



Confraternity of Saint James

# Bulletin

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**June 2008**

**No 102**



## About the *Bulletin*

ISSN 1755-1617

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

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

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# Editorial

Gosia Brykczynska

There has already been a long-running discussion on the pages of the *Bulletin* as to what attributes (if any) might make up a *true* pilgrim. This debate has been taken up again by Maureen Measure and to some extent by a very correct John Revell. I am not sure that I have the answer to that all-important question, but I do know that a pilgrim is not *solely* an alpinist or sporting mountain-climber or long-distance runner. A pilgrim is someone who normally wants to get from one place of refuge to another along a designated track as safely and quickly as possible in order to be able to spend more time in Santiago, enjoying the scenery and nature along the way and having the luxury of being able to stop at places of prayer and quiet in order to re-charge their spiritual batteries and to take time out to reflect.

I write this because at a certain section of the Arles route along the d'Aspe valley just before the village and monastery of Sarrance I recently came across an extremely dangerous section of the footpath. The path had been sufficiently eroded to become a serious safety hazard and currently all but impassable. I felt no thrill of excitement from overcoming the difficulties I faced (as a sportsperson might) and that evening with a fellow pilgrim from Sweden could only think of how best to alert others not to take that particular path up the valley gorge. When I think of families possibly going up that gorge (should they be doing the Arles route) I feel almost cold with fear – and yet as Robert Sellick recounts in this *Bulletin* he went with his family on the camino.

Along the stretch of the Arles camino past Oloron Ste-Marie, as I entered and left small Pyrenean villages I kept meeting up with





the local priest - a Premonstratensian monk - who told me he had eighteen parishes to service! Even on my last leg of the route, as I was preparing to veer off the way-marked path through the woods and take the old road (now completely empty) by the new Somport Tunnel - who should stop me yet again but the friendly priest. He assured me of his prayers - and with a generous and heartfelt *bon courage* waved at me and left me to tackle the final crossing over the mountains. I never saw him again. But I know he was praying for me - a lone pilgrim - all through that weekend as the courage and fortitude he assured me in prayer were needed and gratefully received when I got into difficulties around Sarrance.

One of the attributes of a true pilgrim must surely therefore be that the pilgrim is keen to alert others of known problems along the way and encourages them to keep at it and to persevere till the goal is reached. A pilgrimage to Santiago is not just a solitary feat of endurance by one individual, even if that pilgrim should be setting out initially as a solitary walker. Pilgrimage and especially going on pilgrimage along the camino is a communal response to a compulsion to undertake the camino - albeit a response to a personal call; something noted by Robert Sellick and Philip Wren in their articles.

These thoughts came to me very forcefully as I was walking the last sections of the Arles route and again when some CSJ members met at the House of Lords for the launch of the booklet *Roads to Santiago - A Spiritual Companion* which is included with this *Bulletin* for all CSJ members in honour of our silver anniversary. (See photo of that event in Secretary's Notebook.) As it was mentioned on that occasion, it is pleasantly and edifyingly surprising that over the twenty-five years of the existence of the CSJ the organisation has not splintered or broken up; it has not been the cause of major rifts or misunderstandings. Quite the opposite; members who joined in the early years (and of course later too) are still busy working for the CSJ in various capacities even today and enjoying friendships that have been formed along the way which are strong and well-tested - both from walking the camino as much as from going up ladders repairing roofs in Rabanal and spring-cleaning in Miraz, not to forget running the office and stuffing *Bulletins*, singing in the choir, writing guide books and reading them. There is a specific friendship and affinity among pilgrims that is difficult to quantify - as Mark Hassall notes in his contribution to the booklet.

Bearing this in mind it is with great sadness that we note that the



initiator of the Rabanal Project – Walter Ivens - died on 28 April. A service of thanksgiving for his life was held at St George's church Kensington, on 28 May. See his obituary in this *Bulletin*. Meanwhile, a fuller account of Walter's contribution to the CSJ and the camino will be published in the September *Bulletin*. I would like to think that Walter will smile approvingly at our latest CSJ publication – to which he and Mary contributed – and urge us to continue working in Rabanal and Miraz.

This *Bulletin* reflects back to a previously published article about Scottish links to St James, but also looks forward to some lesser known routes with a piece from Sheila McGuirk about the camino from the south of Spain and a short piece by Cecilia E Gossen explaining the first stages of her research on the significance of meaning and place as experienced by pilgrims on the camino.

So what do I remember most vividly from my own last pilgrimage? The beauty of the landscape and the sheer variety of nature as presented to me in mid-Spring along the Pyrenees and the d'Aspe valley? Certainly I could have listened to the birds until my hearing failed; and I could have gazed on the spring wildflowers and plants in all their shades and colours until my eyesight dimmed, but as Stephen Malone noted in respect of a small bird he observed –

*You get excited about the dawn –  
Of course you do!*

*There are very few dawns  
Assigned to you.*

*(TO A TINY LARK IN CASTILE)*

I remember with most satisfaction the moments of peace and quiet in churches and chapels and the joy of being able to attend a Mass – even in the depths of rural France - and finally the certainty of knowledge that there are angels guiding my feet (even if prompted by overworked parish priests). Pilgrimage is one aspect of a mobile ever-changing community of which I am overjoyed to be a member.

Wherever you are this St James's Day, walking along the camino, working in Rabanal or Miraz, meeting with other CSJ members in Warwickshire (See CSJ Events Page for further details) or anywhere else on our delightful planet – have a lovely and happy day. And as is the case every year prayers will be said for all CSJ members especially those who have died during the past year. May their path to heaven be a along a gentle camino.



# The Camino del Sur in Andalusia

Sheila McGuirk

In February 2007 my husband Russell and I spent two weeks in western Andalusia walking on a pilgrim trail from Huelva on the Atlantic side of the Straits of Gibraltar to Zafra, in the province of Extremadura. This is not one of the better known routes, such as the Vía de la Plata, but by definition there had to be a way for pilgrims from this part of Spain to join up with the other routes northwest to Compostela and this path joins the Vía de la Plata just before Zafra. A local enthusiast has written a guide to the route and it is marked by the yellow arrows familiar to all pilgrims in Spain.

As we were a group of 27 our walk from Huelva to Zafra was different from our normal pilgrimages because accommodation had to be booked in advance. This also meant that we couldn't move on every day, it was too complicated, but were bussed forwards or back to the pilgrim road each day from a hotel where we settled for two or three days at a time. At least one main meal a day had also been booked in advance and these were the most amazing feasts. This area of Andalusia is very rural, a rolling landscape of cork oaks, interspersed with pine and eucalyptus and groves of citrus, everywhere the bright oranges providing a strong contrast to the white-washed farms and villages. The main activity is animal husbandry and the pig reigns supreme, particularly the black pig renowned for the cured products derived from it, including chorizo and Serrano ham, or ham of the Sierras. In the succession of courses derived from pork there was rarely a vegetable portion. Delicious as the meals were, by the end we all longed for just a bowl of salad!

The travelling arrangements also allowed for a certain amount of tourism. What Huelva lacks in Jacobean traditions it makes up for by being the point from which Christopher Columbus sailed off westwards in 1492. So before we set off on the walk we visited the monastery of La Rábida, across the estuary from the port of Huelva. Columbus was befriended by one of the monks at the monastery and eventually the Abbot, a former confessor to Queen Isabella of Castile, persuaded that Catholic Monarch to support Columbus's dream and she both financed the expedition and ordered the sailors



of the neighbouring port of Palos de la Frontera to provide the ships and some of the manpower. But the monastery is now primarily a museum of the Americas and there are only five monks left. The emphasis of the site and the monuments in the area are of course on the "evangelisation" which followed Columbus's discoveries. We saw many plaques and inscriptions from the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations of this evangelisation, an anniversary for which Pope John Paul II visited Huelva, Palos de la Frontera and the third local Columbian site of Moguer.

Moguer has two beautiful convents, one now the town hall. At the other, the Santa Clara convent, Columbus prayed the night after his return from his first voyage to give thanks for surviving a storm off the Azores. Moguer was also the hometown of Bartolomé Ruiz, the discoverer of Peru, and of Friar Antonio de Olivares, the founder (in 1718) of the town of San Antonio in Texas (named after St Anthony of Padua, not after himself). Moguer also supplied many of the sailors for Columbus's ships. But above all it is famous as the birthplace and early home of the poet Juan Ramon Jimenez (1881-1958), winner of the 1956 Nobel prize for literature.

In Moguer we had the good fortune to watch a local master of flamenco guitar tutoring his pupils. Then he gave us an impromptu recital, which was enthralling. Our only other musical encounter was at the Saturday evening Mass in the town of Trigueros, which was the end of one of our day's walks, though we didn't stay there overnight. On the first Saturday of the month a group of guitarists and vocalists sing a "Rocío" Mass, with all the ordinaries sung to stirring flamenco music and a final rousing chorus in honour of the Virgen del Rocío. It was a highlight of the two weeks.

Of course the Holy Week processions of Seville are world famous; but Huelva province has its own special festival and parade at Whitsun, based on the shrine of the Virgin of the Dew in the small hamlet of El Rocío. We stopped off at the shrine on our way from Seville airport to Huelva, and sang the first *Salve Regina* of many, really the only prayer we ever used throughout the two weeks. Set in the marshes of the Guadalquivir River delta the site seemed remote and desolate at dusk, with rows of empty buildings and stables. But it comes spectacularly alive for the Fiesta. Nearly a million people come from all over Spain, those from Andalusia on horseback and in gaily decorated covered wagons in which they camp at the site for the period of the festival. At the climax of the festival in the early hours of the Monday the statue



of the Virgin, also known as the White Dove (*la Blanca Paloma*) is brought out of the church and paraded around, with the whole event shown on local TV.

After three nights based in Huelva we moved on to a hotel at Valverde del Camino, one of the towns closely associated with the local mining industry. One and a half day's walk north of Valverde is the town of Minas de Rio Tinto, built by the English, who from 1872 to 1954 had the concession to mine the copper and iron of the Rio Tinto area (whence the name of the famous blue chip public limited company). Several of the company's buildings are now museums, which we visited; the Director's grand residence in Valverde del Camino; the former hospital in Minas de Rio Tinto; and an English manager's house in the Barrio Inglés or Barrio Bella Vista. The rest of this English company town, flats, semi-detached houses and villas, is now owned and occupied by local professionals. The little Presbyterian church is derelict, the tiled swimming pool empty and we didn't see what became of the sports club. An air of faded suburban gentility pervaded the place; an echo of tea-parties and sports days lingered and most English of all, it was pouring with rain! We suspect that in deference to us our guide around these sites moderated his account of the inevitable conflicts which occurred between the Spanish workers and the British company managers, but it is a part of their history, and not all of it was bad.

The churches we passed were not usually open along our way, but where possible the Chairman of the Huelva Association of the Way of St James had alerted a local guide or a member of the town council to show us the sites and occasionally to get the key for the church. So the stamps in our pilgrim passports were more often from the town hall or the restaurant where we had lunch than from the parish. But they still make a fine display and we were proud of the record of the 180 or so kilometres we had walked.

# Pilgrim's Regress

John Revell

**I**n the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

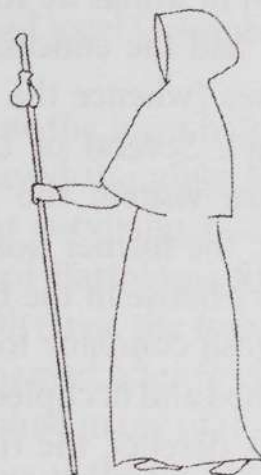
From the Greek *logos* comes our word for "word" and at the risk of being accused of wordiness I here reflect on a personal dilemma.

In the beginning I'd had an original thought – which wasn't really original because many had thought it before me – about the motivation for pilgrimage. My unoriginal thought was to do with the concept that there are as many reasons for undertaking a pilgrimage as there are pilgrims. So, to crystallise my thinking, I wrote down, "Each pilgrim has his own reason for taking to the Way".

There was a profound sigh at my left shoulder and Politically Correct Pilgrim (of undefined or ambivalent gender) pointed out to me that I was at fault with my language because my use of "his" implied that all pilgrims belong of necessity to the male gender. Okay, Politically Correct Pilgrim, I'll change it and write, "Each pilgrim has his or her own reason for taking to the Way".

But PCP was not satisfied. PCP said I was still discriminating positively towards the masculine by using the "his or her" sequence in my statement. Okay, PCP, I could change it and write, "Each pilgrim has her or his own reason for taking to the Way", but I have to point out that now the sequence is reversed in favour of the female gender. PCP then suggested a compromise. Use "his or her" first time round, and second time round use "her or his" to balance it up. But the weakness in this reasoning was that the occasion for use might arise an uneven number of times, and then the balance would be overturned – and anyway, which terminology would you use first in sequence even if the number of times *was* even?

