



# The not so Wrinkly Rag

*The Shed is supported by the Shire of Mundaring, Lotterywest, Mundaring Community Financial Services (Bendigo Bank), Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications, and the WA Department of Communities.*

**Donations of \$2 and above are tax deductible – just ask the Treasurer for a receipt.**

## What's on in the Next Month or 2?

|                                 |  |
|---------------------------------|--|
| General Meeting                 | 11am on 15 <sup>th</sup> of January 2026. December 2025 cancelled.   |
| Wood carvers                    | 7:00pm every Monday – contact Terry 9295-1393  |
| Fundraising                     | Next raffle on 6 <sup>th</sup> of December at Woolies.   |
| Shed Open <b>EVERY</b> Saturday | 9am-noon - come down for a cuppa and a natter.   |
| Committee Meeting               | 11:00am on 8 <sup>th</sup> of January 2026.  |
| Deadline for Wrinkly Rag copy   | 5:00pm on 12 <sup>th</sup> of January 2026.  |
| Wrinkly Rag publish             | 5:00pm on 14 <sup>th</sup> of January 2026.  |
| Christmas Lunch                 | 11:30am on 18 <sup>th</sup> of December. Wive & partners welcome: \$40 per head, payable in advance to catering officer Neil McQuillan |
| Speakers' Circle                | 10:30am on 13 <sup>th</sup> of January 2026 – speaker to be advised.   |

## Editorial – Ross Boughton

Wrinkly Rags are published by the Monday before the monthly general meeting based on information provided up to the previous Friday, being the day after the monthly committee meeting.

Please send articles of general interest (up to 2 A4 pages), photos, funnies, leads to [president@mundaringshed.org.au](mailto:president@mundaringshed.org.au) for inclusion in the Wrinkly Rag. Only **minimal** edits will be applied – **spelling and grammar errors** may slip through. 😊

Normal publishing rules apply – if you “borrow” material, please attribute it to the owner.

### Disclaimer

The information in this publication is of a general nature. The articles contained herein are not intended to provide a complete discussion on each subject and/or issues canvassed. Mundaring Community Men's Shed Inc does not accept any liability for any statements or any opinion, or for any errors or omissions contained.

## President's Patter – Ross Boughton



As we approach the end of 2025, it's interesting to see just how much has been achieved. There are functioning metalwork/mechanical and woodwork shops and nascent plastics and modelbuilding rooms. The main hall has 3 regular monthly bookings from external not-for-profit groups, and we get the occasional ad hoc booking; while the income is not great, it more than covers costs and justifies the use of "Community" in our name. We've had grants from the Shire to buy tables and chairs for the main hall, and from the WA Government to cover the walkway between buildings 4 (ablutions) and 5 (woodwork/modelbuilding/plastics).

We are trialling a "list of small jobs" boards for each of the workshops and one for clubrooms and one for the grounds, where you and maybe a couple of colleagues can say "we'll do that". They will be hung on the Colorbond wall next to the "smoko" area each day. As well as doing something for the Shed you are building connections with other members and can point to something and say: "I did that".

Our relationship with the Daring Red Bloomers (Red Hatters) continues to grow with their expressing an interest in moving their monthly meeting to the Shed, possibly just after the Speaker's Circle on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the month, encouraging their attendees to arrive a little earlier to attend the Speaker's Circle. The 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday will continue to be their monthly event, whether Bollywood dancing, Egyptian makeup, Halloween or who know what!

Saturday mornings have not had a lot of patronage of late. In 2026 we'll be having an open morning on the last Saturday of the month with a \$5 bacon and egg toastie and tea, coffee or juice from 8-10am. This will be open to everybody, not just shedders, allowing us to show (and sell) what we make and let people know the full gamut of Shed activities.

## New Members

New members in the last month: Please welcome Gary Gamble, Craig Wallace-Gibb, Cameron Marshall

**I said I was good at  
making decisions. I didn't  
say the decisions I made  
were good.**

## Kalamunda Open Day Visit – Stephen Fox

MCMS members Barry Crossley, Jim Lucas and I attended the Kalamunda Men's Shed open day on Saturday the 22<sup>nd</sup> of November 2025 and were pleased to be further greeted by members Peter Mateusiak & Peter Thomas who had also considered a visit to our Kalamunda neighbours.

For Barry and me this was our third visit and our second Open Day where in addition to opening up their work areas for Metal, Wood and Jewelry making, there are some external vendors selling coffee, cakes and lunchtime pasta from a van or ute. The Men's Shed were selling hotdogs and had marquees for a sing-a-long group and another for child woodworking activities, as well as a CWA display housed in an entry area of the wood store and a marquee for the "We Care For The Falls" environmental group.

