

SOMERSET CURIOUS AND SURPRISING

'In the Good Old Days'

Jack Sweet

In this sunny and cheerful book, the author Jack Sweet describes the many times and the variety of ways in which the people of Somerset enjoyed themselves – sometimes very oddly indeed – in those 'good old days' when the world and our lives were simpler.

He tells of outings and excursions to the seaside, the fun to be had at pantomimes, carnivals, fêtes and wedding celebrations. There were the thrills of Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show, the pleasure of picking worts (bilberries) on Exmoor, the simple pleasure of looking at a field of wheat and kissing! How we enjoyed the celebrations of the end of the Second World War, old fashioned Christmases, song and dance in 1972 and the fun of the *Western Gazette's* Sports in the summer of 1911. The coronation of Queen Elizabeth II and her great-great grandmother, Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee gave rise to great patriotic displays, whilst there was Taunton's 'Coronatia Fête' in August 1911 celebrating the coronation of King George V. Jack Sweet also relates how the locals had 'Six Days of Fun' at Yeovil Carnival, and how crowds were thrilled by the display by a pioneering aviator in his frail biplane, how a local youth club presented two enjoyable reviews 'Dinah Mite' and 'The Flamingo Club' and how youngsters enjoyed the Saturday Morning Picture Shows. There are memories of family holidays at Blue Anchor in the 1940s, cycling in 1931 and a drive through Somerset in 1924 on a day with 'a glorious sky and sunshine'.

All these and more records and recollections, quaint and curious as they might now seem to us, present a fascinating collage of good old times in Somerset in the not so long ago.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

A proud Somerset man, **Jack Sweet** was born in Yeovil in 1937 and following service in the RAF in 1958 became a local government administrator for 34 years working for Yeovil Borough Council and from 1974 for its successor South Somerset District Council.

His first book *Shocking Somerset Murders of the Nineteenth Century* was published by Halsgrove in 1997 and was followed by twelve more with a Somerset or Yeovil theme (three co-authored with Robin Ansell).

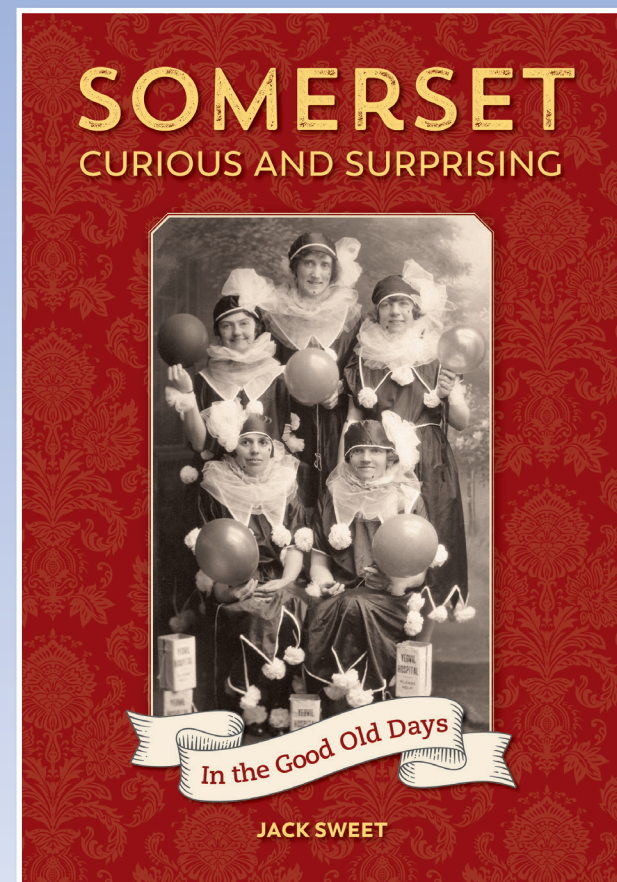
Jack's interests include local, family and military history. He has visited former battlefields around the world as well as many visits to Europe.

Jack is a widower with three daughters, two grandsons and a granddaughter – he still lives in Yeovil.

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