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BINS - Waste Management <a href="mailto:customer.service@shropshire.gov.uk">customer.service@shropshire.gov.uk</a>	0345 6789007
CAXTON SURGERY <a href="https://www.caxtonsurgery.co.uk/index.aspx">https://www.caxtonsurgery.co.uk/index.aspx</a>	01691 654646
Citizens Advice Bureau, Castle View	03444 991100
CORBET SCHOOL <a href="http://www.corbetschool.net">www.corbetschool.net</a>	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: <a href="mailto:westfeltonpc@gmail.com">westfeltonpc@gmail.com</a> <a href="https://www.westfeltonparish.co.uk/">https://www.westfeltonparish.co.uk/</a>	
POLICE, West Mercia Non-Emergency number	101
Oswestry Police Station	0300 333 3000
Safer Neighbourhood team—email: <a href="mailto:oswestryc.snt@westmercia.pnn.police.uk">oswestryc.snt@westmercia.pnn.police.uk</a>	
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	0345 6789000
Anti-Social Report Line	0345 6789020
Your Shrops Councillor: Steve Charmley email: <a href="mailto:steve.charmley@shropshire.gov.uk">steve.charmley@shropshire.gov.uk</a>	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

JUNE 2024

# ROUND and ABOUT WEST FELTON

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# W H A T 'S O N

<b>Parish Council</b>	Second Tues of the month, 7:30 <b>School Hall</b>
<b>West Felton Walkers</b>	10am Mondays, Punch Bowl <b>EXCEPT... see page 49</b>
<b>Pilates Class</b>	Tuesday mornings: 2 sessions: 9:30-10:30 & 10:45-11:45am Need to book on line GYMATCH. Phone: Abi 07904456368
<b>Tai Chi</b>	Tuesday 2pm to 3pm, Village Hall
<b>Badminton</b>	Every Tues evening: 8pm to 9:30pm. Village Hall
<b>Baby &amp; Toddler</b>	9:15- 10:30 Termtime WEDNESDAY at the school
<b>Felton Flexors</b>	Wednesday mornings 9:30am to 10:30am Village Hall
<b>Table Tennis</b>	Thursday 7:30pm Village Hall
<b>WI</b>	2nd Thursday of the month 7pm Village Hall
<b>Short Mat Bowls</b>	contact Glynnis on 610336
<b>Royal British Legion</b>	8pm Meeting, <b>THE PUNCH BOWL</b> first Monday of the month except Bank holidays then second Monday.

6 June	10-12 noon <b>COMMUNITY COFFEE MORNING</b> Village Hall	9
8/9 June	10:30 <b>JON YOUNG OPEN GARDEN &amp; STUDIO</b>	37
25 June	10-6:30pm <b>BROWNHILL HOUSE OPEN GARDEN</b>	
Last 2 weeks of June	Carnival committee will be calling house to house collecting goodies for the Tombola and Grand Prize. <i>Have your bag ready!</i>	11
5 July	3:15 <b>WEST FELTON SCHOOL FARMER'S MARKET</b>	15
14 July	<b>WEST FELTON CARNIVAL24 - book your stall now</b>	11
12 Oct	<b>VILLAGE HALL ARTS &amp; CRAFTS - BOOK YOUR STALL NOW</b>	

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The Post Office is located in the entrance lobby  
of the village hall.

Opening time :  
**Wednesdays only : 9:30am until 11am.**

## Round and About West Felton

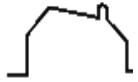
Articles/advertisement amendments for inclusion  
in next issue  
to Editor by email (preferred) or phone

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

**Editor: Colleen Hughes**

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### Services in West Felton Parish:

**St Michael's,  
West Felton**  
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**St Chad's, Haughton**  
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or the Churchwarden:

Dr Michael Davie **01691 610 612**

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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](mailto:westfeltonpc@gmail.com)

Website: [www.westfeltonparish.co.uk](http://www.westfeltonparish.co.uk)

**Chairman** Cllr David WALKER 01691 897 117 (Rep Helicopter Noise Group)

**Vice-Chairman** Cllr Kerry GROVE 01691 611 776 (Rep SALC Area Comm).

Cllr David CURTIS 01691 610 665 (Rep WF Primary School)

Cllr Marian HESKETH 01691 610 441 (Rep for Village Hall).

Cllr Chris JONES 01691 610 354

Cllr Pat MABE 01691 610 400

Cllr Ed NICHOLAS 01691 610 230 (Rep ABP committee)

Cllr Ozcan OZAGIR 07879 330 598

Cllr John THORNHILL 07714 759 466

**Shropshire Councillor** Cllr Steve CHARMLEY 01691 650 488

### ALL IN JUNE

A week ago I had a fire  
To warm my feet, my hands and  
face;  
Cold winds, that never make a  
friend,  
Crept in and out of every place.

Today the fields are rich in grass,  
And buttercups in thousands grow;  
I'll show the world where I have  
been--  
With gold-dust seen on either shoe.

Till to my garden back I come,  
Where bumble-bees for hours and  
hours  
Sit on their soft, fat, velvet bums,  
To wriggle out of hollow flowers.

