



IBMT Newsletter

www.international-brigades.org.uk

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INTERNATIONAL BRIGADE MEMORIAL TRUST



MAKING TRACKS: Billy Bragg and Maxine Peake perform for the IBMT.



Billy Bragg and Maxine Peake in CD tribute

Singer-songwriter Billy Bragg and actress Maxine Peake pay tribute to the British anti-fascist volunteers in the Spanish Civil War on a new CD single exclusively available from the IBMT.

Billy Bragg performs “Jarama Valley”, the song inspired by the battle south-east of Madrid that claimed the lives of 150 members of the British Battalion in February 1937 when General Franco’s fascist forces tried unsuccessfully to surround the Spanish capital.

Written anonymously during the war in Spain, the song became the unofficial anthem of the British volunteers and has been sung by veterans and their supporters to this day at events to commemorate the legendary International Brigades.

The second track features Maxine Peake delivering the famous speech given by Spanish Republican leader Dolores Ibárruri – known as La Pasionaria – at the

farewell parade to the International Brigades in Barcelona on 28 October 1938. On “Brigadista Reprise” she speaks over a dub backing track created by The Urban Roots.

Both recordings have been specially produced for the IBMT. The performers and artists have all donated their talents for free and proceeds of sales go towards the work of the trust.

Speaking about the CD project, Billy Bragg says: “The International Brigade volunteers were part of a generation of anti-fascists who stopped the Blackshirts at Cable Street and then fought Hitler, Mussolini and Franco on the battlefields of Spain.

“While their own government was appeasing the fascist dictators, these brave volunteers knew that fascism had to be defeated and were prepared to die in order to do so. I’m proud to play my part in preserving their

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Memorial gets a big lift and new plaque

Everything in place for annual London South Bank commemoration on 7 July

A repositioned, repaired and cleaned-up International Brigade memorial will be the centrepiece of this year’s annual commemoration on London’s South Bank on Saturday 7 July.

Following the £5 million redevelopment of Jubilee Gardens lasting more than eight months, the national memorial has been moved a short distance away from the congested corner of the park next to the London Eye. Its new location has easier public access and better visibility.

The riverside park is scheduled to reopen to the public on 18 May. The International Brigade memorial, in the form of a bronze sculpture by Ian Walters on a marble plinth, is its only memorial and as such will be a prominent feature of the park.

The IBMT’s ceremony on 7 July will see the unveiling of a new plaque commissioned by the trust to be set in the ground in front of the memorial. The plaque gives updated and additional information about the volunteers from Britain and Ireland.

With assistance from the War Memorials Trust, the IBMT is also paying for the repair and restoration of the memorial, on which there are areas of postulation and wear to the patina of the bronze as well as some damage to the marble slabs on the plinth.

The 2½-metre high memorial was unveiled in 1985 by former Labour leader Michael Foot on a site provided by the Greater London Council.

Jubilee Gardens was first laid out in
Continued on back page



GROUNDING: A crane manoeuvres the 9-ton International Brigade memorial and base to its new position in London’s Jubilee Gardens on 19 April.

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

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Membership applications, renewals and queries should be sent to Membership Secretary Mary Greening. All other correspondence should go to Secretary Jim Jump.

Annual membership rates are £15 standard; £7.50 concessions; £20 family (single household); affiliating organisations by arrangement. Further details and 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. Back numbers can be downloaded from the IBMT website on [www.international-brigades.org.uk/newsletter.htm]. Send all items for the next issue to the Editor by 31 July 2012 at the latest.

Editor: Jim Jump (see contact details above)



The International Brigade memorial hangs in the air over Jubilee Gardens while being repositioned to its new site.

We need your help in major audit of memorials

By Jim Jump

The relocation and restoration of our memorial in London's Jubilee Gardens is a reminder of the importance of the nearly 100 memorials throughout Britain and Ireland to the anti-fascist volunteers who went to Spain between 1936-39. With this in mind the IBMT's Executive Committee decided at its meeting in January to launch a major audit of all these memorials. First and foremost we want to verify that the memorials are still in place. A few, we know, have been moved; others have gone missing when buildings in which they have been located are vacated or demolished. We also want to find out what state the memorials are in – and crucially if they need any repair or upkeep.

Over the coming months IBMT trustees will be checking up on memorials in their area and making sure that we have a photo of each one. It will not be an easy task, so please help if you can by telling us about the location and condition of any such memorial near to you. This project is being coordinated by our Treasurer Charles Jepson (see below), so send any messages and photos to him (details on left) or to your local IBMT trustee, if you know who this is. You can find an inventory of the memorials on our website: [www.international-brigades.org.uk].

Charles in the saddle

We welcome Charles Jepson as our new Treasurer. Charles will be known to many IBMT supporters as the secretary of the National Clarion Cycling Club 1895, which has done so much in Britain, Ireland and Spain to support the IBMT and to remember the International

Brigades. He was appointed at our Executive Committee meeting in January and fills the vacancy left when Duncan Longstaff, who was elected to the post at our annual general meeting last year, resigned soon afterwards for health and personal reasons.

A first for Billy Bragg?

Is Billy Bragg's "Jarama Valley" – which he has recorded this year especially for the IBMT (see front page story) – the first recorded version of the song? The answer isn't clear-cut.

There have been recordings of the song with its American lyrics (praising the Lincoln rather than the British Battalion) by Woody Guthrie and Pete Seeger among others. And last year Billy Stewart of the Lanarkshire Songwriters Group used the original words by Glaswegian volunteer Alex McDade for his rendition on the "From Blantyre to Barcelona" CD collection of songs about the Scottish anti-fascist volunteers. McDade's lyrics are gently satirical, complaining about the lack of leave for the volunteers kept at



SLEEVE NOTES: The origins of "Jarama Valley" are described in the CD with the new Billy Bragg version.



DEFACED: Nazi graffiti on the International Brigade memorials in Berlin (left) and Madrid (right), both photographed in February – a sad reminder of attitudes still in circulation in Spain and elsewhere in Europe.

The graffiti have since been removed from both memorials.

Unveiled only last October to mark the 75th anniversary of the creation of the International Brigades, the Madrid memorial continues, however, to be the focus of controversy. In April a judge ruled that it had been erected by the Madrid Complutense University without the necessary planning permission. The university authorities insist that they followed all necessary procedures. They add that there is no immediate threat to the memorial and an appeal is being considered.

Standing on a site provided by the university, the memorial was funded through a campaign organised by the Spanish AABI International Brigades friendship group. The IBMT donated €500.

Last year there was a last-minute unsuccessful legal challenge by a neo-fascist group to try to stop the memorial's inauguration.



the Jarama frontline following the battle in February 1937.

Billy Bragg, however, uses the words of the better known version that laments the dead of the Battle of Jarama and voices pride in the British Battalion. These words were anonymously penned during the war in Spain and the song also became known as the “Song of the British Battalion”.

The “re-written” song was recorded by the Scottish folk group The Laggan – but as a medley with “Bandiera Rossa” – on the album “I Am the Common Man” in the 1970s and re-released on CD in 2002. Leeds-based folk singer Ewan McLennan also lists the song in his online song-book – see [www.ewanmclennan.co.uk] – but doesn’t appear to have put it out on disc.

So the answer seems to be that Billy’s new recording is the first stand-alone British version of “Jarama Valley”. Any updates from anyone? See overleaf: “Prison song lyrics resurface too”.

Football fans remember Jarama



Talking of “Jarama Valley”, thanks go to Chris Hall from Manchester, who reports that among the supporters of FC United of Manchester (FCUM) are a group of travelling fans who call themselves the Jarama Valley Lads. FCUM is the democratically-run football club founded by disgruntled United fans in 2005 following the club’s takeover by US millionaires. They also have their own blogsite – <http://fcumad.tumblr.com> –

where they proudly acknowledge Manchester’s anti-fascist volunteers as the inspiration for the name on their banner (pictured below).

Story of Guernica

Good news that Spanish film-maker Carlos Saura is to make a film about the painting of Pablo Picasso’s Guernica. Starring Antonio Banderas, “33 Dias” is named after the number of days it took to complete the masterpiece.

The 75th anniversary on 26 April of the bombing of the eponymous Basque town that helped inspire Picasso’s painting, along with news about the film and the inclusion of sketches for the painting in the Picasso and Modern British Art exhibition at the Tate Britain in London (until 15 July), have all prompted the familiar – if often highly questionable – attempts to find contemporary parallels with the bombing of Guernica by Franco’s German and Italian allies.

Leaving that aside, it was good to see that the extraordinary story behind the painting’s public showing in Britain in 1939 has also resurfaced. IBMT member Ben Houlton from Wigan wrote in to recommend the BBC online account of how, after being exhibited at the Whitechapel Gallery in London early in 1939 to raise funds for the Republican cause, Picasso’s painting went to Manchester where it was hung, not in an art gallery or museum, but in a car showroom owned by a sympathetic car dealer. For the full account, see [<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/entertainment-arts-16927120>].

Prescient Jack Jones

Delivering the annual Jack Jones Lecture in Liverpool in May, TUC General Secretary Brendan Barber naturally paid tribute to the former IBMT President’s record in Spain.

Describing him as a “colossus of the labour movement” under whose leadership his union, the T&G, rose to more than 2 million members, Barber said: “Jack’s was an extraordinary life. It began in grinding poverty in Garston, Merseyside, where he was born in

1913. He took in the brutal realities of working in the docks during years of depression; fighting with the International Brigades against fascism in Spain; and assisting in the war effort in the factories of the Midlands.”

The TUC chief also dug out a very apt and prescient quotation from the 1970s, in which Jack appears to predict the breakdown of the post-1945 consensus on full employment and the emergence instead of the free-market “loadsamoney” society we now inhabit. “Are we to have jobs, to make things on which we can survive,” said Jack, “or will we continue to drift into a phoney super-salesman’s Britain where there are no jobs for working men and women but plenty of secret bank accounts in Switzerland or the Cayman Islands?”

To read Brendan Barber’s lecture, go to: [<http://strongerunions.org/2012/04/12/jack-jones-three-lessons-for-our-times>].

