

Notes for Civil Engineers' Club Walk 14 May 2022

St Marys Gate

Several Royal Parks in London, cover 5000 acres
Greenwich Park covers 183 acres, Oldest of the enclosed Royal Parks
Has impressive views across Thames of Docklands, City of London and the Naval College.
Also, has the Royal Observatory and the National Maritime Museum.
Very historic Birthplace Henry VIII
He introduced deer into park
Son Edward VI died here
Daughters Mary I and Elizabeth I born here

Rose Garden

Originally planted 1960 – 61.
Enlarged and replanted 1993 – 94.
Peaks in June/July.
Rangers House – Georgian Villa.
Belongs to English Heritage.
Has the Werner Collection.
Works of art belonging to Sir Julius Werner, Diamond Magnate 1850 – 1912.

Flower Garden

Laid out in 1890 as Edwardian Garden.
Cedar Trees and Fine lawns.
During WWII was an anti-aircraft compound.
Tips of many trees cut off to widen field of fire.
Can still see some truncated trees.

Wilderness and Deer Park

16 fallow deer + 14 Red deer also, sanctuary for other wildlife.
Wood is left to decay habitat for Stag Beetles that take 7 years before emerging as an adult.

Royal Observatory

1675 Charles II commissioned Christopher Wren to design and build the Observatory.
Originally called Flamsted House after John Flamsted.
First Astronomer Royal in about 1720.
Idea was to map the heavens to solve the Longitude Problem for navigation of ships at sea
Red Ball in turret installed 1833.
Dropped at 1.00 each day as a time signal to boats on Thames.
In 1893 28" refracting telescope installed to keep in forefront of astronomy.
Still largest in UK if not in world

Prime Meridian

Longitude zero.
Served as a reference point since 1884.
Also for GMT adopted by international agreement but French not happy as they prefer the Paris Meridian.
See another meridian line by O2 Arena later today

Docklands

Docks formerly part of Port of London.

Were the largest docks in the world.

They Date back to 1802 onward:

East India Docks 1802

Victoria Docks 1855

Royal Albert Docks 1880

Prime target in WWII.

Bombing did massive damage.

One night 380,000 tons timber destroyed.

Big resurgence after the war.

It came to a sudden end in 1960-70's as shipping industry adopted Containers.

All docks were closed leaving 21km² of derelict land in East London.

In 1981 Michael Heseltine formed Docklands Development Corporation.

The aim was to use land for Residential, commercial and light industry.

Biggest Symbol is Canary Wharf.

Now a major business centre with DLR and City Airport.

Still extending:

New Skyscrapers

Extend DLR

Crossrail

Old Naval College (1873-1998)

Originally Royal Hospital for Seamen 1692 – 1712.

Designed by Christopher Wren.

There are four buildings which now accommodate Trinity College of Music and part of the University of Greenwich plus two main attractions: The Painted Hall and the Chapel.

Naval College was founded in 1873 to provide courses for officers.

35,000 officers passed through in WWII.

From 1939 onward included women.

There is a visitor's centre.

O2 Arena (Just walked past another meridian)

Built on reclaimed derelict land.

It was contaminated with Toxic Sludge from East Greenwich Gas Works.

Originally known as Millennium Dome.

It is eighth largest building in world by usable volume.

Queen and Tony Blair here for celebration of 2000.

Was to be a major exhibition centre to be opened 1 Jan to 31 Dec 2000.

Project was a failure only attracted half the 12 million visitors expected.

Highly political.

After closure, exhibits were sold and dismantled.

Site was sold to O2.

Construction of arena 2003-2007.

Interior totally cleared.

No cranes inside so roof constructed on ground and then lifted.

Seating can be modified just like Manchester Arena.

Designed by Richard Rogers and built by McAlpine/Laing.

Built in 15 months and under budget of £43 million.
Seven roof segments.
12 x 100m supporting towers.
52 m high in centre.
365m diameter.
Roof weighs less than all the air inside.
Can now walk over the top.

