



Confraternity of Saint James

Bulletin



September 2010

No III

About the *Bulletin*

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- 2 **Editorial**
Gosia Brykczyńska
- 4 **Caminos en Andalucía**
Michael Gaches
- 7 **A Life in the Day of Ivar Rekve**
Johnnie Walker
- 10 **Holy Years & Compostela Part II**
Laurie Dennett
- 18 **St James's Day 2010**
- 22 **Europa Compostela**
Alison Parkes & Jean-Noel le Toulouzan
- 25 **St Michael's Way**
Robert Shaw
- 28 **Fragments of my Camino**
An Australian Pilgrim
- 33 **Waiting**
George Young
- 36 **Book Reviews**
- 39 **Gaucelmo News**
Roger Davies
- 41 **Members' Pages**
- 46 **From the Secretary's Notebook**
Marion Marples
- 49 **Obituaries**
- 50 **CSJ Events**
- 52 **Other Events**
- 53 **New Members**

Cover:
St Michael's Way, Cornwall
Picture by Robert Shaw.

NB Martin Davis's cover
picture for *Bulletin* 110
was incorrectly captioned
as 'pilgrim sign, Mérida'.
It should have been
described as just north of
Calzada de Béjar on the
Vía de la Plata.

Gosia Brykczyńska

Every Saint James's Day is different; every year the CSJ celebrates in a different way and in a different part of the country. But some things always remain the same, most notably the outpouring of joy and goodwill: a feeling of serendipity – at the mid-point of the year! This year I received news from the *hospitaleros* in Miraz and Rabanal about pilgrim activities in the *refugios* – and I felt as never before on the feast of St James a tangible bond with walking pilgrims, serving pilgrims and stay-at-home-and-celebrate pilgrims.

The *hospitalera* in Miraz recounted to me one of the many reasons why serving the pilgrims is such a rewarding activity and I wish to share the passage with you. *Being a hospitalera is every bit as much an adventure as walking because every day is different. ... The camino is an adventure of trust and the most memorable story of the week for me was just that. A group of young Poles who were walking the camino with their priest stayed with us and celebrated Mass in the village church, singing in five-part harmony. The next day was my afternoon off and I had already planned to walk to the monastery at Sobrado, the next stop on the camino. While sweeping under the beds I found the ID card of one of the young Poles and was able to take it to him, on foot, later that day. They were delighted and it was lovely to see them again...* Yet another miracle of St James!

This *Bulletin* records celebrations of St James's Day in the UK this July, by Teresa Sikorska-Shaw and Paul Lack. Meanwhile Robert Shaw informs us about the St Michael's Way pilgrimage in Cornwall, which is a tempting way to celebrate the archangel's feast which falls on the 29 September. We conclude Laurie Dennett's *The Origins of Holy Year*, and reflect with George Young on his meditative account of camino mishaps. Johnnie Walker continues to present us character sketches of Santiago personalities.

Camino adventures however, occur not just on the way and some life events are life-changing in the literal sense of the words. Thus, the Australian pilgrim, who is sharing with us insights from her camino, lost her husband between the first and second stages of her pilgrimage. Nonetheless she persevered and took up the pilgrimage route again, albeit alone. Her cathartic feelings of being overwhelmed, yet serenely

content at the same time, have been echoed by many a pilgrim. She recounts: *As we enter the darkness Jean hands each of us a small lit candle. Inside, he lights the three huge white candles at the front. The simple Madonna and Christ Child shine and shadows waver on the bare stone walls. We sit, still lost in our own thoughts, for about fifteen minutes. Our silence parts with the pure clear notes of Ave Maria. Jean's strong voice mingles with the flickering light and scent of flowers. I float to the stars. Tears stream down my face.*

As is our tradition, all CSJ members were remembered at the Sunday Service in honour of St James in Worcester Cathedral; the pilgrims on their way to Santiago, those who have returned; those who are serving pilgrims in the many different capacities, both here and in Spain, and finally all pilgrims who have died this year, especially Ruth Revell, who died on the eve of St James's Day.

Meanwhile the CSJ Trustees are looking forward to meeting you at the Constance Storrs Lecture on 27 November and at the conclusion of our CSJ Holy Year celebrations in St Mary's in Clapham on 21 November 2010. (See CSJ Events page).

Caminos in Andalucía

Michael Gaches

The pilgrim who has enjoyed the Camino Francés may well wish to go on a second pilgrimage, perhaps choosing the splendid Vía de la Plata, a camino that reveals so many contrasting Spains as it heads north from Sevilla, Santiago bound.

But you may not be aware that other caminos cross Andalucía. Last year, I walked three southern caminos, each of which revealed different aspects of this fascinating region of southern Spain and each of which link up with the Vía de la Plata.

So instead of starting in Sevilla, how about Granada, Huelva or Cádiz?

From Granada, the Camino Mozárabe heads broadly north-west via Córdoba to Mérida. At 400km, it is almost twice as long as the 220km from Sevilla to Mérida, allowing far greater exposure to the variety of scenery, to the Moorish heritage and to those quintessential Andalusian white villages, fields of olives and hilltop castles. In Spring Andalucía can be particularly beautiful, the wild flowers a real delight, and although the walking is more demanding than the Sevilla route, the views are correspondingly greater. You will rarely chance upon another pilgrim and will enjoy many delightful conversations with villagers curious to know more about you and your journey. As Alison Raju has written not only an excellent guide but also an overview on the CSJ website, I shall refrain from giving more detail here and instead, focus on the other two, much shorter, caminos.

The second route, the Camino Sur, has been created by the *Amigos* based in Huelva, a large town in the south-west corner of Spain, not far from the frontier with Portugal. Not only have the *Amigos* produced a Spanish guide but also waymarked the 176km route to Zafra. They are currently installing familiar kilometre stones to supplement the yellow arrows. The town of Huelva may not be a particularly popular tourist destination but it does have fascinating features, particularly the Columbus complex at the beautiful Monasterio de la Rábida and the English mining connection in the port and one of its housing districts.

The first three days' walking are fairly easy, much of it on a *vía*

verde, formerly a railway line. The scenery gradually changes, with holm oak and pines and hills replacing the cereals, olives and fruit of the flattish Campiña. Nothing can prepare you for the vast multi-coloured opencast mines of Río Tinto – don't miss the museum and Barrio Inglés – but ahead lie ancient paths, the timeless tranquillity and the beautiful scenery of the Sierra de Aracena, a destination for walkers in its own right. You will probably resolve to return to Aracena to explore the sierra and villages and to visit the marvellous caves and outstanding Museo del Jamón. Ahead, the camino, largely on undulating tracks but with some minor roads, is enchanting, and you will need to allow time to visit churches and castles. After a week you will arrive at Zafra, ready to swap notes with pilgrims arriving from Sevilla.

As with the Camino Mozárabe, there is as yet little pilgrim accommodation and you are unlikely to meet a fellow traveller. In addition, despite the good work of the *Amigos*, many of the welcoming locals will not know of the existence of the camino. One villager said to me: "I thought the Camino de Santiago was in Galicia." A great short walk but you may feel a pioneer!

Back in 2002, when I first walked the Vía de la Plata, I decided to take on a challenge à la Wainwright and walk from coast to coast, starting in Cádiz and ending with the Camino Inglés from Santiago to A Coruña. At that time there was no route from Cádiz so I pored over maps in the town's library and planned a way on drove roads and minor roads to Sevilla. When, last year, I learned that the Sevilla *Amigos* had recently created a route from Cádiz, I was so intrigued that I obtained a copy of their guide. Whereas in 2002 I had taken four days and followed a fairly direct route, the *Amigos'* camino is 173km long and divided into 6 stages.

Cádiz claims to be the oldest city in Europe and certainly merits a good visit before you set off: don't forget to climb the cathedral tower or visit the camera obscura in the Torre de Tavira to get an excellent view over the town and the nearby Atlantic and Bay of Cádiz.

As on the camino from Valencia, you start by heading south! In 2002 I had taken the ferry across the bay to avoid the busy main road but the camino now skirts the bay, following the isthmus and parallel to both railway and road. The bay has observation panels with information about the birdlife, vegetation and salt works. This really is a large loop as my original ferry hop had become a 41km circular, the most fascinating part being the nature reserve and the banks of the Río

San Pedro. The second day takes the pilgrim to Jerez de la Frontera, an attractive town with a cathedral and an Iglesia de Santiago undergoing reconstruction, as well as the renowned sherry bodegas.

After Jerez there is a long road section before many kilometres of track close to the motorway, while days 4 and 5 both have long stretches alongside wide irrigation canals. You have to enjoy walking on the flat to appreciate this camino – and not worry about the absence of shade: it is certainly not a walk for high summer. Las Cabezas de San Juan and Utrera are pleasant places to spend an evening at the end of these two days.

The final walk to Sevilla is of two halves: a pleasant sandy track with rabbits, pines, oleander and cacti is followed by massive *urbanización* works, the tricky crossing of major roads and a long, straight avenue into Sevilla.

Yellow arrows keep the pilgrim on the camino, but as so often, the outskirts of towns need extra vigilance – and occasionally a check with the locals. Although there is no specific pilgrim accommodation as yet, I had no difficulty finding cheapish accommodation at the end of each stage.

Three contrasting routes then; to my mind, a gem of a camino, a fascinating shorter one and a third that could be considered as a gentle prelude to the greater path ahead. My primary aim in this short article has been to increase awareness of these alternative/additional routes and, should any of these tempt you, to encourage you to look further. You can find an overview of each in the Confraternity website, together with links to other websites.

A life in the day of Ivar Rekve

in conversation with Johnnie Walker



Ivar Rekve runs the largest forum for English speaking pilgrims on his website www.caminodesantiago.me (previously www.pilgrimage-to-santiago.com). The forum has had over 23,000 visitors per month and has over 3,800 members who so far have made almost 32,000 postings.

I get up every morning between 7 and 7.30. After a shower I feed our cat Pepa and our labrador Cuco; both of them sleep outside in our large walled garden where they can run around. Our house is in the village of Brión, in the countryside about 20 minutes drive from Santiago de Compostela. I moved here five years ago with my wife Maria who is a Professor in the University. I am originally from Norway, from the village of Ulvik near the Hardanger fjord. The family moved to Oslo when I was 13. After studying Psychology at the University of Oslo, then Business Studies in Kongsberg, I moved to Washington State University where I met Maria who is from Lugo in Galicia. After graduating with an MBA I went off to work in Silicon Valley. When Maria finished her PhD, we both got jobs at Colorado State University and we lived there happily for two years. We then had to decide whether we wanted to remain in the USA long term or go back to Europe. Europe was the choice and we were lucky to move close to Santiago.

We both love this house in Brión although for five years we have been renovating it. It is a stone house from 1888 with vines and a 2500 square meter garden. I spend a lot of time outside mowing the lawn. I also have to press the grapes to make wine, but I don't mind. The Galician countryside is very green like the best of Norway with the climate of Spain – although a bit rainy at times! I think that Galicians and Norwegians are alike – we are both a bit reserved. After breakfast I log on to the internet to check emails and look at what is happening on the Forum. I used to read every single post but

nowadays it simply isn't possible, but I do try to read as many as I can. I rely on the help of a small group of volunteer moderators who work hard to ensure that spammers are banned and that there is nothing offensive being posted. We communicate with each other a lot.

