

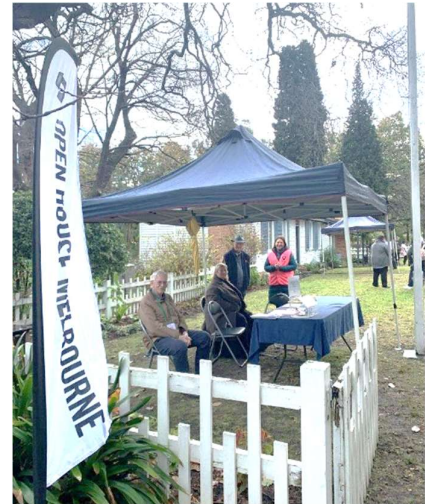


Newsletter No 55

11 August 2025

We congratulate our Events Coordinator, Lindy Golding, for arranging a most successful day as we participated in Open House Melbourne on Sunday 27 July. Nine volunteers assisted on the day – Lindy, Graham, Charles and Helen as guides, Pamela and John as marshallers, Louise and Kathy on the retail desk, and Elizabeth looking after us all with warm drinks and food. Claudette Brennan, NTAV Assets Operations Advisor, attended all day and helped with greeting the 128 visitors. As Lindy reported to NTAV: 'This year the Cottage was part of a sub-group called the Melbourne Arts Precinct which included ACCA, ACMI, ABC, the Recital Centre etc. and this was good exposure for the Cottage – and NTAV - to the wider local arts and cultural community in the area.' We enjoyed meeting the visitors, many of whom were very interested in our site, and seemed to want to dwell in our garden and take in the scene after their brief tour was concluded.

Thanks to the garden volunteers who helped prepare the site for the day. The roses were pruned, the leaves raked, shrubs tidied. Our Citywide lawn mowers, Troy and Mark, then did a great job of mowing and trimming edges.



We are pleased that Karen Stewart, who had joined the Management Team, has agreed to take the role of Curatorial Coordinator, and that Elizabeth Lee, who had taken the role of Housekeeper, has joined the Management Team. All great news for our CMT. We held a meeting recently and are looking forward to the season ahead. We welcome our new volunteers Joseph Millie and Sallyann Wheeldon, who will be joining our guide team, and Matthew Smith, joining the receptionists. They will be participating in some training, and we look forward to seeing them at our Sunday openings – Welcome!

Our Sunday season commences on Sunday 5 October and we need to fix some dates for the Pre-Season meetings I mentioned in my last newsletter: we'll have a choice of two dates for Receptionists (Tuesday **9 September** at 10am or Tuesday **16 September** at 1pm) and guides (Wednesday **3 September** at 10am or Tuesday **30 September** at 10am) to attend an onsite training session. I'll be sending an email soon to ask you all what dates will suit. If neither date suits you, we'll arrange another session. We'll ask those volunteers not guides or receptionists to attend the beginning of one of these sessions (and the morning tea) as there are a few matters that are relevant to all volunteers that need to be covered.

Our Pre-Season House and Garden Working Bee will be held on Tuesday 16 September, 9.30 – 12 noon. All gardeners will be welcome, and if other volunteers are available to help with tasks such as brushing down the weatherboards, de-webbing, window cleaning, etc, and possibly assisting Alexis and Elizabeth inside, we'll be pleased to see you. You'll be contacted closer to the time.

You may remember that we asked you in May if you'd be happy to support Lindy's proposal to open on three Friday mornings in January. We had a good response, so it was put to the National Trust which I'm glad to say has approved. Lindy wrote to NTAV: '... we often see parents and grandparents out and about in the area during the week in school holidays looking after children and grandchildren. So as a trial, we propose to open for a couple of hours on a Friday morning in January 2026 (9th, 16th, 23rd) to attract this group of adults'. Children will be admitted free on these days, and we will put out our children's games. I'll be in touch closer to the time to organise a roster of receptionists and guides.

Cottage Management Team

Liaison	Helen Botham	0447 018224	Maintenance	Colin Mickleburgh	0423 114619
Curatorial	Karen Stewart	0406 501991	Publicity	Helen Armstrong	0427 925616
Education /Events	Lindy Golding	0423 034632	Volunteers	Helen Botham	0447 018224
Garden	Helen Botham	0447 018224	(Statistics	John Botham	0407 814008)
Housekeeping	Elizabeth Lee	0401 073107			

The humidity levels in the Cottage were increasing in the early part of the winter, so out of concern for our collection the dehumidifiers, which we had running all last winter during which time the leak under the dining room was identified and fixed, have been switched on again as a trial. Karen has organised a roster of Management Team members to call in regularly and we have been pleased to see that the Relative Humidity was around acceptable levels. Collections Manager Katie Potter, however, is keen that the machines should continue to run to be checked when the humidity rises. We will therefore monitor Melbourne's humidity, and if it rises above acceptable levels a Team member, if available, will call in to check the dehumidifiers. We have asked for help from NTAV with this task.

A new acquisition at La Trobe's Cottage is a set of four prints of sketches by Louis Kahan of La Trobe's Cottage. The pictures, donated by the family of Margret Grenfell, La Trobe's Cottage and Government House guide (1986-2001), provide a valuable visual record of the wooded surrounds of the cottage before it was moved in 1998 from where the RBG Children's Garden is now. Following discussion with Lizzie Anya-Petrivna, NTAV Senior Curator and Historian, they were re-mounted and framed by FOLTC, and hung in the kitchen block in time for Open House Melbourne.



You will have read in Kate Drummond's recent Newsy Catch-up, that

'I am working closely with the NTAV representative of your volunteering group ... to work out what methods [in Better Impact] will be easiest and best practice for your sites.'

That representative for our group is John Botham, who recently agreed to manage our volunteer and Cottage statistics – Neville has provided him with a hand-over. John has indeed been in touch with Kate about Better Impact to ensure the transition for our volunteer group is smooth and seamless.

Coming Events:

A couple of events being organised by Kate Drummond:

- 15 August 11am: NAIDOC Melbourne Museum excursion: A Heritage tour with the Melbourne Museum included the First Nations exhibit and other areas within the museum.
- 16 September: 10.30am: Visit to Old Treasury Building Objects exhibit (NB This is our Working Bee morning!)

Please contact Kate if you are interested in attending: Kate.drummond@nattrust.com.au

Our End-of-Season lunch has been provisionally set for Wednesday **10 December** – please note this in your diary.

With thanks to you all for your ongoing support, and best wishes from the Cottage Management Team, Helen.



Some scenes from
Open House Melbourne