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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
Methodist Chapel: Revd Julia Skitt Methodist Hall (Bookings)	07810 360778 01691 611733
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 Oswestry Police Station Safer Neighbourhood team—email: oswestryc.snt@westmercia.pnn.police.uk	101 0300 333 3000
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 Church Warden: Dr Michael Davie	01691 674948 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 30

OCTOBER 2023

ROUND and ABOUT WEST FELTON

www.westfeltonmagazine.co.uk



Birthday Gifts?

Christmas?

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**WEST FELTON
ARTS & CRAFTS FAIR
14th OCTOBER 11-3PM
West Felton Village Hall**

The Village Hall Committee says,

“Following last year's successful West Felton craft fair we are pleased to be running this again. There will be 25 tables selling a wide range of crafts and goods.

Come along, and you may just find those Christmas presents you are looking for.”

WHAT'S ON

Parish Council	Second Tues of the month, 7:30 Methodist Hall
West Felton Walkers	10am Mondays, Punch Bowl EXCEPT... see page
Pilates Class	Tuesday mornings: Two sessions: 9-10am & 10:15-11:15am Need to book on line GYMATCH.
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 Tuesdays 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, Punch Bowl first Monday of the month except Bank holidays then second Monday.
Bumps, Babies And Tots	8:45am - 10:45 Fortnightly Termtime Fridays at Methodist Schoolroom Email rev.julia@mail.com

5 Oct	10-12 noon COFFEE MORNING Methodist Schoolroom	
14 Oct	11-3pm VILLAGE HALL CRAFT FAIR	
10 Nov	POPPY CONCERT, Village Hall	
12 Nov	REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY Service St Michael's Church	
12 Nov	10:30am REMEMBRANCE Service, Pradoc Church	
25 Nov	CHRISTMAS COFFEE MORNING, Village Hall	
1 December	CHRISTMAS TREE SWITCH-ON, Alma Close	
6 Dec	7pm CHRISTMAS BINGO, Village Hall	

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The Post Office is located in the entrance lobby of the village hall. Due to a restructure by the Post Office head office, the Outreach Post Office hours for West Felton have been changed. **The new opening time from the 5th of June is Wednesdays only 9:30am till 11am.** Please keep supporting it.



METHODIST HALL

WF Methodist Chapel School Room (opp. playing field)
is available for hire.

Suitable for Meetings, Children's Parties, etc. £5.50 per hour

To book, contact Dianne Rowley 01691 611733

Round and About West Felton

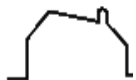
Articles/advertisement amendments for inclusion in next issue
to Editor by email (preferred) or phone

Last day for submission of copy: Deadline for content
changes 10th October 2023

Editor: Colleen Hughes

Advertising Rates
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Tel 01691 610300	Quarter page	£50
colleenhughes748@btinternet.com	Half page	£75
	Full page	£125



WEST FELTON STORES

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Sunday: 7:30am - 7pm

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Parish of Whittington and West Felton with Haughton

Rector: Reverend Suzan Williams,
The Rectory, Castle Street, Whittington,
01691 674 948

Services in West Felton Parish:

St Michael's, West Felton : 9:30am each Sunday

**St Chad's, Haughton : 9:30am on the second
Sunday of each month**

Baptisms, Weddings and Funerals:

Please arrange with The Rector:

Rev'd Suzan Williams **01691 674 948**
or the Churchwarden:

Dr Michael Davie **0691 610 612**

Pradoe Church

Services - at 10:30am unless otherwise stated

All Welcome. Tea, Coffee & Biscuits served after service

Sunday 1 October Harvest Festival

Sunday 5 November Family Service

Sunday 12 November REMEMBRANCE SERVICE

Sunday 3 December Family Service

Wednesday 13 Dec 7pm Carol Service

Monday 25 December 10am CHRISTMAS DAY SERVICE

Christenings, Weddings and Funerals:

Please contact **07968 257452**

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WEST FELTON PARISH COUNCIL

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 David WALKER 01691 897 117 (Rep Helicopter Noise Group)

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

Cllr Carole COLES 01691 610 225

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

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

Cllr John HOUGHTON 01691 610 834

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

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8th September

3rd November

22nd September

17th November

6th October

1st December

20th October

15th December

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£1.50 per session

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Saturday 11th Nov	7.45pm	Llanymynech Village Hall SY22 6EE
Sunday 12th November	2.30pm	Llanymynech Village Hall SY22 6EE

Tickets will be available to book online at ticketsource.co.uk/ladstheatre, by phone on 01691 830558, or at our usual local outlets.
Find us on Facebook and the internet by searching 'LADS theatre' or click on the QR code.



