

CHAPTER XXX.

The Fore Shore Committee and Its Doings—The Council's Bathing Pavilions—West Beach Residents' Protests—Fore Shore Committee's Objections—Clash of Authority—Public Want Baths—The Council Asserts Its Powers—Pavilions Are Built—Council and Committee Agree to Disagree—Carlo Catani, the Spirit of Beach Beauty—The Catani Memorial Clock Tower—Andrew Stenhouse Presents Captain Cook's Statue—Point Ormond and Marine Parade Beautifications.

THE secretary of the St. Kilda Fore Shore Committee, at the time (March, 1927) that the Public Works Committee of the St. Kilda Council, was considering, at a special meeting, the recommendations of the Council's Open Sea Bathing Committee for a comprehensive £100,000 bathing scheme, wrote a letter to a Melbourne newspaper stating that he "hailed with delight any attempt to provide adequate bathing facilities for St. Kilda." He desired to express "an opinion on the St. Kilda Council's £100,000 improvement scheme." He hoped that the St. Kilda bathing scheme was not wholly dependent on a big Government contribution. "The Government," he stated, "stopped its contribution of £500 per annum, to its own reserves, at St. Kilda, two years ago (1924), and it may be only raising false hopes for the St. Kilda Council to expect much . . ." Continuing, the secretary wrote :—"The question of providing a dancing palais in the proposed building is another detail. Already within a hundred yards of the sea we have the Palais de Danse, Wattle Path, Carlyon's, also splendid semi-private dancing accommodation at the St. Kilda Yacht Club, the Army and Navy Club, and the St. Kilda Swimming and Life Saving Club. Further, the Palais de Luxe . . . is not far distant. Would a new dancing palais, with expensive orchestra, etc., pay? I think not. The supply at present is greater than the demand.

"I fear the shopkeeping ratepayers of St. Kilda would protest if there be anything more provided than a cafeteria, with tea, coffee, etc., for visitors to the baths. The St. Kilda shore committee derives about £1,000 from its refreshment rooms and ice cream and soft drinks stall, but no other class of commercial undertaking may be allowed on the people's reserves.

"Again, is it to be open sea bathing? And what are the minimum charges? These are important details."

This candid, and critical, letter did not help the position. Though the letter purported to be a free lance criticism, it was inevitable that the public mind should associate the writer with his office, and attach official importance to a letter that was not flattering to the St. Kilda Council. The communion of interests, and of efforts, between the Council and the Fore Shore Committee were so close that anyone, considering the position, might have expected to find a co-ordination of action between the Committee, and the Council, whatever difficulties there were to be overcome, in the task of placing adequate bathing facilities, on the St. Kilda Beach, but it was not altogether so. The corporate mind of the Council, harassed by a guerrilla-like fire of irresponsible and illinformed criticism, turned to the Fore Shore Committee, and exclaimed, more in sorrow, than in anger, "Et to Brute !" The Fore Shore Committee, the corporate apostle of beauty, that the St. Kilda Council had been largely instrumental in placing on the wild wastes of the sand and rubbish- choked West Beach, became inclined to observe the letter of its powers, more than the spirit of those powers. The powers were elastic enough to allow the closest co-operation, with every gesture made by the Council, in the direction of improving the facilities for sea bathing, on the St. Kilda beach. The beach and its future, were more important to the St. Kilda Council, than the existence of a temporary committee of trust, admirable though the trust was. The committee had its work to do, and then, laden with honors, to be begone. The Fore Shore Committee had lingered, zealously working, on the beach longer than it had been expected to do. Its plea for so doing was that its work of beautification had occupied more time than had been foreseen. That was true, and quite a legitimate explanation, and accepted, without question, by the Council.

At the meeting of the Council, held on June 18, 1928, an animated discussion took place, on the question of accepting the tender of Messrs. T. R. & L. Cockram, for the erection of open sea bathing pavilions at Beaconsfield Parade, Marine Parade, and Elwood. The contract price was £31,426. The veteran councillor, and chairman of the Fore Shore Committee, Councillor O'Donnell, opposed the recommendation of the St.

