

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 "Menshed Australia Ltd".

2009 National Men's Shed Conference ***27th & 28th August 2009.*** ***Brighton Civic Centre, Hobart, Tasmania***

The organising committee have confirmed that the Hobart conference will be at the Brighton Civic Centre with the dinner to be held at the Hilltop Tavern, Granton. Currently negotiations are underway with a number of Hotel / Motels and the committee expect that the cost to attend the conference will be comparable to that of the Manly Conference.

Support for travel to the Hobart Conference

A number of Sheds have contacted us enquiring whether the Australian Men's Shed Association can help by obtaining financial support to send delegates to the 3rd National Men's Shed Conference in Hobart. Whilst Sheds will be carrying out the usual fundraising initiatives, AMSA is offering to help to get financial support from your Local, State and Federal Members.

If this is of interest, send us a letter here at AMSA giving your Shed details (Contacts & Address), a "brief" (one paragraph) on your Shed and the name and address of your Local, State and Federal Members. AMSA will then write to them, on our letterhead, supporting your request for financial assistance, help with your fundraising endeavours as well as informing them of the benefits to your Shed and community by having delegates attend the conference.

Conference Submissions

A number of submissions have now been received for the Hobart conference. Themes are developing on Shed management and self sustainability, new ideas and concepts and Men's Health issues. Submissions can still be made and a form for this is on Page 8.

If you wish to lodge a submission forward it to AMSA or Contact John Waters at bridgewater@bigpond.com

!!!! Shed Stories reminder !!!!

Thank you to all those Sheds and Shedders who have taken the time to submit their "Stories of the Shed" to be forwarded to the Minister for Health and Ageing Nicola Roxon and to the Ambassadors of the National Men's Health Policy. These stories will go a long way in raising the awareness of the benefits of Men's Sheds in relation to Men's Health and to the broader community.

For those of you that have not yet submitted their stories time is running out so hurry, we need your support so we can continue to grow and provide free support and assistance to all Sheds.

Please send your stories to

Australian Men's Sheds Association

PO Box 775
Newcastle,
NSW 2300

Phone:- 1300 550 009

Fax:- (02) 4940 8301

Email:- amsa@mensshed.net

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

News from the AMSA office - David Helmers

The office facilities at Windale are now installed and functional. As mentioned in previous issues the new 1300 telephone number is working very well and bringing in a lot of enquiries as well as comments from Shed members. We appreciate your interest and will try to get answers back to you as soon as possible.

AMSA Database

Finally we have installed the new data base manager software called ACT. After the usual teething problems establishing the software it all looks go to roll now. In the next few weeks Melisa White will be contacting all AMSA members to verify and update your Shed contact details.

New Email Address

To be able to automatically link to the new database AMSA now has a new contact email address amsa@mensshed.net. The old email will still be operable for some time as we change over to the new system. One of the advantages of the new system is that we will shortly be able to offer individual Shed emails through our server. You will then be able to have an address of yourshedname@mensshed.net. This will greatly assist us in communications but, in addition, will be available for you to use for normal emails.

QLDMSA Incorporates

On the 21st of January 2009 representatives from a number of Sheds in Queensland met to finalise the arrangements for a **Queensland Mens Sheds Association (QLDMSA)** They now join **VMSA** and **NSWMSA** becoming one of the founding members of AMSA under the proposed new structure with **TASMSA** and **WAMSA** on their way to completing the team. Graeme Curnow who has worked as part of the AMSA working committee was nominated as President with Bruce Turnbull taking on the role of Secretary. Congratulations to you both and well done Queensland. Hopefully we will be able to bring you more details of this development in the next issue.

Current Research by Professor Barry Golding

Barry Golding, Mike Brown and Annette Foley from University of Ballarat report that they are working in 2009 on two major research projects to do with men's learning and wellbeing in community settings. The projects are being funded by National Seniors Australia and Western Australia Department of Education & Training and involve surveys in 12 sites across five states where the proportion of men (including retired men) not in work is higher than the State averages.