Autumn Fires Robert Louis Stevenson

In the other gardens
And all up in the vale,
From the autumn bonfires
See the smoke trail!

Pleasant summer over,
And all the summer flowers,
The red fire blazes,
The grey smoke towers.

Sing a song of seasons!
Something bright in all!
Flowers in the summer,
Fires in the fall!

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The Royal British Legion West Felton Branch

In 1922 ex-Servicemen of West Felton formed a sub-branch of what was then called the "British Legion" under the jurisdiction of Oswestry. The main branch at Oswestry supplied the main officials. From 1946 onwards many ex-Servicemen and women joined "the Legion" at West Felton.

By 1948 West Felton membership was between 60 and 70. A committee was formed and it was decided that they would form a separate West Felton branch. This was achieved in March 1948.

THE FIRST OFFICERS OF THE NEW WEST FELTON BRANCH WERE:

President: Brig. D Richards, Twyford, Chairman: Richard (Dick) Hamlett, Haughton, Treasurer: Thomas (Tom) Davies, Rednal, Secretary: Glyn Jones, Queens Head.

Amongst those who joined after WWII was Colonel John Kenyon of Pradoc who served in the Burma campaign as a young subaltern with the Seventh Indian Division which stood fast at Arakan and helped gain the first land victory over the Japanese. The troops fought magnificently, led by two of the best leaders every produced by Britain: The Earl Mountbatten of Burma and Lieutenant-General Sir William Slim. By June 1944 the Fourteenth Army had been involved in bitter fighting for three months, with Imphal under siege and a battle raging at Kohima. These twin battles, for vital junctions on the map of Burma, marked the turning point in the Far East war.

As a mountain gunner the young subaltern, John Kenyon, shared the daily slog of a regiment which carried its guns and other supplies over the hills by mule. It has been said the Burma campaign was "A war of mules, porters and air supplies – often not even jeeps."

John Kenyon won the Military Cross during his war in Burma and his Indian radio assistant received the Military Medal. For 24 hours the two played their part in directing allied guns to fire on strongly fortified Japanese bunkers.

Col. Kenyon was proud of his association with loyal Indian troops on active service. He is particularly proud of their stand in the Arakan with its famous victory, followed by the long trek to Kohima carrying the guns over almost impossible terrain.

**When you go home
tell them of us and say,
for your tomorrows
we gave our today.**

The Kohima Epitaph is engraved on the Memorial of the 2nd British Division in the cemetery of Kohima (North-East India) and is recited at Remembrance events.

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WEST FELTON MILLENNIUM OAKS

An avenue of oak trees was planted along the Holyhead Road (old A5) in West Felton in February 2000 to mark the new millennium.

Members of West Felton Royal British Legion planted oak saplings to make an avenue of oaks running along the main road out of the village towards Shrewsbury.

The Branch raised money for the trees and received a contribution from the parish council plus a grant from the Countryside Commission.

Local landowners, the late Col John Kenyon and the late Mr John Suckley allowed gaps in their hedgerows for the trees.

Col Kenyon, on behalf of West Felton British Legion said oaks were chosen because they typified the English countryside. "Hopefully, in 50 years or so they will look splendid", he said.



The planting party comprised branch President, Jim Pearce, Col. Kenon, Jack Owen, Keith Diggins and John Thompson. 23 years on, we think you will agree they already look splendid, now enhanced by the Carnival committee's daffodils.

From the obituary of **Colonel John Frederick Kenyon MC OBE** as it appeared in the Daily Telegraph on 1 December 2006.

"Colonel John Kenyon, who has died aged 84, won an immediate MC as a mountain gunner in the Burma campaign during the critical battle of Kohima; some 35 years later he waged a successful campaign to restore his county council's name to Shropshire instead of the government-approved Salop. ..."

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Rector's Ramblings

Rev Suzan Williams

Preparing for harvest, something we do every year and until we moved as a family to Shropshire in the autumn of 2003 I didn't really understand what an important season Harvest is.

Having grown up in South East London we were a bit disconnected and removed from the thousands of acres of farmland being cared for and cultivated to produce tons upon tons of food every year and on which thousands upon thousands of cattle, sheep, pigs and poultry are again cared for and raised to produce the millions of tons of grain, produce and meat which is transported partly into our supermarkets and shops locally but also shipped to far flung places to be enjoyed!

