



INTERNATIONAL BRIGADE MEMORIAL TRUST

Patrons Ken Livingstone
Prof. Paul Preston

www.international-brigades.org.uk

Charity no. 1094928

Issue eight / July 2004

INTERNATIONAL BRIGADE MEMORIAL TRUST

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David Leach, Dolores Long, Manus O'Riordan

Welcome to our 8th Newsletter, which covers many events we are planning for the near future, as well as proposals to fulfil our aims of educating the public about the Spanish Civil War, its causes, sacrifices and its place in our history.

On the back page there are full details of the gathering at the memorial in Jubilee Gardens on 17 July. We're delighted that Ana Perez, President of the *Asociación de Amigos de las Brigadas Internacionales*, has accepted our invitation to speak. The *Amigos* have worked so hard to continue the strong links of friendship between Brigade veterans around the world and their comrades in Spain. Also with us will be Moe Fishman of the Veterans of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade. Afterwards we will have a social at the Travel Inn, where a Spanish-style buffet is available for £7.50.

We expect to unveil our new banner that day and there will be a book stall with Alan Warren's expanding collection of books about the Spanish Civil War. Our new badges will also be on sale for £2 (or by post from me for an extra 50p for postage & packing.)

Arrangements for the Annual General Meeting in Cardiff on 16 October this year are going well, thanks to an enthusiastic team in Wales. Wendy Lewis is producing a booklet to accompany events in Cardiff and would like to hear from Brigaders or their families from Wales who have memorabilia or any other contributions. Email: wendy.lewis2@aladdinscave.net; post to: 172 Pandy Road, Bedwas, Caerphilly CF83 8EP; tel: 029-2088 9514.

The Len Crome Memorial Lecture, given by Dr Richard Baxell at the Imperial War Museum in March, was very successful and well attended. The IWM has suggested we could use the theatre for the next one, hopefully given by our Patron, Prof Paul Preston.

Elsewhere in this issue you will find items about Richard Thorpe's plans for an education pack, and the first of our proposed Travelling Exhibition which we eventually hope will be available to members arranging local events.

Things continue to progress with the Trust, thanks to the active participation of many of our members. I hope more of you will feel able to get involved in the future. Salud,

Marlene Sidaway

Seated from left, Sol Frankel and George Wheeler celebrate their 90th birthdays in the company of fellow Brigaders Jack Jones (standing, right) and (from left) Sam Lesser and David Marshall at the Len Crome Memorial Lecture on 6 March at the Imperial War Museum, London.



Memorial lecture probes Laurie Lee's role in Spain

The 3rd Len Crome Memorial Lecture, entitled "Laurie Lee in the International Brigades: Writer or Fighter" and delivered by Dr Richard Baxell, proved to be controversial, thought-provoking and very entertaining.

Dr Baxell demonstrated that "A Moment of War", Laurie Lee's story of his experiences in the Spanish Civil War, had been written with a poet's imagination and, as such, should not be seen as a reliable account. However, he provided evidence showing that, despite a number of claims to the contrary, Laurie Lee did join the International Brigades in Spain, though his epilepsy prevented him from actually seeing front-line service with the British Battalion. He is generous in his conclusion, suggesting that "we should, perhaps, not be too hard on Laurie Lee".

Baxell said: "Whilst 'A Moment of War' may

not be a truthful account of his experiences in the Spanish Civil War it was, at least, dedicated 'to the defeated' Republicans, something for which Bill Alexander, one of Lee's sternest critics, stated that he was always grateful."

He added: "It should not be forgotten that the young poet undoubtedly did cross the Pyrenees into Spain, and he did join the International Brigades at a time when, in W H Auden's words 'poets were going off like bombs'.

"That much alone must surely be worth something."

The Len Crome Lectures are named after the Chief Medical Officer of the 35th Division and later the 15th Army Corps who was Chairman of the International Brigade Association until his death in 2001.

The full text of the lecture can be obtained from Marlene Sidaway at the Trust office.

British volunteers for liberty



Richard Baxell's "British Volunteers in the Spanish Civil War" was published in March by Routledge, writes Marlene Sidaway. Developed from researching a PhD at the London School of Economics, his book is an invaluable addition to any scholastic institution specialising in the Spanish Civil War.

While the graphs, maps and tables are clear and informative, the book transcends the historian's remit of facts and figures. It is also a very personalised account of the bravery, comradeship and tragedy experienced by those survivors whose oral and written memories are used to such good effect, reminding us of why we want to keep those memories alive. At £65 the price is a bit steep for individuals, but – lobby your libraries!

Baxell (left) is an IBMT committee member and runs the Trust's website.

Brief notes

George inspires

George Wheeler's book "To Make the People Smile Again" continues to inspire many young people. It was the starting point for Will Rennington and final year students at the Italia Conti Drama School in their research for an excellent production of "Days of Hope". Stuart Duncan read it on his way to London on a protest day, and describes it as "a beautifully written memoir and a gift to us all"

In an open letter to all comrades who went to Spain, he said: "George Wheeler's book allowed me to experience a unique comradeship between men and women of great courage and conviction and to witness their great dignity in the face of death, their great defiance in the face of fascism. From these qualities came their strength and, I believe, their victory. The book left me with a great admiration for the people from all nations who travelled to Spain ready to sacrifice everything, united in their loathing of the fascists and their love of democracy, truth, freedom and camaraderie."