The idea for the Forum came when I was learning Spanish. I didn't know a word when I came here! My original idea was to build an English language website about the town of Santiago but quickly it moved towards focusing on the pilgrimage. It has its own identity and the forum logo is on a badge that many members put on their rucksacks so they can recognise each other. The Forum has grown at a steady rate and I think there is a good mix between veteran pilgrims and new pilgrims - who are just starting out and have many questions. It is a very friendly forum and people try to be helpful, especially to newcomers. Spammers, who post multiple offensive or advertising posts, can bring a Forum like ours to its knees very quickly. Without the vigilance of the moderators constantly updating the forum software, we could easily have 50 – 60 spammers signing up per day. The pilgrims find the Forum useful and I take a lot of satisfaction from that. I work part time at the University so every day I make the drive there or to my new office at the Camino Travel Centre. I usually have lunch at the University. It is amazingly good value with a *menu del dia* for 5 Euros – even better than a Pilgrims' Menu.

My work at the University is IT focused, but over the years I have come to know more and more about the Pilgrimage routes to Santiago. I have also learned about the work of the Pilgrim Associations such as the Confraternity of Saint James in London. They do a huge amount of work and they have been very supportive of the Forum. A few months ago, Maria and I went to London to visit the Confraternity Office and to a church service and party to celebrate the CSJ's 25th anniversary.

Through all of this, I became aware that there are no dedicated facilities and services in Santiago for the increasing numbers of English speaking pilgrims. Pilgrims have been telling me that often they need help to make hotel or transport bookings, negotiate complicated transfers, or just a place to go for help if they need to leave a bag in left luggage or find a way of getting out to Finisterre and back in one day. There are also individuals and groups, for example in the United States or other distant countries, who want to book hotels or *hostals* in advance of their camino or need help getting to their point of departure.

Therefore, I have decided to launch a service to meet these needs.

I've called it the Camino Travel Centre and it is located right on the Camino Francés where it enters Santiago. It offers a full range of services, transport and accommodation booking. I can organise a luggage forwarding service for those who need it and for left luggage in Santiago; all the practical travel assistance pilgrims might need. You can find it at www.caminotravelcenter.com

I have been really busy setting this up but I try to leave for home at around 6pm every evening. My favourite dinner is peppered steak with sauce and fries and if I can eat it with Maria and have Pink Floyd playing in the background it would be perfect. In music, I also like everything from De Lillos to Luar Na Lubre. I try to get to bed reasonably early. I am a great reader and I have recently finished the Millennium Trilogy by Stieg Larsson. On my bedside table at the moment is a copy of Myren (Swamp) by Arnaldur Indridason.

The one confession I have to make is that I have never made a pilgrimage to Santiago. I am going to put that right soon, I promise.

If I had three wishes they would be:

1. that my new venture will help pilgrims and will be reasonably successful
2. that next winter will not be so long and rainy
3. that Ryanair starts a new daily route from Santiago to Oslo.

The Origins of Holy Years and the Compostela

Part II

Laurie Dennett

I do not propose to say much about the ceremonial surrounding holy years or feast-days, about which it is difficult to find two authorities in agreement. Ordinarily pilgrims entered the cathedral by the north door, or *Puerta Francigena*, but once holy years became established, ceremonial came to surround the opening and closing of the *Puerta Santa* or *Puerta del Perdón*. According to some scholars this door, opening off the upper part of the *Plaza de Quintana*, now the *Plaza de los Literarios*, was Aymeric Picaud's *Puerta Sancto Pelagio*, the entrance to the cathedral used by the monks of the nearby monastery of San Pelayo de Antealtares. The evolution of its name may owe something to the change in the site of hearing pilgrims' confessions, from earlier centuries, in the chapel of the *Corticela*, to the chapel of *El Salvador*, which immediately adjoined the door in question, at the east end of the cathedral and directly behind the High Altar. The Holy Door itself is more accurately two doors with a tiny passage between them: the inner, romanesque one, and the outer one opening onto the square, built in 1611 and remodelled in 1622. The well-loved statues of St James and his two companions, Theodore and Athanasius, date from 1694.

What I have not been able to find out is exactly when the ritual surrounding the opening and closing of the *Puerta Santa* at the beginning and end of the jubilee year began. I have asked several people in Santiago whom I thought would know, but they were unable even to put me onto any sources. A recent guidebook to Santiago comments only that it takes place "according to an antique ceremonial" - which does not shed much light on the matter!

Whether in ordinary years or in jubilees, the cathedral would have been thoroughly cleaned in the week preceding St James's feast-day, decorated with tapestries and the finest hangings, and the floor strewn with herbs. Pilgrims wishing to spend the eve of the feast in the customary vigil in the cathedral were expected to purchase a

candle, from one of the sellers of devotional articles whose stalls lined the *Plaza de la Azabacheria*, and enter the cathedral with them ignited (they were supposed to last from nightfall until the end of the first Mass in the morning). The vigil was spent standing. (The night vigil was not, in fact, restricted to holy years or to the eve of the feast-day, but was habitually enacted by pilgrims on the night of their arrival, and for this reason the doors of the cathedral were said to remain open “day and night”.) Especially in a holy year, the crowding would have been intense. It is doubtful whether, after about the middle of the 12th century, pilgrims had free access to the crypt where the relics of the Apostle were guarded. But there was competition to get as close to the crypt and the relics as possible, and we can infer that the resulting scrum was not for the feeble of bone or resolve.

It was not, of course, enough just to be there to gain the longed-for jubilee. Much importance was attached to the pilgrim’s offerings to the Saint and to the cathedral fabric, his promise to do a work of charity, and his prayers for the intentions of the Roman Pontiff. The most important aspect, however, was his expression of penitence, his purification through sacramental confession, and his conversion to new life through sharing in Holy Communion. Pilgrims had ample opportunity to prepare themselves during their journeys and the night’s vigil, and were able to make their confessions before attending Mass and venerating the relics of St James, being conducted to the crypt by one of the cathedral canons. For foreign pilgrims, confession was facilitated by clerics speaking various languages and known as *lenguajeros* or *linguaria*. It took place in the chapel of *El Salvador* mentioned earlier, which was rededicated to the King of France in 1380 following a generous endowment. The late Dr William Melczer and others have pointed out the significance of the location of this chapel: it is the easternmost, and the largest, located directly behind the High Altar, and is flanked by the chapels of the two apostles, John and Peter, who with James the Great constituted the inner circle of the apostles.

Here, in this holiest of sites after the crypt and the High Altar, and whether it was a holy year or not, pilgrims were also issued with what was apparently called *la autentica* - a revealing phrase - a certificate of having completed the pilgrimage. The earliest surviving example of one of these dates from the early 14th century. It seems to have originated as an official substitute for the commonly purchased souvenirs, such as badges and scallop-shells, which pilgrims bought in such quantities

in the environs of the cathedral. It was perhaps natural, with the vast increase in the numbers of pilgrims during the second half of the 11th century, that such *insignia*, as they were called, should be falsified and fraudulently sold to pilgrims who, for a host of reasons, might wish to be seen to have completed their pilgrimages but who in fact had not. These might range from those enacting civil or ecclesiastical punishments, to vagabonds passing themselves off as pilgrims to take advantage of strangers' openhandedness. There were endless canonical and civil penalties intended to protect the value of *insignia*, but the counterfeiting of them was nonetheless very common. Pope Innocent III, in a bull dated 18 June 1207 and sent to all the bishops of Spain and Gascony, excommunicated those who falsified *insignia*. In 1259, Alexander IV issued a bull ordering that shell-badges be made in Compostela under the control of the cathedral chapter.

Pilgrims' motives for wanting a dated testimony of the completion of their pilgrimages were very diverse. In the case of those impelled along the Way of St James by the force of law, the reason is obvious. It is also evident for those undertaking the pilgrimage on behalf of someone else, who might be paying him to carry out a proxy pilgrimage and who needed proof that the contract had been fulfilled. Some confraternities demanded proof of pilgrimage before accepting the newly returned as members. Exemption from certain taxes was a privilege conceded by some towns to returned pilgrims on proof of status.

The evolution of the actual certificate is in itself interesting. In the 14th century it was similar to a letter of diplomatic accreditation: handwritten on parchment, and signed on behalf of the cathedral chapter by the senior cardinal or canon, known as the *Penitenciario*. Next to his signature was affixed the wax seal of the altar of Santiago, impressed over narrow cords held together by small lead *insignia*. The pilgrim's pious intention was attested to and his right to the *insignia* affirmed. The proceedings of the meetings of the cathedral chapter dating from the late 15th century reveal the organisation that by then went into providing services for pilgrims: besides the confessors, those in charge of showing relics and those who accepted the offerings, the senior cardinal was aided by a veritable scriptorium of copiers, and a *latinero de los sellos*, or seal-affixer. The arrival of the printing press made the production of "letters of proof" much faster and simpler, since it was necessary only to write the name of the pilgrim, the date and a few adaptations of the latin text. A Polish pilgrim of 1581 left

the following description of his "letter" or "passport": "written on parchment with the *insignia* of the senior cardinal attached, for which two *reales* was paid; they also added a little proof of confession for which one *cuarto* was paid". At some time in the 17th century the document came to include as an integral part of it the certificate of having been to confession and holy communion that had until then been slips or stamps pasted on.

The document, known earlier as a *compostelana* and then as a *compostela*, was usually printed on paper in gothic lettering, and measured about 18 by 24 cms. In the top left corner was a small woodcut showing a jacobean pilgrim, complete with hat, staff and satchel. Only very grand certificates continued to be produced on parchment and could include, as text, more or less what the relevant personage and the canon writing it wanted to say. The text of the standard printed document altered only slightly over the centuries. One such alteration took place in response to a dispute that arose when, as a result of courtly pressure from Madrid, a papal declaration made St Teresa of Avila co-patroness of Spain with St James. The cathedral chapter in Santiago protested strongly and added the words "sole and only" to the phrase on the *compostela* referring to the patronage of St James. The text was later expanded to include more about the pious motives of the pilgrims. In the mid-18th century the printed border of oak leaves was added and the picture of the Apostle changed to show a seated figure; the seal of the altar of St James was by now only a printed reproduction. In 1775 the mention of "sole and only" patronage was removed and the phrase "St James, Apostle to us and of Spain the Patron" added; the resulting text has lasted almost unchanged until the present day. The main elements of the modern document continue to be, firstly, the words setting out the power of the authorising body, the cathedral chapter, and its representative, to concede the certificate; secondly, the statement honouring the Apostle and stating the named pilgrim's devout intentions in visiting his shrine; and thirdly, the canonical signature, date and inked seal. Since early this century - but no-one seems to know exactly when - the border decorated with jacobean motifs has been more elaborate but still includes the original oak leaves, and St James has reverted to being *Santiago Peregrino*. In 1994 the seal showing him as *Matamoros* was abandoned in favour of the ancient one showing the star over his tomb, probably to accord better with the theme of reconciliation that has been so stressed in recent years by both Rome and the Church in Spain.

Reverting to the 14th and 15th centuries, it is clear that the functions of the *compostela* gradually came to exceed the mere verification of *insignia*. The *Liber Sancti Jacobi* had affirmed that “Indeed, all poor pilgrims must, on the first night that follows the day of their arrival at the altar of the Blessed James, receive at the hospice, for the love of God and the Apostle, full hospitality”. But with the great growth of the pilgrimage, the hospices were frequently overrun and hospitality, in Santiago and elsewhere, frequently abused. The *compostela* came to have the additional function of separating false from genuine pilgrims. There were so many of the former flooding into the city by the late 15th century that they were forbidden to remain there longer than three days. Genuine pilgrims could present their *compostelas* to a notary, and thus engrossed, the documents gave permission to remain longer. The Hospital Real, still a recent foundation in the mid-16th century, was by then demanding that the *compostela* be produced by poor pilgrims before they were allowed their three days’ free meals. At the end of the 17th century, the Hospital of St James in Bordeaux tightened up the rules to prevent vagabonds from availing themselves of the attentions reserved for pilgrims to Compostela: those on their way had to show the letter from their parish priest, and those returning, proof of having made their confession in the cathedral. The porter was required to write down the name, dates of arrival and departure, and place of origin of each jacobean pilgrim. In these measures we see the beginnings of the modern-day *credencial*.

