

LLEISIAU O LAWYR Y FFATRI / VOICES FROM THE FACTORY FLOOR

Mona Products, Menai Bridge 1958-1960; Ferrantis, 1960au; Hotpoint (ychydig fisoedd 1968, yna dychwelyd i Ferranti's)

Cyfwelai: VN055 Beryl Ann Buchanan

Dyddiad: 30:07:2014

Cyfwelydd: Shan Robinson ar ran Archif Menywod Cymru

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

Cadarnhaodd Beryl ei henw a'i chyfeiriad. Ei dyddiad geni yw: 5 Tachwedd, 1942. Roberts oedd hi cyn priodi.

Ei chefnidir: Cafodd ei geni yn Newport, de Cymru, a daeth i fyny i'r gogledd efo'i mam a'i thad pan oedd hi'n fabi. Roedd ei thad yn dod o Lanllechid. Aeth ei mam a'i thad i weithio ar fferm ei hyncl yn ?Corbery?. Ei nain fagodd hi. 'Oedd Nain wedi dwyn fi (fyny)mewn ffordd.' Roedd ganddi saith brawd a dwy chwaer.

Addysg: Ysgol Llanllechid ar sgwâr Rachub, yr hen ysgol ac yna agorodd ysgol newydd (ddim yn cofio'r flwyddyn). Yna i Ysgol Dyffryn Ogwen a gadael yn 1957 yn 15 oed. 'Roedd hi **'jyst isho mynd i weithio achos roedd Nain yn weddw – jyst isho dod â pethma i'r tŷ i helpu allan.'** Doedd hi ddim yn drist yn gadael yr ysgol er ei bod yn reit dda efo arlunio.

Swydd gyntaf – Mona Products yn Menai Bridge. Aeth i'r lle dól a gyrron nhw hi yna am *interview*. Cred mai tua '58-59 dechreuodd hi yno. Mae'n cofio ei bod yn gweithio yno pan gafodd Manchester United y ddamwain awyren (1958). Mae'n cofio gwrando arno fo ar y radio. Doedd hi ddim yn *keen* iawn ar y lle **'ond 'na fo oedd on waith'**. Bu am ddwy-dair blynedd yno. Roedd y ffatri yn cynhyrchu nicys a *T shirts* i Marks and Spencers. Doedd neb arall o'r teulu yno. Mae'r adeilad wedi'i dynnu i lawr rwan. Ochr draw i'r Eglwys Gatholig. Doedd neb o Fethesda yno ond roedd rhai oedd wedi priodi pobl o Fethesda yn gweithio efo hi.

4.13

Gwnïo coleri yn sownd i'r *T Shirts* a *sleeves*, a rhoi lastig yn y nicys, a gwnïo *gussets* oedd hi'n ei wneud. Cafodd *interview* – ddim yn gymhleth. Doedd hi ddim yn hapus yno - roedd y ffatri'n bell iawn ac isho codi'n gynnar yn y bore a thrafaelio. **Ar motor beic yr oedd hi'n mynd yna – ar gefn moto beic ei hyncyl a oedd yn gweithio yn Saunders-Roe.** A dod adre yn y nos, trwy bob tywydd. Dydy Beryl ddim yn meddwl bod pobl eraill yn edrych i lawr ar ferchaid y ffatri.

Cofio ar y diwrnod cyntaf mynd i'r cantîn a'r *supervisor* yn mynd â hi i'r rŵm yma – dangos iddi sut i wnïo ar y mashîn ac '**Awê â ni**'. Doedd hi ddim yn nabod neb ac yn shei yr adeg honno – *teenager*.

Clocio i mewn bob bore a dechrau gwnïo '**a gwnïo fel coblyn 'te achos doedd dim cyflog i ni ga'l. Dim ond be' oedd ni'n gneud. Ella bod ni'n cael ceiniog neu ddwy am gosod colar ar T shirt, ella rhyw ddwy geiniog am neud *sleeve* yn sownd – fel 'na. Doedd na'm *basic wage*. A felly oedd rhaid i chdi fynd fel coblyn ar y mashîn 'de i neud cyflog i fynd.**' Bu hi'n gwneud yr un gwaith o hyd tra bu hi yna.

