



SOUTH EDINBURGH MEETING

October 2025



Friends at the Climate Lobby of parliament on 18 Sep

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 October is for **Compassion in World Farming**. Much more info and donate online at www.ciwf.org.uk Deirdre Armstrong will speak to this.

QUAKER EVENTS

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

Quaker week dates are 27 Sep to 5 Oct with World Quaker Day on **Sun 5 Oct**.

Informal get together –at Ian and Rosamond's house on **Sun 12 Oct** 5.30-7.30 pm. Or 6-8 ... Please bring finger food to share, and for numbers let Rosamond know you'll be there.

Spiritual Review – The first of five planned sessions will be on 'Celebrating the Quaker Way'. Two opportunities, 7.30-9 pm on **Mon 27 Oct** (Alison Chalmers host) or 2pm on **Thur 30 Oct** (Ian and Rosamond). More in LMfB notes on p2.

Book Group on Nan Shepherd's *The Living Mountain*. **Thur 23 Oct** at 2 pm, venue tbc.

Area Meeting South Edinburgh are the official hosts for SESAM at 7 Victoria Terrace on **Sat 1 Nov**.

Quakers in Scotland, the new body that has taken on all the functions of General Meeting for Scotland, has its second meeting at Edinburgh Meeting House on **Sat 8 Nov**. See page 3.

From Rachel Frith of Edinburgh Central:

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

Central Book Group – third Sundays after soup. November: – contact Rachel



A clock made in Shildon celebrating early railways. Shildon was the starting point of first passenger steam service on the Stockton-Darlington railway 200 years ago. Local Quaker Edward Pease was the main promoter. The purpose of the railway was to reduce costs and scale up shipping of coal, but passenger services caught on quickly. By 1831 stationary steam engines were pulling coal wagons up the Innocent Railway through Scotland's first rail tunnel. Moving steam engine services arrived at Scotland Street and Haymarket stations in 1846.



Notes from Local Meeting for Business of 31 August

17 Friends met at the Open Door after a shared lunch. Full minutes have been circulated by email. Key items of business were:

- **Spiritual review** – we plan to commence a series of 5 Meetings for Learning based on Ben Pink Dandelion's 2014 Swarthmore Lecture *Open for Transformation*. Each will have two opportunities to join: first on the evening of Mon 27 Oct or afternoon of Thur 30 Oct, see page 1. Watch the original lecture at <https://youtu.be/oRO-IGD9emM> - book or ebook available from Friends House library.
 - **From Area Meeting** – we questioned whether the Warm Hub at Victoria Terrace had been successful enough to justify the effort required; and ask that AM should discern itself how many meetings to hold.
 - **5th Sundays:** on 30 Nov and 26 March we will hold half hour meetings followed by half an hour of worship sharing, and consider other and outdoor opportunities for Spring and Summer 2026.
 - **Meeting with MP:** we heard a somewhat frustrated report from those who met with Ian Murray, who at the time held the additional role of Secretary of State for Scotland.
 - **Charities:** Kate Arnot is coordinating suggestions for November onwards.
 - **Opening up:** Volunteers to widen the sharing of this role please?
 - **Next MfB:** will be held on **Sun 23 Nov** after Meeting for Worship.
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Adventures in Worship: Suggestions for how we might use the fifth Sunday in the month.

Live adventurously (Advices and Queries 1.02, 27)

We have been looking in our Meeting and in our elders and pastoral carers team at the creative possibilities of using fifth Sundays differently.

After months of Covid restrictions a meeting was offered on fifth Sundays outside in the grounds of Astley Ainslie Hospital for those who might welcome this, particularly for Friends anxious about infection. There was also one school age child who might appreciate being out of doors. Later, many Friends gathering in Neil and Helen's garden with little Esther Marshall Cross enjoying the garden and worshippers. This developed into a regular and valued feature in the summer months.

