



The Garden Clubs
of Australia Inc

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Calendar year 2020 has been a very difficult year so far for The Garden Clubs of Australia Inc as it has for almost all of our members. We understand each of your frustrations, being unable to meet as a group, unable to visit others gardens, unable to organise regular events and enjoy one another's company. Your committee members are also members of local garden clubs as well as working for the GCA and thus we are frustrated twice over.

In spite of the social constraints our association has achieved some important outcomes this year.

- We have reached 70 years of age as an association and your club should have received the **70th ANNIVERSARY BOOKLET** which documents many of our mile stones. This publication was intended to be part of a national celebration in all states and territories.
- We have amended our constitution which recognises more than 20 Life Members of the GCA as exactly that, Life **MEMBERS**. This was one of those oversights from the past that has now been corrected.
- 2020 has seen a deluge of submissions for the GCA Annual Awards. Although it was a difficult job for the judges the GCA were excited about how many clubs wanted to be involved. We are currently conducting a review of the Awards and Ann Williams Clark Medallions. If you have comments about the current process or new ideas, please contact Elizabeth Dobson (awards@gardenclubs.org.au)
- Recently we conducted the ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING by ZOOM with elections being conducted by electronic ballot. More than 60 people participated in this event in locations from far North Queensland all the way to Perth in Western Australia with more than 100 votes being cast. (*Imagine 60 garden club members at an AGM*)
- Your new committee is:-

President **Lorraine Emerson** (NSW), Secretary **Jo Saxon-Keith** (TAS), Treasurer **Frances Cairns** (NSW), Vice-President **John Kitt** (TAS), **Jacqui Bateman** (WA), **Eric Bateman** (WA), **Elizabeth Dobson** (SA), **Heather Pryor** (TAS), **Paul Lucas** (VIC), **Paul McQueen** (NSW), **Judy Horton** (NSW) and **Lynne Faux** (QLD).

We have just had our first ZOOM meeting and we are committed to making the most of what remains of 2020. You will hear more from us soon.

- This is the **FORMS** time of the year and affiliates will receive the ANNUAL SCHEDULE, FORM 1 (Reaffiliation). In recognition of the difficult year that 2020 has been for clubs we have made a substantial reduction in fees for 2021- FORM 2

(Insurance Renewal), FORM 3 (Subscriptions to *Our Gardens* magazine) and FORM 4 (Update of Contact and Registration Information). Please respond to these forms as quickly as you can. We understand your difficulties at present, but please...

- **APOLOGIES**

Earlier in 2020 the GCA began a project to redesign our website and many of the related information gathering processes that we undertake. That project has been fraught with difficulties and the website has been of little use to our members for some time much less the general public who may wish to contact us.

For this we sincerely apologise and we can assure you that the committee is working with all possible speed to rectify the position. The problems have not stopped at the website and many of the committee email addresses have been thoroughly unreliable. It is our serious expectation that the problems will be solved before the end of this month and we will advise you as soon as we are operating effectively.

- You will have noticed that the logo of The Garden Clubs of Australia Inc has been changed. This represents a new era in the life of our association and with the new committee. We believe that together gardening can grow enormously over the next few years and we will continue to work with our members to achieve exciting things and hopefully encourage the new gardeners who have been introduced to this lifestyle through Covid19 to join a garden club to make new friends and get helpful hints to make their gardens productive and beautiful.
- Sales of the 2021 Calendar are proceeding very slowly obviously due to the Covid19 situation and the disruption to Club meetings in some areas. A gentle reminder that the current Calendar order form can be used by individual members to order individual Calendars for delivery to their home address for the same \$8 per Calendar. Please bring this to the notice of your members.