



Confraternity of Saint James

# Bulletin

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**March 2011**

**No 113**

## About the *Bulletin*

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# Camino Calendar

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# Editorial

Gosia Brykczyńska

We are now in a post-Jubilee year. The frenzied activities of the past twelve months are beginning to fade from memory and we are left with just the reduced essence of our most treasured memories – like transient waves of expensive perfume. In truth, we have eleven whole years in which to reflect upon them before the next Holy Year will come around again. By then, God willing, the CSJ will be a wise middle-aged ‘lady’ nudging forty, while many of its founding and early members will be considered to be of an honourable and gracious age and none of us can even begin to imagine who will chair our activities or edit our Bulletin or be our secretary. As our Chairman Colin Jones stated in his report neither will we know how the camino itself will be holding up! It is indeed a great blessing and providential adventure to have to stride into the future – blind. Unseeing we may be – perhaps – but not unprepared.

The greatest asset and treasure of the CSJ are its members, with their tireless commitment to the camino, to the spirituality of pilgrimage, their interest and love of the history and culture associated with the Way and finally their sheer exuberant and highly infectious pleasure in traversing the myriad paths that criss-cross Europe ending up in Santiago. During the next eleven years we will need to remind ourselves periodically of this great wealth of human capacity and keep re-focusing and re-energising our pilgrim souls. Articles in this Bulletin provide a good example of what motivates the contemporary citizen of the world to become a pilgrim and what continues to motivate us to ‘give something back’ to the camino.

Vincent Kelly reminds us of a time when it was very popular to go on sponsored pilgrimages – itself an interesting modern twist to the concept of the medieval pilgrimage by proxy! Philip Wren writes concerning the spiritual pains and unexpected joys which going on pilgrimage with a chosen soul-mate can provoke and induce in us. As Robert Burns noted *the best laid schemes o’ mice an’ men...* For, ruling supreme over all our attempts at control and mastery of our lives, is the Lord of surprises and the unexpected. If nothing else, the camino is a practical spiritual lesson in coping with surprises and the

unexpected! Seán Deany makes it his life's mission to traverse the longest route – just to prolong the pilgrimage experience – just to keep going, ever forward and onwards. They are forever people of the way, a *homo viator*.

For those CSJ Jubilee year pilgrims contemplating in awe their newly-acquired *compostelas* – Mario Pozzati Tiepolo has provided for us an excellent translation of the Latin text. Finally, Peter Neall recounts for us what it is like to be a *hospitalero/a*, especially when the role-models are Alan and Terry Maxwell and Tony Green. They were all working in exemplary fashion at the CSJ *refugio* in Rabanal last year, while Patricia Quaife appropriately enough reminds us that the CSJ *refugio* in Rabanal will be celebrating its twentieth anniversary this year! The coming of age of Rabanal.

Much water has flowed under the bridge since 1990/1991. As someone who was present at the CSJ committee meeting held in Dr Mary Remnant's house, when Walter Ivens first proposed the idea of 'putting something back into the camino' by establishing a refugio, all I can say is – had I known then what I know now, you could have knocked me down with a feather. The water is still flowing under the bridge and there is always much work to do; but also much to reflect on and much to give thanks for. And now not only do we have refugio Gaucelmo in Rabanal to support with loving care and attention but also the new *refugio* in Miraz. Thank God and Saint James for the unexpected and for surprises!

# Chairman's Report

Colin Jones

How will history remember the Holy Year of 2010? Perhaps as the year which began with deep anxieties but nevertheless closed with a quiet sense of triumph? Europe's continuing financial crises, months of dismal weather, the World Cup and the prospect of Spanish victory, and the almost surreal intervention of an Icelandic volcanic cloud combined to suppress numbers of pilgrims on the caminos to Santiago for the first six months of 2010. Yet the clouds, volcanic, economic and meteorological lifted and for the final part of the year numbers surged until 2010 ended with a record-breaking number of pilgrims receiving their *compostelas* at the Pilgrim Office in Santiago.

Perhaps 2010 will be remembered as the Holy Year in which visitors, rather than being welcomed at the entrance of the cathedral by the gaze of Saint James and the smile of the prophets and apostles, were confronted by a tangle of scaffolding and safety tape that shrouded the *Pórtico de la Gloria*. Perhaps it will be remembered as the Holy Year in which a Pope prayed at the shrine of the first Apostle to be martyred, albeit during a visit of four hours. Perhaps 2010 will be remembered for some or none or all of these things. However, the CSJ has cause to look back on 2010 both with gratitude and satisfaction. Our activities both corporately and as individuals amply reflected our primary aims of promoting the pilgrimage to the shrine of Saint James. The jewel in the crown of our Holy Year was the Worcester Weekend. It brought together so much that the CSJ represents. Honouring Saint James at the place where the Worcester pilgrim, Robert Sutton, is buried, through the exciting music of Mary Remnant and John Read; the opening talk by the cathedral archaeologist, Chris Guy; Katherine Lack's scholarly guidance through the city as Sutton knew it, through to the celebratory closing meal combined education, art and companionship that is a true reflection of the camino and the Confraternity. It is true that some who attended may have gained a few inches around the waist because of the wonderful lunch that closed that weekend. However, that was balanced by members walking first with our friends from the Association Normande des



Amis de Saint-Jacques along the Vanguard Way to Newhaven. Then in September twenty or so members walked the Portuguese Coastal Route and in doing so not only established friendly relationship with Associations both in Portugal and Spain but, what must be a first for the CSJ, managed to get themselves onto the front page of the *Atlántico* newspaper with the banner headline “Group of English pilgrims get lost in Vigo”.

Towards the end of the year, José Chemin-de-Andrade-Filho at the Storrs lecture, persuaded us with great charm that the liberty of the camino and the rigour of statistics could be married in a happy union. The question he left unanswered however was at what point he anticipated that the number of researchers into the camino would be the same as the number of pilgrims actually on the camino.

As 2010 closes it is only natural to think of the next Holy Year of 2021. Although eleven years is a mere heartbeat in the life and capacious history of the camino, for us the next Holy Year seems to be on a far horizon. Eleven years is a sufficient length of time to make it impossible to foresee how the camino, pilgrimage or the Confraternity will develop during these years.

Then how can the CSJ even begin to discern what is the best way forward in the coming years? Well, I believe that whatever the future may hold, a good foundation would be to remind ourselves of the roots and purpose of the CSJ.

Our roots are in assisting those who wish to journey the camino in a spirit of adventure, of emotion, of body and soul. Our purpose is to keep alive the authentic camino welcome and hospitality through promoting the history, art and culture of pilgrimage to the shrine of the Apostle, the visible symbols of which are our refuges at Rabanal del Camino and Miraz.

I do not think that we should underestimate the difficulties in doing this. We live at a time when there are significant social, economic and cultural forces that could re-model the camino. Our contemporary culture exults the “Now”, which all too easily threatens to forget the profoundly moving and exciting history and spirituality of the pilgrimage. We are in danger of being left with a camino that is little more than a series of unconnected stories of personal endeavour and triumph. We live at a time when the primary measure of assessment is economic benefit – the numbers game of what contribution something or someone has made and whether this represents loss or profit. All too readily this relegates, or even makes deeply suspect, the



religious and the spiritual that motivates humanity to make these acts of “pilgrimage”.

The pressures outside and beyond the camino could reduce it to little more than yet another tourist route, the value of which is to be found in its contribution to the economy rather than to the welfare of the human body, mind and soul. While not discounting the economic element of the camino it is only one element in the complex make-up of the Jacobean pilgrimage. We must encourage the acceptance that there are deeper ways to appraise a pilgrimage than how much an individual spent along the way. During the past few years it is evident that the caminos and particularly the Camino Francés are under constant threat of encroachment by housing, industrial or new transport developments. The historic and cultural worth of the camino as Europe’s premier cultural route is in danger of coming second to the more immediate possibilities of turning a profit from the land through which it passes. The route, its archaeology and its history are not secure despite its UNESCO-granted World Heritage status. These are why, as a Confraternity, we should applaud and support the efforts of the Asociación Galega de Amigos do Camino de Santiago to resist such encroachments. They seek to highlight the gravity of the situation by lobbying to place the camino on the list of World Heritage Sites under threat. I believe that this is a necessary and good warning that nobody or no organisation that has the good of the camino at heart can allow the next eleven years to pass without vigilance.

Now we ought as a Confraternity to record our thanks to those whose quiet work in the background has helped the CSJ to run smoothly and also cope with the numerous enquiries concerning both the routes and the practicalities of being a pilgrim. Thanks then to Marion Marples, and to those who helped regularly in the Office (Wendy Beecher, Willie Bossert, Robin Dorkings, Henriette van Zaelen); to Alison Thorp and Christine Pleasants for handling the administrative work (and don’t underestimate how much there is!); to those who help regularly on Office Open Days (Tom Barton, Angelika Schneider, Janet Richardson). The vital work of the sub-committees including both Rabanal (especially Paul Graham) and Miraz, the Corporate Governance Committee that keeps us up to the mark in how we should administer our affairs, publications etc. Here it is fitting to pay tribute to Alison Raju who despite being very involved in the production of guidebooks for Cicerone has given her expertise

and wisdom to issues involving the refuges and the whole work of the CSJ.

The list of thanks is almost endless but we should include our new guide writers: William Bisset, Eric Walker, Tony Roberts, Alison Raju, John Walker, Rebekah Scott, Laurie Reynolds, Piers Nicholson and Judy Smith.

As pilgrims we should give thanks to Tony Morwood-Leyland for the prompt and efficient issuing of our pilgrim records. And Paul Turnbull for compiling the Pilgrim Register each year. And to Howard Nelson for the library and the website, John Curtin for the pilgrim diary project and also John Rafferty whose gifts of organisation brought together the return pilgrim service at Clapham and the programme of CSJ visits in September.

Finally, thanks to those who produce the *Bulletin* for us, editor Gosia Brykczyńska, John Revell and James Hatts.

### **CSJ Slide Library**

During 2010 the slide library was used in 16 lectures.

When planning a talk, please give plenty of notice - at least a month and preferably two, directly to the slide librarian, John Hatfield. I will send you a copy of the catalogue from which you can make a selection in good time. I would be grateful if you would not ask me to make a selection for you, as the exercise is very time consuming and I am not familiar with your needs and tastes. I will be most grateful if you would return the slides immediately after your talk, having checked them against the inventory, so that others may not be disappointed.

Ultreya!

John Hatfield, CSJ Slide Librarian, 9 Vicary Way, Maidstone, Kent ME16 0EJ

Tel: (01622) 757814 email: [johnhatfield@mac.com](mailto:johnhatfield@mac.com)

# Who were the first pilgrims to stay at Refugio Gaucelmo?

Patricia Quaife

**T**wenty years ago the first pilgrims stayed in the Refugio Gaucelmo in Rabanal del Camino, following intensive efforts by the Rabanal committee and many working parties made up of the 1990/91 CSJ stalwarts. This year's visit celebrates the anniversary and will bring together many of those who danced in the patio at Gaucelmo on 25 October (date of the formal inauguration) and/or laboured in the house and the *huerta* in early June 1991, getting it ready for the earliest pilgrims and - just as importantly - Gaucelmo's first wardens, Etienne and Nelly van Wonterghem-Teirlink from Belgium.

One may well pose the question: who in fact were the first pilgrims to sleep in the Refugio Gaucelmo? The subject is covered in Appendix 3 of the 2003 Confraternity history '*Give me my scallop shell ...*' and March 2011 would seem to be a good time to reproduce parts of it for the benefit of members who have joined the CSJ more recently.

There are competing voices for the honour of being Gaucelmo's first pilgrim/s. 'The first places in the Gaucelmo pilgrim register are claimed by two Spaniards, Ángel Luis Barreda Ferrer [then] (Coordinator of the Spanish Federation) and José-Ignacio Díaz [then] (editor of *Peregrino* magazine) who booked in on 8 June 1991, the day the *refugio* was officially open to pilgrims.'

