



SOUTH EDINBURGH MEETING

February 2022



Blackford Hill sunset

MEETINGS FOR WORSHIP

Meetings **every Sunday 10.30-11.30 am** at the Open Door, in person or remotely by Zoom.

We are meeting by Zoom at the beginning of the month, but hope to resume meetings in person during February. Please check as below.

On the **First Thursday of each month** we also meet for **30 min at 8 pm** by Zoom, followed by chat.

Joining information for meetings is sent via our South Edinburgh Announce email list. To be added, see <https://quakerscotland.org/south-edinburgh>. If you have technical problems with Zoom, Martin Burnell offers help.

SPECIAL COLLECTION

Our collection in February is for **Quaker Action on Alcohol and Drugs**. They have extended their concerns to include gambling. QAAD developed from the Friends Temperance Union, which was established in 1870. Their work is mainly campaigning and supporting local meetings in helping those affected.

<https://qaad.org> has more info, and a donate button providing details for electronic transfer or an address to send cheques.

QUAKER EVENTS

Evening Meeting by Zoom on first Thursdays at 8pm, so **Thur 3 Feb**.

Local Meeting for Business will be held after Meeting on **Sun 6 Feb**.

These Edinburgh Central events are open to South Edin too, but please contact Rachel Frith to confirm location and numbers:

Coffee – at Rachel Frith’s house on first and third Thursdays, from 10.15 am.

Singing group at Victoria Terrace, 3.30 pm on Tuesday 8th (NOTE DIFFERENT TIME)

Book Group – will meet on **4th Sunday, 27 Feb** after Central MfW to discuss *The Glass House* by Hadley Freeman, and *Daisy Miller* by Henry James (only 63 pages).



Geometric Victorian tiling in a Morningside barber’s doorway.



More Victorian geometric tiles in this evocative 3 min film of the restored foghorn at Sumburgh Lighthouse, Shetland. <https://youtu.be/iHCmzvzCmhl>

WIDER ISSUES: LOCAL, NATIONAL, INTERNATIONAL

Failte Edinburgh

Failte Edinburgh aims to make a difference to the lives of vulnerable refugees who have been forced to leave their homes. Our mission is to help a refugee family to settle in Edinburgh and to bring hope for the future while in turn being enriched by sharing experiences. It is a great privilege to be able to work together towards this common goal.

The group has been established through our Area Meeting under the UK Government-UNHCR Community Sponsorship Scheme, www.unhcr.org/uk/community-sponsorship-5f9825b34.html

Funding to cover the compulsory minimum is secured, but more will be needed. To donate, please send cheques made out to *Failte Edinburgh* to Lynne Barty (Project Lead), 10 Jordan Lane, Edinburgh EH10 4RB, or contact her or Mark Bitel (Treasurer) for bank details for electronic donations. Thank you for your support.

Challenging Militarism

Northern Friends Peace Board's nuclear weapons working group meets in March, and will focus particularly on parties to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) (<https://nfpb.org.uk/tpnw-info>).

NFPB has run a number of workshops for Friends, including during the Yearly Meeting Gathering, focussing on different aspects of militarism and security. Through our involvement with the UK steering group of the Global Campaign on Military Spending, we have supported the development of resources and activities, recent ones in relation to COP26. For more information and to sign up for updates: <https://demilitarize.org.uk>

Call for international accountability mechanism for Yemen

CAAT is among a group of over 60 civil society organisations calling on the UN General Assembly to establish a new international accountability mechanism for Yemen - an independent and impartial body that would investigate and publicly report on the most serious violations and abuses of international law committed in Yemen. This step is urgently needed in light of the failure of the UN Human Rights Council in October to renew the mandate of the Group of Eminent Experts (GEE) on Yemen.

The Nationality and Borders Bill

Has been dubbed the Anti-Refugee Bill by campaigners. You could send a pointed Valentine's card or Tweet to your MP regarding the Bill coming back to Westminster in March. And you might display an orange heart on Valentine's Day. Info about that at <https://cityofsanctuary.org/2022/01/13/make-this-valentines-day-count> Example tweet:

*Rose are red
Violets are blue
I oppose the #AntiRefugeeBill
And so should you 🌹*

More from the Quaker Asylum and Refugee Network (QARN) at <https://qarn.org.uk>

Carol Jennings

The policing bill

Which threatened/ threatens to impose severe restrictions on peaceful protest, met with several defeats and amendments in the House of Lords. It's not over yet though. More information and suggested actions from the BYM blog at <https://bit.ly/3s1NZgs>

Consultation on the legacy of slavery and colonialism

Our clerk Rici Marshall Cross convened a group from the meeting to consider our input to the City Council's consultation. Rici also sent our answers to Geoff Palmer on our behalf. His response is also shown below.

Dear Geoff,

I'm writing to you on behalf of South Edinburgh Local Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers). We are grateful that Edinburgh council are addressing the legacy of slavery and colonialism in Edinburgh. We are glad to be able to respond, and have done so as a Quaker meeting and also as individuals. Friends in the meeting have asked me to pass on some of our comments to you directly and we would be happy to discuss our response as part of the review if that is helpful and appropriate.

Britain Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) has recognised that tackling systemic racism is a spiritual imperative and in 2021 declared a specific commitment to becoming an actively anti-racist faith community. South East Scotland Area Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) has also held this as an active concern over the past year and a half.

We hope that work of the review will address the legacy of ongoing discrimination and poor outcomes for BAME people in education, health care, criminal justice. We hope the outcome of the review will focus on what we can do in the future; building a fairer and more inclusive society. We also hope it will include as a theme an acknowledgment that slavery is not a thing of the past. At the root of slavery is a failure to value others and lack of recognition of a common humanity. Quakers believe that there is that of God in everyone.

