

# NEWSLETTER

NUMBER 110

July 2015

## Dear Pilgrims,

It has been an eventful year thus far as we have celebrated the 40th anniversary of the Walking Pilgrimage with our reunion weekend in April and the 50th anniversary of the Diocese of Arundel and Brighton with the Diocesan Jubilee Celebrations at the beginning of July. Patrick has written in detail about the Jubilee Pilgrimage where a tremendous time was had by all.

And now the Arundel Pilgrimage is now less than one month away! Given the big 40th and 50th anniversaries we have chosen to make this year's pilgrimage within the Diocese returning to our roots in the communities of Surrey and Sussex. Thank you to new and returning pilgrims who are joining this summer's pilgrimage. I want to warmly welcome you on what promises to be a fulfilling and uplifting fortnight.

This year's pilgrimage will begin in Chertsey and after our induction service for the first time in many years we will begin walking on this first day. It will be a gentle start following along the River Wey Navigation Canal. In the first few days we will then be walking eastward across the beautiful Surrey Hills, the Greensand Way and the Pilgrims Way with views across the county. These walking days are all manageable with average distances under 15 miles but there will be some climbing given that Leith Hill is the highest point in south-east England and we climb Box Hill too!

We are very fortunate that this year our first rest day will be at Worth Abbey where we hope for physical and spiritual refreshment. In the middle section of the pilgrimage we will be walking south-eastward toward the Sussex coast. This is pretty rolling countryside with a mixture of woodland and open pasture. We then arrive at the coast at Seaford and there is a stretch of coastal walking before we arrive in Brighton for our second rest day.

The last stretch of the pilgrimage heads westward from Brighton through the South Downs stopping at Upper Beeding and Storrington before heading to our destination, Arundel Cathedral. We will have walked 170 miles in 13 walking days and when we arrive in Arundel the town will be celebrating with us as our arrival coincides with the annual music and arts festival there. I hope you are looking forward to our pilgrimage. I know I am.

It seems normal at this point for the Coordinator to remind pilgrims that there is still time to do a couple of practice walks to get fitter before departure (rather than suffering on the pilgrimage) and to note that it is wise to check your equipment and to re-proof any outdoor gear. You have been reminded!

I would like to make another reminder too. This year in particular we expect large numbers of day pilgrims from local parishes and Churches Together groups. Please do welcome these fellow pilgrims, newcomers and old timers, with your conversation and your stories. At the recent Diocesan Jubilee celebrations I was asked about our Walking Pilgrimage 'who are you and what do you do?' and then 'why?'. Our answers are individual and yet often there are common strands; beauty in nature, fellowship, fun, Christian community, prayer. Asked the same question what might you choose to share I wonder. We will be picking up some of these ideas in this year's pilgrimage theme as we reflect on Christian communities through the ages and ask what these can teach us about discipleship today. If you are an e-pilgrim following the pilgrimage through the web-diaries it would be wonderful to have your thoughts and reflections too.

I look forward to seeing you in August.

God bless,

*Ceri*

## Practical Matters

Now to practical matters - in the “web-post” of which this newsletter is a part, you will also find:

- The route cards: full information on each day’s walking route and other events, which pilgrims will carry with them as they walk
- ‘Come and Join us for a Day’: a short summary of the route cards to give to potential ‘day pilgrims’ who may walk with us for a day or part day
- The Pilgrim Code: guidance for pilgrimage community life
- The Equipment List: guidance on what you need to bring
- The Alternative Transport Guide: a document listing possible alternative transport (buses or trains) for each day

On your arrival on the pilgrimage you will be given printed copies of the following:

- The route cards: laser printed so that they won’t run in the rain (meaning that you can leave the original copy with a relative or friend that wants to follow your progress)
- The Pilgrim Code
- (on request) a ‘Who we are’ leaflet to give to interested passers-by

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## The 40 Year Reunion (April 10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> 2015)

The 40 year reunion was held in Farnham in April this year. The reunion walk, led by Aidan and Bridget, was blessed by fine weather (after a dodgy start) and lovely countryside, a micro brewery, a super-efficient (if pricey) lunch pub and 2 prayer stops. (It also passed the former homes of at least 10 pilgrims past and present, not marked by blue plaques). Back at St Joan’s, Farnham, we celebrated our history in prayers and music, including a procession of pilgrimage crosses and a roll call of deceased pilgrims. This was followed by the slideshow, a splendid supper, cake and a traditional sing-song.



