



Confraternity of Saint James

Bulletin



September 2009

No 107

About the *Bulletin*

ISSN 1755-1617

Editor	Gosia Brykczynska
Proofreader	John Revell
Production Editor	James Hatts
Production Coordinator	Marion Marples

The *Bulletin* is published quarterly in March, June, September and December. The deadline for copy is the beginning of the preceding month.

Contributions for the *Bulletin* are welcomed from members – please contact the editor via the office (see back cover for details).

Please send copy by email to office@csj.org.uk and a hard copy by post if possible. Hard copy alone will necessitate retyping and delays will occur.

If you send an attachment please make sure that it contains the title of the article and the author's name.

Please present your copy as simply as possible. Please take care with the spelling of personal and place names and ensure that accents are included correctly.

For further guidance email the office for a style guide.



Confraternity of Saint James

Bulletin

107

September 2009

- 2 **Editorial**
Gosia Brykczyńska
- 4 **Santiago beyond the Saint**
Chris Masters
- 8 **Notes on a Pilgrimage**
Simon Wethered
- 11 **A diabetic walks the camino**
James Windle
- 14 **The camino, the camera and I**
Philip Wren
- 16 **Camino tale – the parting gift**
Colin Hudson
- 17 **Staying with the road**
Gareth Thomas
- 21 **Nürnberg to Konstanz**
Christine Battye
- 23 **An evening of Pilgrim Music**
Roger Davies
- 24 **Semana santa on the camino**
Paul Dignam
- 29 **Refugio Gaucelmo News**
Graham Scholes
- 31 **Members' Pages**
- 35 **Book Reviews**
- 38 **From the Secretary's Notebook**
Marion Marples
- 43 **CSJ Events**
- 45 **New Members**

Editorial

Gosia Brykczyńska

I don't know how it is for other pilgrims but for me this summer just seemed to have sped by – no sooner started than already finished. Nor was the weather helpful being neither warm or summer-like but prematurely autumnal and often quite cold. I had however planted some sunflower seeds early in April and painstakingly nursed them on, transplanting them out into my sunny front garden in May and watching them grow and grow – like a child in awe of a prize runner bean. I was fascinated and content. My sunflowers were planted to remind me of the *tournesols* I encountered on the Arles route; living souvenirs of one of the more eventful episodes in my life.

Meanwhile, since *Bulletin* 106 the CSJ has celebrated with its members for the twenty-sixth time the feast of Saint James! This year the confraternity made a weekend pilgrimage along the Pilgrim Way from Charing to Canterbury. In spite of the by now familiar chequered weather – the pilgrimage was a resounding success. There was the joy at renewing friendships and meeting new members, culminating at a concert recital delivered by Dr Mary Remnant with singing by the Confraternity choir in the crypt of Canterbury Cathedral. Not only was St James's Day celebrated in style in the cathedral with the concert in the evening but even the two horses who accompanied the pilgrims were blessed and canonically certified (yet again) as great-friends-of-pilgrims. As Mefo Phillips commented, they must be the most blessed animals in England, since wherever they wander along pilgrim paths – they are promptly blessed. Now, as we all know, the patron saint of horses is Saint Eligius (Eloi), an early Gallo-Roman saint connected with many places along the Arles route. There are also additional patron saints of horses, such as St George – to the delight of English folk - and saints Leonard of Noblat and Martin of Tours – the latter two also being connected with pilgrim stops along the Vézelay and Paris routes to Santiago. Obviously, horses are well-connected pilgrims! The CSJ book shop is currently selling *Horseshoes and Holy Water* (£7.99) by Mefo about her pilgrim horses and the adventures they have had together along the camino and she is currently writing an account of her pilgrimage to Rome.



In this autumn's *Bulletin* we have a range of articles: - encouragement from James Windle, a diabetic pilgrim who having taken due care proceeded to undertake the pilgrimage and is now the better for it; observations by Chris Masters concerning the anthropology and cultural sociology of pilgrimage; fascinating personal recollections of Gareth Thomas's pilgrimages in times past in a distant Spain; Philip Wren's philosophical account of the trials and tribulations of a pilgrim camera – never an easy existence if Philip's self-confessed abuse of his camera is to be believed; a poetically condensed pilgrimage experience from Simon Wethered; an account of walking with Gerhilde Fleischer in Germany; and an account of combining the religious practices of Holy Week (Semana Santa) with walking the camino; finally a musical interlude at Rabanal by Roger Davies, concluding with a poem by Colin Hudson.

Likewise my sunflowers remind me at very personal and private level about my pilgrimage in the South of France – even if the whole of my street can also enjoy them and comment to me on their beauty – so in our private recollections of our pilgrimages we can still publically share our joy with others, especially with other pilgrims, through the *Bulletin* and at CSJ events where

*...our time together though will remain
woven into a rich memory cloak.*

Santiago de Compostela beyond the Saint

Chris Masters

I came back to Santiago, seven years after my first visit, this time not on a bicycle, but with indecent haste by aeroplane, for time was limited and the occasion was a family rendezvous with relatives from distant places. Our interests in Santiago were varied but we had a common reason for being there, one of family, brothers, sisters, nephews, nieces, wives and husbands. I wondered if this company of varying intellects and interests would help enliven my experience of the place, for our ideas are often further developed by those with whom we socialise. I thought that this time I might find something behind the saint, another meaning beyond his time and place. The first time, on pilgrimage, I imagined I would perhaps find out more about myself, make a journey into my cultural past, discover some mysterious connection (my Somerset forebears carried the surname of James after all). I was not disappointed but at the same time a real sense of connection inevitably eluded me. This time I would look at it in a different way.

The introduction to Santiago was abrupt, for two hours after leaving London I had arrived; the last time it had taken weeks. Instead of pleasurable toil I was suddenly there, as if I had stepped from a time machine.

So, time was compressed, and time was what interested me. For I intended to go beyond the saint, beyond his time. I knew that Galicia was a Celtic place; I'd read somewhere that the Celtic church had first been established at Bretona, at the head of the Minho river. I felt that I'd entered Galicia on the first occasion when I'd crossed the mountains at O Cebreiro, yet when I looked at the map I realised Galicia was largely defined by the Minho, which flowed from the northeast corner to the southwest, and Bretona was symbolic because it was where the Minho started. Yet Santiago is at Galicia's heart, and the old city is the jewel in that heart, and Santiago occupies a special place in the Christian pilgrim world. Jerusalem represents the origins, the focal point of Middle Eastern desert monotheism; Rome represents the substantiation and institutionalisation of that religion;

Santiago is the westward projection, romantic and captivating because it could be reached by following the setting sun, and once the sun had set, the Milky Way.

If history is what interests us then we choose a starting point or date determined by the time we have available to us for study, not discarding or ignoring what went before that starting point, but relegating it temporarily to the sidelines. If religion is what interests us then we tend to do the same, but are perhaps more inclined to discard what went before, because we are looking for a truth, and would like to believe that the truth was suddenly revealed by one man or at one point in time. Yet sacred places rarely suddenly become so, and often have a much more profound past, and have been borrowed by different groups from time to time. So I decided to look at that time thousands of years before the apostle. I knew that the cathedral was the culmination, the concentration of generations of artistic skill and spiritual aspiration, but I knew too that it had component parts and beautiful things and beautiful ideas are created by generations of experience and experiment.

So, we headed first in search of some of Galicia's ancient past. Megalithic man apparently held geometry to be sacred. This probably stemmed from his need to establish an accurate lunar and solar calendar which could only be achieved by an understanding of trigonometry. There is little doubt that he invented it, numerous prehistoric sites use the Pythagorean three-four-five triangle for example but the Greeks took the credit for it and the Arabs developed it further. The solar and lunar calendars became increasingly important to a developing agrarian society and inevitably rituals and ceremonies were attached to important dates. I suspect that the high priests were the mathematicians and that the lines they plotted on the landscapes, the painstaking observations they made over many hundreds of years, became an obsession, central to their religious beliefs. We don't know to what extent they used pilgrimage; they certainly travelled huge distances and spread their message wide. If they were mapping the planet they must have believed that an understanding of it was essential to a continuing existence. This same impulse was used by the Christian Church when it created the camino, to project lines across the landscape, to define, contain, populate, and penetrate; and they propelled their ideas along it, persuading those who already lived near it of the value and the message.

Three days into our family visit, we found ourselves on a

mountaintop, somewhere close to the coast southwest of Santiago. We'd followed some signs to a "megalithic conjunction" and didn't know what to expect. What we found was curious; lines of standing stones radiating from large piles of natural boulders on the summit of the hill. It was a great example of that joining of the man-made with the stuff of nature, so often found in prehistory. Prehistoric man might have been nervous about applying his own handiwork to places where the gods were exploding through the earth and throwing up huge piles of stone, but he attempted it nevertheless. I'm not alone in believing this to be a critical point in man's development from the ape but I still wonder how man felt when he dared to do it. And look where it led, for would we have the great cathedrals if he hadn't used his brain and harnessed his energy in this way? Making designs and structures for whatever purpose, be it to contain the dead, to mark boundaries or to reflect some aspect of the cosmos, led to the development of the skills that led to the piling and shaping of stones that were to rear hundreds of feet into the sky, seeking God and connecting with the heavens.

On that mountaintop we debated man's purpose. In the end we decided that the stones were probably no more than the remnants of tribal boundaries, a meeting place perhaps, where tribal disputes could be decided, because most of the land occupied by these tribes could be seen from that high point. Yet we preferred to think it could have been something more deeply symbolic or spiritual, it could have been that the fields of stones, like the field of stars over the camino had some guiding purpose. In our twenty-first century wisdom we seemed incapable of being sure; without detailed examination, or the benefit of studies made by others we could not be sure that we were looking at a geometrical formation.

From the mountaintop we moved down to the coast. Here we found on a wild and rocky headland jutting out into the Atlantic the remains of a settlement dating from about the time of Christ, or the Roman occupation, these settlements, relatively common in Galicia, being known as *castros*. This was a dramatic and beautiful location and the remnants of the buildings enhanced it. Another mystery, more questions. Why build in a spot where life must have been so hard? Were these people making a statement about their own durability, or their own love of nature? Were they daring their enemies to confront them, or even perhaps saying, "Look, we belong to the sea, just leave us alone". Once again one finds oneself in the speculative arena. This is the nature of prehistory, and the nature of myth too, that the

truths are unknown and the imagination has to be brought into the game. And this might be why Celtic Galicia, and medieval Santiago, and the myths surrounding St James, exert their power over some of us. The great cathedrals, Gothic and Baroque, and in the case of Santiago a fusion of both, are an expression of the creative force. This is only released by the power of the imagination, and the developed imagination is primarily what distinguishes us from the apes. The ape becomes the man when he moves or works the stones for purposes that are not always obvious, the man becomes the myth for reasons that are even more complex, yet express the nature of humanity and the human condition.

Our collective imaginations have enabled us to accelerate the process of evolution, not always in a positive way, certainly not in a natural. To exercise the imagination we do not need to be trained architects or designers or masons. The discipline helps, but can be inhibiting. The *castros*, which in their ruined state are particularly beautiful, were not designed with reference to a rule book. They were a response to a set of human needs, and it is in such places, as in Santiago with its cathedral and old town, that one's spirit lifts, one's faith in the joy of the human experience rises, drawn from this mix of history, myth, landscape and man's creativity.

Notes on a pilgrimage from London to Santiago

Simon Wethered

Is it not something to do with the unique authenticity of the experience, the extraordinary clarity of recall and the unexpected quality of friendships made along the way? Is that because, as a pilgrim, one temporarily renounces the many roles we each assume - such as husband, father, breadwinner, etc - and all the other paraphernalia that make up what we are in daily life, and discover our own individuality stripped of these labels? Is it because, on a pilgrimage, one can 're-humanise' - in the sense that the body gets back to doing what it does best (namely working all its muscles effectively), and the mind and spirit are freed of the many stresses and intrusions of life in a western capitalist democracy, and so one is able to wonder at the simple beauty of nature and the generosity of God's creation? Are risk assumed and trust tested also an ingredient?

These were amongst my many musings on what drew me to walk, in sections over six years, the 2000 kilometres or so from London (where I live) to Santiago. Having in 2002 spent three weeks accompanying, not only physically but also in an Ignatian sense, a fellow pilgrim on the Camino Francés and reaching Santiago, there was no question but that I had to return, myself then 60 in 2005, to complete the section we missed between Los Arcos and León on my own. And so was born the idea of completing the link with London.

