

18th September to 30<sup>th</sup> September 1984

19th

I've only been here 24 hours, but thought I would start writing now while I've got a bit of space. The first day was great as so many women I haven't seen for a long time were either already here or arrived during the day. Sally, (Anne was away for the day on a course), Joanna, Annie, Rebekah, American Liz, Miranda, <sup>negot</sup>Jane, Jay, Jill,; Sian and Kay for a little while, women from Red Gate, which had been evicted so many times, they abandoned it, but have now set it up again.

To begin at the beginning. My car was loaded up with goods from Deal. Bill gave me a sack of potatoes, three boxes of tomatoes, onions, carrots, sweet corn, etc etc, plus 2 huge home made loaves from Claudine, and what with the tents, my usual gear, plus stuff from Hilary, I was very laden. During the day I put my tent up behind the shit pit area next to American Liz's new bender, did a load of washing up, handed out quantities of potatoes and tomatoes to women who came round from other gates, met new residents like Ann and her three daughters from Burton, and Paulien and her friend who arrived from Holland and Chris from Cumbria. Later on I cooked potatoes and all the sweet corn for supper. Most of the day was taken up with talking and exchanging news. Most of us feel rather apprehensive about the next few days and whether it will work out, but we will have to just wait and see.

Greenham seems to be suffering from a flea crisis, but so far I haven't been bitten. Last night, rather than sleeping in my tent, I moved my sleeping bag into Liz's new amazing bender. <sup>del</sup>It is very long and comfortable, and it's really good to lie back and see the branches with leaves still on just over my head. The benders are creeping back in/out of the way places, and I think before long there will be lots of them all tucked away out of sight. The most ingenious so far is Julie's as she spent a couple of days digging a deep pit and then put a low construction over the top of polythene, then branches over that for disguise. The evictions have been very bad recently, but yesterday we were expecting to have another one, and today, we are just waiting. The traveller, Sally, was told by the police that we were all going to be evicted finally today, but I think it's just a bluff. Just to be on the safe side we've put most of the food etc in the brown van so the rest can be quickly picked up and pushed away in the pram, or carried off.

Tommy and Danny are back with their parents. They haven't changed much, and we were sitting (four of us) in the front of my car having a drink and talk and saw them creep to the van and take something out. They had nicked our candles and lit them down the road. We went and got them back, but we'll have to be careful to keep everything locked up while they are around.

Liz gave us a film show last night. We were sitting in the car and she said she thought we looked like a drive in cinema, so got out and gave us this amazing show with lots of characters, either with or without hat. ~~which~~ It was about Peter Fonda and, I think, Christ. It was confusing but funny. Rebekah, Jane and I fell about laughing, even more so when the motor bike fell over. It was not actually part of the act, and luckily no damage was done. Later Liz and I said we would do a ~~form~~ of night watch as no one turned up for it. In the end the other two stayed up with us round the fire until about 1.30 and we stayed up very sleepily until 2.30, then went to bed. ~~xxxxx~~  
~~xxxxxsleeping~~

This morning is quiet. We are all feeling a little apprehensive about what will happen. The influx has not yet arrived.



Annie's Flea Song

The time for fleas is coming near,  
jump off the cats and in the beer.  
10 million fleas bite wimmin here  
10 million women fear.

Chorus

September 20th for 10 days  
fleas come together to find new places,  
Judy's armpits, Liz's back,  
the fleas are on the attack.

Its time to scratch, its time to itch,  
the fleas will land on every witch.  
TCP cream makes them flinch,  
but they bite on inch by inch.

chorus

Stop the nukes and break the law  
no multinationals anymore  
wommin bring the government to their knees,  
but they can't stop the fleas.

chorus.



20<sup>th</sup> + 21st.

I'm sitting in the car surrounded by activity. Maybe there aren't 10 million, but there are an awful lot of women around and I'm having a break from making a shit pit shelter, remaking the bathroom which the bailiffs destroyed, and <sup>general</sup> cooking, talking and living activities.

Yesterday the women started to arrive. A steady stream of them. Most seem to be self sufficient, some of the regulars are bringing food and goods with them to the main fire, but by now there are dozens of little camps all round Orange Gate. In one direction they stretch pretty well back to the main road, and the other way they are filling the rabbit meadow, the clearing, and odd tents are scattered back on to the common wherever there is a clear bit of ground. There are lots of fires and cooking activities, all of which are observed frequently by the police helicopter which hovers overhead in its usual irritating and noisy fashion. Work goes on inside the base, where they are digging a huge pit just inside the gate. We hoped for a while they were going to make a tunnel just so we could get in the base easier, but I don't think this is their ~~case~~ intention.

It's becoming impossible to name all the women whom I know that have arrived, but Diana and her mother and daughter came yesterday, Judy, Jan, Di and a huge crowd from Southampton, Abergavenny women, Joyce, <sup>by the way the ten days only Chen + Toni the latter were not seen.</sup>

I really ought to go back to where I left off the day before yesterday. As I mentioned we were all wondering what would happen and the day rather drifted about in a not particularly constructive fashion. We ~~all~~ felt we ought to make things and prepare, but the time was not right. Eventually Faversham Hilary arrived and we put up her big tent next to mine. It wasn't all that easy as the brambles and trees rather got in the way. But we now have this little private enclave, sheltered and quiet. Jay is building herself and Jill an underground shelter near, but apart from them there is no one else around. We had just about finished, and were wondering whether to go off to the pub, when Mike drove up with Hilary and Liz. We set up the ~~xxxx~~ gear in the tents and then wandered over to the fire where Rebekah was cooking a great meal. There was a fair amount of drink round so we all sat and talked then Liz did another film show on Humphrey Bogart, the East German supplies of bolt cutters, and the pusher of them who was a little old woman from Birmingham! It was highly complex and very funny.

