

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".

The 3rd National Men's Shed Conference

23-25 August 2009

Wrest Point, Hobart, Tasmania

"Where to from Here"

Hobart Conference a great success

In this AMSA Newsletter
3rd National Mens Shed Conference

AMSA Patrons

Movember support for sheds

Positions vacant

AMSA Presidents Report

WA Mukinbudin Shed Conference

NSW Government Grant for AMSA

The AMSA Committee

Cluster and State Reports

M5 Project Starts in Sheds

Victorian Government Shed Funding

National Mens Health Gathering

New Website

Thank you to the sponsors of the 3rd National Mens Shed Conference



What else can you say about the Australian Men's Shed Associations' 3rd National Mens Shed Conference but "WOW". 297 delegates enjoyed 3 days of high quality presentations, good company and companionship.

Conference Patron Tim Mathieson welcomed delegates to the conference in his opening address. Tim is a committed supporter of Mens Sheds and commented that during his time as a Mens Health ambassador he started to hear about sheds and decided to take a look for himself. After visiting a number of sheds Tim has seen at first hand the benefits of Sheds to the men who participate and to the broader community.

Dr Rob Walters provided the key note address conveying the message to all delegates "Talk to your GP and be open and honest". Rob was extremelycont page 2



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

Hobart Conference a great success

entertaining speaking very openly and eloquently, Rob who is also a National Mens Health ambassador spent a considerable amount of his time at the conference in between seeing his patients at his local Hobart practice.

The conference also had a growing international content with delegates in attendance from Ireland and New Zealand, John Evoy from county Wexford, Ireland also gave a great presentation on his work with disadvantaged and traveller men in Ireland and how he is establishing sheds in the UK with the assistance of AMSA. John's Irish accent and sense of humour won him many friends and fans who were always offering to buy him a drink, John being a non drinker always accepted a coffee and repeatedly remarked "yeh I know an Irishman who doesn't drink, apparently there is me and one other guy and I haven't seen him for a few years now".

On the Monday evening we all gathered for the conference dinner, where following the AMSA's AGM the new committee and office bearers were announced, newly elected AMSA President Mort Shearer gave a great speech conveying his vision for the association and how he looked forward to working with all members throughout his for coming term. But the highlight of the evening must surely have been Darren Cunningham from Melton Mens Shed's stirring rendition of "Mustang Sally" with the backing of the what was a very entertaining band.

The Wednesday saw an early start and for some of us a blurry eyed one, with key presentation by the Royal College of General Practitioners and presentations on Prostate and Bowl Cancer Foundation and the bowel Cancer on men's health related issues. AMSA Patron Professor Barry Golding gave a presentation on the world wide spread of the phenomena of Mens Sheds, Barry is very respected amongst the shed community as the leading academic on men's shed's, I think we all agree we all hold Barry in deep admiration for his ongoing support.



Conference Patron Tim Mathieson, AMSA Executive Officer David Helmers Member for Charlestown Mathew Morris and John Evoy from Ireland on the opening day of the conference



Ruth Van Heck, Iain Beggs, John Waters and Ted Donnelly

All delegates would agree we left Hobart with a wealth of new knowledge and new friends, on a personal note it was a great opportunity for myself and the rest of the AMSA team to put faces to the names we talk to and to catch up with those who we have worked closely with over the past few years. I would like to thank the organising committee of the Tasmanian Mens Shed Association, conference director Roger Joseph and the girls from Events Central who made it all happen. For me, the highlight of the conference was to sit back on the last session of the final day and look on as the AMSA committee's panel chaired by newly elected President Mort Shearer answer delegates questions with such clarity and passion for what we are doing, for that final hour I have to admit it was somewhat an emotional one as I watched feeling like a proud parent, a sediment that was very short lived once I contemplate how much work is still to be done but now the Australian Mens Shed Association has taken a few mammoth

steps forward.

Thank you to all who came to Hobart and I hope to see you all again in 2011, and please email amsa@mensshed.net with any photos you have so we can post them on the website.

David Helmers

Executive Officer

The Australian Mens Shed association



Distinguished Patrons, AMSA recognises for committed support

At the final meeting of the AMSA working committee prior to the commencement of the Hobart conference the committee's final motion was to appoint three patrons of the Association. The patrons were appointed in recognition of their previous and ongoing support to men's sheds, the Patrons are Professor Barry Golding, Professor John Macdonald and Mr Tim Mathieson. All three patrons have made significant contributions to the Mens Shed movement and to the development of AMSA all of whom we owe a great deal. Our patrons continuing responsibility shall be to support AMSA and our members within their specific areas of expertise and to make representation on our behalf. I am sure all the members graciously welcome our Patrons and join in my sentiment and pride in stating that these three fine men who have given so much to sheds and men in saying "we are proud to be able to call them our mates".



Associate Professor Barry Golding University of Ballarat, A man who needs no introduction to those involved with men's sheds. Without doubt, Barry is the most respected academic researcher who has dedicated so much to the shed movement who is renowned internationally amongst "shedders"

Professor Golding an experienced researcher in adult, vocational and community education and author of the NCVER publication "Mens shed's in Australia: Learning through community contexts" which has been undeniably one of the most valuable tools and most common references for those initiating a men's shed projects. Barry has also presented comprehensive papers and speeches at all three National Mens Shed Conferences and is a strong advocate of AMSA.