The six WA sites we have chosen to study are Fremantle and Kwinana, Albany & Denmark and Carnarvon and Denham/Shark Bay. Our research sites in NSW are Blacktown and Lismore; in Tasmania Bridgewater & Oatlands; in South Australia Ceduna and Noarlunga.

Our interest in these projects is how similar or different organisations are that involve and benefit men, in the case of the NSA project, older men (over 50). We are looking not only in organisations like community Men's Sheds (where they exist in these locations) that cater specifically for men, but also in other organisations known to be particularly attractive to men - like some sporting clubs, fire emergency service and surf rescue organisations.

We are also investigating the role learning plays in the wellbeing of men in age-related organisations like senior citizens clubs, churches, cultural and Indigenous organisations. Around three quarters of these diverse locations selected for our study in Australia either have a Men's Shed or are planning to establish one - confirming the incredibly wide and rapid spread of community Men's Sheds

The National Men's Health Policy - Professor John Macdonald, Men's Health Ambassador

Some people might think, and some people say: why do we need a men's health policy?

I think the main reason is that if we don't have one the country will continue to provide – or not provide – health services for men in the way they have always done, and in my opinion that is not very well.

Let me begin this short piece with the positive things that are in the Discussion Paper which the Federal Government has circulated to help us have a national debate about men's health. As "Ambassador" of men's health I am happy to be part of that discussion with yourselves.

The discussion paper has two important, and I think *new*, things to say about men's health.

First, it says, we must try to make men's health services more "man-friendly". That is new and I think we should be glad about this, because in some ways it is an admission that health services have not been very man-friendly until now. Of course, thanks goodness, many of us have met friendly doctors and nurses (and the other kind as well). And often, as men, we don't like to complain. Fine, but if we think of other men – boys having difficulty at school and being given medication to stop them being "hyper-active", young fathers struggling to keep their jobs and to provide yet wanting to be good fathers. We can ask: how "man-friendly" are the health services to these groups of men? The answer is, in general, "Not very".

Hopefully, health services will start looking at the situation of young boys and young fathers and look at those programs which *do* occasionally exist across the country for them and learn from them. Question the amount of medication given to young boys at school (ask around and you might be surprised how much), think of alternatives. Ask how much support young fathers get from the health services. There are classes and support for mothers before and after birth (and of course there should be!) but wouldn't it be easy to run sessions for young fathers (and get some of those who have been there and done that to help with the sessions) to give them insights and hints how to help with the baby? This helps the *whole* family as well as the men. Everyone knows that the early life of a child is very important, lays the foundation for the rest of life and the links with the dad from the beginning are very important. We should ask the health services: "The government says your services should be "Man-friendly": what are you doing to help young fathers?"

The same could be said for men who care for partners with dementia – and there are many of these. Health services are used to dealing with women, we have to help them learn to deal also with men. Men have to be encouraged to **ASK** for the help which is their due. We have made it normal for women to be screened for cancer. They use to be shy of this – no more. Male cancers are just as common as female-cancers. We need to "normalise" screening for men.

The other thing that is new about the Policy document is that it speaks about the "social determinants" of men's health. What, you may ask, does that mean and why is that new and important? Well, until now, lots of thinking and practice around men's health has been driven by the idea that if men are sick it's because they don't go to the doctor, don't get in touch with their feelings or because they tend to be violent and need anger management. If you think that is an exaggeration, try to see what programs for men do get funded, The social determinants of health means that we look at the circumstances of the man's life and see if we can understand his health or lack of it from that point of view before saying it's his fault.

For example, if a man commutes for four hours a day (and plenty do) and arrives home and is a bit irritable and not as calm and patient as he might be (and maybe reaches for a beer), we have to understand his situation and help him if possible to do something about that and not just tell him to be a better father and not to drink so much...etc. Moreover, he gets blamed for not going to the doctor. Are the doctor's hours convenient for most working men? They should be.

