



SOUTH EDINBURGH MEETING

November 2022



MEETINGS FOR WORSHIP

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 fifth Sundays in Autumn, including Oct 30th, an option may be strolling/sitting in Astley Ainsley grounds.

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

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 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 November is for **Aid and Abet**, a peer-led organisation offering a support service to those released from prison. More information and an online donations button at www.aidnabet.org

QUAKER EVENTS

Open Door 40th Anniversary Our meeting place is celebrating 40 years of work, summarised at <https://youtu.be/tLsIZkV5Lsk>

All are invited to a Thanksgiving service at Greenbank Parish Church (Braidburn Terrace EH10 6ES), on **Sat 29 Oct** at 3pm. Refreshments afterwards. Its website is back online at www.theopendoor.org.uk

Funeral for Christopher Speirs (see p4), arranged with support of Dundee Friends on **Wed 2 Nov** at 11.30. Parkgrove Crematorium, Douglasmuir, Arbroath, DD11 4UN.

Evening Meeting by Zoom on first Thursdays at 7.30pm (*note change of time*), so **Thur 3 Nov**.

Area Meeting will be held in Kirkcaldy on **Sat 5 Nov** All-age, morning and afternoon. See emails.

COP27 – during the conference in Egypt, we plan to have a Quaker group join a march in Edinburgh on **Sat 12 Nov**. See LM notes on page 2.

General Meeting for Scotland will be held on **Sat 19 Nov** in Aberdeen.

Meetings for Witness for Peace in Princes St Gardens, to coincide with meetings held at Faslane. The last of the year is scheduled for **Sun 13 Nov**. 10.30 for one hour.

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

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

Singing group, 7.30 pm on First Tuesdays at Victoria Terrace.

Book Group – 4th Sundays at 12.15 after Central MfW. Book for November *1979* by Val McDiarmid. (**Oct 30** *The Great Passage* by Shion Miura)



Effy Jones at the cutting edge in 1895 (page 3)

Notes from Local Meeting for Business Sunday 9th October 2022

- We will continue with meeting in person and on Zoom. Most weeks this will be blended. On 1st Sunday of each month we will continue our trial of not blending.
- On 5th Sunday, or when the weather seems reasonable over the autumn/winter, we will try meeting in the Astley Ainslie hospital grounds for an outside meeting for worship / walk. **First Oct 30th?**
- Time change for our first Thur of the month Zoom Meeting for Worship to 7.30pm.
- More volunteers to join the rota to set up and manage the tech at the Open Door are needed. Induction given! Please let Rici know if you can help.
- There is enthusiasm for more social occasions, for example the lunch before our last business meeting was much appreciated. Could you help organise/coordinate? Please let Rici know.
- We'll meet on Zoom only on 25th December and 1st Jan. We'll be having a Christmas Party (in person, all being well) in early December.
- The Living Witness Gathering addressed the climate and ecological crisis. We plan to hold meeting for learning and discussion. We also invite Friends to join a march together in Edinburgh on **Sat 12 Nov**, while the COP 27 climate talks are taking place in Egypt. Open to all Meetings.
- We have agreed topics to discuss with Ian Murray MP (draft date 4th Nov) and Daniel Johnson MSP (date tbc). Everyone in the meeting is welcome to join these. Let Deirdre or David know if you'd like to be added to the group that liaises about them.

The Open Door is 40 (an event to celebrate it is shown on page 1), but currently facing real problems:

- Hoped-for funding did not come through – £10,000 per month. Without a solution, they do not expect to be able to continue operating past the end of 2023.
- Their catering manager is unwell and off work for a prolonged period, so the cafe is closed. Do you know anyone who could provide short-term cover?
- Additional volunteers are needed for the Open Door's Thursday group.

Please contact simon.warr@theopendoor.org.uk if you have ideas or can help with any of these.

