ARCHIF MENYWOD CYMRU
WOMEN'S ARCHIVE OF WALES

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ARIENNIR GAN Y LOTERI

LLEISIAU O LAWR Y FFATRI / VOICES FROM THE FACTORY FLOOR

Dolgarrog Aluminum (1967-2003)

Cyfwelai: **VN017 Elfyn Jones**

Dyddiad: **10: 03: 2014**

Cyfwelydd: **Kate Sullivan ar ran Archif Menywod Cymru**

There is an English summary of the interview following the Welsh text

Cadarnhaodd Elfyn ei enw, ei gyfeiriad a'i ddyddiad geni, sef 19/08/1941.

Roedd ganddo dair chwaer, mae ei mam yn dal yn fyw, ond ei dad wedi marw. Mae'n dod o Benmachno yn wreiddiol ond wedi byw yn Nhalybont am 44 years, yn cael ei ysgol ym Mhenmachno a Llanrwst, a gadael am 15 oed. Ar ôl gadael ysgol, aeth i weithio yn siop y Cooperative ym Mhenmachno tan roedd o'n 26, wedyn cafodd o swydd yn Nolgarrog.

Cafodd o'r swydd hon achos roedd ganddo fo ewythr yn gweithio yno, fel rheolwr *transport*. Roedd Elfyn dal yn byw ym Mhenmachno pan ddechreuodd o yn Nolgarrog ondroedd ganddo gar, felly roedd o'n gyrru ac yn rhoi lifft i ddau arall o Benmachno a oedd yn gweithio yn y ffatri. Doedd dim bws yn mynd i Ddolgarrog o Benmachno, meddai, dim ond o Lanrwst, ond roedd o'n gweithio shifts beth bynnag a fasai'r bws ddim yn bosibl.
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Roedd yn rhaid i Elfyn gael cyfweliad ond dywedodd fod ei ewythr yn 'helpu.' Dydy o ddim yn cofio'r cyfweliad ond mae'r dyn oedd yn ei gyfweld yn dal yn fyw, yn 85 oed. Dechrau ar shifft nos wnaeth Elfyn, ac roedd 'na dair shifft meddai, bore, prynhawn a nos. Dechreuodd o yn y flwyddyn 1967. Roedd yr aluminium yn dod o Norwy ac roedd gan y cwmni ffatri yno hefyd. Ar y *rolls* oedd Elfyn yn gyntaf, yn rhoi shîts o alwminiwm ar y *rolls*. Cafodd o ryw wythnos o hyfforddiant ac roedd o'n hapus yn y swydd, meddai. Roedd o'n nabod un neu ddau o'r gweithwyr yno cyn iddo ddechrau ond dim llawer. Roedd y gwaith yn drwm ond "**dim yn bad. Roedd pobol yn cwyno weithiau ond dyna fo, dyna fel mae gwaith, ynte."**

Doedd dim llawer o reolau *'health and safety'* meddai, er bod y gwaith yn gallu fod yn beryglus. Ond daeth rheolau i mewn yn nes ymlaen, ond erbyn hynny doedd o ddim ar y *rollers*, roedd o wedi dod yn '*inspector.*' Ond mae'n deud bod y ffatri yn '*champion*,' cyfforddus a 'dan do.'

Ar shifft ddydd, roedd o'n dechrau am hanner awr wedi pump, yn clocio mewn, cael paned, wedyn

mynd ar y *rolls* erbyn chwech o'r gloch. Cael paned arall am hanner awr wedi saith, cinio o ddeg tan hanner awr wedi deg, a gorffen am ddau. Doedd o ddim y rhy hoff o'r shifft nos, ond roedd y ddwy arall yn iawn. Ar ôl iddo fynd ar yr *inspection*, shifft fore tan y prynhawn roedd o'n ei wneud.

Roedd 'na gantîn yno ac roedd y bwyd yn 'champion' ond o achos bod yn rhaid ciwio, roedd o'n tueddu i fynd â'i fwyd ei hunan a bwyta 'wrth ochr y roll.'

Ei gyflog yn dechrau oedd "18 pounds a week" yn y flwyddyn 1967, ond roedd yn mynd i fyny bob blwyddyn. Dydy o ddim yn cofio beth oedd o'n ennill fel *inspector* na phan oedd yn gadael. Wnaeth o newid i fod yn *inspector* ar ôl dwy flynedd ar y *rolls, 'packing inspector'* oedd o, yn tsecio'r bocsys. Roedd ei ewythr unwaith eto wedi helpu fo i gael y swydd yma. Roedd o'n falch i newid swydd achos doedd o ddim yn hoffi'r shifftiau, yn enwedig y shifft nos.

