



Confraternity of Saint James

Bulletin



December 2015

No 132

About the *Bulletin*

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Cover: Statue of
St James, Aix-en-
Provence, France

Editorial

Gosia Brykczyńska

The poet Robert Frost well summed up the peculiarities of our winter and in particular mid-winter, noting –

*...This Eden day is done at two o'clock.
An hour of winter day might seem too short
To make it worth life's while to wake and sport.*

And so I console myself that the reason why working in December (especially writing editorials) is so difficult is because the days are grey and short and dismal. No small surprise that Christmas and end of year festivities seem to be the rational antidote to this seasonal gloom.

Meanwhile, for CSJ trustees, committee members and those working in the Blackfriars office, this time of year is rather busy and quite intense, as they write their year-end reviews, collate pilgrim numbers, and assess the health of our finances. There is the AGM to prepare for and posting out of pilgrim passports to intrepid winter pilgrims! There is no real slowing down for those working in the CSJ office.

In the Blackfriars office there are new faces: in addition to Jean Marray who joined earlier this year as Secretary, we now have CSJ member Rose Creeser who will be helping develop our successful online bookshop. Moreover, Colin our chairman and the current trustees have put out an email request inviting members to come forward as possible future trustees and engage in the running of the CSJ.

In spite of Robert Frost's assertion that maybe it's not worth getting out of bed these short and miserable days, much is happening at the CSJ headquarters and there is a wind of change and novelty. So, this last Bulletin of 2015 reflects in many ways not only the various activities we have undertaken, facilitated and promoted this last year, but also hints at where we would like to be and points ahead to new ventures.

There is a report from Stein Thue about a most timely international peace pilgrimage from Trondheim to Rome; and a report from a regional pilgrim event in Exeter – reflecting the increase in local

membership groups getting together to share past experiences and to encourage new pilgrims to fearlessly set out.

David Baldwin, in a short piece, comments on going back to Santiago de Compostela – after undertaking many other pilgrimages in the meantime, and writing them all up as publications for the benefit of others and to promote the noble art of wandering with pious (and not only) intent. His popular series of pilgrimage booklets published by CTS only confirms our own experience at our busy online bookshop. Pilgrims are hungry for a spiritual dimension to their pilgrimage and seek out publications that can help them experience and prepare for a more fully spiritually rounded camino. This is also echoed in a report from our *albergue* in Rabanal.

Dermot Wynne reminds us that however and whenever we do our pilgrimage – it's ours to own and claim as special and unique to us. This truth is quietly repeated in many places in this Bulletin, not least in the poem – O Santiago. Finally, Minna Graber writes about walking alternative routes (difficult mountainous caminos), while Poppy Peregrina considers her personal camino to have been a path less travelled, possibly because it was not adequately way-marked! She leaves us with a Christmas goodwill glow in the re-telling this timeless tale.

The modern world encroaches into this Bulletin – reminding us of films such as the recent showings around the country of *Walking the Camino – Six Ways to Santiago*, which several CSJ members had seen this mid-summer in London. Adam Wells gives a glimpse into the activities necessary to promote the film in the UK and to arrange viewings. For future screenings of the film around the UK, consult this Bulletin and the CSJ website.

Even our Book Reviews this time reflect the wide-ranging interests of our membership, and although the pilgrimage from northern Italy to Rome along the St Francis Way is not strictly a St James's focused way, since St Francis intended to go to Santiago and his *Friars Minor* certainly did manage to reach the holy city, I think we can celebrate the publication of this new guide while enjoying the other books that are reviewed. There is still opportunity to purchase a copy of the books in time for Epiphany celebrations!

The most difficult aspect of putting a Bulletin together must be the publishing of obituaries and announcing the deaths of fellow pilgrims, people we have known, worked with and who have touched us in so many ways. In the past few months, since the last Bulletin was

published, we have lost Tony Morwood-Leyland, our Membership secretary; and both Maureen Measure (an office volunteer) and Christine Pleasants (an administrative assistant in the office) have lost their spouses. We assure the families of our sincere condolences and prayerful memory.

And so not only has another Bulletin dropped through your letterbox but you have experienced in a microscopic format a bit of the diversity and breadth of our shared camino experience as a member of the CSJ. May the spirit of St James stay with you throughout the next year, and may the great pilgrim-apostle guide your steps and enlighten your way wherever you may have to go. Just as I have already completed my pilgrimage to Santiago, and wish to share its joys with you, so others will no doubt follow behind me. As the contemporary poet Dorothy Hallard gently observes, I...

*...find myself now thinking
The generations linking in a firm continuum of mind*

*The bridge of immortality
I'm walking
The voice before me echoing behind.*

From Colin, all the trustees and the office staff, may I wish you all a wonderful Christmas, and we are looking forward to meeting up with you at the AGM in January. ¡Ultreia!

Gaucelmo Celebrations

Dick Crean

All CSJ Members, villagers of Rabanal del Camino and everyone who has been involved at Gaucelmo are warmly invited to celebrate 25 years of pilgrim hospitality in Rabanal on the weekend of 8.9.10 July 2016.

The provisional programme was outlined in the September Bulletin. Please refer to that and note the following changes:

- Meals will be provided for visitors at the start of the celebration on Friday evening and the finish on Sunday lunchtime.
- Mass on Saturday will be in the Church of Santa Maria and the meal will be in the huerta.
- There will be a Tapas trail on Saturday evening before the 'concert'. If anyone is able to perform at the concert, please let us know!

Refugio Gaucelmo itself will be functioning normally so no visitor will be able to stay there (or have breakfast there).

There are many places to stay in Rabanal for the Friday and Saturday nights. They are in no particular order here but please choose where you would like to be and whether you do the booking yourself or ask us to do it for you; let Dick & Liz Crean know so that they can keep a tally of numbers. **Please email: thecreans@btinternet.com or phone: 0117 973 4502.**

Once you tell us your requirements, we will provide phone numbers and email addresses:

1. The monks' retreat house (La Casa de Acogida) is reserved for us for the weekend. It has a dormitory with 10 beds, is comfortable, offers breakfast and functions on a donations basis. Website: **www.monteirago.org**
2. Meson el Refugio (Antonios) has 9 rooms. Doubles are €50 and singles €35. Breakfast is separately ordered in the bar. **www.hostalelrefugio.es**
3. Casa Rural "A Cruz de Ferro" (Miriam & Manuel) has one 4-bedded room at €60, one twin at €40 and one double at €30. **www.acruzdeferro.es**
4. Miriam now also runs the Albergue Municipal in the main

square and would make available a 9-bedded room there at €5 per person.

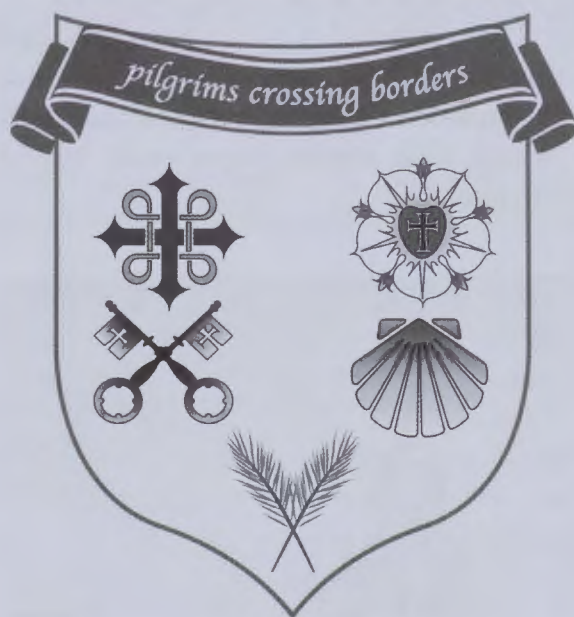
5. Posada Gaspar. A variety of rooms at €54 for two sharing. Breakfast is separately ordered at the bar.
6. Albergue El Pilar (in the main square). This will be functioning for pilgrims but private rooms are also available for anyone particularly wanting to stay there. The same would be true of El Tesin and La Senda (at the village entrance).
7. Casa Rural Las Carballadas. This a brand new development on the camino 1 km before the village. See: **www.escapadarural.com/casa-rural/leon/lascarballadas**. It has four apartments, within which each double room costs €60. A deposit is required to book this.



Sketch of Rabanal by Chris Porter

Report from the Pilgrims Crossing Borders Walk

Stein Thue



Pilgrims Crossing Borders was an organised pilgrim walk from Trondheim to Rome, from 22 April to 14 October 2015. Six European pilgrim associations and 400 participants from 12 nations cooperated on bringing a pilgrim staff and a diary along the old European pilgrim ways to Rome. The total distance covered was around 3000 kilometres. Our planned pilgrimage on to Nazareth and Jerusalem (18 - 27 October) quite understandably had to be cancelled.

The motivation behind the pilgrim walk was and is to create an idealistic endeavour. The concept was developed by pilgrim veterans Alberto Alberti from Rome and Stein Thue from Trondheim. Would we be able to use the old pilgrim ways (in our case, the St. Olav's Paths, via Rome and via the Francigena del Sud) to build bridges between peoples and countries?

The idea of a European pilgrim walk was launched and preparations had been initiated early in 2013. Six pilgrim associations contributed infrastructure and logistics assistance. Einar Vegge, the pilgrim pastor of Nidaros Cathedral, joined the effort early on as

a resourceful contributor and prime mover behind the cultural events and promotion of the walk. Trondheim local authority and the National Pilgrim Centre in Trondheim offered their support and contributed to the events. Due to all these efforts, the idea of a walk from Trondheim to Rome and Jerusalem quickly gained support and acceptance. Volunteers signed up as stage leaders for the 175 day stages and accommodation was arranged. An impressive international joint effort gathered force, and thanks to voluntary enthusiasts and local pilgrim associations this marathon walk across Europe was able to be arranged.

The walk started with a divine service and launch in Nidaros Cathedral in Trondheim on 22 April. The Dean gave a sermon and the mayor of Trondheim gave a speech. The Trondheim Soloists played music composed in honour of the event and the vocal ensemble Schola Sanctae Sunnivae sang beautifully. The painting/portable altarpiece by Håkon Gullvåg, painted in tribute to the walk, was displayed in public for the first time. After the service, it was carried in a procession to the square facing the West Front of the Cathedral. The detachable middle section of the travel altar would join the walk in Einar Vegge's rucksack.

After being wished good luck and many greetings from enthusiastic participants, the walk commenced. Among the travelling companions on the first stage were, in addition to the many Norwegians, representatives from the Jacobi Church in Hamburg. This gave the walk an international aspect right from the first day. Participants would eventually include people from Australia, Canada, Denmark, France, Italy, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Syria, Germany, Austria and the USA. Saba from Syria deserves special mention. She lived in a refugee camp in Scharnitz in Austria. When the pilgrims came there in late August, Saba offered to prepare dinner for us. The day after, she joined the day's stage on the pilgrim way. We saw that the mutual generosity between 'Pellegrini' and permanent residents blesses the road for both parties. The pilgrims will remember Saba in Scharnitz, and she will probably remember the flock of pilgrims who visited her there.

