

# Using trade union banners for education: the case of the 1938 'red'

## Follonsby miners' banner\*

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### Abstract

This article considers the use of trade union banners as tools for mainstream education in the context of the recent reclamation, recuperation and re-articulation of industrial heritage taking place in localities in the former Durham coalfield, north-east England. It does so by focusing on the educational work undertaken by the Follonsby Miner's Banner Association in partnership with a local primary school. It is divided into four substantive sections. The first locates our approach theoretically, primarily in the rich pedagogical literature, while the second briefly contextualises the Association and the school. Drawing on semi-structured interviews with teachers and activists, it offers a chronology of a project that, catalysed by the replica Follonsby miners' banner, developed spontaneously in several exciting directions. These included the school developing its own miners' style banner, unveiled by the late Tony Benn, who featured on it. The third section offers some wider observations about the educational partnership and then considers the specific challenges that the Follonsby banner's iconography posed in terms of teaching and how these were overcome. Finally, we discuss legacies and lessons, arguing that the wider impacts of the project went far beyond the specific learning experience they offered the children involved.

## Introduction

Since the early 2000s there has been a renaissance in British miners' banners that researchers are only beginning to address.<sup>1</sup> Nowhere is this popular enthusiasm better displayed than at the annual Durham miner's gala, whose crowds have been growing year-on-year in recent times. On 8 July 2017, for example, an estimated 200,000 record crowd squeezed into the narrow streets of the county city of Durham for the 133rd annual miners' gala. The gala's current rude health seemed unlikely back in 1993 when Easington, the last colliery in county Durham, closed and the gala itself also looked likely to expire. What is now commonly referred to as the 'biggest trade union gala in Europe', owes much of its vitality to a growing network of local miners' banner groups.<sup>2</sup> These groups are ordinarily established by those who worked in their community's former pit, and they perform some of the functions of the old miners' lodges (pit union branches).<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The pioneering study in the first wave of union banner studies is John Gorman, *Banner Bright. An Illustrated History of the Banners of the British Trade Union Movement* (London, 1973).

<sup>2</sup> Josh Halliday, 'Jeremy Corbyn helps draw record crowds to Durham Miners' Gala', *Guardian*, 8 July 2017.

<sup>3</sup> Carol Stephenson and Dave Wray. 'Emotional regeneration through community action in post-industrial mining communities: The New Herrington Miners' Banner Partnership', *Capital & Class*, 87 (2005), 175–199.

For a study of the DMA when it was one of the largest and most influential sections of the miners' union, see

This significant reassertion of an industrial and overtly *political* identity in a post-industrial setting has received little attention from researchers: Carol Stephenson and Dave Wray's pioneering case study of the New Herrington Miners' Banner Partnership, and John Tomaney's recent work on the Durham miners' gala are important exceptions.<sup>4</sup> In refurbishing its local miners' lodge banner, participating in the Durham miners' gala and undertaking other community commemorative initiatives, the New Herrington Partnership used the miners' 'unique heritage, grounded in solidaristic and inclusive social networks' as a mechanism for 'emotional regeneration'.<sup>5</sup> The miners' banner itself is integral to the process; mining culture is 'embedded in these lodge banners [...] While each banner is unique, collectively they are a physical representation of occupation; of working-class politics and aspiration; of collectivism; and of community-based welfarism'.<sup>6</sup> Individual Durham lodge banners predated the 1869 founding of the Durham Miners' Association (DMA), though none survive. Nevertheless, all banners were, as Wray explained, central to the

'complex process of socialization into occupational and class politics, and symbolic of the long-established and deep-rooted symbiotic relationship that exists between DMA and the mining communities of Durham that it was created to represent'.<sup>7</sup>

Building on Wray and Stephenson's research, this article discusses the educational work of another Durham banner Association: the Follonsby (Wardley) Miners' Lodge Banner, Community Heritage

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Lewis Mates, *The Great Labour Unrest: Rank-and-file Movements and Political Change in the Durham Coalfield* (Manchester, 2016).

<sup>4</sup> John Tomaney, 'After Coal: Meanings of the Durham Miners' Gala', *Frontiers in Sociology*, 5(32) (2020): 1-13.

<sup>5</sup> Stephenson and Wray, 'Emotional regeneration', 178.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 181.

<sup>7</sup> David Wray, 'The Place of Imagery in the Transmission of Culture: The Banners of the Durham Coalfield', *International Labor and Working-Class History*, 76 (2009): 148.

Association (hereafter ‘the Association’).<sup>8</sup> The first section details our theoretical framework and methodology. The subsequent two sections contextualise, describe and assess the educational partnership that the Association developed with a local primary school, paying attention to the potential and actual obstacles to, as well as the successes of, this partnership.<sup>9</sup> Centre stage is the catalysing role, uses and significance of the remade 1938 Follonsby miners’ banner itself, and the school’s ‘miners’ banner’ that it inspired. In this respect we offer a modern case study informed by earlier research on the use of trade union banners as educational artefacts published in the pages of this journal.<sup>10</sup> Again, this important aspect of labour history has received remarkably little attention since Joan Bellamy’s 1992 intervention (discussed further below). The final section and the conclusion consider legacies and lessons, arguing that the project had a far wider impact than simply offering an engaging learning experience for the children involved in it (and their successors). It underscores the relevance and importance of teaching such topics at school and is suggestive of the ongoing legacy of the early History Workshop itself.<sup>11</sup>

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The primary data presented here was gathered as part of ‘Making Heritage Matter’, a Heritage Lottery funded project to develop the partnership between Association and the school through the teaching of local mining history. The project used an action research approach as it enables education practitioners and researchers to learn about and reflect on practice, with the aim of

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<sup>8</sup> Follonsby was the name of the colliery at Wardley between 1913 and 1939.

<sup>9</sup> Ofsted, 2009, ‘Lingey House Primary School: Inspection report’, available from: <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/inspection-reports/find-inspection-report/provider/ELS/108360> (Accessed: 10 June 2015).

<sup>10</sup> Joan Bellamy, ‘The use of trade union banners in education’, *Labour History Review*, 57(1) (1992), 16–17.

<sup>11</sup> See Ian Gwinn, ‘“History Should Become Common Property”: Raphael Samuel, History Workshop, and the Practice of Socialist History, 1966-1980’, *Socialist History*, 51 (2017), 96–117.

improving it.<sup>12</sup> Through action research we aimed to build a community of practice to develop knowledge as a shared and collective endeavour and to proliferate good practice.<sup>13</sup> This article presents the findings of phase one of the project, which involved gathering the experiences and reflections of those involved in the educational collaboration from the outset.<sup>14</sup> We conducted digitally recorded semi-structured interviews with four school staff and the secretary of the Association. Interviews focused on the motivations for the project, moving from the general to the specific. We explored interviewees' life histories and then moved onto asking about why and how the Follonsby banner was used in the school and about the process and impact that the creation of the school's own banner had on all those involved. We also draw on data collected by the National Coal Mining Museum, consisting of recorded interviews with the school's children and staff about their banner.<sup>15</sup> The research received ethical approval from the Faculty of Health and Life Sciences, Northumbria University.

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<sup>12</sup> Mary McAteer, *Action research in education* (London, 2013); John Elliott, *Action research for educational change* (Milton Keynes, 1991).

<sup>13</sup> Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger, *Situated learning: Legitimate peripheral participation* (Cambridge, 1991); Jean McNiff, *Action research: principles and practice* (London, 2013)

<sup>14</sup> Phase two focussed more directly on the children's perspectives. See Lucy Grimshaw and Lewis Mates, "Making Heritage Matter?" Teaching local mining history in primary schools', *Education 3-13* (2020) [early access online].

<sup>15</sup> This NMM project is discussed further below. Our thanks to the NMM for making these recordings available to us and providing a report on their school banner project. Rebecca Hudson, 'Lingey House Banner Project – 2014' (August, 2018).

Paulo Freire's critical pedagogy provided our underlying theoretical framework, alongside the more recent contributions of bell hooks and anarchist pedagogies more broadly.<sup>16</sup> More specifically, we subscribe to the principles and practice of place-based education and the 'history from below' approaches to teaching history. The project and teaching aimed at 'deep learning' to develop knowledge and understanding of the children's own place-based history. Rather than simply imparting and 'banking' knowledge from teachers to pupils, this teaching draws on teachers', pupils' and their families' biographies and experiences of working-class lives. The teaching approaches in our project drew inspiration from projects also informed by critical pedagogy, conducted, for example, in Newcastle-upon-Tyne and Nottingham in the UK, but also in places as distant as Australia and Brazil.<sup>17</sup> Notably, these projects are underpinned by place-based education and occurred in deindustrialising areas with levels of poverty higher than the respective national averages. In the 'Generations Project' at a school in Nottingham, the teaching aimed to help students 'to understand the history of their place, its people and their built and natural environments'.<sup>18</sup> Field-trips, learning walks and other outdoor learning activities are essential

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<sup>16</sup> Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (London, 2005 [1970]); bell hooks, *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom* (London, 1994); Robert H. Haworth (ed.), *Anarchist Pedagogies: Collective Actions, Theories, and Critical Reflections on Education* (Oakland (CA), 2012); Herbert Read, *Education through Art* (London, 1970 [1943]); See also special issue 'Reinventing emancipation in the 21st century: the pedagogical practices of social movements' of *Interface*, 6(1) (2014).