Plans for Ebro memorial

David Leach is actively involved in the establishment of a memorial to the British and Irish who died at the Ebro. Peter Lee is doing the designing. We have already gratefully received 200 from Brendan Byrne, which was donated by the Irish Construction Workers of SIPTU. Martin Green, whose father was killed during "the Last Action", is to write an inscription to accompany the names on the memorial and it is hoped that it will be unveiled on 23/24 September, the date that corresponds closely with that action and with the withdrawal of the International Brigades.

Peter Lee's son, Andrew, is David Leach's partner in Narrative Productions whose film "Voices from a Mountain" has also been an inspiration wherever it has been shown. Andrew filmed the memorial meeting in Jubilee Gardens last July. I have a few copies, available for £5.

Drawings on display

Last July/August, Simon Manfield volunteered to be a documentary illustrator with the Spanish organisation *Asociación para la Recuperación de la Memoria Histórica* when they exhumed a communal grave in the village of Valdedios in Asturias. The grave contained 18 Republican employees of a psychiatric hospital who had been murdered by Navarrese nationalist troops on 20 October 1937. It has been a life changing experience for Simon, and now his drawings are on display at the Imperial War Museum North, Manchester, from the 17 July for four to five months as part of its "Reaction" programme.

Archive work in progress

The British Battalion archive films from Moscow are now being explored by our researchers, Jim Carmody and Richard Baxell. It will be some time before all of the information can be accessed easily, but it will eventually make their work more accurate, and, it is hoped accessible to all.

RMT unveils plaque

On Tuesday 8 June at its London HQ in Clapham – Maritime House – the RMT unveiled a plaque to honour the many seafarers and railway workers who were members of the NUS and NUR (now merged to form the RMT) who fought in the International Brigades. The ceremony was attended by Jack Jones, Bob Doyle and other veterans.

Meanwhile the RMT Scottish Region has agreed to affiliate to the Trust. Our thanks go to Stuart Hyslop, of the RMT executive, for sending us a copy of the video, made by Ronnie Moran of the RMT, of last year's IBMT Glasgow Annual General Meeting and rededication.

Lincoln vet visits

Abraham Lincoln Battalion veteran Lou Gordon and his wife Anne came over to have a look at our archives in the Marx Memorial Library, London, and donated several pamphlets. We had a very pleasant afternoon with them, reminiscing and discussing the political state of the world, and Lou displayed a great talent as a harmonica player.

Oldham memorial

I mentioned in the last newsletter that Antonio Díaz is working on translations of letters from the archives in the Working Class Movement Library in Manchester. He points out that the memorial to the International Brigaders from Oldham is housed in the Gallery, Oldham Cultural Quarter, Greaves Street, Oldham OL1 1AL and not as posted on our web page. It is not on public display and can only be viewed by appointment. Exhibitions Co-ordinator Dinah Winch is anxious to learn more about the plaque. When it was made and by whom? Contact: [www.galleryoldham.org.uk/collections/collections.htm] if you can help.

Banner bright

Jim Jump has been organising the making of a new banner for the IBMT. It will be a virtual replica of the original British Battalion banner, which is now in such a delicate state that we dare not use it for Trust events. It will cost a little more than £1,700

plus VAT, which is actually a bargain compared with the five-figure sum which the restoration of the present one would have cost us – and even then we would not have been able to display it!

AGM will be in Cardiff

This year's Annual General Meeting is in the Temple of Peace, Cathay's Park, Cardiff on Saturday 16 October at 2.30pm after a ceremony at the International Brigade Memorial in the Civic Centre; more details in the next newsletter.

No mosaic

Due to unforeseen circumstances, the "Echoes of Spain" Mosaic Project has had to be cancelled. The donation given by the IBMT has been returned.

Proud to be integrated

Moe Fishman, Secretary-Treasurer of VALB, (Veterans of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade), who will be speaking at the commemoration on 17 July at Jubilee Gardens, London, mentioned in a recent interview that VALB is particularly proud of the fact that the Lincoln Battalion was the first completely integrated US military unit. For most of the Second World War, a million or more black Americans fought in segregated units.

The story of African American volunteers in the Spanish Civil War is now on the world wide web. As part of its ongoing web-based education series "For Your Liberty and Ours", ALBA (Abraham Lincoln Brigade Archives) has just released a new multimedia educational tool on black American volunteers in the Spanish Civil War. Free and accessible to all, it is available at [www.alba-valb.org/curriculum/index.php?module=2].

Talk by Italian IBER

Manuel Moreno has brought to our attention a lecture, "Memoirs of a Partisan", by Giovanni Pesce at Jeffrey Hall, London, at 7pm on 14 July. Pesce, a miner from the age of 13, joined the International Brigades and was wounded three times. On his return to Italy, he was imprisoned in fascist jails for three years. He helped organise the anti-fascist armed urban resistance in Turin and Milan during 1943-45, and was awarded the seldom given "Gold Medal of the Resistance".

Sons stage IB play

Inverclyde Youth Theatre presented "From Calton to Catalonia", written by John and Willy Maley,

President's message

sons of International Brigader James Maley, at Greenock Arts Guild on 11-12 June. The play, a prison drama set during the Spanish Civil War, is based in part on James's experiences as a prisoner of war in Spain.

