



La Trobeana

The Newsletter of the La Trobe Society of Australia

Grevillea La Trobeana Engraving by Edward La Trobe Bateman - La Trobe Collection, State Library of Victoria

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Figure 1

Pencil portrait of Charles Joseph La Trobe as a young man.
Artist unknown.

Source: La Trobe Picture Collection, State Library of Victoria.

EVENTS CALENDAR 2005

JUNE

AGL Shaw La Trobe Society/Royal Historical Society of Victoria Annual Lecture

Tuesday 28 June, 6.00 for 6.30 pm at the Village Roadshow Theatre, State Library of Victoria, La Trobe Street, Melbourne (Entry 3).

Speaker: **Dr Anne Neale** University of Tasmania

Who was Edward La Trobe Bateman?

\$5 (members) \$10 (non-members)

See article page 2.

AUGUST

Annual General Meeting

To be held in August at the National Trust of Australia (Victoria), Tasma Terrace, Melbourne. Date and speaker to be advised.

DECEMBER

Christmas Visit to Mornington Peninsula

3 December 2005

The National Trust of Australia (Victoria) Mornington Peninsula Branch have invited Members and Friends of the La Trobe Society to visit the Mornington Peninsula and see some of the exhibitions and artefacts of La Trobe's period as Lieutenant-Governor. This will be a one-day bus trip to the Peninsula, and further details will be advised.

Christmas Cocktails – 9 December 2005

Lyceum Club, Collins Street, Melbourne

\$35 per head Members \$40 non-Members

RSVP: 5 December 2005.

**AGL Shaw La Trobe Society/Royal
Historical Society of Victoria Annual
Lecture**

**Tuesday 28 June 6.00 for 6.30 pm,
Village Roadshow Theatrette, State Library,
La Trobe Street, Melbourne.**

Who was Edward La Trobe Bateman?

Edward La Trobe Bateman [1816-1897] was an English artist and designer who worked in Victoria from 1852 to 1869. His remarkable family included the head of the Moravian Church in England; the founder of the architectural profession in the United States; the Lieutenant-Governor of Victoria; and the leading hydraulic engineer in Victorian Britain. In England Bateman was a close associate of the young artists of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, and worked with the influential design reformer, Owen Jones. Bateman's talents in art and design were applied across a wide range of media, including illumination, chromolithography & book design; drawing & painting; landscape design; and decorative art & architecture. This resulted in a unique body of work, the extent and significance of which has not previously been recognised.

Dr Anne Neale is an historian of architecture, gardens and art. After many years in Victoria, where she taught in the School of Architecture at the University of Melbourne, she returned to her childhood home in Tasmania in 1999, where she is Coordinator of History and Theory, and Graduate Research Coordinator, in the School of Architecture at the University of Tasmania. Her doctoral thesis in Fine Arts at the University of Melbourne was on Bateman, and she is currently writing a book on his life and work, titled 'The Forgotten Pre-Raphaelite: Edward La Trobe Bateman in Britain and Australia'.

RSVP: See enclosed form



**Figure 2 Grevillia Latrobeana
Edward Latrobe Bateman
Source: La Trobe Picture Collection
State Library of Victoria**

**'My Australian Home': A walk
around La Trobe's Jolimont
garden**

In honour of Charles Joseph La Trobe's 204th birthday, members Richard Heathcote, Director of Carrick Hill estate in South Australia, and Helen Botham, a Melbourne-based historical researcher, presented an illustrated lecture on La Trobe's private garden in Melbourne to the La Trobe Society at Como Historic House and Garden on Sunday 20 March 2005.



Figure 3

La Trobe Society Members celebrated La Trobe's 204th Birthday at the National Trust's Como Historic House and Garden, on Sunday 20 March 2005.

Sixty members and friends were present to delight in the thoroughly researched and witty presentation which was illustrated by numerous paintings, sketches and drawings of La Trobe's garden by his cousin, artist Edward La Trobe Bateman, and by La Trobe himself.

