

## Home Secretary says 'no' to Bishop's plan

Claim that independent Orgreave panel would be of no benefit is kick in teeth, says angry campaigner

HOME Secretary Sajid Javid has rejected an offer by the Bishop of Sheffield to set up an Orgreave independent panel.

The Rt Revd Dr Peter Wilcox argued that there was strong evidence to suggest that such a review, commissioned by the Home Office, would be of real public benefit.

"We had high hopes that his approach would be seen as a real chance to get to the truth about what happened at Orgreave on 18 June 1984 and afterwards," said Orgreave Truth and Justice

Campaign Chair Chris Hockney.

"It's a real kick in the teeth not just for us but for all the people and institutions Bishop Pete has approached who, like us, believe there's a real need to address this part of history so mining communities can get truth and justice."

The so-called 'Battle of Orgreave' at the South Yorkshire coking plant during the 12-month miners' strike led to the arrest of 95 miners who were charged on fabricated police statements, only for their trials to collapse because of unreliable evidence.

Neither the police nor the Conservative government have admitted liability for assault, wrongful arrest and malicious prosecutions, and not one officer has ever been disciplined for any offence.

Campaigners have been pushing for Home Secretary Sajid Javid to review their call for an independent inquiry after accusing his predecessor Amber Rudd of failing to familiarise herself with details of their case before rejecting it.

They include former miner Kevin Horne, one of those arrested at Orgreave who has spoken out about his ordeal.

"It is 35 years since the strike, and I think the government hopes we'll take this to our graves.

"If they've nothing to hide

● CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



The Orgreave banner on display at Sunderland Civic Centre, held by Sunderland councillors, Orgreave campaigners and Sunderland Trade Council officers.

## Sunderland council backs call for Orgreave public inquiry

ON 30 January Sunderland council threw its support behind the Orgreave Truth and Justice Campaign for a public probe into the infamous police attacks on striking miners at Orgreave in June 1984.

Copt Hill ward councillors Kevin Johnston and Jack Cunningham, who represent the former mining community who worked at Wearmouth Colliery, drafted the motion.

Councillor Cunningham said, "I know from speaking to residents involved in these clashes that an inquiry is urgently needed. Orgreave symbolises the wider pain and suffering expe-

rienced during the strike."

Councillor Johnston, moving the motion at Sunderland Civic Centre, said Orgreave was "close to his heart" due to its impact on his family and noted the event's legacy of "police mistrust" in mining communities.

The motion - which received majority backing and a standing ovation from Labour councillors - will see Sunderland join a growing group of councils already backing the campaign for a public inquiry.

● SEE FEATURE ON PAGE 7



### The North's absent voices

Barry Hines' *A Kestrel for a Knave* and the film *Kes* are still hugely popular. But where is the creative talent amongst writers, filmmakers and playwrights to bring alive the drama and humour of working class life today? Chris Hockney introduces our Culture section on Page 17



## EDITORIAL

# We will get truth and justice

**W**ELCOME to the second edition of *At the Coal Face* published on the 35th anniversary of the epic 1984-85 miners' strike

The Orgreave Truth & Justice Campaign (OTJC) was set up in November 2012 to campaign for a public inquiry into the policing of pickets at the Orgreave coking plant on 18 June 1984 during the miners' strike.

We have a big presence on-line through our social media and web page as well as a physical presence at our many and varied meetings, debates, conferences, rallies, demonstra-

tions and events.

We are constantly invited to speak at and be involved in trade union and labour movement meetings up and down the country, and beyond.

On the international front, we have been invited to speak in the North of Ireland, Eire, France, Scotland, Norway and Denmark.

We are a high-profile, vibrant, immediately recognisable campaign. We have made links and worked with other justice campaigns such as Hillsborough, Shrewsbury, Blacklisting, Spycops, Grenfell, and have active support from Lesbians and Gays Support the Miners and many other

organisations and comrades. We have also secured a Labour Party manifesto commitment to open an inquiry into what happened at Orgreave.

On 31 October 2018 we held our second Hallowe'en event to commemorate the then Tory Home Secretary Amber Rudd's refusal on 31 October 2016 not to hold an Orgreave Inquiry. This event was outside the Home Office in London, where we asked the Home Secretary Sajid Javid to hold a public inquiry. He has, predictably, turned down our request.

It is clear that this Tory government will never concede to admitting any misconduct, malpractice

and corruption during the miners' strike.

We will get truth and justice only through fighting for it. We hope this newspaper inspires you to carry on supporting us, or to join us, in campaigning for our goal of a public inquiry into the police riot at Orgreave on 18 June 1984.

A luta continua – the fight goes on.

*Chris Hockney and Kate Flannery, Chair and Secretary, Orgreave Truth & Justice Campaign*

## Sajid Javid turns down Bishop's plan for Orgreave inquiry

### ● FROM PAGE 1

then they should welcome the chance offered by the Bishop to have a thorough and authoritative review of what's held on record, rather than keep trying to cover up the corruption of the past."

Rotherham MP Sarah Champion also recently contacted Sajid Javid to request a meeting with him and the Orgreave Truth and Justice Campaign.

This request was also rebuffed by the Home Secretary. Supporters are encouraged to use social media or write to Sajid Javid urging him to hold an Orgreave Inquiry – something Shadow Home Secretary Diane Abbott has promised should Labour be elected to power.

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## OTJC wins prestigious award

THE Ron Todd Foundation was founded in memory of Ron Todd (1927-2005), General Secretary of one of the biggest trade unions in Britain, the Transport and General Workers Union.

The Ron Todd Foundation recognises that every issue is a trade union issue. It champions collectivism to provide relief of poverty and social injustice, bringing about change in the individual and wider community through the provision of social education, training and a specific set of projects which at their core are based around grassroots community engagement.

Each year the Ron Todd Foundation hosts a Ron Todd Lecture and at this event present a series of Ron Todd Awards. This year the Orgreave Truth and Justice Campaign was nominated for the award for Social Justice and the RTF board of trustees have informed us that our campaign is the winner of this category. We are deeply honoured to have been given this award and it is so uplifting for us to have our campaigning work recognised and acknowledged in this way.

For more details about the Ron Todd Foundation please visit [www.rontoddfoundation.org](http://www.rontoddfoundation.org)

**At The Coal Face is published by the Orgreave Truth & Justice Campaign**

**Editor:**  
Granville Williams  
[granville24@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:granville24@tiscali.co.uk)

**Design:**  
Tony Sutton  
[ColdType www.coldtype.net](http://www.coldtype.net)

**Print:**  
Printed by trade union labour at Reach



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**Web:** [www.otjc.org.uk](http://www.otjc.org.uk)  
**Email:** [orgreavejustice@hotmail.com](mailto:orgreavejustice@hotmail.com)  
**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com)  
**Twitter:** @orgreavejustice  
**Instagram:** [www.instagram.com/orgreavetruthandjustice](http://www.instagram.com/orgreavetruthandjustice)



# Memorial will help to preserve our heritage

By Mick Lanaghan

AFTER the closure of Hatfield Main, the last working mine in the South Yorkshire and Doncaster coalfield, the five communities of Hatfield Main were successful in applying for protected status from English Heritage.

As a direct response, the Hatfield Main Heritage Association formed a working body, Hatfield Main Heritage Trust, to develop proposals for the retention of both headgears and future use of two winding houses, power house and fan housing.

Ideas include a dedicated

mining art gallery, affordable artisan workshops and studios, community facilities, a wedding venue, a recording studio and a virtual reality underground experience.

Since the strike, Hatfield NUM have retained a close friendship with Paul Heaton, ex-Housemartins and Beautiful South, and latterly with Jacqui Abbott. Paul regularly came over from Hull to stand on Hatfield's picket line and became firm friends – he helped carry the new community banner when it was first unfurled for the marking of the end of the 30th Anniversary – the long march back – and he has been kept up to date with the progress of the Colliery proposals.

Early last year we were contacted by Claire Faragher who was producing a documentary on Paul's life and career.

Paul had told her that he wanted to involve the Hatfield communities in the documentary process as he has always said our community gave him the building blocks to build his career.

From that initial contact, Paul proposed a benefit gig at the Pit Club in Stainforth with himself and Jacqui. The plans came



Left to right: Paul Heaton, John Dunn, Kevin Horne and Mick Lanaghan.

together over a six-month period and the event was held on Thursday 13 September.

Sadly, the memorial dedicated to mark the 30th anniversary of the miners' strike had been damaged. However, the local funeral directors, Carpenters, stepped in and donated a black marble memorial stone inscribed with the original design by Karl Lanaghan.

Paul unveiled the new strike

memorial on the day of the gig and presented a cheque for the income received from the Housemartins' track *Coal Train* to Hatfield Main.

We were joined by John Dunn and Kevin Horne with the Orgreave banner and were very grateful for a bag of goodies sent by the Orgreave Truth and Justice Campaign and presented Jacqui Abbott with them on the night of the gig.

It was a fantastic success, ably opened by the Bard of the Hatfield Brigade, Joe Solo. The Hatfield Brigade wholeheartedly joined in and *From Hull to Heatongrad*, the recently aired documentary on Paul's life shown on Channel 4, was shown.

Our thanks to all at the Orgreave Truth and Justice Campaign for their support. Never forget, never forgive!



The Hatfield Commemoration unveiled by Paul Heaton.

