

Hand building hand out Rebecca 30/04/20

Well here we are at the end of April, I hope everyone is feeling well and wanting to go for a walk in this wonderful spring time in the city of London. We are going to look at works of tile art by two people Dorethy Annan and George Frederick Watts, the walk is about a mile long mainly on the flat with either lifts or stairs and mainly off road in the Barbican Centre EC2. Enjoy when you can.

The walk starts with a bus ride from Core Arts, take a 56 bus from Chatsworth Road bus stop , Q, and travel through London to Aldersgate Street, EC2, get off near the Museum of London. You can take a lift or stairs up to the Barbican Estate. Walk towards the Museum of London , turn right in front of the museum and walk along Bastion High Walk, you walk past parts of the old London Wall.

Turn left at 125 London Wall, as you are walking through this estate famous for it's use of concrete look at the examples of bricks – glazed and unglazed on the floor. You get to the Postern EC2, walk ahead and turn right onto Gilbert Bridge going over the ponds. Look out for wild life and water features, walk under the Barbican sign and turn right onto Speed high walk.

This is the mural by Dorethy Annan, The Fleet Building Telecom Mural, it is made of stoneware clay, with textures and glazes. It was made in 1960 for the largest telephone exchange on Farringdon Road, at the Fleet Building. It is in muted glazes, an abstract design of the wonders of new communication technology.

Dorethy Annan was born in 1900 in Brazil to British parents and was educated in France and Germany. She was a painter, potter and muralist. Annan's paintings are in many national collections.

This mural was granted grade 2 listed status in 2011 by the Department of Culture,Media and Sport. As an example of 1960's mural art which are quite rare. The listing was supported by Twentieth Century Society, the Tiles and Architectural Ceramics Society, artist Frank Auerbach and Penelope Curtis, director of Tate Britain.

The murals were commissioned at a cost of £300 in 1960. Annan visited the Hatherware Pottery, established in 1874, in Loughborough, she made the tiles and scored her designs onto the wet tiles, you can see her brush strokes on the tiles.

In 2011 Goldman Sachs who owned the building and wished to redevelop the site and opposed the listing of the murals. The City of London Corporation agreed to take ownership of the murals and in September 2013 they were moved to a permanent location in this publicly accessible part of the Barbican Estate.



I hope that was interesting. We are now going to Post man Park, Aldersgate Street where St Martins Le Grand meets, near where we got off the bus. We can retrace our route or if you want to go round the Barbican Estate you can, you need to follow signs for the Museum of London.

Once at the museum follow exits to ground level, if you go down stairs to Aldersgate Street you will pass some tile art, from 1980's? Of black cats, as you come out you will see a mural of Dick Whittington. Turn right and take first right onto St Martins Le Grand, walk a little way till you come to some railings and a large Plane tree, this is Postman park. This park gets it's name from being popular with local postal workers from the old Post Office.

Walk into it, you can see tile memorial, this is what we have come to see. This is the Watt's Memorial to Heroic Self Sacrifice by George Frederick Watt's built in 1900.

Watt's was a radical socialist with strong sympathies towards the dreadful living conditions of the urban poor. In 1887, he wrote to the Times newspaper proposing a park commemorating 'Heroic men and women' who had given their lives attempting to save others. He felt it would be a worthy way to mark Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee Year, this eventually took the form of the Watt's gallery in Postman Park.

Along the walls of the gallery Watt's placed glazed Doulton tiles commemorating acts of bravery. Each one documents the nature of the heroic act and the tragic tales documented on the tiles are touching. They often involve children and or concern fire, drowning or train accidents. We have to remember in the 1800's life was very unsafe for most people, trains were new, electricity was new and children were left to their own devises.

These two examples of public art using ceramic tiles are very different but I hope you find them interesting. This park is quite peaceful and has plants and flowers and seats.

Post man Park EC2



Doulton and Co

An English manufacturing company started in Vauxhall in 1815, later moving to Lambeth. In 1882 the company bought a factory in Burslem, Stoke on Trent. They made bone china table ware and decorative items. They had started making circular ceramic sewage pipes in 1846 and were very successful.

The 1846 – 1860 Cholera pandemic, and the work done by Doctor John Snow of the 1846 Broad Street Cholera outbreak due to a water supply contaminated by sewage, led to a huge programme of improving sewage disposal and other forms of drainage using ceramic pipes.

Doulton expanded into Sanitary wares until the twentieth century.



By 1860 Henry Doulton became more interested in more artistic ware than the utilitarian ceramics which had grown the business enormously. He developed a number of Earthenware and Stoneware bodies, called Lambeth Faceinse from 1872, was a heavily potted Cream ware much used in decorative plaques and vases, often with under glaze painting. This is how the tiles are made in the memorial.

A moon vase by Doulton.



Well I hope you have enjoyed this walk and the examples of ceramic tiles.