Tunic Tales: Seamstress Surprise

Serendipity led to delight for FOPP board member Barbara Reynolds when she attended an annual Quaker Meeting in New Jersey wearing one of her Peace Pilgrim t-shirts. (For years, high school students from Peace’s hometown created special designs used on tee’s for an annual Peace Pilgrim celebration.) Upon seeing the familiar name, fellow Quaker Bob Dockhorn introduced himself and excitedly told Barbara that his mother, Marian Dockhorn, sewed several of the tunics Peace wore during her pilgrimage.

It turns out his mother was a longtime peace activist who met Peace Pilgrim in 1954 at the Jane Addams House in Philadelphia. Bob even found an old Christmas letter his parents sent that holiday including this mention:

“The year also brought us much joy in friendships. One of the most unique was that of ‘Peace Pilgrim,’ who walked 5,000 miles in 1953 from coast to coast and from border to border of the United States in the cause of world peace. On January 1, 1955, she will start from Los Angeles on a two year pilgrimage for world disarmament, which will take her through every state in the union. A part of her message reads: ‘Overcome evil with good, and falsehood with truth, and hatred with love. Do not say that these are just religious concepts and not practical. These are laws governing human conduct which apply as rigidly as the law of gravity.’”

Although only a “rudimentary” seamstress, as Bob put it, his mother was happy to sew the blue navy tunic with large white letters on the front reading “Peace Pilgrim” and text on that back that changed over the course of her journeys.

“Peace was a frequent visitor in our house in between her extended walks across the country,” recalled Bob, who wrote books about his mother’s life and his own life, both of which include sections on Peace Pilgrim. “Whenever her tunic wore out, she would return for a visit and Marian would make a new one.”

When her visits coincided with Marian’s Bucks County [PA] World Peace Fair – a large annual event held from the late 1950’s into the 1980’s with major presenters like Linus Pauling and Loretta Scott King – Peace would be a featured speaker.

Bob shared several personal memories of Peace, including her gleeful telling of a story about being locked in an Arizona gas station bathroom for 24 hours. “She endured quite well, but [it] horrified the attendant who had locked her in.”

“She was a vegetarian, and once, when I offered her some Junket dessert I had made, she asked me to read the ingredients and then explained that she wouldn’t eat it because it contained rennet, which came from a cow’s stomach,” he remembered. “That was my first encounter with serious vegetarianism.”

Want to make your own tunic? Turn to page 5 for a pattern along with a story of one “Grandmother for Peace” who has been channeling Peace Pilgrim for decades.
Peace Pilgrim Honored as Visionary Champion of Peace and Nonviolence

Visionary women with courage, conviction and compassion have been behind centuries of work toward nonviolent change, from women’s rights and racial justice to disarmament and gun control. Peace Pilgrim was among 12 remarkable people honored by the National Women’s History Alliance as Visionary Women: Champions of Peace and Nonviolence at a special program in Washington, D.C. last spring.

Friends of Peace Pilgrim Board member Bruce Nichols accepted the posthumous award. Although no longer able to attend these kinds of events, Peace’s 104-year-old sister Helene Young expressed deep gratitude through Bruce for the recognition of her sister’s life and work towards a more peaceful world. In addition, Bruce shared a few words of Peace Pilgrim’s wisdom and offered deep appreciation to all the extraordinary women recognized that day. Other posthumous honorees were:

Elise Boulding, a Quaker sociologist and author who was a major contributor to the development of the field of Peace and Conflict Studies.

Sarah Brady, a leading gun control advocate who helped pass important legislation after her husband was permanently disabled in the failed assassination attempt on President Reagan.

Dorothy Cotton, the only woman in Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s inner circle and one of the most influential women in the civil rights movement.

Mary Burnett Talbert, a founder of the Niagara Movement in 1905 and its successor the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) in 1910.

Living honorees, who all attended the event, were:

Kathy Kelly, a dedicated peace worker in international conflict zones, a founding member of Voices in the Wilderness, and currently co-coordinator of Voices for Creative Nonviolence.

