

Memoirs of a Lecko

At Boulby Potash Mine, Cleveland

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I started at Boulby in early 1975 when the mine was new and still being developed. I was starting a new adventure at Britain's newest deepest mine.

I arrived for my first day on a dreary cold morning to "sign on" get all the paperwork sorted out, get my dirty and clean locker, overalls etc. Laurey, the surface engineering mine clerk showed me around and introduced me to the various folks I'd need to deal with.

Next day was underground, I arrived with a kit of "dirty clothes" and went to get changed. I was getting dressed when a young bloke came up to me and said "you won't need all them clothes, it's bloody hot down there"! That was Phil Chapman, one of my colleagues to be, another electrician from another area who had been here for just a short time too!

I was put with one of the foremen and shown to the east development with John Blower, a "D" shift electrician and helped him for that shift. I'll never forget that shift, we changed a Joy cutter cable, hot??? Hotter than hades! Had to have been around 42C and there were lots of places hotter than that place!

At that time Boulby had one shaft in operation, No2, which was men, materials and minerals, it had four four foot vent tubes installed from the surface 1300hp vent fan. The No1 shaft was just an emergency egress, and was being installed with the steelwork for the two 20 tonne skips.

Within a few days I'd joined one of the four shifts which were lettered A,B,C,D, I joined "C" shift under Keith Tomlinson, one of the better foremen on the electrical staff. The senior members of the staff at that time were Dave Horner, Elec Engineer in Charge, Peter ? Elec Superintendent, A shift foreman Trevor Atkinson, B shift foreman "Wanker" Bell, "C" shift foreman Keith Tomlinson, "D" shift foreman "Scotch" John.

There was also John Littleton who was shafts/winding engines and added later, ore handling foreman.

All minerals at that time came to the No2 pit bottom where there was a small chain conveyor bunker and ten tonne skips in the shaft to haul the mineral to pit bank. The skips converted to cages for man-riding and materials too.

Work had started on the two "In seam" 1000 tonne ore bins, they were being driven by contractors in the worst conditions I've ever experienced, at least temps in the 40's C!! That was on what was then the "north side", development was being carried out south and east. Everywhere was just a short walk from pit bottom.

Work soon started on the No2 fan chamber, ready to bring the first of the two 1350hp fans underground to form a balanced ventilation system forcing return air up the No1 shaft. Followed right away with No1 fan chamber on the north side of the No1 shaft, east waht will be the north workshops.

When I started at Boulby the machines used were Joy RU21 cutters, 90hp jib motors and about 25hp pump motors, Secoma single boom drill rigs, all electric/hydraulic, same with the roof bolters. Eimco LHD's (Load haul dump vehicles) and Stamler feeder breakers. All equipment was 1100 volts. GEB's were Wallacetown A67, with associated breakers and Brush 600kva, 6.6kv to 1100 volt FLP transformers. They had Brush SF6 HV breakers on the primary side.

All conveyors were Huwoods, main trunks were TB 125's with two 125hp 1100 volt motors and auto tension devices on them.

Main mine communication was via Derby Automation tannoys via the control room (DAC), with intrinsically safe underground automatic dial telephone system.

Main power from surface via two shaft feeders at 6.6kv feeding the main underground substation, I believe it was at 1 north of east in a cut through. Eventually it was moved to just east of the main north workshops in the north fan chamber.

Workshops and stores at the beginning were due west and back of the No2 shaft up an incline just past 1 west.

"C" shift electricians consisted of Keith Tomlinson, Foreman, John Sinclair, (Womble), Fred Fletcher central and shaft electrician, John??? Can't recall his name now and myself, John Waudby. John, Womble and myself were responsible for covering what was the rest of the mine and back each other up as and when needed.

Those early days we had many "teething" problems which took up most of our time, it was a full eight hours of work, almost none stop and many times we missed our meal breaks.

As the east and south districts advanced it was obvious we would be put in charge of our own districts, but until then we just answered calls to whatever breakdowns surfaced.

On the north side, which was the hottest area, we had the fan chamber, workshops and ore bins being developed by our own crews and contractors. South, East and south east with some development to the west, were all our own staff.

