

THE GATEKEEPER TRUST

By Roma Harding

The Gatekeeper Trust was founded in the summer of 1980 by a group of people, including the late Sir George Trevelyan, Stanley Messenger and Peter Dawkins, dedicated to the renewal of the Earth by: Communication, Research, Pilgrimage, Ritual and Illumination. Individuals and local groups in many parts of the country have been exploring and working with the land for almost thirty years, in a new yet ancient way.

The Gatekeeper Trust is about walking the earth in a simple and sacred way with awareness. At this time, when we are desecrating our planet as never before, there is a real need to rediscover our connection with our environment, to be in tune with the landscape, and to realise how it affects us, and we it.

It is known that we are affected mentally and emotionally for the better by living in peaceful and beautiful surroundings. On the physical level, the link between pollution of air and water with diseases like asthma and cancer is equally well known. But can we connect with the earth at a deeper level and begin to heal the atmosphere of our planet? We believe that we can, and that the process is quite simple. Each of us knows at least one place where we feel special – somewhere that makes us seem more alive, more in tune with the world, more truly ourselves. It is here that we connect with the spirit of place and find universal harmony. By going to places in the landscape to which you feel drawn, and offering your healing love through meditation, dance, song and prayer, or whatever way feels right, places and communities can be transformed, atmospheres made lighter and more harmonious. Often a corresponding change takes place in you too!

Just as acupuncture can restore the healthy flow of vital energy in humans, so walking can help Mother Earth. Historically, caring for the Earth through pilgrimage formed a central core to society. Many old pilgrim routes or Druid track-ways still exist today, especially to and from sacred wells and abbey sites, which were frequently revered places long before their monastic pasts. In medieval times, for instance, pilgrimage routes were established all over Europe. The Australian Aborigines still go on their walk-about, walking the “song lines”, following and listening to their landscape. Walking in this way can enhance the natural energies that flow through the Earth’s crust, helping to bring healing and balance to the environment and to the planet as a whole.

These activities have begun to reveal the vital importance of experiencing the Earth as a living Temple and the landscape itself as a Kingdom of lesser temples. Such temples, described by, and visible to the sensitive as an architecture of living etheric forms and power centres, await only the Light of human consciousness to burst forth into renewed Life appropriate to our times and tasks.

As Peter Dawkins explains, “The overall archetype of all sacred form (i.e. a ‘temple’) consists of three principle archetypes: the Wheel of Life or Mandala, the Chakra System and the Tree of Life. Every temple, natural or man-made is based on these three design principles. That is to say, every natural and human

form of life is designed according to, and is striving to express, these three principles in their fullness. This includes the landscape as well as the whole planet and each human being (although human beings have freewill to strive for such an expression, or not). Like ourselves, the world is in a process of evolution that is manifesting this archetype gradually, stage by stage, in cycles of progressive development and unfoldment. When each form reaches [its] fullness of expression ..., it transmutes (i.e. resurrects) into a body of light – a temple of light, referred to in Western tradition as ‘Solomon’s Temple’. Such a body of light consists of shining, exquisitely structured etheric substance. The process by which this occurs is alchemical.”

For every one of these temples, whether discernable as physical features of the landscape, such as stone circles, dolmen and cathedrals, or more subtle elemental places, many remain to be discovered and acknowledged. All are formed out of the very substance of the Earth itself, rock and stream and waterfall, woodland and hill and herb, all consorting together and interacting with the angelic realms: “as above, so below”. These myriad of sacred centres are as varied as our own organic centres of crown and brow, speech and heart, plexus and gland and deepest kundalini power. We have not so much to dig for these temples as to develop the insight to see them. Working in groups at these places, and connecting with our own guides and the guardians of ‘spirit of place’, can have a powerful effect.

