

# Catalogue of the Papers of Sarah Meyer relating to Greenham Common Women's Peace Camp

By Helen Roberts, PaxCat Project Archivist

*Reference code: GB 0532 Cwl SMA.*

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## **INTRODUCTION**

This collection of papers is one of the archives collected by Commonweal Library, an independent peace library located in the J.B. Priestley Library of the University of Bradford. These archives are part of the Special Collections at the University of Bradford.

This set of papers, like many of the most significant of the Commonweal archives, was catalogued as part of the PaxCat Project. The Project was funded by the National Cataloguing Grants Programme for Archives and ran from May 2009-May 2010. You can find out more about the Project from the reflective blog kept by Helen Roberts, our Project Archivist.

<http://commonwealarchives.wordpress.com>

Alison Cullingford, Special Collections Librarian.

## **COLLECTION DESCRIPTION**

### **Reference code**

GB 0532 Cwl SMA

### **Title**

Papers of Sarah Meyer relating to Greenham Common Women's Peace Camp

### **Dates**

1982 - 1985

### **Level of description**

Fonds

### **Extent**

0.48 metres

### **Name of creator**

Sarah Meyer; Greenham Common Women's Peace Camp

### **Administrative/ Biographical history**

Sarah Meyer's involvement in the Greenham Common Women's Peace Camp dates from the mass direct action which took place there on 12/13 December 1982. Under the slogan 'Embrace the base on Sunday, close the base on Monday', 30,000 women gathered at Greenham, formed a human chain around the base and decorated the fence. The following day a group of around 2,000 blockaded the gates to the base. Sarah arrived at Greenham as part of a local group, Totnes Women for Peace.

From her home in Salcombe, she acted as the South West contact for a national network of supporters of the Greenham Women. By April 1983, she had become co-ordinator of Greenham Southwest, bringing together almost 50 women's groups in Devon and Cornwall. Supporting vigils and demonstrations were organised in the region to coincide with actions at Greenham and trials of those arrested. A good example of this was International Women's Day for Disarmament on 24 May 1983. Sarah was heavily involved in planning for 55 actions across the South West, including a blockade at Devonport dockyard in Plymouth and a demonstration at Bolt Head nuclear bunker.

Sarah's work was marked by the links which she developed within the women's peace movement, not only in Britain, but also in Germany, Sweden and Hungary. Through involvement in European Nuclear Disarmament (END) and the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF), Sarah travelled around Europe in her 'Greenham rainbow bus' attending conferences, and joining peace camps, marches and demonstrations.

This began in May 1983 when she attended the END Convention in Berlin. In July, she crossed briefly into Eastern Europe to visit a peace camp in Budapest, following up contacts between END and the Hungarian Peace Group for Dialogue. She took

part in two major peace marches, from Dortmund to Brussels, 9 July to 6 August and from Berlin to Geneva, 6 August to 17 September. During the Fast for Life which preceded the march from Berlin, significant links were made with East German peace campaigners. Sarah returned to Berlin in October 1983 to join a human chain along the Berlin Wall. Both of these actions were organised by the Women for Peace group in West Berlin. In January 1984, she was part of a group of women peace activists who travelled to Stockholm for an Alternative Peace Conference. This was planned to coincide with the Stockholm Conference on Confidence and Security Building Measures and Disarmament in Europe. Sarah was arrested whilst taking part in a temporary peace camp set up outside the Stockholm Conference.

Sarah returned to Greenham many times to live at the peace camp and take part in direct action, and was frequently arrested. There is evidence in her correspondence to suggest that she lived at the Main Gate (later Yellow Gate) camp. She recounted in later life one of the most memorable actions, at Hallowe'en 1983, when thousands of women cut through the security fence around the base in protest at the imminent arrival of the first cruise missiles. She was one of hundreds arrested.

Sarah described many of her experiences abroad and at Greenham in articles published in the magazine Women For Life on Earth and in her own 'Rainbow Bus' newsletter. She did not return to live at the camp after the evictions of February 1984.

Sarah worked as a registered homeopath for many years. In retirement she devoted her time to researching foreign policy and defence issues (especially the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq), and on human rights and civil liberties. She began her own blog, Index Research, in 2005, to disseminate her research. She was an active member of the BRussells Tribunal and sat on its advisory committee. This group campaigns against American foreign policy in the Middle East and aims to link resistance movements in the region with western peace movements.