New Scots – Fàilte update

We are working hard with the Syrian family who have been here since mid-August. A fuller report will be appearing in Sesame, along with pictures of some of the fun outings we have had. There is so much to do, negotiating the bureaucracy of appointments at the Job Centre, GP and other medical centres, bank, phone and utilities – and all with a family with very little English. The children seem to be settling well into school and nursery; it is much more challenging for the parents. We are really grateful for the generosity of our supporters, and that includes South Edinburgh meeting.

The family will be among the beneficiaries of an Edinburgh City Mission Christmas hamper. More info about these on page 4.

Esther Shreeve

Does your soul weigh 21 grams? (no)

Our **Wikipedia page of the month** is [21 grams experiment](#) (477 views/day). In 1907 Dr Duncan MacDougall, a Massachusetts physician, asserted that by weighing people and dogs just before and after the moment of death, he could show that the weight of a human soul was 21 grams. Dogs had no detectable souls.

It was not good science. The page lists rebuttals of his findings and criticisms of his methods, particularly noting his selective reporting of inconsistent data. MacDougall did himself state that more repetitions of his findings were needed for confirmation, and they have not been confirmed. However the headline that a soul weighs 21g still persists in some corners of popular culture.

Chains of freedom



The photo on the front page and left shows Effy Jones at about 18 in ~1895.

In a wonderful BBC archive recording 'Victorian teenagers' from 1970, at <https://youtu.be/pv6V1yHvJyo> she recounts how the new hi-tech skill of typing, starting at 8s (40p)/week for typing on display in a shop window, and the purchase of the revolutionary new safety bicycle, were her route to independence.

Effy, born 1876, is shown in striking Rational Dress, which she embraced in order to cycle. But "it would never do for the neighbours to see you in what was called very very indecent dress". The date that cycling took off is placed at just this time, Spring 1895, so that around a million and a half men and women are estimated to have been cycling in Britain. And it went right across different groups in society. About cycling for society ladies in London, Constance Everett-Green wrote: "It would hardly be too much to say that in April of 1895 one was considered eccentric for riding a bicycle, whilst by the end of June eccentricity rested with those who did not ride."

THE LADIES SUNBEAM.
DESIGN H. R. H.

Without Free Wheel and Rear Brake! £12 12 0 Cash.
£10 10 0 Cash.

For Easy Payment Terms see separate supplement.
For Guarantee see page 32

SPECIFICATION OF DESIGN H. R. H.
(ILLUSTRATED OPPOSITE)

A High-grade Ladies mount.

Frame.—Slant 71° to 75°, 25 in. 25 in. For slant under 75°, 24 in. under 70°, 23 in. above 75°, 24 in. Strong light best workless steel frame.

Free Wheel.—Ball bearing.

Brakes.—Front: thumb lever rim (see page 25). Rear: our new hand applied hand brake (see page 25).

Wheels.—Hollow rims plated.

Tyres.—Latex except on the £10 10 0 pattern which has Warwick or Clipper.

Gears.—40-in.

Finish.—Fine black enamel; leather chain cover.

SPECIALTY.—A very pretty and reliable Ladies free wheel cycle, and suitable for all who do not wish to go to the price of the Royal Sunbeam.

In just two years prices of new machines halved to £10-20, despite freewheels and pneumatic tyres becoming standard. At the same time the typing skills which got her out of the house to an acceptable, non-factory job, became very sought after, so Effy's salary probably rose. But she must have had help; by 1897 a salary of 18-20 shillings/week is said to have been required to afford purchase by instalments. So not for all of society, but you could see the freedom it gave those who could get their hands on a new or old machine:

There is a new dawn, a dawn of emancipation, and it is brought about by the cycle. Free to wheel, free to spin out into the glorious country, unhampered by chaperon or even more dispiriting male admirer, the young girl of to-day can feel the real independence of herself, and while she is building up her better constitution she is developing her better mind. . . . How little and cramped seems the life before the cycle came into it! (Louise Jeye, in the Lady Cyclist August 1895)

The chief merit of the bicycle in the eyes of the young is that it dispenses with the chaperon. It imparts open air freedom and freshness to a life heretofore cribbed, crabbed, cabined and confined by convention. The cyclists have collided with the unamiable Mrs Grundy and have ridden triumphantly over her prostrate body. (Freeman's Journal and Daily Commercial Advertiser, 30 Aug 1899)