Kilda Council's Public Works Committee, urging the Council to accept the tender. In support of the recommendation, Councillor Unsworth asserted that the new pavilions would attract 30,000 people to St. Kilda, and that financially the pavilions would show a profit. Councillor Taylor observed that the existing open sea bathing facilities which were free, cost the Council £1,000 a year. Tested by a majority vote, the tender was accepted to erect the three pavilions, on the resolution of Councillor Taylor, seconded by Councillor Morley.

By way of contrast, to show what changes are brought about through lapses of time, we quote from an old municipal advertisement, dated fifty-eight years ago, authorised by the St. Kilda Council. The newspaper notice warns St. Kilda ratepayers, and others, "that by-law No. 52 of the Borough of St. Kilda, dated March 11, 1872, does not allow anyone to use the beach, within the Borough of St. Kilda, for the purpose of bathing, (except within one, or other of the bathing establishments) between the western drain, and the main drain, and which two points are defined by posts, and boards, erected by order of the Council. Only children, under ten years of age, between the hour of eight, in the morning, and eight, at night, are allowed to use the prohibited area. £10 penalty. George Sprigg, Town Clerk ; D. McNaughton, Mayor." It will be observed in this advertisement that the town clerk takes precedence of the mayor.

For a month, after the St. Kilda Council accepted the tender for building the three bathing pavilions, the problem of providing for open sea bathing, on the beach, seemed to be happily solved. But no. Things were not quite so simple. The St. Kilda Council had engaged itself in contract, and it followed that if it broke the contract, it was liable to an action-at-law. There was no thought of any such breach of contract. The contractor had just to go ahead, at least, so it appeared, when, in July, the Fore Shore Committee, wrote to the St. Kilda Council, for the purpose of pointing out to the councillors, that before the Council could proceed with the building of bathing pavilions, or any other conveniences of that nature, the Council must have the Fore Shore Committee's approval of the site proposed to be selected, and also of the plans of the proposed building. The ease for the Fore Shore Committee, as stated by Councillor O'Donnell, was, that the Committee was acting within its rights.

Complaints, he explained, had been received by the Fore Shore Committee asserting that the west beach residents objected to the proposed pavilion, and in view of that objection, the Committee wanted to know what were the facts? So far as the St. Kilda Council was concerned, the Committee merely desired that the plans should be submitted to the Committee, so that the engineers of the Committee and Council could confer on the plans.

The complaints, referred to by the Chairman of the Committee had been already the subject of a deputation to the St. Kilda Council, from some of the residents of the west beach. They had protested against the erection of a bathing pavilion on the west beach. The position was disclosed in a letter of complaint, to "The Argus." The writer of the letter said:- The Council intends to take 180 feet frontage from Beaconsfield Parade, with a depth of 46 feet seaward, thus spoiling our view. We pointed out that if these buildings were erected they would monopolise practically all sand space. The present dressing-sheds require remodelling only on the existing site. The women's dressing sheds are 70 feet long by 14 feet wide, and the men's dressing-sheds 76 feet long by 14 feet wide. If the Council altered its plan to make the sheds 32 feet wide instead of 46 feet, the sheds would be level with the clubhouse, thus leaving a little sand for children to play on. As we received no satisfaction from the Council of St. Kilda, we have approached the Fore Shore Committee."

When the powers of a body like the St. Kilda Council are questioned by a minor power, within the city's gate, two courses are open to the Council, to give way, or to proceed. The Council elected to retain its sovereignty, as a corporate municipal body, and to pass by the claim of the Fore Shore Committee to suzerainty over the sands of St. Kilda, so far as the Committee was to determine whether, or not, the St. Kilda Council was within its rights to erect, without the Committee's permission, the bathing pavilions.

The St. Kilda Council took exception to the action of the St. Kilda Fore Shore Committee in requesting, from the Council, a written application for the site, on which to erect the projected bathing pavilions. The Minister of Lands supported the Fore Shore Committee, which support was not unexpected, since the

Committee was a semi-Government body. He expressed his surprise at the way the Fore Shore Committee's letter of protest had been received by the St. Kilda Council. He said that the foreshore was under the control of the Committee, appointed by the Ministry. He asserted imperatively, but somewhat prematurely, that before the Council could proceed with any building programme, it must have the approval of the Fore Shore Committee.

