
Geelong Botanic Gardens And Eastern Park

Location

Garden Street, GEELONG VIC 3220 - Property No G13098

Municipality

GREATER GEELONG CITY

Level of significance

State

Heritage Listing

National Trust

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - June 2, 2004

Geelong Botanic Gardens, set aside in 1850-51, developed from the mid-1850s and particularly from 1857 (following the appointment of initial curator Daniel Bunce), reorganised and further developed by curator John Raddenberry from 1872-96, then maintained by successive curators including the landscaping of additional land from 1959, is of State cultural significance:

- As an outstanding example of a regional botanic garden, a garden type best exemplified in Australia by the network of such gardens created in colonial Victoria; typical characteristics of regional botanic gardens which are demonstrated at Geelong include a wide range of plants, a picturesque landscaped design, incorporation of water features, decorative structures and works, contrast between open lawns and densely planted shrub beds, areas of intensive horticultural interest including the quality and continuity of greenhouse displays, a documented supply of plants from other colonial botanic gardens and prominent horticulturists, and a location in proximity to a township developed during the mid to late nineteenth century;

- For its early design and layout; the layout of parallel paths which was in place by the 1860s reflects the origins of the garden as a systematic botanical garden based on scientific principles, while the planting character and informal layout of surrounding sections reflects the later more picturesque approach developed by curator Raddenberry and is contemporary with other picturesque landscaping championed by William Guilfoyle at the Melbourne Botanic Gardens;

- For its collection of plants (especially trees and shrubs), characteristic of late nineteenth century gardens and representative of more specialised plants groups befitting the scientific role of a botanic garden, evidence of seed and plant exchanges with other botanic gardens in Victoria and interstate, and some outstanding individual specimens such as *Scolopia brownii* (Gunstock Wood), *Ginkgo biloba* (Maidenhair Tree), *Prumnopitys andina* (Plum Fir), *Sequoiadendron giganteum* (Big Tree), *Wigandia caracasana*, *Quillaja saponaria* (Soap-bark Tree),

Fagus sylvatica f. *purpurea* (Purple Beech), *Jubaea chilensis* (Chilean Wine Palm), *Actinostrobus pyramidalis* (Swan River Cypress-pine), *Picconia excelsa*, *Eucalyptus maculata* (Spotted Gum), *Agathis robusta* (Queensland Kauri), *Podocarpus elatus* (Plum Pine), *Acer pseudoplatanus* 'Leopoldii' (Variegated Sycamore), *Araucaria bidwillii* (Bunya Bunya Pine) x12, *Ficus platypoda* var. *angustifolia*, *Brachychiton discolor* (Queensland Lacebark), *Alnus jorullensis* (Evergreen Alder), *Cassine crocea* (African Holly), *Brachychiton x rosea* (Hybrid Flame Tree), *Juniperus thurifera* (Incense Juniper), *Juglans nigra* (Black Walnut), and *Corynocarpus laevigatus* (Karakara), all listed on the National Trust's Register of Significant Trees;

- For its historical links with Daniel Bunce as inaugural curator and John Raddenberry as second curator; Bunce's botanical and horticultural flair enabled the garden to be soundly established and this was consolidated and enhanced by Raddenberry, a noted horticulturist; Bunce's wide plant exchange network also ensured that the gardens were viewed with more than parochial interest and consolidated the reputation of the Geelong Botanic Gardens as being amongst Victoria's major regional gardens;

- For its considerable aesthetic significance, derived from the mature planting, the vistas within the gardens (especially in and to the sequence of spaces defined by Bunce's parallel path system), the collection of structures and works such as the fountains, urns and shelters contribute to the design by providing ornaments in the landscape;

- For the survival of numerous photographs which document and illustrate the development of the site; these complement the extant garden and form a rich resource for interpretation of cultural significance to visitors; and

- For the manner in which the garden is protected, physically and visually, by Eastern Park which ensures that the highly ornamental character of the garden remains as an 'oasis' without significant intrusions from surrounding development.

Eastern Park is additionally of regional cultural significance:

- As a representative example of a mid-Victorian public park, with surviving carriage drives and tree plantings (especially conifers and evergreen trees which give a distinctive character) relating to its first decades of development; these include some outstanding individual specimens such as *Pinus torreyana* (Soledad Pine) x7, *Pinus halepensis* (Aleppo Pine), *Pinus cembroides* var. *parryana* (Mexican Stone Pine), *Eucalyptus bauerana* (Blue Box), *Acer monspessulanum* (Montpellier Pine), *Cupressus goveniana* (Gowen Cypress), *Cupressus macnabiana* (Macnab Cypress) x2, *Juniperus excelsa* (Grecian Juniper), *Araucaria columnaris* (New Caledonia Pine), *Cupressus torulosa* (Bhutan Cypress), *Harpephyllum caffrum* (Kaffir Plum), *Picconia excelsa*, *Xanthorrhoea* sp. (Grass-tree), all listed on the National Trust's Register of Significant Trees;

- For its location overlooking Corio Bay, which permits long vistas out of the park from its elevated position, and for its contiguity with the important bayside features of Eastern Beach and the Limeburner's Point archaeological site; in combination these precincts combine to form an area which demonstrates important aspects of Geelong's history from the mid-nineteenth to the mid-twentieth centuries;

- As an integral part, both historically and visually, of an important nineteenth and early twentieth century precinct of predominantly residential development in East Geelong.

The Geelong Botanic Gardens also includes the relocated first customs house in Geelong, important as one of Victoria's oldest remaining buildings, believed to have been prefabricated in Sydney and despite its minor defacements retaining a certain charm by virtue of its pavilion design with concave roof profile and one remaining ogee-topped window, however, in its current location this building does not contribute to the significance of the gardens.

Note: Geelong Botanic Gardens lies within Eastern Park and has a classification of State.
Eastern Park has a classification of Regional.

Property Number

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/>