## Joe Solo's new album aids austerity battle

TO commemorate the 35th anniversary of the 1984-85 Strike, singer-songwriter Joe Solo is launching a very special version of his album *Never Be Defeated*. Originally released in 2015, the album tells the story of the men and women of Stainforth and Dunscroft, the community around Hatfield Main.

Every year since, Joe has combined with them to form a ramshackle choir;

and together they have released three singles raising money to help locals struggling under Tory austerity.

The new album is a double-CD package with the *Never Be Defeated* album on one disc, while the second disc contains their work, together with some unreleased extras, and it closes with a very special song written and sung by former miner Mick Lanaghan entitled *Farewell Hatfield Main*.

Joe crowdfunded the CD so that every penny raised could be channelled into two projects in the local community: the DN7 Hardship Fund – used to help those struggling at the sharp end of government cuts – and the campaign to Save The Hatfield Main Headgear and turn it into both a monument to the death of an industry and a vital community resource for the future.



Joe Solo at Durham Miners' Gala

The album is available from March at:

<https://joesolothehatfieldbrigade.bandcamp.com/album/never-be-defeated-special-edition>



Christine Peace, prospective Labour Party candidate for North East Derbyshire, describes the high-profile presence of the Orgreave campaign at the 2018 Labour Party conference

# Labour Party supports call for Orgreave inquiry

I REMEMBER as a teenager how many of the adults around me felt let down by the Labour Party during the miners' strike. However, we should not forget those Labour Party members, councillors and MPs who stood strong at the time. Many of those that did are still there in the party today and we thank them.

One of them was Jeremy Corbyn and, under his leadership, we have a commitment in the party manifesto to an inquiry into Orgreave.

Our comrades in Scotland, led by Labour MSP Neil Findley, secured an inquiry into the policing of the miners' strike there. In Wales, our comrade Mick Antoniwi, continues to fight for an inquiry, too.

It's just the Tory government, standing in the way, protecting their Thatcher government of the past. So let's vote them out.

## Huge display of solidarity for the Orgreave Truth and Justice Campaign at the 2018 Labour Party Conference

OTJC ran a very busy stand at the Labour Party conference in Liverpool with the help and support of our dear comrades and friends from Lesbians and Gays Support the Miners.

You were the in the minority if you were there and didn't wear our celebrated *Coal not Dole* OTJC sticker. Our stand was visited by MPs keen to show their support. Other campaigns came along to show support including the Shrewsbury Campaign.

## Support from Haldane

Our campaign continues to fight on a legal front and as socialist activists we recognise legal activists who fight for us and other working class injustices. Special thanks to Haldane Society of Socialist Lawyers who hosted a fringe meeting at Labour Party Conference supporting us, chaired by their chair, Liz Davies.

The Shadow Attorney General, Shami Chakrabarti spoke



Ian Lavery, Chair of the Labour Party with Orgreave campaign supporters at Labour Party Conference 2018, displaying the first iconic T-shirt we produced.



Orgreave at The World Transformed, a lively programme of events organised by Momentum, at Labour Party Conference 2018

about the importance of having an Orgreave Inquiry and what would be expected from that inquiry.

Mark George QC showed some very clear and disturbing images of miners being attacked

and threatened by police at Orgreave and talked about the collusion and the falsified police statements made when 95 miners at Orgreave were arrested.

He also highlighted the perjury committed by the police



Chris Kitchen, NUM General Secretary, and Chris Peace, Orgreave activist and Labour PPC for North East Derbyshire at Labour Party Conference



Miscarriages of justice: Orgreave, Shrewsbury 24, Grenfell, Blacklisting and other campaigners after the World Transformed event

in court and how the police behaved with impunity.

Shadow Secretary of State for Justice, Richard Burgon MP talked about the role of mining communities in the strike putting particular emphasis on

the magnificent contribution made by the women and Women Against Pit Closures. Neil Findlay MSP spoke about the recent decision by the Scottish Parliament to review policing in Scotland.





Gill Furniss MP, Shadow Secretary for Steel, Postal Affairs and Consumer protection, with Orgreave supporters at the 2018 Labour Party Conference.

And I was proud to speak on behalf of the campaign and those I hope to represent in the ex mining communities of North East Derbyshire about our campaigning activities.

I spoke on the failure of three Tory Home Secretaries to act and how today the fight we had then against trade unions is still a fight today. I also said loud and clear that Orgreave is not history.

We face the same battles now against the working class and we should take inspiration from the collectivism that our mining communities showed then to unite and galvanise us against this Tory government now.

#### OTJC at The World Transformed

OTJC also had an opportunity to speak at a packed The World Transformed event at the Class

Injustice meeting along with other campaigners Terry Renshaw from Shrewsbury 24, Sheila Coleman from Hillsborough Justice, Jacqui Haynes from Grenfell Justice and Roy Bentham from Blacklisting. The Shadow Attorney General, Shami Chakrabarti also spoke at this event.

I also spoke on behalf of OTJC about support and solidarity with other campaigns and the need for an Orgreave Inquiry.

#### Only a Labour government will order an inquiry into Orgreave

The OTJC has gained overwhelming support from the Labour and Trade Union movement. The Labour Party now, as a party of socialists and trade unionists, stands firm with us in our call for an inquiry.

#### Labour Party support is here to stay

THE Orgreave campaign is pleased that the Labour Party now, under Jeremy Corbyn's leadership, has a manifesto commitment to an inquiry into Orgreave.

The PLP of today support this, but to win a Labour government, we need to win marginal seats.

And rest assured! Labour Prospective Parliamentary Candidates across the country in key marginals will not only support us when elected but are fighting right now to make this so.

I'm so proud to be the PPC in North East Derbyshire. Please support us, your comrades, and get us all elected to have a Labour government to deliver the justice we need.

Deanne Fergusson, Morley and

Outwood

Jane Aitchinson, Pudsey  
Sonya Ward, Mansfield  
Olivia Blake, Sheffield Hallam  
Paul Farmer, Camborne, Redruth and Hayle  
Debbie Bannigan, Rugby  
Hugo Fearnley, Scarborough and Whitby  
Jackie Schneider, Wimbledon  
Pamela Fitzpatrick, Harrow East  
Belinda Loveluck-Edwards, Vale of Glamorgan  
Chris Webb, Blackpool  
Mary Gwen, Arron  
Gill Ogilvie, Walsall North  
Liz Savage, Southport  
Lavinia O'Connor, East Worthing and Shoreham  
Peter Lowe, Stourbridge  
Zoe Mayou, Nuneaton  
Rachel Eden, Reading West  
Patricia Ferguson, Glasgow North West

Jenny Forbes, Truro and Falmouth  
Charlynn Pullen, Milton Keynes North  
Lauren Dinsdale, Middlesbrough  
Jo Pike, Shipley  
Marc Tierney, Carmarthen West & South Pembrokeshire  
Cara Hilton, Dunfermline & West Fife  
Anna Perrett, York Outer  
Martin McCluskey, Inverclyde  
Fran Boait, Gloucester  
Peter Lamb, Crawley  
Charlotte Cornell, Dover  
Belinda Loveluck-Edwards, Glamorgan  
Laura McAlpine, Harlow & the Villages  
Nicola Bowden-Jones, Kingswood  
Mhairi Threlfall, Filton and Bradley Stoke  
Kate Watson, Glasgow East



## Wilf Dixon reminds us of the parallels between two infamous attempts by the British state to squash workers' protests



Contemporary engraving shows the attack on civilians at the 1819 Peterloo massacre.

# Peterloo and Orgreave

**2019** is the 35th anniversary of the 1984-85 miners' strike and the so-called 'Battle of Orgreave', when a militarised force of police, horses and dogs brutally attacked miners and pickets. 2019 is also the 200th anniversary of the Peterloo Massacre at St. Peter's Fields Manchester in 1819. What took place on the 16 August 1819 resulted in 19 deaths and hundreds of injuries as a result of wounds from the dragoons' drawn swords or being trampled by horses.

It truly was a massacre, and knowledge of this event has been ignored, denied and suppressed by bourgeois historians for two centuries. Its memory has been kept alive through the years by the labour movement and radical historians such as E.P. Thompson who challenged the 'official' version of events.

In anticipation of the 200th anniversary of the Peterloo massacre, the film *Peterloo* directed by Mike Leigh was released late in 2018. This film should be given wide distribution, but so far has been given only restricted showings.

But the facts about what happened that day are now absolutely clear.

A huge crowd, estimated at least 60,000 people, assembled to hear Henry Hunt, a reformer and landowner. Parliamentary representation at this time was based on a very restricted franchise including the 'Rotten Boroughs' where several candidates could be elected by as few as two or three wealthy electors.

The assembly was peaceful and good-humoured, and the weather was bright and sunny. But the authorities were fearful of such a display of political protest. The French Revolution was well within living memory, and after the end of the Napoleonic Wars in 1815 there had been a series of uprisings and localised violence, mainly about food and living conditions in the years of shortages and unemployment that followed.

Luddites had also broken machinery in mills across the country as the introduction of new machinery for spinning and weaving increased unemployment and forced down wages.

In Manchester, to counter these perceived threats, local businessmen created the Manchester Yeomanry in 1817. They, and more than 1,500 soldiers, including 340 regular cavalry from the 15th Hussars, were deployed on that fateful day. It is clear that the Home Secretary Lord Sidmouth along, with the local mag-

istrates, had prepared for only one outcome to the events that day. The Yeomanry cleared a corridor to the hustings to enable the arrest of Hunt after the Riot Act was read (inaudibly) and the Dragoons and Cavalry were mounted and ready. The people, including women and children, were allowed, unhindered, to crowd into St Peter's Fields.