Mineral

More than 40 years ago Peace Pilgrim picked up a small but very heavy stone while walking on a road near the home of FOPP board member Richard Polese in Santa Fe, NM.

“She wondered what it could be,” he recalled, smiling at the memory of her ever-curious nature.

He since learned that the rock is known as ganela, also called “lead glance,” which is the natural mineral form of lead. Used since ancient times because of its low melting point, it is the most important ore of lead and a valuable source of silver. Ganela has a distinct silver color and a bright metallic luster, but often tarnishes to a dull gray.

“I’ve kept ‘Peace’s Rock’ in a clear glass container in my home all these years,” noted Richard. “This stone is one of the anchors of my life – a tangible reminder of Peace’s visit here on her pilgrimage.”

FOPP board member Bruce Nichols is thrilled to accept the award from Martha Wheelock, an NWHA board member who met Peace Pilgrim in the 1970’s and happily held up one of the last navy blue tunics that Peace wore during her 28-year pilgrimage.

Zainab Salbi, founder of Women for Women International, a grassroots humanitarian and development organization dedicated to serving women survivors of wars.

Graciela Sanchez, a neighborhood activist and cultural worker who co-founded the Esperanza Peace and Justice Center in San Antonio, TX.

Deborah Tucker, who helped write and pass the Violence Against Women Act of 1994 and is currently President of the Board of Directors of the National Center on Domestic and Sexual Violence.

Dr. E. Faye Williams, an active civil and human rights leader who is National Chair of the National Congress of Black Women.

Sister Alice Zachmann, founder and former director of the Guatemala Human Rights Commission USA.

“Every good thing you do, every good thing you say, every good thought you think, vibrates on and on and never ceases.”

Peace Pilgrim
Dear Friends of Peace Pilgrim,

In the waning days of October, it continues to be warm in Connecticut. Fall colors are bright though the woods are thinning as leaves tumble back to the earth. The evenings are still rich with the music of crickets and katydids. In another few days, or a week, a hard frost will rime the fallen leaves and silence the night-time choir. The seasons are turning, and each has its beauty and challenges. When asked about her age, Peace Pilgrim once replied, “I think of myself as ageless and in radiant health, and I am. I haven’t gotten younger, but I see no point in getting younger. If you have learned the lessons of the seasons of life before, you really have no wish to return to a prior season of life.”

For the past 36 years Friends of Peace Pilgrim has been sending books, booklets, and other offerings to friends around the world. Thirty-six times around the sun. Thirty-six turnings of seasons. Hundreds of thousands of friends introduced to the “radiant message” of peace that is Peace Pilgrim’s legacy. We hope you find some inspiration in the pages of this newsletter. And that, in whatever season of life this finds you, the radiant energy of inner peace is there also.

In Peace and Friendship,
The Friends of Peace Pilgrim board of directors – Cheryl Canfield, Richard Polese, Jeff Blom, Mayte Picco-Kline, Barbara Reynolds, Maurice Hoover and Bruce Nichols

“I first heard of this woman back in 2006 when I was going through a hard time. I googled inner peace and her website showed up. Anyone can request this wonderful book for free. It’s one of my favorite books. I refer to it again and again.”

This is from one of hundreds of Goodreads followers who highly rated Peace Pilgrim: Her Life and Work in Her Own Words. Compiled by five friends in Santa Fe, NM, in 1982 – the year after Peace Pilgrim’s “glorious transition to a freer life” – the book is a wonderful collection of her own enduring words. It also includes comments by people she met while on her 28-year pilgrimage for peace.

The contents were lovingly gathered from pilgrimage newsletters, tapes of her talks, personal letters, interviews and news articles. She relates many of her experiences, gives examples of dealing compassionately and fearlessly with violent and confused persons and shares some of her unique solutions to problems. There is timeless wisdom for all readers in her joyful thoughts on peace, prayer, simplicity and the way of love.

