



Newsletter No 57

25 November 2025

As 2025 draws to a close we look forward to seeing you all at the End-of-Year lunch on Wednesday 10 December at 12.30. As usual, we'll ask you to bring a plate of something savoury or sweet to share; the Friends will provide a little something to celebrate and soft drink. It's a great chance to meet other volunteers and the NTAV staff we work with.

The start to our Sunday season has been very disappointing. We have been dogged with bad weather almost every Sunday, and events like the Melbourne Marathon and the Walk Through the new Metro Tunnel seem to have taken crowds away from our parkland. We'll be hoping for better weather and greater visitor numbers in coming months.

Our new volunteers, however, are proving to be a great help with the roster. Graham Pilkington, Joseph and Sallyann as guides, and Matthew as receptionist. Matthew has also become our 'Social media rep'! He is going to produce regular clips to be provided to NTAV to post on their Instagram account. One featuring the fantastic spring flowers in the garden was provided to NTAV to post, and there'll be one also in early December about our preparations for Christmas.



Helen and Karen decorate the tree

At the last Working Bee the Christmas Tree was installed and other decorations arranged by Karen and Helen Armstrong. Matthew recorded the event for us. Thanks to John, Pamela and Graham Thomas who attended the 'Bee' to get the garden looking its best.



Matthew at work!

As the Sunday volunteers are aware, we're going to trial Friday morning openings in January – on 9th, 16th and 23rd. Thanks to guides and receptionists for providing your availability for these openings. These will be aimed at parents and grandparents who may bring their children to the Cottage (children will be free on these days), so we'll be making traditional games and activities available, and we'll tailor our tours to our child audience: we'll send some suggestions to the guides.

Lindy will be submitting an Expression of Interest in participating in Open House Melbourne 2026 on Sunday 26 July. We'll of course need the support of the volunteer team to do this; we'll be asking you to let us know if you're happy to participate.

Tim Gatehouse's fascinating article about La Trobe's bed is in the latest issue of *La Trobeana* – see article attached. It provides us with a good understanding of its likely origin - a great addition to our tour notes.

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	0410 195 035			



Our fence and gates are looking very much in need of repair; both the double gates and the little gate now need lifting in order to unlatch them, due to the rotting wood. We are waiting for Tim La Trobe Bateman, a descendent of La Trobe's cousin, and a builder specializing in restoring old homes, to get the OK from NATAV to proceed with this repair, which he has offered to do free of charge.

In the meantime Citywide have gravelled the path to the Cottage and it looks very inviting.



Coming Events:

You will have read in Kate Drummond's last Newsy Catch-Up that there is to be an End-of-Year gathering for all volunteers on Friday 28 November at 1pm at Old Melbourne Gaol Court House. A light lunch and refreshments will be served plus a tour of the complex for those that have not visited before – you were asked to RSVP to Kate: Kate.drummond@nattrust.com.au

Kate is also planning to celebrate International Volunteers Day on 5 December with a visit to ANZ's Gothic Banking Museum and Verdon Chambers, 90 Queen Street; 10.30am -12.00. Get back to her quickly if you're interested!

The annual service celebrating the life of Charles Joseph La Trobe will take place at St Peter's Eastern Hill on Sunday 7 December at 10.30am. This year we celebrate the 150th Anniversary of La Trobe's death on 4 December 1875. Eleven hours later a corresponding service will take place at St Michael the Archangel, Litlington, Sussex, where La Trobe is buried. The La Trobe Society will be providing a bunch of Australian flowers for that service. All are welcome to attend the service at St Peter's Eastern Hill.



As always, a Moravian Star has been placed at the top of our Christmas tree. The very first Moravian Star is known to have originated in the 1830s at a Moravian school in Germany and as the La Trobes were dedicated members of the Moravian Church, it would certainly have enjoyed the honoured place at the very top of the family's tree in Melbourne. (Moravian stars are frequently white, or red and white, but ours is black.)



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