



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Hi Everybody

We were delighted to have MARY KAY WALKER, CEO of Parkinson's NSW, as our first speaker for 2026. She was warmly welcomed by a full house. Many members asked excellent questions which Mary Kay answered extensively. We were invited to go to their website (linked below) and also encouraged to ring their Information Line with any queries - 1800 737 567.

You may be interested in registering for their Symposium on Tuesday, 31 March in the city.

[Click This Link for More Information](#)





ACTIVITIES / EVENTS

Tuesdays 10.00am	Walking Group (free) (each Tuesday)	Asquith Park, Mills Ave, Asquith
Thursdays 10.00am-11.30am	Parkinsong (each Thursday, \$15 per session)	Turrumurra Seniors Centre Gilroy Rd, Turrumurra
Fri. 6 Mar. 10.00am-12.00pm	Members' General Meeting (first Fri. of month) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anne Hogan (Meet the Member) • Wendy Barker (see page 6) 	Mt Colah Community Centre 6X Pierre Cl, Mt Colah
Thurs. 12 & 26 Mar. 12.15pm - 2.00pm	Craft Group (free) (2nd and 4th Thursdays)	Contact Rose on 0412346301
Fri. 13, 20 & 27 Mar. 11.30am-12.30am	Exercises (each Fri. except first Fri. of month, \$10 per session)	Mt Colah Community Centre 6X Pierre Cl, Mt Colah



WALKING GROUP, ASQUITH PARK, MILLS AVE.

Some of our Walking Group stopping for refreshments following several circuits of this beautiful park. Dogs on leads are also welcome. "It is good fun and great exercise".
(Diana Sidney)

L-R : Ian Madden, Rose Parkin, Peter Sidney, Diana Sidney, Roger O'Grady.





CRAFT GROUP

Craft is very important for people with Parkinson's because it enhances hand and brain coordination. It is also meditative, letting your body and brain relax.

The social interaction is also very important.

Our Craft Group meets on the 2nd and 4th Thursday of the month at 12.15pm. Bring a sandwich to have with a cuppa.

For more information ring Rose 0412346301



REFRESHMENTS

Under the thoughtful leadership of Danielle Berthou, our Choir and Monthly Meetings are served morning teas which include a wide assortment of treats, and the Annual Concert also includes delicious sandwiches and scones with jam and cream. Therefore, on all these occasions we feel very special and it is a wonderful time to also socialise. Thank you very much Danielle and the wonderful team of caring assistants, some of whom are shown in the photos below.





CHOIR

The choir is off to a great start for the year, welcoming some new members alongside returning singers, and starting some fresh songs as well as our favourites. It's a great time to join if you've been thinking of giving choir a try! I am writing to you from Budapest, where I have been studying as part of the Sydney Symposium Choral Conducting Scholarship I was lucky enough to receive last year. I have been visiting some amazing colleagues and their choirs, observing rehearsals, attending private coaching sessions, and witnessing the wonderful winter Night of Choirs festival. I am looking forward to bringing my learnings back to share with you all next week. Many thanks to my partner Jack for stepping in while I've been away. As many of you know, we are expecting our first child in May and Jack will be looking after the choir while I take some maternity leave. Jack is a member of the Spooky Men's Chorale, who regularly tour around Australia and internationally. He also co-directs a cappella community choir Alterna with me in Newtown as well as performing in the trio Sofa of Fools and band Ant Gallery.



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Zumba chair exercises to Rod Stewart's **Forever Young** - video courtesy of our Music Coordinator, Peter Sidney. Thank you Peter, and Bev Dind, who suggested we add exercises to our program.





EXERCISE CLASSES

Exercise Tip: Think BIG - "Parade Moves"

Parkinson's often makes movements smaller without you noticing. So we practise the opposite.

Go BIG.

Stand tall.

Hold a scarf in each hand

On the cue:

- Step out wide
- Sweep your arms in a big circle

Finish in a strong position:

- Knees bent
- Hips back
- Chest lifted
- Arms straight
- Palms forward

Hold for **5 seconds**

Then return, sweeping the arms again.

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SPEECH RESEARCH

The following information has been provided by Wendy Barker, one of our Association's members, regarding a research study being undertaken at the Prince of Wales Hospital.

Wendy will speak at our Monthly Meeting on 6 March when we will be issued with pen and paper, and everyone will be asked to contribute.

This is a great opportunity to participate in exciting research.

