

Garden Clubs of Australia.
Secretary.
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President George Hoad, Executives and Committee,

The GCA Bi-annual Conference held in Norfolk Island 13-20th October 2019 seems to have happened only yesterday. So much has happened in the short time since. Thus this late letter with wholehearted appreciation and thank you to the GCA President George Hoad, the Executives and Committee Members, the Norfolk Island Garden Club President Jan Keeping, her valued Committee, Garden Club Members and the Norfolk Island Travel Agency.

Eight keen enthusiastic garden lovers, members from the Goulburn Garden Club, prepared for travel, bustling to get to the head of the immigration line at Sydney Airport, and nestle into our designated plane seats like excited children set for adventure. It was only the beginning! To be greeted at the Norfolk Island Airport by the President and his team, then swooped off to our accommodation like Movie Stars was just the start of a fantastic week.

GCA Committee I wish to thank you for the fabulous opportunity allowing us to enjoy a beautiful part of the world. To share the joy of Norfolk Island gardens, be energised, to sense the majestic peace of the Norfolk Pines, catching up with friends of old from other Clubs, to learn of the Island's entirety all contributed to making us wiser souls.

We experienced something very special, the Islanders so proud of their place and Heritage, their support of one another and the importance of Community running through their veins, we felt their spirit so closely connected to the earth, so proud of all they have and do.

Friendly, Authentic and Inspiring.

Our own country is presently experiencing drought and the devastating fires full of rage and anger causing huge grief. May it end and replaced with love and creativity. We as Garden Clubs can be part of the healing in supporting the traumatised communities and their gardens. Only yesterday did I chat with our President John Weatherstone, both gathering ideas for our club to help repair the damage. Perhaps the gathering of seeds is a good place to start amongst the many other various ways and ideas. Again, an opportunity to share friendship, kindness and empathy with other affiliated gardeners.

GCA's 70th Anniversary is true testament to the Leadership of Committees throughout those years. It continues today with the GCA Committee's support to affiliated members. George Hoad's amazing gift to make all feel important, his kindness, generosity and ability to gather a large gardening family together and stay connected is without question.

Thank you and we look forward to Townsville Qld in 2021.



Libby Ratten
Delegate.