'A month earlier, on 9 May 1991, when the last works to the house were being completed, a group of three German pilgrims... arrived on foot from Astorga on their way to Santiago. They were led by Msgr. Dr Gerhard Specht and included the Confraternity's good friend, Herbert Simon [now deceased] from the Santiago-Freunde-Köln. On their arrival in Rabanal they met the El Bierzo president, Porfirio Fernández Rodríguez, who was inspecting the recent work... and who gave them permission to stay overnight. Asumpta and Charo [the helpful next-door neighbours] also appeared and, with Porfirio, helped make the pilgrims as comfortable as possible in a house with no beds, no light, no kitchen and only cold water... To confirm their status Herbert Simon later sent an account of their stay which was entitled: 'Die

ersten Pilgergäste in der Herberge Rabanal "San Gaucelmo" ' (The First Pilgrim Guests in the Rabanal refuge "Saint [sic] Gaucelmo").

The previous year, during the first ever Confraternity working group visit to Rabanal in October 1990, two young Scottish pilgrims had appeared and helped with clearing the rubble out of the first floor... The working group itself was staying in Molinaseca as the Rabanal house was not ready for occupation. However, John and Sarah were given permission to stay and the next morning, when the working group members returned, they found a scrap of paper which read,

*For the CSJ members –  
just for future information  
the first two Pilgrims to stay at  
the new Rabanal refugio  
were John Budd and  
Sarah Cumings from  
Edinburgh. Thanks for your  
welcome and your hospitality.  
We had a surprisingly warm and  
comfortable night! Hope the  
work goes OK.*

'And that, I [author, Pat Quaife] thought was that until a visit to Strasbourg in the mid-Nineties with the Amis de Saint-Jacques when I met a Monsieur Guilpart who had been on pilgrimage in the summer of 1990. He told me that he had actually spent a night there, clandestinely, in August 1990, and was therefore Gaucelmo's first pilgrim.'

'The answer to the question posed above goes something like this:

- a Frenchman was the first person to spend a night in the parish house while restoration work was in full swing (August 1990);
- two Scots were the first to sleep there, with permission from the Confraternity working group, when conditions were slightly better (October 1990);
- three Germans were the first to sleep there, with permission from the El Bierzo president, when the works were almost completed (May 1991);
- two Spaniards were the first official pilgrims to sleep there, on the first day that wardens were there to greet them



(June 1991) but before the inauguration had taken place.

‘In fact, it does not really matter who has the greatest claim: the four sets of pilgrims, from four different countries, typify the international nature of the Camino de Santiago at an early stage in the story of the Refugio Gaucelmo. And who knows how many anonymous pilgrims, needing just a roof over their head, may have crept in to sleep during the previous three decades when the house stood deserted and forlorn?’

May the June 2011 group remember those early pilgrims, the hard-working members of the first few working parties and wardens Etienne and Nelly who gave sterling service not only in June 1991 but also on many other occasions. In particular people will be remembering the late Walter Ivens who conceived the idea of a pilgrim refuge in 1987 and saw it through to its inauguration and beyond – a stupendous achievement.

# A Winter's Tale

Philip Wren

**I**t was 7.30am Central European Time on Saturday, 16 October 2010. I'd been up a little while getting ready to leave Monte del Gozo for the final 4km walk to greet Saint James in the crypt of his cathedral.

*Before setting out on the journey I had just one more thing to do, namely to read Morning Prayer. Every prayer and reading is said to a different bead on my rosary, this devotional act being something I'd begun during my 2009 pilgrimage along the Camino Inglés.*

*I had previously found that simply repeating the 'Hail Mary' endlessly did not sit too well with my Methodist spirituality, though nor could I ignore the centrality of the prayer to the rosary. So I'd devised my own services of Morning and Evening Prayer, combining material from the Methodist Worship Book with a modern Catholic rite for use with the rosary. I'd hand written both services into a small moleskin notebook bought for the purpose of carrying it along the camino. I'd also included different Bible readings for each day, which allowed me to dispense with both a Bible and a service book. My obsession with reducing weight knows no bounds.*

*Once Morning Prayer had been read, and the final 'Hail Mary' uttered, it was time to set out again to walk to Saint James, travelling along a path I now know so well. About an hour later I placed my rucksack with the depository and finally walked through the Holy Year door, filled with great joy for once again getting safely to Saint James. I went to the crypt and knelt and gave thanks to God, Jesus and Saint James for another safe journey, this time from the mountain cold of O Cebreiro to the warmth of Santiago. I reflected upon the people I'd met, the mud, the rain, the sunshine, the difficulties experienced and, finally, the joys of a winter Galician pilgrimage.*

*Well, that was what was supposed to have happened.*

Instead at 5.30am British Standard Time, I received a telephone call from Sue, a nurse on the coronary care unit at Bassetlaw District General Hospital, Worksop. The expected deterioration in my father's

condition had begun. Dad was on the verge of dying and facing that last, great journey which all of us must one day face.

My mother was already awake and I drove us at double-quick time to the hospital. We discovered that though slightly confused, Dad was still conscious, but clearly terminal. Mercifully, despite renal and liver failure, he was not in too much pain. As they had done for the last couple of weeks, the staff of the hospital were continuing to offer Dad outstanding care and keeping him comfortable was now their priority.

At 6.30am, Dad was still conscious and it was at that moment that it struck me what was significant about this Saturday. When I had booked my flights some months ago, this was the day that I had expected to walk from Monte del Gozo to Santiago to complete my Holy Year pilgrimage.

I told Dad about the significance of this Saturday and added that, allowing for the time difference, I would have been saying Morning Prayer about now.

Dad knew about the camino and the reason was very simple. In 1998, Dad, his best friend Brian and I had set out from St Jean-Pied-de-Port to walk to Santiago. We'd planned the journey for over a year and Dad and Brian had spent many a happy hour in the pub mapping out the journey and learning some of the Spanish phrases that would make our pilgrimage all the easier.

On the morning of Thursday, 7 May we'd set out along the road route to Valcarlos. We knew it was going to be a long day, but with the bright sunshine on our bodies and the cold of the early morning upon our cheeks, we set out feeling we could conquer the world. The freshness of the Pyrenees surrounded us and it lifted and gladdened our hearts. Like most virgins on the camino we were carrying too much weight, but it didn't seem unbearable.

A few people, my mother included, thought Dad was absolutely mad. In 1990 he'd had a triple by-pass after a heart surgeon had told him that five heart attacks had destroyed 70% of his heart. It was risky surgery, but Dad could not survive another heart attack. The operation was an outstanding success and a man who had been at death's door, who could not pick up his young grandchildren, was transformed into a football-playing grandfather. Dad had consulted his cardiologist who said that he had no objections about Dad trying to walk the 488 mile journey. When we set off there was nothing but optimism and joy in our hearts.



The route to Valcarlos is uphill and when Brian stopped us to take a photo of Dad and myself, I did not see the strain on Dad's face. At the sign for the Rio Chapitel, Dad told us he could not go on. He was shattered.

I left my rucksack and returned to Valcarlos in order to try and find a taxi. I was told one would not be available until 5.30pm, some three hours later. The only thing we could do was to return to the village and wait. As we walked I stuck out my thumb in the hope of cadging a lift. The second vehicle to come by was a white Sherpa van. The driver stopped and picked us up. Bob was driving a van that had been hired by a group on a charity walk to Roncesvalles. The van was equipped to carry both walkers and rucksacks and functioned as a support vehicle. While I was in Valcarlos, Dad had been praying for help and his prayers were dramatically answered by the Hounslow-based Sherpa Van Project.

We spent an interesting and blessed night in the monastery and by the next morning Dad thought he could try again. We got to Espinal and he could go no further. A shop arranged a taxi to Pamplona and we spent two days there. Dad made the decision to return home, while Brian and I would continue to Santiago. We said goodbye the Sunday morning and I don't think I have ever felt so disappointed, crushed and defeated as when we parted. I'd invited Dad to join me on this pilgrimage because I knew it would uniquely give us time together, to talk, to bond and to share in a spiritual journey that would be meaningful to the both of us.

After his first heart attack, Dad had become a great walker, sometimes going out after work for as much as ten miles a night. Occasionally I'd been able to join him and they had been wonderful experiences. Going on the camino together would have been one of the highlights of my life.

Brian and I journeyed towards Santiago and, bitterly disappointed, Dad returned home. It transpired that while Dad's heart was beginning to deteriorate, he had also unknowingly developed gallstones. His doctor was adamant that Dad could have managed the journey if he's only had one of the two problems, but he was defeated by what was a toxic combination. Dad had tried with courage and bravery to be a foot pilgrim to Saint James, but he could not overcome his overwhelming health issues.

Not completing the camino was the biggest disappointment of Dad's life. On a later occasion I said to mother, we could have popped



Dad on to buses, into taxis and even on to trains, but he would not have done it. He only wanted to traverse the camino on foot.

The subject of people who use motorised transport is a long-standing, vexed issue on the camino, especially when they take *refugio* beds while foot pilgrims are turned away. Dad wouldn't contemplate that option. For him, personally, there was only one way to arrive in Santiago and that was on foot.

So, I read Morning Prayer. Dad joined in the Lord's Prayer and at the end of the closing prayer he said a loud *Amen*. It was the loudest he was to be that day.

Dad passed away at 10.45, which would have been 11.45 in Santiago. It was about the time I would have been taking my place in the cathedral for the Pilgrim Mass. Somehow it seemed fitting that Dad should begin his time in heaven at the moment that pilgrims would be gathering to give thanks for safely completing their journey and to participate in the Mass.

More often than not I walk the camino by myself. I describe it as being solo, rather than alone, because I carry the presence of God, Jesus and Saint James within me. Inevitably, and gladly, I walk parts of the day with other pilgrims. Dad died with my mum, my sister Helen, family friend Linda and myself around his bed. Brian and his wife Mary had visited a couple of days beforehand. The journey of dying may be solo, but it is not alone when family, friends and God are with you.

So often the journey to Santiago is accompanied by pain, tears, exertion and struggle. Yet we undertake it because we know that in the end our pilgrimage is worth it. Dad's dying was a tough journey followed by completion. My father died in the hope and certainty of heaven. I believe that those arriving in heaven share that which any earthly pilgrim to Santiago may also experience; a moment of utter peace coupled with an intense feeling of joy. Along with that is the sheer, overwhelming sense of having completed the journey, safe in God's hands.

¡Ultreia!

Philip later returned to Galicia and walked from Sarria to Santiago arriving on 12 December.

# An Unexpected “Thank You”

Vincent Kelly

I walked my first camino in 1994, not knowing what really lay ahead of me. At the instigation of some friends I decided to arrange a sponsorship appeal, primarily in aid of the local Berkshire Multiple Sclerosis Therapy Clinic which was under notice to quit its temporary site and was thus in dire need of considerable funds, both to find a new site and to build suitable premises. My GP also suggested that the maternity unit in the Royal Berkshire Hospital in Reading was also in need of support. It is concerning the latter that I am writing this article.

My sponsorship form became a little complicated as I wished the contributors to indicate which of the charities (there were three in all) they wished to support. I raised many thousands of pounds for the MS clinic and about £1,500 for the neo-natal Unit in the hospital which had a special appeal for a much-needed resuscitation chamber for premature babies. Having completed my pilgrimage I eventually had all of the funds collected early in 1995 and these were duly distributed at a ceremony in the Mayor's Parlour.

On 23 June of that same year I visited the maternity unit of that same hospital to greet the last of my nine grand-children and whilst there went to visit the neo-natal unit to find that my contribution had completed their target and the new unit had been ordered and was newly installed. I was taken to see it with its very first occupants – a pair of the tiniest babies imaginable. These two little bright blue beings were so small that it was hard to imagine that they could possibly survive, but the sister-in-charge assured me that all was well and they were now safe.

As I descended in the lift I was accompanied by a lady who was obviously excited by something and yet there were tears in her eyes. She excused herself but said that she had to tell someone of her great news and wanted to tell me, a complete stranger. She had just been to see her first grand-children, a pair of twin girls who would not have survived if the “new incubator” had not been available. I did not tell her of my small part in that saga but, as I walked home, my route took me by St James's church which is located near the ruins of the ancient Reading Abbey and gave thanks to him for his part in what had been, for me, a wonderful experience.

Reading will be the focus for our St James's celebrations in July. See CSJ Events page.

