



# IBMT Newsletter

www.international-brigades.org.uk

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## INTERNATIONAL BRIGADE MEMORIAL TRUST

Stuart Forster/whyeyephoto.com



**ON SHOW:** The IBMT's exhibition, pictured here at Newcastle City Library, has attracted widespread public interest wherever it has been displayed.

### All eyes on Liverpool

The IBMT's annual general meeting will be held in Liverpool on 16 October, and one of its many attractions will be the chance to see the "Antifascistas" exhibition as part of the weekend of activities.

Some 170 Merseysiders, including such notable figures as Jack Coward, Bill Feeley and Jack Jones, joined the International Brigades. Twenty-eight of them are known to have died in Spain.

The IBMT hopes that the AGM and associated social events will provide an opportunity to make contact with more families of International Brigaders and more Brigade enthusiasts on Merseyside.

- See back page for AGM details.
- See the Merseyside International Brigades Network website: [www.mibnet.org.uk].

### 'Antifascistas' goes on tour

The IBMT's new travelling exhibition, "Antifascistas: British and Irish Volunteers in the Spanish Civil War", is touring the country following its acclaimed opening in London in May.

Since then, the exhibition has gone from Newcastle to Nottingham and then to Manchester, where it was displayed at the People's History Museum for most of August. In all locations it was enthusiastically received.

From 7-18 September the exhibition will be in Rotherham.

Afterwards it returns to London to be shown at the Marx Memorial Library (MML) from 20 September to 1 October.

The MML plans to supplement the exhibition by displaying various artefacts from its extensive International Brigade and Spanish Civil War

archive, including film and sound recordings. An evening lecture and a film screening have also been arranged.

To support the Rotherham exhibition, IBMT committee member and school-teacher Richard Thorpe has sent out 116 education packs to local schools.

The opening day of the Rotherham exhibition saw the launch of the re-publication of "Tommy James – A Lion of a Man". James was a local volunteer who served with the British Battalion at Jarama. On his return from Spain he wrote "Pounded Earth", an account of his experiences in Spain, which forms part of the re-published book.

- See "Diary dates (page 8) for more exhibition details.
- See page 5: Lecture launches "Antifascistas".

*Keeping alive the memory and spirit of the men and women who volunteered to defend democracy in Spain from 1936 to 1939*

## International Brigade Memorial Trust

[www.international-brigades.org.uk](http://www.international-brigades.org.uk)

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*Annual membership rates are £15 standard; £7.50 for concessions; £20 family (single household); affiliating organisations by arrangement. Further details and membership forms are available from the Membership Secretary.*

## IBMT NEWSLETTER

*The IBMT Newsletter is published three times a year and is sent free to all members of the IBMT.*

*Members living overseas can access the current issue by using a password on the IBMT website. Back numbers can be downloaded from the IBMT website on [www.international-brigades.org.uk/newsletter.htm]. For information about receiving the IBMT Newsletter on tape, contact the IBMT Secretary.*

*Send all items for the next issue to the Editor by 31 December 2010 at the latest.*

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**EXHIBITION:** At the Newcastle City Library showing of the IBMT’s “Antifascistas” exhibition, Moira Gray (right), sister of Edward and William Tattam, from Sunderland, both of whom were killed in Spain, with daughter Sheila Gray (standing) and partner Pete Widlinski and IBMT Secretary Marlene Sidaway.

**By Marlene Sidaway**

### Annual general meeting

Details about our AGM weekend in Liverpool on 15/16/17 October are on the back page. Please note that the address is changed from the one we gave in the last *IBMT Newsletter*: the new Unite offices (still named Jack Jones House) are at 2 Churchill Way, Liverpool L3 8EF. I hope as many members as possible will be able to make it.

### ‘Antifascistas’

Thanks go to all those members who have looked after the “Antifascistas” exhibition when it arrived in their area – it has done very well in all of the venues with lots of visitors and good feedback. It works particularly well when our members can be there at some point in the day to talk about it and sell books or other merchandise. We are also grateful to the shops attached to the venues who agree to sell for us – as in Nottingham and Manchester. Dates and venues for September and October can be seen in “Diary dates” on page 8. There is no date fixed yet, but it is possible that there will be a showing in Middlesbrough later this year. If so, we will let as many people as possible know by email and publicise it locally.

### Durham and Tolpuddle

It’s a shame that the IBMT wasn’t represented at the Durham Miners’ Gala this year – there were just not enough of us free to do it. Next year I hope we will be more organised and will have many of you following our banner. The Tolpuddle Martyrs’ Festival was a great success, though. I know there are some members who wish we hadn’t changed our July memorial date in Jubilee Gardens, but it’s difficult to find a suitable date when every weekend in July is busy.

### Badge

We have had a donation of 200 International

Brigade badges (pictured below) from Glasgow-based Socialist Productions. These will be available at future events, price £4 or



from me by post (see address on left) at £5, which includes p&p. Many thanks to Socialist Productions for supporting us in this way. They have also donated towards the Blantyre and Perthshire memorial funds.

### Fund-raising walk

Mike Luft, a prominent anti-fascist campaigner and trade unionist from Oldham, is walking across the Pyrenees from La Junquera in Spain to La Coume in France from 13 to 24 September to raise funds for charity. A Unite member and former construction electrician, Luft says he has long been a keen student of the Spanish Civil War and has researched the routes taken by volunteers who crossed into the Spanish Republic to support the democratically-elected government and also those taken by the Spanish refugees and anti-fascist fighters after Franco’s Hitler and Mussolini-aided victory. He is undertaking the walk to raise money for Oldham Unity, a solidarity project which supports asylum seekers and refugees in the Oldham area.

*Oldham Unity’s bank details are: Oldham Unity (Destitution Project), Unity Trust Bank, account no. 20150011, sort code 08-60-01.*



## Perth memorial is unveiled

Perth's memorial to its 10 International Brigaders was unveiled on 5 June at a ceremony which brought together friends and families of the volunteers, local IBMT members and admirers of the International Brigades and trade unionists.

The unveiling by Lord Provost John Hulbert was part of a day-long series of events sponsored by the Unite union and organised by the Perthshire International Brigade Memorial Fund, which is led by IBMT member and historian Paul Philippou.

Among the speakers at the unveiling at North Inch and afterwards in Perth Concert Hall were the Spanish consul-general in Edinburgh, Frederico Palomera Güez, IBMT committee member Mike Arnott and Colin Cargill, a family friend of three of the Perth volunteers: Ann, George and Tom Murray.

Afterwards there was entertainment from local musicians Roberto Cassani and Ian McLaren & Friends.



**PLAQUE:** At the unveiling in Perth's North Inch (below) are (above, from left) Lord Provost John Hulbert, Paul Philippou and Frederico Palomera Güez.



## George Brown's internationalist legacy

This year's third annual George Brown Commemorative Lecture was given by Jack O'Connor, General President of Ireland's largest union, SIPTU, and President of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions.

