



Confraternity of Saint James

Bulletin



September 2007

No 99

About the *Bulletin*

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Editorial

Gosia Brykczynska

It is not warm in London as I settle down to edit this September *Bulletin* and write my editorial, but I have had my fill of hot - possibly too hot - sunshine this summer and some of that heat was experienced in Rabanal. There was heat from the sun, and no-one can dispute that, but there was also heat from lively discussions and street dancing, heat from over a hundred warm hearts celebrating at Rabanal the Feast of St James and finally heat from sixty lit candles on an enormous birthday cake.

Meanwhile, at Gaucelmo itself I suppose I should not have been surprised to encounter a Polish St James hanging from the wall of the *refugio*. The small circular tile representing the coat of arms of the town of Olsztyn in the north east of Poland did however catch my interest (see



photograph) and with the CSJ secretary, Marion Marples we proceeded immediately to have our photographs taken along side it. This encounter with a Polish Santiago was taken as proof - if such was required - that the forthcoming CSJ trip to Poland (including the city of Olsztyn) in search of St James and in order to meet some Polish members of associations dedicated to St James had the approval of the apostle himself. I felt at home and at ease immediately. You must understand that the last time I *passed* through Rabanal was in September of 1981 and I had not revisited the village since then. In fact I had no memory of the village to recall. But my trip to Rabanal in 2007 to celebrate the 100,000th pilgrim staying at Gaucelmo had many exciting and unusual elements, and will be remembered for a long time. An account by Doreen Hansen of the entire visit and Rabanal celebrations can be read on the CSJ website with accompanying pictures or in a shortened version in this *Bulletin*.

Meanwhile, this summer I have already experienced three "pilgrimages"; each different but each united by the presence of St James. As part of celebrating the feast of St James, together with my brother and a group of CSJ members, I walked the few kilometres to the

Cruz de Ferro, and there placed my rejected burdens on the ever rising pile of debris. Initially I was amazed to see so much discarded flotsam – but then I realised that that is precisely what we should be throwing away and leaving behind...rubbish. The rubbish we have collected through our lives. For me – rubbish from the last sixty years; but it was a smallish stone I eventually placed under the post, as I like to think that I have collected many things of great joy and value to me during that time and not rubbish and I did not wish to discard them after all.

The second pilgrimage I experienced was to Auschwitz, where I went two weeks later to celebrate the feast of St Teresa Benedicta of the Cross – Edith Stein, who was killed in that camp on 9 August 1942. Edith Stein was declared co-patron of Europe by the late Pope, adding an interesting dimension to the theology of the camino which itself has been declared by UNESCO as a unifying force in contemporary Europe – a cultural heritage of Europe. The pilgrimage I undertook was around the perimeter of that vast concentration camp of Birkenau (Auschwitz II) and with other pilgrims I participated in a life-affirming *Way of the Cross*. It was one of the more moving spiritual exercises that I have undertaken. Throughout all, in gruelling heat and in spite of the shocking historicity of the place, I was accompanied by St James. One of the young Italian pilgrims I met there had just come back from Santiago and was wearing a camino T-shirt (the bright yellow arrow on the dark blue background). I also encountered a delightful parish priest – Bernard Höckelsberger from Bad Bergzabern, the small German resort town where Edith Stein was baptised. Father Bernard informed me that the town is also a stop on the *Pfälzer Jakobswege*, and that the town boasts a statue of St James! He invites members of the CSJ to visit his parish.

The third pilgrimage which I undertook was at the invitation of CSJ member, Peter FitzGerald from Chichester. There, on the feast of St Roch we climbed together St Roche's Hill - or The Trundle - and celebrated (in freezing weather) an ecumenical service in honour of the pilgrim saint. This is a local Sussex tradition stemming from the 700th anniversary celebrations of the saint's birth in 1995. Even there, on the wind-swept hill, St James was silently walking alongside us. The homily was exhorting us to be humble and not to be demanding of immediate rewards and recognition – like St Roch. This I thought was sound advice for anyone contemplating the duties of a *hospitalero*, and you can read invitations to become just such *hospitaleros* in this Bulletin. Three events in three different countries but all beautifully connected.

So it is that some pilgrimages in our life we chose to undertake ourselves and we plan them ahead and feel in control of events – as with my forthcoming conclusion of the Arles Route from Toulouse to Oloron-Sainte-Marie. Other pilgrimages we have to undertake whether we desire to or not; they are thrust upon us. All these thoughts and more are nicely brought out in the second part of Robert Gussman's article on the spirituality of the pilgrimage.

Also in this *Bulletin* is a short piece by Vincent Kelly about the cult of St Roch in Spain, with a heady moral tale for all to remember. There has been in fact quite a flurry of correspondence concerning the pilgrims' saint, since the publication of his biography in *Bulletin No 98* - see the Members' Page. Meanwhile, Stuart Frost, a curator at the Victoria & Albert Museum in London and CSJ member, has written a fascinating account of the history behind the famous cast of the Pórtico de la Gloria located within that museum – a good place to retreat to on damp and cold January days, to recall once again fond memories of that other site in warmer climes - Santiago Cathedral. And while we are thinking of history and matters historical Vincent Cowley relates the story of an interesting battle which took place a long time ago along one of the present-day quieter stretches of the camino. I will leave the last word however to David Cruickshank, who in his poem gently reminds God (and us) that our land has had its fill of rain this summer, and that it is hard to walk on pilgrimage in the pouring rain! Indeed, some CSJ members have interesting tales to tell concerning this year's inclement weather (here in the UK) but we can find out more about those adventures during the CSJ's AGM 25th anniversary party in mid-January. Meanwhile, David concedes that -

*" ...of course I don't complain
About today's incessant rain,
'Deed found it left me quite inspired
When wading through Your pools, boots mired,
I merest pilgrim, humble James,
Who tries to walk with purest aims,
Enraptured by the mud I've found
Whilst, westwards, Santiago-bound..."*

What I would like to know however, is how did it ever come out that I treated myself to a pair of brightly coloured Wellingtons for my birthday? Are there are no secrets from St James?

More about San Roque

Vincent Kelly

Further to *Bulletin* 98 and Gosia Brykczynska's article on the ubiquitous San Roque (Roch, Rocco) there is the incident reported in the history of the enormous and famous (or infamous) Rio Tinto mines which were British owned and operated from 1873 until the mid-1950s, when the effective control of the company passed out of English hands. (Is there any one reading this who does not know that they are situated in the south-west of Spain near Huelva?)

Although Santa Barbara was, and still is, the patron saint of miners, the controller of the mines on behalf of the Spanish government, one Francisco Tomás Sanz built a private chapel which he dedicated to San Roque in the *pueblo* of la Mina in about 1760. Note that, because of the very nature of these massive open-cast workings, villages were often relocated or they even disappeared, or names were switched, so placing them on a current map can be difficult, if not impossible. In this chapel Sanz installed the statue of San Roque and, in its turn, it was removed to the village of El Valle and still later to the church of Santa Barbara in Rio Tinto.

In 1830 the south of Spain was devastated by a plague but the Rio Tinto area was saved after the inhabitants had petitioned San Roque. Naturally, from then on, the feast of San Roque was celebrated (the first Sunday in November – in Spain) with typically Spanish fervour and that involved a day of feasting and carousing until the evening came when the statue of San Roque, as well as that of Our Lady of the Rosary, were removed from the church and processed through the village streets.

In 1836 a new parish priest, Carlos María González was appointed to replace the priest who had operated under the old system of chaplaincies that had existed for such small communities. He immediately caused problems by his personal behaviour and the records are full of reports made by the villagers to the Archbishop in Huelva and by the mines management to the civil governor in the same town. He was obviously an autocrat who did not readily co-operate with other people of authority in his area and interfered in

all aspects of village life, ecclesiastical or otherwise

He immediately raised strong objection to the annual celebration of San Roque's feast-day because of what he considered to be the improper and unacceptable behaviour of the villagers. He thus decided to ban the usual public procession and would not listen to any objections. This caused great consternation, but he had his way. However, in order not to inflame the passions too much he relented to the extent that he very briefly and early in the morning after first Mass on the feast day took the statues into the street for a few moments and then promptly returned them to the church and locked the doors. All of this was done without prior notice and in the presence of only a handful of parishioners.

After the normal festivities that afternoon, and well fortified by alcohol, the villagers decided to take matters into their own hands, so they forcefully broke into the church and had their procession despite the ban. Strong protestations were made by both sides to the Archbishop in Huelva and there were heated exchanges between the bishop's office, the mine superintendent, the civil authorities and anybody else who wanted to join in. Each accused the others of not exercising proper authority in their respective areas of influence. These bitter exchanges continued for two years before González eventually left the scene.

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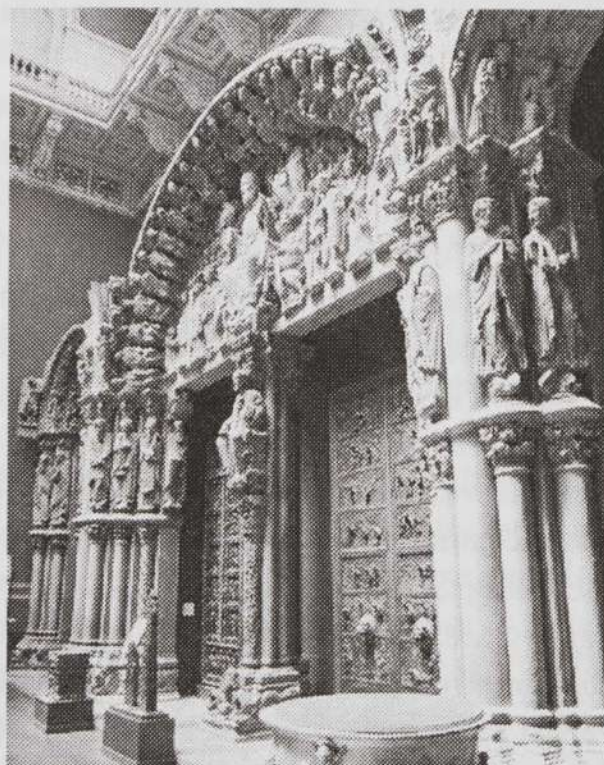
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South Kensington's Pórtico de la Gloria

A Masterpiece for all Time

Stuart Frost

The Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela is a magnificent building. Many photographs have been taken of it but no matter how talented the photographer none can truly recapture the thrilling impact of the first glimpse of the Obradoiro façade upon entering the square from which it soars. This magnificent façade is undoubtedly an extraordinary example of Baroque architecture. Stepping through the doorways in this western façade into the main body of the cathedral the pilgrim is



Plaster cast of the Portico de la Gloria, 1866; Plaster cast; Museum no. REPRO.1866-50.

greeted with a wonderful long vista that extends eastwards towards the shrine of St James. Before entering the nave proper the visitor must pass beneath one of the three round arches of the medieval Pórtico de la Gloria. The richness, beauty and complexity of the sculpture of the Pórtico, completed in 1188, cannot fail to impress the viewer. The Pórtico is so profusely adorned with figures that it is impossible to absorb the detail quickly. Like all great works of art the sculpture of the Pórtico de la Gloria rewards sustained and repeated viewing.

The sheer scale of the Pórtico gives it a tremendous presence and monumentality. The shape of the Pórtico, with its three arches, is reminiscent of Roman triumphal arches like the Arch of Constantine in Rome. The Pórtico is adorned with a stunning programme of sculpture of figures, fantastic beasts and foliage that are intended

to communicate to the viewer the triumph of Jesus over death and the ultimate victory of good over evil. The largest, and most central, figure is that of Jesus. He is depicted on the tympanum of the large central portal seated on a throne, showing the palms of his hands to the viewer. He has a crossed halo behind his head and wears a crown. This figure is almost two-and-a-half metres tall. The four evangelists surround him; Matthew, Mark, Luke and John are depicted with their attributes. Then there are a number of angels who hold objects related to the crucifixion of Jesus. For example two angels hold the cross on which Jesus died. The sculptor has shown that Christ has overcome death.

The outer curve of the central arch carries twenty-four seated figures each of whom wears a crown and holds a musical instrument. These sculptures represent the twenty-four elders of the Apocalypse described in the *Book of Revelation* : “And around the throne were four and twenty seats: and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold” (Rev 4:4). The tympanum is supported by a central column (or *trumeau*) and four columns to the left and four to the right, each column with a carved standing figure. The figures to the left represent Old Testament prophets: those to the right New Testament figures including St John the Evangelist who holds his book open. These figures are literally in this instance the pillars of the Church. The *trumeau* in the centre of this main portal – below the central figure of Christ - is adorned with a seated figure. This is the figure of St James whose shrine is, of course, contained within the cathedral. Beneath all of these columns and figures are a number of fantastic beasts and creatures which look as though they are literally being crushed by the weight of the cathedral.

Other parts of the programme were intended to remind those looking at them that they would be judged. For example the smaller arch to the right is decorated with scenes related to the Last Judgement. On the left-hand side of the archivolt winged angels are raising the souls of those who have been saved upwards towards salvation. On the right-hand side sinners are tormented and punished by demons. All the sculptures carry a warning that they are also optimistic: salvation and eternal life are the reward for good Christians who live their lives according to the rules of the Church.

Whilst there is no real substitute for visiting the Pórtico in Santiago, and spending time there exploring its beauty and meaning,

the Victoria & Albert Museum, located in South Kensington, is fortunate to possess a life-size plaster copy of the Pórtico.¹ This was created in 1866 when casts were taken from the original by a team of specialists commissioned by the Director of the South Kensington Museum (as the V&A was then known). Its presence in the capital means that those who have seen the original in Santiago, and who are able to travel into London, can refresh their memories and renew their acquaintance with Master Mateo's masterpiece. Nor is the Pórtico the only connection with Santiago de Compostela at the V&A or the only incentive for those with an interest in St James to make a different sort of pilgrimage to SW7. In addition to commissioning the copy of the Pórtico de la Gloria the Director sent the museum photographer, Charles Thurston Thompson, to Santiago de Compostela to take a series of photographs of the Portico. These photographs were once displayed alongside the cast.