# A Long-Haul Pilgrimage

## Singapore to Cape Finisterre by Bicycle

Seán Deany

In 2002 I got on my bike and cycled from my home town of Melbourne to Darwin, crossing the Australian Outback in ninety days. I was preparing for an ambitious bicycle tour which would take me from North Cape in Norway to Cape Town in South Africa. As things turned out, I landed a job in South Korea teaching English, and after completing my work there in mid-2004, I needed a real holiday. I decided to travel, using various modes of transport, across Siberia and southern Europe to Spain. There I began a 750km winter walk on the Camino de Santiago, starting at Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port. Gradually I decided that one day I would undertake a more challenging pilgrimage, by bicycle.

It was no easy task preparing for such an epic journey: three and a half years would drag on like a gruelling penance. Nonetheless I made progress with having my proposed Cape to Cape Tour (South East Cape, Tasmania to Cape Finisterre) endorsed by an NGO – WaterAid Australia. I also secured a cycle courier job for daily stamina-building exercise and financial support. I collected camping equipment, guide books and maps. Importantly the desired human-powered machine, a ‘Surly Long-Haul Trucker’ touring bicycle, was ready a year before departure.

I arrived in Singapore from Melbourne and symbolically the flight





en route involved a stopover in Darwin, the furthest point reached on the previous bicycle tour. During my 2004 walk on the camino I had picked up a spare pilgrim credential. As I was now making another pilgrimage, I wished to obtain as many stamps as possible to mark the staging posts. In Singapore on 18 September 2008 I obtained my first official stamp at the Cathedral of the Good Shepherd. Here a dumbfounded church official silently took my credential, shuffled off down a dark hallway and returned what seemed like hours later with my pilgrim passport complete with its first official stamp – upside down! During the course of my travels in Asia I would experience scepticism from some church authorities. However a little explanation of the motive for my travels usually sufficed to have my pilgrim passport stamped.

The first 2126km of my bicycle pilgrimage would take me from Singapore to Bangkok, via Malacca, Kuala Lumpur, the Cameron Highlands and Penang before heading up the coast of the Gulf of Thailand to Bangkok. The tropical heat was oppressive, and the sun burnt my feet through the straps of my sandals. A cold shower and a beer were little rewards at the end of each cycling day. In Malacca I gained my second credential stamp at the Church of St Francis Xavier, and it seemed a sign boding well for my pilgrimage that I should stumble on, and through, the Portal de Santiago.

From the Thai capital – and for the second time out of a total of four during the entire trip – I had to box my bicycle for the flight over Burma to Nepal, from where I planned to ride down from Kathmandu to India. On arrival at Kathmandu, I attracted an audience when reassembling the bicycle at the airport. My first nights were spent in the quieter confines of the Tibetan quarter, around the impressive *Bodhnath*. Here I met many Buddhist pilgrims, who had flown in (if tourists) or walked (if they were local), to make their daily circumambulation of the *Bodhnath* with its watchful eyes of the Buddha! Nepal, once famously Buddhist, is now mostly Hindu, with a scattering of Moslems and an even smaller sprinkling of Christians.

After an exhausting 568kms cycling, taking two weeks, I found myself receiving the generous hospitality of the Rev Jisay Maharana and his delightful wife Carunia, outside Lumbini. Lumbini is world-famous for being the birthplace in 563BC of Gautama Siddharta – the historical Buddha.

Jisay and Carunia could be best described as a two-person NGO with a mission. For a number of years, through their own hard labour



and love, they have built up the Nav Jeevan English Boarding School which provides an education for children of all faiths. I would not have found them if unless a stranger at a roadside restaurant had not pointed me in the right direction, and as I was feeling ill at the time, they offered me their hospitality for several nights' rest. In a way I felt as though fate had brought me there, and that their good work, helping some of the world's poorest people, could be compared to that of St Mary McKillop of the Cross, the first canonised saint of Australia. Each day some more than 175 students attend the school. The monthly fee of only £1.50 is paid only by those parents who can afford it. When it was time to leave Jisay proudly stamped my pilgrim's passport with his school's seal, which displays an open book and the motto *Arise and Shine*.

The northern plain of India is hazardous for cycle touring, so I had factored this into my planning. Instead I would take a train via New Delhi to Mumbai, from where I would cycle some 1893km to the southernmost tip of India at Cape Comorin (Kanyakumari), yet another revered pilgrimage site for the Hindu faith.

In Goa I experienced a traditional Christmas with midnight Mass in the capital Panjim. Christianity had been brought to Goa, then a Portuguese colony in the mid-16<sup>th</sup> century, by missionaries led by Saint Francis Xavier. In fact my first night was spent in his vicinity! It had been my intention to spend a day at Old Goa, but arriving there in the evening I found only one very dirty and over-priced hotel. I decided that, since I was on a pilgrimage, I would knock on the local priests' door seeking hospitality. Invited in enthusiastically, I soon sat down to dinner with clergy from the Basilica of Bom Jesus. That night in the professed house I was given a large bedroom. In the morning I was able to attend a service in the basilica (built around 1605), where lie the remains of Saint Francis Xavier. The church is a site for many pilgrimages. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century the saint's remains were openly displayed, and once a pilgrim bit off one of the saint's toes, seeking a relic to take home! For myself, a little memento was another satisfying stamp in my credential.

The state of Kerala is also important in the story of Christianity in India. It is recorded that Saint Thomas the Apostle reached it in 52AD and established the so-called 'Seven and Half Churches'. One of these is at Niranam, which I found quite by accident, and had my credential stamped. These long-established Syrian churches have interesting features, such as the Hindu-influenced stone candle post where votive

flames are lit. On my first full day in Kerala, cycling along, I noticed a very dishevelled man at the roadside. Expecting what I'd become all too familiar with – the automatic hand out for rupees I was surprised and humbled when in a soft voice he said, "Welcome to God's Country".

Once more I had to take to the air, since changes to my original plan of bicycling through Pakistan, via western China, and through the *stan states* of Central Asia, had to be aborted. This was a great disappointment. This was partly due to the political situation in Pakistan. I had been in Mumbai shortly after the 26/11 Terrorist Attacks.

The alternative plan was set, and this would involve a rail-buff's pilgrimage on the Himsagar Express from Kanyakumari back to New Delhi, from where I would fly to Damascus. From Syria, where I became a "hostage of hospitality", I would continue by bicycle into Turkey and on to southern Europe and so to Cape Finisterre.

I hadn't much time to brush up on Syria, so the thrill of this was the unexpected. On my arrival in Damascus I was hit with the problem of not having access to my money due to a bank error back home, and would have to live on the breadline until I reached Turkey some three weeks later. However, along with Arab hospitality and the presence of a living heritage of ancient Christian monastic culture, my pilgrimage through Syria became a genuine experience in a society soaked with religious practice. I was invited into people's homes for coffee or tea, and on a couple of occasions for a night's rest.

On the road north of Damascus a fresh dusting of snow mantled the arid hills all around me. I made my way to the Convent of Our Lady of Saidnaya. Here pilgrims seek the Virgin Mary's blessings by praying in front of an icon believed to have been painted by Saint Luke the Evangelist. It is notable that Syrian Muslims also pray in front of the icon as well, for healing and fertility miracles. Some 27km further on, is the town of Ma'loula, where Western neo-Aramaic – said to be the language of Jesus – is spoken. Here I was made welcome and provided with hospitality by the Greek Orthodox nuns at the Saint Thecla Monastery. Legend has it that Saint Thecla was being pursued by soldiers because of her Christian faith. She came upon a mountain, and after praying, the mountain split open and let her escape through a long passage still to be seen today.

Next, I skirted the Syrian Desert and arrived at the impressively located Deir-Mar-Mousa. This monastery is like a set from Star Wars, and I was anticipating a warm welcome by some Jedi Master. Instead

I was greeted by its French and Armenian caretakers, who manage it as an eco-friendly monastic community open to all weary travellers. For a change I was in the company of other western travellers/pilgrims who were also a little off the beaten track. I felt as though I had come to the right place for spiritual wellbeing and could have stayed for ever, instead of only two nights. I was very much stretching my time in order to reach Aleppo via Krak des Chevaliers and Apamea. This journey took over one week and in Aleppo I was once more taken in like a true pilgrim by the Maronite Church in the old Christian quarter. The Maronites have been described as more Catholic than the Vatican! They are a branch of the Eastern Catholic Church in full communion with the Holy See in Rome.

From Aleppo I made my way to Antakya (ancient Antioch) via the St Simeon Monastery with its ruins of the Byzantine period. It was here in the 5<sup>th</sup> century that Simeon the Stylite made his Christian ascetic refuge on top of a stone column for some 37 years! Little of the column remains today, since pilgrims in the Byzantine period made off with souvenirs. The following day I was poking about in St Peter's Cave, said to be the world's oldest church. I was now in Turkey, with some serious travelling ahead of me. I cycled some 300km on to Adana – famous for its Islamic orthodoxy and spicy kebabs. From here I took a bus to Göreme, renowned for its ancient rock-hewn churches. A further 375km took me to the capital Ankara. En route I slept one night in a road house mosque!

Due to the huge distances and my dwindling budget, there was that ever-pressing time factor to push on without delay. Some 2803km in cycling distance remained before I would reach my goal of Cape Finisterre. Entering Greece, by way of bus from Ankara, I made a short four nights stopover in Istanbul to experience the true majesty of Hagia Sophia.

I had the unexpected good luck of being admitted to Mt Athos. This was very much a pilgrimage, since I made my way on foot. It was a truly wonderful experience to be out in nature, wandering between monasteries in the footsteps of Chateaubriand and Dalrymple. My first night was spent at the Dionysiou Monastery – the fifth most important of Mt Athos and dedicated to Saint John the Baptist. Its most remarkable feature is a fresco of the Apocalypse.

After Mt Athos I crossed the north of Greece through Thessaly and Epirus, via Mt Olympus and Meteora, with its mountain-top monasteries. The Greek Orthodox nuns at Saint Barbara's Monastery



were happy to leave an impression in my credential with a sticker of their patron saint. Once beyond Meteora I experienced the last gasps of winter and had to make use of the newly-constructed Egnatia Odos, more commonly known as the E90 motorway. I avoided high mountain passes and snow by traversing some of its 99km of tunnels. However, after about 30km, a loud announcement over the security intercom – and eventually the police – informed me ever so politely that I wasn't supposed to be bicycling on the motorway. Once more I was on the quiet back roads, but in the icy rain, eventually sheltering in the porch of a church outside Ioannina.

Once in Italy it was my intention of to make my way along the Via Appia and the Via Francigena. In the end I didn't travel the latter, but made my own way from Bari to St Giovanni Rotondo – a pilgrimage site for devotees of Saint Padre Pio and those interested in the contemporary architect Renzo Piano. I then went across the peninsula to Rome via San Marco La Catola, Isernia and Fossanova. At all these places I was taken in by the kindly Capuchin and Cistercian monks. By the time I hit Rome, my modified credential had been filled with some 43 stamps or seals.

I had a rather amusing, but frustrating, experience in the Vatican City Pilgrim Office. Here I expected to be able to pick up a new pilgrim passport for the road ahead. The chief staff member, after my inquiry into this matter, informed me that they hadn't any such pilgrim passports, nor a stamp for mine. He appeared to be a complete buffoon when I noticed behind him a huge wall banner displaying Rome and Santiago de Compostela. However he was having none of this, and eventually was almost brought to tears screaming "*I know nothing!*"

From Rome north the Via Francigena, the pilgrim's road, is primarily for walking only. Instead I had a nightmare experience getting onto the train at Roma-Termini station bound for Le Puy-en-Velay, by way of seven changes. The day before I had been reassured that bicycles could be taken on the train, and I was booked on the 10.55pm. But I wasn't allowed to depart, and soon the bicycle and I were removed by the railway police. Things were going badly until a kindly fluent English-speaking official got me onto the next train bound for Turin.

Some twelve hours later I was in Le Puy-en-Velay, and after my experience I was more than ready to cycle the remaining 1700km to Cape Finisterre. I had always wanted to visit Le Puy, and here I was at last, walking up the steps to the impressive Romanesque church of



Saint Michel d'Aiguilhe, high on a volcanic plug. On my last evening I attended a special pilgrims Mass at the Cathédrale Notre-Dame du Puy. At last after 239 days of peregrination, I was in the company of other Santiago pilgrims.

