

SAUNDERSFOOT AND DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

For its last lecture of the 2014-15 programme the Society welcomed Richard Davies whose well-illustrated subject was 'Interpreting World War One through Commemorative China.' He divided the collection of crested china into five themes: king and country, battlefield, home front, peace and armistice, and commemoration, and through which the approach and phases of the Great War could be viewed from a very different aspect.

Britain's period of splendid isolation quickly gave way to a series of alliances as the prospect of war loomed and which were shown on various ceramic pieces by the respective flags of the allies or by their heads of state. The flags of Empire were also portrayed to emphasise loyalty and that Britain did not stand alone.

Battlefield pieces included images of the senior generals and of weaponry such as the newly invented tank, ships, planes and field guns. Local affiliations were reflected in regimental names and insignia.

The pictures of the royal family were a staple of home front china but a more utilitarian message was also conveyed, of women in the munitions factories and in exhortations to frugality.

The armistice of 1919 was illustrated again through the flags of the victorious allies, heads of state and generals, while a sombre note was struck by images of the new cenotaph and the tomb of the unknown soldier.

A common feature of the china was the inclusion of town names on pieces, no doubt to foster local pride and a sense of patriotism, but it was of particular interest to see many Pembrokeshire places so represented.

Richard Davies was warmly thanked for his highly informative and unusual talk by the Society's chairman, Mrs. Mary Cavell.

The Society's successful season will be finished with a trip to the White Quarry on the Black Mountain on 17 June. The coach will leave from outside the Amusement Arcade at 9.30 and return at 4.30. Members should bring along a packed lunch and wear appropriate clothing and footwear for the guided walks.