*William Henry Davies*

### LEISURE

What is this life if, full of care,  
We have no time to stand and stare.

No time to stand beneath the boughs  
And stare as long as sheep or cows.

No time to see, when woods we  
pass,  
Where squirrels hide their nuts in  
grass.

No time to see, in broad daylight,  
Streams full of stars, like skies at  
night.

No time to turn at Beauty's glance,  
And watch her feet, how they can  
dance.

No time to wait till her mouth can  
Enrich that smile her eyes began.

A poor life this is if, full of care,  
We have no time to stand and stare.

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## PERCY'S PALS

*Based on an Advertizer article by  
 Alex Whilding, AI Assisted Reporter  
 at The Advertizer.*



**Friends**

At the heart of RJA

### **Percy's Pals help patients with non-medical needs at The Robert Jones and Agnes Hunt Orthopaedic Hospital (RJA)**

The new initiative is spearheaded by the League of Friends and is targeted at reducing low spirits and morale amongst patients on the Sheldon Ward.

The Sheldon Ward offers general medicine, dementia care, and rehabilitation for aging patients, many of whom spend extended periods in hospital before moving to care homes or their own homes.

Michelle Williams, activities coordinator on Sheldon Ward, recognised a growing number of patients with low spirits and morale, due to not receiving visitors. She reached out to the League of Friends for suggestions which could involve volunteer support to enhance overall experience for these patients during their time in hospital.

In response, the Friends group introduced Percy's Pals, a team of volunteers trained in safeguarding and dementia care. This training, provided by Michelle, and Anne Worrall adult safeguarding practitioners, gives volunteers the necessary skills to safely engage with and support dementia patients, ensuring adequate care levels.

Charity director, Victoria Sugden, expressed her enthusiasm about this new initiative as she said: "We are delighted to be able to support patients on Sheldon Ward with our new volunteering opportunity – this role marks a valuable addition to the services we provide.

"The role is focused on being a positive opportunity for individuals to befriend patients, encouraging open conversations about hobbies and interests, while actively promoting fluid intake and identifying simple ways to enhance patient comfort."

Anyone interested in becoming a Percy's Pal or assisting in other voluntary roles can reach the Friends team at **01691 404401**,

or contact **Melanie.Bygrave@nhs.net** directly.

The contribution of volunteers provides an invaluable service, both to patients on the ward and to the hardworking staff at Gobowen. ♦



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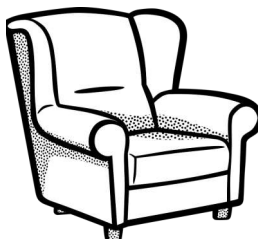


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Tel: 07773053015 or 101.

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.

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



## West Felton Walking Group

**Walk leaders:-**

**Mike Bossen 01691 610623**

**Hilary Iles 01691 610707**

**John and Eileen Hanmer**

**01691 610629**

**Liz and Dave Embrey**

**01691 658275**

We meet at 10.00 am Mondays at the  
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## COMMUNITY COFFEE MORNINGS



## Coffee Morning:

**Thursday, 6th June, 10-12noon**  
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**£1.50 entry includes tea/coffee, biscuits.**

**Bacon baps £1 extra**

**Raffle**

**Sales tables for cakes,  
marmalade, produce,  
greetings cards and  
craft items.**



• The first Coffee Morning of the new era was a great success. The  
 • hall was full. Old friends and new friends meeting for a chat. Bacon  
 • baps selling like hotcakes!

• Trading tables with homemade cakes and marmalade; tomato plants  
 • and greeting cards; and delightful craft items to choose.

**Lovely atmosphere, enjoyed by all.**

• **With thanks to the first team of organisers, you made it all look**  
 • **so easy - but the hard work is very much appreciated.**

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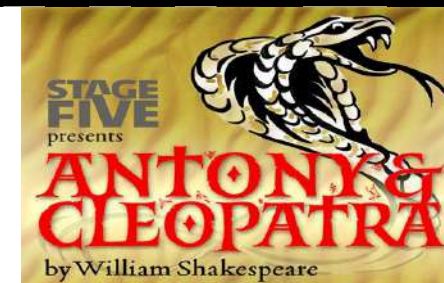
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## WEST FELTON CARNIVAL 24 14th July 2024



From Joanne  
and the  
Carnival  
Committee

**Only 2 months until the Carnival on 14th July!**  
**We're getting excited for the big day!**

**The procession will be leaving The Punch Bowl at 1pm.**

**There's lots of thrilling and new things to do on the field this year!**

We're hearing rumours that some of the floats are already nearing completion! But there's still plenty of time to pull one together! It's free to enter and applications are available from the committee.

**We'll be collecting for the tombola in the last 2 weeks in June.**

Donations of chocolates, sweets, biscuits, bottles of wine and beer will all be gladly received! There's no bric a brac stall this year, so please no donations of this kind. We're also collecting prizes for the grand draw, so if you have something you will kindly donate please get in touch, or speak to any of the committee members.

