



Liaison Coordinator: Alison Pearson

Cottage Management Team changes

Since our last newsletter, there have been further changes to the Cottage Management Team (CMT). Neville and Alexis Jarvis decided to step down from their involvement in the Cottage; we are sorry to see them go and thank them both very much for their contribution. In her housekeeping role, Alexis kept the collection clean and polished, and Neville's contribution as Liaison Coordinator has been key to our positive relationship with the National Trust. Alison Pearson has come on board to take on the role of Liaison Coordinator, and Ellen Walters has stepped down from her role as Garden Coordinator to take on the role of Housekeeping Coordinator. Judy Rigg, a new volunteer, has taken on the Garden Coordinator role. Judy is a very experienced gardener and has developed and maintained some beautiful large gardens. She will be working with the garden volunteers to renew some of the beds that need revitalising, moving some plants around the garden, and development some new areas in the garden.



Judy leading the garden volunteers

STAR Award for Helen Botham

Helen Botham's outstanding leadership and commitment to the best interests of La Trobe's Cottage has been recognised recently with a STAR Award, presented to her by National Trust CEO, Simon Ambrose. Helen is probably the CMT member volunteers have most contact with, but I'm not sure everyone fully appreciates how much time and effort Helen has spent this year ensuring everything at the Cottage continued to run smoothly, particularly during the second half of the year with the change-over of coordinators. The Cottage Management Team felt it was important that Helen's contribution be recognised and nominated her for the Award. I'm delighted to say that we managed to surprise Helen, who thanked members of the team for nominating her. Congratulations to Helen on a very well-deserved Award!



Cottage Management Team

Judy Rigg, Colin Mickelburgh, John Botham, Simon Ambrose (National Trust CEO), Helen Botham, Alison Pearson, Helen Armstrong, Ellen Walters

Cottage Management Team

Liaison	Alison Pearson	0400 543097	Maintenance	Colin Mickelburgh	0423 114619
Volunteers	Helen Botham	0447 018224	Funding	John Botham	0407 814008
Housekeeping	Ellen Walters	0419 519763	Publicity	Helen Armstrong	9592 5616
Garden	Judy Rigg	0412 141343	Curatorial	John Botham	0407 814008

Meetings with the National Trust

The CMT have had two meetings with representatives of the National Trust since our last newsletter, both of which have been very positive. We have put forward a number of suggestions for improvements at the Cottage and we are hopeful that in the fullness of time these will be fulfilled. In an encouraging sign, the rearrangements put in place following the recent filming have all been accepted by the National Trust Curator. National Trust Asset Manager, Sherredan Maher, has expressed her appreciation for the way things are running at the Cottage.

Visit to La Trobe's Cottage by National Trust CEO

Simon Ambrose visited the Cottage on 30 November to present Helen with her STAR Award and took the opportunity to view the recent changes to the inside of the Cottage. He thanked the Cottage Management Team and all Cottage volunteers for their hard work throughout the year.

Housekeeping Coordinator: Ellen Walters

Housekeeping of La Trobe's Cottage continues on a weekly basis following and going beyond the routine set out by Alexis, the last housekeeper of the cottage. I have also taken on cleaning areas that are done less frequently, such as the fireplaces and the curtains and their wooden poles. I found a preponderance of cobwebs and spiders etc. both alive and deceased.

Curatorial Coordinator: John Botham

The collection was considerably disrupted during the Ned Kelly filming with many items stored in the bedroom and kitchen. During the 'bump-out' we took the opportunity to move items around to better interpret the rooms. Also, the red carpet was removed returning the floors to a more authentic appearance. The film crew kindly left some temporary runners and the National Trust will replace these with more appropriate carpet. The sprinkler valve cupboard in the dining room was painted by a scenic artist with a wood grain finish to match the surrounding woodwork. We have just completed another inventory check to document the new locations of the collection and to update the notes for guides. In the future we hope to reinterpret the hall, making it more like the sort of entrance La Trobe would have had and to use the closets to provide displays of his travels and travel goods. We would also like to tidy up the picture gallery in the kitchen. It is planned to remove the large bellows from the kitchen, possibly returning them to Government House.

In his recent presentation for the La Trobe Society Christmas event, Dr Robert La Nauze, author of *Made to Order: George Thwaites and Sons, colonial cabinet makers* threw some doubt on the story we have always believed about the two gothic style ceremonial chairs in the Cottage, in that they were presented to La Trobe by the City Council in 1854. Dr La Nauze believes they were made at different times, and were unlikely to have been a gift. This deserves some concentrated research, and if anyone feels able to carry this out, I would be pleased to hear from them.

Publicity Coordinator: Helen Armstrong

Booklet

The revised booklet 'La Trobe's Cottage and Garden' is expected to be printed in the first part of next year, after other Trust priorities are completed.

