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Oswestry Police Station	0300 333 3000
Safer Neighbourhood team—email: oswestryc.snt@westmercia.pnn.police.uk	
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Year 32

AUGUST 2025

ROUND and ABOUT WEST FELTON

www.westfeltonmagazine.co.uk

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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 **INFORMAL MEETINGS** 8pm Meeting, **THE PUNCH BOWL** first Monday of the month except Bank holidays then second Monday.

7 August	10-12noon - COMMUNITY COFFEE MORNING, Village Hall	
11 Oct	WEST FELTON ARTS & CRAFTS FAIR, Village Hall - book your stall now.	

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Round and About West Felton

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

**Last day for submission of copy and
deadline for content changes
10th AUGUST 2025**

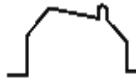
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Clerk to West Felton Parish Council: **Mrs Rosemary WOOD**

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 07955 232 199
 Cllr David CURTIS 01691 610 665 (Rep WF Primary School & SALC Area Committee)

Cllr Alastair FORBES 01691 610 524
 Cllr Mick GREEN 07928 479 305
 Cllr Marian HESKETH 01691 610 441 (Rep for Village Hall).
 Cllr Chris JONES 01691 610 354 (Rep SALC Area Committee).
 Cllr Pat MABE 01691 610 400
 Cllr Ed NICHOLAS 01691 610 230 (Rep ABP committee)
 Cllr Neil SUMMERS 07523 318 005
 Cllr David WALKER 01691 897 117

Our Shropshire Councillor : Cllr David Walker T: 01743 256863
 Mobile: 07484 541576

Our Member of Parliament : Helen Morgan T: 01939 809387
 E: helen.morgan.mp@parliament.uk

PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS

(no meeting in August)	13 January 2026
9 September 2025	10 February 2026
14 October 2025	10 March 2026
11 November 2025	14 April 2026
9 December 2025	12 May 2026

To Contact the Parish Council

Clerk – Rosemary Wood – 01939 262881

Email: westfeltonpc@googlemail.com

Website Address - <https://www.westfeltonparish.co.uk>

**Under the main heading ‘Contacts’ on first page
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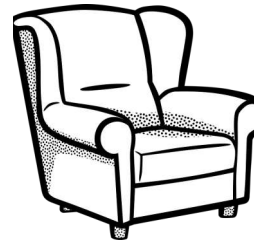


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Report from West Felton Parish Chairman, Cllr John Thornhill

West Felton Carnival - Everyone I spoke with seemed to enjoy the Carnival on Sun 6 July and as usual the floats were varied and imaginative. Congratulations to the Committee for another good event for the Parish. Unfortunately, I did not get much time to look around as I was manning the Parish Council stall, but was encouraged to hear the children of our Primary School singing their school song 'I have the Power.' Well done.

The Council decided to host a stall to encourage parishioners to support us in writing a Neighbourhood Plan for West Felton. This is an important document for a community as it the cornerstone of local progress. These plans empower communities to develop planning policies that shape the development and growth of their areas to ensure it reflects local priorities, needs and character. Whilst the Parish Council can lead the development it is required that they are produced by local residents giving them direct power to develop a shared vision for their neighbourhood and shape the development and growth of their local area. This means that:

- they are able to choose where they want new homes, shops and offices to be built;
- have their say on what those new buildings should look like and what infrastructure should be required;

- decide on appropriate facilities for the locality.

These plans will allow us to echo the words of the children as we sing, 'We have the Power.'

Our stall was visited by a number of councillors and clerks from other parishes and we were complimented on the display and its contents. Some years ago the Council agreed to support a plan to allow 60 more houses on a plot of land in the village without inconvenience to the residents. This agreement was included in the Shropshire Local Plan which gave support and protection against future un-needed development. As I reported previously that Local Plan was withdrawn following Government Inspectors report, thus removing our safeguards. This is why it is vital to produce a Neighbourhood Plan to give us back ownership for development in our village.

It was disappointing that we did not have the opportunity to discuss this issue with parishioners at the Carnival and it was disappointing that not many came to see our stall. However, we can still work on this, produce a Neighbourhood Plan and have it approved. If you want a say in how your village develops then please contact me – number is on an early page in this magazine. You can also contact the Parish Clerk whose details are on the same page. Without

(Continued on page 8)

(Continued from page 7) Parish Council report

this plan it will be extremely difficult to resist applications for building development in the village.

Planning Application Tedsmore

Estate - The Council considered a planning application from Tedsmore Hall for a change of use to allow them to use the property for occasional wedding ceremonies. A group of residents from the area attended the meeting and spoke about this application during the Public Participation Session. A full discussion followed and Council unanimously agreed to oppose the application on a number of grounds. There was concern that there was conflicting and inaccurate information in the application relating to number of attendees, cars and car parking space, frequency and timing of weddings as well as a lack of a habitat impact report on the significant bat population in the area. The major concern is that in this very rural and beautiful area the direct access road to the Hall and all other roads nearby are narrow and not suitable for vehicles other than cars, such as coaches or catering/entertainment vehicles. It was felt that cars could arrive in a 'tidal' format which would restrict traffic movement near the Hall and Emergency Vehicle access as well as impact on dog walkers. There would also be an adverse impact on the village itself. Concern was also expressed about noise and large numbers attending any event thus disrupting the peace and tranquillity of this rural area.

Defibrillator. - The Clerk has contacted

first responders to ask if they would assist with training. We are planning to hold this on a Tuesday evening in Sept or Oct at the Village Hall. If you would be interested in joining a team to look after and use this important life saver please contact the Clerk.

