



Confraternity of Saint James

Bulletin



March 2016

No 133

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Cover: St James,
Barcelona,
Photograph by
Robert Shaw

Editorial

Gosia Brykczyńska

Just when one thinks that life is proceeding along a well-known and familiar trajectory, in an organised and predictable fashion, it has a tendency to surprise us and catch us out unawares, throwing up challenges if not actual problems. Some challenges are exciting and offer new opportunities to look at the world (and our work) with new eyes, in a new way – other times the newness and need to respond in novel ways can be perceived by us as threatening our comfort zones or even as stressful.

So it is in our pilgrim lives as members of the CSJ. After thirty odd years of functioning in a particular way (and growing in small stages and organically), it can be difficult for us now to re-adjust our ways of delivering services, working with volunteers, communicating with the wider world and so on. It is therefore another small miracle of St James, in spite of the massive changes occurring all around us and even in the CSJ office (with the presence of a new secretary and the need to re-organise the training of *hospitaleros* and office volunteers, and recruit new Trustees, and so on) that the core work of the CSJ still gets done. New pilgrims are being helped, yet another AGM has been successfully held and a very useful Practical Pilgrim Day here in London had been attended by over seventy potential new pilgrims.

Our Chairman, Rev Colin Jones, started this year with a summary of CSJ activities delivered at our AGM in January, where he hinted at the many tasks that still lie ahead of us in 2016. Springtime is always busy in the office, and this year is no different, with volunteers helping prospective pilgrims choose their pilgrimage routes and set off to Compostela equipped with Pilgrim Passports and sound information. So it is good and appropriate to read in this Bulletin about various alternative pilgrim routes, not only the better known ones in northern Spain. Evan Llewellyn writes about the Via Podiensis (a route to Santiago de Compostela through Southern France from Le Puy-en-Velay to the Pyrenees), David Pepper comments on one of the Portuguese routes, and even in the *Book Reviews* section of this Bulletin Donald Smith reviews a book about pilgrimage roads in Scotland. But all knowledge of routes is useless if the weary pilgrim has no place to rest and is isolated – alone in an unknown environment.

Brother Javier writes about Christian hospitality in Rabanal village, and Barbara Jones remembers a pilgrim incident in Villafranca. Meanwhile Seán Deany and Chris Slater address the more prosaic issues of “Once I am on the way, in which direction do I go next”; Seán actually asking the locals he meets along the route to draw him a map to indicate the way! While Chris Slater, who is concerned about being on a budget, recounts how everything is do-able – if you only put your mind (and heart) to it.

Finally, we have two poems in this edition of the Bulletin, one from the funeral Mass for Tony Morwood-Leyland and one from Sarah Justine Packwood.

Sarah Packwood in her poem writes that her “...*soul sings to the trees by the light of the morning, And dances in the breeze to herald the dawning of Hope in my heart...*” Now it just happens to be, that the Miraz Committee are looking at this time for examples of art work (silhouettes) expressing *joyful* pilgrims arriving in hope to the *albergue* of Miraz! These “skipping” silhouettes will be eventually cast in iron (in Spain), and form an artistic iron-railing fence along the front of the *albergue*. At the same time that this fence needs to be put up, the *albergue* is receiving a new name, in order to distinguish it from other *albergues* being set up in the vicinity and in the village.

The Bishop of Lugo has suggested that the *albergue* be put under the patronage of San Martín, (the same as in Tours, France and the same who is seen riding his horse above the entrance to the ancient Benedictine Monastery of San Martín Pinario opposite Santiago Cathedral). There is a large following of St Martin in Galicia and in the Lugo Diocese in particular, and he certainly is a well-known saintly figure all over Europe – sharing all he had with the needy. Surely, a good example and rôle model for *hospitaleros* and keepers of *albergues*!

The Miraz committee has decided therefore to commission a tiled picture of San Martín which will be made in Portugal (famous for its tiled pictures), to be placed on an exterior wall,. To this end, if any CSJ members would like to contribute to the artistic fund and help us in promoting the *Albergue de San Martín*, in Miraz, please feel free to send to the office your cheques clearly marked on the back for **San Martin Albergue**. We have already a \$100 contribution towards the fund from a grateful Swiss pilgrim, and we hope to have collected a goodly contribution towards the projects before the end of this pilgrim season. It is anticipated that next year the pilgrim railings and

the tiled picture of San Martín will be in place for all to see and admire and of course will be duly blessed in time, by the Bishop of Lugo.

This year however, most of the CSJ attention will be on Rabanal which this summer will be celebrating its 25th anniversary of service to pilgrims. More news about the history of Rabanal will be in the June special edition of the Bulletin, which will be in fact a commissioned book about the history of Gaucelmo; meanwhile in the September Bulletin there will be a full account of the celebratory events in Rabanal for all to read who cannot be in person at the festivities in Spain!



Rabanal at last

I leave you therefore this springtide with the wise words of Martin Leyland – that you may have: *Strength drawn from the Way the Pilgrims wend - Faith in the confident journey's final end.*

Chairman's Address at CSJ Annual General Meeting 2016

Colin Jones

“Man is a creature who walks in two worlds and traces upon the walls of his cave the wonders and the nightmare experiences of his spiritual pilgrimage.”

The writer Morris West puts these words on the lips of a fictional Pope. They stand well for the caminos of 2015. From the jubilation that UNESCO had recognised the Camino del Norte as a World Heritage Route to the dark news that a pilgrim had disappeared near Astorga, the caminos have generated the best and the worst of news headlines. In their own way, both pieces of news have sent out ripples that will echo into the years ahead.

Pilgrims and authorities have long been aware that the caminos attract a certain level of rascality. Whether the inconvenience of taking not only your towel but your passport and money with you when showering in an *albergue* or suspecting that the price of your reviving brandy may have had a slight pilgrim percentage increase, it was liveable with. It was part of the experience of pilgrimage from time immemorial. The disappearance of Denise Thiem and her tragic end, of course, mystified, unnerved and finally shocked all who hold the caminos as a precious thing. Yet, it has spurred authorities at local and national level to look again at the security of all who follow the yellow arrows. Way marking, particularly on the Camino Francés will be improved so as to remove ambiguities. Personal safety, especially in remoter areas is being taken far more seriously. Terrible though Denise's death may have been, it is important to note that it was not met by complacency or indifference. It is a note of hope emerging from a dark event in the story of the modern pilgrimage to Santiago.

More welcome news broke in the latter part of 2015. UNESCO declared the Camino del Norte, upon which our Miraz is situated, as a World Heritage Route. That recognition is a tribute to the herculean task that various Spanish authorities undertook, over many years, to prepare the submission to UNESCO. That declaration not only values the Norte as an historic pilgrim route but will safeguard it

for generations and encourage proper and sympathetic development throughout all its stages from the French border to Santiago itself. This is especially important as many now choose the del Norte route rather than the Francés for their first Camino in order to avoid the latter's acute overcrowding.

Between these poles of news, there have been other developments of significance. Local authorities through which the Camino Francés passes have banded together to form an association, centred upon Leon, with the express purpose of safeguarding the historic stages of the Camino. For the internet-surfing pilgrim, 2015 brought the joyous news that the Xunta of Galicia had created the first virtual encyclopaedia of the Caminos of Santiago entitled, "Xacopedia". The site proclaims "all the Jacobean culture open to the world through an encyclopaedia", mirroring a site with a very similar name. As it matures as a web site, it will bring together the diverse elements of the Caminos, their history, culture, religious and spiritual traditions, and contemporary news; it will be a valuable investigative tool. However, while information is good, the wisdom born from experience is still essential in order to apply it. This is why the CSJ and other associations are still a vital resource for the Caminos.

The wisdom and experience of Tony Morwood-Leyland as well as his inexhaustible supply of anecdotes will be sorely missed both in the office and in the wider membership of the CSJ. His commitment to the Camino and the CSJ, indeed the strength he drew from being a pilgrim was movingly reflected in his funeral. We should also note with sadness that CSJ members Michael Hull, Desmond Herring, Irene Lawson, Bernard Rudden, and Gillian Clarke also died last year.

2015 also mark a significant change for the CSJ. In July Marion (Marples) retired as Secretary. Whilst easy to say this as a statement of fact, it was no small matter. Over the years Marion has gained an intimate knowledge and profound knowledge of the caminos, their associations and personalities – you could say she is the CSJ's own Xacopedia – and of course, the workings of our office. The trustees recognised that appointing to the post of Secretary would not be a question of finding another "Marion". The post would require a thorough assessment of what the CSJ could reasonably expect a new person could achieve. Considerable time and energy, as well as paper, was invested in this exercise in the early part of last year. As a result, Jean was appointed. She has brought to the post of Secretary not only her considerable skills but also a sharp analysis of how best to shape the functions of the Secretary. The office and its running are a witness to

her capability. Jean's appointment coincided with the barrage of orders and enquiries that the refreshed web site has generated. Thanks are due to the small team who have been helping in the office to ensure that all enquiries are dealt with in good time.

