

Parkinson's UK. Fife Branch

'Keeping Us Together' No.16

Hello Readers

Welcome to 'Keeping Us Together No. 16', which we hope you will enjoy reading. Our thanks go once again to all our contributors.

We would draw your attention to the STOP PRESS article on Page 5. Mark and I would be most appreciative if you would consider placing an order for Mark's Poetry Book which we are sure you will enjoy reading. All profits go to Parkinson's, Fife Branch and Parkinson's Scotland.

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Message from the Chairman – John Minhinick

A few days ago we moved into meteorological springtime but the official summertime of June, July, August is still some time away. That distant-time is the most likely time for restarting in-person activities subject to the ongoing success of the vaccine programme and the continued reduction in the numbers affected by Covid-19.

My committee is beginning to look at the options for in-person activities commencing in the second half of 2021, by considering three questions;

1. What/When we can restart?
2. What will we need to reorganise?
3. What new ideas we could include?



Please let us have your opinion as soon as possible, especially if you have some ideas about new activities or events. 'Where things happen', is also a topic that we have wrestled with for some time. It would be great if more things happened in the northern half of the county. For this to happen we need your ideas and your help to organise.

Being part of Parkinson's UK, the return to in-person meetings will be within the detailed guidance set-down by the charity. I will be attending a meeting on 9th March when the existing guidance will be reviewed and probably updated.

The Dundee Research Interest Group recently held the second in a three-seminar series looking at "Parkinson's & Technology". If you want to see a recording of the first two seminars on "Managing Parkinson's Condition" and "Managing Daily Life with Parkinson's" please let me know.

The last seminar in the series will be held on 27th March looking at "Improved Treatment Due to Better Supported Specialists". You can register to take part at Eventbrite – it's free.

Congratulations to Werner and the rest of the DRIG team for two wonderful seminars. We're all looking forward to number three.

Coffee & Chat Group



The fortnightly meeting of the **Coffee and Chat Group**

goes from strength to strength and at the last get-together we welcomed 17 members, armed with their coffee mugs, to the Zoom call.

As you can imagine there was quite a bit of chat about the vaccine roll-out and some disappointment that the restrictions are continuing, more or less, for another couple of months. However, we tried to be optimistic and chatted about our hopes for holidays that might be on the cards in the coming months.

Longer days, improvement in the weather, signs of life in the gardens and the prospect of seeing our families and friends in the not-too-distant future have lifted our spirits and will see us through these difficult times.



If **you** would like to come along to our get-together, our next meeting is on 10th March and we look forward to seeing you then.

Regards

Elizabeth Tait

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Camera Club

Wednesday the 17th February.

At our last Camera Club meeting we were treated to a look at the colour photographs submitted to a competition from Cupar Camera Club.

The theme of the competition was open and there was a good range of subjects selected from landscapes to portraiture. In addition, our guide Alan, shared with us the judge's comments and the reasons for his marks.



Art photography is subjective and therefore the judge's comments were not always

unanimously agreed upon. However, judges are trained to give consistent comments throughout. I'm pleased to say that the winner of this competition was our very own photographer, Werner Remmele. Congratulations to Werner and thank you for allowing us to print your winning photograph called 'Collecting Salad for Dinner' which was taken in the village on Tonie Sap, Cambodia.



If **you** are interested in photography do come along to our zoom meetings. There is no experience required and photography from any camera, phones to SLRs, is equally welcome.

Link for our zoom meetings is <http://zoom.us/j/610082550> Passcode 447546 .

Bob Copeland

Gillian Aldrich – Our New Lead Parkinson's Nurse

Just as our last newsletter was going to print, we learned that Gillian Aldrich had been appointed to head-up our Fife Health Board Parkinson's Nursing Team as Lead Nurse. Gillian will be well-known to many of our Branch Members as she was a member of the Nursing Team for four years before moving on to nursing in a variety of settings, mainly in the Care of the Elderly sector. I caught up with Gillian recently who was good enough to share some time with me to chat about her nursing life.



Gillian was born in Alexandria, Dunbartonshire, and spent the first six years of her life in the beautiful village of Arrochar on the banks of Loch Long, before her family moved through to Dunfermline. Gillian was employed for the first few years of her working life in the Catering and Hospitality Sector. Although enjoying her jobs she became increasingly aware of the level of misery in the world and decided that she was ready to help. She wanted to make a difference and decided to take up Nursing.

