


VMSA NEWSLETTER

Diamond Creek Men's Shed 10th Anniversary



On Tuesday 1st March, the Diamond Creek Men's Shed put on a special event to celebrate its tenth birthday.

Leigh Marshall (right) came up with an idea to start a Men's Shed in Diamond Creek around 2010. He and his wife Caty walked the streets dropping pamphlets in letter boxes. He also approached the Diamond Valley Lions who were putting on a sausage sizzle at our local Mitre 10 store. They obviously liked the idea as they presented Leigh with a \$2,000 cheque to get the Diamond Creek Men's Shed (DCMS) started.

At the first meeting on 27th October 2010, a small clutch of interested parties came together over sandwiches and beer at the Ellis Cottage Barn.

Subsequent meetings were held at the Barn, and also at the home of Leigh and Caty Marshall. *Cont'd*



Main photo: during the event, a presentation then took place to six new Life Members in recognition of their roles as founding members and continued dedicated service to the Diamond Creek Men's Shed.

L to R: Gary Burke, Norm Osborne, Ross Isaks, Barry Backman, Brian Sedgman and Ken Park.

Continued

John Graham was at the time part of the ministry team at Diamond Valley Baptist Church (DVBC). He generously offered the use of an empty shed in the grounds of the church... free of charge! John is one of our honorary members in recognition for providing us with our first home and he continues to turn up to all our special events.

In December 2011, a public forum was held in the hall at St. John's Anglican Church, Diamond Creek. The purpose of this meeting was to gauge community support for a Men's Shed. Response was overwhelming, with 69 adults and 4 children braving the elements to attend. Of those present, 32 expressed interest in joining.

A working bee followed at the DVBC shed that included digging a trench to connect the power and 25 men sitting down for a Christmas lunch on 21st December.

The DCMS quickly outgrew the limited space available at DVBC. It became apparent in 2012 that the Girl Guides Hall at 53 Challenger Street was no longer in use. DCMS approached Nillumbik Shire Council with a view to making this our new home. Council was receptive to our approach, and by mid-2012 agreed to take us on as tenants. By virtue of many working bees, internal & external painting, and the addition of a wheelchair ramp, the new premises were made ready. We commenced operations there in October 2012.

The most obvious physical change to the shed since then has been the addition of our purpose-built workshop. Not so obvious to an outsider is the growing sense of community within the shed, and our engagement with the wider community. After a Pre-Covid total of 116 we currently have 94 members and growing. In response to our increasing membership, we have increased our opening hours, and are now in the early stages of planning extensions to the premises.

Many months of planning for the tenth anniversary event took place and invitations were sent to members past and present and their partners, as well as to our local politicians (Federal, State and Shire). Invitations also went to Executive Members of the VMSA, the Bendigo Bank, Diamond Creek Rotary Club, Diamond Valley Lions, the Group Leader of 1st Diamond Creek Scouts (our next door neighbour) and representatives of our neighbouring Men's Sheds (Eltham, Hurstbridge, St Andrews, and Whittlesea).

An invitation was extended to the Premier, Dan Andrews, but he was unable to attend. He requested that Anthony Carbines, the Minister

Child Protection & Family Services, Disability, Ageing and Carers (right) attend to represent him. Dan Andrews officially opened our new workshop a little more than three years ago.



We had a total of 121 members and guests attend our event.



Entertainment was provided by our in-house band, OC/DC (Old Codgers Diamond Creek, above) as well as some Russian and Polish folk songs by Jerzy Borowski and a rendition of Banjo Paterson's, The Man from Snowy River.

Speeches followed Danielle Green's (State Member for Yan Yean) "Acknowledgement of Country". First to speak was Anthony Carbines, followed by Rob Mitchell (Federal Member for McEwen),



Vicki Ward (State Member for Eltham, Frances Eyre (Mayor Nillumbik Shire), Michael Maloney (Director Valley Community Financial Services Ltd – Bendigo Bank) and then Trevor Dobbyn (Chairman Victorian Men's Shed Association, above).



Our Founding Member, First President and First Life Member, Leigh Marshall then spoke of his memories of our Shed in the early days.

