

Introduction

Your tour begins today from the southern entrance to the Thames Foot Tunnel. You can get there three ways:

By taking the DLR to Island Gardens Station and walking the length of the tunnel until you come out on the Greenwich side.

By taking the Uberboat to Greenwich Pier.

Or by taking the DLR to Cutty Sark Station and following the signs to Greenwich Pier and the Foot Tunnel.

Some of the people who live in Greenwich like to use the full name of their home borough – The Royal Borough of Greenwich – it is a special title because there are only four Royal Boroughs in the UK. We'll find out why Greenwich was granted this honour later on in the tour. Greenwich has had associations with sea for centuries, and the Navy as its' roots here, which means we'll be learning quite a bit about the country's naval past.

However, the main reason Greenwich is famous all over the world is because the Prime Meridian - the line that divides the globe into eastern and western hemisphere - was established here. At the top of the hill in Greenwich Park we will see the Royal Observatory, the demarkation of the prime meridian, and you'll have a chance to have your photo taken with one foot in the east and another in west. As they say in Greenwich – that's where time began. It may sound a bit over the top, but as you will soon find out, there is some truth to it.

On the tour today you can expect to walk just under 1.5 miles or 2.5 kilometres, and take around 90 minutes. Although this may change depending on your walking pace or stops you wish to make along the way.

For guests with mobility issues, or those with prams or buggies, there is one small set of steps when going from the Maritime Museum to Greenwich Park, although there is a small lift beside it that is sometimes in use.

Our first stop is the Greenwich Foot Tunnel. If you have come from Island Gardens, simply listen to the first clip once you have alighted on the southern side. If you came from Greenwich Pier or Cutty Sark Station, find the domed entrance to the tunnel and stand beside it. Then play the fist clip.

Foot Tunnel

The Greenwich Foot Tunnel, designed by Sir Alexander Binnie for the dock-men who worked and lived on different sides of the Thames, was opened on the 4th August 1902, replacing an earlier (more expensive), and less reliable ferry service.

The tunnel itself has an internal diameter of 9 ft (2.74m), is 50ft (15.2m) deep and is 1,215ft (370m) long. The entire tunnel is coated in 200,000 white glazed tiles and is open to the public 24 hours a day. It's estimated around 4,000 people use the tunnel each day.

From here, if you look across the water you can also see the large white top of the Millennium Dome. Originally opened to the public on 1st January 2000 until

31st December 2000, it housed a major exhibition celebrating the start of the third millennium and at a cost of over £700 million. The exhibition, however, as a flop, drawing in barely half of the estimated 12million customers its sponsors had predicted.

Today it's the centrepiece of what's known as the O2, a large entertainment district including the dome's indoor arena, a cinema, exhibition space, and dozens of bars and restaurants.

With your back to the Foot Tunnel, walk toward the large ship that looks as though it is resting on panes of glass.

Cutty Sark

The Cutty Sark was built in 1869 at a cost of £16,500. She was one of the last tea clippers to be built and is also one of the fastest. In fact, at one stage in her career she was thought to be the fastest freight ship in the world.

The ship was built in the middle of the 19th century in Scotland and was originally used to bring tea from China and India. It was the fastest ship to do so in those days but its career wasn't very long because soon after its service began, the Suez Canal opened so ships no longer needed to go all around Africa.

Later, it was used to bring wool from Australia because it still had an advantage over larger ships on the long journey to the other side of the globe - but eventually, steam ships became faster on long distance journeys and the Cutty Sark, even though still young and strong, had to retire. It was sold to Portugal and used as a training ship and later bought back by the British before finally finding its' home in Greenwich.

It was retired in 1954 and has been in a 'dry dock' ever since. Badly damaged by fire in May 2007, the Cutty Sark has relatively recently undergone a £35million restoration project and is now open again to the public.

Today, it's entirely surrounded by a glass construction, and if you think it looks like a wave on the sea, that means that designer - Nicholas Grimshaw - did a good job because that's how it was supposed to look.

If you can, move to the front - or the bow - of the ship while you listen.

Now that you know its life story, it would be a good idea to explain the name. As you see in the front there is a statue of a woman who appears to be holding something in her hand. As you can see, she has lost what she was holding, but if you look underneath the ship where other sculptures are you can see the same women dressed in white holding strands of long white hair.

The Cutty Sark was built in Glasgow, in Scotland, and its name refers to the poem written by Scottish poet Robert Burns, called Tam O'Shanter – a story that recounts the tale of a young man named Tam who liked having a drink (or two or ten) with his friends. Once, when he was coming home riding his horse, he saw a light in the middle of the dark night and heard someone playing a bagpipe. As Tam approached, he couldn't believe his eyes.

