

Exploring Our Celtic Connections: A Kirkridge Pilgrimage to Scotland

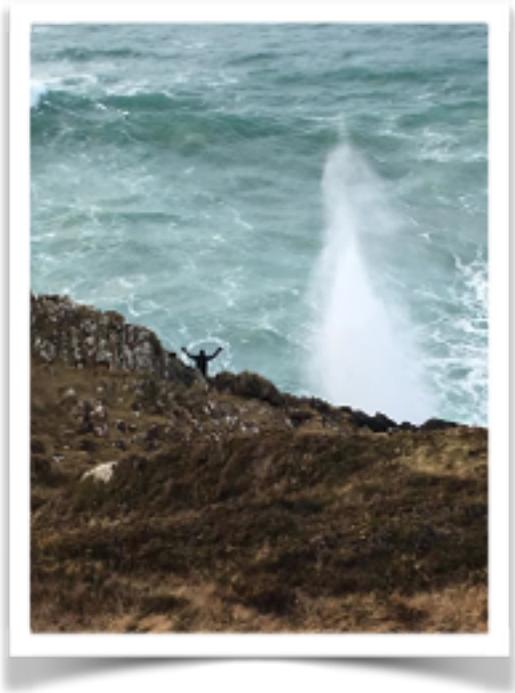
Friday, April 24th - Monday, May 4th, 2020

Led by Denise Crawn and Nick Prance of Walking Awake, LLC,
and Jean Richardson of Kirkridge Retreat Center

You are invited to become one of a small group of people to embark on a soul-enriching journey to Scotland in 2020.

The places we will visit will include:

- 5 days/6 nights on the beautiful Isle of Iona (known both as the cradle of Christianity and the Isle of Druids) featuring: a guided tour of the Iona Abbey, guided walks to many of the island's most sacred spots, and a boat trip to the Isle of Staffa.
- 2 nights in the scenic town of Oban, often referred to as the gateway to the Isles.
- A day walking amongst the energies of the ancestors visiting the standing stones, stone circles, and ancient sites of the Kilmartin Valley.
- 2 nights in the vibrant city of Glasgow.
- A day exploring the historical, yet contemporary city of Edinburgh, including a visit to Edinburgh Castle.



DETAILS OF OUR JOURNEY:

Friday, April 24th, 2020: Our week together will commence at the Glasgow Queen St. train station where our pilgrimage begins with a three hour train ride said to be one of the most scenic in the world. Be sure to keep your eyes open and camera ready for possible sightings of wildlife and breathtaking views as we weave our way alongside the beautiful lochs and mountains to Oban, Scotland's Sea Food Capital. Upon arriving in Oban we will check in to our overnight accommodation located on the Esplanade with plenty of time for individual sight seeing, shopping, or rest. Later that evening we will gather for our Welcome Dinner (included) at an atmospheric (and delicious!) restaurant.

Saturday, April 25th - Friday, May 1st: After breakfast (included), we will board the ferry to Craignure. This beautiful 45 minute sail with stunning views will provide additional opportunities for great photos! Upon arriving in Craignure we will board a bus and make our way across the majestic Isle of Mull to Fionnphort where we will catch our final 15 minute ferry over the turquoise blue Sound of Iona to the Isle of Iona. Once on Iona, our base will be 2 charming self-catering cottages located right next door to each other (Bring your suits...one has a hot tub!). Each cottage will be stocked with all you need for breakfasts and packed lunches throughout the week. Your "home-away-from-home" for the next 6 nights is literally steps away from the shores of the Sound of Iona and within walking distance of the village, Iona Nunnery and Abbey, restaurants and shops. On the evening of our arrival (April 25th) our dinner (included) will be booked together at the Martyr's Bay Restaurant and Pub with views of the Sound. For our final evening on Iona (April 30th), our group will share a meal together (included) at one of Iona's hotel gourmet restaurants.

While on Iona, Denise, Nick, and Jean will offer a balance of structured group gatherings, information and conversations on the Iona Community and the everyday community of Iona, and exploring the connections between Iona and Kirkridge. You will also have the opportunity to participate in: guided walks to many of the island's sacred sites, an informative tour of the Iona Abbey, Nunnery and Oran Chapel, a boat trip to the magnificent Isle of Staffa featuring Fingal's Cave (and maybe even puffins!), and of course, there will be individual time to 'just be'. Friday, May 1st: Saying goodbye to Iona, we will travel back to Oban for another overnight stay with an afternoon full of possibilities: an optional distillery tour, individual time to stroll around Oban, shop, or time to rest. Later that evening we will gather for a group booked meal.