The *compostela* had uses outside the city of the Apostle besides merely proving that the bearer had been there. Since pilgrims in earlier centuries had to return home by the same means as they had arrived, the *compostela* may have served as an additional form of safe-conduct, especially if their return journey took them off the established routes where they already enjoyed considerable legal protection. Whether on the well-worn pilgrim roads or farther afield, the possession of a *compostela* may have resulted in spontaneous offers of meals, beds and favours from local people that eased the homeward way. The rules of the religious foundations at Roncesvalles and Aubrac allowed for the special treatment of accredited pilgrims on their way home, which included warm water for washing and better wine. At other shrines that might be visited on the return journey - Oviedo, San Millan de la Cogolla, Santo Domingo de Silos or Montserrat - those who had been to Compostela were bound to have been favoured visitors.

For the uses to which it could be put, then, the *compostela* became

a desirable piece of paper. For one thing, as Pablo Arribas Briones points out so eloquently,

“the fact of having made one of the major pilgrimages, such as the one to Compostela, gave one a boost up the social ladder. The person who had been to Finisterre was an initiate into mysteries, knowledgeable about far-off lands (about which he could speak, capturing the attention of an ever-credulous audience) to the point of acquiring charisma. People respected him and considered him “a somebody”. Perhaps no-one has yet studied with enough attention what was implied in this change of attitude and even status in a society as closed as was the historic age of the pilgrimages, and what that could mean in the lives of some who had worn the pilgrim habit.”

Not surprisingly, since the subject of Don Pedro's best-known work is the low-life of the Way of St James, the forged and ill-gotten compostela receives a mention. To cater to that desire for enhanced standing just referred to, that longing for access to privilege and hospitality, the criminal element carried on a thriving trade throughout the Middle Ages in stolen documents, for which there was no shortage of ready buyers. In some societies, possession of a compostela meant lower taxes; apparently, among the Slovaks, those who could prove that they had been to Compostela in three consecutive years were free from taxes for the rest of their lives, which goes some way to explaining the degree of ceremony and organisation that groups of jacobean pilgrims from that area are recorded as having observed. In Compostela itself, the cathedral had rivals that specialised in the production of false certificates - their market was the army of false pilgrims mentioned above - and at one time the alcalde of the city was selling compostelas. At least the forgeries produced locally must have borne enough resemblance to the real thing to be convincing. To so-called “pilgrims” who had no intention of going any farther along the Way of St James than the verdant hills of La Rioja, anything could be sold, since they were unlikely ever to have seen a real compostela.

What the certificate could actually be worth in the hands of a rascal, even if he were a *bone fide* pilgrim, can be illustrated by the case of the 18th century Frenchman, Guillaume Manier, who had provisioned himself with at least three safe-conducts before setting

out on his pilgrimage, and on arrival obtained his *compostela* for the price of two *sueldos*. He and his companions lost no time in seeking to recoup their outlay, but went straight away to the archbishop's palace to beg alms, each being given a *cuarto*. Manier subsequently spent some time as a mendicant pilgrim in the company of a blind fiddler, managing to collect no less than fifty *sueldos* through the adroit use of his *compostela*.

It is interesting to note the changes brought about in the appreciation of the document since the introduction of the pilgrim *credencial* by the first "Amigos" in Estella in 1960. Although this familiar item was devised by Dr Francisco Berguete (who is still alive, though now very elderly) it was always authorised and signed by the Archbishop of Santiago de Compostela, and as the pilgrimage began to grow significantly, responsibility for producing it passed to the cathedral chapter. Today it is the *credencial* or pilgrim passport, duly filled out and stamped at the various stopping places along the Way, which gives access to hospitality as once the *compostela* did. That it does this on the journey to the shrine makes it a distant successor of the safe-conduct, and of course it incorporates a space for the pilgrim's parish priest or bishop to write something concerning his motive for undertaking the pilgrimage. On arrival in Santiago, the stamped and dated *credencial* and a brief personal testimony before the *hospitaleros* at the Pilgrim Office will result in the issuing of the personalised and dated *compostela*.

There is a degree of misunderstanding about both the *credencial* and the *compostela* which needs dispelling. Both documents are issued - and that means produced and paid for - by the cathedral chapter; in the case of the *credencial* there is also a hefty postage bill, as it is distributed all over Spain, to churches both on and off the pilgrim routes and to the associations of "Amigos" for them to give out to their members. Many pilgrims today firmly believe that they have a "right" to the *compostela* through the fact of having done the pilgrimage and faithfully stamped their *credencial*. This is not, in fact, the case. What they *do* have a right to is the *credencial* itself, since it does not depend on being a member of anything - and in this sense it is more freely available than the Confraternity's own pilgrim passport. If your motives are not religious or, as many people prefer to call them nowadays, "spiritual", the *credencial* can simply act as a means of identifying yourself as a pilgrim, and having obtained one wherever you begin, you can fill in the details yourself, as fully or as minimally as

you please, and get it stamped where you like at your stops. There is a handsome certificate awarded by the cathedral that will attest to your having made the pilgrimage.

But if you want the *compostela*, which is still, as it always has been, the witness to having made pilgrimage for devotional reasons - although today the international dimension to the pilgrimage has come to mean that this has less to do with denomination or creed, than with the pilgrim's own interior disposition - it will matter where you get your *credencial* stamped and what you say on presenting it at the Pilgrim Office. The traditional sources of stamps are the parish church, the *ayuntamiento*, and the *cuartel* of the *guardia civil*. Most hotels, restaurants and bars have devised their own stamps in recent years, almost

as part of the welcome offered to pilgrims. It is fine to include some of these, but unadvisable to fill your whole *credencial* up with what looks to the Pilgrim Office like the evidence of an 800 kilometre wine-tasting.

Similarly, it is helpful to find a simple form of words in advance that will confirm that your pilgrimage has indeed been a spiritual quest. You will not be asked what denomination you are, or even - surprisingly - whether you are Christian. It is very, very rare for anyone to be refused the *compostela*, and when such cases arise, it is nearly always because a pilgrim has spread out a *credencial* full of bar stamps and given "time in the open air" or "gastronomy" as his motive. If that is in fact the case, he should be asking for, and will certainly be given, the certificate, and should be satisfied with it.



St James's Day 2010

Members of the Confraternity shared celebrations with other pilgrims all over the world. Here is a round-up of some of them.

Australia – Adelaide

An inaugural meeting for a local camino organisation was planned at St James's church, Mile End. Janet Leitch writes: You will be gratified to know that there was one person at our "gathering" who got all the information about it off the CSJ website, and what's more she chose to attend. It was a successful day, and we now have a committee of 7 to look at what / where / how we go about setting up our own organisation. People were very enthusiastic and the people who volunteered all have different types of skills which is great.

Australia – Melbourne

Merlyn Quaife (no relation to Pat Quaife) presented 'Camino de Santiago', a programme of songs and poems with Len Vorster at St John's church, Toorak. We have the texts of some of the poems courtesy of John Revell, in touch with Australian friends who attended the recital.

Belgium

In the weeks preceeding St James's day the Belgian Vlaamsgenootschap van Santiago de Compostela celebrated both the Holy Year and their 25th anniversary with a 38 day walk of 862 km. The walk, beginning on 18 June and ending in Brussels on 25 July, linked together the 18 Flemish churches dedicated to St James. Each church was presented with a bronze scallop shell for the entrance and a waymark showing the distance to Santiago.

South Africa – Kalk Bay

Heinrich Brumfield writes: Our Confraternity had a very good Feast Day on the 25th July in the small church of St. James in Kalk Bay, Cape Town. It was attended by about 54 pilgrims. We changed the format of our programme slightly for the new pilgrims who will be walking in the second half of this year; we added a "blessing of the staff and the

scrip" ceremony. We thought it would be a good idea to revive some of the rituals of the past (Middle Ages). Our regional representatives in other parts of the country also arranged special get-togethers and they reported that there was much interest in the Camino and all things pilgrim.

UK – Lincolnshire

Teresa Sikorska-Shaw writes: Aslackby (pronounced 'azel-bee') is a small village in the depths of sparsely - populated Lincolnshire. It does not possess a pub or a shop but has a fourteenth-century church which, standing on slightly higher ground, dominates the village. It is dedicated to St James the Great. Thanks to its active and energetic PCC, churchwardens and congregation, it is at present undergoing improvements which my husband, as architect, is overseeing. Knowing that we had undertaken the Santiago pilgrimage earlier this year, we were invited to take part in their patronal celebrations on the Saint's feast day.

We arrived in the early afternoon of a sunny hot Sunday. The event started in the splendid and much loved gardens of the old vicarage. This is now occupied by the churchwarden and his wife, the Parish Council Church Secretary, who, generously, are happy to host many village events on their lawns. Drinks were served from under a gazebo, erected in case of inclement weather, as the participants gathered. Unbeknown to us, these included a christening party from nearby Grantham. The father of the baby, a Spaniard, was happy for his one-year-old daughter to be christened in this particular church, dedicated to St James, as he originates from close to Santiago de Compostela!

The service started with a procession to the church from a replica of a camino waymark, lovingly carved by Chris the churchwarden and set beside the drive of his house. We were privileged, together with a local man, to be asked to carry the three scallop shells, which adorn the altar on this special day, to the accompaniment of a hymn. The service was led by a recently ordained curate, who stood in for the vicar who was holidaying with her school-aged children. The visiting preacher, inspired by a Saint so closely associated with pilgrimages, spoke to us, appropriately, about journeys. The baby was duly baptised although not without a moment's concern when the inexperienced curate thought he had forgotten the sacred oils! The light-filled church did not intimidate the baby's young cousins who joyfully (and noisily)

participated in the event. The organ that accompanied our singing also added an extra dimension of heavy breathiness. Will this be the next project to fund raise for?

Back to the welcoming garden and to a magnificent tea prepared by the ladies of the village and co-ordinated by the hard working, but serene, Denise. An abundance of crustless sandwiches, delicious cakes and a fruit salad, without which no English summer event is complete, awaited us. The proud parents provided the christening cake and wine with which to toast the baby.

We were delighted to meet a lady, who having learnt about the event in the CSJ *Bulletin*, had come all the way from Cambridge. It transpired that she and her husband had also completed the camino some years ago, starting from Vézelay, and covering many more miles than our humble effort this year. Moreover, they had given of their time to act on two occasions as wardens at the *refugio* at Rabanal! This had the added bonus that she was at ease with the Spanish language and was able to converse with the delighted 'Spanish Granny' visiting from Galicia, but who had not a word of English.

Eventually an eclectic mix of people had to disperse after a memorable afternoon.

St James has provided us with many happy memories this year.

Annie Wilson writes: Despite the good directions in the *Bulletin* I still managed to get a little lost and arrived in the pretty village just as the Service had started. I was very pleased to see, as I pushed open the very heavy door of the beautiful church, that there was a large joyful congregation. The Baptism of the toddler, Sasha, was a very family and church friends occasion. Sasha's father is Spanish from Galicia and her paternal Grandmother and Aunt had come from Santiago de Compostela to be in Aslackby for that special day.

Amongst the congregation St. James' shells were proudly worn. Then a champagne toast to Sasha by her father completed a very memorable St. James' Day celebration.

Note: Mrs Anne Street, the widow of a previous Vicar, Kenneth Street, has been a member of the CSJ since 1987. Together they have been responsible for developing the devotion to St James in their village.

UK – Worcester Cathedral

Paul Lack writes: If Robert Sutton had sat up and listened, on St James's Day in Worcester Cathedral this year, what would he have made of it?

