

Peace Pilgrim Strides Through City

By CHARLENE BILLO

She considers herself ageless. Boundaries mean nothing to her. She hasn't had a cold or headache for 30 years.

She is known only as Peace Pilgrim and refuses to give her real name because she wants to place the emphasis on her pilgrimage instead of the person. She admits that she has had some unfortunate experiences in the past after revealing her given name.

Wednesday afternoon Peace Pilgrim arrived in Alliance from Canton and visited last evening with Mrs. Pearl Carlson of 499 W. Main St. Mrs. Carlson invited Peace to her home after hearing about her through a mutual friend in Toledo.

This morning she left for Youngstown where she will visit a woman who first heard her on a radio program. From Youngstown she will walk to Steubenville where she will be interviewed for a local television program.

Her message is peace and she believes this can be achieved by "overcoming evil with good, and falsehood with truth, and hatred with love."

She has been walking through the country since 1953 starting from Los Angeles, Calif., where she was living at the time. Since she started her career 15 years ago, she has walked a total of 25,000 counted miles and has been walking the past few years without counting.

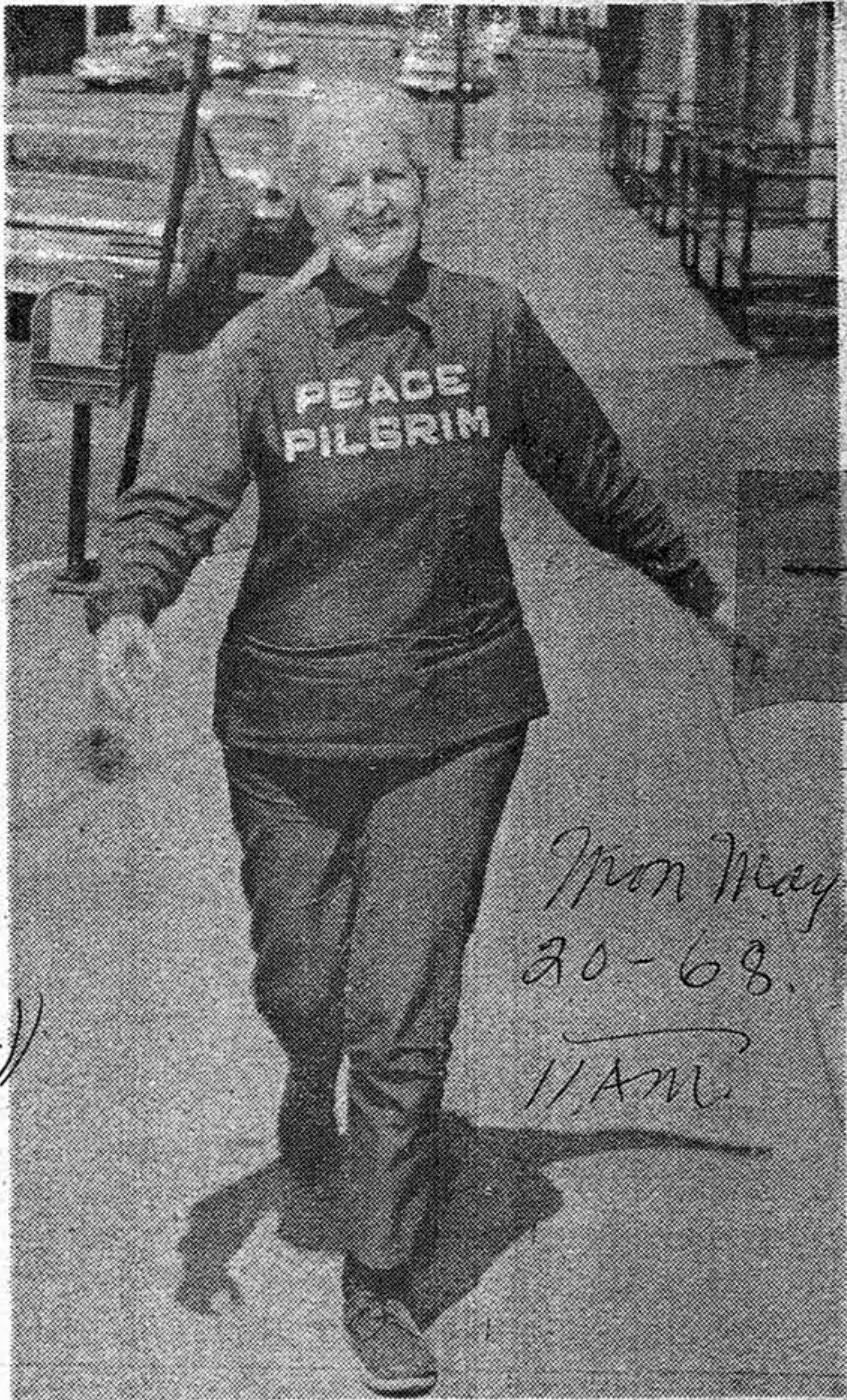
She has no family or dependents and feels she could not have taken this mission if she had.