Continued



Leigh donated a number of tumbled bricks (he likes to think were ballast from the Joseph Scammell that was wrecked off Point Danger near Torquay in 1981) each with

a Tillandsia (Air Plant) implanted in them and also heart-shaped rocks shaped from Torquay stone. These were used as gifts for each of the speakers at our event. These gifts have already found new homes in a politician's office in Spring Street and as far away as a veranda in Hattah. Leigh and Caty opted for a sea-change and moved to Torquay a few years ago.



Leigh's speech was followed by a cutting of the cake. Our cake was made and decorated by Jessie McGrath, granddaughter of one of our members, Peter. Leigh and Caty were presented with a bottle of wine (aptly labelled 'Founder's View') and a bouquet of flowers.

Graham Newman, President,
Diamond Creek Men's Shed

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A message from the Editor



This month the Board is pleased to welcome our first model railway member, the BlueScope Steel Western Port Model Railway Society, located near Hastings, just off Denham Road. They have a 5-inch gauge, a G-gauge live steam loop and HO-gauge tracks. Here is a link to a video about the Society, by Will James Railways.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=crdGfyzs99s>

In our last VMSA New Newsletter we ran a story on the Pomonal Men's Shed and the Mental Health First Aid Course (MHFA). If you missed it, you can read the February New Newsletter here: <https://www.vmsa.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/MENS-SHED-NEWSLETTER-5-FEB-22-2.pdf>

We encourage sheds to take a moment to consider participating in this worthwhile program and learn how you can help your mates, family members and family friends that maybe experiencing mental health issues. Russ Kellett's letter of endorsement is a wonderful, independent view of the benefits of the course.

This course can be run for an individual Shed if your shed has sufficient members to make the course effective or a group of sheds can get together to get sufficient participants to make the course a success.

Please contact Derek O'Leary or Barbara Look in the first instance and they will put you in touch with the folks from Melbourne University to explain how the course works and how it fits into the overall picture of the BUOY research project into Men's Mental Health.

This year we want to get our database records of the VMSA sheds as accurate as possible. So, we are asking the Management Committee of each shed to take time out to let us know who the executive members of your shed are, their contact details and a few shed details as well, i.e. President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer. See the article 'Calling all Sheds' on page 8.

Help us to help you.

You can update your shed's details here: <https://www.vmsa.org.au/shed-contact-form/>

Peter Bettes – Editor

To sign up to receive your own copy of the New Newsletter, click the link and fill in your details:

<http://www.vmsa.org.au/newsletter/?fbclid=IwAR39ym4c8KxR8tDdn6rD5ateLgsqzmfVeYnduUZ-JmyMKbVgFrP8INnbPc>

CEO's Report



As we moved into March, things have certainly started to return to some sort of normality.

The month started with a bang with myself, Trevor Dobbyn-VMSA President and Peter Bettes-VMSA Secretary visiting the Diamond Creek Men's Shed for their 10th birthday celebrations. The guys had it organised like a well-oiled machine with over a hundred guests including state and federal politicians, and several local councillors. It was a great day with plenty of food, music, and discussion, but more importantly plenty of shedders both from Diamond Creek and the surrounding sheds.

A big-ticket item for the month was the final stage of the recruitment process for our new regional co-ordinator, and I'm pleased to advise that Darren Scicluna was successful in being appointed in the new role. Darren, who also happily answers to "Daz" has commenced on the 16th of March and will be busy getting in touch with sheds over the coming months to see how we can best assist you going forward. The role is funded by the Commonwealth Health department, and we thank them for providing us with this critical funding. There will also be regular liaison between Darren and the other regional co-ordinators in all the other states which is a positive step forward for the Men's Shed movement in Australia.

Later in the month myself and Darren attended the cluster meeting for the Central Highlands group, which includes around 20 sheds. It was held in

Dereel and the guys put on a great lunch followed by a productive cluster meeting. It was extremely valuable to hear from all the sheds and see how they were travelling and unravel what they thought were their strengths and weaknesses.

I strongly encourage all sheds to get involved in cluster meetings if they don't already, as they are a very valuable tool in sharing ideas, knowledge, experience, and learnings.

If you need help in putting together cluster meetings, we'd love to hear from you and see how we can support you, and likewise if you already have cluster meetings planned, we will certainly welcome an invitation to come and participate in the meetings with you.