Forging that link started with an early morning Eucharist and pilgrim blessing at St Martin-in-the-Fields, a brief pause at St James's Piccadilly, and thence to the Thames Path. The Wandle Way leads from there to Croydon, from where the Vanguard Way intersects with the North Downs Way at Oxted. Hampshire County Council has produced two rather charming mock vellum packs containing details of the St Swithin's Way from Farnham to Winchester, and the Millennium Pilgrim's Trail from there to Portsmouth. Marion Marples at the Confraternity office was most helpful in providing photocopies of maps enabling a way to be found from St Malo to Mont St Michel, and from there I followed the way to St Jean d'Angély devised by the Association Bretonne des Amis de St Jacques de Compostelle.

Another 'Rando Edition' in French on the route from Paris and Tours charts the way from St Jean d'Angély to St Jean-Pied-de-Port. The extended pilgrimage finished on 1 June this year with Evening Prayer at St Martin-in-the-Fields, where I arrived with five minutes to spare having that morning caught an early TGV from Bayonne.

Apart from the overwhelming joy of arriving at and experiencing Santiago itself, what else of the pilgrimage? Of highs: having effectively walked alone from London, meeting up as much by accident as design with my sister and brother-in-law at 'Gibraltar'. This is a stele, or standing stone, marking the spot where the Tours route, the Vézelay route and the Le Puy route converge just north of Ostabat, and some 30km from St Jean-Pied-de-Port. They had started from Le Puy some three years ago, after their initial experience of the camino from León. Of lows: arriving in the teeming rain at Taller, having been assured that the only shop would be open for the key and provisions. It was not. Of unexpected kindness to strangers: the man I met in the Mairie at Taller who dropped me off at the supermarket at Castets, later returning to take me back to Taller (the Mairie also had a key). Also the hotelier in Blain who freely gave me all the nourishment I needed for the 38-kilometre hike into Nantes. Most memorable experience: on high ground, outside Villar de Mazarife, watching the sun set on a clear unimpeded 180 degree horizon, while sitting on plastic chairs with a fellow pilgrim, sipping red wine out of coffee cups. Most emotional: (surprisingly) cruising past the south coast of the Isle of Wight in the evening sun having accomplished the Portsmouth-St Malo-Mont St Michel-Rennes leg. Favourite places: the Basilica of San Isidoro and of course the cathedral at León. Least favourite: the *albergue* at Zubiri, and almost everything to do with Ponferrada! Most welcome sight: a smile from any waiter or waitress. Least favourite: yet another self-congratulatory sign erected by the EU Commission. The most delightful day's walk: that from Cizur Menor to Puente la Reina via Eunete and from there on to Estella. And the worst: walking many unnecessary miles in the rain while lost in the woods outside Guemene-Penfao (marvellous name!) due to incompetent signage. The most satisfactory item of equipment: my trusty Meindl boots which saw me all the way there, and more, without a single blister, and are now about ready for retirement. Most nerve-wracking moment: no rucksack (with all its precious cargo) on the carousel upon return from Santiago (it arrived the next day). And that of most contentment: making that service of Evening Prayer at St Martin's on my return home.

The charge of self-indulgence can perhaps be rebutted not only by the considerable discomfort – throbbing feet, damp clothes, hard beds, smelly loos and all the other inconveniences of pilgrimage - but by the importance of having ensured that nobody else has, directly or indirectly, had to pay a price for one's departure – missed birthdays, wedding anniversaries, board meetings and so on.

And who, having once done it, does not rejoice at the experience of moving silently through the countryside (never to pass that way again) under a canopy of pin-bright stars in the pre-sunrise cool of the morning, or delight in high-wheeling birdsong or the sun-brightened colours of the wayside flowers, and having thus rejoiced and delighted would not want to relive those precious moments of beauty?

The space – emotional and spiritual as well as physical – which pilgrimage enables (and which perhaps distinguishes it from the challenges of long-distance walking) is a precious opportunity for prayerful discernment, for whole-hearted thanksgiving, for marking a rite of passage, and even for penance, each an ingredient of my own extended pilgrimage, for which I am profoundly thankful.

The preciousness of those few objects that are carried day after day – the penknife, the torch, the diary, the pilgrim hat and staff – bring home starkly just how over-cluttered our everyday lives are, and correspondingly how things can acquire a value out of all proportion to their monetary value; another salutary lesson there.

Drawing these questions and observations together; is the deep-seated but indefinable desire that motivates continued pilgrimage something to do with the opportunity for profound thankfulness which it creates? In my case I think so, and that is what will keep me returning to 'the camino' for as long as strength allows.

Bibliography

The Thames Path – ISBN 1-851410-773-9 a National Trail Guide

The Wandle Guide – ISBN 0 907335 330 available from Sutton Leisure Services

See also www.wandle.org

The Vanguard Way – www.vanguard.org.uk

The North Downs Way – www.nationaltrail.co.uk/Northdowns/. Also a National Trail Guide

St Swithun's Way – ISBN 1-85975-283-7 available from Hampshire County Council

Pilgrim's Trail – ISBN 1-85975-283-7 available from Hampshire County Council

Le Chemin du Mont-Saint-Michel – ISBN 2-84182-260-5 published by Rando editions for the Association Bretonne des Amis de Saint-Jacques de Compostelle

Le Chemin de Paris et de Tours- ISBN 2-84182-310-5 by Jean-Yves

Gregoire and Jacqueline Veron published by Rando editions

A Diabetic Walks the Camino

James Windle

To walk the camino to Santiago is an incredible experience. For some years I have wanted to participate but I was concerned that my diabetes would make it difficult. I am a 61 year old who has been dependent on insulin since 1997. I normally inject Humalog Mix 25 three times per day. After deciding to follow the Camino Francés I had difficulty finding specific advice so I agreed to record my experiences for the *Confraternity Bulletin*. I am not medically trained and I cannot stress too strongly the importance of discussing your plans with your doctor: don't assume this article will cover your circumstances. I am fairly fit and normally aware if my sugar level goes low and I would imagine the risks are much greater for a diabetic who is sometimes taken by surprise by a low test result.

I started on 19 May this year and walked from St Jean-Pied-de-Port to Santiago in 33 days, a total of 500 miles. My daughter walked with me for the first week. At 10.30 on the difficult first day, after four hours of hard walking and steady climbing, I rather suddenly felt very feeble and a test showed that my blood sugar was low. Food and a short rest put me back on my feet but I was very tired by the time we reached Roncesvalles (as are most people!). From then on I started to test regularly to pre-empt low sugar levels. I had no further significant problems but during the following days I found it necessary to reduce my insulin dose considerably. I have no idea if this reduction in insulin needs would be typical for other diabetics. I suggest you get an opinion about this from your doctor.

For emergency food I started out with oatcakes from England but could not find them in Spain. When necessary, I found that dried apricots were a good quick pick-me-up. I carried digestive and savoury biscuits, cheese, dried fruit and nuts (cashews and almonds) and a few cereal bars as my emergency rations. Normally I was able to get breakfast consisting of coffee, fresh orange juice and bread and jam or a croissant either before starting out or within an hour of doing so. Lunch was a *bocadillo*, a length of French bread with either ham or cheese, and a piece of fruit. *Bocadillos* are available from many cafés and they will usually add tomato if you ask. Supper was normally

the big meal of the day. Often the 'pilgrim menu' included spaghetti and then meat and potatoes or something similar. It was nourishing, if short on green vegetables. At the end of the walk my weight had dropped from 90kg to 82kg. This weight loss is not unusual for walkers on the camino.

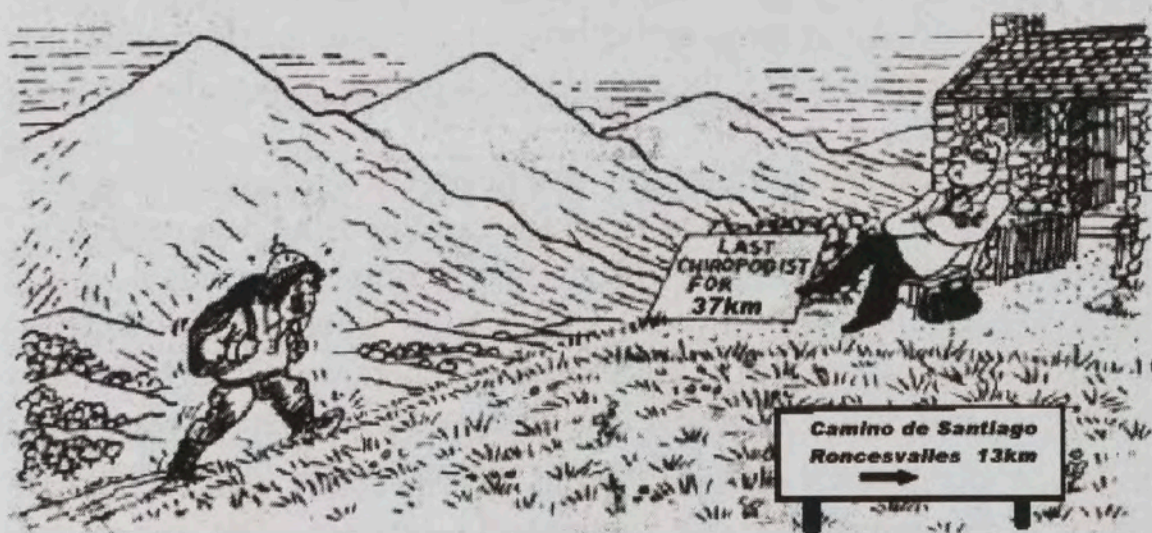
Before I left I received lots of conflicting advice about footwear. During the camino I met one very experienced walker (not a diabetic) who always walks in trainers. I used walking boots and I am still not sure they were the best choice. My feet have high arches and the skin on the soles of my feet is dry and prone to cracking. I always use a urea based cream and during the walk I applied it twice daily. I had relatively little trouble with my feet: just minor blisters. See a diabetic consultant and carefully consider his or her advice. If you decide to go ahead the guidelines I would suggest are:

- Test your blood sugar very regularly and adjust your insulin dose as needed.
- Carry at least a day's supply of food at all times for emergencies.
- Make sure your food and test kit are easily available (or you might be tempted not to bother).
- Consider going with someone who knows you well and recognises your sugar-low symptoms.
- Eat as regularly as possible.
- Look after your insulin and carry a spare pen.
- Drink plenty of water. (Of course this does not apply only to diabetics.)
- Be *very careful* of your feet. Change your footwear (shoes and socks) as soon as the day's walking is done.

Everyone says that a pilgrim should prepare by doing regular walks with a loaded rucksack. I agree but I met very few people who had done so. However, depending on the time of year, Spain will be hotter but in other respects it is possible to see how you will cope by doing a three-day walking trip with a fully loaded rucksack. Do this even if it means walking from home and returning each night. Aim to walk at least fifteen miles each day as a fair test. At the end of that you will know whether you would be able to cope.

Before I left I discussed the walk with my diabetic consultant and

I did so again after returning. His opinion was that the risk was not justified and he would advise me not to do the walk again. His main concern was the effect on my feet and the risk of ulceration in the feet and legs. If you are a diabetic and you decide to walk the camino I think you should have a medical examination with a diabetic specialist and carefully consider his advice before committing yourself. It is then a matter of balancing the risk against the opportunity. For me the walk was a fantastic experience. The greatest pleasure came from deep discussions with the pilgrims I met. Conversations started during the day would continue into the evening over a meal. Others were most moved by the scenery or a particular church or the arrival in Santiago: everyone gets a different outcome but the massive sense of achievement is impossible to describe.



Tony Roberts

The Camino, the Camera and I

Philip Wren

There is one thing on which my ex-wife, my current wife and my eldest son Timothy agree. When I go on the camino I should not be allowed to take a camera.

To be truthful, both Jacqui and Jenny think I shouldn't be allowed a camera - full stop. I am forever stopping to snap some photograph, be it of the family on holiday, the way the sunlight is bouncing off the beautiful building, or the close-up of the flower in the hedgerow.

Timothy hates it because while others are striding on purposefully to the next *refugio's* bed and shower, I am constantly stopping to photograph the derelict church, the new monument that wasn't there the last time I walked this stretch or the interesting pilgrim whom we met on the way. Tim hates having his photo taken, probably because of the upbringing he had with his "just move a little to the left please" father, who has almost certainly scarred him for life. On the Camino del Norte, when I walked back fifteen minutes (half-an-hour round trip) to take one photo of a priest's derelict house, he responded by sending me to Coventry for the rest of the day. (I took a photograph of the justified sulk as well!)

The problem is that I have the "you never know what this might be useful for" syndrome. I give talks on the camino using data projection (PowerPoint, if you prefer) and every story or point is illustrated with a photo to back up what I am saying. It is very rare when there is no photo and I have found uses for some shots that others would have deemed a waste of disk space. It doesn't help that such photos have reinforced my "I know I'm right" syndrome and that my ego is bigger than my camera.

