disgyblu neu am resymau diogelwch ond, dros y blynyddoedd, collwyd yr awdurdod sylfaenol hwn ac, ym mlynnyddoedd olaf y diwydiant, y rheolwr oedd yn disgyblu fel rheol rhag ofn y byddai'r glowyr yn gwrthod gweithio pe bai'r is-swyddogion yn gwneud hynny. Roedd llai o barch at reolwyr hyd yn oed, a phe bai gweithiwr yn cael ei ddisgyblu am regi wrth siarad â rheolwr, roedd hynny'n ddigon i gychwyn anghydfod!

Roedd llawer o'r glowyr yn breuddwydio am gyfnod pryd y byddai'r diwydiant wedi'i wladoli a'i warchod ond rwy'n siwr mai ychydig iawn ohonynt oedd yn rhagweld cyfnod pan na fyddai'r un pwll yn holl gymoedd y de. Roedden nhw bob amser yn hyderus 'Bydd angen glo bob amser - bydd gwaith ar ein cyfer ni am byth!' Mae'n drist meddwl bod y freuddwyd wedi'i gwireddu ond na lwyddwyd i ragweld ac atal sefyllfa lle'r oedd gormodedd o anghydfodau diwydiannol a rheolaeth wael yn agor y drws i eithafwyr gwleidyddol chwalu'r diwydiant yn llwyr.



DIRPRWY A GORUCHWYLIWR YN TRAFOD
TACTEGAU O DAN DDAEAR
A DEPUTY AND OVERMAN DISCUSS
TACTICS UNDERGROUND

their shift had ended rather than ride the shaft to the surface where they knew that the under manager or manger still were and who would critically question them about the low productivity. By evading their superiors they hoped that those same officials would think that they were still deep in the workings overseeing the problems. I doubt if this tactic ever worked though as those managers and under managers had once been firemen and overmen themselves!

As a sixteen-year-old I was not then aware that a slow change was already starting, one that would accelerate as the former private enterprise officials disappeared and were replaced by others who had commenced under the control of the National Coal Board. Some of the older officials were privately scathing of the newer colleagues claiming that they would never have held a job down under private ownership and it has to be said that there was a decline in discipline and an increase in the incidence of disputes and stoppages of work. Even under nationalisation it was once common for overmen and firemen to send workmen from the

workings for disciplinary or safety reasons, but over the years this basic authority was withdrawn and in the final years of the industry it was usually the manager who adjudicated on such breaches in case the actions of the junior officials precipitated a stoppage. Even the respect once afforded to a manager diminished with disputes started through workmen being disciplined for addressing their superiors with indecent language!

It was the dream of many miners to witness the nationalisation and protection of the industry; I think that few of those ever foresaw a time when all the valleys of south Wales would not contain even one pit. There was always a self-assurance amongst them that 'They'll always want coal - there will always be jobs for us!' How sad it is that when the dream of nationalisation became reality it did not bring in its wake the foresight to predict and prevent the situation where an excess of industrial disputes and bad management would open the door for political extremists to bring about the total demise of the industry.

Mynd i lawr

**GWYN MORGAN,
GLOFEYDD
OGILVIE A DEEP
NAVIGATION,
1953-66**

Sdim ots ers faint o amser fyddech chi wedi gweithio o dan y ddaear, doeddech chi byth yn cyfarwyddo â mynd i lawr y pwll. Roedd gan bob glofa ddwy siafft, y siafft aer i fyny a'r siafft aer i lawr. Roedd yr hen aer twym, drewllyd yn cael ei dynnu trwy'r siafft aer i fyny gan ffan fawr ar ôl bod o dan y ddaear. Doedd dim ffan ar gyfer y siafft aer i lawr gan fod yr aer yn rhuthro i lawr i gymryd lle'r aer oedd yn cael ei sugno i fyny'r siafft arall. Yn yr haf, roedd cyflymder y gwynt yn gwneud iddo deimlo'n oer, yn y gaeaf roedd fel bod mewn twnel gwynt rhewllyd!

Roedd y glowyr yn cael eu gollwng i lawr y pwll mewn caetsh. Roedd un caetsh yn llenwi bron hanner siafft crwm y pwll. Roedd caetsh arall yn yr hanner arall. Pan oedd un caetsh ar y top, roedd y llall ar y gwaelod. Roedd rhaffau dur trwchus yn dal y ddau ac yn cael eu dirwyn dros yr olwynion tal pen pwll i'r sied weindio. Roedd y dyn weindio yn gweithio'r ddwy raff ar yr un pryd, y naill yn codi a'r llall yn gollwng. Roedd llawer o ddynion yn taeru eu bod yn gallu dweud pwy oedd yn rheoli'r rhaffau'r diwrnod hwnnw wrth y ffordd roedden nhw'n cael eu gollwng i'r pwll neu eu codi oddi yno.

Roedd gan ddynion oedd yn smocio ddwy flaenoriaeth. Roedd rhaid iddyn nhw sugno'r sigarét olaf i'r eithaf cyn mynd i lawr y pwll, ac roedd rhaid cael lle saff i gwato'u tun baco er mwyn cael mwgyn cyn gynted ag y gallen nhw ar ôl dod nôl i'r wyneb. Roedd rhaid cael lle da i'w gwato. Roedd rhaid iddo fod yn agos, yn sych a mas o olwg gweithwyr y wyneb. Cyn mynd i lawr y pwll, roedd pawb yn cael eu chwilio i weld a oedd ganddyn nhw fatshys a

sigarêts. Roedd hi fel rhyw ddawns ddefodol, byddai'r smygwyr yn gorfod codi eu breichiau ac wrth i'r chwilwyr fynd trwy eu pocedi, bydden nhw'n taflu'r stwmpyn olaf. Roedd y man archwilio'n agos at ben y siafft a byddai pawb yn rhuthro oddi yno i ddisgwyl am y caetsh. Roedd pawb eisiau dal y caetsh cyn gynted ag y gallen nhw er mwyn mynd o'r oerfel a chael y daith o hanner milltir i waelod y pwll drosodd cyn gynted ag y gallen nhw. Bydden nhw'n gwyro o dan y gât ac yn joslan ac yn jogan tan i'r gât gau arnyn nhw gan eu gwasgu i mewn yn dynn.

Yna, tawelwch. Dim ond swm diferion dwr o do'r caetsh yn taro'u helmedau. Dyma'r caetsh yn dechrau cwympo'n araf, heb fawr o swm wrth lithro i lawr y rhaffau canllaw sydd wedi'u hiro'n dda. Wrth i'r caetsh gyflymu, mae waliau'r siafft yn rhuthro heibio a'r diferion yn stopio. Mae ochrau concrit a brics y siafft yn troi'n niwlog. I lawr â nhw'n gyflymach eto. Does dim pwysau ar eu traed ac maen nhw'n teimlo fel pe baen nhw'n nofio yn yr awyr. Maen nhw i gyd yn meddwl y gwaethaf - fyddan nhw'n iawn? Ydyn nhw'n ddiogel? Mae'r gwynt yn rhuo wrth i'r caetsh arall ddod i gwrdd â nhw ar ei ffordd i fyny, yna tawelwch eto. Dyma'r weindiwr yn cyffwrdd â'r brêc. Mae pengliniau'r glowyr yn plygu ac mae pwysau trwm ar eu traed. Daw cawod arall o ddiferion. Brecio eto, rhagor o bwysau ar eu traed ond mwy o reolaeth wrth i'r caetsh arafu. Gallant weld ffurf y brics a'r concrit unwaith eto. Daw eu pwysau arferol yn ôl a dyma nhw'n dechrau chwerthin a phryfocio eto wrth iddyn nhw arafu a gorffwys yn esmwyth ar y gwaelod. I fyny â'r gât ac allan â nhw gan grymu eu pennau a gwylio'u traed cyn dechrau cerdded cryn bellter i'w man gweithio.

Going down

**GWYN MORGAN,
OGILVIE AND
DEEP
NAVIGATION
COLLIERIES,
1953-66**

It didn't matter how long you worked underground, you never got used to going down the pit. Each colliery had two shafts, one called the upcast, the other the downcast. The upcast shaft was where hot, stale, stinking air was sucked up after its journey through the underground workings, by a giant fan. The downcast had no fan and air rushed down it to replace what was sucked up through the upcast. In summer the speed of the airflow made it feel cold, in winter it was a freezing wind tunnel!

The miners were lowered down the pit in a cage. One cage filled almost half the rounded pit shaft. In the other half was another cage. When one was at the top, the other was at the bottom. Both were attached by thick

steel ropes, via the familiar headgear wheels to the winding house. The 'Winder' (or winding engine man), in control of the winding gear, operated both ropes simultaneously, one pulling up and one dropping down. Many men swore that they could tell who the winder was by the way they were transported up or down the pit.

Smokers, before going down the pit, had two priorities, one was to get every last suck out of their last cigarette and the other was to find a place to hide their 'bacco tin' so that they could light up as soon as they got back to the surface. A good hiding place was essential. It had to be close at hand, dry and out of sight of some surface worker who might be gasping for a free fag. Close to the shaft everyone going down the pit was searched for contraband matches and cigarettes. Like some ritual dance the smokers would outstretch their arms and,



DYNION YN
DISGWYL I
FYND O DAN
DDAEAR YNG
NGLOFA'R
CWM, TUA
1982
**MEN WAITING
TO DESCEND
CWM COLLIERY,
C.1982**

as fingers probed their pockets, they would flick away that last lighted dog end. After being given the OK to pass, it was but a short step to the shaft to wait for the cage to come up. There was always a rush to get into the cage as they wanted to get out of the cold and to get their half mile drop over as quick as possible. Ducking under the gate they jostle and joke until the gate drops behind them packing them in even more tightly than they were before.

Suddenly they are quiet; the only noise is the drops of water from the roof of the cage hitting their helmets. The cage starts to drop slowly, making very little noise as it slides down the well-greased guide ropes. The walls of the shaft rush past as the cage picks up speed. The droplets stop dripping. The concrete and brick sides of the shaft have now been replaced by a blur. They drop

even faster. There is no weight on their feet and they feel as if they are almost floating as if, maybe, they could be left behind by the cage. They are all thinking the unthinkable - are they all right? Are they safe? The other cage passes on its upward journey with a roaring rush of air, then it's quieter again as they drop on down, weightlessly. The winder touches his brake and their knees start to buckle and they weigh heavy on their feet as they are showered with droplets. More brake, more weight on their feet, but more control now as they slow down. The blur outside the cage turns back to concrete and brick, normal weight now, the laughter and banter start up again as they drop ever more slowly until with hardly a bump they are on the bottom. The gate is lifted and out they pour, crouching so as not to bump their heads, watching where they step, ready to start the long walk, to where they will work.



Six Bells

TEULUOEDD YN
DISGWYL
NEWYDDION
FAMILIES WAIT
AT THE PIT HEAD
FOR NEWS

DAVID JOHN
WITHERS,
GLOFA SIX
BELLS

Buodd 'nhad yn gweithio yn y lofa trwy ei oes ac fe ddilynais i e. Es i i weithio yng Nglofa Six Bells pan oeddwn i'n 17 oed. Pan gyrhaeddais i ffas 0.18 am y tro cynta fel helpwr, ges i 'nghyflwyno i Reggie Poe a fyddai'n 'byti' i mi. Dangosodd e'r tŵls y bydden ni'n eu defnyddio a dau farc sialc a 15 llath rhyngddyn nhw ar y ffas. Dyna lle fydden ni'n gweithio, 15 llath o hyd, 4 troedfedd 6 modfedd o ddyfnder a 5 troedfedd o uchder. Feddyliais i 'blydi hel' - roedd e'n lot o lo i'w symud. Roedd y ffasy eraill yn yr ardal yn fwy modern, gydag offer hydrolig i ddal y to ond roedden ni'n dal i ddefnyddio'r hen 'friction posts' a 'linked bars' - Alla i ddangos y creithiau ges i ar ôl i un o'r bariau ddod i lawr ar fy mhen i!

Gawson ni broblemau â nwy ar ffas 0.18 ac roedd y llwch yn ddigon o farn - byddai'r belt yn cychwyn ac allech chi ddim o'ch gweld eich gilydd tan i'r llwch setlo. Pan oedden ni'n ifanc, roedden ni'n aml yn gwrthod mynd ar y ffas gan fod cymaint o lwch yno - roedden ni'r criw ifanc yn cadw gyda'n gilydd hyd yn oed os oedd y swyddogion yn bygwth ein hanfon ni adref. Doedd hynny ddim yn llawer o fygythiad gan mai dim ond rhyw £6 oeddwn i'n ei ennill!

Ro'n i wedi bod yn gweithio am ryw ddwy flynedd pan ddigwyddodd y danchwa. Ro'n i'n gweithio ar ffas 0.18 yn Six Bells ar y 'shifft dro' ac fe gyrhaeddais i ar y bws i weld y lofa'n ferw gwyllt a chlywed bod 'na danchwa wedi bod. Gan fod y danchwa yn y man lle'r oedden ni'n gweithio a'n bod ni'n nabod y lle, fe gynigion ni fynd i lawr i helpu ond roedd y sefyllfa dan reolaeth gan y Frigâd Achub a chawson ni ddim mynd i lawr.

Mae'n anodd dweud sut rwy'n teimlo am y peth. Roedden ni'n gwybod fod nwy yno ac fe ddywedon nhw mai sbarc oedd wedi achosi'r ffrwydrad. Ro'n i'n mwynhau'r gwaith yn eitha da tan hynny. Dw i'n cofio pedwar o'r dynion a laddwyd yn arbennig - ro'n i'n arfer rhoi snisin iddyn nhw a rhisgl coed wedi'i falu ynddo fe fel jôc - roedd ysbryd da ymhlith y dynion yn y pwll. Ar ôl y danchwa, fe gollais i'r plaser.

Roddais i'r gorau iddi ychydig wedyn. Rois i fy notis i mewn. Ro'n i'n rhy ifanc i golli 'mywyd yn y pwll' - pe bawn i'n gweithio'r shifft ddydd yr wythnos honno, byddwn innau wedi marw. Ar ôl y danchwa, sylweddolais i beth oedd y peryglon ac fe es i weithio yn y diwydiant adeiladu - ro'n i'n un da â 'nwylo' - ond fe wnes i aeddfedu'n sydyn iawn yn y pwll.