Following her training at Dundee University, Kirkcaldy Campus, and Queen Margaret Hospital, Dunfermline, Gillian soon became a Staff Nurse and worked in Orthopaedic Trauma and Medical Admissions. Gillian had always had an interest in Parkinson's Disease as her gran had lived with the condition. It was when a vacancy arose in the Nursing Team that Gillian decided to take her interest further. She successfully applied for the vacancy in the Parkinson's Nursing Team and joined Nancy and Lynda.

Gillian loved her new job and quickly got to know her patients and colleagues. She built up a very positive relationship with our Fife Branch and attended several of our Branch meetings in the Dunnikier Golf Club. She also met with our newly formed YP Group. Branch members seemed to value meeting our nurses face-to-face, putting a face to a name and building up positive relationships with them. It also benefitted Gillian too. She was able to hear, at grass root level, just where the positive strengths lay and what the important areas for development were in the service.

Gillian then spent four years in the post before moving on. However, Gillian missed her patients and when Fife Health Board decided to restructure the service, Gillian successfully applied for the Lead Nurse post. She is very enthusiastic about the future of the service. Although COVID 19 has had necessitated limitations, Gillian is planning for the future.

She is hoping to develop and expand throughout Fife the New Diagnostic Clinic Project which Lynda had started. This project brings together a range of support services to assess and plan for the needs of newly diagnosed Parkinson's patients on the same day! She sees this as the way forward throughout Fife.

Gillian is also very interested in helping People with Parkinson's develop 'Anticipated Care Plans' if they wish. These plans allow patients to have their voices heard when they feel able to make good decisions and choices about their future care as their health deteriorates. Gillian understands that these plans are not for everyone but are valued by others.

Gillian is hoping to extend the use of PKG (Parkinson's Kinetic Graph) watches. The use of the PKG watches was one of the service improvements Lynda initiated and the watches have proven beneficial. When medication does not seem to be working, the use of 'PKG watches' which monitor and collect information about a range of actions and symptoms e.g., medication input, spells of dyskinesia, bradykinetic episodes etc. The results are then collated in graph form which can help practitioners plan future treatments in greater detail.

Gillian would also like to continue developing the Apomorphine service with the continuing support from Elaine Thomson, Apomorphine nurse specialist. Apomorphine is a liquid dopamine agonist Parkinson's medication. It is delivered through a pump. Although not for everyone, this does provide an alternative approach for some which can only benefit the quality of treatment for patients in Fife.

Gillian is well aware that NHS Fife has always had a strong Parkinson's Nursing Team and she thinks that once the new staffing plan is in place, her team could continue to build on this foundation. This can only be good news for patients. Gillian is very upbeat about the future of Parkinson's Nursing in Fife.

I am sure all our readers, will join me in wishing Gillian the very best in her new post.

Charles Small

DONATIONS TO OUR BRANCH



Our Parkinson's UK Fife Branch is always very grateful to receive donations.

If you are thinking about fundraising, remember that details are on our web site, fifeparkinsons.org

Thank you to Charles and Margaret Small

The Walking Group

The Walking Group hasn't had a chance to dust off its collective walking boots as yet but thankfully, as the vaccine programme is now well underway, perhaps we'll soon be able to get them out of the back of the cupboard.

Our recent meetings have taken us out of Scotland to venture further afield when we reminisced about favourite places we had visited in the past – and perhaps will get the opportunity to return to in the future! All those who took part showed some of their photographs and told us of their memories. We travelled from Paris to Singapore, from Italy to Madeira and Cyprus before returning to the Cotswolds and the North of Scotland.



At our most recent meeting we were treated to a trip to Hong Kong given by Alan Chapman who had spent some time there a number of years ago. It was very good to hear a personal experience of the city and brought out lots of details about Hong Kong that was new to many of us. After Alan's presentation we had some discussion about the recent political developments now taking place there, as it increasingly comes under the influence of China and our hopes that these changes won't take away from the freedom experienced by the people of Hong Kong.

If you wish to join in our Virtual Walking Group Zoom meetings you will be made very welcome; the link is in the list of meetings page of this Newsletter.

Elizabeth Tait

**GET IN TOUCH with
Parkinson's UK
0808 800 0303**

FIFE BRANCH ZOOM MEETINGS FOR MARCH

Branch Get Together 11am Mondays
Code: 414757393 Password: 886058

Exercise with Janet 2pm Monday 8th.
Code: 92958557138 Password: 379658

Eric's Tai Chi 11am Tuesdays
Code: 933719944 Password: 099173

Camera Club 10am Wednesday.
3rd 17th & 31st March
Code: 610082550 Password: 447546

Coffee & Chat
Wednesday. 10th 24th March
11.00am Code: 945 0650 0621 Password: 842374

Quiz Evening 7:30pm Wednesday.
3rd 17th & 31st March
Code: 94386184709 Password: 892282

Sarah's Dance/Exercise & Chat
11:15am Thursdays Code: 414757393
Password: 886058

Walking Group 10:30am Friday
5th & 19th March
Code: 838404255 Password: 855592

Meri's Sing-along 09:45am Friday
12th & 26th March
Code: 95044591219 Password: 130018

April is Parkinson's Awareness Month
April 11, World Parkinson's Disease Day



SPREAD THE WORD
EDUCATE YOURSELF
SUPPORT THE CURE

STOP PRESS STOP PRESS

STOP PRESS STOP PRESS

Very Exciting News!