Rednal Straight Potholes - There have been discussions with the highways manager on this matter. He has responded to say that 'Keir will have a team working on this road from Monday 23rd June, working evenings.' If you have any up to date information please contact the Clerk.

Tree Protection Orders - An application was submitted in January and we have now received a temporary notice on the trees in Oak Farm Lane. We are awaiting response on the two other areas.

The Council has also agreed to undertake a tree safety survey on trees around the village and in the park. We are having some good weather at the moment and trees and hedges are enjoying growth spurt which looks beautiful. However, in some cases, such as on Holyhead Road, they are now encroaching on pavements and roads making it difficult for pedestrians who having to walk in the roads and for motorists with some vital signs covered up. The Council will be approaching Shropshire Council to trim trees and hedges which are becoming a safety risk. If any of trees or hedges are rooted in your property would you kindly consider pruning them – thank you.

(Continued on page 9)

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Donation to West Felton Primary School - Council received a letter from the children of West Felton Primary School reminding us of their great success in promoting a Beat the Summer Slide initiative they organised last year. They told us that it is intended to repeat their success this year and were seeking donations. Council was pleased to give them a grant of £250 to help finance the initiative. ●

Shropshire Council Report: July 2025

Cllr David Walker, Shropshire Council: Whittington Division

This month the new administration has been hitting its stride more. Many more meetings with officers have taken place whilst members complete their induction training this month. Below some points from my portfolio and some key points from other portfolio holders:

Planning Portfolio - I've been closely involved in coordinating with officers around planning policy, development management, enforcement, government planning consultations, Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and the withdrawal of the Local Plan. The Local Plan will be formally withdrawn at the next full council meeting on the 17th of July. On the 10th of July Shropshire Council will be launching a new 'call for sites' as they prepare to start developing the new local plan in January. Under the updated National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), sites previously assessed or allocated will not automatically carry over and will need to be re-submitted for review. The NPPF now includes mandatory housing targets for Shropshire of 2,025 dwellings a year, as well as bringing in Grey Belt. Additionally, new Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) are in production and

are expected to be published for review shortly. These are seriously out of date, dating back to 2012. A new bigger range of SPDs will help provide some policy cover while there is no Local Plan. They will cover a range of issues from affordable housing, design codes, local nature recovery schemes, to transport. I have asked officers to look at introducing Fixed Penalty Notices for planning enforcement. Lack of planning enforcement is a common complaint from the public.

So far this year Shropshire Council has 685 live planning applications, 48 live planning appeals, 93 live tree applications and 227 live enforcement cases.

I have responded to queries from members and residents across Shropshire about planning applications, CIL and S106 allocations, and enforcement concerns, ensuring complaints were acknowledged and followed up.

I attended a range of meetings to talk about the new administration, their priorities and my planning portfolio role. On the 24th of June I attended the SALC Oswestry Area Committee AGM. (Continued on page 11)

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(Continued from page 9)

On the 25th of June I was a guest speaker at the Developers Breakfast meeting organised by Berrys. Last week I attended Highley Parish Council's planning meeting to discuss the local plan, neighbourhood planning and how they can proceed on a number of issues.

Health - A countywide campaign has been launched to address falling vaccination rates, which have declined significantly since the Covid-19 pandemic. This drop poses serious public health risks, and residents are encouraged to ensure they and their families are up to date with all routine vaccinations.

On a positive note, the issue of delayed hospital discharges has seen significant improvement compared to last year. Continued efforts are underway to reduce delays further, ensuring patients can return home or move into appropriate care in a timely manner.

Housing - The county's social housing register, Homepoint, is undergoing an urgent review. Currently operating as a two-tier system, the priority waiting list has grown to 7,000 households. There are growing concerns that local housing needs in rural communities are not being adequately met.

Social Care - Fostering - Shropshire Council is seeking to expand its fostering service and actively recruiting for more foster carers. Fostering provides either a long- or short-term home for children and young people in the care of the local authority. Providing safe,

stable and loving homes for children and young people is a high priority for Shropshire Council and the children they look after. Foster carers are well supported by Shropshire Council with training provided as well as social events and peer support.

There is lots of information on this link [Foster Care In Shropshire | Shropshire Fostering | Home](#) and a local charity **Shropshire Foster Carers Association** who do some great work organising trips and events for foster families. They are actively fundraising so if you can help to spread the word with this link [Building Bonds Through Shared Journeys](#) that would be wonderful.

Casework Issues - Casework this month has again been focused on planning applications. But has also covered roads maintenance complaints, noisy and collapsing road covers, fallen trees, other tree hazards, planning enforcement cases and the lack of enforcement. As well as following up on existing casework and the back log of issues across both parishes.

The next few weeks look like being particularly hectic, with various strategic site meetings and but as always happy to help with casework where I can.

Cllr David Walker, Shropshire Council:
 Whittington Division
E: cllrdavid.walker@shropshire.gov.uk
T: 01743 256863
M: 07484 541576



West Felton C of E Primary School News

Willow class spent some enjoyable afternoons in the Summer term sewing with ladies from the village. The children enjoyed it very much, chatting whilst learning a valuable life skill. They have made some beautiful bookmarks to treasure. Thank you very much ladies for giving up your time to support us.



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The Power of Poetry...

At West Felton CofE Primary School, we recognise the Power of Poetry. We know that poetry provides children with a portal to rich and varied vocabulary, we can craft a firm foundation for verbal communication and confidence, we can play with words, learn their etymology and embed their spelling patterns, we can build our understanding of sentence construction and value the importance of each and every word.