Somehow we didn't get to bed all that early again. Hil and I had a nightcap with Hilary and Liz in their tent, and then I really crashed out and slept very soundly apart from waking hearing heavy rain falling. It went on falling all night and quite a lot of the day, and by the middle of the morning the puddles were really deep, but we dug drainage trenches into the massive shit pit, and it's not too bad now. The police are here in some force, plus a couple of mounted men, and they walk round all the time, and have at least one van parked at the gate, making sure we behave ourselves. We are wondering what sort of action ~~will~~ take place. We would love to have something really peaceful and quiet where the fence just disappears and falls down of its own accord, with no loud pulling and cutting and shouting <sup>and</sup> tension. We will have to think hard and constructively, and even then I don't see how we can achieve this, but at Greenham anything is possible.

I had arranged with Jay that I would help her collect her caravan from north of Banbury with Jill, when she finished school. ~~xx~~ In the end Hil and Julia also came with us. I had no idea it was going to be such a long trek, and ~~xxxxxxx~~ I drove over 160 miles on this jaunt. Actually it was fun, and we saw some lovely countryside, found some amazing mushrooms in the Quaker graveyard, and Jay now has a home of her own near Thatcham, in a nice paddock. Mind you the caravan needs a lot of working on, as it is missing windows and



is only a shell, but I know it will be really successful, and as she said, she couldn't stand a Pommie winter under a sheet of polythene! We didn't get back to Orange camp until well after 10pm, but we'd stopped for chips in Thatcham, so we weren't that hungry. We had a couple of beers and a snack, and then went off to bed. The tent is pretty good just a bit wet round the zip, but its always been bad there.

We do have one other real problem at Greenham, mainly Orange Gate, this time. Fleas. We may not have 10 million women, but we do have 10 million fleas, and they are breeding rapidly. The first night in American Liz's bender she told me the fleas were bad and showed me the bites all over her back. Well, they did attack my right shin, but I'm not flea material and Annie and I are now the only women in this area who are not constantly scratching somewhere about our persons. What interest me is what will happen when we all go home. Will the flea epidemic spread around the country, or will the ~~the~~ 10 million badge be a woman scratching, or just the picture of a flea? Greenham fleas are everywhere, is a good slogan and most appropriate to this gathering.

*in pink tube*

I have just been interrupted by two fairies leaping round waving wands and turning all the policemen into frogs. The cops don't really realise this yet, but soon they will suffer an identity crisis.

Today we have all got ourselves together. The camp is full of women making things. At the moment Annie is painting notices, Hil, Hilary and Liz have dug a deep shit pit in the usual area and made a screen round it, as the police and various men keep walking up and down shit pit lane, and the most amazing construction of the proper loo is now in position over the council shit pit which is actually a long trench so stop us bringing cars on to the common. The construction consists of a floor with a hole, standing on strong supports, then four uprights and non-see-through plastic round it. It has to be strong and heavy as the wind is blowing like mad round here, and the floor has to take the heaviest women. When it was finished and we carried it down to the far end of the ditch, Ruth was persuaded to squat inside and have the inaugural pee. Success!

I have re-instated the bathroom. It may not be quite as good as the original structure and I had difficulty in finding the right sort of wood, and the slatted floor is nailed to the ground as the only nails were 4 inches long! What made me want to put it in order again was that I had a 'bath' this morning and it really is hard not to get dirty feet while washing. I am having trouble at the moment as Hil is distracting me at wonderment at my touch typing. Anyway, now all is quiet. The sun is shining and women just wandering about, waiting for the real onslaught tomorrow. (I hope.)



22nd 23rd 24th

24th

The rest of Friday is a bit of a blurr. Its so hard to remember details of what happened, except the unimportant things, like the fact I missed supper again that evening. I have just remembered really what ~~take place after the missed supper~~. Julia, Hil, Jan, Maureen and I decided that we would get supper at Green as they had said there was going to be a big gathering, rave-up and food there. Well we set off and it was very dark, with masses of cars and women all wandering around. There were lots of fires, but the food being cooked on them was obviously just for a few. Then we saw a big fire with women standing round and chanting and singing going on. We'd hit the right place (or so we thought). A bag of peanuts was passed round and we were told to take one each and pass the bag on. Then some dried fruit, and the same thing happened. Then some cheese, then one piece of Ryvita, so we all broke off a small bit and passed it on. The trouble was that we passed all these things on to German women who didn't understand that they had to pass it round, so it kept coming back to us, and we were so hungry that we gladly kept nibbling. Then a very small bottle of home made beer reached us. This we didn't even try to pass round, but ~~xxx~~ stood and shared it amongst ourselves. Somehow we didn't seem to be really joining in the spirit of the occasion, and decided to creep away and go to the pub. Well we ended up having a goodevening there, and it was only later that we found we had left Green much too early, had missed the proper food and also missed the pulling down of Green Gate and a load of fencing. You can't win them all, but we really failed badly on that evening. The odd thing was that all the Orange Gate women had done the same thing, and gone away much too early.