Professor John Macdonald, founding Chair in Primary Health Care University of Western Sydney, Director Men's Health Information and Resources Centre, President of the Australasian Mens Health forum, National Mens Health Ambassador. John is arguably the most respected authority on Mens Health with strong beliefs in the capabilities of Mens Shed's contributing to make a difference to the well being of men. An advocate of the Social Determinants of health John is also the Chair of the Mt Druitt Shed project that aims mainly at Aboriginal and Torres straight Islander men. Professor Macdonald has been of great support to AMSA and our members by being a strong advocate of Men's Sheds both domestically and internationally. John believes that it is well and good to tell men don't drink, don't smoke and eat better but in some areas of society these are almost impossible to follow.



Mr Tim Mathieson Mens Health Ambassador, as a Mens Health Ambassador Tim attended many of the community consultation forums where he repeatedly heard from "shedders" praising how much of an important role men's sheds played in their lives and the community in which they live, so he thought he would take a look for himself. It would be an understatement to say that Tim was impressed with what he saw and he immediately offered generously his assistance becoming patron of the 3rd National Mens Shed Conference which led to his nomination to Patron of AMSA as well. Tim is the partner of the Deputy Prime Minister Julia Gillard and has been involved with many Mens Health organisations within his role as a men's health ambassador but is now purely focused on AMSA and Mens Sheds.

2011 conference

Currently AMSA is preparing a tender document for the 2011 conference. AMSA affiliated State association interested in hosting the 4th national conference shall be asked to prepare a brief submission for the committee nominating a venue for the conference. The submissions are also to outline a broad range of accommodation facilities and transport options as well as sponsors, state government support and an agreement with an event company to project manage the conference. This tender process shall open in December and close in May allowing sufficient time to

Men's Sheds benefit from Movember



Grow a mo' in Movember to support *beyondblue* and men's health

MOVEMBER, the month formerly known as November, is a time of year enjoyed by men across Australia. For four weeks, men are encouraged to throw away their razors and grow the best moustache possible. One of the wonderful things about Movember is girlfriends, partners (or mothers!) can't complain about fuzzy face because it's for a very worthy cause.

Men who participate in Movember, known as 'Mo Bros', are asked to recruit sponsors who donate money to support the growing of the mo'. These donations will help to improve the health of men around the country through research projects and men's health programs.

This year, The Movember Foundation has again partnered with *beyondblue: the national depression initiative* and with the Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia (PCFA). Funds raised during Movember will help *beyondblue* increase awareness of depression and anxiety disorders in men and encourage men to talk about mental health problems and seek treatment.

On average, one in eight men will experience depression at some time in their lives and less than half seek help. If left untreated, depression can be a risk factor for suicide.

While men have lower rates of depression than women, they don't seek help as often and are more likely to self-medicate with alcohol or drugs. Over 70 per cent of men with a mental illness don't access services.

Through the amazing efforts of the Mo Bros and Sistas and the generosity of the Australian public, The Movember Foundation has donated more than \$6 million to *beyondblue* from the 2007 campaign alone.

beyondblue has used Movember funds to raise awareness of depression and anxiety in men's sheds. The *beyondblue* Men's Shed Kit includes a range of *beyondblue* information materials that are relevant and useful to men attending a Men's Shed. *beyondblue* encourages all community-based Men's Sheds to order a free Shed Kit either from www.beyondblue.org.au or by calling the *beyondblue* info line on 1300 22 4636.

Continued page 5

Supporting Men's Sheds

beyondblue is promoting awareness of depression and anxiety through community-based Men's Sheds. A Men's Shed is a place that men (particularly older men) come together to socialise, network, make friends, and learn and share skills. *beyondblue* has developed a Men's Shed Kit that includes a range of *beyondblue* information materials that are relevant and useful to men attending a Men's Shed.

Nearly 300 Men's Sheds Kits have been distributed to date.

beyondblue has also developed and delivered a Depression Awareness Training program for shed leaders and facilitators.

"The kits we have already dispensed have been well received at the sheds so far and are an extremely valuable resource— especially the two DVD's – very user friendly for blokes."

A Men's health worker.

Funding Indigenous Men's Sheds/Spaces

The Indigenous Men's Sheds/Spaces program is aimed to raise awareness of depression and related disorders and to increase and improve access to health services among Indigenous men.

The program was delivered in seven locations nationally and supported the development of a network of Indigenous Men's Sheds/Spaces that are accessible, inclusive and effective.

Men's Sheds benefit from Movember

beyondblue has also developed a Depression Awareness Training program for shed leaders and facilitators. If you are interested in hosting the free program, contact Carolyn Salmon at *beyondblue* on (03) 9810 6164 or carolyn.salmon@beyondblue.org.au

It is easy to register for Movember. Log on to www.movember.com and click on 'Register' or call **1300 4769 66** (local call cost from a landline).

For more information about depression, anxiety and related drug and alcohol problems visit www.beyondblue.org.au or call the *beyondblue* info line on **1300 22 4636** (local call from a landline).

