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BINS - Waste Management customer.service@shropshire.gov.uk	0345 6789007
CAXTON SURGERY https://www.caxtonsurgery.co.uk/index.aspx	01691 654646
Citizens Advice Bureau, Castle View	03444 991100
CORBET SCHOOL www.corbetschool.net	01939 260296
DIAL-A-RIDE, Volunteer Bureau and Qube Arts centre (main switchboard Osw.Community Action)	01691 656882
ELECTRICITY Scottish Power (Manweb as was)	0800 001 5400
KNOCKIN Medical Practice	01691 682203
NHS Out of Hours Service	111
Orthopaedic Hospital	01691 404000
PARISH COUNCIL email: westfeltonpc@gmail.com https://www.westfeltonparish.co.uk/	
POLICE, West Mercia Non-Emergency number	101
Oswestry Police Station	0300 333 3000
Safer Neighbourhood team—email: oswestryc.snt@westmercia.pnn.police.uk	
PRADOE CHURCH: Chairman: Andrew Kenyon	01691 610218
PUNCH BOWL	01691 610322
QUEENS HEAD RESTAURANT	01691 610255
RAIL STATION, GOBOWEN	01691 681010
ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH: Fr Philip Holy Mass Saturday 6:30 pm, Sunday 10 am	01691 652248
RSPCA Shropshire Branch	07703 567935
SAMARITANS	116 123
SCHOOL – West Felton C E School	01691 610388
SHOP: West Felton Stores	01691 610863
SHROPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL Anti-Social Report Line	0345 6789000 0345 6789020
Your Shrops Councillor: Steve Charmley email: steve.charmley@shropshire.gov.uk	01691 587958
ST MICHAEL'S CHURCH: Revd Suzan Williams	01691 674948
Church Warden: Dr Michael Davie	01691 610612
ST. CHAD'S: Chapel Warden: Mrs A Hampson	01691 610845
ROYAL BRITISH LEGION - Secretary	01691 610357
VILLAGE HALL Bookings	01691 610629
WASP Problems Emergency number	01691 831251 / 07772 006994
WATER - Severn Trent Water Authority	0800 783 4444
WOMEN'S INSTITUTE: Gillian Sturgess	01691 611811

Year 31

AUGUST 2024

ROUND and ABOUT WEST FELTON

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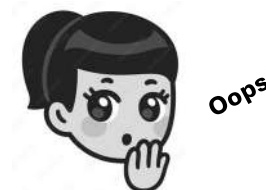
Saturday 12th October

**Did you remember to book
your table?**

Contact Christine -

01691 610665

email: christinecurtis2022@hotmail.com



*Looking for unusual
Birthday or Christmas gifts?
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interesting at the Fair on
Saturday, 12 October.*

WHAT'S ON

Parish Council	Second Tues of the month, 7:30 School Hall
West Felton Walkers	10am Mondays, Punch Bowl EXCEPT... see page 51
Pilates Class	Tuesday mornings: 2 sessions: 9:30-10:30 & 10:45-11:45am Need to book on line GYMATCH. Phone: Abi 07904456368
Tai Chi	Tuesday 2pm to 3pm, Village Hall
Badminton	Every Tues evening: 8pm to 9:30pm. Village Hall
Baby & Toddler	9:15- 10:30 Termtime WEDNESDAY at the school
Felton Flexors	Wednesday mornings 9:30am to 10:30am Village Hall
Table Tennis	Thursday 7:30pm Village Hall
WI	2nd Thursday of the month 7pm Village Hall
Short Mat Bowls	contact Glynnis on 610336
Royal British Legion	8pm Meeting, THE PUNCH BOWL first Monday of the month except Bank holidays then second Monday.

Happy August holidays, everyone - no WI meeting, no Parish Council meeting.

1 August	10am COMMUNITY COFFEE MORNING, Village Hall	13
21 Sept	10:30 - 2pm Hallmarks Valuation Day, Village Hall	27
12 Oct	VILLAGE HALL ARTS & CRAFTS - BOOK YOUR STALL NOW	19



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See page 39.

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Wednesdays only : 9:30am until 11am.