Sarah was married to Karl Meyer for 12 years and together they had three children, Heather, Jonathan and Ernest. She died at her home in Sussex on 3 March 2010.

### ***Immediate source of acquisition***

Donated to the Commonweal Collection by Sarah Meyer.

### ***Scope and content***

This is a small collection which consists of files covering Sarah Meyer's involvement in the Greenham Common Women's Peace Camp during the years 1982 - 1985, and her travels in Europe to attend peace conferences and take part in peace protests over the same period. The files contain a mixture of newsletters, circulars, photographs, correspondence, leaflets, posters, postcards and press cuttings. A great deal of this material was created by women living at the peace camp. The correspondence includes letters addressed to the peace camp collectively.

### ***Appraisal, destruction and scheduling***

A few items transferred to pamphlet collection.

### ***Accruals***

None expected.

### ***System of arrangement***

Arranged in a single chronological sequence, based on the order created by Sarah Meyer.

### ***Access conditions***

Available to researchers, by appointment. Access to archive material is subject to preservation requirements and must also conform to the restrictions of the Data Protection Act and any other appropriate legislation.

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### ***Language of material***

English. Some items in German, Swedish, Italian, and Spanish.

### ***Related units of description***

Archives of Women for Life on Earth, Glamorgan Record Office (GB 0214 DWLE).

Archives of Yellow Gate camp, Greenham Common Women's Peace Camp, The Women's Library (GB 0106 5GCW).

### ***Archivist's note***

Described by Helen Roberts.

### ***Rules or conventions***

ISAD(G) 2nd ed.

### ***Date(s) of description***

May 2010.

## **INDEXING**

### **Persons**

Meyer, Sarah (1937-2010)

### **Corporate Bodies**

Greenham Common Women's Peace Camp

Women for Life on Earth

### **Subjects**

Peace movements – Great Britain – History – 20th century

Nonviolence – Great Britain – History – 20th century

Pacifism – Great Britain – History – 20th century

Nuclear disarmament

## **CWL SMA/1. GREENHAM COMMON, DECEMBER 1982**

### ***Title***

File. Greenham Common, December 1982: Embrace the Base

### ***Date***

November 1982 - January 1983.

### ***Extent***

1 file.

### ***Language***

German.

### ***Scope and content***

Photographs; postcards; leaflets; newsletters and magazines, including Women for Life on Earth; circulars.

## **CWL SMA/2. GREENHAM COMMON, JANUARY 1983**

### ***Title***

File. Greenham Common, January 1983

### ***Date***

January 1983.

### ***Extent***

1 file.

### ***Scope and content***

Postcards; leaflets; newsletters and magazines, including Women for Life on Earth.

## **CWL SMA/3. GREENHAM COMMON, FEBRUARY 1983**

### ***Title***

File. Greenham Common, February 1983

### ***Date***

February 1983.

### ***Extent***

1 file.

### **Scope and content**

Photographs, including Totnes Women for Peace; newsletters and magazines, including Women's Peace Camp and Womyn's Peace Camp Green and Common; circulars; press cuttings; correspondence; minutes of Totnes Women's Peace Group.

## **CWL SMA/4. GREENHAM COMMON, MARCH 1983**

### **Title**

File. Greenham Common, March 1983: Greenham Common Blockade

### **Date**

March 1983.

### **Extent**

1 file.

### **Scope and content**

Circulars; petition form; correspondence; press cuttings; programme and related papers on non violent direct action training; briefings; CND leaflet; photograph of banner, 'Leeds women refuse cruise'; West Yorkshire Peace Newsletter.

## **CWL SMA/5. LA RAGNATELA WOMEN'S PEACE CAMP**

### **Title**

File. La Ragnatela Women's Peace Camp, Comiso, Italy: visit from Greenham women, March 1983

### **Date**

July 1982 - April 1984.

### **Extent**

1 file.

### **Language**

Italian.

### **Scope and content**

END report; stickers; handmade booklet about Hallowe'en blockade; magazines, including Lysistrata; circulars; leaflets; report of events at Comiso, March 1983; press cuttings.

## **CWL SMA/6. GREENHAM COMMON, APRIL 1983**

### ***Title***

File. Greenham Common, April 1983

### ***Date***

April 1983.

