



February 2026



## MEETINGS FOR WORSHIP

We meet on **Sundays 10.30-11.30 am** at the Open Door, 420 Morningside Road, and remotely by Zoom (hybrid).

Recent notices and late changes are sent by weekly email. Join the email list by clicking the link at <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.

Children are welcome anytime. For details of planned activities, see online.

## 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>

Several South Edinburgh Friends also attend **Midweek Meeting on Wednesdays**, 12.30 for 30 mins at Victoria Terrace meeting house. Tea and coffee available, you can eat your packed lunch.

## SPECIAL COLLECTION

Our collection in February is for **Corrymeela Ecumenical peace centre**, founded in Northern Ireland 60 years ago. Alison Burnley will speak to this. [www.corrymeela.org](http://www.corrymeela.org) has more info and a Donate button. More on page 3.

## QUAKER EVENTS

Latest updates at <https://bit.ly/SEdQuakEvents>

**Workshop after Meeting – Know your Gifts** (What does our meeting need?) **Sun 1 Feb** led by Zoe Prosser. Bring a sandwich. Preparation for next session of Open for Transformation, but good without that too.

**Quakers in Scotland** meet *online* on **Sat 7 Feb**, 9.30-1.00 pm. Agenda and Zoom details by email.

**Open for Transformation** – 5th of 6 sessions. 7.30-9.00 pm on **Mon 9 Feb** (Alison Chalmers hosting) or 2pm on **Thur 12 Feb** (Ian and Rosamond).

**Book Group** on *Woman in the Polar Night* by Christiane Ritter, **Thur 19 Feb**, 2 pm, venue tbc. to Carol Jennings has more info.

**Open for Transformation** – Last of six. 7.30-9.00 pm on **Mon 23 Feb** (Alison Chalmers hosting) or 2pm on **Thur 26 Feb** (Ian and Rosamond).

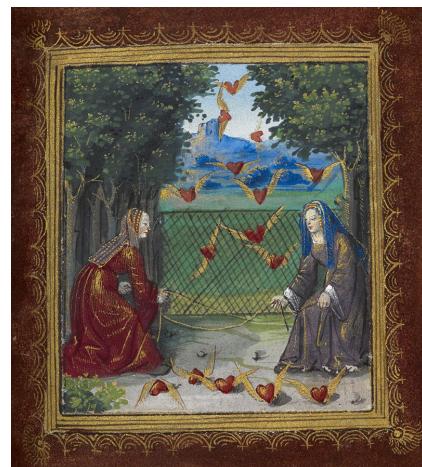
**Quakers in Scotland** meet *in person and online* on **Sat 28 Feb** at the AK Bell library in Perth. Times and details by email.

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From Rachel Frith of Edinburgh Central:

**Coffee** at Rachel's house on first and third Thursdays, 10.15 am. please confirm with Rachel.

**Central Book Group** – third Sundays after soup. February: Andrew Miller, *The Life in Winter*.

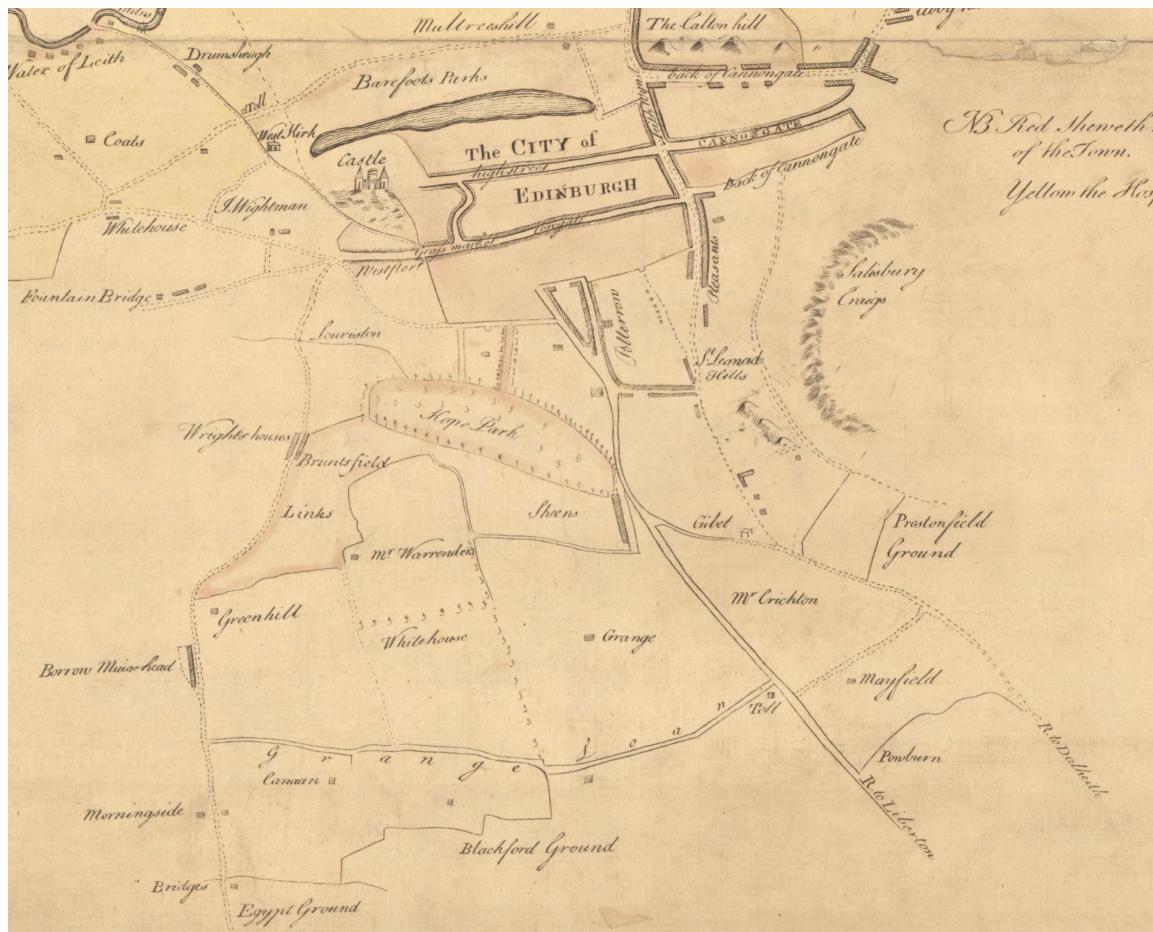


Valentine thoughts: The *Petit Livre d'Amour* was hand drawn by the 16th-century Lyon-born poet Pierre Sala for his lover and future wife Marguerite Bullioud. *British Library via Public Domain Review*.

## South Edinburgh in 1759

This map by Richard Cooper shows the original city before the massive expansion of development to the North and then to the South. Available from the NLS online collection; original held at the Signet Library.

The Nor' Loch has not yet been drained. Construction of the New Town began 8 years later in 1767 and continued over the next 80+ years. North Bridge opened in 1772, South Bridge 1786, and George IV Bridge 1832. The current mostly iron North Bridge (undergoing restoration at present) replaced the original bridge in 1897. The Meadows are 'Hope Park', and Princes St Gardens 'Barefoots Parks'. South Edinburgh is a patchwork of estates named for their grand owners and houses. The names of most persist.



*Red Sheweth the Property & Superiority of the Town. Yellow the Hospital Lands [to North and West].*

## Where was the Quaker Meeting House?

From David Mealand's short article in SESAME 146, April 2009, reproduced at [www.quakerscotland.org/news/very-brief-account-quakers-edinburgh-1653-1938](http://www.quakerscotland.org/news/very-brief-account-quakers-edinburgh-1653-1938)

In 1730 a meeting house to hold 600 was built in Peebles Wynd off the Cowgate. A separate "bread and cheese" meeting was held at Meadowfield in the Canongate on his own premises by the third William Miller\*. By 1785 the South Bridge was due to be built and the city planners had three streets demolished. One of them contained the meeting house in Peebles Wynd which came down in 1789. It had been in one of the poorer and rougher parts of the city. With compensation money, and some help from the sale of a meeting house in Glasgow, a new meeting house was built in the Pleasance in 1791 next to the Quaker burial ground. The meeting there continued till 1944.

