

Jenny Engledow

So the first thing I wanted to really ask you is how it started. So how you got involved in the peace movement?

Oh, gosh, I started in the peace movement. And I went on a CND march in South London in Bromley, right when I was about 16. And then I would go on marches they were only small marches with sort of a few dozen people. And then in Croydon, where I actually lived, I went on a few demonstrations there and so on. And then, of course, there was the Vietnam War with the threats and the appalling things that were going on. And I went up to the demonstrations there. So I've been involved in the peace movement. Certainly, since I was 16.

Right. Okay. How old were you when you went to Greenham then?

I think it was about 84, isn't it? So? I was. I was born in 49. So I was 30.. I was 35.

Right. Okay. And so what was it that made you go? What was the sort of trigger?

Again, um, I had a bit of a spell when I didn't, wasn't active in in the peace movement, because I had children. And by, by 84, my children were teenagers. And I was able to start being active again. And I went up to the ring around the base in the December. And I just thought I have to go back. And just partly because it's women. There's something completely different about working with women only. And I wanted to experience that that purposefulness that I felt on that day of going up and running around the base kind of thing.

Yeah. And that was what started it then, the embrace the base?

The embrace the base. Yes. I it encouraged me to go back and, you know, get on with being active.

And and so how long were you there for?

Well, what I used to do, because I was self employed at that time, and I had these two children, well teenagers. And it meant leaving them for a few days, which was fine, because I was with Paul, and he was looking after him. They're not his children. But I was aware of that, you know, sort of didn't want to encroach on his generosity. Yeah. I mean, but yeah, I went up. It was a very snowy winter. And I love snow. And I thought, well, I'd be quite happy camping out in the snow. So I went up, some relatives that stayed over Christmas. And they gave me a lift up because they were passing. So I went up with my sleeping bag and stayed in a huge bender thing that had been made tarpaulin, really. And, and from that moment on, I thought, well, I have to come up regularly. And again, I know that it was clear that there were a lot

of women at weekends, because obviously women weren't. At that time, often women weren't working at weekends. But as I was self employed, I could go up when it suited me. So I would go up, usually during the week, and I'd stay for three or four nights. And I was a driver. So it meant that although initially I didn't have a car, it meant that I could drive the van. So if the bailiffs were coming around, I could drive it off site. And so on.

That first winter then, what was it? Can you remember? What was it specifically that made you just think I'm coming back, I have to come back?

Well, it was all it was very much obviously to do with the missiles and the lunacy, absolute lunacy of having the missiles here. And making Britain a target, but the whole the whole nuclear industry, weapons industry being such a complete nonsense. And a shocking thing, I mean, I can remember there was a in Namibia where they used to get the uranium the conditions the workers lived under, was so appalling. We tried to there's a lot of work going on around not only following the the movements of what what the military were doing, but also to do with the, you know, the getting of the raw materials and the transportation, and the docks, and so on. I mean, there are so many areas where you could have a major accident, and the whole whole industry, all of it, it was so corrupt. And that made obviously and I also wanted to support the women because I felt like they did you know that it was time this all stopped. And how dare they threaten humankind.

So, it must've been women only by the time you arrived in 84?

Yeah, so, um, I think it was 84 I'm sure I'm not very good on dates.

That's okay.

You know, you just do things.

It was very, very established by 84 wasn't it?

Yeah. Yeah, it was when they did the ring around the base, the circle of the base, and I can't remember what year.

Now that's a little bit earlier than 84.

Okay, in that case, I was already.

Yeah. But I think the decision the decision to be women only was what it was much earlier. Yeah, it was shortly after it started I think.

Yeah, it was it was women only when I went there. But that encirclement. I'm sure. We could look it up where when they circled when we encircled the base that maybe it was about 82.

I think he was 82. Yeah.

It was from then I started going and I went regularly always.

Did you live there? Or did you

No I, I would be there for about four days at a time. And I went every month, I just did four days a month might not sound a lot, but you're trying to get your life. You know, you're trying. Occasionally I would go up if they knew the convoy was going out. I would get a phone call and go up. But it's it's not a very easy journey from here.

Oh you were in Brighton?

I was in Brighton then, yeah. And it's, you know, it's quite common. You go to London, or you go to Newbury and you catch a bus or walk with all your stuff. You know, I mean, it's almost a day to get there. And almost a day to get back.

You mentioned that your husband was there, doing his part in it?

No, no, no. He looked after my sons, which was he was very supportive. But and he would give me lifts up there. What I mentioned was that when camp started, there was a camp in Brighton.

Yes.

On the level. And we were there for we were there for about four months, I think it was because then it would be Easter, because we were there sort of January to April or May or April or something. Because then when it was going to be Easter there would be the fair there, funfair. And where it was difficult enough being there in the middle of the town, because there were endless when the when the pubs and clubs when the pubs closed, we got lots of people coming up with mostly abusive verbally. And then when the clubs tipped out, you then got those people coming along and so on. So it was quite It was a difficult place to stay. And I stayed down there.

Were there incidences of physical violence there?

Um, not that I can recall.

And it was women only there at Brighton?

It was women only. Yeah, yeah. Yeah. But it was it was quite a hard place to be in the middle of town. Funnily enough, in some ways, it was very, it was different from Greenham, because Greenham, there were the MOD around who were mostly very unhelpful. But here, there we were on our own, sort of, which was fine, but it was just, there were some pretty unpleasant people. Sort of very angry.

Yeah. Yeah. And when you went to Greenham did you? Did you have to make sacrifices to allow yourself that four day stint once a month? Or was it manageable in your in your life?

It was manageable in my life, it was sometimes it was complicated, trying to sort of balance things out. But I, I very much liked going there. I found it fascinating. On a personal level that is sort of recreate yourself. And I know it never occurred to me that that would happen. But because you arrived there, you know, nobody. And you, then you sort of people say what do you do and so on and you, you kind of recreate recreate yourself, which is a very interesting process, because normally you sort of evolve in your friendships and your work and so on. It sort of flows, whereas this was sort of an abrupt start, which was quite nice. In a way.

Yeah, kind of liberating.

Yes, yes.

Yeah. And what what gate were you at?

I was at yellow gate. Up until well, most of you possibly know, there were some difficult time. Yes. When there was when it became very difficult, I went round to orange gate. Sometimes, obviously, but all the gates if they didn't have enough women.

Okay. To keep them safe?

Safe. Yeah. But I will

So that was a real concern?

Yes, it was. Yeah, even less than that. We wouldn't never have less than two less than, well, preferably less than three but less than two. Because as the years went by, the numbers were less.

And what was the particular threat that was of concern then?

Safe from the attentions of the American forces as well as the because a lot of the people in the area work there. There was not there was also the Americans lived outside the base. And obviously,

And there were some incidents were there, there must have been reported incidents in order for people to not feel

There were - Well, there was one very serious incident. And it's unclear as to who or what the two women one of them is my friend who died, who lived

recently. She, she and another woman were away from the road, they'd set up a camp round and green at, I don't know where they called it was round by the silos. And there was just the two of them. And the lights went out one night, and then suddenly, some men came and beat them up very badly.