Speaking on the theme of "The Legacy of George Brown" on 26 June in Inistioge, County Kilkenny, birthplace of the volunteer from Manchester who was a political commissar of the British Battalion and was killed in the Battle of Brunete in July 1937, O'Connor stressed the fact that Brown's sense of social justice knew no frontiers.

"George Brown was a working class leader of integrity, vision and commitment," he said. "He dedicated the last few months of his short life to fighting in defence of democracy in Spain because he knew that basic human rights are indivisible – that the consequences of defeat in Madrid would be felt, sooner rather than later, by workers in Manchester and here in Inistioge as well."

He went on: "The decision by over 45,000 volunteers to serve in the International Brigades was one of the most striking affirmations of the human spirit in the modern era, where former opponents of the left sealed their new-found unity in blood."

## Interviewed for World Service

BBC



International Brigade veteran and IBMT Chair Sam Lesser (right) was interviewed by the BBC World Service for the anniversary of the start of the Spanish Civil War as part of its "Witness" series on modern history. The 10-minute interview, which was broadcast on 16 July, can be replayed at [www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/p008kzvh/Witness\_Spanish\_Civil\_War].

## Petition for Gerda Taro



The Madrid-based Association of Friends of the International Brigades (AABI) is campaigning to have a street in Villanueva de la Cañada named after the photographer Gerda Taro (pictured). The Hungarian-born anti-fascist was killed on the outskirts of the village on 25 July 1937 during the Battle of Brunete. The AABI has produced a petition form (in Spanish) addressed to the mayor of Villanueva de la Cañada. For a copy of the form, email Severiano Montero Barrado: [seve.montero@gmail.com].



## Repaired Glasgow statue returns to plinth

Glasgow's memorial to the International Brigades is now back on its plinth beside the Clyde at Custom House Quay following £17,000 of repairs lasting over four months. It was formally rededicated at a ceremony on 23 August.

The fibre-glass statue, which is a B-listed monument, was created by sculptor Arthur Dooley and erected in 1979. It depicts the legendary Spanish Republican

leader Dolores Ibárruri, better known as "La Pasionaria".

The costs of the repairs were shared by Glasgow City Council and various labour movement organisations in Scotland, along with a substantial contribution from the IBMT.

To hear an interview given by Scottish Ambulance Unit veteran Thomas Watters for Scottish TV on 23 August, go to: [http://video.stv.tv/bc/news-100823-veteraniv].





**AT JUBILEE GARDENS:** Geoff Lawes (left) accompanies himself on concertina while singing songs about the International Brigades. Top: Dolly West-Shaer recalls her father, Frank West, returning from Spain after being released from prison. Above: Christine Collins recounts her 14-year-old mother's agony when told that her father, Tom Picton, had been murdered by a prison guard in Franco's Spain.

## PoW Brigaders remembered at Jubilee Gardens

By Pauline Fraser

British volunteers of the Spanish Civil War were remembered on 3 July at the International Brigade Memorial in London's Jubilee Gardens. Honouring the 2,500 men and women from Britain and Ireland who served in the International Brigades as soldiers or medics, of whom 525 were killed, the 2010 commemoration focused on the volunteers who were captured and spent time in Franco's jails and prisoner of war camps.

This year marks the 70th anniversary of the release of Tommy Jones, the last British International Brigade prisoner.

The gathering of members and supporters at the memorial under the London Eye heard family members speak about two Brigaders who had been imprisoned in the notorious San Pedro de Cardeña jail, a bleak former monastery near Burgos that had been requisitioned by Franco to incarcerate Republican prisoners.

Dolly West-Shaer, daughter of Brigader Frank West, spoke of how she had waited eagerly with her mother at London's Victoria Station in late 1938 to welcome her father home when many of the surviving Brigaders were repatriated. They waited in vain. Frank was not released until the following year, a separation of five long years for father and daughter.

Christine Collins' grandfather, Tom Picton, never returned. Christine's mother was 14 when the family was told the terrible news that her father had been killed in San Pedro de Cardeña. In an act of bravery characteristic of the man, Tom had protested at the brutal treatment of a fellow prisoner and was shot dead on the spot by a prison guard. His widow refused to believe the news, as no body was found, and she took her daughter on several futile visits to Spain to try to establish his whereabouts.

Although it was painful to share her grandfather's tragic story with others, Collins said she wanted to speak out on behalf of her mother, who never really recovered from the impact of her father's death.

Another highlight of this year's proceedings was folksinger Geoff Lawes paying tribute to the Brigaders in a series of songs, culminating in "The Ballad of Clem Beckett", which tells the story of the dare-devil motorcycle ace from Oldham who was killed at the Battle of Jarama.

Other speakers included Miquel Caminal of the Catalan government's Memorial Democràtic agency, who was introduced by Professor Paul Preston. Catalonia, said Preston,

## Homage in Paris at the tomb of Juan Negrín

Carmen Negrín, grand-daughter of the last prime minister of the Spanish Republic, Juan Negrín, lays a wreath at his tomb in the Père-Lachaise Cemetery in Paris on 10 August. She was accompanied by Daniel Serrano Recio, a Republican army veteran. They also left floral tributes at the cemetery's memorials to French International Brigaders, to the victims of Nazi concentration camps and to the Spanish Republicans who were killed during the Second World War. According to this final memorial, they numbered 10,000 killed in deportation and 25,000 while fighting with the Allies and in the French Resistance. It was Juan Negrín who promised International Brigaders Spanish citizenship – a pledge that was finally fulfilled by Spain's 2007 Law of Historical Memory.





**SPEAKER:** At the People's History Museum, Manchester, historian Richard Baxell (left) gives a talk on the British Battalion at Jarama. Right: Coverage of the exhibition on the BBC Manchester's website.



# Lecture launches 'Antifascistas' at People's History Museum

By Bill Williams

Close on 150 people were present at Manchester's People's History Museum on 7 August to hear a lecture by historian Richard Baxell and to listen to songs and poetry about the Spanish Civil War. The event was sponsored by the IBMT and organised by its Manchester representatives, Hilary Jones, Dolores Long and Chris Hall. It was planned to coincide with the opening at the museum of the IBMT's "Antifascistas" exhibition on the British and Irish volunteers in the Spanish Civil War.

The acappella group, the

MadDonnas, launched the event with their usual élan with a series of Spanish songs directly related to the war, including "Jarama", the British Battalion's anthem.

Baxell's lecture, accompanied by photographs, film and extracts from interviews conducted with veterans, focused on the everyday experiences of British Brigaders. He is a leading authority on the British volunteers' experience of the civil war and the audience welcomed his interweaving of scholarly comment and a down-to-earth and humane perspective on warfare and its consequences.

Michael Wild, son of Sam Wild,

the legendary commander of the British Battalion, sang a song he had himself composed for the commemoration of the 70th anniversary of the ending of the war.

IBMT Secretary Marlene Sidaway brought the event to a close with a summary of the work of the IBMT and a reading of extracts from the poets of the civil war.

The whole event interested and excited a sympathetic and mostly informed audience, some of whom spoke afterwards of their own knowledge of the war and of documents and photographs which they are prepared to have copied or donated. The audience, whose

interest had clearly been engaged, remained for some time discussing the lecture amongst themselves, viewing the exhibition and exploring the stalls selling books and t-shirts, before rather reluctantly dispersing.

