



Newsletter No. 18

December 2016

A Word from the Chair

Two meetings have been held with the new CEO of the National Trust of Victoria, Mr. Simon Ambrose, to discuss the present and future of La Trobe's Cottage. Simon visited the Cottage on Thursday 8 December and was suitably impressed with the condition of the buildings. He commented that the work by the volunteers and guides was obvious in the presentation of the Cottage. Simon looked at Domain House and the Shrine Depot to obtain an understanding of the total complex that has been under discussion ever since the Cottage was relocated to the present position.

The first step is to have a meeting with the Botanic Gardens management to discuss the use of Domain House. The aim is to have access to the reception area which includes the kitchen and toilets with use of a room behind the reception area for storage of books, chairs etc. The storage in the Cottage is lacking so this would alleviate the problem.

Simon is arranging a meeting with the Director of the Gardens, Dr Tim Entwisle, in January which I will also attend, to discuss the better sharing of the facilities of Domain House. The aim is to have a close working association between the La Trobe Society and the Trust to plan the future development of the Cottage and the complex.

With the number of properties in the Trust portfolio that the CEO is responsible for it is refreshing to have somebody who is showing such a strong interest in the future of the Cottage. I believe we will achieve some good results and aim to keep everyone informed of progress through the newsletter.

John Drury

From the Publicity Officer

La Trobe's personal letters have been digitised and can be read on the La Trobe Society website, along with extracts from letters that he and Madame Sophie wrote to Agnes following her return to Switzerland from Jolimont in 1845 due to the need for better educational opportunities than were available in Port Philip. The collection of eighty letters spanning the period from 1839 to 1874, together with the extracts, may be accessed via the page www.latrobesociety.org.au/transcripts.html. They are indexed under numerous headings, both of a general nature and La Trobe specific, that add considerable value to these interesting items.

Garden Report

Our dedicated Garden Coordinator, Sandi Pullman, has sadly had to withdraw from her voluntary duties at La Trobe's Cottage garden due to study and work demands. Sandi has led the work to transform the garden area into the style La Trobe would have had in place, featuring many of the plants it is known he grew. She has also sourced many plants of interest including a collection of 'latrobei' species (*Grevillea*, *Eremophila*, *Glycine*, *Acacia*) and has initiated many garden projects such as the making of the garden seat, the bird bath, the storage box, and the painting by Jo Reitze from which cards were produced with sale proceeds going to the Cottage. Lorraine will, with help from Tim Gatehouse and Ellen Walters, continue to arrange occasional working bees. Sandi has produced a schedule of activities required throughout the year. A copy of this and her plant census and Richard Thomas's plan of the garden is now available in the Cottage for volunteers to view; the plan and census may also be viewed on the Cottage garden webpage, <http://www.foltc.latrobesociety.org.au/garden.html>.



Sandi's bird bath

We thank Sandi for all her hard work at the Cottage over the last seven years. She will still be in touch to advise.

Committee

Chairman	John Drury	9646 2112	Secretary	Dianne Reilly	9646 2112
Cottage	Lorraine Finlay	9563 6363	Treasurer	John Drury	9646 2112
Publicity	Helen Armstrong	9592 5616	Guides	Lorraine Finlay	9563 6363
Building	Max Joffe	9563 6363	Sunday Roster	Helen Botham	9583 1114

Tours

While numbers at the Cottage on Sunday afternoons have varied, we have not been as busy with Government House group tours as usual. This is a little concerning as those tours generate income for the Cottage. Please take any opportunity to encourage your friends, if they are members of a group, to consider bringing their group on a combined tour, see <http://www.foltc.latrobesociety.org.au/visiting.html> .

Future Events

Australia Day

The Victorian Colonial Infantry Association will again be present at the Cottage on Australia Day, Thursday 26 January. Thanks to all who have volunteered to assist on the day. The Victorian Colonial Infantry Association will entertain visitors throughout the afternoon with flag raising ceremonies, firing of vintage rifles and mortar fire. A tea and lamington stall will provide refreshments.

La Trobe Birthday Celebration

Sunday 19 March: 4.30–6pm

Speaker: Professor John Barnes, 'In Search of La Trobe', on his much-anticipated book *Charles Joseph La Trobe: Traveller, Writer, Governor* that will be published shortly. Venue: Mueller Hall, Herbarium, Royal Botanic Gardens. Afterwards birthday cake and festive drinks will be served in the La Trobe's Cottage garden to celebrate Charles Joseph La Trobe's 216th birthday.

Admission \$15, child \$5, Bookings dmreilly@optusnet.com.au or ph: 9646 2112 (please leave a message)

Past Events

Visit by 'Litlington schoolboys'

Eight members of The Sun Advertiser Youth Travel Association visited La Trobe's Cottage on Monday September 19 this year. Some of these visitors were in the party of Australian schoolboys who visited St Michael the Archangel, Litlington, the site of the grave of Charles Joseph La Trobe, to mark the Centenary of Victoria on 1 July 1951. Amongst many dignitaries attending that ceremony were the Lord Mayor of London and the grandson of Charles Joseph La Trobe, Captain Charles La Trobe. The schoolboys formed a guard of honour between the rectory and the church for the official procession. The visit to La Trobe's Cottage this year was seen by the party as a reunion for the group, one of their party travelling from Tasmania for the visit. A copy of a photograph of the 1951 event which was presented to La Trobe's Cottage is now on display in the cabinet of photographs in the Cottage.

See *La Trobeana* 15(3), November 2016, 49-50.



Photographer unknown The Lord Mayor of London (Sir Denys Lawson) and his wife leading the memorial procession to the churchyard at Litlington, Sussex, 1 July 1951. Members of the Sun Youth Travel tour provide a guard of honour.

'Members talk to Members and Friends' program

The series of three talks presented on Sunday afternoons 31 July, 28 August and 25 September at Domain House proved to be a great success. Between 50 and 60 people attended each talk, all enjoying the informal atmosphere provided by La Trobe Society and FOLTC volunteers, and the delicious afternoon tea served after the talks. These events provided an opportunity for many National Trust members and others who had previously not attended a La Trobe Society event to see our group in action.

The program will continue next winter on Sundays 11 June, 9 July, 13 August and 10 September in Mueller Hall, Royal Botanic Gardens. Further details will be available nearer the time.

Cottage Volunteers Christmas Picnic.

Thanks to Joan Macdermid and Lorraine for organising the annual Christmas get-together for Cottage volunteers on 8 December. We always enjoy the chance to meet – another opportunity will be provided at the conclusion of our Summer season when we organise a meeting of the Cottage volunteers.

With thanks to all volunteers at the Cottage and garden. We look forward to seeing you all in the New Year.

With best wishes for a Happy Christmas season.