Saturday, May 2nd: After breakfast (included), we will board a private hire bus and journey through the beautiful Scottish hills to the Kilmartin Valley (rich with evidence of over 5000 years of human history). Once in Kilmartin, we will spend the day exploring its atmospheric hill fort, Dunaad (the ancient capital of the Dalriada Kingdom with ties to St. Columba), its many burial cairns and cists (some of which predate the pyramids), and walk amongst the Nether Largie standing stones and the twin stone circles of Temple Wood. After our day in Kilmartin, our bus will take us to our hotel in the city of Glasgow where we will spend the next two evenings.

Sunday, May 3rd: After breakfast (included) on our final full day together, we will board a train from Glasgow for a day exploring the city of Edinburgh. Our time in Edinburgh will include a morning group visit to Edinburgh Castle (home of the Stone of Destiny and the Crown Jewels of Scotland) and the option of an afternoon guided walk around the city with Nick and Denise, or time on your own to explore, pub-hop or shop. Our journey together will close with an evening return to Glasgow.

As in all Walking Awake events, this pilgrimage will include a mix of traditions old and new; story, song, poetry, group informational sessions, ceremonies, and "Walking Awake" in and with Nature ~ all blended beautifully with our group sessions and the historical and mythical energies of Iona, and the other incredible spaces we will visit.

PRICE:

Early Bird Special:

\$2300.00 per person if registered and paid in full before May 1st, 2019 (*includes \$500.00 non-refundable deposit*).

\$2400.00 per person if registered with payment of non-refundable deposit of \$500.00 by May 1st, 2019 with balance paid via *payment plan. (**Payment Plan: 2nd payment of \$500.00 due 8/1/19, 3rd payment of \$500.00 due 11/1/19, 4th payment of \$500.00 due 1/1/20, and final payment of \$400.00 due 2/1/20*).

After May 1st, 2019, the Early Bird Special ends and the price increases to \$2500.00 per person: payment can be made in full, or after first payment of \$500.00 non-refundable deposit, a payment plan is possible (contact Denise regarding).

Note: With all of the payment options listed above: final amount must be made in full by February 1st, 2020.

You may hold your space now by paying in full or placing your \$500.00 non-refundable deposit via the PayPal link on Walking Awake's website (www.walkingawake.com)

**All payments include a \$500.00 non refundable deposit.*

**See Walking Awake, LLC's website for pilgrimage terms of agreement and cancelation policy.*

This trip is limited to 12 guests.

PRICE INCLUDES:

Transportation: Train to Oban, Ferries and bus to and from Iona, private bus hire from Oban to Kilmartin and return to Glasgow, return train for day trip from Glasgow to Edinburgh.

Accommodation: 2 nights in Columba Hotel, Oban (with breakfast), 6 nights on Iona in our home-away-from-home cottages (**see below for meal information*), 2 nights in hotel in Glasgow (with breakfast).

Entrance Fees to: Iona Abbey and Museum, Edinburgh Castle and Boat ride to Staffa.

3 Inclusive evening meals: Welcome meal in Oban, *First and last nights on Iona (meal allowance £35pp/\$45.00).

*Stocked breakfast and packed lunch items in cottages on Iona.

Guide Fees.

OPTIONAL AD-ONS:

- Oban Distillery tour on the afternoon of Friday, May 1st. (£18 additional charge, payable on the day.)
- Some single rooms available in Oban and Glasgow for an up charge of \$100.00 per room/per location and will be allotted on a first reserve basis however, there are no single rooms on Iona, all are shared.

**Price does not include air travel and other meals/accommodations/items/options not listed as included above.*

*Guided walks and tours are optional and may include all or most of the following: The Iona Abbey, Nunnery and Oran's Chapel, Columba's Bay and Iona's Labyrinth, the Hermit's Cell, Dun-I and Brigid's Well (aka: The Well of Eternal Youth), the North Shore, the Marble Quarry, St. Martin's Cave (a magical place only accessible during low tide), Dunnad Hill Fort and other sites in Kilmartin.

A detailed daily itinerary for the journey will be distributed prior to our pilgrimage. A list featuring degree of difficulty for each walk will be included with itinerary (walks range from easy/moderate to challenging). There will also be plenty of un-programmed time for quiet reflection and individual exploration.