It was the devil himself playing the music, surrounded by witches dancing around. Not wanting to be noticed, the young man was quiet but one of the witches was a beautiful young girl dressed only in a short shirt (OR cutty sark in the Scots language) and Tam was so excited when he noticed her that he shouted, "Well done Cutty Sark!" drawing the group's attention to himself.

When the witches realised someone was watching them they stopped dancing and started chasing the man. Tam O'Shanter knew that the only thing witches are afraid of is running water so he was riding as fast as he could to cross a little river which was not far away. He reached the river and as his horse was jumping through, the witch with the 'cutty sark' reached forward and pulled off Tam's horse's tail, and that tail is what the figure on the ship is holding in her hand.

With the foot tunnel behind you, and the Cutty Sark to your left, walk toward the Gipsy Moth Pub. Keep walking straight down the path, passing the pub - and then Starbucks - on your LEFT. Take the first LEFT onto College Approach and walk until you see the entrance to the Greenwich market on your RIGHT. Enter the Market and play the next clip.

Greenwich Market

There has been a market in Greenwich since at least the 14th century but the current version exists because of a permission granted in 1700 to the Commissioners of Greenwich Hospital giving the right to hold a market here for the next 1,000 years!

The Market is open Tuesday – Sunday from 10am to 5pm, however some market shops and pubs are open all week. The market is both a delicious place for lunch and a mecca for those who like to shop for individual and unique items. Most of the structures that surround the market are Grade 2 listed and date from the 1820's and 30's, although the roof wasn't added until 1908!

Note that Greenwich Market is the only market in London located within a World Heritage Site, Greenwich having received that title in 1997. Have a browse around, or a bite to eat, if you'd like before continuing on your tour.

Once you have explored the Market, exit via the way you came in and take an immediate RIGHT. Take the first LEFT and walk back along the other side of the Cutty Sark from where you stood earlier, with the park on your RIGHT. Take the first RIGHT into the park through the gate. The statue of Walter Raleigh will soon appear on your RIGHT and this is your next stop.

Statue of Raleigh

When you enter the park and go towards the Visitor Centre in front of the building to the left, you will see a statue of Sir Walter Raleigh - Greenwich's strong connection to Naval history means there are depictions of many seafarers here.

Raleigh is known by some as a naval hero but as a ruthless pirate to others and is widely credited with introducing both tobacco and potatoes to this side of the Atlantic.

While Walter Raleigh himself never visited North America but he organised expeditions that settled the first English colonies there. The land where the first colony was established was called Virginia – after Queen Elizabeth I's nickname: the virgin Queen, owing to her refusal to ever marry. However, the first American colonies weren't all successful. Take, for example, Roanoke – located in today's North Carolina. Once everything there was properly established, some of the settlers left and went back to England with a promise that they will come back in one year with more people and more supplies. Unfortunately, however, it was three years before they managed to return. And when they did, they didn't find any people, any bones, or any sign of a fight. It seemed as though they had all just... disappeared and that's why one of the first English colonies is now known as The Lost Colony.

Although Sir Walter never sailed personally to North America, he did make it to South America twice. These journeys weren't made with the intention to build colonies, but to get rich. Not just any kind of rich. He hoped to get legendarily rich because he believed that he knew where to find El Dorado – the legendary City of Gold. Although Raleigh was successful in plundering gold and treasures throughout his maritime career - he never did find El Dorado.

However, his second expedition to South America got him into A LOT of trouble. In Walter's youth, England and Spain were at war on the sea and the English would often attack and rob Spanish ships. Eventually the war ended, and the peace treaty that was drawn up forbade any more English attacks on Spanish ships. Unfortunately, during his second quest for El Dorado, some of Raleigh's men attacked the Spanish in what is today called Guiana. Even though Sir Walter didn't order the attack and even lost his own son during the fight – he was considered responsible. After returning to England, he was sentenced to death and shortly thereafter beheaded in front of the Palace of Westminster on the 29th of October 1618.

As a somewhat grim sidetone, his wife was gifted his head which she reportedly kept in a velvet bag until the day she died when it was, thankfully, returned to his body and interred at St. Margaret's Church in Westminster.

Return to the path you uses to enter the park and turn RIGHT. Follow the path through the streets toward the large stone building. Keep walking until you get to the small green square on your RIGHT. Enter the square through the centre pathway and stop when you see a plaque at your feet. Then play the next clip.