WE HEAR YOUR VOICE

(Facilitator: Dr Nichole Scholes-Robertson, Research Fellow at University of Sydney)

Speech Recognition Technology (SRT) is an assistive technology that not only has the potential to improve verbal communication but also opens the gateway to a range of other voice controlled assistive technologies (e.g. commands to Alexa or Google).

Focused on neurodegenerative diseases like Motor Neurone Disease, Parkinson's Disease, Huntington's Disease and Spinocerebellar Ataxia.

Part of the Project is to create an individual list of phrases for each disease group that would be used by you and your family from the perspective of someone with Parkinson's Disease. The top 30 would then be ranked in order of the most important. For example these would include the following:

- I have Parkinson's Disease so my voice is soft but I can still understand/hear you.
- My name is
- Please call
- What is on my calendar today?
- Can you take me to the bathroom/shower/bedroom/shop/car?
- Turn off/on the heat/the cooler/the TV
- Alexa/Hey Google (commands)
- I don't feel well today

This is an opportunity to contribute to research with Parkinson's specific input for a new technology development that may become a very beneficial communication tool.

Wendy Barker (barkerj01@gmail.com)



POSITIVE RESULTS FROM EARLY TRIAL OF DRUG THAT COULD PROTECT BRAIN CELLS

From Parkinson's UK, 8 October 2025

MHER-096, a potential new Parkinson's treatment, has shown promising phase 1 trial results, proving it's safe, well-tolerated, and effective in reaching the brain in people with Parkinson's. This is a crucial step towards a drug that could slow, stop, or even repair Parkinson's damage. The trial, funded by Parkinson's UK through the Parkinson's Virtual Biotech, in partnership with the Parkinson's Foundation, as well as funding from the Michael J. Fox Foundation, provides a strong foundation for moving HER-096 into larger phase 2 trials. The hope is that this will take place in 2026.

What is HER-096?

HER-096 is a small molecule designed to act like the growth factor called cerebral dopamine neurotrophic factor (CDNF), naturally found in the brain and known to support brain cell survival and health. It is also thought to reduce the clumping of alpha-synuclein, a protein associated with Parkinson's. These mechanisms suggest HER-096 could slow or even stop the progression of Parkinson's. A company based in Finland called Herantis Pharma Plc (Herantis) is leading the development of this drug.

Key findings from the phase 1 trial

The trial involved two stages. Initially, 12 healthy participants received a single injection of HER-096 to see whether it was safe and had any unexpected side effects. This is a crucial stage as this was the first time the drug had been used in people.

This was followed by a trial involving 24 people with Parkinson's, who received twice-weekly injections of HER-096 or a placebo injection over four weeks. The participants were all around 5 years post diagnosis and were able to continue taking their usual medication.

The results were positive. HER-096 was found to be safe and participants in the trial generally tolerated the injections well. Importantly, the drug performed as expected in the body, successfully reaching the brain at levels that have the potential to protect and maybe even repair brain cells. It's likely that 2 injections a week will be the method trialled in future larger trials.

While movement symptoms remained stable during the 4 week trial, it's important to note that the study was not designed to evaluate the drug's impact on symptoms or progression of Parkinson's. This will be the focus of the next phase of research.



POSITIVE RESULTS FROM EARLY TRIAL OF DRUG THAT COULD PROTECT BRAIN CELLS (Continued)

What's next?

The positive data from this phase 1 trial provides strong evidence for HER-096 to move into phase 2 trials. These larger and longer studies will investigate whether the drug has the potential to reduce Parkinson's symptoms and progression.

Dr. Lynsey Bilsland, Managing Director of the Parkinson's Virtual Biotech, said:

"It is great to see the positive news from the initial trial of HER-096 in people with Parkinson's. It adds another glimmer of hope that we are on the right track towards much needed treatments that can slow or stop Parkinson's, something that we currently don't have. It is further testament that the Parkinson's Virtual Biotech and charity funding is an important mechanism to support early-stage trials into new drugs for people living with the condition. We look forward to seeing this progress into larger and longer studies."

Dr. Antti Vuolanto, CEO of Herantis Pharma, added:

"We are thrilled to achieve this important milestone, successfully meeting the trial's primary and secondary endpoints. These results are a testament to our team's expertise and dedication, demonstrating our ability to drive the development programme forward efficiently. We sincerely thank the Parkinson's patients participating in this trial, other contributors, and patient organisations, the Michael J. Fox Foundation and Parkinson's UK, for their support and engagement in this study. We are now excited to advance this programme to phase 2 as we explore HER-096's potential to become the first disease-modifying therapy for Parkinson's."