\* The first William Miller was appointed hereditary Master Gardener of the Abbey of Holyroodhouse by the Duke of Hamilton in 1689. He was a prominent Edinburgh Quaker and 'prosperous seedsman'; prosperous enough to become owner of Craigentinny house and estate. A branch of the family became prominent in Whitehaven, West Cumbria. The Duke of Hamilton 'the premier peer of Scotland' is also hereditary keeper of the Palace of Holyroodhouse. Their seven major houses and castles included Kinneil House near Bo'ness.

Mostly from James Smith, The Story of Craigentinny, Old Edinburgh Club 1938. <https://bit.ly/4jOT5Y5> (pdf)

## Corrymeela Ecumenical peace centre – this month's collection

Corrymeela was set up in Northern Ireland 60 years ago to welcome people from different sides and provide a way for them to meet safely, have difficult conversations well, and support one another finding a way based on trust and reconciliation. It has inspired people around the world to live out reconciliation in their daily lives. They now work with marginalised communities, provide help with trauma whether recent or from Northern Ireland's own troubled history.

Alison Burnley's father worked there for 20 years in the early days and gave the house he had been living in there to be used as a retreat, as well as planting a lot of trees.

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## Quakers in Scotland

Area Meeting on Monday 19 January discussed whether to join the other AMs by fully integrating with Quakers in Scotland and dissolving the SESAM charity. Our minute on the subject was one of several LM minutes in support of progressing with that. After a meeting extending well beyond 9pm AM's minute concluded:

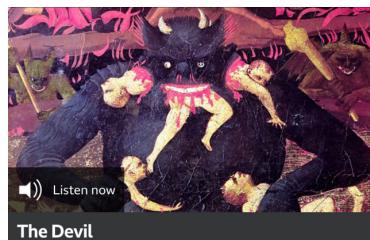
"We are not in unity on proceeding forthwith to dissolution. Our intention is to be legally part of QiS once sufficient progress has been made and Trustees and others working with QiS have been able to clarify all aspects, including membership, to the satisfaction of SESAM in session."

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## Further tales of admirable obsession

**In our Time** – Matt Webb has catalogued all 1078 episodes of Melvin Bragg's long running-academic radio series by subject area and date, with links to full info and the BBC recording at <https://braggscope.com>

So you can have your interest piqued by the Late Devonian Extinction and move on to 10 more discussions of the earth's formation, black holes, types of star, and the nature of space. History of religions, including Quakers, is well represented. You can also browse by Dewey decimal number. Wikipedia has a list by date, but with links to Wikipedia pages of discussants.



## Directory

- 000 Computer science, information and general works
- 100 Philosophy and psychology
- ▼ 200 Religion
  - 200 Religion (14)
  - 210 Philosophy and theory of religion (3)
  - 220 The Bible (4)
    - [Josephus](#) 21 May, 2015
    - [King Solomon](#) 7 Jun, 2012
    - [The Dead Sea Scrolls](#) 4 May, 2023
    - [Typology](#) 17 Apr, 2025
  - 230 Christianity (11)
  - 260 Social and ecclesiastical theology (1)
  - 270 History of Christianity (30)
  - 290 Other religions (18)
- 300 Social sciences
- 400 Language
- 500 Science
- 600 Technology
- 700 Arts and recreation
- 800 Literature
- 900 History and geography

**Galactic Compass** Matt Webb is also behind this app. All it does is display a floating arrow that points to the location of the centre of our galaxy.