Almost 600 years after his death, a group of people commemorating his life...? Do you imagine *anything* 600 years into the future? Wouldn't things have changed beyond recognition? I reckon the pace of change even then was pretty fast – but the cathedral is still there; stripped, colourless, bare to his eyes, but structurally the same, and there's still some scaffolding, comfortingly repairing some part of it. And some of the music was probably familiar. However, if they were having a service, why weren't they saying a mass for his soul? The rose placed on his grave was a nice touch – though he would have put it on his wife's grave



Why him - just an ordinary man? No saint – and undoubtedly a sinner. An ordinary man who made the pilgrimage and was buried in his boots. Why him, now?

Just as the Tomb of the Unknown Warrior became the focus for commemoration of the great war and the thousands of husbands and sons who died, so, Robert Sutton, one of the few medieval pilgrims we know by name, has become the focus for the commemoration of those thousands of unknown pilgrims. We were gathering at the tomb of the known pilgrim.

The reasons for the pilgrimage – the ostensible reasons anyway – have changed. But I suspect that Robert Sutton would have recognised many of the pilgrims gathered in his name in Worcester. If they compared notes, I expect they would discover that what they found on the pilgrimage was very much the same, and that the end of their exploring was “to arrive where we started, and know the place for the first time.”

Italy – Castel Gandolfo

From L'Osservatore Romano: The annual Peach Festival is held on 25 July when a basket of the first and most beautiful peaches of the season are presented to the Pope at his summer villa.

Europa Compostela 2010

From London to Newhaven



On Saturday 26 June 13 members of the Association Normande de Saint Jacques made their way to London to join ten English members of the Confraternity of Saint James to walk the first leg of the European Pilgrim Relay carrying a pilgrim staff to Santiago de Compostela. Some members of the group would continue to Rouen and Chartres where they would meet with other pilgrims walking from Paris. The theme of this Pilgrim Relay is “Solidaires de la Terre et des Hommes”, affirming the pilgrim’s respect for the rights of man and the protection of our environment, togetherness and strength.

A welcoming reception and walk along the Thames visiting places of interest was followed by an excellent dinner in a local restaurant and a superb performance of Monteverdi’s Vespers of 1610. Pilgrims then went back to East Croydon for an early start the next day.

The route chosen for the English stage of the Relay was the Vanguard Way, an attractive - and strenuous - route from East Croydon to Newhaven,

crossing the North and South Downs. The route passes through pretty villages and seems remote in spite of being so close to London. Even the first section took advantage of parks and woodland footpaths and kept us away from heavy traffic. We were all thrilled to see a display by the Red Arrows, their red, white and blue smoke trails seeming particularly appropriate. The final stage, from Alfriston to Newhaven, is especially fine, with its superb view from the South Downs down over Cuckmere Haven. The climb over Seaford Head has one of the most spectacular views in Southern England. We were delighted to have as our leader Graham Butler, one of the originators of the Way, whose knowledge of the Way was most impressive. Accommodation ranged from the excellent, hotels at East Croydon and Newhaven, through comfortable, Youth Hostels at Blackboys and Alfriston, and basic, hall floors at Limpsfield and Forest Row, certainly well-known to many pilgrims.

We received a great deal of help along the way from local members of the Confraternity, Hall Committees and YHA staff and thanks are due to all those who gave their time and energy to transport baggage and people and shop for supplies etc.

The group certainly showed its "solidarity", the theme of Claude Pigeon's message during a halt in the Ashdown Forest. Those who had difficulties were helped and French and English alike made sterling efforts to communicate in each other's language. Old friendships were renewed and new friendships forged and ties between the Confraternity and the Amis de Saint Jacques will, I am sure, be strengthened.

I will finish with remarks on a postcard which I have just received from a member of the Amis. She writes "Notre Cheminement est terminé, nous avons formé avec les Anglais un groupe très chaleureux, plein de joie, d'amitié et de partage. La séparation du groupe a été un peu douloureux comme à chaque fois, nous avons prié très fort à la Cathédrale pour nous retrouver à un autre cheminement".

ALISON PARKES

The Milky Way

On Monday 28 June, 24 pilgrims from Confraternity of Saint James and Association Normande des Amis de Saint Jacques, led by Graham, are still walking from London to Newhaven on the Vanguard Way www.vanguardway.org.uk. I will personally call this part of the path from Limpsfield to Forest Row the 'Milky Way' www.nasa.gov for two reasons:

First of all, because the 'Milky Way' was announced by the aerobatic display-team of synchronised flying named the 'Red Arrows' which I

had seen the day before. These 'Red Arrows' etched their signatures in white smoke in the beautiful blue sky of that day.

Furthermore, these signatures of these airplanes at Biggin Hill were not only in white but also in blue and red, the colours of the three Australian, British and French flags, representing all the nationalities of our pilgrim group.

These airplanes also heralded the future of the European Relay in France with Didier Berhault as the pilot, for the benefit of those pilgrims with a handicap that cannot walk...for the moment.

The second reason I refer to this part of our path as 'Milky Way' is not as elevated as the first one but is sustained by your stomach, by my stomach indeed! I mean the marvellous coffee break we had in an inn: coffee with milk, cream and brown sugar! We appreciated British taste and we love England.

Were we both on the 'Vanguard Way' or on the 'Celestial Way' or on the 'Star route' towards Santiago de Compostela or on the 'Milky Way'?

May these routes, generated by the European Relay 'Europa Compostela 2010' be the same when we walk in solidarity with the Earth, the Sky and Mankind.

JEAN-NOEL LE TOULOUZAN

St Michael's Way

The other, shorter, pilgrims' route across Cornwall

Robert Shaw



The historic-looking map in the lobby of the Virxe da Cerce hotel in Santiago shows the converging pilgrimage routes from all corners of Europe, including two separate routes leaving from England. Curiously, the CSJ Pilgrim's Record map shows no routes starting from England at all!

One of these "English" routes comes out of Cornwall and the reality is that, as the crossroads of the "Celtic fringes" of Europe, Cornwall was a departure point for countless pilgrims heading to Santiago. Cornwall has only recognised this in recent years. The first "official" pilgrimage route was the Saints' Way, between Padstow and Fowey, for which the

few available guides scarcely mention the camino to Santiago.

More recently, however, a second route has been opened, with Euro-money and which positively incorporates the scallop shell in its signage. This is called St Michael's Way and runs 12½ miles between St Ives Bay, on the north coast, and St Michael's Mount, on the south. We walked this route in spring 2010, between completing the Saints' Way after Easter and setting out to northern Spain for our camino.

It was a fine, sunny morning in Lelant, where the Way officially starts, and we had left our car at the end of our walk, in the car park at Marazion, and had taken the local bus that runs across the narrowest bit of Cornwall, to our starting point.

St Uny landed at this thriving port in AD600 and Celtic Christianity survived here until the Roman church eventually gained power in AD930. Before the estuary silted up in the 16th century, it was possible to sail beyond Lelant to Hayle and even to St Erth. However, St Ives then became the main port.

We decided, however, to omit the first mile or so of walking, in what appeared to be the wrong direction and between the railway line and the golf course, and stayed on the bus until Carbis Bay. Here St Michael's Way has turned inland, has crossed through the village and begun to lead quite steeply uphill. From a distance we saw a tall pointed obelisk on a hilltop. The Way passes close by so we investigated it. The three-sided granite monument was erected - to his own glory and with the intention of it becoming his mausoleum - in 1782 by John Knill. *

Knill was the local Collector of Customs in St Ives and it can only be assumed that the monument resulted from excessive "collections" and excessive hubris! There are great views of the coast (including Godrevy lighthouse, which inspired Virginia Woolf) from "Knill's Steeple", but we pressed on.

The Way is partly on minor roads, partly paths, across fields and even crosses a campsite. It was not long before we reached Trencrom Hill. One of the glories of walking in Cornwall in the spring is the blackthorn blossom, and here, approaching Trencrom, it was in profusion, combined with field boundary walls built with huge, neatly - interlocking granite boulders.

The Way skirts around the foot of Trencrom Hill, though there can be few walkers who do not go up to the top, 212 metres above sea level, for one of the finest views in Cornwall. This is another outcrop of massive, weathered, rounded granite. There are said to be sixteen hut circles here and Neolithic axe-heads have been found which date

to 3,500BC.

Halfway down Trencrom we met a gentleman on his own, climbing up, so we stopped to chat. We explained that we were preparing for our camino and he revealed himself to be a local vicar (we eventually sent him a postcard from Santiago). He wished us *Buen Camino* and warned us about a detour within the next mile, where a local farmer had (allegedly) diverted the right of way. At the bottom of the hill we came to Ninnes Bridge, where the Way runs alongside a stream through the front garden of a converted Wesleyan chapel. Climbing the other side of the valley we reached Trembethow and, as had been foretold, we were totally confused by the absence of signage and much recent wire. We incurred a significant detour – together with several un-Christian thoughts!

We rejoined the Way as it formed a beaten line across a ploughed field, then down steeply and up steeply several times, over several kilometres, until we reached Ludgvan. St Ludgvan's church was a meeting point for pilgrims making the final leg of the journey to St Michael's Mount, which ran through thick forest and then across marshland. Next door to the church is the White Hart Inn, the first pub we had come upon and where we drank lunch and readied ourselves for the final straight (almost literally). The Way runs downhill from Ludgvan along field edges, where arrangements of granite slabs act as cattle-grids. The heavy forest has long disappeared and we crossed the A30, then the A394, as the Way finally reaches sea level.

The ancient forest may have disappeared, but the marshy land remains. Marazion Marsh is now managed by the RSPB as an important habitat. The Way crosses these marshes on raised decking. It also crosses the main Penzance to Paddington railway line, with surprisingly little security!

Finally, we emerged onto the seafront of Marazion and the car park. Ahead was St Michael's Mount, accessible by foot over the causeway at low tide, but now, in mid-afternoon, separated from the mainland by high tide. Knowing it well already, we decided to forego the boat trip to the Mount and back, and drove home instead.

Our next cross-country walk would be following the scallop shells and yellow arrows westwards out of León.

* Ceremonies to remember John Knill take place on 25 July every five years. The next event is in 2011.

Fragments from my Camino

An Australian Pilgrim

Background

A supported walk from Le Puy-en-Velay to Conques in 2003 was the introduction for Bob and me to the Way of St James. As we walked we knew that we would be back to continue but we did not know that Bob was suffering from a slow-growing brain tumour and resultant brain swelling. Imperceptibly our almost telepathic bond disappeared after thirty-four years of marriage.

In what follows *How was your day?* covers one of the days on that walk. The other two pieces, *Crossing the Pyrenees* and *Eunate*, are from the first time I walked alone.

How was your day?

I find that I can record the events of the day and our brief conversations.

But I cannot know your thoughts and feelings.

What was the colour of your day? Was it grey overcast with patches of blue? What did you observe as we followed the red and white way-marks across the high plateau which was already settling in for a long hard winter?

What was the music of your day? Was it the tap, tap of walking poles, the thud of heavy walking boots on rock, the tinkle of sheep bells, the crunch of crisp autumn leaves, the rustle of wind in dry grass, the gurgle of water over rocks in small streams, the squelch of boots in boggy ground, the silence of the hills, the happy chatter when we met other walkers?

What were the smells of your day? Were they the fresh baguette, the steaming milky coffee, the earthy fungi, the resinous pines, the penned sheep, the meaty evening casserole?

What were the tastes of your day? Were they the bitter coffee, the sweet apple, the cold wind, the rich *aligot*, the spicy sausages, the creamy dark chocolate mousse?

And did you feel that you floated when you removed the heavy walking boots and settled into the hot soaky bath?