9:00 Mae Elfyn yn meddwl mai dynion oedd y rhan fwyaf o'r gweithwyr, a phan oedd o'n dechrau roedd rhyw 700 yn gweithio yno. Roedd y merched yn gweithio gan fwyaf yn y *'light sheets mill'* ac roedd wyth o ferched yn gweithio efo fo yn yr *inspectio*n, yn gwneud yr un swydd â fo. Ar wahân i'r *light sheet mill*, roedd y Felin Fawr, yn gwneud y shîts mawr, a doedd y merched ddim yn gallu gweithio yno, fel arfer, achos roedd y shîts yn rhy drwm. Roedd y *light sheets mill* yn gwneud pethau bach tenau a'r felin fawr yn gwenud shîts ar gyfer *helicopters* ayyb.

Roedd 'na ddigon o hwyl yno, meddai Elfyn, ond Saesneg oedd yr iaith yno; er bod rhai yn siarad Cymraeg, yn Saesneg roedd y posteri a phethau, dim byd dwyieithog. Roedd y gweithwyr yn siarad Cymraeg efo'i gilydd ond Saesneg oedd y rheolwyr yn siarad. Mair Williams (VN018) oedd yr unig 'fore woman' ac roedd hi'n siarad Cymraeg. Roedd hi'n *inspector* hefyd.

Roedd dau *inspector* yn gweithio gyda'i gilydd, meddai. Roedd y gweithwyr ar ryw *scheme* D. I. sef *Direct Incentive*. Oedd oedden nhw'n mynd dros yr awr yn gwneud rhyw ddarn o waith, roedd yn rhaid i'r *inspector*s wylio beth oedden nhw'n ei wneud (?). Os oeddech chi'n cadw o dan yr awr, roeddech chi'n cael bonus. Gwaith Elfyn oedd sicrhau bod y gweithwyr yn cyrraedd y safon iawn.

Tasai rhywbeth yn gam efo'r cylchau o aluminium, roeddyn rhaid iddynt fynd yn ôl i'r *'re-cast*,' lle roeddent yn cael eu toddi i lawr a'u hail-wneud.

12:20 Roedd undeb yno, ac roedd Elfyn yn aelod, fel y rhan fwyaf o'r gweithwyr. Doedd bod yn aelod ddim yn hanfodol, meddai, ond dim ond un neu ddau oedd dim wedi ymuno. Mae'n meddwl bod o'n talu swllt yr wythnos i'r undeb. Daeth y gweithwyr allan am wythnos ar un adeg, dydy o ddim yn cofio'r achos, ond doedd o ddim byd mawr meddai, a daeth o i ben trwy drafodaeth. Heblaw hynny, dydy o ddim yn cofio streic arall.

Roedd pwll nofio a chyrtiau tenis yno ar un adeg i'r gweithwyr, ond roedd y rhain wedi cau erbyn i Elfyn fynd yno. Dydy o ddim y gwybod pam, ond efallai fod y lle wedi newid, mwy o bobl yn dod i mewn o du fas i weithio ayyb. Ar un adeg, roedd pawb yn byw yn Nolgarrog, ac yn gweithio yn y ffatri, wedi dod i'r cwm tua 1909, mae'n credu. Adeiladodd y cwmni dai i'r gweithwyr yn y blynyddoedd wedyn. Wnaeth Elfyn ddim symud i fyw yn Nolgarrog ei hunan eioed, er iddo weithio yn y ffatri am 36 o flynyddoedd. Roedd Talybont mor agos, gallai gerdded i'r gwaith.

16:00 Priododd Elfyn yn 1969. Roedd o wedi mwynhau gweithio mewn ffatri, ac wedi mwynhau'r cwmni mwy na dim byd arall, dim llawer o ffraeo, ac mae rhai yn dal yn ffrindiau heddiw. Roedd rhai yn cymysgu y tu allan i'r gwaith, yn mynd am dripiau, er enghraifft. Roedd hi'n iawn gweithio efo menywod er bod tipyn bach o 'bitchiness' weithiau Mae'n dweud bod dim gwahaniaeth rhwng

sgwrs dynion efo'i gilydd a sgwrs merched efo'i gilydd yn y ffatri - "**O, very rough and ready oedden nhw, ie, ie**."

