

A VISIT TO THE
SPLENDID ROYAL BOROUGH
OF
GREENWICH, UK
FAMOUS IN HISTORY AND
ON THE BIG AND SMALL SCREEN



The grandeur of Greenwich from the Thames

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April, 2018



The glorious Old Royal Naval College, on the south bank of the River Thames in Greenwich, London, is stately in size and structure. It was designed in the 17th century by Sir Christopher Wren, and is said to be his personal favourite London building. It was built as a hospital to house naval pensioners and retired veterans of Britain's Navy - the Royal Hospital for Seamen.

Between the two college buildings appears the Queen's House. Just visible on the skyline behind the College is a statue of James Wolfe, at the end of an avenue of chestnut trees. The Royal Observatory is just detectable to the right.



The last part of the Foot Tunnel on the Greenwich side of the Thames.

I visited these treasures in London last year after a brisk walk from Limehouse, where our son Alex lives. The Greenwich Foot Tunnel, built in 1899, took me under the Thames from the shining skyscrapers of Canary Wharf to the peaceful and historic parklands of Greenwich.

This area of Greenwich is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and has become a top film location in London. Historic Greenwich's stunning

architecture and dramatic views have acted as the backdrop for countless Film and TV productions.

It has appeared in blockbuster and historic films and TV shows such as *Thor 2*, *Les Miserables*, *The Iron Lady*, *The Crown*, *Sherlock Holmes 1 and 2*, *Charlotte Grey*, *Octopussy*, *The Young Victoria*, *Pirates of the Caribbean 4*, *The Mummy Returns*, *Patriot Games*, *Muppets Most Wanted*, *Four Weddings and a Funeral*, *Sense and Sensibility*, *Lara Croft: Tomb Raider* and many more.



The Old Royal Naval College was transformed into the streets of Paris for most of the filming of "Les Miserables".



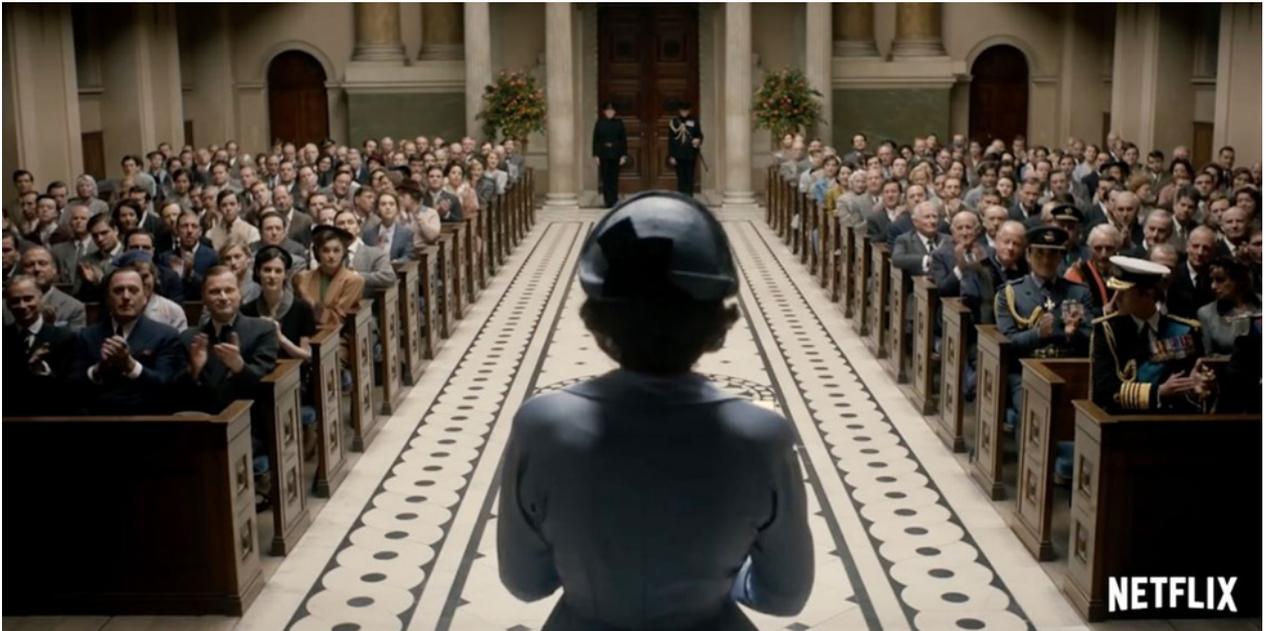
In the movie "Thor", The Old Royal Navel College appears as a crash landing spot for a spacecraft.



