



February 2026

# 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 19 <sup>th</sup> of February 2026.
Wood carvers	7:00pm every Monday – contact Terry 9295-1393
Fundraising	Next raffle on 9 <sup>th</sup> of May at Woolies.
Shed Open <b>EVERY</b> Saturday	9am-noon - come down for a cuppa and a natter.
Public Open Saturday (last Saturday of the month)	28 <sup>th</sup> of February Open Morning 8:00am-noon. Bacon & egg toastie and juice plus tea or coffee for \$5 - 8:00am–10:00am. All welcome, even family, friends, neighbours.
Committee Meeting	11:00am on 12 <sup>th</sup> of March 2026.
Deadline for Wrinkly Rag copy	5:00pm on 13 <sup>th</sup> of March 2026.
Wrinkly Rag publish	5:00pm on 15 <sup>th</sup> of March 2026.
Speakers' Circle	10:30am on 10 <sup>th</sup> of March 2026 – Cate Mitchell from <i>diabetesWA</i> : "Understanding Diabetes and Reducing your Risk".

## 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

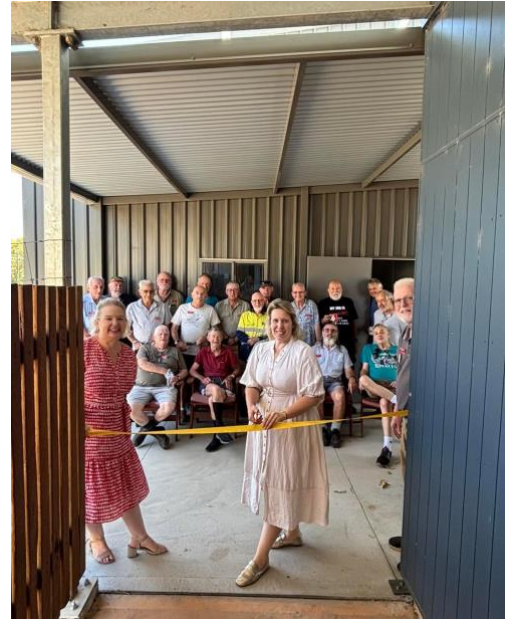


As a result of the May 2025 election, we received a grant from the WA Government Department of Communities to cover the walkway between buildings 4 (ablutions) and 5 (woodwork / modelbuilding/ plastics). This cover was “opened” at 10:am on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of January by the Honourable Klasey Hirst

MLC, who provided morning tea!

On the 31<sup>st</sup> of January 2026 we had the first of our planned regular “last Saturday of the Month” open mornings with a \$5 bacon and egg toastie and juice and tea or coffee from 8-10am. We made and sold 25 toasties! This event will continue while ever there’s interest. It is 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. The next event will be on the 28<sup>th</sup> of February. Please come along and support the Shed if you can; if you can help with catering all the better.

If you are experiencing health issues or just need somebody to chat with, remember there’s always somebody at the Shed willing to lend an ear.



On Tuesday the 24<sup>th</sup> of February for 8am onwards we’ll be having a “working bee” to dismantle the wood store from 3205 Jacoby and transport it to 1 Morilla where it will become the garden shed in the community garden. More details in an email in the next day or so.

## New Members

New members in the last month: Please welcome Dennis Rapana, Paul Denton, Robert Greenwood, Ivan Gian-Piero.

## Containers for Change – Max Hore

Since October 2020, Western Australians have saved over five billion 10¢ containers from general waste.

One container may not seem like much, but together, every container returned has added up to:

- Over \$500 million in refunds.
- 419,040 tonnes diverted from general waste to recycling.
- Nearly \$20 million in donations to charities, community groups, schools, and sporting clubs.

Now that’s a reason to celebrate!



## Around the Shed

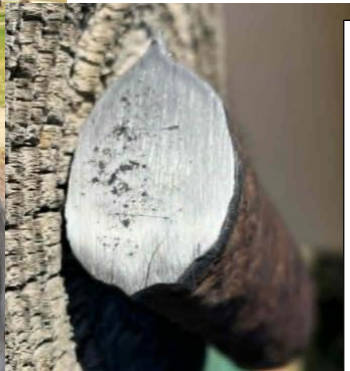
Recently Kevin Norris took some photos of “Men at Work” for the Shire to use in their publicity.