The presentation demonstrated the change evident in La Trobe's approach to gardening during the 15 years he spent in Victoria. He arrived with clear memories of the beautiful gardens he had seen in Europe, and with a passion to recreate these in his new, uncultured environment. Early paintings of Jolimont show just how successful he was – many like-minded gardeners in this remote colony provided him with seeds of the plants of home which he received with delight and propagated with flair. His gardeners kept his lawns and paths well-trimmed. The Survey of the Jolimont Estate carried out in 1853 shows the extent of the walks and beds that La Trobe had originally set out.

The La Trobe Arms and Their Story

Silver with azure front loaded with three golden shells, the shield stamped with an arm carrying an anchor.



Figure 4 1854 Lithograph of Jolimont
Source: La Trobe Australian Manuscripts Collection,
State Library of Victoria

But as La Trobe moved about the colony, he began to appreciate the beauty of the native flora, and the sense in cultivating these, as well as Mediterranean-type plants which were so much better suited to the local climate. The plants sent to him by other gardeners and from the Botanic Gardens in Sydney began to reflect his new interest in growing plants more suited to the Mediterranean climate of Victoria.

The drawings of Edward La Trobe Bateman, completed in 1853-54 and preserved in the Picture Collection at the State Library of Victoria, show how the previously well-tended European-style garden had become a haven of Mediterranean and Australian native plants.

The lecture was presented as a visual tour of the garden, using contemporary images of the grounds of Jolimont as they were, and incorporating the information contained in the 1853 survey maps of the area. Such first-hand depictions of the environs of *La Trobe's Cottage* give the modern-day viewer a clear idea of the plants La Trobe favoured, and the flavour of every-day life at Jolimont while it was the family home.

Helen Botham, Member



Figure 5 Edward La Trobe Bateman sketch of Jolimont.
Source: La Trobe Pictures Collection, State Library of
Victoria.

At the beginning of the 1820s, Jean Joachim Latrobe, then knight of the 'Légion d'Honneur' and of 'the order of Saint-Louis' decided to adopt the arms which are still worn by the family today. Adopting this blazon, with a composition unusual to a heraldist's eyes, was a consequence of the first meeting between the French and British branches after 150 years of separation.

Puzzled by the reading of an article in the *Journal de Paris* describing the part played by Benjamin Henry Latrobe in the rebuilding of the Capitol in Washington which had been destroyed by the British army, the Frenchman, Jean Joachim wanted to know more about this sameness of name. Nine years later, a new article relating the travels in South Africa of Reverend Christian Ignatius La Trobe, Bishop of the Moravian Church, led Jean Joachim to write to Capetown, where the traveller was said to be then residing. Although Christian Ignatius had left South Africa, the letter was forwarded to London where it eventually reached him.

An exchange of letters and a visit followed. The English La Trobe asked Jean Joachim whether he could confirm the noble origins of the family. The two families had common roots, broken at the time of the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes. Jean Joachim Latrobe explained that the Latrobes belonged to the Protestant 'bourgeoisie' of Montauban, in the south of France. Their common ancestor had played a part in the defence of the city in 1621, but they were no aristocrats, Joachim wrote with a most Hugenot sternness:

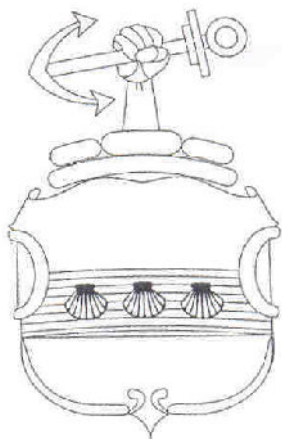
You must be content with belonging to an honorable family that has been honoured for nearly two hundred years and that — though it cannot find positive and ancient titles of nobility — at least undoubtedly owns the true nobleness of feelings of honour and hereditary integrity.

This disappointment did not mar the friendship between the two gentlemen, and when he came to Paris in the autumn of 1822, Christian Ignatius presented Jean

Joachim with a seal 'of Greenland semiprecious stone' with the family arms.

Rather astonishingly, considering his genealogical intransigence, Jean Joachim decided to use these arms for himself.