However, there is one more person who has not yet been mentioned and that is my camera itself. I see my camera as my over-worked and long suffering friend. When I see it lurking in the back of the drawer, looking tired and pensive, I think of it as a poor, tired pilgrim who has travelled too many miles and who wants nothing more than to rest and sleep, preferably not only tonight but the rest of the next day as well.

If my camera were an employee, he would almost certainly be claiming for overwork and physical abuse. Though my camera is my friend I see no point in mollycoddling it. If it gets dropped, rained on, frozen in the winds of Galicia or sunburnt on the plains of the meseta - tough. I'm the

boss and you will do as you are told; no matter what the weather you will come out of a nice warm, dark pocket and do your job.

On my first camino in 1998, I managed to have my camera stolen at Bayonne station. I was exhausted and put it down on a chair, along with my rucksack, while I went to buy a ticket home. When I returned, it had gone and with it over a hundred slides on three rolls of film, containing the last two weeks of my journey. I grieved not a moment for my lost companion; it was the slide films that I mourned for. On my subsequent caminos I have taken a little more care not to have my camera stolen, but I am still guilty of camera abuse. As long as the lens is clean, the rest of the camera simply has to take its chances.

My last pilgrimage was Ferrol to Santiago and A Coruña to Santiago, the two legs on the Y of the Camino Inglés. This time I really surpassed myself. My poor, abused Casio had already got a number of dents in the casing and the lens was not always fully extending by mechanical power alone; I sometimes had to pull it out. On the beach of Pontedeume, I placed it on my monopod, which the wind blew over and it hit the sand. I cleaned it up and, as any employee should, it went back to work before going on strike later that day. When everything else had failed, I managed to get it working by smacking it against a wooden post, causing the lens to pop out. It worked fine all the next day, but as I left Hospital de Bruma, it gave up the ghost and flatly refused to work again. I am not in the least bit sentimental and having replaced it in Santiago, into the bin it went.

My new Fuji also ended up in the bin. The final shot is of the pavement just before the lens hit the ground in Muxia, which I had walked to after arriving at Santiago from A Coruña.

Back in England I bought a second-hand Casio on e-bay. It already had someone else's scratches, scuff marks and dents upon it and it is currently sitting on my desk looking half defiant and half scared. Defiant, because it has already suffered and survived in the hands of some other alpha male who knows that a camera is the sort of friend whom you should rough up from time to time just to prove who the boss is, but scared because its chances of surviving the 2010 Holy Year pilgrimage are not good and it knows it.

But, hey, it might not have to go if someone is kind enough to buy me a new camera for Christmas, but it will certainly not be my ex-wife, my current wife or my son. They know me too well to waste their money on buying me a new friend who will almost certainly end its days in a Spanish bin.

Camino tale – the parting gift

Colin Hudson

At some point this company must part
and once more pursue paths solely set
our time together though will remain
woven into a rich memory cloak we share ...
the warp our lives shared side by side
the weft our perusals in pilgrim path places
the colours richly steeped in autumn kindnesses
the pattern, divinely sprinkled with joy,
sparkling moments of earth beauty intensity.

The laughter and happiness carried
both hearts and bodies along the miles,
with an eye kept fondly on one another
so that all would journey safely on.

Staying with the Road

Gareth Thomas

Last year I set out for the longest journey on foot that I have ever made: from the west of England to Compostela. In early May I left Worcester Cathedral carrying a replica of the 15th century *Cockleshell Pilgrim* staff, loaned by Katherine Lack who wrote the book about the pilgrim dressed in Compostela pilgrim garb who was unearthed in the 1980s. I remember feeling oddly afraid as I walked south along the River Severn in the first two hours of the walk. I kept thinking of the magnitude of the task ahead: to put one foot in front of the other continuously for three months over twelve hundred miles. I simply had a gut feeling that it would be possible, strengthened by the knowledge that many pilgrims had gone before me and above all a sense of Christian pilgrimage in which this was to be a walk with the Lord, and he would send his angels to protect me.

It was a journey prepared over forty years, for my first encounter with the camino was in the 1960s at the age of fourteen, wearing the blue shirt and red beret of a certain Spanish youth organisation. Our moustachioed and uniformed leader, *Capitan* Nuñez, our school history teacher who was a retired Civil War army officer, marched us down the camino during our summer camp. He was the Spanish equivalent of *Dad's Army* Captain Mainwaring. It was he who taught us how to load and fire our antique Martini rifles in Saturday morning drill sessions on a remote beach, convinced we could repel the communist invasion he expected at any moment. His haunted eyes showed that the Red hordes marched on him in the night, and we were pleased that our youthful energy and enthusiasm seemed to reassure him he could carry on chain-smoking his *Celtas sin filtro* cigarettes until he died peacefully in his bed. We marched to Compostela for the glory of the *patria*, “¡España Una, Grande y Libre!” and the national patron Saint James of whom we knew little apart from the myths recounted to us around the camp fires.

How odd this early experience seems now; so very far away, but this was the curious way in which I first walked on what we now call the Camino Francés. In those days they didn't call it that: it was simply a dusty route-march for uniformed youth that the retired officer class

and clerical old guard saw as the guarantee of Spain's future. There was no welcoming *hospitalero* or *menu peregrino* for us: we camped out on the hillside or slept on the bare floors of parish halls. A bottle of Coca Cola cost five pesetas. We bought bubble gum and collected the *cronos*: picture cards of the aircraft of the Spanish Civil War. The Fiat CR32 biplane always eluded us and we concluded that the card didn't exist: it was just a ploy to make us buy more bubble gum. That was the only mystery of the camino that we knew. I remember the overwhelming smell of primitive toilet arrangements and the unsightly piles of refuse that you found in every village in those days; and there was sadness and poverty, the ever-present amputees and the general broken appearance of most people you met, in a land still patrolled by green uniformed *guardia civil*, always in twos with carbines slung over their shoulders.

I returned with my family to England to finish my education and twenty years went by until I explored the camino again. In the 1980s as an Anglican Franciscan friar, I hitch-hiked in habit from England to Spain and walked part of the way from Burgos to Compostela over a two-week period. The Camino Francés had begun to gain some popularity and there was an awareness of its cultural significance. It was promoted as a source of regional renewal and the priests I stayed with on my journey were convinced the pilgrimage would be reborn. In the end they were right, but it was not quite the future they imagined. The camino eventually took on its own independent life.

At journey's end, I remember looking down from Monte del Gozo, which in those days was an empty hill. I stood in the rain in my soaking wet Franciscan habit, trying to make out the Obradoiro in the distance. I knew my hitch-hiking meant I had not walked the route authentically – it was all I could do in the time available to me – but I wondered then what emotion a medieval pilgrim might have felt, arriving at that point after walking from England. In trying to share in that emotion, that joy, the seeds were sown for the big walk, twenty years later when I would stand again at this same spot, having walked all the way from England.

I built up to it gradually. I went to Compostela by bike from Canterbury via Taizé and Le Puy; then I walked from St Jean-Pied-de-Port to Compostela; and after that I walked in winter, climbing O Cebreiro in the snow, a real contemplative experience which I would recommend to anyone. Then finally I did it: I walked from Worcester to Compostela in three months. It was a hard walk.

The Japanese writer Haruki Murakami, in a book about marathon running quotes this runners' mantra: "Pain is inevitable. Suffering is optional." He explains, "The *hurt* part is an unavoidable reality, but whether or not he can stand any more is up to the runner himself." (H. Murakami: *What I think About When I think About Running*.) There is truth in this. When you first begin a long physical journey, travelling under your own steam, just as with starting at a gym or going for a keep-fit run around the block, it will hurt; and that *is* unavoidable.

The Jesuit priest Gerard Hughes wrote a book about his one thousand mile walk to Rome (G. Hughes: *In Search of a Way*), and he explains how he had worked out a 100-degree pain scale on an earlier walk. When he was only a short distance along the road on the day he set off, he felt a pain in the knee which "only merited 20 degrees, so I attributed the pain to psychosomatic anticipation and limped on". In his account, the physical hardships of the road gradually diminish as he becomes accustomed to the walk, but he soon learns that undertaking a long-distance walk requires psychological strategies too. Hughes explains how he disliked using the rosary as a child and "used to try to speed up the prayers to have them over and done with". He never overcame that boredom and eventually abandoned the rosary; but while walking to Rome he rediscovered it: "It is a rhythmic prayer and I could vary the rhythm, sometimes a few steps to one syllable. I could pray almost effortlessly for an hour in this way."

In the anonymous Russian Orthodox classic, *The Way of a Pilgrim* (translated by RM French), the pilgrim - a seeker of true prayer - travels hundreds of miles on foot. His object is not to arrive anywhere in particular, but to learn how to "pray constantly". I have found that the Jesus prayer is very well suited to praying the road. Breathing in, while stepping forward a few paces, "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God..."; and then exhaling on the next steps, "...have mercy on me a sinner". Hundreds of repeated prayers become thousands, and eventually the rhythm becomes the prayer.

It was certainly a hard journey, walking to Compostela, particularly in the unrelenting rain in France throughout the whole of May. Yet, the trials of the journey somehow became the point of the journey, and often the challenges eventually led to encounters with other people, and all the way along I was part of a community. The three-month pilgrimage involved contact with hundreds of people, all of them playing some part in getting me to the destination. Now, in my prayer times, I reflect on that journey. I pray the road, mentally revisit the

people I met on the way and pray for them, and I pray for those on the road now.

When I arrived at Monte del Gozo I finally knew the answer to the question I had wondered about twenty years earlier: what does a pilgrim feel after walking all the way from England? I felt numb. All who arrive in the Pilgrim Office in Santiago receive the same certificate - and rightly so - whether they have walked from Worcester or Sarria. The printed piece of paper is a charming souvenir, but what is imprinted on your heart and on your soul is the great gift that you carry home.

Now that the pilgrimage is successfully completed, I look back on a very satisfying once-in-a-lifetime event and see that the fears were realistic. It was very hard at times, and tempting to give up at some points; but I am so glad I kept going to the destination and I look back at the 1200-mile walk as a defining event in my life. For three months I absorbed the experience of the road to Santiago but it will take me much longer to fully discover the meaning. Nothing would be better, in my last conscious moment in this life, than to recall the sound of the breeze in the tall spiky plants on that steep descent in the meseta towards Hornillos del Camino, the ribbon of white camino stretching out ahead. And I will give thanks, for the pilgrimage goes on.

Nürnberg to Konstanz – Jakobusweg

Christine Battye

Two years ago after reading a short mention of a pilgrim route from Nürnberg to Konstanz in the *Confraternity Bulletin*, I contacted Gerhilde Fleischer who is the guardian of this particular part, and was encouraged to join a group that walks the route every spring to update and repair the way marking. Nürnberg to Konstanz is part of a network of feeder roads that lead pilgrims to the four main routes through France. The Nürnberg to Konstanz route takes approximately three weeks, but unfortunately my first attempt finished rather spectacularly after two weeks at Ulm, where I slipped off a pavement and fractured my knee. However, this year I rejoined from Ulm and completed the whole distance.

I have walked pilgrim routes prior to this, and one invariably meets interesting companions along the way. But occasionally there is someone special, and I can only describe Gerhilde as a very special person. A large woman, with sensible shorts, a small rucksack, a pilgrim's staff with shell and below the shock of white hair a smile that illuminates all around her and exudes confidence and kindness. She has been walking this route for thirteen years and feels passionately that the history and culture surrounding it should be kept alive for all to benefit. This is a pilgrimage which embraces everyone who wants to join in, and music and singing are high on Gerhilde's priorities. Every morning begins with a visit to the local church, which will have associations with St James, and whether it be a simple Protestant church, or a magnificent Baroque Roman Catholic one - of which there are many as you approach Konstanz - Gerhilde confidently ushers her group in to share the ambiance. Her well-researched knowledge of the architecture and culture combines with the enjoyment of singing from the individual songbooks she has prepared for each of her pilgrims. The only snag is that it is all in German, and while Gerhilde's English is excellent it is, I felt, one burden too many to expect her to translate everything as you go along. On my first trip I was very fortunate that Alison Raju was walking the route and I was constantly snuggling up to her for a discreet run-down of what was being said and sung. We

were, however, invited to give a rendering of Lord of the Dance, and All Things Bright and Beautiful in English which appeared to be very well received. This spring I teamed up with the delightful Annalise, a fellow walker, who was a constant help with translation. We had lots of fun as she improved her English, and I learned to speak at least three words in German. However, if you don't speak German you must be prepared to feel a little isolated at times.

