



SOUTH EDINBURGH MEETING

June 2021



Our first makeshiftly blended meeting on 9th May.

MEETINGS FOR WORSHIP

Meetings every **Sunday 10.30-11.30 am**. In May we held our first experiments in 'distanced' in-person meetings at the Open Door, in a garden outdoors, maybe to be added to by other indoor groups in time. The majority still join by Zoom.

Booking is essential for in-person options. Restrictions: as at June 1, but likely to change at short notice: The Open Door has a capacity of 10, or 12 if some people are from same households, but no coffee afterwards. Outdoors: up to 8 people. Indoors in a house: up to 6 from 3 households.

Joining instructions for Zoom and in-person meetings are sent in emails via our email list, which you can join at <https://quakerscotland.org/south-edinburgh> If you have technical problems joining, Martin Burnell is a Quakerly wizard.

SPECIAL COLLECTION

Our collection in June is for **Freedom from Torture**. The charity provides psychological therapy for asylum seekers and refugees who have survived torture, to help them recover and rebuild their lives in the UK. Plus training for professionals, and campaigning for change. More information and online donations at www.freedomfromtorture.org

QUAKER EVENTS

Our Local Meeting for Business will be held after Meeting for Worship on **Sun 6 June**. How this will fit with our developing dispersed, hybrid meeting arrangements is still to be determined, but Zoom is likely to be the main way to join this time.

Area Meeting will be held on **Sat 19 June**. This would have been ours to host at the Open Door, but will be online with us as virtual hosts. Details in emails.

General Meeting for Scotland will be held on **Sat 12 June**. This would have been held in Dundee, but will be via Zoom from 10.15 till 2.30, with a break between 12 and 1. Joining details in email, with number to join by phone in email, or via Martin Burnell. We will hear about parliamentary work, and from our new Development Worker Zoe Prosser, and receive annual report and accounts.

South Edinburgh Friends are very welcome to join the following Edinburgh Central Meeting events. All via Zoom: details from rachel.frith@waitrose.com

Singing Group – meets every first Tue at 7.30 pm

Online coffee – bring your own to an online conversation, 10.30 on **1st and 3rd Thursdays**

Book Group – 12.15 (after Central MfW) on **4th Sundays**. On 27 June, *The Nickel Boys* by C Whitehead.



Meetings resume in person.

Via historian John Reeks, [@wartsandbrawls](https://twitter.com/wartsandbrawls)

A day out in Edinburgh's cemeteries (contd.)



Liberton Churchyard is beautiful and ancient, with views of the city, the Forth and Fife, and it is on the scenic high altitude route from the Open Door to Little France via the Braid Hills. Two 8th and 11th century Celtic crosses from here are in the Museum of Scotland. The current church (1815) sits in an older graveyard, replacing a previous one destroyed by fire. There are some striking gravestones, including an 18th century portrayal of ploughing with oxen and horses, and a memorial to the notable John McNeill, an unlikely social reformer who deserves more another time.

It overflows into the adjoining City cemetery, while along the road the crowded Mount Vernon Catholic cemetery, still privately owned, forms a newer (1875) sanctuary with impressive views. In common with Morningside, some edge plots have been sold for housing. Despite or because of the crowding, a few years ago a previous superintendent was tempted to sell non-existent plots on his own account.



Cemetery aficionados: Edinburgh Council lists 5 that you can tour virtually online, at www.edinburgh.gov.uk/burials-cremations/cemeteries-burials-edinburgh – the same url lists council cemeteries with space for new entrants.

Wikipedia lists 42 Edinburgh churchyards and cemeteries under local authority management, and 14 in private control, including the Quaker graveyard at the Pleasance. This series has legs.

Getting to Know



Last month's reprinting of Tony Davies' interview in 2004/5 reminds that it is always lovely to find out more about people we may have sat next to silently for years. Or seen on-screen. We have an archive of interviews with around 50 South Edinburgh Friends, in two volumes (74 pages, two files of about 6Mb each, available from neilturn@gmail.com), conducted between 1997 and 2010. Since then we've published 4 or 5 more in our newsletter, but none recently, so volume 3 is still awaiting willing subjects and enthusiastic interviewer/authors.

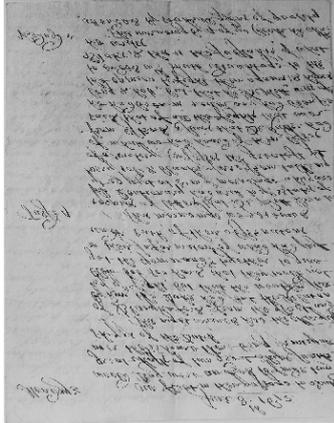
Stitchery



Art thou in the Darkness? Mind it not, for if thou dost it will fill thee more, but stand still and act not, and wait in patience till Light arises out of Darkness to lead thee. Art thou wounded in conscience? Feed not there, but abide in the Light which leads to Grace and Truth, which teaches to deny, and puts off the weight, and removes the cause, and brings saving health to Light. *James Nayler. QFP 21.65*

Catriona Courtier

This is not a letter. Why is it called a newsletter?



