

SKIP 1. -> INTRO

Today we are here to talk about the statues which are scattered about in the Gardens. It would seem that the Victorians were very interested in statues of all kinds. Well educated people at the time had a background in Classics: the myths and legends of the Greeks and Romans, so part of the enjoyment of looking at statues probably provided an "aha moment" of saying "Ah yes, I know who that is, and providing the story to themselves or those around them. I often wonder about the fact that dress in Victorian times was extremely modest, yet somehow it was quite OK to have skimpily clad statues on view in all sorts of places, including gardens where families were expected to picnic and generally enjoy themselves.

We have a great many statues, so first we will tell you what they are:

There are 12 statues given by Thomas Stoddart scattered through the gardens.

The statues in the Statue House are from the estate of James Russell Thomson, Chosen by Thomas Stoddart.

Also a statue of Wallace near the entrance, which came from the remainder of the money of the Thomson estate.

We have two lions by the main gates, given by Mr Ham,

A fountain in memory of William Claxton in front of the small gate to the north, given by public subscription.

Perseus who came to Ballarat from the NGV, which is in the Robert Clark Centre

An incomplete statue of Hercules which lives in the conservatory,

And busts of Robert Clark and Adam Lindsay Gordon.

After morning tea we hope you will come with us to view all these statues.

Thomas Stoddart

For the next few minutes we might look closely at Thomas Stoddart and his statues.

Thomas Stoddart was born in 1829 in Roxburgh Scotland. He was employed by the British Army as a Joiner, and made medical boxes for Army doctors.

He arrived in Ballarat in 1853 at the age of 25. He worked his passage as a sailor. Perhaps as a carpenter? He worked as a miner till 1861. Perhaps this wasn't a very lucrative job and he became a speculator and a share broker. He is said to have floated more companies than any other man. He never married.

By 1882, in his fifties by now, he took a European tour. In Rome he visited the studio of Charles Summers, a sculptor who had also been a miner in Victoria, and who had worked on various public statues a bronze group of Burke and Wills and facade of the New Parliament House.

In Summers' company Stoddart then went to Genoa and saw many statues in public places. So they went on to Carrara where Mr. Stoddart ordered 12! He would have liked to have Apollo and Minerva in this group of 12, but they couldn't be ready within the time frame of the order, so Flora Farnese and Bacchante were ordered instead.

After this tour Stoddart came home and lost quite heavily on some investments, but he continued to contribute to Churches and Sporting activities and the cultural life of Ballarat.

The statues arrived in Victoria and were placed in the gardens, no doubt in consultations with those concerned. Then on Queen Victoria's Birthday in 1884 they were unveiled with much ceremony, at the same moment, when a bugle sounded and the draperies which were covering each statue were removed simultaneously.

Stoddart died in 1905, "having caught a cold and neglected his health" though the Death Certificate cited cancer of the liver.

John on Greek and Roman information

~~Carara Carara~~
- Greek mythology → Roman mythology
? names.
- Greek statues / Roman statues
TYPE. CLOTHING
OVER A Mixture

The Stoddart statues are made from Carara marble, with Sicilian marble for the pedestals and the bases are from Grampian granite.

Walking south down the Prime ministers' Avenue we come to the

4 seasons,

These were sculpted by Bertozzi.

Spring carries a posy, has a floral wreath on her head and has a toga dress with one shoulder.

Summer carries a sheath of grain and just the handle of a scythe the rest of which is missing. There is no knowledge now of whether it was broken in transit or later.

Autumn is a young man with a bunch of grapes. In many representations of Autumn there is a dog, symbolising the chase, but ours doesn't have one. Perhaps Mr. Stoddart didn't like dogs, or thought that the chase was not suitable for an Australian autumn.

Winter is a cold old man pulling his cloak about himself. There is a tradition that he looks like Mr. Stoddart, but none of us can verify that.

The other statues refer to Greek and Roman mythology.