<sup>17</sup> Maria Auxiliadora Schmidt and Tânia Maria F. Braga Garcia, 'History from children's perspectives: learning to read and write historical accounts using family sources', *Education 3–13*, 38:3 (2010): 289–299; Pat Thomson, 'Foreword', in Brenton Prosser, Bill Lucas and Alan Reid (eds), *Effective teaching: Promoting a Culture of Inquiry in Schools and Education Systems* (Kent Town, South Australia, 2010): i–vi; Carol Stephenson, John Stirling and David Wray, "'Dig where you stand": Working life biographies as a challenge to the neoliberal classroom', *Capital & Class*, 38(2) (2014): 399–412.

<sup>18</sup> Thomson, 'Foreword', i.

components of place-based education, allowing pupils to encounter their physical and natural environments, including the relics of their area's industrial past.<sup>19</sup> The premiss of the 'Recreating Histories' project in Brazilian elementary schools was that historical narratives could be drawn from ordinary ephemera in documents and memories.<sup>20</sup> Valuing the history of ordinary people encouraged the participation of both teachers and students in producing knowledge through collecting and analysing diverse images and documents.<sup>21</sup> This approach facilitated the making of 'connections between micro history –aspects of community and family life – and the macro history of the locality and country', the production of historical narratives, and of new teaching materials.<sup>22</sup>

The place-based projects in Nottingham and Adelaide (Australia) shared a 'concern for the politics of place in globalising times', as both spoke to 'much larger national and international concerns'.<sup>23</sup> These concerns revolved around improving educational outcomes for children living in deprived localities (de-industrialised or rural), and challenging the dominant public policy discourse of need. The projects' counter-approach to a discourse that defines the local children and their families by their deficiencies and inadequacies instead regards them as possessing 'assets' and 'funds of knowledge' that can work 'towards changing what is regarded as important and valuable knowledge'.<sup>24</sup> Similarly, the 'Recreating Histories' project resulted in the recognition by students,

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<sup>19</sup> For a very recent example of the literature in this area see Monica Green and Michelle Rayner, 'School ground pedagogies for enriching children's outdoor learning, *Education 3-13* (2020): 1-14 [published online].

<sup>20</sup> Schmidt and Garcia, 'Children's perspectives', 289.

<sup>21</sup> This is a staple of place-based approaches; see, for example, Gregory A. Smith, 'Place-based education: Learning to be where we are', *Phi Delta Kappan*, 83(8) (2002): 584–594.

<sup>22</sup> Schmidt and Garcia, 'Children's perspectives', 297.

<sup>23</sup> Thomson, 'Foreword', ii.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*,

teachers, and the community 'that their stories are important and that it is important that they participate in the making of history'.<sup>25</sup>

A significant outcome of all place-based education is to strengthen children's 'connections to others and to the regions in which they live'.<sup>26</sup> Gregory Smith suggests that learning in the school environment was invariably qualitatively different to lessons learned in the real world, and that place-based education could, through its adaptability to specific localities, overcome the gulf between school and children's lives outside of school. Children can gain the skills and motivations to help to regenerate their communities. In so doing they, and their teachers, come into contact with different people possessing varied experiences of living in their localities, rendering such place-based projects 'historical' as well as spatial.

Involving issues-based curriculum design, student-centred learning and real-world problem solving, place-based education also demands democratic processes. As Pat Thomson noted, there are opportunities to engage with societal difference(s), 'to critically engage with contemporary and popular cultures; and to question the relationship of people and nature'.<sup>27</sup> Teachers act as facilitators 'linking the problem to the required curriculum, finding resources, and acting as a general troubleshooter'.<sup>28</sup> The students, by contrast, are the 'creators of knowledge rather than the consumers of knowledge created by others', thereby playing 'a pivotal role in identifying problems [...] developing potential solutions and then organizing and participating in efforts to solve the problem'.<sup>29</sup> This democratising element of place-based education synergises well with the

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<sup>25</sup> Schmidt and Garcia, 'Children's perspectives', 297.

<sup>26</sup> Smith, 'Place-based education', 594.

<sup>27</sup> Thomson, 'Foreword', iii.

<sup>28</sup> Smith, 'Place-based education', 589.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 598, 593.



requirements in the latest English Schools' National Curriculum to teach citizenship ('civics').<sup>30</sup> Indeed, place-based education offers one means of teaching civics that necessitates a deeper political education.<sup>31</sup>

Inevitably, place-based pedagogies offer – and draw on – rather different kinds of knowledge from that prescribed in the National Curriculum. Fortunately, former education secretary Michael Gove's top-down, prescriptive and 'traditional' proposals for history teaching in a reformed English National Curriculum in the 2010s did not survive the consultation process intact.<sup>32</sup> The final National Curriculum thus endorsed the teaching of local history, offering an opening to place-based pedagogies. Teachers keen on pursuing this avenue, however, still have to find room in a school timetable pressured by the demands of a curriculum that prioritises Maths and English and heavily emphasises the accompanying Statutory Assessment Tests.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Kendra Bischoff, 'The civic effects of schools: Theory and empirics', *Theory and Research in Education*, 14(1) (2016): 91-106; Department of Education, 'The national curriculum in England Key stages 3 and 4 framework document' (London, 2014).

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/840002/Secondary\\_national\\_curriculum\\_corrected\\_PDF.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/840002/Secondary_national_curriculum_corrected_PDF.pdf). (Accessed: 9 September 2020). For a recent review of the rich literature in this area, see Edda Sant, 'Democratic Education: A Theoretical Review (2006–2017)', *Review of Educational Research*, 89(5) (2019): 655-696.

<sup>31</sup> Wiel Veugelers and Isolde de Groot, 'Theory and Practice of Citizenship Education', in Wiel Veugelers (ed.), *Education for Democratic Intercultural Citizenship* (Leiden, 2019): 15.

<sup>32</sup> Haydn, 'Longing for the past'; Cooper, 'Charlotte Mason'; Mark Brundrett, 'Policy on the primary curriculum since 2010: The demise of the expert view', *London Review of Education*, 13(2) (2015): 49–59.

<sup>33</sup> Department of Education, 'History Programmes of Study: Key Stages 1 and 2 National Curriculum in England' (London, 2013).

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/239035/](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/239035/)

Finally, and appropriately considering our theoretical alignment, the rich data we present demands a 'thick description' approach, popularised in the field of 'history from below' by Raphael Samuel.<sup>34</sup> We have also drawn theoretical inspiration from the spirit of Samuel's History Workshop at Ruskin college, that empowered working-class students to research and write about their own history.<sup>35</sup> These included our Association activist interviewee Dave Douglass, a Wardley miner who moved to the Doncaster coalfield in the early 1970s and then attended Ruskin College.<sup>36</sup> Furthermore, 'History from below' partly inspired the emergence of the 'new history' in the 1960s, which was a reaction to traditional Whig 'great men' teaching of history in schools. Rejecting the 'names and dates' approach, the 'new history' instead emphasised the teaching of historical skills and understanding. It thus championed introducing schoolchildren to the interpretation of historical evidence.<sup>37</sup> An earlier strand of progressive thought blazed the trail for the 'new history'. It was exemplified by British

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PRIMARY national curriculum - History.pdf (Accessed: 31 December 2020); Hilary Cooper, 'Children, their world, their history education: the implications of the Cambridge review for primary history', *Education 3-13*, 46(6), (2018): 615-619; Zeta Williams-Brown and Michael Jopling, "'Measuring a plant doesn't help it to grow": teacher's perspectives on the standards agenda in England', *Education 3-13* (Published online: 28 January 2020).

<sup>34</sup> See Robin Blackburn, 'Raphael Samuel: The Politics of Thick Description', *New Left Review*, 1:221 (1997): 133-138.

<sup>35</sup> See Raphael Samuel's own discussion of this in 'History Workshop, 1966-80', in Raphael Samuel (ed.), *People's History and Socialist Theory* (London, 1981).

<sup>36</sup> See David John Douglass, *The Wheel's Still in Spin* (Hastings, 2009).

<sup>37</sup> Martin Booth, *History Betrayed* (London, 1973); Terry Haydn, 'Longing for the past: politicians and the history curriculum in English schools, 1988-2010', *Journal of Education, Media, Memory and Society*, 4(1) (2012): 7-25.

educationalist Charlotte Mason's (1841–1923) advocacy of pupil engagement with primary as well as secondary sources to facilitate interpretation of the past 'through retelling, role play and art'.<sup>38</sup>

In the project we discuss below, the creation of two 'mining' banners served as both modern and historical artefacts that developed children's understanding and learning; artefacts which, the research demonstrates, enhance primary school children's cognitive skills.<sup>39</sup> Keith Hodgkinson argues that using historical artefacts in teaching can offer a 'rich source for children's learning about the past', accessible to young children and capable of overcoming two problems in teaching history; the intangible (not concrete) nature of the discipline and the preponderance of high-order concepts it contains.<sup>40</sup> Hodgkinson endorsed Hilary Cooper's claim that 'in Primary schools we should not be satisfied with the sensory, descriptive and concrete. [...] it is possible to find bridges towards the cognitive, analytical and abstract, in an integrated and structured way'.<sup>41</sup> Joan Bellamy's discussion of the use of trade union banners for teaching supports this claim. In Bellamy's experience, asking students to study and analyse trade union banners 'helps to illuminate the lives, values and culture of sections of the organised working class of the past who are often invisible, but whose existence and achievements are a significant part of the history and culture of the period'.<sup>42</sup> Having established the theoretical, methodological and pedagogical foundations of the 'Making Heritage Matter' project, we turn to the findings of the first phase.

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<sup>38</sup> Hilary Cooper, 'Looking backwards to move forwards: Charlotte Mason on history', *Curriculum Journal* 23(1) (2012): 15.