Orwell's credibility

I received the following letter, dated 30 March:

Dear Friends, The play "Homage to Catalonia" by George Orwell, given publicity in the International Brigade Newsletter, was reviewed in a feature article in the *Yorkshire Post* on 24 March when it was produced at the Yorkshire Playhouse. This review promoted a perspective which Brigades might find surprising, for example: "Knots of ragged men crouched behind hummocks, the occasional bullet whizzes aimlessly. No one seems to know where the enemy is. In truth the enemy lies among the warring factions on the Republican side. . . As Orwell said: the workers of the world ignored Spain, but Stalin saw his opportunity and sent forces to take control."

The sainted George at best is used to promote propaganda which seeks to blame the Left for the defeat of the Spanish Republic. According to the review, George Orwell was wounded and returning to Barcelona where his wife was waiting. Some of the conditions described on the Catalan front are known from sources other than George Orwell.

The British Battalion was on this front after two years fighting across Spain, knowing full well that the enemy was the Franco-led rebellion. They lost about one quarter of their strength plus many wounded who returned to the fight when recovered. One comment from a Brigader who moved with the Brigade into the area where George Orwell had been was: "They had not even dug proper trenches when that front had been quiet for many months."

Let us be careful to whom or to what we give credibility.

Yours fraternally, Joan Brown

The publisher of George Wheeler's book, Martin Ellis, thought it would be a good idea to have an exhibition in the foyer of Newcastle Playhouse during their production of "Homage to Catalonia" to add a more accurate dimension to the play. I was very grateful to Martin who organised the information panels with help from Frank Graham, Anne O'Hara and Peter Lee.

Salud,
Marlene Sidaway

In June the RMT (Rail, Maritime & Transport union) organised a special tribute to the International Brigade with the unveiling of a splendid memorial plaque to the railway workers and seamen who fought in the British Battalion.

The plaque was designed by my son (Mick) and contains the names of about 70 volunteers. A number of them I fought alongside; others I assisted in their recruitment to the International Brigades in the Liverpool area.

The memorial will have a permanent place in the headquarters of the RMT with



similar prominence to the memorial to the Brigade in the T&G union headquarters.

It is very pleasing to have recognition in this way. Despite the years which have passed,

the significance of our fight must be remembered and hopefully honoured as an example and a message to the younger generation.

The work of our association and the involvement of so many friends and supporters goes on and we all must endeavour to provide greater strength.

I salute all who make a contribution to our cause. It is especially important to ensure a really successful rally in London on 17 July.

Keep firm in the cause!
¡Salud, suerte!

Jack Jones

Obituaries

Reg Saxton



It was with great sadness that we learned of the death of Dr Reg Saxton on 27 March, aged 92. The assembly for his remembrance which his family gave on 7 April was a testimony to the high regard in which he was held by so many people.

Reg went to Spain in 1936. From the start his main fight was against the very primitive conditions in which the hospitals were forced to function, but nevertheless, he and his colleagues succeeded in saving many lives. His greatest contribution was his involvement with the development of blood transfusions. Working with Dr Norman Bethune, they pioneered a method of saving blood which they would then take to needy hospitals in a van with refrigerators running on paraffin.

During World War II he was in Burma with the Blood Transfusion Service, was mentioned in dispatches for bravery, and given the rank of Major. After the war Reg practised as a GP in Brighton, where he met his wife, Betty, a great support to him, particularly when they moved to Wales to work with Dr Julian Tudor-Hart, again doing pioneering work in the field of male Sterilisation, cervical cancer testing and collecting blood plasma to be used in Vietnam.

Reg always played an active part in politics, taking his young children on the Aldermaston marches, campaigning on behalf of Cuba, and vociferously

opposing the war in Iraq, which continued to the end of his life.

In Spain Reg had met and fallen in love with Rosaleen Smyth, and although their relationship did not survive the war, they met again in Spain during the 1996 *Homenaje*. When Betty died, Reg visited Rosaleen in Canada. They remained together, returning to England after Reg's heart attack two years before his death.

He was a great supporter of the IBMT and will be greatly missed by all who knew him.

Frank Knowles Girling

Dr Frank Knowles Girling, a distinguished anthropologist and veteran of the Spanish Civil War, has died in Edinburgh at the age of 86. Originally from Newcastle, Dr Girling, a lifelong socialist and campaigner, graduated from Cambridge and Oxford and held lectureships at Leeds, Edinburgh and Sheffield Universities. His contribution to the Republican cause included working as an editor, translator and broadcaster for the Republican government. His wife, Oxford graduate Elizabeth Ayton, also volunteered.

Judith Cook

Journalist, author and tireless campaigner Judith Cook, beloved wife and companion of leading IBMT member Martin Green, died on 12 May, aged 70. She founded the anti-nuclear group Voice of Women after the 1962 Cuba missile crisis and wrote two books and one play about the suspicious death in 1984 of celebrated anti-nuclear campaigner Hilda Murrell, which is still being investigated.

News from home...

Plan for new education pack

At present the Spanish Civil War is excluded from most GCSE courses. Where it is taught, it tends to be reduced to "and Hitler tested his new weapons..."

It does not have to be this way. Opportunities exist in the history taught at primary schools (Britain since the 1930's) and secondary schools (20th century world and GCSE coursework). It can also be taught at part of citizenship.

An education pack is now being created which will provide teachers with the materials to make the period part of their curriculum. The pack will contain lesson plans, materials such as sources, writing frames and activities as well as assessment material, which can be used in British and Irish schools.