Royal Naval College Stop 1: Tudors

The kings and queens of England often chose to stay in Greenwich because of its beautiful surroundings, rich hunting grounds and easy access to London – which was achieved by taking a royal barge on the river to the Tower of London or to the Palaces of Westminster and Whitehall.

The Tudors in particular spent a lot of time in Greenwich, in their Palace which used to stand here before it was demolished in the late 17th century.

This is where their children were born, their marriages celebrated, and where their feasts were held. In fact, arguably our most famous king, Henry VIII, was born here on the 28th of

June 1491. His two daughters, Queens Mary I and Elizabeth I were also born here in 1516 and 1533 respectively.

Henry IS famous of course, but not because of anything he did as king but for his scandalous personal life and his six wives. In Greenwich Palace, he married his first, and longest serving (or suffering) wife – Catherine of Aragon. Then, over 30 years later, he officially met his fourth wife – Anne of Cleves – just outside the gates of Greenwich Park. But Anne and Henry’s marriage was a disaster from the start.

Henry had chosen Anne as his fourth wife based entirely on her portrait, and complimentary descriptions of her by his courtiers. On the day Anne arrived here to Greenwich, Henry wanted to surprise his betrothed in an old courtly-love tradition. So, he disguised himself as an ordinary man and went to see her before their official meeting. He arrived looking a bit rough, and found Anne staring out the window at some bull baiting that was going on below. Without warning, he embraced and kissed her and handed her a gift he said was from the King. She was abashed and embarrassed and had no idea who he was so she thanked him - then turned back to continue looking out the window.

Henry, disappointed she didn’t realise it was him - her new true love - in the disguise, that he left the room, put on his luxurious cloak, and came back into the room to show Anne and her ladies who he was. After that, Anne tried to speak to him, but the damage was done and immediately Henry told his courtiers “I like her not!” From then on, he complained that the portrait he saw of her was a bit too flattering. He also claimed that she looked too old, was too fat, and that she had “evil smells about her.”

We have no account of what Anne thought about her future husband but judging by other contemporary descriptions of the king, she could have easily said the same about him. Some who met the king around that time say that he was so large that three men could fit inside him. On top of that, he had an ulcerated wound in his leg which wast so putrid, Palace guests could smell the King coming before he actually entered a room.

Historians today believe Anne probably looked as beautiful as people claimed, but that Henry was so embarrassed by their initial meeting, that he could never recover enough to feel love for her.

However, the two did become good friends after their marriage was over, and it seems as though there were no hard feelings, probably because Anne was more than happy to get out of her strange and strained marriage.

Henry’s life, of course, was not purely drama and scandal. Henry VIII may not have been a brilliant husband, but he was very well educated and understood the value of education for both himself and his children - including his daughters at a time when women weren’t educated. From a very young age Henry was tutored in many subjects. He was fluent in Latin, Greek, French and Spanish. As a child he exchanged letters with Erasmus of Rotterdam and the great scholar praised Henry’s talents and knowledge. After the Reformation, when many Catholic monasteries were shut down, he turned the buildings into schools enabling many more children to gain an education.

And, most relevant to where our tour is today, Henry was the one who founded the English Navy. He invested in shipbuilding, increasing the number of England’s warships 8 times over. He encouraged dock building, invested in firepower to be held on board his new ships, and created the “Council for Marine Causes” which oversaw maintenance and operation of the Navy - which would go on to govern the Navy, under a different name (The Admiralty), until 1964.

Now walk slowly away from the river between the two buildings and towards the road, listening to the next clip. Stop when you get to the steps ahead of you.

Royal Naval College Stop 2: Naval History

Today Greenwich is now mostly known for his naval connections. The big buildings surrounding you, the Old Royal Naval College, once served as a hospital for sailors and the thousands of crew working on the hundreds of ships docked here at the Port of Greenwich, and was later a college.

Chartered by King William III and Queen Mary II in 1694, the complex was designed by renowned architect Sir Christopher Wren and was completed in 1712.

The hospital here closed in 1869 and the buildings were then turned into a training establishment for the Royal Navy, a purpose it served until 1998. It's now run by a charitable foundation who preserve it and keep it open to the public - and it is thanks to them that you will get to enjoy your next stop.

As an aside, the buildings look familiar to you, it may be because the site is used quite frequently as a filming location. It's appeared in *The Bounty*, *Four Weddings and a Funeral*, *The Mummy Returns*, *The Avengers*, *Tomb Raider*, *Pirates of the Caribbean*, *the King's Speech*, *the Dark Night Rises* and *Les Miserables*. Just to name a few!