The new, alternative design for our Pilgrim Credential became available last year. It has proved immensely popular. Requests for it have kept the office working all out to satisfy demand. A significant number of members are asking for a CSJ *sello* to mark the beginning of their pilgrimage. As Spain is a rubber stamp culture, so we are not. However, we are going to work on a suitable design for our own *sello*.

As 2015 drew to a close the balance of accounts for the Caminos became clearer. There had been a notable increase in the number of pilgrims arriving at Santiago – 262,400 (the highest total for a non-Holy Year). Italians, Germans and Americans continue to be the non-Spanish nationalities most represented within that number. Whilst the Camino Francés still retains the blue ribbon for the most popular (65.5%) – some may say most crowded camino – the del Norte and Portugués registered a significant increase in pilgrims. These figures may translate on the ground to extreme business but they also represent the caminos at their finest – pilgrims drawn from 179 nations from the largest (People's Republic of China) to some of the smallest (Kiribati, and Palau). The camino is making friends of strangers – although a nightmare for *hospitaleros* when trying to establish a common language.

And, what of 2016? Well... Prediction is very difficult, especially if it's about the future. However, it is reasonable to suppose that interest in the Northern and Portuguese routes will continue to grow, especially as facilities and support improve. For us, the CSJ, we must continue to encourage more involvement particularly in support of the office and of regional groupings. We should seek out more opportunities to promote the pilgrimage and the CSJ.

As our presence at Greenbelt has proved, there is a questing interest in pilgrimage and the roads to Santiago. There is a need to become an attractive organisation in which younger people feel they have found a spiritual home.

Finally, on your behalf I would like to thank all the trustees, and members of the various Committees for all the exceptional work they have done in the past year. They have achieved remarkable results, which for an almost wholly volunteer organisation is in itself remarkable.

A Pilgrim Experience in Villafranca

Barbara Jones

I was pleased to read the article on Albergue Fenix in Villafranca del Bierzo in the latest bulletin, particularly because in 2003 I had quite a different reception.

It was summer time and extremely hot. I was in my late 50s, cycling alone; I wasn't very fast and I seemed to be plagued with punctures!

The day in question didn't start well as when I retrieved my bike from the shed belonging to the bar in El Acebo it had yet another puncture! I was really worried about changing the inner tube this time as it was imperative that I reset my brakes safely; the descent from El Acebo is not pleasant, despite the views! There were even warnings for cyclists to take care, plus a monument to a German cyclist who'd lost her life on the descent! I even tried walking the bike down part of it but that was no help, as the weight of the panier bags swung the whole thing round and almost made it topple!

Despite my relief at having reached the bottom alive (!), I denied myself the pleasure of a look around Molinaseca, attractive though it seemed, and headed straight for Ponferrada, wanting to find a bike shop where I could buy more inner tubes and assure myself of my bike's safety. The shop owner was very helpful, but sighed on seeing the state of my bike wheel, removed it, straightened it on his vice, fixed the brakes and even mended my punctured inner tube. He was a godsend! I knew that the next day's journey (to O Cebreiro) was another steep hill – and that would be followed by another descent - so I was very thankful that a professional had seen to the bike and verified its roadworthiness.

Ponferrada, being a place of some size, was useful for other reasons – to get cash, to buy a film for my camera (2003 wasn't the age of digital!), postcards, stamps and a coffee plus have a friendly chat to some German pilgrims. I began to calm down and my stress of earlier faded away. It would have gone completely if I hadn't insisted on finding an internet café and a place to top up the credit on my phone. Unfortunately, I wasn't a true pilgrim; I needed to maintain regular contact with my nearest and dearest and, in doing this, encountered innumerable problems.

Even leaving Ponferrada wasn't easy. It was market day, stalls were everywhere and I couldn't see the Camino signs!

By the time I was finally on my way, and heading towards Villafranca, all my worries were replaced by concern about the heat. It was unbearable! At one stage I just lay in the shade by the roadside and a passing cyclist stopped to check I was OK! That was kind.

It was 4 o'clock when I finally approached Villafranca, and what was described in the literature as a "welcoming albergue". Despite this I didn't realise how bad I'd feel when the lady – on seeing my cycle helmet – said they were full. She wouldn't even let me sleep on the floor! I came back outside, sat on a chair there and burst into tears! It was the last straw!

Then my "white knight" arrived beside me - Thiery, a Belgian pilgrim, a very fast walker. He'd been just inside the albergue, in the café part, when the lady had turned me away. Apparently he had arrived earlier (no silly diversions for him!) and was housed in a dormitory for the over 50s (good idea – more peaceful) which was PRACTICALLY EMPTY.

I couldn't speak to him, I was so upset, but he realised what had happened and very gallantly summoned up his hesitant Spanish and somehow managed to persuade the lady to let me stay. She was very grudging and I felt like a second class citizen but oh, did I need that bed!

So, you can imagine how happy I am to read that Dermott Wynne was received well, plus the albergue's website now says: NO SE LIMITA LA ENTRADA A LOS CICLISTAS que tienen las mismas normas que el resto de peregrinos.

I wonder whether my experience pricked their conscience and made them change their approach? Oh, and I did reach Santiago and obtained my Compostella.

On the Way of St James

Martin Leyland

*A steady journey,
Through a fast fragmenting world.
In circles of influence,
Their blood-dark banners furled.
A reckoning up of long and counted years,
A careful ledger of life's unrestful tears.*

*Strength drawn from the Way the Pilgrims wend
Faith in the confident journey's final end.
The Elder Brother bends in meeting you,
As the white road dips
And now is lost from view.*

*Brushed by Black-robed wings,
Our face light-kissed.
As the soft, refreshing earth
Is swathed in mist.
Walking the road of the Scallop-shell
In trustful tread
By kindly shades, accompanied;
The Blessed Dead.*

*This, the golden Autumn Day
Is done,
Where leaves turn home
Against a setting sun.*

*A book of Faith;
We turn the final Page.
To find at last,
An end to all our pilgrimage.*

[This poem was read at the funeral Mass for Tony Morwood-Leyland, by Tony's brother].

Rabanal, a monastery on the Camino

Brother Javier Aparicio

Translated by Margaret Simonot

When it gets to this time of the year, one needs to be able to enjoy solitude and tranquility and the silence of the streets of Rabanal... and to bear the intense cold of these lands of Leon.

Winter is the time to turn one's path inward, something that belongs in its own right to our condition of being monks; it's the time for recharging our batteries that are already more or less exhausted, and in this way to embark on a new season with renewed hope and energy.

The square of the church of Our Lady is resting in its own winter slumber. Gaucelmo has closed its doors and won't be open again more or less until the Holy Week of the year that is beginning; the monastery reins in its activity – which is at times frenetic – quite considerably, while the daily observance continues just as much in prayer or services and in welcoming and providing hospitality, not so much to pilgrims, who are few and far between in this phase of the year, but to guests who come in search of a few days of retreat.

One year is drawing to a close; a fresh opportunity to look back and to give thanks yet again for being able to live in a place that is so particularly blessed by the hand of God as Rabanal is. To attempt to capture in a few lines all the lived experience of our community is an almost impossible task. But also, in writing these lines, one is reminded of the fact that our day-to-day life keeps a very normal rhythm, with few significant events that would warrant major commentary. The life of our community has focussed on living the here and now of our own special mission on the Camino. And this consists of routine, of work that is both continual and seemingly monotonous... but we try to live it as part of what in monastic terms is known as “stability”.

As always, there have been many who have passed through the monastery. And I'm not referring purely to pilgrims. As is the custom, monks, Jesuits and *hospitaleros* have made it possible for our pastoral work to be closer to the grassroots and more fruitful. Brother Marinus of our Abbey of Sankt Ottilien was here for just over six months; a period that was more than enough for him to be fully integrated into the life of our community, not only in the work of the house but also with pilgrims. His presence and support have been a great help to us.

But in addition to him there have been many others who have wanted to collaborate with us in tending to pilgrims. From Sankt Ottilien we were also able to count on the reinforcement brought by Brother Cassian; by the “recidivist” Brother Sturnius and Father Benedict from Munsterschwarzach, and by Father



Sketch of Rabanal by Ivan Eshattley

Brendan from Belmont Abbey in England; and Brother Antoine from St. Anselm's. In addition, and as is the custom, the *Compañía de Jesús* (Society of Jesus, or Jesuits), has continued to strengthen their links with us and many of their members have worked with us in the monastery. And finally, we can do no less than name and thank those who over the years have without a doubt been numerous and who have carried the primary responsibility of our house for pilgrims, not only as friends and collaborators, but also in a certain sense, as members of our community of San Salvador. So thank you to everyone, yet another year.

