

# **THE DOWER HOUSE NEWSLETTER**

JANUARY ISSUE



I would like to wish all our residents on behalf of the entire staff a Happy New Year.

# JANUARY ACTIVITIES

Activities this month maybe be cancelled or amended at very short notice.  
Also, numbers will be smaller than normal at each activity in order to achieve social distancing.

Please see the notice board with any updates.

All activities will start at **2.45pm** if the time is not mentioned below.

**Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> January** - Anytime Club will be showing a film in the drawing room

**Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> January** – Anytime Club will be holding a Quiz in the dining room

**Friday 8<sup>th</sup> January** – We will be holding an afternoon tea in the dining room at **2.45pm** to say goodbye to Philippa and wish her a happy retirement, and to welcome Michaela to The Dower House

**Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> January** - Anytime Club will be showing a film in the drawing room

**Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> January** – Art afternoon in the dining room with Doreen

**Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> January** – Anytime Club will be showing a film in the drawing room

**Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> January** - Anytime Club will be showing a film in the drawing room

**Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> January** – Anytime Club Quiz in the dining room

**Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> January** – Anytime club will be showing a Film in the drawing room

**Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> January** – Anytime Club will be showing a film in the drawing room

**Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> January** – Are very own Zuzanna will be playing the piano in the drawing room

**Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> January** – Anytime club will be showing a film in the drawing room

**Activities are subject to change at short notice.**

## THIS MONTHS FILMS

This month will be showing a new drama series called Bridgeton in the drawing room on a Tuesday and Thursday at 2.45pm



The show is based on a series of historical romance novels written by Julia Quinn.

**A short Synopsis:** "Bridgerton follows Daphne Bridgerton, the eldest daughter of the powerful Bridgerton family as she makes her debut onto Regency London's competitive marriage market. Hoping to follow in her parent's footsteps and find a match sparked by true love, Daphne's prospects initially seem to be unrivaled. But as her older brother begins to rule out her potential suitors, the high society scandal sheet written by the mysterious Lady Whistledown casts aspersions on Daphne.

# BEN'S GARDENING NEWS

Little January

Tapped at my door today.

And said, put on your winter wraps,

And come outdoors and play

Little January

Is always full of fun

Until the set of sun

Little January

Will stay a month with me

And we will have such jolly times

Just come along and see.

Winifred C. Marshall, January

January is an exciting month, time to start looking for the first signs of growth on a short stroll around the garden. The garden is slowly waking up although the weather maybe cold, snowy, or wet the snowdrops, hellebores, catkins and early irises are all appearing to bring us joy and a smile.

Over the last month Terry and I have been working through the patio gardens and borders and continuing our loop around the grounds in preparation for mulching all the beds, we do this every winter to keep all the borders in top condition, the mulch feeds the plants and keeps the weeds down, it also makes the borders easier to work when digging and the birds love to pick the worms and bugs from it too. It is a fun seasonal job that will keep us warm on a cold day.

We have finished gathering up the leaves now apart from the ones in the pond, the pond will be cleaned but it is a team job, Richard, Terry and I will work on it over the next two months. Cleaning the filter tanks and working the borders around it. Once the borders are prepped and the pond is cleaned, we will be all set for spring and we all can enjoy the garden as it bursts back into life.

# NEWS FROM BATH

Happy New Year to you all.



I hope that you had a lovely Christmas and are looking ahead to more positive times, like I am trying to.

The garden although cold and bleak right now will soon come to life. We are eagerly anticipating our bulbs which we spent last Autumn planting.

In particular, the areas in the garden which were lacking in Spring colour. One area which is going to be a real picture, is under our rose arches. A simple, gravel, paved area under rose arches which acts a soft green fernery through summer, in the shade of the roses. Come Spring it usually lacks interest, but we are hoping to transform it by planting with an abundance of bulbs. We have planted fritillaria, chionodoxa, muscari, anemone blanda, tiny dwarf tulips and narcissi in different varieties. We hope to provide a jolly plethora of colour here.

