



# INTERNATIONAL BRIGADE MEMORIAL TRUST

Patrons Ken Livingstone  
Prof. Paul Preston

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

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## INTERNATIONAL BRIGADE MEMORIAL TRUST

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**A**s this 70th anniversary year gets underway, we know it's going to be a very busy. Looking back over the past year, the Annual General Meeting in Dublin (see middle pages) was a great success, and we must congratulate Manus, Annette and Brenda O'Riordan and all who took part in the smooth organisation of the event and thank them most sincerely for a very special weekend.

Of course the highlight was being received by Ireland's President, Mary McAleese, who gave a particularly warm welcome to the Brigade veterans, having heard about the Spanish Civil War from a family friend when she was a child. The Taoiseach, Bertie Ahern, also sent us a very kind message for the occasion.

Looking ahead, we're very fortunate to have Dr Enrique Moradiellos as our speaker at the Len Crome Memorial Lecture on 4 March (see back page).

The 15 July meeting will also be memorable. The principal speaker will be Rodney Bickerstaffe, and we will launch our poetry anthology. Although work on the Jubilee Gardens regeneration may have begun by then, I have had reassurances that our memorial will still be in the same place this year, but it will be re-located to a prominent place in the future.

The Manchester AGM is being organised by Dolores Long and Hilary Jones and already they are well ahead with their plans (see page 8).

In addition there are lots of events being organised around the country and in Spain during the coming year. After our commemorative walk over the Pyrenees in April, there will be an inauguration of a monument to the International Brigades at Morata, an International Congress on the IB on 4/5/6 October, a Homenaje/Tribute also in October or November and on 27/28/29 November an International Congress on the Spanish Civil War; more details as we get them.

Finally, thank you for all your support, particularly to the committee who do such good work. And my personal thanks too, to all who sent messages of condolence when David died. They were a great comfort in a time of sorrow. Salud,

*Marlene Sidaway*

## Irish President greets the veterans



President of Ireland Mary McAleese receives a courtesy call from International Brigade veterans at Áras an Uachtaráin, the official presidential residence, on 15 October 2005, one of the highlights of the Trust's Annual General Meeting in Dublin. Pictured from left are Michael O'Riordan and Bob Doyle and, from right, Jack Jones and Jack Edwards. Full story on Page 4.

Nearly 70 members and friends of the Trust have signed up for the Commemorative Pyrenees Walk on 14-17 April, with a waiting list in case any who have booked places will be unable to go.

We will have a send-off at Super-Ias-IIIas at the beginning of our walk on 15 April, supported by the local councils. As we walk through the Pyrenees, we will pause to remember the Brigaders who passed that way 70 years ago. We will read their poetry and accounts of the crossing.

Our walk will conclude at Col de Manrell, where there is a monument to Luis Companys, the Catalan President during the Republic, who was returned to Spain by Vichy France and executed on Franco's orders.

The following day we will rally at the Castell de Sant Ferran in Figueres, where volunteers mustered before being sent to Albacete and surrounding villages for training. We may even have a plaque put up to the Brigaders at the fortress. I shall be visiting Spain in February to put the finishing touches to the arrangements.

Members who live in France or Spain are invited to join us at 11am on 15 April, either at Super-Ias-IIIas on the French side of the border or at Col de Manrell about 4pm. The nearest village to the border on the Catalan side is La Vajol,

## In the footsteps of the volunteers

where you could park and walk up to the Col.

We may also need transport by car to Col de Manrell for non-walkers or those who have had enough. The road is too narrow and steep for our coaches. If you can offer space in your vehicle, please let me know. If you would like to join us in the evening at Figueres, also please let me know, so I can add you to the numbers for the restaurant: [pauline@fraser4219.freeserve.co.uk](mailto:pauline@fraser4219.freeserve.co.uk) tel: (+44) (0)20-8506 0088.

*Pauline Fraser*

# Brief notes

There are reports elsewhere of our **Annual General Meeting** in Dublin and the tremendous honour accorded to us by the President of Ireland, Mary McAleese. We also received a message from the Taoiseach (Prime Minister), Bertie Ahern, which was read out at the meeting: "I am sorry that I cannot join you in person today. However, I wish to take the opportunity of your Annual General Meeting to salute those who fought and died for democracy in Spain during the tragic civil war. In particular, I wish to send my best wishes to those great fighters Michael O'Riordan, Bob Doyle, Jack Edwards and Jack Jones. Jack Edwards and Jack Jones are no strangers to our shores and their presence here today reminds us yet again of the strong ties between their home town of Liverpool and Ireland. Jack Jones' contribution to the cause of international labour will be long and widely remembered. His parents decision to name him after the great Big Jim Larkin no doubt set him on the right track from birth. The willingness of those who joined the International Brigades to sacrifice all so that others could enjoy a democratic way of life is an inspiration to us all and the fact that Spain is today a leading democratic nation in a strong and united Europe is no small tribute to them. Best wishes."

George and Mary Park complained to Scottish Television about the use of the **La Pasionaria statue** in an episode of "Taggart", when a corpse was seen to be hanging from it in the opening shots. This was particularly unfortunate, as the date of transmission was the 11 November. We received a letter from the series' producer, Graeme Gordon, who wished to convey his sincere apologies for any offence caused. He added: "There was never any deliberate intention to offend and the significance of the date... was an unfortunate coincidence." George Park also sent me a newspaper cutting setting out proposals for the development of the quayside surrounding the statue. It would be helpful if all of you in Glasgow kept an eye on this!

