



Pluscarden 1230 Pilgrimage – The Final Day – Friday 1st September

Introduction

After 13 long weeks and nearly 1400 miles the epic journey that is the Pluscarden 1230 Pilgrimage is drawing to a close. As I write they are heading north from Ballachulish to Fort William and will finish Week 12 at Fort Augustus. Next week, Week 13, sees them overnighing at Drumnadrochit and then moving on to visit Beaulieu Priory with further night stops at Old Allangrange with David and JJ Gladwin, Cawdor Castle and finally as guests of Alasdair and Panny Laing at Logie. The plan is to co-ordinate their arrival at Pluscarden around 14.30 on Friday 1st September.

It has become clear that there is huge interest in this final day and many ex pilgrims, appeal committee members, local Moray people, including the local primary school, and indeed both local and national press, wish to become involved. This is indeed hugely heartening but it does bring with it safety issues and the last thing we want is to end this unique and ambitious event with some sort of accident. Safety is, and has been throughout the pilgrimage, paramount, hence the need for close co-ordination.

Friday 1st September

It is important that we arrive at the Abbey around 2.30pm for the formal handover of the restoration stone carried all the way from Burgundy, from the original Valliscaulian Abbey at Val-des-Choux, and to ensure that we achieve maximum press coverage. To that end this last day will involve some stage management which will include 3 different start/gathering points (SGPs).

SGP 1 OS GD 006506 – Logie Steading.

This SGP is for those who are already walking the last week of the pilgrimage, for those pilgrims who have walked on previous weeks in France and the UK and for any others who wish to walk this 15 mile leg. All should gather at Logie Steading by 9.45am and be prepared for a start between 10am and 10.15am. The aim is to reach Rafford Village hall between 12.00 and 12.15. The group will be held briefly at this stage in order to marry up with those waiting to join the pilgrimage at this SGP and to allow the Police to establish control of the final miles along the road into Pluscarden.

SGP 2 OS GD 068555 – Rafford Village Hall

This SGP is for those who wish to join the pilgrimage for the final 6 miles to Pluscarden. This includes the children from Mosstowie Primary School and all those who wish a more manageable distance. From this point onwards the whole group will be kept close together for safety and arrival timing reasons.

SGP 3 OS GD 133571 The back entrance to Westerton

This SGP is for those who wish to join us for the last mile and will include those who require mobility scooters or wheelchairs.

Arrival

On arrival at the Abbey a short ceremony will take place to handover the stone from the Abbey in Burgundy to the Pluscarden Community after which a late lunch (BBQ) will be laid on. All celebrations will end by 5pm at the latest. In order to co-ordinate numbers for walking and lunch all those who wish to take part must let the appeal office know by close of play next Monday, the 28th of August.

THE PILGRIMAGE CAN ONLY BE JOINED AT THE SGPS. THIS IS FOR SAFETY AND EASE OF CONTROL.