Public opinion was behind the Council. The sea-side bathers of Melbourne wanted the pavilions, and the public was not in sympathy with the attempts of the Fore Shore Committee to enforce the right it claimed to possess, to say when, and where, the St. Kilda Council should build bathing pavilions. The Council did not think the Committee had that right, and decided to go on, much as the waves went on rolling when King Canute told them to stop. This little official thunderstorm cleared the heated atmosphere, along the beach front, admirably, and the parties, to the argument, agreed to agree to differ on the point raised. The Lands Department shrugged its shoulders, a wilful council must have its way ! The Council could not be arrested, for trespass within a few paces of its own front door. And so the fetish of imaginary shore boundary lines was killed by a common sense action.

Before the end of the year (November, 1928) the sun was shining once more, and the Minister of Lands was amicably notifying the St. Kilda Council, that it had been appointed, as a Council of Management of the areas, on which the new bathing pavilions, at the Marine Parade, and Beaconsfield Parade, were being erected. The pavilion area, at Elwood, was already in the official control of the Council, and was, and is, quite outside the jurisdiction of the Fore Shore Committee. The effect of the Minister's letter, pace the usual declaration in the Government Gazette, was to give the Council official control of the areas, it had already masterfully placed under its municipal wing.

At the time the Council decided to erect these three new dressing pavilions, there were six bathing sheds on the St. Kilda beaches, but their accommodation was very limited. St. Kilda has a beach frontage of 21 miles. There are three separate locations adopted for open sea bathing, viz.:—The West Beach, the Marine Parade, and Elwood. Open sea bathing pavilions

have been erected at each such locations. They are of reinforced concrete, each 180 feet long by 46 feet wide. At each pavilion accommodation is provided for both men and women. In the men's section there are 756 lockers, 8 cold water showers, 4 W.C.'s, 9-stall urinal and 3 lavatory basins. In the women's section there are 572 lockers, 8 cold water showers, 6 W.C.'s and 3 lavatory basins. The administrative section consists of two offices, and one general store, and giving separately controlled ingress for men and boys to the male section and for women and girls to the female section. The store contains six tiers of shelving to carry bathing costumes, towels, etc. Ingress is by means of turnstiles with automatic recorders, and egress by one-way turnstile, of which there are two to each section.

The enclosed swimming baths are now undergoing reconstruction, and the enclosed bathing facilities consist of two distinct pools, adjoining each other ; that for men being 190 yards by 65 yards with water practically over the whole area at all tides. The ladies' cover an area of 190 yards by 56 yards, which contains a good area of sandy beach suitable for very young children in charge of parents, and is an entirely new structure of all reinforced concrete with dressing cubicles, fresh water showers, retiring rooms with all conveniences, and area for sun bathing.

.There are hot sea water baths-19 for men and 9 for women with massage room for men. The hot sea water is provided on an up-to-date circulating system, sufficient to meet all demands.

Gymnasiums are provided for men, 82 feet x 43 feet, and women 54 feet x 35 feet, kiosks for ice cream, confectionery, soft drinks, etc. A main cafe 58 feet x 52 feet and open-air cafe 40 feet x 33 feet, kitchen, servery and retiring rooms for both sexes and caretaker's quarters. The main cafe has a parquet floor, making an ideal place for dancing, etc.

By November, 1928, the bathing pavilions, and the business concerning them, was approaching the time, when their office management would be classed as routine work. On the fifth of that month, the Public Works Committee of the St. Kilda Council, made a recommendation to the Council, which was adopted, that separate tenders be invited for the lease of the open sea bathing pavilions, at Beaconsfield Parade, Marine Parade, and Elwood,

