

Happy February!

I hope you have survived the wet and windy conditions that defined January and that the warmth of the camaraderie you find from your fellow members will see you through to the warmer spring months.

To develop a sense of camaraderie we need time together on interesting activities and luckily for us, this is exactly what the Branch Events and Communication Teams excel at. Here is all you need to know about this month:

- The 2024 **Branch AGM** will take place at Shalford Village Hall at 2.00 pm on **27 February 2024**. Please arrive at 1.45 pm.
- **Snooker** is an activity that anyone can play that makes you smile and keeps you fit. Whether you are a complete beginner or a more experienced player, come along for a free 2-hour session at Woking Snooker Centre, Kingfield Rd, Woking, GU22 9AA. The sessions are free, thanks to funding from Parkinson UK. The first session is **27 February** from **11 am**. For additional dates and details please check the website [guildfordparkinsons.org.uk/news-2024/](http://guildfordparkinsons.org.uk/news-2024/)
- We plan to start a 6-week trial of a **Seated Yoga** class (starting **Wednesday 6 March** through to mid-April) from 12:15 to 13:00. It will be led by Lindsey Brown who gave members a taster session at a Shalford Village Hall meeting last year. The trial classes will be at the Conservative Club, **2nd Floor** (they have a lift), **11 Wharf St, Godalming GU7 1NN**. The full cost per attendee will be £11.00, split £6.50 paid by member and Branch will subsidise by £4.50. Members interested will sign up for a 6-week trial so the initial outlay from them will be £39.00 (6 x £6.50) payable directly to Lindsey. Those interested should contact Lindsey at [lindseyliveyoga@gmail.com](mailto:lindseyliveyoga@gmail.com)
- **Spring into Jazz**. Trad's Army Dixieland Jazz Band will provide an afternoon of jazz entertainment at Onslow Village Hall, 4 Wilderness Rd, Onslow Village, Guildford GU2 7QR on **6 April** from 12.30 pm to 3.00 pm. Attendees will be seated at tables, however, you are more than welcome to dance if you wish! Alcoholic and non-alcoholic refreshments will be available by voluntary payment. Bring family, neighbours and friends. Early bird ticket prices (up to and including 1 April) are £15 per adult and £7.50 for members and children under 16. Full price from 2-6 April and on the door: £20 per adult, £10 members and children. For tickets please apply to Clare Price by email at [cprice@guildfordparkinsons.org.uk](mailto:cprice@guildfordparkinsons.org.uk).
- **Qigong Ba Duan Jin (BDJ)** sessions are now available on Zoom. Ruby Ho, a retired Occupational Therapist and qualified Health Qigong (HQG) Ba Duan Jin (BDJ) Instructor is offering free weekly Zoom sessions on Qigong Ba Duan Jin for branch members. BDJ is a

Traditional Chinese exercise with a long written history and is well known for its gentle, slow movements and associated health benefits. The weekly sessions will be run in English on Wednesdays from 9:00 to 10:15 and the course starts **3 April 2024**. If there are sufficient numbers a seated class will be offered.

Those of you who follow 'The Ramblings of a Madman' will no doubt be waiting for the results of the questions I set in January.

Where will you find the Golden Boot?



What sign did I see and where exactly is that sign that links Guildford and York?



Both were in Guildford High Street and The Shambles is also one of York's most famous landmarks and one of the best-preserved medieval shopping streets in Europe. Many old medieval towns have a street called the Shambles. "Shambles" is an obsolete term for an open-air slaughterhouse and meat market. Streets of that name were so called from having been the sites on which butchers killed and dressed animals for consumption.

However, what is the history of this 'Golden Boot'? Apart from being above a shoe shop, what else was on Google? I was somewhat disappointed to get no references to my Golden Boot search, instead the majority of results referred to an initiative for Surrey school children to travel to school by any means other than the family car.

Always tenacious, I contacted Guildford Historians who are knowledgeable about most historic things in the locality but who replied explaining they did not know. They passed me to the Surrey History Centre who also could not help. I concluded that the trail had run dry and it was time to concede I would never find out anything about the Golden Boots. I was however under-estimating the amazing skill and knowledge of our Treasurer, Steve Heron, who while proofreading my initial newsletter added this incredible background - The only reference I could find was a comment on a Guildford Dragon website quiz in October 2013 where local historian David Rose asked the

question 'Where is this?' alongside a photo of the Golden Boot. The comment by one respondent to the quiz was "*the boots are a representation of a pair of waterproof waders made in Guildford for the world-famous Surrey Speedboat Regatta*". Whether this is correct or not, it then made me google the Surrey Speedboat Regatta....and Guildford-made waterproof waders.....both to no avail!!!

Having canvassed opinion, it dawned on me that I had asked a question about the location of an item that few, if any, could identify and that once discovered no one knew anything about. Are any of you able to help me with any history of this Boot?

At this point, I was thinking that whilst the Newsletter location quiz is quite a good idea, as with many of my 'Cunning Baldrick Plans' the idea started to unravel if I then tried to provide any history in the answers to the quiz 😊.

Spinning this positively in Continuous Improvement terms 'I had developed an approach, had measured success and improvement factors and was now ready to refine before going again'. In less favourable terms 'I hadn't even produced one month's newsletter before it all turned to poo and I need to scrap and replace it'. I will therefore not pose a 'where is this item' question in this month's newsletter whilst I ponder my conundrum.

Being serious for a moment, we all know that exercise combined with intellectual and social activity is vital to ward off Parkinson's progression. While this is easily said it's harder than one thinks to comply.

This is where I would like to create a new initiative, my '**Chair's Challenge**' comes in. I'd like to create something scaleable for those with great mobility through to those in wheelchairs. For this to work it must be challenging but not so much that it excludes too many members.



As background, I have always been inspired by Aardman Productions, the creators of Wallace and Gromit and Shaun the Sheep, and their initiative to place various cartoon animals around Bristol for folks to visit (the photo shows a Shaun the Sheep sponsored by Royal Mail and covered with stamps). They found it inspired people to 'ramble together' looking for the cartoon animals, developing community cohesion and improving health. I'd like to develop something similar but clearly at less grand a scale.

What I propose, and it will only work if I get active participation, is that I set a monthly challenge and ask members for feedback on their experiences. For example, my challenge for this month is to go somewhere "**where there is something interesting involving Transport**" and then to send me a photo or drop me a line to tell me about the experience. Please don't be put off thinking it has to be amazing. It could be a photo of a car with an interesting registration number, a trip on a bus, a classic car or anything vaguely related to Transport. All that matters is you get some additional exercise/time in the fresh air and have to put those little grey cells into operation to think of something. I'll then summarise the members' experience in the coming month and set a new 'Chair's Challenge'.

By way of example, one of my favourite places is the River Wey and I cannot help smiling when I see my favourite canal boat 'Bogwoppit'. *I you can't say the word out loud without smiling!*

During the working week, the River Wey Navigation is relatively quiet and wonderfully peaceful. It provides me with the tranquillity needed for me to create my ideas.



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To reiterate, this cannot just be about my experiences, which would simply be too boring but needs to include the experiences of others who participate in the Chair's Challenge. I'm not expecting miracles, but it would be great to hear about others who have done something and enjoyed it. That could be as simple as a 10-minute walk that raised spirits. So, if you are game to try it, please reply so I know what sort of volume of members and their carers are up for trying my **'Chair's Challenge'**.

David