But that's not all...poetry can be an outlet for exploring big emotions or a window into those felt by others, it can shine a light on all those dark and hidden crevices of the heart and mind, allowing us to explore new perspectives with growing empathy and understanding for others.

And with this in mind, we reviewed our teaching of poetry. Our staff received training from Poet Laureate, Joseph Coelho and from the Centre Literacy for Primary Education. We wrote our own poetry spine including a vast range of

poets and poems, which will be delivered to every child in school. And we had a huge whole school poetry competition.

Our theme was “Where would you travel?” and helped by Hays Travel, Oswestry and Liberty Travel, Oswestry our children set out exploring the big wide world from our classrooms. We crafted our poems, trialling different styles and content before choosing our favourites to enter. Then we invited the community to judge – from the Parish Council to the WI, from St. Michaels Church to Booka Bookshop – and they had a difficult job!

After a gruelling morning, the judges whittled it down to 8 finalist and eventually, an overall winner.

It has been a superb project for the whole school community and the poetry that the children have written is astounding. Every poem will be presented in a book which will be on sale as soon as possible and we hope to have ignited a legacy – **the Power of Poetry.** ●

The winning poem...

I want to travel...

I want to travel around the world
for fun,

And see different lands one by one,
First, I'll eat noodles in Japan,
The whole family is going, even my
Nan!

Next, I'll go on safari in South Africa,
I'll see elephants fighting,
it will be a massacre!

Then, I'll go on a gondola in Venice,
I don't know...I might be a menace!

After that, I'll dance on the top of the
Great Wall of China,

Or maybe go on a big cruise liner.

Finally, I'll sleep in a yurt in Mongolia,
Buy a flower called a magnolia,

**My suitcase, I will have to pack
I'm not sure if I'm coming back!**

Tilly Downes, Aged 9
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**Come and meet
the neighbours.**



Thursday, 7th August

10-12noon in the village hall.

£1.50 entry includes tea/coffee biscuits.

Bacon baps £1 extra.

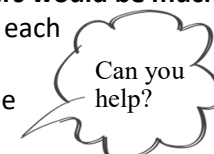
Community Coffee Mornings - from the committee

Can you believe we have now completed our first year of coffee mornings in the Village Hall? The volunteers were very hopeful that the mornings would be successful, but I don't think any of us knew just how popular they would become. Thank you to everyone who has joined us - whether it be just once or twice, or every month. The bacon baps always go down well, and the introduction of toasted teacakes as an alternative have been well received. We try to ensure the raffle prizes are worth winning, and of course each month there are varying stalls to tempt us to part with our money - or practice self restraint if we do not!

Although our aim is not to make money, we have ended our first 12 months with a healthy profit, and as the volunteers agreed when we set the venture up, we suggested local organisations who could benefit, and everyone attending the June coffee morning had the opportunity to vote. The result was that the Village Hall and Round and About West Felton (the village magazine) have both received a donation from us.

Because we have been so successful, a few more volunteers would be much appreciated - We have 3 teams of volunteers which means each team is on duty only four months of the year. Have a word with one of the volunteers if you would like to be part of the team, or contact Christine on 610665.

If you have not yet joined us, the coffee mornings are usually held on the first Thursday of the month, and everyone is welcome. We would love to see you.●





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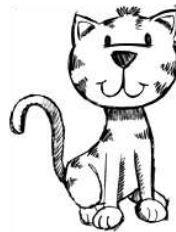
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WEST FELTON BRANCH

SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING

24th JUNE 2025 (PUNCH BOWL 19.30)



This meeting was called to ascertain after much deliberation, the future of our local branch. It was chaired by the Royal British Legion County Chairman, Ian Williams with Hayden Langston, Membership Engagement Officer and a colleague.

The invitation to attend went out to the 30 plus members registered in West Felton of which 5 attended. No apologies were received. As previously recorded, it was because of low attendance and the inability to fulfil specified roles (secretary) that such a meeting became necessary.

The Chairman described the three options open to us –

1. Establish a committee by attracting new active members and continue.
2. Become a County supported Branch where all administration matters including finance, would be administered by the County Committee.
3. Close the branch and lay up the Standard.

Members advised the Chairman that notwithstanding the outcome of this meeting and the possibility that full closure became the option, we would continue to fulfil the three functions we hold around the time of Remembrance Sunday being – the Church Service, the Service at the Village Memorial, and the Poppy Concert in the Village Hall. All of which have been hugely supported and include involvement by the Village Primary School.

This was clearly appreciated.

Members attending were asked to consider all three options and deliver a verdict.

Option 1 was clearly no longer viable. Had more members attended and some been willing to undertake Committee roles, then this option could have been considered further.

Option 2 was attractive in that it would allow us to continue the use of the Standard which remains a “Key” figure in Ceremony. However, concern was raised over the number of directives/requests received from the County Committee in respect of recruitment drives etc. It was explained that we

(Continued on page 19)

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(Continued from page 17)

had painstakingly gone this route for a long time without result and with nothing new to offer, would not take kindly to such requests. For administration purposes two members would be chosen as the links between County and local members.

Option 3 was frankly what we had expected to agree, having accepted that we had done all we could to avoid the situation and at the same time guaranteed to the Parish that we would continue to organise the three events previously mentioned.

After much consideration it was unanimously agreed to accept Option 2. The retaining of the Standard for Ceremony was felt to be of prime consideration.

The appointed contacts with the County Committee are to be Jim Maxwell and David Curtis. We are responsible for holding two meetings a year for which the first will be on Monday 3rd November (19.30 at the Punch Bowl) which will be classified as the Annual General Meeting. All invitations will be sent out by the County Committee who will also be responsible for Chairing the meeting and recording discussions.