PCP suggested a final compromise and I wrote, "Each pilgrim has





*their* own reason for taking to the Way”. O Grammar, where art thou? I looked up Fowler’s Modern English Usage and Fowler agreed that “the problem is an old one”, which left me uncomfortable and PCP still sniggering at my left shoulder.

Would “All pilgrims have *their* own reasons for taking to the Way” do? No, it wouldn’t, because I had originally wanted to stress the individuality of each pilgrim. I could be forgiven for thinking we were about to discover a major Black Hole in our language.

So back I go to my beginning. “Each pilgrim has *his* own reason for taking to the Way.” Publish and be damned.

Before PCP strode off I decided to have a go at determining his/her (or her/his) gender. Shrouded in a pilgrim cloak as PCP was it made it difficult for me as an observer to decide. But as PCP was a self-confessed pilgrim I felt it was safe to assume basic Christian tenets so I asked hesitantly, “What is your Christian name?”

Well, that was like a red rag to a bull to PCP. I suppose I should have expected it. “We call it a forename nowadays” was the inevitable reply.

I gave up.

# A Saint, a Devout King and a Very Large Archangel

Ian Tweedie

One of the earliest of the Stuart kings, James I, is known to have been born in late July 1394 and there is a tradition that the birth was on 25 July, hence possibly the choice of name. However, some of his ancestors, the Fitz Alans (High Stewards of Scotland), had St James the Great as a family patron.

A descendant, King James IV, definitely took St James the Great as a patron for, in the *Book of Hours of James IV* in the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, is an illustration of him kneeling in prayer before a domestic altar and standing behind him is St James dressed as a pilgrim, complete with staff and scrip, though no hat or scallop are visible. It is reported that he had sent, as a gift, a silver model of a ship to Santiago de Compostela – perhaps a model of the Great Michael? Might this still exist in the Cathedral Treasury?

James IV is, arguably, the most attractive of the long line of Stuart kings – a man of drive and with a wide range of interests. He made pilgrimages to many shrines in Scotland. Sadly he was to die at Flodden in a campaign in which he may have been half-hearted, but obliged to mount under the terms of the Auld Alliance with France.

He was ambitious to enlarge his already strong navy and set about organising the construction of several large ships. The first, the Margaret (probably named after his wife) was built and launched, with great difficulty because of the shallowness of the water at Leith, the port of Edinburgh.

In 1504 James decided to develop a new dockyard some two kilometres to the west of Leith where there was deep water and a small fishing community. He enlarged the village, bringing in skilled craftsmen from Flanders, France and Spain to work on the ships. This came to be known as Newhaven (sometimes as Our Lady's Port of Grance). Here in 1507 was laid the keel of what was to become the largest ship in Europe at that time. St Michael or Great Michael was about 70 metres long by 20 metres wide – reports vary – and carried some 300 guns. (These figures may be exaggerated!)



## **Village Chapel**

To serve the spiritual needs of the expanded community, the King built a small stone chapel around 1507, possibly intending a larger church at a later date. This was dedicated to the Blessed Virgin and St James – the title varies slightly in different sources. An area of land was attached, one report suggesting as much as six acres, for graveyard, priest's house and renting out for income. The first chaplain was Sir (Father) James Cowie. The property seems soon to have become attached to the Hospitallers of St Anthony of Egypt who had a house and chapel in Leith, ministered to the poor and ran an almshouse. They had been brought from their mother house in Vienne, France, around 1430 by Sir Robert Logan of Restalrig and followed the Augustinian rule. In addition to gifts and rents, they were financed by a tax in wine on all wine imported into Leith. They seem to have had some control over wine sales in the area. Cellars and vaults which they used still exist and are now used by a commercial wine company. On the walls there still grows a fungus peculiar to this site and to cellars in Bordeaux. For very many years claret was Scotland's favourite drink and there was a brisk trade with Bordeaux. Perhaps some of these ships might have carried pilgrims bound ultimately for Compostela?

Came the Reformation and in 1587 the foundation was annexed to the crown until in 1614 the property was consigned to the Kirk session of the (Church of Scotland) parish of South Leith. The chapel had by then fallen into disuse and is reported in ruins by 1611. Whether this was due to the zeal of the reformers or the attentions of the Earl of Hertford, who sacked Leith, is unclear. In the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century the chapel and much of the ground were bought by the society of the Free Fishermen of Newhaven, a long-established Trade Guild and Benevolent Society which also promoted civic works and education, and was used as a burial ground until about 1848. Following the Disruption part of the site was sold to the Church of Scotland who built their own church there in around 1850. This still stands but is now in secular use.

## **The chapel excavated**

In 1972, at the start of a sweeping re-development of the village – by now a suburb of Edinburgh – the chapel was excavated by a team from Edinburgh University. The west gable still stands to its original height (much greater on the outside than the inside – a natural progressive elevation in graveyards). Much of the other walling was revealed and

consolidated. Currently it appears as a single chamber measuring about 19 metres (west to east) by 6 metres, with perhaps an entrance door in the south wall. Immediately outside this is a featureless patch of part of the original graveyard. No altar base, fittings or other artefacts of note were unearthed but very many skeletons at different depths were found. The deepest ones were complete and composed; those in the upper layers were in great disarray, suggesting that they had been moved from elsewhere on the site.

At present, the site is neat and well cared for. It is hemmed-in partly by modern domestic buildings and partly by railings with two padlocked gates.

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Editor's note: The tradition of naming someone after the patron of the day on which they were born is well established in many countries on the Continent to this day – and it is a quirk of fate that I am not named Jakubina but take as my patron-saint Margaret (Queen of Scotland 1045 – 1093).



# Shaped by the Camino

James Cruickshank

As pilgrims westwards slowly walk  
transcendent chords reveal  
How values, friendship, fellowship  
are stamped by instincts' seal,  
On path where seekers' steps have trod  
for thousand years gone by  
And those to come will walk in ours,  
hearts fired to sample why.

Deep notions move quite mystic'ly -  
'cross present, future, past -  
As spirits, senses, raisons d'être  
get singularly cast,  
And combined force so synergised  
spurs pilgrims, mind-sets won,  
While we from diff'rent eras  
share communion . . . ever one.



# Why a pagan walks the camino

Peter Neall

**W**e learn as children to walk.  
For some people it is a means of locomotion, for some just expedient, for some it's just for the sheer joy and delight in the movement of one foot before another.

And for a few, I think a select few, the walking - just the walking - carries us closer to the Divine, whatever name we may use for it. These few we call pilgrims. Sometimes the destination calls them to come, for others the Way itself is enough and the destination incidental. Either way they just walk (and in later years the walking is replaced by cart or horse, by bicycle, by car, by boat, and even by aeroplane) but still they come seeking the divine in the journey or at their arrival.

They walk, not to be there. They walk to be, just to be. And in that being is their reward. Now the being is in the journey, for many that is walking, but if not does that make them any less pilgrim?

Now, and for many years we have linked Pilgrim with being Christian, and in truth Christians have walked for centuries - to the Mount of Olives, to Calvary, to Nazareth and Bethlehem. And later to Jerusalem, to Rome, to Santiago, to Canterbury, to Walsingham, to Croagh Patrick, indeed to the Celestial City itself! Each seeking the Divine and profiting from being closer to it than by staying at home. But Christians do not walk alone.

Buddhists have walked to the places of the Lord Buddha, to the Barabar Hills, to Boha Gaya, to Champanagar. Hindus have walked to the seven holy rivers including the Ganges and the Yamuna. Mohammad walked, first to Medina and on to Mecca and his followers indeed followed.

And Pagans walked. They walked to know the land of which they were a part. They walked to pass on their knowledge to distant others. They walked because they too were pilgrims seeking to be closer to their divine.

And on the camino I heard and saw many Christians walking, some Hindus walking, a very few Muslims walking (not too many given Sant Iago's reputation!) and many more pagans walking than I had expected. Some knew themselves as Pagans, some would admit



only to being 'Spiritual', some used names like Druid. Whatever name they used they were walking and honouring the Way and its traditions despite never calling themselves Christian, and occasionally even calling themselves anti-Christian.

Now why? What is it about a Christian pilgrimage and a Christian tradition that calls us? It is not the Christianity, for many of us rejected that long ago in our past. It is not the churches and fine buildings because we can see them any time and often in our own lands. It is not just the long walk, we can do that more easily wherever we call home.

We respond to an outpouring of Spirit - an outpouring of Spirit similar to Pentecost - one which affects people of all nations. There is no distinction between pilgrims - they are just pilgrims. On my path I walked with French, Germans, Spaniards, Poles, Canadians, Americans, Mexicans, Brazilians, Koreans, Russians, Indians, Polynesians, Australians and so on. Unlike most places there was absolutely no distinction or privilege for one nationality rather than another.

We come to be part of a community of generosity, of a community of love, of a community of acceptance. We come to be who we are on the road, Jew or Samaritan, Christian or Pagan, all one in Spirit.

We come to share what we have. We come to share the abundance of the land. We come because we know there is an aspect of the divine that we recognise and which is recognised by every colleague walking the road. We come for a Brotherhood which stretches beyond denomination and the names of God.

We come because we feel one with the Earth and its People and so is the Way.

# **Meaning-making & place-making**

## **A study of the pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela**

Cecilia E Gossen

**I**n September of 2006 I was admitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies at the University of Calgary (Canada) in a program leading to a PhD in the Interdisciplinary Program. The topic of my research is meaning-making and place-making as it is embedded in the pilgrimage routes to the Cathedral of Saint James in Santiago de Compostela.

Pilgrimage and place are well-established areas of scholarly inquiry. Indeed, reflections on pilgrimage were part of early mythologies and the topic of 'place' has been of philosophical interest for the past two thousand years. The concept of place as it relates to meaning-making is dense. It is more than a physical entity in this world as it is also a way of understanding the world. It is an irreducible and essential aspect of being human – the bedrock of human meaning and social relations. A first order of being human is to be in place. Working from such a principle, can humans be fully human without expressing their ideas of place through art? Much of the literature on pilgrimage is by anthropologists and humanistic geographers. This study provides an alternative understanding by linking the ideas of place and meaning-making from the perspectives of religious studies and visual arts.

The project argues that for the pilgrims en route to Santiago, meaning-making and place-making are encoded and expressed in traditions and artistic objects (such as churches, paintings and sculpture) that embody or reinforce the religious and civic values of the pilgrimage. I am using these traditions and artistic objects to provide empirical details on how place is primary for the construction of meaning and for understanding society.

The thesis idea is complex enough to require an innovative multidisciplinary approach. First, the study examines the history of the pilgrimage to Santiago, from its beginnings to the contemporary period. Further, the project includes a careful look at the monuments, churches, church decorations and their iconography along the route



to Santiago in order to identify their relevance and importance to the pilgrims as containers of meaning. Lastly, and importantly, this research will be the inspiration for an exhibition of sculptures. This exhibition will be a conscious and deliberate expression of the intellectual insights gained on the ideas of place-making and meaning-making as evidenced on the pilgrimage routes to Santiago.

This project proposes a three-pronged approach to the concept of place. First, a descriptive approach that focuses on what is distinctive and particular about the pilgrimage to Santiago. Secondly, there will be an analysis of place as social construction. This analysis will pay attention to the particularity of place as the product of general social processes that make places intelligible and memorable. Finally, the project will include a phenomenological critique that would deal with how place defines the essence of human existence in a necessary and important way – with particular attention paid to the pilgrimage site at Santiago. By using these multiple approaches, the study will be in the unique position of providing insight into the way that humans experience the world, and how places are so primal to human experience that they become a powerful force in the construction and understanding of society.

The research is being conducted in library settings and in the field. The library research reflects a strategy that best uses the density and diversity of the literature. It focuses first on the on-going debate on the nature of place. Secondly, it focuses on the topic of place as it relates to meaning-making in the pilgrimage to Santiago, including the historical records on the pilgrimage and the cultural context of the pilgrimage routes. There will be no interviews of pilgrims. Instead, the study will rely on written accounts available through pilgrim records and travel blogs. The library of the Confraternity of Saint James in London has a treasure trove of personal accounts of the pilgrimage to Santiago which I have been fortunate to access. All library material identified to date is available in English and/or Spanish. I am fluent in both these languages.

Theoretical understandings of place make experience essential in place-making and meaning-making. Accordingly, the field research will involve walking the pilgrimage. This will provide an opportunity to observe how the experience of pilgrimage impact me and others, and it will give me insights on the specific traditions, buildings and monuments pilgrims find noteworthy along the route. Preparing my research 'eye' is important, and to this end I have read hundreds

of personal accounts of the pilgrimage and have identified several important and recurring themes, such as the true meaning of pilgrim, the experienced sense of history, the hardships of the road and the strong emotions aroused by the pilgrimage itself.