I know that your soul was touched because you shared those

feelings with me. We rested for a long time in a simple Romanesque church in a tiny village.

"I feel so peaceful," you said and lit a candle.

This was strange but I made no comment; meditation and spirituality were part of your make-up but you had no formal religious background, and in our thirty-four years of marriage you had shown little interest in churches. We did not know of your brain tumour and swelling; I think we were both unwilling to acknowledge that all was not right.

Crossing the Pyrenees

In the early hours of the morning, movement in the bunk above woke me. The darkness held night noises; rustles, heavy breathing, grunts, groans, snores of the hundred or so other walkers bedded in that vast room, once a medieval pilgrim hospital now converted into a pilgrim hostel, a *refugio*, run by a group of Dutch Friends of the Camino. I snuggled into my sleeping bag and reflected. The night before was the first time I had ever shared a room with complete strangers - five Japanese women - and this night, another first, a mixed dormitory, male, female, young, old, Spanish, German, French, Italian, Dutch, Japanese, Brazilian - the list of nationalities seemed endless.

Respite from my role as a carer was to continue alone along the Way of St James. Bob and I had completed the 740km walk from Le Puy-en-Velay to St-Jean-Pied-de-Port the year before. It became obvious to me that it was to be his last walk in a country he loved and that if I wanted to complete the remaining 770km it would be alone. And here I was.

As I weighed in my 7.4kg backpack in Sydney for the flight to Bayonne via Paris I told myself yet again that I could always opt out and come home. Bayonne, then the small mountain train to St-Jean for a night, an early morning start and I was on the Way of St James following the Route Napoléon over the Pyrenees. Not trusting my level of fitness I had booked the first night at Orisson eight kilometres straight up, the last stop before Roncevalles eighteen kilometres further, on the other side of the pass. I arrived at Orisson at 10am and spent the day enjoying the mountains from this eyrie.

The thought of the walk from Orisson to Roncevalles had been frightening, one of the two hardest days on the whole Way and along which there had been several deaths from exposure and exhaustion. Despite the apprehension, it was a magical day - dull blue sky, only

a light wind, no fog to hide the way-markers, a gradual climb, the occasional fellow walker, the ring of neck-bells on the little Basque mountain horses and sheep on the slopes near the pass. On the slow descent I entered a silent world of autumn beech forest and just after the fountain of Roland crossed an isolated cattle grid in a barbed wire fence and passed from France into Spain. In this high lonely world the only sound was the squelch of my boots in the thick mud that the track had become after leaving the treeless stony heights of the pass. Amongst the trees was the grave of a walker who had only got that far. Coming out of the forest I reached the Puerta de Ibañeta, the spot where Charlemagne was supposed to have heard and ignored the sound of the mighty horn, Oliphant, Roland's vain call for help. And then the spires of the medieval abbey of Roncevalles appeared.

Tomorrow's walk would take me through more Basque territory past the spot where Roland had dug his sword Durendal into a rock as he lay dying, and into Hemingway country towards Pamplona. Cocooned in my soft down bag on the thin foam mattress, I had survived, and *would* survive and enjoy this long walk alone along the Way and into my future, confident that way-markers would be there.

Eunate

I sit down on the wooden pew; already distanced by long days of walking, grief slips away.

Peace embraces me.

No past, no future, just me, here right now.

I remain seated for a long time in harmony with my surroundings.

The Romanesque chapel is filled with white flowers. The fragrance of roses and lilies blends with the soft music that floats around me and above to the high medieval pointed ceiling. Sunlight filters through the thin alabaster windows and the golden stones of the octagonal walls glow. The only adornments are a Madonna and Christ Child and three large white candles.

I almost didn't come.

"Don't miss Eunate, it is only about two kilometres off the Way," Maria told me in Sydney.

At Muruzábal a small sign reads "Eunate". The track heads off the ridge down through bare autumn paddocks, no shade, no grass verge to soften my steps.

It is about 2pm, I am sweaty, dirty and hungry, disinclined to

dine alone amongst the extended Spanish families gathered for the important Sunday meal.

Pamplona is twenty kilometres behind me. I walked out of the convent in cold pre-dawn rain. Near the cathedral – joy! – a tiny *café*/bar is open; sweet pastry and strong *café con leche* kept me going.

Puente la Reina is five kilometres ahead, about an hour's walk to a shower and bed for the night.

"Drat it," I say aloud, frozen in my habitual indecision.

I take a swig of water and head into the dry hot paddock, my boots heavy on the dusty hard track. I tramp endlessly towards the tiny building which my Pili Pala Press Guide tells me is 'one of the most stunning churches you'll see on the camino'.

The rich smell of meat and vegetables frying greets me as I reach the door of the tiny pilgrim *refugio* tucked beside the chapel, the pair isolated in this vast cornfield in Navarre.

"Come in, come in. I am cooking tonight's dinner." Jean welcomes me, grabbing my backpack. He is the current *hospitalero* from a Southern French Group which maintains this minute *refugio* and looks after the chapel.

"First a cold drink and something to eat," he tells me as I start to ask if there is space here for me tonight. I sit at a long wooden table; the ginger flavoured drink, fresh grapes and almond biscuits are perfect.

I leave my Scarpa boots and Leki walking pole in the rack and suddenly weightless float upstairs. Jean deposits my backpack in the only dormitory, a cool room with large terracotta floor tiles. This *refugio* only sleeps eight walkers. Brazilian Edna has already claimed a mattress from the pile and a spot by the window. Her back is aching and she has stopped early to rest. I grab my light Merrell shoes and head for the chapel. I pass the afternoon meditating inside and sitting outside between the columns of the roofless cloister writing my journal.

The peace and serenity remain and I want to stay here in this spot forever.

"I am staying here the night," I tell gentle Miriam whom I first met days ago while walking across the Pyrenees on the Route Napoléon from St-Jean-Pied-de-Port. She has arrived with Sabine, a fellow German.

"Tonight we stay in Puente la Reina," she replies.

In half an hour they are back to stay.

Later, Mexican Estella limps up. I have seen her a couple of times

since Roncesvalles. Today, I learn that she is a true pilgrim in the religious sense, walking for her handicapped sons.

"Would you like to come to the chapel to pray?" Jean asks as we chatter happily over the delicious dinner he has prepared.

The octagonal chapel sits a solid presence in the black night. From the *refugio's* small herb garden the resinous smell of rosemary wafts as we crunch across the gravelled parking area. Our steps quieten once we reach the soft grass inside the low stone enclosing wall and pass through the roofless cloister to the door. As we enter the darkness Jean hands each of us a small lit candle. Inside, he lights the three huge white candles at the front. The simple Madonna and Christ Child shine and shadows waver on the bare stone walls. We sit still lost in our own thoughts for about fifteen minutes. Our silence parts with the pure clear notes of *Ave Maria*. Jean's strong voice mingles with the flickering light and scent of flowers. I float to the stars. Tears stream down my face.

Next morning, beside each coffee cup on the breakfast table is a little grey stone painted with a bright yellow arrow, the yellow arrow which marks the Way of St James from the Pyrenees to Santiago de Compostela. I linger after the others have gone, reluctant to leave. A small tour bus pulls up and a tiny Japanese woman detaches herself from the group. She wants to borrow my backpack, hat and walking pole for a photo. It is time to continue following the yellow arrows west.

Waiting

George Young

In 2008, I had set off from the Tour Saint Jacques, sadly still out of bounds to pilgrims, to follow the *chemin* to Tours and then Bordeaux. This year I planned to resume my pilgrimage from that city and, through St-Jean-Pied-de-Port and Irún, to join the Ruta de la Costa, eventually to rejoice in Santiago.

The route along the northern coast of Spain comes with warnings: short of infrastructure, physically tough, and very solitary. I found the first two warnings accurate; but pilgrims, not as thick on the ground as elsewhere, are certainly there for comfort and companionship.

Such was the nature of the coastal route that I did not settle down until Bilbao. Having left behind the horrendous road works that beset the way to Portugalete, I gradually began to feel more at home. In Laredo I stayed with the Trinity nuns and made the acquaintance of half a dozen or so German pilgrims, some of whom had a good command of English, most of whom were my intermittent companions until Villaviciosa. One, a man travelling alone, known as Sigi, I met most nights and sometimes during the day. We talked of entering Santiago together though sadly it did not work out like that.

Although I am older than I should like, I am still a fit and experienced long distance walker. Here however I was not behaving properly; I did not eat enough during the day as I did not find the quality of the food appetising, especially in Galicia, and as I normally walk solo, I do not take enough rest, particularly in the middle of the day. Nevertheless, I was doing fine.

In Villaviciosa, as some of our number were leaving the camino, half a dozen of us gathered for a farewell supper – the food was fine and the pouring of *sidra* by the waiter was a novelty. Some were concerned about the climbs to be made during the next day, made nervous by the profiles in their guide, but Sigi and I were not put off.

We reached the top by the big car park from where it would be downhill all the way to Gijón. Sigi, in his usual sensible way, was settling down for a decent break and a good snack, while I, in my impetuous fashion, set off almost immediately. By the time I was half

way down the hill I was struggling with thirst. By the time I reached the outskirts of Gijón I was in a bad state; although the way was flat the temperature was very high and the tarmac went on forever. As I soon discovered, all the facilities pilgrims would need were at the far end of the city, kilometres away, but I was going to have no hope of reaching them.

I lurched into the first hotel I came to, which, by pilgrim standards, was way off the radar although to tourists and business folk it would be quite modest. To my astonishment and relief I was accepted, booked in and shown to a very comfortable room, no sea view but I cared nothing for that, nor anything else. I passed an awful night, feeling very ill and knowing I needed a doctor. When would morning come? It did at last, so that soon the receptionist and I were grappling for comprehension through half-understood languages. He decided that a house call by a doctor would not be adequate and that I should travel by taxi to the A & E department of the university hospital.

Once there, I went through a number of tests and processes. I vaguely remember that I had a drip of some sort, and was passed from one station to another, each time the medical staff having to search for someone with minimal skills in English. Exhausted by all this, on top of my debilitated state, I was at last left to rest on a trolley. Now I had no need to worry about anything until I was thrown out. In this irresponsible condition my eyes wandered over my surroundings, noting that there were people walking backwards and forwards, usefully occupied in doing things. Just opposite me, on the other side of the corridor in which my trolley was parked, there were other people not doing anything at all except lying on their trolley, presumably waiting to be shunted off to their next station.

Idly (that reasonably describes my state), my glance wandered around the corridor, finally alighting on a notice above the other trolleys. I could not read it at first, at least until I was able to remember that this was Spain and the notice was probably in Spanish. It bore just one word: *esperar*. My grasp of Spanish is tenuous but even semi-conscious I knew that that short word meant 'Wait', and that is what my fellow trolley people were doing: waiting. So was I, perhaps there was even a notice above me: 'Wait'.

But my exposure to the Spanish language, brief though it had been, told me that *esperar* had a secondary meaning: hope, *esperanza*. That was what all we trolleys needed just then, to understand that though we were waiting we were also hoping, hoping that all

would be well. *In our hardships, understanding that hardship develops perseverance and perseverance develops a tested character, something that gives us hope.* (Romans 5:3-5) I am not very good on hope; it is one of those virtues that I find problematical; out of the trilogy: faith, hope and love - hope, for me, was the least regarded. What have I been missing?

In the afternoon, I was discharged into the city clutching a couple of prescriptions and heeding the firm admonition of the sister to eat properly and drink plenty. Then I began to put my pilgrimage together again, joining the two halves of my journey, the before and the after. I had arrived here, quite without hope; here I had waited regardless at first of hope, now I would persevere, this time in hope.