### ***Extent***

1 file.

### ***Scope and content***

Postcard; newsletters, including Womyn's Peace Camp Green and Common; circulars; correspondence; leaflets; press cuttings; press release.

## **CWL SMA/7. GREENHAM COMMON, MAY 1983**

### ***Title***

File. Greenham Common, May 1983

### ***Date***

May 1983.

### ***Extent***

1 file.

### ***Scope and content***

Newsletters and magazines, including Womyn's Peace Camp Green and Common and Peace News; circulars; leaflets; statement issued 31 May; posters for A walk for life: Faslane to Greenham Common, and Greenham Rainbow Cruise Bus; photographs of direct action at Allington Farm, report of activities, circulars, factsheet and correspondence, Porton Down Women for Peace and Animal Liberation.

## **CWL SMA/8. INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY FOR DISARMAMENT, 24 MAY 1983**

### ***Title***

File. International Women's Day for Disarmament, 24 May 1983

### ***Date***

May 1983.

### ***Extent***

1 file.

### **Language**

German.

### **Scope and content**

Circulars; stickers; leaflets; press releases; list of members of Greenham Southwest; plans for activities and direct action in Devon and Cornwall; guide to liaising with the media; correspondence; press cuttings; Lysistrata (women's peace magazine).

### **Conditions of access**

Restricted access. Data Protection Act applies.

## **CWL SMA/9. EUROPEAN NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT, BERLIN, MAY 1983**

### **Title**

File. European Nuclear Disarmament convention, Berlin, May 1983

### **Date**

May 1982, May 1983 - January 1984.

### **Extent**

1 file.

### **Language**

German, Spanish, Swedish.

### **Scope and content**

Photographs; reports by Sarah Meyer and Kay Little; conference programmes and manual; conference papers and discussion documents; circulars; leaflets; newsletter, Women in Action; poster, 'Atomfritt Europa'; correspondence; booklet, Nordiska Fredsmotet, Goteborg 15 Maj 1982; END Bulletin; correspondence between World Bike Ride and Women for Life on Earth; circulars and articles by Sarah Meyer and Jennie Kerr, summer-October 1983; report of women's peace camp and direct action at Pine Gap Joint Defence Facility, near Alice Springs, Australia, January 1984.

## **CWL SMA/10. GREENHAM COMMON, JUNE 1983**

### **Title**

File. Greenham Common, June 1983: Dragon Festival

### **Date**

June 1983.

### **Extent**

1 file.

### **Scope and content**

Poster; photograph; postcard; newsletters, including Womyn's Peace Camp Green and Common, Women's Encampment, Women for Life on Earth and Peace News; circulars; leaflets; press cuttings. Also letter and circular from Lakenheath Families Against the Bomb Peace Camp; letter and circular from Puget Sound Women's Peace Camp.

## **CWL SMA/11. PEACE GROUP FOR DIALOGUE, BUDAPEST, JULY 1983**

### **Title**

File. Peace Group for Dialogue, Hungarian Peace Camp, Budapest, 4-6 July 1983 - END Hungary Working Group

### **Date**

July 1983 - June 1984.

### **Extent**

1 file.

### **Language**

Dutch.

### **Scope and content**

Photographs; circulars; correspondence and child's drawings; notes about visit to Hungary and article by Sarah Meyer; magazines, including Women for Life on Earth and END Journal; proposal for social peace service [alternative to military service]; reports of visits to Hungary by END activists, including updates about PGD activities; press cuttings and English translations of extracts from Hungarian newspapers; minutes of END Hungarian Task Group meetings, with papers for discussion.

## **CWL SMA/12. PEACE MARCH DORTMUND TO BRUSSELS**

### **Title**

File. Peace march from Dortmund to Brussels, 9 July - 6 August

### **Date**

July - August 1983.

### **Extent**

1 file.

## **Language**

German.

## **Scope and content**

Photographs; correspondence; leaflets; handbook for marchers; newsletters; songsheet; press cutting; notes of discussions on march to Brussels and article by Sarah Meyer.

## **CWL SMA/13. GREENHAM COMMON, JULY 1983**

### **Title**

File. Greenham Common, July 1983: blockade against Cruise missiles

### **Date**

July 1983.

