

# *BOB CROW*



*1961 – 2014*

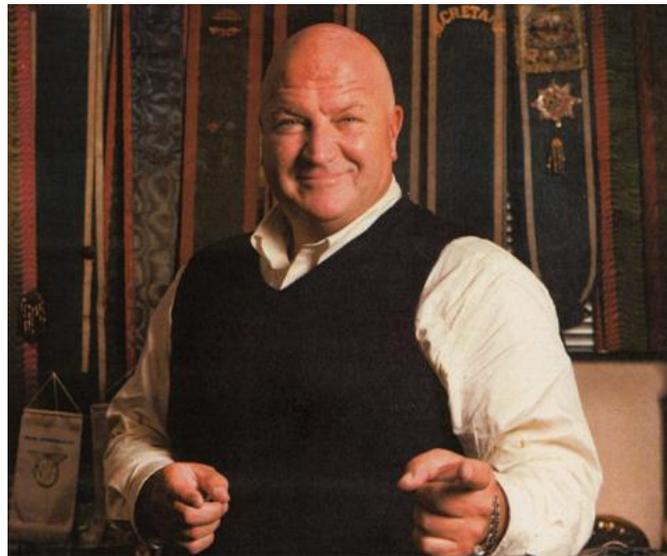
*2019 marks the fifth anniversary of  
the passing of Bob Crow.*

*We honour the man, the father, the  
friend, the leader, the inspiration  
and partner of the love of his life,  
Nicola.*

*He is much missed and much loved*

## Foreword by Nicola Hoarau

When I first meet Bob he was still working for the underground. Not long afterwards he was elected onto the Executive Committee. What attracted me to Bob, was that he made me laugh, feel very special and I felt protected by him.



Bob was a hard-working person and gave his all to the betterment of his members. He was soon elected Assistant General Secretary and when Jimmy Knapp died, he stood for General

Secretary and got elected. Before he stood for General Secretary he asked me if I minded, as it would take him away from home a lot more. I told him to go for it, as I knew he had so much he wanted to do and give to his Union, his members and he wanted to fight injustices. He got involved in many organisations that could help people around the world and raised RMT's profile for the benefit of its members.

Being General Secretary was by no means an easy role to fulfil. He had to give up his role as a football manager for a local Sunday league team, which was a shame as he enjoyed it so much. It was a time that he could escape from the pressures of work. He would get involved in planning his teams' game and afterwards he could be like one of the lads having pints and a laugh. My only stipulation was that he had to be home for our family Sunday roast dinner together.



Life was tough at times as he dealt with the pressures of Union business, outside organisations and the press. I feel it was very hard on him at times. The stress levels were crazy. He would always try to be everywhere for everyone; he never wanting to let anyone down. If he said he would do something, he would do it, even if he was completely shattered. I did

eventually manage to get him along to the gym to work out, instead of running along the streets, to help ease the stress.

Nights out with him were a laugh. They normally entailed him taking the "p" out of us sometime during the evening. He always loved to have a laugh; singing karaoke and

he was always able to bring people together who might have never spoken to each other. He was sociable and would speak to anyone who spoke to him or, as usual, have his photograph taken with anyone who asked for one with him.



Bob was good at talking to people and putting them at ease. He was a very caring man. He would always remember the name of a person and would ask after them or their loved ones. He had an inner strength that made people want to get up and take control of their lives. He would encourage this not only in his family, but to his members as well. He believed that if you really wanted something you had to go and get it – as long as you worked for it you would achieve your aim.

I remember, when the kids were growing up they wanted a dog, and of course Bob being Bob, typically on his way home from the pub, was approached by a man who, after talking with him, sold him a puppy. That's how we got Castro. Bob slept downstairs for a couple of nights with Castro as Castro had just left his mum and was crying. Bob stayed with him until he stopped.

He loved his football team, Millwall. He was a true supporter – through and through. He took me to my first football match years ago. I remember it clearly. It was a Millwall v Chelsea match. I couldn't believe what I saw; the fans fighting each other and the police on horses trying to separate the rival supporters, all while the game was playing. I was petrified. But Bob was totally calm saying it was the "norm" for a match. There was a rematch at Chelsea's turf and he asked if I would like to go. I told him, without hesitation "no way"! People would make fun of him and pull his leg for supporting Millwall, but he didn't care. His dad introduced him to Millwall and he stayed true to Millwall. He loved attending the Den and was a season ticket holder. The other local team he supported was Dagenham and Redbridge.

He liked to iron for the family. He would stick on a movie and iron away. He enjoyed cooking, and would often swap recipes with people. I was quite happy with this arrangement as I hate ironing and wasn't the best cook in the world, as he would often tell me! He also loved his garden and would spend hours pottering about in it.



He loved to watch films. His favourites were *The Sopranos* and *The Godfather*. He also loved watching *Only Fools and Horses*. He loved to read biographies and books about the East End of London.

Although he gave his all for his members, sometimes to the detriment of his health, his family knew that he always loved all of us deeply.

I think the hardest part of the job was when strikes took place. He dealt with transport company management, which he could handle, but it was the hounding by the press that made it so much harder for him. Sometimes it was unbearable. During those times he would want to leave and do a normal job to get away from the hatred of the press against him.



He will always be remembered and loved by his four children and his grandchildren. Unfortunately he will never see them grow up, nor see two of his daughters getting married. He will never be forgotten by any of us. As, for the grandchildren, we will always remind them of what a great man their grandad was. I hope that some of his magic will rub-off on them.

All our family love and miss him dearly and he will always have a place in our hearts for the rest of our lives. I hope that you will also keep a little bit of him in your hearts too. Xx

Nicola 2016

## **General Secretary's Tribute**

It has been over 5 years since we lost our great friend and comrade Bob Crow and the idea of renaming his branch in his honour, creating a banner in his memory and taking that banner out on tour, as a celebration of his life and work for our movement, is a very fitting tribute.

The branch, Bob's family, his friends and our union have been able to celebrate the man who was such a big part of our lives for so many years and I am delighted to have the opportunity to add a few words to this publication.

My first recollection of Bob goes back to the days of the P-Way, S&T, and OHL Grades Conference. Bob was moving resolutions such as asking for LUL members to be provided with Barley Water drinks during hot weather. Dismissed by some as daft, but by the time Bob had finished speaking you wanted that and more for our LUL members!

I also remember the time we served together on the National Executive Committee, particularly as Chair and Secretary of the Negotiating Committee. The pair of us, the youngest on the Executive Committee, getting the opportunity to represent the whole union at National Level meetings, going toe to toe with the employers alongside Jimmy Knapp. I consider myself extremely fortunate to have come through the ranks of this trade union alongside Bob.

We worked together again in 2002 when, following his election as General Secretary, I was elected Senior Assistant General Secretary. I had the opportunity to see at first hand how he worked tirelessly to change and grow this union of ours. He gave so much to our union and our movement. That is clear to see and that stays with us today.