It was a struggle to decide the sensible course to take, but I came up with a desperate notion of rejoining the camino by first taking a bus to Ribadesella, take a day's rest, then go on to Santiago still with a hope of a *compostela*. I managed through the bus journey and next day had a shot at Lourenz  . I tried eating but the food in the restaurants was unappetising and the shops were not offering the sort of snacks with which I, in my feeble state, could cope. Next day I pushed on to Mondo  edo where I reluctantly came to my senses. Maybe I could just stitch the next week or so together, but in case of difficulty would I be able to get a doctor, or would there be public transport to get me to a city big enough to cope? In a vision I knew that here was where, this year, my camino hit the buffers. A day's rest, a bus to Santiago and a plane from A Coru  a to Heathrow; end of the line.

Now I feel none the worse for my misfortunes and intend to return next year to Gij  n to walk those last few days. All I have to do is to summon up that perseverance and that tested character to arrive at hope. To keep me hoping, Sigi and I have been in touch. If - I should say when - I make it to the end of the camino, I may visit a small town in Germany before returning to England; forget the glory, hope is all I need.

Book Reviews

The Itineraries of William Wey

Edited and translated by Francis Davey, 2010, Oxford, 253pp, £27.99, ISBN 978 1 85124 304 4; Copy in CSJ library.

Francis Davey is a careful academic and excellent storyteller. This book develops the work he began in *William Wey: an English pilgrim to Compostella* in 1456, published by the Confraternity in 2000, £5.50.

He has followed meticulously the journeys made by William Wey, a Devonian priest, to Compostella, Rome and the Holy Land between 1456 and 1462. He has translated the Latin and Middle English texts by William Wey and presents a synopsis and a commentary on each journey. He identifies confusing place names not otherwise recognisable and briefly describes some of the adventures and tribulations in travels through Belgium, Germany, Italy, Montenegro, Rhodes and eventually Jaffa for both Wey and himself in hot pursuit. In addition, his Notes enhance the translations and fill out our picture of medieval pilgrimage.

Wey was given dispensation by Henry VI to go on pilgrimage. His job of Bursar at Eton College shows that, as an early accountant, Wey was a keen observer of behaviour and manners and he meticulously recorded the information necessary for travellers, rather in the way we do for our own Confraternity guide books today. In particular he noted the cities and distances between Calais and Rome, Rome and Venice and also Venice and Calais and also currency conversion rates, monuments, language etc. He has a very practical section on obtaining provisions and a good passage from Venice.

Another chapter deals with the reasons for making a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, both as a theological imperative 'by the Command of Christ' and the 'strengthening of faith' as well as the names of the places to be visited, the biblical references and the 'indulgences granted at these places'.

It is much more expansive and revealing than the camino's own *A Pilgrim's Guide: a 12th century Guide for the pilgrim to Santiago de Compostela*, (CSJ, 1992, £6) which outlines the basic routes and tells stories of the saints but gives little in the way of explanation or insight beyond the quality of the water and the characteristics of people to be met along the way.

The Appendices contain additional fascinating information. William Wey left an unofficial will, written on a flyleaf of his mss,

listing his gifts to the chapel he had added to the church at Edington in Wiltshire, where he lived in retirement. It includes a large collection of vestments, liturgical items and souvenirs from the Holy Land, including a flat pack kit of the Holy Sepulchre. Further essays expand the short articles written for the *CSJ Bulletin* on the extraordinary journeys of the Icon of Our Lady of Philerimos (Bull 85, Mar 2004) and the history of the Syon Bridgettine community, now in Devon, housing another icon of Our Lady, left at their Lisbon home by a pilgrim on his way to Compostela, who failed to return and collect it (Leigh Hatts, *Bulletin* 100, Dec 2007)

Although the Compostela pilgrimage may be of the greatest interest for us, this new work expands our knowledge of travel in late medieval Europe and the sorts of conditions pilgrims enjoyed or endured. It is a hugely interesting and an enjoyable read. Highly recommended.

MARION MARPLES

To obtain copies see From the Secretary's Notebook.

The Camino Letters: 26 Tasks on the Way to Finisterre

Kirkpatrick, J 2010, Pyxis Press ISBN: 978-0-9865134-0-4 248pp \$34.95 Hardcover

After deciding to spring-clean her busy life and close down her legal practice so that she can spend a month in her garden, forty year-old Canadian Julie Kirkpatrick decides instead, practically on a whim, to walk eight hundred kilometres of the Camino de Santiago pilgrims' path in Spain with her seventeen year old daughter.

She knows little about the thousand year-old pilgrimage trail and does no physical training for the gruelling hike that starts in the Pyrenees Mountains, crosses three mountain ranges and ends at Finisterre on the Atlantic coast.

Before leaving home, she asks twenty-six friends to set her a task to do each day that she will be walking. Many of the tasks are imaginative and surprisingly thought provoking. Besides being asked to recite mantras and prayers, to think about the millions who have gone before her, to listen to the wind or to other people, she is asked to determine what events transpired in her life to lead her to Spain and what she hopes to gain from the experience. One friend prophetically asks her to write the first chapter of a book in her head as she walks. As she steadfastly completes each new task they become a rite of passage, sometimes painful and angst ridden, sometimes joyful, filled with music and light, and sometimes esoteric (her day and night at the Templar shelter in Manjarín - page 147).

This beautifully written, heartfelt book is not a travelogue about walking the camino in Spain. The pilgrimage trail is merely the landscape through which the writer passes, a transient backdrop to her daily tasks which evolve into a fascinating patchwork of self discoveries, miscellaneous emotions, thoughts, memories and life changing decisions, woven into twenty-six exquisitely honest letters written to her friends each evening after the day's walk

"I have decided to throw off the cynical and pessimistic world that I have created around myself and love my life, as the true spark of light that it is. *Paso por paso*. Step by step. I have my proof."

This book will appeal to all, but especially to women, mothers, daughters, and mothers of daughters.

SYLVIA NILSEN

Available from: P.O. Box 382, Millbrook, Ontario, Canada, L0A 1G0
Tel: (705) 761-3754 www.thecaminoletters.com / info@pyxispress.com

The Journey in Between: 1000 miles on foot through Spain on el Camino

Keith Foskett, 2010, 291pp, £14.99, ISBN 9780557179961, from www.lulu.com
Copy in CSJ library

This book is written by a 43 year old man who has done a lot of cycling and walking but not a pilgrimage requiring one to walk day after day.

It is refreshing to read of the difficulties and trials experienced by a younger pilgrim rather than the ones we usually encounter, who are by and large people of greater age and so face different challenges. After overcoming blisters and going back to his first idea of treating the journey as a relaxed walk, rather than having a daily distance target, he begins to enjoy the experience. His challenges are often concerned with balancing relationships with women met on his travels and also a friend in Greece. Particularly this involves needing to stay out late and therefore trying to persuade the wardens of the refuges to let him come in late.

I was surprised by the frequent mention of smoking cigarettes. He is, no doubt, too young yet for it to prejudice his health and stamina! On the other hand he would suddenly lapse into lyrical descriptions of nature and the countryside, which came as a pleasant change from the more practical concerns of finding camp sites or hostels and which of these were the better of the two options.

In spite of the title the book covers his pilgrimage from Le Puy.

I would recommend it to be read by our members in able to gain an insight into a different side of a pilgrimage. "To each his own".

CHRISTINE PLEASANTS

Where have all the pilgrims gone?

News from Gaucelmo

2010 Hospitaleros

August Thomas Bak, Deidre Kennedy and Hilda Staunton
 Gilbert Cabergs, Patricia Watterson, Stewart Bliss
 and Eilis Fitzsimmons

September Sanda Collier, Renee Christian and Bob Holm
 Anne and Adriaan Kreupeling

October Liz and Dick Crean
 Brendan and Anne Nolan

All hands to the pumps! Stockpile toilet rolls, order extra bread, tea, coffee, jam and biscuits because we are going to be busy in this Holy Year! That is what we thought when we anticipated a very hectic time at Gaucelmo, but where have all the pilgrims gone? Certainly numbers are down on the Camino Francés whilst other routes appear to have increases.

Greater numbers are undoubtedly reaching Santiago in this Holy Year (the number of *compostelas* issued by the Cathedral has increased) but the numbers starting on the French border have decreased. Intermediate starting points have also lower numbers of pilgrims. Indeed there seems to be a correlation suggesting that the further the distance from Santiago the lower the pilgrim numbers. This does not mean that all albergues and refugios have been idle because there has been an increase in the number of pilgrims starting at Sarria, where it has often been difficult to find a bed for the night.

Pilgrim numbers at Gaucelmo have generally been in the mid-twenties but on a few rare days we have been full to bursting point. Low numbers are not a problem for us because we are not a commercial organisation and our volunteer hospitaleros go there to support pilgrims. However this has been a poor year for those in Rabanal whose businesses rely on income from pilgrims.

The experiment with the paper sheets continues to be a success. Both hospitaleros and pilgrims are enthusiastic about their use – obviously for different reasons! They are not particularly bulky and

their disposal is no problem. Meanwhile there are still regular visits by our “friends” the bed bugs. Pilgrims are very grateful that we adopt a pro-active response to any infestations. One pilgrim who had been unable to get assistance elsewhere on the camino was seen to be spraying herself with fly spray. She left extremely pleased at the way she was looked after at Gaucelmo – bed-bug free.

During the World Cup final the refugio stayed open late to enable pilgrims to watch the match. The flying of the Spanish flag at Gaucelmo was appreciated and admired particularly by the Spanish pilgrims.

The herbs in the garden have been much in use. They have been used in flavouring food, to make herbal tea and to soak weary feet. We hope the winter will not be too unkind to the plants and that they grow even stronger next year.

Thank you to all the hospitaleros who give freely and generously of their time and energy and take each and every problem in their stride.

Members Pages

From Tom Cheesman

I have wanted to walk the camino for nearly seven years, after reading Paulo Coelho's *The Pilgrimage*. My route starts in le Puy-en-Velay, departing on the 20 April 2011 and I expect to be gone for three months. I've spent time near stretches of the French section and the landscapes are simply stunning. I aim to use my experience as a photographer to record the trip visually and on my return create a photographic coffee table styled journal. Once published, I have pledged to give fifty percent of any profits to UNICEF and a further twenty-five to smaller local charities.

It's been ten years since my last big adventure which involved riding a 350cc motorbike around Australia. I've had itchy feet ever since, but I've always been a very loyal work orientated employee, and for quite some time now work has had to come first!"

The last time I did any serious walking was during school in 1990 when I was training for the Ten Tors. With this in mind, I realise that the challenge in front of me is probably the greatest I have ever had to face. Hence taking up the torch for UNICEF.

All the funds raised will support UNICEF's work with children in more than 190 countries. UNICEF's practical programmes help protect the rights of all children around the world. UNICEF helps to provide the healthcare, nutrition, education and protection children need to survive and thrive.

To make a donation to *The Way To Santiago* fundraising venture please visit www.supportunicef.org.uk/thewaytosantiago

For further information please contact: Tom Cheesman on 07970 937851, or email tom@tomcheesman.co.uk or visit www.thewaytosantiago.co.uk

From J A Hilton

THE LAZARISTS' PILGRIMAGE TO SANTIAGO

At Pentecost in this Holy Year some four hundred members of the Order of St Lazarus from all over the world, including over forty from England and Wales, assembled at Santiago. We had answered the call of our Grand Master, the Marquis of Almazán, to join him in pilgrimage. A few had walked the camino, but most of us came by plane. On the Saturday we were taken by bus to Monte de Gozo, whence we walked



the six kilometres to the cathedral. (Although I am a member of the Confraternity of Saint James, this is probably as much of the camino as I shall ever walk.) In the cathedral we gathered for the Pilgrims' Mass, presided over by the Archbishop of Compostela and by our Spiritual Protector, the Melkite (Greek Catholic) Patriarch. The Grand Master made an offering to St James on behalf of our Order. The weekend culminated on Pentecost Sunday in a Melkite Rite Mass celebrated by the Patriarch.

