

**a woman  
pilgrim  
stories  
spirituality  
& travel**



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## *PILGRIMAGE TO THE HOLY ISLAND OF LINDISFARNE*

Lindisfarne, the Holy Island, is attached to the Northeasternmost coast of England for five hours twice a day. The rest of the time, the causeway is buried under the waters of the frigid North Sea and the land becomes an island. To drive across the causeway with the water licking at the tires is a race with time itself. And the victor finds herself locked onto an island with seven hours grace.

“My friend, Sue, makes good food at the Columba Hotel,” said our hostess, Maureen Porter, at the Lindisfarne Bed & Breakfast called *The Bungalow*. But when we went next door, the hotel was filled with children. They were seated in the glamorous dining room, eating fish and chips and peas. On the radiator, their socks were drying, radiating a steamy aroma.

“Let’s go for a walk,” said The Storyteller, his classic solution for most dilemmas. The path out of town led to a farm. Geese set up a terrible noise at our coming. Their noise called out to the dogs, whose barking added to the fray. We walked quickly, feeling no fear on this Holy Island. The pens to our left were filled with fine sheep and their twin lambs. The earth was riddled with rabbit warrens.

The vast Northumbrian sky stretched over our heads. Our strides lengthened to fit the land. We walked along a muddy road that was lined with hawthorn trees which had not yet bloomed. At the end of the protected path we came to open land. The scent of the sea came. In the distance we could see sand dunes covered with tough Marram grass.

To our right we could see the old castle. Lindisfarne Castle seemed organic, growing out of the dolerite rock at the highest point on the island, Beblowe Crag. It was a fort from Reformation times until the Jacobite rebellion. But then it had fallen into ruin. In 1901, Edward Hudson purchased the Castle and engaged Edwin Landseer Lutyens to create a country-house. He did so with the utmost of taste and artistry.

In the distance we could hear Lindisfarne Lough and Sandham Bay. It seemed that all the birds of the world nested here. Now, as dusk came, birds settled for the night. Whooper Swans, noisy trumpeting birds, wintered over here, escaping the cold of Iceland. Mallard ducks were here, as well as tiny Dunlins, Turnstones, Sanderlings, Bar-tailed Godwits, and elegant Oystercatchers. The lullabies of the birds created an actual presence in all that space.

We walked along the path towards the sand dunes and climbed up as high as could be, and expected to see the North Sea. But all we saw were more sand dunes. This Holy Island was larger than it first seemed. We could not explore all of it now, with dark coming and hunger rising.

Back at the hotel, the children were now playing soccer in the front yard. We broke the magic of their play as we walked through the boundaries of their imaginary soccer field.

“You’d best eat in the bar,” cautioned the pubman. “The socks are still drying,” he added with a wink. The Fisherman’s

Pie was hot and delicious. Sue gave me the recipe. Like all good cooks, she demurred, “Oh, it’s easy, just fish and potatoes, really.”

The village was quiet in the early spring evening. Lindisfarne is a halftime island - a tidal island. The tide was in. The causeway was closed. The island was isolated from the mainland by the sea. There was no traffic at all. In the town square pennants hung, ghostly cloths flying in the island mist.

At the southern edge of the town was St. Cuthbert’s Island. This smaller island was separated from Lindisfarne by tides, as Lindisfarne was set off from the Mainland by tides.

The Storyteller said, “St. Cuthbert came to Lindisfarne from Melrose. Do you remember the Lammermuir Hills that we visited recently? In the Scots Borders near Melrose?”

I nodded, remembering our time at the Cistercian monastery, Nunraw Abbey in East Lothian. A pair of Eider ducks, known as *Cuddy’s Ducks* for they were Cuthbert’s favorites, slipped from the marshes and came towards us, begging. They stopped to listen as The Storyteller talked about their saint.