TÎM ACHUB
Y GLOWYR
YN Y LOFA
MINES
RESCUE TEAM
AT THE
COLLIERY

**DAVID JOHN
WITHERS,
SIX BELLS
COLLIERY**

My father worked in the colliery all his life and I sort of followed him into the pit. I went to work in Six Bells Colliery at 17 years of age. When I first went on the 0.18

coal face as a collier's helper I was introduced to my 'buddy' Reggie Poe who showed me the tools we were using and two chalk marks 15 yards apart on the coal face. This was our working place, 15 yards long by 4 foot 6 deep by 5 feet high, I thought 'bloody hell' - it seemed a huge amount of coal to shift. Although the other coal faces in our District were more modern with hydraulic roof supports, we were still using the older 'friction posts' and 'linked bars' - I've still got the scars where one of the bars came down on me!

We had quite a few problems with gas on the 0.18 coal face and the dust was killing at times - the conveyor would start up and you couldn't see each other until the dust settled down. As boys we often refused to go onto the face because of the amounts of dust there - being youngsters we stuck together even when the officials threatened to send us home. It wasn't much of a threat as I was only earning about £6 odd!

I had been working about two years when the explosion happened. I was working on the 0.18 face at Six Bells on the 'turning shift' and arrived at the colliery on the bus to see the colliery in turmoil and heard that an explosion had happened. As the explosion had occurred at our place of work, we offered to go down and help as we knew the place, but the Rescue Brigade had it under control and wouldn't let us go down.

It's hard to say my feelings about it all - we knew there was gas there and they said a spark had set it off. I had mostly enjoyed the colliery up to then. I remember four of the men who died especially - I used to give them snuff with powdered bark mixed in as a joke - there was a good spirit amongst the men at the pit. Once the explosion had happened it put me off.

I finished just after the explosion, I put my notice in, I was too young to lose my life in the colliery - if I had been working the day shift that week it would have been me. The explosion opened my eyes to the dangers and I went into the construction industry instead - I was always good with my hands - but the pit made me grow up.

Aberfan

A black and white photograph capturing the aftermath of the Aberfan disaster. A massive crowd of people, including men, women, and children, is gathered across a landscape covered in debris and rubble. In the background, a large, multi-story brick house with several windows stands amidst the wreckage. The scene is one of devastation and a somber gathering.

**ABERFAN -
21 HYDREF, 1966.
DIWRNOD DUAF
Y BWRDD GLO
CENEDLAETHOL.**

**ABERFAN -
OCTOBER 21, 1966.
THE NATIONAL
COAL BOARD'S
DARKEST DAY.**



Alla i weld eu hwynebau nhw o hyd

JOYCE MOON,
YSBYTY
LLANDOCHAU

Dros hanner canrif yn ddiweddarach, alla i weld eu hwynebau nhw o hyd. Nyrs dan hyfforddiant oeddwn i bryd hynny yn Ysbyty Llandochau, Penarth. Y funud y cyrhaeddais i ward clefyd y llwch, neu niwmoconiosis, ar ddechrau fy nhri mis yno fel rhan o'r hyfforddiant, fe wyddwn i fod rhywbeth yn wahanol ac yn arbennig am y ward hon. Roedd yno gynhesrwydd a hiwmor, cyd-ddealltwriaeth, roedd fel pe bai'r ward gyfan yn rhoi cwtsh i chi i'ch croesawu.

Hon oedd yr uned gyntaf o'i math yn y wlad ac roedden nhw'n gwneud ymchwil i niwmoconiosis, silicosis, neu 'Glefyd y Lluch' ac yn trin glowyr o'r de a oedd yn dioddef ohono i raddau mwy neu lai.

Yn y tri mis hynny, fe welais drosof fy hunan ganlyniadau erchyll gweithio am flynyddoedd yn y pyllau glo gan anadlu'r llwch du i'w hysgyfaint. Erbyn iddyn nhw gyrraedd y ward, doedd pethau ddim yn edrych yn dda i lawer ohonyn nhw; ar y gorau, byddai'n rhaid iddyn nhw wynebu trafferthion anadlu

am weddill eu hoes, gan ddefnyddio ocsigen gan amlaf. Rwy'n cofio un dyn ifanc o'r enw Glyn a oedd yn ei dridegau cynnar. Allai e ddim cerdded hyd y ward heb ocsigen. Hanner canrif yn ddiweddarach, rwy'n gallu gweld ei wyneb o hyd, a wynebau llawer o'r lleill hefyd.

Roedd y gwaith ymchwil i'r clefyd wedi camu ymlaen bryd hynny. Roedd modd lleddfu'r symptomau ond doedd dim gwellhad. Yn aml, roedd rhaid mynd o dan y gyllell ac roedd hynny'n beryclach o lawer nag ydyw heddiw gyda'r dechnoleg fodern. Roedd rhaid tynnu ysgyfaint cyfan neu rannau o ysgyfaint. Pan oedden ni yn y theatr gyda'r cleifion hynny, roedd yn torri'ch calon i weld eu hysgyfaint duon, diffygiol o'u cymharu â rhai pinc, iachus pobl eraill.

Roedd yn fraint ac yn bleser nyrsio'r glowyr hynny. Roedden nhw bob amser mor ddewr ac, er eu bod yn dioddef, roedden nhw bob amser yn gwenu. Roedd pawb ohonon ni'n hoff iawn ohonyn nhw a, hanner can mlynedd yn ddiweddarach, mae gen i atgofion hoff ac edmygedd mawr ohonyn nhw.

I can still see their faces

MURLUN
AR WAL
ALLANOL
YSBYTY
LLANDOCHAU
A MURAL
ON THE
OUTSIDE
WALL OF
LLANDOUGH
HOSPITAL

JOYCE MOON,
LLANDOUGH
HOSPITAL

Over fifty years on, and I can still see their faces. I was a student nurse then, in Llandough Hospital, Penarth.

The moment I entered the pneumoconiosis ward, to start my three months of duty there as part of my training, I could tell there was something different and special about this ward; there was warmth and humour, a camaraderie, an atmosphere that wrapped itself around you like a big welcoming hug.

The unit, the first of its kind in the country, was researching and treating the dreaded disease known as pneumoconiosis, silicosis, or 'Miner's Lung'. The patients, miners from the south Wales collieries were suffering, in various degrees, with this disease.

In those three months I saw, first hand, the dreadful results these men suffered from years of working down the coal mines, inhaling the black dust into their lungs. For many, by this point, the prognosis was poor; at best they faced the rest of their lives suffering breathing





difficulties, and in all probability requiring oxygen. One young man I nursed, in his early thirties, his name was Glyn, was unable to walk the length of the ward without oxygen; fifty years on I can still see his face, along with many others.

Research into the disease was certainly a step forward then, but there was no cure; treatment brought relief of symptoms but was only palliative. Surgery was something that often had to be resorted to, much more critical then without today's technology; whole lungs,

or part lobes of lungs, would have to be removed. In theatre with those patients, it was heartbreaking to see the ingrained, blackened and dysfunctional condition of their lungs as opposed to the pink and healthy state they should have been in.

It was a privilege and a pleasure to nurse those miners, they always showed such brave faces and, in spite of their suffering, they always had a smile. We all grew fond of them and, fifty years on, I remember them with that same fondness and huge admiration.

BANER A
GARIWYD
YN UN O
WYLIU'R
GLOWYR YNG
NGHAERDYDD
YN Y 1960AU

BANNER
CARRIED IN
A 1960S
MINERS
GALA IN
CARDIFF



Y Braslun Olaf

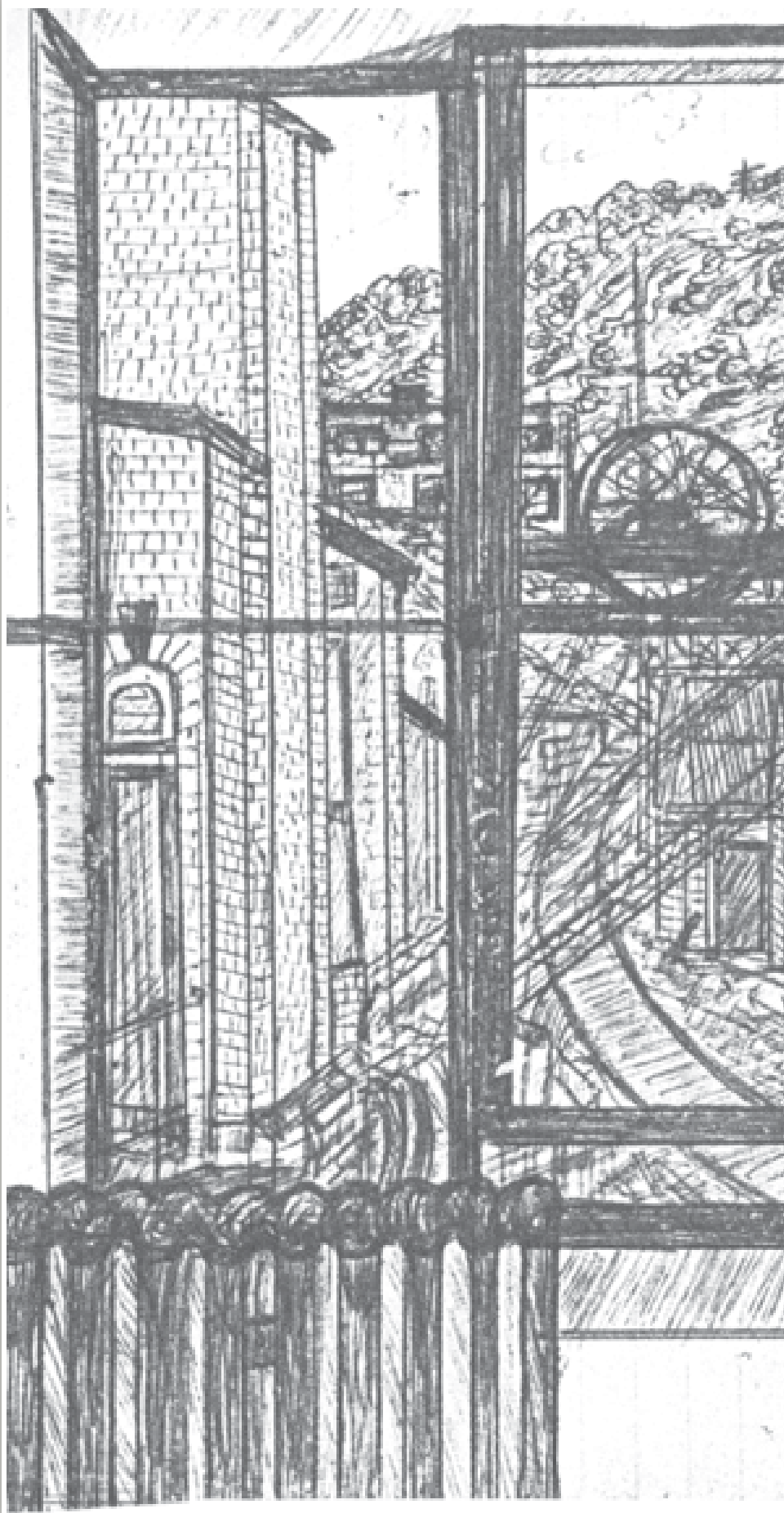
**MOLLY
MOUNTAIN,
WATTSVILLE**

Roedd fy nhad, Charles Joseph Wakefield, yn gweithio yn sied y ffan yng Nglofa Nine Mile Point. Bob tro y câi gyfle, byddai'n tynnu brasluniau o'r lofa ac roedd ganddo nifer fawr ohonynt. Byddai'n eu cadw yn ei locer yn y baths pen pwll. Pan roddwyd y gorau i weithio pwll Nine Mile Point ym 1965, cadwyd ef ymlaen i glirio'r safle ac ati ond, gwaetha'r modd, cymerwyd ef yn wael ar ddiwedd shift a bu farw ar y diwrnod y caewyd y lofa'n derfynol. Collwyd ei frasluniau i gyd heblaw am hwn pan ddymchwelwyd y baths pen pwll - roedd wedi mynd â hwn adre i ddangos i'w wraig.

The Last Sketch

**MOLLY
MOUNTAIN,
WATTSVILLE**

My father, Charles Joseph Wakefield, worked as a fan house attendant at Nine Mile Point Colliery. Whenever he had the chance he would sketch scenes of the pit and he had a great many of these which he kept in his locker in the pithead baths. When Nine Mile Point closed as a working pit in 1965 he was kept on to do salvage work but unfortunately collapsed at the end of a shift and later died on the same day that the colliery finally closed. All his sketches were destroyed when the pithead baths was demolished apart from this one, which he had taken home to show his wife.





NINE MILE PT COLLIERY:
WATTSVILLE, MON.
SEPT 19TH/65.

62

Gwaith dyn ym myd dynion

**ANN JENKINS,
GLOFA
GROESFAEN**

Ddechreuais i weithio i'r NCB yn Ystrad Fawr fel teipydd llawfer yn y deipfa beirianneg. Roedden ni'n cael gwybod os oedd swyddi'n mynd a bydden ni'n tyrru o gwmpas yr hysbysfwrdd pan oedd bwletin staff newydd yn cael ei roi yno. Daeth swydd clerck y rheolwr yng Nglofa Groesfaen yn wag ond fe ddywedwyd wrthym, fwy neu lai, na fydden nhw'n penodi merch achos mai gwaith dyn ym myd dynion oedd e. Wrth gwrs, pan glywsom ni hyn, fe wnaeth bron bawb ohonon ni gais am y swydd!

