

The Somerset Archaeological and Natural History Society (SANHS) have just published the second volume in their series on the *Maritime History of Somerset*. Edited by local author, Dr Adrian Webb, volume two contains a wide variety of information detailing aspects of Somerset's much neglected maritime past. Six authors have contributed years of research into this volume which contains chapters on:

- Travel along the Somerset coast
- Tourism in Somerset
- River ferries at Pill and Rownham on the River Avon
- The development of Minehead harbour
- Sea fishing off the Somerset coast

Covering over a thousand years of history, discover the fate of the men who operated the ferry across the River Avon until the motor car and the Avon Bridge put an end to their livelihood. Or stories of the experiences from a few of the travellers who journeyed down the Bristol Channel, skirting the Somerset coast, many of them to find new lives in the New World. Many travellers were not so lucky and many wrecks were the sad result of their attempts at finding a new life.

Devastating storms at the end of the seventeenth century forced the Luttrells to rebuild their pier at Minehead. In order to do so a civil engineer was employed who rode from London to Minehead to survey the scale of the work needed. His detailed letters, accounts and drawings are included in this book, along with a chapter on sea fishing. Sadly, what was once a source of income for hundreds of Somerset folk has today almost slipped out of the public eye. Only a brave handful earn a living from sea fishing but back in the seventeenth century Minehead had its own fleet!

Of a more cheerful nature is the chapter on Somerset's seaside tourism. Traced from the eighteenth century, local historian, Sue Berry, has unearthed tales of tourists' experiences who braved the Somerset seaside. Minehead, Burnham, Weston and Clevedon all cashed in on the hoards of visitors before foreign holidays became the preferred destination for those who could afford it.

This book is an A4 softback and contains 225 pages, and 159 colour and black and white images. The foreword has been written by Lady Gass. ISBN 978 0 902152 26 7.

Exclusively available in Taunton from Lionel and Jo at Brendon Books, Taunton's only independent book shop, at £20. Available by post from <http://www.freewebstore.org/SANHS>