Round and About West Felton

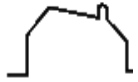
Articles/advertisement amendments for inclusion
in next issue
to Editor by email (preferred) or phone

**Last day for submission of copy and
Deadline for content changes 10th JULY 2024**

Editor: Colleen Hughes

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colleenhughes748@btinternet.com	Half page	£75
	Full page	£125



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Sun 6 Oct
Sun 19 Oct (Harvest Festival)
Sun 3 Nov
Sun 10 Nov (Remembrance Sunday)
Sun 1 Dec
Wed 18 Dec (Carol Service 7pm)
Wed 25 Dec (Christmas Day)
Sun 5 Jan 2025 (Plough Sunday)



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Clerk to West Felton Parish Council: **Mrs Rosemary WOOD**

Parish Office: 5 Newtown Gardens

Baschurch Shrewsbury SY4 2HF Tel 01939 262 881

Email: westfeltonpc@gmail.com Website: www.westfeltonparish.co.uk

Chairman Cllr John THORNHILL 07714 759 466
Vice-Chairman Cllr Ozcan OZAGIR 07879 330 598
Cllr David CURTIS 01691 610 665 (Rep WF Primary School & SALC Area Comm)

Cllr Sonja D'ARCY 01691 610 302
Cllr Alastair FORBES 01691 610 524
Cllr Kerry GROVE 01691 611 776
Cllr Marian HESKETH 01691 610 441 (Rep for Village Hall).
Cllr Chris JONES 01691 610 354
Cllr Pat MABE 01691 610 400 (Rep SALC Area Comm).
Cllr Ed NICHOLAS 01691 610 230 (Rep ABP committee)
Cllr David WALKER 01691 897 117 (Rep Helicopter Noise Group)
Shropshire Councillor Cllr Steve CHARMLEY 01691 650 488

PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS 2024-25

No meeting in August	14 January 2025
10 September 2024	11 February 2025
8 October 2024	11 March 2025
12 November 2024	8 April 2025
10 December 2024	13 May 2025

WEST FELTON PARISH COUNCIL REPORT

At the June meeting your Council discussed our **ACTION PLAN** to develop and improve facilities within the village which is considered every six months. It covers the following range of items.

Speed mitigation measures. My report in the July magazine set out our proposal for Traffic Calming Measures. We have already received a grant from the Police and Crime Commissioner and submitted a further application to the **Shropshire Council Environmental Maintenance Grant** for funding. We have received a response indicating that *the value of applications requested is double the amount of budget available and they will only be able to offer everyone a grant of 50% of the value they have requested.* We did receive a sum

(Continued on page 7)

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PC 21312 Bryant,
Oswestry Central Safer Neighbourhood Team
Oswestry Police Station.

Email: Karl.Bryant@westmercia.police.uk.

Tel: 07773053015 or 101.

These personal mobile numbers/email addresses can be used to gain quick contact with our local policing team **BUT are not to be used to report new incidents**. All incidents must be reported on either of the two numbers: 101 in the case of non-emergency and 999 for emergencies.

Crimestoppers: 0800 555111

Non emergency number : 101 web: www.westmercia.police.uk

Email: oswestrys.snt@westmercia/pnn.police.uk Twitter: @OsCops

Local Police Community Support Officer: PCSO Stuart Carroll 07970 544372.



West Felton Walking Group

Walk leaders:-

Mike Bossen 01691 610623

**We meet at 10.00 am Mondays at the
Punch Bowl car park**

Hilary Iles 01691 610707

**EXCEPT on the first Monday of the
month when departure is 9:30 to
allow time to travel to our chosen desti-
nation for the away day walk.**

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(Continued from page 5) Parish Council

of money to progress our proposals.

However, our efforts to progress these proposals have been severely hampered by the failure of Shropshire Council's officials to respond to emails regarding this matter. The Clerk first raised this in July 2023 seeking support for the scheme and requested a site visit to establish appropriate placements in the village for vehicle activated speed signs. Regular contact has been made but there had been no response to our requests for a site visit and attendance at one of our meetings to discuss this issue. I met with the Leader of Shropshire Council Lesley Picton and as a result have now contacted senior officials to move this matter forward. I also raised our concern about the proposal to charge £56 per year to empty our Green Bins and require members of the public to book times to use the Recycling Centre.

My report also included an appeal for volunteers to engage with a **Community Speed Watch** scheme. So far three parishioners have offered to become involved, but we need at least six to operate it effectively so if anyone else is interested then please contact the Clerk at westfeltonpc@googlemail.com

Community engagement. The Council wishes to improve how we engage effectively with the community and our parishioners. A proposal will be prepared for the September meeting, and I would welcome any comments and ideas that you have, which can be sent to the Clerk.

Tree Protection Order applications. We are concerned to protect trees in the parish by securing TPOs. We have approached Shropshire Council to enquire as to whether applications would be considered and been advised that they will look at any applications. A site visit was held with an arboriculturist, and Councillor Jones has produced a map showing three priority areas. It has been agreed to obtain costs for progressing this matter to identify specific trees for which we would seek TPOs from Shropshire Council.

History of West Felton booklet. It was agreed to consider producing a booklet of the history of West Felton for parishioners and others new to the village. I am aware that a comprehensive document was prepared to support the application for the Conservation Area. If anyone is willing to work with the Council on that material please contact the Clerk. We will consider this in detail at our September meeting and would welcome your views on the format, content, distribution, and any other matters on which you wish to comment.