If a man is separated and doesn't have much contact with his children, it can get to his mental health and wear him down. That is probably the main social determinant of *his* health. Anti-depressants may help but someone has to understand the context in which he lives and help him deal with that and maybe direct him to services where he can have fairer access to his children.

Men who retire have often worked hard to provide for their family and their daily work situation has provided them with contact with other people and a sense of purpose in life. After retirement, his health, physical and mental, can deteriorate as he can lose many human contacts and sometimes lose also a sense of purpose. These are *his* social determinants of health and health services should be taking them into consideration and supporting initiatives (like Sheds) which support men.

My intention as ambassador for men's health is to ask every health service what they are doing to make their services more "man-friendly". I encourage you to do the same. If you don't want to for your own age group, let's think of other age groups, perhaps younger than us and ask health services, doctors and community health what they are doing for men's health.

Snowy River Men's Shed Opens By Richard Nutt (NUTTY) - Chairman

On Saturday 22nd November The Snowy River Men's Shed was officially opened to the public.

3 years ago a few members of the Jindabyne Uniting Church Parish thought a "Shed" would be of great benefit to the town. They applied for a grant to help fit out the electrical wiring & safety exits of the other half of their existing OP SHOP shed. Then with money left over some tools were purchased. Things didn't go too fast from there, but in May last year 5 guys got together & every Wednesday through the cold winter season, started clearing out a space & building benches & shelves with anything they could get their hands on. The staff at the local tip has been very helpful in keeping their eyes out for useful bits & pieces for the Shed.



A committee was formed & the Men's Shed guidelines manual was purchased which was very helpful \$35 well spent. The Shed was registered & we were on the way.

Approaching local businesses, saw prizes donated towards a Christmas Family Package prize, where about \$1100 was raised. A nice surprise of a cheque to the value of \$1000 came on the opening day from the Dept of Ageing Minister via a Local politician, which was a very welcome gift & so both monies will now go towards the "Sheds" first major tool purchase a Metal lathe, which will be purchased in the new year, adding nicely to the 2 wood lathes that were donated earlier.

Other tools have now been donated & our membership is now 7 & we're building & progressing slowly. We have completed 3 community projects in that short time so far for local children's day care groups, a mobile chook cage, a Christmas stable / puppet stage & small whiteboard writing boards. As other "Sheds" have found out I'm sure, now the hard work has been done, people finally come forward, we have already had people approach us to fix things & to look into other projects which will benefit the community. We have been approached by women of the Community to run some classes for them in various subjects. We will, but we will not mix the classes to be fair to all.



The old saying "Many hands make light work" could not be further from the truth. When starting your "Shed" get them workers in, in the early days if possible.

The "Shed" at present is open on Wednesdays from 9am till 4.30pm & is located in the grounds of the Uniting Church, Gippsland St Jindabyne NSW. Anyone calling through is most welcome to pop in for a cuppa or a chat anytime or call ahead if you'd like to see our "Shed" at another time.

Regards to all other Sheddors & their helpers.

Contact us at :- PO Box 503, Jindabyne, NSW. 2627.

Email: info@jindabyneaccommodation.com

Phone (02) 6456 1199 Mobile 0404 020 440

Are health services man-friendly ?

Every picture tells a story and this one certainly backs up Prof. Macdonald's article on Page 4

(Image used with permission of Men's Health Information and Resource Centre, University of Western Sydney".)



The Shed@RFBI Hawkins - By Bob Walker



The Members of Hawkins shed having a cuppa and a chat

Hawkins Masonic Village is the largest of 22 retirement villages throughout NSW and ACT, owned and operated by the Royal Freemasons' Benevolent Institution (RFBI). Our village, at Edgeworth, a suburb of Newcastle, has approximately 380 residents in 3 Hostels, 1 nursing home and 215 Self-Care (Independent Living) Units.

Over the last 2 years or so, there has been a steady increase in the proportion of men entering our residential care homes, a phenomenon experienced by the majority of facilities in aged care. Traditional activities which were developed for residents, the vast majority of whom were female, were no longer satisfying the needs of this new resident mix. It was decided that we should explore other activities that were more appropriate for men in residential care.