*Well, when Cuthbert was a young man, in the year of the Lord 651, he was a shepherd up in the Lammermuir Hills. One night, when it was very dark, he saw the sky open and light poured from heaven. And then, Cuthbert saw angels carrying a very precious soul upwards in a globe of fire.*

*Cuthbert shook his companions and shouted, ‘Wake up. I’ve just seen a very great soul being carried to heaven. Probably a bishop!’*

*And to his great surprise, within a few days, he learned that the holy Aiden, the abbot of Lindisfarne Island, had died.*

*That very moment, the boy felt his whole spirit turn towards God. He left his work and walked to Melrose Abbey. He had heard about the holy monk Boisil.*

*When Boisil saw Cuthbert approaching the Abbey, the monk cried out, 'Behold the servant of the Lord!' Boisil welcomed Cuthbert and he was accepted into the monastery and received the tonsure.*

*Once, Cuthbert came to the monastery at Coldingham where Ebba was the Abbess. Busy during the day with advising Ebba, it was at night that Cuthbert slipped out of the monastery and hurried away. One old suspicious monk watched him and wondered what he was doing. The monk followed Cuthbert as he raced over the land, eastwards towards the Sea. He watched as Cuthbert climbed down the cliff now known as St. Abb's Head.*

*Cuthbert walked on the harsh lava rock as if it were fine sand. And then Cuthbert entered the sea. He walked into the cold water until it covered his chest. And holding his arms outward in the form of a cross, Cuthbert began to pray in a loud voice. And which was Cuthbert's voice and which was the voice of the sea, the spying monk did not know. He watched in awe all the night. The full moon shone down on the water, and all was calm and very cold.*

*When the first hint of dawn came and it was time for Matins, Cuthbert left the sea and stood on the shore. And then, the spying monk saw two otters come from the sea. One otter went to right foot of Cuthbert and the other otter came to the left foot. They breathed warm air on his feet and rubbed their bodies against his legs to warm him. And all the while Cuthbert continued to pray as rosy light filled the morning sky. Then Cuthbert thanked the otters and blessed them, and they went back into the sea. And Cuthbert walked back to the monastery.*

*Cuthbert prayed with the others but the monk who had watched was not among the faithful that morning. He had been taken with stomach cramps that made him cry out with pain.*

*And so, after Matins, the old monk came to Cuthbert and told him that he had spied on him. And Cuthbert said, "As long as you tell no man what you have seen as long as I am alive, there is no harm done. Go in peace." And that monk told no one of what he had seen at St. Abb's Head that day. Until the day that Cuthbert died. And then he lost no time in telling the world. And that is how we have the story today.*

*Time passed and in the year 664, Cuthbert was named prior of Lindisfarne. He was drawn into the politics of the times, but more and more he longed for solitude. He found a tiny piece of land off Lindisfarne, a mere quarter of an acre known as Thrush Island. And this island, like Lindisfarne itself, was cut off by the tides from the main island of Lindisfarne. And to this island he would go and spend his time in prayer and fasting.*

The Eider ducks spoke rapidly to each other and then passed us on their way to their nest. The memorial cross on Cuthbert's Island, which was the new name for Thrush Island, spoke of the devotion of St. Cuthbert. He was a Celtic Saint who accepted the Roman law. He was a kind man, a man who loved animals, a man who began his life as a shepherd and ended his life as a Saint because he was filled with heavenly love. We turned and walked through the graveyard of the Church of St. Mary the Virgin. Surely there could be no uneasy souls on this Holy Island.

"Here's the grave of the Lilburn Family" cried The Storyteller, stooping down in that church cemetery to read the inscription of a white gravestone. "Remember that long story

the old Caretaker at the restored Lindisfarne Castle revealed to us today.”

“I could barely understand his accent,” I said. “Please, tell me the story again.”

“Well,” said The Storyteller, “the Caretaker seemed to find us, remember. We were in the kitchen of the Castle looking at the photographs on the wall. And this old man came up to us. He was dressed all in tweeds, had a big head covered a bushy beard and moustache. He pointed to the picture of a young woman. Out of the blue, he said,

*She died here an old lady. She be the daughter of Jack and Linda Lilburn.*

“The Caretaker didn’t need much encouragement to tell us about the Lilburns” continued The Storyteller. “He talked without interruption. Remember, he said, as if we were kin:

*Well, Jack was just a fisherman, don’t you know. But one day, he took the owner of this house out fishing for the day. And the man was taken with Jack and said, “Would you live here and be my servant?”*

*Jack said, “Yes, of course.”*

*And then it was, his fortune changed, don’t you know. For Jack moved into this great house with his wife, Linda. And din’t they meet all the important people of the time, the king of this and the prince of that. And met them just like people, din’t they. No kowtowing or anything.*