LED streetlight on The Avenue. Your Council sought quotes for this in the autumn of 2023, but companies have requested the completion of a questionnaire and provision of a site plan. Yet again, progress has been hampered as no response has been received to our request to Shropshire Council officials for a site visit.

(Continued on page 9)



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ALL THE OTHER DAYS

Confessions Of A Serial Plant Killer

Oh, I wish that I had a green thumb.
All my houseplants are looking quite glum.
I never can tell
Why they're looking unwell
Or why so many succumb.

Have I failed to give enough water?
Have I watered them more than I oughta?

Are they getting too hot?
Is this not the right spot?
It's like sending poor lambs
to the slaughter.

The hard, undeniable fact is
Many succulents, ferns and a cactus,
A begonia, a fig,
Many palms, small and big,
Have been victims of my malpractice.

I confess I'm a serial killer.
Many end up as mulch or land filler.
I kill far more plants
Than snails, thrips or ants.
Or an army of green caterpillar!

Though houseplants are deemed beneficial,
Should these perish, then it is official:
I'll waste no more dough
Just to watch 'em die slow,
For my next plants will be artificial!

Cynthia C. Naspinski.

Knock, knock!
Who's there?
August!
August, who?
A gust of wind
over 74 MPH
Could be the
start of a
hurricane?

HAIKU
Fresh flowers,
I wheeze.

Green trees,
blue skies,
and the breeze.

Watch out!
Here's a sneeze.

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(Continued from page 7) Parish Council

Bin at Fox Lane. The Clerk emailed the Street Scene Officer on 20 May to enquire about the possibility of and cost of a new bin at the bus stop at Fox Lane. This was followed up on 3 June and 3 July asking for confirmation that the two previous emails had been received and a timescale for a response. We have now had a response with costs and members and are now looking into the matter.

Correspondence from parishioners

In response to my request in the May magazine we have had two comments. The first refers to parking at the main village crossroad near the shop. We have referred this to the police as this is a matter for them if any alleged criminal offences have taken place and also to Shropshire Council highways department to take any action such as double yellow lines or imposition of parking notices. We have had a response from the police which states *I notice that there are no road markings at this location – and I feel that it would be most beneficial to have double yellow lines on the corner, making it quite clear where you cannot park or stop. Also, I did speak to one of the Local Enforcement Officers in town yesterday and asked them if they would be prepared to attend locations such as West Felton and they said they would but would have to be specifically requested via Shropshire Council.*

These two suggestions will be on the Agenda for our next meeting in September and we would welcome your views and comments. Please forward them to the Clerk,

The second is in relation to Hickson's Lane which has become very overgrown making it exceedingly difficult to use. Your Council arranged a site visit last year with officials of Shropshire Council who are responsible for the land which is not within our control. We were requesting consideration be given to putting a hard surface on the path. There was no further action, but we have again reported the matter to them with pictures sent to us. We have received the following response *Thank you for your email and I can confirm that this issue has been logged and the details forwarded to the area officers for their attention.*

West Mercia Police Local Policing Community Charter

West Mercia Police launched a Local Policing Community Charter in 2021 which outlined its commitment to communities and partners. The Charter was subsequently updated in 2022 and can be found at <https://www.westmercia.police.uk/SysSiteAssets/media/downloads/west-mercia/public-charter.pdf>. It will be added to the website.

The Charter seeks to increase police visibility and accessibility, enhance their response to the public, prevent crime and anti-social behaviour, reduce vulnerability, and develop stronger more effective relationships with partners. West

(Continued on page 11)



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(Continued from page 9) Parish council

Mercia Police made a Charter commitment to work with all councils in the development and focus, through joint working, of (up to) three local priorities. Many councils have benefited through this joint work and shared priorities which have been progressed through the work of our Safer Neighbourhood Teams and other departments, working with councils and partners, and reviewed and/or changed, each quarter.

The team have not been able to attend some parish and town council meetings owing to operational demand being prioritised or lack of availability for staff on duty. However, they have agreed to furnish a monthly report about the work they have been doing to address our top three concerns. Should you wish to view crime statistics these can be found at www.police.uk. In addition, they will send a newsletter to highlight the work that they have been doing across our operational areas where you will see examples of best practice and opportunities that you may wish to take in your local communities.

They have asked us again to provide the top three concerns in our parish as they are writing to establish our priorities for the next quarter which will be made available in late August.

Please let us know what would be your three top priorities.