Back at Orange we sat around then Reading Anne said that she had heard that bits of the Cruise convoy were going to be brought back inside that night. She even had a time for this exercise, 3.30am, but this rumour was one that I wasn't all that keen on. Anne, Hil and St. Albans Anne said that would go and lurk in a car on the appropriate road, and I said I would direct operations from this end, from in bed. By the time we had all this worked out it was 1.30, and when Hil crawled back into the tent at 4am and woke me briefly to say nothing had happened, I felt I had taken the right decision. Hil agreed with me.

The twelve women from Deal also arrived safely on Friday night at about midnight. We went and talked to them and watched them put up a couple of tents, and helped them drink their apricot brandy.

Saturday was a day of greeting more women and showing them where everything was and saying that they should put their tents wherever they could find an agreeable space. That was not easy as the tents and vehicles stretch from the road right round to the clearing which is full, as well as the rabbit meadow, and also back on to the common. Maura and waffle-women- Jan are here, plus a load more I know from all over the country. The weather is quite good, sunny, but the wind typically Greenham, blowing smoke from the fire in all directions.

Ellie turned up during the afternoon, and we decided to have fish at chips, and also to take Jan, Rebekah and Maureen to the Rockaby for a drink. There was an action to be held at Orange that night a 8pm, mainly singing and then a silent period, Actually we were rather late back for it, and I found the road quite blocked with women and police, so backed down it and on Rebekah's advice, ~~xxx~~ went round the back and took a very narrow track up to the main path, but found that blocked by a tent, so had to back down it again and reach home up shit pit lane. Some women were pulling the fence and the police kept hauling them back, but there were no arrests and the whole thing was fairly low key. At this time the only women arrested



from Orange were Miranda and Reading Anne. They had found a newly blown down piece of tree which they wanted to make a bender pole out of. The police saw them and accused them of damaging the common, so they have been charged. They were both upset as they are both very caring as far as the common is concerned and are ~~the last~~ women who ~~would~~ cut trees down. dnit

We all had a drink of mulled wine round the fire, then Ellie and I had a walk down to the ford before going to bed, where Ellie lost her lighter in the ford under the bridge. These stupid things do happen. Sally's parents arrived today from America and Barbara was just as enthusiastic about the camp as the last time I saw her.

Sunday didn't really start until midday when we got up and had breakfast. Women were milling around in their thousands, so Ellie and I decided to walk round the base. We stopped at Red and walked on past Violet and Indigo. Blue was packed as they had been doing a blockade and then a Nottingham all women's band was playing. We felt it was time for a rest, so had some coffee under the shelter when the rain suddenly poured down. The ground was really wet in places, but we went straight past Turquoise and Emerald round to Green. We took one look at the muddy boots of the women heading towards us, and made the rest of the trek the longer way by road. I saw many more women I knew on the walk round, including some of the miners' wives from East Kent.

At Yellow we sat by the fire and Caroline Blackwood turned up. She handed over a bottle of vodka, then said who she was. She listened carefully to criticisms, and said in her next book she would correct them. I thought it was brave of her to come and be prepared to listen to the complaints anyway, and was glad that most of the women thought the book really good.

We saw Julie at Yellow. She had been in a blockade, and had got dropped on her head. She looked rather shaky, so Barbara got her a lift back home, and Ellie and I walked. I also saw Jane and met her mother at Yellow who is staying at

Ellie got a lift back to London with Isia soon after we got back, so I wandered down to talk to the Deal women who, of course, had just gone, apart from Angela who is staying on. I stopped and ~~talked~~ chatted to the St. Albans crowd and was invited to a superb curry supper with hot cooked fruit for pudding. It was really welcome. Back at the main fire, we felt that there should be some action that night. In the end there were quite a lot of us prepared to do it, so we ended up with two groups. These spit down into smaller groups, and none of us had any luck. The first lot went towards Yellow, round the corner from here, and there were lurking men both inside and outside the fence, creeping around, hiding in bushes pretending not to be there even when the women confronted them. Karen and Fiona from the London Hospital went round the other way, and as Karen was bending down for the first snip, lights were ~~xxx~~ shone on her with bolt cutters poised, so she beat a hasty retreat. Then Faversham Hilary and I wondered if we could find the hole which (we hoped) the first group had cut, so strolled round, but we ~~were~~ spotted instantly by an MOD cop and his dog. They were both very quiet, but we backed away into the bushes, and in a few moments met up with the women also on their way back. We aren't very happy about things. Either the MOD have got really clever and are playing our game of hide and seek, or else we have a mole at Orange. I really hope it is the first, but I'm not at all sure.

I went to bed early last night, and really slept soundly, but I knew there was going to be a blockade at Orange at 7, so was not all that surprised to be woken by Reading Anne ~~xxx~~ just before ~~then~~. Hilary wasn't at all keen to get out of her sleeping bag, but we ~~all~~ staggered over to the gate and sat in front of it, in varying degrees of sleepiness and alertness. There were a lot of us there, and we decided it was important to go to indigo to blockade there where the gate is being used all the time.



24th

I never managed to even start writing about my real event of the 24th, as the interruptions just went on and on, but now I have some space. Juley has joined me in the car with knitting and orange juice, and all is fairly quiet. *to steamy old*

The blockade at Orange was going pretty well, but we felt that we had so many women around a crowd of us ought to go to Indigo, which is very much in use, and the police are being very heavy over not having too many women around there. Some of us piled into the brown van and set off. Women from all gates were there milling about and we were told that they had been warned that if they obstructed the road again, they would be arrested. Well, we decided that we hadn't been warned, so Steph and I from Orange and Mersey Karen and five others, from Blue I think, went into the road and prepared to sit down. Well, my bottom never reached the ground before two very large policemen grappled me under the armpits and carried me away. I must be fair and say that they were careful not to hurt me, and when one of them lost his grip, the other stopped and told him exactly how to hold me. Karen and others were dragged quite roughly, and her shoe was wrenched off. Anyway for the first time I ended up in the golf club car park and was asked if I would get into the van or would I rather be dragged. I preferred to go in under my own steam, and soon the eight of us were locked in and being driven to Newbury cop shop.

