

## Celebrating 50 Years of the *La Trobe Journal*

This issue of the *La Trobe Journal* is a milestone: it is no. 100. The first issue, a mere 16 pages, was published by the Friends of the La Trobe Library in April 1968.

To celebrate the 50 years of the journal's publication, this 100th issue features 50 items or collections that have been added to State Library Victoria's collections through full or part funding by the Friends of the State Library's La Trobe Library, its successors, the Friends of the State Library of Victoria (1983), the State Library of Victoria Foundation (1997), and the current Friends of the Library. It was journal editor John Arnold's inspired idea to mark the 100th issue in this special way.

The Friends of the La Trobe Library was formed following the 1965 opening of the La Trobe Library wing on La Trobe Street, built to house the Australiana collections of the State Library. The aims of the Friends group were 'to publicise the Library, to attract financial support for it, to help to fill gaps in the book collection, and to encourage the donation of manuscript and other material'.

The publication of a journal dedicated to publishing research in the Library's collections, and details on recent acquisitions for the Australian Manuscripts Collection and the Pictures Collection, was a logical extension for the Friends. Geoffrey Serle was the founding editor, seeing the first 21 issues through the press. He was followed by John Thompson (nos 21–24), Paul Macpherson (nos 25–31) and Tony Marshall (nos 32–44), all three having held the position of Manuscripts Librarian at the State Library. Teresa Pagliaro and various guest editors were responsible for nos 47 to 60. John Barnes then took over as editor, producing 20 issues (nos 61–80) before handing over to the current editor, John Arnold. The journal is now published both in print and online, making it accessible to local and international audiences. All back issues have been digitised and are available online through the Library's website.

Selecting the 50 items featured in this issue from the many purchased with the assistance of the Friends and Foundation was a difficult task. Various collection managers, along with Head of Collections Jo Ritale, and John Arnold with the assistance of Foundation member Ellie Dargaville, worked through various reports and previous issues of the journal to assemble the list of acquisitions.



The works featured date from one of the earliest acquisitions by the Friends of the La Trobe Library – a portrait of William Buckley bought in 1967 – to one of the most recent, a set of prints that now completes the Library’s *Banks’ Florilegium*. The items included are drawn from the major collections of the Library: the Rare Books Collection, Australian Manuscripts Collection, Pictures Collection, Victorian and Australian Published Collections, and the Rare Children’s Books Collection.

The 50 items have been arranged roughly in order of their creation or, in the case of collections, the period they cover. Most of the articles have been written by current or former staff members of the Library, reflecting their commitment to the wonderful collections of State Library Victoria. Other articles have been written by those with a close and long association with the Library, including three former presidents of the Friends of the State Library.

In celebrating the 50th anniversary of the *La Trobe Journal* we are also acknowledging the extraordinary contributions of the Friends and the Foundation in supporting the Library to acquire unique and rare collection items for all Victorians to enjoy.

*Kate Torney*

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