for a period ending April 30, 1931, subject to conditions, embodying regulations for the control of such pavilions, and scale of charges, and for the facilities to be provided therein. Then we find the Council, acting as the Committee of Management of the Elwood Reserves, asking the Board of Land and Works, to make, under Section 181 of the Land Act 1915, regulations for the Management, and Use of the Open Sea Bathing Pavilion at Elwood, in accordance with a draft submitted by the Council. Regulations for the other pavilions followed. Still later, December 3, 1928, the Public Works Committee of the Council recommended successfully to the Council, the acceptance of a tender for the lease of the open sea bathing pavilion at Elwood, at a rental of £1,000 per year. By December 17, the Council is inviting tenders for the purchase of the material of the old bathing shelter at Elwood, stored at the Council's depot, and for the purchase, and removal of the old bathing shelters, at Marine Parade, and Beaconsfield Parade. On January 29, 1929, the Council accepted the tenders for the lease of the open sea bathing pavilion, at Beaconsfield Parade, for a period ending April 30, 1931, at a rental at the rate of £600 per annum, and for the open sea bathing pavilion, at the Marine Parade, for a period ending April 30, 1931, at a rental at the rate of £800 per annum. The material of the old shelters brought £11—and so ended, for the time being, the evolutionary movement for freedom for mixed bathing and for open sea bathing. For a while, anyway, the St. Kilda Council had solved the difficult problem, that provoked so much feeling, and discussion.

We have now arrived at the final phase of the beach bathing problem, for the present generation, on the beaches of St. Kilda. What may lie ahead, what further facilities for bathing it may become necessary to provide, cannot be prophesied here. The remaining baths of the old era, two baths, one for women, one for men, had reached a period of decrepitude, sun-blistered, weather-worn, sagging, worn out; totally out of harmony, with the picture of modern improvements, on the foreshore, beside the pier. The baths' days were numbered, but they remained pending the Council's decision of its next move in the bathing provision problem. The Council decided to build, on the old baths' sites, enclosed baths for men, and for women, and the Council communicated its intentions to the Minister of Lands.

At the Council meeting held on November 4, 1929, a letter was received from the Minister, in which he said, with regard to the Council's proposals, for enclosed bathing facilities at St. Kilda, the Government was not prepared to make a "substantial grant," nor to provide a loan, at a low rate of interest, but the Government was willing to accept the surrender of the existing leases for the men, and women's, baths, and to issue, in lieu thereof, a lease for the proposed amalgamated site, for the maximum term of 21 years. Amending legislation, he said, would be sought, to extend the term of the lease for 49 years. The amount of insurance money, held by the Treasury, was to be made available for the new buildings. There were other contingent clauses, relating to sub-leasing, which, in the circumstances of the Council's intentions, did not apply. Councillor Unsworth moved, and Councillor O'Donnell seconded, "That the Council accepts the terms set out in the Minister's letter, of the 21st October, 1929, in reply to its representations, on the subject of enclosed bathing facilities, and that, subject to the provisions of the Local Government Act, as to borrowing of money, the Council proceed with the construction on the lines of the scheme, adopted at its meeting on February 19, 1929." At the meeting referred to, the Council decided to borrow £66,700, and of that amount, to earmark £45,000 for the building of enclosed baths for men, and women. At the time of writing (October, 1930), these baths are under construction.

Though immaterial differences of opinion are to be found that have existed in the relations between the St. Kilda Council, and the St. Kilda Fore Shore Committee, on various points, it must be understood that those variances when they had arisen, were recognised, on both sides, to be honest differences, and ones that arose from the contemplation of the foreshore from different points of view. The St. Kilda Council has not, at any time, restricted the measure of its generous praise to the excellent work done by the Fore Shore Committee. The work itself has, with the liberal aid of the St. Kilda Council, proceeded, so far as the work itself was concerned, without any friction. Many pleasant memories remain among the public-spirited men, associated together, in the task of reclaiming, and beautifying the St. Kilda foreshore.

One man's name is indissolubly linked with the beautification of the St. Kilda foreshore. No description of the beauties of the foreshore at St. Kilda can hereafter be complete, without mention of the creator of its charming shorescapes, Carlo Catani. Mr. H. O. Allan, the secretary of the Fore Shore Committee, wrote in a newspaper article :—"I cannot end this short article without paying a tribute to the late Carlo Catani. I took part with him in starting the St. Kilda Fore Shore Trust. I did the legal, literary, and financial part of the job, and he, a landscape genius, if ever there was one, the engineering work, together with the beautification. What a man ! His monuments are everywhere—at Buffalo, the Alexandra Gardens, St. Kilda, Donna Buang. . . . He saw possibilities to which others were blind."