### **Extent**

1 file.

## **Scope and content**

Correspondence; circulars; information pack; Womyn's Peace Camp Green and Common newsletters; leaflets; poster for Glastonbury Green Gathering; photographs of Upper Heywood Peace Camp; press cuttings.

## **CWL SMA/14. WILPF INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS, GOTHENBURG, 1983**

### **Title**

File. Women's International League for Peace and Freedom international congress, Gothenburg, 31 July - 6 August 1983

### **Date**

July - August 1983.

### **Extent**

1 file.

## **Language**

Swedish.

## **Scope and content**

Photographs; conference programme; postcards; circulars; song lyrics, 'Sing for Freedom and Peace'; leaflets; history of WILPF by Frank Gordon; conference papers

and discussion documents; newsletter; logo design for Kvinnor for fred, Goteborgsgruppen; press cutting.

## **CWL SMA/15. PEACE MARCH BERLIN TO GENEVA**

### ***Title***

File. Peace March from Berlin to Geneva, 6 August - 17 September 1983

### ***Date***

August 1983.

### ***Extent***

1 file.

### ***Language***

German.

### ***Scope and content***

Handbook for marchers; leaflets; photographs; circulars; photocopy drawings of direct action at Soviet Embassy in Geneva; report on Fast for Life, Berlin, 6-12 August; correspondence, including letter from hunger strikers in East Berlin; Martin Niemoeller Haus newsletter; notes of discussion with peace activists from Jena and article by Sarah Meyer; Observer Magazine.

## **CWL SMA/16. GREENHAM COMMON, AUGUST 1983**

### ***Title***

File. Greenham Common, August 1983

### ***Date***

August 1983.

### ***Extent***

1 file.

### ***Scope and content***

Photographs; proposal for direct action; postcards; newsletter; circulars; leaflets; report of meeting between Greenham women and CND; poster for air day at St. Just aerodrome; correspondence.

## **CWL SMA/17. GREENHAM COMMON, SEPTEMBER 1983**

### ***Title***

File. Greenham Common, September 1983: 10 Million Women, 10 Days at Greenham

### ***Date***

September 1983.

### ***Extent***

1 file.

### ***Scope and content***

Leaflets; newsletters and magazines, including Womyn's Peace Camp Green and Common and Lysistrata; circulars; briefings for direct action against cruise missiles; paper on nuclear winter given at British Association for Advancement of Science; appeal for international peace camp in Grebenhain, West Germany.

## **CWL SMA/18. GREENHAM COMMON, OCTOBER 1983**

### ***Title***

File. Greenham Common, October 1983

### ***Date***

October 1983.

### ***Extent***

1 file.

### ***Scope and content***

Photographs; public statement, 29 October; newsletters, including Womyn's Peace Camp Green and Common and Between the Lines; leaflets; circulars; press cuttings.

## **CWL SMA/19. BERLIN, OCTOBER 1983**

### ***Title***

File. Berlin, October 1983: Women for Peace human chain at Berlin Wall

### ***Date***

October 1983.

### ***Extent***

1 file.

### **Language**

German.

### **Scope and content**

Greenham Rainbow Bus newsletters; photographs; text of speech by Sarah Meyer, 15 October; leaflet; liturgy and song booklet for peace march, 16 October; notes about the events.

## **CWL SMA/20. GREENHAM COMMON, NOVEMBER 1983**

### **Title**

File. Greenham Common, November 1983

### **Date**

October - November 1983.

### **Extent**

1 file.

### **Language**

German.

### **Scope and content**

Newsletters and magazines, including Womyn's Peace Camp Green and Common; photographs; circulars; leaflets; Hands off Greenham! poster; petition form; brief for meeting between government officials and the police to discuss eviction of Greenham women; press cuttings; photographs of protests against Cruise and Pershing missiles at Mutlangen, West Germany; letter from Christian Gooseman, Berlin, and extract from German peace newsletter.

## **CWL SMA/21. GREENHAM COMMON, DECEMBER 1983**

### **Title**

File. Greenham Common, December 1983

### **Date**

December 1983.

### **Extent**

1 file.

### **Language**

German.

