



OCTOBER 2026 NEWSLETTER



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

We were very privileged to have Professor Simon Lewis as our speaker for the September meeting. There are some very promising developments in the understanding and treatment of Parkinson's, so don't give up. (See pages 3 & 4 for how you can take part in this very valuable research.)

The guest speaker for our October meeting on 2nd October is Councillor Nathan Tilbury who will be telling us about the transformation of Hornsby Quarry into a beautiful park area. Nathan is a very engaging speaker. Don't miss this talk.

We have had a few very warm days lately which makes us think of the very real prospect of bushfires. Have you got an evacuation plan? Are your key documents in a fire safe place?

Talking of key documents PLEASE be kind to your family and make sure you have a current Will, and Enduring Power Of Attorney. Intestacy is a nightmare, especially if you have a blended family.

Anyway, enough lecturing. Enjoy the sunshine and beautiful gardens. Come along to our choir, our exercise class, our walking group or craft group and meetings. Check our website www.parkypeople.org for information.

Rose



ACTIVITIES / EVENTS

Tuesdays 10.00am	Walking and Social Group (each Tuesday)	Asquith Park, Mills Ave, Asquith
Thursdays 10.00am-11.30am	Parkinsong (each Thursday)	Turrumurra Seniors Centre Gilroy Rd, Turrumurra
Thursdays 12.30pm-2.30pm	Craft Group (each Thursday)	As advised
Friday, 2 October 10am-12pm	Cr Nathan Tilbury (Guest Speaker: Hornsby Park) Annual General Meeting	Mt Colah Community Centre 6X Pierre Cl, Mt Colah
Fridays - October 9, 16, 23, 30 11.30am-12.30pm	Exercise Classes (except first Friday of Month)	Mt Colah Community Centre 6X Pierre Cl, Mt Colah
Fridays, Nov. 13, 20, 27	Exercise Classes (except first Friday of Month)	Mt Colah Community Centre 6X Pierre Cl, Mt Colah
Friday, 4 December	Christmas Party (bookings \$30 - 0484 750 455)	Asquith Golf Club Lord St, Mt Colah



PHOTOS URGENTLY NEEDED

The Committee is in the process of organising a reprint of our long standing Parky People brochure. The excellent text will remain but the outdated photos need replacing. If you have any photos which you think would look interesting and appealing in this brochure, please ring Helen Jordan on 0425 339 841 as soon as possible. Many many thanks.



VIDEO SUITE

The partner of the late Adrienne Irving, Ray Corbin, whose sister also has Parkinson's, is producing videos covering aspects that particularly impact on living with Parkinson's.

He has asked that members contact him via email at raycorbin1@gmail.com to suggest any aspect of Parkinson's that they consider should be covered in the videos.

This is a challenging project but one that I am sure you will all support with your ideas of content that Ray should include whether it be as a sufferer or carer.

Dick Babb



PROFESSOR SIMON LEWIS EXTENDS AN INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

On 4 September at Mt Colah, PROFESSOR SIMON LEWIS spoke at our monthly meeting sharing with us the extensive research being undertaken at the Parkinson's Disease Research Clinic located at the Macquarie Hospital University. He commenced with some practical advice:--

All exercise is good - no exercise is bad. Walking around the park with a coffee does not count. It should be the priority three times a week - 30 minutes at a level where you can only just talk. For the older person core strength and balance is the priority. These exercises should be slow both ways i.e. slow standing up; and slow down. For balance, place a chair in front of you - stand with feet apart, then together, then one foot in front of the other, then eyes closed and recite Times Tables.



- Speech therapy should be one hour a day. SPEAK OUT on Internet - <https://parkinsonvoiceproject.org/program/speak-out/>
- Cognitive Training Brain HQ - <https://www.brainhq.com/>

How would I like you to get involved ?

There are chemical trials being conducted but it is the research trials I would like you to get involved in which are running now.

No other animal gets Parkinson's, so we can't conduct research in mice. I would like you to write to politicians about the importance of Parkinson's research and actually get involved in this work.

The bottom line is that there are different Pathways playing in the disease and we have to work out these Pathways, e.g. accumulation of protein, effect on mitochondria,, Inflammation, storage of protein in brain, etc. So, a lot is going on in Parkinson's at different times. The Australian Parkinson's Mission is looking to do some smart Trials - i.e. instead of doing what is the usual practice, it will be replaced by finding a drug which is already licenced to target those Pathways.

So there are research projects that I would like you to get involved with now.

