

Jim Butterley

8.11.16

Minutes	
	Spent all summer long taking tomatoes round village, grown by dad, to give to pensioners. Dad also grew chrysanths.
1.45	Grandad arrived here in early twenties on a hand cart with dad and Aunty Mary and grandma and built a sty in the bottom of the yard. I can remember slaughtering pigs. (Shows photo of grandfather)
3.00	Grandad was a miner. Once a year he would go on holiday to Ireland with his mates. Grandma not pretty. They came from Grimesthorpe, Sheffield. Grandparents came so grandad could work at Hatfield Main and live in a house with their own outside toilet. Dad did 47 years down the pit, as did Uncle Eric.
5.00	If I raised my voice in the house I'd get a back hander. Once swore at my mother when I was 19 or 20, and I ran to my grandad's and he told me to go home to face my punishment. I got a good hiding at home. Same for all kids then. 'If your father said in for ten, then you were in for ten'. Used to escape to see family in Sheffield.
7.00	Worked for Dept of Environment at RAF Finningley doing maintenance. But Maggie privatised it and lost my job overnight in civil engineering. So went to sign on at Hatfield Main, saw Mr Dean the pit boss. But my dad wouldn't let me go down the pit.
8.30	All my family worked down the pit, it gave you importance, dignity and a pay packet on a Friday night. But my dad knew what was coming. He knew Maggie was coming to get us because of what miners did to Ted Heath. The unions weren't combining together the way they did in the Seventies. It took her 5 years but she got there in the end. Got her plan together and everybody could see it happening. Stockpiles of coal getting higher and higher, like my father said 'you don't bring a miner out in spring'. I was 24 when strike started.
9.30	Got a job with Council instead, as school caretaker. Didn't want to do it, but 35 years on I've been in work all my working life. Dad born 1919 and finished in pit after 47 years. All my uncles in the pit. Only Uncle Arthur left now, he was a blacksmith down there.
10.30	Got identical twin cousins, Paul went down pit and Mark worked on railways. The only thing that got you out was education. Uncle Eric's oldest lad Eric got a grammar school scholarship and ended up teaching - Head of Maths and Physics at Buxton College. Nobody wanted their sons down the pit.
12.00	Changes in Doncaster – Wheatley Hall Road. Used to be Shaw Lane Indl Estate, lots of factories such as Burtons, now it's four miles of car garages.
13.00	I never thought I'd see a supermarket on Orgreave yard, because as a young un they were Orgreave Cokeworks. Steelworks etc gone from Sheffield.
14.30	Now people don't know who they're living next to, kids don't know their own families. Community is getting older. Mother gave me Alex Haley's Roots to read, to give me the understanding. You're not the only one on the planet. Have 2 kids, 1 is a nurse and the other works as a carer for Mencap, both really good girls.
15.30	But they're ignorant of who they are, and who other people are. In my childhood every day was an adventure, you weren't on phones.

17.00	There are so many people judging people. We don't seem to teach history anymore, just teach facts. The community moulds you. During Yorkshire Ripper time the bobbies would come into pub and tell you to walk the women home. Not like that now. Drug them. Don't know what's happening to my kids on a Friday night. No-one's looking out for people anymore.
21.00	Society has a problem with drugs.
22.00	During the strike one of the lads called Bones lost everything, home, marriage, his lad and Stewie Thompson came and said Bones was on Ward 25, Doncaster Royal Infirmary, the loony ward. Went to see him and put Special Brew down my sleeves for him. Next time we went the Matron had put him on porridge morning, noon and night, but he had plucked up courage to ask a girl out on the ward. They ended up living together.
25.00	Whatever happens, some joker will find a way of making light of it. We all have rose tinted glasses when we look back.
26.00	Some things I don't miss – getting coal in, making the fire up, chopping sticks. But our childhood was brilliant. We spent summers roaming. We had gangs – ours went from Abbey Pub to Hatfield Bridge, to the school gates. We guarded our bonfires.
28.30	Now kids get preyed on by weird cyber freaks. Can see it at school. Fights seem to start on Facebook. Kids don't seem to do things – very insular. Parents pick up kids from school, but we walked with our mates. In the Sixties everybody knew everybody on the street. Can remember who got the first cars on the street. No-one went to school alone.
31.00	I can't imagine my dad's childhood, his was between two world wars. My mother's childhood stopped because she had to make bobbins in Nottingham. My parents told my children tales. I can't imagine what it was like living through war for 6 years. My best mate was in Falklands War and first Gulf War, can't imagine that.
34.30	I went into army at 16 until 18. I were a bugger. It knocked the edges off me. Can't force kids into the armed forces. Maggie thought the way to sort the country out was to discipline the working classes, wanted them to toe the line.
36.00	I'll never forget seeing my mates' kids queuing up in the summer holidays for a school dinner. Saw my mate Ralph Butler queuing up for a loaf of bread. Saw Pride, I was in floods of tears. Changed the perspective of the hard working class people from round here. These poor buggers have been persecuted for nothing more than their sexuality, which they haven't got a choice about.
38.30	Is that any different from what we're fighting for? It's all about dignity. I've had the dignity of work. A lot of people didn't get that. North / South divide – Tees – Exe Line.
41.00	It's different now, there is dignity in someone's sexuality, knocking down walls. Relates to Paralympians, they are Olympians. The north was the industrial heartland. It gets back to education. About meeting different people – I got involved in trades union movement from age 20, and met people like Tim Roach, the now General Secretary, he's worked in industry, he talks sense, yet he's a Southerner. I'd been brought up thinking Tories were Southerners and never trust a Tory. You meet Southerners, like dockers from East End and you think you're not that different after all.
45.00	A worker is a worker, irrespective of where everybody works.

48.00	The fight was always against the Tories. In the Seventies we won, but a realisation by Christmas that she (Margaret Thatcher) wasn't going to back down and she used the State. In 1983 you did what a bobby told you. All of a sudden we were the enemy within. They were just miners wanting their jobs, a future, but your liberties were ceasing, and it's a police state. I went on the picket line 'and I shite mysen, no two ways about it'. They'd come at you, like a bloody cavalry charge, chasing you down the back alley.
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