Dynion oedd yn pacio, ac roedd *mechanic* i'r mashîns. Dyna'r unig ddynion oedd yno. A hefyd un *manager* – dyn. Merched oedd y *supervisor* a'r *manageress*. Roedd pawb yn gwneud yr un peth yno – dim angen sgiliau arbennig. Dim llawer o hyfforddiant '**roedd o reit hawdd a deud y gwir.**'

8.12

Roedd lot o ferched priod yno. Ansicr sut byddent yn ymdopi gyda theulu. Genod ifanc heb briodi oedd y rhan fwyaf. Doedden nhw ddim yn cael cyflog iawn – dim ond beth oedden nhw'n wneud. Hyd yn oed ar ol gwneud 5 o goleri dim ond swllt fyddech chi'n ei gael. Roedd y cyflog yn wael ofnadwy. Roedd hi'n methu rhoi llawer i'w Nain - os byddai mashîn yn torri lawr – wel dyna fo! Arhosodd y gyflog yr un fath tra bu hi yno. Roedd lot yn codi row am y peth – '**cega, isho mwy o gyflog, ond doedd neb yn gwranddo. Oedd nhw'n strict ofnadwy yna.**'

Cael eu talu bob wythnos mewn pecyn pae. Roedd rhai yn cael mwy o gyflog nag eraill am eu bod yn gweithio'n ffastach. A fwy *experienced* na hi.

Dim ond ychydig bach o'i phres roedd hi'n ei gael iddi hi ei hun. Roedd yn gorfod gofyn i'w Nain am fenthyg o hyd. **Byddai'n gwario'i phres ar smoc fach** ac allan i'r *pictures once in a blue moon*.

Doedd dim *perks* o weithio yno, na chael prynu nwyddau'n rhatach. '**Os oedd ni'n sâl 'ylly 'te, efo petha misol 'te, a ella crafu fe off ni ?? ... ella bo ni'n gneud *sanitary towel* yn y lle, efo'r stwff - *rejects* nicys, neu rwbath fel'na, crafa fo ffwrdd ... (chwerthin).**'

Dydy Beryl ddim yn meddwl bod undeb llafur yno. Roedd ‘na ryw ddwy â digon o geg i siarad drostyn nhw. ‘Hen fochyn o ddyn’ oedd y *Manager*. Roedd nhw’n strict ofnadwy. Doedd y gweithwyr ddim yn cael eu trin yn deg efo cyflog yno. Dylen nhw fod yn cael cyflog a bonus – ond dim felly roedd hi. Roedd y *supervisor* yn cerdded yn ôl ac ymlaen. Os oedd gynnoch chi *complaint* byddech yn mynd ati hi.

13.08

Mae’n cofio hi a’i ffrindiau yn mynd lawr i’r pier ac roedd nhw’n genod drwg a deud y gwir – direidus ‘te, a gweld cwch bach ar y *Menai Straits*, a dyma nhw’n chansio hi a dechrau rhwyfo, A riportiodd y dyn ar y pier nhw i’r *Manager*, ‘Wel am row! Naethon ni byth wedyn – oedd nhw’n lwcus bo ni’n fyw a deud y gwir!’

Doedd dim iwnifform – dim ond eu dillad eu hunain – oferôl arferol. Roedd y gwaith yn beryglus – y nodwydd yn mynd drwy’r bys. Ac roedd yn rhaid cael y *mechanic* yna i dynnu pob dim allan. ‘**Roedd yn rhaid gwatshiad – roedd y mashîns yn mynd fel bom.**’ Mae’n cofio un neu ddwy o genod yn cael nodwydd trwy’u bys. Dim iawndal.

Roedd nyrs yn y ffatri. Os oedden nhw’n sal roedden nhw’n cael mynd i fyny grisiau bach, i fel atig fach, roedd gwely *single bed* yna i orfadd. Mae’n cofio bod yn sal un tro a gorwedd yno drwy’r dydd.

Doedd dim rheolau *Health and Safety* adeg honno. Roedd cantîn bach yno. Dim ond rhyw ddau ddyn oedd yn pacio ac un ar tractor bach oedd yn cario pethau, y *Manager* ei hun a dau fecanic.

Roedd gan y ffatri fiwsig – radio a *loud speaker*. Y bosys oedd yn dewis beth oedd arno – tebyg i *Workers’ Playtime a news*.

