



Royal Star & Garter

Care with courage

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

World Music Day: Singing gives RAF veteran living with dementia a new lease of life

An RAF veteran who is living with dementia is enjoying a new lease of life, thanks to his passion for music.

Staff at Royal Star & Garter in High Wycombe discovered Geoff Ames' love of music when he first came to the Home for Lunch Club. As a result he now uses its popular Day Care service several times a week.

He was speaking with his wife Mary at the care home, ahead of World Music Day, on 21 June.



Geoff enjoys a dance with Day Care Coordinator Angie

Geoff served in the RAF from 1975 until 1984, and later worked as an auditor. He was diagnosed with dementia in 2020 and, following a further decline in health in 2024, started coming to Royal Star & Garter.

The High Wycombe Home provides loving, compassionate care to veterans and their partners living with disability or dementia. The charity has also launched new services, including Lunch Club and Day Care, which reach out into the community.

Geoff first came to the Home for Lunch Club, along with Mary. She said: "Geoff started talking to the Wellbeing Coordinators, who were playing some music for residents. Geoff told them how much he loves singing and music, and that he and I both sing for Hughenden Community Choir. He offered to bring the choir to the Home, and the staff said yes! So we've sung two concerts here."

It also led to Geoff regularly using Day Care. Mary continued: "Because everyone was so lovely and kind, Geoff started coming to Day Care one day a week. But he loved it so much he now attends three times a week! They do lots of exercise, there's indoor



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sports and lots of music. Geoff really loves the music activities and live concerts, and he also enjoys taking part in arts and crafts."

She acknowledged coming to Day Care on his own was a big step for her husband. "With Geoff's Alzheimer's, prior to coming to Royal Star & Garter, we'd done quite a lot together for the past two or three years," Mary explained. "He probably felt a bit different without me being here, he was a bit shy to begin with, but he joins in with everything and chats to lots of people now."



Geoff cutting loose with Royal Star & Garter resident Carolyn during a concert at the High Wycombe Home

She continued: "I think Day Care has helped Geoff's confidence because he's socialising. We do have a lot of friends outside, but Alzheimer's changes things, and I think it can knock the individual's confidence a bit. But I think Day Care and Royal Star & Garter has been really helpful, with all the music, the interaction with people, and the banter. Geoff's got a good sense of humour, he loves to make people smile and laugh. He has always been a people-person and I think this is good for him. I think the mental stimulation has been like a new lease of life for him."



Geoff with his wife Mary

Geoff's Day Care also offers Mary an important break. She said: "It got to the stage where I was Geoff's full-time carer and I couldn't leave him on his own. Day Care means I can have some time to myself, and that I can recharge my batteries. It means I can go for walks, or meet up with friends if I wish to, so that's really important. It's made a big impact for the best in both our lives. I can be independent and I know that Geoff is fine. I don't worry about him when he's here and that's a gold mine, it's an absolute treasure. It's changed the course of our lives."

World Music Day is an annual international celebration of music which takes place each year on 21 June.

Royal Star & Garter in High Wycombe is welcoming new residents. For more information on this, the new services it offers, or to work at the Home, go to www.starandgarter.org/hw



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About Royal Star & Garter

Founded in 1916, Royal Star & Garter provides care, support and friendship for veterans and their families so that they can live well. The charity delivers nursing and dementia care through Homes in Solihull, Surbiton, High Wycombe, and now in Worthing, having recently merged with the military charity Care for Veterans. It also offers a range of services reaching into the community, including Lunch Clubs, Day Care and a national Telephone Friendship Service.

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