Growing up I didn't understand that some of the sayings banded about like 'Make hay while the sun shines' literally mean just that and after a funeral recently a family member apologised for not having been able to make the meeting before for exactly that reason. The weather was good and so he was out harvesting.

In recent years harvest time practically has shifted and by the time we celebrate with our Harvest services much of the harvesting has already taken place but it doesn't mean our farming community isn't still busy travelling up and down the roads between their fields and live stock. So let's take a moment to thank the farmers, the vets and all those who tend the land and care for the animals. The lorry drivers who then deliver the food and the staff in the shops and supermarkets who serve us as we shop. Let's remember that manners don't cost anything as my mum used to say and saying thank you is very important!

Every year we sing well known Harvest hymns like We plough the fields and scatter and Now thank we all our God. Let's be grateful for all we are blessed with as we come together to celebrate this Harvest time.

Every Blessing, Suzan



Annual property review 2023

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Kind regards,
Daniel & team



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West Felton Methodist Chapel and Schoolroom - opposite the playing field



Minister: Rev Julia Skitt 07810 360778
Secretary Christine Curtis 01691 610665

SERVICES 2023

OCTOBER

1st Rev. Graham Horsley – Holy Communion
8th Ref. Jon Chesworth
15th Church Anniversary at 2.30 p.m. with Ruth Shoreman
22nd At Oswestry at 10.45 a.m.
29th Mr. Geoff Nankivell

NOVEMBER

5th Songs of Praise
12th Remembrance Day – service at St. Michael's
19th At Oswestry at 10.45 a.m.
26th Songs of Praise

Coffee Morning

Thurs 5th October 10am to noon

Bacon Baps, Produce, Books, Bring & Buy, Raffle.

All the usual Methodist hospitality. **Everyone welcome.**



WEST FELTON METHODIST CHAPEL

It is with great sadness we have made the difficult decision to close our chapel. We have just 8 members and we are finding it increasingly difficult to finance and run the chapel and the building in general. Obviously there is now a process to be followed but the decision has been made and we expect to close the chapel in the spring – probably just after Easter. After closure there will be formalities to go through and the building will most likely be put up for sale some time in July 2024.

**So until March our services, coffee mornings and
fish 'n' chip suppers will continue
and we hope to see many of you during the coming months.**

And of course we will keep you updated as time passes.

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Up the Garden Path with Topiarius

Time for changes

The last words of Helen Dillon's Garden Book is "Change is everything". Change when you want it can be exciting but change when it is forced upon you can be a damned nuisance. However, many of us will sure to be making changes this winter following the critical review of our gardens, and probably it will be for a mixture of reasons. The basic fact is that gardens are not static but are living things that continually develop. Plants get too big, others decline due to old age (don't we all), there are new varieties to tempt us, while fashions and our taste are subject to change. Certainly, I have my list ready and am excited by some of the plans.

A pleasurable October job is ordering seeds which will all be done via the internet. I can vaguely remember when ordering was done by post and then later by telephone or possibly fax until the internet became universal. A change that maybe was not exciting but certainly very welcome, if only for the speed. We will try and be a bit more adventurous than usual and try some new varieties. One change for us will be that we made a midsummer resolution to cut down on bedding. Hence, we will be ordering more perennial seed than usual and also ordering plants. The reason for this change is simply that it is hoped to reduce labour in future years, but we are also excited

by how the new plans will look.

There will be no change in that October is when the glasshouse heating gets turned on and the glass cleaned. The outdoor grapes will be picked and our miniscule vintage got under way. Most apples are picked this month and the last of such things as squash harvested. Then it is clearing parts of the vegetable garden and, a sure sign of impending winter, a start made on pruning of trees and shrubs. Where power assistance is desirable, we now use cordless tools as they have developed to be plenty powerful enough in recent years.

Another notable thing from Helen Dillon's books is that I was taken aback by the amount of work she put into her garden and the amount of time she lavished on her plants. For example, using vast quantities of bone meal and compost when planting, not to mention the size of the planting hole. Then there is the whole watering can per pot in summer—there would be no time to sleep. The time spent is far more than I can afford and I can't believe that many professional gardens get such treatment nowadays. Most of us have so many things calling on our time and that spent in the garden has to be rationed. She actually says that the detail makes the difference between a garden looking fine and looking terrific. I will have to remain just aspiring to be fine. ♦



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STEP INTO THE SPOTLIGHT:

Face2Face Performance Academy Invites New Students to Join!



