



Pilgrim

Footprints

Changes are coming to CCoP and may affect YOU almost immediately!

Please check inside for details.

WHAT'S INSIDE?

1. Website:

Our website (santiago.ca) will be offline from Monday Sept. 17th to Wednesday Sept 19th and will be online again Thursday Sept 20th with a new look and new features. NO web services will be available during these 3 days.

See page 2 for more information.

2. Membership Structure Changes: See page 3.

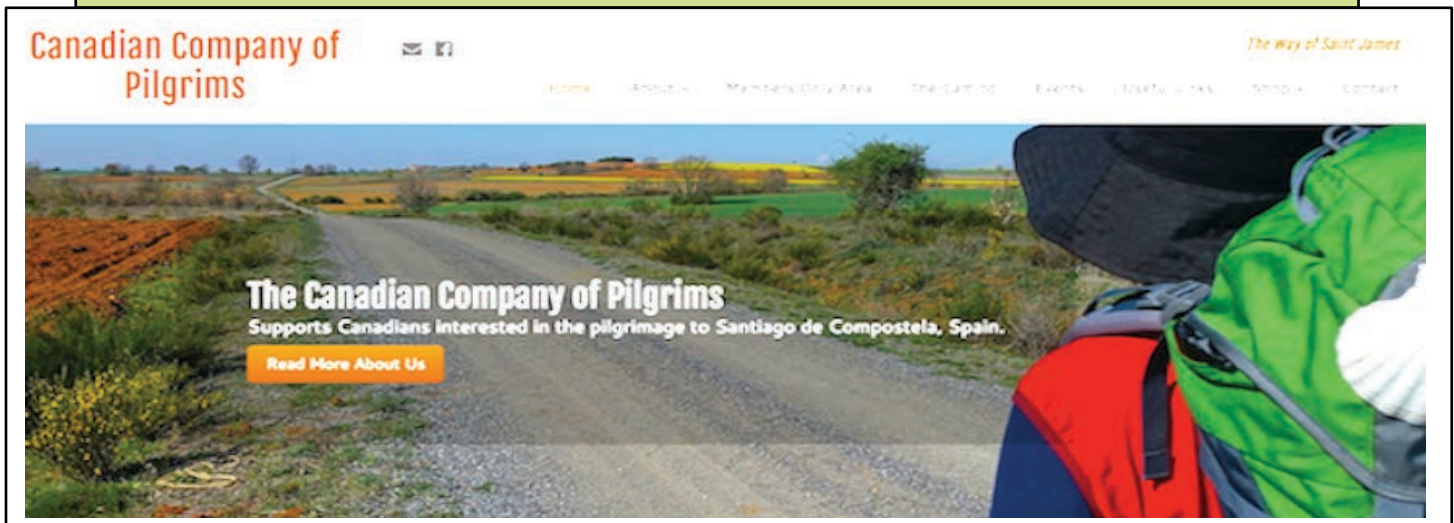
3. Board Nominations:

Consider volunteering for the Board and giving back to Canadian pilgrims. The deadline for nominations is SEPTEMBER 16th. **See page 4 for more information.**

4. Where Should I Walk? Doug's Swiss camino.

See page 5.

1. Changes are coming to the CCoP website (<https://www.santiago.ca>)

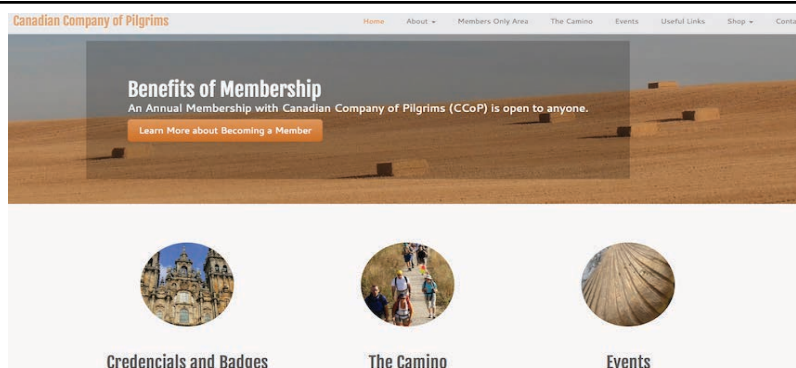


Important Update to the CCoP website

On September 20, 2018 we will be launching a **new website** along with a **new membership software**. It will come with some great new features including a member profile where you can join a specific chapter, manage your emails lists, share with us your camino experiences, and print a personalized membership card.

