

Parkinson's UK. Fife Branch

'Keeping Us Together' No.17

Hello Readers

A spring welcome to 'Keeping Us Together 17' which as ever we hope you will enjoy reading. It is amazing how longer days and some sunshine can brighten up our moods. If you have any good news to share with other members please get in touch.

We have good news about orders for Mark's forthcoming poetry book. He has received nearly 80 pre-orders so a very big thank you to everyone who has contacted us.

We are pleased to announce that Mark has received the six tablets and dongles from CONNECTING SCOTLAND and has started to distribute them to our first batch of applicants from our list.

Finally we would also like to draw your attention to our 'Haiku Poetry Competition' on Page 2 and hope we receive many entries.

Charles Small - 01592 713824 cjsmall12@tiscali.co.uk

Mark Coxe – 07913 207057 markcoxe@blueyonder.co.uk



Message from The Chairman – John Minhinick

Recently I attended two more excellent meetings organised by Parkinson's UK looking forward to the time when we can renew in-person events. One meeting re-visited the need for care when we plan the revised programme. The other meeting was part of a thorough review of how volunteers are supported by the central charity including the "rules" for running Branches and Groups. Learning from the 90 volunteers was an encouraging feature of the Zoom meeting. With such a large number of volunteers online we worked via eleven breakout rooms.

Most of the people who have received this newsletter are also members of Parkinson's UK with the benefit of also receiving regular information from the charity. The role of my committee is to support all people with Parkinson's in Fife along with their families and carers irrespective of their membership.

You could be one of the 15 to 20% of the people reading this newsletter who may not realise that your membership has lapsed since the need to pay an annual fee was removed. It's more likely if you previously paid manually, you would have needed to confirm your wish to remain as a member. You can join or re-join Parkinson's UK through the membership form that you can find online here:

[Team Parkinson's joining form.pdf](#)

If you need to check your membership status, or get a paper copy of the application form, speak to Briar Richardson, our Membership Secretary Mobile : 07821 552228 or Email: bandbrichardson52@gmail.com

You will remember that the annual visit to the Pitlochry Festival Theatre was cancelled last summer. At that stage we left the booking in place hoping to make the visit this summer. The normal summer season has not been possible for 2021 so we have cancelled our booking and the Treasurer will be repaying the money that some of you are due from your booking last year.



The Coffee & Chat Group

The Coffee and Chat Group has attracted between 12 and 15 participants at each of our last 2 meetings.



Topics discussed were as wide as they were varied. We talked about the Saturday jobs we had when at school, campervans (particularly illegal parking of) and plumbing issues in our homes. During our first session Janet was busy making Orange Drizzle Cake to sell as a fundraiser for Malawi Schools. At our most recent meeting she was baking birthday cupcakes for a neighbour. This led to a general cooking/ baking conversation: from Celebrity Bake Off to cooking in a woodburning stove. We finished off with Jenny telling us how to make homemade pasta (the ingredients include coconut flour!)

The Spring sunshine focused the conversation onto holidays, houseplants and gardening. A few of us have already booked staycations and did you know that you can successfully grow potatoes in plastic bags and rubber tyres?

However, this mixture of topics was all topped by Meghan and Harry's Oprah appearance. A very lively discussion ensued about the couple which became slightly heated (fortunately Zoom doesn't allow you to come to actual blows!)

If you have a favourite book or can recommend a TV programme, please come to our next get-together on the 7th April at 11am. A warm welcome awaits you.

Briar Richardson

Haiku Seek

Jarlath Busby, David Rigg and Mark Coxe have been taking part in a series of poetry workshops which have been organised by Cambridge University MRC Cambridge Stem Cell Institute and Parkinson's Scotland.

The aim was to bring people with Parkinson's and researchers together to share their experiences and express themselves through the various forms of poetry.

The six-week course is nearing its end and some of the poems will not only be read to an august group of University and Parkinson's finest, but to the poets and their guests. An anthology of selected poems will also be compiled into a book.

One of the experiences from the course was the Haiku, which is a Japanese artform from the fifteenth century. The Haiku consists of three lines and seventeen syllables. Five in the first line, seven in the second and five in the third. Traditionally they were themed around nature or conflict but these days anything goes.

Compose a Haiku
Set free your poetic self
Feel happy and proud

Charles Small

We would like to see whether there are any budding Haiku writers amongst us, so we are launching a Haiku Competition to see who can write the best one. Everybody can enter, just send your creations to the editors. So pick up your bamboo ink stick and get to it. Remember 5-7-5!

To quote Dr John Cooper Clarke's Haiku number 1;

To convey ones mood,
In seventeen syllables,
Is very diffic,

Mark Coxe

A collection of poems by someone living with Parkinson's, battling with the degenerative and debilitating disease with humour, perseverance and a positive attitude . . . until Covid struck!

