



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2010

**Friday 19th November at Twelve Pins Public House, 5pm
(nearest tube, Finsbury Park) All Members Welcome**

Please come to our Annual General Meeting, the most important meeting in our calendar where, amongst other things, we elect our branch officers and local reps for the coming year. The following positions remain vacant:

**BRANCH OFFICER POSITION
ARNOS GROVE GROUP**

**BLACKHORSE ROAD GROUP
BLACKHORSE ROAD REVENUE
BRIXTON GROUP
LEICESTER SQUARE GROUP
CLEANERS**

**Assistant Secretary
2 Industrial Rep (IR) positions and 1 Health &
Safety (H&S)
1 H&S
1 H&S
1 IR and 1 H&S
2 IR and 1 H&S
all positions**

If you wish to stand for an officer position, you need to be nominated and seconded by a member of the branch. To stand for a local rep position, you must work in that locality and be nominated and seconded by another member from your area. In both cases, you may nominate yourself. Nominations can be emailed or texted to Branch Secretary, Dean O'Hanlon (dohanlon@aol.com or 07956342235), and nominees must attend the AGM in person.

Guest Speakers

Olly New, Council of Executives Member
Fire Brigades Union speaker (to be confirmed)
Community Group speaker (to be confirmed)

Remembering Stuart Carcary

RMT merchandise and a special badge will be on sale with all proceeds going to the family of CSA Stuart Carcary who sadly passed away this year.

Bookstall

There will be a Pathfinder bookstall selling a selection of books on working class history, political economy, culture and philosophy amongst other subjects. Feel free to browse.

Food and Entertainment

As always, after the meeting, there will be a social with free food, a limited free bar and music until late.

THIRD STRIKE CRIPPLES LUL

The third in the series of four one-day strikes by RMT and TSSA members took place on 2nd/3rd November and was strongly supported yet again. Coupled with the overtime ban and refusal to do higher grade work, LUL and Mayor Johnson are now under great pressure to rethink their job-slashing plans and return to the negotiating table. Congratulations again to every one of you who supported the strike, and especially to our ASLEF colleagues who continue to fight with us for jobs and safety despite the lack of any leadership or guidance from their union's leaders.

Reports from the Front

Clearly, the company's strategy has been to sit out the industrial action and hope that we would be divided along union lines and then that we would give up the fight and drift back to work, defeated. However, not only has there been no crumbling at the edges but, in some areas, the strikes are getting even stronger, especially in the areas covered by our branch. What follows are a few brief reports from the front line in some of our areas.

On the **Victoria Group**, a well attended picket line saw only three scabs – one from our union, one from TSSA and a non-member. Apart from this, the strike was solid. TSSA General Secretary, Gerry

Docherty, attended and many leaflets were given out to members of the public who were generally supportive of what we are trying to achieve.

As always, there were large and effective picket lines on the **Finsbury Park Group**. Apart from one RMT Supervisor and a few non-members who came in, the strike was solidly supported with many of the group's stations closed.

At **Arnos Grove depot**, the strike days go from strength to strength. Only 8 or 9 drivers worked, the fewest yet, and the token 'service' offered between Cockfosters and Finsbury Park (with multiple stations closed in between) was truly pathetic.

On the Victoria line trains side, the picture was more mixed with a number of members choosing to cross picket lines at **Brixton** and **Seven Sisters depots**. Despite this disappointing development, the Victoria line service was poor. In yet another example of how LUL ditches its normal safety standards on a strike day, there were at least two occasions when passengers were wrongly let off a train at a closed Pimlico station. No doubt these staff errors will be brushed under the carpet, as were similar errors made by scabs on previous strike days.

A Message to Strike Breakers

At its last meeting, the branch discussed the issue of strike breaking by some of our members. It was agreed that any member suspected of having worked on a strike day or of having broken the overtime and higher grade working bans, would be written to by the Branch Secretary and invited to attend a branch meeting to either refute the allegation or explain their actions. It was noted that no branch representative could be forced to represent or support any member found to have broken ranks over industrial action.

Please remember that this action was agreed by a democratic vote of the membership and is aimed at protecting jobs, safety and working conditions for **ALL** Underground staff.

If the issue is loss of pay, please also be aware of the **BRANCH HARDSHIP FUND**, which has been set up to help any member in genuine need. For financial help, please contact your local rep or Branch Secretary, Dean O'Hanlon.

We are winning this dispute. Stay united, stay strong.

UNITY IS STRENGTH!

“Everybody in Cuba has access to culture”

This was the message from Cuban writer Aida Bahr (*pictured centre*) at a meeting in London’s Birkbeck College in September this year. The broadly sponsored meeting, including the Finsbury Park RMT branch, was attended by more than 80 people. They heard the speaker describe the sea-change in Cuban culture opened up by the 1959 revolution.

