



SOUTH EDINBURGH MEETING

December 2020



MEETINGS FOR WORSHIP

Up to 25+ Friends each week have been joining our meetings via Zoom, every **Sunday 10.30 am**. Instructions in emails. Technical Qs to Martin Burnell or David Somervell.

SPECIAL COLLECTION

In December will be for the organisation that has hosted our meeting for the last 28 years, **The Open Door**. Susan Robertson will speak to this. No online options for this one, but you can send to Susan, or save for later.

BRITAIN YEARLY MEETING

BYM has a £3M deficit for 2020 as a consequence of Covid. Area meetings are likely to be making reduced donations for similar reasons. Friends are encouraged, if they are able, to make additional donations directly to BYM online at <https://bit.ly/37honSt> – other routes available, listed at <https://bit.ly/BYMGiving>

QUAKER EVENTS

Christmas – happy Christmas! We hope to hold a half hour meeting by Zoom on Christmas Day – hosted in spirit by Sylvia and in practice by Ola. To be confirmed.

Some meetings in South East Scotland are now holding physical meetings. These have very limited capacity, and booking is essential. Central Edinburgh offers a simultaneous online/ in person experience; Kelso, indoor; Tweeddale, outdoor for the truly hardy.

The following events are from Edinburgh Central Meeting, but South Edinburgh Friends are very welcome. Contact rachel.frith@waitrose.com

Singing Group – meets on **Tue 1 Dec**, and will sing **Carols** on **Tue 15 Dec**, both safely via Zoom at 7.30 pm

Online coffee – bring your own to an online conversation, 10.30-12 on **Thur 3** and **17 Dec**.

Book group – postponed till **Sun 3 Jan** at 12.15, RK Narayan's *The English Teacher*.



Frederick Douglass (see p2), key figure in the anti-slavery movement, visited Edinburgh in 1846. But here he is in Gilmore St in 2020 (via [trenchone](#), Instagram).

[More Events and News on the Back Page](#)

Getting away from slavery

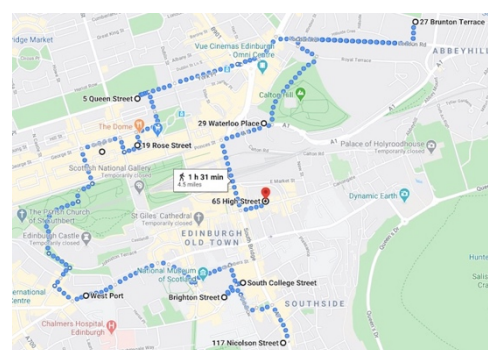
Relics of slavery or its profits are pretty much ubiquitous in British cities, and Scotland is certainly not spared from this – Glasgow and Edinburgh, the opposite. Much of the country's wealth in the 17-1800s came directly or indirectly from exploiting slavery, funding much of our historic civic architecture and industrial base. Many politicians and commercially successful individuals had some degree of connection. Their names pepper our streets, institutions, and businesses.

An illustration of the complexity from Liverpoolian author and poet Malik Al Nasir:

- **My ancestors were both slaves and slave owners** (Radio 4): www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p08srtsm

In what now looks like a rather clumsy attempt to cleanse history, Edinburgh University renamed its David Hume Tower, sparking protests from some of its own academics as well as the national press. The Student, a newspaper founded by Robert Louis Stevenson in 1887, clouded the issue further with an article ‘When it comes to slavery, “40 George Square” should worry us more than “David Hume Tower”’. <https://bit.ly/2U6m7Hx>

Frederick Douglass (illustrated on page 1) was a high-profile speaker who energised the anti-slavery movement when he visited Scotland during a 'sensational' tour of Britain. He reached Edinburgh in 1846, but apparently was just the most remembered of at least 28 African-Americans to speak in Scotland in the 60 years from 1838. The story is told by Hannah Murray (@Hannah_RoseM) on a fascinating website presenting her PhD research for all (should all PhD students copy this?), at <http://frederickdouglassinbritain.com/Scotland>



The sites of many of these speeches are included in walking tours of major cities including Edinburgh.

Quakers were prominently present at these events. The Society for Effecting the Abolition of the Slave Trade was founded by a mainly-Quaker group in England in 1787. Quakers had earlier petitioned parliament for abolition in 1783. In Edinburgh, Jane and Eliza Wigham are singled out. Jane Wigham's Wikipedia page is a short and fascinating read, but a gem that is missed by most visitors (2 views per day). The foot of her page has a wealth of links relating to women's suffrage in Scotland.

More mainstream, and our [Wikipedia page of the month](#), is the **Society for Effecting the Abolition of the Slave Trade** (50 views/day). It links to a wider, detailed network of pages on slavery – all for free. You can contribute your time and/or donations to furthering it.

BLM

Four Area Meeting groups with about 6 Friends in each are continuing to meet through December, and plan to gather in January to think what next. Approachable watching and listening:

- **Black and British: A forgotten history**, BBC TV www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/b082w9p9
- **Britain's forgotten slave owners**, BBC TV www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/b062nqpd
- **What does a black history curriculum look like?** (Radio 3) www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p08k4ymn
- **Code-switching** (Radio 4) www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m000ls8x
- **The battle of Lewisham** (BBC World Service) www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/w3cszmvj
- **Thinking Black** (Radio 3) www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m000n8xb (five 15min episodes)
- **Witness black history** (World Service) many 9 min episodes www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p01h9d10
- **About Race** – podcasts from Reni Eddo-Lodge, author of *Why I'm no longer talking to white people about race* at www.aboutracepodcast.com

Rici Marshall Cross

More resources are listed in the November edition of Sesame, and in our own July and August newsletters. Roisin Armstrong points to a reading list at <https://bit.ly/2ADrE1M>

See also Minutes of our Local Meeting for Business of 29 Nov 2020, appended to this newsletter.

