



INTERNATIONAL BRIGADE MEMORIAL TRUST

Patrons Ken Livingstone
Prof. Paul Preston

Charity no. 1094928

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INTERNATIONAL BRIGADE MEMORIAL TRUST
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Co-opted Members: Gerry Abrahams, Jim Jump, Dolores Long

Hello again, and welcome to our fourth newsletter. I'm delighted to tell you that we now have charitable status, with all the advantages I have mentioned before. Jack has already written to various trade unions asking for their financial support, and we hope that this new initiative will enable us to extend our work.

Spring will be busy. Following Bob Doyle's recently published book (more inside), George Wheeler's book launch is on 24 February, there is a re-dedication of the IB memorial at Transport House on 5 March followed by a celebration of Jack's 90th birthday, and on 8 March, we have the Len Crome Memorial Lecture (see back page) at which we also hope to celebrate Jack's birthday.

Looking ahead: The speaker at 19 July meeting in Jubilee Gardens will be the Rt Hon Chris Smith MP, who has a keen interest in the International Brigade, and has campaigned for some time for a memorial in Islington, I'm delighted he has accepted our invitation. At a recent meeting re the Jubilee Gardens development, Pauline and I were reassured that the memorial would be preserved in its present position and that our Patron, the Mayor of London, continues to keep our interests before the planning committee.

Thanks again to Gerry for editing the newsletter, and to Jim for the new masthead and redesign. It's good they were co-opted onto the committee at the AGM, as was Dolores Long, daughter of Sam Wild. All good wishes, Salud,
Marlene

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Production Coordinator: Jim Jump



Left to right: Mrs Margerete Bates, Ronald Bates, Mrs Eileen Ellis (Wally Tapsell's daughter) and Jack Jones.

Printworkers honoured

On 5 November 2002, the GPMU print union honoured four printworkers who gave their lives fighting fascism in Spain by dedicating a statue and memorial terrace garden to them at the union's Quorn Grange Centre in Leicester.

General secretary Tony Dubbins paid tribute to the men: journalist Ralph Fox who died at Cordoba on 28 December 1936, machine minder George Hardy who was killed by sniper fire on 31 March 1938, Leslie Maughan, a readers assistant killed by a sniper at Teruel on 14 January 1938, and journalist Walter Tapsell who was killed in action on 31 March 1938.

One of the invited guests, IB veteran Jack Jones, paid tribute to the men. The President of the IBMT spoke of how the four were typical of the International Brigaders of many countries who gave their support in the hour of need.

They went to support the Spanish people, based on ideas of internationalism and freedom that have been carried forward to persuade people to defend freedoms elsewhere he said.

It is not only right to remember these people, it is also about education. We live in strange times, with le Pen, Fortuyn and the BNP demonstrating fascism is not dead. We must be vigilant in fighting fascism and racism everyday.



Councillor Ray Davies unveils the plaque at Caerphilly Visitors' Centre.

Four Welshmen remembered

Four brave Welsh International Brigaders were remembered when a commemorative plaque was unveiled at Caerphilly Visitors Centre in Wales.

Jack Roberts, Leo Price, Jim Brewer and Lance Rogers were the backbone of their community prior to going to Spain in the 1930s and participated in hunger marches and strikes, demonstrating solidarity with their fellow workers. In Spain, they fought at Jarama, Brunete, the Ebro and at all the major battles.

These four brave Welshmen stood tall amongst their contemporaries, and without people like Jack Roberts, Leo Price, Jim Brewer and Lance Rogers, we would not be enjoying the freedom we have today, said Councillor Ray Davies.

Brief notes

Book exchange

In the last issue I asked if anyone would be willing to run a Book Exchange for us. I'm delighted that CHRISTOPHER HALL has volunteered. If you have any books relating to the Spanish Civil War, biographies, pamphlets, duplicates or books you no longer have space or use for, please let Christopher have a list.

In the same way, if you are looking for books, let him know.

His address is: 286, Brantingham Road, Chorlton, Manchester, M21 0QU (e-mail: christoff_hall@yahoo.com), or send the details to me (address on front page) and I'll pass them on.

To start off, student Amy Carson of Kingsley Hall, The Cross, Kingsley, Cheshire, WA6 8EX is looking for SPANISH LANGUAGE books or documents relating to the International Brigades. Can anyone help?

There is, of course, BOB DOYLE's book *Memorias de un Rebelde sin Pausa* which was recently published in Spanish (details in this issue).



In 1975 Harrap published JR JUMP's *La Ofensiva del Ebro*, a reader for school students of Spanish. A Swedish edition was also later published.

Gaelic readers might like to know that EUGENE DOWNING's account of his time in Spain, *La Nina Bonita*, agus *An Roisin Dubh*, first published in 1986, is still available from The Gaelic League, 6, Harcourt Street, Dublin 2.

Video exchange

Jack Oldham, 5 Arbury Avenue, Cheadleheath, Stockport, SK3 0QA would like copies of videos relating to the Spanish Civil War, in particular *Return to the Battlefields* with Sam Wild, and Bob Doyle's TV documentary. Does anyone have a list of videos, or know where Jack could find them?

Thanks

to Manuel and Juan Moreno for putting the relevant information and photos received from Mr & Mrs Painter onto a disk for our archives.

News from abroad

● Ulrich Kolbe from Germany reminds us of the truly International aspect of the Brigades. A photo of German-American volunteer FRED SCHOFS was discovered by his widow in Harry Fisher's book *Comrades* where he was an unknown fighter. Last Mayday Frau Schofs presented her husband's documents and memorabilia to the US archives as Fred had served in the Lincolns rather than the Thaelmanns and was unknown in Germany as a Brigader.

● Vernet d'Ariege Internment Camp (France) was used to intern many undesirable foreigners, anti-fascist intellectuals, members of the International Brigades from September 1939 when World War Two was declared. The appalling conditions are described by former internee Arthur Koestler's book *The Dregs of the Earth*. From 1942 Jews arrested in the area transited via Vernet prior to deportation to Auschwitz. In June 1944 the last 400 internees were evacuated, and deported to Dachau. In total, nearly 40,000 people (mainly men but some women and children too) of 58 nationalities were interned in this camp by the French authorities. The Association of former Vernet Camp Internees would like to hear from anyone who is a survivor, or who had relatives in the camp. Their web site is: [www.ccpayserdun.fr/saverdun/pages/vernet/accueil.htm] if you have any information or would like to find out more.

65th anniversary of the Ebro Battle: 4/5 July 2003

Excerpts from most recent correspondence...

Madrid, 5 February 2003

Dear friends and comrades,
The town Council of Corbera d'Ebre has given us the main information on the celebration of the Festival of the Peoples of the World for Peace and Solidarity 65th Anniversary of the Ebro Battle, 4 and 5 July.

Corbera is a tiny village with no hotels, so we have to be accommodated in nearby villages, in not luxurious hotels. All of them have been

booked, but we have to confirm our booking, specially for the brigaders and their companions (those who share the room with them).

The brigaders and one companion each are paid for: transfer airport-Barcelona-Corbera-Barcelona-airport/railway station, hotel room and full board expenses in Barcelona (night Friday 3rd) and in Corbera area (nights 4th and 5th) and, in the cases needed, journey expenses.

For the relatives and friends who want to travel, it is also possible to book rooms in the same hotels and on the same dates. There are one, two, three and four-bedded rooms.

The prices are: 16 euros per person/day, room only, and from 35 to 55 euros per person/day, full board. (Prices refer only to hotels near Corbera. We do not have the price of the hotel in Barcelona, which we think is going to be more expensive).

Please, we need to know before 15 February: Name, address, phone number, etc. of each brigader and companion and the kind of room they want; name, address, phone number, etc. of the friends and relatives, and the kind of room they want.

If anyone wants to stay longer, it is understood that it will be at their own expense, but it is advisable to communicate it in advance, to book the dates required beforehand.

We are looking forward to seeing you again and all together celebrate this anniversary as a Festival of the Peoples of the World for Peace and Solidarity.

Waiting for your news. Our best regards. Salud! Down with war!

*Ana P rez & Juan Carlos Poy n
Presidenta & Secretario*

Full details of provisional programme are available from Marlene, but the itinerary begins with an overnight stay in Barcelona on 3 July, transferring to Corbera d'Ebre on 4 July and visits to Miravet (crossing of the Ebro) and Sierra de Pndols, followed by the Festival of the Peoples of the World and celebration of the 65th Anniversary of the Ebro Battle and homage to the International Brigaders on Saturday 5 July, with the transfer to Barcelona for the return journey on 6 July.)

