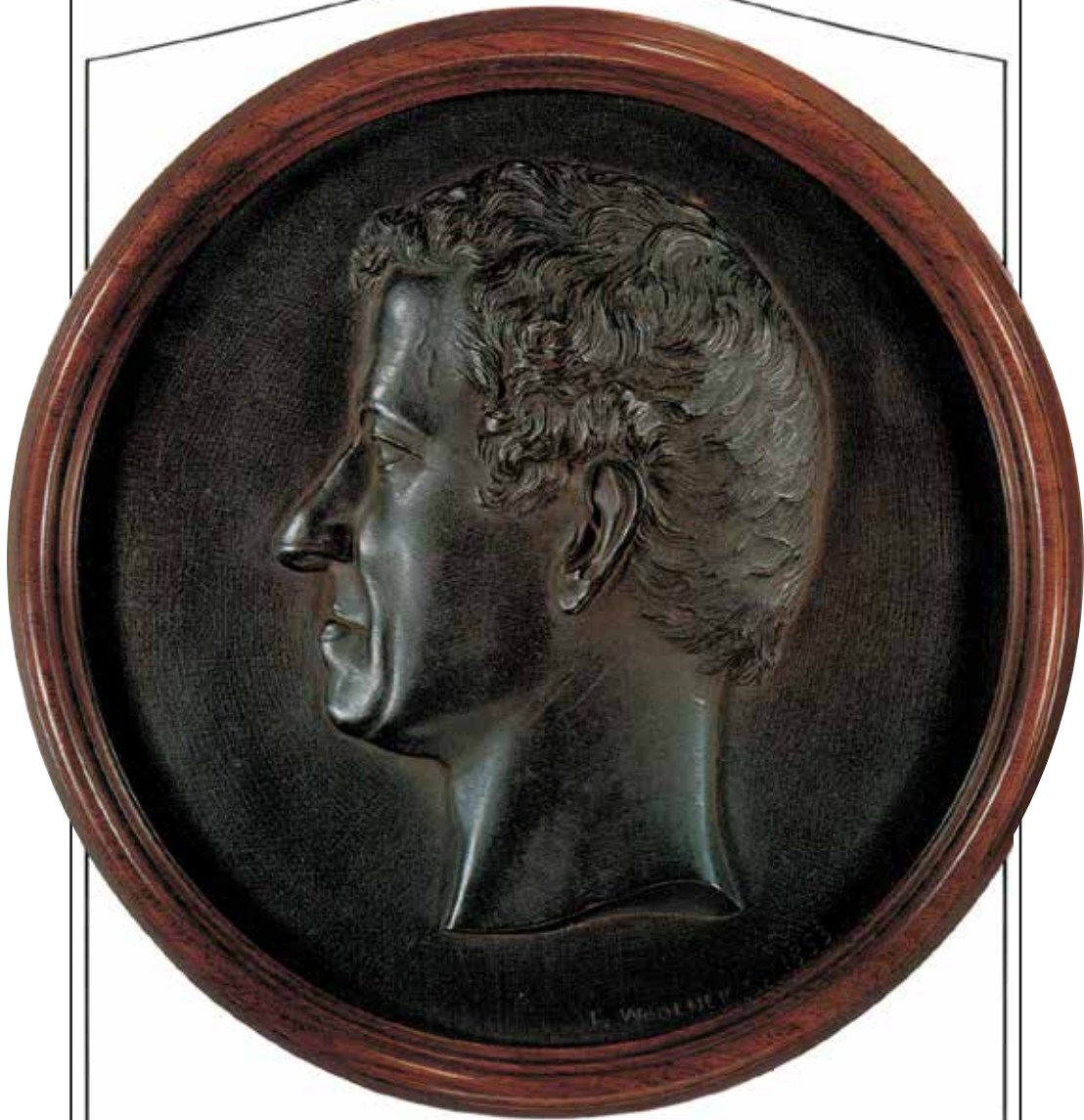


LA TROBEANA



Journal of the C. J. La Trobe Society Inc.

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The C J La Trobe Society Inc was formed in 2001 to promote understanding and appreciation of the life, work and times of Charles Joseph La Trobe, Victoria's first Lieutenant-Governor.
www.latrobesociety.org.au



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FRONT COVER

Thomas Woolner, 1825-1892, sculptor
Charles Joseph La Trobe
1853, diam. 24cm. Bronze portrait medallion showing the left profile of Charles Joseph La Trobe.
Signature and date incised in bronze l.r.: T. Woolner Sc. 1853: / M
La Trobe, Charles Joseph, 1801-1875. Accessioned 1894
Pictures Collection, State Library of Victoria, H5481

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A Word from the President

Welcome to 2014 and the first edition of the La Trobeana with its various fascinating and diverse articles. The C J La Trobe Society this year will again offer a variety of interesting and thought-provoking lectures and functions for members. The highlight of the 2013 Christmas season was our Cocktail Party hosted by Sue Roberts, CEO and State Librarian, in the State Library of Victoria's domed La Trobe Reading Room which was celebrating its centenary. Robyn Annear entertained us with a lively address entitled 'La Trobe was here!'

Our annual Candlelit Carols held at La Trobe's Cottage on 16 December in the garden was also a delightful Society occasion. The distinguished soprano, Merlyn Quaipe with accompanying choir, provided a focus to what would have been an important religious festival for the La Trobe family at *Jolimont*. Joan Macdermid of the Friends of La Trobe's Cottage decorated the rooms quite beautifully and the gardeners who work throughout the year had made a special effort for this occasion.

This issue of *La Trobeana* has three most interesting contributions. Architectural historian Professor Harriet Edquist has written us an article on Edward La Trobe Bateman's involvement with the design of the Melbourne Public Library in the period 1860-1866. It is based on a lecture she gave at our Annual

General Meeting last August. Bernard Wallace has also been researching another interesting person, James Blair the Police Magistrate for the Portland Bay District, a somewhat controversial man who was part of La Trobe's world, albeit one whom La Trobe met only a couple of times. While Patrick Gregory has written us a narrative of the life of Sophie and Charles La Trobe at their beloved *Jolimont* home. It reminds us that history writing can take many forms.

There are some fascinating pieces of research from three of our busy La Trobe Society committee members on matters as diverse as a clock in the State Library of Victoria, an intriguing marine reserve at Mt Martha and milestones in our celebration of the life and times of Charles Joseph La Trobe. There are also three reports written regarding the brilliant and evolving La Trobe Society website (www.latrobesociety.com), as well as an update on our relationship with St Peter's Eastern Hill whose foundation stone was laid by Charles Joseph La Trobe.

I look forward to seeing you throughout the year at the various functions.

Diane Gardiner
Hon. President C J La Trobe Society

The Chancellor's Column

The C J La Trobe Society's annual calendar is punctuated with a number of key events throughout the year, culminating in the annual Christmas party. *Christmas Cocktails under the Dome* was held at the State Library of Victoria on 6 December 2013. The event was most enjoyable and Society members were treated to an informative and fascinating talk, *La Trobe was Here!* by writer and historian, Robyn Annear.

As many members of the C J La Trobe Society will know, over the last couple of years the Society and La Trobe University have been working to build connections between the two organisations around mutual interests and understanding. Accordingly representatives from the University: Chief of Staff, Perry Sperling, Trusts and Foundations Officer, Caterina Demontis and Fundraising Officer, Bruce Moore joined Society members for the end-of-year gathering.

Bruce Moore is new to both La Trobe University and Australia and this was his first C J La Trobe Society event. Originally from the US, he has spent the last seventeen years working as a fundraiser for an independent school in Taiwan. His role at La Trobe University is to secure philanthropic support for the exciting and important research that is being undertaken in La Trobe University's Faculty of Science, Technology and Engineering.

I was very curious to know what he, as someone new to the country, thought about the Society and what he had learned about C J La Trobe.

"As an American, I must confess that I had not heard of C J La Trobe before I came to Australia; however, I was intrigued to learn more about this important historic figure and was curious to understand why my University had been named after him," Bruce observed.

"Now that I know a little more, the synergies and parallels are strikingly apparent – in particular C J La Trobe's vision for his colony and the research priorities that have been identified by La Trobe University. I look forward to finding out more about Charles La Trobe and engaging more deeply with members of the Society." On being informed of the connection between Charles Joseph La Trobe and his uncle, the revered architect Benjamin Henry Latrobe who redesigned the Capitol buildings and the White House, Bruce further added: "I have been to Latrobe, Pennsylvania before. Now I know the connection."

Adrienne E Clarke AC
Chancellor, La Trobe University

The other La Trobe: E. L. Bateman at the Melbourne Public Library 1860-1866

By Harriet Edquist

Harriet Edquist is Professor of Architectural History and Director of the RMIT Design Archives at RMIT University, Melbourne. Actively engaged in the promotion of Australian architecture, art and design, she has published widely and curated numerous exhibitions in the area. Most recently, she curated the exhibition 'Free, secular and democratic: building the Public Library 1853-1913' at the State Library of Victoria (2013) and published the associated ebook *Building a new world: a history of the State Library of Victoria 1853-1913*.

Other recent publications by Professor Edquist include *George Baldessin: paradox and persuasion* (2009); *Designing Place: an archaeology of the Western District* (2010) and *Michael O'Connell: the lost modernist* (2011), all of which had associated exhibitions. Since 2007 she has been Director of the RMIT Design Archives that has already established an important, and growing, collection of material related to Melbourne design practices from the 20th century to the present.

Edward La Trobe Bateman, cousin of Charles Joseph La Trobe, made a significant contribution to the design history of Victoria, particularly in the fields of book illumination, garden design and interior design. As Anne Neale has so cogently argued, he was an early appreciator of native plants and became 'the most talented, best-documented and most prolific Anglo-Australian landscape gardener of the nineteenth century' and was an internationally significant design reformer, bringing to Melbourne experience of working in the office of the great British designer Owen Jones.¹

My interest in Bateman was sparked by research into the nineteenth century history of the Public Library where he was involved in two separate interior design projects of the 1860s.² Each was significant and advanced up-to-date ideas about the decoration of public buildings and each was carried out in collaboration with, or perhaps under the aegis of, architect Joseph Reed. It is the relationship between Bateman and Reed that will be the focus here.

Much has been made of the influence exerted on Bateman by Owen Jones in the late 1840s when Bateman was employed in the design

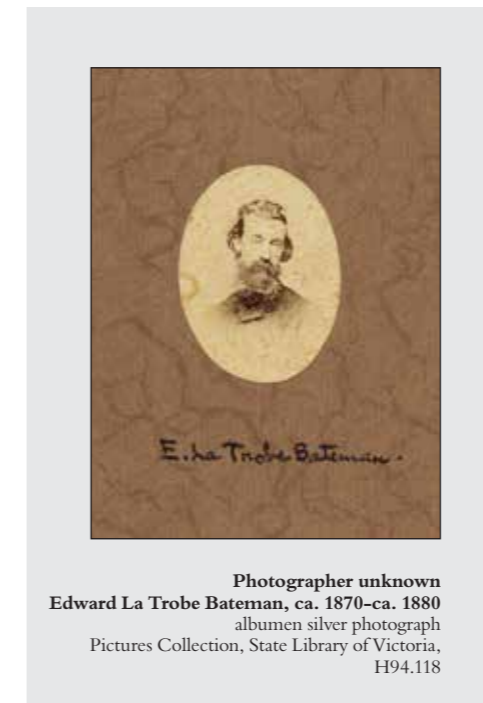
reformer's London office to illustrate a number of high-quality gift books. Yet a comparison between Jones's architecturally-derived interest in ornament and Bateman's ornamental book covers and borders indicate that the latter's aesthetics were formed just as much under the influence of John Ruskin, the most influential nineteenth-century art theorist and champion of the Gothic Revival. Bateman's enthusiasm for medieval book illumination and commitment to the representation of nature, his friendship with members of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood

woody dingle with its eye-like window, and sending up the motion of azure smoke between the silver trunks of aged trees; or grouped among the bright cornfields of the fruitful plain; or forming grey clusters along the slope of the mountain side, the cottage always gives the idea of a thing to be beloved: a quiet life-giving voice, that is as peaceful as silence itself.⁴

An aesthete and dreamer, Bateman was not a worldly man.⁵ He appeared disinclined or simply incapable of establishing a home or a design office of his own in Melbourne, working instead in a series of significant collaborations with people with specialised professional skills like Professor of Natural History, Frederick McCoy and architect Joseph Reed. The former would have taught Bateman a great deal about the recognition, classification and use of exotic and native plant species when they collaborated on the botanic garden at the University of Melbourne 1856-1862, while the latter provided both an office and professional expertise about building practice and architectural design.

In 1858 Joseph Reed, the architect of the Melbourne's Public Library and close professional associate of Redmond Barry, Chancellor of the University of Melbourne and chief trustee of the Library, was appointed architect to the University and this point marks the beginning of his professional collaboration with Bateman. Bateman had been brought into the University two years earlier to work with McCoy, probably at the instigation of Godfrey Howitt, a member of the University Council and host to Bateman during most of his seventeen years in Melbourne.

Bateman's first work in Reed's busy office might have been drawing up the site plan for the Wesley Church precinct, Lonsdale Street in 1859.⁶ It was followed a year later by a scheme at the Public Library which for the first time brought Bateman to the general notice of the Melbourne public. Reed had won the competition for the Public Library soon after arriving in the colony in 1853. The foundation stone was laid in 1854 and the central portion opened in 1856. Reed had envisioned the upper range, the Queen's Reading Room, later known as the Queen's Hall, as a temple interior framed by a double row of giant order Ionic columns. He had defended his choice of the Ionic order for the exterior and interior of the building (the exterior was later changed to Corinthian) in a letter to Barry in 1854, citing Renaissance architects Vignola and Scamozzi as sources, thereby linking his work to



Photographer unknown
Edward La Trobe Bateman, ca. 1870-ca. 1880
albumen silver photograph
Pictures Collection, State Library of Victoria,
H94.118

who were supported by Ruskin, and the artful rusticity of the Hermitage, his cottage at Highgate, all suggest this allegiance. According to Neale, the London circle of William and Mary Howitt in which Bateman moved included John Julius Loudon, for whose *Magazine of Natural History* Ruskin contributed articles in 1834 and whose *Poetry of Architecture* appeared serially in Loudon's *Architectural Magazine* in 1837-38.³ It is the latter of these that seems to infuse the first works which Bateman produced in Melbourne, including views of La Trobe's residence 'Jolimont' and a series of rustic cottages intended for the unpublished 'Bush Homes of Australia'. These beautifully detailed and sympathetic drawings recall Ruskin's descriptions of the vernacular cottage:

...the cottage is one of the embellishments of natural scenery which deserve attentive consideration. It is beautiful always, and everywhere. Whether looking out of the



Barnett Johnstone, 1832-1910, photographer
Queen's Hall Reading Room, Melbourne
Public Library, 1859
 albumen silver photographic print
 Pictures Collection, State Library of Victoria,
 H3679



Edward La Trobe Bateman, 1816-1897, artist
Front view of Jolimont, c. 1852
 drawing : pencil and
 Chinese white on brown paper
 Pictures Collection, State Library of Victoria, H
 98.135/22

the Renaissance revival popular in contemporary British public architecture. The interior of Queen's Hall, with its ceiling opened at intervals by coved skylights glazed in a fish-scale pattern and framed in classical borders, can be seen in Barnett Johnstone's 1860 photograph taken soon after the completion of the south wing.⁷

Soon, however, the newly completed wing was closed for refurbishment and when it re-opened it was 'redecorated in a style which has hitherto been unseen in Melbourne'.⁸

...the general tone of the painting is a light cream colour for the lower portion and a light blue for the ceiling, broken up by introducing gilding and ornaments in Etruscan red. The rilievo ornaments, such as moulded guilloches, &c., are picked out in gold and various colours.⁹

This scheme of applied painted and stencilled decoration broadly Greek in form and colour, was superimposed over the existing Renaissance revival scheme. In undertaking this work Bateman followed the theories of Owen Jones and others who had demonstrated that ancient architecture was polychromatic, colour introduced either through varied materials (structural polychromy) or applied decoration, as here. Examples of polychromatic ornament were reproduced in Jones's most influential text, *The Grammar of Ornament* which was published in 1856; Bateman had worked on it while in Jones's office although he left London four years before its publication.¹⁰ In addition Jones, with Matthew Digby Wyatt, was put in charge of

the removal of the Crystal Palace, erected for the Great Exhibition in 1851, from Hyde Park to Sydenham where it re-opened in 1854. It featured a series of Fine Arts Courts including the Alhambra, Egyptian, Greek and Roman Courts designed by Jones, which outlined the history of architecture and ornament. These would have provided important exemplars for the Public Library interior.