Our investigations led us to the Men's Shed conference held at Manly in 2007. We were very impressed with the different approaches to Sheds, as well as the friendliness, mateship and willingness to share that we experienced at that conference. We quickly became convinced that a Men's Shed would address the need for male-oriented activities for our residents. Armed with 2 copies of "Setting up a Men's Shed", and some wonderful new contacts, we returned to Newcastle very eager to get things going.

The RFBI Board of Directors was very supportive and agreed to allow us to convert some of our older self-care units into a Men's Shed. We floated the idea to our men in the self-care section of our village and almost instantly had 15 men who were prepared to work with us in developing the Shed. Committees were formed for "painting and decorating", layout, tools, shed management, and most importantly "scrounging". With support from Hawkins Masonic Village Management, David Helmers and the Hunter Shed Cluster, they launched into preparation for the shed.

From the outset, we made it clear to the committees that:

We would provide some "start-up" funds for tooling, etc, but the committees would need to accept responsibility for running the shed and maintaining its financial viability;

We would require at least one half day per week for the men in residential care to use the shed, and they would be accompanied by a carer;

The men from our residential care would not be using heavy machinery or any tools that could pose a safety risk;

As the shed was to be located in our village, and would be covered under our insurances, all aspects of operation must comply with the village standards for Occupational Health and Safety, including risk assessments, standard operating procedures, electrical tagging, supervision, competencies, etc

The units chosen were a group of 1-bedroom units, built in pairs. Each unit was a mirror-reverse of its adjoining one, with the lounge rooms sharing a common wall. We could, therefore, demolish the wall between the lounge rooms of the adjoining units to form the main section of the Shed. The two bedrooms, at opposite ends, are used for 1) workshop for smaller projects (toys, etc), and 2) games / discussion / tearoom. One bathroom was converted to a store room and the other remains with toilet and shower. One kitchen was converted to an office and the other is still used as a kitchen.

In March 2008 refurbishment of two units commenced and by mid-July, the Shed was ready for fit-out. Power tools and hand tools were purchased, several more were donated, workbenches and storage cupboards were donated by West Wallsend High School. After a whirlwind "birthing process", the Shed commenced operations on 28th July 2008, under the auspice of the RFBI. An open day was held on 4th August 2008, attended by over 50 residents from our village.

While the building works were underway, 6 of our self-care residents commenced a mentoring program with technology students at West Wallsend High School. A contra mentoring program was arranged where a number of West Wallsend High School Information Technology students assisted several of our Village staff to gain basic computer skills, a classic "win-win" situation.



Some of the high quality products pro-

Commencing in December 2008, seven or eight of the men regularly attend the Shed on Wednesday mornings. They enjoy assembling, finishing and painting projects that have been prepared by the other Shed members. A major benefit for these men is typical of all Sheds – the common purpose and companionship of other like-minded men!

Initial activities in the Hawkins Shed include wood working (wood turning, toy making, small projects), a games/chat room, a separate metal-working / welding shed, and the mentoring programs. Initially membership will be restricted to men living in our village, but, after the first 6 months, the committee will consider offering membership to men in Edgeworth and surrounds. We know our men will benefit greatly from this project, and we look forward to expansion and further development of the Shed.

Bob Walker - (Regional Gen. Mgr, Hunter and Central Coast,) **Royal Freemasons' Benevolent Institution**

Beyondblue - Depression Awareness Training for Mens Sheds Leaders and Facilitators

Depression is more than just a low mood – it's a serious illness that requires attention. More than one million people in Australia experience depression, anxiety or a related substance use disorder each year. With depression affecting one in five people at some point in their adult life, it's likely to affect shed members.

It's vital that the leaders and facilitators of Men's Sheds learn to recognise depression in men, because depression is treatable and effective treatments are available.

Beyondblue has developed Depression Awareness Training for Men's Shed leaders and facilitators.