Roedd e’n lle swnllyd i weithio gyda’r peiriannau yn mynd drwy’r dydd lawr grisiau a fyny grisiau. Tua 50 mashîn mewn un ystafell zzzzzz drwy’r dydd. Roedden nhw’n gweithio reit agos at ei gilydd ac yn gorfod gweiddi i siarad. Roedden nhw’n cael siarad cyhyd â’u bod nhw’n gweithio. Os oeddech chi’n siarad gormod oeddech chi’n cael row. Roedd y *supervisors* yn cerdded – Gladys oedd enw ei *supervisor* hi.

Dim smocio wrth weithio ‘**Oeddach chi’n cael smocio yn y cantîn a *that’s it.***’

Tynnu coes efo’r mechanics ‘**Roedd gormod o dwrw yna .. i wrando na clywad neb yn deud jôcs. ... On i’n sedêt pan on i’n ifanc!**’

18.17

Gweithio pum niwrnod – Llun i Gwener, dim shifftiau yna. Gweithio wyth tan bump.

Clocio i mewn ac allan – ac mae’n credu eu bod yn clocio amser cinio hefyd. – os oedden nhw’n mynd allan i’r stryd, i’r caffî neu rywbeth amser cinio ‘ **a gwrando ar *juke box* neu**

rywbeth fel yna'. Roedd yn rhaid iddyn nhw ddod â *lunch box* efo nhw neu fynd allan i gael bwyd. Roedd dynas yn gwneud jyst te yn unig yno.

Brêc o ryw ddeg munud yn y bore, trichwarter awr neu awr amser cinio a rhyw ddeg munud yn y prynhawn. **'A dwi'n meddwl nath o cytio'n brêc pnawn ni off, ac oeddan ni'n cael mynd adra'n gynt.'**

Gwyliau – y ffatri yn cau ond dim tâl achos bonus roedden nhw'n ei gael. Cau am bythefnos, a chael Dolig ond nid yw'n cofio'r gwyliau banc eraill. Doedd hi ddim yn mynd i ffwrdd ar wyliau – doedd hi ddim yn gallu ei fforddio fo.

Roedd y rhan fwyaf o'r gweithwyr yn byw yn Sir Fôn, felly doedd ganddi hi ddim ffrindiau yn fan'ma o'r ffatri. Os oedd galw personol – angladd neu rywbeth **'jyst colli a that's it 'te.'** Roedd y ffatri tua saith milltir un ffordd iddi hi. Roedd yn rhaid cychwyn tua hanner awr wedi saith yn y bore.

Doedd dim cymdeithas i'r merched y tu allan I'r ffatri, **heblaw amser cinio pan fydden nhw'u gyd yn mynd allan yn un gang. Pan oedd Ffair Borth yna roeddan ni jyst yn mynd rownd y ffair yn pnawn. Dwi'n cofio hogyn y ffair yn cael lectric sioc yn y ffair. A dwi'n cofio ni genod yn mynd i *Catholic Church* i weld o yn 'i arch. 'Nesh i ddim mynd 'te. Ond oedd na lot yn mynd yna – oedd o'n hogyn del.**

22.50 Dim parti Dolig. Dim clwb cymdeithasol. O safbwynt mwynhau – **Oedd o'n iawn ond don i ddim yn licio'r ffordd – mi fasan nhw fod wedi gallu tritio pobol yn well.** Roedd y genod yn grêt i weithio efo nhw, oedd. Oedd y genod yn ffantastig, ond oeddan nhw ychydig bach yn strict yna – y *Manager* 'de.

Bu'n Ferranti's ar ol gadael – o ddechrau'r 60au. Llawer gwell lle a chael cyflog a bonus. Agosach at adre hefyd. Roedd hi'n *jack of all trades* yn fan'no. Roedd y ffatri yn gwneud *meters* lectrig, Roedd hi'n polisho *spindles* i roi mewn *meter* a fframia'r meter – dyna ei gwaith hi. Roedd hi'n gwneud lot o bethau yna – sodro a phob dim. Roedd Ferranti's lawer mwy hefyd ac roedd *laninations* yna yn ogystal.

O ran maint: Tair gwaith mwy yn gweithio yn Ferranti's nag yn Mona Products. Bu'n gweithio yn *laminations* Ferranti yn gwneud topiau *sports cars* a cyfars lledar iddyn nhw.

