

Parkinson's UK. Fife Branch

'Keeping Us Together' No.14

Hello Readers

Mark and I would like to send all our readers our best wishes for a happy and healthy 2021. We hope you will enjoy reading our January edition which has a poetic and Scottish flavour inspired by our national bard, Robert Burns.

We were thrilled that so many readers sent in Christmas messages and articles for our Special Christmas Edition. Our Branch newsletter is becoming a much healthier community publication. Let's keep it going. We want to hear your stories, your poems, your recipes and your thoughts.

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A Message from our Chairman – John Minhinick

As we move into the New Year, I begin my welcome with some special thank you messages. Recently at the last committee meeting for 2020 Diane, Annette and David were there for the last time. During six years as the Branch Secretary Diane Dunbar has been an outstanding support, a valued source of opinion and common sense to me personally and more widely to the committee.

For over four years, Annette and David Fitzsimmons have handled the transport requirements and varying demands of the social programme with quiet efficiency. They have dealt so very well with late changes where members sometimes expect/demand the impossible. Earlier in 2020, John and Jackie Ramsay stood down from organising the weekly indoor bowls meetings.

Their contributions to our committee meetings and the Styx Race Nights were greatly appreciated.

I'm delighted that Briar Richardson has agreed to become the Fife Branch Secretary and Membership Secretary. Briar and Brian have been very active supporters of the Branch in recent years. We are still looking for a volunteer to join the social team and another to organise the transport to meetings and events. Someone to organise the weekly bowls sessions will also be needed.

In an earlier edition of "Keeping us Together" I informed you that following Parkinson's UK guidance, we would not be holding an AGM. As promised, we are in the process of sending out the minutes from the AGM held in January 2020 and a review of the past year including a financial statement.

Supported by the excellent guidance issued by PUK, we will be formulating our plans for getting back to in-person meetings later in the year. In the next few months, we will continue with the successful Zoom-based meetings; if you've yet to come on board why not make it your New Year resolution. Later in this newsletter you'll find details of a new fortnightly Wednesday morning meeting.

During these difficult times you may be having financial problems for a variety of reasons. There are many types of grants, loans, schemes or financial support that you can apply for if you're affected by Parkinson's. For more information go to:

<https://www.parkinsons.org.uk/information-and-support/grants-loans-and-other-support>

People with Parkinson's or other forms of progressive parkinsonism, and unpaid carers, can apply for a Parkinson's UK Grant up to £1,500. The Parkinson's UK Grants programme is currently closed. It will open again for applications from Monday 1 February 2021. For more information go to:

<https://www.parkinsons.org.uk/about-us/parkinsons-uk-grants>



The Coffee and Chat Group

Hello everybody and Happy New Year to all our friends in the Parkinson's Group. Here we are once again in another period of lockdown and for many of us this time coping with it has become more difficult; in part because it has been going on for so long but also as we are now dealing with isolation through bad weather and winter's dark nights.

The Zoom meetings that have been organised by the Fife Branch over the last nine months have been a Godsend for many of our members who have found the isolation difficult. Perhaps in the early months of the pandemic you didn't feel the need for these online meetings but are now wearying of the enforced restrictions. If you now find that you would welcome some relaxed and wide-ranging conversation to break up the monotony of daily life under lockdown, we would encourage you to join the fortnightly Wednesday morning Coffee and Chat sessions. Set up fairly recently, this friendly get-together has attracted quite a number of new members and existing members too, who drop in with their morning coffee for some light-hearted and varied conversation.

Our last meeting of 2020 was on the day before Hogmanay and after a dreadful old year we are all wishing for a better new year. We have sacrificed so much during 2020 so our new year resolutions are along these lines. Fourteen folk came along to share the company and the chat revolved around 'What was your best Christmas present?' Great hilarity was shared over the technical side of Zoom and attempts to get nice backgrounds on our Zoom pictures. We were inspired to try to achieve Elizabeth Thomson's 'Tropical island in the sun' background!

We are now in 2021 and our first meeting was on the 13th of January when thirteen folks joined the group. Our discussion included the Covid 19 Vaccine and various issues about venues in Fife. New members, Mary Patey and Agnes Thomson, joined us today. As the ladies had attended the Glenrothes Café, they had already met some of our 'crew'. It was great to see you both.