And we can only be grateful to our good neighbours, “the English”

for the selfless, and certainly significant, work that they carry out in Rabanal. Gaucelmo and the Monastery work perfectly in tandem to provide no less than a simple Christian welcome to the pilgrim, which is our common goal. Along with the *refugio* of the Confraternity, collaboration with other *refugios* of the village means that Rabanal continues to provide a wide-ranging offer to pilgrims in a place that has been so significant in offering hospitality to pilgrims not just over the years, but for centuries.

Finally, in trying to sum up briefly what Rabanal means, one is aware that on the road of this little village people of our time are walking, some in search of something, others simply walking; but all viewed with love by our good Lord. In a few days, this good Lord will come as a pilgrim to our house. What a gift!

Monasterio Benedictino de San Salvador del Monte Irago
From the periodical **De Monjes y Peregrinos**, 2015/3

Highways and Byways

Evan Llewellyn

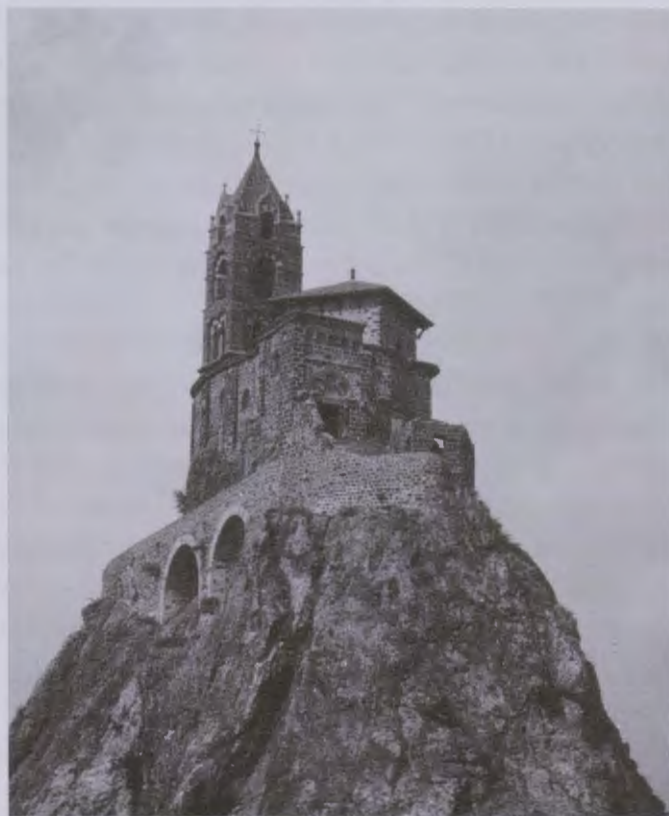
Every year the Camino draws increasing numbers of pilgrims, and our principal trail, the *Camino Francés*, is the choice for many of us. However, there are other paths leading to Santiago de Compostela such as the *Camino del Norte* and the *Camino Portugués*, and they can offer experiences away from the bustling crowds. On these trails we may find the relative solitude not always present on the busier routes.

Several years ago my wife and I started out on the *Via Podiensis*. This historic path begins in Le Puy-en-Velay in south central France and continues 730 kilometres to the French/Spanish border. We passed through some of the most beautiful French countryside one could ever hope to see, and we were privileged to visit ancient Romanesque churches, abbeys and cloisters, and even hostels built for mediaeval pilgrims. The path is wonderfully described in Alison Raju's Cicerone guide book. Once you reach the Pyrenees the pilgrim has two options, either to continue on the *Camino Francés* or to follow the *Camino del Norte* running along Spain's north coast.

In recent years even the less frequented *Via Podiensis* has become well-travelled so this past summer my wife Joy and I chose another alternative. We took several secondary trails or *variantes* as they are called in France, branching off the main path from Le Puy to St. Jean. We began our walk in the delightful mediaeval town of Figeac and headed north to the ancient pilgrimage site of Rocamadour with its statue of the Black Virgin. The trail is well signposted as the GR6. In Rocamadour we stayed in a religious residence just a few steps from the magnificent basilica of St. Sauveur. For a few euros we were given comfortable, single rooms with an extraordinary view of the valley below us. From Rocamadour we continued through the Causses de Quercy. These are the limestone cliffs and plateaux of one of France's largest regional forest reserves. Though the *variante* is entitled the GR6, it changes its name after Rocamadour and becomes the GR652. However, it is a single trail, easily manageable and well marked. It was July and the weather was hot, and perhaps because of this we passed no one on the path for eight days.

Each evening we easily found accommodation, and chatted with

local people, but pilgrims were scarce. We overnighted in municipal *gîtes*. These are hostels set up specifically for pilgrims and run by the local mayor's office. We stayed at a campsite, in a gypsy caravan, a tent on a raft that floated out to the middle of a small lake, and in *chambres d'hôtes* (Bed and Breakfasts). If we felt slightly out of touch on occasion, the trail more than compensated for our moments of restlessness. We pushed on through the departments of the Lot and the Lot and Garonne, eventually arriving in Agen. This was the only city on our journey, but along the way we passed ancient towns still marked with vestiges of the Hundred Years War. In Penne d'Agenais we saw the ruins of a fortress built by King Richard the Lionheart. From Agen we walked on to La Romieu where we reconnected with the main path, the GR65. Here we visited the early fourteenth century *Collégiale*, a magnificent cloister and church now a designated World Heritage site.



Église St-Laurent et Aiguilhe, Le Puy, photograph taken by Bryan Stevens

Instead of turning towards the Pyrenees and Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port, we now walked east up the main trail looping back to our starting point in Figeac. On our first morning from La Romieu we crossed perhaps 50 pilgrims all coming towards us on their way to St. Jean. It

was a shock after our days of solitude, and we almost wore ourselves out with our frequent *bonjours*. We passed through Lectoure and Moissac, and from Cahors struck out again on another alternative path through the Célé Valley. The Célé River runs through a rugged and utterly charming part of France where not even our cellphones would work.

We returned to Figeac sixteen days and 400 kilometres later. The local people we met were friendly, if a little bemused by these foreign pilgrims and the countryside afforded us many enjoyable moments. Secondary trails such as these still retain the essence of the Camino with churches to visit and occasional pilgrims to meet, but they offer a tranquility not always available on the main thoroughfares.

Finally, this past September we set out again, this time on a new trail from Geneva to Le Puy, the so-called *Via Gebennensis*. Here, we drew our inspiration from Bryan Stevens' article published in the Confraternity's newsletter in March 2015. We relied extensively on our 2015 yellow guide, *Chemin de Saint-Jacques de Genève au Puy-en-Velay*, which we had obtained from the Confraternity's office in London.

A word of caution: the Topoguide produced by the *FFRandonné*, which Bryan mentions in his article, was difficult to find. It is published in French only, and at various times we were told that it either did not exist or that it was out of print. Eventually a fellow traveller gave us a used copy, and we found it a good companion, although the path from Geneva can be easily managed without this guide. Again we experienced the peacefulness of solitary walking plus the generosity and goodwill of our many *Jacquaire* hosts. These families have agreed to feed and put pilgrims up for the night in return for a modest donation. And we met the occasional pilgrim who was only too pleased to share the path with us.

We will likely return to the Camino and more of these byways because for us they provide an intimate walking experience. We hope and imagine that others might enjoy them too.

To read more of our experiences of walking the Camino from Le Puy-en-Velay to Santiago de Compostela, I invite readers to take a look at *My Own Damn Camino*. In this eBook, available on Amazon, I have written about a wary pilgrim who joined his wife for what many would consider the wrong reasons. In this case the wary pilgrim was me. I struggled, eventually coming to terms with my decision and the pilgrimage itself. It is a light-hearted look at the pleasures and the pitfalls of a thousand mile journey.

My soul sings

Sarah Justine Packwood

*My soul sings to the trees by the light of the morning,
And dances in the breeze to herald the dawning of
Hope in my heart as a new day arrives,
Under radiant sun my whole being thrives,
Upon walking the Way in the path of the ancients,
Who accompany me beyond time and space
And I know I am not alone.*

*My soul sings to the birds to join in their symphony,
And floats above phrase and cadence of rhapsody,
Creating harmonics from music so pure,
My heart-strings vibrate to the melody's allure,
Upon hearing the Way proclaimed in fine birdsong,
My body, an instrument, to this orchestra belongs,
And hums along to its soul-tune.*

*My soul sings to the flowers in the warmth of the noon-day,
And paints kaleidoscope hues on meadows at play,
With butterflies and bees it flit-flutters about,
Their display lifts mine eyes from within to without,
Upon seeing the Way cloaked in myriad colours,
My consciousness shifts to uncover the wonders,
Of creation, and I kneel down.*

*My soul sings to the mountains, the rocks and the earth,
And beats Gaia's rhythm to welcome the birth,
Of a new phase of grace that will touch all who know,
To heed the pilgrim's call to get up and go,
Upon feeling the Way safe and sure 'neath my feet,
Where sole of pilgrim shoe and gravel path meet,
And I urge my feet to walk on.*

*My soul sings to the lakes in the silvery twilight,
And murmurs to waterfalls and rivers of might,
That water the gardens of the grain and the vine,
Which produce humble fayre of the bread and the wine,
Upon tasting the Way presented at table,
A feast fit for kings where pilgrims assemble,
And I feel like I have come home.*



In harmony with nature

A walk to St James Church, Altham

Barry Mathers

On Saturday 17th October, eleven of us met at Whalley for the walk to St James Church, Altham. It was a fine October morning and after coffee we set off, crossing the River Calder heading for Whalley Nab. We started climbing following an old packhorse route. After a while we met a group of scouts who were camping nearby. They were out face painting and Pam couldn't resist having hers done, complete with red nose and whiskers. We followed the River Calder for a while, with some of us lucky enough to see a heron in flight. Eventually we found a convenient spot for lunch with St James's church in the distance. Not long after setting off again we passed the restored Constant Mary waterwheel pit and tramway which was used at the nearby Dunkirk coal pit, in the past, mining being very extensive in the area. After joining the River Calder again we passed St James's church on the opposite bank. On arriving at the church we were met by Les the church warden and his wife. I can't imagine what they thought of cat woman. After welcoming us with tea and biscuits we were treated to a very interesting and entertaining tour of the church.