Read the full report at:

<http://thepilgrims.org.uk/wp/40-years-of-pilgrimage-celebrated-in-farnham/>

The photo diary of the event can be viewed at:

<http://www.thepilgrims.org.uk/2015/reunion40.php>

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## The Jubilee Pilgrimage (3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> July 2015): A letter from Patrick

Dear wonderful brother and sister jubilee pilgrims

What a wonderful time we had together on this pilgrimage. I often compare a pilgrimage to being like a wine. The pilgrims are like the grapes, the better the quality of grapes, the better the wine. The soil the vine is growing in makes a difference too just like the countryside we walk through does for the pilgrimage. And the weather makes a difference to a wine and can make it a good year or a not so good year, just like it can affect a pilgrimage. We had glorious weather to walk in. We had stunningly beautiful countryside to walk through with many beautiful views and all of you were such a fantastic bunch of pilgrims that I think we can honestly say that this pilgrimage hit the champagne standard!!!

I thank all of you for being such a lovely group to have had the honour of leading and you made my task so much easier by your joyful smiles and laughter. There are some special thank you's I'd like to make to those whose gracious efforts helped everything to run so smoothly and or added to the whole event.

At Arundel Cathedral we have Catherine Christmas to thank for playing the organ and helping out with the liturgy and also Louise Sharp who printed off the service sheets. We must also thank Deacon Richard Edwards who MC'd the event and for Bishop Richard Moth for presiding.... Who is now officially an A & B pilgrim himself having walked with us for the first few miles.



And then there's the fantastic Celebration Samba Band with Janice being the main contact who chased and got the band together at reasonably short notice. They really did add to the whole occasion and set us off with a glorious bang! They even turned up in the pouring rain to play for us as we processed over to the Amex. I am not going to forget going into the underpass with them playing their drums... loud or what!!!

Sounded like a herd of jumbo jets had all tried to get into the tunnel at the same time with their engines full on!! They have some photos of the event on this link

<http://www.celebrationsamba.co.uk/#!jubilee-pilgrimage---into-the-amex/c1rur>



Then there's the front and back markers marking the way and collecting the arrows making sure we all enjoyed a wonderful route without getting lost.



Sue and Fred Adilz with Bruce Matheson were leading the first day with Sue and Michael McCabe with Francis O'Sullivan back marking. On the second day, Bruce was leading the back marking with Geoff Murray ably assisting. Our thanks should also go to Becky Reeve and John Abba up the front on the Saturday with new front marker and first time A & B pilgrim Nick French on arrows. Nick has raised nearly

£2,500 for the Lourdes pilgrimages by walking great chunks of the Diocese in the weekends preceding our pilgrimage. Fantastic effort! Well done Nick.

Two people we all need to applaud for their efforts are Howard and Theresa Park, not only our van drivers but also grade one goalies making sure nothing got missed. These two heroes just get on with it quietly and spot what has been overlooked and sort it out. I can't thank you two enough! Just by knowing you are so reliable takes a great weight off any leaders mind. Thank you, and thank you again.

Joan Gale, our Sarnie queen and her gang of sandwich makers making our sandwiches for the Saturday's walk, many thanks to you too. Every little bit of help on our pilgrimage just adds to its smooth running... and in this case stops our stomach's rumbling. And thanks also to those who mucked in with the toast and breakfast production on Sunday.

We can all thank Pippa and Michael Logan for the beautiful mugs that we were able to give to every pilgrim at the end of the pilgrimage and also to the samba band. I left 6 of these mugs on the steps of the convent with an orange arrow sticking out of one of them thanking the sisters for their hospitality while we were with them. If you haven't got a mug, let me know and I'll try to get one to you.

Sr. Patrick was so helpful in our planning for this pilgrimage. She and her sisters have always been welcoming to the A & B pilgrims first offering us hospitality in the 1970s . We are stopping their again on our August pilgrimage... anyone fancy another swim? It won't be their school presentation evening and we will get instant access to the hall... he said temptingly? The sisters and their cook did a wonderful job of feeding us on the Friday evening and Saturday morning.

And what a night we had on the Friday! Swimming pool... boy was that refreshing after the hot day's walking! And then we had Kate's Kitchen Band playing away and then later leading us in a barn dance. I think they were stunned that we actually got up and danced after a long day's walk. We owe them our thanks for making the evening so enjoyable.

Drinks' stop cars – we had David Robbins kindly come and help from early Friday. He had never been on our pilgrimages before but boldly got stuck in, a real star. Mike and Hilda joined us at lunch time on the Friday too and they fitted right in. This was Hilda's first experience of the A & B pilgrimage and a definite find for the pilgrimages. I really hope you come back and help in this role in the future.