Face2Face Performance Academy, a renowned performing arts training provider in Oswestry, dedicated to nurturing artistic talent and fostering creativity, is thrilled to announce that it will be opening its doors to new students this September. Aspiring performers are invited to join the academy's vibrant community and get involved in the many opportunities available. You can join any time.

Now in its seventh year, Face2Face has become known for its ability to unlock the full potential of its pupils, with many pupils gaining places at prestigious Drama schools and gaining professional performance opportunities.

Creative Director of The Holroyd Community Theatre, Michael Jenkins said:

“We are thrilled to be opening our doors, and welcoming more pupils into the academy. In January, we will have been open for seven years and I think it is a testament to the quality of our coaching and the unique opportunities that we still have some of our original members in the academy.

“What sets us apart from other academies, is that our faculty is made up of industry professionals, all of whom have experienced the performing arts field at the highest levels. This gives our pupils a true insight into the industry and raises their aspirations. In addition to the quality coaching, we also provide outstanding opportunities, which are truly memorable.”

The academy's weekly sessions are designed to cater to various artistic interests. From acting and dancing to singing and more recently film-making, the academy provides a diverse curriculum that emphasises skill development, personal growth, and collaborative learning.

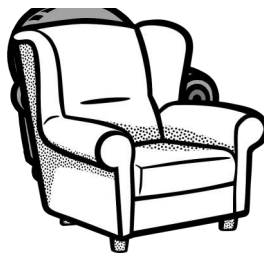
Speaking about the academy, longstanding pupil, Lecsi (14) said: “I would recommend Face2Face to anyone interested in performing arts. Before starting I attended other academies, it was clear from my first term at Face2Face that there is nowhere quite like it. Through the academy, we have access to the best opportunities, from meeting and working with West End stars, to performing live on stage in plays and musicals, and most recently, filming in really cool locations.

“If you're nervous about joining, don't be!

Everyone is so friendly and welcoming, you won't want to leave.”

The Autumn term will begin in September, but you can join later. If you are aged 9 to 18, and have an interest in performing arts, find out more about how to sign up by visiting www.theholroyd.com/face2face ♦

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from Eileen & the CARNIVAL COMMITTEE

As this goes to press we haven't had a meeting so there is not much news for you.

The only thing we have decided is that the Christmas Tree switch on will be Friday, 1st December - so put that in your diaries.

This will be a great start to all the Christmas festivities for young and old alike.

And I'm sure we will be selling baubles for a good cause again.

More news next month.



Charity plant sale in aid of cancer research
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(Continued from page 37)

the nuclear umbrella for peace (mostly) since the Second World war would probably be going a bit too far for them. They also made the mistake of writing it in Latin, causing the Senior Tutor to remark that the grace was not so much an insult to the Lord as to the Latin language.

Saying Grace, giving thanks or gratitude, is even more remarkably associated with well being. A study of health professionals showed that those who made a note of being thankful were less prone to stress and depression. Another series of studies begun 20 years ago has shown that gratitude is important in developing and maintaining social engagement and development whilst motivating people to behave in ways that benefit others. Giving thanks is associated with other positive traits such as happiness and forgiveness.

The undergraduates of Newnham, in establishing a Grace, have identified the value of a ritual that has eluded the lawyers of Lincoln's Inn. A form of grace is recognised by most of the world's religions. Some of these Graces are quite long but commonly invoke some form of deity. There is evidently a need for a brief form of Grace that can satisfy all religions. The Latin Grace 'Benedictus benedicat – let he who is blessed bless (this food)' does at least not specify who is blessed. Atheist graces are rather bland, emphasizing the communal aspect but without giving thanks. The ancients may inadvertently have got it right leaving their successors to struggle with finding a universal formula including bonding and thanks. ♦

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West Felton Village Hall Committee

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GRACE BEFORE MEALS

Michael Davie

Before we sat down to our Harvest Supper, a Grace was said. Many authors confirm that when a community or family eats and drinks together, group identities are nourished. From the earliest times food and drink were suited to playing a rôle in rituals expressing cultural values and social relationships including any ancestors or gods who might have shaped the world. A hundred years ago saying of Grace before meals was commonplace, but it is now rarely said outside of a religious community, or colleges, particularly when they had previously been a religious foundation. The custom of saying grace varies from country to country. A study in America suggested that almost 50% of Americans say grace before meals at least once a week. Recently the saying of Grace before meals at Lincoln's Inn (a legal institution) was discontinued. The Treasurer felt that it did not provide a setting where all felt equal

The word Grace is derived from Latin meaning 'thanks'. Although many Graces used in this country have a Christian background, references to the Lord stating that God should be blessed for food appear in the book of Deuteronomy about 1400 years before Christ. Jesus himself gave thanks before the Last Supper. Giving thanks before a meal to a deity is not confined to Christianity: most other religions have some

form of blessing before eating and give thanks to a superior being.