Yn y cyfweiliad, esboniwyd beth oedd dyletswyddau clerck y rheolwr. Roedd rhai'n gwrthwynebu hyd yn oed ystyried rhoi'r swydd i ferch gan mai dyn oedd wedi'i gwneud erioed ac felly y dylai aros. Roedd llawer o bobl, yn cynnwys fy mam a 'nhad (oedd yn löwr ei hunan) yn credu mai yn y cartref roedd lle menyw ac y byddai mynd i weithio i lofa gan wneud sioe o'n hunan lawn cynddrwg â mynd i weithio mewn puteindy! Ymhen rhai dyddiau, fe glywais i 'mod i wedi cael y gwaith. Roeddwn i wrth fy modd. Fe ges i barti ffarwél a bant â fi i'r Groesfaen.

Un rhan o 'ngwaith oedd monitro faint o lo oedd yn dod o'r pwll. Roedd disgwyl swm penodol o bob

gwythien ac os nad oedd hynny'n digwydd, roedd rhaid gofyn pam. Yna, byddai'n rhaid holi'r goruchwyliwr neu'r ffeiarman beth oedd y broblem a'i riportio. Roedd rhai gwythiennau'n anlwcus ac yn cael dim byd ond problemau o'r dechrau i'r diwedd. Doedd rhai eraill ddim yn cael problemau o gwbl. Roedden ni'n cael llawer o drafferth â'r gadwyn 'panzer' (a oedd yn cludo glo wedi'i dorri ar hyd y ffas) mewn un gwythien. Ychydig o lo oedd yn dod i fyny, os o gwbl, ac roeddwn i'n gorfod ffonio gwaelod y pwll trwy'r amser i gael gwybod beth oedd yn digwydd. Yn y diwedd, penderfynodd Mr Butcher, y rheolwr, y dylwn i fynd i lawr gydag ef i weld amodau gwaith y dynion a pham nad oedden nhw'n gallu cynhyrchu glo - doedd gen i ddim dewis.

Chysgais i ddim winc y noson cyn mynd i lawr i uffern ond, yn y bore, ges i'r gêr i gyd a mynd i lawr gyda Mr Butcher. Aethon ni i wythien B2 lle'r oedd cant a mil o broblemau. Roedden nhw wedi dechrau defnyddio llettau neu 'tshocs cerdded' yn y wythien yma yn lle'r hen byst pwll i gynnal y to. Roedden nhw'n edrych fel borydd smwddio mawr gydag un goes fel pe bai'n plygu yn y pen-glin a throed fflat fawr. Roedd y 'tshocs cerdded' hyn yn symud ymlaen trwy system hydrolig ac roedd y to y

A man's job in a man's world

**ANN JENKINS,
GROESFAEN
COLLIERY**

I started working for the NCB in Ystrad Fawr as a shorthand typist in the Engineering Typing Pool. We were all kept well informed about vacancies and would crowd around the noticeboard when the new staff bulletin was pinned up. The position of manager's clerk at Groesfaen Colliery became vacant but we were told, more or less, that no woman would be accepted as it was a man's job in a man's world. Needless to say, on hearing this we nearly all applied!

During the interview the duties of a manager's clerk were explained to me. There had been opposition to even considering a woman for the post as it had always been a man's job and should remain so. It was thought by many, including my mother and father (who was a miner himself), that a woman's place was in the home and to go and work in a colliery 'flaunting myself' was like signing up to work in a brothel. Several days passed before I knew that I had been successful. I was delighted; I had my going away party and headed for Groesfaen.

Part of my job was to monitor the tonnage of coal

coming up the pit; a certain tonnage was expected from a certain seam and, if that did not tally, why not? I would then have to contact the overman or fireman to find out what the problem was and report it. Some seams were just unlucky and had problems from the day they opened until they closed. Others had no problems at all. We were having a lot of difficulties with the 'panzer chain' (used to convey cut coal along a coal face) on a certain seam. The tonnage was low, if any at all, and I kept on ringing pit bottom wanting to know why. Eventually Mr Butcher the manager decided that I should accompany him on an inspection to see for myself the conditions the men were working under and why no coal could be produced - I had no choice.

I didn't sleep the night before my entry into hell, but, all geared up and Mr Butcher with me, off I went. We went into the B2 seam, which was rife with problems. 'Walking chocks' had been introduced into this seam (they were like giant ironing boards with one leg jointed at the knee and a sizeable flat foot) to replace the conventional pit props in shoring up the roof. These 'walking chocks' moved forward hydraulically leaving the roof they had been supporting to collapse making a

buon nhw'n ei gynnal yn dymchwel gan wneud sŵn fel taran wrth i gerrig gwympto a chymylau llwch lenwi'r lle.

Roeddwn i'n dal yn sownd yn fy llyfr nodiadau ac fe glywais i Mr Butcher yn dweud 'lawn, gofynnwch iddyn nhw beth yw'r broblem' - doeddwn i ddim yn disgwyl hynny! Roedd hi'n wahanol yma; roeddwn i ar eu tir nhw. Fe ddaliais i 'nhir - ond dim ond achos bod llond bola o ofn arna i! Fe wnes i nodiadau a chefais i weld y gadwyn panzer a'r holl bethau roeddwn i'n gwybod eu henwau ond heb syniad sut roedden nhw'n perthyn i'r system gyfan. Roedd hi'n wers adeiladol a difyr iawn. Ar y diwedd, trodd Mr Butcher at y dynion a dweud y bydden ni'n gwneud archwiliad tebyg unwaith y mis. Diolchodd iddyn nhw am beidio â rhegi o 'mlaen i. Unwaith y mis! Fe es i'n benysgafn i gyd ac roedd fy nghoesau fel jeli.

Ar ôl i mi deipio'r adroddiad am yr archwiliad, aeth Mr Butcher trwyddo gyda mi air am air i wneud yn siwr 'mod i'n deall beth a ysgrifennais. Roedd e'n meddwl y byddai'n syniad da i mi esbonio beth yr oeddwn i wedi'i weld a'i glywed ac fe wnes i hynny ar ôl pob archwiliad. Aeth e 'mlaen i fod yn ddarlithydd - dw i'n meddwl ei fod yn ymarfer arna i.



ROEDD PAPUR NEWYDD COAL NEWS YN CAEL EI DDOSBARTHU TRWY'R DIWYDIANT GLO I GYD; ROEDD YN CYNNWYS NEWYDDION A DIGWYDDIADAU O'R HOLL RANBARTHAU. PENDERFYNWYD CAEL LLUN A STORI AMDANA I GAN FOD CAEL MERCH YN GLERC Y RHEOLWR YN BETH EITHRIADOL O BRIN. OND, AR ÔL YR HOLL DDISGWYL, GES I SIOM PAN WELAIS I'R LLUN YN COAL NEWS YM MIS TACHWEDD 1965 ACHOS ROEDDEN NHW WEDI RHOI CROESAIR AR Y DUDALEN NESAF AC ROEDD YN EDRYCH FEL PE BAI RHAI O 'NANNEDD I AR GOLL. DYNA DDIWEDD AR FY AWR FAWR !

noise like thunder with stones dropping and clouds of dust filling the area.

With my note book clutched in my hand I heard Mr Butcher say 'Go ahead and ask them what the problem is' - I had been set up! It was different down here; I was in their territory, in their world. I stood my ground - but only because I was rigid with fright! I took my notes down, was shown the panzer chain and all the little bits and pieces that I knew the name of but didn't know their relationship to the system as a whole. It was a very productive and informative lesson. On the way out Mr Butcher turned to the men and said that a similar inspection would take place once a month and thanked them for not using bad language. Once a month! I went all light headed and wobbly.

When I typed out the inspection report Mr Butcher went through it word for word making sure I understood what I had written. He thought that it would be a good practice for me to embellish what I had seen and heard and I did this for each inspection. He later became a lecturer - I think he must have been practising on me.



THE COAL NEWS WAS A NEWSPAPER THAT WAS DISTRIBUTED THROUGHOUT THE COAL INDUSTRY; IT CONTAINED NEWS AND EVENTS FROM ALL THE REGIONS. IT WAS DECIDED THAT I SHOULD HAVE MY PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN TOGETHER WITH A WRITE-UP AS A WOMAN MANAGER'S CLERK WAS UNHEARD OF. HOWEVER, THE PHOTO IN THE COAL NEWS IN NOVEMBER 1965 WAS MARRAS AS THEY HAD PRINTED A CROSSWORD ON THE FOLLOWING PAGE AND IT LOOKED AS IF I HAD TEETH MISSING - MY CLAIM TO FAME GONE.

NAME	ADDRESS	AGE
A. Colcombe	87, Marian St Clydach V	44
D. Evans	4, Bryntawel. Blinclydach	28
W. I. Thomas	13, Francis St Clydach Vale	33
L. May	347, Brithwenydd Trealaw	46
A. Newman	3, Bryn Terr. Blaenclydach	45
I. Jacobs	83, Ynyscynon Rd. Trealaw	46
J. Channing	31, Brook St. Williamstown	48
E. L. Rees	57, Edmundstown Rd. Penrhiwfer	51
V. Nicholas	53, Maddock St. Blinclydach	34
R. Daniels	108, Park St. Clydach Vale	28
G. Thomas	31, Jones St. Blaenclydach	32
I. Morgan	Flat 2 New Century Rd. Trealaw	42
D. Price	4 Llwynypia Rd. Tonypandy	27
T. Williams	78 High St. Clydach Vale	55
R. J. Roberts	25 Court St. Tonypandy	
S. Williams	74 Ely St	
K. Davies	8 Railway Terr. Blaenclydach	26
E. Williams	17, Rowling St. Williamstown	51
E. W. Burnett	30 Caeglass Penrhiwfer	46
T. J. Harris	4 Sunny Bank Blaenclydach	
R. Hucker	103 Park St. Clydach Vale	
R. Flower	83 Marian St	45
D. Calvert	96 Charles St. Tonypandy	40
D. Griffith	"	43
R. Grogson	154 Dunraven St. Treherbert	21
H. Lee	70 High St. Clydach Vale	56
R. Arnold	26 Pontypriald Rd. Porth	48
H. Pope	106 Wern St. Clydach Vale	50
G. Davies	170 Court St. Tonypandy	24
E. Breeze	[Manager]	
L. Williams	[Undermanager]	

Bore Llun cyffredin

**BILL
RICHARDS,
GLOFA'R
CAMBRIAN**

Gadewais gartref tua 6.30 am a chychwyn cerdded yr hanner milltir i'r lofa. Wrth gerdded lan y rhiw serth, roedd bysys a cheir yn fy mhasio yn mynd â'r dynion at eu gwaith. Roedd yn fore Llun cyffredin.

Wnes i ddim newid i 'nillad gweithio y bore hwnnw achos roedd gen i waith i'w wneud ar yr wyneb. Wrth groesi'r bont dros y seidin ar y ffordd i ystafelloedd y ffeiarmin, fe welais i Mr Breeze, y rheolwr, yn dod i gwrdd â mi. Gawson ni air neu ddau a dywedodd fod un o'r dirprwyon yn absennol o adran Pwll Rhif 4 a gofynnodd i mi fynd yno yn ei le. Wedyn, dyma fi'n mynd i lawr y siafft i lefel gwythien yr lard a gadael i'r gweithwyr oedd yn disgwyl amdana i fynd i mewn at eu gwaith. Roeddwn i ar fin eu dilyn pan glywais i'r signal i ddweud bod rhagor o ddynion yn dod i lawr ar gaetsh 7.30. Pan gyrhaeddodd, pwy ddaeth allan ond y dirprwy absennol a dweud ei fod wedi cysgu'n hwyr. Ei ardal ef oedd hon felly fe gymerodd ef awdurdod yn syth ond dywedais i y byddwn yn mynd i mewn ac yn tanio'r deg pwys o 'bowdwr' (ffrwydron) roeddwn i wedi arwyddo amdanynt yn y storfa ffrwydron. Roedd hyn o fantais iddo fe am ei fod wedi cyrraedd yn rhy hwyr i gael ffrwydron.

**CHWITH: RHESTR O'R RHAI A LADDWYD
A RODDWYD YM MYNEDFA'R LOFA,
DE: YR ANGLADD**

**LEFT: LIST OF VICTIMS POSTED UP AT THE
COLLIERY ENTRANCE,
RIGHT: THE FUNERAL CORTEGE**



Just another Monday morning

**BILL
RICHARDS,
CAMBRIAN
COLLIERY**

I left home around 6.30 am and began the half-mile journey to the colliery. As I walked up the steep road I was passed by buses and cars carrying workmen to the same destination. It was another Monday morning just like any other.

I didn't change into working clothes that morning because I had duties on the colliery surface and was crossing the bridge over the sidings en-route to the firemen's consulting rooms when I saw the manager, Mr Breeze, walking towards me. We stopped to speak and he told me that a deputy was absent from a No. 4 Pit district and instructed me to go there in his place. A short time later I descended the shaft to the Yard seam

level and allowed the workmen who were waiting for me to go into the district. As I was about to follow them I heard a shaft signal indicating that more men were coming down on the 7.30 cage. When it landed the absent deputy stepped out and told me that he had overslept. It was his district so he automatically assumed authority but I said that I would enter the district and fire the ten pounds of 'powder' (explosives) that I had signed for at the explosives magazine; this was an advantage for him as he had arrived too late to obtain any for himself.

I had fired the last of the explosives when the overman approached and said that the manager was ringing from the surface; there were matters there that he wanted me to attend to, so I left the district. I ascended the

Ar ôl i mi danio'r ffrwydryn olaf, daeth y goruchwylwyr a dweud bod y rheolwr yn ffonio o'r wyneb eisiau i mi wneud rhyw waith yno felly fe es i lan i'r wyneb am 10.40 a, phan oeddwn ar fy ffordd i'r baths, gwrddais i â'r rheolwr ar y bont. Dywedodd ei fod yn mynd i ardal P26 lle roedd trafferthion cynhyrchu. Soniodd am ryw waith yr hoffai i mi ei wneud a dywedodd y byddai'n esbonio'n iawn ar ddiwedd y shift. Gwaetha'r modd, welais i fyth mohono wedyn achos dwy awr a chwarter yn ddiweddarach roedd e a 30 o ddynion eraill yn farw yn ardal P26, wedi'u lladd gan danchwa nwy.

