

NEWSLETTER

NUMBER 90

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Dear Pilgrims,

The 2008 Pilgrimage from Evesham to Salisbury is only a few weeks ahead. As your current Coordinator I would like to welcome you all to Salisbury 2008 - whether you are new to the pilgrimage or have been involved for all or many of the past 34 years.

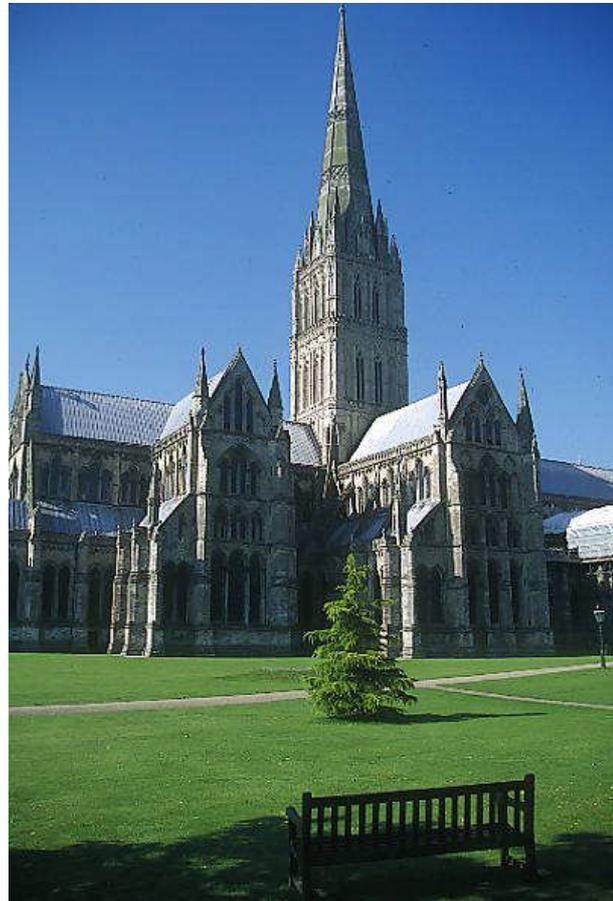
This year we start where the pilgrimage finished 25 years ago. Louise Chenery, wife of Master Route Planner John, was very keen that Evesham should be our destination in 2008 to commemorate the 25th anniversary both of the last visit by the Pilgrimage and 25 years of her journey with the Walking Pilgrimage. In the midst of discussion of route choices, Aidan Simons, working on his ever present lap top, came up with the news that Salisbury Cathedral would be celebrating the 750th Anniversary of its Consecration, so the dice was cast and it became Evesham to Salisbury.

A further reason for returning to Evesham was the rarity value. Not welcoming many pilgrims to the town, the local paper ran a headline 'Welcome Pilgrims - Do come back again!'. So after a brief delay of a mere 25 years, we are responding to that invitation.

As arrival for most pilgrims travelling from Redhill is likely to be fairly early on the Saturday afternoon and as our departure will not be until after the 10.00am Anglican Eucharist on the Sunday morning there will be 'ample' time to explore this town - renowned for its Medieval Abbey and the centre of fruit growing in the famous Vale of Evesham - incidentally pronounced locally as 'Eve a shum'!

This year we will be walking through the wonderful North Cotswold countryside and staying in the spectacular Medieval Wool Towns of Chipping Camden, Winchcombe, Northleach and Cirencester. Then in the later stages we cross the Wiltshire Downs and Salisbury Plain before arriving at our Pilgrimage Destination, which is now in celebration mode, for our arrival, and 750 years since Consecration!

It is with great pleasure that I welcome Aidan Simons as the Coordinator in waiting, Aidan will take over in September. Who could be fitting for this role than Aidan? His father, Mike Simons, was the co-founder of the Pilgrimage with Father Bill Haynes back in 1975. Both Aidan and Imelda, who was later to become his wife, were amongst that very first band of pilgrims. The Simons clan, which incorporates Gambles and Yeomans, has been at the heart of the A and B Walking Pilgrimage



throughout its history. So a great welcome to Aidan as he prepares to assume the mantle of leadership.