**Middlesbrough and Teesside volunteers:** I'm proposing to put most of David Marshall's Spanish Civil War memorabilia and books in the Local Social History Department of Middlesbrough Library, and I would like to hear from relatives of other Brigaders or Aid Spain activists from the area who would like to do the same so that we can establish a "Teesside Archive". My contact details are on the front page. Of course, the Marx Memorial Library is the main depository of all our archives and I shall be sending copies there too.

**Belfast** celebrates International Women's Day, 8 March 2006, and also marks the 70th anniversary of the Spanish anti-fascist war with a talk by Angela Jackson – "The Clarion Call: Women and the Spanish Civil War" – in the Central Hall, Belfast Institute of Further and Higher Education from 12.30-3.30pm. In the evening there will be an IWD

event in the John Hewitt pub, Donegall Street from 7pm when "Into the Fire", a film about American women's involvement in the war will be shown, followed by musicians/singers/poets. All proceeds go to the International Brigades Commemoration Committee to establish a memorial to Belfast people who died fighting with the International Brigades in Spain. Further details from [lwalker@belfastinstitute.ac.uk] or 07751-951 785.

Professor Brian Tate has a selection of **videos** of Spanish Civil War-related subjects, including an interview with Walter Gregory, and films of the meetings in Gandesa in 1996. This brings to the fore the question of where to keep such archive material. There are now lots of videos and film footage of the various homenajes (tributes), interviews with Brigaders as well as the meetings in Jubilee Gardens etc. We should try and find a good home for them where they can be kept safely, yet available to members for research or for showing at events, or just as a reminder of the occasions and circumstances in which they were filmed. Anyone with bright ideas as to how we could store them, please get in touch.

Still on the subject of **archive material**, we would like to hear from any members who could advise us on how to safeguard the rights of such material; similarly, with any **family archives**. If members come into possession of any unpublished memoirs or any other material relating to the International Brigades and the Spanish Civil War, or know of any that might be thrown away, please let us know. So much has been lost in the past and we owe it to future generations to safeguard the past as best we can.

The Centro de Documentación de las Brigadas Internacionales (**International Brigades Documentation Centre**) created by the Madrid-based Friends of the International Brigades (Asociación de Amigos de las Brigadas Internacionales – AABI) in collaboration with the regional government of Castilla La Mancha, is situated in the Archivo Histórico Provincial de Albacete, C/Padre Romano n°1. Since the creation of this centre in 1998, it has been the recognised archive by the Brigades' associations. All the archives donated to the AABI, as well as the ones obtained by agreement with other institutions, such as the Resistance Archive of Vienna or the Military Historical Archive of Prague, have been placed there.

A plaque commemorating the life and work of Aberdeen political activist, International Brigader and folk singer **Bob Cooney** was unveiled recently by the Lord Provost of Aberdeen, John Reynolds. The plaque is on the front of the Voluntary Service Aberdeen Building at Castlegate and was instigated by George Thomson of Aberdeen Trades Council.

The website for Martin Sugarman's references to **Jews in the Spanish Civil War** is [www.virtual-

jewishlibrary.com]. Readers can ask the site to search for "Jews in the Spanish Civil War".

Scots Brigader **Steve Fullarton** is giving a talk on his experiences in the Spanish Civil War at Leith Public Library on 21 February at 6.30-8pm. Full details from Christine Stark on 0131-529 5517.

Brian Walsh had a wonderful day being shown round the **battlefield at Brunete** by Ernesto Viñas and friends. In Ernesto's words: "It was a cruel, cruel battle – static, like in the First World War." They will "tailor-make" a tour to suit individual requirements. For further information contact Ernesto Viñas at: Plaza Buenavista 11-3"-D, 28600 Navalcarnero, Madrid, Spain; tel.(+34) 91-811 26 02 or visit [www.terra.es/personal/chechinet] and [http://es.geocities.com/batallabrunete].

Mike Arnott, Secretary of Dundee Trades Union Council's talk on "**Dundee and the Spanish Civil War**" to the Friends of the Dundee Archives on 3 November 2005 was very well received. Afterwards, a woman in the audience showed him her late father's copy of Bill Rust's book "Britons in Spain". The title page is signed by seven people. Five are Brigaders with known Dundee links: Peter Cassidy, James Chalmers, George and Daniel Gillan and Henry Smith. Another signatory is William Harrington, but it is not known if he had any links with Dundee. The seventh signature is faded, but looks like John Scott Peat (or Paul or Read). Also on the roll of honour at the back of the book there is an E McGuire but not William McGuire, whose name is on the Dundee memorial and whose mother has a letter quoted on Page 137 in the book. Were there two McGuires from Dundee? Can anyone clarify?

**Thelma Ruby's** varied and exciting life in the theatre has included starring with Judi Dench in "Cabaret" and Topol in "Fiddler on the Roof" and she has a one-woman show/lecture entitled "That's Entertainment". In November last, as a result of a meeting with comrades from Leicester at the Jubilee Gardens Memorial Day, she presented the show to members of Leicester Secular Society. The performance is free but she asks that afterwards she can do a book signing of "Double or Nothing" – a biography of herself and her late husband **Peter Frye** in which there is a fascinating chapter of his experiences with the Abraham Lincoln Battalion. This year, Thelma has bookings in Glasgow and Bournemouth in May; Bristol in June and Newcastle in August. If you would like to see the show in any of these places, or would like to book it for a group of your own, contact Thelma on 020-8789 3526.

Don't forget: Our **badges** are good value and look good for £2 each (plus p&p 50p) – cheaper if you get more for a group.

