



Newsletter No 50

23 March 2024

Fortunately for the Cottage garden our summer has not been too severe, until recently. Two Sunday openings, 4 February and 10 March, had to be cancelled as the forecast maximum temperature was for 37/38 degrees – our policy is that the Cottage will not open if the forecast maximum temperature is for more than 35 degrees.

Average visitor numbers up to this point have been the same as last year – an average of eleven visitors every Sunday. We're hoping that the Heritage Festival publicity might bring a few more visitors in our last two weeks of the season.

Our new CMT Member, Lindy Golding, recently met with Susan Moir, NTAV Commercial Manager, to discuss ways of bringing more visitors to the Cottage. Topics covered included events, promoting wedding photography, and providing a series of talks by Cottage volunteers. Developing an education program was also discussed.

La Trobe's 223rd Birthday, Sunday 17 March

The usual celebration of La Trobe's Birthday was held at the Cottage after our opening last Sunday. The theme of the day was the return of the restored La Trobe family portraits. John Botham, who led the appeal to raise funds for the restoration, thanked those who had donated and introduced the conservator Noel Turner, who described some of the issues he encountered as he undertook the work. He then showed the guests, in small groups, the detail of his work, which provided some fascinating insights into his craft. This was an opportunity for our generous donors to see what their contribution had enabled.



Noting that many of the National Trust staff with whom we work had never visited the Cottage, we made several dates available for them to visit and sixteen NTAV staff members visited in two groups on 23 January. They were taken on a tour of the Cottage, and we then sat under the oak tree for a drink and discussion. It was useful for members of the Management Team to have this opportunity not only to chat with the staff, but also show them the site, and talk about it with them.

Cottage Management Team

Liaison	Helen Botham	0447 018224	Publicity	Helen Armstrong	0427 925616
Curatorial	Neville Jarvis	0490 494009	Statistics	Neville Jarvis	0490 494009
Education /Events	Lindy Golding	0423 034632	Volunteers	Helen Botham	0447 018224
Garden	Helen Botham	0447 018224	Adjunct Coordinator	Rob Christie	0488 759065
Maintenance	Colin Mickleburgh	0423 114619			

Our Government House guides were invited to participate in the Government House Open Day on 26 January. Six guides were warmly welcomed by Government House staff and enjoyed engaging with the public as they toured the State Apartments. Since then Helen Botham was invited to join Susan Moir, NTAV Commercial Manager, in a meeting with Government House staff to discuss the possibility of increasing the frequency of Combined Government House/ La Trobe's Cottage tours. Our monthly booked tours have been booked out well in advance. It was suggested that we run two tours on the same day, one starting at Government House at 10am, one at La Trobe's Cottage at 10am, and then swapping over at 11am. This would double the number of bookings for National Trust tours. If the current demand continues, this will commence on 1 July. Depending on group numbers we will need a Cottage guide to help with these Monday morning groups.

Work continues on the repair and painting of the timbers on the servants' block, Myron's team of Tim and Craig, recently filling, sanding and painting the back wall of the servants' block, and replacing a rotten window. This work is ongoing.

Many thanks to those who have volunteered to help with our Open House Melbourne Day on Sunday 28 July. The Cottage will be open from 10am-3pm, and we'll have shifts of volunteers to lead 10-15 minutes 'walk-throughs' of the Cottage. NTAV encouraged us to participate in this event, which can provide opportunities, through the event booklet and other publicity, for the people of Melbourne to be made aware of our site. We will be assisted by OHM volunteers and NTAV staff will also be calling by. Lindy Golding is managing the roster and she will be in touch with those who have volunteered.



The Volunteers' End-of-Season meeting will be held in Domain House on Tuesday 23 April at 1.15pm. We will be joined by Sherredan Maher, Susan Moir and Kate Drummond, NTAV staff. The meeting will be followed, around 2.15, by afternoon tea, and at 2.45 Helen Botham will give a talk describing, with illustrations, her tour last year of La Trobe sites in Switzerland which was escorted by Professor Jason Grant of Neuchâtel



University. If you'd like to invite a guest to the afternoon tea and the talk they would be very welcome. We encourage all our volunteers to attend the meeting at 1.15pm, as we'll be raising various matters that all need to be aware of. I'll be in touch closer to the date.

We're hoping to arrange a visit to Napier Waller House in June. This National Trust property is not currently open to the public, but much work is going on to restore and maintain it. I'll be in touch when a date has been agreed. <https://www.nationaltrust.org.au/places/waller-house/>

Hoping to see you all on 23 April.

Best wishes from the Cottage Management Team.