

Australian Men's Shed Association Newsletter

*The official publication of the
"Australian Men's Shed Association"*



There is no relationship between the community-based "Australian Men's Sheds Association (AMSA)", representing independent Community Men's Sheds, and the Company "Mensshed Australia Ltd".

*Wishing all Shedders & Supporters
a Merry Christmas
And a Happy & Prosperous New Year*

AMSA and The New National Men's Health Policy

On 25th November the Minister for Health and Ageing Nicola Roxon announced the appointment of Ambassadors for the New National Men's Health Policy. On Dec 2nd one of the appointed Ambassadors, Professor John Macdonald from the University of Western Sydney visited the AMSA office to discuss these issues and the role of Men's Sheds .

Professor Macdonald is very enthusiastic about the growth and development of the Men's Shed movement and AMSA, and is very passionate about the importance of Sheds and the role they play in providing a place of belonging and purpose to men of all ages. He feels strongly that Sheds play a vital role in preventative health by providing a place to go and socialise with other men and this, especially in retirement, can improve a man's health and add years to his life.

After the meeting the message that Professor Macdonald asked AMSA to convey to the members in the strongest way was "**Participate**". There are two items of information that he would like individual Sheds to provide for the Minister and Ambassadors and these are explained in page 3.

We need to provide evidence to the Ambassadors so they will realize the benefits and contribution that nearly 300 Men's Sheds are providing and that we can and do make a difference to the health of many men.

2009 National Men's Conference

27th & 28th August 2009.

Brighton Civic Centre, Hobart, Tasmania

AMSA Committee Meets in Canberra

The committee are now asking for Papers to be submitted. If you would like to participate in the Men's Shed conference program you can either:-

- ***Give a talk about your Shed***
- ***Teach a skill from your Shed***
- ***Share your Shed experience***

A form is available for submissions (Page 8)

Contact John Waters

bridgewatershed@bigpond.com

Members of the AMSA Working Committee met in Canberra last month for a forum to discuss the progress of the Association. Delegates from all over Australia met for two days to discuss everything from the proposed structure, strategic planning, the constitution through to the role of Sheds in men's health. At the conclusion of the meeting a delegation met with senior representatives from the Department of Families Housing Community Services and Indigenous Affairs. (Full report page 2)

To contact us for all Association business:- Phone **1300 550 009** or Email amsa@tpg.com.au
Previous Newsletters are available on the AMSA website - www.mensshed.org

AMSA Working Committee Meets in Canberra

At the Canberra meeting Committee delegates from VIC, NSW, TAS & QLD had a tight agenda for the two days, but the results were very worthwhile.

The best structure for AMSA - Association or Guarantee Company (see section below) was discussed and it was agreed to accept the legal advice and convert to the simpler company structure.

The draft Constitution was discussed and the changes needed because of the new structure will be incorporated. These items will be circulated to members for comments before the AGM at the Hobart conference.

A great deal of time was given to strategic planning, the role of Sheds in men's health and preparing the presentation to the Federal Government.



Graeme Curnow, Gary Green, John Waters, Ruth Van Herk, Ron Mitchell, Ted Donnelly.

Following the meeting a delegation meet with senior staff at the offices of the Department of Families Housing Community Services and Indigenous Affairs. The delegates presented AMSA and our cause to the Department as well as our directions for the future. Although in the long term AMSA will have to become a self sufficient organisation we may be able to source seed funding from various Government agencies. It was clear that we are certainly being noticed by the Federal Government.. The Cluster concept was well received together with a proposal to source funding for regional coordinators to service each cluster. This would provide the government with an economically viable

Should AMSA be an "Association"?

When AMSA was established it had to be "Incorporated" and the obvious way to do this was to set up an "Association". However, this structure requires specified office bearers and committee members who are elected. This inevitably leads to a large structure and organizing this on a National basis has proved difficult.