The Gatekeeper Trust welcomes the interest and support of all who respond in their hearts to the adventure of Temple seeking and Temple renewal, or simply enjoy walking with mindfulness. We have a programme throughout the year of local contacts and national events. Local groups frequently meet at the equinoxes and solstices and other traditional festival times, to celebrate the Wheel of the Year through pilgrimage. Journeys through the outer landscape can create within us new frontiers of inner perspective; we can discover new depths of potential in ourselves. The Earth herself has an abundance of simple gifts to be enjoyed and released in us. We invite you to discover them with us.



The Butterfly is our symbol – the Gatekeeper or Hedge Brown has orange-brown wings and a black spot with two white pupils near the edge of its forewing. It is known for its guardianship of gates and hedges, and so is most often seen as one goes in and out of fields and woods and along roadside verges. The butterfly is the earthly partner of the elemental kingdom, its presence frequently accompanies us on pilgrimage – a sign as one crosses the threshold of a sacred place and seeks permission to enter. Engaged with the fairy and devic realms, tree and nature dryads, the butterfly reminds us of the alchemical transformation of earthly substance, keeping the Temples mysteriously tended and alive for humanity to rediscover them and find new ways to worship.

The Gatekeeper Trust is a non-denominational, educational charity (Registered Charity No. 326416). We not only walk and exchange consciousness with the

land, but also explore history, mythology, archaeology, poetry and the arts, and their relevance in today's changing world. *"We live in the landscape and the landscape lives in us."*

Over the past couple of years, *The Gatekeeper Trust* has been expanding its educational programme and is working on a series of pilgrimages and workshops leading up to 2012 and the Olympic Games in London, with the sailing events to be held in Weymouth & Portland, Dorset. As Trustee, Charlotte Yonge, says: "New Temples are constantly being created, such as the Olympic stadia, which bring the human family ever closer together in a state of excitement, awe and devotion to excellence. Now London is the next focus, and to increase the spiritual magnetism of the city's ancient landscape, our Autumn Conferences focus specifically on this area in the great landscape zodiac of England. What are we creating, but a temple with altars, to create a new sense of connectivity across nations, through which to express our divinity, creativity and huge heartfelt optimism for a harmonious future together on the planet."

HOW DOES PILGRIMAGE HELP THE EARTH?

"... The old saying that every pilgrim leaves footprints of light that others might follow and add to, is no idle saying. The earth can be turned into light through pilgrimage, and there is a science associated with how this is done.

Love is an energy, and all things including ourselves are built out of energy. ... Energy fields affect each other. If our energy is loving, then we affect other energy fields that we touch or move in with that love. We can share that love.

We can both give and receive love, in mutual benefit. In such a way a pilgrim's relationship with the earth, with the landscape, can be a love relationship. Just like us, the earth longs for such love and calls us to love her. The earth in her love for us helps us towards illumination, and we can help her towards hers. That is the hidden purpose of pilgrimage – the so-called redemption of mankind and nature, the raising of all to light, wherein Light is the manifestation of Love."

Peter Dawkins

To find out what is happening in your area, details of courses and national events, see www.gatekeeper.org.uk or contact the *Gatekeeper Secretary* for a programme with list of local contacts: 01803 864680 email: secretary@gatekeeper.org.uk

Becoming a member involves no other commitment than to share in our sacred landscape with an open heart, in whatever way feels right for you. You may attend local events across the country at a minimal cost. Membership also provides preferential access to national events and conferences, plus our annual magazine, which is timeless and informative. To receive a copy of *The*

Gatekeeper, 2009, price £3.50, contact the Secretary (above) or email: spiraloftranquility.roma@virgin.net Tel: 01305 816644.

Compiled by Roma Harding, local *Gatekeeper* contact for Dorset and organiser of Weymouth & Dorchester Branch of the Wessex Research Group. With thanks to Maggi Fielder, editor, *The Gatekeeper*, for much of the information in this article. Also to Peter Dawkins, Elder and co-Founder of *The Gatekeeper Trust*, and Charlotte Yonge, Trustee, for their permissions to quote previously published insights.