

# DOWN MEMORY LANE

*Continuing our series looking at Stewkley past and present*

## Three Picturesque High Street Buildings

Almost in spite of the traffic, the gradual meander of the High Street gives the impression of a lane, reinforced today at the southern end of Ivy Lane by three picturesque historic buildings. These are all Grade II Listed and located one next to the other on the outer curve of High Street North.

No 24 High Street North and Old Timbers, Ivy Lane were originally farm labourers' homes, built around 1640, of timber-frame construction and thatched. The present Old Timbers started life as two cottages, Nos 1 and 3, explaining why there is no longer a No 3 Ivy Lane. The former front door to No 3 can just be seen in the 1930s photograph.

The third dwelling, peeking out from behind No 24, is Pear Tree Cottage, No 28 High Street North. Dating originally from the 15th century (but rebuilt in brick in the 19th century), it has remains of a cruck truss frame of long, naturally-curved timbers, leaning inwards and secured by horizontal beams. Historically the roof would also have been thatched.

Until the 1960s, the group was augmented by Woodlands, No 22 High Street North. Also a 17th century property (seen in the 1930s photograph), it was demolished in 1963 prior to the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments listing of Stewkley in the 1980s. No 22 was the family home of William and Becky Clarke, village builders and undertakers. It had a large builder's yard at the rear fronting Ivy Lane. The iron railings in the old photograph were removed for munitions in WWII and replaced by a brick boundary wall after the war. The wall has recently been repaired and attractively radiused with characteristic, half-round, saddleback copings.



## FROM THE GRAPEVINE 10 YEARS AGO...

*From March 2010*, Robert 'Bob' Dickens, a giant concerning Stewkley's heritage and all things natural, both locally and nationally, passed away aged 91, and is still much missed today...a Stewkley diary to prevent events clashing was launched by the Grapevine...St Michael's headteacher Kieran Salter wrote about an Arts Week in school...Bill Chappell and Joan Beaumont-Lewis were honoured with Royal British Legion long-service certificates at a village lunch party...nothing changes, the Parish Council was concerning itself with highway potholes...tickets for Stewkley Film Archive's *The Way We Were* and *The Things We Did* film show proved so popular, a second showing was announced...Stewkley Singers hosted a lively and successful Burns Night...and Stewkley FC fixtures continued to be postponed because of the adverse winter weather.

## FROM THE GRAPEVINE 20 YEARS AGO...

*From March 2000*, the village hall was reported to be 'in crisis' and in desperate need of £65,000 to fund essential repairs and improvements... Faith Kemp regretfully announced the demise of 1st Stewkley Guide Unit after 32 years due to lack of numbers...Stewkley's bus service from Milton Keynes to Aylesbury was being poorly supported by villagers and only kept afloat by demand from Aston Abbots' folk...Stewkley FC stood third in the North Bucks Premier Division at the half-way season stage...unusually the Tennis Club team was narrowly beaten into second place in the Scouts' Annual Quiz by a team called 'Friends and Neighbours'...and a first, the Grapevine now had its own web page where contributions could be sent electronically to the editorial team.