Climb Every Mountain



I close my eyes and reminisce
Of days gone by and how I miss
The glorious mountains that we have climbed
Bagging Munros the thrill comes to mind
Glencoe, Torridon with fabulous ridges
Not forgetting the dreadful midges
Every mountain a memory to behold
A different tale to each one can be told
The Mamores, Glen Shiel the beautiful Schiehallion
Ben Nevis, Glen Etive, too many to mention
Summer, Winter, Spring or Autumn
Jackets on we set out to greet them
But the crème de la crème with pinnacles so high
Is the magnificent Cullins on the Island of Skye
In awesome amazement their beauty displayed
The grandeur and ruggedness cannot be erased
Such wonderful memories that will never fade
I'll be grateful to cherish the rest of my days
But now I have Parkinson's my summits I find
Is to welcome each day as a new mountain to climb.

Margaret Stewart

Shortbread

Ingredients

8 oz (225g) plain flour 8oz (225g) margarine
4 oz (113g) cornflour 4 oz (113g) caster sugar

Method

Mix flour, cornflour and sugar in a large bowl.
Add margarine (in pieces) and work it into the
dry ingredients.

Transfer mixture into a baking tray (8in x 8in /
20cm x 20cm) and flatten with your fingers
Prick the mixture thoroughly with a fork.

Place tray in oven and cook at 160C
for approximately 1 hr 30 min.

Remove when golden brown.

Sprinkle with more sugar.

Cut into pieces while still hot.

Place pieces on a rack to dry out and crisp.



John Minhinick – A Tale

When Fifers had to leave the street
To stop indoors and rarely meet
Their neebours, freends and all held dear
After Nicola's made it very clear
That COVID-19 had arrived
And although the powers-that-be had tried
To stop the virus in its tracks
That battle was lost, we were under attack.

Nae langer were groups allowed tae meet
O'er cups o' tea and tasty treats
Nae sitting thegither, nae chance o' a blether
Nae gaitherings in Falkland in a' kinds of weather
We stopped looking forward as numbers were rising
The nation's mood dropped which was no' that
surprising.

Do you, guid branch members, mind the day
When oor chairman, John Minhinick, emailed us to say
That our face-to-face meetings would now have to stop
To keep us a' safe - this has come frae the top?
Suddenly our lives changed, our structure had gone
Things taken for granted now seemed to take on
A new value and worth, it has got to be said
Weel, nae ither group appreciates the thochts in our
heads.

Now to mony a man, this would hae been a big problem
But to our guid man John, with all of his wisdom
Turned problem to challenge, 'We must find a solution,
'Fife Branch must survive, we must dive into action.'

The first step he took was tae introduce Zoom
To his trusted committee wha could only assume
As he had used it afore, whit he said must be true
So they a' jumped on board and became Zoomers too.

But to spread the Zoom word, proved a challenge for all
Until one young branch member came and answered the call
Having mentored oor Maggie through her window flung wide
Thocht it wid be beneficial to design a Zoom Guide
To help a' our members to join in on the fun
John wanted tae offer a link tae each one.

But John, dearest John, although we were keen
Whit an experience that wis, as we sat at oor screens
Meeting numbers and passwords and chat rooms to find
Hosting meetings, recording, they a' blew our minds
Some folks couldn't get in, some got pictures, nae soun'
'Unmute yoursel' hen!' wis the cry that went roun'
And hoo dae you dae that? We were going insane
But John patiently waited and advised yet again
Until all of the pennies dropped neatly in place
And a new-found self-confidence we a' could embrace.

John skelpit on and pit thegither
A programme simply unlike ony ither
We could choose to chat or simply to listen
We could choose to dance or to sing in unison
Tai chi tae calm, quiz questions tae test
We could even share the walks which we've all lo'ed the best
In the Camera Club we could noo learn to hone
Our photography skills in the comfort of home.
It became a fine model, and nationwide it went
Inspiring our Chloe for her YP event.
And John shared Mark's booklet with Parkinson's UK
His vision undaunted, he still showed us the way.

