

The Garden Clubs of Australia Inc



ABN 74 058 867744

www.gardenclubs.org.au

'Friendship through Gardens'

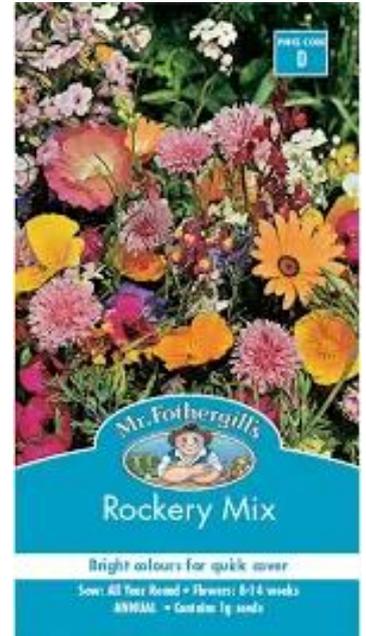
Secretaries: Please email this directly to your committee & members.

We're thinking of you.

Many garden club members lost all or part of their gardens in the spring and summer bushfires. We can only imagine how devastating it must be to see years of growth and work destroyed and every gardener will understand and empathise with how they must feel about their losses.

GCA President George Hoad would like to write to fire-affected gardeners to extend our sympathy and best wishes to garden club members whose gardens have been directly affected by the fires. And Mr Fothergill's Seed has kindly donated packets of mixed flower seeds to be sent with the letter.

Zone Coordinators are asked to contact Director of Zones Glenys Bruun glenysbruun@bigpond.com and arrange for the GCA President to write to fire-affected gardeners and pass on the seeds, together with the thoughts and best wishes of garden club members around Australia.



Just When We Thought...

... it couldn't get any worse...

BUT we know how to deal with this latest problem.

Go play in our garden!

And that is what many members have indicated will be their plan of attack during this time of war. They will look for different ways of 'surviving'. For many of our gardeners the war started much earlier with severe drought and deadly fires. And now it's the virus. But we Australians are resilient; made of *tough stuff*. Let's look at some of the ways we can keep in contact with our club members.



Facebook

Facebook is not for everyone but after four months **120 GCA garden clubs** (or 16%) have been **sharing their club activities** on The Garden Clubs of Australia "Club Activities" Facebook group.

YOU are to be **congratulated! Well done!!!** Here is the link.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/2249602565338673/?ref=bookmarks>

Anyone from your club can share stories and photos, invite other club members to join the Facebook group, comment on other club activities and (dare we say this) steal other clubs' ideas for your club.

Connection is the key. Keeping connected with each other is vital to help the mental health of our gardening family. Our community is not just those in our club but clubs across Australia. There are many features on Facebook that can help us stay connected.



Facebook has the facility for a messenger video call. You can invite one, two or a multiple of friends to participate in a conversation, share ideas, photos and stories. There is one problem, though. This is only available to Facebook users. So, what other technology is available for you to use?



The Humble Telephone

...is vital to keep you in contact with members of your club. What about starting a **phone tree** where members have a 'club friend or two' to call on a regular basis. "Hi Judy, just thought I would catch up for a chat." Such vital words.

Newer phones have the option for a video call. Just think, you can call each other, chat endlessly, reverse the camera and each walk around your garden showing off the latest blooms.

Another fun activity would be to take a photo of your latest obsession and text it through to your club members. There are endless possibilities to keep in touch with each other.

We know that garden clubs are more than just plants, benching and guest speakers. They are about our need to be with people, to provide opportunities for conversation and to help our mental health.



This is not where you get in your car and pretend to drive around the neighbourhood making *brooom* *brroomm* and *beep beep* car noises.

Zoom is one online application that can be used for chat via **video** link. There are free and paid versions however the free version can do most of the things needed for a garden club or personal discussions. It is easy to sign up, with great 'how to' videos.

Zoom is excellent for holding online committee meetings, face to face contact with guest speakers and sharing information. Consider downloading this program on your computer, iPad or phone and stay connected with your gardening family.

The GCA purchased ZOOM and have embraced the endless possibilities, not only for the management committee but for contact between Zone Co-ordinators and clubs. <http://zoom.us>

Oops, One Little Word!