It is not clear who made the decision to use the Queen's Hall as an experimental canvas to test these new, widely debated theories of classical ornament, but it would not have been Bateman's alone. Reed would have had to agree to this modification of his original scheme and the trustees (or Barry) would have had to agree to the additional expense. It was presumably Barry who had ensured that a copy of *The Grammar of Ornament* was not only in the Public Library but also the Supreme Court Library. Needless to say a copy was in Reed's office. The Public Library had bought Philip Delamotte's 1854 photographic record of the Crystal Palace at Sydenham, as well as Sydenham's contemporary descriptive publication *The Fine Arts Courts in the Crystal Palace: first series, north-west side (1854)* which included Owen Jones's 'An apology for the colouring of the Greek Court in the Crystal Palace'. On this evidence we might conclude that Sydenham provided the rationale for the redecoration of Queen's Hall which was possibly the first public, non-exhibition space in the world to adopt such a scheme.¹¹

Collaboration on the Queen's Hall matured Bateman's design skills as can be seen by the next work commissioned by the Public Library, the cover and floral initials and tail-pieces of its first self-published Catalogue in 1861 and



Charles Nettleton, 1826-1902, photographer
Interior view of Queens Hall, State Library
of Victoria, c. 1898
 gelatin silver photograph
 Pictures Collection, State Library of Victoria,
 H9318

the Supplemental Catalogue of 1865. Compared with Bateman's earlier book illustrations, the Public Library catalogue designs are more stylised although still naturalistic enough for each floral specimen to be recognized. The stylisation of natural forms for the purposes of design was advocated by Jones and exemplified in the final plate of *The Grammar of Ornament*. But these principles were widely promoted years before *The Grammar* by both Ruskin and the great Gothic architect and designer, A.W.N. Pugin, whose major publications such as *The True Principles of Pointed or Christian Architecture* and his huge body of decorative work in all fields of design, attest to the robust usefulness of the theory. Bateman's predilection for painted and stencilled, as opposed to three-dimensional ornament, was Puginian and there is much in his multi-dimensional practice as a designer that recalls Pugin. The maturation of Bateman's design skills coincides with the Library commissions and Barry's desire to establish a design school at the Public Library; the collections of plaster casts of architecture and ornament assembled from 1860 were to form the basis of this school. It was wholly appropriate therefore that the Public Library itself, both as a patron of architecture and of book production, demonstrate the latest design thinking.

The success of the Queen's Hall scheme led to Bateman's continuing employment as Reed's interior consultant for the Public Library, which included decorating the ground floor exhibition rooms. In 1862 Reed, Barry and architect George Knight travelled to London in time for the second Great London Exhibition. Housed in Francis Fowke's monumental and generally disliked 'shed' on Cromwell Road, South Kensington, it was host to an enormous Victorian exhibit which included textile designs by Bateman featuring native flowers and foliage.¹² The Gothic revival was at its height. Pugin had died in 1852 but the interior of the Houses of Parliament as well as his voluminous publications kept his name and reputation alive;

Morris and Co was established in 1861 by those who had collaborated on the interior decoration of the revolutionary *Red House* designed by Philip Webb for William Morris in 1859; and the polychromatic Gothic architecture of G E Street, William Butterfield and others was in its ascendancy. Professional architect that he was, Reed would have updated himself on these latest developments in Britain and the Continent. The impact of his travels can still be seen in the Independent Church in Collins Street (1866) built in a polychromatic, brick Romanesque Revival style, but was also as much in evidence in the Intercolonial Exhibition buildings. The style he chose for the interiors was Gothic but with round-arched windows to harmonise with the classical form of the Public Library.

Intended to provide the foundations of a new Public Library on the eastern boundary of the Swanston Street building, Reed's Great Hall and Rotunda carried lightweight open timber and iron roofs on masonry walls. As they were temporary, their plain brick facades were fairly crude, and so everything depended on the effect of their interiors which Bateman was charged with decorating. The Great Hall owed much to Fowke's Exhibition buildings in Cromwell Road, South Kensington, which included a huge hall with an open roof. The interior of the London hall, Barry noted, 'was ornamented by Crace and by some of those decorative artists who are considered as standing first in the ranks of their profession', but he thought that Bateman's 'execution is equal in many respects, and superior, in my opinion, in several, to theirs.'

The decorations of the hall are also of a very superior description. The clerestory windows are frosted with imitation ground glass, and are ornamented with scroll pattern work, stencilled on the glass in light scarlet and blue. The walls are painted 'distempered

buff; and are divided into panels, with light blue and buff stiles, enriched with scarlet leafage with blue and red lines surrounding the panels; the main ribs are striped with red and blue. The whole has a most pleasing effect.¹³

The Greek motifs used by Bateman including fret, wave, star and anthemion, his controlled use of primary colours and method of creating small fields of painted and stencilled pattern between the roof trusses and rafters accorded with the theories of ornament

heraldic motifs and above these arched windows in groups of three which were frosted with imitation glass and ornamented with stencilled stylised plants. Crowning it all was the iron roof, the interior divided into timber panels decorated in the Gothic manner. *The Guide* called it 'surpassingly clear and beautiful'. The colour scheme followed that of the Great Hall although the background colour was a remarkable violet. It is conceivable that the unusual interior of the Rotunda was inspired by the original debating hall designed by Benjamin Woodward for the Oxford Union in 1857, its Gothic interior decorated by Bateman's friend D.G. Rossetti, with Edward Burne-Jones, Morris and other



Frederick Grosse, 1828-1894, engraver.
Contributor: **Albert Charles Cooke, 1836-1902, artist**
The Rotunda, Intercolonial Exhibition, Melbourne, 1866
Publisher: **Melbourne, Ebenezer and David Syme, Illustrated Australian News, November 20, 1866**
wood engraving.
Pictures Collection, State Library of Victoria, IAN20/11/66/1

propounded by Jones in the *Grammar of Ornament*. For example, Proposition 7 stated that the 'general forms being first cared for, these should be subdivided and ornamented by general lines; the interstices may then be filled in with ornament, which may again be subdivided and enriched for closer inspection'.¹⁴ However, many of these propositions were by the 1850s and 1860s commonplace design principles adopted by the reformers of the Gothic Revival; indeed, the ceiling treatment of the Great Hall echoed the ceiling decoration of Pugin's House of Commons in Parliament House, London which opened in 1852, a fitting enough model for an ambitious, democratically inclined colonial institution.¹⁵

The Rotunda is possibly more interesting than the Great Hall and more innovative. Originally designed as a square building, at some point Reed chose a polygonal structure, again possibly swayed by the polygonal pavilions of Fowke's Exhibition building although the roofs of these were glazed. On the frieze above the doors in the Rotunda were panels with central

members of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. As Deane and Woodward's Museum of Natural History at Oxford (1854-1860) may also lie behind Reed's decision to design a Gothic museum at the University of Melbourne, it is quite possible he made the trip to the university town to view for himself its new buildings, although they were also reported in the architectural press.

The Intercolonial Exhibition thus provided the next stage for Bateman's development as a pattern maker in the medieval mode. Furthermore, he designed an illuminated address presented at the Exhibition to François de Laporte, comte de Castelnau, London-born French naturalist, explorer and widely-travelled collector who arrived in Melbourne in 1864 where he was appointed Consul-General for France. The extraordinary design, only recently come to light, shows Bateman in full command of the repertory of design principles of flat, non-figurative pattern based on medieval, Asian and Islamic art that were promulgated by the design reformers Pugin, Ruskin and Jones. It



Photographer unknown
Porch of "Heronswood", c. 1900-c. 1905
gelatin silver photograph
Pictures Collection, State Library of Victoria, H93.371/13

shows how much Bateman's design ability had developed in the collaborative environment of the Public Library commissions.¹⁶

The middle years of the 1860s were Bateman's most productive. As his work with Reed progressed at the Library, he became involved in building works at *Heronswood*, *Dromana* and *Barragunda*, Cape Schanck. *Heronswood* was intended as a holiday retreat while *Barragunda* was intended as the family home of Godfrey Howitt's daughter Edith and her husband Robert Anderson. As he was not an architect, Bateman worked under the umbrella of Reed's office and the degree of Reed's involvement in these projects has yet to be properly resolved. It is likely that Reed's office played a major role at *Barragunda* considering its status as a family home and, indeed, Bateman's friend Georgiana McCrae attributed it to Reed. Bateman might well have been given license to experiment at the less ambitious holiday retreat *Heronswood*.¹⁷

A comparison of *Heronswood* with a documented work of Reed and Barnes of similar style and date, namely the homestead *Kolor* at Penshurst in the Western District of Victoria, reveals that something altogether different is being attempted at *Dromana*. *Kolor* is architecturally sophisticated and its construction, out of the intractable local bluestone, has extraordinary finesse and is finely detailed. A villa in the picturesque tradition, its elevated site was chosen to take advantage of views to two sides. It is possible Bateman was involved in the siting of the homestead and responsible for the circular lawn garden to one side.¹⁸ *Heronswood*, built for W.E. Hearn, Professor of Modern History and Literature, Political Economy and Logic, is also a picturesque villa sited on a hill with sweeping

views of the Bay. Constructed from blocks of the local granite with limestone dressings it comprises a series of separately roofed rooms or pavilions. While *Kolor* adopts the round-arched form of the Romanesque and was built in one campaign, *Heronswood* is of the ruggedly unadorned Early Gothic style and was built in an organic piecemeal fashion, firstly in timber then in the local stone, from about 1864 to 1871; the final result is an extraordinarily varied elevation and roofscape. Far removed from the tutored Gothic of Pugin's acclaimed follower William Wardell whose St Patrick's Cathedral was under construction from 1858, and also from the Gothic of the pattern books used in a number of Victorian homesteads, *Heronswood* displays a different understanding of Gothic. Its Puginian honesty of detail, its bulkiness and eclecticism do not suggest the hand of an accomplished architect such as Wardell, Reed or exponents of pattern book Gothic like Crouch and Wilson. Rather, they suggest a romantic sensibility, the hand of a designer intent on producing a vernacular cottage of which Ruskin and a client conversant with modern history and literature might approve. What they produced was a Ruskinian 'embellishment of natural scenery'.

If *Heronswood* is unique in Australia it does have a sympathetic counterpart in William Morris's *Red House* at Bexleyheath, Kent which was built in 1860 and which reinterpreted local vernacular traditions of brick building in a manner that appears timeless; its assortment of separately roofed rooms producing a varied and picturesque roofscape. Inspired by Ruskin, Bateman's Pre-Raphaelite friends decorated this revolutionary house as a temple to those values of art and life that they shared with Bateman. On one wall, amongst scenes of medieval feasting, Rossetti painted a wombat asleep under a chair,

an animal he was fond of but one which also possibly reminded him of his antipodean friend.

Heronswood was completed some years after Bateman left the colony, presumably by Reed's office and it remains the most celebrated of Bateman's work in Australia. It was designed at a point when Bateman was working closely with Reed, George Knight (the Commissioner of the Exhibition) and Barry at the Intercolonial Exhibition. The exhibits included a medieval court, modelled on Pugin's medieval court at the Crystal Palace Exhibition, and it included decorative Gothic work destined for St Patrick's and other Melbourne churches.

It could be argued that this environment of experiments in Gothic-based design reform, sponsored by the Public Library, provided a

theoretical springboard for Bateman's ambitious leap into the building arts. In sum, by providing the context for the extraordinarily fruitful collaborations between Bateman, Reed and Barry, the Public Library played a significant, but still largely overlooked, role in the promotion of design reform in mid-nineteenth century Melbourne.

The enlightened Administrator and the martinet Magistrate:

Charles Joseph La Trobe and James Blair

By Bernard Wallace

Bernard Wallace was one of La Trobe University's earliest graduates, with a History major. His main interest is the rich history of Victoria's South West, particularly the origins of its placenames. In 2005, he contributed a substantial article to the *Victorian Historical Journal* entitled 'Naming Victoria's South West'. Bernard writes a weekly history feature for the *Portland Observer* as part of the series, 'Our yesterdays revisited'. He is also a regular contributor to the *Hamilton Spectator* and an occasional contributor to a range of publications. He was a substantial contributor to the *Biographical Dictionary of the Western District*. His most recent publication is *Mary MacKillop's Portland Years, 1862-1866*. In June 2012, he contributed 'Charles La Trobe, the Hentys and Victoria's South West' to *La Trobeana* following a most successful tour La Trobe Society members made to the Western District in November 2011.

Charles Joseph La Trobe and James Blair are inextricably linked. Blair was the Police Magistrate of the huge Portland Bay District. As such, he was the means by which La Trobe administered and developed Port Phillip's vast Portland Bay District. Blair served as Police Magistrate from 1840 until 1866.

La Trobe, of course, was Superintendent of the Port Phillip District of New South Wales from October 1839 until 1851. After Separation, he served as Lieutenant-Governor of the newly-established colony of Victoria until May 1854. In performing this role, La Trobe operated within a restrictive framework, limited by a powerful governor in distant Sydney and all-powerful officials in England. For much of the time this Governor was Sir George Gipps. Gipps, very sensitive to the expectations of his masters in London, expected La Trobe to keep the Port Phillip District free of debt and to preserve the peace in all ways. La Trobe, in turn, expected this of Blair.

The Portland Bay District was an immense administrative unit. At one time it extended north to the Murray River, south to the sea, west to the South Australian water and east to near Geelong. Until the commencement of the Victorian gold rushes in 1851, the Portland Bay District produced much of the colony's wealth. Portland was the 'capital' of the District and a significant colonial port. It was the region's driver of development.

La Trobe and Blair worked closely together over many years; routinely and constantly corresponding on a host of official matters. They conferred directly on but a few occasions, mainly during La Trobe's official expeditions to Portland and the Portland Bay District.

It was an important administrative relationship that extended from 1840 until 1854. It was, however, a most unlikely relationship. La Trobe and Blair were extremely disparate personalities. Blair was an Irish-Catholic, came from a military and legal background and

- 1 Anne Neale, 'Flora Australis: native plants in the art, design and gardens of E.L. Bateman', *Studies in Australian Garden History*, 2003, pp. 35-53; Anne Neale, 'The Garden Designs of Edward La Trobe Bateman (1816-97)', *Garden History*, vol.33, 2005, pp. 225-255; Anne Neale 'Decorative Art and Architecture: Owen Jones and Bateman in Australia', in *Firm(ness) commodity de-light?: questioning the canons, papers...Society of Architectural Historians Australia and New Zealand*, Melbourne, 1998, pp. 269-276. See also Neale's entries on Bateman in Richard Aitken & Michael Looker (eds) *The Oxford Companion to Australian Gardens*, South Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 2002; and Philip Goad and Julie Willis (eds) *The Encyclopedia of Australian Architecture*, Port Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 2011.
- 2 Harriet Edquist, *Building a new world: a history of the State Library of Victoria 1853-1913*, Melbourne: State Library of Victoria, 2013, www.slv.vic.gov.au/explore/our-publications/building-a-new-world.
- 3 Neale, 'The Garden Designs of Edward La Trobe Bateman', p.226; George L. Hersey, *High Victorian Gothic: a study in associationism*, Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1972, p.23.
- 4 John Ruskin, *The Poetry of Architecture*, www.gutenberg.org/catalog/world/readfile?fk_files=1509552&pageno=8 (accessed 13 January 2014)
- 5 Brenda Niall, *Georgiana: a biography of Georgiana McCrae, painter, diarist, pioneer*, Carlton: Melbourne University Press, 1994, pp.204-7
- 6 For Reed and Bateman see Neale, 'Decorative Art and Architecture', pp.271-273.
- 7 Edquist, *Building a New World*, building-a-new-world.slv.vic.gov.au/#folio=34, pp.34-35
- 8 *The Argus*, 31 October 1860, p.5.
- 9 *Illustrated Melbourne Post*, 22 March, 1862, p.20.
- 10 Neale, 'Flora Australis', p.40.
- 11 Neale suggests the historical precedence of Queen's Hall in 'Decorative Art and Architecture', p.270.
- 12 Neale, 'Flora Australis', p.43.
- 13 *Illustrated Melbourne Post*, 27 September 1866 quoted in Neale 'Decorative Art and Architecture', p.271.
- 14 Owen Jones, *The Grammar of Ornament*, London: Studio Editions, 1986, pp.5-8.
- 15 Illustrated in Paul Atterbury and Clive Wainwright (eds) *Pugin: a Gothic passion*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994, p.235.
- 16 Edquist, *Building A New World*, building-a-new-world.slv.vic.gov.au/#folio=34, p.90.
- 17 Neale discusses Bateman's involvement in these houses in 'Decorative Art and Architecture', pp. 272-73.
- 18 For the Picturesque tradition in colonial Victoria see Timothy Hubbard, 'Towering Over All: the Italianate villa in the colonial landscape', PhD thesis, Deakin University, 2003.

seemed most comfortable in wielding power. He was said to have been quick to take offence and to give offence, and to bear a grudge. Politically conservative, he was apparently harsh in the way he dealt with the common people but at the same time most uncompromising in his dealings with the gentry and squattocracy.