Bert’s words stand the test of time



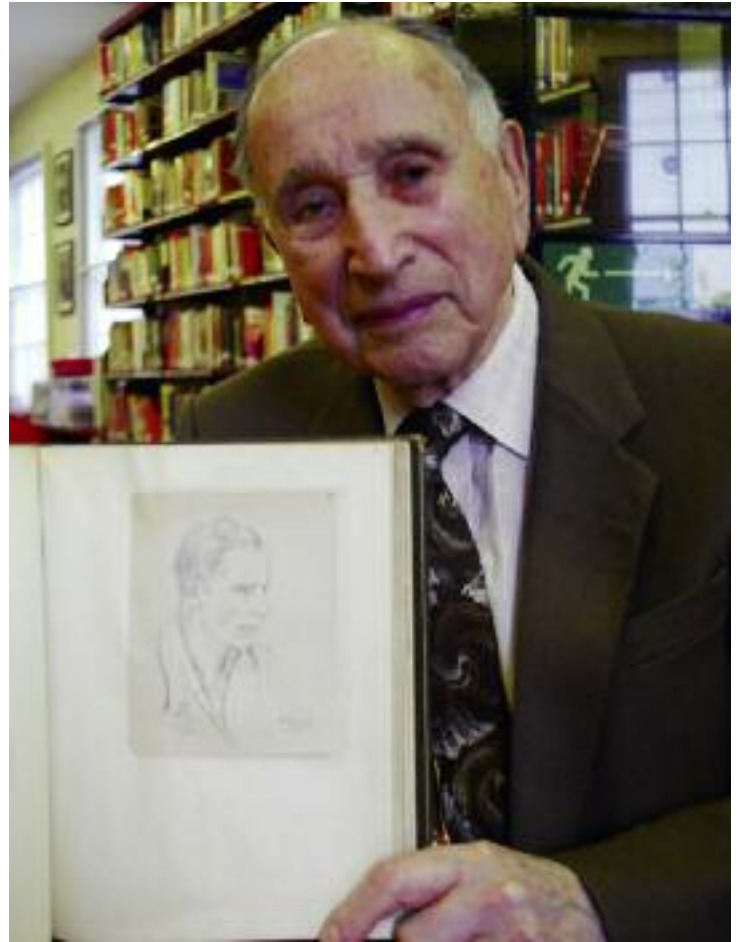
Madrid-based IBMT member Justin Byrne sends us this interesting photo of graffiti on the door of a house in Madrigueras, where the British Battalion was based early in the civil war.

Now a private residence, the house was used as a library by the volunteers, and the inscription “Bert Neville. London. CPGB. Feb 1937” is lovingly preserved by the family who now live there, says Justin. The graffiti was discovered by Caridad Serrano, a local historian who has published an oral history of villagers’ memories of the International Brigades.

Originally from Ipswich, Neville was a taxi-driver from Hammersmith, west London. His poem “England Arise” was published in the 2006 anthology “Poems from Spain: British and Irish International Brigaders on the Spanish Civil War” and a copy has now been given to the family in Madrigueras. “I like the idea of the poet carving his name on a library door,” chuckles Justin.



LIKENESS: International Brigade veteran David Lomon reunited at the Marx Memorial Library with his portrait sketched in 1938 in Spain.



A sketch returns from the past

By Jim Jump

After nearly 75 years, International Brigade veteran David Lomon has laid eyes on a portrait of him sketched in the prisoner-of-war camp in Palencia, northern Spain.

The drawing was by the artist and poet Clive Branson, who like David was captured by Italian troops near Calaceite in the spring of 1938 when the British Battalion was forced to retreat through Aragon in the face of a massive offensive by the fascists.

Dated 7 August [1938], the sketch is one of several portraits and other drawings that Branson produced as a prisoner at Palencia and also at the prison camp at San Pedro de Cardeña, near Burgos.

All these original sketches, plus poems written



ARTIST: Clive Branson, pictured here in British army uniform during the Second World War, sketched David Lomon and several other Brigaders while they were held prisoner during the Spanish Civil War. The Britons were later freed in a prisoner exchange with Italian troops captured by Republican forces.

or inspired by Spain, were donated last year by daughter Rosa Branson to the Marx Memorial Library in London, where they join an extensive International Brigade archive.

Now aged 93, David Lomon always remembered being sketched while at Palencia, but never thought that his portrait might have survived after all these years until he found out about the existence of Branson's original sketches.

So the IBMT arranged a visit to the MML on 25 April to see if he could identify his portrait as a young man.

"It was amazing to see the drawing," said David at the library. "It brought back memories of how most days we would all sit around talking or playing chess and then Clive would say 'I want to sketch you today' and whoever it was would have to keep still for a while."

Turning to his son, Irving, who accompanied him on the visit to the library, he asked; "Do you think it looks like me? I certainly had more hair then."

Several paintings by Clive Branson, who was killed, aged 36, while serving with the British army in Burma in 1944, are in the collection held by the Tate Britain gallery in London. Last year the MML organised an exhibition of his paintings alongside a large mural-style painting by daughter Rosa, also an artist, commemorating the International Brigades.

Prison song lyrics resurface too

For David Lomon, looking at Clive Branson's prison camp sketches and listening to Billy Bragg's new recording of "Jarama Valley" have brought back memories of songs that he and fellow captured International Brigade volunteers used to sing in Spain.

At the Palencia prison, says David, they used their own lyrics when they sang "Jarama Valley" (to the tune of "Red River Valley") – a song originally penned by Glaswegian volunteer Alex McDade and then anonymously rewritten to become the unofficial song of the British Battalion.

These are the words that David and the other prisoners used to sing, as recalled by him...

*There's a prison in Spain called Palencia
Tis a place that we know all too well
It was there that we gave of our manhood
And spent months of misery and hell.*

*Surrounded one day by Italians
Who with guns bought by Chamberlain's
gold
Blown to hell by artillery and avion
That's how our brave comrades were
sold.*

The focus of this year's Len Crome Memorial Lecture... From Second World War to Cold War and beyond: How perceptions of the Brigaders have changed

By Jim Jump

The shifting political and cultural interpretations of the Spanish Civil War and the role of the International Brigades, from the time of the war itself to the present day, were the focus of the IBMT's 2012 Len Crome Memorial Lecture.

Delivered by American historian Peter N Carroll, the lecture concentrated on changing perceptions in the US, with special emphasis on the attitudes towards and among the veterans of the 2,800 volunteers who served in Spain in the Abraham Lincoln and George Washington Battalions.

Under the title "From Guernica to Human Rights: The Spanish Civil War in the 21st Century", Carroll's lecture at London's Imperial War Museum on 3 March ranged over topics such as President Franklin Roosevelt's policies towards the Spanish Republic, reactions by civil war veterans to Ernest Hemingway's novel "For Whom the Bell Tolls" and the emergence in the 1950s of George Orwell's "Homage to Catalonia" as the most commonly read text on the war.

A key element of his talk and the subsequent question and answer session was the dramatic impact of the Soviet-Nazi German non-aggression pact that was signed in 1939 in the few months separating the end of the war in Spain and the start of the Second World War. The leadership of the Veterans of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade (VALB) followed the Soviet line up to 1941 that the Second World War was an imperialist war. But several former Brigaders fought with distinction in the war. Many, however, faced discrimination and suspicion because of their record in Spain.

Carroll stressed that the anti-communist paradigm of the Cold War that followed the Second World War had a decisive and lasting impact on how the Spanish war and the international volun-

teers were viewed. The civil war was redefined as a battle between equals – fascists and communists. The volunteers were labelled "premature anti-fascists" and Franco's regime became a stalwart anti-communist ally of the US. President Ronald Reagan went so far as to say that the volunteers had fought on the "wrong side".

Differences of opinion among the volunteers themselves sparked political arguments and battles in VALB that continued well into the 1970s and beyond.

Chaired by historian and IBMT Patron Paul Preston, the 11th Len Crome Memorial Lecture was attended by more than 250 people, the biggest attendance so far for the event.

Preston introduced Carroll as the author of several books, including "The Odyssey of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade: Americans in the Spanish Civil War" and emeritus chair of the board of governors of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade Archives, one of the IBMT's sister organisations in the US, and editor of its journal, *The Volunteer*.

The morning session at the Imperial War Museum included screenings of "With the Lincoln Brigade in Spain", a film made in 1938 by Herbert Kline and Henri Cartier-Bresson, and "The International Brigaders Among Us", the British premiere of a film in English and Catalan about the Brigaders before the Battle of the Ebro. The films were introduced by historians Helen Graham and Angela Jackson, who also spoke about her new biography of International Brigade nurse Patience Darton, "For us it was Heaven".

Linda Palfreeman, who gave last year's Len Crome Memorial Lecture and is the author of "¡Salud! British Volunteers in the Republican Medical Services during the Spanish Civil War", led the tributes to Thomas Watters, a volunteer with the Scottish Ambulance Unit, who died a week earlier.

Hopes for IB musical to be performed in Barcelona

The writers of "Goodbye Barcelona" are seeking funding to have their musical about the International Brigades performed in Spain.

Composer Karl Lewkowicz was in Barcelona and Madrid in March, where there were special screenings of a recording of the musical made during its successful five-week run at London's Arcola Theatre in November and December last year.

"I'm hoping that, if we can galvanise the interest so that the money can be raised, there will be a Spanish/Catalan language version of the show some time next year," says Lewkowicz, who co-wrote the musical with Judith Johnson.

A personal highlight of his visit to Barcelona was a meeting with Dr Moisès Broggi, aged 103, who was a field surgeon in the International Brigades' medical services.



Dr Moisès Broggi with Karl Lewkowicz in Barcelona.

Belfast supporters meet

The Belfast-based International Brigades Commemoration Committee held a successful annual general meeting on 25 February, reports Ciaran Crossey.

Some 40 supporters heard John Callow, director of the Marx Memorial Library, give a talk about the International Brigade archives held at the library in London. There were discussions too about plans for new memorials in Belfast, Dundalk and Derry.

