

**Spode Works Press Release
April 2014**



The Spode Museum Trust is pleased to announce that we are open until the 2nd of November, 2014 on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays and also on Bank Holiday Mondays from 10.30 am to 4.00pm. We can cater for groups on these days and indeed any other day of the week with prior booking. The Visitor Centre has a limited amount of antique and vintage Spode and Copeland china available for sale and other gift items.



Most of the specific displays from last year have either been expanded upon, added to or improved. We have recently unveiled two new displays: one of Tiles and the other of Armorial. Included in the tile display is a rare and interesting four-colour register tissue printed Copeland tile. The Armorial display includes items produced for Charles Dickens, the Emperor of Mexico, The East India Company, Princess Mary of Teck, The King of Belgium and many more. These displays will be refreshed over the season.

New to the transfer-printing area is the Spode Willow pattern story with examples from Chinese originals to Caughley porcelain to Spode wares from the late eighteenth century through to 2008. Hand-engraved copper plates originally used to produce these wares are included within the display.

Ceramic artists Tony Challiner and David Bailey, both formerly employed at Spode, are teaming up to re-create two hand-painted and gilded replicas of an elaborate Victorian seau, or deep dish, one of the treasures in the Spode Museum's collection currently on display at the Centre.

The original seau was painted by Charles Ferdinand Hürten, who trained in Cologne and Paris, but worked at Copelands for over 30 years. He was considered the finest painter of flowers on ceramics at any British factory during the Victorian period and his pieces were exhibited at International Exhibitions in London, Paris, Berlin, Vienna and North America doing much to confirm Copelands as a world class producer of ceramics.



During their time at Spode, Tony and David produced high-quality hand-painted items and worked on prestige wares such as those for the Royal Yacht Britannia, the Shah of Persia and Pope John Paul II. They will be based at the Spode Works Visitor Centre on the old Spode factory site and visitors will be able to meet and talk to one or the other during special demonstration sessions on most Fridays throughout the summer.

Tony said: “We were lucky enough to find two blanks among the debris when Spode closed down therefore without having to re-mould and re-fire the ceramic bodies, it was just too good an opportunity to miss, but this is going to be a very challenging project. Hürten was without equal as a flower painter and reproducing his work is in a way like trying to reproduce a Rembrandt – you can get it looking similar, but can you get it as good?”

David said: “There are going to be a number of technical challenges, not least since some of the pigments Hürten used are unavailable nowadays because of their lead and mercury content. The gilding in particular is very complex, however we have a few tricks of our own up our sleeves and think we should be able to get around the problems - this is a great project.”

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