

Salford Quays Heritage Trail

Compiled by Diane Lee, with help from Ken Craven

Route2:

(Facing the Dock Office turn left along Trafford Road for a few yards then turn right onto The Quays. Cross the road and turn right to the walkway alongside Ontario Basin.)

(Continue along the walkway over the footbridge. Wheelchair users can cross the bridge by using the ramps on either side of Mariners Canal. Cross the lifting bridge over Welland Quay, passing Laser House, to reach St Francis Basin.)

1 The Dock Office

The Dock Office opened in 1927 replacing wooden huts on the other side of Trafford Road Bridge. The plaque on the former main entrance to the Docks pays tribute to Edward Leader Williams, the engineer who designed the Manchester Ship Canal. The Manchester Ship Canal Company's Coat of Arms includes a steamship and a terrestrial globe reflecting the motto 'Navigation and Commerce'. Dockers would meet here to see which ships had entered the Canal. The information was written on a slate in one of the ground floor windows and from this they would know what work was available.

The Ship Canal Company had their own police force monitoring who and what came through the Main Entrance and retired officers can recount many serious and amusing incidents.

2 The Four Corners Sculpture

As you pass the Quayhouse, one of several conveniently situated restaurants on this walk, not the raised granite letters spelling Ontario Basin on the lower walkway. All the enclosed basins are named after North American lakes. At the top of the slope stands the Four Corners sculpture. The sculptor, Noah Rose, designed the curved fins echoing the shapes of propellers, hulls and sails whilst the weather vane represents Salford and Pomona Docks plus the Dry Docks. The etched panels, designed with the help of former dock workers, reflect their memories and stand as a tribute to all those whose lives were part of a thriving port. Facing the Dock Office turn left along Trafford Road for a few yards then turn right onto The Quays. Cross the road and turn right to the walkway alongside Ontario Basin.

3 Waterfront Quay

Standing with your back to the Canal, Manchester Town Hall can be seen immediately ahead. From this point you can appreciate how the new bunds, which were built in with the original Dock walls. Beyond St Francis Basin lie St Lois and St Peter Basins. Each is named after North American lakes reflecting the area's strong trading links with that continent.

Once the water quality was improved, by pumping in compressed air to increase the oxygen content, several hundred coarse fish - including roach, perch, and carp - were introduced into St Peter Basin where their progress was carefully monitored. As a result of their excellent growth rates, the Quays were stocked with 12,000 coarse fish in 1989. Artificial habitats were created to provide spawning areas and refuge for smaller fish. This is a popular spot for fishing although anglers use all the enclosed basins on Salford Quays.

4 Trafford Park Industrial Estate

Behind you on the other side of the Canal is Trafford Park Industrial Estate. This was founded in 1896. It was to become the largest industrial park in Europe. Employing 75,000 people during the Second World War. Many famous companies became established there, including Metropolitan Vickers - one of the greatest engineering firms of its day.

Today a notable landmark is the recently built 26,000 seat North Stand of Manchester United Football Club. This increased the ground's seating capacity to 55,320.

(Continue along Merchants Quay.)

5 Merchants Quay

Merchants Landing consists of 100 town houses and apartments. Towards the end of the road Merchants House, on the right, is topped by a decorative weather vane. To the left are St Peter Basin and Chandlers Canal which links the former No. 7 and 8 Docks. The Canal is one of several sites favoured by anglers at the Quays.

(At the head of St Peter Basin turn right following the signpost to Clippers Quay and South Bay.)

Salford Quays Heritage Trail

Compiled by Diane Lee, with help from Ken Craven

Route2:

6 South Bay

The bollards and boat hooks along the piers remain as evidence of the docks' former activity.

Although the main cargoes were cotton, grain and timber, a wide variety of commodities were brought from all over the world including tea, fruit, live and frozen cattle, lard, oil, petroleum and sulphur. Manchester's huge industrial base resulted in exports of textiles, machinery, car and locomotives.

(Pass the Transport and General Workers Union office, the Copthorne Hotel and Waterside restaurant.)

Many famous shipping lines were connected with the Port of Manchester. Clan Line, founded in 1895, established a regular service to Indian Ocean ports and 'Clan Graham' was the first ship to use the new transit shed here on No. 6 Dock when it came into use in 1967. Manchester Liners, founded in 1898, traded with Montreal and the Mediterranean. Other famous companies included Furness Withy, Ellerman, Strick and Lykes Lines.

(Turn left to Clippers Quay, then right to the Manchester Ship Canal.)

Walking towards the Canal the 'Samuel Platt' pub can be seen directly opposite on Trafford Wharf Road. It is named after Samuel R Platt of Oldham who was an ardent supporter of the Manchester Ship Canal project. His elegant steam yacht 'Norseman' led a procession of ships from Latchford to the terminal Docks at the opening of the Canal on 1 January 1894.

The supports for the railway swing bridge still remain in the Canal. The original single track bridge, connecting the railway system on the Docks with Trafford Park Industrial Estate, was replaced in 1942 by a twin track bridge. It became redundant with the closure of the Docks but a decision was taken to retain it on Salford Quays. In 1988 it was jacked up and floated down the Canal into No.9 Dock where it was renovated for use as a fixed pedestrian bridge and named Detroit Bridge in 1989.