<sup>39</sup> See for example, Hilary Cooper, 'Using Artefacts to teach Historical Thinking Skills to Young Children', in Danijela Trskan and Špela Bezjak (ed.) *Archaeology, Heritage and Education* (Ljubljana, 2020);

<sup>40</sup> Keith Hodgkinson, 'How artefacts can stimulate historical thinking in young children', *Education 3-13*, 14(2) (1986): 14.

<sup>41</sup> Hilary Cooper, 'From Marbles to Murder', *Teaching History*, 36 (1983): 26.

<sup>42</sup> Bellamy, 'trade union banners', 17.

The Association was established in 2011 to bring back to life the lost banner of Follonsby colliery, in the pit village of Wardley in the easternmost zone of the metropolitan borough of Gateshead, near the south bank of the river Tyne. The Association's driving force was Dave Douglass, a third generation Wardley miner who played significant roles in the miners' strikes of the 1970s and 1980s in South Yorkshire before retiring to the north-east.<sup>43</sup> Since his time at Ruskin College in the early 1970s, Douglass had been captivated by an earlier local militant leader, George Harvey, and the miners' banner that he had helped create, initially in 1928.<sup>44</sup> Like its immediate predecessor, the lost 1938 'red' Follonsby banner carried the images of James Connolly, militant miner's leader A.J. Cook, Labour Party pioneer Keir Hardie and Harvey himself, all circled around a larger, centrally located portrait of Lenin. The presence of Lenin and Connolly -Follonsby is the only known British or Irish union banner depicting the Easter rebellion leader wearing his Irish Citizen's Army uniform- gives it a strong claim to being the 'most revolutionary banner yet unfurled by a union'.<sup>45</sup> Indeed, this self-same feature also sealed the 1938 banner's fate as it was painted over by a more moderate local leadership within a few years of Harvey leaving the colliery in early 1939.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> See Douglass' *Geordies Wa Mental* (Hastings, 2008).

<sup>44</sup> David John Douglass, *George Harvey: Pitman Bolshevik* (Gateshead, 2011), n.p.n.

<sup>45</sup> Gorman, *Banner Bright* (1973), 16.

<sup>46</sup> Douglass, *George Harvey*, n.p.n.

The Association's intention from 2011 was to reclaim and raise awareness of the coal mining heritage of a socially deprived area where it was fast disappearing.<sup>47</sup> Even new road names in a modern industrial estate where the colliery once stood have been inexplicably corrupted to 'Follingsby'.<sup>48</sup> All that remains of the real name is a Follonsby Terrace, a row of former miners' cottages standing in front of where the old colliery gates once stood. Thus, once it had raised the necessary finances, the Association turned its attention to how it might use its new replica banner for wider education. It sent out letters to all the local primary and secondary schools suggesting joint working on the locality's mining heritage.<sup>49</sup>

Lingey House primary was the only local school to respond enthusiastically to the Association's proposal. Its teachers brought energy and commitment to the project from the start, and their motivation for involvement was clear: the collaboration offered the school a way to address an important gap in local knowledge. Christine Jones, Lingey House headteacher in 2011, was struck that there was 'absolutely no understanding' among the children, staff and many parents that their community existed because of coal mining.<sup>50</sup> Jones had grown up in the mining areas of east Durham where physical memorials of a mining past existed and she was 'stunned' that there was nothing similar in the Gateshead area, with its rich coal mining past. Having worked in education for forty

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<sup>47</sup> For mining communities see David Gilbert, 'Imagined communities and mining communities', *Labour History Review*, 60(2) (1995).

<sup>48</sup> In 2010 Wardley was among the 20% most deprived neighbourhoods in Britain. ONS [Office for National Statistics], NE10 8DN Neighbourhood Profile, deprivation; available at; <http://neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/dissemination/NeighbourhoodProfile.do?a=7&b=6275106&c=NE10+8DN&g=6358035&i=1001x1012x1013&j=6290618&m=1&p=6&q=1&r=0&s=1434104508797&enc=1&tab=8> (Accessed: 12 June 2015).

<sup>49</sup> Dave Douglass interview with Lewis Mates, 10 October 2015.

<sup>50</sup> Christine Jones interview with Lewis Mates, 17 November 2015.

years, Jones had noticed that there was ‘no sense of belonging anymore.’ As she was growing up, ‘it was very much a sense of history [...] constantly you know, it was talked about and what the people who worked down the mines went through, [...] like for instance, child labour down the pits.’ For Jones this meant that it was ‘really, really important that children had that sense of understanding why [...] their community was there and to [...] give them some sense of ownership and care and respect as well’.

Similarly, the then school music teacher Jackie Kendrick was born and raised locally ‘with a view of the pit heap behind where I lived’.<sup>51</sup> Her husband’s father and grandfather were miners and she used to work Sunday mornings at the local swimming pool with pitmen who had lost limbs in workplace accidents. She was a secondary PE teacher in county Durham during the 1984/5 strike and recalled ‘children coming to school, you know, they’re not having much food to eat, not being able to study because many of them were really quite affected by it all’ though ‘as a teacher, we take an impartial view’.

The first step in the collaboration came with the first Wardley gala, organised by the Association at the local former miners’ welfare for the unveiling of the new replica 1938 Follonsby banner in June 2011.<sup>52</sup> The school sent children and teachers to represent it. The then deputy head Catherine Ritchie recalled at the Wardley gala that: ‘we were looking at the banners that were there, I can remember feeling one and saying to Chris[tine Jones], “Oh I would like one of these. You know, it would be lovely if we made one”’. The school (a group of teachers, children and their parents) then

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<sup>51</sup> Jackie Kendrick interview with Lewis Mates, 23 November 2015.

<sup>52</sup> The programmes of the 2014 and 2015 Wardley galas can be downloaded from <https://www.thefreelibrary.com/lt%27s+gala+time+for+community.-a0293479925> and [http://www.minersadvice.co.uk/images/events/Wardley%20Miners%20Gala%20Programme%2007.13\[2\].pdf](http://www.minersadvice.co.uk/images/events/Wardley%20Miners%20Gala%20Programme%2007.13[2].pdf) (Both accessed: 6 July 2020).

joined the Association to parade the new Follonsby banner at the July 2011 Durham miners' gala. They accompanied Association members carrying the Follonsby banner to Durham Cathedral to have it blessed in a traditional ceremony by the Bishop of Durham (and later Archbishop of Canterbury), Justin Welby.<sup>53</sup> The blessing ceremony itself was 'very, very emotional' for all the school community.<sup>54</sup>

Outside the cathedral immediately after the service, veteran Labour left-winger and regular gala attendee Tony Benn was on Palace Green with a film crew. Benn was filming for 'Will and Testament' (2014), the retrospective of his life, to be released after his death.<sup>55</sup> Benn started chatting to the Lingey House children who were having a final photograph taken with their parents and the Follonsby banner: 'some of these politicians, they've got no sense of how to talk to children or adults for that matter, but he's [Benn] straight across and he was chat, chat, chat to the children and totally oblivious to the TV cameras being there'.<sup>56</sup> When asked if he would be on the new Lingey House banner, without hesitation Benn replied "'I'd love to, I'd be honoured'".<sup>57</sup> Thus, in the three weeks since its unfurling, the Follonsby banner had already spawned the idea of a school banner and proffered one of the figures to appear on it.

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<sup>53</sup> Footage of Dave Douglass talking about the banner before it is taken in to be blessed in July 2011 can be seen here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uH0fmUx4gJc> (Accessed: 6 July 2020).

<sup>54</sup> Christine Jones interview.

<sup>55</sup> Tony Benn's 'Will and Testament' (2014) can be viewed here: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M\\_o2tsp-E2I](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M_o2tsp-E2I) (Accessed: 25 June 2020). The 2012 Durham miners' gala footage is 57 minutes in. Immediately before that, the Association's Dave Douglass is speaking on the occasion of Margaret Thatcher's funeral in 2013.

<sup>56</sup> Christine Jones interview.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid., In his 'Will and Testament', on his image being added to Blackhall miners' banner Benn comments; 'I can't imagine a greater honour than to be on a miners' banner'.

The collaboration began in earnest when Dave Douglass gave a talk to a whole school assembly about coal mining and the Follonsby banner. He set up a display in the hall of various miners' lamps, mining-linked ties, photographs, and coal. Douglass' passion for his subject enthused the children and staff alike. The assembly also had a wider catalytic effect, as the children told their parents about the topic and 'it'd obviously reignited some of their memories, so it started talk in the community about the mining history'.<sup>58</sup> Several parents responded to an appeal for mining memorabilia to display at school and this generated further, and considerable, interest. School governor Stephen Iley, who was for eleven years a miner at Westoe colliery (South Shields) until its closure in May 1993, also came into the school to talk. His motivation was also a recognition of 'how important local history is to the children'.<sup>59</sup>

Building on this interest, the school ran a half-term project in autumn 2011 for the year five children (9-10 years old) called 'Who are we, who were they?' The hope was that working in depth on the topic would help to ensure that what the children learned 'would stay in their memory forever really'.<sup>60</sup> Teaching began in 'outdoor learning week' in October 2011. Dave Douglass headed a 'learning walk', a central component of place-based education, leading the children between local landmarks mostly associated with mining.<sup>61</sup> It covered some considerable distance, taking all day and ending up at the remains of an old colliery near the River Tyne.<sup>62</sup> The walk also took in a local church yard (St. Mary's church, Heworth), which contains a memorial naming the ninety-two men and boys

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<sup>58</sup> Ibid.,

<sup>59</sup> National Mining Museum [hereafter NMM] Interviews (adults) (n.d. c.2014).