The V&A's Pórtico de la Gloria is currently on display in the Cast Courts at the V&A. These two hall-like rooms contain what are undoubtedly one of the most extraordinary museum displays anywhere in the world. The two cavernous spaces are filled with copies of some of Europe's greatest medieval and Renaissance art works. These are mainly reproductions in plaster but there are also some electrotypes. A plaster-cast copy of Trajan's column dominates the central area of the court that contains the Pórtico de la Gloria. The extraordinary impact of the column is magnified because it has been installed in two sections in order to fit beneath the roof. The current displays in the Cast Courts date from 1982 but the casts and electrotypes largely date from the nineteenth century. The collections were gradually assembled to provide artists, designers and students with an opportunity to study great artworks that were otherwise difficult to see. Some casts were acquired as gifts, others were purchased from commercial companies that supplied copies of artworks and occasionally some were commissioned by the museum. Casts were relatively common in nineteenth century museums, but as they fell out of favour from the early twentieth century onwards many were destroyed.

The Pórtico is now acknowledged as one of the great works of art of any time and place, but this hasn't always been so. Before 1865 detailed accounts of the Pórtico were not available. The displaying of the plaster cast copy of the Pórtico at the South Kensington museum played an important role in raising awareness of this great work.

Whereas a sculpture like Michelangelo's *David* has long been admired and appreciated, the Pórtico for many centuries languished in relative obscurity. The construction of the western Baroque façade of the cathedral of Santiago de Compostela arguably gives some indication of the regard in which the Pórtico and the work of Master Mateo's workshop were held in the eighteenth century. This Baroque phase of building destroyed the most western part of the Romanesque façade and involved the removal and relocation of a substantial part of Master Mateo's work.

The photographs of the Pórtico de Gloria taken by Charles Thurston Thompson were published in a single large format volume in 1868. This book features twenty wonderful plates.² This volume's brief introduction provides an overview of the history of the pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela during which the author refers to 'the diminished stream of pilgrimage'. To anyone who has walked the pilgrim route, or visited Galicia, some of the author's other statements may seem rather extraordinary. The pilgrimage is described as a long and difficult journey "to the most remote and least attractive district of barren Spain". In the 1860s the journey to Santiago was undoubtedly rather more difficult to follow than today. However one suspects that the author, who wisely remained anonymous, must have had an exceptionally unpleasant experience to describe the landscape in such caustic terms. The author also describes local traditions then associated with the cathedral. He recounts that 'peasants', before entering the cathedral nave, 'lean upon a particular part of the columns, and throw sand into the gaping mouths of the monsters which support its base'. He offers no explanation for this ritual other than casual imitation over time.

The plates have a beautiful and evocative quality. The first image provides a general view of the exterior of the cathedral and adjoining buildings. The second shows the west front of the cathedral.³ The majority of the remaining plates feature details of the Pórtico de la Gloria. Some of the details were impossible to take from the original due to the limitations of the photographic lens of the time. Therefore the plates that show the details of the tympanum and the archivolt of the central doorway were taken from the cast as it was erected on the South Kensington site. The plates are accompanied by simple captions: there is no detailed descriptive text or interpretation. The volume containing the photographs can be viewed in the Print Room and

the National Art Library at the V&A. One of the photographs can be accessed via the V&A's Collections Online database at <http://images.vam.ac.uk>.

The making of the cast is an extraordinary story. In September 1865 John Charles Robinson, a curator of the South Kensington museum, visited Santiago on a tour of Spain to purchase Spanish sculpture and art for the collections. Robinson persuaded the Museum Director that the Pórtico should be photographed and a cast made for the museum if at all possible. In his letter his enthusiasm for the Pórtico was unequivocal. He wrote: 'I have no hesitation in stating that I consider it ...the most important monument...of its epoch'. He placed it on a par with the Sistine Chapel and declared it to be a 'masterpiece for all time'. It is fortunate for future generations of visitors to the V&A that the Director agreed. Domenico Brucciani visited the Cathedral to meet Robinson and to make a technical report about how the work would be done, and to obtain permission from the Cathedral Chapter for the work.

The team assembled by Domenico Brucciani to take the cast left London in 1866. His letters provide a remarkable insight into the journey that began on 2 July 1866 and which was expected to last six days. The boat clashed with a barge whilst leaving the pier and once out at sea heavy seas and a gale forced the captain to put in at Portland for a few days. There was a fire onboard whilst the ship was in the Bay of Biscay. Upon reaching harbour the team were greeted by the booming of a gun, followed by notification that the ship was to be quarantined at Vigo for ten days. The team were confined in 'a locality that defies description in abounding with loathsomeness and wretchedness', a 'den of defilement' where they were 'compelled to herd in with some of the worst specimens of humanity ...the eye ever had the misfortune to look upon'. Periodically the men were subjected to a fumigation process. Once the ten days were up Brucciani decided to travel overland, rather than to continue to travel by sea with their materials. Even then, there were to be further troubles. The authorities at the point of embarkation feared that the plaster of Paris was actually a combustible material and refused to allow it to be unloaded until some analysis had taken place. This delayed the team by a further two days. The team, and their equipment, finally arrived in Santiago on 27 July, almost twenty days later than anticipated.

Domenico Brucciani introduced himself to the Dean of the cathedral and was keen to get work under way as soon as possible.

However subsequent to the initial approval that had been granted the cathedral's architect, who was due to supervise the work, had died and therefore permission to take the cast was refused. Brucciani arranged a meeting with the Archbishop who was very supportive and was reported to have said: 'Because one man is dead, have we no other to take his place? It will be an insult to Great Britain to allow you to return without the copy of the Gloria.' In a few days official permission was forthcoming and work could finally proceed. Even then, Brucciani complained of interference once work had begun, which 'greatly retarded the work'. He further explained that: 'I was daily visited by the population of Santiago..... They had got a notion into their heads that I should either destroy or injure their beautiful Gloria and it was not until some of the models were taken from the moulds already completed that they were satisfied'. In order to address these concerns the team decided to make an exhibition of their work and an advertisement was issued:

13 October 1866 By permission of His Grace, the Archbishop and the Canons of the Cathedral of Santiago the Public will be admitted to view the copy of the Gloria on this day from 10.30-3.30.

[Signed] D Brucciani.

Numerous portions of the cast were placed around the cathedral forming a small gallery of art. During the five hours Brucciani estimated that no less than 7,000 people passed through the cathedral to inspect the work. All that then remained was to pack and transport the sections to Corruna, and then ship them back to England. This all seems to have progressed smoothly. Perhaps not unsurprisingly the team decided to travel back overland to keep the time spent at sea to a minimum. Given all of these problems the presence of the cast in the V&A over a hundred years later is something of a triumph. Sections of the Pórtico were cast and shipped back to the museum where they were assembled and displayed with Charles Thurston Thompson's photographs.

The South Kensington connection with St James and Santiago de Compostela doesn't end with the cast of the Pórtico de la Gloria and Thurston Thompson's photographs. There are many beautiful and important representations of St James within the V&A's collections and other objects which relate to the pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela. For example there are several examples of artefacts that feature representations of the scallop shell, commonly worn by pilgrims who had been to Santiago de Compostela. A painted figure of

St James, dated 1360-1390 from north Germany holds a scallop shell in his left hand (Museum No 4845-1856). The sculpture was once part of an altarpiece from the Johanneskirche in Lüneburg, Germany and is testament to the popularity of St James throughout Europe at this date. An alabaster tomb effigy from Toledo of Don García de Osorio (died after 1502) provides another good example (Museum No A.48-1910). He wears a scallop shell on his hat. In this instance the shell indicates that Don García was a member of the Order of Santiago. His is also shown wearing the mantle of the Order. Unfortunately this effigy is not currently on display, but an image is freely available on the V&A's online database, as are images of several other objects with a strong connection to St James and Santiago de Compostela. The effigy will be included in the new Medieval and Renaissance Europe 300-1600 galleries at the V&A which are due to open in the winter of 2009.

Whilst these objects are all worthy of attention and contemplation there is no doubt in my mind that the plaster-cast copy of the Pórtico de la Gloria is the greatest treasure in the V&A's collections associated with Santiago de Compostela. The Pórtico was intended to communicate messages of fundamental importance to pilgrims and other viewers of its programme of sculpture. The Pórtico represents one of the greatest works of sculpture of any period or culture and the presence of the cast at the V&A has helped bring awareness of this great work of art to a much wider audience. The fact that it is placed alongside other great works of art at the V&A only underlines how magnificent it is, and how lucky we are to have a piece of Santiago de Compostela in London.

Select Bibliography and Online Resources

To explore the V&A's collection online for objects which relate to St James and Santiago de Compostela please visit <http://images.vam.ac.uk>

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Endnotes

1. The Museum number for the cast is REPRO.1866-50.
2. 'The Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela in Spain: showing especially the sculpture of the Pórtico de la Gloria by Master Mateo. A series of twenty photographs recently taken by the late Mr Thurston Thompson. The National Art Library pressmark for this volume is 108.D.64
3. The later plate can be viewed online at <http://images.vam.ac.uk>

!Ultreia!

An exploration of the soul of pilgrimage

Continued from Bulletin 98

Robert Gussman

I am The Way

Most pilgrimages focus on the destination; the Way of St James is a pilgrimage on which the journey itself is every bit as important, if not more so, than the goal. If it were otherwise why would so many people still choose to make the journey under their own steam, when modern forms of transport make it far easier, quicker and probably cheaper? The daily accumulation of experiences, quite apart from the host of delightful places along the route, makes the Santiago pilgrimage a very special education in itself. If that sounds as though I am trying to turn pilgrimage into a kind of school exercise, it is worth noting that the origins of the word 'learn' are to be found in a root which means 'to follow a track'. Because the thousand mile journey is so long and slow, there is time and space for it to teach us many lessons, and to make a particularly powerful impact. In fact it reverses subject and object so that, instead of the pilgrim making the pilgrimage, it is the pilgrimage that makes the pilgrim, moulding and shaping her or him with a new outlook. The previous three themes discussed earlier could easily be re-titled Faith, Hope and Love, to match the great three gifts of the Spirit that St Paul celebrates in his famous Hymn in 1 Corinthians 13.

But there is a further process at work. Self-forgetting, listening, reflecting, loving - all these start to allow a new encounter that is literally personal. As you proceed, you find you are walking with Christ, growing in his character, moulded according to his image. How might we describe this new personality? It includes a simplicity of heart, an openness to others and the world, the spirit of forgiveness that readily lets go of the past and has no time for bearing grudges, a life that bears with fortitude the little irritations and physical discomforts of the pilgrimage, for the sake of the greater goal.

But it is a very gradual process. On our fourth afternoon out from Le Puy, we met a fisherman in the woods who asked "Where we were going?" I replied, "A St Jacques de Compostelle." "I don't think you'll

make it today” was his response! Then Tom asked me, if I saw a sign that said 3km to Santiago, would I be pleased? No! We need time, space, to let go, to strip away, to absorb, to change – pilgrimage, like life, should not be hurried.

Following the Way always meant stepping in the prints that others had already left, never along an untrodden route, and though it may not be the whole world that takes the path to Compostela, we were very conscious that we were simply travelling where hundreds of thousands have gone before, and in this we were following not merely the physical journey but no doubt also the spiritual path too. In Cajarc, a fellow pilgrim who had already experienced the camino in Spain advised that once we crossed the Pyrenees we would find it a much more obviously spiritual journey: more intense, more clearly dominated by the goal. But even in France we had a sense of spiritual growth, of spiritual discovery. Already the Way, *le Chemin de St Jacques*, meant so much more than just the path we followed. It is actually an encounter with the Spirit of God, and with Christ.

So, there was something not entirely strange or surprising to find a stark grey stone cross high up on the *Route Napoléon* over the Pyrenees, standing remote and far from anything else, that bore the inscription “*Ni nais bidea*” – the Basque words from the Gospel meaning “I am the Way”. Jesus Christ is the Way; and we were finding that the Way is Christ. So when we came face to face with the sculptured stone of Christ in Glory on the tympanum above the doors at the west end of the cathedral in Santiago, or elsewhere, we felt we were meeting an old friend, the one who had been accompanying us all along, as our guide and as our goal.

As we got nearer to our destination, I was expecting to feel perhaps a note of sadness or nostalgia that soon our journey would be over. But instead I experienced a deep sense of rich satisfaction, like the feeling you have at the end of a particularly satisfying meal. Life felt complete; we were full – filled up with joy, with heaven.

Opening up

The hardest questions in life concern our identity and our longings: who are you, what do you really want? They probe and delve into our innermost self, and an honest answer requires that we break through the outer, surface layer of our daily life with all its distractions, to uncover the more enduring, more important essence. The spiritual journey is one that takes us into that inner place, to what we call the

heart. But it is a fundamental insight in most world religions, some more than others, that we cannot entirely dispense with the physical exterior world: in fact most often the material is the vehicle for the spiritual, and for those who have eyes to see, it is the physical that reveals the spiritual, the material that delivers the eternal.

In the Christian tradition, we are familiar with the notion of the Sacrament, the outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace. I came to find the Pilgrimage working for me as a Sacrament, revealing God and his purposes.