Members wished to stress that the monthly gatherings at the Punch Bowl on the first Monday of the month as advertised in the Parish Magazine would continue but of course will be in the form of a (very) informal get together over a "Pint". Everyone is welcome.

With Grateful Thanks to all my Colleagues,
 DAVID CURTIS, PRESIDENT (*soon to be stood down*).

**JUST A COMMON SOLDIER
 (A SOLDIER DIED TODAY)
*A Lawrence Vaincourt***

He was getting old and paunchy,
 and his hair was falling fast,
 And he sat around the Legion,
 telling stories of the past.
 Of a war that we had fought in
 and the deeds that he had done,
 Of his exploits with his buddies,
 they were heroes, every one.
 And tho' sometimes, to his neighbours,
 his tales became a joke
 His Legion buddies listened,
 for they knew whereof he spoke.

But we'll hear his tales no longer for
 old Bert has passed away,
 And the world's a little poorer,
 for a soldier died today.
 He was just a common soldier and his
 ranks were growing thin,
 But his presence should remind us
 we may need his like again.
 For when countries are in conflict,
 then we find the soldier's part
 Is to clean up all the troubles
 that the politicians start.
 If we cannot do him honour while
 he's here to hear the praise,
 Then at least let's give him homage
 at the ending of his days.

WEST FELTON VILLAGE HALL

Chairmans Report 2024-2025

Delighted to say a very successful year for our Village Hall.

Bookings have meant a full schedule during the week with many weekends used for parties, presentations etc.

Fundraisers have been well supported, these are the Bingo sessions at Christmas and Easter and the Craft Fair, which was again a great success.

The Jack Dent magic show for children was hilarious, and so obviously enjoyed by the children (and accompanying adults). This was not meant to be a fund raiser but just an opportunity to do something for the younger children of the village. In fact, a small loss was the result, but the reward was the sheer joy of the children.

Bookings have again been tremendous with multiple Dance Classes, regular Groups and Societies plus of course our amazing Poppy Concert which this year meant we had to borrow chairs from the Punch Bowl to accommodate the numbers attending. The rapport with our local Pub is worthy of a special note.

The first Thursday of each month sees the hall full at the now popular community coffee mornings which started after the closure of the Methodist Chapel. Numbers attending have sometimes hit sixty with many new faces and of course the opportunity for old friends to get together.

Several structural, electrical and general maintenance issues have been addressed to ensure sure the hall continues to be maintained at the



(Continued on page 21)

Up the Garden Path with Topiarius

Thinking of change

We at last got to visit the RHS Bridgewater garden just outside of Manchester. We travelled up the night before to give a full day and, despite being there soon after opening time, we were still a long way from the front of the car park. There is a lot of impressive planting, and then more impressive planting (and a few less good bits in the modern wilding style). So much excellent planting of beds, but where was the wow factor? With our critical hat on we thought it lacking in vistas, statuary and changes of level. However, it must be remembered that it is still a work in progress and the Chinese streamside garden currently under development in particular has promise of being a major attraction.

Our own garden openings for the NGS are now over for this year and we were very pleased to have exceeded our previous highest contribution to the NGS charities. We are also happy to have got away with good weather because the last things you want for opening are too much rain or drought beforehand or rain on the day. Also, you could do without rain as a visitor.

After the July article was submitted, we made a decision to change the runner bean system from double rows of bamboo canes to wigwams. We made wigwams of about 80 cm diameter using eight 8 ft canes. The tops were simply tied together and one bean plant put by

each cane. It took a fraction of the usual time, looks much nicer and, hopefully, will be more wind resistant. Another case of you do something one way for years and then suddenly see the advantage of an alternative.

Whilst routine work of weeding, feeding, watering and harvesting is likely to keep you busy, in other respects the jobs list in August is quite short. I replace cucumber plants as the first ones give up and perhaps sow more radish. If you have vine weevil problems now is a good time to order nematodes, and with perhaps a little time available a start can be made on maintenance like putting preservative on woodwork. You will probably have a list of changes to make and maintenance needed from the July review.

We have been contemplating the possibility of introducing wild flowers to some areas of grass. I hadn't thought about it, but apparently a real meadow has only perennials, with annuals such as poppies and cornflowers belonging in cultivated fields. For one area I had the fanciful notion of having buttercups and daisies as I remember the village green. We shall see. In another area we had a lot of daffodils established in the grass, but over the years they have all but died out. Now we are in two minds whether to plant more bulbs or go for something different. It is probably too fertile for most wild flowers so re-planting bulbs might be sensible.●

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West Felton Village Hall
15:00 to 15:40**



(Continued from page 20)

highest level. Recently a group from Hampshire who were travelling to North Wales stopped off for a lunch at the hall. I especially mention this because compliments were received not only for the hospitality but also the quality of the hall. Many pictures were taken including the murals that hang from the walls. Whether this was a reflection on the quality of village halls in the south or just a special reflection on our Village Hall, the compliments were gratefully received.

We have addressed the need to replace some chairs and tables. As I reported last year, we had been a little upset by the lack of care some take on putting hall furniture away at the end of a hiring. Nevertheless, we do recognise that "wear and tear" is an issue and accidents do happen.

Financially through good governance the hall is in good shape. Acknowledging that capital expenditure is always necessary we have a sound structure going forward allowing us not to increase hire charges this year.