When the late Carlo Catani retired from the position of Chief Engineer of the Public Works Department, after an honourable career of forty-one years of service, the St. Kilda Council invited him on May 21, 1917, to be present at its meeting for the purpose of expressing its corporate gratification that Mr. Catani would retain his position as Government representative on the St. Kilda Fore Shore Trust. Alas for the uncertain tenure of men's lives! On July 29, 1918, the Council recorded in its minute book its great sense of loss in the death of Carlo Catani, the master of the beauty of the St. Kilda foreshore.

On August 12, a resolution was passed, by the Council, to confer with the St. Kilda Fore Shore Committee, to consider how to worthily perpetuate the memory of the late Mr. Catani, and to mark the city of St. Kilda's appreciation of his art services so generously given for the city's beautification, and advancement. Some little time was to pass, but the St. Kilda Council did not lose sight of its intention to honour, by a permanent memorial, the memory of Carlo Catani. His often expressed desire to see a clock tower erected on the foreshore beach of St. Kilda was recalled—when the question of what form the permanent memorial to him should take. The Fore Shore Committee was prepared to donate £750, provided the Council would give pound for pound.

A conference was held in March, 1930, between the representatives of the Council, and the Fore Shore Committee. There were present, Councillor Unsworth, Acting Mayor; Councillors

Morley, and Cummings, and of the Fore Shore Committee Messrs. Thorn, Mackenzie, Wimpole, the Hon. Secretary of the Fore Shore Committee, H. O. Allan, and the Town Clerk of St. Kilda, Mr. F. W. Chamberlin, and the City Surveyor, Mr. R. T. Kelly, C.E. Mr. Chamberlin explained that the allocations of local carnivals, in past years, had left available the sum of £635. Messrs. H. F. and L. Phillips, of the Palais de Dance, had promised to donate £50 to the fund for the Catani Memorial Clock Tower, and the St. Kilda Fore Shore Committee, and the St. Kilda Council had agreed to share equally the balance of the cost of erecting the Memorial, which it was purposed to place on the present site of the Esplanade Band Stand.

Tenders were called for competitive designs for the tower, and the President of the Royal Victorian Institute of Architects, Mr. T. J. Buchan, was made the honorary assessor. He handed his report to the Council, on July 14, 1930. Forty-six designs were submitted. The design placed first was inspired by the Italian Campanile, and was based on the best traditions of Italian renaissance architecture. It will, when erected, contrast pleasantly with the War Memorial, near by to its proposed site. The architect was Norman E. Schefferle.

As one reads these records, there comes a sense of the great service members of the Fore Shore Committee have rendered to the public, a feeling admiration, for the Committee, and for the Council, both of which must be judged by their works, and by their visible works they are judged by the public, weighed in the scale, and not found wanting. The death of Carlo Catani was the greatest of losses to Council, to the Committee, and to the public. His main designs have been, broadly speaking, completed, but the personal touch—the finishing strokes will be, as far as possible, in the master's manner, but they will not be from his hand. Untimely, too, that his colleague, the forceful, loyal secretary of the Fore Shore Committee, Mr. H. O. Allan, should have died so soon after attending the Catani Clock Tower Memorial meeting. On July 14, 1930, the St. Kilda Council deplored his loss. The councillors spoke of his long, and his honourable service to the State, and of the great interest he had always shown, as a resident of the municipality, in the progress of the city of St. Kilda.

