



# Australian Men's Shed Association Newsletter

Produced by

*"The Shed" @ Windale*  
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For the Australian Men's Shed Association

## WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU LOCATE A SHED AT THE LOCAL DUMP? IT'S A SHEDDERS HEAVEN

We all have been guilty of it, we have all done it and we all have had hostilities raised with our spouses for it, that is the trip to the local waste centre and coming back home with more than we went.

As the wise old saying goes one man's trash is another man's treasure and those sheds that are associated with or in some cases located within a recycling centre are truly in a shedders heaven.

Recycling and Men's Sheds seem to go together hand in hand, it appears a logical way of providing materials and projects as well as generating income at the same time.

The Shed @ Salamander Bay located on the grounds of "Refused and Reused Recycle Centre" is almost 100 percent dependent on recycled materials and other sheds such as Bowral are investigating similar options.

*(Continued on page 4)*



Shed Heaven - The Shed@Salamander Bay

## A Firing Tribute



Dave Samms from Refused and Reused Firing the Big Guns of Fort Scratchley

Refused and Reused Coordinator Dave Samms had the prestigious honor of firing the 6-inch guns to welcome the Cruise Liner Mercury to Newcastle on Friday February 15.

Dave fired the Guns in memorial for former local MP John Bartlett whose funeral was held later the same day.

John was born in England and immigrated to Australia in 1962. Formally the Mayor of Port Stephens, John entered the state political arena in 1999 as the Member for Port Stephens. John also was the Director of Refused and Reused recycling, the success of which stands as a tribute to John's dedication to the community.

John Bartlett passed away on February 8, 2008 at the age of 58.

Dave Samms was invited by the Shed @ Fort Scratchley to fire the Gun in his honor.

## Men's Sheds Networks—Current Situation

by Ted Donnelly

At the Manly Conference, it was identified that the liaison and communications between Sheds needed improvement. As a first step it was suggested that Sheds in a defined area (LGA, region or district, etc) could network with each other within this area.

Bringing Sheds together in this way could help with training, purchasing, local publicity/fundraising and general passing on of information whilst socialising. This is already happening with Victoria forming a State group, and Tasmania and West Australian looking into what would be their best approach.

Because of its size, NSW is forming a number of Groups. The Western Alliance comprises a number of Sheds ranging from Griffith and Grenville to Cootamundra and they have already held a number of meetings and inter-Shed visits. The Hunter Group (reported in the last issue) is well established and is now actively helping other start-up groups. The 22 Sheds in the Sydney area have just held their first meeting (see page 2) and it is planned to hold an exploratory meeting for an Illawarra group in April.

Further developments in these Groups will be given in future newsletters.

To contact us please use this email address for all Association business:- [amsa@tpg.com.au](mailto:amsa@tpg.com.au)

## Sydney Cluster Group Holds First Meeting - by Ruth Van Herk

On Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2008 a number of Men's Sheds representatives from the greater Sydney Region, the Central Coast, and the Hunter Valley Region met to discuss the pros and cons of forming "Cluster Groups" of Men's Sheds.

The idea is that neighbouring Men's Sheds within the area could share common information and concerns, alert each other to opportunities for acquiring materials and tools, share project ideas and templates, help each other with publicity and encourage social networking occasions like barbeques or day trips. It also offers a cohesive approach for submitting and accepting money from grants from any given Shed. Any business arising out of these encounters could be aired and the information fed into AMSA.

The idea was accepted as valuable. The Hunter Region's spokesmen, David Helmers and Roger Greenan from the Men's Shed @ Windale, then presented an advanced model of what their region's Cluster group had achieved. Apart from the invaluable networking possibilities for materials, policies & procedures sharing, strategic action planning and training opportunities etc. the Hunter Region had developed a Terms of Reference Paper which outlined a particular structure amongst their group of Sheds which has set up the ability for the group to receive and distribute money among its members through successful submissions and grants.

A number of the Sydney Shed participants opted for a more informal approach to Cluster Groups at this stage, since they were just feeling their way with the concept. They may well adopt a more structured approach as they begin to understand and experience their role more fully. The Hunter Valley Region serves as a cogent model for this approach. There was an agreement to actually form loose, local cluster groups based on Sydney (North, South, East and West) and the Central Coast region. Organisational details will be discussed at later meetings.

### **VICTORIAN MEN'S SHED ASSOCIATION (VMSA)**

The Governor of Victoria has agreed to be the Patron of VMSA and individual Sheds, who are members of the VMSA, can now acknowledge this on their own Shed brochures.

The latest VMSA meeting was held at Melton on 14 March. Despite the extreme hot weather, which prevented some people traveling, about 50 members attended.

A key part of the meeting was an excellent presentation on OH & S issues by Steve Kolotylo from Worksafe VIC.

The next meeting will be in Manfield on Friday 11 July. At this meeting it is planned that four different Men's Sheds will present for about 15 minutes each what is happening at their Shed. This may involve initiatives, innovations, problems that were solved etc basically information that others may be able to take away and use at their own Shed or will inspire other Men's Sheds.