<sup>60</sup> Christine Jones interview.

<sup>61</sup> Green and Rayner, 'School ground pedagogies', *passim*.

<sup>62</sup> A second learning walk took the children down into the village of 'old Wardley' and to the remains of the colliery that finally closed in 1974, and to the Bowes railway, which used to run coal to ships on the Tyne for export and the London market.



killed in a catastrophic underground explosion at nearby Felling colliery on 25 May 1812.<sup>63</sup> The memorial was, in the words of 1930s local MP Ellen Wilkinson, a 'witness in stone to the deaths of boys of eight and nine years in the mine'.<sup>64</sup> Reading the names on the memorial had a profound impact on the children (who did not know about this disaster): many shared surnames with, and were the same age as, those listed as killed.<sup>65</sup> Buried in the same churchyard is Thomas Hepburn (c.1795-1864), a pioneering Durham mining trade unionist who ended his working life at Felling colliery. Hepburn's was 'one of the first names to stand out among the anonymous working-class heroes of these early days', according to Ellen Wilkinson, herself a later local hero to many (see below).<sup>66</sup> While many of the children knew the name 'Thomas Hepburn' from a local secondary school, they 'didn't have a clue' who he was.<sup>67</sup>

While all this was going on, the school was working on designing and fundraising for its own banner. In terms of its overall design, the teachers 'felt very much that we wouldn't've been involved in the project if it hadn't been for David Douglass and the Follonsby project. So we decided that we were going to replicate the Follonsby banner'.<sup>68</sup> This involved using the same specialist silks and employing the same professional banner artists, Chippenhams.<sup>69</sup> The £8,000 cost of the school banner came from a council community fund grant, which also funded related school trips to the tune of £2,000.

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<sup>63</sup> John Hodgson, *Felling Colliery 1812: An Account of the Accident* (Wigan, 1999 [1812]).

<sup>64</sup> Ellen Wilkinson, *The Town that was Murdered* (London, 1939), 41.

<sup>65</sup> Christine Jones interview.

<sup>66</sup> Wilkinson, *Town that was Murdered*, 28.

<sup>67</sup> Christine Jones interview.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*,

<sup>69</sup> Douglass, *George Harvey*, n.p.n..

Jamie Jackson, the school's art coordinator, worked with the after-school art club of 'gifted and talented' children to design the rear of the school banner. Given their remit, they worked around photos of the Follonsby banner 'but the children were quite adamant about what they wanted on their banner as well'.<sup>70</sup> That said, there were some boundaries to their creative license; 'we didn't want "One Direction" [a pop band] on, for instance'.<sup>71</sup> One idea for the design sprang from the current dilapidated state of the school infrastructure. It was a CLASP (Consortium of Local Authorities Special Programme) building of prefabricated concrete sections, a popular form of post-war school building until the later 1970s, that gave a quick, cheap, but medium-term infrastructure solution.<sup>72</sup> Lingey House was then transitioning into new school buildings. Taking a cue from the Follonsby banner's image of a miner and his family looking to the future, the teachers thought; 'well, let's Lingey House look to the future. What's our new school going to look like?'<sup>73</sup>

Figures 1 and 2: the Follonsby and Lingey House Banners (rear) compared (authors' photos)

Groups of children were tasked with designing different aspects of the rear of the school banner: the new school building, and its new gardens.<sup>74</sup> The old CLASP school is pictured on the right with an adult holding a miners' lamp in his right hand, showing five children the school of the future. The

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<sup>70</sup> Jamie Jackson interview with Lewis Mates, 23 November 2015.

<sup>71</sup> Christine Jones interview.

<sup>72</sup> Stuart Maclure, *Educational Development and School Building: Aspects of Public Policy, 1945-73* (London, 1984).

<sup>73</sup> Christine Jones interview.

<sup>74</sup> Jamie Jackson interview.

angel image came directly across from the Follonsby banner with the children replacing miners and the future school replacing a modern (in the inter-war period) housing estate (see figures 1 and 2).<sup>75</sup> In this way 'links were made to the banner, old and new; to the school, old and new; past, present, future and the children came up with, well, quite an exciting looking school that I wish we could have'.<sup>76</sup> Christine Jones was a little more circumspect about the appearance of the future school ('it looks like a polytunnel doesn't it?') But it needed to be this way as 'it was the children's ideas, so you go with that, don't you...?' Indeed, Jones found it 'quite inspirational' as the children, with the current global environmental crisis in mind, decided that by the time the future school existed there would be no living trees or creatures. The school banner thus depicts metal trees, birds and insects and the future school is set in a barren, green-free landscape.

Due to his mining background and input as a school governor, Stephen Iley 'didn't have to think twice' when asked to feature on the school banner: 'I was honoured in a way'.<sup>77</sup> The children pictured on it were all from the school's council. One of them is Iley's son who offered a 'link to the past, the present, the future' and was similarly pleased to be asked.<sup>78</sup> Also pictured is a male pupil of Sri Lankan heritage who had been involved in the project from the outset to exemplify 'how we embrace multicultural societies in school'.<sup>79</sup> The other children chosen to feature on the banner were drawn from among those who had shown most commitment to the project, through the art club, the school council or the choir, which had been busy with project-related singing engagements (see below). The aim was to depict a representative cross-section of the school on its banner and all those chosen, and their parents, were naturally pleased. One of the children appearing on the

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<sup>75</sup> Catherine Ritchie interview with Lewis Mates, 19 October 2015.

<sup>76</sup> Jamie Jackson interview.

<sup>77</sup> NMM Interviews (adults).

<sup>78</sup> Jamie Jackson interview.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid.,

banner thought it 'really exciting [...] that when I leave, they're still gonna remember us'.<sup>80</sup> The teachers reported no negativity or resentment from the children not chosen to be on the banner; the school worked hard to ensure that everyone 'felt equal in terms of things that they were given; rewards and opportunities'.<sup>81</sup>

Figures 3 and 4: the Lingey House School and Follonsby Banners (front) compared (authors' photos)

The front of the school banner also drew inspiration from the 1938 Follonsby banner (see figures 3 and 4). In effect, the children designed the back of the banner and the teachers decided who would go on the front (the various portraits). That said, the children were instrumental in inviting Tony Benn at the 2011 gala to be the first figure on the school banner, and his image took the central spot in the roundel. Benn's PA sent copious portrait photographs and, working with the Chippenhams artists and Benn, the teachers decided on the best one for the banner. To Benn's right (positions are always taken from the perspective of the banner carriers) was the portrait of Peter Mole, a school governor and Gateshead councillor who was instrumental in securing the banner's funding.<sup>82</sup> Mole, a 'big political figure in the area [...] was like our Lenin, if you like (laughs)'.<sup>83</sup> Smaller images of the old, CLASP school, a child's depiction of the Anthony Gormley sculpture the 'Angel of the North' (a modern, local landmark) were joined (instead of the hammer and sickle of the Follonsby banner) by the Gateshead portcullis, recognising the council's generosity.

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<sup>80</sup> NMM Interviews (Lingey House children) (n.d. c.2014).

<sup>81</sup> Christine Jones interview.

<sup>82</sup> Catherine Ritchie interview.

<sup>83</sup> Christine Jones interview.

The third figure chosen - to Benn's left - was Ellen Wilkinson, MP for the local Jarrow constituency in the 1930s and 1940s and a leader of the famous 1936 march against unemployment to London.<sup>84</sup> In the post-war Attlee Labour government, Wilkinson was the first woman in Britain to hold the post of Minister of Education, and the second to have a seat in the cabinet.<sup>85</sup> The teachers were 'very keen to have a woman' on the banner and Wilkinson, with her historic links to the 1938 Follonsby banner's context and strong association with the area, was the obvious choice.<sup>86</sup> Indeed, Wilkinson had been rather fulsome in her praise of 'Harvey's men' in the 1930s. Writing about the impact of mining trade unionist pioneer Tommy Hepburn on the locality, Wilkinson wrote that he 'laid the foundation for the reputation that Felling and Follonsby pits have to this day of being among the most thoughtful and best-read of the Tyneside miners'.<sup>87</sup> Wilkinson's own links to the area became more evident with the 1950s semi-detached Wardley housing estate that took her name and where Dave Douglass lived for his later youth.<sup>88</sup> The street names of the Ellen Wilkinson estate are a veritable 'who's who' of notable socialists and reformers, from Keir Hardie (whose portrait appeared on the 1938 Follonsby banner) to Margaret Bondfield, who preceded Wilkinson as the first female British cabinet minister (of Labour in Macdonald's second Labour government) in 1929.

On 13 July 2012, Tony Benn unveiled the new Lingey House banner at a ceremony at the school. He made a strong impression immediately. On arriving at the school, Benn ignored all the local

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<sup>84</sup> Lewis Mates, 'Debunking Myths', review essay of Matt Perry, *The Jarrow Crusade: Protest and Legend*, in *North-East History*, 38 (2006), 171–179.

<sup>85</sup> For differing recent emphases see Matt Perry, *"Red Ellen" Wilkinson: Her ideas, movements and world* (Manchester, 2015) and Laura Beers, *Red Ellen* (Cambridge (MA), 2016).

<sup>86</sup> Christine Jones interview.

<sup>87</sup> Wilkinson, *Town that was Murdered*, 46.