Equally, he taught and inspired so many individually, including myself of course, as he worked as the General Secretary and leader of our union. That work has meant his legacy to us all is a fighting and democratic trade union, punching above its weight and strong and fit to face the challenges ahead.

Bob has passed the baton onto us all. I have made it clear, repeatedly, that I am determined not to let him down as we continue to develop and build our organisation for the struggles that we know lay ahead. Bob's inspiration, comradeship and loyalty stays with me as we move on – fighting and winning. That's what we are all about and it's a privilege to take those core principles forwards.

Mick Cash, RMT General Secretary

## Acknowledgements

We would like to thank everyone that has helped create this album. It documents a small moment in time – Bob's Branch and Union and celebrating his life.

Firstly, to Ed Hall, who made the banner in a very short time to enable us to premier it at the 2019 May Day March in London.

We thank Nicola Hoarau for giving us permission, on behalf of Bob's family, to change our branch name to the Bob Crow Branch and also to the National Executive and General Secretary for allowing this to happen. Also, for her marvellous efforts to finally get Bob onto the stage at Tolpuddle, something that sadly did not occur during Bob's life-time.

We thank Bob's work colleagues, Sean Fahey, Terry 'the Tamper' Gipps, Chris Newell, Eddie Norton and Doug Hammersley for their memories of Bob during his working days.

We would like to thank those that have spent time to write such wonderful and heartfelt tributes to Bob to accompany the photographs in this album. Karen Mitchell, Barry West, Mick Cash, Andy Gilchrist, Mick Lynch, John Leach, John Reid, Glen Hart, Glenroy Watson, Andy Littlechild, Sean Hoyle, Michelle Rogers, Peter Skelly and Alan Pottage

Our most sincere thanks to Stephen Guy of the Durham Miners, who not only made us welcome, but also organised a special blessing of our Banner, outside Durham Cathedral. A unique tribute that is usually only allowed for Miners' Banners.

We would like to thank LU Engineering Branch and RMT Members for their love and support in ensuring that Bob's legacy has endured and continues to thrive. It was symbolic of this that 'Bob's Banner on Tour' was met with such respect and support as we travelled the country in the name of class solidarity and determination to honour the giant of a man that was our Bob.

Our gratitude also, to the staff of the RMT Communication's Team for their proof reading and formatting of our album, who have helped finish this work that we all worked so hard to create.

Lastly, we would like to thank Bob's family, for allowing us to share him with them, for an all too brief moment in time.

## Bob in his London Underground workdays



Bob at work in approximately 1985, with Tom Quigley, Terry Gipps and Dean Stemp.

### Day 1 at Neasden Training Centre 1985

*After being in the classroom for 2 hours the instructors stated they were leaving and a Union Rep was coming in... The door burst open and in walked Bob Crow, a mate from years gone by. He stood there and said, "here are your membership forms, fill them in now and return them to me" A new starter asked "what happens if we don't want to join". Bob being Bob looked at him and said "nothing mate, you won't be working here tomorrow though!" We were then members of the N.U.R.*

*In my early days in Loughton, Tree Gang Bob, as he was in our gang used to come in on overtime Saturdays, but during the week he was on 'Union Duties'. However, Bob was an*

*absolute nightmare when he got hold of a chainsaw so whenever he came in we used to tell him to piss off and do union duties! That way our safety was ensured. I'm sure he did it on purpose to get the day off.*

*There was a weekend points renewal at Hainault. The gardening gangs were used as labour seeing as they were the best workers. I remember going in at 23:00 hours and being teamed up with Bob to start running out the screws on the points. We had an old fashioned T-spanner, a heavy old thing but with two of you it worked pretty well. Unfortunately, having Bob as a second person was a nightmare. He used to hang on the spanner and put no effort into it at all, again, resulting in me telling him to sod off and I'll do it on my own. He walked off and I didn't see him until just before the end of the shift,*



Bob on the Track May 1990

Photo courtesy of Terry Gipps and not for reproduction

around 06:30, when he came walking up the bank yawning and stretching as he had been asleep all night. And there was that great smile he had where he had got one over on the firm.

Sitting in the pub one afternoon with Bob, chatting about various bits, he mentioned a case where a P-Way worker had been suspended for theft of railway equipment. Management had gone to his house and found an old Anderson shelter full of P-Way tools, jacks, forks, spades, shovels and a whole range of equipment – banged to rights it would seem. Bob proceeded to explain how he went to the disciplinary and, over a couple of hours, listened to all the evidence



Bob was in GM3, the Tree Gang, and worked alongside GM8

which seemed overwhelming. Surely the P-Way man would be sacked? Bob did his usual smile and said, I asked ONE question. “Have you ever called this man in from home in an emergency?” Management replied “Yes”, Bob just said “This man should be given an award for initiative. The time he has saved the railway by having equipment at home to bring straight to the location of the emergency, rather than having to go to stores to get emergency equipment, then more time travelling to the location, must be invaluable”. The case was dismissed.

Terry Gipps, friend and work colleague

## Bob’s Branches History

1993 – 2006	LUL Signals, Electrical & Track Branch: 1 <sup>st</sup> Branch Secretary Bob Crow
2006 – 2018	LU Engineering Branch
2019	Bob Crow Branch
2020 – Present	LU Engineering

## LUL Signals, Electrical & Track Branch 1993



*This picture was taken on a Thursday night in the early 1990's when Bob was the Branch Secretary of LUL Track & Signals Branch. My ganger Eddie Mackie was medically retiring. So I had collected about £300 for him and bought him a lovely clock. I decided the best place to present it to him was at the branch meeting as I knew all the lads and Bob would be there.*

Known people in the photo:

Derek Petrie, Jack Cunningham, Dave Godfrey, Willie Devlin, Eddie Mackay, Lee Walsh, Tony Patton, Bob Crow, Seam Fahey, Terry Siggers.

*Eddie and I only lived down the road in Old Street, so it was local for us. It turned out to be a fantastic night. Bob had his usual couple of*

*pints of Guinness as he did when anyone was leaving.*

*There were no heirs and graces with Bob – everyone was equal – proper legend.*

*I went to the branch as I was worried my mate wouldn't have a good turnout as it was a school night, great days!*

*There was another occasion a few years later when my mate Tony and I bumped into Bob on the Euston Road. He must have been doing a TV interview because he had make-up on. As you can imagine, we had a great laugh with Bob about that and teased him many times when we bumped into him afterwards.*

Sean Fahey, P-Way work colleague

## LU Engineering Branch 2006

*"The LU Engineering Branch was created in July 2006 from the merger of parts of LUL Main Works Branch and LUL Signal, Electrical and Track Branches.*

*I was the first Secretary of the latter branch when it was created on July 29<sup>th</sup> 1993.*

*This was the eve of my daughter Tanya's birthday. I remember celebrating the Branchs' opening and waking up at 5am the next morning with a massive hangover and my wife in labour!*



LUEngineering Branch Banner at the Bob Crow 'Millwall Night'

*That Branch brought all of the signal and track grades together as one after the company plan was opposed in 1992. The Branch was and still is the largest in the union and it is a pleasure to be its first Secretary.*



*LUL Signal, Electrical and Track and as it is now known, LU Engineering, has always been at the forefront of the union's policies and it is with immense pleasure that I am still a member of it today."*

Bob Crow 2006

LUEngineering Banner at Manor Park Cemetery, 2014

## Branch Long Service Awards

I have included photos from our branch socials where Bob gave Long Service Awards to his mates from LUL that he worked with. Sadly, the picture from 2013 was taken at the last one he attended.