Gosh. Yeah.

And have you heard about this?

I think I have. Yeah. I don't know the name, unfortunately. But

I know both their names.

Yeah.

But they that was shocking. profoundly shocking. And

The was some press coverage of that wasn't there?

There was yes, there was a bit of press coverage. Yeah. And I don't, you know, obviously, I don't know who who was responsible. But that was that was terrible thing to happen. I mean, we peacefully and the lights went out. That's very suspicious.

Oh right. Okay. Yeah. And the antithesis of nonviolent direct actions instead, of course, yeah. Yeah. So you so you were at yellow gate, in what years 82 to?

To, whenever it was that there was this sort of the division. When, when things got difficult, and the gates kind of separated? And I can't remember what year that was.

I think it was around 84/85, wasn't it?

Oh, I think. Well, my impression was It was later than that.

Oh, okay.

I can't remember. Sorry. Yeah, yeah, you don't log these things. It's just life happening.

No, no, no, that's fine. So is that when you decided to sort of

That was when I when. Some of the women obviously, remain round at yellow gate. And some of us went off to different gates and said, Let's, let's back off, you know, to get that we don't want to be getting into conflict. And there's no point in that. So we went around to orange gate. And then finally, orange gate. There weren't enough. Really, women really. And the gate was permanently locked. So we went round to blue gate.

What was your, what was your sort of experience of the conflict at yellow gate and your sort of view of why it happened?

Well, I, I don't know. There was a lot of sort of chat about what might have caused it. It did coincide. Whether it was caused by or not, I don't know, a woman who came over and was she was saying, saying, basically that the camp was a racist group of women. And that was very difficult. There weren't many there were nearly all white women, very nearly all white women. Now at that time, I think black women, if they were involved in any sort of political activity, was largely to do with their race, trying to get sort of, you know, trying to address those issues. And you can't, I don't know you can't make people go to camp, you can. I mean, it was very difficult. I will appreciate that we all have racisms in us, and often, I mean, goodness what's happening with the Labour Party at the moment. You know, it's hard to you don't definitely recognise it in yourself. And, you know, there was all that sort of conversation going on. But it was very, it became quite bitter. And I can remember there was one time when we were all gathered into circle and I'd been away and so I'd arrived back at camp and this was going on, and I didn't know what it was about. Really, I mean it was sort of, I didn't know what was going on. But it was, it was an unpleasant, very unpleasant experience, really, because these friendships that we've formed, you rely on each other so much. In all manner of ways. Even just simply, like, if it's nighttime, you need to go for a pee and you go in the bushes, you want, you want to know that somebody is, somebody knows you're there, you know. So even those sort of little things, as well as friendships and so on. So it was it, it was very damaging. And sad to see longtime friendships being broken, it sort of healed, it sort of healed. I mean, in fact, my friend who lived in Worthing, she remained a yellow gate, but it got it got it to get very bitter. And she had a very sad sort of time there. And after a while, she came round to orange gate and, and stay with us, and it was all fine. It was fine with her, you know, she sort of recovered from her. Her sadness.

Yeah. And was the what was the relationship like, between the women at the different gates? Was there much interaction?

There was, there wasn't a huge amount of interaction, we would sometimes go off to see a go, let's go in an evening, let's go round to see, blah, blah, gate, and we'd all go round there, or some people would go round there, or even walk around the base, I remember walking around the base. But because there weren't many of us, you kind of needed to stay at your gate in a way. But there was and obviously, it was pre mobile phones. So that made it complicated. I mean, when we, when we thought there was a convoy, you know, had to mostly get in one of the vehicles and drive around and tell the other gates, because there was no other way of doing it. But it was, yes, I'm in communication. It was good fun. We might go around to another gate. And you'd all have, you know, more cups of tea, or maybe even a bit of wine.

Was orange living at orange gate, very different from living at yellow gate then?

Yes, because yellow gate was the main gate. And obviously you had throughout the day, there was a constant stream, pretty much of people going into the base, you know, the MOD and the American forces and so on. And sometimes that lead to abuse, and sometimes they just went in, and we all ignored each other and got on with our lives. It was it was I'm under the impression it was targeted a lot more in all sorts of ways of, you know, because like, for example, when the convoy was going out, it usually well it sometimes when from obligates but usually the activity you see the truck with the flares that was going down to Salisbury or wherever it was they were going to have their actions, and that we did go out during the day. And so we we usually sort of hiding along the road somewhere so we could follow and go and let people further down the line know so people on the on the road would actually be out there. But it was so it was quite different, I think living at yellow gate, but I did certainly at orange gate. That gate was never open, hardly ever opened. So there wasn't the sort of stream of people going in. So it was more sort of guarding the gate in a sense.

And um, just going back to this idea of women only space. What would your opinion be on why that decision was taken? And how, how important did you feel that was and why did you feel it was important?

I think it was a women, as I mentioned earlier, there was the camp on the level. Now my partner Paul came down, he took me down to one time because I had a load of wood and stuff, food and things to take down there. He was dropping me off. And he stopped he stopped for a cup of tea. And very briefly it was I forget what time of day it was. But I think I think it was sort of dusk or something. And he was not going to stay obviously. And some young men came up and were being very verbally abusive. And Paul found it very, quite hard to sort of not want to defend, verbally defend, what, defend us and we will and I was saying You need to go. It's all right. You know where we're fine. He said, Yeah, he could see that, obviously, I think when there are men there, the testosterone if you like, gets more jiggered. And I think there's more potential for violence and, and aggression, and even verbal aggression was verbal aggression, probably because it's hard to say. But I think also women had a very clear way of not wanting to engage in, you know, it's sort of always trying to lower the, the anger and keep keep things to a minimum. I remember one lovely incident at Aldermaston because after, when, when Greenham closed and we started going for a long time, we would go to both. But there was one time at Aldermaston, there were a lot of women that must have been one of the big days. And some men came out and in the peculiar way that they do, they drop their trousers and pants and wave their bums at us, which is kind of a weird thing that they think is an insult to us. And what we did was, we surrounded them and started walking. So they had to walk, but they couldn't pull their trousers up. So we walked them to sort of about a couple of 100 yards. And we were singing and we just sort of walked them. There were a lot of us surrounding them. And they couldn't pull their trousers up, they

were shuffling along. It was so funny. And I thought that was actually such a brilliant way of dealing with dealing with their anger. Yeah, and dealing with our, our, how we feel about or felt about what was going on.

Yeah.

You know, it was very funny.

What were your, sort of brings us on to NVDA really, what what were your experiences of it and your perhaps your contribution or your engagement with it?