Indeed, heraldic capacity, contrary to a widespread prejudice, is by no means the privilege of nobility – the Parliament of Paris in the Ancien Régime was always opposed to arms being used only by aristocrats – but Jean Joachim's attitude is surprising. We must bear in mind that these events took place at the time of the Restoration. After Waterloo, Louis XVIII had returned to France and with him the emigrants, who had neither learnt nor forgotten anything. French nobility, a prey to a real fad for heraldry, then displayed blazons, crowns and mantling, stamping mansions, linen, carriages, liveries, furniture, china, jewels, and every kind of item, with unsurpassed frenzy. In such an environment, Jean Joachim may have been tempted to pick up these arms, all the more so as his title of Knight of the Légion d'Honneur allowed him to do so. Indeed the edict of 8 October 1814 specified that in a family where the grandfather, the son and the grandson were successively knights of the Légion d'Honneur the grandson was noble by right and was thus able to pass on nobility to all his descendants. In addition, the same decree made it clear that the members of the Légion d'Honneur with a yearly income of 3,000 Francs could apply for arms from the Chancellor of France. Jean Joachim's choice was not only in keeping with the spirit of the time, but in conformity with imperial law.



Thus Jean Joachim and his descendants in France would now wear 'Silver with azure front loaded with three golden shells, the shield stamped with an arm carrying an anchor'. Such is the heraldic transcription of the family arms which might be described more plainly as a silver shield crossed in its middle by a blue band with three golden shells, the whole being surmounted by an arm holding an anchor. There are several variations on the family blazon where the arm may be naked or armoured, that is, covered with an iron gauntlet. It may also jut out of a mere 'tortil', the cushion on which knights' helmets used to rest, in the main colours of the shield.

The Livonian branch of the family descended from the brother of Christian Ignatius, John Frederic, who was knighted by the Russian Tsar in 1864.

An oral tradition prevailing in the family maintains that the English La Trobes were granted arms by the British monarchy for services rendered to the Crown and that, later, they had allowed their French cousins to use them. Deeper research led to a more romantic story.

Despite an outstanding position within the English gentry, the La Trobe family was never ennobled, and the Royal College of Arms keeps no record of an award of arms to them. The descendants of John the emigrant, whose departure from France at the time of the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685, marks a break between the two main branches of the family, built a most surprising theory on their French origins. This theory, although firmly denied by Jean Joachim Latrobe, was thus summed up in Burke's *Landed Gentry*:

The family of La Trobe is of the French noblesse, originally from Languedoc, and settled near Montauban. They early embraced the doctrines of the Reformation. In the reign of Henry III of France they opposed the League and valiantly supported the cause of Henry IV. One of the family distinguished himself by the defence of the strong fortress of Verlhac, near Montauban, now in ruins. They continued to take part in the religious wars during the reign of Louis XIII, and were involved in the persecutions which followed the revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685. After losing their patrimonial estates, John Henri Boneval de La Trobe, son of

Henri Comte Boneval and Adelaïde de Montmorency, emigrated from France and fled to Holland and from him the present English, Russian, and American families are descended ...

This fantastic story, worthy of Alexandre Dumas is quite untrue; we know for sure now that John the emigrant was a son of Michel Latrobe, a merchant, and Maffré Raymond, daughter of Alexis Raymond dit Redon, all of them good 'bourgeois' of Villemur, who would have been very surprised to hear that they were related to the Montmorency, one of the most distinguished families of French aristocracy.

However, this legend was firmly rooted in the mythology of the English branch, whose spectacular ascent in society at the end of the 18th century claimed aristocratic recognition.

Christian Ignatius' two brothers, Benjamin Henry and John Frederic, had made wonderful careers outside Britain. Benjamin Henry, President Jefferson's friend, had become Inspector of Public Buildings in the United States and, indeed, the official architect of the young state. His brother John Frederic, had made a fortune in Russian Livonia and had become a Baltic knight in 1864.

The armoured arm carrying the anchor which surmounts the Latrobe shield is probably a tell-tale heraldic emblem alluding to the surname. In heraldic vocabulary, 'la Trabe' means the bar crossing the anchor: so the arm of the shield holds 'la Trabe' or 'La Trobe'. Only a slight difference in a vowel distinguishes the 'trabe' of the anchor from the name Latrobe, the distinction being hardly audible, 'a' and 'o' considered by linguists as the closest vowels on the phonetic scale. This hypothesis sounds likely to the specialist in heraldry, since most coats of arms are based on these puns, sometimes baffling for the uninformed.