We have added Hellebores in gentle pale-yellow tones and narcissi thalia to our woodland bed in hope that they will multiply over time. We have planted snow drops and scilla to areas in the lawn to add colour and interest. As an enthusiastic gardener, ongoing to a lecture by Arne Maynard in the past, (one of our top garden designers), his words of wisdom were these: by adding bulbs to a

garden, you are instantly adding character colour, and the feel of an established garden. We are excited for our Spring pots. Tulips lay tucked sleepily below the soil, waiting to rise for Spring. But we have bedding plants in the tops of the pots that the tulips will happily grow up through when the time comes. But so as not to have empty pots we have filled them with viola in the sweetest shades of blue, and our favourite, small annual wall flowers. Bought as just a plug, they look quite unassuming to start with. But they will last all the way through until mid-summer, if dead headed. They provide Spring pots with clusters of delicate tiny flowers on spires which will lift your Spring displays. They are good value for money, slugs do not seem keen on them, and as I have mentioned previously, they go on and on.

The one thing we can look forward to and be certain of during these uncertain times, is our garden. At The Dower House Ben and Terry's care we can be certain everything will look its best next year. Now more than ever we all need nature, even if it is just looking out of our bedroom windows looking out at bare tree branches, with their interesting formations, this can be a real source of pleasure.



I am looking forward with real hope to seeing you all and the garden this year.

Best wishes  
Mrs Lywood

# 10 Facts About the Winter Solstice, the Shortest Day of the Year

## 1. THE WINTER SOLSTICE HAPPENS ON DECEMBER 21 IN 2020.

The date of the winter solstice varies from year to year, and can fall anywhere between December 20 and December 23, with the 21st or 22nd being the most common dates. The reason for this is because the tropical year—the time it takes for the sun to return to the same spot relative to Earth—is different from the calendar year. The next solstice occurring on December 20 will not happen until 2080, and the next December 23 solstice will not occur until 2303.

## 2. THE WINTER SOLSTICE HAPPENS AT A SPECIFIC, BRIEF MOMENT.

Not only does the solstice occur on a specific day, but it also occurs at a specific time of day, corresponding to the instant the North Pole is aimed farthest away from the sun on the 23.5-degree tilt of the Earth's axis. This is also the time when the sun shines directly over the Tropic of Capricorn. In 2020, this moment occurred at 10:02 a.m. UTC (Coordinated Universal Time) on December 22. For those on Eastern Standard Time, the solstice will have occurred at 5:02 a.m. on December 21. And regardless of where you live, the solstice happens at the same moment for everyone on the planet.

## 3. THE WINTER SOLSTICE MARKS THE LONGEST NIGHT AND SHORTEST DAY OF THE YEAR FOR THE NORTHERN HEMISPHERE.

As most are keenly aware, daylight hours grow shorter and shorter as the winter solstice approaches and begin to slowly lengthen afterward. It is no wonder that the day of the solstice is referred to in some cultures as the "shortest day of the year" or "extreme of winter." New York City will experience 9 hours and 15 minutes of sunlight, compared to 15 hours and 5 minutes on the summer solstice. Helsinki, Finland, will get 5 hours and 49 minutes of light. Barrow, Alaska, will not have a sunrise at all (and has not since mid-November; its next sunrise will be on January 22), while the

North Pole has had no sunrise since October. The South Pole, though, will be basking in the glow of the midnight sun, which will not set until March.

#### 4. ANCIENT CULTURES VIEWED THE WINTER SOLSTICE AS A TIME OF DEATH AND REBIRTH.

The seeming death of the light and very real threat of starvation over the winter months would have weighed heavily on early societies, who held varied solstice celebrations and rites meant to herald the return of the sun and hope for new life. Scandinavian and Germanic pagans lit fires and may have burned Yule logs as a symbolic means of welcoming back the light. Cattle and other animals were slaughtered around midwinter, followed by feasting on what was the last fresh meat for several months. The modern Druidic celebration Alban Arthan reveres the death of the Old Sun and birth of the New Sun.

#### 5. THE SHORTEST DAY OF THE YEAR MARKS THE DISCOVERY OF NEW AND STRANGE WORLDS.

The Pilgrims arrived at Plymouth on December 21, 1620, to find a society that would allow them to worship freely. On the same day in 1898, Pierre and Marie Curie discovered radium, ushering in an atomic age. And on December 21, 1968, the *Apollo 8* spacecraft launched, becoming the first crewed moon mission.

#### 6. THE WORD *SOLSTICE* TRANSLATES ROUGHLY TO "SUN STANDS STILL."

*Solstice* derives from the Latin scientific term *solstitium*, containing *sol*, which means "sun," and the past participle stem of *sistere*, meaning "to make stand." This comes from the fact that the sun's position in the sky relative to the horizon at noon, which increases and decreases throughout the year, appears to pause in the days surrounding the solstice. In modern times, we view the phenomenon of the solstice from the position of space, and of the Earth relative to the sun. Earlier people, however, were thinking about the sun's trajectory, how long it stayed in the sky and what sort of light it cast.

