

EDINBURGH PEOPLE'S FESTIVAL

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Last Spanish Civil War Veteran From Scotland Dies

The death of Stevie Fullarton, the last surviving Scot to fight in the Spanish civil war [1936-38] represents the end of an era and breaks an important human link in the struggles of the socialist movement internationally. Stevie was born in the east end of Glasgow in 1920 and joined the Communist Party as a teenager. He left Glasgow at the age of seventeen and smuggled himself into Spain via France because he was outraged at the sight of Franco's fascists threatening the elected Republican government.

Whilst governments stood by and watched Franco in Spain and Mussolini in Italy mobilise fascist armies thousands of internationalists, socialist like Stevie, did not spectate but took up arms directly to help the people of Spain.

I met Stevie Fullarton a few months ago when myself and Craig Maclean from the Edinburgh May Day Committee visited him in his nursing home and took him a gift of thanks for his courage and commitment on behalf of us all going off as a young man to fight in Spain.

Although in his late 80's when I met him he was still abuzz at the memories and rightly fiercely proud of the decision he took back in 1937. He painted a picture of war I have heard from many veterans, with the long periods when next to nothing happened and then the suddenness of his gun shot wound and demobilisation. I could have listened to him for hours as he recounted the events and mood at the time. How the world has changed.

Last summer the Edinburgh People's Festival arranged for Stevie to be honoured by Hearts [his football team for the past 50 years] and Barcelona before they played at Murrayfield in a UNICEF sponsored pre season friendly. Officials from the Catalan club joined those from Hearts in presenting Stevie with an award in memory of his involvement defending Barcelona on the Ebro front in 1938.

On behalf of the Edinburgh May Day Committee and the Edinburgh People's Festival I have sent our sincerest condolences to Stevie's son Ronnie and all his family.

**Colin Fox,
Chairman, Edinburgh People's Festival**