His powerful speeches at every event, as he handed out the awards, inspired us all and made the evening special for our members receiving their gifts. It was always a special night.



December 2009

*When I worked with Bob on London Underground, my biggest memory was his humour and the fact that he always carried a copy of the 'Morning Star' with him!*

*Whenever we had a strike looming, in would come Bob, larger than life. "OK lads. What day do you want to have off?" Fancy Wednesday so you can watch the football? OK, sorted. I will sort out overtime for the weekend for you all". Then off he would go and low and*

*behold, the strike would be Wednesday and we were in at the weekend!*

*It was weekends that we mainly saw Bob, on overtime of course! He would come in on the Saturday morning all bright and breezy. You were still allowed to drink in those days, so the rest of us were nursing hangovers and trying to sleep it off in the locker room. In he would come and start kicking us. "Come on you lot, we ain't got all day. Let's get the job done and go home". So up we would stagger and out the door we would go. He did like to get away did our Bob.*



December 2011

Eddie Newton, LUL work colleague



December 2012

*'I first met Bob on the Central Line in the mid 1980's when I was working with L-Gang. We had a chat and a laugh and a joke and that was it really.*

*I did not meet him again for another 10 years, as tends to be the way on the Railway. Up he came, shook my hand and said , hello Chris!. That was typical of the man. After all those years, he would still remember my name.*

*Later, I became an RMT Rep and we would laugh and joke about the past and the present. But Bob never forgot his roots and it is hard to believe that he has gone. He will never be forgotten'*

Chris Newell, RMT Rep, Central Line Track.



December 2013: Bob's last award night and LU Engineering branch social

## Bob's May Day 2014

Following the sad death of Bob, the 2014 May Day March through London became the RMT March to honour the loss of our General Secretary.



The LU Engineering Branch led the trade union banners that day, behind Bob's family. It was placed onto Nelson Column, behind the speakers as a mark of respect to Bob.



## Creation of the Bob Crow Branch

January 2019 – December 2019

2019 marked the 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the sad passing of our General Secretary and comrade, Robert Crow. The RMT union decided to run several events celebrating Bob's life and achievements, such as an event at Millwall around the time of Bob's birthday.

Our Branch, LU Engineering, wanted to celebrate our first Branch Secretary, branch member, workmate and friend. We decided to request the National Executive of our union to change our Branch name, for one year only, to the Bob Crow Branch. We would then commission a banner and donate it to the family at the end of 2019. It was their wish that the banner be sold to raise funds for the British Heart Foundation so that lives could be changed with this money.

To add to the interest surrounding the banner, it was agreed that we would do our best to take it around the country, especially to events that Bob loved. To that end, the banner went from Torquay to Durham, from Unity House to Tolpuddle and we have kept a photographic almanac of this journey.

Four copies were made. One each to be donated to Bob's family, the RMT Trade Union, Bob's Branch and the final one to accompany the Banner.

### ***'Bob Crow Resolution:***

*Our branch requests a temporary name change for 2019 only.*

*In honour of our foremost branch member, Bob Crow, who sadly passed away 5 years ago this year, our branch of Thursday January 3<sup>rd</sup>, unanimously agreed to the proposal to be renamed to 'Bob Crow Branch'.*

*We further intend to honour Bob's Memory with a commemorative branch banner and badges, under the name of Bob Crow Branch and that we intend to donate to his family at the end of the year (or to a location of their choice) and produce a portfolio of pictures throughout the year at various events, to increase the interest and potential value of the banner*

*On January 1<sup>st</sup> 2020, we would revert to 'LU Engineering Branch'.*

Seconded Bro Boyce

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

## Bob Crow Branch banner unfurled

18<sup>th</sup> April 2019



Nicola Hoarau unveils the Bob Crow Banner in the General Secretary's office.

On the 18<sup>th</sup> April, 2019, the Bob Crow Banner was unveiled by Nicola Hoarau in the RMT General Secretary's Office at Unity House, London.

The banner, made by Ed Hall, was designed by the LU Engineering Branch and Bob's family to try and reflect the various facets of Bob and some of the events that he enjoyed.

*"I was so pleased to make the banner celebrating the life of Bob Crow. When the history books are written, Bob will not just be honoured as a great trade unionist but also a great Londoner and international leader.*

*I first got to know Bob at the time of the Liverpool Dock strike and all the struggles in the aftermath of the Thatcher Government. He inspired so many people. When I make banners, I like to go attend the presentation to members for the first time, and I was awed by the number of times Bob would also be there. I remember in particular being in Preston on a Saturday and thinking of Bob's workload and his family. He saw it as his responsibility to be among his members. I remember the unveiling of the Paddington No 1 Branch banner and Bob's unique speaking style. Bob was responsible for some famous quotes. "If you fight you might lose, but if you don't fight you will always lose".*

*I had a banner exhibition at the Peoples History Museum in 2011 which was sponsored by the RMT. This decision went across Bob's desk and it would not have taken place without him.*

*I remember other trade union members saying, "If only we had Bob Crow as our Secretary...", I loved making the banner, it gave me time to think of that great man."*

Ed Hall

Bob's banner was made by Ed Hall and designed with the help of the LU Engineering Branch and Nicola Hoarau and her family. We hoped that it would show the whole side of Bob's personality and, whilst we could not include every facet of his life, we did our best to capture his core attributes.



**'Friends, RMT, Family':** The leading legend is, for us all, quite poignant. Family and Friends was always so important to Bob and we, as a union, shared him for an all too short moment in time

**'Millwall Crest':** Bob loved his team and cries of "Millwall" and "No one likes us, we don't care" have followed our banner almost everywhere it went.

**'Cuban Flag':** Bob had a special place in his heart for Cuba and visited the country several times. He was also key in setting up the RMT Cuban Solidarity event, still held on a yearly basis at Maritime House by the RMT.

**'Durham Miners':** It is hard to put into words the support that Bob

had for the Durham Miners and the respect and admiration that they had for him.

**'Our Industries':** Bob represented all areas of our trade union with equal vigour. But with limitations of space, we choose to show a Tube Train to highlight all industrials and the area that Bob came from.