### **Fremantle Men's Shed - On the ABC**

ABC Radio National ran a programme on the Fremantle Men's Shed in August 2006 and because it was so well received they re-broadcast again in early March.

The programme covered how, when holidaying in NSW, Bill Johnstone had a chance encounter with a Men's Community Shed in Nambucca. He was struck by the potential that a community shed might have in his home town, the historic port town of Fremantle, Western Australia - particularly as Fremantle's property boom had squeezed out many a backyard workshop.

Two years later, the Fremantle Men's Community Shed measures its success by an ever increasing membership of guys who take pride in sharing their skills and passing them on to the wider Fremantle community.

Further information on the Fremantle Shed can be found on their website [www.fremanshed.org](http://www.fremanshed.org). The programme commentary is on [www.abc.net.au/rn/streetstories/stories/2008/2185004.htm](http://www.abc.net.au/rn/streetstories/stories/2008/2185004.htm)

*Men's Health Feature by Greg Millan*

## Dealing with Depression

Depression is more common than we think affecting people of all ages and backgrounds. 25% of the population will suffer some form of depression at some time in their lives.

Each year, depression will affect one in six Australian men at any given time. But these numbers may not tell the whole truth as a great deal of male depression goes undiagnosed.

Men are different from women who seek out help and support for these conditions. Most men tend to not want to talk to someone or seek out appropriate treatment and may turn to alcohol and drugs or other ways of coping when they are in a depressed or anxious state of mind.

Men learn to overvalue independence and self-control from an early age and they wrongly believe that it's unmanly to express pain, weakness, uncertainty, helplessness and sadness. They think that if they can't deal with these difficult emotions that they are somewhat less of a man. Nothing could be further from the truth however as many men exhibit strength and grit by dealing effectively with depression and leading productive and rewarding lives - but these are the ones who do something about it.

A lot of men focus on achievement and success, so they feel under constant pressure to perform well. If they experience setbacks at home or at work, they may keep their distress to themselves. Women on the other hand - including those who focus on achievement and success - usually feel free to seek help.

Depression may have a profound impact on every aspect of life. It may directly affect your health by keeping your stress response continually activated, a state that can damage many organs, including the heart. It may even shorten your life. In a given year, depressed men are more than twice as likely as non-depressed men to die of any cause. Depressed women also have an increased risk of dying, compared to non-depressed women, but the difference is not as great as in men. Depression also increases your risk of divorce and at work depression makes you less productive, limits your earning potential and increases your risk of losing your job.

If you suspect you have depression, talk to someone about it - partner, friends, family, counsellor or the doctor. It's important to remember there are many things you can do apart from or alongside taking medication, like talking strategies, and new exercise, diet and lifestyle changes.

For more information visit the website at [www.BeyondBlue.org.au](http://www.BeyondBlue.org.au)

Greg Millan is a Men's Health Consultant working in Newcastle and he can be contacted at [gmillan@bigpond.net.au](mailto:gmillan@bigpond.net.au)

### **Put "ICE" into your mobile phone**

Most of us carry a mobile phone with names and numbers stored in its memory but if we were involved in an accident, or were taken ill, how would anyone attending to us know who to call? Which number is for the contact person in case of an emergency?

For some time now in Europe and the USA there has been a campaign to include in the phone memory an "**ICE**" number standing for ( **In Case of Emergency** ) and this is now being promoted in Australia. All you need to do is store the number of a contact person or persons who should be contacted during an emergency under the name "ICE". In cases of accidents or illness Emergency Service personnel and hospital staff would then be able to quickly contact the right person by simply dialing the number that you have stored as "ICE". For more than one contact name, simply use ICE1, ICE2, ICE3, etc.

For legal reasons of confidentiality and also that patients may have another person's phone the Emergency Services are not yet campaigning for this move but they support the concept of "ICE" as having merit. They do also recommend having back up information with you in wallets, diaries etc

As a well known Melbourne TV celebrity would say:—  
**"You know it makes sense"**

### ***The manual on "Setting up a Men's Shed" has been a great success***

Following the release of the Manual at the Manly Conference about 190 copies have now been sent to a large range of organisations, including Councils, Church groups, Rotary and other community groups.

The overwhelming message is that there is a great interest in Men's Sheds and over the next year or so we expect a large growth in the number of Sheds.

This is not limited to Australia as we have also had requests from New Zealand, UK, USA, Ireland and Japan.

*For further information and Table of Contents contact AMSA on [amsa@tpg.com.au](mailto:amsa@tpg.com.au)*

## SHEDDERS HEAVEN

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Already a lot of sheds are resorting to toys and furniture as part of their activities, associations with recycling centres is an advancement on this existing concept.

The Shed @ Salamander was established last year with the contribution of an existing building within the operations of Refused and Reused Recycling in Port Stephens.

Members of the shed scour through the enormous variety of materials left at the centre and determine exactly what can be made from the resources. Some items are pieces of furniture which are restored other projects vary from toys to household items such as chopping boards, toilet roll holders and even painters easels, the items are then resold through the R&R store located onsite returning revenue to the

shed.

It is amazing what you can find there, from power tools through to general hardware such as new nails, screws, hinges and paints.

