

Five Alive

The Magazine of the Redruth Team Ministry

St Euny Redruth, Christchurch Lanner, St Andrew Pencoys
St Andrew Redruth and St Stephen Treleigh



OCTOBER 2026
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FIVE ALIVE MAGAZINE

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LATEST DATE FOR ARTICLES—FRIDAY 20 OCTOBER 2026

What's the Story...?!

For those of you more engaged with popular culture, you may have heard that Oasis have announced some dates next year. This is not a modern band, they were big in the 90's when I was a teenager. I feel that we need to be super aware in church of our dominant demographic, and how we can be exclusionary when we claim things are modern, when what we actually mean is we are old!!!! So, Oasis, a band who I followed in the 90's, are back.

My eldest, Daniel, has been a huge fan since he found my CD collection about five years ago. I very much appreciate that much of the loud music that blasts through our house is music that I have listened to for two thirds of my life!!

You will know some of Oasis' music. Wonderwall became a world-cup theme song for England this summer, and Champagne Supernova is often blasting out in shops. And if you want to get a pub of drunk lads singing, then start singing "so Sally can wait..." and they'll all be singing "Don't look back in anger" before you know it.

Music is one of the many things that can mark our generation, and our story. Music marks a point in time, and it reveals more about what matters to us, our background, and where we are from. I once met a really really famous pop star from Burundi. He was Burundi's answer to Robbie Williams. I can't remember his name, and I couldn't pick him out on the street. But if I was from Burundi, he would be a household name to me. Music, like other parts of culture, tells other people lots about us.

When we tell our story, we need to be aware of the context we speak in and to. I could tell a Yorkshireman that some bloke I met was "built like a Cornish Hedge" and it wouldn't land quite as I meant it to. Nothing against Yorkshire drystone walls, but they don't have the foundations, foliage, and presence of a Cornish hedge!!

When we tell our story as church, what is the story we tell? Do we speak of the choir filling the stalls, incense rising to the ceiling, and the full pews as a celebration of the church's story? Or do we tell it as a regret that it is no more?

I was in a meeting with Bishop David last June. He was encouraging us (parish priests who are feeling just a little despondent at times!) that we need to keep telling the story.

We have an amazing story to tell. We are part of a multigenerational community that does social justice, youth work, creates community for lonely people, visits the ill and sick, and knows Christ at the centre of everything. Our faith leads us to believe we have the reassurance of eternal life, and peace in the most challenging circumstances. Our church is kept functioning by the time and energy of volunteers. And we meet with anyone who wants us from our wider community, through the ministry of our priests, and through the witness and encounter each of us has day by day. We have an amazing story to tell.

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But what is the story we tell to those around us, or in PCC, or on our DCCs, or at our church activities? Over the next few months I am reviewing again where we are going, and how we spend our time and energy. I want us, as a parish, to think deeply about how our PCC best serves the whole parish, and how we make decisions together. I want us to think about how the lesser seen parts of our life, are still a huge part of our life, and to be celebrated. But it starts with thinking about how we tell our story.

Oasis were a band in the 90's. But they are so much more than that now. They have heritage, they release new music, and they have woven themselves into this country's culture for thirty years. Church is even more than that. But do we tell our story as well as a pop band?!

What's the story? The story is that Christ lives: The story is how that fact affects who we are and what we do.

Revd Becca Bell

FROM THE REGISTERS

WEDDING

05 September 2026	Roger Mark Crouch and Sharon Ann Kernan	St Stephen Treleigh
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FUNERALS

24 July	2026	Tom Mugford	St Andrew Pencoyd
27 July	2026	Henry Grenfell	St Stephen Treleigh
24 August	2026	Sinclair Johns	StEuny

INTERMENT OF ASHES

18 August	2026	Julie Clife-Matthews	St Stephen Treleigh
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CHRISTCHURCH LANNER



Christchurch remains open 10.00am– 4.00pm. The **FIRST** Sunday of each **MONTH** IS A service of the word. Holy Communion is celebrated on Sundays **TWO** and **THREE** at 9.30am. The third Sunday is a Communion with new music and each Wednesday there is a Prayer Book Communion

Service at 11.00am followed by a Bible Study. *The LAST Sunday of each month will continue to revolve through the six worship settings and starts at 10.30am.*

OTHER EVENTS AT CHRISTCHURCH: Margaret's Last Monday Tea Party 2.00pm – 4.00pm. the OCTOBER date is Monday October 26. EVERYONE IS VERY WELCOME.