The training aims to:

***Increase awareness of depression and anxiety; and
Increase the confidence of Shed leaders and facilitators to
approach someone about whom they may be concerned.***

The three hour workshop is presented in an interactive style by a *beyondblue* accredited trainer. The workshop focuses on depression in men and what Men's Sheds can do to assist. It provides information via DVD presentations and group activity and discussion.

Representatives from a number of Sheds are invited to join together to host the Depression Awareness Training. The workshop is available **free of charge** to all Shed leaders and facilitators. Sheds are asked to organise:

- A venue for the workshop (ideally a shed)
- Audio visual equipment
- Invitations to Shed leaders and facilitators to attend the workshop (up to 25 participants)
- Morning tea and lunch for participants (to be funded by *beyondblue*).

If you are interested in hosting a Depression Awareness Training workshop contact:

Carolyn Salmon, *beyondblue* on (03) 9810 6100 or at carolyn.salmon@beyondblue.org.au



Students take in tricks of the trade Article by:- MEGAN CUNNEEN (THE POST Wed Sept 17)

Harry Turnbull got hands-on skills in "cutting cars" with the Jaws of Life, when he participated in the vehicle recovery demonstration at the Try a Trade Day, last Friday.

As well as some new skills, Harry also walked away with a few "unusual" souvenirs.

"I got a sun visor out of it and a gear stick and a hand brake" he said.

The year 9 student from Mayfield's San Clemente high school enjoyed learning about the different trades available but he wants to follow in his father's footsteps and join the defence force. "I learnt about sheet metal and what they do to make stuff and I also learnt about refrigeration and about the defence forces and how to join," Harry said.

Some 400 year 9 and 10 students from local high schools participated in the event held at the Windale PCYC and at The Shed.

Instead of being bombarded by power point presentations and brochures about the trades available post-school, the students thoroughly enjoyed the real life advice and hands-on experience.

There were more than 40 trades represented on the day including carpentry, commercial cookery, gardening, hairdressing, planting, metal work, tiling and child care.

The vehicle recovery demonstration organised by the NRMA and the Cessnock Rescue Squad was popular with the male students and the hairdressing stall was a standout hit with the girls.

The day was organised by representatives from participating Rotary Clubs, career advisers and TAFE representatives.

At the end of the day students were presented with a certificate of participation to recognise their involvement in the event.



Hand On: Wayne Wilson from Cessnock Rescue Squad shows students from San Clemente high school the finer points of vehicle recovery.

Photo: JAMIE WICKS

Men's Health Feature - Covering your back

By Greg Millan



One of the most difficult types of pain for men to handle is back pain. The spinal system with its bony column of vertebrae, disks and cartilage and attached muscles and nerves is the source of our strength and mobility in life. A sudden backache can mean a lot more than an onslaught of pain - it can be felt as a real loss of power for many men.

The fact is that over 80% of men will experience back pain at some time in their lives. It is one of the most common conditions that health care workers treat. The vast majority of problems are normally caused by sprains in muscles or tendons which are often caused by lifting, bending or dragging a heavy object the wrong way. If you already have a predisposed back condition even sleeping the wrong way in bed will increase the pain. Other causes include sporting or gym injuries and developing weak back supports as we grow older generally due to us carrying some extra weight and having undertrained abdominal muscles.

So what can we do to take better care of our backs?

Making sure your back stays strong and flexible is the key. Learn a set of stretching exercises by visiting your friendly physiotherapist. It is best to have a set of stretches specifically designed for you and always stretch and limber up before embarking on any exercise like swimming, running or cycling. Strengthening crucial groups of support muscles is paramount to preventing long term back problems.

Swimming is great for sore backs as it strengthens muscles while supporting you in the water, and so is yoga for its gentle stretching and general support. But generally any exercise is good. The bottom line is if you have a sore back, except for times when it is critically inflamed, the more you move the better it will be. Inactivity only make sore backs worse. Try to sleep with your body in a straight line. If you use the computer a lot, get up and move every 40 minutes and make sure you have a good chair with adequate lower back support.

