

a statue for Sylvia Pankhurst



Patrons: Maxine Peake, Baroness Margaret Prosser, Lord Chris Smith

Committee: Philippa Clark, Professor Mary Davis, Megan Dobney, Barbara Switzer

Late Patrons: Rodney Bickerstaffe, Baroness Brenda Dean, Richard Pankhurst



Patron Baroness Brenda Dean

It was 20 years ago, April 1998, that the story of A Statue for Sylvia started. Showing some young friends around the sights of Westminster and stopping in front of the memorial, adjacent to the House of Lords, to Emmeline and Christabel Pankhurst and the women who were imprisoned and force fed because of their determination to fight for the right of women to vote, Sylvia Pankhurst was notably absent.

People may know about Sylvia the suffragette but perhaps be unaware that she doesn't feature on this memorial to the suffragettes. She wrote the definitive history of the suffragette movement and whilst her name is

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primarily associated with the fight for votes for women, less well known is her active involvement in other causes both domestic and international.

Sylvia trained as an artist. Whilst painting and thus documenting working women in factories, mills and potteries she wrote:



Patron Maxine Peake

“Mothers came to me with their wasted little ones. I saw starvation look at me from patient eyes. I knew then that I should never return to my art.”

Sylvia was expelled from the Women's Social and Political Union by her sister, Christabel, endorsed by her mother Emmeline and this is why she is not represented on the memorial despite also being imprisoned and force fed. They were opposed to her determination to improve the conditions of the poor and her belief



Helen Pankhurst, Islington Mayor Kat Fletcher, Patron Rodney Bickerstaffe

Patron Richard Pankhurst
with the maquette



effective campaigning tool. These were the days of letters and emails!

The site is in Clerkenwell Green in Islington and will form part of the council's refurbishment of the Green to make it more pedestrian-friendly and encourage more people to enjoy this space.

mould ready for casting. The base of the statue is formed of placards showing the campaigns for which Sylvia worked tirelessly. The sculpture is full of movement – Sylvia walking forward, papers under her arm. She will be on a low plinth (one foot high) of York stone and is a thing of beauty!

that campaigning for women's rights should not be suspended during the First World War.

Sylvia lived and worked in the East End of London, campaigning with the East London Federation of Suffragettes to improve the lives of those living in poverty. In 1915 they demanded "that the principle of equal pay for work of equal value shall be established throughout the entire field of industry". She established a nursery, food hall, employment and healthcare for women. She was vociferous against racism and fascism – all issues still very 'live' today.

Concerned about the lack of recognition of such a significant woman, we spoke to Professor Mary

Davis who was writing her book "Sylvia Pankhurst, A Life in Radical Politics". We became enthused to campaign for a statue to Sylvia. The Sylvia Pankhurst Memorial Committee was formed, four women who were working together in the women's and trade union movement. Our first Patron was Richard Pankhurst, Sylvia's son.

The sculptor is the renowned artist, Ian Walters – especially famed for the head of Mandela on London's South Bank and latterly his sculpture of Mandela in Parliament Square. Ian generously agreed to work with us 'blind' as we set about fundraising. We had little experience of such an undertaking and began before social media became such an

It has been something of a saga – we have met many obstacles – no doubt because Sylvia Pankhurst was always a thorn in the side of the Establishment. We have received a generous donation from the Corporation of the City of London and fantastic support from Islington Council. The funds for the statue however have largely come from donations by individuals and trade union branches. This statue really is in the spirit of Sylvia, a people's statue. We now need to raise sufficient funds to cast the statue in bronze, transport it to Clerkenwell Green and ensure its maintenance. The artist at the Morris Singer Foundry has scaled up from the maquette, and the craftspeople at the foundry have prepared the

August 2018 will see the 15th annual Sylvia Pankhurst Memorial Lecture given by Dr Sheila Hanlon: "Pedalling days: Sylvia Pankhurst and political cycling traditions, from Clarionettes to Suffragettes". Previous lecturers have included Richard Pankhurst, Gloria Mills, Rita Pankhurst, Theresa Moriarty, Hester Reeve and Helen Pankhurst.

We are now seeking financial support so the statue may be completed in this centenary year of the first limited franchise for women.

Thank you for taking the time to read this: The Sylvia Pankhurst Memorial Committee



Cheques should be made payable to
“SERTUC (Sylvia Pankhurst)” and sent to
Megan Dobney, 1 Camden Hill Road,
London SE19 1NX

We are crowdfunding on:
www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/sylviastatue

The campaign website is
www.gn.apc.org/sylviapankhurst

Find us on
www.facebook.com/astatueforsylvia and
follow us on Twitter @sylviastatue

You can also donate on line at
<https://donorbox.org/a-statue-for-sylvia-pankhurst>

Contact us 01479 851 306 or 07952 771
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Top left, the maquette is scaled up in clay.
Next the mould is made, and above the clay
floor of placards