*Marlene Sidaway*

# President's message

This year will be a truly memorable one, being the 70th anniversary of the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War. There will be many events to mark this in many lands but most notably for us firstly we will have the Len Crome Memorial Lecture and get-together in March. Then at Easter many comrades and friends will be going on a memorial trek across the Pyrenees.

Later in July, we have our annual Jubilee Gardens commemoration at

our great memorial sculpture site when we hope to see the biggest attendance ever! To coincide with this we anticipate the book launch of a wonderful new anthology of poems written exclusively by British and Irish Brigaders and compiled by our good comrade Jim Jump.

Then in October we have our celebratory travelling Annual General Meeting to be held this year in the great city of Manchester, with

a fine programme of events which we hope as many people as possible will attend to make this a truly fine occasion.

We pay homage to our comrades who died in that terrible war and those who have passed away since, and encourage all our friends to remain as active as possible in strengthening our organisation to keep that memory alive!

*¡Salud!*

Jack Jones



## Shadow of the generals

2006 marks 70 years since a group of Spanish military officers rose up against the democratically-elected Republican government. The Republic's defeat in the ensuing civil war ushered in nearly 40 years of dictatorship.

Today finds Spain with a well-established democracy of nearly 30 years' standing; indeed the socialist party that Franco so viciously suppressed is currently in power. But events from Spain's past still cast a long shadow: the exhumation of bodies of those murdered during the civil war has reopened old wounds and the issue of Catalonian autonomy remains particularly divisive.

The recent warning by Lieutenant-General José Mena Aguido is a mark of the Spanish military's antipathy towards the division of Spain; it also displays the army's long-standing belief in its right to criticise the actions of Spain's elected government. But this interference no longer inspires the fear it once did; there will be no military rising. Even the most reactionary in the Spanish military accept that.

The views of General Mena are those of the Francoist old guard, and have no place in modern Spain. With Mena's dismissal on 13 January, it would appear they have no place in the modern Spanish army either.

*Richard Baxell*

## Conference in Bristol

Dr Martin Hurcombe is organising a conference at Bristol University on 17-19 July to examine the international social, political, military and cultural aspects of the Spanish Civil War. It is hoped that the IBMT will be involved in a supporting public event, presenting a poetry evening (based on the forthcoming Brigaders' anthology), along with Arnold Owen's exhibition and Alan Warren's book-stall. Keynote speakers include Paul Preston, Helen Graham, Michael Richards and Rémi Skoutelsky.

## Obituaries

### David Marshall

David Marshall, one of the last surviving British volunteers, has died, aged 89. Born in Middlesbrough in 1916, he gained a scholarship to high school, where he developed a lifelong love of literature and poetry. After an unhappy period working in the Ministry of Labour, in July 1936 David read that a military revolt had broken out in Spain. Suddenly, his life changed.

David departed for Spain, where he joined the Tom Mann Centuria, later part of the XII International Brigade. In November 1936, his unit was sent to attack Cerro de los Ángeles, near Madrid, where David was wounded in the leg. He returned to England, where he continued to work for the return of democracy in Spain. He joined the International Brigade Association in 1939 and wrote a poem, "Retrospect", which was included in an anthology edited by Stephen Spender and John Lehmann, "Poems for Spain".

David served in the Second World War, experiencing the D-Day landings and the liberation of Belsen. Demobbed in April 1947, he returned to Middlesbrough, before moving to London and working as a joiner with the Theatre Workshop.

After many years living on his lovingly refurbished barges, "Jock" and "Zwerver", in 1992 David moved in with his long-time partner, Marlene Sidaway.

In 2000, he helped establish the IBMT. He continued to write poetry; and a collection, "The Tilting Planet", was published last year.

*Richard Baxell*

*Marlene Sidaway writes: I was very comforted by*



David Marshall (right) in Barcelona in 1936.

*all of the messages of condolence that I received after David died. Donations to the Trust in David's memory and for his book now total over £1,500. Our work will continue to serve as a lasting memorial to him and all Brigaders.*

● Please also remember: **Rob Wardle**, a very active Trust member and son of Robert Wardle, killed at Calaceite on 31 March 1938. Rob placed a plaque in memory of his father and another Brigadier from Hull, James Bentley, in Calaceite in 1992. **Tony Banks**, as Chairman of the Greater London Council in 1985, spoke at the unveiling of our memorial in Jubilee Gardens. The GLC gave financial support and was instrumental in placing the memorial in its prominent position. **Jimmy Carroll**, was a founder of Scottish CND, and a member of the Hands Off Spain committee in Glasgow during the Spanish Civil War.



## A special AGM in Dublin

The IBMT's 2005 Annual General Meeting was held in Ireland for the first time, at Liberty Hall, headquarters of Ireland's largest trade union, SIPTU. The weekend event began with a visit to Áras an Uachtaráin, the official home of the President of Ireland, Mary McAleese, by four International Brigade veterans: Jack Jones, Jack Edwards, Bob Doyle and Michael O'Riordan.

The AGM itself followed in the afternoon, preceded by a ceremony in front of the Liberty Hall memorial to the Irish International Brigade volunteers who had given their lives in defence of the Spanish Republic. The speakers were IBMT President Jack Jones, SIPTU General President Jack O'Connor, and the General Secretary of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions, David Begg. The Roll of Honour of 72 Irish volunteers was read out by Manus O'Riordan, and a wreath was laid in their memory by Deirdre Davey, daughter of Rev Robert M Hilliard, Irish Republican and internationalist, who fell in the battle of Jarama. Christy Moore sang "Viva la Quince Brigada", the song that he composed in honour of those Irish dead, stating that it had been inspired by Michael O'Riordan's book, "Connolly Column".

