

Barnsley & District Branch

NEWS

March 2021

Introducing Terry, our New Chair See P2

Respite Care

- ★ A reminder that all carers of People with Parkinson's can take advantage of [Respite Care](#), funded by the Branch, as and when required up to a maximum of 4 hours per calendar month with limited flexibility on how the hours are taken up.
- ★ This service is available for leisure activities, essential shopping or just having a break. It is provided by Crossroads Care and is strictly confidential.
- ★ For referral to access the service, contact your free confidential helpline on 0808 800 0303.

Find us online...

Barnsley Branch WEB: barnsleyparkinsons.org.uk

EMAIL:
info@barnsleyparkinsons.org.uk

Medicine Supply

Hopefully, no one should experience a shortage of medication as a result of Brexit, as the government has put contingency plans in place to keep medicines in supply. You should be able to keep ordering your repeat prescriptions and take your medication as usual.

However, if anyone should have difficulties, the advice is to ring the helpline on 0808 800 0303. Advisers will follow up the complaint and liaise with the drug companies to find a solution.

World Parkinson's Day

To celebrate World Parkinson's Day on Sunday 11th April, the committee proposes to hold a Zoom meeting for all members at 12 noon. If you would like to take part, please contact Doris, so that she can liaise with Ken to issue invitations.

Changes at the Top!

On behalf of the committee, I would like to give a very warm welcome to Terry as the new Chair and also to express our thanks to Philip for his many years of excellent service. His knowledge and advice have been invaluable to us all. We are delighted that he will not be deserting us altogether but will stay on to give us the benefit of his extensive experience in persuading organisations to give us funding support.

We are also sorry that Granville has decided to give up his position as Membership Secretary, following what has been a very difficult year for him. It can be a frustrating role, which requires a certain degree of forbearance. Ann Marie has agreed to carry on where Granville left off and I am sure she will be similarly successful in using her skills and experience to ensure a smooth transition.

Sheila

Acting Chair's Chatter

I feel privileged to have been elected by the committee to the position of Acting Chair and hopefully will be duly elected to the position of Branch Chair at the next AGM.

My background is that of a retired Company Director, having worked as Managing Director in my own Human Resource (HR) consultancy business. The business provided advice to small and medium size companies in South Yorkshire on such matters as employment legislation, contracts of employment, recruitment, redundancies and disciplinary procedures.

I have a wealth of experience in human resource management which enables me to deal with pastoral matters with compassion and understanding, resulting in practical support and guidance to colleagues.

I served as a Magistrate in Barnsley Courthouse for just less than 17 years. For the last three of those years I was the Chairman of the Bench.

I have just moved to Royston with my wife Shirley. For the past 30 years we lived in Penistone. I have two married daughters and four grandchildren - they are aged between 16 and 22, and all live in the Blackpool area.

Philip will be a hard act to follow! During the 16 years he has been our Branch Chair he has worked tirelessly to ensure the Barnsley Branch is truly represented at every level of the Parkinson's organisation, resulting in our Branch being highly regarded at the head office of Parkinson's UK.

I acknowledge the role of Acting Branch Chair will be very challenging. I expect it will also be very rewarding.

With the continuing success of the Covid-19 vaccination programme it seems that at last there is light at the end of this very dark tunnel that we have all been living with this past 12 months.

Hopefully, during the autumn, we shall be able to re-start in-person activities and what a delight it will be to meet up at Bronia's exercise class and to see the reintroduction of our monthly Branch meetings. Not forgetting of course our overdue AGM.

Keep safe, I hope to see you all before too long.

Terry

From Rose Crawley

I am the local Network Support Officer and part of my role is to support the volunteers in the Barnsley area.

I'd like to take this opportunity on behalf of Parkinson's UK to say a special thank you to Granville and Philip for being such wonderful volunteers.

We will miss Granville's good humour and the patience he brought to the role of Secretary.

Philip was a brilliant Branch Chair and certainly kept me on my toes! He has worked tirelessly for the group and I am delighted that he is going to continue as a Branch Committee member.

I'd also like to thank all the other volunteers for their dedication and support, and to all of you who help the Branch to continue to thrive.



B and B to Combat Falls

My balance has not been as good as it should be for some time, thanks to my Parkinson's. Even before I was diagnosed, I noticed that on high mountain routes I started to feel uneasy when I was on steep ground. Then there were falls in the garden at home, but nothing compared with my accident in Wharncliffe Woods in August 2020.



