

... AND ONE THAT'S NOT SO PLEASANT

WA Navy base target for anti-N protest

By LIZ HARRISON, Detective Sergeant Western Region

December 1 1984 signified Election Day for most Australians, but for members in Western Region it signified the start of a women's peace camp for nuclear disarmament near HMAS Stirling, just south of Perth.

Two eastern Australian-based women's peace groups — Women's Action Against Global Violence and Women for Survival, together with the Perth-based Women's Action for Nuclear Disarmament, set up camp on the mainland.

Their main objectives were to demonstrate on nuclear disarmament; the visits to Western Australian ports by American Navy personnel and vessels and the laws restricting access to Garden Island where HMAS Stirling is located.

There were approximately 500 women at the barren campsite and no men (not even the media) were allowed on its precincts.

Some 56 of our members from Western Region, together with 12 policewomen from Canberra, Melbourne and Adelaide, arrived at Garden Island on the Friday and Saturday, where we were settled into the Navy accommodation blocks.

We were split into two shifts each working 12 hours on and 12 hours stand-by. We set up base at the Naval Police Station and a contingent set off to man the main gates on the causeway which stretched from the mainland to the island.

There we had our first confrontation with the demonstrators. There was a constant chanting of protest songs by the women, and typical discussions both among themselves and with anti-



• Constable Trudi Ware accompanies a demonstrator from the scene.

protesters and interested onlookers. 'Shut Down the Sound' was sung again and again — 'The Sound' being Cockburn Sound which stretches between Garden Island and the mainland.

We learned to be patient waiting for the action, card playing and 'trivial pursuit' being the most popular pastimes.

We discovered the island to be prolific in its wildlife of Tammars (small wallabies), tiger snakes and March flies. These were compensated for by the island's natural beauty, its idyllic swimming and fishing areas.

The sun shone warmly during the day, but the nights were freezing, especially when a biting wind blew across the causeway. We were supported on the island by Naval personnel, and on the mainland by the Western Australian Police with whom a good camaraderie was established. During our spare time we made use of the Navy facilities, which included squash, tennis, swimming and, of course, the Mess.

On Thursday 6 December, about 200 demonstrators stormed the main gate. To the on-looker it may have appeared like a volley ball match. Women clambered up rope-



• A banner on display at the gates of Garden Island.

ladders and steps of milk crates in an effort to make it over the gate. Some were literally thrust over by their mates. A diversionary group tried floating past the gates on an assortment of airbeds and rubber floats, and then clambered up the rocks onto the Causeway. The media gave a broad coverage of these events.

A total of 75 women was arrested, testing the capacity of the Navy lock-up where they were temporarily lodged. The cells reverberated with protest songs until all the women were finally despatched into the custody of the Western Australian Police. We suffered some minor assaults that day, and one member had his pocket badge stolen.

The following day two local women, who claimed to be anti-protestors were arrested after swimming alongside the Causeway and gaining entry to the restricted area.

Early on Monday 10 December, three women were arrested after gaining entry to a bridge on the Causeway from a small craft.

Later that day about 150 demonstrators held a mock auction at the main gates and subsequently two arrests were made, one for the assault on police and the other for the theft of the police pocket badge.

The demonstration ended on 14 December 1984 after about 150 demonstrators gathered at the main gates. A water ballet was performed by a small group and there was street-theatre, speeches and more singing before the gathering dispersed.

Early on Saturday, five buses arrived at the campsite and soon after dawn all but a few stragglers had departed.

The Sound was still secure.



• First Constable Peter Middelhuis finds himself with more than a handful assisting two unprotesting protestors.

45 NEW BMWs JOIN ACT FLEET

The AFP recently became the first police force in the world to take delivery of the latest BMW K100TIC motor cycle, adapted specifically for law enforcement duties.

Forty-five of the big, white, streamlined bikes were delivered by BMW Australia Ltd. to the Federal Police in February.

They are being used in Canberra for normal patrol duties. Two are also in use at the driver training unit and one is based at the ACT's Jervis Bay.

The bikes are part of an upgrading of patrol vehicles for the AFP. New pursuit cars are being introduced for ACT patrol work as they become available.

The AFP extensively evaluated the new K100TIC bikes during tests which began in the middle of last year.

For the technically minded, the



• BMW's national Australian Sales Manager, Mr Steve Crouch, hands over the keys to one of the bikes to the Officer-in-Charge of the AFP's Traffic Division, Chief Inspector Peter Curtis, with motor-cycle patrol officers and their new bikes in the background.

police version shares the high-tech features with the standard K100 series which was released in Australia early in 1984.

It has a four cylinder, light alloy, water-cooled engine of 988cc, twin overhead camshaft design for smooth operation, electronic igni-

tion for trouble-free running, computer controlled fuel-injection for maximum power and performance with minimum fuel consumption.

Maximum acceleration is said to be in the region of 0-100km per hour in 3.9 seconds, while the top speed is 220 km per hour.