

Let's take a look at... February



The shortest month of the year, February is generally the time that the first signs of spring start:

- The days start to get longer
- In the fields, you will start to see lambs
- Snowdrops start to peek through the ground

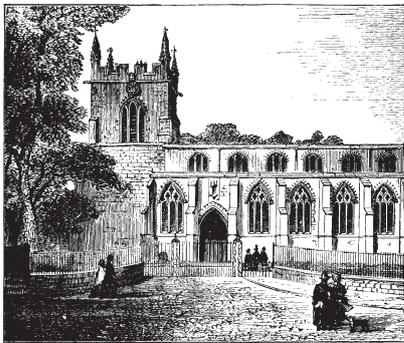
But what else happens in February?



St. Valentine's Day: The roots of the celebrations come from Lupercalia, the pagan fertility festival, which was celebrated in Rome between 13 - 15th February. The Christian faith later adopted this day in 496 AD to celebrate St Valentine who is actually the patron saint of beekeepers and epilepsy.

The first connection to love and St Valentine came in 1382, after Geoffrey Chaucer wrote 'Parliament of Fowls' to celebrate King Richard's engagement. The first love poem appears to have been sent by a French Duke from his cell in the Tower of London, as he misses 'my sweet Valentine' in 1415. The trend of sending Valentine's poems didn't take off for another 186 years, and then it wasn't until the arrival of the penny post in 1840, that the Post Office was inundated with the anonymous Valentine's Day cards. The rest is history!

Check out the On Demand Crafts for the Valentine's Craft Activity.



This year (2021) February has Shrove Tuesday in it, otherwise known as Pancake Day, on 16th February. Each year Shrove Tuesday happens on a different day as it occurs 47 days before Easter Sunday. Shrove Tuesday is a Christian tradition. Traditionally, Shrove Tuesday was the day where people would have a feast! This would be to use up all of the rich food (eggs and fats) in the house before the Christian observation of Lent started the following day. Lent is the Christian time to fast, to represent the time that Jesus was in the desert for 40 days and 40 nights.

The first known recipe for pancakes dates back to 1439 and the traditional ingredients for pancakes can be seen to symbolise four points of significance at this time of year:

- Eggs ~ Creation
- Flour ~ The staff of life
- Salt ~ Wholesomeness
- Milk ~ Purity

Head over to the On Demand Cooking for a Pancake Day recipe.