Initially my motives for making the pilgrimage grew out of a fascination with the trail of twelfth-century Romanesque sculpture and architecture that spread across France and along the *Camino Francés* to Santiago. I was excited at the prospect of exploring the various churches and monuments along the route. And they were glorious. Particularly memorable were the abbey church at Conques, the porch to the great abbey church at Moissac, the funerary church at Eunate and the cathedral at Santiago de Compostela. But I found that, wonderful as such cultural feasts were, they soon slipped to a far less important place in my mind. On reaching Santiago, I reported to the office of the cathedral to have my pilgrim passport examined and to receive my certificate, the *compostela*. When I came to give my reason for making the pilgrimage, I had no hesitation in placing 'religious' as the primary motive, not cultural or artistic.

Gently but insistently, the camino gets to work on all who travel along it, breaking through the outer layer of our old selves, patiently dissolving the surface ways of thinking, to draw out a deeper, and ultimately a more worthwhile being.

Often the sheer physical rigour of the pilgrimage brings this breakthrough about: the relentless demands of keeping going, whatever the weather, whatever the terrain. I remember particularly the day we opted to take the old *Calzada de los Peregrinos* between Sahagún and Mansilla de las Mulas, in preference to the more southerly route via El Burgo Ranero, called the *Real Camino Francés*. That day we walked some twenty-five miles, under unrelenting hot sun. Fifteen miles of it were along the ancient Roman road, the *Via Traiana*, where there is neither house, nor shade nor tap, but dead-straight, flat track, flanked by fields of stubble as far as the eye could see. No one else came with us along this route. We met no one until we reached Mansilla. Here was the Open Road with a vengeance; no physical comforts, nor entertaining distractions to avoid facing the inner self; the rallying

song '¡Ultreia!' had become an order: keep going, or collapse! No sign of charming medieval sculpture, not even a wooden hut to lean against in its shade. That was a day to savour the grandeur of the camino and its power in all its austere purity.

We began to understand why perhaps priests like Abbé Ihidoy back in Navarrenx, or Don José Ignacio Díaz in Grañon, invest so much of their ministry in the welcome they offer to the pilgrims passing through: for the pilgrimage is a remarkably powerful opportunity for bringing people to reflect more deeply about what our life is for, and the values by which we live. It is infinitely worthwhile encouraging and enabling those who are engaged in following the way of St James to press on and find this out for themselves. There is no need for overt preaching, but simply for making space for people to make the connection, seeing how Christian faith can give order and substance to those fleeting glimpses of the spiritual.

For those used to traditional Christian worship, there is ample provision along the way to offer prayer and share in the liturgical celebrations of each local community. Many of the churches we entered had been built specifically to cater for the huge numbers of pilgrims passing by in the Middle Ages. Some of them already were or became centres of pilgrimage in their own right, recognising the material benefits that a local community would reap from encouraging visitors. Not a few became known for instances of the miraculous, such as Santo Domingo de la Calzada, or particularly O Cebreiro. And it was to this latter place with its powerful Legend of the Blessed Sacrament that I looked forward with special eagerness.

To reach this tiny village, perched high on the mountain border of Galicia, the pilgrim on foot climbs steeply up heavy stoned paths through woods after meandering along the dusty valleys west of Villafranca del Bierzo. It is a long and demanding day's walking, and as we rounded the mountainside, along weather-beaten stone paths, bordered by gorse and bramble, we felt not just that we were coming into a new country, but that the village harboured a distinctly remote quality about it. Hardly more than twenty houses were huddled to the west of the ancient church, perched at the peak. It is here that legend records some wayfarer arriving late one dark wintry night long ago. As a devout Catholic he was keen to hear Mass said, and banged on the priest's door with his request. The priest was comfortably ensconced by his warm fireside and initially refused to budge. But the visitor was persistent. Eventually the priest gave in and with huffy reluctance

prepared to open up the church and make the altar ready, muttering something about not really believing all that nonsense about the sacrament anyway. But as the liturgy unfolded, and the priest lifted up the bread and wine at the moment of consecration, all his cynical lack of faith was utterly confounded as he saw in his hands the true flesh of Christ and His blood in the chalice.

In a small chapel to the south of the nave you can see today in a glass cabinet over the altar a simple chalice and paten, said to be those used at that miraculous celebration. On the wall stands an early polychrome figure of Our Lady who is reported to have nodded her head in affirmation at the moment the priest's faith in the sacrament was restored. As you enter the building, you feel drawn into an awareness of prayer and the power of faith. It is one of those 'thin places', where the veil between the worlds of matter and of the spirit is almost transparent. I stayed to hear mass, offered by a priest who celebrated in a deadpan manner; I would not have wanted it otherwise, and it seemed to be the most appropriate way. Spiritual truth will reveal itself without human effort or manipulation.

So the spiritual fruits of the pilgrimage slowly surfaced, opening us to fresh wonder at the glory of all God's gifts, to the love given and shared between men and women thrown together on the way, breaking down barriers of race and language, and lifting us into a new dimension of living, joy-filled, and expectant.

Humility

During the last few days before we finally reached Santiago, I began to wonder how our destination would measure up against the unexpected richness of the experience we had had on the journey so far. It would have to be a very special place. I knew in my heart that going to kneel at the shrine where the bones of St James are supposed to lie was not all that important for me, and certainly had never been the primary motive for the years of planning that had gone into preparing for this great venture. Yet as we approached, I felt a rising sense of excitement combined with a strong desire to be alone and not to hurry this last stage. We happened to walk the last few miles into the city with a group of Spanish, Italian, French, Belgian and German pilgrims. Coming into the great square at the west end of the cathedral, the Plaza del Obradoiro, tired, dusty and thirsty, I felt as though I was floating: could it be true that after all those months of walking, we were at last here?

A kind of numbing haze enveloped me. The Italians and Spaniards spontaneously fell on their knees and the tears of joy poured down their faces. Those of us from the more northern countries were all slower to express our emotions. We climbed up the monumental steps to the west door, entered and queued to take part in the rituals of the completed pilgrimage. Then I searched out a space to rest a while: in the north transept there is a large chapel reserved for silence. It was there, having sunk to my knees that I found emotional release, and at last the tears flowed freely. I felt a huge sense of joy and fulfilment, but equally a profound sense of being humbled before the grace and goodness of the God who had presided over the past three months, giving me strength and health for the journey. I was bowled over by how deeply I suddenly felt all this.

The next day we went to the cathedral for the midday Pilgrims' Mass, and were amazed by the sheer volume of people: standing room only for us all around the sanctuary, and the list of pilgrims and their starting places read out by the Dean at the beginning of the service seemed endless. Our sense of personal achievement may have been great, but we were soon aware that there was nothing unusual about what we had done. Each day we attended this service, made the more dramatic by the use of the monumental censer, the *botafumeiro*, at the end of Communion, and the numbers were the same. Suddenly we found ourselves alongside dozens of other pilgrims whom we had encountered singly along the way, and as if for the first time understood quite how many people take part in this venture. I learnt later that something in the region of a hundred thousand registered as having walked, cycled or ridden on horseback for a minimum of a hundred kilometres that year, 2000. Our sole material prize was the right to claim three free meals in the *Hostal de los Reyes Católicos*, arguably the oldest purpose-built hotel in the world, which stands in the big square at right angles to the west front of the Cathedral. We were not allowed to enjoy those meals, however, in the hotel's main restaurant, but down near the kitchens in a small room set aside for up to ten pilgrims at a time. As we made our way through its grand courtyards, we could not possibly attempt to dress up to the standards of this royal hotel. We were inescapably conscious of our scruffy appearance and status as pilgrims, a word whose Latin root denotes the alien, foreign stranger.

Some of us could not immediately relinquish the now long-accustomed momentum of the pilgrim and set out a day later, to

continue westwards as far as land stretched. It was the hardest part of the journey, and our bodies rebelled after the psychological climax of reaching Santiago had dried up our resources of energy. Tom in particular lost his temper for the one and only time during the whole journey, and throwing down his wooden stick, smashed it in sheer frustration on the road. Why, after having at last made it to Santiago, should we conceivably wish to walk any further? He certainly had a point. We took three days to get to Finisterre, and then spent the night at the last pilgrims' *refugio* in the village there. The next morning I was deputed to enquire of the young woman at the desk if there was any chance that we might stay for a second night. Perhaps I had caught her at a bad moment, but nothing could have prepared me for the savage onslaught of her response. This hostel was intended for proper pilgrims, she stated coldly, who are content to spend one night there and move on. To suggest we might want to spend a second night clearly betrayed the fact that we were little more than tourists and should accordingly seek accommodation in one of the local hotels. Smarting heavily from her attack, I was struck dumb. Clearly this was a final reminder of the humble status of the pilgrim who can expect no special favours, no matter how far he has come.

But there is a proper quality of humility that goes with the pilgrim. It is not so much a matter of putting up with short-term humiliations, still less any grovelling or apology for his or her shortcomings. It is, rather, implicit in so much of what has already been mentioned: the ability to be down to earth, (the word humility is derived from *humus*, the Latin for the soil) because we were living so close to the ground on which we walked, and also a readiness to let go our self-centredness and self-concern as we gazed out in wonder at the glories of the world around us. We had indeed learnt how to find so much joy in the simplest and smallest things.

Journey's end?

Although our continuation of the journey another ninety kilometres to Finisterre was not entirely easy, I believe that we, and even Tom, all agreed that it well repaid the effort. This rocky promontory juts out into the Atlantic and represents what was believed to be the most westerly point of land – literally the end of the world. Such an extension of the pilgrimage offered us a superb opportunity to wind down gradually and allow us to enjoy a quieter period after the last few days into Santiago which had become almost impossibly crowded.

We made this final stretch of our pilgrimage in company with just a handful of others – a Belgian, a Frenchman, a German and a Spaniard. Most of the time we walked separately, but sometimes we met up to eat and to share accommodation.

On the last day, we stopped for a mid-morning break, high up on the cattle drove across the mountains, with our first glimpse of the blue waters of the Atlantic miles over to the west. There was a deep sense of sadness that soon we would have no choice but to go back. The physical pilgrimage would surely be over. But the Spaniard, who had walked the camino several times before, encouraged us not to be downhearted. It is like the student, he said, who enjoys a relatively short period at university, although these three or four years are perhaps often the most exciting of his life; when the time comes to graduate and move on, inevitably there is sadness that those heady days are over, but nothing can take away all that he has experienced, and the most important thing is to go out and put what he has learnt into practice. So also, when the pilgrim reaches his destination, he must prepare to return home and apply all that he has learnt from the Way.

Of course there was a deep and natural sadness as we bade farewell to those we had shared so much with, whose friendship sustained us and whom we had grown to love. Since then, there have been opportunities to keep in touch with at least some, and even thinking of one another brings back so much of the powerful sense of joy that the whole pilgrimage offered. We all know that our lives have been immeasurably enriched by that experience, and hope that something of the joy will be carried with us for ever. Surveying the fruits of the pilgrimage helps to highlight what we may have learnt and can seek to apply in life from now on: a greater alertness to everything around us, the renewed appreciation of our personal relationships, living more simply so that there is room for the deeper things in life to shine through, looking forward in hope whatever may happen to us, and above all the sense that there is so much more to life than just the material things, and that there is one who holds us secure in his love.

There were several occasions during our ten weeks of pilgrimage when we took part in rituals that served to focus our attention and symbolise for us something of the significance of the moment. But there was none so powerful as our very last shared rite, which was a simple impromptu celebration of the Eucharist held on the rock beyond the lighthouse at Finisterre. Some of our companions had

discovered that I am ordained, and asked if I would celebrate for them at this special final moment. We bought bread, a bottle of wine and a small glass in the village. About a dozen of us gathered round the rock which served as an altar. As the sun gently sank into the ocean behind me, and using as the gospel reading, the triple questioning of Peter's love by Jesus and his call to look after his sheep in St John 21, 15-19, we gave thanks together, offering up all our experiences, focussed in Jesus Christ, the Way we had given ourselves to. We sang. We shared a slice of bread, such as we had eaten each day as our wayfarers' staple diet, now become for us the Body of Christ, and drank wine, often referred to along the route as 'the blood of the pilgrim', now become the blood of Christ. Through these spirit-bearing elements we came back to Him, who in various ways had called us, strengthened and guided us along the Way. We sensed that it was through Him that we had come together in love, and that now He was sending us on to live with the same strength and love. As I spoke of that love and of being released in the freedom of the Way to find the fullness of life, a flock of birds took off from the shore below. We felt that we were very close to the heart of it all.

Elements of the Camino

David Cruickshank

*Dear Lord, of course, I don't complain
About today's incessant rain,
'Deed found it left me quite inspired
When wading through Your pools, boots mired,
I merest pilgrim, humble James,
Who tries to walk with purest aims,
Enraptured by the mud I've found
Whilst, westwards, Santiago-bound.*

*Today, I'm lucky that I've seen
How You perceive the wider scene,
For rain, for sure, will let crops thrive,
So keeping Man and Beast alive
Through nurtured fields, now green and lush,
Close by Camino's soggy mush,
Whilst bloss'ning trees beside the fields
Now seem assured of splendid yields.*

*The cows and calves, contented, graze
As tactics by You me amaze,
Your daughter, Mother Nature, she,
Dispensing with kind bonhomie
Your ~~blinkin'~~ rain, so pure, upon our backs,
Onto Your happy pilgrims' sacks,
We rich in luck to tread such mud
And venture through the beaut'ous flood.*

*Dear Lord, of course, I don't complain
About today's incessant rain,
But if I may disclose a thought -
Soil's being washed from fields a lot? -
And, from a farmer's point of view,
Tomorrow, sun, would favours do...
Whilst, cheerfully, Your choice I'll share
And, if that's sun, shall meekly bear.*

Written on 17 April 2006

It worked. It really did, I think! The next three days were mostly sunny. Then came a very wet morning, which farmers would have liked, followed by 11+ days of near cloudless skies.