Of the more than 400 pilgrims who participated, some only walked a single day stage. Others walked for weeks, some for months. Günter Hannig (76) from Germany walked 1600 kilometres from his home town Hamburg to Rome, while Canadian Wilma Foyle (82) walked 1200 kilometres from Würzburg in Germany to Rome. The pilgrim flock has also varied greatly in number, age and composition – from

two hearty souls to 70 pilgrims.

The specially designed pilgrim staff that was carried on the walk came from Stiklestad in Norway (the site where St. Olav died in battle). Its inscription was artfully made by the Restoration Workshop of Nidaros Cathedral. See it at *'Pilgrims Crossing Borders 2015/Nidaros/Trondheim-Roma-Jerusalem'*.

Right from the start we made it a point that anybody who wanted to join was welcome to take part in the walk, regardless of faith or life view. When in early August we came to Würzburg in Bavaria, meetings in accordance with the event's traditions were arranged between Jews, Christians and Muslims. These meetings were initiated by the German pilgrim association. To highlight the wish for dialogue between religions, the pilgrim staff was inscribed here with symbols for the Jewish faith, Christianity and Islam. Through these symbols on the pilgrim staff, we presented our quiet hope for reconciliation, understanding and increased knowledge about different ways of living, values and religions. For the pilgrim ways of Europe remind us about the common history and cultural heritage of the continent. Thus, we have also chosen the European Council's goal for Europe's cultural roads as the motto for our event:

"May the faith that has inspired pilgrims throughout history, uniting them in a common aspiration and transcending national differences and interests, inspire us today, and young people in particular, to travel along these routes in order to build a society founded on tolerance, respect for others, freedom and solidarity."

Now let us make a long story short and look at the events on 14 October on the final stage to Rome. A flock of 35 hopeful pilgrims were on their way along Via Cassia, walking towards St. Peter's Basilica. The meteorologists had predicted a veritable flood of pouring rain that we were equipped for but saved from. We had sent notification of our arrival and preparations had been made, and it did not take long before friendly police officers met us to stop car traffic where we needed to cross the road. RAI (Radiotelevisione Italiana) insisted on interviewing us several times along the way. On the way up Monte Mario, the hill of joy for pilgrims in Rome, we were met by uniformed park attendants who guided us to places with the best views of the goal for our pilgrimage.

When we passed along the final blocks toward St. Peter's Square, car traffic had been stopped to allow us free passage. It was not without a deep sense of piety and tears of joy that we saw St. Peter's Basilica at

close range. Shortly after arrival we participated in a divine service with the pilgrims who had walked from Rome to S. Maria de Leuca (935 km in 45 day stages), they also being a part of Pilgrims Crossing Borders. A party of pilgrims who had walked from Assisi to Rome to arrive on the same day as us were also among the churchgoers. The service became a time of solemnity where words fail to describe what the pilgrims felt after reaching the destination of their pilgrimage.

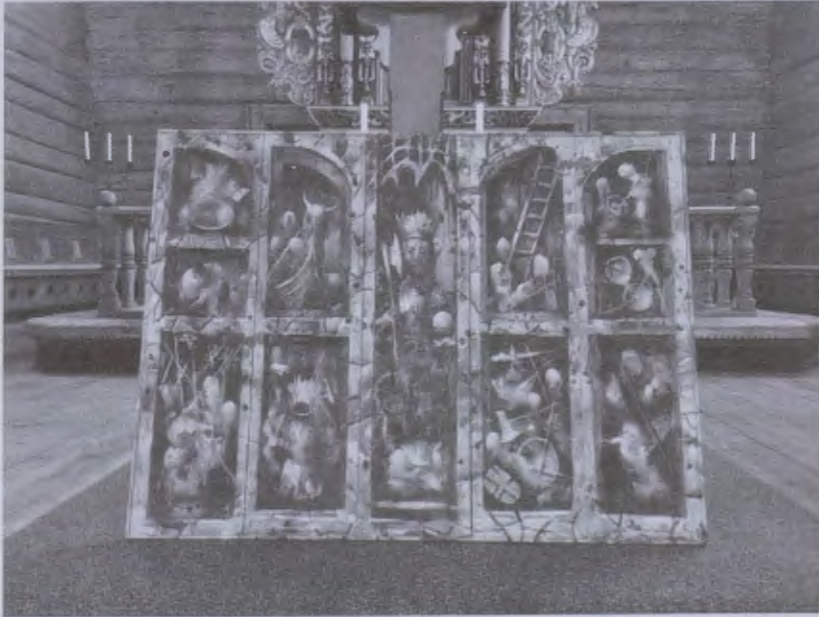
The next day (15 October) there was a full programme in Sala Campidoglio at the Capitol (a prominent meeting room for receptions and conferences in Rome). Representatives of the Mayor of Rome and the Italian Ministry of Culture welcomed us. The undersigned introduced the Pilgrims Crossing Borders walk to dignitaries and representatives of various participant countries, and pilgrim associations gave speeches. A packed room listened when the speakers talked about and showed pictures of the walks through Europe that they had completed.

In the evening, a concert featuring a quartet from the Trondheim Soloists was held at Chiesa di San Giovanni Battista dei Genovesi, a special medieval church with a cloistered garden, in the heart of Trastevere, Rome's ancient quarter. The concert included the composition by Tormod Tvette Vik in tribute to the walk. The work, called *Pilgrims Crossing Borders*, has been inspired by hymns from the countries the pilgrims crossed. The concert had its premiere performance in Nidaros Cathedral on 22 April, the first day of the walk. Then, as well as on this October night in Rome, the music created a harmonious atmosphere for contemplation and reflection. The musicians received standing ovations for their performance, and the audience successfully insisted on *da capos*. Again, we experienced music as a universal language that reaches out to everyone. The concert was sponsored by Trondheim Local Authority and the National Pilgrim Centre in Norway.

Another part of this story concerns the altarpiece by Håkon Gullvåg which arrived in Rome the same time as the pilgrims. The middle section of the painting, which can be detached, had in late April and early May been carried in the rucksack of the pilgrim pastor as he skied from Trondheim to Oppdal.

In October, the altarpiece arrived with Einar Vegge as special air transport to Rome. Here the pilgrim pastor ensured that the artwork was on display and the story retold to the hosts and pilgrims in the meeting room at the Capitol Hill, as well as in the medieval church in Trastevere.

We had originally planned to continue the pilgrim journey from Rome to Palestine during the final two weeks of October 2015. From Rome we would fly to Tel Aviv, and then walk from Nazareth to Jerusalem. This walk had been planned by the pilgrim pastor Einar



Håkon Gullvåg's travelling altar for Pilgrims Crossing Borders in Rennebu church

Vegge in cooperation with a Palestinian travel agency. The plan had attached importance to meetings, dialogues and interaction between pilgrims and permanent residents. The Trondheim Soloists as well as the Schola Sanctae Sunnivae choir were to give concerts in Ramallah and Jerusalem. When the situation in Jerusalem and the border adjacent to Gaza became very tense, it was decided to cancel the pilgrim walk in the Holy Land. The decision was made together with Norway's representation office for the Palestinian territories. While it must be said that this was a disappointing turn of events, it is important to take responsible action under the circumstances. When the Norwegian authorities advised against a walk where we had planned to go, it was wise to take this advice to heart. We again would like to thank Trondheim local authority and the National Pilgrim Centre for their promised support for the planned concerts with the Trondheim Soloists and the Schola Sanctae Sunnivae choir in Ramallah and Jerusalem. We hope that the situation for the local populations in the Palestinian territories and in Israel will soon improve. When the situation permits and the time is ripe, we will again consider a pilgrimage to the Holy Land.

Looking back, we consider Pilgrims Crossing Borders to have been a successful endeavour. We walked through a diversified Europe on old roads where pilgrims have walked for centuries before us. We met pilgrims and permanent residents with differing views of life and faiths and built bridges between countries and peoples. While Pilgrims Crossing Borders formally concluded on 15 October 2015, the international cooperation it has engendered has created a European network of pilgrim enthusiasts. We will meet again to evaluate the walk and to discuss how we can use this network to strengthen the voluntary pilgrim activities in Europe. The walks and the cooperation will continue.

In conclusion we would like to point out that Pilgrims Crossing Borders was possible due to cooperation between the following pilgrim associations and bodies:

- The Pilgrim Confraternity of St. Olav, Norway
- The Confraternity of St. James, Norway
- The Confraternity of St. Hallvard
- Nordjysk Pilgrimsforening
- Hauptkirche St. Jacobi, Hamburg
- The Via Romea Germanica, Italy
- Jakobsgemeinschaft Tirol
- Via Romea Stadensis
- Gruppo dei 12
- Club Alpino Italiano
- Trondheim Local Authority
- The National Pilgrim Centre in Norway
- The regional pilgrim centres in Norway

If you would like to find out more about Pilgrims Crossing Borders, check our blog, which features reports, photos and our handwritten diary: <http://picrobo.blogspot.com>

Trondheim, 10 November 2015
S.T.

O Santiago

Uncastedsky

*O Santiago, never seen,
Yet thought of in a distant dream
I look on your cathedral spires
That bend the thought to heavenly choirs
And pierce the blue Galician sky
To send the spirit soaring high*

*For here, within your ancient walls,
Still pilgrims make their sore footfall
As homeward, from the beaten path,
They step and stumble in at last
What liberation of their soul
Has lifted them towards this goal?*

*An ancient light has guided still
To lead beyond the western hills
Where once, within a mythic field,
Celestial glow was seen to yield
The resting place of one of twelve
Who knew the Saviour for himself*

*The brother of Saint John, this one
we know as James, a fisherman,
whose net was cast in wider arc
and souls were caught from worldly dark
And brought to know the holy light
That flows from Jesus, ever bright.*

*This compostella, holy shrine,
Has drawn in thousands at a time
Committed to the ancient Way
Which over Spanish kingdoms lay
This fair Camino, feet have trod
And known a deeper sense of God.*

*Today, upon this trail so vast,
The beauty of the land holds fast
In flowers, birds, in hedge and tree,
On mountains, valleys, rivers free
In colour, scent, in light and shade,
The spirit speaks to all He's made*

*So, coming to ourselves at last,
We may make sense of all that's past
Of new community we found,
By simply walking history's ground
And grateful, at the end to say,
For all the gifts upon the Way*

June 2014

Pilgrims' Day in Exeter

Jenny Heesh

The Pilgrims' Day was held on Sat 10th October at the Quaker Meeting House in Exeter - a beautiful and historic building which dates back to 1874. The meeting began at 10am with a delicious morning tea, followed by a Thought for the Day when we all took time for personal reflection. Valerie and Terry Brighton from the CSJ local group who officiated at the meeting then did an introduction when they set out the day's agenda, after which we all introduced ourselves. The group of around 20 pilgrims was a mixture of new and returning pilgrims. There were several Camino Forum members present, with some wonderfully familiar faces from the two 'Camigos in South Devon' meetings I'd been lucky enough to attend last year.