Daeth y neges ffôn o'r ffas i'r swyddfa ychydig ar ôl un o'r gloch i ddweud am y danchwa a rhedais i gartref yr is-reolwr a oedd gartre'n sâl. Dywedais wrtho am y danchwa a brysio 'nôl i'r swyddfeydd. Yna, rhedodd swyddog arall a minnau i'r sied lampau lle trefnon ni na chât neb basio trwyddo heb roi ei enw a rhif ei lamp. Roedd hyn yn ychwanegol at y trefniadau argyfwng arferol ond doedden ni ddim am fentro o gwbl. Gwnaed yr un peth yng ngheg siafft Rhif 1 ac arhosais i yno i gadw golwg ar bethau am dros 11 awr. Ar ôl rhyw ddwy awr, cefais wybod yn dawel bach bod llawer wedi marw ond wnaeth hynny 'mo 'mharatoi i ar gyfer gweld yr holl stretchers â blancedi wedi'u rhwymo drostynt i gyd. Daethon nhw'n un rhes o'r caetshus heb orffen nes bod 31 ohonynt wedi dod i'r wyneb.

Wrth gerdded o'r lofa yn oriau mân bore drannoeth, allwn i ddim credu beth oedd wedi digwydd. Os oedd angen cadarnhad, roedd y ffaith bod tyrrau o bobl yn sgwrsio yn nrysau'r tai ar awr mor annaeol yn profi bod rhywbeth mawr o'i le a'r ffordd yr oeddent yn sefyll yn dangos bod y newyddion dirdynol yn dal i gorddi yn eu meddyliau nhw fel yr oedd yn fy meddwl i. Roedd rhai ohonyn nhw fel pe baen nhw'n fy ngwahodd i stopio i siarad â nhw ond allwn i wneud dim ond nodio i'w cydnabod fel y gwnes i wrth iet fy nhŷ i, lle gwnaeth criw le i mi basio trwyddynt.

Roedd yr angladdau'n achlysur emosiynol iawn. Roedd llu o ddynion yn gorymdeithio o gartrefi'r rhai a laddwyd i'r fynwent, heibio i siopau oedd wedi cau, ar hyd ffyrdd di-draffig a channoedd o bobl yn sefyll ar y naill ochr a'r llall iddynt. Wrth orymdeithio, fe sylwais ar y menywod oedrannus, a gofalon y byd wedi'u hysgythru ar eu hwynebau. Roedd llawer ohonynt â braich warchodol dros ysgwyddau eu hwyron, a'r digalondid yn eu hwynebau'n dangos nad oedd trychinebau yn y pwll yn beth dieithr iddynt.

Er bod y lofa wedi cau a dros ddeugain mlynedd wedi mynd heibio, rwy'n dal i deimlo'r loes dros rai y chwalwyd eu perthynas ar amrantiad. Dyna oedd, ac yw, pris glo.

Just another Monday morning

shaft at 10.40 and was making my way to the baths when I again met the manager on the bridge. He told me that he was going into the P26 District where production difficulties were being experienced. He spoke of a job that he wanted me to do and to make myself available at the end of the shift when he would explain further. Sadly that meeting never took place, two and a quarter hours later he and thirty others lay dead in that P26 district, victims of a firedamp explosion.

The telephone message from underground was received at the offices sometime after one o'clock causing me to run the short distance to the home of the under manager who was away from work ill. I informed him of the explosion and hurried back to the offices. From there another official and I raced to the lamp room where we arranged that no man could pass through until he gave his name and lamp number. This was a back-up to the established emergency procedure but we were taking no chances. We also implemented the same arrangement at the mouth of No.1 Shaft where I remained to oversee for over eleven hours. A couple of hours after my arrival at the shaft it was whispered to me that there were many fatalities, information which did not prepare me for seeing the sequence of stretchers completely covered in bound blankets, which began leaving the cages and only ceased when they numbered thirty one.

As I walked from the colliery in the early hours of the following morning I could not believe the events that had unfolded. If confirmation was needed there was plenty provided by the way groups of people conversed at doorways at such an unusual hour, their body language indicating that the shattering news was still reverberating in their minds as it was in mine. Some of these paused as I approached as an invitation to talk but I could only nod my head as I did at the gate to my home where a group divided to allow me to enter.

The funerals were occasions of great emotion. The corteges were predominantly of men who marched in rank from victims' homes to the cemetery past closed shops along traffic-free roads lined with hundreds of people. As I marched my eyes took in the presence of older ladies with care worn features many of whom placed protective arms around grandsons, the despair on their faces suggesting that they were no strangers to mining tragedies.

Although the colliery has gone and over forty years have passed the ache in the heart still remains for many whose relationships were severed at a stroke. Such was, and still is, the price of coal.



'GLOWYR O
GYMRU', TUA 1950
'WELSH COLLIERS',
C.1950

Johnny Kid

**GWYN
MORGAN,
GLOFEYDD
OGILVIE A
DEEP
NAVIGATION,
1953-66**

Roedd yn bryd mynd lan i'r wyneb. Rhuthrodd pawb i gael lle yn y caetsh a chawson ni'n pacio i mewn, fel sardîns mewn tun, yn ffaelu symud modfedd. Cefais i fy ngwthio yn erbyn Johnny Kid. Roedd e wedi bod yn focsiwr proffesiynol tua dechrau'r

pumdegau. Cafodd gryn dipyn o ornestau - ennill rhai a cholli eraill. Yna, rhoddodd y gorau iddi a dod i weithio gyda ni yn y pwll. Ag yntau wedi'i eni a'i fagu yn yr ardal, doedd dim arall iddo'i wneud ar ôl rhoi'r gorau i focsio ond dod i'r pwll. Yr hyn oedd yn gwneud Johnny'n wahanol oedd mai dyn du oedd e. Fuodd e ddim yn hir yn setlo yn y gwaith. Wedi'r cyfan, roedd e wedi'i fagu gyda'r rhan fwyaf ohonon ni a nawr roedd e'n gweithio ar yr un ffas â mi yn y pwll glo.

**GWYN
MORGAN,
OGILVIE AND
DEEP
NAVIGATION
COLLIERIES,
1953-66**

It was time to go up the pit. We all rushed to get in the cage and were packed in, unable to move, like sardines in a tin. I was jammed in against Johnny Kid. He had been a professional boxer in the early fifties, he had had quite a few fights, won some and lost some, then gave

it up and came to work with us in the pit. I suppose it was inevitable, born and bred locally the only thing left open to him after he gave up fighting was the pits. Nothing unusual in that you might think and there wasn't, except for one thing: he was a black man. He soon settled in however, after all he had been brought up with most of us, now he was a collier working in the same face as me.

Johnny Kid

Roedd yr awyrgylch yn hollol wahanol wrth fynd lan o'r pwll i'r hwyl wrth fynd lawr. Ar y ffordd lan, roedd pawb yn jocian, yn pryfocio ac yn chwerthin. Sylwodd rhywun fod Dai Bessie yn y caetsh hefyd. Roedd Dai a Johnny Kid wrth eu bodd yn pryfocio'i gilydd. Roedden ni i gyd yn gwybod beth i'w ddisgwyl, roedden ni wedi eu clywed nhw wrthi droeon o'r blaen, ond fe wydden ni hefyd y byddai pawb yn chwerthin lond eu boliau erbyn i ni gyrraedd yr wyneb.

Fel rheol, byddai'r hwyl yn dechrau wrth i rywun ddweud 'Welais i monot ti ar y bws tsha thre ddde, Bessie.'

'Na, gollais i'r diawl peth. Roedd rhaid i fi gerdded tsha thre.'

'Newidiwch y record, y diawlled,' byddai Johnny'n weiddi, 'allwch chi ddim meddwl am ddim gwell i'w ddweud?'

'Gwed ti wrthyn nhw Johnny!' meddai rhywun arall.

'Pam gollaist ti'r bws, Bessie?'

'O! Caewch eich cegau?' - Johnny Kid eto.

'Ie, shwt gollaist ti'r bws?' - llais o'r cefn y tro hwn.

'Wel, ro'n i'n golchi 'ngwallt yn y baths, a'r sebon yn fy llygaid, pan ofynnodd rhywun i fi sgwrio'i gefen. Allwn i ddim gweld yn dda iawn a roeddwn i wrthi am bum munud yn sgwrio'i gefen e cyn i fi sylweddoli mai Johnny Kid oedd yno. Dyna pam gollais i'r blydi bws.'

'Fyddwn i ddim yn gofyn i ti wneud dim drosta i, Bessie. Alla i olchi 'nghefen yn hunan - sy'n fwy nag y galli di wneud y rholyn tew!'

'Rho glatshen iddo fe Johnny', meddai rhywun arall.

'Ffeit!'

'Sw'n i ddim yn gwastraffu'n amser arno fe,' meddai Johnny.

'Fydda i'n reffari?'

'Oes rhywun am roi bet arni? Ddalia i'r arian!'

'Pwy sy'n mynd i dy ddala di?'

Pawb yn chwerthin.

'Mae dy ofan di arno fe, Bessie.'

'Paid â mwydro, allai e roi crasfa iddo fe unrhyw ddiwrnod'.

Wrth gyrraedd yr wyneb, deuai'r pryfocio i ben ar unwaith - tan tro nesaf. Roedd pawb ohonon ni'n cael tynnu'n coes o bryd i'w gilydd. Roedden ni'n trafod pob math o bethau. A fyddai Caerdydd yn maeddu Casnewydd ddydd Sadwrn? Pam roedd tîm darts y clwb yn gwneud mor wael? Pam roedd ieir Billy Ffowls wedi stopio dodwy? Pwy oedd wedi gweld car newydd Will Fine Talk? Pwy oedd yn caru â phwy? Pwy na ddylai fod yn caru â phwy? Neu pam roedd Jackie Jam yn cael yr un peth yn ei focs bwyd bob dydd.

Ddeugain mlynedd yn ddiweddarach, mae Johnny Kid yn dal i gwrdd â Dai Bessie yn y clwb bob nos. Maen nhw'n cael cwpwl o beints, yn sôn am slawer dydd ac yn dadlau ar eu ffordd adref. Mae'n siwr ein bod yn torri'r rheolau i gyd yn ôl safonau heddiw ond roedd yn anodd bod yn hiliol yn y pwll - roedden ni i gyd yn yr un cwch, ac roedden ni i gyd yn ddu.

Johnny Kid

Going up the pit we were a complete contrast to when we were going down. Now the air was filled with wisecracks, insults and laughter. Someone had noticed that Dai Bessie was also in the cage and Dai had taken the role of verbal sparring partner with Johnny Kid. As soon as it started we knew what to expect, we had heard it all many times before, but we also knew that by the time we got to top pit, we would all be joining in the fun.

It usually started with someone calling 'Didn't see you on the bus going home yesterday Bessie.'

'No, I missed the bloody thing didn't I, had to walk home.'

'Change the bloody record will you boys', Johnny would shout, 'can't you make up something else?'

'You tell them Johnny!' another voice joins in.

'Why did you miss the bus then Bessie?'

'Why don't you lot shut up?' - Johnny Kid again.

'Aye, how did you come to miss the bus?' - another shout from the back.

'Well I was washing my hair in the Baths, soap all in my eyes and someone asked me to wash his back. I couldn't see very well and I must have rubbed his back for five minutes before I realised that it was Johnny Kid. Missed the bloody bus then didn't I.'

'I wouldn't ask you to do anything for me Bessie, I can wash my own back, that's more than you can do, you

big fat slob'.

'Smack him one Johnny', someone else joins in.

'There's going to be a fight!'

'I wouldn't waste my time on him', says Johnny.

'I'll be referee'

'If there's any betting I'll hold the money!'

'Who's going to hold you?'

They all laugh.

'He's scared of you Bessie'.

'Don't talk rubbish; he could have been a contender'.

By this time we were at the top and the discussions ended as quickly as they had started, over until the next time. The leg pulling happened to us all in turn, nothing was sacred. Things like would Cardiff beat Newport on Saturday? Why was the darts team in the club bottom of the league? Why had Billy Chickens' hens stopped laying? Will Fine Talk's new car. Who was courting who? Who shouldn't be courting who? Or why Jackie Jam had the same thing in his sandwiches every day.

Forty years later, Johnny Kid still meets Dai Bessie in the club every night. They have a couple of pints, talk about the old times and argue their way home. I suppose we broke all the rules by today's standards, but it was hard to be racist in the pit, we were all in the same boat and we were all black.

Y Ganolfan Feddygol

The Medical Centre

BU PHYLLIS JONES YN
GWEITHIO I'R BWRDD GLO
CENEDLAETHOL FEL
SISTER-Â-GOFAL YN
NGLOFA MYNYDD MAWR
AC WEDYN SYMUDODD I
GYNHEIDRE

PHYLLIS JONES WORKED
FOR THE NATIONAL COAL
BOARD AS A SISTER-IN-
CHARGE AT GREAT
MOUNTAIN COLLIERY AND
WAS LATER TRANSFERRED
TO CYNHEIDRE COLLIERY



PHYLLIS
JONES,
GLOFA
CYNHEIDRE

Ar ôl i'r ambiwlans olaf adael a'r neges olaf gael ei hanfon i gartrefi'r rhai a laddwyd, roedd cegin y ganolfan feddygol yn llawn mygiau a blychau llwch afiach yn gorlifo. Arhoson ni yno'n dal mygiau o'r cantîn - dyna'r unig dro i mi gael blas ar de tywyll, melys y cantîn. Ond fel arfer roedd yno ddigon o gloncan a hyd yn oed chwerthin. Er enghraifft, pan oedd raid i Elwyn druan fynd â neges at ryw wraig a oedd yn byw mewn bwthyn anghysbell ond na allai fynd yn agos at y drws achos bod 'Alsation, mor fawr â llew, â'i ddannedd wrth 'y nhin i,' neu pan drefnodd y rheolwr i gael wal newydd wedi'i chodi ac anghofio bod angen digon o le i gael stretsier rhwng y drws a'r baths pen pwll. Pan ddywedwyd wrtho, fe drefnodd i agor sgwaryn oedd yn ddigon mawr i gael stretsier trwyddo yn y wal. Ond, wrth i ddau ddyn geisio cael rhywun trwy'r twll ar stretsier, fe ollyngon nhw'r claf. Chlywon nhw ddim o'i diwedd hi. Byddai pawb yn gofyn iddyn nhw, 'Odyd chi wedi gadael i rywun arall gwympo'n ddiweddar?' Dyna'r oriau, pryd roedd perthnasoedd clôs yn cael eu meithrin gan ein bod yn rhannu pob peth.

