

Title:

History Lover's Paradise

Word Count:

581

Summary:

The "Old Lady of Threadneedle Street Museum," or the Bank of England Museum as it is popularly known is one site which any person just cannot miss.

Keywords:

london hotels,hotels in london

Article Body:

The "Old Lady of Threadneedle Street Museum," or the Bank of England Museum as it is popularly known is one site which any person just cannot miss. The Museum is housed within the Bank of England itself, right at the heart of the City of London. It traces the history of the Bank from its foundation by Royal Charter in 1694 to its role today as the nation's central bank. There are gold bars dating from ancient times to the modern bar, coins and a unique collection of bank notes, as well as many other items one might not expect find - such as the pikes and muskets once used to defend the Bank and Roman pottery and mosaics uncovered when it was rebuilt in the 1930s. On display are documents relating to famous customers such as the Duchess of Marlborough, George Washington and Horatio Nelson.

The Bank Stock Office, a late 18th century banking hall by the great English architect Sir John Sloane, has been reconstructed and two award winning interactive systems allow visitors to look behind the doors of the nation's central bank or to examine the intricacies of bank note design and production. Live information on gilt-edged stocks and securities and the foreign currency and money markets is given at the Dealing Desk, similar to those in everyday use at the Bank. One can even try your hand at dealing on the US Dollar/Sterling Exchange market by pitting your wits against a computerized simulation.

There are also less expected displays of wonderful antique furniture, much of it used by the bank directors over the centuries, such as a set of chairs specially designed by architect Sir John Soane. In addition, an extensive collection of artwork portrays bank personnel and the changing look of the bank premises over time. There is also antique silver and statuary, weaponry used to defend bank premises, and banking paraphernalia such as weights, scales, keys, and

calculators. The Bank of England Museum hosts a regular program of special events, talks, and exhibits. An audio tour is available for a small fee, with the commentary "provided" by Abraham Newland, Chief Cashier of the Bank from 1778 to 1807.

There are also ancient ledgers and other bank documents containing the signatures of famous figures such as William Pitt the Elder, George Washington and Admiral Lord Nelson. The museum documents the history of the Bank of England since its formation in 1694. In addition to the historic currencies are many fine paintings, some depicting important figures in the banks history, some donated by patrons of the bank across the centuries. The museum holds regular exhibits including a fascinating recent display on forgery and method of detection, past and present. Another absorbing exhibit was 'Amusing, Shocking, Informing' a collection of cartoons and caricatures taken from the press over the past three centuries depicting various famous faces -most famously -'the old lady of Threadneedle Street', a fictional lady who guards the money dressed in banknote clothes, and the source of the nickname for the Bank of England.

The museum has many permanent exhibits also including an in depth look into the fantastic detail put into banknotes throughout history- in order to deter forgeries. Visitors are also encouraged to take the mental aptitude tests that applicants joining the bank in Victorian London were required to pass and are given the opportunity to hold a genuine Gold bar. The bank holds many seasonal events including an Easter egg hunt and Christmas carol service.