

MARITIME GREENWICH WORLD HERITAGE SITE

10 HISTORICAL FACTS

1. Built in 1847, the riverside Trafalgar Tavern quickly became famous for its Whitebait Dinners in the Nelson Room; distinguished diners included Charles Dickens, Samuel Pepys, William Thackeray, Wilkie Collins and more recently the Saints and Sinners Club of London. Dickens mentions the Tavern in the wedding breakfast scene of *Our Mutual Friend* and is quoted to have said: "There is no hangover like that that follows a Greenwich dinner" (Pickwick Papers).
2. After being fatally wounded at the Battle of Trafalgar in 1805, Vice Admiral Lord Nelson was laid in state in the Painted Hall at the Old Royal Naval College. The naval uniform coat he wore on the fatal day, complete with bullet hole and blood stain, is on display in the Nelson Gallery at the nearby National Maritime Museum.
3. King Henry VIII was born at Greenwich Palace (which once occupied the site of the Old Royal Naval College) on 29th June 1491. His daughters Elizabeth and Mary were also both born at the Palace and both went on to rule England as Mary I and Elizabeth I; it was from here that Elizabeth's Council planned the Armada campaign in 1588.
4. Covering 183 acres, Greenwich is the oldest Royal Park with a history dating back to Roman times. King Henry VIII stocked the park with deer in 1515 and their descendants are still there. The fallow and red deer wandered free until 1927 but are now kept in the wilderness area near Blackheath Gate.
5. Greenwich was an important royal centre and will become a Royal Borough in 2012. King Henry VIII built the finest armour factory in Europe on the site, importing German and Italian craftsmen and running regular tournaments to test the metal of their work. An enthusiastic horseman, he often jousted in Greenwich Park but in January 1536 the King was thrown from his horse and remained unconscious for two hours. He never jousted again.
6. The red Time-Ball was installed at the Royal Observatory in 1833 on the roof of Flamsteed House and was replaced in 1919. It still drops daily at 1pm and was originally intended as a time-keeping signal for ships on the Thames to set their chronometers.
7. A church has stood on the supposed site of the martyrdom of St. Alfege since 1012. Alfege - the Archbishop of Canterbury - was taken hostage by Viking raiders, held to ransom in Greenwich for six months, and then murdered on April 19th. A second church was built around 1290 where King Henry VIII was baptised but - undermined by burials - it collapsed in the great storm of 1710. The third and present church dates to the 1770s and was designed by Nicholas Hawksmoor.
8. In Chapter 100 of the novel *Moby-Dick*, the Pequod of Nantucket meets a whaling ship of London named the Samuel Enderby which has also encountered the White Whale. The Samuel Enderby was a real ship, which was in fact one among three Enderby company ships departing from Enderby Wharf in Greenwich with 150 colonists onboard. It arrived in New Zealand in 1849 to initiate the ill-fated 'Enderby Settlement' for British whaling purposes on New Zealand's Auckland Island.
9. Between 1865-1975 Glass Elliot and Co. manufactured over 70% of all submarine telegraph cables in the world from Enderby Wharf. At first only 10-12 words per minute could be sent through such cables, yet developments pioneered at Enderby Wharf have enabled submarine

cables to provide the dominant form of international communications; to this day satellites provide for only 1% of international communications, whilst submarine cables provide the rest.

10. In 2012, as well as becoming a Royal Borough and hosting a variety of Olympic and Paralympic events, Greenwich will boast a brand new International Cruise Liner Terminal at Enderby Wharf. The terminal will be able to accommodate cruise liners with up to 1,500 passengers, and will overlook the Old Royal Naval College and World Heritage Site.