- **Just a note to advise that no dogs will be permitted on to the field. The field is covered by a Dog Exclusion Order and legally they're not allowed in that area, carnival day is no exception.**
- **It's not too late to book a stall, so if you're interested please get in touch for more information.**

Email: [wfcarnival@gmail.com](mailto:wfcarnival@gmail.com) Phone Jenny: 07852 211099

Facebook: West Felton Carnival





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**AURA**  
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(Continued from page 43)

cemetery). Tithe, meaning one tenth of income, would be collected from the people. In Felton, this would go to pay the clergy.

In the bell tower of St Michael's church hangs a board listing all the tithes. From the spelling probably written in the 18th Century.

There would also have been a mill. The people, in return for their land, worked the lord's land at harvest time, plus sessions of ploughing, mowing and reaping. They could be called upon at any time to do the lord's work.

They were also expected to give a chicken and a gift worth a penny to their lord's lady at Christmas time. This may sound harsh, but the lord was their protector. In a book written by R. Kenyon *"After the Middle Ages the horizon was pushed back a little for the common people and many times the Lord of the lands called for two hundred men from Felton to follow him to war in Wales, Scotland, France or the Civil War."*

We are fortunate that today we can still see the Mound and part of the moat in what was the farmyard of Manor Farm, situated close to St. Michael's church. It was from here that the village of Felton grew.

In the reign of King Stephen, about 1155, Felton was included in the manor of Ruyton XI Towns, the only place in England to have roman numerals in its name.



The eleven towns were **Ruyton, Coton, Shelvock, Shottaton, Wykey, Eardiston, Haughton, Rednal, Sutton, Tedsmore and Felton.**

William fitz Alan gave The Manor of Felton to John le Strange.

By 1240 John was dead and was succeeded by his co-heiresses. In 1301 the Earl of Arundel became Lord of Ruyton and over-lord of the Manor of Felton.

In the 1350s Hugh fitz Philip took a house and land in Felton from the Earl and produced a deed showing his right to take pasturage and turf in the lord's land in Felton. A year later William de Hampton produced a deed by which **Hugh fitz Philip of West Felton** had the same rights (it was here that the addition of "West" appears for the first time).

The Manor House passed to the Lords Craven, Lord of the Manor of Ruyton, and about 1777 the Manor House was bought from the lord by the Frank family and remained in the family until the early 1900s. In the churchyard close to the Manor House are the tombstones of the Frank family. ♦

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## WEST FELTON WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

**April Meeting** - Gillian opened the meeting by welcoming everybody especially two new members, Aly and Yvonne and one visitor, Irenie.

The 2024/5 Committee members were confirmed and an open invitation made to all members to attend any committee meeting to see if it appealed - no obligation to join, but new committee members always welcome.

**WF SCHOOL FARMERS' MARKET 5th July.** School grounds. Starts at 3:15pm. Volunteers sought to man the stall and bake cookies. Handmade craft items would be gratefully received too.

**CARNIVAL 14th July.** Members reminded to donate cakes and help on the day. **It's WI's turn to organise the CHRISTMAS FAIR.** Members agreed it was time to start thinking about the various activities. Knitters and sewers need to start making suitable items. For the Tombola, teddies and soft toys are requested.

### Forthcoming WFWI Activities/Events

Garden visit part of Shropshire Open Gardens. Thurs. 27th June arrive at 6.30pm £10 inc refreshments. Moat Hall, Annescroft, Shrewsbury.

**June outdoor meeting Thurs 13th June.** Cambrian Railway Centre Oswestry. Tour, talk and train ride. Refreshments on a buffet carriage. Meet there at 6:45.

**Oswestry Show Sat 3rd Aug 2024.** Schedule of classes available.

**The Resolution** going forward to the WI Federation Annual Meeting is 'Dental Health Matters' Members reminded to read the briefing notes about the pros and cons in the WI Life magazine and on the My WI website.

**Monthly competition points awards (April 2023 – March 2023)** vouchers were awarded. *Competitions:* 1st Jo L; 2nd Marian; 3rd Eileen, Gillian, Sally. *Flowers:* 1st Eileen; 2nd Avril; 3rd £5 Marian and Jo L was the overall winner of the cup.

**Guest Speakers** were John and Annie Moody of West Felton. John is a **Military Knight of Windsor.** They gave a fascinating talk about their lives at Windsor Castle where they have lived for the past 6 years, when not in Shropshire.

**The Military Knights** are retired military officers who provide support for the Order of the Garter and for the services at St George's chapel. Military Knights are expected to undertake numerous duties throughout the year, which include attending Mattins and being on parade every Sunday. Both John and Annie run VIP tours of the castle and Annie is an expert on Queen Mary's dolls house which is on display at the castle. John also runs the castle wine club. The Military Knights commissioned a full sized copy of a garden bench from Queen Mary's dolls house, a gift for the late Queen on the occasion of her Platinum Jubilee.

**May meeting** - Guest Speaker Paul Rushworth: "Around the world with a pack of cards and a rabbit." ♦

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## WEST FELTON VILLAGE - THE BEGINING

*By Ann Evans, at the turn of the century.*

West Felton lies approximately five miles south of Oswestry, and was once a thriving farming community.

With the coming of the new by-pass in the 1980s, the village has grown and is now home to many new people from various walks of life and occupations.