It is pleasing to report that the hall made a small profit this year;

Income from hire and fundraising = £13,619

Cost of operating the hall = £12,516

Therefore Profit = £1,103

I mentioned last year that our secretary for many years was standing back, and the result has been the sharing of duties which to date has worked well. The Hall is managed by volunteer Trustees, some of whom are appointed by several village institutions. Whilst we share many skills, we are always grateful for additional support. If anyone, especially with secretarial experience would like to consider helping, the committee would love to hear from you.

Finally, a massive thank you to all my colleagues on the committee and to Pippa who keeps the hall in such good order and clearly helps to provide such an excellent facility for all in the community to enjoy. West Felton Village Hall is a Focal Point of our village and one that everyone should be proud of.

DAVID CURTIS,

CHAIRMAN, 30th June 2025

**FROM EILEEN
AND THE CARNIVAL
COMMITTEE
Thank you!
Congratulations!**



They say 'rain before seven, clear before eleven' - and that was what happened on Carnival Sunday. We were so very lucky to have ideal conditions for the day, not too hot, not too windy and no rain.

They lined the main road to cheer on the floats that had made a really wonderful effort. What a hard job the judges had! But they decided WI came 1st with their special army lorry and their display of all the women who helped in World War 2. Close 2nd was 'Alice in Wonderland' with Dennis Price and friends; 3rd was the 'Roaring Twenties' by Friends of the Carnival. Such a shame we only had one child's float, so now you see what fun it is, please enter next year.

Entertainment was very good; there was something for all ages.

- * **We would like to thank our sponsors Fairmitre Windows and Conservatories, MVRs Horsebox Vehicle Repair, TG Group Skip Hire, and Mr Dave Hinton who supports us every year with a load of logs which were auctioned by our Compere, Mike Perry.**

The £100 1st prize stayed in the village
with a lady from Woolston Road winning.

- * **The committee would like to thank everyone for their support with our door to door collection, everything costs so much these days to put on such a event as ours.**
- * **A big thank you also to Sally, Paul & Mark for all their hard work with the BBQ to round off the day at the Punch Bowl.**

We are a small committee who would like to grow a bit bigger so, please, if you think you could manage a couple of hours a month, do come along to the meetings.

A letter from Tony, (Antonio Ranconi) who worked for Mr. Moseley at Grigg Hill for three years. Tony had obviously become very attached to little Margaret, now Mrs Margaret Lycett of Ruyton.

He came from Bank Top Camp for Italians at St. Martins, a satellite camp to the German Mile End camp. Bank Top held 600 Italians and Mile End held 2,000 German POWs.

Rancoli Antoni, 100 T.L.B. St. Martins Camp, Oswestry, 5-12-1945

Dear Mrs. Moseley

This letter will bring to you my best wishes and say goodbye to you all as I am going back in a very short time. I send you a photo of mine which it still remind you the time we ... together: remembered the funny old days don't you? When we couldn't understand each other and since then three years have gone though it seems yesterday. We are going home in three groups: each group subdivided in first age-group I am into the fourth age group so it won't be long now perhaps another month and then I shall be able to see my family again, thank God I feel homesick (two words illegible) never like that before.

Oh Mrs! it will be marvellous talking to our own women again! And no doubt we shall answer them in English and say (yes) when it is wrong. Now Mrs. how is Margaret? And how is the little ones? Give my love to them, and tell Margaret that I shan't forget her. Please you all, forgive me, if I have been a bad fellow; but I only did it in a rash temper and let's draw a line to it and forget the old things now.

In a few week's time I shall be crossed the water but still beside you with my thoughts and I shall see you again through my dreams.

I send you nice things and may God bless your future and keep you happy for ever.

I will say you now a good-bye

Yours truly, Tony

I shall be glad to hear some things from you,

Good bye again, Tony

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West Felton Women's Institute



We've had an interesting variety of activities and weather in this summer month. Girly Gourmets tucked into the pizzas at Prezzo and others ventured to Trefonen WI to listen to Peter Dunhill's entertaining history of the Shipping Forecast - we now know our Faeroes from our Forties and Fitzroy sea areas. The speaker's father was David Dunhill who used to broadcast the forecast on the radio - and was the last voice to be heard on the 'Home Service' before it became Radio 4. Find it on Youtube if you're feeling nostalgic!

Gales imminent meant that we postponed our planned crazy golf tournament at Cae Glas Park in Oswestry. However we are optimistic that the sun will soon shine to allow us to enjoy this fun activity in such beautiful surroundings; thank you to the park keepers for all their help and hard work. We sought shelter somewhat sooner than planned at The Wynnstay where we had delicious food and drinks and did some serious thinking for our quizzing (date when the Wynnstay was established in Oswestry, anyone? Or what about naming one of the Seven Wonders of Wales, according to the old rhyme?)

It was a relief to have (slightly) better weather for Oswestry North Group's 'Lucky Dip' stall at the Derwen College's annual fete with all proceeds going to the College as usual. We encountered many fete-goers as well as heavy rain, gusting wind, sunshine and showers. Thanks to all from Gobowen, Whittington, St Martin's, Oswestry and West Felton WIs who generously donated parcels and their time to support this fund-raiser.

A real treat awaits us at the end of the month when we will be hosted at Tedsmore's gardens by the kind invitation of Mr and Mrs Parker. We then look forward to the visit of storyteller and performer Alison Utting from Ellesmere: her dramas bring to life the lives of interesting women from Shropshire's past so in July we will be transported to Regency and Georgian Britain with 'Miss Plymley Recollects'.

If you are interested in joining the Women's Institute do come along to one of our meetings which are held on the second Thursday in the month (except August). Contact 07375997782. •

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ness and kindness of this lady.

