

AUDIO TRANSCRIPTION

Italics = Contributor Name, Music and SFX – these are not spoken in the audio

- 00:00:00 **AUDIO START**
- 00:00:00 *Miners' Gala music*
- 00:07:27 *Sam*
I was 15, I was into, Duran Duran.
I would listen to what people were saying, obviously listen to the, earwiggling,
And all the discussions and things, and you just do start to become aware of what's going on...
It's like osmosis I guess really.
- 00:28:28 *Sam*
The coat, that my auntie had made, I can't remember the style of it, but it was kind of a
herringbony-type coat, and the watch was a plastic, bangle-watch that was so cheap and tarry,
erm, cream in colour, and I can still see it now. I wish I still had it actually, I should have kept it,
erm, but I can still picture the watch.
- 00:54:03 *Miners' Gala music and hubbub*
- 00:59:59 *Sam*
It was a nice coat actually, I did twist about it at the time but it was a nice coat.
And I was an only child, and I was, a little bit spoilt, so Christmas was always a settee,
You know, overflowing with presents, and that year, it wouldn't have even gone on the corner
of the settee, but I really, I didn't care.
- 01:03:83 *Gayle*
And I remember going tut 'stute one night, with my mum and dad, with all these hair slides and
jewellery on, I think I put, literally every piece what were in this box on, and I felt amazing
[laughs] because, 'cos I'd got on all this jewellery, and plastic hair-slides and I absolutely loved
'um.
- 01:38:98 *Elspeth*
Books I think more than anything.
Sarah, a cuddly hippo I think it was, she got, which she had for many years
- 01:46:43 *Gayle*
I can remember certain toys that I got, still got, but I think it's still at my mum's though, erm, a
Care Bear. I've got a cup, badges, book, and there's one, actually there's one that's story taking
mick out of Maggie Thatcher. I've still got that book as well.
Can't remember thinking, I've gone without, there were things probably, I wanted, but, I mean
me dad's always said as well, it's as if I knew I couldn't ask for too much, because I knew, it
weren't there. And I really wanted this recorder, really, really bad [laughs].
Got a face on for a bit and then that were that.
- 02:27:97 *Soundscape of Christmas day opening presents*
- 02:40:41 *Gayle*
I can Christmas, we always used to get up, erm, and we all piled into my mum and dad's
bedroom, and we sat and we opened our Christmas present on my mum and dad's bed.
Erm, and that happened every year.
I can't ever remember waking up or thinking, this is horrible.
But like I say, I were only 4, 5 year old at that time. [pause]

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- 03:06:00 *Jayne*
We had quite a lot of happy times. Spirits were quite high, considering that they were on strike, and people were...skint.
- 03:15:41 *Gayle*
They just remind me, erm, [pause] of erm, [pause] my mum and dad working [voice falters] sorry [tears], I didn't think I was gonna do this, sorry [tears/laughter – pause]
Fighting so hard, to keep us all together, and get through it. [pause, below song underscore]
Sorry, It's my mum and dad, it just, obviously went through, and it, Let me get a quick tissue, am I alright to move
- 03:38:50 *Flis singing underscored with Gayle above*
We are women we are strong,
We are fighting for our lives
Side by side with our men
Who work the nation's mines,
United by the struggle,
United by the past,
And it's - Here we go! Here we go!
For the women of the working class
- 04:00:00 *Miners' Gala music and hubbub*
- 04:06:00 *Elspeth*
An ordinary day would be, to get the kids up for school, get them breakfast,
And, if Bill was going on picket duty he probably would have gone.
Once they got to school I went to work, erm, I would come home, make the tea, and then,
go to some fundraising event. Went to working men's clubs and asked for donations, and we
went to London, and spoke at a rally with Tony Benn, and err, absolutely terrified, yeh [pause].
My dad was a miner, all his brothers were miners, so we weren't the only ones out on strike in
our family. I remember taking Bill's mam to see Arthur Scargill, what a night we had,
so we were, one hundred percent behind the strike.
- 04:59:05 *Arthur Scargill Archive Clip*
- 05:05:23 *Elspeth*
You know, we were, really well looked after, well supported by family
- 05:10:40 *Gayle*
And me mum were part of Women Against Pit Closures, obviously when it bit hit,
my mum were out a lot ding food parcels and stuff like that, so I can remember her not being
there as much as she was before.
- 05:23:27 *Jayne*
Well I were also involved in women's support group. It were just a meeting place were all
women used to meet up, bandstand at top of Dinnington.
Also collecting Gayle from school – *When they remembered me [Gayle, laughing]* – I know on
food parcel days we used to have, we used to think, 'Oh my god, we've forgot her' and have to
run down street but, teachers realised what we'd done and they used to keep her every week.

