**Report on the Fitzrovia and Bloomsbury virtual tour – 11 March 2021**

Katie Wignall of Look Up London gave an extremely interesting virtual tour of the Fitzrovia and Bloomsbury areas of London, showing us how much London was changing in the early 18th century. Tottenham Court was a private estate which was given to Henry Fitzroy, the Duke of Grafton and Earl of Euston; hence the name of Fitzrovia. Many of the buildings were constructed during that time and the area became a very good part of London to live. Many of the imposing buildings of Fitzroy Square and the surrounding vicinity were designed by the Adam brothers, providing elegant homes for the middle classes. However, the area was changing during these times due to the likes of Virginia Woolf and others moving into the area including Charles Dickens who lived between 1815-1816 and 1828-1831 in the first house in Cleveland Street. The Fitzrovia Chapel still stands in the neighbourhood which was built as the hospital chapel for the original Middlesex Hospital. Parts of the Chapel were built in the Venetian style based on St Mark’s Cathedral with its beautiful ceiling; a must for any visitor to the area and the Chapel is open every Wednesday. Katie pointed out The Eisenhower Centre in Chenies Street which was built in 1942 and is connected to Gooch Street station by a series of underground tunnels, and as we moved further, there was a large art-deco mosaic on the wall of a discussed petrol station, now a restaurant, showing the Duchess of Bedford driving a purple car who had quite an adventurous life sadly ending in a plane crash in South Arica. We then moved along Gower Street to Tavistock Square passing Gordon Square gardens. We arrived at the Foundling Museum in Brunswick Square where the statue of the founder of the Foundling Hospital, Thomas Coram, stands. He set up the Foundling Hospital due to the scale of child poverty and this was London’s first home for babies whose mothers were unable to care for them. On leaving their baby at the Hospital, the mother left a token which was used to identify their child if they returned to reclaim their child, and sadly very few children were reunited with their mothers. Nearby you will see a bronze child’s glove on a fence by the eminent sculptor, Tracey Emin, as a reminder of the children who were cared for at the Hospital. On Bernard Street, there is a plaque of JM Barrie, the author of Peter Pan, near to what is now Great Ormond Street Children’s Hospital, and all royalties from Peter Pan are given to Great Ormond Street.

If you would like a copy the map showing Katie’s route for this tour please click the link below.

 <https://www.google.com/maps/d/u/0/viewer?mid=1yXKZQow69qELv4HkG_fYy7_h7TKyu5n7>

If you would like to leave feedback on Katie’s Tri Advisor site please click on the link below

<https://www.tripadvisor.co.uk/Attraction_Review-g186338-d8720802-Reviews-Look_Up_London_Tours-London_England.html>

Joanna Painter

Events Committee

City Consorts