

DOWN MEMORY LANE

Continuing our series looking at Stewkley past and present

Changes looking south on High Street North

Farm animals and horse-drawn vehicles were a common sight on the High Street in the first quarter of the last century when the two old images were taken. The animals' inevitable deposits were soon cleaned up by the two full-time road-sweepers resident in the village. There were no sidewalks or footpaths, and in any case it was quite safe, as can be seen in the old photos, to walk in the middle of the High Street. The poles show that the telephone had arrived in Stewkley, although electric light and power were not supplied until 1931. Church Villas still hold prominence in the centre of all the images, together with the former Hounslow's shop and the King's Head pub opposite. The gable ends of Bury

Farmhouse and butcher Dickens' slaughterhouse have

disappeared from near the vanishing point of the modern image, but pleasingly the gentle meander of this part of the High Street remains. St Michael's Church pinnacles became unsafe and were removed, and Woodlands, the Clarke home, was lost from the end of Ivy Lane. Alfie and Teddy Dickens ran a wheel-wright business in the workshops on the right of the monochrome image...farm carts in the front yard.



FROM THE GRAPEVINE 10 YEARS AGO...

From September 2010, young villager Alistair Bremnath was preparing to run in the New York marathon for the Challenger Trust charity...there was still the threat that the proposed route for HS2 could have run in the Grand Union gap between the village and Soulbury... Barbara Ginn starred in Bunt Scott's *Desert Island Discs* after 57 years in Stewkley and at the age of 86...Nature Notebook reported a flock or 'charm' of 70-80 goldfinches seen raiding knapweed heads for seed in the Wildlife Reserve; and regular sightings of a solitary red kite (now a common sight overhead) were reported as a heartening sign of this breed's recovery...and Stewkley Scouts went camping on Guernsey for their annual camp.



FROM THE GRAPEVINE 20 YEARS AGO...

From September 2000, the Venture Scouts were preparing for an expedition to Austria... David and Julia Willis's dog Nettle had qualified for the National Lurcher and Racing Club finals...Bunt Scott was thanked for refurbishing the Jubilee Pump in High Street South...BCC approved the installation of enhanced road safety signs for Ivy Lane...Maurice Tofield was thanked for installing new memorial seats on the Rec...and from the Grapevine's editorial team, ever vigilant in scouring the world to protect Stewkley's intellectual property rights, Diana Sheldon had discovered another local newsletter called *Grapevine* in the town of Lucca in Italy (no hardship finding that then.)