A similar scenario took place at Orgreave in 1984 when the police placed no obstacles on miners assembling near Orgreave coking plant. Clearly, in both cases, the forces of the state had something in mind other than 'keeping order'.

In the days after Peterloo, those who had orchestrated the bloody outcome celebrated. The Prince Regent sent a message recording his "great satisfaction at their prompt, decisive and efficient measures for the preservation of the public tranquillity". The view that the bloody repression had "done the people good" was the prevailing one among

these notables. Similarly, days after the miners' strike ended, on March 27 1985, the government invited police chief constables to the Home Office for celebratory drinks.

No public enquiry was ever held into the events at St. Peter's Fields, such was the fear of the government that it would expose its conspiracy. But the death of an ex-soldier, John Lees, an Oldham cloth-worker who died subsequently from wounds received at Peterloo, prompted an inquest which, through press interest, turned into an enquiry into the events at St. Peter's Fields, Manchester. However, the judge, who was blatantly partial towards the magistrates, forced an adjournment on the grounds of jury fatigue, during which time a case was trumped up to dismiss the jury and inquest on a technicality.

The events at Peterloo, although more bloody than those that took place at Orgreave on June 18 1984, are a mirror image of mounted police with batons charging into a peaceful crowd. The conspiracy of the Thatcher government to brutally suppress the miners in their just struggle to save pits and jobs is on a par with the conspiracy of Lord Sidmouth and his ministers to save their power and privilege in 1819.

It is no less of a conspiracy by the current Tory Government to obstruct a public inquiry into the events at Orgreave. But 2019 is not 1819. We will have an inquiry!

### Not enough dead for a massacre

The historian Donald Read wrote *Peterloo: The Case Reopened* in 1958. In the book he makes this amazing comment: "Peterloo is a name so well-established in English history that it is perhaps easy to forget that it is in fact a soubriquet, angrily fabricated in bitter mockery of the feat of British arms at Waterloo four years before. It first appeared in print in the Manchester Observer newspaper on August 21, 1819. The successful designation of Peterloo as a 'massacre' represents another piece of successful propaganda. Perhaps only in peace-loving England could a death-roll of only eleven persons have been so described."



# Encourage your council to support an Orgreave inquiry

THE Orgreave Truth and Justice Campaign would like you to ask your local council to pass a resolution/motion to support the campaign and contact the Home Secretary to ask him to order a public inquiry into the events at Orgreave on June 18th 1984.

We have received magnificent support from a number of councils throughout the country and are hoping that we can get much more support to help us succeed with our request for an inquiry.

We have also received a lot of support from Labour Party, trade union colleagues and branches and political and social justice organisations throughout Britain, showing that this is not just an issue affecting the north of England.

## Model council resolution

We have produced a model resolution (right) but please use your own resolution if you think that is more appropriate. If you require an Orgreave Truth and Justice Campaign speaker at your council meeting or more information please contact us at [Orgreavejustice@hotmail.com](mailto:Orgreavejustice@hotmail.com)

You can find your local councillor's information and contact details at [www.writetothem.com](http://www.writetothem.com)

The Orgreave Truth and Justice Campaign advises anyone contacting Sajid Javid, the Home Secretary to also forward your email to [public.enquiries@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:public.enquiries@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk)

The following councils have passed motions supporting a public inquiry:

Barnsley, Sheffield, Doncaster, Wakefield, Bradford, Rotherham, North East Derbyshire District, Derby City, Durham, Bolsover, West Lancashire, Leeds City, Chesterfield Borough, Salford, Wirral, and, most recently, Sunderland.



**Above:** Orgreave supporters on the steps of Barnsley Town Hall. Later the council voted to back a public inquiry



**Left:** Sheffield Councillors and Orgreave campaigners crowd on to the steps inside Sheffield Town Hall before the council voted to support a public inquiry

## Draft model council resolution

THIS Council is concerned and disappointed by the previous Home Secretary's rejection on the 31st October, 2016 of an Inquiry into the policing of events at Orgreave. This Council notes, since this decision was taken, a new Home Secretary, Sajid Javid, is now in office.

This Council is pleased to note the decision by the Scottish Parliament on 7th June 2018 to order an independent review to investigate and report on the impact of policing on affected communities in Scotland during the period of the miners' strike from March 1984- March 1985.

This Council further praises the decision of the Welsh Assembly on 12th June 2018 to write to the Home Secretary, Sajid Javid, to ask for an independent review into policing in England and Wales during the miners' strike, and on 13th June 2018 to

also write again asking that the Home Secretary orders an inquiry specifically into the policing at Orgreave on 18th June 1984.

This Council asks, in the light of such statements from the Scottish and Welsh government, what the new Home Secretary, Sajid Javid, has done since these statements, to take these into account and express his views, on a full public inquiry into the events at the Orgreave coking plant on 18th June 1984.

This Council notes that 95 miners were arrested and charged with offences, but were all later acquitted amid claims that police at the time had fabricated evidence.

This Council observes that the Independent Police Complaints Commission said about Orgreave on 18th June 1984 in their report released in June 2015 "that there was evidence of excessive violence

by police officers, and a false narrative from police exaggerating violence by miners, perjury by officers giving evidence to prosecute the arrested men, and an apparent cover-up of that perjury by senior officers".

This Council is of the view that the Home Secretary needs to acknowledge the action of the Scottish government and the call from the Welsh government and confirm his response.

This Council will write to the Home Secretary and ask that he acknowledges the response of the Scottish and Welsh Parliaments, explains what action he has taken in response and takes into account the opinion of this Council and accepts that there is widespread public concern about events at Orgreave and calls for him to order an inquiry into them.





## Ex-miner's painting is striking cover for new edition of 'Shafted'

THIS is the front cover of the new edition of *Shafted*, published for the 35th anniversary of the miners' strike. It will be available in April and on sale on OTJC stalls. If you would like to order a copy (£10.50 inc P&P) contact CPBF(North) at cpbfnorth@outlook.com

The cover is by artist Harry Malkin, a former miner from Fryston pit, who started painting after the pit closed. He explains the painting:

'Monday morning and shifting Everest with a banjo' is really about my father. He was a ripper at Fryston when I was growing up and when I started there he was working his way out, as was the thing with mining. You worked towards the face for the money, then worked out as you got older. Anyway, he would always get on about having to go to work and shift a load of muck as big as a house every day. It wasn't until I started there as a fitter and saw the men regularly doing this day in day out that I appreciated what he had to go through.



North East Derbyshire District Council's proud display of former pits in its area.

## Art served on a plate

During the 1984-85 strike a range of artistic talent was unleashed by those working in the Derbyshire mines. Lynda Straker takes a look at some of them

THEY sit in a row, five china dinner-size plates displayed along with scores more as you walk into our house. They are, if you like, our proud family 'photos'.

Williamthorpe sits on the left, my husband and one of his brothers; Glapwell, two of my other brothers-in-law, follows; Shirland, Pleasley and Parkhouse (Cathy) are my late father-in-law.

These are the north Derbyshire pits they all once worked at but, unlike the reality of their dark underground working lives, these plates shout colour, wit and passion.

That's just the front. Turn them over and you get a potted history and fascinating facts about the mines and those who worked in them, until exhaustion or the '84 strike hit. A piece of art and literature all in one, and if it carries the name of an artist or writer you know, that's a bonus.

The plates sprang up across the country during the strike to help raise desperately needed cash and also the profile of the communities involved. We had our banners and badges, and now we had our plates, most of which had a limited run of around 250.

In this area, Brian Martin was the man to go to for your plates, and although this

Ogreave veteran and active NUM member is sadly no longer with us, his legacy lives on. His words are on the back of many plates, and he initiated public displays of them seen by visitors to Clay Cross Hospital and at North East Derbyshire District Council's offices.

And, just like friends and family, there are favourites. For my son, born in the autumn after the strike, it is the Bevercotes NUM plate with its striking image of an arm bursting through the earth and wielding an axe alongside the words, *Loyal To the Last*.

For those not familiar with Bevercotes pit, it lay in Nottinghamshire; it's a powerful image that fittingly pays tribute to the bravery of those miners who stayed out on strike, including my son's uncle.

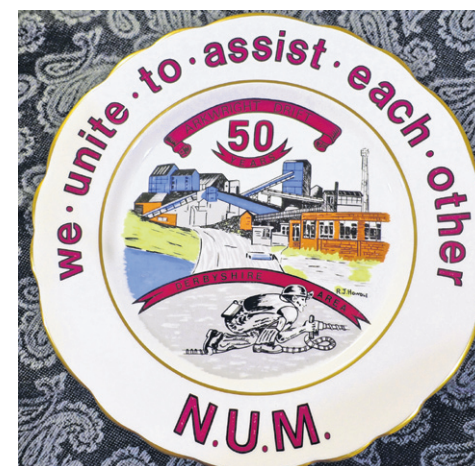
Recently, I took part in a research project being carried out by Middlesex University focusing on women in the strike, and I was asked to bring along a significant object from that time.

For me, it had to be a plate or, rather, a photo of one that's too precious to physically take anywhere. It's one that still brings a lump to my throat and sometimes a tear to my eye.

It was given to me in 1985 by its artist, Rob Howdle, back in the days when he



Powerful Bevercotes.



Personal favourite, Arkwright Drift.

was a young striking miner and neighbour with a toddler and another on the way. His plate, Arkwright Drift, has no words on the back, but I'll never forget the words he spoke and the pride he felt in giving me that plate.

What he couldn't have known was that Arkwright was the pit I regularly used to picket in the early hours of that long winter.

If the aim of art is to represent not the outward appearance of things but their inward significance, then these plates are priceless treasures.



Family pride.



# Pride and the Cuban connection

Mike Jackson reports on the stunning reception he received on his visit to Cuba

IN spring 2018 I went with my sister on our first holiday to Cuba. Before I went, I contacted the Cuba Solidarity Campaign to find out if our LGSM movie *Pride* had been seen in Cuba. It turned out that it had been shown on television and that Mariela Castro Espina, the daughter of Raul Castro, the former president of Cuba, had given a 10-minute introduction to it.

CSC helped me to make contact and I heard that Mariela was delighted I was going over and that I should time it with their week of activities against homophobia and transphobia in May. I could march on the Conga (think Pride march) with them and give a talk about the movie.

Mariela is Director of Cenesex, the government department that supports and develops LGBT+ inclusion. Her mother was Vilma Espin, one of the women involved in the armed struggle and later the revolutionary government. She founded the Federation of Cuban Women in 1960.

We attended a social for international trade unionist supporters of Cuba. We met British Unite and RMT comrades and people from Canada, the US, France, and Ireland.

The first LGBT event we attended was a spectacular gala held at the Karl Marx theatre.

There were around 4,000 guests and we were treated to wonderful dancing and singing. I had the honour of being invited on stage to be given an award by Mariela on behalf of Cenesex. Later I was interviewed by a journalist from the Cuban national newspaper *Trabajadores* (Workers).

The next afternoon was the LGBT Conga (Pride march). We arrived with our LGSM banner and our hosts quickly spotted us (many of them were wearing our LGSM Pits and Perverts T-shirts) and squeezed us into the third position from the front.

Leading was a huge Cuban flag, followed by an equally huge rainbow flag, then us and Cuban comrades holding our LGSM banner.

There was a big pink 1950s' American car immediately behind us. Mariela jumped into it, saw me and beckoned me to sit next to her on the back of the rear seat. I've never seen so many cameras. She is adored by the Cuban LGBT+ community.

I was having to pinch myself that this was actually happening. I'd decided to wear my Orgreave T-shirt with that infamous photo of a row of police on it. Mariela asked what it was about and I told her it was about the abuse of human rights in the UK. I enjoyed that.



Mike Jackson, left, at the 2018 Labour Party Conference with Cuban ambassador to Britain Tere-sita Vincent Sotolongo, OTJC Secretary Kate Flannery, miner's wife and OTJC activist Chris Horne, and Cuba Solidarity director Rob Miller.



Mariella Castro and Mike Jackson at the 2018 LGBT Conga (Pride march) in Havana.

The march set off and I was surrounded by wonderful revolutionary banners including 'Soy Fidel!' – 'We are Fidel'.

As we approached the park where the stage was, our car slipped away from the marchers into the grounds of a municipal building. Lots of police and sol-

diers poured out of the building. Mariela turned to me, pointed at my T-shirt and, smiling, said, 'Don't worry, they are here to protect the marchers, these are revolutionary soldiers and police!'

I thought back to my first Gay Pride march in London in 1973 when we were flanked by double rows of police who certainly weren't there to protect or reassure us!

The final event was to give a presentation at Cenesex, where I shared a platform with three other activists. The first speaker was a courageous Colombian mother of 13-year-old Sergio Urrego, who had taken his own life as a result of relentless homophobic bullying. She has set up a foundation in his memory to campaign against homophobic bullying in schools. Next were two inspirational trans activists, Dani Vega, an actress, from Chile, and a Gaby Gygy Castil-

lo, a documentary maker from Guatemala. That Cenesex would invite international speakers is very much Cuba's approach: internationalism, support and inclusion.

Late last year I took an opportunity to return the kindness of Mariela and Cenesex by organising a meeting for her when she visited London for the Latin America conference. The aim of the meeting was to introduce her to key people representing LGBT+ best practice in the UK.

I live in central London amidst great wealth, yet I see homeless people everywhere. I saw no-one sleeping rough in Cuba although it is a vastly poorer country than Britain.

They have a world-class health service which provides free medical scholarships to students from Latin America and Africa. Cuba spends 13% of the GDP on education compared to 5.6% in the UK and US. All this despite the devastating effect of the US embargo.

Tourism is an important income for the island so go and enjoy a holiday there!

2019 is the 60th Anniversary of the Cuban Revolution and the Cuba Solidarity Campaign will be celebrating with many events and activities.

For more information about the Cuba Solidarity Campaign please contact them at: Cuba Solidarity Campaign c/o UNITE, 33-37 Moreland Street London EC1V 8BB. Email: [communications@cuba-solidarity.org.uk](mailto:communications@cuba-solidarity.org.uk)



Mariella Castro meets UK LGBT activists in London.



# 2012-2019 – seven years of OTJC high-profile activity

FROM Durham to Downing Street, from Orgreave to outside the offices of the Independent Police Complaints Commission in London, our banners and striking T-shirts convey the clear message: We are determined to win a public inquiry into Orgreave. We set up the OTJC in November 2012,

and since then we've won huge support from the trade union movement, the Labour Party and the public.

Get in touch with us if you would like a speaker or want to organise an event with us.

Email: [orgreavejustice@hotmail.com](mailto:orgreavejustice@hotmail.com)

Photographs by Wilf Dixon



Hallowe'en 'Death of Justice' protest rally in Sheffield one year after Home Secretary Amber Rudd blocked a public inquiry into Orgreave.



First demonstration outside IPCC offices, Wakefield. After a year, the IPCC had not made any progress with its report on South Yorkshire police. The reason they gave was that missing boxes of evidence had not been received. As a result of the demo, the IPCC promised to keep us informed about the report's progress.



Chesterfield, May Day 2017.



OTJC stall Chesterfield, May Day 2017.



Chesterfield, May Day 2018.



OTJC demo outside IPCC National offices, 14 November 2014.



Second demonstration outside IPCC Wakefield offices, 28 March 2014.



OTJC and union banners line the entrance to the IPCC office in Wakefield, West Yorkshire





Stunning weather at Durham Miners' Gala, 8 July 2017. Shorts and sandals as the OTJC turn out in force for a great day.



March commemorating closure of the last UK pit, Kellingley Colliery, 31 December 2015



Orgreave March and Rally, 18 June 2016, near the site of the infamous police assault.



Orgreave March and Rally, 16 June 2018. OTJC supporters applaud speakers at the rally before the march. Speakers included Tim Roach National Secretary, GMB union.



OTJC protest outside Parliament on 31 October 2018 – the second anniversary of Tories blocking an inquiry.



Stuart Crosthwaite and OTJC Secretary Kate Flannery with other OTJC members take their protest to Downing Street.



# Why I'm still committed to our fight for justice

Kevin Horne, who was arrested and charged at Orgreave, on his work with the OTJC

I WAS a miner at Barnbrough Colliery near to Mexborough, South Yorkshire where I live. I started at the pit from school (New Stubbin) but left after two years and went into the steel works at Park Gate. I was 17 years old when I left the pit in 1966. I did all sorts of work, from factories to building sites, and got married in 1967 when I was 20. It wasn't until 1977 when I decided to go back to the pit.

When the strike came in March 1984, I joined in picketing. We saw for the first time the behaviour of the police under instruction from the government. We were stopped going into Notts, Derbyshire and Lancashire and when we did get

through taking B roads and dirt tracks, the police would smash windscreens and arrest drivers so that the passengers had no transport home and no money to pay any fares.

The story behind Orgreave is that there was a tripartite agreement between the steel union, the rail unions and the miners to provide enough coal to Orgreave to make coke to keep the furnaces alive at Scunthorpe steel plant.

But somewhere along the way the steel unions reneged on the deal and wanted full production at Scunthorpe. So scab drivers were hired at great expense to take coal into Orgreave and take coke to Scunthorpe.



Kevin Horne holds a banner at the IPCC protest in Wakefield. In the last year of his working life he was one of the Doncaster Care UK striking workers.

From just a few pickets and even fewer police, it built up to be thousands of pickets and thousands of police in full riot gear with horses and dogs in reserve, culminating in the so-called 'Battle of Orgreave' on the 18 June 1984 where pickets reacted to a police riot. Police on horseback charged into pickets that were sat talking and eating sandwiches.

The police made over 100 arrests on that day, but only 95 were charged (only the miners) myself among them.

Charges were riot, riotous assembly and unlawful assembly.

The first of these trials happened 12 months later and lasted 48 days before all charges

were dropped when it became clear that the charges relied on false police statements.

I never got my day in court but always thought that the truth would come out one day.

A couple of months after the OTJC was formed I read an article in the *Rotherham Advertiser* and myself and my wife Chris turned up at the Bridge Inn to see what the campaign was all about.

I was still a care worker at the time and couldn't get to all the meetings because I did a lot of night shifts but I decided that the campaign was very serious so I attended as many as I could.

When I retired I had been

asked to do more speaking and push myself forward a bit more. So now was the time to do just that. Myself and Chris went down to Merthyr Tydfil for the weekend to run an OTJC stall and do a speech.

The weekend lifted me and made me volunteer for other things, including TV and radio interviews.