Next day clouds built up, ominously so as the afternoon of May 3rd progressed. The big question was whether or not Mother Nature would be able to keep a grip on two of her more mischievous offspring.

St James's Day Celebrations at Rabanal del Camino

Doreen Hansen

On 25 July 2007 thirty or so members of CSJ, together with family and friends, met together in Rabanal to celebrate St James's Day and the 100,000th pilgrim having received hospitality at Refugio Gaucelmo in June 2007 (see report in *Bulletin No 98*). Members travelled to Rabanal by a variety of routes and means: by air, sea, car, and train; and I together with Marion Marples and Gosia Brykczynska managed to walk quite a few kilometres looking at important sites en route.

Day 1 21 July

At 4am on an unseasonably cold day Marion, Gosia and I set out from west London by car for Stansted Airport bound ultimately for Bilbao. Leaving the UK so early allowed us time to attend a late-morning Sunday Mass in the 14th century Gothic Cathedral of St James – which was quite a bonus, as the church has been under wraps in restoration for the last several years. We then set out to explore something of the old city of Bilbao, taking the city lift to the top of the cliff above the Upper Town to get a better view of the rooftops, meandering river and surrounding hills. We then walked back across the river bridge to catch the 2.30pm FEVE to León, on which we enjoyed a shared picnic lunch. This was my first journey on the FEVE and it exceeded my expectations in terms of interest and scenery. (See *Bulletin No 91* for David Elliot's account of his FEVE trip in 2004.) It is a long journey to León (7½ hours) and we advise would-be travellers to carry food and drink with them. We reached the FEVE station in León at 10.00pm but there was not a taxi in sight! Thanks to Marion's unerring sense

of direction we found the Hotel Paris where we were to stay the night. Leaving our bags at the hotel we set out at 10.45pm to find supper – after all this was Spain!

Day 2 22 July

After a comfortable night's sleep followed by breakfast we spent the morning exploring the Cathedral of Santa María de León and the Diocesan Cathedral Museum. Notable in the cathedral are the windows, side chapels and the 17th-century silver casket containing the remains of St Froilán. The museum is also very interesting, with an excellent exhibition of hand-embroidered clerical vestments, dating back several centuries. In the afternoon we boarded a local train to Astorga, again sharing a picnic lunch. On arrival at Astorga we were grateful to see James Maple and the Graham family who had kindly come to greet us. James generously conveyed us to Rabanal in his car, while Paul waited for others to arrive by bus from Madrid.

At Rabanal we were greeted by old friends, including the villagers, and we were directed to comfortable rooms at Gaspar's or Antonio's. In the early evening further arrivals were greeted and friendships were renewed. Members will recall the Madrileñas who used to live next door to Refugio Gaucelmo and we were delighted they were with us in Rabanal for these celebrations. That evening bemused pilgrims staying overnight in Rabanal at one or other of the *refugios* viewed with some suspicion the joyous reunions of British pilgrims bearing a range of scallop-shells and pilgrim insignia in homage to St James; yet mostly arriving in Rabanal in a distinctly un-pilgrim fashion on four wheels. Next to the Refugio Gaucelmo the silver stars and golden shells on the ironwork window guards of the monastery twinkled in the deepening evening light. After Vespers in the Church of Santa María, we sought our suppers around the village.

Day 3 24 July

The group descended on the Refugio Gaucelmo at 8am for breakfast. We counted ourselves very fortunate that Alison Raju was in overall charge helped by two other *hospitaleros*. The hospitality she arranged for us on the three days we were in the village was greatly appreciated by everyone present. This came on top of normal wardening responsibilities for the *refugio* which was open to pilgrims throughout our visit. Later we examined the walnut tree in the *huerta* grown by

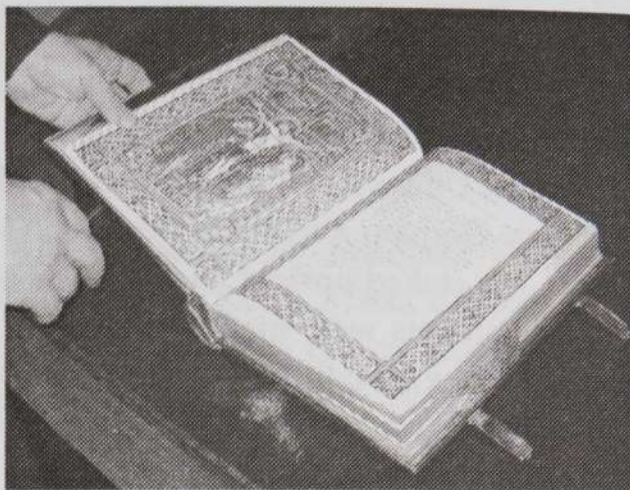
Linda Poulsen and Rodney Alcock in Dorset. The original nut had been taken from a tree in James Maple's garden in France, when Linda and Rodney visited on a CSJ trip in 2004. The little tree is doing well in the *huerta*. Under Ken Jones's expert guidance and with the assistance of Lawrie Graham a fruit tree which had been uprooted in the recent storms was staked upright and firmed back into the soil of the *huerta* and assessments were made on location concerning redesigning the *huerta* for the benefit of pilgrims. The group then assembled at the Church of Santa María for an interesting and informative lecture by Don Juan Antonio, the Prior of the monastery in Rabanal. He explained in great detail the nature of the archaeological excavations, the stories behind the recent discoveries and the plans for the future of the Romanesque church. (*A detailed account of his talk will appear in Bulletin 101.*)

The excavations are due to be completed in 2008 and during the interim period the monks had been using the recently renovated Church of San José located at the bottom of the village. In April of this year however they decided to move back to the church of Santa María in spite of its present state, as they recognised that it is the main focus for pilgrims passing through Rabanal.

As evidence of this focus Don Juan Antonio recounted for us a moving tale concerning a German pilgrim and his fondness for the ancient church of Santa María. At the end of May this year the former pilgrim now living in Germany, realising that he was in the terminal phases of leukaemia with a life expectancy of only three to four weeks, decided to make official his marital status by a public Catholic marriage ceremony in Rabanal in the church of Santa María! He wrote to the parish priest Don Juan Antonio explaining what he wished to do and a marriage service was promptly arranged in conjunction with Vespers in the church with other pilgrims in attendance. It was a very emotional and expressive ceremony. Three months later the monks heard that the man was again in good health – and still enjoying his camino-blessed marriage. This was taken as a sign that the Benedictine monks did well to decide to return to the church of Santa María. Fortunately the Spanish authorities recognise this to be a much-used church and wish for a safe and quick restoration of the building to its former glory.

We then walked over to the monastery, where Don Juan Antonio gave us a conducted tour around the very beautifully restored building, together with an explanation of the Benedictine Rule and the

ordered day of the monks. We were shown some of the monastery's treasures, such as the silver gilt chalice and paten and the statues of Our Lady and St James removed from the Church of Santa María for safe keeping. Finally we were shown the most recent treasure worked by the monks using 21st-



century information technology. This takes the form of an exquisitely illustrated *Book of the Gospels* set within a beautifully worked silver casing. Juan Antonio explained that it is work typical of the illustrated *Codex Calixtinus*, but was produced using methods available to the monks of today. Next we visited the guest house linked to the monastery, where a quiet, reflective, spiritual atmosphere is provided for pilgrims who wish to spend a few extra days in Rabanal for reflection.

After the visit to the monastery I joined a group travelling to Ponferrada to look at an exhibition about the camino and pilgrimage entitled *Yo Camino*. In the early evening in the *huerta* many members of the village community accepted our invitation to wine and *tapas*. On behalf of the Confraternity Marion Marples presented Don Juan Antonio with a statue of Our Lady of Walsingham and the gift was graciously accepted. We hope it will also become a monastery treasure, and in future years will revive memories of this beautiful evening and the happy meetings across the communities. From the *huerta* almost everyone present walked to the church for first Vespers of the feast of St James, where we were joined by many of the pilgrims who had chosen to stay in Rabanal for the night.

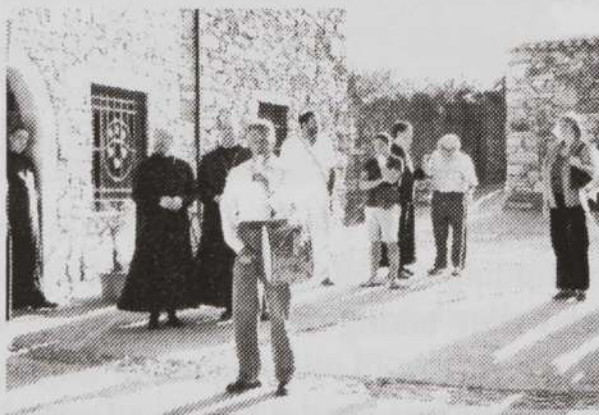
Day 4 25 July

St James's Day started well with breakfast by courtesy of Alison and her assistants and bowls of luscious red cherries on the tables. There was something definitely different that morning in Rabanal. The tall monk José Carlos who was to be ordained priest the following Saturday had commandeered a VW Golf and its driver and they were busily stuffing mattresses into it. As I approached they both looked up and gave wide

grins and cheery waves. I'd been told that the ordinand would be very well supported by family and friends and the villagers were starting preparations to open their houses to welcome guests for a night or two. Suddenly I knew what the atmosphere reminded me of; I had found myself in a Don Camillo novel! I decided to take myself off for a quiet walk along the camino in the direction of Foncebadón.

The St James's Day Mass, celebrated by Archabbot Jeremias Schröder OSB of the German monastery of St Ottilien, made it a very special day for all present. In the beautifully coloured and gilt Baroque church there was a wonderful tumbling of red roses, all supplied from local gardens. The silence and stillness of the hot summer morning, the pristine church linen, the service conducted with a great depth of feeling, the plainchant hanging softly in the air – all combined in great beauty. Following the main address in Spanish there was a delivery in English where Archabbot Jeremias acknowledged the presence of the CSJ in Rabanal and the support given to pilgrims during the years before the monastery was established. A something-special-is-happening-to-us-feeling prevailed.

In the afternoon there was time to talk and to take short trips around the area. A small group walked up to the Cruz de Ferro, as reported graphically in the Editorial to this *Bulletin*. In the evening we assembled for Vespers in the church led by Archabbot Jeremias. Afterwards in the square between the church, *refugio* and monastery the monks hosted a *tapas* party. Maximiliano played the pipe and tabor and the villagers performed traditional Maragato dances. After a few minutes on the periphery pilgrims gradually joined in. Daylight faded and we left the square to head for the dining room at Gaspar's for a formal



celebratory dinner. The Archabbot and all the monks had accepted our invitation, as did the members of the village. Speeches were short and tribute was paid to those whose past vision and commitment provided the drive to establish Refugio Gaucelmo as a way of giving something back to the camino and the village of Rabanal. Archabbot Jeremias responded on behalf of the monastery. William Griffiths then welcomed long-time friend of the CSJ Don Alberto Morán who

entertained us with his guitar and pilgrim songs. The CSJ sang *Frère Jacques* in several rounds. We toasted absent friends and Alberto Morán closed the evening with a prayer and a song of farewell. In addition to the privilege of having Archabbot Jeremias with us it was also Gosia's birthday, observed with a special cake for dessert and the presence of her brother Pavel who came from Madrid for the occasion. Could this day have happened in Great Britain, I asked myself? I think the answer to that question would be found somewhere between 'yes' and 'no'. There was an unforced naturalness about the day, a quality which does not come readily to the fore in the UK.

Day 5 26 July

The day dawned bright and the air was refreshingly cool as we assembled at Refugio Gaucelmo for our last breakfast. It was Marion's birthday and Marion, Gosia, and I were generously offered lifts to Valladolid by Belinda and Bruce and Tony and Margaret. Valladolid itself proved a little disappointing as much of historic interest was under plastic wraps, being renovated or having its original use changed. We bought food in the large central market hall and retired in 30C+ to sit in the shade of the trees in the town park. In the early evening we located the Church of St James and attended Mass. We noted an impressive reredos featuring St James Matamoros, St James's crosses on both pulpits and on the iron tracery around the side altars, and a beautiful statue of Santa María del Pilar with a kneeling St James. There was also a pilgrim St James by the baptistery.

Day 6 27 July

We returned on a Ryanair flight to Stansted which was enlivened for me by finding myself in the midst of a group of very excited ten year olds who were taking their first flight for an exchange visit with a school 'somewhere' (all very vague!) in England. I do hope they enjoyed their stay in my country as much as I enjoyed my stay in theirs.

A Joyful Ordination ends Gaucelmo's Season of Celebration

Paul Spink

Gaucelmo had seen a summer sun come to Rabanal at last, in time for the celebrations to mark its 100,000th pilgrim and the *huerta* party of 24 July previously reported.



José Carlos thanking the congregation

Now on 28 July this same *huerta*, newly-mown and green, was bathed in light for a solemn occasion and a huge and joyful celebration. The road for Gaucelmo's friend and neighbour from the Monastery of Monte Irago had no doubt been long, the learning hard and full of challenge, but now the young monk José Carlos had reached the day of his ordination, the first Rabanal had seen.

For days, monks, helpers and villagers had been preparing; flags and bunting were everywhere, flower-decked arches, woven by villagers, showed the way along the now rose-petal strewn processional route. In front of a huge stage with thrones and altar were row upon row of places to seat more than 500 people – family, friends, fellow monks

from Spain and Germany, priests from across the diocese and beyond, government and military officials, villagers, *hospitaleros* and pilgrims and a band of musicians brought specially from Germany. Around the edges of the field were bars, catering tents and tables; the *huerta* contained all this, with space to spare.