*And din’t those fine people give them tips and not just money. Oh, money, of course, for the services rendered. But tips on how to invest their money. Oh, aye, Jack and Linda came to own much of the property on this here island, they*

*did. Just bought it up during the Depression.*

*And parties here. When the owners were away in the winter, weren't all the villagers invited up here for great parties. The fires they built in the great fireplace were so grand they nearly burned the place down. Look at the scorched mantelpiece. The heat was so great you could hardly enter the room. Aye, and there was great drinking and storytelling here in the winter.*

*Linda was born here in this very house. And raised here. And lived her life here. Linda served all the mistresses who lived here over the years. In the end it was Linda who was an old lady, taking care of her mistress in the lonely old place.*

*Now, of course, it has come to the National Trust. And we must fill out fifty forms to light one match in here now. For fear it would burn down. And aye it would, although it seems to be of stone. For the wood is old and dry and would go up in a flash. I live in the village, and many a night I have flown over here when the fire alarm goes off accidentally."*

The Storyteller and I looked at the white gravestones, inscribed with the names of Jack and Linda Lilburn and their daughter, Linda. A great fire lit up the sky of our imagination and the sound of laughter drifted from the ruins of the Abbey. I shivered. The Romanesque skeleton of Lindisfarne Priory loomed before us.

The chill had penetrated our waxed cotton coats, so we headed back to the B & B. We paused at the hotel, remembering our hot meal with pleasure. All of a sudden, an alarm sounded in the stillness. Then, all the children poured out of the hotel. They were dressed in thin night dresses and wore no shoes. The children hopped up and down like tiny blue

tits and chirped, sounding for all the world like a flock of starlings.

The mistress said, “Be sensible, children,” and they all quieted. “This is a fire drill,” she went on. And once again, as if on signal, the boys and girls hopped up and down and screamed.

Surely God listens with pleasure to the cries of birds and children on this Holy Island. Surely God allows birds and children to fly freely between this world and the next, in this holy place, Lindisfarne. This much seems clear on this holy island: *Watch the birds and the children to find your way to God.*

I looked for signs of Saint Etheldreda, for she had been Queen of Northumbria in the Seventh century. Etheldreda, also known as Audrey, had been born a Princess of East Anglia. She was happily living as a chaste religious widow, when she was persuaded to marry Egfrid, who was the Prince of Northumbria.

Etheldreda’s condition of marriage was that they live as brother and sister. She had taken a vow of chastity as a young woman and had committed her life to Christ. She had no desire to marry again but her uncle convinced her of the political expediency of this alliance which would benefit her own people. When the old king, Oswy, died in 670, Egfrid and Etheldreda became the new King and Queen of Northumbria. Cuthbert was at their coronation in Bamburgh Castle.

There was no sign of Etheldreda in Northumbria at the close of the Twentieth century. Driving north from Lindisfarne through a spare landscape in which rounded hills flattened out to meet an enormous sky, we crossed the Tweed River and entered Scotland. The Storyteller spoke:

*Egfrid became more insistent upon Etheldreda and demanded that she be his wife in all matters. And Etheldreda, in consultation with her confessor, Bishop Wilfrid, decided to flee with her women to Coldingham and the Abbess Ebba. But Egfrid and his thanes followed her even to the convent. So Ebba told Etheldreda that she must flee again.*

*Etheldreda and her women fled along the crest of these hills, their long linen veils flowing in the strong sea wind. They ran down a precipice from what is now known as St. Abb's Head, a knuckle of land jutting into the North Sea. Jagged black rock of an ancient lava flow formed the beach and made it almost impassable. It was to this very cove that Cuthbert had come to pray on another quiet moonlit night. But this night, there was no peace and the moon was hidden by rapidly scudding clouds.*

*A storm broke. The winds blew with a cruel intensity. The waves crested on the rocks. Icy needles of rain lashed the women. The women ran to a small cave under the cliff. Above them they could hear the frustrated cries of Egfrid's thanes who were unable to reach them. The sea had cut them off from their pursuers.*

*In the distance the women could hear the cries of the seabirds - the fulmars and curlews and gulls, as they whirled about the cliffs, calling out the danger of the storm and the men. Redshank Waders, The Wardens of the Marshes, called out their warning with hysterical cries. Comical puffins marched into the cave, seeking refuge. The frightened women smiled.*