Finally, I also had the pleasure of attending Government House at the invitation of the Honourable Linda Dessau AC, Governor of Victoria for the presentation of the Volunteering Awards for 2021. I'm pleased to advise that the VMSA are held in high regard by the all levels of government and many great networking opportunities and relationships have grown due to our presence at this event and many other government events that I attend.

In closing, keep up the great work and I hope to see you in a shed sometime soon.

Kind regards,

Derek O'Leary – VMSA CEO

Recognising Our Dedicated Volunteers

Our VMSA CEO, Derek O'Leary represented the VMSA at the "Recognising Our Dedicated Volunteers" event at Government House on Friday 25 March 2022.

Derek represents the VMSA on Minister Anthony Carbin's Volunteer Advisory Committee. This gives the VMSA the opportunity to represent our member sheds at the Ministerial level on a regular basis, in addition to the one-on-one meetings Derek has with the Minister's advisors and his Parliamentary Secretary.

Jaya Manchikanti is the 2021 Premier's Volunteer Champion of the Year for her selfless work supporting the physical and emotional wellbeing of Victoria's Indian community.

Minister for Disability, Ageing and Carers Anthony Carbin's today announced the winners of the 2021 Volunteering Awards, which celebrate the extraordinary efforts of the state's hard-working volunteers.

For more information click this link: <https://www.vmsa.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/220325-Recognising-Our-Dedicated-Volunteers.pdf>

Chair's Report



On Tuesday 22 of March my shed, which is the Ouyen District Men's Shed hosted a visit from Dr Rick Hayes who gave a report to members at smoko about his involvement in the early days of the shed movement in Victoria.

He spoke about his role alongside others in the 1990's working on men's health issues and in developing a framework that emphasised the importance of men working in groups to improve their health and wellbeing. In 2000-2004 the Working with men network was formed in Melbourne as more agencies requested support for community development sessions for men interested in developing groups for men.

Rick also noted that outside of metropolitan Melbourne things were happening as well. Community Health Bendigo established the "Men in Sheds program" and other regional initiatives saw new programs that were heading towards what we have today.

It was in the early 2000's that men's sheds began to pop up all over the state and as government support kicked in the men's shed movement took off from around 2005.

Rick made the point that sheds were in existence before the Victorian Men's Shed Association or its national equivalent AMSA were formed which of course makes sense as there has to be some form of on the ground entities for peak bodies to represent, in this case is sheds.

I think this is important as sheds were the beginning not peak bodies like VMSA or AMSA and reemphasises in my mind that the peak bodies are there to service and support men's sheds.

From a VMSA perspective this means we should have only one thing in mind and that is to do everything we can to enrich the lives of men in sheds and to provide sheds with the necessary support and advice that they need to grow and foster the health and wellbeing of their members. In short, the VMSA should properly regard itself as the servant of men's sheds in Victoria.

If we keep this in mind, we won't go too far wrong.

Rick's presentation went down very well with the members at the Ouyen shed and his presentation sparked a lively discussion that continued for some time after the meeting ended. He was reminded not to be a stranger and invited back next time he was up in the Mallee.

Kind Regards

Trevor Dobbyn - VMSA Chair

New VMSA Members

The Board of VMSA on behalf of the VMSA membership would like to welcome a new member to the VMSA Shed Community. Our newest member is :

The BlueScope Steel Western Port Model Railway Society.

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/BSSWPRS/>

Location: **BlueScope Steel Recreation Reserve, Denham Rd, Hastings**

Our new shed member is an example of a group of men getting together with a common interest to share friendship and camaraderie, with a sense of purpose – model railways.

VMISA Appoints Darren Scicluna to fill the New Regional Coordinator Position

The VMISA Board is pleased to announce that Darren Scicluna has joined the VMISA to fill the new position of Regional Coordinator.

We welcome Darren into the VMISA team and encourage all the VMISA Sheds and Shedders to make him feel welcome when he visits your Shed or contacts you by phone.

About the regional coordinators initiative

The regional coordinators initiative will provide \$1.5 million over 3 years (from 2021–22) for regional coordinators to provide grassroots support to men's sheds across the Country.

