

# The Tower of London



The first part of the Tower of London was built by William the Conqueror in 1078 but what we now call the Tower is actually a collection of several different buildings.

The Tower of London has been used for many things since it was first built. Hundreds of years ago it was most famous as a prison where some prisoners were even tortured or killed! Now it is just as famous as the home of the crown jewels which have been kept there since the year 1303.



This was **traitor's gate**. Many prisoners of the tower were brought there by boat.

## Locked up!

The most famous people to be locked up in the Tower of London were Queen Elizabeth I and Guy Fawkes.

## Did you know?

The full name of the Tower of London is actually **Her Majesty's Royal Palace and Fortress**.

## Ghosts!

Many people say that the Tower is the most haunted building in England. The most famous ghost is said to be Anne Boleyn. She was married to King Henry VIII but in 1536 he had her head chopped off!!

# The Gherkin



The Gherkin was completed in December 2003. It is 180 metres tall and has 40 floors! The building was designed by Norman Foster who also designed City Hall, the Millennium Bridge and Wembley Stadium!

On 21<sup>st</sup> February 2007, the Gherkin was sold for an amazing £630 million! The building today is used as offices but also has a restaurant on the 39<sup>th</sup> floor.

## Did you know?

The full name of the Gherkin is actually **30 St Mary Axe**.



↖  
The bottom of the tower.



Work began on the Gherkin in March 2001

## What a view!

The building is so big that it can be seen from the M11 motorway over 20 miles away!

## Green Gherkin

The Gherkin was designed to be very environmentally friendly and only uses half the power of other towers like it.

# The London Eye



The London Eye is the most popular paid tourist attraction in the United Kingdom, visited by over 3 million people every year!

The London Eye was opened by Tony Blair (who was the Prime Minister at the time) on December 31<sup>st</sup> 1999. This is why it is sometimes called the Millennium Wheel. By June 2008, over 30 million people had been on it!

**Did you know?**

It takes 30 minutes to go all the way round the wheel.

**It's wheely expensive!**

The cost of going on the London Eye is £15.50 for adults or £7.75 for children.

**Get on quick!**

The wheel moves so slowly that it doesn't stop to let people on - you have to get on and off while it is still moving!



There are 32 capsules on the wheel, each one holding up to 24 people.



# HMS Belfast



The HMS Belfast was built in 1936 just before the Second World War. It was used for only 25 years and on 21<sup>st</sup> October 1971 was opened in London as a museum.

On 21<sup>st</sup> November 1939, during the war, the ship was badly damaged when it hit a mine which had been laid by a German submarine. 21 men were injured and the repairs took nearly 3 years.

## Did you know?

The initials HMS stand for 'Her Majesty's Ship or Submarine'



After World War Two, the HMS Belfast fought in the Korean War. In July 1952 the ship was hit and one man died.

## On film

The ship has appeared in many movies including the last Harry Potter film.



The crew of the HMS Belfast had to fight during the night using its 4 inch guns.

# Big Ben



Big Ben is the name given to the large bell inside the clock tower of the Palace of Westminster (also known as the Houses of Parliament). The tower was built by Charles Barry after the old one was destroyed by fire in 1834.

**Did you know?**

The tower is over 96 metres tall!



## Cold hands!

On December 31<sup>st</sup> 1962, the clock slowed down because of the ice and snow on the hands!



## About time!

The clock was finished in 1854, but the tower wasn't completed until 1859 so for 5 whole years they had nowhere to put the clock!

The hour hand on the clock is nearly 3 metres long and the minute hand is over 4 metres long! These men are cleaning the clock face.

# Houses of Parliament



The Houses of Parliament is where politicians meet to make important decisions about how the country should be run. The parliament of England has met here since the year 1295.

## Did you know?

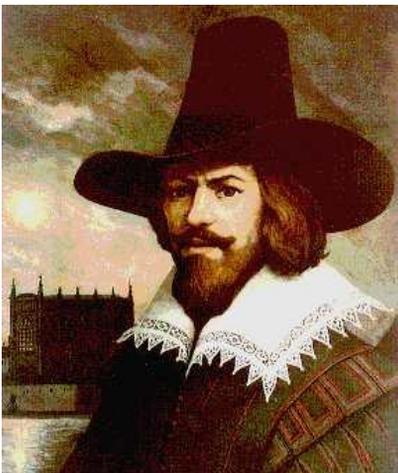
The real name for the Houses of Parliament is the **Palace of Westminster**.

## Look smart!

Hats are not allowed to be worn in the Houses of Parliament and you are not even allowed to walk around with your hands in your pockets!



The palace has 1100 rooms, 100 staircases and 4800 metres of corridors!



## The Gunpowder Plot

On 5<sup>th</sup> November 1605, Guy Fawkes and a group of his friends tried to kill King James I by blowing up the Houses of Parliament using gunpowder. The plot failed and all the men were sentenced to death.