Mo Fun Facts (Source: www.movember.com)

- Women are more attracted to men with mo's
- Mo's are sported by over 3.5 million adult males and some females in Eastern Europe
- Mo's make you look stronger and will scare off any opponent.
- Gentlemen have always worn mo's
- A mo will make you richer
- Mo's make you look smarter
- There are between 10,000 and 20,000 hairs on a man's face
- In 1967, the Beatles gave away cardboard mo's with their album Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band
- In a deck of cards, the King of Hearts is the only king without a moustache
- Spanish proverb – "A kiss without a mo is like an egg without salt"

Positions Vacant

We employ over 800 LOCAL people to provide services & support for LOCAL families, children & individuals...

PROJECT COORDINATOR, Maitland Men's Shed Project, 2 year contract

This permanent role will work with Maitland Shed Inc and the Shed management committee to oversee the construction of infrastructure, engage with community and business, attract and engage volunteers, facilitate activities and training initiatives.

PROJECT COORDINATOR, Hunter Valley Shed Cluster Group, 2 year contract

This permanent role will work with Cluster members to provide direction for the cluster group and each Shed project such as strategic planning; foster business partnerships, coordinate training and men's health initiatives, support and encourage shed self management and independence, foster growth in new shed developments.

Both Coordinator positions are funded through the Jobs Fund, a Commonwealth Government initiative.

For enquiries regarding both Coordinator positions phone Liz MacDonald on (02) 4979 1356.

Application packs and position descriptions are available at: www.mn.catholic.org.au Applications close Friday 6 November 2009.



CatholicCare Hunter-Manning is an Employer of Choice for Women and offers 9 weeks paid maternity leave for eligible employees; salary packaging of up to \$16,050 and extensive career development opportunities.

www.mn.catholic.org.au



CatholicCare Hunter-Manning | Diocese of Maitland Newcastle

Presidents Report



Hi Shedders

Can you believe it is already more than a month since the Hobart Conference?

Since then a lot has been happening behind the scenes and we need to bring you up to date. This will be the first of a regular series of articles that I intend to write, so I'll limit this to 2 main subjects that came up frequently at the Conference: Communication and the structure of AMSA

Communication

One of the frequent comments we heard in Hobart was that members would like more communication within AMSA. We intend to address this in several ways

- The AMSA website will eventually be the primary communication link within AMSA and will be the source of the regular bulletins. I can hear someone say 'but not everyone has a computer'.....this may be true, but most Sheds either have their own or have access to a member's computer, so maybe they can print a copy of the bulletin and post it on the Shed Notice Board for everyone to read.
- Until the new website is up and running, Bulletins will be sent out by email to all Sheds. Can the Sheds please make sure all Shedders have access to a copy by forwarding them the email or by printing a copy for your Notice Board.
- Many minds are working on the concepts which will eventually be incorporated into the AMSA website. The intention is that the AMSA website will contain
 - past bulletins so you can refer back to them
 - a knowledge base containing info on all aspects of Shed Management and Operations – more detail next time
 - web-base forums where Shedders can discuss subjects of interest with other Shedders wherever they are

The Structure of AMSA

A number of Shedders have asked why AMSA needs to include State Associations and Clusters in it's structure. Why don't we just have everyone belonging to the National body?

For those who haven't looked at it closely, let's restate it for the record.

The structure is set up so that Shedders belong to local Sheds. Shedders meet at their Shed meetings and decide on issues that affect their Shed.

Local Sheds are organised into Clusters of Sheds that will usually cover 10 to 20 Sheds who are sufficiently close together that delegates from local Sheds can easily meet regularly, swap ideas and vote collectively on issues affecting their area.

Clusters are organised into State Associations where Cluster delegates meet to discuss and vote on matters affecting their State.

AMSA is the National body where State delegates meet and decide on national matters.

There are a number of good reasons for this structure including:

- Funding – AMSA will seek national funding from the Federal government, but we need State associations to organise funding from State governments. The Qld State government, for example, won't fund the National body AMSA because some of that funding would go to SA, Victoria, WA and those states are not Qld's responsibility. Similarly, local Government funding will only go to local bodies – Clusters of local Sheds can exert more influence than individual Sheds.
- Voting and representation – in a few years we will have 1,000 Sheds in AMSA and we need to plan for that. Can you imagine 1,000 Sheds trying to have their say on an important policy matter? We need to distribute the voting process so that the majority vote is clearly heard and acted upon.
- Exchange of information – we have a huge advantage: the diversity of Sheds within our organisation. That means we have a lot to learn from each other. Cluster meetings give a marvellous opportunity for information exchange between Sheds.
- Bureaucracy – we would not be able to find enough volunteers to handle the affairs of 1,000 Sheds in a central office, so we would have to employ a small army of people to manage the organisation. Small armies become very bureaucratic and costly, so we overcome this by delegating to small units – States and Clusters - where volunteers can do the jobs at minimal cost and with a minimum of bureaucracy

Learning from the experience of others – Service Clubs (Rotary, Freemasons, Lions, CWA), NGOs, governments, successful businesses, all work on the principle of delegation of local matters to local people because it works. Why should we try to reinvent the wheel?

Enough for the first bulletin. More subjects next time.

Please give us feedback as what you would like to see us talk about or if you have any specific queries.

