



The Stoddart Statues

Twelve marble statues were selected by Thomas Stoddart during his visit to Carrara in Italy and were consigned together with Sicilian marble pedestals as a gift to the citizens of Ballarat. The statues were unveiled in the Ballarat Botanical Gardens on Empire Day 1884 by the Governor of Victoria with thousands of spectators travelling from Melbourne.

The Carrara marble statues have suffered many losses through vandalism, biological degradation and weathering.

The classic mythological figures presented were:
Spring, Summer, Autumn, Winter, Hercules, Pomona, Bacchante, Hebe, Flora Farnese, Leda, Mercury and Flora.

Spring and Hercules were smashed when vandals pushed them from their pedestals in 1993. Council engaged a Melbourne sculptor to undertake carving copies in Carrara Marble, however the artist was unable to complete the project. We have an incomplete copy of Hercules and a block of white marble as a legacy. Hercules and Spring were repaired by stonemasons and displayed in the Robert Clark Centre since 1998.

Flora Farnese, Leda and Hebe were smashed by vandals in 2002. Following this act and the saw cut to the leg of Autumn occurring, Council determined that the collection would be removed from their pedestals in the gardens and they have been stabilised and cleaned and placed on display within The Conservatory. Flora Farnese, Leda and Hebe are currently being restored to their pre- vandalism condition through use of stainless steel reinforcing pins, epoxy adhesive and joins and losses being replaced using silicon microspheres, acrylic resin and marble dust so that repairs will not be obvious.