FUTURE EVENTS: The games afternoons and the film nights are advertised in the weekly pew sheet. **GAMES REMAINS TO EVERY OTHER TUESDAY 2pm – 4pm.**
Future dates include: OCTOBER 6 & 20

FILM NIGHTS: Please see the website for October as it cannot meet on October 30 due to the **RANDOMS** event in the Crypt

SEASONAL SUNDAYS: The project has been devised by Julia KB. and hopes to attract an intergenerational congregation but with a new approach to church. There will be opportunities for play, singing, Bible reflection, activities, refreshments, informal seating arrangements and prayers. People of all age are really welcome and **SEND** provision is a priority. The next event will be held on **SUNDAY OCTOBER 11 at 2.30pm.**

THE DAC (Diocesan Advisory Committee) VISIT: The committee came to guide the church reps on what might be possible for a re-ordering of both the hall and the church building. Various alternatives were discussed e.g. selling the hall and converting the Sunday School area into a kitchen and toilets replacing part of the hall garden wall with a door leading onto a patio. The meeting was very positive and a feasibility study is to be arranged.

NEW HALL HEATERS: The hall now has two new storage heaters which can be set to provide a background warmth. Many thanks to those who arranged this.

CHRISTCHURCH is moving forward due to the energy of its faithful congregation. THANKYOU SO MUCH.

FLAPJACK

Four Lanes And Pencoys Join and Cheer the King

The united community of the Four Lanes Methodist Chapel and St Andrew, Pencoys continue to rejoice in the FLAPJACK project which unites and overcomes past traditions which divide. THANKYOU for all your support in facing the emergency repairs which are needed in the church. The whole community came together for a coffee morning which raised £550.00 in two hours / thankyou Sonia. Others events are planned to ensure the church remains open. BUT!! The long term future of the church now depends on a project that will re-order the building and thus provide toilets, a kitchen, a worship space and a space for community activities. It is going to be a long journey, but we are at the starting line!!

The 'Pencoys Pantry' remains open and well-stocked. The burden rests on the shoulders of Brian and Sheila and the community is so grateful to them for their faithfulness which keeps the pantry open. Recently there have been large quantities of bread and fresh produce left. Sadly, these items go out of date quickly and are thus left. However, we have a solution!! BUT tins and packets are always needed.

ADVANCED FLAPJACK DATES:

SATURDAY	OCTOBER 3	QUIZ	Pencoys Hall	back to 6.00pm
SATURDAY	OCTOBER 17	BINGO	Pencoys Hall	6.00pm
SUNDAY	OCTOBER 18	CONCERT BY FOUR LANES CHOIR	Church	6.00pm
SATURDAY	OCTOBER 24	SAUSAGE & MASH	Chapel	11.00am
MONDAY	OCTOBER 26	FUND-RAISING GROUP	Sportsman's	7.00pm
SATURDAY	OCTOBER 31	SELLING FPs ITEMS with coffee	Chapel	10.00am

THE MERMAID CENTRE The sale of FPs items at a coffee morning in the Chapel is part of the latest fund-raising project. You will remember that you raised £10,000.00 for the Sunrise Centre, now it is the turn of the Mermaid Centre. We may not reach the same target again, but just think, in the new year there is to be a 'Fishy Gala Event'!!

With love to all the readers from FLAPJACK xx

FP

ST STEPHEN TRELEIGH



Autumnal greetings to all readers after a very hot, dry summer which some of you will have relished while others, like myself, felt the need for shade and a cooling breeze.