There is no shortage of unflattering judgements, past and present, of Police Magistrate James Blair. The *Portland Guardian*, established in 1842, regularly and vociferously attacked Blair and his perceived shortcomings throughout La Trobe's administration. The *Portland Guardian* in 1845, for example, reported that Portland's public buildings, 'erected at the expense of the district', were poorly positioned and that 'the man who directed their laying is an ass'.¹ That

that 'Blair, reputedly a firm disciplinarian ... did not need urging to his disagreeable task.'⁶

Edgar Beale, author of *Kennedy of Cape York*, is most scathing of Blair. Kennedy, the heroic explorer who perished at Cape York in 1847, fell foul of Blair during his stint as a government surveyor at Portland Bay. Blair, Beale declares, 'performed his duty with justice (as a rule) but with severity'⁷, and that Kennedy was yet another 'one of his victims'.⁸ Blair, he contended, engaged in 'customary tattling to his superiors', was an 'offensive busybody' and generated a letter about the young Kennedy that 'was a malicious farrago of gossip and rank falsehood' aimed at destroying Kennedy's reputation and career.⁹



John T Collins, 1907-2001, photographer
Customs House, Portland, c.1962-c.1966
Gelatin silver photograph
John T Collins Collection, Pictures Collection, State Library of Victoria, H98.250/2005

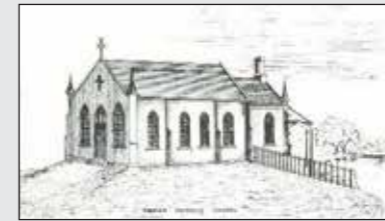
man was James Blair. In 1846, the *Guardian* asserted that 'Mr. Blair is the most unpopular man in the district'.² At issue was Blair taking on another public role; a directorship of the newly-established Union Bank. When this was confirmed, the *Guardian* mercilessly criticised the appointment, declaring that it produced 'an involuntary burst of laughter, ridicule and jesting' and that Blair was 'the All-in-all of whatever was, whatever is, and whatever will be in Portland'.³ It considered that Blair held too many public offices and too much power. This was followed by a scathing condemnation of Blair and his administration: 'Is he a clever man? If cunning is cleverness, he is as clever a man as we have ever met. He has quarrelled with every person he has had anything to do with.'⁴

A range of historians have also judged Blair harshly. Noel Learmonth, author of several books of substance about Portland and its district, observed that Blair was a man who 'ruled with the proverbial iron rod'.⁵ Marnie Bassett, author of *The Hentys*, in writing of the government's actions against that family, stated

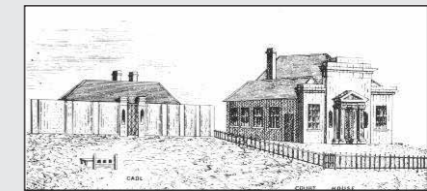
In *Twenty Years in an Hour Glass*, the historian J.G. Wiltshire describes Blair as having ruled with a 'harshness more associated with convict settlements than with a tiny country settlement of free men and women. This harshness became more dominant over the years, though in the very early years it was more excessive bullying than tyrannical'.¹⁰ Furthermore, he argues:

Police Magistrate Blair was a vindictive character who handled the truth very carelessly indeed. And while still persevering as a staunch guardian of law and order... Mr Blair went on quietly establishing himself as one of the wealthiest squatters in the colony.¹¹

Variouly described as an 'autocrat', a 'martinet' and a man who was known far and wide for his 'rigid rule', his decision to install a set of stocks near the Portland Courthouse



Frederick William Birmingham, fl. 1853, engraver and publisher
Portland's first Catholic Church, Police Magistrate Blair's place of worship.
Detail from Map of the town of Portland in the colony of Victoria, 1853
Etched on stone and published by Fredk. Wm. Birmingham.
Detail from the collection of Bernard Wallace.



Frederick William Birmingham, fl. 1853, engraver and publisher
Portland Courthouse and stocks.
Installed at the behest of James Blair, they were one of the reasons he was described as 'tyrannical'.
Detail from Map of the town of Portland in the colony of Victoria, 1853
Etched on stone and published by Fredk. Wm. Birmingham.
Detail from the collection of Bernard Wallace.

added to his fearsome reputation. The *Portland Guardian* was quick to respond: 'The Stocks. This barbarous machine of torture was brought into use or abuse for the first time Tuesday last... We believe that every right thinking man in the colony will utter an indignant "Shame"'.¹²

Blair's handling of the interests of the district's indigenous population has attracted criticism in recent years: that he made little effort to curb the excesses of the land-hungry squatters and that whilst massacres and murders of Aboriginal people took place across the Portland Bay District few offenders were brought to justice.

He was also variously accused of bias, of sectarianism, of aggrandising power in the south-west by holding multiple public offices, and with amassing substantial personal wealth whilst holding public office. And on one could go.

The question, of course, is how did the refined, enlightened and principled La Trobe deal with such a man? How did things get done when there seemed to be the makings for a combative relationship, with the potential for endless bitter differences on policy and practice? Could there possibly have been a successful administrative relationship?

Whilst the La Trobe story is well known, Blair's life and career are less public. However, his life is documented in an *Australian Dictionary of Biography* entry¹³, in the La Trobe-Blair/Blair-La Trobe official correspondence, in Portland newspapers of the day, in Blair's contribution to what became *Letters from Victorian Pioneers*¹⁴, in his obituary in the *Portland Guardian* and in an extensive file at Portland's History House Museum.

Blair was born in Dublin, Ireland, in 1808, of Scottish parentage but of the Roman Catholic faith. His father was a successful doctor, with Blair receiving an education appropriate to his station in life. He became a member of the military and while stationed at one of Ireland's coastal forts, was involved in an explosion that left him lame. He was invalided and retired from the service. Blair married in around 1833. In time, six children came out of the union. He obtained an appointment in New South Wales as legal clerk to John Hubert Plunkett, later Attorney-General of the colony. Blair disembarked in New South Wales in 1834. After service with Plunkett, he became a Clerk of the Bench and a Justice of the Peace. He became Police Magistrate at Hartley, New South Wales, in 1838.

James Blair was appointed Police Magistrate of the Portland Bay District in August 1840. He was appointed by Sydney-based Governor Gipps, not by La Trobe. Blair took up his position in October 1840 and soon made his presence felt. There had been no government presence in Portland or the Portland Bay District until that time. The District and its hinterland had developed haphazardly and there were law and order problems.

Many of the dealings between La Trobe and Blair, whilst important, were of a routine nature: requests from Blair, directives and inquiries from La Trobe, responses and reports from Blair and so on. Blair was La Trobe's eyes and ears, communicating to him the sentiments and aspirations of the settlers, squatters and captains of commerce and industry. Blair was also the means by which La Trobe imposed the law of the land and implemented policy and reforms in the region.

During their fourteen-year relationship, several issues or developments stand out. One was La Trobe's official visits to the Portland Bay District on some seven occasions between 1841 and 1850. The first occasion was a challenging two-week Melbourne to Portland and return expedition in May 1841.

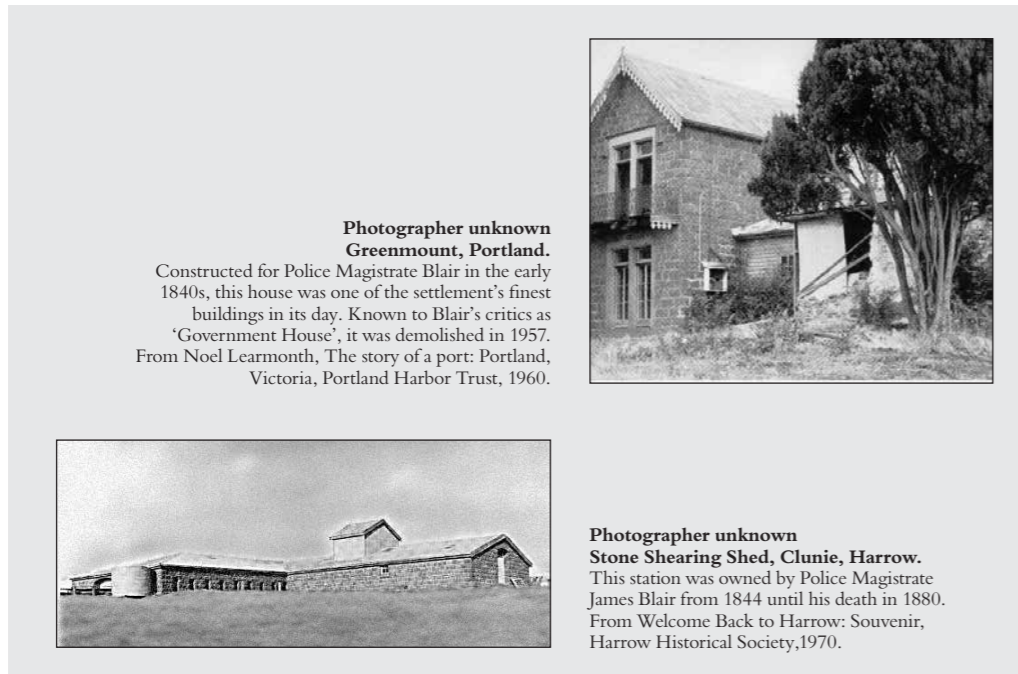
In February–March 1843, La Trobe made his way from Melbourne to Portland by way of Port Fairy. Portland commercial and pastoral interests kept Blair and La Trobe busy with their demands for development. The demands they regularly had to contend with are exemplified by a feature in the *Portland Mercury* of 10 March

issue is a long and complex story well told in the 1954 work by Marnie Bassett, *The Hentys*. The very short story is that when La Trobe arrived in Melbourne as Superintendent in October 1839, the diverse Henty landholdings were greatly at risk. The Hentys had illegally established a settlement and enterprises at Portland Bay and pastoral stations in the hinterland. At risk were houses, warehouses, fencing, a whaling station, gardens and improved and productive lands, including the vast 100,000 acre *Merino Downs* station. The Colonial Office and Governor Gipps wished to oust the Hentys from their landholdings.

brothers and their energetic representations and tactics. He used his powers where appropriate and on several occasions unleashed Blair, who performed his duties most conscientiously.

Another significant issue for Blair, and in turn La Trobe, was the matter of Assistant Government Surveyor Edmund Kennedy. Based at Portland Bay from December 1840,

act. Although the case was speedily dismissed with costs awarded against him, Kennedy attracted considerable support in his battle against Blair. Blair was not happy. Kennedy had ignored his advice to drop the matter and, to add insult to injury, had called convict witnesses to give evidence against Finn. Blair complained to La Trobe.



1843. On that occasion, the citizens of Portland Bay demanded a gaol, a jetty, a Court of Quarter Sessions, a suitable post office, a police office, a coroner, bond store, flagstaff, and that 'His honour to pay quarterly visits to Portland'¹⁵

In 1845, La Trobe went to Portland Bay via the Pyrenees and the Grampians and thence the Glenelg, where he wrote a letter dated 16 March to his wife. The address he gave was 'Mr. Blair's Portland Bay'.¹⁶ Blair by this time had a pastoral station at the junction of the Wando and Glenelg Rivers. At Portland, La Trobe, Blair and other interested parties considered the possibility of emigrants being sent directly from England to Portland Bay. La Trobe's last major visit to Portland Bay and Blair was in 1849. The Gold Rushes brought such expeditions to an end.

A very significant matter involving La Trobe and Blair was the Henty land dispute with the colonial government. The Henty lands

However, the Hentys contended that they were entitled to special consideration on a number of valid grounds. Gradually, the tide turned in their favour. From 1842 onwards, there was a softening of the British Government's stance. The Hentys also had sympathetic friends with influence in England, and the Colonial Secretary of the day wanted this vexatious matter ended. Gipps was under pressure to achieve a settlement. A compromise was arrived at: the Hentys could remain on their inland stations but at a cost. They also received partial compensation for the forfeited Portland landholdings, as well as other concessions.

The role played by La Trobe and Blair in the Henty land saga had been substantial and ongoing. Blair was La Trobe's zealous and efficient 'man on the ground' in dealing with the often-vexatious Henty family. La Trobe handled the matter with a light touch, but was not unduly influenced or intimidated by the

Kennedy departed under a cloud in 1843. His fall from grace was not because of surveying shortcomings. Kennedy fell foul of Blair over Margaret Murphy, an unemployed Irish assisted immigrant who had been sent to Portland to find work. Murphy was ultimately Blair's responsibility. He arranged for her to take up service with a pastoralist at Port Fairy, but she ended up back in Portland with Kennedy. In the words of biographer Edward Beale, she and Kennedy were soon 'living together intimately'.¹⁷ Blair did not approve of a member of the servant class associating so closely with a government official.

Kennedy's downfall in Portland was, however, a consequence of the Dog Act of 1830. He had been fined by Blair for owning two unregistered dogs. Kennedy responded with a legal action against Chief Constable Finn, Blair's loyal Irish–Catholic subordinate, who had allegedly noticed a third dog, yet failed to

La Trobe did not rush to judgement, but the differences between Blair and Kennedy grew. In late 1842, Kennedy put quill to paper and unburdened himself to La Trobe, roundly criticising Blair. Blair responded by making La Trobe aware of Kennedy's involvement with Margaret Murphy. La Trobe advised Governor Gipps of the situation, passing on an array of damning information regarding Kennedy and his actions. La Trobe ordered Kennedy back to Sydney, where Gipps would decide his fate. After several years of enforced inactivity, Kennedy proceeded on an exploration expedition to Cape York where he died in tragic but heroic circumstances.

As the region prospered, so did Blair. Over time, he acquired property in Portland and at nearby Trewalla and Narrawong. Blair is believed to have had the dwelling *Blairmona* constructed in the early 1840s to the south of Portland on the early road to Cape Bridgewater.

His main Portland residence, *Greenmount* was also constructed at that time. It was apparently the first substantial residence to be erected in Portland and one of Portland's show-places. Known to Blair's critics as 'Government House', it was located on a slope giving commanding views of Portland and Portland Bay. Blair also became a successful squatter, acquiring *Clunie Station* on the Glenelg River near Harrow in 1844.

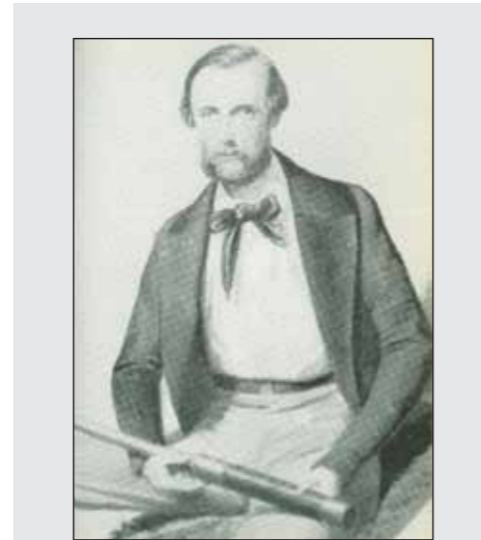
By the time of the establishment of the Colony of Victoria in 1851 and the commencement of the gold rushes, Portland was an orderly and well established settlement of over one thousand people. Blair certainly brought law, order and progress to what was once a frontier society. Law and order generally prevailed across the vast Portland Bay District. It had long ceased to be a sanctuary for run-away convicts or ticket-of-leave men. Street-drunkenness in Portland had abated and sellers of liquor quickly acquired licenses.

Blair was a strong advocate for Portland and the Portland Bay District and La Trobe responded appropriately. A post office had been established, a postmaster appointed and an overland mail delivery system had been established. Substantial public buildings had been erected or land reserved for their construction in the future. A jail had been erected and a pier constructed. Systematic town planning had commenced and offensive industries confined to the edges of the settlement. All of the major religions had their own churches, and a range of educational and cultural institutions were established.

By any standards, the administrative relationship between La Trobe and Blair was most successful and highly productive. But was it based upon compromise? Did La Trobe decide that the ends justified the means and turn a blind eye to Blair's many alleged shortcomings and misdoings? There is absolutely no evidence to suggest this. Nor is there evidence of official admonishments or negative reports to Governor Gipps. There is every indication that it was also a most cordial and professional administrative relationship.

It is worth testing briefly some of the major condemnations of Blair. He was clearly very authoritarian, as were his peers. He did 'rule with a rod of iron' and with severity. However, he was responsible for many improvements over a vast area and had but a small civil establishment. On occasions he was petty, possibly vindictive, but never a tyrant. He certainly held an array of public offices over time but he did not seize them; they were imposed upon him. Nor is there any evidence that he abused these offices.

Was he sectarian? As the settlement's pre-eminent Catholic, he apparently favoured his co-religionists where possible but also ensured that the major churches of the day were able to establish themselves in Portland. Blair was a generous donor to the establishment of the Church of England and of the Presbyterian Church.¹⁸



Artist unknown
Edmund Kennedy, 1818-1848, explorer.
As a young Government Surveyor, he fell foul of Police Magistrate Blair and departed Portland Bay in disgrace, being described as yet another 'one of his victims'
From Edgar Beale, *Kennedy Of Cape York*, Adelaide: Rigby, 1970.

Whilst Blair became wealthy in office, so did most Police Magistrates and Crown Lands Commissioners. Several became successful squatters, including Geelong Police Magistrate and Crown Lands Commissioner Foster Fyans.