As I write this, I am in the second year of my program. I am very grateful for the help received from the Confraternity of Saint James in London. My interest in the camino was piqued when I did the Camino del Norte in 2003. The information in the *Pilgrim Guides* was invaluable then and will be again when I do the Camino Francés in September of this year. The collection of personal accounts available in your library is very exciting and a valuable resource to my research. My gratitude to Marion Marples, Gosia Brykczynska, Howard Nelson and the rest of the volunteers for their help and willingness to share their knowledge of the camino. I look forward to my next visit.



# What is a real pilgrim?

Maureen Measure

I am a serial pilgrim as the following narrative will demonstrate.

In May and June of last year I walked from Logroño to Ponferrada, taking nearly three weeks to travel and spending two days in each of Burgos and León. On a previous pilgrimage I had been a bit lonely during the week after crossing the Pyrenees as I had been with companions from Ramblers Holidays up to that point and then I was alone. The hours to dinner stretched. This year I took *The Canterbury Tales* of Chaucer as an appropriate read for those hours.

In Bilbao the rain was sheeting down and it thundered all night. I spent all day at the Guggenheim Museum next day and took the bus up to Logroño. The weather at the end of May was cold and wet. On the first day of walking my waterproof over-trousers were getting heavy with damp and mud. They were too large round the waist. I remedied the situation with a bit of string. Often, as a lone pilgrim, I sing and this was the song when I donned the waterproof trousers:-

*My old man's a dustman  
He wears a dustman's hat  
He wears gor blimey trousers....*

Fortunately, nobody can hear me when I walk alone and sing.

Sometimes I ask myself the question – Am I a real pilgrim? I am not using the *refugios*, but have booked with Chemins du Sud (for the third time) who book bed, breakfast and except in the large cities of Pamplona, Burgos and León, some sort of evening meal. I still have a large backpack, just in case my suitcase goes missing, but sometimes don't mention this to others – the 'real' pilgrims. I feel a bit guilty. What do readers think?

I have the theory that, with the notable exception of the convent in Santo Domingo de la Calzada, the quality of the evening meal is in inverse proportion to the comfort of the accommodation. I am vegetarian, and have had no problem at all for the weeks in France. Both alone and with groups I have had delicious dinners. But in Spain, the vegetarian message has not got through. How my husband would grumble! I don't worry because the wine is good and free. In Sahagún, in a comfortable hotel, we all got the main dish before the soup and some people got their sweet first. We all realised that the staff spoke less



Spanish than the pilgrims. At least the wine was good.

Walking alone does not present many problems, but one day, not far from Castrojeriz, a white van drew up before me. The sign at the back said in large letters, *Ayudo a los Peregrinos*. I was rather tired and hot and the driver was offering me a lift. This was 1 June and the sun was shining at last. A German couple got in and I decided to take advantage as well. Soon the couple started arguing because (I think) one did not want to 'cheat', so they both got out and I was left alone with the driver. Not feeling comfortable I also got out of the van and trudged the last ten minutes or so into the little town.

Chemins du sud have sometimes arranged for me to stay in a place for two nights, with taxi transport back to where I finished the previous day. The standard time for leaving is 9am and the standard time for picking up is 5pm. This is OK for a leg of 20km when I can await the taxi with a glass of red wine and Chaucer's pilgrims, but not for a day of 28km. Luckily I speak Spanish and negotiate with the driver for different times. If a leg is too long, I can always take a bus or taxi – as long as I do the last 100km on foot, it does not matter. Or does it? Is it 'cheating' to take the bus into Burgos or a taxi to avoid the suburbs when leaving León, or the last 8km of road walking before Ponferrada? The taxi drivers said that other people do this and two did not charge me the full fare. ¡*Que te descances!* said one – a good subjunctive to remember.

In the mornings I walked with pilgrims from all over the world, but during the afternoons the camino was much emptier, because the 'real' pilgrims started earlier from their *refugios* and got to their destinations by 2pm. I left León in a taxi at dawn to avoid the suburbs and thought that I would be walking with the 'real' pilgrims all day, but no, they would not have 'cheated' and I walked the country route to Hospital de Orbigo alone.

I loved the *meseta*, and was alone when I started to walk this section. The camino was bordered by pink dog-roses and poppies, daisies and gorse stretched to the horizon. I sat down to reflect upon things and was suddenly aware of several skylarks wheeling above and singing. I don't know how long I sat there. After a while a German couple stopped to ask me if I was all right, and we continued together.

There were a lot of Germans last year, small and large groups of pilgrims and coach parties. Apparently a famous actor wrote a book about the camino and there have been programmes on the German television.

It was a German pilgrim who recognised the significance of *The*



*Canterbury Tales*, which I was reading, with a glass of red wine, in the sunshine at El Burgo Ranero. He had studied Chaucer in London back in 1978 and wanted to practice his English.

And now I would like to ask a second question. What is the spirituality of the camino? Why is this trek so special? I returned home after Ponferrada, and a few days later walked the length of Hadrian's Wall (another 124km) with my husband and some good friends. What are the similarities and the differences? Both walks go westward and both are continuous. Unlike Spain, you start the day with a full cooked breakfast and are given a packed lunch – there are few bars along the way, although some enterprising farmers have snacks available in their sheds with an honesty box. The Hadrian's Wall path has been open only four years and people have walked the camino for a thousand. There are walkers from all over the world along Hadrian's Wall – they have left messages in the farmers' sheds. ¡*Ultreia!* I wrote. Almost everybody is having their suitcase carried to the next B&B. However, there is not the same sense of spirituality, nor the compulsion to continue on and on. When we arrived at Port Carlisle we were given a certificate of achievement when we presented our 'Roman passports', but I think that arriving at Santiago will be very different. I am not as 'spiritual' as Robert Gussman, not even a churchgoer, and do not even think very much of St James, whose supposed tomb I am walking towards. People have asked me why I am doing this and the only reply I can give is 'because I have to' or 'because it's there'. My husband tries to understand.

All the above I meant to write before leaving for Ponferrada on 16 September last, but time crept up and there was a lot to arrange before leaving home on the next stage. Now I was to be with a group of fourteen with Waymark Holidays. Four of the group had walked two sections together in France with Ramblers Holidays. I was the only one of this particular group who had walked the rest of the *chemin* in France and the camino.

Our leader, Michael, who lives in Cadíz, was excellent. He had our *credenciales* ready and named for us. It was the thirteenth time he had led this section of the camino, and the second time this year. He explained the importance of the continuity of *sellos*. We had plenty of stops while Michael pointed out interesting features, which I may have missed alone, even with Alison Raju's guide.

I found that the food had improved, even for vegetarians. One evening Michael arranged an *aguadiente* after dinner. He asked for the restaurant lights to be turned off and then they brought in a huge bowl



of spirit which was ignited and produced lots of blue flames. We then drank the strong spirit. At Samos we arrived just too late for the monks to give us a guided tour, so he did it himself, very knowledgeably. We transferred to Lugo for a rest and laundry day.

When we got to Melide, Michael arranged for us to have a late, Spanish lunch in the best *pulpería*, with lots of wine served in bowls. He arranged a delicious *minestra* for the two vegetarians.

On the evening before we arrived in Santiago, Michael explained to us what we would do on arrival – go to the cathedral, hug the statue, see the tomb and collect our *compostelas*. We would not be able to put our hands on the pillar as it was being restored. Some of our group said that it was hypocritical to state that they had walked for spiritual reasons. During these last days I was becoming more and more thoughtful. I sat quietly in the bar, wondering what it would be like to arrive after so many kilometres during the last three years. I would definitely say ‘spiritual’.

I stayed on in Santiago a couple of extra days to do some sightseeing and hoping to see the *botafumeiro* at the Sunday pilgrim Mass. I arrived at 10.30 for the midday Mass and just sat there, gazing at the statue of St James and the continual procession of people hugging him. For over an hour I just looked at the ornate Baroque over-the-top-decorations while the cathedral filled up. I had not been to a Mass since Le Puy. Many people did not have the opportunity to sit down as the cathedral was absolutely full. When they swung the *botafumeiro* everybody stood up and 2,000 cameras clicked. Then there was a round of applause. This was the icing on the cake.

So what has changed? Am I a more spiritual person? I am physically much tougher than the woman who thought ‘walk to Santiago, you must be joking!’ after the first leg from Le Puy. I am sleeping a lot, but this is due to emotional tiredness, not physical tiredness. Linguistically I now speak Castilian Spanish – I had spent little time in Spain before the camino. It is difficult to say – but again I ask readers:-

- What is a real pilgrim?
- Why is it that the *chemin/camino* is a spiritual experience?
- Why is it always less stony / muddy on the other side of the track?

Afterthought: You can put your hand into the column of the Pórtico de la Gloria in the Cast Court of the Victoria and Albert. Thank you, Stuart Frost.



# A Pilgrimage of Self-Discovery

Philip Wren

The decision is made. In the spring of 2008 I will undertake one last pilgrimage on the Way of St James and then call it a day. If all goes well then I will have walked just over 2000km on the Camino and it will be time to call a halt to the blisters, the exhaustion, the jubilation, the ecstasy, the heartbreak and the spiritual growth and insight that walking to St James has brought me on five pilgrimages over nine years.

I had never intended to be a physical pilgrim; it happened because James called me to him via the Reader's Digest.

In 1997 I was faced with planning a three month sabbatical for 1998 and I had absolutely no idea what I wanted to do. The Methodist Church is generous about what you actually do on a sabbatical, but given the financial costs and the workload thrown on to colleagues, the authorities expect that some sort of spiritual development should be undertaken. It was while eating my breakfast cereal that I innocently picked up the latest edition of the Reader's Digest and read of a Canadian pilgrim's experience of walking to Santiago. I knew there and then that I was going to travel to James, though at that time I did not know why. In June 1998, I arrived at Santiago, having walked some 500km of the Camino Francés, having travelled the rest by bus and train.

I have written in previous editions of the *Bulletin* as to why I walked from Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port to Finisterre in 2004. In 2005 I took my son, Timothy, and we walked from Sarria to Santiago. In 2006 Tim and I walked from Vilalba, on the Camino del Norte, to Santiago and then on to Finisterre and, lastly, in 2007, I walked from Logroño to Hornillos del Camino (and back to Burgos). All of this comes to just under 1900km and one more camino will take me beyond the 2000km mark.

Since 1998 I have constantly asked myself why am I, an overweight, insulin-dependent, comfort loving, unadventurous Methodist minister – a Protestant by conviction – so obsessed in walking the camino?

Historically, the pilgrims of old walked because travelling to St James allowed them to meet with the apostle. While we may find it



strange, the medieval Christian believed that to go and pray at the tomb of a saint meant that you were talking intimately with them. Put another way, the physical proximity led the pilgrim to believe that they were speaking face to face with the saint. This had benefits. "The shrine of a saint was a potentially active source of spiritual energy. Although dead in the flesh, the saint was there, a formidable and powerful being who, if approached properly, could bring help to the supplicant." (J.G Davies, *Pilgrimage Yesterday and Today*, SCM Press. p5)

If we truly believe that heaven is outside of time and space, then it matters not that James is physically dead. His spirit is in the now and his casket is the place to meet with him. (Though, of course, you can argue, why travel to the shrine in the first place if James is beyond time and space? Perhaps the actual act of travelling made the encounter far more meaningful to the pilgrim, not unlike the difference of watching a football match from a seat in the stadium as opposed to watching it on television while sitting on your sofa.)

In 1181, Pope Alexander III published the *Regis Eterni Bulla* which granted the plenary indulgence and remission of sins to all who travelled to James as penitential pilgrims. Those who travelled in a Holy Year had the remission of their sins extended to those normally reserved by the Holy See. If you are a Catholic this is a very important part of your quest for Eternal Life and a smooth transition to Heaven via the shortest possible time in purgatory.

Others walked in response to prayers offered to James for healing or forgiveness which, having been answered, laid an obligation upon the petitioner.

Going on pilgrimage was sometimes set by either the parish priest or the bishop as part of a penance. When a sin was confessed "he or she becomes liable to the appropriate penalty before remission can be bestowed. This order – sin, confession, penalty, absolution" (Davies, op cit p15) was imposed by the Church which believed that as inheritors of the keys given to Peter, they were part of the process of forgiveness being granted. From the 7<sup>th</sup> century onward the pilgrim would have received absolution before setting out on the journey, but nevertheless they would have to complete the pilgrimage as part of the penance. The believer would already be forgiven, but the pilgrimage would be a powerful reminder of why one should not fall into that sin again. (The Reformers objected to this idea of penance as Christ alone forgives sins and he does so gladly and freely, but that was historically speaking a late development.)



