

Historical Significance of Portsmouth

Throughout the history of Portsmouth, it has shown to be significant in a variety of categories. Here are some categories where Portsmouth truly stands out.

One of the most well-known categories Portsmouth exceeds in would be its military history. It is rumoured that warship building went back to the rule of Alfred the Great to push back against the Viking invasions. This would be the start to what would be known as for years to come the most powerful navy in the world and it was most likely undertaken in Portsmouth. Portsmouth was also the birthplace to maybe the first ever dry dock and the Mary Rose. During the 1850s, it was believed that the Portsmouth docks were the largest industrial site in the world and it would stay that way till the end of the First World War. During this time, many famous naval technologies were invented in the docks, for example the first Dreadnought which was a massive, fast, large calibre gunship never seen before. Then during the two wars, Portsmouth was the main place for ship construction and one of the first places to hire women and it was said to be one of the major embarking points for the famous D-Day assault. Lastly, during World War 2, the docks received substantial damage from 67 Luftwaffe bombing raids which shows that even the Germans at the time saw Portsmouth to be a more vital piece than Southampton. This shows that throughout time Portsmouth has always taken on a significant role, seeing as most of our battles and the economy revolved around a substantial navy.

Portsmouth has also been home to many famous sports professionals and athletes. For example, Wally Hammond, a famous cricket player born in 1903 who played first class cricket and later on went to captain the England team. He was considered the best English batsmen of the 1930s and was thought of as one of the 4 best cricketers of all time by the Cricketers Almanack. He broke 3 records in his career and in his Test career, he scored 7,249 runs and took 83 wickets. Another famous athlete was Katie Sexton, who was an Olympic swimmer for Britain. She was the first ever British woman to win a world championship title when she won the 200m backstroke. She went on to participate in two Olympics, three commonwealths and four world championships. When she retired, she started an academy based in Havant to help train the next generation and to help give back to the Portsmouth community. She also founded a charity called Off the Record which is a counselling organisation for 11 to 25 year olds. Portsmouth was also home to Sir Alec Rose who served in the royal navy during World War 2. Once the war

finished, he developed a passion for sailing so he bought a second hand boat, slightly modified it and then participated in the second single handed Atlantic race in 1964. In this race, he circumnavigated the whole globe in 354 days and then went on to come fourth out of all the contestants. Around 3 years later, he was knighted by the Queen for his feat and representing his country well. He then donated his boat, the Lively Lady to charity where it is still used today to help train younger sailors. Lastly, the most famous sporting champions in all of Portsmouth, Portsmouth FC. This is Portsmouth's football club that is unique from all the others. Since the club was at one stage going bankrupt, the community decided to buy it, making it one of the only clubs to be a fan owned club. By doing so they have kept alive the legacy of the club's achievements. For example, in 1926, Portsmouth FC became the first club south of London to reach the first division which its counterpart, Southampton wouldn't reach for another 40 years. They were also the first team to play at home on a floodlit pitch in Fratton Park. They were also declared League champions in 1949 and then defended that title the next year. Thus, they showed just how prestigious a now somewhat lowly ranked football club was over the years.

This shows Portsmouth to have shaped numerous highly talented athletes and professionals who have represented their country graciously and come back to selflessly give back to the next generation.

Overall, this shows how in numerous categories Portsmouth will always shine brighter above the rest, throughout history showing just how significant it will always be in our country's historical legacy.

