

NEWSLETTER

NUMBER 71

February, 2002

Dear Pilgrims,

There was no December Newsletter in 2001 but it is not too late to wish a happy 2002 to you all! Last year was a pretty miserable one for British farming and tourism, people who enjoy ecumenical walking pilgrimages, victims of terrorism, victims of reactions to terrorism, and so on. Well I hope you have had personal joys more than sufficient to counterbalance the gloomy bits.

Those of us who attended the Reunion at Redhill were certainly uplifted. It was a wonderful weekend thanks to the Redhill team under the thoughtful leadership of Pat Donachie. The word 'celebrate' is a bit over-used but was entirely apt in describing our celebration of pilgrim companionship, the lives of our deceased friends, Brenda Dillon and Jim Casey, our celebration of the Eucharist, and our celebration meal, plus a walk, of course.

You will see from the enclosed papers that St Chad II is on. Thanks to the hard work last year by Route Planners and our Accommodation Officer the infrastructure is already in place for a good pilgrimage.

The Planning Team for 2001-2002 was appointed or re-appointed as follows:

- Co-ordinator John Lamb
- Deputy Bruce Matheson
- Secretary Gillian McLauchlan
- Treasurer Patrick Reeve
- Accommodation Aidan Simons
- Alt. Transport Monica McLauchlan
- Booking Sec. Pat Donachie
- Day Pilgrims Gillian McLauchlan
- Catering Frances Deane
- Catering Support Mary Sharp
- Chaplain(s) Fr. David Russell + ?
- Chief Route Planner Maurice Hickman
- Church Liaison John Lamb
- Database Tom Yeung
- Drinks car Rosemary Southon
- Footcare Mary Fuller
- Liturgist/music Louise Chenery
- Sandwiches Joan Gale
- Van John Russell
- Van assistant Vacancy
- Youth concerns Patrick Reeve
- Safety Officer Peter Storrow
- Websites: Danny Thomas & Aidan Simons;
- Other Publicity: under review
- Newsletter Editor Mike Kanssen

Two particular points to note are that our Deputy Co-ordinator, Bruce is a member of an Evangelical Church, Abbey Church, in Gloucester which should be good for broadening our base and the '?' by Fr David's name is a hopeful one that we will have the Rev. Jill Warren from St Chad's, Lichfield with us too.

While the majority of the names are re-appointments, we must expect some change. John Russell, for example, has served notice that he is quitting at the end of this year. He has an obvious and important role regarding the van but as well as this he quietly and unobtrusively keeps a kindly eye on many things. He will be hard to replace but I hope a reader of this Newsletter may feel able to offer - you maybe?.

Here are some other ways you can maintain pilgrim family vitality:

- Display the enclosed A4 poster; try to recruit another pilgrim;
- We are likely to stay in the South-East in 2003. It gives our present contacts a better chance to join for less than the full two weeks. If you have knowledge of suitable sleeping places in Kent, Sussex, Surrey, Hants. please pass details to Aidan;
- Renew your pledge to support Fr Joe Kengah's travel to join us this summer if you can still afford it. If you missed out last year, perhaps you might offer this time? If we exceed target, we can call in less than the full promise from each person. All you need to do at this stage is grab some paper and write "Joe Kengah Appeal", your name, address (with postcode) and sum pledged and return it to Pat Donachie with your booking form, or to me (address at foot of front page);
- Thomas Yeung, new mailbase manager would appreciate being kept posted on changes of name, address or loss of interest (perish the thought!) Contact via [e-mail](#);
- Pray that by cheerful Christian witness our Pilgrimages will touch the people we meet.

I look forward to seeing you in August. God bless. John Lamb

2001 Pilgrimage Reunion

Last years (p)reunion was held on 14-16 September 2001 at St Joseph's Parish Centre, Redhill

For this year's reunion we were once again the guests of the Redhill Area Pilgrims: Pat and Keith, Joan, Milly, Mary and Maurice, and as ever we treated royally.

