

Ramsgate Maritime Museum



East Kent Maritime Trust
Registered Charity
No. 288702

Ramsgate Maritime Museum
Clock House
Pier Yard
Royal Harbour
Ramsgate
Tel: (01843) 570622
curatorramsgate@btconnect.com
www.ekmt.fogonline.co.uk

Opening Hours

Easter - September
Tues to Sun. 10am - 5pm

October - Easter

Thurs, Fri, Sat & Sun. 11am - 4.30pm

Admission

There is a small admission charge with reduction for children under 16yrs, senior citizens and families. Visits by groups and schools are welcome by prior arrangement, when other concessions may apply.

Visit also

Margate Museum

Thanet in Peace and war, law enforcement, the seaside holiday, paddle steamers, entertainment, etc; housed in Margate's Old Town Hall and Police Station



Market Place,
Margate, Kent
For More
Information call
(01843)
231213

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View of Ramsgate harbour, from an 1808 engraving by J Hill after an original by P J De Louthembourg.

RAMSGATE MARITIME MUSEUM is housed in the early 19th Century Clock House, a Grade II* listed building which, for nearly two hundred years, has maintained strong associations with the sea-faring life of Thanet and the East Kent coast. Former Occupants have included the Royal Navy, Trinity House and the General Steam Navigation Company; and a Solar Transit Observatory for the correction of ships' chronometers was incorporated beneath the central tower. More recently the building provided premises for a fishermen's association and a sailing school.

Following two years of restoration the museum was officially opened in 1984. In 1986, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Queen mother visited the museum and later presented the portrait which greets visitors as they enter the Smeaton Gallery.

The Museum has four permanent galleries and has recently been extended to provide a fifth room :-

The Smeaton Gallery; named for the great 18th Century civil engineer who contributed much to the construction of Ramsgate Harbour. Displays include a history in engravings of the Harbour's development; optics from a Trinity House light-vessel last stationed on the Goodwins; and ship models. The visitor may also find here one of the temporary exhibitions frequently mounted.

A staircase leads to:

The Island Gallery.

The Isle of Thanet provides the theme

for this room. Past and Present Thanet activities such as ship-building, fishing, tourism and trade are represented within the context of the Island's geology and patterns of settlement. Look out for shipwrights' tools, a real Ramsgate wherry, fishing memorabilia and a model of the very first cross-Channel train-ferry port.



The John Rennie Room was named for another famous engineer, this time one who was closely associated with the Clock House itself. This room housed the Solar Transit Observatory founded in 1819.

The line running

north-south across the floor is a Meridian Line. Learn how that was used, how navigational instruments have changed over 300 years, and how lighthouses, lightships and buoys help guide the mariner around these dangerous waters.

The Goodwin Gallery. For centuries the Goodwin Sands have been the setting for events both tragic and heroic. In this gallery are gathered some of the artifacts recovered from vessels lost in one of the worst storms in recorded history (in 1703). Also featured are the exploits of the Ramsgate lifeboats, including the famous rescue of 11 men from the ship '*Indian Chief*' in 1881.

The Gun Room. Home to the ongoing conservation of a Prince Rupert patent Demi-Cannon raised from the wreck of the *Stirling Castle*, this temporary facility also houses further displays. Currently the Gun Room is host to a display on Naval Gunnery which complements it's long term inhabitant.



Motor Yacht 'Sundowner'. In the Inner Basin is moored the Dunkirk Little Ship '*Sundowner*'.



She was converted from a 1912 Admiralty steam launch by Commander C H Lightoller, who was the senior surviving officer of the '*Titanic*' disaster.

In 1940 she rescued 130 men from the beaches of Dunkirk and brought them to Ramsgate.

'*Sundowner*' was restored to take part in the 50th Anniversary of Dunkirk in 1990.

Please Note:

The EKMT regrets that visits to the '*Sundowner*' may only be made by prior arrangement.

Education & Research. The Museum encourages visits from school, youth or other groups for the purpose of study or research. Special arrangements may be made with the Museum Administrator for group visits. Full details of services to schools are available on request.

Harbour Trail. A leaflet providing a guide to historic buildings and places of interest around the Royal Harbour is available from the Museum shop. Guided 'Harbour Trail' walks may be arranged for parties upon prior booking.

The East Kent Maritime Trust. Ramsgate Maritime Museum functions under the auspices of the East Kent Maritime Trust. The Trust, whose aim is to promote an awareness of the maritime heritage of Thanet and the East Kent coast, is a registered charity and member of the South East England Tourist Board.

Visit the East Kent Maritime Trust on-line at <http://www.ekmt.fogonline.co.uk>