

Trident Ploughshares (TP) was weakened by old age and Covid, and felt under capacity to organise a summer disarmament camp but there had not been one at Peaton Wood for 5 years. The usual protest activity had stopped. But this was the year and the month that the first CoP of the TPNW was to be held in Vienna and the war in Ukraine had suddenly brought the threat of nuclear war unimaginably close and high up on the political agenda. People were being scared back into the old false thinking that nuclear deterrence was necessary and could work. It was time to protest once more in Scotland; time to ensure that Scotland, at least, would not go back on its anti-nuclear promises; time to encourage the UK Government to join the TPNW process. Co-incidentally, it was the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Faslane Peace Camp on 12<sup>th</sup> June.

Extinction Rebellion Peace (XR Peace) still had ownership of a large CND symbol on a trailer that had been used to make the links between the existential crises of nuclear catastrophe, climate change and biodiversity loss. It was time to use it again and to plan for joint actions including both XR Peace and TP. So, Rowland and Angie with the help of Kim, planned a route from Bristol to Coulport and Faslane Action for the Bomb Ban (FABB) was born.

The camp was to be set up at Peaton Wood, only a half mile or so from the main gate of the nuclear warhead storage base at Coulport. The wood (a beautiful remnant of ancient oak woodland) is owned and managed by a group of women and Angie is one of the Trustees. It has been used by TP for over 20 years.



*This iconic logo was designed by Dagmar and used during the journey and FABB Camp*

Local anti-nuclear and climate activists gathered in Bristol on the morning of the 6<sup>th</sup> June to see the van and CND Symbol start its long journey north. It travelled to Knighton on the 7<sup>th</sup> June where a crowd of around 30 local people urged the UK to sign and ratify the TPNW and waved off the 4 activists (Rowland, Tanya, Kim and Angie) on the next leg of their journey.



*Cascade steps Bristol 6June2022*



*Knighton Community Centre 7June2022*

They stopped at Oswestry for a quick meeting with supporters and arrived at Todmorden in the evening to give the first of their talks. Angie spoke about the necessity of nonviolent civil resistance against nuclear threats and her book 'Activism for Life' and Rowland, as an ex-nuclear physicist, about the links between civil nuclear power and military nuclear weapons.



*Todmorden College after evening talk 7June2022*





Penrith lunch stop 8June2022

The next morning, 8<sup>th</sup> June, they continued to Penrith and Carlisle.

All the stops and overnight stays along the route were organised by generous local CND and XR supporters along with Quakers.

Another talk was given to local people at the Carlisle Friends Meeting House that evening.

Finally at 11.30 am on 9<sup>th</sup> June they arrived safely in Glasgow and parked up outside the Glasgow Friends Meeting House. A large crowd gathered, banners were displayed and music played. Speakers included Lynn Jamieson of Scottish CND amongst others.



Gretna stop with Angie, Kim, Rowland and Alex, 9June2022



Outside Glasgow FMH 9June2022

At around 1 pm those going on to the FABB camp (around 25 people at this stage) went inside for a 6 hour workshop about the FABB camp which also included a chance to explore the meaning and practice of nonviolence. Mary Alice prepared us tea and gradually people dispersed to their respective overnight accommodations. Rowland and Angie proceeded, alone, to Peaton Wood where they started to set up the basic camp site.

More people arrived during the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> June, along with the TP camp equipment, put up their sleeping tents, the communal tents, set up the kitchen, dug a latrine and compost pit, and settled in. Banners and flags were hung, placards planted and the daily morning and evening vigils at Coulport, and some at Faslane too, began.



Banners around the kitchen tent



More banners at FABB camp



Vans and cars plus placards by the roadside

Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> June was the anniversary of the Faslane Peace Camp so most of the camp went to celebrate the steady sustained anti-nuclear protest this represented. The amazing Edinburgh based choir *Protest in Harmony* sang and danced outside the main gate of Faslane with new songs about the TPNW and shameful behaviour of the UK Government. There were more than 50



Choir and Symbol at Gates of Faslane 12June 2022



people present and the CND symbol repeatedly drove around the roundabout and in front of the entrance to the Gates of Hell.

Monday 13<sup>th</sup> June saw the beginning of the more serious nonviolent resistance during the morning vigil at 6.45 am when around 20 activists put up banners. 5 women from the *Greenham Women Are Everywhere* group wandered into the road before the gates into Coulport and poured fake blood over themselves. Penny, Sheila and Margaret from Protest in Harmony excelled themselves with singing songs of empowerment and peace, keeping the atmosphere strong but calm.



5 women with fake blood in a die-in at Coulport gates 13 June 2022



Brian, Willemien and Gillean in lock-on at Coulport 13 June 2022

While the police concentrated on the women 3 TP activists from the *Peace Pirates* group used the opportunity to lock-on to each other and lie in the road. All three were arrested, charged and taken away in police vans to be released later that night on undertakings to return to court.