We are mindful that we should not underestimate the backlash that there is against 'critical race theory' and accusations of 'wokeness'. Many people are very angry that this is being brought up, claiming it is not relevant and it is just historic. Rather, we would encourage the review group to assure people that we do not seek to rewrite history or to ask current Edinburgh residents to be overly apologetic for our history, but we ask for a fuller view of our heritage and broader remembrance of actions that happened in the past. Treatment of Windrush generation and their children is a recent illustration of what happens when we hold this mentality of a one sided history.

We all need to recognise the huge benefits (which we have taken for granted) that our public institutions and wider society has accrued from the source of the wealth which established them, whether schools, universities, health facilities or major public buildings. There is also a benefit that wider society can expect to gain when we learn about these broader histories.

We recognise the need for some kind of independent monitoring group to assess what is happening and encourage further work on this. Could the review group continue to monitor council equality and inclusion policies across all the areas with which it is concerned?

Friends had questions on how to find more information about how the group is working, records of their deliberations, and especially our concern would be that the review group engages with black, indigenous and people of colour people living in Edinburgh now.

Finally, thank you for taking on the role of chair of this review group. Your leadership strengthens our confidence in the process. I'm aware of some conflict on twitter in recent days and hope it is not too wearing. We will be holding you and the rest of the group in our prayers as you carry out this work on our behalf.

In Friendship,

Rici

Dear Rici,

Thanks for the kind words. We could have a Zoom meeting as soon as possible, I will contact you.

We are One Humanity... it is time we recognise this truth and try and correct the consequences of the past such as racism. The fiction that has come to be associated with this truth is fine but should be acknowledged. Truth needs evidence, fiction doesn't. The Quaker people pressed for abolition as part of this truth. My simple approach...

Blessings,

Geoff

NEWS

Ida Turner We heard the sad news that our Friend Ida Turner died on Monday 24th January. Ida had been unwell for many months, in hospital and then a care home.

Ida and David were longstanding members of South Edinburgh and then Portobello & Musselburgh meetings, until moving to Stirling in 2020. They marked their 70th wedding anniversary in September. Details of a memorial event to follow.



Hats for HMP Wandsworth – Alison Burnley has spoken of the campaign by Liz Bridges, Quaker chaplain, to give hats and later socks to prisoners at Christmas. 14,000 pairs of socks were received and they are not looking for more just now, according to The Friend. Thank you.

Training for Quaker roles – Courses on Nominations and clerking are among the wide range of things available now or soon via www.woodbrooke.org.uk/our-courses

Quaker Faith in Action highlights teenage Israeli and Palestinian conscientious objectors, lists several February activities on climate change, and updates on Quaker support for a ban on gender identity ‘conversion therapy’. More info at <https://bit.ly/3nQwEG0>

Five Good Reasons to be a Quaker in 2022 – Meeting; Anyone can be a Quaker; It’s not just about Sunday mornings; Quakers are working for a just and sustainable world; It’s an adventure. Paul Parker’s 4 minute read in the BYM *Quake* blog, www.quaker.org.uk/blog/5-good-reasons-to-be-a-quaker-in-2022

Heads of International Quaker agencies meet – Alison Burnley was struck by the report on this hybrid meeting in *The Friend* of 17 Dec. Climate, sustainability, peacebuilding, institutional oppression. Ask if you would like to see it. Ending:

We call on Friends to be humble and to be bold, to be faithful and determined, to work inwardly and outwardly, with in our Quaker communities and outside them, to build the just and peaceful world God tells us can be ours.

Our newsletter is usually published on or near the last Sunday of each month. Ideas and content please to neilturn@gmail.com

Find this edition, plus archives of previous, at www.quakerscotland.org/south-edinburgh

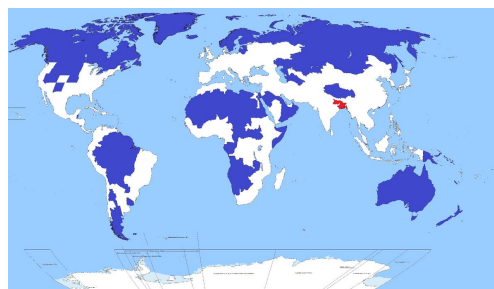
FROM THE WEB

Music that survived the Nazis – We have just had Holocaust Remembrance Day. Ola Uduku recommends this BBC World Service podcast for a fascinating, surprising, at times uplifting, but still deeply distressing and tragic slant (part 1 of a series):

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/w3ct3c7y>

All labour is skilled labour – illustrated in this short be-amazed-and-a-little-scared Twitter thread:

<https://bit.ly/3mZxHmw>



The population of the red area is greater than the population of all the blue areas together. ‘That includes the light blue.’ @amazingmap The population of Bangladesh is 162 million.

FROM A BOOK

How can a bishop marry? How can he flirt? The most he can say is ‘I will see you in the vestry after service’. (Sidney Smith)

Quote from *Carr’s Prelates*, as in December issue.

TANGIBLE OBJECT

Barbie inspiring women recognises the truly inspiring **Ida B. Wells** in its latest addition to an impressive list. Pre-order now for around £30, but quickly, they are popular. Equality-washing by a plastic and carbon-heavy toy company, or admirable? You decide at <https://bit.ly/3IM1Jmz>

Ida Wells is the subject of an unusually long and well-read **Wikipedia page of the month** (1746 views/day).

