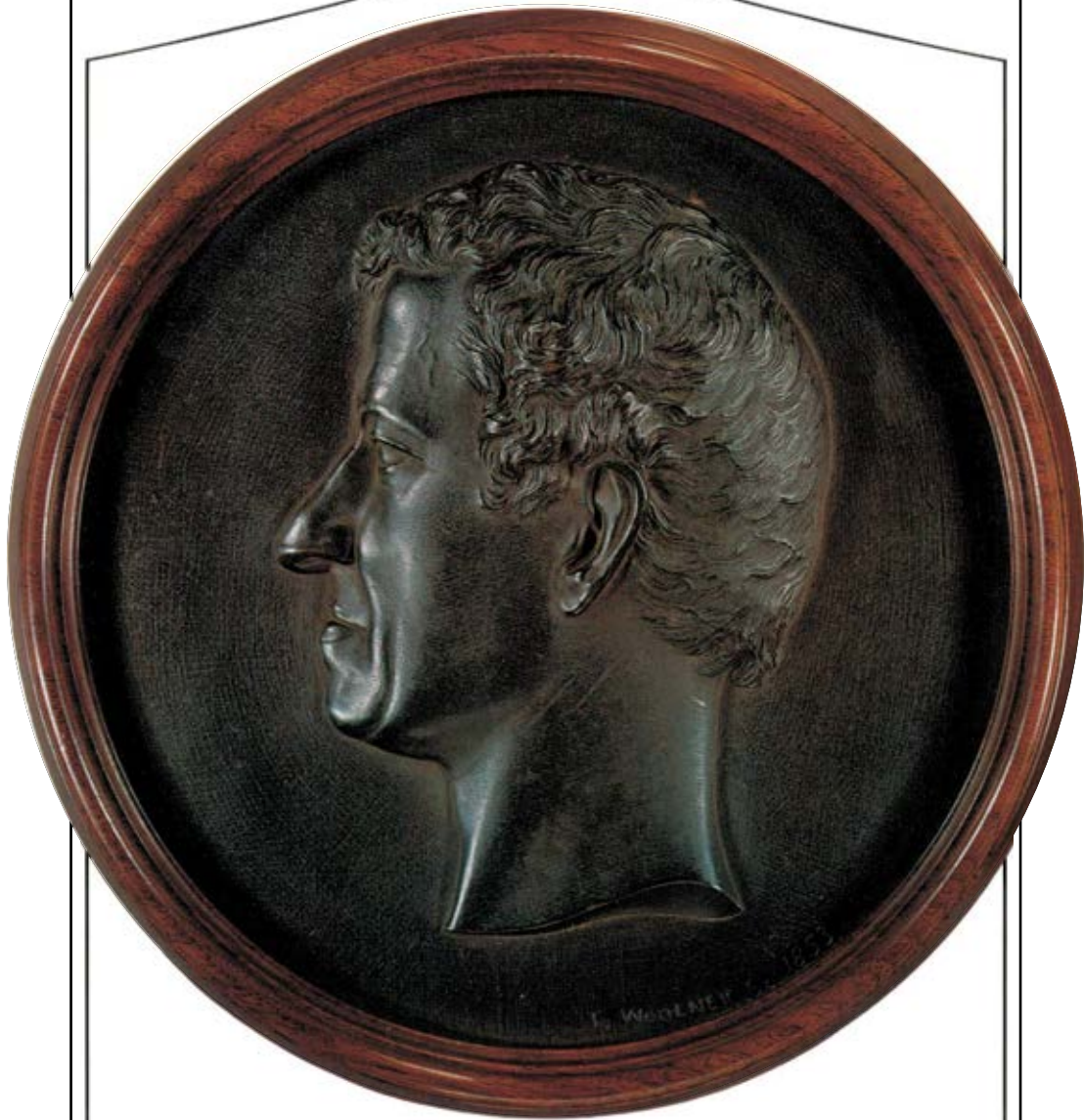


LA TROBEANA



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

Vol 15, No 1, March 2016

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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

La Trobeana is published three times a year: in March, July and November. The journal publishes peer-reviewed articles, as well as other written contributions, that explore themes in the life and times of Charles Joseph La Trobe, aspects of the colonial period of Victoria's history, and the wider La Trobe family.



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FRONT COVER

Thomas Woolner, 1825-1892, sculptor

Charles Joseph La Trobe, 1853

Bronze portrait medallion showing the left profile of Charles Joseph La Trobe, diam. 24cm.

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, H5489

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A Word from the President

It is a great pleasure to bring to members of the La Trobe Society the first edition of *La Trobeana* for 2016. It is full of interesting articles and yet more information about the way of life contemporary to the La Trobe era. With this issue, *La Trobeana* will become a partially 'peer reviewed' journal, meeting the high standards required to encourage academic researchers to contribute to our pages from time to time. Apart from a statement to this effect on the inside cover, no other changes will be apparent.

Murray Thompson's article is a reflection on La Trobe's deep spirituality and his conviction that La Trobe's position as Superintendent of the Port Phillip District and later Lieutenant-Governor of Victoria was a responsible and weighty one for him, laying as it did the solid foundations on which modern-day Victoria is built. Margaret Bowman, in writing about two remarkable teachers of the young Agnes La Trobe, has brought them 'briefly out of the historical shadows', reminding us of the major contributions, so often overlooked, made by women in the colonial era. Daryl Ross gives us the benefit of his thorough research on the history and personalities associated with the Chapelle de l'Ermitage in Neuchâtel, built to honour La Trobe's memory by his second wife Rose. The Pleasure Gardens in the East Sussex village of Litlington are brought to life by Loreen Chambers whose research into the places known to La Trobe and the significant houses he and his family occupied after his return from Australia, reveals much about English social history.

Many of us have wondered over the years about Melbourne's smallest sculpture, installed in the City Square, which shares a surname with Charles Joseph La Trobe. The cheeky canine Larry La Trobe charms all who pass by his position in Collins Street, opposite the Town Hall. Why does he bear such an historic name? James Lesh reveals all in his well-researched and witty exposé of 'Melbourne's Famous Pet Dog'.

The calendar of 'Forthcoming Events' for 2016 is featured in this issue, with a variety of La Trobe-related experiences and functions organized for our education and enjoyment. Two events which will be of great interest are to be held at the historic Beleura House and Garden in Mornington on 14 May and 18 June. Please put these dates in your diaries – more details to come.

Further afield, you will be interested to know that a bronze bust of Charles Joseph La Trobe, commissioned by the Queenscliffe Historical Museum, was unveiled in Hesse Street, Queenscliff. In association with the unveiling of the bust early in March, John Drury was invited to install part of his larger La Trobe exhibition in the Museum, and this will be on show for several months. A visit to Queenscliff to view both the new sculpture and the exhibition would be worthwhile.

An exhibition at the UK National Trust property Ightham Mote in Kent is planned for the period March to October 2016, featuring the lives and works of the great ornithologist,

Prideaux John Selby, and Charles Joseph La Trobe who leased the Mote from Selby in 1856. Both men were fine painters, illustrators, and naturalists, and had much in common. Should you be visiting Britain this year, it would be well worth the effort to visit Ightham Mote, a rare example of a moated manor house still in existence, and see the exhibition.

One of the highlights of each La Trobe Society year is the service to commemorate La Trobe's death, held each December at his former parish church, St Peter's Eastern Hill. The service was conducted last year by Father Hugh Kempster, and Mr Murray Thompson MLA spoke eloquently, his subject being 'La Trobe... the city of Man, the city of God'. Concurrently, the parish church at Litlington, St Michael the Archangel, featured a memorial service in honour of La Trobe whose gravestone lies in the churchyard, and each year, through the good offices of Helen Botham, the La Trobe Society arranges to send Australian flowers for the occasion. The gravestone had fallen into disrepair over the many years since La Trobe's death in 1875. It is excellent to be able to report that, thanks to the generosity of John and Loreen Chambers, it has now been repaired and the lettering replaced.

It is with deep sadness that I record the recent deaths of two members of the La Trobe Society: John Dawson AM and John Hulskamp.

I look forward to seeing many of you at the functions arranged for 2016.

Australia Day 2016 Honours

La Trobe Society members will be delighted to know that, in the latest Australia Day 2016 Honours List, two of our members received awards in acknowledgement of their talent and hard work in the community across many fields:

Maria Myers AC

Maria received the nation's highest Australia Day honour, being appointed to the Companion of the Order of Australia:

For eminent service to the community through philanthropic leadership in support of major visual and performing arts, cultural, education, and not-for-profit organisations, and to the advancement of the understanding of Indigenous rock art.

Valda Walsh AM

Valda, a life member of the Real Estate Institute of Victoria with forty-seven years' experience in the industry, was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia:

For significant service to the real estate industry, and to the community through support for a range of charitable organisations.

From all of us, congratulations to them both!

Diane Gardiner AM

Hon. President

C J La Trobe Society

La Trobe's Melbourne: city of Man, city of God

By Murray Thompson MLA

Murray Thompson has represented the seat of Sandringham in the Victorian Parliament since 1992 and is currently a member of the Law Reform, Road and Community Safety Committee. He is a member of the C J La Trobe Society and has undertaken considerable research into Lieutenant-Governor La Trobe.

This is an edited version of an address Murray Thompson gave at a reception for La Trobe Society members in the Federation Room, Parliament House on Wednesday, 25 November 2015. He acknowledges the dedicated research assistance of Jenni Howell and Daniel Scida and the many detailed discussions in following in La Trobe's footsteps.

La Trobe once caricatured some fellow travellers on a paddle steamer on the Arkansas River whilst travelling in the United States:

As to the Sergeant, he being of Yankee blood, had more than one iron in the fire: and to tell the truth, loved peddling far better than paddling...

– the pilot is found to be a toper
[drunk] – the engineer an ignoramus
– the steward an economist – the captain a gambler – the black fireman insurgent, and the deck-passengers riotous.¹

Welcome to Spring Street!

Earlier this year, I had forwarded a copy of Dianne Reilly's magnificent book *La Trobe: The Making of a Governor* to a Victorian secondary

school teacher, whose family had arrived in Australia from Europe after World War II. She replied, 'I found the story of Charles La Trobe a most unusual and bold overview of the man at this time in history... This is a story that needs to be told'.

The development of early Melbourne between 1839 and 1854 was guided by the wisdom, judgement, life journey experience and faith of Charles Joseph La Trobe and also the people he appointed to office. It might be said that two cities defined his life: the city of man and city of God. This framework was used to describe the life of a former Victorian Planning Minister. Reverend Warren Clarnette told a Melbourne congregation in 2015 that there were two cities that defined the life of Evan Walker:² the city of man and the city of God. He said 'Few have done more than Evan in building the city of man.... His memorials appear on the Melbourne skyline.' He continued, 'Evan lived

David Relph Drape,
 1821-1882, artist
**Royal Park, road to the
 model farm, 1871**
 Watercolour
 Pictures Collection, State
 Library of Victoria,
 H2012.150/2



by a different hope and a different courage which led him to believe that our life's work is never wasted: it is recognised, treasured and stored. That is the meaning of the Holy City. For reasons beyond our comprehension, there would be irreparable loss if humanity and its work were unrecognised, wiped out or forgotten. That is why we may say that nothing we have ever done is lost.²³

I find it interesting that La Trobe had a first-hand insight into the architecture and urban design of multiple European and North American cities: London, Paris, Berne, Venice, Rome, New York, Philadelphia, Boston and Washington. In 1832 La Trobe visited Boston, describing it as a handsome capital: 'It is by far the most English looking city of the Union, and has a character for possessing much good, well-educated and accomplished society, male and female'.⁴ Little did he know that, a hundred and fifty years after his book was published in 1835, the city of Melbourne, over which he exerted much guiding influence, entered into a sister-city relationship with Boston in 1985. La Trobe also described other American cities:

New York is the most bustling;
 Philadelphia the most symmetrical;
 Baltimore the most picturesque; and
 Washington the most bewildering. At
 New York you pass hours with delight
 under the trees on that beautiful breezy
 promenade, which the good taste of the
 citizens has preserved at the extreme
 point of their island... You enjoy
 many a stroll along Broadway with its
 handsome edifices, shops, and public
 buildings. At Philadelphia, 'the city of
 Brotherly Love', you are struck with
 the regularity of the streets, – their
 numberless handsome mansions, – the

lavish use of white and gray marble, –
 pleasant avenues and squares, – noble
 public institutions, – markets, – the
 abundance of water...⁵

Buildings

During his time in Melbourne La Trobe presided over the establishment of the State Library, Supreme Court, University of Melbourne, and the Melbourne and Geelong Hospitals. Interestingly, he also selected the site for the Victorian Parliament and the Lunatic Asylum. The Parliament was for a time referred to as 'La Trobe's Block House'.

Interestingly, his uncle Benjamin Henry Latrobe had re-designed sections of the White House and Capitol Hill building in Washington, as well as churches and multiple other buildings which Charles La Trobe had seen in America.

Parks

La Trobe's travels, ranging from the European Alps to the frontier of North America, helped engender his extraordinary appreciation of flora and fauna. In turn it could be said that he developed a visionary appreciation of the importance of trees and open space in city and urban environments. The development of Melbourne's magnificent parks and gardens had their genesis under the La Trobe administration. He established the site of the Botanic Gardens and reserved the King's Domain as the site for a future Government House.

By the mid-1850s, Melbourne had an inner ring of parkland with Flagstaff, Fitzroy, Carlton and Treasury gardens. An outer ring included the Royal and Princess parks to the north, Richmond Police Paddock (Yarra Park),

Studley Park and the Survey Paddock (Burnley Park) to the east, and Fawkner Park and South Melbourne Park (Albert Park) in the south. On the day of his departure in 1854, La Trobe rode to the area he had reserved ten years earlier and indicated to the surveyor-general exactly where he wanted the boundaries of Royal Park (then an area of 730 acres or 295 hectares) and Princes Park. La Trobe's contribution to the provision of open space in Melbourne was therefore of great importance.⁶

Patron

La Trobe served as the patron of a range of organisations including the Royal Melbourne Philharmonic, the Mechanics' Institute now the Melbourne Athenaeum, the Philosophical Society (now known as the Royal Society of Victoria), and the Auxiliary Bible Society of Australia Felix.

Contemporary Issues

He dealt with multiple local political issues ranging from constraints of finance, communication delay, immigration mix, sectarianism, separation, gold licence fees, the development of infrastructure, Indigenous protection, water supply and mental health. His refusal to allow the disembarkation of convicts from the *Randolph* might be explained both in terms of seeking to maintain an aspiration to build a stronger civil society as well as a response to public opinion.

Breadth of Experience

Prior to arriving in Melbourne La Trobe had had an extraordinary breadth of life experiences. He had travelled to the great cities of Europe, and through eighteen states of the United States, to Mexico and the West Indies. He had written seven publications namely:

The Alpenstock: sketches of Swiss scenery and manners 1829

The Pedestrian: a summer's ramble in the Tyrol and some of the adjacent provinces 1832

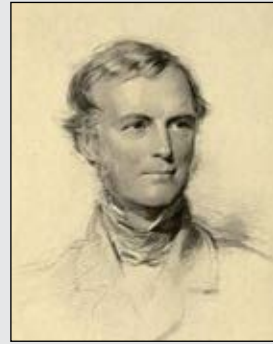
The Rambler in North America 1835

The Rambler in Mexico 1836

Negro Education in Jamaica 1838

Negro Education in the Windward and Leeward Islands 1838

Negro Education in British Guiana and Trinidad 1839.



George Richmond RA, 1809–1896, artist
Sir George Grey, 1859
 Steel engraving
 Frontispiece to Memoir of Sir George Grey
 by Mandell Creighton,
 London: Longmans, Green, 1901

Interestingly, La Trobe wrote about what he became: 'men who dare attempt what others dare not; ...for one individual, who, forsaking the beaten path, has, by striking fortuitously into a more noble one suited to his talents, left a name and a character for high deeds to posterity'.⁷ He chose a path of adventure.

Providential circumstances

There were perhaps four providential circumstances in La Trobe's life. There were providential meetings with Washington Irving, an American writer and diplomat, at a French port, and subsequently with Henry Ellsworth in America, briefed by the United States Government to assess the resettlement options for the 'Indian' tribes west of the Mississippi. Through his travels with Irving and Ellsworth, recorded in his book *The Rambler in North America*, La Trobe gained deep insight into the travail and discord between the settlers and the Indigenous population arising from confrontation, displacement and corrupt conduct on the part of settlers. Following the publication of this book, providentially La Trobe was commissioned to provide a report to the House of Commons on the use of funds voted for the education of the Negro slaves in the West Indies after emancipation.