The book is offered for free in several formats. The digital version comes in 18 languages; print is available in English and Spanish, and there is an audio edition in English.

Links to all the print and digital materials can be found on our website: www.peacepilgrim.org

A Question on Peace Pilgrim and God

We receive notes and questions from friends all over the world. A periodic inquiry is similar to the one James sent through a message on our Facebook page:

Something I noticed in reading Peace Pilgrim’s book is that I don’t think she ever used a pronoun for God. Do you know if she ever discussed this as her intention?

FOPP board member Bruce Nichols replied:

To the best of my understanding, Peace Pilgrim’s sense of “God” is not an anthropomorphic one. I suspect that to call God “He,” or “She,” would in some way limit the inclusiveness of the direct way in which she experienced God.

It is probably best to use her own words found on page 2 of the book, Peace Pilgrim: Her Life and Work in Her Own Words [available for free from www.peacepilgrim.org]:

“Intellectually I touched God many times as truth and emotionally I touched God as love. I touched God as goodness. I touched God as kindness. It came to me that God is a creative force, a motivating power, an over-all intelligence, an ever-present, all pervading spirit – which binds everything in the universe together and gives life to everything. That brought God close. I could not be where God is not. You are within God. God is within you.”

The closest I can find in the book where she uses a personal analogy is when she refers to God’s hands. page 64:

“In the beginning you may have to take it back to God quite a number of times before you develop the habit (which I have developed) of always doing everything you can in a situation, and then leaving the rest safely in God’s hands.”

I hope this is in some way helpful.
Celebrating Peace in 2019

As in years past, FOPP hosted several events for like-minded people to celebrate the life of Peace Pilgrim and the profound personal impact her message has made in so many hearts.

Stormy weather could not dampen the joyful celebration of Peace Pilgrim’s birthday on July 18, 2019. Friends new and old gathered in her hometown of Egg Harbor City, NJ, at the Historical Museum across from Peace Pilgrim Park.

Originally intended to be outdoors, the gathering was filled with love and laughter. Everyone was thrilled to chat with Peace Pilgrim’s “baby” sister, Helene Young, age 104, who blew out the candle on the birthday cake.

When the weather cleared a little, the party moved across the street for a quick tour of the Park, which looked beautiful thanks to the efforts of local master gardeners and neighborhood children.

“I enjoy connecting the children in the community to the nature found in the Park,” said master gardener Candace Negron. “We planted native plants for our bees and butterflies visiting the gardens and educated our students on the importance of them to the garden.”

After visiting the Park, which features a Peace Pilgrim statue surrounded with colorful tiles made by local school students and a garden in the shape of a peace sign, the group returned to the museum. Accompanied by three guitars, they sang peace songs until about 10 pm.

“It was a most wonderful evening in the company of many Friends of Peace Pilgrim and Peace’s most amazing sister, Helene,” said FOPP board member Bruce Nichols.

Appalachian Trail Retreat 2019

For the seventh time since 2012, a group of retreatants gathered at the Mohican Outdoor Center in Blairstown, NJ to enjoy the Beauties of Nature and the fellowship of others who have been inspired by Peace Pilgrim’s life and message. We shared a comfortable lodge with a short uphill hike to the Appalachian Trail on the Kittatinny Ridge, where, in the photo above, we watched the sunrise and enjoyed stunning broad views to the east.

In the year before the start of her pilgrimage, Peace Pilgrim was the first woman to walk the entire length of the trail in one season. In 2017 she was inducted into the Appalachian Trail Hall of Fame for that accomplishment.

The annual retreat offers an opportunity to connect with Peace’s AT journey and enjoy the peace, silence and inspiration of living surrounded by and close to the natural world. It also offers an opportunity to share our personal journeys toward a more peaceful life with others who are walking similar paths.

The Appalachian Trail Retreat 2020 will take place the weekend of Oct. 16-18, 2020. If you would like to be informed of the dates and notified when early registration opens, please send an email to: aatretreat@pacepilgrim.org

Please put “AT Retreat 2020” in the subject line. You are also welcome to contact us by regular mail.
“Grandmother for Peace” Has Channeled Peace Pilgrim for Decades

Jemila Ericson will never forget meeting Peace Pilgrim in the summer of 1972. “I was deeply moved by her talk and her presence. Decades later – well after Peace had made her ‘glorious transition to a freer life’ – the passionate actress began donning one of the well-worn navy blue tunics herself. She traveled around San Jose and Monteverde in Costa Rica, channeling Peace Pilgrim’s message of inner and outer peace.

In fact, Jemila was in the iconic outfit when she met Peace Pilgrim’s sister, Helene Young, nearly 20 years ago. Helene and FOPP board member Barbara Reynolds were arriving in San Jose for the dedication ceremony of a Peace Pilgrim statue at the United Nations University for Peace [see update about the statue in our Winter 2019 newsletter.]

“I had spent the day at two schools where I had given talks dressed as Peace,” recalled Jemina with a smile. “The taxi bringing them from the airport to our hotel pulled up just as I was being dropped off. I was a little nervous about meeting Helene for the first time. There I was portraying her own sister! But we stepped out of our vehicles and Helene’s face lit up. She threw her arms wide open, and she practically crowed, Hello, sister!! Lots of hugging and laughing became our modus operandi for that whole incredible journey!”

They have remained friends ever since. Last year Jemila, who is an active member of Grandmothers for Peace, visited Helene in Egg Harbor City, NJ, the town where Helene and Peace grew up.

“She and Barbara Reynolds and I had a delightful visit! Helene was 103 then! We talked for hours. We did the grand tour of all the sites (and sights!) associated with Peace. I’d seen them before but I always enjoy seeing them again.”

Make Your Own Tunic

FOPP board member Richard Polese created this easy pattern for replicating the navy blue tunic worn by Peace Pilgrim throughout her 28-year pilgrimage. (Note: dimensions can be scaled as needed to fit the size of the wearer.)

Thoughts on Peace Pilgrim and Climate Change

“My pilgrimage covers the entire peace picture: peace among nations, peace among groups, peace within our environment, peace among individuals, and the very, very important inner peace”

These words appear at the beginning of Chapter 3: “The Pilgrimage” in Peace Pilgrim: Her Life and Work In Her Own Words. In this age of global warming and climate activism, it is interesting to connect with Peace Pilgrim’s commitment to “peace within our environment” that goes back to the mid-1950s, a time when concern for the environment was almost unheard of. Peace Pilgrim lived her life as a pilgrim with one of the smallest carbon footprints that can be imagined. She walked almost everywhere. Her only possessions were the clothes on her back and the few items carried in her pockets. She was a vegetarian. And she encouraged others to enjoy lives of more simplicity and freedom.

While we may not be able to bring our lives down to the minimalist level of Peace Pilgrim, we all can find inspiration in her example and look at the places where we might make small changes in our lifestyle to create more “peace within our environment.” Can we drive our cars a little less, perhaps enjoying one car-free day a week or a month? Can we pare down our possessions, buying less and recycling or passing on to others unnecessary stuff? Are our diet and food choices such that the impact on our planet is minimized? Our choices today will determine the future of our planet and humanity. And as Peace Pilgrim has proclaimed, “The choice...is up to us!”
Some Notes from Our Friends

From Kevin in Indianapolis, IN

The inner peace booklet has been such an inspiration for me. I have it in my meditation room and read it over and over again, and know others that have received it feel the same way. Thank you so much.

From Arun in India

I cannot tell how delighted I am to know about her. Tears flowed as I read about her, and her simple clear sane thinking about the world. She takes the way of Gandhi and Vinoba, saints and monks, sadhus and hermits, but while remaining in this world - thanking it, cajoling it to think. I live in Delhi, India and this is July 29, 2019 - but can there be a more saner message? I thank you for your love to her, for making us know of her, for keeping sane in a completely insane world of wars and consumerism and fundamentalism. Thank you and bows of respect.

