

DOWN MEMORY LANE

Continuing our series looking at Stewkley past and present



High Street Methodist Church, Stewkley.

Stewkley Primitive Methodist Church

The Primitive Methodist Church or Chapel on High Street South was built in 1903 using funds donated by local village families. It replaced an earlier chapel of 1839 in Orchard Lane which had become too small for Sunday attendances taking place in the morning, afternoon and evening.

Attendances at the rival Wesleyan Methodist Chapel in Chapel Square had been declining throughout the second half of the 20th century. The two congregations combined when the Wesleyan Chapel closed in 1987 and was demolished in 1988.

Now known as the High Street Methodist Church, it forms a pleasing visual focus on High Street South, with its Italianate-style campanile and copper-clad spire, its adjacent schoolroom of the same date, its cast-iron railings and trees.

Flanked on either side by the strong presence of The Manse and Clarendon House, very little has changed in the 90 years between the images, except the iron railings have been lost from outside The Manse, and the weather vane from atop the church spire.

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FROM THE GRAPEVINE 10 YEARS AGO...

From February 2011, with a broad smile on his face, Bunt Scott berated folks failing to exchange a traditional 'hello' on meeting up on Stewkley streets...the PC Traffic Sub-Committee issued a warning to motorists parking at the War Memorial junction that they were breaking the law...Nature Notebook remarked on the many wildlife scavengers finding life-saving food amongst the casualty creatures of the winter cold spell...the Church Social Committee's New Year's Eve Dinner Dance in the Village Hall had proven to be a resounding success...at an open evening in the Church, it was agreed that a rebuild of the old vestry was the most acceptable plan to provide modest toilet and kitchen facilities...Irene Robinson thanked Stewkley for 40 years of happy memories in the village...and Lin and Dave Garrard waved farewell to Stewkley after 35 years as leading lights in the WI (Lin) and youth soccer (Dave).



FROM THE GRAPEVINE 20 YEARS AGO...

From February 2001, Post Office Counters gave a resounding 'thumbs down' to the PC plea to use the village library premises as a temporary alternative venue for a Post Office, calling it both "impractical and uneconomic"...the PC owned trailer was stolen on New Year's Eve from the Recreation Ground storage sheds...the plan for a One 2 One telecoms tower to be constructed adjacent to the tennis courts on the Recreation Ground was abandoned...the Village Hall Committee was to host a St Valentine's Dance to the music of James Goff and his Yamaha keyboard for the princely ticket price of £6.50...Stewkley Players announced what was to be their excellent production of *Tartuffe* in March...and January's heavy snowfall forced the Grapevine into developing its Internet presence for its content contributions and simply to get the news out.

