

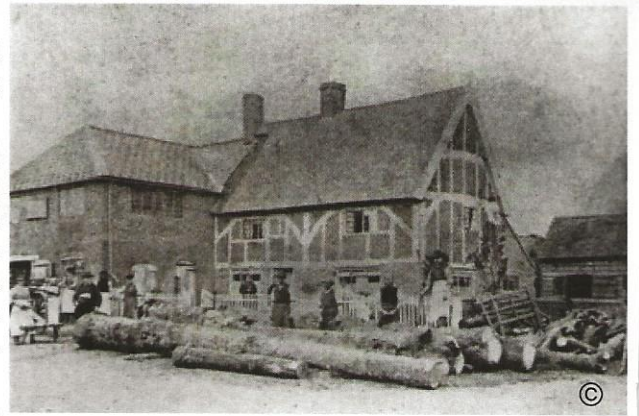
DOWN MEMORY LANE

High Street North from Cricketers Corner

Past the bend where once stood The Cricketers village pub, the substantial 16/17th-century Grade II listed home at No 78 High Street North, today known as Stonhill House, heaves into view.

Partly thatched, and long a keystone of local character, the building has enjoyed a number of roles. It was the premises of Coles and Son, well-known wheelwrights and coach builders. Coles had their own saw-pit and employed a considerable local workforce (see photo right c.1890). The view looking north, 100 years ago, reveals Coles' business already in decline. Having served as an air mechanic in the Royal Naval Air Squadron in WWI, Laurence Stonhill, son of village coachbuilder Richard Stonhill, came home to found Stonhill Garage, in the same establishment, to repair motor cars and sell petrol.

The only traffic is the not unwelcome sight of a farm cart, heavily laden with corn sheaves, in the middle of the road. Medlar Cottage, at No 71, can still be seen to the left with Danesbury House and its former bakery buildings in the distance. Traditional brick walls still define the north-east street side, visually connecting frontages and providing continuity to the street scene.



FROM THE GRAPEVINE 10 YEARS AGO...

From October 2009, the Village Hall paid off the £18,000 loan taken out to fund the first phase of its refurbishment project...Nature Notebook reported the last of three broods of swallows using the Village Hall clock as a flying lesson perch before vacating the nest above the main entrance...Stewkley picked up the Sword of Honour, and the Cup, for Best Kept Village...St Michael's Church held its 'Picnic at the Grange' on a sunny autumn day of fun...the Third London Airport campaign DVD, *Over Our Dead Bodies*, went on sale...the RAF explained to villagers that the noisy, night-time helicopters, flying low over the village, were training crews for action in Afghanistan...and Stewkley Vicarage Cricket Club celebrated Paul Beasley's 40 years' service to the club with a 'Players Past and Present' match.

FROM THE GRAPEVINE 20 YEARS AGO...

From October 1999, an "injudicious adornment", wrote one protester, as the saga of 'to be or not to be' over the hotly-debated Millennium window in St Michael's Church was to be aired at the Parish Council...Stewkley Players' next production, *And This Was Odd*, was to be a first-time venture for Mike Stenson as producer...Bob Dickens was puzzling over when and why the Parish Church's dedication was changed from St Mary's to St Michael's...some of the new children at St Michael's School were given space to include personal sketches of themselves...Rev Ian Banks thanked villagers for their support as he departed Stewkley...and the incoming Methodist minister, Rev Brian Trugian, announced his arrival.