After many years when our luggage has been so ably transported by John Russell, we now greet a new van man, James Swale, recruited by Patrick. Thank you, James, for agreeing to take on this essential role (the idea of carrying all that baggage on our backs doesn't bear thinking about!). We will all make an enormous effort to make sure that your job is not too onerous and that you have an opportunity to experience and enjoy the pilgrimage as much as the rest of us!

An equally warm hello to Margaret Pollard. Having nobly invited a group of wet, weary (and I suspect smelly) pilgrims to her house in Freshwater Bay for a shower, Margaret actually VOLUNTEERED to join in as transport provider and catering assistant to our amazing Pilgrimage Cook, Frances. Now that takes some beating. When studying your List of Pilgrims you may spot a 'Douglas Pollard' also of Freshwater Bay. Douglas is husband to the said Margaret and one of my fellow Catenians. He will be walking the pilgrim's way with us, whilst Margaret ensures that we are amply fed. Wonderful to have some fellow Islanders aboard.

The decision to walk from Wells to Arundel in 2007 and from Evesham to Salisbury in 2008 was taken by the pilgrims, totally unpressured by myself (true if unbelievable!). Both years have had very close personal associations for me. I come from the Island and live there again after 35 years away. Shepton Mallet near Wells was the setting of my most active Deacon role with my wife Joan, leading the parish of St. Michael, from 1997-2000. Whilst Winchcombe, which was not originally on the 2008 itinerary, replaced Stow after the Rugby Club Hall was withdrawn as our sleeping space. Winchcombe was where we lived for thirteen years in the eighties and nineties, whilst teaching in nearby, Cheltenham. So a tremendous thank you to all those pilgrims who inadvertently by their choice of pilgrimage routes gave my two years in charge, such personal significance.

All that remains to be said is: study your equipment list, gather your gear, practice your walking - especially in those boots - and then set out for Evesham (via Redhill for coach travellers) on the third Saturday in August, not the traditional second Saturday. A long wait if you arrive a week early. **So until Saturday 16th in Evesham and the start of PILGRIMAGE 2008...**

Peter

Follow the pilgrimage online at <http://live.thepilgrims.org.uk> – updated every night as we journey to Salisbury.

The 2008 reunion will be in Epsom on the weekend of 31 October – Make a note in your diary now!

Volunteer wanted

I have finally realized that I am getting too out of touch to properly fulfil the job of the newsletter editor. (I've not stayed overnight with the pilgrims since before Geoff was born in 2000, and living the wrong end of Essex very much limits the times I can join in any other events as well.) So, after many years enjoying the easy job of Newsletter editor, I have decided it is time to give it up.

Please consider if **YOU** could give something back to the pilgrim family by taking over the role, there are only 3 editions a year and these days they rarely require more than an evening's work with a word processor. If you feel able speak to Peter, Aidan or any member of the committee.

Mike

News

Lesley Brennan's Mother - Kath Hill - passed away on 8th February, Lesley asks for your prayers for her soul as well as for her family.

Fr Joe Kengah will be in Hemel Hempstead when the pilgrimage starts, but is determined to join, at some point, even if it's just for one or two days. He will be arriving in UK on the 12th of July

Brooks Hill would like to pass on a big Hello to anyone from Lindisfarne 1984.

Jean Winn writes:

'I just wanted to say how sad I am not to be able to come on this years pilgrimage, alas the dates just didn't fit, and my thoughts of coming just for a day have been foiled by my hips! You may recall I limped off from Ryde last year, I apparently had 'bursitis' of the hip, not so serious so I rested it and I'm now walking normally again and not with the sailors rolling gait I'd had on the IOW, however any prolonged walking and it starts up again, so I've been limited to slightly shorter mileage by the Dr. I am still doing my daily short walks so hope by 2009 to be back on form and will get out the sleeping bag and lilo again.

Please give my love to the other pilgrims, and I shall be thinking of you and keeping up on the website in August.'