<sup>88</sup> See Douglass, *Geordies*; Dave Douglass, *Pit Talk in County Durham: A Glossary of Miners' Talk Together with Memories of Wardley Colliery Pit Songs and Pilking* History Workshop Pamphlet No. 10 (Oxford, 1973), 72.

politicians (and teachers) standing at the door, and instead spoke to the nursery children enjoying a 'pirate day' and offering him a 'guard of honour': 'that said everything about the man, what kind of man he was'.<sup>89</sup> The next day the children and their parents marched with their new school banner alongside members of the Association at a busy Durham miners' gala. A 'rather frail' Benn met the school at the gala's rally point on Durham racecourse and the children joined him on the main stage to sing.<sup>90</sup> Like the Follonsby banner the previous year, the school took their new banner up to Durham Cathedral to be blessed. Afterwards, the children were able to enjoy the gala's various stalls and attractions.<sup>91</sup>

III

We turn now to discuss how the educational partnership between school and Association brought unexpected developments and benefits. We then consider some of the challenges. While the school had taught mining history before the collaboration, this teaching lacked a local focus and direct links to former miners and there was nothing as tangible or visually striking as a 'real' miners' banner to work with. Once the Follonsby banner effectively catalysed the process, it was remarkable how the project snowballed, developing in all sorts of exciting, unanticipated ways. For Catherine Ritchie, seeing the Follonsby banner blessed in Durham cathedral at the 2011 gala was crucial: 'the whole sense of community and the history and heritage, it suddenly started to dawn on, yes, we would like to be more involved in this'. Then came the serendipitous encounter with Tony Benn (explained above) and his involvement: 'it was huge. [...] And the thing is [...] you couldn't have written down a

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<sup>89</sup> Christine Jones interview.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid.,

<sup>91</sup> Several images of the unveiling and of the school banner at the gala and Durham cathedral can be seen at the banner artists' website: <https://www.chippenhamdesigns.co.uk/> (Accessed: 2 July 2020).

plan that you would do these things. It was just one thing led to another'. This was Stephen Iley's experience too; he found that the project soon 'spiralled beyond the banner'.<sup>92</sup>

This spontaneity saw the school develop important new external links both near and far. Locally, the school linked up with Beamish Open Air Museum in County Durham. Beamish outreach workers visited the school, teaching the children how to make 'proggy mats' (traditional rugs made from scraps of cloth) and doing experiments to demonstrate the dangers, due to the presence of gas, of using candles in the mines. This, along with workshops and educational videos, all helped to prepare the children for Beamish's annual 'Old King Coal' festival, celebrating the north-east's mining heritage. The children marched with their own school banner in the 'Old King Coal' parade. Beamish museum has its own drift and deep mines - the former offering a brief but informative underground guided tour - and model pit village (set in 1913) that the children visited during the festival.<sup>93</sup> In March 2012, the school choir professionally recorded a CD of mining songs in collaboration with Gateshead College: 'the recording was great fun. The kids loved it...'.<sup>94</sup> The CDs of the recording were sold for charity.

Through Dave Douglass' contacts, the school was invited in September 2012 to the National Coal Mining Museum at Caphouse, near Wakefield (West Yorkshire), along with other schools from the north of England for a project on children's banners. Called "Courage, Camaraderie and Community", this special exhibition aimed 'to engage different communities in their local mining history and to celebrate this mining heritage'.<sup>95</sup> While some of the children were 'excited' and

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<sup>92</sup> NMM Interviews (adults).

<sup>93</sup> Catherine Ritchie interview; Christine Jones interview. See the Beamish website:

<http://www.beamish.org.uk/> (Accessed: 7 July 2020).

<sup>94</sup> Jackie Kendrick interview.

<sup>95</sup> Hudson, 'Lingey House Banner Project', n.p.n.

'loved' going down the mine (and getting coal dust on their faces), others found it 'really scary': Dave Douglass told them stories to take their minds off the descent in the cage.<sup>96</sup> During the visit the school choir sang the song 'Working Man' - an unlikely UK top-twenty hit in 1990 - while two-hundred feet down the mine.<sup>97</sup> Tony Benn's son Hilary happened to visit the museum whilst the exhibition was still on and wrote to the school saying how touched he was seeing the image of his then late father on the Lingey House banner.

Dave Douglass also facilitated a fieldtrip visit from Oberlin college students, Ohio. It was a source of pride to the Lingey House teachers that Oberlin was the first US college to admit both women and African Americans. The Oberlin students joined the school at the miners' gala and the teachers were 'absolutely over the moon, you know, for them to be involved'; the students interviewed the children for a research project they were doing: 'we sang for them, they sang for us'.<sup>98</sup> The school sang the American national anthem; all the Lingey House children knew the words, while, amusingly, their American guests did not. The college graduation brochure that year carried an image of the Lingey House school banner on the front and the students wrote a publication on English notions of class based on their visit, a copy of which they sent back to the school.<sup>99</sup> The collaboration also strengthened pre-existing links that the school had. For example, it worked with a school in Ankara, Turkey linking its coalmining project to the Turkish silver mining industry. A group of Turkish children

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<sup>96</sup> NMM Interviews (Lingey House children).

<sup>97</sup> 'Working Man' is a mining song by Canadian singer-songwriter Rita McNeil. See Charlie Rhindress, *I'm Not What I Seem: The many stories of Rita MacNeil's life* (Halifax (Canada), 2017), 107-9, 114, 201-3.

<sup>98</sup> Catherine Ritchie interview.

<sup>99</sup> Marc Blecher and Devon Rettew (eds), *What the English Know as Class* (Ohio, 2013).



visited and were treated to one of Douglass' learning walks. The partnership had help make Lingey House school 'big across the world now'.<sup>100</sup>

Spontaneity in terms of the teachers recognising and developing opportunities as they presented themselves made for a rich and varied learning experience for the children while still allowing for teaching elements of core curriculum. For example, while singing their mining songs down the mine at the National Mining Museum, Jackie Kendrick and the choir noticed that the sound was echoing off the walls:

there you go, there's a link to the science. Why does the sound echo? What happens? What's on the coalface to make it echo the way it did? So, then it brought in another aspect of teaching.

Similarly, going into the recording studio at Gateshead college:

and trying to get the children to think, well, where did you go between the pits and this [modern recording studio] and all of a sudden [...] how do radios work? How do people communicate down the pits, you know? [...] The links were amazing.

Naturally, there were challenges from using the 'red' Follonsby banner for teaching, given the controversial nature of those pictured on it. It was on display in the main school hall for some time, but potential controversy was fairly easily averted by facing Lenin and his 'comrades' towards the wall: 'I think that that's probably one of the things that politically we haven't really to be seen to follow'.<sup>101</sup> This minimised the likelihood that the teachers would need to explain to inquisitive children who the figures on the front of the banner were, though they would of course do so if asked. Ordinarily, the children did not tend to ask. Displaying the Follonsby banner on the

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<sup>100</sup> Christine Jones in NMM Interviews (adults).

<sup>101</sup> Catherine Ritchie interview.

'community' side rather than the 'political' side proved the only area of (slight) collaborative tension between the school and the Association. Dave Douglass, when he visited the school, always urged the teachers to display the banner's 'political' side. But Christine Jones was clear that she did not want to push any political beliefs onto children: 'It's up to them, you know, to formulate their own beliefs [...]' And Douglass himself, of course, recognised that the Follonsby banner 'is extremely political and it's not easy politics either'.<sup>102</sup>

Even then, of course, the 'community' side of the banner picturing a 1920s housing estate that looked very similar to the 1950s Ellen Wilkinson estate just over the road from the school stimulated discussion. The images allowed for teaching what modern housing offered miners and how they had lived before:

for children to understand that, that you know these miners, they had no washing facilities, they had, you know, very basic cooking facilities; it was on the fire mainly, no toilet, you know and then suddenly this is the vision for the future, that beautiful estate with areas for children to play games [...]<sup>103</sup>

Furthermore, there were occasions when the Follonsby banner's five "political" figures were explained to the children. In July 2013, for example, Dave Douglass spoke at the school on this subject. Beforehand, Christine Jones asked him to avoid some of the gory details: 'these children, you know, they don't want to hear that he [Connolly] was beaten to a pulp and then tied to a pole and then shot [...]. So it was just, "he was an Irish politician and.." (laughs)'. With this in mind, Douglass confined himself 'largely to the making of the banners, the early struggles of the miners

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<sup>102</sup> NMM Interviews (adults).

<sup>103</sup> Christine Jones interview.

and what our union was all about'.<sup>104</sup> He also outlined 'vaguely who everybody was and what they believed' but he was taken aback at the children's deep inquisitiveness. Just as the talk was ending and the children had to return to their classes, one asked "'So how did the [Russian] revolution turn out then?" [...] This is just as he's going through the door. I said, "Well, it depends who you talk to". [...] "That's another story how it turned out, but that's a really good question".<sup>105</sup> Christine Jones was satisfied with how this discussion developed: 'it was not "political" at all, it was just historical fact, you know, that Lenin [...] was a major figure in Russia and the hammer and sickle was the sign [...]'. This careful balancing act helped to ensure that no parents complained about the Follonsby banner being on display in the school: on the contrary, it was a useful conversation piece.