PHYLLIS
JONES,
CYNHEIDRE
COLLIERY

The kitchen in the medical centre would be littered with mugs and disgustingly overflowing ash trays after the last ambulance had gone and the last message had been sent to the home of a victim's family. We sat around with mugs from the canteen in our hands - this was one time that I could drink sweet dark canteen tea with relish. There was gossip, even laughter; for example when poor Elwyn had to deliver a message to a wife who lived in an isolated farm cottage and could not get near the door because 'An Alsation, as big as a lion, had his jaws next to my backside,' or when the manager had a new wall built and forgot to allow for the angle needed to allow a stretcher to pass between it and the entrance to the pithead baths. He was told about the error and built a rectangle large enough to pass a stretcher through. However, whilst manouevering a stretcher, two luckless men dropped the injured man, 'Dropped any good patients lately!' was their future reference. These were the hours where a companionship based on sharing became real.

Cychwyn streic 1984-5 yng Nglofa De Celynen

RAY LAWRENCE,
GLOFA DE
CELYNEN

Am 5.30 am ar fore dydd Llun oer, gwylb a gwyntog, dyma Ysgrifennydd Cyfrinfa'r NUM a minnau'n anrhydeddu penderfyniad y gynhadledd leol a sefyll, yn unig, ar y llinell bicedi, wrth i'r dynion gyrraedd eu gwaith. Yn nes ymlaen, daeth yr Ysgrifennydd lawndal a dau arall atom. Erbyn shifft y prynhawn, roedd cyfanswm o bump ar streic yn Nglofa De Celynen. Mae'r darn isod yn ddarlun creulon o'r sefyllfa yn Swyddfa'r Glowyr yng Nghrymlin pan alwodd y pum streiciwr i mewn am saith o'r gloch y bore;

Swyddfa'r Glowyr, prif ganolfan a phencadlys Byddin Streic Glowyr Gwent. Awyrgylch trydanol? Bwrlwm o weithgaredd? Na! Fel y dywedodd rhywun, 'Yr unig un sy'n gweithio 'ma yw'r blydi tegil'.. Roedd asiant y glowyr yno - yn ansicr ac yn teimlo tipyn o gywilydd - roedd dynion ei bwl e wedi mynd i weithio. 'Shwt mae'n mynd, Bill?' holodd yr Ysgrifennydd i'r Asiant, gan gyfeirio at y streic, 'Itha da 'chan, bach o ben tost, na'i gyd', atebodd yr asiant, 'Pwy sy ar streic 'te?' Mae'r ffôn

yn canu. 'Twll eich tin chi' meddai'r asiant dros y ffôn, 'Blydi riporters.' 'Shwt mae 'da chi?' holodd am Dde Celynen, 'Gweithio' oedd yr ateb. Y ffôn yn canu eto, 'Twll eich tin chi' meddai'r asiant. 'Beth sy'n digwydd ymbyti'r lle 'te? Pwy sy mas?' holodd yr Ysgrifennydd, 'Mbo' atebodd yr Asiant. Ffôn yn canu. 'Dim i'w ddweud' meddai'r Asiant - merch oedd y riporter y tro hwn.

Sŵn clebran, drysau'n clepian, ac i mewn â swyddogion cyfrinfa Glofa Gogledd Celynen, 'Wel, pwy sy'n rhoi'r tegil mlan 'te?' (gan swnio fel tysten nhw wedi ennill y frwydr yn barod!). 'Odydychi mas?' hola'r Asiant, 'Wrth gwrs,' yw'r ateb. 'Maen nhw wedi mynd i weithio,' gan bwyntio at Ysgrifennydd De Celynen. 'Ni'n gwbod - cachgwn.' Ffôn yn canu, 'Six Bells yn gweithio'. Ffôn yn canu 'Twll dy din di.' Ffôn yn canu, 'Blaenserchan yn gweithio'. Dyma'r drws yn agor ac i mewn â Chyfrinfa Oakdale; maen nhw'n cydymdeimlo â De Celynen. 'Beth sy'n digwydd?' gofynna'r Asiant, 'Mbo', 'Beth mae'r brif swyddfa'n weud? Ffôn yn canu, 'Marine yn gweithio', ac eto 'Twll dy din di', ac wedyn 'Dim i'w ddweud.' 'Er mwyn dyn, Bill, anghofia'r blydi ffôn 'na a gweud beth mae Central Office yn neud.' 'Sa i'n gwbod. So nhw'n dachre gwitho tan naw.' Ffôn yn canu 'Mas o ma,' meddai'r Ysgrifennydd.

Roedd hi ar ôl deg cyn i Gyngor Gweithredol yr Ardal gwrdd y bore hwnnw. Helpodd dirprwyaeth o gyfrinfeydd y Maerdy a'r Tŵr iddyn nhw barhau â'r frwydr. Roedd Ardal Swydd Efrog ar streic. Penderfynwyd na allent droi nôl.

Am 6am fore trannoeth, cyrhaeddodd rhyw 60 o bicedwyr i'r pwll. Rhai'n swnllyd, y rhan fwy'n sefyllian ac yn troi yn eu hunfan yn ansicr pa fath groeso oedd yn eu disgwyl - roedden nhw mewn lleiafrif bach iawn. Cyrhaeddodd holl rym y Gyfraith - wel, dau blismon a aeth i sefyll rhyw 200 llath i ffwrdd, allan o olwg y dynion. Galwodd yr Ysgrifennydd gyfarfod yn y cantîn. I mewn â dynion De Celynen. Arwydd da - dim ond rhyw ddwsin yn yr ystafell gyfan oedd wedi newid i'w dillad gweithio. Ai wedi profi eu pwynt trwy weithio'r diwrnod cynt oedden nhw ynteu ai'r picedwyr oedd wedi'u darbwyllo ynteu'r peth rhyfeddol hwnnw o'r enw cydwybod oedd yn eu pigo? Gwyddai'r Ysgrifennydd na fyddent yn gweithio.

Penderfynwyd galw cynhadledd ardal i gael pleidlais ar y streic a chael cyfarfod cyffredinol y dydd Sul wedyn. Gwrthododd y dynion dderbyn eu bod ar streic tan y bleidlais ond fe gytunon nhw i beidio â chroesi'r llinellau piced. Fydden nhw ddim yn profi te'r cantîn eto am amser hir iawn.

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The start of the 1984-5 strike at Celynen South Colliery

**RAY LAWRENCE,
CELYNEN SOUTH
COLLIERY**

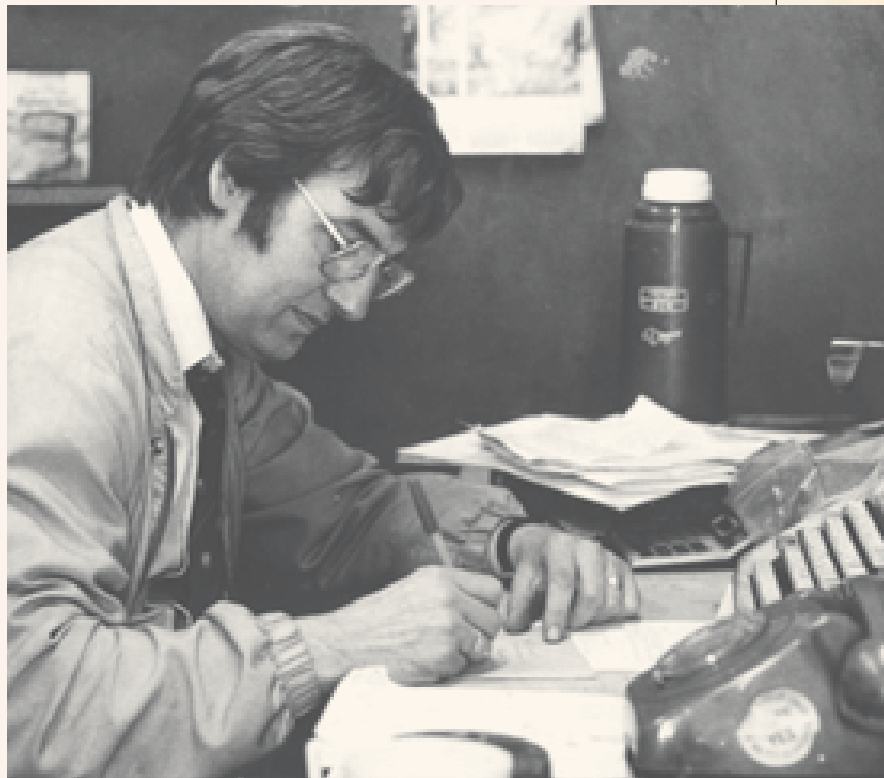
At 5.30 am on a cold, wet and windy Monday morning as the NUM Lodge Secretary I honoured the area conference decision and stood alone on the picket line as the men trooped to work. Later I was joined by the Compensation Secretary and two others. By the afternoon shift a grand total of five were out on strike at Celynen South. The uncertainty of this first day of the strike can be best illustrated by this caustic comment on the situation in the Miners Office at Crumlin when the five strikers called in at 7 am that morning;

The Miners Office, nerve centre and GCHQ of the Gwent Miners Strike Army: electrified atmosphere? Hive of activity? No! As someone said the only one working here is the bloody kettle. A miners' agent - perplexed, unsure, embarrassed - his own pit had gone to work. 'How's it going Bill?' the Secretary asked the Agent, meaning the strike, 'All right mun, bit of a headache mind' replied the agent, 'Who is out then?' the telephone rings 'Bugger off' says the agent on the 'phone, 'Bloody reporters.' 'How's your pit then?' he asks of Celynen South, 'Working' the reply. The telephone rings, pause, 'Bugger off' says the agent. 'What's happening about, who's out then?' asks the Secretary, 'Dunno' replied the Agent. The telephone rings 'No comment' says the Agent - lady reporter this time.

Loud banter, banging doors, enter the lodge officers of the Celynen North Colliery, 'Kettle on then?' (the arrogance of victors in this lot!). 'You out?' asks the Agent, 'Naturally' the reply. 'They've gone to work' pointing at the Celynen South Secretary. 'We know, bunch of 'airy arsed boys down there.' The telephone rings, 'Six Bells working'. The telephone rings 'Bugger off'. The telephone rings, 'Blaenserchan working'. The door opens and in comes Oakdale Lodge; they sympathise with the South. 'What's happening' asks the Agent, 'Dunno', 'What's the order from Central Office?' The telephone rings, 'Marine working', then again 'Bugger off', then again 'No comment.' 'For Christ's sake Bill forget the bloody 'phone and tell us what Central Office is doing.' 'Dunno, they don't start work until 9 am.' The telephone rings 'Time for us to bugger off' says the Secretary.

In fact it was past 10 am before the Area Executive Council met that morning. A delegation of Maerdy and Tower Lodges help persuade them to continue the fight. The Yorkshire Area was out. They decided that there was no turning back.

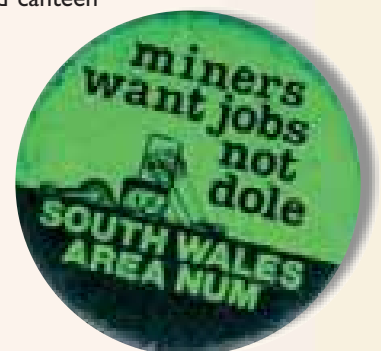
At 6 am the following morning about 60 pickets arrived at the pit, some noisy, most milling around like lost sheep unsure of their reception, they were hopelessly



outnumbered. The mighty arm of the Law also arrived in the shape of two policemen who discreetly positioned themselves around 200 yards away and out of site. The Secretary called a meeting in the canteen, the South Celynen men troop in; a good sign, only a dozen out of the crowded room had changed into their working clothes. Whether they had proved their point by working yesterday, or it was the pickets, or that strange and wonderful thing called a conscience, the Secretary knew that they wouldn't work.

A commitment was made to call for an area conference for a ballot on the strike and the convening of a general meeting for the following Sunday. The men refused to accept that they were on strike until a ballot was held, but did agree not to cross picket lines. It was to be a long, long time before they tasted canteen tea again.

**RAY LAWRENCE
WRTH EI
WAITH 1984
RAY LAWRENCE
AT WORK 1984**



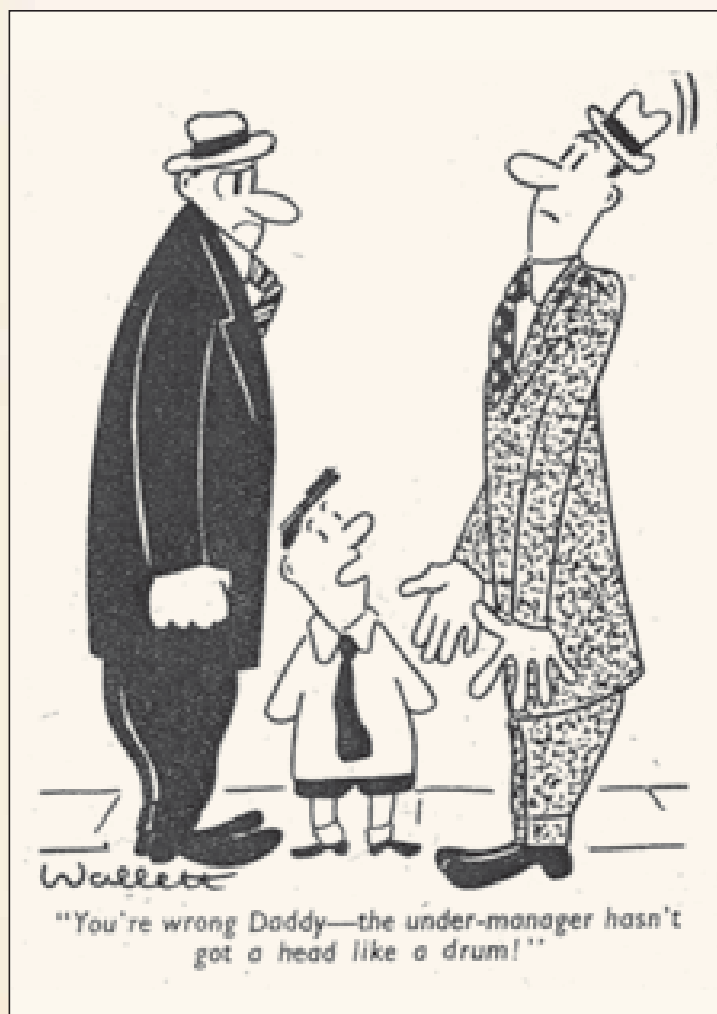
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**PETER
WALKER,
GLOFA
PENALLTA**

Ar ddiwrnod ola'r cloddio, roedd yr is-reolwr arall a minnau wedi mynd i lawr i'r pwll i weld y bechgyn. Roedden ni'n gwybod beth oedd yn mynd i ddigwydd ac felly roedden ni wedi mynd ag ofyrôls sbâr gyda ni. Aethon ni i mewn dipyn a cwato'n cotiau a'r ofyrôls sbâr ar un ochr ac ymlaen â ni i'r ffas.