The event was a triumph for the IBMT and one which was ideally suited to a recently extended and refurbished museum concerned to illustrate the "people's history". It was also a tribute to the close working relationship between the IBMT and the museum's staff, who were helpful and cooperative in every possible way. Kate Chatfield acted as the museum's mediator with the event's IBMT organisers.

was unique among Spain's regional governments and autonomous regions in having established an agency charged with remembering the victims of Francoist repression.

The event was followed by a social for Brigaders' families, friends and supporters at the adjacent Premier Inn. On show was the travelling exhibition "Antifascistas", which tells the story of the volunteers from the British Isles.

● This website (in Spanish) contains prisoner lists plus photos from San Pedro de Cardeña: [<http://thejailynews.blogspot.com/2009/06/listado-de-internacionales-delegada.html>].

● Geoff Lawes is to give an illustrated talk at the Royal Hotel, Ferensway, Hull on 10 September, from 7.30pm-9pm, on the International Brigade volunteers from Hull.

## Dad's Army: recalling the IB connection

Richard Thorpe, IBMT committee member and member of the La Columna Spanish Civil War reenactment group, reports that the group's

presence at the commemoration at Osterley Park, west London, for the 70th anniversary of the formation of the Home Guard generated considerable public interest.

"Media coverage was amazing," he said afterwards. "We made Radio London, the Forces Network, ITN and BBC Breakfast and BBC News 24."

Several prominent International Brigade veterans, notably Tom Wintringham and Hugh Slater, were instrumental in the creation of the Home Guard at Osterley Park, whose story has been popularised by the "Dad's Army" BBC TV comedy sitcom.

Thorpe now hopes that the National Trust, which owns Osterley Park, can be persuaded to agree a more permanent link at the former Home Guard headquarters to acknowledge the part played by International Brigaders.

"Dad's Army" fans will know that in one episode (the second in the third series), "Battle School", there is a Captain Rodrigues who fought in the Spanish Civil War. He instructs the fictional platoon from Warmington-On-Sea in guerilla war tactics – just as Wintringham did when he was in charge of Osterley Park.



**AT THE ARC DE TRIOMPHE:** International Brigaders are greeted with full military honours by the tomb of the unknown soldier beneath the Arc de Triomphe in Paris on 28 May. The ceremony was organised during a meeting of representatives from 15 countries in the French capital to discuss greater coordination between various groups commemorating the International Brigades. The meeting was convened by ACER-AVER, the French Association of Volunteers and Friends of Combatants in Republican Spain. The IBMT representatives at the meeting, Marlene Sidaway and Pauline Fraser, welcomed moves towards more international contacts but stressed that individual organisations should remain autonomous. They also said that any international coordination should preferably be centred in Spain. More pictures and report (in French): [[www.acer-aver.fr](http://www.acer-aver.fr)].

## Joe Kahn

By Richard Baxell

International Brigade veteran Joseph Kahn died on 17 July, aged 94. Born in London in 1916 to Russian Jewish immigrants, he grew up in Tottenham, leaving school at 15. It was the midst of the Great Depression and not an auspicious time to be looking for employment. However, he managed to find a number of jobs, before securing permanent work as a warehouseman. A strong believer in workers' rights, Kahn joined the Houndsditch and Whitechapel branch of the National Amalgamated Union of Shop Assistants, Warehousemen and Clerks in 1935, and was instrumental in persuading colleagues to strike for better working conditions.

Like many other young Jewish men in the 1930s, Kahn was an active anti-fascist. This led to him joining the Communist Party, who were then at the centre of the battles with Sir Oswald Mosley's British Union of Fascists. He was arrested at a demonstration at Ridley Road in Dalston and was bailed out by his mother, who fully supported his actions. He was also one of the protestors at Cable Street on 4 October 1936, which successfully prevented Mosley from leading his Blackshirts in a provocative march through the Jewish areas of London's East End.

Kahn was horrified by the rise of fascism across Europe. As he later recounted: "We were very conscious of the early reports from Germany which filled us with horror, detestation and a determination that this evil had to be fought." General Franco's fascist-backed revolt against the Spanish Republic in July 1936 soon offered him the chance to participate in the fight.

Angered by the British government's dupli-

Graeme Robertson/The Guardian



Joe Kahn at the Spanish embassy in London in 2009.

tous policy of "non-intervention" in the Spanish Civil War, Kahn decided to volunteer to fight in Spain. In December 1936 he became one of nearly 2,500 from Britain and Ireland to join the International Brigades, as part of the newly-formed British Battalion. Following a brief period of training, rendered virtually useless by the desperate shortages of arms and ammunition, he went into battle on 12 February 1937 at the now infamous Jarama valley, to the south of Madrid.

The inexperienced British volunteers were pitched against Franco's elite Army of Africa and suffered appalling casualties. Kahn was wounded on the second day of the battle, suffering concussion and a serious wound to his eye. Nevertheless, he was one of the lucky ones; of the 500 that went into action on 12 February, only a third remained in the line two days later. He took no further part in the fighting, spending the next six months in and out of hospitals, before being repatriated to Britain in August 1937.

On his return to Britain, Kahn was appalled by

descriptions of Stalin's purges and decided to leave the Communist Party, joining, instead, the Labour Party. Marked unfit for service during the Second World War, he took on the highly dangerous job of a fire-fighter in London. During the war he met Sarah, known always as Sally, and they were married in 1941.

After the war, he briefly worked for a furniture firm, before establishing a business in 1946 with his wife, selling office furniture. He also continued his political activities, becoming a Labour councillor and financial officer in Hackney. In 1956 he was elected Labour mayor for the borough. His particular concern was social housing, though he also had a significant influence on cultural activities within the borough. If bringing a symphony orchestra to perform in the Hackney Empire was not an unqualified success, his support for the left-wing Theatre Workshop, run by Joan Littlewood and Gerry Raffles, certainly was. His pressure led to the allocation of a small financial grant, which eventually shamed the neighbouring borough of Stratford, home of the theatre, to do likewise.

Joe was, for a time, a magistrate, though his seeming unwillingness to ever convict anyone ensured that his time on the bench was rather brief. He finally retired from work in 1990, aged 74, very reluctantly, following a stroke.

In June 2009 Joe was one of seven volunteers to attend the Spanish embassy in London for a ceremony to present the surviving veterans with Spanish citizenship and passports.

## Bernard Knox

By Jim Jump

Bernard Knox, who died on 22 July in Bethesda, Maryland, US, at the age of 95, was one of the first International Brigade volunteers from Britain. He continued the fight against fascism during the Second World War as a US Army captain working with the French and Italian resistance and afterwards became a distinguished classics scholar.

Born in Bradford in 1914, the son of a professional pianist, Knox was raised in south London, where he was educated at Battersea Grammar School before winning a scholarship in 1933 to study classics at St John's College, Cambridge. There he began reading the works of Karl Marx: "Like many of my generation faced with what seemed to be the collapse of capitalism, I turned to the texts that seemed to offer an explanation of our dilemma – above all, that remarkable document 'The Communist Manifesto'."