When we arrived we were processed one by one. I was taken in third. I had been warned that I may have my photo taken and to hold a scarf over my head, but of course I ~~rather~~ was taken by surprise when this did happen. I don't think it was much of a piccy, as I had my hand up to my face, as usual dragging on a cigarette. I was taken by a policewoman to a cell, where I was asked to empty my pockets. I had the usual odds and ends of rubbish in them, and money in my sock. Even my watch was taken and put in the bag with everything else, tobacco, lighter, rusty nail, gloves, *cell bag*, etc. ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ I was then taken to the charging officer who asked my name Janette Leech, date of birth, I can't remember, *the date I gave* except that I've decided that each time I'm arrested I will get a year younger, and place of birth, Chalfont St Peter, again. I think it sounds very authentic. I told the officer that I hadn't been warned that I would be arrested if I went into the road, and actually no one had arrested me yet. He said he was doing so now. They accepted my address as the Peace Camp, and he asked me if I'd like to make one phone call. As the time was about 8am I did wonder if I ought to make a call to John to tell him it was time to wake up and go to work, but in the end, thought it would not be diplomatic. Anyway after signing a couple of bits of paper, I was taken to my cell and locked in. For the uninitiated I must say it was a very boring place, just like the ones you see on the telly. The walls had been newly painted and I was warned that if I damaged them in any way, I would be fined. Mind you anything that I could have scratched marks on the walls had been removed, but my shoes hadn't been taken as they fasten with velcro rather than laces.

Quite shortly after the door had clanged shut it was unlocked and ~~XXXXXX~~ policewoman asked me if I would like some tea. I said no I'd rather have coffee. 'With or without sugar?' 'Without, thank you.' A few moments later she returned with the coffee, and said she'd put it on the bench for me as the plastic cup *was* very hot. She then asked me if I wanted breakfast and did I eat meat? I said yes to both questions and she asked if sausages would be all right. Once again I said yes. Door clanged shut. A while later she brought in a huge plateful of food. 2 sausages, about half a tin of baked beans, a fried egg and two tomatoes! Amazing! I really enjoyed my meal. When the empty plate was taken away she said she would get me another coffee. When she brought this back a while later, she said it was hard to remember, but she hoped that it was correct without sugar.

When I told the women back at Orange about this they could hardly



believe it, as if they had a cup of lukewarm tea, they felt they were lucky. ~~Now~~ they are all keen on doing a pre-breakfast action to see if they get a similar meal. The policewoman was really nice.

My cell was right at the end of the passage, but I could hear women from our group singing in the distance and we tried to have an 'I spy' game, and percussion sessions on the grills under the wooden bed/seat. It was bloody cold in my cell, and I curled up on the bench and dozed for a while. Its very hard to know how much time has passed, and even a short while seems hard to bear with absolutely nothing to do, except live with your own thoughts. In my cell I had a block of those thick glass wall panels which let in a bit of light, and I found myself counting them. Nine across and five down. Forty five in all. Just to check I counted them individually! I didn't feel particularly claustrophobic, just wondered how long they would keep me in. I guessed how much time passed, and when I was released I was interested to find it was about an hour later than I thought it would be, 11.30 rather than 10.30. When they started to let us go, the first woman shouted back, that ~~xxxxx~~ she was going out and we would all be free soon. The actual release meant that our possessions were taken from the sealed bag and checked with us, then the charge sheet was handed over. I have to appear in the Magistrates court on the 5th November. Thats a Monday so we will all have a big party over the weekend, and I will take an exeat from University. So many women have already been arrested, they will never get through all the cases *on that day*.

There were masses of women waiting on the steps for us outside, and we stopped on the way home to buy a bottle of scotch to go with our morning coffee. We ~~stopped~~ <sup>How</sup> stopped to drop someone at Red, and they told me that a a rounders game had been arringed between Red and Orange for that afternoon after the blockad~~e~~ at indigo. They wanted to play where the ~~Americans~~ <sup>at</sup> play football, on the end of the runway. The plan was to cut the fence, then the two teams to go in, with bat and ball.

We had coffee and lunch, then I sat in the car to write, but after a bit, urgents lifts were needed, so I started being a taxi. First for the blockade, then an hour later to pick them up. Our team was depleted a bit as Jan and Helen were arrested. I think Hil and Liz and Hilary were quite disappointed not to be arrested as well, but They were looking forward to the game. Juley borrowed my cutters for the hole, and Maureen got into the spirit~~t~~ of the rounders by taking off her jacket and putting ~~soft~~ <sup>running</sup> shoes on. But, once again, the MOD were there, ready and waiting. I had decided not to take part, as I thought two arrests in one day was pushing my luck too far. In the end the women went off in dribs and drabs round towards Red where Juley had previously cut a hole which no one had found. They all got inside, were spotted by the police and I think it was more a game of tag rather than rounders. Everyone was impressed by Maureen's running speed, and at one point shewas in danger of lapping the man chasing her! They were eventually rounded up and questioned in the base. They weren't charged, and were lucky enough to be ~~xxxxxx~~ released at Orange.