Roedd 'da fi gwdyn o loshin a thrap llygod ynddo fe. Ro'n ni wedi treulio oriau y noson cynt yn llacio'r blydi sbring ar y trap ac yn tynnu'r pigyn o'na. Wrth i ni fynd ar hyd y ffas ro'n i'n cynnig switsen i'r bois. Roedden nhw'n rhoi eu llaw i mewn a **CRAC!** Do'n nhw ddim yn cael lo's - dim ond tipyn o sioc. Roedd pawb yn chwerthin wedyn. Gawson nhw gacen a pethau; trimins, hetiau parti ac ati. Weles i ddim cwrw ond swn i ddim yn synnu pe bai 'na beth.

Wel, roedden ni'n cerdded lawr y ffas yn cael hwyl gyda'r bois. A dyma ni'n cyrraedd pen y ffas. Beth chi'n meddwl wnaethon nhw? Troi'r beipen ddŵr arnon ni a'n gwlychu ni at y crwyn. Roedden ni'n gwobod beth i'w ddisgwyl felly dyma ni'n chwerthin gyda'r dynion ac yna'n newid i'n dillad sych.

Gyrhaeddod ni nôl at y caetsh yn teimlo'n blêsd â ni'n hunain - roedden ni'n sych ac yn gynnes ac yn barod i fynd nôl i'r wyneb. Fel rheol bydden nhw'n cnocio ac i ffwrd â ni ond Na. Roedd y gatau wedi'u cloi. Allen ni ddim diengid. Tro'r criw ar waelod y siafft oedd hi wedyn. Dyma nhwythau'n troi'r peipiau dŵr ymlaen ac yn ein gwlychu ni ... Ro'n ni'n diferu unwaith eto - ym mis Tachwedd cofiwch. Wedyn, lan â ni. Ond hanner ffordd lan dyma'r caetsh yn stopio. Lawr â ni eto a dyma nhw'n ein gwlychu ni eto. Roedd rhywun heb gael tro i ddal y beipen. Pan gyraeddod ni'r top yn y diwedd, fe ddaethon ni mas o'r caetsh ac roedd dyn y sied weindio'n cerdded heibio'n wherthin yn iach. Bastard!

Yna, fuon nhw'n gorymdeithio gyda'r faner. Roeddwn i a rhai o'r rheolwyr yno'n eu gwyllo nhw'n mynd ac yn clapio. Ry'ch chi'n gwybod shwt oedd hi - bydden nhw'n codi dau fys arnoch chi a chithau'n gwneud yr un peth nôl! Roedden ni'n deall ein gilydd. Dw i'n cofio criw ohonon ni'n mynd i'r dafarn gyda'r dynion wedyn am beint 'tawel'. Wrth gwrs, roedd pawb yn feddw gaib a dyma un o'r bois yn dwgyn 'y nhei i! Brilliant! Mae hynny'n dweud y cwbl. A dyna ni - y diwrnod olaf.



GLOFA
PENALLTA
PENALLTA
COLLIERY

The last day

**PETER
WALKER,
PENALLTA
COLLIERY**

On the last day of coaling the other under manager and me had gone into the district to see the boys. We knew what was going to happen in there so what we had done was take extra overalls down the pit with us. We walked in so far, put our coats and spare pair of overalls cwtched to one side and we walked into the coalface.

I had this big bag of sweets with a mousetrap in it. I had spent hours the night before loosening the bloody spring on the mousetrap and taking the spike off it and everything. And we went along the face, you know, 'have a sweet boys?' They'd put their hand in and CRACK! It didn't hurt but it was just a bit of a surprise and a good laugh! They all had cake and stuff; trimmings, party hats, there were all sorts down there. I didn't see any booze but I wouldn't put it past them.

Well we go through the face and we were just generally having a good laugh with the boys all the way through. And we get to the end of the face and what do they do? They turn the hose on you and soak the pair of you. We knew it was coming so we just laughed let the boys have their go and then went out and got our dry clothes and changed.

We got back to pit bottom feeling quite pleased with ourselves, there we were all nice and dry and warm and then into the cage to go up the pit. They normally knock and away goes the cage but No. The gates are locked. You can't get out. Now it's the turn of the pit-bottom boys, what do they do? Turn on the hoses! They soaked us ... We were dripping again. Bear in mind now it's November. So up we go. But halfway through the shaft the cage stops. Back down we go and they soak us again. Someone hadn't had a go with the hose. Then when we eventually go up we were walking out of the cage and there's the winder driver walking across laughing his lungs out. Bastard!

Then they had their march, banner and all. Me and a couple of the management were there watching them go out and giving them a clap. You know, you'd get a couple of fingers off the boys and you'd give a couple back! It was all in good part, certainly from our side of things anyway. I remember a bunch of us going to a pub with the boys after just for a 'quiet' drink. So of course we all got pissed and one of the boys nicked my tie! Brilliant! Says it all really doesn't it. And that was it, that was the last day.

Marwolaeth diwydiant

RAY LAWRENCE,
GLOFA DE CELYNEN

Maen nhw'n dweud bod amser yn feddyg da ac wrth i'r blynyddoedd fynd heibio mae'r atgofion drwg yn pylu ac ry'ch chi'n cofio'r amserau da. Mae'n rhaid meddwl yn galed i gofio'r dychryn oedd yn eich calon wrth i'r coedydd trwchus oedd yn dal to ffas B5 falu fel matshys; neu orfod tynnu batri'r lamp ar eich het er mwyn gallu mynd trwy ran isel o'r ffas ar eich bola; neu benlinio mewn troedfedd o ddŵr mewn man pedair troedfedd o uchder gyda mwy o ddŵr yn arllwys drosoch wrth i chi geisio trafod motor trydan hanner tunnell; neu obeithio y caech chi ddamwain fach er mwyn cael ychydig wythnosau gartre ar y 'Comp.'

Does dim pleser mewn gweithio o dan ddaear, gan weld 'bytis' yn cael eu lladd neu eu hanafu'n ddrwg, neu weld perthnasau'n sugno ocsigen o botel oherwydd clefyd y llwch. Ychydig iawn o lowyr oedd eisiau i'w meibion eu dilyn i'r pwll. Mae'r oerfel, y tywyllwch a'r ymdrech gorfforol enbyd oll yn bethau y mae pobl o'r tu allan yn methu â'u dirnad.

Wel, beth oedd yn dda am weithio yn y pwll 'te? Dim byd, dim byd o gwbl, a phe byddai Llywodraethau wedi codi ffatrioedd ar wyneb tir y pyllau, byddai'r glowyr wedi gweiddi hwrê. Roedd yr amserau da yn dod er gwaetha'r gwaith caled. Mae'n wir bod gweld belt gludo llawn glo'n rhuthro tua gwaelod y pwll yn rhoi teimlad o foddhad i chi. Roeddech chi'n teimlo eich bod yn gwneud gwaith 'go iawn' ac yn cyflawni rhywbeth. Roedd blas y smôc gyntaf ar ôl dod lan i'r wyneb ar ddiwedd shift yn well na phryd moethus ond roedd yr amserau da'n dod er gwaetha'r gwaith nid o'i herwydd - er gwaetha'r ffaith fod y tir yn ceisio'ch lladd chi a'r perchnogion yn ceisio'ch blingo chi. Roedd yr union ddau beth hyn yn tynnu'r glowyr at ei gilydd ac, o'r undod hwn, daeth y frawdoliaeth sydd mor agos at ein calon.

Doedd dim yn dda am weithio mewn pwll glo ond roedd pob peth yn dda am fod yn löwr ymhlith glowyr.

The death of an industry

RAY LAWRENCE,
SOUTH CELYNEN COLLIERY

The old saying that absence makes the heart grow fonder is true, even in a different context, as the years roll by the bad times tend to be pushed to the darker recesses of your mind and only the better times are remembered. You have to think hard to remember being terrified as the thick timber supporting the roof of B5 coalface snapped like matchsticks, or having to take the battery of your cap lamp from your belt so that you can wriggle through a low part of a coalface. Or kneeling in a foot of water in four feet of height with more water constantly pouring down on you as you try to manhandle a half-tonne electric motor, or hoping that you have a minor accident so that you can have a few weeks on the 'Comp.'

There is no pleasure in working underground, of seeing 'butties' killed or maimed for life, or of seeing close relatives sucking in oxygen from a bottle due to dust. Very few mining fathers wanted their sons to follow them down the pit. The cold, the darkness, the sheer physical challenge of it all is something that outsiders find it difficult to imagine.

So what was good about working in a pit then? Nothing, absolutely nothing, and if successive Governments had built factories on the pit-tops the miners would have cheered. The good times were a spin off of this most arduous of jobs, true you have tremendous satisfaction seeing a conveyor belt full of coal hurtling its way to pit-bottom. You could feel real satisfaction in doing a 'real' job that achieved something, and that first fag that you lit after coming up the pit tasted better than any gourmet meal, but the good times came despite the job, despite the twin attacks of Mother Nature trying to kill you and the owners trying to rob you. These very two factors forced the miners to unite and from this union came the comradeship that is remembered with fondness.

There was nothing good about working in a pit, yet there was everything good about being a miner amongst miners.

Mae glowyr yn frîd rhyfedd. Maen nhw'n cydymdeimlo â phobl ddifreintiedig cymdeithas heb sylweddoli eu bod nhwythau ymhlith y mwyaf difreintiedig. Maen nhw'n edrych i lawr eu trwynau ar weithwyr ffatri ac eto'n genfigennus o'u cyflog a'u hamodau gweithio. Maen nhw'n difrio eu cydweithwyr gan fod anwyldeb yn cael ei gyfrif yn wendid, ond fe gloddian nhw â'u dwylo noeth i'w hachub gan beryglu eu bywyd eu hunain. Dyma i chi 'ddynion caled' go iawn, dynion sy'n gofalu am ei gilydd. Yng nghwmni'r dynion hyn, roeddech yn teimlo'n gyfforddus, naill ai wrth y gwaith neu wrth gymdeithasu, roedd yno rywun i ofalu amdano. Os oedd gennych broblem, unrhyw broblem o gwbl, gallech droi at yr undeb i gael cymorth a chynghor ac, yn gyfnewid am hynny, roedd y glowyr yn hollol deyrngar i'w hundeb - teyrngarwch yr oedd yn anodd i bobl eraill ei ddirnad. Roedd ambell i afal drwg yn y gasgen wrth gwrs, a gallai criw ohonynt fod yn ddigon anodd eu trin, ond pe bai'r wlad yn llawn pobl fel yr hen lowyr gynt, byddai'n lle gwell o lawer i fyw ynddo.

Felly beth yw'r sefyllfa nawr? Wel, mae'r lefelyddyn dal o dan y ddaear, wedi'u llenwi â dŵr a welith neb mohonynt nhw byth eto. Cafodd yr adeiladau ar wyneb y tir eu dymchwel ac mae'r safleoedd yn segur ac anial. Mae'n anodd dychmygu bod miloedd o ddynion yn arfer diflannu bob dydd i lawr i dyllau mawr yn y ddaear. Anodd meddwl bod yr ardaloedd pen pwll yn atseinio â sŵn chwerthin a gweiddi, chwerwder a dagrau, bod peiriannau'n cloncian ac yn clecian, a chorn y gwaith yn diasbedain trwy'r cwm ar ddechrau shift.

Daeth diwedd y glofeydd ac, o fewn cenhedlaeth, bydd diwedd ar y dynion a fu'n gweithio yno hefyd a bydd dros 200 mlynedd o waed, chwys a dagrau, chwerthin a brawdgarwch wedi mynd yn llwch.

Beth am y dynion? Mae'r rhai hynaf yn gofalu am eu gerddi, yn golchi'r llestri, yn mwynhau peint neu ddau ac yn chwilio am yr hen wynebau cyfarwydd wrth siopa yn y trefi. Os oeddech yn hanner cant oed neu fwy pan gaewyd y pwll, roedd wedi canu arnoch - Dim rhagor o waith llawn amser i ti. Roedd eich sgiliau, eich gwybodaeth a'ch cyfraniad at lewyrch y genedl yn werth dim. Aeth y dynion iau i chwilio am waith arall ond ychydig iawn a gafodd waith lle'r oeddent yn defnyddio'u sgiliau i'r eithaf. Mae trydanwyr medrus, er enghraifft, yn ddynion diogelwch neu'n ofalwyr ysgolion ac yn ennill llai o arian nag yr oeddent ddeng mlynedd yn ôl. Mae gofaint sgilgar yn casglu sbwriel oddi ar y ffordd ac mae peirianwyr trwsio celfydd yn gwneud gwaith glanhau rhan amser mewn ffatrioedd. Bu rhai'n fwy llwyddiannus nag eraill ond erbyn hyn unigolion yw pawb ohonynt mewn byd nad yw'n hidio amdanynt.

