**Sam Purdie interview extract 3 (6.35 min):**

*In this part Sam remembers the end of the village. He describes the move from Glenbuck miners’ rows to Muirkirk council houses in 1954 and the better amenities of the new housing, including electricity and gas. He also reflects on the loss of community and what it felt like to him to leave Glenbuck.*

INSERT THIRD AUDIO CLIP

**Sam Purdie interview clip 3 transcription**

Glenbuck was almost at the *end* of that process. There were very few miners’ rows left in Ayrshire by that time so Glenbuck was one of the last places.

**AM:** When was that, Sam, just so we have a date?

**SP:** This is 1954.

**AM:** ’54 [1954], yep.

**SP:** And by that time, er, they had decreed that these houses were insanitary so the hook that they hung the repopulation of Muirkirk with the Glenbuck people was ‘insanitary conditions’, which was absolutely true! So, in 1954, gradually, house by house and family by family, we left. The school had closed in ’51 [1951]. We used the buses to school in Muirkirk, the Primaries.

**AM:** Yep.

**SP:** The kirk…er, closed in ’53 [1953], just before the, before the crash. So, gradually, house by house, family by family we all moved away. [pause]

**AM:** And where did people move to?

**SP:** Well, in Muirkirk, the Muirkirk had had, *there* a complete rejig of, of rows because there had been huge areas of Muirkirk that were miners’ rows! Nothing, nothing else! One, they didn’t all disappear but most of the miners’ rows went and they built these houses on greenfield site, to the west of the village and the *last*, almost the last houses to be built were, er, a street of *timber* houses that had been gifted by Norway. You remember Norway was gifting a lot of timber houses, to Britain at that time, in recognition of our contribution in the war. So, the Glenbuck people went into these timber houses in 1954 and it was called Hareshaw Crescent because the name of the *hill* in Glenbuck is Hareshaw.

**AM:** Hareshaw. How do you spell that, Sam?

**SP:** H-A-R-E-shaw.

**AM:** Shaw.

**SP:** And, and, and the, it was quite, it was, it was, it was quite a transition for people to make first of all…they’d water in the house! *Baths!* [pause] The other big thing was, there was an *upstairs*! Now, they’d always lived on the flat. Their, Hareshaw Crescent was built as far away to the left as the Muirkirk people could get it! Get them away there! And it was quite high up on the edge o’ the moor. First day there was a high wind, here are these people, who’d been in the habit of living on the ground – this house was making *noises*! Shaking! And everybody’s out in the street because they thought these houses were going to blow away! The other excitement was, because these houses had water, they had a back boiler, put behind the fire, to heat the water and this back boiler started to rumble and everybody thought the place was going to blow up! [both laughing]

**AM:** Did, did they have electricity as well there?

**SP:** Oh, of course!

**AM:** Yeah.

**SP:** And, and gas. Muirkirk had one of the first, if not *the* first (there’s a kind of dispute), the first gasworks in the world! Because a few miles away is Murdoch, the man who invented gas from coal. Muirkirk gasworks was the earliest.

**AM:** And did, did you move yourself, then…

**SP:** Oh yes.

**AM:** …from Glenbuck?

**SP:** Yeah.

**AM:** What, what was your feeling about moving from Glenbuck to, to…

**SP:** Well, I don’t think I’ve ever quite got over it, to be honest. I mean, that was, we got torn out by the roots! [pause] Although, it’s formative years, you know, until eight, nine, ten, twelve – it’s all we ever knew!

**SP:** We knew where the fish could be got, we knew where the rabbits could be got. We knew what doors to knock on. It was a complete community! If I went to the Glenbuck dam and caught several trout, I’d knock on a pensioner’s door and say I’ve got too many or, if I’d one or two rabbits because there were quite a lot of them, I’d put a rabbit into somebody. Clean it on the hill and hand it in clean! That’s what you did.

**AM:** Hmm.

**SP:** If there was any illness in the village, people rallied round. [pause] Because there were a lot of old miners who didn’t have good health one way or another. Mining is not the healthiest occupation.

**AM:** Were there miners with breathing difficulties then?

**SP:** Oh, absolutely! Both, er, both silicosis and pneumonoconiosis. Now, the mine drivers, stone mine drivers, they, they tended to get silicosis. [sighs] It was a terrible disease and then, er, the coalminers got pneumonoconiosis because ventilation was practically non-existent!

**AM:** Do you remember any of the older miners in the village…?

**SP:** Oh yeah!

**AM:** As you were growing up?

**SP:** Oh yeah, they were all, they were all, the interesting thing was, the other wee community thing that we got involved in, during the war, Dig for Victory! So, there was this *natural* terrace above the football park where everybody had a wee plot in that. Dug their own stuff, which is just as well although I have to say, that in Glenbuck because we were in the village we kept hens. One or two people kept hens. We had eggs, we had rabbit, we had trout, we had our own vegetables. It wasn’t so bad for us during the war as it was for people in a city, for instance. And, er, yeah, we, a lot of the old characters, there was, the man that lived next door to us was the last winding engineman in Grasshill Pit. He had a *lodger* who was the *last* winding engineman in the *Macdonald* Pit!

**AM:** Hmm.

**SP:** So, there were these kind, all of these guys, you know, to them the pit had only closed yesterday! They’d spent their lives since boys ‘cause you’ll remember they left school at twelve and went to work in the pit.

**AM:** Yep.

**SP:** My grandfather left school at *eleven* and went to work in the pit.

**AM:** Interesting. How did, um, how did the women in the community take the move from Glenbuck to Muirkirk?

**SP:** Oh, they were delighted! They had, all these facilities.