Mid 1975, my foreman got us altogether for a meeting in the north workshop office to explain we were due to go into full production and that our boss wanted all but one shift electrician on days to overhaul the equipment ready! It would entail three months on days, he told us he wanted to split the time between two electricians as 6 weeks each to be fair and that one of the conditions was that the shift electrician would only do breakdowns, no maintenance period! I and John Sinclair would be the C shift leckos to carry on as usual, Fred and the other John and our foreman would stay on days for three months. Right, I volunteered for the first stint which would start in about a months time.

During that time, No1 winder would be commissioned, ropes installed, the shaft sinking winders would be dismantled, two of them in No1 shaft and one left in No2 shaft. That would leave the two permanent winders doing all the work. The two 20 tonne skips were due to be installed ready for production too and all rock would go up No1 shaft. The north side fan chamber was coming on, both 1000 tonne ore bins were complete and the south side fan chamber was ready for installation of that fan.

I can't recall what shift I was on, on my first shift alone covering the mine, I'd say it was afters, I do recall every shift was busy though! From start to knock off time I was on the go, resting E/L's on GEB's, changing cables out, etc etc.. We were also having heat related problems with the Wallacetown, (Wecol) A67 gate end boxes, (GEB's) At that time we used the "Vactac" contactors, which had large contactor coils which got very hot and couldn't dissipate the heat due to the high ambient temps, so they burnt out on a regular basis. We just didn't have the spares to change out the Vactacs for standard contactor chassis, so it was remove the old coil and replace it with a new one. Also, these GEB's had several micro chipped modules that controlled the contactor for various functions, ext sequencing, timers, E/L modules etc.. All prone to heat problems!

Then our nightmare started, only on afters, E/L trips, (earth leakage =E/L) everywhere in the pit, one after the other after the other! Went on throughout the shift all shift long! Stand need for problems like this when our workload was so high! We did eventually pin it down what was causing the trippings. It was No1 winder being commissioned! Both winders were 6.6Kv DC winders operated from a 6.6Kv transformer, switched by banks upon banks of thyristors, (electronic switches put simply), the "gating" circuits were creating line problems our GEB's were translating as earth faults on dynamic braking tests!! Eventually some high voltage compensating equipment was added, but not soon enough for we electricians underground!

At last my six weeks were nearly up and I could have a well earned day shift rest!! I was on days and Keith, my foreman approached me, "Do us a favour John, do the next six weeks as a favour to me please"! Ouch!! John Sinclair, (Womble) wasn't the best timekeeper, not his fault, he had a stomach ailment that made him eat a low protien diet, and Keith was worried he'd be called out and have to find a replacement at short notice to cover the shift. Reluctantly, I agreed, and went back into hell for another six hard weeks! It flew by and I was designated East and South East panel electrician on full production. Womble got the South panel, Fred returned to the ore handling and shafts and the other John went on regular days as winder electrician. We were down to three leckos, one foreman and now I had a labourer assigned to me to assist in running the district, we also had a second "maintenance assistant", just a fancy name for labourer, in the workshops.

Not too long after we had gone into full production than the Manager wanted to have one of his meetings with everyone in the conference room before we went on shift. Production figures are still way too low, nothing normal! He wanted to put the East district on full 24 hour production, change at the face, which would mean new shift times for us in the east side, including some overtime to compensate the face changeover.

Things went like clockwork, I don't recall how long it went on for, maybe a couple of months or so.

My time as East/South East electrician were numbered now, Fred was getting ready to migrate to South Africa, we'd had a Marrietta continuous miner, which hadn't worked out, and finally the first Jeffries Heliminer had arrived with four shuttlecars, two for the south side where the miner was going and two for a development called West Links.

I was looking forward to getting my teeth into the Heliminer, a 120HR, 80 tonnes of it and the two Joy SC10's on the south side, I was assuming too much!

It was now 1977, time really flies when your on this shift system!

Fred left on the 13th of January and I was appointed ore handling/shafts and central area electrician, I was disappointed not being able to work on the heliminer, but it was a blessing in disguise!

Now all mineral was going out No1 shaft, both fans were operating underground, ventilation was never better! and the north workshops were in use 24 hours a day to the north of the shafts with a very large underground store.

I was authorised to fill out stores requisitions and our foremen had all been pulled to dayshift for various duties, so shift electricians were left to their own devices. Being senior electrician on the shift, even though Womble started before me, I like my colleagues in the same job, were used as unpaid charge-hands. We'd been given one of the day shift spare electricians, who was a fairly new starter, he was covering the west district, Womble was covering the south and the east had been mothballed for now. So all mineral was basically mined by continuous miner, with some from the west undercut, drilled and fired down.