Mort Shearer

National President, AMSA

The Inaugural Western Australian Men's Shed Conference Mukinbudin

**"The best conference I have ever attended - anywhere in the world"
Professor Barry Golding**

The first Western Australian Men's Shed Conference was held recently in Mukinbudin on the 3rd & 4th September 2009. Mukinbudin is located 300kms east of Perth on the edge of the Wheatbelt. It has a population of about 650 very community minded residents. The conference was held at the Mukinbudin Community Workshop.

This outstanding conference was attended by 140 delegates who came from places ranging between Paraburdoo to Albany and Esperance. Keynote speakers were Associate Professor Barry Golding from the University of Ballarat, Professor John Macdonald Foundation Chair in Primary Health Care, Co-director, Men's Health Information & Resource Centre, UWS Hawkesbury Campus, David Helmers from Australian

Men's Shed Association, Julian Kreig from Wheatbelt Men's Health and the Hon. Brendon Grylls Minister for Regional Development and Lands, Member for the Central Wheatbelt and the Leader of the National Party.



Delegates heard how some of the existing sheds had started and also learned that each shed has its own personality and focus – depending on local needs, influences and community involvement. Topics discussed included how men's sheds can be a major mechanism in improving men's' health and thus contributing a significant saving to the national health budget; how to start a shed, funding support, safety and insurance matters. Brendon Grylls gave an interesting insight how to best liaise with our members of parliament and on how best to present submissions to government requesting support.

During the conference, the delegates resolved to form a Western Australian Men's Shed Association (WAMSA) and 12 delegates volunteered to join the steering committee.

Bill Johnstone from the Fremantle Shed will be leading the immediate direction of the steering committee.

With AMSA being supported by the respective state bodies, communication between all of the 400 or so sheds throughout Australia will be significantly improved. It will also be able to present a co-coordinated and common voice when presenting issues to government.

AMSA is also preparing a standard insurance package in order to produce a common approach to insurance companies. This will save sheds a lot of effort and premiums are expected to be a lot lower for each shed.

Professor Barry Golding in the final session of the conference was quoted as saying "that this was the best conference I have ever attended - anywhere in the world. The passion and support of the organizers and community, the feeling amongst the conference delegates, the facilities, the food, the social program, the support of people billeting delegates, the quality of the presentations and presenters were all nothing short of outstanding."

To get such a large and enthusiastic group of people to a location 300km away from a capital city is remarkable. Delegates were in awe of and grateful to the Mukinbudin community for organizing and hosting this conference.

The hospitality of Mukinbudin's community was the stuff that legends are made of with many of the Shires ladies doing a lot of the catering. Many of the town's residents opened their homes to provide accommodation for those who couldn't fit into the hotel and caravan park. This was very much appreciated.

The organiser Ann Brandis, Shire staff and councillors are congratulated and thanked for organising a very successful conference and hopefully the first of many.

*For information regarding the Western Australian Men's Shed Association contact

Bill Johnstone

freowill@bigpond.com or Mob 0411134808

Hear, hear to men's hearing



On Monday, 12 October, federal government agency, Australian Hearing, held the first of five free 'talk and test' sessions at the Lewisham Men's Shed in Sydney.

Annette Martin, Customer Service Officer, Australian Hearing Sydney, spoke to the Lewisham members about hearing loss, which effects more than 60 per cent of Australians aged over 60.

"Many people learn to live with a hearing loss and may allow pride and denial to get in the way of taking action," Miss Martin said. "But, doing something about it greatly improves a person's lifestyle. And for many over the age of 65, hearing services are free or subsidised – including free digital hearing aids".

Australian Hearing offered information and advice to Men's Shed members about the effects of working with loud and heavy machinery.

"Eighty per cent of our male clients say that workplace noise is the cause of their hearing loss," she said. "A lifetime of industrial noise, such as factory equipment, causes gradual damage to the ear."

The day also included a chance for all group members to have a free hearing screening.

"Getting your hearing checked is simple," she said. "It takes about 10 minutes and simply requires responding to the sound of some beeps."

Australian Hearing is returning for a further four 'talk and test' days on 14, 20, 22 and 23 October.

Australian Hearing has 108 centres across Australia and provides visiting services at an additional 265 locations. If you think you may have a hearing loss, call 131 797 to be connected to your nearest hearing centre.

Pensioners and veterans are entitled to free, Government-funded services.

If you would like Australian Hearing to visit your local Men's Shed group to provide a similar free 'talk and test' day, contact your local centre on 131 797.

NSW Government Grant for AMSA

At the Hobart Conference NSW State Member for Charlestown Mathew Morris announced a \$30,000 commitment from the Premier Nathan Rees in the form of a Premier's Department grant allocation. In announcing the funding Mr Morris explained to the delegates that this was initial recognition of the contribution Mens Sheds and AMSA are making to the community and to the benefit of men's health, the funds are to be utilised to commence work on improving the communication between sheds and improving risk management systems.

These funds shall be utilised to

- Purchase a new dedicated server for AMSA, this server shall also form the base for our new shed management and risk management program's currently under development.
- Establish the membership email system
- Provide one Laptop computer and licensed software for each state branch, enabling each state to access the AMSA data management system creating easier communication
- Provide training for each state delegate in using the data system

This system shall allow much easier communication on all levels from shed to shed, state to state and from state to AMSA it will be a vast improvement on the current system and the hardware operating it. We envision the system shall be operational by December with the management system online by mid 2010.