Working people used the conquest of power to eliminate capitalism and take control of all aspects of society. Today “every municipality has a library, theatre, cinema, art school and museum” including in areas made up of scattered villages, Bahr said, “So everybody has access to culture”.

Bahr went on to describe the shifting trends of cultural life from the 1960s to the present day. The 60s were a decade of lively debate, of mass participation when book prices were capped at 40 cents, within the price range of everyone. The 1970s, however, fell under the influence of the USSR, what some referred to as the ‘dark

period’ or the ‘grey five years’. Stalinist type policies decreed what and who could be published, and what constituted ‘proper’ working class culture. Many writers and artists were completely marginalised, their concerns and styles rendered taboo.



The 1980s saw Armando Hart become Minister of Culture and a reversal to the revolutionary policies of the early years. “There was a new debate” said Bahr, “a new openness. A critical eye on Cuban art and fiction was developing”. Literary festivals and writers’ workshops proliferated. Bahr presented book launches on the streets and in factories.

That cultural openness continues despite the problems of the 1990s for Cuba and the world economic problems facing everyone today. “They cause not a setback for creation but for the means of creation”, explained Bahr. There is a desperate shortage of paper so book publication has to be limited. Aida Bahr’s publishing house, Oriente, “plans to publish 42 books this year. We try to balance genres and tendencies and have both experimental and traditional writing. Every year we try to publish some unpublished writers”.

In a lively question and answer session a wide range of subjects came from the audience covering all aspects of life in Cuba. Many of the audience went on to a local pub where a room had been booked to continue the discussion with Aida informally. All in all the meeting was a great success.

Report by Phil Waterhouse who attended on behalf of our branch. Phil will be running a Pathfinder bookstall at our AGM.

Next Branch Meetings

Twelve Pins Public House (near Finsbury Park Stn)

Thursdays 2nd and 9th December at 1600hrs

VOTE JANINE BOOTH FOR COUNCIL OF EXECUTIVES

Finsbury Park branch is proud to throw its support behind **Janine Booth** in the imminent election for the London Transport member of the union's Council of Executives. Janine is a former member of our branch and is well known for her intelligent, tireless and honest approach to building the union, helping members and organising the fight for a better, safer workplace for all. **Read what some of our reps have to say about Janine below:**

"In the next few years and beyond, RMT members across the combine and the whole of our industry will need the type of work output we have been receiving from Janine Booth."

Glenroy Watson
Chair, Finsbury Park branch

"I am supporting Janine Booth in the EC election because she has all the qualities needed to best serve the interests of members in our Region. I have known Janine as a level 1 Rep, Stations Functional Rep and Regional Secretary, she has consistently demonstrated that she is a dedicated, hardworking activist who will listen to the views of the members and represent those views both at the negotiating table and at debate within our Union. "Janine has tremendous organising skills and has been instrumental in improving the way we communicate with our members. Democratic principles are at the heart of her Trade Union activism which, if

elected to serve as EC member, will stand her in good stead. I believe that Janine will bring the passion and energy she has shown thus far into the role of EC member and will be a credit not only to the Region but also at a National level."

John Kelly
RMT Stations & Revenue Council rep

"I am voting for Janine because I find her to be an exceptional woman. She is hardworking, kind, honest and approachable. She has the members' interests at heart and I think she is the only person for the job. She always has time for you and will do her very best for each of us."

Tracy Fitzpatrick
Seven Sisters depot drivers' rep

"I am voting for and supporting Janine for Council of Executives London Transport seat because she's a great candidate. She has the competence, experience, strength and commitment to serve the members in this national leadership position."

John Leach
Former Council of Executives member

"I am backing Janine because of her dedication to the membership, her workrate and her democratic principles."

Dean O'Hanlon
Secretary, Finsbury Park branch

"Janine Booth has a proven good track record of representing and campaigning for all grades of members. She puts complex issues concisely into everyday English to the benefit of all. A vote for Janine

is a vote for common sense!"

Ifor Davies
BCV Revenue Control health and safety rep

"Janine's persistent efforts and commitment to our cause proves that she is worthy of an Exec position. I must commend her with my support and for her unwavering fight against those who oppose RMT. How she manages to balance this with her committed family life is also worthy of note."

Waseem Malik
Leicester Square group rep

"Janine's determination and dedication to the cause is second to none. I know of no one who works so tirelessly in pursuit of workers' rights, so selfless and for the good of the membership."

Bjorn Bradshaw-Murray
LU Leaner Reps' Co-ordinator

"Janine has been a tremendously supportive RMT Functional representative. She has a keen eye for fine detail and the bigger picture. Approachable, honest, helpful and active, Janine recognises that, regardless of grade, we are one class."

Terry Jeffrey
Leicester Square group rep

"RMT reps support Janine Booth for the Executive. She has been a tower of strength and a source of vital support in our struggle against the proposed job cuts and the vicious management trying to impose them."

Peter Hartshorn
Green Park group rep