



## SOUTH EDINBURGH MEETING

December 2022



### MEETINGS FOR WORSHIP

#### Christmas meetings

**Sun 25 Dec** 10.30 as usual, **Zoom only**

**Sun 1 Jan** 10.30 as usual but **Zoom only**

Meetings **every Sunday 10.30-11.30 am** at the Open Door, or remotely by Zoom (hybrid, except on the first Sun of each month, for a trial period). *Late changes and notices sent by weekly email.* To join the South Edinburgh Announce email list, see <https://quakerscotland.org/south-edinburgh>

On the **First Thursday of each month** we meet for **30 min at 7.30 pm** by Zoom, followed by chat.

On **fifth Sundays** during winter, strolling/sitting in Astley Ainsley grounds, weather permitting.

#### Other local meetings

Central Edinburgh and Portobello-Musselburgh are closest. Times are listed in SESAME, but for full info and a map, see <https://quakerscotland.org>

Central Edinburgh's **Midweek Meeting on Wednesdays**, 12.30 for 30 mins at Victoria Terrace meeting house. Tea and coffee are available, and you can bring a packed lunch.

### SPECIAL COLLECTION

Our collection in December is for **River Garden IFDAS** which runs a residential centre at Auchincruive (pic p4) to help people to learn to become independent from drugs and alcohol. They stay there 3 years. David Somervell will speak to this. More information and an online donations button (top right) at [www.rivergarden.scot](http://www.rivergarden.scot)

### QUAKER EVENTS

**Evening Meeting** by Zoom on first Thursdays at 7.30pm (*note change of time*), so **Thur 1 Dec**.

**Christmas party – Sat 10 Dec** 4-6pm at Deirdre and David's house. Bring food and a game if you can.

**Christmas meetings** – Dec 25 and Jan 1 are on Sundays this year. We plan to hold meetings by Zoom only, at the usual time on both days.

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South Edin friends are welcome to these in-person Edinburgh Central events. Qs to Rachel Frith.

*Note changed singing and book dates for December.*

**Coffee** – at Rachel's house, usually on first and third Thursdays from 10.15 am. Please contact Rachel in advance to ensure numbers OK.

**Carol singing**, 7.30 pm on **Thur 15 Dec** at Victoria Terrace.

**Book Group – Sun 18 Dec** to discuss *The Bridge of San Luis Rey* by Thornton Wilder.

### Christmas boxes



The horse taxi drivers' box on the railway bridge adjacent to the Open Door on Morningside Road, and locally-manufactured post and police boxes in Belhaven Drive, just around the corner. See p3.

## Memorial Meeting for Rachel Howell

Held at Victoria Terrace Meeting House on 19 November 2022



Rachel's Memorial Meeting had a restorative atmosphere, somehow even joyful at times although we were all feeling her sudden loss on 6 September 2022 at the age of 48 as very shocking and far too soon.

Rachel had introduced the idea of a Memorial Meeting shortly before she died to her sister like this 'The Quakers might have a Memorial Meeting – you might find it interesting but don't feel you have to go'!

Her sister both came and ministered in a wonderful way intent on moving away from 'canonising' Rachel, telling us some wonderful family stories but full of love and gratefulness for her older sister's company and advice.

Many people ministered both on the screen from Oxford Meeting and other places and from within the room. Rachel had impacted so many people's lives through her years of voluntary work in refugee communities in the UK and the USA, through her PhD work and most recently her very successful work as a university teacher.

We heard from people who had lived with her in communities and shared houses, sung with her in choirs and learned songs from her choir leadership, been on marches with her, learned from her, walked with her, joined circle dances with her, done yoga and been on retreats with her, respected her voice in voluntary organisation meetings, been helped by her as a neighbour and been impressed by her in a myriad of ways.

Ola Uduku and David Somervell were the Elders and Ola extended the Meeting a little to encompass a feeling that others might still wish to contribute. At this time Rachel's mother spoke very movingly about how Rachel's talk of 'holding people in the light' felt close to her own form of 'wandering prayer'.

David Somervell introduced the 3 charities which were the focus of the collection at The Meeting – The Prison Phoenix Trust, Crisis at Christmas, and Friends of the Earth Scotland. Links to these:

[www.theppt.org.uk](http://www.theppt.org.uk) | [www.crisis.org.uk](http://www.crisis.org.uk) | <https://foe.scot>

The collection astonishingly raised almost £500 which will be divided between them. All the charities will be bereft of Rachel's practical contributions – writing letters to support prisoners learning yoga for the Prison Phoenix Trust, being a Trustee on the Board of Friends of the Earth Scotland and working for Crisis on the London streets every Christmas. True to her very practical and principled nature she never stopped at just sending money. Now some of us need to step into her place in her active roles in helping people ...

*Deirdre Armstrong*

A link to a Zoom recording of the meeting was given in the email sending out the newsletter, or ask Deirdre or Neil. A memorial minute for our local meeting will follow.

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## Guiding someone with visual impairment

Some sighted people are very empathic. But the lack of imaginative empathy and affirmation from some others is less easy: people coming up and not saying who they are, then wandering off without saying so, so that you would find yourself talking to a blank space. Not being able to see who else is at a party, or how to join their group; depending on people coming up to *you*. Being invited to talk only about disability rather than the myriad other things that make up a full life experience.

Not everyone guides well! Please mention in good time any steps or slopes down, uneven stretches of road or pavement. Share which way a door ahead opens, and which side the hinge is on. Say who's approaching. Describe any new space just entered. Don't walk too fast.

Imagine arriving at Edinburgh station, and not having a clue where to find the exit, a taxi, bus or even the help desk.

