

The Telephone Tree

The Greenham Common Peace Camp existed in a time before mobile phones and the internet were widely accessible.

Some women lived at the camps while others visited for the day. At Embrace the Base, in December 1982, over 30,000 women held hands around the base before turning their backs on it and singing songs.

But how did the Greenham Women spread the word?

The Telephone Tree

The Telephone Tree was used by the Greenham Women to help send messages fast.

One person would call six people who would each call six more people who would each call six more people and so on.

It was used to spread information about large scale events and was also used by Cruise Watch which used to track the convoys of lorries carrying cruise missiles.

Before Embrace the Base, ten letters were sent out and each recipient was to tell another ten women. In the end, it is estimated over 30,000 women turned up.

Lynette Edwell

Lynette was a crucial figure at Greenham and ran the Greenham office from her house (where this interview was conducted). As the key administrator for the campaign, she was the person who triggered the telephone tree, and watched for cruise missiles. She gave space to the Greenham women in her home, letting them use it for phone calls and administration, as well as showers, childcare and long discussions on politics and feminism. As a journalist, she wrote press releases trying to get proper media representation and helped the women with paperwork related to court appeals.

You can hear Lynette talk about the telephone tree at 26:50 here: <https://greenhamwomeneverywhere.co.uk/lynette-edwell-2/>

Spread the word

What can you tell someone about the Greenham Common Peace Camp? Think of an interesting fact or story you've discovered and tell three people. You could:

- Talk to them when you see them
- Send them a letter
- Make a flyer to give them

If you ask each person to tell another three people, how far can you spread stories about Greenham Common?



Image by Wendy Carrig

Cruise Watch

Step into the archive to find out more about Cruise Watch. You'll find more interviews that mention Cruise Watch here:

<https://greenhamwomeneverywhere.co.uk/?s=cruise+watch>

Don't forget, you can use key words to search the archive or transcripts.