

Blue Plaque unveiling 28<sup>th</sup> July 2017 at Hazeldene, Pearson Park, Hull  
Barbara Coombs



Last Friday in Hull on the edge of Pearson Park the 20 children who came to Hazeldene were remembered with a blue plaque above the door of the house. Representing the Basque Children Association Simon Martinez and Manuel Moreno were welcomed by the Lord Mayor of Hull. The event was attended by 70 members of the public on a dry and warm afternoon.

Manuel thanked the people of Hull for their welcome given to the children and Simon expressed his belief that his and his family's life had been enriched by the warmth and kindness extended to the children 80 years ago this year. Flowers were laid and then following a short walk back to the Bowling Green Pavilion to have refreshments and view the BCA exhibition board. Manuel and Simon gave a talk about the Niños Vascos. Simon asked three questions: what was the British Government doing then, and is it any different from now; how did the British Public change the government policy; and did the Basque Children Committee do what it set out to do?

After the speakers an electrifying hush fell on the room when a first hand account of a seven year old girl now grown to an 87 seven year old retired nurse who recalled playing ring a roses with the children from Hazeldene who had gone on to work with Maria Coupland, one of the two Maestras at he Colony. Astonishingly Maria's daughter, Carmen, was also present. Other guests included two daughters of one of the other Maestra and relatives of the 8 Hull men who volunteered for the International Brigade of whom 4 died in Spain.

The event was organised by the Hull IBMT who are fundraising for a permanent memorial to their volunteers.