

## **Happy June!**

You may recall the May Newsletter was predominantly about my research trial and the fact that I spent a significant time in a small, confined PET scanner – effectively in a long tube.

Not wanting to be repetitive, I decided to focus this month's newsletter on 'being confined in a small aluminium tube' but this time with wings. Yes, that's right, I plan to bore you all rigid with my holiday escapades in Portugal.

The above of course is a lie, as it will be repetitive, as it covers my favourite topics of real-world Parkinson's challenges, the awesome skills of others and dodgy signs :-)

So those of you who wish to escape my ramblings you need only read the next section about key Branch activities and events. Don't forget to add them to your diaries.

### **Thursday 6 June - Godalming Conservative Club - 2.45 - 3.30**

- New weekly day for our subsidised Seated Yoga Class in Godalming. For more details contact Lindsey Brown by email at [lindseyliveyoga@gmail.com](mailto:lindseyliveyoga@gmail.com)

### **Tuesday 25 June - Shalford Village Hall Social Meeting - 2.00 - 4.00**

- Dave Pascoe, from Willow Consultancy and Training, will give a presentation on Government Benefits - 'Your entitlements and opportunities to make life easier when living with a chronic condition.'

### **Saturday 20 July - Summer Picnic - 1.00 - 5.00**

- Our Summer Picnic will be again at Great Halfpenny Farm, Halfpenny Lane, Guildford. Ticket prices - Adult £5, Child £3, Family ticket - 2 adults and up to 3 children £15. For tickets please apply to Clare Price by emailing [cprice@guildfordparkinsons.org.uk](mailto:cprice@guildfordparkinsons.org.uk)
- We are also running a Raffle for the Summer Picnic, with a fabulous 1st Prize of a 2-night stay at the Glass House, a fabulous AirBnB in the grounds of Great Halfpenny Farm. The 2nd Prize is an equally great experience for someone to be the passenger in a 1946 MG sports car on a drive through Surrey lanes. The 3rd Prize will be a 10-year-old bottle of Bushmills Irish whisky. Tickets are priced at £2.00 each and will be on sale shortly through Committee members.

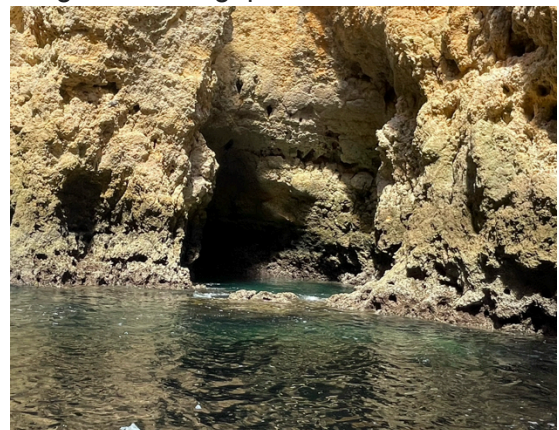
### **100 Club Subscription renewals**

- We will start the 4th year of our 100 Club on 1 July. Those who joined when we launched the Club back in July 2021 will need to renew your annual subscription by early July to remain in the monthly draw. Our Treasurer, Steve, will contact you in June to remind you how to renew your subscription.

So back to my recent holiday in Portugal. I could write about a number of topics but I feel the newsletter needs focusing on those of greatest importance. This is where the problem lies; My wife thinks I am delusional and that Parkinson's and the medication I take, removes all sense of what is and isn't socially acceptable in terms of discussion. I on the other hand think, that to beat Parkinson's you need to face up to it without embarrassment and remove its power by seeing the amusing side of every situation. Accordingly, in my world, no topic whether it be toileting or punching a loved one while asleep is off-limits.

Those of you who have read my newsletters over the last couple of years will know that I have a long-standing relationship with the topic of toilets. :-) So what incident brings me onto the topic of Portuguese toilets? Well, the problem seems to be that many of the toilets are fitted with motion detectors set to some infeasibly short time scale - probably somewhere in the region of 20 seconds. After 20 seconds you are plunged into complete darkness. I cannot be sure that this does not impact able-bodied men or cubicle users to the same extent but certainly for me as a man, a Person with Parkinson's and a urinal user I clearly do not move in a manner that indicates to the sensor I remain present and I therefore I end up in the dark. I did try waving, even adopting some of the PD Warrior-style waving techniques, but this was hit and miss (no pun intended) as to whether I deserved light. If anyone has found a means around this problem I'd be delighted to know and happy to add this key knowledge to the next newsletter.

Back to safer ground. Many people know one of my favourite activities is 'people watching' and more specifically looking for those who demonstrate amazing skill. I got to see this in Portugal when we went out on a boat to see the local caves eroded into the rocks. My version of the experience is that we sat in a boat looking at a small gap in the rocks, about 200m away towards shore and there was no way on earth we could pass through such a small gap. I remember the pilot of the boat speeding up and heading directly for the gap. I felt this rather reckless but the next minute we were inside the cave with perhaps 6 inches of clearance in all directions. Amazed that this was even semi-possible, I concluded that the next step was an imminent, catastrophic crash when we hit the front wall! At this point, I have no idea how the pilot achieved it but he manage to brake from an enormous speed to stop about 6 inches from the wall. I knew then I had seen and experienced unbelievable boating skills. The guide explained that repeating this tour, multiple times every day for over 30 years had made our pilot one of the greatest boatsman in the area. I simply have to agree he was awesome and frankly, I gained more from being mesmerised by his skill than from the geology and geography of the caves.



I continued my practice of looking for interesting signs and found the following. I find that signage in foreign countries transcends the language. I don't speak Portuguese but it obviously has one of two meanings:

- Warning - don't show off to your mates by doing headstands while crossing the bridge as all your change will fallout and they will not be impressed, or

- Attention - whether you bring a dance troop of 5 or you breakdance on your head as an individual you will never make enough movement to convince the light sensor to stay on for the necessary time.

Finally, I believe that travel expands the mind and provides us with challenges to overcome. If you get the opportunity and it's within your capability, have a go at visiting places or take a holiday. Better still is if you wish to publicise your experience I would happily add it as an article in the next edition of *The Park*.