What of the matter of Kennedy, who had been welcomed into the settlement's most elevated social circle? This powerful clique, all of the established religion, accorded Blair respect appropriate to his position but resented his administration and, above all, that he led the Government's moves to oust the Hentys from their landholdings. Kennedy, perhaps buoyed by the exalted company he kept, went looking for trouble, found it – and paid the price.

Blair's handling of the interests of the Portland Bay District's indigenous population was certainly not beyond reproach. However, it would seem that his performance was no worse than that of most Police Magistrates of the era. He did have a vast area to police and had few resources to curb the excesses of offending squatters and overseers or to successfully bring them to justice.

Above all, most of the attacks on Blair and his magistracy during La Trobe's administration originated from a single source, the *Portland Guardian*. The proprietors, Thomas Wilkinson and James Swords, two strongly committed members of the established church and of the anti-Blair clique, may have been the real sectarian bigots. As was generally the case, Blair got the better of his opponents. In time, a change of proprietors saw a change in the paper's stance towards Blair, when it declared that 'he has a

to contribute to La Trobe's proposed history project and the body of correspondence that later became *Letters from Victoria Pioneers*.

Blair continued to serve as Police Magistrate after La Trobe departed Victoria in 1854. He took leave in 1859, spending a year in England and Europe. When the government chose in 1866 to reduce the number of magistrates, Blair retired. Around this time he apparently lost a substantial part of *Clunie Station*



Correspondent unknown
Letter from early Portland to Superintendent La Trobe, c.1840s
Perhaps it contained a lengthy complaint about the conduct of his Police Magistrate, James Blair. An array of Portland interests found much fault with Blair.
Collection of Bernard Wallace.



Artist unknown
Charles Joseph La Trobe. 1801-1875
Despite Police Magistrate James Blair's formidable and unpleasant reputation, La Trobe and Blair enjoyed a cordial, professional and productive administrative relationship that extended over fourteen years.
From Picturesque Atlas of Australasia, Vol 1, Sydney: Picturesque Atlas Publishing Co., 1886-1888.

strong claim on the gratitude of the people of Portland as an upright magistrate, a good citizen, a liberal patron of charities, benevolent asylums, mechanics' institutes, sports and every object that had a tendency to ameliorate the conditions or elevate the social status of the people.¹⁹

Blair had other supporters. One was Governor Gipps, who described Blair as 'one of the best magistrates we have.'²⁰ Likewise, eminent Portland historian Noel Learmonth also saw Blair as the man who 'practically single handed kept law and order amongst the rough and lawless of the forties.'²¹

It is difficult to establish what Blair and La Trobe thought of each other at a personal level, both being rather circumspect men. However, in a letter to his wife written at Portland during his 1849 visit, La Trobe observed that 'Here people are very civil & the Blairs very kind. I have told him that we have a bed for them if they come to town.'²² Blair's private opinion of La Trobe is not on record; he apparently left no diary or memoir.²³ Blair did, however, see fit

as a consequence of the Selection Acts which he apparently declined to exploit to his advantage.²⁴

In 1867 he moved his family to Melbourne and constructed another *Greenmount* in the suburb of Toorak. He became a director of the Bank of Victoria and the patron of various charities. He maintained ownership of and an interest in *Clunie* until his death at *Greenmount*, Toorak, in 1880.

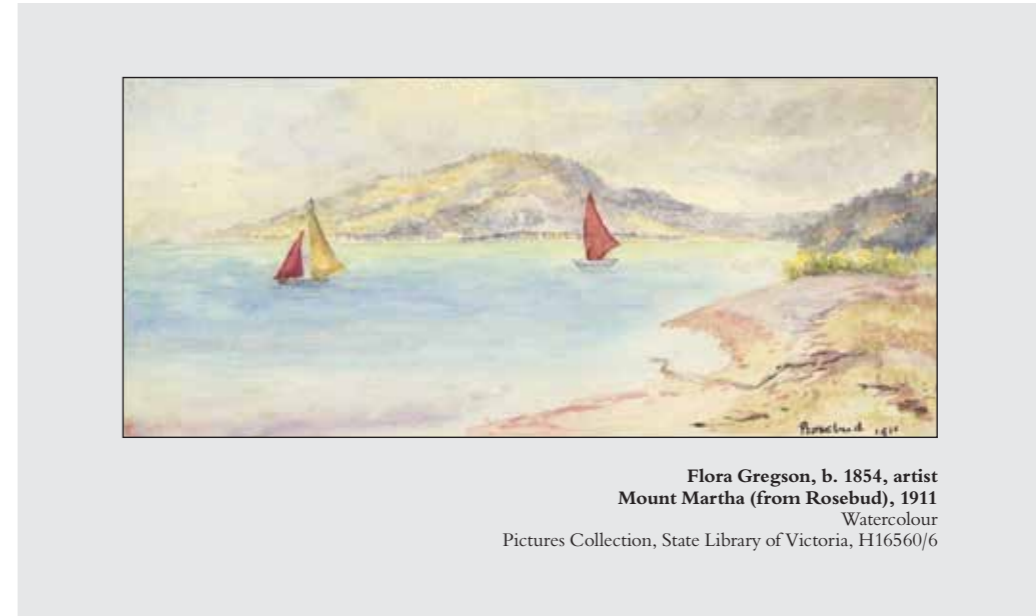
On this occasion, the *Portland Guardian* again sang his praises:

As police magistrate Mr. Blair bore an irreproachable character. He was strict, but just and impartial, and his conduct on the bench, particularly in cases where employers and employees were concerned, was invariably characterized by an administration of the law that paid not the slightest regard to the position or wealth of the

master. In private life he was of an exemplary character; a good father and a kind devoted husband, while in his dealings with the subordinate officials with whom he was associated, he was not only courteous and considerate but a truly generous friend.²⁵

James Blair, a significant albeit controversial figure in the history of Victoria's South West, is remembered in various forms, including an entry in the *Australian Dictionary of Biography*. In Portland, there is Blair Street on the edge of the city's centre. There is also Blair House, a supported accommodation establishment

very much in tune with Blair's spirit of 'disinterested generosity'. The Greenmount Link, one of Portland's newest carriageways, enjoys a connection with Blair. His residence *Greenmount*, demolished in 1957, overlooked Greenmount Link. *Blairmona*, his other Portland residence, still stands and in good state. Inland, *Clunie* remains substantially intact and continues to be a renowned sheep station. In nearby Harrow, a settlement that benefited greatly from his patronage, the main thoroughfare is Blair Street, and there is a monument in that street honouring him.



Flora Gregson, b. 1854, artist
Mount Martha (from Rosebud), 1911
Watercolour
Pictures Collection, State Library of Victoria, H16560/6

Tracing the Marine Residence at Mount Martha: a research report

By Susan Priestley

Susan Priestley MA (Melb), FRHSV, is a freelance historian with an abiding interest in pursuing historical enigmas about people and places. She joined the Editorial Committee of *La Trobeana* in 2014.

A Shire of Mornington Heritage Study, produced by Graeme Butler & Associates in 1994,¹ identified Mount Martha as once being reserved by C.J. La Trobe for the site of a 'Marine Residence for the Governor of Victoria', although the plan came to nothing. This report summarises some remnant information found during an enjoyable historical excursion into the records. An interesting finding along the way was the real identity of the women for whom Mount Martha and Mount Eliza were named.

Two sources concerning the marine residence are given in the heritage study. One is what has been identified as a Lands Department

file 'RS1029 31.8.64', although it was not in the permanent Lands archive transferred to Public Records Office Victoria (PROV). However, the number is linked with the Mount Martha Public Reserve on an 1879 Parish of Kangerong map held at PROV.² This is a 130 acre (52½ hectare) remnant of the original Government Reserve that had a trigonometric station on its summit at 545 feet (166 meters). The trig station was in the network established during the progressive Geological Survey of Victoria undertaken by Alfred Selwyn between 1853 and 1869. La Trobe was instrumental in securing the appointment of this first Surveyor General, another instance of his administrative foresight. Survey teams covered the country between Melbourne, Western Port

1 *Portland Guardian*, 11 February 1845.
2 *ibid.* 10 July 1846.
3 *ibid.* 21 July 1846.
4 *ibid.* 31 July 1846.
5 Noel Learmonth, *The Portland Bay Settlement*, Hawkesdale: Baulch Publications, 1983, p.127.
6 Marnie Bassett, *The Hentys*, Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1954, p.84.
7 Edgar Beale, *Kennedy of Cape York*, Adelaide: Rigby, 1970, p.84.
8 *ibid.* p.23.
9 *ibid.* p.36.
10 J.G. Wiltshire, *Twenty Four Years in an Hour-Glass*, Portland: E. Davis & Sons, 1980, p.16.
11 *ibid.* p.25.
12 *Portland Guardian*, 26 January 1854.
13 Kathleen Thomson, 'Blair, James (1813–1880)', in *Australian Dictionary of Biography*.
14 T.F. Bride (ed.), *Letters from Victorian Pioneers*, Melbourne: Lloyd O'Neil, 1983.
15 *Portland Mercury*, 10 March 1843.
16 cited in L.J. Blake (ed.) *Letters of Charles Joseph La Trobe*, Melbourne: Government Printer, 1975, p.30.
17 Beale, p.28.
18 Learmonth, p.277.
19 *Portland Guardian*, 10 September 1866.
20 cited in Bassett, p.461.
21 Learmonth, p.127.
22 cited in Blake, p.34.
23 Learmonth, p.127.
24 Margaret Kiddle, *Men of Yesterday: a social history of the Western District of Victoria, 1834-1890*, Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1863, p.239.
25 *Portland Guardian*, 22 June 1880.



H. Permien, Surveyor General's Office
Sections in the Parish of Moorrooduc [sic], near Mount Eliza and
Mount Martha, County of Mornington, detail, 1856
Map Collection, State Library of Victoria

Bay, Cape Schanck and Point Nepean in the first half of 1854, building wooden trig stations on the high points of Arthurs Seat, Mount Martha and Mount Eliza.³ The 31 August 1864 date on the file seems to coincide with transfer of the remnant reserve to the control of a newly-extended Mount Eliza Road Board, the forerunner of the Shire of Mornington. The other source given in the heritage study is a community memory recorded by R.H. Croll in *The Open Road* in Victoria, published in 1928, which mentioned the reserve and its trigonometric station as a fine outlook point for motoring excursionists.⁴

The marine residence reserve was not officially gazetted⁵ but kept on hold, so its date of initiation remains unclear. However, since it was for 'the Governor of Victoria' it must have been set aside after Victoria was declared a separate colony in 1850, taking effect from 1 July 1851, and before La Trobe's departure in May 1854. When other indirect evidence is considered, the date window narrows to 1852-1853. An initial government survey of Mount Martha was completed by March 1853 when the merchant firm Alison & Knight advertised they had 'To Let - 1024 acres [414 hectares] a portion of the Mount Martha Survey, having a frontage of 33 chains [664 meters] to the Bay of Port Phillip'. This area most likely included land subdivided for Osborne township. It was advertised in July 1853 as 'possessing splendid sites for country

villas, in commanding position, surrounded by picturesque scenery of unrivalled beauty, and there being a reserved frontage to Port Phillip Bay renders this property particularly well adapted for Marine Residences'.⁶ Despite such glories and echoes of Queen Victoria's summer residence on the Isle of Wight, Osborne amounted to very little, the only current evidence being Osborne Drive, running nearly parallel with the Esplanade.

Maps held at PROV and the State Library of Victoria allow the 'Government Reserve' to be more closely defined. These indicate that a portion of the land was in the original parish of Kangerong, which was surveyed in 1841 to accommodate Hugh Jamieson's claim for a Special Survey of 5,120 acres (2,072 hectares).⁷ It was never developed and returned to Crown control, some being included in the Mount Martha pastoral lease.⁸ Boundary adjustments in the 1850s then placed the whole reserve within the adjacent parish of Moorrooduc. Its present day boundaries are roughly Hearn, Forest and Ellerina West roads and the rocky shrub-edged shoreline along which the Esplanade runs. A map in the State Library collection dated 25 January 1856 depicting the parish of Moorrooduc⁹ shows 'Government Reserve' in the lower left, with 'Exd Nov 1858' pencilled next to it. On PROV Roll Plan 47 depicting Kangerong and Wannaeue parishes in 1857¹⁰, the Reserve is a

promontory bounded to the east and north-east by country lots 33 (434 ac), 34 (250 ac), 35 (613 ac) and 36 (532 ac), all bought from the Crown by James Hearn. The 640 acre pre-emptive right to Mount Martha pastoral lease, immediately adjoining lot 32 on the east, was also in Hearn's possession by then, transferred to him in April 1856 when the initial grantee of the pre-emptive right in July 1851, John C. Aitken, had not completed the purchase.

The excision date of November 1858, which is pencilled on the January 1856 map, could indicate the cancellation of the marine residence reserve, making the land again available for other uses. Seven months earlier, in March 1858, tenders were invited for leasing the Mount Martha Reserve of 'about 685 acres' as grazing land, although only until the end of the year and with no removal of timber permitted.¹¹ The reserve gets further mention in the *Argus* of 29 October 1858, which reported a deputation to Sir Henry Barkly by some Dromana landholders, Thomas Herbert Power MLC, William Clarke MLC, Captain Cole and 'Mr Scurfield' who was the only actual resident. They wanted the jetty proposed for Snapper Point (Mornington) to be sited instead at Dromana, but got a negative response.

His Excellency remarked that he was aware the water on the coast there was very shallow as, when he was near the place some months ago, he had wanted to land, for the purpose of inspecting a locality which had been set apart as a marine residence for the Governor [my italics], and had been told he would not be able to do so unless he was carried ashore by men. He feared a jetty in such a situation would be a very expensive work.

Access difficulties seem to have put the site out of vice-regal consideration as a permanent resort. Instead Barkly continued the La Trobe tradition of visiting Queenscliff for summer vacations. Later governors also favoured seaside resorts, with Sir Charles Manners Sutton able to use his son-in-law Charles Bright's house, Beleura at Mornington, from 1870. Lady Loch, wife of Sir Henry (1884-1889), initiated the vice-regal retreat to the coolness of Mount Macedon.¹²

Blocks sold by the Crown on the lower slopes of the original Mount Martha Reserve bear dates ranging from 1867 to 1879. That fits with the recognized span of years when a

number of wealthy Melburnians established or developed grand summer homes on the Mornington Peninsula, even though proximity to a vice-regal marine residence was no longer current. That a memory of it persisted can be put down to 'the romance of the past', doubtless fostered by real estate promoters.

Romancing the past also helped create the popular and still current myth that Mount Martha was named for the wife of Captain William Lonsdale who held the administrative fort at Port Phillip for three years before La Trobe's arrival in October 1839. It is even more unlikely that Mount Eliza was named for the wife of John Batman. The official naming in 1837 came through Governor Richard Bourke, an outcome of his instructions to Captain William Hobson of the Royal Navy vessel *HMS Rattlesnake* to survey Port Phillip Bay for navigational purposes, once the first Port Phillip administrative party headed by William Lonsdale had been safely landed. The survey was done in the last three months of 1836. Relevant documents are printed in 'The Charting of Port Phillip', the first chapter in volume 4 of *Historical Records of Victoria Foundation Series*.¹³ This is the source for most of the following information.

Back in Sydney on 16 December 1836, Hobson composed his report, mentioning the work done by 'Lieutenant Symonds and Mr Shortland (Mate), Lieutenant Henry and Mr Pope the Master, taking each a very ample share of the work'. Lieutenant Richards also got a mention in Bourke's report to the Colonial Office. The recommendations ensured their names were attached to features on the chart, Symonds to what is now commonly the South Channel, Shortland to the Bluff, Henry to the point at the entrance to Corio Bay, Richards to a point on Indented Head, while Pope's Eye near the entrance, a 'little shoal' that was the basis for a later uncompleted bay fort, bears the Master's name.

In April 1837, Sydney newspapers reported that 'His Excellency the Governor has named the Bay at the northern extremity of the waters in the chart of Flinders Port Phillip' for Hobson himself.¹⁴ This followed Bourke's visit to Port Phillip in March, with the experienced hydrographer Captain P.P. King among the *Rattlesnake's* party, when the name of the Yarra settlement, its streets and other place names were determined. The chart was complete and ready for printing in October although only a limited number were issued that year because of the expense. Commercial mariners relied instead on Hobson's detailed 'Directions for Port Phillip, Southern Australia', the original of which is in the State Records of New South

Wales. The Directions were printed in the December 1837 issue of the *British Nautical Magazine* and reprinted in Australian papers, for instance the *Sydney Australian* 22 May 1838 and the *Port Phillip Gazette* 12 January 1839. Full advice is given about water depths, channels, hazards, the ‘considerable force...[of] the tide in the entrance’ and points of reference for taking bearings. Among the latter are Point Lonsdale, Point King and Mount Eliza. Official recognition of the emancipist wife of John Batman in 1837 is simply not feasible. Much more likely is that Governor Bourke conferred names on the minor eminences on the eastern shore of the Bay which had been put forward by Captain Hobson, that is, Eliza for his wife Eliza Elliott whom he had married in 1827 and Martha for his mother Martha Jones, ‘a member

of an Anglo-Irish family prominent in church and state’.¹⁵ How the alternative myths gained currency is a puzzle awaiting investigation.