To the left is Trafford Road Swing Bridge which dates from December 1892. It was one of seven swing bridges built during the construction of the Manchester Ship Canal between 1887 and 1893. It was built by Messrs Butler and Co. of Leeds and although it has the smallest span it is the heaviest of the swing bridges at 1,800 tons. Beyond the bridge lies Pomona Docks which dealt with the coastal trade. Also to the left, but on the opposite bank of the Canal is the Liverpool Warehouse dated 1932. The Trafford Park Mural, not visible from here, was painted on the far end of the building by Walter Kershaw in 1982. He replaced it in 1993 when it was unveiled by Denis Law. It is reputedly the largest piece of industrial art in Europe. The Skyhook sculpture was designed by Brian Fell.

This area of the Canal near Salford Quays is one of the top ten sites in the country for diving ducks. In winter the Quays provide a temporary home to Pochard Ducks. these winter visitors, numbering approximately 3,000, come from Russia.

(Return via Clippers Quay to Trafford Road. Walk past the 166 bedroom Copthorne Hotel and follow the Metrolink route onto Clippers Quay at the side of Hanraham's.)

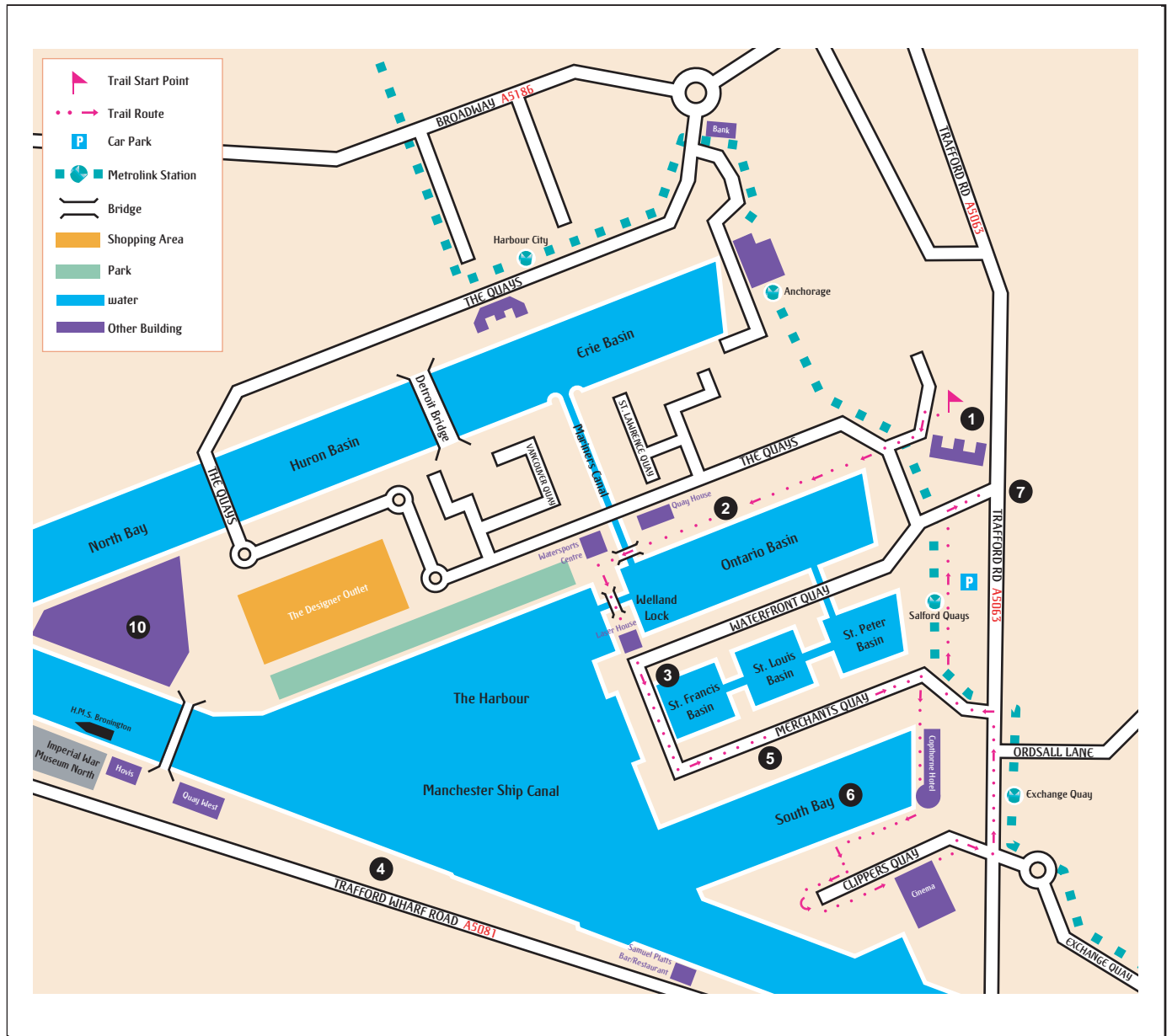
7 Trafford Road

On the other side of Trafford Road is Exchange Quay with over 500,000 sq. ft of office space. Beyond it lies Colgate Palmolive's factory. Further opportunities for refreshments are provided by the restaurants facing St Peter Basin before you rejoin Trafford Road to complete the walk.

Salford Quays Heritage Trail

Compiled by Diane Lee, with help from Ken Craven

Route2:



- 1 The Dock Office
- 2 The Four Corners Sculpture
- 3 Waterfront Quay
- 4 Trafford Park Industrial Estate
- 5 Merchants Quay
- 6 South Bay
- 7 Trafford Road