Friday evening we all gathered, laid out our beds, and chatted over a glass or two in the parish bar, with warming soup for those who needed sustenance, followed by trays of pizza etc. Reminiscences of a summer without pilgrimage (or at least, without our pilgrimage) were shared. Gradually we drifted off to bed, ready for the morrow.

Saturday morning dawned, and (apart from John and Lesley in the honeymoon suite upstairs) everyone was up and about bright and early to enjoy a splendid cooked breakfast, before joining St Joseph's parish for their Saturday morning Mass.

As the appointed hour of departure approached, our numbers were swelled with more pilgrims, and we duly set out north. For "Jules the Steam" it was heaven, crossing back and forth over the London to Brighton lines, the high point being a class 66 hauling a fully laden freightliner service through Merstham station: if only he'd had his camera ready...

As we walked through Merstham the view back was a typical pilgrim straggle, small groups in conversation, individuals with their own thoughts, but all one pilgrim family.



Climbing west across Merstham Golf Course, we got close to Maurice and John, our front markers, we paused, the serenity of the countryside to the south compromised by the M25 to the north. From here we tracked along to the south of the motorway, climbing gradually up towards the top of the North Downs, and reaching the viewpoint and car park at Reigate Hill.

After brief refreshments at the coffee shop, We then followed the North Downs Way across the A217 and west, gaining excellent views south and west over the Surrey countryside (even as a native of Surrey, I am continually surprised at the beauty and extent of the countryside in this "suburban" county). Then, over the motorway, away from the noise, to the Sportsman Inn at Mogador for lunch. After lunch it was back to walking... We retraced our steps over the motorway and along the downs to Reigate Hill, from where we took the short descent. Unfortunately Harriet tried a quicker descent than intended and suffered the day's only serious injury, a twisted ankle. After being strapped up by Patrick, she bravely walked the remaining 3 miles, (walking being considerably less painful than the prospect of being carried by Patrick, although Lauren took the risk, which says lots for her judgement).

Back in the hall for tea and cakes, a slideshow of three (fairly) recent pilgrimage weddings, and preparation of the liturgy for our eucharistic meal.

Traditionally the first Eucharist of the pilgrimage is in memory of deceased pilgrims but, with no pilgrimage, we had been unable to celebrate this. So this Eucharist was for that intention, but especially for Brenda Dillon and Jim Casey who died recently, and Jim's family were able to join us for the service. In the light of the horrific events in America in recent days, we also remembered all those killed and bereaved there.

A table was set out with memories of Brenda and Jim



We celebrated the Eucharist sat around the tables we would eat dinner off and Keith read his excellent reflection on pilgrimage while Father David led the service

After a moving celebration we were served a splendid dinner, eaten in leisurely fashion - there was no entertainment booked to move out of the way for - before we retired to the bar for a sing song into the small hours....And so, Sunday morning... Up and packed; some joining local communities for 8 a.m. Eucharists, then another cooked breakfast (and we're not even walking), before clearing the hall and preparing for the AGM. The AGM will be documented elsewhere, but was unusual in that we had no "recent pilgrimage" to give a post mortem, and no major decisions to make about next year's route.

And then, lunch for some, home for others. A lovely weekend with such special friends. A huge vote of thanks to the organisers, who can organise another reunion whenever they want!

Abridged from www.thepilgrims.org.uk



Pilgrimage E-mail

Aidan has set up generic "@thepilgrims.org.uk" e-mail addresses for various committee members posts. These have been set up to automatically forward the e-mail to the correct person's current e-mail address. This will mean that when the post changes hands or the occupant changes ISP you won't have to change the address you send messages to. These are documented in the paper version: from here please use the [e-mail form](#).

Pilgrimage Website and Archive News

Since the St Chad's Pilgrimage I have been running a web site dedicated to the A&B pilgrimages at www.thepilgrims.org.uk. Whilst it is no rival to Danny's masterpiece at www.pilgrimsprogress.org.uk, which contains information on many and varied pilgrimages, I have been able to publish current developments on the planning front and news of various events, including our regular newsletters, building on the "Pilgrims Live" reporting of the St Chad's Pilgrimage.