The themes of the lessons will vary. At the core is a course which explains why the Spanish Civil War broke out, looks at the role of the International Brigades and analyses the reasons for the defeat of the Republic.

Other lessons, which can be taught alone or as part of the course, will also look at Aid For Spain, the role of trade unions, Spain under Franco, the return to democracy, and the refugee Basque children. While most of the material is aimed at 13-15 year olds, specific lesson plans will also be set for primary aged pupils and source material for A level or equivalent will also be available.

I hope that the pack will be available through the IBMT website in the autumn. In the future it should be possible to develop additional lessons, to broaden the themes already cover and provide, for example, database ICT lessons, analysing the histories and service of the Brigaders.

Richard Thorpe

Relaunch of 'Miners Against Fascism'

Twenty years after its first publication on the eve of the miners' strike of 1984-85, Warren & Pell Publishing re-launched "Miners Against Fascism" on May Day 2004 in the South Wales Miners' Library in Swansea University.

Alun Menai Williams, the last surviving Welsh Brigader, thoroughly enjoyed the occasion and was particularly delighted to meet IBMT Secretary Marlene Sidaway. Mary Greening and Iori Williams represented the children of Welsh Brigaders, and José Cifuentes, a Chilean refugee who with his wife Cristina had been imprisoned by Pinochet, spoke movingly of the warm welcome he had received from the people of the Welsh valleys.

Readers encountering the book for the first time



Alun Menai Williams, the last surviving Welsh Brigader, was delighted to meet IBMT Secretary Marlene Sidaway.

may be in for a surprise. The part the Welsh Brigaders played during the fighting in Spain occupies just one chapter.

As Will Paynter pointed out in his foreword to the first edition: "The merit of this book... is that it portrays the background factors which conditioned the spontaneous response of solidarity by the people of the mining valleys of Wales."

These factors included the volunteers' experiences in the coalfield following the defeat of the miners in 1926, in what was technically not a strike but a lock-out, the extra-parliamentary tradition of action, the South Wales Miners' Federation and Spain and the influence of the Communist Party. "Miners Against Fascism" costs £12.95 + p&p, and Warren & Pell can be contacted by phone on: 01495-775 561, or by email at: [warren.ofbooks@virgin.net].

Pauline Fraser

Reading volunteers remembered

Reading's memorial to those who died in Spain records the names of three men: Bill Ball, Josh Francis and George Middleton. It should probably record a fourth, John Beale.

In February 2000 when we published "We Cannot Park on Both Sides", a brief history of Reading volunteers in Spain, we could confirm the identities of 12 people from Reading who served in one capacity or another.

Most were connected with the medical corps but five served in fighting units. Of these, four fought in the British Battalion and one, George Middleton, served with a militia unit before the British

Battalion became operational.

After we published the book, James Carmody sent information showing that George Middleton was killed between 10-16 November 1936, fighting with the Communist *Muertes es Maestro* Militia in the Casa de Campo area of Madrid. The records also contained reference to John Beale.

Like Middleton, Beale was unknown to either the Communist or the Labour Party in Reading at the time, or to William Rust, the British Battalion chronicler or Bill Alexander when he wrote his history of the Battalion. It seems that Beale was in the same Centuria as Middleton. He was recorded as "missing" on 16 December. We do not know if he and Middleton went to Spain together.

James Carmody also added to

the picture of a controversial and colourful Reading man, Frank Hillsley, who gave an interview to a local paper allegedly on his return with wounds in November 1937, claiming to have fought at Jarama, Brunete and Belchite.

From Foreign Office records, it seems that Norman Frank Hillsley served in the International Brigades as Frank Norman, deserting at some point before October 1937 and was sent home in November.

Mike Cooper

A new memorial for Ireland

At a meeting in City Hall on 25 March an appeal was launched to fund a monument to the 11 Waterford volunteers who fought in the International Brigade in the anti-fascist war in Spain in 1936-38. Target funding for completion of the project is 25,000. The appeal has the unanimous support of Waterford city council and is expected to attract funds from a number of trade unions.

Irish volunteers from all 32 counties proved to be exemplary soldiers in defence of the Spanish Republic against Franco's fascist rebellion in a bitter war that raged as a prelude to World War II. More than 200 Irish volunteers served in the British Battalion, the US Abraham Lincoln Battalion, and the Canadian unit, the Mackenzie-Papineau (MacPaps). The majority of the Irish volunteers had travelled from Britain, America, Canada and even Australia.

Cllr Seamus Ryan, deputy mayor of Waterford, chaired the meeting. He is the honorary secretary of

the appeal committee, and a grand-nephew of the late Peter O'Connor who, with fellow-Waterfordmen, Paddy and Johnny Power, crawled out onto the Jarama battlefield to bring back the body of Irish poet Charlie Donnelly, for burial in Morata de Tajuña. Johnny was one of three Power brothers who served in the International Brigade. In February 1937 five Waterford men fought at the Battle of Jarama, where Mossie Quinlan was killed in action.

The sculptor Michael Warren also addressed the meeting. His sculpture, to be called "No Pasarán" (they shall not pass), will stand on the public open space in front of the Bishop's Palace on The Mall, next to City Hall in the heart of the city, visible to all traffic passing through Waterford. It will take the form of three blocks of granite, imported from Castile and weighing more than 6.5 tonnes, "designed to convey something of the heroism and commitment of the Waterford men" in the words of the sculptor. It will bear the words "No Pasarán" and the names of the 11 Waterford International Brigaders. The memorial will be jointly unveiled on 9 July by veterans Michael O'Riordan and Jack Jones.

