

THE BOOK OF BRIDGWATER

DIAMOND JUBILEE EDITION

Roger Evans

Bridgwater dates back to 800AD and was a free borough by 1200. It once boasted a river-side castle and was the most significant shipping port on the Somerset coast. It was from here that the Duke of Monmouth set out on his fateful journey to the Battle of Sedgemoor. It is the home of Admiral Blake, described by Nelson as England's finest admiral. It was even disenfranchised for corrupt voting practices in Parliamentary elections.

Relics of its maritime past can be seen at the historic docks and along the quaysides from where shiploads of emigrants left for America. Although it is a town steeped in history, it is today perhaps best known for its spectacular winter carnival with a procession unchallenged as the world's greatest night-time carnival, an event which reflects the culture of this Somerset community. This book explores the history and character of this unique Somerset town.

First published in 2006 and quickly sold out, this new edition of *The Book of Bridgwater* published to coincide with the Diamond Jubilee, brings the story of the community fully up to date. A new section highlights what has happened since the book was first issued. Bridgwater's one-time largest employer, British Cellophane, closed its factory gates for the last time and the landmark chimney has long since disappeared. Major development work is now taking place on the former site as the town re-vitalises itself. Meanwhile Bridgwater has been left without a swimming pool after the controversial closure of the Sedgemoor Splash and the town made the national news when the West Quay river wall collapsed on the very night of Bridgwater Carnival. New images capture how the Jubilee was celebrated.

This unique publication is a vital record of the history and inhabitants of the ancient town of Bridgwater; presented in a single volume for all to treasure.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

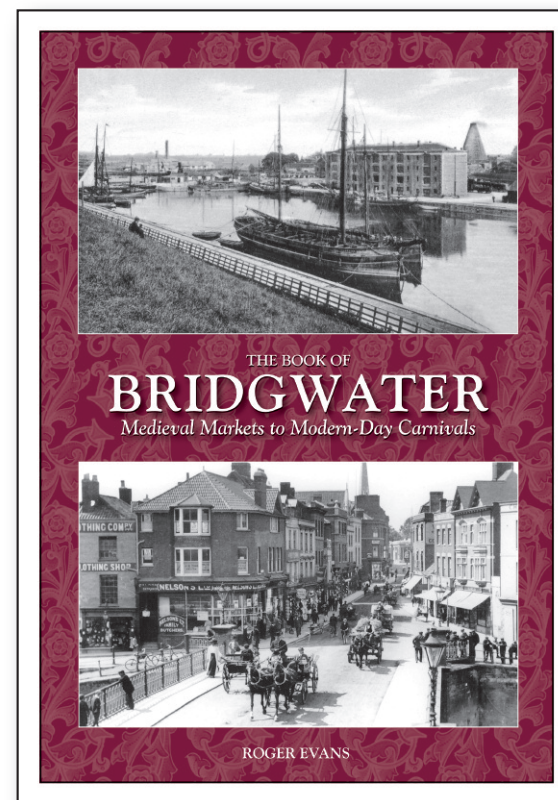
Roger Evans, MA, born and bred in Bridgwater; was educated at Eastover Primary School and Dr Morgan's Grammar School for Boys. Aged 22, he was the borough's youngest ever councillor and later a chairman of Bridgwater Carnival. His passion for the town is revealed in his earlier publications: *Bridgwater with and without the 'e'*, *Forgotten Heroes of Bridgwater and Somerset Carnivals* (Halsgrove, 2005). In 1996 he won the 'Bridgwater Cup' as the individual making the greatest contribution to the town that year. He is known across the county as the author of many publications on Somerset and as a raconteur for radio and TV.

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THE BOOK OF BRIDGWATER



The popular Bridgwater Lido.



The local Army Service Corps in 1914 marching to the railway station on their way to war.



West Street during Bridgwater Fair in the 1950s.

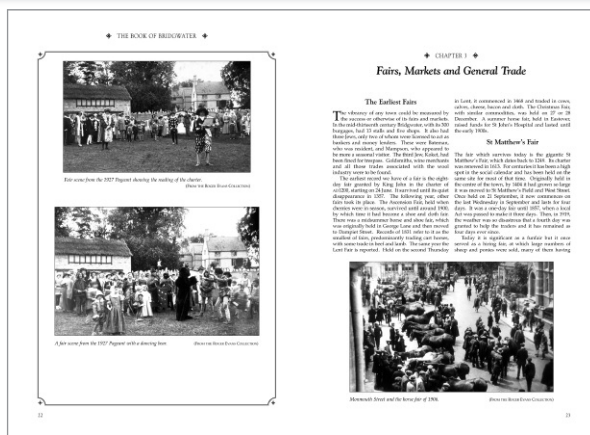


Right: Ox roast on the River Parrett, 1895.

Below: A Bridgwater brickyard, c.1950.



Example of a double-page spread.



Residents of The Copse celebrate with a Diamond Jubilee street party, June 2012.