The meeting started with a minute's silence for the last Irish volunteer, Paddy Cochrane, and for Jack Edwards.

Also remembered was Conor Shaw, grandson of local volunteer Joe Boyd, who died in 2011, aged 31, after battling cancer. Conor was inspired by the values of his grandfather and was laid to rest wearing an International Brigade badge.

See more about Conor Shaw here: [<http://irelandscw.com/docs-ConorShaw.htm>].

'Antifascistas' at union conferences

The IBMT's "Antifascistas" exhibition has been on a successful tour of Scotland since February, finishing in the Scottish head office of Unison in Glasgow in May following show-

Continued overleaf



SPEAKER: Peter N Carroll, pictured at London's Imperial War Museum, where he delivered the IBMT's 2012 Len Crome Memorial Lecture in March.



GROUP: From left: Pend Books owner Julia Watt Muir, Janet Butterworth and (right) Gill Bailey, all members of the Whithorn & District Business Association, with Dumfries & District TUC Treasurer and IBMT member Stuart Hyslop.

Marking Jack Brent's centenary

The centenary of the birth of George "Geordie" Dickie, known as Jack Brent when he travelled to Spain as an International Brigade volunteer, was marked at the house that bears a plaque in his honour in Whithorn, Dumfries & Galloway.

Dickie was born in Coburg, Ontario, on 24 February 1912, but his family returned home to Whithorn a few months later. He served an apprenticeship with a local butcher before joining the Cameron Highlanders for a short spell. He later made his way to London and in 1936 travelled to Spain.

During the Battle of Jarama he was severely wounded while rescuing a fallen comrade. His injuries were to result in constant pain and several operations during the rest of his shortened life. He died in Whithorn in 1951 at the age of 39.

The ceremony to remember this "heroic, self-educated, local man", in the words of IBMT member Stuart Hyslop, was organised by Dumfries & District TUC and was attended by representatives of the Whithorn & District Business Association (WDBA), whose determination to honour Jack Brent resulted in the unveiling of the plaque in 2006.

The WDBA-commissioned plaque is situated at 55 George Street, on the wall of the premises of the butcher's shop where Geordie worked as a young man.

"The plaque has proved popular with tourists and visitors, who often inquire at the next-door Pend Books bookshop for further information," reports IBMT member Stuart Hyslop.

A biography of Jack Brent, by Stanley Harrison, was published in 1954 by Lawrence & Wishart, London.

Is this your last Newsletter?

IBMT subscriptions for 2012 are now overdue. If you have not already done so, please send your payment immediately. Otherwise you will be removed from the *IBMT Newsletter* mailing list and this will be the last issue you receive. When returning your cheque, clearly state your name and address so that these can be matched with our membership records. Also, please consider paying your subs by direct debit. The direct debit form can be downloaded at: [www.international-brigades.org.uk/join.htm]. Send cheques or completed direct debit forms to Mary Greening, IBMT Membership Secretary, 2 Woodford Close, Radyr Way, Cardiff CF5 2PH.

For any queries, tel: 029-2019 5412; email: [memsec@international-brigades.org.uk].

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ings at Dundee, Blantyre, Fife and at the Scottish TUC's offices in Glasgow and then at the STUC conference in Inverness.

The acclaimed exhibition has also been well attended in Wales, especially in Swansea during March and April and afterwards at Maesteg – where it stays until 14 May.

"Antifascistas" is scheduled to be on display at several trade union conferences this summer, and it is hoped that it will be displayed in Newhaven Fort during the weeks leading up to the IBMT's annual general meeting in October on the Sussex coast.

For information about hiring "Antifascistas", get in touch with Exhibition Coordinator Marlene Sidaway (see contact details on page 2).

George Brown's Manchester roots

Over 60 people attended a meeting on 9 March to commemorate the life of Irish-born Manchester

volunteer George Brown, who was killed at the Battle of Brunete in July 1937. The event was held at the Irish World Heritage Centre in Cheetham Hill, Manchester, and members of the Inistioge-based George Brown Memorial Committee from Ireland were among those present.

A film about the unveiling of the memorial to George Brown in Inistioge, Co Kilkenny, was shown, which included footage of International Brigade veterans Bob Doyle and Jack Jones. This was followed by a talk by Harry Owens on the life and times of George Brown. During a concluding question and answer session, a proposal to erect a memorial to George Brown in Manchester met with general approval.

Victims remembered at Marx's tomb

Javier Moreno Díaz, president of one of the main groups in Spain campaigning for recognition of the crimes of Franco, gave the annual oration at the Karl Marx tomb in London's Highgate Cemetery on 10 March.



TALK: An event to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the International Brigades took place in Aberdeen on 14 October 2011 in the ATUC Club. There was a talk by Neil Cooney, nephew of Bob Cooney, former political commissar of the British Battalion, on the 19 Aberdeen volunteers, five of whom were killed in Spain.



BENCH: Friends and family of International Brigader and former IBMT Chair Sam Lesser gather around the memorial bench that was inaugurated in his honour on 18 March in Victoria Park, east London, close to where he was raised as a child.

Speaking on behalf of the Federación Estatal de Foros por la Memoria (National Federation of Forums for Memory) – which promotes the exhumation of the mass graves of the victims of the Francoist repression of supporters of the Spanish Republic – Moreno Díaz said: “While Spanish judges who have been investigating the crimes of Francoism are disqualified, bulldozers are removing the remains of murdered Republicans from ditches throughout Spain,”

He told the audience at the event organised by the Marx Memorial Library: “The remains of Republicans executed, tortured and made to disappear are not just bones. These remains have a dignity, these people were murdered for being organised, for having a class consciousness... They resisted and fought against the tragedy of fascism.”

In brief...

● Jules Paivio, the last surviving **Canadian veteran** of the International Brigades, received his Spanish nationality at a ceremony at the Spanish consulate in Toronto in January. Now aged 94, Pavier was one of the 1,400 Canadian volunteers in the Mackenzie-Papineau Battalion. Spanish nationality was conferred on International Brigade veterans by Spain’s 2007 Law of Historical Memory.

● IBMT supporters in **Reading** are campaigning for donations to have their memorial – now over 20 years old – cleaned and restored. They have set up a Facebook page and are arranging fundraising events. Find them on Facebook at Reading-International-Brigade-Memorial or email [spanishwarmemorial@hotmail.co.uk].

● A campaign has been launched by IBMT supporters in **North Lanarkshire** for a memorial to volunteers in the Spanish Civil War. A fundraising event was held in Motherwell on 24 March, with the IBMT’s “Antifascistas” exhibition on show at the Heritage Centre supplemented by some original material from Glasgow Caledonian University’s archives, including a postcard from Charlie Goodfellow to his next door neighbour. The Lanarkshire Songwriters Group sang a selection from their “From Blantyre to Barcelona” CD and John Milligan, of the No Pasaran group that organised the event, reported that the local council had already allocated a site for the memorial in Duchess of Hamilton Gardens.

● Ivry-sur-Seine, a suburb on the southern outskirts of **Paris**, remembered 10 local volunteers who were killed in Spain fighting with the International Brigades on 25 January when a plaque was unveiled in their honour. The ceremony was organised by the IBMT’s sister organisation in France, ACER [www.acer-aver.fr] and the Ivry town council. The plaque was placed next to another one inaugurated in 1996, telling passers-by that some 60 Ivry volunteers left for Spain in November 1936 from 19 rue Raspail.



Margaret Finley (right) with friends at the Zombie Club, Havana, around 1942. Next to her is husband Enrique Moret Astruells.

From Isle of Wight to Spain, Paris, Dominican Republic, Cuba, New York, Ecuador and back to Spain...

The extraordinary life and times of Margaret Finley

ALAN LLOYD looks at the eventful life of Margaret Finley, one of the British nurses who served in Spain. Until recently, little was known about her, but a wealth of information came to light early last year when Alan made contact with Margaret’s niece, Di Margetts, and her friend and carer in the final years of her life, Lynne Armitage.

Born on 22 December 1913 in Ryde, Isle of Wight, Margaret Duncombe Finley began her training as a nurse on the island and later moved to London’s Kings College Hospital for more formal training between 1933-36. This was followed by surgical training at the Royal Masonic Hospital in 1937/8.

After attending an Aid Spain rally in the East End she volunteered to go to Spain, serving as a nurse in Mataró, about 20 miles north-east of Barcelona, from August 1938 to December of that year. She worked in some very miserable and fairly unsanitary conditions and later spoke of the terrible injuries that many soldiers had.

With a group of young Spanish socialists and injured International Brigaders she made her way to the French frontier at Le Perthus and from there was repatriated to the UK.

She left behind a boyfriend, Enrique Moret Astruells, a sculptor and captain in the Spanish

Republic’s army. As Catalonia fell to the fascists in January 1939 he was detained in Olot, but managed to escape. Across the Pyrenees he was interned in the camp at Le Barcarès.

Margaret was meanwhile touring the UK raising money for Spanish refugees. She returned to France early in 1939 and worked for the British Committee for Spanish Refugees. Somehow she found Enrique and sprung him from the camp. They travelled to Paris, where she lobbied for the rights of the refugees.

In Paris they were married and, mixing in left-wing and artistic circles, Margaret began to develop a growing interest in artists and art.

She also became involved with the initiative launched by Rafael Trujillo, the dictator of the Dominican Republic, titled “Dominicanización de la frontera” to encourage European immigration. He pursued an open door policy admitting Jewish immigrants in the 1930s when most countries were turning them away. After the Spanish Civil War he promoted the immigration of Spanish Republican exiles.

Margaret and Enrique were on the *Cuba*, a chartered steamship that arrived in the Dominican Republic in 1940, having sailed from Marseilles full of Spanish refugees.

However, conditions in the Dominican Republic were abhorrent, little better than in the French camps that the refugees had been in and there was soon discontent. With her British

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Margaret Finley

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passport Margaret secured work with a committee helping to rehouse the refugees.

As the conditions in the Dominican Republic worsened in 1942 the couple relocated to Cuba, where Margaret secured work in the Anglo American Hospital in Havana.