I would describe the route as soft, without too many strenuous parts. Two of our walkers were in their mid to late seventies and completed the whole route without any problems. The country-side especially in the spring is lush, with dense forests where you emerge to see rolling hills and the Swiss Alps on the horizon. Gerhilde has a knack of arriving at villages just as the church-bells are ringing, and is often met enthusiastically by locals and former pilgrims. I hadn't walked in a group before and at first had to pace myself accordingly finding it difficult to adjust to the regular breaks for lunch etc. Food is taken seriously, with enormous breakfasts where you are encouraged to take a snack for later in the day and serious suppers accompanied by, if you so wish, huge glasses of beer. However, travelling as a partial vegetarian I found the salads and fish delicious, and often resorted at lunch-time to eating a tin of sardines in the garden of the local restaurant. We only stayed in one hostel along the way so the pilgrimage is not cheap even though one is expected to share a room with a fellow traveller. Whilst Gerhilde appears to run the group effortlessly carrying her 'bureau' around with her in her rucksack, there is an enormous amount of organisation that takes place to ensure that everyone is comfortable and has the opportunity to "bond" with fellow pilgrims.

There are some surprises along the way; "manna and music" would be the best way to describe them without totally spoiling the spontaneity for those who might wish to join this pilgrimage. I found the whole experience totally uplifting and will always remember with pride walking behind Gerhilde as she led our group into villages and towns along the way.

Alison Raju's excellent overview of the Nürnberg to Konstanz route can be found on the Confraternity website and can be bought through the office.

An evening of Pilgrim Music at Rabanal

Roger Davies

Whilst we were working recently as *hospitaleros* at Gaucelmo we had a most wonderful evening because we just happened to have professionally talented pilgrims staying with us namely - a South Korean baritone, who sang Italian arias; a highly talented Polish guitarist/singer, who sang sad wistful songs; a French songwriter/singer; and an American storyteller/poet. Between them they delivered a concert and sang the following ballad: -

A pilgrim ballad

Oh Pilgrim

What you are searching for
is already inside you

But you have to go around and around
to some corner of the world
to scale the Redwoods or Mount Everest's face
or find your name on the cover of a book
or wrapped in some perfect lover's arms

Pilgrim,
find fame where you are
Better yet, forget about fame
for no one really ever knows you anyway

Rather,
go on a journey, a spiritual quest
Don a robe, a headscarf and a staff
walk 500 miles in the desert or the fields
Get to know yourself.
Tonight you might be wrapped in your own arms
and sleep better than you had in 25 years.

NB: This poem was delivered to a musical accompaniment by Brian Ruhr, a pilgrim from USA. Roger Davies is the Wardens' Coordinator for the Rabanal Committee.

Semana Santa

Holy Week on the Camino

Paul Dignam

*In our darkness there is no darkness with you Oh Lord;
The deepest night is clear as the day.*

Somewhere on Palm Sunday we are walking. No-one within the sound of cooe. At his request I am teaching our German friend Marian some Taizé chants and my brother, some distance ahead, catches and echoes the metres. “Jesus, remember me...; *Ubi caritas...*; In our darkness...”

It is a little awkward fitting into the rhythm, as we walk quite fast, jerkily at times, over uneven terrain. As almost always when I sing I am relaxed, enjoying myself, and when Marian gently, unselfconsciously, picks up the chant, we are profoundly at peace. Sung liturgy. The paradoxical experience of being exquisitely alone and together at one and the same time. Safe. Held.

At Grañón a few nights earlier we had had our first real experience of the camino “Communion”, arriving in dribs and drabs at the refuge hidden in the attic of an ancient church, the official camino passport stamp this time a generous kiss on both cheeks. A guitar. Hank, an American lad in his early twenties, encouraged to stay and play classical for us, and then my brother and me taking the mostly continental crowd through our sung repertoire, while others quietly listened, joined, thanked. I am humbled by their praise. Slicing carrots for salad, supper a simple and abundant meal shared with all who would stay the night. I do my traditional best with the leftovers. The shared washing up. A candlelit blessing in the church loft, liturgy in alternating languages, intoning “In our darkness” into the silence. A wish passed around the circle, the content perhaps incomprehensible in others’ tongues, the good intention clear. Sports mats spread on the floor to stretch our bedding. Blissful sleep.

We arrive at León on Wednesday. There is talk of staying another night to celebrate the Thursday liturgy. I’m not keen: I’m not sure you can mix the camino and much else, and already I’m finding the processions overpowering. We can’t wash our clothes because

the drying courtyard has to look neat for the preparations (nothing actually happens there) and I recognise church bureaucracy in all its glory. Certainly the city is pretty. Antonio, a Spanish veteran of the camino, is meeting his wife to continue on together, and they take us all out to beer and tapas for the evening with casual generosity. Our night's sleep is disturbed by the bells and bands of the processions till midnight, the voices and singing of the night-time revellers till dawn and the snoring of a particular fellow traveller all through. We can't stand another night and move on.

Thursday night at Mazarife, the "less travelled" alternative path. A private *albergue*. A small number in a spacious room. Paella cooked in front of us, and later the cook and host *hospitallero* reflects on the changing character of the camino, becoming simply another tourist trek for so many rushing through. We give and receive massages.

Friday. As always we three older "boys" wake early. Black tea, bread, cheese, chocolate, a few raisins, an orange. We head out into the dark. It had been raining but for the moment it is only the road that is wet. My brother strides off into the darkness and I hope he won't get lost: the spray-painted yellow arrows and scallop shell signs by the way are easily missed in the dark. Marian stops to adjust his poncho and falls behind. We have learnt to let ourselves fall in and out of these duets as the journey progresses, currents of water that eddy and flow, breaking and reuniting, coming inevitably to the sea. I find a white arrow pointing to the side...roadworks I think, not the camino...I hope! Our road stretches out straight ahead in the darkness. There is a glimmer of light and the full moon of Easter eases below the clouds on the horizon, resting above the mountains, in line with the road. Surreal. In damp night I walk into the moon, as the sun waits to pierce the cloud behind me. I can't believe the beauty of it, the silent majesty. With quiet certainty I know that David, up ahead, is experiencing the same wonder, and Marian behind me, and the others. When we catch each other for morning tea I am reminded of honey on hot buns we used to share sometimes after early morning Mass, when we were children and food only came after church - a true break-fast!

The end of Good Friday is less mystical. The last hour into Astorga is barren walking into a bitter headwind. I watch Marian's heels and nothing else. His steady momentum drags me along. I can barely think. It seems to last forever. We hit the final stretch around 2.30, walking up a steep street to the first plaza. I imagine myself briefly as Christ, tortured and exhausted, dragging up the hill, and am embarrassed by

the pathetic comparison. An elaborate “stations” procession is winding its way out of the cathedral with multiple bands playing music I can’t relate to, an almost grotesque mix of the sacred and secular. Later, in the main square, the crowds seem of similar mind: packed together, chatting, photographing, otherwise remote. We push through them to find a pub and eat, aware of our own rudeness, not sure what else to do, and come home later through a crowd that is anything but subdued. As children on Good Friday our family had gathered in the lounge at home, beneath a crucifix, on our knees on the wooden floor, and quietly shared the liturgy of the seven last words of Christ, to be followed immediately by hot cross buns that *were* hot: yeast dough home made from the oven, hard-topped and sticky with glaze. For me nothing else has ever approached that quiet solemnity.

On Saturday we walk to Rabanal, anticipating a special liturgy with the Benedictines there. We wait near a fountain an hour or so as the *albergue* is not yet open, and a woman from the parish brings us biscuits and then hot chips! This is an English-run refuge and at last my brother gets the real pot of tea he has been craving, but to match it there are detailed negotiations about being “allowed” out to go to midnight Mass. The host is insightfully apologetic about his own officiousness, encourages our cooking and directs us to some herbs in the garden to enliven the spiced bean and potato stew that has become our staple when Marian and I cook. We prepare the meal and go out to Vespers, sung Gregorian Chant in Latin by the three Benedictines, with intermittent help from locals and visitors. *Kyrie Eleison* at least is familiar, and *Ora pro nobis*. Psalms and responses. The rhythm. The clarity of practised *a capella* male voices. The peace settles over us, into us. Back to the refuge for dinner. Some massages shared between us and one for the second *hospitalero*. The first seems a little uptight and I don’t even offer, but I have misread him: I am surprised when he appears later with a guitar, casually asked about shortly after we’d arrived, and settles back to listen. To Hank, to Zac, to me. He is obviously relaxing and appreciative, his thanks again humbling. He offers real tea leaves for us to take away! We wind gently down and head out at 11pm for the Easter liturgy.

As we wait around the fire-in-a-bucket outside the church we could have been in anyone’s parish: the ordinariness of the tools with which we recreate this most powerful of symbols, the candle into the darkened church, “Christ our light”. The celebrant is late. We are freezing. It gets underway. The music is beautiful but unfamiliar, and

tired as I am from a fortnight's walking I struggle to stay awake. Just as my own children not so long ago were put to sleep on church pews or the carpet against the wall, out of the congregation's way, and I too a generation before. At the sign of peace we exchange "Happy Easter" in Spanish. Everyone is welcoming - as so often on this trip the camino pilgrims are incorporated into the local community.

About 8km out and 300 metres up from Rabanal stands the Iron Cross, where pilgrims traditionally leave a pebble they have carried from home or up the hill. It had been Marian's intention to be there for sunrise and certainly his bed is empty when I awake. I wonder how it has gone for him. There is toast and tea for breakfast but some over-conscientious guest has turned off the gas, the circuit trips on the electricity, and the host is shaken out of rhythm preparing for us. He recovers promptly once everything is working and we leave unusually well fed and full of tea! Easter morning is overcast, and windy, not yet raining. We start heavily clad against the cold and within half an hour are pulling out the ponchos for sleet and then snow. I find myself with Mari-Jo and Melanie in bright yellow. Mari-Jo broadens my vocabulary of Spanish weather words. The path is steep on the hills and muddy on the flats - how is my brother managing his diabetic feet in light sandshoes? - but wildflowers are emerging on the edges and as we gaze out across the valley dusted in snow the beauty takes our breath away. I can't get enough of it and pause to let the girls draw ahead, to have some silence. It is heavy going. Even in the fair light of mid morning our way is not always clear and we wonder how Marian managed it hours before. Suddenly the cross looms out of the mist, its base buried in a broad cairn of stones of all sizes. I throw my pebbles from the side. Melanie climbs carefully to the peak, bending down in the ridiculous yellow poncho, and as she kneels at the foot of the cross I can't believe it as the sun actually peers through for a few seconds, a clear circle of light.

We start to descend. Tucked into the side of the road is a cramped stall of coloured flags and signs to distant countries and cities. Trestle tables, hot drinks for a donation, a fire burning in an old washing machine drum, some partial cover from the intermittent rain. This is Manjarín, "*una luz en el camino*", a light on the way. In the back some counters of religious items, crosses etc. We enjoy the respite, the local dogs and cats eagerly watching for dropped crumbs, the companionable warmth of pilgrims and hosts. And move on refreshed. And get lost.

It's a respectable four-wheel drive track but we've seen no arrows

for ages and the topography doesn't match such maps as we have. We struggle on, using our motto "*un pocito mas*", just a little more, but the hill is not *pocito* at all. Melanie picks out shoe marks and alpenstock holes in the path and we know we aren't the only ones to have wandered sideways. Finally we peak and the main road appears, other walkers curious about these strangers appearing out of the gully! I panic briefly on the walk down as agony sears through my toe, and I try unsuccessfully to walk through the pain. Boots off I find a tiny grass seed has managed to wedge its way needle-like into a vulnerable spot: easy fix, but how pathetic! When we finally reach El Acebo we stop for real food and hot drinks, thawing out in a crowded bar. The subsequent descent is almost blissful. The sun shines as we traverse a succession of narrow green valleys with trees in early blossom, spring flowers, groves of lavender, bell-tonking sheep. Later we learn that all have delighted in this Arcadian moment although only we got the extended sunshine.

Arriving in Molinaseca we find the others already showered and refreshed, and swap notes. I track down Marian, hugging him, eager to hear if his morning had gone well. It had. But it had been scary. Dark and cold and wet. On a mountainside, not the sealed road we'd done two days earlier. He'd wondered at times if he'd been lost. The weather had lightened at times and he'd had a glimpse of light, but mostly it was perseverance. How did he manage in the night? He laughs as he answers: "But our song! In our darkness there is no darkness...!"

Refugio Gaucelmo News

Graham Scholes

2009 Hospitaleros:

June: Gene & Rosann McCulloch and Valerie Beyer.
Alain & Janet Lising and Peter Wright
July: Roger & Julie Davies and Inge Puri
Tom Gibson, Leo Bolsius, John & Pam Newnham.