At our last Local Meeting for Business we agreed that on 30 November and 29 March we would have half an hour of Meeting for Worship as usual, followed by half an hour of worship sharing. This proposal emerged after Jo Swanson and David Somervell led us in a creative exploration of What is Ministry? The worship sharing that followed was appreciated by the large number of us who took part. Incorporating this into our worship is part of our Reflections on the Spiritual Life of our Meeting which is taking shape. During fifth Sundays during the summer months out of door Meetings will again be offered. Other suggestions have included:

- A 90 minute Meeting for Worship – yes, there are takers!
- Music or singing, either after a shortened Meeting, or at a different time of day. (Woodbrooke offers a workshop on the use of chants. There is also a Quaker Song Book.)

As Quakers we have amazing freedom to live and worship adventurously, but need to be mindful of the core place of silent worship as the basis of our life together. I offer these thoughts with this in mind.

'The treasure I had found [in meeting for worship] seemed startlingly simple, and I held this treasure quietly to myself ...Part of its simplicity was that I and others were to start just where we were at the moment and proceed at our own pace from there... The promptings of love and truth were starting places and we could move at our own pace to recognise them as the leadings of God-the beyond which drew me and others on from our limitations and despair and smallness.'

Ruth Fawell, 1987 (QF&P 2.06)

Rosamond Robertson

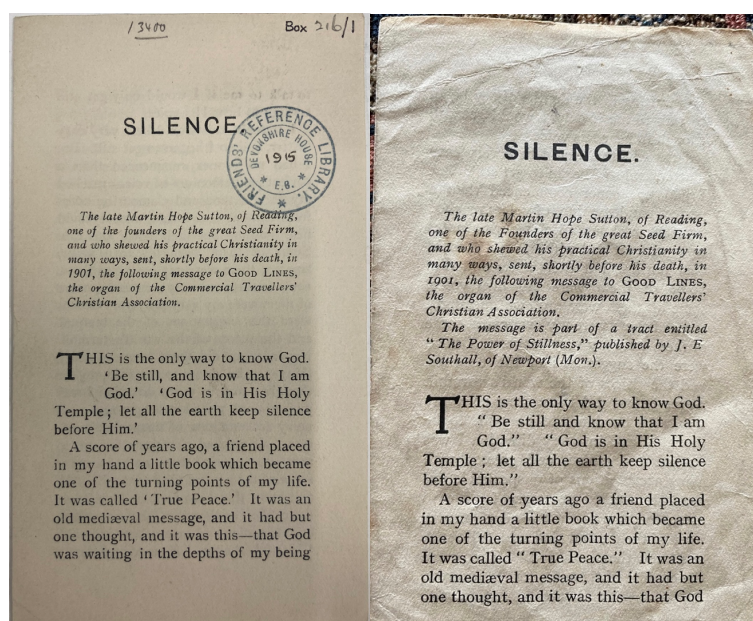
Quakers in Scotland (QiS)

At its first meeting in Perth on the 20th September, alongside the final meeting of General Meeting for Scotland (GM), 443 Friends who had formally transferred their membership from GM to QiS were welcomed. Others were urged to follow - if there is anyone locally who hasn't done this yet, please speak to a clerk or member of the elders and pastoral care team about how to. Attenders are also asked to agree to the transfer of their contact details.

QiS takes on all the responsibilities of GM, but in addition will be able to take on the functions of Area Meetings if requested. Three of Scotland's four Area Meetings have indicated a desire to move their legal and charitable functions to QiS as soon as possible, hoping that this will be completed within 2025. SESAM is the outlier, but will consider the question in January. All Area meetings continue to function until they formally hand over responsibilities and assets, and we anticipate that regional meetings conducting much of the business that we see at SESAM are likely to continue.

QiS holds its second meeting at Edinburgh Meeting House on **Sat 8 November**.

100 years of Silence



In September Mary Steven's 'Getting to Know' drew attention to *Silence*, a short pamphlet that many Friends remember. It still captures very well what many Friends experience in Meeting for Worship, in a way that appeals to seekers as well as to established Friends.