The lively social evening featured many talented singers and musicians, and there was a special surprise when the Cuban Chargé d'Affaires, Teresita Trujillo, announced that on 20 September 2005, the President of the Republic of Cuba, Fidel Castro, had awarded the Medal of Friendship to the 88-year-old veteran Irish friend of Cuba, Michael O'Riordan.

The weekend's events culminated the following day with a commemorative ceremony in Glasnevin Cemetery at the graveside of Irish International Brigade leader Frank Ryan. Manus O'Riordan, whose children formed the colour party, sang in Spanish, recited a poem by Irish



**Christy Moore sings "Viva la Quince Brigada" on the steps of Liberty Hall before the Dublin AGM. Irish veteran Michael O'Riordan is seated behind.**

Brigader Charlie Donnelly, and gave an immensely moving oration which included Frank Ryan's own account of "the great rally" at Jarama in the "Book of the Fifteenth Brigade".

*For a transcript of Manus's oration, see: [www.geocities.com/irelandscw/IBMTAgm/RyanComm.htm].*

### Proposed memorial at Blaenafon

A meeting was held in December looking into the possibility of erecting a plaque to commemorate the Welsh miners who went to Spain. The meet-

ing was convened by Alan Warren and Ceri Thompson, curator of the Big Pit Museum, Blaenafon. Others present included Arnold Owen, Stephen Thomas (Temple of Peace, Cardiff) Wendy Lewis and Ray Davies.

The possibility of holding a day-long event on Sunday 16 July was discussed, with films, an exhibition, songs by the Cardiff Red Choir and a buffet lunch. More in our next Newsletter, but those interested can contact Alan Warren at [warren.ofbooks@virgin.net].

### Remembering Jack Brent

A memorial plaque to Spanish Civil War hero Jack Brent will be unveiled at a ceremony in Whithorn on 25 February.

Among the guests are likely to be MSPs Alex Fergusson, Chris Ballance, Alasdair Morgan and Tommy Sheridan. Russell Brown MP and the Spanish Consul-General to Scotland, Santiago Salas, should also be in attendance.

The 1pm unveiling will be followed by short speeches. Jack Brent's nephew John Dickie, formerly of Whithorn and now of Northampton, will speak, as will local councillor Alistair Geddes, if council protocol permits.

It is also hoped the Consul-General will say a few words to mark the occasion. A message from IBMT President Jack Jones will be read out.

### Return to the Ebro

Organised by the association No Jubilem La Memòria in collaboration with the town councils of Marçà and Flix, the November 2005 weekend programme of events began near Marçà with the unveiling of a simple inscribed stone in memory of the Argentinean Brigader, Fernando Iaffa, at the site where his ashes had been scattered next to the gravestone of the American Brigader, John Cookson.

Two of his sons were present to speak about

## Postscripts to the Dublin meeting

**Following a vitriolic attack by columnist Kevin Myers in the Irish Times following our Annual General Meeting, IBMT President Jack Jones wrote the following (edited) letter:**

I am sure that this year's Remembrance Sunday services will not provide the occasion for any personal attacks by an *Irish Times* columnist on surviving veterans of the Allied forces in the Second World War.

Consider, then, my surprise at the vindictive and highly personalised attack by your columnist Kevin

Myers ("Irishman's Diary", 19 October) on the fact that the President of Ireland so graciously received a courtesy call from four International Brigade veterans of the Spanish anti-fascist war on 15 October.

The International Brigade Memorial Trust is a body established by veterans and their families and friends in order to pay tribute to our fallen comrades from both Britain and Ireland. This year's wreath-laying ceremony was performed by Deirdre Davey, daughter of the Rev Robert M Hilliard of Killarney, who gave his life in

defence of the Spanish Republic at the battle of Jarama in 1937. Our Annual General Meeting is held each year in a different city in these islands, but never before has it been subjected to such a newspaper attack, not even by those newspapers that historically had supported the British government's policy of appeasing fascism and denying to the democratically elected government of the Spanish Republic the means by which to resist the military onslaught of Franco, Mussolini and Hitler.

When I was born in Liverpool in the momentous year of the Dublin

their father and tell the story of his marriage to a local girl in 1938. After Franco's victory, Fernando was arrested and sentenced to death. Only a vigorous campaign in Argentina and the involvement of high level officials managed to persuade Franco to commute his sentence to deportation. Ernest Benach, the President of the Catalan Parliament unveiled the memorial stone.

The programme continued in the village hall where the mayor of Marçà, Quico Piqué, and Ernest Benach paid tribute to the Brigaders present, Milton Wolff from the US and Giovanni Pesce from Italy. This was followed by the presentation of "Otra Colina", the Spanish translation of Milton Wolff's autobiographical novel "Another Hill" and an afternoon of short films relating to the civil war.

A large crowd turned out in Flix to welcome the Brigaders and other civil war veterans such as Leandre Saun and the aviator, Antoni Vilella. The veterans crossed the river Ebro on the ferry. Milton Wolff made a floral offering to his comrades who had died there, many unable to swim across the river during the retreat as he had done. Juan Alsace, the American Consul General from Barcelona, spoke with admiration of the International Brigaders, probably the first public acknowledgement of them by a US diplomat in an official capacity.

The veterans were given a warm welcome by the mayor of Flix, Pere Muñoz, and by many local people during the parade through the town. A visit to an exhibition of photographs and objects relating to the battle of the Ebro was followed by a short session of questions for Milton Wolff from school children and lectures by historians.