#### 7. STONEHENGE IS ALIGNED TO THE SUNSET ON THE WINTER SOLSTICE.



The primary axis of the megalithic monument is oriented to the setting sun, while Newgrange, another structure built around the same time as Stonehenge, lines up with the winter solstice sunrise. Some have theorized that the position of the sun was of religious significance to the people who built Stonehenge, while other theories hold that the monument is constructed along natural features that happen to align with it. The purpose of Stonehenge is still subject to debate, but its importance on the winter solstice continues into the modern era, as thousands of hippies, pagans, and other types of enthusiasts gather there every year to celebrate the occasion.

## 8. ANCIENT ROMANS CELEBRATED REVERSALS AT THE MIDWINTER FESTIVAL OF SATURNALIA.

The holiday, which began as a festival to honour the agricultural god Saturn, was held to commemorate the dedication of his temple in 497 BCE. It quickly became a time of widespread revelry and debauchery in which societal roles were overturned, with masters serving the people they enslaved, and servants being allowed to insult their masters. Mask-wearing and play-acting were also part of Saturnalia's reversals, with each household electing a King of Misrule. Saturnalia was gradually replaced by Christmas throughout the Roman Empire, but many of its customs survive as Christmas traditions.

## 9. SOME TRADITIONS HOLD THAT DARK SPIRITS WALK THE EARTH ON THE WINTER SOLSTICE.

The Iranian festival of Yalda is celebrated on the longest night of the year. In pre-Islamic times, it heralded the birth of Mithra, the ancient sun god, and his triumph over darkness. Zoroastrian lore holds that evil spirits wander the Earth, and the forces of the destructive spirit Ahriman are strongest on this long night. People are encouraged to stay up most of the night in the company of one another, eating, talking, and sharing poetry and stories, to avoid any brushes with dark entities. Beliefs about the presence of evil on the longest night are also echoed in Celtic and Germanic folklore.

## 10. SOME THOUGHT THE WORLD WOULD END ON THE 2012 WINTER SOLSTICE.

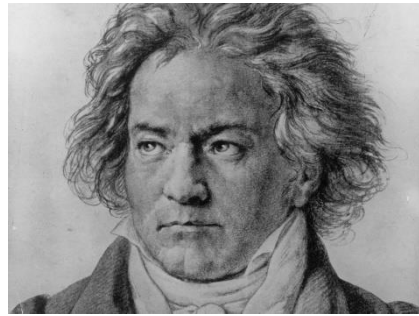
December 21, 2012, corresponds to the date 13.0.0.0.0 in the Mesoamerican Long Count calendar used by the ancient Maya, marking the end of a 5126-year cycle. Some people feared this juncture would bring about the end of the world or some other cataclysmic event. Others took a Newer Age-y view (literally) and believed it heralded the birth of a new era of deep transformation for Earth and its inhabitants. In the end, neither of these things appeared to occur, leaving the world to turn through winter solstices indefinitely, or at least if the sun lasts.

## EDITOR'S NOTES

**Philippa Thompson**  
**General Manager**

# JANUARY QUIZ

1. What is the birthstone of the month of January?
2. On which day in January is Burns night?
3. Who wrote The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy?
4. In the Hans Christian Andersen story, which little girl was found inside the petals of a flower?
5. What is the name of Italy's largest airport, situated in Rome?
6. What is the Greek word for restaurant?
7. What was Beethoven's first name?
8. Which country is known as the 'land of the midnight sun'?
9. Starting with letter 'P', what is the name of a baby puffin?
10. Cockneys are said to be those born within earshot of which historic church?
11. Which primates are the world's largest monkeys?
12. On the famous white signpost at Lands End, what is listed as being 28 miles away?
13. Which familiar sight on the streets of the UK was designed by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott?
14. Which film starred Celia Johnson, Trevor Howard and a train station?



# *ANSWERS*

1. Garnet
2. 25<sup>th</sup> January
3. Victor Hugo
4. Thumbelina
5. Leonardo de Vinci International Airport also know as Fiumicino International airport
6. Taverna
7. Ludwig
8. Norway
9. Pufflings
10. St Mary-le-Bow
11. Orangutan
12. Isles of Scilly
13. Telephone Box
14. Brief Encounter