The group then moved to the 'core business' of the day... starting to plan and how to get to some starting places. Camino resources were then discussed. Mary Moseley from the CSJ Committee gave an excellent presentation on the wide variety of resources available to CSJ members and spoke in detail about the CSJ albergues at Miraz and Rabanal.

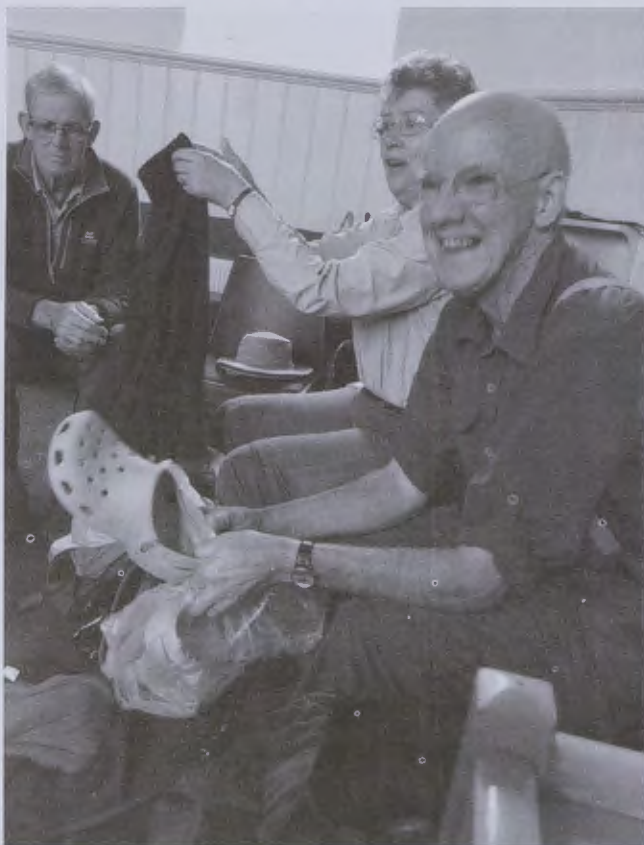
Mary brought along a number of the new, compact CSJ credentials which were passed around and much admired. The new credential is a beautiful document and it is obvious that much thought has gone into every aspect of it. The first verse of Sir Walter Raleigh's famous poem, 'The Passionate Man's Pilgrimage' is featured on its back cover:

*"Give me my scallop-shell of quiet,
My staff of faith to walk upon,
My scrip of joy, immortal diet,
My bottle of salvation,
My gown of glory, hope's true gage;
And thus I'll take my pilgrimage."*

The Camino Forum, well-known to a number in the group, was then discussed. The Forum has a global membership of well over 30,000. Answers to every camino question that has ever been asked can be found on the Forum. Much like the CSJ, it is a place of community and sharing, albeit in the online world. The Forum's website is

caminodesantiago.me.

Prior to lunch, practical issues were discussed and two groups were formed; for walkers and cyclists: Boots and Backpacks for the walkers and Bikes and Panniers for the cyclists. Valerie and Terry displayed the contents of their Camino-ready packs and explained why



Pilgrims' Day in Exeter

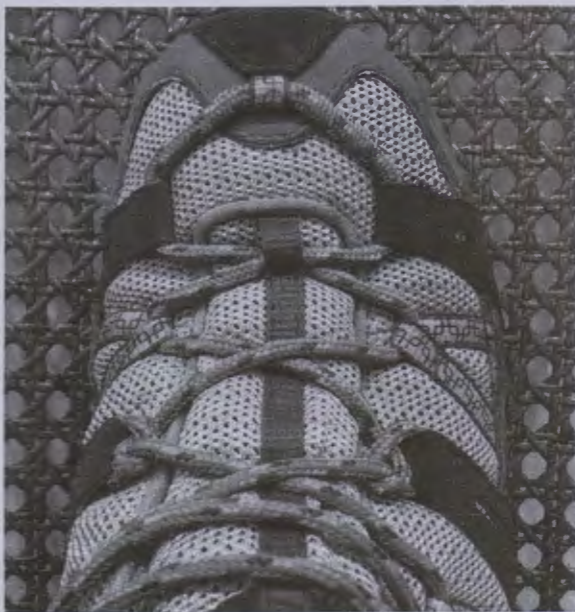
each item of gear worked so well. After so many caminos they certainly have l i g h t w e i g h t backpack packing down to a fine art! The importance of properly fitting boots was highlighted and Valerie and Terry gave the group a great tip which works well for them for blister prevention – wear three pairs of socks! The cyclists had an interesting and thorough demonstration, with CSJ member Jo bringing in her bike,

fully loaded with panniers, so explanations of each important facet could be given.

After lunch, veteran First-Aider, David, gave a talk on First Aid and Injury Prevention. David has vast experience of giving first aid and pastoral care on the Camino – this year was his tenth year supporting pilgrims on the early stages of the Camino Francés. Each year David sees the same problems: blisters caused by badly fitting or the wrong hiking boots/shoes and poor foot-care, to name a few. Knee problems caused by walking too quickly or too far each day and not resting adequately were also seen again this year. David then did a demonstration on how to tie the laces on hiking boots and shoes in a beneficial way to create the maximum room for toes. The method is to untie the laces, ball one's fist into the toe box of the boot or shoe to

create maximum room for the toes, and then to loosely lace the boot/shoe up to the third eyelet and then tie a half-hitch - a simple knot - at the third eyelet to secure the loosely tied laces. Then finish lacing as normal (see photo).

CSJ member Maggie and I then recounted our experience of being CSJ *hospitaleras* – a most rewarding experience that will stay with us for the rest of our lives. We both agreed that throughout our duties we were so well supported by the CSJ – nothing was left to doubt in our training and with the use of the Hospitaleros' Handbook, which gives all hospitaleros the confidence to carry out the role and to enjoy every day of their duty. Application forms for the



Demonstration of how to tie-up boots

volunteerships were handed out, with several of the group expressing interest. The application forms are also available on the CSJ website.

CSJ member Sean recounted his experience as a volunteer as part of the Amigos programme – now called Voluntarios – in Santiago. For two weeks Sean carried out a number of different duties for the Pilgrims' Office, including working in the office itself and outside on Plaza Obradoiro welcoming pilgrims to Santiago. Applications to be a Voluntario are available. Montse at the Pilgrim Office can be contacted at info@acogidacristianaenelcamino.es.

The various types of accommodation available on all the Caminos was discussed, as were pilgrim menus and of course the dreaded bedbugs! No pilgrim get-together is possible without the subject of bedbugs being raised! The day finished with a Q&A and afternoon tea. It was a most successful day and a day that was very much enjoyed by all. Special thanks to Valerie, Terry and Maggie. Profits from the day went to help the CSJ albergue at Miraz.

Return to Santiago

David Baldwin

I walked the Way of St James from Le Puy-en-Velay to Santiago in the Great Jubilee Year of 2000, the marvelous experience of which prompted me to write a small book of memories and reflections. Final production of the book would not have been possible without the comprehensive advice and input of Laurie Dennett, then Chairman of the Confraternity, with some lovely pictures contributed by Marigold Fox (*Santiago de Compostela, The Pilgrim Way of St James*, Catholic Truth Society (CTS); see also www.ctsbooks.org).

This year, 2015, I returned to Santiago to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the foundation of the *Apostolat Militaire International*, a lay Catholic organisation of military folk founded in Santiago and approved by the Holy See, which promotes Christian fellowship and practice throughout the armed forces of the world. The Assembly, with delegates from all over the world, was held over five days, staying directly opposite the Cathedral in the marvelous Hospedería San Martín Pinario.



Rev Dr Fr Francisco Buide de Real and author

Amongst the lectures and discussions was, not unexpectedly, a very informative and knowledgeable talk on the Way of St James, given by Dr Prof Rev Francisco Buide del Real from the University of Salamanca, who amongst his other duties is the Cathedral's Archivist. Of the 50 of my Santiago books donated by CTS to all delegates to mark this occasion, I was very happy to present one to Fr Francisco to be lodged in the Cathedral Archive.

It was an extraordinary

and grace-filled experience returning to Santiago (by plane and taxi!), with all the pilgrim memories coming flooding back: the anticipation, the arrival, the joyful meeting up with fellow *peregrinos*, the thanksgiving, the celebrations – a major fiesta of reminiscences! It was also lovely to chat quite uninhibitedly with the ‘arriving pilgrims’ and hear of their experiences fresh from the camino!

That first pilgrimage inspired me to journey to other pilgrim places and write about them, with my eleventh such book; bringing together all my pilgrim experiences from those many journeys and places, *Why Pilgrimage* has just been published by CTS. It seeks to answer the ‘whys’ as well as suggest some ‘wheres’.

A Parallel Route through Northern Mountains

Minna Graber

Whilst walking the Camino Primitivo last year I had come across information boards about the Gran Recorrido (long distance path) number 109. It sounded an exciting route and was very well sign posted. What's more, in effect it provides a route running parallel with the Camino Francés but through the spectacular mountains of northern Spain – the Cordillera Cantábrica. Anyone who has walked the Camino Francés will have been aware of these snowy heights on the right hand horizon accompanying them for many kilometres. The highest peaks in the range are called the Picos de Europa and have as fine mountain scenery as anywhere in Europe.

To my consternation however, when I enquired at Spanish Tourist Information offices, they told me that it was not practicable to follow the GR 109 as a long distance route because there was nowhere to stay and no information as to facilities. As a long distance walker of many years' experience a little thing like that wasn't going to put me off. I did a bit of research on the internet over the intervening winter and established that the longest stretch I would have to weather without any certainty of accommodation or a grocery store was going to be 4 days. I packed my usual hard rations (these largely consist of lentils, rice and packet soup) to last me five days, a bivouac and sleeping bag and set off.

In the course of my researches it became plain that the GR 71 made a logical prelude to the journey along the GR 109. This path passes through the mountainous Saja-Besaya Reserve and again runs parallel with the Camino Francés.

So it was that, towards the end of May this year, I set out on a RENFE train from the village just beside Santander airport (Maliaño) with a ticket to Bárcena de Pie de Concha and to the beginning of my journey.