He also joined the Cambridge Socialist Club, where he befriended the dashing young poet John Cornford. They were part of a generation of students attracted to communism and alarmed by the growth of fascism in Europe.

When the Spanish Civil War began in July 1936, Cornford immediately went to Spain to help the Republican cause. He enlisted with the revolutionary militias on the Aragón front, but came



**RETURN TO SPAIN:** The fourth annual hike on the Brunete battlefield was marked this year by the scattering of the ashes of US International Brigader Jack Shafran in the River Guadarrama by family friend Olivia Jongerson. He died in 2008, leaving a request for his ashes to rest in Spain: "the country that I loved so much". Organised by the Madrid-based AABI (Association of Friends of the International Brigades), the hike was held on 3 July and toured sites where the International Brigades, including the British Battalion, took part in fierce fighting between 6-27 July 1937. See a video of the ceremony at: [[www.youtube.com/watch?v=VuZLTHKfHxk&feature=channel](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VuZLTHKfHxk&feature=channel)]. More photos can be viewed at: [[www.nodo50.org/Emotivo-homenaje-a-las-Brigadas.html](http://www.nodo50.org/Emotivo-homenaje-a-las-Brigadas.html)].

home in September 1936 to persuade others to join the fight. He contacted Knox, then aged 21, who recalled: “He had returned to England to recruit a small British unit that would set an example of training and discipline (and shaving) to the anarchistic militias operating out of Barcelona. He asked me to join and I did so without a second thought.”

Cornford – who was to be killed in action at Lopera on 28 December 1936 – took his group to the International Brigade base at Albacete, where they received some training and were assigned to the machine-gun company of the French Commune de Paris Battalion, with Knox as an interpreter.

The British unit took part in the battles in and around Madrid in November and December 1936 at the University City, Casa de Campo and Boadilla del Monte, where Knox was so badly wounded he was left for dead: “The order to withdraw soon came; we did so by sections, one covering the other with fire as it came back. As our section was moving back, dragging the [machine] gun, I felt a shocking blow and a burning pain through my neck and right shoulder and fell to the ground on my back with blood spurting up like a fountain. John [Cornford] came back, with David [Mackenzie], our Oxford man who had been a medical student. I heard him say: ‘I can’t do anything about that’ and John bent down and said: ‘God bless you, Bernard’ and left. They had to go; they had to set up the gun and cover the withdrawal of our other crew. And they were sure that I was dying. So was I. As the blood continued to spout I could feel my consciousness slipping fast away.”

Alone, Knox regained consciousness and with the help of a young *miliciano* made his way to the dressing station at Las Rozas and was then moved to the International Brigade hospital housed in the Hotel Palace in Madrid.

His neck injury required further medical attention and he was repatriated in January 1937. “Back home, I watched in utter despondency as the British government persisted in its policy of appeasement and the prospect of victory in Spain receded fast as Hitler and Mussolini gave Franco a steadily increasing preponderance in weapons and troops.”

In 1939 he moved to the United States and married Betty Baur, an American student he had met at Cambridge and who, as a novelist, would use the name Bianca Van Orden. They stayed together until her death in 2006.

In 1942 Knox joined the US Army and was promoted to captain in 1944, by which time he had also become a naturalised US citizen. In July of that year, while serving in England in an OSS (Office of Strategic Services) unit, he was parachuted into Brittany as part of Operation Jedburgh and worked with local members of the French Resistance. In 1945 he was sent to work with the Italian partisans and was involved in heavy fighting during the Gothic Line and Po Valley campaigns. He later recalled: “The OSS also gave many Americans who had fought in the Brigades a chance to use their skills. [They] didn’t



Bernard Knox in Connecticut, US, in 1941.

care what your politics were or might have been as long as you were willing to fight, and there were many ex-Brigadiers who did dangerous and effective work between and behind the lines in Italy.”

He returned to the US with two Bronze Stars and the Croix de Guerre “avec palme”, the decoration’s highest category. The citation was signed by Charles de Gaulle and said: “Although the area [Finistère] was particularly well-patrolled by the enemy, he did not hesitate to undertake long and dangerous journeys to organise the arms drops that allowed 4,000 men of the Maquis to take part in the liberation of Brittany. Constantly exposing himself to hardship and always present at the most dangerous points, Captain Knox led a number of particularly successful ambushes and attacks.”

Following his return from Spain, Knox had become disillusioned by Stalin’s show trials and ceased to consider himself a communist. He was sickened in particular by the recall to Moscow and imprisonment of the commander of the International Brigades during the defence of Madrid, General Kléber (*nom de guerre* for Manfred

**“How, I wondered, could anyone be a premature anti-fascist? ... If you were not premature, what sort of anti-fascist were you supposed to be? A punctual anti-fascist? A timely one?”**

Stern), “whose coolness under fire at University City had taught us all how to face danger”.

Though Knox remained a defender of the Spanish Republic and a champion of the cause of freedom in Spain, he joined no political party in the US and refrained from political activity. He was taken aback when in 1946 the chairman of Yale University’s classics department called him a “premature anti-fascist”, a phrase he would subsequently discover was the FBI code for a communist. “How, I wondered, could anyone be a premature anti-fascist? Could there be anything such as a premature antidote to a poison? A premature antiseptic? A premature antitoxin? A premature anti-racist? If you were not premature, what sort of anti-fascist were you supposed to be? A punctual anti-fascist? A timely one?”

His political past did not, however, prevent him from being accepted as a PhD classics student at Yale where, following the award of his doctorate, he also taught. In 1961 he was appointed the director of Harvard’s Center for Hellenic Studies in Washington DC. He held the post until his retirement in 1985.

The book which established his academic reputation, “Oedipus at Thebes: Sophocles’ Tragic Hero and His Time”, was published in 1957. Later came “The Heroic Temper: Studies in Sophoclean Tragedy” (1964) and the acclaimed “Word and Action: Essays on the Ancient Theater” (1979). Among his other books were “Essays Ancient and Modern” (1990), which includes chapters on his wartime experiences in Spain and Italy, and “The Oldest Dead White European Males and Other Reflections on the Classics” (1993), in which he challenges the criticisms of the classics made by “advocates of multiculturalism and militant feminism”.

For the full text of Knox’s 1998 lecture at New York University, “Premature Anti-Fascist”, in which he recounts his political education and experiences in Spain, see [[www.english.illinois.edu/maps/scw/knox.htm](http://www.english.illinois.edu/maps/scw/knox.htm)].

## Also remembered

- The death of historian **Jim Fyrth** was announced in June by the Socialist History Society. Among his books was the groundbreaking study published in 1986 “The Signal Was Spain: The Spanish Aid Movement in Britain, 1936-39”. With Sally Alexander he also edited “Women’s Voices from the Spanish Civil War” (1991).
- Austrian International Brigader and lifelong socialist **Ferdinand Hackl** died on 10 May. Born in Vienna in 1918 to a poor family, he became a Young Communist at the age of 14 and in 1935 was jailed for his political activities. In 1937 he went to Spain and joined the 86th Mixed Brigade, fighting on various southern and eastern fronts until the final retreat from Barcelona early in 1939. In France, he was interned at camps at St Cyprien and Gurs before being handed to the Gestapo following the Nazi occupation. He was imprisoned at the Dachau concentration camp until 1945.



