

# Walking Pilgrim Visits City To Bring Message of Peace

By JUDI NORTON  
Of The Commercial Staff

A silver-haired woman walked into Pine Bluff yesterday. She was wearing navy slacks and shirt and a short navy tunic. In her pockets were what she calls "all my worldly possessions" — a ballpoint pen, a folding toothbrush and a small comb.

She also carried a map and some pieces of paper with names on them.

She is Peace Pilgrim, who walks from one end of the United States to another talking about inner and outer peace.

On January 1, 1953, at the Tournament of Roses Parade in Pasadena, California, Peace Pilgrim (which is the only name she uses) began her first pilgrimage for peace. Her goal was to walk 25,000 miles talking to persons who sought her out.

She reached her 25,000 mile goal in 1964. Since then Peace Pilgrim has walked "intermittently," she said. She walks whenever she can and accepts rides only in order to meet speaking engagements, she added.

However, she emphasized, "I refused to accept a single ride while I was walking my 25,000 miles." She has lost count now of the number of miles she has walked since 1953.

Her plan to take her message of peace to the United States through person-to-person contacts was enlarged almost as soon as she began her pilgrimage. She said that a reporter noticed her at the Tournament of Roses Parade and the next day she gave an interview to the Los Angeles Times.

Since then she has been interviewed on both radio and television and has spoken at churches, schools and colleges. But she says she still takes time to walk around in each town and just talk to individuals.

Her tunic with the name "Peace Pilgrim" is her identification. And she talks only to those persons who initiate a conversation with

wouldn't want to interrupt them," she said.

What about the skeptics? I don't come into contact with them, she said.

"You see, my tunic is also a selective device it weeds out the people who are skeptical because they just won't come over and start talking to me," she said, adding: "Oh, I'm sure there are many people who think I am a kook."

Peace Pilgrim says she doesn't worry about food, clothing or shelter because people are always offering her these things. She will accept no money and she walks without a penny in her pocket, she said.

How can she tell others about peace? Because, she says, she herself has found inner peace.

For 15 years prior to beginning her 1953 pilgrimage, Peace Pilgrim prepared herself for her goal. She spent these 15 years in serving others, she said, specifically in working with the elderly and with the psychologically disturbed.

Only after she found her own inner peace, she said, did she begin trying to help others.

Her life before 1938, when she began her preparation, is a mystery just as her name is. But she gives one the feeling that it just isn't that important. Of her life before she became Peace Pilgrim, she said:

"I had money and I had the material possessions that one with money acquires. But I wasn't happy. My life wasn't complete."

Then she gave up her former life and turned to a new one.

She has no home in the material sense. "My childhood home was sold long ago," she said, "and the apartments I lived in have all been rented."

She said her pet project was to praise good things to strengthen other people and her vow is: "I shall not accept more than I need while others in the world have less than they need."

Peace Pilgrim says she can easily communicate with



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## Peace Pilgrim Tells Her Philosophy

because she herself has rejected some of those values. For example, she said, young people wearing old or shabby clothes are saying that beautiful clothes — the material things — are not important.

"We have no generation gap," she said, but "we have a value gap."

Here is what she calls the kernel of her message of peace:

"This is the way of peace. Overcome evil with good and

falsehood with truth and hatred with love.

She continues:

"The Golden Rule would do as well. Please don't way lightly that these are just religious concepts and not practical. These are laws governing human conduct, which apply as rigidly as the laws of gravity. When we disregard these laws in any walk of life, chaos results.

"Through obedience to these laws this frightened, war-weary world of ours could enter into a period of peace and richness of life beyond our fondest dreams."

While Peace Pilgrim is in Pine Bluff, she is staying with the Jim Roth family at 3909 King Richard Road.

Here is her speaking schedule:

**Today**

— 7:30 p.m. at Trinity Episcopal Church at 703 West Third Avenue.

**Sunday**

— 9:45 a.m. First United Methodist Church at West Sixth Avenue and Pine Street.