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- 05:52:10 *Gayle*
I remember a lot of parties, mainly at our house actually 'cos we had like a massive living room, and everyone on 'street used to come to our house and they'd all fetch a bit of whatever they'd got, say someone might fetch some rice, and they'd make pot of stew or, whatever we could. They used to brew their own wine, and beer [laughs] I can remember that [pause] 'cos women didn't actually like the wine so they used to just chuck it into a plant in my mum's room [laughs]
- 06:22:25 *Jayne*
Yeh, she used to have a big giant rubber plant, but, wine used to go in and this guy'd come and fill all glasses up and he couldn't understand why we were all stone cold sober but, plant thrived on it [laughter].
- 06:36:60 *Jean*
'cos I'd been working, I got a bit of money at beginning of strike, so, I, we didn't take our food parcels, we weren't 'gonna take from anybody else who had a lot less than us. What we decided were, when money runs out we'll take it but until then, we'll, it's our contribution to everybody else.
- 06:59:45 *Karen*
Think that was a big benefit of going to soup kitchen, because you saw all that stuff coming in as well and you were all sat together and you was eating together as well which I think's quite an important thing, when you're sharing food together and everybody's cooked and you're all, and you're communicating with what's going off and you're not sat in your own little house going, 'oh in't this really awful' every day.
- 07:24:30 *Miners' Gala music and hubbub*
- 07:26:80 *Elspeth*
In our hallway we had boxes of tins of soup, beans, spaghetti, meat, corned beef, fruit which were collected each week.
- 07:29:30 *Sam*
I don't remember ever there not being food ever. I remember the food parcels and how crap they were. And you always got a tin of Pek, which nobody ate, so in the cupboard there would be 46 tins of Pek which probably were multiplying on their own, err, 'cos nobody ate it, but every week we must of got a parcel from, oh I don't know where, dad would come in with it. But I remember there was one guy, down our street at the bottom, and he used to start at the top with his food parcel and he just used to give it away 'cos he was, that's the kind of people that they were, and by the time he'd got inside the house he just had an empty box and he used to get wrong, off his wife who was like, 'how am I supposed to feed anybody?' and he just give it away as he was going down the street.
- 08:18:20 *Miners' Gala music and hubbub*
- 08:24:00 *Elspeth*
The impact was, that we [pause] reversed roles, erm, I got a little job in a shop, erm, I got thirty-seven pound a week, which wasn't a lot but it kept the wolf from the door. It just happened, err, it just happened, it was erm, something that I had never presumed I would go back to work until the girls were older and, but it happened and he just got on with it.

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He was err, he could make a dinner better than I could, he could never grasp the ironing of the shirts but erm, he got on with it and when he wasn't picketing he was just brilliant. I think the most difficult thing was that we always had to have someone with the girls in the house, or they went to Bill's mam and dad's or, but it was always busy.

09:15:00

Jean

You don't get that in other communities, you don't get that [pause] sense of everybody, everybody might know your business but everybody helps, everybody's there when, they might talk about you but when you're in trouble, they're there for you.

09:31:19

Craig

Well I remember growing up with such love and such, [pause] sort of, I don't know there was a genuine collective feeling you know when you could run into someone's house on your street and they'd know you. If your mum or dad was in a tight bind you'd just go, 'would you watch our Craig five minutes whilst I just nip to the shops' just dump you, you couldn't do that, anymore. I kind of, miss that.

09:53:52

Dave

Support came from strange places. And, where you would have expected support [pause] you got none, in fact you got hostility.

10:04:28

Karen

Christmas has never been a spending, spending time for me anyway, and Andrew was brought up in a similar way, you could say, you know, this is why you've not got much, but I mean I think [pause] there were a drive to make sure that every kid had got something at Christmas, there were campaigns. I mean International support we got, you said about kid's clothes.