The Order of St Lazarus was formed in the Holy Land during the Crusades to care for people suffering from leprosy and like the Hospitallers of St John, it also became a military order for the defence of the Christian Kingdom of Jerusalem. Today its primary activity is raising funds for the treatment of skin diseases, including leprosy. Membership is open to Christians of all denominations. For further information on the English Jurisdiction of the Order, see our website at www.st-lazarus.org.uk

From Christine Pleasants

There have been several articles in various St James Association magazines and *Bulletins* recently relating to the Japanese Shikoku pilgrimage. Unfortunately these being in foreign languages they are not easily accessible for the pilgrimage to be understood. I had the

pleasure of experiencing some of this well trodden way this year with my son and grandson.

I will commence by explaining the background to this pilgrimage. A young man named Kukai growing up on the island of Shikoku in Southern Japan was meditating on a cliff there and achieved enlightenment. He was led to become a monk and was very well thought of by the Emperor. He was sent to China to study Buddhism and came back to expound the knowledge he had learnt. He requested to set up the headquarters of his branch of Buddhism in the mountainous area of Koya, a site in south central Honshu. This became the centre for the Shingon sect of Buddhism. Kukai was given the title of Kobo Daishi which acknowledged his sainthood after the self predicted date of his death. An enormous cemetery has grown up around his tomb and it is believed by adherents of the sect that he lies there to rise again.

It has become therefore the site for the beginning of the pilgrimage. Here the pilgrims can buy their robes, hat, staff and book to receive stamps gathered from the visited temples. On completing the pilgrimage it is traditional to stick a stamp on one of the pillars of the great *tore*, that is the gateway of the main temple complex. Several pilgrims walk the route up to the mountain top to gain a blessing at the start of their pilgrimage. (My son Justin did this after Christmas). They then travel across to the island of Shikoku to walk around the island perimeter visiting 88 temples which have connections with Kobo Daishi's life. This is a distance of 1400 to 1600 kilometres depending on how many other temples are visited on the journey: several others have been developed to commemorate the events of various other saints in their travels.

It is customary to travel by ferry to arrive at the city of Tokushima to start at number one of the temples. The first few take one away from the coast and up into mountains and had been done by Justin before this New Year. This enabled Eldan, aged 4, and myself to do one easy stage along the coast and visit a famous temple at the end of a 10 kilometre walk. So we took a little local train to the village of Yuki. As we got ready to start our walk it began to rain so we donned waterproof jackets. Eldan was wearing a poncho for a ten year old which was looped up and tied in a knot at his knees! I discovered that there is a striking similarity to the Camino traditions and arrangements in that there is a hat sporting a verse which roughly translates "We two, pilgrims together" expressing that Kobo Daishi walks with you. There is the staff with a bell attached, a script or bag carried over the

shoulder and the book to collect stamps, poems and prayers in. There are sign posts and map boards along the path with descriptions of the temples to visit. Very well organised rest points are set up by the path consisting of a shelter from sun or rain, maybe combined with a look-out viewing point, drinking water and toilet facilities.

At one of these points, as we were leaving to continue our walk, we were hailed by a lady who chatted and gave us biscuits which were very welcome at our next stop, just before a steep descent to another bay. I must add it rained all day and we were glad to arrive at our hostel at Hiwasa. It was large and had rooms for four people, containing rails and hangers for our wet clothes, a water heater for necessary cups of tea and traditional style Japanese bathroom with bath water so hot I couldn't bathe until after dinner. There was a large restaurant with set meals, dinner and breakfast and also a snack bar. Many groups of pilgrims who were staying there were travelling by car or who had transport backup. They were quite elderly in the majority. We had seen about five youthful pilgrims walking like us. Of course in March it was not a Japanese holiday time.

The temple of Jakuoji was 150 steps above us and beautifully lit. I had planned to rise at 6am to join the blessing service which consisted of one hour of chanting the sutras while prayer sticks were burnt at the main altar. I was welcomed by the other pilgrims who brought me a chair and placed me in the centre of the line of worshippers. After the service the decoration of flower paintings on the ceiling was pointed out to me and I could also see where the fire was burning. Previously I had only been able to see the sparks flying heavenward. I spoke to the priest explaining where we came from. I then walked past the office where the stamps are issued - which was closed at that time. No doubt one is expected to get ones' stamp when one arrives the night before or wait for a later start!

I climbed up the rest of the steps to the Stupa where one gets an excellent view of the city and the bay. I returned to our room to find it was locked and Justin and Eldan had just finished breakfast - I had mistaken the time by half an hour! One of the elderly pilgrims approached Justin and gave him a token showing that he had completed the journey 50 times - one a year I should imagine! It needs quite a lot of stamina just to visit each temple as some are only accessible by the help of chains let into the rocks.

I wish I could do more of this journey with my son who is hoping to complete it this year as a sponsored walk to raise money

for “bamboo schools” in Nepal. This charity can be found online at karuna-shechen.org

If you would like to follow the progress of Justin’s pilgrimage you can follow it on his blog at describingacircle.blogspot.com

If you should feel led to contribute, sponsorship can be arranged by contacting me at christineplea@yahoo.co.uk and can be an amount per kilometre walked or an amount pledged for the completion of the pilgrimage.

Walk for William

William Gomez, a composer and classical guitarist, died of cancer his 2000. His brother Robert has been raising money for cancer charities since then. His latest walk with his wife Ana Maria was from Gibraltar to Finisterre. You can read his blog at walkforwilliam2010.blogspot.com to discover the trials and tribulations and sponsor him at www.justgiving.com/walkforwilliam2010

Via Francigena

Both Marigold Fox and Alison Raju have been travelling the roads to Rome this summer. Alison was changing trains at Besançon when she spotted somebody writing postcards in a miniscule hand. ‘That must be Marigold’ she thought. And it was. Shortly after we received this photograph of Marigold with the president of the Franche-Comté region Joseph Mulin.



From John Hatfield

Are you planning to give a talk about your pilgrimage? Why not use the CSJ slide library to help you? Did you know that the CSJ’s growing collection of over 3300 slides, available to UK members, covers not only the Camino Francés, but also the other main routes in France and Spain?

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

From the Secretary's Notebook

Marion Marples

How busy has the Camino been this Holy Year?

The verdict so far is that it has been busy, but not as overwhelmingly busy as predicted. Many refuges report a decrease in pilgrims, with far greater fluctuations in numbers from night to night. There are also reports of the sudden reduction in numbers of younger pilgrims at the end of August. My hunch is that due to the poor weather earlier in the year, and the World Cup in June, many pilgrims have postponed their journeys until the autumn. I predict September will be pretty busy.

DEPARTURE POINT	2008	2009	2010
Saint-Jean-de-Pied-Port	11269	10953	12103
Roncesvalles	6889	7842	9824
Pamplona	3156	3035	2982
Astorga	3801	4125	5608
Ponferrada	5083	6205	9070
O Cebreiro	6101	7485	15365
Sarria	16192	20329	45533

TOTAL NUMBERS TO 31 AUGUST FROM ALL ROUTES

2008 – 94,576

2009 – 110,326

2010 – 186,781

European Relay

The pilgrim relay in which we participated for 5 days (see article by Alison Parkes and Jean-Noel le Toulouzan) reached Chartres on 12 July and handed over the specially decorated baton to the next group to take on the next stage through France. Pilgrim groups and individuals who started the process in Norway, Denmark, Poland, Germany, Vézelay, Croydon, Canterbury, Le Puy etc have converged on Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port and should reach Santiago on Saturday 18 September.

2010 Storrs Lecture & Day School

For those interested in the history and art and architecture of the pilgrimage we would normally recommend trying to attend the annual Storrs Lecture, which allows us to hear of the academic work being carried out in the UK and elsewhere. However, this year, on Saturday 27 November, there is already a day school being organised by the University of Oxford Continuing Education Department on *The Road to Santiago: Medieval Art and architecture along the Camino Francés*, with tutor John McNeill. See www.conted.ox.ac.uk, course code O10P109ARJ, £50. This will be a thorough and comprehensive introduction to the history of the pilgrimage and the art and architecture to be found along the way. However, this date is already scheduled for our own Storrs lecture. This year we are departing slightly from tradition and have invited Eduardo de Andrade Chemin-Filho, who is completing a PhD thesis at Exeter University on a Sociological Analysis of the Pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela. He will present his work so far and invite comments and experience from former pilgrims who would like to reflect further on the implications of their pilgrimage in terms of their own experience, and to discuss the re-emergence of religion (in all its forms) and the coincidental juxtaposition between decline in church attendance and the renewed interest in pilgrimage sites and religious/spiritual rituals/festivals. The Lecture will take place after the Office Open Day (10.30am to 3.30pm) at 4pm, at a new venue: Bankside Community Space, 18 Great Guildford Street, London SE1 0SY, just behind Tate Modern and a few minutes walk from the Office. If you would like some preparatory material to consider in advance please contact the office by email or post. Tickets (on the door) £5. We shall go for a meal together at 6pm, all welcome; please let me know in advance if you would like to join the group (price c £20).

Toronto Film Festival

Look out for any information about *The Way*, directed by Emilio Estevez starring his father Martin Sheen. We hope that we shall somehow be able to arrange a special showing for CSJ. There is a short trailer on YouTube.

World Cup Victory pilgrimage

Andres Iniesta, who scored the winning goal for Spain in the World Cup final, has pledged to make the pilgrimage with some of his fellow team members and doubtless many fans sometime this Holy Year.

The Itineraries of William Wey

Francis Davey's English edition of William Wey's 15th-century journal was published by the Bodleian Library in early summer. The normal retail price is £27.99 but members may buy a copy for £25.50, including inland postage, from Francis at 1 North Street, Topsham, Exeter, Devon EX3 0AP. Please make your cheque out to Francis Davey. Overseas postage increases the overall cost to £28.00.

The Call of the Camino: Myths, Legends and Pilgrim Stories on the Way to Santiago de Compostela

Alison Raju has endorsed Robert Mullen's new book thus: 'In this book, the camino 'calls' the reader with three interwoven voices: personal experience, history and an anthropological perspective. Well-written (nothing is redundant), well-researched and extremely readable, Robert Mullen has a rare gift for presenting conversation and conveying, very subtly, essential information about foreign terms and concepts without being either pedantic or condescending'. Bob Mullen has used his time well as 'winter caretaker' at Miraz in the last few damp and chilly winters writing this book. You can read more on his blog camino.findhornpress.com. A full review will appear in the December *Bulletin* but we already have copies in the CSJ bookshop, price £7.99 + postage (1st cl £1.32, EU £2.83, ROW £4.99)

Camino de Invierno

A newly devised route known as the Camino de Invierno has been devised from Ponferrada to Santiago. It avoids the mountain climb to O Cebreiro and is supposed to be suitable for winter walking. It follows the valley of the river Sil and passes As Medulas, the Roman goldmines. On to Monforte de Lemos it allows further exploration of deep Galicia while avoiding the crowds on the Camino Francés. We have a few copies of a descriptive leaflet. However, the leaflet does not give any accommodation about distances or availability of accommodation: if you would like one please send an sae (A6) marking your envelope Camino de Invierno. Rebecca Scott writes about walking the route on her blog Big Fun in a Tiny Pueblo April & May 2010.