Recently, sorting out piles of paper that my dad and I had stashed away over the years, I discovered that I had an almost complete set of newsletters from the very beginning, which made interesting reading, and started adding these to the web site.

More recently, I have inherited much of Bill Haynes' archive of pilgrimage material, from which Patrick and I extracted newsletters, application forms, route notes, address lists, paper cuttings, accounts, some other interesting items, and many of the slides Bill took on early pilgrimages.

Whilst we are happy to give the archive a loving home, it's difficult to share it with others. So I have started to put suitable items on the web site, including the newsletters (with personal contact details removed) and press cuttings, and more recently I've started writing the story of each pilgrimage, illustrated with Bill's slides (and other pictures if appropriate). It's only "one man's view", and there are several pilgrimages I wasn't on, so I'll need help (I'll also need pictures where Bill's run out!). But those I've talked to think it's good to get down the memories while we can.

For those without access to the internet, I will print out a copy in due course and bring it along to gatherings of pilgrims.

But there's one thing I want to be very clear: while there's lots to celebrate in our past pilgrimages, and lots of special memories of those we've shared the journey with, a pilgrim's eyes must be on the path ahead not in the rear-view mirror.

Aidan

Invitation to a one-day Pilgrimage

Recently co-opted to represent our church on the Churches Together in Alresford committee, I was asked if I had any ideas regarding an event for this year's diary. As a long shot I told them of my pilgrimage experiences, and suggested running a one-day pilgrimage in the locality. The offer was accepted! So, on Saturday 29th June I will be leading the Christians of Alresford in search of that "pilgrimage experience".

I would love some other pilgrims to join us for the day and mingle with the novices. Whilst the pilgrimage is "non residential" I'm sure we can find space for any pilgrims who want to stay over (plus slides, singing, etc).

Please let me know if you hope to come so that I can provide accurate details nearer the date.

Aidan

Pilgrim News

Ex-pilgrim, Anne Pollington will be ordained, this year and then will become the Vicar of Hollington

Rather delayed news from Shelia Tilley, (of 17½ pilgrimages!) - due to my missing her letter for the July issue, sorry Sheila & there not being a autumn/winter issue last year. Alan & Ruth Tilley (nee Allanson) had a son -Guy- born to them on 7th March 2001 weighing 8½lbs. Patrick was one of Guy's God parents at the christening last Easter. Sheila also says she now has some new feet, which have straightened her up, but she still can't cope with the long walks these day's. Her husband Tony had a period of fairly severe illness during which Sheila was kept busy nursing him, fortunately he is now much better.

Louise and Phil Sharp's daughter who was born shortly after the Reunion: Anna Beatrice Sharp b. 10 October 2001; wt. 8lb 14oz This made Grandma Mary very happy!

Edna Davies has kindly donated a communal footpump to inflate our beds. Technical experts and theologians are working out how to arrange for it to blow the foot off anyone using it after "lights out" without being uncharitable.

Help! Perhaps you are the person to act as deputy bookings secretary. Pat Donachie would be happy to tell you what is involved.

This year the Romero Sponsored Walk 2002 will take place on 29 June. It will be a one day event and Maurice Hickman has, once again, kindly agreed to plan the route. Please put it in your diary and 'watch this space'. Anyone wanting further info can contact Keith Donachie (use the [web mail](#) and I will forward)



Danny Thomas celebrated his 50th Birthday in December with a wonderful party at Nonsuch Park. Many Pilgrims, as well as family members, were present to congratulate Danny as well as to admire his most impressive cake! This depicted a computer (displaying the route he's taking to Santiago de Compostela) along with hike boots, scallop shells & a guide book in a work of art that seemed a shame to cut up. - I have to admit it was by far the tastiest monitor I've ever seen!

Liz Wakefield from Glastonbury 1 pilgrimage, writes with an update '...just to say hello and see if anyone remembers me,. Anyway Vicky our daughter is now 16 believe it or not and studying for A levels, Rob is teaching A level Physics and I am still teaching junior school age kids and also in charge of all the computers etc. If anyone lives in the Croydon area then they may know the school I teach in, Good Shepherd, New Addington, I commute from Hove each day! '