In Australia we are doing some novel research trials not done anywhere else. Trials are being conducted re accumulation of protein, energy sources in the brain, inflammation in the brain, storage in the brain. Different processes are going on and we have to work out Pathways. We measure brain waves, sleep profile, structure in brain and different parts of the brain connecting/talking to each other. Australian Parkinson's Mission is on the job. We are looking at different Pathways already using drugs to target each Pathway which are already licenced which can go in the same trial. This means that less people are taking sugar pills overall.



PROFESSOR SIMON LEWIS EXTENDS AN INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH (CONT.)

One thing we have seen in Australia is that PD gets worse more slowly in Australia (about half the rate) so is less aggressive.

The first trial has finished. Six different drugs targetted different Pathways in the brain - one in four sugar pills, eight centres around Australia, 200 patients in the trial - blood pressure, diabetes. The result showed no difference between sugar pill and Pathways.

The second trial is running at the moment with people between 18-80 and will finish in the middle of 2027. The testing is using an antibiotic and a cough mixture. Parkinson's does not happen overnight and we want to target cells before too much happens not when half of dopamine has been lost.

Dream sleep gives us an early warning. If you hit the person beside you it is time to see your doctor, rather than wait until there is shaking. With this action you are at risk of getting Parkinson's 140 times more than normal. Punching someone in sleep shows an increased level of inflammation. The more inflammation you have the more dopamine you lose. If you lose your sense of smell you are 4 times at risk and exposure to pesticide 50 times at risk.

There is a drug to reduce inflammation in the brain. We received \$6M from Parkinson's UK to do world first trial. Three out of four patients had the drug and a brain scan was used over the twelve weeks of the trial - doing a scan at the beginning and then at the end showed a positive result in reducing inflammation in 31 patients in a part of the brain which is significant. The patients with the placebo got worse and those with the drug got better. We work very hard doing trials for Parkinson's and we are recruiting now. Only one trial in the world and it is just down the road at Macquarie.

Contact Professor Lewis if you would like to be part of a trial. The 18-80 rule has been set because people over 80 usually have other medical issues which could mask the effect of a trial. But he is happy for you to make an appointment to discuss any concerns, eg patients with Lewy bodies, ADHD, visual hallucinations, cognition issues, etc. Would you like to Volunteer?

Contact: pd.clinic@mq.edu.au

Or click the link below:

<https://forms.cloud.microsoft/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=wRTFghenh0C-BtQNIHCtUvJIfvdp-85KrC7kUH-gkWxUMUM4WVExTTdOTUkyMIBNMTFUOEZYWkNERyQIQCN0PWcu&origin=QRCode>



EXERCISES WITH FELICITY



Those Chairs Look a Bit Lonely...

I hear Professor Simon Lewis had a few things to say about the importance of exercise when he visited at the last meeting. So, naturally, I was expecting a stampede at Friday's exercise class.

I took these photos. Look at all those empty chairs!

There were 10 of us, so it wasn't exactly deserted — but I think we have room for a few more!

I'm certainly not suggesting that Professor Lewis sent me to round you all up, but if you haven't been for a while..... or if you've been thinking about giving the class a try, come along.

We work on strength, balance, coordination, agility and reaction time, and everything can be adapted to suit the person doing it.

I hope to see you one Friday!

Felicity Neale

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SENATE INQUIRY TO SCRUTINISE CHEMICAL REGULATOR'S DECISION ON WEEDKILLER PARAQUAT

David Pocock has launched a senate inquiry into the decision by the Australian Pesticides & Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) to continue the use of paraquat in Australia. (ABC News: Adam Kennedy in short). It follows chemical regulator APVMA's decision in June to continue to allow the use of the popular herbicide after a decades-long review.



What's next? Public submissions are open until October 22, 2026.

Independent Senator David Pocock successfully referred the APVMA decision to the Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport References Committee, with support from the Greens and the Coalition.

We've seen the APVMA having a rolling review of paraquat for nearly 30 years," Senator Pocock said. "In the meantime, 70 countries have banned paraquat because of the health risks. I think there are some real questions to ask about the way that the APVMA is going about regulating chemicals in this country."

In June, the APVMA concluded a 30-year review of the herbicide, restricting its use and application rates, but stopped short of a complete ban. The decision was criticised by experts and advocates, who accused the regulator of ignoring evidence of the links to increased rates of Parkinson's disease.

I have had so many experts in this space raise concerns about the way that the APVMA looked at evidence, the weighting that they gave to different studies, and that's really concerning," Senator Pocock said. "The APVMA concluded that the available evidence did not convincingly demonstrate a direct causal link. That seems counter to what the scientific consensus is."

At the time of its decision, the APVMA said it received 171 submissions from scientists, doctors, the agricultural industry and other interested parties, which included concerns about human health, farming viability and environmental impact. In a statement, a spokesperson from the APVMA said the review included an additional 134 peer-reviewed studies on the possible associations between paraquat exposure and Parkinson's disease submitted after the publication of a draft proposal in 2024. "Parkinson's disease is devastating for people living with it and their families, and it is understandable there is strong interest in identifying potential causes," the spokesperson said.

