

Flint Faience Fireplace (continued)

All tiles were boxed and then stored at my home because the school district had no money or place to store the tiles. Over time I worked on repairing the tiles that were broken or where the glaze was peeling. I glued the broken tiles together with super glue, filled the gaps with plaster and painted.

After cleaning the barnyard mural I discovered that the way it had been originally installed was wrong. There was part of the duck's tail in the middle of the mural where it didn't belong! For the reinstallation the Cranford Preservation Board decided to change the position of the tiles in the mural when I went back to install the fireplace in October 2013. The fireplace was installed in the lobby of the Cranford Community Center, 220 Walnut Avenue. The board also decided to raise the hearth six inches up from the floor. The base was built by Chris Siano, a local contractor. We used the extra tiles I had removed to raise the hearth so that no one could trip on the tiles.



Rearranged Flint Faience mural at the Cranford Community Center. The duck has now retrieved its tail!

We made some changes on the fireplace to make it suitable for the space. Blue tiles were taken from the mantle to use on the raised hearth and 3x3 blue tiles on the side of the hearth. Gold tiles from the hearth were used in the firebox and the extra gold tiles were used on the side and top of the fireplace. The space between the tile and wall will be covered with oak plywood paneling. The tiles were glued to the drywall form with thin set at ¼-inch grout joints and grouted with natural grey grout. It took three days to recreate the fireplace. Karen Mobley helped unpack tiles and set out the numbered tiles in the proper order. The biggest help was her talking to the people that were asking questions so I could work with little interference!

Maureen Starzdon, who spearheaded the project in Cranford, is having a plaque made with the animal tiles and wainscoting trim.