Why it is important

Regional coordinators will help men's sheds to connect with local health services.

Goals

The goals of the regional coordinator's initiative are to:

- help men's sheds to connect with local health services
- promote health events aimed at improving the health and wellbeing of men's sheds members across the country

This role provides a vital link to health information and access to resources to improve men's health and wellbeing.

Meeting the Department's goals

Regional coordinators will:

- identify critical health needs for men's sheds across regions in each state and territory
- give men's shed members access to health and wellbeing information and resources to meet their needs
- promote the benefits of men's shed activities
- promote the National Shed Development Programme
- form partnerships with health providers
- help men's sheds to organise and promote regional health events to benefit men and their communities
- make sure grant information and applications are available to men's sheds

Who the Department works with

The Health Department runs the regional coordinators initiative and meets with the Regional Coordinators monthly. The first meeting was on Friday 18 March 2022.

Status

- The Australian Men's Shed Association (AMSA) has been successful under the Initiative, and will receive funding to implement regional coordinators in NSW, the ACT, SA and the NT
- Men's Sheds of WA (MSWA); the Queensland Men's Shed Association (QMSA); the Tasmanian Men's Shed Association (TMSA); and the Victorian Men's Shed Association (VMISA) are also funded to introduce regional coordinators in each of their respective states
- Work on the regional coordinator's initiative commenced from 1 July 2021.

Please do not hesitate to contact Darren and have a chat. Here are his details:

Email: darren@vmsa.org.au Mobile: 0402 522 325

For more information about the initiative and the Federal Department of Health's information about Men's Sheds, please go to: <https://www.health.gov.au/initiatives-and-programs/mens-sheds>



Calling all sheds...



Have you updated your details lately?

We would all agree that communication is important. It is how we find out information that is of assistance to us for all sorts of reasons.

So, we are asking all Shed Management Committees to update their contact details on our website at this web address:

<https://www.vmsa.org.au/shed-contact-form/>

Your assistance is greatly appreciated. This will ensure your Shed receives the latest VMSA and other relevant information.

When you have updated your details, please send an email to editor@vmsa.org.au

Thanks very much.

Thanks to our sponsors for their ongoing support



BOSCH



Donating to Sheds affected by the floods



The Dingley Village Men's Shed gets 'MAD' about the devastation caused by the NSW and QLD floods and in particular the losses experienced by Men's Sheds.

The fellas at Dingley decided to have a 'Mad Hatters' day to raise money for the **Lismore Men's Shed**. A fantastic result was achieved; they raised \$650.00 and instead of donating to a recognised charity, they sent the money directly to the Lismore Men's Shed, so the Shed would get the full benefit of the donation.

If you wish to help the **Lismore Men's Shed** here are their banking details copied from their Facebook page.

| | |
|---|---------------------------------|
| President: Don Abrahams, Phone, 0437576837 | Direct Deposit into Summerland |
| Email: donabrahams52@gmail.com | TBSB 728728 |
| Website: https://mensshed.org/profile/AMSA100065/ | ACCOUNT No. 22316142 |
| | Lismore Men & Community Shed |
| | Reference it as 2022-FLOOD-AID. |

The other Men's Shed affected by the floods is the **Pottsville and District Men's Shed**. Fortunately, despite the extent of the floods, these two sheds are the only ones affected by the floods in NSW that we are aware of.

Here are the contact and banking details of the Pottsville Men's Shed:

| | |
|---|---|
| President: John Taylor – 0418 432 864 | Direct Deposit |
| E-mail: padmssecretary@gmail.com | Pottsville and District Men's Shed Inc. |
| Website: https://padms.org/ | NAB (Kingscliff NSW) |
| | BSB: 082 679 Account: 243120007 |
| | Reference: Flood Donation |

Ipswich Men's Shed in QLD was affected too.

Here are the contact and banking details of the Ipswich Men's Shed:

| | |
|---|--------------------------------|
| President: Terry Carter - 07 34365857 | Direct Deposit |
| E-mail: ipswichmensshed@hotmail.com | Ipswich Men's Shed Inc. |
| Website: https://ipswichmensshed.org.au/ | Bendigo Bank |
| | BSB: 633000 Account: 150058048 |
| | Reference: Flood Donation |

Check out the ABC Breakfast TV on Saturday that had a story about the **Ipswich Men's Shed** with Terry Carter, President, being interviewed.

