

DOWN MEMORY LANE

Continuing our series looking at Stewkley past and present

High Street South Beyond Orchard Lane

Entering the village from Dunton Road crossroads, High Street South slowly meanders to the left as it passes Orchard Lane, with the Methodist Church sited opposite on the outside of the curve. This area forms one of the 12 village "nodes" or identity areas of individual townscape character identified in the Conservation Area.

'Sawmills', No 62 High Street South, is a prominent home which contributes particularly to Stewkley's rural character. Identified in the Conservation Area document as a "prominent building", it is unlisted which is a quite remarkable oversight given that it is a 17th century timber-framed property. It previously had a steeper roof pitch and was thatched, as can be seen in the old image. The upper storey was re-built after suffering severe fire damage in the 1950s...perhaps the Royal Commission on Historic Monuments that carried out the listings didn't care for the inappropriate asbestos tiles employed on the replacement roof. No matter, the recent conservation work has replaced them with a fine, new slate roof.

During the first half of the 20th century the house was the home of talented violinist, and maker and mender of violins, William Capp. He was also a celebrated village builder, carpenter and undertaker, and left a memorable word picture of village life in his lifetime in *Stewkley, Bucks* which he co-authored with Kate Mayne in 1955. Until recently, the house was the home of well-known landscape artist Edward Stamp RI, the grandson-in-law of William Capp.

On the right beyond the trees in the old image, can be seen the chimneys of the demolished Griffin's Farmhouse in Chapel Field, now the site of the four modern bungalows in the contemporary image.



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FROM THE GRAPEVINE 10 YEARS AGO...

From October 2011, Rev. Paul Drake, Stewkley Vicar for 16 years throughout the Third London Airport campaigns, had died aged 92...Bunt Scott was out 'on his bike' equipped with megaphone and mini-windmill, to drum up protest against the proposed Stoke Hammond wind farm...PC Chair Cllr Paul Smith received the De Fraine Cup on behalf of the village, as Bucks Best Kept Village winners...St Michael's School was about to welcome a new Headteacher in the shape of Mrs Katherine Passmore... as Stewkley thinks towards Her Majesty's Platinum Jubilee in 2022, the PC was offering grants towards village events being planned to mark the Diamond Jubilee...villagers Janet Mayne and Terry Mead passed away, with a Grapevine tribute to Terry's championship flock of Southdown sheep...Chris Collins was once again Tennis Club men's singles champion...and the ladies of St Michael's Church were pictured busily decorating for the Harvest Festival.



FROM THE GRAPEVINE 20 YEARS AGO...

From October 2001, St Michael's Church Bell Fund had now reached £18,834 with many fundraising events still planned including a plant sale, coffee morning, Harvest supper and a Village Hall talk on the Battlefields of the Great War...Methodist Minister Rev. Arthur Cowburn wrote on the theme of the tragic events of '9/11' in New York and Washington DC... Stewkley Scouts were seeking new leaders under the threat of disbandment...Martin Gregory scored 125 not out as Stewkley 1st XI defeated Little Gaddesden...and Stewkley Players were to stage the pantomime *Jack and the Beanstalk* in the Village Hall.