Whilst AMSA has a number of specific National responsibilities, many are similar to those of State or Regional groups but with different emphasis and targets. Most of the "on the ground" work requiring the efforts and time of a lot of people are at the State/Regional zone levels.

AMSA has always been defined as an "umbrella organization" but, unlike the States/Regional zone functions, this work can be carried out by a small staff (possibly one Executive officer and secretarial help) acting as a "Secretariat" rather than the committee structure of an association.

A number of legal people advised that AMSA, being a National body, should be set up as a "Not for Profit Company Limited by Guarantee" and not as an Association. Initially this did not seem to agree with the aims of Shedders but further investigation clarified that a "Guarantee Company" was different to a conventional Trading Company that owned capital and earned and distributed profits/dividends. This is really a way to use the simplified structure of a company and as it would be a "Not for profit" Company it would not have to include "Ltd" in its name. The word Association could still be in the title but as part of the name rather than a description of the structure.

Guarantee Companies are very widespread and this is the structure used by clubs, sports associations (Cricket Australia), worker's cooperatives, non Gov't organizations (NGOs) and charities (Oxfam).

As a Guarantee Company does not have share capital its guarantors are members not shareholders and in the case of AMSA it is proposed that these be the State Associations. They would appoint their representatives to guide and monitor the work of AMSA.

Converting AMSA to a Company (Limited by Guarantee) means we would not require the large bureaucratic organization of an Association, could operate with a small staff and the organization could be set up quickly. It is possible that the Government would help in financing this small team because it would simplify access to what they are now seeing as an important organization.

This would enable us to concentrate on setting up and strengthening the State and Regional Associations where the real work is going to be done.

Ted Donnelly

AMSA and The New National Men's Health Policy

Important !!!!! Your Shed and AMSA requires participation

On 25th November the Minister for Health and Ageing Nicola Roxon announced the appointment of Ambassadors for the New National Men's Health Policy.

We know the role that our Sheds play in contributing to the wellbeing of men within our communities and I have often heard Shedders saying "if the Government would only spend more on developing Sheds we would save them millions in health care". Well now it seems the Government is looking out for projects just like ours.

After reading the documents released on this Policy it is clear that Men's Sheds tick all the boxes in relation to Men's Health and Social Inclusion. One of the appointed Ambassadors is Professor John Macdonald from the University of Western Sydney and it was very pleasing that he visited the AMSA office on Dec 2nd with his colleague Anthony Brown (a long time Shed supporter) to discuss these issues and the role of Men's Sheds .

Professor Macdonald is involved with an indigenous Men's Shed and was very enthusiastic about the growth and development of the Men's Shed movement and AMSA, and is very passionate about the importance of Sheds and the role they play in providing a place of belonging and purpose to men of all ages. He feels strongly that Sheds play a vital role in preventative health, just by providing a place to go and socialise with other men and this, especially in retirement, can improve a man's health and add years to his life.

This is something we have all known and been saying for years. So where to from here? After the meeting the message that Professor Macdonald and Anthony Brown asked AMSA to convey to the members in the strongest way was "**Participate**".

WHAT CAN YOU DO ?

Provide examples where men's lives improved because of attending a Shed.

Practically every Shed has seen members who have been depressed because of illnesses (physical and mental), bereavement, loneliness etc. and yet have overcome these problems with help from other Shed members. It was suggested that these examples be collected together and presented to Minister Roxon and the Ambassadors for the National Men's Health policy.

All Sheds and Shedders are therefore requested to write down these good news stories and send it (or them) to AMSA so that we can present them all as a collection. They can be as long or short as you want, but please remember (for privacy) change the names of the individuals concerned.

Explain the activities of your Shed.

Men's Sheds have an extremely wide range of activities and, even within our own organisation, people have a very restricted idea of what other Sheds do and how they do it. All Sheds are therefore asked to write a brief note on their Shed - how and why it got started - who helped - number of members and current activities. It would also be useful to include other projects that you cannot do because of funding.

We want to provide the evidence to the Ambassadors so they will realize the benefits and contribution that nearly 300 Men's Sheds are providing and that we can and do make a difference to the health of many men.