*From our late Friend Hilary Davies (see October issue)*

## Invaluable obsessions on the web, part 15. *Disraeli gears*



As is common, the website [www.disraeligears.co.uk](http://www.disraeligears.co.uk) documents massive amounts of work and knowledge, but holds no clues to the creator's identity. However Deirdre reveals that he was one of the founders of the Edinburgh Bicycle Coop.

The subject is derailleur gears, the Disraeli descriptor a joke around a common mispronunciation. The Derailleur Wikipedia page is presumably maintained by similar enthusiasts, and reports “*Dérailleur* is a French word, derived from the derailment of a train from its tracks. Its first recorded use was 1930.” (133 views/day, 34 edits per year).

Older than you think though – the illustration (left) is from an 1899 patent for the New Protean two-speed gear that was fitted to the Whippet safety bicycle.

If you want to explore the detailed history of this fantastic asset, invaluable for cycling in hilly Edinburgh, and to competitive as well as regular cycling, you could spend a few hours here.

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## Christmas Boxes (part 16 parts a b and c)

The wooden box on the railway bridge on page 1 was the taxi office from which you could get a horse (Hansom or similar) cab, likely dating back to the opening of Morningside railway station in 1884.

The cast iron post box on page 1 is likely to have come from the Mungal Foundry of the **Carron Company**, near Falkirk, which cast pillar boxes (from 1922), wall boxes (from 1952) and lamp boxes (from 1969 to 1982). Info from the nicely niche Letter Box Study Group <https://lbgsg.org> – scores of photos there too. Edinburgh's cast iron police boxes were made by the same company. For a map detailing the Edinburgh police box network when it was created in 1932, again from an anonymous contributor, see <https://bit.ly/3i6BZca>

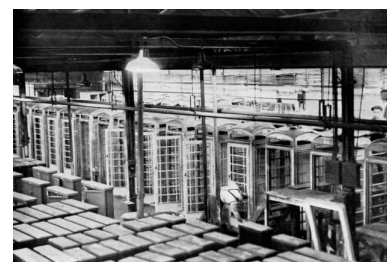
Our **Wikipedia page of the month** is **The Carron Company** (24 views per day). Their drain covers are all over the city, along with many other features hidden in plain sight.

Carron made huge numbers of phone boxes too, but there do not seem to be any survivors near us in South Edinburgh. Photos below are from the National Telephone Kiosk Collection at Avoncroft Museum, Bromsgrove. K1 (1921), K2 (1924), four K6s (1935), and more police boxes. The K4 (1930) not shown incorporated a stamp dispensing machine. As an extravagant present, a K6 for your garden would cost £3,300+ now.



More about phone boxes at [www.the-telephone-box.co.uk](http://www.the-telephone-box.co.uk) – even buy one, at [www.x2connect.com](http://www.x2connect.com)

Recently the inheritors of the Carron company have been making frying pans from melted down K6s, using original moulds, as part of a campaign to remember the vast iron casting industry that developed between Bo'ness and Falkirk. Info and links from previously featured Twitter account [@FalkirkMade](https://twitter.com/FalkirkMade)





## NEWS

We are members of **the Stop Climate Chaos Scotland** coalition [www.stopclimatechaos.scot](http://www.stopclimatechaos.scot) SCCS is encouraging Friends to press the Scottish Government to go further. There is a sample for a letter to send to MSPs in an email circulated recently from GM ([scotfriends@gmail.com](mailto:scotfriends@gmail.com)).

The Nov 24 edition of **Quake**, the weekly newsletter from BYM (archive and sign-up at <https://bit.ly/3gAhZOZ>), has links to

- *Supporting human rights and peace in Russia*, **Tue 13 Dec**, 7-9 pm
- *Understanding Discernment* **9 Jan - 5 Feb**, Woodbrooke course
- *Revising our book of discipline*. and other interesting things.

## News of Friends

John Fox is a Central Edinburgh Friend who lives near Gorgie/Slateford. He is less able to get out, and feeling isolated, hoping for visits and occasional company for coffee or longer trips out. Could any South Edinburgh Friends help? Please contact Carol Dean (Central Edinburgh).



**This month's charity** – building a vibrant and working community where people wanting to be free of their alcohol and drug problems can live and work. Here they can gain the skills and the confidence they need to become valued and productive members of society. More details on front page and at [www.rivergarden.scot](http://www.rivergarden.scot)

*Our newsletter is usually published near the last Sunday of each month. Christmas present reviews and other crackers to [neilturn@gmail.com](mailto:neilturn@gmail.com) Find this edition, plus archives of previous, at [www.quakerscotland.org/south-edinburgh](http://www.quakerscotland.org/south-edinburgh)*

## Short watching



**Smoke Break** This 9 min, quiet, fixed-camera observation of different groups of people taking one (<https://vimeo.com/745502766>) shows the value of little unscripted interactions, 'idle moments of connection', in establishing healthy relationships and de-stressing. This can be done without smoking, but is difficult to reproduce on Zoom. (via [aeon.co](http://aeon.co))

## Short browse

An unexpected Scottish Odyssey. Did I tell you about the time my son failed his driving test for the second time? <https://bit.ly/3V8K1jH>

## Longer browse

**The dangers of minimalism** from our **Twitter account of the month**, [@culturaltutor](https://twitter.com/culturaltutor) (355,200 followers). <https://bit.ly/3Vw7USz> But don't miss the scores of other topics, including lots of beautiful art. Or there is a library of threads at <https://culturaltutor.com/the-library>



Evolution of the phone box and of the bollard