



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

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