This special and memorable day for Gaucelmo, with the Bishop of Astorga and the Archabbot of Saint Ottilien presiding, saw José Carlos achieve his dream in a most moving and impressive ceremony.

This was a day of great emotion and affection, of ceremonial embraces, of tears both sad and joyful. A moving address of thanks from the now ordained José Carlos included the Confraternity and then his first gift of the sacrament, or a blessing.

The solemnity complete, the *huerta* now exploded into a party such as it had surely never witnessed. Musicians played, with flavours of Germany and Spain and international songs combined, feet were dancing, wine and beer were there for everyone; there was food to feed five thousand – among traditional Spanish favourites, sausages just brought from Bavaria, the Archabbot proudly explained. This was a huge and joyful gathering with everyone assisting and a whole community combining to help, drawn together in celebration.

The *huerta* had been the setting at the heart of everything and the Confraternity can be proud to have been represented and to have played a vital part in such a momentous event.

The Battle of Foncebadón

Vincent Cowley

Idling my time away in Waterstone's recently, I came upon a book that alluded to a battle at Foncebadón. Yes, I was surprised too. It took place on 2 January 1809, so its bicentennial is coming up soon. But you won't see dancing in the streets of Foncebadón to celebrate the event for this was a one sided affair, a decisive win for the French over a depleted Spanish force. There was a British interest too. The action at Foncebadón had a role to play in support of Sir John Moore's retreat to Corunna and it was this that brought 3,600 British soldiers clattering through Rabanal as 1808 drew to its dismal close.

On 30 December 1808, Moore was at Astorga with his army of 30,000 men. He had spent the previous three months rumbling around Spain with little to show for it, apart from minor victories at Sahagún and elsewhere. At Astorga he was joined by the Spanish general, La Romana, and the remnants of his army, amounting to 8,000 men. But these were in such a state of exhaustion that they were barely a viable force, more like a column of refugees.

Moore's predicament was dire. He was pressed on two sides by overwhelming French forces and his army was short of food and marching on its uppers. To stay at Astorga was to court disaster, so he resolved to withdraw to the coast for evacuation to England. The British Fleet lay at Vigo, but the state of the route there was uncertain. On the other hand, the road to Corunna was familiar to him and he had supply dumps at Villafranca and Lugo. So his immediate choice was withdrawal through Bembibre to Corunna, leaving several hundred sick and wounded at Astorga to become prisoners of war.

He seems to have wanted to keep open an option to divert to Vigo if necessary and as a precaution he sent two light brigades up the Camino to march directly to Vigo. Thus it was that on New Year's Eve the people of Rabanal looked on anxiously as troop after troop of British light infantry plodded up the Calle Real and on to Foncebadón and beyond. They were followed by La Romana's army painfully limping out of Astorga and up through El Ganso. They were not a bit too soon, for on New Year's Day 1809, Napoléon Bonaparte himself arrived at the gates of Astorga.

As La Romana reached Rabanal, he could see Foncebadón squatting low on the brow of the hill dominating the Camino. He immediately appreciated the defensive possibilities and decided to deploy a delaying force there while he and the rest of his troops slipped over the hill. In due course a 2,000 strong French cavalry division appeared under General Francheschi. Battle was joined and the French emerged

victorious. Unfortunately, details of the battle are scanty and there is no note of casualties on either side. There is only the bare statistic that 1,500 Spanish prisoners were taken. These were so far spent that Napoléon described them as being a 'horrible state'.

Although the French rightly regarded themselves as the victors, the Spanish defenders too could claim some share of the honours. Their object had not been to defeat the French at Foncebadón. There was never any hope of that. Their aim had only been to delay the enemy so that their comrades could escape. In this they succeeded completely for the French chose not to continue the pursuit. The defenders went into captivity but La Romana had escaped with about 6,000 men.

Moreover, whether he intended it or not, La Romana's decision to make a stand at Foncebadón was good news for his British allies. It enabled the light brigades heading for Vigo to make a clean break from the enemy. It also stymied any possibility of the French forces using the camino to outflank Moore before he reached Villafranca.

La Romana and his men lived to fight another day. Some melted into the hills to become guerrillas, a word that entered the English language for the first time in 1809. Others withdrew with La Romana into Portugal to continue the struggle against French oppression. Their opportunity came soon for in April that year Wellington arrived back in Lisbon and the tide began to turn against Napoléon.

Reference

Haythornthwaite, Philip: *Corunna 1809* Osprey Publishing, 2001

Refugio Gaucelmo News

Graham Scholes

Hospitaleros

June: Roger & Julie Davies, Inge Puri and Sarah McBain; James & Jennifer Ward and Michael & Effie Romain.

July: Tom Gibson, Peter Stutt and Joanne Brandenburg; Alison Raju, Gilbert Cabergs, David Garcia and Joanne Brandenburg.

June saw some unseasonably cold and stormy weather at Rabanal with frequent interruptions to telephone communications. The poor weather may have also contributed to the low pilgrim numbers staying at Gaucelmo. though there seems to have been an increase in the number of Eastern European states represented.

Fortunately the weather improved during July and helped the preparations for the ordination of the Benedictine monk Jose Carlos on 28 July. The CSJ presented a small statue of Our Lady of Walsingham to the monks, and the 100,000th Gaucelmo pilgrim celebrations took place in the garden at Gaucelmo without any major disruptions to the daily routine of the *refugio*. (See special report in this Bulletin).

Thanks to a donation from Tom and Di-Anne Gibson, a tumble dryer and a replacement spin dryer were installed in the *hospitaleros*'s bathroom during this period. They will be for use by the *hospitaleros* to dry bed sheets and towels when the weather is not suitable for using the washing line in the garden.

Following a request made by Paul Graham in a previous issue of the *Bulletin* for suggestions regarding the improvement of the *huerta* at Gaucelmo, plans have been drawn up by Ken Davies, a CSJ member and experienced landscape designer, for the redevelopment of part of the *huerta* to form more relaxing garden areas for use by the pilgrims. The construction and planting work is scheduled to be started in October.

We thank all the *hospitaleros* who have volunteered their time to support pilgrims on their journey and due to last minute problems with the availability of volunteers for the first two weeks in July special thanks are given to Joanne Brandenburg who agreed to arrive over a week before she was actually due to start her role of duty.

A list is now being assembled of prospective *hospitaleros* for 2008/9. If you would like to know more about the role, or wish to volunteer for 2008/9, there is a 'Giving Something Back' day planned for **Saturday 6 October 2007** to be held at the CSJ office in London. There will be a presentation, followed by an opportunity to meet representatives and experienced *hospitaleros* from each of the *refugios* where the CSJ has an involvement to answer any questions regarding the role of the *hospitalero*. See CSJ Events page for more details. Alternatively, please contact the *hospitalero* co-ordinator Tricia Shaw via e-mail at : stuartandtricia@btinternet.com.

Book Review

Sur le Chemin de Saint-Jacques-de-Compostelle: La voie de Vézelay, La via Lemovicensis

Francois Lepère and Gerard Rousse, Lepere Editions 2007, 22 euros
ISBN 078-2-915156-25-6, available on www.lepere-editions.com.

Francois Lepère is a pilgrim who has been writing and publishing guides to the Santiago routes for some years: I remember using an early edition of his Paris route guide to supplement Maurice and Marigold Fox's guide when walking to Tours in 2001. The size and quality of his guides have improved over the years. They now cover several of the routes (including some non-Santiago ones like the *Tro-Breiz*, the circular pilgrimage to the Seven Saints of Brittany) and are substantial colour paperbacks. We were recently sent two samples, including this guide to the Vézelay route, which I was asked to review, having been a pilgrim and *hospitalier* on the route (but not yet walked it in full) since 2004. By good fortune, Susie Quarrier and I were about to walk a section, from Gargilesse to Limoges, and were able to do so with the relevant pages in our hands (the map pages, 1/100,000, come with "cut here" dotted lines.)

We also carried the relevant pages of the book's main competitor, the *Itinéraire du Pèlerin de Saint-Jacques* by Monique and the late Jean-Charles Chassain of the *Amis et Pèlerins de Saint-Jacques de la Voie de Vézelay*. This is in loose-leaf format, with maps at 1/50,000. Our members will know that the third edition is now available with introductory booklets and glossary in English from the CSJ for £24. In the section that we walked, there was little difference in the routes of the

two guides (Lepère was a bit more inclined to favour roads over forest paths). Lepère's maps show the route both for walkers and for cyclists, but the coloured dots used need to be more clearly distinguished, and the scale is more difficult to read than the *Itinéraire's*. Lepère's French style is pleasantly chatty, and there are good colour photos.

The Lepère guide's main flaw seems to derive from a determination never to mention the *Amis de Saint-Jacques de la Voie de Vezelay*. One suspects some past outbreak of hostilities along the Camino is behind this – possibly concerning a variant route via Sancoins after Nevers. (I have heard there was a difference of opinion concerning this, but know not the full details.) Ignoring the *Amis* is like ignoring the proverbial elephant in the room. The *Amis'* contribution to the route is fourfold: describing the route; waymarking it with the yellow-and-blue *balises*; fostering accommodation (those refuges run by or in association with the *Amis* bearing their prominent yellow plaque); and running the information office every weekend in Vezelay. Lepère's guide never mentions that a pilgrim following his route will generally, from Vezelay to the Pyrenees, be following the *Amis'* *balises*. He does mention (fulsomely!) the *balisage* of another Association on the Sancoins variant, and once or twice in the section we walked I think he refers to the *Amis'* *balises* as “le *balisage local*” (when advising pilgrims to ignore them and take the road). This policy risks being seriously misleading to pilgrims: there was one hamlet soon after Gargillesse, where, had we followed Lepère's guide without also following the *balises*, we would have got lost.

The most bizarre consequence of this policy comes in the page on Corbigny, where the *Amis'* refuge has had several CSJ members as *hospitaliers*. Lepère's guide warns “*Réservation impérative pour le gîte de la municipalité.*” There is no municipal *gîte* in Corbigny! Only the refuge of the *Amis*: where pilgrims are welcome to ring to warn us of their arrival, but we do not accept reservations. However I am glad that he has included the ramshackle *Hôtel La Belle Etoile* in Guerigny, which I used to think of as my secret accommodation, to be whispered to pilgrims in need!

I am about to order a copy of François Lepère's guide to the *Tro-Breiz*, which I hope I may be able to attempt some day. For the Vezelay route, however, if he could but bring himself to acknowledge the presence of the *Amis de Saint-Jacques*, pilgrims could use his guide with much more confidence.

WILLIAM GRIFFITHS

CSJ Publications

Warwickshire and the Pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela

John & Katherine Jenkins, 2007, 42pp, £5. ISBN 978 1870585934.

In the early years of the CSJ we had a Research Working Party which collected information on a county-by-county basis about the cult of St James in counties with which the researchers had a connection. The first Guide, Leicestershire and the Pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela by Ted & Peggy Harper appeared in 1995. Twelve years later we have managed to produce the second volume, Warwickshire and the Pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela by John & Katherine Jenkins. The long gap has been caused by the growth in the numbers of people wanting to make the pilgrimage to Compostela and the consequent amount of time needing to be spent in running the CSJ and information service. Several people have helped bring the Guide to publication, including John and Katherine, Ann Clark, Pat Quaife, Peggy Pullen, John Mark (an American intern) and James Hatts. There is an Introduction to the Santiago tradition and a brief history of medieval Warwickshire. The bulk of the text is a gazetteer of the 19 churches dedicated to St James in that county, what may be seen there and how to visit them. Major centres such as Birmingham, Coventry, Stratford on Avon and Warwick are covered. Three villages held St James's fairs and there are several stained glass St James windows in churches dedicated to other saints.

Pilgrimages to St James of Compostella from the British Isles during the Middle Ages

R Brian Tate, CSJ Occasional Paper no 5, 2003, 32pp, £5, ISBN 1870585704

This is a reprint of a paper given originally at the University of Liverpool. It has been unavailable for some time. After general remarks about the historical pilgrimage Prof Tate looks at the ways pilgrims from the British Isles would have travelled across England and the ports from which they left. He examines the pilgrimages accounts of three people: Anthony Woodville, whose pilgrimage in 1473 was commemorated in his family arms; Robert Langton, whose account was printed in English in Fleet Street in 1522 (the only copy is now in Lincoln Cathedral library); and John Goodyear who in 1456

gave an alabaster altarpiece, probably made in Nottingham, to the cathedral at Santiago. It is the only such complete work and shows five scenes of the life of St James.

Pilgrim Guides to the Roads through France no 4

i) **Arles to Toulouse**

ii) **Toulouse to Puente la Reina**

Marigold Fox, £5 each, ISBN 978 187058598 4 and 978 187058599 2

Marigold Fox has been helped by Alison Raju to update the Guide of 2003 which she prepared with her late husband Maurice. They have incorporated the updates received from pilgrims and additional information. The Guide is now divided into two sections, with the break at Toulouse, which can be found described in both volumes.

The Riding Pilgrim

Practical Pilgrim Notes no 4. £2.50

Valuable advice given by those who have made the pilgrimage on horseback from England and from France, with and without back up, or with a donkey.

