

## ***Pilgrim, Orange County, CA***

**“A person who undertakes a journey to a sacred place”**

“Pilgrim” became the working title of a music project that Scott Key and Ritchie Miller embarked on last September—Scott being a young, full-of-energy missionary from Orange County, CA, and Ritchie being a tired middle-aged old cynic whose main ministry was that of *Acts 2vs 17: “Your Old Men shall dream dreams.”* (This is a ministry I seek to fulfil at almost any time of day, no matter what company I’m in.) Somehow Scott managed to grab my attention on one of the odd occasions I was awake, and suggested that we blow off the cobwebs of some old tunes I wrote and make a CD. Before I had time to fall off to sleep again, there I was in the Rock n Roll capital of central Scotland - *Shotts* - in a state-of-the-art cupboard (a closet, for American readers). This is the stuff Rock n Roll Dreams are made of. Pilgrim is born.

### **Let’s get to work**

It never ceases to amaze me how the seasons of our lives change: we meet new people, we lose touch with others, we think some will be around forever, and in a blink of an eye they’re not there anymore. But in the family of God I’ve always found that as one chapter ends, another begins. This hasn’t always been a fact that I have been able to embrace willingly (‘cause, like Garth in *Wayne’s World*, I FEAR CHANGE). But it has happened most of my Christian life. Every time I settle down into a place where I can pursue my ministry of sleep (sorry, I mean dreams) God shakes up my circumstance and moves me on.

### **Pilgrimage: A journey to a sacred Place**

Keeping in mind the dictionary explanation of the term ‘Pilgrim’, I am forced to contemplate how my journey to the sacred place is going. It’s always a good thing to every now and again stop and take stock, just to check that we’re still on course, and that the service we are involved in is exactly what our Master wants for us. It’s the easiest thing to get into the ‘same old-same old’ groove. So I believe that Scott was sent along to move me on in my journey to Emmanuel’s Land.

By Christmas '03 we had a four track EP ready to take to Orange County, CA.: *Pilgrim - Passin' Thru* (Square Peg Records). The tickets were booked for Jan 7th, and, as is usual when I find myself being led into new paths, I gave far too much ear to self-doubt. Scott & Dani had gone home in mid Dec for a month's furlough and were setting up some gigs for Lyn and myself arriving in Jan.

### **California dreaming on such a winter's day**

Touch down LAX Jan 7th. The airport wasn't exactly filled with screaming fans. In actual fact there were none there at all, but thankfully Tony and Anita (Dani's Mom & Dad) were. We were taken to Orange City, our base for the next two weeks, to the home of John & Lori Key (Scott's Mom & Dad). One of the greatest confirmations of our faith is when we can span an ocean and three thousand miles of land, arrive in a person's home, and within minutes we know that we are part of the universal family of God. 'The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God' (Rom 8:16).

So there I was cutting round in my shorts and sandals, and all the locals had their winter woollies on, looking at me as though I was mad.

### **We all speak the same language... Don't we... Well... don't we?**

Apparently not! "It's English Jim, but not as we know it," to quote a rather well known 'Vulcan'. Apparently we Scots have a tendency to speak a little too fast. Well, that might be, but there is one thing that is identical in all of us as believers—God's precious Holy Spirit. He overrides grammatical differences we might have, and He helped me to slow down and deliver the word He had for the body.

As I have already mentioned, this is one of the best encouragements anybody can have for their faith, to be able to travel six thousand miles to be in the company of our eternal family, speaking in one Spirit, worshipping the same Jesus, bringing glory to our God and Father, standing together and resisting the same enemy. Praise God! And surprisingly enough, the music went down not too bad either.

### **Why Pilgrim?**

Not the coolest name for a contemporary soft rock/worship band. Kind of old fashioned isn't it? It conjures up images of "The pilgrim fathers," all dressed in black with their frilly white collars, half-length trousers, tights, and shoes that Michael Flatley used in River Dance. Well, needless to say, Scott & myself decided not to don that look for our stint in O.C. (although it might have generated a lot more interest). No, the real inspiration behind the name came from considering Jesus Himself.

"A person undertaking a journey to a sacred place..."

Yes, Jesus was the "Ultimate Pilgrim." His journey began at Bethlehem in a manger, led to Calvary (The Sacred Place), and then beyond the grave to Glory. So, since no servant is greater than his master, I happily take on the pilgrim mantle. The great thing about a pilgrim is that he or she is always on the move, always pressing on towards the "sacred place." Lead on Lord.

Could I wind up this report by asking for your prayers as we walk this road together? And thank you for taking time to read these ramblings. I hope to be with you again soon on the GSM Electrozone.

Yours in Jesus,  
Ritchie