In contrast to the naming myths, the proposal for a Mount Martha marine residence for the Governor of Victoria has not continued in public memory to the present. However, it did have a brief period of actuality in the 1850s.



Charles Billich,
b.1934, artist
**Opening of La Trobe
University, 1967**
Oil on board
La Trobe University
Art collection

Celebrating Charles Joseph La Trobe (1801-1875)

**A research report
By Helen Armstrong**

Helen Armstrong is a Volunteer Guide at La Trobe’s Cottage and a committee member of the C J La Trobe Society and of the Friends of the La Trobe’s Cottage, coordinating publicity and website content. She joined the Editorial Committee of La Trobeana at the end of 2012 and enjoys growing into another role associated with the legacy of Charles Joseph La Trobe.

Significant milestones in La Trobe’s life and work, as well as his legacy in general, have been celebrated over the past six decades. A related anniversary was the centenary of Victoria and Melbourne in 1934/35, at which time a large consignment of La Trobe correspondence and pictures was given to the Public (now State) Library by the Baronne de Blonay of Switzerland, daughter of his eldest daughter Agnes, to commemorate the life of her ancestor, and to mark the centenary of the foundation of Port Phillip.¹

With the approach of the 175th anniversary of La Trobe’s arrival in Melbourne, it is timely to document these events.

1951

Centenary of Separation

A ceremonial visit on 1 July 1951 to La Trobe’s grave in the churchyard at Litlington, East Sussex, was one of the events organised in celebration of the centenary of Victoria as a separate colony. It followed a service in St Michael the Archangel that was organised through the Agent-General in London, as colourfully described in a recent issue of *La Trobeana*.²

Establishment of the La Trobe Library

As part of the centenary celebrations, the foundation stone was laid on 2 July for a new

- 1 *Shire of Mornington Heritage Study*, Graeme Butler & Associates, [Rosebud: Mornington Peninsula Shire Council], c.1994.
- 2 A senior PROV archivist in 2013 identified the number as belonging to a Correspondence file.
- 3 Rex Davis, ‘Selwyn, Arthur Edward (1823-1899)’, *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, vol.6, 1976, Melbourne University Press, pp.102-3; Selwyn’s report to the Colonial Secretary dated 28 July 1854 was reprinted from Parliamentary Papers in the *Argus*, 23 December 1854, pp.4-5.
- 4 Robert Henderson Coll, *The Open Road in Victoria: being the ways of many walkers*, 2nd ed, Melbourne: Robertson & Mullens, 1928, p.50.
- 5 There were no results from a long digital search of *Victorian Government Gazettes* for the period.
- 6 *Argus*, 8 March 1853, p.5; 11 July 1853, p.7.
- 7 Title Deed dated 18 October 1841. *Sydney Herald*, 17 November 1841, p.3, trove.nla.gov.au/nla.news-article-12873201 (accessed 3 February 2014). Map, VPRS 14152/P0001/1, used in Marie Hansen Fels, *I Succeeded Once: the Aboriginal Protectorate on the Mornington Peninsula*, ANU E Press/Angus & Robertson, 2001, p.173.
- 8 A.G.L. Shaw, *A History of the Port Phillip District*, Melbourne: Miegunyah Press, 1996, p.162.
- 9 *Sections of the Parish of Moorooduc [sic], near Mount Eliza and Mount Martha, County of Mornington*, H. Permein, Assist Surveyor, Melbourne: Surveyor General’s Office, 1856. Available online via the State Library of Victoria website (Ed.)
- 10 *Kangerong and Wannaeue, including Jamieson’s Special Survey*, 1857, Historic Plan Collection, Roll 47, VPRS 8168/P0002/5436 (microfiche VPRS 15899).
- 11 *Victorian Government Gazette* 1858, p.493.
- 12 See Marguerite Hancock, *Colonial Consorts: the Wives of Victoria’s Governors 1839-1900*, Melbourne: Miegunyah Press, 2001, pp.74-5, 108, 176-9.
- 13 *Communications, Trade and Transport*, Melbourne: Victorian Government Printing Office, 1985. (Historical Records of Victoria Foundation Series, editor-in-chief: Michael Cannon, associate editor: Ian McFarlane, vol.4)
- 14 For example *The Colonist*, 27 April 1837, p.6.
- 15 E.J. Tapp, ‘Hobson, William (1793-1842)’, *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, vol.1, 1966, Melbourne University Press, pp.545-6.

building to house the Public (now State) Library's Australiana collections, as proposed by Professor R.M. Crawford, then Professor of History at the University of Melbourne. However, building did not commence until 1962.

1965

Opening of the La Trobe Library

The La Trobe Library, appropriately located on Melbourne's La Trobe Street, opened to the public on 29 March, housing the specialist Australiana collection within the State Library of Victoria. For administrative reasons it closed as a separate library on 5 September 1990. Following a major refurbishment of the State Library the general component of the Australiana collection was rehoused on 8 July 2003 in the Domed Reading Room, which was renamed the La Trobe Reading Room.³

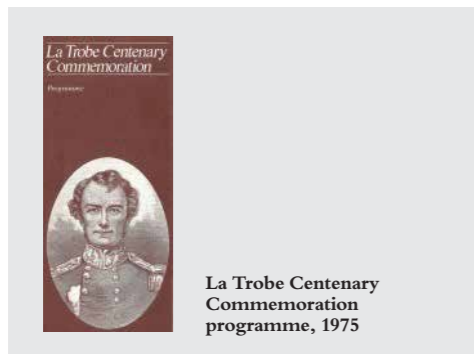
1967

Opening of La Trobe University

La Trobe University was established in 1964, with a founding mission that echoed the values of Charles Joseph La Trobe, to serve the community through improving access to higher education. Its official opening on 8 March 1967 was depicted in a commemorative painting by Charles Billich.⁴ The University's motto 'Qui cherche trouve' is a modern version of the La Trobe family motto 'Qui La cerca La trova' (Who seeks shall find). The scallop shells in the University's coat of arms are taken from the La Trobe family arms.

Ceremonial Visit

Dr John Henry de La Trobe from Hamburg⁵ visited the restored La Trobe's Cottage on 31 May 1967 as a guest of the National Trust of Australia (Victoria).⁶



La Trobe Centenary Commemoration programme, 1975

1975

Centenary of La Trobe's death

A Committee was formed within the Department of the Premier and chaired by Sir John Holland to organise the celebrations, which took place over two weeks from 4-14 December, in Melbourne and in regional areas.⁷ Forty-three events in all included historical re-enactments,

exhibitions, presentations by eminent historians, church services, sporting events, unveiling of commemorative plaques, a tree planting⁸ and a 'paint out' in the Royal Botanic Gardens. There was even a 'La Trobe Song' composed for the occasion, as well as a La Trobe medal, church services overseas at Litlington and Neuchâtel, and planning for a statue.⁹ The official guest of honour was Dr John Henry de La Trobe. Blake's edition of the *Letters of Charles Joseph La Trobe*,¹⁰ which was commissioned only in February of that year, was launched at a reception at Government House, where a state dinner was also held. A printed programme and two informative official government publications were issued.¹¹



Dr John Henry de La Trobe, c.1977

Photographer unknown
Source: Schiffbautechnische Gesellschaft e.V. (STG)
The German Society for Maritime Technology
www.stg-online.org/stg/geschichte/1961-90.html
viewed 11 January 2014

1978

Unveiling of a Memorial Window

Following the commemorative church service in 1975 in the Chapelle de l'Ermitage, Neuchâtel, Switzerland, which La Trobe's second wife Rose had built in 1878 to his memory (and that of their daughter Isabelle), artist Alan Sumner was commissioned by the Victorian Government to design a memorial window to be presented to the Neuchâtel parishioners. It is understood that this fine window was unveiled in 1978, although it could have been in 1979, as Bronwyn Hughes has recently explained.¹²

1979

Tree Planting

On 4 May Dr John Henry de La Trobe planted a 'descendant' of the elm tree, *Ulmus procera*, that Charles Joseph La Trobe had first planted in 1851 in the Royal Botanic Gardens, a little to the west of the historic Separation Tree, near the current Tea Rooms. The original had been planted by La Trobe in his capacity as Lieutenant-Governor of the new colony of Victoria that took effect from 1 July 1851; it is understood that the planting took place a little before that significant date.¹³ The 1979 tree replaced the previous cutting planted in 1975.

1989

150th anniversary of La Trobe's arrival

During the term of Dr Davis McCaughey AC as Governor of Victoria, events were organised by the Governor's Committee for the La Trobe Celebrations. Professor Emeritus A.G.L. Shaw gave an oration at Government

House coinciding with the launch of his edition of the *Gipps-La Trobe Correspondence*.¹⁴ The State Library mounted an exhibition 'La Trobe and his Circle', sponsored by the Swiss Bank Corporation. In parallel, the National Trust organised an exhibition of La Trobe's watercolours and drawings at the Herbarium, and Basil Dunne, curator and guardian of La Trobe's Cottage, gave a talk on La Trobe in Victoria.¹⁵ Once again Dr John Henry de La Trobe was guest of honour and planted a weeping elm, *Ulmus glabra 'Camperdownii'*, at the Cottage, which at that time was located next to the Herbarium.

2000

150th Anniversary of Separation

A re-enactment of the announcement by Superintendent La Trobe of separation from the colony of New South Wales, together with his opening of the new Prince's Bridge, was held on 15 November. Organised by the National Trust, a procession of some four hundred people led by an award-winning high school band from Lilydale accompanied Mr La Trobe¹⁶ in his journey by horse-drawn carriage from the City Square to his Cottage. The Masons gave him an illuminated address and the town crier was in attendance. Copies of John Pascoe Fawkner's newspaper banner were handed out as on the day in 1850.¹⁷

2001

200th anniversary of La Trobe's birth

This year saw the foundation of the C J La Trobe Society with the mission to promote understanding and appreciation of the life, work and times of Charles Joseph La Trobe and to launch an appeal to raise funds to create the first statue of La Trobe. Professor A.G.L. Shaw gave an address to the Royal Historical Society of Victoria to celebrate the 200th anniversary of La Trobe's birth on 20 March 1801¹⁸, an anniversary that has been celebrated annually ever since, and on 7 August he delivered an address at the inaugural meeting of the La Trobe Society at Rippon Lea Estate.¹⁹ The Governor and founding Patron Mr John Landy AC and Mrs Landy hosted a reception at Government House on 3 October to celebrate La Trobe's arrival in Melbourne.

2003

200th Anniversary of European Settlement

An exhibition of La Trobe's Port Phillip watercolours and drawings was organised by the National Trust's Mornington Peninsula Branch and the La Trobe Society, in association with the Mornington Peninsula Regional Gallery, to mark the 200th anniversary of the arrival in October 1803 of *HMS Calcutta* with

Lieutenant-Colonel David Collins to establish a settlement at Port Phillip. *Old Settlement Point*, drawn in November 1853 and depicting Sullivan Bay near present-day Sorrento, was a highlight of the exhibition, 'A Governor and his Paintbrush'.



Dr Charles La Trobe Blake and sculptor Peter Corlett OAM at the unveiling of the La Trobe statue, 2006
Photographer: Susan Gordon-Brown

2006

Year of La Trobe

To mark the 50th anniversary of the formation of the National Trust in Victoria, the Trust declared 2006 the 'Year of La Trobe'. The Trust's touring exhibition of La Trobe's watercolours and drawings 'A Sketcher of No Mean Pretensions: Charles Joseph La Trobe, the Governor and the Artist' opened at La Trobe University Art Museum and then toured regional Victoria during 2006 and 2007. A number of books about La Trobe were launched during the year.²⁰ The most significant event of 2006 was the unveiling of the bronze statue of La Trobe by sculptor Peter Corlett OAM on the forecourt of the State Library of Victoria by the then Governor and Patron of the Society, Professor David de Kretser AC. La Trobe's great-great-grandson, Dr Charles La Trobe Blake, visiting from the U.K., was in attendance. The sculpture was commissioned by the La Trobe Society from funds generously donated by members and supporters of the Society.



Charles Joseph La Trobe reading the proclamation: re-enactment 2009
Photographer: Martin Green

2009

170th anniversary of The Governor's Arrival

A re-enactment of the arrival, exactly 170 years earlier, of Charles Joseph La Trobe in Melbourne was organised by the Friends of La Trobe's Cottage on 3 October. The group had been formed that year under the umbrella

of the La Trobe Society to support the National Trust in maintaining and promoting the Cottage. Superintendent La Trobe²¹ arrived by horse-drawn carriage, read his proclamation to the citizens of Melbourne and presided over the raising of the flag. Oakleigh City Band provided a fanfare and the Newport Bush Orchestra further music during the afternoon.

2010

171st anniversary of The Governor's Arrival

A follow up re-enactment at La Trobe's Cottage on 3 October, 'The Governor's Return', was organised by the Friends of La Trobe's Cottage to celebrate recently completed works at the Cottage. Superintendent La Trobe²² inspected his newly refurbished Cottage and planted an olive tree grown from a cutting originating from a tree at the McCrae Homestead. Darebin City Brass Band provided a fanfare and the Newport Bush Orchestra returned to provide music throughout the afternoon.

2011

10th anniversary of the C J La Trobe Society

Ten events were organised throughout the year, including a lecture by Dr Brian La Trobe of South Africa on Christian Ignatius La Trobe's travels in South Africa in 1815-1816. There were excursions in the footsteps of his son Charles Joseph La Trobe to the Bellarine Peninsula, and to Hamilton and the Western District; an address 'Victoria in the 1840s' by Emeritus Professor Geoffrey Blainey AC was given at the Annual General Meeting; Kay Craddock-Antiquarian Bookseller hosted 'Lieutenant-Governor Charles Joseph La Trobe: An exhibition of Books, Pictures and Sculptures'; and talented

young pianist, Kevin Kanisius Suherman gave a recital 'Christian Ignatius La Trobe & Friends'.

2012

Anniversary of the death of La Trobe

Joint church services were held on Sunday 2 December at St Michael the Archangel, Litlington, East Sussex, where La Trobe is buried, and at St Peter's Eastern Hill, Melbourne, where he worshipped and had laid the foundation stone in 1846. The La Trobe Society and both parish communities wish to make this an annual event on the Sunday closest to his date of death, 4 December.²³

2013

Opening of the Charles La Trobe Lounge

A new private meeting and study space for La Trobe University academic staff, emeritus professors, alumni and postgraduate research students was officially opened on 20 February in the Borchardt Library of the Bundoora campus of the University.

2014

175th anniversary of La Trobe's arrival

The La Trobe Society is planning to celebrate this important anniversary in an appropriate historical manner on 3 October.

- 8 The *Report of the Activities of the La Trobe Centenary Commemoration Committee, December 1975*, Melbourne: Government Printer, 1976, p.14, states that a *Eucalyptus Delegatensis* (alpine ash) was planted in the Australian Lawn, in the southeast corner of the Royal Botanic Gardens, on 6 December by Dr John Henry de La Trobe. However, according to the Gardens' Living Collections Database maintained by the Plant Information Officer, an elm tree, *Ulmus procera* (accession number 528926), was planted on the Phoenix Lawn at that time, by Dr de La Trobe using a ceremonial spade. This tree was removed in 1977 and was replaced with a cutting in 1979 (source: Jenny Happell who interviewed former Gardens' propagator, Cliff Grosvenor) – see also 1979 Tree Planting.
- 9 The proposal for a statue was made by Mr Rodney Davidson OBE, who chaired a committee which estimated the cost to be \$50,000 of which the Government would contribute half. This did not proceed and three decades later the La Trobe Society commissioned Peter Corlett OAM to sculpt the bronze of La Trobe now on the forecourt of the State Library of Victoria.
- 10 *Letters of Charles Joseph La Trobe*, edited by L. J. Blake, Melbourne: Government Printer, 1975.
- 11 *Report of the Activities of the La Trobe Centenary Commemoration Committee, December 1975*, Melbourne: Government Printer, 1976 (which gives a total \$25,000 direct expenditure, \$10,000 of which was for public relations, but it is reported that \$20,000 would have been desirable); and *Principal Addresses of the C. J. La Trobe Commemorative Celebrations*, Melbourne: Government Printer, 1978. Contents pages are on the Society's website, as is the Programme.
- 12 Bronwyn Hughes, 'The Governor's Window', *La Trobeana*, vol.12, no.2, July 2013, p.15.
- 13 R.T.M. Pescott, *The Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne: a history from 1845 to 1970*, Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1982, p.29. The 1979 tree was removed on 18 May 2012 but a cutting of it has been propagated and it is hoped that when large enough it can be planted in King's Domain close to La Trobe's Cottage.
- 14 *Gipps-La Trobe Correspondence, 1839-1846*, edited by A.G.L. Shaw, Melbourne: The Miegunyah Press, 1989.
- 15 Information supplied by Diane Gardiner, then a staff member of the National Trust of Australia (Victoria).
- 16 In the person of Richard Heathcote, then manager at Rippon Lea Estate and an actor in a former life.
- 17 Information about the procession was supplied by Diane Gardiner.
- 18 A.G.L. Shaw, 'Victoria's first Governor', *La Trobe Journal*, no.71, autumn 2003, pp.85-95.
- 19 A.G.L. Shaw, 'La Trobe's Melbourne', *Victorian Historical Journal*, vol.73, 2002, pp.133-142.
- 20 Helen Botham *La Trobe's Jolimont : a walk round my garden*, Melbourne: La Trobe Society and Australian Garden History Society, 2006. Dianne Reilly *Charles Joseph La Trobe, Australian Notes: 1839-1854*, Yarra Glen: Tarcoola Press, 2006. Dianne Reilly *La Trobe: the making of a governor*, Melbourne: Melbourne University Publishing, 2006. Raymond Henderson, *From Jolimont to Yering...Neuchatel's bachelor vigneron*, Kilsyth: Roundabout Publishing, 2006.
- 21 In the person of Justin Smith, then Manager at Rippon Lea Estate and actor in amateur theatre.
- 22 As above.
- 23 La Trobe initially worshipped at St James' Church, now St James' Old Cathedral, and had laid its foundation stone on 9 November 1839. A service has been held in Litlington for many years.