Place Your Book Order NOW!

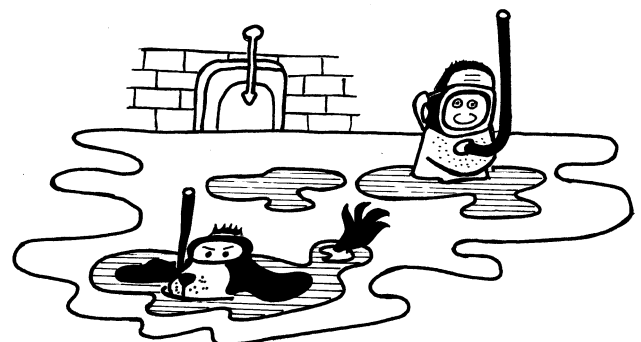
As our regular readers will know, our very own poet and joint editor of 'Keeping Us Together', Mark Coxe, has been persuaded to publish a book of the poems he has written since the start of the first Lockdown. The profits will be going to Parkinson's UK, Fife Branch and Parkinson's UK, Scotland.

Mark tells me that he is almost about ready to send the sixty-six poems and illustrations to the printer, so it won't be too long before he is able to launch his very first poetry book.



Mark expects the book to cost £10.00 (plus £3.00 post and packaging, if required) and we wanted to give our Fife Branch members and friends the first chance to order a book/books.

If you would like to order a book/books, please either telephone **Mark Coxe 07913 207057** or **Charles Small 01592 713824** and we will add your order to the names we have already. We will contact you when the books arrive so **DO NOT SEND MONEY AT THE MOMENT**. We will give you payment details at that time.



Your replies will help us to estimate how many copies will require to print, so make that call and order your copy/copies as soon as you can.

DAFFODIL WALK – By Margaret Stewart

We wandered, not lonely as a cloud but in our cheerful group.
All sharing the wonder Wordsworth felt with each step we took.
For as far as the eye could see laid out in splendid array.
Was hosts of golden daffodils, maybe a relation pertaining to his
day.



It seemed to me they were ready for a majestic fanfare.
The tall and straightest stems with trumpets set to blare.
An orchestra set out, in perfect lines, row after row.
Smaller daffodils placed around with different varieties to show.

As if waiting for the maestro the breeze would set in motion.
The gentle sway of those daffodils all playing with devotion,
The tallest, proudest bright yellow heads seemed to command
the display.
All other varieties in perfect unison would wait willingly to obey.

If it was possible to imagine and set the scene to music.
This host of golden daffodils would perform and never lose it.
The carpet of gold as seen by Wordsworth's poetic eye.
Will thrill and amaze us all as many years roll by.

So with happy, daffodil feelings our group walked on their way.
It inspired the hearts of everyone at such beauty on display.
And as Mother Nature plays it's role as sure as blackbirds sing.
These lovely hosts of daffodils will bloom again next spring.

Exercise with Janet

Janet has been leading some 'taster' sessions of low-impact exercise for us on Zoom. Her last scheduled session is on Monday March 8th at 2pm & joining details can be found on page 5.

Please come along and if enough people want to continue, Janet might even make it a regular event.



Tait's Teaser

**Blimmey Guv! -
Can You Guess
These London Locations?**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

Tom Hanks a bunch, Liz!

Cranberry Ganache

Allan Thomson had an uplifting experience after eating a 'Chocolate Cranberry Ganache' sweet from a 'Christmas Box'. He decided to make up the recipe below himself! He also wanted to share his enjoyment with us. Limit yourself to one a day as they are so delicious and moreish!

INGREDIENTS



- 150g Whitworth Little Jewel Cranberries
- 100g Dark Chocolate 85% cocoa solids. (Chopped)
- ½ cup or 125g cup Double Cream
- 2/3 cup or 166g Granulated Sugar

DIRECTIONS

Step 1 Bring the cranberries, cream, and sugar to the boil in a medium saucepan over medium heat stirring to dissolve the sugar. Simmer for about eight minutes, until saucy.