The period from June through July was dominated by efforts to ensure pilgrim safety and compliance with new Spanish health regulations.

June saw an increase in the numbers of occurrences of pilgrims arriving at Gaucelmo with bedbug bites. Bedbugs were spotted by the hospitaleros actually inside Gaucelmo, therefore the sanitation company was contacted to re-fumigate the premise, even though the annual fumigation was carried out earlier this year. The refugio was closed for a day while the fumigation was carried out, although there were sufficient beds in the other refugios in Rabanal for pilgrims that day.

To comply with the gas regulations, the gas bottle hoses and terminations were also replaced.

In order to comply with the new health regulations regarding legionella disease from the Castile and León authorities, an inspector arrived at Gaucelmo to take samples of water for analysis. Their report identified that our installation required a combination of chemical additives to ensure that the quality of the water remained safe from the bacteria. A company, who work on behalf of our El Bierzo partners at each of their refugios, carried this out at Gaucelmo. In addition to the annual water analysis and treatment, the hospitaleros now have to record the temperature of the water in the boiler daily, purge the hot water tank weekly and record the temperature of the hot and cold water from each tap and shower in Gaucelmo monthly to ensure that the water temperature is within stated limits. It is unfortunate that additional demands have had to be placed on the hospitaleros on duty, but the Rabanal committee are endeavouring to make the procedures as simple as possible.

As for pilgrims, the number staying at Gaucelmo has fluctuated

dramatically, from the usual high numbers prior to 25 July, to on one day only 16 pilgrims. Gaucelmo also received its first ever pilgrim from Cyprus.

Unfortunately three of the apple trees planted in 2007 have not survived the summer months, even though the hospitaleros have been watering them in the huerta. On a brighter note, Ken and Joan Davies, who designed the layout and planted the trees in the huerta, are visiting Gaucelmo in September to prepare the garden in the patio area for the construction of a new herb garden.

From 1 August 2009, Roger and Julie Davies replaced Graham Scholes as the Hospitalero Coordinator for Gaucelmo. The hospitalero rota for 2010 is now complete, but if you would like to know more about the role, or wish to volunteer for 2011, please contact the Refugio Gaucelmo Hospitalero Coordinator via e-mail at r-wardens@csj.org.uk

Members' Pages

From Alison Raju

This 330km Via Rhodana links Gillonnay (on the Geneva-Le Puy route) with Arles, from where pilgrims (coming from Germany and/or Switzerland, for example) can continue through France to cross the Pyrenees by the Col du Somport and link into the Camino Francés in Puente la Reina.

The route is waymarked throughout with the familiar European shell symbols and goes through Saint-Antoine-L'Abbaye before continuing along the right bank of the Rhône as far as Beaucaire, from where it proceeds to Arles along the left-hand bank of the river.

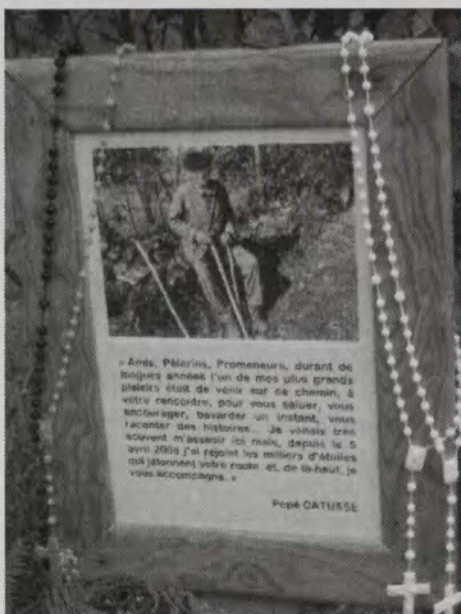
A 64 page guide book, with both route-finding information and accommodation details, is available from the Association Rhône-Alpes des Amis de Saint-Jacques, the group responsible for organising and waymarking this route. It costs €10 (including postage and packing). Available from the CSJ Bookshop, write to Monsieur Dominique Montvenoux, 7 rue Bernard Vallot, 69500 Bron, France, or email guides@amis-st-jacques.org

From Mary & Alf Cutts

Last year we began the second leg of our pilgrim journey. We had started from Le Puy in 2007 and reached Estaing where we stopped for the year. So in September 2009 we travelled out again back to Estaing and recommenced – flight to Toulouse, train to Rodez, bus to Espalion, walk from there to Estaing!

On our first day out we followed the bottom of the Lot Valley under cloudy skies and then, just as we started to climb out of the deep valley en route for Le Battedou on the other side of Golinhaç, it began to rain and we were forced to crouch in our enveloping black capes under the trees.

Fortunately the downpour didn't last too long and soon we set out again coming off the path up through the woods and onto a very minor road. A weak sun appeared as an encouragement, and soon after, at a crossroads outside the little settlement of Fontailles we came across a humble and very moving memorial. It was a laminated sheet of script and a photo in a frame placed at the roadside. It spoke of a whole, simple life and of the pleasure which the pilgrim route can give, not only to those of us en route but also to local people whom it



touches in different ways, and for whom, in these remote areas, it is a source of company and interest in their lives.

The wording on the memorial is: -

Friends, Pilgrims, Walkers over many years one of my greatest pleasures was to come to the chemin to meet you, say hello, offer encouragement, chat for a minute, recounts some stories... I came very often to sit here but, since the 5th April 2008 I have gone to join the thousands of stars marking out your route, and from on high, I am accompanying you.

We would be very interested to learn whether anyone remembers sharing a few words with P  p   on the journey.

From John Paterson

I am a Scots member of the CSJ and I finished my camino from Roncesvalles to Santiago in 2004. Every year since then I have walked different routes, N  rnberg to Konstanz, the Camino Aragon  s, Konstanz to Interlaken and the Camino Portugu  s last year. As you can see I love the caminos and meeting other pilgrims from all over the world. I am now 72 but very fit and walk between 20-30km each day on the camino. I plan to arrive in Wroc  w on 26 May and start my Polish camino from G  log  w.

Editor's note: Members of the CSJ visited the Polish Confraternity of Saint James the Apostle in G  log  w-Jakob  w in the autumn of 2007 where they met Henryk Karas, president of the CSJA and Stanis  aw Halarewicz who welcomed John in G  log  w. The CSJ will be visiting churches of St James in Southern Poland this autumn.

From John Hatfield

Planning to give a talk about your pilgrimage? Why not use the CSJ slide library to help you?

Did you know that the CSJ's growing collection of over 3300 slides, available to UK members, covers not only the Camino Franc  s, but also the other main routes in France and Spain?

Please give at least a month's notice so that a catalogue can be sent to you and your choice made. As soon as I hear from you, I can reserve the slides and dispatch them two weeks before your talk. I can be contacted at: 9 Vicary Way, Maidstone, Kent ME16 0EJ; Tel: 01622 757814

From John Revell

Where were you on 25 July? Vincent Kelly was in Rabanal and here we see him in the *huerta* at Refugio Gaucelmo beside the tree which has been planted to the memory of his wife Mary who died in November 2005. Also present in Rabanal at the same time, and also staying at Antonio's, were Alison Pinkerton and Ginny Lighton, former wardens at Gaucelmo on numerous occasions looking in from the outside on the scene of earlier dedicated activity.



From Graham Tipper

Jennie Marsh died in 2004 in northern Mozambique. She and her husband Nick had been married for four months and had taken time out from their careers to work for a Christian project which cares for local orphans, has a primary school and trains pastors for the local church. From the time of Jennie's death, Nick had a vision to establish a charity to carry on her work and ideals. A vision paper was produced which laid out the vision for the first five years of the Trust. The Object is "the advancement of the Christian faith". Grants have been made to projects in Mozambique, Johannesburg, Uganda, Soweto, Cape Town and in the UK. Her father, Graham Tipper, walked the Camino de Santiago in May and raised £3000 in sponsorship.

See www.jenniemarshtrust.org for details of the charity and current projects.

From Rodney Bessolo, Tiburin, California

The June 2009 *Bulletin* of the Confraternity of Saint James arrived at a perfect moment. A year ago I walked the chemin de St-Jacques from Vézelay to St. Jean-Pied-de-Port and in spring of 2006 I walked the chemin from Le Puy to St. Jean-Pied-de-Port. Those were my fourth and fifth crossings of France on foot. My first was in 1996 when I cobbled together a route from Germany to the Mediterranean Sea. Now, a year after my most recent adventure, I am recovering from hip replacement surgery. And the *Bulletin* was just the right medicine to refresh memories and pick up my spirits. I agree wholeheartedly with Gosia Brykcznska that “something of a unique personal experience stays with us for the rest of our days.” My hope is to recover enough to be able to do the Arles chemin. But at the moment it is not clear if that will be possible. But what remains within are the incredible memories and the pleasure to read of the experiences of the other brothers and sisters of the chemin in the *Bulletin*. Thank you so much for all of your good work.

From a saint chaser

While enjoying the summer feast of Saint Dominic on August 8 (the medieval friar who founded the Order of Preachers) I read in a collection of legends about him that in 1211 a group of English pilgrims to Santiago were making their way in a boat across the River Garonne when their boat capsized. Dominic who happened to be nearby heard the commotion and after praying, sternly bade the waters to release the sinking pilgrims. The pilgrims were immediately thrown onto the shore and one of them, named Lawrence, was later to become the first Englishman to follow Dominic! Like so many other saints, Dominic is closely connected with places along the Arles, Vézelay and Le Puy routes to Santiago in southern France.

Book Reviews

Making a Pilgrimage

Sally Welch, Lion Publishing, 2009, £5.99, 128pp, ISBN 978-0-8254-78697

Advice on how to prepare for your first pilgrimage tends to concentrate on the physical and the practical. Books, internet sites, and practical pilgrim days help to anticipate problems, as well as the cultural and historical richness that the camino has to offer. Being alert to the limitations of our bodies, such as the weight we can realistically carry, is clearly very important. Yet, it is as important to think through the spiritual and psychological implications of being a pilgrim. Sally Welch has published a book, "Making a Pilgrimage" that will help to do just that. Although it is a book about any pilgrimage, it is also very clearly centred upon her own camino to Santiago.

Very concisely she outlines the interior rhythm and feelings of making "a meaningful journey to a sacred place". She begins by asking the most difficult question of all, "Why journey?" Her answer is that we do so because it is a spiritual adventure. In the following sections she offers reflection and advice on how this adventure will affect us as we leave, journey and arrive.

In effect Sally points out that becoming a pilgrim is a process. Putting on a rucksack is only the beginning of both outward and inward experiences by which we become pilgrims. Relationships change as we leave behind family and friends and encounter new companions on the camino. She offers wise advice about now to avoid the all too subtle ways we can be self contained as a pilgrim and apart from our fellow travellers. We miss being enriched by their presence, stories and support if we succumb to this temptation. For example, in our eagerness to be a pilgrims we acquire the best equipment, but as she points out this does not create space in a crowded refuge; for that we must rely on others, their work and hospitality. On pilgrimage, we learn that traditional ways of judging people do not apply on the camino. There are also refreshingly novel insights; we change our relationship with the material world as well. We learn the high importance of a few things – and the unimportance of many things. It is also good that she has sections on penance, burdens and healings because many become pilgrims to find a new way forward.

Each section consists of stories, both old and new, of pilgrimage to Santiago, followed by her text, and concluding with a simple reflection

which will often be in the form of an exercise, such as taking note not only of the beauty of a landscape but also how human activity has shaped it. It's a helpful way of seeing that although we may pass through a landscape we should resist believing that we are isolated from it by the "high" purpose of being a pilgrim. That said, there are times when the reflections feel slightly strained – such as the suggestion of pouring two glasses of water and then muddying them (page 54).

These occasional wobbles do not detract from an excellent achievement; Sally's book balances material and ideas that alert us to possibilities that we may meet on our pilgrimage but without being overly directive about their meaning and significance. In the end, we have to experience pilgrimage for ourselves and work out how it has affected us. Sally Welch is a rector in Oxfordshire.

COLIN JONES

Now available in the CSJ Bookshop, price £5.99 plus postage.



Alison Raju

Along the Templar Trail – Seven Million Steps for Peace

Brandon Wilson, Pilgrims' Tales Inc, pp328, £9.99, ISBN 9 780977 053681

When I chose to read and review this book I was excited by the thought that I would learn more about what the Crusaders had experienced on their journeys across Europe. Also I wanted to find out how the writer felt about Jerusalem on his eventual arrival, having myself recently been on a Christian pilgrimage there. It is quite a detailed account of his path but did not mention the Knights Templar much and Jerusalem only featured in ten pages of the penultimate chapter.