St James window, Altham Church

He told us it stood on a Christian site by a ford from the reign of King Stephen about 1135 AD. It is thought a monastic cell was founded and used by local people when prevented from reaching their parish church of St Mary's Whalley about 4 miles away. It is thought to have been dedicated to St James after local men had returned from the Second Crusade after visiting the

shrine at Santiago. There are two magnificent stained glass windows in the east wall; one of St James depicted as a pilgrim and the other of St John. In the Baptistry is a font, a gift of Abbot Paslew the last abbot of Whalley, executed in 1537 for being involved in the Pilgrimage of Grace. By the font is a brass plaque dedicated to the memory of the victims of the Moorfield Colliery disaster of 1883 on the outskirts of Altham. Built into the south chancel wall is a tympanum which used to be over the original doorway and because of its simple diaper design was not destroyed during the Dissolution of the Monasteries. The warden gave us a rendition of the church bells operated not by pulling on ropes but by striking blocks in quick succession thus only needing one person. Because of the magnificent tour we stayed longer than expected so, after thanking the warden and his wife, we set off back to Whalley. Not wanting to risk the ford, we crossed by the bridge and followed the river, then after turning off we headed for Read then on to Read Hall. This was the home of Robert Nowell, the magistrate who convicted the Pendle Witches on trumped up charges. With Pendle Hill in the distance we headed to Portfield, an Iron Age Hill Fort, passing a mediaeval barn connected to the estate of Whalley Abbey. After arriving back at Whalley we had a visit to St Mary's church where the warden gave us a quick tour showing us the miserichords which came from Whalley Abbey. Unfortunately we had no time for the Abbey but I think we'd done enough by then. A visit to the Abbey still awaits us.



Stopping for a break

The camino on 13€ a day

Chris Slater

At the checkout, I became aware that the comforting rectangle in my pocket wasn't there. Maybe another pocket – but no. Sensing the shadow of impending doom, I abandoned my groceries, went outside and searched and searched my backpack. But to no avail, no wallet. No plastic cards.

I had walked seven weeks from Arles, marveling as my perceptions of physical and mental burdens receded and the colors became brighter, more and more conscious of nature and my fellow pilgrims, now what was this new challenge? I took the moneybag from round my neck, verified the passport and slowly fingered my remaining wealth of banknotes. Enough euros for three weeks, at 13€ per day, could I manage? I felt a strange sense of elation. At least I was in Santo Domingo among friends, since the previous year Esther and I had volunteered here, and the *cofradía* were enormously helpful in contacting the local police and the previous night's albergue in Nájera, but nothing transpired. Was it lying in a ditch, or the pocket of someone who needed it more than I? I shall never know. So I embarked on my frugal camino.

I sought the municipal *albergues* with kitchens, an inventory of past remains yielding delights. Freshness was a rare luxury. I learned to linger patiently, befriending the best chefs with the skills of an amiable dog, always ready to gobble up the surplus spaghetti. At a *donativo* I occasionally became a freeloader, feeling uncomfortably like a member of the flotsam of the camino I had become aware of as an *hospitalero*. At Gaucelmo I confessed that I wouldn't leave a donation, but would make amends later at Blackfriars Road, cheerfully accepted by the good folks there who assured me that their performance wasn't evaluated on the level of contributions. Little by little I saved for the occasional treat, like a *café con leche*, or a cold beer on a hot day, even cherries in el Bierzo. One of the hardest things was to accept charity though this was freely offered, as age and distance walked marked me as an *éminence grise* of the camino, needing little encouragement to pontificate on the relative merits of the *albergues* ahead.

So I arrived in Santiago in triumph, my last free meal as one of the celebrated ten at the *Hostal de los Reyes Católicos*, where the greasy

egg and limp salad were in particular contrast to the five star cuisine enjoyed by the paying guests. A fitting end to yet a new lesson of the camino, a highlighting of the gulf between rich and poor on our planet.

Chris is a resident of Asheville NC, USA



Hiking Cartoon by Tony Roberts

A Portuguese camino

David Pepper

So 10 years after my first camino experience I wanted to give it another go. This time my partner wanted to come so we had to pick a route she would be happy with. Fortunately she wanted to visit Portugal and I love Port, so the Portuguese Camino it had to be. Next question was how, and like any good relationship the answer was compromise. We would use hotels and guest houses as we are still in the romantic stages of our relationship but we would go equipped to stay in refuges – just in case. However I drew the line at having a taxi carry the luggage. It is not just that I have a thing about looking after my own stuff but I also have the view that if you need a taxi to carry your bag you have packed too much. In any case who wants to arrive at their accommodation to find it has a swimming pool but their trunks are in a taxi that won't arrive for two hours?

The start couldn't have been worse. We trained, unlike last time, and could be found carrying a house brick in a rucksack up and down the Malvern Hills, and in our local outdoor shops sifting through gear in the sales. What we didn't plan for was the refugee crisis. We decided that the whole trip had to be flight-free so booked Eurostar, a TGV and then the fabulous hotel train to Lisbon. In the morning, at St Pancras station, we find our train cancelled due to 'people in the tunnel' and little hope of joining the next train. This is where fate lends a hand and we meet two other *peregrinos* and together with a little help we blag our way onto the next train. Arriving in Paris with 30 minutes to cross the city we don't have time to print our TGV tickets, so sneak on board, ticketless. Equipped with a letter from the Eurostar steward, a booking reference and our new friends' ability to speak good French we manage to wear the train manager into submission and avoid being thrown off at Bordeaux.

We join the train hotel in Irun and fall into our 'luxury compartment' that was the height of style and design sometime in the '60s. The dining car is closed but the café is open for a superb meal that would make any traveller on a British train cry. Here we meet Portuguese service for the first time. The food and wine served with a passion for its origin and history and with a sense of true ownership. Imagine a GWR buffet attendant wanting to explain exactly where the bacon in a sandwich came from?

We holiday in Lisbon and then onto Oporto, all the while try to keep up our training without the aid of a house brick. North of Oporto in Barcelos

we make our start gaining our first stamp in our camino 'passports' by interrupting the priest's lunch in the church. We also have our first meeting with a party of Australian women making the trip with the support of a luggage carrying taxi service. They are loud and we are thankful that they will be ahead of us and we will not have to listen to them spoil another meal.

That was until the following night. We find our accommodation, a small guest house in the tiny village of Quintaes. It has two swimming pools and quiet gardens and no record of our booking. They do however seem to have experience of Australian women's groups as they find us a room in the main house well away from the ladies. The next morning the host has taken note of the fact neither of us can tolerate lactose and has provided a stunning breakfast free from the curse of cow's milk. It seems one of the staff is lactose intolerant and has raided her fridge at home to help. This is the first of so many kind acts that brought a warm buzz to every day of the trip.

That morning we follow little groups of Aussie women out along the trail. Far from spoiling our walk they added a dash of colour and fun along the way. Up into the hills, starting with single figure distances and then building to 12 or 14 or 18 km per day. When the storm hits, the women push on driven by a timetable. We are lucky, as with no return ticket booked we are free to hole up in a cottage in the grounds of a manor house for a few days and catch up with our washing.

We take advantage of a break in the weather to visit the coast to find ourselves sitting in a café looking at a floating museum. And so a washed out day turns into a highlight as we tour a fishing support vessel launched in 1955 – the very year of our births.