Once I embarked on the route it became clear that there was much more in the way of accommodation and other facilities than appeared as I sat at my computer in London. It was also the case that many people were providing a very good service but were starved of

customers because of the lack of information about where to stay at the end of preceding or succeeding stages of the route. I decided that my mission was not to rough it in my bivouac, but to try and ferret out the missing details and publicize it as much as possible so that the life blood of a stream of other walkers could bring success to these good kind people and much enjoyment to those undertaking the path. Bivouacing is all very well but it isn't for everybody. I have succeeded in finding places to stay from Bárcena up to Barzana which is where I finished. Next year I will do Barzana to Berducedo.

Asturias, is famous for its great mists and uncertain weather and there were several days where I climbed endlessly only to be greeted by a complete white out at the top of the mountain. The information panels showing me what a great view I would have had in other weathers were not much compensation. Many were the occasions, however, when I stood in wonder at the beauty surrounding me. Often the view was of surrounding mountains against which waves of mist broke and fell back revealing and then concealing the mighty peaks. Quite frequently I could see for miles and miles through clear sunny weather and the pasture land surrounding me was starred by beautiful spring time flowers including many orchids.

The route itself was, in the main, easy to navigate. It follows earth roads used by the farming community – not that you will meet much traffic on them. It is signed with the red and white stripe familiar all over Europe. At junctions it has signposts that give the distance from the last head stop and on to the next one. It is true to say that in the remoter areas it does sometimes (very infrequently) peter out and it was handy to have a GPS system with me at those points. I have written a full account of my journey which can either be obtained from the Confraternity Office as hard copy or can be found in the form of a blog at this site:

<http://cordilleracantabric.blogspot.co.uk/2015/08/through-cantabrica-and-asturias-gr-71.html>

This also gives details of where you can download GPS tracks and where I found them useful.

The Spanish government site also gives a day by day account of the route and can be accessed here:

<http://www.magrama.gob.es/es/desarrollo-rural/temas/caminos-naturales/caminos-naturales/sector-noroeste/cordillera-cantabrica-asturias/default.aspx>

From this you will see that the route of the GR 109 in its

entirety stretches from Panes to Santa Eulalia de Oscos. It coincides with the Camino Primitivo from Berducedo to Grandas de Salime. Unfortunately the GPX file that is posted on this site is too big for my Garmin device to handle.

If you choose to add-in the preceding GR 71, there is a choice as to how to effect the join between the two routes. I took a bus between Potes (a really lovely town) and Panes. The gorge that the road runs down (Desfiladero Hermida) between these two towns would not be safe to walk. A more interesting possibility would be to follow the GR71 to its conclusion in Sotres and then carry on over the Picos de Europa to join the GR 109 at Carreña. My blog/account lodged with the Confraternity, sketches in the stages you might follow in order to do this and suggests a couple of side trips. Last year I completed all the trips recommended in this section apart from the walk down from Bulnes to Puente Poncebos and on to Carreña via Arena de Cabrales. I do hope some of you try the GR 71 and 109 as it is very lovely route and little frequented.

Do write to me if you think I can offer any further advice, at: **minnagraber@msn.com**

The Road Less Travelled

(An extract from a Camino Journal)

Poppy Peregrina

It is a very long climb up to Alto de Mostelares, nearly 1000 metres above sea level, then over the river and out of Castrojeríz (population 853, I note) and down a steep descent to 350 metres and a Y decision. Back at the high point, two crosses mark the deaths of two pilgrims: I wonder what they died of? The dates show them to be considerably younger than me. We come to a fork in the road with two signs, one, faded, pointing straight ahead and the other, much newer and with a more demanding presence, pointing to the left. A Frenchman, with whom we had dined last night in Castrojeríz, prominent in a cheery red jacket, is sitting in the wheat by the straight track. My feet turn themselves to this track, dotted on the sign board, which points to Itero del Castillo. Every other pilgrim takes the camino trail turning left without so much as a glance at this other possibility. A *frisson* of hesitation makes me pause – I could be wrong about this. Vanessa is up for an adventure, and follows me, calling to John who is fast disappearing left along the main camino track. He climbs back up the bank to join us, swears he will throttle me if...

We walk the track in silence. Underfoot is soft and dry rather like powder, gentle on the feet. Far to my left on a pitiless stretch of very empty road I see dots of pilgrims walking under the sun. Today isn't too hot, lucky for us all. After a pretty but Very Long Walk we come to a tiny, rather desolate, hamlet with a vast square tower high above the houses, an attractive standing stone and cross, a *fuentes* and a church – but no bar, no café, no shop. Things are looking bleak – we have been walking many hours and need breakfast. I am not looking forward to being throttled...

Exactly as I reach the last house in the village the front door springs open and a handsome man with the manners and elegance of a Spanish *grandee* steps out. He smiles at us and I ask if he knows of a bar or café where we might have coffee. He looks, well, slightly concerned I think, as if he doesn't want to burden such a lovely morning with bad news – there is no bar in Itero del Castillo; in fact there are no longer any pilgrims passing through Itero del Castillo because there is no longer any

bridge linking Itero del Castillo with Itero de la Vega – it was washed away years ago! But he holds all this to himself for the time being and calls up to the upper window, where appears his attractive wife. A few words exchanged and: *you are welcome in our home for coffee*, he smiles, looking back at us.

What a delightful home it is. Lovingly restored, fascinating old pieces everywhere, upstairs a landing whose floor has been removed to reveal the charming parlour below, the room adjacent to where we are led to. And the bathroom – filled with exquisitely embroidered linens, drawn thread work and old hand lace curtains – oh so pretty.

We spend two, or is it three, memorable hours with Fernando and Rosa, reluctant to leave this charming interlude of elegant and cultured company, good coffee, toast, butter, apricot jam and their last three almond biscuits; one for each of us *peregrinos*. Today is their day to shop and stock up. Fernando is a retired lecturer in agriculture, cereals, as I understand it, from the University of Valladolid. The name launches me into the remarkable account of my obtaining a Spanish *credencial* from Valladolid before I even set foot in Spain. In turn that draws many questions from the two of them about the Glastonbury legends and the church of St Mary; which conversation then leads on to Philip of Spain and the writing on the wall for English Catholics during the horrors of the Reformation in the 1530s. This leads on to the invitation of Philip in 1538 to found an English seminary in Valladolid – the point in question. ‘Ah,’ smiles Fernando, ‘*this Camino is a holy camino*’ and I respond, ‘*and meeting you and Rosa fills it with miracles!*’ He offers us walnuts from California. Cracking one for himself, Fernando says solemnly: ‘*My breakfast is very defined; one walnut, two toasts with olive oil, three toasts with jam, no coffee but chocolate with milk and honey.*’

I crack up laughing and pull out my notebook to quote his delightful breakfast discipline as Fernando looks up with a twinkle in his eye to ask if I will write this. When I say, ‘*Oh yes,*’ he replies: ‘*then I must break with tradition and crack a second walnut!*’

Rosa tells us how unusually cold the weather is this year, and then they both break the news that the bridge between the villages had been swept away years before – but there is a pretty path along the river to the main road which then becomes the camino. Cross the river there and we are in Palencia. Our encounter has been pure serendipity and my companion John decides not to throttle me.

Ed Note: The full journal can be obtained from the CSJ library.

Making History

Dermot Wynne

Take any of the hundreds of small villages and towns along the many pilgrim routes to Santiago and it would be possible to make a case for any one of them to epitomize the whole message of what the pilgrimage means to the individual. Very often, I suspect, this embodiment would reflect a personal or particular experience which just happened to 'glue' itself to the memory of a person. In this respect my town is Villafranca.

By the time I had reached Villafranca del Bierzo I had cycled one thousand five hundred kilometres and was beginning to feel that Santiago, a mere two hundred kilometres further on, was within my grasp. Although I had been truly stunned and amazed by all the wonders of architecture, people and nature since leaving Le Puy-en-Velay I hadn't really 'connected' with or felt personally part of that bond – religious, spiritual or otherwise – with St James and the pilgrimage in the medieval sense. I had just allowed myself to enjoy the changing kaleidoscope of each day's events as they unfolded. I was free from any spiritual or intellectual commitment. This arrogant attitude was not to last.

As I cycled into the centre of Villafranca I didn't, as John Wayne might have done, make straight for the Saloon bar. In fact I was attacked immediately by a nasty dog who had clearly decided that part of my leg was going to contribute towards his lunch. Fortunately, like John Wayne, I was quick on the draw and zapped the dog with my battery-operated dog dazer; a very effective and necessary piece of equipment in any cycling pilgrim's kit.

Villafranca was created during the latter part of the 11th century by Alfonso VI. It flourished and grew because of its position on the road to Santiago. A settlement for the French was founded on the banks of the river Berbia and the king also established a community of Cluniac monks. Aymeric Picaud, König von Vach, Arnold von Harff and Domenico Laffi all speak in glowing terms of the town and its abundance of food and wine. By the last few days of the 11th century the whole of northern Spain, which even included areas now part of Portugal, belonged to the kingdom of Leon and Castile. There was, of course, a small section towards the Pyrenees which formed the

kingdom of Navarre, but in general the whole of northern Spain was free to develop, in relative peace and prosperity, the pilgrimage to Santiago. This period was the hey-day of pilgrimage. The Holy Land was a war zone at that time and the first crusade was well under way, so a pilgrimage to Santiago was a safer and easier option.

I visited the centre of town. The old church of St Nicolas now seemed to be an hotel. The Calle del Agua with all its merchant houses and the Collegiate church were all part of the rich history of Villafranca. Eventually I made my way to the refuge which is immediately adjacent to the church of Santiago. As I looked at the refuge I was convinced it had been built by Walter Gabriel of Ambridge fame. I had the distinct impression that if one piece of the supporting corrugated iron or wooden fencing was moved, the whole structure would collapse. However, as I entered the ramshackle Refuge I was met immediately by a wall of warmth, comfort and happiness. 'Of course it didn't matter that I was a cyclist. Of course there was somewhere to leave my cycle in safety. Would I like a cold drink – free? If you take your shower now and do any necessary washing you will find the water quite hot. Don't forget to reserve your place for the pilgrim evening meal.' These and many other comments by the warden were all made with a charming smile and a genuine desire to welcome pilgrims – of all methods of propulsion – as warmly as possible. This truly was the spirit of pilgrimage and gave a capital 'c' to the word confraternity.

As the afternoon turned into early evening the refuge began to fill with pilgrims from all countries. I found myself talking with a number of them whilst I enjoyed a cool drink in the shade outside the refuge. A coach pulled up and about forty tourists got out. Their guide had obviously brought them specially to visit the refuge. Although I couldn't understand a word he was saying he was clearly explaining who and what we were. And this was within a few feet of where we were sitting. A total silence fell upon our group and we remained stunned as the tourists poked their cameras within a few inches of our noses and clicked away merrily as if we were animals in a zoo. This little scene led one pilgrim to remark that at least they, the tourists, should have had the courtesy to offer us all a banana each if they considered us to be monkeys! We all laughed at this comment, even if it was a little disingenuous. But this scene together with the experience earlier in the day did bring into sharp focus an understanding of what 'going on pilgrimage' meant personally.