On Sunday 17 May 2009, with a ready supply of *Créanciales du pèlerin de Saint-Jacques-de-Compostelle* in my handlebar bag, I began the final long haul to the apostolic city and the ends-of-the-earth beyond it. A hot European summer was well under way, so cold showers and humble bedding were a welcome sign of relief each day as I approached journey's end. For three days I rode with a German cyclist, through the Lot Valley, stopping at Estaing and Conques. There I experienced an illuminating evening inside the splendid Abbey Church of Sainte-Foy, with its alabaster windows, while later there was an organ recital concluding with *The House of the Rising Sun*!

Fellow pilgrims met in the *gîte d'étape* along the Via Podensis provided good company. One evening in the French town of Arthez-de-Béarn I was treated to dinner by a Dutch pilot, while on the next day in Maslacq I had a home-cooked dinner with a small group of ladies from the Dordogne. We all shared a common interest and affinity in being pilgrims – looking out for each other in whatever way we could.

I reached Roncesvalles on 2 June and was at last in Spain, having crossed the Ibañeta Pass with little effort. I had actually spent a night here in the winter of 2004, when first walking the camino, and so had fond memories of a cosy dormitory set aside for the twelve or so pilgrims. However times had changed, and now during the summer peak season they had over 350 beds filled that evening. Cyclists we found were at the bottom of the pecking order, since forty of us were crammed into an airless dorm for the night! I was to experience much discrimination along the Camino de Santiago for being a cyclist: travelling 8,000 kilometres was not good enough for several of the *albergue hospitaleros*. I took a side trip to Lugo, and was shocked that on my arrival at 11am I would have to wait until 7pm before being admitted. My valuable bicycle would have to be left in the street for the night. But as I was the only cyclist, the management relented and allowed me to bring it in to the spacious hostel. That said, I have come to accept that walking the camino is indeed a better option, for one gains the genuine pilgrim's experience.

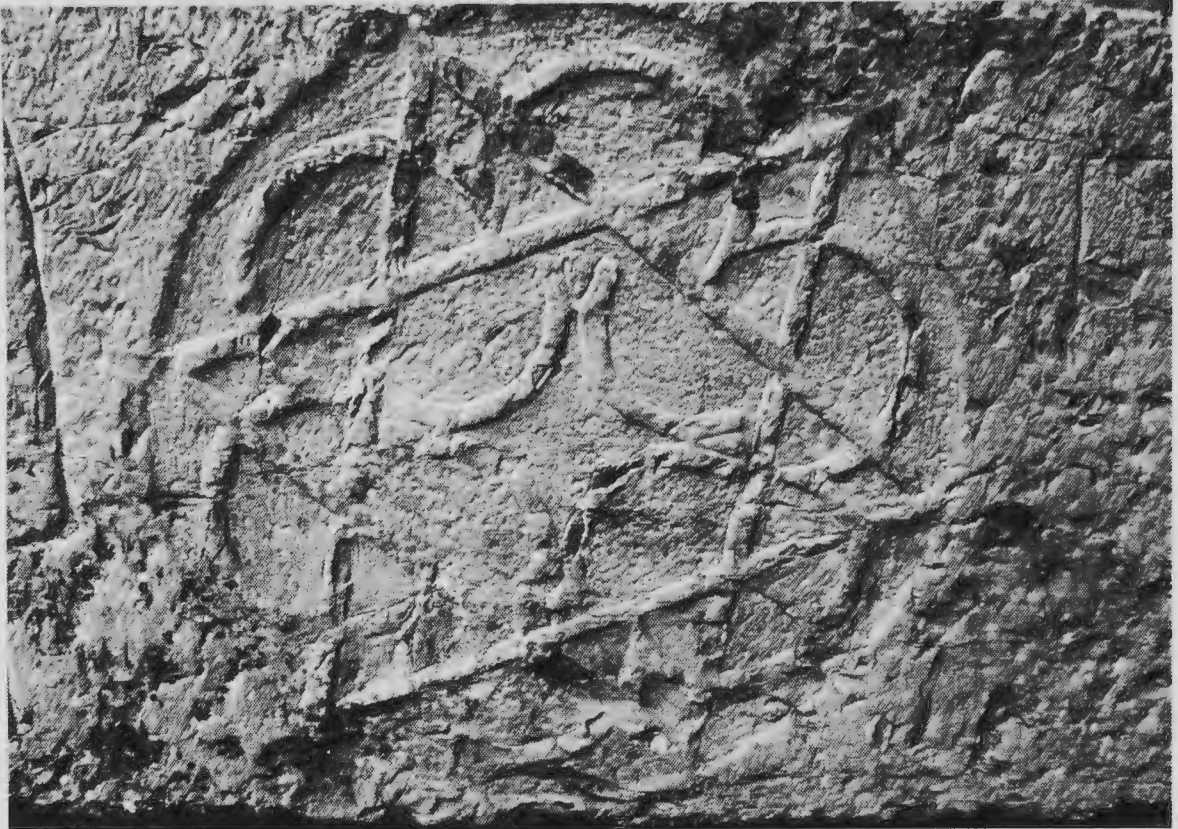
I reached Santiago de Compostela, and importantly the Pilgrim Office, to receive my *compostela* on Sunday 21 June. The office staff

were quite impressed to see my credential, which had now grown to the considerable length of an arm span. On the following morning I commenced the final days of my ride to Cape Finisterre. But first of all I had an interview with the Pilgrim Office concerning my Cape to Cape Tour. Several days later, on my return to Santiago, *La Voz de Galicia* (the regional newspaper) conducted an interview adding to my modest fame. The woman at the news stand was ecstatic when she saw that it was me, and a hardened-looking café proprietor gave me a powerful hug and coffee on the house after discovering my means of reaching his home town.

It was on Wednesday 24 June 2009, by way of Muxia, that I finally reached my destination of Cape Finisterre. The total cycling distance from Singapore clocked on my bike odometer was 8,961km. What only lay ahead of me now were the blue-green waters of the Atlantic Ocean. I had indeed reached the ends of the earth! There was no fancy reception, and all I could do was thank Saint James for the safe journey. That evening, at the Albergue de Paz, the friendly *hospitalero* gave a finishing touch to my pilgrim record when he wrote in English – “Game Over”.

# Signs and Symbols in the Stones

Sylvia Nilsen



**I**n 2002 I noticed a couple of fascinating signs and symbols carved into blocks of stone on the walls of the Augustinian abbey in Roncesvalles. One appeared to be a geometric symbol with a Star of David superimposed on six joined circles. The other carving, just below this symbol, looked like a bird or a shoe.

Chatting to the curator of the museum I learned that stones from the original 12th century hospice had been recycled to construct the 'new' abbey and that these were probably reused stones. She suggested that the shoe engraving could be that of the original stone cutter or mason as the shoe mark was often chosen by workers who could not write. She thought that the large symbol could be that of a Master Mason.

As Romanesque architecture developed into Gothic the Way of St James facilitated the movement of builders and architects between France and northern Spain. Masons from all over Europe worked on the churches, cathedrals and monasteries constructed on the pilgrimage roads to Santiago de Compostela. One theory on the enigmatic symbol is that it represents a hexagram or Hexad, sometimes known as a



Thunder Stone. As James the Greater was known as the Son of Thunder this theory suggests that the symbol could represent San Iago. Another theory links it to the legend of Charlemagne and Roland. On further research I found this explanation of the Roncesvalles stone symbol by Dr James McQuillan on the Nexus website.

“We know the imposed equilateral triangles as the **Star of David**. This is traditionally related to the Six Days of Creation (the hexaemeron), and thus refers to the Authorship of the Cosmos – God. Concentric with the Star is a floriated circle with six ‘petals’, the inner circle being omitted. This expansive figure can be related to light-geometry, as light expands as a circle, and the six ‘petals’ can be understood to refer to subsidiary light sources, such as planets or stars. Such a figure is common in High Gothic stained glass windows. In the centre is a cross formed by quadrants of a circle – the same circle as the ‘petals’. This of course signifies Christ. The full symbol then represents (a) the Process of Creation (b) the resulting Cosmos, and (c) the presence of Christ who will, by His Second Coming, terminate the Cosmos.”

Whatever the truth, it is clearly not the simple sign of a stonecutter or mason, but a complicated religious symbol, chiselled by a skilled craftsman, easily interpreted and understood by large numbers of people in the Middle Ages.

There were many levels of skill in stone masonry, from those who hewed crude chunks of stone out of the quarries, to the apprentice and mason who cut the stones with mathematical precision for building, and the skilled artist who sculpted statues, columns, capitals and so forth. When an apprentice mason completed serving his time he was admitted as Fellow of the Fraternity of Freemasons. Only then was he granted a special mark which he would use in perpetuity, wherever he travelled to find work. This Masonic mark not only identified his work for payment of wages but also indicated that the stone was acceptable for use and served as a means of quality control. Using another mason’s sign was tantamount to stealing his work. Some marks found on stones are positional and indicated where a particular stone should be placed within the structure. Carpenters and other tradesmen also had proprietary marks but few of these have survived as well as the mason marks.

In 2004, about the same time as Dan Brown’s books feature people scrambling about searching for signs and symbols in places like Rosslyn Chapel, I started photographing signs and symbols in the stones of buildings on the camino routes of northern Spain. The majority of the photographs were taken on the outside of structures

where the signs were chiselled into stones many centuries ago. There are two reasons for this. Some churches and cathedrals do not allow flash photography inside the buildings, and the signs are more evident on the outside walls where time and weather have exposed the formerly hidden mason marks.

Some marks are easily recognisable and appear on different structures in different locations. Although it is possible that masons in different countries chose the same signs (such as a fish or a shoe) it is quite feasible, when seeing the same sign on different buildings in close proximity, that the same mason worked on these structures during his lifetime. Masonic marks are the same all over Europe and one can find the same signs in most medieval buildings. Theoretically, one could follow a medieval mason by the signs he left on the structures where he worked.

Although stone signs that are thousands of years old are evident in all ancient buildings, 'modern' mason signs have been traced as far back as the end of the 10th century and can be found on the walls of St Mark's Cathedral in Venice. Strasbourg Cathedral in Alsace has more than 1500 different signs. However, it wasn't until the 15<sup>th</sup> century that a register of marks became necessary to identify the personal signs of mason. In his book, "*Firmado en la Piedra, Marcas por los Maestros Canteros Medievales*" Juan Luis Puente López has documented thousands of marks, signs and symbols in medieval structures in Spain. Even the smallest church, such as Santa Maria de Eunete, has hundreds of signs on the outer walls. All you have to do is look and once you have seen them you will find them everywhere!

So, the next time you walk a camino, look a little more closely at the walls of the churches, cathedrals and monuments. Those strange drawings, marks or initials you see carved into the stones might not be common graffiti but centuries old mason signs.

## References

*Signs in the Stones* by Sylvia Nilsen

[peregrinations.kenyon.edu/vol3\\_1/photo\\_essays/stones/stones.html](http://peregrinations.kenyon.edu/vol3_1/photo_essays/stones/stones.html)

## Further reading

*Firmado en la Piedra, Marcas por los Maestros Canteros Medievales*  
by Juan Luis Puente López

[www.tiempodehistoria.com/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=398](http://www.tiempodehistoria.com/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=398)

*Masons' Marks* by Pennick N. Cockayne, Cambridge 1974  
[freemasonry.bcy.ca/history/marks/freemasonsmarks.html](http://freemasonry.bcy.ca/history/marks/freemasonsmarks.html)

# The best *hospitaleros* in the World

Peter Neall

I have just had the privilege of working with some of the best *hospitaleros* in the world. Let me describe a typical day in their life at Gaucelmo.

2pm in the afternoon – the doors open!

On a busy day there will already be a queue of pilgrims, sometimes up to twenty long all waiting at the door or in the shade across the square, whilst their rucksacks are neatly piled in front of the door in strict arrival order.

The door opens and the *hospitalero* spreads his arms wide and announces the opening with a broad smile and a loud welcome in as many languages as he can muster. The welcome always brings a smile, and when there is a long queue he also says (again in as many languages as possible), “Don’t worry, there will be a bed for you all”. The pilgrims visibly relax and smile as they walk and shuffle to their place in front of Tony – the greeter!