Caption ideas welcome!



## What am I? – Stephen Fox



In the irregular series of “What Am I’s”. While I did attend (22<sup>nd</sup> Jan 2026) we had a guest for the formal opening of the covered way and the answer was not a reality. So for those who may have been interested this is the joining bar for the two half sections that form sections of the Mundaring to Kalgoorlie water pipeline. You will see a stylised version to signify part of the pipeline route along much of the length of the pipeline.



If you're in, Mount Barker and fancy a break in your journey consider a visit to the Corkscrew Gallery many of the exhibits mimic a sense of fun.

Wrinkly Smiles – Max Hore



# To A Mouse

Wee, sleekit, cowrin, tim'rous beastie,  
O, what a panic's in thy breastie!  
Thou need na start awa sae hasty,  
Wi' bickering brattle!  
I wad be laith to rin an' chase thee  
Wi' murd'ring pattle!

I'm truly sorry man's dominion,  
Has broken nature's social union,  
An' justifies that ill opinion,  
What makes thee startle  
At me, thy poor, earth-born companion,  
An' fellow-mortal!

I doubt na, whiles, but thou mayst thieve;  
What then? poor beastie, thou maun live!  
A daimen icker in a thrave  
'S a sma' request;  
I'll get a blessin wi' the lave,  
An' never miss't!



Robert Burns



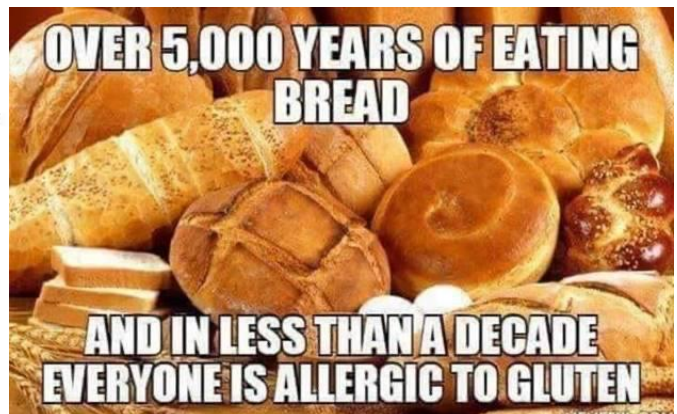
**When I complained to Amazon about a missing parcel they asked me to send photographic evidence.**



**Parking lot in front of the Laser Eye Surgery Center.**



**A friend suggested putting horse manure on my strawberries... I'm never doing that again, I'm going back to whipped cream.**



## Riches by Rail – Craig Ward

From 1890, when the WAGR originated, rail has played an important role in the economy of this beautiful state, none more so than the non-government lines. Whether hauling timber, grain or minerals, these privately owned rail systems played a vital role. When a large reserve of coal was discovered by a shepherd, George Marsh, and then developed in 1898, the state-owned rail line was extended to Collie from the Narrogin line. The town was named after the river which had been named after Dr Alexander Collie by Governor James Stirling in 1829. Prior to the opening of this field, coal had been imported from Newcastle in NSW. Coal had been found elsewhere in the southern regions, at Walpole's Coalmine Beach and near the head of the Irwin River at now the Coal Seam Conservation Park. However, although many finds were made, they were all uneconomical to work.

It was imperative that coal had to be found for the development of the rail system. During the depression and WWII there was a struggle to keep the coal supplies up, although many of the miners and loco crews were on the essential services. Collie has a significant role in the provision of electricity for Western Australia. The state's two coal mines are in the town, and there are the three coal-fired power stations (Muja due to close by 2029, Collie due to close by 2027, and Bluewater's which had financial difficulties, has since been resurrected). In 2014, Western Collieries, the Premier Coal mining operation, reported a production capacity of 5 million tonnes of coal per year for 30 years. The Griffin Coal mine is owned by the Indian company Lanco Infratech. This mine has been a main supplier of coal, and a State agreement to underwrite them has been extended until 2031. Operations and supply of fuel from the Ewington mine will continue for the Bluewater's Power Station, thereby ensuring energy for all customers. There have been many challenges, both for the state and the employees on the mines, which must be addressed for the future.