The OTJC has become a large part of my life. We are all still pulling in the same direction and confident that we will one day get the justice we are demanding.

Maybe we need a Labour government to get what we want so that it can fulfil its manifesto pledge for a public inquiry.

Arthur Critchlow tells how he went to prison for trying to help an unconscious Orgreave miner



Arthur Critchlow went to jail for helping an injured miner.

IN the last issue of *At The Coal Face* I told the story of my arrest and injuries at the so-called 'Battle of Orgreave' when I ended up in hospital with a broken skull handcuffed to a copper.

Well, when I was at hospital the doctor said that he would not treat me until the handcuffs were taken off and the officer removed himself from the treatment room.

After my treatment I was taken to Armley Prison in Leeds where I was charged with 'unlawful & riotous assembly'. I wasn't given a solicitor like the other pickets, who were taken to Rotherham magistrate's court.

I was in Armley for 21 days before Mike Mansfield could get me to the High Court in London where I was given my freedom on a split decision by the High Court judges, with a bond which was paid by my pub landlord and other friends. I will forever be in

## A broken skull and three weeks in jail

their debt.

My wife took it really bad while I was in prison. She had two kids to look after on her own without any money and her visits made her feel even worse.

When I got home I was given very strict bail conditions.

I couldn't go within 500 yards of any National Coal Board property, power stations or railways. But in order to sign on at Rotherham police station twice daily, I had to walk past all these.

I had to wait 12 months for my trial along with 14 others. I had to ask for permission to have

time off work to attend Sheffield Crown Court. So I had this hanging over me for 12 months worrying whether I would get life or would I get the sack or both?

But as you may know the trial collapsed after 48 days.

During the trial it became evident that the so-called arresting officers had had their statements dictated to them by senior officers and 31 of these statements were identical.

Ten years later 49 of us got nearly £500,000 in compensation for wrongful and malicious arrests, malicious prosecution and assault. I had a nice little holiday

in Jersey.

Not one policeman was prosecuted for their actions.

Can I ask this question of you? Why did 11,000 men get arrested and given a criminal record overnight, with 188 of them sent to prison? Two men were killed on the picket line without any investigation.

At Orgreave I went to help an unconscious miner. For this I was assaulted, thrown in prison and faced charges which could have meant life imprisonment. Maybe one day the truth will come to light. I hope I'm alive to see it.



# Policing the strike, policing rebellion

Joe Rollin highlights how the tactics and methods used by police during the great strike are now commonplace in modern policing

**W**HEN discussing the miners' strike of 1984/5 it is important to remind ourselves of the scale of the dispute in terms of numbers of strikers, duration, and the response of the government, police, courts and media to the biggest industrial revolt since the Second World War.

Here are some statistics to illustrate the point:

- 165,000 on strike
- 11,313 arrested
- 7,000 injured
- 5,653 put on trial
- 960 sacked
- 200 imprisoned
- 2 killed on the picket lines

So what comparisons can be made with policing trade unionists and activists since the miners' strike? I think the first thing to consider is that the police are constantly learning how to control dissent and when they hit upon a useful tactic they will repeatedly apply it with great effectiveness.

Ogreave on the 18 June 1984 is a good example of this, the police knew and were expecting large numbers of pickets, and were determined to stop another "Saltley Gate" which resulted in a massive victory for the miners in 1972. The police at Orgreave were present in huge numbers and operated with military precision. Pickets talk of being welcomed by the police and even told where to park (in huge contrast to previous picketing experiences where miners were stopped from traveling to their destinations). Once in position the miners were surrounded by the police in a movement than can only be described as similar modern day 'kettling'.

## Terrible beatings

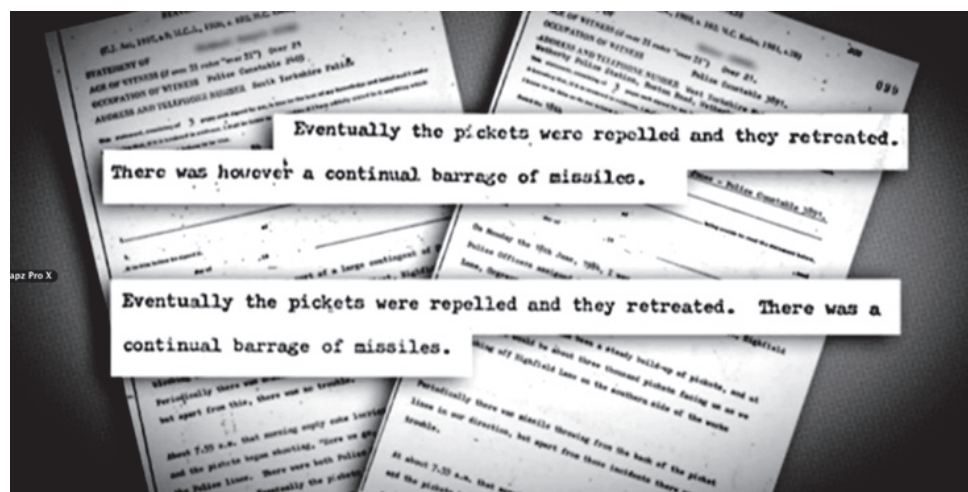
To today's activists kettling is a common occurrence and one which is carried out with great efficiency from the police's point of view. The police at Orgreave also meted out terrible beatings to pickets in an attempt to scare miners. Former officers have admitted to BBC reporter Dan Johnson they had been told to use "as much force as possible" against striking miners and that the police were 'relishing' the chance to get stuck in to the miners.

Both kettling and violence against protesters are used today with recent examples having tragic outcomes such as the death of Ian Tomlinson in the anti-capitalist G20 protests in 2009 (an innocent



Police surround picketing miners as a convoy of coke lorries leaves Orgreave for Scunthorpe steelworks during the miners' strike

Photo: © John Harris /reportdigital.co.uk



Evidence against miners arrested and charged at Orgreave was fabricated. The same sentences were used in all the statements made by different policemen.

man trying to make his way home was trapped by the police kettling and struck by PC Simon Harwood) and the kettling of student protesters in 2010 which again ended in violence this time with student Alfie Meadows being struck on the head and needing an emergency brain operation. Thankfully he survived.

Another common tactic carried out during the miners' strike was mass arrests and the imposition of strict bail conditions on striking miners and their supporters on trumped up charges. These tactics which had two purposes from the point of view of the State: One it gave them valuable information on the individual arrested but moreover the bail conditions would prevent the person from taking part in lawful picketing or demonstrations effectively 'taking them out of the picture'.

This tactic is again now common place in modern policing with recent examples

being the arrest of 146 peaceful UK Uncut protesters (lots of them under the age of 18 and one girl only 15 years old) at Fortnum & Mason protest at the anti-austerity protest in 2010. More recently the same tactics of mass arrest were used in relation to anti-fascist protesters in 2013 when the Metropolitan Police arrested 160 demonstrators for daring to oppose the English Defence League which marched through Tower Hamlets trying to stir up racial hatred in a largely Muslim Community.

## Secret services involved

So what do the police do with all the information gathered on activists? Well we now know that the police were involved with undercover operations on activists which resulted in some officers duping women into false relationships and even fathering children. It's common knowledge that the police and secret services

were involved in operations against the National Union of Mineworkers and the NUM are now 'core participants' in the Undercover Policing inquiry. Furthermore hundreds of arrested miners lost their jobs after the strike and were black-listed. Some of the miners never worked again.

This tactic of blacklisting trade unionists was used with ruthless effect against construction workers where activists were put on register by the 'Consulting Organisation' (in collusion with the police) and companies such as Carillion, Balfour Beatty, Costain, Kier, Laing O'Rourke, Sir Robert McAlpine, Skanska UK and Vinci could pay to see if workers applying for jobs were 'known trouble makers' and then ensure these workers were denied employment opportunities.

The media also plays its part in demonizing trade unionists and activists. In an inspiring story of solidarity during the strike The Sun newspaper had planned to print a front page story showing Arthur Scargill giving a Nazi salute, but the print workers refused to print it.

The BBC also had to admit that it tampered with footage from Orgreave to give the impression that miners attacked police when in fact the footage showed the opposite happening. Today's media is no different and they often hype up expectations of trouble before demonstrations which then gives the police free reign to carry out the tactics discussed above.

Joe Rollin, a founding member of the Orgreave Campaign & Unite Industrial Organiser.





Women's Banner Group community banner on display at its first Big Meeting, July 2018.

# Banner Group supports women's work in mining communities

Lynn Gibson tells how the group was established and explains its mission to support and celebrate women in their roles within trade unions, politics and communities in the former Durham coalfield

IN 2017, Laura Daly (the founder of the Women's Banner Group), in a conversation with Stephen Guy, discussed why there wasn't any official female representation at the Durham Miners' Gala. Although women have always attended the gala, they attended to support their husbands, fathers and brothers.

The response to the commem-

oration of 100 years since suffrage gave Laura the idea to hold a meeting for like-minded women to attend to discuss female representation and celebration within the Gala and beyond.

I knew Laura from our Labour Party activism. I come from a long line of coal miners; my father, grandfathers and great grandfathers and beyond all worked down the pit and I

can trace my mining heritage back to the tin mines in Cornwall and the Yorkshire coal mines – my great grandfathers all coming to the Durham coalfield in the 1800s.

I am incredibly proud of my

mining heritage, the part my ancestors played in the industrial revolution and the creation of trade unions.