Members' Pages

From Simona Bennett

Retired lady teacher is looking for a walking companion from Burgos to León in the first half of October 2007 and León to Santiago next April/May/ Please phone 020 8959 3521 or email *db@soas.ac.uk*

From Mary Howell

When I was walking the camino I met a young Spaniard who was a native of Hospital de Orbigo. In fact we walked into Santiago together in time for midday Mass. His ambition was to run a bed and breakfast along the camino. After many years of hard work restoring a lovely old house he is now open for business. I said I would contact as many people as I could to advertise this fact. El Caminero B&B, C/Sierra Pambley, 56, 24286 Hospital de Orbigo, León Email: *info@elcaminero.es* web: *www.elcaminero.es*

From John Hatfield

Planning to give a talk about your pilgrimage? Why not use the CSJ Slide Library to help you? Did you know that the CSJ's growing collection of over 3300 slides, available to UK members, covers not only the Camino Francés, but also the other main routes in France and Spain.? Please give at least a month's notice so that a catalogue can be sent to you and your choice made. As soon as I hear from you, I can reserve the slides and despatch them two weeks before your talk. I can be contacted at: 9 Vicary Way, Maidstone, Kent, ME16 0EJ; tel: 01622 757814

From Jacques Isaacson in Worthington, Idaho

The City of Paris offers many things including the venerable St Roch. I did not know of his connection to the pilgrimage. Just opposite the Ferris wheel, in the Jardin des Tuileries, is a small street, Rue Saint Roch, that connects the Rue Rivoli to the Rue Honoré. Just at that junction is the Church of St Roch. It has, if memory serves, a grand high altar. With a jog, Rue Saint Roch extends on to Av. de L'Opera. *Abrazo a todos*

From Ben and Muriel Burrows

Here at Goodwood – that is “Glorious Goodwood” to King Edward VII and all subsequent race-goers, we have overlooking the racecourse, St Roche’s Hill. Sadly his sometime chapel has descended into dust. It is here on his day, that we yearly commemorate the saint in a service of thanksgiving, complete with procession, choir, brass band, plus sundry clerics. Our own Duke – of Richmond and Gordon – normally gives one of the readings. We know that St Roch also appears across Europe. At Pont d’Oilly, near Thury Harcourt south of Caen in Normandy, we happened upon a delightful wayside chapel dedicated to him, complete with murals depicting the salient points in his life. Finally, in an attempt to improve my Spanish, I happened to come across a sentence which is apparently introduced to school children: *El perro de San Roque no tiene rabo, porque Ramon Ramirez se lo ha cartado.*

From Janet Davies

On a walking trip to Brittany last month I found a statue but could not make up my mind whether it was of St Roch or St James. The statue was in the small church of St Sauveur in the Saint Gustan area of Auray, near Vannes. The statue definitely has a shell on the saint’s hat. But although St Roch’s dog is there - with a loaf – the saint is not lifting up his cloak to show the usual leg wound. I think the statue maybe a hybrid of the two saints. This area certainly has Compostela pilgrim associations and St Gustan is the port area of the estuary which leads to the Gulf of Morbihan and so might have been used as an embarkation point for Santiago. (*Ed Notes – Obviously the faithful hound has taken such good care of St Roch’s sores that they have been completely cured.*)

From David P Snelling

Henry the hinny is retiring. The life of a hinny can be full of adventure, no more so when he accompanied member David P. Snelling on the *Via Podensis* leaving Le Puy-en-Velay on the 2 April 2002 to experience the pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela. His story is found on www.operationhenry.com Now, at the age of 22, (39 years in human terms), the time has come for him to retire. His pension will come from the proceeds of the following sale of his equipment:-

A 4-wheel wagonette with lightweight detachable canopy, carries up to 4 rear passengers, front double seating for driver and groom.

Suitable for 12hh to 14hh Equidae. Excellent condition. Photos on request. £2,000 o.n.o. A unique lightweight pack-saddle designed to the British Army specification plus 2 sets of panniers, a) Loose canvas + b) Framed, 26cmx78cmx72cm. £550 o.n.o.

In order to help a well deserving friend of the Confraternity, please obtain more details by emailing at: charliem.cook@virgin.net or tel:- 01 664 424301

From Alison Raju

Vía de la Plata - *Refugio* in San Pedro de Rozados. A private *refugio*, for pilgrims only, is run by Raúl and Núria in San Pedro de Rozados, a village on the *Vía de la Plata* some 30km south of Salamanca. The Albergue El Milario is in Calle Rosario 17, has 10 beds (to be increased to 16 next year), hot water, heating, a fireplace in the living room and is open all year round. Access is via Elena in BarClaveles. Raúl and Núria also have a Casa Rural at the same address. Email: casamilario@hotmail.com Tel: 923.34.44.01, 600.89.89.09 & 600.75.84.87

From Aileen O'Sullivan

In medieval times St James's Gate in Dublin was gate on the outer defence walls of the city, where pilgrims gathered to take ship for Santiago de Compostela. Today it is the HQ of the famous Guinness brewery. When Ireland founded a St James Society in the 1980s the first meeting was hosted at Guinness with a generous reception and of course a sample of the famous creamy liquid. In this 21st century of so-called progress and a nonstop quest for building land there is alas the possibility that the Guinness factory will be moved out of Dublin and the land sold for development. The Guinness legacy began when Richard Guinness was a land steward in Dublin and part of his duties was to supervise the brewing of beer for estate workers. It was here Arthur Guinness, his son, learned the art of brewing and he bought a small disused brewery at St James's Gate, the lease of which was first signed in 1759, for 9000 years at an annual rent of £45. In the event of the sale of this historic land it would be a nice gesture if the developers were to mark the Santiago connection with a visible sign eg a statue of St James.

From the Secretary's Notebook

Marion Marples

Thank you

There was a marvellous response to the Job Descriptions in *Bulletin* 98, and several members have offered to take up important CSJ tasks in the next few months. Doreen Hansen will take over from Eric Walker as Pilgrim Record Secretary in the New Year, Angelika Schneider has offered to help as part of the Membership Team, John Curtin is helping with the Library and two people, Wendy Beecher and Anne Froud, offered time to take minutes at CSJ trustees' meetings. The only unfilled vacancy is for the CSJ website: please contact Howard Nelson via the Office if this is a job you would be interested in.

St James's Day 2007

You will have read elsewhere in this *Bulletin* about the Confraternity celebrations among friends in Rabanal del Camino. Among other notable events a new shrine of Santiago de Compostela at the church of St James the Apostle was declared in Cebu in the Philippines (named after Philip II of Spain) by Archbishop Ricardo Vidal. A Plenary indulgence is available for those visiting the church between 25 July 2007 and 25 July 2008, and in Holy Years (when 25 July falls on a Sunday). Or the pilgrim can visit any day to gain spiritual benefits if s/he walks the last 1km, or, if sick, may visit in a vehicle.

Protest in Santiago on 30 July

A protest march was organised by the Galician Amigos del Camino and supported by several thousand people, including pilgrims, to protest against plans to develop an industrial estate on the camino in the area of O Pino, just before Santiago.

Camino Portugués Information

In the continued absence of a revised CSJ Guide to the Camino Portugués there are some alternative sources of help. On the website of the Amigos del Camino of Galicia www.amigosdelcamino.com there is a downloadable Guide to the route from Lisbon (in Spanish or Portuguese)

www.amigosdelcamino.com/php/upload/GUIA_ESPANOLreduc.pdf

In the CSJ office we have a CD 'From Cumbria to Dumbria' with a diary and notes about their pilgrimage prepared by CSJ member Graham Dixon, which is available for use in the Office and for short term loan to members.

Erratum

In *Bulletin* 98 the web address of the new Confraternity of Pilgrims to Rome was wrongly given: it should be www.pilgrimstorome.org.uk

Relaunch of Pilgrim Forum

The Confraternity encourages members to participate in the Pilgrim Forum on the www.santiago-today.com website. Several of our members already act as moderators and I am pleased to say that the CSJ usually gets good mentions. Ivar Rekve, a Norwegian living in Santiago, has recently upgraded the site, with interesting news stories from the local papers and a busy pilgrim forum where questions about making the pilgrimage are covered. Some recent statistics shown on the site: by the end of August 86,000 pilgrims had received compostelas and on Saturday 18 August over 1500 compostelas were issued, the highest number ever for one day, even including Holy Years.

Bedbugs

Unfortunately it seems that the winter's precautions of fumigating refuges has not completely eradicated the problem of bedbugs. Pilgrims are encouraged to check their clothing, bedding and rucksacks when out in the open, giving everything a good shake. The sign of bedbugs is brown specks of blood in sleeping bag /liners. If you have a bad reaction to a bite an anti histamine cream is recommended.

Suggested mixed able bodied and disabled pilgrimage

Barbara Reed writes: I am in contact with the owner of two shire horses and a disabled accessible cart with removable cover (rather like the wild west caravan.....) Seats 17 without luggage, so probably ten with tents and food supplies for the shires etc He also has a smaller more traditional buggy, also accessible but probably too small for the exercise I propose.

In 2008 I would love to try out a camping trip, initially local to me as that is where the horses are, and if it all works well, to do at least

the last 100 km to Santiago a year later. I think that if we are to do this without motor support we would need a mixed group with one or two wheelchair users, two fully able bodied pilgrims, and two more pilgrims with whatever they come with in the way of handicap, but autonomous. The owner of the cart of course, and his helper, make a total of eight people. That way all the pilgrims could walk as much as they wished or were able to do, and rest in the cart when they needed to. I live on one of the secondary routes in France now, and the part I walked today is delightful, maybe not authentic but a good grassy lane. I can work out a local itinerary, and propose to use campsites for night stops, with gites where available. Now I realise this would mean a lot of planning, but I think it could be a wonderful experience for all concerned. The main trip, in Spain, if we are to do only the minimum, might have to be the Camino francés for the width of the path with the cart, but in any case I think we need to do a local trial. As you know I have some experience travelling unsupported with my donkey. In some ways this would be easier, shires are hardy animals and we would have their owner with us, and could carry supplies. On the other hand I think we would need a fixed itinerary which I never had! I am preparing for my stint as hospitalera at Miraz right now, Dalie is coming with me to walk from Baamonde, so can scope out the route for a cart at the same time in case it is possible to do the Norte in 2009.

If you would be interested in helping Barbara with the planning of this pilgrimage or would like to explore the possibility of joining the group please contact her on barbara@interpc.fr tel 0033(0)5 49 48 40 54 or mobile 0033(0)6 08 91 54 88

Invitation for Vézelay Route Wardens for 2008

Many CSJ Members, having completed the Camino or other pilgrim routes, wish to give something back to the movement. A number of possibilities arise, including that of serving as wardens at a refugio. Over the last 13 years, some have given their time at the Refugio Gaucelmo at Rabanal del Camino and more recently at Miraz and at the two small refuges on the Vézelay Route, at Corbigny and Sorges. By 2008 Les Amis et Pèlerins de Saint Jacques de la Voie de Vézelay (APSJVV) will be looking to staff 5 refuges. In addition to Corbigny, Bouzais (5km SSW of St.Amand-Montrond), and Sorges there will be La Coquille in the Dordogne and Saint Ferme in the Gironde. If you speak good French, the opportunity of being a warden, or

“hospitalier”, at one of these four small, recently developed hostels at Corbigny , Sorges, Bouzay, La Coquille or at St.Ferme, on the *Voie de Vézelay*, is a possibility. These refuges usually accommodate around six pilgrims. The season runs from 15 March to 15 October. Since 2000, the enthusiastic and dedicated APSJVV, led by Monique and Jean-Charles Chassain (see Obituaries) have way marked the historic pilgrim route from Vézelay to Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port. Though based in Perigord, Monique monitors all the activities on the route and she is often at the Vézelay Office to welcome pilgrims. For pilgrims, the Vézelay route is a “Route de Solitude” as yet unspoiled by commercialism. The aim of the APSJVV is to keep it that way. In 2006 over 1000 pilgrims were recorded as coming down that route to Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port. In 2006, the CSJ has collaborated with them so that several of our members have served as wardens for two weeks each, at the refuges at Corbigny, on the Southern branch out of Vézelay and at Sorges, a day’s march short of Perigueux. They have all returned speaking of their warm experiences there. If this opportunity appeals to you, John Hatfield, (9 Vicary Way, Maidstone, Kent ME16 0EJ, Tel:01622 757814) will be happy to give you background information, after which you may wish to contact Monique Chassain to negotiate, in French, the possibilities and to arrange dates for your “hospitalier” sojourn. Amis et Pèlerins de Saint Jacques de la Voie de Vézelay
24 Rue Saint Pierre, 89450 Vézelay Tel: 0033 3 86 32 38 11
email: contact@amis-saint-jacques-de-compostelle.asso.fr

Obituaries

Jacques Camusat RIP 1920 – 2007

Jacques Camusat, member of the Confraternity intermittently since 1994, died suddenly in his beloved Alps on 14 April 2007. At his funeral, at Saint-Nom-la-Breteche, near Paris, five scallop shells were placed on his coffin to represent his five pilgrimages to Santiago.



He told repeatedly, to anyone who would listen, the story of how he and I met at Auvillar, on the Le Puy route, in 1994. Seeing me approach, and deducing that I was British, he called out directions in his American-accented English (acquired during his wartime service as a Free French pilot, another tale we all got to know well). We walked together for two weeks to Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port, where he had a memorable contretemps with Madame Debril, who in those days assisted and regulated pilgrims crossing the Pyrenees. (They were later reconciled.)

I left him to continue on his own, but stirred by my account of the founding of the Confraternity, he was determined to become (as he always phrased it) an “honourable member”. He added his inimitable flavour to various of our events: among them the Baztan valley pilgrimage of 1994, “Le Walk” from Southampton to Reading in 1996; and made his own pilgrimage along the Pilgrims’ Way to Canterbury (with a deviation to Chartwell to venerate his hero Winston Churchill).