NOTE: The date for letting the Amigos know numbers etc has passed. If you have not already been in touch about the Festival, please contact the Amigos immediately if you are interested in going to the Ebro celebration.

Salud,
Marlene

President's message



Since our AGM in Manchester, I have written to all the trade unions affiliated to the TUC inviting financial support for our work in monitoring and maintaining the numerous memorials (now 63 in number) to those of our comrades who made the supreme sacrifice in the Spanish war. It is indeed one of our main responsibilities to treasure the memory of our fallen comrades in this way.

The support of trade unions was recently highlighted by the unveiling of the splendid memorial in honour of the much revered four members of the GPMU who were killed in Spain. Another vital occasion will be the splendid tribute which will be paid to the members of the Transport and General Workers' Union who fought in Spain, including many who made the supreme sacrifice. The ceremony will take place at Transport House in London (T & G headquarters) and will be attended by a number of IB veterans and family members,

also the committee of the Trust.

The number of us still alive who fought in Spain are relatively few and the work of the Trust to keep moving the spirit and purpose of that for which we fought is very much welcomed, not least the educational efforts, in this respect, become a vital part of our responsibilities. Peter Crome's support of the annual lectures is a great help. The next one will be on Saturday 8 March. I hope it will be fully supported.

Not least, I look forward to a really successful memorial meeting on 19 July when Chris Smith, one of the most prominent Members of Parliament, will be speaking. Also our AGM in Glasgow which has aroused great interest in Scotland and the Northern areas – Keep right on!

Salud,

Jack Jones

Obituaries

Jud Coleman



We were saddened to learn of the death of Jud Coleman in July, and regret that there was no obituary in the last newsletter.

At 20 years old, Jud first tried to get into Spain with two colleagues from the YCL in October, 1936, but they were turned back because they didn't have the correct papers. A second attempt a month later,

as part of the first official group from Manchester was successful however, and he saw action at Cordoba, Las Rosas, Jarama and Brunete, many of the friends he had gone out with were killed, and Jud was wounded, but remained in Spain until the Brigades were repatriated in October, 1938.

● I also had a phone call from a Mr. Westlake about a colleague of his in the Long Range Desert Group Association, MICHAEL BRENNAN, who said he had also fought with the International Brigade. Mr. Brennan died in Worthing in December.

● I was also sorry to learn that MIKE COHEN had died last year. He was the Morning Star photographer and a familiar sight at our meetings for many years, and his published photographs kept the memory of the International Brigades in the public mind.

Memorials

Report from Wales

Thanks to Arnold Owen of Blackmill, Bridgend, for submitting a list of other memorials in Wales:

- Ammonford — Old Town Hall 1998 (Two more names need to be added.)
- Burry Port, West Wales — Memorial Hall, 1997
- Llanelli — Outside the Plaid Cymru Office 1998
- Merthyr — Council Offices 1996
- Neath — Memorial Stone in Victoria Gardens 1996
- Neath — Brass Plaque in Town Hall
- Porthcawl — The Paul Robson Room in the Sea Front Pavilion 1999
- Rhondda Valleys — Maerdy Community Woodland Project — Plaque on Bridge.

Arnold Owen has been instrumental in getting several of these memorials in place and he also has a large exhibition about the Spanish Civil War which he has taken to events all over Wales, it has been seen in Ireland and London too — a Trust member working tirelessly to keep the memory and spirit of those brave Brigaders alive.

NOTE: There are now 63 memorials in Britain and Ireland, with many more at planning stage.

Can you help?



Irish IBer Eugene Downing asks if anyone recognises the woman in the middle of the picture? Featured left to right are Matthew O'Neill, Ellis Ryan (sister of Frank Ryan), the lady whose identity is missing, Brendan Byrne (Eugene's nephew) and Peter O'Connor. Contact Eugene at 'Whitethorn', Valleymount, Co Wicklow, Eire.

● Keith Pettitt wants to know the exact location of the platform in Barcelona where La Pasionaria made her famous farewell speech to the International Brigades [keithpettitt@hotmail.com].

● George McCabe asks: Any record of Britons going to fight Fascism in any other countries, e.g. Italy? If not, why were they particularly drawn to Spain? (Informed opinion suggests that most fought fascism in their own countries, but volunteers were drawn to Spain because it was an anti-fascist war, and it was the first time that they thought they could make a difference.)

