

SOUTH EDINBURGH MEETING

June 2020



A deer in Morningside High St.

MEETINGS FOR WORSHIP

There are no physical Meetings for Worship during the current epidemic. But 25+ Friends each week have been joining our meetings via Zoom, **every Sunday 10.30 am**, which are running really well. Instructions in emails.



Joining by phone is possible, but not so good. We're keen that everyone should have the best possible access, so please ask for help. First Qs to Martin Burnell or David Somervell.

If joining by phone, please remember to press **6 *** (6 then 'star') after you have joined, to mute your phone. Same to unmute if you want to speak. That improves the sound quality for everyone.

QUAKER EVENTS

Mid-week Zoom catch up – Thursdays 2.30-3.30 pm being tested, but see emails for confirmation. Same link as for Sunday Meeting.

For the following Zoom events, please contact Rachel Frith (Edinburgh Central Meeting) for login details. rachel.frith@waitrose.com or by phone.

Singing Group – via Zoom, so the first one must have worked! 7.30 pm on **Tue 2 June**

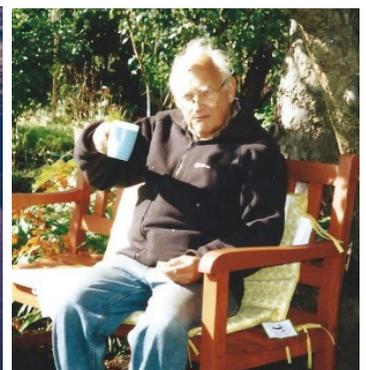
Online coffee – bring your own to an online conversation, 10.30-12 on **Thur 4 and 18 June**.

Book group – will discuss Jim Crace's *Harvest*, at about 1pm, after MfW at Central Meeting, on **Sun 28 June**.

SPECIAL COLLECTION

In June is for **Second Sight**. Deirdre Armstrong has written about them, and details on how to give, on page 2. www.secondsight.org.uk

DAVID BELL



Remembering our Friend David Bell, who died on 9th May aged 82. His funeral was held on 21st May.

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

Second Sight, this month's charity

Roisin Armstrong worked for this charity for a time during university vacations and had the highest admiration for their staff and work. Francisca van Holthoon wrote to us via Deirdre on behalf of the charity:

Sight restoring surgery in North India's poorest communities has been Second Sight's main work since this tiny charity was founded. This has had to be stopped for the time being due to Covid 19 and our partner hospitals are all eagerly awaiting the moment they can start operating again. However, they have not been waiting passively but have looked for ways to help their communities, e.g. by getting involved in food distribution programmes to isolated, vulnerable communities and the Lakshman Eye Hospital in Muzzafarpur has taken in migrant labourers who had returned to Bihar from Delhi . On arrival they were told to go into quarantine before returning to their villages but they had nowhere to go.

Lucy (Mathen, founder of Second Sight) and I won't be able to visit Bihar for a while, which feels strange as we are so used to going regularly. Meanwhile we carry on our fundraising efforts help alleviate the huge blindness backlog which needs to be cleared before our partner hospitals can be self-sustainable.

Second Sight has no office and no paid staff, yet has cured approximately 500,000 blind people in Bihar to date and will resume its highly effective programme as soon as its partner eye hospitals reopen for surgery.

Lucy's most recent book about Second Sight, a modest looking paperback called '**Outgrowing the Big**', is also available by getting in touch with Lucy at the above address. It costs £20, so every book can fund one operation. So, now most of us have more time than ever before, maybe Quaker friends might be interested in buying it?

Donating: At www.secondsight.org.uk there isn't a mechanism to send donations directly, so please send a cheque to **Lucy Mathen, 8 Battledean Road, London N5 1VZ**, or for bank details for a direct transfer, email LucyMathen@Secondsight.org.uk – either way, please indicate whether the charity can claim Gift Aid on your donation. OR keep your donation in a marked envelope till Quaker physical meetings resume.

Deirdre Armstrong



The Scottish Refugee Council, as part of its Covid-19 Refugee Support appeal, is asking people to send any old **mobile phones, tablets or laptops** that they have in the house. If you have a device to donate, and have not already offered it to someone in our meeting or otherwise in need, please email them at: funding@scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk

More about the Scottish Refugee Council at www.scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk

Minutes of South Edinburgh Local Meeting for Worship for Business Held online 1pm Sunday 10 May 2020

1. Opening Worship

We heard a reading from Quaker Faith and Practice 28.02, from William Penn writing in 1677 on how best to prepare for Quaker meetings. There were 13 Friends present at our Zoom meeting.