If we turn walk towards Wellington Avenue we come to **Flora Farnese**, by Udny. The goddess of Flowers. One of the statues that Stoddart chose because Apollo and Minerva were not available. It is believed that she was a

copy from a collection of statues which the wealthy Farnese family had in their gardens. Her dress is quite modest, high at the neck and her hair is more carefully restrained, unlike the other Flora's.

To the south is **Leda** by Raggi, The legend tells us that Leda was seduced by Zeus in the form of a swan and produced two eggs, the twins, Pollux and Castor or Helen and Clytemnestra. Our swan is tiny, and stretches the imagination somewhat, but there are other representations of large swans in compromising positions.

Turning back towards the west there is **Hebe**, by Raggi, goddess of eternal youth. She was also cup-bearer of the gods, serving nectar and ambrosia. She was the daughter of Zeus and Hera. Some say that she spilt a cup and was then replaced by Ganymede, and married to Hercules

Mercury (Bertozzi) Son of Zeus, made a messenger to curb his thieving tendencies. He has a winged helmet, indicating speed and a pouch presumably to

carry necessary requirements for his journeys, and is dressed in the clothes of a shepherd. Was also known as the patron of trade, particularly the grain trade. He carried dreams from the Valley of Somus to sleeping humans. Patron of travellers, thieves, pickpockets and dishonest persons.

Walking towards the entrance there is **Hercules**, by Bertozzi. He is known as the epitome of human strength. With a rather violent and impulsive nature. He had 12 labours set for him as punishment for some violent acts. The list varies a little depending on who is telling the story. He is depicted with a lion skin and a club.

In front of the Fernery we find **Baccante** by Udney. She is a priestess of Bacchus, carrying a tambourine. The tradition is that these women held orgies in the forest, tearing animals to pieces with their teeth, and were, not unnaturally, known as wild women. Baccantes have a staff of giant fennel covered with ivy and

vine leaves wound round a pine cone called a Thyrus and are clad in tiger and panther skins.

Close by is **Pomona** by Raggi, Goddess of gardens and orchards. She carries a pruning knife.

In this group of goddesses we meet **Flora**. by Marchetti, goddess of flowers and spring. She carries a watering can and is watering flowers at her feet. She was married to the wind god, and was a companion of Hercules.

James Russell Thomson

He was born in Airdrie Scotland in 1818. He enlisted in the Army and served in many parts of the world, then in the Post Office.

He arrived in Australia at 34 in 1852 he went to the Ovens Diggings where he "subdued a mob of lawless men" and then to Ballarat. He was one

of the first miners to follow up leads in deeper ground and was successful. He was a shareholder in several mines in Redan. He was involved in all sorts of community matters, taking a prominent part in the search for the miner, Scobie's murderer. Thomson was a sound adviser and an able worker in the events that led to the Eureka rising. He has been described as :truthful, well read, a man of engaging disposition. Like his friend Stoddard, he was a bachelor. He died in 1886 at 93 Doveton St. North. From Cirrhosis of the liver.

In his will he set aside 3,700 pounds for the purchase of statuary for the gardens. The trustees, who included Thomas Stoddart, purchased the Flight from Pompeii 1,500 pounds, Susannah, Ruth, Rebecca and Veiled Modesty for 2,500 pounds . With the remainder the trustees commissioned the statue of Wallace.

The Statue House was built by the Council to house the bequest of James Russell Thomson. It was opened, with the statues in position in August 1888. The Statue House, or Pavilion was

designed by an architect, T.M. Molloy. The Council was encouraged to insert glass window lights into the roof of the Pavilion in 1889 and this was done. In the 1970s there was a move to replace the Pavilion but the local National Trust averted this, and the Heritage Listing of the Gardens will protect such buildings into the future.

The Statues inside the Statue House are the work of Australian Charles Francis Summers, son of Charles Summers who was the friend of Thomas Stoddart. Charles Francis was born in Richmond in 1858. He travelled to Rome with his father in 1869 and learnt his trade in his father's studio. Then going on to another Roman studio. He returned to Australia in 1904, so the statues we have must have been made in Italy. He was friendly with 2 popes and given permission to take plaster casts of figures and carvings in the Vatican. He used Carrara Marble and has works in Ballarat and Rotorua. Oddly he is described in several records as a minor

sculptor. But perhaps these critics hadn't seen Modesty. He died in 1904.