The project still urgently needs donations to cover costs. Make out cheques or euro drafts to Relatives and Friends of Waterford International Brigaders, payable to a/c 77000030, sort code 93-41-19, Allied Irish Banks, Waterford, Ireland or posted directly to treasurer Sean Kelly, 3 Breffni Close, Lismore Lawn, Waterford.

Tribute to victims of Madrid bombings

Coinciding with the three minutes of silent tribute paid to the victims of the Madrid bombings throughout Europe at noon Spanish-time on Monday March 15, Irish brigadista Michael O'Riordan chose to pay his tribute on Spanish territory at the Spanish Embassy in Dublin.

He signed the book of condolences as follows: "Deepest sympathy with the peoples of Spain and solidarity in the fight against terrorism and war. Michael O'Riordan, Irish volunteer in the Spanish Republic's International Brigades 1938, and honorary citizen of Spain 1996."

Norman Bethune exhibition

David Duncan of Glasgow, now living in Spain, visited the recent photographic exhibition at Malaga featuring the work of Norman Bethune. Said Duncan: "He was a witness to the exodus of



Pauline Fraser lays a wreath on behalf of the IBMT at Jersey's Liberation Day commemorations.

the civilian population of this city when the Franco forces took it. The people walked along this coast and all the way to Almeria for safe haven. On the way they were strafed and bombed by aircraft and bombarded by naval ships – there were a great number of casualties. Some of the photos depict the actual march with mainly women and children on foot or on donkeys – a very poignant display."

Paul Preston gives Marçà lecture

When Paul Preston came to the small village of Marçà to give a lecture on 24 April this year, he was surprised to find over 400 people eagerly waiting to hear him speak. At the request of the association, No Jubilem La Memòria, he had agreed to make a detour from his usual venues in large cities and universities.

The lecture was based on his current research for a new book, "The Spanish Holocaust", and gave a chilling insight into the long years of repression in Spain after the civil war. Afterwards, everyone sampled the local wine and viewed an exhibition of photographs showing Brigaders in this area before and after the Battle of the Ebro as Paul patiently worked his way through a long queue of people, signing dozens of copies of his books.

Another feature of the evening was the first showing of a documentary made by NJLM using interviews carried out with local people and some Brigaders who were here in 1938. Undoubtedly, one star of this video was Steve Fullarton who had been filmed last summer walking round the village,

revisiting old haunts and describing what it had been like during the war. As he sat in the new school, built on the former site of the Brigade parade ground, he remembered La Pasionaria's invitation to return to Spain and spoke of how glad he was to be back again in times of peace. Many people in the audience were moved to tears.

Forthcoming events for NJLM include a presentation of the documentary and the exhibition at a reunion of 700 pensioners. It is hoped that some will agree to share their memories of Brigaders with us.

Angela Jackson

Slave-workers honoured in Jersey

In the bright afternoon sunshine of Sunday 9 May, around 70 people came together to lay wreaths at the monument to the slave-workers who were forced to build the underground hospital on Jersey whilst it was under Nazi occupation. The ceremony has now become an established part of Jersey's Liberation Day commemorations, which begin with a procession of the Jersey States Deputies to the harbour-front in St Helier, the Jersey capital, and a re-enactment of the landing of British troops on Jersey soil in 1945.

Prisoners from many parts of Europe were brought to Jersey by the Nazis to work under intolerable conditions on the underground hospital project. There were Russians, Poles, French, Spanish Republicans and Jews from Alsace.

Norman Le Brocq, the well-known Communist Deputy, campaigned for many years for a suitable memorial to the slave-workers and became the first master-of-ceremonies at the annual commemoration. He was succeeded in the role by Francisco Font, a Spanish Republican soldier who stayed on Jersey after Liberation to marry a Jersey girl. Their son, Gary, maintains the tradition as master-of-ceremonies. The IBMT was represented by Rob and Maggie Smith, and Pauline Fraser, who laid a wreath on behalf of the Trust. Another Trust member, Fernando de la Torre, son of a Minister in the Republican Government, and Capt Andrei Vanchugov, Assistant Naval Attaché at the Russian Embassy, also laid wreaths. There were diplomatic representatives of France and Poland, as well as of the Jewish community.

Among the crowd at Westmount, where the slave-workers memorial is set, were Jersey people who had bravely taken in escaped Russian slave-workers. The penalty if they were caught was to be sent to a concentration camp and 22 brave people who paid with their lives for this simple human act of solidarity are commemorated in the gardens above the underground hospital.

Pauline Fraser

Can you help?

William Beales

● Mark Chiverton would like to know more about William Thomas George Beales who joined the International Brigade at Albacete on 8 December 1937, and was killed on 30 August 1938 at Aragón. He was a locomotive engineer, and gave his address as The Eagle Tavern, 32 High Street Newport, Isle of Wight. Mark hopes to establish some kind of memorial to him. Reply to Mark Chiverton, 38 Queens Rd., Ryde, Isle of Wight, PO33 3BQ or email: [mark.chiverton@iow.gov.uk].

