

Archives are now housed at the University of Southampton

On Monday January 4th 2016, Karen Robson, head archivist and Carmen Kilner of BC'37A, signed the documents formally passing our archives into the care of the Special Collection.

One of the aims of our association has been to collect and archive materials related to the 1937 '*Expedición a Inglaterra*'.

Several years ago the decision was made by the committee that the most appropriate place to keep these archives was at the University of Southampton, Special Collection housed in the Hartley Library.



Karen Robson signing the transfer documents

This is a remarkable collection (read more about it here: <http://www.southampton.ac.uk/archives/index.page>) which holds the archives for many groups of refugees who have entered Britain through the port of Southampton; these are now joined by our archives of the Basque Children who entered through Southampton on 23rd May 1937. (See blog entry: <https://specialcollectionsuniversityofsouthampton.wordpress.com/2015/11/20/univers-al-childrens-day/>)

At the 75th Commemoration held at this university, an archive box was symbolically handed by our Secretary, Natalia Benjamin to Prof Chris Woolgar marking the start of our archive collection.

Natalia had been housing the ever growing collection of papers, documents and photos in her study until it was almost bursting at the seams. The transfer is now complete and our archive material has been meticulously documented and catalogued.

The collection is being stored in truly state of the art conditions and we can be certain that not only will everything be kept safely, but in the best possible conditions for their preservation. The catalogue of Basque children material can be viewed online at: <http://www.southampton.ac.uk/archives/resources/basquecollections.page>.

Also in the "Basque collection" is material collected for the '*Los Niños*' project and exhibition by the Hispanic Area Studies of the University of Southampton which can also be accessed in the virtual reading room.

Anyone that wishes to see the contents or originals of the Basque collection can contact the archives to arrange viewing of materials. There are no costs involved, but an appointment must be made prior to the visit.

Postal address:
Hartley Library
University of Southampton
Highfield
Southampton SO17 1BJ

Email: Archives@soton.ac.uk

Cataloguing our archives finished in late October, and already there have been several individuals and groups who have accessed the archive. On my visit to sign the hand-over documents, I spent time with a young American university student, Angélica Inclán, who is writing a dissertation on the Basque Children and had been awarded a grant to travel to Southampton to see our archives. This followed on from a letter last year asking for help and advice.

I have been able to refer several researchers to the archives and we are expecting visitors from as far away as Australia in the next few months. It is a great satisfaction to know that within only a few months the BC'37A archives are being actively used.

Finally, we would like to encourage anyone who has any letters, envelopes, documents, photos, memorabilia of any kind relating to this area of history of the children, the *maestras*, the *señoritas*, the English helpers, fund raisers or childhood friends of the *niños*, to consider depositing them either directly in the collection at Southampton, or with us at the Association.

Carmen Kilner



Carmen Kilner and Angélica Inclán looking at documents in the Special Collections reading room.