For men also, it made it possible for city dwellers without access to a horse to relish the countryside:

I had a beautiful ride last Sunday. Such a day! I can never forget it. I had to stop and get off my machine once, for my heart got so full at the sight of violets growing all in bunches on a bank by the roadside. (A skilled workman, Manchester Guardian 21 Aug 1895)

But as Effy hints, in 1895 it wasn't yet easy for women. By 1899 there are fewer accounts like this:

Few would believe how insulting and coarse the British public could be unless they had ridden through a populated district with a lady dressed in Rationals. (Frederick Leeming 1895)

Thirteen persons saluted me with the polite command of, 'Git yer 'air cut!' Eight were extremely anxious to know my tailor's address; an even greater number requested the name of my hatter. A ragged urchin ran alongside for some distance, and asked, 'Could yer oblige us with a match guv'nor?' A barber further down the road went one better by standing on his step and enquiring, 'Shave sir?' Several pedestrians helpfully suggested that I should 'get orf and push!' While an elderly lady imparted the information, I was a 'forward young minx!' One man – how I thanked that man – doffed his oily cap and exclaimed, 'Bravo! I likes yer pluck!' (North-Eastern Daily Gazette 9 April 1895)

Read more

- Victorianist blog: Chains of Freedom, the bicycle's impact on 1890s Britain. <https://bit.ly/3rW5q2i>
- <https://onlinebicyclemuseum.co.uk> has many lots of photos
- David Rubinstein, Cycling in the 1890s. *Victorian Studies* 1977, 21:47-71. Learned account, available from JSTOR with academic login.

NEWS

Discuss work by BYM – there are 4 dates in early November for 90 min online discussions about work done by trustees in reviewing central committees, and what more could or should be done by BYM. Book one at <https://bit.ly/3VpOi2N>

Christmas party and meetings – our traditional party will take place on **Sat 10 Dec** 4-6pm at Deirdre and David's house. Bring food and a game if you can.

Dec 25 and Jan 1 are on Sundays this year. We will hold meetings by Zoom only on both days.

Climate Fringe – 'The home for climate events in Scotland' – allows you to see upcoming events. <https://climatefringe.org/event-calendar>
There are a lot. Click on Region to filter for Edinburgh and Lothians, or others.

Two reports are out on issues that Friends have given evidence on and campaigned for. Stasa has more details on both:

Holyrood's Equalities, Human Rights and Civil Justice Committee have, by a majority, agreed to the general principles of the Gender Recognition Reform (Scotland) Bill. <https://bit.ly/3EmSCtt>

The Expert Advisory Group on Ending Conversion Practices has advised prohibiting them. <https://bit.ly/3Mc6KHS>

Cost of living – At gov.scot/costoflivingsupport there is guidance on support, grants, benefits, and advice for anyone struggling to cope with increased living costs this winter.

Christmas hampers – Edinburgh City Mission hampers this year are planned to be a voucher plus a token present to each family, rather than bags of shopping. Our Fàilte family (page 2) will be among the beneficiaries. Details of how to contribute to follow, but if you can help with deliveries near Christmas, please contact Esther.

About Friends

Our friend Christopher Speirs died on 19th October. Chris was a longstanding South Edinburgh member before moving to Kirriemuir. The photo by Rufus Reade accompanied Susie Reade's 2014 interview for Getting to Know Friends.



HAPPY BIRTHDAY

To **Ted** who will be 12 on the 24th.



A special afternoon tea from a hotel in Beijing (@tongbingxue).

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

If war should come



This 10 min Government Service film tells what to do if war is announced, what air raid warnings and gas alarms will sound like, and how to construct an Anderson shelter for your family. Made to be shown before the main feature at cinemas in 1939, but it has too many modern parallels, as well as in our parents/ (great) grandparents experience not to be disquieting today. <https://bit.ly/3S5M1qu>