Such sheds are nearly fully self sufficient based entirely on recycling. In this age when we are all looking to reduce our carbon footprint recycling is definitely the way to go.

Bowral Men's Shed is currently investigating an arrangement with Wingecarribee Resource and Recovery Centre of mutual benefit and I feel many more shall follow.

After visiting the Shed @ Salamander I now mention the concept to every group I have inquiries from on the establishment of a Mens Shed, one of the first things I now ask "Is there a recycling centre near you?"

By David Helmers



Ingenuity: even the work benches at Salamander are made from a recycled kitchen



Chas Reid from Bowral Mens Shed with one of his recycled chairs

## HUNTER CLUSTER GROUP AT WOODWORKING EXPO



The Wood turners of the Hunter held their annual Wood Working and Craft Expo on the 28th of February through to the 2nd of March at Newcastle Entertainment Centre.

This year the Hunter Valley Shed Cluster Group partook with a combined exhibition with six sheds participating.

The volunteers manning the stand were pleasantly surprised with the extraordinary amount of interest shown in their stand. By 11am on Friday it was standing room only with thousands of patrons passing through the gates and the Cluster Group's stand being extremely popular.

The focus of the exhibit was recruitment of shed members and raising public awareness, with all sheds having numerous inquiries and running out of brochures on the first day resulted in some emergency printing.

The Wood turners of the Hunter provided the Expo Site free of charge

and Marlin exhibitions also provided the exhibition hire equipment with no charge.

After the three days it is estimated that over 1000 brochures were distributed and with eight volunteers working they could not keep up with all of the inquiries at times.

On the final day the President of the Wood Turners along with some members of the committee visited our stand to thank the group for their participation stating that our display proved to be a highly successful addition to the Expo and extended the invitation to participate again next year.

## LOOKING FOR A GOOD HOME

Tony Clifford from Willoughby Community Men's Shed has a Table saw that has been donated that he is looking to forward on to a good home. The saw is in working order but is requiring some TLC for further information contact Tony on 02 99580529 or 0418 220 774 or email [tonyc@cliffordmarine.com.au](mailto:tonyc@cliffordmarine.com.au)



## Letter to the Editor

Just to say that the Thames Men's Shed opened on 17 March. This is the first in New Zealand.

It all started with Barry Golding's talk at a Conference in Queenstown, New Zealand, last year plus a visit from Alex Paton and his wife (Illawarra).

A thanks to all you Aussie Shedders for letting this positive virus spread across the Tasman.

Ian Durie (Thames Men's Shed Steering Committee)



***FEATURE SHED***  
**WILLOUGHBY COMMUNITY MEN'S SHED**

Early in 2006 the Willoughby City Council in cooperation with the Chatswood Rotary Club commenced looking around the municipality to identify a suitable site for a Men's Shed. The first site chosen was a scout hall off Mowbray road which was eminently suitable except that there were accessibility problems.

After deciding on the present site, the former Northbridge RSL Hall, the WCC requested community and sponsor club representatives to form a working party to get the shed up and running. The working party was formally enabled in October 2006.

At this time the federal government was approached for funding by the WCC. UnitingCare Ageing, Lane Cove, who have a lot of experience in Men's Sheds was also on the working committee at that time. Their experience was invaluable.

Work commenced on specifying equipment and tools to be acquired and installed. Concurrently members of the working party manufactured and installed the work benches you see in the images accompanying this document. Due to the relatively small space involved, a lot of planning was required to place all the machinery so it was accessible and safe.



**Willoughby Mens Shed Members**

Selection and installation of dust extraction equipment also consumed large amounts of time and energy. Working party members constructed a large enclosure on one end of the RSL hall to house the machinery. WCMS members assisted with the installation of the machinery and the ducting inside the shed.



**A Very impressive setup - note the dust extraction system**

The official opening with the Mayor and Joe Hockey present was on July 26<sup>th</sup> 2007. After several "information days" the shed opened for full operations on August 16<sup>th</sup> 2007. Initially open for only one day a week, the shed is now open every Tuesday and Thursday.

Most recently, a Christmas BBQ was held for members, their partners and children. More than 60 people attended on December 8<sup>th</sup> 2007 and a good time was had by all.



**The official opening**

At last count we had 66 members signed up and we see about 15 to 25 of them every week. Members have been engaged in further fit out of the shed and various community projects such as manufacture of

fabric stands for the Northbridge Quilters, bowls carriers for a local club, toys etc. A number of personal projects have been undertaken in the short period we have been in operation.

Tony Clifford - WCMS Coordinator

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Please send your comments, suggestions for future articles or requests for information etc. to AMSA .

Email:- [amsa@tpg.com.au](mailto:amsa@tpg.com.au)

**In order to clarify the confusion that exists in a number of Men's Sheds and the organisations that sponsor and support them, the following statement is made:**

**There is no relationship between the community-based "Australian Men's Sheds Association (AMSA), representing independent Community Men's Sheds, and the Company "Menshed Australia Ltd". There is no relationship between AMSA supporters Centacare and UnitingCare Ageing and this company.**