Reflections
Reflections

Poetic Thoughts About
Parkinson's, Pandemic & Life

MARK COXE

AVAILABLE NOW TO
PRE-ORDER

All profits go to Fife Branch & Parkinson's Active

STOP PRESS . . . STOP PRESS . . . STOP PRESS . . . STOP PRESS . . .

Place Your Book Orders NOW!

Mark Coxe, our very own Fife Branch poet, has been very busy in the last few weeks not writing poetry, but learning how to publish a poetry book. As we know, Mark hated poetry in school, disliked poetry as an adult but woke up one morning during the Pandemic with words flying round his head trying to organise themselves into poems – now almost a hundred of them!

Little did he know that writing the poems was perhaps the easy section on his book publishing journey. Mark tells me that he has been quite overwhelmed with the support, generosity, kindness and enthusiasm of our Branch members, colleagues, friends, family and complete strangers. The profits will be going to 'Parkinson's Active' Scotland Appeal and our own Fife Branch.

The book called '**Reflections - Poetic Thoughts about Parkinson's, Pandemic and Life**', will cost £10.00 (plus post and packaging, if required) and Mark wanted to thank everyone who has already placed an order. Hopefully the book will be published in the next few weeks which is really exciting.

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 almost ninety 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.

STOP PRESS . . . STOP PRESS . . . STOP PRESS . . . STOP PRESS . . .

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

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Together in Malawi

At the last meeting of the Walking Group, we were treated to a presentation by Janet Kerr of a trip she made to Malawi in Africa when teaching at St Leonard's School, Dunfermline, in 2018. But as is our usual start at our meetings, we had a quiz set by Elizabeth Tait, to test our knowledge of Africa. Liz had, in 'Millionaire' style, set questions to name African countries from North to South and more from East to West. Needless to say, they taxed the grey matter and you could hear the wheels turning even via zoom. The winners were Victor and Jenny who had lived in Zimbabwe for many years. Africa is a continent in which we know the big countries but to get them in order was tricky. Thanks to Liz for putting the quiz together, some of it will stick with us I'm sure.

Janet's presentation which was aided by super photographs, started with how the trip to Malawi came about. This surprised us as it was the Pars Foundation, Dunfermline Athletics charitable wing.



The Pars Foundation had been using football as a means to engage with children who were slipping through the education net, with great success. It had a link to Malawi and it decided to part fund a trip to the country by Scottish teachers to see what help the foundation could provide to schools in the Karonga area of Malawi. Six teachers were chosen and our Janet who had just been diagnosed with Parkinson's, was one of them.

Each teacher had to fundraise to meet the cost of the trip and we now know Janet is a full-on fundraiser.

Their journey to Karonga which is at the north end of Lake Malawi, took three gruelling days to reach including a ten-hour journey in a small van that certainly wouldn't pass our MOT

inspection having holes in the floor. Maybe a hint of people power as in Fred Flintstone.



The group had an incredibly busy week meeting with the village elders, the school's head teacher and families

of the school children. They also took some lessons in conditions which seemed to have been the same for years such as dilapidated buildings without desks. The pupils had to sit on dusty stone floors. They are still using chalk and talk as the teaching method. I'm sure it still works best as no modern teaching facilities, no necessary technology nor the finance to keep it going, are available.



Janet's photos allowed us to be there with them and portrayed their lives in detail. After their week in Karonga, the group then had another gruelling three-day journey home and the van still wouldn't have passed its MOT. Thanks to Janet for a look at a world we can be thankful we are not part of and be grateful we live in Scotland.



Bob Copeland

ZOOM MEETINGS FOR APRIL

Easter Quiz

1. True or False The word 'Easter' appears in the Old Testament in the Bible.
2. The idea of the Easter Bunny was originated in the 1700s in what country?
A. Russia B. The United States
C. Germany D. Great Britain
3. What flower is associated with Easter?
A. Rose B. Lily C. Pansy D. Crocus
4. At the Last Supper, what food did Jesus liken to his body?
5. Which country has the tradition of eating hot cross buns at Easter?
6. Which disciple is not present when Jesus goes to see them after his resurrection?
A. Thomas B. Simon C. Paul D. Peter
7. What is the name given to the Thursday before Easter Day?
8. Easter Island belongs to which South American country?
9. Which New York City street hosts the annual Easter Parade?
10. 'Easter Parade' was a 1948 American musical film starring Judy Garland and the late actor, dancer and singer from Omaha. Who was he?

