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News

MINERS' LIVES REMEMBERED

A PUBLIC art event is being held in memory of the men and boys who lost their Denaby and Cadeby Main collieries from 1868-1973.

The Out of Darkness Light Project has been organised by 21-year-old student Rache a 1984 'strike baby' of Cadeby Main who wants to keep the memory of coal mining alive. The initiative has received high profile support from famous people who became involved supporting the miners, including singer Billy Bragg and trade union leader Rodney Bickerstaffe.

Don Valley MP Caroline Flint and former Doncaster Deputy Mayor Aiden Rave are also supporting the project.

Rachel has spent the last 10 months working on the project which she said had also involved about looking into her own family history.

"I feel very proud knowing that I was a 1984 strike baby," she said. "I'm really proud of my family and my community and I hope this project is seen as a fitting tribute towards our community's deep rooted mining history."

"I decided to go back to my roots, to create a fitting memorial tribute to my own cultural heritage.

"In my eyes, the year I spent working on this project, for free, reflects the unpaid strike of 1984-85."

The event involves a large scale light sculpture, a river boat cruise and the launch of a campaign, which asks: "Why should all evidence of mining be erased off the map?"

The light sculpture will be situated on Cadeby Main Colliery's former slagheap and is in memory of all the men and boys who died whilst working at the sister pits Denaby and Cadeby Main.

The light sculpture will consist of 410 lights with each light representing one of the miners who died at work from 1868-1973.

The project is currently looking towards individuals and businesses to sponsor a light memorial light sculpture.

The first light has been sponsored by Billy Bragg while other sponsors include Rodney Bickerstaffe and Jeff Martin, organiser of the Leftfield at Glastonbury.

All sponsors will be invited on a river boat cruise to view the light sculpture on Monday 22)

The river boat will display original artworks by five contemporary artists and all artworks will be based around the subject matter of coal mining.

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The main light sculpture will be situated on the Cadeby Main slagheap and the boat will depart from Sprotbrough Flash to view the site of Cadeby Main Colliery and the light sculpture.
Re-mapping the Cultural Terrain Campaign will also be launched as part of the memorial event.
The campaign intends to petition for Ordnance Survey Maps to recognise how coal mining has shaped the landscape of South Yorkshire and beyond.
Billy Bragg is hoping to raise the profile of the campaign by getting all MPs from mining constituencies to sign an Early Day Motion in the House of Commons.

18 May 2006

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