

Grant puts Postal Museum on track

03/06/2014



The British Postal Museum & Archive (BPMA) is pleased to announce today that it has been awarded £4.5m by the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), putting delivery of a subterranean ride on Mail Rail – the old Post Office Underground Railway – on track.

HLF's grant is a major vote of confidence in the BPMA's plans for a new, national museum and paves the way for its success. Approximately 95% funded, BPMA is now focusing on raising the remaining capital necessary to enter the build phase, with construction expected to begin later this year.

The Postal Museum will chart almost 400 years of Britain's social, communications and design history through the iconic postal service, bringing to light the extraordinary stories of one organisation's constant struggle to keep the world in touch.

In addition to a permanent museum dedicated to the extraordinary stories of Britain's postal past, the BPMA also plans to open parts of the unique Mail Rail system to the public for the first time in its history. Used to transport mail across London for more than three quarters of a century, new trains will carry people, rather than post through a section of the original tunnels before exploring an interactive and atmospheric exhibition in the Car Depot at Mount Pleasant, where train

maintenance was undertaken throughout the railway's life.

Adrian Steel, BPMA's Director commented: "With this significant grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund, we have taken another major step towards building a world-class, sustainable museum that will highlight the important story of our universally recognisable postal service. From the Napoleonic wars to piracy, the invention of the first computer to the advent of instant communication, the postal service has played a vital role in both British, and global, history and shaping the world as we know it today. We thank HLF for showing its support to this important project".

Sue Bowers, Head of HLF London, said: "This wonderful new museum and archive repository are set to be enhanced by plans to open up the historic 'Mail Rail' for visitors to experience. Proposals for major redevelopment work will help people learn more about the key role the postal service played in shaping the modern world. It will also regenerate a part of London that has strong community involvement but ranks high on the list of social deprivation. The combination of all these factors make for an exciting project and we're delighted to be confirming an investment of £4.5m today."

Notes to editors

Established in 2004, The British Postal Museum & Archive (BPMA) is the leading resource for all aspects of British postal history. With collections ranging from staff records to stamps, poster design to photography and from transport to telegrams, it cares for the visual, written and physical records from almost 400 years of innovation and service, revealing the fascinating story of British communications. Records in the Royal Mail Archive are Designated as being of outstanding national importance. For more information view the [British Postal Museum and Archive website](#).

Further information

British Postal Museum & Archive: Harry Huskisson, Communications Manager on 0207 354 7277 / 07725 201 109, email: harry.huskisson@postalheritage.org.uk.