Um, oh, well be I didn't like being carried by the police. But it happened a few times, you know, when it's the blockading, I remember we blockaded, there was a few Fridays, when the there were tanks that went along the main road. And this is again, this is you know, because it was yellow gate, it was right by main road. So there was that sort of the military tooing and froing. Anyway. And they, we knew they were coming along, we've seen a few and we could see one coming. And we just had time to go out and sit in front of the tank. That was scary, because he can't see you, or at least you think he can't see you. And we sat there, we knew how long it would take. Because that was outside the MOD jurisdiction. We knew that Thames Valley would come and remove us. And we so we knew it would take about 20 minutes. So we sat there for about 18 minutes, and then got up and moved. So we weren't manhandled that time. But you know, it was those sorts of actions that were going into the base as well. You know, sort of being some, some funny actions and some serious actions. You know, they were,

What were your memories of those?

Oh, there were some very funny ones. I can remember, we people often use the local people would drop off their old furniture for us. And not that we always needed it. But a settee was dropped off in a cardboard box and a lamp or maybe we made the lamp. Anyway we made a hole in the gate in the fence. This was at blue gate. We took the settee in and we turned the box into a television. And we were sitting there watching EastEnders or I don't know what it was like I can't remember now pretending not to see when the MOD came up. You know, oh, can't we watch the end of you know, EastEnders, we want to know what happens, you know, whinging and whining as though we're like children being told to go to bed. And it was it was just very funny sort of turning the camp into our living room. Just rather nice. Another time, oh, we all went in. I think everybody went in from all the gates pretty much. It was. Again, there are a lot of women there. And there was some one porter cabin that was full and the other port cabin was full, because we'd all been arrested and taken there. And we were all waving and so on and the group, there was a one group that I was with at one time they I think it was that same occasion. We had, we were playing football with a can and the they were getting very cross with us. Sit down, sit down, stop kicking. And we're obviously ignoring them. And several women had chalk and were writing on

the walls, and they were getting very cross about that. And they get a piece of chalk and think that'll stop them. But of course somebody else had a piece of chalk. And it was it. It was just very funny sometimes. And there's one of the photographs there that your colleague is looking at the we broke into the base. And we were pretending that we were schooled from from public school. And we, we've been down to the town and got clothes to dress up in from the charity shops. And when we were arrested, we would we were pretending to do ballet. Now bearing in mind, we had sort of big boots on cos, and all those layers because it was cold, and sort of skirts on on top as though we were ballet dancers. And there was a mirror and there was a rail. That's right. And we were sort of pretending to do ballet dancing, and it was an absolute.

So you were arrested, then?

Oh, yeah.

Were you arrested a few times?

Yeah. In fact, very early on. I was very angry. I felt I felt incredibly angry. And I sort of went off for a walk by myself, and just started making a hole in the fence. And of course, they were there within seconds. And that was the first time. Yeah. And that was that was the first time I was arrested.

Could you talk about that experience? Or?

Yes.

Sort of how it played out?

Yeah, it was. Obviously they took me inside the base and into a porter cabin. That was quite near yellow gate. And I could hear it was very weird, because I could hear the women talking. But like on a on a radio thing. It wasn't. Right. Yes. And we will know. We don't know really what was going on. But we wonder whether there was some sort of thing that they were picking up what we were saying. And after that we were very careful, because we decided that it was because sometimes we would make plans to go break in, and they'd be there when we got there. So I think that was actually what was going on. They were listening to us somehow. But it was very nerve wracking because I'd never been arrested before. I was self employed. It didn't mean I would impact on my job or anything like that. Feeling a feeling of powerlessness, because you can't leave, you know, they've locked you in.

Right, so they locked you in a porter cabin, did they? Yeah.

Yeah, it was sort of

For how long?

I can't remember now. I think I was there a couple of hours. I can't remember. And just no comment when they interview. Just No comment. No comment, no comment. You know, were you by yourself? No comment. I mean, they know I was by myself. Did they put you up to this or that sort of thing. I just tried to sort of, you know, get you to say whatever they can. So you just sort of no comment the whole time, really?

Were you briefed to say that by the other women then?

I'm not sure that I was actually. I think I already knew that. I can't really remember.

So what happened then then after you've been arrested?

I was charged. And I went to court and defended myself. And I was fined. In fact, I paid that fine. I know women, later on. I didn't pay fines, but I paid that one. Because I was quite traumatized. Because it was the first time.

How long did the whole process take then for you to be

To go to court? I can't remember, it was a couple of months. I really can't remember. So did you just go back to I went back to the camp, when they released me after a couple of hours after the processed me they let me go and I stay. And I just sort of stayed in the camp. And of course, when somebody has been arrested women, they were really protective and you know, sort of helpful, you know, because you're, you are quite traumatized. Because you you know, I'd had this sort of middle class upbringing, if you like, and it's not something that had happened. I'd been told off by the police before but never arrested and

Interrogated?

Interrogated. Yeah, yeah.

What was it like being in court and defending yourself?

Nerve racking, but I was determined to do it. And I said a little speech. We never think that's enough. That's enough. You know, we sort of carry on you know, about why I did it and so on.

Was the fine a significant amount of money. Was it difficult to pay or?

It wasn't a huge amount. No, no.

What did they charge you with?

Well, I, they found me cutting the fence. I think it was criminal damage to the fence.

And why did they not because obviously, some women were sentenced for that, weren't they?

It well, usually you go through a process once you've been in court, and they fined you, if you don't pay your fine, then you go to prison for non payment of fine. And I was arrested on subsequent occasions. And, and each time you know, when I went to court, I thought they might send me down this time, but because we were fighting, the the fighting the legality of the base, and so on, and legality of the trespass charges. It was it was in it in sort of suspended animation if you like, yeah, so I never I never got sent down. In some ways I'd like to have been, I thought about it. After that first time, I thought about it a lot about how women in prison for not not that sort of crime, how they would feel about people like me, and like my friends that can and how they would feel about you know, you've chosen to come in and he must be mad. You know, it's just sort of how they would actually feel, how they would relate how I would relate to them. So when I sort of was determined that I wouldn't pay another fine. But I never got to go to prison. It was quite weird really.

So did you. You must have felt absences when the women were in prison, though, Yeah, when friends went?

Yeah. Yeah. I mean, mostly they were only in prison for a few days, there were a couple of women who were sent down for longer periods. There was one woman. One woman in particular, I remember who was sent down. I think she served about six months, because she'd she was charged and found guilty of damaging an airplane. aShe'd gone in and done some work on an airplane.

Do you have a criminal record now then?

Yes, yeah. I think it's probably lapsed, if such things happen.

Yeah. How did that have an impact on your work? So what is your job?

Well, after I because I was self employed. And then I, I got bored of being self employed. And I decided to work I worked with learning disabled adults in the local council, in day services, and I had to tell them about my criminal record. And I didn't know if I'd get the job. But they said that didn't really matter. They weren't worried at all about that. It would be it would have been if I've been involved with drugs or or anything like that, you know, some theft or something. But because it was just,

Peace campaigning.