● Jim Ainslie, 5 Egehill Rd., Doncaster, DN2 5QT, wonders if there is an IB connection to a military medal from World War 1 which he found as a medalion in a flea market in Malaga. It was awarded to JAMES R. GREEN of the Hackney Rifles. Jim also wants to know if anyone remembers coalminer JAMES WOOD, from Bentley, near Doncaster, born about 1920 and believed to be a Brigader.

● John Mehta, Thwaites House, Chop Gate, Cleveland, TS9 7JH wants any news or reference about his mother's first husband, GILBERT TAYLOR who went to Spain in October '37 and was reported missing in the Aragon Retreat, March '38. Letters recently recovered indicate that he was with the Recruit Company (Tarazona), worked as assistant to Political Commissar Johnny Powers and was much involved with Wall Newspapers. He went to Teruel in Feb '38, was hospitalised in Benicasim and left there on 13 March to rejoin the Brigade. That was his last communication.

● Dr. Mike Sheaff, Dept. of Sociology, University of Plymouth, Drake Circus, Plymouth PL4 8AA (tel 01752 233289) wants to know more about ALEX

HALL, listed in the Roll of Honour in William Rust's book Britons in Spain, who died at the Ebro. Were any other Brigaders from Plymouth? Are any of Alex Hall's relations members of the Trust?

● Derek O Driscoll, Flat 11, Windsor Court, 156, Woodcote Road, Wallington, Surrey, SM6 0PA wants to research details of Brigaders from Battersea/Wandsworth and would like to start a campaign for a memorial to them. Richard has made the following list: George Wheeler, George Baker, James Broomfield, Ralph Fox, Herbert Sines, Frank Brooks, John Loder, John Lye, Clive Branson, Alexander Watts, Robert Taylor, plus Richard White, James Cockburn, Richard Cullen, Geoffrey Marshall, from Balham & Putney. Some are already on other memorials, but if you know of others, or wish to be involved in the campaign, please get in touch with Derek.

● Bob Cuff's PhD focuses on the representations of the British/Spanish countryside in prose and poetry that evolved from those who went to fight in the Spanish Civil War. He would like to contact poets, writers, artists, photographers and of course IBers themselves [robert.cuff@strath.ac.uk].

● Norah Daniels, joe.daniels@sympatico.ca, wants to know more about her late uncle JOHN CONOLLY of Glasgow, member of YCL who joined the Brigades at Albacete in December 1936 and was killed at Jarama in February 1937.

● Karl Aneurin Rogers wants to know more about his uncle's involvement in the Spanish Civil War. His uncle, Lance Rogers was from Cefn Coed near Merthyr Tydfil in South Wales, and had the film Voices from a Mountain dedicated to him by David Leach.

Irishmen and the Spanish Civil War

On Thursday 14 November, a meeting was held in Trinity College Dublin to analyse Irishmen's role on both sides of the Spanish Civil War.

As Secretary of the main debating union of the College, the University Philosophical Society, it is my task to provide meetings that are controversial and provocative. Rarely have the students of Trinity had the pleasure to witness a more passionate debate.

Invited to speak as distinguished guests of the Society were Professor Robert Stradling of the University of Wales, author of Irishmen and the Spanish Civil War, and Dr. Fearghal McGarry of Queen's University Belfast, who has also written extensively on the subject. Also present were family and friends of Irish International brigaders.

Professor Stradling was adamant in his belief that revisionist history had corrupted the worthy motives that led to Irishmen fighting on the side of Franco. He also condemned the anarchic Republic and maintained, despite heated interjection from the floor, that O'Duffy's XV Bandera of Franco's Foreign Legion fought to protect essential rights, not destroy them.

Dr. McGarry went on to outline how he saw O'Duffy's brigade as a Catholic misadventure rather than a fascist alliance with Franco. Manus O'Riordan then spoke of the necessity to guard a Republic rather than destroy it and he saw the Irishmen who fought for the Republic as valiantly resisting an attack by a conservative alliance bent on preserving power by whatever means necessary.

The evening closed with student contributions. A constant theme was wonder at the courage despite terrible losses of the Irish in the International Brigades. Their ideological conviction was seen as a remarkable contrast to an Ireland where politics is based on shades of indifference.