How this impacts you:

- The **website will be offline starting Monday September 17 and will reopen again on September 20**. You will not be able to purchase a membership or items in our shop during this time.
- If you are a current member, the password you currently have for your membership will not work after September 17, 2018 and you will need to change it afterwards.



2. Membership Structure Changes

It is said that the only constant is change and this is true for the Canadian Company of Pilgrims and our membership structure.

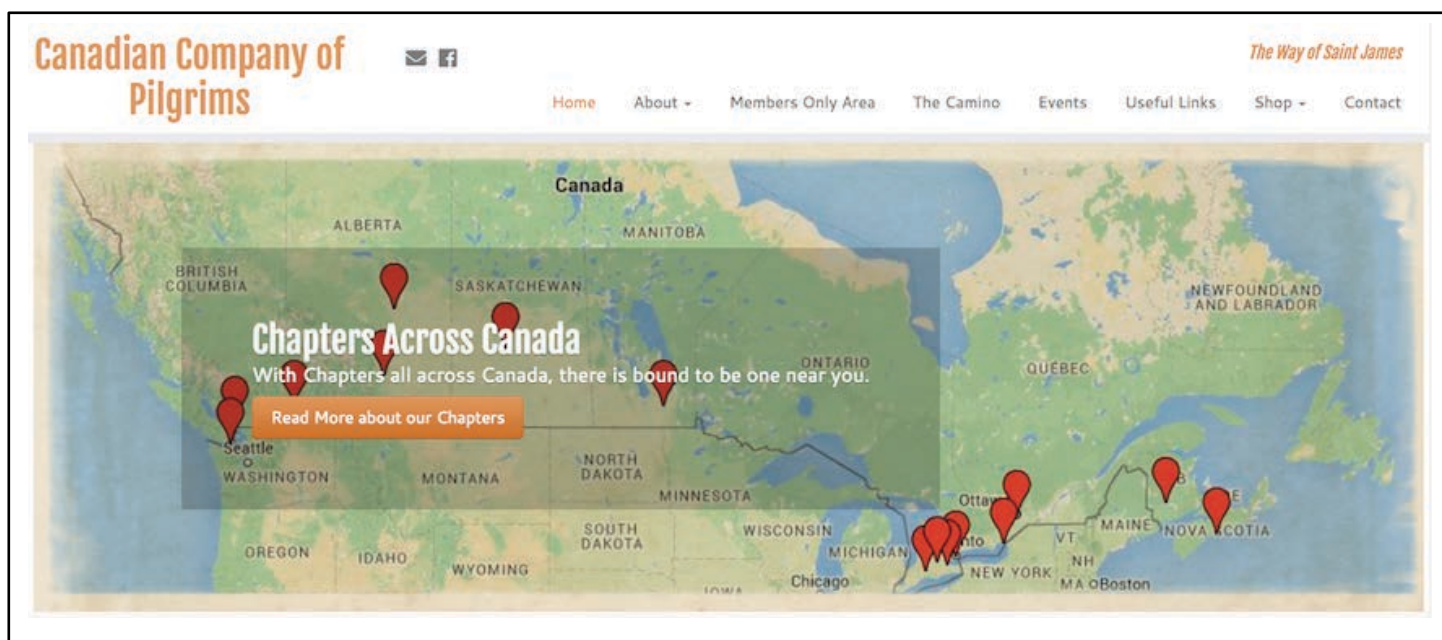
Currently, with one CCoP membership you can order two Credencials/Pilgrims' Passports (e.g. you and your spouse or child) if you live at the same address. However, only one account holder is the actual member with AGM voting rights.

In order to improve our tracking of memberships and to better utilize the technology in our new membership/shopping system, the CCoP membership structure will change to **one membership per individual**; that is, **all individuals, regardless of commonality of address, will purchase and hold their own membership, have the right to vote at the Annual General Meeting and will have a personal membership card.**

This change in structure will be **effective when the new website launches on September 20, 2018.**

For current members, the change will be reflected upon renewal of membership which is one year from the date of original purchase.

The cost of the membership will remain unchanged at \$10 with badges and credencials available at a cost of \$5 each.



3. Call for Nominations for Board of Directors

It's **time to renew the CCoP Board** and we would like qualified, capable and enthusiastic members to step forward for the three positions coming open. We're looking for:

- A commitment to the values and vision of the Canadian Company of Pilgrims;
- A willingness to listen carefully and understand others' views;
- An ability to think independently and conceptually and to analyze effectively;
- An openness to learn and to adapt;
- A commitment to holding oneself and others accountable;
- An ability to contribute to helping the board develop trust and consensus;
- An ability to 'take the long view' in providing oversight and direction and in anticipating future challenges and opportunities.