Until 1960 there were restrictions on the export of iron ore as it was considered that Australia did not have enough for its own use. Later proved to be incorrect. As a strategic resource, it was banned from export in 1938. However, pig iron was exported to Japan in 1938. Because of Japan's war footing and invasion of China the port employees refused to load the ship at Port Kembla, New South Wales. The then Attorney General, Robert Menzies, retaliated by ordering the army to load the *Dalfram*. This caused much furore, and later Menzies received the epithet of "Pig Iron Bob".

After these restrictions were lifted in the 1960's, the WA Government issued permits to explore and develop iron ore deposits. By 1965, Mount Tom Price (named after an American geologist who verified the find) had been discovered, Hamersley Holdings and Hamersley Iron Pty. Ltd were formed, and a major contract signed with Japanese Steel Mills. Funds were raised from North American banks for the construction of processing plants and a railway line to the coast for export shipping. In August 1966 the first shipment was sent on the "TACHIKAWA MARU" to Japan, after the completion of the rail line.

From these humble beginnings, it was all systems go! BIG locos and trains were crucial for the transport in the Pilbara Region, with over 2,790 kms of track laid, with four major networks operating. These were the RIO TINTO, BHP, FORTESCUE, and ROY HILL.

The first rail system was the result of the merger of the Hamersley and Robe River railways into the PILBARA RAIL in 2001, by RIO TINTO, with a saving of \$16 million. It was originally from Tom Price to the new port at King Bay, now Dampier Port, constructed in 1964. They have over 1,800 Kms of network with Autonomous Electric Haulage – a large-scale driverless transport, also known as "Auto Haul". This



Ready to haul more ore to China.

was the world's first automated, long distance, heavy haul rail network and was key to Rio Tinto's "Iron Ore Rail Capacity Enhancement Project". It incorporates remote co-operation, wayside systems and on-board systems to connect 15 mines with ports across 1700 km of track.

BHP amalgamated with the Goldsworthy and Mount Newman companies which began in the 1960's. This line runs for over 400 kms from Mount Newman to Port Hedland. It has seven lines from their mine sites, including Mount Whaleback and Yandi, and began its life in January 1969, opened by the Premier, Sir David Brand. This system has been noteworthy over the years. In 2001 the longest train in the world, at 7.4Kms, was run from Yandi Mine to Port Hedland on the Mt Newman line. It consisted of 682 wagons with 8 locos placed along its length with a payload of 99,734 tonnes. The train was controlled by a sophisticated control system and only one driver. This feat has inspired other freight operators to have a go with their gear.

BHP iron ore train has typically 268 cars and a train weight of 43,000 tonnes carrying 24,200 tonnes of iron ore, 2.8 km long, two SD70ACe locomotives at the head of the train and two remote-controlled SD70ACe locomotives as mid-train helpers. This impressive feat of engineering not only highlights the advancements in railway technology but also showcases the capacity for transporting vast quantities of resource efficiently across long distances. However, within the Aussie environment, few roads, and zero population along the route, it may be sometime before it happens elsewhere. On 21<sup>st</sup> June 2001 one of BHP's trains travelled without a driver for nearly 100 kms before crashing. No one was hurt, but it cost over A\$300 million in lost production and repairs.

Another rail complex is owned and operated by "Twiggy" Forrest's Fortescue Metals Group (FMG). Like everything else in the Pilbara, it was built to carry heavy loads, 40 tonnes axle loads, in excess of other lines. FMG originally hoped to use BHP's and RIO TINTO's tracks to develop its Cloud Breath mine, but they said no. This forced FMG to build its own at a cost of \$2.5 billion. November 2006 saw the start of a 280 km line from Cloud Break to Herb Elliot Port at Port Hedland. Unfortunately, some delays occurred, a cyclone passed over killing two workers in 2007, and there were other disruptions. Finally in April 2008 the first load travelled down to the port. Four and half years later the line was extended through to the Solomon Mine. The trip is relative short, 5 hours, and an average of 14 trains per day. As the locos used are all electric there is a large reduction of its carbon footprint as the requirements for fuel oil is practically eliminated. "Twiggy", being a nice guy declared that other hopefuls could use the line for their operations. A nice little earner with no cost to FMG.