The village is divided in two by the A5. The original grew up around the church of St. Michael the Archangel. The main part of the village, the shop/post office, and public house, on the old A5, was once part of Twyford.

West Felton is mentioned in the Domesday Book. In the reign of Edward the Confessor, Seward was owner of the Manor of Felton, which contained half a hide of land and employed a plough with one team of oxen, but the area was mostly waste. It continued the same throughout William the Conqueror's reign. It eventually passed to Alan fitz Flaald and from him to his son William fitz Alan of Whittington Castle.

Of the ancient inhabitants of West Felton, little is known. Certainly the Anglo-Saxons were here, and from the close proximity of the Old Fort at Oswestry, possibly Iron Age people.

In the 1950s axe heads from the Stone Age, were found by a Mr Roberts from St Martins doing drainage work at Manor Farm. These can be seen in the Rowley Museum, Shrewsbury.

More recently three axe-heads from the Bronze Age, dated about three thousand years old, were found on farmland at Rednal. They were in remarkable condition and can now be seen at the museum in Oswestry library.

The Romans closely settled in the district and their habitations and roads can be traced throughout. There is believed to have been a Roman settlement at Twyford, also one at Sandford. These places would only have been moated farms or villas, some camps or military posts.

The mound by the Church was a typical settlement in Saxon times. The chief man of the village, the lord, would have had his manor house built there, surrounded by a moat. He would appoint a bailiff who in his absence would be responsible for looking after the people, collecting their taxes and keeping law and order. Each of the families would be given a strip of land, approximately 8 to 12 hectares, depending on the type of land. Here they would build a wooden hut, this would be surrounded by an earth bank and ditch, topped with a fence or hedge. Outside of this would be their pasture or cultivated land. Each household would have their own strip, and a large area of common land for use by all.

This community would have a church and a tithe barn. (A tithe barn in excellent repair can be found in the grounds of The Old Farm, opposite the new

*(Continued on page 45)*



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### Our biennial Farmer's Market is fast approaching.

Sycamore Class (aged 9 –11) take charge of organising and hosting this event. We visit Oswestry Artisan market; talk to stall holders, taste produce and take advice.

The children write letters and emails inviting a range of businesses and then send out the relevant information to those able to attend.



**West Felton Farmer's Market**  
**Friday 5th July 2024**  
**Starts @ 3:15pm**  
**on the school playground!**

We have a range of exciting stalls in attendance this year, from delicious sweet treats to organic farm food products—there is something for the whole family. Please join us to enjoy this fabulous community event, supporting our local children and businesses all in one go!

Here are just some of our confirmed stall holders for 2024:



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## Rector's Ramblings

*Rev Suzan Williams*

I wonder if you've planned your summer holiday yet? We're going to Cornwall with our two younger daughters in August and I've booked to take my mum and sister to my friend's caravan in Borth for a few days in June. Increasingly I'm more and more convinced that we need to plan things to look forward to across the year. Because in my experience if we don't plan, they don't happen. However, Easter weekend we had an impromptu trip to Talacre beach with our eldest daughter, son-in-law and four grandsons and it was such an enjoyable day. Sometimes those unexpected, unplanned things that happen are a blessing to.

So maybe it's about balancing those things we need to do and need to plan but leaving room for the unexpected.

In Ecclesiastes 3 it says 'There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens' and then in a later part of the chapter goes on to say 'What do workers gain from their toil?' <sup>10</sup> I have seen the burden God has laid on the human race. <sup>11</sup> He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the human heart; yet no one can fathom what God has done from be-

ginning to end. <sup>12</sup> I know that there is nothing better for people than to be happy and to do good while they live. <sup>13</sup> That each of them may eat and drink and find satisfaction in all their toil—this is the gift of God.'

Lately I've taken a fair few funerals of key people in the village who've lived in and been part of the West Felton community for the best part or the whole of their lives. And for each family saying goodbye to a key person, who has loved them, cared for them and supported them in ways that words cannot fully express. There is a legacy that lives on and an attitude often to make the most of life and enjoy the blessings we have. Whether that be our health, our family and the friends who we journey through all sorts of things with.

So my advice to you in this middle part of the year would be plan those meals with friends, breaks away to enjoy the beauty of nature around us and at the same time be prepared and open to embrace the unexpected and be blessed by it.

If God loved us enough to sacrifice his only Son then why would that not be in part to enable us and release to live life, enjoy it and be a blessing to those around us.

Every Blessing  
Suzan

## Annual property review 2024

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## ROUND AND ABOUT WEST FELTON MAGAZINE

*from the report to the Annual Parish meeting, April 2024*

**2023** - Another successful year for the magazine in which we celebrated the Village Hall centenary by publishing articles and photographs giving some idea of what it was like in West Felton down the years.

We are indebted to village historian, Ann Evans, for her great contribution, and to everyone else who contributed. The sometimes-quirky reports have been appreciated by many. We received requests for copies of photographs from family members delighted to see images of lost loved ones – and in one case, a fondly remembered car!

**Financially** the audited accounts show we scraped through again, maintaining our 'not for profit' status, but covering all our costs.

