

# Today in Math History...

**-13 October 1884**

An international conference in Washington, DC decided “to adopt the meridian passing through the center of the transit instrument at the Observatory of Greenwich as the initial meridian for longitude.” Greenwich Mean Time (GMT) was born.



Shown above is a laser marking the “initial meridian” at the Greenwich Observatory.



*Greenwich Mean Time (GMT) was at one time based on the time observations made at Greenwich (until 1954). Thereafter, GMT was calculated from observations made at other observatories which were still active. GMT is now often called Universal Time, which is now calculated from observations of “extra-galactic radio sources.” GMT is also known as Zulu Time.*