

# DOWN MEMORY LANE

*Continuing our series looking at Stewkley past and present*

## Cricketers Corner

It is interesting and rewarding to come across photographs of Stewkley past and present where from the camera image perspective there appears to be little or no change in the built street scene. This is the case in the example of High Street North at Cricketers Corner where, travelling north, the road twists right and then sharply left across the front of No 78 High Street North. Today known as Stonhill House, this 16/17th-century Grade II Listed Building is a partly thatched home with a gable-hipped, slate-roofed extension. The extension performed several roles of local historic interest from Coles and Son's 19th-century wheelwright and coach building business to Laurence Stonhill's post-WWI motor repair and filling station, known as Stonhill Garage. A saloon car and petrol pump can be seen in the old image.

The row of brick terraced cottages of Nos 61 to 65, part of Stewkley's Victorian/Edwardian uplift in housing stock, embraced the first village policeman's house at No 63. The double gable-end of No 67, The Little House, a late 18th-century Grade II Listed Building, sits precariously on the inside of the bend at the end of this short High Street vista.

Back to the past and present photographs, where the camera framing in both images disguises the scene on the right-hand side of the High Street. In the old image, south of No 78, there stood one of Stewkley's original ten pubs, the Cricketers Arms, from 1853 to the 1920s, when it became Cricketers Farmhouse, before being finally demolished in the early 1970s. Next southwards there was an open plot which commanded views to adjacent farmland, and where in the 1950s the prominent Hedges' home was built. Its trees and greenery held little special merit and the modern image excludes the new housing development of Cricketers Close, recently built on these sites. However, the retention of a few mature trees provides a welcome foil to the brickwork and a reminder of the countryside nearby.