The Greenham women chose to leave the road without being arrested and had a celebratory hug as they were now free to act again.



5 women stand up and walk free after their die-in 13 June 2022



Greenham Women Are Everywhere start their walk from the camp near Coulport to Faslane 14 June 2022

Back at camp plans were being made for a canoe action and on Tuesday, while some of the Greenham Women took part in a walk from Coulport to Faslane to mark the nuclear convoy route along the MoD road, others got ready to launch their canoes.



Readying the canoes on the beach with 2 police boats watching closely 14 June 2022



Ginny inside the naval base at Coulport 14 June 2022

The 1 double and 4 single canoes set off to see how far they could get and if they could get into the Coulport base by sea to do a nuclear weapons inspection. The MoD police kept telling them to stop as they were not permitted to cross over an invisible line, but they continued, and eventually Ginny broke through the loch corral, canoed away fast and landed on the shore well



inside the Coulport base, got out, raised the peace flag and then evaded the police coming over the rocks to arrest her, and paddled back to join her friends.

The morning and afternoon vigils, timed for when the majority of workers entered and departed the bases continued amidst all the activities. Camp life was hectic but the communal meals enjoyed by all as everyone chipped in taking turns to shop, cook and wash up. We had been given a very generous donation of whole foods from Glasgow's Greencity, who have supported Trident Ploughshares disarmament camps for over 20 years now.



Camp meeting.

The 6<sup>th</sup> day of the FABB camp began as usual with the morning vigil at 7 am at Coulport but at 10 am we were joined by the Glasgow Catholic Workers who usually do a monthly vigil at Faslane. They attached pictures of the bombing of Hiroshima on the roundabout fencing, put up their Nagasaki Cross, and then conducted a very inclusive prayerful religious service. Even the police seemed moved.



Queuing for food at the FABB camp June 2022

Meetings were often held while munching away.



Glasgow Catholic Workers service 15 June 2022



Ali stopped but Gillean sitting down in road at Coulport 15 June 2022

3 women then poured fake blood on themselves and tried to lie in the road. Gillean and Ros succeeded but Ali was caught in the act!



Gillean and Ros in road at Coulport 15 June 2022



Ros arrested in road at Coulport and then taken to a police van 15 June 2022

Ros was eventually hauled away by the police once they had donned their protective white suits. The fake blood was made of syrup and food colouring, so completely harmless.



The last active day of the FABB camp dawned. After intense discussions with the police liaisons over several days we managed to arrange a demonstration at the gates of Coulport to hand over a letter to the base commander of Coulport. Sal handed it in at the gate while Angie read the contents out with a pa speaker system.

The CND symbol was then driven around to Faslane where it was allowed to position itself right in the bell mouth by the main gate.



Angie reading out the letter to the base commander at Coulport 16 June 2022

Here it was Jules who

handed the letter into the hands of an MoD Police Sergeant who came out to receive it. Angie read out the letter once more at Faslane. The demonstration and letters were part of a co-ordinated European wide protest at the refusal of the European nuclear powers (Russia, France and the UK) to engage with the TPNW process and similar letters were being handed in at various embassies in London and in other European countries. The letter spoke of the immense danger we were all in and the real hope that the multilateral TPNW offered the boldest and most realistic hope for progress towards a nuclear free world. It urged the UK to go to Vienna to observe the 1st Conference of the Parties of the TPNW that was to start in Vienna on the 21<sup>st</sup> June.



Jules handing in letter addressed to base commander at gates of Faslane 16 June 2022

The rest of the day was spent leafleting the population of Helensburgh to inform them of why we had brought the CND symbol to their locality and were camping by Coulport and what was happening in Vienna. We were shocked at how many people did not even know about the nuclear convoys, the links between civil and military nuclear technology or the accidents that had already happened and which were causing radioactive clusters.



Leafleting in Helensburgh 16 June 2022

We had a final circle on the 17<sup>th</sup> as most people then left as the tents came down leaving just a very few of us for a final clear up. Jed had arrived just in time to help take down the large gazebos, fill in the various dug trenches and put back the turfs to cover the fire pit. All the rubbish was recycled and the equipment finally left on Saturday the 18<sup>th</sup>.



Final circle on 17 June 2022

We had survived the rain, midges and ticks, found a great deal of local support and new neighbours who will join us in managing the wood for public use. The Thai Buddhists in Helensburgh had been very welcoming and provided much needed support and on Saturday came out to look at the wood that they hope to now use for peaceful meditation.

Maybe their peaceful presence will influence the naval bases and persuade them to put their skills to more productive ends.

Let us all work constructively for peace wherever we are.



Stig's XR Peace banner