Enrique was again working as a sculptor. But he could not obtain a visa to enter the US, so Margaret took some of his works to New York to organise an exhibition. However, she never returned to Cuba. In 1945 they were divorced and Enrique quickly remarried.

In New York Margaret obtained work with art curator Mildred Constantine as an agent for Latin American artists, while sending money to the Spanish refugees whenever she could.

In 1946 she returned to the UK to visit her family. There she was asked by the newly formed World Federation of United Nations Associations to be their Latin American Secretary. She travelled to postwar Czechoslovakia, where she met Jan Masaryk, the country's president. Back in Cuba, at the start of a tour of Latin America, she contracted hepatitis. There were bouts of the illness in Guatemala and Mexico and the trip was abandoned, forcing her to return to New York. There she was hospitalised.

In 1947, after her recovery she was invited to a party in New York where she met Jan Schreuder, a Dutch cartographer working for BP in Ecuador. He was also an artist and, after they married and she returned with him to Ecuador, she persuaded him to take up painting full time. They bought a small studio in Quito and encouraged Ecuadorian Indians to develop their arts and crafts. Many of the traditional designs still seen in the markets of Ecuador were reintroduced thanks to the efforts of Jan and Margaret. Meanwhile, she had become a competent artist herself, but as she later said: "There was only ever room for one artist and ego in the household."

In 1959 Jan was offered a job in the US at a university in Oklahoma, but this time it was Margaret who was refused an entry visa – because of her "communist" background. Due to Jan's bad health they had to leave the altitude of Ecuador and, with his comfortable company pension, they were able to move to Spain, where they became friends of Gerald Brenan, the noted Hispanicist and former member of the Bloomsbury Group. He recommended a house in Mijas to them, which they bought.

They subsequently purchased a nearby plot of land and designed and built their own house and studio. Jan died in 1964, but Margaret remained there until her death on 5 September 2003 at the age of 89.

Alan Lloyd is a Southampton-based IBMT member who researches and writes about the International Brigade volunteers from Hampshire and the Isle of Wight.



From left: Alberto Bayo Giroud, Miguel Ángel Lauzurica Díaz and María Luisa Lafite.

Cubans in the Spanish Civil War: 'Not one step backwards'

By Steve Ludlam

Revolutionary Cuba's current medical internationalism has been called "the greatest story never told", and its military internationalism in Africa, which cost over 2,000 Cuban lives, receives little attention today. Cuban internationalism in the Spanish Civil War is similarly hidden from history. Cuban historians Enrique Cirules and María Mercedes Sánchez Dotres have recently uncovered evidence in Russian and Spanish archives to sustain a claim that, proportionately to population, Cubans' engagement was unmatched.

They have identified 1,225 volunteers, compared with 734 in earlier Cuban studies and 1,056 in Denise Urcelay-Maragnes's major 2008 French study of Cuban volunteers. Why so many? One explanation notes historic links with Spain. But few Cuban volunteers registered Spanish origins. Crucially, Hispanic-American volunteering was far weaker elsewhere: estimates suggest 11 from the Dominican Republic, 464 from radical Mexico. In the Americas, only the US seems to have sent more volunteers.

A more compelling explanation stresses politics. Most Cuban volunteers were young veterans of contemporary struggles against Cuba's Machado dictatorship and the first regime of Batista. The "tropical Mussolini" Machado was overthrown in 1933, but in 1934 the radical government fell to US-supported Batista. Revolutionary groups, notably the "Young Cuba" insurrectionists and the Cuban

Communist Party, dominated resistance at home and anti-fascist support for Spain.

The first volunteers were revolutionary Cubans exiled in Spain, led by Young Cuba intellectuals. In July 1936, many immediately joined the fighting against the military revolt in Madrid's Montaña Barracks. Most, initially, entered the 5th Regiment. María Luisa Lafite fought in the Montaña Barracks and many battles, alongside her husband Pedro Vizcaíno Urquiaga. Policarpo Candón Guillén became a divisional commander, at 35 known as the "old man". Alberto Sánchez Menéndez, a victim of Machado's torturers, became the "comandante cubano" in the 11th Division, dying in battle aged 22. Cuba's outstanding young writer, Pablo de la Torriente Brau, died in battle at 25, earning the title "Martyr of Majadahonda".

"...no matter who falls"

Not all were exiled activists. Cuban boxer Miguel Ángel Lauzurica Díaz, "Malaya", working in a Madrid gym when the rebellion began, went straight to his union office, joined up and fought in the 5th Regiment (and was wounded near Toledo).

The second group, both of intellectual exiles and migrant workers, came from the US. Led by medical student Rodolfo de Armas Soto, the Cubans formed the Abraham Lincoln Battalion's Centuria Cubana Antonio Guiteras (named after a young martyr of the anti-Machado struggle). Arriving in January 1937, they were soon fighting at the withering Battle at Jarama. After 12 days of fighting, the Centuria Guiteras was ordered to attack the

"In 1936 they decided to postpone the plan [for an invasion and insurrection in Cuba] for six months, explicitly to redirect their forces to Spain. It would be two decades before Fidel Castro's force would make good the promise to resume this struggle."

enemy trenches. Rodolfo de Armas led from the front, and died aged 25 having told his fighters: “Remember muchachos, not one step backwards, no matter who falls!” Losses forced their reorganisation into the combined Guiteras-Connolly unit.

The third and largest group were recruited in Cuba into the International Brigades, arriving between April 1937 and May 1938. An extraordinary event demonstrates radical Cuba’s link to the defence of Spain. The Young Cuba group, with the Communist Party and exiled 1933 President Ramón Grau San Martín, had agreed an invasion and insurrection in Cuba. But meeting in the US in 1936 they decided to postpone the plan for six months, explicitly to redirect their forces to Spain. It would be two decades before Fidel Castro’s force would make good the promise to resume this struggle later.

A revolutionary legacy

Within Cuba, support was overwhelmingly for the Republic: barely one tenth of the number fighting for the Republic joined the Francoist foreign legion. Teresa Casuso, widow of Pablo de la Torriente Brau, led solidarity aid, which included the Casa Cuba children’s refuge at Sitges. Cuban and Spanish Civil War veterans later fought side-by-side against Batista’s dictatorship in the 1950s. In 1955, Alberto Bayo Giroud, Cuban-born Spanish Republican commander, was engaged by Fidel Castro to train his guerrilla forces at the Mexican farm and home of Teresa Casuso. Republican General Enrique Lister Forján later trained revolutionary Cuba’s militia. Bayo died a general in the Cuban revolutionary army.

Mario Morales Mesa, later president of Cuba’s Spanish Civil War Veterans’ Association, joined the clandestine 1947 expedition from Cuba to overthrow the Trujillo dictatorship in the Dominican Republic. Alongside him were Daniel Martín Lambrandero, Spanish commander of the XV International Brigade’s 59th Battalion, and a young Fidel Castro. Martín Lambrandero died fighting Batista and is a “Martyr of the Cuban Revolution”. María Luisa Lafite, who had rushed to the Montaña Barracks, was a clandestine fighter in Cuba in the 1950s. Many such links must exist.

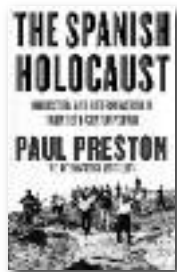
Cubans in Spain fought in many units (according to Urcelay-Maragnes, seven fought in the British Battalion) and in many battles, losing around one fifth of their comrades in Madrid, Jarama, Teruel, Brunete, Belchite, Ebro, Gandesa, Pandóls and elsewhere. When the new Cirules and Sánchez Dotres study emerges, resources should be found for an English edition. Cuba’s Volunteers for Liberty deserve their story to be heard more widely.

Steve Ludlam is a senior lecturer at Sheffield University. Contact him [s.ludlam@shef.ac.uk] for a longer version of this article and a list of Spanish and French sources.

Digging up Spain’s guilty past

“The Spanish Holocaust: Inquisition and Extermination in Twentieth-Century Spain” by Paul Preston (Harper Press, London, 2012) £30 (hardback)

Reviewed by Helen Graham



In Spain today, the civil war triggered three-quarters of a century ago is still “the past that has not passed away”. When a Spanish judge, Baltasar Garzón, internationally renowned for his championing of human rights, opened an investi-

gation into the conflict’s core of extreme extrajudicial violence (in which more than 200,000 people were killed), he was charged with abuse of power. Although he was acquitted, the fact both that he was put on trial at all and that judicial investigation into the violence is now blocked renders Paul Preston’s monumental, rigorous and unflinching study important and opportune in ways that reach far beyond the purely academic.

Preston, Britain’s foremost historian of modern Spain, acknowledges his debt to those historians inside Spain who over the past three decades, despite huge social and political obstacles, have opened up the facts of this violence through painstaking research in local archives. But Preston’s own contribution is a major one, both in tracing the fundamentalist origins of the military

“Even in areas where there was no resistance to the coup, the new military authorities presided over an extermination, mainly perpetrated by civilian death squads and vigilantes.”



Exhumation of a mass grave of Spanish Republican supporters.

coup that unleashed the killing and in reconstructing its barbed and complex consequences. What the conspirators intended was to crush the social challenge posed by the reforming project of the democratic Second Republic.

Preston reminds us that the conflict in Spain began as a military assault on an evolving civil society and democratic regime. Recognising that the initial massive violence was generated precisely by the military rebels themselves remains the biggest taboo of all in democratic Spain’s public sphere. Franco’s dictatorship has never been delegitimised since his death in 1975, notwithstanding the symbolic measures of recent years. It is this central military responsibility which Garzón sought unsuccessfully to confront judicially that lies at the heart of Preston’s study.

The conspirators’ determination to deploy terror from the start was made clear in the prior orders of the coup’s director, General Mola, to “eliminate without scruples or hesitation all who do not think as we do”. Their aim was to reverse both the Republic’s redistributive policies of land and social reform and the cultural shift implied in its extension of literacy, co-education and women’s rights. But resistance to the rebels in much of urban Spain created such logistical challenges that the coup would likely have failed, had it not been for the provision by Hitler and Mussolini of the aircraft that transported Franco’s colonial Army of Africa to mainland Spain.