18:20 Ymddeolodd Elfyn yn gynnar, yn 61 oed. Cafodd o arddwrn (wats – wristwatch?) gan y cwmni ar ei ymddeoliad, ac mae o'n ei wisgo o o hyd, a phensiwn da. Mae'n dweud ei bod hi'n drueni bod y ffatri wedi cau.

20 munud.

English summary

Dolgarrog Aluminum (1967-2003)

Interviewee: **VN017 Elfyn Jones**

Date: **10: 03: 2014**

Interviewee: **Kate Sullivan on behalf of Women's Archive Wales**

Elfyn was born on 19 August 1941 and had three sisters. He is from Penmachno originally, but has lived in Talybont for forty four years. He was educated in Penmachno and Llanrwst and left school when he was fifteen years old. After leaving school, he went to work in the Co-operative shop in Penmachno until he was twenty six years old, and then got a job in Dolgarrog with the help of his uncle who working there as a transport manager.

He was living in Penmachno when he started working in Dolgarrog. He had a car and would drive there and give two others from Penmachno a lift to the factory. There was no bus going to Dolgarrog from Penmachno, only from Llanrwst. He worked shifts and getting the bus wasn't possible.

Elfyn had to have an interview but his uncle helped him. The man who interviewed him is still alive today and is now eighty five years old. There were three shifts at the factory – mornings, afternoons and nights – and Elfyn started on the night shift. He began there in the year 1967. The aluminium came from Norway and the company had a factory there as well. Elfyn's first job was putting aluminium sheets onto the rolls. He was given about a week's training and he enjoyed the job. He knew one or two of the workers before he started working there but not many. The work was heavy but not bad, although people complained sometimes.

There weren't many health and safety regulations even though the work could be dangerous. Rules came in later on but by this time he'd become an inspector and wasn't working on the rollers. He said the factory was 'champion', comfortable and they had a roof over their heads to work.

When he was on the day shift he would start work at half past five, clock in, have a cuppa and then be on the rolls by six o'clock. He would have another cuppa at half past seven, lunch from ten until half past and finish work at two o'clock. He didn't like working night shift much, but the other two shifts were fine. After he'd become an inspector, he only worked the morning or afternoon shift.

There was a canteen and the food was 'champion' but they had to queue so he tended to take his own and eat at the side of the rolls.

His starting wage in 1967 was eighteen pounds a week and it increased every year. He doesn't remember how much he earned as an inspector or when he left. He became a packing inspector, checking the boxes, after working on the rolls for two years. Once again, his uncle had helped him get this job. He was glad that he'd changed jobs because he didn't like working shifts, especially the night shift.

9:00 There were approximately seven hundred people working there and the majority of them were men. The women worked mainly in the light sheet mill and there were eight women working with him in the inspection, doing the same job as him. As well as the light sheet mill there was the large mill which made large sheets. Women couldn't work there because the sheets were too heavy. The light sheet mill made thin sheets and the large mill made sheets for helicopters, etc.

There was plenty of fun to be had there. English was the language of the factory even though some people spoke Welsh. The workers spoke Welsh to each other but the managers spoke English. Mair Williams (VN018) was the only forewoman and she spoke Welsh. She was also an inspector.

Two inspectors worked together. The workers were on a Direct Incentive scheme whereby if they did a certain job in less than an hour they got a bonus. Elfyn's job was to ensure that the workers reached a certain standard.

If the aluminium rings were bent they had to be re-cast which meant they were melted down and re-done.

12:20 There was a union there and like the majority of workers, Elfyn was a member. Being a member wasn't compulsory but only one or two hadn't joined. He paid approximately a shilling a week to the union. The workers went on strike for a week once. Elfyn can't remember why but it wasn't over anything serious, and was resolved through discussions. He doesn't remember any other disputes.

There was a swimming pool and tennis courts for workers at one time, although these had shut by the time that Elfyn started there. He thinks that the company came to Dolgarrog in 1909, and built houses for the workers. Elfyn didn't move to Dolgarrog, even though he worked there for thirty six years. Talybont was close enough for him to walk to work if he wanted to.

16:00 Elfyn got married in 1969. He enjoyed working in a factory – above all he enjoyed the company. There were no quarrels there and he is still friends with some of the workers today. Some of the workers socialised outside work. It was fine working alongside women, although there was bitchiness occasionally. The conversation between the women was no different from that of the men – the women were very rough and ready.

18:20 Elfyn retired early, when he was sixty one. He received a watch from the company on his

retirement. He still wears it and receives a good pension. He thinks it's a shame that the factory has shut.

Duration: 20 minutes