Perhaps fittingly, the Lingey House banner itself was not entirely free from controversy. This was partly due to Ellen Wilkinson's image. After deciding that Wilkinson should appear on the school banner, the teachers 'did some research' and 'found out she was quite a naughty lady, so we didn't ever go into too much of that with the children (laughs)'.<sup>106</sup> This was a reference to Wilkinson's long-term affair with Herbert Morrison and contested claims that she committed suicide.<sup>107</sup> Wanting to 'focus on the positive', Wilkinson was talked about at school as a pioneering female politician, a 'driving force for social reform' and 'an icon, really, for women at the time'.<sup>108</sup>

Tony Benn's image on the banner also provoked other forms of controversy. Benn's presence in Gateshead for the unveiling of the banner sparked tremendous interest from local dignitaries. But

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<sup>104</sup> Dave Douglass, 'Class heritage' letter to *Weekly Worker* (n.d.; July? 2013) Available at: <https://weeklyworker.co.uk/worker/969/letters/> (Accessed: 4 July 2018).

<sup>105</sup> Dave Douglass interview. See *Ibid.* for a more detailed account of this talk.

<sup>106</sup> Christine Jones interview.

<sup>107</sup> Perry, "Red Ellen", 384–390.

<sup>108</sup> Christine Jones interview.

Benn had been clear to the teachers that he was there for the children. The school was presented with a list of people to invite by the local council, but the only invited guests were the children's families, school governors and Association members: 'people who we thought had had a lot of input with our banner [...] But we didn't think it was a political event 'cos it wasn't, and some people really, really took umbrage at that'.<sup>109</sup> In the event some uninvited local councillors turned up regardless. One even barged through and sat in the chair intended for Benn himself; 'it was all about, "Oh the papers are gonna be there", you know, "I'm gonna be here"'.<sup>110</sup>

Perhaps unsurprisingly, Benn's image continued to get the school banner noticed. At the 2013 Durham gala, *Daily Mirror* journalist Kevin Maguire tweeted a photo of his view from standing on the County Hotel balcony (while the gala marched past). He added the line 'Lingey House Primary School banner with Tony Benn! Gove [the then coalition government's Conservative Education Minister] will do his nut'.<sup>111</sup> Christine Jones recalled that the tweet 'caused quite an unpleasantness' by suggesting that 'we were teaching the children left-wing beliefs, because we had Tony Benn on our banner'. While she did not think Maguire was 'being malicious', 'other people took it up...' as the tweet and accompanying controversy moved seamlessly onto Facebook. Phoned by the press about this, Jones 'refused to get involved': 'It was not a political banner and I just said that "Tony Benn was a good friend to the school. He was a kind and caring man..." which is why he was pictured on the banner'.

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<sup>109</sup> Ibid.,

<sup>110</sup> Ibid., For the press report see Tony Henderson, 'Tony Benn keeps Durham Miners' Gala pledge', *Newcastle Journal*, 14 July 2012, available at: <http://www.thejournal.co.uk/news/north-east-news/tony-benn-keeps-durham-miners-4406634> (Accessed: 4 July 2018).

<sup>111</sup> Kevin Maguire tweet (13 July 2013) See: [https://twitter.com/Kevin\\_Maguire/status/355963363739713536](https://twitter.com/Kevin_Maguire/status/355963363739713536) (Accessed: 7 July 2020).

A sub-controversy arose in a reply to Maguire's tweet that referred to Benn as 'the Energy Secretary who closed all those coal mines. #shortmemories'. While Benn was not the relevant office holder when Wardley itself was finally shut down in 1974, it is the case that before 1979 more mines were closed down under Labour administrations than they were under the Conservatives and in fewer years in government.<sup>112</sup> Benn himself oversaw the closure of twenty-two pits with 17,000 job losses. In July 1984, Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher tried to use this record against Benn, arguing that he was in favour of the closure of uneconomic pits, essentially the policy that she claimed her government was then pursuing. Benn responded angrily that the crucial difference was that Thatcher wanted to break the essential element in the 'Plan for Coal' that he had abided by; 'agreement with the NUM [National Union of Mineworkers] on the future of the industry'.<sup>113</sup>

IV

Regardless of these challenges and controversies, the collaboration between the Association and the school had significant pedagogical value as well as a wider impact. First, it is clear from all the teachers' testimonies that the Lingey House children sustained a high level of engagement with the varied elements of the 'Who are we, who were they?' topic. On the one hand, comparatively small things caught the children's imaginations. For example, on the learning walks, the children hunted for bits of coal: 'it was as if they'd found gold, you know. "We've found a bit, we've found a bit,

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<sup>112</sup> Department of Energy and Climate Change, 'Historical coal data: coal production, availability and consumption 1853 to 2013' (January 2013; updated 31 July 2014). Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/historical-coal-data-coal-production-availability-and-consumption-1853-to-2011> (Accessed: 9 June 2015).

<sup>113</sup> Parliamentary Debates (Commons), 31 July 1984. See <https://api.parliament.uk/historic-hansard/commons/1984/jul/31/government-policy> (Accessed: 8 July 2020). See also Benn's account of this exchange in his diaries; *The End Of An Era: Diaries 1980-1990* (London, 2014), 370.

we've found a bit". [...] So, even that side of things was interesting and their level of interest was good'.<sup>114</sup> The relatability of the topic captured the children's imaginations. They 'like to hear about themselves, about children their age or the things that were relevant to them. [...] you can say "they were here, it actually happened here"'.<sup>115</sup> But the topic also threw up bigger questions of justice that were particularly engaging; 'the children are really good at discussing what's sort of not fair and what's not just [...] and how they would want to stand their ground and fight their cause'.<sup>116</sup>

The children's ownership of the topic and their agency in aspects of how it developed both demonstrated and deepened their investment in it, and enhanced its pedagogic impact. For example, when having their photos taken for the banner design, the children involved self-organised; 'it was lovely to watch 'cos they told each other how to stand and where to stand and what to do. So, it was all their effort. [...] Everything came from them'.<sup>117</sup> Similarly, outside Durham cathedral on gala day 2011; 'the kids were all involved in that- "Oh, Mr Benn, will you be on our banner?"'.<sup>118</sup> When Dave Douglass spoke about the five figures on the Follonsby banner it was the children who 'imposed their own agenda during questions'.<sup>119</sup> The school banner was also essential in this process of engendering ownership. The way they were engaged in designing it, and the inclusive end result, helped, according to Christine Jones, to build the children's 'sense of belonging'.

Indeed, the school banner became important in terms of instilling a collective identity amongst all the children in the school: 'it lifts them'.<sup>120</sup> This is evident in the children's own testimonies too. In

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<sup>114</sup> Catherine Ritchie interview.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid.,

<sup>116</sup> Jackie Kendrick interview.

<sup>117</sup> Jamie Jackson interview.

<sup>118</sup> Christine Jones interview.

<sup>119</sup> Douglass, 'Class heritage'.

<sup>120</sup> Jackie Kendrick interview.

the National Coal Mining Museum testimonies one Lingey House child describes the school banner as 'beautiful'; another discusses feeling 'very proud' carrying the banner to get it blessed (though perhaps with a tinge of disappointment in their voice when they relay that they had been to three galas but only carried the banner once).<sup>121</sup> The teachers also took pride in their banner. At the gala, the banner attracted photographers because it 'is spectacular, it is one of the best [...] but I'm biased'.<sup>122</sup> When asked 'what's the best thing about this project?', one of the children answered; 'Learning about what happened years ago before... it's, like, made us more proud of the area we live in'. A second responded; 'everything is the best part'. There was a chorus of 'yeses' when the children were asked if they would all go to the gala next year and if they thought the experience was something they would always remember. One of the children commented; 'I am very proud of our heritage and where I live and the people, who lived before us and the people who mined before us'.<sup>123</sup> Rebecca Hudson of the Museum also noted this collective enthusiasm. She found that the children 'were all very excited and engaged by the project and were very happy to share their stories with us'. Hudson remarked on the children's 'real sense of pride' from singing mining songs at the Museum. This also 'reinforced their understanding of the importance of keeping coal mining history and communities alive'.<sup>124</sup>

Second, the collaboration was also a significant learning experience for the adults involved in different ways. Among the teachers, Jamie Jackson, for example, had mining heritage on his father's side, though this did not form a significant part of his identity. The collaboration 'opened my eyes quite a lot. 'Cos I didn't know – I've lived here all my life and I didn't know the history of around our

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<sup>121</sup> NMM Interviews (Lingey House children).

<sup>122</sup> Jackie Kendrick interview.

<sup>123</sup> NMM Interviews (Lingey House children).

<sup>124</sup> Hudson, 'Lingey House Banner Project', n.p.n.

area and I didn't think history would've interested me as much as it did'.<sup>125</sup> Catherine Ritchie similarly learnt a good deal about the locality's industrial landmarks; ruins that she had not always realised were linked with the coalmining industry.

With many parents and some grandparents accompanying their children to the gala and supporting other mining project related events, it was hardly surprising that they, too, learned about their local heritage. Many of the parents did not know that the Durham miners' gala still existed. One year, with gala day clashing with another event, the school decided not to attend officially. But a few of the parents who had planned to go with the school took their children along anyway. In 2014, many parents responded enthusiastically to the school's open invitation to all pupils to attend the gala on the school bus. Christine Jones' family also began attending, with her grandson, Thomas Brace, marching with the school and taking a turn at holding a banner pole: 'which was lovely'. This was Jones' last gala as headteacher so it 'was quite emotional for me as well'. All the parents Jackie Kendrick spoke to about the gala agreed that it 'has been a fantastic event and that they, even if we [the school] weren't coming, they would like to go back too. But they liked the fact that the children were singing with the banner'.