**'If you fight you might lose, but if you don't fight you will always lose':** Bob was famous for many quotes but few are as memorable as this one.

**'The Internationale'** on the reverse of the banner, Ed Hall wrote the first verse of the Workers' anthem, 'Arise ye workers from your slumbers, Arise ye prisoners of want, For reason in revolt now thunders, And at last ends the age of cant. So away with all your superstitions, Servile masses arise – arise we'll change forth with the old conditions, And spurn the dust to win the prize, So Comrade come rally, And the last fight let us face, The Internationale unites the Human Race.'



The back of the Bob Crow Banner

Bob would occasionally make the odd mistake when he made his speeches, usually when he was practicing them at our branch prior to delivery at an event such as our AGM. It is therefore fitting that there is a minor error on our banner. Superstitions is mis-spelt as supestitutions!

There was one occasion when, on our behalf, he was presenting a picture of Picasso's *Dove of Peace* to an Egyptian trade union leader. He delivered an amazing speech on International Trade Union solidarity and was given a deserved round of applause.

However, when he handed the portrait over, instead of calling it a Picasso, he slipped up and called it a Pistachio instead. No one noticed but we did mildly tease him afterwards.

*Bob's Banner on  
Tour 2019*

## May Day – International Workers’ Day 1<sup>st</sup> May 2019

The day when ordinary workers around the world celebrate their solidarity and achievements – in our present political climate it is important we re-assert the need for trade union rights and workers’ protection.

We also celebrate the real internationalism of workers across the world facing the same big multi-nationals and financiers who try to impose austerity and attack public services. We stand with workers around the world and oppose those who seek to divide us by skin colour or ethnic background.



Frank Murray

This was the first outing that Bob’s Banner went on.



Les Harvey, Mick Cash, John Reid

*‘No2 EU yes to Democracy, Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition and National Shop Stewards Network were all put forward and developed under Bob’s leadership.*

*He saw the need to combine militant trade unionism with a socialist political alternative to the neo-liberal EU and to austerity. The NSSN brings together shop stewards from various*

*left wing unions and will be important in combating the anti-union Tory government in the coming period. The memory and legacy of Bob will live forever.’*

John Reid, former London Transport National Executive Member



Mick Cash & Sean Hoyle – 2019 General Secretary opponents, united by the banner.



The poignancy of the Old Warrior saluting the fallen comrade. Glenroy Watson and Bob Crow both shared the same start date in the RMT of 1979.

*Greetings Comrades. When most people think of Bob, they try to imagine how much more he would have achieved if he was still alive.*

*Me? I think of all the great things he did achieve within his short life.*

*I think of how they have affected us and how they have sustained us.*

*As long as we think of you Bob.*

*You are alive with us.*

*Solidarity remains eternal."*

Glenroy Watson, comrade



Steve Hedley (senior Assistant General Secretary), Paul Jackson LU Engineering Branch Secretary & Mick Lynch (Assistant General Secretary).

*It was great to be able to march and carry the new branch banner on May Day. It gave a lift to all activists from across the movement who saw it with many stopping to take pictures and have their pictures taken with it.*

*Bob was not just a fine leader of our union but an inspiration for other trade unionists and working people across Britain and abroad. Many of them wanted to make the connection with him that the banner provides.*

Mick Lynch, RMT Assistant General Secretary

## RMT LGBT Conference (Torquay)

17<sup>th</sup> May 2019

The 2019 RMT LGBT Conference was the first conference outing for Bob's Banner.

Following a 6-hour motorcycle drive through roadworks and traffic to Torquay from Ipswich, the banner was unfurled.



Jess Webb

Mick Cash

Our conferences are all amazing and unique, but the stories told by the priest who gave a speech about his life was awe-inspiring.

Bob would have enjoyed the irreverence, courage and determination he had shown.

# Wakefield With Banners Held High

18<sup>th</sup> May 2019

*With Banners Held High* is a festival of trade union and working-class Yorkshire culture.

It started as a tribute to the pitmen of the 1984-85 miners' strike and has grown into a large, free, outdoor community festival celebrating the special place trade unions hold in our county's heritage. 2019 saw a year of reflecting on a trio of anniversaries: Orgreave, Kellingley and the First World War.



The point of *With Banners Held High* is to remind people what it feels like to stand together, as a community, and believe in something better.

Bob's Banner was invited to attend.



Harry Hewes

Harry Hewes carries the banner on behalf of the Bob Crow Branch.

Proud Harry, is the grandson of the present LU Engineering Branch Secretary, Paul Jackson. Little Harry has, for many years, played 'pickets and scabs' with his granddad, shouting 'You will not pass'!

## Branch Secretary Conference 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2019

*'I first met Bob in March 1980 when I joined Debden Fettleing Gang. Bob was in the Vegetation Gang at Loughton. He had hair then! Bob wasn't involved with the union at this time. The main person for the P-Way at that time was Bruce Spencer. He later gave up his trade union roles when he was appointed to Inspector in the Finchley Central area.*



2019 Branch Secretary Conference Lake Windemere

*Bob and I regularly did overtime together on Sundays at Hainault and at Morden depots. It was always 'job and knock' and usually on our way home by 11:30. On occasions, when the ganger thought the management would come down, we were told to go to the Morden Club and hide ourselves. He would call us if*

*we were needed. We ordered 2 pints of Guinness each at a time and easily had 8 pints before being able to go home.*

*In 34 years, it was only a couple of times we didn't see eye to eye, but we always understood each other's positions and remained friends throughout. Bob was always Bob to me. I would have the wrong approach at times, if he was with, for example, Tony Benn or Ken Livingston. I would still say "Get the beers in you tight F\*CK\*R".*

*Bob always asked me to confirm that he did real P-Way work and didn't just snip down twigs. I always confirmed that he did, but only on Sundays!*

*I asked him to leave a message on my wife's answerphone asking for her to call him back. She was working for Metronet at the time and was being bullied by her manager. On hearing his voice, the manager said I didn't realise you knew Bob Crow. The bullying stopped. For me Bob was the best General Secretary this country has ever seen. It's never been the same since he's gone and I miss him'.*

Doug Hammersley, TfL No.1 Branch Secretary & comrade of Bob

## Bob Crow Celebration (Millwall)

8<sup>th</sup> June 2019

*I had decided not to come to London for his funeral as I felt I would like to do something a little more personal and in my own way on the day. I did and it was simple and not public.*

*I was always very conscious that the RMT had never done anything to remember Bob in way of an event that rank and file members could get together and share personal memories and celebrate his life, his work, commitment and all he achieved.*

*So I wrote to the General Secretary on a personal level and also got the South West Regional Council to do the same. We requested that we arrange something for him, his family and those that wanted to come and pay their respects. Something, until now, we had not been able to do for many different reasons and awaiting a moment in time that felt right.*