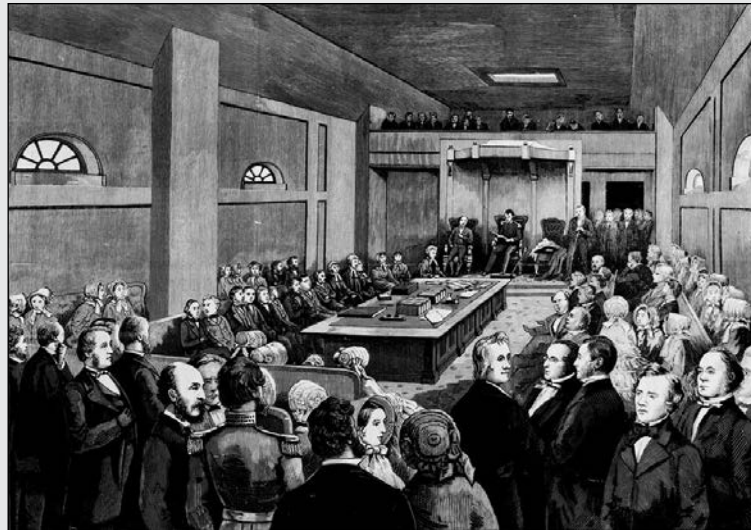
He was appointed by three members of the British Colonial Office, all committed Christians connected with William Wilberforce and the anti-slavery movement: Lord Glenelg, (Sir) George Grey and Sir James Stephen. La Trobe's father, Christian Ignatius La Trobe, had informed Wilberforce on the condition of the West Indian slaves in 1807. Lord Glenelg was Secretary of State for the Colonies in 1835, a humanitarian and a committee member of the evangelical Church Missionary Society. Under

Secretary James Stephen's wife was the sister of the vicar of the church at Clapham where Wilberforce attended.

La Trobe's report on *Negro Education in Jamaica* (1838) was presented to Sir George Grey, whose biography, written by Bishop Mandell Creighton, described Sir George's parents as 'strongly evangelical, and they numbered amongst their friends William Wilberforce, Charles Simeon [an evangelical clergyman], and the chiefs of the evangelical party.'⁸ In a memorial sermon, Bishop Creighton stated that: 'What [Sir George] did in public life was due to integrity of purpose...he sought only to know what was most right. He regarded his talents as gifts of God.'⁹

Stowe.¹⁰ His son, James Wilberforce Stephen, was a Victorian Attorney-General and later a Supreme Court judge. A stained glass window at Oaktree Anglican Church in his memory has the inscription, 'For he was a Good Man'. James Stephen, the father of Sir George and Sir James, was regarded as the main proponent (chief architect) of the *Slave Trade Act 1807*, banning the trading of slaves.

It has been my contention that, in the role of La Trobe in the Port Phillip District and Colony of Victoria, he contributed not just to public infrastructure, administration and planning, but also made a contribution to 'The City of God'.



William Strutt, 1825-1915, artist
The first Legislative Council of Victoria, 13th November, 1851 [1887]
 Wood engraving
 Pictures Collection, State Library of Victoria, IAN25/06/87/SUPP/8

The fourth providential circumstance was that these men appointed La Trobe as Superintendent of the Port Phillip District when the expectation was that a person of military background would be chosen. They were well aware of the outrages against the Indigenous population in Van Diemen's Land and New South Wales.

It was Sir James Stephen, Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, who had earlier drafted the Abolition of Slavery Act of 1833. Interestingly, his brother Sir George Stephen who was also active in the abolition movement, migrated to Australia, joined the Victorian Bar and taught Sunday School at St. Mary's, now Oak Tree Anglican Church, in Glen Eira Road, Caulfield. He later published *Anti-Slavery Recollections*, a series of letters to Mrs. Beecher

He was a member and benefactor of St Peter's Church Eastern Hill, which is within a couple of hundred metres of Parliament House. A large memorial commemorating the life of his late wife Sophie is on the church's southern wall, and elsewhere there is a description of his role as church member and Governor. He supported the establishment of the Lutheran Church in Macarthur Street on the corner of Cathedral Place and Tasma Terrace and was a donor to the Lutheran cause. He worked with the Roman Catholic Church to secure the site of St Patrick's Cathedral and averted a plan to extend Bourke Street further to the east. He had a very strong working relationship with Governor Gipps, a man of personal conviction who had worked with the justice process in the wake of the Myall Creek massacre.



**Charles Norton, 1826–1872, artist
St Peter's 1850**

Watercolour on cream paper
Pictures Collection, State Library of
Victoria, H88.21/63

When La Trobe arrived in Melbourne his address included the following words:

I pray God, to whom I look for strength and power, that whether my stay among you as chief organ of the Government, be long or short, that I may be enabled through His grace, to know my duty, and to do my duty, diligently, temperately, and fearlessly...

It will not be by individual aggrandizement, by the possession of numerous flocks and herds, or of costly acres, that we shall secure for the country enduring prosperity and happiness, but by the acquisition and maintenance of sound religious and moral institutions, without which no country can become truly great.¹¹

I ask the question: Were these words a traditional ceremonial piety or did they have a deeper origin? I favour the latter interpretation. In support of this contention, the faith of La Trobe is transparently reflected in much of his writing. In his book *The Pedestrian*, he wrote:

It was Sunday morning; the day which God has hallowed by his own repose, and bestowed as a sacred gift upon his creatures; and the simple churchyard and covered porch beyond, were already filled with the peasants of the Simmenthal, awaiting the hour of social worship. I rose and went to worship with them, for none had greater cause to carry the offering of praise to the altar of God than myself. I had often owned his preservation, and the guidance of his Providence in solitude, and I now rejoiced that I was spared to bless and give him thanks with my fellow men.¹²

In his earlier book *The Alpenstock*, he wrote:

Who would not rejoice to be reminded of his dependence upon the bounty, providence, and mercy of God; to feel, when far away from the crush and trammels of a state of society, where man is too often tempted to forget it, that he is a creature dependent upon his Creator, and upon Him alone, for guidance and direction: that from Him he has the breath of life, and strength, and health and reason, and that to Him he must look for their continuance. Many a time have I felt my heart glow with acknowledgment, and my eyes fill with tears while bending over the clear spring, and soaking my hard crust, under a conviction of the infinite goodness of the Creator towards his creature.... On that solitary road [in Neuchâtel] I have witnessed many a glorious display of the beauty, majesty, and grandeur with which God has decked this earth both by day and night.¹³

In *The Rambler in North America*, La Trobe had outlined the imperative need in America for 'just, honest and good men – men of character and probity – above profiting by the defenceless state of the tribes, and superior to the temptations held out on every hand for self-aggrandizement'.¹⁴

He also spoke of the strong connection of values shared by Britain and America:

– speaking the same language, claiming the same literature, the same early history; both possessing the same ardent love of liberty, though the one may incline to the monarchical, and

the other to the democratic form of government, – worshipping God after the same manner; each containing thousands of real Christians, united together as brethren by the closest bonds of the Gospel, with common hopes, desires, and ends in living.¹⁵

In his report to Lord Glenelg in the House of Commons, he wrote: ‘The gift of an education should not be merely based upon worldly morality, but built upon the Holy Scriptures’.¹⁶

From his experience in North America and the West Indies and his perspective of faith, La Trobe had seen the need to appoint good men (and I would add women) as leaders and change-makers. He supported Bishop Perry and his wife Frances from their arrival in Melbourne; Frances Perry did great outreach work establishing many important Melbourne institutions. He appointed Alfred Selwyn, the son of a cleric, to prepare a geological survey of Victoria, and Ferdinand von Mueller, a donor to Lutheran causes, as Chief Botanist at the Melbourne Botanic Gardens.



Charles Albert La Trobe, 1845-1909, artist
Tuggundun's Tomb, Banks of Yarra, c.1852

Pencil on paper

Australian Manuscripts Collection, State Library of Victoria, MS 13354

La Trobe’s writings analysed the qualities of leadership. He described the failings: ‘grasping hand, selfish policy, and want of faith... How often did he return evil for good... The dissolute and ignorant of both classes will give rise to yet greater evil... The Indians are surrounded by bad men... Few of whom, for very evident reasons, are to be trusted’.¹⁷ He went on to note that much iniquity was practised by those agents appointed by the government to deal with indigenous Americans. He referred to temptations open to men of lax principle, and defined the challenges of co-existence:

The white man and the Indian cannot be near neighbours. They never will and never can amalgamate. Feuds, murders, disorders will spring up; mutual aggression among the dissolute and ignorant of both classes will give rise to yet greater evils. If the Indian turns his back upon the alternative of civilization, he must recede; and were it not even advantageous to the white, it would be mercy in the latter to attempt by all lawful means to arrange matters in such a way as to avoid the possibility of collision.¹⁸

Of particular interest are the backgrounds of the people whom he appointed as nominees to the first Victorian Legislative Council:¹⁹

William Lonsdale, General Secretary. Lonsdale was Port Phillip’s first Police Magistrate, and after La Trobe’s arrival, his most senior deputy. He conducted early church services in the Port Phillip District and served as President of the Bible Society upon its formation in 1840.

William Stawell was appointed as the Attorney-General. It was said of Stawell that he was converted after a sermon by Bishop Perry in 1848. Stawell was regarded as a person of high intellect whose advice La Trobe and later Hotham relied upon. He was also good company.

Redmond Barry was appointed as the Solicitor-General. He was a barrister, later Supreme Court judge and nominal Anglican. Appointed by La Trobe to the first Council of the University of Melbourne he was

elected Chancellor, and also had a prominent role with the Melbourne Hospital and the Melbourne Public (now State) Library.

Charles Ebden was appointed as Auditor-General. Ebden was an overlander, former property owner of a house in Black Rock, Melbourne, which is still standing, and a communicant member of St Peter's.

Robert Pohlman was appointed Chairman of the Court of Requests. Pohlman, a lawyer by training was an original trustee of St Peter's and attendee there. Pohlman served as the Chairman of the Denominational Board of Education.

The five nominees without office of the Legislative Council were:

Alexander Dunlop. Dunlop was a pioneer pastoralist, director of the Victorian Industrial Society and Magistrate in 1851. He was a very devout man and highly respected, who, as a member of the first House, moved that its meetings should be opened with prayer. Dunlop delivered the address at the third anniversary of Knox Church, Melbourne on 19 November 1849. He was a member of the Free Presbyterian Church in Geelong.

Charles Griffith. Griffith was noted as a devout Anglican, grazier, lawyer and Sunday observant. He was later appointed as a Chancellor of the Anglican Church in Victoria and helped found the bishopric endowment fund and Melbourne Church of England Grammar School.

William Haines. Haines was a significant landholder and farmer, prominent in the Geelong district as a local magistrate and member of the Grant District Council, who later became Victoria's first Premier, then called Chief Secretary, on 28 November 1855.

James Hunter Ross. Ross, a solicitor, was a member of the Port Phillip Orphan Immigration Committee and Board of Guardians in 1848. The *Chronicles of Early Melbourne* describe Ross 'as straight as a lamp-post', albeit sour faced.²⁰



**Louis Laumen, 1958- , sculptor
Dungala Wamayirr (River People),
Sir Doug and Lady Gladys Nicholls, 2007
Bronze
Parliament Gardens, Melbourne**

Andrew Russell. Russell was Mayor of Melbourne 1847-1848, pastoralist, wine wholesaler and bank director.

Another La Trobe appointment which I found particularly interesting was that of Henry Dana as Officer in Charge of the Native Police Corps. Dana was only twenty-two when he was appointed and died at the age of thirty-two. Newspaper reports suggest that he had been introduced to La Trobe back in England through a mutual acquaintance, Lord Kinnaird. This was either the 10th Lord Kinnaird, a British evangelical Member of Parliament and later President of the National Bible Society of Scotland, or his brother, the 9th Lord Kinnaird. Dana had an unusual role with the native police. In the light of La Trobe's North American experience, it is contended that he would only appoint someone with the necessary qualities of character, enthusiasm and leadership to meld an effective force.

An insight into La Trobe's persona could be gleaned from a notation written for him on a drawing by his son. It was of the grave on the banks of the Yarra River of a young Aboriginal man called Tuggundun who had died near La Trobe's tent:

This was a youth I was much attached to. I scarcely ever went from Narre Warren but he accompanied me.

Often on a moonlit night he charmed me singing the Old Hundred to an Aborigine Hymn. I had hoped that he might have been some evidence of my endeavours – he could read and write, knew the Ten Commandments, Lord's Prayer and the Creed and apparently understood their import. After being for at least 3 years partially civilised... [he obtained] leave for 6 months. Returned in a consumptive state and died by my tent between Mr Kerr's [Curr's] & Lyon Campbell's by banks of the Yarra.²¹

In contemporary terms, La Trobe held out hope for the welfare of the Indigenous community, exemplified in an understanding of the Christian faith.

In 2007 the statue of Sir Doug Nicholls – Indigenous leader, sportsman, social leader, Christian pastor and Governor of South Australia – and his wife Gladys was unveiled in the Parliament Gardens on the corner of Spring and Albert Streets, Melbourne. An Indigenous

friend of Sir Doug told the assembled gathering that a favourite passage of scripture marked in his Bible was from the Book of Philippians, Chapter 3, V. 13-14:

Brethren, I do not consider that I have made it my own; but one thing I do, forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

Were it possible for La Trobe to have returned to this precinct a hundred and forty years after the date of his death, and observed what had been built upon the foundations which he had sought to establish as Superintendent and Lieutenant-Governor, he may have rightly held the view that his toil had not been in vain.

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- 1 Charles Joseph La Trobe, *The Rambler in North America, 1832-1833*, London: R. B. Seeley & W. Burnside, 1835, Vol.1, p.200.
 - 2 Evan Walker (1935-2015), architect and former Victorian Labor Planning Minister, has been described as 'the father of urban renewal' in central Melbourne. Quoted *Age*, 18 February 2015.
 - 3 Warren Clarnette, Address at Evan Walker's funeral, Auburn Uniting Church, 23 February 2015.
 - 4 *The Rambler in North America*, Vol.1, p.50.
 - 5 *Ibid*, p.31.
 - 6 Royal Park, Heritage Council Victoria, <http://vhd.heritagecouncil.vic.gov.au/places/1954/download-report> (accessed 6 February 2016)
 - 7 *The Rambler in North America*, Vol.1, p.73.
 - 8 Mandell Creighton, *Memoir of Sir George Grey*, London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1901, p.13.
 - 9 *Ibid*, pp.157-158.
 - 10 George Stephen, *Anti-Slavery Recollections: in a series of letters addressed to Mrs Beecher Stowe*, London: Hatchard, 1854.
 - 11 *Port Phillip Patriot and Melbourne Advertiser*, 7 October 1939, p.4.
 - 12 Charles Joseph La Trobe, *The Pedestrian: a summer's ramble in the Tyrol and some of the adjacent provinces, 1830*, London: R. B. Seeley & W. Burnside, 1832, p.349.
 - 13 Charles Joseph La Trobe, *The Alpenstock: or, sketches of Swiss scenery and manners, 1825-1826*, London: R. B. Seeley & W. Burnside, 1829, p.69.
 - 14 *The Rambler in North America*, Vol.1, p.134.
 - 15 *Ibid*, p.234.
 - 16 *Report on Negro Education in British Guiana and Trinidad*, Parliamentary Papers, House of Commons, Great Britain, 1839, vol.34, Accounts and Papers, No.35, p.11.
 - 17 *The Rambler in North America*, Vol.1, pp.131-133.
 - 18 *Ibid*, p.133.
 - 19 This background information draws heavily on the *Australian Dictionary of Biography*; while Ray Wright, *A Blended House: the Legislative Council of Victoria, 1851-1856*, Melbourne: Parliament of Victoria, 2001, is the authoritative reference on the Legislative Council.
 - 20 Edward Finn ('Garryowen'), *The Chronicles of Early Melbourne, 1835 to 1852: historical, anecdotal and personal*, Melbourne: Fergusson & Mitchell, 1888. Vol.2, p.781.
 - 21 Agnes Louisa La Trobe Scrapbook, La Trobe Neuchâtel Archive, MS 13354, Australian Manuscripts Collection, State Library of Victoria (copy of the original held in the Archives de l'Etat, Neuchâtel). The notation continues: '- I got my son to sketch this from Nature. - I gave the blacks a trifle to enclose his remains with saplings which they did by my direction very neatly'. The location was in the Dight's Falls area. (Ed.)
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Educating Agnes: Agnes La Trobe and two of her teachers

By Dr Margaret Bowman OAM

Dr Margaret Bowman was a Creative Fellow at the State Library of Victoria in 2011, and is the author of *Cultured Colonists* (2014) and of several articles on early colonial history. Formerly she taught Politics at Monash University. She has a PhD in politics from Monash University and a PhD in Art History from the Australian National University. She was the first Urban Affairs Fellow, Commonwealth Department of Urban and Regional Development in 1974.

