Henry Norman Bethune

This is a portrait of Norman Bethune when he was working in Madrid

Would you like to learn more information about the amazing surgeon and stretcher bearer Norman Bethune? Read on if you do!

By: Jack Skipworth
Early Life

- Bethune's mother was named Ann and his father was named Malcolm.

- Henry Norman Bethune was born on March 3rd, 1890 in Gravenhurst, Ontario.

- The Bethune family settled in Toronto when young Norman was only 3 years old.

- Bethune graduated from the University of Toronto with a medical degree. In 1911 he interrupted his studies to work as a labourer-teacher with Frontier College and went back to school in 1914 to finish his medical degree.

This is Norman Bethune when he was 15 years old.
Adult Life

- In 1924 Bethune and his family moved to Detroit. Norman was not married at this time.

- In 1926 Bethune was diagnosed with tuberculosis, a feared lung disease. He was inspired to help other tuberculosis because he knew how dangerous it could be.

This is a portrait of Norman Bethune as an adult.

- Bethune died of blood poisoning on November 12, 1939 in Huang Shiko, China

- In 1938 Bethune left Canada for the last time to join the 8th Route Army in the Shanxi-Hebei border region in China.
Why Norman Bethune was important:

Bethune was important because he worked with fellow doctor Sir Frederick Banting to co-discover insulin (antibiotics). Without Norman Bethune, a lot of us would be have diabetes and have nothing to do about it.

A picture of Norman Bethune doing surgery in an abandoned Chinese temple.

Norman Bethune was also important because of his impact on Sino-Canadian relations (Chinese-Canadian relations).
Famous quotes by Norman Bethune

"The function of the artist is to disturb. His duty is to arouse the sleeper, to shake the complacent pillars of the world. In a world terrified of change; he preaches revolution—the principal of life. He is an agitator, a disturber of the peace—quick, impatient, positive, restless and disquieting. He is the spirit of the working in the soul of man."
—Norman

"Charity should be abolished; and be replaced by justice."
—Norman

A picture of Norman Bethune as an adult.

This is a picture of Norman Bethune's house.
Online Sources:


2. livinghistory.med.utoronto.ca

3. commons.m.wikimedia.org

Text Sources:

Canadian Heroes
By: Maxine Trotter