We cross the border in the pouring rain. The bridge is high and long, the river roaring below and I rediscover my fear of heights. We trudge on a few more kilometres when my partner decides to call it a day. We row over coffee whilst we drip onto the café floor. I worry about the owner, his floor and his electricity bill whilst I dry off using the hot air blower in the toilet. Buying more coffee I see his Camino Certificate behind the bar and we exchange knowing nods and grins. He orders us a taxi and we skip the next 10 km into another camino legend of a hotel – the International in Porriño. In broken languages of French, Spanish, Gallego and heaven knows what, we are told we can stay until the rain stops – one, two, however many days it takes. Nothing seems to be a problem here.

This is our first stop in Spain and we take advantage of the rest to post our Portuguese guide books and posh clothes on to Santiago. This lightens our packs and the lady in the post office joins in our cheers as her scales read 2.5kg. It also reaffirms our commitment, now we have to make it to Santiago

if we want our clothes back!

As we walk on through small villages seemingly unchanged for decades we get the worst stay of the entire trip. A roadside 'hotel' at Barro is a hovel, it is dirty and inhospitable but every cloud has a silver lining. In a café having dinner we meet a Dutch couple walking our way carrying a tent. Each night when they have had enough they knock on a door and ask to camp in a garden or field. They have never been disappointed. We reflect on how that would work in England. Next morning we pay for our room and coffee and get change from a 20€ note and reflect on how that would happen in England too.

With my surname we have to have a rest stay in Padrón and among other delights we find our first pilgrims' laundrette. Pleased to see that we don't need soap powder as it is included automatically but surprised to find that it also includes disinfectant.

Onward the delights continue. We mix it with a group of Spanish squaddies on their first route march who struggle to keep pace with us despite support from their own ambulance crew and encouragement from a military



St James's boat above fountain in Padrón

police unit. We paid the price for our sport and walked past our bed for the night so had to double back 2 km. Poetic justice perhaps? As we close in on Santiago we find we are walking in a group of like minded souls, quiet after a simple greeting and maybe a comment about the weather.

We didn't go straight into the cathedral and I have no idea why not. Later I saw that you can't take your rucksack in but that wasn't the reason.

Entering the cathedral is a personal experience different for all and we reflect on the true meaning of 'Pilgrimage'. It is a word that like so many others in the language has become over used. I know people for whom the Sunday visit to the pub is referred to as 'the pilgrimage' and for others it is a visit to

a football stadium. Is it a pilgrimage if you are part of a coach tour? What if your luggage is carried by taxi? What if you use hotels and not refuges, what if you sleep under those stars? I came to a simple conclusion; a pilgrimage is an experience that brings you to tears of emotion. On my first camino venture the tears were from exhaustion. As for this trip, well I'd have to get to know you better before I told you that.

So now the practical bits:

Town	Accommodation	Opinion
Barcelos	Hotel Bagdiera	Perfect location on the market square
Quintiaes	Casa dos Assentos	A homely guest house with 2 swimming pools and good simple food.
Facha	Casa das Torres de Facha	A manor house with self-catering cottages.
Valença	Hotel Lara	Modern hotel in a perfect location overlooking the old town. Breakfast from very early.
Porriño	Hotel Internacional	About 98K from Santiago! Perfect hospitality.
Redondela	Hotel Antolin	Walk on to this hotel on the beach. Lots of terraces to air your boots. Amazing sea food.
Pontevedra	Parador Casa del Baron	I studied in Pontevedra and was always told this Parador was noisy – they were right. Wooden floors.
Barro	Pension Meli	Don't.
Caldas de Reis	Hotel Balneario Acuña	A spa hotel. They even have special packages for pilgrims. Ease your aching back and feet here.
Padron	Hotel Monumento du Pazo de Lestrove	Was the Bishop of Santiago's summer palace, now a fabulous place to stay.
Teo	Parada de Francos	Lovely B and B in small hamlet. Restaurant over the road is not as good as they think it is.

The Camino: Still the same ageless appeal in a changing world?

Hugh Lockhart

Are bedbugs still a bane of pilgrims? Possibly, but according to a recent survey, it is the mobile phones ringing in the night which irritate most modern pilgrims. Oh, and of course those other traditional fears and dislikes of fierce dogs and litter along the Way.

The survey was commissioned by the Confraternity of St James (CSJ) and the Way of St Andrews, and the full results can be seen on the website. But below are some musings on the results.

In a changing and more secular world the survey revealed the continuing attraction of the Camino. Over fifty per cent of pilgrims still have the confidence to come alone, and a significant majority put personal spiritual development, visiting churches and attending services very high, alongside the simple secular enjoyment of fresh air and exercise.

Unsurprisingly, one hundred per cent of respondents favoured country paths and grassy tracks, and over fifty per cent stated a particular aversion to tarmac. Over fifty per cent keep in touch with people they met along the way; and for every ten who go on the camino nine return or intend to do it again. This latter kind of statistic, a “Buy again” 90% rate, is the stuff any soft drink or other food manufacturer would kill for.

But as modern day pilgrims evolve, so must the camino. Pilgrim cyclists are up to eleven per cent of all pilgrims – and considered aggravating for those who want the simple peace of walking. Twenty per cent are now coming as families, so the three or even four generation group may soon be commonplace. Perhaps surprisingly, the refugio, with its mixed dormitory and community living is losing out to the rising supply of “room with ensuite”. The daily cost of pilgrimage is rising too. The lowest quoted was 8€ a day – which (including wine) was the norm not so long ago – but this has risen to between 20€ and 40€. A few weeks on the camino is no longer an option for the unemployed or skint, a prominent category of should-be pilgrims.

Perhaps it should not come as a great surprise that fifty per cent stated how much they enjoyed the study of the geology as they passed through the spectacular and varied landscape on their daily journey.

Behold a question of the moment, “Is the Camino unique, and should it remain so?” Is it like a visit to Naples or opera at Glyndebourne, or can much of the experience be reproduced elsewhere? And indeed, would pilgrims want to go “elsewhere”, for instance to Scotland where revived pilgrim ways to St Andrews have been nicknamed “The Little Camino”? “Yes” was the response of three out of four surveyed. “Yes”, they would like to do pilgrimage in the UK. Or was it a “Yes, maybe” and “That depends”? Is it realistic to expect that in ten or fifteen years time over 200,000 people will come from all over the world to savour the joy of the road and visit shrines from Land’s End to John O’Groats? We do not of course have the guaranteed sun, but nor do we have the blistering heat; our walking season is longer; easily running from March to December, and we can provide the same varied scenery, the historic places to visit and support of good public services. Add the people, the camaraderie along the way and Bang! – another Camino. But “The Camino” has that established infrastructure of sign-posted roads, places to stay and the great Compostela recognition of achievement, which along with generous publicity brings pilgrims in great numbers from all over the world.

In Britain there remains a lot to do particularly on the accommodation side where B&Bs are increasingly going after better-off travellers. “Let them camp” is a languid injunction only likely to be obeyed by a mere twelve per cent of pilgrims. And, as for information, go to your local UK tourist office and staff will expertly help you fulfil your dream of golf, sailing or shoveha’penny, but pilgrimage... no chance!

For the CSJ the survey brings a double pat on the back. It is welcome news that over fifty per cent want to help out in a *refugio* but even more, that over eighty per cent use the CSJ for pilgrimage planning. The CSJ is thus proved to be an important resource for all pilgrims in the UK, but especially for those newcomers, probably on their own, eager but nervous, and hesitant to take that great lifetime step, and go on the Camino for the first time.

RESULTS OF HUGH LOCKHART’S SURVEY:

Q1. When you first did the camino what age were you?

Average 50. Less than 20% above 60.

Q2. For most of the time did you travel alone, with family, with a friend or in a group?

56% alone, 22% as family, 22% as group.

Q3. Did you walk or cycle, or other?

89% Walk, 11% cycle.

Q4. What was your average daily expenditure?

The lowest was €8 and the highest €120. The majority of between €20 and €40 a day.

Q5. How many days/weeks on the camino?

The longest was 112 days and the shortest one week. The most popular lengths were 1 week, about 20%, and 5 weeks, about 30%.

Q6. Were you on holiday, unemployed or retired?

Over 50% were on holiday and 25% were retired.

Q7. Have you kept in touch with any people you met?

Over 50% have kept in touch with people they'd met along the way.

Q8. How many times have you been back on the camino?

Over 70% had been on the Camino more than once.

Q9. Do you go on other pilgrim routes?

Over 40% use other pilgrim routes?

Q10. What were your motives for doing the camino?

The majority, 75% to 85%, quoted religious, cultural and personal spiritual reasons for going on the Camino. Surprisingly, less than 10% put green issues as important.

Q11. How did you get ready for the camino ?

80% consulted CSJ and got fit; 30% made a short pilgrimage nearer home.

Q12. As a result of your experience do you intend to go on camino again?

The majority, 90% wanted to repeat the experience. Interestingly, 70% wanted to pilgrimages in the UK; 7% said they would do the camino, and another 7% never again.

Q13. What did you enjoy seeing/visiting/experiencing?

100% unanimous enjoyment of fresh air and exercise. About 90%, church services and sites of cultural, religious significance. Interestingly, 50% showed an interest in geology.