*Suggestions for planning your flight arrivals and departures (Glasgow Airport): Arrival: We ask that you plan on arriving at least a day early (Thursday April 23rd). This will allow you time to spend resting/shaking off jet lag and plenty of time to meet us early the following morning at Glasgow Queen Street Train Station in Glasgow City Central. For your arrival evening stay: You may wish to consider booking at the Holiday Inn Express at Glasgow Airport as it is within short walking distance from the airport. It's an easy base location to grab a bus or taxi into Glasgow. Or, you may wish to book a hotel in Glasgow City Central near to Queen St. Train station. Departure: We suggest you book your flight to return to your home destination on Monday, May 4th.

Alternatively: If you wish to arrive early and/or stay after our designated group pilgrimage time, Walking Awake can provide you with some possible options. Contact Denise Crawn with any questions: dcrawn@walkingawake.com

Bios of Leaders:

Denise Crawn is a former Kirkridge employee, Columcille Board Member now residing in Scotland with her husband, Nick Prance.

Owner of Walking Awake, LLC, Denise is an ordained Interfaith Minister through One Spirit Interfaith Seminary, NYC, author of "Walking Awake: The Faces In Nature", and creator of several inspirational card decks. Denise's ministry and love of nature is expressed through her photography, book, cards and events which focus on becoming more aware and awake by accessing our innate connection with Nature and our relationship with the Divine within and around us. Her deep-rooted relationship with Nature began as a child when she would join her father and brothers hunting and fishing. No longer a hunter, she remains forever an outdoors woman with a keen eye for tracking and a gift for reading Nature's hidden messages. Since her discovery of Columcille Megalith Park (Kirkridge's mountain neighbor) in 1996 (which inspired her first visit to Iona in 2003), she has enjoyed visiting Iona on a regular basis becoming very familiar with its landscape, history and myths, and its longtime residents.

Nick Prance was born in the north of Ireland, raised in Liverpool, and has lived in Scotland for the last 16 years. During his time in Scotland, he lived on Iona for three years working for the Iona Community helping to organize and run the program for the many guests who came on pilgrimage and retreat. He also joined the Iona Community as a member at that time. Following a career working within the Mental Health services and training for the Anglican ministry, Nick has been exploring Buddhism, seeing it as a helpful way of engaging compassionately with the human condition and the nature of suffering. Now mostly retired, Nick currently spends his time alternating between walking in the wild and beautiful spaces of Scotland and enjoying the inner child by playing as often as possible with his four young grandchildren!



As a couple: Nearly six years ago, Denise and Nick met on a ferry while each were traveling to the Isle of Iona, Scotland. In October 2016 they were married in Scotland surrounded by family and friends. A 'ferry-tale' come true indeed! Since meeting, they have traveled together throughout Scotland, England, and Wales along with other magical places visiting standing stones and ancient sites and loving every moment of it! Both have deep and long standing connections to the people and energies of Iona. As co-leaders they bring together an eclectic mixture of backgrounds including everything from trainings in ministry, theater, mental health, shamanism, mindfulness, as well as their love and connectedness to poetry, story, music and nature. Nick and Denise enjoy sharing these treasures, passions and adventures with others as they lead and co-lead workshops, retreats and pilgrimages on 'both sides of the pond'.

Dr. Jean M. Richardson for over 14 years has had the privilege to serve as the director of Kirkridge Retreat and Study Center. During her time at Kirkridge she has met many wise and wonderful souls and has been blessed in countless ways by her journey on the Kittatinny Ridge. A trained facilitator of the Center for Courage and Renewal she attempts to bring this work into her daily practice of living and work at Kirkridge.



Photos of previous Walking Awake Pilgrimages to Iona and Kilmartin:



Pictured Above: 1st row, L to R: Nick leads a pilgrimage of the Iona Abbey on Iona. Puffins on Staffa. The Standing Stones of Kilmartin. Maclean's Cross on Iona.

2nd row L to R: Walking Awake pilgrims on their way to Columba's Bay, Iona. The turquoise blue Sound of Iona. Nick guiding a tour of the Iona Abbey.

3rd row L to R: Boarding the Iolaire after visiting with Fingal's Cave (and the puffins) on Staffa. Our group dinner on the Esplanade in Oban. A reflective moment on the Machair on Iona. A beautiful sunset in Oban.

