WINTER 2025

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With Christmas on its way, it's not too soon to book your festive party, or your day out; nor too soon to decide where to buy your Christmas tree, robot lawnmower, or your new car!

Personal care is always important, and we offer hearing and eyecare specialists, hair stylists and barbershop, skin rejuvenation, a fitness centre, and a qualified counsellor.

Our contributors have submitted some interesting articles this time. On **Page 16** we have news from Crewkerne Museum. Crewkerne British Legion marked the 80th anniversary of VJ Day on Friday August 15th. Read their article on **Page 22**. On the same day Stoke sub Hamdon resident Chris Weedon held a talk about his late father, and his experiences following surrender to the Japanese in Hong Kong. More details on **Page 32**.

Crewkerne in Bloom have their regular article on **Page 30** and Friends of Crewkerne Station appear on **Page 34.**

Crewkerne District Rotary Club have details of their up-coming fundraising events this winter, on **Page 42**, and we bring our report on

Crewkerne's Annual Charter Fair on Page 43.

Our contributor wished to remain anonymous, but **Page 46** brings an interesting account and photos of a local tree surgeon who was entrusted with felling a dangerous tree this summer - in Norway!

With warmest wishes for the winter season 2025-26.

Anthony Bucke EDITOR.

Friday 10 October 2025.

Email crewkerne @theantiquestourist.com



Crewkerne Fair 2025

Disclaimer: The Crewkerne Flyer is published by The Flyer Publications Ltd, The Old Textile Mill, South Street, Crewkerne, TA 18 8AG. Whilst every effort is made to ensure accuracy, no liability is accepted by the publishers for inaccuracies or omissions in the content of The Crewkerne Flyer. This publication is distributed free of charge in the TA 13, 14, 15, 16, 17 and 18 postcodes. If you would like your own free copy, please contact the publishers with the above contacts.

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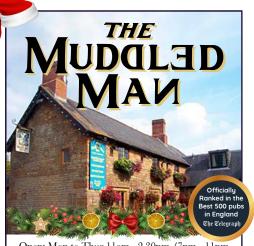
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CREWKERNE MUSEUM & HERITAGE CENTRE

The Museum and Heritage Centre has enjoyed a summer of visitors and we are now looking forward to the autumn and winter events.

The last special exhibition of the year features objects from the stored Collection. If you are curious about the history of local postcards, if you are familiar with the old businesses in Crewkerne there are receipts on display, or want to read stories from the surrounding villages then visit soon. There is also a display of objects for you to identify - the answers are on display, but the objects motivate discussion!

We have been pleased to welcome new volunteers this season who are becoming familiar with the building and how they can help. Although the museum will close on 2nd November we continue to work through the



winter months on research. maintenance jobs and planning for Crewkerne 2026. If you Museum would like to be involved in our work as volunteers contact us on admin@ crewkernemuseum. co.uk

We also welcome group visits to the museum during the winter so if your organisation/ school/group of friends would like a guided tour then email to make arrangements and find out details.

The museum will be open on Lighting up evening with some homemade goodies for sale, don't forget to pop in while you are enjoying a walk around the town to view the Christmas lights.



Our series of Talks & Teas will be open for the public to book soon, visit the website for details, we have some interesting and engaging speakers this year.

If you would like to have up to date information about the museum and events then let us know your email address to become a Friend of the museum. There is no membership fee but we would love you to visit and support our events. To make a donation visit the website or call into the Heritage Centre.

The Heritage Centre, Market Square, Crewkerne Somerset TA18 7LP 01460 77079 admin@crewkernemuseum.co.uk | www.crewkernemuseum.co.uk



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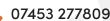
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80th Anniversary of VJ Day - Royal British Legion

At 12 noon on Friday, 15th Aug, 2025, the 80th Anniversary of VJ Day, the Crewkerne & District Branch of the Royal British Legion led the town in the National 2 min Silence in Falkland Square. The ceremony commenced with an introduction and prayers given by the Branch Padre, the Reverend Andrew Longshaw. This was followed by the standard Remembrance Service format of the Exhortation, Last Post, 2min Silence, Reveille, and the Kohima with the branch President, Tony Smith laying a wreath below the War Memorial at the end. A personal wreath was also laid in memory of a family member.

