

# FEBRUARY 2026

## DOWER HOUSE NEWSLETTER

### Mill Farm Visit



Sarah & Tom from Mill Farm are well known to the Dower House as we usually hold a summer fayre outside in our beautiful gardens, 2026 will be no exception! The Winter months can be long and take its toll on your mental health, so we thought let's bring the farm into The Dower House! it's an ideal way to relive memories as well as enjoying the therapeutic experience of holding and stroking a pet. On a wet soggy day we had chickens (Flannigan & Allen) 4 Rabbits (Flopsy, Mopsy, Cotton tail and Millie) and 3 guinea pigs (Snap, Crackle & Pop)



Our residents found it to be an excellent opportunity to share stories about their experiences and chat about their own pets. Tom & Sarah allow animals to visit residents who are unable to leave their rooms, this is truly magical for them.



During the visit one of the chickens laid an egg! Nurse Beverley was delighted when offered the egg and took it home for her breakfast!! 'Theres nothing like a fresh egg' she said.

## Ben's News

February is a month of hope. It can be cold with biting winds but the promise of spring at the end of the month gives us something to look forward to along with the early flowers from Snowdrops, Aconites, Crocus and the first Daffodils.

Over the last month Terry and I have had a good session collecting branches from the high winds at the beginning of the year. We have started tidying the borders from the top carpark working towards the patio gardens getting them ready for mulching and have pruned the roses over hanging the drive wall and have weeded between all the irises.



On the way round we will also clean out all the bird nesting boxes ready for the spring and as we go into next month, we have started jet washing all the garden furniture and cleaning the patios so that the garden is in top condition for the spring ahead. If the sun is out and it's not too cold, please come out for a chat and take a walk around to see all the bulbs starting to rise and see how the birds are really enjoying the berries from the Hawthorn trees. Within the next month our ducks may return that visit us every spring might show themselves.

### Here are a few of Ben's tips: *What can you plant during February?*

It's time to make early sowings of many summer bedding plants, such as geranium, petunia, impatiens (busy lizzie) and nicotiana along with some perennials.

### *Things to keep you active in the garden during the winter.*

February is the last month of winter, and frequently the coldest. It's the end of the dormant period for many plants, so the last opportunity to plant out perennials and fruit trees. Timing this is tricky, as the ground is sometimes too frozen to dig with a spade or garden fork.



## New Artists for 2026

### Spanish Guitarist Jonathan Prag

Jonathan, winner of the Buxton Fringe Solo Instrumentalist Award 2024 made contact about playing to our residents.

Jonathan played some classical music whilst residents sat back and relaxed. Jonathan balances baroque favourites like J S Bach with thrilling and evocative contemporary music like the songs of Mikis Theodorakis.

He included beguiling tunes by Cole Porter or George Gershwin and sometimes blues arrangements.



### Singer Ryan Bishop

Ryan has been a cruise director for Seabourn prior to joining crystal cruises and now spends time singing for Warner Hotels and other venues. He provided us with much more than just his singing he brought laughter & great deal of entertainment which really went down a treat.

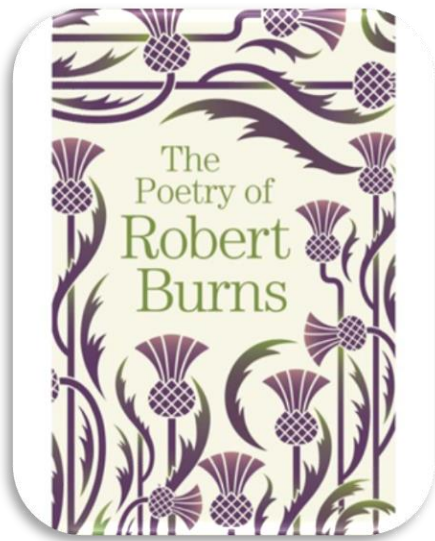
### Keep Fit returns, with cycling too!

A pedal exerciser is designed for low-impact cardio and strengthening, two of our ladies volunteered to trial out our new pedal machines. Both really enjoyed and felt that they benefited from the session and would love to continue on a regular basis.

Pedal machines help to improve circulation, joint flexibility, and muscle strength.



# Burns Day Lunch



Residents and staff celebrated Robert Burns's lunch with the traditional haggis, neeps & tatties and a well-loved dessert cranachan.