Q14. What are your preferred road surfaces?

100% in favour of country paths and grassy tracks. 50% expressed aversion to tarmac.

Q15. What types of accommodation do you favour?

60% prefer room with en-suite bathroom. 35-40% like the hostel-

class dormitory, generally in favour of mixed rather than single sex accommodation. 12% like camping.

Q16. What general features of a pilgrimage route are important to you?

Over 75% enjoy meeting other pilgrims along the way. Majority in favour of traffic free, scenic, easy-to-follow route and good food and drink along the way. Surprisingly low appeal of access to health services (15%) and public transport (6%).

Q17. What else was important?

Friendliness and support of locals. Combination of solitude and camaraderie. Self-discovery which occurs along the way.

Q18. On arrival at Santiago what was important?

80% in favour of recognition of achievement, religious service, and of course, food and drink. 80% against a tour of the city or some theatrical event.

Q19. How would you like to help the camino?

50% prepared to help in a hostel.

Q20. What were your best experiences etc?

- reconnecting with something deeper and more natural
- gaining strength to go back to real life
- coming to terms with some sadness
- the joys of both solitude and camaraderie

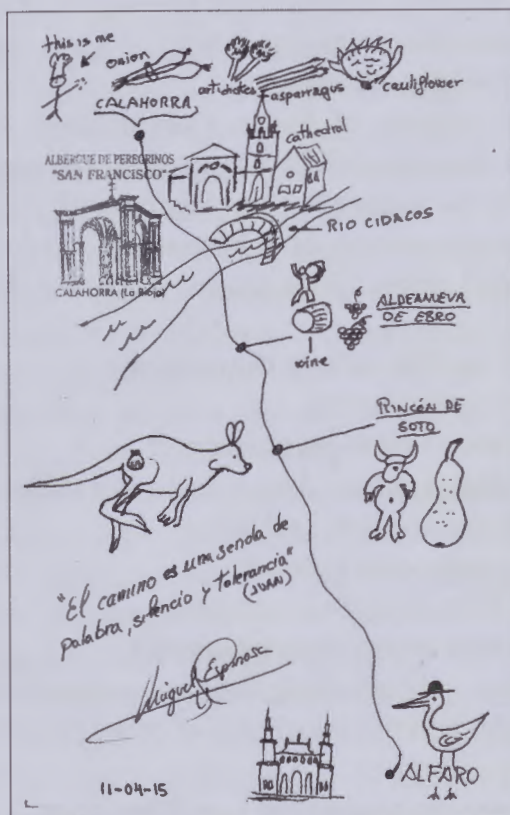
Q21. What were your worst experiences etc?

Macro: Fierce dogs, rubbish along the way, and rain. Micro: Mobile phones in the night, and the selfishness of other pilgrims in pursuit of creature comforts.

Q22. Most of those who responded were Christian.

Mapping the Way of St Ignatius with Homer (Simpson)

Seán Deany



Diagram

From early April to late June in 2015 I embarked on an ambitious pilgrimage halfway across Europe – taking in the recently established Ignatius Way which runs from the birthplace of Saint Ignatius of Loyola in the Basque Country to Manresa in Catalonia. This predominantly walking pilgrimage in its entirety covered some 1115 km on foot along Spain’s *Camino Francés*, *Camino del Ebro* and *Camí de Sant Jaume*, as well as France’s *Chemin des Piémont*, *Chemin d’Arles* and *Via Domitia* before crossing the Col de Montgenèvre en route to Turin along a branch of the *Via Francigena*. It is clear that this journey was not towards Santiago as such, but instead took into account my long term goals of eventually reaching Jerusalem and to an extent was

closely following in the footsteps of Saint Ignatius – founder of the Jesuit Order.

This peregrination got me as far as Turin and unfortunately two days after the Shroud had been packed away. An accident on Mt. Montserrat, where I broke a tendon on my right ankle, only one third of the way through my anticipated journey, severely hindered ambitions to do most of the way on foot. However what better place to have an accident but in the footsteps of Saint Ignatius, where I was able to make seven day convalescence at the famous *La Cova de Sant Ignasi* in Manresa despite a 300€ hospital fee for my ailment. Manresa is important as it is where St Ignatius famously wrote his *Spiritual Exercises*.

Saint Ignatius, Saint James the Great, Saint Roch and Saint Peter became my patron saints along this arduous journey. This said, one more patron should be added to this long list – Homer Simpson!

With the kind assistance from strangers met along the way I incorporated into this journey a visual project first considered on my 2008/09 bicycle pilgrimage (see Bulletin No.113 – March 2011). This was, each and every day of my peregrination, to ask a stranger, fellow pilgrim etc. to draw for me a small map showing the way to my next destination. Maintaining my vigilance for this project to be as seamless as possible from start to finish, I was drawn closer towards the people of the lands I was to cross each day.

Therefore on the morning of my departure from Melbourne, stepping into my favourite bookstore, I saw the motivator on the specials rack – the Simpsons Moleskine sketchbook. The internationally recognisable Homer would be a good device to break the language barrier and to achieve input from strangers met along the way.

A picture is worth a 1000 words, but from my point of view a map says a whole lot more. At the pilgrims' office at Loyola on the 1st April my first map was put down on paper, crucially showing where I was and where I hoped to be heading. So there the mapping project was born.

There would only be one basic set of rules for this linear cartographic experiment. The map should illustrate a given route to the place I was intending to walk to that day and was restricted to one facing page. Other than this the font of local knowledge had the freedom to illustrate or draw in whichever way they pleased. I gave myself some strict rules also – to inform them that I was on

a pilgrimage and that the cartographer had to make do with their own devices. Many of the 65 maps achieved during the course of my 3 months' journey were deliberately not made in my presence. Directing their map making would be intrusive, so I trusted the person drawing a map to do so in their own time, taking care of my Simpsons Moleskine for even up to an evening, with no distractions. As the number of maps in my sketchbook increased they actually improved, with a couple of earlier renditions adding to the motivation.

Nonetheless there were wildly varying standards in map making and from people of all ages too. In a small bar in Fuente del Ebro an old man named Jesus shakily showed me the way to Venta Santa Lucia with his phone number included. That same day and at destination's end nine year old Miguel beautifully but cautiously has illustrated that I indeed have a highway to follow to Bujaraloz. Manager and chef Miguel Espinosa of the *Albergue de Peregrinos: San Francisco* in Calahorra includes himself, the rare fresh vegetables I consumed and myself as a kangaroo en route to Alfaro, famous for its storks (pictured). Some of the best illustrative maps were executed by the kind staff of the many tourist information offices passed on the way. The unexpected request from an Australian pilgrim took them away from the often banal demands made from tourists or pilgrims alike.

One of the best renditions along the way (and for my sake early on into the project) came from the 18-year-old Basque – Uxue of Laguardia. Here she, in good taste, illustrated her love of good wine production, for I was about to step foot into the La Rioja region of Spain. My host for two nights in Zaragoza, Alejandro, shared my interest in bicycle touring, but clearly illustrated me complete with the *Carrix* cart I pulled from journey's start to end. This walking aid became even more important after my accident. However my journey slowed down and other means of transport were periodically required from then on. This said, the near daily map-making continued across France and into Italy. In Andorra an aspiring opera singer illustrated for me that pocket-sized country's tiny Romanesque churches. At another point along the way and seeking water, tired out with the heat and unable to find accommodation, I was kindly given shelter in a garage for the night. However Paul-Louis's wife upgraded my lodgings from the garage to a queen sized bed and dinner and the following day a fine breakfast laid out on the table. His map includes the family cats Minette and Jacob – St James in disguise dare I say. Towards journey's end I was accompanied by a friend – Aurelie

- whom I met at the ancient Ganagobie Monastery. Aurelie, who had only days before broken off with her partner of six years, even apologises on her map that she was so sad during those rest days spent with her in the French Alps.

An important point was that I asked each person when possible to please sign and date their renditions. 65 maps later I would like to send my sincere thanks to all for their good work and kind assistance. These were not merely illustrative maps, but indeed had their useful function showing me the way during my peregrinations of 2015. Lastly, my thanks should go out to Homer Simpson for his ability to break the ice in so many situations encountered.

For those of you who may wish to view a large selection of these maps please go to **caminoaustralia.blogspot.com.au** and click on *Following in the Footsteps of St Ignatius - My Camino Mapping Project 2015*.

Our Albergues Gaucelmo and San Martín in Miraz and Rabanal

Julie Davies and Priscilla White

The 2016 pilgrim season is now well under way and the CSJ Hospitaleros training days for both *albergues* have already been conducted. It is crucial to the well running of the albergues that prospective *hospitaleros* attend these days.