This could result in new funding opportunities for existing Sheds and especially for new Sheds. More importantly it will raise your Shed's profile within the community, attracting socially isolated men to visit a Shed and, hopefully, improve their well being.

I know all of us have campaigned long and hard for the benefit of our own Sheds. This, however, is our first opportunity to campaign together for all of our mutual benefit.

Please send your stories and covering letters by the end of January so they can be forwarded to the Minister.

David Helmers

Please forward your views and suggestions to AMSA. (amsa@tpg.com.au)

News from the AMSA office - David Helmers

The AMSA office is now established and functional and Melisa White, who provides the secretarial help, is rapidly learning about Men's Sheds. The new contact details are:-

Mail:- Australian Men's Sheds Association
PO Box 775
Newcastle,
NSW 2300

Phone:- 1300 550 009
Fax:- (02) 4940 8301
Email:- amsa@tpg.com.au

New Database system for AMSA

Over the next few weeks AMSA will be updating our data base of members using a newly purchased data management program called ACT. This program was designed as a client management system for business but will not only serve our immediate requirements but also our needs well into the future.

Work will begin shortly on updating all members contact information, so expect a call from the office to verify contact details. During this process we will be adding more member information to the data base such as activities, operation hours and number of members. Melisa White or myself will be contacting each Shed early in the new year updating the system when complete all members will receive notification of AMSA membership along with a new membership number.

Email and Website

One of our continuing dilemmas is that when we circulate correspondence a proportion of email addresses have changed each time and we spend many hours updating this information. One of the advantages of the new database software is that it enables us to have a large number of email addresses linked to it. Each shed will be allocated a member email account with the aim of improving communications with AMSA. However, they can also be used as a normal email and, of course, Sheds can retain and use any addresses that they already have. When established the accounts will come with full instructions

.As usual with AMSA this service is totally free of charge.

Work is progressing on our new AMSA website with updated information and a new shed locator. This website will be a vast improvement on the old one, but if anyone has ideas on additional content we would like to hear from you.

New Phone No. (1300 550 009) is a great success.

Since the introduction of the 1300 hundred number we have had a massive increase in membership and enquiries regarding Men's Sheds. The calls have ranged from questions like "Where is the nearest shed to me", "How can we start a shed in our town", "How do I join AMSA", "Can you help with a problem we are having in our Shed".

However, the most surprising result, and one that wasn't expected, was the number of men calling this number simply wanting someone to talk to. Happily I have been able to refer these men to a Shed in their area or to organisations such as Beyondblue and Lifeline. We have even been able to refer callers wishing to donate money and materials to the nearest Shed.


Currently we are averaging around 12 calls per day with a record of 36 calls in one day so far, so please keep the calls coming.

A Christmas Message

It's that time of year again, the time when men gather in the centre of seemingly endless shopping malls pretending that they are not being forced to stand and wait as their spouses ponder over potential Christmas gifts for relatives that we have never see at any other time of the year. We stand their busily minding our own business discretely raising our eyebrows and nodding in acknowledgment of one another as if to say "I know how you feel mate, be patient", we stand their until we are retrieved by the wife to progress to the next bargain bin or women's fashion store, where again we wait patiently and acknowledge the presence of other Christmas shopping centre inmates serving weekend detention, thinking wouldn't it be nice if I got to spend so much time pondering through the hardware store on the way home, but instead we are informed that the credit card limit has been exceeded.

Yes the Christmas season is upon us once more, and we wish for gifts for the shed to arrive. It has been a long and productive year for AMSA, with the Association growing beyond all expectations, new sheds opening regularly and developments progressing well with federal government recognition and assistance. 2008 has been a year of achievements and at the end of which I sincerely feel that 2009 shall be a year where AMSA shall reach our first of many major milestones.

