

# DOWN MEMORY LANE

*Continuing our series looking at Stewkley past and present*

## Plough Cottage~Bowls Farm, High Street North

Trees and hedges continue to contribute to the quality of this most northerly node of the Conservation Area. The early buildings here represent the transition between the remains of a tightly built form and the more scattered pattern of later development on the village periphery.

The pub sign in the bucolic turn-of-the-century sepia image indicates the site of the late 17th-century property which in 1846 became The Plough, yet another of Stewkley's long lost pubs. Before it closed for business in the 1920s, it purveyed the Aylesbury Brewery Company's 'celebrated ales'. In addition to serving a pint, publican William Elmer could also repair your clock or watch in his rear workshop. It remains in the modern image as a private home, Plough Cottage, No 123 High Street North.

A thatched cottage, long since demolished, whose gable end can be seen behind the pub sign, was the home of celebrated artist Miss Edith Cheesman. In the 1920s, she travelled to Mesopotamia, then under British occupation, with her British Army officer brother, Major Robert Cheesman, a noted cartographer and naturalist. Edith painted watercolour scenes and created artwork for stamps for the Iraqi postal service, whilst Robert had the distinction of having his identification of a rodent, Cheesman's gerbil (*Gerbillus cheesmani*), named after him.

Beyond Miss Cheesman's home can be seen the mid-19th-century bay windows of Mrs Joshua Heley's general shop. Still present in the modern image, the clue is in its current name, The Old Store, at No 129 High Street North.

Completing this little group is the substantial Victorian farmhouse of Bowls Farm across the High Street.



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### FROM THE GRAPEVINE 10 YEARS AGO...

From August 2012, the speed vigilantes of the PC's Traffic Sub-Committee were on the streets for the first time... Stewkley took joint runner-up position to Chalfont St Peter for the Tindall Cup in the Best Kept Village competition...David Carter won the Michell Cup for most class victories at the Village Hall Show...Nature Watch reported the conspicuous scarcity of butterflies that summer...the village mourned the passing away of Kath Henley and John Drummond...an investigation remained unresolved as to why the name of Stewkley schoolboy John Hambly, killed in action in France in August 1915, was rejected for inclusion on Stewkley War Memorial, or why his name is spelt wrongly by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission on his headstone...Stewkley folk lined the streets of Whitchurch and Winslow to cheer on the 2012 Olympic flame...and Grapevine managed only 16 pages in the dog days of summer.



### FROM THE GRAPEVINE 20 YEARS AGO...

From August 2002, Luton Airport was proposing a new landing approach on a flightpath routing directly overhead Stewkley...consultation was taking place on planning permission at the former Newton Longville brickworks quarry to build an incinerator at the heart of the biggest waste facility in Britain just three miles from Stewkley...views were being sought by a questionnaire on desired teenage leisure facilities for Stewkley youth...and Jill Scott won the silver salver for best single exhibit in the Village Hall Show (Grapevine would love to know what the winning exhibit was?!)