Some were sent as punishment. As Cain was sent into exile, (Genesis iv.12) so being sent on pilgrimage was a form of punishment, as one could only return to one's own land when the journey was completed. The pilgrimage was then seen as a form of penitence. One woman caught in adultery had a choice; go to prison or go on a penitential pilgrimage to St James. Guess which she chose?

Others have walked because their lives are in a mess and they hope that somehow on the journey they would either find answers or divine guidance as to where they go next. In 2007 I met at least three pilgrims for whom this was their motive. In 2004 I walked away a massive dose of anger against the appointments committee of the Methodist Church who were sending me here to Liverpool completely against my will. On that journey I learned that God is gracious and that as he was to protect me on that physical pilgrimage, so he would care for me in my new appointment, as he has.

But why do I continue walking?

I have spent some time reading about pilgrimage and integrating this with my camino experiences. I now have two reasons. The first is that all my life I have been on the move. I grew up in an RAF house, experiencing five moves, seven houses, seven schools, and even when my family settled in North Leverton, I was only there for seven years (two more schools) before work took me away from home. Since then I have been constantly travelling as a Methodist minister since Methodism operates an itinerant ministry. We are usually invited to an appointment for five years, with the possibility of an extension, but if the circumstances change we may not stay that initial period. To date my ministry has been seven years, four years, two years, eight years and six years, though taking in a total of seven houses. Because of Methodism's peculiar system of oversight I have been minister to a total of twenty-three different churches. With four of those churches I was the minister for only one year.

Over the years this constant moving and changes in ministry has taken a toll, yet some how I have coped with it. The camino has helped to shape an understanding of why I have coped and, in fact, even embraced this lifestyle. My spirituality is rooted in my calling to be a pilgrim. I am always on the move, a rolling stone with no real sense of any one place being called home. I am always looking to see what is going to happen next, what is around the next corner, what joy or sorrow will life bring next? Please don't get me wrong, there have been times when it has been really tough, even bewildering, but



understanding that I am called by God to be a pilgrim makes sense of it all.

My vocation is to be a Methodist minister. A vocation is traditionally understood as a ministry that God has called you to, which the Church has recognised, and which others are prepared to physically support you in the provision of housing and stipend.

Very often the notion of calling and vocation are intertwined as they both have their root in the Latin word, *vocare*. So it is helpful to my own self understanding of who I am, to recognise that while my calling is to be a pilgrim and my vocation is to be a Methodist minister, the two are really the two sides of the same coin. Nevertheless, I recognise that if I lost my sense of vocation and ceased to be a Methodist minister, I would not lose my sense of call to be a pilgrim. From almost the first day of my life, my very essence has been rooted in being a pilgrim.

Since my understanding of being a physical and spiritual pilgrim has emerged and developed, I have found it much easier to be a Methodist minister, for it is a work that I would not have chosen to do. Both my temperament and personality do not sit easily with what this vocation requires. I am not naturally suited to this task. Nevertheless, I am undertaking this ministry because God has called me and I had no option but to respond to that call. In travelling to St James I have both discovered and clarified that I am a pilgrim. Seeing my vocation as a Methodist minister as another form of pilgrimage was and is an important, liberating experience. When I find being a Methodist minister a difficult, frustrating, and draining experience (which is often), I remember what it cost me to walk the Camino and the joys and benefits that came with it. Sustained, I continue in the task to which God has called me. It took travelling on the Camino to reveal that which was previously hidden.

But why do I pilgrimage to James time and time again? Here is the second reason. When I kneel in the crypt, I am physically close to St James whom I see as a fellow pilgrim, fellow disciple and one who gave up all to fulfil both his calling and vocation.

James loved Jesus and visa versa. James was called early, he travelled with Jesus all through his earthly ministry and he was one of three present at the transfiguration. James was at the Last Supper and the Resurrection appearances. Yet if the tradition about James' ministry in Spain is correct, he was an apparent failure. It is said that he made only nine converts (Walter Starkie, *The Road to Santiago*, John Murray.



1957 p14), though two of them, Athanasius and Theodore, were to be loyal beyond all expectation. For those of us who serve God in an age when the church is declining, that the apostle James was not blessed with growth, is ironically a great encouragement. Our success or failure is not down to our closeness with Christ. Even the most loyal of disciples may not see spectacular success. What marked James out was not that he was successful, but that he was loyal to Christ and he gave his ministry his all. He travelled to a far land, he preached the Gospel of Christ and then when summoned to Jerusalem he returned, only to die for his faith.

In spite of apparent failure, James was faithful to the end and so he provides a role model that makes sense to ministers in this generation.

A third reason is that we know that James tried to claim one of the most important places in heaven, to be seated at either the right or left of Jesus, and that he was rebuffed (Matthew xx. 20-23). Methodism sets great store on growing in grace and the quest for holiness. We live in a tradition that reminds us that human beings are sinners in need of the grace of God, but that it is our daily task to strive to be more Christ-like. "Teach me how to grow in goodness, Daily as I grow," may be words of a children's hymn, but they are words owned by many Methodists. Yet, like James, we are often blinded by power, recognition and prestige. We long to be better than our neighbour and be more important within the church than those around us. For ministers especially, the pride of status can be an all too real temptation. We long to be in bigger churches, with larger congregations and in appointments that are far more important than others. Ministers can share the sins of those whose working lives are in factories, offices and corporations, who also long for success at the expense of others or by playing the system. Like James, ministers also need to know Christ's forgiveness and to be content with where God has placed us. Ministers and laity alike live in the tension of struggling to be more and more like Jesus, yet knowing they can get it wrong. I see in James this struggle and even the Protestant churches acknowledge the importance of good role models who inspire us to be more Christ like. James is a lesson in how to turn a lust for power into a life of sacrificial service.

In the end, it was in death that James became an effective apostle of Christ Jesus, perhaps the most effective of them all, apart from maybe Peter. Most of my ministry has been marked by church decline, though I have personally struggled to help people on their spiritual

journey. The decline I have experienced is mirrored across many denominations and the whole of Europe, yet as I look to James, I see a reason to hope. His story reminds me that in the end God will make all things worthwhile and that true success is not marked by growth, but faithful, sacrificial obedience.

Does it matter that the bones in the tomb may not be those of James? No. The journey to Santiago is done in time and space, across the physical and geographical land of Spain. But it is also undertaken in the inward lessons learnt on the road to the apostle's tomb. That which I have learnt is this. I am a physical and spiritual pilgrim. That is my calling. My vocation is to be a Methodist minister. Success is not measured in numerical growth, but sacrificial obedience. The saints of God strove for perfection, (and so should we), but experienced much failure and temptation on the way. They had to learn to live in God's grace and forgiveness. These are the lessons I have learned on the road to Santiago.

Thank you, James, my patron saint and brother.

*The Rev. Philip J Wren, CSJ member, is a Methodist minister in the Liverpool South Circuit.*



# The Family as Pilgrim on the Camino Francés

Robert Sellick

## A Promise

The life of a family is eternal, passing from parents to children. In our lives we should mark this experience. When our son was born relatively late in our lives, we made a promise to attempt a pilgrimage on the Camino de Francés to offer thanks, celebrate new life and explore the experience as a family together sharing pilgrim customs. We made this camino together with our two year old son, Martín.

We completed the camino nine weeks later with many adventures, much help, little criticism, intense sun, summer storms, surprising places, strange situations, and a dream of what the final outcome might be.

## Preparation

We were quite concerned before we left about what the challenges and achievements of the pilgrimage with our child would be. We decided to make the journey when he was two years old. He could already express his own feelings and walk, yet he was still sufficiently loyal to his parent's wishes and preferences. Moreover he didn't weigh more than the normal backpack. We researched about families making the camino but found little specific information available. For several years I had been a member of the Confraternity of Saint James which offered us plenty of information and encouragement.

## Departure

We chose to set out in May when the days are longer, with moderate temperatures, and the natural beauty more colourful. We decided to take a light compact push-chair (actually the wheels were too small for the stony paths) and a backpack to carry the child. Also there were numerous clothes, nappies, food, first aid, remedies, books and toys for Martín on top of the normal pilgrim load. We also carried his birthday present, a small pedal-less bicycle, which we hung on the backpack or pram, so that he could develop his own mobility.

We left Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port to cross the Pyrenees and enter

Spain on foot. By now we were clear that our progress would be much slower than any other pilgrim. More importantly, patience and sensitivity to the emotional needs of the child are the keys to a successful camino. In this way his pace became our optimum camino.

## **Spirit**

When we left Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port Martín wasn't very aware of the faith or spirit that moves and sustains the pilgrim on the camino. When we visited the church in Roncesvalles to seek a blessing, Martín became nervous in the dark silent atmosphere. He cried and shouted as a priest blessed him. Gradually during our pilgrimage Martín's behaviour changed. During the long days with villages far from one another, Martín shouted enthusiastically *tulung, tulung* (tolling bell) or *torre, torre* as he spotted churches still distant on the horizon. For him they became important destinations. Little by little when we entered churches, hermitages, monasteries and cathedrals he became calmer and conscious of the peaceful atmosphere. During the final weeks when we entered a church he would sit for a minute or two on a pew to contemplate the atmosphere.

## **Adaptation**

The continuous movement and change day by day is a big challenge as much for a child as for adults. The beauty is mixed with the rigours of the camino. For the parents it is the tiredness caused by the additional weight of the child and his luggage. For the child it is the constant movement of people and places. Also the parents are concerned with the energy, health and enthusiasm of the child. The rest stops were as important as the progress so that he could play, rest, explore, and eat. The daily progress varied between six and twenty kilometers. Some days were spent mainly resting. Very important elements of the stops were the *albergues* and *refugios* on the camino. We spent more than fifty nights on the camino.

Our timetable was not the usual pilgrim one. A child sleeps longer than an adult and we were always the last to leave the *albergue* in the mornings. Occasionally an understanding *hospitalero* would offer us an extra hour in bed in the morning. Frequently we put Martín, still asleep in his sleeping-bag directly into his push-chair. We dressed him when we stopped for breakfast an hour or so later.



## Rhythm

After a late start we always walked in the mornings with a long stop at mid-day (two o'clock in Spain) for lunch and rest. We preferred a stop in the shade of trees with sandwiches more than the pilgrim menu because it gave Martín more space to play and rest. The stops lasted as long as six hours depending largely on the heat, games, tiredness and beauty. The playgrounds were very important destinations; we stopped for five hours in the park in Hospital de Orbigo.

At about six in the evening we began to walk again if we wanted to reach a more distant *albergue*. We enjoyed the tranquillity of the camino at sunset so much. In the mornings on the camino there was a continuous flow of pilgrims passing us, which at times made us feel quite pressed. The evenings offered us a far more peaceful space for contemplation.

## Albergue Nights

Arriving at dusk at an *albergue* it was always a little uncertain if there would still be room. Frequently the hospitaleros were a little surprised to receive a family with such a young child. However they nearly always gave us a warm welcome. Only in a very few cases did the *hospitaleros* doubt if they could accommodate children. We had to convince them that Martín would not cry or shout in the night, certainly not as loudly as the infamous snorers, or noisy pre-drawn risers who rouse everyone. Martín invariably shared one of our beds. We tried not to be too demanding. From time to time other pilgrims seemed a little uneasy having a child in their dormitory or dining room as if their dreams and relaxation might be disrupted.

On very few occasions was Martín intolerable. Normally he would be in bed by lights out, and frequently the pilgrims were charmed by him. Occasionally *hospitaleros* offered some special treat; such as a room for three of us alone, or playing with Martín for an hour so that we could get away for a short break. There were very generous *hospitaleros* who were sensitive to our needs, like those at Eunete, Cirauqui, Nájera, Hospital de San Nicolas, Bercianos de la Rana, Astorga and Gaucelmo at Rabanal.

The parish church *albergues* had the strongest spirit of hospitality offered by volunteers. The private *albergues* also offered a distinctive, and frequently warm, welcome. Some of the municipal and Galician *albergues* were more formal and less sensitive to the needs of a family. In Galicia there were fewer private *albergues* and the rush of pilgrims



in July frequently meant no spaces were left in the state ones by the time we arrived. We were increasingly dependent on the *hostales*.

### **Completing the pilgrimage**

At last after nine weeks on the camino we reached Santiago. For each one of us it was a very personal experience. Moreover together as a family we came to understand our spiritual capacity to support one another in moments of uncertainty and exhaustion. Not only did we share motivation but also the patience with the daily rhythm which varied day by day and from dawn to dusk.

### **No Compostela for Youngsters**

We were very disillusioned by the decision of the church authorities to reject Martín's application for his *compostela*. We felt that Martín made his pilgrimage with so much effort and spirit, and that not once did he express a wish to give up the adventure. Moreover that Martín, at his early age, achieved and learnt much more than us, his elders.

The pilgrim office gave us several reasons for declining his application:

- his age – so young that he did not have the ability to choose for himself to do the camino.