Kane/O'Kane

● Ann Kane is still anxious to learn more of her uncle Owen Kane/O'Kane, who left Middlesbrough in 1936 to fight in Spain, born 20 May 1909. It was her father's last wish to discover what had happened to his twin brother. Ann is at 1/68 Hall Street, Bondi Beach, NSW 2026, Australia. or email [anniekane@ozemailcom.au].

Eric Fowler

● Erica Fawkes is trying to find out more about her father, Eric Adolphus Fowler, born in Basingstoke on 13 May 1909, who fought in Spain. He was a plumber and apparently did some work on Buckingham Palace. He had digs in London during the war, but the house was bombed, destroying everything he had. Contact Erica at [erica.fawkes@freesurf.ch].

Argentine IBers

● Argentinian Volunteers: Prof Juan Carlos Cesarini, a library director, is researching International Brigaders from Argentina. If you can help, please contact him at: Avda Rivadavia 7589, Piso 10, C1406 GMF, Buenos Aires, Argentina. Email: [juancesarini@infovia.com.ar].

JS Williams

● Iori Williams's father JS Williams was chairman of the Communist Party of Merthyr Tydfil, a great campaigner and leader who also organised a group to go to Spain. He returned in

1938 and died shortly after of pneumonia. He was a self-taught man who built up a splendid library, now in the University of Swansea, but Iori has kept a valued heirloom from the library, a copy of "The Complete Works of Shakespeare" inscribed "To Jack – May we meet again in socialist Spain – Rudy". He recalls his dad saying that Rudy was a Geordie, but has no more information. Can any one shed any light on this? If so please contact Iori at 7 Rosemary Ave, Braintree, Essex CM7 2SZ.

Tattam brothers

● Bill and Edward Tattam of Sunderland, Co Durham, both killed in Spain, wrote many letters to their mother, Anne. She kept them carefully until 1939, when someone asked for them, and they were never returned. The letters were quoted in Bill Rust's book "Britons in Spain", so they may be in an archive or private collection. The brothers' great-niece, Anne Tattam of Eugene, Oregon, is researching their story. Please contact her through Gina Herrman at [alba@forums.nyu.edu].

Why not all?

● Pips Pinkus asks why we don't list ALL who fought and returned, as well as those who fell in Spain? Our historians, Jim Carmody and Richard Baxell, say it is difficult to give an accurate list of the possible 3,000 volunteers from here. Many used false names, or started the journey and were unable to continue. The war made it even more difficult to keep paperwork up-to-date.

Red Army recording

● Wanted Urgently – copies of the Red Army Choir singing "The Internationale", and their Paris concert; on CD or tape; to be copied and returned. Please ring David Marshall 020-8555 6674.

Tommy Flynn

● Jim Carmody [jimcarmody@yahoo.com] is researching British and Irish volunteers who fought for the Republic. He would like any information on Tommy Flynn, apparently a well known sportsman in Glasgow. He was a member of the Young Communist League and probably one of the first from Glasgow, after Phil Gillian, to arrive in Spain. In November 1936 he joined the famous No I Company and fought at Lopera in December 1936. He later transferred to the mainly German and Polish "Tchapiiev Section" of the 13th International Brigade and was killed at

Valsequillo (Córdoba) on 7 April 1937. Though apparently Scottish, he is described by an English volunteer who fought beside him as "a lone Irishman and a great chap".

Barbara Wilby

● Sabita McGuinness asks if anyone remembers her mother, Barbara Wilby (aka Barbara Hammaad/Hibbuard) 1914-1997, of Lancaster Gate, Queensway, London, who lost many close friends from London in the Spanish Civil War. She can be contacted at 5 Meridian House, Baynes Street, London NW1 OTR.

Charles Goodfellow

● Charles Goodfellow would like information about his grandfather, Charles Goodfellow, from Bellshill, Lanarkshire, killed at Brunete. He is mentioned in Bill Rust's book "Britons in Spain" and historian Jim Carmody has been able to supply some information. Anyone in Lanarkshire who remembers the family, please contact Charles at [charles.goodfellow@bt.com].

Ebbw Vale memorial

● Andrew Rogers has been campaigning for some time for an International Brigade memorial at the Nye Bevan Memorial Stones at Ebbw Vale. If you'd like to join the campaign, please get in touch with Andrew at: [eulanwy@aol.com].

Edinburgh IBers

● Mark Herzog is researching a possible feature on people from the Edinburgh and Lothians regions who went to the Spanish Civil War. He would like any information on those who participated, not only in the combat units but in ambulance units as well. He would also like to know more about the support and solidarity networks in Edinburgh that existed during the SCW and about any visual archive material on Scots who fought in Spain. Contact Marc Herzog at 12 Morningside Road, Edinburgh EH10 4DB. IBMT Secretary Marlene Sidaway has already suggested the British Battalion archive, with many books/pictures and memorabilia, at the Marx Memorial Library, 37a Clerkenwell Green, London EC1R 0DV; also a very good sound archive at the Imperial War Museum in Lambeth Road, London SE1; recording began in 1976, and there are many interviews with Brigade veterans (there is a catalogue). The Gallacher Memorial Library at Glasgow Caledonian University, Cowcaddens Road, Glasgow G4

IBMT Newsletter

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OBA also has a large collection of photographs, pamphlets and memorabilia about Scottish Brigaders; contact Audrey Canning on 0141-331 3028.

