



**The Garden Clubs
of Australia Inc.**
*'Friendship
through Gardens'*

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AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- ▶ To encourage friendship through gardening
- ▶ To further a knowledge of all aspects of gardening and floral art
- ▶ To aid in the protection and conservation of natural resources
- ▶ To cooperate with kindred organisations having similar aims



A Word from the President

Over the past year or so we have lost some of the giants of the gardening and horticultural world – legendary plantswoman Beth Chatto, rose breeder David Austin, rose expert David Ruston and naturalist and environmentalist Densy Clyne to name a few. All lived full and rich lives, indulging their passion for plants, and all took delight in sharing their experience and enthusiasm with others, passing on a lifetime's knowledge to the next generation.

I'm reminded of that old African proverb: 'When an old man dies, a library burns to the ground.' This is certainly true for all of the above and for many more gardeners that we have individually known and loved.

I often hear on my visits to garden clubs across the country that they would like to attract some new and younger members – this is very true as most garden clubs and societies have an ageing membership. But with the passing of these gardening giants, I'm reminded of the treasures that each and every garden club has in its own ranks: the older members of the club who have accumulated a wealth of practical, hands-on knowledge through a

lifetime of gardening experience. These 'libraries' are still with us and are such valuable resources. These members are to be cherished, valued and recognised. What better way to encourage new club members than to advertise the wealth of knowledge and experience on offer.

Speaking of libraries, most gardeners of the older generation accumulated large collections of books and most of the aforementioned added their own writings to these. When the owners are gone, the problem becomes what to do with these books – the local op shop, garden club, auction house or the bin? As an avid collector of garden books, particularly very old ones, I too am confronted with this dilemma – what instructions to leave?

Whilst I mull over this quandary, I shall pick up one of these treasured tomes, peruse the musty pages and think of the gardening giants – both past and present - who have enriched and enhanced my life.

George Hoad

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Deadline next issue 1/9/2019

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