Roedd hi llawer hapusach yn Ferranti – roedd llawer mwy o hwyl yno. **Dwi'n cofio ni'n cael – reit yn laminations 'ma – ac oeddan ni wedi mynd â booze i mewn ac oedd pawb 'di deud yn laminations 'ma 'Reit pawb i ddod â potal i fewn ac roedd yr hogia 'di dod â ryw gasgan bach fel hyn o gwrw ac wedi cuddiad nhw yn stores, - jyst cyn torri am Dolig 'de, oedd hi, a dyma ni'n deud, 'Reit genod, amsar cael *drink* bach 'wan. A dyma ni'n mynd, stopio gweithio a *drink*. Ac oddan ni'n hannar honci .. a pwy ddaeth i fewn ond y Bós ac oeddan ni gyd yn canu ac yn *merry* ac yn gneud dim strôc o waith. 'Right' medda'r *Manager* 'you've all been sacked!' Oeddan ni'n ista fan'na'n chwerthin 'te, doedd dim otsh, nag oedd, prun ag oeddan ni wedi cael sac neu beidio. Eniwê aeth un o'r**

hogia at y *management* a siarad efo nhw a ballu, achos roedd ganddyn nhw foi *Union* a gaethon nhw'u jobsys yn ôl. A '*Apologies mawr – it's Christmas!*' *Oeddan ni gyd wedi meddwi – Wel am laff!*'

Roedd lot mwy o ddynion yn Ferranti. **Mae'n cofio boi yn ei hanfon i'r stores i ofyn am sky hook** – dim ffasiwn beth yn nag oedd?

Bu yn Ferranti's nes symud i Hotpoint – ddim yn *keen* ar Hotpoint, yn Llandudno Junction. Cyn iddi briodi yn 1968 yr aeth hi am ychydig fisoedd i Hotpoint. Roedd hi'n cael lliff nol ac ymlaen yno. Ond yna dychwelodd i Ferranti's – y ddwy ohonyn nhw.

Edrych yn ôl ar ei hamser: Atgofion melys am Ferranti's – roedd wrth ei bodd, Byddai'n hoffi mynd yn ôl yno heddiw i weld ydyn nhw'n gneud yr un peth ag oedden nhw'n neud. Dydy hi ddim wedi cadw cysylltiad efo'i chydweithwyr, ond bydd yn eu gweld weithiau .

Cael plant wnaeth iddi hi orffen gweithio – **full stop!**

Dysgodd rywbeth trwy weithio mewn ffatri, ac roedd hi'n grêt yn Ferrantis.

Hyd: 30 munud

English summary

Mona Products, Menai Bridge 1958-1960; Ferrantis 1960s; Hotpoint (for a few months in 1968, then back to Ferrantis)

Interviewee: VN055 Beryl Ann Buchanan

Date: 30:07:2014

Interviewer: Shan Robinson on behalf of Women's Archive Wales

Beryl's maiden name was Beryl Roberts. She was born on 5 November, 1942 in Newport, and moved to North Wales with her parents when she was a baby. Her father was from Llanllechid. Her parents went to work on her uncle's farm in Corbery? Her grandmother brought her up. She had seven brothers and two sisters.

She went to Llanllechid School on Rachub square and then on to Dyffryn Ogwen School. She left in 1957 when she was 15 years old. She wanted to go out and work because her grandmother was a widow and she wanted to help her.

Her first job was with Mona Products in Menai Bridge. She was sent for an interview there by the people in the dole office. She thinks she started there circa 1958-1959. She remembers working there when the Manchester United air disaster happened (1958). She wasn't keen on working there but stayed for two to three years. The factory produced T-shirts and knickers for Marks and Spencers. Nobody else from her family worked there. The building has been demolished by now.

4.13

She made collars and sleeves for the t-shirts, put elastic in the knickers, and sewed gussets. She had to get up early in order to travel to work. She travelled there by motor bike in all kinds of weather. It was her uncle's motor bike. (He worked in Saunders-Roe).

She remembers the supervisor showing her the machine on her first day and was then expected to get on with it. She was only a teenager when she started there and felt very shy.

She had to clock in every morning and start sewing like the clappers. They might have received a penny or two for each collar put on a t-shirt, but there was no basic wage as such. She did the same job throughout the time she was there.

The only men who worked there were the men in packing, the mechanic who looked after the machines, and the manager. The supervisor and manageress were women. Everybody else did the same job and no special skills were required. The work was quite easy.

8.12

There were many married women working there but the majority were young, single girls. The wage wasn't very good and they were only paid for what they had done. Even after doing five collars she would have only have earned a shilling. If the machine broke down this would affect wages as she would lose productivity. Because the wages were low she couldn't give her grandmother much money. Many of the workers complained about the pay but nobody listened.