So guid readers tak' heed when a problem arises
And we a' know that problems come in a' shapes and sizes
Just bring tae mind John, his approach is that braw
Mak' the problem a challenge - it'll soon gang awa'
Turn your worry into action inside your wee brain
And your problem will not be a problem again.
You'll be awfy amazed as your thinking progresses
That all of your worries will turn into successes
And just like oor John, always fu' o' guid cheer
You too could be made a 'Volunteer of the Year'.

Charles Small
January 2021

Robert Burns – A Quiz

- 1 Which of these creatures did Burns NOT write an ode to?
a. Mouse b. Cat c. Louse
- 2 Where is Burns buried?
a. Dumfries b. Ayr c. Aberfeldy
- 3 Which British astronaut took a miniature book of Burns' poetry into space?
a. Tim Peake b. Helen Sharman
c. Nick Patrick
- 4 How many children did Burns have?
a. 9 b. 12 c. 7
- 5 What former republic or sovereign state featured Burns on a stamp?
a. Soviet Union b. Yugoslavia
c. Czechoslovakia
- 6 How old was Burns when he died in 1796?
a. 28 b. 37 c. 42
- 7 Where was Poesie Nansie's tavern – said to have inspired, 'The Jolly Beggars' – located?
a. Mauchline b. Cumnock c. Alloway
- 8 Which of these is NOT formally toasted at a Burns' Supper?
a. Haggis b. Whisky c. Lassies
- 9 What was the horse in Tam O' Shanter called?
a. Maggie b. Meg c. Molly
- 10 When was Robert Burns born?
a. 1759 b. 1756 c. 1764
- 11 Where did Robert move to after his first book of poems was published?
a. Edinburgh b. Glasgow c. Dundee
- 12 What was Robert's father's occupation?
a. Fisherman b. Farmer c. Publican

'You, Me & Mr P: Living and loving with Parkinson's':

Katie Nicol from Ayrshire has created a lovely website and blog aimed at families, friends and carers.

Katie is really keen to reach out to folk, and her hope is that it will be a help to people like her, and that they will engage and contribute as well. She plans to schedule a blog post to go out every week.

It is also her intention every few weeks to ask a guest blogger to contribute a post. Please click the link to have a look, it's wonderful, really warm, engaging, informative... really lovely.

<https://westhavenkatie.wixsite.com/youmeandmrp>

Alice Hall



STOP PRESS

. . . For some time now the Parkinson's Nursing Team for Fife has been understrength. Starting on Monday 18th January, Gillian Aldrich will be returning full time to head-up the Parkinson's Nursing Team, allowing Lynda Kearney to concentrate on her role as Lead Nurse for MS sufferers. We wish them both well in their new roles. [Read more in 'Keeping Us Together 15'](#).

TEAM PARKINSON'S

We're Worried About You!

Parkinson's UK changed their membership rules last year and you don't need to pay a subscription to join or remain a member anymore.

If you have been a member, and make a donation by Direct Debit your membership will be renewed annually. If you no longer wish to pay a subscription but want to remain a member then you should have had a membership form sent to you by PUK. If this has not arrived it can be downloaded from the PUK website. You don't even need a stamp to return it because the address is freepost.

<https://www.parkinsons.org.uk/sites/default/files/2019-02/Team%20Parkinson%27s%20joining%20form.pdf>

Or you can contact Charles or Mark and we'll take care of it on your behalf.

DONATIONS TO OUR BRANCH

Our Parkinson's UK Fife Branch is always very grateful to receive donations. We recognise that they are given not just after times of celebration and enjoyment but they are also gifted after times of sadness. If you are thinking about fundraising, remember that details are on our web site, fifeparkinsons.org

Here are the latest donations.

Donations:

Erskine Church

Burntisland & Kinghorn Rotary Club

People with Parkinson's need your help!

Please join PD Avengers

Parkinson's is the fastest growing neurological condition in the world, approximately 1 in 100 people have Parkinson's globally. We need your help but we are not after your money or sponsor we **are** after **your voice**. We believe it's time to tell the world about what this condition means, to organise ourselves and to take action to fight it.