An under-reported piece of history. Between the early 1600s and mid 1700s, handwritten letters reproduced in bulk, sometimes by different scribes on the same letter, were a major way of distributing news. The national postal service was opened up to the public in 1657 in England, which must have facilitated news gathering and distribution.

Handwritten newsletters amalgamated information from multiple sources. Though someone chose the content or extracts from other letters, it was reporting without editorial comment. Items were generally presented in time sequence without headings, oldest first, latest at the bottom. They were mass-produced so tended to open with an anonymous 'Sir,' then off they went.

England's first broadsheet newspaper the London Gazette appeared in 1665, but was something of an elite publication 'for the use of some Merchants and Gentlemen'. *'The heads of severall proceedings in the present Parliament'* (1641, National Library of Scotland) is the first known printed newsheet from Scotland, but simply repeated news from London, received as letters. From 'correspondents', indeed. The Edinburgh Gazette began publication in 1680, but printing was not yet cheap and fast, and print runs were small. Government interference with printed papers may also have extended the life of scribe-produced news letters, which remained a parallel system of information spread for many more decades.

From research by Rachael Scarborough King, Huntington Library Quarterly 2016, via jstor.org <https://bit.ly/2TCsW6P>

Road to COP26: Edinburgh, pioneer in electric cars

At the turn of the 20th century, three different technologies were vying for primacy in powering road vehicles. Steam, proven on the railways; petrol, but the early machines were temperamental and difficult; and electricity, easy to drive, not smelly or noisy, and then as now, looking like the technology of the future.

The rechargeable battery was invented in 1859, and was first adapted to propel tricycles and boats. But by 1890, the first electric cars were being tested in several countries. In 1899 a rocket-shaped electric vehicle in France exceeded 100 kph and held the world speed record. The **Madlevic Motor Carriage Company** (our **Wikipedia page of the month**, 6 views/day) was founded by the City Astronomer, William Peck, and existed for just two years 1898-1900, just as the South Edinburgh suburbs were spreading outwards.



(1) The remarkable Madlevic carriage looks made to be horse-drawn, which it often was when you ran out of charge. Almost hidden underneath is the small electrically-powered 5th wheel. Photo from edinphoto.org (caution: rabbit hole) <https://bit.ly/3fHkX0E> (2) Madlevic production block photo from the Buildings at Risk Register for Scotland, buildingsatrisk.org.uk, also worth exploring (<https://bit.ly/3vMVGaW>) – said to be the first purpose-built car factory in the UK, and apparently had a test track on its roof. (3) Office building photo from Wikimedia Commons by Stephendickson, intensive Wikipedia and catalogue of Edinburgh cemeteries.

You can visit the disappointing shell of the Madlevic factory on the edge of industrial land awaiting reclamation in Granton, or save a trip by viewing it from <https://bit.ly/3vMVGaW> The office building is better preserved, and you might hear Suzuki violin classes through its window. Over the door is an image of the powered 5th wheel.

Next month: bicycles

NEWS

The Pilgrimage of Life – Alastair McIntosh offers a spiritual journey on Zoom: departure, initiation, return. Donations for Glasgow Meeting House funds. **Sun 27 Jun** 2pm. Details and booking at <http://bit.ly/GQpilgrimage>

Britain Yearly Meeting Gathering (YMG) is over three online weeks this year, its final week running into **Yearly Meeting sessions** over the weekends from **Fri 31 July** and **Fri 6 Aug**. Key themes are anti-racism, gender diversity, and climate justice. Bookings open now at www.quaker.org.uk/ym

Truth in the Era of Fake News. Journalist and great great grandson of Anna Southall (see April issue) Thomas Penny will be giving the **Swarthmore Lecture** on **31 July** as part of YMG. More info at <http://bit.ly/swarthmore21>

Preparation for COP26 – the UN Climate Change Conference taking place in Glasgow **1-12 Nov**. <https://ukcop26.org>

Stitches – help create 1.5 miles of scarf. See <https://stitchesforsurvival.earth> – and this month's Sesame has more on the initiative.

Relay – the Young Christian Climate Network is organising a phased relay to COP26, which will have an Edinburgh-Glasgow leg on **Thur-Sat Oct 21-3**. Walking, running, or cycling; all ages welcome to join in or support. Sign up at <https://www.yccn.uk/relay>

OTHER NEWS

Coffee in Meeting Stooshie That old chestnut 'Is it OK to drink coffee in Zoom meetings' hit the pages of *The Friend* this month. Diana and John Lampen ask whether Elders are going to guide us, noting that the webpage advertising Woodbrooke's regular open Zoom meetings *actually headlines an image of a coffee cup*. If only they had read our Guide to Quaker Zoom etiquette (July 2020). You may be wondering whether Friends bombarded our local Elders with similar anxieties*.

Oscar winners and film reviews held over till next month. Your reviews overwhelmed the space available*.

* They did not

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Wishing a very happy first birthday to **Esther** on the 20th. May you one day get something as splendid as Jacob received.



INTERNETS

Our **Instagram account of the month** showcases the edible toast art of Japanese artist Manami Sasaki, [Sasamana1204](https://www.instagram.com/Sasamana1204)



Our newsletter is usually published on the last Sunday of each month. Send your early summer flowerings to neilturn@gmail.com

This edition, plus archives of previous issues, at www.quakerscotland.org/south-edinburgh