Pyrenees crossing

● Pauline Fraser is organising a commemorative crossing of the Pyrenees to retrace as accurately as possible the route taken by so many Brigaders at dead of night after the border was closed. She is hoping to do this in the Spring of 2006, which would coincide with the 70th anniversary of the Spanish Civil War. She is collating information from Brigaders' memoirs to work out the route, and would be pleased to hear from Brigaders who made that crossing into Spain and who can remember particular places en route.

Kerry

● Bill Kerry is trying to find out more information about two people called Kerry who fell in the Spanish Civil War: E Kerry, from London, was mentioned in the roll of honour printed in the *Daily Worker* on Friday 3 September 1937. The roll of honour relates to those who fell in the July offensive around Brunete. There is also a reference to another Kerry, apparently from Gateshead. The two references may relate to the same person.

Fred Copeman

● Patrick Worrall of the *Barking & Dagenham Recorder* would like to hear from anybody who knew Fred Copeman, particularly during the time he worked at Fords, Dagenham. Email: [patrick.worrall@bdrecorder.co.uk] or telephone: 020-8477 3825.

IB books wanted

● Chris Hall has had requests for "The Signal was Spain" by Jim Fyrth and "British Volunteers for Liberty" by Bill Alexander. The people concerned wish to buy a copy. If anyone knows where they can be obtained, please contact Chris at: [christoff_hall@yahoo.com] or 286 Bratingham Road, Manchester M21 0QU. The Alexander book can be in a poor state, as long as it has all its pages. The purchaser is unemployed, and can't afford to buy commercially.

Warren & Pell

Bill Alexander's "British Volunteers for Liberty" is one of several books relating to the Spanish Civil War which Warren & Pell Publishing is planning to re-publish in the near future. Others are Alun Menai Williams' autobiography and Nan Green's memoirs.

Books already published by Warren & Pell include:

● "The Book of the XVth International Brigade", a record of British, American Canadian and Irish Volunteers first published in 1938 by the Commissariat of War, XVth Brigade, Madrid. It is a contemporary account of events by members of the Brigade, re-published by Frank Graham in 1975 and again by W&P in 2003. Royalties from sales are donated to the IBMT.

● "Britons in Spain" by Bill Rust, first published by Lawrence & Wishart primarily for the benefit of family and supporters of those who served with the British Battalion. It is a contemporary account written by the Daily Worker correspondent. As a mark of respect, 526 individually numbered hardback copies were re-published to commemorate the officially stated number of those who died whilst serving with the British Battalion in Spain. A softback version is also available.

● "Miners Against Fascism" by Hywel Francis was re-launched at the South Wales Miners' Library, University of Swansea on 1 May. Welsh miners made up one of the largest contingents within the British Battalion, and brought with them a political tradition unique in Britain in its combination of trade union militancy, radical extra-parliamentary activity and internationalism. The book received many plaudits when it was first published in 1984. It is a fascinating study of life in the Welsh valleys before/during the Spanish Civil War and the long struggle to win justice and a better life that grew from hardship and cruelty, a shared legacy with the people of Spain. Photographs, and interviews with Brigaders and their families are very human accounts of those times and sacrifices, within the wider context of the political upheavals of the rest of the world.

Warren & Pell can be contacted at The Old Bible Christian Chapel, High Street, Abersychan, Pntypool, Torfaen NP4 7AG or email [warrenofbooks@virgin.net]; website [www.warrenandpellpublishing.co.uk].

Anglo-Spanish ties

"España Britannia – a Bitter-Sweet Relationship" by Alistair Ward is published by Shephard-Walwyn (see [www.espaniabrannia.com]) Beginning with the Eleanor Crosses, where the body of Edward I's Queen, Eleanor of Castile, was rested on its way to London before finishing

at Charing Cross, a stone's throw from Trafalgar Square, this is another reminder of our links with Spain. Ward's book fills in the gaps between well remembered facts from school history lessons in an entertaining and readable way and reveals that, whether as enemies or allies, there has always been a strong link between Britain and Spain. The chapter about the Spanish Civil War (as distinct from other bloody clashes within Spain), for which Ward acknowledges the help given to him by Brigadier Chris Thornycroft, gives concise background to the run-up to the war and the part played by the rest of the world in its outcome.

Spanish memories of IB

Caridad Serrano's book, "Los Protagonistas de la Historia y los Testigos de la Vida" is an oral history of the International Brigades in Madrigueras. It uses accounts from residents to look at the impact of Brigaders on the small town in Castilla La Mancha. Madrigueras, a small town in the vicinity of Albacete, was used as a training centre for volunteers.

Caridad lets the transcribed interviews speak for themselves, without commentary. The interviewees were all young at the time of the Brigaders' stay in Madrigueras and the experience clearly made an overwhelmingly positive impact during their formative years. The Brigaders brought a wide cultural life to the town, with film shows, concerts, dances, and singing. Many interviewees spoke warmly of British and North American Brigaders. The arrival of the Brigaders coincided with the opening of Madrigueras' first school. While the children were exposed to formal education for the first time, they also received an invaluable informal education through friendships with volunteers.