People with Parkinson's (PwP's), their family, friends and carers have many challenges to deal with: the variable and debilitating effects of Parkinson's, the side effects of drugs and treatments and experiencing or witnessing the continuous progression of the disease with its increasingly debilitating effects.

PD Avengers mission is to End Parkinson's.

Whilst there have been unprecedented advances in technology and medicine over the last 50 years, very little progress has been made in developing better treatment for Parkinson's, let alone with finding a cure. We have therefore joined the global alliance of PD Avengers which has three objectives:

1. All people of the world with Parkinson's need to have access to proper medications, treatments, information and support.
2. We hope to unite one million actively engaged advocates around the globe by 2022 to power unified campaigns raising awareness for our mission.
3. We aim for meaningful Parkinson's patient input at every step of therapeutic development. We believe this will accelerate the development of better treatments and ultimately lead to a cure.

To achieve this we PD Avengers need your help.

Scotland HUB of PD Avengers

As PD Avengers we will do whatever we can by uniting globally but acting locally, working closely with appropriate groups to support efforts that are compatible with our mission. By establishing more local HUBs of PD Avengers we expect to grow our numbers quickly, raising awareness and promoting action.

We hope to have at least **120 PD Avengers in Scotland** by the end of this month! Yes, January 2021. For the whole of 2021 we want to set the bar really high at 1,200 equivalent to 10% of PwP's in Scotland.

So, whether you are a Person with Parkinson's, a family member, friend or carer please join us, become a PD Avenger and persuade others to join too?

Please visit www.pdavengers.scot which shortly will also provide local updates, information, a blog, testimonials etc and other relevant information. Importantly it links directly to www.pdavengers.com where we hope you will sign up.

When you become a PD Avenger then please send an email to confirm this to: join@pdavengers.scot and let us know that you are happy for your name, address and email to be retained by the PD Avengers for the purpose of keeping you up to date and to send you relevant information.

We hope you will join us. Thank you!

Jo Goodburn, Brendan Hawdon, Janet Kerr, Siobhan O'Hara,

Robert Burns Quiz - Answers

1. (c) Louise 2. (a) Dumfries 3. (c) Nick Patrick 4. (b) 12 5. (a) Soviet Union 6. (b) 37
7. (a) Mauchline 8. (b) Whisky 9. (b) Meg 10. (a) 1759 11. (a) Edinburgh 12. (b) Farmer

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Towards a new quality of treatment for Parkinson's:



Parkinson's and Technology, a Series of 3 Events on Zoom

The past decades have brought an unparalleled increase in the speed of technological advances. Basic technology for products which are now at the centre of our lives often did not exist 10 or 20 years ago. Yet we think we cannot live without them and the good news is, that there are many already available, that can help PwP. The Steering Committee has put together a series of three events to which we are all invited.



- 1. through improvements in managing the Parkinson's Condition (23rd January) 2 – 4.45pm**
Keynote speakers will include Professor Lynn Rochester, Newcastle University, speaking about the role of digital technology in the future of Parkinson's healthcare; Dr Andy Kerr, University of Strathclyde speaking about rehabilitation technology to support maintenance of mobility; and Dr Kyle Montague, Northumbria University, speaking about wearable devices for the collection and practical use of data. The special guest, Rory Cellan-Jones, BBC News Technology Correspondent will open the event and take part in the panel Q and A session.
- 2. through assistance in managing the daily life with Parkinson's (27th February)**
- 3. through improved treatment due to better informed specialists (27th March)**

Being in the midst of these developments, we take the opportunity to show already existing solutions, dare to take a glimpse into the near future and are brave enough to articulate our own ideas. This series of, initially, three events is our offering to take part in a breath-taking journey towards a new quality of treatment for Parkinson's.

