

40 SPARKS PARKINSON'S^{UK}

CHANGE ATTITUDES. FIND A CURE. JOIN US.



Hereford & District Branch Newsletter Issue 40 Easter 2021

AGM Chair's Report

With the unfortunate absence of our AGM once again my report reflects on a year severely restricted by the pandemic.

Most of our activities have been virtual with Singing, The Café, two of Yoga groups, Conductive Education (CE) and Exercise all moving online. Our Café at The Swan met briefly when they could and CE is now having face to face teaching in Leominster (whilst maintaining good Covid precautions).

We have not been able to hold Archery/Table Tennis and Nordic walking activities and the locality friendship groups, although the local supervisors have continued to support their members by phone.

We have not needed to request any grants this year and some of our reserves have been forwarded to Parkinson's UK to help them to continue to support you all, e.g. magazines.

Sebastian Bowen, the Chairman of Herefordshire Council, has kindly offered to extend his support to us as his charity for his second year with ongoing availability of the Shire Hall or Town Hall for an event which we hope to take up when safe to do so.

Whilst we have had no requests for help with transport we have managed to provide a donated scooter and welfare funds to help respite care and CE subsidies.

Whilst two of our Specialist Parkinson's Nurses were moved to A&E and ITU this year we look forward to them moving back to supporting Nicky and Dr Wales who have been forced to temporarily consult mostly by phone. We are aware that this has not been ideal.

Interestingly we were steadily increasing our membership when the epidemic struck. However, this has fallen by a few recently possibly due to the death of several of our well-loved, long term members. However, it may be due to reduced GP referrals so please remind your carers of our existence and see if they would like some of our Hello leaflets to send to their patients who have Parkinson's.

We have been keeping our website up to date for the last year and we have now, thanks to the ongoing support of Mike Searl, a Winchester Member who has modernised it and has set up an address for us which now works. So please take a look at: www.herefordparkinsons.org.uk and let me know of any improvements you would like. Both our Facebook (Hereford & District Parkinson's UK) and Twitter (@parkinsonshfd) feeds are embedded on the website homepage so it will be updated with our latest news.

We now offer to send out our newsletter (sParks) electronically and several people have requested these which helps both the climate and allows the funds to go further. However, we are aware many people prefer a paper version so we will continue to send out paper copies to those who don't request electronic versions. Please let Fiona our newsletter editor know if you would prefer to have it emailed.

The committee are grateful for Jane Henderson who works for Parkinson's UK and supports the branches in our region.

I am grateful to Sharon for her help to the committee as our secretary till she retired (please let any of the depleted committee know if you are interested in volunteering yourself or know someone who could do this).

Since the last real AGM, we have three "new" committee members; Fiona who collates the articles and edits *sParks* our

Newsletter; Richard representing our Working Age Group; and Sandie the Ross-on-Wye Friendship Group. Len has kept us financially stable and Keith has vigilantly chased up our membership and maintained the quality of our membership/ mailing list. He has also been on our Welfare committee and helped distribute the newsletter. Unfortunately, he has decided to retire from the committee in March, so thank you Keith for all you have done for us and we are grateful for you continuing to lead the Hereford friendship group. So, we are now down to five committee members.

Again we are desperately looking for another committee member to guide the branch, going in the way we and hopefully you wish. More hands make light work - so speak to any of us and you can always sit in (at present we use zoom and meet roughly monthly for under an hour).

Whilst Covid-19 has restricted the way we have been able to support you, we hope all our activities will soon be back up and running with choice of how you access them.

Take care but have fun!

Chris Frith

Lions Holiday Caravan

The Lions Club in Hereford owns a caravan in Porthmadog, just at the beginning of the Llyn Peninsula in the most beautiful part of North Wales; it is on a lovely site next to the beach in an official area of outstanding beauty. The caravan was bought from the local branch of the MS Society; it was purpose-built and fitted out for people with disabilities, although you don't have to have a disability to book it. Use of the caravan is restricted to local charities such as Parkinson's UK and our local branch. If you would

like a leaflet telling you all about it and how to book, please give the sParks Editor a ring (01885 400657/07710 19 16 08)

The Lions Club is hoping that, despite the current situation, the caravan will have a lot of usage this year, especially as it affords people the chance to self-isolate at the caravan.