Our opinion is that at any moment Martín could have obliged us to abandon the pilgrimage. He sustained his motivation throughout the length of the Camino

- His capacity to express verbally the significance of the pilgrimage on his religious and spiritual development.

Our opinion is that at the beginning of the pilgrimage Martín was frightened and had little understanding of faith when he cried and shouted during his blessing in Roncesvalles chapel. Later he recognised and was excited by the church towers on the horizon. He sat quietly for several minutes in many churches to contemplate the spiritual atmosphere.

- That he had not taken his first communion.

Our opinion is that there are other pilgrims of all ages who have not taken first communion. But as adults were not asked if they had taken first communion, their applications for *compostelas* were obviously not declined for that reason. He was given a certificate acknowledging his completion of the pilgrimage.



## Conclusion

We felt that some of these norms need reviewing because the youngsters put more effort into the camino. They develop a unique spiritual sensitivity from the experience distinct from but shared with that of their parents. The Camino Francés was a great success for each of us in the family, and something that will always be shared between the three of us. We can confidently recommend the camino to more families with youngsters. With improvements in the infrastructure, principally road safety black-spots throughout the camino and *albergue* accommodation in Galicia and increasing the awareness of *hospitaleros*, the conditions for families on the camino will improve even further. Martín, we hope, will return to follow his own footsteps on the camino once again.

*Robert Sellick contributed this paper to the Foro Europeo Conference held in October 2007 in Jaca, which he and William Griffiths attended on behalf of CSJ.*



Delegates visit the site of the hospital of Santa Cristina, Somport Pass.



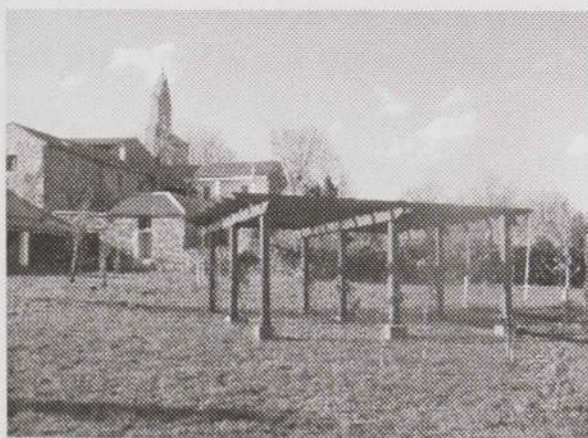
# Refugio Gaucelmo News

## Hospitaleros

April	Gillian Anderson and Margaret Hall Mike & Anja Mannion
May	Hilary Monk & Orlando Krippner Tom & Di-Anne Gibson

The end of March 2008 saw CSJ members Alison Raju, Trevor Curnow and Graham Scholes at Gaucelmo to prepare the building for the arrival of pilgrims on the 1 April. There was no damage to the structure of the building over the winter, other than the shutters on the windows overlooking the square were found to be more ill fitting than usual. But, strange deposits were found in the large dormitory toilet/shower room. At first it appeared to be that of a dog, but on further inspection by 'Sherlock' Raju, it was decided that it was decomposing walnut shells brought in by a squirrel, or possibly a large bird. The small window opening in one of the toilets was screened with a piece of chicken wire in order to stop further 'crimes'.

The 2007 planting in the *huerta* has survived the winter and in early April was starting to bud. The construction of the pergola structure in the *huerta* is now complete (see photo) and ten climbing shrubs have been planted, watered and mulched around the base of each support.



Ken and Joan Davies, the garden designers, revisited Gaucelmo at the end of April to check on the progress of the planting.

Around 20 villagers attended the Gaucelmo party on Monday the 31 March. This year Oblines was not the first to arrive, but it was one of the monks, Juan Antonio, to apologise that he would not be able to stay due to having to move furniture and other items between the village churches. The party was again a great success and gave the incoming *hospitaleras*, Gillian and Margaret, a chance to meet the villagers.

Gillian and Margaret reported that they have had some lively and enjoyable occasions with their fellow pilgrims – one evening was spent



singing WWII songs in six different languages, including a German pilgrim who accompanied them on the guitar!

Mike and Anja carried out their Good Samaritan *hospitalero* duties by allowing a 'scruffy' Englishman to stay at Gaucelmo, the Monks had not allowed him to stay in the monastery. He did not have money, spare clothes, food nor sleeping bag – but lots of religious books in his rucksack. They gave him a spare towel and blanket and allowed him to sleep in the barn. The following morning he was very grateful for their hospitality and kindness and went on his way.

The annual fumigation of the building does not appear to have been carried out as usual before opening this spring. We have an annual contract with the fumigation company in Ponferrada to carry out a scheduled fumigation of the buildings, but due to communication problems the date was not confirmed. This meant that Hilary and Orlando, as well as having to cope with a swarm of bees making their home in the barn wall, had the unfortunate task of closing the refugio for a day in early May while the work was being carried out.

Hilary also reported that Marimar, a taxi service, was still transporting rucksacks along the camino. The rucksacks are being dropped off at Gaspar's, the restaurant at the end of the village, while some of the rucksacks owners have been attempting to stay at Gaucelmo. Hilary and Orlando have been able to spot most of the 'non pilgrims', but it has not been easy. On occasions some departing pilgrims have even been known to ask whether we have the white forms to fill in to arrange for the next days travel arrangements!

Javier, a local gardener who cuts the grass in the *huerta* at Gaucelmo, has been experiencing problems with his lawn mower to such an extent that he is now unable to mow the grass, resulting in a meadow like appearance to the *huerta*. Tom and Di-Anne have been trying to find a replacement for Javier in Rabanal with no success.

In order to maintain the garden for use by the pilgrims, the CSJ Rabanal Committee may have to resort to buying a strimmer and lawnmower and, like Miraz, rely on the *hospitaleros* at Gaucelmo to cut the grass.

If you feel as though you would like to volunteer for the role of *hospitalero/a* at Gaucelmo, there are still a few places remaining for 2009. A list is now being assembled of prospective *hospitaleros* for 2010, the next holy year. If you would like to know more about the role, or wish to volunteer for 2009/10, please contact the *hospitalero* coordinator, via e-mail at [r-wardens@csj.org.uk](mailto:r-wardens@csj.org.uk)



# Book Reviews

## **Guía práctica del Camino Jacobeo del Ebro y Camino Catalán**

Carlos Mencos, 978-8493451231, Published by jacobeo.net

This guide covers the routes that follow the River Ebro and join the Camino Francés at Logroño. It has been written by Carlos Mencos who is both a journalist and the manager of jacobeo.net. His editorial skills are evident in this concise, usable and light-weight guide for pilgrims on foot or on bike.

This route has two branches that unite a little to the east of Fuentes del Ebro. The Camino Catalan begins at Monserrat but has the disadvantage of following the A2 which is a very busy main road. The Camino Ebro is certainly the more pleasant route but the starting point at the mouth of the Ebro has no public transport to get there. After these routes merge the camino largely passes through gently rising and open country. Undoubtedly, the jewel in the crown of this route is Zaragoza with its Basilica de Nuestra Señora del Pilar and its historic remains spanning the Roman and Moorish periods. The downside to this route is the lack of pilgrim infrastructure. Stages need careful thought to allow for accommodation and sometimes food, especially in approaches to Zaragoza and in La Rioja.

The guide is in Castilian but even non-speakers will find the book accessible. The introduction is kept to the minimum covering very briefly the authenticity of the routes, practical advice about climate, the state of way-marking (not as prolific as the Camino Francés) and daily expenditure. The remainder of the guide is divided into stages, colour-coded by province. Each stage has a very clear route map (plus clear city street diagrams) and a brief description of the route and points of interest. Important information (such as accommodation and contact telephone numbers) is made obvious by grouping at the end of each stage rather than being buried in the text.

The guide achieves just the right balance between practical and cultural information. As well as the maps there are stage profiles and good photographs to help identify the route and to highlight places of especial interest – really useful for non-Castilian speakers. Towns and villages have facilities clearly shown with standard symbols.

The advantage of this guide is that up-dates for this route,



accommodation and refuges are easily available through the jacobeo.net web-site. So once bought, this guide should last some time. One gripe however – the index of the various stages is divided by province and not by page number. Since the two branches of this route are not of an equal number of stages, those joining the Camino Catalán from the Ebro will need to know which province and what stage the two meet by thumbing through the plans (the answer is page 119!).

Overall this is an excellent guide to one of the less well known pilgrim routes. A vast improvement on the rather clumsy Castilian/Catalán language guide that was, until now, the only one available.

A copy is available in the CSJ library.

COLIN JONES

### **The Way of a Thousand Arrows**

Jonathan Drane, 2007, Available as e-book or paperback from [www.jondrane.net](http://www.jondrane.net)  
978-0980424706

This book is sub-titled 'An Australian family's journey through the Camino de Santiago' and describes the 22 days spent by the author, his wife and three teenage children, travelling between Pamplona and Santiago in the autumn of 2006. I deliberately use the word 'travelling' for, although they do walk the last 100km from Sarria to Santiago and obtain their *compostelas*, they happily travel by bus between Burgos and León and between Ponferrada and Sarria. On other occasions, they are not averse to using taxis for some family members and their backpacks.

I did not warm to the book from the outset having been told on page 3 of the introductory chapter, that along the camino, "...the earth is said by some to be connected with the universe through electromagnetic lines called 'ley lines'". This sets the tone for the book as the author describes in very flowery language his experience of a 'dark presence' with a 'current of hatred, menace and impatience' in the Iglesia Santiago in Puente la Reina and of seeing a 'playful demon' that was like 'a cartoon bad guy' in, of all places, the Hospital de Peregrinos, San Juan Bautista in Grañón!

The book is also littered with a whole host of basic errors. He calls virtually every church along the camino a 'Cathedral' but calls the Cathedral of San Salvador in Santo Domingo de la Calzada, a 'Church'! He cannot spell simple Spanish words such as *hospitalera* or *peregrino*. He puts an extra 'r' into the latter making one think of a cross between

a dog and a pilgrim! He describes the *fuelle del vino* at Irache as producing red and white wine when it actually offers red wine and water. And so one could go on.

The author also has very peculiar ideas about the CSJ, describing us as 'a central organisation behind the camino', crediting us with running many *Albergues* when we only run one on the Camino Francés, and confusing us with other pilgrim associations such as the Flemish one that provides *hospitaleros* for the *albergue* in Los Arcos.

There are the occasional helpful insights, such as describing an older French female pilgrim who just walks at a slow and steady pace yet usually reaches the next *albergue* ahead of the younger pilgrim who rushes ahead and is then exhausted. But if I was wanting a book to give to someone to describe what making a walking pilgrimage to Santiago is like, I certainly would not choose this one!

RICKY YATES



# Members' Pages

## From Miriam and Don DeJongh

We flew from the United States in late March for our third season walking from Le Puy to Santiago. We, of course, travel very light and do not wish to check luggage through, particularly since we have three flights each way.

In the past, we have carried on our collapsible walking sticks (in our backpacks). However, we have become increasingly worried that security agents might refuse to allow them in our carry-on packs. Have you heard of anyone who has had to surrender walking sticks at the security checkpoints?

We carry our CSJ pilgrim guides each year and thank you for all your efforts. Rabanal remains one of our most precious memories.

## From John Revell

I would like to use the Members' Page to say thank you for a unique gift. When I chose to start my recent pilgrimage from Vézelay to La Souterraine (using the southern branch of the Voie de Vézelay via Nevers) I was unaware that the day before was the occasion of the Annual General Meeting of Les Amis et Pèlerins de Saint-Jacques de la Voie de Vézelay in Vézelay itself. So it was that on 29 March I was one of three guests at the meeting chaired by Monique Chassain. One of the gifts which I was given at the meeting so embodied a combination of my own personal interests and delights that I am drawn to the conclusion that Monique Chassain must be a mind-reader. Unbeknown to me the day of the meeting also happened to be the first day of issue by the French Post Office of a group of ten stamps featuring different parts of France. In conjunction with the issue *La Poste* published an attractive book of sketches and paintings entitled *Portraits de régions* which also included the stamps themselves in detachable form. Last in order came a stamp depicting Vézelay, and to my delight Monique had somehow contrived a first-day-of-issue postmark. I am deeply indebted to her for the overall experience in Vézelay, and for such a continuing memento of that day.



