

DOWN MEMORY LANE

Continuing our series looking at Stewkley past and present

War Memorial Corner

Appropriately as we approach Remembrance Sunday, this month features the Stewkley Village Public War Memorial at the junction of the High Street with Soulbury Road. Considered by many villagers to be the emotional and physical heart of Stewkley, the War Memorial was unveiled by the Earl of Orkney on 9 April 1922. Originally constructed to honour the Stewkley men fallen in the Great War, it now

also bears the names of the victims of the Second World War. The form of the Memorial as an obelisk was not without controversy leading to the resignation from the War Memorial Committee of the Vicar, the Rev Archibald Moxon. He had proposed that the design be in the form of a cross, as in the cemeteries on the Western Front. However, when a village vote was held, a large majority found in favour of a granite obelisk.

The 1930s image is a delightful composition with St Michael's Church at centre, as you rounded the corner. Unfortunately that view is obscured today by the dense trees in the vicarage garden. In terms of change, the 14th-century Perpendicular pinnacles on the church tower, made of brick with Roman cement render, were removed in 1964 when they became unsafe and in danger of falling. They were disliked by many as not being in keeping with the simplicity of the Norman tower.

The Buckinghamshire Best Kept Village sign is a happy addition to the scene.

FROM THE GRAPEVINE 10 YEARS AGO...

From November 2010, yes indeed, there was an earlier Parish Plan then, which identified a demand for seven new two-bedroom homes, and villagers disquiet about over-development and increased road traffic...a Grapevine cartoon depicted an angry-looking lady armed with rolling pin, threatening tardy deadline copy dodgers...Rev Jim Gorringer graced Bunt Scott's *Desert Island Discs*...St Michael's search for a new vicar failed to produce an applicant with the required experience and was to be re-advertised...the Youth Club launched Stewkley's *Got Talent* events...Stewkley FC 1st XI were five points clear at the top of the N. Bucks Premier Division...Nature Notebook announced the first winter sightings of fieldfares...Ernie Keen's beloved plough had been magnificently restored by the Humphreys family in Dunton Road...and the Carpenter's Arms was to stage a bonfire and firework display.

FROM THE GRAPEVINE 20 YEARS AGO...

From November 2000, the front page was dominated by the unprecedented news of the closure of the Post Office in the Old School premises after the resignation of the post mistress following the second armed robbery within a few weeks...newly arrived in Stewkley, John Thornback mused on the mysteries of the village chip van...Robert Dickens' *Stewkley in Camera Vol II* was with the printer and about to be published that month...the Recreation Ground committee was making an earnest plea to dog owners to clean up after them as football pitches were having to be cleared of dog faeces before matches...Jack Howe was in fine form for Stewkley FC U10s scoring seven goals over two matches in October...St Michael's PCC was appealing for villagers to join a grass mowing rota to keep the churchyard tidy...and Stewkley Players next production was to be *The Coarse Acting Show*.



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