10:25:01

Jean

Yeah, we got kid's clothes for Christmas my son and they came from East Germany. And I got a lovely letter [pause] I cried [laughs] I'll start crying again, it were lovely. Can't remember the exact words, but it said, 'We are thinking of you and how very brave you are, and err, we hope you carry on, [pause] fighting for what is good.' I felt like saying, I wouldn't get this from next door but one but I can get this from East Germany. We did get some from this country, I'm not saying we didn't, but we got a lot from abroad, and that were really, really nice. And all kids had little red duffle coats but they were knitted [pause] they all looked like extras in Little Red Riding Hood [laughter] but we all laughed, oh he looked beautiful our Shaun in it.

11:14:07

Elsbeth

Well I think we were all worried and anxious. My children didn't go without and we had a lovely family Christmas and I know I mentioned to Cath Connolly that uh we wouldn't be having a real Christmas tree that year because uh well things were a little bit tight so I we'd gone shopping leading up to Christmas and we came back and there was the Xmas tree in the back yard – she'd gone out and bought a tree for us.

11:43:00

Craig

Brenda came to the house with you know a weeks worth of shopping just to give to me mum so that she could I guess make it easier you know have food in whatever her reasons were and I remember my mum being really taken back by that and not really knowing how to react just because she thought it was an amazing gesture.

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- 12:06:00 *Miners' Gala Music*
- 12.07.00 *Karen*
I always like a real, a real Christmas tree (Jean Oh yeah (laughs)) and I were like, ooh we're not going, we're not gonna have a, you know a, as long as I can smell pine needles I'll be fine and uh we found this like a broken Christmas tree and found top of it somewhere int, int pile of Christmas trees or something and then I said oh there's a top here so we bought it quite cheap for I don't know it might have been a quid or something like that, if that. And I just put some sellotape round it and covered it with tinsel and that you know I said that's it I'm fine now I've got some pine needles that I can smell pine needles.
- 12:42:00 *Elsbeth*
We had donations from lots and lots of people. We got some presents, toys that we wrapped up and we managed to have a disco and hot dogs for the kids and I believe Santa Claus came on the stage and we handed out selection boxes at the end of the day.
- 13:01:00 *Dave*
And we were inundated with donations and one was, it was a postal order for five pounds and a little note unsigned, unsigned said, 'Please accept this, its my Christmas Bonus. It's sent in solidarity not charity. Aye. And (pause) I think I cried when I saw that. In fact I went about um (pause) and I never kept it. I should have been beaten around the head with something hard. But that, that when you're in that situation and you read something like that. The person hadn't even signed it. They didn't want thanks.
- 13:57:00 *Flis singing*
If I had the wings of a sparrow,
If I had the arse of a crow,
I'd fly over Kiverton tomorrow
And shit on the scabs below.
- 14:11:00 *Caroline and Flis laughter*
Great
- 14:14:00 *Sam*
I remember that someone spray painted someone's house. Scab probably I would imagine it would be scab and I have a suspicion that I know who it was. Still hate each other. It's still the same, people are still scabs if they went back they are still scabs and they'll be scabs until the day they die.
- 14:32:00 *Gayle*
Me at my age at the time I wouldn't of, I heard the word but I wouldn't have known who were and who weren't. How I saw it were everybody were doing what my dad were doing and, and standing up for what he believed in.
- 14:45:00 *Sam*
I had a friend whose dad was also on strike. The YMCA were fantastic and they took us all away on a holiday. We were quite close friends after that. Um and then as time went on unfortunately her dad went back after the strike and she didn't speak to me again after that. So that was a little bit upsetting because we'd become very close and then obviously he went back and um we weren't friends anymore after that so that was quite hard.