Step 2

Place the chocolate in a medium bowl and pour the hot cranberry sauce over the top. Stir until the chocolate has melted, let cool stirring occasionally.

Step 3

Divide the ganache into petit four cases. Refrigerate until set, about four hours.

Thanks, Alan for thinking about us. You are right – delicious!

Tait's Teaser Answers

- 1, Abbey Road
- 2, Kings Cross Station
- 3, Elephant and Castle
- 4, Waterloo Station
- 5, National Maritime Museum
- 6, Hyde Park
- 7, The Globe Theatre
- 8, Portobello Road
- 9, Buckingham Palace
- 10, Kew Gardens

Not Newsworthy

I am very disappointed,
I had my jab today,
It's supposed to fight the Covid,
Make Pandemic go away.

I thought that I'd be famous,
Filmed by all the TV crews,
But I wasn't even interviewed,
I'm not on the national news.

The amount of times I've seen it,
People getting their injections,
Surely everybody's getting filmed,
When they have their vaccinations.

I've got my second dose in May,
Perhaps I'll get filmed then,
But by that time I doubt it,
I'll never make the News at Ten.

What if at the vaccine centre,
Instead of giving them my arm,
If I bared my naked bottom,
Would that have set off an alarm?

The nurses would have called the cops,
And I would have been arrested,
My story would have caused a stir,
On news headlines I'd be pasted.

So that's what I will do in May,
To get me on the news at last,
But you know that you won't see my face,
You will only see my.....
.....elbow!



Mark Coxe

Illustration by Tom C. Murray

Genesis by Melvin Barnes

From the crest of the hill, the view was breath-taking. There was the ship: calm, regal, majestic. A slim silver bullet set against a background of granite mountains, lush green forests and shimmering waters dappled by a burnt orange sky. It stood beside its gantry: silent and imperious, as though daring anyone to have the impudence to climb aboard and set her upon a course for which there would be no return.

In any other circumstance, Tanure would have sat down, rested, and enjoyed the view. But today, there was no time, for it had taken him longer than expected to travel from the great city to the Ark: time that he could not afford.

The laboratory box slipped from his grasp, pulling at the safety chain, and causing the skin on his arms and wrists to tear and bleed. He pushed the circlet of titanium that held the safety chain to his wrist as far away as he could from the broken skin. Taking a small tube of ointment from his tunic, he squeezed the contents on to the damaged flesh and rubbed gently, bringing temporary but much needed, relief from the persistent pain.

From his vantage point at the top of the hill, he saw that the forest was a hundred metres inland from the coast and ran parallel to it. The ship's gantry lay midway between the two, and slightly to the east of where he now stood. It did not matter where he emerged from the forest's embrace, he would have an unimpeded path to the ship. But would he have time to reach it? He descended the hill and entered the forest. He could no longer see the ship, but he knew it was there; for the same reason that he knew it could not leave without him. He took a fresh grip on the laboratory box, and not without trepidation, started to walk.

He was without compass or electronic pathfinder devices; he had to emerge from the forest as close to the vessel's gantry as possible. So, carefully, and with maximum concentration he attempted to travel in a perfectly straight line. Slowly, very slowly, the cloistering darkness of the trees gave way to an invasion of light from the planet's orange sun; and blinking in its bright light Tanure emerged from the forest's dark cathedral, less than a hundred metres from the perpendicular construct that was the ship.

He carried the heavy laboratory box, but not without difficulty, up the gantry and into the command pod: Tanure, last of his race, had made it to the Ark. He found a laser cutter and removed the shackle from his wrist. He took the laboratory box and placed it in the ship's protection cocoon; it would be safe there. Meanwhile time was running out. Catastrophic events did wait upon man's command. Swiftly, Tanure donned the protective suit, locked himself into the launch command module and punched in the appropriate codes. The photon engines pulsed into life, and the ship hurtled from the planet at the speed of light.

Time quite literally stood still as the Planet Thera, and its orange sun succumbed to the gravitational pull of the black hole and disappeared into infinity. The clock of life suspended.

The Ark emerged from its quantum leap and found itself in a decaying orbit around a small planet poised in space on an elliptical path around a central bright sun. Countless stars shimmered against the velvet background.

Tanure had long since drifted into eternal sleep. The grip of this small planet's gravity pulled the Ark mercilessly into its atmosphere. White hot from the friction of re-entry it struck the surface of the planet and began the slow process of disintegration. The laboratory box, succumbed to the corrosive harshness of the planet's atmosphere, and the Proteinogenic amino acids so jealously protected within its confines, spilled out on to the planet's surface. And, on a tiny speck within the unlimited expanse that is space, the clock once more began to tick.