2. Minutes of our 8 March 2020 meeting – Matters Arising:

- Rendition and Torture (Q-CAT) - Ian Murray MP has responded - but no clear way forward as Select Committees not yet meeting at Westminster.
- Sanctuary Meetings Gathering in Scotland 9.45 for 10-11.30am Saturday 30 May - book via <https://sanctuary30may.eventbrite.co.uk>

3. Our Income and Expenditure 2019

Our treasurer Susan Robertson reported on figures submitted to Area Meeting Treasury Team. Our closing balance last year (2018) was £8,427 and this recent year was £8,422 (2019).

Our Local Meeting income last year was slightly down (£3,677) compared to 2018 (£4,008) with a smaller surplus - after paying our premises costs (£3,328) etc - of £175 against £243 in 2018.

Friends very generously gave a total of £2,318 which has been sent to 12 monthly charities. Full details shared in the Statement and Susan's Commentary.

We thanked Susan very much for such clear and thorough work, and we thanked Phil Noble for independently checking the accounts.

4. Proposal for a midweek online "Drop-in session"

We heard of the idea for our LM hosting an informal Drop in / chat opportunity where we might share thoughts, hopes and fears - and trivia of course! - in a way not possible after Meeting for Worship on Sundays.

We agreed to hold such a meeting at **11.30am - 12.30pm on Thursdays** for a trial period. Susan agreed to hold the first session on Thursday 14 May and we agreed that at each meeting the next host would be nominated to welcome participants. [Post Meeting Note: Use Sunday's Zoom link.]

5. Take Action for Palestine

We heard of the Israeli Government plans to legislate to annex significant parts of the Occupied Palestine Territories; and the Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel ([EAPPI's request](#) to contact MPs to urge them to show their support for international law and peace in Palestine by adding their name to an [appeal to the Prime Minister organised by The Council for Arab-British Understanding \(Caabu\)](#). We ask our clerk to write to Ian Murray, our MP, and we encourage Friends to do the same individually.

6. Death of David Bell

We heard that our long-time friend had died last night Saturday 9 May at St Margaret's Care Home. He had found the last year difficult and was quite infirm. He had tested positive for the Covid-19 virus.

We invite friends who have memories of David to send them to Susan Robertson, who has - along with Sylvia Massey, Dorothy Buglass and Sara Davies from Central Meeting - been so very faithful in supporting David since he found independent life difficult and moved from Ratho.

6. Dates of Next Local Meetings for Worship for Business

Sundays: 20 September and 29 November – after Meeting for Worship.

QUAKING THE LOCKDOWN

Listening

We had ministry on Sunday 10th May about the Pentland Hills and what they mean to us. Brings them to life listening to ***Weir of Hermiston***, RL Stevenson's last and unfinished novel. Very well dramatised and a gripping tale with Quaker relevance – please report to Deirdre what that is. www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m000hfwk

Reading

The Dazzle of Day by Molly Gloss is a cross between science fiction and literary fiction. It is set on a starship which left Earth 175 years earlier because of ecological destruction, and now close enough to a possible new home planet to find out what it's like and have to make decisions about whether/how to live there.

But this starship is peopled entirely by Quakers, originally from Costa Rica, Norway, and Japan, all speaking Esperanto. Meetings for worship for business are described in detail (one review commented that they had never read a novel in which the *process* of a meeting is a plot device!).

The author is not a Quaker herself. Authors write about groups they don't belong to all the time but I do find it amazing that someone would choose Quakers. If you're not one, what leads you to think "hmn... would be interesting to write a novel about a bunch of Quakers having to face enormous changes in their lives" or "hmn... would be interesting to write about a bunch of people having to face enormous changes in their lives - and extra interesting if they do so through Quaker processes".

Available to borrow from the library of Rachel Howell when lockdown is lifted.