In this article she provides another perspective on a theme previously explored by John Botham.¹

Agnes La Trobe spent only a few years in Australia, leaving Melbourne and her family as an eight-year-old to grow up and then settle in Neuchâtel as a member of the Swiss aristocracy. In the year before she left Melbourne, and during her voyage to London, Agnes's education was enriched by two remarkable and very different teachers: Anne Gilbert and Kezia Ferguson. Mrs Anne Gilbert ran a seminary for young ladies, which then occupied the premises of the Melbourne Mechanics' Institution in Collins Street. Agnes attended only briefly but she remembered it fondly. Kezia Ferguson was the wife of the ship's captain, into whose care Superintendent La Trobe and his wife Sophie entrusted Agnes during her five-month long voyage to London.

The decision by her parents to send Agnes to her mother's Swiss family for her education was not taken lightly. Although taken in the child's best interests, the separation was nonetheless very painful, as Sophie La Trobe

makes clear in a letter to her daughter written in 1851: 'It is very painful very hard to bear, but we feel that it is the only way to secure to you the advantages of a good education.'²

When Agnes boarded the barque *Rajah* for the voyage that was to take her to a new life far from her family and the happy life at *Jolimont*, she had never been so long as a week away from them. Not surprisingly, a few days after they had sailed Mrs Ferguson could only report in the journal she was keeping for the La Trobes, that Agnes, seasick, was constantly saying, with tearful eyes 'I want maman' and 'I wish I were with maman'.³ However, as the voyage continued, Agnes appears to have settled comfortably under Kezia's firm, kindly direction. In a journal entry at the end of May, after weathering a storm, she noted that the child was 'lively, happy and talkative as ever'.⁴ Not given to lavish praise Kezia further reported on 26 May, 'she has been tolerably good today, though of late she has been rather more careless'.⁵

While the La Trobes' decision to send Agnes to Switzerland for her education was for highly personal reasons, the question of how best to educate their children was common to all colonial officials, whose residence abroad was limited. Their children had to be prepared for a life back in their homeland. At this time, when society in Melbourne was 'in its infancy',⁶ the educational and social supports needed to prepare a young lady for a successful marriage 'at home' were scanty. It may seem to the modern reader that Agnes was still very young to be sent away, and that there would have been plenty of time for early educational weakness to be repaired once the family returned to England.

dearest child how happy we are when we learn that you have been a good and docile child...'⁹

And in a letter written from Hobart where he was acting governor, Agnes's father echoed the same sentiments: 'We have been greatly cheered by the recent letters of your dear Aunt Rose giving us intelligence of your progress in obedience and docility... and we rejoice and believe that dear Agnes will become a consciously good and God-fearing child.'¹⁰

For Agnes's parents, then, 'education' meant much more than book learning and the acquisition of refinements. How attractive



Unknown artist
Melbourne Mechanics' Institution, Collins Street, Melbourne, c.1842
Site of Mrs Gilbert's school
Collection: Royal Historical Society of Victoria, GS-EM-02

However, although it is impossible to know everything her parents considered in reaching their decision, their letters speak plainly of their worries about being unable to find a suitable governess, and of Agnes being 'allowed to run wild at Jolimont'.⁷ She was evidently a very bright and energetic child: even as a five-year-old her father had described her as 'a noble little girl, full of talent, but as wild as a march hare and giddy beyond endurance'.⁸

For her parents, Agnes's behaviour was much more serious than simply boisterousness or demanding attention. As Christian parents, their goal was to ensure that Agnes was 'good', since only then could she be happy; for them, a good girl was quiet and submissive. In her letters to Agnes, Sophie La Trobe repeatedly emphasised the importance of obedience and docility. She wrote: 'I was glad to hear that you have been very well and very cheerful – and a good and obedient girl – if you could only know

to her mother must have been the memory of the aristocratic home in which she had grown up where conservative Calvinist values were unchallenged. There Agnes would have a protected, privileged life surrounded by a large and loving extended family. Where could there be a better place to grow up to be a good woman and a good wife? In the event, at the cost of separation from her parents and siblings, it looks as if 'all the hopes and wishes of her parents for her education and success in life were fulfilled'.¹¹

Anne Gilbert and her school

Although the school Agnes attended before going to Neuchâtel was no substitute for a governess and could not provide Agnes with the education her parents wished, her teacher had much to offer. In the first place, the La Trobes knew Anne and her husband, the artist George Alexander Gilbert, personally as members of their social circle.¹² She was an intelligent,



Johann Friedrich Dietler, 1804-1874, artist
Agnes Louisa La Trobe, c.1850
Watercolour
Archives de l'Etat, Neuchâtel
Agnes aged thirteen

cultured woman who had spent many years among the rising intelligentsia of London and Paris; in addition to all the usual feminine accomplishments, she was French speaking. As an experienced school-mistress she offered 'in addition to the sounder and more practical parts of education, the refinements and habits essential to the superior classes of society'.¹³ A surviving fragment of a letter in which she promoted the advantages of schooling over tuition by a governess neatly encapsulates Anne Gilbert's progressive views about education. In it she stressed the value of cooperation that comes from learning in school: '...the inestimable advantage of joining with other young persons of her own age and sex... in the practice of all those endearing duties and pleasures which belong only to a state of harmonious society'.¹⁴ Again, in line with the teachings of the utopian socialist Charles Fourier, she stresses the pleasure of learning the 'delightful pursuit of useful knowledge'.¹⁵ Although Anne's underlying socialist philosophy was unlikely to appeal to Agnes's parents, they would surely have shared the idea that cooperation was a good thing and that learning could be a delight.

More important for Agnes was Anne Gilbert's gift for establishing friendship with her pupils: in the case of one of them, Eliza Bacchus, it proved to be lifelong. Agnes's teacher was clearly fond of her, continuing to write even seven years after her pupil had left the colony. In a letter to her daughter dated 13 January 1852, Sophie La Trobe wrote: 'Mrs Gilbert brought me a letter for you the other day. She and Mr Gilbert never forget you'.¹⁶

Anne Gilbert had arrived in Melbourne in November 1841 with her much younger second husband George Alexander Gilbert, his brother Frank and the two children of her first marriage to Sir John Byerley. Only a month or so after their arrival, her seventeen-year-old daughter Emma died of dysentery, when she herself was also suffering from the disease. Showing remarkable resilience she set about opening a school for young ladies in their rented house in Collingwood, as soon as she was sufficiently recovered.

At the time when Agnes was her pupil, Anne Gilbert would have been in her early fifties, having married Gilbert in 1839 in London when he was twenty-four and she was forty-eight years old. Intelligent, self-reliant and adventurous, it was Anne Gilbert's modest inheritance that made possible the family's settlement and she may well have been the driving force behind their leaving England. She brought with her to Melbourne a wealth of life experience gained first in her native Wales, and later in France and England.

Born in 1793, Anne was the only daughter of John Bird and his second wife, Susan (née Vaughan).¹⁷ The Cardiff in which she grew up was still a small town with about 2,000 inhabitants, clustered round the castle. John Bird, honest and energetic, collected rents and generally took care of the local interests of the Marquess of Bute, the immensely rich (and inattentive) absentee landlord. Bird was also a bookseller and printer, coach proprietor and postmaster, as well as being active in municipal affairs.

As the only daughter in the household where her father was immersed in local commerce and politics, and connected with the wider world as Lord Bute's agent, an intelligent girl like Anne had every opportunity to observe the ways of the world, not least because the local scene was extending in size and importance as coal and iron from the Welsh valleys were transported through Cardiff as raw material for Britain's industrial revolution.

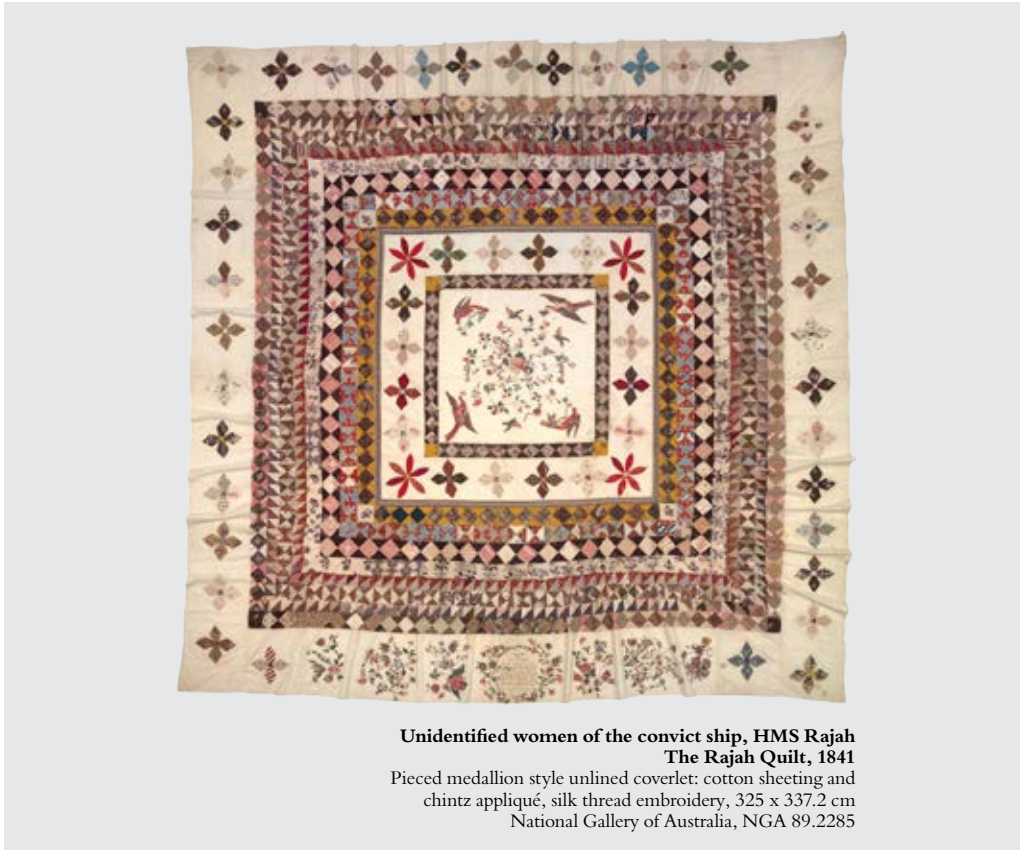
We do not know why or when Anne Bird left Cardiff, but she may have felt no longer comfortable at home after the death of her mother in 1810, and her father's (apparently unhappy) third marriage two years later. All we know is that in 1823 she was in Brussels where she married Sir John Byerley. A likely reason for her being in Brussels was as a companion or governess to an English family or, like Charlotte Brontë two decades later, as a teacher in a school for young ladies.

With her marriage, Anne Gilbert entered the emerging world of the intelligentsia, a

kind of lively free market in which talented, self-educated, ambitious men of lowly birth competed for patronage and recognition. John Byerley (1783-1857), born in north Yorkshire as the son of a carpenter, had established himself in literature as well as in the shadowy world of intelligence, being honoured in 1814 by Tsar Alexander I with the order of Saint Vladimir for

interest in his *Voyage en Orient* (1835)¹⁸ which she translated for publication in 1843.

Returning to England in 1833, the Byerley family lived first in London before moving to Gloucestershire where Sir John died suddenly in 1837. Widowed with two young children, Anne returned to London where she moved in liberal



his work for Russia during the Napoleonic wars. After his marriage, he went on to achieve further success in literature and science, receiving an annual pension from the Prince Regent and, in 1827, a Fellowship of the Royal Society of Literature.

The Byerleys spent some years in Paris where among many other activities John was agent for the Whig MP, Sir Charles Tennyson, in his dealings with the masonic Order of the Temple. Their son Frederick was born in 1825 in the respectable, bourgeois Turenne district: his sister Emma was born there two years later. It was probably while living in Paris that Anne was attracted to the work of the utopian socialist Charles Fourier (1772-1837), so attracted indeed that she planned to translate some of his extensive works into English. It is tempting to imagine that Anne may also have known the poet and politician Alphonse de Lamartine and his English wife, also resident in the Turenne district, and that this is what stimulated her

political and literary circles, becoming friendly with (among others) the prolific writer William Howitt, older brother of Dr Godfrey Howitt, who was well established in Melbourne society. It would have been during these years in London that Anne became interested in mesmerism – then popular among progressive *literati* including Charles Dickens – and in the New Church based on the works of Swedish philosopher and mystic Emanuel Swedenborg.

As an immigrant, Anne Gilbert brought with her a wealth of experience and a progressive outlook: as a schoolmistress she clearly cared deeply for her pupils who became very fond of her. And what stories she could have told them about life in London and Paris!

**Kezia Elizabeth Ferguson, née Hayter
(1818-1885)**

Kezia Ferguson, wife of the master of the ship *Rajah* that carried Agnes to Europe, was equally

remarkable, but very different from Anne Gilbert. To Agnes's parents she might have been like an answer to prayer: there could have been few women to whom they could have entrusted their daughter with as much confidence. It is even possible that it was the availability of a passage on the *Rajah* with its competent young master and his exceptionally suitable wife to care for Agnes, which precipitated her parents' decision to send her back to Europe. The La Trobes would have heard of the Fergusons from Sir John and Lady Franklin when they stayed at *Jolimont* while waiting to return to England on the *Rajah*. They may well have visited the ship when it was at anchor off Geelong in the February before Agnes left.¹⁹ In the event, her parents' care was fully justified, as Charles La Trobe wrote later to Agnes: 'I never cease to bless God that He enabled us to place you in such good, kind, careful hands'.²⁰

Kezia Ferguson was uniquely prepared for the task of looking after Agnes during the long voyage home. As the Captain's wife, she knew the ship well having sailed in her when it carried convict women to Hobart. She was a committed Christian: a woman of firm principles, an experienced teacher and 'a female of superior attainments'.²¹

Little is known about her early life beyond a family connection with the well-known miniaturist George Hayter (1792-1871). Clearly devout, as a young woman Kezia Hayter worked for the reform of women prisoners at Millbank prison where she came to the attention of Elizabeth Fry. A sermon by the Tasmania-based Anglican cleric, Robert Rowland Davies, seems to have aroused in her a desire to continue her work for female prisoners in Australia. At the age of twenty-three, backed by Fry, she accepted an offer by the British Ladies' Society of a free voyage to Hobart on the *Rajah* in return for acting as matron to oversee the welfare of its 180 women convicts.²²

According to her own report, Miss Hayter organized the women into groups and, instead of the disorder and filth of many other prisoner transports, ensured that the women were given religious instruction and some schooling as well as useful activities. Her report describes the daily church services; on one occasion in the tropics '...a congregation of more than 200 persons assembled in such order on the deck of the ship to worship God and hallow his sabbath'.²³

Among the materials provided by the Ladies' Society for the benefit of the convicts during their long sea voyage were bundles of fabric so that women could make patchwork quilts, either for their own use or for sale on



Sir George Hayter, 1792-1871, artist
Kezia Elizabeth Ferguson, c.1844
 Miniature watercolour
 Personal collection of David J Ferguson

their arrival. The one surviving quilt, now in the National Gallery of Australia, was made by a small group of more skilled women under Miss Hayter's direction. It was made for the Ladies' Society members as 'a testimony of the gratitude with which they [the convict women] remember their exertions for their welfare...'.²⁴ It is not known whether the quilt ever reached the Society members, but if, as seems most likely, Miss Hayter was responsible for its design (and possibly for stitching the inscription) Agnes had a teacher with an artist's eye when she came to make her own sampler.²⁵

The voyage proved to be a life-changing one for the convicts' matron: en route, she and the ship's captain, Charles Ferguson became engaged. They were married in Hobart in 1843 on his return from a subsequent voyage. While waiting for her fiancé's return, Kezia Hayter worked as a governess as well as in a Hobart school, refreshing her skills with young ladies to add to her unsentimental, enlightened and competent management of convict women.