***HERE IS THE LATEST PARKINSON'S RESEARCH
ROUND-UP, CURATED BY CLINICAL EXPERTS.
(PARKINSON'S NSW)***

New molecule could lead to new treatments for Parkinson's in younger patients.

A novel drug molecule could potentially lead to new treatments to prevent Parkinson's disease in younger patients, according to new research.

[Read full article](#)



HERE IS THE LATEST PARKINSON'S RESEARCH ROUND-UP, CURATED BY
CLINICAL EXPERTS (PARKINSON'S NSW) (Continued)

New AI powered speech screening tool.

Computer scientists at the University of Rochester have developed an Artificial Intelligence (AI) powered, speech-based screening tool to detect signs of Parkinson's disease.

[Read full article](#)

Nanocapsules show multiple benefits in Parkinson's mouse model.

Researchers have created tiny treatment capsules that help boost dopamine while also calming harmful inflammation in the brain. In a study using mice with Parkinson's disease, the treatment improved both movement and thinking skills, offering encouraging signs for a possible new way to treat the disease.

[Read full article](#)

Brain scan breakthrough reveals why Parkinson's drugs don't always work.

Canada's Simon Fraser University (SFU) researchers are using a new approach to brain imaging that could improve how drugs are prescribed to treat Parkinson's disease.

[Read full article](#)

Combined DBS approach found safe, feasible in Parkinson's.

A 15-year Phase 1 study found that adding a patient's own ankle nerve tissue during DBS surgery (DBS-Plus) was safe and feasible in Parkinson's disease, with mild, temporary foot or ankle discomfort as the most common side effect.

[Read full article](#)

'Dancing the blues away' seen in brain imaging in people with Parkinson's disease.

Dancing lowers the depression associated with Parkinson disease, and the benefits can be seen in multiple ways, according to a study published in the Journal of Medical Internet Research involving York University, Toronto.

[Read full article](#)



COMMITTEE MEMBERS

- President, Rose Parkin
- Vice President, Michael Parkin
- Treasurer, Ian Madden
- Public Officer/Membership, Dick Babb
- Welfare Officer, Pam Beattie
- Event Co-ordinator, John Moore
- Music Co-ordinator, Peter Sidney
- Asst. Music Co-ordinator, Diana Sidney
- Secretary, Helen Jordan
- Assistant Secretary, Keith Kennedy



The Committee welcomes advice or suggestions regarding the Association's activities. Please don't hesitate to contact any of the Committee Members as feed-back and new ideas are important to ensure we are addressing the needs of our members.



HAVE A STORY FOR THE NEWSLETTER?

Please send to the Newsletter Editor, Helen Jordan (keithandhelenjordan@iinet.net.au, or phone: 0425 339 841) -

- any tips or ideas for inclusion in the next Newsletter;
- any news and photos you would like to share.



WELFARE CALLS

Please advise Pam Beattie, our Welfare Officer, if you know someone who would welcome a call from Pam - 0435 716 392



JOKES OF THE MONTH

*Picked up a hitch hiker,
Seemed like a nice guy.
After a few miles, he asked me if
I wasn't afraid that he might be
a serial killer.
I told him that the chance of two
serial killers being in the same car
were extremely unlikely!*

Out on the golf course with his wife, the husband says,
"Twenty years ago I had a brief affair. It meant nothing. I hope you can forgive .me."
His wife was hurt but said, "Dearest, those days are long gone.
What we have now is far more valuable. I forgive you."
They embraced and kissed.

On the seventeenth tee, the husband was starting his back-swing when his wife
blurted out, "I'm sorry darling, I've been so conscience-stricken since you told me,
but since we're being honest with each other, I have something to tell you also.

Fifty-two years ago I had a sex change operation.
I was a man before I met you. I hope you can forgive me."

The husband froze at the top of his back-swing, then threw a fit! He slammed the
driver into the ground, kicked the ball into the woods, stormed off the tee, pushed the
golf cart over on its side, broke the rest of his clubs one by one, then started on hers.

He screamed and ranted,
"You liar! You cheat! You despicable deceiver! How could you?
I trusted you with my heart and soul ...

And all these years you've being playing off the bloody ladies' tees!"

(Joke supplied by Stuart Cumming)