Rachel Howell, way over the word limit

Watching

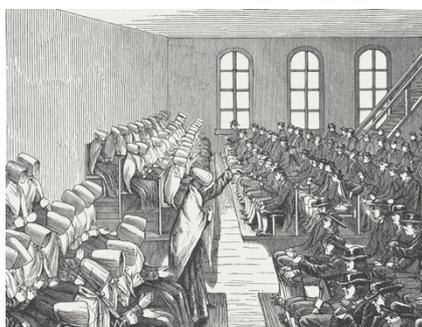
Michael Mears first performed his one-man, multi-part play **This Evil Thing** at the Festival in 2017. He has crafted this performance over years and feels passionately about the issue of conscientious objection. Now amazingly he has made his own film of it again single-handed. Watch it in 6 15-minute chapters at https://youtu.be/loDLsow0_Sk

A moving account of those who refused to fight in the 1st World War, mainly from their own words.



Studying

Radical spirituality – the early history of quakers. This free online course is running again at www.futurelearn.com/courses/quakers



Lego

For the genius **Zoom Meeting in Lego**, we thank an anonymous Edinburgh Friend with both free time and admirable creative skill. Includes favourites such as 'Friend showing only the top of their head', 'the sideways-on Friend', and 'very close and blurry view-up-nose' Friend.

Artsing

Images in May of younger Friends doing this provoked competition



Susie and Rufus are the Ambassadors



David and Deirdre are the coo

Quaking of these pages: 83%

MORE NEWS AND DATES

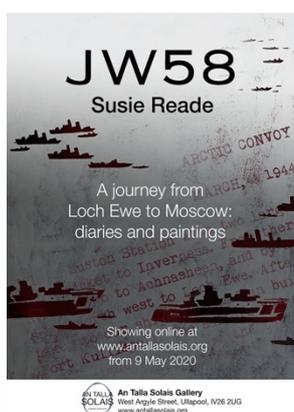
New to Quakers? This year's **Enquirers Meeting** will take place by Zoom, on **Sat 18 July, 10.30-3**, with a break for lunch. For anyone who wants to find out more about Quakers

- Want to explore Quaker worship?
- Want to find out more about how we are organised?

Details of how to book and join to follow.

This year's Yearly Meeting Gathering is deferred to 2021, 31 July – 6 Aug. If you were booked in, you can simply transfer to those dates if you ask. More at www.quaker.org.uk/ym

Susie's exhibition



Susie's exhibition **JW58** was due to open in a lovely gallery in Ullapool in May, but due to covid restrictions it is now online at www.antallasolais.org/jw58-online-exhibition

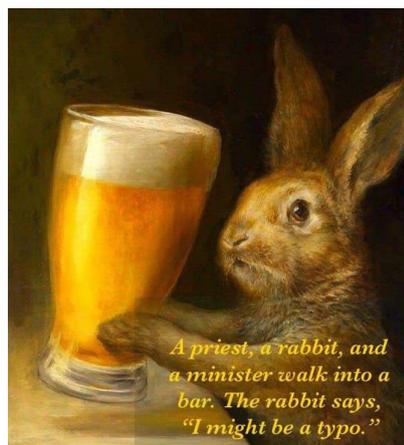
A collaboration between mother and daughter, JW58 is about two journeys; the journey taken by Lavinia Ponsonby in 1944, and also the journey taken 75 years later by her daughter, Susie Reade.

"The paintings are inspired by my mother's journey to work in Moscow by Arctic convoy in 1944. This exhibition follows directly on from an evening spent a few years back in Sylvia's front room. At that I had showed some of my drawings and told some of Mum's history. I was so encouraged by the level of interest from Friends that I went on to paint and assemble this whole exhibition."

There's also short video at <https://youtu.be/SUkCr93NQf4>

FROM THE CHILDREN

A priest, a minister, and a –



Later, they go on to a blood bank. The rabbit says, "I might be a Type O".

After that they go back to the bar again but the bar tender asks the rabbit "Are you allowed to drink here?" to which the rabbit replied "It's autocorrect".

IN OTHER NEWSLETTERS

The **New York Times** had a great article on Quaker Meetings by Zoom, mostly pictures of Friends. <https://nyti.ms/2TNAdOI>

Hannah Brock Womack, Quaker and social justice campaigner, appeared on BBC Radio 4's *Beyond Belief* as part of a panel discussing **the place of marriage in today's world**. 30 minutes at www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m000j79n

This newsletter is usually often published on the last Sunday of each month, except when it's different. Send your ideas to neiltturn@gmail.com

Please get in touch if you know someone who i would benefit from a posted or delivered copy.

This edition, plus archives of previous, available from quakerscotland.org/south-edinburgh