



Newsletter No. 22

June 2018

A successful 2017-18 season, with a good number of combined tours, concluded with two weddings at the Cottage, one in February and one in March. The garden provided a pretty setting for the events and was much admired by the wedding parties and the guests. We hope for more such bookings next summer season.



We are now seeing a significant decrease in the number of bookings for combined tours with Government House, with numbers about one third of those seen in the winter months of 2017. It is likely that Mr Howard's free tours for community groups are having an impact on our bookings. As part of an effort to reverse the decrease in bookings, we have developed a 'Garden Tour', incorporating a half-hour tour of the garden focussing on its heritage aspects, followed by a shortened tour of the house interior. The garden groups who have booked this tour have provided excellent feedback.

Liaison Coordinator

Two new members have recently joined the Management Team; they are warmly welcomed. Following Sandi Pullman's withdrawal as a volunteer, Ellen Walters has come on board as Garden Coordinator and John Botham takes on the much-needed role of Curatorial Coordinator. Both have assumed their responsibilities with great gusto as you will read below. We thank Sandi Pullman for her work in the garden over many years. It now contains rare and special plants and represents the style of cottage garden La Trobe would have had. Her efforts were recognised in the Historical Interpretation Award of the Victorian Community History Awards of 2014. Amongst many other things, we have Sandi to thank for the welcoming garden seat under the elm, and the photo-shoot that provided a portfolio of superb pictures of the garden.



The Memorandum of Understanding between the National Trust and the Team has been reviewed and these changes together with other tweaks as a result of experience over the first year of its operation are reflected in the now signed revised document.

I attended the latest National Trust (Victoria) All Sites meeting held at the Polly Woodside in mid-June. Matters raised of particular interest to the Cottage were:

-) All volunteers are encouraged to use the National Trust Intranet regularly. Volunteers Coordinator, Helen Botham, will be in touch about this soon.
-) An interesting session covered educational excursions and the best approaches to tap into this market. The unique approach taken by Carrum State School's visit to the Cottage in 2014 was one focus. A short 2½ minute YouTube video made by the school about the visit can be viewed at www.youtube.com/watch?v=iX8QleHeS8I.

Cottage Management Team

Liaison	Neville Jarvis	8555 9116	Maintenance	Colin Mickelburgh	0423114619
Volunteers	Helen Botham	0447 018224	Funding	Neville Jarvis	8555 9116
Housekeeping	Alexis Jarvis	8555 9116	Publicity	Helen Armstrong	9592 5616
Garden	Ellen Walters	0419 519763	Curatorial	John Botham	0407 814008

-)] While all new volunteers need to obtain a 'Working With Children' check, current volunteers who do not hold a current check are encouraged to consider doing so. The online application process, followed by a quick visit to a post office, is straightforward and free.
-)] Consideration has been given about the display of books and cards in the Cottage reception area; a possible source for a period-style dresser with better display and storage possibilities has been found at another National Trust property.

Neville Jarvis

Funds/Statistics Coordinator

The essential details are:

-)] We welcomed 389 visitors at the Cottage during the 2017/18 Sunday Afternoon season and 673 for the LTC/Government House Booked Tours during the 12 months to 30 June 2018.
-)] 102 items of merchandise were sold in the past year totalling \$2,200; this includes sales of the new biography of Charles La Trobe, *La Trobe: Traveller, Writer, Governor* by Professor John Barnes.
-)] In the same 12 month period, volunteers have contributed over 1,500 hours for Sunday afternoon openings, joint tours, special events and Team Coordinator duties.

Neville Jarvis

Maintenance Coordinator

The inactive air-conditioning units have been removed from the Cottage, and, with more space now available, National Trust curator Katie Potter has given approval for the long case clock to be moved to a more visible position in the drawing room.

Colin Mickleburgh

Garden Coordinator

La Trobe Cottage garden working bees have got off to a flying start with five dedicated volunteers. We are slowly working around the garden both inside and outside the gates, taming the amazing healthy growth that can be seen in every corner of the place, deciding collectively how to proceed.

I have also held a couple of garden tours explaining the history of the development of Charles La Trobe's vision for his "estate" over his fifteen year tenure, as well as pointing out some of the more important plants that we have growing here.

My thanks to all who have helped make it happen. If you wish to join this happy band, whether occasionally or regularly, please contact me at garden@latrobesociety.org.au.