Naturally I had to visit the church of Santiago adjacent to the refuge.

The famous and richly carved north portal, the Puerta de Perdón, gives onto the pilgrims' way. In the 15th century the Spanish Pope Calixto III granted concession to pilgrims, who were sick and unable to continue their journey, the right to stop at the church and receive the absolution and plenary indulgence they would have received on reaching the Apostle's tomb in Compostela. And, of course, the church of San Francisco, elsewhere in Villafranca, commemorates the passing of St Francis of Assisi in 1214, also going to Santiago. So it was almost certain that I had trodden along the same path as St Francis of Assisi! Amazing! The tourists had clicked their cameras at the refuge so, perhaps, each of us in our own modest way was something special. Perhaps we were trying to find a 'peg' on which to hang our *raison d'être*. Certainly, after the incidents of the day I felt a sense of belonging to a continuous process of pilgrimage history. Maybe St Francis had found his peace along the camino? Perhaps this had led to the now arguably second most famous Christian prayer: Lord make me an instrument of thy peace.

When you get up in the morning you can never be exactly certain how the day will finish. At the end of my day in Villafranca I slept with the certain knowledge that I did have a bond with the camino and I was happy to acknowledge that I had at least found something to make me part of the confraternity of St James and the continuing history of the pilgrimage.



Sketch of Villafranca by Chris Porter

UK Film Screenings: Walking the Camino – Six ways to Santiago

Adam Wells

In June, I hosted the first UK film screening of *Walking the Camino: Six Ways To Santiago*; a documentary following the journeys of six modern-day pilgrims coping with blisters, exhaustion, and loneliness as they walk their Camino Francés – the same experience many of us have been through on our own caminos!

In July, I had the pleasure of meeting up once more with Lydia B Smith, the documentary's producer, as she toured Spain hosting the first screenings for Spanish audiences. With follow-up question and answers sessions, I listened to Lydia talk of her journey of bringing the documentary to the wide screen:

'In making the camino documentary *Six Ways To Santiago*, I now see that I was fulfilling my calling to the camino. The documentary was never a part of my plan, I walked my camino in 2008 and whilst in León I went for a massage. The masseur asked me what I did for a living and I explained I worked in film production. He immediately suggested I make a film on the camino. I immediately replied with 'no way' and this was for a number of reasons. Firstly, it would be impossible to capture the authenticity and the essence of the camino on film; secondly, the logistical challenge of filming the entire journey across Spain would prove immensely difficult; and thirdly, finding investors prepared to fund a venture would be near impossible since I had made a short documentary before, I know how challenging it was to raise money. After my massage, I thought nothing more of this conversation and continued on my way to Santiago de Compostela.

'It was only when I got back to the United States after my camino that the little voice in my head started talking to me. After a period of time, I realised that, if I did take on the huge undertaking of making an authentic camino documentary, I would actually be fulfilling my life's purpose – that of helping to share the magical message of the camino to a wider audience. It is said the 'real camino begins in Santiago' and that expression is so true – I've now been on that real camino journey for six years!

'The actual challenge to bring the film to the big screen was much,

much, harder than walking my 800 km Camino Francés many times over. There have been multiple highs and lows. Filming took place in 2009; I returned to the US with 300 hours of footage – with no money for post-production editing and had rejection after rejection of funding requests from traditional sources. Finally, I turned to friends and family and the money started trickling in. We also received two small grants from *American Pilgrims On The Camino* as well as from the Danish and Norway Associations. Friends and colleagues contributed hours and hours of their time for free and donations came from pilgrims all over the world. The support has been incredible. And I mustn't forget those strange serendipitous camino moments when I thought 'all is lost' and a miraculous door suddenly opens to allow the project to continue.

In 2014, the documentary was first screened in the United States. A very successful roadshow followed and the documentary received numerous awards. Now, in 2015, we are holding screenings in Spain, France, United Kingdom, Italy, Japan, Australia (where we are the no. 2 documentary of 2015) and New Zealand. Successful as that may appear, many of these screenings only come about through the help of the camino community and the different country confraternities. This is because in some countries I have been unsuccessful in securing film distributors to promote the documentary - often I think this simply is because there isn't any sex, violence or rock and roll in the documentary which distributors think is necessary; but after countless sold-out shows worldwide, we know a film can be entertaining and attract great audiences without sex nor violence.

'I have fulfilled my vision of making the documentary. My wish now is for others who have been touched by the magical qualities of the camino to help share the camino message to the wider world. My hope is that *Walking The Camino: Six Ways To Santiago* is the catalyst for this – that in solely by seeing the film, people can have a mini-camino experience. In everybody helping, I truly feel that each of us in our own little way is taking a step to make the world a better and more loving place and ultimately this is the meaning of the camino.'

I met Lydia at the *American Pilgrims On The Camino* convention in San Francisco in March this year. I had watched the *Walking The Camino: Six Ways To Santiago* on DVD only a few weeks previously and loved it. At February's CSJ camino meet-up evening in Blackfriars, the week before my trip to the US, we had all talked about how great it would be for there to be a London cinema screening.

'I have no distributor for *Walking The Camino in the UK*, Adam. Would you be interested in organising a cinema screening in London, Adam?' Lydia asks me.

'Sure', I say without having a clue where to start with such an undertaking and thinking that a whole new unexpected camino-type journey is beginning for me.

Following the recent classification of *Walking The Camino* by the British Board of Film Classification, it is now possible to organise cinema screenings around the UK for CSJ members. In order to identify the best locations for screenings and to reach out to as many CSJ members as possible, if you would like to attend a screening please notify the CSJ either by internet or by email.

For further information, please contact me on **info@discoverthecamino.com** or via my contact page at **www.discoverthecamino.com/contact**.

Obituaries

Tony Morwood-Leyland 1948-2015 RIP

We are sad to record the untimely death of Tony Morwood-Leyland on 5 October after a short illness.

Tony and Alice joined the CSJ in 2002. Tony had walked to Santiago in the 1999 Holy Year. Having taken early retirement from various accountancy jobs Tony would appear at walks, meals and talks and became more involved as Pilgrim Record Secretary from 2009, and later as Membership Secretary and bookkeeper. Members in the vicinity of Basingstoke would often be surprised to receive a hand delivery of Pilgrim Records or membership information.

He had a very quick mind and could converse on any subject, however unlikely. He had had a great variety of work, for example as Deputy Superintendent of Insurance in the Cayman Islands to formulate their Disaster Recovery Plan (implemented in Hurricane Gilbert in 1988), and for HM Treasury on the Equitable Life Enquiry. He was involved with many other charities including CAMRA, the local Scouts and the Basingstoke Cricket Club.

For the CSJ he enjoyed a challenge. For example, he soon devised a way to reconcile the Paypal payments made through the new website. He was also very interested to develop the St James's Way from Reading to Southampton and led several walks along it in the last few years, including Winchester to Eastleigh in early June this year. (See photo.)



Tony Morwood-Leyland (4th from left) with CSJ group this summer

Tony's faith was extremely important to him and he supported many Catholic organisations. His parish priest Fr Mark Hogan has made several camino pilgrimages himself and heard of Tony's death while he was in Santiago with a parish group.

The CSJ was well represented at his Requiem Mass in Basingstoke and Alice has generously decided that any contributions in Tony's memory should be given to the CSJ. We send our condolences and prayers to Alice, and his sons Ed and Bob, who have all supported the CSJ activities in various ways, with lifts, food for the office workers or Bulletin stuffing.

Michael Hull 1934-2015 RIP

Earlier this year we also lost Confraternity member Michael Hull, who was married for 22 years to Christine Pleasants, the CSJ's long-time administrative assistant in the charity's Blackfriars office.

The pair tied the knot on 25 July 1992 – but it was only on their honeymoon in Spain that they realised the significance of that date! Then, inspired by CSJ founder member Rob Neillands' book *The Road to Compostela*, Michael and Christine tracked down the Confraternity and attended its 1993 AGM, becoming members on the spot. And the next year they walked together from Valcarlos to Navarrete on the Camino Francés.

Over the years that followed Michael and Christine participated in many CSJ events, including a number of organised trips to cathedral cities – both as CSJ members and to celebrate their wedding anniversary. One of the highlights came in October 1996 when they attended Pat Quaife's study visit to the Maragatería region of Spain, staying opposite the CSJ refugio in Rabanal del Camino.

Five years ago Michael's health started to deteriorate, making walking increasingly difficult and attendance at more recent CSJ events impossible. He died in March this year. Both he and Christine made lasting friendships through the Confraternity, which has been a great comfort to Christine now in her loss.

Rabanal Report

Dick Crean, Chair of the Rabanal Committee,
and Julie Davies

This report is a summary of the 2015 season.

The number of pilgrims: 4727 was about 4% down on last year. This could be because of a number of factors such as the availability of other accommodation in the village and the adverse publicity surrounding the murder of an American pilgrim in April, close to Rabanal. The average donation was €6.06, which is 5% down on last year's figure of €6.41. Despite the above figures, we have ended the year with a healthy bank balance and with cash in hand to pay for winter work. We will start the next 2016 season with a sound balance after paying 10% of donations to our local partners in Ponferrada.

We do not have any capital expenditure projects pending over the next 12 months so we will be focusing on our 25th anniversary celebration weekend on the 8th, 9th and 10th of July next year (which we hope many of you will be able to attend, of course).

Just under 40 *hospitaleros* spent two weeks looking after pilgrims at Rabanal this season (not all at once I hasten to add). As our *Facebook* pages record vividly, the vast majority of pilgrims

and *hospitaleros* were able to experience a comfortable and peaceful refuge which, for many, was one of their stand-out experiences on the camino. The friendliness of *hospitaleros* invokes regular comment in the Pilgrim book as a reason why pilgrims love staying with us. They say friendliness is contagious!

September was a month of rarities. Not only did we receive our first two donkeys of the year, but also the first pilgrims this year from Haiti, Honduras, Lebanon and Namibia. Gaucelmo also received for the first time ever pilgrims from Greenland and Mongolia.



Feast in Rabanal

Two years ago, Suzie, a very sick pilgrim from the USA, had to finish her pilgrimage at Rabanal del Camino. Thanks to *hospitalero* Peter's sound judgement and knowledge, she was admitted to hospital where she could get the necessary treatment. She was put in an Intensive Care Unit for a considerable period of time. Her family are convinced it is thanks to the *hospitaleros* and their care and concern that she survived. This year Suzie returned to be reunited with *hospitalero* Peter in September and to finish her pilgrimage which she successfully did. (See photograph of reunion meeting.)