**CUTTING:** An article about Archie Johnstone (see below) from *The Scotsman*, which is believed to be from about 1948.

● Andrew Ogilvie is investigating the work of **Archie Johnstone**, his grandmother's brother, who was a journalist from the mid 1930s until the 1950s. When the Spanish Civil War started he owned a hotel with his wife at Lloret de Mar, but became involved with the Republican cause as a journalist based in Barcelona until the fall of the city in December 1938. The family understands that he was making a radio broadcast at the time and just escaped over the Pyrenees with his wife. In 1947 Johnstone was appointed editor of *British Ally* in Moscow, eventually renouncing his British citizenship. He published "In the Name of Peace" (1952), where he describes his First World War experiences, his journalistic background and his disgust with post-Second World War Europe. If anyone has more information about Johnstone during the Spanish Civil War, contact Andrew Ogilvie at [jandy\_ogilvie@yahoo.co.uk].

● Ronald Finch is trying to find information about his uncle, **Robert Finch**, born in Poplar, London, in 1911 or 12. Contact the IBMT Secretary (details on page 2) if you know anything about this Brigader.

● Joanne Phillips is trying to find out about **Charles Finlayson**, brother of her mother **Aileen Finlayson**. She believes they may have had something to do with the International Brigades. Contact [japhillips.25@gmail.com] if you can help.

● Lila Waiz, a volunteer at the Working Class Movement Library in Salford, is interested in trying to solve the following puzzle. In 1939 Picasso's painting "**Guernica**" was exhibited in a car showroom in Manchester, because art galleries refused to show it. The location was 2 Victoria Street, near the cathedral, and the painting was shown from 2 to 15 February.

All proceeds from entrance fees went to Manchester Foodships for Spain. Waiz cannot find out any more information about this extraordinary event. Can anyone else shed any light? If so, please contact Lila via the library at [enquiries@wcmf.org.uk]; tel: 0161-736 3601.

● Graham Bengie is researching a book on the fall of **Málaga** in February 1937 and the atrocities that the Nationalist forces carried out afterwards. He knows about Peter Chalmers Mitchell's eye-witness account in "My House in Malaga", as well as Arthur Koestler's "Spanish Testament", and about Canadian International Brigader Dr Norman Bethune, who witnessed the shelling of refugees fleeing the city. He would welcome any further information from anyone who was there or has or had a family member who was in Málaga during February 1937. Contact [graham.benge@firsttakemedia.co.uk].

● Olivia Farnesy is looking for information about her grandfather, a Republican exile who came to England after Franco's victory and in the 1940s was living in Coventry and working as a miner. He may also have been in the British forces during the war. He had changed his name to "**Miguel Gonzales**" but his original surname might have been Muñoz. Olivia does not know where in Spain he was born, and his date of birth could have been in 1912, 1919 or 1920. He died in 1973 of a heart attack exacerbated by a mining related breathing condition. During the 1950s he and his family moved to Nottingham where they lived in Rothersey Avenue and he worked in the Clifton pit, where he was known as "Spanish Mick" to his mates. Olivia's mother recalled visiting the Spanish/English family of a university lecturer who she believed had helped her husband in Spain; their name was something like Falomere or Falomeans and they lived in the Wollaton area of Nottingham in the 1950s. Email [olivia.farnesy@googlemail.com] or tel: 07796-396 193.

● In our last issue we gave an incorrect email for Patrick Black, who is interested in finding out more about the anti-fascist struggles in **Sheffield and South Yorkshire** during the 1930s, along with information about Sheffield's involvement in the fight against Franco and fascism in Spain. If you can help him, contact: [profpattblack@hotmail.com].

*If you do not have access to email, contact the IBMT Secretary (details on page 2). Please share your information about Brigaders with Jim Carmody, the IBMT's researcher: [jamescamody@yahoo.co.uk].*



● **7-18 September 2010:** The IBMT's "Antifascistas" exhibition; Old Market, Westgate, Rotherham S60 1QA; contact Joan Brown for more information: 01709-372 887.

● **20 September-1 October 2010:** "Antifascistas" exhibition at the Marx Memorial Library, 37a Clerkenwell Green, London EC1R 0DU; 1pm- 6pm Monday-Friday; visit [www.marx-memorial-library.org] for more details.

● **20 September 2010:** Lecture "The Consequences of the War in Spain and the Recovery of Historical Memory" by Javier Moreno (Domingo Malagón Foundation, Madrid), 6.30pm; Marx Memorial Library, 37a Clerkenwell Green, London EC1R 0DU; £2.50/£1 concessions; [www.marx-memorial-library.org].

● **21-22 September 2010:** Conference on "Violence and Memory: considering repression and resistance in Spain 1936-1952 in comparative perspective" at London School of Economics; speakers include Paul Preston, Helen Graham and Julián Casanova; £50 (free to PhD students); more details: [www.lse.ac.uk/internationalhistory/events/violenceandmemoryconference/home.aspx].

● **27 September 2010:** Film screening "The Good Fight: The Abraham Lincoln Brigade in the Spanish Civil War"; 6.30pm; Marx Memorial Library, 37a Clerkenwell Green, London EC1R 0DU; £5 (booking advisable); [www.marx-memorial-library.org].

● **2 October 2010:** Informal symposium entitled "The Spanish Civil War and Popular Memory in the English-Speaking World"; Butetown History & Arts Centre, Bute Street, Cardiff CF10 5AN; 2pm; website: [www.bhac.org].

● **7 October 2010:** Lecture by John Callow, Director of the Marx Memorial Library: "Freedom Was Never Won Without a Fight – Motivation and Mobilisation of the British Battalion of the International Brigades, 1936-1938"; 12.30pm; National Army Museum, Royal Hospital Road, London SW3 4HT; more information: [www.national-army-museum.ac.uk].

● **9 October 2010:** Lecture by Paul Preston, "The Crimes of Franco"; 2.30pm; Kensington & Chelsea Library Lecture Theatre, Phillimore Walk, London W8 7RX; organised by Basque Children of '37 Association; tell [secretary@basquechildren.org] if you intend going.

● **16 October 2010:** IBMT annual general meeting; 3.30pm; Unite, Jack Jones House, 2 Churchill Way, Liverpool, L3 8EF; day's programme starts at 12.30pm; social at 7.30pm in Casa Bar, 29 Hope Street, L1 9BQ; see back page for more details.

● **17 October 2010:** Tour of Liverpool (as part of the IBMT AGM weekend); 10am followed by lunch at 1pm at La Viña restaurant, 11-15 Hope Street, L2 5QY; contact IBMT Secretary (page 2 for details) for reservations.