### **From Henryk Karaś – Poland**

The Confraternity of Saint James the Apostle – in Jakubów, Poland has just completed its fourth Papal pilgrimage from Głogów to Jakubów on 12 April 2008. The weather was rainy but still about a hundred pilgrims took part. (see photo) Along the way the pilgrims visited the churches of Brzostowie and Kurowice. In



Kurowice the parish priest blessed a newly renovated cross. By the time the pilgrims reached Jakubów the sun came out and everyone felt better. The Mass in Jakubów was celebrated by Bishop Stefan Regmunt and during the Mass the bishop blessed the new banner of the Confraternity. It is hoped that the weather will be sunny for the next celebrations on the 13 and 14 June when the Polish confraternity will be celebrating its first anniversary and the third anniversary of the bringing over to Jakubów a relic of Saint James. After Mass concelebrated by Cardinal Henryk Gulbinowicz and Bishops Stefan Regmunt and Tomas Pety (from Kazakhstan) there will be shows of knightly jousting and demonstrations of first-aid and rescue work by firemen / policeman and medical services. It should be a lot of fun.

*Henryk Karas will be a guest of the CSJ on the Warwick weekend in July.*

### **From Gosia Brykczynska**

CSJ members often ask me why we don't have more sketches and ink drawings and pictures (not to mention cartoons) from the camino in the *Bulletin*. The answer is simple; because CSJ members do not send them in. But we all know that we have wonderful artists among our membership – as the exhibition in Guildford Cathedral several years ago was splendid proof and testimony. So, please consider this as an appeal for various bits and pieces of artwork that can be suitably used in the *Bulletin*. Strong black-and-white drawings and sketches are preferred. Many thanks in advance - for your generous response.



## **From Revd John Marsh**

I wanted to write to let you know that, for my two-year term of (honorary) office as Moderator of the General Assembly of the United Reformed Church from July, I have taken the theme of 'Pilgrimage'. This was largely inspired by my experience on sabbatical study leave in 1997 (not as a walking pilgrim) travelling along the Pilgrims Way from Paris to Santiago de Compostela. I stayed roughly a week to ten days at a time as a guest in monasteries along the Way (St Benoit sur Loire, Ligugé, Notre Dame de Maylis, San Salvador de Leyre, Santo Domingo de Silos, and Samos).

Since 1997 I have sought to share the sabbatical experience, partly through making many presentations to various churches and groups, and partly by organising church group visits to various parts of the Spanish Camino. All this seems to have been valued by those involved.

Obviously, I cannot claim to be a pilgrim in the traditional Camino sense, but it has all greatly enriched my ministry. I retired from active ministry in 2005, but when the United Reformed Church honoured me by electing me to be Moderator of the General Assembly for 2008-2010, it was not difficult to decide upon the theme of Pilgrimage for my term of office.

You may also like to know that another CSJ member, The Revd Dr Jane Leach (Methodist minister and Senior Tutor & Director of Pastoral Studies at Wesley House, Cambridge) has agreed to conduct the daily Bible Studies at Assembly (but re-styled 'Spiritual Directions') based on her experience of walking the Camino, and drawing upon her book '*Walking the Story – In the steps of Saints and Pilgrims*'. I imagine you will have this in the CSJ Library.

I was, and remain, deeply appreciative of all that CSJ is and does. I delight in receiving the *Bulletin*. I commend you to God in my prayers. Your prayers for me would be appreciated, as I take up office at the General Assembly on its opening day on Friday 11th July 2008 at Heriot Watt University Edinburgh, and subsequently as I undertake two years of official visits on behalf of the United Reformed Church throughout Wales, Scotland and England - and maybe further afield from time to time.

Yours in peace and pilgrimage,

CSJ Membership No. 1996262

Moderator-elect of the General Assembly of the United Reformed Church (2008-2010)

### **From Doreen Hansen – Pilgrim Records Secretary**

Please help the prompt processing of your Pilgrim Record Request in the following ways:

- apply in good time (about a month ahead)
- provide an envelope which will stick down by itself
- ensure you have put enough postage on your envelope to me (remember it will probably be a 'Large Letter' (I cannot collect letters and pay excess postage from the Sorting Office!))
- if you use an A4 (as opposed to an A5) envelope for your return Record(s) you will need extra postage
- International Reply Coupons from abroad are causing some problems. Post Offices in the UK will not accept them if they are unstamped. Please ensure that the coupon is **stamped** before sending it on to me for your membership papers and the Pilgrim Record. Please FOLLOW INSTRUCTIONS for GETTING a Pilgrim Record to the LETTER!

Grateful thanks – Doreen



# Obituaries

## Walter Ivens RIP 1928-2008

When Walter and Mary joined the Confraternity early in its existence in 1985 they became deeply involved with the pilgrimage to Santiago.

I soon got to know Walter well as a friend, but, as everyone who knew him found out, he was always much more interested in other people than himself and keen to hear all their news. He seldom talked about himself.

Walter became a member of the committee and, although by then there were 500 members and the Confraternity was growing fast, we felt that something beyond the status quo was needed. We asked for suggestions. Several good ideas were produced, but it was Walter who made the heartfelt plea for the Confraternity to find a way to 'pay back' the rich experience so many members had gained while on the Camino. He talked and wrote about the very poor condition of some of the villages and suggested that we try to find a way to bring one of them 'back to life'.

The committee agreed whole-heartedly but recognised that this would be a massive task. Of course we all know what happened from then onwards: it is well documented in the *Bulletins* and in *Give me my scallop shell*, Pat Quaife's excellent history of the first twenty years of the CSJ. It was immediately clear that the Confraternity as a whole was gripped by the plan for a refugio at Rabanal.

Walter brought to the project a wealth of experience. What was fundamental to the fantastic success of the Refugio and the fairly rapid transformation of the village was the inspiration and the very hard work which Walter, with Mary's constant help, brought to the Appeal and the implementation of the original idea.

However, Walter would never take and credit for his success. He always said 'It was all of you!' It was anyone, but never him.

Walter was a wonderful man. Behind his great modesty, there was an enormous happiness in seeing the finest Refugio on the Camino, giving such help and pleasure to thousands of pilgrims from all over the world on their way to Santiago de Compostela, but also making Rabanal a village full of life and prosperity.

JAMES MAPLE





## **Ray Kenney RIP 1944-2007**

Ray and Isabelle Kenney walked from Burgos to Santiago during the summer of 2001, as a masochistic way of celebrating their 30<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary. Instead of gifts they received sponsorship (a total of £6000) towards the rewiring of their local church, St Michael and All Angels in Bampton, Devon.

Ray left school in Dublin at 14, trained as a chef at the Dorchester Hotel in London and in Switzerland, and went on to become one of the first chefs to obtain a degree in education, finishing his teaching career at Cardiff University.

Ray and Isabelle founded a 'hotel with nurses' to care for the elderly in Devon and the business continues to thrive after 24 years. Ray was diagnosed with leukaemia in May 2007, shortly before his daughter Lucy was married in St Michael's.

His pilgrimage ended on 28 July and a huge horse-drawn funeral was held there, followed by his burial. Later this year his first grandchild, Ella Rae, will be christened at St Michael's.

The words of the Irish poet, Seamus Heaney describe Ray: 'a sunlit absence'.

ISABELLE KENNEY

## **Fr José-Maria Marroquín**

*Further to the request in Bulletin 101*

**PAUL MOOSE, CARMEL VALLEY, CA, USA WRITES**

I read with profound sadness the article on the passing of Fr Jose-Maria in the CSJ *Bulletin*. I met him during my stay at San Juan de Ortega on my 1998 pilgrimage from Le Puy to Santiago. That night and my encounter with Fr Jose-Maria was one of the high points of my journey. I looked back at my diary and here is what I wrote of that experience;

"18 June 1998 San Juan de Ortega is a magical and special place that every pilgrim should visit. The evening starts with a lecture at 6:00 pm on the history of Santo Domingo de la Calzada and San Juan de Ortega; the bridge, roads and hospitals they built from Logrono to Burgos. The mass at 7:00 pm was followed by garlic soup made by the priest (Fr José-Maria) and his sister. Fr J-M also gets up and makes and serves café con leche to the pilgrims in the morning.

There were 9 countries represented in the 30 odd pilgrims having soup together. Fr J-M said some things that helped me understand the Camino better:

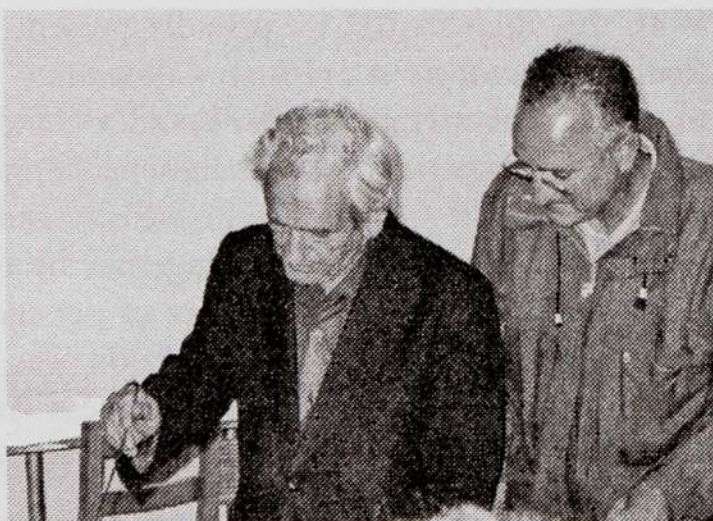


- ‘Most pilgrims can’t answer “why” (why they are doing it)’
- ‘The Camino is very “wide” (all are welcome)’
- ‘The average pilgrim is solo’
- ‘Two pilgrims make a group, three is a crowd’
- ‘There is only “one camino” ‘
- ‘For 1500km you are “on the camino, at the end the camino is in you” (your heart, the spirit, esprit of the camino) ‘
- ‘The real challenge of the camino comes at the end, to keep its spirit alive in your heart, to live your life as you did on the camino, sharing, making friends, helping those who need help. To take the spirit of the camino to others.’

I was on the Camino in 1998 in my sixtieth year. I carry wonderful and powerful memories from my journey. But the one I have from San Juan de Ortega remains one of the most significant and moving to me to this day.

#### **CHRIS DYOS WRITES**

Just before heading off for what we hope will be the final stage of our pilgrimage to Rome, I’m getting round to doing all sorts of little things that I ought to have done ages ago. In among them I have it in the back of my mind that there was a request in one of the



recent CSJ *Bulletins* for any reminiscences that members might have of the famous “Garlic Soup Priest” of San Juan de Ortega. Well, when we were there it was very cold, so we remember everyone being tucked up in their sleeping bags in the middle of the afternoon for some warmth, then Mass in the church with an extended homily from himself, followed by the soup-fest! This maybe isn’t too interesting I’m sure, but we do have a photo of the priest from that occasion.



# From the Secretary's Notebook

Marion Marples

## CSJ 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary present



With this *Bulletin* 102 we proudly present the CSJ's latest publication: *Roads to Santiago: a Spiritual Companion* which we are sending free to all current members. The booklet comprises 25 reflections on the pilgrimage experience by members, complemented by photographs from the Picture Gallery on the website and by poems, psalms or bible readings. The whole was put together by new member John Rafferty who used his formidable powers of persuasion to broker a deal with Redemptorist Publications. The book was launched at the House of Lords under the patronage of Baroness Andrews and Lord Clark of Hampstead, who have now both developed a great interest in the camino!

Until 25 July the booklet is offered for £3.95 plus postage to CSJ members. This is because we should like you to use the book to spread the word about the Confraternity and share your camino experience with your friends. Please use it as a recruiting tool and buy copies for all your relatives and those you would like to encourage towards making their own pilgrimage when they are ready. Order form at the end of the *Bulletin*.

## Apologies

To all those people who searched for a form with *Bulletin* 101 to complete for the CSJ's Warwickshire weekend. In the last minute haste to finish the *Bulletin* it got left out. However, there should be a form with this *Bulletin*; please complete it if you would like to join the other members of the CSJ



for St James's day celebrations starting at St James's Church, Snitterfield, Warwickshire, approx halfway between Warwick and Stratford-upon-Avon and later exploring the Lord Leycester Hospital and chapel of St James in Warwick and walking the Monarch's Way to Stratford.

### **Missing books from the Library**

John Curtin is assisting Howard Nelson with Library matters. He has identified the following books as missing. Please could you check your shelves to see if you have borrowed them and return them to us at the Office. Thank you.