One very fine illustration of public citizenship remains permanently to impress, all who came hereafter, that among the citizens of St. Kilda, were generous men. While the statue of Captain Cook stands on the foreshore of St. Kilda, the name of Andrew Stenhouse must be associated with it, and his name remembered as a synonym for a generous benefactor to St. Kilda. Andrew Stenhouse was an old man, a retired contractor, and he lived at "Willyama," Beaconsfield Parade, St. Kilda. He was not, in the days of his vigorous manhood, a resident of St. Kilda. He followed his calling in New Zealand, and elsewhere, as far afield as Broken Hill. He built the spire of the Christchurch Cathedral, in New Zealand. He settled down in St. Kilda, in the placid evening of his days, and he was 81 years of age when he died. The work of the reclamation of the St. Kilda foreshore was going on in front of his dwelling. In his daily walks, he became interested in the work, and then, his interest took an appreciative form. At the time, 1913, the Fore Shore Committee had been in existence for seven years, and it had spent £20,000 on the beautification scheme. Mr. Stenhouse provided, at his own expense, seating accommodation and marble topped table in Shakespeare Grove, for picnickers. He paid for the erection, and equipped, at the cost of £100 each, two life saving stations, one on the West Beach, the other on Marine Parade, opened on December, 1913. These benefactions were followed by his gift of Captain Cook's statue.

The unveiling of the statue of Captain Cook, given to the people of Victoria by Andrew Stenhouse, and erected by the St. Kilda Shore Committee, upon the West Beach of St. Kilda, took place on Monday, December 7, 1914, by the Governor, Sir Arthur Stanley, in the sight of a gathering of Commonwealth and State notables, and also of hundreds of residents of St. Kilda. The Lord Mayor of Melbourne, Alderman D. V. Hennessy; the Chief Secretary, Hon. John Murray ; the Minister of Lands Hon. H. S. Lawson; the President of the Senate, Senator Givens; Hon. W. A. Watt, M.H.R.; the Mayor of St. Kilda, Councillor Hewison ; and the Town Clerk, Mr. F. W. Chamberlin; the Councillors of St. Kilda, the Mayors of Brighton, Malvern, and Prahran, accompanied each with their town clerk—all were there.

Mr. Stenhouse, with a few words, presented his gift of the statue of Captain Cook. He was more concerned to pay well-deserved tributes to the admirable work done by Mr. Carlo Catani, and Mr. H. O. Allan, the Secretary of the Fore Shore Trust Committee than with the gift. The Governor, Sir Arthur Stanley, declared that Captain Cook was the supreme type of what British captains were, in the days when the world was wide, and its unknown highways called to adventurous spirits to undertake works of exploration, which they did in vessels that seamen of to-day might well hesitate to sail in, upon such perilous pilgrimages, across unknown seas.

While we witnessed the unveiling of Captain Cook's statue, on the shoreland of St. Kilda, we thought of how appropriate the situation was by the sea for a great captain, whose life had been a storm tossed one, and how the accidents of life often determine careers, in short that there is "a divinity that shapes our lives, rough hew them as we will." Had not James Cook, the grocer's boy, been accused of taking a shilling from the shop drawer of his master, he probably would never have gone to sea, and there would be no statue of him on the foreshore of St. Kilda. His master, the grocer, found the missing shilling had fallen into a crack of the drawer, and thereupon he withdrew his accusation, but young Cook, indignant, exclaimed, "Once a thief, always a thief," and he discharged himself, and, looking for work, became a ship's boy.

The statue is a replica of the statue by Sir John Tweed, R.A., which is erected on the West Cliff at Whitby, England, Cook's birthplace, the town wherein he was so badly used when a grocer's boy. The Fore Shore Committee presented Mr. Stenhouse with a small replica of his gift. The statue cost over £1,000, and the whole structure with pedestal cost £1,500. The monumental base has the inscription, "Andrew Stenhouse, 3rd December, 1914, Captain Cook, H.M.S. Endeavor, 2nd August, 1763."

When Captain Currie, one of the original members of the Fore Shore Trust Committee, died, Andrew Stenhouse was appointed a member of the committee to fill the vacated position. Later, Andrew Stenhouse supplied bronze castings for the base of the statue. These bronze plates contain the names of the officers, and the ship's company of the "Endeavor." Altogether it is an

interesting and historical monument, in several ways, and a unique contribution of distinction to the general beauty of the St. Kilda foreshore. Sir Arthur Stanley, when he spoke, at the unveiling of the monument, suggested that there should be a line of statues of England's worthies, extending along the foreshore. An attempt was made, in the year 1915, to persuade the Matthew Flinders Memorial Committee to place the statue of Captain Flinders, R.N., on the foreshore of St. Kilda. The St. Kilda Council was prepared to contribute £100 towards the expense of doing so, and the Fore Shore Committee was willing to donate £600. Though a very strong case was made out for the St. Kilda site, the statue was placed, closely tucked under the shadow of the western wall of the Anglican Cathedral, in Swanston Street, within a few yards of Flinders Street, alongside one of the most densely traffic congested street junctions in Melbourne. How the Flinders Memorial Committee reconciled that extraordinary selection of a cramped position with the calling of Captain Matthew Flinders remains, to this day, unfathomable to many who were interested in the question.