Peace campaigning, yeah. Cutting holes in fences. Very strange. In fact, recently, I was volunteering to help at something down in the town. And they

said, it was it was the questionnaire, Do you have you got a criminal record? So yes, occasionally, you have to bring it up.

It's had quite a big impact on some women.

Yeah.

On their lives and work hasn't it?

Yes. Yeah.

And obviously with women who are European nationals, and a Brexit now it's proving really hard.

Right.

Yeah, because of criminal records and their right to be in the country is under threat. Yeah, so it's quite

Yeah, yeah. Oh God, that whole Brexit thing.

Yeah.

I remember, we had a holiday in America, we were going to stay with some friends. And I didn't know if they let me in. I remember standing in the queue in the airport thing in America thinking they're going to put me straight back on a plane. But that's terrible about women. You know, just busy trying to save the human race.

And so, we have, we've had quite a lot of stories of and read quite a lot about violence at camp from like authorities. A number of different sources actually and also women coming away from sexual violence in their own relationships and using Greenham to escape that kind of thing. Yeah. Did you know much about any, were there any, did you witness any aside from the one you've talked about it? What, did you witness any violence? Or did you witness any events where women were subjected to assaults and things?

I can remember seeing quite a lot of violence from the MOD and I can remember one MOD saying to us, we can do whatever we like to you.

Right.

Which was one of the most horrifying things I heard actually. Because, you know, he was saying nobody cares. And it's true, it was in the dark, it was sort of in a, you know, in the middle of Berkshire, you know, that was, that was pretty horrifying to be told that by, by a policeman, oh you're meant to trust them aren't you. But I know that there were women some there were some women who were quite troubled women who came, and we did

everything we could to look after them. Women with mental health problems sometimes and very often, women who had experienced domestic violence and so on. And abusive relationships. And and it was a, it was a place of safety in some senses like that. Yeah. Because, you know, women wanted to support each other very definitely. Yes. Yes. And there were relationships. I mean, in terms of sort of relationships between women, I mean, sometimes, like, with any family, or group of people, there are times when it's not smooth. You know, there are times when things are difficult, you're under great pressure, you may be cold, some of that quite a lot of the time or on, you know, you can't wash you can't, you can't do most of the normal things in life, you're sort of you're camping, and camping is weird, anyway, in a way, isn't it living under such conditions. You can't just pop to the shops because you're four or five miles from the nearest shop. So there was a lot of complexities in that way. And I think I think it was quite hard for it was a hard place to live. And, of course, then you've got in your menstrual cycle, women feeling unwell and all that can lead to. There were family there were people in the town in Newbury, a couple of particularly one family where where you could where they looked after women, if you were physically unwell, you could go and stay at this woman's house. There was some support from the town. There was some horrible stuff in the town.

Yeah, I was gonna ask you about relationships with residents, local residents and things.

Yeah, some of them were. Well, obviously, they worked in the base. And so they were against our stance, so to speak. And some of some of them were were amazing. I mean, just they must have put up with so much, because their neighbors would have known all these grubby women were arriving. And they were great. They were they stood by us. There was a woman used to come up on her little moped, she came up practically every day, as far as I remember. She was amazing. So there was the, there was also the hot food run. And that was from because in the winter months, you can't cook your last meal at 3:30 in the afternoon, when you're out outside all the time. Yeah, you get hungry. So hot food used to be brought by various groups who'd take it in turns, on a sort of rota, and they would come over with hot food. And some of them were local-ish. And some and some were from quite a long way away. So yeah, so we got real mixed as you can imagine.

And what was some of the negative experiences then, did you witness any of those from residents?

From residents? Well, I remember people shouting mostly, mostly, they would shout things like you filthy lesbians, right, which was sort of like, Okay, you try camping and keep clean. It was just stupid. Why don't you get a job? Why don't you get a real job? Those sorts of comments which were nothing really.

And yet, if you do get a job, then it's get back in the kitchen.

Yes, yes!

There's no winning.

No, that's right. Oh, God, it was. It was bizarre. It was sometimes completely bizarre. Yes, the local residents it was more likely to be verbal, but apart from I can remember when we were at Aldermaston again one time. Some people drove their van right through between our tents. And there was a woman in a tent and they caught the end of the tent. And we thought, oh my god, but she was alright. We didn't go over her but that was horrifying.

We were you aware of the death of Helen Thomas?

Yes. Yes. A van caught her, didn't it? Yes. Or a lorry? Yeah, I wasn't. I wasn't up there, when that happened. But yes, I didn't really know Helen Thomas. I mean, there were a lot of women who came and went regularly, some, many of them. I mean, there were, there were women who came down from Manchester, quite often in a van, a van full of women. And van full of women from London and various parts of London, and so on. I didn't know Helen Thomas. I don't know much about that. I mean, I know that she, she died. I

I suppose if you weren't there, you wouldn't have felt the fallout from that, would you?

No, no, that's true.

Yeah. Yeah. And what was the just looking at the sort of day to day running of the camp when you were there? And what about things like medical treatment and things like that? Like, when people got sick? What did you do?

Well, they used to get if they needed to, sort of not be at camp because they were that sick, then they would go. If they didn't go home, weren't able to get home, they would go and stay with this, this woman Lynette we'd go and stay at Lynette's, and she would look after them and so on, doctors I don't know, I'm not really aware of. Certainly, I'm not really aware of women needing to see a doctor. But you have the right to see a

Obviously there was Sarah Green who gave birth there as well. Were you there then?

No, I wasn't.

No. Yes, that would have happened earlier wouldn't it. Yeah.

Yes, that was right at the beginning I think wasn't it?

Yeah, yeah. And And what about the day to day running of the camp, presumably you all had jobs and ways of, because we're quite interested in the fact that you

were sort of working more on a lateral way of working rather than standard hierarchies.

Yeah, no, we didn't have hierarchies.

You didn't vote for things either did you either?

No, we would always discuss things. I mean, that was another thing that was great about it was the discussions that you had about about it, anything and everything kind of thing. But yeah, we the day to day running, I mean, you know, if you could see that you needed stuff then somebody would get down to the town somehow or another walk or catch the bus, or drive or cycle or whatever.

So what how did you kind of like manage the loos, now I suppose you dug shit pits.

Dug shit pits, yes. Water was

The fire and the water you were drinking.

I was using. Yeah, I was a great one for always wanting there to be water and wood. And I used to warm myself up, I would sort of go off wooding. You know, go finding wood. That was more when we were at Blue gate I remember doing that a lot actually. And orange gate, no blue gate particularly. And then at water, we we had a standpipe thing. And we used to lift up the metal cast iron, cover and attach our tap and water I was always concerned that we had enough water because you get through quite a bit, but you can't save a lot.

Did you boil it? And then

Yeah, because we always had a fire. So we'd always boil the water for tea.