Conveyors were, No1 in pit bottom, a soop controlled Huwood TB125 feeding the skip pockets from the 200 Tonne surge bin at the tailend. No2 from the bottom of the two 1000 tonne ore bins to the top of the surge bin. No3 was the one that fed No2 ore bin, No4 fed No1 bin and No3 belt, No5 fed a crusher screen which were not in use, it ran along the road outside the main control room. Then 6/1,6/2, 6/3 belts inbye. All Huwood TB125's controlled from a master/slave GEB system of Wecol A69 and A67 respectively via a Huwood Mk 1a Flameproof control box.

All main HT switchgear was Brush SF6 6.6Kv freestanding switch banks.

The two fans were 3.3Kv, 1350HP fed from a "dry" transformer and switchgear in the fan chambers. Both fans were axial flow type with blades that could be set at a different pitch should the need arise.

I now understand, both fans were taken out of service and only one is used as a surface conventional vent fan today.

Heliminer was run at 3.3kv from a Belmos KFG GEB with the BM1 methane detector equipment and the two 550 volt shuttlecars run from Baldwin and Francis SCB1 GEB's.

We also had a Dosco Roadheader arrive about this time, brand spanking new, the crew drove a road from 1 west down to the West Links as an access road and broke some records in yards cut in a shift!

I started my first shift as central lecko on Friday the 14th of Jan 1977 and stayed in that job until I left for Australia in the last days of July of 1979. This was a job that required me to put in lots of overtime in covering mates who called in sick, on holiday or just absent from work.

There were loads or perks, shaft time was one of then and sump time too! Sump time paid double time due to dirty conditions and the danger of being at the bottom of the shaft. On an overtime shift, which was double time to start with, a bloke could earn nearly a weeks pay in one shift working on the sump pumps!

Just an aside here, when I first started at Boulby, there were no overtime rates, everyone was classed as "staff", so little wonder, very few would work any overtime whatsoever, experiment failed!

I was also one of a couple of other electricians who were instrumental in getting the "permit to work", personal lock system instigated. We had a lock, "scissors" and danger tags, but there were too many keys for me to feel safe on the end of a HV cable!

I brought it up at a union meeting that we needed something better for safety, so we worked it out to bring in the old NCB permit to work system most of the staff were familiar with and only a few from the steelworks had to be trained with. It worked real well with both our staff and the fitting staff too, more paperwork yes, but better safety!

During my couple of years in the central area I saw a few changes, West Link started and driven with the Dosco and two SC10 shuttlecars, the 5 conveyor road backripped as it had weighted from 15 feet to around 6 feet in height. Main subs moved to the north fan chamber, manriding moved to loading and double decking in No2 shaft.

Other perks of being central lecko was I could forgo the queue in pit bottom at the end of a shift and wangle a ride up No1 shaft.. LOL Mind you, all the late rides I had outweighed that perk. I was expected to be first down should my colleague on the shift I was relieving have a breakdown, and I was expected to stay with a breakdown until I had it running. My overtime didn't have to be sanctioned.

Talking of overtime, we'd been having problems getting our holidays cleared, so negotiations with the ETU and the company were ongoing, they reached a settlement that only ONE shift electrician could be off on any shift at any time and no more, that meant one on each shift could book hols and be allowed to be off!

Nobody thought about the central area where we specialised!!

John Blower, "D" shift central lecko and Shop Steward for us, took me to one side one shift laughing his socks off, turns out the three two other central leckos and himself all wanted the same two weeks leave! Initially, management refused, John laid their own rules down and they had to agree or trouble would brew!

That left me holding the baby for two weeks!

Time!! I was on one of my dayshifts, Friday, the first one, when I got a call from John Littleton my foreman for the area, what we going to do to cover the job??? We I said!! You mean ME don't you?? Yep YOU!

Give me a few minutes to come up with something and I'll call you back.

I called him and suggested I go home at 4-00pm, end of shift, come back at 8-00pm and cover 12 hour shifts, leaving a day shift lecko to cover the other 12 hours. That way, the day shift lecko would only be "on his own" four hours and couldn't get into too much trouble in that time. All agreed, one thing John!! This will cost you! I said!! F it he came back, I don't care just cover the job for me!