With the steps in front of you, and the river behind, turn RIGHT. As you walk, you will soon find a set of steps on your LEFT that will take you into the building on your left hand side. If it is open, go inside and play the next clip. If not, continue walking until you can turn LEFT. Walk either along the side the building or through the green square toward the road up ahead.

Cross the Street at the lights, immediately turn LEFT then take the first RIGHT through the iron gates. Walk until you come to the point where a path coming from your LEFT to your RIGHT intersects the one you are standing on. Stay near here and play then next clip.

Painted Hall at the University

This is one of the most impressive interior spaces in London. Completed in 1726 by Sir James Thornhill, it was originally intended at an eating space for naval veterans who had been admitted to the Naval Hospital. There's over 40,000 sq ft of walls and ceilings here, covered in stunning imagery depicting over 200 figures including queens, kings and mythological creatures. There are five British monarchs depicted here, and most can be seen trampling Britain's enemies or receiving blessings from Heaven.

Referred to by some as Britain's Sistine Chapel, it took 19 painstaking years to finish and netted Thornhill £6,685.00 and a Knighthood. Conversely, in 2017 the Hall underwent a two year refurbishment at a cost of over £8.5million.

Now, exit the way you came in. When you come down the steps, continue walking until you can turn LEFT. Walk either along the side the building or through the green square toward the road up ahead.

Cross the Street at the lights, immediately turn LEFT then take the first RIGHT through the iron gates. Walk until you come to the point where a path coming from your LEFT to your RIGHT intersects the one you are standing on. Stay near here and play then next clip.

Queen's House

The building ahead of you is Queen's House, a former royal residence which dates from around 1619. It was designed by Inigo Jones for Anne of Denmark, the queen of King James I and was later altered for queen Henrietta Maria, wife of King Charles I, hence the name of the house. Note, however, that neither queen as able to enjoy the house for long. Anne died before it was completed and the English Civil War - which would culminate her husband losing his head - meant that Henrietta Maria was forced to abandon the House - and the country when she fled to France for her own safety.

The view of the river from Queen's House is actually a protected view and explains why Christopher Wren's Naval College (which now stands behind you, between you and the Thames) is made up of two identical buildings that are not connected to each other. Wren was given specific instructions not to impede the view of the Thames from the Queen's House, which meant he couldn't connect the two wings of the College!

Queen's house is considered particularly important architecturally speaking as it is the first consciously classical building to have been constructed in the country. It's considered to be the introduction of Palladianism in England, and boasts the first centrally unsupported helical stairs ever built here, known as the Tulip Stairs.

If you visit the Queen's House, you will have a chance to see that beautiful staircase as well as the iconic Armada Portrait of Elizabeth I – where the Queen is surrounded by symbols representing her navy's victory over the Spanish fleet.

When we look at portraits of Elizabeth and other Tudor monarchs, we can be pretty sure that these portraits reflect how the subjects actually looked - which can't be said about most of our medieval kings and queens. In the 16th century, artists started paying more attention to realistic depictions of people and this change was, in part, thanks to the popularisation of the camera obscura – a primitive photo camera.

Simply put, it consisted of a lens attached to an aperture on the site of a darkened tent, room or box. Light reflected from the chosen subject outside of the dark space passed through the lens and could then be projected on to a surface on a smaller scale. This projection could then be traced, allowing artists to capture true likenesses. You can see a modern camera obscura at our final stop, The Royal Observatory.

Facing the Queen's House, turn RIGHT down the path toward the large building ahead of you. Keep walking until you can see the entrance on your LEFT. Stay near here and play your next clip.

National Maritime Museum

The National Maritime Museum is the largest maritime museum in the entire world, housing a collection of over 2 million objects including over 2,000 model ships! According to their own description, the museum “Aims to achieve a greater understanding of British economic, cultural, social, political and maritime history and its consequences in the world today.” No mean feat!

The official opening of the museum took place on the 27th of April 1937 by King George VI. He was accompanied that day by his 11 year old daughter, Princess Elizabeth – our late Queen Elizabeth II – who travelled to Greenwich with her father via boat.

A free museum, the Maritime Museum is quite child friendly and families with children will find many activities designed for them. On the first floor there is a huge map of the world incorporated onto the floor as well as a few small toy ships. Kids can sit on the ships and explore the whole world by moving around. There is also a “hands on” area where children can experience the feeling of real sailing by touching authentic objects and cruising on the ship simulator. Children’s activities are contained separately from the rest of the museum, to keep the more adult sections quiet.

