



Weaving our Iona Connections: A Walking Awake Pilgrimage with Columcille Megalith Park and Kirkridge Retreat Center to the Isle of Iona, Scotland, May 3rd - 11th, 2024: Guided by Walking Awake's Denise Crown (former Columcille Board Member and Kirkridge employee) and her husband Nick Prance (former Isle of Iona resident).

Dear Friends of Columcille Megalith Park, Kirkridge Retreat Center and Walking Awake:

If you have a love of Celtic Spirituality and a curiosity about the connections between Kirkridge, Columcille, and the tiny Hebridean Island of Iona, Scotland: we'd like to invite you to join us on a very special pilgrimage to Iona in early May, 2024.

The Isle of Iona is often referred to as a 'thin place'. It has long been a place of pilgrimage influencing art, music, poetry and religion across the ages. The history and myths surrounding Iona are both intriguing and inviting. Being on Iona for more than just a few days is the only way to truly get a sense of its energy.

Kirkridge and Columcille are also 'thin places' — both with strong roots grounded in Iona — all three are sacred, holy places.

Columcille's founder, William (Bill) H. Cohea was forever changed by the dreams and visions he experienced while on Iona. Together, Bill and his partner, Fred Lindkvist manifested these Iona encounters into the Columcille Megalith Park we know and love today.

Kirkridge's founder, John Oliver Nelson visited Iona and was inspired by the work of the Iona Community founder, George MacLeod. He returned home to the US with the vision of creating a similar community, from which Kirkridge was brought forth just over 80 years ago.

Walking Awake evolved out of Denise Crown's experiences in Nature and love of Celtic Spirituality. Columcille, Kirkridge and Iona have played key roles in Denise's life journey. It has long been her heartfelt vision to see the stories of these three places continue to weave and grow for generations to come.

Much like the Celtic knot of three interwoven threads, we, as three distinct yet uniquely interlaced communities have committed to embark on a pilgrimage together. Our vision is to weave the lineage of our ever-expanding kinship with each other, with Nature, and with Iona.

We are especially excited to share that while on Iona, our accommodation will be at the Bishop's House. Built in 1884 and originally called "Saint Columba's House," Bishop's House is an Episcopalian retreat house with an open, warm hospitality extending to individuals and private groups whether or not they have a connection to any particular faith tradition.



We're delighted to have the opportunity to experience the exclusive use of Bishop's House as this will provide us with a welcoming open space to gather and to be free to create our own unique experience.

On our way to Iona, we will spend a day exploring the Kilmartin Valley and its many ancient sites and standing stones concluding our day with an overnight hotel stay in the harbor town of Oban.

While on Iona we will visit its many sacred sites including those connected to Columcille Megalith Park by name such as: the Hill of the Signal, the Glen of the Temple, Dun-I and Brighid's Well. We will also visit: Columba's Bay, the Hermit's Cell, the Nunnery ruins, the Oran Chapel and Iona Abbey (where John Oliver Nelson was so deeply inspired). We will delve into and explore the stories of Columba, Oran, Brighid, Vikings, Monks, Nuns, Bill Cohea and Fred Lindkvist of Columcille Megalith Park, and John Oliver Nelson of Kirkridge Retreat Center. From "The Beginning to the Beginning!" (as Bill Cohea used to say) we will weave our connections to this sacred isle as individuals, and as a community.

We'd love to share this magical journey with you! If you are interested in joining us on this pilgrimage, we do recommend you consider securing your registration early as we suspect this journey will fill fast. Further details are attached.

Looking forward to May 2024!
Iona Blessings,

Denise Crown and Nick Prance, of Walking Awake, LLC
John Drinkard, Board President of Columcille Megalith Park
Lydia Wylie-Kellerman, Executive Director of Kirkridge Retreat Center