Ian Foster, Hereford Lions Club

News from Nicky Stapleton, the Parkinson's Nurse:

The news we have here is that Sian Perkins has started with us and is the permanent replacement for Caroline. She is working Mon-Thurs so will be meeting many of you in the next few months. Ella has gone back to her role in A&E.

We are now moving back to seeing people face to face more routinely but are still happy to offer both telephone and video calls if preferred.

In the next few weeks, hopefully by mid May, we are moving out of Gaol St into Sarum House. The office number will, unfortunately, have to change, but we will notify every one of the change. You can still contact me on my mobile 07976 526335 or by email at parkinsons.nurseswvt@nhs.net. My mobile diverts to the admin team if I am in clinic or otherwise not available so messages can be left.

Thanks 😊 Nicky

Nicky Stapleton

Parkinson's Disease Lead Clinical Nurse Specialist

tel: 01432 378935 /07976 526335

World Parkinson's Day 2021

On Sunday 11 April the Parkinson's community will come together for World Parkinson's day. Find out more about the live event on April 11 on our World Parkinson's Day webpage here <https://www.parkinsons.org.uk/get-involved/world-parkinsons-day-2021>

The page includes a range of ideas to stay connected - from research & art, to walks. Also attached are some WPD ideas and a quiz that the UK office has put together. A logo, developed for World Parkinson's Day, along with a press release template, is available on the document hub of **Assemble** and World Parkinson's day posters will be available to all volunteers on **Create**, our hub where you can create your own posters and flyers <https://www.parkinsons.org.uk/get-involved/parkinsons-uk-create>.

To whet your appetite, try our quiz - answers will be given in the next Issue of *sParks* Newsletter!

PARKINSON'S QUIZ

General Knowledge:

1. Who wrote the essay on Shaking Palsy?
2. And in which Square in London would you find a blue plaque memorial to this person?
3. In which year did Parkinson's Disease Society become Parkinson's UK?
4. To the nearest 10,000, how many people in the UK are estimated to be living with Parkinson's?

5. Parkinson's symptoms start to appear when the brain can't produce enough what?

Celebrity Supporters:

1. Ozzy Osbourne revealed he has been diagnosed with Parkinson's but which band did he front as the 'Prince of Darkness'?
2. Michael J Fox is most famous for playing which character in the Back to the Future trilogy?
3. What is the nickname given to Scottish Comedian Billy Connolly?
4. Who is the famous person married to Parkinson's UK Celebrity Ambassador Ayda Field?
5. Jane Asher is Parkinson's UK President and has had a full career as an Actor, Author, Entrepreneur but is famous for what else?

Research:

1. A pioneering clinical trial programme that delivered an experimental treatment directly into the brain is known by an abbreviation of which 4 letters?
2. How many active research projects are currently funded by Parkinson's UK?
a) 14 b) 41 c) 104 d) 140
3. How could Sebum, which is an oily substance secreted from the glands of the skin, help diagnose Parkinson's?
4. Parkinson's UK Brain Bank is based in which London University?
5. To the nearest million how much to date has Parkinson's UK invested in research?

Our Local Branch's New Website

Have you made a note of our website address? Here it is once again – why not log it on your mobile or laptop or tablet **now** and look at it regularly to keep up to date with all the happenings in the world of Parkinson's. **www.herefordparkinsons.org.uk**.

Did you know, for instance that they have discovered that a simple skin test can determine the likelihood of somebody developing the disease?

Also there I downloaded a free booklet entitled *Practical Parkinson's Tips - 67 tips to help make your life Easier, Happier and More Productive*. You can download it for free at

www.allaboutparkinsons.com/practical-parkinsons-tips-ty -

(This is not an official recommendation – just that your Editor thought it had some good ideas she had never thought of!) And then you discover more books by the same author and then.... And then.... And it's an hour later and you *still* haven't looked up what you came on line to find!!!

Undaunted

For many years now Alister and Heather Cole have supported us with donations raised at their "Northern Soul" evenings in Ledbury. DJ Alister, together with one of his friends, would "spin the vinyl" and recreate the atmosphere of the dance venues in Wigan and Keele in the 1970's.