### **Scope and content**

Postcards; correspondence; 'Women reclaim Greenham' briefing for 11 December; photographs; newsletters, including Greenham Rainbow Bus; circulars; proposal for mixed action [men and women] at Greenham, 10 December; leaflets; press cuttings; press statement; leaflets and circulars about demonstration at St. Mawgan USAF base; poster for 'No room at the bunker' protests in Bath and Corsham, 17 December.

## **CWL SMA/22. ALTERNATIVE PEACE CONFERENCE, STOCKHOLM, 1984**

### **Title**

File. Alternative Peace Conference, Stockholm, 15 January 1984 - Conference on Confidence and Security Building Measures and Disarmament in Europe, Stockholm, 17 January 1984

### **Date**

June 1983 - February 1984.

### **Extent**

1 file.

### **Language**

Swedish.

### **Scope and content**

Rainbow Bus newsletter; correspondence; conference agenda, aims, list of participants and discussion documents; booklet, Spindelnaetet: feminism och fred, including article by Sarah Meyer; 'Sound around Greenham' poster; public statements; circulars; press releases; call for trade union action; transcript of interview with Olaf Palme.

## **CWL SMA/23. WEST GERMANY, JANUARY 1984**

### **Title**

File. West Germany, January 1984

### **Date**

January - February 1984.

### **Extent**

1 file.

### **Scope and content**

Correspondence; leaflets; circulars; photograph; Rainbow Bus newsletter.

## **CWL SMA/24. GREENHAM COMMON, JANUARY 1984**

### **Title**

File. Greenham Common, January 1984

### **Date**

January 1984.

### **Extent**

1 file.

### **Scope and content**

Newsletters, including Womyn's Peace Camp Green and Common, Robertsbridge Peace Council and Greenham Women Against Cruise Missiles; press release; circulars; photographs; correspondence; press cuttings and photocopied articles; photograph, correspondence and newsletter, Mutlangen Peace Camp, West Germany; appeal letter and circular about arrest of Ulrike Poppe and Baerbel Bohley; reports of peace marches and demonstrations in United States, with sticker and badge.

## **CWL SMA/25. GREENHAM COMMON, FEBRUARY-MARCH 1984**

### **Title**

File. Greenham Common, February - March 1984: evictions

### **Date**

February - March 1984.

### **Extent**

1 file.

### **Scope and content**

Newsletters, including Womyn's Peace Camp Green and Common and Convoy News; correspondence; press cuttings; Observer Magazine; sponsor form for a women's peace delegation to Nicaragua; circulars; leaflets; article by Sarah Meyer, with letter from Satish Kumar, Resurgence; poem.

## **CWL SMA/26. GREENHAM COMMON, FEBRUARY 1984 - END 1985**

### ***Title***

File. Greenham Common, February 1984 - end 1985

### ***Date***

February 1984 - December 1985.

### ***Extent***

1 file.

### ***Language***

German.

### ***Scope and content***

Newsletters and magazines, including Women for Life on Earth, Womyn's Peace Camp Green and Common, Peace News and END Journal; press cuttings and articles; correspondence; circulars; reports about childhood leukaemia in the Winrith area of Dorset; handbook for peace march from Mutlangen to Bonn, August - September 1984.

## **CWL SMA/27. GREENHAM COMMON CORRESPONDENCE**

### ***Title***

File. Greenham Common

### ***Date***

October 1983 - January 1985.

### ***Extent***

1 file.

### ***Scope and content***

Correspondence, including postcard from Tony Benn and several poems.

## **CWL SMA/28. PEACE SONGS**

### ***Title***

File. Peace songs

### ***Date***

1983.

**Extent**

1 file.

**Language**

Swedish, German.

**Scope and content**

Song sheets.

**CWL SMA/29. NOTEBOOK 1983**

**Title**

Notebook

**Date**

1983.

**Extent**

1 vol.

**Scope and content**

Contact details; notes of discussions, meetings, travels and events.

**Conditions of access**

Restricted access. Data Protection Act applies.

**CWL SMA/30. NOTEBOOK 1983-1984**

**Title**

Notebook

**Date**

July 1983 - February 1984.

**Extent**

1 vol.

**Scope and content**

Diary of experiences in Hungary, Sweden and Germany, summer 1983, interleaved with photographs; notes of meetings and discussions; contact details; interleaved letters.

**Conditions of access**

Restricted access. Data Protection Act applies.