Atheists of course have a problem with grace because they do not believe in a superior being. Advice given to atheists advocates that it is polite to take part in the grace but atheists should not cross themselves. A few seconds of quiet before a meal is not only a ritual, but gives people time to think and has been said to re-inforce a shared sense of purpose and identity. Since the earliest times eating together has been recognised as a force for social cohesion.

The saying of grace before a meal became a sensitive subject to the undergraduates of Newnham College, Cambridge some years ago. Newnham was founded as a women's college and was anything but a religious institution. (Up until 1948 women could not be awarded degrees by the University: female undergraduates were awarded a titular BA, unfortunately abbreviated to BA tit). The Undergraduates at Newnham felt that the saying of a Christian grace before a meal was meaningless to those who were not of that faith, yet they recognised the value of having a grace as a means of creating an institutional bond and creating a common purpose that looks beyond the 'self'. The undergraduates wrote a new offering of thanks for food, companionship, and peace. The problem they had was to whom they were giving thanks: farmers for food perhaps, companionship –each other possibly, but thanking

(Continued on page 39)

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Lest we forget . . . Remembrancetide is a

fortnight from the end of October to Remembrance Sunday,
and includes the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal.

Wearing a poppy is a show of support for the service and sacrifice
of our Armed Forces, veterans and their families.

- It represents all those who lost their lives on active service, from the beginning of the First World War right up to the present day.
- It also honours the contribution of civilian services and the uniformed services who contribute to national peace and security, and it acknowledges innocent civilians who have lost their lives in conflict and acts of terrorism.

The poppy has been a symbol of Remembrance for over 100 years. It became a symbol of Remembrance and hope for a peaceful future in the aftermath of the First World War. Since 1921 Poppy collectors have been at the heart of the Poppy Appeal. And this year they will be back in local communities across the UK to collect donations that help RBL continue it's vital work.

There is no 'correct' way to wear a poppy. Wearing a poppy is a personal choice reflecting individual and personal memories and hopes for peace. It's a matter of personal choice whether and when someone chooses to wear a poppy and how they choose to wear it. From the new plastic-free paper poppies to pins, bag charms and pet poppies, the best way to wear a poppy is simply with pride.

The poppy is red because that's the natural colour of the poppy flower. During the First World War previously beautiful countryside was blasted, bombed and fought over, again and again. The landscape swiftly turned to fields of mud where little or nothing could grow. But out of this devastation the delicate but resilient bright red Flanders poppies grew and flourished in their thousands.

The red poppy directly supports the Armed Forces community. The red poppy is worn as a show of support for the Armed Forces communities across the UK, Allied Forces and the Commonwealth. Donations from the sale of red poppies go directly towards helping the Armed Forces community.

Money raised during the Poppy Appeal helps support the Armed Forces community in lots of different ways, including providing financial advice to veterans who struggle to adapt to civilian life and funding recovery services like the Battle Back Centre, the first port of call for wounded, injured and sick service men and women as they start their Individual recovery programs.

West Felton has long held a fine reputation for donating to the Poppy Appeal. Door to door collections can still be expected as well as the usual red Poppy collection boxes in shops and public houses. Times are hard now, so it must be even harder for injured service people and their families. Let us remember them. ♦



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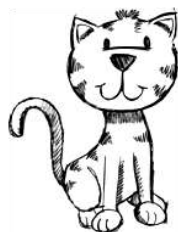
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2023 marks a significant anniversary for Healthwatch, it is 10 years since the network was set up across England. At the beginning of 2023 Healthwatch Shropshire was awarded the contract to continue to act as the health and social care champion in the county for another 3-5 years.

They have just published their annual report detailing how they have championed the voices of the thousands of Shropshire patients and service users they have heard from over the last year. Including

Raising the struggles people face when seeking urgent help and calling for an ambulance

Bringing experiences of Psychological Therapies to life to help the NHS improve services

Highlighting the communication needs of people with disabilities and cognitive impairment

Vanessa Barratt, Chair of Healthwatch Shropshire, said, "It is really important that we hear from all communities in Shropshire. Over the past year we have worked hard to make sure we hear from everyone within our local area including the people we hear from less frequently, to gather their feedback and make sure their voice is heard and services meet their needs."