I went back to Red with some women and then on to Newbury to get petrol and make phone calls. I called round to the police station and saw Jan and Helen standing on the steps, waiting for the others to be released and their lift to collect them. We had a drink then Sheriden came in her Dormobile and we all drove home. We had a meal, and as I was really tired, decided to go to bed early. I went and cleaned my teeth (I hadn't even washed my hands or face all day) then there was the suggestion of hot chocolate and brandy, so stayed up for hours talking round the fire. I never even heard Hil come into the tent a short while after I had gone to bed.



25th 26th 27th

The 25th was another day of arrivals and departures. Lynne and Susan came from Wales, and Waffle Jan is going to live in France with her fellow, and Annie has decided that she will go with them grape picking for a while. We decided we would have a party for Jan that night and mulled wine was on the menu. There were a lot of strange women round the camp fire, so one by one we wandered off to Diana's fire, and were checking the wine was the right flavour, until unfortunately we found we had finished it before Jan and Moira appeared. They did have a bottle of scotch with them, so it was not as disastrous as it might have been, and everything ended with a load of songs by Moira, Jan and Annie mostly. By this time I was speechless with laryngitis again, so all I could manage was a rather bad clapping rhythm noise. I must try hard not to talk too much.

*see over* We are still feeling very neurotic about the actions which appear to be known about ~~xx~~ inside the base before we even start them. I'm still not sure whether this is because at last the authorities are getting cleverer and more cunning, or whether there is a 'mole'. We all feel that proposed actions are discussed too freely, and it is more than likely that there are 'plants' amongst us, so now we have little huddles and try to keep actions fairly secret. I thought it was just Orange that was feeling like this, but I find its all the gates, and Yellow are in even more of a state than we are.

Anyway, after this Jan party, I was feeling pretty merry, and just about to go to bed when Barbara from Yellow turned up looking for Juley. I had only been to Juley's underground bender once in daylight, and trying to find it in the dark was more than I could cope with. I came back and found Gravesend Jan, who was in a worse state than I was, but knew how to find the bender. We set off hand in hand, crashing through the undergrowth, and woke Juley from a deep sleep (it was well past midnight), told her Barbara wanted to see her, and went back to the camp. Barbara had ~~gone~~ *left by the time* but Juley was really very good about it, upset, but not too cross with us for waking her. I would have been furious if anyone had done that to me, whatever the circumstances.

The next morning I was up by 8am and took Juley to Yellow before driving to Worthing to see my mother. It was a good day to be away, as it gave me a chance to save my non-existent voice, have a bath and do a load of ~~xxxxx~~ washing. I got back just before 7pm, in time for a good supper and a sit round the fire. I was thinking about going to bed at 10.30, but was not particularly tired, when two women, one from Yellow and one from Orange wanted a lift round to Red. I realised there was action in the air, so offered my services as a driver. It turned out to be quite a long night. Burghfield was the objective. A woman from Red joined us and we set off. I really felt I was the 'get-away' driver, but I'm not sure if a Fiat Panda is quite the right vehicle. We had lots of complicated maps to find the back way round so we wouldn't be seen, and I pulled the car just off the road and they piled out with the usual equipment of cutters and paint. We arranged that I would wait for 2 hours in the car, and if they hadn't returned by then I would go. I dozed for a while, and only four vehicles passed during the next hour and a half. Then I heard running. The three had been spotted. They had cut a hole, having gone across a field, scrambled through brambles etc. When they were at the fence, they had seen nothing but one ~~was~~ *then* had heard the click of a bike gear or dynamo, although no light was seen. They then heard over the walkie talkie a policeman state that there were two peacewomen around, so the three of them fled. The action was useful for future occasions of how to be more successful. I said that the driver needed more instruction as to the names given if they were arrested and how long to leave checking where the women were. Also they need much longer than 2 hours, as the car has to be parked a



8/25  
Called WENZANI ('What are you doing') which like Vottle asks Kiar whether  
He gives answers.

Early on in the evening we were told that two South African women were giving a show round a Green Gate. A crowd of us went to see them, and they were fantastic. They gave a series of sketches of life in South Africa, most of them sad and very moving, some funny, and they sang the songs of the black people. By the time they finished it was quite dark, so they borrowed a torch from a member of the audience and continued by the light from it. We were all very moved and felt close to them, but realised that our lives were really easy in comparison with the brutality of the police and hatred of the whites.



them to take the cutters, and pass them back to Juley and me. As usual the cutting sounded incredibly loud to us, but at last it was done, and just as the women round us were about to go, I saw five women behind us creeping towards the fence. A rival group from Yellow! I leapt up and told them that Orange women were just going in now, and if they liked to wait a bit, they could use the same hole. I warned them not to go near the hangers which was where our group was ~~going~~ <sup>heading</sup>. They thanked us for providing the hole, and they ~~left~~ <sup>came to</sup> and Juley, their woman with the cutters and I walked back in the rain to Yellow. Marie and Io gave us a lift back home and hospital Karen produced the wine, and Isia turned up, and so another evening started. I was so tired that I couldn't stay up all that long, but I ~~was~~ <sup>was</sup> still around when ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup> women were let out of Orange Gate. They hadn't been charged and had gone quite a long way inside before being caught. They had had the usual fun and games in the prefab where they were taken, ~~and~~ <sup>and</sup> as usual I think the cops were only too glad to be rid of them.

