



Newsletter No.47

23 May 2023

Thanks to you all for assisting us through another busy Sunday opening season. At our volunteers meeting on Tuesday 2 May, Neville provided statistics revealing a total of 366 visitors at an average of 13 for each opening. The highest attendance was 45 on 19 April, the first Heritage Festival weekend. We benefitted on that day from the publicity surrounding the Heritage Festival.

And thanks to all who attended the Volunteers meeting – it was a great opportunity to get together and to hear from Executive Manager, Assets & Conservation, Sherredan Maher, who thanked Cottage volunteers for their continuing support. We heard about repairs to the Cottage (the rotting window frame will soon be removed and repaired) and Peter Jewell explained his proposal to produce a series of podcasts about the Cottage with topics on La Trobe, the cottage itself, the garden, the collection and the invaluable volunteers. We noted that additional volunteers are required for Sunday reception and to assist Alexis with housekeeping duties - if you know of anyone who would like to greet and log our visitors and take their digital payments, or help with housekeeping, please let us know. Following a query about the Acknowledgement of Country at the beginning of tours, Sherredan pointed out this is NTV policy and compulsory for guides.

Some volunteers got together again to celebrate National Volunteers Week at a Morning Tea at Rippon Lea on Friday 19 May. Emily Howells, NTV Executive Manager, People & Culture, took the opportunity to thank all NTV volunteers for their contribution.

A couple of big Working Bees in February and March had the garden all set for the La Trobe Society event on 19 March, celebrating La Trobe's 222nd Birthday. Cottage guide, Catherine Gay, gave a fascinating talk about the samplers held in the Cottage, with the garden providing a pretty backdrop. Those attending were invited to bring their own family samplers to show Catherine, and she provided some interesting insights about these family pieces for many of us. She was particularly interested in the sampler brought in by John Drury, completed by his grandmother Eleanor Blacket in 1891. Catherine is soon to travel to the UK where she will be presenting papers at the Institute of Historical Research in London and the Centre for the History of Childhood at the University of Oxford.



We are glad to report that the target of the La Trobe portrait appeal has been reached, thanks to the generosity of many La Trobe Society members – we thank all who have donated. The funds raised will enable a full restoration of the paintings and their frames. Katie Potter, NTV Senior Collections Coordinator, has been in touch with the restorer who will begin the work in August.

Cottage Management Team					
Liaison	Helen Botham	0447 018224	Maintenance	Colin Mickleburgh	0423 114619
Curatorial	Neville Jarvis	0490 494009	Volunteers	Helen Botham	0447 018224
Garden	Helen Botham	0447 018224	Publicity	Helen Armstrong	0427 925616
Statistics	Neville Jarvis	0490 494009	Gov't House Liaison:	Colin Mickleburgh	0423 114619
			Adjunct Coordinator:	Rob Christie	0488 759065

We are sorry to note that long-time volunteer Joan Macdermid has retired from volunteering. Joan has been guiding at La Trobe's Cottage and Government House for over twenty years and has supported both the volunteers and the Cottage in many ways. In her early years as a Government House guide, she established the tradition of an End-of-Year gathering, and has continued to provide much support for that gathering every year, as well as creating beautiful Christmas decorations in the Cottage. She donated the audio player that plays Christian Ignatius La Trobe's piano sonatas in the Cottage, and the framed photographs of Charles and Sophie in the reception area. She put together the peg doll kits for children visiting the Cottage, and made the mob cap and pinafore now hanging in the small bedroom. Joan has always been a great support to new volunteers, especially those mastering the Government House tour: she provided a wonderful model for those who shadowed her tour as part of their training and provided extra information and guidance, as well as great encouragement and ongoing support. At a lunch gathering of Government House guides arranged recently to celebrate her many years of volunteering, we handed to her a note of thanks from the National Trust, and a card signed by her colleagues. We thanked Joan for her dedicated years of service and wished her well in her retirement.



You may remember the trouble we were having with rodents causing damage in the Cottage last winter. The worst damage was to the curtains in the dining room - they chewed the lining, as well as some smaller patches on the main fabric, see photos. Fortunately this damage could be mainly hidden from view, so the curtains remained in place over the season. Alexis has now carried out a supremely professional repair, attaching new linings, and making some almost invisible dainty repairs to the main fabric – thank you Alexis!



Annette Shiell, NTV Executive Manager, Collections & Cultural Projects, has found, in the National Trust Collection of Cast Iron stored at Bendigo, an iron gate, which clearly had been in place at Bedgoods at Jolimont at some time.

The sign at the top of the gate reads:

This building was the residence
of His Excellency
CHARLES JOSEPH LATROBE C.B.
Superintendent 2nd Oct. 1839
and Governor of the State of
Victoria 5th July, 1851 to 1854.

The National Trust will have discussions about how to appropriately install this on site at the Cottage. You can read about the collection at www.nationaltrust.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Cast-Iron-Collection_SA.pdf

We wish you all a pleasant Winter Season. There'll be a garden Working Bee in July, and we'll be holding a pre-Season Volunteers Meeting and a big House and Garden Working Bee in September, so we'll hope to see you then.

With best wishes from the Cottage Management Team, Helen