Sir Neil McKay, Chair of Shropshire and Telford and Wrekin Integrated Care Board, said, "Healthwatch plays a vital role in connecting the Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin Integrated Care Board with the communities we serve. Healthwatch Shropshire's excellent Annual Report describes the breadth of work they do to examine health service issues which concern people. The Report is a credit to them. We greatly appreciate their work and look forward to continuing our strong relationship with them."

The full report is available here: <https://www.healthwatchshropshire.co.uk/report/2023-07-13/together-were-making-health-and-social-care-better-healthwatch-shropshire-annual>

Healthwatch Shropshire is the independent health and social care champion in Shropshire. It gathers the views and experiences of patients, service users, carers, and the general public about services including hospitals, GPs, mental health services, community health services, pharmacists, opticians, residential care and children's services. It also has statutory powers that it can use to influence service provision by encouraging improvements. ♦

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WEST FELTON WOMEN'S INSTITUTE



Whilst there was no regular monthly meeting in August there was no lack of fellowship or entertainment

OSWESTRY SHOW 2023

Congratulations to all members who entered the competitions. West Felton WI had several winning entries in the individual classes: Brownies - 1st Jo Lawson, 2nd Julie Holmes. Dundee Cake - 2nd Gillian Sturgess. Cordial - 1st Anna Stockbridge, 2nd Jo Lawson. Greetings Card - 2nd Sally Wheeler.

Also congratulations to Yvette Openshaw and her husband Mark for the many rosettes they won in the sheep classes.

On a breezy Saturday morning later in August, members and friends headed to the Midlands on a day out. The first stop was The Forge Mill Needle Museum where they learned the fascinating story of needle making in Victorian times.

<https://www.forgemill.org.uk/web/>

On the same site were the ruins of Bordesley Abbey – which have been extensively excavated; the visitors centre told the abbey's story. The tour guides were excellent, very knowledgeable. A lovely buffet lunch in the visitors centre followed, before heading to the Birmingham Botanical Gardens.

Birmingham Botanical Gardens offer something for everyone. Four Victorian Glasshouses as well as exciting outdoor gardens including two Alpine Gardens, the Japanese Garden showcasing the National Bonsai Collection, a Pinetum, the Adventure Playground, and a rolling lawn overlooking the bandstand and Aviaries. The butterfly house was a firm favourite. All in all a great day out – and the sun came out in the afternoon too. www.birminghambotanicalgardens.org.uk

Then it was all back to 'work' for a very busy September.

Thursday 14th September saw the West Felton WI Craft and Produce Show followed by the monthly meeting, featuring guest speaker Victoria Graham who was a Lieutenant Commander in Queens Alexandra's Royal Naval Nursing Service.

On Wednesday 27th September West Felton hosted the **Oswestry North Group of WIs** group social evening.

More about these events next month.

The October meeting is on Thursday 12th, featuring guest speaker Caroline Hickman - Laughter Yoga. ♦

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The original hall was rather less than half the size of the present building, financed by a legacy left by Rector W G Haslehurst, and built on land given by the Congreave family. The Haslehurst Memorial Institute was opened on 12th October 1908, and used for various parochial purposes, chiefly for the Men's Club though



in the 1920s the Girl Guides also held their meetings there, with Miss Langford in charge. Later on, the Institute building was enlarged. Originally there was no drainage system. For a number of years the building was leased to the Shropshire Education Authority, for the use as a school canteen. The Educa-

tion Authority installed cookers and washing facilities along with a septic tank in the adjoining field as a temporary drainage system. The 'Canteen' and the ladies who dished up school dinners to generations of West Felton children are held in fond memory by many still resident in the village. ♦



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the towns, leaving space for new and varied types of resident. It was the culmination of a long process as transport links improved - starting with the canal, then the railway, and later the A5 bypass, which has changed the entire nature of village life. ♦

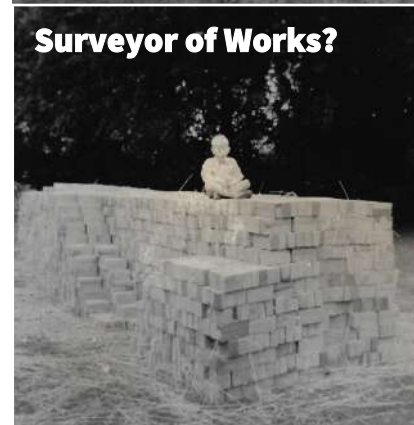


**The 1963
Rectory**

*with gratitude to
Mr Ned Millington
for sharing his
memories - so
many West Felton
people have never
even seen either of
the Rectories.*



Surveyor of Works?