Big Liz's car has been decorated. Apart from a huge web and a witch on a broomstick and a poem, Orange women have been doing selfportraits, in characteristic poses. I did myself standing on my head with a bottle beside me!

This morning I've been sitting here next to the car while Penni drew a lovely picture of Sian with Tim lying on her stomach, then one of me typing. The police are everywhere and the Royal Irish Rangers are back in action inside the base. The sun is shining, and women are everywhere, more and more. The police have been trying to count us, and apart from their chopper, an army one is now overhead. They are all quite certain a big action will take place tomorrow, but we don't seem to have heard about it this side of the fence. Last night when Sheriden was inside the police kept asking her about actions, so she told them that the big action was going to happen at 6am this morning. I don't know whether they believed her.

We had a bit of fun with them this morning. St. Albans Anne decided to put her tent up where the benders used to be along the fence, so a few of us went to help. The police waited until the tent was up, then came and asked us to take it down. I counted and there were 18 police lurking in our area. That is known as overkill. We kept them talking and arguing while we smoked our cigarettes, then they started pulling out the pegs and getting quite cross, so we took it away and put it up somewhere else.

Time for coffee and lunch now I think.

### 29th and 30th

I'm back home now and my interruptions are different. The phone, the cat, and rushing in and out to deal with the washing on the line in a day of heavy showers. In my mind I'm still back at Orange and yesterday afternoon ~~went and~~ returned a load of Hil's possessions to her and we sat and talked for hours. Like me, she can't wait to get back there again. We were both pretty tired, but a bit of sleep gets rid of that. We can't get rid of the memories and experiences nearly so easily.

I stayed round the main camp area and my car <sup>on Saturday</sup> until Christine and Ellie arrived. They were amazed at the number of women there, so I took them on a tour round to see the rest of the population round Orange. Then we had a coffee with free-food people, collected some things for them from their house, and decided that we would have an early drink at the Rockaby. Juley joined us as she wanted to be



dropped at Red Gate, but in the end stayed with us. The Rockaby so early in the evening was not its usual self and had more locals rather than Greenham women there, but gradually it became more normal. We didn't stay late as we knew at 8 there was going to be a big gathering at Orange. This time I was sure I wouldn't be able to drive ~~thexx~~ down the road, so took the back way up shit pit lane. There were thousands of women around. ~~When~~<sup>When</sup> we first got there, they were just singing, then they sat silently ~~humming~~<sup>the humming</sup>. There was a bit of a noise down the road, and soldiers inside started forming up and moving to where the noise was, so all the women cheered, then moved in towards the fence. There was banging and yelling and feelings and mood changed. Anything might happen. I saw Reading Anne and Sally both looking very apprehensive as not only women could get hurt, but there were children around and dogs, and the tension was rising. The trouble is that women come to Greenham for a big demo and they want to do something. They are so used to the usual life style of being organised and told what to do that they look for leaders, and the residents don't want hierarchy but neither do they want ~~violence~~<sup>violence</sup>. The fence pulling ~~is~~ gives a great feeling of power, and we all know that after only a few moments it rocks and is loose. But the posts are heavy concrete, and there is barbed wire on the top of the fence. Pushed or pulled over, people can be badly hurt, and the police and soldiers are frightened and lash out indiscriminately. Cutting the wire with bolt cutters may take longer but it isn't dangerous.

I wasn't as scared as other residents about the feelings. I had done a bit of banging myself on the big skip with a stone, but realised this banging made the ~~tension~~ worse, so stopped and stood quietly. Slowly the noise stopped and women came back from the fence a little, then starting singing Greenham songs again. We were really relieved to ~~hear~~ hear them, and I told Sally I thought this would happen but the ~~feelings~~<sup>emotions</sup> would go in waves and the fence shaking would start again, then die down. Anne said she felt it would be a good idea to try and disperse everyone by 9 o'clock, so went round and suggested it to various groups. I should say that all this took place just round the gate, but up and down the road, groups of women were doing their own things, some cutting, some shaking and banging, but the main crowd were in agreement, and at 9 they drifted off to their tents and all was quiet.

Odd shouts and songs round the fence went on for hours, but it was not so frenetic. I heard that there was going to be another big action at 4am, but when the time came I was tucked up in my sleeping bag and the rain was beating down. I'll have other opportunities to go inside the base, and I don't feel for me an action when the place is so crowded is right.



We went back to the fire, had a drink and found to our amazement there was still some food in the wok, so shared it out. One of the women left her little boy Joseph with us, and I sat him between my legs where he played with a candle and a stick for over an hour quite happily, having been rather ~~xxxxx~~ scared at first. By about 10.30 we decided it was time for bed. The little tent next to mine has been empty all week, so Christine put her sleeping bag in there. Some time during the night I was aware of voices near my head and the owner of the tent, Mary, had come back. There was just room for the two of them, but they did get a bit wet, as a real storm got up with lashing rain. I couldn't be bothered to get up and fasten the piece of polythene I'd put over the door of my tent in place, but kept my feet well away from the entrance and we only had a small puddle inside by the morning, which didn't really worry us.

I got up quite early ~~in the morning~~ (about 9.30) as I wanted to make a couple of phone calls. Once again the receiver had been ripped out of the local box and I went on to Brimpton. Making phone calls in that area has been a nightmare for us all. Actually a few evenings previously I had the most expensive call of my life. The first box was full and would only take reverse charge calls which I didn't want to do. The second, just in Thatcham was vandalised, the third swallowed 10p pieces then went dead. The fourth was occupied for ages and when eventually I got through, there was no reply, so I went to the off-licence, bought a bottle of scotch, took it back to Orange and it was drunk in about 5 minutes!

