

Parkinson's UK Edinburgh Branch Research Interest Group

PARKINSON'S^{UK}
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Newsletter October 2017 Issue No. 16

View from the Chair

The sixth Edinburgh Parkinson's Lecture was delivered by Professor Andrew Lees at the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh on the evening of 20th September 2017. The lecture was entitled **The quest to find a cure for Parkinson's disease** with an intriguing subtitle: *Mentored by a Madman: The William Burroughs experiment*. Professor Lees took the audience on a guided tour of his life as a neurologist and on the people and things that had influenced his development, from Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and his creation, Sherlock Holmes, to the writer William Burroughs. A fascinating evening.

In this issue:

ERIG talk by Dr
Esther Sammler

2017 Lecture by
Prof Andrew Lees

Forthcoming ERIG
talk by Dr Tilo
Kunath

Parkinson's
Research Initiative

Forthcoming ERIG
talk by Prof Wlady
Gedroyc

Contact details

ERIG talk by Esther Sammler

A record audience attended the latest meeting of ERIG on 22 April 2017 to hear a talk entitled '*200 years on: genes, genetics and signalling pathways in Parkinson's Disease.*' by Dr Esther Sammler, from Dundee University.

As a clinician, Esther is interested in the potential for LRRK2-mediated Rab phosphorylation to act as biomarker for LRRK2-associated Parkinson's, and in exploring ways to monitor LRRK2 pathway activity in patients with Parkinson's. In association with colleagues, a 'robust assay' to assess quantitatively LRRK2-mediated Rab phosphorylation in peripheral blood samples has been developed, and pilot studies are now underway in Dundee and Tübingen. The assay provides a tool to monitor LRRK2 pathway activity in people with Parkinson's – and can also assess how well drugs administered to inhibit that activity are working. Esther's slides are available to read or download on our website. As usual, we are grateful to Dr Tilo Kunath for his hospitality at SCRM.

The 2017 Edinburgh Parkinson's Lecture

On our website you can find a summary of the lecture, written by Branch member Helen Harris, together with photos taken at the event. A DVD of the lecture is also available: details of how to obtain a copy are also on the website

ERIG talk by Dr Tilo Kunath

Dr Tilo Kunath will give a talk to ERIG on his current research:
'Where are we at with a cell therapy for Parkinson's?'

Time and date: 10.30 – 13.30, Saturday 2 December 2017

Venue: *Scottish Centre for Regenerative Medicine, 5 Little France Drive
Edinburgh EH16 4UU*

Please register via Eventbrite on our website and indicate whether or not you wish to stay for a sandwich lunch after the talk.

Parkinson's Research Initiative Launch

Following the 2017 Lecture there was a reception at the Royal College of Physicians, to announce a multidisciplinary Parkinson's Research Initiative to accelerate the application of scientific knowledge into developing new and better treatments for Parkinson's. This partnership between the Universities of Dundee and Edinburgh will integrate the innovative scientific research teams at both universities with clinical medicine to improve patient care and access to research studies and clinical trials for people affected by Parkinson's in Scotland.



(L to R) Tilo Kunath, Ken Bowler, Esther Sammler, Gordon Duncan, Dario Alessi, Siddharthan Chandran

ERIG talk by Professor Wladyslaw Gedroyc

Professor Wladyslaw Gedroyc of Imperial College, London, has kindly agreed to give a talk to ERIG entitled

'MR guided focused ultrasound of the brain.'

Professor Gedroyc is a consultant radiologist at St Mary's hospital and Imperial healthcare where he has been working for the last 27 years. He is involved in research investigating utilising MRI for image guidance in a variety of applications. More recently this has centred on utilising MR guided focused ultrasound in a variety of body areas as well as associated projects on drug activation with focused ultrasound. Currently brain focused ultrasound applications are being investigated by Prof Gedroyc and his team at Imperial predominantly at the moment in the context of motion disorders.

Time and date: 10.30 – 13.30, Saturday 3 March 2018

Venue: Scottish Centre for Regenerative Medicine, 5 Little France Drive
Edinburgh EH16 4UU

Please register via Eventbrite on our website and indicate whether or not you wish to stay for a sandwich lunch after the talk.

Contact details

The Edinburgh Branch web site is at www.edinburghparkinsons.org and the Research Interest Group page is www.edinburghparkinsons.org/research-interest-group/.
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