This pilgrimage was undertaken in order to promote peace between the different nationalities along the route which passed through eight countries and like many pilgrimages the original route had to be changed for political reasons. Brandon is a member of the Friends of Peace Pilgrims organisation web address www.peacepilgrim.org and also the writer of *Yak Butter Blues: a Tibetan Trek of Faith*

The story is a sample of a lesson which we often preach on practical pilgrim days - to be sure you know your chosen walking partner well and have the same agenda before embarking on a long and hard endeavour. This was obviously not the case with the two participants in the pilgrimage. The writer, Brandon, was not familiar with the characteristics of a diabetic person's problems and needs. I was however impressed with his patience with Emile and the perseverance and strength of both he and Emile. The hardships they suffered were tremendous but they were greatly hampered by not having detailed maps - once more not sufficient planning beforehand.

Half way through the book I began to experience relief that things were going to get easier for Brandon but that did not seem to happen. I was interested to learn that there is a recognised walking trail through Israel with a support system. So if you are tempted to try walking to Jerusalem you might want contact the Israel National Trail organisation, email dany@spni.org.il

Although I am critical of their methods I was drawn through the book at a fast pace, trying to anticipate how it would all end, and resisting turning pages to check on the sketch maps to see what would happen next. I suppose that is the test of a good book!

CHRISTINE PLEASANTS

From the Secretary's Notebook

Marion Marples

Revd Dr Michael Wyatt RIP

We send our condolences to the American Pilgrims on the Camino on the premature loss of Michael Wyatt. He was all too briefly chairman of the Board and was in the midst of trying to build an organisation to respond to the needs and desires of American pilgrims. He was also a much loved priest and teacher. I had the privilege of meeting him at the Ponferrada conference in 2006 and had high hopes for a fruitful relationship between our organisations. He grew up in Spain and so was well placed to get to know the Spanish Associations. Unfortunately, though, he had to stand down from his pilgrim role soon after due to ill health.

The Honorary President of the CSJ

Carles Casajuana i Palet was appointed last October as 175th Ambassador of Spain to the Court of St James. He has graciously accepted our invitation to be Honorary President of the CSJ. He is Catalan and has served widely in the diplomatic service in Bolivia, Philippines, US, Malaysia Brussels as well as in Madrid. He is also an author and we congratulate him on the recent award of the Ramon Llull prize for his novel *L'últim home que parlava català* (The last person to speak Catalan). We look forward to working with him closely in Holy Year 2010 as we develop the ties between the CSJ and the Spanish Associations.

‘When I was on the camino...’

Have you been on pilgrimage in 2008 or 2009?

Every other year the CSJ organizes a Retreat for those who have returned from pilgrimage and who would appreciate a weekend of quiet and meditation about the fullness and nature of their experience. We go to Ampleforth Abbey in Yorkshire for a suitably ‘away from it all’ feeling as well as good worship and food. The retreat is lead by a former pilgrim, Fr Ben Griffiths from Keighley, and sessions with readings, music and discussion allow people to explore the changes (or not) made by the pilgrimage in their lives. We also enjoy watching

‘Within the Way Without’, Larry Boulting’s evocative film, to recapture many camino moments. There is also opportunity to explore some of the surrounding wild North York Moors and remote monastic establishments. The dates are Friday 20- Sunday 22 November, cost £110, to include accommodation in single or twin rooms and all meals. Please book as soon as possible by sending a deposit for £50 (payable to Confraternity of Saint James) to the Office, stating whether you require a single or twin room and any special dietary requirements. Latest date to book 21 October.

Pilgrim Register Forms

Please can we remind you to complete your Pilgrim Register Forms with details of your pilgrimage so your name can be inscribed in the CSJ’s Pilgrim Register. Please return forms to Paul Turnbull, 55 Tollgate Drive, Colchester CO3 0PE. Thank you. The Registers are available to view at the AGM each year.

Advance Notice – Trustees

Several of the current Trustees have indicated that they are stepping down and not standing for re-election to the committee. In order to give more time to members to find out about the role and consider whether they might be willing to serve and help shape the development of the next 25 years we are giving an early warning! At present Committee meetings are held near Waterloo Station approx from 6pm-8pm on the first Tuesday of the odd numbered months. A variety of skills are needed but interest and enthusiasm for the pilgrimage, helping with meetings and all aspects of the CSJ’s work are essential. Spanish speakers would be particularly welcome. If you would like to discuss your possible contribution please contact Marion at the Office or email William Griffiths, Colin Jones or Alison Raju for more information.

Advance Notice – AGM

The ‘Ten Best Slides’ section of the AGM has now been overtaken by the development of digital photography. In order to provide the best presentation possible we are asking that you let us know several weeks before the AGM whether you would like to show slides. We ask that digital presentations of no more than 25 pictures should be in PDF or PowerPoint format and emailed to the office the week before the AGM so that any problems can be ironed out. If you would like

to discuss your presentation please contact Angelika Schneider on amhschneider@hotmail.co.uk

Looking ahead to June 2010

We are hoping to plan a walk with our French colleagues of the Association Normande des Amis de Saint-Jacques from London to Chartres in late June and early July 2010. The approximate dates are 25 June to 12 July and the walk would be along the Vanguard Way from East Croydon to Newhaven, a ferry crossing to Dieppe and then walking from Dieppe to Chartres. Stages are envisaged at 20-25km per day, accommodation as basic (church hall floors), limited back-up and carry your own luggage. Early expressions of interest from walkers would be appreciated plus anyone, preferably local to London and Sussex, who would like to be involved with the UK logistics, arrangements and back-up. Please contact Marion at the office.

St James's Day in England 2009

It was very good to meet a good number of members in Canterbury this summer. Twenty pilgrims (and two horses) braved typical summer storms to walk on the Pilgrims' Way from Charing to Canterbury. We were grateful to Canon Clare Edwards for her warm



welcome and blessing at the Cathedral. Many people were attracted into the 12th century Eastbridge Hospital for the Pilgrimage Exhibition fantastically organised by Sally King and opened by pilgrim cyclist Canon Ed Condry. They all enjoyed learning about the Pilgrimages to Santiago and to Rome as well as Canterbury. Susie Gray and Mefo Phillips gave a talk on Thursday 31 July about their horse pilgrimages to Santiago and Rome. Mary Remnant had a good audience for her Lecture Recital with the Choir in the Cathedral Crypt. And of course there was plenty of fellowship, eating and drinking. We have made very good friendships with the Anglican Franciscans who look after the Hospital and hope for developing relationships with the Cathedral and the RC church of St Thomas of Canterbury.

St James's Day in Santiago

Members maybe interested to read the blog written by Johnnie Walker about his week working at the Pilgrim Office in Santiago. John had the thrill of writing out his first 'Compostela' earlier in the year and returned to volunteer at the peak time. See <http://johnniewalker-santiago.blogspot.com> You will also find his highly enjoyable accounts of walking the Camino Inglés, Portugués and rediscovering the route from Madrid to Sahagún.

We were also remembering CSJ members celebrating in California and Hawaii!

Swine Flu

During the summer Spain experienced the rapid spread of Swine Flu. Pilgrims were even being discouraged from kissing and hugging the statue of the Apostle.

Bulletin 102

Thank you very much to the many members who sent in their copies of *Bulletin* 102: we now have a respectable number for archive purposes.

New Guides

Arles Route: we are still looking for someone who would like to work on producing a new Guide to the route from Arles. We have the original files for the Fox's guides but the route and accommodation need checking and updating. We are grateful to Michael Gaches for offering to work on a new Guide for the Paris route.

Tunnel Route: Tony Roberts has produced an updated Guide to the Los Caminos del Norte route from Irún to Santo Domingo de la Calzada through the St Adrian Tunnel which we first published in 2002. It is substantially updated and is available for £5 though the Bookshop or to download from www.csj.org.uk/guides-online.htm

Library News

The Pilgrim Diary Project – to analyse the content of the 600 plus Personal Accounts – is progressing well and the scanning of our foreign language magazines is moving into gear. We experienced the fruit of this in *Bulletin* 106 with the interview featuring Uli Ballaz. It is hoped further articles will appear in due course. We are very grateful to the volunteers who make these projects possible.

Book reviewers

We are always glad to have offers to review new books, which are appearing at an ever faster rate as Holy Year approaches. If you would like to be considered please contact office@csj.org.uk, stating the kind of book you would like to review eg contemporary account, historical (state period), academic or spiritual so we can place books appropriately. Reviewers are asked to return the book for the Library collection.

Confraternity of Pilgrims to Rome Meeting

The next scheduled open meeting will be on Saturday 7 November 2009 in the Meeting Room at St James Church, Piccadilly and will concentrate on various aspects of Rome itself. They hope that members of the CSJ will also be interested: please contact Alison Raju if you would like to attend.

CSJ Events

Saturday 26 September

Office Open Day

Office, Bookshop and Library open for enquiries 10.30-3.30pm. 27 Blackfriars Road, London SE1 8NY.

Monday 19 October

Lecture Recital

Mary Remnant gives an illustrated Lecture Recital on the Musical Road to Walsingham with the Confraternity Choir at Ealing Abbey, 7.30pm. For directions see www.ealingabbey.org.uk, nearest tube/train station is Ealing Broadway.

Saturday 31 October

Office Open Day

Office, Bookshop and Library open for enquiries 10.30-3.30pm. 27 Blackfriars Road, London SE1 8NY.

31 October to 7 November

Poland Visit

Visit to Southern Poland/ Krakow and Małopolska Route

Saturday 14 November

South West Local Meeting

Pilgrimage meeting at Chudleigh Parish Church, Devon (between Exeter and Newton Abbott)

The programme starts with tea/coffee at 2.30. Slides / talk beginning 3.00 followed by a discussion and a 'Bring and Share' tea. Depending on those present, the discussion will include some future planning for a local walk/pilgrimage next year. Bowl will be placed for contributions towards costs (minimal!). Any 'profits' to Miraz Appeal.

Contact Terry and Valerie Brighton tel 01626 859506 email twb@madasafish.com

Saturday 14 November Returned Hospitaleros Day

An opportunity to learn about the experience of and thank all who have worked at the refugios in Rabanal and Miraz this year. John Marshall Hall, Christ Church, 27 Blackfriars Road, London SE1 8NY.

Fri 20-Sun 22 November Post Pilgrimage Retreat

Ampleforth Abbey, £110 pp. talks, meditation, music, films to enable pilgrims to share their pilgrimage experience whilst enjoying Benedictine hospitality. Arrive from 5pm on Friday and leave after Sunday lunch. Single and twin rooms available. For more details see From the Secretary's Notebook.

Saturday 28 November Office Open Day

Office, Bookshop and Library open for enquiries 10.30-3.30pm. 27 Blackfriars Road, London SE1 8NY.

4pm Galician 'Lunch' at La Terraza, 27 Bedford Road, Clapham (North) SW4 7SH. Please phone office to book a place.

Saturday 5 December Constance Storrs Lecture

THE WORCESTER PILGRIM: A MYSTERY SOLVED?

Dr Katherine Lack, John Marshall Hall, Christ Church, 27 Blackfriars Road, London SE1 8NY, 3.30pm, £5. In her book, *The Cockleshell Pilgrim*, (£10.99) Katherine Lack shows that the pilgrim buried in the crypt of Worcester Cathedral could well be wealthy dyer Robert Sutton. This lecture is in preparation for the planned Holy Year visit to Worcester for 23-25 July 2010.

Saturday 30 January 2010 Annual General Meeting

11.30am Annual General Meeting, other presentations etc.

4.30pm Guest speaker Derry Brabbs, well known photographer and author of *The Roads to Santiago, the medieval pilgrim routes through France and Spain to Santiago de Compostela* published in 2008.

New Members

Information is provided for members' use only.