The Working Party to open up Rabanal after the winter consists of Liz and Dick Crean, Paul Murray and Peter Garlick, and we can happily report that the 2016 rota for *Refugio Gaucelmo* is now complete with a healthy reserve list. There are 14 tours of duties starting from the 31st March and finishing on 1st November with 37 volunteers altogether. The *hospitaleros* at Gaucelmo will come from six different countries, with 26 experienced *hospitaleros* and eleven “first timers”. However, we will start the season at Gaucelmo without a Property Co-ordinator, so if anyone is interested in taking on this role please contact Dick Crean, or the CSJ Office, or anyone on the Gaucelmo Committee.

The albergue in Miraz will be opened for pilgrims on the 6th April and will close the 3rd November. There will be forty-two *hospitaleros* from seven countries representing 15 tours of duty while the well-being of the building and its ongoing maintenance will be lovingly tendered and its care co-ordinated by Ted and Avril Jones while the *huerta* will be looked after by Ken Spittal during the summer. Finally this year the Miraz committee is in a position to commission improvements in the kitchen, the finishing off of the front of the building, consisting of improving the drainage on the patio, putting in place an artistic fence and finally, installing on an outside wall, a tiled picture of the new patron of the albergue – suggested by the Bishop of Lugo – and readily adopted by all, of San Martín. See advertisement in this Bulletin in regards to these artistic endeavours.

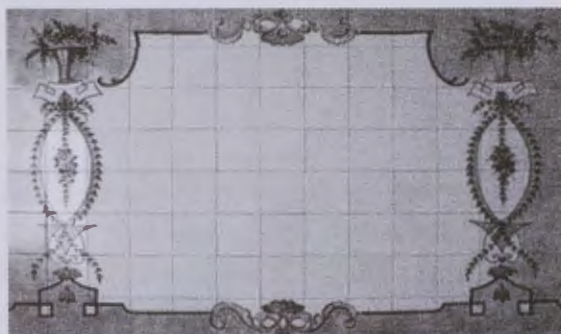
The rota for next year, 2017, is already filling up for Rabanal and the Miraz list will also start to fill up. If anyone is anxious to do a specific tour of duty next year, please put in an early request to the specific albergue Hospitaleros Co-ordinator. Meanwhile, there are still several weeks in the pilgrim season that could benefit from sponsorship – so please do not hesitate to send in your contributions which significantly help us to run the *albergues*.

Finally, as you already know this year marks 25 years of Gaucelmo's opening. Festivities will be held in July, and it will be a celebratory time for all. More information about the event will be available on the CSJ website.

Would you like to help the Albergue San Martín in Miraz to install a new artistic iron railing fence in place of this routine one and commission a tiled picture of St Martin for the entry porch instead of just a series of blank tiles?



If so, you may send your contributions towards these projects to the The Miraz Committee c/o CSJ Office, 27 Blackfriars Rd, London SE1 8NY, indicating that your donation is towards the Miraz Project.



Book Reviews

My Camino Amigo by John Cowell, 2015, Rossendale Bks Pbl; ISBN 9781326293536, 200pp, £7.00

This book contains a short recollection of various pilgrimages by the author John (Juanito) in the company of his friend Fred (Federico), an indefatigable volunteer for CAFOD (Catholic Agency for Overseas Development).

The two met at Spanish evening classes, and even embarked on a university course such was their enthusiasm, so both became proficient Spanish speakers. During their studies and investigations of Spanish legends and traditions they came across the history of the Camino, and both decided they would like to try it some time, though it seems that neither had any previous walking experience. They adopted the Spanish versions of their names and started walking the various sections of the Camino Francés each year, with the purpose of raising funds for CAFOD, and later on for street children in Brazil.

This is an entertaining read and one learns much about the author's Camino Amigo Fred, who was such an avid volunteer, and who gave John the strong desire to help him. During a holiday in Spain one year they meet a pilgrim who has just completed the Camino, who tries to describe the spirit and feeling there to them, but he says you really have to do it to experience this. He inspires them in their resolve to undertake the pilgrimage on their next visit to Spain, and from then on many more are to follow.

The book is written assuming readers are not familiar with the Camino, and information on it is given at the beginning through a talk Federico is giving to a group of CAFOD employees/supporters whom he plans to lead on pilgrimage after some years of following the Camino. The description at the beginning of their various escapades and encounters very much conjure up the spirit of the Camino, with a couple of "miracles of St. James" on the way.

It was surprising to read that they were in Rabanal and tried without success to stay at the monastery, which was full; but no mention was made of Refugio Gaucelmo. Maybe it was closed season there?

The photos are good and very characteristic (maybe a bit small) and a map of the camino would have been useful to follow the various sections as they progressed (maybe on p.54, mainly blank. Also p.69 and top of p.80 photos are duplicates.)

When finally the two decide that maybe eight times along the Camino was enough, and having reached Santiago, Fred prepares to embark on a new project in England by bicycle for further fundraising. John is full of admiration for his friend's dedication, and ends saying, "I feel honoured to have him as my friend."

Note: By the way, my curiosity was aroused about the Roman bridge which they found near Estella, and its replacement by a modern one some years later. It seemed scarcely believable this could happen in Spain – would it have been erected again somewhere else?

LIZ KEAY

Pilgrim guide to Scotland by Donald Smith, 2015, Edinburgh, Saint Andrew Press, ISBN: 978-0-86153-862-1. £14.99

Making a major pilgrimage, such as to Santiago de Compostela, is something that not everyone can easily aspire to, so it is good to be able to recommend a book which offers possibilities for spiritually motivated pilgrimage nearer to home.

The Christian faith first arrived in my homeland – what we now call Scotland – through the efforts of travelling missionaries, mostly from Ireland. One of the earliest was Ninian who founded an abbey at Whithorn in the south west, some 1500 years ago. Among the pioneers were several well-known saints – Kentigern or Mungo, Columba and Cuthbert. Others, such as Moluag, Enoch, Serf, are more obscure. But all have left their traces on the Scottish landscape in ancient ruins, place names, religious foundations and stories. Some of the saints have never been officially canonised by the Vatican, but that does not detract from their achievements nor their power to speak to us from the distant past.

I was struck by the author's statement in his introduction that, in an age which is sceptical of God and other concepts of the divine, it is good remind ourselves that the early Celtic saints were also aware of the absence of God while somehow sensing God's presence vividly in the natural world. Modern pilgrimage recognises this elusiveness of God, acknowledging that, in the rhythm and discipline of being a pilgrim, unexpected light or insight can emerge. He writes: 'Pilgrimage nurtures an openness to the divine in everything.'

To help the reader engage with Scotland's spiritual heritage, the author suggests fourteen themed pilgrim routes, each named after a particular saint or group of saints. Between them the routes cover most parts of the

country. For example, the *St Magnus Pilgrim Route* covers Orkney and Shetland, *St Blane and St Kessog* the Trossachs area, the *St Bea and St Baldred* route is in East Lothian and the Borders, and the *St Mungo and St Cuthbert* routes stray across into northern England and Wales,

Each route has a chapter devoted to it with a map, prayers, stories and meditations, all new translations or adaptations by the author from original sources or traditional writings. The stages are described with topographical and historical information and chapters are peppered with anecdotes and legends about the places and their saints. The author has visited every site mentioned in the book, a task which I understand took many years to complete.

There is a useful, brief introduction to Scottish religious history, some comments and profound reflections on the why and how of making a pilgrimage, and a reading list for those who want to explore the source documents.

You could use the book to refresh your memory about historic religious sites throughout Scotland, and learn about some of our less familiar saints. You could use it to help plan a personal pilgrimage whether on foot, bicycle, car or public transport, but you will need to turn to other sources, such as maps, guide books, tourist organisations and the Internet for detailed route planning and accommodation options. I found *Pilgrim guide to Scotland* very readable, with its balance of information, story, and spirituality. The fact that St James is nowhere mentioned is more than made up for by the rich and delightful variety of Scotland's local saints.

Donald Smith is a writer and founder of the Scottish Storytelling Centre.

ANDREW BETHUNE

Members' Pages

From David Martinson

Many Members walking the Camino Francés will have seen the inscription on the arch over the entrance to the Los Arcos burial ground: IO FUI LO QUE TU ES TU ERES LO QUE IO SOY. By chance I discovered that in the graveyard of St Michael's church in the village of Owermoigne in Dorset, there is buried under a box tomb the remains of William Wallis who died on 21 March 1651. An epitaph is inscribed on one of the side panels of his tomb which concludes with the words: I WAS AS THOU ART THOU SHALT BE AS I AM.

These words translate verbatim the inscription on the Los Arcos arch. Assuming neither admonishment is a copy of the other, can anyone suggest a common source?