The printers did not increase their charge in November this year and we have not increased the advertising charges for 2024. However, the cost of printing did go up in March 2024 but only by a small amount.

We are on course to cover our costs in 2024 though the margins may be even tighter!

**Advertising** - Several cancellations this year, but all have been replaced.

We were lucky to get £100 donation from Cambrian Oswestry Rotary in November 2023, they appreciate the publicity given to their events, especially the Santa Sleigh run.

No 'staff' problems this year. Dot and Kathy Bliss continue to do their important job, hospital visits, hip operation etc. notwithstanding.

Kate and Alan taking a well-earned break, Derek and Maggie happily doing the driving around each month with Anthea continuing to cover the outlying hamlets.

Hilary, Carole (Gray) and Barbara (Jones) took on extra deliveries in the centre of the village, following Janet Knight's retirement after more than 25 years and Dorothy Barnes' more recently.

*(Continued on page 19)*



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**Cinema closes after failed community takeover.**  
Kinokulture cinema closed permanently at the end of April despite hopes it could continue under new management.

**Message from James Bond, Oswestry Film Society:  
OSWESTRY FILM SOCIETY NEW VENUE  
Help us keep cinema alive**

After our emotional final screening at Kinokulture, let's celebrate together our films at our new venue: **The Hermon Chapel Arts Centre.**

**Oswestry Film Society film night is now WEDNESDAYS.**

If a full-time cinema is to return to Oswestry, the company will want to see that the town CAN support a film venue.

**Upcoming Film and new info**

**Pride (15) - Wed June 5, 7.30pm.** Truly uplifting British comedy-drama based on the extraordinary true story of London-based gay and lesbian activists supporting a struggling Welsh pit village in the Miners' Strike. We are showing this to mark the 40th anniversary of the strike, and to preview Oswestry's forthcoming first Pride festival.

Tickets should be available on the door, but it would help if you book in advance via the Oswestry Film Society website as we find our feet at our new venue.

The Hermon Chapel is just round the corner from Kinokulture, in Chapel Street close to the entrance to the Horsemarket car park. Seating is currently unallocated, but we're working on that.

The Hermon is fully accessible, and has a licensed cafe-bar.

We're jointly aiming to screen extra films, if we see the demand is there.

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(Continued from page 17)

All other deliverers still in place. Thank you all.

**The Future** - The magazine engenders a lot of goodwill and there has never been a problem in recruiting volunteers – except for the position of editor/administrator!

**Still hoping for someone who would love to get involved, with a view to taking over, some time in the future.** *Colleen Hughes, March 2024*

**PS.** Since the above report, we have had a monthly charge imposed for our previously FREE web site [www.westfeltonmagazine.co.uk](http://www.westfeltonmagazine.co.uk)

We need to find another £36 in this financial year. Thankfully we have already had some really generous donations which will cover it.

Donations from readers are always most welcome.

**Many thanks to all who contribute to the production and delivery of our 'unique, FREE-to-your door every month' magazine.**

**I'm told by advertisers that West Felton magazine is so good for their business, they can cancel other advertising. Ed.**

	West Felton Magazine	2023
<b>Income</b>	Advertising	£4,290.00
	Donations	£195.00
	Bank Interest	£38.71
	<b>Total</b>	<b>£4,523.71</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>	Printing	-£4,068.00
	Expenses claimed	-£74.85
	Bank fees	-£61.60
	<b>Total</b>	<b>-£4,204.45</b>
	Income over Expenditure	£319.26
	<b>Petty cash c/f</b>	<b>£17.15</b>



## THE SHROPSHIRE ARCHÆOLOGICAL SOCIETY.

### ANNUAL EXCURSION.

The annual excursion of the members of the Shropshire Archæological Society took place on Tuesday, June 23. The weather was very agreeable, and the pleasures of the excursion were enjoyed by a considerable number of the members of the Society and their friends. Amongst those present were:—Mr W. B. Morris, Mr John Calcott, Mr L. Wilding, Mr William Phillips, Mr Edward Jones, Newport, Mr George Griffiths, Mr E. Hodges, Mr James Tasker, Mr J. P. White, Mr J. R. Humphreys, Mr W. W. Whitaker, Mr R. E. Davies, Mr G. S. Corser, the Rev Canon Lloyd, the Rev J. G. Swainson, the Rev Canon Allen, the Rev C. H. Drinkwater, the Rev W. A. Leighton, the Rev R. W. Gleadowe, Mr T. B. Barrett, Welshpool, the Rev R. K. Haslehurst, the Rev F. Paget Wilkinson, Lieutenant-Colonel Barnes, Mr J. Laing, Mr F. Goyne, secretary, the Rev D. Jones, Glynceiriog, and several ladies. Baschurch station was the rendezvous, the excursionists meeting there shortly after ten.