**Edward Burke,
Secretary,
Philosophical Society
Trinity College Dublin**

An appreciation

Henri Rol-Tanguy Brigadista and liberator of Paris

Died in Paris on 8 September 2002



In October 1988, I accompanied my father, Irish Ebro veteran Michael O Riordan, on his first return to Barcelona after 50 years. We travelled with veterans of the British Battalion for the unveiling of the first International Brigade Monument to be erected in post-Franco Spain. A dignified Rol-Tanguy, whom my father told me had been the leader of the Paris Resistance, spoke on behalf of the European veterans.

Henri Tanguy was born on 12 June 1908 in the Breton town of

Morlaix, the son of a merchant seaman and a washerwoman. Leaving school at 13, having been forbidden to join his father at sea, he moved to Paris with his mother and started work as a Renault carworker at 15. He joined the Communist Party and became Paris Secretary of the Metal Workers Union.

In 1937 Tanguy volunteered to fight in defence of the Spanish Republic. With his organisational talents, he rose rapidly through the ranks of the International Brigades, becoming commissar of the 14th Brigade, la Marseillaise. Fighting on the Ebro front in 1938 he was wounded in the chest and saw the death of his very close friend and comrade Theo Rol, whose name he adopted as his own *nomme-de-guerre* in the French Resistance.

In 1939 he married Cecila Le Bihan, whose militant Communist father would perish in a Nazi deportation camp. At the outbreak of WW2 Tanguy was called up to the French army and fought as a second lieutenant before

being demobilised in August 1940. Both he and his wife went underground in the Resistance movement of occupied Paris, organising sabotage units and armed groups. By 1942 he had become leader of the Communist Resistance in the capital and by June 1944 head of all the Unified Resistance groups in the city.

Following the Allied invasion of Normandy it had been the original intention of General (later US President) Eisenhower to by-pass Paris. Rol-Tanguy was instrumental in persuading General Charles de Gaulle's emissaries that he would stage an uprising against the occupying German forces, which led to Eisenhower's allowing Free French regular troops under General Leclerc to be dispatched to Paris to assist. Rol-Tanguy brought about strikes by railworkers, police and the post office, becoming an underground leader in every sense as he installed himself in headquarters underneath Place Denfert-Rochereau. Without his initiative, General Charles de Gaulle would never have been able to march triumphantly down the Champs Elyse on 26 August 1944. Rol-Tanguy was later made a Companion of the Liberation.

He became a Commandant in the regular army and fought through to the surrender of Germany, but with the emergence of the Cold War, he was sidelined with other officers of Communist background into administrative duties in what became known as the unit of the isolated. He finally retired from the army in 1962. In an obituary for Rol Tanguy in *The Independent*, Douglas Johnson gave a revealing account of an event 22 years later, in 1984, at a meeting held to commemorate and discuss the history of that Liberation. No one seemed to know what Rol-Tanguy looked like until he delivered a short, modest speech. A national hero was unknown.

It was not until 1994, 50 years after the Liberation of Paris, that Rol-Tanguy was awarded the Grand Cross of the Legion d'Honneur. Following his death, the French President Jacques Chirac hailed his leadership of the Paris uprising as the act of a great strategist who had defended freedom and the French Republic. As a premature anti-fascist he has previously fought to do no less for the Spanish Republic. His British and Irish fellow-brigadistas and their families are proud to have stood shoulder-to-shoulder with one whom the *Guardian* obituary rightly acknowledged to have been one of the last remaining authentic giants of the French Resistance.

MANUS O'RIORDAN

Jews in the International Brigade

Martin Sugarman called for an acknowledgement of the massive contribution of Jews in the IB. The widows of two Jewish IBers give their opinion in the following excerpts:

We should know more about the contribution of both Jews and Blacks. This is the first time in history that American blacks were treated with dignity and given high ranking positions in the army. The contribution of Jews is important because they made up a huge percentage of the volunteers, far higher than their percentage of the population. It is not only because Jews are traditionally supportive of socialist causes in great number, but because as my late husband Peter Fry said, it (Spanish Civil War) was the very first place where we felt we could fight back at Hitler.

Peter said that he volunteered as a socialist when he saw in the *New York Times* that children being killed in the very first Blitzkrieg. Were it not for the non-intervention policy of the Western democracies, we might well have stopped Hitler before the Second World War. He realised that the prime motivation of all the volunteers was to fight fascism but for Jews there was an added dimension and I think that should be recorded and recognised.