At 6pm the Proclamation was announced from the steps of Crewkerne Town Hall by the Town Cryer, David Craner. He was accompanied by the Deputy Mayor, Kathy Head, the branch President Tony Smith, branch Standard Bearer John Smith and Stevie, the branch Poppy Mascot.

At 6.30pm attention switched to the Crewkerne Methodist Church where a Commemoration Service took place. This was compiled and conducted by Rev Longshaw on behalf of the crewkerne Branch. The service was short but moving with 3 Hymns, a Reading, an Address titled "They are not Forgotten", the Last Post, 1 min silence, Reveille and the Kohima. Light Refreshments, prepared by branch committee members Sandie Smith, Sarah King and Lizzie Longshaw were available on completion.

The Crewkerne Branch as a whole was congratulated by a small party that had come across from the Bath area. They commented very favourably on the content and manner in which the occasion had been handled. They had come, they said, because they could find absolutely nothing in the way of VJ Day Commemorative activities taking place in their local area.

The Fourteenth Army and all those who served in the Far East are truly not forgotten by the Crewkerne and District RBL.





 $We b site: {\color{blue}\textbf{www.counties.britishlegion.org.uk/branches/crewkerne}}$

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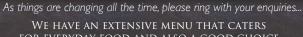
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BERTIES BIG BAND ARE BACK FOR ANOTHER CHRISTMAS CONCERT IN CREWKERNE THIS YEAR.

We had a really good turnout last year in spite of shocking weather. Hope to see you all again this year.

You will notice a few changes. We have a new musical director, Seth Nordin, who is graduate of music from Arkansas University USA.

Also the well known local singer Julie Dunn will be adding the vocals. There is a rumour the mayor of Crewkerne will be there too, so the band will be on best behaviour!

Join us in the Victoria Hall on December 13th at 7:30pm.

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Crewkerne in Bloom

NEW PLANTING SCHEMES

We've been adjusting to global warming for some time and we're pretty sure that you will have noticed changes to the contents of our planters this year.

Crewkerne in Bloom volunteer Sallie explains, "Wherever possible we are introducing drought tolerant plants. Instead of filling all the planters with seasonal bedding, some now contain a mixture of perennials and foliage with a few annuals included for extra colour.

Meanwhile, our landmark large flower bed at the

Rotary Stone is benefitting from the addition of plants that have outgrown their planters, plus the two big coloured grasses that were formerly near the Black Swan dental practice. Autumn's rain has encouraged new growth in the perennials and we are well on the way to restoring this area's former beauty after the dry Summer."

POTS OF HYACINTH BULBS FOR CHRISTMAS

It wouldn't be Christmas in Crewkerne without our popular annual sale of hyacinth pots.

Three to a pot, they come in pink, blue or white.

Find them at our stall in the Farmers' Market on November 23rd; the Christmas Market on



November 29th; in the LIC at the Town Hall during opening hours – and any other shop or business that might be kind enough to sell them for us. Proceeds will go towards our programme of further cheerful planting around town

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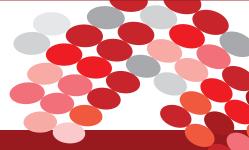
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VICTORY OVER JAPAN!

This important day, 15 August 1945, signalled the final end to fighting in World War Two. The Japanese Emperor Hirohito unconditionally surrendered his Nation to The Allies. The 80th anniversary of VJ Day was commemorated in August 2025, with many parades, church services and meetings around the country to show respect for those who fought and died in The Far East.

At times like this we often hear about The Fall of Singapore; The Burma Railway; Changi Jail; and Hiroshima. Stoke sub Hamdon resident Chris Weedon brought a fresh dimension to war in The Far East, high-lighting a tragic event which involved his late Father. This was the sinking of "The Lisbon Maru".

