

# Victorian Heritage Database Report

Report generated 24/02/20



## WOMENS CHRISTIAN TEMPERANCE UNION DRINKING FOUNTAIN



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H0194 WCTU Fountain Melb 15 05 2006 JB 004



H0194 WCTU Fountain Melb 15 05 2006 JB 008



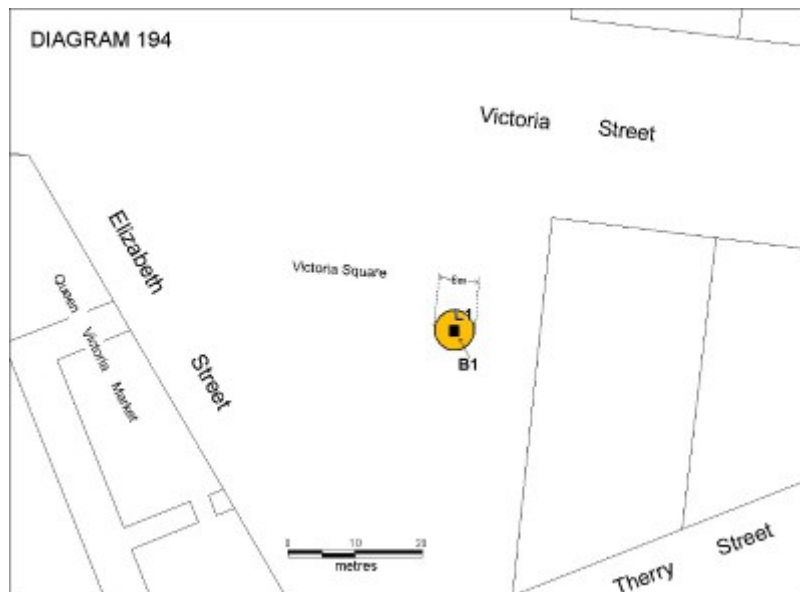
WCTU Fountain Melbourne



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H0194 plan

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## Location

VICTORIA SQUARE ELIZABETH STREET MELBOURNE, Melbourne City

## Municipality

MELBOURNE CITY

## Level of significance

Registered

## Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

H0194

## Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO937

## VHR Registration

September 14, 2006

## Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Register

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## Statement of Significance

Last updated on - September 18, 2006

What is significant?

The Women's Christian Temperance Union drinking fountain which stands opposite the Queen Victoria Market in Elizabeth Street, Melbourne, near the corner of Victoria Street, was erected in 1901.

The Melbourne Branch of the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) was founded in 1887. The model was directly inspired by the WCTU that had been founded in the northern States of America in 1874. The American Branch sent out 'world missionaries' to help found branches in other countries. Mary Clement Leavitt visited Australia and New Zealand in 1885 and inspired the creation of a number of branches throughout the Australian colonies, in both rural and city areas, but the largest branch was in the Colony of Victoria. The WCTU was an influential organisation run for and by women and was involved in many social reform campaigns, as well as temperance, including, most notably, the vote for women. The WCTU realised that if women had the vote they could influence social policy and legislation. Meanwhile the Union was active campaigners with petitions, letter writings, education programs and meetings.

As a part of their temperance concerns, the Union agitated for the provision of clean drinking water in public places, in particular, drinking taps and fountains. These were usually sited outside institutions where large numbers of people congregated and were sometimes opposed by publicans who feared losing thirsty customers. In 1900 to commemorate Federation and to coincide with the visit of the Duke and Duchess of York (later George V and Queen Mary) the WCTU decided to donate a fountain to the City of Melbourne. This was duly

accepted by Melbourne City Council. It was initially intended to locate this near the new central Flinders Street railway station but eventually was installed near the market. While the WCTU hoped that the Duchess would unveil the fountain, the inscription merely notes that the fountain was "in commemoration" of their visit.

The granite and marble fountain was erected for the sum of 250 pounds, and was designed and erected by J. Churchman and Sons rather than a celebrated sculptor. Churchman was a monumental mason who lived and worked near the Melbourne General Cemetery in Carlton. Churchman's involvement may explain the 'funereal' appearance of the fountain. It has a stone drinking bowl with a Gothic style canopy upon which stands a plinth and a figure of a woman in classical robes pointing towards the heavens. Inscribed on the fountain is the WCTU motto "For God, Home and Humanity". Inscriptions also note the dedication, "In commemoration of the visit of their Royal Highnesses the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York", and the designer and manufacturer of the fountain. Bubbler taps were later installed in the fountain to avoid the transmission of disease.

How is it significant?

The Women's Christian Temperance Union drinking fountain is of historical significance to the State of Victoria.