They would receive their pay packet on a weekly basis. Some workers would receive more than others because they were faster, more experienced and more productive. She didn't keep much of her pay for herself and was always asking her grandmother to lend her money. She would spend her money on cigarettes, and going to the pictures 'once in a blue moon.'

There were no perks for working in the factory, and they weren't allowed to buy items at a cheaper rate. They sometimes made their own sanitary towels out of the material of the reject knickers.

Beryl doesn't remember a union being there and had to represent themselves. The manager was a 'pig of a man'. They were very strict. The workers weren't treated fairly. They should have received a wage with a bonus but this didn't happen. There was a supervisor there walking back and forth and if they had a complaint they would go to her.

13.08

She remembers going down to the pier with her friends. They saw a small boat on the Menai Straits so they got in and started rowing. The pier man reported them to the manager. He gave them a big row but they were lucky they didn't drown.

They wore overalls which they provided themselves. The work was dangerous – the machines were fast and it was possible to get a needle through the finger. Beryl remembers this happening to a few girls but they didn't receive compensation.

There was a nurse in the factory. If they felt unwell they went up the stairs to a small attic-type room where there was a single bed to lie down.

There were no Health and Safety regulations back then. There was a small canteen there. Music was played on the radio over a loud speaker but it was the bosses who decided what was played and it was usually Workers' Playtime or the news.

It was noisy with the machines going all day both downstairs and upstairs. There were about 50 machines in one room. They worked in close proximity to each other and had to shout in order to speak to each other. They were allowed to chat as long as they carried on working but if they talked too much they were given a row. Her supervisor was called Gladys.

They were allowed to smoke in the canteen but not as they worked. There was a lot of leg pulling with the mechanics although Beryl says she was sedate when she was young.

18.17

Beryl worked five days a week, from Monday to Friday. She worked from eight to five and there were no shifts.

They had to clock in and out (including lunch time.) They either brought a lunch box or went out to get something to eat although there was a woman there who made tea. There was a ten minute break in the morning and one in the afternoon, although Beryl thinks the afternoon break was done away with which meant they could go home sooner.

When the factory was shut for the holidays the workers would be unable to earn their bonuses. It closed for a fortnight [during the summer] and they were off Christmas time. Beryl didn't go away for the holidays as she couldn't afford it.

The majority of the workers lived on Anglesey so she didn't have friends from home working in the factory. The factory was seven miles away for Beryl so she had to leave the house at half past seven in the morning.

The girls would all go out in one gang lunch time but didn't socialise outside work. **When Borth Fair came they went round the fair in the afternoon. Beryl remembers one of the fair lads getting electrocuted. He was a handsome lad and the girls went to the Catholic Church to see his coffin. Beryl herself didn't go.**

22.50

There was no Christmas party and no social club. Beryl enjoyed working there and thought the girls were fantastic but thinks her employers could have treated people better. The manager was very strict.

She worked in Ferranti's after leaving, during the beginning of the Sixties. It was much better here. She would receive a wage and bonuses. It was also closer to home. She was a jack of all trades. The factory made electric meters. She polished the spindles that went inside and the meter frames. She did many things there including soldering. Ferranti's was a much larger place – approximately three times larger than Mona Products. She worked in laminations in Ferranti making sports car tops and leather covers.

Ferranti's was much more fun. **"...everybody in laminations had said, 'Right we all have to bring a bottle in and the lads had brought a little barrel of beer and had hidden it in stores – it was just before breaking up for Christmas.'** It was just before the break up for Christmas and they decided to have a drink and got half cut. **'...and who came in but the Boss, and we were all singing and merry, and not doing a stroke of work. 'Right' the Manager said, 'you've all been sacked!' We were all sitting there laughing, and didn't care whether we'd been sacked or not.'** One of the lads went to speak to the management because they had a union representative and they got their jobs back.

26.34

There were many more men than women in Ferranti. She remembers a man sending her to the stores to ask for a sky hook, when no such thing existed.

Beryl stayed in Ferranti until she moved to Hotpoint in Llandudno Junction for a couple of months before she got married in 1968, but she returned to Ferranti.

She has fond memories of Ferranti. She would like to return there now to see if things are the same. She hasn't kept in touch with her colleagues but sees them from time to time. The reason she left was because she had children. She learnt a lot by working in the factory.

Duration: 30 minutes