Where did you get that water from?

Well the standpipe we had it we had this big tub, big white plastic tubs, incredibly heavy when they're full. So people brought those to you or we got them. We always had two or three, or at each gate almost most of the time, at any rate. Now at blue gate there we used to have to go we went to a church to get the, we had a shopping trolley, and we put the water but things in the shopping trolley water containers and go and fill them up by church. It was incredibly heavy and unwieldy and you had to have two of you so you could try and bring it back without it tripping over and so yes, water was was always something that you needed to sort of be aware of.

And what kind of with the shit pits and everything they were far away from there?

Not very far away. They were far enough you wouldn't be heard, which is why you generally made you generally made sure that somebody knew you'd gone Yeah. So if you didn't come back after a bit they knew.

And did you just dig it just covered it over the soil, did you?

Yes, we dug a, dug a

Just thinking about the hygiene of it and how that was managed?

Yeah no, yeah no, we dug a pit. And then when that pit was perceived to be fully full and used, we put the soil back on. But the pit was probably probably about two foot deep by 18 inches two foot. So it was sort of deep enough to actually be hygienic be hygienic. Yeah, yeah. And then the next one would be further away. And we'd sort of try and find a place where there were bushes around so that you could have a bit of privacy.

Did you have any problems with like wildlife and things like that?

Rats?

Yeah.

Now, I didn't mind the rats because I know some times people got a bit. Well, no, I don't recall there being a lot I but I can recall seeing them I mean, you know, they obviously knew that we had food. I mean, if I was a rat I'd have gone to us but so we had to make sure that food was always in tins and or in containers that were hopefully rat proof. Yeah, you know, so that Yeah, that was a

What kind of food did you eat then?

It was all, what did we eat, we had we would make stews, sort of stewie things a lot. Most very nearly always meat free. Though there was one woman who lived in a van, who has since died. Carol she, she liked to come out at night. She, she, needed a lot of protecting in a way. She came out at night and would cook up her in her own little pan. She'd cook her meat her bacon, whatever it was, I don't know. And she slept most of the day. She sort of slept in the van. So she was sort of tucked away. Yeah, like a Dormouse. But most yes a lot, a lot of sort of stewie things and fried things sometimes, you know. Yeah,

Yeah. Where most people were vegetarian were they?

Yeah, yeah. Yes. Yes. I mean, there was cheese. And so on, you know, quite a lot of sort of sandwiches. I remember my friend Hazel from Worthing used to make coleslaw sandwiches. I used to, at one point I had a car and I used to drive us up there. I'd go along, pick her up, and then we'd go on up. And she

always made all these coleslaw sandwiches, British bread rolls, which were just wonderful. We'd live off those for a couple of days. Yes, the food. You know, I mean, we had fruit as well. I mean, we'd we'd have as much as healthy a diet as we could.

Yeah, yeah. And in terms of children at the camp. How did that all work and their education and, and with your own children? Obviously, they were a bit older were they so they?

Yeah, two boys. They didn't ever come up.

No. Did you want them? Oh, they couldn't really could they?

Not really. Because they were, they were sort of 14 and 16 I think. Yeah. And they, but yes, there were a few children. That it was very rare for there to be many children. I mean, they'd go there for the big days you know, when when there'd be sort of, you know, sort of event going on? I remember one woman who you might have come across Di? Have you met Di?

Di, I've heard of Di. I think someone else has interview Di. Yeah.

Oh, right. Yeah, well Di. She had triplets. She had other children. And then she had triplets. Right. And her children would be there sometimes. But very rarely. Yeah. It wasn't. It wouldn't be the place that I would think of as being a good space for children because because of, you know, the verbal abuse and so on. And the unpredictability I mean, mostly it was fairly predictable what was going on but it could be unpredictable.

Well the bailiffs would just turn up?

Oh, and they were horrible. The bailiffs were disgraceful people. And they'd come with the police because they had to have the police there. But they'd take anything and everything they can lay their hands on. They were shocking. There must have really been they must have really hated us.

Yeah.

You know, I to take from people who've got nothing to we've only had sleeping bags,

You know, ingenuity to set up a life outside as well and then just kind of break it down. Yeah.

Incredible.

Were they aggressive with you.

They didn't I I never witnessed any physical aggression. I mean, they were verbally verbally horrible. But you know when the camps at Cali with the refugees, I mean, I I can only guess what it's like there too. I mean, I know. They've got, they're quite organised, they've got kitchens and, and so on. But, you know that sort of the negativity from the local people from some of the local people because some of them are supportive. Now it's it was a very strange environment to be and so it was not somewhere I would take a child for long.

Did though, your boys must have been aware that you were

Oh, they were.

Yeah. So did you talk to them about it?

Yeah, in fact the first time I was arrested, the police came to my house, apparently, and my son, my eldest son opened the door and they said, Are you, you know, Jack? And he said, Yes. Are you the son of or something. Does Jennifer Engledow live here? He said yes. And they said, you know, he said that I'd been arrested. And my son was really pleased and really proud of it! Which is quite sweet. Yeah, no.

They understood.

They did. Yeah. Yeah.

And did they? Do you feel that they had an awareness of the threat of nuclear as well?

Yeah. I think so. Because all their lives they'd been, you know, yes. I mean, I had taken them on demonstrations when they were younger, not when or when they were babies. I remember going on the on women's right to choose marches to choose abortion or not. They came on those demonstrations with me, but no they were aware of they were very aware of the need to get rid of nuclear weapons.

Yes. Are they quite politicised now then? Are they quite active?

Quite, they're not hugely active. One of them is a lecturer in university in Sydney, Australia. And he's, he's very interested in lots of political stuff. But he's, he's not hugely active in it specifically. My other son is in Devon. And he works with children with behavioural problems. And he's he's not politically active, like by and large, but he's interested.

Yeah.

Yeah.

So it had an impact on them?

Oh, yes. Yeah.

Yeah, yeah. Um I just wanted to chat briefly about art actually. Cos there was so much outpouring of craft and art. And all that kind of thing. Did, did you do much of that when you were there?

I, I well. I started making banners. And I made some of the banners. There's one that they still use. A friend of mine, Judith, who's actually coming to stay next week, she and I made together. And they still use that up at Aldermaston and

Oh right. What did it say? Do you remember?

No, I can't I can remember. We made two halves, we made a half each and we put them together. And the half she made had a huge kettle on a fire. And my half had a man in the radiation suit. And with dark, it was all dark. Yeah. I still make banners. I've got some banners upstairs.

What would you put on your banner today?

If it was about Greenham or Aldermaston?

About anything? What would be your if you had one banner?

Shall I go and get one and show you?

Yeah, Yeah, that'd be lovely. Yeah.

So are these the ones you're making today, then?

These are current ones. I haven't got any of the old.

No, that's okay. We're interested in what Greenham woman would say today. Do you know what I mean what your, what your campaigns are today, what you'd put on a banner.