The military rebels now unleashed the mass slaughter of civilians. Preston’s book tells the harrowing story of this “cleansing” war of terror as it unfolded across the entirety of Spain’s territory. Even in areas where there was no resistance to the coup, the new military authorities presided over an extermination, mainly perpetrated by civilian death squads and vigilantes.

In the areas of Spain where the military coup failed, in one crucial respect it “succeeded” fully—

Continued overleaf

'The Spanish Holocaust'

From previous page

in that there too it unleashed extrajudicial killing. In Republican territory this killing, which for a time the government was powerless to prevent because the coup had collapsed the instruments of public order, was perpetrated against civilian sectors assumed to support the coup. Some 50,000 people were killed, including nearly 7,000, mostly male, religious personnel – killings that drastically undermined the Republic's international credibility.

After Franco achieved victory in spring 1939, the mass murdering dimension inherent in war-forged Francoism became fully apparent, as the final section of Preston's study explores. Of the baseline figure of 150,000 extra- and quasi-judicial killings for which it was responsible in the territory under direct military control between 1936 and the late 1940s, at least 20,000 were committed after the Republican military surrender in late March 1939.

Tens of thousands were tried merely for their political or social alignment with the Republic – as one prosecutor declared: "I do not care, nor do I even want to know, if you are innocent or not of the charges made against you." This was the Franco regime's "fatal" moment: it mobilised a social base of perpetrators, building on their fears and losses sustained during the war, while, at the same time, it criminalised the Republican population, perpetrating an abuse of human rights on a vast scale. Worse still, the regime, buoyed up by the Cold War, then kept alive these binary categories for nearly 40 years.

This is what marks Francoism apart – the lasting toxicity of its originating strategy which still burns the social and political landscape of 21st century Spain, three-and-a-half decades after the dictator's death.

That Spain's public sphere is still shaped to a great extent by the values and perceptions bequeathed by four decades of Francoism is blindingly evident in the Garzón case. Inside Spain, the afterlife of violence remains; and with it the need for a democratic coming-to-terms, inherent in which is an openness to the difficult past.

Preston's study is history as a public good, a substitute for the process of truth and reconciliation that has not taken place in Spain and an antidote to those who still regard Franco as a good Christian gentleman.

Helen Graham is Professor of Spanish History at Royal Holloway, University of London. A longer version of this review was first published in *The Independent* on 2 March 2012. See [www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/books/reviews/the-spanish-holocaust-inquisition-and-extermination-in-twentiethcentury-spain-by-paul-preston-7468500.html].

To die in Madrid 60 years later

"'For us it was Heaven' The Passion, Grief and Fortitude of Patience Darton: From the Spanish Civil War to Mao's China" by Angela Jackson (Sussex Academic Press, Eastbourne, 2012) £22.50*

Reviewed by Richard Baxell



Nearly 20 years ago, Angela Jackson, then researching her doctorate, interviewed a woman who had worked as a nurse in Republican Spain during the civil war. The story that Angela was told that day by her 80-year-old interviewee, Patience Edney (née Darton), became an

important part of a ground-breaking thesis and led to a well received book on women in the war.

This biography of Patience brings Angela back to her beginnings and, perhaps understandably, is the cause of a certain amount of reflection by the author. In many ways the book is a personal account of Angela's relationship with Patience and the process of researching and writing.

The opening chapters portray Patience in the years before Spain, where we learn about the development of two important and long-standing features of Patience's life: nursing and left-wing politics. Born into an upper middle-class family, Patience decided to train as a midwifery nurse at University College Hospital in London, where she was also introduced to progressive politics by the illustrious scientist and dedicated communist, JBS Haldane.

The story of Patience's time in Spain forms the central part of Angela's portrayal. She was persuaded to go to Spain to nurse the British Battalion's former commander, Tom Wintringham, who was dangerously ill with typhoid. A nurse's life in war-torn Spain was not an easy one and this biography presents a clear picture of the impossible conditions under which the nurses were forced to operate, with hospitals and ambulances deliberately targeted by Franco's forces.

Yet, despite the long hours and near exhaustion, there was still the opportunity for love. Uncovered through her personal letters, we hear how she fell in love with and married a young German International Brigader. Soon we realise why Angela refers to Patience's grief and fortitude: her new husband was killed on the Ebro in the summer of 1938. Patience didn't mention him again, nor did she visit Spain, for another 60 years.

In the 1950s, following the Second World War, Patience turned her efforts towards Mao's China, carrying on the work she had begun in Spain. While there are accounts by other Spanish veterans who went on to work in China, such as Nan Green and David Crook, this is not an area that has been

widely written about, so I found this section particularly interesting.

In 1996 Patience attended the *homenaje* in Madrid. The book's last act is genuinely moving, for Patience did not survive her return to Spain: "To Die in Madrid", read Patience's obituary in *El Periódico* – a fitting conclusion to an extraordinary life and an engaging biography.

* Available from the IBMT at the special price of £19 plus £2.99 p&p. Send cheques payable to the IBMT to: IBMT, 6 Stonells Road, London SW11 6HQ.

A helping hand from the British establishment

"Franco's Friends: How British Intelligence Helped Bring Franco to Power in Spain" by Peter Day (Biteback Publishing, London, 2011) £19.99 (hardback)

Reviewed by Jim Jump



In June 1938, following a series of spectacular military victories that had split the Spanish Republic into two zones, General Franco sent a private message to British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain thanking him for Britain's friendship and reassuring him that they were

both defending the same ideals. Embarrassed, Chamberlain ordered that there should be no publicity for the greeting, recounts Peter Day in this new study of the support that Franco's rebellion received from key sections of Britain's political, financial and intelligence establishment.

No wonder the architect of appeasement with European fascism was so embarrassed. While Britain professed neutrality and "non-intervention" in the Spanish Civil War and still recognised the Spanish Republic as the legitimate government of Spain, the reality, as "Franco's Friends" lays bare, was entirely different.

Day's book is a who's who of the powerful network of fascist-sympathising aristocrats, right-wing politicians, upper-class Roman Catholics, industrialists, bankers, MI6 spies and rich playboys (and the odd playgirl) who worked openly and covertly to make sure that Franco triumphed in Spain. Some were blinded by their anti-communism – ignoring the fact that in 1936, when Franco launched his coup, the Spanish Communist Party was small and relatively insignificant. Others cynically used scaremongering about the threat of a communist takeover of Spain to justify their actions.

The communist threat was entirely fictitious. Indeed one of Franco's influential British backers, Arthur Loveday, a businessman, journalist and MI6 agent, boasted that he had personally uncovered "evidence" of a communist plot to seize power in Spain. The documents in question were a forgery. There were parallels in this affair, according to Day,

to the scandal that brought down the Labour government in 1924 with the publication in the *Daily Mail* of the Zinoviev letter, another forgery in which British intelligence was implicated.

Loveday was a member of the antisemitic Right Club. The club's founder was the Conservative MP Archibald Ramsay, another of Franco's prominent supporters, who was interned during the Second World War for his pro-Nazi views.

Veteran journalist Peter Day compellingly describes the antics of these loathsome characters. And as in any cloak-and-dagger tale involving spooks, it is a story replete with secret meetings, conspiracies, bribes, international intrigues and betrayals – especially the betrayal of Spanish democracy.

Now his story can be told

“The Last To Fall: The Life and Letters of Ivor Hickman – an International Brigader in Spain” by John L Wainwright (Hatchet Green Publishing, Southampton, 2012) £10.99

Reviewed by Alan Lloyd



Just a couple of years ago Ivor Hickman was like so many of the Brigaders in Spain: a name sitting with the more than 500 other volunteers on the roll of honour, a few personal details, but nothing about the man himself – his

hopes, his dreams or his fears.

All that changed with the discovery of Ivor's letters from Spain to his wife, Juliet. They had been carefully preserved by Juliet and then her daughters after her death – a moving story, lying in an attic, waiting to be told. John Wainwright has used these letters in the context of events in the Spanish Civil War to tell this story, and everyone who reads it will be grateful that he has.

Ivor was the son of a Southampton gas collector, who died when Ivor was very young. A series of scholarships saw him graduate from Christ's College, Cambridge, in June 1936. It was at Cambridge that he met and fell in love with Juliet MacArthur, a student at Newham College, whose family home was in Petersfield, Hampshire. It is at this stage that the letters begin, both humorous and intimate, the joy of two young people who have discovered love for the first time.

After graduation Ivor moved to Manchester to work for Metropolitan Vickers as an apprentice mathematical engineer. Juliet followed and in December 1936 they were married. Ten months later Ivor was in Spain. His early letters show the exuberance of a soldier keen to fight for the cause and then to return home and fulfil all the previously made plans for the future. Although the tone changes as the war wears on, his commitment to fighting fascism never wavers, nor does his desire for a frontline position.

New study charts the long war against fascism

International Brigade historian Richard Baxell's next eagerly anticipated book will place the volunteers from Britain in the wider context of the struggle against fascism from the early 1930s through to the end of the Second World War in 1945.

“Unlikely Warriors: The British in the Spanish Civil War and the struggle against fascism” weaves together the stories of the men and women who opposed Sir Oswald Mosley's Blackshirts on the streets of Britain and then fought Franco and his Nazi German and Italian Fascist allies in the Spanish Civil War of 1936-39.

Many of them afterwards went on to fight in the Second World War – often despite the opposition of the British authorities and the Communist Party.