On 15 August 2025, at Stoke sub Hamdon, Chris held a fascinating talk about his late Father, Martin Weedon 64628, and the book his Father had written "Guest of An Emperor". On 25 December 1941, Captain Weedon had

been captured during the fall of Hong Kong, along with 1815 other prisoners. On 27 September 1942 Captain Weedon and his fellow prisoners of war boarded armed Japanese troopship "The Lisbon Maru". Although they did not know each other at the time, my late Father Lieutenant Cyril Bucke 113504 was also on the same ship. They were bound for slavelabour camps in Japan.

On 1 October 1942 "The Lisbon Maru" was torpedoed by "USS Grouper" - an American submarine. As "The Lisbon Maru" was flying Japanese flags and showed no other indication that it carried prisoners of war - for example a RED CROSS - this was deemed a legitimate target. The ship sunk, and settled on a sandbank, but the Japanese made no attempt to rescue the prisoners; instead they shot dead any trying to escape from the stricken ship. By 5 October 828 prisoners



The Lisbon Maru Memorial at the National Arboretum.

had been killed, the survivors finally escaping to Shanghai, aided by Chinese fishermen. Despite more deaths due to injuries, mis-treatment and malnutrition, the remaining men made it to Japan. However, by VJ Day 1945 - after a further two and a half years of captivity - just 750 survived out of the original 1815 who had originally left Hong Kong. Thankfully Chris's father and mine were amongst those 750 survivors.

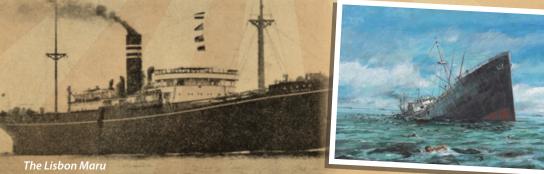
References -

Martin Weedon author of 'Guest of An Emperor'.

Steve Denton & Robert Widders – "The Lisbon Maru Massacre".

Photo credits: Chris Weedon.

by Anthony Bucke



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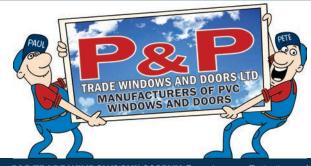
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The Friends of **CREWKERNE** Station

SUMMER OF THE SMDS

This summer's hot, sunny weather caused soil moisture deficits (SMDs), drying the ground under the track and forcing a 40 mph limit. The Yeovil-Exeter line already runs a tight timetable with few passing places. SMD restrictions between Yeovil and Crewkerne meant that, for two weeks, trains skipped Crewkerne to keep time. Further SMDs west of Axminster prompted a new timetable: one train every two hours. Recent heavy rain has helped the track bed, but disruption will continue into the autumn.

The volunteer watering team has kept planters going; a hose along the down platform made it easier. Passengers enjoyed flowers, lettuces and tomatoes. Drought-tolerant herbs and pelargoniums gave strong colour, with cordylines and phormiums as hardy



backdrops. Volunteer Sue is pictured dead-heading.



We welcomed local MP Adam Dance for a tour, highlighting how breakdown-prone elderly trains and limited passing places deter car users from switching to rail. Government investment in our Railway is needed. The photo shows Adam on the volunteerrestored waiting-room bench. The grant-aided Pumphouse window frame awaits a structural engineer's report before reinstatement.

A Railway 200 scheme encourages visits to first-class venues near Blackmore Vale Community Rail Partnership stations via collectible postcards-with prizes. . Volunteer Frankie Mac won a South Western Railway water bottle after sending eight postcards and a rail ticket. The Christmas season is ideal for visiting local stations for decorations and gift ideas.

The Friends won gold for



their community garden and entered a Biodiversity award with South Western Railway. Seasonal flowering plants support pollinators and insects; birdlife is up thanks to bird boxes and a busy bird bath on the down platform. Wildflower banks further boost biodiversity. Heather is pictured with the gold award.