I got 24 hours double time for the first shift plus quick return plus meal payment, then all the 12 hours plus sump times quick returns etc.. Best months pay I ever had!! When he was filling in the time book at the end of the month, he never flinched at what I was reading out what I wanted paying!! I still have my old diaries from my last three years there together with all payments owed!

Only one other electrician at Boulby ever put more time in one shift than me, and that was Roger Williamson who clocked 35 hours in one shift and was in big trouble from personnel department for it. They had to pay it in several increments as it's illegal to be underground for more than so many hours without a break, they never questioned my shift!

Just a little background history, I served my apprenticeship as an electrician with the National Coal Board at Clifton and Cotgrave Collieries in Nottingham during the 1960's. I left the industry on completion of my time to work in the repair trade,

overhauling electrical rotating machinery, transformers and switchgear. I worked at the old Beeston Boiler Co in Nottingham for a short time as nightshift lecko, but the missus didn't like an empty bed night after night, so had to look for a new job!

I ended up at Marblaegis mine, Brit Gypsums, East Leake works, where I worked underground as a shift lecko for a couple of years, I left there to work at Boulby because it offered me the chance to start at a brand new mine with plenty of opportunities for advancement, should I wish.

Anyhoosley, the many hours I was at work strained my marriage to breaking point and we parted company, so I looked for a new start in life, one I'd dreamed of for many years and never achieved... AUSTRALIA!! I ended up at Renison Bells Tin mine in Tasmania, rather an out of the place site! Wet, cold etc.. so moved on and ended up in New South Wales, where I ended up working at Wongawilli Colliery near Wollongong. The under-manager at this pit had been a shift mining supervisor at Boulby and had migrated a year before me. I then chased money! and ended up in the Western coalfields of NSW at Angus Place Colliery, a fairly new pit running a longwall, stayed there until I ended up retired in the states.

Ever wonder how they get an 80 tonne machine down a three quarter of a mile deep shaft?

It's stripped to the lightest possible weight first, with a miner, around 40 tonnes. Then one skip is loaded to 20 tonne capacity, and left in pit bottom area, then the empty is raised up into the tower with heavy lifting chains mounter from the hook beneath it, the chains are then secured to the continuous miner frame and raised into the shaft with something like an Eimco to steady it at pit bank. Once in the shaft, the Eimco is removed and the load secured so as to be clear of all obstacles within the shaft and extra chains added to prevent the frame spinning. It is then lowered at around 5 feet a second, takes about 8 hours to reach pit bottom accompanied by a couple of shaft men with chain lifts and vhf radios just in case it gets hung up on anything. The winding engine is about 20 tonnes out of balance during this operation, so the whole set up is rather hazardous.

Once the bottom is level with pit bottom, chains are once again attached to the frame, and some of the securing chains are removed and the frame is then hauled out of the shaft by an Eimco while the engine driver lowers it slowly.

Mission accomplished. The machine is then rebuilt in pit bottom as the parts arrive from the surface. It is then tested under power, then when all is OK driven to the face under it's own power.

During my stay there, there were some fatalities, an "A" shift miner died tragically in a gas blow while he was driving a heliminer. The face blew out at him while he was in the driving seat and caused massive chest injuries. The district supervisor administered mouth to mouth, but the injuries were too devastating.

Outcome was, exploratory drilling way ahead of the days cutting depth to locate any hidden gas pockets.

Just a few days before Christmas, I think it was 1975, we were on nights and a few blokes on the mining side hadn't turned in for work, so the south side wasn't operating and what manpower left over was sent elsewhere. I was sat in the baitroom with my assistant and the fitter and his mate when a young bloke walked in and asked the way to the face, That was the last time we saw him alive. There was a maintenance area where the face machines were rotated for a spare every so many shifts. Both the fitters and our staff had blackbanned that area as we considered it unsafe to work in.

Some miners were moving gear out the area and relocating trailing cables that were hung from hangers from the roof. This feller and one of our own were standing at side of a Secoma drill rig when the rib side, over 30 tonnes, rolled over, caught the young bloke and killed him instantly and seriously injured our miner. He left a wife who was pregnant and due anytime.