The figures on the banners also facilitated some parental political education. For example, on sending invites to the school banner unveiling, it became clear to Christine Jones that some of the parents did not know who Tony Benn was; 'but we talked that through, you know'. The banner unveiling was a big draw for the parents, who

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<sup>125</sup> Jamie Jackson interview.



loved the whole event. They really did. I mean the turnout was phenomenal wasn't it, and they really valued the fact that he'd given up his time to come along [...] and of course it was on TV as well, so the parents were delighted that it was on TV and it was in the local paper.<sup>126</sup>

Watching their children in school assemblies, the Follonsby banner hanging on display in the school hall alerted many parents to the topic and helped generate discussions (even with the banner's 'community' side on show).

Not only did the project help educate different generations of the local populace, it also sparked intergenerational dialogue within families. This was the case for Stephen Iley who, as a full-time worker, was involved in the project as much as possible. The mine that Iley worked at was 'long gone' by the time his son, who featured on the banner, was born. (Iley remarked: 'I'd go back [to work in Westoe] tomorrow if it opened again').<sup>127</sup> After having seen the memorial to the Felling disaster in Heworth church, Christine Jones was sure that many of the children had told their parents that their surnames were on it and asked if they had lost relatives in 1812:

The children would come into school and say, "My Grandad was a miner", you know and, "My Mam says that she was talking to my Grandma and her father came from another area" [...] So obviously it started discussions at home.<sup>128</sup>

A significant feature of this phenomenon were the numbers of children who discovered that they had some Irish heritage. This whole part of south Tyneside was settled by Irish immigrants moving to work in the mines and shipyards in past generations; these included Dave Douglass' ancestors.<sup>129</sup>

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<sup>126</sup> Christine Jones interview.

<sup>127</sup> NMM Interviews (adults).

<sup>128</sup> Christine Jones interview.

<sup>129</sup> Lewis Mates, *The Spanish Civil War and the British Left: Political Activism and the Popular Front* (London, 2007), 25, 99–100; 109–110; 114.

With the numerous distractions for children on the internet and social media, for parents and grandparents 'to get involved in actual talking to the children was quite inspirational, I think, for the kids and they were coming into school and they were making contributions'.<sup>130</sup>

Furthermore, the collaboration was an excellent way of taking the children into the wider community. This was facilitated especially by the medium of song. Durham has a rich heritage of mining songs, a function of it being the southern part of the Great northern coalfield, one of the oldest worked coalfields in Britain. The original lyrics of the famous 'Blackleg miner', for example, thought to have been written about the 1844 lockout, mention proximate Northumberland pit villages.<sup>131</sup> The children took these songs into the community by performing at the local Wardley gala, established by the Association as an annual community event at the local miners' welfare.<sup>132</sup> There were regular singing appearances at the miners' gala in Durham itself, as well as at the National Mining Museum and at the Sage Gateshead, a modern music venue that is part of the quayside area's cultural regeneration.<sup>133</sup> The children felt these occasions, performing in front of 'a big audience' were 'amazing' and 'such a great experience'.<sup>134</sup>

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<sup>130</sup> Christine Jones interview.

<sup>131</sup> Derek Hobbs, *Singin' Hinnies. Twenty Favourite Songs from the North East of England* (Newcastle, 1999).

<sup>132</sup> See the Wardley gala 2013 programme, 16 June 2013. Downloaded from [http://www.minersadvice.co.uk/images/events/Wardley%20Miners%20Gala%20Programme%2007.13\[2\].pdf](http://www.minersadvice.co.uk/images/events/Wardley%20Miners%20Gala%20Programme%2007.13[2].pdf) (Accessed: 4 July 2018).

<sup>133</sup> Steven Miles, "'Our Tyne": Iconic Regeneration and the Revitalisation of Identity in Newcastle Gateshead', *Urban Studies*, 42(5/6) (2005), 913–926.

<sup>134</sup> NMM Interviews (Lingey House children) (n.d. c.2014).

The children also sang regularly at the annual memorial service, organised by the Durham Miners' Association every October at Heworth church to commemorate Thomas Hepburn and trade union pioneers. Jackie Kendrick recalled:

The children go and we go along the road with the banner and we sing loads of songs with the band, following the band. [...] But once inside, the children have to be made aware of what it's all about. So, they have to know about who's Thomas Hepburn, why are we there, why are we commemorating him, what did he do in his life that meant people today still remember him? So, the children are made aware of all of that and my, the only thing I can say is, they take the reverence of that seriously. I am so impressed that I've got children as young as year three, who take everything of that so seriously. And I think it's because we have so much diversity in what we do with them. [...] They're lovely. I couldn't be more proud of them. Really couldn't.

For the October 2015 service, a contingent of school children, teachers, and Association members carrying the school and Follonsby banners and accompanied by the Felling brass band marched one mile from the school to the church. Also heading to the service, the mayoress decided to get out of her car and join the march on foot. Reflecting on this march with band and banners through the streets of the local community -something that the miners' lodge would have done regularly when the pit was open- Catherine Ritchie remarked:

we saw that sense of community where people came out in their pyjamas onto the street to see the band, to see the banners on the way down [to the church] [...] People were looking and I think people are looking for that sense of community and I think if you can foster it through looking at the past, well that's a good idea.

The school, through the collaboration, thought it was helping the children to create their 'own community from the past'.<sup>135</sup> Through engaging with external events and organisations in the locality, the school was becoming more visible and increasingly playing a wider community support role:

people come to schools for help and advice [...] they don't know where else to go. [...] people are being drawn [to Lingey House] because they realise that, you know, we are a caring school and we do, we are a hub for the community so, and I do think the link with the banner has actually helped that and brought people together.<sup>136</sup>

Activists from the miners' side also benefitted in important ways from the collaboration. Dave Douglass' schooling among the Wardley baby boomers of 'C-stream' was 'absolutely brutal' and left him with a deep hatred of schools and teachers.<sup>137</sup> Douglass was only to grasp the joy and power of knowledge after experiencing Ruskin college and Raphael Samuel's tutorship in the early 1970s. It was then that Douglass embarked on his research into George Harvey and the Follonsby banner, writing about it in his first 'History Workshop' pamphlet, and then offering a follow up on similar themes.<sup>138</sup> For Douglass, working with the teachers and children of Lingey House was a revelation:

there's a quality of the school itself that I've never found children so interested in things, ever. And it's a general interest. [...] it reminds me of a university. Every time I go there they're in small groups doing things or else they're getting on buses to go different places. [...] The

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<sup>135</sup> Catherine Ritchie interview.

<sup>136</sup> Christine Jones interview.

<sup>137</sup> Dave Douglass, 'C-stream on Tyneside' in Raphael Samuel (ed), *Patriotism: The Making and Unmaking of British National Identity Volume II: Minorities and Outsiders* (London, 2016 [1989]).

<sup>138</sup> See David Douglass, *Pit Life in County Durham: Rank-and-File Movements and Workers' Control* [History Workshop Pamphlet No.6] (Oxford, 1972); Douglass, *Pit Talk*.

children there are universally happy and free and they're not told off about every little thing.

So, they chat and they laugh, you know. I'm knocked out by the school.<sup>139</sup>

The masculine, adult-dominated and traditionalist world of coal mining and the Durham gala also learned from the children.<sup>140</sup> To illustrate this at an individual level, take 'one of the amazing things' that happened when the children sang 'Working Man' down the mine at the National Mining Museum:

some of these men that take you round, ex-miners; I mean they're as hard as nails and they were standing crying [...] the words and the way the kids sang it [...] And these miners, the tears rolling down their faces.<sup>141</sup>

Watching the children singing in the chapel at Beamish, it was the parents' turn. One of the children recalled; 'it was great; we sang our hearts out and had nearly everyone crying'.<sup>142</sup>

At a broader level, historically, miners' banners did not carry the portraits of female political leaders (i.e. on the "political" side). Women appeared on the "community" side, or in the form of angels or similar, representing 'peace' or freedom.<sup>143</sup> One partial exception is the Bowburn lodge banner of

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<sup>139</sup> Dave Douglass interview.

<sup>140</sup> For a classic statement of coal miners' masculinity see George Orwell, *The Road to Wigan Pier* (London, 2001 [1936]), chapter 2. For new discussion of the same theme see Jay Emery, 'Geographies of belonging in the Nottinghamshire coalfield: affect, temporality and deindustrialisation', PhD thesis, University of Leicester, 2019, esp. 101-106, 147-152, 223 - 227.

<sup>141</sup> Christine Jones interview. Rebecca Hudson similarly remarked on this occurrence. ('Lingey House Banner Project', n.p.n).

<sup>142</sup> NMM Interviews (Lingey House children) (n.d. c.2014).

<sup>143</sup> For an analysis of this phenomenon in a contemporary setting, see Lucy Grimshaw, 'Community work as women's work: the gendering of English neighbourhood partnerships', *Community Development Journal*, 46(3)

1919 that carried the portrait of Edith Cavell, a British nurse who treated casualties of both sides of the conflict in Belgium and who was executed in 1915 for helping allied soldiers to escape the occupied territories.<sup>144</sup> Cavell seems to have had no local connection but was widely regarded at the time and, given that she is a heroine who ‘humbled’ a far more recent Labour leader, is perhaps not such an unusual banner choice.<sup>145</sup> While Cavell was in public life, she was not a political leader as such and did not appear on the ‘political’ front of the Bowburn banner. That honour was reserved for Durham miners’ leader John Wilson (who also died in 1915, after a lifetime as trade unionist and as the union he had led for so long was turning against his conciliatory ethos and methods).<sup>146</sup> The school banner is thus a rarity for mining-related banners and unique in carrying the image of Ellen Wilkinson on the “political” side.<sup>147</sup> Since the school banner’s unveiling, the new Hatfield miners’ banner has been unveiled, carrying an image of German revolutionary Rosa Luxemburg, and the Association is currently seeking funding for a new banner commemorating the first miners’ union in 1825, which would carry the image of a ‘Mrs. Carr’, leader of a local rebellion.<sup>148</sup> That female

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(2011), 327-340. An image of Wingate lodge banner is available at:

<https://www.durhambannermakers.co.uk/#/replica-banners/> (Accessed: 2 July 2020).

