

Museums and their Collections V – Maritime Museum

As early as the beginning of 20th century, there was an exhibition room in Morrish Barracks named “Maritime and Fishing Industry Museum”, afterwards the collections in the museum were moved to outer harbour, but unfortunately they were blown up during the air raid in 1945.

After 40 years, the Maritime Bureau at that time suggested to re-establish a museum with maritime research as its theme. Therefore, the existing two-storey green building next to A Ma Temple was transformed to the “Maritime Museum” in 1987 and opened to the public for visit. On 24 June 1990, the new exhibition hall building which is also located on Barra Square was completed and opened, while the former exhibition hall served as the Administrative Building of Maritime Museum instead, which is still being used until now.

The exhibition hall of Maritime Museum has a distinct shape with a sailing ship as its design concept, which is also the first building being constructed with museum function, marking a significant symbol of the development of museum industry in Macao. The Maritime Museum is three-storey high, with maritime activities of China, Portugal and Macao regions as its major line; it is divided into different thematic exhibition areas:

- 1) Maritime Ethnology Exhibition area, which mainly introduces the traditional custom of fishermen and fishing culture in southern China and Macao regions.
- 2) Maritime History Exhibition area, which displays the marine history of China and Portugal.
- 3) Maritime Technology Exhibition area, which illustrates the knowledge of marine technology and maritime transport.

The exhibition themes of Maritime Museum do not only reflect Macao’s historical evolution, they also systemically introduce the outstanding achievements made by China and Portugal in the maritime history, indicating the importance of the ocean towards the development of human culture.

Regarding this stamp issue, the main collections being illustrated in the four stamp designs include:

Divinity Chu Tai Sin

One of the protector gods for fishermen in Macao, the local believers only worship the idol on the fishing boat, therefore it is rarely known by the public.

Octant

When sailing, the crew use the Octant and other instruments to precisely determine the location of a ship.

Tai To Junk

A fishing boat with sail which was often seen in Macao in the past.

The Black Ship

A large commercial ship that travelled along the trading route between Goa, Malacca, Macao and Japan before 1618, which is known as Naus do Trato by the Portuguese; in Japan, it is called ‘Black Ship’ due to the dark colour of the ship hull.

Maritime Museum
Marine and Water Bureau
Translation: NTC Communication & Translation Service