If you already have a back problem you would have probably visited your doctor and had x-rays taken. Depending on the nature of the problem you may chose to go to a physiotherapist for some stretching and gentle massage work or a chiropractor who tends to work more with heat, massage and skeletal manipulations. Osteopaths also use a combination of deep muscle massage, gentle stretches and manipulations. All of these treatments can help. It's your back and you need to take good care of it as chronic back problems if they develop can be very physically and emotionally draining.

Greg Millan is a Men's Health Consultant in Newcastle. He can be contacted on 0417 772 390 or gmlan@bigpond.net.au

Regional AMSA Contacts

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.

All other enquiries to AMSA by Phone on 1300 550 009 or Email amsa@mensshed.net

Region	Contact	Phone	E-mail
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	bridgewater@bigpond.com
West Australia	Bill Johnstone	(08) 9336 4408	fremanshed@optusnet.com.au
Queensland	Scotia Monkivitch	(07) 3027 4490	scotia.monkivitch@brisbane.qldgov.au
Northern Rivers	Bill Taylor	(02) 6622 6116	mms@mor.com.au
Warrumbungle Shire	Procter Morris	(02) 6849 2180	procterm@hyw.com.au

Department of Veterans Affairs

Vietnam Veterans Family Study

Recruiting families now

The Vietnam Veterans' Family Study is now recruiting. The study will look at the impact of war service on the health and well-being of the families of Vietnam veterans. The study is inviting randomly selected Vietnam-era Army personnel and their families to participate — 10,000 each of those who served in Vietnam and those who didn't. They have all been mailed an invitation to participate in the study, with extra registration forms to pass on to their kids and family. For the study to go ahead we need those invited to participate, and to encourage their families to get involved as well.

Tell your mates

Even if you haven't been invited, you'll know plenty of people who have been. It's time for Vietnam veterans to help their mates again. Talk to your mates, those who went to Vietnam and those who didn't. Tell them how important this study is. Find out if they've been invited and get them involved. Tell them to pass on the registration kits they received with their invitations to their families so their families get involved as well. The success of the family study relies on a big response from those invited. Not just Vietnam veterans, but their families too and the Vietnam-era personnel and their families — for comparison.

The science

There are two main study groups:

10,000 randomly selected Vietnam veterans and their families: including their partners, ex-partners, children, step-children, brothers, sisters, nieces and nephews.

10,000 randomly selected Vietnam era veterans who didn't serve in Vietnam and their families: including their partners, ex-partners, children and step-children.

These two groups provide a comparison based on randomly selected families where the main difference is a parents' military service in Vietnam.

Family study

This study is about families. There are a number of studies of veterans already, but not of families. Participation of families is vital. If you know someone who served during the Vietnam war, whether they went or not, talk to them see if they've been invited and get them involved. Spread the word to their family too.

How do you register?

If you have received an invitation to participate in the study, you can register by:

- registering online at: www.dva.gov.au/vvfs;
- phoning DVA's Health Study Line on freecall 1800 502 302; or
- mailing your completed registration form to DVA.

Forms are available on the website or by phoning freecall 1800 502 302. Participation in the study will not in any way affect your pension, benefits or any health services you are entitled to from DVA. Any information you provide will be confidential and be used only for the research. Vietnam service or not, if you've been invited, please participate please ask your family to participate Find out more about the Vietnam Veterans' Family Study program at www.dva.gov.au/vvfs

The Kincumber Men's Shed

Wednesday 11th February 2009 is the 2nd Anniversary of the opening of "The Kincumber Men's Shed". From 11am the Shed will be open and a light lunch provided.

For further information please contact Peter Jessop on 0412 223 363 or John Connor on 0432 890 323 or Email johnconnor6@bigpond.com

The 3rd National Men's Shed Conference

27th & 28th August 2009.

Brighton Community Centre, Hobart,



The 3rd National Men's Shed Conference is expected to attract over 400 delegates from around Australia. The Conference has grown as the Men's Shed movement has grown and for 2009 we are aiming at providing a wide range of topics to cover the interests of developing Sheds as well as established facilities.