The one little word '*special*' made all the difference to NSW Fair Trading questioning our **amended constitution** which you, the affiliates, **voted for overwhelmingly**, at the February Special General Meeting. Our paperwork sent to you said "*Resolution at a Special General Meeting*".

Fair Trading require us to say

'SPECIAL RESOLUTION at a Special General Meeting'.

After much discussion with Fair Trading and Prolegis Lawyers in Sydney, GCA Management Committee decided to re-do the **ballot by postal vote** so that the wording "Special Resolution" is included.

In the near future, your club will receive paperwork explaining the situation in detail, a voting slip for your executive committee to consider and a reply post envelope to **return** to GCA **ASAP**.

We understand it is a difficult time to be considering such matters.

"We would like to take this opportunity to apologise for the inconvenience."

Conversation Starters

What does a great club get-together look like? As you can imagine this is a 'how long is a piece of string' conversation. But quite often it is that very activity that sends members away with smiles on their faces.

The conversations!

Club committees are tasked with keeping the meeting interesting and it is through the sociability of chatting, sharing thoughts and collaboration that we can develop stimulating discussions. One method, be your club big or small, is to have members form an inner and outer circle. The inner circle is static and the outside is progressive, just like the old-time dances. Larger clubs could make several groupings. For those unsteady on their pins, seat them in the inner non-moving circle.

The topic of conversation is set and couples have two minutes to share their particular view with each other. Time is called and the outer circle moves one partner forward. Repeat this process half a dozen times or so and members have had a chance to socialize and share thoughts with a variety of members they probably have never spoken to.



Bring members back to their circle of chairs and have them share interesting conversations they heard. This works particularly well with those contentious issues that occasionally rear their heads. It gives people a chance to 'get it off their chest' prior to the meeting discussion. BE PREPARED! It is noisy and energetic and people invariably whinge "I haven't finished talking" but that is the whole point. They now have something to chat about at cuppa time.

Here's an idea to get you started from the GCA "Ideas for club activities" booklet.

Aspects to consider when constructing gardens.

- ❖ Private vs Public
- ❖ Examine the requirements
- ❖ Consider the site.
- ❖ Types of materials which should be used.
- ❖ Features to consider.
- ❖ Restoration of gardens e.g. at local hospitals or hostels, retirement villages etc.
- ❖ Size of garden.
- ❖ Garden layout, shapes, curves, creating vistas.
- ❖ Drainage.
- ❖ Paths and paving.
- ❖ Retaining walls.
- ❖ Use of rocks, steps, woodwork, garden edging.

What can you do to keep the conversations going now? What about some quiz questions? Here's an interesting one from the internet.

1. Who was the first to create a zoo and botanical garden for scientific study? Aristotle, Galileo, Carl Linnaeus, Charles Darwin. *Answer below.*
2. Who is the author of the “De Materia Medica” a 5-volume Greek encyclopedia about herbal medicine? Pedanius Dioscorides, Hippocrates from Kos, Pythagoras, Galenos. *Answer below.*

Here’s another conversation starter from the GCA “Ideas for club activities” booklet.

Examine factors to consider when selecting and planting plants.

- Preparing the soil - testing, type, improving
- Types of plants - exotic v natives
- Trees, shrubs, herbs, vegetables, annuals, perennials
- Consider aspect of site etc. e.g. N.S.E.W.
- Height/width/growing rates,
- Colour, texture, propagation techniques.
- Types of plants suitable for specific regions.
- Mulching -types and practices/methods
- Weeds/noxious plants - types and how to eliminate.
- Sun and shade areas vs dry and moist areas.
- Availability of water.
- Maintenance of garden.

INSURANCE CERTIFICATE

This year your club Insurance Certificate will be **emailed to you**. Please ensure all **email contact information** is up to date. When the certificate arrives **save and print it**.

For more information email insurance@gardenclubs.org.au



DATA BASE

“The times, they are a changing.”

Exciting Times! Greg Ruckert has been working with the talented Erick to produce a new data base and website, which will almost ‘cook a chook’ by the time they are finished.

“What’s a data base?” you ask. It is the ‘library’ that holds all the information about the clubs and important information for the

GCA. It can generate reports, making managing the business of the GCA a lot more efficient. There will also be a web site with a map of Australia, with pins indicating where your club is.

No, don’t look for it yet but it is in the not too distant future.