By the time I got back for breakfast, the coaches were arriving. and by midday you could hardly move. Donations were flooding in and we set up a big box of food for miners wives and children. We are rather rightened that the bailiffs will be really heavy this week, so it is no good keeping more than can be coped with during evictions. Some of the home made food was fabulous. There was one chocolate cake given one day just as the TV crew for CBS in America was about to ~~xxxx~~ have an interview with Sally and American Liz so ~~that~~ <sup>it</sup> will be shown to the American audience as well as the women. At times it is really hard to keep a straight face. Sometime on Sunday when every two minutes the residents were being asked some question, a nice woman came up to me ~~xxxxx~~ with <sup>it</sup> a carrier bag. She explained she thought we might find the things she had brought would be useful, which they will be, then pulled out some cut pieces of string which she said could be tied round individual candles and hung from the women's waists during eviction time! I managed not to catch anyone's eye at this, but in some ways I wish she, and others, could see the mayhem with bailiffs striding round, pulling hidden items from the bushes, women pulling them back from their hands claiming them as personal property, the



pram overflowing with pots, pans, dishes and cutlery, and the desperation and scurrying around. Tying candles on to belts is about the last thing we would have time to do, however brilliant idea it might seem to someone who has obviously never experienced an eviction. A lot of money donated has been spent on essentials, like new tyres for the brown van, and giving women some dole money which they haven't had for weeks. I'm not sure how much I took in cash and cheques during the ten days and kept in my locked car, but it was quite a few hundred pounds. We are so short of money, this really will help for a few weeks. Also we had blankets, clothes and a tarpaulin, all of which are needed now the weather is getting colder. Benders ~~hidden~~ in the bushes will need to be carefully hidden from prying eyes. Someone offered a tent, and I found Isia and told her, as hers had been one of those slashed by vigilantes some weeks ago. The replacement is identical to the destroyed one.

Orange Gate hairstyles are really good. Anne cut mine and one or two others early on in the week, then Listy set about most of the heads around. Juliey, we discover actually has ears, and Jan's long hair is now fashionably short on top, although still long round the sides and back. Some have naturally spikey hair and those with fine hair had gel put on to make it stick up. The policewon't recognise us next time they arrest us. *De hope!*

Its been very interesting how new affinity groups have set themselves up. Hil, Hilary, Liz, Sheridan, Jan, Helen, Maureen, Big Liz and a few more have formed a close group, and will meet up there again for more actions and companionship. I am more in tune with the original Orange Gate women, but we won't be the same soon as Ruth is returning to Australia any day now, and in a couple of weeks Sally is going back to America, although I'm certain she will be back perhaps next year. American Liz is also going back at Christmas time, *+ moranda in the new year to NZ.* We will really miss these strong women. I know that others will come and be strong, but in some ways we all came ~~xxxxxx~~ to Orange at more or less the same time and have a deep understanding and love for each other. Goodbyes are really sad with such good and true friends.

Perhaps for me one of the best things about ~~these~~ ten days was meeting friends again. On Sunday, just for the day, Marizon and Ann-the-vicar's-wife came, plus Dot, Kay and others from Wales. Charmian *her daughter* had had a ~~xxxxx~~ <sup>strange</sup> experience a couple of days earlier when she was cutting the fence, was spotted, chased, then rugby tackled by a policeman, and then she got an asthma attack. The cop was really worried, got help, stayed with her in the ambulance and refused to have her arrested, just sat and held her hand. until he was sure she was all right. She said she thought the experience of this would make him a more thoughtful man.



During all this activity Reading Anne and I were trying to continue our work on the oven. Anne had put the drums in place over the fire hole near the main fire behind the wood pile, and we then set about mixing cement and sealing it in position. At one point Anne went off to help start a car, and Val helped, then I did a bit on my own. When the cement is hard, the whole oven will be disguised with soil over the top and as the oven door is facing away from the fire, we hope that the bailiffs won't notice it. The only thing that will be really visible is the chimney, made out of two tin cans. It should work, and I've asked that I'm kept informed as to its viability.

I also left work on the oven when I heard that a young woman had been knocked down by a police horse and had a suspected fractured skull. This took place on the road near Southampton Village. There were a lot of concerned women around, and a couple were haranguing three mounted policeman, including, I believe, the one who had knocked the woman down with his horse at a canter. I was glad to see that Di was there helping and going in the ambulance with the woman. I left her to deal with things, and just gave her some money for phone calls etc. She had the woman's back pack, as she appeared to be on her own and was foreign. She looked very pale and unhappy as she was lifted into the ambulance. I hope she <sup>is</sup> ~~was~~ all right.

The police have been a very mixed bunch. Personally I have been treated well by them, but whether this is because of my grey hairs and middle class accent, I don't know. Without doubt there has been some violence, and in Britain ~~wixxoutxxdxxk~~ if you are punk, or black or don't fit the respectability image, treatment is worse. Sad and wrong, but this is a fact of life.

It was time to say goodbyes. My gear <sup>was</sup> ~~wixx~~ in the car, plus a load of Ellie's, Christine's, Hil's, Hilary and Liz's and I was taking Ellie and Christine back to London. My passengers wanted to leave at 6, so I gave myself an hour to ~~sayxx~~ go round the camp area. Some of the women were still dressed up and had painted faces, like Liz from Wales and Juley but the ones I ~~may~~ never see again like Ruth and Sally, were quiet and subdued and took some finding. All day they had been saying farewells to women, and although I felt like having a good cry, I knew it would make it harder for us all. Everyone wished me well in my new life as a student at Sussex, and masses of women said that they would be back at Orange Gate for the weekend of 3rd, 4th November when we would have a party for all those in court on the 5th. I'm just wondering if I can keep away until then.



