

**Carole Wood**

**Date: 22.7.18**

**Interview by Garry Lyons for Last Seam play**

| Minutes |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
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| 2.00    | <p><b>Track One</b></p> <p>After the strike I wanted to learn to drive. Got a Honda 50 motorcycle but fell off on the pit tip. Had it for a year and a half, it were brilliant. Went to Tesco, went to do my school cleaning job on it. Then a year later did some driving lessons. Passed my test first time in 1986 and 'never looked back'.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| 4.30    | <p>During the strike they wanted someone who could type and I used to work in an office so they got me an old Remington typewriter and I took the minutes. Gave me confidence.</p> <p>After learning to drive I did flower arranging – I went to night school for 3 years. I was 45/46 when I went, Jim had retired from pit through ill health. Used to clean at Stainforth School 6.30 to 8.30am, come home and get changed, drive to college till 3pm and that was full time cos if you went full time you got your flowers paid. It was 1998.</p> |
| 6.00    | <p>When I got my car I went for 3 years to learn Mechanics. They got me stripping down a carburettor, changing oil, everything. If I have a car I want to know what's wrong with it, so I don't get done.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| 9.00    | <p>I did Level 3 flowers. I would have loved to teach floristry. I've done weddings, funerals. Did my own dad's funeral. I finished all my work the day before he died, and I went to see him to tell him I'd passed. It's very relaxing doing flowers. I've got a room upstairs, my creations room. My grandkids think it's ace to go up there.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 11.30   | <p>In the mining communities they used to grow dahlias and crysanths and have shows. They don't do it now. My Grandad Robson had 2 allotments and we were always down there. He used to rear pigs. He was the first one to have a vine.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| 13.00   | <p>Someone on the allotments was breeding mink, his wife wanted a fur coat but the fox came for them, one after another, so he only had enough mink left to make a collar!</p> <p>'That's what a community is. I mean now...it's not the same'.</p> <p>My lads are doing well, one's a chartered surveyor and the other is an electrical engineer. One daughter in law has 2 cafés and the other is a Headteacher. They don't live far away.</p>                                                                                                      |

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|  | <b>Track Two</b><br><p>2.00 We moved here in 1976, it were a pit house. It was supposed to be haunted. I don't believe in ghosts so it didn't bother me one iota. It were a lovely house and it's solidly built. We've been here 42 years now.</p> <p>Jim started in the pit 1974.</p> <p>He were a painter and decorator and he decided to go in pit for more money. His dad were a miner. He lasted in the pit, then he</p> <p>4.00 went to Sheffield Uni with the union and did a course.</p> <p>During the strike, doing the minutes changed me 'because I were more of a background person, now I were in forefront of it all, because I had to do letters and send them out'. It was for the children's appeal, for Christmas, to have a party for 1500 kids in 4 locations.</p> <p>5.30 We got vanloads of stuff. Raleigh sent 5 bikes. Each kid got a raffle ticket and one got the bike. The money that was left, we took all the kids to Scarborough for the day. 13 double decker buses. They got a fish and chip dinner, so many rides on the fairground and a</p> <p>8.00 bag of rock. They got a voucher and 5 pounds to spend.</p> <p>I'd do my school cleaning then at 9am go to the soup kitchens and</p> <p>9.00 stopped till 3. I got very involved because I enjoyed it. Then to the other school in Dunsville until half past 5. I used to go back to the</p> <p>11.00 Welfare to wrap presents for the kids. Jim used to put these sheets up in Welfare and people would put their names on.</p> <p>If you didn't do it, what would the kids do?</p> <p>I bought stuff from jumble sales. But my kids were level headed. I tell them it hasn't hurt them. They know the value of money.</p> <p>Mortgages were about 13%</p> <p>The worst thing was being cold. We went to the tip and got a bag of old boots that we burnt, we was huddled up in blankets. We tried making bricks to burn with coal dust and cement but it didn't</p> <p>13.30 work.</p> <p>I improvised with food. I was cleaning in Hillards so I were first in queue to get things cheap on sale. We lived on minced meat, breast of lamb and sausage. But I can make a mean stew pie and a flan with Heinz spaghetti, 4 eggs and cheese on top. It's absolutely delicious. When Jim said he was on strike, the first thing I said was, I was glad I'd bought a sack of taties the day before yesterday.</p> <p>You had to improvise. But they were never hungry.</p> |
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| 2.00  | <p>A lot of people lived beyond their means before the strike. They depended on overtime. But we never did. 'That's where they come unstuck'. Jim was on strike right through.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| 3.30  | <p><b>Track Three</b></p> <p>He went back to the pit after the strike. 'That were a terrible time that'. Going down Pit Lane that day, it were horrendous. I walked down with them.</p> <p>I tried to keep kids away from it. Once our Nigel thought they were coming to switch the electric off, which they weren't. 'I think he'd heard it at school or summat'.</p> <p>But all the kids were in the same boat.</p> <p>I remember when the first scabs went down, that were terrible. Seeing police who weren't police. It was horrible but there were some fun bits.</p> |
| 7.15  | <p>We used to have nights out, to get money in. All the girls used to make sandwiches. We had a French night once and a couple stopped here with their kids.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| 11.30 | <p>This area has gone downhill. Shops have gone.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| 14.00 | <p>I used to do flowers here, I'd always got some flowers in. I used to get them from the warehouse.</p> <p>When Jim died, my oldest son's friend, Shelley kept pestering me to work in a floristry shop. I went to work for Trish for a few years.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 16.00 | <p>But on Mothers Day, Christmas, I was working all hours and she got 2 people in to do my job, that's how many hours I was doing. So now I just go and help her. When my mam died she let me go there to do the flowers. I did 60 rainbow roses, lilies, carnations. I did a mam, then a nanna. When Jim died we had 63 roses, because he was 63.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| 18.00 | <p>My mam loved flowers, every week I'd get her some flowers.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| 21.15 | <p>And now I help out, I pick litter up, I got a pick from the Mayor, she brought it round.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| 23.00 | <p>I used to be a cleaner in charge of 2 schools but I thought I'd got more to my brain than that, so I asked my area supervisor if there were any jobs in the office. I went to Carr House and answered the phones, then I helped out at South Parade in the office. I was doing pricing, buying stationery, printing materials. I learnt. And I went on different courses. I went to college to learn to do</p>                                                                                                                                                           |
| 25.00 | <p>computer.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |

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|  | <p>I finished cleaning in 2002. From South Parade I went to Scarborough House, doing engineers' fees. I had to get engineers to do timesheets, it was like trying to get blood out of a stone. I also did health and safety of the officers. I loved working with fellers, I really did. 2 of us were promoted to do my boss' job. She was the manager of the admin. I were fire warden.</p> <p>'But I wouldn't have done that if it hadn't been for being on strike'.</p> <p>Anecdote about speaking at a floristry event to 40 people.</p> <p>It annoys me that as a widow, in the house all day, people think you're not happy. If you can't enjoy your own company, you might as well not bother.</p> <p>This area has declined, it needs sorting. When they closed the swimming pool I wrote to every councillor, my own MP, the free press and within so many weeks it was fixed. If I don't like things I'll ring the council up.</p> <p>I'll say, 'come and get it sorted' and they do.</p> <p>I am going to join the Labour Party.</p> |
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