

# DOWN MEMORY LANE

*Continuing our series looking at Stewkley past and present*

## Methodist Church to Orchard Lane

The northerly section of this village node has strong vernacular building structure maintaining the character of the High Street. Trees and grass verges along the pavements between the buildings and the street soften the appearance for pedestrians.

The Italianate Methodist Church of 1903 provides a visual focus. The old image from the first decade of the 20th-century reveals that its extant copper-clad campanile was a slightly later addition. Directly opposite the Church stands the delightfully proportioned 19th-century home of No 60 High Street South.

Next door, in a northerly direction, is the Grade II Listed 16/17th-century thatched cottage at No 58. Both the old and the contemporary images highlight the two-storey tiled extension which greets the pavement. William Bliss worked a smithy here in the late 1800s. In the early 20th-century, the cottage and its adjoining land to the north, were bought by London silk merchant, Amos Ashwell who built The Orchard on the land in 1912.

The original cottage was rented to a Mr and Mrs Lovett who opened the extension with shop window, seen in the old image, as a draper's shop. As we can see, the Lovetts were agents for nationwide dyers and dry cleaners, Pullars of Perth.

In 1910, the Lovetts moved up the High Street to a purpose-built shop and home at No 42, which vintage villagers will remember became successively the local Co-op, Les Smith's butcher's shop and finally, Harvey's café and delicatessen...another village retail outlet lost to commercial change. The adjacent street name, Lovetts End, records the association.

After the Lovetts moved to their new premises, brothers Cyril and Bert Simister Amos from Drayton Parslow took over the shop at No 58 and opened a saddlery and bicycle shop. The brothers joined up into the Bedfordshire Yeomanry cavalry in the Great War and their shop never re-opened.



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

From September 2012, Aylesbury Vale District Council rolled out the now familiar blue-top, green-top and food waste bin routine on a new Tuesday collection day in Stewkley...ironically, the 2012 harvest was delayed and in poor condition as a result of a very wet summer...Stewkley mourned the passing away of Joan Ayres, Beryl Barton and Pauline Hall...Nature Watch reported raptor education classes taking place amongst kestrel and buzzard families in Dunton Road community woodlands...youngsters Rebecca Peacock and Isaac Tofield staged a trumpet concert, with support from Isaac's siblings, at the Tofield home to raise funds for Macmillan Cancer Support... and Stewkley Community Enterprise was to be 'up and running' from 12 October.



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

From September 2002, Stewkley Library in High Street North announced revised (shorter) opening hours from 3 September... the Parish Council pledged to register to all authorities the village's strong opposition to London Luton Airport's increased flight plans overflying Stewkley, and also to the Newton Longville incinerator plan...Robert Dickens was appealing for help in identifying an unknown Great War soldier in a trio photo group, the other two being well-known local lads...the Rec Management Committee was pleading with dog owners to remove the obscenity of dog poo from the Recreation Grounds...Martin Gregory scored 135 not out as Stewkley 1st XI vanquished Rivets by seven wickets...and Shane Orchard, Joel Lewin and Lucy Collins were trophy winners in the Piers Draper Junior Tennis Tournament.