While it has been a quieter time at St. Stephen's Church we were thrilled to be hosting the only Wedding in the Parish on Saturday 5th September when the sun shone after a rather damp week. We hope that next year our pretty church may be the choice for those people wishing to get married, where there is plenty of parking, a hall and garden for a small reception and we can even supply church bells through the sound system! On Thursday 3rd September our congratulations were extended to Anne and Mel Youlton on the occasion of their Diamond Wedding Anniversary, may they enjoy many more years of happiness together. The first tea party for Treleigh schoolchildren and their families was held on Tuesday, 8th September and was our annual fundraiser for MacMillan when donations amounted to £125. Although an enjoyable afternoon the numbers were down as the new term had only started on the previous day so many people were unaware. Although this venture was started three years ago initially for Treleigh school families we would like all the Parish to know that we welcome you all to come and enjoy a cuppa and cake usually held on the 2nd Tuesday of each month from around 2.30pm. Our next Tea Party will be on 13 October. We extend our thanks to those who come regularly to help with this project.

By the time this magazine is read we will be looking forward to our Harvest Festival on Sunday, 4th October at 11.15am, when we welcome Licensed Lay Minister, Jim Seth to lead us in a Service of the Word. As has been the custom for the last few years, we invite the congregation to bring non-perishable goods for the foodbank to display in the church along with the harvest flowers that will have been arranged around the church and porch. Following the service we will go to the hall to enjoy a bring and share lunch of savoury food and a dessert to which all are welcome, tea, coffee and biscuits will be available for those people who are unable to stay for lunch.

We should be finished in plenty of time to join in the 6pm Harvest Sunday First Service at St. Euny Church.

As many of you know, our hall, although internally refurbished a few years ago, is in need of structural repair which could cost thousands of pounds so we are hoping to find ways of fundraising, if anyone has any bright ideas to bring in some welcome funds please let us know. We are following the lead of Pencoy's Church and Four Lanes Chapel and Christchurch, Lanner where small jars or containers are offered to people to save their small change and we hope this will at least kick start the project.

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Other initiatives will be advertised in the weekly sheet but please come to our “Christmas Fayre” on Saturday 28th November from 11am - 2pm where we will be serving Soup & bread roll lunches, tea, coffee and biscuits will also be available. There will be the usual grand raffle, cakes and preserves, bric a brac, a Christmas stall and music.

Our porch, known as the Wayside Chapel continues to be used as a place of quiet contemplation where prayers are left on the prayer tree. It’s also a shelter from the rain and a place where the schoolchildren write names or drawings on the prayer stars, Long may it continue to be a haven for those in need, where the candles (battery) are permanently lit as a sign of God’s love.

Christine Cunningham

NEWS FROM THE BELL TOWER

As the partial eclipse of the sun on August 12th was on the same evening as our practice, some of us arrived early and climbed the eighty steps to the roof of the tower. It was well worth it, viewing it through the special glasses as the sun was slowly setting over Carn Brea, and we felt the cooling breeze and a haze forming over the landscape.

On Monday 24th August I tolled the tenor bell before and after the funeral of Sinclair Johns, who I had known in the village, and both of us and his wife Jennifer, were pupils at Carnkie Primary School.

Clive Reynolds

MARGARET PATERSON (NEE JENKIN)

Margaret Paterson (Nee Jenkin—St Andrew Pencoy's) now living in Montreal, would like to hear from anyone who remembers her or any of her family from Pencoy's. Margaret's husband David, died some weeks ago but I think she would like to make contact with long lost Cornish friends. If you would like to contact Margaret, please email me on magazine@redruthchurch.org.uk and I will pass on your details.

Rosemary

St Euny

Since the last edition of Five Alive we have held a very successful summer BBQ, with many thanks to all who helped to set up and take down and especially to Charlie and Lavinia Green for their kind donation of meats and for running the cooking, the most essential aspect.

St Euny has been open throughout the summer on most days, with a few exceptions when we didn't have anyone available to open and close the church. If ever we question the need for this, here is an extract from one note in our visitor book over the summer:

"Grieving myself for my traumatic life up until now ... the world has hurt me badly through trauma and woe, but I come here today ... to sit in quiet peace and remember my loved ones before me...This beautiful church is a place of peace and safety for me when my soul needs peace! I find it beautiful and very healing"

We often receive grateful messages, but this one particularly made it feel so worthwhile to keep the church building open as a sacred space for all.