Künig Von Vach, Hermann translation by Vazquez Quiapo BKB 2241  
Moran Luna, Alberto Nostalgia (and three other songs) BKB 2844  
Urrutia, Angel *De Navarra a Compostela: guía lirica del Camino de Santiago* BKA 2109  
Roland, Chanson de BKA 262  
Guides Gallimard, *Chemins de Saint Jacques* BKB 1743  
Merklein Johannes *Pèlerinage à Saint Jacques de Compostelle*, BKB 2106  
Blum Jolanda *Les Chemins de St. Jacques à travers la Suisse* BKA 2086  
*Guía Espiritu del Peregrino, Central de Peregrinaciones* Assis S.A. Santiago de Compostela BKA 1271  
Carandell, Luis *Ultreia: historias, leyendas, gracias y desgracias del Camino de Santiago* BKA 1679  
*El Mundo Escandinavo, Santa Brigida y el Camino de Santiago* Encuentro Historico Espana Sueica VIII. BKA 4069  
Suarez Otero, José *Thoughts with regard to the archaeology of the apostolic sepulchre*, BKB 2504

### **Congratulations**

A couple of years ago the Amigos del Camino de Santiago de Astorga y su Comarca launched an International Pilgrim Diary competition. The Diaries were submitted under pseudonyms in a choice of languages and marked by native speakers of the relevant language. I am thrilled to announce that the entries from CSJ members won both First and Second Prize: our congratulations go to Michael Gaches (known as Valiant) for first prize and James Lawlor (known as Kessog) for second place. Third prize went to a German pilgrim, Nicola Kopp. Thanks to all five CSJ members who entered.

### **Wettest May in Santiago for 100 years**

In spite of more rain than in the whole of 2007 in Santiago there have been large numbers of pilgrims, especially Germans, still inspired by last year's TV programme and book by Hans Kerkeling *Ich bin dann mal weg* (I'm off for a bit). There have also been noticeable numbers of South Koreans, including a school party walking from Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port



with their teachers. In Santiago there was rain on 23 days in a row and it is 15 years since there was less sun.

### **Helpful Travel Advice**

I am grateful to Penny Searley for this useful addition to Martyn Tonks's travel booking recommendations in *Bulletin* 101. 'I use Railbookers, who I have found wonderfully efficient, with excellent personal service.' Contact Railbookers Ltd, 14, Bonhill Street, London EC2A 4BX, tel: 0870 458 9080, fax: 0870 458 9082, email: [info@railbookers.com](mailto:info@railbookers.com)

### **Gareth Thomas walks from Worcester to Santiago**

New member Gareth Thomas originally planned to start his pilgrimage in London. But researching his route at the CSJ Office he came across references to the 'Worcester Pilgrim', buried near the High Altar in Worcester Cathedral. He contacted Katherine Lack, author of 'The Cockleshell Pilgrim' which describes her detective work identifying the hitherto anonymous pilgrim as wealthy dyer Robert Sutton. She also suggests the possible route he may have taken through France. She generously lent Gareth the replica staff she had had made, based on the one found with the pilgrim burial. After a Pilgrim Blessing at Worcester (with a second pilgrim who surprisingly materialised just at the right time) Gareth started his pilgrimage. He received a further blessing from Fr Christopher Turnbull of Westminster Cathedral, in the presence of wellwishers from Whizz-kidz, the charity for whom is hopes to raise £10,000 for wheelchairs and mobility aids for non-mobile children. He is writing an interesting detailed blog of his journey. Both this and his fundraising page can be found via [www.csj.org.uk](http://www.csj.org.uk)

### **Pilgrim Website Classification**

Do you have a working knowledge of French or German?

[www.santiago-compostela.net](http://www.santiago-compostela.net) is mounting a major new initiative to help future pilgrims. We plan to add a further 150 websites to our "Index of websites classified by content."

We need helpers who are interested in finding out what kind of information is carried on major French and German websites, and who can classify the content using pre-arranged codes in a methodical way. We have now obtained external funding for this project, so we are able to offer a stipend of £200 for the classification of the first batch of 20-25 websites we need to be classified. If this phase is successful, we may have more similar work later. Email [info@santiago-compostela.net](mailto:info@santiago-compostela.net) if you are interested.



# CSJ Events

## Saturday 28 June

## Office Open Day

Opportunity for questions, sharing camino experiences, browsing the bookshop and Library. 10.30-3.30pm.

27 Blackfriars Road London SE1 8NY

## Sunday 29 June

## Forest of Dean

Gathering in Bream, Glos (Forest of Dean) with Catherine Kimmel; please contact the office for details

## Friday 25-Sunday 27 July

## Warwickshire Weekend

Friday 25 July 7.30 pm Eucharist, St James the Great, Snitterfield (just N of A46 between Warwick and Stratford) followed by refreshments. The parish has invited the congregations of other St James's churches in the area to join them and us.

Sat 26 July 10.30am 'Roads to Santiago' presentation by various members about the pilgrimage followed by Pilgrim Lunch, 3 pm visit and guided tour (£6.40) of Lord Leycester Hospital, Warwick (late 14th c almshouses plus 12th c chapel of St James)

Tea, visit to St Mary's Warwick

Meal together

Sun 27 July Walk to Stratford 6km along Monarch's Way. 11am Mass at St Gregory the Great church (RC).

Pub Lunch

*Ad lib* Visit to St David's Newbold-on-Stour (new pilgrim window commissioned by Christabel Watson, showing Via de la Plata) (on A40 S of Stratford)

Depart

## Friday 25 July

## St James's day Eucharist

7.30pm Sung Eucharist celebrated by Revd Michael Paterson at Christ Church Episcopal Church (Holy Corner), Morningside Road, Edinburgh, followed by celebratory wine and tapas. If you would like to join a scratch choir to sing Spanish and English music please arrive at 6.30pm for a rehearsal and if you could help with preparations or catering please contact Michael on 0131 228 2931 or [pilgrim@6a.eorg.uk](mailto:pilgrim@6a.eorg.uk)



## **Sunday 24 August**

## **Fairford**

Gathering at Fairford Church, Glos. John Read invites members to Fairford (which has splendid 15th c stained glass including a small head of St James); Welcome & Introduction, Lunch, Members' presentations, Tour of Church, Service, Walk round Fairford; contact Dave and Theresa Jones, d-jones56@sky.com

## **Saturday 27 September**

## **Office Open Day**

Opportunity for questions, sharing camino experiences, browsing the bookshop & Library. 10.30am-3.30pm 27 Blackfriars Rd London SE1 8NY

## **Saturday 18 October**

## **Pilgrim Reunion**

Walk, sharing, lunch and service for recently returned pilgrims.

10.30 meet for Walk led by Leigh Hatts (place to be announced in September *Bulletin*)

12.30 Rendezvous at Loughton Methodist Church, 260 High Rd Loughton, IG10 1RB by kind invitation of the Revd Tony Morling, who made his own pilgrimage from Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port in April 2008. Bring and share lunch. Loughton station is 27 mins on the Central line from Liverpool Street, and the church is 10-15 mins walk from the tube. Please bring your memories, highlights, disappointments, and any music, poems or readings that helped sustain you through your pilgrimage as well as a contribution towards the lunch.

## **Saturday 25 October**

## **Office Open Day**

Opportunity for questions, sharing camino experiences, browsing the bookshop & Library. 10.30am-3.30pm 27 Blackfriars Rd London SE1 8NY

## **Saturday 15 November**

## **Hospitaleros' Workshop**

Rabanal and Miraz Hospitaleros' Workshop, 10.30-5pm, John Marshall Hall, 27 Blackfriars Road, London SE1 8NY

## **Saturday 22 November Office Open Day & Storrs Lecture**

Opportunity for questions, sharing camino experiences, browsing the bookshop & Library. 10.30am-3.30pm 27 Blackfriars Rd London SE1 8NY  
Followed by 3.30pm Storrs Lecture: *Criticising and defending pilgrimage in the early Middle Ages*, Prof Dame Jinty Nelson, £5.



# Other Events

## Saturday 21 June

## Harry Paye Day

As part of the festivities recalling the 600<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Harry Paye's return to Poole with captured French boats, the town's St James's church will also now make amends with the church of Finisterre by presenting them with a new cross to replace the one stolen by Harry Paye during a raid on the Galician port. Apart from his piratical activities Harry Paye was licensed in 1401 to take 80 pilgrims from Poole in the *Mary* on pilgrimage to St James. He ended his days as Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports and is buried in Faversham church in Kent.

## Sunday 22 June

## Garden Party

Members in the Cheltenham area might enjoy supporting the Friends of Tredington and Stoke Orchard Churches Annual Garden Party and Pig Roast, at Tredington House from 12.30pm. Tickets are £9 each to support the Friends. St James Stoke Orchard church has a unique fine but damaged series of 12th c wall paintings showing the life of St James. The CSJ is a member of the Friends but would really like a local member to keep a watching brief on Stoke Orchard church and keep us in touch with the ongoing conservation work. Contact Mrs Anne Newman, 01242 680669 for the Pig Roast or Marion at the Office for a background briefing on Stoke Orchard church.

## Thursday 3 July

## Illustrated Talk

Brendan Mulcahy will talk about his recent pilgrimage from the south of Portugal to Santiago. The Convent School, Belmont, Shrewsbury, 7.30pm. See [www.shrewsburycathedral.org](http://www.shrewsburycathedral.org)

## Sunday 6 July

## St Birinus Pilgrimage

Annual walking pilgrimage to commemorate the journey made by St Birinus to evangelise England c 634. Starts from Churn Knob (12 mls), 12.15 picnic lunch, 1.00pm start. Pilgrimage visits Blewbury (10 mls), Brightwell (5 mls) and Wittenham Clumps (2 mls) to end at Dorchester Abbey for ecumenical service at 6.30pm. Further details from 01865 340007 or [www.stbirinuspilgrimage.org.uk](http://www.stbirinuspilgrimage.org.uk) for directions, parking etc

## **Friday 18 – Sunday 20 July**

## **St Arilda's Weekend**

Oldbury on Severn in South Gloucestershire is celebrating its patron saint in style this year, and the Confraternity is warmly invited to join us for some or all of the following programme:

**Friday 18 July:** 7.30pm Roman Catholic Mass in St Arilda's church, Oldbury on Severn.

**Saturday 19 July:** 3pm Walk from St Arilda's church to the well (approx. 1 mile) for a shared picnic and singing of the saint's hymn.

7pm Dinner in the restaurant at the Anchor Inn, Oldbury on Severn.

**Pre-booking is essential as summer Saturday evenings are busy at the Anchor. Names to Jane.**

**Sunday 20 July,** St Arilda's Day: 6pm Patronal festival in the church. The preacher will be the former priest in charge, Rev. Audrey Hayman. There may also be a walk of about 16 miles from the other church dedicated to St Arilda at Oldbury on the Hill near Didmarton. **N.B.** There is no public transport to Oldbury, which is north of Bristol some 3 miles west of Thornbury. Motorway access is good, for details please contact Jane Bradshaw, The Bank House, Oldbury on Severn, S.Glos. BS35 1PR, tel 01454 413199, email: [bradshaw@uwclub.net](mailto:bradshaw@uwclub.net)

## **Conferences**

### **Friday 5-Sunday 7 September**

### **Bourges**

Gathering of Amis de Saint-Jacques. A social and cultural visit to the city of Bourges, on the northern branch of the Vézelay route, organised by the Société Française des Amis de Saint Jacques de Compostelle in Paris. The aim is to strengthen existing links and forge some new ones between the European Santiago associations. Booking fee is 10 euros, visits (cathedral with guided tour, palais Jacques Coeur,) are free but you need to find your own accommodation and meals. Sunday mass in the Cathedral will see a special display of their relic of St James). If you are interested please contact Marion as soon as possible (preferably by 30 June).



VIII Congreso Internacional de Asociaciones Jacobeas. This biennial conference is being held in Zaragoza., under the title 'Camino de Santiago, Pilar de integracion'. The 4 basic themes are

- The significance of the Camino de Santiago in the formation of the European spirit. The influence of Cluny and other monastic and military orders on the Camino de Santiago.
- The infrastructure of the urban and rural pilgrim landscape: past and future
- The cultural heritage of Aragón
- The figure of the pilgrim

Please contact the office for the Spanish version of these titles.

Papers are called for, preferably in Spanish. No more than 6 sides of double spaced ariel size 12, max 10 mins delivery time. Items for the programme must arrive by 15 September.

If anyone feels moved to make a contribution to the conference please contact Marion at the Office to discuss the matter.

We are fortunate to have some good Spanish speakers /translators who may be able to help provide Spanish versions of any papers given in English. At present the CSJ will be represented by William Griffiths, Colin Jones and Marion Marples

## **Courses**

### **20 weeks from September 2008 Pilgrimage Course**

Based in 2 centres: Knaresborough, St John's church hall, Wednesdays 2-4pm and Ampleforth College, Postgate Room, Thursdays 2-4pm

The course tutor is Sophie Weston.

Topics will include medieval church art and architecture, music and literature, travel, social and religious history. Field trips include Harpham, birthplace of St John of Beverley and Durham cathedral and pilgrimage to Cuthbert's tomb. Also an illustrated Lecture Recital by Mary Remnant The Musical Road to Santiago. At the end of the course there will be a trip along part of the Camino de Santiago. Further details from Sophie Weston on 01751 475654.