Submissions from the Shedding community along with those from health professionals and community groups are now open. If you have a story to tell, or ideas to share, please submit them to the committee for consideration in our planning. Submissions close on **Friday, February 27, 2009.**

Name _____ **Shed / Organisation** _____

Address _____ **State** _____ **P/Code** _____

Contact Phone _____ **Fax No** _____

Email _____

Title of Submission _____

Brief description of submission and the relevance to Men's Sheds

Requirements/ audio visual / data display

Please send completed submissions to :-

The Organising Committee
3rd National Men's Shed Conference
PO Box 191
Bridgwater
Tasmania, 7030

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

For more information contact AMSA on 1300 550 009

COMMON TOOLS DEFINED - David Atkinson - President Hunter Valley Shed Cluster Group

DRILL PRESS: A tall upright machine useful for suddenly snatching flat metal bar stock out of your hands so that it smacks you in the chest and flings your beer across the room, denting the freshly-painted vertical stabilizer which you had carefully set in the corner where nothing could get to it.

WIRE WHEEL: Cleans paint off bolts and then throws them somewhere under the workbench with the speed of light. Also removes fingerprints and hard-earned calluses from fingers in about the time it takes you to say, "Oh shit..."

SKILL SAW: A portable cutting tool used to make studs too short.

PLIERS: Used to round off bolt heads. Sometimes used in the creation of blood-blisters.

BELT SANDER: An electric sanding tool commonly used to convert minor touch-up jobs into major refinishing jobs.

HACKSAW: One of a family of cutting tools built on the Ouija board principle. It transforms human energy into a crooked, unpredictable motion, and the more you attempt to influence its course, the more dismal your future becomes.

WISE-GRIPS: Generally used after pliers to completely round off bolt heads. If nothing else is available, they can also be used to transfer intense welding heat to the palm of your hand.

WELDING GLOVES: Heavy duty leather gloves used to prolong the conduction of intense welding heat to the palm of your hand.

OXYACETYLENE TORCH: Used almost entirely for setting various flammable objects in your shop on fire. Also handy for igniting the grease inside the wheel hub out of which you want to remove a bearing race.

TABLE SAW: A large stationary power tool commonly used to launch wood projectiles for testing wall integrity.

E-Z OUT BOLT AND STUD EXTRACTOR: A tool ten times harder than any known drill bit that snaps neatly off in bolt holes thereby ending any possible future use.

BAND SAW: A large stationary power saw primarily used by most shops to cut good aluminum sheet into smaller pieces that more easily fit into the trash can after you cut on the inside of the line instead of the outside edge.

TWO-TON ENGINE HOIST: A tool for testing the maximum tensile strength of everything you forgot to disconnect.

CRAFTSMAN 1/2 x 24-INCH SCREWDRIVER: A very large pry bar that inexplicably has an accurately machined screwdriver tip on the end opposite the handle.

PHILLIPS SCREWDRIVER: Normally used to stab the vacuum seals under lids or for opening old-style paper & tin oil cans and splashing oil on your shirt; but can also be used, as the name implies, to strip out Phillips screw heads.

STRAIGHT SCREWDRIVER: A tool for opening paint cans. Sometimes used to convert common slotted screws into non-removable screws.

PRY BAR: A tool used to crumple the metal surrounding that clip or bracket you needed to remove in order to replace a 50 cent part.

HOSE CUTTER: A tool used to make hoses too short.

HAMMER: Originally employed as a weapon of war, the hammer nowadays is used as a kind of divining rod to locate the most expensive parts adjacent the object we are trying to hit.

DAMMIT TOOL: Any handy tool that you grab and throw across the garage while yelling 'DAMMIT!' at the top of your lungs. It is also, most often, the next tool that you will need.

If your Shed has interesting Specialised Tools with similar precise, highly technical, (and possibly emotional) definitions please let us know.

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