The events are jointly organised by DRIG¹, SIGP@T² and WPC³. **Attending is free, but registration is necessary:**

For more information and to register for your **free place**, please visit the organisers' EventBrite

page: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/parkinsons-and-technology-managing-the-parkinson-condition-tickets-132398319939?aff=ebdssbonlinesearch>

Or

[Parkinson's and Technology - Managing the Parkinson Condition Tickets, Sat, Jan 23, 2021 at 2:00 PM | Eventbrite](#)

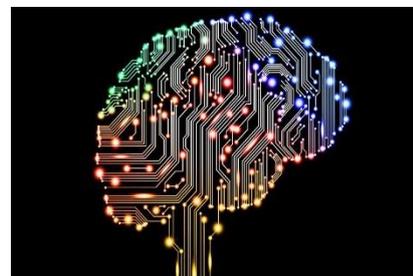
More information and the detailed programme can be found on the [SIGP@T website](#).

We're looking forward to welcoming you to those events.

¹ Dundee Research Interest Group

² Special Interest Group on Parkinson's and Technology

³ World Parkinson Congress 2022



FIFE BRANCH ZOOM MEETINGS FOR JANUARY/FEBRUARY

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

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

Camera Club 10.30am Wednesday. 20th Jan, 3rd 17th
Feb
Code: 610082550 Password: 447546

Coffee & Chat
Wednesday. 27th Jan, 10th & 24th Feb
11.00am Code: 945 0650 0621 Password: 842374

Quiz Evening 7:30pm Wednesday. 20th Jan, 3rd 17th
Feb. Code: 94386184709 Password: 892282

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

Walking Group 10:30am Friday 22nd Jan, 5th & 19th
Feb
Code: 838404255 Password: 855592

Meri's Sing-along 09:45am Friday 29th Jan, 12th &
26th Feb.
Code: 95044591219 Password: 130018

Not Stepping Out But Stepping Into 2021

The Walking Group's first meeting was on the 8th January for our first Zoom get together of 2021. Who would have thought that months on we would still be confined to barracks? However, the silver lining is that the vaccine is here and we just have to be patient until it's our turn to get it.

Our meeting started off with our usual quiz using the OS map of Goonhilly where the first satellite dish was sighted and the phone cable from over the Atlantic came ashore. This enabled information from the satellites in space be sent rapidly to America.

After our brain-storming, we discussed the group's way forward in 2021 as it will be months before we will be able to meet face-to-face and continue our walking throughout Fife. If you are interested in joining our Walking Group come along and meet the group on Zoom once a fortnight from 10.30. am. The next date is Friday 22 January. The Zoom link is <https://zoom.us/j/838404255>. Pw 855592

~

Watch This Space

Parkinson's Fife Branch has teamed up with the Scottish Government Initiative "Connecting Scotland", which aims to help people like us, people with Parkinson's,

get online and be able to have the confidence to Zoom, email, shop online or whatever you like!

We are hoping to get 6 tablets, which will have unlimited internet connectivity. If we are successful, we will allocate them FREE to whoever can make use of them. You will get help and guidance on how to use them as well as continued support. If you already have a computer but you are worried that this will cause your existing set up a problem, don't worry the tablets are completely separate from your computer system.

All you need is a finger, so that you can use the tablet. It's yours to keep and did I already say that it's FREE?

Contact Charles or Mark to get your name on the list.



Graduating With Filters

The Camera Club members continue in their quest to be able to take better photographs using different techniques and lenses.

At our last meeting in December, we took close up images and in January 2021 we discussed using graduated filters for our next images. We were to then use graduated filters and present three photographs.

Graduated filter systems are fitted to the front of a SLR camera lens, which give a different shade or colour depending on the filter used and can shade the top part of the image such as the ones shown.



This effect can be also be achieved using a post editing app or programme on your computer.

If you are interested in photography at any level or have a compact, SLR or mobile phone camera come and join us. No experience needed.

Changes to Helpline Opening Hours

We expect January and February will be a difficult period with tighter restrictions continuing after almost a year since the start of the pandemic, being in midst of the winter weather, and the potential impact of Brexit. To ensure we can give the best service we can to people with Parkinson's and their loved ones, as well as ensuring our helpline staff are well and supported, in January we will close at 5pm every weekday and in February, we will close at 6pm every weekday.

In January, our helpline is open:

Monday to Friday: 9am to 5pm
Saturday: 10am to 2pm

In February, we're open:

Monday to Friday: 9am to 6pm
Saturday: 10am to 2pm

GET IN TOUCH
with Parkinson's
UK

0808 800 0303