



## AGM 2020 – Chair's Annual Report

Yet another busy year!

A high point in the year was when Paul and I with our partners were invited to Buckingham Palace to meet the Patron of the charity, Duchess of Gloucester who gave a reception to mark the charity's work for 50 years. Each of us was presented to the Duchess, Paul with his celebrity status and I as 'leading one of the most well run branches'. A proud moment

We have had truly interesting speakers at our meetings and it can seem a simple task to find speakers in a place like Oxford. But getting the variety and scope is not so simple and we're thankful to Nigel for seeking to find relevant and interesting people.

I am pleased still more of you are volunteering for research projects. Many of you have said how much you have enjoyed going through the process.

I believe I speak for us all in thanking Martin for arranging visits for us. Getting out and about is something I've been keen to set in place. Now we have some permanent features in the calendar...our spring lunch, our Blenheim picnic the BBQ. a visit to a Christmas Market.

Our holiday was magnificent. So much so that Martin reserved places for us in Studely Castle. Then, due to the vagaries of Warners' putting prices up, before we knew it the price per person had risen by £100. Enough was enough and we cancelled. But like the proverbial bad penny they turned it around and relented and we are back to the good terms we had before.

Our exercise classes are popular and we now have Big Bold and Balance classes about the county. Find Your Voice numbers have risen and there is a regular group or over 20. Emily our leader has had to move on and it was a sad moment when we said goodbye to her. We are most fortunate to have Kate Wilkinson to replace her.

Membership continues to rise mainly I believe due to the encouragement of Ian and Diana who facilitate First Steps.

I'm pleased to inform you that Kit, who had been our Fundraiser (FR) for a few years, has agreed to take back this position, if elected. Though we have been making funds in the two years, I do not think we could continue without a FR.

We are re-launching our respite package and are delighted that Dee Hembury Eaton will be administering it on our behalf. More details in the coming weeks.

There are people who do not wish to be in the limelight yet without them we would struggle. Thanks to:

Helen and Wendy who welcome you to our monthly meetings and organise the raffle; to Helen and Roy Hamlett who ensure there is someone to do the refreshments each meeting; to Malcolm who keeps the 200 club active, to Richard and Rachel, Ros and Paul who step in to help so often, to Sheila Russell who rushes every Friday to ensure our tea is hot after BBB, to the generous bakers and sellers of cakes, to those who are 'just there' when needed, to Mais who continues to support us in many ways and of course to her sons who cook on the BBQ and run the minibus around Oxford when they help at the Oxford Walk, to those of you who kindly collect people each month to bring them to our meetings; to those who inform others about PD; to those who volunteer to support research projects; to Dee Hembury Eaton who is valiantly taking on the responsibility of respite care, to all our members who say such good things about this branch.

I thank our speakers and anyone who has contributed to making us understand and to learn more through our regular visiting speakers. I thank our neurologists, our Parkinson's nurses and Delia for their devotion to us and to our well being. I thank the committee who generously give so much time and energy to make this branch successful.

Carys has been our treasurer for the past 7 years one year over the recommended period. Words cannot convey the valuable expertise she brought to the position. Her impeccable book keeping and her advice to us is exemplary. She plans to remain on the committee. We look forward to working with Steve Duhan who we hope will take over as treasurer following the elections

Following guidance by PUK who recommend Committee officers stay no longer than 6 years in post I will be standing down as Chair in 2021. We will plan for a smooth transfer to a new Chair over the coming year. I have had a fabulous time and thank you all for your support. To crown my final year, I shall be receiving an Honorary Doctorate of Letters from Reading University and an Honorary Doctorate of Science from Oxford Brookes University.

*Sally*