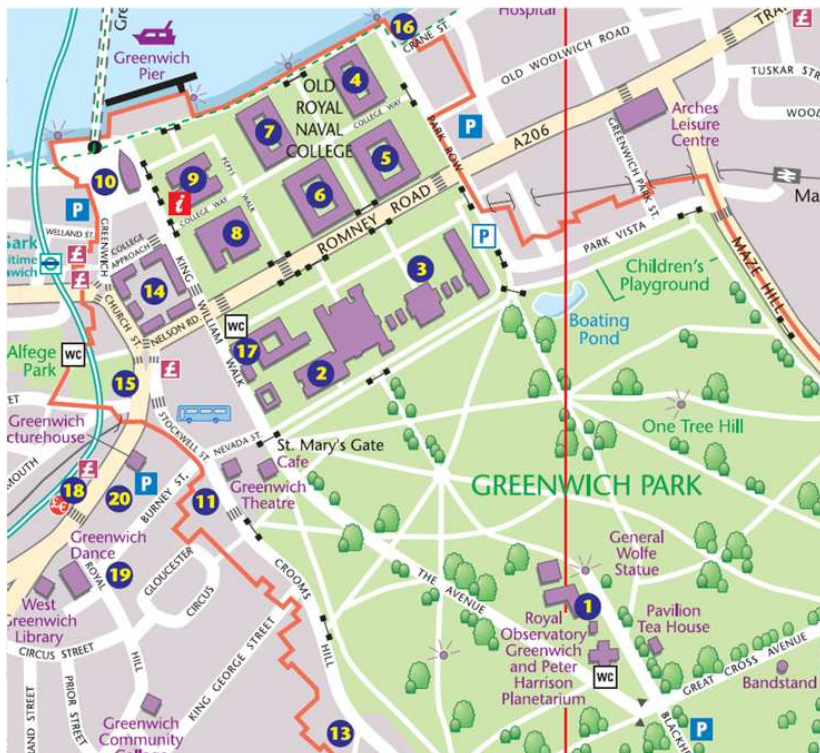




# Royal Borough of Greenwich National Maritime Museum



The



- 1 Royal Observatory Greenwich and Peter Harrison Planetarium
- 2 National Maritime Museum
- 3 The Queen's House
- 4 Stephen Lawrence Gallery and University of Greenwich
- 5 Chapel and University of Greenwich
- 6 Painted Hall and University of Greenwich
- 7 Trinity Laban Music
- 8 Dreadnought Library University of Greenwich
- 9 Tourist Information Centre and Discover Greenwich Visitor Centre
- 10 Cutty Sark
- 11 The Fan Museum
- 12 Wernher Collection at Ranger's House
- 13 Church of Our Lady Star of the Sea
- 14 Greenwich Market and Shops
- 15 St. Alfege Church
- 16 Trafalgar Tavern
- 17 Devonport House Conference Centre
- 18 Post Office and Bureau de Change
- 19 Police Station
- 20 Clock Tower Market

## National Maritime Museum



*The Museum from the Observatory*

The **National Maritime Museum** (NMM) in Greenwich, England is the leading maritime museum of the United Kingdom and may be the largest museum of its kind in the world. The historic buildings forming part of the Maritime Greenwich World Heritage Site, it also incorporates the Royal Observatory, Greenwich, and 17th-century Queen's House. In 2012, Her Majesty The Queen formally approved Royal Museums Greenwich as the new overall title for the National Maritime Museum, Queen's House, the Royal Observatory, Greenwich and the Cutty Sark. The museum is a non-departmental public body sponsored by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport. Like other publicly funded national museums in the United Kingdom, the National Maritime Museum does not levy an admission charge although most temporary exhibitions do incur admission charges.

The National Maritime Museum is formed from the Queen's House and two separate wings, joined by colonnades. The museum was first opened in 1937. The west and east wings, plus the linking colonnades, were built in 1807-16 by Daniel Alexander. They were built as extensions to the Naval Asylum School, which had recently moved into the Queen's House. The west wing has become much larger than the east because of a number of later extensions, and this holds the main body of the museum. The east wing is nowadays mostly used for special exhibitions. The number of exhibits in the museum is enormous; the intention is to show the entire history of mankind's association with the sea. Use [this link](#) to visit the National Maritime Museum's own Web site.



*The Museum from the main entrance*

Since earliest times Greenwich has had associations with the sea and navigation. It was a landing place for the Romans; Henry VIII lived here; the navy has roots on the waterfront; and Charles II founded the Royal Observatory in 1675 for "finding the longitude of places". The home of Greenwich Mean Time and the Prime Meridian since 1884, Greenwich has long been a centre for astronomical study, while navigators across the world have set their clocks according to its time of day. A painting of the Great Comet of 1843 that was created by astronomer Charles

Piazzi Smyth. The Museum has the most important holdings in the world on the history of Britain at sea comprising more than two million items, including maritime art (both British and 17th-century Dutch), cartography, manuscripts including official public records, ship models and plans, scientific and navigational instruments, instruments for time-keeping and astronomy (based at the Observatory).



The *Bretagne*, painting by Jules Achille Noël, 1859, at the National Maritime Museum



Portrait of Captain James Cook by Nathaniel Dance at the National Maritime Museum

Its British portraits collection is exceeded in size only by that of the National Portrait Gallery and its holdings relating to Vice-Admiral Horatio Nelson and Captain James Cook, among many other individuals, are unrivalled.

It has the world's largest maritime historical reference library, including over 100,000 books, 20,000 pamphlets, 20,000 bound periodicals including 200 current titles and 8000 rare books dating from 1474 to 1850. The Museum's Caird Library is a comprehensive specialist reference library and a rich research resource for all. The Library is open Monday to Friday, 10.00–16.45 (until 19.45 on Thursday), and 10.00–13.00 and 14.00–16.45 on Saturday.

An active loans programme ensures that items from the collection are seen in the UK and abroad. Through its displays, exhibitions and outreach programmes the Museum also explores our current relationship with the sea and the future of the sea as an environmental force and resource.

By virtue of its pairing with the Royal Observatory, the Museum enjoys a unique conjunction of subjects (history, science and the arts), enabling it to trace the movement and accomplishments of people and the origins and consequences of empire. The outcome of the Museum's work is to achieve, for all its users at home and overseas, a greater understanding of British economic, cultural, social, political and maritime history and its consequences in the world today.

The collection of the National Maritime Museum also includes items taken from Germany after World War II, including several ship models and paintings. The museum has been criticized for possessing what has been described as "Looted art". The Museum regards these cultural objects as "war trophies", removed under the provisions of the Potsdam Conference.

The Museum awards the Caird Medal annually in honour of its major donor, Sir James Caird.