In this areas, you’ll find artefacts from British sailing history relating to exploration, trade and military action. You’ll find maritime art, cartography, manuscripts, models, navigational instruments, and various time-keeping and astronomical inventions. There are rooms dedicated to great sea battles and there is also a royal barge from the 18th-century. Visitors can see the conditions sailors lived and worked in for months at the sea and how the standards changed and improved over the time up to the modern era.

Facing the National Maritime Museum, turn LEFT and retrace your steps. As soon as you can, turn RIGHT and walk along the side of the Museum. Walk toward the collinaide and, when you get there, walk over it toward the brick wall ahead of you. At the wall, turn RIGHT and walk until you reach the gate on your LEFT. From there, enter the park, find a nice spot, and play the next clip.

Greenwich Park

Greenwich Park was the first of London’s Royal Parks to be enclosed (in 1433) and stretches out over 74 hectares or 180 acres. The land here was given to the Duke of Gloucester by King Henry VI in 1427. He set about building himself a small house by the river, unknowingly laying the foundations for the Greenwich that stands here today.

In the 16th century, the park was mostly being used as a hunting ground after Henry VIII introduced deer to the habitat. In fact, a small collection of deer are still maintained today nearby. The brick wall that you passed through to get here was erected by King James I in the early 17th century who also ordered the construction of the first modern ice house here in 1619.

On public holidays in the 18th century, the big hill in the park was used for mass tumbling, as men and women rolled down the hill for fun!

From the park, with the Naval Museum and Queens House behind you, you can see a brick building on top of the hill with white trim and a tall mast with a red ball. This is Flamsteed House at the Royal Observatory, your next stop. Play the next clip as you walk

there - when you reach the top, stand where you have a good view of the complex of brick buildings.

Royal Observatory Part 1

The Royal Observatory was commissioned by Charles II in 1675 and the foundation stone was laid on the 10th of August in that year. It was in the same year that Charles created the position of 'Astronomer Royal' to serve as the director of the observatory.

John Flamsteed was the first Astronomer Royal and the Observatory itself was referred to as 'Flamsteed House' in his honour. The first purpose-built scientific research facility in Britain, it was designed by Christopher Wren and built at a cost of £520 – which was actually £20 over budget!

The main purpose of the Observatory was to measure and monitor time and the most famous aspect of the Observatory comes from this purpose: The Prime Meridian. At 0 degrees longitude, the Greenwich Meridian marks the point where all time around the world is measured. The Prime Meridian was established in 1851 and gained international usage by 1884.

For centuries, people measured time using nature: sunrise and sunset, moon phases, and the changing seasons. But eventually this all changed, beginning here in Greenwich.

Ancient Egyptians in about 2000 years BC noticed that the regularity of stars in the sky could be used to help measure time throughout the night. They observed 36 stars that appeared throughout the night on the horizon in the groups of three. Every time another group of three stars appeared, it was one unit of time and since the 36 stars were divided in groups of three it gave twelve time periods - which is why today, we divide day and night in 12 hours.

During the day they measured the passing time by putting a long stick in the sand and observing as its shadow passed twelve marks on the ground. This method helped them dividing each day and night, but the length of the hour changed throughout the year and was problematic to use in northern countries where clouds often cover the sun and stars.

In medieval Europe, church bells informed people what time of the day it was by summoning people for different kinds of prayers and by using one chime for each hour during the day. Their time keeping was important: they needed to know the exact time so they could plan their work at the field accordingly - by knowing how much daylight they had left to complete their day's work.

At first, for centuries, hours were unequal, varying throughout the year and geographically. When mechanical clocks become more precise, they could measure equal hours regardless of the time of the day and keep the correct rhythm.

So now the hour is the same everywhere, but when to start counting the hours? There were different options. Sunrise or sunset were the most common suggestions because these moments were easy to spot, but again they varied with geography as well as seasonal changes throughout the year. When astronomical and communication tools got

more advanced, the beginning of the day was at noon and it was only in the 20th century that we began using midnight as the start of the day. This is where the time ball comes in.

Now, look for the large white 24 hour clock near the black gate of the Observatory. Head over there for your view of the Prime Meridian, and the 1 o'clock ball, and play the next clip.

