

## EDITORIAL

Artist David Roberts's six volumes of lithographic views of the Holy Land and ancient sites in Egypt and Syria were published in London in the 1840s. A set of these large folio volumes was acquired by the Melbourne Public Library (now State Library Victoria) in the late 1850s. In that decade English photographer Francis Frith produced a series of photographic prints of Egyptian antiquities, and a partial set was presented to the Library in 1870 by Edward Maunde Thompson, the librarian at the British Museum, London. Stephen Jakubowicz compares Roberts's lithographs to Frith's photographs and discusses the role both played in fulfilling the Library's aim of education through access to the best works of literature and images of classical subjects.

Adam Lindsay Gordon was an extraordinarily popular poet in his day. Although little read today, his books sold in their thousands, and hundreds used to attend the annual Gordon commemoration at his grave, in the Brighton General Cemetery, Melbourne. Brigid Magner outlines this near hero worship of Gordon.

Many Melburnians would know of Labassa, the Italianate mansion in Caulfield North, in southeast Melbourne. Few people, however, would know anything of its interior decorator, Peter Hansen. Vicki Shuttleworth has been researching his life and work for many years, and in 'In search of "Hansen, decorator"' she presents the findings of her (unfinished) search.

Maurice Blackburn is an Australian law firm well known for its advocacy in injury compensation cases. In 'When Maurice met Doris', Margaret Geddes writes about the courtship of the founder of the firm, Maurice Blackburn, and his future wife, civil rights activist and politician Doris Hordern, as seen through letters they wrote to each other prior to World War I when they were active in left-wing and feminist politics.

Music publisher and patron Louise Hanson-Dyer made a major contribution to Melbourne's music scene in the early decades of the 20th century. Here, Daniela Kaleva, a previous contributor to the *Journal*, writes on

Adelaide enthusiastically welcomes the cast of *Coronation Street*, c. 29 March 1966 (detail). Reproduced courtesy Nine Network Australia



the Australian premiere of the English composer Gustav Holst's opera *Savitri*, which was sponsored by Dyer as her effective farewell gesture to the British Music Society in Melbourne, before her departure in 1927 to live in Europe.

The parents of many baby boom Melburnians would have used the services of Nappy Wash, founded by human rights advocate and social worker Jessie Clarke and her husband, Frank, in 1945. Jessie, the daughter of businessman and philanthropist Herbert Brookes, wore the elaborate 'State of Victoria' gown that was a highlight at the Pageant of Nations events held during Victoria's centenary celebrations of 1934–35. Annette Soumilas recounts the story of the gown, which Jessie donated to State Library Victoria in 1998.

The baby boomers who watched *Coronation Street* with their parents were soon protesting about Vietnam and conscription, and seeking alternative lifestyles. Many read and learnt about this counterculture through the Melbourne bookshops Source Books from America, and the Whole Earth Bookstore. Using interviews with their former proprietors, June Torcasio provides an account of these two alternative and fondly remembered stores.

Baby boom parents and their elder children will recall with affection watching the long-running British television soap opera *Coronation Street*. Some of the stars of the show toured Australia in 1966, receiving tumultuous welcomes and attracting as big a crowd in Adelaide as The Beatles had done a few years previously. Adrian Schober provides an account of the tour.

On a personal note, this is my last editorial for the *La Trobe Journal*. After 11 years and 22 issues, it is time to hand over the baton. It has been a most rewarding experience to work with so many willing contributors and to publish articles and themed issues that contribute to our knowledge and understanding of history, reflect the Library's inclusiveness, and promote the Library's collections.

*John Arnold*

EDITOR