All areas on display were great to see but time spent with the three Women members, all called Margaret, was very heartening. They willingly gave their time to answer all our questions and to show us in a greater detail the Jewelry making area and the array of tools. The Women's contingent meet on Tuesday afternoons and showed an interest in Mundaring considering a similar program on Wednesday afternoons.

## Welding activity, Stick, MIG, TIG and Gas – Stephen Fox

A big vote of thanks to recently recruited members Jim Lucas and Brian Elphick who both attended a revised version of my sheet metal working activity that let them demonstrate competence with the Air operated 1200mm Guillotine and Magnetic Bender as well as the Notcher. However, my thanks are directed to their willingness to act as guinea pigs for the welding activity where several pinch points in the activity mean we need to redesign the activity. Three hours to mark out cut with bandsaw and or friction saw, drill holes with both twist drills and hole saws and finally debur and clean up weld surfaces, does not leave enough time for the four types of welding. The activity also highlighted a number of maintenance issues with our MIG welder and Oxy/Propane gas equipment, along with trying to locate all the TIG equipment.

We will need to attend to several items of maintenance before we run the welding activity again and will recommence in March 2026 or when the season becomes a little cooler. At that time, we will offer two versions of the welding activity one where the participants prepare the steel sections in their own time ready for the second part of the activity where up to four types of welding are performed based on need or just to experience all four of these the most common welding methods (Stick, MIG, TIG and Gas).

## I, Me, Myself – The Grammar N\*zi

- **I:** Subject pronoun (e.g., *I* went to the store).
- **Me:** Object pronoun (e.g., The gift is for *me*).
- **Myself:** Reflexive pronoun, used when the subject does the action to themselves (e.g., I taught *myself* guitar).

For example:

- "Contact Fred or me", not "contact Fred or myself"
- "Alan, Rick and I went" not "Alan, Rick and myself went"



## What am I? - Stephen Fox

In the irregular series of “What Am I’s” this latest item is a short length of iron cut from a much longer section (47mm wide & 29mm high) and then polished on the cut end to reveal that the iron is of relatively low quality (porous) and on the right side a hairline mushroom shape, less visible (but evident) on the left side as well. I will bring it to the Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> January 2026 morning tea for closer examination and an explanation.



## Around the Shed



A nice picture frame made by James Scully, coincidentally for my brother-in-law's wife.

I've noticed half a dozen possum boxes go through the shop and at least one refurbished pew.

More pictures and stories, please.



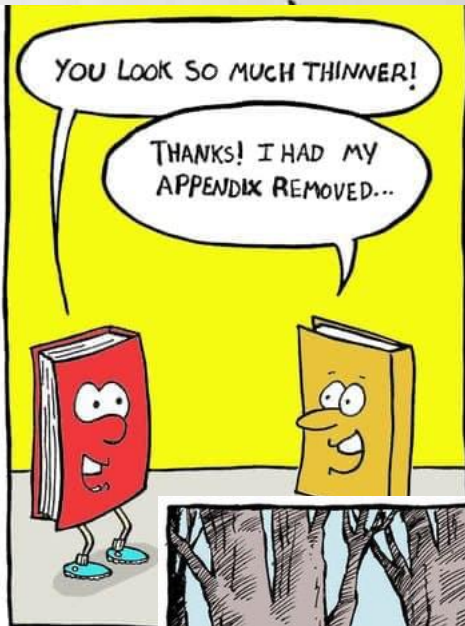
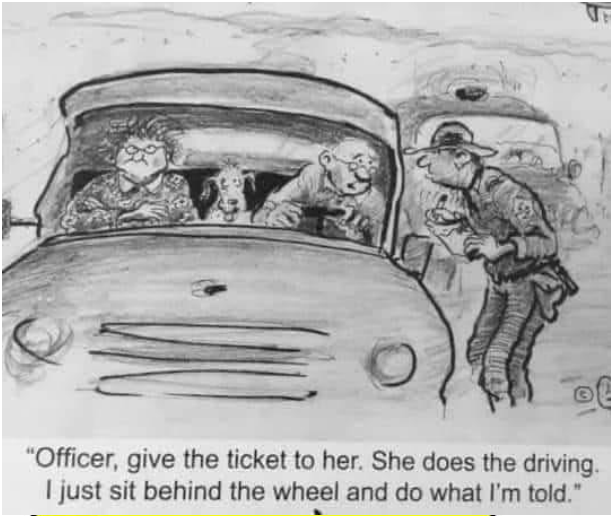
Things that go bump in the night



And some of the (Mun)daring Amblers catching up with the slower walkers at Sculpture Park.

