Heritage Lottery Fund grant will help to tell Navy's story

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The confirmed grant will help tell the story of the Royal Navy since 1900, a largely untold part of our maritime heritage. The 18th-century Storehouse 10, built in 1776, is one of the finest Georgian storehouses in the UK and will be completely restored providing new exhibition spaces for the museum's vast collections. Storehouse 10 will be connected to Storehouse 11 enabling the museum to showcase four centuries of our important naval history properly for the first time. State-of-the-art interactive displays and exhibitions will help bring the collections alive and into the 21st century for everyone, especially young people, to learn from and enjoy.

Stuart McLeod, Head of HLF South East, said: "This project has the potential to entertain, intrigue and delight. Maritime and particularly naval heritage in the 20th and 21st centuries is currently underrepresented in our museums, and this award to the NMRN in Portsmouth will help to address that. The Heritage Lottery Fund is delighted to award this substantial investment which will not only help to bring our impressive maritime heritage alive but boost tourism too."

"This is fantastic news", says Dr Dominic Tweddle, Director-General of the National Museum of the Royal Navy (NMRN). "Despite the remarkable achievements of the men and women of the senior service over the past 100 years, there is no single exhibition in this country that tells their story. We can now put that right – and do so here in Portsmouth, the home of the Navy. This means we have now raised £3.2million out of the £4.5m we need and will encourage others to join us in reaching our final total. There is no time to lose; we are determined to have the new exhibitions opened by 2014, the centenary of the start of World War I, so the museum can be at the centre of marking the Navy's vital role. It is also positive that by the time these galleries open NMRN will have invested £11.1m in the Portsmouth area, with more to come."

The project will enable a 400% increase in the space available for exhibitions on the Navy and its people since 1900. A special exhibitions gallery will also be added, giving the museum the chance to create two new exhibitions a year which can showcase new collections, commemorate anniversaries and bring a changing attraction to Portsmouth Historic Dockyard. It also includes a dynamic programme of events and activities to help local schools, veterans and families discover and understand how the Navy has shaped their heritage. With a new Community Outreach Officer the museum is going to be even more active outside the dockyard wall and there will be many opportunities for volunteers to get involved. A variety of themed activities will include: 'World at War', looking at the links between the Royal Navy and the rest of the world; 'Community Curators', helping local people to curate their own exhibitions; and the 'Sea Life and Community Road Show'; enabling local schools to get more hands on.

"The Navy has faced unprecedented changes and challenges since 1900", says Matthew Sheldon, the Museum's Project Director. "We want these exhibitions to convey this through the real things and the real voices of the men and women who lived, worked and fought to create this history. The new galleries will feature amazing stories of how past generations faced these challenges and also look forward to what the Navy faces now and might face in the future."

It is an exciting time for Portsmouth Historic Dockyard as support from the Heritage Lottery Fund has enabled it to develop plans to tell the navy story in a uniquely inspirational and moving way. Over the next few years, as well as the development of the NMRN, there will be a new Mary Rose Museum (due to open late 2012), which received £21million

grant to complete the conservation of the hull and build a permanent museum, which will also house the thousands of treasured artefacts found with the ship.

Notes to editors

The National Museum of the Royal Navy (NMRN), an initiative fully supported by the Navy Board, embraces the four existing Naval Service museums (the museum at Portsmouth Historic Dockyard), the Royal Marines Museum (Southsea), the Royal Navy Submarine Museum (Gosport) and the Fleet Air Arm Museum (Yeovilton)). It is a core objective of the Naval Heritage Strategy, the aim of which is to ensure that naval heritage as a whole is deployed to its full potential in promoting the Naval Service and that the full range of our heritage assets are appropriately resourced, managed and employed in a coherent manner.

Using money raised through the National Lottery, the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) sustains and transforms a wide range of heritage for present and future generations to take part in, learn from and enjoy. From museums, parks and historic places to archaeology, natural environment and cultural traditions, we invest in every part of our diverse heritage. HLF has supported 30,000 projects, allocating £4.7billion across the UK.

Further information

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