THELMA FRY

My view, as the non-Jewish wife of David Crook, a Communist Jew who fought in the International Brigade in Spain, is that the fact that such a relatively high proportion of Brigaders were Jews is a significant subject to deal with, but only if it throws light on real issues:

What sort of Jews volunteered to fight fascism in Spain? Were there any religious

Jews? Were there any kosher fighters?

Why did they volunteer? Did it have anything to do with being Jewish? Did a perception of anti-Semitism in their own lives politicise them, or the rise of fascism in Germany and Hitler's persecution of the Jews? How many were Communists before they joined the IB?

David thought of himself as a communist rather than a Jew, but he was proud of the contribution made by Jews to Western civilisation. He read stories from the Old Testament to his young sons so that they would know something of the history of the Jewish people and take pride in this half of their heritage. After seeing the documentary *Shoah* David felt it important to identify himself ethnically with the Jewish people. His attitude to Israel, however, was mixed. He strongly opposed Israeli violence against the Palestinian people and the building of Israeli settlements on the West Bank.

ISABEL CROOK

Book reviews



Bob Doyle (third from left) at the launch of his book in Madrid in December.

MEMORIAS DE UN REBELDE SIN PAUSA MEMOIRS OF A REBEL WITHOUT PAUSE

by Bob Doyle

Published by the Madrid Association of Friends of the International Brigades

On Tuesday 10 December, Bob Doyle's long-awaited memoirs were launched in Madrid's prestigious Círculo de Bellas Artes in the presence of Bob himself, family and friends from England, Scotland and Ireland, Ana Perez, president of the Amigos Association, translator Severiano Montero, and the renowned Spanish poet, Manuel Rivas.

It is the first time the Association has been involved in the publishing of memoirs said Ana Perez. It is so important to retain memories after 40 years of dictatorship and another 20 years of continued silence, but now society realises it has to know.

Bob's book is an account of his childhood in a volatile inner city Dublin in the 1920s, and his volunteering for the International Brigades in support of the democratically-elected Republican government. After capture in 1938, Bob spent 11 months in S Pedro de Cardenas, near Burgos. After his release he served in Britain's merchant navy during WW2.

He has campaigned for many years after the war in Spain for the restoration of war graves for those who fell in Spain, and for memorials to honour those who died there.

Bob, and Lola his wife, travelled to Spain during the dictatorship and they brought pamphlets and fought for the rights of volunteers to be recognised by the Government said Ana Perez.

We thank him for that effort. Now there is a plaque in the cemetery at Morata. Bob Doyle has never stopped fighting and if there were more people like him, the world would be a better place.

Poet Manuel Rivas spoke lyrically about the book, likening the early part to Angela's

Ashes because of its personal anecdotes.

You can see the life of the man in this book but it does not exclude the others who fought because it tells their stories too he explained. It shows the whole picture.

Bob has acknowledged the hard work of his friends Harry Owens and Maria McLaughlin who struggled to find a publisher in Britain or Ireland before connecting with Seve Montero in Madrid, and is. Bob is thrilled that the first version has recognition in Spain, London and Dublin. Plans are underway now for an English language version.

BRITISH WOMEN AND THE SPANISH CIVIL WAR

by Angela Jackson

Routledge/Cañada Blanch Studies on Contemporary Spain, 2002

Reviewed by Richard Baxell

Angela Jackson's new book on the experiences of the women who volunteered for Republican medical units is the latest addition to the literature on British volunteers in the Spanish Civil War. It is a thoroughly researched and highly academic study, drawing on a mass of interview and memoir material. However, the empathic and sensitive approach ensures that the book is not a dry analytical study.

The book traces the motivations for volunteering of the women who, it seems, came from widely diverse social and political backgrounds. For many the chance to help defend the Spanish Republic against Franco and his fascist supporters was their prime consideration, though for others, caring took precedence over politics. As Jackson shows, whilst there was a complex interplay of political and humanitarian motives, the women were united by a determined belief that they could provide real practical help.

The book goes on to examine the role of the

women in the various British Aid-Spain organisations, before turning to the experiences of the women in Spain itself, placing this within a wider discussion of the role of women in wartime. Jackson shows how idealised notions of nurses in crisply starched white uniforms are a far cry from the appalling reality of the experiences of nursing in Spain. Giving blood transfusions by the light of a cigarette lighter, whilst debilitated by lack of sleep or dysentery appears to have been a more typical experience.