Highways We have received notice of the following road closures:

Twyford Lane, West Felton Start Date: 29 Oct 2024; End Date: 31 Oct 2024; Promoter: Severn Trent Water; Enforcement pattern: all the time; Closure and diversion route: <https://one.network/?tm=139131144>

Grimpo Road, Grimpo Start Date: 23 Sept 2024; End Date: 24 Sept 2024; Purpose: install x4 new poles and cabling works; Promoter: Freedom Fibre; Enforcement pattern: 09:30 to 14:30hrs; Closure and diversion route: <https://one.network/?tm=139407540>

Planning Permission Request

An outline planning application for the erection of up to five dwellings and associated infrastructure had been submitted for the site at the Punch Bowl Inn. **The Ref. No is : 24/02386/OUT | Validated: Thu 04 Jul 2024 | Status: Pending Consideration.**

It was received too late for the July agenda, but we received comments at our recent meeting from members of the parish. It was agreed that as it was a critical issue we should invite parishioners to share their views at a single item extra-ordinary meeting.

At the July meeting we welcomed two new members to the Parish Council – Sonja D'Arcy and Alistair Forbes. I hope they enjoy their term of office.

Cllr John Thornhill, Chair, West Felton Parish Council.

Wills, Property Protection, Powers of Attorney

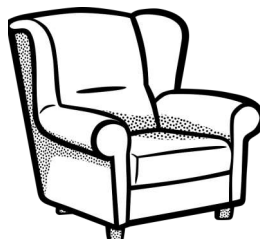


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Rector's Ramblings

Rev Suzan Williams

As I look out at my garden watching the plants moving in the chilly wind, and its July as I'm writing this is far from as warm as we would expect it to be. I am reminded of a simpler and more peaceful rhythm to life. Nature is unhurried. It prompts me to reflect on the construct of time we have invented for ourselves, where life is carved out in weeks, hours and minutes. It seems we are slaves to the clock, always imagining we haven't got enough time....

In the church we have entered a season called ordinary time. A time without festivals but a time for taking stock and growing; we might say 'business as usual'. By church I mean the group of people who are committed to following Jesus' way and his teachings and to sharing that with others. I choose to follow Jesus because 'his business as usual' is entirely about love. Everything he does is because he loves God and other people. He spends his time healing and caring for those who are downtrodden, and teaching people about how to be whole, how to live a loving, full life, how forgiveness and reconciliation lead to peaceful relationships with our neighbours, be that next door, in our communities or other nations. I'm sure that is something all of us yearn for: a life well-lived in love and peace, enjoying rich relationships with family, friends and neighbours. Jesus invites us to lean on him and he promises to help us. (Matthew 11:28-30)

I pray that in this summer season your 'ordinary time' is filled with a sense of freedom from time constraints and the stuff that the world dumps upon us, and that you can find a timeless sense of peace.

Every blessing, Suzan

A cheerful heart is a good medicine... Proverbs 17:22

Church Newsletters - US style

In the bulletin of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic Church, Palm Coast, FL:

"We will have a Special Holiday Bingo & Dinner on Monday evening, Dec. 30. You will be given two bingo packs, which cover all games played, and your choice of children or roast beef for dinner." — Rev. Frederick R. Parke.

A woman invited some people to dinner. At the table, she turned to her six-year-old daughter and said, "Would you like to say the blessing?"

"I wouldn't know what to say," the little girl replied.

"Just say what you hear Mommy say," the mother said.

The little girl bowed her head and said: "Dear Lord, why on earth did I invite all these people to dinner?"

Annual property review 2024

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(Continued from page 41)

viewed the whole proceeding with disfavour and indignation. *"In common with most rural parishes, Chedworth suffers from a scarcity of houses, new ones are so costly to build as to put them beyond the reach of the ordinary man,"* the paper wrote.

In January 1930 the dismantling began. It was without doubt the most expensive project at Greenfield Village. Keystone were numbered and stones were packed into 506 sacks. Doors, windows, staircases and beams were packed into a further 211 crates. Mr Ford even imported some Cotswold sheep to add to his storybook cottage. It took a total of 67 railway wagons to transport 475 tonnes of material from Foss Cross station, Cheltenham to Brentford, where it was shipped to New Jersey and on to Dearborn, Michigan.

While labour to rebuild the house was provided by Ford's factory workers, Mr Ford was keen to use Gloucestershire craftsmen who knew how these buildings fitted together. Stonemason Tom Troughton and carpenter William H. Ratcliffe, were sent to the USA to oversee rebuilding the house. William's daughter-in-law, Maureen Ratcliffe, still lives a few miles away from Chedworth. "This was a big adventure for him, he was sent in a first-class cabin on the RMS Homeric and he stayed there for six and a half months," she said. They were just ordinary people, and they were on this ship eating caviar and all sorts. It was a huge job and a real honour for him to go out there. His family was really proud of the work he did," said Mrs Ratcliffe.