When in November of 1948 I went back home, after being discharged, we kept in touch with each other. In the summer of 1950, I visited you for the first time as a "free man". There was a heartfelt joy to see each other again. At the time, Jim was also at home, on leave from the army. In 1951, your mother came to visit me in Germany. I introduced her to my family and to the people I worked with, and I showed her many historical places in our vicinity. Many years later she often told me: "Edwin, this was the only and the most beautiful vacation I have ever had".

In 1953 I emigrated to Canada, and later moved to California. But we kept in touch. And always, during my visits to Europe, I stopped over in England for a few days, because I look upon your country and your family as a second home. And every time there was so much to tell, and so much to show. I met the men and women that meanwhile had married into the family, as well as their children. I felt that I belonged. I felt at home.

For me all of these memories are unforgettable. Not once did Mum forget my birthday. Every Christmas she wrote me a letter with all the news. During the last few years she signed her letters with "Mother R". When I visited England for the last time, I mentioned during the meeting of the clan, that this time I would go to see Horst (in East Germany) also, Mum asked me to give her kindest regards to Horst and his family, in the name of all the Robinsons.

Yes, this woman had a big heart and understanding for the troubles both big and small, not only of her children, and grandchildren, but all those who crossed her life's path. She was a person for whom love, sacrifice and service to her fellow man signified the meaning of her life.

Distance and other circumstances prevented me from attending her funeral. But in my thoughts I was standing among you to bid farewell to this exceptional lady – our MUM. May God grant her soul eternal peace.

Peace and Love to you all,
 Your "brother" Edwin



EDWIN HARTMANN
 Young German POW billeted with the Robinsons family, Middle Farm, Shotatton 1946-1948.

The letter from Edwin Hartman, captured at the age of 17. Instead of being incarcerated in the POW camp, he and his friend Horst were billeted with the Robinson family at Middle Farm, Shotatton. His letter to the family when Mrs. Robinson died tells us more about young German POWs than we could ever read in books.

Menlo Park, Calif, April 30, 1984

TO ALL OF MUM'S CHILDREN !

When Peter, on April 10, phoned me to give me the sad news about "Mum's" death, my clock indicated 4:50am. I was in bed, I usually get up at 6:15am. But I could no longer fall asleep.

My thoughts went back 37 years, when Horst and I, two prisoners-of-war, joined your family to work on Middle Farm. Ever since I had turned fourteen years of age, first at work, and then as a soldier and a POW, I always had to deal with many people. In time, I developed certain knowledge of human nature. It became clear to me from the first day we met, that I was surrounded by people who had their hearts in the right places. I could feel the warmth of a healthy and happy family. I also noticed that your family came from the same circumstances as my own, that is to say we were both farm people.

For us Germans, after a lost war, it was a very sad time. Our homeland, beaten and totally destroyed, was despised by the rest of the world. The propaganda messages spread by the victorious powers were filled with words of distrust. Every German was suspected to be a hidden "Nazi" whose mind was filled with evil. Thus any human contact between victor and vanquished was first of all guided by caution.

However, the Robinson family paid no attention to such nonsense. We looked upon each other as human beings, with faults as well as good qualities. Never in my life shall I forget when the "Misses" (that is what Horst and I called your mother at the time) told us: ... "Listen boys, I have ten children, now with you two I have twelve." ... with this magnificent gesture, our acceptance into your family was complete.

In such a large family, as you older ones will surely remember, not an hour passed without someone calling: "Where is Mum?", "Bring this to Mum", "Go to Mum", "Ask Mum". Everything in your family turned around Mum. Before long, in our conversations, (and in our broken English) Horst and I talked about "our family", "our Martin, Sheila, Jim," and so on.

When Mum went into town to shop (I think this happened about every two weeks), she most of the time brought back some sweets (which were rationed at the time). Although POWs were not entitled to such special treats, your mother always bought goods that could easily be divided, and so we too were included among the recipients. Once, in the summer of 1947, she came home with a whole stack of shirts. Every male member of the family were fit out with a beautiful, sky blue, short sleeved shirt. I could mention many, many more things (one letter would not be enough), that bear witness to the great-



WEEKLY FRAUD UPDATE FROM WEST MERCIA POLICE ECONOMIC CRIME UNIT - 1 July 2025

Don't let Criminals ruin your holiday

Fraudsters can operate all around the world.

So, it's important to keep your card and card details safe when travelling.

International card fraud losses for 2023 were £134.5 million.

BEFORE YOU GO OVERSEAS:

- Only take the cards you intend to use, and leave the others in a secure place at home
- Make sure your card company has your up-to-date contact details.
- Ensure you have your card company's 24-hour telephone number with you in case you need to contact them.
- If you are registered with a Card Protection Agency, take that contact number and policy number with you.

WHEN YOU ARE OVERSEAS:

- Don't let your card out of sight, especially at restaurants and bars.
- Don't give your PIN to anyone, even if they claim to be the police or your card company.
- Shield your PIN when typing it in, and never give your PIN to anyone, even if they claim to be from the Police or Card company
- Check which currency you are being asked to pay in.
- Paying with your Credit Card gives greater protection on any payments made over £100 and less than £30,000
- Check your bank transactions when you can to see if there's anything unfamiliar.
- Look after all your other belongings like passports, wallets, purses, travel, and ticket information.

WHEN YOU GET BACK:

- Check your bank and card statements for any unfamiliar transactions. If you do spot any, report them to your bank immediately.
- Fraudulent transactions can be reported to the Fraud Prevention Department of most major UK banks using the short phone number - **159**

Please feel free to share these messages with any vulnerable friends, relatives, or neighbours, especially anyone of pensionable age.