Why is it significant?

The Women's Christian Temperance Union drinking fountain is of historical significance for its association with the Temperance Movement in Victoria in the late 19th and early 20th Century. The fountain is a physical manifestation of the WCTU's concern to provide an alternative to alcoholic drinks.

The Women's Christian Temperance Union drinking fountain is of historical significance to the State of Victoria for its association with the Women's Christian Temperance Union which was the biggest and most influential of the various women's organisations in Victoria in the late 1890s. The WCTU introduced large numbers of women to political activity, linking temperance and women's suffrage as a means of achieving a variety of social reforms.

## **Permit Exemptions**

General Conditions: 1. All exempted alterations are to be planned and carried out in a manner which prevents damage to the fabric of the registered place or object. General Conditions: 2. Should it become apparent during further inspection or the carrying out of works that original or previously hidden or inaccessible details of the place or object are revealed which relate to the significance of the place or object, then the exemption covering such works shall cease and Heritage Victoria shall be notified as soon as possible. General Conditions: 3. If there is a conservation policy and plan endorsed by the Executive Director, all works shall be in accordance with it. Note: The existence of a Conservation Management Plan or a Heritage Action Plan endorsed by the Executive Director, Heritage Victoria provides guidance for the management of the heritage values associated with the site. It may not be necessary to obtain a heritage permit for certain works specified in the management plan. General Conditions: 4. Nothing in this determination prevents the Executive Director from amending or rescinding all or any of the permit exemptions. General Conditions: 5. Nothing in this determination exempts owners or their agents from the responsibility to seek relevant planning or building permits from the responsible authorities where applicable. Regular Site Maintenance : The following site maintenance works are permit exempt under section 66 of the Heritage Act 1995: a) the maintenance of an item to retain its condition without the removal of or damage to the existing fabric or the introduction of new materials; b) cleaning including the removal of surface deposits, organic growths, or graffiti by the use of low pressure water and natural detergents and mild brushing and scrubbing. Note: Surface patina which has developed on the fabric may be an important part of the item's significance and if so needs to be preserved during maintenance and cleaning. Note: Any new materials used for repair must not exacerbate the decay of existing fabric due to chemical incompatibility, obscure existing fabric or limit access to existing fabric for future maintenance. Repair must maximise protection and retention of fabric and include the conservation of existing details or elements. Public Safety and Security : The following public safety and security activities are permit exempt under section 66 of the Heritage Act 1995, a) public safety and security activities provided the works do not involve removal or destruction b) the erection of temporary security fencing, scaffolding, hoardings or surveillance systems to prevent unauthorised access or secure public safety which will not adversely affect significant fabric of the place; c) development including emergency stabilisation necessary to secure safety where a site feature has been irreparably damaged or destabilised and represents a safety risk to its users or the public. Note: Urgent or emergency site works are to be undertaken by an appropriately qualified specialist such as a structural engineer, or other heritage professional. Signage and Site Interpretation : The following Signage and Site Interpretation activities are permit exempt under section 66 of the Heritage Act 1995, a) signage and site interpretation activities provided the works do not involve the removal or destruction of any significant above-ground structure b) the erection of non-illuminated signage for the purpose of ensuring public safety or to assist in the interpretation of the heritage

significance of the place or object and which will not adversely affect significant fabric or obstruct significant views of and from heritage values or items; c) signage and site interpretation products must be located and be of a suitable size so as not to obscure or damage significant fabric of the place; d) signage and site interpretation products must be able to be later removed without causing damage to the significant fabric of the place; Note: The development of signage and site interpretation products must be consistent in the use of format, text, logos, themes and other display materials. Note: Where possible, the signage and interpretation material should be consistent with other schemes developed on similar or associated sites. It may be necessary to consult with land managers and other stakeholders concerning existing schemes and strategies for signage and site interpretation.

Construction dates	1901,
Heritage Act Categories	Registered place,
Other Names	WATER FOUNTAIN, WCTU FOUNTAIN, WOMENS CHRISTIAN TEMPERANCE UNION FOUNTAIN,
Hermes Number	14270
Property Number	

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## Plaque Citation

Constructed in 1901 to commemorate Federation and the visit of the Duke and Duchess of York to Melbourne, this drinking Fountain is associated with the Temperance and Suffrage (Votes for Women) movements.

## Extent of Registration

1. All of the structure known as the Womens Christian Temperance Union Drinking Fountain marked B1 on Diagram 194 held by the Executive Director.
2. All of the land marked L1 on Diagram 194 held by the Executive Director being a circle of 3 metres radius from the centre of the fountain.

*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 data owner.*

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