From a BBC radio listener

There will be meetings around Ireland (North and South) in March and April to help prepare pilgrims for their caminos. At that time there will be the official Irish Pilgrim Passports to obtain, and books by John Brierley, and pilgrim badges and our latest *Newsletter*. For more information please contact Betty Tuite, Office Secretary, Camino Society Ireland Ltd; 36 Upper, Baggot Street, Dublin 4, Ireland Telephone: 085 7819088 ; www.caminosociety.ie

From Julie-Ann Milne in Australia

I am the *hospitalero* trainer in Australia; and I have just been to Melbourne for the latest training weekend. That was also the final one for the immediate future. I usually conduct training in January/February so look out for training dates in the autumn. Included in the *hospitalero* information on the CSJ website is my email address and there is also a link to the Pilgrims in Sydney website which is where I post the dates once training has been scheduled. Regards, Julie-Ann Milne

NB: Julie-Ann is one of a number of splendid Australians who are also members of the CSJ and who work as *hospitaleros* in Spain!

From Eivind Luthen – in Norway

Want to sail a pilgrim-ship? This summer we will be off again for two weeks, sailing with pilgrims from Selja to Trondheim, once an important place of pilgrimage. This is a “non for profit enterprise”, organized by the Confraternity of St James, Norway. Last summer we had pilgrims from US, Belgium, England, Denmark, and Luxembourg going with us. The ship is 70 feet long, beautifully restored, and we can take 20 people with us. If interested please send us an email to: pilgrim@pilgrim.no Greetings from the Pilgrims Office, Oslo.



Pilgrim ship

From the Secretary's Notebook

In the office we are gearing up sharply for a busy season ahead – if interest in our concertina-style Pilgrim Record is anything to go by. Last week alone, we despatched some 50 copies, bringing to over 1,600 the number issued since the new Record was launched last summer. Earlier this month, our Practical Pilgrim Day in London was an unexpected sell-out too.

It is therefore with relief and gratitude that a number of you have signed up to our 2016 Volunteer Programme to help the small office team meet the growing demand for the CSJ's services. And not just from the UK – but from across the English-speaking world.

Rose Creeser is doing a sterling job managing our online shop on a part-time basis; Christine Pleasants continues to provide excellent continuity with admin on a Tuesday. But change is afoot again as I must, with regret, step aside as Secretary (because of the pressure of another commitment) and hand over the reins to younger blood in the shape of Freddy Bowen.

Freddy previously held a general managerial position for a network of education centres. He has a degree in Spanish and French and has lived for a year in Granada, Spain. In his spare time, he is keenly involved in amateur theatre productions in South West London. I hope you will give him your kind support in his new role at the CSJ.

My thanks and best wishes go to you all for the rest of 2016. And I hope our paths will cross again at a future CSJ event.

Jean Murray

In other news:

Sponsor-a-Week

We have a few weeks still available for the Sponsor-a-Week scheme at the CSJ's refuges at Miraz and Gaucelmo. By donating £50 you are contributing to the running costs of the refuge for a week. (Or share a week for £25). You will receive a letter from the hospitaleros telling you about events in a week of your choice (perhaps a birthday or anniversary?). To donate, or for more information, please contact Paul Murray (mutil1@hotmail.co.uk) for Gaucelmo or Priscilla White (priscilla@pawwhite.co.uk) for Miraz.

New Member Details

In order to protect the privacy of our members, we are no longer printing details of new members at the back of the Bulletin. However, please ask the Membership Secretary (Alison.thorp@virgin.net) if you wish us to contact other members in your area on your behalf.

Membership Update

In the five months to the end of February 2016, we have enrolled 166 new members in the following areas:-

UK – East Anglia 8, Home Counties North 22, Home Counties South 20, London 16, Midlands 24, North 14, Scotland 7, South 10, South West 9, Wales 5.

Europe 5; Rest of the World – Australia 5, Canada 3, New Zealand 3, USA 15.

Treasurer's Update

As mentioned at the AGM, the accounts for the year ended 30th September had not been inspected. Messrs Lang – Chartered Accountants of Truro – were appointed and have completed the independent inspection. Consequently, they are able to sign the certificate on page 8 of the accounts.

This firm came recommended as a specialist in charity accounting, Truro Cathedral being one of their clients. The fee was a modest £600 plus VAT.

If any member would like a final copy of the signed accounts, please let the office know.

The way in which the accounts are presented is changing and you will see some differences in the accounts for the year ended 30th September 2016. This is as a result of the issue of new accounting standards – perhaps more important for the large international charities but still applicable to the CSJ!

CSJ Events

Saturday 23 April 2016

Office Open Day – for enquiries, bookshop and use of the library – at 27 Blackfriars Road, SE1 8NY from 10.30 am to 3.30 pm. It would be helpful if you could email office@csj.org.uk or phone 020 7928 9988 if you plan to visit us.

Saturday 2 July 2016

Hospitaleros Preparation Day (Miraz).

Friday 8 – Sunday 10 July 2016

25th Anniversary Celebrations of Refugio Gaucelmo in Rabanal.

Saturday 23 July 2016

St James's Day event to mark the anniversary on 25 July. Please see our website for further details in due course.

Friday 26 – Monday 29 August 2016

Greenbelt Festival, Boughton House, near Kettering, Northamptonshire. The CSJ will once again be hosting a stand at this annual festival of arts, faith and justice. For more information on the event, please see: www.greenbelt.org.uk

Saturday 29 October 2016

Returned Pilgrims' Day, St James's Church, Reading.

Other Events

Tuesday 5 April 2016

Private View at 6.30 pm of the art exhibition 'On St Michael's Way' at the 12 Star Gallery, Europe House, London SW1P 3EU. Featuring works by Cornwall-based artists with an interest in landscape, ritual and faith – and the 12.5 mile walking route across the peninsula from Lelant to Marazion and St Michael's Mount. The exhibition continues until 15 April in London. For more information and updates: <http://stmichaelsway.net>

Sunday 10 April 2016

The Ultraia Mancunia regional group will hold a meeting on 10 April with a visit to Gorton Monastery, Manchester. For further information, please contact Ned Spencer on **07867 802744**.

Sunday 24 April 2016

Screening of award-winning documentary 'Walking the Camino: Six Ways to Santiago': 1 pm, Dukes at Komedia, Brighton. Please note that 25 tickets need to be purchased by 17 April for this screening to take place. For more information, contact Adam Wells: info@discoverthecamino.com.

Tuesday 19 – Friday 22 July 2016

Annual summer course at the University of Santiago de Compostela: 'La Hospitalidad en el Camino de Santiago'. For more information, email the course secretary, Paula Pita Galán, at secretaria.leccionesjacobeas@gmail.com.

Local Group Contacts

Bristol and South-West	Liz Crean	thecreans@btinternet.com 0117 973 4502
Cambridge Norwich/ E Anglia	Jo Wibberley Diana Alston	wibs.anjo@uwclub.net dalston999@gmail.com
Wessex	Carole Vose	carolevose@btinternet.com
West Midlands	Dave Jones	d-jones56@sky.com 077132 49661
Devon	Valerie Brighton	camigos@countysidematters.org.uk

Confraternity of Saint James

Registered Charity number 1091140
Company limited by guarantee, registered in England & Wales, number 4096721

Information and Publications available from Registered Office:

27 Blackfriars Road, LONDON SE1 8NY

Usual opening hours Thursday 11 am to 3 pm (other times by appointment)

Telephone (020) 7928 9988 email office@csj.org.uk website www.csj.org.uk

Honorary President H E The Spanish Ambassador

Secretary Jean Marray
27 Blackfriars Road, LONDON SE1 8NY

Pilgrim Record Secretary *Please apply with SAE (quoting membership number) to:*
Stan Haworth, 45 Finedon Road, Irthlingborough, NN9 5TY

Committee 2016

Charity Trustees and Company Directors

Chairman Colin Jones, 13 Dunsley Drive, Wordsley, STOURBRIDGE, West
Midlands DY8 5RA pacharan@btinternet.com

Vice-Chairman Gosia Brykczynska, 148 Carlyle Road, LONDON W5 4BJ
gosia.brykczynska@talktalk.net

Other Members Dick Crean, Robin Dorkings,
Richard Jefferies, Mary Moseley,
Tony Ward, Priscilla White

Rabanal Committee

Chairman Dick Crean, Balcony Flat, 30 Cornwallis Crescent, BRISTOL BS8 4PH
thecreans@btinternet.com

Rabanal Committee Members

Dick Crean (Chair), Michael Krier (Deputy Chair), David Arthur
(Premises Co-ordinator), Julie Davies (Hospitalero Co-ordinator),
David Garcia (Hospitalero Training), Maggie Gardner,
Peter Garlick, Paul Murray (CSJ de Ponferrada Secretary)
Laurie Dennett

Other Officers

Membership Secretary Alison Thorp alison.thorp@virgin.net
Treasurer Tony Ward, Syracuse, St. Neot, Cornwall PL14 6NJ
and Company Secretary Work (01579) 320480 mail@tonyward.biz
Librarian Margaret Simonot simonot.m@gmail.com
Website Manager TBA
Slide Librarian John Hatfield, 9 Vicary Way, MAIDSTONE, Kent ME16 0EJ
(01622) 757814

*Members wishing to borrow slides should make their selections
from the catalogue four weeks in advance.*

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