Tony welcomes them personally, often in their own language, and talks with them of their journey, their needs and who they are. Meanwhile Ann, Terry or Peter pass them fresh cool water. Once registered Terry picks up their rucksacks usually to mild protests which he ignores really well, and shows them to their beds! On the way there is a short guided tour, with a little history, accurate information about the kitchen, the bathrooms, the shop and the arrangements and even time, with those who speak some English, for a few jokes. The football shirt he wears is joke enough for some folk!

As the first rush passes so Ann shows them the washing facilities, especially the spin dryer and the wonderful *huerta* where there is space to really dry clothes. On the odd occasion when a pilgrim arrives with bed bugs spotted by the Hawkeye Hospitalero, Peter and Ann swing into a well-oiled routine of washing, cleaning, reassuring and isolating so the pilgrim goes on his way the next day cleansed and smiling, and the other pilgrims and later refugees stay insect free!

The pilgrims settle slowly, often still in their separate groups and speaking their own tongue. This all changes with afternoon tea! Ann



makes a huge pot and keeps the kettle boiling, Peter plays 'Mum' and provides everyone with fresh 'English Tea and biscuits'. The tea and the chat gradually break down the barriers and with lots of laughter and smiles cooking groups form, friends are made, healing is offered, people go to shop, to eat, to cook and another evening at Gaucelmo is underway.

Visitors abound. Rabanal's place on the mini-bus pilgrim routes is assured and there are hosts of travellers, not staying at Gaucelmo, who want to get their stamps, find out what happened to the monks and even just look! Tony's languages are stretched to the limit, and sometimes even his tolerance as some visitors have no more idea of what it means to be a pilgrim than an aggressive businessman pursuing scarce shares in a stock exchange!

Questions abound. Is it far to Ponferrada? What is the way like tomorrow? Can we cook here? Have you walked the camino? What can I do to heal my foot? Do you have any plasters? – and so on and so on.

Each *hospitalero* /a takes a few pilgrims under their wing and gives them that added personal touch. All talk of spirit and pilgrimage, of life changes and service, Tony shares languages and talks of routes and politics, of international understanding and principle; Terry talks of football and pilgrimage, of the Cruz de Ferro; and Ann – Ann talks of food and children and family and values. Peter practises Reiki and holds knees and feet in the palm of his hand as he strives to overcome tired and bruised bodies so that they are ready once again for the next day.

The *hospitaleros* eat, two by two, one day at Antonio's, one day at Gaspar's. Not only fair, but seen to be, then the pilgrims know that the references are real and the villagers recognise that all are treated the same.

Back to a quieting house as the need for rest and sleep take over. Meanwhile Ann sets breakfast in the kitchen; Terry, guardian of Gaucelmo, locks up, and the night stills into deep dark as pilgrims oblivious, and *hospitaleros* ever watchful, sleep on.

In the pre-dawn Peter rises and silently creeps downstairs, standing alone in the dark watching the stars wheel by. An early pilgrim stumbles, rustles and falls downstairs trying to get an advantage on the road. Peter heads for the kitchen and with practised hands brews coffee, tea and cola-caó. Another joins him and together they serve wakening pilgrims with a hot drink and a 'Good Morning' in the

tongue closest to the one that they can remember as each pilgrims' own. And then there is bread, jam and even a song to set them on their way.

Goodbyes, hugs, exchanged e-mails, extra *donativos* and waves complete the morning before they sit down to tea or coffee prior to setting up for those already on that day's road to Rabanal.

Then they scrub, wash, clean and count, sometimes to the sounds of Rock and Roll, as they sing along until all is again spotless and fit for a queen, or even a pilgrim. Itinerant salesmen come with loud horns advertising their wares; bread for the breakfast, hardware for the cleaners; no vintners for the drinkers though!

They stop, take stock and divide up trips to Astorga for the bank, and supplies; trips through the village to meet the villagers, to talk over the politics of the monks, to be sociable, trips to the Cruz de Ferro to remind them of their own journey and trips for them just to be tourists and relax for a while.

Then it's lunch and the pilgrims are outside the door wanting to be let in once more.

*With grateful thanks to the best hospitaleros in the world; Ann and Terry Maxwell and Tony Green*

We want to encourage more CSJ members to think about becoming more 'best hospitaleros in the world'. If you are at all interested please see the Gaucelmo News and contact Roger and Julie Davies on [R&J@rogerdavies.go-plus.net](mailto:R&J@rogerdavies.go-plus.net)

# Translation of the Compostela

Mario Pozzati Tiepolo

**O**n receiving your coveted *compostela* at the Pilgrim Office have you puzzled over the meaning of the Latin terminology? Mario Pozzati Tiepolo provides us with the following translation, so why not take your framed certificate down from its place of honour on your wall and compare notes?

*The Chapter of this Holy (1) Apostolic and Metropolitan Church of Compostella, guardian of the seal of the Shrine (2) of blessed James the Apostle, so that to all the Faithful and Pilgrims from the whole World who come together, moved by devotion or on account of a vow (3), to the portals (4) of Our Apostle, Patron and Protector of Spain (5), Saint James, it may provide an authentic record (6) of their visit, makes known to everyone who will read this document (7) that: [Latinised Name of the Pilgrim] has devoutly for a religious reason (8) visited this most Holy Temple.*

*In witness whereof I bestow on him/her (9) this document, confirmed by the seal of the same Holy Church.*

*Given at Compostella on [day] of the month of [month] of Our Lord's year [year].*

*Holy Year (10)*

[Signed by]

[Chapter's Seal]

**Canon, Appointed for Pilgrims (11)**

## Notes

1. *Almae*: literally 'kindly', 'bountiful'.
2. *Altaris*: literally 'altar', 'shrine' (the sacred tomb of a saint, a casket containing sacred relics).
3. *Vel voti causa*: to fulfil a vow.
4. *Ad limina*: literally 'thresholds'.
5. *Hispaniae*: in classical Latin meaning the whole of the Iberian Peninsula.



6. *Litteras*: literally 'letter'.
7. In traditional legal English, obviously derived from exactly this sort of Latin expression in Medieval Latin documents in England, 'all and singular those who shall read these presents' (in fact the usual English phrase is 'to whom these presents shall come').
8. *Pietatis causa devote visitasse*: here again as above with *devotionis affectu*, is underlined the need for the Pilgrim (*Latin per + ager*, 'through + field') to have made his pilgrimage moved by devotional reason, with pious intentions and as a spiritual quest.
9. *Ei*: meaning 'him' or 'her'.
10. ...*Annus Sanctus*: 'Holy Year' is added to the date when the pilgrimage is completed during a Holy Year. In around 1119, the so-called Jubilee or Holy Year Privilege was granted by Pope Calixtus II. A Holy Year according to this particular privilege, is a year in which the feast day commemorating the martyrdom of Saint James – held on 25 July – falls on a Sunday, which happens in sequence every 6, 5, 6 and 11 years. Those pilgrims who in a Holy Year complete the journey to the basilica in Santiago are able to benefit from the concession of a full indulgence and spiritual rewards.
11. *Canonicus Deputatus pro Peregrinis* Instead of "Canon, Deputy for Pilgrims" I feel it is more precise to translate as "Canon, appointed for pilgrims". In fact *Canonicus* and *Deputatus* can both be used as nouns and adjectives, so there is a degree of ambiguity, but *Deputatus* is best taken as past-participle-passive in this context. I have therefore amended the above.

I feel confident and reassured that the translation is accurate and close to the Latin text. I have received confirmation from Birkbeck College London, University College London (Department of Medieval Latin) and Dr Carolinne White of Oxford University who is renowned for her work on the *Medieval Latin Dictionary*. Dr White is also the translator of *The Rule of Benedict* for Penguin Classics, and author of *Lives of Roman Christian Women* (Penguin 2010). *Lives of Roman Christian Women* deals with early Roman Christian women becoming pilgrims to the Holy Land and other sacred places.

# News from Gaucelmo

## Another year, another pilgrim season

Roger Davies

### 2011 hospitaleros

April	Michael Krier and Anne Wrapson Maggie and John Gardiner
May	Pat Chambers and Antonio Tejero Sanchez Pat and Martyn Singleton and Jenny Carr

Gaucelmo will be opening on 1 April 2011 and, although we are unsure how many pilgrims will be visiting us, we have no doubts that our wonderful hospitaleros will be more than equal to the challenge. This year is also the 20th anniversary since Gaucelmo was opened and, in that time, we have welcomed 120,343 pilgrims – a cause for celebration!

Prior to opening, Gaucelmo will be fumigated to combat the threat of bed bugs. Bed bugs seem to be an increasing problem everywhere - recent newspaper reports suggest that these annoyingly adaptable creatures are now a worldwide problem with difficulties reported in London, throughout Europe and the Americas...

We will be supplying pillows this year and, as the disposable sheet experiment proved to be so successful, these will now be a permanent feature. The November Working Party smartened up the refuge with coats of paint and varnish, trees were pruned, the herb garden weeded and the large upstairs dormitory has had a revamp with 4 beds having been removed giving pilgrims much more space. During the winter the reception area will have received a much needed make-over.

Some potential volunteer hospitaleros have queried how the rota is put together – this is how we co-ordinators try to arrange things. There are basically three stages to becoming a volunteer hospitalero:

- approaching the CSJ or hospitalero co-ordinators offering to do a duty at either Gaucelmo or Miraz and giving a number of dates when you could be available;
- completing an application form and satisfying most or all of the criteria; and

- training which can take the form of a training day in the UK or some other appropriate arrangements.

The rota is often “completo” by the beginning of the year. Many volunteers wishing for specific dates apply one or even two years ahead. However, circumstances of volunteers can and do change when arrangements are made so far in advance. This can be for a variety of reasons i.e. emotional, health, financial, family or work commitments and volunteers sometimes have to withdraw at short notice. It is therefore always worth asking to be put on the reserve list - many of our hospitaleros have been able to do a duty this way by helping us out at relatively short notice.

Some dates are extremely popular - if you are fluid in the dates you require you stand a much higher chance of getting a slot. Unfortunately if you are limited because of work or family commitments and can only manage one or two dates, it may become more problematical unless you apply well in advance.

At the end of each duty we ask volunteers to complete a feedback form. The form invites suggestions on how Gaucelmo can be improved and requests hospitaleros to indicate whether they would like to volunteer again in the future. If an individual or a team has worked successfully and they wish to volunteer again, we like to offer them a further opportunity in following years. We always try to ensure that hospitaleros volunteering for the first time are placed with “old hands”. This means that we try to keep a healthy balance between new volunteers and experienced ones. Although the refuge at Rabanal is known by many pilgrims as “the English Refuge” it is increasingly becoming more cosmopolitan. Last year volunteer hospitaleros came from the UK, Costa Rica, America, Canada, Hungary, Belgium, Australia, Denmark Ireland and Poland - a truly international gathering!

We still have last minute vacancies for hospitaleros in 2011:-

- last 2 weeks in August (arrive 15 August – depart 1 September): and
- first 2 weeks in September (arrive 31 August – depart 16 September).

Please contact us if you are able to help.



# News from Miraz

- Members of the the Winter Working Party moved and stored away all the bunks and other furniture in the new building in preparation for the forthcoming building works.
- Work started on 7 February, and is progressing, on the renovation of the old building and creation of more washing facilities.
- The reopening date is scheduled for Palm Sunday 17 April.
- The grand opening with a Mass in the Miraz church of Santiago, Blessing and party will be on Tuesday 7 June. ALL WELCOME.
- The next fundraising round will be to equip the refuge's kitchen and living space with new furniture- the old furniture was found to be infested with woodworm.
- The Hospitaleros training and rotas have been completed.
- Check out the Miraz Facebook page for comments from pilgrims and hospitaleros.



## Sponsor-a-Week

The Sponsor-a-week scheme supports the CSJ refuges at both Rabanal and Miraz. With a donation of £50 for one week, (or £25 for a half-week) you would be contributing to the everyday running costs such as providing breakfast for pilgrims. The *hospitaleros* for your chosen week will write and tell you about life at the refuge during that time.

If you would like to help, please send a cheque made payable to "Confraternity of St James" or your credit card details, to the office in London. Dates currently available range between 9 April and 22 October 2011 but some are already taken so when donating please give a first and second choice of dates.