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(Continued from page 30)

found himself in a British camp was very lucky as, unlike the Russians, this country observed the Geneva Convention and the prisoners' Bill of Rights was displayed at every camp. POW camps were often constructed of wood and corrugated iron 'Nissan' huts.

Trusted POWs were transported to local farms on army lorries which picked them up, and returned to camp at night. While working, the men were under the direct command of the farmer for whom they worked. POWs were paid the current union rates for the job, between three and six shillings for a 48 hour week. The men were also allowed the same rations as British servicemen which was more than the civilian population was allowed!!

POW farm workers

At the beginning of the war, John Richards was evacuated from London to stay with his uncle and aunt at Clifton House. After the war John joined the Household Cavalry but took every opportunity to return to Ruyton to visit the friends he had made here and to work on his uncle's farm. John remembers two POWs who were still living in the village at that time. Herz Lutho, and Beck who lived in one of the tiny cottages opposite the Talbot and worked at the Dairy.

Hertz had been a cavalry officer in East Germany so he and John had a lot in

common and became good friends. Herz worked on Bill Jackson's farm at Wykey until he was injured by a bull which tossed him over the hedge. He then worked at the Dairy. Nestor Clarke remembers Italians working at Little Ness, and Heinz, who delivered milk for Mrs. Higgins.

Mrs. Dorothy Cocks tells of a German who worked at Shelvock. After the war he became a teacher at Shrewsbury School. Richard Hunt thinks some of the POWs came from as far as High Ercall and that they were very good at "making anything out of anything". Mabel Jones, working as a land girl at Slaters Farm, between Ruyton and Baschurch, says the Italians could make rings out of coins. Mrs. Dorothy Slater remembers they made lovely toys for the children. Another memory is of a POW who made a young boy a model of a parrot which swing round on a stick. The toy was so popular that the young man made several more and took them to the school for the children.

Many German and Italian POWs never returned to their own countries, they might have married local girls, or in the case of those who came from what became the Eastern or Russian sector, their homes were now in the hands of the enemy and who knew what fate awaited them. Others, it seems, just became accustomed to our way of life. ●

PRISONERS OF WAR (POWs) IN RUYTON XI TOWNS

Yoland Brown (abridged)

How very odd?! A headline in the Oswestry Border Counties Advertiser on 9th January 2022 proclaimed:

“AN EXCITING HISTORICAL DISCOVERY has been made at the site of the new roundabout at Mile End. Archaeologists excavated the site of the new dual roundabout at Mile End have found evidence of a Prisoner of War (POW) camp.”

Really? Well if they had been around in 2005, there were plenty of people in Ruyton XI Towns who could have given them chapter and verse about that POW camp and the one at St. Martins, as men were transported to work on several farms in the village!

Read about the memories of Ruytonians who remembered Beck, Herz, Eric, Heinz, Edwin, Horst and others.

Read the letter from Tony, (page 35). (Antonio Ranconi) who worked for Mr. Moseley at Grigg Hill for three years. Tony had obviously become very attached to little Margaret, now Ruyton's own Margaret Lycett. He came from Bank Top Camp for Italians at St. Martins. It was a satellite camp to the German Mile End camp. Bank Top held 600 Italians but Mile End held 2,000 German POWs.

We hear very little about the fact that at its peak, there were 402,000 Prisoners of War in 1,000 camps in Britain. Perhaps the reason being that there were not that many breakouts, if you actually managed to escape, how were you going to get across the inter-

vening water between Britain and Germany - without any brave members of the resistance to help you?

Please read the letter from Edwin Hartman, (p 32) captured at the age of 17. Instead of being incarcerated in the POW camp, he and his friend Horst were billeted with the Robinson family at Middle Farm, Shotatton. His letter to the family when Mrs. Robinson died tells us more about young German POWs than we could ever read in books.

We are familiar with British Prisoners of war in German and Japanese camps but there were several German and Italian POWs working, and sometimes living, here in Ruyton XI Towns.

POW camps

There were 15 Prisoner of War Camps in Shropshire and two of them were very close to Ruyton - Kinnerley, Mile End House just this side of Oswestry and Italian POWs were at Walford Manor camp.

Any German or Italian POW who

(Continued on page 31)

Message from ...

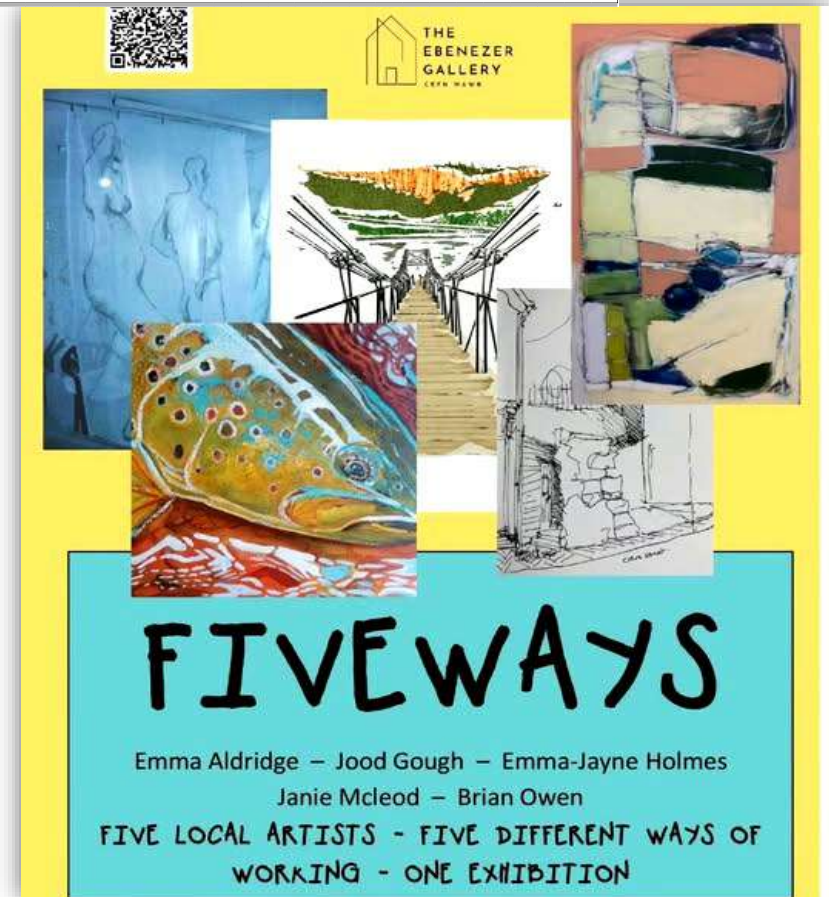
From: Brian Owen <brianowen04@gmail.com>