The day ended as the sun set at the International Brigade memorial on the banks above the river where a new plaque was unveiled to commemorate the visit. Giovanni Pesce, President of the Italian Association of Spanish Civil War Combatants, spoke about the role of the Garibaldi Battalion. La Pasionaria's farewell

**US veteran Milton Wolff (left) talks to Ernest Benach, President of the Catalan Parliament. See "Return to the Ebro".**



speech to the Brigaders was read by a girl from Flix in traditional dress. Milton Wolff, the last Commander of the Abraham Lincoln Battalion, recalled dancing with La Pasionaria after the farewell parade in Barcelona. Although a remarkable woman, he commented, she was certainly not as pretty as the girl from Flix!

*Angela Jackson*

## Belfast plans

The Belfast-based International Brigades Commemoration Committee (IBCC) is making progress with its plans for a new memorial to the 21 IB volunteers who died in Spain (or in the Second World War).

The memorial, to be unveiled in September 2006, will be a boat-shaped stone sculpture by Mark Anthony O'Neill, symbolising the boats used in the last engagement of the war in which the Irish International Brigaders participated when they crossed the river Ebro. The boat also represents their journey from Ireland and beyond to the battlefields of Spain.

The IBCC will publish a pamphlet that

describes the volunteers' involvement in Spain. It will include a (correct) listing of the 76 men who have been positively identified as having "been in Spain for the workers' cause".

As the Brigaders came from both main traditions, the Community Relations Council has agreed to fund three education seminars as part of the project to emphasise the "common history" aspect of this project. They will be organised by the IBCC, the Messines Association and the Belfast & District Trades Union Council.

The IBCC, in conjunction with The New Belfast Arts Initiative, will produce murals with the participation of the local communities from both backgrounds in the North, South, East and West of the city at neutral locations commemorating the Brigaders who came from those areas. The intention is to use the "common history" theme to assist in the breaking down of barriers of intolerance and mistrust.

Other events for 2006 include concerts, film shows, and an exhibition by local artist Gerry Gleason entitled "Ghosts On the March" which will be displayed in the Linenhall Library

*Continued on page 7*

Lockout of 1913, and my father named me James Larkin Jones in honour of his friend and former fellow worker on the Liverpool docks, I was also imbued with the Larkinite principle of "an injury to one is the concern of all". The planes that were to bomb the city of Coventry to smithereens in the 11-hour-long blitz of November 1940 were the same Nazi German bombers that a British policy of appeasement had permitted to destroy the Basque city of Guernica in April 1937.

As Spain's democratically elected parliament had been defended by

International Brigaders in 1936, so also did its democratic parliament of 1996 award the right to claim Spanish citizenship to Irish veterans Eugene Downing, Bob Doyle, Maurice Levitas, Peter O'Connor and Michael O'Riordan, together with IBers from all over the world.

When all is said and done, the verdict of history that matters most to us International Brigaders is that of the Spanish people themselves.

Yours, Jack Jones

*2 November 2005*

Dear Manus (O'Riordan),  
I want to congratulate you and say

thank you for Saturday 15th, the AGM and all the other events. I shall never forget the experience. I was sorry to miss the events on the Sunday, but I was dependent on others and their timetables too.

I was very sorry to read in *The Independent*, of the death of David Marshall, Marlene had said that he was very unwell, I hope she was able to get back in time. Jim Jump's tribute was very good.

I also wish to say how very honoured and most moved I was to lay the wreath at the memorial plaque at Liberty Hall. Suddenly it was as if I was at my father's funeral, and I

was quite overcome. For me and the family he had had no funeral all those years ago. We just got the news and that was all, so I suppose the occasion swept away the nearly 70 years and struck a chord I had no idea was still there and so raw.

It was good to meet your father, and to see him get the medal from Cuba. I was delighted to see Mary McAleese look after all the veterans so well – what a lovely person she is.

Yours, Deirdre Davey  
*Deirdre Davey is the daughter of Rev Robert M Hilliard, who died at Jarama.*

# Can you help?

If you are not on email and can answer any of these queries, contact IBMT Secretary Marlene (see details on page 1) and she can pass your message on.

● Bill Thornycroft, brother of Brigadier Chris Thornycroft, is aiming to get a memorial set up to commemorate the efforts of those many local people who supported the Spanish government and the refugee children in Worthing. Anyone with any relevant knowledge, especially of the 60 children who lived there, please get in touch at: 112 Broxholm Road, London SE27 0BT; tel: 020-8670 4798; email [billthebus@btinternet.com].

● Peter Ferguson is trying to find out more about his grandfather Patrick Ferguson, a cook from Alexandria, Scotland, who was in Spain from December 1936 to February 1937, then repatriated because of bad eyesight. He went to Spain with friends from Alexandria and Renton: Pat Curley (d. February 1937, Jarama) Robert Stevenson, Dan McEwan, Jon Loban (d. September 1938, Ebro). Jim Carmody, our researcher, has given some information, but if anyone remembers them from their home town, or in Spain, contact Peter at: [peter.ferguson13@btopenworld.com].

● Robert Llopis wants to know more about Brigaders cared for at the hospital/rest camp (Hospital No 10) at Benisa, Alicante, during the war. He has listed people from several nationalities, but the only English (sounding) name is Tom Spiller. Contact Robert on [tombaturons@gmail.com].

● Ernesto Viñas and colleagues, who run tours of the Brunete battlefield and who work hard in their spare time to uncover information about the Brunete battle, have many artefacts and photographs but are also keen to receive copies of information from Brigaders' relatives. They want to know more about medical and nursing care in the area during the battle. Contact Ernesto at: Plaza Buenavista 11-3"-D, 28600 Navalcarnero, Madrid, Spain; tel: (+34) 91-811 26 02.