So from the AMSA working committee and from one Shedder to another, I would like to wish you



David Helmers

Please forward your views and suggestions to AMSA. (amsa@tpg.com.au)

AMSA helps in Queensland

On December 9th members of Sheds in Southern Queensland gathered for a meeting in Brisbane. The meeting was well attended with interested parties from Sheds of all stages of development.

David Helmers was invited to speak at this meeting to explain the structure of AMSA as well as our aims and objectives. Queensland has been somewhat delayed in developing the Shed concept compared to the Southern States, but they have now embraced the idea and Sheds are being set up everywhere throughout the State.

AMSA is helping by sharing information learned from the longer established Sheds and this should help the development of Queensland Sheds without spending time and money on reinventing the wheel.

The meeting adopted a motion to incorporate the Queensland Men's Shed Association and a small starting committee was formed.

NSW Men's Shed Association

The NSW Men's Shed Association has now been incorporated as part of the AMSA structure.

It is proposed that a meeting be called for February 2009 of all Sheds and Clusters throughout the State to form a starting committee, submit a constitution for approval from the members and to organise an election for office bearers and the first AGM.

Fundraising for the Shed



Winner of our recent fund raising raffle Gerry Wild (centre) with two members of the SHED.

The need for a central point for men's group activities has been well established at the Shed @ Windale. The regular gathering of people to address personal issues, Centrelink requirements and assisting fellow members fulfils that need. Community projects, youth mentoring and social interaction are normal daily activities with the SHED becoming a valuable community place where young people can receive mentoring and training from skilled retired or unemployed persons. A key focus is for young people to develop their literacy and numeracy skills while improving their self esteem..

A major fund raising raffle recently conducted by the Shed had a first prize of power tools to the value of \$5000 going to Mr. Gerry Wild. Imagine our pleasant surprise when Mr Wild returned the next day to donate

back to the SHED the major power tool item in the prize -a very expensive mitre saw. We were very appreciative of Mr Wild's unselfish generosity, especially when he said he wished to contribute to assisting those disadvantaged youth who may gain by their experience at the SHED. Such kind consideration brings a lump to ones throat and provides further incentive for us to continue to pursue our goals.

A further surprise occurred a week later when the local Bennetts Green Rotary Club sponsored the supply of polo shirts for Shed members showing the *SHED'S* name and logo. This very generous gesture provides an improved and professional image when representing the *SHED*.

Members of the Shed have been busy completing a number of community projects recently so they can taper off for the Christmas break. They have completed dolls houses for a children's centre; small timber beds for a local kindergarten (the kids actually sleep in them); a concrete chess board for a local school playground, the 600mm high chess pieces were previously donated to the school, and other small projects as well as attending a variety of markets selling raffle tickets.

So at the end of a busy but eventful year we wish fellow Shed members a very happy Christmas and a healthy and successful 2009.

Roger Greenan

Men's Health Feature:-***beyondblue* Men's Sheds Training**

Brimbank Men's Shed once again played host to another fantastic event when ***beyondblue: the national depression initiative*** ran some training for Men's Shed leaders & facilitators on Oct 30.

The session attracted around 20 Sheddies from across Melbourne's West including Kilmore and we all left with a better understanding of male depression and it's impact on blokes and the community more broadly. We learnt what signs to keep an eye out for, and most importantly it showed some basic tools and approaches we can all use to give someone a helping hand when they're struggling a bit.



A big thanks to the *beyondblue* team for running the training, David (the presenter), Carolyn and Marie-Anne and to the whole organisation for their growing recognition of and support for Men's Sheds. We've found a like-minded spirit in them and we can all look forward to a great, shared journey between Men's Sheds and *beyondblue* into the future. To find out about hosting a *beyondblue* session for Sheds in your regional area, contact Carolyn Salmon on 9810 6164 or carolyn.salmon@beyondblue.org.au

You can even order your free *beyondblue* Men's Shed kits by emailing menssheds@beyondblue.org.au or by calling their info line on 1300 224 636. Check out the *beyondblue* website for heaps of great information or to order some other top-notch resources: www.beyondblue.org.au

Mobile memories to heal the pain of dementia

Bulman with a model of the mobile men's shed due to start rolling soon.