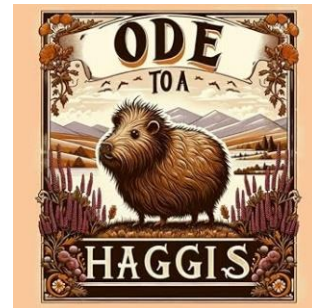
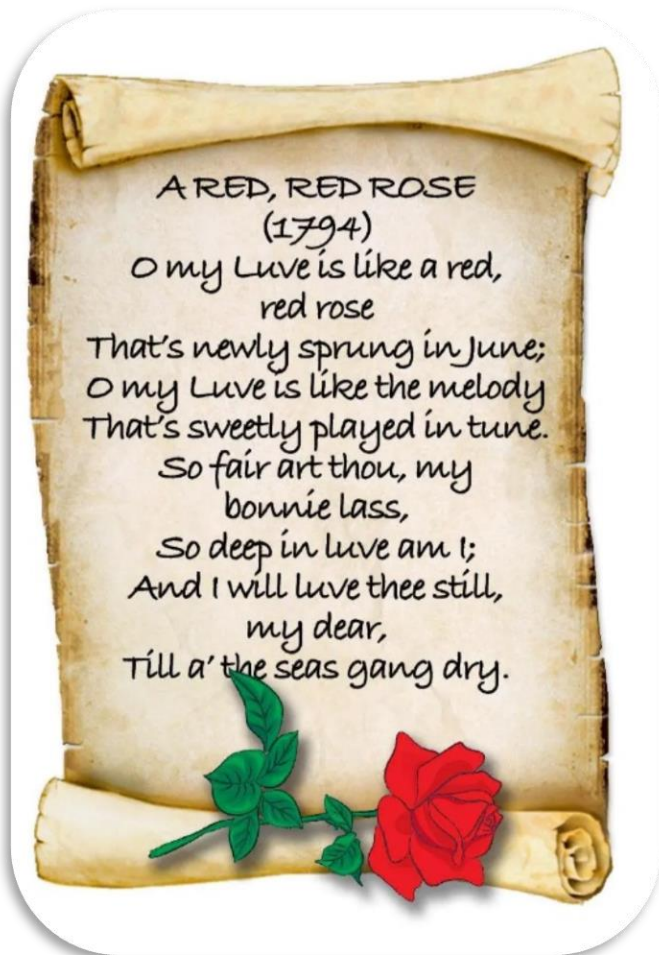
You may ask what was Robert Burns most famous for? Poems! One of Robert Burns's best-known poems is the mock-heroic "Tam o' Shanter," published in 1791. He was also well known for his contribution to over three hundred songs that celebrate love, friendship, work, and drink with often hilarious and tender sympathy, such as "Auld Lang Syne."

Burns lived in near poverty most of his life. He had been engaged in heavy physical farm work since he was a young boy, in a harsh climate and on a very limited diet had taken its toll. He was only thirty-seven years old when he died.

The very first Burns Night was held in 1801, and over 200 years later, some of the traditions of that night still exist today.

The centrepiece of any Burns Supper is always the haggis.

If you're unfamiliar with haggis, you may want to take a seat as the ingredients can seem a little 'unusual', but we can assure you it's tasty! Haggis is a savoury pudding containing sheep's heart, liver and lungs, which is minced with onion, oatmeal, suet, stock and a selection of spices.



"Address to a Haggis," praising the dish as a "Great chieftain o' the pudding-race!" and ending with a flourish to "Cut you up wi' ready sleight,"



# February Quiz

## HEART FOR ART, THE MASTERS

Can you name who painted the following:

- THE GIRL WITH THE PEARL EARRING
- THE NIGHT WATCHMAN
- THE MONA LISA
- THE BIRTH OF VENUS
- THE ROKEBY VENUS
- THE LAUGHING CAVALIER
- THE DANCE CLASS
- WATER LILIES – SERIES
- MOULIN ROUGE CHARACTERS
- SUNFLOWERS
- 3<sup>RD</sup> MAY 1808
- GUERNICA
- CHRIST OF ST. JOHN OF THE CROSS
- MR & MRS ANDREWS
- THE HAY WAIN
- THE FIGHTING TEMERAIRE



*Please join us for  
sherry time chats  
in the conservatory  
from  
12 midday with  
Christine on  
Mondays and  
Wednesdays*

### NOTICEBOARD

#### Needing a Hairdresser

We have 2 hairdressers who attend The Dower House every Wednesday and Friday mornings. If you would like an appointment, please ask a staff member to write your name down in the hairdresser's book.



Mrs Harris  
Mrs Ottewill  
Mrs Rampling

From Matron, Celia  
and all the staff at  
The Dower House on  
your February  
Birthdays!

# WHAT'S ON IN FEBURARY

Every Monday at 10.30 Knit & Natter with our ladies from Inner Wheel

Every Tuesday morning Keep Fit

Sunday afternoons 'Film Club'

Monday 2nd 3pm True or False  
Tuesday 3rd 3pm Mead Wine Tasting  
Wednesday 4th 11am Scrabble Completion  
2.30pm Winchester College Entertainers, this month with 15 singers!  
Thursday 5th 11am The Word Game  
3pm Music Club  
Friday 6th 11am Games of Legs  
12md Sherry Social  
2.30pm One to One Chats  
4pm Olga & Lorna our Therapy Dog, Room Visits  
Monday 9<sup>th</sup> 12md 3pm Room Visits  
Tuesday 10th 11am Keep fit Class with Christine  
3pm Non-alcoholic drink tasting  
Wednesday 11th 11am The Word Game  
12md Sherry Social  
3pm Craft Time  
Thursday 12th 11am Desert Island Disc & Morning Chats  
3pm **AIR AMBULANCE CHEQUE PRESENTATION**  
AFTERNOON, WITH HIOWAA VOLUNTEERS & SPEAKER  
Friday 13th 11am What the papers say  
12md Sherry Social  
3pm Valentines Day Bingo  
Monday 16th 3pm Craft Time  
Tuesday 17th 3pm Pancake Racing, come and have a go at tossing the pancakes  
Wednesday 18th 11am The word game  
3pm Sarah Hobbs singing  
Thursday 19th 11am Games of Legs  
3pm Speaker Ruth Kerr 'A wonder without wellies'  
Friday 20th 11am What the Paper Say  
3pm Brian Budden playing the piano  
Monday 23rd 3pm Music Club  
Tuesday 24th 3pm Ryan Bishop Singing  
Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> 11am Games of True or False  
3pm Speaker John 'Googled eyed Plover & Quail nesting on Salisbury Plain  
Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> 11am The Word Game  
3pm Matrons Meeting  
Friday 27<sup>th</sup> 11am Desert Island Disc & Morning Chats  
3pm Carol Watson speaking on her Journey in Japan