Specific shed email addresses shall be forwarded to members shortly along with simple step by step instructions on how to set up the system courtesy of Redback solutions who have kindly been assisting us in this process

Mr Morris has been a long time supporter of men's sheds and is also patron and regular visitor to the Shed at Windale.

The New AMSA Committee



Ted Donnelly (Secretary), Mort Shearer (President), Gary Green (Vice President)

For four years now AMSA has been directed by a working committee who have strived to establish our Association, at the Hobart conference this was expanded to allow for the transition to a fully elected committee made of two members of each state association, the committee also took the historic step forward by electing our first office bearers. The current committee stands as Mort Shearer (President), Gary Green (Vice President) Ted Donnelly (Secretary), the committee members are Graham Curnow and Bruce Turnull (QLD) Bill Johnstone (WA) John Waters (TAS) Ted Donnelly, Ruth Van Heck, Mort Shearer (NSW) Gary Green, Iain Beggs, Ron Mitchell (VIC) and David Helmers holding an ex-officio position as executive Officer. With some states still working towards incorporation and elections the committee and office bearers hold position until the next AGM in August 2010 where the committee shall operate from then on with two elected representatives from each state. Detailed profiles on each of the committee members

shall be on the website soon. I am sure the committee shall continue to develop the Association within the best interest of sheds, we wish them all the best for there for coming term and our full support.

Hunter Valley Shed Cluster Group Inc. PRESIDENTS REPORT – 2009

I want to thank the participating committee members for their ongoing support for the cluster concept. The early vision for the formation of this group has proven to be the accurate vision as indicated by the number of cluster groups observing our progress and mirroring the model established by this group. We can take some comfort that the cluster model being generally adopted nationally was developed in the Hunter.

During the year the President elect, David Atkinson, resigned from the Presidents position and the cluster committee due to personal reasons unrelated to the Shed movement. David completed a lot of ground work on behalf of this group including the preparation for a cluster web site and documentation for the Action Plan which can be further developed during 2010. I wish to acknowledge and thank David for the time and work dedicated by him to help the association grow.

I wish also to thank the office bearers for their continual effort and dedication. To Paul Battle for his willingness to step into several roles on short notice during the year, I express my appreciation. And a special also thanks to Secretary Louanne Riboldi who, notwithstanding the demands of her real job with Hawkins Village, has been a valuable support during my short term.

The year has had its highs and lows for the association with the resignation of the President and shed members on one hand and the vigorous monthly meetings and additional shed membership on the other hand. We started the year with eight members with two discontinuing membership during the year, and completed the year with eleven members with the potential to increase further.

This association is locked into the Australian Men's Shed Assn (AMSA) plan and will become a member of the State body by providing two representatives to attend that forum as required. This process will provide both a voice at national level and a communication gateway for this group.

It would be remiss to not mention the AMSA National Conference held in Hobart over three days during August this year. The Master of Ceremony for the conference was Tim Mathieson, the National Ambassador for Men's Health. Several key note speakers addressed the conference with subject diversity of great interest to the delegates and galvanised by a common health message "Don't Smoke".

Five cluster members attended the conference as delegates with three of them actually contributing to the program by making presentations. Bob Walker from Hawkins presented on the subject of Men's Sheds in a retirement village environment and Paul Battle and I co-presented on the subject of management systems in a Shed environment. The State Member for Charlestown, Matthew Morris, was also in attendance and presented on the best way to engage local politicians and the relevant benefits available. All sessions were well received and complemented the theme of the convention.

A meeting of the appointed AMSA committee was held during the conference when all committee and office bearer positions were filled by an election process. This committee now has the mandate to address and prioritise the many AMSA issues with a view to rolling out a process of determination. The conference was considered by all to be very successful.

As previously mentioned, the Hunter Cluster has developed a mission statement and Action Plan defining KRAs and Activities in relation to the four primary activity categories - Marketing, Management, Funding and Operations. Each activity has a dedicated sub committee to assist in future development. I strongly recommend so that we don't lose sight of the achievements to date and urge ongoing member support to assist the cluster coordinator in that regard. I also encourage consideration for the appointment of a cluster activities officer to provide a single coordinated approach to events that could/should have a cluster involvement.

Thank you and congratulations to the outgoing office bearers for a job well done and I welcome the elected committee for 2010.
Rogan Greenan

Victorian Mens Shed Association AGM Report



The Victorian Men's Shed Association AGM was held at the Keysmen (Keysborough) Men's Shed on Friday 16th October 2009. Approximately 80 people turned out for the occasion to enjoy the day. Guest speakers included Tim Holding (Victorian Government Cabinet Minister), Bernie Geary (Victorian Commissioner for Children) and Mort Shearer (AMSA president).

Tim Holding spoke of his emotions that followed his recent rescue from Mt Feathertop. Tim said Men's Sheds are not just about woodwork; they are about relationships with each other. Women are good at supporting each other; men manage their emotions in other ways. Tim said he would rather be at Mt Feathertop and deal with issues and difficulties than be asked "How I feel." He felt uncomfortable with the media asking him about his feelings. He said that it is difficult to go places we haven't been before and it is not a bad thing to think about what is important to us. The Mt Feathertop experience enabled him to step back and think about what was important to him and what he was missing... "my family and being surrounded by people I care about" is most important. Tim encouraged the members to work on relationships with others and said that Men's Sheds are about people coming together and building relationships that are meaningful. He congratulated the VMSA and its members for engaging with each other and improving the lives of all men. He said "I appreciate the work you are doing." Tim agreed to take questions and spoke about his role as Minister for Water. He stayed for lunch and continued to informally mix with members.