When she undertook the care of Agnes, Kezia Ferguson had shown herself to be a woman of independent thought, deeply committed to Christian principles. Her evident concern for Agnes's spiritual and moral welfare demonstrated that she fully shared the La Trobes' values. In a letter to Agnes in 1845 she wrote:

Never forget dear Agnes, how much, how very much, we have talked together of the sin of falsehoods. Your spirits will, I know, often lead you to

commit faults like other little girls,
but if you honestly confess them, not
only your friends but the God of Truth
himself will love you.²⁶

On a more mundane level, Kezia was just as diligent in her concern for good behaviour. Her voyage journal has this entry for the 19 September: 'Agnes has been tolerably good today though of late she has been rather more careless than usual.' Another delightful journal entry shows a mutual concern with Anne Gilbert in overcoming Agnes's habit of biting her nails. Kezia wrote on 27 May:

She was delighted today to have the
nails of both hands cut... I put the
gloves on some time since which very
much distressed her and she has not

since bitten them. . . . she said she was
sure that if Mrs Gilbert saw them she
would jump for joy and after all, she
said it was Mrs Gilbert's gloves that
cured her.

Agnes La Trobe and her parents were fortunate that during a short period of childhood she was in the care of two remarkable women. It is good to bring them briefly out of the historical shadows as a reminder of the too often unsung contribution of women to the colonial experience.

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- 1 John Botham, 'The Good Old *Rajah*: and those who sailed in her', *La Trobeana*, v.14, no.2, July 2015, pp.31-42.
 - 2 Sophie La Trobe to Agnes La Trobe, 28 February 1851 – Journal and letters of Agnes La Trobe MS 14152, Australian Manuscripts Collection, State Library of Victoria.
 - 3 Journal of Kezia Ferguson on voyage of "Rajah" from Port Phillip to London – Journal and letters of Agnes La Trobe, MS 14152, Australian Manuscripts Collection, State Library of Victoria. Entry for 25 April 1845.
 - 4 *Ibid*, 30 May 1845.
 - 5 *Ibid*, 19 September 1845.
 - 6 Charles Joseph La Trobe to John Murray, 15 December 1840, in *Letters of Charles Joseph La Trobe*, edited by L.J. Blake, Melbourne: Government Printer, 1975, p.11.
 - 7 Marguerite Hancock, 'News from Jolimont: the letters of Charles Joseph and Sophie La Trobe to their daughter Agnes, 1845-1854', *Victorian Historical Journal*, v.73, 2002, p.147.
 - 8 Charles Joseph La Trobe to Julia Latrobe, 6 June 1842, Charles Joseph La Trobe Miscellaneous Papers, MS000317, Royal Historical Society of Victoria.
 - 9 Sophie La Trobe to Agnes La Trobe, 16 February 1846.
 - 10 Charles Joseph La Trobe to Agnes La Trobe, 3 January 1847.
 - 11 Botham, p.38.
 - 12 Margaret Bowman, 'Portrait of the Artist as a Young Settler: George Alexander Gilbert', *La Trobeana*, vol.12, no.3, November 2013, pp.16-22.
 - 13 The advertisement appeared in all four editions of the *Port Phillip Magazine*, January-April 1843, p.133.
 - 14 Anne Gilbert to Joseph Docker, 6 October 1842, Docker Papers, 1815-1978, MS 10437, Australian Manuscripts Collection, State Library of Victoria.
 - 15 *Ibid*.
 - 16 Sophie La Trobe to Agnes La Trobe, 13 January 1852.
 - 17 See Hilary M. Thomas (ed), *The Diaries of John Bird of Cardiff, Clerk to the First Marquess of Bute 1790-1803*, Cardiff: South Wales Record Society, 1987, Preface.
 - 18 Alphonse de Lamartine, *Souvenirs, impressions, pensées et paysages pendant un voyage en Orient, 1832-1833*, Paris: Gosselin, 1835.
 - 19 La Trobe recorded that on 17 February 1845 he and Sophie visited Geelong, where the ship was at anchor, see *Charles Joseph La Trobe: Australian Notes, 1839-1854*, Yarra Glen: Tarcoola Press in association with the State Library of Victoria, 2006, p.126.
 - 20 Charles Joseph La Trobe to Agnes La Trobe, 30 September 1846.
 - 21 Thomas Timpson, *Memoirs of Mrs Elizabeth Fry including a history of her labours in promoting the reformation of female prisoners and the improvement of British seamen*, London: Aylott and Jones, 1847, p.133.
 - 22 Trudy Cowley and Diane Snowden, *Patchwork Prisoners: the Rajah quilt and the women who made it*, Hobart: Research Tasmania, 2013, p.26.
 - 23 Timpson, pp.133-134.
 - 24 Cowley and Snowden, p.3.
 - 25 Journal of Kezia Ferguson, 19 September 1845.
 - 26 Kezia Ferguson to Agnes La Trobe, 27 October 1845, Journal and letters of Agnes La Trobe, MS14152, Australian Manuscripts Collection, State Library of Victoria.
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La Chapelle de l'Ermitage, Neuchâtel

By Daryl Ross

Daryl Ross is a retired business executive and former export consultant. His Swiss great-grandfather, Louis Ernest Leuba, was one of a number of enterprising young Swiss encouraged by C J La Trobe and his Neuchâtel Swiss wife, Sophie, née Montmollin, to settle in Victoria. Ernest Leuba arrived in Melbourne in March 1854, accompanied by Hubert de Castella and Adolphe de Meuron. Daryl's interest in the family associations with Neuchâtel, which he has visited many times, triggered his interest in the La Trobe Society when it was first formed. Daryl is currently Vice-President of the C J La Trobe Society.

The story of La Chapelle de l'Ermitage, Neuchâtel draws together many threads in the lives of Charles Joseph, Sophie and Rose La Trobe and their children. The chapel is a monument to one family's deep love. The story also emphasises the strong connection between the Swiss canton and the State of Victoria. This connection was recognised by the celebrations in Neuchâtel for the hundredth anniversary of the death of our first Governor in 1975.

Monument to a family

Charles Joseph La Trobe C.B. died at Clapham House, Litlington, Sussex on 4 December 1875 aged seventy-four. He left his second wife Rose Isabelle La Trobe (née de Montmollin), four adult children from his marriage to Sophie, one child

of his second marriage, and a grand-daughter by his eldest child, Agnes. La Trobe is buried in the churchyard of St Michael the Archangel in Litlington.

Following La Trobe's death, Rose Isabelle returned with her nineteen year old daughter Margaret Rose (known as Daisy) to Switzerland. She had purchased a property on the hillside above her hometown of Neuchâtel the year before her husband's death. Their younger child, Isabelle Castellane Helen had died in August 1874 aged sixteen. Agnes Louisa, the eldest child of La Trobe's first marriage, had married Pierre Count de Salis-Soglio in Litlington in October 1874. Their daughter Isabelle Rose de Salis was born on 19 October 1875 just a few weeks before her grandfather's death, but she died on 18 July 1878, during a diphtheria epidemic that also



Raymond Berthoud, photographer
La Chapelle de l'Ermitage, south facade, 2015

The large white building is apartments built on former l'Ermitage land

claimed the lives of her two younger brothers, Jérôme André (born 7 December 1876) and George Auguste (born 22 April 1878).¹

Rose, who was twelve years younger than her sister, Sophie, was the widow of Louis Auguste de Meuron, from the same patrician family as Rose and Sophie's mother. They had married in September 1841 and their only child, Esther, born in 1842, died in infancy. Louis Auguste was the regional Commissioner for Forests and Lands in the Canton of Neuchâtel before he died in 1843 at the age of forty-two, after only two years of marriage. The widowed Rose became a surrogate mother to her sister's daughter Agnes when she returned from Australia in 1845. Charles and Sophie had decided that an upbringing in frontier Melbourne would not be best for their lively eldest daughter, so in a traumatic separation, at the age of eight, Agnes was sent home to the family in Neuchâtel for her education. She was sixteen before she saw her mother again, when the very ill Sophie returned to Neuchâtel with the three younger children in 1853. After Sophie's death in early 1854, Rose took responsibility for all of the children. La Trobe's subsequent marriage to Rose de Meuron-Montmollin in 1855 has been the subject of other articles.²

Rose's twenty-year marriage to La Trobe was rich and fruitful for all parties. Despite the uncertainty surrounding her husband's career

and financial circumstances, Rose was awarded a measure of emotional certainty by her own motherhood and in taking care of her husband's children whom she could love and raise as her own.

We can imagine the depth of grief that Rose endured in those few years after her second husband's death when their sixteen year old daughter and then three step-grandchildren died. We believe she found solace in her religious devotion, expressing both grief and gratitude by commissioning the building of a place of solitude and worship in perpetual memory of her loved ones.

La Chapelle de l'Ermitage

The settlement in Neuchâtel goes back beyond the early Celtic migrations when they built their houses on stilts in the lake as protection from savage wild animals. A period of Roman occupation was followed by the building of a dominant new castle by the Burgundians early in the 11 Century AD. This gave its name 'Neuchâtel' to the region and the lake that was carved into the southern Jura mountains by glacial action during prehistoric ice ages.³

The south-facing ridge along the north side of Lake Neuchâtel has long been a favoured terrain for Swiss vigneron. By the end of the eighteenth century the area immediately above,



Daryl Ross, photographer
 La Chapelle de l'Ermitage, northern
 aspect, 2015
 The path up the hillside leads to La Plota



Daryl Ross, photographer
 La Chapelle de l'Ermitage,
 interior, 2015

but just outside the perimeter of the old town of Neuchâtel, was well established as vineyards. In the 1780s a major road was constructed linking Neuchâtel to the traditional road to the ancient commune of Valangin. This new road, which cut through the established vineyards, was diverted in places by rocky outcrops on the hillside. One such outcrop was to become significant to our story.

In 1794 Abel-Georges Bosset applied to the local authorities for permission to build a residence for his vine-workers; the property was defined by two lime trees (linden). Permission was granted and two boundary stones were subsequently set in the enclosure wall. Then in 1799 Bosset sold the land to a Neuchâtel wine merchant, Jonas-Pierre Varnod. This enterprising gentleman had established public baths with hot and cold rooms on the lakeside promenade. For this he required hot rocks which he obtained from the outcrop he purchased in the vineyards. In 1802 his enterprise failed and he left Switzerland in debt. When his creditors listed the hillside quarry for sale it was purchased by the local landlord, the Merveilleux family, who did not wish to see a quarry reopened in their tranquil area. In 1841 an adjoining property was purchased by Reverend Alphonse-Claude-Louis de Perrot. He built a house for his retirement, and named the property *l'Ermitage*

(The Retreat) which became the manor house of the neighbourhood. Formerly Professor of Theology at Basel University, Perrot was well known and respected in the canton of Neuchâtel. In retirement he held classes in the house. Being unmarried and without descendants he established a foundation, placing his assets in trust to assist local convalescents. After he died in 1874 the committee of the foundation put the property on the market. It was purchased on 30 June 1874 by Rose La Trobe for 48,500 francs.⁴

After the unexpected death of her sixteen year old daughter Isabelle in Switzerland in August 1874, followed so closely by her husband's death in December of the same year, Rose decided to seek refuge and return to the sanctuary of Neuchâtel to retire at her recently acquired property, *L'Hermitage*. Undoubtedly affected by the tragic family deaths and perhaps influenced by the English upper class tradition, Rose decided to build a private chapel on her property as a memorial to her husband and their daughter.

The rocky outcrop so unsuitable for viticulture, a former quarry now a saw mill recently ruined by fire, seemed an ideal location for such a building. Rose purchased the property from the Merveilleux family who totally

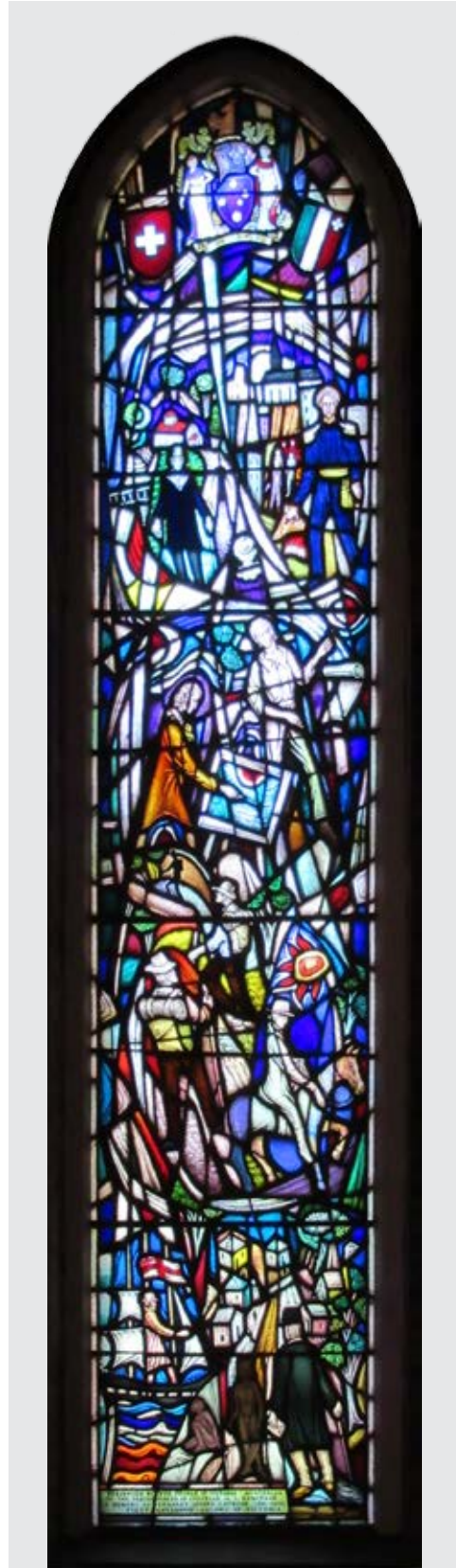
supported her project. Plans for the chapel were drawn up by Louis-Daniel Perrier, a local architect familiar with all current requirements. Perrier, Parisian-French by birth, had studied in Paris and later in Berlin. He had settled in Neuchâtel in 1848, the year of political turmoil in Neuchâtel, as in many other parts of Europe. He worked mainly for the local government until 1864 when he was appointed Director of Public Works for the City of Neuchâtel. Many of the classic buildings in that beautiful city bear his stamp to this day.

‘Une modeste chapelle de style anglais’

The brief that Rose gave Perrier was simple, ‘a modest English style chapel’. So on land levelled from the ruined sawmill, Perrier produced an elegant chapel: a nave with a choir and transept, an entrance doorway through a stone and timber porch, walls of small yellow stone on a brick foundation, solidly buttressed; a roof topped with a simple gable running west to a bell tower in a metal steeple and a weather vane, complemented with a Celtic cross. The lancet windows along the north and south walls allowed light through translucent diamond shapes in lead tracks. Three large windows in the west wall had alternating squares and diamonds. The choir, slightly elevated above the transept, was lit by two plain lancet windows and an oculus above. At the north end is the entrance to the sacristy. The inside is simple, not large: about sixteen metres long, by seven metres wide and five metres in height. It is tastefully decorated in colours complementary to the timber wall panelling and the honey coloured timber pews. A soft blue and white tile patterned floor completes the décor.

In designing this memorial Chapel in such a way that it can be used as a place of worship, Rose created not only a memorial to her husband and her daughter but a centre of worship that was missing in this growing quarter of Neuchâtel. Today the Chapel is home to a substantial and loyal congregation of the Reformed Church of the Canton of Neuchâtel. The current pastor is a member of the Salis family.

As outlined above, in 1874 at the age of thirty-six, La Trobe’s eldest daughter Agnes had married Count Pierre de Salis-Soglio, hereditary Count of the Holy Roman Empire, whose mother was from an aristocratic Neuchâtel family. Pierre was a painter who became the curator at the Neuchâtel Museum of Art and History. Agnes was his second wife and in the years following their marriage they had three children; Isabelle Rose b.1875; Jérôme André b.1876 and Georges Auguste b.1878, all three of whom subsequently died from diphtheria during an epidemic that raged in June/July 1878.