Picture: MARTIN BECKY 1/2017

MANNINGHAM men with dementia are being offered a hand by a Doncaster East couple.

Warren and Sue Bulman have started an association called Mobile Memories for the Aged, which is aimed at improving the lives of men living with dementia.

The couple was inspired to establish the association after Mr Bulman's father passed away earlier this year having lived with dementia.

The association will operate a program called The Mobile Men's Shed, which will include a purpose-built trailer with wood-working tools to visit men at aged care and residential centres. The Mobile Men's Shed will predominantly focus on senior men and will have tools dating from the 1900s to 1960s.

"The tools from this era will encourage reminiscing and discussion through touch, feel and smell" Mr Bulman

said. "Our Mobile Men's Shed program leverages the principals of the community Men's Shed program to create a sense of being, belonging, mateship and a place to be valued—all in an environment where they feel familiar and comfortable".

The association recently received a grant from Manningham Council, but needs more financial help. For more information, or to donate, e-mail info@mobilememories.com.au.

PETE'S COMMUNITY WORKSHED



Recently, the Brighton Municipality lost one of its most valuable community members with the sudden passing of George Startup. George's talents, attitude and commitment to his community will be missed.

George had many achievements but one of his proudest moments was receiving the inaugural Pride of Australia Medal in the Mateship Category. This was a very much deserved award for the valuable work performed by George and the other volunteers at Pete's Community Workshed.

George's contributions to Pete's Community Workshed were many and varied. With thought, he could put his hand to repairing or fabricating almost anything. He also set an important mindset for the shed. Those that visited the shed were allowed to participate in their own time. Some people preferred to watch for a while before they picked up tools and attempted to make something for themselves. It was very important to George to give people the space to partici-

pate. He was not into spoon feeding anyone.

His dedication to this community was not only through his work at the Shed but also his involvement with the Bridgewater and Gagebrook Community Centres. His presence will be greatly missed by staff, volunteers and community members of all ages. He was always a willing helper on any project or activity that was happening and was able to quickly problem solve and provide 'running repairs'.

Pete's Shed is an important resource for those in the local community. It acts as a local fabrication centre for almost anything that may be required by the community. Be it a park bench for the local council, decorations for the Christmas pageant, a billy cart for a boy that has lost his, or rejuvenated bikes for those that can't afford them. The Shed provides diversional therapy for residents of nursing homes, and for people supported by Headway Support Services. It has allowed visiting students from the local schools to regain their interest in attending school.

Pete's Shed has also been instrumental in the Men's Shed movement by providing advice and support to other Sheds starting up in Tasmania. Volunteers at the shed are active members of the Australian Men's Shed Association.

Jordan River Service Incorporated (Bridgewater and Gagebrook Community Centres), Brighton Council and other service providers involved in Pete's Community Workshed would like to assure all current and future participants that they are fully committed to the continued operation of the Shed. They are keen to hear from people who have practical skills who can commit themselves on a regular basis as volunteers for a morning or two (or more). They can contact Helen Manser at Jordan River Service on (03) 6263 6097 or John Waters at Pete's Shed on (03) 6263 5142.

Pete's Community Workshed is open Mon – Fri, 9am to 1pm and can be contacted during opening hours on (03) 6263 5142.

Melton Men's Shed gets a very special visitor



Whilst the **Melton Men's Shed** has a few months before it opens its doors (around April 2009 – fingers and toes crossed) we've been very busy spreading the word about what we're up to. In early November we had our first display at a big community event, the annual Djerriwarrah Festival.

It was a very busy day with a couple of hundred people visiting our Shed display. The response was extremely positive (especially when the wives/partners heard we'd be offering cooking classes for their blokes).

We even managed a very special guest who dropped in for a chat and a look around. The Hon.