Before she began walking, she explained she had to find inner peace or she would not have been stable enough for the task and secondly she was convinced that this is her calling. Otherwise she wouldn't be able to do it.

She previously worked with the elderly and with the psychologically disturbed.

It took 15 years to find inner peace which she defines as "bringing your life into harmony with laws which govern this universe which are the same for all of us and finding and fitting into your part in the life pattern which is unique for every human soul."

Peace explained that "30 years ago the world considered me successful because I had money and things. I knew my life was empty so I changed my life to give what I could, instead of getting what I could. Now I am penniless. I own



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Arriving in Alliance Wednesday afternoon from Canton, Peace Pilgrim exuberantly walks through the downtown area before visiting with Mrs. Pearl Carlson of 499 W. Main St. Mrs. Carlson invited Peace to Alliance after hearing about her through a mutual friend in Toledo. Review Photo—Thomas Hagan

only what I wear and carry, but now my life is full of health, happiness and inner peace - things which you couldn't buy if you were a billionaire."

She walks until she is given shelter and fasts until given food. "Without ever asking for anything I have been supplied," she added. She never asks for food and shelter but lets the other persons approach her and has seldom skipped more than three or four meals in a row.

There are certain hardships she admits, but "if you are concerned enough, you don't mind." At times she has slept in bus stations or at truck stops and a few times she has had to walk all night in order to keep warm.

She hasn't been sick for 30

years and thinks no negative thoughts. She also thinks of herself as ageless. "When you have found inner peace, you forget age."

Peace is a silver-haired woman dressed in navy blue slacks and shirt and a short tunic with pockets in which she carries her only worldly possessions. To protect herself against the weather conditions, she spends the winters in the warm southern states and the summers in the north.

She walks as a prayer and as a chance to inspire others to pray and work with her for peace. She speaks to individuals along the way, to groups in cities, and is invited to speak at colleges and churches. Although she is not denomina-

tional, she says she is a religious person and has addressed all the major denominations. Her record is seven sermons on one Sunday.

Does she ever get tired of walking? She says she doesn't. "After finding inner peace, you feel as though you are plugged in to the source of universal energy."

People do not have to agree with her or what she is doing, but she discovered that a "loving relationship is possible if you put your mind to it."

She averages about 1500 miles on one pair of shoes. She can walk as many as 50 miles a day, but since she stops to talk to people along the way, she averages about 25 miles.

She is currently engaged in her fourth pilgrimage route across the country. Her first walk was from Los Angeles to New York City. She walked through Alliance about six years ago when she was visiting U.S. cities with a population of more than 25,000.

Peace says she will visit wherever she is invited and receives many invitations from her address in Cologne, N.J. She hopes to arouse people from apathy and make them think. To her the world is a mirror, she "smiles at it and it smiles back."