

My name is Alfie Price, age 52. I live in Trelevis, mid Glamorgan, S. Wales.

I was born December 1932. My parents were both Welsh, my father was a fluent speaker of the Welsh language, born 1878, he was 20 years older than my mother. He left school at the age of 11 years to work at the local colliery in the village of Deri (the Darren Pit).

My mother lived at Tonypandy, left school at the age of 13 years to work in 'service' in the town of Weston Super Mare as a pastry cook.

Part of the system to eradicate the Welsh language was the Welsh knot, to which my father fell victim at school. Any pupil caught speaking Welsh was given a knot which was passed from pupil to pupil. At the end of the school day the child who possessed it would face detention or caning.

I often think that although my parents had a very hard but still happy life with better education they would have had a more enjoyable and fuller life. Both were quite articulate, my father being able to switch from Welsh to English, writing or speaking, quite easily.

I left school at the age of 14 years and went straight to the local colliery, "Taff Merthyr". My school days were happy enough; I was a fairly good pupil, learning to adapt to school work and discipline quite easily. Sat my 11 plus, passing and winning a scholarship on the local grammar school "Lewis School Programme". My father had to finish work when I was 14, with two younger sisters still at school, I had to leave school to help support our family.

After leaving school, I attended night school for 2 years. The N.C.B. then figured in my education, but all the education received was work oriented and to do with making me a better workman for the benefit of the N.C.B.

Looking back in retrospect I missed a golden opportunity to further my education by leaving school at the age of 14 years.

I am a married man, my wife is a product of Bargoid Grammar School, and runs the local newsagent's shop. We have 4 children, 1 daughter and 3 sons. Our daughter is aged 27, educated Lewis Girls' School, Pengam and Nottingham University, is now a teacher at a local school.

Oldest son, aged 24, electrical engineer at a local colliery, still studying at Polytechnic of Wales; educated Lewis School, Pengam.

Other two sons educated at Afon Taff Comprehensive School, not doing so well as other children; personally think that comprehensive school education is inferior to old fashioned grammar school.

What I believe is that if children spend more time at schooling, that is leaving school at a higher age, they will be able to express themselves in a more articulate way, widen their outlook on the world and hopefully help to make it a better world to live in, environment-wise and socially. Not forgetting that further education is a bonus for the arts: music, painting, sculpture, ballet, etc. all reaping a benefit.

I realise that some of the worst tyrants of the world have been "well educated" but still, I think that if they had received a more social oriented type of education they could well have turned out to be different personalities and channelled their motivation or power in a different way.

It would be foolish to assume that education finishes with formal schooling, university or college training, for we continue to learn at all times afterwards.

Having been educated formally it is what we do with our education that is the most important aspect of all. Whether we use it to further our work, profession, leisure or hobbies lies within ourselves.