*Meanwhile, wind and rain lashed Egfrid and his thanes as they stood vigil over the cliff. Arctic terns struck at Egfrid's men with their sharp beaks, drawing blood. The storm lasted for three days. At the end of three days, Egfrid cried out to God in disgust, "If you want Etheldreda so much, you can*

*have her.”*

*And with that, the storm stopped. Etheldreda and her women were free to go south to the Isle of Ely. Once there, Etheldreda started a monastery for men and women. And she became their beloved Abbess. There she happily remained for the rest of her days.*

Only the black volcanic rocks of St. Abb’s Head now hold the story and they are pounded daily by crushing surf. The birds still whirl about the cliffs. The spray of the sea comes up through blow holes and meets the mist coming in off the waves. St. Abb’s Head is a place of power and danger still.





## *PILGRIMAGE TO NUNRAW ABBEY*

### *A Minion Guards the Gate*

“What kind of stone is that?” The Storyteller asked the taxi driver who drove us from the city of Haddington through the village of Garvald to Nunraw Abbey, a Cistercian monastery in East Lothian, Scotland. The guest house was a 15th century building of red stone with a square tower smack in the middle.

“Dumfriesshire stone,” said the taxi driver. “I know because my father was a mason. He worked on this abbey. Look for the carving of the devil in there.”

And he left us off with our suitcases, standing in the portico of Nunraw Abbey. The huge wooden door opened and a happy young man came out, extending one hand in greeting, taking our suitcases with the other hand. “I’m Charles,” he said.

“Are you a priest?” I asked.

“No,” he laughed. “I’m Father Raymond’s minion.”

“Minion?” I asked, puzzled by this quaint word...

***Continued...***



## WALSINGHAM, EAST ANGLIA

### *Our First Pilgrimage*

This is the story of our first pilgrimage, which has been culled from diary entries and letters. By 1972, The Storyteller and I had lost an infant son and a daughter to a rare genetic disease, Werdnig-Hoffman Syndrome. When I learned that I was pregnant for a third time, we decided to leave our home in San Francisco and move to Cambridge, England for the birth of our third child. The Storyteller was accepted as a resident scholar at St. Edmund's House. Lodgings for married couples were available. We flew Aer Lingus from Kennedy Airport and arrived in London with little except hope.

### *December 26, 1972. Boxing Day.*

We are here - in England - in Cambridge - on Latham Road - in Southacre. We have our own place with red curtains and a grey rug and beautiful grounds and a room for a baby. It is warm and there is enough food to eat. Today.

### *January 18, 1973*

“First I must invite the tramps to leave,” said The Reverend Mark Turner, of Great St. Mary's Church of England, Market Square, Cambridge. “Then you must come home with me for tea. Fiona would so like to meet you.”

***Continued...***



## TERREMOTO!

### *THE EARTH QUAKES IN ASSISI*

“*Due biglietti per Assisi,*” the Storyteller ordered train tickets in his best Italian, in the grand station of Milan, Italy, one morning in the middle of October, 1997.

The ticket agent replied in English, “There are earthquakes in Assisi!” Then proudly, he continued, “We, in Milan, do not have earthquakes, situated as we are in the great Po valley upon a vast water table. Do you really want to go to Assisi? Stay here. Go to the opera instead.”

“*Grazie,*” the Storyteller said as he took the large orange cardboard tickets, the size of airplane tickets. “Yes, we know there are earthquakes in Assisi.”

The earthquakes began September 27. *Storyfest Journey’s Pilgrimage To Saint Francis’ and St. Claire’s Assisi* was scheduled to begin October 19 with nineteen people. We called Leonard Murphy, a seismologist, who told us about the nature of the particular earthquakes in Assisi. “These earthquakes are unusual,” he said. “They usually occur in connection with volcanoes in the middle of the ocean. Unlike California earthquakes, they will continue for a very long time at the same intensity. Most of the damage has been done. Go on your trip. You are safe. Just don’t stand under...”

***Continued...***



## *HAWAII: PELE'S ISLAND*

Our favorite place in all the world is the Kona coast of the Big Island of Hawaii. Story is sacred here. Every aspect of land and sea holds a story. Every rock and inlet, bay and lava flow, flower and insect has a story. The people will invite you to 'talk story' as they invite you to sit a spell and chat.