"The final decision also introduced significant new safeguards and removed uses that did not meet contemporary standards. The APVMA is confident that paraquat products can be used safely when used in accordance with the instructions approved at the conclusion of the reconsideration.



SENATE INQUIRY TO SCRUTINISE CHEMICAL REGULATOR'S DECISION ON WEEDKILLER PARAQUAT (CONT.)

"The spokesperson said the regulator would "engage constructively" with the parliamentary process.

Senator Pocock said the inquiry would consider the broader issues of transparency and integrity, which could have ramifications for other chemicals and the regulatory framework. "This is an opportunity for the Senate to actually look at all of this, weigh it up and ensure that we're protecting our farmers if there is a material risk to them," he said. "I've heard from farmers who have parents who've developed Parkinson's ... and from really good farmers who are using low-till, no-till agriculture and relying on paraquat.

Parkinson's Australia chief executive Olivia Nassaris welcomed the inquiry, and said she would continue campaigning for a ban on paraquat.

"We cannot bury our heads in the sand about the use of paraquat and the evidence that shows its toxicity in neurons," she said.



"Why else have about 70 countries so far, including the UK, the European Union, China – and just in July, India – all banned the use of the chemical?"

According to a study published by the British Medical Journal in 2025, the number of people living with Parkinson's globally was expected to more than double by 2050, affecting about 25 million people.

Ms Nassaris said this put pressure on the health system and economy. "We have to do something to stop it," she said.

The inquiry is expected to deliver its report early in 2027.



CEDARS-SINAI ADDS STEM CELL SKILL TO KEY PARKINSON'S DISEASE STUDY (REPORTED BY PARKINSON'S NSW)

Cedars-Sinai Health Sciences University investigators are bringing their stem cell expertise to a collaboration with two other academic medical centres with the goal of clarifying the connection between pesticide exposure and Parkinson's disease. The project, which includes investigators from the University of California, Los Angeles, the University of Southern California and the University of Münster in Germany, is funded by a three-year, \$9 million grant from Aligning Science Across Parkinson's (ASAP) in partnership with The Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research.

In the debilitating neurodegenerative condition, one of the major problems is that brain cells producing dopamine – the chemical in the brain that helps nerves coordinate muscle movement – die more rapidly than normal. As these cells die off, patients experience tremor, stiffness, movement and balance issues.

"We think that Parkinson's disease is caused by a combination of genetic traits in the patient and environmental exposures – especially to certain pesticides and air pollution," said Clive Svendsen, PhD, executive director of the Cedars-Sinai Board of Governors Regenerative Medicine Institute and one of the principal investigators of the study.

"It seems the genes load the gun while the environment pulls the trigger. With this grant, we will generate lines of stem cells from people living in a pesticide-treated area in the San Fernando Valley and attempt to figure out why some developed Parkinson's and some did not."

Svendsen said that only about 5%-10% of Parkinson's disease cases are caused by a single genetic mutation, and evidence is building that mutations in many other areas of the genome may also contribute to disease.

"If you have mutations in an array of different genes, we know that increases your risk for developing Parkinson's," Svendsen said. "We are trying to determine which of those genetic vulnerabilities interact with pesticides – and how. If we can figure that out, we can begin to think about new approaches to treatment."

The team will recruit groups of relatives – some who developed Parkinson's disease and some who did not. Investigators will reprogram participants' cells to create induced pluripotent stem cells, which they can then turn into dopamine-producing neurons that replicate the brain cells at risk in Parkinson's patients. They will then expose those cells to the pesticides or air pollution present where the participants live.

"By investigating how the environment and a person's unique genetics interact to drive Parkinson's, this team is uncovering the diverse biological drivers of the disease," said Sonya Dumanis, PhD, managing director of ASAP.

"This is exactly the kind of bold, integrative science the Collaborative Research Network is designed to accelerate. With a better understanding of these disease mechanisms, we can lay the groundwork for new, personalized therapeutics and better outcomes for Parkinson's patients."



CEDARS-SINAI ADDS STEM CELL SKILL TO KEY PARKINSON'S DISEASE STUDY (REPORTED BY PARKINSON'S NSW) (CONT.)

The investigators' theory is that the dopamine neurons generated from people with Parkinson's disease will die more quickly after pesticide exposure than the neurons from family members exposed to the same pesticides or air pollution who did not develop the disease.

"If that turns out to be the case, we can compare the genetic makeup of those individuals, and the proteins their genes express, and try to figure out what triggered the development of Parkinson's disease in some of them but not others," Svendsen said.