The new enlarged salon has been very well received and provides



Reunion of pilgrim Suzie and *hospitalero* Peter in Rabanal

pilgrims with a much improved space for relaxing. It was fortunate that Betty McDougall, whose late husband Dugald's bequest funded the project, was able to see a commemorative plaque installed during her stint as a *hospitalera* in September. Also during September the *Interreligiosa Peregrinación* ended its sixth stage in Rabanal after starting in Sahagún. About 150 pilgrims (mostly staying in Pilars) consisting of Buddhists, Hindus, Jews, Baha'is and Christians, processed into Gaucelmo's *huerta* after Mass. A Hindu shrine was set up under the pergola. There followed a ceremony with bells, chanting and incense and pilgrims receiving a Hindu Blessing. It concluded with one of the *hospitaleros* giving a Celtic Blessing, which a group of Spanish musicians then sang in

Spanish. The party spent about an hour in the sunshine enjoying the peace of Gaucelmo's *huerta*.

Paul Graham, former Chair of the Rabanal Committee, and the two gardeners, Ken and Joan Davies, visited twice this season and their help has made a huge difference to the herb garden and *huerta* which are a joy to behold.

The solar panel system continues to work well although it has been hard to calculate the cost-benefit. What we know is that the system does successfully heat up the water and so we use considerably less gas!

We are planning to get ready for opening again on Friday 1st April 2016 and a priority for the Rabanal Committee will be making arrangements for the 25th anniversary of Gaucelmo in the summer of next year.

Confraternity of Pilgrims to Rome - AGM

The Confraternity of Pilgrims to Rome will hold its Annual General Meeting on Saturday 5th March 2016 at St James's Church, Conference Room, 197 Piccadilly, London W1J 9LL.

All members and friends, and also prospective members, are warmly welcome. Those attending will be invited to make a voluntary contribution of £5.

The Conference Room (down the stairs at the back of the church's offices) will open at 1030 and the AGM will commence at 1100.

Two speakers will share their experience of walking to Rome.

Charles Arthur: 'In the footsteps of Haig and Hannibal – London to Rome in three stages.'

Julia Peters: 'Walking to Rome – and the best laid Schemes of Mice and Men.'

This will be followed by an open forum on planning and undertaking a pilgrimage to Rome.



Road to Rome sign

Book Reviews

The Apostle Saint James: Life, Death and Burial by José Fernández Lago, 2015

Published by the Chapter of the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela – 6th Edition, revised and extended; pp126

Interest in ‘camino spirituality’ continues to flourish. The term seems to have become so broad that it is synonymous with any way of making yourself feel better. Over recent years, books published dealing with the interior life of a pilgrim to Santiago have included the tarot, the occult, a back-to-nature outlook, or simple techniques for reflection and awareness.

The Apostle Saint James suggests that there is a theological way of understanding the pilgrimage and the pilgrim within the camino. This brief examination of the pilgrimage to Santiago is divided into three parts. The first, ‘The Apostle James in the Bible,’ gives a very useful thumb-nail sketch of the life and martyrdom of the apostle. In doing so it roots the pilgrimage to a particular perceptive. Pilgrimage to Santiago is a paradigm for life itself, a movement towards God the creator through the death and resurrection of Christ. In this first section there are interesting digressions about the Jubilee years and the different types of pilgrims, both of which are well worth thinking upon.

The second section, ‘Novena to St James the Apostle,’ offers a nine-day cycle of prayers and readings based on the glimpses in the New Testament of the life and martyrdom of St James. The current trend is to make spirituality an intensely personal and self-orientated endeavour, so this set of prayers may seem overly rigid and mechanical. However, this section does serve as a reminder that the camino has been shaped by both biblical and spiritual traditions that draw us out of ourselves yet also allow us to retell or recast our own story through our encounter with God in the camino and its people. If the camino helps with ‘self-discovery and self-awareness’ then we need points of reference beyond our own experience and self-perception to avoid being too introspective.

The third section has examples of hymns in honour of the apostle. Quirky though this may be, it reminds us that pilgrimage involves the whole person. Also, since singing is best enjoyed as a communal activity, the music points pilgrims towards the fellowship of those wearing the scallop shell.

Visitors to the cathedral bookshop will be familiar with previous

editions of this book. Slim and not weighty, it is easily carried in rucksacks. As a translation from Spanish it is on the whole good, although heavily reliant on the use of the historic present tense when relating the life of Saint James. If you agree with Radio Four's John Humphrys' annoyance with the trend to use this when writing about the past, then this translation could be a little wearing to read. There are one or two errors in the text. For example, on page 8 it says that Matthew and Mark receive Jesus's call, when it means in their version of the Gospel, James (Santiago) and John receive Jesus's call. Also there are several typographical errors – Santiago is designated the 'Patron' of Spain. However, don't be put off. I think the errors and slight clumsiness in translation make you read with more attention, and add to the charm of this small volume.

*Steps out of Time. One woman's journey on the Camino by Katherine B Soper; 2013
Stellaire Press, Ann Arbor, USA. ISBN 978-0-9911492-0-9, pp286*

Time is of the essence in this camino account. Twenty years before Katharine Soper set out on the Camino Francés, she had accidentally lost a precious gold watch. An over-busy, successful US professional, focussed on achieving and striving, she uses this metaphor of 'lost time' to reflect on the problems of *'doing versus being'*, whilst exploring her own spiritual development as she literally steps out of her time-pressed professional and family life and into the *'outside of time'* experience of walking for a month to Santiago.

Soper's eloquent, intelligent and thoughtful account stands out as one of the best books I have read about travelling to St James. She leaves behind the baggage of the commitments which rule her time at home and embarks on the road – initially with a French friend who does not stay the course very long, then alone, travelling light in every sense of the word.

Her account remains sufficiently objective to avoid the intense 'me' focussed self-analysis which can mar some 'my camino' writing. Rich in detail, balanced and well-paced (no pun intended!) the sense of the day after day after day journey is strongly evoked.

This book sits pleasantly in the hand, is well-designed with quotes – many translated from well-known French texts on the camino – at the beginning of each chapter, dated stages, illustrations of the pilgrim passport and stamps, photos and a bibliography with sources for further reading.

It was good to read a glowing endorsement of the help she received from Marion and the CSJ in London.

As with so many pilgrim travellers, it is the kindness of strangers, the chance but significant encounters and as Soper adds '*the good coffee... and ...the unexpected*' which make this journey memorable. We get a real sense of the physical hardships and discomfort (and the magic cure of cabbage leaves for tendonitis); the need for rest; the need to treat oneself to the guilty indulgences of a peaceful hotel room to escape from snorers; the subsequent return to what she calls the '*humble simplicity*' of the *refugio*; the need to compromise and accept the foibles of fellow travellers; the need to be mindful – to live in the moment by breathing through panic and boredom – while facing a crisis of mental and physical ability on the Meseta. However, she uses every experience to reflect on what she is doing and how she may fit in to the wider picture – the whole parade of past, present and future pilgrims moving slowly through their lives from birth to death.

Katherine Soper learns the lessons of time well. Her pilgrim pace, not tied to a ticking clock, whilst initially frustrating for her, becomes the marker of achievement for each day's slow movement towards her goal. She accepts her role as a '*wanderer with a purpose*' and likens each step to the practice of '*the art of being alive*'. Written in the present tense – in itself lending the sense of immediacy – she is a wise and sympathetic pilgrim who evokes the connectedness of the camino experience vividly and the central lesson of being '*simply and completely here*', the being in and of the moment and going with the flow.

As both a vivid pilgrim account and an insightful reflection on self-development this is a great read. Soper has the ability to make us feel we are there on the road each step of the physical way, blisters and all, through her encounters, the events and the landscapes. She also weaves through the whole experience – in an objective, wry, mature and intelligent style – her inward journey to finding a new 'way' to move ahead in her post camino life. Highly recommended.

HELEN WILLSON

The Way of St Francis: From Florence to Assisi and Rome Sandy Brown, Cicerone Press, 2015; pp. 288, ISBN: 978-1852846268; £16.95.

When I was offered the opportunity to review this new guidebook on the Via di Francesco, I did not have to think twice about accepting. My

wife Sheila and I, with Gosia Brykczyńska, walked from Assisi to Rome in May of this year, before Sandy Brown's book was published. At that time (a mere six months ago as I write), two guidebooks dominated the market, the writers each having pioneered their own versions of 'The Way' of St Francis, but in different languages. Kees Roodenburg, writing in his native Dutch, produced the first guidebook (*Een Franciscaanse Voetreis*) in 1994 and has been updating it ever since. Italian pilgrim-way enthusiast Angela Seracchioli authored *Di qui passó Francesco*, which appeared in 2004. Translations exist of both books: Roodenburg's into German and Seracchioli's into English. Naturally, we used the English translation of Seracchioli's book, entitled *On the Road with Saint Francis*, which took us as far as Poggio Bustone, about two thirds of the way from Assisi to Rome. The few English and Australian walkers we met in May were using the same book.

Sheila, Gosia and I are experienced walkers, but we do not use the new GPS technology. We rely on (i) good way-marking, (ii) an accurate description of each day's walk in the guidebook, and (iii) good maps—and for me a good trekker's map is one with a scale of 1:25,000. Guidebook maps are normally 1:50,000 scale. After doing our pilgrimage, I found out that the Dutch version of Roodenburg's book has 77 superb maps at 1:25,000, but these are not reproduced in the German version, where the maps are only 1:100,000.

Walking from Assisi to Rome was a wonderful experience, but as the route proposed by our guidebook was fairly new and not fully developed, we did face difficulties which one might not encounter, for example, walking the Camino Francés to Santiago. The way-marking from Assisi to Rome was intermittent and occasionally downright confusing, often disappearing altogether for an hour or more at a time.

Angela Seracchioli's book has done good service over the past dozen years, helping native English-speakers (and Italians) to walk the Way of St Francis. The information it contains on the life of the saint is excellent. The author's recommendations for accommodation are good and as up-to-date as can be reasonably expected. Her maps are beautiful to look at, and drawn at the usual 1:50,000 scale. The book's main weakness lies in the written descriptions of each day's walk: suffice it to say that the information is too often inadequate, especially when one cannot always rely on the way-marking.

Turning now to the new Cicerone guidebook by Sandy Brown, would we have been better off had it been available to us in May?

In so far as I can make a decisive judgement without actually using

the book as intended (i.e., on the Way), my answer is a resounding 'yes'. This is an attractive, meticulously researched book which should, indeed, answer the needs of future pilgrims on the Way of St Francis. The directions are reassuringly detailed, with distances from one landmark to the next confirmed by the author's GPS. The maps are impressive, and while their scale is only 1:50,000, if the directions in the text are as good as they appear to be, the scale of the maps is less important. For walkers who have GPS and know how to use it, 'GPX tracks' for the entire route can be downloaded from the Cicerone website. In other words, Sandy Brown has brought to the Way of St Francis a whole new level of directional information.