During Christmas of 1994 we stayed at a Japanese-American Hotel that has catered to travellers around the island since the beginning of this century. Hotel Manago is located beside the Mamalahoa Highway which circles the island of Hawaii. The history of the Japanese-Americans in Hawaii lives within these walls.

Hotel Manago was inexpensive and quite wonderful. The Manago Hotel had wooden floors, polished by long use and many washings with water. In the front of Hotel Manago was the common room in which resided the only television set on the premises. In each corner of this room were cases of individual, exquisitely attired American and Japanese dolls. Next to the common room was the restaurant which was known throughout the island for its grilled pork chops, heavy with flavor and fat.

A wooden bridge connected the front of the hotel with the back. Underneath the bridge, upon looking down, we could see a marvelous proliferation of flowers...

***Continued...***



# *OLD GWERNYFED: A HOUSE IN WALES*

*Part One*  
*1987*

Sometimes I wonder if I can ever leave Wales. More often, I wonder if I can ever go back. As I write, I feel I am straddling two worlds, neither fully in one nor the other.

We were looking for a place to hold a Storyfest Journey in Wales, so we first visited this land on July 28, 1987. The ferry ride from Dun Laoghaire outside of Dublin across the Irish Sea to the port of Holyhead in Northwest Wales was beset by folly, human and divine.

The mist came down as we chugged across the Irish Sea. The seas rose and the water became choppy. Children wailed and soiled their pants. Parents smoked vile unfiltered cigarettes and odd men, hidden in corners of the ship, drank whiskey from paper cups.

We arrived late at night at the Isle of Anglesley. We drove to a manor house, named Talebolion, near Aber Alaw, but we saw nothing. I sat in the window seat of our room named *The Woodcocks* and looked out into the darkness of the Welsh night. The night was a raw presence, filled with moisture which carried sounds and smells and a certain sense of...

***Continued...***



# *ARCHETYPES ALIVE IN KING ARTHUR'S CAMELOT*

## *An Apology*

The basis for this story was Storyfest Journey's seventh journey to Camelot. Individuals quickly became archetypes. Myths supplanted history. Facts became fiction. Any resemblance to archetypes is intentional.

## *Prologue*

Ordinarily, we would pick people up in Exeter at the Rougemont Hotel and drive by coach to Hatherleigh village where we stayed at The George Hotel. For a week Storyfest Journeys would explore Devon, Cornwall and Somerset, looking for the story of King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table. Then, we would drive back to Exeter.

But this was our seventh year, and seven is a number of fullness and completion. We could not have returned so many times to the same places and stories without nudging the sleeping forces.

How shall I tell you what happened?

"Begin at the beginning and go to the end," said...

***Continued...***



## *SAILING TO IRELAND*

My father, a Navy Captain and an engineer, traveled around the world, and he said that "travel was going from Point A to Point B." Yet, as he described his travels upon his return, it seemed to my young mind that more was involved than moving along a straight mathematical line between two points. A longing grew in me to see the whole world: to meet its people, to shop in its markets, to finger its crafts, to eat its foods, to walk its roads. Moreover, I wanted to know why other people traveled.

When he retired, my father, an Irish American, visited Ireland for the first time. He kissed the Blarney Stone, gazed at the Cliffs of Moher, drank Irish coffee, and came home to America disillusioned. Was that all there was to Ireland? Where was the Ireland of his dreams? Where was the time and the place of his great grandfather, John Kelly, a sheep jobber who had married Katherine Fitzgerald on May 5, 1843 in County Roscommon, Ireland and then emigrated to Elmira, New York in 1863?

Americans, a people of many nationalities, cherish dreams of their fatherland, their motherland. What do they hope for? What do they find? My questions about travel became more focused. What do Irish Americans expect? What do they experience? What do they remember when they return to Ireland, the land of their heritage?

***Continued...***



## *MY DARK ROSLEEN, THE SPIRIT OF IRELAND*

The train from Galway chugged across the heartland of Ireland, east towards Dublin. Around Kildare, we passed the place for the horseraces. “That’s been associated with horses since the time of Bridget,” said The Storyteller. But I wanted to read my novel and paid no attention. I glanced up to see a flat, grassy land, enclosed by the white fences that indicated horse country. I should have paid attention S

A young girl of about four ran up and down the corridor of the train. She was dressed in black taffeta, a huge bow tied in the back of her dress. On her feet, she wore red velvet shoes. This filly ran with such speed and beauty, towards the West, against the direction of the speeding train.