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Information is provided for members' use only

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## Warwickshire Weekend

*please circle as appropriate*

**Accommodation** needs Fri Sat D ,T, S, S but would share  
T

B&B Snitterfield prices c £30 per night

B&B Warwick prices c £? per night (prob c £35)

I can offer accommodation (plus appropriate transport?) Y N

Please specify \_\_\_\_\_

**Meals** Saturday lunch Saturday supper Sunday lunch

**Visits** Lord Leycester's Hospital, Warwick £6.40

*please send cheque to book a place*

I plan to arrive Fri time? \_\_\_\_\_ Sat \_\_\_\_\_

At \_\_\_\_\_

I will need a lift / can offer \_\_\_\_\_ car spaces from \_\_\_\_\_

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Address + postcode

Email/phone no

*Please return form to CSJ, 27 Blackfriars Road, London SE1 8NY*

*or email details for Warwickshire weekend to [office@csj.org.uk](mailto:office@csj.org.uk)*



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**T**he 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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- 4 *Los Caminos del Norte* Eric Walker, 4 Gawthorpe Avenue, BINGLEY, West Yorkshire BD16 4DG  
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- 5 *Camino Portugués* Rod Pascoe, The White House, Pensilva, LISKEARD, Cornwall PL14 5NA  
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**Contributions to these and other publications should be addressed to the Office.**



# Confraternity of Saint James

Registered Charity number 1091140

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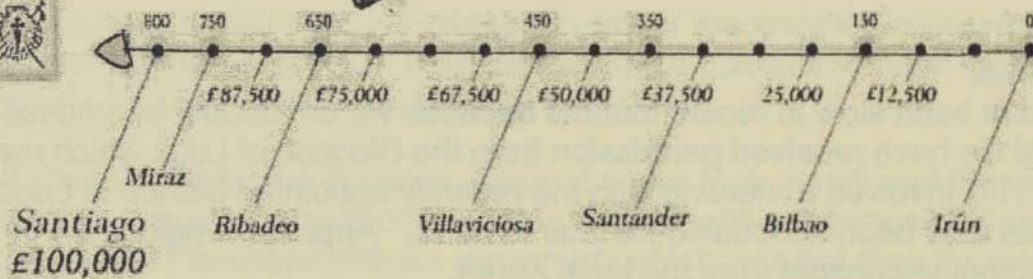
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## How has the *gaítero* progressed?



**Appeal Total £77,381 - THANK YOU**

- The 5,000<sup>th</sup> pilgrim !
- Miraz Development
- Winter in Miraz
- ¡Que Aproveche! - now available
- Help Needed
- Sponsor-a-Week



## \*\*\* *The 5,000<sup>th</sup> Pilgrim !* \*\*\*

By 22 May 2008, 115 pilgrims had stayed at Miraz so far this year, bringing the total since the CSJ opened the refugio to 4020. (already?!!!). The 5,000<sup>th</sup> is expected to arrive around September - a great excuse for a celebration.

This is an amazing achievement and thank you to everyone who has made Miraz possible and such a success.

## \*\*\* *Miraz Development News* \*\*\*

### The Plans

We had to completely rethink the way in which the accommodation could be extended since, due to various planning and practical considerations, it has not been possible to convert the roof space or the outbuildings in the way we envisaged when we first saw the building. The architect has developed a plan which takes into account CSJ, pilgrim and planning needs - the existing building would be used for sleeping accommodation and washing/toilet facilities, the garden buildings for storage and a new building for a larger kitchen and common room (the latter being available for additional mattresses in the busiest periods). The proposed new layout was shown in the centre pages of the March newsletter.

### The Infrastructure

As the existing house was built for the parish priest, the increased usage by many pilgrims has put extra strain on the infrastructure and services. If the above plan goes ahead much of this work, such as wiring and pipes, will be replaced by the new facilities.

### The Consents

Progress has been slow in recent months because we are unable to proceed any further until we have received permission from the Diocese of Lugo which owns the building. This involves a meeting with the recently appointed Bishop of Lugo and a meeting has now been scheduled for later in June. Approval would allow us to then apply for planning consent from the local Xunta.

### The Budget

A new building will involve a significantly higher price than was thought when the appeal was first launched in 2005. The trustees therefore held a special meeting in January to consider the project and decided to proceed to the next stage which will enable us to clarify the financial position. It is not practical to implement the above plan except in its entirety and therefore the trustees consider that all the required funds should be in place before the work starts. The alternative would be to repair the infrastructure.

## \*\*\* *The Miraz Appeal* \*\*\*

History - In May 2005, the Bishop of Lugo gave us use of the *Casa Rectoral* (priest's house) in the village of Miraz in Galicia, to provide a pilgrim *refugio*. Whilst structurally sound, the building needed to be renovated, equipped and perhaps extended, if pilgrim numbers justified it. We originally aimed to raise £100,000 to cover both these and future running and maintenance costs.



## \*\*\* *Winter in Miraz* \*\*\*

*from Bob Mullen, a winter caretaker*

On arrival in Miraz. Jesús, the *sacristán* of the church, appeared to greet me looking fit and healthy, apparently recovered from his respiratory problems of the year before. My first meal at the refuge was thus a tortilla made from half a dozen eggs laid by his (freely ranging) chickens.

Amongst the first pilgrims to appear was a researcher for the German "Yellow Guide." If the three portions of *Caldo Gallego* that he put away in the evening are any guide, we should be getting a good review.

The death knell was tolled at the church one day, every hour on the hour, to mark the demise of a villager. The man was well into his nineties and an uncle of Pilar's - the woman who runs the bar. It wasn't so much that he had died, Pilar says afterwards, but simply that he was finished, *acabado*.

Better news from the Bar Miraz is that the moronic chat show, "*A Tu Lado*" to which evening drinkers were previously submitted, has been replaced by "*Marina*," a Mexican soap opera in which it is often possible to understand the Spanish, as only one person speaks at a time.

Having been requested to look into planting *grellos* (turnip tops,) I duly consulted the clientele in the bar and was told that the time for this was "*con la luna nueva de agosto*," at the new moon in August. (August *hospitaleros* take note.)

Just about everyone in the village is *pachucho*, under the weather, owing to the great variation in the daily temperatures. Regular midday temperatures have been in the 20's, dropping some 25 degrees by the middle of the night.

*Martes de Carnival*, Pancake Tuesday, brought a visit from Judith and Florentino, who look after the *albergue* in Corcubión. Judith appeared with a thermos of batter for making *crepas* and Florentino with an *empanada* which was put atop the woodstove to reheat. The host thus provided only a salad and a bottle of chilled Albariño.

The gift made to the village by the Confraternity has been used to buy a conference table, five chairs, two heaters, and a clock for the Centro Social. The village treasurer, María Carmon, in order to assure that every penny was duly spent, also secured a wire waste basket, two wire pencil holders, and half a dozen ballpoint pens.

A fortunate error: having had to return to the bar to pick up something which I left behind on the counter, I was told by Pilar that Gallegos would say about this, "*El que no tiene cabeza, tiene pies*." Which I take to mean that he who doesn't use his head has more need of his feet. And which, if I had used my head, I would never have learned.

This winter in Galicia ended for me as it began, with a storm at sea. Waves said to be eight metres high lashed the shore at La Coruña, destroying part of the *Paseo Marítimo*, ripping out lampposts, and tossing cars about as though they were toys, as can be verified on YouTube. And so, in Galicia as elsewhere, winter struck a few last blows before giving way to spring.

(For a fuller version of Bob's report, please go to <http://www.csj.org.uk/miraz-intro.htm>)



# *¡Que aproveche!*

Recipes from Spain



**Confraternity of Saint James**



**\*\*\* Just Published! \*\*\***

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& Shellfish, Chicken, Beef, Lamb, Pork, Ham & Sausage, Puddings & Cakes.  
And a few Miscellaneous surprises too!  
With food quotations.

~~~~~

Here's a taster:-

***Macaroni with Bacon & Tomato Sauce***

**Ingredients:** 250 g / 8 oz macaroni  
100 g / 2 oz bacon, cut in pieces  
100 g / 2 oz chorizo, cut in pieces  
1 onion, chopped  
0.25 L / 9 fl.oz tomato puree  
100 g / 2 oz cheese, grated  
olive oil  
seasoning

**Method:**

*Cook the macaroni in plenty of boiling water with a tsp. olive oil and seasoning.  
In a pan soften the chopped onion, bacon and chorizo.  
Add the tomato puree and cook for several minutes.  
Mix in the macaroni and put it all in an oven serving dish.  
Sprinkle with grated cheese and put back in the oven for 2 minutes.  
Serve.*

**Serves:** 4-6

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Our grateful thanks to all those members who sent in their contributions and comments,  
to James Hatts for his creative presentation skills, and last but not least, to Maureen  
and Keith Young for the many hours they spent sorting, planning, typing and putting it  
all together.

**Cost:** £6.50 plus p&p

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



### *\*\*\* How you can help the Appeal \*\*\**

*\* What events would you like to see?\**

*\*Please send us your ideas\**

*\*Would you enjoy meeting other new and returned pilgrims?\**

How? - by organising a local gathering

Why? - to exchange your experiences or pass on advice to those who are still only thinking about going to Santiago.

Where? - a local pub, restaurant, your home

What about Food? - supplied by venue or ask everyone to bring a dish with them

Who? - local members. Just send us the details of your event and we will circulate members in your area.

Cost? - up to you depending on your choice of venue. Plus, hopefully, a donation towards the Miraz Appeal.

### *\*Current Offers\**

**¡Que Aproveche!**

See pages 4 & 5 for details of details of the new Miraz Spanish recipe book.

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

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

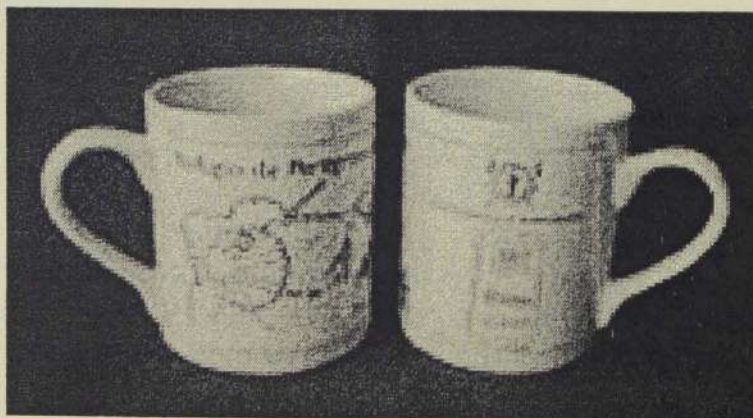
£6.50 per copy to Miraz. Order from the office or online bookshop £12.99 + p&p (UK-£1.21, Eu-£2.10, ROW £3.95)

### **Miraz Mugs**

Available from the office or the online bookshop at

[www.csj.org.uk](http://www.csj.org.uk)

£5 + p&p (UK-£1.50, EU-£2, ROW-£3.50)





### \*\*\* *Sponsor-a-Week* \*\*\*

This scheme was introduced in the early days of Refugio Gaucelmo to allow pilgrims to support and keep in touch with events in Rabanal by sponsoring-a-week for £50 (or £25 if you share with a friend), When we opened Miraz, the scheme was extended. The extra funds help provide for any major works that need to be carried out over and above the usual running costs, which are met from the pilgrims' *donativos*. You will receive a letter from the *hospitaleros* telling you the pilgrim news for your week, and know that you are helping pilgrims too. *Please use the form on page 8, or contact Alison Thorp email: [alison.thorp@virgin.net](mailto:alison.thorp@virgin.net) or Tel: +44 - (0)1372-274398 for more details.*

### \*\*\* *Thank You* \*\*\*

We are equally grateful for ALL donations, of every size and kind. People have found many ways to contribute e.g, by giving lecture fees, showing films, donating in memory of members who have died, making pendants, selling artwork and also simply making a donation. Even the smallest amounts quickly add up to a considerable sum and have made a big difference to the current amazing total of almost £78,000. Our thanks also go to members of the Canadian Company of Pilgrims who have made considerable contributions to the appeal.

*Thank you so much to everyone for your very generous support.*

### \*\*\* *Miraz Contacts* \*\*\*

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

Co-ordinator	- Colin Jones	- <a href="mailto:pacharan@btinternet.com">pacharan@btinternet.com</a>
Fundraising / Newsletter	- Alison Thorp	- <a href="mailto:alison.thorp@virgin.net">alison.thorp@virgin.net</a>
Operations/ <i>Hospitaleros</i>	- Alan Cutbush	- <a href="mailto:alan@cutbush35.fsnet.co.uk">alan@cutbush35.fsnet.co.uk</a>
Property	- Peter FitzGerald	- <a href="mailto:peter_of_chichester@tiscali.co.uk">peter_of_chichester@tiscali.co.uk</a>

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