For the young women of the town there were, inevitably, romantic encounters. Of particular interest in this respect is the story of IBMT member Olga Gascon Flanagan's grandparents. Her grandmother was a young Madriguereña, Sagrario Cabañero Valaverde, her grandfather Irish Brigadier, Andrew Flanagan. Sagrario's cousin brought Andrew to his mother's house, and the couple fell in love and married. But while another Brigadier James 'Blunfil', presumably Bloomfield, returned to Spain after the war to see his daughter, Flanagan never did. The only news was that he had survived and was well.

Caridad Serrano's book was published in Spanish last year. Those wishing to obtain a copy should contact Caridad by email: [caneloski@tiscali.es].

Pauline Fraser

NB: Paul Preston's new book "Juan Carlos, a People's King" will be reviewed in our next issue.

Forced labour camps in North Africa

In the last issue, Rob Satloff requested information about the running of the forced labour camps in Morocco and Algeria during World War II, where many Spanish Republicans were held.

Gideon Rosenbluth from New York recalls: "In 1943, our outfit landed at the port of Arzew Oran, below the city of Algiers. We were with the British, driving back the German Africa Corps under Rommel. During that time, there was an encampment held by the French Vichy government which finally surrendered around 2,000-3,000 Spanish Republican men and women to our forces.

Those of us who were politically knowledgeable about the war in Spain, 1936-39, spoke with some of them who in turn told us of their plight. We forwarded to them medicine, food, clothes etc. We learned that the French Vichy army was very hard and fed them only dates and figs. Though kept alive, they had been under-nourished, for two to three years.

At the back of us, we had a prisoner of war camp filled with German prisoners. When we loaded the Spanish Republicans on to trucks sending them to their next destination, we were all startled, while the trucks circled the POWs, and from 2,000 to 3,000 Republicans, we heard "The Internationale".

Steve Fullarton remembers William Gauntlett

Scottish veteran Steve Fullarton noticed that the name of International Brigader William Gauntlett is missing from both the plaque and the white canvas banner honouring Brigaders from the Glasgow area who died in Spain. Steve and William went out to Spain together from Glasgow.

Steve recalls: "We shared a chabola (dugout), organised by Dusty Miller, with five others at Chabola Valley near Marçà in Catalonia. We crossed the Ebro and I never saw him again. He was with the machine gunners and I was in No 1 Company. When I was wounded, I enquired about different people, and was told he had been killed in the last days at Hill 666."

Steve was reminded of another comrade, Ben Richardson from the North East of England, when he visited an exhibition at Albacete and saw a poster-size photograph of him smiling as he held out his aluminium plate for his rations, and more recently he was contacted by the "4th Peter Cassidy", looking for information about the Peter Cassidy Steve knew so well in Spain.

From Guernica to the Lake District

Doreen Walden has donated a pamphlet "Crusade or Class War?" published in 1937, which she found amongst her partner Eric Walker's archives, as well as other memories of Eric's support for Spanish refugees as a 15-year-old collecting money on Tyneside.

He tells of Basque refugee children housed in Tynemouth after the bombing of Guernica in

International Brigade Memorial Trust



A ceremony to honour the 2,100 men and women who left these shores to fight side by side with the Spanish people in their heroic struggle against fascism 1936-1939 and to remember the 526 who did not return

on Saturday 17 July 2004 at 1pm

at the International Brigade Memorial (adjacent to the London Eye), Jubilee Gardens, London SE1

Chairman: Jack Jones, President of the IBMT

Speakers: Ana Perez, President of the Asociación de Amigos de las Brigadas Internacionales; Moe Fishman, Secretary of the Veterans of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade

Singer: Liz Shirley

Afterwards there will be a social in the Travel Inn, Belvedere Road, London SE1 (just behind the memorial; disabled access available) where an optional Spanish-style buffet will be available for £7.50.

1937. One of the helpers with them was Carmen Gill, who had been shopping in Guernica and was waiting at the railway station for a train home when the attack began. A quick-thinking train driver hustled everyone aboard the train and drove it into a tunnel, which no doubt saved many lives, including that of Carmen, who eventually married Eric's uncle, Leslie Walker, and settled in the Lake District.

Carmen was not re-united with her family until the early 1960s when her sister and family arrived in Keswick for Carmen's son's wedding, but there have been many reciprocal visits since then and Carmen now lives with her daughter near Bolton.

Memories of Jack Brent and George Dickie

Many thanks to Betty Birch and others who replied to queries in the last Newsletter about Jack Brent and George Dickie. Betty and her husband Chris were members of the Aid Spanish Youth Committee. For them, Jack was a legendary figure. Badly wounded in Spain, he spent many

years in and out of hospitals on his return. A secretary of the International Brigade Association, he tirelessly continued the fight against fascism, speaking at meetings, distributing pamphlets and selling the *Daily Worker*.

Stanley Harrison, a *Morning Star* journalist, produced a book, "Good to be Alive: The Story of Jack Brent", based on Jack's letters, IBA records and recollections from family and friends.

There are plans to re-publish it if copyright permission can be granted from the author's daughter, Susan. Anyone who knows how to get in touch with her, please contact IBMT Secretary Marlene Sidaway (address, telephone number and email on front page). It is hoped also to put up a memorial plaque to Jack Brent.

John Dickie has written to say that he has a folder of material about Geordie (Dickie). "I was unaware of the moves in Whithorn and find it very moving that he should be so remembered. A huge influence on my life was the late Tony Gilbert, who of course was my uncle's closest friend. It was because of Tony, Chris Maxwell and others in the IBA that my parents moved to England and our lives changed so dramatically."