Staying in still?

F/friends recommendations for watching, listening, and reading.

Folk Journeys – Michael Morpurgo traces a folk song with singers and historians as it journeys through different areas and different countries. Particularly recommended: Four-loom weaver, with Karine Polwart and others. www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/series/m000nllb Margaret Anderson

The Wrong Box – classic 1966 British comedy with all-famous cast. Free, full length for at least a while at https://youtu.be/_PprS91tvx0 Helen Pilling

Elizabeth Fry – the Angel of Prisons – Life behind bars in English prisons in the early nineteenth century was, to put it mildly, grim. Elizabeth Fry was one of the major driving forces behind a new way of thinking about prisons – one that stressed that improving conditions for prisoners and treating them with humanity would lead to better outcomes and lower re-offending rates. A Christian philanthropist from a large Quaker family, her ideas were taken up across much of Europe. www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/w3cszjvz Terrace Talk

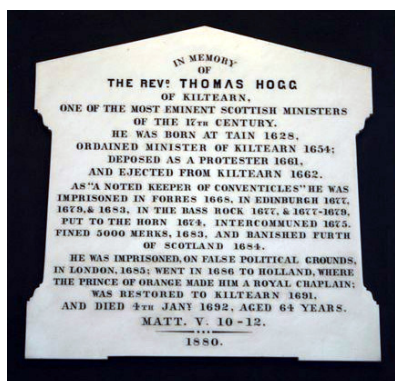
A history of Zoom backgrounds – The use of an artificial background isn't new. <http://bit.ly/2JoE95C> gives an interesting historical perspective on the use of photo backdrops.



Left: An unknown Union soldier at Benton Barracks in Saint Louis, Missouri (c1863-65) by Enoch Long (Library of Congress). Right: A still from *Butter Lamp*, a wonderful award-winning 2013 documentary-style film of a photo-booth in a Tibetan street. 15 mins at <https://youtu.be/4cOEdBFAHlw> – well worth a click.

Going out?

Discovering experiences of other ministries, and a warning



Exploring the north shore of the Cromarty Firth, just north of Inverness, we found a small ruined church with this memorial stone. It tells of a fascinating life and an appalling punitive regime. The minister Thomas Hogg was an almost exact contemporary of George Fox.

Hogg was ordained as minister of Kiltearn in 1654, but deposed as a Protester in 1661. A punishing series of imprisonments followed. He returned to Kiltearn in 1690 after the post-Restoration settlement restored Presbyterianism to Scotland, but died two years later. He was buried beneath the threshold of his church with this threat on the inscription:



THIS STONE SHALL BEAR WITNESS AGAINST THE PARISHIONERS OF KILTEARN IF THEY BRING AN UNGODLY MINISTER IN HERE.

Susie Reade

NEWS

Nuclear weapons ban – as widely reported, the 50th state has ratified the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. This means it has 'international legal force' from 22 January. None of the existing nuclear-armed states (UK included) has engaged with this.

Aid & Abet – last month's charity – bank details in the email accompanying this newsletter. There's a good film of their work at www.aidnabet.org

The Rock Trust are as usual accepting donations for the homeless and vulnerable. Deirdre can deliver these in mid-December, and can collect from your front door – call 07815 305 150. Not limited to, but they particularly need toiletries: shampoo, conditioner, shower gel, soap, hand sanitiser etc. Deirdre can **collect for the Food Bank** at the same time. The demand has gone up hugely. They also need toiletries, and long-life milk, rice, tinned puddings, breakfast cereals, sanitary goods.

BIRTHS! Welcomes to ...

Thomas Gabriel Sikorski-Reade, born to Ben Reade & Lika Sikorska-Mazur on 22 October.

Finlay David Thomas Turner, to Josiah Turner and Kate Thomas on 24 August.

Esther Jane Marshall Cross, born to Rici and Danny on 20 June. We welcomed Esther already, but it's lovely to see several new names together.

Have we missed any?

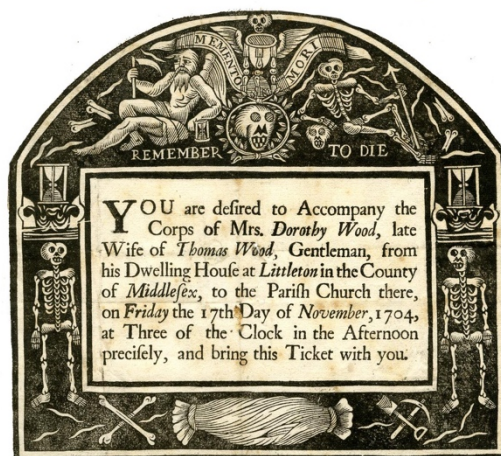
Our newsletter is usually published on the last Sunday of each month. Winter wishes to neilturn@gmail.com

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

NOT NEW

In addition to Zoom backgrounds:

1. Having to book tickets for funerals. 1704:



Via historian of undertakers and funerals [@drdan_o](#)

2. Pandemic precautions. 1918:

