

Cumbria's Basque children become a focal point of residential course

'A Welcome in the Hills' was the title of a residential course held at the beautifully located and hospitable Higham Hall in the Lake District in July. The course, led by Rob David, focused on the stories and experiences of the refugees who came to Cumbria during the 1930s. As well as covering the Basque children who came to Brampton, Ambleside, Carlisle and Wigton, the course also examined the events surrounding the arrival of Czech, German and Austrian refugees, in particular the children from these countries who arrived as part of the *Kindertransport*. As part of the course those attending were taken to Carlisle Archive Centre where they had an opportunity to examine some of the documents and other material that has been deposited there as part of the Charles and Lady Cecilia Roberts archive collection. Dr Steph Wright from Lancaster University joined Rob and together they set the course members various enquiries using the documentary evidence. The feedback elicited some interesting observations.

The course concluded with a discussion hosted by the West Cumbria Refugee Network during which course members had the opportunity to talk with two Afghan refugees and to compare the refugee experiences of the 1930s with those of today.

The scale of the Roberts archive is best demonstrated through this image of the archive boxes, all of which are full of the documentation on the hostels at Brampton and Ambleside.



Rob David