

Statues & Coffee Walk - Sturt Street Ballarat



18. Queen Victoria Statue 1900 B. Mackennal, Marble

Queen Victoria Statue

This statue of Queen Victoria by B. Mackennal was erected in Queen Victoria Square directly opposite the front door of the Town Hall. It was unveiled 24th May 1900. The foundation stone was laid in the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Year.

1837 - 1897

VICTORIA

DEI GRATIA

BRITT. REGINA. FID. DEF

IND. IMP.

(Victoria, by the grace of God, Queen of Great Britain, Defender of the Faith, Empress of India)

The four 2' x 3' bronze relief panels at the base of the statue depict stages of her life.

East is: 1837 The Accession (Men in frock coats telling her the news.)

South is: 1838 The Coronation (The Queen seated with the orb and sceptre.)

West is: 1900 Australian Commonwealth (Signing the constitution.)

North is: 1897 The Diamond Jubilee (The Queen in her open carriage.)

Ballarat Centenary (1935) p63 "On May 28th (?) 1900, the Lieut-Governor of Victoria, Sir John Madden, before a crowd of 20 000 spectators, unveiled the statue of Queen Victoria, in the Square named in honour of the first lady of the Empire. The crowd cheered loudly when the curtain was drawn and showed the marble representation of the Monarch who was loved and revered by all."



Queen Victoria Statue Makeover to Commence this Week after Storm Delays

Recent storms have delayed the scheduled makeover for the Queen Victoria Statue in Sturt Street Gardens. Melbourne based conservator, Paul Hunt, will now undertake restoration work on her Majesty later this week.

The white marble rendition of the robed Queen Victoria, with a staff in her right arm and a gilded bronze angel on an orb in her left hand, was originally unveiled on 24 May 1900 and will require three weeks of careful restoration work.

Works will include removal of lichen and algal deposits, removal of crystalline deposits, restoring and re-securing the orb, filling cracks and repointing the plinth.

The work of Sir Bertram McKennal, one of Australia's most recognized sculptors and the first Australian artist to be knighted; the sculpture was erected to mark the victory by British troops during the Mafeking Siege which ended in May 1900.

The siege, which lasted 217 days until the British successfully secured the South African border town of Mafeking, created a wave of national patriotism both in Australia and Britain which not even the VE celebrations of 1945 would equal.

The works will cost \$5700 and a \$3,000 donation from the Victoria League Ballarat Branch which closed two years ago, will go towards the restoration work.

The statue is one of the City's most valuable outdoor art pieces and a detailed conservator's report was commissioned to determine how the piece should be restored prior to work commencing.

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For further information, contact the City of Ballarat Media Unit on 5320 5658 or 5320 5512.

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