We didn't win any of the prizes on offer (random draws) but will continue the walking challenge (Heart Foundation 4 walks in 4 weeks through Men's Sheds of WA) when weather permits and we have at least 3 starters.

## Wrinkly Smiles – Max Hore



## Railing the Timber – Craig Ward

Timber was the first major export from our We're Awesome state. Captain Stirling saw the potential in 1829 when his mob arrived here. Later one of the visiting ships, the HMS *Success*, required some repair work and the local Swan River Mahogany (later correctly identified as Jarrah) was used. Samples were then sent to the Admiralty in England to be tested and certified. The British government was impressed and ordered 200 loads at £12 10s a load. Unfortunately, this could not be sent at the time as the colonists were unable to supply as yet. But later, many loads of timber were delivered to the Admiralty for ship construction. The first export was in 1836, and the first ship constructed of local timber in WA, the *Lady Stirling* was launched. (An aside, the Norfolk pine was grown here to supply masts and yardarms for repairs and spares for needy vessels, but later they proved to be unsuitable as they broke under strain). Also, two other fine timbers were exported, Karri and Marri. Sandalwood, harvested in the Avon Valley, was the first export in 1846 during a high demand and prices. This timber was sent for joss sticks to Singapore, Hong Kong, China and later to India. It was light, small and easily pulled for export and saved many settlers from possible disaster.

With all of these profits waiting, a system was required to move the timber to the ships and users. Rail was the cry – horses were too slow and needed special tucker, while the locos could eat wood. The first of these amazing machines was built in Victoria and named after its birthplace, the *Ballaarat*, and the first of the same 3'6" gauge built in the Southern Hemisphere. This was originally run on the Lockville-Yoganup tramline that was constructed in 1871 for the Western Australian Timber Company. (Some data re the engine. Cost £780, wheel diameter 3ft, total length 16'9", weight 10 tons, working pressure 150lb per inch<sup>2</sup>, could haul 150 tons with a top speed of 10 mph.)



Ballaarat Steam Engine,  
Built in 1871 to haul timber.

From the beginning railways (or officially, tramways) were used throughout the timber regions of the SW from Chidlow and Sawyers Valley, south to Pemberton and westward to Karridale and Hamelin Bay, just north of Augusta. East of the Perth to Bunbury government line there was a network of tramways, with Jarrahdale having over 600 km of track serving seven sawmills. The earliest lines were mostly government operated before 1880's and the timbermen brought their processed timber out to them. These private companies later had their own locos – the first being the *Ballaarat* at Lockville in 1871 and a few months later the *Governor Weld* at Jarrahdale. This became impetus for many more locos. Millars Timber Co had over 30 engines operating on more than 500km of tramways. During the timber era, 6,600km of private track had been constructed. This was equal to that of the WAGR. Almost all of this track was for the



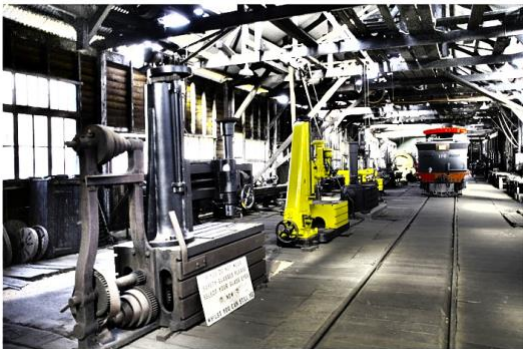
Abandoned Tramway Line near Nannup

transport of logs cut in the bush to the many mills. The tramways were the most efficient method for the movement of these heavy loads, although horses were often used for short hauls from the fallen tree to the bush loading platform. From there, logs were loaded onto the train wagons (a set of these was called a rake) and transported up to 35 km to the mill. Rails were originally logs laid throughout the bush, but later, light-weight steel lines were used as this made it easier to re-lay them as the timber was cut out. The rail gauge however was the same as the government lines of 3'6" to standardise the locos used. Sleepers for rail tracks were initially hand hewn but later sawn in steam mills. At peak production 2.4 million hewn sleepers were produced (275,000 tonnes). These were exported to India, South Africa, Britain and even to South Australia. Up to the beginning of World War II the best sleepers were hand cut, and

even well into the 1980's skilled hewers were employed on bridges and major constructions. There were, from the mid 1800's up to the 1990's many timber companies, some of which later became hardware stores. Millars, Bunnings and Wittakers are the best known, all of which had private lines.