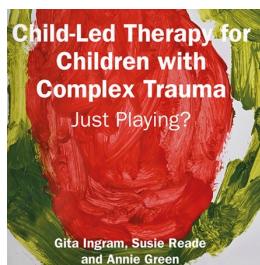
*'Surprisingly grounding'. 'Helps put life into perspective'. 'You won't know how much you needed it until you try it.'*

The distance to the supermassive black hole Sagittarius A is 26,000 light years.

## Other news and future events

**Morningside Justice and Peace Group** has a very interesting list of short talks – tapestry on 4 Feb, but wide range of politics, environmental, and other topical issues. **10.30 on Wed** mornings during the dark months. At the Eric Liddell Centre, £2 per talk. See the programme at <https://morningsidejandp.org>

## In the media



Susie Reade has just published this book with colleagues. For those interested in children's mental health, in particular clinicians, social workers, teachers. Academic but full of down to earth, transferable material and ideas. Numerous descriptions of children's play and how to observe and respond. Discount code 26SMA1 gives 20% off till 30 June at <https://bit.ly/4a1Esx3>

**Favourite Quakers in Fiction** – Bridget Collins 2019, [www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/m0002g4b](https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/m0002g4b) in *Open Book* (5 mins from 9.45)

**George Fox and the Quakers** – from Melvyn Bragg's extraordinary long-running academic series **In Our Time**. This episode is from 2012, 45 mins at [www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b01f67y4](https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b01f67y4)  
A textbook example of Admirable Obsession also arises from this series, see page 3.

**Annie Miller** in *The Friend*, 25 July, wrote about the 1700th anniversary of the council of Nicaea, which attempted to standardise tenets and beliefs of multivariate early churches. This is also the subject of a fascinating *In Our Time* episode (see p3) [www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/b008jglt](https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/b008jglt)

**Thirst** – Above too academic? How much we should drink? Your editor in *The Thirst for Water*, [www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/w3ct70sb](https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/w3ct70sb) (World Service, July 2025)

## Happy Anniversary

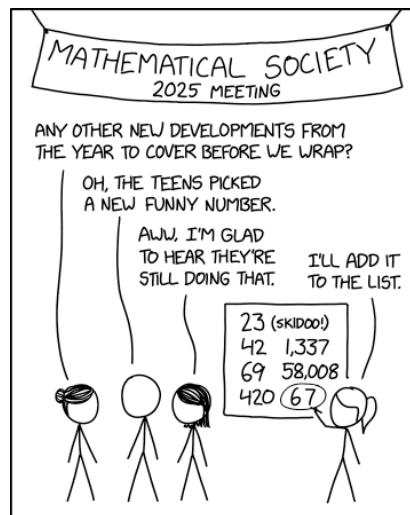
US abolitionist **Angelina Grimké** was born 221 years ago on the 20th, and Edinburgh's **Eliza Wigham** 206 years ago on the 23rd. Eliza campaigned strongly for abolition and was one of the two 'fair Quakeresses' who are said to have been with Frederick Douglass when he carved 'Send back the money' in large letters on the slopes of Arthur's Seat during his 1846 visit\*.

If we were to include those with a strong Quaker background but not membership we could add author, suffragist, and contributor to the Keswick movement **Hannah Whitall Smith** who would have been 194 on the 7th, and cool actor of the 1950s **James Dean** (Rebel Without a Cause, East of Eden), 95 on the 8th.

\* [www.bulldozia.com/douglass-in-scotland](https://www.bulldozia.com/douglass-in-scotland)

*ChatGPT helped to compile a list of historic Quaker birthdays by month, but it took several lengthy rounds of prompting, refinement, and checking.*

## Adding to history



In 1899, people were walking around shouting '23' at each other and laughing, and confused reporters were writing articles trying to figure out what it meant. <https://xkcd.com/3184> *Explain XKCD* gives plausible answers at <https://bit.ly/3YWVzKc>

*Our newsletter is published near the last Sunday of each month. March mayhem to neilturn@gmail.com*

*Find this edition, plus archives of previous, at [www.quakerscotland.org/south-edinburgh](https://www.quakerscotland.org/south-edinburgh)*