From Ann in Elkhart, IN

Peace Pilgrim stayed overnight at my house near Daleville VA, in 1972, when I was 16. She made a very positive impression on me. I was saddened to learn of her death in 1981. Tomorrow [April 5, 2019] I leave for a thruhike of the AT, I will look forward to reading this book on my return. My husband might actually send it to me once it arrives, depending on size and weight of the book. So glad for the opportunity to read her words!

From William in Haysville, KS

I had the honor of having the Peace Pilgrim speak to my Freshman class at Salina South High School, Salina, Kansas in 1973. It was one of the events that helped form the way I view the world. The Peace Pilgrim had the same enlightened being feel about her as Thich Nhat Hanh and the Dalai Lama. I would love to have whatever you can send me so that I can read the words of this wonderful person. I thank you so much for carrying on the message.

From Keith in Los Angeles, CA

I was introduced to the Peace Pilgrim’s legacy this week. I give thanks for whomever is continuing to spread Peace Pilgrim’s legacy.

From Liz in Connecticut

I am a nurse in a geriatric practice that my partner is the physician of. I have witnessed so many older adults in worry and anxiety over their lives over the years. I believe the booklet would help them immensely to examine the causes of their troubles. Is it possible to be sent a few copies of this wonderful little booklet? Incidentally, my daughter went to Guatemala last summer for a month to study Spanish immersion. She brought this booklet in Spanish and in English for her dad as a silly joke after acquiring it from a passerby. (She didn’t even look inside it.) She is only 16. She unknowingly changed the face of our lives. And it happens just like that, seamlessly and without effort. We are listening. Thank you. Have a wonderful day.

From Susan through Facebook

I have been following Peace for 32 years now. She would never want me to say that I am her disciple but I sure have lived my best life because of her pilgrimage.

From Val through Facebook

When I was a teenager she came to our high school. I didn’t have much consciousness then and I couldn’t imagine someone would just walk away from their house and roam all over the country. I actually thought she was a bit crazy but now I realize I was lucky to ever have been in her presence.

“Unnecessary possessions are unnecessary burdens.”

~ Peace Pilgrim

Peace Pilgrim Message Inspired Hungarian Translator

Cseresznye Krisztián had seen Peace Pilgrim’s name on a list of U.S. walkers he had found. But it wasn’t until he was in the midst of a “dark period” in his life that he returned to her words. Reading Steps Toward Inner Peace brought him great relief.

“Soon I wanted to spread it to others,” he said. “I knew what it was to be tormented by destructive thoughts and I knew how simple the solution she presented was. I thought I might help people who were suffering in the same way.”

He completed the Hungarian translation of the booklet during the winter of 2017-2018 when he was in Iceland.

“Even if only one person reads the Hungarian version, he or she might talk about it to somebody else and from that point on, there is no telling how far it will go,” he noted.

Steps Toward Inner Peace (digital version) is available for free in 30 languages

While he doesn’t agree with everything Peace Pilgrim wrote, Czeresznye said “most of what she said feels true to me...She wasn’t just a philosopher, her life is evidence that what she believed in, works. She did face violence at least three times and turned it around. She faced hatred and turned it around. She had nothing but she was provided with everything.”

“I am very glad I have found her legacy and that her friends are still maintaining it,” he added. “Thanks for doing so and for the support I have received during the translation.”
Offerings from Friends of Peace Pilgrim

One of the primary ways we continue Peace Pilgrim’s legacy is through our free offerings. Her message is now in over 100 countries. In the last three decades, we have sent out almost 500,000 free copies of our book, Peace Pilgrim: Her Life and Work in Her Own Words and more than two million booklets, Steps Toward Inner Peace. We’ve also filled requests for thousands of free audio tapes and DVDs.