On October 27, 1928, a public gathering assembled at Captain Cook's statue on the St. Kilda foreshore to celebrate the 200th anniversary of his birth. The Mayor of St. Kilda, Councillor Unsworth presided, supported by the Councillors, and the Town Clerk. The memorial meeting was arranged by the Historical Society of Victoria. Professor Ernest Scott delivered an oration, in which he said that Captain Cook was the greatest navigator the world had ever had. At the celebration there were many representative bodies, including the Royal Society of St. George, and the Overseas League. Such a celebration, even if it were practicable, could not be reproduced at the foot of the statue of Matthew Flinders in Swanston Street. The setting would lack the spaciousness of the sea curtain, and of what appertains to the sea, all compressed into the lives of these two great and adventurous seamen.

Another benefactor of the city, in the interests of beauty, is Mr. Alexander Isaacson. At the south end of the Esplanade is the marble bust of a youth, which he presented to the city. In December, 1928, he gave to the Council a marble bust of a woman, the work of Bertini, the sculptor, dated 1811. It is a

very attractive piece of work, and is well called, "The Spirit of the Carnival." It stands in the foyer to the City Hall.

Change, immutable in its changing habit, is the keyword of the terrain of St. Kilda, changing conditions, changing appearances, the shore lands have changed. Point Ormond, the Red Bluff, was far enough away from human habitations to serve as the site of a quarantine station, a settlement of weatherboard houses, and tents, that indirectly gave to Elwood its first made road, for a road had to be roughed out through the tea tree to the cleared space of the quarantine ground. Time brings with its passage the cutting down of the Red Bluff, and time, too, sees every trace, even of the graves, of the quarantine station, swept away. A municipal council arises, and thoughts come of beautifying these old-time places, the historical memories of which scarcely have any lodgment in the minds of men, such a nature's eraser is time. The romantic suggestion, that seems to arise, when what existed in the past is mentioned, though the romance has not any justification in many cases, is blotted from sight by the glare of a modern extract from a Council minute book. The St. Kilda Council wrote to the Public Works Department in December, 1914, asking the authorities of that Department what they purposed doing with regard to improving the lands of the Point Ormond Reserve—the old quarantine ground has become a people's pleasure! The Minister of the Department said he had no funds available for the purpose, and added that as only about £500 was required to complete the scheme the Council might provide that amount. The St. Kilda Council was well versed in this official sparring, which generally preludes some action of a more or less satisfactory character. The Council, at heart, desired the Department to finish the scheme, and to complete the undertaking, because it was "eminently desirable that the work should be finished simultaneously, with the completion, and the opening of the extension of the tramway system, from the Elsternwick railway gates, via Glenhuntly Road, to the terminus at Point Ormond.

By February 15, 1915, the St. Kilda Council had so far made up its corporate mind, that it had agreed to inform the Minister of Public Works, that, subject to the scheme for the completion of the improvements at Point Ormond meeting with