Miners are a strange breed of men. Compassionate towards the less privileged in society, but never realising that they are just as underprivileged. Contemptuous towards 'mere' factory workers to the point of arrogance, yet envious of their pay and conditions. Abusive to their workmates as it is weakness to show affection, but they will claw with their bare hands to rescue them risking their own lives when mother earth is hungry. These are the real 'hard men', men who look after their own kind. In the company of these men you felt comfortable, either in work or socializing, your back was watched. If you had a problem, no matter what it was, you could always turn to your union for help and advice and in return the miner gave their union an intense loyalty which was difficult for others to comprehend. Individually there were some 'bad ones' and collectively they could be awkward devils, but if this country was now populated by the miners of yesterday it would be a far better place to live in.

So where are they now? Well the underground workings are still there, waterlogged, crushed and never to be seen by anyone again. The surface buildings have been flattened and the pit-tops are now deserted, desolate places. It is with difficulty that you imagine that many thousands of men once disappeared daily down big holes in the ground. That the surface of coal mines echoed with laughter and shouting, bitterness and tears, that machinery rattled and clanged, and the pit hooter resounded off the hillsides at the commencement of the shift.



The collieries are no more, and within a generation the men who had worked there will also be no more, gone to the big canteen in the sky to jaw with those who have preceded them, and over 200 years of blood, sweat and tears, laughter and comradeship will be forgotten.

What of the men? The older men tend their gardens, wash the dishes, have a few pints, and search for the old familiar faces in crowded shopping streets. If you were fifty years of age plus when the pit shut that was it chum, no more full time work for you, your skills, your knowledge, your contribution to the nation is discarded. The younger men sought work elsewhere with very few achieving their full potential, skilled electricians are now security guards or school caretakers, on less money than they earned ten years ago. Master Blacksmiths are now collecting litter off the roads and skilled mining repairers do part time cleaning jobs in local factories. Many have prospered, others have not, and all are now just individuals in an uncaring world.

Y cadeirydd gorau na chafodd yr NCB erioed

Peiriannydd mwyngloddio a chyfathrebwr rhagorol - pe bai ef yn ben ar yr NCB, fe fyddai 'na ddiwydiant glo heddiw.

DR KIM HOWELLS, GWEINIDOG GWLADOLYNY SWYDDFA DRAMOR A'R GYMANWLAD

Philip Weekes oedd Cyfarwyddwr yr NCB, Ardal De Cymru, rhwng 1973 a 1985. Roedd yn arwr ym maes glo'r de, yn ŵr bonheddig a oedd bob amser yn rhoi blaenoriaeth i fuddiannau'r rheolwyr a'r gweithwyr, er ei fod yn gorfod gwneud penderfyniadau anodd. Yn ystod streic y glowyr 1984-5, bu'n gweithio gyda'r NUM i osgoi'r trais a welwyd mewn meysydd glo eraill. Pan gafodd orchymyn gan Gadeirydd yr NCB, Ian Macgregor, i sefyll i fyny fwy i'r streicwyr, gwrthododd, ac ymddeolodd bedwar mis yn ddiweddarach.

PHILIP WEEKES (MEWN SIWT)
YNG NGHLODDFA DDRIFT Y BETWS.
PHILIP WEEKES (IN SUIT) AT BETWS
DRIFT MINE.



The best NCB chairman we never had

A brilliant mining engineer and communicator - if he had been in charge of the NCB there would still be a mining industry today.

DR KIM HOWELLS, MINISTER OF STATE, FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

Philip Weekes was Director of NCB South Wales Area between 1973 and 1985. He was a legend in the south Wales coalfield, a gentleman who, although he sometimes had to make

harsh decisions, always had the best interests of both management and workforce in mind. During the 1984-5 miners strike he worked with the NUM to avoid the violence seen in

other coalfields. On being told by the NCB Chairman Ian Macgregor to be more confrontational with the strikers he refused and retired four months later.

THE PITT-PROPPS

By HICKEY



Arfbais yr NCB

Ystyr yr arwyddair yw 'Goleuni allan o dywyllwch' ac mae'r 'diemwntiau duon' sydd mor amlwg ar y darian yn cynrychioli'r glo a godwyd i'r wyneb. Mae'r llewod ar y naill ochr a'r llall i'r darian yn cynrychioli'r Llew

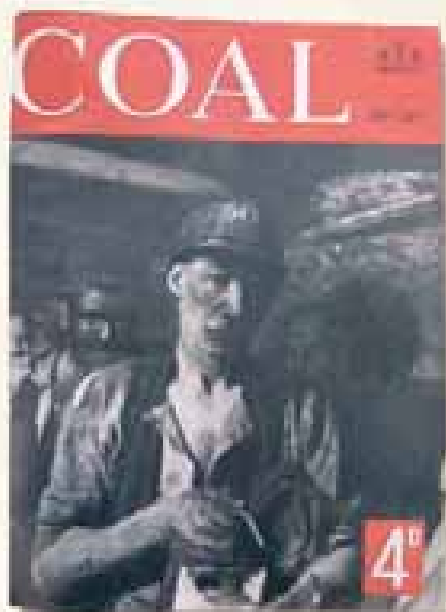
Prydeinig ac mae patrymau'r haul arnynt yn cynrychioli gwres, golau, ynni a phŵer, sef yr hyn y mae glo'n ei gynhyrchu. Y disgrifiad heraldaidd yw 'llew du, ag arno lun haul yn ei ogoniant ar ei ysgwydd'



The NCB Coat of Arms

The motto translates as 'Light out of darkness' and the 'black diamonds' that dominate the shield represent coal brought to the surface. The lions on each side of the shield, representing the Lion of

Britain, are embellished with designs of the sun, signifying heat, light, energy and power as the products of coal. The heraldic description is a 'lion sable, charged on the shoulder with a sun in splendour or'



Ysbrydolwyd y llyfryn hwn gan y cylchgrawn COAL a gynhyrchwyd gan y Bwrdd Glo Cenedlaethol o fis Mai 1947 ymlaen. Newidiwyd yr enw'n ddiweddarach i COAL NEWS

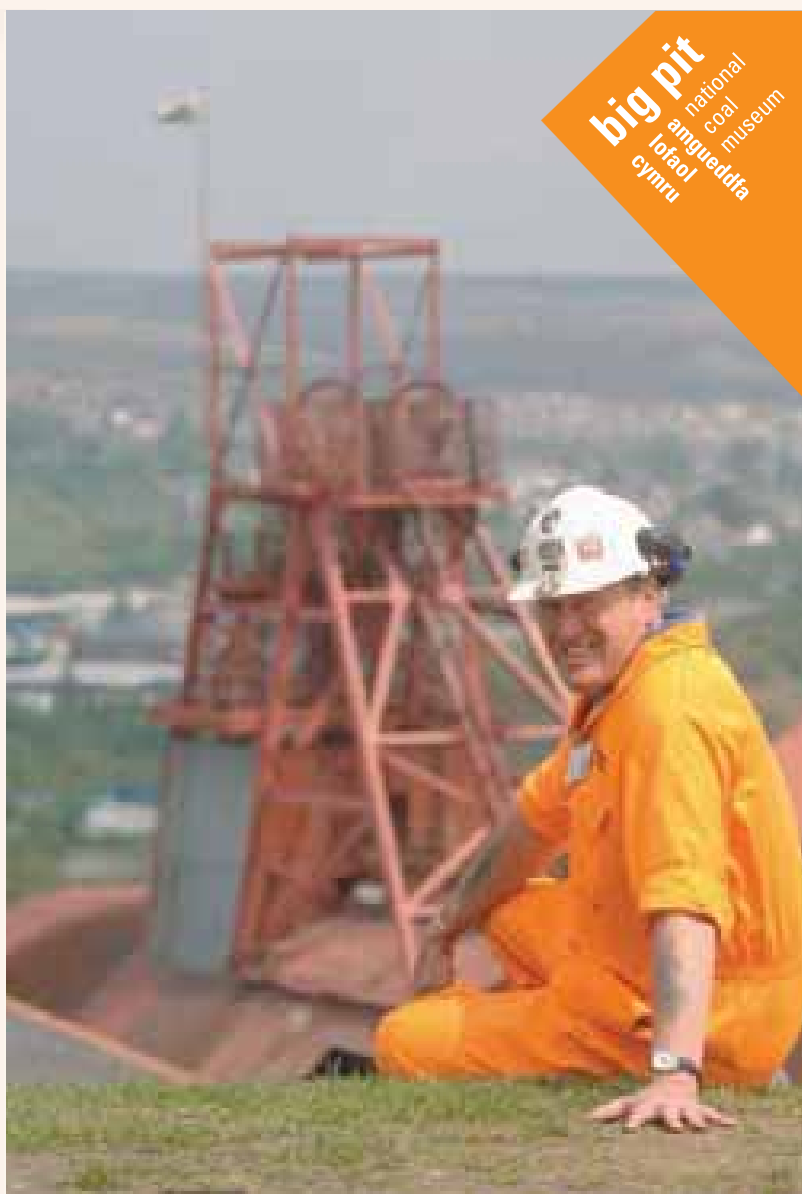
Cafodd 'GLO - NC Bloody B' ei ddylunio gan mo-design a'i argraffu gan Wasg Gomer.

This booklet was inspired by COAL magazine which was produced by the National Coal Board from May 1947, it later became COAL NEWS.

'GLO - NC Bloody B' was designed by mo-design and printed by Gwasg Gomer.



"What makes you think I am incapable of maintaining the pumps?"—By G. Edwards, Llanhoran, Glamorgan.



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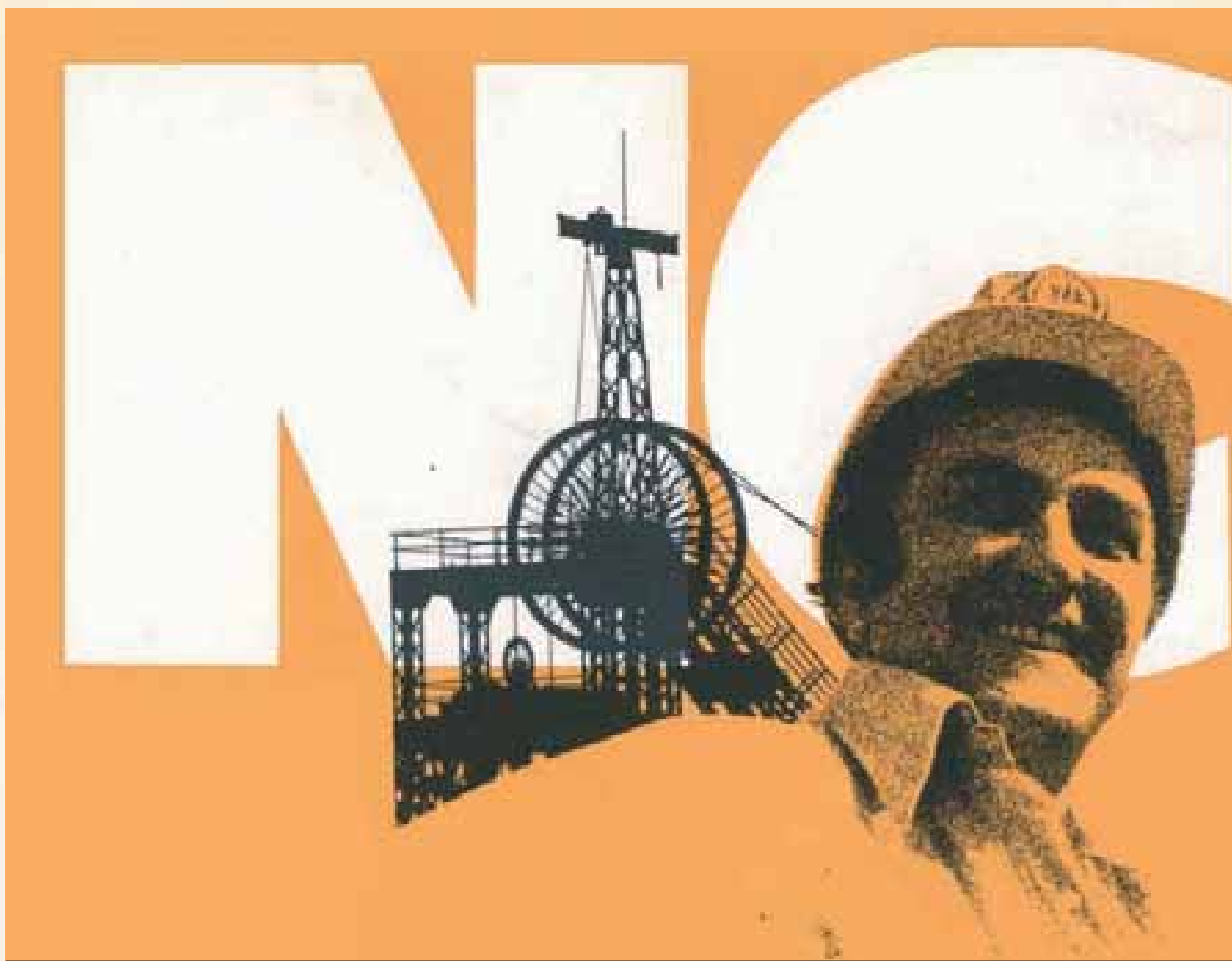
Ar agor Ionawr 9.30am - 4.30pm.
Ar gau 29-31 Ionawr.
Bydd y rhan danddaearol yn agored
ar 13-14, 20-21 a 27-28 Ionawr.
Ar agor bob dydd o Chwefror 1,
9.30am - 5pm,
Teithiau tanddaearol 10am - 3.30pm.

BIG PIT: NATIONAL COAL MUSEUM

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Fax: 01495 792618
bigpit@museumwales.ac.uk
www.museumwales.ac.uk

OPENING TIMES

Open January 9.30am - 4.30pm.
Closed 29-31 January.
Underground open:
13-14, 20-21 & 27-28 January.
Open every day from February 1,
9.30am - 5pm,
Underground tours 10am - 3.30pm.