Source: 2026 Cedars-Sinai Health Sciences University.



COMMITTEE MEMBERS

- President, Rose Parkin
- Vice President, Michael Parkin
- Treasurer, Ian Madden
- Secretary, Helen Jordan
- Music Co-ordinator, Peter Sidney
- Welfare Officer, Pam Beattie
- Event Co-ordinator, John Moore

In Attendance:

- Public Officer/Membership, Dick Bagg
- Asst. Music Co-ordinator, Diana Sidney
- Assistant Secretary, Keith Kennedy



WELFARE CALLS

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



ALL GRIT. NO QUIT. - MICHAEL J FOX FOUNDATION

"Last week, the Foundation unveiled All Grit. No Quit., our \$2.5 billion Campaign to end Parkinson's disease.

"For decades, Parkinson's research lacked the tools and investment needed to move quickly. Determined to change that, The Michael J. Fox Foundation opened its doors in 2000 and began investing early in promising ideas to speed scientific innovation. This led to the game-changing discovery of a biomarker — a test that detects Parkinson's biology before symptoms begin.

"Scientists now have the tools to accelerate what comes next. All Grit. No Quit. will build on this breakthrough and provide the necessary fuel to drive progress across the four pillars of our Strategic Research Agenda: clearer disease diagnosis, better treatment pipelines, faster clinical trials and catalyzed communities.

"Check out our revamped website for more information on how All Grit. No Quit. will help change what's possible for every person impacted by Parkinson's."

With gratitude,

The Michael J. Fox Foundation

"We've launched our historic All Grit. No Quit. Campaign to accelerate breakthroughs in Parkinson's research. See how we're shortening the distance between discovery and impact."

https://www.michaeljfox.org/campaign/all-grit-no-quit?em_cid=mc-a1bVL0000080Hsj&utm_source=sfmc&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=092426_ENG_FNG_LNM_MUL_AGNQ+Cmpgn+Announce+2&utm_content=learnmore-footer-inline

Thank you Judy Farrell for sending this item to our Association for information.



BRAIN TEASERS - (conceal the answers - try to figure them out)

1. A woman shoots her husband. She plunges him underwater for several minutes, then hangs him. Right after, they enjoy a lovely dinner. What happened?
2. What kind of animal can you always find at a baseball game?
3. What is the one thing everyone can agree is between heaven and earth?
4. I can fly but have no wings. I cry but have no eyes. What am I??
5. If you have me, you want to share me. If you share me, you don't have me. What am I?
6. Name the next three letters in this combination OTTFSS.
7. When is "L" greater than "XL"?
8. What has ten letters and starts with gas?
9. I have keys but no locks. I have space but no room. You can enter, but there's no door. What am I?
10. I'm light as a feather, yet the strongest person can't hold me for long. What am I??

1. A woman photographer shoots her husband, plunges the photo underwater for several minutes, then hangs him. Right after, they enjoy a lovely dinner.
2. A "bat" — because baseball uses bats, and the word also refers to the animal.
3. "and"
4. Clouds (raining)
5. A secret is something you want to share, but sharing it means you no longer truly have it.
6. The letters in the riddle are the first letters of the numbers one through eight in order. O for One, T for Two, T for Three, F for Four, F for Five, S for Six, S for Seven. So, the next three letters, E N T, stand for Eight, Nine, Ten. This riddle is a play on our understanding of sequences and patterns, specifically with how we represent numbers with letters. By recognizing the pattern, we can easily solve the riddle and find the next three letters in the sequence.
7. To determine when 'L' is larger than 'XL', we need to analyze the Roman numeral values represented by these letters. In Roman numerals, 'L' stands for 50, while 'XL' represents 40. Identify the value of 'L'. The letter 'L' corresponds to the number 50 in Roman numerals. Identify the value of 'XL'. The combination 'XL' signifies 40, as 'X' (10) before 'L' (50) indicates that 10 should be subtracted from 50. Compare the two values. Since 50 (L) is greater than 40 (XL), we can conclude that 'L' is indeed larger than 'XL'. Therefore, the relationship holds true that 'L' is larger than 'XL' due to the numerical values they represent in the Roman numeral system.
8. The riddle answer is "automobile," a 10-letter word that starts with "gas" in the sense of requiring gasoline to operate.
9. A keyboard fits all parts of the riddle: It has **keys** but no locks. It has **space** (the space bar) but no room. You can **enter** using the Enter key, but there's no physical door.
10. Multiple reputable riddle sources confirm that the solution to "I'm light as a feather, yet the strongest person can't hold me for long" is **breath**. Breath has no weight, making it "light as a feather," yet even the strongest person can only hold it briefly before needing to exhale.