

The Australian Women's Register

Entry type: Organisation

Entry ID: PR00077

Feminist Anti-Nuclear Group (FANG)

(1982 - 1984)

Born	19821101, Adelaide South Australia Australia
Died	19840925, AdelaideAdelaide South Australia Australia
Occupation	Anti-nuclear group, Feminist organisation, Peace organisation

Summary

Feminist Anti-Nuclear Group (FANG) was formed in November 1982, initially as an organisation which enabled women to demonstrate their solidarity with the women of the Greenham Common Peace Camp.

Central to FANG's philosophy was a non-hierarchical structure, where women were free to feel empowered and express their desire to work toward the common goals of peace, social justice and a nuclear-free future.

The group organised several actions, including a peace camp at the US Base at Smithfield, and a 2-week vigil in support of the Pine Gap Peace Camp. The group also coordinated women's only spaces at Roxby Downs actions, as well as information and film nights to educate women about worldwide peace movements and anti-nuclear actions, to educate its members about non-violent direct action techniques.

Details

FANG was formed in November 1982, initially as an organisation that enabled women to demonstrate their solidarity with the women of the Greenham Common Peace Camp.

Central to FANG's philosophy was a non-hierarchical structure, where women were free to feel empowered and express their desire to work toward the common goals of peace, social justice and a nuclear-free future. Their aims were for all countries to disarm, to end nuclear fuel cycles, a commitment to non-violence, and an end to patriarchal oppression.

The group organised several actions, including a peace camp at the US Base at Smithfield, and a 2-week vigil in Adelaide in support of the Pine Gap Peace Camp. The group also coordinated women's only spaces at Roxby Downs actions, as well as information and film nights to educate women about worldwide peace movements and anti-nuclear actions, and educated its members about non-violent direct action techniques.

They sent letters of support to the Women's Peace Movement in England, Italy and Sweden, and some members of FANG (including Briony Monahan) travelled to and lived at the Women's Peace Camp at Greenham Common, and later to the Peace Camp in Comiso, Sicily. FANG received much correspondence from international women's peace groups, including a banner from a Swedish women's peace group.

FANG decided not to support the Women's Peace Camp at Pine Gap in 1983, citing a lack of communication with interstate organisers, and thus exclusion from group processes and decision-making. FANG was concerned about the effect of the Peace Camp's presence on the traditional owners of the site at Pine Gap, as well as women activists of Alice Springs, and a concern regarding violence towards these groups in particular. As an alternative, FANG proposed a National Day of Women's Peace Action on the 11th of November (intended to be the start of the Peace Camp) and held vigils and actions in Adelaide instead. These actions included a daily vigil on the steps of Parliament House, the Pillowcase Protest (where women were encouraged to create an image of their dreams of a nuclear future on a pillowcase- later used as an installation at Rymill Park) and daily peace picnics at Rymill Park for women and children only.

FANG worked with Women for Survival to organise an action in Victoria Square, Adelaide, in April 1984, as an indication of their support for the trials of the women that were expelled from the Comiso Peace Camp, called the "Flying Web Action". The web was a frequently used symbol indicating the interconnectedness of women around the world within their visions of a nuclear-free future, where the web of communication and connection between women demonstrated their unity, diversity and as well as strength and fluidity of structure. It was also a symbol used by the women of Greenham Common, and within other Peace Actions around the world.

The group had regular correspondence with other peace organisations, such as Women Against Nuclear Energy (WANE) and Campaign Against Nuclear Energy, Women's Action Against Global Violence (WAAGV) and Women for Survival. FANG also received financial sponsorship from the Seaman's Union of Australia (SA Branch) and the 1984 crew of various ships, as well as the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom and the Waterside Workers' Federation.

The group operated out of the Women's Liberation Movement offices at 6 Mary Street Hindmarsh, holding regular meetings where they sought to evenly distribute the balance of power, by rotating the meeting coordinators and facilitators. As a group, FANG initially struggled with numerous issues regarding their "women only" status, as well as concern surrounding their appearance to outsiders (whose interest and involvement they sought to attract). Issues rose regarding whether or not the term 'feminist' was 'scary', and whether members felt they should conceal their lesbianism in order not to isolate or offend non-feminist/non-lesbian women. FANG sought to gain the attention of surrounding people via 'active action'- moderate civil disobedience – in an effort to retain the support of people who came along, without setting themselves apart as being 'too militant'.

Some of the women involved included, Connie Frazer, Marg Hypatia, Barbara Baird, Marg Madden, Annie Dugdale, Briony Monahan, Deirdre Knox, Nadine Williams, Jan Crawford, Bobbi Willow and many others whose first names have only been recorded.

Published resources

Resource

Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

Newsletter

Liberation, 1970

Archival resources

State Library of South Australia

[Women Against Nuclear Energy](#)

[Adelaide Women's Liberation Movement Archives Collection](#)

Author Details

Katey Bereny

Created 18 December 2009

Last modified 19 February 2019