To get an idea of these operations, Yarloop was a town built in 1895 solely for the maintenance of the tram system. Developed by the two Millar brothers, this became the largest timber and engineering centre in the world. Even the Yanks were impressed!

The Millars Timber and Trading Company expanded to include 17 large and 15 small timber mills in the Southwest corner. This work hub ran 24 hours a day producing building materials exported throughout the world.



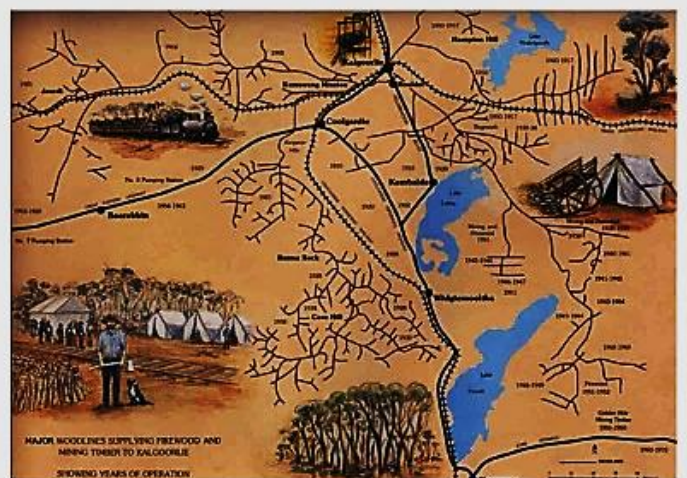
Yarloop Workshop before Fire Destroyed the Building in 2016  
Rebuilding commenced in 2017.

Their first major contract was for 1,000,000 9 cubic inch jarrah blocks to pave the streets of London. (Dick Whittington's streets of gold was only a dream)! As well as maintenance, the workshops manufactured milling machinery, rolling stock and other equipment for private clientele anywhere in Australia. This town, as it became by the 1930's, was a vital hub for many mills and surrounding farms and hamlets. The local "shop" or Emporium also served a large region extending for miles around. A mill store, now known as a hardware store, also served the area. Unfortunately, all is now lost.

Another region for timber harvesting was in the Eastern Gold Fields. When Coolgardie, Kalgoorlie and Boulder kicked off, the water supply was scarce and brackish. Condensers were constructed but they required fuel to operate. Coal was out of the question; however, timber was plentiful. Wood was also needed for domestic use. Once the underground mining commenced, timber supports were vital. At first the timber was brought in by camels, but later, as the trees were cut out, tramways were used. There were at least five species of trees harvested. Because of the semi-arid environment this timber was ideal for the mines. I remember, when working underground, the logs were straight, knot free and of varying sizes and easy to work with. The common trees were the Salmon Gum, Goldfields Blackbutt, Redwood and Gimlet, all suitable for mining while the Grey Gum was suitable for fuel.

Originally there were a number of small operators, but they soon amalgamated into larger groups until the Lakewood Timber Co became the main supplier. During the peak of timber harvesting up to 2,000 tons of wood was delivered to Kalgoorlie each day. From the late 1890's until the 1950's. The timber was mainly cut by Italians and Yugoslavs.

There was a great deal of argy-bargy between the government and private timber companies. The private owners had been trying to force the government to open up areas and was accused of blackmail, but their arguments were "thinner than a refreshment room sandwich". On another occasion the viewpoints of the private companies "smelt as fishy as a defunct snapper". In those days journos knew how to write!



## Woodlines in Goldfields

*TO QUOTE FROM M.R.H. SOUTHCOMBE*

“Were it not for the steam engines and steam locos the development of the timber industry, in fact the whole state, would have been many years.”

END NOTE.

It is ironic that the foundation of Perth was marked by felling of a tree, possibly a Sheoak (*Casuarina*), but the forests enacted their revenge when William Parsons, a sailor, was killed by a falling tree while clearing the “town site”.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- “Steam in the Forests” M.R.H. Southcombe
- “Big Timber Country” Mary Calder
- “Jinkers and Whims” Jack Bradshaw
- “Fallen Timber, A History of the Worsley District” John Bird
- “Timber for Gold” Bill Bunbury”
- “The Ghosts of Hamlin Bay” Garry Teahan
- “The Timber People, Bunnings Family” Jenny Mills