LONDON

Mr Robin Bonner	07949 078733
62 Brooke Road London N16 7RU	
Mr Tom Farnsworth	07738 267007
8 Maple Court, Cantwell Road Shooters Hill London SE18 3LW	
Mr Thiemo Fetzner & Ms Franziska Weiss	07727 819961
18-24 Fitzroy St, Carr-Saunders-Hall Room 509 London W1T 4BN	
Mr Andrew Folan	07713 175733
79 Mayday Gardens Blackheath London SE3 8NL	
Mr Albert Garcia-Bermejo & Mr I Garcia-Diaz	020 8452 0531
30 Alder Grove London NW2 7DB	
Mr Simon Hawkins	020 8693 6026
Basement Flat 23 Barry Road London SE22 0HX	
Mr Thomas Hawkins	020 8365 8554
113 Brownlow Road Bounds Green London N11 2BN	
Mr Edward & Mr Alexander Hunter	020 8788 9094
14 Festing Road Putney London SW15 1LP	
Mr Stefan Kaven	020 8944 9931
Flat 2, 18 The Grange Wimbledon London SW19 4PS	
Ms Cathy Keable-Elliott	020 8761 9208
74 Queen Mary Road London SE19 3NP	
Mr Charles Leonard	020 8944 0702
Flat 6 Cromwell Court 40 Alexandra Road Wimbledon SW19 7JZ	
Mr Raphael Miller	07899 074029
41B The Broadway Mill Hill London NW7 3DA	
Revd Alan Moses	020 7636 1788
All Saints Vicarage 7 Margaret Street London W1W 8JG	
Lady Jane Naylor	07740 475221
SafeHands For Mothers 23 Fitzjohns Avenue London NW3 5JY	
Mr Robert & Mrs Teresa Shaw	020 8994 1599
32 Foster Road London W4 4NY	
Mr Jock Shearer	07891 592636
15 Hillcrest Road Acton London W3 9RN	

HOME COUNTIES NORTH

Mr Nick Dunkley	01628 603690
23 Sonds Farm Drive Burnham Bucks. SL1 7LD	
Miss Carol Target	07531 716391
32 Hunsdon Road Iffley Oxfordshire OX4 4JE	

HOME COUNTIES SOUTH

Mrs Patricia Barr 01883 713913
11 Blouhouse Lane Oxted Surrey RH8 0AA
Mr Jonathan Clay
3A Larchwood Drive Englefield Green Egham Surrey TW20 0SQ
Mr John Dyer 07941 183786
41 Longdene Road Haslemere Surry GU27 2PQ
Mr Robert & Mrs Ana Maria Gomez 07789 502530
62 Netherby Park Weybridge Surrey KT12 8AQ
Mr Richard Green, Revd Dominic O'Hara & Revd Dominic Rolls
01243 823619
Priory Cottage High Street Bognor Regis West Sussex PO21 1HB
Priory Cottage
Mrs Mary Lowerson 01273 473413
9 Bradford Road Lewes E Sussex BN7 1RB
Mr Martin Martin 020 8940 9409
Flat 10, Priors Lodge 56 Richmond Hill Richmond Surrey TW10 6BB
Mrs Suzanne Pepperell 020 8398 7146
1 Wessex Close Thames Ditton Surrey KT7 0EJ
Ms Hendrika Van Schie, Mr Matt Lennon and Ms Celia, Ms Janine &
Ms Lynn Parry
33 Dunstable Road Richmond Surrey TW9 1UH

WEST

Revd Jonathan Herbert 01308 868308
Pilsdon Manor Bridport Dorset DT6 5NZ
Mr Michael & Mrs Jennifer Moore 01380 860615
Tudor House Horton Nr Devizes SN10 3NB
Mr Mike Smith 02380 845338
66 Davidson Close Hythe Southampton SO45 6JT
Mr Timothy Colebrook & Mr Richard Lane 01392 861019
Ockero Thorverton Exeter EX5 5NL
Mr Barry Cotter, QC 0117 973 1802
7 Mortimer Road Bristol BS8 4EX
Mr Steve Foster & Ms Monica Castle 01761 453634
"Karradale" Wells Road Hallatrow Bristol BS39 6EJ
Mr Kim Hemsworth 01326 574184
Leat Edge Coverack Bridges Helston Cornwall TR13 0LX
Mr Benedict Keatinge, Mote Keatinge & Mr James Sizeland
07789 007203
Youldens, Main Road Harbertonford Totnes Devon TQ9 7TR

WALES

Ms Marie Furness
C/o 22 Allan Durst Close, Danes Court Llandaff Cardiff CF5 2RP

Mrs Stephanie Jefferies 01792 402409
 26 Farnhill Close Blackpill Swansea SA3 5BX
 Dr William Morgan 01873 811242
 5 Church View Llangattock Crickhowell Powys NP8 1PQ
 Mr Reg & Mrs Pauline Peacock 01978 755839
 Bryn Glas, Llanarmon Road Bwlchgwyn Wrexham LL11 5YP

EAST MIDLANDS

Mr Stephen & Mrs Di Matthews 0115 933 4363
 3 Bailey Court Radcliffe-on-Trent Notts. NG12 2DN
 Mr Andrew Skinner 01522 523046
 2 Lichfield Road Bracebridge Heath Lincoln Lincolnshire LN4 2SS

WEST MIDLANDS

Mr Jim Croskerry 01782 372735
 The Green Cottage Vicarage Lane Barlaston Staffs. ST12 9AG
 Revd Tony & Mrs Alison Sparham 01691 770320
 8 Sycamore Close St Martins Oswestry Shropshire SY11 3EL
 Revd Ricarda Witcombe 01452 500443
 St Paul's Vicarage 2 King Edward's Ave Gloucester GL1 2DA

EAST ANGLIA

Ms Maggi Livingstone, Ms Fran Earnshaw/Miller & Ms Liz Fairhurst
 01394 450438
 Nightingale Cottage 39 School Road Sudbourne Suffolk IP12 2BE
 Miss Lourdes Ortiz de Urbina 07975 585272
 3 Melbourne Mews Church St Attleborough Norfolk NR17 2QG
 Dr Melanie Shaw 01603 270471
 The Maltings South Walsham Road Panxworth Norfolk NR13 6JG

NORTH EAST

Mr Martin & Mrs Gwen Grove 01423 503873
 19 Granville Road Harrogate HG1 1BY
 Mr Alan Jordan 01943 877318
 22 Old Hollings Hill Guiseley Leeds W Yorks LS20 8EW

NORTH WEST

Dr Robert Blackwood 0151 733 3586
 276 Prince Alfred Road Wavertree Liverpool Merseyside L15 8HH
 Mr Julian Peterson 01524 823152
 62 Marine Drive Hest Bank Lancaster LA2 6EB
 Mrs Aelison Wilson 01928 735765
 1 Elm Rise Frodsham Cheshire WA6 6AJ

NORTHERN IRELAND

Ms Zoe & Ms Catherine Keown 028 4484 1189
 73 Killard Rd Ballyhornan Downpatrick Co Down BT30 7PQ

SCOTLAND

Mr Mark & Mrs Karen Calder 07877 243509
Lethenty Byre Lethenty Mill Inverurie Aberdeenshire AB51 0HQ
Ms Svenja Meyerricks & Mr Luke Devlin
G/R 14 Queen Mary Avenue Glasgow G42 8DT
Mrs Diane Taylor 01349 864461
1 Laurel Bank Dingwall Ross-Shire IV15 9NE

EUROPE

Mr David O'Sullivan & Mrs Dorte Klabbe 0045 3284 7017
Kinavej 22 Copenhagen 3 2300 Denmark
Mr Chris Wells 00353 872 142344
Cong Hostel Cong Co Mayo Ireland

USA

Mr Richard Baldwin 001 1407 6297882
1550 Dale Avenue Winter Park Florida FL 32789 U S A

CENTRAL AMERICA

Mr Adriaan & Mrs Anne Kreupeling 001 506 2244 3669
Apdo. 192 Sto. Domingo de Heredia 3100 Costa Rica

CANADA

Mr Donald Sinclair & Mr Valmon Le Blanc 001 604 266 8121
2072 W.43 Avenue Vancouver B C V6M 2L9 Canada

AUSTRALIA

Ms Katharina Kahsche 0061 2 9519 1338
86 Gowrie Street Erschineville NSW 2043 Australia
Ms Christine Leach 0061 2 6681 1578
PO Box 1104 Ballina NSW 2478
Mr Patrick & Mrs Katherine O'Connor
31 Burton St Randwick NSW 2031 Australia
Mrs Penny Oldfield 0061 4 1732 8753
26 Coniston Place Trevallyn Tasmania 7250 Australia
Ms Desley Pedrazzini 0061 7 3369 5530
PO Box 18 Royal Brisbane Hospital Brisbane QLD 4029 Australia
Mr Peter & Mrs Pauline Rake 0061 2 49521744
71 Charlestown Road Kotara NSW 2289 Australia
Ms Lynn Thomas 0061 2 9569 9339
Flat 5, 6 Merton St Syanmore NSW 2048 Australia

NEW ZEALAND

Mr Don Harford 0064 7856 2280
15 Howell Ave Hillcrest Hamilton 3216 New Zealand

Editors of Confraternity Publications

available from Registered Office:
27 Blackfriars Road, LONDON SE1 8NY
telephone (020) 7928 9988 fax (020) 7928 2844
or through our secure online bookshop at www.csj.org.uk/bookshop

The editors of our guides are always keen to receive feedback. If you have recently been on any part of the pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela, have used one of the guides listed below, and wish to pass on the benefit of your experience to those who may come after you, please contact the relevant author/s:

Pilgrim Guides to Spain

- 1 *Camino Francés* William Bisset
editorcf@csj.org.uk
- 2 *Camino Mozárabe* Alison Raju, 21 Hall Street, Sherwood, NOTTINGHAM NG5 4BB
alisonraju@btopenworld.com
- 3 *Finisterre* Alison Raju, 21 Hall Street, Sherwood, NOTTINGHAM NG5 4BB
alisonraju@btopenworld.com
- 4 *Los Caminos del Norte* Eric Walker, 4 Gawthorpe Avenue, BINGLEY, West Yorkshire BD16 4DG
(01274) 562559
- 5 *Camino Portugués* John Walker
johnniewalker-santiago@hotmail.com
- 6 *Madrid to Sahagún* Marigold Fox, 19 Maple Way, ROYSTON, Hertfordshire SG8 7DH
(01763) 244525
- 7 *Camino Inglés* John Walker
johnniewalker-santiago@hotmail.com

Pilgrim Guides to the Roads through France

- 1 *Paris to the Pyrenees* Marigold Fox, 19 Maple Way, ROYSTON, Hertfordshire SG8 7DH
(01763) 244525
- 3 *Le Puy to the Pyrenees* Alison Raju, 21 Hall Street, Sherwood, NOTTINGHAM NG5 4BB
alisonraju@btopenworld.com
- 4 *Arles to Puente La Reina* Marigold Fox, 19 Maple Way, ROYSTON, Hertfordshire SG8 7DH
(01763) 244525

Pilgrim Guides to the Roads through Europe

- 2 *Nürnberg to Konstanz* Alison Raju, 21 Hall Street, Sherwood, NOTTINGHAM NG5 4BB
alisonraju@btopenworld.com
- 4 *Via Gebennensis* Alison Raju, 21 Hall Street, Sherwood, NOTTINGHAM NG5 4BB
alisonraju@btopenworld.com

Practical Pilgrim Notes *for Walkers*
for Cyclists
for Riders
Winter Pilgrim
Which Camino?

Contributions to these and other publications should be addressed to the Office.

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 11am to 3pm (other times by appointment)

telephone (020) 7928 9988 fax (020) 7928 2844 email office@csj.org.uk website www.csj.org.uk

Honorary President

H E The Spanish Ambassador

Secretary

Marion Marples
45 Dolben Street, LONDON SE1 0UQ

Pilgrim Record Secretary

Please apply with SAE (quoting membership number) to:
Doreen Hansen, 1 Kingscote Close, Hatherley, CHELTENHAM GL51 6JU

Committee 2009 Charity Trustees and Company Directors

Chairman

Dr William Griffiths, 8 Glenville Road, KINGSTON-UPON-THAMES,
Surrey KT2 6DD (020) 8549 2080 w.griffiths@ukonline.co.uk

Vice-Chairman

Alison Raju, 21 Hall Street, Sherwood, NOTTINGHAM NG5 4BB
alisonraju@btopenworld.com

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

Other Members

Gosia Brykczynska, Roger Davies, Susan Goddard, Paul Graham,
Catherine Kimmel, Mary Moseley, Angelika Schneider,
Cristina Spink, Graeme Taylor, Eileen Terry

Rabanal Committee

Chairman

Paul Graham, Somer House, The Street, CHILCOMPTON, Somerset
BA3 4HB p.graham2712@btinternet.com

*Wardens' Coordinator,
Refugio Gaucelmo*

Roger Davies, West Wing, Down Hall, Bedford Place, BRIDPORT,
Dorset DT6 3ND (01308) 427295 r&j@rogerdavies.go-plus.com

Other Members

Trevor Curnow, Laurie Dennett, David Garcia, Michael Krier,
Marion Marples, Alison Raju, Graham Scholes

Miraz Committee

Coordinator

Colin Jones

Other Members

Alan Cutbush (*hospitaleros*), Peter FitzGerald (property),
Alison Raju, Alison Thorp, Keith Young, Maureen Young

Other Officers

Finance Manager

Alison Thorp, 18 West Farm Avenue, ASHTEAD, Surrey KT21 2LG,
alison.thorp@virgin.net

*Treasurer
and Company Secretary*

Tony Ward, Syracuse, ST NEOT, Cornwall PL14 6NJ
Work (01579) 343215 mail@tonyward.biz

*Librarian
and Website Manager*

Howard Nelson, 71 Oglander Road, LONDON SE15 4DD
howard@csj.org.uk

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.*

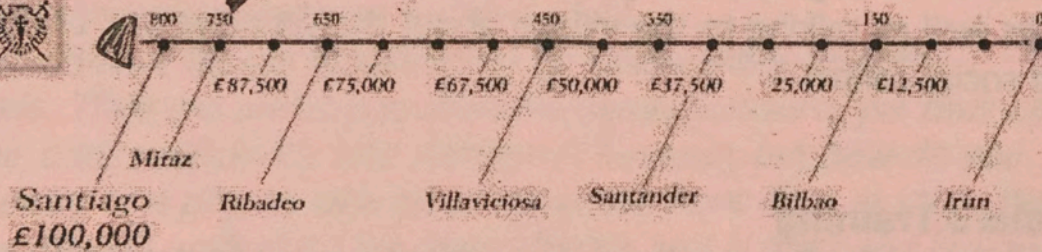
Digital Library Manager

Michael Krier, Hyde, Temple Guiting, CHELTENHAM, Glos GL54 5RT
krier@btinternet.com

MIRAZ NEWS - Autumn 2009



How has the *gaitero* progressed?