From July to September 1930 the house was slowly rebuilt. Henry Ford often dropped by to check on their progress. When the building was finished, Ford paid for Messrs Ratcliffe and Troughton to go on a two-week holiday, sending the rural craftsmen on a sightseeing trip to the Niagara Falls. Henry Ford paid the craftsmen handsomely. With the money made from the trip, Mr Ratcliffe bought a piece of land in Bourton-on-the-Water and built two bungalows for himself and his brother. One of the houses was named "Greenfield" after the attraction in Michigan.

Now visited by millions every year, the Chedworth cottage is popular with Americans looking to explore the Cotswolds in a setting closer to home. "We use it to host afternoon tea in the garden - and there's actually a waiting list for that," said the director of the tourist attraction.

It is also said that Henry Ford wanted to purchase the 15th-century parish church of St Peter in nearby Winchcombe and the cottages at Arlington Row in Bibury, but local opposition prevented him. Proof that, perhaps, money cannot buy you everything. ♦

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WEST FELTON VILLAGE HALL Chairmans Report 2023-2024

I am happy to report another successful year for our Village Hall. Last year was very special as it was our 100th anniversary and therefore a hard act to follow. I feel the Centenary itself has spurred us on to ensure the continued success of this cherished asset. Following the standing down of Ann Hampson last year after a service of more years that we care to count, we have welcomed two new members to our committee, Patricia Hicks and Deryck Lindsey. On a less positive note, finding a replacement secretary has not been a success. Christine has fulfilled that role diligently for 14 years and has given notice on several occasions, often extending her date to stand down to overcome the lack of finding a replacement. A special meeting was held to confront the situation with the result that for the time being individual members will take on specific clerical roles. If that fails, consideration will have to be given to employing someone as the role has to be properly fulfilled to satisfy "Charitable Status" regulations. I hope to report positively on this topic in the future and of course if there is anyone out there keen to volunteer and welcome the challenge, I would love to hear from them.

We are so grateful for the continuing support of the clubs and societies that regularly use the hall for their activities. Two new Dance Classes have commenced and since the sad closure of the Methodist Chapel, a new Community Group has been formed to ensure the Coffee mornings continue at the Hall with the hope that given their great success, Fish and Chip Suppers may start up again in the Autumn. I must confess some disappointment that the Parish Council, needing to depart from having their meetings at the Chapel Hall, chose not to use the Village Hall in favour of West Felton School as their new venue. Many have expressed their clear surprise with this move as the Village Hall, with its built-in facilities and central position, was the natural choice for a major Community activity.

The regular events organised by the committee such as the Bingo sessions and the Craft Fair continue to make a positive financial contribution to the Hall. The latter now being a regular feature. We will of course continue to consider new events to bring to the Hall, as well as old favourites, to keep

(Continued on page 17)

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From Chedworth, Gloucestershire to Michigan: this cottage is now visited by millions. *Image source, The Henry Ford Museum.*

Why Henry Ford imported a Cotswold cottage to Michigan

From an article by Jonathan Holmes, BBC

Many of us enjoy taking souvenirs home from our holidays, but when you are the world's richest man the souvenirs can be much bigger.

In the 1920s Henry Ford, the founder of the Ford Motor Company, was besotted with the Cotswolds in Gloucestershire, and decided that he wanted to own a piece of it. He loved the region, and quietly worked with his English agent, Herbert Morton, to find a building that was for sale, and acquired it.

Greenfield Village - and nearby Henry Ford Museum - were founded in Michigan by Ford in 1929 to collect objects that were being lost to a changing society, thanks in part to Ford's own invention, the Model T motor car. Multi-billionaire Ford purchased whole buildings, like the Wright Brothers' shop and Thomas Edison's laboratories, alongside smaller items. Today the Village is a huge tourist attraction with villages and working farms.

The Chedworth cottage was originally known as the Rose Cottage, because of the way the rain changed the colour of the limestone when wet. Mr Morton bought the house for £500 and made several modifications to perfect the storybook cottage look for Mr Ford. The Times newspaper reported that the local villagers

(Continued on page 43)



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(Continued from page 15)

fund raising positive. The Poppy Concert organised by the West Felton Branch of the Royal British Legion was once again brilliant and so well supported.

Financially your Village Hall is well placed for the future but as previously pointed out, has been the benefactor of substantial Covid Grants which did much to sustain us through difficult times. Obviously, we must focus on making sure the Hall is sustained and can face the future through general income as the grants etc are there to ensure longevity in the form of a Capital resource. We have however used some capital to replace the floor covering in the rear meeting room, and upgrades to our electrical systems following the obligatory Five-year inspection. For those who may be hard of hearing, I can confirm that the “Loop System” has been fully repaired. Future Capital expense will be required to focus on much needed repairs to small parts of the main floor by the fire exits, which appear to have suffered from the deteriorating condition of the main supporting joists. A lack of ventilation may be the issue. This and repair to the external gutters is in hand.