Finally Jackson examines the feelings of the women towards their time in Spain, how they dealt with returning home and having to confront the defeat of the Republic. Not surprisingly, many women continued to be involved with Spain and later joined the International Brigade Association. Many members of the IBMT will know that since the publication of the book, Angela Jackson has herself taken on a personal role in the preservation of the nurses' memory, by putting considerable effort into helping establish a monument at the site of the Santa Lucía cave hospital in La Bisbel de Falset. Clearly, Angela Jackson has done much to ensure that the role of the British women in Spain will not quickly be forgotten.

ONLY FOR THREE MONTHS

by Adrian Bell

Mousehold Press

£6.95

Reviewed by Jim Jump

Last year's BBC Radio 4 documentary *Suffer the Little Children* renewed interest in the story of the Basque children who found sanctuary in Britain after the bombing of Guernica by Franco's Nazi German allies in April 1937. The full story is told here by Adrian Bell who, along with reminiscences of surviving children, describes the political controversy provoked by the fate of the nearly 4,000 refugees.

The children were brought to Britain by the National Joint Committee for Spanish Relief (NJCSR) which, with public opinion outraged by the destruction of Guernica, persuaded a reluctant British government to accept the refugees only for three months until the fighting in northern Spain was over. The newly formed Basque Children's Committee was entrusted with the care and welfare of the children, who were dispersed around the UK to colonies staffed and financed in the main by individual volunteers, church groups and trade unions. Indeed, the Baldwin government had insisted that the entire cost of children's care and eventual repatriation had to be borne by the NJCSR.

Political passions surrounding the refugees



International Brigader Jimmy Jump and his wife-to-be, Cayetana, at the Basque children's colony in Lancing, Sussex.

peaked after the fall of Bilbao and Franco's capture of the rest of northern Spain in the summer of 1937. Immediately the fascist rebels and their sympathisers in Britain demanded the mass repatriation of the children. There were furious exchanges in the Commons, street demonstrations and angry letters to newspaper editors. It was left to the Basque Children's Committee to vet carefully all requests on a case by case basis, a process which continued until the late 1940s. By then the vast majority of the children had been reunited with their parents, either in Spain or in exile in France or Latin America.

Over 250 settled permanently in Britain. They included orphans as well as over-14s who chose to remain here. The 3,826 children on board the Habana when it docked in Southampton from Bilbao on 22 May 1937 were accompanied by 95 teachers, 15 priests and 120 se oritas (volunteer helpers), among them my mother-to-be, who in 1940 married International Brigader Jimmy Jump.

"Suffer the Little Children" can still be heard at: [www.bbc.co.uk/radio4/factual/sufferthelittlechildren.shtml].

TELEGRAM FROM GUERNICA: THE EXTRAORDINARY LIFE OF GEORGE STEER, WAR CORRESPONDENT

by Nick Rankin

Published on 7 April 2003 by Faber
£14.99

This is the story of the man who reported the bombing of Guernica to the world. Steer was working for The Times, and when Guernica was bombed on 26 April 1937, he travelled from Bilbao to Guernica the following day and his account was published in The Times and New York Times (lead story) on 28 April.

Voices

If My Voice Should Die On Earth

On 10 December 2002, at the launch of Bob Doyle's memoirs in Madrid, Manus O'Riordan recited Rafael Alberti's "If My Voice Should Die On Earth" in his honour since "Bob fought against fascism as a soldier and a sailor".

If my voice should die on earth
It's from the sea it may be heard
If you leave it on the shore.

So take my voice down to the sea
That a captain it may be
Of a white ship of war.

Oh let my voice be decorated
With the emblems of a sailor:

With an anchor from the heart
That anchor reaching for a star
And from that star the wind will rise
With wind to sail – my undying voice!

RAFAEL ALBERTI

The Mountain Speaks – Sierra de Pandols

On visiting the only monument to the International Brigades in Spain erected during the Civil War to survive Franco's savage campaign of destruction.

Deep in my stony heart I kept it safe
Your secret, safe, through all those arid years,
When your destroyers triumphed through my tears.

A barren mother for you, save one spring,
That, while you quenched your thirst with
urgent sips,
I could not save from your destroyers' lips.

No longer had the power which once I held,
When, as the ocean ground me groan by
groan
I turned now lifeless shells to speaking stone.

I tried to let you chip a hiding place
But refuge was there none in my stone womb

From the incessant torment of their bombs.