Friends House Library catalogue reveals that the first edition of *Silence* was as long ago as 1910, published like other approved leaflets of the time by the Friends Tract Association. *Silence* seems to have been constantly in print since then until recently, one edition stating that it was its 35th printing. A version that can be downloaded from the BYM website (under Resources for Local Meetings 'no longer in print' section) is dated 2006. It has therefore been continuously available for over a century.

The pamphlet has always been prefaced by confusion or vagueness about its origin. The first edition attributed it to Martin Sutton (of Sutton's Seeds), but details changed after a letter to *The Friend* on 18 August 1911 from John Southall, a printer, pointing out that he had published it before Sutton, but he did not reveal its author. Southall was a prominent promoter of the use of the Welsh language, but also published some Quaker works.

The text of the tract is an extract from a longer item or sermon 'The Power of Stillness' which appears in an 1895 book by the Rev AB Simpson, a Canadian Presbyterian who founded the Christian and Missionary Association. His writings, including this extract, have been republished by the C&MA many times, and copied elsewhere. It is interesting that this origin wasn't stated. More explanation needed!

Thanks to Friends House library for help with this research. More detail, should you seek it, from NT.

Other news and future events

Refugee protests Friends have been joining counter-protests on Saturdays for refugees staying at the Cladhan Hotel in. Coordinated by Falkirk/Polmont Friends. Info in emails to the AM list, or contact Cath Dyer.

celebration

it is fine to fly a flag
it always has been
there has never, ever been a law
banning british bunting

but when you only fly a flag
in response to politicians
making rage-bait speeches
about immigrants and muslims

there is a difference

like wearing a long, white dress
to your best friend's christian wedding
then acting all confused
when the other guests starts talking

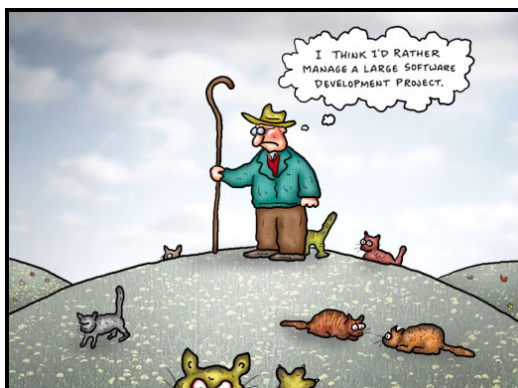
as you claim *it's just a colour!*
as you claim *it's just a fashion!*

Hollie McNish // Sketches

Poverty Alliance March to call for a better Scotland **Sat 25 Oct** – more info and sign up at www.scotland-demands-better.com

Scotland's climate march and rally: a better world is possible. **Sat 15 Nov** to coordinate with COP30. Glasgow Green from 11am; sign up and info at https://act.foe.scot/climate_march_2025

Managing Quakers



David Farley's Doctor Fun cartoons were the first web comic. Over 2,600 drawings archived at <https://archive.org/details/doctor-fun> were published between 1993 and 2006.

Local history web



Portobello open air pool opened in 1936, and by the end of its first season in September had recorded over 290,000 swimmers. It closed in 1978 after the adjacent power station was no longer able to provide warming for the water. Read all about it from Andy Arthur at <https://threadinburgh.scot>

Gorgie is the subject of a fascinating blog post from Historic Environment Scotland at <https://bit.ly/47Qw6b1>



A major Gorgie employer until 1968 was the McVitie & Price biscuit factory, the site afterwards taken over by Ferranti (subject of another threadinburgh.scot article) until around 2000. The block in Robertson Avenue is the only surviving building from the St Andrew Biscuit Works. Map at <https://bit.ly/42R4kaY>

Our newsletter is published near the last Sunday each month. November narratives to neilturn@gmail.com
Find this edition, plus archives of previous, at www.quakerscotland.org/south-edinburgh