In downtown Dublin, the Saturday afternoon crowds were crushing. People crowded Kildare Street across from Trinity College but they parted for the passing of one child on this May Day. She was dressed all in white, yards of white silk covered with jewels, crowded with lace. She passed through the dirty, tired mass of Dubliners on the arm of her brother. “It is her First Holy Communion Day,” whispered the Storyteller. The child looked as pure as a saint...

***Continued...***



## *MARGARET OF KILKENNY*

When first I met Margaret Phelan in the summer of 1988 in Kilkenny, Ireland, she raved about my name.

"Kelly, Kelly," she lilted my name. "We are related. Go up to St. Canice's Cathedral, just up the main road. You will find a marker there and our names are intertwined in stone, the Phelan's and the Kelly's.

Little did I know then, that this small, friendly woman had researched the stones of St. Canice's Cathedral and written articles about her findings.

So The Storyteller and I searched all the cathedral stones to find our relatives in common in the 1600's. We found the Kelly crest, a tower turreted between two lions rampant, joined with the Phelan crest. I borrowed paper and pencil from a lady selling religious goods in the cathedral and made a rubbing for my father.

And I had made a new friend, Margaret Phelan.

I think what I like best about our journeys are the people who travel with us and the people we meet along the journey. Margaret Phelan is a small, spritely, lovely woman with a voice that sings and laughs. Her passion is the Kilkenny Archeological Society and the Rothe House in Kilkenny, Ireland.

Kilkenny is a prosperous merchant tow...

***Continued...***



*A MILLENNIUM  
AND A TWELFTH NIGHT  
IN NEW MEXICO*

*Christmas Day*

A celebration of the birth day of Our Lord Jesus Christ in Bethlehem.

To travel on Christmas Day is to let go of all expectations and be open to the Numinous, whenever Wonder deigns to appear. And so it was that the entire day had passed, from Dulles Airport in Virginia through Denver to Albuquerque in New Mexico, and we were only weary with the rigors of travel.

We headed north and west out of Albuquerque, bound for the great Jemez Mountain. Along Route 44, heading west, lay the first sign of the great explosion of this volcanic mountain so many years ago. A huge lava flow, over time, became a wide clear swath of forested land between two hills. My mind's eye saw the slowly moving lava and the bursts of flames.

Christmas day, eons later, it was quiet and clear. We turned right onto Route 4. Along this road were the towns of San Ysidro and Cañon, Ponderosa and Jemez Springs. Along this road was the pueblo of the Jemez Indians, the place of the red rocks, the geothermal springs of Soda Dam...

***Continued...***



## *NEW ORLEANS: A CITY OF DREAMS*

*Spring, 2000*

Moissant Fields Airport New Orleans, Louisiana

The luggage from flight 815 from Paris, (stopover at Dulles International, final destination New Orleans) was extremely slow in coming. There was time to look around the baggage area.

A wagnerian sized woman counted, in German, her tidy group. She was wide-eyed in alarm that they would be lost, but they formed straight lines and marched off.

“Nineteen,” muttered the Storyteller.

“Why Nineteen?” I asked. “Is that how many were in that group?” As tour operator, my occupational preoccupation concerns the gathering of groups.

“No,” he shook his head. “On the plane, I dreamed that I had been strapped into a seat. It was like a circus ride that spins around, creating maximum velocity. ‘Nineteen days,’ cried the carney man. ‘You’ll be at the Moon in nineteen days...’

***Continued...***



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*Questions of Heaven:  
The Chinese Journeys  
of an American Buddhist*  
by **Gretel Ehrlich**

The warning came at the end of Gretel Ehrlich's travel. "Remember, use soft words. We are still in danger," said Xuan Ke, a musician who lived in Lijaing. Gretel Ehrlich, an American Buddhist, visited China in 1995 to find Buddhism in China

What she found was a countryside dedicated to progress and a people struggling for survival. The signs of Buddhism were rudimentary: A monk, a temple, a bell.

Gertrude Ehrlich reflected on the nature of pilgrimage as she began her ascent of Emei Shan, the sacred mountain. The word for pilgrimage in Chinese means...

