



Bench Press

Shed West — the community men's shed for Pullenvale Ward
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Men's Shed Association Canberra

At the Men's Shed conference in 2007 it was agreed to form a national body, the Australian Men's Shed Association, (AMSA) with membership from all registered Sheds. A working party was set up to start the foundation and seven state representatives from NSW, Victoria, Tasmania and our Graeme Curnow, met in Canberra on November 10 and 11 this year to progress the organisation's development.

The meeting decided to form a national secretariat consisting of a board with one representative from each State and Territory, and employ one paid executive.

State Shed Associations will be comprised of Sheds operating from within their State and employ a paid State Coordinator. Within each State there will be clusters of Sheds within regions or with common interests. Eventually there will be up to eight paid Cluster Coordinators employed within States.

The Federal Government will be asked to fund this AMSA structure and the employment of coordinators.

The responsibilities of the national secretariat will be:

- communication through the national network of sheds via the newsletter and website;
- organising national conferences;
- representations to the Federal Government and large organisations;
- seek national fundraising;
- support individual sheds in applying for funds;
- compliance development;

- promote and publicise Men's Sheds nationwide;
- coordinate insurance schemes; and
- develop training tools.

The responsible Federal Minister was unable to attend, but sent three of her Departmental Directors to meet with a representative group. There was no immediate promise of funds but the Shed reps did get a good hearing.

Building musical instruments



Charles Neville shows Keith Foy and Chris Young the finer points of how to build musical instruments from recycled materials. If you would like to know more about the project visit Charles's website at www.cyberferal.com

Visioning

The vision for Shed West is, *to provide a safe, welcoming and creative environment in which to serve a wide range of needs for men from the district.*

A recent meeting revisited the vision and progress with the development of Shed West. This was the first opportunity for many

members to have an input into the direction and development of our shed. The meeting confirmed the current vision and direction but was concerned about the pace of development. Our Council representative outlined the processes which have to occur and possible timelines for rezoning the works depot site for community use. The Committee will now investigate further program developments including the use of additional local resources.

Melbourne Cup

Melbourne Cup day saw a good role up for our first Melbourne Cup party. It was a successful social function with an expertly catered and cooked BBQ, followed by our own race.



The shed-bred horses and jockeys are in the starting stalls ready for the start for the Shed West Melbourne Cup.

Voyager Centre Chermside

Thirteen members of Shed West visited the Voyager Centre at Chermside on September 30. Our hosts for the visit were Jim Whalan and Alan Walker, both Committee members of the Kedron-Wavell RSL Sub-Branch. Both men were very forthcoming with information about their Centre, their experience in acquiring equipment and materials for its development. The Centre operates under the auspices of the Kedron-Wavell RSL Sub-Branch, in a former Sea Scouts den.

The Centre is open to the general community, and operates on five days a week. Activities catered for at the Centre are diverse. They include woodworking, pottery, jewellery

making, art, lead-light glasswork, a pipe-band and meetings or presentations. Activities are conducted by specialist leaders, on a regular time rostered basis with an effective sharing of facilities.

Because of the broad range of activities and full schedule, effective operation requires all participants to leave the area clean and tidy.

There are strict processes and a system of qualified users for the operation of powered machines. Users are required to pay a fee for each session, and to meet the cost of special materials used.

The Centre was impressive in how effectively a modest sized facility can be used for a wide range of activities, with efficient use of space, good scheduling and the cooperation of participants.

Workshop tip

Often power tools such as routers and saws come with a small metal fence. However, they are often not long enough. To increase the efficiency, fit a 300 mm length of wood to the inside edge. This effectively increases their reach and accuracy (Charles Smith).

Basic woodworking

Members' basic woodworking skills have been put to good use under the expert guidance of Charles Smith and Keith Foy. Several work benches and fourteen wooden stools are under construction. These will be a valuable resource once our Shed is up and running.



Wooden stools under construction at a shed meeting. (photo by Ken Martin)

Program

The Shed West program revolves around the weekly Tuesday meetings with a mix of presentations by members, guest speakers and skill demonstrations.

The program runs from 2 pm to 4 pm and the agenda for the coming weeks is:

- 2 December: Cooking
- 9 December: Basic woodworking skills
- 16 December: Christmas breakup
- 20 January: Start of 2009 program

Please note the program is subject to changes.

2009 program

Planning is well under way for next year. However, we would like to hear from any members who have a special interest that they would be prepared to present to the group.

Specialist groups

Shed members have a wide range of interests and the Committee is interested in hearing from any one interested in convening special interest groups. Contact Stephen Temple-Watts aquilatw@optusnet.com.au

Digital photography

The first special interest group is on aspects of digital photography. If you are interested contact John Green jgreen@qldnet.com.au

Show and tell

Show and tell is now a part of the basic woodworking meetings. Please bring along any projects you are working on to show others, tell us about your experiences and receive advice from the experts or those with more experience.

Web wanderings

The web provides many opportunities for exploring what others are doing. For the wood workers try the *Australian Woodsmith* magazine site.

www.australianwoodsmith.com.au/

Earlier in the year we had a number of meetings focusing on men's health. Here is an

interesting site with questionnaires and a newsletter. www.menshealthaustralia.net

Membership

Membership is open to all interested men. Please feel free to pass this newsletter on to interested friends, colleagues and organisations.

Alternatively, bring a friend along to a meeting to experience what goes on. All it costs is some time and a gold coin.

If you are not a member but are interested, come along on Tuesday afternoons to the former Kenmore South Scout Den in Branton Street Kenmore Hills.

New committee member

The Committee has welcomed Stephen Temple-Watts as our membership coordinator. Stephen has already done a wonderful job of contacting members and sorting out mailing list problems and ensuring our attendance records are maintained.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year

Come to the Shed Christmas break up on Tuesday 16 December 12.30 pm for a BBQ with drinks and activities included. Please provide a contribution of \$15 towards the costs of food and refreshments.

As this will be last newsletter before Christmas the Committee wish all members and their families a safe and Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. We look forward to seeing you all when shed meetings resume on Tuesday 20th January.