● Alan Lloyd is pressing ahead with plans to have a commemorative headstone on the grave of James Arthur (Jimmy) Moore from Portsmouth who was badly wounded in Spain, and though he survived the return journey to England, eventually died of his wounds in a London hospital and was buried in Milton cemetery. Jimmy was an active member of the Transport and General Workers' Union, and even from his hospital bed wrote a letter to his local evening newspaper urging the people of Portsmouth to support the Spanish cause. He ended: "Although I have not been in Spain long, I shall always feel proud of having stood shoulder to shoulder with these heroic people in their fight for existence from the Fascist

regime." Alan is also seeking support for a second memorial in Southampton which will bear the names Ray Cox, Harry Laws, David Guest and Ivor Hickman, all of whom were either born, or had strong connections with the area. Contact him at 1 Chardon Court, York Drove, Southampton S018 5LZ; email [alan.lloyd121@virgin.net] or tel: 023-8043 2598.

● Arthur Blackman, whose obituary appeared in the last issue, was from Winchester and although we have some information about him, Alan Lloyd would like to learn more about Arthur for his research into International Brigaders from Hampshire. Contact details for Alan are in the paragraph above.

● Sally Watson from Surrey would like information on her great uncle John Burton, possibly from Coedpoeth in Wales, who left for Spain while still a student at Aberystwyth University, and never returned. If anyone has any information or recollection of John, please contact Sally at 01344-627936.

● Irene Nixon's husband is trying to trace a photograph of his father, James Nixon, which he remembers seeing in a book when he was a child. He has forgotten the name of the book, but James Nixon was pictured astride a cannon. He was notified as having died in Spain, but in fact he was wounded and in hospital and nobody knew until he arrived home. Jim Carmody, our researcher, has found some information, but does anyone know of the picture, and where it can be found? Contact [irenenix@yahoo.co.uk].

● Todd Winer is researching the life of Bert "Yank" Levy, a Spanish Civil War veteran later known as one of the first instructors on the subject of guerilla warfare. His book "Guerilla Warfare" was published in 1964, and taken largely from lectures he gave at the Osterley School of the British Home Guard. If anyone has any information or recollection of Levy or his family, please contact Todd at [winert@ajc.org].

● Jo Stein Moen is working on a book about Norway and the Spanish Civil War and wondered if any of our readers have information about Norwegian Brigaders or anything else that might be interesting and useful in her research. Contact Jo at [josmoen@online.no].

● Gordon Hilton, from Victoria, Australia, son of Brigade veteran Stanley Gordon Hilton, has been in touch and our researches have been able to find out that Stanley was a seaman who "jumped" the SS "Pilson" at Gandia on 22 November 1937. He was listed as missing in action during the Aragon retreats in March/April 1938, and is listed as killed on the roll of honour in Bill Alexander's "British

Volunteers for Liberty". But in the Foreign Office list of correspondence for 1938 he was described as "ex member of the International Brigades, believed to have been a stowaway on the SS "Lake Lugano" and made his own way back to England". Clearly there is an interesting story here, which we hope Gordon Hilton can elaborate on!

● Tom Buchanan is looking for information on George Keegan, a YCL (Young Communist League) member from 107 Blackburn Street, Glasgow. Keegan went to Spain in December 1936, deserted, returned home at the end of April 1937, but returned to Spain about three weeks later. He spent some time in Brigade prisons before being sent back to the Battalion. He was imprisoned once again for desertion in July 1937, then wounded at Quinto in late August 1937. He reported back to Britain on 28 September 1937. Tom is also interested in Keegan's mother, Mrs J Lacey, who was well known in Glasgow Communist Party circles and was a prominent campaigner for the Spanish Republican cause. If anyone has any information regarding her before, during and after the Spanish Civil War, contact Marlene Sidaway and she will pass it on to Buchanan.

● Jane Patrick, a Glasgow-based anarchist was in Spain from autumn 1936 to mid 1937. Our researcher, Jim Carmody, has unearthed a reference from July 1937 to a "Jane Patrick, Irish, who was a journalist for a so called Trotskyist journal named *Regeneration*. She was in Madrid on 3 May 1937 requesting a pass to visit the front at Pozoblanco." Patrick, accompanied by Ethel MacDonald, went to Spain in October 1936 to work for the propaganda section of the CNT-FAI anarchist trade union federation. The reports which they sent back from Spain were published in "News From Spain" and "Barcelona Bulletin", both of which came out in May 1937. If anyone can give additional information, especially dates and if there is any Irish connection, please contact Ciaran Crossey at [cpcrossey@hotmail.com]. On a similar point, can anyone give Ciaran any information on John Mahon, a long-term Communist Party of Great Britain official?

● Alan Davidson of 39 Scott Road, Glenrothes, Fife KY6 1AD is doing research on volunteers from Fife. If anyone can help, please contact Alan at the above address; tel: 01952-754 740 or email [pacer05@btinternet.com].

● Brian Walsh is anxious to find out more information about his uncle Eddy, Samuel Edward Walsh, of 19 Portland Street, Newcastle-upon-Tyne. He was a member of the Communist Party and died in the battle of Brunete in July 1937. He was a cook by profession.



# Books notes . . .

## Tom Wintringham in verse

*We're Going On!: The Collected Poems of Tom Wintringham*; edited by Hugh Purcell; Smokestack Books; £6.99 (paperback).