The coat of arms is identical to the arms belonging to the noble de Bonneval family to whom the Latrobes were reputed to have been related. In fact, apart from the crown, never claimed by the Latrobes, the coat-of-arms of the de Bonneval family is identical to that of the Latrobes.

Benjamin Henry Latrobe adopted the blazon without hesitation before handing it over to his brothers, and later to his French

cousins, who were then persuaded that the arms were English and genuine.

This is how, through an astonishing combination of circumstances, blending with the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, Jefferson, the French Revolution, a knighted family in Livonia, the genealogical approximations of an architect, a family descending from French Huguenots from Montauban, still wears the arms of a French aristocratic family with which it is not linked.

Shall we conclude that there has been usurpation of the blazon? And that the Latrobes are wearing arms to which they have no right? Indeed it is not so. First we must understand that the two coats-of-arms are distinguished by their crests. The armoured arm surmounting the Latrobe blazon is, as mentioned earlier, a heraldic element referring to the name, and belongs to this family.

Moreover, its combination with the Bonneval blazon gave birth to unique arms which are different from it. Besides, these arms were officially acknowledged as those of the de La Trobe family, the Baltic branch, when it was knighted by the Tzar. Eventually, these arms which have been worn over two centuries by the English branch, and more than one hundred and seventy years by the French branch, are part of the family history, a history that certainly gave rise to one of the most unusual heraldic compositions possible.

With thanks to Camille Pascal, France; edited by Dianne Reilly.

Note: The La Trobe name is spelt as two words by the English, Australian, German and South African branches of the family while the French and American branches spell the name as one word.





JOHN DAVIS MCCAUGHEY 12 JULY 1914 – 25 MARCH 2005

*We shall not cease from exploration
And the end of all our exploring
Will be to arrive where we have started
And to know the place for the first time.*

T S Eliot, 'Little Gidding'

What is the La Trobe Society?

The C J La Trobe Society Inc. was formed in 2000 to promote recognition and understanding of the achievements of Charles Joseph La Trobe. Superintendent of Port Phillip, then a colony of New South Wales in 1839, he became the first Lieutenant Governor of the new colony of Victoria after separation in 1851.

The Society celebrates La Trobe's Birthday annually, hosts lectures, special functions and other events throughout the year and distributes this Newsletter, *Latrobeana*, to its members three times per year.

Our aim is to erect a bronze statue of La Trobe and to facilitate a fellowship in his name for the study of the colonial period of Victoria's history.

All donations are gratefully received and are tax deductible. Membership Subscriptions are due at the Annual General Meeting in August each year.

VALE



Dr Davis McCaughey, foundation member of the La Trobe Society, died at his home in North Melbourne on Friday 25 March 2005.

A summary of the life of this remarkable man follows. It is reproduced by kind permission of Mrs Jean McCaughey.

JOHN DAVIS MCCAUGHEY was born in Belfast, Northern Ireland to parents, Lizzie Finnegan and John McCaughey.

After attending school at Campbell College Belfast, he read English and Economics at Pembroke College, Cambridge, studying under Basil Willey, and was elected president of the university's Student Christian Movement. These twin interests started lifelong commitments to the role of the imagination in interpreting scripture and the public world, and to fostering the ecumenical movement.

After Cambridge he was appointed secretary of the SCM for Ireland and served the movement in tertiary institutions in both parts of the country. During that time he met Jean Henderson and they married on 6 September, 1940. Over the next eleven years, they had five children, James, Patrick, John, Mary and Brigid.

Called to ordination in the Presbyterian Church of Ireland, he and Jean moved to Scotland where he became Study Secretary of the British SCM. He served as secretary of the British Council of Churches Commission into the Era of Atomic Power. For the SCM, he travelled widely, encouraging the study and discussion of scripture – skills that were key to his later work in Australia. On the continent, he contributed to post war reconstruction in church and university and the international extension of the ecumenical movement. Later, he transferred to the staff of the SCM Press – the foremost publisher of theological books in the UK – and was for a time acting editor.