I must report the disturbing issue of damage to both chairs and tables. Chairs have clearly been stood on by objects of considerable weight and force. Whilst the tables may not have been stood on, damage to legs and locking pins has obviously been caused by a similar force. A request for a “little more care” PLEASE.

Visitors from outside the Village often comment on the quality of our Hall. A compliment which we are rightly proud and of course reflects on our lovely village and without doubt those who live in it. Such compliments do not come without effort and once again there is a need to focus on attracting new volunteers to take up roles not just for the Village Hall, but the Village in general.

Finally, I must use this opportunity to sincerely thank all Members and Staff of the Village Hall Committee who have given so much of their time to ensure all in the Parish have the use of a Community Hall which is a facility everyone should be proud of.

DAVID CURTIS
CHAIRMAN
21/06/2024



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Another easy poem to recite aloud:

The Owl and the Pussy-Cat **Edward Lear(1872)**

I
The Owl and the Pussy-cat went to sea
In a beautiful pea-green boat,
They took some honey, and plenty of
money,
Wrapped up in a five-pound note.
The Owl looked up to the stars above,
And sang to a small guitar,
"O lovely Pussy! O Pussy, my love,
What a beautiful Pussy you are,
You are,
You are!
What a beautiful Pussy you are!"

II
Pussy said to the Owl, "You elegant
fowl!
How charmingly sweet you sing!
O let us be married! too long we have
tarried:
But what shall we do for a ring?"

They sailed away, for a year and a day,
To the land where the Bong-Tree grows
And there in a wood a Piggy-wig stood
With a ring at the end of his nose,
His nose,
His nose,
With a ring at the end of his nose.

III
"Dear Pig, are you willing to sell for one
shilling
Your ring?" Said the Piggy, "I will."
So they took it away, and were married
next day
By the Turkey who lives on the hill.
They dined on mince, and slices of
quince,
Which they ate with a runcible spoon;
And hand in hand, on the edge of the
sand,
They danced by the light of the moon,
The moon,
The moon,
They danced by the light of the moon.

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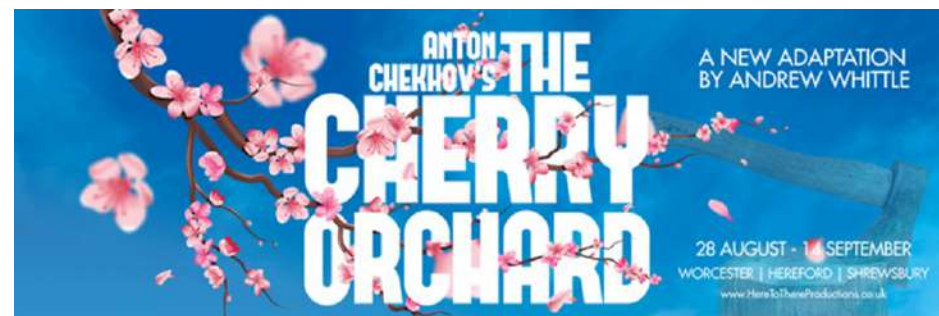
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WEST FELTON WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

May and June were busy months for members. The President welcomed another new member, Bobby, who was later amongst others who were congratulated on upcoming birthdays.



- The June meeting is traditionally an outing and this year members paid a visit to the **Cambrian Railway and Museum in Oswestry**. Following a train ride with tea and cake, they explored the fascinating Railway Museum. It was declared well worth a visit. Eileen was thanked for organising the trip and a note of thanks was afterwards sent to the Railway volunteers who looked after the group so well. The outing to **Stratford upon Avon** was much enjoyed, again thanks to Eileen's organisational skills.
- Several members attended the **Shropshire Federation of WIs Annual Meeting** at Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury and had a thoroughly enjoyable day. The speaker was Sarah Clarke who was the first Lady Usher of the Black Rod - you will have seen her at the opening of Parliament and other ceremonial occasions. Shropshire Federation was honoured to hear her talk about her career as Championship Director at Wimbledon and then as Black Rod. She is still serving in this role and doesn't normally give talks, but as a Shropshire lass and her mother being a WI member, she thought she would make an exception. It was reported that whilst six Shropshire WIs were suspended this year, a new one and two virtual WIs opened and, overall, membership has increased. Well done to Yvette who spoke on stage about the two new virtual WIs. Yvette was appointed to the Board of Trustees and is a qualified WI Adviser.
- **National Fed. of WIs Annual General Meeting** was held in the Royal Albert Hall in June. The resolution to be voted on was Dental Health Matters and it passed with a large majority. "Fantastic day at the Royal Albert Hall and wonderful speakers." was the opinion of those who attended. The guest speakers were:
 - ♦ Nazir Afzal, former Chief Crown prosecutor for the Northwest. He was the first to believe the women in the Rochdale abuse scandal. He has done so much for women's rights in the justice system, including forced marriage and honour crimes and violence against women generally.
 - ♦ Melanie Brown MBE (scary Spice girl!) who spoke openly with Victoria Derbyshire about surviving an abusive relationship;
 - ♦ and Timothy Watson, best known for his role as Rob Titchener in BBC Radio 4's The Archers, in a storyline which hugely impacted the public awareness of domestic abuse. All were very moving and inspiring.