Alan Sumner, 1911-1994, artist
 La Trobe Commemorative window, 1978
 Chapelle de l'Ermitage, Neuchâtel
 Daryl Ross, photographer

By way of a loving and lasting memorial, Rose had two family plaques created. They are beautifully engraved copper plates inlaid into stone niches in the walls of the choir with moulded frames and scripted in old English lettering as would be found in many village churches in the United Kingdom. They read:

To the Glory of God Almighty,
 Father Son and Holy Ghost
 and in loving memory of
 Charles Joseph La Trobe Esq CB
 and of
 Isabelle Castellane Helen La Trobe
 his daughter
 This Church was erected AD 1878
 The Lord God giveth them light
 Rev XXII

In Loving Memory of
 Jerome Andre de Salis
 born Decr 7th 1876 died June 20th 1878
 George Auguste de Salis
 born April 22nd 1878 died July 5th 1878
 Isabelle Rose de Salis
 born Oct^r 19th 1875 died July 18th 1878
 The beloved and only children of
 Peter de Salis Esq^r and of
 Agnes Louisa La Trobe
 his wife
 So shall we ever be with the Lord
 1 Genesis IV 17

In addition to establishing and furnishing the Chapel, Rose and her daughter Daisy joined with the neighbouring Merveilleux family to provide the pulpit, the communion cups and table, and a special bell that was mounted in the tower. The action of the bell's striker was by ropes in the nave until 1969 when it was electrified.

Rose had joined the newly formed parish of this church in 1876 while the chapel was under construction. Regular Sunday evening services, held in different locations, began in February 1877 under the direction of Pasteur James Wittnauer, who was one of the founders of the Independent Evangelical Church of Neuchâtel in 1873. The new Chapel was inaugurated on 30 June 1878 in a service chaired by Pastor Wittnauer and Professor Frédéric Godet, the father of Georges-Edouard Godet who in 1883 became the husband of Charles' and Sophie's youngest daughter, Cécile. Afterwards Rose arranged an afternoon party for the children of the parish at her adjacent L'Hermitage property.

Tragically this event coincided with the deaths of Agnes and Pierre de Salis's three young children, so the Chapel became a further memorial for this family. Then in 1880, when Agnes and Pierre were settled in Neuchâtel, they



Daryl Ross, photographer
Memorial plaque to Charles Joseph La Trobe
and Isabelle Castellane Helen La Trobe
 Chapelle de l'Ermitage, Neuchâtel
 Commissioned by Rose La Trobe 1878

built a new house for themselves on L'Hermitage property which they called *La Plota*, overlooking the Chapel and the Lake to the distant Alps. Rose and Daisy continued living in the original house that became known as the *Foyer de l'Ermitage*.

A Sunday morning service was held at the Chapel each week, with a second service in the evening followed by a meeting of parishioners. The morning service followed the liturgy of the Independent Church, that is, the sermon was preceded by a reading of scripture from an original Ostervald Bible,⁵ which had been generously donated to the Chapel. That bible stayed in use until 1943 when it was replaced by a more modern version. By this time the congregation had outgrown the capacity of the chapel.

A committee was established to oversee the maintenance of the Chapel and its surroundings. It was financially supported by Rose until her death in 1883, after which time Agnes assumed responsibility. Even the grounds and gardens had been developed and maintained by groundsmen from her neighbouring property. Now living at *La Plota*, Agnes and Pierre had two more children after the tragic loss of their first three: Elisabeth-Sophie born 1880 and Rose Marguerite born 1882, but she too died in 1889.

Special events were also celebrated in the



Daryl Ross, photographer
 Foyer de l'Ermitage, 2015
 Former home of Rose La Trobe

Chapel, notably Queen Victoria's Jubilee on 21 June 1887, when Agnes had the chapel specially decorated, and arranged for an English chaplain to celebrate a special liturgical service with ninety guests. By this time the chapel was being used to celebrate marriages and baptisms. Other denominations also made use of the chapel outside church hours.

Singing was accompanied by a volunteer playing a simple harmonium; often this was Agnes herself. However, an annual report of the committee noted that the collaboration of a group of teachers helped the congregation hold the correct tune.

Agnes died in 1916 during World War I. This was a difficult time for the Swiss despite their neutrality. Switzerland relied on other European countries for many essentials that were unavailable in wartime. For instance, the heating system in the chapel needed a new boiler and pipes during the freezing winter months. Agnes's only surviving child, Elisabeth-Sophie, who had married Count Godefroy de Blonay in 1901, had been gifted the ownership of L'Hermitage property and the Chapel in 1906. From this time she assumed responsibility for the property's maintenance. However, due to wartime privations, nothing could be done during the winter of 1916-17 and the Chapel was closed. Then in July 1918 the State Council decreed that all public meeting places, including places of worship, be closed to avoid contagion during the prevailing influenza epidemic. The Chapel

remained closed for the next four winters.

In 1921 when the Blonay family found the management and maintenance of the chapel property increasingly onerous, the Parish Council agreed to take over full maintenance responsibility. During this time the *Foyer de l'Ermitage* house where Rose had resided was no longer occupied by the family, as Elisabeth-Sophie was living at *Chateau Grandson*, the de Blonay family estate. It was decided that the chapel and its land should be separated from the house property.

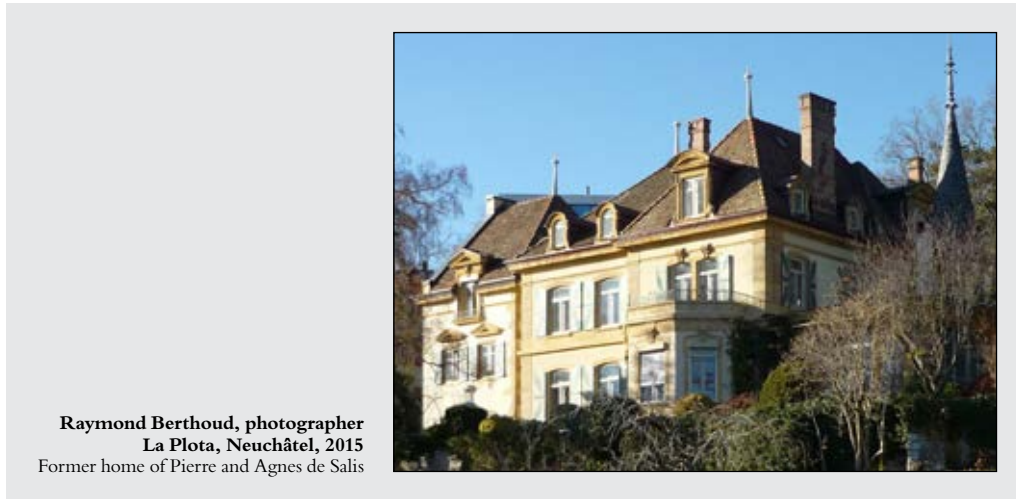
In October 1927, Elisabeth-Sophie generously gifted the chapel property to the parish of the Neuchâtel Independent Church. In exchange, the parish undertook to never dispose of the property or alter the appearance of the chapel that had special significance to the Montmollin/La Trobe family members. As 1928 was the jubilee of the Chapel, a special celebration was held on 8 July 1928 at which the Blonay family were honoured guests. A fifty-year history of the Chapel was published by Pastor Daniel Junod and distributed to the parishioners. The legal commitment of the family to the chapel had ended; however it remains a sanctuary and a memorial to Charles Joseph La Trobe, his two wives, Sophie and Rose and their descendants.

Under the administration of the parish, some essential renovation and repairs were done. In 1934 a new house built on the adjoining

property blocked the view of natural greenery from the windows in the choir. A proposal to install stained glass windows was agreed and these were donated by a parishioner, Miss Keigel. The work was carried out by a stained glass specialist from Geneva and unveiled on Palm Sunday 1936 – appropriately, as the scene depicted in the oculus is the Pascal Lamb carrying the Cross. Coincidentally, this biblical scene is the insignia adopted by the Moravian Church.⁶

1978 and the metal steeple on the bell tower was replaced in 1979. These repairs were all done in a manner consistent with the undertaking given originally to the founder.

In December 1975 the State of Victoria commemorated the hundredth anniversary of the death of their first Governor, Charles Joseph La Trobe to whom the Chapel was dedicated by his late wife Rose. For this special occasion L'Hermitage community participated



In 1941 Rose's original L'Hermitage property was sold by Elisabeth-Sophie to a telecommunications company but then resold in 1953 to a construction company. However as a result of local protests, the quarter was declared a non-commercial area and this property was then purchased by the Reformed Church of the Canton of Neuchâtel for the sum of 90,000 francs. It was to be used as a centre for church purposes: classes, social functions, meetings and residential etc., and known as the *Foyer de l'Ermitage*, as it is today.

Further changes to the Chapel

The Reformed Church, a 1942 amalgamation of all the national and independent churches in the canton of Neuchâtel, had limited financial resources from which to meet its high administrative and property maintenance costs. A parish levy was needed in 1944 to repair the chapel roof. A new communion table, a hymn tablet and seat cushions were then installed, and in 1953 listening devices for the hard of hearing.

In May 1953 a special service was held to celebrate the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Chapel. A new electric organ was purchased to replace the series of harmoniums installed since the first in 1878. Heating was renewed in 1964 and double glazing applied to the windows in 1977. The floor of the nave was rehabilitated in

in a commemorative service presided over by the Reverend Theodore Gorge. It was held at 10p.m. on 3 December, timed to allow for the international time difference between the two continents. The service was attended by the Official Secretary, Mr George Bolwell and his wife, representing the Agent-General of the State of Victoria. A sacrament service was held at the conclusion of the celebration.⁷

The centenary of the Chapel, a major social and religious event in the Neuchâtel community, was celebrated on the weekend of 24-25 June 1978. A two-day celebration included a fete selling local produce, followed by an evening choral concert in the gardens of *Foyer de l'Ermitage*. On Sunday the morning service at the Chapel including the dedication of the La Trobe window, was followed by a luncheon in the gardens of the *Foyer de l'Ermitage*.

The new stained glass window, gifted by the Government and people of the State of Victoria, was installed in the central window in the west wall of the Chapel. This outstanding window was designed by Melbourne artist and stained glass designer Alan Sumner (1911-1994), former head of the National Gallery of Victoria Art School. It depicts significant events that occurred during La Trobe's period of administration in Victoria. A detailed interpretation of elements in the window and a background to the artist was

written by Bronwyn Hughes in an earlier issue of *La Trobeana*.⁸

During her lifetime Rose had been concerned about the fate of the individual family memorial stones elsewhere in Neuchâtel and expressed the desire that they be relocated one

day at the chapel she founded. Her step-daughter, Agnes de Salis, began implementing this pious wish and the tombstones have now been placed along the walls of the chapel, including that of Rose herself. Thus, the original purpose of the Chapel as a memorial to her husband and his descendants has been fulfilled.

Memorial stones at Chapelle de l'Ermitage

South facade

Isabelle Rose de Salis-Soglio 1875-1878

Jérôme André 1876-1878 and George Auguste 1878-1878 de Salis-Soglio

Rose Marguerite de Salis-Soglio 1882-1889

North facade

Rose Isabelle La Trobe 1821-1883

C L (dates illegible, Isabelle Castellane Helen La Trobe 1858-1874)

A L de M 1843 (Auguste Louis de Meuron, 1809-1843, first husband of Rose Isabelle La Trobe)

G A de S 1829-1866 (Georges Aloys de Salis-Soglio, younger brother of Pierre de Salis)

R de M 1773-1856 (Rosalie de Meuron, great-aunt of Pierre de Salis)

Agnes Louise de Salis-Soglio née La Trobe 1837-1916 and Pierre de Salis-Soglio 1827-1919

Elisabeth de Blonay née de Salis-Soglio 1880-1967

Remy Pierre Louis de Blonay 1911-1958

Acknowledgements

I wish to thank M. Georges de Montmollin, genealogist, custodian of La Chapelle de l'Ermitage and patron of the Montmollin family for the generous use of his time and extensive family history database. www.montmollin.ch/heredis/accueil.htm, and his keen interest in our Society's objectives in commemorating the life of Charles Joseph La Trobe.

I am also particularly grateful to M. Raymond Berthoud, a retired Swiss schoolmaster and great nephew of Jacques Petitpierre, lawyer and historian whose research for his 1955 publication, *Patrie Neuchâteloise*, first enlightened the Swiss as to the relationship of La Trobe with Switzerland and Neuchâtel in particular.

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Litlington Pleasure Gardens and Frederick Russell in the time of Charles Joseph La Trobe

By Loreen Chambers

Loreen Chambers is a retired History teacher and a member of the editorial committee of the C J La Trobe Society. She has a particular interest in the homes where Charles Joseph La Trobe and his wife Rose lived in the last twenty years of his life after the hardship years of colonial administration.

Loreen wishes to acknowledge the unstinting assistance given by Juliet Clarke who produced the only reference on the Russell Pleasure Gardens in 1999.¹

The genesis of this paper began when my husband and I, both La Trobe Society members, made our first trip to Litlington in East Sussex² in 2012. After visiting the twelfth-century parish church of St Michael the Archangel and its graveyard where La Trobe is buried, we walked up Clapham Lane to view *Clapham House* situated in its pleasant park-like grounds. Then, we came back down through the village to the Litlington Tea Gardens and Nursery, these days a pleasant cluster of craft shops and a café. On the wall of the café, we found a faded, framed poster of the once-grand Pleasure Gardens of Frederick Russell. Beyond the car park close by the garden entrance, there are garden beds, a fountain, two stone lions, and some ancient survivors (such as monkey puzzle trees) among the few other remnants of the past. The most poignant reminder of Russell's time, however, is a segment of the stone entrance gate pillars whose garlands are almost hidden in tangled shrubbery. Thus began our interest in the scenic Cuckmere

Valley and, in particular, the charming village of Litlington with its 17th century alehouse 'The Plough and Harrow', The Long Man Brewery that La Trobe would have known as Church Farm³ and, above all, the remnants of what was once an extraordinary enterprise established by its almost forgotten founder, Frederick Russell.

An unidentified newspaper cutting held at the State Library of Victoria headed 'Fashionable Marriage at Litlington' reported the wedding of Agnes La Trobe, La Trobe's eldest daughter, to Peter de Salis-Soglio of Neuchâtel, Switzerland, at St Michael the Archangel, Litlington which had been specially carpeted and was decorated with flowers:

The wedding party was conveyed to the Parish Church in four carriages supplied by Mr C. Bradford, of the Victoria-mews, Eastbourne. On the

road to the sacred edifice, which was neatly decorated, was a pretty triumphal arch erected by Mr F. Russell, opposite his residence. It was composed of evergreens and flowers and bore the inscription on the one side of “God bless you”, and on the other “May you be happy” ...

The service ended, the bridal party returned to the bride’s parents’ house – at the entrance of which there was an arch, composed of evergreens. Here they partook of the wedding breakfast. ...

Mr La Trobe presented each poor parishioner in the village with a joint of meat, and Mr Russell provided dinner and refreshments for the coachmen and others.⁴

as they were called in the twentieth century. To Juliet Clarke, they were the ‘Lost Gardens’ of Litlington. What she calls her ‘booklet’, was published in nearby Alfriston in 1999, but is now out of print and almost impossible to find. Very little has been written about the villagers themselves, and they are of interest, not only in their own right, but because of the significant role taken by Charles Joseph and Rose La Trobe in the hierarchy of village society, evidenced by the newspaper account of Agnes La Trobe’s marriage on 19 October 1874.⁷

Until Frederick Russell set up his Pleasure Gardens, sometime after 1862, Litlington was much like any Sussex Downs village with its picturesque hills and water meadows, a population of about 120 villagers, mostly agricultural workers, shepherds and a few domestic servants. The parish comprised only

Loreen Chambers,
photographer
Front entrance to Litlington
Tea Gardens, 2013



Frederick Russell was most likely the supplier of the ‘arch of evergreens’ that was erected at *Clapham House*. As John Barnes remarks: ‘The report reads almost like an advertisement for Russell, who provided refreshment for the drivers, and the businesses that supplied the carpet in the church and the carriages for the bridal party’.⁵ Indeed, the newspaper report had most likely come from the *Eastbourne Gazette* which was happy enough when required to promote the fine Pleasure Gardens at Litlington, as it did for the businesses and delights of Eastbourne itself.