For further details please contact Alison Thorp, email: [alison.thorp@virgin.net](mailto:alison.thorp@virgin.net) or Tel: 01372 375082

# Members' Pages

## **From James Day, Dartmouth**

James is walking from León to Santiago from 6 September and would like a companion. He is 35 and loves walking and photography. He lives in Dartmouth (and Huddersfield some of the time). He will be raising money for various causes including his local church. Contact him on [jamesday5@btinternet.com](mailto:jamesday5@btinternet.com) if you would like to discuss the possibility of walking together or swapping notes.

## **From Kai Tabacek and Amy Pollock**

We joined the CSJ in January and have already benefitted from the excellent Practical Pilgrim day and from the knowledge of its members and library. We are walking the Camino Francés in June and will be making a radio documentary. We're both broadcast journalists and are interested in the many reasons people become pilgrims. If you would be willing to give us a short interview, and especially if you're going on pilgrimage to Santiago this year, please get in touch. This is nothing to be worried about - we're interested in your stories and experiences. If you think you may be interested or would just like to hear more, please email us at [k.tabacek@gmail.com](mailto:k.tabacek@gmail.com). Thank you.

## **From John Hatfield**

Monique Chassain has established a new association to concentrate on the production of the Voie de Vézelay Guide. The target date for publication of the 5<sup>th</sup> edition, which will have a new cover, is 1 Feb 2011. The address of the Association is 17, rue de la chèvrerie - 89450 Asquins-près-Vézelay, France Tél. : 00 33 (0)5 53 50 73 21 Fax : 00 33 (0)5 53 51 16 76

The website is: [www.saint-jacques-par-vezelay.eu](http://www.saint-jacques-par-vezelay.eu) Contact can be made with Monique Chassain at Belcayre - 24290 Thonac. You can order the Guide from the CSJ Bookshop or you can place orders for the guide with her. Tel: 0033 5 53 50 73 21

### **From Sandra Collier**

In December 25 pilgrims attended our gathering. David, a returned pilgrim, was also there. David has been an avid bush walker for many years and has just returned from the camino: the best experience of his life. He has been coming to Sydney every-other month, for about a year to attend our meetings and to read our guide books and then buy his own and listen to camino stories. This time he sat with two ladies who are leaving in April and he was confidently chatting about his own camino experiences when he said to me, "I have a present for you". Whereupon the present came out of his bag – a CSJ pilgrim passport. I did not even know that I had lost it... He had been in Rabanal and had met Liz and Dick who were the *hospitaliers* at the time. They asked him does he know Sandra in Sydney because she has left her pilgrim passport behind? A little Saint James moment on the Sydney camino!

### **From Alan Day, New Zealand**

I walked from Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port to Santiago to give thanks for my 70 years, and to ask for long life, health and happiness for my children. ...When I got to Santiago I was on a high, I actually made it. People in the cathedral were listening to a priest singing and tears of joy were running down their faces. I wanted to see the *botafumeiro* swung by six priests [sic], as a highlight of my Camino, and attended three services to no avail, but while waiting for a Mass to start, I could hear a noise, a faint boom-boom- boom and it got louder BOOM-BOOM-BOOM, three lines of people were coming down the aisle, wearing white with red trims, in the middle a line of six big drums BOOM-BOOM-BOOM, and either r side, two lines of people playing castanets, CLICK-CLICK-CLICK, and as they twirled from side to side, the coloured ribbons on their hats made arcs like a rainbow.

The rhythmic beats of the drums, echoed off the walls filling the cathedral, the mind, it was wonderful, beautiful, an offering of music and dance to God. It wasn't what I expected, but more than I could have hoped for.



# Obituaries

## **Mary Patricia May 1923-2010**

Pat May lived in Southsea, before becoming a nurse during and after World War II. Following her marriage to Joseph May she supported him in his distinguished career in the newspaper industry. In 1990 and 1992, she and Joseph walked the Camino Francés in sections from Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port. Subsequently, she accompanied Joseph on several Rabanal working parties. He predeceased her in January 2010. May she rest in peace alongside Joseph and their son Dominic at Stoneyhurst College, Lancashire.

JOHN HATFIELD

## **Aubrey Pearcey 1917-2010**

With his wife Maime, Aubrey made three pilgrimages on foot to Santiago. Together they did the Camino Francés in 1990, the Camino Primitivo in 2000 and the Camino Portugués in 2002. Two years before he died, Maime miraculously managed to take him in a wheelchair, via Madrid to Santiago for St James's day as a culmination of a long-life devoted to St James.

## **Barry Humpidge 1931-2011**

Barry joined CSJ in 1988. He was an engineer and printer and was able to assist the CSJ in the production of 2 early works: the translation by James Hogarth of the *Pilgrim's Guide: a 12<sup>th</sup> Guide for the Pilgrim to St James of Compostella* (1992, 1996) still in print, and the *Pilgrim Anthology*, edited by Phinella Henderson (1994), now out of print but which we hope to reprint in due course.

## **Robert Brian Tate 1921-2011**

Brian Tate was a CSJ member from early days. An expert linguist, he had been appointed the first Professor of Spanish at Nottingham University in 1954. He built up the Department with style and gained great respect from academic colleagues. His first love was Catalan but he also had an abiding interest in Santiago and the Pilgrimage.

In 1987 he published *The Pilgrim Road to Santiago* (Phaidon). This is a glossy photographic essay, the result of a marathon journey by jeep with his son Marcus and photographer Pablo Keller through France and Spain. Brian loved to describe how they would leave their rooms

before dawn to drive to some scenic spot, to get the most atmospheric light for the photos. Then they drove hard to the next location to wait for the evening light to illuminate the church or landscape. Marcus says that this experience helped him decide to study photography.

Brian was active in CSJ as a member of the Research Working Party which met twice a year at Birmingham University. In 1990 he contributed to the Hengrave Hall Conference on *Pilgrimage from the British Isles to Santiago de Compostela in the Middle Ages*. In 1994 he helped to persuade the Xunta de Galicia to publish Constance Storrs' important MA thesis as *Jacobean Pilgrims from England to Compostella from the early 12th to late 15th century* and he gave the 1990 E Allison Peers Lecture at Liverpool University on *Pilgrimages to Compostella from the British Isles during the Middle Ages*, which we republished as Occasional Paper No 5 in 2004. In 1995, under his chairmanship, the Research Working Party published the first County Guide, *Leicestershire and the Pilgrimage to Santiago*, researched by Ted and Peggy Harper. Also in 1995 he wrote, with Thorlac Turville-Petre, *Two Pilgrim Itineraries of the Later Middle Ages*, which was published by the Xunta de Galicia. This stimulated further research on Master Robert Langton, Clerke and the Pilgrimage of Samuel Purchas.

He succeeded Prof Derek Lomax as CSJ representative on the Xunta's Committee of Experts, working for many years alongside such scholars as Profs Robert Plötz, Paulo Caucci von Saucken, Fernando López Alsina and Manuel Díaz y Díaz.

Prof Richard Cardwell of Nottingham University, who succeeded Brian as Head of Department in 1984, spoke in tribute at his funeral about Brian as soldier and scholar. The vicar of Beeston spoke of his life as Pilgrim. His pilgrim hat rested on his coffin and scallop shells were cremated with him. The 'pilgrimage of life' grew more meaningful and gave him strength as he grew older and his health declined. His ashes will be buried beneath a stone inscribed Soldier, Scholar, Pilgrim. The pilgrimage goes on.

# Book Reviews

*All views expressed here are those of the reviewer and not necessarily those of the Confraternity of Saint James*

## **Seven Tips to Make the Most of the Camino de Santiago**

Cheri Powell, Amazon Books, R.C. Linnell Publishing, 2010, ISBN: 978-0615381466  
180pp, \$17.95

This is an interesting book, not only for its content, but also for the fact that it is a print-on-demand book, which you order from Amazon.

The depth of the book is indicated by the seven tips running to 180 pages. The tips are very broad – for example, the first tip is “Know the History of the Camino” and deals with the historical St James, the first pilgrim guide, the miracles of St James and the Modern Camino. I found that my knowledge of this subject was not as comprehensive as I imagined, and I was glad to know more. “What to take and what to leave behind” is a very intelligent discussion on packing lists. Packing lists appear in many books and numerous websites, but this discussion would enable potential pilgrims to get further up the learning curve before they get on to the camino – and to save them the trouble of posting their surplus home at Puente la Reina as I did eight years ago.

Other sections deal in similar detail with setting expectations, getting there and back, good things to know on the Camino, Etiquette, and knowing how to stay healthy on the camino.

The author says in her introduction “you will leave this book at home after reading it”. True, I am sure, but the wisdom you have obtained from it will be with you throughout your journey, and will make walking the camino more enjoyable and less liable to difficult problems.

PIERS NICHOLSON

## **Romanesque Churches of Spain: A Traveller's Guide**

Peter Strafford, Giles De la Mare Publishers, 2010, 978-1900357319, 400pp, £16.99

This is the guide English speaking enthusiasts have been waiting for ; there is little in our Mother tongue on this subject that has not either



been published in obscure journals, or else contained in volumes written a long time ago, such as Kenneth Conant's *Carolingian and Romanesque Architecture* (1959).

Peter Strafford worked as a journalist on the Times for three decades and held various responsible positions for that paper. This experience shows in his writing which is concise, informative and aimed at the general public, which is presumably why he decided to omit both footnotes and bibliography. His short glossary is invaluable for those of us who are inclined to forget such things as the difference between Mozarab and Mudéjar Architecture, or the proper term for horseshoe arches.

The 32 page introduction should enhance the experience of anyone walking the Camino Francés or the Camino del Norte. With a short passage about the history of Northern Spain, Strafford helps us to sort out who the Visigoths were, as well as talking about early invasions of various North African tribes, who are popularly lumped together as the Moors. There is a splendidly concise account of the importance and the development of the pilgrimage routes from the time of Sancho el Mayor (1004 – 1035), who was King of Navarre and became ruler of Castile and Aragon. Moving to the twelfth century, Strafford also manages to include 1 ½ pages summarizing the Pilgrim's Guide, and to write briefly about Cluny's presence in Spain.

The rest of the book is devoted to individual entries for 120 Romanesque churches arranged in 8 geographical areas. Each area has an introduction followed by short discussions of each church, arranged alphabetically. Geographical ignorance is not a hindrance; for those unsure of the provinces a full index is included.

Naturally the section on Galicia will be the most interesting for pilgrims. Strafford challenges popular notions about the area's remoteness, pointing that it was never as inaccessible as Asturias, Cantabria or the Basque country. The entry for Santiago is impressive. Two examples will suffice. Writing about the Portico de la Gloria, he compares the two figures playing the organistrum to those on the North doorway in the church of Santa Maria la Mayor in Toro (Léon). He touches on the 4 architecturally related major churches that Prof. Fernie discussed in his 2008 Storrs lecture, but suggests that Santiago's architect may have been French, while Prof Fernie thinks Santiago could have come first and influenced the other churches\*.

This is a book that is well worth looking at before you go on to Camino, rather than one to take with you. Few pilgrims will have

energies for the architectural niceties. But the main introduction, and those for the regions could be very useful starting points towards understanding medieval Christian culture in Northern Spain.

ROSALIND BILLINGHAM

\* CSJ Occasional Paper No. 9

## **A Slow Walk across Spain – Walking the Camino de Santiago**

Karen Manwaring, Watermelon Press 2010, ISBN 978-0-646-54465-6

‘What an attractive book’ was my first reaction on looking at this newly published guide to the Camino Francés. The stylish format is original and eye-catching, with monochrome photos, coloured plates, varying fonts and page formats, recipes, diary entries, pilgrim stamps, derivations and quotes all collaged into the text.

The author, an Australian who has walked the Camino Francés twice, lays out the specific purpose of the book in her introduction:

*‘Let’s Go for a Walk: using this book to imagine and prepare for your Camino’.* This jolly invitation sets the tone for the book which is a personal, easy-going, friendly and at times jokey evocation of the Camino experience which cannot fail, I suggest, to carry the reader along with its enthusiasm.

Karen Manwaring emphasises that this is not a book to pack in your rucksack – in effect it can be interpreted as either armchair travelling or an excellent, very readable guide to the pilgrimage route (referred to throughout as ‘The Camino’) before you set off. Based on her experiences of walking to Santiago, it is planned in three parts. The first – ‘*Camino Calling*’ – explores the ‘why’ of the pilgrimage... the personal/ spiritual (or otherwise) call of the road and what it may mean in practice. Part two is the practical section – full of tips about walking, food, fitness, accommodation, feet (!), the topography of the route, kit lists, guidebooks, weather, Spanish food etc. There are lots of references at the end of the book for further reading and websites.