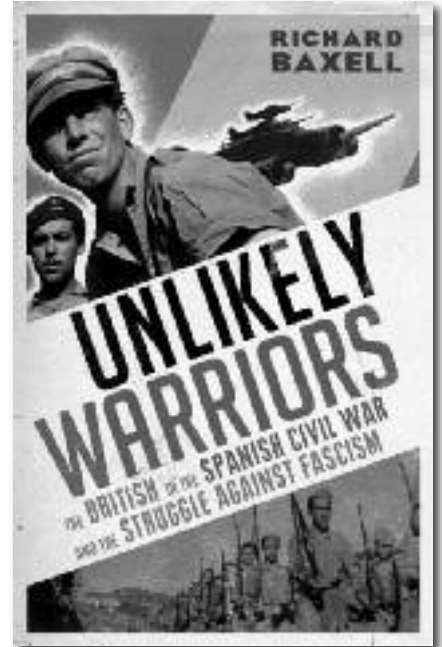
“Anyone who has heard my ‘Three Months in Spain’ or ‘Cable Street: the road to Spain’ lectures will be familiar with the approach I take,” Baxell told the *IBMT Newsletter*. “It's very much an oral history, using the mass of interview material and memoirs, properly contextualised.”

Scheduled to be published later this summer, the book begins with an explanation of the socio-economic and political climate of the 1930s, before moving on to show that it was the creation of Mosley's British Union of Fascists that solidified a disparate group of political dissenters into committed anti-fascists.

Baxell is the author of



Richard Baxell.



“British Volunteers in the Spanish Civil War”, which is regarded by many as the definitive account of the International Brigaders from the British Isles. He explains that, in addition to the story of the British Battalion, his new study will include chapters examining the roles of other volunteers, including the medics and the ILP (Independent Labour Party) group. It also tells of the numerous visitors from Britain to Spain, from reporters to “war tourists”.

“Unlikely Warriors: The British in the Spanish Civil War and the struggle against fascism”, is planned for publication by Aurum Press in August. It will have roughly 400 pages and will be on sale for £20 (hardback).

Following a period as chief instructor at the International Brigades' training school for officers in Tarazona de la Mancha, he moved to the front at the Battle of the Ebro as chief observer of the British Battalion. His letters from this period show that he remained optimistic about surviving, though obviously well aware of the danger he was in. All the time he reminds Juliet of his love and desire to return and be with her. But it was not to be, as Ivor was killed on 22/23 September 1938, quite possibly the last British Brigader to die at the Ebro.

Although Ivor's letters were only ever meant to be shared by two people, John Wainwright has sensitively woven them into the meticulously researched narrative both of Ivor's life and the story of the British Battalion. This allows the reader a real insight both into the man himself and the realities of the war in Spain.

Medics in the line of fire

“¡Salud! British Volunteers in the Republican Medical Service during the Spanish Civil War, 1936-1939” by Linda Palfreeman (Sussex Academic Press, Eastbourne, 2012) £24.95*

Reviewed by Pauline Fraser



At last, in “¡Salud!” we have a book that gives a comprehensive account of the British contribution to the medical services in Republican Spain that will take its place as the key work of reference.

Continued overleaf

Frank Ryan film pulls back from controversial thesis

Reviewed by Manus O’Riordan

“Queen’s set for Nazi occupation” was the headline in the Irish edition of the *Sunday Times* last September when reporting that Queen’s University Belfast had been festooned with Nazi insignia to represent wartime Berlin for a film being made by Desmond Bell, of that same university, entitled “The Enigma of Frank Ryan”.

The report quoted Bell on the declared purpose of the film: “What we are really trying to do is to present to the audience the kind of enigma that Frank Ryan was – how he started out on the left and

ended up working for fascism.” The film’s historical consultant was stated to be fellow Queen’s academic Fearghal McGarry, author of “Frank Ryan” (2002), with one character-assassinating chapter headed: “Collaborator, 1938-44”.

The completed film was premiered at the Jameson Dublin International Film Festival on 18 February. The publicity material generated for its marketing contained the same message. “Wartime Berlin comes to Queen’s” was the proud boast of the press release from Queen’s University itself, which continued: “Academic and film-maker Professor Des Bell and historian Dr Fearghal McGarry, both from Queen’s, are taking on one of their biggest assignments to date with the production of a film on the enigma that was Frank Ryan. Ryan was a republican socialist of 1930s Dublin and International Brigade volun-



“Enigma”: Frank Ryan.

teer who fought fascism in the Spanish Civil War, and ended his life working for the Nazis in wartime Berlin.” (My emphasis – MO’R)

The film received a second showing on 26 February, followed by a debate organised by the journal *History Ireland*, in which both McGarry and I participated. My original review refuting McGarry’s thesis is online at [www.irelandscw.com/docs-Ryan2.htm] and I again took issue with him in the February debate.

Notwithstanding the character assassination that continues to be deployed by Bell in promoting his film, however, I was pleasantly surprised that the actual screenplay had pulled back from the McGarry thesis and treated Ryan’s period in Germany in all its complexity, demonstrating that he most certainly was not a collaborator.

It was, in fact, the film’s superficial treatment of the Spanish Civil War itself that turned out to be its most disappointing feature. There was a caricature of Ryan’s internationalist handling of national tensions in the British Battalion, along with a portrayal of the Battle of Jarama that is historically unrecognisable. And there was a failure to seize the dramatic opportunity that the film had open to it if only it had gone on to re-enact Ryan’s great rally of Brigadistas of all nationalities by leading them, with a mass rendition of “The Internationale”, to recapture territory previously yielded up in an earlier retreat.

Hospitals, ambulances and medical units were under constant attack, as Franco’s forces blatantly violated international agreements. Hospitals and medical units had to be camouflaged and during the Ebro offensive they were set up in railway tunnels and even caves. Ambulances remained a target and several stretcher-bearers and drivers lost their lives. Against all these odds, the achievements of the Republican medical services, to which the British Medical Unit made a substantial contribution, were enormous. There were four main areas in which medical science advanced: the organisation of medical support to the armed forces, including the strategic positioning of emergency units and frontline hospitals; the treatment of wounds and injuries; the control of

In brief...



● Manchester-based folksinger **Michael Burns** (left) has written a song in tribute to local volunteer James Keogh, who was killed in Spain in May 1937, aged 22. Listen to it at [http://michaelburns1.com].



● **Winifred Wheable-Archer**, former widow of Manchester International Brigader **Ron Barber** (their wedding is pictured in the press cutting) has posted her autobiography as a free online download. “We really do not alter, just grow older” describes Ron’s time in Spain and her Aid Spain campaigning in Manchester. He died soon after the

Second World War from pancreatic cancer – which they suspected had developed as a result of entering the Hiroshima radiation area while he was serving in the Royal Navy. Born into a strongly Labour family, Winifred was a local government social services administrator in later life, based in Manchester, Leeds and Nottingham. Download her story from: [www.betterworldbooks.com/we-really-do-not-alter-just-grow-older-id-095324234X.aspx].



● The out-of-print memoir of Irish Brigader **Joe Monks** (1915-1988), “With the Reds in Andalusia”, originally published in London in 1985, has now been published in Spanish (as “Con los rojos en Andalucía”) by Renacimiento (Seville, 2012, €15) with an introduction by historian Miguel Ángel del Arco Blanco. Monks was in Spain from December 1936 to July 1937, seeing action on the Córdoba and Segovia fronts.

The medical volunteers

From previous page

“¡Salud!” is divided into several sections. The first tells the story of the Spanish Medical Aid Committee, which was the first foreign aid committee to send volunteers to Spain. We learn how the first British hospital was set up at Grañén and how the British Medical Unit was integrated into the International Brigades.

The second section follows the British Medical Unit throughout the war, from Jarama to the Ebro. Medical staff worked in appalling conditions, grappling with lack of sleep, extremes of heat or cold, insanitary conditions, shortages of supplies and the frequent need to operate in darkness.

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Against all these odds, the achievements of the Republican medical services, to which the British Medical Unit made a substantial contribution, were enormous. There were four main areas in which medical science advanced: the organisation of medical support to the armed forces, including the strategic positioning of emergency units and frontline hospitals; the treatment of wounds and injuries; the control of

infectious diseases and the creation and development of blood banks.

Linda PalFREEMAN tellingly comments: “Despite the extremely harsh conditions and the scarcity of medical materials of all kinds in Spain, there were surprisingly low mortality rates in comparison with previous wars.”

On their return, many medical volunteers passed on their expertise: writing articles, giving lectures and putting their skills into practice in the Second World War.

The final section of the book consists of biographies of most of the volunteers.

* Available from the IBMT at the special price of £17 plus £2.99 p&p. Send cheques payable to the IBMT to: IBMT, 6 Stonells Road, London SW11 6HQ.

Remembering the Red Matildas

I live in Australia and have only just learned of the IBMT's existence. I was lent a book, "Australia's Spanish Knight", by a friend who knew of my interest in the Spanish Civil War. When I got to page 25 I was amazed to read the names of three nurses who had been part of Australia's contribution to the International Brigades. One of the nurses mentioned, May Pennefather (née McFarlane), had been a close friend of my mother and grandmother and is indeed one of the three female subjects of a prize-winning documentary, "Red Matildas", made by my daughter Sharon Connolly in 1985.

I contacted the authors of the book, Des and Kate Speight, and we have now had email communication in which they mentioned your organisation.

My interest stems from more than the fact that as a child I knew volunteers Sam Aarons and Ron Hurd. I also met Lloyd Edmunds, who once helped me to promote the film "The Good Fight" (about the Abraham Lincolns) when I worked at a film centre here in Melbourne.

My grandmother Elizabeth Lister was for a time the secretary of the Spanish Relief Committee in Perth, Western Australia, which raised money for medical aid and ambulances. In her fine film my daughter has used, amongst other archival footage, a still photo of my grandmother saying farewell to the nurses and an ambulance at Fremantle pier.

My mother was also involved in the Spanish Relief Committee and as a child (I was born in



The young and older Australian nurse May Pennefather in the "Red Matildas" documentary.



National Film & Sound Archive of Australia

1936) I often heard about what happened in Spain. As an adult I returned to complete my education, which had been cut short by marriage and four children, and later went to university where I majored in Spanish language and Latin American studies, also completing a unit on the Spanish Civil War. All this was back in the 1970s, but has all surfaced again as I've been writing a memoir about my marriage to a remarkable man, who was a well-known and widely respected journalist, author and film critic.

My book has a section dealing with my relatives and their connection to Spain and indeed my own visits there in 1974, 1982 and 1999, the last accompanied by my husband not long before his death.