Tom Wintringham (1898-1949) was a man of action, a revolutionary, a soldier and a poet. During the First World War he served in the Royal Flying Corps. In the Spanish Civil War he commanded the British Battalion and in the Second World War he was the driving force and inspiration behind the establishment of the Home Guard.

He was a founder member of the Communist Party and one of its 12 leaders gaoled for "sedition" in 1925. He edited the *Worker's Weekly*, helped launch the *Daily Worker* and was one of the first editors of *Left Review*. Expelled in 1938 from the Communist Party, Wintringham co-founded the Commonwealth Party and almost won a famous war-time by-election.

His poetry was published in many magazines and his numerous books included "The Coming World War", "Mutiny", "English Captain", "The Politics of Victory", "People's War" and the best-selling "Your MP".

Drawing on the newly opened Wintringham archive, this book contains nearly all Tom Wintringham's poems, many of which are published here for the first time. From the Great War and the October Revolution, via the General Strike to Spain and war against Hitler, Wintringham's poems are a unique record of those revolutionary years, a compelling cocktail of ideas and imagination, romance, realism and action.

● Smokestack Books will launch the Wintringham book at the Marx Memorial Library on 27 March at 7.30pm.

## Owen's war diary

In our June 2005 Newsletter we reported the death of IBMT member Owen Hardisty. His widow

Maureen has sent a copy of his book "Blitzing Vauxhall – A Dogsbody's War Diary" which sadly was published just after Owen died. It is a fascinating account of Vauxhall Motors (where Owen worked all his life) during the war – particularly during the blitz of 1940. It is a story of hardship and tragedy, illuminated by flashes of humour. The "blitz spirit" is not a nostalgic myth dreamed up by the elderly; it was a living thing in Vauxhall's workshops and trenches, Luton's backyard shelters, food queues and works canteens – it was human kindness and communal solidarity in action. The book is published by The Book Castle, 12 Church Street, Dunstable, Beds LU5 4RU; tel: 01582-605 670; email [bc@book-castle.co.uk].

## Milton Wolff's early life

Book One of the three-book autobiographical series, "Member of the Working Class", by Milton Wolff, provides a rich, unusually detailed portrait of the early working-class life of Milton Wolff during the 1920s and 1930s.

At the age of 22, Wolff became the last commander of the Abraham Lincoln Battalion during the Spanish Civil War. "Member of the Working Class" is Wolff's story, from his childhood up until he prepares to depart for Spain. Throughout his story, rich, curious details emerge about working-class life in the 1920s and 1930s. This blunt account of a rough, unadorned American life helps us find clues to Wolff's future persona. How did the man who Ernest Hemingway called "as brave and good a soldier as any that commanded battalions at Gettysburg" become the natural leader of the volunteers who went to Spain? "Member of the Working Class" is now available at [www.iuniverse.com]. Book Two, "Another Hill", is available from the University of Illinois Press and has been translated into Spanish and published in Barcelona by Ediciones Barataria [www.barataria-ediciones.com] price: \$19.95.

a militaria fair and display stands by various groups, including Ay Carmela. The second day was to be more of a living history event. A military camp had been constructed, with a display of trench life. In the UK, La Columna has always portrayed events without Nationalist opponents. We show International Brigade encampments, Spanish civilian life or Aid for Spain rallies. In post-Franco Spain, even in old Republican areas, sensitivities about the war run deep. The display could go ahead only if both Republicans and Nationalists took part and an act of reconciliation was made.

The Carlist militia treated us very well, fed us, praised our uniforms and were generally pleasant people – what were they doing on the wrong side?

## 1936 and all that

For an amusing take on the Spanish Civil War, see "1966 And All That" by Craig Brown (Hodder & Stoughton, £10): "The Spanish Civil War took place between (a) General Frankie Vaughan, the Spanish Florist leader, and (b) a small but prestigious group of English and American authors. The authors included Earnest Humaway, author of For Whom the Kettle Boils. Humaway was interested in bulls and petit-point, but not necessarily in that order. The British writers WH Maud, Sir Spender and Cecil Day-Return also formed a battalion to fight against the Florists, but they thought the best tactic was to lie low in a trench just north of Hyde Park."

## Marx Memorial Library

The Marx Memorial Library, London, home of the International Brigade Memorial Archive, has been assessing its books and identifying areas where new acquisitions would prove invaluable. To date, it has been dependent on the gifts of members in order to build the unique resource that it has become.

However, it is now launching an appeal for new books, by inviting members to donate the cost of a book to the section of the library of their choice (such as Spanish Civil War, Marx and Marxism; History; Politics; Trade Unions etc.) with the book itself chosen by the librarian to fill a gap in that section.

The gift would be marked by an "Ex Libris" sheet on the inside cover, indicating the donor and a message of choice – perhaps in memory of someone, to mark a retirement; an exam pass; or an anniversary.

It is proposed that donations begin at £10 and it will be possible to buy as many books as you wish. Contact: Marx Memorial Library, 37a Clerkenwell Green, London EC1R 0DU; tel: 020-7253 1485; email [marx.library@britishlibrary.net].

## Book Exchange

Don't forget the Book Exchange! Contact Chris Hall at [christoff\_hall@yahoo.com] if you are looking for a book relating to the Spanish Civil War, or if you have any to spare.

We have come back keener than ever to work on our living history displays, inspired by contact with our Spanish comrades.

Richard Thorpe

## Scotland and the Spanish war

On 11 February 2006 at Glasgow University, Mike Gonzales and Andy Durgan gave a lecture on how the Spanish Civil War has a particular resonance in Scotland, many of whose citizens fought and died in defence of the Republic. They argued that, for many people, what happened in Spain between 1936 and 1939 was not a domestic affair, but a confrontation between democracy and fascism on Spanish soil.