**Continued...**



*Spider Woman:  
A Story of Navajo Weavers  
and Chanters*  
by **Gladys Reichard**

If you would fully enter another time and place and people, take an anthropologist as your guide. An anthropologist ob-

serves and records everything - food, people, landscape, ritual, prayers, paintings, relationships, work. Gladys Reicherd was such a guide to the Navajo world in the 1930's. Trained as an anthropologist under F Boaz, she went to Arizona to learn to weave with the Navajo. This was a new approach, to become part of the community and to learn a skill and to describe all that happened in the exchange.

She became known as Weaving Woman. The book, Spider Woman: A story of Navajo weavers and chanters, tells of her four summers spent with Red Point's family in White Sands near Ganado. The women of the family...

***Continued...***



*The Soul of Night*  
*An Astronomical Pilgrimage*  
by Chet Raymo

In the wintertime, the dark and cold time, the stars are more present. It is the time of year to go outside and look at the stars. And it is a time to stay inside by a fire and read about the stars in the sky.

Chet Raymo wrote this book of reflections about the night and the stars with graceful sentences and transcendent meaning. This book of essays cannot be summed up. It can only be read slowly, and savored.

Each chapter, which is hauntingly titled, begins with woodcuts that are exquisite....

***Continued...***



## *The Greenlanders*

by **Jane Smiley**

The Washington County Library places “Free Reads” in public places. At the Washington County Airport, my hand leapt, unbidden, towards the biggest of these books, *The Greenlanders*. The Antietam Institute for Cultural and Heritage Travel will sponsor a trip to Iceland in September of the year 2000. “Greenland is close,” I thought and lifted the heavy book. And at that very moment, I left Washington County airport and entered another world. Had I unawares, boarded a magical airplane bound for 14th century Greenland. Who knows? I entered a place that was cold, dark, and dangerous and I lived with people whose work was survival in such a place.

The scope of the saga is breathtaking. Beginning with the story of Aesgir Gunnarson...



## *Arabian Sands*

by **Wilfred Thesiger**

*Arabian Sands*. Wilfred Thesiger. Penguin Books. 1964. Longmans, Green. 1959.

His first name is so English. Wilfred. The name of Saxon

saints and kings in Northumbria over a millennium ago. Never in my life would I have met such a man. And even if I had met him in some pub in Wales or some lodge in Scotland, never would I have managed to engage him in conversation to the extent that he would tell me about his travels to The Empty Quarter of Saudia Arabia in the late 40's. This man was as alien to me as the land to which he travelled. I am glad he wrote this book.

The Iman of Oman did not want Thesiger to come. The Arabs fought the arrival of the Christians, the oil seekers. Wilfred Thesiger was a threat to the Arabs and the Bedu whom he loved, for he...



*Art of Pilgrimage: Seeker's Guide to  
Making Travel Sacred*  
by **Phil Cousineau**

Christmas is the time of year we remember journeys. A young pregnant woman and her fiancé journey by donkey from Nazareth to Bethlehem, at the coldest time of year. Three wise men from the East travel for a long time by camel, following only a star. Dirty shepherds race down from the hills because an angel sang to them. Barnyard animals move closer to the child, nestled in the hay of a manger. What journeys they all took to arrive at this place of birth. And then they were all sent out again. To tell the story of that birth.

The Art of Pilgrimage is designed for those who intend to embark on any journey with purpose but are unsure how to prepare for it or to endure...



*Little Saint*  
by Hannah Green

Hannah Green's sentences go on and on until the beginning of the thought is lost in a maze of words. I trace my fingers under the words, hoping to keep them in their place and create a linear thought. But how can I? This author wants me to journey with her in a spiral leading back, back in time and up, up to the Numinous.

I let go and let her words flow over me. I look up and out after reading the first chapter. Yes, my world is still here, but I have been invited to go on pilgrimage this winter's day. Not a pilgrimage on foot this time, but in my mind.

I remember my pilgrimage place: the statue, the incense, the flowers, the darkness, the candles lit, the hush, the awe. Walsingham, Norfolk, England. Ah. Awe.

"I was filled with a vision of a book about Saint Foy," said Hannah Green. I sit here with the product of that vision in my hands. Hannah was inspired by the story about how St. Foy lighted all the stories down through the ages with the breath of her life, even as she gave her life to Christ

This is the story, part of the story, the beginning of the story. In the time of the Emperor Diocletion's Persecution, a young girl, who has twelve years, refused to sacrifice to the Goddess Diana. Dacien...

***Continued...***

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