The Mining and Pasty Festival was held on the second Sunday in September this year, and St Euny was involved on the Friday evening and on Sunday morning. We were blessed with superb late summer weather this year, so the Friday evening walk to the St Euny mine engine houses was held in beautiful afternoon sunshine and many of the followers came to church for refreshments afterwards. This year the bellringers gave us an additional event of poetry readings linked to bells, with an exhibition and talk about bell-ringing. Many people attended this and were introduced to the church. There was also an exhibition on bell-ringing and an exhibit from Redruth Old Cornwall Society on the 200th anniversary of the 'Great Trek', when miners from the Redruth-Camborne-Chacewater area took machinery, including a boiler from Harvey's of Hayle, to open up the silver mines of Mexico. Carrying this heavy load over the mountains with no proper roads and suffering huge difficulties on the way, with significant loss of life due to accident and disease.

Mining Sunday was well attended this year, with one visitor from Mexico, the first Mexican Bard, Franz Trejo. Our talk, from Tony Langford of the John Harris Society, was very interesting and a powerful reminder of just one of the extraordinary lives of the miners and who came from a life of extreme hardship to take advantage of the education and work opportunities which transformed their lives and also those of others.

Harvest will be celebrated with a harvest Supper at St Euny on 4th October. This is a First Sunday event and there will be a service with traditional harvest hymns followed by a Harvest Supper. Food will be cottage pie, both meat and vegan options available, with a fruit crumble pud, again vegan option available. Please do come and support this event. The collection will be to support the work of Shelterbox.

Linda Beskeen

ST ANDREW REDRUTH

The Redruth Randoms Winter Show

If you hear music, laughter and the occasional unexplained crash drifting from the Church Crypt, on a Wednesday evening, the chances are the Redruth Randoms are in full rehearsal. This lively amateur group meets there each week to prepare for its two performances a year, and the next one is already firmly on the calendar: the Winter Show on Friday 30th October.

A Randoms evening is not quite like anything else. There are readings, songs, guest spots, surprises, and usually at least one moment when everyone wonders, “Whose idea was this?” — shortly before deciding that it was a very good idea after all. Seating is limited, so early booking is strongly recommended; every year there are folk who leave it too late and miss out.

Regular followers will have their own favourite memories. Mine include Father Simon Cade appearing as a belly dancer, complete with yashmak; the much-missed Phil Myers dressed as a pasty, or being led on stage as part of a pantomime horse for “You Can’t Keep a Horse in a Lighthouse”; Mother Shirley giving us a brilliant rendition of Victoria Wood’s “Let’s Do It”; and Father Peter, faced with the absence of his duet partner, gamely performing both parts himself with the help of a coat hanger and a dress.

Dave and Mary Pink can often be relied upon for a romantic number, while Hilary and Lez usually appear as their unforgettable duo, “Fish on a Bicycle” — a double act that has, in the nicest possible way, left a few indelible scars.

The group is also fortunate to have Suzanne, Toby and James as highly talented regular musicians — and, in true Randoms fashion, all three have been known to sing or act as well. Nobody is allowed to hide for long.

The company is smaller than it once was, but the enthusiasm is as strong as ever, and new players are always welcome. You do not need to be a fantastic actor, singer or dancer. What you do need is a sense of fun, a willingness to laugh your way through Wednesday evening rehearsals, and the ability to be ready for almost anything. If that sounds like you, speak to Lez or one of the other Randoms — you might fit in really well!

Looking forward:

Remembrance concert 15th November – Town Band, St Agnes Singers and Dhiworth-an-Gollon

Christmas Craft Market in December 4th & 5th – if you know crafts people, makers or artists who would like a stall for either or both days please contact Lez.

And of course the carol service with the Town Band and all the usual Christmas services – the church wardens will be very busy!

Jim Seth

Seasonal Sunday: the story so far

At the beginning of this year, I started Seasonal Sunday at Christchurch Lanner. The idea was to create something a little different: a relaxed and creative gathering for all ages, with Bible stories, simple prayer, music, food and things to make. I wanted it to feel welcoming and easy to join in with, particularly for people who might not feel comfortable coming to a more traditional Sunday service.

Part of my thinking has also been around neurodiversity. Not everybody finds sitting still, listening for long periods or following a traditional service easy. Seasonal Sunday gives people permission to move, make something, talk, watch for a while or join in when they are ready. It is not specifically a neurodivergent service, but I hope it is a place where different ways of taking part feel completely normal.