The happy home he shared with Anne at Saint-Nom, with children and grandchildren nearby, was a place of hospitality to many CSJ members including those on the 1994 Paris visit. With the family engineering company, Camusat SA, in the safe hands of his daughter, Jacques could devote himself to his perpetual expeditions on pilgrimage (including the family pilgrimage on donkeys from Le Puy), climbing in Alps and Himalayas, and pursuing his other enthusiasms. We were fortunate that he was able to attend the 2007 AGM, as irrepressible as ever, a few months before his death.

Jacques is the man who best exemplifies for me Hilaire Belloc’s verse:

*“From quiet homes and first beginning,
Out to the undiscovered ends,
There’s nothing worth the wear of winning,
But laughter and the love of friends.”*

WILLIAM GRIFFITHS

Jean-Charles Chassain RIP 1943-2007

It was with great sadness that we learned of the death of Jean-Charles Chassain on 8 March 2007 after a long illness. The CSJ extends its sincere condolences to his widow, Monique. Jean-Charles trained as a lawyer and during his career he worked for the United Nations in most of the countries in Africa. Together, the Chassains first took an interest in the Jacobean routes in 1992. In 1997, upon retirement, they undertook the pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela. On their return they determined to help pilgrims and so became the prime movers of the St Jacques Association in their own region, Limousin-Périgord. By 1999 they had produced a guide and had waymarked the Limousin/Périgord part of the Vézelay route. Their next target was to complete the entire route from Vézelay to the Pyrenees, so they formed Les Amis et Pèlerins de Saint-Jacques de la Voie de Vézelay, an amalgam of all the regional associations on the route. Fortunately, the work of the Aquitaine associations was already well developed, so the first magnificent *Itinéraire* for whole route was published in June 2000. The CSJ had the pleasure of receiving presentations of their work at the 2003 and 2005 Nottingham practical pilgrim days. From John Revell's Pilgrim Record



London
May 2004

Chassain



Jean-Charles Chassain
22 Mar 2004

Although a quiet man, making it difficult to get to know him well, Jean-Charles was a man of great faith and a scholar. He had a passion for the historical authenticity of places along the route and for the Jacobean ideal. The Chassains worked as a close team with the needs of pilgrims uppermost in their minds. That the route developed so quickly speaks volumes for their determination and their diplomatic skills of persuasion to achieve the cooperation of the communes along the way, without which little could be done. Jean-Charles had excellent IT skills which enabled him to produce the initial exemplary 2000 guide and the subsequent updates with their splendid IGN maps showing the route and icons of the accommodation on the way, together with the route details. He was the secretary of the Voie de Vézelay Association and created their admirable website.

Although he has made the ultimate journey, his spirit is with us. Let us keep that spirit alive by supporting his work on the Voie de Vézelay by walking the route or giving something back by offering our services as wardens at the new small refuges pèlerins de Vézelay (RPVs) or in any other way in which we can help.

JOHN HATFIELD

Jonathan Ingham RIP 1938-2007

Jonathan was a great and enthusiastic friend of the Gaucelmo Refugio. He joined the CSJ in 1987 when he cycled to Santiago. He took part in the first working group in October 1990 when the Refugio was only partially finished and the group slept each night in Alberto Moran's house in Molinaseca, and then in June 1991 which coincided with the opening of the Refugio to pilgrims. He always retained an interest in the development of the Refugio. He and Angela joined one of the CSJ visits to Santiago. He had been diagnosed with diabetes and died peacefully in hospital in Castres.

Our sincere condolences to Angela Ingham and the family.

WALTER IVENS

James Hall RIP 1918-2007

Jim and Stella Hall were early members of the CSJ, first coming to a meeting held in Pat Quaife's garden in East Finchley. In 1987 he gave a talk on Subjects and Symbols on the Road to Compostela, unusually held in the grand surroundings of Miranda House, the Venezuelan Cultural Centre. As the author of Hall's famous Dictionary of Subjects and Symbols in Art (1974) he was well placed to explain the symbols and strange creatures found on the Mappa Mundi, then on display at the Royal Academy in the Age of Chivalry Exhibition and to explore the depictions of pilgrims found along the camino.

Having left school at 17 he found a job with publishers J M Dent and worked his way up to become production manager. He frequented the National Gallery, became fascinated by the recurring symbols found in the great art he found there and researched widely their significance.

His Dictionary is still in print, and has been translated into 14 languages. He taught himself Italian to write about A History of Ideas and Images in Italian Art in 1983. During this research he found the 17th century diaries of an Italian, Domenico Laffi, in the British Library. These he translated and with Stella drove several times along

the route to produce in 1997 *A Journey to the West by Domenico Laffi: the Diary of a 17th century pilgrim from Bologna to Santiago de Compostela*. This undoubtedly gave him the most pleasure to write and a copy was placed in his coffin.

By coincidence, while looking up earlier *Bulletins* to write this Obituary I found an article on The Staff of St Roch written by Jim in 1990 for Bulletin 35. Domenico Laffi describes seeing it in 1666 in Montpellier: 'We went to the church of the Trinitarians where they keep a long stick which St Roch used as a pilgrim's staff. Noone may touch it, except the clergy. They keep it in a box which is just the right length and well protected with locks. Being a priest I took it in my hands and felt how heavy it was. The brother who showed it to us told me it weighed twelve pounds. It has an iron ferrule at each end and is slightly crooked. A seraph has been engraved on a knot in the middle. Noone knows what wood it is made of though it has been seen by many thousands of people.' Jim further tells that the staff is still in the church of St Roch in Montpellier, though much shrunken after being thrown on a fire in the French Revolution.

He died, aged 89, after a short illness.

We send our condolences to Stella and their three children.

MARION MARPLES

CSJ Events

Saturday 29 September

Office Open Day

Office and Library open for questions and browsing, 10.30-3.30pm 27 Blackfriars Road, London SE1 8NY

Friday 28 September-Friday 5 October

Poland

Visit to Poland: discovering St James in Olsztyn, Torun, Gniezno, Glogow, Jakubow and Wroclaw.

Saturday 6 October

Giving Something Back

Hospitality on the camino in France & Spain, John Marshall Hall, 27 Blackfriars Road, London SE1 8NY

10.00 Coffee

10.30 Introduction: Hospitality on the Caminos de Santiago, experience of receiving and giving hospitality. DVD 'Welcome'.

11.15 Rabanal and Refugio Gaucelmo: Paul & Cristina Spink, Hospitality presentation by Graham Scholes, Q&A.

12.15 Voie de Vézelay: Gaby Hodgson who has been a hospitalière in Corbigny and Sauges

1-2.30 Picnic lunch (DVDs, presentations)

2.30 Miraz: Colin Jones and team

3.30 Other forms of Hospitality: Irmgard Churchill – Acceuil Saint-Jacques in Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port, Conques
Other 'giving something back': Marion Marples – helping in Office, Bulletin stuffing, organizing a local meeting, Practical Pilgrim

4.30 Tea and close

Friday 2-Sunday 4 November

Retreat

Returned Pilgrim Retreat, Ampleforth Abbey, Yorks,
Led by Fr Ben Griffiths, Pilgrim and Parish Priest of Keighley, Yorks.
There are still a few places (2 nights B&B and all meals, £100) left for those who have made the pilgrimage this year and would like time and space to contemplate their experiences. Ampleforth provides a welcoming and comfortable place to share the insights gained on

pilgrimage with other pilgrims. Please contact the Office with a deposit of £40 pp if you would like to book a place.

Saturday 17 November

Where Next?

A Practical Pilgrim type day to explore other less known pilgrimage routes with illustrated talks on *Via de la Plata* – Alison Raju, *Camino del Norte* - Michael Gaches, *St. Olav's Way* - Corwen ap Broch and Kate Fletcher, *Via Francigena* - William Marques and Joe Patterson

27 Blackfriars Road, London SE1 8NY, 10.30-5.00pm

Saturday 24 November

Office Open Day

Office and Library open for questions and browsing, 10.30am-3.30pm.
27 Blackfriars Road, London SE1 8NY.

Saturday 1 December

Storrs Lecture

Pilgrimage, Hagiography, Literature - The many faces of the *Liber Sancti Jacobi*, Professor Klaus Herbers, Erlangen University, Nurnberg, Germany, John Marshall Hall, 27 Blackfriars Road, SE1, 6pm. £5.

Each year we have a lecture from a noted academic to increase our understanding of the historical research being done about the Camino. The *Liber Sancti Jacobi* is Book V of the collection of manuscripts known as the *Codex Calixtinus*, which can be found in Santiago Cathedral Archive and other places. Prof Herbers is one of the editors of the *Jakobus-Studien* published in German. His research fields include the early Papacy, the art and literature of the pilgrimage and the early development of the cult of St James in southern Germany.

Saturday 19 January 2008 Annual General Meeting

St Alban's Centre, Baldwin's Gardens, London EC1N 7RD.

Important Notice: the business meeting will be at 11.30am not 2.30pm as in previous years

Saturday 2 February

Practical Pilgrim

John Marshall Hall, 27 Blackfriars Road, London SE1 8NY. 10.30am-5pm. First of three days in February and March offering advice and information to prospective pilgrims.

Other Events

Wednesday 17-Friday 19 October

Conference

In Santiago on the City of Santiago, Camino and Pilgrims at the Hostal de los Reyes Catolicos. Papers to be given by Prof Paolo Caucci, Prof Robert Plotz and Prof Fernando Lopez Alsina (who have all spoken to the CSJ) and others. If you would like an invitation to the Reception on Thursday 18 at 21.30 in the Hostal de los Reyes Catolicos, or to attend the Conference please contact the Office.

Monday 22-Friday 25 October

Residential Course

Medieval Pilgrims: Lectures on medieval English pilgrims and the pilgrim roads. Visit to Whitchurch Canonicorum and shrine of St Wit. Tutor Tim Porter. Dillington House, Ilminster Somerset TA19 9DT. More information 01460 258613 or see www.dillington.co.uk

Friday 2 November

One-woman show

One day I'll go to Compostelle: One-woman show at St James's Church, Wetherby by Marie Celine Lachaud as part of the Wetherby Festival. The 2.30 performance will be in French, at 7.30 in English. See www.wetherbyfestival.co.uk/compostelle.php

A few years ago French author/performer Marie Celine Lachaud decided to tackle the pilgrimage to St Jacques de Compostelle. On the way she met Jack - a widower from a little town in Yorkshire (could it be Wetherby?). He used to be a pilot and sang hymns. They continued their journey together. See what develops.

Thursday 15 November

Book Presentation

The Arts of Spain: Iberia and Latin America 1450-1700, M Trusted. 6.30pm Cervantes Institute, 102 Eaton Square, London SW1W 9AN 020 7235 0353 cenlon@cervantes.es

New members

Information is for members' personal use only.

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

Pilgrim Guides to Spain

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | <i>Camino Francés</i>
£6.00 | William Bisset
editorcf@csj.org.uk |
| 2 | <i>Camino Mozárabe</i>
£5.00 | Alison Raju, 21 Hall Street, Sherwood, NOTTINGHAM NG5 4BB
alisonraju@btopenworld.com |
| 3 | <i>Finisterre</i>
£4.00 | Alison Raju, 21 Hall Street, Sherwood, NOTTINGHAM NG5 4BB
alisonraju@btopenworld.com |
| 4 | <i>Los Caminos del Norte</i>
£2.50 | Eric Walker, 4 Gawthorpe Avenue, BINGLEY, West Yorkshire BD16 4DG
(01274) 562559 |
| 5 | <i>Camino Portugués</i>
new edition in preparation | Rod Pascoe, The White House, Pensilva, LISKEARD, Cornwall PL14 5NA
(01579) 362819 |
| 6 | <i>Madrid to Sahagún</i>
£4.00 | Marigold Fox, 19 Maple Way, ROYSTON, Hertfordshire SG8 7DH
(01763) 244525 |
| 7 | <i>Camino Inglés</i>
£4.00 | Patricia Quaife & Francis Davey, 1 North Street, Topsham, EXETER, Devon EX3 0AP |

Pilgrim Guides to the Roads through France

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| 1 | <i>Paris to the Pyrenees</i>
£5.00 | Marigold Fox, 19 Maple Way, ROYSTON, Hertfordshire SG8 7DH
(01763) 244525 |
| 3 | <i>Le Puy to the Pyrenees</i>
£5.00 | Alison Raju, 21 Hall Street, Sherwood, NOTTINGHAM NG5 4BB
alisonraju@btopenworld.com |
| 4 | <i>i Arles to Toulouse</i>
£5.00 | Marigold Fox, 19 Maple Way, ROYSTON, Hertfordshire SG8 7DH
(01763) 244525 |
| | <i>ii Toulouse to Puente La Reina</i>
£5.00 | |

Pilgrim Guides to the Roads through Europe

- | | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|---|
| 2 | <i>Nürnberg to Konstanz</i>
£5.00 | Alison Raju, 21 Hall Street, Sherwood, NOTTINGHAM NG5 4BB
alisonraju@btopenworld.com |
| 4 | <i>Via Gebennensis</i>
£3.00 | Alison Raju, 21 Hall Street, Sherwood, NOTTINGHAM NG5 4BB
alisonraju@btopenworld.com |

- | | | |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|-------|
| Practical Pilgrim Notes | <i>for Walkers</i> | £1.50 |
| | <i>for Cyclists</i> | £2.50 |
| | <i>for Riders</i> | £2.50 |
| | <i>Winter Pilgrim</i> | £1.00 |
| | <i>Which Camino?</i> | £2.50 |

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

Confraternity of Saint James

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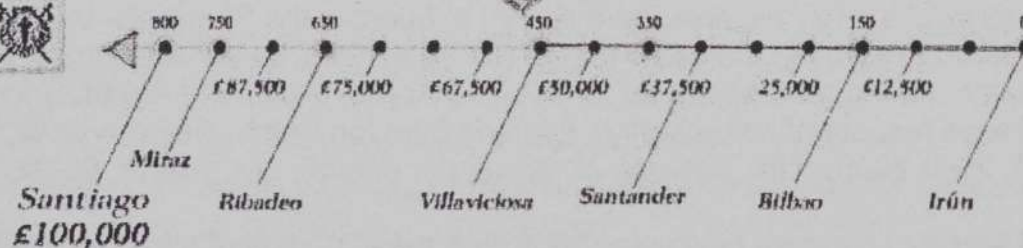
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(01622) 757814

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



How has the *gaítero* progressed?