Garden book – Anne Vale

The display copy at reception of Anne Vale's *Gardens of the National Trust of Australia (Victoria)* now includes information that the book is available at the Royal Botanical Gardens, as well as at Como, Rippon Lea and Tasma Terrace – in addition to being available online from the Trust, postage \$15. The beautifully produced book gives a very generous coverage of the Cottage garden.

Cottage Events:

Open House Melbourne: 28,29 July: This proved to be a successful event for the National Trust: 287 people visited La Trobe's Cottage on the Saturday (Government House was also open on that day) and 138 on the Sunday: a total of 425 people. Thanks to the volunteers who contributed to the day by taking a slot on the reception and guiding roster. The National Trust is keen to continue our participation in this event next year and will run the event centrally.

Film Shoot *The True History of the Kelly Gang* 20 August. La Trobe's Cottage was selected as the set for the home of the policeman Fitzpatrick, visited by Ned Kelly. Filming took place on Monday 20 August. All of the previous Friday was spent by the Art Department of the film crew 'dressing' the Cottage, and the following day was spent 'bumping out'. The Cottage garden was overrun by the crew with their various stores of equipment, food supplies, etc. Filming took place only inside a darkened Cottage, where the drawing room became the dining room, and the dining room was transformed into a sitting room. This event was a big one for the Cottage, and we hope that other film crews choose it as a site for further film shoots.



Fitzpatrick's dining room

Heritage Walking tour of the Royal Botanic Gardens 15 November. Garden volunteer Jenny Happel, who is a guide at the Royal Botanic Gardens, took us on a tour of the Gardens focusing on La Trobe, early curators, and early significant trees. This was a fascinating visit, where we learned much about the early development of the garden and La Trobe's role. Jenny was responsible for the propagation of an elm tree that is a descendent of an elm tree planted by La Trobe in 1851. She led the project to plant this specimen, which took place on the Tennyson Lawn in early November. Jenny and Sandi Pullman, who supported Jenny in her campaign to preserve the specimen, helped with the planting. On our tour, which Sandi helped to organise, Jenny showed us not only the newly planted tree, but also the site of the original tree planted by La Trobe. The City of Melbourne has approved the planting of another of these elm descendants in Kings Domain near the Cottage. This is expected to be in autumn, once the Domain precinct works are settled.



Volunteers End-of-Year gathering 30 November. A group of about 15 volunteers were joined by Sherredan Maher and Alyce McCue from the National Trust for lunch at the Cottage on Friday 30 November. The weather was perfect for a cottage garden picnic, with everyone's contributions providing a delicious lunch. Sherredan thanked the volunteers for their work during the year, saying the National Trust staff appreciated the efforts taken by the volunteers and the Management Team to run the Cottage efficiently on behalf of the Trust.



La Trobe Service St Peter's Eastern Hill 2 December. The annual service celebrating the life of Charles Joseph La Trobe took place at St Peter's Eastern Hill. 11 hours later a corresponding service took place at St Michael the Archangel, Litlington, Sussex, where La Trobe is buried. The La Trobe Society had, as always, sent a bunch of Australian flowers which were processed through the church and laid on La Trobe's grave. At our service at St Peter's the Vicar, Reverend Dr Hugh Kempster, spoke of La Trobe's dedication to his religious faith, recalling that La Trobe's speech when he arrived in Melbourne was more like a sermon, reminding the early colonists that 'It will not be by individual aggrandizement, by the possession of numerous flocks and herds, or of costly acres, that we shall secure for the country enduring prosperity and happiness; but by the acquisition and maintenance of sound religious and moral institutions, without which no country can become truly great'.

Future Cottage Events:

26 January 2019, 1-4pm. Family Day at La Trobe's Cottage

We plan to repeat last year's successful Australia Day event. The Cottage will be open between 1pm and 4pm. Last year, the majority of our visitors came after their visit to Government House, and we will again be handing out brochures informing people as they leave Government House about our event. The \$2 entry fee will include a fairly brief tour of the Cottage and the servants' block. Old-fashioned games will be available in the courtyard, and there will 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. We'll need a good team of volunteers to help us with this event.

La Trobe's Birthday Celebration, Sunday 24 March, 4.30-6pm Details later.

Friends of La Trobe's Cottage Annual Lecture, Thursday 23 May, 6-8pm

Topic: *La Trobe's Gold and Silver Testimonial Pieces.*

Final notes from the Volunteers Coordinator

I would like to thank our new Coordinators: Alison, who is providing a truly efficient link between the Team and the National Trust, and Judy who has set about caring for, and developing, the garden with great dedication and enthusiasm. Ellen has stepped into Housekeeping with gusto and we appreciate her commitment to her new role.

Thanks to all Cottage volunteers for your support during 2018 with Government House tours, Sunday openings, gardening and special calls for events or extra duties at the Cottage.

Best wishes for a peaceful festive season.

Helen Botham