We were also graced with Cannon Kieran O'Brien and Fr. Tony Milner who lead our Mass at Storrington which all added to this being a blessed pilgrimage. We also had Rev. Gail Souppouris with us. I hope and

pray that one day we will all live into Christ's own prayer that we should all be one and truly celebrate God's will being done on Earth as it is in heaven. We should all thank our Christian brothers and sisters who are not Roman Catholic for their tolerance of our barriers which I strongly believe are only as a result of the foolishness of man. (Ladies, in this case I am laying the whole blame for this on men. You are exempt). On the August two week pilgrimage there is more opportunity for Anglican and free-church services.

I am really glad we gave the staff at the Student Unions café and bar a huge round of applause on the Saturday evening – excellent food and plenty of it. And then the singing kicked off. Many thanks to Sue and to Louise on guitars and to Becky for her lovely flute playing.

A pilgrimage comes together because of the love and goodwill of past pilgrims who volunteer to take on roles. Many started with a one off experience, loved it and came back again and again. If you feel called at some stage to offer help or suddenly see that there is something you want to do... well that tends to be how the pilgrimage keeps going...



I really hope and pray that we can all meet up and share our pilgrimage journeys together again. You were all an absolutely wonderful group to journey with on the Jubilee Pilgrimage to the Amex.

Love & prayers

***Patrick***

The photo diary of the event can be viewed at:

<http://thepilgrims.org.uk/2015/festival50.php>

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## Positive Comments on the Jubilee Pilgrimage:

Thank you so much for allowing me to join your wonderful pilgrimage. Even though I was only there for one day everyone was so welcoming and friendly and it was so well organised that even being a slow walker there was no danger of me getting lost. I found it a very joyous and spiritual experience, even if I am suffering a bit with muscle aches and blisters today!

Thank you again to you and your wonderful team.

CH

I thoroughly enjoyed the pilgrimage, my first, and thought there was just enough organisation to make it relaxed and enjoyable but meeting all our needs. PS

Seems so long since this pilgrimage was first mooted and now suddenly it is completed and it was a fantastic success, thanks for your hard work and passion. John and Louise

Congratulations on such a successful pilgrimage. There were quite a number of compliments that I heard from new pilgrims as to the effort that they could see had been expended to ensure smooth running. Well done!!

Nick Lamb

Really enjoyed the bit of my first pilgrimage from The Towers Convent to Amex. The organisation, stopping points, food and entertainment were great. I can't wait to join the next one. JD

This walking pilgrimage was wonderful!! I never expected to get so much from it. I met fellow pilgrims from all over the diocese, we shared stories, prayed, laughed, sang and celebrated our the weather was so kind to us. Hospitality at the Towers convent from the nuns who made us so welcome.

I have recommended this walk to fellow parishioners in my parish and our parish priest! I hope to do a couple of days of the pilgrimage in August. M

Thank you, a fabulous weekend! Thank you for making the weekend so enjoyable for all and for injecting new life into the Pilgrimage Community. Sue A

A belated thank you for the most wonderful pilgrimage you organised and led last week. I found it such a spiritual uplift, and it was so special meeting such a team of inspiring pilgrims to travel with.

On the coach back I relayed a bit of my experiences of our pilgrim walk, and I went full flow from the moment we were commissioned at Arundel, to our last night on the Sports Hall! I passed round to everyone on the coach the wooden cross we were given, which now is hanging down from a hook on the ceiling of our hall so I see it every time I climb the stairs!

ML

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## Call for Prayer Support

Pilgrims will recall that in the December newsletter we asked if anyone would be interested in praying for the success of the pilgrimage and for members of the pilgrim community on a regular basis.

We asked if anyone would have the skill to build a (virtual) community of intercessors in prayer. Very kindly Mary Fuller has agreed to accept this challenge. Thank you Mary! If you would be prepared to become a pilgrimage intercessor please can you contact the newly created e-mail address [prayers@thepilgrims.org.uk](mailto:prayers@thepilgrims.org.uk) so that Mary can include you in the circulation list for prayer updates?

Please do remember Monica McLauchlan and Roger Keyes in your prayers as they continue to receive treatment for cancer. Patrick and Becky Reeve also ask for your prayers. Becky has been unwell for some time now and the results of recent hospital tests seem to point in the general direction of M.S. although they will have a much clearer picture after a forthcoming MRI scan.

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## 2015 Autumn Reunion

### 2015 Pilgrimage Reunion Weekend

A date for your diaries: John and Louise Chenery will be hosting the 2015 Pilgrimage Reunion on the weekend of 23-25 October 2015. The reunion will be based in Dorking. It will be a chance for a decent walk before the clocks change and winter really sets in and a time to reconnect with pilgrimage friends. Further details and application forms will be published on the pilgrimage website in the Autumn.

If you are not up to walking but would be interested in helping with the catering or being part of the support team then please contact John directly ([john\\_chenery@btinternet.com](mailto:john_chenery@btinternet.com))

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