Meet the Friends at the Christmas Market on 29 November -food, drink, and seasonal, hand-crafted gifts for sale.

CREWKERNE

The Friends of the Station are interested in all things railway and transport and welcome additional members and volunteers.

Find us on Facebook www.facebook.com/groups/friendsofcrewkerne or contact us at focscrewkerne@gmail.com



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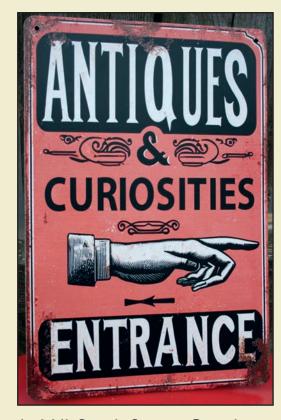






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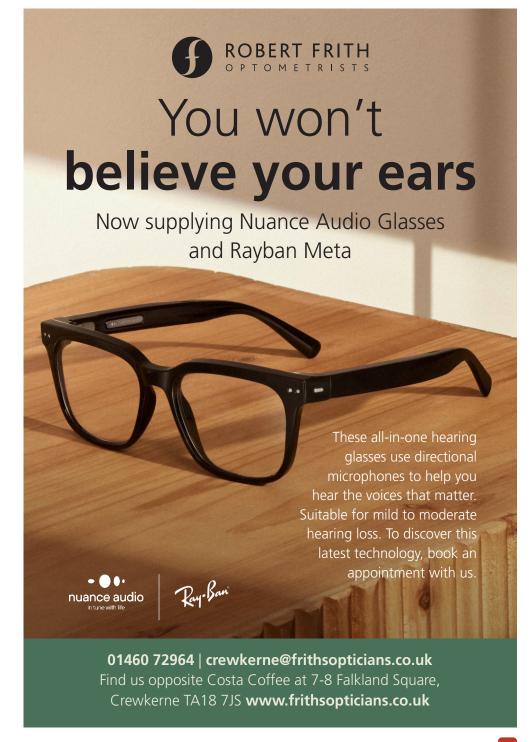
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CREWKERNE DISTRICT ROTARY CLUB

In addition to the **Crewkerne Charter Fair** and **Street Market**, the Crewkerne District Rotary club also organise the **annual fireworks display** on Station Road and support the **Rotary Santa Float** for 6 nights in the lead up to Christmas.

This year the fireworks display will be on Friday 7th November and Santa will be visiting the area on 8,9,10 and 15,16,17 December. Full details closer to the time.

Three fantastic community events. If this is something you feel you would like to volunteer for please contact secretary@crewkernedistrictrotary.org

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PhysioFit – Chair-based exercise & physio – 9:30am – 10:30am. Pilates – Pilates for the over 55's – 2:30pm – 3:30pm.

Tuesday

Computer Group – Help with laptops & tablets – 9:00am – 11:00 noon.

Live at Lunch – Live entertainment & set 2-course lunch – 11:00am – 2:00pm.

Memory Lane – A group for those suffering with Dementia – details upon request.

Knit & Natter – A session of knitting & nattering – 2:00pm – 4:00pm.

Wednesday

 $\begin{tabular}{ll} \textbf{Coffee \& Cake Club}-a & chance to socialise with others while enjoying some delicious cakes $-9:00am-11:00am$\\ \textbf{Chair Yoga}-A Yoga class which is accessible to all, no matter your fitness $-9:30am-10:30am.$\\ \end{tabular}$

Memory Group – A group for those suffering from Dementia – details upon request.

Thursday

Winter '
What's On brochure out now!

Yoga – Gentle Yoga aimed at those over 55 – 9:00am – 10:15am. PhysioFit – Chair-based exercise & physio – 10:30am – 11:30am.

Peer Support for Loss & Bereavement – every 1st Thursday – 11:00am – 12:30pm. Sconversational French – every 2nd & 4th Thursday – 11:00am – 12:30pm.

