

Strolling Pilgrim Returns to Lafayette

BY NANCY BAKER

Peace Pilgrim returned to Lafayette Wednesday during her "25,000 miles on foot for world peace" hike across the country.

Peace Pilgrim is a gray-haired woman who wears navy blue slacks, shirt and a short tunic whose pockets around the bottom contain all her worldly possessions.

"Peace Pilgrim" is printed in bold white letters on the front of her tunic, and "25,000 miles on foot for world peace" covers the back.

Answering to no other name, Peace Pilgrim continues to walk many miles because, "I shall remain a wanderer until mankind has learned the way of peace."

She is affiliated with no organization and walks without a penny in her pockets.

Her return visit to Lafayette was at the invitation of Mr. and Mrs. Victor Lane. Wednesday night, she spoke at a meeting at Purdue University which was arranged through Ron Hoyman, a student whose parents at Indianapolis are Peace Pilgrim's acquaintances.

She began her walking pilgrimage in 1953. She has covered "the 48 states thoroughly, and also Mexico and all 10 provinces in Canada."

She walks, she says, "to talk with others about the steps to inner peace. I expect to see world peace in my lifetime," she declared.

About three-fourths of the time during her travels, she says she is given shelter by strangers. Sometimes she walks all night to keep warm. She seldom misses more than three or four meals in a row and doesn't think about food until someone mentions it. "I'm no longer a slave to custom and convenience," she said.

She doesn't advocate her type

of life for everyone. She said she has no dependents and no close relatives who "would worry about me."

She speaks mostly to college students, church groups and some service clubs and home meetings.

VIETNAM VIEWS

As to Vietnam, Peace Pilgrim says: "Stop the bombing and let neutral nations go into Vietnam to supervise the holding of the nation-wide elections which should have been in 1956, according to the Geneva Convention."

"Then," she continued, "we would move out and, when the elections have been held, the neutral would move out too, leaving Vietnam in the hands of its own people."

Necessary arbitration would go through the United Nations. Democracy is the best we have been able to come up with so far," she asserted.

Peace Pilgrim began her pilgrimage in Los Angeles, and walked 5,000 miles in 200 walking days the first year. She has walked as much as 50 miles a day, but says she averages about 25 miles, walking along main highways where the mileage is recorded.

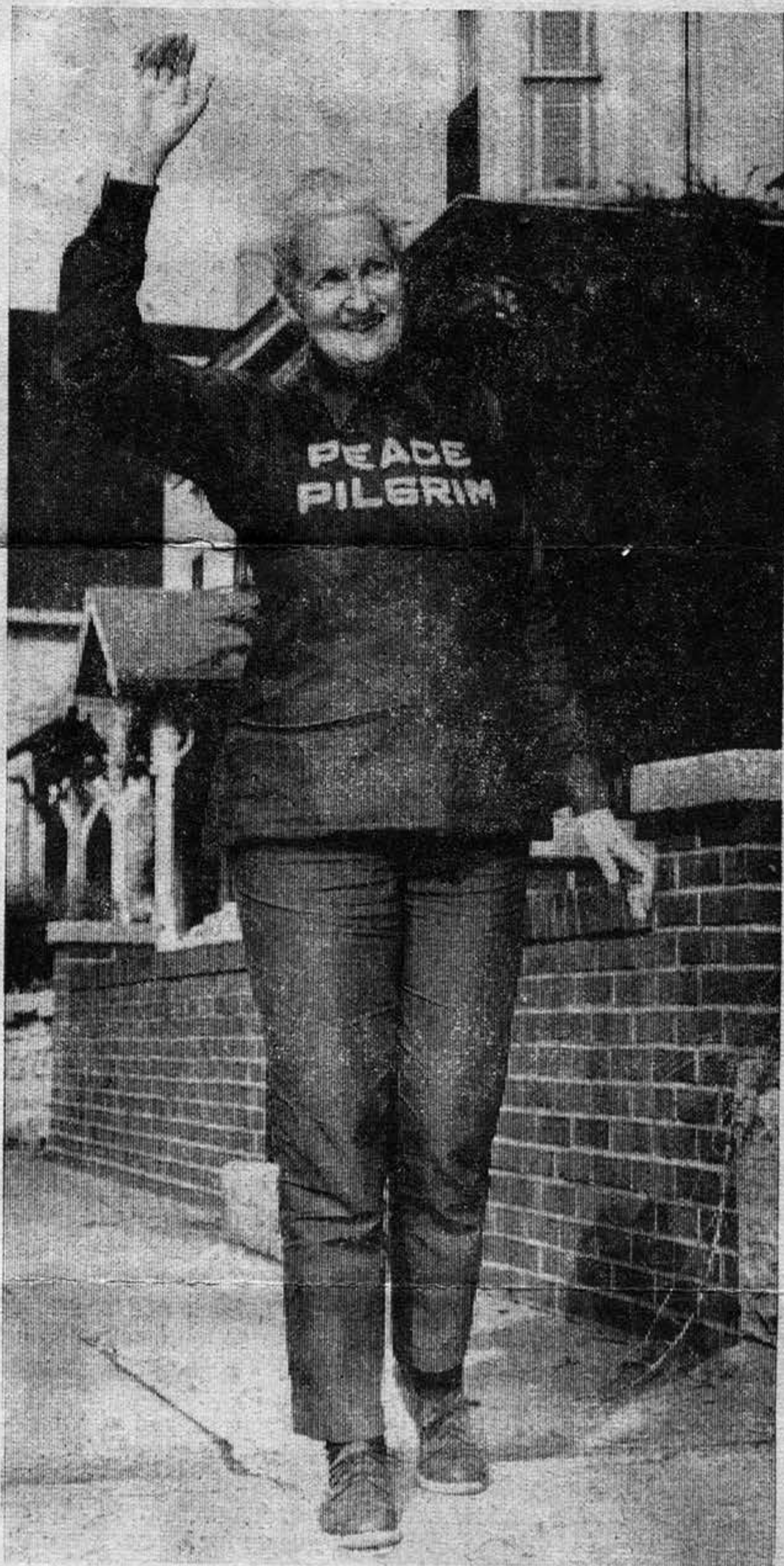
Now that she has completed her 25,000 miles, she walks over country roads, sometimes over wilderness footpaths, going according to invitation, but also trying to cover some unknown territory so she can continue her pilgrimage.

Only a short time after the beginning of her walking pilgrimage, she adopted the name Peace Pilgrim, "because I decided this is what I am, and I feel it is really my name now."

Peace Pilgrim has been in Indiana three other times, and keeps track of where she will be in the future.

"I know day by day where I will be until the end of the year," she says, "and then month by month until the end of 1972."

"In October, 1971, I'll be back in Indiana," but in Lafayette, specifically, only by invitation.



Peace Pilgrim

Peace Pilgrim has over 25,000 miles of walking to her credit on a pilgrimage which makes her a "wanderer until mankind has learned the way of peace." She was in Lafayette Wednesday to visit with new-found friends and talk at Purdue University. (Staff Photo)