Julia Gillard is not only the Deputy PM, she is also our local member and we were delighted for her to see what we're up to and to meet some of our eager "Sheddies".

Darren Cunningham - **Melton Men's Shed**

Australian Men's Shed Association National Conference

27th & 28th August 2009.
Brighton Civic Centre, Hobart, Tasmania



Call for Papers

The 3rd National Men's Shed Conference is expected to attract up to 400 delegates from around Australia and we aim to provide a wide range of topics covering the interests of developing Sheds as well established facilities.

Submissions are requested from the Shedding community along with those from health professionals and community groups., if you have a story to tell or ideas to share please submit to the committee for consideration in our planning.

Submissions close on **Friday, February 27, 2009.**

Please send completed submissions to

For more information contact
AMSA on 1300 550 009

The Organising Committee,

3rd National Men's Shed Conference,

PO Box 191,

Bridgwater,

Tasmania, 7030

Fax (03) 6263 5142 Email bridegwatershed@bigpond.com

Subject of your Presentation _____

Name _____ Shed / Organisation _____

Address _____ State _____ Code _____

Contact Phone _____ Fax No _____

Email _____

Brief biography of presenter - Not to exceed 50 words.

Abstract of paper - (200 words Maximum)

Requirements/ audio visual / data display

Cabbage Tree Men's Shed - Invitation to the Opening

Cabbage Tree Men's Shed (near Orbost Victoria) will be having it's official opening by local State member Craig Ingram on 31st January at 12midday. There will be a sausage sizzle and all Men's Shedders are invited

*At the end of this year we wish you all
a Happy and Prosperous 2009*

Central & Regional AMSA Contacts

Contact details for AMSA are:-

Mail:- Australian Men's Sheds Association
PO Box 775
Newcastle,
NSW 2300

Phone:- 1300 550 009 (Local call costs on landlines)
Fax:- (02) 4940 8301
Email:- amsa@tpg.com.au

This contact point provides support to all Sheds, forwards general enquiries from potential members and supporters to the nearest shed in their area as well as providing Start up assistance to communities wishing to create a Shed.

A number of enquiries that are sent to AMSA require local knowledge and therefore, to improve the flow of information, some members have agreed to act as regional contacts. Their details are given below and they will help with local queries or re-direct the request if necessary.

As the number of Regional groups and Clusters grow this list will be enlarged.

<u>Region</u>	<u>Contact</u>	<u>Phone</u>	<u>E-mail</u>
Mid North Coast NSW	Stuart Holmes	(02) 6568 5090	stuart@nvcsc.org.au
West NSW	Ray Cawthorne	(02) 6343 1289	grenfellmensshed@westnet.com.au
Hunter Valley	David Helmers	(02) 4979 1344	david.helmerts@mn.catholic.org.au
Sydney Area	Ruth van Herk	(02) 9418 8459	lanecovemenshed@nsr.unitingcare.org.au
Victoria	Gary Green	(03) 5154 6648	gary.green@orh.com.au
Victoria	Ron Mitchell	(03) 5234 6163	lynneron@gotalk.net.au
Tasmania	John Waters	(03) 6263 5142	bridgewatershed@bigpond.com
West Australia	Bill Johnstone	(08) 9336 4408	fremanshed@optusnet.com.au
Queensland	Scotia Monkivitch	(07) 3027 4490	scotia.monkivitch@brisbane.qldgov.au
Queensland	Graeme Curnow	(07) 3376 1886	g_scurnow@optusnet.com.au
Northern Rivers	Bill Taylor	(02) 6622 6116	mms@mor.com.au
Warrumbungle Shire	Procter Morris	(02) 6849 2180	procterm@hyw.com.au

Please send your comments, suggestions for future articles or requests for information etc. to AMSA .
Phone:- 1300 550 009 Email:- amsa@tpg.com.au

*The Australian Men's Shed Association
Newsletter is produced by:-*

"The Shed" @ Windale



Centacare Newcastle

UnitingCare
Ageing
Northern Sydney Region