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- 15:12:00 *Dave*
Went in from picketing um freezing cold (*cheers from picket line archive*) walked through the door and Sam and her mams getting the breakfast and they both had overcoats on in the house and I thought they'll never beat us, they'll never beat us if they are prepared to do that. I can't tell you how proud I was of Sam and my wife. Never ever complained. In the whole of the strike never ever complained. Not once.
Miners' Gala music and hubbub underscored with Dave above
- 15:48:00 *Miners' Gala music and hubbub*
- 15:49:00 *Sam*
At the end of that year people were like your best friends you knew everybody because you'd spent so much time with these people.
Miners' Gala music and hubbub underscored with Sam above
- 15:57:00 *Picket line chants archive clip*
- 15:59:00 *Sam*
When people started to go back there was conflict it was, it was hatred. It was absolute out and out hatred. If somebody had gone back that was it, it was just like split the village down the middle.
Picket line chants archive clip underscored with Sam above
- 16:11:00 *Picket line chant & speaker archive clip*
- 16:13:00 *Craig*
It's in the aftermath and the stories not only of my family, but of other people that we knew and you know friends of family and extended family and cousins and uncles and things like that. I take great pride in my parents really for being through like the hardest of hardships and yet they can still laugh about it. They can still tell stories where uh they were on they were coal tipping and pinching coal and throwing it into the back of my nan nans car and me dad saying to her if the police come we just need you to drive and they did and she just drove off and left them both there stranded and they had to run away. You know things like that and they laugh about it now and I always think that's a great credit to people in all struggles.
Picket line chants archive clip underscored with Craig above
- 16:53:00 *Elspeth*
In the early days of the strike Bill took Clare to Herrington Colliery and uh he said I want you to watch this and uh the police were there um playing football and (*pause - picket line chanting underscored*) at one point, it must have been in the summer because they made fans out of twenty pound notes and waved them about um and uh. Yeah so they uh I shouldn't really say it but the police weren't the flavor of the month for our family.
- 17:38:00 *Craig*
Growing up I was just told Thatcher was bad you know Tories were bad that was just something probably didn't understand but still never questioned um and I guess by default that's where my, that's where my heads wired politically. He never really talked about politics that much me dad unless it was bad and then the slipper was at the television you know it was that kind of thing. Me Nan used to escort us out of the room (*laughs*) 'cos there was a lot of effing and jeffing.

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- 18:07:00 *Sam*
I hated the fact that I got free school meals um it was awful you had to queue up for a ticket to get your free school meal and I hated, I hated that. I really didn't like the fact that we were singled out and you had to go and stand in this queue to get a ticket so that you could get your dinner. We refused to do it. Me dad said that we organized a little strike I don't know if you would say it was that organized but we refused to – we just said that we weren't prepared to go and stand in a line to get a ticket and that they would have to do it some other way.
- 18:39:00 *Craig*
I was pretty shocked first of all I was kind of kind of disbelief when she told me that he'd been arrested at Orgreave. It's still pretty painful for him but no it was me mum that sort of disclosed that family secret I guess so to speak - but she, she still find it quite difficult. I think her experience of me dad being arrested was shit I'm on my own what you know I've got a kid on the way and I've got two that I've got to get up tomorrow, feed em get em to school how do I do that when your dads facing three years to life.
- 19:14:00 *Elsbeth*
Whether my girls were influenced by the outcome of the strike, Sarah just knew, her heart is where it should be. They both know that you've got to work hard for what you get and uh they've both done that. Sarah would - definitely felt that the year of the strike was it brought people together rather than pushed them apart.
- 19:40:00 *Craig*
I think the biggest thing for me is like my dad was my age in fact he was younger when this happened and he was there and he was beaten up and but I still find it quite hard to believe that me dad was you know bleeding on a field just because he wanted to work.
- 19:55:00 *Dave*
All of that must have an impact on a kid fourteen or fifteen years old growing up -all of us were politicized by that - but I think the children her age the older children, I think a lot of them were politicized by that - being involved in that dispute. My daughter certainly was – she won't let anything pass right unchallenged and often at some cost to herself. She's just like any other Geordie lass out for a good time but there's a line you know that she won't walk past.
Miners' Gala music underscores Dave above
- 20:29:00 *Jean*
I think Sean had a, it had a positive effect on Sean really. (Karen mmm) In regards of I went to university and then his dad went to university. So Sean were about eight or nine when I went back to school and knew what his dad had done at pit and saw that his dad had got a better life and I think it did impact on him quite a bit.
Miners' Gala music underscores Jean above
- 20:54:00 *Dave*
It's like unquestionable it was for us anyway.
Miners' Gala music underscores Dave above
- 21:00:00 *Sam*
I must admit, it would I don't think I could cross a picket line. I really don't think I could cross a picket line. You'd write scab on me garage door.
Miners' Gala music underscores Sam above