It is important to note that each of the three authors mentioned in this review promotes a different route, with varying amounts of overlap between them. Roodenburg recommends beginning in Florence and taking 34 days to get to Rome. Seracchioli's route begins in La Verna, 80 kilometres east of Florence, takes 17 days, and ends at Poggio Bustone. (Walking from there to Rome took us an additional 5 days.) Sandy Brown's route begins in Florence and takes 28 days, ending in Rome. While Seracchioli's route from Assisi was splendid in terms of beautiful countryside, historical relevance to St Francis, and sightseeing generally, I am sure this can be said of the other two routes as well and, therefore, do not hesitate in recommending Sandy Brown's version for the sheer convenience of having the better directions.

So much for the new book's essential information. There are also sections on the life of St Francis and such matters as climate, accommodation, appropriate training for long-distance walking, business hours, post, telephones, internet, etc. It has beautiful photographs throughout. The book weighs 320 grams, and, a feature that I particularly like, it fits in the pockets of my trousers, fleece or GoreTex, as appropriate.

The book also offers a smart solution to the problem of information occasionally needing updating: updates are posted on the Cicerone website. And if you are taking your i-Pad anyway, note that there is a kindle version of this book, which gives you the option of foregoing the extra weight of the printed book (perhaps more interesting if you are relying on GPS).

To conclude, this is an excellent guidebook to the Way of St Francis, and I highly recommend it.

RUSSELL MCGUIRK

Members' Pages

From Alison Raju

Albergues open in winter (1 November 2015 to 29 February 2016): if you are walking or cycling the Camino Francés this winter, between the dates indicated above, you can find completely up-to-date, accurate details of which *albergues* are open/closed on what days in the following website: www.aprinca.com/alberguesinvierno. You are requested, however, by our informants, NOT TO MAKE PHOTOCOPIES of this information and NOT TO COPY/PASTE IT INTO OTHER EMAILS/DOCUMENTS, as this information is susceptible to very rapid and very frequent changes. The website is updated on a daily basis, since the availability (or not) of accommodation in a given *albergue* can vary, even from one day to the next, at this time of year.

From Brian Mooney, Chairman of the Confraternity of Pilgrims to Rome

Anarchy rules OK! Philip Constantine wittily challenges and pokes fun at the supremacist pilgrim – those who seem effortlessly to outwalk and out-macho everyone else on the camino (*Did you walk the whole way? September 2015*). But he picks the wrong person and draws incorrect conclusions when he writes about me as ‘a man... walking from Spain to England’ and suggests that I would have been happy to avail myself of a ‘contraption capable of getting there and back in a day’.

Can I reassure Philip that I love walking and I have no need to speed things up? Perhaps he will be even more reassured to learn that I often tell people that I walk because I am an anarchist, by which I mean that walking is one of the last human activities that is not in one form or another regulated. There are – as yet – no EU directives on walking! Within reason, we can walk where we want and as far and near as we please. So Philip’s somewhat anarchic approach to it all is perfectly in order!

From William Griffiths, Hon Vice-President of the Confraternity of St James

On 6 November 2015 I wrote to the editor of *The Telegraph*, in response to a query from a reader as to what could be done with scallop shells. My letter appeared in the newspaper (minus the last sentence, which I thought the most significant). With it were three other suggestions (gardening, wind chime, grotto) and an illustration of ‘Mary, Mary, quite contrary’. I remember that, at the time I joined the CSJ in 1985, the topic much discussed in the Bulletin was the urban urchin tradition of begging ‘a penny for the grotto’, a tradition which was held around the feast of St James in July.

From Robert Shaw

Some time ago I went to see the newly restored Middlesex Hospital chapel, as part of Open House Day. It is an amazing building by J Loughborough Pearson who designed Truro cathedral and innumerable other good late-Victorian churches. This chapel has been dazzlingly restored as part of the commercial redevelopment of the old hospital site. There are cartouches of the twelve apostles under one of the arch ribs, with St James “mai” featured with staff and shell. All rather Byzantine! Not sure what the future of the building is – should really be chamber concerts with the occasional high-incense Mass!



Rondel of St James on the ceiling of Middlesex Hospital



Middlesex Hospital Chapel

From the Secretary's Notebook

Donations

Thank you so much to everyone who has recently sent in donations either with or without a subscription for membership. These have been allocated to the General, Rabanal, Miraz or St Christopher funds as requested. We are extremely grateful for your kind and generous donations and also for the 25% added via Gift Aid when applicable. We do not usually send out thank you letters because of time and cost restraints but of course are happy to do so when asked.

Practical Pilgrim – 6 February 2016

Your Confraternity needs you! We are trying to put together a small team of volunteers with recent experience of walking – or cycling – a range of caminos to give advice at our next Practical Pilgrim day in London. If you think you can help, please contact Colin Jones directly at pacharan@btinternet.com

Other Volunteering Opportunities

We urgently need a 'minute taker' for our Trustee Meetings. These take place every couple of months in London, near the Blackfriars office.

It would also be good to expand our small team of regular volunteers who attend our Thursday Open Days – especially if you have completed one of the caminos less travelled but growing in appeal, such as the Norte or the Portugués.

Please email me at office@csj.org.uk. Or introduce yourself in person to Tom Barton who will be manning a dedicated 'volunteering' stand at our...

AGM on 23 January

And don't forget that we still need lots of raffle prizes for the day. These are best dropped into Blackfriars Road, ideally on a Thursday, but do call ahead to confirm other days when the office will be staffed.

Templar Pilgrimage Trust

We have been approached by the above ecumenical trust which offers small grants to individuals and groups to encourage pilgrimage to the Holy Land, Lourdes, Walsingham and other Christian holy places, including Santiago de Compostela. To find out more, please email

mavisjacobs@talktalk.net or write to: **The Hon Applications Secretary, Templar Pilgrimage Trust, 34 St Augustine's Gate, Norwich NR3 3BE.**

FINALLY, before I forget in the rush to get this Bulletin and AGM papers to the printers: a very Happy Christmas to you all and every best wish for the new year ahead.

Jean Marray

Calling all CSJ members!!!

Would you like to contribute to a play? As part of this year's AGM there will be a retelling of the pilgrim journey of Christiana, based on John Bunyan's work.

There will be a workshop in the morning which will precede the performance, and is designed for up to 20 participants. Taking themes from the story, the workshop will allow us to share our own experiences of pilgrimage, using art, music and drama to enrich our understanding of Bunyan's story and how it resonates today in the Camino. Themes raised in the workshop will be fed back into the live performance, to reflect our Camino stories.

The workshop and performance will be led by Nicola Grove who founded the award winning charity **Openstorytellers**, and by Amy Douglas, storyteller and award-winning author.

If you wish to participate in the workshop, please sign and return the slip at the foot of this page, to:

CSJ office
Att: AGM Performance
27 Blackfriars Road
London SE1 8NY

Name

Address

Email

Telephone

CSJ Events

Saturday 23 January 2016

The CSJ AGM will be held at St Alban's Centre, Leigh Place, Baldwins Gardens, London EC1N 7AB

Saturday 6 February 2016

Practical Pilgrim Day to be held in London

Saturday 5 March 2016

Hospitaleros Preparation Day (Miraz)

Friday 8 - Sunday 10 July 2016

25th Anniversary Celebrations of Refugio Gaucelmo in Rabanal
(See further information in Bulletin.)

Other Events

Saturday 16 January 2016

A showing of the documentary film 'Walking the Camino: Six Ways to Santiago' at 18.30, in Caryford Hall, Maggs Lane, Castle Cary, Somerset BA7 7JJ. The evening will start with drinks and nibbles, then the screening and a Q & A session. Cost £10 and funds raised will go to Macmillan and a local animal sanctuary. To obtain tickets please contact Simon Bebbington at: 1simonbebbington@gmail.com

Tuesday 5 April 2016

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

Local Group Contacts

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

Confraternity of Saint James

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

Information and Publications available from Registered Office:

27 Blackfriars Road, LONDON SE1 8NY

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

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

Honorary President H E The Spanish Ambassador

Secretary Jean Marray
27 Blackfriars Road, LONDON SE1 8NY

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

Committee 2015

Charity Trustees and Company Directors

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

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

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

Rabanal Committee

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

Rabanal Committee Members

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

Miraz Committee

Chairman Richard Jefferies, Magnolia Cottage, Westwood Lane,
Normandy, GUILDFORD, GU3 2LG rjefferies@hotmail.co.uk

Miraz Committee Members

Richard Jefferies (Chair), Alan Cutbush (Hospitalero Co-ordinator),
Colin Jones (Hospitalero Training), Trevor Hockey, Rick Baldwin,
Averil Jones, Ted Jones, Judith E Burrows, Ken Spittal,
Carole Vose, Priscilla White

Other Officers

Membership Secretary Alison Thorp alison.thorp@virgin.net
Treasurer Tony Ward, Syracuse, St. Neot, Cornwall PL14 6NJ
and Company Secretary Work (01579) 343215 mail@tonyward.biz
Librarian Margaret Simonot simonot.marg@gmail.com
Website Manager TBA
Slide Librarian John Hatfield, 9 Vicary Way, MAIDSTONE, Kent ME16 0EJ
(01622) 757814

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

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

Confraternity of Saint James



Annual General Meeting

Please bring this booklet and the Accounts with you

Notice of the 16th Annual General Meeting of the
Confraternity of Saint James (the Company) to be held on

Saturday 23 January 2016

St Alban's Centre, Baldwins Gardens, London EC1N 7AB at **12.00**

Agenda

- 1. Welcome and Introductions**
- 2. Apologies for Absence**
- 3. Minutes of the 15th Annual General Meeting (31/1/15)**
- 4. Chairman's Report for 2015**
- 5. Annual Report & Accounts 2014-2015**
- 6. Report on Refugio Gaucelmo, Rabanal del Camino**
- 7. Report on Refugio de Peregrinos de Miraz**
- 8. Report on the Camino Chaplaincy**
- 9. Programme for 2016**
- 10. Election of Trustees:** Half the directors stand down and are standing for re-election: Dick Crean, Tony Ward. Continuing: Gosia Brykczynska, Robin Dorkings, Colin Jones, Mary Moseley, Priscilla White. Not standing: Liz Crean, Ken Spittal.

New nominations: Following our recent electronic appeal for new Trustees, there has been a very good response – which bodes well for our organisation. Because of the number, a more formal review process will be needed, and all those who have applied will be hearing from the Chairman shortly.

11. Any Other Business

The Accounts and Reports for the year ended 30 September 2015 will follow under separate cover. If you would like these in a larger (A4 format), please contact the CSJ office.

!!!! PROGRAMME for the Day PLEASE NOTE TIMINGS !!!!

