The Worcester News reports that the Royal Worcester Museum is the recent beneficiary of a £1.3 million grant to complete a project designed to celebrate 250 years of innovation, industry and craftsmanship at the museum. The newly funded project will expand the museum’s offerings beyond its extensive collection of china to include the history of the factory, the people that worked in it and the social history linked to the company’s hundreds of years of porcelain production. When completed, the expanded exhibit will “shine a light on the hidden stories and exhibits from the museum’s archives” and it will include “audio recordings which describe the camaraderie and rivalry that existed between departments and show just how many skills and pairs of hands each piece took to create.” Consultant for the project, Philippa Tinsley, said that “You get a sense of how important [the city of] Worcester became because of the factory.” Royal Worcester, in operation from 1751-2008, was the oldest porcelain manufacturer in Britain.

Laura James of The Sentinel reports that Portmeirion, current owners of the Spode brand, have planned a celebration of the 200th Anniversary of the company’s iconic Italian pattern. Produced for the first time in 1816, this ubiquitous pattern continues to be a favorite for Spode lovers today and rivals the success of another Spode original, the Standard Willow Pattern. While it is frequently referred to as Blue Italian, the pattern has been produced in many colors over the years. Blue and black appear to be the preferred colors for today’s consumers. Given its popularity, it has been produced by several factories over the years.

The Spode Museum Trust will have a cooperative display at the Visitor Centre later in the year and the Portmeirion Company will be contributing financially to support it. The Trust has been assisting Portmeirion with their marketing celebration by providing the background history about the Italian pattern and with historical information about the Spode factory.