



# **Victorian Lamp posts Refurbishment**

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Preserving our nation's heritage



## ICONIC VICTORIAN DOLPHIN STURGEON LAMP POSTS REFURBISHMENT

*Southbank London*

Our Metalock cold casting repair department have once again been involved in the preservation of our architectural heritage during the refurbishment of the iconic dolphin sturgeons located on the Victoria Embankment in London.

The dolphin sturgeons were installed when the river wall was built 150 years ago now showing signs of wear and tear they are in need of some care and attention.

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## So, it all started on the Victoria Embankment and Civil Engineer Sir Joseph Bazalgette's scheme to build a new road and sewage system for London.

The building of Victoria, Albert and Chelsea Embankments would give Londoners new places to stroll down by the river and, in order for them to stroll safely, lighting was needed. The idea was first discussed by The Metropolitan Board of Works various designs ideas were published in the Illustrated London News and The Builder. It was finally decided to go with the creation by George Vulliamy who was Superintending Architect of the Metropolitan Board of Works at that time. The installation of the original 49 ornate cast iron 'sturgeon' lamp columns mounted on top of the Victoria embankment wall thus creating the 'Dolphin Zone' occurred in 1870s. The cast-iron lamps feature two dolphins (or sturgeons) with their bodies wrapped around the lamp column and were apparently inspired by the dolphin sculptures on the Fontana del Nettuno in Rome's Piazza del Popolo.

The Victoria Embankment River Wall is located on the north bank of the River Thames and was constructed between 1864 and 1870, it stretches between Westminster Bridge and the City Council's boundary to the east of Temple Place. The structure is Grade II listed.

If you walk down the steps by the Millennium Bridge on the North Bank of the river Thames you will very probably stop to gaze across to the South Bank, taking in views of the Tate Modern art gallery and the new Globe Theatre. You will see the dolphin zone on the South Bank. The iconic lamp posts are entwined dolphins (sturgeons) and have the inscription EIIR. Then, in 1977, City authorities had replicas placed on the North and South banks of the river to commemorate the Queen's Silver Jubilee, with 'EIIR' inscribed to honour Queen Elizabeth II.

We are lead to believe that some of the later additions "Dolphin Lamps" were cast at Sandersons and Robinson Ltd , Meadow Foundry in Mansfield Nottinghamshire and others at the Old Rd Foundry in Oldham Lancashire.





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