1 Ten years earlier two other grandchildren, Captain Charles La Trobe and Mrs Victoria La Trobe Shea-Simonds, donated to the Library a folio of Edward La Trobe Bateman's drawings of *Jolimont*. In 1960 they further donated four folios of La Trobe's watercolours and drawings, together with some family portraits, to the National Trust; the watercolours and drawings have been on permanent loan to the State Library since 1976.

2 Susan Priestley, 'Boys and History: Litlington visit 1951', *La Trobeana*, vol.12, no.1, March 2013, pp.25-27.

3 The Australian Manuscripts Collection was rehoused in the La Trobe Gallery, so named when completed for the National Gallery in 1892. Rare printed materials and pictures were rehoused in two other galleries of the building.

4 Charles Billich, b.1934, *Opening of La Trobe University, 1967*. This painting depicting La Trobe now hangs in the Charles La Trobe Lounge at the University.

5 'Dr John Henry de La Trobe (1923-2002) was Chairman of the Columbus Shipping Line and German Shipowners Association, Head of Hamburg-Süd Shipping Group and President of the Australia-New Zealand-South Pacific Association in Germany. He was the official guest of honour at La Trobe Centenary Celebrations in Melbourne in December 1975 and was Honorary Chairman of ALIS [Association Latrobe International Symposium] in France in May 1997. He did major research into Latrobe genealogy for a number of years.' His great-great grandfather was an uncle of La Trobe. Source: JHBL Family Genealogy website (accessed 11 January 2014)

6 *The Age*, 1 June 1967.

7 One of the people liaising with the organisers in Geelong was Mr George Shea-Simonds, La Trobe's great-great-grandson. He and his children are La Trobe's only descendants in Australia.



George Alexander Gilbert, 1815-1877, artist
View of Jolimont, Melbourne, Port Phillip, 1843-44
drawing : pastel on paper
Pictures Collection, State Library of Victoria, H5278



Artist unknown
[La Trobe's Cottage] c.1900?
Glass negative of an oil painting on board,
executed before 1900
Pictures Collection, State Library of
Victoria, H92.334/13

'Dear Jolimont': a narrative

By Patrick Gregory

Patrick Gregory has been appointed the new Director of the Northern Territory Library, commencing at the end of February 2014. Patrick has had a range of senior management roles at the State Library of Victoria since 2006, including Information Services Manager and Manager Public Libraries. He has a deep interest in local history, a fascination with the origin of place names, and has been wandering around every page of the Melway for many years. He has recently started writing a few of his favourite Melbourne stories.

Patrick's story of the La Trobes at Jolimont takes on many of the aesthetic elements of narrative form in which voice and story structure are key elements, but one in which historical accuracy is still paramount. (Ed.)

She grew up by Lake Neuchâtel, buoyed by the company of her twelve brothers and sisters, carried along by their ceaseless flow through the long corridors and lofty rooms of their home.

'Look Maman, look at what Georges has found!'

'See what Cécile has written'.

'Maman, Maman, listen to Rose's new song'.

She would have been happy to spend her life just listening to them, but they asked so many questions; so, setting her book down once more she explained to little Auguste why the mountains were so high and where the snow came from. Her father, Frédéric Auguste, Councillor of State, was a blur of black cloth, forever disappearing around the corner. Sometimes he talked to the children about Duty.

Sophie de Montmollin had more cousins than there were birds in the cloudy grey sky. Many uncles, Councillors like her father. Place, family, government – indivisible.

There were many aunts to be visited, and on one of these calls in 1824 she met Charles, the new tutor to her cousin Albert de Pourtalès. He was English, devout – but also humorous and kind. He asked what she was reading. They talked about religion, about geography and the world beyond Neuchâtel. But Charles was twenty three, Sophie only fourteen and, whilst this young man was certainly a gentleman and not without prospects, as a tutor he was still a servant, and Sophie a daughter of the ruling class.

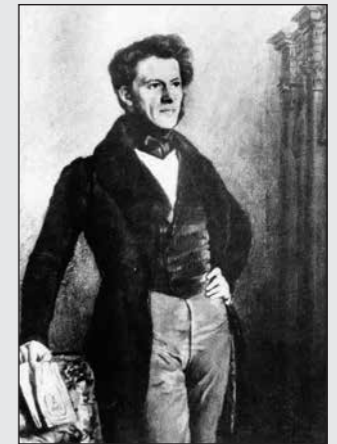
Charles later left to accompany Albert on his educational travels. Nine years passed.

Charles was a walker, a climber, a keen observer and recorder of all around him, a specimen of the restless intelligence of his time. He published two books on his journeys though the Alps and Italy, and with Pourtalès and the author Washington Irving, he travelled across North America and Mexico, writing two more volumes. And yet! He feared the life of the dilettante, hoped for marriage and wished to achieve something more worthy in the eyes of God. He maintained

In 1839 though, when Charles Joseph La Trobe was appointed Superintendent of the newly settled Port Phillip District in Australia, Sophie had little choice but to travel with him. Duty. She had long prepared for the role as the wife of a government administrator, but had never imagined that this would be a life stripped of family and tradition, away from lake and mountains in the hard light of a new town where each was a stranger to the other.



Johann Friedrich Dietler,
1787-1854, artist
Sophie de Montmollin, 1834
Watercolour
Archives de l'Etat, Neuchâtel



Unknown artist
Charles Joseph La Trobe, c. 1835
Oil
Frontispiece to *The Rambler*
in Oklahoma, Oklahoma City,
Harlow, 1955.
Whereabouts of original painting
unknown.

a warm correspondence with the Comtesse, Pourtalès' mother. Perhaps at her prompting, in 1835 he returned to Neuchâtel and asked Councillor Frédéric Auguste for Sophie's hand in marriage. The days in which he waited for an answer were an agony. Sophie's dowry would be small, as one amongst such a vast brood of children, and Charles did not yet have a defined path in life or guaranteed income. To a friend he wrote 'I am on the point of being married to one I have long loved and esteemed'. In his journal, he wrote: 'If I get S. I know what I have in her, neither beauty nor wealth but-'. But, presumably, something far better. Five days later, another entry: the single word 'Approved'.

They were married at the British Legation in Berne, and took their honeymoon in a manor house owned by the Pourtalès family, set on a hill overlooking Lake Bièvre – it was called *Jolimont*.

Writing had been enough to sustain Charles to this point, but now he needed a career. In 1837 he was commissioned by the British government to inspect the schools set up for emancipated slaves in the West Indies. Sophie stayed behind at the family home, and shortly after he left, their daughter was born. He was away for seventeen months, missing Sophie – 'you who are ever at my side in fancy' – and Agnes was already over a year old when he saw her for the first time.

It was the talk of Neuchâtel. Sophie was to sail across the ocean to a place so unsettled that she would have to take her own house with her. And indeed amongst the La Trobes' possessions on their voyage was a prefabricated cottage made by Henry Manning of High Holborn, London, a company that specialised in prefabricated wooden buildings for the colonies.

They arrive in Melbourne, a town of mud and hammers just four years old, during a bright and windy spring day in October. Seeking some relief from the noise of three thousand hard working souls, they choose to erect the cottage about a mile to the east of the new settlement, up on a hill overlooking the town, the river, and off in the distance, the blue waters of Port Phillip Bay. They name their new home with optimism *Jolimont*, after the place of their greatest happiness.

Society is also under construction. Sophie, so used to being surrounded by a dense community of kin, finds few other women of her class, and fewer still who speak French. She has a small group of friends, Phebe Howitt, Anne Greene, Georgiana McCrae, but her love is for her home and family. Charles spends much time in town on government business, and when the pressures of office weigh too heavily indulges his exploratory, rambling nature, riding out for nights at a time to other areas of settlement. The



Photographer unknown
 'Jolimont',
 Erlach (Cerlier),
 Switzerland
 Photograph
 Personal collection of
 Patrick Gregory

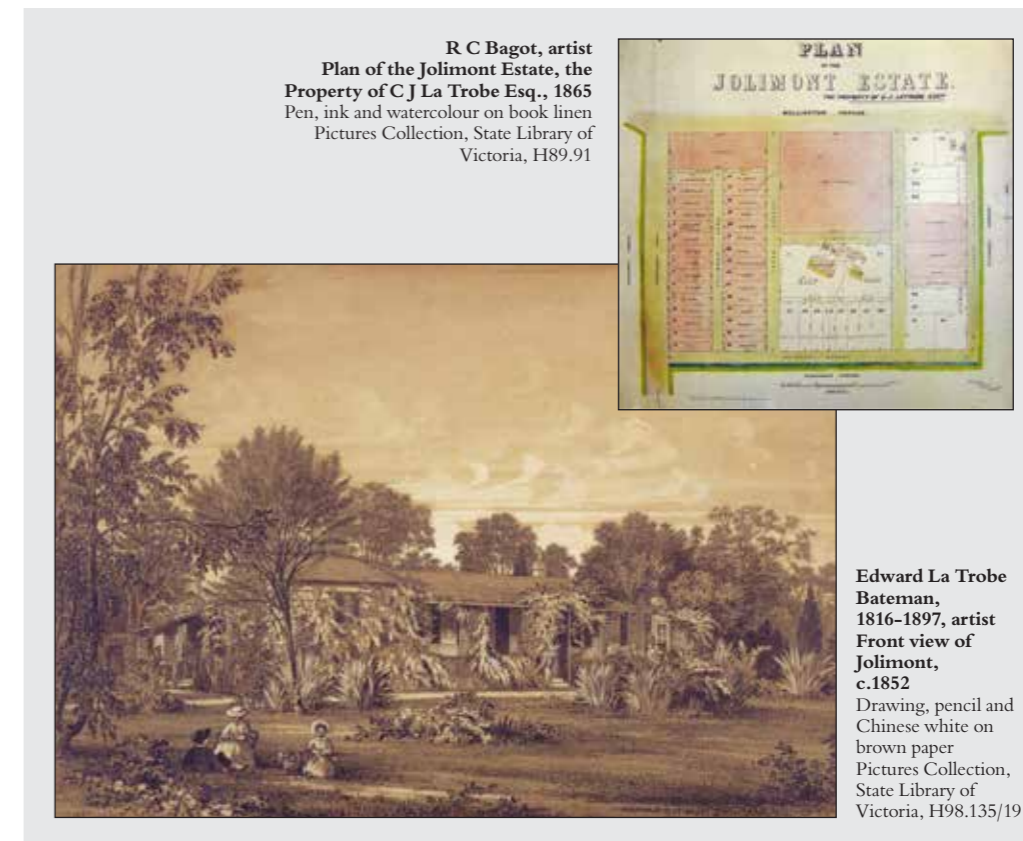
Map of vicinity of Erlach
 (Cerlier), Switzerland, showing
 location of 'Jolimont'
 Personal collection of Patrick
 Gregory from Swiss National Library

La Trobes disappoint those in Melbourne who expect the Superintendent and his lady to be the leading lights of the social scene, but they are not only temperamentally disinclined to the role, they simply cannot afford it. Charles receives only a third of the salary of the Governor of Van Diemen's Land and has to provide for his own accommodation.

Jolimont becomes a retreat from Melbourne society rather than a focal point. Three more children are born, Eleanora Sophia (Nelly), Mary Cecilia (Cécile) and Charles Albert (Charley). To Sophie's great joy, they are joined by Charlotte Pellet, a housekeeper who had served her family in Neuchâtel and who brings with her the French tongue and a shared knowledge of friends and family at home. *Jolimont* grows, extended with a dining room and butler's pantry, kitchen and servants' quarters, bedrooms for the children and a library. Gardens are established and tended, and a large trellised verandah runs along the side of the house, festooned with climbing and flowering plants. Charles and Sophie sit on a seat outside the grotto on quieter evenings as the children play, watching the ships from home come and go across the bay. Charles says of the cottage that 'small as our establishment is, I assure you that there is not a more comfortable, well regulated and more lasting one in this part of the world'; Sophie simply refers to it as 'Dear *Jolimont*'.

Sophie is gentle, loyal, cultured, devout and loving. She is also prone to debilitating migraines, and sensitive to heat and noise. Her occasional visitors find her in the cool dim light of a drawing room decorated with maps, seeds and butterflies in glass cases. Hearing the faint creak of the boards under their feet, she will look up from the book over which she is straining her poor eyesight. She seldom travels with Charles, or attends the painful chore of official functions. On one occasion, laid up at home with a headache, she accepts Georgiana McCrae's offer to substitute for her at the opening of the new Princes Bridge, and it is Georgiana's arm that waves to the crowds from the shadows of the carriage interior.

Dear *Jolimont* is threatened for the La Trobes are technically squatting on Crown land, and now Governor Gipps in Sydney approves the sale of property in the area. Charles is desperate to buy the land on which he lives and to provide his family with some peace of mind. Local colonists view the New South Wales government's failure to provide a residence for the Superintendent of the Port Phillip District as a calculated insult, and it becomes a matter of local pride that the La Trobes are provided with a proper home. On the day of the auction John Pascoe Fawkner leaps onto the auctioneer's stump and implores the crowd not to bid against the Superintendent. Only one man



R C Bagot, artist
 Plan of the Jolimont Estate, the
 Property of C J La Trobe Esq., 1865
 Pen, ink and watercolour on book linen
 Pictures Collection, State Library of
 Victoria, H89.91

Edward La Trobe
 Bateman,
 1816-1897, artist
 Front view of
 Jolimont,
 c.1852
 Drawing, pencil and
 Chinese white on
 brown paper
 Pictures Collection,
 State Library of
 Victoria, H98.135/19

disagrees, a Sydneysider who objected is quickly manhandled from the scene. Charles purchases twelve and a half acres of land around *Jolimont* for a total of £250, for which a price of £6,000 is closer to market value.

Did Charles and Sophie talk of how long they would remain in Australia? She wishes that they could all return home to Switzerland. She loves her husband, her family and her house, but neither Melbourne's society nor its climate is congenial to her, and the headaches get worse. The children, too, are growing up perhaps too wild, too free. With no return to Europe imminent, they make the decision to send their volatile eight year old eldest daughter back to Neuchâtel to be educated for her future place in her 'home' society. Agnes travels for five months, survives a hurricane, is met by family in London and taken to Switzerland. It is almost a year before Charles and Sophie learn that she has arrived safely. It is over eight years before they will see her again.

As Port Phillip grows, so does the clamour for independence from Sydney. The glorious news of Separation, providing the new colony of Victoria with its own government, is published in the *Melbourne Morning Herald* on 11 November 1850. Charles is now a Lieutenant-Governor, but greater rank is soon joined by larger problems with the discovery of gold at Clunes,

Ballarat, Warrandyte and Bendigo within a matter of months. A prosperous but regulated colony explodes in excitement, waves of ships bring gold seekers up the Yarra, shanty towns of tents spring up along the south bank of the river, noise, drunkenness, boom-time wealth. Sophie finds it hateful. Charles, always stiff with the lower orders and wary of democracy, finds the breakdown of social order shocking, the workload exhausting. Sophie writes to Agnes: 'I suppose he [Papa] tells you how much those gold discoveries have given him to do – how harrassed [*sic*] and worried he feels at times – but thank God who keeps him in good health and in strength of mind & heart. For a week towards the end of the year I got very anxious about him – he had lost his appetite, his sleep, in part – and for a week, or a fortnight we never saw a smile on his face – you know, that is not at all like him'.