We began in January with **Christingle**, using light and hope as our starting point. In February, our theme was **pancakes and love**. Alongside eating pancakes, we made small wooden heart tokens and added simple words such as *love, peace, hope, kindness* and *welcome*. It gave us a very practical way to think about what love might look like in everyday life.

In March, we created a **road to Jerusalem** for Palm Sunday. A long strip of paper became a shared piece of artwork, with palms, fabric cloaks, footprints, words and speech bubbles added as people explored the story together.

April gave us an opportunity to get outside and notice the world around us. We used **solar paper** with flowers, leaves and other natural objects to create sun prints, exploring what could be seen, what was left behind and the detail we sometimes overlook.

At Trinity, things became slightly more edible with **three biscuits and a prayer** – a playful way of exploring the idea of three-in-one without trying to turn the Trinity into a theology lecture! For our combined June and July gathering, we explored **journeys and St James**, whose stained-glass window is in the church. We made shell-shaped cards, adding prayers and messages before hanging them beneath the window.

After a break over the summer, Seasonal Sunday returned in September with **Rainbows and Promises**, exploring the story of Noah. We shared the story together and made paper-plate rainbows with cotton-wool clouds, tissue paper, colouring and scraps of card. The rainbows could be taken home as a reminder of God's promise.

Getting the word out has been an important part of the experiment too. I promote Seasonal Sunday quite heavily through *Lanner Life* on Facebook, which has been particularly useful for reaching people locally. I have also tried advertising through the school, although communication has not always worked as well as I had hoped. That is something I would still like to develop.

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Attendance has varied, and it is often the same core church members alongside the same returning adults and young people, rather than lots of completely new people each month. I actually find that encouraging. People are choosing to **come back**, and a small community is beginning to form.

I am learning as I go. Some ideas work better than others, and Seasonal Sunday continues to change as I learn more about pioneering, inclusion and what helps people feel that they genuinely belong.

It is still small, but it is beginning to find its own identity: another doorway into church, rooted in creativity, relationships, faith and welcome.

Julia Knight-Bennett



Marion, (spelt with an O!)

I remember the first time I heard Marion introduce herself, many years ago and it was important to her that everyone understood, “She was Marion, spelt with an O!”

Sadly, Marion recently retired from her place within the close knit team of the Breakfast Club at St. Andrews. “Sadly” because she will be greatly missed, particularly by those who come, week after week, month after month.

The Breakfast Club isn’t just about food, though for many it might be the one decent, hot meal of their week. It’s very much about nurturing, belonging, supporting and just being there for all who may be in need. Those needs maybe complex, may need professional help or signposting. They may also just need a kind word or a smile.

The team is run completely by volunteers overseen by the CPR Transformation. There are amazing kitchen cooks, two at each session, refreshments and waiting staff, those that spend time going from table to table checking on everyone’s wellbeing. There are also ‘meeters and greeters’. It’s a very privileged and special role where volunteers often get to know and share in the lives of those that come.

Marion spent time getting to know so many and will, of course be greatly missed, so “thank you Marion for your long term commitment, for your care and your companionship. We will miss you”.

The team desperately needs volunteers to join the rota. We are often understaffed and over stretched. If you feel you could spare a couple hours a month chat to Robin or any of the clergy.

Pie Louis-Smith

REEF DONATION

Thank you for your continuing support for our emergencies fund so we can respond when there is a need. Following our August Fifth Sunday service at St Andrew’s Redruth, an immediate donation of £300 was sent to Shelterbox for their work in Nepal