Gina's favourite colour!

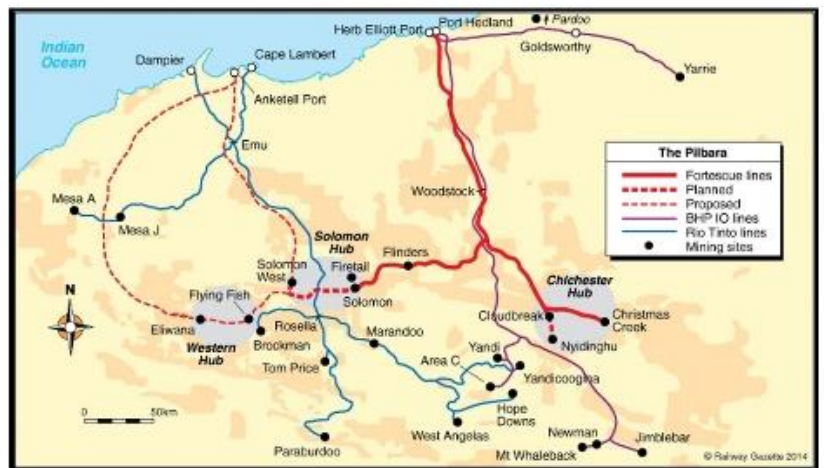
The latest privately owned and operated choo-choos are owned by Hancock Prospecting, the ROY HILL INFRASTRUCTURE RAILWAY. Commenced in 2012 and finished two and a half years later, with a load of prospective washing machines, cars and building frames on its way to China in December 2015. This construction would have been breathtaking with eight river crossings and four road and rail crossovers. The combined cost of the mine, port and rail was \$10 billion. This rail project, together with the Auckland Electrification Project in New Zealand,

won the 2016 railway project award from the Railway Technical Society of Australasia. Not bad, something to hang in Gina's office. (The RTSA was formed for the advancement of the railway industry and technology in 1997).

All these rail lines finish at one of three ports. Port Hedland being the main destination. This is the world's largest bulk export port, with ore from BHP Billiton, Rio Tinto, Roy Hill and FMG all heading there. Dampier is a mixed bulk cargo handling port, with iron ore from Rio Tinto mines, liquefied natural gas and salt going overseas. The third export port is Port Walcott, which is the second largest iron ore export terminal,

shipping over 170 million tonnes annually from Rio Tinto mines. It has massive loading facilities with equipment loading 10,000 – 16,000 tonnes hourly!

As elsewhere, there are concerns about the environment. The previously diesel-powered locos are being replaced by electric locos, therefore reducing pollution. Also, these trains are now remotely controlled from Perth, thereby eliminating FIFO drivers. Who knows, maybe these mines will be fully operated remotely by robotic equipment! There have been rapid changes from the early days of men swearing and horses sweating and dying in the heat and dust. Already the agriculture industry has dramatically improved over the past 100 years, with more changes forecast.



### The Main Rail Network in the Pilbara.

Red: - Fortescue Lines

Purple: - BHP Line

Blue: - Rio Tinto Lines

We all have heard of Intercourse Island and puzzled over the origin of the name. An early explorer, Captain Philip Parker King who, in 1829 named these islands after the intercourse between him and the local aboriginals, during an exploratory trip in the ship “Mermaid”.

#### FOOTNOTE:-

Update on last month’s essay in regard to the grain transport. Last year’s 2024/25 grain season produced 20.4 million tonnes, making it the third largest harvest. However, this years (2025/26) harvest is the largest with 24 million tonnes delivered across the state network. From “The Northam Advertiser” and “The West Australian” newspapers