Incidentally I also replied for May Pennefather to an invitation she received to attend the birthday celebrations for Dolores Ibárruri's 90th birthday. May had met La Pasionaria in Benicásim in January 1937 and again in Valencia at a conference of anti-fascist women in late 1937. May nursed on the Jarama front, also in Brunete, Belchite, Albacete and Mataró.

Another coincidence is that you have a new record with Billy Bragg performing "Jarama

Valley". My second child (who died at 36) was a guitarist and songwriter with one of Australia's leading rock groups and they played with Billy when he was here some years ago.

My grandparents came to Australia from Warrington, Lancashire, in 1926 with their five children when my mother was 12. Grandma very quickly became active in the 1930s in the movement against war and fascism. In 1938 she was a guest speaker at the first ever International Women's Day (IWD) celebration in Perth and the subject of her discourse was La Pasionaria. This was all duly reported in the *West Australian*. Incidentally in the 1950s my mother chaired IWD. So you can see I had good role models.

My own four children grew up listening to the 1961 double album "Songs of the Spanish Civil War" and probably can still belt out a passable rendition of "Jarama Valley", "Viva la Quince Brigada" and the chorus of "Venga, jaleo, jaleo" in bad Spanish.

Joan Connolly
Melbourne

Clips from "Red Matildas" can be viewed online at [<http://aso.gov.au/titles/documentaries/red-matildas>].

CAN YOU HELP?

Respect for Alan Gilchrist

Mike Slater, from Malvern, is a former pupil of International Brigader Alan Gilchrist, who taught English at Hanley Castle Grammar School in Worcestershire in the early 1950s. Mike would dearly like to know where Alan's ashes were scattered on a hillside in Spain by some of his former comrades. "He [Alan] had a significant influence to the good on my life and many others. As we frequently travel to stay in Catalonia I would like to visit and pay my respects to them all at this hillside."

He adds: "At school he was a tall imposing character, well respected by all. As pupils we were in awe of him – we knew he had been in the Spanish Civil War but he never spoke about it and we were too fearful to ask." If anyone can help, contact Mike at: [theslaters73@gmail.com].



Alan Gilchrist (above) at Hanley Castle Grammar School and (left) at the Battle of the Ebro in 1938.

Role of personal photography

Beatriz Pichel, a postgraduate student at the Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, is preparing a research project about photographs taken by volunteers in the International Brigades. Her aim is to analyse the role played by personal photography, so she is seeking to make contact their families with such photographs.

Contact: [beatriz.pichel@gmail.com].

A song for Felicia Browne

IBMT member Geoff Parry is looking for someone to put music to the lyrics he has written for a song, "Salud, Felicia Browne", in tribute to the young artist killed in August 1936 while fighting with the anti-fascist militias in Aragon. She was the first British volunteer to die in the Spanish Civil War. Here are the first three verses and chorus:

You knew the fascist enemy

From dark days in Berlin –
You stood in Barcelona
And saw the war begin.

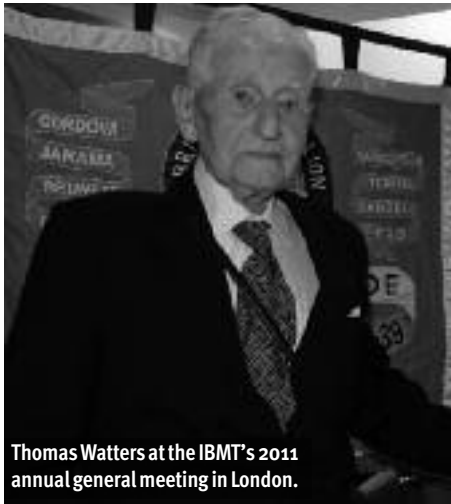
The people fought the fascists,
The streets and sky were red,
You put away your painting
And joined the fight instead.

You marched off with your comrades,
A rifle in your hand.
You told your friends that you could fight
As well as any man.

You gave your life for freedom
The day they shot you down.
May your name live for ever –
Salud, Felicia Browne!

If you can help, contact Geoff on [geoff@geoffrey3.wanadoo.co.uk].

If you think you can help with any of these queries but do not have access to the internet, contact the IBMT Secretary (details on page 2).



Thomas Watters at the IBMT's 2011 annual general meeting in London.

Thomas Watters

By Jim Jump

Thomas Watters, who died on 25 February aged 99, was the last known survivor of the 550 volunteers from Scotland who served in the Spanish Civil War of 1936-39. Though most were communists and socialists and enlisted in the International Brigades, Thomas always declared himself to be apolitical and said that it

was humanitarian rather than political motives that took him to Spain as a member of the independent Scottish Ambulance Unit.

Born in Alloa, Thomas had been studying first aid with the Red Cross for several years while working as a Glasgow bus driver, having trained as a motor mechanic after leaving school in Tillicoultry. So when he heard the appeal for Scottish drivers and medics to go to Spain he felt he was well qualified for the challenge. Glasgow Corporation helped by agreeing to keep his job open.

Following a financial appeal in which trade union members in Glasgow organised flag days and the local Musicians' Union staged a benefit concert, a large crowd saw six ambulances crewed by Thomas and 18 other uniformed volunteers leave the city centre on 17 September 1936. It was barely two months since Franco had launched his initially unsuccessful coup against the Spanish Republic with military backing from Hitler and Mussolini. Watters was to serve in Spain for most of the next two years.

He was immediately pitched into action in October 1936, helping the wounded as Republican militias and civilians retreated north in the face of the well armed and organised fascist advance south of Madrid. However, the Scottish Ambulance Unit was almost just as quickly plunged into controversy. Even before leaving Scotland there had been charges of pro-

"I had quite a few narrow shaves, mind you. But we were fortunate enough to make it – plenty of others didn't, unfortunately."

Republican partisanship from right-wing sympathisers of General Franco. But in Spain, there were suspicions that members of the unit were helping Franco's rebels, in particular by smuggling fascist sympathisers out of the capital. Claims also emerged that some individuals had been involved in looting. Five volunteers were placed under house arrest in Madrid before deportation and another two were sent home for health reasons. Depleted though still determined, the remaining members, including Watters, returned to Scotland in December and launched another round of fundraising activities.

The new appeal attracted support from across the political and social spectrum in Glasgow. Backers included the Lord Provost, Sir John Stewart, and Sir Daniel Stevenson, the local philanthropist, businessman and chancellor of Glasgow University who had been the driving force behind the creation of the unit.



Lise London

French International Brigade volunteer Lise London (née Ricol) died in Paris on 31 March, aged 96. She was also a Communist Party activist and veteran of the French

Resistance. She married Czech International Brigader Artur London (1915-86) and the couple settled in Prague after the Second World War. Artur was imprisoned in 1951 following a Stalinist show trial that targeted several Jews and International Brigaders. They moved to France in 1956.



Shmuel Segal

The last surviving member of the International Brigades who came from Palestine and afterwards lived in Israel, Shmuel Segal, died on 13 January, aged 94. Born in 1917 in Minsk, then part of Russia, his family settled in Tel Aviv in 1926. He travelled to Spain as a young communist activist in 1937 and served in the Mickiewicz Battalion, seeing action at Huesca, Teruel and Extremadura.

After the Spanish war he settled in Manchester. When the Second World War began he volunteered to join the British army but was turned away, supposedly on political

grounds. However, he was conscripted after the war ended and posted to the military government HQ in Vienna, where his fluency in Russian was useful.

He moved to Israel in 1948, the year that independence was declared, working first as an engineer and later, until aged 80, as a lawyer. Though no longer a communist, he continued to support left-wing causes and represented left-ist activists in civil and military courts.



Fritz Teppich

The last German anti-fascist volunteer of the Spanish Civil War, Fritz Teppich, died on 25 February, aged 93. Born in

Berlin, as 14-year-old Jewish "Red Pioneer" he was sent by his mother along with his elder brother to Paris and later Belgium to work as an apprentice cook when Hitler took power in Germany. She and Fritz's younger brother were later murdered by the Nazis.

When the Spanish Civil War began, Fritz, at 17, found his way to Spain's Basque Country in September 1936. Under the *nom de guerre* Alfredo T Salutregi he joined the pro-Republican forces, taking part in the fighting around San Sebastián and Bilbao.

When Bilbao was captured he escaped to France and re-entered Republican Spain in Catalonia. He joined Enrique Lister's 11th Division and fought until Catalonia fell in February 1939.

In France following the Nazi invasion he was interned as a foreign alien in the prison camp at Gurs and later Le Vernet. Just before his work unit was due to be sent to Auschwitz he slipped away and with a false ID travelled through Franco's Spain to Portugal where again he was interned, this time until the end of the Second World War.

Back in Germany, he worked as a journalist and was politically active in left-wing groups and the peace movement in West Berlin.

Ronald Fraser

Ronald Fraser, who died on 10 February aged 81, was one of the most acclaimed British historians of Spain. His 1979 study, "Blood of Spain", was a ground-breaking account of the Spanish Civil War. Using interviews with participants on both sides, it was one of the first books to describe the true extent of the repression and hardship suffered by ordinary Spaniards.

Jeanette Hurst

Jeanette Hurst, who died on 5 April aged 63, was a keen supporter of the IBMT from Leicester. She regularly attended events around the country and in Spain. She worked in the shoe industry and was an active member of the National Union of Boot & Shoe Operatives and later the shopworkers' union USDAW. Husband Lynn Hurst writes: "Her involvement in the IBMT brought her some of her happiest times and memories, and for this I thank you all."

Watters plus two of his original colleagues and seven new volunteers were soon travelling south in two ambulances, leaving Dover on 19 January 1937 for the journey back to the Spanish capital. With the city effectively under siege by the Francoists and facing daily bombardments, they braved bombs and shells to organise civilian evacuations and to bring in emergency food supplies, with the unit winning praise from the Republican authorities for its “valuable solidarity”.

