



**Newsletter No. 21**

**November 2017**

**From the Chair**

My congratulations to the members of the La Trobe's Cottage Management Team.

While my role is a small one, I have been impressed to see how the new team is working so well together in the interests of the Cottage. I have been aware, too, of just how much work has been involved, and the many hours they all put in. Neville has taken the lead with liaising with the National Trust. At the Property Managers meeting, he represented the Cottage to the senior team at Tasma Terrace, and he continues to communicate with them and coordinate the affairs of the Management Team. Alexis has done a great job with her 'Housekeeping' portfolio, having, with the support of National Trust Curator Katie Potter, completed a Spring Clean of the Cottage, and rationalised the storage of goods and documents around the Cottage and into the Shed. Colin, Sandi, Helen A and Helen B continue to ensure the interests of the Cottage are forefront in each of their respective roles.

Following concern about the Government House tours that Judge Howard, the Governor's husband, has been providing for U3A groups at no charge, and the marketing of these by the Office of the Governor, John Drury, Manager of the La Trobe Society, and I had a meeting with NTAV Chair Simon Ambrose on 17 October. These tours are likely to have an impact on the combined Government House/La Trobe's Cottage tours booked through the National Trust, thus reducing the income generated by these tours for La Trobe's Cottage. I am hoping that the outcome of this meeting may be to initiate discussions with the Office of the Governor with a view to a resolution of this matter, and to improve the National Trust marketing of the combined tours.

**John Botham**

**Volunteer Coordinator**

We have had reasonable numbers at our regular Sunday Openings, following our successful 'Garden Day' on Sunday 1 October. An article featuring La Trobe's Cottage, mentioning our Opening Sunday event, appeared in *The Age* the previous week, and this, and a very timely piece, thanks to Helen Armstrong, in the 'What's On at the National Trust' bulletin brought many members interested in Sandi's tours of the garden. We have suggested that this should be an annual event at the start of our season.



We are delighted that La Trobe's Cottage has been selected as the venue for the National Trust's launch of their Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan on Tuesday 5 December: Kristin Stegley, Chair of the National Trust of Australia (Victoria), and Ian Hamm, Director and Chair of the Aboriginal Advisory Committee, will be attending this event, along with other dignitaries associated with this important initiative.

**Helen Botham**

**Cottage Management Team**

Liaison	Neville Jarvis	8555 9116	Maintenance	Colin Mickleburgh	0423114619
Volunteers	Helen Botham	9583 1114	Funding	Neville Jarvis	8555 9116
Housekeeping	Alexis Jarvis	8555 9116	Publicity	Helen Armstrong	9592 5616
Garden	Sandi Pullman	9646 9776			

## Maintenance Coordinator

In general, the cottage continues to be in a good state of maintenance.

Following an inspection by the NT contractor regarding the state of the electrics within the building it has been decided that no immediate action is required. Other than the absence of illuminated exit signs which prevent us from using the cottage after dark we are compliant and safe.

A quotation for repainting the cottage has been reviewed and it was decided not to take any action. In general, the paintwork is still in acceptable condition and the structure will not deteriorate if painting is postponed for 12 to 24 months.

Consideration is currently being given to removing the internal air conditioning units, which have not been operating for many years. Quotations for replacing the inoperative system (and even removing the external units) are deemed beyond the Cottage's current budget.

Tasks recently completed include: realigning the bolt on the double garden entry gate; fitting wheels to the "A" frame sign; making a sign asking visitors not to enter the Cottage without first visiting reception; and mounting a key box in the volunteers' kitchen.

**Colin Mickleburgh**

## Garden Report

Spring is the best time in our garden as it is looking its best. Roses are out, lavender is setting flowers for our summer show and the fox gloves and larkspur are in their full glory. The best light to view the garden is early in the morning or at dusk.

The most exciting thing is that our heritage apple trees have set fruit and hopefully we will have a bumper crop (and not the possums!).

The National Trust gardeners are going to help me propagate some more of the red rose *Rosa 'Arthur de Sansal'* for the front garden and English lavender, as some of the existing lavender is starting to look woody and needs replacing.

**Sandi Pullman**



## Volunteers' Lending Library

A fledging library of books is in the process of being put together which Cottage volunteers can access. It is located at the left-hand end of the cupboards at eye-height in the volunteers' kitchen. There is a notice on the cupboard door and a Loan Register inside for completion whenever a book is borrowed and returned. With most volunteers being at the Cottage fairly regularly, especially during the summer season, a general borrowing period of a month will apply. The Library currently consists of:

*The Melbourne Scene 1803-1956*, James Grant & Geoffrey Serle

*Colonial Consorts: The Wives of Victoria's Governors 1839 -1900*, Marguerite Hancock

*Diary of a Lady's Maid: Government House in Colonial Australia. Journals of Emma Southgate, 'Between Stairs' Servant, 1884-1886.* Edited by Helen Vellacott

*A Girl at Government House. An English Girl's Reminiscences 'Below Stairs' in Colonial Australia.* Edited by Helen Vellacott.

More titles will be added shortly. However, if you have any publications related to early Melbourne, the life and times of Charles La Trobe or to Government House which you would be prepared to either donate or loan on a longer-term basis, they would be much appreciated. Please contact me by email, [anjarvis72@optusnet.com.au](mailto:anjarvis72@optusnet.com.au) , or phone 8555 9116. Thank you.

**Neville Jarvis**

## **Calendar of Events**

### **Thursday 30 November, 9.30am. Cottage Working Bee**

Alexis would like us to clean the exterior of the Cottage, and we'll also be decorating our Christmas Tree in the Drawing Room, which will enable us to remind visitors that Sophie La Trobe introduced the Christmas Tree to Melbourne. Thanks to all who've volunteered.

### **Friday 1 December, 12 30pm. Cottage Volunteers' end-of-year lunch at La Trobe's Cottage**

We are hoping you'll all be able to join us, and some of the National Trust staff we work with, to celebrate the end of the year. Please bring a plate to share; please wear your name badges.

### **Sunday 3 December, 11am. St Peter's Eastern Hill, 15 Gisborne Street, Melbourne**

The anniversary of the death of C J La Trobe. Charles Joseph La Trobe will be remembered at a service at St Peter's Eastern Hill, coinciding with a memorial service at St Michael the Archangel, Litlington, Sussex, where he is buried. The Vicar of St Peter's, Reverend Dr Hugh Kempster, invites FOLTC members and their friends to the service, followed by refreshments.

### **26th January 2018, 1-4pm. Family Day at La Trobe's Cottage**

Next Australia Day is being promoted by the National Trust as a Family Day, with the Cottage and grounds being open between 1pm and 4pm. The \$2 entry fee will include a fairly brief and focussed guided tour of the Cottage and the servants block. A Victorian experience will be provided for visitors, with several volunteers dressed in period costumes, plus old-fashioned games for the children including quoits and croquet. There will also be:

- ) demonstrations of making rope and old-fashioned dried flower cards. Children will be able to use the rope for skipping and the cards will be for sale
- ) peg-doll making for the children.

Light refreshments will be available for purchase in the garden as usual.

So there will be plenty of interest on offer at the Cottage for visitors spending the Australia Day afternoon in the beautiful Domain. We'll need a good team of volunteers to help us with this event.

With thanks to all for your interest and support over this past year, and best wishes for a happy Christmas season.