*(The tour covered various places before heading for West Felton. Ed.)*

and the party drove past Robin Hood's chair, the site of which is near Ruyton Towers, to West Felton, where they at once went to the Nursery, the charming residence of Mr John Dovaston. Two hours were very pleasantly spent at the Nursery, the visitors being allowed to roam about the delightful grounds, in which are to be seen trees representative of every country in the world. A graceful weeping yew attracted much attention; it is the only one of its kind in England, and it is named after one of the Dovaston family who planted it. It is peculiar for the fact that, being a male tree it has one female branch. In the court-

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yard of the Nursery the column of a sundial which came from Llwynymaen is preserved; the head of the column is square, and on one side is the date 1607 and the design I.H.S.; on another side the age of the world is recorded "A.M. 5569;" on the third side the double eagle of Prussia is displayed, and on the fourth the initials

"E L L I." The interior of the Nursery, with its exquisite library and its interesting antiquarian objects, was also thrown open to the visitors. Here there is preserved probably the only, or at any rate the chief piece of household furniture that Kynaston the Wild possessed; it is a three-legged stool with a back rest formed of a piece of board rudely nailed to the edge of the stool. On the seat the initials "H.K." and the date 1564 are engraved. In the grounds there is also to be seen an obelisk erected on a druidical mound in memory of the late Mr Councillor Dovaston. The genial host explained that in 1829 some repairs were done to the chancel of the church at West Felton, and in the progress of the work the body of a Miss Sarah Duckett was disturbed. The late Mr Dovaston was very much offended at the disturbance of the remains, and to avoid a similar experience in his own case he determined to erect a cromlech for the reception of his own remains, and around the cromlech he placed nine boulder stones in order to give the erection a druidical appearance. The cromlech was completed, and some time afterwards he dreamt that he was dead, and in that state he was seized with a desire to visit his groves at West Felton. When there he dreamt that he went to see the cromlech, and there he saw a monument erected with his name engraved on it, the date of his birth, the date of his death, and an epitaph—

Happy I lived, and peaceful died,  
Nature my light, and God my guide;  
Thankful 'mid ev'ry blessing given,  
For truth on earth has trust in Heaven.

The late Mr Dovaston always kept a slate and pencil by his bedside, and he got up and recorded his dream. For many years he believed he should be buried in his own grounds, and in every will he made until the last one



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he inserted a proviso that unless he was so buried his successor should forfeit £500 to the Salop Infirmary. When he made his last will he made Mr Williams of the firm of Longueville, Jones, and Williams his executor, and again he wanted the same clause inserted. Mr Williams persuaded Mr Dovaston to leave the matter to him as he was anxious to avoid any contention about the will. The

matter was left to Mr Williams with the result that Mr Dovaston was buried with his forefathers. When he died, he (the host) considered the story to be too good to be forgotten, and so he perpetuated it by the erection, on the cromlech, of a monument with Mr Dovaston's name, the date of his birth, the date of his death, and the epitaph already quoted. The inscription is "John Freeman Millward Dovaston, M.A., Born 30th December, 1782, Died 3rd August, 1854." At the Nursery the excursionists were most hospitably entertained at luncheon in a tent which was erected on the lawn. Here the company was joined by Mr and the Misses Dovaston, the Rev T. M. and the Hon Mrs Bulkeley Owen, Mr H. Graham Lloyd, the Rev Mr Moody, Mrs and Miss Kenyon of Pradoc, and others. After luncheon the Rev Canon Lloyd said he wished to express the gratitude of the company to Mr Dovaston for the splendid hospitality with which he had received them. (Cheers.)

On leaving the Nursery the party visited West Felton Church, in which a Norman arcade and a fourteenth century roof are preserved. In the churchyard there is an old dial, apparently much older than the date, 1760. A very perfect beacon-mound a few yards to the west of the Church was examined. On the way to Knockin St. Winifred's well at Woolston was visited. Here Mr Dovaston read the following extract from the Dovaston MSS.:—"Of Woolston I never heard anything worth troubling history except the following :—September 13th, 1651. The houses in Woolston of Edward Davies, Ermin Davies (widow), Wm. Footman, John Bailies, William Williams, and Daniel Jeffrey's barn, were all burnt with their corn and household stuff. The parish of West Felton contributed to their relief £20, and Wm. Jones of Sandford gave them



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## St Michael's Church, West Felton

**Easter 1936**

### Rev RGT Gilman and the church choir,

Rev Gilman was Rector from 1928-1956. He was very high church. In 1933 on July 9th he held a special service at St Chad's for peace and unity in Commemoration of the Oxford Movement (an Anglo-Catholic movement). Many of the services at St Chad's at that time were taken by Rev Owen Jacson of Tedsmore (died in 1935) or JW Lee.