Yr NCB yn ne Cymru

1947 I Ionawr, y Bwrdd Glo Cenedlaethol yn cymryd drosodd berchnogaeth a rheolaeth y diwydiant glo ym Mhrydain.
Gweithwyr: 108,000.

1948 Cyflwyno'r prosiect cyntaf i gynnwys 'mwyngloddio llorweddol' yng Nglofa Llanharan Colliery. Gweithwyr: 108,000.

1949 Cytundeb rhwng yr NCB a'r NUM yn caniatáu i ffioedd yr undeb gael eu tynnu o gyflogau'r aelodau. Glofa Mardy'n cael buddsoddiad o £5 miliwn.
Gweithwyr: 106,000.

1950 Gwahodd menywod i ymweld â phyllau glo er mwyn denu rhagor o weithwyr.
Gweithwyr: 102,000.

1951 Codi gwaith golosg newydd yn Nantgarw.
Gweithwyr: 102,000.

1952 Ffurio Sefydliad Lles Cymdeithasol y Diwydiant Glo (CISWO) - daeth yr NCB yn gyfrifol am les fel rhan arferol o waith rheoli'r glofeydd.
Gweithwyr: 103,000.

1953 Agor Coleg Staff yr NCB yn Chalfont St Giles. Penodi cyn Gyrnol yng Nghorfflu Addysg y Fyddin yn bennaeth arno.

Gweithwyr: 104,000.

1954 Tanchwa yng Nglofa Glyncorwg yn anafu 24 o lowyr.
Gweithwyr: 103,000.

1955 Tanchwa yng Nglofa Blaenhirwaun yn lladd dau chwe glöwr.
Gweithwyr: 101,000.

1956 Tanchwa yng Nglofa Lewis Merthyr yn lladd dau löwr a saith arall yn marw o'u hanafiadau. James Bowman, cyn-arweinydd yr NUM, yn dod yn Gadeirydd yr NCB.
Gweithwyr: 100,000.

1957 Cynhyrchu'r miliynfed postyn

pwll hydrolog.
Gweithwyr: 101,000.

1958 Suddo pyllau dyfnaf y de (897 llath) yng Nglofa Abernant.
Gweithwyr: 99,000.

1959 NCB yn cyhoeddi rhaglen i gau pyllau - 120 o lofeydd i gau dros y pum mlynedd nesaf.
Gweithwyr: 93,000.

1960 Tanchwa yng Nglofa Six Bells yn lladd 45 o lowyr.
Gweithwyr: 84,000.

1961 Yr NCB'n lansio 'Blwyddyn Genedlaethol Diogelwch'.
Gweithwyr: 81,000.



**GLOWYR YNG NGLOFA ABERCYNON;
GLOFA BRITTANIC
MINERS AT ABERCYNON COLLIERY;
BRITTANIC COLLIERY**



The NCB in south Wales

1947 1 January, the National Coal Board takes over the ownership, control and management of the British mining industry.
Manpower: 108,000.

1948 The first mining project to include 'horizon mining' introduced at Llanharan Colliery.
Manpower: 108,000.

1949 Agreement between NCB and NUM allowing trade union dues to be deducted from members' wages. Mardy Colliery gets investment of £5 million.
Manpower: 106,000.

1950 Women invited to visit coal mines to encourage recruitment.
Manpower: 102,000.

1951 A new coking plant built at Nantgarw.
Manpower: 102,000.

1952 The Coal Industry Social Welfare Organisation (CISWO) set up - the NCB now assumed responsibility for welfare as a normal function of colliery

management.
Manpower: 103,000.

1953 NCB Staff College opened at Chalfont St Giles, a former Colonel in the Army Education Corps appointed as principal.
Manpower: 104,000.

1954 Explosion at Glyncoirwg Colliery injuring 24 miners.
Manpower: 103,000.

1955 Explosion at Blaenhirwaun Colliery kills 6 miners.
Manpower: 101,000.

1956 Explosion at Lewis Merthyr Colliery kills 2 miners, 7 others die of

injuries. James Bowman, a former NUM leader, becomes Chairman of the NCB.
Manpower: 100,000.

1957 The one millionth hydraulic pit prop produced.
Manpower: 101,000.

1958 Deepest pits in south Wales (897 yards) sunk at Abernant Colliery.
Manpower: 99,000.

1959 NCB announces pit closure programme - 120 collieries to close over the next 5 years.
Manpower: 93,000.

1960 Explosion at Six Bells Colliery, 45 miners killed.
Manpower: 84,000.





1962 Tanchwa yng Nglofa'r Tŵr yn lladd naw glöwr.
Gweithwyr: 79,000.

1963 Oherwydd prinder glo, yr NCB yn cynnig y dylid gweithio ar ddydd Sadwrn ym mis Tachwedd a mis Rhagfyr.
Gweithwyr: 77,000.

1964 Tanchwa yng Nglofa Cefn Parc yn lladd tri glöwr.
Gweithwyr: 72,000.

1965 Darganfod olew a nwy ym Môr y Gogledd. Yr NCB yn colli marchnadoedd wrth i olew ddisodli glo. Tanchwa yng Nglofa'r Cambrian yn lladd 31. Gweithwyr: 64,000.

1966 Tomen lo yn llithro i lawr i bentref Aberfan. 116 o blant ac 28 o oedolion yn colli eu bywydau.
Gweithwyr: 58,000.

1967 Yr NCB ac undebau'r glowyr yn galw am Bolisi Cenedlaethol ar Danwydd.
Gweithwyr: 53,000.

1968 Yr NUM yn cyflwyno papur newydd misol, The Miner, i wrthweithio 'propaganda'r NCB' yn The Coal News.
Gweithwyr: 48,000.

1969 Pasio Deddf (Tomenni) Mwyngloddiau a Chwareli oedd yn

ymwneud â thomenni gwastraff ar ôl Trychineb Aberfan.
Gweithwyr: 40,000.

1970 90% o'r glo a gynhyrchwyd yn dod o ffasys mecanyddol.
Gweithwyr: 38,000.

1971 Ffrwydrad nwy glo yng Nglofa Cynheidre yn lladd chwe glöwr.
Gweithwyr: 36,000.

1972 Streic genedlaethol y glowyr. Toriadau trydan yn gyffredin a dros filiwn o weithwyr yn cael eu hatal o'u gwaith dros dro.
Gweithwyr: 34,000.

1973 Yr Adran Ynni'n dod yn gyfrifol am y diwydiant glo.
Gweithwyr: 31,000.

1974 Streic genedlaethol y glowyr yn arwain at gwymp llywodraeth y Ceidwadwyr.
Gweithwyr: 31,000.

1975 Cyflogau'n cyrraedd £61 am waith ar y ffas lo.
Gweithwyr: 30,483.

1976 Mae'n hysbys bod 170 miliwn tunnelli o lo yn y DU mewn gwythiennau dros droedfedd o drwch - digon i roi ynni am ganrifoedd.
Gweithwyr: 30,000.

1977 Gosod y system danddaearol hiraf i gludo

dynion yn y de (3,000 metr) yng Nglofa Cwmtylleri.
Gweithwyr: 28,965.

1978 Cyflwyno helmedau 'Airstream' rhag i'r dynion orfod anadlu llwch o dan y ddaear.
Gweithwyr: 27,384.

1979 Margaret Thatcher yn dod yn Brif Weinidog. Buddsoddi £35 miliwn yng nghyffres glofeydd Oakdale/Markham/Gogledd Celynen.

1980 Ymddiriedolaeth Lesiannol y Diwydiant Glo yn rhoi awdurdod i dalu budd-dâl i ddibynyddion glowyr a fu farw o ganlyniad i fronceitis cronig ac emffysema.

1981 Y Llywodraeth yn cyhoeddi'r bwriad i gynhyrchu 10 miliwn tunnelli yn llai o le a chau 20, neu efallai 50, o byllau. Streiciau'n cychwyn yng Nghymru ac yn lledaenu i feysydd glo eraill.

1982 NCB'n amcangyfrif colledion blynyddol o £500 miliwn. Rhoi'r gorau i ddefnyddio'r injan ddirwyn stêm olaf yn y maes glo yng Nglofa Morlais.

1983 Penodi Ian McGregor yn gadeirydd y Bwrdd Glo Cenedlaethol. NUM De Cymru'n methu cael cefnogaeth meysydd

glo eraill i wrthwynebu cau Glofa Lewis Merthyr.

1984 NCB yn cyhoeddi y bydd 20 pwll yn cau ac 20,000 o swyddi'n cael eu colli - mae streic yn cychwyn, heb bleidlais, ym mis Mawrth gan bara blwyddyn lawn.

1985 Y glowyr yn mynd yn ôl i'r gwaith. 12 o lofeydd Cymru'n cau.
Gweithwyr: 13,500.

1986 NCB yn troi'n Gorfforaeth Glo Prydain (British Coal Corporation). Pedair glofa'n cau.

1987 Glofa Six Bells yn cau.

1988 Pum glofa'n cau yn cynnwys y glofeydd olaf yn yr ardal glo carreg.

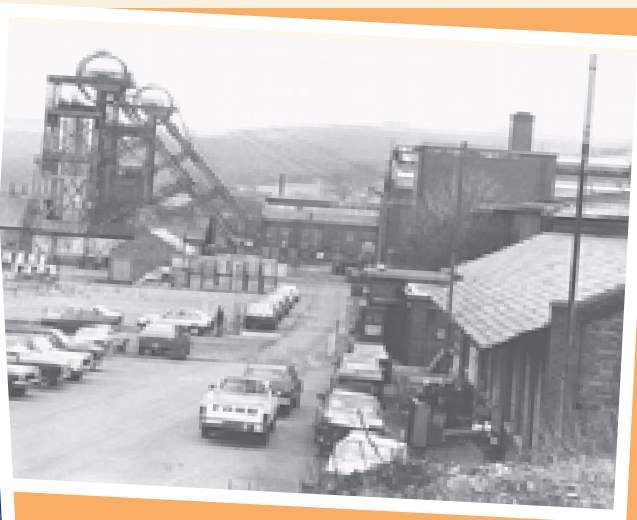
1989 Dwy lofa'n cau.

1990 Glofa Oakdale, y pwll dwfn olaf yng Ngwent yn cau.

1991 Tri phwll yn cau, yn cynnwys pyllau olaf Cwm Rhondda a Chwm Rhymni

1993 Glofa Taf Merthyr yn cau.

1994 Glo Prydain yn cau'r pwll glo dwfn olaf yng Nghymru, Glofa'r Tŵr. Diwydiant glo Prydain yn cael ei breifateiddio.



CAU GLOFA
CWMLLYNFELL, 1959;
GLOFA NANTGARW;
YMWELWYR A GLOFA
DEEP NAVIGATION, 1979;
GLOFA COEDEL

CLOSURE OF CWMLLYNFELL
COLLIERY, 1959;
GLOFA NANTGARW;
VISITORS TO
DEEP NAVIGATION, 1979;
COEDEL COLLIERY

1961 'National Safety Year' launched by NCB.
Manpower: 81,000.

1962 Explosion at Tower Colliery, 9 miners killed.
Manpower: 79,000.

1963 Because of a shortage of coal, NCB proposes Saturday working in November and December.
Manpower: 77,000.

1964 Explosion at Cefn Park Colliery, 3 miners killed.
Manpower: 72,000.

1965 Oil and gas discovered in North Sea. NCB loses markets as oil replaces coal. Explosion at Cambrian Colliery, 31 killed.
Manpower: 64,000.

1966 Coal tip slides onto Aberfan, 116 children and 28 adults lose their lives.
Manpower: 58,000.



1967 NCB and mining unions call for a National Fuel Policy.
Manpower: 53,000.

1968 NUM introduces a monthly paper, The Miner, to combat the 'NCB propaganda' in The Coal News.
Manpower: 48,000.

1969 The Mines and Quarries (Tips) Act passed to cover waste tips following the Aberfan Disaster.
Manpower: 40,000.

1970 90% of production now coming from mechanised coal faces.
Manpower: 38,000.

1971 Outburst of coal and firedamp at Cynheidre Colliery, 6 miners killed.
Manpower: 36,000.

1972 National coal strike, power cuts widespread and over a million workers laid off.
Manpower: 34,000.

1973 The mining industry becomes the responsibility of the Department of Energy.
Manpower: 31,000.

1974 National coal strike, leading to downfall of Conservative government.
Manpower: 31,000.

1975 Wages reach £61 for coal face work.
Manpower: 30,483.

1976 Known reserves of coal in UK in seams over one foot thick are 170 million tons enough to provide energy for centuries.
Manpower: 30,000.

1977 Longest underground man riding system in south Wales (3,000 metres) installed at Cwmtillery Colliery.
Manpower: 28,965.

1978 'Airstream' helmets introduced to eliminate workmen breathing dust underground.
Manpower: 27,384.

1979 Margaret Thatcher becomes prime minister. £35 million invested in Oakdale/Markham/Celyn North complex.

1980 Authority given under the Coal Industry Benevolent Trust to pay benefit to dependents of miners who died as a result of chronic bronchitis and emphysema.

1981 Government announce their intention to reduce coal output by 10 million tons and close 20, possibly 50, pits. Strikes begin in Wales, spreading to other coal fields.

1982 NCB estimate annual losses of £500 million. Last steam winding engine in the coal field stops working at Morlais Colliery.

1983 Ian McGregor appointed chairman of National Coal Board. South Wales NUM fails to get support from other coalfields over closure of Lewis Merthyr Colliery.

1984 NCB announce the closure of 20 pits and the loss of 20,000 jobs - without a ballot a strike begins in March and lasts a full year.

1985 Miners return to work. 12 Welsh collieries close.
Manpower: 13,500.

1986 NCB becomes the British Coal Corporation. Four collieries close.

1987 Six Bells colliery closes.

1988 Five collieries close including the last collieries in the anthracite district.

1989 Two collieries close.

1990 Oakdale Colliery, last deep mine in Gwent closes.

1991 3 mines close including the last pits in the Rhondda and Rhymney Valleys.

1993 Taff Merthyr Colliery closes.

1994 Last deep coal mine in Wales, Tower Colliery, closed by British Coal. British coal industry privatised.