Bernie Geary spoke about how important the role of a man is in the family. He said that men have a lot to contribute to children and children need an adult they can trust. Bernie said there was a great capacity for men in sheds to become mentors for children so their lives can take a positive turn. It is important for children to have a happy and safe connection with a happy male.



Bernie congratulated Victorian members on the development of the Men's Shed movement. He advised members to not discriminate on issues around culture, status ...and don't complicate. "You are doing it well for each other and the community. Best wishes to you all."

Mort Shearer was invited to speak to give a rundown on the activities of the Australian Men's Shed Association. AMSA has applied to the Federal Government for funding for positions to support the AMSA office as well as positions to support Men's Sheds in each state. Funding has been made available in Victoria, NSW and WA but AMSA is continuing to knock on doors. Feedback from the conference is that there is not enough "communication". The new website is up but it is early days. AMSA hopes to have the newsletter on the site, as well as sheds profile and activities and information

resources such as OH&S. The website would be a "total, national exchange of information." Mort said there is a need for recurrent funding as well as project funding. Men's Sheds are taking the load from social services and agencies and this argument needs to be put forward to the Government.

Some of the other items that may interest Shedders from around the country:

Gary Rogers said that ourcommunity.com has a list of all grants available. (Government and Philanthropic). For a \$45.00 annual subscription you can have access to this information.

Broadband for Seniors - Federal Government is offering a grant for 2 new computers and internet access ..Contact Denis Minogue for details on 9798 7005

Scroungers Award - The VMSA 2nd Annual Scroungers Award winner is Bushy from Carrum Downs.

Ken from Wodonga Shed spoke of his disappointment at the Geelong VMSA meeting when he found out from MP Lisa Neville that Wodonga had missed out on funding. He was dreading going back to Wodonga to tell 57 blokes the news. He added that although he was extremely disappointed, many of the blokes at that meeting chatted to him and encouraged him to keep trying and this gave him a much needed boost. He went back and they managed to get a Council grant of \$8,500 and fundraised with raffles and applied to DVA. They now have a house and a block of land at the back to put a shed on. Ken thanked everyone for their support and encouraged members to keep coming to the VMSA meetings because it helped him to get through a difficult time. Ken finished by saying: "We need a cluster group in our area. You are an inspiration...this is the forum for it!" (Cont'd page 12)

THE M5 PROJECT –MEN'S PREVENTATIVE HEALTH

-in your shed -

It is hopeful that most of us men have an increasing awareness of the need to address health issues more frequently and of the much promoted awareness program called the M5 Project carrying the following catch phrase:-

“Currently, 5 men die every hour in Australia from potentially preventable illnesses”.

The M5 Project is managed by the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) as their GPs are at the forefront of dealing with men's health issues every day and whose mission is to “improve the health and well being of individuals, families and communities across Australia by supporting GPs in their pursuit of clinical excellence and ensuring high quality education, training, continuing professional development and research for general practice”. The RACGP works to improve the standards of health care for all Australians - especially groups of people with special health care needs. Men's sheds therefore has been identified as natural catchments for in support of the project.

The Project uses the number 'five' to break down the barriers that prevent Australian men from going to a GP, and ultimately, save men's lives. They say it only takes five minutes to get involved and get people thinking. As a start, men can take five preventive steps:

1. **Share your family history with your GP**
2. **Know your healthy weight**
3. **Check your blood pressure**
4. **Stop smoking**
5. **Maintain a healthy mind and body**



(Paul, Roger, Dr Marsh and Nurse Claudine)

Through the Hunter Valley Shed Cluster Group, the Shed @ Windale accepted the challenge/invitation to conduct a 'men's health examination' at the Windale shed in accordance with the established guidelines. Windale is a small public housing estate located in NSW near Newcastle between the shores of the Pacific Ocean and Lake Macquarie.

Resultant dialogue provided the necessary information to hold a men's health check in regard to date for the event and more importantly, involvement of the local GP and local media. The event was adequately covered by local radio including the ABC Radio, the Newcastle Herald and the Newcastle Star, a local newspaper, and was coordinated by

Emma Ford and Richard Lawrence from the RACGP with Emma being on site during the day

After a lot of communicating; coordinating and with some trepidation, we opened the shed doors at 8am on Thursday 24th September 2009 to welcome the invited, which included members from both Windale and Swansea sheds, and the uninvited to the medical session. The session included an assessment of body weight index, measuring blood pressure, blood sugar and cholesterol. Local GP Dr Lindsay Marsh was in attendance accompanied by two nurses, Claudine Ford & Kate Grover, who conducted the relevant tests. Dr Marsh made himself available for the session by not taking patient appointments for that morning. He not only addressed the group for about 30 minutes about men's health issues, but talked with those who sought further information and actually participated in assisting the nurses during the session.



