



Newsletter No 60

19 August 2026

Thanks to the Team of Volunteers who helped on our Open House Sunday on 26 July. It was a most successful day - 249 visitors (nearly double last year's total) and the feedback from the visitors was excellent. We were pleased to see a slightly different demographic to our Sunday tours – a lot of younger people and children, which we enjoyed. We gather our volunteers were happy too, thanks to the lovely weather, and the cheerful cosiness in the Volunteers Retreat, with Elizabeth waiting on us all with food and drink.



Our thoughts are now on the return of our Sunday Open season, with the first Sunday, 4 October, as always celebrating the garden in 'Garden Day'. There'll be a Working Bee on Tuesday 15 September to prepare the Cottage garden and interior: we'll be grateful for extra volunteers that day to do all that is necessary.

Our online pre-season meeting for volunteers will be held on Tuesday 8 September at 10am – please make a note of that date so you're free to join us.

We have three new guides, some in training, who will be assisting this season: Susan Lengyel, Caroline Whiteside and Kuba Lecki. Samantha Parkyn will be assisting Elizabeth with the care of the collection as well as assisting as a guide.

We welcome new volunteer Kuba Lecki who has an interest in our collection and is going to work on photographing and digitising more of the artefacts. He will meet with Katie Potter, NTAV Collections Manager, who will provide advice about NTAV protocols on these matters, and then embark on sessions photographing items using a Light Box provided by Katie. Our Housekeeper Elizabeth will be standing by to ensure the items Kuba photographs are clean and shiny! You'll be able to see the results of their work on the Vernon database, <https://collection.nationaltrust.org.au/explore>

We sadly must farewell Colin Mickleburgh who has decided to retire from the Cottage Management Team and from his other volunteering duties. Colin was a founding member of the Cottage Management Team as Maintenance Coordinator and has given great service over nine years in that role, as well as volunteering for four years before that as a guide. We will miss him from our volunteer team, and especially from a CMT role that not many are aware of: Colin supervises the regular maintenance checks that are required, i.e. Fire (monthly) and Pest (every 3 months). If any of our volunteers (or their contacts) would be interested to take on this role, please get in touch. We thank Colin for all the years of volunteering he has given to La Trobe's Cottage and wish him well in the future.

Cottage Management Team

Liaison	Helen Botham	0447 018224	Volunteers	Helen Botham	0447 018224
Education /Events	Lindy Golding	0423 034632	Combined Tours	Karen Stewart	0406 501991
Garden	Helen Botham	0447 018224	Curatorial	Vacant	
Housekeeping	Elizabeth Lee	0410 195 035	Maintenance	Vacant	
Publicity	Helen Armstrong	0427 925616	(Statistics	John Botham	0407 814008)

La Trobe's Cottage volunteers joined the tour of the Victorian Trades Hall arranged by Kate Drummond on 12 August. We all agreed it was a wonderful event, which explored an important part of Melbourne's history.

And some of you may have joined Kate on the visit she arranged as part of NAIDOC Week to the Potter Museum of Art, University of Melbourne. The current exhibition, *Nagarn Wa'ngal (Breathing for Us): Art of the Gum Tree*, showcases a diverse range of artworks from early colonial times to the present, see <https://potter-museum.unimelb.edu.au/whats-on/exhibitions/art-of-the-gum-tree>, all featuring the gum tree and providing thought-provoking stories on the experiences of First Nations people. There are also beautiful Aboriginal craft works. We'd like all our guides, in particular, to take the time to visit as a background for engagement with visitors who may have seen it. Open Tuesday-Saturday, 11am- 5pm until 21 November. There is also a very nice cafe on site!

We are very pleased to see that the rotten double gates and some of the fence have been replaced. This is thanks to La Trobe Society members John and Loreen Chambers, who kindly donated the funds required for the materials to replace the rotten timbers. This work is not yet complete, and Myron and his team will continue to work on the rotting fence in coming months. We thank John and Loreen for their generous donation.



There has been a slight change to the arrangement of pictures in the kitchen display area. The illustrations of the Cottage are now placed in chronological order, and the display includes a framed reproduction of an oil sketch of La Trobe by Sir Francis Grant. This was a preparatory study for the artist's portrait of the Lieutenant-Governor. We thank Dianne Reilly, Secretary of the La Trobe Society, for this donation.



Future Events:

Pre-Season Volunteers Meeting: To be held online on Tuesday 8 September, 10am.

Cottage Working bee: Tuesday 15 September, 9.30 – 12.15.

End-of-Year gathering: Tuesday 1 December is the date for our End-of-Year gathering. It will take the usual form of a lunch in the Cottage garden, and we ask everyone to bring a little something to contribute to the table. The Friends will provide liquid refreshments.

Kate Drummond's coming events:

Friday 27 November: TBC NTAV End of Year Celebration

Saturday 5 December: TBC International Volunteers Day excursion

We look forward to seeing you in coming weeks, and we thank you for your ongoing support.
The Cottage Management Team