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throughout May. The Linenhall Library will also hold an event celebrating the famous writers and poets who fought in the International Brigades. For information about the memorial campaign, see: [www.connollycolumn.org].

## La Columna in Spain

Since the La Columna historical re-enactment group was founded we have always hoped to link up with comrades in Spain and take part in an event with them. Last October, we finally achieved this when we took part in Expohistorica 2005, Castellón's now annual historic event.

The first day of the two-day event consisted of

## In brief

### Direct debit changes

The IBMT has recently changed its bank account from the Halifax to the CAF (Charities Aid Foundation). Please can all members and supporters that have direct debits or standing orders set up to pay subscriptions and/or donations into our Halifax account please alter them to pay into the following account instead: Bank: CAF Account; name: International Brigade Memorial Trust; sort code: 405240; account number: 00013716. If you have any queries, please contact Pauline or our new Treasurer, Nick Moreno: [nick3737@hotmail.com]; 07886-727 790.

### No Jubilem la Memòria

No Jubilem la Memòria has entered a new phase, becoming an officially registered cultural association. Its members continue to work to recover the history and memory of the period of the Second Republic and the Civil War (1931-39) in the Priorat region of Catalonia and to organise commemorative events.

No Jubilem la Memòria would like to invite IBMT members to join. The normal membership fee is 12 euros. Veterans of the civil war will receive free honorary membership. Those who would like to contribute 30 euros will become patrons of the association. If you do not have a Spanish bank account, please write to the address below or contact by email to decide the best method of payment of the membership fee.

Donations would be gratefully received, from members or non-members. This extra support would help further with all activities, especially for 2006, the 70th anniversary of the civil war.

If you have any questions, information relating to the Priorat during the civil war, or suggestions for events, please contact: No Jubilem la Memòria, Plaça de les Arenes, 43775 Marçà (Priorat), Tarragona, Spain; email: [nojubilem-lamemoria@yahoo.com].

### South Yorkshire Festival

The IBMT will have a strong presence at the South Yorkshire Festival at Wortley Hall on the first weekend in July. Amongst the proposed events will be a Spanish Civil War exhibition; songs by the Cardiff Red Choir; appearances by La Columna; an exhibition by Chilean comrades, and hopefully a showing of films, including "Voices from a Mountain". The Clarion Cyclist group plans to be there, and there will also be a poetry programme based on our new anthology. For those who want to stay for the weekend, accommodation can be arranged. Full details from Joan Brown on 01709-372 887 or from Andy Ducker at [andyducker@blueyonder.co.uk].

### IBMT Newsletter

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# The Len Crome Memorial Lecture

by Dr Enrique Moradiellos

## "Albion's Perfidy: The British Government and the Spanish Civil War"

2.30pm Saturday 4 March 2006, Imperial War Museum, Lambeth Road, London SE1 6HZ

Enrique Moradiellos is an internationally recognised expert on various aspects of the Spanish Civil War. Among his many books, his definitive work on the contribution of Great Britain to the defeat of the Spanish Republic, "La perfidia de Albion", has been widely acclaimed and has influenced all serious scholarship on the subject. His most recent book is "Franco frente a Churchill". He has lectured at the Universities of Madrid and London, and is currently Professor of History at the University of Extremadura in Cáceres.

This annual lecture commemorates the life of Dr Len Crome, who went to Spain with the Scottish Ambulance Unit and joined the International Brigade early in 1937. He served as Chief Medical Officer of the 35th Division

and then of the 15th Army Corps. During World War II, as a captain in the Royal Army Medical Corps in Italy, Dr Crome won the Military Cross for extraordinary bravery, carrying on working despite heavy enemy fire. He was a valued President of the International Brigade Association for many years.

Light refreshments will be served afterwards. A room has also been booked in a nearby pub, the Bar Room Bar, on the corner of Brook Drive and Kennington Road from 6-12pm for a benefit social evening for the IBMT. The pub serves home-baked pizzas. There will be live music later in the evening by Los Tones, the band in which Jim Jump plays.

# Annual General Meeting

## Commemoration of the 70th anniversary of the Spanish Civil War and Annual General Meeting

14/15 October 2006, Manchester

The International Brigade Memorial Trust will be commemorating the 70th anniversary of the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War at our Annual General Meeting in Manchester.

### Programme of events

*Saturday 14 October:*

1.30pm: Rededication of the memorial plaque in Manchester Town Hall to the men and women from the North West who went to fight in Spain and supported the Spanish people.

2.15-4.15pm: Civic reception in the Manchester Town Hall and an exhibition.

4.30-5.45pm: Annual General Meeting in the Town Hall.

7-11pm: Social event with food and music at the Mechanics Institute, Manchester.

*Sunday 15 October:*

11am: Visit to the People's History Museum (Pump House Museum, central Manchester)  
1pm: Meal in a Spanish restaurant.

### Accommodation

We have negotiated rooms in the Castlefield Hotel, Liverpool Road M3 4JR (15 minutes walk from the Town Hall); tel: 0161-832 7073, [www.castlefield-hotel.co.uk]. The rooms will be held until 31 August. Double/twin rooms are £65 per night, single rooms £55, including breakfast. Booking reference number: 6661.

### Information

For more information contact Hilary Jones: 0161-224 [1747 hilary.m.jones@btinternet.com] or Dolores Long: 0161-226 2013 [dolores@long.freewire.co.uk].