Flight from Pompei represents the flight of a family, father, mother and child from the ash and lava which erupted from Mt. Vesuvius (79AD).

Benzoni 1809-1873 designed this statue, and made a much smaller one, which can be seen in the Todmoden Town Hall in Yorkshire. He began to on this much larger one but died before much was done. Our Flight from Pompei was sculpted by Australian, Charles Francis Summers. It is a work of great delicacy, which we shall be able to admire later.

There are 4 marble reliefs at the statue's base also by Summers

A priest seeking to escape with his treasure and his slaves, overwhelmed by falling buildings.

The blind Girl, unaffected by the dark, leading her friends to safety,

A Roman Sentinel who remained at his post

The general confusion aggravated by the earthquake which occurred during the eruption.

Ruth

This statue refers to the Biblical book of Ruth, Ruth, a foreigner from Moab is Naomi's daughter in law. Both women are widows. Here Ruth is depicted as gleaning in the fields to feed Naomi and herself, since there is no other form of support for them. Boaz, who owns the field is attracted to Ruth and eventually marries her.

Rebecca

In the book of Genesis we are told that Abraham, concerned that his son Isaac might marry a Caananite woman, sends a servant to Abraham's birthplace to find a wife for him. When the servant arrives in that country he meets Rebecca at the well. She shows

herself to be kind and gracious towards the traveller. The servant then sees that perhaps the Lord has chosen her to be the bride, so he asks her family and they accept this proposal (luckily so does Rebecca, so that's just as well) Here she is journeying to the family's home in Canaan. She has not yet met Isaac, but believing this marriage to be blessed by the Lord, goes forth with confidence and joy.

Susanna

This is a story from the Apocrypha: Susanna, an upright Jewish wife, goes to bath privately in the garden. Two men. Elders of the community are infatuated with her and hide themselves in the garden before the gates are locked. They endeavour to seduce her, and when she refuses to bow to their will they denounce her as an adulterous woman. The penalty for adultery was death. As she was being led to execution, a young man, Daniel called the judgement into question and exposed the elders' lies. They were then put to death instead. Our statue shows Susanna preparing to bathe.

Modesty. This quality is shown by the covering clothing. Look at the exquisite detail that is sculpted. There is lace which looks real, and the veil over the face is quite wonderful. There is a similarly veiled figure, named Rebecca, by Benzoni in the Museum of High Art in Atlanta.

The very large statue which one passes the lions to view is of the great Scottish hero **William Wallace**. He was a Scottish landowner who became one of the leaders during the wars of Scottish Independence. He defeated the English Army at the Battle of Stirling Bridge in 1297. Later he was captured and put to death by King Edward 1. He is lauded in literary works by Walter Scott and subject of the film Braveheart. Since Stoddart and Thomson were both Scots and Thomson was known to revere Wallace, the choice of this statue is not surprising.

The Sculptor was **Percival Ball**. The Trustees of the Thomson Estate commissioned him to make the Wallace statue. He was born in

Westminster, England in 1845. His father was a carver. He studied at the Royal Academy of Arts in England and won medals and prizes.

He went to Europe in 1870 and studied in Paris, Munich and Rome for 8 years.

In 1884 came to Australia because of asthma and bronchitis. He completed the statue of Sir Redmond Barry from a clay model made by James Gilbert which is outside the State Library. And other works can be seen in the National Gallery, and Latrobe Library. The Art Gallery of NSW has a relief of Phyrne before Praxiteles on its facade which was sculpted by Ball.

There was an athletic Scot called Dimmie visiting at the time that Ball was working on the Wallace statue, and he was used as a model. Ball died of heart failure due to asthma and bronchitis while working in England in 1900.