

Six men, one dog, a Queen and a horse!



Sounds like the start of a really bad dad joke, right.....?

Join **Dorchester Sheroes** in their quest to erect Dorchester's first non-royal female statue and celebrate an overlooked shero from our past. This project aims to be a collaborative, community-led campaign that involves local schools and engages the public. We value your input on potential candidates for the statue, and once we have a shortlist, the community will have the opportunity to vote for their chosen shero to be immortalised in bronze. We are fully supported by the **Dorchester Town Council Joint Heritage Committee**, and funding for this project will rely on the power of the people, with fundraising events and grant schemes playing a pivotal role. Read on to learn more about the significance of this initiative and the individuals driving this inspiring campaign forward.



Who Are We Putting On Pedestals?



- Representation of statues in our landscapes is vital because public artworks show us how to visualise our shared history.
- Statues represent people we agree are significant, worthy and should be remembered.
- That's why making women an equal part of that experience is essential.
- The values and beliefs celebrated with a publicly displayed piece of art reflect what the people of that town are choosing to remember and honour.
- Over **85%** of statues in the UK are of men.
- Only **3%** are statues of women.
- There are more statues of men called John than of all non-royal named women put together.
- In the whole of the Southwest of England, which includes Cornwall, Devon and Dorset, there are only three full-size statues celebrating named women in a whopping 13,000 square kilometres of the UK.

Dorchester Sheroes – The Criteria



- We are specifically interested in hearing about real women, not fictional characters, who have lived predominantly in and around Dorchester.
- Their significant contributions should have had an impact on the county town and the lives of its residents.
- An approximate 20-mile radius. E.g., from Cerne Abbas in the north, Wool in the east, Portland in the south and Chilcombe in the west. This is not fixed; we are happy to be flexible for the right shero.
- Your shero must be from the past and no longer living - but we are happy to hear from long-lived individuals who may have contributed to recent historical events like the Second World War.
- Diversity is important, so there is a preference to champion a working-class shero. Very few stand-alone female histories are recorded, and when they are, they tend to come from women of privilege.
- We are also keen to explore the untold stories of women who collaborated with men, recognising that their invaluable contributions have often been overshadowed by their male counterparts.
- We are also interested in finding trailblazers that paved the way for others.
- Times and dates are not important. We are happy to look at all eras and all untold histories.
- It would be interesting to see groups of women who did remarkable things together. Your suggestion does not have to be an individual.
- It is important to celebrate uplifting and positive female role models, and we are actively looking to step away from narratives that have already been covered in depth in and around Dorchester.
- Have a shero for us? Then, email us at [**DorchesterSheroes@gmail.com**](mailto:DorchesterSheroes@gmail.com) and follow us on our Facebook page **@DorchesterSheroes**

Dorchester Sheroes – The List So Far



Sylvia Townsend Warner
(1893-1978) Was an English novelist, poet, and an LGBTQ+ pioneer. She lived with her partner Valentine Ackland at Frome Vauchurch in Maiden Newton and at Chaldon Herring.



Lucy Emily Baxter
(1837-1902) Was an English art writer, chiefly under the pseudonym of Leader Scott and was the daughter of William Barnes.
Source image



Hannah Gifford
Was a teacher at a free school that was "one of the most striking achievements of Puritan Dorchester" between 1651 and 1668. The town paid for her salary and the education of dozens of poor children.
Source image



Tola
Was an 11th-century landowner who, along with her husband Orc, founded the abbey at Abbotsbury. Organising formal guilds, binding the local society together to ensure the continued prosperity of the area.
Source image



Mary Mullet Moule
(1801-1877) In the 1800s, alongside her husband, the Reverend Henry Moule, she worked tirelessly with the poor during the cholera epidemic in Mill Street, Fordington, Dorchester, to provide better sanitation.



Elizabeth Muntz
(1894-1977) was a Dorset artist from the village of Chaldon Herring and was noted for her sculptures and paintings. She was the first elected woman freeman of The Ancient Order of Purbeck Marblers and Stone Cutters.



The Dorset Button Makers
1622 to 1850 The Dorset Button industry influenced the lives of hundreds of women across the whole of Dorset for more than 200 years. Including Bere Regis, Milborne St Andrew, Sherborne, Wool and Piddletrenthide, to name a few.
Source image



Sarah Eldridge
In 1837, she created and ran a thriving brewery in Dorchester with her husband, Charles. On his death in 1846, Sarah, unusually for the time, continued to run the business independently.
Source image

Meet the Team



Secretary:

Tabitha Schofield is a trustee of The William Frampton Educational Foundation. She is a businesswoman running multiple hospitality and events venues and has previously worked in business development within the Vocational Training sector for over ten years. Tabitha has lived most of her life in her beloved Dorset. She is passionate about where she lives and is keenly interested in the history of Dorset. She also believes in positive role models with diversity and inclusion at its core. She is also an avid reader of history and is currently secretary of her local book club. To recognise a forgotten Dorchester woman from our past is hugely important to her.



Treasurer:

Mark Damon Chutter is the Chairman and Academic Director of The Thomas Hardy Society. He is a Head of Performing Arts in a secondary school and has taught Drama and English for 30 years. Mark was shortlisted for The Times teaching awards 'Most Innovative Teacher of the Year' and 'Teacher of the Year', respectively, in 2014 and 2015. Mark passionately cares about Dorchester; he was born here and has a special interest in Fordington. He is a member of the Dorchester Civic Society, Dorchester Town Council Joint Heritage Committee, and STAND. To take a female who has been forgotten and to give them representation and visibility is of great importance to him and to the community.



Chair:

Anya Pearson is the founder and trustee of the Mary Anning Rocks charity and was recognised as a Woman of the Year in 2022; she also received a Points of Light Honour from Downing Street for her work, raising the profile of Mary Anning. She is a fashion professional and a lecturer at the Winchester School of Art and the Arts University Bournemouth. She has lived in Dorset for over 18 years and firmly believes in the importance of cultivating positive and empowering female role models for children to be inspired by. Anya emphasises the importance of visual representation of women in our towns and cities, as they help break down the barriers imposed by gender.