We know a good deal about La Trobe’s life at *Clapham House*, the home he made in the Spring of 1867 after he gave up *Whitbourne Court* in remote Herefordshire in 1866,⁶ but Frederick Russell had become almost a forgotten man when Juliet Clarke decided to research the Victorian origins of the ‘Litlington Tea Gardens’,

893 acres (361.3 hectares) leased from the Scutt estate⁸ by Thomas Shepherd Richardson Esq. of *Clapham House*,⁹ and boasted an ancient church, an inn, and a row of cottages and barns which straggled along its main road.

In the nineteenth century, almost all of the villagers were agricultural labourers who rented their thatched and flint-faced rubble cottages from the manor house family. Most had been born in Litlington or nearby parishes, such as Denton, Berwick and Alfriston. Few men in the village were self-employed. According to the 1861 Census for Litlington, John Russell, the father of Frederick Russell, was one, and the other was the publican John Terry, living at the Plough and Harrow.

As long as anyone could remember, agricultural workers and their families had little way of breaking out of rural poverty until

the last half of the nineteenth century. Some enterprising young men, however, had taken the road to London and to large market towns for work. Assisted immigration to the colonies was another solution; some 3,914 migrants from Sussex went to Australian colonies between 1836 and 1847.¹⁰ Others had gone to sea or become soldiers.¹¹ A number of Sussex men were also transported for larceny. One was Stanton Collins of Alfriston,¹² a notorious smuggler, who was transported to New South Wales for stealing sheep.¹³ Smuggling, especially tea, was rife along the coast. Finally, the great agricultural depression after 1875 forced them off the land and later the Great War took the last of the young men away.

wedding suggest that the usual observances were not neglected.

Litlington villagers seem to have had the same pattern of extended families living at home as the gentry, but the size and quality of their rented cottages was a different matter altogether; some were in a nearly ruinous state being typical of the Sussex ‘tile-hung’ houses if they were of wood and plaster construction or, if more modern, had flint walls with slate or clay tiles.¹⁷ Most cottages had between four and seven people living in them. Any more than that could not be accommodated, let alone fed, and so one rarely finds older children at home after the age of twelve. Girls went off to work as



Unknown photographer
The Fountain, Litlington Tea Gardens
 Postcard c.1950s



Loreen Chambers, photographer
Remnant front gates of Litlington
Pleasure Gardens, 2014

When Charles Joseph La Trobe moved to *Clapham House* in the Spring of 1867, leasing it until his death in 1875, he found this elegant Georgian house a perfect retreat. It easily accommodated himself and Rose, his older unmarried sister Charlotte and his six children (when they were all at home). Their ages at the time of the 1871 Census ranged from thirty-four down to twelve. Guests who came to stay included George Rusden when visiting England from Melbourne, and Charles Perry, the first Anglican Bishop of Melbourne who officiated at Agnes La Trobe’s wedding. Although *Clapham House* was smaller than *Whitbourne Court*,¹⁴ six servants including a cook were needed to support an establishment, commensurate with what he regarded as his position, ‘retired Lieutenant-Governor CB’.¹⁵ However, his age and his total blindness¹⁶ would suggest that he was a remote presence in the community. Nevertheless, La Trobe was always a man who observed protocol, and the joints of meat distributed to the poor of the village on the occasion of Agnes’s

servants and married as soon as possible. Flora Thompson, writing a little later in the century and of a different part of England, reveals better than most statistics the relief and the heart-break of care-worn mothers bidding their small daughters goodbye.¹⁸

Boys on the other hand could earn more money often close at hand, such as two sons of Mary (50) and Ralph Levett (53), a shepherd, whose eleven year-old son Albert, and eight year-old son Frederick, were both shepherd boys. Two teenage daughters, Louisa and Agnes, were domestic servants (we are not sure where) and living at home. The crowded cottage of the Levett family also contained a six year-old grandson, Edward, whose mother was either working in Hastings or who was dead. Boarders were also an important source of income for some households, even for clergyman such as the Reverend Richard White of St Michael’s who had gone to live in Alfriston; the Litlington living did not carry a big stipend. Bare census statistics

like this can give us flashes of understanding of the lives of such people.

Work for the local men, such as the Marchants, Crowhursts and Westgates who were agricultural workers, might consist of a variety of tasks such as ploughing, milking and carting, while the day labourer might do general mucking out or digging. There were also seven shepherds in Litlington who tended the hardy little Southdown sheep grown mainly for their meat, and useful for their manure on the chalky soils of the Downs. James Caird saw for himself farmers on the Sussex Downs near Brighton laboriously tilling the difficult-to-plough hillsides with wooden turnwrest ploughs drawn by teams of six oxen,¹⁹ just as their medieval ancestors had done.²⁰

Food for the villagers, Caird also noted, was simple and dominated by bread, flour (with water to make a gruel), potatoes and a little butter or cheese or bacon. 'The appearance of the labourer [on this diet] showed... a want of that vigour and activity which mark the well-fed ploughman of the midland and northern counties.'²¹ One can only think of the astonishment of the villagers in hearing that the La Trobes had the rather strange foreign habit of growing and eating 'saladings' all year round.²² In all, the agricultural worker had a desperately hard life, the poorest of all workers in the nineteenth century.

Despite this sombre picture of life in Litlington, the farming community would have been relatively self-sufficient: some greens and the herbs needed to season food were grown in gardens; pigs, ducks, geese and other poultry were kept; and hemp and flax were grown in the marshland from which clothing could be made. Women provided labour for most of these activities. They probably also worked at harvest time, sold home-made pies and confectionery or engaged in crafts such as glove-making or pillow-lace as they did in other villages.²³ This picture of self-sufficiency was hostage, of course, to weather and famine as it had always been, and the death of a head of household or a young mother could, as much as a crop failure, bring further misery. Happiness depended on such things. This then is the village that Frederick Russell, the creator of the Pleasure Gardens, came home to in 1862.

So who was Frederick Russell and what were the Litlington Pleasure Gardens? Frederick Russell (1821-1882)²⁴ was the ninth of eleven children born to John and Lucy Russell at *Barn Cottage*, and Frederick was an example of a new breed of men who, through their own

initiative, intelligence and hard work, was able to seize the opportunity to break out of the traditional pattern that was the lot of Litlington men, almost all of whom were poor agricultural workers. Frederick's father John Russell²⁵ had been born at West Dean, and had possibly come to work in *Clapham House* as a gardener in the 1820s, after which he married and set up a small-holding at *Barn Cottage*. He additionally rented land from the Clapham House estate for an orchard of half-standard and larger fruit trees, under-planted with vegetables, the common practice generally in those days. Some of the land had to be set aside to grow fodder for the horses and other livestock, always a consideration in the days before the railways.

However, John Russell's orchard could only afford to employ one of his four sons.²⁶ Frederick, with an interest in market gardens, went to Lewisham, then part of Kent, where he secured an apprenticeship at Russell's, the largest nursery in south-east of England, which employed seventy men on a holding of just over sixty hectares supplying fruit, nuts and vegetables to London's Covent Garden.²⁷ Such nurseries were also beginning to supply the rising middle classes, who were building suburban villas which inevitably had a garden and a small greenhouse. Hundreds of new varieties of bedding plants were also now available, and the fashion for flamboyant and geometric gardens arose together with the desire to create a kitchen garden at the back.²⁸

Frederick Russell, an energetic and restless young man of twenty, then made a surprising move and became a man-servant to a *nouveau riche* city entrepreneur John Castendiecks, a new class of employer. Again, quite significantly, he changed his employment a couple years later (by now he was married and obliged as a servant to give notice) and became a Ticket Inspector and later the Clerk at the newly opened Lewisham railway station on an income unheard of for a manservant, let alone a market garden employee. By the time he was in his mid-thirties, Frederick Russell could purchase a new suburban villa at Hither Green, lay out a garden in the 'gardenesque' style favoured by the suburban gardener,²⁹ build a conservatory garden and, take in views from his house across to Sydenham Hill. Always a businessman, Frederick and Henrietta took in respectable boarders, something Henrietta understood being the eldest daughter of the landlord of the Spotted Cow at Lewisham.³⁰

In 1860, Frederick Russell, then nearly forty years old, visited *Barn Cottage* to see his ailing father John, who was seventy-seven and had two years to live. Frederick's baby

daughter Catherine Eliza was christened at Litlington church – and he pondered his future. He had observed the leisure interests of the growing urban middle classes, knew their tastes in gardening, and noted that they were taking holidays, something unknown to the agricultural worker.

In 1849, the London, Brighton and South Coast Railway had arrived in Eastbourne, to scenes of great jubilation. Gaslight came to Eastbourne in 1851 and, in 1859, a water company was formed. It was becoming a

more land became available for lease behind the vicarage, Frederick Russell seized the chance to renew the lease of the house and garden. Beyond the rectory wall there was a large field and beyond it, rising up the hill, was nearly a hectare of woodland, all glebe land,³⁵ which commanded beautiful views of the Cuckmere Valley. This too was available for lease. This land would become Frederick Russell's Pleasure Gardens, a concept as innovative and exciting as anything for miles around. His plans did not stop there because there was the opportunity to lease another two hectares or so behind his father's



John Chambers, photographer
The Old Rectory, Litlington, 2012
Lived in by the Russell Family c.1850-1891

booming seaside resort catering for the newly affluent, literate and leisured upper middle classes, and dozens of smart hotels and boarding houses were opening.³¹ Others came to reside semi-permanently. Indeed, Eleanora La Trobe, younger sister of Agnes, was to move there after her father died in 1875.³²

By 1862 Frederick would have recognised the growth in holiday visitors coming by rail, and that Litlington was little over an hour away by carriage or wagon trip. Secondly, the *Eastbourne Gazette*, a weekly paper that had begun publication in 1859, would be a powerful source of publicity. The newspaper was itself a reflection of changing times. The symbiotic relationship of client and newspaper was born. Frederick brought new ideas and fresh capital to his home village of Litlington. His plan was to do more than just expand the market garden and orchard business begun by his father and continued by his brother Charles.³³ Charles and his wife Dorcas had been renting the two-storey flint and stone-faced (and rather run-down) vicarage house from the absentee Litlington minister, the Reverend Richard White.³⁴ When

orchard for more planting. In consequence, it was decided that Frederick and Henrietta and their four children would move into the large vicarage house with Charles and the now pregnant Dorcas, an arrangement that was to last a number of years until the business stabilised.³⁶

When old John Russell died in 1862³⁷ he left three sons running various enterprises in the village: Charles continued the family fruit business,³⁸ Frederick began his new enterprise, and a third brother Thomas moved back from Alfriston to help with the initial work of preparing the grounds. Thomas and his wife Augusta had five children, the youngest in 1861 being three and the oldest, seventeen year-old Frederick, who was working as a groom, possibly at *Clapham House*. Augusta being thirty-seven in 1861 went on to have ten children in all. It is not surprising that she and Thomas moved back to the comforts and family at Alfriston when the hard preparatory work was done at Litlington.

An unmarried sister Catherine Russell, Frederick's older sister, was the postmistress, a position she held for nearly thirty years.³⁹ She seemed to have been an exception to a pattern of crowded households but even she at one time



**MacLure, MacDonald & MacGregor, lithographer
Litlington Pleasure Grounds and Gardens, mid-1870s**

Picture taken from poster
'A retreat which is not equalled in any watering place along the south coast'

was living in part of the post office, with the other half let to a widow with two sons, one an agricultural labourer and the other, interestingly, a stoker on a warship who was staying with her on the night of the 1901 Census. At the same census Catherine aged eighty-four was sub-postmistress, with her thirty-four year old niece, Lucy keeping her company. Whilst it seems the Russells were a close-knit family working and caring for each other, it is likely that economic forces as well as prudence kept what, in fact, was a family business functioning successfully.⁴⁰ On the other hand, in those days, no-one ever lived alone or was lonely. The age of individualism had not arrived.

Frederick Russell was a man of his time: he understood the demand for more varied foodstuffs as the urban middle classes increased, and their desire for the 'luxury' of pleasure and leisure. He expanded the area of fruit and vegetables grown on the glebe land and built a cucumber house, a vinery and two hot beds in keeping with modern tastes (think of cucumber sandwiches). Two glass houses, an astonishing vision for people used to the tiny windows of flint cottages, were built either side of the path leading to the vicarage front door. Outhouses, cisterns and a water tower were built, and beside

the ancient tithe barn, a magnificent entrance gate was constructed with arches formed of stone garlands of fruit and flowers.⁴¹

Frederick Russell's pleasure garden was in what had been cornfields behind the vicarage. Beside the house a broad stepped pathway was built up to the top of the hill where the adventurous could admire the view of the water meadows in Cuckmere valley below, and beyond where white sheep grazed on the green downs. Advertisements claimed that one might even see as far afield as the 'ancient town of Alfriston' (today a thriving tourist destination). The *Eastbourne Gazette* of 1879 describes it thus:

The grounds consist of pleasure, fruit and nursery gardens, and the proprietor (Mr Russell) has laid the whole out to the greatest advantage. Pleasantly shaded walks lead up and down, and hither and thither, intersecting one another at various points, so that the parties can derive much enjoyment from playing the old game of 'hide and seek', and if flirtations be the order of the day, the crossing must be provoking... The tall park-like trees which overshadow these walks keep off the rays of the sun... These arbours are created with great taste, and many of

them are used for luncheons, dinners, teas, etc. Near the principal ones there is a small house in which dinners, etc. are usually served up, and from whence meals are taken to localities which might be selected by different parties.⁴²

The *Eastbourne Gazette* also published glowing testimonials from visitors, such as one in 1870 who said: ‘...should a pleasant party be formed, I do not know any place near Eastbourne where a happier day could not be spent than among the trees and flowers and fruit beds of Mr Russell’s little floral kingdom at Litlington’.⁴³

By the mid-1870s, the business was so successful that Frederick and Mary Russell⁴⁴ were in a position to build a large new home opposite the Pleasure Gardens entrance. It was erected on one of the few freehold pieces of land in the village, although the large field behind it which dropped down to the river flats, was owned by the Clapham estate. The three-storey house, completed in the mid-1870s, was a substantial, double-gabled house with decorated barge boards. Stables and a coach house were built at the back. The handsome decorated bargeboards seen in old photographs have long gone but the house is still recognisable. Frederick’s fine new house was built in what must have been seen either as the edifice of a successful man – or by local villagers, as a modern abomination. In another interesting move, the ornamental entrance piers to the Gardens were moved down the road so that they were facing Frederick’s new house. It provided him not only with a borrowed vista, but a means of contemplating with pride his achievements as a self-made man. The house, Litlington Arms as it came to be known, later functioned partly as a private hotel.

As Juliet Clarke has acknowledged: ‘the garden itself was not particularly innovative’ but she argues that Russell was a man of his time who ‘knew what his customers would expect to see and be impressed by...’.⁴⁵ It could also be argued that Russell was innovative in anticipating the prosperous middle-class tourist about to discover the High Victorian gardensque. Such gardens were notable for their showiness in terms of elaborate and often symmetric carpet bedding planted out with interesting and colourful new hybrids, just becoming available from plant nurseries all around Great Britain. There was a new fascination with exotic trees and shrubs. Gardens should also have lawns (mowers had recently been invented), arbours, and rockeries. Flowering plants such as clematis, fuscias, pelargoniums, azalias, and daffodils, lilies and pansies were becoming available, and interested gardeners might visit Litlington to

see them on display. Hybrid tea roses were also becoming hugely popular. Fruit trees, especially apples, together with peaches and plums, even grapevines were now within the reach of the middle class.⁴⁶ The mahogany dining room table or sideboard was incomplete without an elegant bowl of fruit in season.



Simon Carey, photographer
Former Litlington Arms, Litlington, 2008
 Built by Frederick Russell mid-1870s
<http://www.geograph.org.uk/photo/670353>
 Creative Commons Licence

The advertising poster for ‘Litlington Pleasure Gardens’ draws on a long artistic history of the landed classes commissioning artists to paint their estates. The poetic licence taken in the poster fulfils the new middle class aspiration to mirror the behaviour of the gentry. Not only might suburban villas have park-like surrounds, with a conservatory and hot houses at the back but their owners might now partake in leisure activities of the gentry. The focus of such estates is always a fine house (in this case a vicarage); gentlemen and ladies are arriving by conveyance, or strolling through the park-like grounds, and in the distance views of hills and water. From the ‘fashionable watering place’ of Eastbourne, the new middle class might now visit Frederick Russell’s Pleasure Gardens. Russell was no doubt a very good plantsman, but also a very modern entrepreneur who achieved considerable success in his time.