Meryl Streep is seen here being filmed inside the College, playing Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher in the film "The Iron Lady".



Rowan Atkinson makes his "holy goat" gaffe in the second wedding in "Four Weddings and a Funeral" in the Royal Naval College Chapel



More recently, the same chapel was filmed in an episode of "The Crown"

The scene in *The Crown* is quite fitting, as Greenwich is well known not only for its important maritime history, but also as the birthplace of many royals such as Henry VIII and Elizabeth I and Mary I. It was the main palace throughout the Tudor Period. Henry VIII enjoyed jousting here, and his wife Ann Boleyn was famously arrested here. Apparently the King had observed her dropping a handkerchief in the grounds as a sign to her lover.

The original Tudor Palace lies beneath the Old Royal Naval College. In 1873 the Naval College in Portsmouth acquired the buildings to establish the Royal Naval College in London. The Navy left in 1997, and it is now open to the public.

Queen Mary II, wife of William II of Orange, made sure that these buildings did not interrupt the view from the Queen's House.

The Queen's House, behind the Old Royal Naval College, was designed by architect Inigo Jones and built between 1615 and 1638. It is significant as the earliest English Building in the Italian Renaissance manner. King James 1 of England (James VI of Scotland) gave the manor of Greenwich to his Danish Queen Anne, reportedly for losing his temper when she accidentally shot his favourite dog while hunting.

She proceeded to have this “Queen’s House” constructed. It now forms part of the National Maritime Museum and is used to display parts of their substantial collection of maritime paintings and portraits.



The stately Queen’s House looking back onto the Thames and the Old Royal Naval College buildings.



The Queen’s House appeared in a dramatic Jaguar car advertisement portraying English actors as villains.

The Queen's House was used as a VIP Centre during the 2012 Olympic Games. The grounds behind the Queen's house were used to house a stadium for equestrian events and the modern pentathlon was staged in Greenwich Park.



Royal Armada Portrait of Queen Elizabeth I

This Royal Armada portrait of Queen Elizabeth 1 was meticulously restored after being obtained in September 2016 by the Royal Museums of Greenwich - the body responsible for the entire area. The Queen's House itself had an extensive two year renovation to reopen to the public in October 2016. Here it is being rehung at the end of last year in The Queen's House.



The 'Tulip staircase' is just one of the delightful architectural features of this historic building, along with beautiful windows with views to Greenwich Park, where Sir Walter Raleigh famously laid down his cloak over a muddy puddle for that very same Queen Elizabeth I.



The wonderful view looking from the Queen's House to the Old Royal Naval College and the Thames.

If this view seems familiar even though you haven't visited, these buildings appear in countless movies and TV shows.



In "Pirates of the Caribbean: On Stranger Tides", Jack Sparrow is being arrested and dragged through the College's Painted Chapel, to serve under the pleasure of King George II. He then makes a well executed escape, also filmed in the grounds.



A scene with Harrison Ford in "Patriot Games"



Keira Knightley walks down the corridors portraying "The Duchess"



A scene filmed in the park from the movie "The Young Victoria"



Even Miss Piggy, Kermit and the Muppet gang filmed here in 2014 for "Muppets Most Wanted"