Nor could I save but kill you in my turn,
When, thrown in helpless fragments to the
sky,
So falling earthwards, crushed and made you
die.

Now where are you bambinos, my lost boys?
When living, many tongues called each to
own,
But death united in a single moan.

I failed you my lost boys, no power to save,
The generous blood you shed as careless
young,
I lost the bloodless bodies and mute tongues.
But though your tongues are still, these
stones still speak,
A testament was carved by those who lived,
And "Venceremos" is my triumph too,
A mother failed, but secret-keeper true.

PAULINE FRASER
August 2002

Remember

From Battlefields and Girls: Poems by David Martin Glasgow, 1942.

You shall sing this song, this proud song again
You shall sing their soldierly song!
Of Arganda Bridge and the Ebro campaign,
Of those of us who were buried in Spain,
And of hearts that beat bravely and strong.

Remember Jarama? The poppies lay red
Where we broke the Moorish assault.
We came many men strong and left many men
dead,
And many a brave British working class lad
Fought Junkers with rifle and colt.

Remember Arganda? Remember the fight
For Las Rosas and Carabanchel?
Remember Brunette? The night was bright
With burning woods and a village alight,
At Brunette, where Nathan fell.

DAVID MARTIN GLASGOW

Thanks to Owen Hardisty for submitting this poem.

Len Crome Memorial Lecture

Saturday 8 March, 2003
at 2.30 pm

In the Conference Room of the Imperial War Museum,
Lambeth Road, London SE1 6HZ

By

Helen Graham

“The Spanish Civil War 1936-2002: Memory, Myth & Revisionism”

Dr. Len Crome went to Spain with the Scottish Ambulance Unit and joined the international Brigade early in 1937. He served as Chief Medical Officer of the 35th Division and then of the 15th Army Corps. During WW2, as a Captain in the Royal Army Medical Corps in Italy, Dr. Crome won the Military Cross for extraordinary bravery, carrying on working despite heavy enemy fire. He was a valued president of the International Brigade Association for many years, and we are proud to join his family in this commemoration.

HELEN GRAHAM has published widely on Spain in the 1930's and 40's, including a book about the Spanish Socialist Party during the Civil War and, most recently, a major new analysis of the left "The Spanish Republic at War 1936-1939." (C.U.P. 2002) Helen is now working on a biography of the Finnish-American Brigader, Bill Aalto (1915-1958) if anyone can offer help or information please contact her via the Trust, or [h.graham@rhul.ac.uk].

Light refreshments will be served, so for catering purposes, please RSVP to Marlene Sidaway, 37 Reginald Road, Forest Gate, London, E7 9HS or telephone 020 8555 6674.

Poems & Paint Night in Aberdeen

Tommy Campbell, regional industrial organiser of the T&G Scotland, intends to organise a fundraising Poems & Paint night in Aberdeen at the end of February, and would like to include some poems relating to the Spanish Civil War. The night will be organised in conjunction with Hilda Meers, whose latest book: *For the Hearing of the Tale*, for the Future of the Wish focuses on the little-known opposition, sabotage and resistance within the concentration camps and prisons of the Nazi era. Contact Tommy Campbell at T&G Scotland, 42/44 King Street, Aberdeen, AB24 5TJ or tel: 01224 645271; e-mail [tcampbell@tgwu.org.uk].

Basque Children of '37 Association UK

Natalia Benjamin, Manuel Moreno and Helvecia Hidalgo have established a new Association to keep alive for our descendants the memory

of the Basque children's experiences when they were exiled in the UK in 1937. Membership is open and free to all ni os (and their spouses) who came here, and open (fee £5 per annum) to friends and family with special interests and ties with the ni os. They plan a twice-annual newsletter, film previews, exhibitions, and increased contact with ni os vasquos in other countries. Juanito Moreno has also set up a ni os website: [www.spanishrefugees-basquechildren.org].

● Paco Escudero, who recently published a novel *Pasajero 2058* chronicling a Spanish youth's experiences in the Spanish Civil War, his captivity and contact with British members of the International Brigade at that time, now wants to write a (factual) literary tribute to those British men and women who fought beside their Spanish brothers, who included his grandfather. Contact him via Linda Palfreeman, Universidad Cardenal Herrera Ceu, C/Comissar, 103203 Elche, Alicante.

● Did you know that there is a website dedicated to Ireland and the Spanish Civil War. The contact is Ciaran Crossey.