Ellen Walters

Curatorial coordinator

The Management Committee has for some time been trying to obtain expertise to review the collection and make recommendations to the National Trust on the appropriateness of the items in the collection and how they should be interpreted and displayed. Through contacts recommended by Cultural Engagement Manager Martin Green, we now have a proposal for the offer of two students at Deakin University who are undertaking a course in cultural heritage and museum studies. I have taken on the role of curatorial coordinator in order to support them in this project to ensure that we get the maximum benefit. Some volunteers have made a start by undertaking an inventory check of the collection with a view to updating the database. We will now assemble all the information we can find on the collection items. I have met with Dr Steven Cooke, Senior Lecturer Cultural Heritage and Museum Studies, Deakin University, to discuss the proposal and he is planning to put the offer of an internship to his students as part of their post-graduate study. I will contact you again for help in preparing the ground for the students and I will also be asking for your views on the collection and its presentation.

During the Inventory check, we have been reminded that the chair currently used by receptionists is in fact an 1820s elm chair, which we feel should not be routinely used. We will replace this with a chair more suited to the purpose.

John Botham

Publicity Coordinator

We have been working with the National Trust to have Government House correct its website in connection with the combined tours. We are considering a publicity drive to groups such as Probus, U3A, VIEW clubs and other common-interest groups, in the hope this may generate new bookings.

Calendar of Events:

Friday, 29 June 2018

Melbourne Rare Book Week Lecture: 6 – 8.30 pm

‘The Remarkable Library of Bishop Goold: its creation, loss and rediscovery’ - Shane Carmody.

Venue: Tonic House, 386 Flinders Lane, Melbourne. Refreshments. No charge (sponsored by Roy Morgan Research).

This free lecture will show how Melbourne’s first Catholic Bishop built on the foundations of set by Charles Joseph La Trobe to create a European culture in a new landscape.

Sunday, 8 July 2018

Edward Byam Wight: pioneer in the Port Phillip District: 2.30 – 4 pm

Speaker: Davydd Shaw. Venue: Mueller Hall, National Herbarium. Cost: \$5.

Wight’s contribution to Victoria was significant as a businessman and philanthropist. In the small settlement of Melbourne his friendship with La Trobe was almost inevitable, especially given La Trobe’s desire for good governance, public institutions and the creation of a stable and civilised community. Wight was the first mayor of the Borough of Essendon; a rug from his home graces the floor of the Cottage drawing room.

Sunday, 12 August 2018

La Trobe and his Horses - Testing Times: 2.30 – 4pm

Speaker: Peter Hiscock AM, Venue: Mueller Hall, National Herbarium. Cost: \$5.

A life-long horseman, Peter will deepen our understanding of La Trobe’s challenges in making more than ninety journeys and excursions around the colony.

Sunday, 8 September 2018

Gulf Station: one of the National Trust’s La Trobe era properties: 2.30 – 4pm

Speaker: Irene Kearsey, Venue: Mueller Hall, National Herbarium. Cost: \$5.

By examining first settlers’ experiences around Yarra Glen this talk will give a flavour of early life in rural Victoria.

Tuesday, 18 September 2018

Friends of La Trobe’s Cottage annual lecture: 6 – 8pm

‘Eliza Nelson and Dr John Singleton: eventful lives in colonial Victoria’

Speaker: Lorraine Finlay. Venue: Mueller Hall, National Herbarium. Cost: \$25 (adults), \$20 (Cottage volunteers), includes refreshments.

A gold-rush immigrant, pioneer, midwife and entrepreneur will be counterpoised with a well-known temperance advocate, social reformer and philanthropist.

For all these events bookings are essential: please go to www.latrobesociety.org.au/events.html or phone 9592 5616.

Helen Armstrong

Cottage Events:

Open House Melbourne: The Cottage will be open on both Saturday and Sunday 28 / 29 July from 12 noon - 3pm. We will be offering 20 minute tours of the Cottage every 15 minutes, so we will need all hands on deck to help us with managing the groups, taking the tours and manning the sales table. I will be sending the request for the roster, which we hope to break up into two-hour sessions, very soon.

Film Shoot. True History of the Kelly Gang It seems likely that at least one day’s filming for this movie will take place at the Cottage in August.

Spring Opening and Garden Day, 7 October 1 – 4pm. Our opening Sunday of the season will repeat last year’s successful theme, with tours of the garden at 1.15pm, 2.15pm and 3.15pm.

With thanks to you all for your support. We look forward to seeing you at the Cottage or at one of our Winter/Spring events.

Helen Botham