10.15	Doors open	Coffee available
10.45	Creative Workshop: Christiana's Journey	Church Hall
12.00	Annual General Meeting	Main Hall
13.00	Lunch (bring picnic lunch; drinks available) or pubs nearby	
14.30	Creative Performance: Christiana's Journey Followed by reflective discussion	Main Hall
15.30	Tea	
16.00	Short presentations: The Confraternity of Pilgrims to Rome – Brian Mooney Photography – Piers Nicholson	
17.00	Annual New Year Party	

The **Annual General Meeting** is the main event for members in the Confraternity's year. It is friendly and fun and a good way of meeting other pilgrims. Please help us by returning the form to speed Registration and avoid seating problems.

A list of nominations and existing Trustees will be available on the day.

Trustees: Existing and those Standing for Re-election

Colin Jones (joined 1991): It is a pleasure and a privilege to serve as a trustee helping the CSJ to fulfil its role of supporting and promoting the pilgrimage to Santiago. The various aspects of being a trustee come together as "giving something back" to the Camino.

Gosia Brykczynska (joined 1983): I have walked several pilgrim routes in Spain and France and also from Assisi to Rome. I have volunteered several times as a *hospitalera* and once as an *amiga* for the CSJ. I am currently Bulletin Editor.

Dick Crean (joined 2006): A pilgrim and hospitalero with my wife, Liz, I am chair of the Gaucelmo sub-committee.

Robin Dorkings (joined 2001): office volunteer since 2003, spent 2 weeks in Santiago in 2013 as an "Amigo". I have walked several Caminos to date and hope to do more in the future. I have been a trustee since the 2015 AGM.

Mary Moseley (joined 1997): An enthusiastic walking pilgrim on *C Francés, Via de la Plata, C Portugués*. I help to organize major CSJ events.

Tony Ward (joined 1997): I became a member whilst on a long-term pilgrimage from St Neot (Cornwall) to Santiago, which took 8 years in fortnightly slots. I was appointed Treasurer in 2004 and have continued

in that role ever since. I have actively supported the activities of the CSJ over the years, including several spells as hospitalero at Miraz.

Priscilla White (joined 1992): After years of interest, but no formal education in medieval history, I joined the CSJ and subsequently walked from Le Puy-en-Velay to Santiago. This was followed by parts of the *Via de la Plata* and also the *Camino del Norte*.

Helping and participating on the AGM day

Book Sale & CSJ Publications

Second hand Camino books for sale and selection of free Bulletins to catch up on will be available. Also a range of CSJ Publications, including the 2016 edition of The Pilgrims' Guide to the Camino Francés.

Hospitality

We may be able to offer accommodation in London members' homes to people from far away who otherwise would not be able to come to the AGM. You are invited to make a donation to Miraz. If there are more London members able to offer accommodation, please make sure you indicate on your AGM Form. Hotels near the office are listed on www.london-se1.co.uk/hotels

Badges and Friendship

Everyone attending the AGM is asked to wear their name badge given on arrival. Those attending for the first time will have a distinctive badge.

New Year Party As usual we ask people to contribute homemade food rather than pay if possible. If you would like to help with the food shopping, preparation or serving please contact Ruth Johnston on 01903 885068. If you bring food to the value of £5 you do **not** have to pay to come to the party. If you contribute food to a lesser value we ask you to pay the balance for the Party. Otherwise the charge for the day, talk and party is £5. Please complete and return the enclosed form.

Hospitaleros/hospitaliers

Find out about hospitality on the Camino and becoming a hospitalero in Spain or hospitalier in France, or working with the Amigos Project in Santiago: please speak with Julie or Alan at the AGM. It is hard but rewarding work. We want to encourage more UK members to volunteer at Rabanal and Miraz and to point people with good Spanish to volunteer in Santiago, or good French to volunteer on the Vézelay route.

Important Things to Bring with You

- this copy of the Agenda, and the Accounts
- any outstanding Library books you wish to return
- any photos/albums of your pilgrimage you would like to share
- any jiffy bags for recycling
- your contribution of food
- Money /cheques for Publications, including 2016 Camino Francés Guide.
- Raffle prizes with a pilgrim theme

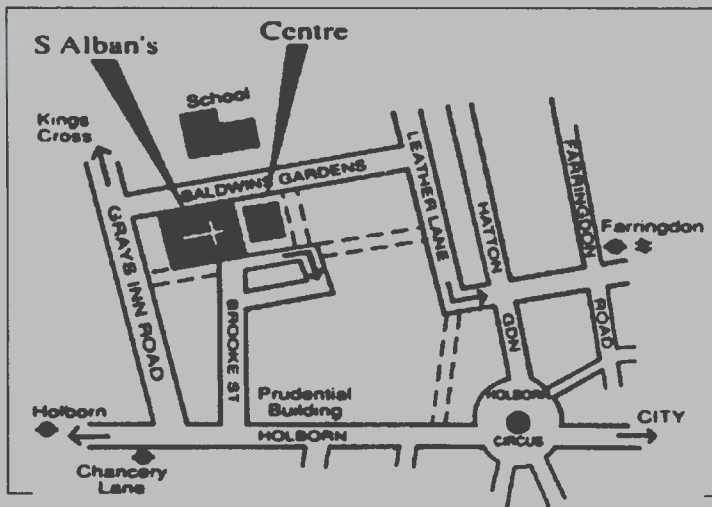
Things to do

Sponsor-a Week at Gaucelmo or Miraz.

This scheme allows pilgrims to continue supporting and keeping in touch with events in Rabanal and Miraz by sponsoring-a-week for £50 (or share with a friend), receive a letter from the *hospitaleros* telling you of pilgrim news and know that you are helping the pilgrims. See Paul Murray at the AGM for details of weeks available at Gaucelmo.

Exhibitions: East & West Seminar Rooms *upstairs*

If you have any displays or photos you would like to share please take them to the east and west rooms upstairs at the Centre.



Holborn Circus or Grays Inn Road.

Arriving & Parking

You are strongly advised to travel to the AGM by public transport as there is little street parking in the area.

Underground
Chancery Lane (Central line) or Farringdon (Circle, Metropolitan).

Buses serving

Minutes of the 15th Annual General Meeting of the Confraternity of Saint James (the Company)

Held on Saturday 31 January 2015

1. Welcome and Introductions: The Chairman, Colin Jones, welcomed members, including Padraig McSweeney of the Irish Society of Friends of St James and Eeva Terasalmi from Finland.

2. Apologies: c 20 apologies had been received, including from long standing members James Maple and Vincent Kelly.

3. Minutes of 14th AGM of the CSJ (Company)

There being no corrections to the Minutes, Mario Pozzati Tiepolo proposed acceptance, seconded by Marion Clegg: agreed *nem con*

4. Chairman's Report for 2015: for full text please see Bulletin 129, March 2015. Colin Jones spoke of the challenge of increasing regulation in running albergues and forthcoming changes in the life of the CSJ as Marion Marples retires and Gosia Brykczynska wishes to hand over editorship of the Bulletin.

5. Finance: Annual Report & Accounts: Tony Ward, as treasurer for the 11th year, presented the Annual Report & Accounts for the year to 30 Sept 2014. He reported that the Bursary fund has not been used for 10 years and that trustees would be considering the best way forward. CSJ has received a very generous legacy of £56,000 from John Revell RIP. Tony Ward proposed an amendment to the Objects of the CSJ (in the Memorandum & Articles of Association) to delete reference to a Joining Fee; seconded by Simon Wethered, carried. Marion Marples, Christine Pleasants, Alison Thorp and Tony Morwood-Leyland were thanked for their work on the finances of CSJ

Proposed: to accept the Accounts & Report for 2013-14: Michael Krier, seconded by John Snell, carried unanimously.

6. Report on Refugio Gaucelmo: Dick Crean spoke of the c 5000 pilgrims for the 2014 year, in which Americans outnumbered Spanish pilgrims. He noted the death in the year of Seraphin of the Pilar albergue. Financially the solar panels have now been completely paid for. In the coming year the showers would be retiled. He announced celebrations for 25 years of Gaucelmo in July 2016.

7. Report on Miraz: Richard Jefferies reported that the Bishop of Lugo had visited to bless the new stone given by Ken Spittal. The committee is looking at plans to improve the kitchen facilities.

8. Report on Amigos Welcome Project: Fr G Postlethwaite's report was circulated in his absence.

9. Report on Greenbelt: Liz Crean spoke about the experience of taking part in Greenbelt and being able to share Camino experiences, and encouraged others to join the group in 2015.

10. Programme for 2015: outlined by Marion Marples

11. Election of Trustees

Standing for re-election: Colin Jones, Gosia Brykczynska, Mary Moseley, Liz Crean, Ken Spittal, Priscilla White. **Standing for the first time:** Robin Dorkings. **Continuing:** Dick Crean, Richard Jefferies, Tony Ward. Whole list proposed Hilary Hugh Jones, seconded William Griffiths, agreed.

11. Any Other Business

- a. Gosia Brykczynska reissued her request for a new Editor or people to be part of an editorial team to come forward to develop the Bulletin.
- b. Maureen Measure spoke about changes to the Amigos project in Santiago.
- c. Barbara Jones regretted the turning away of a pilgrim from Gaucelmo as luggage had been transported in advance (pilgrim was unwell or not able to carry rucksack). Lively discussion ensued.
- d. Cotswold Stores now offer a 15% discount in the shop and online for CSJ members -code available.
- e. Colin Jones introduced a new Pilgrim Record for 2015.
- f. Rotraud Rebman: encouraged people to think about joining the Nurnberg-Konstanz pilgrimage.
- g. Evan Rutherford spoke about contacts he is building on informing pilgrims (esp English speaking) about the Civil War monument outside Burgos.
- h. Mary Cutts spoke about attending the conference of the Vézelay association.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Office Closure

The Office will close on Tuesday 22 December for the holiday and reopen for visitors on Thursday 7 January 2016.

Practical Pilgrim Day 2016

London - Saturday 6 February 10-30 am to 2.30 pm

John Marshall Hall, 27 Blackfriars Road, SE1 8NY

An opportunity to hear what others say about the pilgrimage experience, to build up your knowledge of the route and to ask all those niggling questions about gear, maps, washing, socks... Opportunities to learn from others and browse the guides to see which suits you best. Bring your questions. Set off better prepared! Please try to attend all day.

Approximate timetable

10.30 Introduction/ Spirituality and the Pilgrimage
followed by general Question & Answer

12.00 separate groups for walkers and cyclists

13.00 bring a picnic lunch, drinks available

13.30-14.15 Talk by William Griffiths, GP

"Personal Health and the Camino"

Followed by Sending Out of Pilgrims

Tickets £5

Please indicate whether walker or cyclist and which routes are of particular interest

	Returned -which route?	New -which route?
Walker		
Cyclist		

Name (s):

Address/email:

Return details to office@csj.org.uk

Please pay via Paypal through www.csj.org.uk or send your cheque or credit card details to:

CSJ Practical Pilgrim, 27 Blackfriars Road, London SE1 8NY