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- 21:08:00 *Dave*
Would I?
Sam and Dave laugh
Sam
He's got form I think
Dave
No. It wasn't me
Sam
I think it might have been
Dave
It wasn't me honest. It wasn't me
Sam
Mmm me mam thinks it was
Dave
Your mam always thinks the worst of me doesn't she?
Sam and Dave laugh
- Sam*
It would have been the red paint underneath your fingernails
Dave
No it was white paint
Sam
How do you know what colour the paint was?
Dave
I was told. I saw the window
Sam and Dave laugh
Sam
Mmm I'm not convinced. I think it was you
Music from Miners Gala underscores Sam and Dave above and continues here
- 21:54:00 *Sam and Dave recite together*
Who am I?
To ask them why,
Which pit must live, that pit must die,
They say but sir its economics
That's juggling by financial comics.
- 22:06:00 *Dave*
And that's all I know I can't remember anymore
Sam
I'll never forget it
Dave
Aye, yes, yes
- 22:11:00 *Music from Miners' Gala*
- 22:18:00 *Craig*
The effects the strike had on the community was, I think it was pretty devastating. I think fundamentally it was a, it was an erosion and we get you know zero hours contracts and its not at all what they could have had you know the union doesn't exist anymore really for those people so workers aren't protected

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- 22:42:00 *Jean*
I mean who cares now really. I mean communities that we live in are decimated - our village has decayed and it has. My dad's office is a gym and I walk past it twice a day everyday and I and it really there's times when I cry when I walk past 'cos I think that's all that's left. The whole pits gone and there's that one office and its like, it's taunting me.
- 23:09:00 *Craig*
My mum was doing her training, my dad's job was getting phased out he did return to work but he was moved around heavily because all the pits were shutting and you know he, even their, their relationship it became a stretch and they ended up getting divorced five years after the strike so it and you look back at it now and all the things that you sort of put to them falling out are definitely direct links to that event really
Miners' gala hubbub
- 23:35:00 *Jean*
The impact of it for us, it affected our marriage definitely. When he went back to work, he really did work every hour god sent simply because he thought this int' going to last very long we need the money. We were left broke and er uh I, we lost touch. (*Karen mmm*) we really did. And we were both annoyed and angry about what had happened.
- 24:05:00 *Elsbeth*
We just had such a great time and I can't think that I ever said to Bill I wish you would be going back to work. There was families who were with little kids really small kids you know, found it really difficult just to get nappies and soap powder and there was a real lot of hardship but for em personally it was just a wonderful year.
- 24:29:00 *Gayle*
Because everybody were all in the same situation and even kids, adults everyone, wives, husbands they were all going through exactly the same I think as a kid meself we all just like got through it together sort of we just carried on playing and adults carried on helping each other
- 24:51:30 *Sam*
I've always been a daddy's girl if I'm honest I would have just had the same views that me dad had cos I was just so proud of him and he was like this hero you know he was at the forefront of it he was the boss everybody came to him and um I would have just have, if me dad would have said the police are horrible. I would have just gone – the police are horrible.
Miners' Gala music and hubbub underscores Sam here and continues
- 25:13:00 *Dave*
It changed my life. It changed your life.
Sam
Absolutely
Dave
It changed the lives of a lot of people some for the worst
Sam
Ours for the better
Dave
Yeah
Miners' Gala music and hubbub underscores Sam and Dave here and continues

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25:23:00

Sam

It was just such fun. The Christmas holidays it had snowed everyone went outside and I can remember there being a big snowball fight out with all the guys and I just there's so many memories, happy memories. I loved it. I had Arthur Scargill posters on me wall Coal not Dole everywhere. It was just a complete shrine thing on me walls to do with the strike. Every wall was like I didn't have any Duran Duran posters up. It was all just strike stuff. Arthur Scargill was me poster, me pop idol

Laughs

Miners' Gala music and hubbub underscores Sam here and continues

AUDIO END