(Continued on page 23)

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THE LADS SUMMER SHOW -
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Directed by Julia Thomas
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Dates and venues to be confirmed.

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Monday 29th July at Pant Memorial Hall 19:30 - 21:30

There will be lots of acting parts, large and small, young and old.

Musicians also needed, as well as sound, lighting, prompt, etc.

Rehearsals will start in September.

Performances will be 29th Nov - 1st Dec at Llanymynech Village Hall, and
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As with many new inventions, though, Bullock's press could be wonky. On April
2, 1867, he was making adjustments with his foot to a press being installed at an-
other newspaper's offices. His leg became tangled in a moving belt and was
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(Continued from page 21) WFWI report

Members were reminded about upcoming fundraising events: Carnival Teas in July and the Christmas Fair in November. It is vital these events are supported to ensure the continuation of the things that make the WFWI experience so enjoyable. There was mention of 'knitted rats' - best not go there?!

Oswestry Show 2024 - arrangements were made for individual members to enter the various classes.

There being no meeting in the holiday month of August, at the 12th September meeting in the village hall, the guest speaker will be Maggie Love, Dance Historian - The evolution of Dance. ♦



How times are changing.... Colleen Hughes WFWI

One of my most enduring West Felton WI memories is of the time I represented West Felton and three other WIs at the National AGM in the Royal Albert Hall. It is hard to describe exactly how moving was the sight and sounds of the 5000 plus women-only audience, especially when standing together to sing Jerusalem to open proceedings and again the National Anthem and Land of our Fathers at the end. This year the honour fell to Marilyn Jones, Maesbury WI and it is clear from

(Continued on page 25)



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Tom is a professional stage combat instructor, actor and director.

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her excellent report that she got that feeling too.

The theme for the meeting was violence against women and girls. The three guest speakers spoke eloquently from different perspectives, very moving.

The Resolution to be debated was chosen by all the institutes across the nation. That 'Dental Health Matters', was passed by 95.53%.

The Chair, Ann Jones, mentioned the highlights of her tenure as Chair, including an increase of 24,272 new members and the launch of the first podcasts online with 1500 downloads.

She announced that the AGM in 2027 will be fully online due to increased hire costs of the Royal Albert Hall. It appears that National Federation have been reviewing arrangements for future National Annual Meetings. Consideration has been given to this review by the NFWI Board of Trustees, the result of which is that from 2025, they will begin a continuous three-year cycle that will include two meetings offering **online participation only**, followed by one in-person meeting at a larger venue, allowing members to join both in-person and online.

The 2025 NFWI Annual Meeting will be held online (streamed from the NFWI office in London) on 4 June 2025.

So, those of us who have been lucky enough to experience the big day out in the Royal Albert Hall are the last to enjoy it.

My abiding impression of that day, apart from the serious business carried out in the Hall, was the lunch break when 5000 women decided all at once to cross the road to sit in Kensington Gardens with their packed lunches. The London traffic stopped - drivers totally bemused but going nowhere until we had all ambled across, chatting amiably. I'm told this year a taxi driver actually got out to ask one group of ladies what was going on! ♦



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Up the Garden Path with Topiarius

What should go must go

I choose the end of July to make an annual assessment of the garden and list the things that need changing, removing or replacing, both plants and hard landscaping. By the height of summer, you can get a good idea of what has outgrown its space and what is past its sell by date. This year, as usual, there were a number of shrubs that were well overdue for a severe pruning and were probably overdue the year before. In winter they look smaller, and it is only too easy to let them go for another year, despite what the assessment said. A resolution to be firm is needed. Exactly the same applies to things that should be removed completely. What is obviously wrong in August can seem innocent in January. Also as usual, we have a list of repairs that need to be made to structures and will aim to get them started before really bad weather. The best list will be of replacement plants to buy.

