

Len's 44th letter from the Via

Date:15/08/17

Location

Sarzana

KM's to
Rome

607

Steps Today

35,544

Getting in the taxi and being driven to Aulla was a very strange feeling today, I have been in a car once in the past seven weeks and I didn't like being there again. Strange how quickly the world passes you by when using motorised transport. It was the same last night on the train, but I think I was so tired I didn't really notice.

To make up for yesterday the track makers have decided to take us straight up the mountain today, a climb of just over 500 meters, over the top and down to Sarzana with sea views. To

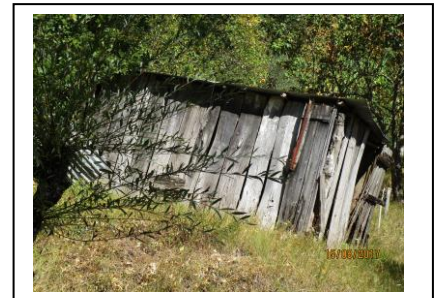


placate us walkers they have taken us through a couple of lovely small villages. This one, Bibola is perched on a ridge near the mountain top around an old castle. Walking through it feels like time has stood still. The roads in are only marginally better than the mule tracks I have been walking on so would be a major disincentive to leave the village. There was nobody about so couldn't really get a feel for what sort of people were living here.

On the way up I meet a couple of young

walkers walking down who told me that one of the locals had directed them another way so as to avoid the steep climb up to the top. I was reluctant to go off the designated track so I told them I would see them at the bottom and we could discuss which was the best way. One of them had excellent English as she has visited Australia three times.

I'm glad I went the hard way as it was very scenic and I came across this little bush hut near the top of the mountain. It got me thinking how similar the walking is at times to what I have done in Australia, change the vegetation and it wouldn't be any different.



Today I walked for a while with an Italian walker who was walking barefoot, I queried him about this but couldn't really understand his reasons. When he found out I was from

Australia he told me that Australians walk barefoot, he was of course referring to the indigenous population. Interesting what facts people retain about other countries.



I meet the young walkers again down the bottom and they had beaten me by about thirty minutes, but I had the far more interesting walk and no cars which they had to deal with. The person on the right has just come back from doing the Spanish Camino. She told me that she met an 87 year old man who was doing the walk the whole distance and doing it the Pilgrim way, staying in hostels and sometimes actually sleeping on the floor. I guess he wasn't too old to set another goal or to dream a

new dream, at the moment I am just dreaming of being able to finish this dream..