5th October 84

I decided some time ago that the 10 million women for 10 days would be the end of my journal for the year at <sup>Orange Gate,</sup> Greenham Common. Well its over, finished, and now I must try and sum up my feelings about these last twelve months. It won't stop me writing more in the future, but this is somehow <sup>the</sup> an end of an ~~era~~. <sup>era</sup>.

Oddly enough it ends as it starts with the inevitability of changing relationships. When I went to Orange Gate a year ago I was in a state of personal crisis and unhappiness, trying to regain something which was irretrevably lost. I knew this, and also that there is no going back in life. Whatever mistakes have been made, whether they are our own faults, or not, we must go on. The women, my friends, gave me this help, through their love and companionship. I became one of them, a Greenham woman. I was accepted, welcomed, wanted, needed, and our differences of age, background, country of origin in some cases, were unimportant. I was me, a woman, Ginette. <sup>Each time</sup> ~~When~~ I arrived I was always scared at that last bend in the road, ~~that~~ they wouldn't be there, or they would be strangers, but never have I been disappointed. <sup>Always</sup> ~~Each time~~ it was a coming home ceremony, not just to catch up on news of what had been happening, but a warmth and giving of pleasure on both sides. I'm certain at times they must get sick to death of me talking too much, too loudly, standing on my head, particularly when drunk, and being obstreperous generally, but I <sup>am</sup> ~~was~~ always welcomed.

I have learnt so much from these women. How to live in a commune, be strong, <sup>share, give</sup> wash in a cupful of water, sleep outside in rain and frost, question authority on its stupidity, hate hierachy, to hug and show affection, naturally and without embarrassment, not be afraid of what others think if I don't <sup>believe the time is right for me</sup> ~~feel I want~~ to do something when others do, shit in a shit pit, and also dig one, to support and trust those with me however hard the circumstances. Also <sup>we</sup> ~~have~~ a hell of a good time!

I take it as a real compliment when I'm told that although most of these women are young enough to be my daughters, <sup>I'm no older than them in my</sup> ~~we are all equal.~~ <sup>Young women</sup> ~~although many of them~~ wish their mothers had fought for their freedom the way I have and want me to meet ~~them~~ and persuade ~~them~~ that anything is possible. We advise each other on problems and teenagers and sixty year olds have just as much to offer. I think with <sup>hope</sup> ~~my~~ ~~association with them~~ we have learnt from each other. ~~I hope so.~~

Of course I get on with some of the women better than I do with others, but the fact of living in harsh conditions gives us a <sup>mutual</sup> ~~mutual~~ respect <sup>for each other</sup>. Some may be better at washing up and others braver in times of adversity. There are verbal slanging matches, but its better to have



differences out in the open, although this ~~personally~~ is something that personally I am very bad at doing. There may be tears, shouting, but it usually ends with the antagonists hugging each other.

The main brickbats hurled at Greenham woman ~~is~~<sup>are</sup> about the lesbianism and that no men are allowed there, and that because of this family lives are broken up. First, it is women's space. ~~Th~~ We all know that if men are there, just living or being involved in actions, the whole concept of the place <sup>would</sup> change. We feel safe there without men. I think that if they did live there without doubt there would be hierarchy and roles to play, and during actions, violence would inevitably creep in however careful we all tried to be. Violence among women is much more likely to be verbal and tearful, rather than physical, although during big demonstrations when the fence is pulled, there is a feeling of violence and power which is not usually around <sup>there as frequently</sup>. If a woman is roughly treated by the police, women will yell both at the policeman, and in support of the woman, but ~~they~~ will not use ~~their~~ fists or boots. I think most men would if pushed far enough. Next lesbianism and home breaking. Yes, many of the women are lesbians, but there are also many heterosexuals. We are all just women, so what? It is far more the thought that we can manage at Greenham without men that worries many men. We have learned to be strong and self-sufficient and help each other, and close relationships are often formed. Some women become lesbians when they have lived there for a while, but I think this is because away from a place like Greenham it is hard to admit to ~~any~~<sup>being</sup> 'different' feelings or put a label on oneself. Here there is no normal or abnormal, ~~label~~. We are here because we want to be, and if a friendship develops into love, it is expressed without fear or ridicule. It's all very natural and simple and beautiful. As in the outside world, some relationships last and are permanent, others transitory. Sometimes women get hurt but this is ~~the~~ real world and changes happen, however hard ~~this~~<sup>it</sup> may be. But, the overall help and understanding and talking it all through <sup>with women</sup> ~~xxx~~ does help to relieve the pain of a lost love. Many women come <sup>here</sup> because they have already acknowledged that they are lesbians and are freer to express themselves with like-minded women. I think that the 'broken homes' syndrome which is often bandied about would have happened whether the individual woman had or hadn't come to Greenham. It might be accelerated because there is space and time to sort problems and feelings out, but what will be, ~~will be~~<sup>is inevitable</sup>.

I originally came to Greenham on a CND ticket. I still believe completely and utterly that nuclear missiles are the most distasteful things the world has ever devised, but after a year of actions and living with women in peace and harmony, I think we can change the world,   
 & make it beautiful.