In 1952, he was appointed Professor of New Testament Studies in the Ormond College Theological Hall and the family travelled to Australia and settled in Melbourne. For the next seven years he taught in the Hall, inspiring

generations of students with an enthusiasm for New Testament Studies as a basis for the proclamation of the faith.

He was a leading figure in the negotiations that sought to effect reunion of the churches and was one of the architects of the Uniting Church formed out of the previous Congregational, Methodist and Presbyterian Churches.

In 1959 he became Master of Ormond College, a position he held for the next twenty years. During this time, the College embarked on an ambitious building program, notably increasing the size of its student body. Among many initiatives, he strengthened the academic program and admitted women as resident students.

He also played other roles – as first president of the Uniting Church of Australia, as member of the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches and as a member of the interim Council of La Trobe University. He was the first chair of the University Assembly of the University of Melbourne and spent a year at Cambridge University as Commonwealth Professor and Honorary Fellow at Pembroke College.

After retiring he became Deputy Chancellor of the University of Melbourne and Professorial Associate in the History Department.

In 1986, he was appointed Governor of the State of Victoria, a post which he held for six years. During their time in office, he and Jean travelled widely in the State, enjoying meeting people from all parts of the community. They caused Government House to be open to members of the public.

He was admitted to the Order of Australia at the rank of Companion and received Doctorates of Divinity at New College Edinburgh and the Melbourne College of Divinity, Honorary Doctorates of Law from Melbourne, Monash and Queens University, Belfast and an Honorary Doctorate of Letters from La Trobe University.

After leaving Government House, Davis concentrated on reading, writing and preaching. He supported a large number of institutions, acting as Patron of the State Library of Victoria, Fellow of the Australian Academy of the

Humanities, Honorary Fellow of the Australian College of Physicians and a member of the medical ethics committee of the National Health and Medical Research Council.

He wrote (or co-authored) *The Christian in the World Struggle* (1951), *Christian Obedience in the University* (1958), *Piecing Together a Shared Vision* (The Boyer Lectures, 1988), *Victoria's Colonial Governors 1839-1900* (1993), *Tradition and Dissent* (1996) and *Fresh Words and Deeds*, ed. P. Matheson and C. Mostert (2004).

Dr Davis McCaughey is survived by his wife, Jean, his children, his eleven grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

Editor's Note: Dr McCaughey's book, *Victoria's Colonial Governors 1839-1900* contains a fine chapter on the life and work of Charles Joseph La Trobe.

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CONTRIBUTIONS of articles for the Newsletter, *La Trobeana*, are always welcomed. They should be directed to the Honorary Editor, Dr Fay Woodhouse:

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NATIONAL TRUST OF AUSTRALIA (VICTORIA)



NATIONAL TRUST

THE YEAR OF LA TROBE

Each year the National Trust celebrates the contribution of an outstanding Victorian. In 2006 the Trust will celebrate its fiftieth anniversary and it believes it is fitting in its 50th year to celebrate Charles Joseph La Trobe, a person who had a profound influence on the early development of Victoria.

Victoria's first Lieutenant Governor, Charles La Trobe had the vision to set aside a minimum of 20 per cent of all land in Melbourne and its surrounding suburbs for parkland. His interest in the minds of those in the fledgling colony saw other groundbreaking initiatives in a free public library, public art gallery and the founding of our first University. At a time when others were pre-occupied with the material improvement of the colony, La Trobe saw to it that the hearts and minds of Victorians would not be neglected. The Trust recognises that this vision to look beyond material possession and development is just as relevant today as it was 150 years ago.

The Committee of the La Trobe Society will advise Members of our Society's involvement in the official **'Year of La Trobe'** as well as news of social events, lectures and other items of interest that will arise during the year.

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LA TROBEANA, AND THE LA TROBE SOCIETY

La Trobeana is the Newsletter of the La Trobe Society Inc. It appears three times per year, with news of forthcoming events, and reports of interest to the membership. Contributions are always welcome and should be directed to the Honorary Editor, Dr Fay Woodhouse, by email at flw@unimelb.edu.au.

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