Appeal Total
£91,155
THANK YOU

- Miraz Development News
- 2010 Holy Year -the Challenge
- New Miraz T- Shirt
- Events and Sponsorship
- Sponsor-a-Week

*** Miraz Development News ***

Latest news

We have finally heard that we are not to receive a grant from the *Xunta de Galicia*. It therefore looks unlikely that we shall have sufficient funds to build the extension to the refuge in the near future. However, numbers of pilgrims on the Northern Route and those wishing to stay at Miraz are still rising. It is not hard to see that this will continue next year, the Holy Year. So, the question of how to accommodate so many pilgrims with such limited resources is something that the Miraz Committee has been discussing as a matter of urgency. Several possibilities are going to be investigated. CSJ trustees will make representations to the *Xunta*, in conjunction with the Galician *Asociación de Amigos* at a forthcoming conference to be held in Santiago. It is also important that those responsible for managing the Holy Year are made aware of the difficulties pilgrims now face in finding a place to stay at certain points along the *Camino del Norte*.

We shall also investigate putting temporary accommodation in the refuge's *huerta*, as well as talking to the village about the sensitive use of the newly restored social centre.

Hospitalero Training

To help wardens for the coming season we are going to produce a training film showing the way we try to welcome pilgrims and giving glimpses of a typical "wardens' day". It is hoped that this will provide more of a flavour of Miraz than the still photos we have been using until now. Filming is one thing, editing is another! If anyone can offer their talents in the editing room, **please contact Colin Jones.**

Working Party, March 2010

With the Holy Year fast approaching the next working party takes on a new importance. We are always looking for volunteers who can help get the building into tiptop condition ready for the pilgrims. Can you paint, are not averse to going up ladders, and able use a hammer as nature intended it to be used. Interested? **please contact Peter Fitzgerald.**

2010 HOLY YEAR- THE CHALLENGE!

Next year is a Holy Year as the feast of Saint James 25 July falls on a Sunday. This has major implications for the pilgrimage particularly the numbers who are expected to arrive in Santiago throughout the year. A forecast of more than 200,000 pilgrims has been mentioned. To date we have somehow managed to accommodate those reaching Miraz, with a peak of 44 pilgrims on 21 August. This has placed pressure upon the *hospitaleros* this year as the following extract shows:

There are now a great many pilgrims on the Camino, on some days there have been as many as fifty arriving at the refugio, and the hospitaleros have been overwhelmed by the sheer numbers. Although they have been able to persuade some to continue walking or to seek accommodation elsewhere, the majority insist on staying at Miraz, and we have on a number of days felt compelled to accept more than our stipulated maximum number of 21.

It is very difficult for our hospitaleros to refuse entry on some occasions. They are under considerable moral pressure, yet they carry out their duties efficiently and with good humour; but how do you refuse entry to a pilgrim who turns up at the front door at six in the evening, having walked 40 km from Villalba and is tired and hungry?

Clearly the demand for support and accommodation is likely to grow next year. Plans locally by the *Xunta* and *Xacobeo* are still uncertain. However there will be a need for funds to support the impact of the Holy Year in Miraz. Approaches are being made to the EU, grant making bodies, pilgrim associations and corporate sponsors. The aim is to attract major funds to permit the development of the *refugio* at Miraz. Our contacts and resources are limited. We would welcome the ideas and experience of members who have success in this professional field.

*****Fundraising Thanks*****

Our thanks go to Priscilla and Mark White for their *Merienda* & Summer Garden Party. The time was enjoyed by all as well as a magnificent Men's Singles Final at Wimbledon.

*** Thank You ***

Our grateful thanks go to all those of you who have made possible the establishment and running of the Miraz refuge, by contributing so much in donations and in time, but also in your interest and support. We are very lucky to have received several significant donations; however, it is the smaller amounts which make up over 90% of the total raised so far and do make a big difference. Thank you everyone.

And pilgrims appreciate it too:-

On our pilgrimage on the "Camino del Norte" in Spain we came on 9th June 2009 to the albergue of Miraz. We did the washing of our clothes after a long day of walking and hung out the laundry. But rain was coming down in sheets. No way to dry our clothes. So the "nurses" of Miraz dried our clothes in their drier!!! What a unique help for a pilgrim!!!

For dinner they had prepared an excellent soup and we relaxed perfectly from the stress of the passed day. In the morning they had prepared the table - for every pilgrim his place - for breakfast. It was unique!

We made the "Camino Frances" from Roncesvalles to Santiago, but such a "thing" we never could enjoy. Please give them the best greetings of two pilgrims, which are happy to have lived their help and humanity. Rita from Catalunya and Winfried from Germany

Events and sponsorship

Himalyan Trek In November 2009 Graeme Taylor intends to reach the source of the Ganges in the Himalayas.

His objective is to reach the source of the Ganges, understood to be in the Gangotri Glacier, Uttar Pradesh, Himalayas, India. This is an intensely spiritual site for Indians on a par with Santiago for Christians.

He will make the final 66 mile walking trek through the Himalayas to Gangotri. This will be a solo effort. It is likely he will camp out most nights of the walk itself and he will send a photo of himself standing outside the gates of the temple at Gangotri as evidence of completion of the walk (if he cannot get one of him bathing in some glacial meltwater nearby - the local equivalent of casting one's clothes off and bathing at Finisterre).

He is a trustee of the Confraternity and the 'Scottish Representative'. He goes with the support of his fellow trustees on this ambitious challenge. This holiday has become a fund-raising opportunity. He is paying for himself so all monies raised will go towards the Confraternity's Miraz appeal.

Could people interested in making donations, for now, contact him personally at TaylorGTaylor@btinternet.com.

*** Back by Popular Demand ***

¡Que aproveche!

Recipes from Spain



Confraternity of Saint James

The first edition of the
"Que Aproveche !" recipe
book produced in aid of the
Miraz Appeal
has now sold out

But Don't Panic!

The 2nd edition is in
production with more new
recipes added

Maureen Young plans a fund
raising meal using the best of
the recipes

*** Other Fundraising ***

**Up to now the most popular events have been those which have
included food**

- either staying in for a meal or a coffee morning
- or eating out at a local pub or restaurant

Other members have raised funds by

- Selling CD and book accounts of their camino
- Being sponsored for events
- Offering their holiday cottages at special rates to members
- Giving talks about the camino
- Holding concerts
- Leading walks to local places of interest

**If you have ideas for future fundraising.
please let us know via the office.**

*****Miraz T shirt*****



Initially available in Royal Blue.

The gaitero is in white and the arrow in yellow.

To see in glorious technicolour, please visit the CSJ website

Sizes S to XXL

£10 +p&p

Please order using the form on page 8 or via the website www.csj.org.uk

*** Sponsor-a-Week ***

This scheme was introduced in the early days of Refugio Gaucelmo to allow pilgrims to support and keep in touch with events in Rabanal by sponsoring-a-week for £50 (or £25 if you share with a friend), You can also sponsor-a-week at Miraz and you will receive a letter from the *hospitaleros* telling you the pilgrim news for your week, and will know that you are helping pilgrims too.

Please use the form on page 8, or contact Alison Thorp

email: ["mailto:alison.thorp@virgin.net"](mailto:alison.thorp@virgin.net) or Tel: +44 – (0)1372-274398 for more details

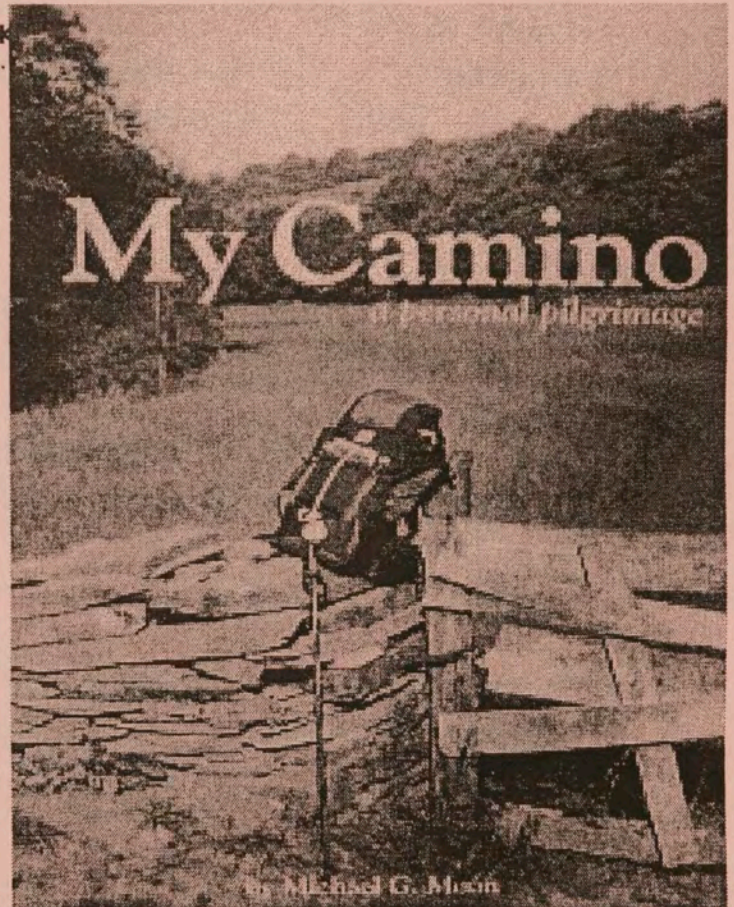
***"My Camino : a personal pilgrimage" ***

Michael Moon's book following in the footsteps of his ancestor who walked from St Jean-de-Pied-de-Port to Santiago in 1280AD.

Many colour photos.

Cost: £12.99 + p&p
(includes £6.50 per copy to Miraz.)

Please order using the form on page 8, or via the CSJ website Bookshop.



***** Miraz Contacts *****

If you have any suggestions, offers or comments, or need more information, please contact the following by email or via the office

Co-ordinator	Colin Jones	- pacharan@btinternet.com
Fundraising	Richard Jefferies	- richardjefferies@ntlworld.com
Operations/ Hospitaleros	Alan Cutbush	- alan@cutbush35.fsnet.co.uk
Property	Peter FitzGerald	- peter_of_chichester@tiscali.co.uk

Order & / or Donations Form

CSJ Member no. (if known)

Name

.....

Address.....

.....

.....

Tel or email address :

.....

I wish to :-

☐ Order : ---- (number) Miraz T-shirts

Size : S / M / L / XL / XXL

Cost : £10 each

+ P&P : UK £1.50, EU £1.89, ROW £3.30 per shirt -----

☐ Order ---- copy/ies of "My Camino" – cost £12.99 each

+ P&P : UK £1.00, EU £2.20, ROW £3.95 per copy -----

☐ Help pilgrims at Miraz by sponsoring the
week shown below for £50 (or part week for £25) -----

(Date)

☐ Sponsor Graeme Taylor to the source of the Ganges or make a donation to
the Miraz Appeal

Total £ =====

Payment

☐ I enclose a cheque made payable to "Confraternity of Saint James"

☐ I authorise the CSJ to charge my credit card as follows
(NB: Credit cards will be charged **actual** postage)

Visa / Mastercard Number - - - - / - - - - / - - - - / - - - -

Expiry Date - - / - - Security Code - - -

Signed

Date:.....

Please send the completed form to :

CSJ - Miraz Appeal, 27 Blackfriars Road, London SE1 8NY