Barry West & Nicola Hoarau

*Finally, the plan was delivered. His legacy had been celebrated in a most fitting way at the event celebrating his life, held at Millwall Football Club, just after Bob's birthday.*

*Today, the memory of Bob Crow lives on deep in the heart of many, not just in the world of trade unionism, industry and politics, but for so many others too. Bob was a giant amongst men. He had a profound impact upon a much wider audience than one often overlooks or is aware.*

*Despite his busy schedule of attending conferences, meetings and press conferences, his help, support and kind words left a lasting impression on families and individuals.*

*"He was never too busy or unavailable to be there for those that he cared about"*



The Millwall bus

*Those that had suffered an injustice or detriment – those that were victims of crime or accidents – he always made a difference.*

*Workers of the world have been left an invaluable lesson on how fighting for fairness, equality and injustice can be challenged through a dogged determination.*

*He is quoted as saying “If you fight you won’t always win. But if you don’t fight you will always lose”. That will live in the hearts and minds of all of us and is*

*something that hopefully will be instilled at root level training for the next generation of those that follow.*

*When Bob sadly passed away, he left a huge void not only to his family but to all of us.*

*From London, he travelled the length and breadth of the country, often to just make a Long Service Award or attend a branch or function, because he cared and every member mattered.*

*I can remember him, after a days’ work, travelling to Penzance only to then catch the Sleeper back so he could be in the office the next morning. He was an inspiration and a role model that many looked up to and follow his way forward by walking in his footsteps.*

*My family, including my children, had all known him and often laugh about how he thought a home-made Cornish pasty was a loaf of bread. He said “they don’t make them like that in London”. He was right – they don’t. He had said it in jest and it still raises a smile even after the passage of time. Like him, the memory has not diminished.*

*One of his last acts, on a personal level, was to send a 21st birthday message to my daughter Bridie. Someone he knew and had supported in the most difficult of circumstances that any parent could ever imagine. It all began with a telephone call from me to Bob at around 07.00 hours one Sunday. The rest is history. The support Bob gave was beyond anything any family in crisis could have ever imagined.*

*Thank you Bob. We will never forget.’*

Barry West, Regional Organiser



Karen and Bob's family sing Karaoke; loud and proud

*'Where do I begin to tell you about my friend and comrade Bob? I met him many years ago at a family party. I was a Solicitor and partner in a trade union law firm at the time and Bob came to the party with his young daughter Tanya. Bob being his charming self, thought I was a secretary at the Firm: his first of many faux pas. I, being modest didn't seek to correct him!*

*He never let me forget it as our next meeting was at an international social at the TUC where I was speaking. I think he liked my modesty because from that day we became friends.*

*Later Bob did me the honour of asking me to come and join the RMT as Legal Officer and then to set up an in-house legal department. He had the vision and courage to take this onboard and never once doubted me. Whilst we got on famously, we did argue occasionally and he would often say to Nicky "that bloody woman"; especially when I was right!*

*He was however my inspiration: a leader amongst men and women.*

*Bob had a terrific, mischievous sense of humour. I recall our mutual love of Cuba, where I have the fondest of memories of Havana during May Day. Bob being his usual impatient self didn't want to wait around for the communal bus that had been laid on to take us to the parade ground. Instead he decided that we should get a taxi to the parade ground. He ignored the fact that the taxi couldn't get as close to the ground as the coach could and we were dropped off miles from the ground and got lost!*

*Bob, hearing music in the distance, promptly marched us over a hill, and by this time we had picked up some FBU colleagues who were similarly lost. As we trekked over the hill, he then managed, somehow, to get us through security. This may have had something to do with my Spanish which he insisted that I speak at every opportunity! Nonetheless we found ourselves on the parade ground itself in front of a crowd of thousands of onlookers who had come along to view the parade and speeches. Bob*

*casually slung his holdall over his shoulder and trooped us along in military fashion to the international guests section. I was mortified, especially when he laughed and said “just act natural”. I couldn’t see the funny side until I saw the disbelief on the director of Cuba Solidarity Campaign’s face when he saw us marching along in formation in front of him! Bob was right after all. It’s important to maintain a sense of humour*



Bob’s Family

*when things aren’t going according to plan! I didn’t tell him at the time, on account of sheer embarrassment, but I would have followed him to the end of the world.*

*I miss him dreadfully, but I have, and will continue, to ensure that his legacy and vision of an in-house legal department remains a bright jewel in the Union’s crown. He was our star and we owe him so much. I had the honour of speaking at his funeral and, as I said then, the Union movement owe an enormous debt of gratitude to Bob’s family for allowing us to share their dad and partner with us. I hope that the banner continues to remind us and future generations of his greatness and to inspire as much as the man did throughout his life.’*

**Karen Mitchell, RMT Legal Officer**

*‘When the late Bob Crow used to travel through my workplace, Clapham Common LU station he always impressed by giving his time to speak to any workers on duty - irrespective of TU affiliation or not. One of his many discernible qualities, in addition to his approachability and humility, was his unique ability to recall minor*



Paul Reilly NEC, Sean Hoyle former RMT President, Matthieu Bolle-Reddat CGT, Sean McGowan RMT RO, Glen Hart LT Regional Council

*details about whoever he was talking to.*

*For example, he'll remember your name 3 months later even though you only met once. It ensured that whenever Bob spoke to anyone they always felt special because he had listened to what they said. I really rated Bob. His passion for RMT Union was infectious and consideration for members, unconditional.*

*I will truly miss Bob Crow. One of a kind.'* Glen Hart, London Transport Regional Secretary

### **Peter Skelly, Retired Regional Organiser**

*'I first met Bob Crow in either 1981 or 1982 at an NUR P-Way, S&T & OHL grades conference (now known as the Engineering Grades conference). I was greatly impressed by a contribution made by the young man during a debate on one of the motions and, when I bumped into him during the interval, I asked if he would join me for a coffee. He agreed and this was to lead to a lifelong friendship.*

*Almost as soon as we had sat down to our coffee, Bob quickly asked me two questions. Firstly, to which NUR branch did I belong, and secondly, which football team did I support? I told him I was a Cardiff City fan. He laughed loudly and said he was a Millwall supporter. They do say opposites attract.*

*In the following few paragraphs I would like to say a little about Bob's love of the beautiful game and a couple of anecdotes arising out of it.*

*I do this in the full knowledge that after his family and secondly his Union, football was his passion.*

*Over the years Bob and I attended many matches together and watched lots more live on TV. One of the more surprising aspects of this was that wherever we were in London Bob always knew of a hostelry equipped with satellite TV where a match could be watched. One of our favourites was a small pub up an alleyway near Holborn tube station. The landlord made his own pork pies and sausage rolls. Quite a few hours were spent there watching football and enjoying the hospitality.*

*A couple of other stories come to mind.*



Peter Skelly

## Desert Island Discs.

Sometime around 2010/11 Bob rang me saying that he had been invited to be 'The Castaway' on Desert Island Discs. He then rattled off a list of songs that he intended to use on the programme, and what did I think of his choice. I said to him "yes they're ok, but you've missed an obvious one". "Which one?" he said. "Nessun Dorma by Luciano Pavarotti" I replied. The song was, of course, the anthem of the 1990 Italy World Cup Finals. I knew he was very fond of it. He couldn't believe that he had overlooked it. When I hear it played, I get quite emotional. In any event, and if I remember correctly, on the day of the recording, Bob was busy elsewhere and didn't attend the studios, so he didn't do Desert Island Discs after all!