Obituaries

Andrée Norman Taylor RIP

My dear friend Andrée died on 13 June, peacefully at home with some of her family around. There had been a 90th birthday celebration last summer with all the family, to which I was also invited. She had lived for a long time in Africa with her husband and the first batch of children – there being seven altogether. She had walked the Le Puy route with Mark Hassall at a fairly advanced age and I had accompanied her on various CSJ occasions, including a retreat at Ampleforth. I also accompanied her on foot on the Pentecost pilgrimage from Paris to Chartres, which we started a little beyond Paris, and at that time she was 82! Some of Andrée's family had recently taken her to Oberammergau for the Passion Play. The Requiem Mass was at St Andrew's church, Tenterden, Kent and she is buried there. She had spent quite a long period living in Kent before eventually moving to Abingdon where her daughter Anthea was able to keep a watchful eye and provide for care when needed. It was while living in Kent that she had organised for several years an annual walk around the county for the CSJ.

She was an amazing person, even more so when I heard more about her earlier life at the funeral.

LIZ KEAY

Philip Cafferky RIP

In 1990 members of CSJ were entertained to morning coffee in Philip and Joan Cafferky's delightful clifftop garden in the Dorset village of Worth Matravers, before tackling part of the South West Coast Path. This followed a Practical Pilgrim day held at St James's church in Poole.

Peter Shorer RIP 1923-2010

Goldsmith and jewellery maker. The scallop shell reproduction medieval pilgrim badges sold by us for 27 years were supplied by Historic Jewellery Reproduction and their chief designer Peter Shorer. Peter was a fourth generation goldsmith; his father worked on resetting the jewels in the Coronation Crown. He trained at the British Museum and worked on the display of the Sutton Hoo treasure and was one of the few allowed to handle delicate antiquities. His son Michael will be continuing the business.

Our condolences go to former trustee Hilary Hugh-Jones on the death in June of her husband Philip and John Revell on the death of his wife Ruth on the eve of St James's Day.

MM

CSJ Events

Saturday 25 September

Office Open Day

10.30am-3.30pm Office open for enquiries, sales, use of Library

Saturday 30 October

Office Open Day

10.30am-3.30pm Office open for enquiries, sales, use of Library.

Sunday 21 November

Celebration Service

3pm St Mary's (Redemptorist) church, Clapham Park Road, SW4 7AP (Clapham Common tube) with guest of honour Canon Don Jenaro Cebrián of the Pilgrim Office, Santiago Cathedral. The Service will also incorporate any readings or poems suggested by this year's pilgrims who would like to mark their pilgrimage in this way and pilgrim music sung by the CSJ Choir directed by Mary Remnant. Organist John Rafferty. This is an opportunity to relive your pilgrimage and meet fellow CSJ members.

Celebration Spanish 'Lunch' for Holy Year & Miraz

4.30pm La Terraza, Bedford Terrace, SW4. This Galician restaurant produces an excellent menu for pilgrims with local specialities such as *Caldo Gallego*, *Merluza*, and *flan*. The cost (tbc) will include a donation to the Miraz Fund. There will also be a raffle: please donate generous prizes and come prepared to buy! Please let us know if you would like to come.

Saturday 27 November

Office Open Day

10.30am-3.30pm Office open for enquiries, sales, use of Library

Saturday 27 November

Storrs Lecture

4pm. Eduardo (José) Chemin-de-Andrade-Filho, researcher, Exeter University will give a presentation and lead a discussion of the re-emergence of pilgrimage as a spiritual experience and the development of interest in pilgrim shrines in the light of the decline of church attendance (see From the Secretary's Notebook). Tickets £5 on the door at Bankside Community Space, 18 Great Guildford Street, London SE1. All welcome to join a group for a meal at a nearby restaurant, (c£20) at 6pm.

Annual General Meeting

Saturday 22 January 2011

at the S Alban's Centre
Baldwins Gardens, London EC1

Full details in next *Bulletin*

Other Events

Until 25 September

Photographic Exhibition

10am -12noon and 2pm-6pm, Tuesday-Saturday, 'SW France and the Way of St. James', Salle d'exposition, Communauté de Communes, Office de Tourisme, D999, 81630 Salvagnac, Tarn, SW France. Photos by Jill Swainson.

Friday 22 October

Day School: Haddenham

Pilgrims in Mediaeval England : Tutor - Tim Porter

10am-4pm Haddenham Methodist Church, Haddenham, Bucks, organised by WEA West Bucks Villages Branch, Fee £23. Contact for information and enrolment Annette Ingleton 01865 768 289

Saturday 27 November

Day School: Oxford

Mediaeval Art and Architecture along the Camino Francés, Tutor: John McNeill

University of Oxford Dept of Continuing Education, 9.30 - 5pm
Code X7109

£50, enrol through www.conted.ox.ac.uk 01865 270380

New members

Information is for members' use only.

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

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

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

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Confraternity of Saint James

Miraz & Holy Year Appeal

September 2010

PLANNED DEVELOPMENT AT MIRAZ



Photos: The new extension

The first phase of the building work on the new extension and the refurbishment of the outhouse is now complete. The site is now tidy but the *huerta* is not quite back to its former glory.

The work to fit out the kitchen in the new building and the improvement to the showers and other facilities in the old building, which will start in the New Year, will inevitably bring pressure on funds. The architect ordered materials early to avoid the forthcoming increase in VAT.

THANK YOU

Continuing the magnificent response to the Holy Year Appeal flyer, at least 185 members have now sent in contributions, grossing just over £10,000 to date.

We still need to raise around £10,000 to reach our original £20,000 target.

A Belated Thank You to The Canadian Company of Pilgrims which has made us several generous donations totalling over 4000 euros to help with the fitting out of the kitchen, including a new stove. We are very grateful for their continuing support. At the last count 82 Canadian pilgrims had enjoyed the hospitality of an international team of *hospitaleros*

Rabanal Visit aids Miraz Funds

In Spring 2010 the Revd John Marsh of the URC took 25 pilgrims along the Camino by minibus. Part of the experience was to hear about the ministry of hospitality. Paul Graham was at Refugio Gaucelmo to welcome them and tell them about what we do there for pilgrims. The pilgrimage had a modest surplus and John very kindly donated this to the Miraz Holy Year Appeal.

NEWS FROM MIRAZ

- The Xacobeo has reimbursed us for the work done so far which means that we can start the upgrading of the original building early next year. Thus the Holy Year 2010 will have been marked by a significant increase in facilities in Miraz. The recognition as one of the finest *refugios* on the Camino del Norte has been well justified.
- The Miraz village council has decided to use the social centre for their own activities this year. Consequently our increase in capacity is most timely.
- Earlier in the year *hospitaleros* planted a number of different vegetables in the two plots by the back door. They have been well looked after by all the teams, and are now producing a good crop of tomatoes, lettuces, courgettes, onions etc.
- Press Coverage: *El Pais* Galicia edition
A glowing article about the hospitality offered at Miraz appeared recently in *El Pais*. David Garcia and his fellow hospitalera Amanda Harrold were interviewed by Xurxo Lobato, a well known Galego photographer and journalist. The article was one of the most thorough I have seen. If you would like a copy to practise your Spanish please email office@csj.org.uk for a link or send and sae to the office marked 'Miraz article'.

STATISTICS

Numbers on the Northern route are increasing this year as expected. At the middle of August this year, 2031 pilgrims had stayed in our refugio, a 25% increase on the year before. In the last week a record 284 pilgrims enjoyed CSJ hospitality. Fortunately we were able to sleep many on the floor of the newly renovated outhouse and on the floor of the extension.

The 10,000th pilgrim arrived on 13 July, a young Polish lad, Piotr Tadeusz Niewrelski. The *hospitaleros* presented him with a CSJ T-shirt and badge, and a certificate, which they made at a local internet cafe, to commemorate the occasion, and which was signed by the *hospitaleros* and all the pilgrims who stayed at Miraz that day. The *hospitaleros* also arranged a *tapas* party in the evening to celebrate the event.



Pilgrims for the last four months came from all around the globe, with numbers from Brazil, Canada, and Poland (including Piotr, above)

HOW TO HELP THE APPEAL

Items for Sale

****NEW Valiant: a pilgrim on the Camino del Norte

The CSJ has broken a longstanding rule! That is, we do not generally publish members' pilgrim diaries or descriptions of their pilgrimage. But we were so pleased that Michael Gaches entered the Second International Diary Competition, organised by the Amigos of Astorga and Comarca, and he won the first prize from all the entries, that we thought we should publish it to help those pilgrims wanting to know more about the attractions of the Northern Camino. Of course, when Michael actually walked, Miraz was not a village where one chose to stay - instead he walked the huge stage of 43km from Baamonde to Sobrado de los Monxes. But we are very grateful to him that he has offered us the text to publish and is giving the proceeds towards the Miraz Appeal, price £6.

*¡Que
aproveche!*
Recipes from Spain



Confraternity of Saint James

Que Aproveche! The reprint of the CSJ's Cookery Book is now available again, price £6.50

My Camino, Michael Moon's pilgrimage on the Camino Frances, £6 for Miraz, price £12.99

**** NEW Fundraising badges

Ted and Averil Jones have donated button badges with the camino waymark symbol of a blue and gold shell for sale in aid of Miraz, price £1 each. (See Piotr's photo)

Cap badges

Carol Vose is a great needlewoman and has sewn CSJ red and gold 'Camino de Santiago Camino de Europa' badges onto cream or navy baseball caps, in aid of Miraz, price £5.

Clothing

Miraz T shirts, mid blue with *gaitero* and yellow arrow, S, M, L, XL. Price £10.

Holy Year T shirts, Navy with a yellow arrow, price £10 (see Piotr's photo)

CSJ Polo shirts in black or mid blue with embroidered CSJ logo on the L chest, size S, M, L, XL, £15.

Fundraising Events

Sunday 21 November

Holy Year & Miraz Celebration

Guest of Honour

Don Jenaro Cebrian
Canon in charge of the Pilgrim Office
Santiago Cathedral

3pm

St Mary's Clapham, SW4
(Clapham Common tube)

Service

To celebrate Holy Year
Give thanks for safe return of pilgrims
Celebrate the successful first phase of works at the
Refugio de Peregrinos de Miraz

CSJ Choir directed by Dr Mary Remnant
John walker-organ

Followed by

4.30pm

'Spanish Lunch' for Miraz

at La Terraza Restaurant
27-31 Bedford Street
London SW4 7SH
(Clapham Common tube, Northern Line)

Galician Menu
Raffle

Price £28 per head

RSVP to Miraz Lunch, CSJ, 27 Blackfriars Road
London SE1 8NY

With credit card details or cheque payable to
Confraternity of Saint James

Fundraising - Donation Form

Name

Address

.....

.....

(1) Membership

☐ My membership number is(if known)

(2) Purchase

___ x Valiant @ £6.00

___ x Miraz button badges @ £1 each

___ x Miraz t shirt size S, M, L, XL @ £10

___ x Holy Year T shirt size S, M, L, XL, XXL @ £10

___ x CSJ Polo shirt sizes S, M, L, XL in black or mid blue @ £15

___ x Baseball cap, cream or navy, with CSJ badge @ £5

___ x My Camino @ £12.99

TOTAL

Postage to be calculated at time of posting (phone office if paying by cheque)

(3) Payment

I wish to support the *refugio* at Miraz and I therefore

☐ enclose a cheque for £.....,
made payable to "Confraternity of St James "

☐ authorise the CSJ to charge £ to my credit/debit card as follows

Card Number - - - - / - - - - / - - - - / - - - -

Issue Number - - / - - Start Date - - / - - Expiry Date - - / - -
Security Code - - -

Signed Date

(3) Gift Aid (UK only)

☐ I am a UK taxpayer and wish to add 28p to each £1 by authorising the CSJ to claim Gift Aid on my donation.