"Cometh the lockdown, cometh the man", so Alister took to YouTube and asked his many fans to help us again, in the hope that it would not be too long before they would be "rocking in the aisles" once more. They did not disappoint, so we have continued

to benefit from their generosity, even though there is no dancing to be seen.

This is one of their “Patches”, similar to those stitched onto the bags of the fans “up North”, all those years ago.

We salute you all, and say a big “Thank You”.

Len Vidler

In Memoriam

Remembering Janet (Jan) Sheldon
(16th May 1938 – Christmas Day 2020)



There are some people whom you meet on life’s journey that you never forget and Jan was certainly one of those people. She was a very quiet, private person but she was at the same time, warm, friendly, kind and helpful in every way. She cared for her husband, Alan, for many years after he developed young onset Parkinson’s Disease. Alan was Headmaster of Goodrich School and, after they moved to this area Jan was a supply teacher at Aston Ingham School.

Jan was born in Leek, Staffordshire and following her marriage and living in Gloucester the family moved to Leys Hill where they brought up their children, a girl and twin boys.

Following the death of her husband Jan continued her support for the Hereford & District Branch and Ross-on-Wye Friendship Group

in particular. Although she developed mouth cancer nothing deterred her and she brushed it all aside as though it was of no consequence to all the other interests and work she wanted to do. Many found her to be a fount of knowledge and drawing on her personal experience, willing to help those with a problem.

She was especially helpful to Jeff Pratt (and to his wife, Jane), and to me as past Leaders of the Friendship Group and latterly to Sandie van Someren our current Leader.

Nothing was ever too much trouble for Jan, and although always very busy, found time to do whatever was asked of her, whether making items for fundraising, for example making scarves, toys or helping at the various collections over the years.

Jan, whose strong Christian faith sustained her, was a great support to her church at Goodrich also the Bishopswood WI where she worked on the scenery and acted in the pantomimes. She played the piano for them and designed and made their new banner.

She was also a staunch member of the Goodrich Art Society before that unfortunately was wound up. She was a beautiful painter and very artistic. Jan was also excellent at quizzes – always seeming to win! An excellent cook, as we in the group can testify – her Welsh cakes were second to none! She also enjoyed sewing and was interested in patchwork and quilting. She was also a keen bridge player.

Needless to say, Jan loved her garden and was very knowledgeable about plants and delighted in the wildlife that came to visit.

Above all, her family and her six grandchildren were, of course, dear to her heart as she was to them. She has left them bereft and much saddened.

Her sudden death on Christmas Day 2020 came as a shock to everyone and we shall continue to miss Jan, but for all of us, she was a joy to know and we hope she realised how much she was appreciated.

Anne Downing & other contributors

Trials and Tribulations of a Scooter user in Leominster

Marcella Taylor Billing
talks to your local reporter!



Marcella saw an ad for this lovely big scooter, a really fast guy who could go at 8 mph so she bought him but didn't go out for quite a while!! After twelve months (!!) it was time to give it a go again, but the tyres were somewhat squidgey and needed pumping

up. So, being the sensible girl that she is, Marcella had the scooter serviced with a new battery in place and new tyres. Off she went.... but the scooter pulled to the left. Trouble was, the tyre need air into it and Marcella's pumping let more air out than in!

However she bravely continued this particular trip until the scooter stopped dead in its tracks – the engineer came, said it was the battery, new one need - £100.00!! But all was *much* better.....except that it was too heavy to get into the car! So, like any sensible girl, Marcella got a new car, a *very* nice new BMW with a hoist to lift the scooter in and out!! And in it went, no problem ... but it couldn't get back out again!!!! So eventually our Marcella settled on a nice, sensible little scooter and enjoyed getting out and about around Leominster – she even went off-road on a trip to Hampton Court with her friend Jo, though “off-road” almost ended “in-pond”. Now that would have been a sight!! But Marcella and the nice, sensible little scooter are still happily going along on the bumpy, bumpy streets of Leominster and negotiating the low step drive-on, drive-off style of the local buses. And as Marcella says, ‘if you fancy the dishy driver, don't drive over his toes!!’ A moral for us all!



The copy date for the next *sParks* is June 18 for the Summer issue published June 30 – contributions to fionajones500@gmail.com or by mail to Firbush, Winslow, Bromyard HR7 4SG