Richard Robinson

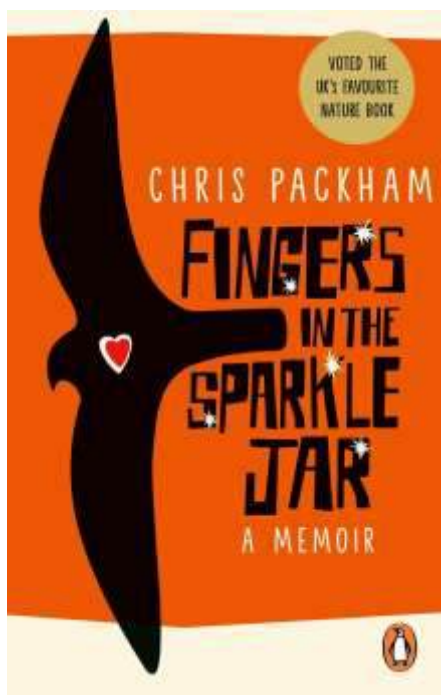


Redruth Parish Book Club

Degrees of Guilt by H S Chandler is one of those books it's hard to put down. Over two or three weeks of an attempted murder trial there was so much going on as we followed Maria and several members of the jury. Just as you think you're sussing things out there is a twist in the tale. Sympathies move from one person to another as the story unfolds. Discussion inevitably moved to us considering how difficult it might be to come to a just conclusion if we were sitting on a jury. You may have already experienced how hard it is to sit on a jury or just get to the bottom of a situation and discover the truth. There was certainly a lot to think

Miss Benson's Beetle by Rachel Joyce is our next book, probably a more gentle read in the same way that The Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry and Queenie were. You may have watched the film of Harold Fry recently shown on Film 4, a bit slow to start with but with a thought provoking finish. Enid Perry in her link suit is Margery Benson's unlikely companion as they are drawn into an adventure that will exceed every expectation. They will risk everything, break all the rules and at the top of a red mountain discover their best selves.

We will meet on October 5th to share our thoughts and perhaps pick up some of the questions and topics for discussion at the back of the book. Venue for this meeting to be arranged. Please check with any of our members nearer the time.



In November we will talk about Chris Packham's memoir Fingers in the Sparkle Jar. It's quite a while since we read about someone's life and it sounds very interest. A rich, lyrical and emotional memoir which brings to life Chris's childhood as he searches for freedom, meaning and acceptance in a world that didn't understand him. During the 70's his bedroom was bursting with fox skulls, birds eggs and sweaty jam jars as he set out on numerous feral adventures. 'Beautifully wrought this memoir will be unlike any you've ever read before.'

Maybe this book will inspire you to read and perhaps encourage you to join the book club!

Margaret (07930 471837)

PS. Don't forget to look at some of our previous reads on the book shelf near the coffee area in St Andrew's.

FP's THOUGHTS

The General Synod is the Parliament of the Church of England. Each Parliament sits for FIVE years The last one was elected in 2021 and so there is an election taking place.

I stood at the 2021 election and was not elected and I am standing again at the current election. There is little chance of me being elected this time either.

So why am I bothering with election addresses, hustings and the whole voting procedure. The reason is that it is only a decision by the General Synod that will allow same gender people to be married in church. Only a decision by the General Synod who can allow two people of the same gender to bring their love for each other into a church and before God to take the promises that opposite gender people can take.

I recently had a meeting with a mother whose daughter wants to marry another woman. That mother and her daughter are both regular members of a church community – but not any more. For them the church has slammed the door in their faces.

Worse is to come!! At the final meeting of the 2026 General Synod a motion was put: *that faithful and intimate same gender relationships are compatible with Christian discipleship*. That motion was passed by the House of Clergy and the House of Laity but failed in the House of Bishops – so it failed completely.

So that is why I am standing for election as the process will allow me to get the message that God's love is there for ALL people and that "All people are called by name and are precious in God's sight"