The last section is about the history of the Camino and St James – myths and reality. Some information given as ‘fact’ (such as the Battle of Clavijo) may be merely legend and by ‘the 9<sup>th</sup> century battle of Limoges’ did the author mean the Battle of Poitiers in 732, which ended the Muslim progress north through Frankish territory? This and little details – calling the Cruz de Ferro ‘Cruz Ferro’ and the origins of the Santiago tax (repealed in the 19<sup>th</sup> century) perhaps

aren't that significant in the whole context of the book's scope but left me feeling frustrated that some checking/editing might have been advisable. There are some beautifully designed maps, including a fold out, detachable one, which however is so general that its usefulness other than to indicate in very general terms the routes, is limited. Not all the photos stated where they were taken – I found that frustrating! Perhaps the sheer concentration on the design and style of the book can at times detract from its practicality – some of the lovely subdued typefaces, colours and photos can be hard to read. All in all though, this is such an appealing book that I wouldn't hesitate to recommend it to prospective pilgrims or, to those who are already familiar with the walk, as a very accessible overview. I found it a joy to handle and look through – the author really does gather the reader in and you feel ready to pull those boots on and tackle 'your Camino'.

HELEN WILLSON



# The Way

## Two CSJ members preview the film:

**T**he *Way* is a film that aims to persuade that there is a pilgrimage for all comers. By virtue, however, of its cinematic medium, it inevitably tells its story in a romantic style. No place for bedbugs, blisters or even blood sweat and tears. However the scenery is magnificently and clearly portrayed. The quartet of main characters have their own integrity and Martin Sheen as the grieving father demonstrates a degree of nobility that he sustains throughout the two hours in the cinema. There is a parallel with Larry Boulting's more intimate 2004 docudrama *Within the Way Without*. *The Way* is a large budget Hollywood attempt to convey a moving tale. It succeeds in showing the emotions along the paths of four pilgrims. Yet its realism still fails to display the authenticity of a 500 mile journey. It is not sentimental, it is understated and will reach out to a large audience. Our preview attracted good interest and a lot will depend upon critical comment. Grass root support from Guardian readers and the timing of showing around this Easter raises its potential. However for a member of the Confraternity, *The Way* is only a partial reflection of days on the Camino. Sheen himself admits to have walked just a little of the paths of Galicia and has received the recognition that his celebrity deserves. His credentials are undoubted, having greeted Mother Teresa and had an audience with the Pope. His son, Emilio Estevez has produced a film that will reach out to potential pilgrims across the globe. His aim is to question what is a "true pilgrim". Who knows? At least filmgoers will now recognise Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port and Santiago de Compostela as the limits of Jacobean pilgrimage.

Members may choose to view the film for the sake of nostalgia as many of the locations remind one of the Camino Francés in good times and weathers. Further the stimulus from *The Way* could well prompt a range of queries and conversations from potential pilgrims. So it would be as well to see a picture that does promote pilgrimage as an aid to personal and spiritual growth. General release is planned for the UK on 15 April and in the United States in September.

RICHARD JEFFERIES (Trustee)

2011 and Hollywood's gaze alights on our beloved Camino – what are we to make of it? We know that at its best Hollywood can produce a spectacular and moving experience. But at its worst, serves up an americocentric world. As graduate pilgrims we approach the release of this offering with some hope for the great movie that will communicate this special experience to millions. But also with trepidation - that what we cherish will be reduced to a crass commercial formula.

It has to be said that the Camino is pretty much the perfect setting for what used to be called picaresque – where our hero sets off on a journey to be peppered with trials, adventures and revelations. This, as no doubt most of us can testify, is the Camino itself.

With such a setting it would be very hard for the movie not to get the basics right and indeed it does - we have the adventures, the serious moments and the humour, interesting and mysterious characters and revelations. We can marvel at the striking landscape and the existence of old-world old-religion Spain. We can wonder at its legacy of architecture, churches and tradition, as we pass through it towards our goal, while not being entirely certain of what that will bring.

In this case, the story follows Tom, played by Martin Sheen whose estranged son dies while walking over the Pyrenees on the first day of his Camino. Tom goes to Saint-Jean and, partly to pay his respects to his son and in part to try and understand him, embarks on the Camino himself. He carries his son's backpack and a box containing his ashes, which he distributes at various points along the way.

Prickly and morose at first, he starts to interact with and then warm to a disparate band of pilgrims, each with their own issues to sort out. And as the journey progresses they are drawn closer together through a series of incidents – as much about how they get on with each other as the world they are passing through. The acting is pretty solid although James Nesbitt does get carried away a bit when we first meet him, throwing a wobbly in a Navarran field.

The physical beauty of our Camino is faithfully captured and many of the key ingredients of a Camino are included, such as the challenges, the camaraderie and ultimately the sense of achievement - even the age-old debates about why you walk the camino and who is the real pilgrim. You'll see places you recognise, lustrously captured on film which, for me, triggered many a poignant memory of what I was going through on my first pilgrimage. We get a decent 'greatest hits' of locations including Saint-Jean and the clattery train, the Pyrenees,

Roncesvalles, Pamplona, Alto de Perdón, Burgos, a little of the meseta, the Cruz de Ferro, O Cebreiro and of course Santiago.

But wait, this is Hollywood! - so all the key people speak excellent English, including a French policeman and a traditional Burgos gypsy. We barely see a motorised vehicle during the whole film and our pilgrims' appearance remains exactly the same from beginning to end. Its synopsis of the camino does feel authentic, but padded out with standard fare by your jobbing scriptwriters. They've missed the sore feet and blisters, the thundering lorries, the Galician weather, the not knowing whether at the end of the day there'll be food and somewhere safe and dry to sleep. They've captured nothing about how early worries turn to wonder and then to the slow realisation that somehow, things always seem to work out – one way or another. Nor appreciate the little considerations we learn to make for each other (such as waiting for and walking with someone slower than us and sharing our last piece of food) that gradually evolve into kindness and trust.

But apart from this it's an engaging film and honestly, it would be unrealistic to expect much more. I doubt it'll convert the friends and family we arrested ancient mariner-like when we returned from our first camino. But I think it just shows us that that ultimately the Camino is not there to be described, it's there to be done.

So enjoy a gentle tale. Allow yourself to fall into step with this quirky bunch. And take the opportunity to be reminded of your own first journey and all that it has meant to you.

TOM BARTON (Saturday Office Volunteer)

*The Way* goes on general release on Friday 15 April .

# From the Secretary's Notebook

Marion Marples

## **Annual General Meeting**

Thank you very much to all who participated in and helped with this year's AGM and 'Speed Practical Pilgrim'. Alison Raju has stepped down from being Vice Chairman and a Trustee, though she will be still be involved in many other ways. Eileen Terry and Sue Goddard have also stepped down and we welcome Liz Crean from Bristol and Clare Taylor from Bishop Auckland as new Trustees. Kuni Bahnen's presentation of images, poetry and music, was to be enjoyed and to be allowed to refresh the spirit. Special thanks go to Joyce Culnane and her helpers who produced a fantastic spread of food for everyone to enjoy. Only one item of lost property this year –did you lose a long black devoré scarf? I have it at the office.

## **Being an Office Volunteer for the CSJ**

We need some more people to learn about being an office volunteer, both for the weekly Thursday openings and for the less frequent Saturday Open Days. It is an opportunity to excite and reassure new pilgrims that pilgrimage is actually possible and to help them plan and prepare for their pilgrimages. You never know who is going to come through the door, what questions will be asked and it is a chance to meet some of our overseas members who call in en route for Spain. The basic reference source is the CSJ website and I encourage volunteers to be familiar with the whole range of our publications and other books so they can advise callers on what is available. If you would like to be considered, please email [office@csj.org.uk](mailto:office@csj.org.uk) and come on a Thursday to experience the range of skills you could develop.

## **Minutes Secretary**

We are very fortunate that we have had two excellent members, Wendy Beecher and Anne Froud, to take the Minutes at Trustees meetings. Wendy is no longer able to continue and so we should like a replacement for her. The Trustees meetings are on the first Tuesday of the odd numbered months, near Waterloo Station, from 6pm to 8pm. There is one Saturday meeting in the summer (more informal)



and it is helpful if the biannual Gaucelmo meeting (Tuesday pm at present) or Miraz (Saturday morning) meetings could be covered, by negotiation. We ask you take the minutes and then send them as soon as possible to Alison Thorp for distribution to trustees. Please contact Alison Thorp at the office if you would like to volunteer.

### **New Guide writer for Los Caminos del Norte**

After an appeal in the Bulletin, we are very pleased that Chris Lennie, has come forward to offer his services for further editions of the Northern Route guides undertaken until now by Eric Walker. Sadly, poor health for Eric and his wife Elizabeth, means that he is no longer easily able to update the Guides. Chris welcomes any feedback from 2011 pilgrims [chris.lennie@googlemail.com](mailto:chris.lennie@googlemail.com)

### **Novena for St James**

On our website we have a Novena of Prayer in preparation for a pilgrimage, originally translated from Spanish by Karen Puga and with an introduction about St James and the tradition of pilgrimage by Donn Tilson. I was delighted recently to receive a request for the Novena to be translated into Latvian to appear on the blog of Bruno Skara of St James's cathedral in Riga.

### **Call for information**

Jean-Pierre Rousset, a former president of the Association des Amis de Saint-Jacques in Les Landes, now living in America, is making a study of English-speaking pilgrims. He is interested in what brought them to the camino on a human and philosophical way, the strongest memory of the whole pilgrimage, whether their life changed on their return home. The purpose of the book he is writing will be to encourage English speakers on to the camino. Anyone who would like to be part of this project please email him on [info@compostela-images.com](mailto:info@compostela-images.com)

### **Spanish Tourist Office**

Last year the Spanish Tourist Office in London ran a competition for schools on the Camino de Santiago, in conjunction with Turgalicia, the Xacobeo and the CSJ. The winning entry came from Lancaster Girls' Grammar School, which has specialist language college status. The prize is a trip to Galicia and Santiago: we are waiting to hear more from the head of Spanish, Kate Whitehouse, about how they will use their prize.

## **Holy Year Refuges**

The Xacobeo opened 10 new refuges last year on various routes. They supported more than 60 others, making a total of 3900 beds. The latest four refuges opened in Dumbria (between Finisterre and Muxia), Samos, Valgo and Palas do Rei. An additional five temporary refuges were set up. Refurbishment work took place at Melide and Hospital do Condesa and 3 enlargements, in conjunction with religious orders at Samos and Sobrado and with the Confraternity of Saint James at Miraz. The total spent was 1.5 m euros. In 2011 six new albergues will be opened-in Betanzos, Carral, Boimorto, Pontecesures, Castroverde and Viladerrei.

## **Bookshop news**

### **NEW CSJ GUIDES**

**Pilgrim Guides to Spain: 1. Camino Francés**, 2011 Up to the minute Guide for all, edited by William Bisset with help from 2010 Pilgrims, 96pp, £7.00

**2. Camino Mozárabe**, 2011, Alison Raju, 96pp, £5, new edition, completely revised. As this 1000km route from Seville becomes more popular this is an invaluable addition as the Cicerone Guide is temporarily out of print until a new edition in 2012.

**7. Camino Inglés**, 2011: John Walker, 50pp. A revised Guide to the Camino Inglés, with changes /clarifications to the route on the A Coruña branch.

This is one of the many Guides now available to download from [www.csj.org.uk/guides-online.htm](http://www.csj.org.uk/guides-online.htm) - these include:

Camino Inglés; Portugués (from Porto and from Lisbon to Porto); Finisterre; Madrid to Sahagún; Tunnel Route; Camino del Salvador (León to Oviedo); Camino del Invierno (alternative route from Ponferrada); Voie Littorale (France).