## Labour Transport Minister Geoff Hoon. MP

During one of the Tony Blair led Labour Governments, the Minister for Transport was a fellow named Geoff Hoon. Bob and I had been to Wembley to see a game and had had a few to drink. A couple of minutes prior to full time we decided to leave for the tube in order to avoid the rush. Needless to say other fans had decided to do the same thing and the train was packed solid.



Barry West

Nicola Hoarau

Peter Skelly

A few moments into the journey, Bob nudged me and pointed to the end of the carriage where Geoff Hoon, the Minister for Transport, was standing by the door. I couldn't miss this opportunity and I shouted out "Hey Geoff. What's you and the Labour Government going to do about this situation – people getting packed into these carriages like cattle?" Hoon was quite startled and nervously asked who we were. "We're from The RMT" I replied. He was floundering and said "as it happens, I've been trying for weeks to contact your leader to arrange to meet him, without success". Bob shouted out "That's me, Bob Crow and I've had no contact from you or anybody else?" Hoon, red as a beetroot, blurted out "Really? Well there's been some kind of mistake and I can't work it out, but I'll be in touch" At that time, the train came to a station and the Labour Minister for Transport jumped off with a backward wave of his hand!

*To this day, I don't think it was his intended station and Bob and I laughed all the way to Baker Street. So, there we have it – a Labour Minister for Transport who was probably the only person in London who didn't know Bob Crow. As they say, you couldn't make it up!*

### **Cardiff City v Millwall 29-12-2012**

*The last match I attended with Bob was a meeting between our two clubs. Prior to the game, whilst in one of the bars at Cardiff City stadium, a friend gave me 4 tickets to watch the match. I invited Bob and Nicky to join me along with my wife Gina. Bob was initially reluctant, with good reason knowing the history of the fixture and reputation of both sets of fans. I finally persuaded him to go and the four of us arrived nice and early. We found nice seats and got a drink. The place started to fill up with a Cardiff fans who were singing and chanting. Even I began to wonder if we had done the right thing. It was obvious lots of them recognised Bob and, as everybody knows, he follows Millwall. Just prior to kick off, 4 or 5 big lads approached our table and I thought 'oh no'! To our surprise and relief a couple of them were RMT members and were delighted to see and meet Bob. Handshakes were exchanged and photos taken. It turned out to be a really good day with Bluebirds fans treating Bob fittingly as the working-class hero that he was.*

*On a visit soon after to our RMT Bridgend, Llantrisant and District Branch, Bob mentioned the reception he had received. In the mean-time Cardiff had been promoted to the Premier League and Bob was presented with a bottle of Welsh Whisky, made to commemorate the occasion. To this day, it remains in a cabinet in the a General Secretary's office.*

*Although I remember Bob for more serious matters than sport, I feel that football was the one thing that he could switch off for and take time to relax.*

*As said, I will remember him for many things but will never forget watching football with him or the endless conversations on the subject.*

*Those memories are priceless.'*

Peter Skelly, retired Regional Organiser and friend



Matthieu Bolle-Reddat CGT

Nicola Hoarau

*At the beginning, Bob was an example for me. A true socialist, a real internationalist, and he became a friend. I admired his sense of humour, his fanatic determination, his true friendship, his outbursts against class-collaborationist unions, against social dialogue.*

*Last time I saw him was at the congress of my federation, CGT of Rail Workers, in France. After his speech, the five hundred representatives rose to cheer and got up to sing the Internationale. I joined him after and Bob raised his fist up in the air and told me "Long live the WFTU". This is my last memory of Bob, the one memory that's going to stick in my brain forever.*

*On March 11th 2014, Britain's working class lost a true leader. Workers around the world lost a precious comrade, and I lost a friend.*

Matthieu Bolle-Reddat, General Secretary of CGT Union Railway Workers of Versailles.

## Durham Miners' Big Meeting Gala – 13<sup>th</sup> July 2019



seven times the population of Durham itself.

The Gala developed out of the miners' trade unionism, the first Union being established in 1869. The day commences in mining villages before everyone descending on the City of Durham to march with their banners, possibly attend a service at the Cathedral and listen to the political speeches.

Guest speakers are carefully selected by the Executive committee of the Durham Miners' Association. Speakers have included former Labour Prime Ministers, International Trade Union Leaders and General Secretaries of progressive Trade Unions in the UK.

Bob Crow has spoken at the Big Meeting on four occasions but had attend the event each year since 1992 with the RMT. Bob was extremely popular with the Durham Miners and those who attended the annual meeting. I firmly believe his popularity is

The Durham Miners' Big Meeting or 'Miners' Gala' to some, was first held in 1871. It is widely considered to be the largest left-wing political platform across Europe and has survived despite the deliberate and determined colliery closure plan of Thatcher and the Tory Government.

The Big Meeting developed into the largest unofficial miners and trade-union gathering in the United Kingdom.

At its peak the Gala attracted more than 300,000 people – more than



Stephen Guy



Bob at the Durham Miners

rooted in the fact that he understood the challenges and threats the miners and our communities faced.

The messages he gave during his speeches were relevant and resonated with the crowds. My late father, Dave Guy, President of the Durham Miners' Association, when he introduced Bob at the 2009 Gala, talked about the special bond the NUM and RMT have and the fact that some 500 of Bob's

members were sacked for supporting the 1984/85 Miners' Strike.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sQPz9aF42qk>

Bob's commitment to achieve social justice in the UK and beyond was evident in his words and actions. This convinced me that Bob was a comrade in whom we could trust; he did what he said. There were no hollow words or false promises with Bob Crow. His fabulous oratory skills would get trade unionists on their feet and left feeling buoyant, leaving the Gala field with hope and determination ahead of the next battle in the workplace or our communities.

I had the privilege of socialising with Bob during the Durham Miners' Gala weekend too and I must say I enjoyed that just as much as his contribution from the Big Meeting Platform!

It was a true privilege to join RMT members on 13<sup>th</sup> July 2019 at the 135<sup>th</sup> Durham Miners' Gala at Palace Green to share some of my memories of Bob and to witness the blessing of the Bob Crow Banner. It made my special day extra special. I will never forget the great man, Bob Crow nor will many of my generation.

Stephen Guy



The priest blesses Bob's Banner, a huge honour only bestowed on Miner's Banners

Bob Crow was unique, a man of passion and integrity who was never afraid to say what he thought no matter who that may have upset.