Janet's Morning Stretch 1015am Monday
Code: 414757393 Password: 886058

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

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

Camera Club 10am Wednesday 14th & 28th.
Code: 610082550 Password: 447546

Coffee & Chat 11.00am Wednesday 7th & 21st.
Code: 945 0650 0621 Password: 842374

Quiz Evening 7:30pm Wednesday 14th & 28th.
Code: 94386184709 Password: 892282

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

Walking Group 10:30am Friday 2nd, 16th & 30th.
Code: 838404255 Password: 855592

Meri's Sing-along 09:45am Friday 9th & 23rd.
Code: 95044591219 Password: 130018

RED NOSE DAY CELEBRATED. . . . by our WALKING GROUP

March 19th was Walking Group Friday but it was also **RED NOSE DAY 2021** and members held a **Red Nose Competition** to celebrate this amazing charity and the fantastic money it raises. Five walkers created their own 'red noses' and elaborate they were!

Bob was delighted to announce that **Liz Tait** won the competition with her absolutely fabulous **red nose** which must have taken her ages to put together.

Well done Liz!

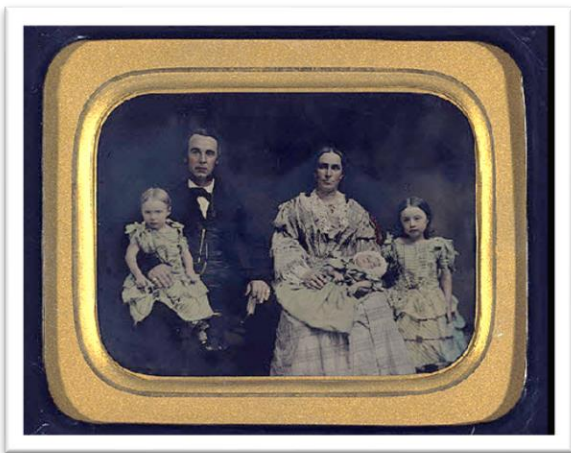


Camera Club News - Wednesday 3rd March

At this meeting we continued looking at photographs submitted into competitions at Cupar Camera Club and again an eclectic range of photos was shown and discussed.

Some may wonder why we would look at competition photos when most of us are just enthusiastic amateurs. However, it's the way you learn to take better photographs by picking up tips of composition, viewpoints, angles and whether black and white would be better for some images rather than colour etc.

The early photographers looked to the Artists to learn about these rules and put them to work in their own images.



They used different techniques learnt in processing the images to get the desired effect. Today the same general rules apply but technology has progressed so much through digital photography and computer post editing with Photoshop, Lightroom or Snapseed that the modern photographer is given so much more scope to alter their images.

Accepting modern images Cupar Camera Club has a competition solely using images from mobile phones. Cameras in today's mobiles have really decent camera lenses with some having multiple lenses allowing you to zoom in without loss of quality.

Wednesday 17th March

At the start of our meeting, we were all asked to show a selection of our favourite photographs and everyone contributed. One of our team, Jan Karl, told us that he had managed to capture a photograph of the Aurora borealis from Kings Barns. He has an app on his phone which lets him know if the Aurora will be near and the strength of the particles. He phoned a friend who also has the app only to find he was already at Kings Barns.

Persuading his wife to drive him, he set off and after meeting his friend, got the camera and tripod set up and managed to get amazing photographs of the Aurora borealis and for luck catching a shooting star in one of the shots.

We then settled down to see the other images that our group members had taken and we were treated to images from far and near and a selection of subjects including landscapes, portraiture and street photography.



Our Zoom meetings attract a small band of seven enthusiastic attendees. If you are interested in photography or want to improve your images, come along to our fortnightly Zoom meetings every second Wednesday at 10am.

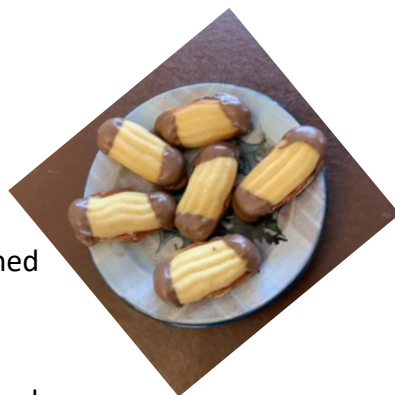
The link to our Zoom meeting is <https://zoom.us/j/610082550> pw 447546

Bob Copeland

Viennese Fingers

Ingredients

4oz / 110g butter softened
 1oz / 25g icing sugar
 4oz / 110g plain flour
 1/4 teaspoon baking powder
 2oz / 50g chocolate



Method

Pre-heat the oven to 190c / 375f / gas 5
 Lightly grease a baking tray
 Put butter and icing sugar into a bowl
 Beat well until pale and fluffy
 Add flour and baking powder and beat well.
 Put mixture into a piping bag with a medium star nozzle.
 Pipe out the finger shapes about 3in / 7cm long spacing them well apart
 Bake for 10-15 minutes or until a pale golden brown
 Lift off and cool on a wire rack.
 Melt chocolate
 Sandwich together with jam, dip each end in chocolate.
 Leave to set on wax paper.