Watters later recalled: “You never know what was going to happen. People often asked, were you deliberately bombed or shot at? But if you go into the target area, whatever the target is, you’ve to take what comes, just the same as the fighting men. I had quite a few narrow shaves, mind you. But we were fortunate enough to make it – plenty of others didn’t, unfortunately.”

Controversy struck a second time when four members of the unit resigned in March and joined the International Brigades’ Spanish Medical Aid Committee. Contrary to the officially neutral stance, they argued that the unit should remain behind Republican lines should Madrid fall to the fascists, as then seemed likely.

Again depleted, the unit travelled back to Scotland in July 1937, only to return to Spain in September. Watters was once more part of the team. With only one subsequent two-week break in Britain, in February 1938, he continued his welfare and medical work until the unit was finally repatriated in July 1938. Only a few weeks later, on 9 August, he was awarded the Medal of the Order of the British Empire – better known as the British Empire Medal – for his efforts in Spain by Glasgow’s Lord Provost.

During the Second World War Watters moved to St Albans to work as an engineer in the de Havilland aircraft factory in Hatfield. Though the company name changed to Hawker Siddeley and later British Aerospace, Watters stayed at the same factory until retirement. His wife Constance, “Connie”, whom he met during the war in Spain while she was working as a translator, died in 1990, aged 89.

In his final years, Thomas became active in the IBMT. He received Spanish citizenship at a ceremony at the Spanish embassy in London in June 2009 along with eight International Brigade veterans.

In August of the following year he spoke at the rededication of the memorial in Glasgow by sculptor Arthur Dooley to the Scottish volunteers in the Spanish Civil War and in July last year, the 75th anniversary of the outbreak of the war, he laid the wreath on behalf of the trust at the national memorial to the International Brigades in London’s South Bank.

Speaking about Spain and the volunteers who went there, he said: “It was very hard. The language was a big problem and the weather was sometimes appalling. You think of sunny Spain but it could be very cold and miserable in the winter-time and some suffered. It was not just the fighting men, you had all the civilians as well, in Madrid especially. They suffered terribly as well.”



The Bourbon Street Preachers will be performing at an IBMT benefit in Manchester on 18 May.

Stewart Malecki

16 May BLACKBOYS: Unveiling of plaque at Blackboys Youth Hostel, near Uckfield, East Sussex, commemorating stay of Basque refugee children during Spanish Civil War; 11:30am; if wanting to attend, contact Mike Anderson: [mike.c.anderson@talktalk.net] or 01435-864978.

18 May MANCHESTER: IBMT Benefit Night; from 8pm at Chorlton Irish Club, 17 High Lane, Chorlton M21 9DJ; Les Jones & Friends of The Beech, The Madonnas, Bourbon Street Preachers; £5 (£3 concs) on door; more information: 0161-224 1747.

18-20 May HAMBURG: Weekend organised by IBMT sister organisation in Germany, KFSR, to honour Hamburg’s 160 International Brigade volunteers, with English translation of speeches etc; harbour tour will recall anti-fascist resistance of dockers, including action against Nazi arms shipments to Franco; contact [reinhardtsilbermann@arcor.de].

24 May BELFAST: Guernica 75th anniversary event featuring Teknopeasant (“banjo-driven, gipsy, folk, punk poet”); from 7:30pm; White’s Tavern, 2-4 Winecellar Entry, BT1 1QN; organised by Belfast-based International Brigades Commemoration Committee; tel: 07759-393 607 or 07751-951785.

2-6 June PYRENEES: 75th anniversary walk across Pyrenees in footsteps of volunteers; travel by train to Perpignan on Sat (leaving London St Pancras at 9:44am) and return on Tues (arriving 7:03pm); crossing will be made on Sun; re-dedication of plaque in San Fernando Castle, Figueras, on Mon; for more details or to sponsor walkers to raise money for IBMT contact Pauline Fraser: [pbf262@googlegmail.com] or 020-8506 0088.

29-30 June INISTIÖGE: 5th annual George Brown commemoration weekend at Inistiöge, Co Kilkenny; speakers include Michael Herbert on struggles in Manchester, Manus O’Riordan on 1930s Irish party politics and the Spanish war, Harry Owens on Rev Martin Hilliard, nephew of Rev Robert Hilliard, killed at Jarama; more details: [georgebrown.inistiöge@gmail.com] and [doylejoseph@hotmail.com].

30 June BRUNETE: Commemoration of Battle of Brunete; organised by Madrid-based AABI (Friends of International Brigades); contact Seve Montero: [seve.montero@gmail.com].

7 July LONDON: Annual commemoration at

International Brigade memorial, Jubilee Gardens, SE1; assemble 12.30pm for 1pm; followed by social from 2pm at Camel & Artichoke, 121 Lower Marsh St, SE1 7AE; contact IBMT Secretary (see page 2) for more details.

14-15 July KELMARSH: La Columna Spanish Civil War living history group will be performing “From Guernica to Guildford” at English Heritage’s Festival of History at Kel-marsh Hall, Northants NN6 9LY; see [www.lacolumna.org.uk] and [www.english-heritage.org.uk/daysout/events/festival-of-history-2012].

13-14 October SUSSEX COAST: Weekend of events centred on IBMT annual general meeting at Newhaven Fort [www.newhavenfort.org.uk] from 2pm-4:30pm on 13th and presentation “Sussex and the Spanish Civil War” at Unite the Union’s Eastbourne Centre in the evening, plus tour of Robert Tressell’s Hastings on 14th (see box below); B&B and evening meal available at Eastbourne Centre (tel: 01323-433 900/www.eastbournecentre.co.uk) at special daily rate of £55.50 per person; for more information: [mike.c.anderson@talktalk.net] or contact IBMT Secretary (details on page 2).

Mugsborough tour at AGM

For IBMT members attending this year’s Annual General Meeting in October on the Sussex coast there will be a coach and walking tour of sites in Hastings that feature in the life and classic novel of Robert Tressell.

Tressell (real name Robert Noonan) lived and worked in Hastings, which he called Mugsborough in “The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists” that describes the exploitation of a group of painters and decorators early in the 20th century.

A coach will leave the Eastbourne Centre, Grand Parade, Eastbourne, at 10.30am on Sunday 14 October and return at 3.30pm. Local historian Steve Peak will lead the tour. His book “Mugsborough Revisited” can be bought online for £8.50 at [www.hastingschronicle.net/buyBooks.html]. There are only 30 seats available, £10 each on a first-come, first-served basis. Cheques payable to IBMT to Mike Anderson, 16 Meadow Way, Heathfield, East Sussex TN21 8AL.

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

CD tribute to volunteers

From front page

memory. They will continue to be an inspiration to all of us involved in anti-fascist campaigns today.”

Maxine Peake says: “Growing up in Bolton, it was my granddad Jim who first told me all about the heroism and sacrifice of International Brigade volunteers. When I came to London in the 1990s I was lucky enough to meet some of them. They were wonderful men and women and still an inspiration to me.

“The words of La Pasionaria eloquently express everything that needs to be said about the International Brigades. I’m honoured to be able to recite her speech and help make sure that their example of international solidarity and anti-fascism is remembered today.”

The CD can be ordered for £5 plus £1.99 p&p (cheques payable to IBMT) from: IBMT, 6 Stonells Road, London SW11 6HQ. To pay by credit card or PayPal, order via the merchandise page on the IBMT website: [www.international-brigades.org.uk].



PREVIEW: The new plaque for Jubilee Gardens.

London memorial

From front page

1977. Its condition deteriorated in recent years following the construction of Hungerford Bridge and the erection next to the Thames of the London Eye, one of the capital’s most popular tourist attractions.

The re-landscaping of the previously almost featureless park includes the addition of undulating lawns, new paths and lighting and the planting of some 70 new trees.

The IBMT’s annual ceremony to remember the 2,500 Brigaders, among them more than 500 who died in Spain, will begin at 1pm. Wreaths will be laid following a minute’s silence and there will be songs and speeches.

After this year’s commemoration, participants will be invited to a nearby pub, the Camel & Artichoke, for lunch and more music.

See “Diary dates: page 15.



Supporters gather around the International Brigade memorial beside the Jarama battlefield to remember the battle that helped save Madrid in February 1937.

Remembering the battles of Jarama and Guadalajara 75 years ago

The British and Irish were the largest contingents among more than 300 people who gathered in Madrid on the weekend of 17-19 February for the 75th anniversary of the Battle of Jarama.

The programme included a tour of the battlefield 12 miles south-east of the Spanish capital, talks on British volunteers Christopher Caudwell and Tom Wintringham and a visit to the University City battlefield in Madrid.

Following the Jarama site visit, a memorial was unveiled at the museum of the battle in Morata de Tajuña and the participants enjoyed a Spanish lunch and musical entertainment.

Jointly organised by Liverpool IBMT member Dan Payne and the Madrid-based AABI International Brigades friendship group, the remembrance weekend also paid homage to

the International Brigade and civilian victims of an air-raid on Albacete by Hitler’s Condor Legion, also 75 years ago.

The Battle of Jarama in February 1937 was where the British Battalion first went into action. Casualties were very high, with 150 killed and a similar number injured.

Meanwhile Italians and Spaniards came together in Guadalajara on 17 March to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the victory by Spanish Republicans, assisted by Italian volunteers of the Garibaldi Battalion of the International Brigades, against Franco’s attempt to capture Madrid by an offensive from the north-east of the capital. The Battle of Guadalajara saw Italian anti-fascists pitched against – and defeating – troops sent by Mussolini to help Franco’s rebel army.



UNVEILED: The new memorial (left) in the museum at Morata de Tajuña, made up of some 3,000 pieces of shrapnel gathered from the Jarama battlefield, was created by Goyo Salcedo (right), who is also the owner of the museum. He is pictured with Nils Wintringham, grandson of Tom Wintringham, commander of the British Battalion during part of the Battle of Jarama. Nils read his grandfather’s poem “Monument” at the inauguration.



GROUP PHOTO: Members of AICVAS, the IBMT’s sister organisation in Italy, and the ANPI Italian partisans’ association, join supporters of the AABI Madrid-based International Brigades friendship group and local political parties to remember the Battle of Guadalajara.