*Bob's personality shone through and even his harshest critics begrudgingly admired him.*



*It is a shame his wit, persona and talent couldn't be bottled. Our Movement was richer for having him as part of it.*

*Trade unions respected and grew around Bob – he empowered people. Every RMT representative who worked alongside him was blessed with a richness to fight beyond their means!*

*One of my proudest achievements was getting to know Bob and more importantly knowing he believed in all of us.*

*A gentleman with the roar of a lion that everyone took notice of! Never forgotten, Never on our Knees.*

Michelle gives a speech at Durham Cathedral as Bob's Banner is blessed.

*don't fight you will always lose" has never been more apt. Bob truly was a legend of fighters.'*

*In the current climate "if you fight you might lose, but if you*

Michelle Rogers, RMT President 2019 – present

# Tolpuddle Festival 2009

By Alan Pottage, friend

## 1987 - Prince of Wales Feathers pub, Warren Street, London



I first met Bob in 1987. In a pub. Where else? That was a long time ago. We were both young activists in the NUR. I had travelled down to London from Edinburgh on the overnight seating train to meet with leaders of our sister union in South Africa - SARHWU. Leaders who had just been released from prison after being brutally tortured by the apartheid regime. Typical was Bob's concern about the plight of fellow railway workers in South Africa. He had a burning passion for fighting for justice. That flame never diminished throughout his life.

Our mutual comrade, great friend and mentor Geoff Revell, introduced me to Bob and that was the first pint I had with him. We both initially struggled with each other's accents – which was sadly a theme Bob kept going for the next 30 years. *“Oi... why can't you Jocks speak properly?!”*

Over the next three decades we had no problem understanding what each other were thinking. I got to know Bob very well. He made a difference and we became mates. We grew up in the union together. In fact I still have his old Millwall top from 1994. Bob's father had passed away, so Bob kept his dad's top and gave me his.

## BOB's LEGACY

I spent time on the NEC with Bob. We shared ideas – we played football together and, after being elected General Secretary, Bob asked me to head up the union's Organising Unit which was a central part of Bob's Organising initiative. A strategy, which was a huge success, that involved our leadership, officers and activists and turned around a declining membership of just over 50,000 members to now well over 80,000 strong. Bob was very proud of this and even the TUC



Geoff Revell, Bob & Alan Pottage

had to use 'Bob's RMT' as an example of the organising success that hard work coupled with an ambitious strategy can achieve.

## **A COURAGEOUS INSPIRATION**

It's impossible to explain the massive difference Bob made to our union, our class and our communities, in just a few words. You cannot do Bob justice without mentioning the words 'inspirational' and 'courageous'. He saw his union as an extension of his family. He wanted to unite all parts of our union in order to focus on fighting the boss class. Bob's desire for unity came naturally to him as did the many sacrifices he and his family made in order to lead our struggle with such vigour.

I have loads of good memories of Bob: his passionate speeches, his friendship, his humour, going to a few Hibs games together (where Hibs always won), his love of rebels and his valiant Karaoke efforts! Perhaps my favourite was when Bob made a mad dash to a 'solidarity' meeting in the House of Commons. He was straight off a flight from South Korea. As he quickly passed through security the alarms went berserk. Bob had completely forgotten all about the presentation made by South Korean railway workers: a massive ceremonial sword that was stuffed into the big brown holdall he always carried about!

I have to say my least favourite memory was being boxed in a tight corner during five-sides and hearing Bob hurtling towards my back!!

## **LEGACY**

Losing Bob in 2014 was a huge blow on so many different levels. We all lost a friend, a comrade and our leader. I still feel stunned. I kept all the obituaries and it's very clear just how much of a difference Bob made to countless people from all parts of our world. A regular working-class laddie with the heart of a lion and the ability to outsmart the employers, lawyers and politicians.

## **HOPE**

Every June, RMT members play football for the 'Bob Crow AGM cup' and on the 13th June we remember Bob's birthday by making a special effort to go out into the many workplaces and organise workers into our union. Bob Crow's everlasting legacy is one of hope. He was to leave us stronger, better organised and more capable of fighting for justice so it's very important we build on Bob's legacy and fight even harder for justice!

Bob's influence in our union was massive. He held strong principled positions on many important issues. Whether it be the debates about the Labour Party, independence for Scotland, Europe... Bob had his say and pinned his colours to the mast! He was also a ferocious defender of the high level of rank and file democracy that places the power in the hands of our members which makes the RMT special.

Alan Pottage  
National Organising Co-ordinator, RMT Organising Unit

## Tolpuddle Festival 20<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup> July 2019

Tolpuddle is a tiny, thatched village by the River Piddle which has become globally famous for the story of the Tolpuddle Martyrs. It was under a sycamore tree in 1831, that six hard working farm labourers, led by a Methodist lay preacher George Loveless, met to form a union in an effort to resist further reductions in wages. Although trade unions had been legal for the past ten years, they were harshly arrested and made an example of for administering a secret oath.



Kevin Hall Mike Sargent

The men were taken to Dorchester where they were tried, found guilty and transported to Australia, bound hand and foot in chains, to serve a seven year



Lorna Tooley, East Ham Branch Secretary

sentence. There rose a public outcry at the injustice of the sentence and in 1839 the men were granted a free pardon to return to England. A statement from George Loveless' defence is inscribed outside the Tolpuddle Methodist chapel where he preached: "My lord, if we have violated any law, it was not done intentionally; we have injured no man's reputation, character, person or property; we were uniting together to preserve ourselves, our wives and children from utter degradation and starvation".

The old sycamore, owned by the National Trust, still stands and across the main road are six cottages, built in 1934 by the TUC, one of which now houses the small Tolpuddle Martyrs museum in which there are items

relating to these events. Every July thousands of people come to Tolpuddle to celebrate trade unionism and to remember the sacrifice made by the six farm workers of the village.

Bob loved Tolpuddle and would attend regularly. However, the TUC never allowed him to appear on the stage. This year would be different.