Royal Observatory Part 2 -

Firstly, look for the red ball on top of Flamsteed House. This is a time ball, installed in 1833 to show people on land, and the sailors in the ships around Greenwich, when it's precisely 1 pm. This enabled everybody within viewing distance the ability to set their clocks to an accurate time. Let's say that somebody has a clock which is running a bit early or late. Just before 1 pm they would come somewhere they could clearly see the time ball and look - and wait. At 5 minutes to 1 the ball would rise and then at 1.00 pm it would drop - giving those who observed the exact time. And this is still the case today.

Now everybody in London had the same time starting at the correct time, but what about other cities in the UK? If counting the hours started at noon or sunrise there would always be a difference between the east and the west. When this system was used in the UK in the early 19th century the difference between London and Bristol was ten minutes.

That's not really a problem when you travel from one city to another via horse and carriage. That journey would take many hours so a ten minute time difference didn't matter very much. But it DID start to matter when the rail network started developing in the 1840s - arriving 10 minutes off could mean missing your train!

That's when the red time ball came to be useful again. An electric cable joined the ball with King's Cross station in London and once a day at 1 pm an electric pulse was sent to set the clock and, from this station, the pulse was then sent to all the rest of the stations in the country to synchronise all their clocks. Later, the cable was led from the ball across the Channel to France, and the rest of Europe and soon after this. It was even laid under the Atlantic Ocean to Harvard University and the rest of the USA. That's why some say that time started in Greenwich and they are right!

Now focus on the large white clock.

Now, what could you do if you missed the 1 pm time ball drop? You could rely on somebody else's clock, but that wasn't always precise. In the middle of the 19th century, more people had personal clocks and watches and wanted to regulate them according to Greenwich Mean Time. For this purpose, on the outside of the gate here, the so-called Shepherd clock was placed - connected to the master clock inside the Observatory. It's called the Shepherd Clock after its designer and maker Charles Shepherd and it was the first clock to publicly display Greenwich Mean Time to the public. When you take a first quick glance at the big clock it looks as though it's showing the wrong time. Look closer, however, and you can see that it's the 24-hour clock, so the dials are not where we are used to seeing them on our 12-hour clocks.

As you've likely noticed, it's quite a climb to go all the way up here to check the time. Such a situation was a great opportunity for some people to make money. They would make the effort to go to the top of the hill to check the time and then come down and sell the precise time to those who couldn't - or didn't want to - go all the way up the hill!

While facing the clock, look to your RIGHT. You will see a small black gate. Go through this gate and, by the wall, you will find a line - this is the Prime Meridian. It is marked on the ground and, at night, there is a green line of light displayed to also show the location.

The Prime Meridian

The human race managed for millennia to operate without the Prime Meridian - or any meridian. But, in the 19th century, rail and nautical systems of transportation became cheaper, faster, and more popular, and a lot of international trade and movement of people depended upon it.

New woes of immigration, and the new desire to travel for tourism, saw people paying a LOT of money to get from one place to another or to have their goods shipped on time and to the right location. This had, of course, been achieved before but not always successfully. If something went wrong in the middle of the ocean how can you describe your location?

The only way is by establishing your longitude and latitude. Latitude lines run horizontally and are parallel to the equator. Where to find the equator was obvious (the middle of the globe) but what about the north – south line? There also had to be a beginning somewhere. It was decided during the International Meridian Conference in Washington DC in 1884 that it would be this line, passing through Greenwich. Greenwich's history with time aside, the USA had already chosen Greenwich as the basis for their own national time zones - and in the 1800's about 72% of the world's commerce depended on sea-charts which used Greenwich as the basis of their calculations, making this an obvious choice.

Note that a new set of coordinate systems were developed between 1984 and 1988 based on more accurate satellite data and updated measurements which saw the prime meridian of the world move to a position around 102.5 metres to the east of this historic, Greenwich, prime meridian.

Conclusion

So the time has come for our tour to end. We hope you enjoyed the tour and that will remember Greenwich as the place where you can see a ship sailing on glass, where Henry VIII played as a little boy, where sailors waited to set their clocks, and where astronomers discovered the worlds beyond our reach and where East meets West.

If you've enjoyed your Greenwich Tour with us and wish to take another self-guided tour, visit our website at www.freetoursbyfoot.com. There you will find self-guided tours of Royal Westminster, Harry Potter, the Beatles in London, the East End and more. You will also find information on other audio-tours that we offer and also our full tour schedule. Free Tours By Food offers pay-what-you-like walking tours on a daily basis here in London and we'd love to have you join us - simply book online.

Thank you for touring with Free Tours By Foot today and we hope you've enjoyed every step of your journey.

