

## ***Parkinson's UK Edinburgh Branch 2005 AGM Presentation by Hon Chair, Patrick Mark***

### ***Branch Committee Changes***

There have been a number of changes. During the year Hamish Jamieson, Ron Partington, Val Young, Margaret Seager and Bobby Wood have resigned from the committee. We thank all of them for their contribution.

Ron did a tremendous job as Branch Chairman for a number of years, and we all owe him much for his commitment and hard work.

We have been joined by: Diana Harkiss, Cathie Quinn, Angie Hawkins and Mary Noble.

### ***Donations***

In 2004-2005 donations have been received from

- North Berwick Inner Wheel
- North Berwick Ladies Golf Club
- Balerno Ladies Bowling Club
- Blackhall Ladies Bowling Club
- The Military & Hospitaller Order of St Lazarus

And from many individual supporters. We are most grateful for all these donations to help the Branch's work.

### ***Membership***

Membership of the Branch has grown to a total of 240 over the past year as a result of our efforts to raise awareness. However as there are probably more than 1,500 people with Parkinson's in the Lothian area we need to continue our efforts to encourage new members.

### ***MRU project***

In September the PDS Scotland Mobile Resource Unit visited Edinburgh for 5 days. It was manned by Gina Allen the Edinburgh CSW, assisted by team of branch members. The aim was to reach those People with Parkinson's (PwPs) and their families who were not aware of the PDS. Areas visited were Craigmillar, Sighthill, Gilmerton, Leith and Muirhouse.

Over 80 people visited the unit and all obtained information about Parkinson's Disease and the work of PDS. The highlight was a visit by the new PDS Chairman Mr Mark Dumas, as part of his visit to the Edinburgh Branch.

We plan to repeat the project in April and September 2005.

On April 25 to 28 we will be visiting Leith, Craigmillar, Craigroyston and Wester Hailes.

### ***New CSW***

An important objective for 2004 was to engage an additional Community Support Worker for the Lothian Area to share Gina Allen's workload.

We are delighted that Annabel Fairweather has now been appointed. Many of you will by now have met her and we look forward to her help in providing advice and support to the Parkinson's community in Lothian.

### ***Activities Group***

This has continued to develop strongly, with bowling, swimming, Yoga and activity evenings all being popular activities. It is a key part of the branch philosophy of encouraging exercise – both physical and mental as a way of improving personal wellbeing.

### ***Newsletter***

Diana and Angie

### ***Drop-in Centre groups***

There have been a number of changes since the last AGM.

The Astley Ainslie Drop-in was well attended, but the room was not ideal, so we decided to change to nearby St Raphael's (4 South Oswald Road). We also changed from a Friday to a Wednesday to give people a choice of day as the other drop-ins are held on Fridays. The room at St Raphael's is very comfortable with easy access. There is a bus route nearby and plenty of parking.

There has been a change in the organisers since Val Young left at the end of 2004. We now have a team of 3 people to organise each drop-in centre.

Teams:

**RVH** – Cathie Quinn, Alan Dunbar, Betsy Brunton

**Drummond Grange** – Dennis Arduis, Kate Mark, Diana Harkiss

**St Raphael's** – Mary Burnie, George Burnie, Diana Harkiss

The drop-ins at the Royal Victoria Hospital and Drummond Grange continue to be very successful and are very well attended. The numbers attending St Raphael's are rather low and we are trying to find out why that is. We are also in the process of carrying out a survey to find out what sorts of activities members would like at the drop-ins. We have been handing out a questionnaire asking such things as: Should we have speakers at every drop in or just occasionally? Should we have (gentle) exercise? What other things would people like to do? This should give us a good idea as how the drop-ins should develop in the future. *If you haven't had a chance to fill in one of these questionnaires and would like to make your views known please take one today and return it to either Cathie or Diana.*

### ***Carers Course***

Another Carers course was organised for us in the Autumn by Vocal, attended by 12 Parkinson's carers. One session coincided with the visit of the Princess Royal to Vocal and she spent some time talking to the Parkinson's group, who told her about the needs of PwP and the work of PDS in Edinburgh.

### ***Care Home Training***

A course for over 40 staff from care homes in Edinburgh was run in September. The aim was to explain the needs and problems of People with Parkinson's. The success of this course indicates a need for more training of this nature, and we will be looking at how to achieve this in 2005-2006.

### ***Computer Introductory Course***

Following interest by some members two short courses were arranged by Diana at Newington Library as an introduction to computers and the Internet. Those members who attended have been encouraged to develop their knowledge and experience, and further courses may be arranged following evaluation of the results.

### ***Speech Training Course***

A very successful voice production course was run by Alan Dunbar. Hope to repeat.

### ***Lifestyle Management Courses***

Two more Lifestyle Management Courses have been run successfully at the Thistle Foundation, and a further Course has just started.

The combination of exercise, relaxation and discussion has proved to be both popular and useful.

Everyone who has completed a Course can join the Maintenance Group which aims to continue the good work. This Group now numbers eighteen, being a mixture of people from the three Lifestyle Management Courses.

With the help of the team of therapists at the Thistle Foundation, participants have enjoyed new friendships and feel much fitter and more confident.

We have another Course planned for September, so if anyone would like to take part, or would like to know more about it, please speak to Kate Mark.

### ***The Edinburgh Parkinson's Assessment Clinic***

Continues to be funded by the Bertram Trust for running costs and by the Branch for other expenditure, such as small items of equipment. There have a number of changes in personnel over the year and the new therapists have made a big effort to create an effective new team and to work with the Branch in our endeavours successfully.

Mention death in 2004 of Gordon Hutcheson, past Treasurer of branch, instrumental in setting up EPAC and much other work for Branch.

### ***Events Programme:***

This runs from September to April and has had a number of interesting speakers and activities, including the Dr Davenport, Mercators Drama Group. The programme will be continued in the future, but we want suggestions for speakers please.

### ***LHB Strategy Consultation***

Move RVH to WG site. Branch commented after consultation with RVH clinicians.

### ***STRATEGY for the BRANCH: 2005-2006***

- A need to achieve a more integrated service structure for Parkinson's, with a clear pathway and proper access to services which people needed.
- Progress towards a further PDNS to spread the load carried by Alison Stewart.
- Raising the profile of PD in the Health board so as to attract resources and interest in the condition.
- More attention to 'Non Motor' issues such as sleep, depression etc. The lifestyle course at the Thistle is an important resource to help with this.
- Ensuring that the branch's activities are relevant and helpful to all of the Parkinson community – young and old, and people with different problems, different areas etc.

- Developing a closer working relationship with the Haddington Support Group, Yappr's and Spring

**Thanks to Helpers:**

Committee, Hon Treasurer, Hon Secretary.

Activity Organisers

Refreshment team

Probably well over 25 people involved in keeping Branch going

Thank them all on your behalf.

But we need more – activity limited by number of activists

Committee, activity organisers, administration, planning, publicity.....

Family & friends to help??

If you can help, please contact me or any member of the committee.