● **17 October 2010:** Unveiling of memorial seats to International Brigader and writer Ralph Fox (1900-1936) and Aid Spain activist and anti-fascist campaigner Hilda Baruch (née Froom) (1918-2009); Piece Hall, Halifax HX1 2RE; 4.30pm; confirm provisional arrangements with IBMT: [secretary@international-brigades.org.uk] or tel: 020-8555 6674.

● **8 November 2010:** Lecture "Homage to Caledonia: Scotland and the Spanish Civil War" by Daniel Gray; 6.30pm; Marx Memorial Library, 37a Clerkenwell Green, London EC1R 0DU; £2.50/£1 concessions; [www.marx-memoriallibrary.org].

*NB: Events not organised by the IBMT are the responsibility of the individuals and organisations concerned.*





Above: Margaret Powell (top left) with other nurses in Spain.

Right: Partly-hidden (foreground) next to Sam Lesser in Barcelona in 1938; also pictured is Sam Wild with two unidentified nurses.

Far right: Being made Dame of the Order of Loyalty to the Spanish Republic by the exiled Republican government, with Luis Portillo (left) and Welsh Brigader Jim Brewer.



## Notes from the Aragón front

**MARGARET POWELL (1913-1990) was the last British International Brigade nurse to leave Spain, losing her passport in the chaos of the retreat into France as hundreds of thousands of Republicans fled from Franco's advancing army in January 1939.**

**At the border she was arrested by French police and taken to the refugee camp at Argelès-sur-Mer, where refugees lived on sand dunes with no shelter and in appalling sanitary conditions.**

**She was finally rescued by a Quaker relief team and was later honoured by the exiled Spanish Republic "for her valiant action as a nurse... for her faith, self-sacrifice and devotion to our wounded and to our war victims".**

**After the war she married International Brigader (and current IBMT Chair) Sam Lesser.**

**This is an extract from an article that she wrote in Spain for the April 1938 issue of *British Nursing Journal*.**

After spending several months in a small village on the Aragon front serving at an urgent surgical centre, the division to which we were attached became a "shock division" moving from place to place; we, as the mobile surgical team, moving with it. We reached the end of our journey, which was high up in the Pyrenees at midnight and for the rest of the night we heard mules and trucks go by towards the front line – in some places less than four miles away.

Early next day we commenced making our preparations, selecting for the theatre a shed which had been used as a slaughterhouse (there was no other choice). At least it had the virtue of a roof, even if some of the walls were missing. Blankets were hung where the walls should have been, whilst the remaining walls were white-washed and the mud scraped off the floor...

All the afternoon and evening we heard the sound of battle, and we knew that soon our period of "idleness" would cease. The wounded began to arrive at about six o'clock in the morn-

ing, a grim contrast to the loveliness of the Pyrenees, and we started our work without doing more than struggle into our clothes and washing our hands.

In addition to being surgically responsible for our own division of over 10,000 soldiers, we were also detailed to attend another 3,000 men because their division had no surgeon.

All the wounded, many of whom had to be brought down from the mountains on mules, were first treated at the first aid stations and then came on to us. Ambulance after ambulance – "six abdominals and a couple of heads – all for operation". Next one: more abdominals, more heads, compound fractures, "all for operation". And for all this, only one surgeon – Spanish – who just goes on and on, speaking only to enquire what is next; making anxious enquiries about the state of the last case; asking about the stock of sterile material, and above all passing never-failing words of encouragement to the wounded, even after 24 hours of constant work!

We had no electricity, but worked with primus lamps and candles and when all the mantles broke, just candles. Imagine if you can, a surgeon performing a laparotomy, finding and suturing a liver wound, or maybe 24 or more intestinal perforations, performing a nephrectomy, removing a spleen, all by candlelight. Meanwhile we grope around the table for instruments, thread needles, break catgut capsule all in the flickering light...

Blood transfusions were given whenever possible, but we could not employ the tubes of blood because we had no refrigerator in which to store them, so the direct method was always used. There were times when it was impossible to find a donor, for everyone within reach had given as much as they could.

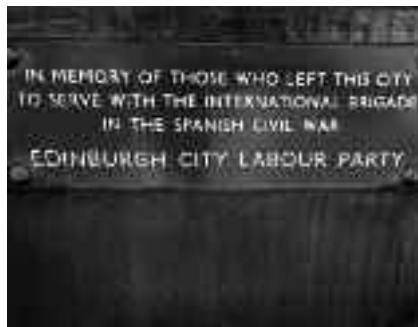
We were, I suppose, always in some sort of danger, but somehow when one is surrounded by danger one does not think of it, and in any case we did not have the time to worry. The only fear which haunted us was the fear that we should not have enough material with which to work. There are things which the Spanish people are able to supply us with, but there are many necessities they cannot provide. We depend on our [Spanish Medical Aid] Committee for these, and so far they have not failed us. The thought that some day they might have to stop supplies through lack of funds is too terrible to contemplate...

If you could know the Spanish people as I have come to know them, you would find the ordinary people brave and kind, fighting not because they love bloodshed as many people would have you believe, but because they know that they MUST fight to save their homes and for the right to live peacefully and decently. They feel and indeed they know that the victory of the Fascist force would mean tyranny and oppression for them and for Spain.

The full article can be read at: [<http://cohse-union.blogspot.com/search/label/Margaret%20Powell>].



Clockwise from left: Memorials in Liverpool, Dundee, Belfast and Edinburgh.



# International Brigade memorials

The IBMT is currently updating its list of memorials in Britain and Ireland to the International Brigades and individual volunteers. If you have any additions or corrections to the list below, or other relevant information about the memorials, please contact *IBMT Newsletter* Editor Jim Jump at: [editor@international-brigades.org.uk] or tel: 020-7228 6504. Memorials in Wales, the Midlands, London, the South-East, the South and the South-West will appear in our next issue.

## Ireland

- BELFAST:** Plaque in the John Hewitt Bar and Restaurant. Unveiled by Bob Doyle, 16 September 2006.
- BELFAST:** Statue in Writers' Square. Erected by International Brigades Commemoration Committee and unveiled by Bob Doyle, 13 October 2007.
- BURNCOURT:** Memorial in Burncourt (Co Tipperary) to Kit Conway, killed at Jarama, February 1937. Unveiled 11 June 2005.
- CLONMEL:** Plaque in ATGWU union office, Clonmel (Co Tipperary). Unveiled by Peter O'Connor and Michael O'Riordan, 1996.
- COALISLAND:** Memorial in Coalisland (Co Tyrone) to Charlie Donnelly, killed at Jarama in February 1937. Erected 2003.
- DOOEGA ACHILL ISLAND:** Memorial at Dooega Achill