the Council's approval, the Council was prepared to contribute one-third of the cost, not to exceed £235, of the cost of the work. The total cost was estimated at £700. The design of the improvements was plotted by the artistic genius of the foreshore, Carlo Catani. In March, everything was progressing so favourably that the Council asked the Lands Department to sanction the building of a refreshment kiosk, and at the same time delegating to the Council the powers of control necessary for it to become the Committee of Management of the Point Ormond Reserve. This power included that of leasing the kiosk. The completed designs showed a building, the cost of which was not to exceed £700, and the design was studiously made in conformity with the buildings already erected by the St. Kilda Fore Shore Committee. The Minister of the Lands Department agreed to these conditions, and the kiosk was built. Later, on March 29, 1915, the Government expressed its desire to provide £350, to pay for further improvements to the Point Ormond Reserve, provided the Council contributed a like sum. The Council, pleased at the prospect of the completion of the improvements, according to the Catani design, readily agreed to the Government's proposal, and promised to pay pound for pound up to the sum of £350. The Council, in addition, pressed upon the Government, the desirability of completing the work without delay. The Government desired to find work for the unemployed upon the Point Ormond Improvement Scheme (May 25th, 1915), and the work was set in hand. The Point Ormond Tramway Extension was opened to public traffic at 3 p.m. on June 4 of the same year. Since that time the reserve at Point Ormond has had its full share of attention from the Council. In the summer months Point Ormond Reserve is rendered attractive by having municipal band recitals given there.

During the comedy of red tape restrictions, it was asserted, by one of the official principals of the Fore Shore Committee, that the St. Kilda Council had control of the Marine Parade beaches for years, and it was asked: "What satisfactory account can the Council give of its stewardship?" A distressing picture of desolate beaches, along the Marine Parade, was word focalised and then the camera was swung round northward, to focalise the beauties of the foreshore under the control of the Fore Shore Committee. The contrast made was an effective appeal

to the eye of the public. No doubt the popular verdict went against the St. Kilda Council, regardless of the silent equities of the position. The Committee, too, had been subsidised, for a number of years, by the Government, with a £400 annual grant, and it had also, and has, a very profitable source of revenue, in the rentals for stands for beach shows. The St. Kilda Council has under its control (1930) a municipality with an area of 2,049 acres, upon which are built 11,115 houses, inhabited by about 42,085 people, and these people, and the streets they live in, demand many municipal services, and though the valuations for St. Kilda, 1928-29, was £1,069,478, and for 1929-30 £1,083,055, and St. Kilda's general rate 2/- in the £, and its revenue £127,942, for 1928-29, with assessments numbering 11,644, and ratepayers totalling 10,951, with a voters' roll of 9,845, it is obvious, that the St. Kilda Council has many claims on its large revenue, and also that the Council has other duties besides the one of beautifying the foreshore with its reserves. The Fore Shore Committee on the other hand, was created for the pleasant task of beautification, and that alone was its business, and its sole excuse for living, so, perhaps, the Committee's Hon. Secretary's jibe, at the St. Kilda Council, over the condition of the Marine Parade, was not quite a fair thrust.

The St. Kilda Council has been well informed, for years, on the possibilities of beautifying the shore lands and beaches, at the Marine Parade. The foreseeing Council has looked, with covetous eyes, on shoaling sandbanks, and seen how with an enclosing wall, and the subsequent filling in of the sandbanks enclosed, an area might be won from the sea, and the land, when top-dressed with garden soil, made into lawns, and beauty spots, the whole, when completed, to link up with the works of the Fore Shore Committee. The engineers of the Lands Department have conferred with Mr. R. T. Kelly, C.E., the City Surveyor, and the Councillors, and the Town Clerk, for several years, have been keenly interested in the scheme. General Hughes, when he retired from the Council, in his valedictory remarks, referred to the Great Scheme of land reclamation at the Marine Parade, with a certain longing, with a tinge of regret, with scarcely a hope, that, in his time, he would see the great work accomplished. The cost, he feared, was too great, but the thought of the foreshore line of beauty,

from the West Beach to Elwood, caused the eyes of the one time Chairman of the Parks and Gardens Committee to sparkle, in anticipation of something worth doing, still remaining to be done, to increase the loveliness of the beach front of the City of St. Kilda. Municipal dreams in St. Kilda have a way of becoming materialistic, and some wonderful things are done by the much criticised Council. At the present time (October, 1930) engineers of the Public Works Department, are engaged in checking an estimate of the cost of the sea wall, that forms part of the St. Kilda Council's foreshore reclamations scheme, at the Marine Parade. The Government has promised to contribute £7,000 towards the cost of the wall. The Council's estimated cost of the wall itself is £14,000. The dream of beauty is well on its way to become a reality.