In 1848 Sophie falls from her horse, and there is some suggestion of a miscarriage. Her health worsens. With the other children reaching an age where a proper education is becoming essential, government of the colony increasingly slipping beyond his capabilities, and his own personal stock amongst the colonists sinking, Charles resigns his post in December 1852. It is not only the strains of office, but the lack of appreciation from both colonists and the home government that galls him. It is difficult, though, to find a quick replacement, and he is obliged to



Alexander John Petrie 1905-1988, photographer
 La Trobe's Cottage, Jolimont, Melbourne, 1934
 Photograph
 Pictures Collection, State Library of Victoria, H2009.30/1
 Note: The Bedggood Shoe Factory (formerly Fenton's
 China Warehouse) can be seen in the background.



Patrick Gregory, photographer
 Sophie Lane, 2013
 Personal collection of Patrick Gregory

stay for another eighteen months. He persuades Sophie to leave before him taking the children. It is not how she wants it to be. To Agnes she writes 'I need not tell you, dear child, that if the joy to see you will be great – the prospect of having to leave your dear papa, on this side of the world, is a very sorrowful and grievous one to me – and if I had been allowed to choose, I would have much preferred [sic] waiting for him that we might all meet again together – but it [is] not to be ...'. They board the *Blackwall* in February 1853. Unfavourable winds keep them from sailing, and Charles stays on board with them for a week. Finally the wind turns. He stays on the ship until it reaches the Heads, is rowed ashore, and watches for more than an hour as it disappears into the horizon.

27 April 1854. Governor Hotham is due to arrive in a few short weeks, and Charles will sail back to Europe. The *Morning Post* from 8 February has just this morning arrived. He opens it at the dining room table over breakfast, looking out through the gardens down to the bay. On page 8, amongst the London shares list, advertisements for sherry, cigars, perukes and artificial teeth, are the death notices.

DEATH.
CUNLIFFE.—On the evening of the 4th inst., at his residence, 1, Upper Hyde-park-street, James Cunliffe, Esq., of 84, Lombard-street, aged fifty-six.
La Trobe.—On the 16th ult., at Neuchâtel, in Switzerland, at the residence of her mother, Madame de Montmoulin Meuron, Sophie, the beloved wife of his Excellency Charles J. La Trobe, Lieutenant-Governor of the colony of Victoria, in the forty-fourth year of her age.

Death Notice, *Morning Post*, London,
 8 February 1854, p.8.

Letters from family and friends informing him of the news arrive on a separate ship a few days later. Sophie's condition had worsened on the voyage home, and she was already very ill on reaching London. Sophie's condition had worsened on the voyage home, and she was

already very ill on reaching London. 'I tremble so much that I can scarcely manage my pen; I was already like this towards the end of my sojourn in Australia, and it has become worse during the voyage, and now it is worse than ever ... If my dear husband were only with us, I know I would be much better.' She was taken to Neuchâtel by her family, but never recovered and died on 30 January 1854.

Charles writes of his 'irreparable loss'. He is glad though, he says, that he has heard the news before departure rather than receiving the shock 'on the threshold of my return. How I have mourned her I cannot tell – at the same time that I bow to His will...'. Without waiting for his replacement to arrive, he departs Victoria forever on the new American steamship, *The Golden Age*.

Charles returned to Neuchâtel, where Agnes, Nelly, Cécile and Charley were being looked after by Sophie's youngest sister Rose, herself a widow at thirty four. They married a year later. It no doubt seemed the best thing to do for the family, but their attachment grew stronger and they had two children of their own. They lived a happy life together in England despite Charles' increasing blindness, until his death in 1875. Their union finished Charles' career with the British government where, unlike in Switzerland, marriage to a deceased wife's sister was illegal. Fortunately, Charles had an alternative source of income. Already valuable in the 1840s, the twelve and a half acres of land in Jolimont was gradually sold off in order to supplement a parsimonious pension.

And *Jolimont* itself? The land was subdivided and the streets named after the La Trobes' children Agnes and Charles. The cottage was leased out and then sold in 1886 when a warehouse was built on the estate, and



Patrick Gregory, photographer
 Glass window – Home,
 Sophie Lane, Jolimont
 Personal collection of
 Patrick Gregory

sold again in 1899 to the company of Bedggood and Co. Though in some disrepair, for many years it served as the residence of the caretaker of the Bedggood's nearby shoe factory. The company commissioned Edna Walling to build a garden in front of the house, and public tours were taken for a few years in the 1930s, but in 1937 a substantial part of the old buildings was demolished when the factory was expanded. The rest was nearly flattened to make way for an air raid shelter during the Second World War and with its future precarious, the small remaining parts of the cottage were moved to the Domain in 1963 by the National Trust.

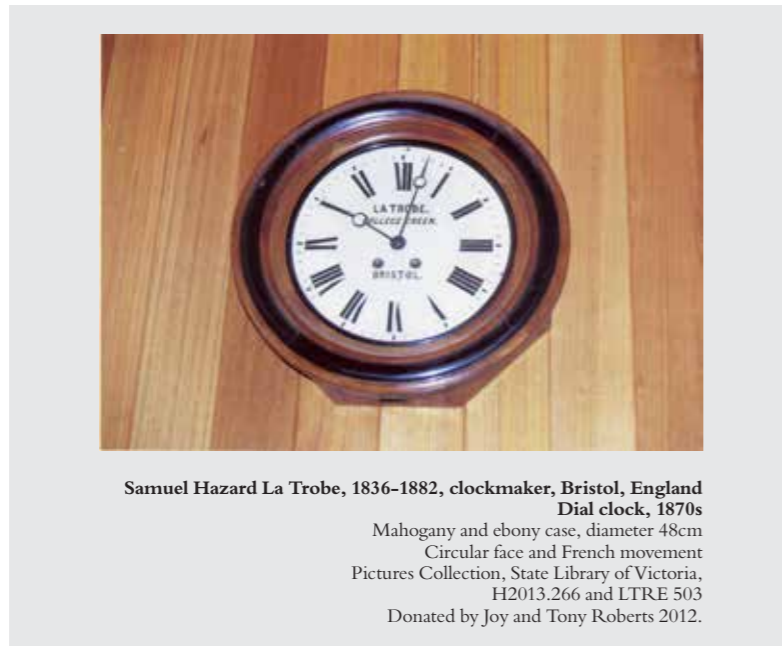
Other sections of the cottage have been rebuilt in the style of the time, and the whole is now open to the public on Sunday afternoons in Spring and Summer. Unlike the cottage, the name Jolimont has been long associated with the area. It is familiar to many Melburnians as the railway station most convenient for the Melbourne Cricket Ground, which lies just down the hill. Except on days of football and cricket matches, when Sophie's ghost is disturbed by the raucous crowds streaming through the area like the hateful gold seekers of old, Jolimont is otherwise a quiet residential section of East Melbourne. There are no longer uninterrupted views back to the town, the river and the bay, but the elevated location is put to contemporary use, capped with a mobile phone tower. Heading down Charles Street, there are few signs of the past: a bluestone and

brick wall, the late nineteenth century houses of Jolimont Terrace – but the buildings on the site of the cottage itself are of much more recent vintage. A small historical marker is round the corner on Agnes Street, a white metal sign on a grey wall, seemingly an afterthought next to a little stairwell leading to a fire hose. It shows a blurred historical map of the area, and the accompanying text reads 'Jolimont, the private residence of Charles Joseph La Trobe, the first Superintendent of the Port Phillip District and later Lieutenant-Governor of Victoria, originally stood on this site'.

No mention of Sophie, whose residence it was when Charles was spending his time at the government offices or riding out through the colony. In recent years, though, some recognition: the formerly unnamed service path to the rear of the cottage site now goes by the name Sophie Lane. It is a dark, cold and uninviting thoroughfare over what was once the cottage's gardens, Charles's rockery replaced by bluestone, a high wall running along one side, four-storey office buildings and car parks to the other. It is hard to imagine Sophie herself regarding it with anything but horror. But there is one small consolation that she might have enjoyed as a memento of 'Dear Jolimont': the terrace at the end of her lane is called 'Home'. In the wall of the porch is set a small coloured glass window, which shows a cottage overlooking a body of water, lit by the rays of a setting sun.

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 Marguerite Hancock, *Colonial Consorts: the wives of Victoria's governors 1839-1900*, Chapter 1 Sophie La Trobe 1839-1853, Carlton South: The Miegunyah Press 2001.
 _____ 'The Life of Sophie La Trobe', *La Trobeana*, vol.9, no.3, November 2010, pp.16-21.
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Samuel Hazard La Trobe, 1836-1882, clockmaker, Bristol, England
 Dial clock, 1870s
 Mahogany and ebony case, diameter 48cm
 Circular face and French movement
 Pictures Collection, State Library of Victoria,
 H2013.266 and LTRE 503
 Donated by Joy and Tony Roberts 2012.

The La Trobe Clock

Dr Dianne Reilly AM

Dianne Reilly is an historian who was La Trobe Librarian at the State Library of Victoria from 1982 until 2008. She has published widely on Charles Joseph La Trobe.

Dianne currently manages the State Library Foundation's bequest program, the Redmond Barry Society.

An Honorary Fellow in the School of Historical and Philosophical Studies at the University of Melbourne, she is a co-founder of the C J La Trobe Society, and is currently its Secretary.

The State Library of Victoria has recently added to its collections of La Trobe family archives and memorabilia a fine example of clock-making by Samuel Hazard La Trobe, a watch and clock maker whose business flourished in Bristol in the United Kingdom in the second half of the nineteenth century.

The dial clock first appeared in England in the 1720s in response to the growing requirement for accurate time-keeping as Britain emerged as an industrial nation. Up until this time, awareness of time seems to have been rather haphazard, and

the province of the wealthy who had decorative clocks and watches as signs of their prosperity. However, with the industrial revolution towards the end of the eighteenth century, the need to run factory equipment to a timetable and to transport people and goods in coaches on time brought about a huge growth in affordable clocks and watches. In fact, the heyday of the dial clock was the Victorian period, when it was to be found in every office, factory, school and railway station. Today, such clocks are increasingly appreciated by collectors who admire the simple elegant dials and the very fine workmanship of the movements.¹

The gift of Joy and Tony Roberts, the State Library of Victoria's dial clock now appropriately enhances the Information Centre off the La Trobe Reading Room. In a handsome mahogany and ebony case 48cm in diameter, it has a circular face and French movement. Although it has been decided not to keep this clock running, it is still in perfect working order, some 140 years after it was made.

The provenance of this time-piece is impeccable, coming to Australia for Joy and Tony Roberts from Joy's father Wilfrid E Browning, direct from Bristol where it was made. Wilfrid Browning had purchased the clock in 1971 from Mr King, the proprietor of the La Trobe Pharmacy at the Highbury Corner, Bristol, near the former Bristol Homeopathic Hospital. The Homeopathic Hospital, after more than a century of service to the community, moved from its historic location in 2013 and has now been absorbed into the South Bristol Community Hospital out of the city centre.

The identification on the enamelled metal face of the clock reads:

**La Trobe
 College Green
 Bristol**

The name 'La Trobe', so clearly displayed, is a familiar one to many Victorians who recall that Charles Joseph La Trobe (1801-1875) was the pioneering administrator who arrived in 1839 as Superintendent of the Port Phillip District of New South Wales and, during his fifteen-year term of office, laid the foundations for the flourishing independent State of Victoria as we know it today.

Given that the surname 'La Trobe' or 'Latrobe' is a rare one, it may be safely asserted that all those who bear the name are tied to the same family tree. Through the vicissitudes of history following the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685, the family spread around the world to all five continents from Huguenot origins in towns near the Protestant city of Montauban in the south of France.

Many of the family found shelter in England, where they distinguished themselves in service to the Moravian church, in the skilled trades including linen manufacturing and clock-making, and in the architecture, engineering, teaching and nursing professions.

Noticing the name of the clockmaker, most Melburnians would be immediately curious to know which particular member of the La Trobe family crafted this fine example of the clockmaker's art. Samuel Hazard La Trobe

was that maker. His work was obviously of high quality, and timepieces by him still appear on the antique market today.

A second cousin of Charles Joseph, Samuel Hazard La Trobe was born in London on 13 January 1836, the second son of Bishop James La Trobe and his second wife Mary Grimes. Like all the children of James La Trobe, Samuel Hazard was educated at the Moravian Boarding School at Fulneck in Yorkshire. He kept a diary of his own daily routine at Fulneck some forty years after Charles Joseph's education there from the age of six to eighteen. The diary reflects the sort of regime and the general ambience of the school experienced earlier by his older cousin. The weekly routine of the boys who lived, worked and relaxed in the Single Brethren's quarters, embraced all the necessary subjects: English grammar, Latin, French, arithmetic, geography, drawing and singing. A great deal of homework and learning by rote was the norm and, as was the case for the young Samuel, so was gentle correction for such misdemeanours as talking in class and impertinence.² The week was liberally sprinkled with periods of recreation, cricket being a great favourite. Visiting clergy of many denominations preached to the students and there were various lectures on interesting subjects, such as elocution and slavery. The Debating Society was a focus for the whole school, and Samuel recounted that

I went to it as I wished to hear the debate of this evening as I was greatly interested in the subject which was about slavery and it was proved that it was a good thing that slavery is abolished.³

The Moravian faith was introduced in Bristol in the 1700s and became 'a small but not unimportant religious group in 18th and early 19th century Bristol'.⁴ True to his family tradition, Samuel Hazard was a member of the congregation with most of his siblings. He was married for the first time on 5 September 1860 to Sarah Ann Oates⁵, daughter of a Moravian blanket manufacturer.⁶ She died on 5 March 1863 after the birth of a son, James Henry La Trobe, on 13 January 1862.⁷

His second wife was Mary Hannah Pearson of Bath with whom he had five children.⁸ She was of great support to him in his jewellery, watch and clock-making business established on The Green in the centre of Bristol in 1856. Nineteen years later, Samuel Hazard La Trobe placed a fulsome advertisement in the Bristol newspaper, the *Western Daily Press*, which gives the strong impression that he was successful at

his trade with a flourishing business in the centre of town:

**UNDER ROYAL PATRONAGE.
WATCH ENTERPRISE.**

S. H. LA TROBE'S ADDRESS TO HIS FRIENDS AND THE PUBLIC. – As it has been supposed by some that I supply the (so-called) Aluminium and common Swiss Watches, I state that I sell none but Warranted Watches in Genuine Gold and Silver Cases, and I am determined to sustain the reputation I have established for selling only good Watches. It is 19 years since I commenced business in College Green as a Watchmaker. The Public have shown a growing appreciation of my endeavours to serve them well. In 1869, having realised the fact that the strong, pair-case Verge Watches, so long in use, were nearly worn out, I made a study of the requirements of Artisans, Policemen, and others, and introduced my British Workman's Watch (of which there are many inferior imitations). It is an extra strong Swiss Watch, with Horizontal Escapement and thick Plate-glass Front, and nearly 2oz. Silver Case, sound in every respect. My first Customer for this Watch was her Majesty Queen Victoria, who graciously stated her approval of it in a letter. Sixty Watches were quickly sold to persons of almost every trade and profession – as Carpenters, Gardeners, Clergymen, Private Gentlemen, Schoolboys – and gave wonderful satisfaction to almost every purchaser. I have since then sold between 1,000 and 1,500 of the British Workman's Watch alone, and above 5,000 of all sorts of Gold and Silver Watches. The timekeeping of these Watches is remarkable, and statements are made which, if not corroborated by others, would be scarcely credible. Space will only allow of one, selected from this neighbourhood. John Ball,

of Bedminster, says:—"Your British Workman's Watch has not varied about one minute by two long-case 8-day Clocks in two years." (This kind of Clock is the best timekeeper in use.) I sold one of my Railway Watches, £7, for a little Boy of eight going to Cheltenham College. I have Watches suitable for Servants 55s Swiss and 95s English Lever. For Gentlemen and Clergymen I keep Gold Watches, at £9, £10 15s, &c. My accurate English Lever is in great favour, both in Gold and Silver Cases. Of this English Machine-made Watch, introduced in 1870, I have sold between 1,000 and 2,000; it is unsurpassed for strength and durability. I keep it in about 20 varieties of style, form, and size, from 95s. The acme of perfection is my Timed ¾-plate Gold English Lever, at £25. A purchaser says: "I would not take £50 for it." Others testify that in it they have a treasure. For Ladies I keep a choice selection of Gold Watches, from £5 to £18, Swiss and English. For the Blind I supply Watches which enable them to tell the time by feeling, from 55s. My whole business is conducted on cash principles. Price Lists post free, on application.—Address SAMUEL HAZARD LA TROBE, 35, COLLEGE GREEN, BRISTOL. May, 1875.⁹

He is regularly listed in various directories of this part of England, the *1881 England Census*, describing him as 'Watchmaker & Jeweller Employing 2 Men, 1 Young Woman & 1 Boy'.¹⁰ However, not long after, his death from peritonitis¹¹ at age 46 is recorded as having taken place at The Mumbles, Gower Peninsula, in Wales on 16 May 1882.¹² His widow, Mary La Trobe, was granted probate on his estate on 16 January 1883 as follows:

La Trobe Samuel Hazard.
Personal Estate £3,515 5s
Administration of the Personal Estate of Samuel Hazard La Trobe late of 35 College-green in the City of Bristol. Watchmaker and Jeweller who died 16 May

1882 at Caswell-road Mumbles in the County of Glamorgan was granted at Bristol to Mary Hannah La Trobe of 35 College-green. Widow of the relict.¹³

Clocks of an inferior quality. MRS LA TROBE is also offering, at a similar Reduction, a variety of Cheaper Clocks suitable for Hall, Kitchen, and Bedroom.

