

The Basque children of 1937

May 2007 saw a series of events, culminating with a celebration to mark the seventieth anniversary of the arrival of 4,000 children, largely from the Basque country, in the port of Southampton, fleeing from persecution in Spain at the start of the Civil War. The University's Ramón Pérez de Ayala Lecture, was given by the Southampton film-maker, Steve Bowles, on 21 May. Steve is well-known for his documentaries, especially those on the Spanish Civil War. He has recently completed the re-editing and expansion of his film, originally for the BBC, *The Guernica Children*. The lecture looked at the tensions between humanitarian need and political expediency, the presentation of the events in Spain in newsreel and film of the period, with interviews with some of the children. The new version was premiered at the commemoration event in Southampton on 26 May. Organised by the Basque Children of '37 Association UK, it was attended by some 200 people including the Spanish ambassador, a representative of the Basque government, niños, their families and friends. A plaque was unveiled for Southampton Civic Centre. Archives relating to the events of 1937, and the subsequent careers of the children and teachers who came with them, are being brought together in the University Library's Special Collections. These include some fascinating collections of photographs and memorabilia.