Okay. Well, this is a recent one, when they designed it with a friend and I did the sewing. We started off the campaign against the arms trade. Sorry, I'm not quite big enough to.

The most, the most corrupt of the circles. UK sells arms.

So far, I guess I see both sides.

Brighton and Hove against the arms trade. Yeah.

Yeah,

I like making banners. I like sewing banners.

It's amazing. Yeah, we'll have to get some pictures of you with that.

That's actually a recent one. And because I'm active in Women's International League for Peace and Freedom. Yeah. I am the branch secretary. We did last year we had a big

International Day of the Elimination of Violence Against Women. Yeah. And do you do Reclaim the Night and things?

No, that has happened here, but I. We mark a lot of days in WILs here we have right. Conscientious Objectors day we usually do something and the fourth of June which is the International Day for to end Violence Against Children or something like that, and here we are it says it here

A special day for child victims of war fourth of June. Yes.

We have a store down in the town talk with people about child victims of war in terms of them being forced to be soldiers. Yeah.

Yeah.

The, what else? What other days? Hiroshima day we always have. Yeah. And we have, there are various stalls. And this one when it was our 100th anniversary, I made this banner.

Is that the suffrage colours?

It is. we had a. We had an exhibition

Oh wow! Gorgeous. Oh, that's beautiful. Oh, that's beautiful.

Oh, thank you. We had an exhibition down in the town. We've done it twice. Now. The first the first exhibition was in 1915. No, it wasn't it was in 2015. [laughter] I got that wrong. We, we had, it was about our history WILs history. And then last year, we had one because it was the end of the First World War. And we had one about what what happens a lot of a lot to with with what's happened since Yeah, you know, and now, our current work. So

I'd love to get some photos of you with those. They're brilliant.

There's another one here, I can't remember which date this one is. This is

Fourth of August 1914. The slaughter of, sorry, I can't, the slaughter began, stop war, change militarism.

Yeah. So we we sort of do, oh yeah, this one's painted. Because sometimes I think I must make a banner and I just quickly painted one. And I've made them for the women's equality party. Yeah.

Yeah. Yes. They're great aren't they? I'll have to get some pictures.

So I started making banners when I was at Greenham. And I've carried it on. And whenever I see a demonstration, encampment, like the Occupy and all those. I, you look to see what it's about. And it's the banners that tell you.

Yeah, yeah.

So yeah.

And how, how well, do you feel like Greenham is represented today? Like, how well do you feel? How much do you feel people know about it?

I'm, it's interesting, because it's a generational thing. Obviously, the I mean, you're, you're young, and it's interesting that you know about it. Whereas obviously, you weren't even born when it was going on. I imagine.

I was born in 79.

Okay, you were little. And obviously, you know, like, we have stools, like we always have International Women's Day, we had a stall all day Saturday down in the dome, in Brighton. And it's interesting, because a lot of the young women have never heard of it. And yeah, you know, because they closed it down and took the weapons to sea, because the way I see it is that our campaign, in some senses was very successful in that way that they, we harassed them so much that they they gave up and said Okay, we'll take them to sea. Now that's obviously a disadvantage in a way because we can't very easily, I mean, obviously, there's Faslane, we can't really sort of do a great deal about that. Yeah, except obviously, there's still also the Aldermaston peace camp where they make the weapon. So obviously, there's still the opportunity to sort of demonstrate our resistance to their weapons. But

Why do you, why do you think the younger generations don't know about Greenham?

It's not taught, I suspect? Yeah, I mean, I don't know. Obviously, I'm not in the schools. But

Does that make you angry? That that huge because it's huge. It's one of the largest campaigns in European history, isn't it?

It was wasn't it , it's interesting, because at the time, you just get on with it. And since then, I've realised that it was a big campaign. And I'm very pleased

I'm very happy to have been part of it. I think I was very lucky to have been, very lucky. Because it's such an opportunity to find out what you're capable of. And I mean, because I didn't know I had no idea what I would be capable of didn't occur to me. You just defend yourself in court. Yeah, yeah. Apparently I talked very quietly in court. And I said, Oh, no. And my friend said, but that's good. Because he really had to be quiet and listen to you. Which I hadn't thought of. Wasn't deliberate. It was just sort of, you know,

Your own way of harnessing power as well though, isn't it?

Yes. Yeah. I mean, it's, it's, it's quite frightening because you're in a different world, of your liberty can be taken from you. And there's nothing quite like losing your liberty, to bring home but you're actually

Do you feel like people who do know about Greenham? How do you feel? Not the women that were there who really know about it? But like outsiders? How do you feel that they represent it in culture? And do you struggle with the way people represent it?

Oh, sorry, what was it? How it's represented and whether I think it's getting a fair representation now. It's my impression that they that because it's a I think now the people like yourself, sort of being interested in it, and so on. And I went up to the LSE recently in the exhibition and the entrance. Yeah, library. Yeah. And I think that that's very interesting, because it's obviously, you know, something that they are recognising what went on, there is nothing like the attention to it, that there should be in a way.

No.

Yeah, does that answer your?

Yeah, that does. Yeah, I just think it's, I don't know, it feels very much that it was such a campaign rooted in women and women only space that it doesn't feel coincidental to me that it's not taught or kept in the history books. And it's just been kind of really censored from educational systems.

Yes. Yes. I mean, it's interesting that for a long time, we didn't, we didn't really hear much about the suffrage movement. You know, when I was a child, we weren't really taught about the suffrage movement. And it's only in the last few years. Because it's come up to the centenary and so on. I think that's the that's why that's become more in the press, if you like. Yeah. But it's interesting. I, I think you're right. I'm sure it's because it's a women only if, you know, I mean, the press can choose, can't they, they direct very much the direct what people are thinking, in a sense, yeah. And now, of course, it's even worse, really the way I see it with the internet. It's sort of one of those things that, you know, the Facebook and so on the interference from Cambridge analytical and all that kind of thing. It's frightening because they can wipe out.

Yes. Change culture can't they.

Yeah.

Um, in terms of the press that you've received, we're obviously there was some really upsetting press that that actually targeted individual women as well didn't it. A lot of the presses. Was there anything? Do you? What was your experience, like reading through that kind of, did you? How did you cope with it? Because it was hard to get positive press at the time I think wasn't it?

Oh, it was. I can I can remember at the beginning when they when they would be on the news or on television, when there would be cases, women go to court. And there would be hundreds of women at the court, dozens and dozens of women at the court. And they'll be interviewed by some of the top journalists of the day. And then gradually over the years, it was ignored it got more and more ignored. And I'm sure it was deliberate. I mean, I wasn't it. Names gone. The Ministry of Defense chat with the Hazeltine. You know that some of the comments that were made by politicians sort of were disgraceful.

Well, Thatcher

It made me very angry.

I believe ordered shoot to kill orders, didn't she?