Appeal Total **£64,689 - THANK YOU**

- Spanish Lunch & Entertainment
- Camino Wine Box Offer
- Phase 3 plans

*** *The Miraz Appeal* ***

History - In May 2006, 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 aim to raise £100,000 to cover both these and future running and maintenance costs.

Progress - The work envisaged in phases 1 & 2 i.e. renovation of the main building, including the replacement of services and provision of necessary fixtures, fittings and equipment, has now been completed at a cost of just over £34,000. The everyday running costs of the refuge are roughly equal to the *donativos* received.

What's Next ? - The initial draft plans from the architect propose allocating the existing building for beds and night-time use, a new extension for day-time / communal use, with facilities for wardens in between. The plans take into account our original requirements as well as those of the local Xunta (see June newsletter) regarding bed space, and disabled access and facilities. The Trustees and Miraz Steering Group have now studied these and accepted them in principle. The architect has been instructed to draw up the more detailed plans, to include items such as solar-heating, together with a budget of the full cost; we hope to have these available for members to see at the AGM next January.

Pilgrims Statistics - 1,127 pilgrims have stayed at Miraz in the 22 weeks to 27 August 2007, compared to 1,003 in the same period last year. 48% came from Spain, 22% from Germany and the others from as far apart as Korea, Brazil and South Africa. The largest increase has been in numbers of pilgrims from the former Eastern bloc countries (70 in 2007, 20 in 2006). The average *donativo*, per person, per night is €5.22

Pictures of Miraz - There are now some "Before & After" photos of Miraz on the CSJ website, showing how things have changed. (See <http://www.csj.org.uk/miraz-reports-restoration.htm>)

We have many more photos available so if you wish to hold a fundraising event we can lend you a photo album, or, one of the fundraising team could attend your event, bringing a digital presentation with them and describing the progress in more detail.

Next Working Party - Each Spring, a group of volunteers go to Miraz to carry out repairs and get the *refugio* ready for the new season. 2008 dates are March 5-11.

*** *Thanks* ***

Donations, Large and Small

We are equally grateful for ALL donations, of every size. People have found many ways to contribute e.g. by donating 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 £65,000. Thank you so very very much for all your support.

*** *A Taste of Spain* ***

*Celebrate the CSJ's 25th Anniversary, the AGM and
raise funds for Miraz all at the same time!*

25th Anniversary Spanish Lunch

Sunday 20 January 2008

At the Don Pepe Restaurant, The Green, Hampton Court,
KT8 9BW, Surrey

12.30 – Welcome drink

1.00 - Lunch

Tapas Variadas

-

Paella - the classic version with fish, chicken and seafood

or

Paella – for vegetarians

or

Lomo de Cerdo Riojana

*(Pork Loin steak in Rioja wine, peppers & mushroom sauce, vegetables &
potatoes)*

-

Flan de Huevo – Crème Caramel

Gelado – Ice Cream

Tarta del Dia – Today's selection of Cakes

-

Followed by

Entertainment & Prizes

**Price including wine
£37.50 (£35 if booked by 1 December)**

**Apply early as numbers are limited
(Closing Date 31 Dec 2007)**

*** William Griffiths has offered to lead a local walk prior to the meal ***
(See December newsletter for further details).

*** Camino Wine Box ***

The box contains two bottles of each wine selected from vineyards along the *Camino Frances*. 10% of the price will be donated by wine merchants Laymont and Shaw of Truro to the Confraternity of Saint James for the Refugio at Miraz Appeal.

Navarra

Although Navarra includes a slice of the Rioja wine region it has become known for its own eponymous DO. Thanks to a more open, less protectionist attitude than that shown by its neighbour, Navarra has surged ahead with a policy of planting international grape varieties.

1 - Senorio de Sarria S.A., Puente la Reina

The first international vineyard on the Camino. One of the most beautiful bodegas in Navarra with a growing reputation for wines named after a specific vineyard area on the estate.

Red Vinedo No 7 Graciano 2001/02 (£7.30)

Fragrant plummy fruit with distinctive varietal character.

2 - Bodegas Castillo de Monjardin S.A., Villamayor

This impressive bodega sits smack on the route to Santiago and forms part of an elegant complex containing a superb restaurant, tasting suite and shop. The surrounding vineyards are planted with Chardonnay, Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon and Tempranillo.

Red Tinto Reserva 2000 (£7.25)

A very nicely structured Cabernet Sauvignon / Tempranillo blend.

Rioja

Right on the Camino Francés sits the province of La Rioja and its vineyards are the most famous on the route.

3 - Bodegas Sonsierra S.Coop., La Rioja

A lively young enterprise lying on the north bank of the river Ebro

White Sonsierra Blanco 2006 (£5.00)

Lemony fresh; very dry, crisp and flavoursome. Blissfully free from oak.

León

The harsh remote plains of the meseta in León have little to offer the oenophile other than a grape variety unknown elsewhere - Prieto Picudo, which produces wine with pungent, ripe red berry aromas.

4 - Gordonzello S.A., Gordoncillo

Rose Peregrino Rosado 2006 (£6.15)

One of the best of the new wave of Rosado wines. Bright, deep pink colour with an agreeable floral aroma and ripe raspberry flavours.

Bierzo

The Bierzo region on the boundary between the kingdom of León and Galicia is on one of the prettiest sections of the Camino between Ponferrada and Villafranca and you pass plenty of vineyards on the path. The wines tend to fall between the light wines of Galicia and the robust reds of the Duero.

5 - Descendientes de J Palacios S.L., Villafranca del Bierzo

Alvaro Palacios, who made his name in Priorat, has joined his nephew Ricardo Perez in a highly successful attempt to make fine wine from the Mencia grape.

Red Petalos del Bierzo 2005 (£10.95)

Dark coloured, with hints of eucalyptus on the nose. Very good fruit within a fine complex structure.

Ria Baixas

The vineyards of the Rias Baixas on the Camino Portugese in Galicia extend southwards from Santiago de Compostela to the river Mino. The vines are often trained on pergolas so that the bunches of fruit are protected by their own leaves during the summer. The local grape is the Albarino, which produces a crisp, fresh and fragrant wine.

6 - Lagar de Fornelos S. L., O Rosal

The Lagar de Fornelos estate has been owned by Rioja producer La Rioja Alta since 1988 and occupies a prime south-facing position just inland from the Atlantic.

White Lagar de Cevera 2006 (£9.85)

Intense aroma of peaches, apricots and greengages. Wonderfully refreshing acidity gives good structure. Delicious.

Price £93.00 (including delivery to UK mainland)

Please order direct from Laymont & Shaw

Telephone 01872 - 270545 quoting "Camino Case"

(Last orders by Friday 14th December 2007 to be sure of Christmas delivery)

**** More Thanks ****

Our grateful thanks to William & Bronwyn Marques for all their hospitality at the Food & Wine event in June and to all who supported them, raising £410 (including £79 Gift Aid) for the Miraz Appeal. Visitors were treated to a delightful walk across the fields to the local village of Little Berkhamsted, a delicious lunch in the garden (fortunately the rain didn't start until the end of the meal), a fascinating talk by William on the Via de la Plata and a wine tasting. The success of the latter and enthusiasm of the participants gave rise to the above Camino Wine Box offer, which we hope will bring back happy memories of pilgrim journeys.

Thank you also to Michael Paterson for arranging the Saint James' Day celebrations in Edinburgh. The promise of tapas and wine and singing Pilgrim songs drew many supporters who generously contributed £413 (including £88 Gift Aid).

*** *Miraz Appreciation* ***

The Association Rhône-Alpes recently donated €500 to the appeal. Earlier this year, their president Marylène Delmarre, wrote to us as follows:-

Dear friends,

I was on the Camino del Norte in June 2006 and I passed in Miraz : it was a marvellous stopping-place! I would like to thank your association with this little word! But my English is bad and I prefer write in french.

Et c'est la récompense ! Le pèlerin arrive à Miraz, un peu incrédule de trouver dans ce hameau oublié, un petit gîte propre et accueillant qui vient à point nommé. Créé il y a quelques années par la volonté des bénévoles de la Confraternity of St James, il est une véritable oasis pour le pèlerin à quelques jours de Santiago.

Les hospitaliers bénévoles vous accueillent dans la pure tradition jacquaire par une bonne tasse de thé, comme il se doit de l'autre côté de la Manche ! Avec beaucoup de gentillesse et de disponibilité, ils écoutent, renseignent, dépannent, soignent, encouragent...tout cela en plus de la gestion du gîte.

Pas de tarif ; chacun donne ce qu'il peut : « Donativos ».

Les bâtiments, ai-je cru comprendre, faisaient partie de l'ancien presbytère de Miraz. Véritable ruine, il a fallu toute l'énergie de nos amis de St-Jacques anglais pour créer une structure pèlerine digne de ce nom, car le financement d'une telle entreprise n'est pas chose aisée pour une association.

Words such as *véritable oasis* need no translation. It is a great encouragement to all those involved in Miraz, whether donors or volunteers, to know what a difference their efforts have made and that our objectives of providing welcome hospitality and encouraging pilgrims on to a less frequented route to Santiago are being met and appreciated.

*** *Give Something Back Day* ***

This day will show the range of ways of helping Miraz ie. wardens, working party, fundraising, offering technical know-how, and what is really involved in being a warden. Take the opportunity to come along and find out more from the members who have been involved in the Miraz project.

This will be held in the John Marshall Hall (27 Blackfriars Road) on Saturday 6th October, from 10.30 to 4.30, See Bulletin for further details.

*** Fundraising Offers ***

"Compostelle -The Ceaseless Tramp of Feet"

CD - including over 300 photos - written diary of a member's experiences along the route from Le Puy to Santiago, as well as some historic perspectives along the way.

Send cheque for £6 (UK) or £7 (non-UK) payable to "A J H Grant" to *Andrew Grant*,
72 Easter Warriston, Edinburgh EH7 4QY Scotland. Tel: 0044 (0) 131 476 9576.

Minimum of £4.50 per CD donated to Miraz

NB: CD suitable for playing on computer, NOT on DVD player

"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.

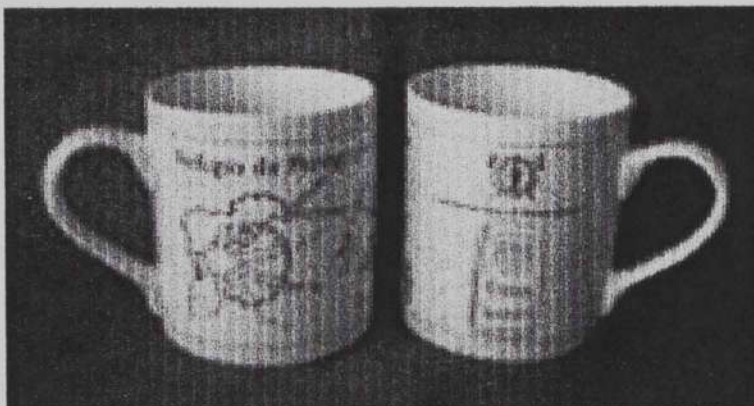
£6.50 per copy to Miraz. Order from the office or online bookshop £12.99 + p&p (UK-£1.21, Eu-£2.10, ROW £3.95)

Miraz Mugs

Available from the office or
the online bookshop at

www.csj.org.uk

£5 + p&p (UK-£1.50, EU-£2,
ROW-£3.50)



*** Miraz Contacts ***

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

Co-ordinator	- Colin Jones	- pacharan@btinternet.com
Fundraising / Newsletter	- Alison Thorp	- alison.thorp@virgin.net
Operations/ Hospitaleros	- Alan Cutbush	- alan@cutbush35.fsnet.co.uk
Property	- Peter FitzGerald	- peter_of_chichester@tiscali.co.uk
Publicity (Europe)	- Marion Marples	- office@csj.org.uk
Publicity (Rest of World)	- Rebekah Scott	- rebrites@yahoo.com
Sponsor-a-Week	- Walter Ivens	- mwivens@ivensw.fsnet.co.uk

Spanish Lunch - 20 Jan 2008

Closing date 31 December 2007

Name

Address

Tel or email address :

- ☐ I am a CSJ member and my number is (if known)
- ☐ I wish to reserve a total of _____ places for the Spanish Lunch for myself / and the following named visitors

.....

Please select your choice of main course (number of each)

☐ _____ Paella classic _____ Paella vegetarian _____ Lomo de Cerdo Riojana

☐ I am interested in joining a local walk in the morning

Price Either : _____ @ £35.00 each (before 1 December)
 Or: _____ @ £37.50 each (after 1 December)

Payment

Total £

=====

=====

- ☐ I enclose a cheque made payable to "CSJ - Miraz Appeal"
- ☐ I authorise the CSJ to charge my credit card as follows

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

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

Signed

Date:.....

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

If you are travelling from outside London, we hope to be able to find you accommodation with members in London if needed

- ☐ I can offer accommodation for people
- ☐ I would like accommodation for people

Please send the completed form to : CSJ - Miraz Lunch, 27 Blackfriars Road, London SE1 8NY