Regional representation is important to us, and we will have continuing board members from BC, Manitoba, New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia, and encourage applications from other areas of the country.

We hope that applicants bring a knowledge and understanding and affection for the Camino and for pilgrims. Board members meet virtually using online meeting software and we don't foresee any travel involved.

Forms have been sent to each member by email and are available on the website. Please send the completed form to austin@santiago.ca or by post at: P.O. Box 36025, Victoria BC V9A 7J5.

On the form, tell us about your background, your interest in being on the Board, what you bring to the Canadian Company of Pilgrims, and your vision for CCoP. We ask that two paid-up members sign the nomination.

We're operating under very tight timelines to give the committee time to do their work. Please think about contributing your service and act by the **deadline of September 16TH, 2018**. Nominations will be voted on at the AGM in January, 2019.

Sincerely,

Austin Cooke

Chair, Nominating Committee

Where Should I Walk Now?

So far in 2018, **234,561 people** have arrived at Santiago de Compostela and registered their pilgrimage with the Pilgrims Office in Santiago.

Between 50 and 60% of those people walk on the Camino Frances. Basic math will tell you that's a huge number of people walking each month, especially between April and October. **To avoid the bed races and to enjoy a bit more privacy, consider other routes.** Doug Steinburg recently walked a Swiss Camino. This is his story.



MY SWISS CAMINO.

By Doug Steinburg, Victoria

Several years ago, while walking the Via Francigena, I had the opportunity to cross Switzerland from Ste Croix on the French border to the Grand St Bernard Pass on the border with Italy. I was so impressed with the tracks and the scenery that I decided one day I would take the Camino that passes through Switzerland on the way to Le Puy en Velay. And that is how I came to take the Camino which begins in Basel and goes to Geneva.

The route from Basel is one of several historically documented routes which collected pilgrims coming from or through southern Germany and Austria and joining together near Schwarzenburg for the larger route towards Geneva, on to Le Puy, and from there all the way to Santiago. Of the two principal feeders (the other being from the shores of Lake Konstanz), I chose this one because of the beauty of the city of Basel as well as its accessibility by air and rail. This route would take me over the Jura range of mountains into central Switzerland and along the rivers feeding Lac Léman – better known to us as Lake Geneva. Approximately 350 kilometers in length, it can be fairly easily completed in 16 stages. *(continued on next page)*

(continued from previous page) However, it is an opportunity to spend time in many beautiful places and make many rewarding side trips (walking of course!) so I wound up spending a month in all. I do not propose in this short article to provide you with a guidebook – a note at the end will provide information in that regard – but rather to leave you with my impressions of the route in the words I wrote at the time. Like most who have kept a record of their Camino experience, one keeps two journals: one for public consumption and another which is for the writer's eyes only. I am sure you will thank me for exposing you only to the former!



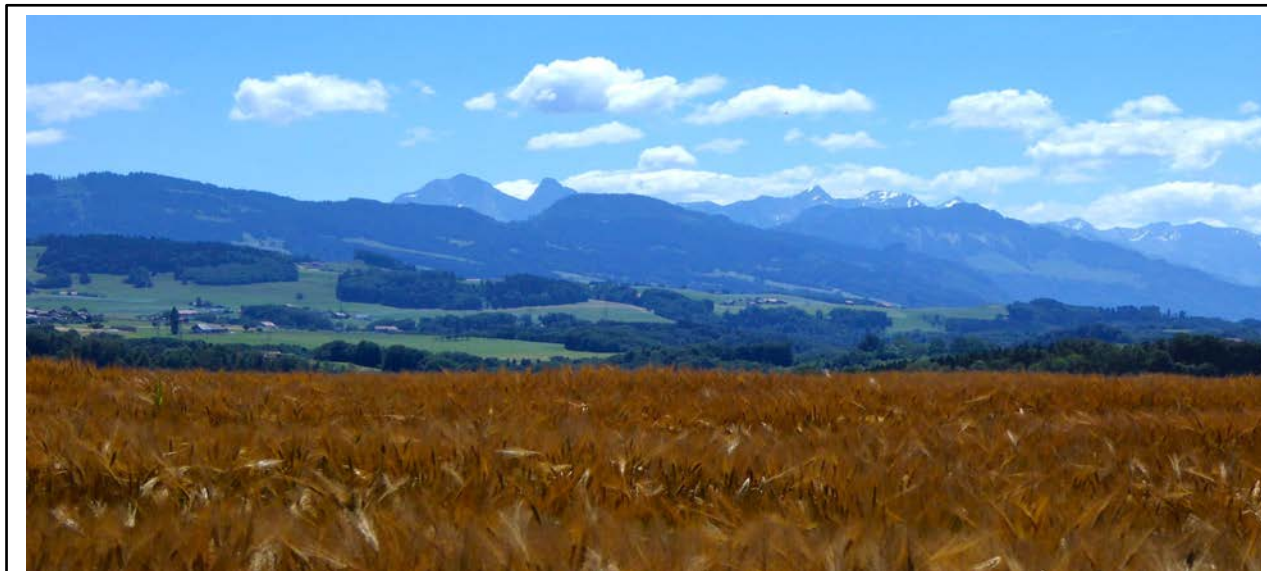
Two weeks into my Camino I am discovering the Switzerland of Heidi and Emmenthal cheese. The first part goes through the cantons of Basel, Solothurn (2 of them), Bern, and Freiburg. The latter two are bilingual German/French, but the first 3 are pretty much all German speaking.