Because of this I have found it an honour to be involved in the Redhills Appeal at the Durham Miners' Association. As well as this I have taken an active role within Education4Action, a voluntary group at the Durham Miners' Association whose purpose is to educate children and adults in the vitally important history of our mining heritage.

Also, as a life-long attendee of the Durham Miners' Gala I was intrigued to learn more about Laura's idea and so attended the first Women's Banner Group meeting in November 2017.

At the first meeting it was agreed that the mission of the group was to support and celebrate women in their roles within trade unions, politics and communities and to engage, educate, empower and recognise the contribution of women locally, nationally and internationally.

Our first project was to design and produce a community patch-

work banner, drawing strength from the women who ran free cafés throughout the miners' strikes and their unwillingness to let communities fall apart.

Our banner, which was designed and produced by more than 50 women from the County Durham Coalfield area, marched in its first Durham Miners' Gala in 2018.

It also had the honour of being blessed at Durham Cathedral following the procession. We are also the first all women banner group to be affiliated to the Durham Miners' Association as an official banner group.

2019 sees the 150th year of the Durham Miners' Association. This year we have many more projects planned including the creation of a Women's Banner Group silk banner, the publication of a book of inspirational women and the installation of blue plaques commemorating historically important women in the Durham coalfield.

*Lynn Gibson is the Women's Banner Group Secretary*



WBG Secretary Lynn Gibson with her two sons before marching.



WBG Founder Laura Daly (centre) proudly with the banner at the County Hotel, Durham.





Around the brazier at the Houghton Main women's camp during protests against pit closures.

# New book tells story of women's protest

**Flis Callow** tells the inspiring account of the women of the Houghton Main Pit Camp who protested John Major's pit closures

MORE than 80 people turned out for the book launch of *You Can't Kill the Spirit* at Waterstones, Sheffield, on 13th January.

The book, which was published at the end of November, is produced by Sheffield and Houghton Women against Pit Closures, and tells the largely untold story of the women who set up camp in 1993 to stop the

further destruction of mining communities through more pit closures.

Women who had been active in the strike in 84/85 came together, joined by many other women, when John Major's Tory government said another 31 pits would close in addition to the 125 that had already closed since the end of the

strike. These closures were the final onslaught on the mining industry, in preparation for the industry's privatisation.

In response, pit camps were set up by Women Against Pit Closures at seven of the 10 most threatened pits. *You Can't Kill the Spirit* is the story of one of them, Houghton Main in South Yorkshire. Like many of the

other pit camps, the determination and spirit of the women at Houghton Main and their supporters, kept the camp going 24 hours a day, seven days a week for five months through the cold winter of 1993.

Women from the local area, together with others from Sheffield and Barnsley, involved their children and families and the local community in many actions and events to build solidarity and to keep spirits up – including making banners and T-shirts, organising social events, children's demonstrations and a hot air balloon event to get publicity and support for a 24-hour strike by miners and other unions.

The book contains around 150 images – photos and memorabilia from the pit camp – leaflets, press cuttings, diaries, drawings and quotations from women involved with the camp.

For more information please see our Facebook page, Sheffield Women against Pit Closures, Pit Camp 1993 or, to obtain a copy of the book, please email [swapcpitcamp1993@gmail.com](mailto:swapcpitcamp1993@gmail.com)

The book is also available at Waterstones, Orchard Square, Sheffield, Weston Park Museum and Dina cafe, Charles Street, Sheffield



The balloon flies across the coalfields of South Yorkshire.



Children lead the march through Houghton.



Our final act... spray painting the pit yard



# 10 reasons why we need a public inquiry into Orgreave

Police brutality against miners is one area that needs examining

A KEY aim of the Orgreave Truth and Justice Campaign (OTJC) is to obtain a full and independent Public Inquiry into:

- the pre-planned militarised nature of police tactics and police brutality against miners.

- wrongful arrests, blatant corruption and perjury connected with the events that occurred when striking miners picketed the Orgreave coking plant on 18th June 1984.

- ensuring the true narrative of what happened at Orgreave and throughout the year-long strike is finally placed in the public domain.

The injustice experienced by miners and communities due to what happened at Orgreave is felt to this day and must be dealt with to achieve Truth and Justice.

The manner and scale of pit closures in the 1980s and 90s combined with the implementa-

tion of deindustrialisation, mass unemployment, casualisation and welfare reforms feeds into the motivation for the OTJC to seek justice for the miners and their communities.

## 10 REASONS WHY WE NEED AN ORGREAVE INQUIRY

1. The incredibly serious and unprecedented nature of what happened at Orgreave.

2. The militarised nature of police tactics on the day.

3. The deliberate construction of a 'false narrative' in police evidence.

4. The deliberate promotion of the 'false narrative' through the media.

5. The lack of legal accountability and failure of the legal system.

6. The ongoing consequences of Orgreave.

7. The role of Hillsborough and undercover policing inquiries.

8. New sources of police and government evidence.

9. The key issues associated with Orgreave are still relevant today.

10. The law requires there to be an Inquiry..

## FOUR KEY FEATURES OF AN ORGREAVE INQUIRY

These are the key elements of an Orgreave Inquiry that the OTJC has told the Home Secretary are necessary to make an Inquiry effective.

1. The Inquiry must have the power to require all the relevant information and evidence to be produced to it.

2. Those who have an interest in the Inquiry must be able to fully participate in order to lend their experience, knowledge and understanding to the process.

3. The tribunal conducting the Inquiry investigation

## A SERIOUS CRIME HAPPENED HERE

STRIKING MINERS WERE BEATEN UP, FITTED UP AND LOCKED UP. THE GOVERNMENT HAVE REFUSED TO INVESTIGATE



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## DEMAND JUSTICE NOW!

CONTACT THE HOME SECRETARY SAJID JAVID:

sajid.javid.mp@parliament.uk

@sajidjavid

or call him on

# 0207 219 7027

#OrgreaveJustice

must include a range of skills so that people can have confidence that it will fully understand the issues and be independent and objective in its approach.

4. The Inquiry must be transparent, open and accessible

and its conclusions publicly explained. OTJC does not demand an expensive, overly-long Inquiry. Plenty of information exists and has already been obtained giving an Inquiry a substantial head-start to deliver Truth and Justice.

# How to make Freedom of Information requests

ARE you an ex-miner arrested during the 1984/5 miners' strike?

The Orgreave Truth and Justice Campaign have been provided with information from some ex-miners about their arrests during the strike.

We want to know more about arrests at Orgreave and throughout Britain during the strike and, if you were one of the many who were arrested there is a way you can try to find out what information the police hold about your arrest.

## How to find out more

If you were a miner arrested when you were on strike in 1984/5 and want to find out about the details recorded about your arrest, you can contact the police force which arrested you.

This may require you to make a FREEDOM OF INFORMATION request (commonly

known as an FOI). You might not need to make a FOI request to get the information you need but this is usually the best route.

- The Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) gives you the right to request recorded information held by the police.

- Anyone can request information – there are no restrictions on your age, nationality or where you live.

- Your request will be handled under different regulations depending on the kind of information you ask for.

- There is a £10 cost to this.

If this would prohibit you from carrying out this request or you have any other questions please contact the campaign for assistance.

We have an FOI request form on our web page for you to use if you wish (see links below). Please print out this form, com-

plete it and send it off to the police force responsible for your arrest. Please keep a copy of your completed form. You can also request information by email.

## How you can help the campaign

If you want to share any information you receive with us, as other ex-miners have already done, we would respect your confidentiality and not name you or share any information without your permission.

If you make an FOI request and the police make it difficult for you to get the information you are requesting, please insist they give you reasons in writing and let us know if you want to by emailing us at:

Orgreavejustice@hotmail.com.

Again, we would deal with this information confidentially if you prefer.

## Where to get help if you were arrested

**You can find a FOI Request form on our web page here:**

<https://otjc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Foi-request-form-270118.pdf>

More information here:

<https://www.gov.uk/make-a-freedom-of-information-request>

Please use this link to find out where police forces are located:

<https://www.police.uk/forces/>

If you were arrested by a Scottish Police Force more information is available here:

<http://www.scotland.police.uk/access-to-information/freedom-of-information/>

You need to send the form to FOI Central Processing Unit, Information Management Unit, Police Scotland, Clyde Gateway, 2 French Street, Glasgow, G40 4EH.



# Culture

At The Coal Face



## Absent voices

Barry Hines: Plans are being made to release more of his unpublished dramas and stories that are heavily critical of the ruling class.

Picture: SWpix.com

## Chris Hockney introduces a selection of mining community writing, with some thoughts on class and culture

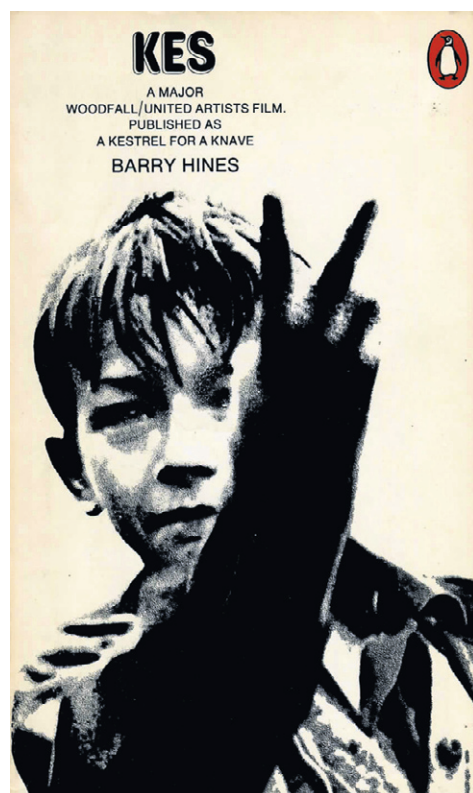
**T**HE ruling class denigrates and puts down working class culture, suggesting that it is inferior to 'their' stuff. Ordinary people can't possibly produce good work, whether art, stories, poems, plays, or whatever medium.