**Rev Gilman followed Rev Frank Taylor and was  
succeeded by Rev KC Millington.**



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*(Continued from page 23)*

£5, a court-house being built in Woolston over a well made for a bath for the Joneses of Sandford family. When they left Sandford it became the rendezvous of the country, who from the middle of May to the end of Harvest, resorted from all parts thither, some at nights to bathe and dance and riot most of the nights at the ale-houses, of which there were during the summer not less than five. This ill custom lasted many years, till it was broke about the year 1755. Woolston is called in old deeds Wyston, Ouzleton; the first 'watery low town', and the other signifies the same, although some will have it that it takes its name from the water ouzle." Others who were more fanciful, Mr Dovaston continued, said that it was one of the resting places of St Winifred's body on its journey from Holywell to Shrewsbury. They knew that St Winifred was slain at Holywell by her lover, one of the Princes of Wales; he cut off her head and rolled it down the hill, and where it rested a foun-

tain of water rose up ... The tradition made Holywell famous and Margaret, wife of Henry VII built a beautiful well at Holywell which was to be seen now. At the time of St Winifred's death, the monks of the Abbey of Shrewsbury were not in such good a position as other abbeyes, because they had no miracles or traditions and they begged that St Winifred's body be interred at the Abbey at Shrewsbury. That was done, and those who were fanciful said that on the evening before it reached Shrewsbury, St Winifred's body rested at Woolston. In his younger days he remembered people coming to the well at Woolston for the cure of sore eyes and the old woman who lived at the house used to point out a particular place from which patients could take the water. He believed what he had read out was the true account, but those who were fanciful could take their choice. From Woolston the party resumed the drive to Knockin ...

**Since generations of Dovaston men, their sons and nephews were all called John, it is hard to keep in mind who is who.**

**The man in The Nursery in 1885, and the host at the meeting reported above, was the nephew of JFM Dovaston, (Dec 1782 – Aug 1854) poet and naturalist, the man who hoped to be buried in the Nursery garden.**

*This is what Ann Evans tells us:*

*"John FM and a group of famous literary friends always gathered at the Nursery to celebrate William Shakespeare's birthday. At one of these gatherings in 1810, 'An Irregular Ode on Shakespeare Birth' was written. The following text was found in a book of poems by John FM Dovaston. The last part was hand-written by John Dovaston, JFM's nephew:*

*'Written and recited on the occasion of a few literary friends planting a Walnut Tree (having a wine bottle buried under the root, with an appropriate inscription cut thereon with a diamond) in the author's grounds; on that day in 1810 and intending to celebrate it annually. '*

*'(This was a walnut tree, it was decayed at the root and lately grew at an angle of 45 deg. I removed it and planted another in its place on this my 24th Birthday 12 Sept. 1874. The "wine bottle" under the root was not disturbed.)'*

*Is it still there, Ann wonders?"*

*(Continued on page 27)*





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## Up the Garden Path with Topiarius

### Grass or no grass

With all the interest in wild flower meadows, movements like No Mow May and the reduction in the size of gardens, it would not be unreasonable to wonder whether the lawn is becoming extinct. Ben Dark argued that "reports of the lawn's death are surely exaggerated because we need somewhere for a blanket and a Sunday paper." Many people would say "What is the matter with the patio?"

I have always maintained that it is best to have no lawn in a very small garden simply because grass does not rank high enough in the interest stakes when space is at a premium. A small paved area will suffice for recreation. With a larger garden there is no doubt that a lawn is a very pleasant if not essential feature to have. Having said that, a good lawn is not low labour and using a mower can get very hard as you grow older. For that reason, we cut down the size of our lawn area several years ago, and this year cut it back some more.

The alternatives are having longer grass that only needs one or two cuts per year or using artificial turf. We have areas of long grass in wilder parts of the garden but I am not convinced of that approach in a small garden. Despite in the past being very involved with the specification of artificial turf for sports installations, it simply does not seem right to me in a garden. In any case, the high quality materials are prohibitively expensive, not to mention the negative environmental factors.

Going to what is happening in June, we start with the lawn needing mowing, as it will for the rest of the Summer. It may also need weeding and possibly watering.

The landmark event is at the beginning of the month when, subject to unusual late frost, the bedding is planted out. There will also be leeks, runner beans, sweet corn, sprouts and sprouting broccoli plants to go out. Seed sowing includes main-crop carrots, beetroot, succession of lettuce and radish and, late in the month, chard. With all those young plants and emerging seedlings, the last thing you need is a drought, but we must expect watering to be needed on occasions.

In the glasshouse, if you have one, there will be tomato and cucumber plants and also possibly peppers to plant in the border or in growbags/large pots. I have been growing tomatoes in the same space for many years with no problems but I have found it better to put cucumbers into large pots rather than the border.

We use Growmore as a convenient general fertiliser and during June a second application will be made on flower beds and on some vegetables. Later potatoes will need earthing up and there will be the delight of having the first earlies for dinner. Late in the month I have to put fleece tunnels over leeks and carrots. ♦



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(Continued from page 25)

As we read in the account above, JFM Dovaston was very upset with St. Michael's and vowed that he would not be buried at the church.

On his death in 1854 he was in fact buried in West Felton church at the request of his executor. His successor erected the obelisk on the cromlech with the inscription "John Freeman Dovaston born 30 December 1782, died 8 August 1854" and had the lines he composed carved on it. The obelisk was preserved in the garden of one of the new houses that stand there today.

John Dovaston, the nephew who succeeded him, very much appreciated his predecessors' library. Like them, he also was very interested in antiquities.

In 1883 he was made a JP for Shropshire, he died in 1900. He was succeeded by his son Freeman Dovaston, who died unmarried in 1904. He was succeeded by his brother Daniel who was a solicitor.

Daniel Dovaston died in 1938, his son Daniel succeeded to the estate, he had two children Brian and Dorothy.