### **Pilgrim Guides to the Roads to Santiago through France:**

**4 Arles-Puente la Reina: i) Arles-Toulouse** 60pp, **ii) Toulouse-Puente la Reina**, 96pp. They cost £5 each.

We are indebted to Michael Gaches for very efficiently producing new editions of the original guides by Marigold and Maurice Fox. These are the only guides in English to this route. Michael walked the entire route in 2010 and provides walking directions and advice on accommodation as well historical and geographical information, all in a succinct form. Both guides have an introduction to the whole route;

Part ii, Toulouse-Puente la Reina also includes the Camino Aragonés.

### **MIAM MIAM DODO GUIDES**

We have in stock the new 2011 editions of the Guides for the GR65 le Puy route, £14.40; the Camino Francés (£17.20); the Voie d'Arles (2010-11 edition), £17.20.

### **JOHN BRIERLEY CAMINO GUIDES**

John Brierley has just published new editions of all three of his guidebooks - to the *Camino francés*, the route to *Finisterre/Muxía* and the *Camino portugués*. The latter now contains a full route-finding description, plus accommodation details, not only of the *camino* starting in Porto but also the 615 km route from Lisbon. (The previous, second, edition of this guide included this section but only in outline form.)

### **EVERY PILGRIM'S GUIDE TO WALKING TO SANTIAGO DE COMPOSTELA**

Peter Müller, Angel Fernández de Aránguiz, 2011, translated by Laurie Dennett, 192pp, £12.95

This book has had a long and difficult journey. It originally appeared in German, with examples of poetry and music from the German tradition. Then it was translated into Spanish with Spanish cultural references by Angel Fernández de Aránguiz, a priest of the camino, responsible for developing links with German pilgrims and at least six refuges, including Foncébadon and La Faba. Laurie Dennett has drawn on CSJ's *Bulletin* and Library to share the devotional text with English speaking pilgrims. Full review in *Bulletin* 114.

### **New Library Books**

It is quite difficult to keep up with the flow of new books about the camino. One particularly special volume is *With an eye on the Via de la Plata: Seville to Salamanca* by Martin Davis, one of our more recent members. It is a beautiful photographic record and diary of his 2010 pilgrimage from Seville, including the weather vane silhouette we used for the cover of *Bulletin* 110. As Martin himself says, "it is too expensive (£72.94) to buy unless you are very rich or addicted to coffee table books", but you can look at it online at [www.blurb.com/bookstore/detail/1488414](http://www.blurb.com/bookstore/detail/1488414)

## **Crossing Paris**

A new waymarked route from the Basilica of Saint-Denis in the north of Paris, past the Tour Saint-Jacques and out of Paris along the Rue Saint-Jacques was inaugurated in December. Points of interest along the route include the church of Saint-Jacques and Saint-Christophe de la Villette in the 19eme, on the Roman road from Flanders and Germany and known to pilgrims to Santiago; the now reopened Tour Saint-Jacques by the Seine, where so many pilgrims gathered during the Middle Ages after their stay at the nearby Hôpital-Saint-Jacques; the Oratory of Saint-Jacques at the head of the Rue-Saint-Jacques; the pilgrim symbols to be found in nearby Saint-Severin and the scallop shells decorating the Hôtel de Cluny, marking the devotion of its founder Jacques d'Auboise. More information on [www.compostelle2000.com](http://www.compostelle2000.com)

## **New bridge between Finisterre and Muxia**

A new bridge has been built over the Rio Castro, between Dumbria and Muxia.

## **Ryanair**

There seems to a bit of a stand-off between Ryanair, the Xunta and Santiago Council. Flights ceased from Stansted at the end of January and resume on Sunday 27 March, but only 4 days per week, Monday, Wednesday, Friday, Sunday.

## **Via de la Plata**

Those who have been inspired to follow this route by the contributions of Alison Raju, Martin Davis or David and Penny Penton at the London Practical Pilgrim day, will be pleased to know that the daily 8.30am Mass in the Capilla Mayor at Seville Cathedral will end with a pilgrim blessing .



# CSJ Events

**Saturday 16 April** [additional date]

**Office Open Day**

Office open from 10.30am-3.30pm for information, purchases, browsing the library and meeting fellow pilgrims.

**Thu 2-Thu 9 June**

**Visit to Rabanal and Miraz**

To celebrate the 20th Anniversary of the opening of Refugio Gaucelmo, Rabanal (Sat 4 June) and the blessing of the new building at Refugio de Peregrinos de Miraz (Tues 7 June). The basic plan is to fly with easyJet from Gatwick to Madrid, take the bus to Astorga and taxi/car to Rabanal. 4 nights in Antonio's.

- Saturday 4 June; Celebrations with tapas in the huerta 5pm, evening meal together at Antonio's
- Sunday - optional trip to spectacular village of Santiago de Peñalba and the Valley of Silence
- Monday - coach transfer to Parga via Herrerías/Hospital Inglés and O Cebriero/La Laguna de Tabla (visit to Laurie Dennett). 3 nights in Parga
- Tuesday - Mass in church and Blessing at Refugio de Peregrinos de Miraz, followed by party
- Wednesday - choice - in Miraz, visit Sobrado, Lugo, or Santiago
- Thursday fly with Vueling from la Coruña to Gatwick arr 1540

The group will meet at Madrid airport to travel together to Astorga in the afternoon on Thurs 2 June. Please email [p.graham2712@btinternet.com](mailto:p.graham2712@btinternet.com) for a full schedule and to let us know if you would like us to book accommodation in either place for you, if you would like to go on the Sunday coach trip (to be organised around Mass), or a place on the coach trip to Miraz. It is also helpful for us to know who will be travelling by car and whether you might have room for passengers at either location.

## **Fri 22-Sunday 24 July    Reading Abbey and St James**

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A weekend of history, music and pilgrimage.

Reading Abbey was one of the most important monasteries of the Middle Ages. It was founded in 1121 by Henry I, who was buried in front of the High Altar. The court and parliament met there; Thomas Becket and Henry II both attended the consecration in 1146. Henry II had a great devotion to St James. His daughter Matilda married the Holy Roman Emperor Henry V. On his death she gave the relic of the hand of St James from his treasury to the Abbey in memory of her father. Reading grew as a place of pilgrimage throughout the Middle Ages. The English round, *Sumer is acumen in*, was first written down by a monk of Reading Abbey.

At the dissolution of the monasteries, the relic was hidden. Much of the metalwork, roofing and stone from the Abbey was reused in buildings in Reading and the Thames valley, including at Windsor Castle. In 1786 a shrivelled hand was discovered by workmen building the new Reading gaol. It was placed in Reading Museum, until the collection was dispersed in the 1850s. It was then acquired by Charles Scott-Murray, MP for Buckingham, for the new private chapel he commissioned from AW Pugin for his home at Danesfield, just along the Thames. Pugin also designed the churches of St James in Reading, and St Peter's Marlow which acquired the relic of the hand in 1896, after Danesfield was sold.

### **The weekend programme**

- Fri 22 July, St James's Church, 7.30pm , Lecture by Prof Brian Kemp, former Prof of History at Reading University and expert on Reading Abbey. Also Prof Lindy Grant, current Professor of Medieval History at Reading University , will present the plans to further conserve the Abbey ruins, develop the Museum displays and enhance Reading's place in European history.
- Sat 23 July, St James's church: Music workshops through the day for A Pilgrimage Cantata by John Read. All are welcome to participate; music available in advance. There will be some rehearsals in Newent, Glos , London and possibly Reading in preparation. Non singers: walkers could take the beginning of the St James's Way- a non-historical route devised to take pilgrims from Reading to Southampton or Portsmouth for the start of a pilgrimage to Santiago either through France or through Spain.

7.30pm: performance of *Pilgrimage Cantata* in St James's Church followed by refreshments in the church.

- Sunday 24 July: 11am Mass of St James, with the parish of St James. The church of St Peter Marlow is very kindly lending the reputed relic of the Hand of St James for this occasion. Sunday lunch together in Reading PM walk in Reading to see last traces of the Abbey including the Gatehouse, St Laurence's church, the Hospitium, the Mill stream and mill, and visit to Reading Museum, with a display of fine 12<sup>th</sup> c carved capitals from the cloister of the Abbey.

Please email the office for full programme details and to reserve accommodation with the group.

## **1-16 September**

## **Walking Pilgrimage**

### **NORTHERN ROUTE WALKING PILGRIMAGE**

Fly out from Stansted on 31 August to Asturias, catch a local bus to Lueca where we begin the walk on 1 September. Return to Stansted from Santiago on 16 September. We hope to accommodate all reasonable levels of walkers and find various types of accommodation wherever possible.

Of course, as before, pilgrims will find their own way to the start and their own way back to whichever airport they choose. However, all possible help and assistance will be given on the walk.

We have allowed 16 days, a day to get there a day back + a day in Santiago. We worked the walk out into 12 stages leaving an extra day for either a rest day or to make one of the stages a bit shorter. Please contact Colin Jones on [pacharan@btinternet.com](mailto:pacharan@btinternet.com) or Dave Jones (no relation) on [d-jones56@sky.com](mailto:d-jones56@sky.com) to register your interest or learn more.

## **Sat 24 September**

## **Office Open Day**

10.30am-4pm Office open for enquiries, browsing and information



## **Fri 21-Sun 23 October**

## **Retreat**

### **RETREAT FOR RETURNED PILGRIMS**

To be held at Ampleforth Abbey, N Yorkshire, and to be led by Fr Ben Griffiths, chaplain at St James's Hospital, Leeds. This is an opportunity for a weekend of quiet reflection and lively recollection of all aspects of making the pilgrimage for those who have come back from pilgrimage in the recent past. Fr Ben uses music, poetry and prose to recall people and places and understanding of the complex thoughts and feelings aroused by the pilgrimage experience. There is an opportunity for an autumnal walk, worship in the Abbey church, excellent food and warm accommodation. Single and twin rooms available, price £120 per person. Please contact [office@csj.org.uk](mailto:office@csj.org.uk) for more information or send £50 deposit, payable to Confraternity of Saint James to reserve a place.

## **Saturday 29 October**

## **Office Open Day**

10.30am-4pm Office open for enquiries, browsing and information.

## **Wed 2 - Fri 4 November**

## **Utrecht Conference**

The Dutch Association is holding an international conference on the theme of 'Reflections on a Renaissance'. Papers will be in English and there are opportunities to present the CSJ and our activities and time to contribute to the discussion of emerging issues for the future. We should also like to make a presentation about The St James's Way from Reading to Southampton/Portsmouth as we know there is a lot of interest in walking English pilgrim paths. There is also an important Santiago exhibition at the Catharijnconvent Museum of Christianity in the Netherlands which we shall be able to visit. If you think you might like to join a group of CSJ members visiting Utrecht please contact the office. The Conference could be combined with a visit to some of the other Dutch Santiago sites.

## **Saturday 26 November Office Open Day & Lecture**

10.30am-4pm Office open for enquiries, browsing and information.  
Storrs Lecture at 4pm speaker and venue tbc



# Other Events

**Thu 23 June-Sun 9 October**

**Exhibition**

Treasures of Heaven: Saints, Relics and Devotion in Medieval Europe, British Museum This exhibition brings together for the first time some of the finest sacred treasures of the medieval age. It features over 150 objects drawn from more than 40 institutions including the Vatican, European church treasuries, museums from the USA and Europe and the British Museum's own pre-eminent collection.

**Fri 7-Sat 8 October**

**Conference**

Matter of Faith: a 2 day conference in connection with the Treasures of Heaven Exhibition.

**Saturday 5 November**

**Course**

## **EL CAMINO DE SANTIAGO COURSE**

Organised by Janet Leitch, to be held at the WEA, 223 Angas Street, Adelaide, Australia. Phone 8223 1979 for enquiries and bookings.

The course covers information about the different paths, accommodation options, and lots of practical information with regard to packing, getting there, stages, guides etc.

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Information provided is for members' use only.

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

### Pilgrim Guides to Spain

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| 3 | <i>Finisterre</i>            | Alison Raju, 21 Hall Street, Sherwood, NOTTINGHAM NG5 4BB<br>alisonraju@btopenworld.com |
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| 4 | <i>Arles to Puente La Reina</i> | Michael Gaches<br>mikrowen@yahoo.co.uk  |

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**Practical Pilgrim Notes**    *for Walkers*  
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                                      *for Riders*  
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**Contributions to these and other publications should be addressed to the Office.**

# Confraternity of Saint James

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