- Island (Co Mayo) to Thomas Patten, killed at Madrid, December 1936. Financed locally and from the US. Unveiled 28 October 1984.
- DUBLIN:** Memorial headstone in Glasnevin Cemetery over grave of Frank Ryan. Erected following repatriation of his remains for reburial in June 1979.
- DUBLIN:** Plaque outside SIPTU union HQ, Liberty Hall, Eden Quay, to Irish volunteers. Erected by the Dublin Council of Trade Unions, 5 May 1991.
- DUBLIN:** Plaque in ATGWU union offices. Unveiled by Jack Jones, 1996.
- DUBLIN:** Plaque in memory of Charlie Donnelly, killed at Jarama, February 1937, at University College Dublin. Unveiled 26 February 2008.
- DUNMURRAY:** Memorial chalice in Church of Ireland for Rev Robert Hilliard, killed at Jarama in February 1937.
- INISTIOGE:** Memorial olive grove to Kilkenny volunteers in Woodstock Gardens, Inistioge (Co Kilkenny). Unveiled 30 December 2007.
- INISTIOGE:** Plaque in Inistioge graveyard to George Brown, born in Inistioge (Co Kilkenny), killed at Brunete, July 1937. Unveiled by Jack Jones and Bob Doyle, 28 June 2008.
- KILGARVEN:** Plaque on Morley's Bridge, Kilgarven (Co Kerry), to Michael Lehane. Erected by the Killarney Republican Graves Association and unveiled by Michael O'Riordan, 7 May 1989.
- WATERFORD:** Glass plaques in ATGWU Hall, Keyser Street, to volunteers from Waterford. Erected by Waterford Council of Trades Unions and unveiled by Peter O'Connor and Michael O'Riordan, 1 May 1994.
- WATERFORD:** Monument to Waterford volunteers, erected by the Relatives and Friends of Waterford

International Brigaders. Unveiled by Jack Jones and Michael O'Riordan, 9 July 2004.

## Scotland

- ABERDEEN:** Plaque in Aberdeen Trades Council offices, John Londragan House. Erected 1993.
- ABERDEEN:** Plaque in Concert Hall to Aberdeen volunteers. Erected by Aberdeen City Council.
- ABERDEEN:** Books in the XV Brigade Memorial Library, Aberdeen Unemployed Centre, 54 Frederick Street. Provided by volunteers and the Aberdeen Trades Council, 1989.
- BLANTYRE:** Memorial to three local volunteers killed in Spain at Blantyre Miners' Welfare Club. Erected by East Kilbride & South Lanarkshire Trades Union Council, 24 October 2009.
- DUNDEE:** Plaque in Peace Gardens, Albert Square. Erected by Dundee City Council, 23 February 1975. Rededicated by Jack Jones and Jack Edwards, 11 October 2008.
- EDINBURGH:** Plaque on bench in East Princes Street Gardens. Erected by Edinburgh City Labour Party.
- GLASGOW:** Pasionaria statue in Custom House Quay. Erected by City of Glasgow, 23 February 1980 and rededicated 23 August 2010.
- GLASGOW:** Plaque listing Scottish volunteers killed in Spain in Scottish Trades Union Congress offices, 333 Woodlands Road.
- GLASGOW:** Plaque in Baillieston Public Library to William Keegan. Erected by Scottish Trades Union Congress, National Union of Mineworkers and Glasgow and Strathclyde councils, 1 December 1989.
- IRVINE:** Plaque in Cunninghame House branch

library to John Smith, killed on the Ebro in 1938. Erected by Cunninghame District Council, 1 September 1988.

**KIRKCALDY:** Plaque and memorial, Forth Avenue. Erected by Kirkcaldy District Council and Friends of the International Brigades, May 1980 and September 1986. Rededicated 4 April 2009.

**PERTH:** Memorial for local volunteers at North Inch. Erected by Perthshire International Brigade Memorial Fund, 5 June 2010.

**WHITHORN:** Plaque to Jack Brent (George Dickie). Erected 25 February 2006.

## The North-East & Yorkshire

**BLYTHE:** Sheltered housing, Bob Elliott House, Wright Street, for Bob Elliott, killed at Villanueva de la Cañada. Erected by Borough of Blyth Valley, 2 May 1986.

**DURHAM:** Plaque to Durham volunteers in Miners' Hall. Unveiled by Jack Edwards, 10 October 2009.

**HALIFAX:** Seat in Bull Green to Ralph Fox. Erected by Ralph Fox Memorial Committee, 24 April 1950 and re-dedicated in 1979.

**HULL:** Memorial plaque in Guild Hall, Alfred Gelder Street, to four volunteers killed. Erected by Hull City Council, 1 April 1990.

**LEEDS:** Memorial plaque in Foyer, City Hall, George Street, to Leeds volunteers. Erected by Leeds City Council, 11 November 1989.

**MIDDLESBROUGH:** Wooden memorial plaque, made in 1939, in Town Hall. Rededicated 2009.

**NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE:** Tree and plaque in grounds of City Hall to volunteers from Tyne & Wear. Erected by Newcastle City Council, County Association of Trades Councils, July 1986 and March 1989.

## The North-West

**LIVERPOOL:** Memorial plaque in Unite union offices, Jack Jones House, 2 Churchill Way, L3, to Merseyside volunteers. Originally erected by Merseyside County Council in The People's Centre, Hardman Street, 16 November 1985.

**MANCHESTER:** Carved wood memorial in Town Hall, Albert Square, to Manchester volunteers. Erected by Manchester City Council and Manchester branch of printworkers' union SOGAT, 12 February 1983.

**OLDHAM:** Plaque to the Oldham volunteers in Gallery Oldham, Greaves Street.

**ST HELENS:** Plaque in former Unemployed Workers' Resource Centre, College Street. Unveiled 1 April 1990.

**ST HELENS:** Memorial in Hall, Town Hall, Corporation Street to Bill Feeley. Erected by St Helens Metropolitan Borough Council, 1 November 1987.

**SALFORD:** Plaque in Working Class Movement Library to Independent Labour Party volunteers. Unveiled 30 May 2009.

**STALYBRIDGE:** Plaque to Lilian Urmston at St Paul's Primary School. Erected by Tameside Borough Council, 2008.

*Part 2 in our next issue*

## Expert views on the civil war

Leading historians from Britain and Spain examine various aspects of the International Brigades and the Spanish Civil War in a newly published collection of all the Len Crome Memorial Lectures that have been given up to now.

"Looking Back at the Spanish Civil War" contains all nine of the IBMT-organised lectures from 2002-10, plus photos and a tribute to Len Crome, the volunteer doctor who went to Spain from Britain in 1936 and became chief medical officer of the Republican army's 35th Division.

The tribute was written by Paul Preston, whose lecture "The Crimes of Franco" is included in the new book. Also with two chapters is Richard



Baxell, who writes about the British Battalion early in 1937 – including its baptism of fire at the Battle of Jarama – and examines the record of Laurie Lee's time in Spain in comparison with the author's semi-autobiographical account.

Other contributors are Julián Casanova, Helen Graham, Angela Jackson, Enrique

Moradiellos, Francisco J Romero Salvadó and Ángel Viñas. The subject matter ranges from the experiences and memory of those involved in running a cave hospital during the Battle of the Ebro to topics such as Britain's role in blocking international help for the Spanish Republic and the reasons why Stalin agreed to sell arms to the Republic.

Edited by *IBMT Newsletter* Editor Jim Jump, the book is published by Lawrence & Wishart in collaboration with the IBMT and the Cañada Blanch Centre for Contemporary Spanish Studies.