The cities are all very beautiful with their old medieval centers and walls. In every case the walking entry and exit have been beautiful parks and tracks where people bike, stroll, walk their dogs, and just enjoy nature. (continued on page 7)

This is a long way from the usual urban sections of Caminos I have taken in the past. While trekking through the countryside has been a challenge of climbing and descending - sometimes 1000 meters in less than 3 kilometers - it has been spectacular for scenery.

Leaving aside the difficult climbs, there are plenty of hills and valleys to cross, filled with prosperous looking farms with large and small herds of cattle and goats. Dairy is king here! Meadows of wildflowers are interspersed with fields of grain and hay. The air is filled with the sound of cow bells of different timbres: at times ear popping in volume, at other times a distant tinkling. The people have been wonderfully friendly, even supplying little stands with goodies for passing pilgrims. The best of these was a little table and chairs with umbrella at which the owner had placed a milk can converted into a drinks holder, and a little freezer with home-made ice-cream. Conveniently, this was at the top of a very long climb on a warm, sunny day. Ahhhh!

The farm buildings are characteristic of our postcard vision of Switzerland. In most cases, the farm residence is attached as part of the same structure as the barn. The residence is invariably very large, holding more than one generation of the same family. Over the main door of the barn will be plaques of the various awards and prizes accumulated over the years: categories like "bullock most likely to succeed", etc. Everything is amazingly organized and tidy, with everything in its place. In every case there is both a large kitchen garden and flower garden, along with play area for the children and painted caricatures with names and dates proclaiming the births of children. *(continued on page 8)*



As for the trail, the extensive network of walking trails in both the countryside and cities is **very clearly marked** with signs indicating direction, town names, and the usual time necessary to arrive. At every railway station one is greeted by these **cheerful yellow signs pointing the way** to the next adventure.

After about 350 leisurely kilometers, I am coming to the end of my Camino from Basel to Geneva. Since leaving Fribourg/Freiburg, the trail has had **only minor climbing**, winding its way through the countryside of Gruyere cheese and then along the shore of Lake Geneva (Lac Léman) where it remains pretty level. As it gets closer to the end, I am experiencing the usual sense of loss at the prospect of not having to take up my pack each morning and begin anew. At 68, the aches and pains take longer to work out, but the spirit is always ready, notwithstanding rain-soaked boots of a previous day, snoring fellow pilgrims, or steep climbs. What I remember of this Camino will be the fields of wildflowers, the mountain peaks, the cool shade of forest trails, the many little kindnesses, the passing greetings, the meticulous organization of the trail signage, the glimpses of wildlife, the tidy villages with their typical architecture and well-maintained churches, and so much more.

Switzerland is all it is cracked up to be when it comes to order and organization and I can say without doubt that I have never felt quite so safe no matter where I was walking. Even though walking long distances is a way of life here, people were always pleased to see a pilgrim on the road. **The Camino is well known here**, with every church and town hall having its own special stamp for the pilgrim passport. It was especially encouraging to find that it is by no means only Catholic churches which promote the Camino de Santiago. As I walked through the traditionally Protestant areas, **every church (always open by the way) had a special place for pilgrims** where one could get a stamp and read a prayer or blessing for passing pilgrims. Talking with people I encountered in lodgings, grocery stores, bakeries (my favourite right around 10am), and restaurants, I discovered how similar this country is to my own Canada and how much the Swiss love Canada. I was especially surprised at how many had visited or had family members living in Canada. What follows is just one instance of what it was like.

