Changing lives: Battle Bus apprentice putting her



Although historic buses were not ‘her thing’, getting onto an apprenticeship at the London Transport Museum has transformed Hannah Steele’s career prospects.

“I had done a number of jobs and uni was out for me. I’d tried it and it just wasn’t me," says 25-year-old Hannah from Havering, East London. “I needed a different kind of challenge. That’s why I came down the apprenticeship route; something that would allow me to get into a career that I would enjoy.”

That career path was working with young people and the vehicle, quite literally, was a First World War B-type Battle Bus being restored by the London Transport Museum as part of a First World War centenary project made possible by a £750,000 HLF grant.

> "It allowed me to know that I can do these things and run projects myself. That really gave me the push that I needed to get into employment."
>
> - Hannah

Hannah was completing a Level 2 apprenticeship at the museum in Covent Garden when the chance to move up to a Level 3 came along, thanks to the Battle Bus, a restoration project tied in with learning about the War.

“I had a fantastic time,” says Hannah. “I was leading on outreach volunteering for young people. We were creating stories around the bus and we would go out and tell these stories, taking the bus around London.”

In a previous job she had organised events for young people and knew, from that point on, that this was what she wanted to do. She was tasked by the Museum with running two eight-week courses with young people visiting the museum to research the history of the Battle Bus, one of hundreds commandeered along with their crews by the government in 1914, painted khaki, and used as troop transports taking Tommies to the front line in Flanders.

“Having learned all they could the young people would interpret it in a way that was relevant to them today, through storytelling and drama,” explains Hannah. This involved her travelling with them to venues around the capital.

With the apprenticeship coming to an end in January, Hannah applied for and was given the permanent post of Youth Travel Co-ordinator at the London Transport Museum. She is now getting into her new role. “This is the job for me,” she enthuses. “I go to secondary schools and talk to them about travel. I get them to run campaigns about how they can improve travel in their areas and promote this to their peers and to their communities. This is perfect for me. I’m working with students. I’m not at a desk all the time and it’s just a lot of fun!”

She had known for some time that, although not wanting to become a teacher, she did want to get involved in helping young people to learn. Using the historic collection at the museum has enabled her to achieve this in a particularly creative way.









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Changing lives through heritage