And what brought Charles Joseph La Trobe to Litlington? As John Barnes comments:

It was a period when communication with the wider world was becoming easier... The consequence of these changes was that Litlington became an



John Chambers, photographer
St Michael the Archangel, Litlington, 2012
 Charles La Trobe's headstone with cross is to the right of the porch

attractive destination for trippers who came by wagonette from the nearby resort of Eastbourne. This development may have brought Litlington to the attention of La Trobe and Rose, his second wife.⁴⁷

Indeed, it is possible to consider that the newly created Litlington Pleasure Gardens themselves may have caught the attention of the La Trobe family, and were a factor in the choice of *Clapham House* as their home. The 'pretty triumphal arch' of evergreens and flowers erected in honour of Agnes La Trobe's marriage some years later, may in fact, have reflected the stone garlands of fruit and flowers on the handsome entrance arch to the Pleasure Gardens. If so, this was a neat way of linking the fashionable wedding of a Swiss aristocrat to the daughter of the retired colonial governor living at *Clapham*

House, with the proprietor of the Pleasure Gardens. Frederick Russell, ever a man of enterprise, might have seen subtle opportunity in the event.

When Russell died in 1882, seven years after La Trobe's death, he was buried in Litlington Church grounds. La Trobe, born in London in 1801 had travelled thousands of miles in his lifetime, but finally found rest in this small village. Frederick Russell born in 1821 in Litlington, had travelled to Lewisham and back, and had come home to his people. The headstones in church graveyards tell us little about those lying there, and Frederick Russell's headstone reveals nothing of this enterprising citizen who deserves to be remembered better than he is by present-day visitors to the Tea Gardens.

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- 1 Juliet Clarke, *Mr. Russell's Little Floral Kingdom*, Alfriston: Rookery Books, 1999, is the chief source for this paper. Unfortunately, it does not provide details on her primary sources except for quotations, mostly from the *Eastbourne Gazette*. Census data for 1851 through to 1911 was also crucial.
 - 2 In Russell's time known as Sussex until the county was divided into East Sussex and West Sussex in the 1970s.
 - 3 It may have been a malt house in the middle of the nineteenth century.
 - 4 Copy of an unidentified newspaper cutting, 'Fashionable Marriage at Litlington', MS 7614, Australian Manuscripts Collection, State Library of Victoria. From internal evidence the newspaper date is 20 October 1874.
 - 5 John Barnes and Christopher Metcalfe, 'Farmer La Trobe' at Clapham House', *La Trobeana*, November, 2013, vol. 12, no. 3, p.28.
 - 6 *Ibid*, pp.24-28.
 - 7 Agnes Louisa La Trobe 1837-1916 married to Pierre de Salis-Soglio 1827-1919, painter and engraver, and Conservateur of the Musée d'Art et d'Histoire, Neuchâtel.
 - 8 *Clapham House* stayed in the hands of various descendants of the Scutt family until 1922. Source: *Cuckmere Valley Project*, Lewes: Sussex Archaeological Society, 1992, Litlington Tenement Analysis, pp.14-18.
 - 9 An ancient house was probably on that site but was demolished to make way in the eighteenth century for *Clapham House*, a listed grade 2 building.
 - 10 James Jupp, *The English in Australia*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004, pp.52-53.
 - 11 The 1871 Census reveals a Chelsea Pensioner, Edward Miller aged 47 who had served in the 22nd Regiment. He had been born in nearby Berwick but was a lodger with his uncle George Westgate, a farm worker, together with another lodger, also a farm worker.
 - 12 Alfriston just over one and a half kilometres away from Litlington on the other side of the Cuckmere River became an infamous centre for smuggling after the Napoleonic Wars.
 - 13 Frederick Russell's older brother Thomas married Augusta Geering/Collins b.1824, the daughter of Stanton Collins.
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- See also W.H. Johnson, *Crime and Disorder in Late Georgian Alfriston*, Eastbourne: Downsway Books, 1994.
- 14 La Trobe leased *Whitbourne Court* from 1858-1866. See Kate Lack and Loreen Chambers, 'Whitbourne and Whitbourne Court 1858-1866', *La Trobeana*, March, 2015, vol.14, no.1, pp.22-24.
 - 15 Census 1871.
 - 16 La Trobe experienced the traumatic loss of sight in his remaining good eye 16 October, 1865.
 - 17 Litlington Conservation Area, Hailsham: Wealden District Council (pamphlet, after 1967).
 - 18 Flora Thompson, *Lark Rise to Candleford: a trilogy*, London: Oxford University Press, 1945. For a most interesting account of this aspect of child labour see Book 1: *Lark Rise*, chap.10, 'Daughters of the Hamlet', p.155.
 - 19 Sir James Caird (1816-1892) was a parliamentarian who wrote widely on the agricultural economy. Caird described the life of an agricultural labourer living on the Salisbury Plains in 1850 as 'the most consistently depressed class of the nineteenth century'. (The Salisbury Plains were part of the great chalkdowns covering southern England.) Quoted in M. St J. Parker & D.J. Reid, *The British Revolution 1750-1970: a social and economic history*, London: Blandford Press, 1972, p.264.
 - 20 Gordon Edmund Mingay, *Rural Life in Victorian England*, London: Futura, 1979, p.68. Mingay claims such practices persisted as late as 1914, partly because landowners were unwilling to spend money on improvements and because the inherently conservative and near illiterate farmers found oxen were cheaper to feed than horses, and less nervous so that it was possible to plough closer to hedges and in difficult terrain.
 - 21 Parker and Reid, p.264.
 - 22 Richard Heathcote, 'Charles Joseph La Trobe and the English Country House', *La Trobeana*, November 2010, vol.9, no.3, p.38.
 - 23 Mingay, p. 87.
 - 24 Frederick Russell 1821-1882. All birth and death dates of Russell family members from the Family Tree, Juliet Clarke p.18.
 - 25 John Russell 1783-1862.
 - 26 Clarke, pp.8-12.
 - 27 Probably not related (Juliet Clarke).
 - 28 Clarke p.11-12, 16.
 - 29 Miles Hadfield, *A History of British Gardening*, Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1985 c.1960, p.258. Hadfield compares the gardenesque style with the picturesque style favoured by the landed classes with their larger rural estates.
 - 30 Clarke pp.12-16.
 - 31 A pier was built in 1872 and Devonshire Park opened in 1874. In 1851 it had a population of less than 3,500. By 1871 Eastbourne had over 10,000 people, and by 1901 it had 43,000.
 - 32 Eleanora Sophia (Nellie) 1842-1938, never married. In the 1881 Census she was living or staying in a boarding house in Eastbourne where she declared she was living on income from dividends. She was writing from 45 Blackwater Road Eastbourne in 1934/45 when she was in her nineties.
 - 33 Charles Russell 1823-1876.
 - 34 The rectors preferred to live in the larger and more vibrant village of Alfriston rather than the somewhat damp and 'unwholesome' Litlington rectory on The Street, i.e. the main road through the village. They rode the short distance to Litlington most Sundays when the weather was clement.
 - 35 Land attached to the church.
 - 36 Clarke pp.19-21, 23-24.
 - 37 Saint John Russell, 'gardener and seedsman of Litlington' died in April 1862, leaving an estate for probate of less than £100. Son Frederick 'innkeeper of Reigate Surrey' was one of two executors.
 - 38 In 1867 on the death of the surviving parent, Charles and Dorcas moved to *Barn Cottage* and vacated the vicarage. Dorcas continued as gardener long after her husband's death in 1876 and as late as 1891 was still working with the assistance of her unmarried daughter Lucy.
 - 39 Catherine Russell 1816-1901. Postmistress, she held the position for nearly thirty years. Died unmarried.
 - 40 Another Frederick, son of Thomas and Augusta (originally a groom), became a travelling tea dealer and was reputed to have walked a hundred miles a week – for the last seventeen years, and calculated to be a total of 88,400 miles. Clarke p.45.
 - 41 Clarke p.25.
 - 42 Quoted in Clarke p.37.
 - 43 Quoted in Clarke p.36.
 - 44 In 1869, Frederick Russell married Mary MacLennan (1823-1907) from Inverness, Scotland. After Frederick's death Mary continued living in the Litlington Arms, together with her niece who assisted in running the hotel.
 - 45 Clarke p.27.
 - 46 Hadfield, *A History of British Gardening*, Chapter 7 'The Glorious Victorians, 1814-1882', pp.303-359. This is general background on the great breeders and their plants of this period.
 - 47 Barnes and Metcalfe, p.25.

Melbourne's Famous Pet Dog: Larry La Trobe

By James Lesh

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In Melbourne's City Square resides *Larry La Trobe*, an endearing dog statue. He captures the attention of people walking past, contributing to the everyday urban experience of being in Melbourne. Despite his small size and unprovocative form, Larry acquired civic stature after he disappeared one night in 1995. This triggered a citywide search across Melbourne to find him, propelling him into the popular consciousness.

I believe that a poor statue about the place is better than no statue at all.

– Leslie Bowles, Melbourne sculptor, 1938.²

A 1m high Bronze Dog will be installed next to one of the seats in the City Square. Care has been taken that there will be no sharp protuberances, for it is envisaged that this will be a very

popular sculpture with children.

– Public Art Committee, Melbourne City Council, October 1992.³

The City Square was an empty space / Crying out for a brand new Face! / The planners of Melbourne sent out a probe / And came-back-with-a-dog – Larry La Trobe. / Pedestrians stopped, patina head and coat / A top dog he became, by a popular vote. / Everybody took to Larry with a great shine / Now Melbourne's mascot is a brassy canine.

– Extract from poem 'Welcome Home Larry La Trobe' by Bruce Stephens, c.1995–1996.

This article tells the story of *Larry* in his Melbourne context. It considers the broader relationship between dogs and cities across the world, the reasons why the Melbourne City

Council commissioned him, his placement in the City Square and then the subsequent public response to him as a work of public art. Taking the curious case of his dognapping as a pivot point, the article then examines how Larry continues to enrich the city, including the ways he has been propelled into local and international, civic, social, political and cultural spaces.

Designed by local artist Pamela Irving and cast in bronze, seventy centimetres in height, the original *Larry La Trobe* was dognapped on the evening of 30 August 1995 from Melbourne's City Square. Poor Larry was never found; rumour has it that he was drowned in the Yarra River or was buried in a suburban backyard. The *Larry* that now resides in City Square is a replica of the original statue. Few urban public art works can lay claim to this kind of history. *Larry* (fig. 1) is indeed a curious Melbourne dog.

Despite their popular appeal unprovocative everyday public art installations such as *Larry La Trobe* are rarely taken seriously in urban or art circles. From the outset, nevertheless, Larry's installation troubled some Melburnians, provoking questions about public art: Are dog statues the kind of public art that municipal authorities should commission for public space? Is *Larry* a 'good' work of art, or even Art at all? The Melbourne City Council defined 'public art' broadly in 1992: 'any original work of art, created by an artist, which is accessible to the general public [on/in] streets and squares'.⁴ Crafted by a local artist, *Larry* is both statue and sculpture, and fits the Council's criteria as a work of art, being folksy and aesthetically unchallenging, even kitsch.

Melbourne's pet dog joins the ranks of many urban, bronze, immortalised dogs (fig. 2). These dogs are bound to history, memory and commemoration; inscribing on the urban landscape paganism and religion; empire and imperialism, murder and death; local, civic and national virtue. Such monuments have lined boulevards, forums, markets and squares since antiquity.⁵ Animals and particularly canines have featured prominently, attributable to the ways in which dogs endear themselves to humankind.⁶ Dogs were the first animal to be domesticated and introduced to the city; 'man's oldest companion', in the words of the great urban historian Lewis Mumford.⁷

Whilst the Urban History of the Dog is yet to be written, there are numerous dogs that would feature in such an endeavour. At the turn of the Common Era, Cicero mentioned the *Capitoline Wolf* statue, part of Rome's founding mythology.⁸ Modern cities including Brussels, Edinburgh, Tokyo and Wellington boast dog



**Figure 1: Pamela Irving, 1960– , sculptor
Larry La Trobe, 1992 (1996)
Bronze
Photograph: author's collection, 2012**

statues, and each has its own place in local mythologies.⁹ Tokyo's *Hachikō* – the faithful dog who awaited his owner's arrival at Shibuya Station every day for many years after his owner's death – appears on countless picture books, tourist guides and postcards.¹⁰ A recent popular history on the nineteenth-century *Greyfriars Bobby* of Edinburgh suggested that that city's adored dog, reputedly guarding his master's grave, was actually concocted by businessmen as a promotional stunt.¹¹ Even dog statues are embroiled in local urban politics.

Closer to home, scholar David Paxton has speculated on the relationship between Australia and dogs, using a naturalistic perspective to tie together settler colonialism, rapid rates of urbanisation, and urban animal management.¹² A 2009 book traces this 'iconic partnership' from the First Fleet onwards.¹³ Other prominent Australian sculpted dogs include Queen Victoria's favourite dog *Islay*, who adorns a well outside the Queen Victoria Building in Sydney. Passers-by are encouraged by a recording of radio personality John Laws to place a coin in the well for a children's charity. *The Dog on the Tuckerbox* near Gundagai, New South Wales, is a bronze tribute to colonial settlement, immortalised in poem and song, which sustains national mythologies concerning Australia's pioneer history.¹⁴

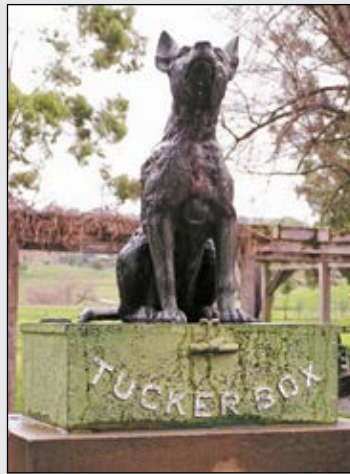


Figure 2: Famous Dogs
 Clockwise from top left:
 Capitoline Wolf, Musei
 Capitolini, Rome, c.500-480
 BC; Greyfriars Bobby,
 Edinburgh, c.1855-1856;
 Hachikō, Tokyo, 1934; Dog on
 the Tuckerbox, Snake Gully,
 New South Wales, 1932. ★

Such statues venerate ‘man’s best friend’, their owners and, like other civic monuments, the suburb, city, or nation that erected them. But this was not the case for Melbourne’s *Larry La Trobe*. When he was sculpted in 1992, he had neither past nor commemorative function. Council documents described him as something that ‘will be very popular with children’; perhaps because he would be at their height, meeting them on the street at eye level.¹⁵ Larry does not sit on a pedestal, a plinth anticipating recognition; rather his four paws stand on the ground, upright, excitable, ceaselessly forging his own place in City Square as he receives attention from passers-by. Larry’s own place in the popular imagination was seized after his placement. So how did this bronze become so famous, included on tourist itineraries, even having a kennel reserved for him at Melbourne’s Lost Dogs Home?

As a proud nineteenth-century Victorian era city, Melbourne has many grand sculptural monuments.¹⁶ The first public monument was of the unfortunate explorers Robert Burke and William Wills. Since funding from private

donors was meagre, the colonial parliament commissioned artist Charles Summers whose statue *Burke and Wills* was subsequently unveiled to a crowd of 10,000 people in 1865.¹⁷ Fashioned in the European tradition – heroic, celebratory and civic, pedestalled, bronze and solid – *Burke and Wills* has been installed at various locations over the following 150 years. This pattern of placing monuments has been embraced by towns and cities across Australia.¹⁸

As elsewhere, Melbourne public sculpture has always been bound to broader political, social and aesthetic shifts. Just as *Burke and Wills* reflects nineteenth-century Victorian tastes, other illustrious figures offer sculptural treatment that reflect their respective time period and subject, whether regal Queen Victoria and King Edward VII, cordial Adam Lindsay Gordon, approachable Batman and Fawkner on Collins Street, or the relaxed long-serving Premiers (Dunstan, Bolte, Hamer and Cain) in the Treasury Gardens. The life-size statue of Charles Joseph La Trobe installed in 2006 on the forecourt of the State Library of Victoria continues this civic tradition, in a twenty-first century form.¹⁹ Such monuments are nevertheless the embodiments of permanence and grandeur, venerating the city

and its past in a bold manner.