(Continued from page 29)

Behind the house was the main garden, separated by a tall hedge from the kitchen garden with its orchard, a heated greenhouse, a cobbled courtyard with stable-block for three carriages and six horses, harness room, workshop, stores, and groom's cottage. Amongst other relics of the past we found a horse's leather boot, one of a set the horse would have worn to protect the lawn during mowing, and many other Victorian tools whose uses we could only guess at. At the bottom of the garden had been a tennis court, we were told.

The rectory was replaced in 1963 with a new house on the lawn. After the family had moved in, we dismally watched the demolition of the old building. The capacious cellars now served as receptacles for rubble, so their tile-topped storage surfaces and brick arches are still there for future archaeologists, under the new estate. In the roof were found marks indicating the presence of recycled ships' timbers. The staircase was destroyed; nowadays it would have been dismantled and sold.



Back of 19th century Rectory, start of the new building on the lawn.

The most valuable asset to the demolitioners was the huge amount of lead from the roof. The reason given for the demolition was the high cost of maintenance, given the size of the building, but it wasn't in bad condition, and would have converted into flats.

Around this time similar decisions were being made over the future of many similar country rectories: Whittington was demolished, making way for the A5 straightening, while Selattyn and Welsh Frankton, with their great views, were sold off and converted.

The importance of the rural parishes was reflected in the size of their rectories. West Felton, and amongst others, was a richer living than Oswestry because the farms produced most of the wealth, a state of affairs that had existed for centuries, but was now changing as the farms became mechanized and people moved off the land to work in



West Felton Walking Group

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

EXCEPT on the first Monday of the month when departure is 9:30 to allow time to travel to our chosen destination for the away day walk. New members always welcome.