Most of our materials can be downloaded immediately from our website (www.peacepilgrim.org) We also are happy to mail the following offerings. In the spirit of Peace Pilgrim we send them freely to all who ask. Since many inquire about making donations, we are including our approximate costs for printing and mailing our offerings within the USA. (Contact us about international costs.) Donations are welcome but not necessary to receive our offerings. Friends of Peace Pilgrim is an all volunteer 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Donations are tax-deductible. All money goes directly to our work, helping us to continue producing and distributing materials to all who ask regardless of their financial situation.

PUBLICATIONS

PEACE PILGRIM: Her Life and Work in Her Own Words (Standard Edition), 224 pages. Compiled by five of her friends after her transition in 1981. (Printing and postage $5) (Note: digital versions available in 12 languages)

PEACE PILGRIM (Compact Edition), 224 pages. This book is the same as the Standard Edition except smaller. (Printing and postage $4)


STEPS TOWARD INNER PEACE, 32 pages. Peace Pilgrim relates her own steps toward inner peace and gives ideas for working for world peace. (STEPS is also available in print in Spanish, Chinese, Arabic and Hebrew. Please call or write for information.) (Printing and postage $1) (Note: digital versions available in 30 languages)

LARGER PRINT EDITION OF STEPS, 64 pages – 5”x7”. This attractive edition of STEPS is especially appropriate for those who require larger, easier to read text. (Printing and postage $3)

PEACE PILGRIM’S WISDOM: A Very Simple Guide by Cheryl Canfield, 224 pages. Currently our of print; a 2nd edition is in process. (Printing and Postage $6)

PEACE PILGRIM, An Extraordinary Life by Ann Rush, 16 pages. Peace Pilgrim’s life is traced from her ordinary beginnings through a transformation to a life of unusual commitment. (Printing and postage $2)

THE PEACE PILGRIM COLORING BOOK. English and Spanish in one book. By Barbara Werner and Gary Guthrie. 48 pages – Peace Pilgrim’s story with line drawings on facing pages that can be colored. (Printing and postage $5)

DVD VIDEO

PEACE PILGRIM INTERVIEWS DVD – Includes a six-minute TV broadcast from PM Magazine; a 25-minute interview for WIFR TV in Rockford, IL; a 30-minute interview at Pensacola Junior College; and our 24-minute Highlights video. This DVD is subtitled in English, Spanish, Chinese, Russian, Portuguese and French. It also includes a wealth of downloadable PDF “extras” in several languages. (Printing and postage $6)

PEACE PILGRIM LECTURES DVD – Contains over three hours of video including talks given to students at California Sate University, a question and answer session with students at the University of Georgia, a Pensacola Junior College Interview and the PM Magazine profile. (Printing and postage $6)

PEACE PILGRIM DOCUMENTARIES DVD – Includes two beautiful and informative documentary films: PEACE PILGRIM: An American Sage Who Walked Her Talk (one hour) in both English and Spanish. This professional documentary film highlights Peace Pilgrim’s life, with new historical footage and interviews. The Spirit of Peace (71 minutes) is an earlier documentary that features interviews with those who knew Peace Pilgrim and those who were inspired by her message. (Printing and postage $6)

We also have a wealth of audios, videos, news clippings, photos and other wonderful Peace Pilgrim materials available to download or view directly on our website: www.peacepilgrim.org

OUR NEWSLETTER – To be added or removed from our newsletter mailing list, please visit our website or contact us at the address below. All of our past newsletters as well as the Peace Pilgrim’s Progress newsletters sent by Peace Pilgrim during the years of her pilgrimage are available on our website: www.peacepilgrim.org

Contact us to request materials:
Friends of Peace Pilgrim, P.O. Box 2207, Shelton, CT 06484
or call (203) 926-1581, or email: friends@peacepilgrim.org
“Some people seem to think that my life dedicated to simplicity and service is austere and joyless, but they do not know the freedom of simplicity. I am thankful to God every moment of my life for the great riches that have been showered upon me. My life is full and good but never overcrowded. If life is overcrowded then you are doing more than is required for you to do.

Peace Pilgrim: Her Life and Work In Her Own Words (page 51)