

---

## Catani Gardens WWI Cenotaph



SaintK 16.jpg



SaintK 17.jpg



SaintK 18.jpg



SaintK 19.jpg

---

### Location

Beaconsfield Parade and Jacka Boulevard, St Kilda, PORT PHILLIP CITY

### Municipality

PORT PHILLIP CITY

### Level of significance

-

### Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

H1805

### Heritage Listing

Vic. War Heritage Inventory

---

### Statement of Significance

Last updated on - August 9, 2001

Victorian Heritage Register:

Extent of Registration: 1. All of the structures marked B1-B10 on Diagram 1805 held by the Executive Director:

2. All the gravel paths marked P1 on Diagram 1805 held by the Executive Director:

3. All the plants and avenues of trees marked T1-T11 on Diagram 1805 held by the Executive Director:

4. All of the land known as Catani Gardens being land permanently reserved as a Recreation Reserve marked L1 on Diagram 1805 held by the Executive Director.

Comparisons: The Catani Gardens were directly influenced by contemporary resort gardens and landscaping on the Continent, in particular, the Villa Comunale in Naples (see History, above).

Monuments and Statuary:

There are a number of war memorials of the same form as the Catani Gardens Cenotaph to be found across Victoria. The St Kilda example is outstanding in its siting and simplicity of design. The workmanship is of a much higher standard than many of the other works located across the state. Comparable works include those at Bendigo, Hawthorn, Parkville, Sandringham and Williamstown.

Sali Cleve Drinking Fountain is a unique work in an unusual style. There are no other recorded drinking fountains in Victoria which take this form. Although there are many privately donated drinking fountains in Victoria, there are none which come close to the distinctive Beaux Arts composition of the Sali Cleve Drinking Fountain.

The Captain Cook Memorial appears to have been the first major memorial to Captain James Cook in Victoria when it was erected in 1914. The dramatic rebuilding of 'Captain Cook's Cottage' in the Fitzroy Gardens in association with Victoria's 1934-5 Centenary celebrations subsequently became Victoria's, and probably Australia's, best-known memorial to Cook. The Catani Gardens Memorial is a major monument to the navigator and explorer in Victoria

Catani Gardens comprise approximately 6 hectares of landscaped garden developed on foreshore reclaimed in the period from 1890 to c.1916. The St Kilda Foreshore Trust Committee, set up in 1906 to reclaim and beautify the entire St Kilda foreshore, appointed Carlo Catani to design the Gardens as part of a larger foreshore plan extending to Point Ormond. The main landscaping and planting were completed by the late 1920s. The prime landscape feature of the Gardens is its extensive use of palms arranged in rows and grand avenues along principal axes of the Gardens, with secondary promenades of Monterey Cypress, and smaller pathways and specimen plantings (including the indigenous Coastal Tea Tree, Coastal Banksia, and She-Oak) adding interest and intimacy. Palms, lawns and paths dominate the Gardens, with horticultural displays apparently never an important feature. The planted lava rock retaining wall on the west side supports an embanked lawn, with bays of inbuilt bench seats facing the sea. Other early park furniture includes lava rock drinking fountains. Monuments in the Gardens include the Sali Cleve Drinking Fountain (1911), Captain Cook Monument (1914), and Cenotaph (1925).

The Catani Gardens are of historical, aesthetic, architectural and scientific (horticultural) importance to the state of Victoria.

The Catani Gardens are historically important for their association with Italian born Public Works Department engineer Carlo Catani, who achieved widespread public recognition for his visionary schemes of public works including the Alexandra Gardens, Alexandra Avenue, and Lake Catani at Mount Buffalo. The Gardens also have historical significance as the major work in a foreshore development scheme which cast St Kilda as a fashionable seaside resort in the Continental manner. The European resort character of Catani's original design concept sets the Gardens apart from other foreshore schemes. The layout, planting and monuments evoke St Kilda's heyday as a resort for promenading, reflecting both Edwardian formality and the festivity of a seaside resort. The Gardens also have significance for pioneering a multi-government Trust purely for the purposes of foreshore beautification and leisure, paving the way for similar schemes, notably at Geelong's Eastern Beach Reserve.

Catani Gardens have scientific (horticultural) significance for their outstanding collection of palms including three intact avenues of uniform sized *Phoenix canariensis*, and an exceptional stand of *Washingtonia robusta*. The *Phoenix canariensis* are believed to represent the greatest concentration of palms in a Victorian public garden.

Catani Gardens are of aesthetic significance for their seaside location, both reflected and enhanced through the extensive use of palms. Catani's palm landscape has since been extended, and palms have become a major

theme throughout St Kilda. The combination of open lawns, pathways, vistas, specimen planting, walls, monuments and garden furniture all contribute to the aesthetic significance.

The monuments have historical and aesthetic significance. The Cenotaph, designed by GH Alsop and JC Aisbett with models by Paul Montford, memorialises those locals who served and died in World War I and expresses the trauma of those events. It is a notable example of the distinctive war memorial design deriving from British architect Sir Edwin Lutyens and distinguished by high quality craftsmanship, subtle design and setting. The Sali Cleve Drinking Fountain has aesthetic significance as a delightful folly and rare example of the Beaux-Arts style. It is the only known public piece in bronze by noted architectural designer and artist CA Irwin. The Captain Cook statue, a replica of the Sir John Tweed statue in Cook's birthplace Whitby, has historical significance as the major Victorian monument to Cook at that time.

Construction dates 1920,

Architect/Designer Catani, Carlo,

Hermes Number 127015

Property Number

---

## Physical Description 1

Monuments in the Gardens include the Sali Cleve Drinking Fountain (1911), Captain Cook Monument (1914), and Cenotaph (1925).

## Historical Australian Themes

Commemorating significant events and people

## Usage/Formal Usage

Commemoration

## Veterans Description for Public

The Cantani Gardens Cenotaph was built in 1925 to commemorate the First World War. It was designed by GH Alsop and JC Aisbett with models by Paul Montford. The memorial is also a notable example of the distinctive war memorial design by British architect Sir Edwin Lutyens, distinguished by high quality craftsmanship, subtle design and setting.

*This place/object may be included in the Victorian Heritage Register pursuant to the Heritage Act 2017. Check the Victorian Heritage Database, selecting 'Heritage Victoria' as the place source.*

*For further details about Heritage Overlay places, contact the relevant local council or go to Planning Schemes Online <http://planningschemes.dpcd.vic.gov.au/>*