Andy Littlechild. RMT National Executive 2016 - 19

*'We miss Bob Crow; so many stories ~ inspiring and funny memories; too many to mention!*

*We all knew that bringing Bob in to deal with management always generally closed talks in our favour, and he took the heat for us from the media and press so we could get on with the job of organising our members "under the radar" in the work place.*

*Bob Crow gave confidence to the RMT members:*

*"Did you see Bob on the TV last night?!" was a common subject in our mess rooms, especially when we were in a dispute. That was because Bob always toughed it out with the reporters rebuffing their attacks with pithy observations, irony and well timed sarcasm, often*

*turning the questions back on them.*

*I don't think he was ever actually bettered let alone beaten by any of them!*

*Bob is still sorely missed, but tears of sorrow have been replaced with tears of laughter and pride.*

*Bob Crow just made us all feel good about ourselves, proud to be working class and glad to be in the RMT!*

Andy Littlechild,  
RMT member & rep



Sean Hoyle and Nicola carry the Banner

*I remember meeting Bob when I was a local rep and being impressed that he remembered my name the next time we met, even though it was almost a year later.*

*I learnt over the years that Bob remembered people because he cared about what they had to say.*

*Bob had many great attributes and the fact that you could passionately disagree in the Boardroom and then go for a*

*pint as friends isn't something many can do.*

*Bob inspired so many of us in the movement and beyond. There won't ever be another Bob Crow that's for sure. The bosses feared him and the members loved him. I'm luckier than most as I got to work with him full-time for his last 3 years.*

*Bob loved his family, his members and his class. You would often hear him saying "I've got more in common with a Chinese Labourer than a city of London stockbroker".*

*Bob was a man with a wicked sense of humour. Everything he did was with real passion. It was my privilege to have known him.*

Sean Hoyle RMT President  
2016-18



The RMT Brass Band plays at Tolpuddle. Bob would have been proud.

## Bob on the Tolpuddle stage

Bob had never been allowed to speak on the stage at Tolpuddle. He was too much of a reminder to the TUC of what a Trade Union Leader should be, militant, organised and unrepentant. 2019 would become the year that Bob finally got onto the stage through the sheer hard work and determination of his partner, Nicola.



She had 'cornered' Frances O'Grady the night before, whilst everyone was out enjoying the social side of Tolpuddle. Nicola convinced her to allow Bob's Banner to be brought onto the stage. She initially thought that it would just be brought on, a few words and then leave the stage.

She was proud of how she had managed to convince Frances that this was the right thing to do and over the moon that Bob would finally be on the stage at Tolpuddle. Bob would have been proud of her.

On the day, we arrived, as instructed, at 11am to leave the banner and were told to return after the march instead. This was frustrating to say the least.

At the end of the march, we listened to the RMT Brass Band and made our way back to the waiting area to bring the banner onto the stage. Then the moment came and we proudly walked forward, trying to avoid tripping over.

Joe Solo read the short introduction and celebration we had written for Bob. Instead of us leaving he played a tribute song that he had written to salute the memory of our great leader and friend.



Bob's Banner on stage at Tolpuddle

## Bob Crow Education Centre – 14<sup>th</sup> November 2019

*I had the privilege of speaking with Bob Crow at a number of TUC and Labour movement events, as the former FBU General Secretary. Both of us were very content for the press to label us 'The Awkward Squad' as we always sought to be a thorn in the side of New Labour. I also remember well, shortly after Bob's election, attending the Cuban Ambassadors' London address for a political/social gathering of supportive Trade Unionists. All went well until the meal*



Bob's family open the Bob Crow National Education Centre

*turned up. The traditional black beans with everything, to which Bob suggested the cook had left them on the cooker too long! Ever humorous, ever honest and straightforward a members' man, Bob Crow was an exceptional Trade Unionist and he will always be very much missed. Andy Gilchrist*



Bob's banner 2019

# Bob Crow's posthumous 40-year Membership Award

1979 - 2019



*"It was a great honour, and an emotional occasion for me, to be able to present Bob's posthumous 40-year membership badge to Nicola and to hand over the banner. The fact this took place at Bob's own branch meeting was fitting.*

*Bob was a renowned national figure but it should also be remembered that first and foremost he was a dedicated family man and a true rank-and-file member of our union. He always took the trouble to go to presentation evenings of members and it was appropriate that we marked what would have been his 40-year membership as a rank-and-filer in the union at his branch on their presentation evening.*

*Bob believed in the way our union works – in our democracy. That members, such as himself and all national and full-time officials, are nurtured and shaped in the branches and regions. In the Representative structures and that they can be elected – but remain rank-and file.*

*He was a leader but, essentially, he was one of us.*

*I worked with Bob in creating and building my own branch, European Passenger Services, the RMT Credit Union, on Company Council, and later on our NEC. I found that one of his best values was that he trusted the members.*

*He trusted our members and felt his duty was to create a union where their rank-and-file power could be released so that we could win advances for ourselves not wait for others to grant them.*

*So it was great of his branch to honour Bob – their member and their activist – by*



*remembering his own long membership of their branch and of our union.*

*We cherish Bob's memory – his achievements and legacy should be our inspiration. He wanted our union to thrive and be strong, and in his honour we must carry on building and strengthening our union, a union of rank-and file members in control, and winning for us all.*

Mick Lynch Assistant General Secretary

## **Handing over the banner**

**6<sup>th</sup> December 2019**



Mick Lynch, Assistant General Secretary hands over the Bob Crow Banner to Bob's family. The cycle was completed as Nicola accepted it with Bob's 40-year awards in her hand. The family now wish to donate the banner to raise money for the British Heart Foundation and we hope this album provides convenience to raise more and much needed money for a brilliant cause.

## Final Goodbye

*'It has been a tremendous privilege and honour to be the Branch Secretary of Bob's Branch, especially in the 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his sad passing and his 40<sup>th</sup> year since he joined the RMT.*



*The changing of our Branch name for 2019 and the creation of Bob's Banner was our way of remembering the great times that we shared, the admiration that we felt and to give our final condolences to his family and friends.*

*Taking the banner around*

*the country, hearing stories and memories about the life and times of Bob have been truly humbling. The work and efforts of us all in making new memories and experiences during this period, have been far too many to collate. We remembered him but with laughter, with the odd pint and with a broad smile on our faces. There will never be another Bob, but we can judge the man by what he left behind:*

*A strong and loving family; friends that remember amazing times; a brand of militant and fighting trade unionism that other unions aspired to become; a wit and humour that stood him out whether talking to his working-class mates, or appearing on question time or being interviewed by Jeremy Paxman. As Bob said in that interview "dinosaurs were around for a long time and so will his memory be too".*



Paul Jackson, LU Engineering Branch Secretary

## **Bob in his own words**

"I have a barometer in the house and if I could have been anything else other than a union official I would have been a footballer - or a weatherman."

"It's an old media myth that the Rail, Maritime and Transport union resorts to industrial action lightly."

"My body never burns, because I'm a Greek god."

"What do you want me to do? Sit under a tree and read Karl Marx every day?"

"At the end of the day, as General Secretary of a union, you've got to be larger than life. You don't want to mooch around in a grey suit and eat a sandwich every lunchtime. You want someone with a bit of a spark about him."

"You keep telling us it's an open door, but it's a revolving door. We keep on coming out the same side we come in."

"I'm not going to be hanging around for ever. I won't be one of these people like Lenin in a mausoleum."

"You can crawl away into a shell or go out on the streets and fight."

Spit on your own and you can't do anything, but if you all spit together you can drown the bastards

"I was born in a council house, as far as I am concerned, I will die in one"

"If you fight you may not win, if you don't fight, you will always lose"