Expert

Are you an expert? GCA is looking to update our pool of Experts guest speakers to share with our affiliates. Clubs often ask for a list of guest speakers be they garden, floral art, speciality or general benching judge or anything else for that matter. Let us know so we can add to our growing list of names.

The GCA 2022 “Beautiful Gardens of Australia”

Calendar photograph submissions

Submissions close on the 15th February 2021, and there is no entry fee.

Why not submit your lovely photographs of gardens in Australia for possible inclusion in the main monthly photo pages?

The simple conditions for entry are on the GCA website www.gardenclubs.org.au. There is no limit on the number of images, or when they were taken. You can email them to photocomp@gardenclubs.org.au

Members whose images are chosen for the 13 main pages receive \$100 each, so encourage your members to have a go!!

The smaller “filler” images chosen do not attract a fee, but members get the satisfaction of having their image published in the Calendar along with their name.

The 2020 Annual Photographic Competition

Submission of digital or post card entries close on the 1st October 2020, with no entry fee.

Members are reminded the total prize pool valued at around \$1,400 is the largest in Australia for a non-commercial organisation photographic competition, with no entry fee.

There is no time limit on when the photographs were taken or where in the world they were taken.

Entry details are on the GCA website www.gardenclubs.org.au or can be requested from the address below.

Entries can be emailed to photocomp@gardenclubs.org.au or posted to Paul Lucas at 64 Timbertop Drive, Rowville, Vic, 3178

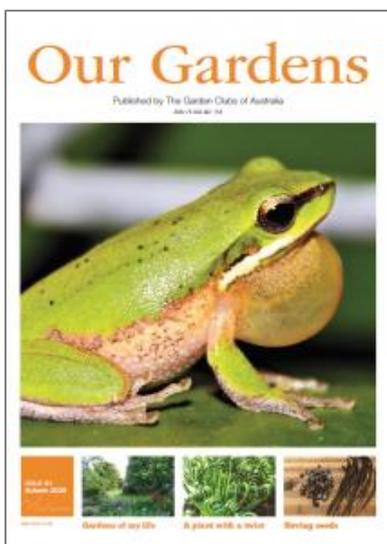
Your Story to be Told

We all have a story. Some give us a little laugh, make us cry or contemplate our lot in life. Our stories are unique and quite often when we sit and listen to someone else’s story, we are amazed at the tale.

The GCA magazine ‘*Our Gardens*’ is looking for **your story, your garden, your tale** of humble beginnings.

500 words and half a dozen photos, that is all it takes and you might be featured in our upcoming edition.

Contact Judy Horton editor@gardenclubs.org.au NOW!



Club Activities from Facebook

We have had the following information on the GCA Club Activities Group.

Trip Coordinator **Lola Gray** for TWIN TOWNS & DISTRICT GARDEN CLUB (northern NSW) and would love to take some members to **Tasmania** in 2021 for their annual extended trip and asks for some help. galo630@yahoo.com

What does Lola need at this stage (early itinerary planning)?

1. Gardens not to missed.
2. Any bus companies who charge a fair and reasonable price. Do you have a member in your club with a 20-seater bus licence who may like a week’s work (if we hire the bus)?
3. Info on good clean accommodation in your area which could house up to 21 people.
4. Best time of year to do our trip to see the gardens at their best.



Secretary **Liz Kerr** is delighted to announce the running of the *Bourke and District Garden Competition* again this year, with

tentative closing dates for entries 3pm Friday 21st August and

judging on 28th, 29th and 30th August. <https://www.facebook.com/gardenclub.bourke>

Rural garden entries will be accepted by a **short video and/or time-date stamped photographs**.

The impact of the drought has impacted all gardens. Please enter anyway!

(What an interesting concept to ensure out of town members get to showcase their gardens.)



Quiz Answers

1. Throughout his conquests of Asia, Alexander the Great collected many plant and animal specimens for Aristotle's research. This allowed Aristotle to develop in Athens the first zoo and botanical garden in existence.
2. Pedanius Dioscorides (40-90AD) was a Greek physician, pharmacologist, botanist and author of De Materia Medica – a 5-volume Greek encyclopedia about herbal medicine and related medicinal substances (a pharmacopeia), that was widely read for more than 1,500 years. He was employed as a physician in the Roman army.

Kind Regards

Suzanne Bushell (Bulletin)

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