



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
VICTORIA

PEACE AND PROSPERITY KITCHEN GARDEN PROGRAM END OF YEAR RECEPTION

Monday 9th December 2019

Members of the Scanlon Family

Dr Sonja Hood, CEO, Community Hubs Australia

Ladies

First, I acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land upon which we are gathering and pay my respects to their Elders past and present and to any Elders here with us this morning.

Tony and I are absolutely delighted to welcome you back to Government House today to celebrate the end of the 2019 Peace and Prosperity Kitchen Garden program.

It is a joy for us to see you all again, and to see everyone dressed up - looking wonderful.

But the particular treat for us is to see your happy faces, and to hear the noisy chatter and laughter, as you gather here and connect with friends.

Do you remember the first day you came to Government House? No doubt, you had mixed feelings. Some excitement, but probably some nerves or trepidation as well.

As you came through those big gates and up the sweeping drive to then approach this magnificent House, we would not be surprised if you found it a bit imposing or daunting.

As you met the other women, we know that many of you were feeling shy. And of course you did not yet know our wonderful staff and the Community Hub leaders and volunteers.

It is heart-warming for us to know how those first impressions or that nervousness quickly gave way to a feeling of security and warmth as you all got to know each other and Government House.

If, through this Program, you have made new friends, felt more connected to our community, understood the role of the Governor, enjoyed learning a little about gardening and even picked up some new recipes, then we are happy.

This year, we have welcomed groups from Hume, Dandenong and Brimbank, and women from 25 different countries. How wonderful that is. You are part of the diversity that enriches Victoria.

This morning gives us the opportunity to thank a number of groups and people.

Thank you to Community Hubs Australia and the Scanlon Foundation for helping us to run this program. In particular, to Peter, Angie and Alex Scanlon. And to Sonja Hood, the Hub leaders, and Caroline Robinson for your very special contributions.

We are also grateful to our staff, particularly Erin, Simone and Suzi. I know they have all thoroughly enjoyed having you here.

Personally, I want to say thank you to my husband. It should be obvious to you just how enthusiastic he is about this Program. And I have no doubt that you have all enjoyed his amazing tours of the House. I know how much he has enjoyed sharing it with you, and talking about the ways in which we use the House for the people of Victoria.

Above all, I want to thank all of you. You have approached your time with us with open hearts and minds. You have been kind to and supported one another. You have been fun for each other.

For those of you who celebrate Christmas, we wish you and your families a Merry Christmas.

For those who do not, we wish you and your families well over the summer break.

We wish each one of you a safe, peaceful and prosperous new year, and invite you to bring your families and friends to our Open Day on Australia Day (26 January). There will be so much entertainment for everyone. Of course, you can show them how well you know the House and garden!