I put plant supports in the same bracket as 'life is too short to stuff a tomato'. Consequently, we tend to avoid things that can't stand up on their own. There are of course notable and honourable exceptions—climbers, broad and runner beans, and newly planted trees. There are a few wayward things we have to tie to a bamboo cane but, as a general rule, if it flops it needs to go. The collection of metal support stakes goes virtually unused. Many people will disagree, and some make staking almost an art form,

but I will use my time elsewhere.

The mention of summer and winter reminds me that it is easy to get confused over when seasons start and finish. Probably, uncertainty comes from the astronomical times being based on the equinox or solstice, with the spring equinox being around 20th March, the summer solstice about the 20th June, the autumn equinox around 23rd September and winter starting on the solstice on 21st or 22nd December. British summer time starting on the last Sunday in March and finishing on the last Sunday in October doesn't help. We gardeners can make it simple with every season starting on the first of a month: March = early spring, April = mid-spring, May = late spring, June = early summer, July = midsummer, August = late summer, September = early autumn, October = mid-autumn, November = late autumn, December = early winter, January = mid-winter, December = late winter. Now we can all speak the same language.

The jobs list for August doesn't look very onerous but it can hide the amount of time and effort that will still be needed for weeding, watering, feeding and pruning such things as grape vines. My list also includes scarifying the lawn, replacing cucumbers with young plants, applying vine weevil nematodes to containers and putting preservative on outside woodwork. Plus of course some harvesting. ♦

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Did the battle of Milvian Bridge change the meaning of Christianity?

Such a question 200 years ago would have been met with derision. But now the Church of England, in one of its periodic missions, is desperately trying to get people back into church.

But before commenting on the present, some explanation of the first sentence is required. Christianity was a minor sect for about 3 centuries after the death of Christ. A Professor of Ancient History at Cambridge calculated that by 100AD there were about 7000 Christians in the Roman empire out of a population of 60 million. Christianity was hard: people met in houses and often set up self help groups – the forerunners perhaps of food banks. Christians tended to be persecuted, but were helped by their placing great store by literacy which gave them entrance into the bureaucracy of the Empire. And then in 312AD Constantine faced his great rival, Maxentius, who fought under the banner of the unconquerable Sun, at the Milvian bridge over the Tiber. Constantine prevailed and as noted earlier in these articles, Christianity was not just allowed in the Empire, it became the established faith of the Roman Empire. From then on, it all became too easy.

Christianity became the thing to follow, whether you believed in it or not. All you had to do was to turn up at church, pay a few dues and you were part of the “in crowd”. Inevitably it became an

organisation, and organisations have to have hierarchies; and these hierarchies led the minds of the people. Popes became powerful people, even to the extent of organising wars. Rulers of countries realised that some form of control or at least liaison with the church made their ruling easier, echoing the interaction of Moses and God recorded in Exodus 19 and 20. Bishops became members of the governing body of England in the Middle Ages and even today the two Archbishops and 24 other Bishops sit in the House of Lords.

Schisms within the church led to wars which did religion little good whilst probably antagonising much of the yeomanry and peasantry who wanted a quiet life. By the 18th and 19th centuries wars had receded but many felt alienated from the established church which tended to attract the more comfortably off members of society. Inhabitants of towns especially felt abandoned and Wesley started preaching to those workers who felt neglected, leading to the rise of Methodism. The established church was doing rather well, it believed. The clergy were paid by tithe or Queen Anne’s bounty and churches were reasonably full. What could go wrong?

Actually an awful lot. The church was losing its way. Procedure over worship took preference over its basic charge to do good and look after people. Instead of the church being concerned about poor children, other organisa-

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tions, such as the NSPCC, sprung up to do that work. Other groups such as women’s associations, the Royal Antediluvian Order of Buffaloes, and the Joseph Rowntree foundation were all founded to promote mutual self help and social interaction. Gradually the work that the church should have been doing was being undertaken by other bodies. This left the church to conduct an, often very beautiful, service on a Sunday as well as being the body that baptises you, marries you or despatches you, though the last two are now most frequently done by other institutions.

One gets the sense that even 100 years ago the church was absorbed with its own administration. Parochial church council minutes of that era reveal that time was taken up discussing whether a

new Diocese of Shrewsbury should be created (it wasn’t), whether an order book should be kept “and “no bills paid unless signed by the Churchwardens” (it was) and whether the alms bags should be cleaned (agreed). The annual accounts show that a little money was given to local hospitals and to the Waifs and Strays society. There was nothing to show that anything was given locally other than for a choir outing.

The Diocese wants parishes to connect with schools, with the local community and have churches filled with people reflecting the age and racial profile of the community. In this parish we do make a grant to the school of about £1500/yr. (This year the school went to a Multifaith centre in Derby). For most parishes the Diocesan mission represents the challenge of reversing centuries of neglect. ♦

