

## March and April 2018

Please note that from now onwards the Diary Dates will be published bi-monthly: i.e. six issues each year instead of twelve. The postage on each issue is currently £67 so by this change we save over £400 per year which can be better used. Printing cost per issue is currently £6.50 per page so a larger Diary Dates is possible, enabling us to pass on more information relevant to Parkinson's.

### Forward Dates

Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> March 2.00 pm, Branch AGM at Hinchingbrooke Park Education Centre.

Speaker, Sharon Cade, Service Manager East, Parkinson's UK

\*Free car park vouchers from Malcolm Ryman or David Rudd

Monday June 18<sup>th</sup> 3.00 pm: Strawberry Tea at Waresley Garden Centre.

Monday 17<sup>th</sup> December: Branch Christmas Lunch at Hemingford Abbots Village Hall

**Dr Beate Ritz** is Professor of Epidemiology at University of California Los Angeles and is particularly interested in the way genetic factors are affected by environmental factors. She said that even the smallest differences in genetic factors can change how an individual reacts to the environment around them. The more common environmental agents are food, medications, mould, pesticides and air pollutants. No previous generation has had to face so much pollution of soil, air and water. Almost all diseases are the result of GeneXEnvironment interactions. Pesticides and air pollutants are known to impact on neurodegenerative diseases and cancers. One study in Southern California Central Valley showed that the combination of the fungicide 'maneb' and herbicide 'paraquat' can increase the risk of developing Parkinson's by 75% in comparison to people who had no contact with them. Agriculture and chemical industries are slow to adopt changes in USA. Parkinson's is extremely complex and we do not yet properly understand it.

[Paraquat is banned in all EU countries, used under licence in USA and is uncontrolled in many Asian countries Editor].

**Dr Roger Barker** (who is known to many of us) is Professor of Clinical Neuroscience at Cambridge University, Consultant Neurologist at Addenbrooke's, guest Professor at Lund University, Sweden and a Principal Investigator in MRC-Welcome Trust Stem Cell Institute in Cambridge. For the past 25 years he has been investigating the various forms of Parkinson's and Huntington's Diseases. "Stem cells are cells that have both the capacity to divide, and give rise to differentiated cell types. One example is embryonic stem cells which are found in the newly fertilized egg which give rise to all the different kinds of cells we have in our body. The main aim of my research group is to better define the different types of Parkinson's Disease. From there we try to understand why they happen and how we can best treat each sub-type – including with new therapies such as dopamine cell transplants. We use stem cells in two ways: (I) as a source of cells which then we can turn into dopamine cells to graft back into the brain and (II) to make dopamine nerve cells to try to understand what goes wrong in those cells in Parkinson's. This opens the possibility that we can test various drugs on these cells to see if we can slow down or alter aspects of the disease process."

**How many people in UK have Parkinson's?** Latest studies indicate that the number of people living with Parkinson's is around 145,000, with 50 people being diagnosed every day. More men than women have Parkinson's. By 2025 the number may rise to 168,000. The Society's Chief Executive Steve Ford says "We've understood for some time that the number of people living with Parkinson's is on the rise. The new ways of working we've brought in over the past couple of years have put us in a stronger position to reach greater numbers of people and make

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changes happen more quickly. What these figures will help us do now is talk with more urgency about the scale of the issue. The more people affected, the more care service providers, policy makers and drug companies will need to take notice – and action. By the end of 2018 we'll have a clearer picture of what's working well and where bigger improvements are needed. Next year we can put the right plans in place for 2020 and beyond to bring us closer to the day we can say 'people used to have Parkinson's'".

## Exercise and other Therapies

*Reflexology by Vanessa* (at a subsidised rate for members). Phone 01480 435718 for appointments  
*Chair-based exercise with Gareth* Tuesdays 11.00 at Pilgrim Hall, United Reformed Church, St Neots  
*Parkinson's Dance with Kim* Thursdays at 15.00. March 8<sup>th</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup>, April 5<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup>, at Stage Works, Buckden Towers.  
*Sing for Parkinson's with Alison*, Thursdays at 14.00. March 1<sup>st</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup>, 29<sup>th</sup>, April 12<sup>th</sup>, 26<sup>th</sup>.  
Exercise for voice and breathing at MS Centre, Bradbury House, Mayfield Road, Hartford, Huntingdon  
*Love to Move with Kim* Thursdays at 13.30. March 8<sup>th</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup>, April 5<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup>, at Stage Works, Buckden Towers  
Thursdays at 13.00. March 1<sup>st</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup>, 29<sup>th</sup>, April 12<sup>th</sup>, 26<sup>th</sup>, at MS Centre, Mayfield Road.  
Note that *Love to Move* is now weekly to gain full benefit, but at alternating venues.  
*Chair-based exercise with Becky* Fridays 11.00 at Crossways, St Ives

## Exercise and Parkinson's

Physiotherapists and exercise professionals have helped to create the latest resources on exercise and Parkinson's. As Parkinson's affects everyone differently, there isn't a one-size-fits-all approach to exercise.\*\*  
Parkinson's UK has produced better information to help people find physical activity that suits them.  
Advice is in three categories for different stages of Parkinson's:

- Newly diagnosed or mild symptoms
- Symptoms that are progressing
- More complex symptoms

Each has its own page on the website and an animation to help explain it. There is also a framework for health professionals (such as GPs, Parkinson's nurses, physiotherapists).

Visit the website: [parkinsons.org.uk/information-and-support/exercise](http://parkinsons.org.uk/information-and-support/exercise)

[\*\*That is why in this Branch we provide four different styles. Editor]

## Social and Information Calendar

Dolphin Hotel, St Ives. There will be no meeting in March because of the AGM.

April 4<sup>th</sup>, at 14.00, the speaker will be Dr Simon Stott whose research is into chemical markers in breath.

Rainbow Surgery, Ramsey. At 14.00 on Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> March the speaker will be Marianne Fountain, Parkinson's Local Advisor.

The April meeting will be at 14.00 on April 11<sup>th</sup>.

Old Market Court, St Neots. At 14.00 on March 19<sup>th</sup> the speaker will be Marianne Fountain.

On April 16<sup>th</sup> at 14.00 the speaker will be Honoré of Assistive Technology

Marbrook Centre, Eaton Socon. Café Neurol at 10.30 on March 27<sup>th</sup> and April 24<sup>th</sup>