(The medical team with some shedders)

The day was a huge success with each participant having available a Health Check Evaluation sheet completed for their GPs information. The success was further complemented by the fact that several attendees admitted to their associates that they hadn't 'been to the doctor' for more than five years. It was also a busy morning (finishing about 1pm) as there were approximately 45 men from the Windale and Swansea sheds and about five community attendees who walked in off the street.

So become involved for health's sake and allay any fears and concerns about involving your shed in the M5 Project as our experience was very positive, even to the extent of gaining new members.

Victorian Government show's further commitment to Mens Shed's

The Victorian Government is continue to acknowledge the important role of sheds in the community by releasing the 3rd round of specific Mens shed funding. The Victorian Government is the only one of state and federal governments that has established shed specific funding leaving the rest of us to chase other forms of Project Based funding that can predetermine the outcome of sheds before they even commence operations. I whole heartedly congratulate the State Government of Victoria in taking such an initiative however I do have one point of criticism , that they have not made any provision for administration support for these shed's. With each round of funding AMSA and VMSA receive numerous inquiries on how to apply for funds, to establish sheds and for ongoing support, I would encourage the Victorian Government to consider making available a percentage of these funds to the VMSA to employ a State coordinator.

The Victorian government have indeed set a bench mark for the others to follow with meeting now scheduled for the WAMSA and NSWMSA to meet with their respective governments.

Applications must be made by the 10th of December online at www.grants.dpcd.vic.gov.au

- by email to grantapplications@dpcd.vic.gov.au

Phone inquiries call 1300 366 356

- by fax to (03) 9208 3680

- by mail to:

Grants Unit Department of Planning and Community Development

GPO Box 2392

Melbourne Vic 3001

Hon Lisa Neville MP Minister for Senior Victorians

I am pleased to announce the third round of the Victorian Government's Men's Sheds Program.

These grants, worth \$4 million in total over four years, are helping to establish new Men's Sheds in areas of high need across Victoria.

Men's Sheds are an initiative of the Government's long term social action plan *A Fairer Victoria*. The Men's Shed program is part of the Victorian Government's actions to deliver better services and strengthen local communities. Research shows that strong and resilient communities deliver fairer and more prosperous outcomes for all Victorians.

In some groups and places in Victoria men experience greater needs compared to those in the broader community. By improving access to the local community-based programs and services provided by Men's Sheds, we will create more opportunities for these Victorians, increase pathways to further education and training, build stronger communities and improve health and wellbeing.

As valuable community facilities, Men's Sheds make an important contribution to local communities. They are places where men can meet and get to know others in their community while they learn or improve a variety of skills. Men will also find many volunteer opportunities through the activities of their local Men's Shed.

Since the first round of the Men's Sheds Program more than 50 communities have been able to build or renovate a Men's Shed as a result of the funding they received through this program.

It is hoped that this benefit can continue to be spread across the state with this third round of funding.

I encourage community based groups and organisations eligible for funding to follow the process outlined in this document and apply for a grant so you can provide local men in your community with a Men's Shed to share with friends from all backgrounds and cultures.

Hon Lisa Neville MP
Minister for Senior Victorians

The National Men's Health Gathering

By Greg Millan

NATIONAL MEN'S HEALTH GATHERING 2009 The life of men

The National Men's Health Gathering 2009 was held in Newcastle from Oct 6 – 9 and an outstanding success with the highest attendance for a men's health event ever. Over 460 delegates participating in over 160 presentations during the four days.

The National Men's Health Gathering was the collective name for 3 events, the 5th National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Male Health Convention, the 8th National Men's Health Conference and the 4th National Men and Family Relationships.

There were delegates from all states of Australia and 8 delegates from overseas (New Zealand and the USA).

Areas covered and recommendations from the National Gathering will be available on the website in a few weeks and I will provide the website link to these in the next issue of the AMSA Newsletter.

There were a number of presentations on men's sheds at the National Gathering and these were the key points in that area:

ISSUE – MEN'S SHEDS

Men's sheds help men and the local community in which the shed is operating

Men's sheds help other men to discuss health problems, gain support and find purpose in life

They provide a place for health workers to target older men and hopefully in the future younger men

Men's sheds provide much needed mentoring for boys and sometimes this leads to boys getting work

RECOMMENDATIONS

Sheds are spreading and built on a model of self determination

Sheds provide a stable way of addressing the needs of dysfunctional boys

Men's sheds need funding

At the conclusion of the 2009 National Gathering the next Gathering was announced – it will be in Perth in 2011. More on the Gathering in the next issue.

Greg Millan is a Men's Health Consultant and he can be contacted on 0417 772 390 or by email at greg@menshealthservices.com.au Visit the website at www.menshealthservices.com.au

The VMSA AGM (cont'd from page 9)

Then it was down to the AGM business. The Annual Report by outgoing president Iain Beggs (Ballarat Men's Shed) was tabled and an enviable Treasurer's Report by Denis Minogue (Keysborough Men's Shed). Denis's report was that, once again, VMSA had spent no money over the last 12 months and had a balance of around \$1400. With a treasurer like this the VMSA should not get into any financial difficulties!