One Saturday, I was in on overtime, my "ANDO" day, and a couple from "A" shift were in on overtime too. My job for the shift was to do a full exam of one of the trunk conveyors, so would be a full shifts work involved. One of the overtime "A" shift was a mate of mine Lee Selwood, the date was Sat 22nd April 1978. I had started the job and was about an hour into the PPM when I heard activity on the tannoy on the other side of the belt, for some reason, they'd all been switched in so everything was being relayed across the pit. I couldn't make out was being said from where I was working, so went to have a listen. I knew something serious had happened, so waited for the next person to talk. Then my foreman shouted me, "John make your way to the

control room will you?, how much more you got to do to make the job safe?" I told him it was ready to run, but I hadn't finished the PPM, he said forget it and make my way outbye now! That in itself told me there had been a fatality inbye somewhere.

I put my tools in my bag and started outbye, went through some airdoors and bumped into the shift super and the mine surveyor heading inbye, "serious?" I asked. "very" they both said. Confirmed by that, a fatality.

I arrived at the control room a few minutes later, but Bill Ions the mine clerk wouldn't tell me anything other than I was to make my way to pit bottom and ride out the mine ASAP!

There was an almost full cage that I boarded, you could hear a pin drop, everyone knew something, but for the whole four or five minutes ride nobody said a single word.

I got off and made my way to the lamproom, put my lamp on charge and rescuer on it's shelf, went up the stairs to the main foyer, for want of a better word, and at our pm office window was just about the rest of our staff from that shift. It was there that I learned Lee had died earlier in an accident. I was in a state of shock for the rest of the day.

Boulby always had two shafts available for winding men in an emergency. When I started in early 1975 the rock shaft, No1, was being fitted with the steelworks for the cage guides, no guide ropes! Guide rails and high speed guide pullies mounted on the skips. During that time it was only used in emergencies, it wanted to be too! As to gain access to the cages, one had to climb down the ladders at pit top to the minus 30 foot level and literally walk the plank and jump across!! Scary the first time one did it. If my memory serves me right, the minus 30 foot level was where the shaft doors were. I only rode down once while that set up was being used. So the memory is shaky. I don't know whether the shaft doors were left in place or not as I never went down there again. Hope that clarifies my earlier posts.

As I'm on about the rock shaft let me add some details about the winding, as it was unique to the UK but common in South Africa. We had to get exemptions from the mines Inspectorate to operate the system!

Normally, the M&Q Act requires a detaching hook on the winding rope as a last act in an overwind situation. What Boulby had was two winding ropes on each skip in the rock shaft, (no1), they had cappel's on the end and met up with a "balance" rope wound one dead lap around a wheel on top of the skip. The way it detached was via a "knife" slicing through the balance rope, it was mounted high in the tower. To prevent the detached skip from plummeting down the shaft, jack catches had to be mounted on each corner guide, so should the skip go into an overwind situation it would ride past the jackcatches, which would flip out after the skip had past, the balance rope would be sliced leaving the skip suspended in the tower.

The other shaft was normal, one rope per cage and a "King" detaching hook plus guide ropes down the shaft.

When I was working there, two other mines in the UK were using a DC 7000HP motor like Boulby's No1 shaft winder, The Wheal Jane tin mine in Cornwall, and there was one on the main drift Cablebelt at Selby complex. Both ourselves and Wheal Jane could use the NCB spare if we needed it. I presume both companies paid a fee for this service. I have no idea what CPL is doing now for a spare motor should the need arise.

We had a junior engineer at Boulby, ex NCB, straight from Uni, know-it-all and knows nothing. We led him a dogs life!

He called me up one morning in the workshops and asked me to get the schematics out for the Wecol A67 GEB's and see if I could wire a contractors belt up for auto start/stop with the trunk belts. I went through them and decided it was possible, went to the stores, got what I needed and went and got on with the job. Tested OK, no mods were done that would have violated the FLP certificate and left it running.

He called me up later and said to forget it, it's not possible to do it without modifying the wiring within the GEB. Too late I said, it's done, working and all legal. How did you do it, he said, thats for me to know and you to find out was my reply! LOL I let my boss know and the other leckos, but never told him. It was dead easy, how he missed it I'll never know.

We had a new starter join our shift, he was to work on the west side as the shift lecko, NCB trained like the majority of us, but he was prone to panicking under pressure, and believe me we had lots of that in the early days on shifts!

He got worse as time went by, he was making so many mistakes that he just couldn't handle it. I was in the control room when the assistant shift super came in laughing and deriding this poor lecko, who had completely folded under pressure, I gathered he'd broke down and was in tears because he had several breakdowns. I jumped right down his throat, this could have been any of us, but we were stronger to the point we just said 'eff it at times, he saw my point and apologised. I picked my tools up and told the mine clerk I'm off down there to help him out. I wasn't supposed to leave my area under orders from the Manager on safety grounds due to the shafts.