In 1966, disillusioned with farming in Britain, the family decided to sell The Nursery estate and emigrate to the Bay of Plenty on North Island New Zealand, Daniel his son, Brian, daughter-in-law Christine and grandchildren, Phillip, Andrew, Daniel and Sara, set sail on the S.S. Northern Star where they established a very successful business in agriculture. A fourth son David was born in New Zealand in 1970.

"Daniel Dovaston senior died in January 1975. Christine died 28th March 2001 aged 64 years, "she was a lovely and genuine lady" Ann recalls.

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# Traditional v Secular

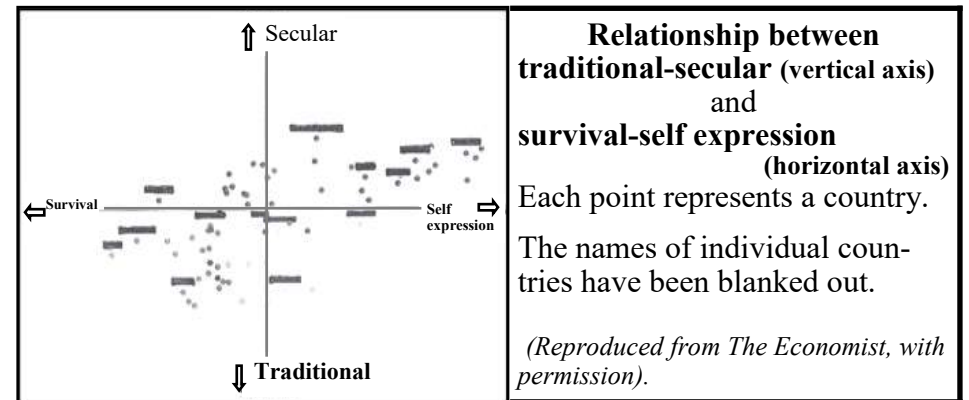
Michael Davie

April 7th 2024 will be remembered with sadness amongst the older people of West Felton. It was the day on which the chapel had its last service. About 50 people attended drawn from Methodist, Anglican and Catholic denominations of the Christian faith. The service was followed by a wonderful feast in good Methodist tradition. People remembered the times in their youth when they attended events such as Sunday school there. Passing the chapel as I often do, I feel a certain sense of wretchedness that those people whose names are engraved on the stones in the wall, and indeed many others unnamed, have been let down. In her sermon the Minister recalled that attendance at chapel had been falling until it was no longer viable. Most churches have had that problem. I looked up attendance at services in St Chad's over the past 90 years. In 1934, 52 people attended communion at Easter, in 1964 35 and in 2024 17. On ordinary Sundays attendance at communion has been steady ranging between 7-10 over the same time.

The Minister's words about attendance at church caused me to ponder the reasons for the decline. In doing so I came across an article drawing

attention to the work of Ron Inglehart. Forty years ago Inglehart, a Professor of Political Science at the University of Michigan, started a famous investigation which entailed 130,000 people in 60 different countries being interviewed. Every five years the process was repeated – not with the same people necessarily. Inglehart's hypothesis was that as the world became richer, so people's values would come together. He theorised that insecurity determines how people think. In a world of insecurity the family and religious organisations are the main source of solace. As people become richer and better educated they have more time to think for themselves. He developed two rating axes. On one, vertical, axis lies your position according to such questions as how you rate obedience in children, belief in God, whether you trust people, or whether you would sign a petition. This with tradition at lower end and secular at the upper end, he called the "tradition-secular" axis. On the other, horizontal, axis the extremes lay between survival on the left and self expression on the right. As survival became more important so people stuck together as nations, were fearful of strangers and clustered round institutions. With greater confidence, self expression with independence of thought started to flower.

(Continued on page 29)



(Continued from page 28)

Inglehart then related the "tradition-secular" axis, with the "survival-self expression" axis... Remarkably, the relationship (correlation) revealed that as self expression increased, so people discarded traditional values and became more secular. Correlations by themselves do not show cause and effect, but there is a prima facie reason to think that the two might be associated. Although peace has reigned for the last 80 years – or at least major wars have not been fought – clergy have commented in the past how wartime, with the accompanying anxiety about security, caused people to attend church. The records for St Chad suggest a modest increase in attendance in 1940 over the late 1930's.

Over the forty years of Inglehart's study, wealth has increased. Only 8% of the world lives in poverty compared with 40% forty years ago. As wealth in a country increases, and is shared with the population, so more

resources flow into education. With education comes learning and discussion. Over the years the Christian church has supported education and the relief of poverty. Such beneficence is worthy, but given the work of Inglehart, it raises the startling possibility that the church is supporting its own demise. As wealth and education increase, so traditions decline and included with those traditions is religious faith.

Such a relationship is already recognised by some cultures in which religion is associated with restriction of freedom, education and clothing, especially in women. People are thus encouraged to maintain tradition and in so doing to suppress self expression – at least publicly. Christianity, having had similar traits, has progressed to encourage education, thus moving towards self expression and independent thought. Along with these attributes comes questioning of religion, and of faith. ♦