Diane Dunbar

Thanks, Diane for sharing your recipe with us.
 The fingers are delicious!

The Dawn Chorus

Rising each day as dawn is breaking
 I'm thrilled to tell as my breakfast I'm making
 Looking out to the garden, what do I see
 This little Robin sitting on my tree.

It sings its song, a delight to hear
 A perfect performance, notes crystal clear
 It cocks its head as if to say
 How did you like my song today.

It knows I am watching, and I like what I see
 This grand morning chorus it sings just for me
 It flies away, I must move on
 But I'll be back tomorrow at the crack of dawn.

Margaret Stewart



WORLD PARKINSON'S DAY
SUNDAY 11TH APRIL 2021

On Sunday 11 April the Parkinson's community will come together, even while we're apart.

No matter what gets in the way, the Parkinson's community has shown it is determined to stay connected. Let's celebrate the power of our community this World Parkinson's Day.

Attention all new and existing members!

What is keeping you so busy that you can't come to some of our exciting Branch Zoom activities?

Sarah's Dance/Exercise Class on a Thursday morning continues to be very popular, great fun and well worth a visit.

Continuing with the theme. Janet's Morning Stretch Class is a relatively new addition which loosens the limbs and helps to improve your flexibility and movement. Plus, if you watch closely you can sometimes see a guest appearance from Gary!

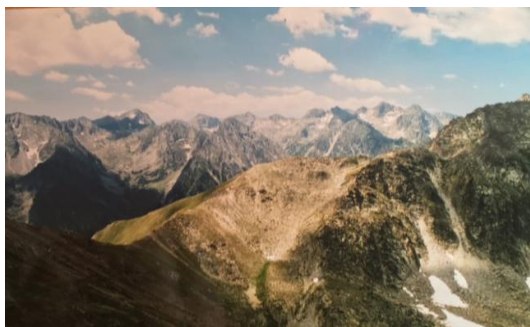


10	Fred Astaire
9	5 th Avenue
8	Chile
7	Maundy Thursday
6	Thomas
5	Great Britain
4	Bread
3	Lily
2	Germany
1	False

Easter Quiz Answers

NICE PYRENEES – SUMMER 2003 – PARC NACIONAL D'AIGUESTORTES

Bob showed a selection of his pics on a Waymark holiday in the PYRENEES based in a National Park just over the French/Spanish border. It was certainly a very different terrain, pretty rugged gabro rocks which were category 3 in the tourist guide. This area is away from the honeypot centres of the Alps and is very like the Skye mountains in Scotland.



Travel was by flight to Toulouse in southern France followed by a four-hour bus journey over the mountains to the “resort” of ESPOT. Espot is mainly a ski centre in winter months, and we found all the hotels were undergoing major construction works off season. The group was very disappointed when it was decanted to a hotel ten miles away on the main road to Barcelona.

The start of the walking day was at a lake five miles up the valley from Espot – so a land rover took the walkers to the start which was certainly not the most comfortable drive on the bumpy track! Our guide had no knowledge of the area, being his first visit and managed to get the party lost one afternoon. Another day he injured his wrist going behind a tree for a comfort break!!!

Us Scots folk like our tea early but the Spanish meal was at 9 pm which was not ideal and you were up and off by 8 am. The early rises were necessary to avoid the thunderstorms in early afternoon. All in all, this was a very different holiday! It was challenging, very scenic with superb views and good weather – what more could you ask for !!!

Frances Copeland

Who'd a thought it?

A year ago give or take a day,
With Covid refusing to go away,
The Government told us to all lockdown,
And stay in bed under the eiderdown.

No one thought it would last a year,
Three sixty-five days without much cheer,
Except of course for our Zoom meetings,
And our new found friends with their bonnie
greetings.

The virtual parties that we have had,
Trying desperately not to be too sad,
All clapping for the NHS,
And Captain Tom, now laid to rest.

There's tension in the ICU,
Working flat out, so God bless the few,
This really does feel like a war,
It's the nursing staff we're grateful for.

And what will history have to say
About Government actions in the fray?
And decisions that they might have made,
Lack of PPE and Quarantines delayed.

There has of course been the odd blip,
Dominic Cummings' Bernard Castle trip,
Boris admitting shaking hands with all,
With Jon Van-Tam standing there appalled.

And so, a year on down the line,
You'll find that I'm still on the wine,
They say on a 'school day' you shouldn't be
drinking,
But the odd wee glass won't hurt I'm thinking.

So, on the whole how's your year been?
I'll not begrudge you a loudish scream,
The second anniversary you'll know is cotton,
Don't let that make you feel too rotten.

Remember we're not out of the trees,
Although we're far from on our knees,
We have a vaccine that can help,
Just watch yourself 'you've all been telt'!

Mark Coxe