Not long afterwards, we were having our monthly union meeting when Dave, the engineer asked to address us all, the feller in question was off sick, nerves! He requested that he have him in the office and ask him to leave with references, his points were 100% valid, the feller was a danger to himself and everyone underground and shouldn't be working in such an environment.

We heard him out, then discussed it among ourselves, we came to an agreement to allow Dave to ask the feller to resign, luckily, he agreed and also stated it was too much for him.

Shame such an event had to happen, but some blokes can hack pressure, others can't, but for the grace etc.

I hated faults that were hard to locate, nice when there's a foreman or another lecko who can give some fresh input! When I was leading hand in Oz, I got a call from one of my leckos who was just in that same position, he said he felt like a fool but was getting nowhere, plus it was the early hours of the morning on night shift! I just said we've all been there and no doubt we'll all be there again. Together we pinpointed the problem.

I've had labourers point the problem out before, "is it that wire hanging off over there??" Lo and behold it was!

Worst faults are those damned elusive intermittent faults, boy can they make you look like a plonker! We had one at Boulby that lasted about a year before it stayed on long enough to pinpoint it! Turned out to be an earth leakage module on a conveyor thruster brake module, never forget it!! I went through the set up with a fine tooth comb and found nothing, another very good electrician did the same, Myself, that lecko and a foreman spent six hours and found nothing. Then one day shift the fault came on long enough for another electrician to at least defeat half the problem to get the belt running. That was the clue we were looking for. Took me on a Saturday two hours to change out ALL the electronic modules and damn to it!! After that we had no more problems. Like I say, if it hadn't stayed on long enough for the other lecko, we'd still have been having it until the day I left.

One of the oddest faults I tackled was a Joy cutter. It had a contactor for reversing the 90 hp cutter motor, the contactor was mechanically and electrically interlocked, so it shouldn't cause a fault and drop a dead short across two phases, well it shouldn't!! But this one did! God! you should have seen the smoke seeping out through the flamepaths of the enclosure!

When I opened the door, the mess was unbelievable. Myself and another electrician cleaned the chamber out of all the debris, cleaned the inside of carbon and totally rebuilt the contactor chamber with new components. All I can think that happened was a contact worked loose and dropped between two phases.

We had a local lad come back from Australia, he'd worked at Boulby as an electrician before me, migrated, didn't like it and returned. His name was Brian Dixon, short feller, big gob, you know the sort, his mouth gets him into lots of bother. He joined us on "C" shift when I was covering the East and South East panels.

He was supervising some miners hanging cables, roof was about 15 feet high, so they were using an Eimco LHD, he was in the bucket putting the cable on the hangers while the miners were taking up the slack. Bait time arrived so the driver raised the bucket to the roof with Brian in it and clamped it to the roof, shut the engine down and left him up there squealing like a stuffed pig. I wonder if he'll read this?

I was about to take my summer two week hols, my foreman told me Brian was covering my districts while I was off. The East side blokes were OK, I never had trouble with practical jokers, but the South East side crew were a sneaky bunch! Although they never tried anything on with me! I was doing my rounds when I landed up in the south east bait room, of course, word had got

around I was going on holiday, so the blokes wanted to know who was covering for me, so I told them, Brian Dixon! Their faces lit up, so mischief was afoot!!

I told Brian to behave himself or they would do all sorts of nasty things to him, like cut his pants down to shorts or worse. "Take better men than them to get me" he said! Course, I told the blokes to shouts and whistles, so it looked like Brian was in for a tough time!

Hols over, first shift back at work, "so what happened to Brian" I asked my labourer, "Nothing he said, not until the last shift!" Turns out, they gave him dirty looks whenever he went around the south east side, he'd come in shorts so as to foil that endeavour, so they got him in pit bottom waiting for a ride out on the last shift. They grabbed hold of him and spray painted a pair of black legs on him! Apparently, it took him ages to get the paint off his legs in the showers..

Brian was having a shower one shift, they waited until he was washing his face, then one of the blokes snook up on him with a handful of hand-cleaner, that soft soap, slapped it on his rump. Brian jumped, shot out the shower cubicle and ran down the showers with the same bloke chasing him, everyone was shouting obscenities I daren't write!! I'll leave those to your imaginations, but Brian was screaming as he was running away.