"Looking Back at the Spanish Civil War" can be ordered from the IBMT for £16.99, including p&p. Send a cheque for this amount to the IBMT, 37 Reginald Road, London E7 9HS. Contact [secretary@international-brigades.org.uk] for enquiries about multiple orders.

## In brief...



● Currently touring the UK is Tayo Aluko's "Call Mr Robeson: A Life With Songs", a tribute to the US actor, singer and political activist **Paul Robeson**.

Written and performed by the Liverpool-based Aluko (pictured), the performance – a mixture of songs and story-telling – makes reference to Robeson's support for the Republic during the Spanish Civil War. Indeed Robeson visited Spain during the war and was photographed with International Brigade volunteers. This autumn, "Call Mr Robeson: A Life With Songs" is at venues in Hemel Hempstead, Mold, Builth Wells, Essex University, Blaenarvon, Liverpool, Stockport, Guildford, Coventry and Lincoln. For more details, see [http://cmr.tayoalukoandfriends.com].

● The September 2010 issue of *The Volunteer*, the always interesting and informative quarterly magazine of ALBA, the IBMT's sister organisation in the US, is available at [www.albavolunteer.org].

● A short film by **Henri Cartier-Bresson** about British and North American International Brigade volunteers in the Spanish Civil War has been found more than 70 years after it had been presumed lost. The 18-minute documentary, which was made in 1937, was screened in New York in 1938 but later vanished. According to a report in *The Times* on 15 May, the film was shot over two days in Aragón and shows the daily life of the British, Canadian and US volunteers. The

film, titled "With the Lincoln Brigade in Spain", was uncovered in the archives of the IBMT's sister organisation in the US, ALBA, in New York. Researchers were able to prove it was Cartier-Bresson's work by matching parts of the film with still images by the French photographer.



**Na-Mara**, who have played at several IBMT events, have released their third album, "The Bite". Illustrating the range of influences on Paul McNamara (above, left) and Rob Garcia (right), "The Bite" presents tunes and songs from the British Isles, Quebec, Brittany, Asturias and Galicia, as well as three of their own compositions. The title track, "The Bite", is a self-penned tribute to all those from the British Isles who fought in the International Brigades in the Spanish Civil War, while "Only For Three Months", set to Javier Tejedor's tune "Cimiano", tells the heartbreaking story of Garcia's father and uncle, evacuated from Bilbao with thousands of other children in May 1937 on the *Habana* following the bombing of Guernica. Fairport Convention virtuoso Chris Leslie (violin) and Dan Garcia (percussion) each join Rob and Paul for three of the 11 tracks. "The Bite" is on the Rightback Records label and can be obtained through the usual retail channels and downloads and from Rightback Records: [www.rightbackrecords.com].

# International Brigade Memorial Trust

Notice of annual general meeting on Saturday 16 October 2010 from 3.30pm-5.30pm at Jack Jones House, Unite the Union, 2 Churchill Way, Liverpool L3 8EF



## AGM agenda

- 1/ Chair's opening remarks
- 2/ Apologies for absence
- 3/ Minutes of previous AGM
- 4/ Matters arising
- 5/ Secretary's report
- 6/ Membership Secretary's report
- 7/ Treasurer's report
- 8/ Election of officers
- 9/ Any other business (AOB)
- 10/ Date and place of next AGM
- 11/ Chair's closing remarks

Send items for AOB to IBMT Secretary Marlene Sidaway at least one week before the AGM; email: [secretary@international-brigades.org.uk]; tel: 020-8555 6674.

## Programme of events for the weekend of 15/16/17 October 2010

### FRIDAY 15th

**From 8pm:** Informal get-together in Philharmonic pub, 36 Hope Street, Liverpool L1 9BX (food available for purchase).

### SATURDAY 16th

**12.30pm:** Re-dedication of International Brigade plaque in foyer of Jack Jones House.

**1pm:** Viewing of IBMT's "Antifascistas" exhibition.

**1.30pm:** Buffet lunch, courtesy of Unite.

**2.15pm:** Talk by Richard Baxell: "British and Irish in the Spanish Civil War".

**3.30pm:** AGM (see agenda, below left).

**5.30pm:** Travel to the Casa Bar, 29 Hope Street, Liverpool L1 9BQ, for social/concert. There will be transport for those who need it. The Casa Bar serves food. Times and performers for the concert to be confirmed.

### SUNDAY 17th

**10am:** History tour of Liverpool (transport hopefully available, if needed).

**1pm:** Lunch at La Viña Spanish restaurant, 11-15 North Street, L2 5QY.

**4.30pm:** In Halifax, West Yorkshire, unveiling of new memorials to Ralph Fox and Hilda Baruch (see page 8 for more details).

Contact the IBMT Secretary (details on left) for any more information about the annual general meeting. Contact the IBMT Secretary or IBMT committee member Hilary Jones (0161-224 1747) if:

- a) You are coming to the AGM.
- b) You will need transport around Liverpool.
- c) You wish to go on the history tour.
- d) You are going to La Viña for lunch on the Sunday.
- e) You plan to go to Halifax on the Sunday.



**CLARION CHOIR:** Spanish Civil War songs.

## Volunteers reclaim place in Notts history

By Lyn Hurst

Congratulations to Nottinghamshire, Mansfield & Nottingham Trades Union Council (NMNTUC) for their two-hour event on 17 July at which the city's memorial to its International Brigade volunteers was rededicated. It could not have been better organised or presented. The 200 people in attendance were entertained by the Nottingham Clarion Choir, who gave brilliant renditions of the songs that evoke our emotional memories of the International Brigades.

The names of all the Nottingham men were read out, followed by poetry written by the Brigaders that gave an understanding of the intense feelings of the volunteers. There were readings too from the biographies of volunteers, offering factual accounts of the war and their living conditions, along with their political thoughts and ideas that lead them to go to Spain and how their actions, and deaths, affected their families at home.

The platform had an excellent backdrop of the widest representation of flags and banners of the whole political spectrum of Republican Spain, which certainly gave a dash of colour to the day.

This was a day that was necessitated by the unprecedented and vile attempt of the Tory council to write the Nottingham Brigaders out of history by removing the plaque that explained the background of the Brigades and their role in fighting fascism in Spain.

A plaque with the names of the Nottingham volunteers is still there, but is arguably meaningless without the now missing pre-amble.

This act of institutional vandalism has only been equalled by actual vandalism to other monuments, here and in Spain, and the NMNTUC has made a resounding statement in their fight to get the plaque returned by this rededication.

To their credit the Labour Party has vowed to return it, if they win back power on the city council.

This is clearly not an outcome that the trades union council is willing to wait for, so we must continue to support the NMNTUC in its quest.

**MARCHERS:** Singer-songwriter and IBMT supporter Billy Bragg (second from left) joined the IBMT contingent for part of the march through the Dorset village of Tolpuddle on 18 July to remember the Tolpuddle Martyrs who were convicted and transported to Australia in 1834 for forming a trade union. For the second year running the IBMT had a stall at the three-day festival, which proved a popular draw for the thousands of people attending.

