FRIENDS OF LA TROBE'S COTTAGE
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NATIONAL TRUST

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Another Sunday Season has come to an end. Thanks to all our volunteers who contributed to its success: an average attendance over all Sundays of 15 visitors – three up on last season! Our thoughts are now turning to next season and I am very pleased to welcome our new volunteers: Susan Lengyel, Samantha Parkyn and Caroline Whiteside who will be training as guides, and Zoe Karkarnis who will train as receptionist. Samantha has an interest and qualifications in conservation management, and she will be working with Elizabeth on the care of the collection.

A wonderful day was arranged by Kate Drummond on 21 May at Labassa to celebrate International Volunteers Week. NTAV CEO, Collette Brennan, expressed her appreciation for the work of the volunteers, and years of service certificates were awarded to Joan Daw (40 years), John Botham (20 years) and Irene Kearsey (20 years); Helen Armstrong was awarded a Certificate of Commitment, and Graham Thomas was awarded an Exceptional Service Award. Karen Stewart and Sallyann Wheeldon received awards for their work at Portable Iron Houses and Tasma Terrace. Congratulations to our award winners.

John, Helen, Graham, Joan and Irene with their awards

Past Events:

On Tuesday 3 March Katie Potter, NTAV Collections Manager, invited volunteers to visit Labassa to view La Trobe's sword, which had been returned to the National Trust from State Library Victoria. Graham Pilkington took particular interest in the sword and after the visit compared it with the sword La Trobe is wearing in the Grant portrait, and he noted that it was different! Katie then carried out some extensive research, and was able, at the Friends of La Trobe's Cottage Annual Lecture at Labassa on 19 May, to tell us that in fact this was not La Trobe's sword. Through various lapses in, or lack of, procedures to catalogue the collection in the 1960s when the sword was donated, the false labelling of the sword as La Trobe's was able to proliferate. Katie's story of her research uncovering the various mis-steps along the way was of great interest. We are grateful to Graham, and to Katie for following this through. Katie also showed the gold-plated trowel presented to La Trobe at the laying of the foundation stone of the Geelong Railway Terminus on 20 September 1853, which will now be returned to display at La Trobe's Cottage. Katie's talk was preceded by John Botham's presentation titled 'In the Footsteps of La Trobe: Tahiti', which provided an insight into the places La Trobe sketched during his six days in Tahiti on his return to Europe in May 1854. The venue for our event, the magnificent Labassa mansion, provided a wonderful setting: the event was enjoyed by all.

Graham carefully studies the sword, watched by Katie Potter, with Colin, Davydd, Helen and Karen.

The La Trobe Society celebrated Charles La Trobe's 225th birthday at the Cottage on Sunday 22 March, with the now usual celebratory refreshments. The donation of four Louis Kahan print reproductions, showing the Cottage

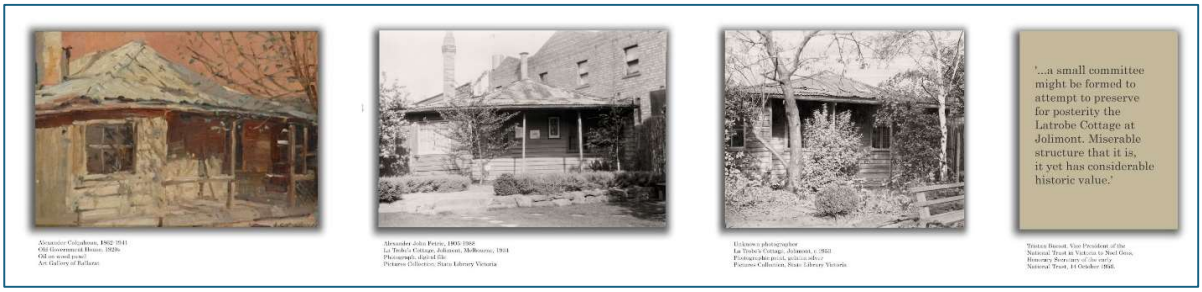
Cottage Management Team

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			

after reconstruction in 1964, and the 70th Anniversary of the formation of the National Trust in Victoria, was celebrated by Joan Daw in her talk 'Jolimont and Beyond', during which she recalled for us the guiding experience when the Cottage was on Birdwood Avenue. We were delighted that the family of Margaret Grenfell who had donated the Kahan prints were in attendance.

The Cottage's display celebrating the 70th Anniversary of the National Trust will remain permanently in the servants' kitchen. It is a series of early photographs (1920s, 1934 and 1953) of La Trobe's Cottage leading up to the 1956 discussions which led to the acquisition by NTAV of the dining room – all that was left of the Cottage in 1956, the year NTAV was formed. Tristan Buesst, early Vice-President of the National Trust, wrote on 14 October 1956: '…a small committee might be formed to attempt to preserve for posterity the Latrobe Cottage at Jolimont. Miserable structure that it is, it yet has considerable historic value'.

The display was funded by the Friends of Trobe's Cottage.



Future Events:

Open House Melbourne: La Trobe's Cottage will be open on Sunday 26 July, 11am – 4pm. Lindy will be in touch soon with more details and we will be seeking support from volunteers to assist on the day. We will be providing 10-minute 'walk-throughs', and hope to sell some NTAV merchandise and some memberships! We'll also hope to interest some visitors into returning for a fuller tour at a later date. There'll be a Working Bee on Tuesday 21 July to prepare the Cottage and garden. The gardeners are already preparing the garden for the winter.

In September we'll be holding pre-Season meetings for guides, receptionists and others.

Pamela and Sue at a Winter's Working Bee

NTAV will be rolling out across National Trust places in Victoria "Heritage Futures", a travelling outdoor installation to celebrate the National Trust's 70th Anniversary, running from May-December. It has been developed and inspired based on Petrichor Collaborative's original RiverFest 2025 event at Como, see https://youtu.be/1irxjNTqEw8?si=cDXc1Y82fG9b36IR The program, which will be facilitated by a dedicated NTAV volunteer, will come to La Trobe's Cottage for one day on Sunday 29 November.

A self-guided audio experience, which will be provided to visitors via a QR Code on entry, encourages personal reflection through prompts, while remaining deeply connected to each landscape. A collaborative artwork invites visitors to contribute to a growing textile installation, using natural materials (fallen leaves, garden fragments, petals) to decorate a section of fabric lightly stencilled with the property. The individual fabric contributions will be brought together into a large-scale artwork to be displayed at Tasma Terrace, resulting in a powerful visual expression of shared custodianship, capturing how hundreds of visitors imagine the future of National Trust places. The program will run at Como and Rippon Lea during week-ends 30/31 May, 6/7 June and 13/14 June and at Pentridge daily from 27 June to 12 July. We would encourage you to visit and take a look so that we will know what is coming to the Cottage in November.

We hope you are enjoying the winter season, and we look forward to seeing some of you at Open House on 26 July. With thanks to you all for your ongoing support, and best wishes from the Cottage Management Team.