Fr Peter

My way to Compostela
Day 27 part 2
Villafranca del Bierzo to O`Cebreiro
36.1 Km

Villasinde, like all the villages we had passed through was semi-abandoned, it did however have a 'bar' the sign on the door informed pilgrims to knock and 'Celia' would open for them! We however did not feel the need to knock but just find a suitable spot to sit, rest and empty Andrew's snack bag! As we sat close to the village's water fountain, I reflected on the challenge of arriving at this point of the Camino. These ramblings of mine and the details of the guidebook do not truly reflect the effort so far achieved on this day and on this route. At this point we had already walked in actual distance 20.9km. We had one last valley to descend and climb out of to reach the village of Herrerías at which point we would have [accrued](#) a total of 1,300M (4265ft). So, it was not surprising that as we set off on the 4.8 km ascent to Herrerías I did not feel at all comfortable. We headed out of the village passing the church before turning right to follow the signpost of the GR11 to pass between the rise of Teso Redondo and Vilerla heading for a radio mast which we could see on the horizon. Reaching the mast, we turned left and kept on this contour to follow the path round to our right heading further upwards towards a second radio mast on the peak of the mountain. At this mast there was a broken signpost directing us left to the start of our last descent of the day, from here we could see in the middle distance, the village of Herrerías in the valley. As we headed down the the path it was [evident](#) that this section of the route was poorly maintained, the steep path being very overgrown with broom and heather, making it slow going to avoid tripping on the undergrowth with the added danger of a bramble jumping out on us to drag us to the ground. We however, managed to avoid the dangers and reached the valley floor and with a level walk through woodland and crossing the Rio Pereie, which starts at the top of O`Cebreiro we arrived at Herrerías. By this time, I was not feeling particularly well and was struggling to control my temperature. A mountain mist had set in as we had reached the top and I had put on my poncho but now, I was feeling extremely hot, so a welcome rest [was called](#) for at a village bar. Herrerías is a large sprawling village with several bars/café's to choose from, but I was happy just to go to the first we came to and sit down as I was, by this time feeling more than slightly unwell. Having more than a passing degree of medical knowledge can be undesirable! My pulse was racing away, I felt cold and clammy from not long ago being hot and with Andrew asking me if I was ok because I did not look well, was I having a heart attack were the thoughts running through my mind and was this to be my final stop on the Camino! A glass of brandy and 20 minutes of mindfulness I was back to my normal heart rate and no longer cold or clammy. After an enforced rest, we set off on what was to be the last 8.1km leg to O`Cebreiro. Herrerías was once an important medieval stop for pilgrims which once had a hospital dedicated to Pilgrims from England. We leave the village and follow a stony path, descending slightly before beginning to climb out of the valley taking us through a delightful, shaded woodland of Chestnut trees (castanos) heading towards the village of La Faba, passing through the village we continue to climb up along a tree lined path.

Continued

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Stopping for a few minutes I look back at the views over the Valcarce valley grateful that my pilgrimage did not end in Herrerías! After 2.5Km we reached the hamlet of Laguna de Castilla. This tiny village is the last habitation in the province of Castille as we are now close to the Autonomous region of Galicia, where in addition to Spanish, they speak their own dialect in which X replaces the letter J, so Junta becomes Xunta (The X being silent). The regional government has its own system of way marking which we will follow all the way to Santiago and additionally they have either built or renovated old buildings into pilgrim hostels. We see the first of the new way signs as we climb up out of the village K152.5 OS Sante (152 km to Santiago) and after 1.1 Km we arrive at the Frontera Galicia [indicated](#) by a [substantial](#) marker post. The path from here for the next 1.2 Km is scrubland and gorse until we reach O`Cebreiro Iglesia one of the oldest surviving buildings on the Camino dating back to the 9<sup>th</sup> Century. The Church is the burial spot of Don Elias Valina Sampedro once the parish priest who did a lot to restore and preserve the route to O`Cebreiro and the restoration of an adjacent building San Giraldo de Aurillac. The building was formerly part of a monastic hospital going back to the 12th century. King Alfonso assigned the care of pilgrims to the monks of the Abbè de Saint Giraldo. Queen Isabella stayed there in 1486 during her pilgrimage to Santiago. From the Church a further 2.5Km uphill struggle brought us to our destination of the Xunta albergue of O`Cebreiro situated on an exposed elevated site, with its 104 beds spread over 3 floors with all mod cons run by the Xunta Galicia. To say that I was glad to arrive would be an understatement!! What did it matter that I had to share a dorm with 50 other individuals, some of which I had shared with before except for a very rude German man of whom I will say no more! All that remained was to shower, change and eat at one of the 3 bars in the village and go to bed. As we leave our chosen bar it was noticeable how cold and damp it had become, little did we know what we would awake too!!

Len Cunningham

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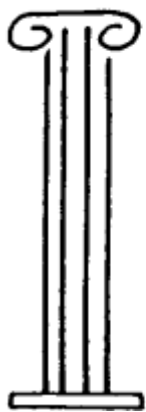


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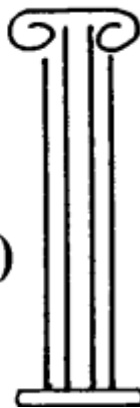
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