This stereotype is always there, and was used heavily during the miners' strike to portray the miners as thick, ignorant, stupid, and violent. If they were hurt by police, brutalised and imprisoned, so what? They have no feelings or sensitivity, so it doesn't matter.

We saw the same message when the fans at Hillsborough were blamed for what happened, and the current attacks on low-paid workers and people claiming benefits. It's their fault, they are scroungers.

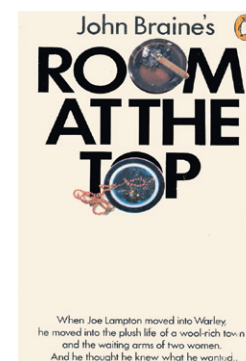
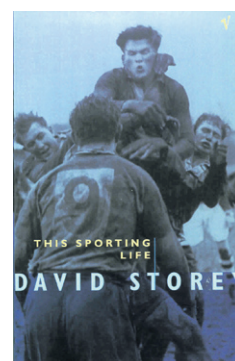
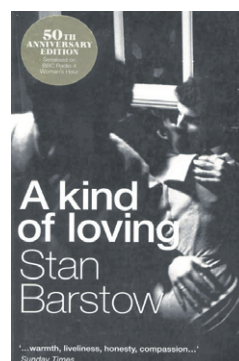
The ruling class get away with this through their control of the media and the various cultural organisations. Many of the outlets and opportunities that used to be there for working class writers and artists have disappeared.

Institutions play it safe by not commissioning programmes that are seen as a risk. *Days of Hope* and *The Monocled Mutineer* are examples that had senior Tories baying for blood when they were shown on the BBC, and they are unlikely to be shown again.



Anything by Jimmy McGovern is usually heavily criticised by the Tories and their allies.

*Armchair Theatre* and *Play for Today* have long gone. Commissioning editors with the autonomy to promote working



**Northern classics (from left):** *Kes*, *A Kind of Loving*, *This Sporting Life*, and *Room at the Top*.

class talent have had their powers removed.

Today's equivalents of Barry Hines, Shelagh Delaney and Andrea Dunbar would struggle to get their work commissioned, so who is there to tell the stories of ordinary men and women?

Art and music are seen as less important. Lee Hall's play *The Pitman Painters* brought to life the work of the Ashington miners in the North East who created wonderful art after their shifts at the pit, but otherwise how widely would their work have been known?

Actors like Julie Walters, Christopher Eccleston and David Morrissey have all said that they were lucky to get grants to be able to learn their craft, and that there just aren't the opportunities for working class actors today.

Privately-educated actors, with money behind them, are in favour today.

School students previously had a wealth of things to study – the kitchen sink playwrights, books like *A Taste of Honey*, *This Sporting Life*, *Kes*, *The Price of Coal*, *Room at the Top* and *A Kind of Loving*, were all on the curriculum. Not any more though.

During 2019, we hope to work with Barry Hines's family and Sheffield University to get some of his unpublished dramas and stories out for the public to see. Barry wrote *A Kestrel For a Knave* which was later filmed as *Kes*.

His unpublished work is from the heart, raw, historically accurate and heavily critical of the ruling class. 2020 will also be the 50th anniversary of the release of *Kes*.



# A year in the literary lives of a community of striking mine workers

## A YEAR OF OUR LIVES



**A**FTER the 1984/85 strike the Hatfield community put together *A Year of Our Lives: A colliery community in the great coal strike of 1984/85*, a book of stories, poems and pictures, to tell what happened

to them during the strike.

It was printed by Hooligan Press in 1986 (ISBN 1 869802 02 2) and is well worth a read if you can get hold of a copy.

I picked it up from a second-hand bookshop in Clumber Park of all places, not exactly-known as a seething hotbed of socialism and revolution.

The following poems are taken directly or adapted from the book, with the original authors credited.

They are over 35 years old, but show the lives of ordinary people and what happened to them; still so relevant today.

## Ballad of Adrian

(I.K. Biggs, Hatfield Colliery)

Adie was a miner  
On strike at Hatfield Main  
Trying to stop blackleg miners  
Crossing Picket lines again

Now Adie tried to talk to those scabs  
And found it was too late  
The Snatch Squad moved in  
to drag him down the road  
And through the gates

Now at the Court  
The verdict was "Guilty"  
and Adie was left in thought  
What about the boot marks  
and that gash on his head?  
"Self-inflicted wounds"  
the police inspector said

We're fighting for the future  
For our kids, and their kids too  
NO PIT CLOSURES!  
NO JOB LOSSES!  
While there's coal for us to go through  
And now the strike is over  
Have all the Adies been forgot?

For all my friends and me  
I hope for heaven's sake not

Remember! 1984 to 1985  
They do as well  
So I say to you all  
Support sacked miners  
Don't let them go through hell

## Oh Grieve, For Bloody Orgreave

(From the I.K. Biggs original)

Remember those lads in 1984  
Who marched with men from Corton-  
wood  
And with their loyal wives  
They joined the Durham Miners and  
others  
Who were fighting for their lives  
They met the lads from Rhondda  
Upon that Orgreave Field  
To face horses, dogs and truncheons  
And the bloody riot shields

## Maggie's Dream

(From the I.K. Biggs original)

If all the Miners  
Were on the dole  
We'd have to pay  
For imported coal

Could you imagine Thatcher  
And her sodding team  
Going down a mine shaft  
To work on a seam

Now here is Arthur  
A decent man  
Doing his best for us  
As best he can

So recall all union members  
To forge a sound team  
So we defeat bloody Thatcher  
And her Coal Plan dream

## TALES FROM THE STRIKE / KEVIN HORNE

# The copper got a surprise when he asked strikers to open car boot

**O**NE early morning in September we decided to see what was in the farmer's field as we were travelling to picket the power station at West Burton.

We stopped just under a railway bridge, and looked in the nearest field. There were carrots in the field so we got out and ran into the field and grabbed an armful each and dropped them in the boot of the car. Then we were on our way again.

About two miles down the road we saw a rabbit in the road (roadkill). One of the lads got out and inspected it. Seeing as it was OK, this also went in the boot. And off we went again.

A few miles down the road we came to a roundabout with a police roadblock. The police stopped us and asked where we were going, so the driver (Paul) told them that we were going to Skegness for the day.

The copper obviously didn't believe us, asked what we had in the boot, then ordered us to open it.

When the boot was opened, the copper asked, "What's this?" pointing to the rabbit. "It's just 'roadkill'," said Paul. "It was in the road and we thought it would make a meal for someone."

"What's all this lot?" asked the copper, pointing to the carrots. "Oh," said Paul, "it must have been sick."

You may have guessed that we didn't get through that day, but we had a good laugh.

## Rose's Cafe, Retford

**W**HILE picketing West Burton power station, we used to call at a transport cafe at Retford owned by Rose Hurley. She was a lovely woman, maybe in her early 60s. We called her Auntie Rose.

She helped us out no end, like letting us out of the boot of the car when we arrived and giving us our breakfast.

She told us that mining was in her blood and that as a girl in the north east, she had been a coal sorter on the screens and, although it was hard work, she enjoyed the feeling of community and would support the miners to the end.

When the strike ended, I kept in touch with Rose and gave her a framed print that my mate from university had painted. She was over the moon with it and kept it on her wall in pride of place.

We kept in touch with Christmas cards telling each other what was happening with our lives. I told her about my pit closing and getting transferred, then about me going into 'Learning Disabilities'. This went on for nearly 30 years.

About six years ago I got a card from her daughter to say that if I wanted to see Rose that I needed to come soon as her mother wasn't well. So while I was at work in Doncaster I decided to go and find her bungalow. When I found it I knocked on the door and her daughter answered. Imagine my surprise when I realised that I knew her daughter and

had met her many times through work, as she also worked in Learning Disabilities in Doncaster.

Rose was so glad to meet again and so was I. She told me that she had lent the picture out for a mining exhibition and never got it back. She was very upset, so I replaced it with one that I had given to my local pub that had later closed down.

A few weeks later Rose's daughter rang to tell me that her mum had passed away and invited me to the funeral.

I turned up at the funeral along with about 100 others.

During the service, the preacher told of the flying pickets and how she gave us our breakfast. Then, when the police came in, she would charge them double, so she never lost a penny.

I was so proud that I cheered in the chapel. The family made such a fuss over me and wanted to give the picture back to me. I told them it was theirs to keep, and they promised to hang it in the cafe while ever it was open.



# Striking images

Former miner

**John Dunn's** stories of the 1984-85 strike inspired artist Darren Coffield to create his exhibition *Ashes and Diamonds*

**I** FIRST met Darren Coffield in 2010. He was interested in our Great Strike and was looking for first hand information about the eventful year of 1984/85.

