

## SAUNDERSFOOT AND DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

At its first meeting of the 2016-17 season the Society welcomed back the Rev. Richard Davies. Some two years ago Richard had spoken on commemorative pottery of the First World War and here he took a similar topic but with a different theme: Diamond Jubilee to Diamond Jubilee, where the world of commemorative china was again illustrated and explored but with a focus on the monarchy.

The first such china dates from the restoration of the monarchy and Charles the Second but it was very expensive and few pieces were produced. The invention of the transfer print technique after 1750 substantially reduced prices but it was not until Victoria's reign that the practice of actively collecting memorial china became a popular pastime. In its Victorian heyday almost any person, place or event was commemorated though it was the milestones of each monarch's reign that most interested the buying public.

Victoria's Diamond Jubilee in 1897 saw a particular outpouring of pieces. Interestingly, a diamond jubilee had until then meant seventy-five years but in consideration of the Queen's age the event was brought forward, and of course a diamond anniversary has since remained sixty years. The Queen's death in 1901 gave rise to a large number of new commemorative pieces: plates, cups, saucers, mugs and many other items of varying quality and price. The Queen had died at Osborne House on the Isle of Wight and new protocols needed to be created for the return of the funeral cortege to Windsor, from an avenue of battleships from the island to Portsmouth to the stations along the sombre rail journey. Every aspect would be recorded in china and sold to an eager public.

Thereafter, each new reign brought forth a host of new china, and each event during the reign would be commemorated. Accessions, coronations, weddings and their jubilees, births of children and deaths – all gave rise to memorial china to be proudly displayed on mantelpieces and in cabinets throughout the land.

The speaker was warmly thanked by the chair, Mrs. Mary Cavell. The next public lecture will take place at 7.30 on 19 October when Anthony Ferrier will talk about 'The Geology of Saundersfoot and how it has affected its growth.' Meetings are held at the Regency Hall and non-members are very welcome to attend on the night.