Goldies Sing & Smile – A fun singing session – every 4th Thursday – 2:00pm – 3:00pm.

Friday

Chair Yoga – A Yoga class which is accessible to all, no matter your fitness – 9:15am – 10:15am.

Meet, Greet & Eat – Games & 2-course roast lunch session – 11:00am – 2:00pm.

Friday Forget Me Not – A group for those suffering from Dementia – details upon request.

Goldies Sing & Smile – A fun singing session - Every 2nd Friday – 2:00pm – 3:00pm.

Please note times are subject to possible change, please call before attending a class for the first time.



Loved by the children, tolerated by local businesses, and a source of pleasure and enjoyment for so many generations of local people, Crewkerne Fair has survived for over 800 years.

The earliest legal record permitting the fair to set up on the streets dates from 1280. Dedicated to St Bartholomew (like our parish church), the roots of St Bartholomew's Day Fair lie in agriculture and trade. Originally this was an annual gathering of farmworkers, bailiffs and landowners all hoping to make a deal. Almost certainly trade here years

ago included the sale of livestock and the hiring of farm workers and domestic servants for the coming season. Alongside the serious business were entertainers, card-sharps, amusements, swing-boat rides and cheap-jack stalls selling both useful items, and more frivolous and decorative treasures. Thomas Hardy records ancient hiring fairs in a number of his works.

Today the scene is quite similar, but without the serious dealing, hiring and firing.

Crewkerne Fair has survived due to a few factors; the original Charter permitting

its operation on very strict dates and operating hours; the enthusiasm of the Town of Crewkerne to perpetuate this very popular event; and the excellent stewardship of Crewkerne District Rotary.

Recently elected Rotary
President Lindsey Bristow
and her team were on hand
throughout the 3 days of
the fair, carefully directing
traffic, guiding pleasureseekers, visitors and sightseers, around the narrow
streets of our town.

Anthony Bucke

EDITOR. Monday 6 October 2025

Rotary Club of Crewkerne District Trust. Registered Charity Number: 1160927





Rotary President Lindsey Bristow & Rotary Member Rosan Cosgrove





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Festival of Snowdrops

Save the date: East Lambrook Manor (South Petherton) will be staging its popular Snowdrop Festival once again this coming February. There will be over 100 varieties on display. Although planted throughout the garden, the highlight will be the famous "Ditch" with it's blanket of rare and unusual snowdrops making a heartwarming display in the depths of winter.

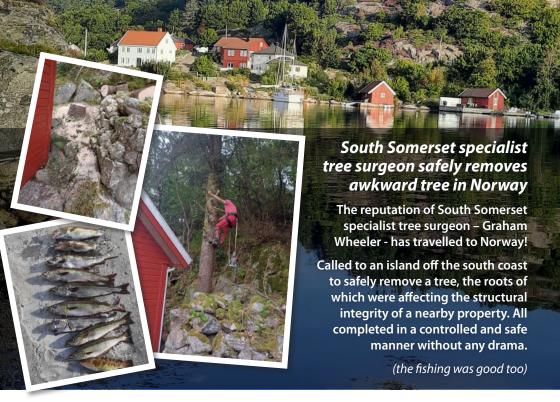
The on-site nursery will also feature a display border and will have a wide variety of both Snowdrops and Hellebores (*Christmas Rose*) for sale. Visit the café for a hot drink and piece of cake while warming yourself by the log stove, or cross the road to the neighbouring Rose and Crown pub for a hot meal.

Garden Nursery and Café open 10am till 5pm Wednesday to Sunday. Admission £8.50 for adults, children under 16 free. Visit

www.eastlambrook.com for full details.

photos courtesy of James Ingram





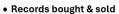


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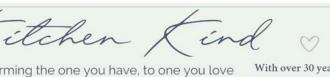
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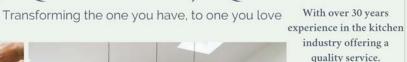
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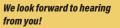
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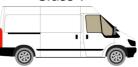
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