The historical trajectory particularly relevant to Larry begins in the 1970s. By this time, in response to changing artistic, architectural and urban philosophies towards public art and public space, more democratic kinds of art works were sought to adorn city streets.²⁰ Outdoor sculpture was commissioned as part of 'per cent for art' programs, which posited public art as integral to and a benefit of urban rejuvenation. These programs originated in North America, triggering debates about the purpose and form of public art. Some scholars have critiqued the resultant works as unchallenging and populist, sanitising urban conflict and lacking an overt political or commemorative function.²¹

Debates over public art indeed emerged in Melbourne. In 1978, for instance, the Melbourne City Council commissioned Ron Robertson-Swann's *Vault* for the new City Square.²² Dubbed 'The Yellow Peril' by its many critics, *Vault* was a challenging and assertive abstract sculpture, fashioned from many bright yellow horizontal planes. After just eight months in situ, late one evening in December 1980, it was removed from City Square, eventually taking an honoured place on the forecourt to the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, Southbank. Despite its ignominy, *Vault* exemplified a new kind of civic and heterogeneous public sculpture, leaving an artistic legacy for City Square that affected future commissions.²³ Future works would be less challenging.

As one newspaper article put it, unlike the 'banished' *Vault*, Larry 'stayed on'.²⁴ Bred to be more personable and less contentious than *Vault*, Larry appeared in the original City Square in 1992 as part of the Swanston Walk project.²⁵ This project attempted to rejuvenate Melbourne's major pedestrian thoroughfare, principally by removing cars, during which the Council reserved \$100,000 for public art.²⁶ The Council sought 'proposals which incorporate a thematic and/or physical link with the chosen site [and] reflect contemporary visual arts practice to 'allow for incremental enrichment of the city'.²⁷ In early 1992, Council welcomed submissions from artists, and fourteen proposals were shortlisted that July. The Council committee envisaged the 'Bronze Dog [would be] a very popular sculpture with children'.²⁸ No other reasons for its selection were minuted in records now deposited with the Public Record Office.

Irving was paid \$1,000 for her design concept; casting and installation cost \$6,550, with 'each additional Larry' to cost less.²⁹ The original proposal was that 'sculpted "lifelike" dogs' be 'strategically placed within the walk'

at locations to be determined.³⁰ This was inexpensive, economically rational public art. Council's independent Public Arts Committee was presented with the list of proposals for comment, notwithstanding Council's decision to commission one 'lifelike dog' sometime during the previous three months.³¹ Irving had also proposed 'Bazza Bourke' and 'Clarrie



Figure 3: Larry La Trobe with Burke and Wills and City Square, 2012.
author's collection

Collins', identical dogs from the same cast, but there was to be just one Larry, a singularity that would be essential to his mythology.³² Theft of one dog statue out of three might have been less significant.

Installed in December 1992 next to a green park bench on Swanston Street, orientated towards the Melbourne Town Hall, Larry soon received company. In 1993 he was joined by *Burke and Wills*; their expedition to find a permanent home had come to an end.³³ This led to City Square's intriguing spatial tableau of sculptures (fig. 3); small versus large; explorers versus a dog; prominent and civic versus ostensibly insignificant and unregarded; both bronze statues.

Artist Pamela Irving was born in Melbourne in 1960 and has a Master of Arts from the University of Melbourne, 1987.³⁴ She takes inspiration from folk art traditions, works in print, ceramic and mosaic sculpture, and also takes part in community art practices. Irving does not explicitly challenge artistic or social conventions, employing largely genial, humorous and figurative motifs. Although Larry is of no indiscernible breed, her own dog provided inspiration for the sculpture's pleasing form: compact yet life-size, grooved body, rascally expression, adoringly cheeky eyes, endearingly tipped ears, and playful demeanour.³⁵

Seen from a distance, Larry's studded collar may appear threatening, but as one walks closer, one becomes aware that there is nothing to fear. His loveable snout and bronze coat have been worn away by rubbing and patting, traces of human adoration. The studs on his collar are smooth, he does not dominate in form or size, and so constitutes an approachable and

city's newest pet. An *Age* columnist described how 'everybody stops to fondle *Larry La Trobe* and even some adults talk to it. (I do.).'³⁸ The *Herald Sun* plastered his photograph across page three, and he appeared, cryptically, in an *Age* crossword.³⁹ The University of Melbourne's student newspaper *Farrago* toasted *Larry* as 'the recipient of countless friendly pats... [a work of]



Figure 4: 'On Larry's Trail', *Melbourne Times*, 1 November 1995
courtesy of the Melbourne Times

safe space. Sharing City Square with *Burke and Wills* and where *Vault* once stood, Larry is not grandiloquent despite being bronze and near the majestic nineteenth century Melbourne Town Hall.

Larry does boast a memorable name, a pleasing alliteration taken from the artist's uncle, Larry, and the northernmost street of the city grid, La Trobe Street. Certainly this street is named after Charles Joseph La Trobe; however, despite being bound in name, Irving has suggested no conscious relationship between the Lieutenant-Governor and Larry. Charles La Trobe may have been fond of dogs, but Larry is not his dog. Rather, Larry is a pet belonging to all Melburnians. Wikipedia contributors claim he was 'crafted to generate a sense of Australian larrikinism in the viewer', a description also applicable to the *Dog on the Tuckerbox*.³⁶ Larry is made personable by his biography and appealing form, and suggestively civic by patron, name and location.

Once in place, Larry provoked popular debate. In August 1993, the Melbourne City Council launched the 'Melbourne Open Air Sculpture Museum'. The 'sculpture walk' incorporated a range of works from *Burke and Wills* to *Larry La Trobe*.³⁷ It produced an eclectic narrative, divergent in style and theme, period and patron, only unified by being located within the Melbourne CBD. A promotional campaign for the walk highlighted Council's 'per cent for art' program, drawing special attention to the

art that is seen and remembered and relevant'.⁴⁰

In contrast, various members of the art world criticised *Larry* and the city's public art program. Before commissioning the new works, the Public Art Committee – comprising eminent Melburnians such as art historian Bernard Smith, sculptor Kenneth William Scarlett and journalist Terry Lane – recorded no objections.⁴¹ The criticism began after *Larry* was installed. Gallery director Maudie Palmer called *Larry* 'small and weird'; architect Joe Rollo bemoaned that the Swanston Street works were 'selected for their potential to appeal as objects of whimsy and curiosity'; and, commentator Virginia Trioli declared that Melbourne needed a tougher and grander public art vision.⁴² Such judgements resonated with American art critic Clement Greenberg's 1939 essay, 'Avant Garde and Kitsch', which (re-) affirmed the distinction between high and low art.

Larry became a vessel for waging grander battles.⁴³ It was a debate that mixed quibbles over low and high art, questions about art works that authorities ought to commission, together with civic and urban philosophies. Termed in irresolvable modes, the conflict was ultimately one of taste and distinction; about who should be the ultimate arbiters of public taste.⁴⁴ The debate soon subsided because it was basically extraneous: *Larry* had popularly endeared himself to Melburnians, becoming a permanent city fixture.



**Figure 5: Larry La Trobe
Moomba Float, 1996**
courtesy of Pamela Irving

After *Larry* was dognapped in August 1995, Irving thought *Larry*'s theft was a prank and he would be returned; perhaps similar to the removal and subsequent return of Picasso's *Weeping Woman* from the National Gallery of Victoria.⁴⁵ But neither clues nor trail were found.

To the dismay of *Larry*'s critics, the *Melbourne Times* and the Council staged a campaign for the statue's return, dubbed 'Larry Come Home.'⁴⁶ The name resonated with an earlier generation of Melburnians who had watched *Lassie Come Home*, an American film of 1943 based on the novel of the same name set in Yorkshire during World War II. Local newspapers ran many stories. The *Melbourne Times* was on the lookout for 'loveable Larry', (fig. 4); the *Caulfield/Glen Eira Leader* wrote 'all is forgiven'.⁴⁷ 'Larry the bronze bitser dog statue' was even included in the *Age*'s 'Best of Melbourne' of 1995 under the heading 'Best Sculpture'; it was preceded by 'Best Theatre' (Princess) and followed by 'Best Established Artist' (Arthur Boyd), binding *Larry* to a grand theatrical institution and an eminent visual artist.⁴⁸ Absent *Larry* had been inadvertently propelled to fame.

The 'Larry Come Home' campaign reached its apex during the 1996 Moomba Festival, at the always exuberant final day parade. On 12 March 1996, according to the *Age*, the parade highlight was Larry La Trobe.⁴⁹ With Irving's consent, his motif was appropriated, magnified and recoloured into a float (fig. 5). *Larry*'s float joined another recreated Swanston Street public artwork, *Three Businessmen Who Brought Their Own Lunch*. The *Melbourne Times* featured the float of *Larry* on its front cover.⁵⁰ Parading down Swanston Street to

the acclamation of 150,000 people, enlarged *Larry* even passed his namesake's former abode in City Square.⁵¹ Vanished *Larry* reemerged in giant form, rising above the crowd to new heights, presiding over the city's thoroughfare, a metaphor for his now inflated prominence.

After almost a year, the original bronze had not been found, despite further rumours about its whereabouts.⁵² *Larry* was then to be (re) immortalised. With much acclaim, to the hum of an original poem, a second *Larry La Trobe* was placed in City Square on 16 September 1996.⁵³ Prominent gallery owner Peter Kolliner, who owned the foundry where *Larry* was cast and still held the original mould, gifted the replacement bronze to the city.⁵⁴ The second *Larry* had a slightly redder tinge, which distinguished him from the original pup. He was securely fastened with thirty-centimetre bolts, locked into a concrete block.⁵⁵

The Council subsequently appropriated *Larry* for one more activity. In 1997, the 'Larry Come Home' Moomba float was taken to Osaka, Japan, Melbourne's sister city, for their annual Midosuji Parade.⁵⁶ Perhaps conjuring their *Hachikō* statue, it provoked much excitement and was awarded best float. Travelled *Larry* thus became a fleeting emblem of the city. Like Edinburgh's *Greyfriars Bobby*, *Larry* too was being used to promote Melbourne, becoming implicated in urban boosterism.⁵⁷

Larry had spawned an eccentric Melbourne tale, transforming from a folksy, disputed statue to claim an authentic place in the urban imagination. This was no orchestrated campaign, and few benefited financially. Rather this was an organic and creative expression of local pride, a bit of fun for those who involved themselves. Certainly, via boosterism, *Larry* was bound to broader social, economic and urban processes; specifically, appropriated by civic-minded people and also the tourism industry. In these ways, Melbourne's bronze dog became at once distinguishable from and similar to dog statues elsewhere.

After City Square was redeveloped in 1999, *Larry* was walked to a more prominent home, nearer to the Swanston and Collins Street intersection, safeguarding City Square, and facing Melbourne Town Hall. In 2003 he appeared on the front cover of commuter daily *mX*; in 2009 he flew into Virgin Blue's on-board magazine; in March 2012 he challenged Melburnians in the *Age* super quiz in the lead-up to the Melbourne Romp – a mass scavenger hunt for children and adults alike, premised on urban spatial knowledge.⁵⁸

A prestigious engagement was his inclusion alongside Rodin, Moore and Picasso among 500 public art works from antiquity onwards, that were selected for an international coffee table publication.⁵⁹ However, the debate is still not over as of 2015; *Larry*, *Vault* and Callum Morton's Hotel on the Eastlink freeway are all apparently still 'controversial' Melbourne art works, according to a recent newspaper article.⁶⁰

Perhaps this sudden re-emergence of Larry criticism is a product of his recent activities. In 2011 Occupy Melbourne, part of the contentious transnational urban social movement, appropriated *Larry* (fig.6) as 'Occy the Occudog'.⁶¹ Occupy protestors draped a sign over his neck, reading: 'Stand for your Rights', and on other occasions forced him to speak on their behalf: 'Occupy sez, get a dog Julia', which was directed towards then-Prime Minister Julia Gillard. Appropriated as a temporary emblem

of civic activism, Larry became an expression of urban protest, occupying city space without threat of eviction.

In City Square, Larry contributes to what historian Dolores Hayden calls 'the power of ordinary urban landscapes to nurture citizens' public memory, to encompass shared time in the form of shared territory'.⁶² He becomes part of everyday urban social experience. His story is understandable and relatable, readily re-imagined by children and adults alike; continuously retold in newspapers and tourist guidebooks, on the internet and as part of the Melbourne Open Air Sculpture Museum. Attracting advocacy, controversy, thievery and mystery, Larry spawned a stimulating imaginary life, seizing a place amidst civic mythologies. In the present, Larry interacts with people at street level and beyond, helping people to forge a sense of urban belonging.



Figure 6: Larry La Trobe 'occupied' by Occupy Melbourne movement, 2012
author's collection

* Source of photographs: collection of famous dogs (Figure 2)

Capitoline Wolf, Wikipedia user: Rosemania / CC BY 2.0, 2010
(http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:She-wolf_of_Rome.JPG, accessed 22 December 2015).

Greyfriars Bobby, Rebecca Siegel / CC BY 2.0, 2010
(<http://www.flickr.com/photos/grongar/5114712728/>, accessed 22 December 2015).

Hachikō, Author's collection, 2010.

Dog on the Tuckerbox, Wikipedia user: AYArktos / CC BY-SA 2.5, 2005
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Forthcoming events

MARCH

Thursday 17

La Trobe's Birthday Reception

Time: 6.30 – 8.00 pm

Venue: Rooftop, Tonic House,
386 Flinders Lane, Melbourne

Guest Speaker: Martin Green, Learning
Manager, National Trust of Australia
(Victoria)

Topic: Heritage at Your Touch!

The National Trust (Victoria) has recently introduced new approaches in education and museum exhibitions to engage visitors, students and the general public. These include using new 3D technology that maps spaces, including La Trobe's Cottage, in three dimensions.

Launch: Public Record Office Victoria,
La Trobe's Incoming Correspondence
online

Refreshments

Admission: \$45.00 per person

APRIL

Tuesday 12

Friends of La Trobe's Cottage

Annual Lecture

Time: 6.30 – 8.00 pm

Venue: Domain House, Dallas Brooks
Drive, Melbourne

Speaker: Irene Kearsy, La Trobe
Society member, La Trobe's Cottage
volunteer and dedicated historian

Topic: La Trobe's First Immigrants:
the 1839 Voyage of the *David Clark*

Refreshments

Admission: \$15.00 (members)
\$20.00 (non-members)

MAY

Saturday 14

Beleura House & Garden, Mornington

Time: 9.30 am – 2.30 pm

House and garden tour, including a light
lunch

Further details to be advised

JUNE

Saturday 18

Beleura House & Garden, Mornington

Time: 1.30 – 3.30 pm

Musical afternoon in the new Pavilion

Further details to be advised

Tuesday 21

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

Time: 6.30 – 8.00 pm

Venue: Royal Historical Society of
Victoria

Cnr William and A'Beckett Streets,
Melbourne

Guest Speaker: Dr Marguerita
Stephens, University of Melbourne
Redmond Barry Fellow 2013

Topic: Unless a Portion be Given to the
Idle: The Kulin and the New Poor Law at
Port Phillip

Refreshments

Further details to be advised

JULY

Friday 15

Melbourne Rare Book Week Lecture

Time: 6.30 – 8.30 pm

Venue: 401 Collins Street, Melbourne

Guest Speakers: Des Cowley, History of
the Book Manager, with Richard Overell
and Anna Welch, State Library of Victoria

Topic: The John Emmerson Bequest (tbc)

Refreshments

Admission: No charge

AUGUST

Wednesday 3

**La Trobe Society Annual General
Meeting and Dinner**

Time: 6.30 pm

Venue: Lyceum Club, Ridgway Place,
Melbourne

Guest Speaker: Professor Graeme
Davison, Eminent historian and Sir
John Monash Distinguished Professor of
History, Monash University

Topic: The Governor, the Captain and
the Needlewomen: How my great-great
grandmother arrived in Port Phillip

Further details to be advised.

NOVEMBER

Christmas Cocktails

Details to be advised

DECEMBER

Sunday 6

**Service to mark the Anniversary of
the Death of C J La Trobe**

Time: 11.00 am

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

The Editorial Committee welcomes contributions to La Trobeana which is published three times a year.

Further information about the Journal may be found on the inside front cover and 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