The election of office bearers followed. There were no contested positions so the positions were filled by: Gary Green (Orbost) President, Ron Mitchell (Colac) Vice President, Jeremy Hearne (Whittlesea) Secretary, Denis Minogue (Keysborough) Treasurer, Lyn Kinder (Brimbank) Ordinary Member, Iain Beggs (Ballarat) Public Officer, Paul Sladdin (Mansfield) Ordinary Member, Peter Harris (Glen Park) Ordinary Member, David Gutherie (Hills MS) Ordinary Member.

After the vote, Gary Green spoke and congratulated and thanked Iain Beggs for his endeavours as the first President of the VMSA and endorsed Denis Minogue as the most honest and trustworthy Treasurer. He also thanked the previous committee for their hard work and welcomed new executive members, Dave, Peter and Paul. Gary reminded members that the executive committee role is voluntary and, because of other workloads it may seem that we fumble along but eventually we do get things done. The committee wants to truly represent Men's Sheds and its members in Victoria so let us know your needs and wants.

Following the AGM an excellent BBQ lunch was enjoyed by all and then the new VMSA Committee met. Some of the issues at this meeting were:

- The committee will develop Position Descriptions to guide committee members.

- A membership kit/booklet is being developed for member sheds.

- Membership Certificates are being developed for member sheds.

- A submission is almost ready to go to the Victorian Government to fund a position within VMSA for a State Men's Shed Support Worker position.

The committee looks forward to the challenges that the year ahead brings and thanks all the Victorian Men's Sheds for their continued support. Thanks also go to AMSA for their continued support.

Gary Green, VMSA President

CRANKY OLD MAN !!

When an old man died in the geriatric ward of a nursing home in country NSW, it was believed that he had nothing left of any value.

Later, when the nurses were going through his meagre possessions, they found this poem. Its quality and content so impressed the staff that copies were made and distributed to every nurse in the hospital.

And this old man, with nothing left to give to the world, is now the author of this 'anonymous' poem winging across the Internet.

Cranky Old Man !!

*What do you see nurses?What do you see?
 What are you thinkingWhen you're looking at me?
 A cranky old man,not very wise,
 Uncertain of habitWith faraway eyes?
 Who dribbles his food And makes no reply.
 When you say in a loud voice 'I do wish you'd try!'
 Who seems not to noticethe things that you do.
 And forever is losing A sock or shoe?
 Who, resisting or not Lets you do as you will,
 With bathing and feedingThe long day to fill?
 Is that what you're thinking? Is that what you see?
 Then open your eyes, nurse You're not looking at me.*

*I'll tell you who I am. As I sit here so still,
 As I do at your bidding, As I eat at your will.
 I'm a small child of TenWith a father and mother,
 Brothers and sistersWho love one another
 A young boy of SixteenWith wings on his feet
 Dreaming that soon now A lover he'll meet.
 A groom soon at Twenty My heart gives a leap.
 Remembering, the vows That I promised to keep.
 At Twenty-Five, now I have young of my own.
 Who need me to guide And a secure happy home.
 A man of ThirtyMy young now grown fast,
 Bound to each otherWith ties that should last.
 At Forty, my young sons Have grown and are gone,
 But my woman is beside me To see I don't mourn.
 At Fifty, once more,Babies play 'round my knee,
 Again, we know children My loved one and me.*

*Dark days are upon meMy wife is now dead.
 I look at the future I shudder with dread.
 For my young are all rearing Young of their own.
 And I think of the years And the love that I've known.
 I'm now an old man And nature is cruel.
 It's jest to make old age Look like a fool.
 The body, it crumbles Grace and vigour, depart.
 There is now a stoneWhere I once had a heart.
 But inside this old carcass A young man still dwells,
 And now and again My battered heart swells
 I remember the joys I remember the pain.
 And I'm loving and living Life over again.
 I think of the years All too few gone too fast.
 And accept the stark fact that nothing can last.
 So open your eyes, people open and see.
 Not a cranky old man . Look closer seeME!!*

Remember this poem when you next meet an older person who you might brush aside without looking at the young soul withinwe will all, one day, be there, too!

New AMSA Website

Finally after much anticipation the new AMSA webpage is up and running, with many thanks to Ted and Redback Solutions for their efforts. Glenn Arkell has kindly volunteered to administer the website and make improvements, thank you Glenn for providing your much need expertise. us know of any changes needed. As you all know the old site had a lot of outdated information and was very difficult to change hopefully the new site has more accurate information, so please check the website and make sure your information is correct and let us know of any changes required. We shall be adding new pages and information constantly so keep checking the site and if you have anything of interest to be posted please email us at amsa@mensshed.net

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 and Cluster Groups 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

<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 2145	garygreen55@bigpond.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	Graeme Curnow	(07) 3720 9789	gsmcurnow@bigpond.com
Northern Rivers	Bill Taylor	(02) 6622 6116	mms@mor.com.au
Warrumbungle Shire	Procter Morris	(02) 6849 2180	procterm@hyw.com.au

<u>Cluster Groups</u>	<u>Contact</u>	<u>Phone</u>	<u>E-mail</u>
Hunter Valley Shed CG	Roger Greenan	0411 023 525	dormg@internode.on.net
Central Coast Shed CG	Kim Hopkins	0414 855 943	krhopkins@bigpond.com
Independent M S Alliance	Len Wallace	(02) 6343 1289	grenfellmensshed@westnet.com.au



info line 1300 22 4636



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