<sup>144</sup> For an image of Edith Cavell on the banner see;

<https://twitter.com/durhamgala/status/653607307297861632> For an image of the front of the Bowburn lodge banner see; <https://www.facebook.com/RedhillsDurham/posts/the-bowburn-lodge-banner-is-unveiled-at-a-may-day-rally-in-coxhoe-on-this-day-in/2248619045203359/> (Both accessed: 9 July 2020).

<sup>145</sup> Gordon Brown, *Courage: Eight Portraits* (London, 2007).

<sup>146</sup> For Wilson see Mates, *Great Labour Unrest*, passim.

<sup>147</sup> Middlesbrough NASUWT banner carries an image of Wilkinson. See;

<https://shewhomust.livejournal.com/689014.html> (Accessed: 2 July 2020)

<sup>148</sup> Several images of the new Hatfield banner, unveiled in 2015 to commemorate thirty years since the miner’s strike and carrying an image of Dave Douglass, can be seen at: <https://www.chippenhamdesigns.co.uk/> (Accessed: 2 July 2020).

teachers took most of the lead roles in developing and delivering the topic, along with the gender balance of children on the school banner (and a woman leader, Ellen Wilkinson, pictured on the 'political' side) helped make 'Who are we, who were they?' appeal to all the children, even though only men and boys had worked down Durham's pits.

On the school banner's first outing (at the 2012) there was some traditionalist resistance when it came to the blessing ceremony. In the queue of banner groups waiting to enter Durham Cathedral on gala day, an individual from another banner association told the teachers that only miners' banners could be blessed. Determined that the children have the experience, the teachers negotiated a compromise whereby the school would be present at the ceremony but the banner itself would not be blessed. In the event, the school group, parents included, ended up at the very front of the Cathedral. As soon as the ceremony started, the Bishop immediately came across

and blessed our banner. It was fabulous. Anyway, as we went out, I went across to the Bishop and I said, "Can I just say, a very big thank you for doing that", I said, "because I know there was some pressure put on you not to bless our banner". And he said, "I'm telling you now, there was no way that your banner was not going to be blessed".<sup>149</sup>

After this, the school's presence challenged other gala traditions; for example, by singing before the dignitaries on the balcony of the Royal County hotel. Traditionally, it was only brass bands that would play at this point. At the 2013 gala the choir sang '(Is this the way to) Amarillo' for the gala dignitaries 'And they were all dancing and Jackie [Kendrick] dancing away and it's just lovely'.<sup>150</sup> Then there was an arguably even more significant precedent, that of being the first school choir allowed

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<sup>149</sup> Ibid.,

<sup>150</sup> Christine Jones interview. This moment can be viewed two minutes into this gala footage:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?time\\_continue=4&v=K8eTFoNciH4&feature=emb\\_logo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=4&v=K8eTFoNciH4&feature=emb_logo) (Accessed: 10 July 2020).

to sing on the main stage of the gala at Durham Racecourse. In an obvious sense, for the gala and what it is celebrating to continue, it is essential that the younger generations are made to feel welcome and to feel ownership of the event and its meanings. Inspired by the remade Follonsby miners' banner, Lingey House School has played its trailblazing part in demonstrating how this can happen.

## Conclusion

We conclude by considering the legacies and lessons of this trade union banner-inspired educational collaboration. The first is that in involving itself in this collaboration, the school was creating its own history, recorded here for the first time. As Catherine Ritchie pointed out; there was 'heritage for the school that Tony Benn came' to unveil the banner and a display of photos from this event took pride of place in the school hall for many months afterwards. The relationship between Benn and the children, she remarked, 'in itself was lovely and the children could say, well, they've met Tony Benn. They've been part of it'. This was particularly moving given Benn's death in March 2014; his association with the school was among his final activities in a long life of activism.<sup>151</sup> There was a sense from the teachers, too, that the children involved in the first year of the collaboration had been privileged: singing with a live brass band itself was a treat. Being the first school choir to sing from the main gala stage (and outside the County Hotel) 'is one heck of a privilege for these children [...] It's something some of them would never see or never go to or just experience'.<sup>152</sup> The children themselves also vocalised what a 'big privilege' it was to sing for Tony Benn.<sup>153</sup>

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<sup>151</sup> Jad Adams, *Tony Benn: A Biography* (London, 2011).

<sup>152</sup> Jackie Kendrick interview.

<sup>153</sup> NMM Interviews (Lingey House children) (n.d. c.2014).



The second major legacy is the number of other schools in the region who have followed Lingey Houses' lead with their own banners. As a National College school - essentially a leadership school that works with trainee headteachers - the teachers at Lingey House had an opportunity to showcase their teaching around 'Who are we, who were they?' as well as the school banner itself. Christine Jones was 'very proud of the two banners [Follonsby and Lingey House] in the hall and the work that the children had done' and this invariably provoked questions from trainees who she was showing round.<sup>154</sup> One trainee became the head teacher of another County Durham primary, Ox Close, and it soon had its own school banner to parade at the Durham gala and Beamish museum events.<sup>155</sup> Ox Close even started its own brass band and joined Lingey House on the National Mining Museum school banner project.<sup>156</sup> Since then, school banners have proliferated in County Durham, with a local company responsible for making banners for at least fifteen local schools. Of these, however, only one has a comparably 'political' female local figure akin to Ellen Wilkinson associated with it. This is the banner of Waterville primary school, North Shields, which carries text proclaiming the inspiration of 'Ethel Williams, suffragist, pacifist, doctor 1863-1948'.<sup>157</sup> Williams was Newcastle's first female general medical practitioner, and also a suffragist, pacifist, educationalist and social welfare campaigner.<sup>158</sup>

Naturally, not every experience of the first year of the educational collaboration inspired by the Follonsby banner and developed through the 'Who are we, who were they?' topic can be replicated.

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<sup>154</sup> Christine Jones interview.

<sup>155</sup> For images of Ox Close banner see <http://www.ox-close.durham.sch.uk/school-council-and-brass-at-beamish/> (Accessed: 2 July 2020).

<sup>156</sup> Hudson, 'Lingey House Banner Project'.

<sup>157</sup> Fifteen school banners are pictured on the 'Durham Bannermakers' website at <https://www.durhambannermakers.co.uk/#/053204149098/>. (Accessed: 2 July 2020)

<sup>158</sup> Nigel Todd, 'Ethel Williams: Medical and Suffrage Pioneer', *North East Labour History*, 30 (1996), 19–21.

The school, after all, only really needs one banner, and (annually) painting over the images with new ones (as happened once to the actual 1938 'red' Follonsby banner when the lodge was taken over by a more moderate leadership), is evidently not an option.<sup>159</sup> The teachers were, however, clear that 'Who are we, who were they?' would not be a 'one-hit wonder'. They have continued teaching local mining history, with the school banner acting both as a teaching device, and a link to the topic and to the school's own recent past.<sup>160</sup> The topic 'has to be revisited to give children an ownership and an identity quite of where they are. And we know that they like that. They like to embrace the past.'<sup>161</sup>

it's all part of that isn't it, in making the children value themselves and seeing what's possible, and I suppose you know, 'Who are we, who were they?', that underpinned it all. [...] You know, valuing those people who died down the pit in the mining explosion, who fought, you know, for the rights of the working-class people, like Ellen Wilkinson, and getting them to have an understanding of how important those people were.<sup>162</sup>

In these crucial respects, this educational work, in its inspiration, approach, spontaneous development and impact, is an echo of the ongoing spirit of the early History Workshop that inspired and enabled Dave Douglass to research his history.

The major lesson of 'Making Heritage Matter' is of the powerful pedagogical impact of place-based education when combined with the ethos of the 'new history'.<sup>163</sup> There are further lessons to primary school leaders about the rich and deep potential of partnerships between schools and

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<sup>159</sup> Douglass, *George Harvey*, n.p.n.

<sup>160</sup> Christine Jones interview; see Grimshaw and Mates, "Making Heritage Matter?"

<sup>161</sup> Catherine Ritchie interview.

<sup>162</sup> Christine Jones interview.

<sup>163</sup> For more discussion on the impact of this teaching on the children, see Grimshaw and Mates, "Making Heritage Matter?".

community groups such as the Association to develop inspirational educational activities and learning opportunities. This project demonstrates the importance of leadership within the school and the motivation of teachers to find space even within a pressured curriculum focused on core subjects. It endorses the importance of creating and using artefacts as links to understanding the wider community and its history, and, furthermore, suggests the potential for positive impact beyond the children and the school by increasing knowledge amongst parents, for example. Finally, this project also suggests that it is possible, despite challenges and controversies, to engage children in schools around political working-class history. A place-based, 'new history' approach developed the children's sense of ownership of the banner, of their school community and of their own history. It is too early to know what the children will remember of their learning experiences, but it is the hope of our interviewees, as it is the hope of teachers generally, that students' learning of this type has positive long-term impacts on them.<sup>164</sup> The project's participants hoped that the children drew strength from their history; that they carry into adulthood, and wherever they go, a sense of pride about where they come from, and who they are.

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<sup>164</sup> Stephenson, Stirling and Wray, "Dig where you stand", 399-412.