Yeah, yeah. Oh, yeah. I can remember one time when I, when a couple of us went into the base, and we thought we wouldn't go to the site, get to the silos because none of us wanted to be shot. Yeah. But we were invisible. It's amazing how invisible you can be in the dark and they think because people when you're driving, you look down the headlights of your car. And so the road the Land Rovers were going round and round and their vehicles are going round and round. And every time they came near us, we would just dive into the ditch cover your head, you know, because so there's no, no lightness there. And we got rather a long way, we got to the point where we're thinking, actually, we don't actually want to go into where the silos are, because you know, what the result will be. And obviously, we were found and, you know, but that was quite strange, because you knew that they would shoot you to kill. I remember a daylight action when one of the airplanes came in with with the exchange, and the weapons they used to do that in daylight. And we all cut holes and ran in from all different directions. And I was stopped by an American with a machine gun. I don't know, I'm not up on my weapons. And he was pointing it at my head. And he said, he said something about stop there. You're in my backyard. And like I said, I said, I thought I was in Berkshire in England. But you know, they're so jumpy. You know, once again, absolutely.

That's scary, isn't it? A jumpy person with a machine gun?

Exactly. You know that you've got to be in control of this person's emotions. Yeah. You know, that's when I really NVDA. Yeah, is really important, because you've really got to use your sort of negotiating skills in a way.

Did you do training in NVDA? because there was a workshop?

I think I did one. Yeah.

Do you remember much about it or

Not a lot.

No, no.

But that was, you know, that was very important that you know that you didn't get too jumpy. You didn't? You know, these guys are, they're are you ready? Are you ready? You know, the military? That's what they do, don't they? They keep? Are you ready? To the you know. You know, the top to the lower sort of military that the whole point is that they've got to be ready to defend. So they see it defend their country kind of thing, or that bit of land that they're renting from us. And so the whole time, they're sort of hyped up. And, obviously, because the airplane had come in with the weapon with the bombs to be exchanged, and so on. I mean, they're really hyped up, and completely untrustworthy, because they're just, you just don't know quite what they're going to do. So you really do have to sort of talk them down. Yeah, you know, it's okay. I'm not gonna do anything. You know.

And what, what was, did you have any experience with the zapping and things like that?

I'm not, I was never sure about that. I do remember getting there was one time I can remember several of us had headaches. Yeah. And you just didn't know. You just don't know. Because, you know, sometimes there's the power of suggestion, but I did wake up with a headache. And there was I can remember there was on a car, it was a frosty day. And halfway down, there was this sort of line all the way along, where it wasn't frosty, which was very bizarre.

Right.

So it was only because it's early laser day was not, I can remember another time actually going off. In in the, in the dark, it was near blue gate. And I went off and had a pee, and I could see them in the base aiming at me, and I read and that was at the beginning of when they got their night vision. Night vision cameras, and that was just, you know, you just think God, you can't even go for a pee without these idiots. Intrusive, very intrusive.

That was that just a few people getting the night vision or was that like a kind of government issue to help them?

It was the Americans. It was an American patrol car inside the base.

Okay, so it was kind of issued as a strategy to cope with you, kind of thing. Yeah, yeah.

Yeah. They try things out on us. You know, always in warfare, don't they? They try I mean, the first few nuclear bombs in Japan. They were trying them out really. Yeah. You know, I,

What did you think about because there was some investigations done around the idea that some cancers had been caused, women or women at Greenham and had some obscure cancers and there was some investigations done about whether or not that had been caused deliberately by radiation leaks, and

I think it's quite probable. Yeah, I think it's quite, you know, it is quite probable that they would have tried anything out.

Because there was there was definitely problems at Aldermaston with children's leukaemia, wasn't there?

Yes. In the surrounding area. Yeah. Yeah. And I can remember we we produced a leaflet and put it through lots and lots of doors. Yeah. Yeah.

Did that worry you at the time then that possibility? I mean, how aware were you?

I know, I was aware of that. I, I suppose I sort of thought, well, I just hoped that personally I'd be alright. And that everybody would be right. But you know, I think they were. I mean, it's the places and Aldermaston's a very leaky sort of place. There's sort of steam coming up all over the place, and sorts of, you know, very dodgy looking pipes and sort of rusty. Yeah. And so it doesn't wouldn't surprise me in the slightest bit if there are leaks that never get reported. Yeah. So no, I mean, I must admit I, I was aware of that. But I suppose from my point of view, I was beyond, I didn't want any more children. So there was, it wasn't like I was pregnant or likely to be pregnant, which would be very concerning if you're in an area where there might be some sort of leakage like that. Yeah. Again, that's another reason that I wouldn't I would have felt concern about having a child there for long.

Yeah. Actually, that just reminds me, did you ever feel like when you were sort of being arrested, and when you were there, did you feel this conflict between your children and your sort of role as a mother and your role as a peace campaigner? And

Yes, I it. It was a balancing act. I mean, Paul was amazing. I mean, given that is not their dad. And he was, he was quite happy to look after them. But I

didn't want to take advantage of that too much, because it didn't seem fair. I also had, that my mother was she was alive then for a long time after then, actually. So I had family sort of commitments and so on. And also because I was self employed, I needed to be working. I needed to be self employed. And I needed to be producing. I was sewing clothes at home at that point. Yeah. Because it enabled me to be home to look after, after children, though, by then they were, you know, older. But the other it was, it was kind of a strange thing, really, because it was it was always up to me to choose. But I, so I want you to sort of keep the balance of home life and, and life at camp.

But did you worry that?

When I was at Camp when you were back when I was in camp, I thought about home. When I was at home I worried about camp.

Yeah. Yeah. But did you worry like if you if you went to prison, the impact on the children? Or was it I suppose as they were quite short sentences, weren't they?

Yeah, they were days usually. Yeah, yes. I didn't do anything that would have given me a sentence for months. Yeah. Yes, no, I, I wasn't worried about that. If I'd gone to prison, I wouldn't have worried about my children, or what would happen at home.

Yeah. And so how does your fear of nuclear weapons then, compare to your fear of it now?

That's an interesting question. I think now, in some ways, there's far more risk around or there's probably far more risk around in a way because I think Trump and you know, America, North Korea, China, Pakistan, India, Britain, you know, there's so much opportunity if you like, for things to go wrong, accidentally, let alone warfare and at the moment, we seem to be the world seems to be in such a state of in terms of politics of, of aggression, ready to jump and ready to fight at the drop of a hat and that's which I think is incredibly dangerous. I mean, they've already used uranium weapons haven't they with disastrous effects on on women and children, because women, women's bodies react differently to the radiation anyways, you probably know that it's, it's really a much worse effect on women, particularly of childbearing age if they're caught up in any sort of nuclear radiation problem. So now I think then I was over, then I was worried about how I would protect my children. Well, I can't possibly protect my children now because they're not even nearby. But that was that was a large motivating factor. I, I can remember when my kids were little, when we when I started getting involved with, in as I say, I had a period of about five or six years when I hardly did anything, but and then when I moved down to Brighton, they were seven and five. And initially, the schools that could accept them were in different sites. And I thought there's no way I could have my children on different sites. If, if I needed to collect. I just had this feeling that if if there was a five minute

warning, 10 Minute Warning, I want to get to one school not two. And I know it sounds mad.

