

Title: Haller Fountain or Galatea

Artist: Unknown

Date: September 1893

Location: Washington and Taylor

Media: Bronze Casting

Dimensions: 7' high x 3.5' diameter at base

This fountain is often thought to portray Venus, the Roman goddess of love, or Galatea, a sea nymph from Greek mythology. In 1893 the statue first appeared at the World Columbian Exposition in Chicago's German Pavilion and was shortly sold to J.L. Mott Foundry of New York, a company specializing in plumbing fixtures. The statue that stands today is a bronze casting of a pot metal original donated by Theodore N. Haller and installed by the City of Port Townsend in 1906.

Following its placement at the bottom of the Taylor Street Stairs, a local bar owner by the name of Charlie Lang reputedly placed and trained trout in the pool to jump through hoops. Later on a vehicle, which had driven down the stairs, collided with the statue and sent it into the street. Several paintings over the years obscured some of the finer details. Vandals also damaged the original although most of the missing pieces eventually returned when word got out they were needed for recasting. In 1958 the statue was removed for repairs, totaling 18 months of work. During the repair process, Dr. Kenneth Carter of Port Townsend came to the conclusion that the figure lacked shape and slightly modified her cup size.

Haller Fountain restoration became a unifying cause for Port Townsend residents in 1992 after well-intentioned children naively climbed on the statue, breaking a limb off and damaging the cherubs in 1990. Removing the statue for further repairs, the Kiwanis Club discovered the original version much too deteriorated for prolonged use. They began a fundraising campaign that involved door-to-door campaigning and change jars in grocery stores in order to mold a new bronze replica.

Mark Stevenson and David Eisenhower were commissioned to reconstruct the statue from the assorted parts and dilapidated original. The new bronze statue, installed in 1993, stands to this day. The Central Fountain of St. James Court in Old Louisville, Kentucky and Venus Rising from the Sea at Kimberly Crest Gardens in Redlands, California are nearly identical statues to Galatea.