After a few discussions, we came up with the idea of an exhibition that would be different. This one would be held in ordinary places, where people could get up close and discuss the images and not have to talk in the hushed tones of art galleries.

It launched in 2011 and toured the venues associated with my former NUM area, Derbyshire, the Market Hall in Chesterfield on May Day, placed in the refreshment hall, Hust House WEA centre, home of the Derbyshire Miners' Day Release Course, Open Day at Northern College, where it remained for several weeks. Its official opening was at Wortley Hall in South Yorkshire in November, opened by Arthur Scargill, followed by an educational week of discussions and meetings.

The Durham Miners toured it around the Durham coalfield, keeping it for a year.

Everywhere it was viewed it received rave reviews. From *Che Scargill* done in Maltby NUM coal dust, to the *Iron Lady* done in rust, to the iconic *Clockwork Orgreave* and the *Hanging Scab*, these images conjure up emotive memories of a magnificent struggle.

Darren's words outline his vision: "Every picture needs a subject, just as every novel needs a plot. I remember watching the miners' strike as a child. On one hand, it seemed a million miles away, almost unbelievable; while, on the other, it seemed as if civil war had been declared on the working classes.

"I remember watching the massed police and brutality of the metropolitan police special patrol group (SPG). Witnessing such scenes of unrelenting brutality deeply affected me as a child. Coming back from school one day it was suddenly over. I watched the men return to work with their heads held high. There was something poignant and heroic in the struggle of the Miners' Strike. Britain has long eulogised such events – think of Dunkirk or even Scott of the Antarctic. Heroism and dignity in the jaws of defeat is quintessentially British. These images haunted me.

"Many years later, I became interested in making pictures about British contem-



Some of the iconic images from the exhibition of Darren Coffield's work that conjure up images of the miners' epic year-long struggle against the Thatcher government.

**Above: Bloody police.**

**Far Left: Clockwork Orgreave.**

**Left: The Hanging Scab.**

All images  
© Darren Coffield, 2011

porary/modern history but was always put off by how people had gone about it in the past. History painting is an inherent lie; the artists who painted these pictures were not there to witness the historical events they depicted.

"No artist ever saw King Arthur on horseback or seated at his round table, but the Victorians loved history painting in the way it functioned as a form of propaganda for the church or the state to reinforce its values and push its own agenda. The problem is how to paint history without making it fraudulent or a fabrication

of the facts.

"The miners' strike happened within living memory. I was not there, but there were plenty who were, who fought and suffered.

"To paint a traditional type of painting depicting a scene like the battle of Orgreave would be to lead to charges being levelled against me of being a fraud and exploiting the misery and misfortune of others. So I decided to paint iconic, simple images that would work along the lines of contemporary street art and commercial advertising. To recreate new

images from the old, evoking a place and sense of history in an attempt to intrigue the young, provoke thought and discussion amongst the generations and to act as a key to unlocking the gates of memory."

This year, the 35th anniversary, will see his exhibition relaunched, hosted by the Orgreave Truth and Justice Campaign.

These images conjure up emotive memories of a magnificent struggle.

Don't miss it, it's coming to a venue near you!



# A Pitman Poet

**Mike Westwood** is a retired coal miner who spent 30 years working underground. His poetry is widely read in former mining communities and some of his poems have been adapted as songs. Mike is a

Staffordshire man, born in 1944. He left school in 1959 and went to work at Cannock Wood Colliery until it closed in 1972. Then he went to Lea Hall Colliery, Rugeley where he finished in 1990

## Not them

After the war's devastation,  
And when re-creation began,  
Who were the roots of this nation?  
The British working man!  
When nothing was left from the battle,  
Except for the steel and the coal,  
The working man's sabre did rattle,  
Restoring the heart and the soul.  
While bankers and investors dallied,  
The working man grafted full tilt,  
And slowly this proud nation rallied,  
As 'Great Britain' took shape and re-built.  
The heart of this nation was beating,  
As strong as a nation's heart can,  
T'was then the beginnings of bleating,  
But not from the working man.  
Investors and bankers who'd hidden,  
Demanded a say in affairs,  
The working man's power was forbidden,  
The 'Gentry' said power must be theirs.  
And slowly, these rats all came crawling,  
And seized from the working man's hand,  
All the fruits of the working man's calling,  
And the wealth of this shining new land.  
Now the rats, and the bankers sit proudly,  
All stripped of their yellow disguise,  
And they sup on their port and bray proudly,  
How they dine, from the working man's prize.  
It was not they who rebuilt this proud nation,  
No blisters for them on their hand,  
It was the worker who began the creation,  
That restored the word 'Pride!' to this land!

## Light in the shaft

Today is the day, that the mine meets its death,  
The fan has been stopped, it has moved its last breath,



**Mike Westwood, the Pitman Poet.**

The pumps are now silent, the roadways will fill,  
And all underground is now quiet and still.  
Where miners and ponies once worked side by side,  
With 'Pit boys' and 'Rippers' who had the same pride,  
Be it 'Candle lit' glow, or the 'Cap lamp's' rude glare,  
All people and horses were heroes down there.  
A history proud will be buried today,  
But memories live and forever will stay,  
Of an underground city, where colliers did dwell,  
And did feast on the might, of the tales they could tell.  
The shaftsmen start filling, and a moaning is heard,

And though everyone swears, they did not say a word,  
They cannot believe what they witness below,  
A lamplight still shines, in the mine's dying glow.  
A coldness, a stillness, descends on the place,  
And each person there has a look on their face,  
For the light from the lamp, and the low mournful cry,  
Is this the voice of our ancestors saying "Goodbye"?  
"Goodbye," says the voice, as the lamp stops its wave,  
"Leave us down here, locked in our grave,  
But never forget, when you take off your boots,  
That we are your brothers, we are your roots."  
"Take with you now, all that we hold within,  
And pass these tales on, to your own 'kith and kin',  
So the tale of the miner forever is told,  
And the flame of his courage will never grow cold!"  
"Tell this to your children, let them tell their friends,  
So the story of mining, and us, never ends,  
And keep yourselves true, to our traditions divine."  
Then the light disappeared, to die with the mine.

## A miner's song

I sang, like no – one heard me,  
As I made my way around,  
Inspecting, testing, watching,  
In the tunnels underground,  
I sang to match my footsteps,  
As I walked alone that day,  
And I sang to mask the silence,

As I passed along the way.  
My cap lamp light my pathway,  
My safety lamp my guide,  
The silence heard my singing,  
The tunnels heard my pride,  
I sang my songs within here,  
Their echoes linger long,  
I left my mark within her,  
Held in a miner's song.  
I sang my song forever,  
I sang to her each day,  
I held my tune within the gloom,  
Till they drove me away,  
And deep within that coal mine,  
My heart will linger long,  
For I will long remember,  
When I sang my, 'Miner's song.'  
Then deep below the valley,  
And high above that hill,  
The echo of my singing,  
Reverberates there still,  
I sang along the faceline,  
Where coal was watching me  
This mineral that called out,  
To who I was to be.  
And there's the tune I left them,  
That is held though we did part,  
For these my 'blackened bretheren,  
Still here within my heart,  
I sang to tell the story,  
So all could hear, and see,  
Of the power and the glory,  
Of a miner's history.  
And though my mine has perished,  
And we have gone away,  
My song is there to testify,  
Of the glory of the day,  
When miners by the thousands,  
Descended in their throng,  
To share their trust and comradeship,  
And to join within my song!  
'God bless you lads'.

*All poems © Mike Westwood*

# The community that rose to the challenge

**By Shaun Garratty**

**I**N 1984, in the middle of winter, and at the height of the miners' strike, a community came together and rallied around, to do their bit to support the striking miners and their families. Yes, the people from the Manor (once called 'the worst estate in Britain') and Manor Park council estates in Sheffield got together at their local church, the William Temple Church, Harbrough Avenue, Sheffield.

This phenomenal gathering wasn't for the usual weekly community bingo, it was for a just cause – to feed the miners and their families. After several months

on strike and no income, miner's families were getting so destitute that some had even chopped up their garden fences and bedroom doors so they could have a fire and warmth in their homes.

Several people from the Manor community trawled up and down to supermarkets, wholesale markets and shops to ask for food donations. They even wrote to the European Fund to ask if food from the European food mountain could be donated. Slowly, gifts of food were collected and taken to the church hall.

Then the news filtered through that the EU was sending two lorries of food. It was a case of all hands on deck. Dozens of people waited and waited for the

lorries to arrive; and, boy, did they arrive! Two articulated juggernauts packed to the roof with food from the EU.

Men, women and children formed a human chain in the miserable weather, passing box after box of food into the church hall.

The hall, brimming to the rafters, was so full that there was hardly enough room for anybody to move. Over the next few weeks, people religiously went to the church day after day, packing the food into boxes.

A typical box would have a tin of corned beef, a tin of stewed meat, a tin of peaches, 1lb of butter, 2lb cheese, 5lb potatoes, fruit and vegetables. The food

parcels were then loaded into two minibuses provided by Manor Community Transport. The volunteer drivers (with their passengers) then drove with their valuable loads, through atrocious weather, often getting stuck in the snow, as they delivered the much-needed food.

Day after day they visited mining communities throughout South Yorkshire, North Derbyshire, North Nottinghamshire and North Yorkshire, greeted by crowds of miners and their families who had heard that the food was on its way. Those few winter weeks made me feel so proud to be a Manor lad, and although it was called the worst estate in Britain, it was also one of the best!