It was much more intense than it is now. I feel like we're almost apathetic to it now.

I think. Yes. Kind of. Yeah. Yes, I think people, I think a lot of people thought that when, when Thatcher and Reagan came up, you know, removed land based missiles. I think people thought that was the end of the nuclear age that there were no more no more nuclear weapons. Now, it's a phenomenal growth isn't it.

Yeah, yeah. Now, that's where most of our tax bill goes, isn't it?

Yes.

And in terms of the techniques, I suppose that you were using at Greenham, do you think that they have other political movements today? Do you think they've learned from those and taking them on?

Yes, I think so.

Which ones do you think?

Well, I think the permanent they're having the permanent camp, as we had at Greenham I think that was because it meant we were constantly a thorn in their side. Right. And I think that which means that they can't deny things, you know, sort of it's been witnessed. I mean, we mark the whole one of the points of Greenham was that every time there was a convoy that went off down to play their war games, we marked that convoy, or we saw that convoy, and we watched that convoy. And that I, you know, I think that's a very important thing. I think if, you know, it's like now who knows what's going to happen next. But if there was another camp, I would, I would be, and I don't go to Aldermaston. I do a lot of stuff locally, because I think it's important, very important to have local things keep shows that the general public can't say they didn't know. It's like, for example, in Brighton there's an Arms Factory EDO, now owned by Harris Core, which is a, an American company. And they make release mechanisms for bombs. And it's expanding, which is why campaign Campaign against the Arms Trade, or some of us, we we're all in campaign against the trade, but we're calling ourselves Brighton Against the Arms Trade, because we don't want to ever have to have meetings and take minutes and things we sort of it's very ad hoc thing. We've had a lot of, we showed a film twice last year made by some people about a book that was written on the arms trade, which is horrifying, so corrupt, you wouldn't believe it, I had no idea quite how corrupt it was. And so from that, with last couple of weeks ago, campaign against Brighton against the arms trade, we had a demonstration out at the factory. Now, there used to be demonstrations out there regularly, which had gone got to the point where when they were in court, they actually won their round in the end, but not and then it sort of

went into abeyance. And so now we had this demonstration, I didn't go to that. What I did was I was part of running a stall down in the town on the same day. Because most people don't most people in Brighton didn't know that there was a Arms Factory here.

I didn't actually and I know Brighton quite well.

Yeah, yeah. So we we have this because I think having a presence down in the town is very important. And obviously Greenham we had a presence but it wasn't in the local. The local people were aware of us in Newbury, but I mean, it's just somehow I think everywhere, every town needs to have active people to, to keep it on the boil.

What would what would you say that the impact of Greenham was? Like, do you mean, do you think it was impactful?

Yes. Yeah, I think it was, I think it was very impactful in a lot of ways. I think the courts had to rethink their position some things. The police, I mean, you know, the one I mentioned to you who said, we can do whatever we like to you. It confronted some of them. I remember one woman, Jean, who's also died a few years ago now, because, you know, some of those is quite a while back. So, I mean, I'm 70. And some of them were in their 70s ish when we were there. So I, but she, one of her nephews was in the police. And he, he was there one time when the convoy was going out. And she said, shame on you, to her nephew. So I think the police that were involved, the MOD, I think they were having to, I mean, it must be very interesting to talk to them, and find out what they felt and what they think now Yeah, in a way to find out what they thought about that. And these women, the they're like the age of my sister, or my mother or my auntie, or my grandma, even

What do you what would you want younger generations to feel about Greenham? What would you want them to take from it?

That we that we were very determined to stay till those land based missiles went. But that wasn't the end of the story, that we're still that we've, many of us have gone off and done other things to do with peace, or that kind of thing, counselling, all sorts of things. That's interesting. I, I want them to know that some of the troops as well, you know, because I'm sure there's a lot of there's very little information out there. And what is I suspect isn't always true. So it would be I think it would be an important lesson in schools. Yeah, you know, that, the power that you can change things. And always I come back in my mind thinking, the women who wanted to get the vote, they went through hell to get the vote for us over a period of about 40 years, actually. And they got it. They got it for all sorts of reasons. And it might be because they're, you know, because the Tories wanted to win in the in the election just after the First World War. It might be because they thought that women would vote conservative. It might be all sorts of reasons why, but they got it. So you can change things. And I think the fact that there aren't land based missiles here

is because of because of what we did, because we were there. It wasn't just the camp, there was also the like the nuke watch, you know that where they would take where the missiles were taken.

How long did you stay there for then? When did you leave the camp?

When it closed down.

2000, You were right there until 2000?

Yeah, I think so.

Four days every month for that entire?

No, because then when I started working, being employed rather than self employed, I started being employed in 1990. But I used to go up at weekend. I used to go up on the weekend of Aldermaston so we would go to Aldermaston and to Greenham and then Greenham closed. And I was still going up there. I only stopped going up there. I don't know how long ago, probably not long after 2000 probably about 2004 or five I can't really

The camp officially closed in 2000.

Yeah. But Aldermaston carried on.

Oh, to Aldermaston. Sorry, I was confused. Right.

Yeah.

Yeah. And and what was, what was your personal legacy from it, do you think? What was the thing that you learned most from that period?

I suppose I learnt about human behaviour. I learnt about how you have to manage other people's emotions like this, this American with his gun at my head. And like this policeman who say I can do what I like to you. You're nothing. But I learned a lot about myself and what I can do,

And the power of the individual person.

Yeah, and the power and the power of collective action. Women together, the power of women. I think that's one of the most important things is the power of women. I mean that that moment when we watch those men, those young men of who waving their bums at us. It was very humorous, but very powerful. Not a finger was laid on them, not a word of not a word of disrespect or abuse or anything, just singing and walking them away was an extraordinary way of handling that. The, the, you know, the the truth of nonviolent direct action is so powerful and women sitting and singing at the gate and being carried away it's you know, it's it's such it's such a powerful

way of behaving in a rather than getting angry and shouting and so on. It's because once you get angry back, it escalates. So keeping it under control, keeping it with humour, using humour or using singing. I mean, the power of singing is very good.

Yeah.

It's, it's so sort of,

Do you remember all the songs?

No, I had a book and I was looking for it. I can't find it.

There's a big Greenham songbook isn't there?

Yes, there was. Yeah.

Lovely. Thank you so much, Jenny. Was there anything else you wanted to add to any of that? Anything we've missed out?

Gosh, I can't remember. The value of friendships up there. The value of friendships with women. And the trust you build up?

Yeah.

Is hugely valuable.