Subject: Ebenezer Exhibition

Excited to be a part of this upcoming exhibition, lots of new work on display, make a date in the diary! Kind Regards,

Brian Owen, West Felton 01691 610335

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UK War Graves

German Prisoners of War

Michael Davie

Visitors to the consecrated cemeteries in West Felton parish are reminded by plaques set up by the Commonwealth war graves commission that British and Commonwealth soldiers from the World Wars are buried there. These are graves of servicemen fighting for Britain. On 17th November 1937, the Border Counties Advertiser published a picture of members of the Oswestry Rotary club placing a wreath on a German military cemetery near Gobowen. This cemetery was adjacent to the Park Hall camp, close to which was a German Prisoner of War (POW) camp and hospital. One hundred and five German soldiers and four German sailors were buried there. The cemetery no longer exists. What happened?

It was almost inevitable that some Prisoners of war would die whilst in captivity. They had to be buried somewhere and the local cemetery was the obvious place. Many churchyards throughout the British Isles hosted deceased German POWs, in spite of many vicars being reluctant to accommodate them. The clergy reluctance was diminished when the Imperial War Graves commission, as it then was, offered to pay them for keeping the graves tidy. Other clergy

however were more compassionate and initiated contacts with the relatives of the deceased in Germany. One of those in the forefront was the Vicar of Margate, Rev David Railton MC. Son of the first Commissioner of the Salvation Army, David Railton had been a military chaplain in the First World War (WWI), and it was he who wrote to Lord Haig suggesting that there should be a tomb for an Unknown Soldier of the First World War in Westminster Abbey. After WWI the Imperial War Graves Commission, as it then was, under the leadership of Fabian Ware started to develop an initiative to gather the graves of German POWs into a central cemetery. Once again the war clouds gathered over Europe and ended discussions.

Peace was again shattered by the onset of World War II. Once more local vicars were called upon to bury deceased German POWs in their churchyards. In this conflict the number of German POWs was greatly in excess of that in WWI. Some 11 million German soldiers became POWs, of which the United Kingdom held 3.6million, some of whom were sent to Canada. Astonishingly very few died, probably only 0.03%. This compared with 0.2% in America and 34% in the Soviet Union. Some in the UK died after the cessation of hostilities. Many POWs were held in Britain until 1948, partly because there was a shortage of la-

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bour in the UK after the war and partly because it was claimed that Germany was in no position to have them back, since the population was starving anyway. In fact one German POW wrote after war that POWs in Britain were lucky having been treated more humanely than anywhere else.

Matters might have rested there had it not been for a visit by Christel Eulen, the wife of Siegfried Eulen, the head of the Volksbund Deutsche Kriegsgräberfürsorge (German War Graves commission), to Plymouth's Ford Park cemetery, which hosted over 700 graves of German servicemen. She was so inspired by this experience that she started to campaign for a central war cemetery for German war dead. In 1959 Britain and Germany came to an agreement that most of those buried in English churchyards would be disinterred and moved to a central cemetery. Such a mission was a formidable undertaking. To disinter a body requires a faculty from the Chancellor of the Diocese in which the cemetery is situated. Some clergy objected to their occupants being disinterred and refused to sign the faculty form. Many had welcomed relatives to their cemetery and felt an abiding responsibility for maintaining the connection. Disinterment was an unpleasant process. Some graves were as deep as 20 feet and without shuttering the sides

tended to fall in. Nevertheless bureaucracy and geology were overcome and a cemetery for German POWs from both World Wars was opened at Cannock Chase.

This central cemetery in Staffordshire accommodates the graves of nearly 5000 German servicemen, about 43% being from WWI. Included are soldiers who fought with the German army but who were not German. Apart from gravestones there is no other memorial. The only known free standing memorial in England to German war dead is a WWI monument, now Grade II listed, in Fordington, near Dorchester. This memorial, erected in 1919, was designed and sculpted by German POWs. Forty five POWs died at the neighbouring POW camp. The first to die was taken to the cemetery on a gun carriage, followed by an escort of 50 prisoners. Large crowds attended, a brass band played and an address by the local vicar followed a gun salute. The novelist Thomas Hardy employed one of the German POWs from the camp to work in his garden at Max Gate.

German war dead still remain in local churchyards, mostly aircraft crew who died over England. Brookwood cemetery in Surrey has the largest number. Many cemeteries however no longer have any evidence of there being German POWs buried there or as at Gobowen no longer exist.●