Following her husband's death, Mary Hannah La Trobe continued to trade as 'S. H. La Trobe, as in the following advertisement in the Bristol newspaper, the *Western Daily Press*:

35, COLLEGE GREEN, BRISTOL

Mrs La Trobe, having decided with the assistance of a competent Manager, to continue the Business carried on for so many years at the above Address by her late husband, is now offering at much REDUCED PRICES, the greater part of his LARGE STOCK of FRENCH CLOCKS suitable for Drawing Room, Dining Room and Study use. Purchasers may thoroughly rely upon the quality of these Goods, which will be warranted in the usual way. This is important to the Public, who are now being offered so many

LA TROBE, 35 College Green.¹⁴

However, despite her efforts to keep the business afloat, including advertisements in both the *Edinburgh Gazette* and the *London Gazette* early in 1888¹⁵, the necessary increase in clientele apparently failed to materialise, and the shop was closed. Mrs Mary Hannah La Trobe was declared bankrupt on 18 February 1888.¹⁶ It is unknown whether there had been a downturn in the watch and clock industry in Bristol before or at the time of Samuel's death, or perhaps his ill-health was the reason for a gradual decline. The cause may have been Mary La Trobe's lack of the experience in management which had made her husband so successful.

This then is another fragment of information about the closely-knit La Trobe family with its links to so many vastly different yet fascinating enterprises all over the world.

- 1 Ronald E Rose *English Dial Clocks*, 2nd edition, Woodbridge, Suffolk: Antique Collectors' Club, 1988, flyleaf and pp.11-14.
- 2 Samuel Hazard La Trobe, 'Remnant of a schoolboy diary, 1848', unpublished manuscript, p.5. In the private collection of Rev. Basil MacLeavy, Leominster, United Kingdom.
- 3 *Ibid.*
- 4 Madge Dresser, 'Sisters and Brethren: power, propriety and gender among the Bristol Moravians, 1746-1833', *Social History*, vol.21, no.3, October 1996, abstract.
- 5 West Yorkshire, England, Marriages and Banns 1813-1935, p.248 (accessed online at Ancestry.com, 24 February 2014).
- 6 *Ibid.*
- 7 Ancestry.com (accessed 24 February 2014).
- 8 *Ibid.*
- 9 *Western Daily Press*, Bristol, England, 14 August 1878, p.7, www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer (accessed 21 February 2014).
- 10 1881 UK Census of England, Wales, Scotland, Channel Islands and Isle of Man (accessed online 21 February 2014).
- 11 Lucy Torode, 'James Gottlieb La Trobe and His Descendants around the Globe' in *Les Latrobes dans le monde*, Versailles, ALIS, 1997, p.216.
- 12 Ancestry.com (accessed 21 February 2014).
- 13 1883 England & Wales National Probate Calendar (Index of Wills and Administration), 1858-1966, (accessed online 21 February 2014).
- 14 *Western Daily Press*, Bristol, England, 17 August 1882, p.4, www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer (accessed 21 February 2014).
- 15 *London Gazette*, 17 February 1888, p.1111; and *Edinburgh Gazette*, 21 February 1888, p.175 (accessed online 21 February 2014).
- 16 *Bristol Mercury*, 18 February 1888, p.8, www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer (accessed 26 February 2014).



La Trobe's Cottage Report

Since the start of our summer season of Sunday openings in October visitor numbers have been steady, a mix of interested local, interstate and overseas visitors. The Cottage has also hosted two events organised by the committees of the La Trobe Society and Friends of the Cottage that were successful fund-raisers: Candlelit Carols and a special opening on Australia Day with entertainment and refreshments.

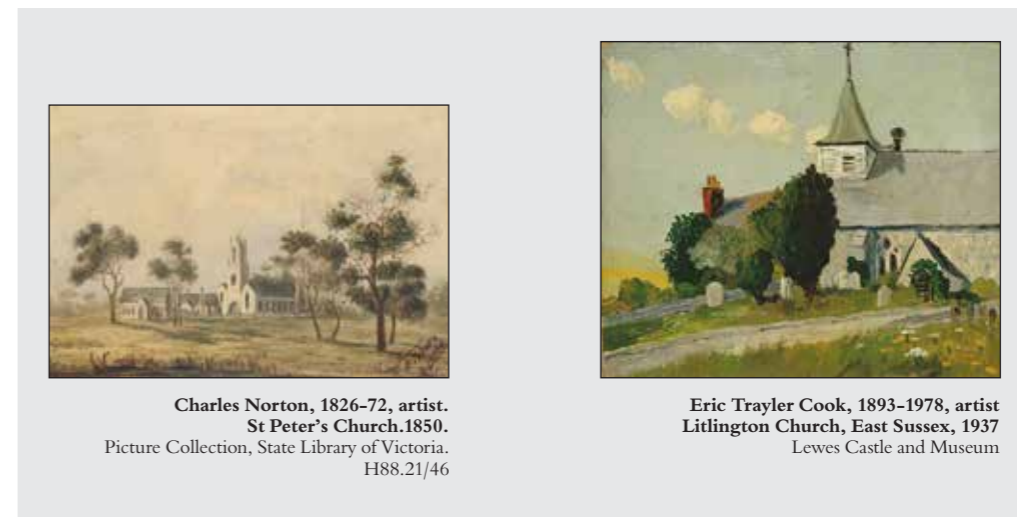
On a beautiful balmy evening on Monday 16 December over 150 people came to the Cottage grounds for Candlelit Carols performed by The Choir of The Way, with guest soloist soprano Marilyn Quaife AM. Guests were then invited to visit the Cottage which had been decorated in a traditional manner with a Christmas tree, candles and greenery.

Throughout the afternoon of Australia Day, Sunday 26 January, the Victorian Colonial Infantry Association in splendid uniforms and with original rifles performed flag-raising

ceremonies accompanied by bugle-playing, rifle and mortar fire. Over a hundred visitors took a tour of the Cottage with the volunteer guides, enjoyed the colourful spectacle of the VCIA and then generously bought afternoon tea at our refreshment table.

Jenny Happell, a guide at the Royal Botanic Gardens and garden volunteer at the Cottage, has recently brought to the attention of Sandi Pullman, volunteer horticulturist at the Cottage, a root cutting from an elm tree that was planted by Charles La Trobe in the Gardens in 1851. Helen Armstrong's research report on Celebrating La Trobe (p.26) presents background information supplied by Jenny and the RBG. This tree is now about one metre in height. Considering its historical significance, Sandi is now seeking permission from the City of Melbourne to plant it close the Cottage.

**Lorraine Finlay,
Manager La Trobe's Cottage**



Charles Norton, 1826-72, artist.
St Peter's Church, 1850.
Picture Collection, State Library of Victoria.
H88.21/46

Eric Trayler Cook, 1893-1978, artist
Litlington Church, East Sussex, 1937
Lewes Castle and Museum

Remembering La Trobe in Litlington and East Melbourne

By Helen Botham

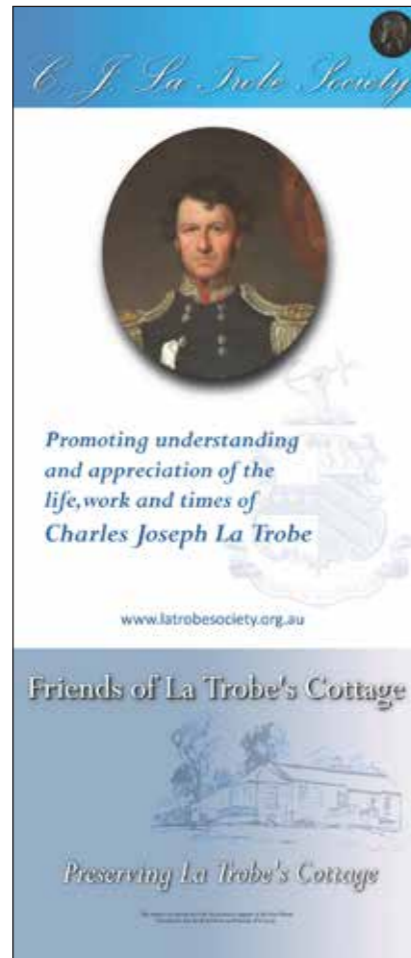
Helen Botham is a member of the La Trobe Society and a guide at La Trobe's Cottage. She was foundation chair of the Friends of La Trobe's Cottage and is the author of La Trobe's Jolimont, A Walk Round My Garden published in 2006. Since then she has maintained a deep interest in the life of C J La Trobe, which has included two visits to Litlington in East Sussex in recent years. She maintain the link between both churches

The tradition, established some years ago, of holding a service to commemorate the anniversary of the death of La Trobe on 4 December 1875 continues at St Michael the Archangel, Litlington, East Sussex, where Charles Joseph La Trobe is buried. A service was conducted by the Vicar, Rev. James Howson on 2 December 2013, and was attended by members of the extended La Trobe family. The Church Warden, Mr Richard Hayward, reported: 'James told us about St Peter's, and spoke well about La Trobe's life and work. I have borrowed his text which I shall produce as a booklet to go in the church here'. Rev. Howson was referring to the fact that a service was held on the same day at the church where La Trobe worshipped in Melbourne – St Peter's Eastern Hill.

The Vicar of St Peter's Eastern Hill, Rev. Dr Hugh Kempster, included a

commemoration of La Trobe as part of his Advent Sunday Mass. La Trobe Society member and St Peter's parishioner, Judith Ryles, had liaised with Father Hugh about the service and members of the Society were welcomed by Father Hugh at Morning Tea after the Mass. Committee member, Loreen Chambers, told the assembled parishioners about La Trobe's association with St Peter's, and with St Michael the Archangel, and presented them with a set of laminated information sheets on the theme of 'Remembering Charles Joseph La Trobe 1801-1875'.

Father Hugh has indicated he is keen for this link between his parish and the La Trobe Society to continue in future years. All members of the Society are most welcome to attend this church service in a church which is so closely associated with the La Trobe family.



Banner

The La Trobe Society now owns a handsome freestanding roll-up banner for display at lectures and other events.

The banner was produced with the generous support of the Vera Moore Foundation and the Royal Historical Society of Victoria in time for History Week during October last year. Designed by La Trobe Society committee member and webmaster, John Botham, it builds on elements from the Society's website.

The image is taken from the full-length portrait by Sir Francis Grant (1803-1878) *Charles Joseph La Trobe*, 1855, that was presented to the National Trust of Australia (Victoria) by La Trobe's grandson, Captain Charles La Trobe MC in 1960. This oil painting hangs in the Executive Council Chamber at the Old Treasury Building.¹

Helen Armstrong

¹ Another version of the portrait is displayed, appropriately, at the entrance to the domed La Trobe Reading Room in the State Library of Victoria. For information about the three La Trobe portraits in oil that are located in Melbourne, see *Lieutenant Governor Charles Joseph La Trobe: an exhibition of books, prints and sculptures to celebrate the 10th anniversary of The C J La Trobe Society, 20 July – 3 August 2011*, curator: John Drury; and a report by Mary Lewis in *La Trobeana* in March 2002, with a subsequent article in November 2004 (both available on the Society's website).

The Superintendent's Superhighway

By John Botham

John Botham is a committee member and webmaster of the La Trobe Society. He spent a career in the RAF and with the Civil Aviation Safety Authority before developing an interest in early Victorian history. He assisted with the production of *La Trobe's Jolimont, A Walk Round My Garden* (2006) and worked tirelessly thereafter to develop an understanding amongst government and the public of the heritage importance of the La Trobe's Cottage. From 2009 to 2010 he was Vice-Chair of the Friends of La Trobe's Cottage.

La Trobe was a great communicator with several books, official reports, and many letters to his name. What would he have made of modern communications media? The La Trobe Society has set out to build a website that he would have been proud of.

The Society aims to 'Promote understanding and appreciation of the life, work and times of Charles Joseph La Trobe, Victoria's first Lieutenant-Governor'. What better way to provide a bedrock of information than a website?

Building the bedrock started in 2010 with a major overhaul of the La Trobe Society website. We developed a new look and content to provide comprehensive information on the Society, La Trobe, publications by and about La Trobe, and events. At the same time we added

the Friends of La Trobe's Cottage website as a sub-domain to provide a similar level of detail about the Friends, the Cottage and information for visitors. Over the last three years the content has continued to grow, thanks to the ongoing efforts of Helen Armstrong. During this time the website has been kindly hosted by the IT services and publishing firm, ripefruit.net.au.

Last year saw the completion of the digitisation of past copies of *La Trobeana* from the first volume in 2002. In future we plan to provide digital copies for all but the latest twelve months of the journal.

The depth and complexity of website content has prompted a rethink as to how we assist visitors to move easily through the site. Interactive dropdown menus now enable them

Forthcoming events



to find their area of interest more quickly. Google custom search on each page allows a search of all material on the Society and Friends websites, including *La Trobeana*. Furthermore, the home page has interactive pictures to enable quick access to key areas likely to be of interest to the casual visitor and it also features a scrolling presentation of significant happenings in the current month during La Trobe's time.

New, interactive slideshows enhance the La Trobe history pages and the La Trobe family tree can be viewed more easily with the magnifier viewer. The publications section is now a wealth of information with many links to other websites to provide a comprehensive source for those

interested in our period of Victorian history. A project planned to be completed this year will add details of sites in Victoria and other parts of the world that commemorate La Trobe.

So, whether you are a web addict or a reluctant surfer, fire up the Society website and see what treasures you can find in its depths at

www.latrobesociety.org.au

We would love to hear your feedback to webmaster@latrobesociety.org.au

MARCH

Sunday 30

La Trobe's Birthday Celebration

Time: 4-6pm

Venue: Domain House

Cnr Birdwood Avenue and
Dallas Brooks Drive, Melbourne

Speakers: Professor John Barnes with
Loreen Chambers

Topic: Charles Joseph La Trobe –
Prologue and Epilogue

Aspects of La Trobe's life before and after
his time in Port Phillip/Victoria.

Refreshments

Admission: \$5 donation for catering

APRIL

Tuesday 29

**Friends of La Trobe's Cottage
Lecture**

Time: 6-8pm

Venue: Domain House

Cnr Birdwood Avenue and
Dallas Brooks Drive, Melbourne

Speaker: Dr Madonna Grehan,
2014 La Trobe Society Fellow at
the State Library

Topic: Mrs Walas is 'ded and beried':
birth and other perils for women in
mid-nineteenth century Victoria

Refreshments

JUNE

Tuesday 17

**Joint La Trobe Society/ RHSV AGL
Shaw Lecture**

Time: 6.30-8pm

Venue: Royal Historical Society
of Victoria

Cnr William and A'Beckett Streets,
Melbourne

Speakers: Andrew Lemon and
Marjorie Morgan

Topic: Superintendent La Trobe and the
Wreck of the 'Catarqui'.

Refreshments

Admission: \$30 per person

JULY

Friday 18

Melbourne Rare Book Week Lecture

Time: 6.30-8.30pm

Venue: 401 Collins Street, Melbourne

AUGUST

Tuesday 5

La Trobe Society Annual

General Meeting

Venue: Lyceum Club, Ridgway Place,
Melbourne

Guest Speaker: tbc

OCTOBER

Friday 3

175th Anniversary of La Trobe's

Arrival in Melbourne

Venue and format of function: tbc

NOVEMBER

Sunday 9

175th Anniversary of St James'

Old Cathedral

Venue: St James' Old Cathedral,
Batman Street, West Melbourne

Wednesday 12

**La Trobe University Alumni and
Advancement Lecture**

Time: 6-8pm

Venue: State Library Theatre,
La Trobe Street, Melbourne

Speaker: Dr Tim Flannery

Topic: Science-related theme, tbc

Friday 28: tbc

Christmas Cocktails

Venue and Speaker: tbc

DECEMBER

Sunday 7

Anniversary of the Death of

C J La Trobe

Venue: St Peter's Eastern Hill,
15 Gisborne Street, Melbourne

Tuesday 16: tbc

**Candlelit Carols at La Trobe's
Cottage**

Venue: La Trobe's Cottage, Cnr
Birdwood Avenue & Dallas Brooks
Drive, Melbourne.

Back Issues

Back issues of La Trobeana are available on the Society's website, except for those published in the last twelve months.

The back issues may be accessed at www.latrobesociety.org.au/LaTrobeana.html
They may be searched by keyword.

Contributions welcome

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Further information about the Journal may be found at
www.latrobesociety.org.au/LaTrobeana.html.

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BACK COVER
La Trobe Family coat of arms

INSIDE FRONT COVER
Charles Joseph La Trobe's coat of arms,
taken from his bookplate