Walk leaders:-

Mike Bossen 01691 610623

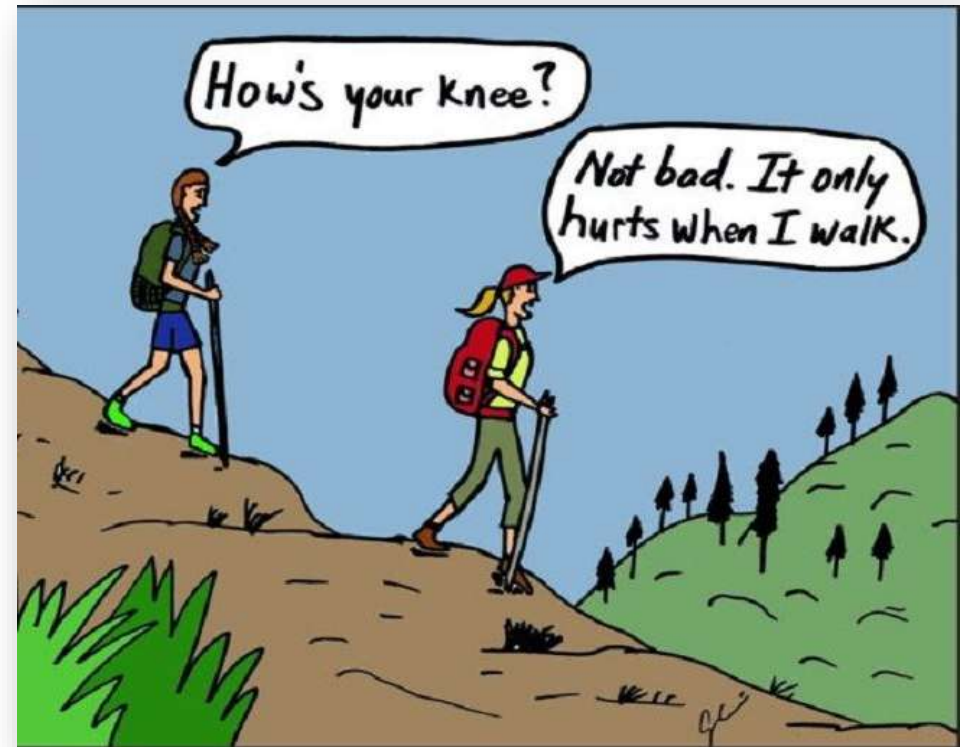
Hilary Iles 01691 610707

John and Eileen Hanmer

01691 610629

Liz and Dave Embrey

01691 658275



West Felton Church St Michael's

At Home in West Felton Rectory 1956 to 1974 - Ned Millington

We arrived in West Felton from our Black Country roots in the first week of April 1956: dad was taking up his new position as the rector and we were four children (soon to be five) who'd never properly seen a bale of hay up close; so imagine the shock for the new inhabitants of the old rectory to find themselves surrounded on all sides by farms. There was Hanmer at the Court, Richards opposite the Court, Roberts at the bottom of the garden, and of course Evans the Manor adjacent to St. Michael's. Church and rectory with two tied cottages occupied an island, and the ancient site was full of powerful spring scents, vivid colours and tumultuous noise, with the jutting perspectives of vast, overbearing trees clutching at us. Our town cat, let out of her box after a few days, went crazily on a slaying spree for a week until, realising she couldn't kill everything at once, she tuned in to the seasons of the countryside and gradually the rate of attrition slowed.

We were overpowered by the scale of nature, and quite besieged by agriculture on our island. However, all the farms were open to our prompt inspection, and got it. The first or second afternoon we ventured over to our closest neighbour, the Manor, to soak up the smells, the pre-milking quiet, and the vast scale of everything. A



block of black-country slums would have fitted into that yard, but the lucky animals, it seemed to us, had it all to themselves - even their own house for milking! The big attraction was the dutch barn, full of handy construction materials for increasingly complex dens. As we got to know our new friends Bill Martin and Dood Lindop, we learned rapidly the names and functions of everything on the farm, and this knowledge translated onto all the other farms. There was a transaction involved - we had to do a bit of work, and later on drive the Fergie, whose heavy clutch caused consternation to its lightweight drivers and brought down hails of curses from the men atop the rickety wagon loads of hay bales. Dai Evans paid us for the summer holiday's labours; for me the sum of eleven shillings comes to mind (how that was calculated I had no idea), together with bacon hacked off the ceiling hooks and as much buttermilk as you could, or could not, drink. The late suppers continued into the corn harvest. Mr Hulse's threshing box would be set up in the stackyard, connected to the tractor's power take-off, and then all hell let loose as the machinery tried to shake itself to pieces. Corn came out at one place and straw bales were shunted out at another -that was as technical as it

(Continued on page 29)

(Continued from page 28)

got for me. The dogs, Sweep and Ken, stood sentry for escaping rats, and when these had been cornered Bill and Dood ran in to finish them off with pikels. Despite the complete absence of safety concerns we managed to avoid serious injury. It was not like our earlier life, where we walked to school across a post-war industrial landscape, past bomb-sites, and factories which opened directly onto the streets and showered streams of sparks across the pavement as we walked by. However, informality and a need for awareness governed both those very different existences.

My elder brother Robert and I were given bicycles very early, and these proved both a boon and a burden. We could visit far-flung friends and farms, but the bikes came with responsibilities: they needed looking after, and there were errands to run and expectations made upon us, such as delivering parish magazines. The bikes survived a casual disregard for maintenance as we gained a wider overview of the area, until cars became accessible, and farms gave way to garages. We both started out at West Felton School, a Victorian building with three classes and open fires, and on transferring to secondary schools in Oswestry, for the first time the village seemed to shrink.

We had brought a television with us in 1956 which just about picked up 'Hancock's Half Hour' and 'The Lone Ranger' in its room on the top floor of the rectory, but when it broke it wasn't

replaced, and we were bereft until kind people in all corners of the parish started inviting us to watch their sets: Evans The Manor, the Wards at The Willows, the Phillips's and the Martins on the A5, the Ellis's on Tedsmore Bank and the Blurtons at Ford's Bank were all among those who took pity on us.

The rectory building itself was interesting. Fifty-two rooms I counted, with most having domestic functions, including an entire servants' wing with two cellars, its own cobbled courtyard (with workshops, store-rooms and a central well) and another working yard at the back (containing two privies, one a double-seater) walled off from the garden so as not to spoil the view. The top floor of the house would have provided accommodation for servants in residence. Bell-pulls in all the living-rooms led to a numbered board at the bottom of the servants' back stairs. This paralyzed the grand staircase, which was lit by a wonderful skylight. Harry Phillips, who was born in the 1880's, remembered over twenty servants being employed at the rectory in late Victorian times, and they would have remained mostly invisible unless summoned. The two disused reception rooms with their french windows swallowed entire garden fetes in wet weather, but two-thirds of the house we could find no use for except as a gigantic all-weather playground. Thus outdoor sports such as cycling, glider-flying and even an air-rifle range found homes in the servants' wing.

(Continued on page 30)