*Wheelchair courtesy of
George Spencer*

I like to keep fit with a variety of activities, but with onset of the Covid-19 virus most of them were suspended. Our Parkinson's keep fit class was cancelled and the small pool I use for a gentle swim on a Friday morning was forced to close. That left Pilates, which successfully changed to a Zoom class, and Nordic walking which I had recently joined. A group of present and former members of the keep fit group had set up a Nordic walking group as it is excellent therapy for some of the Parkinson's symptoms. Nordic Walking uses trekking poles to help propel you forward. As an outdoor activity it could continue for the time being. Everything was going well and I was enjoying it, until the day in Wharncliffe Woods when I turned too quickly to get back up the hill to the car park. I stumbled and found myself on the ground after landing on my left knee. It was painful but, thanks to the people who stayed with me, I made slow progress back to my car and drove home. Thank goodness for automatic cars.

It wasn't long before I realised that I needed to get my knee checked out at A & E. An X-ray showed a clean break across the middle of the patella. They tried me with crutches, but I quickly demonstrated it would not be a good idea and so a Velcro splint was fitted. We expected to return home (we had not even had tea) but the consultant insisted I be admitted overnight, 2 nights eventually. I was not a good patient; I was 'told off' several times for not getting help when I needed it and going too fast with my Zimmer frame! Even so, I was well looked after: the food was varied, beds were comfortable and staff very caring. At one point a young male nurse responsible for tablets said he was going to lock my medication in the drawer next to my bed. I explained why I needed to keep my tablets available and told him about the campaign to 'get it on time'. The more experienced nurse seeing to my bed confirmed what I said and everything was fine.

Ten weeks later I was free of the splint and was already working with the physiotherapists at Mapplewell clinic. For the first few weeks the physio even came to my house. She was addressing the underlying problem of balance as well as making sure that the recovery of my left knee continued. She made me aware that my posture was contributing to my instability and gave me exercises to strengthen leg muscles. It worked. Although I know the underlying problem has not gone away, I feel more confident. I repeat to myself the mantra she taught me – '*Boobs forward, Bum back*'. Not her exact words, but you get the idea. Using that phrase reminds me to keep my weight forward which gives me much more control.

If there is a moral to my story it is **not** 'don't walk in the woods, you might fall down'. Rather, make sure you get the help you need from all the specialists available: doctors, Parkinson's nurse, physiotherapists etc. I have started Nordic walking again, so if you do hear me muttering to myself as I go you know what I will be saying.

Susan

Copy of Letter to Committee

I would like to thank the committee for their kind words at this morning's virtual meeting. In turn, I would very much like to thank the members of the branch and in particular the committee members for the privilege and honour they have bestowed by electing me to the Chair, then continuing to confirm their confidence in me over the past ten years. It has been a rewarding and very satisfying experience to have contributed to what I like to think is a very active and successful branch.

In this respect, I would like to acknowledge the achievements of my predecessors, in particular George Spencer and John Driver. I feel that I have been 'standing on their shoulders', as the phrase has it, in that they laid the foundations for the developments which have followed. The current monthly meetings, exercise class, assistance with travel to meetings, respite care, outings, Blackpool Experience, quarterly newsletter etc. are all features of the branch's present activities which would be recognised by members from the early years.

I feel rather guilty in being thanked for something from which I have obtained so much satisfaction and personal reward. However, this has not been a clean break and I look forward to continuing to serve in a more limited area. I offer my best wishes to Terry, to Ann Marie in her new role and to the rest of the committee. You have some very difficult times ahead, but I am absolutely certain that you will succeed.

Philip

Good News!

- Sheffield University has been awarded £1.2m to develop a drug to protect dopamine-producing brain cells and slow down the progression of Parkinson's Disease.
- Philip and Rona have a new great-grandson. He is called Harris George Ross Thompson, a brother for Tommy.

Website Reminder

Remember that you can find a lot of information about the Barnsley & District Branch on our website (*address on page 1*). Here you will find details of all the services we provide, together with the minutes of our monthly committee meetings, which are still taking place via Zoom.

Keeping Fit!

At the moment we are all spending more time indoors, which means our daily routines have had to change. This makes staying active and exercising all the more important for our physical and mental wellbeing.

The branch has a Wii Fit which can be borrowed by members. If you would like to try it out, contact Susan Grant on 07714 797942.

BARNESLEY AND DISTRICT BRANCH

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Many thanks to the contributors to this issue.
If you wish to contribute in future, please send items
to Sheila Ireland at sheilaireland@hotmail.com

Parkinson's UK

WE'RE the Parkinson's support and research charity. Help us find a cure and improve life for everyone affected by Parkinson's.

Free confidential helpline:
0808 800 0303

Interpreting available:
0800 111 4204

Visit us online at parkinsons.org.uk

A charity registered in England and Wales (258197) and in Scotland (SC037554).

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