I had been following the trail along a forest road when I came to a barrier declaring that no one was permitted to go further by order of the police. I had no idea what to do since I was not at all familiar with the tracks or how I might be able to rejoin the road beyond this point (notwithstanding GPS), so I just kept going. *(continued on next page)*

I had not gone 50 meters when a **policeman emerged from the woods, and then a squad of some 15 or 20 soldiers!** He came straight toward me and I, bold as brass, straight toward him. Before I could say anything, he asked if I spoke French and whether I had seen the barrier, followed immediately by asking if I could read.

My accent told him that I was not from Switzerland so he interrupted my response to ask where I was from. **I explained to him I was following the Camino**, showed him my trail map, and protested that if I left the trail, I had no idea how to get back on it here in the middle of the forest. Now, **knowing that I was from Canada**, he related that it was a place he wanted very much to visit and that unfortunately I could not stay on the trail here as the army was conducting a search and rescue exercise and I might confuse the dogs or otherwise disturb the exercise.

He then produced his smartphone and with detailed maps showed me how I could take a couple of nearby forest roads and return to the Camino on the other side of the restricted area. He went over what I needed to do several times to be sure I understood and would have no difficulty. He then wished me well and sent me on my way. Frankly, I doubt I would have received such polite and considerate treatment anywhere else, not even in my home country.





A note about resources and conditions:

As I indicated, **the trails in Switzerland are extremely well marked with trail markers and signs at intersections better than most city streets in North America.** There are road sections as well as gravel and forest trail, but those road sections are generally country roads with almost no traffic.

English is commonly spoken, but German is the predominant language, with French in Romand region. Although restaurant food and hotel accommodation are quite costly, there are a good number of alternatives in youth hostels, pilgrim refuges, and convents, and grocery stores are everywhere with both fresh and prepared foods.

Published guidebooks are pretty well all in German, with a very few in French. However, **I used the website of the Swiss Friends of the Camino exclusively** <https://www.jakobsweg.ch/en/eu/ch>. The site is in English, French and German, but most of the trail descriptions and accommodation information is only in German. But, it is easy to figure out even without knowing German. **The site also includes maps, GPS tracks and an amazing little application for your smartphone which allows you to download the map and track for each stage, along with information and accommodation listings, height profiles, distances, and more.** Certainly from the navigation and accommodation perspective, this made it the easiest Camino I have ever walked.



Contact List – Board and Chapter Coordinators

Executive		Camino Email
President (BC)	Wendy Loly	wendy@santiago.ca
Vice-President (BC)	Neville Tencer	neville@santiago.ca
Secretary (PEI)	Grace Cameron	secretary@santiago.ca
Treasurer (MB)	Alvin Thiessen	treasurer@santiago.ca
Past-President (ON)	Austin Cooke	austin@santiago.ca
Directors		
Halifax	Cathy Cavanaugh	cathy@santiago.ca
Halifax	Katherine Gartner-Kepkay	Kathy@santiago.ca
Fredericton	Kevin McKinney	kevin@santiago.ca
Winnipeg	Ivor Lockhart	ccopwpg@gmail.com
Victoria	Mary Virtue	mary@victoriacamino.ca
Victoria	Jim Rondeau	b4jim@hotmail.com
Chapter	Coordinator	Camino Email
Halifax	Maureen Summers	halifaxpilgrim@santiago.ca
Halifax	John Roy	halifaxpilgrim@santiago.ca
Fredericton	Kevin McKinney	kevin@santiago.ca
Ottawa	Austin Cooke	austin@santiago.ca
Toronto	Mike Gurski	mike.gurski@gmail.com
Hamilton	Loretta Ray	hamilton@santiago.ca
Kitchener-Waterloo	Ellie Witzke	ellie@santiago.ca
London	Tom Friesen	tomfriesen@hotmail.com
Winnipeg	Ivor Lockhart	ccopwpg@gmail.com
Saskatoon	Lea Pennock	saskatoon@santiago.ca
Calgary	Judy Gayford	judy@santiago.ca
Edmonton	Thaya McKee	thaya1@rogers.com
Kelowna	David Cram	kelowna@santiago.ca
Kelowna	George Forshaw	kelowna@santiago.ca
Vancouver	John MacLean	vancouver@santiago.ca
Vancouver	Donna Coutts	vancouver@santiago.ca
Victoria	Mary Virtue	mary@victoriacamino.ca
Whitehorse	Dianne Homan	whitehorse@santiago.ca
Canadian Hospitaleros	Mary Virtue	maryvirtue@shaw.ca
CCoP Newsletter	Cecelia Pineda	cecelia@santiago.ca