<https://www.facebook.com/487475534620853/videos/389341249320826>

We are sure these sheds will welcome any donation that your shed and its members can make.

Victorian experts to help shape mental health reforms

A roll call of experts from Victoria's mental health sector will provide specialist advice on rebuilding and shaping the state's mental health and wellbeing system, as part of the Andrews Labor Government's nation-leading reform.

The Mental Health Ministerial Advisory Committee (MHMAC) met for the first time this week, chaired by Parliamentary Secretary for Mental Health Steve Dimopoulos, to help guide Victoria's ten-year reform journey.

The MHMAC will identify and provide advice on emerging issues and best practice nationally and internationally in mental healthcare, shaping the reforms and identifying opportunities for further collaboration and innovation.

The Committee includes representatives of the Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations, Transgender Victoria, Foundation House, Turning Point, The Victorian Mental Illness Awareness Council, Tandem, Thorne Harbour Health and the Victorian Multicultural Commission, and other peak bodies.

The MHMAC will be supported by a new sub-committee, the Interdisciplinary Clinical Advisory Group, chaired by Forensicare CEO Dr Margaret Grigg. It has a broad membership comprising some of Victoria's leading mental health clinicians specialising in CALD and Aboriginal Victorian health, LGBTIQ+, disability and homelessness.

Check out the full story here: <https://www.vmsa.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/220216-Victorian-Experts-To-Help-Shape-Mental-Health-Reforms.pdf>

Delivering better healthcare for Mount Alexander Shire

Mount Alexander Shire residents will benefit from better integrated healthcare following a voluntary amalgamation of the local health services.

Minister for Health Martin Foley approved the voluntary amalgamation proposal put forward by the Boards of Castlemaine Health and the Maldon Hospital after being satisfied that it would deliver clear benefits to the community.

To be named Dhelkaya Health – meaning 'Good/Being Healthy' - the organisation will commence on March 1 and comes after extensive community and staff consultation across both health services and communities and will formalise the existing strong 42-year partnership between both services.

Check out the full story here: <https://www.vmsa.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Delivering-Better-Healthcare-For-Mount-Alexander-Shire.pdf>

ATAGI update following weekly COVID-19 meeting – 23 March 2022

An update from the Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI) following their weekly meeting on 23 March 2022.

Latest recommendation updates

ATAGI have provided recommendations on a winter booster dose of COVID-19 vaccine to increase vaccine protection before winter for specified population groups who are at greatest risk of severe illness from COVID-19 and who have received their primary vaccination course and first booster dose.

These groups are:

- Adults aged 65 years and older
- Residents of aged care or disability care facilities
- People aged 16 years and older with severe immunocompromise (as defined in the ATAGI statement on the use of a 3rd primary dose of COVID-19 vaccine in individuals who are severely immunocompromised)
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 50 years and older.

The additional winter booster dose can be given from 4 months or longer after the person has received their first booster dose, or from 4 months after a confirmed SARS-CoV-2 infection, if infection occurred since the person's first COVID-19 booster dose.

ATAGI recommends that the rollout of the additional booster dose for these groups starts from April 2022, coinciding with the rollout of the 2022 influenza vaccination program.

Influenza vaccine can be co-administered with the additional booster dose of COVID-19 vaccine. However, if a person is not yet eligible for their additional booster dose, influenza vaccine could be given ahead of the additional booster dose.

For more information click on the link:

<https://www.health.gov.au/news/atagi-update-following-weekly-covid-19-meeting-23-march-2022>

and here on 25 March 2022:

<https://www.health.gov.au/news/atagi-statement-on-recommendations-on-a-winter-booster-dose-of-covid-19-vaccine>



AMES supporting Afghan refugees in making Melbourne home and joining a Men's Shed



Migrant and refugee settlement agency AMES Australia is currently working closely with new Afghan arrivals to ensure the transition to life in Melbourne is as simple as can be.

Following the unsettling events that took place in Afghanistan last August, a large number of Afghan refugees were airlifted out of Kabul and left to make new homes for themselves in unfamiliar cities.

With many refugees now living in temporary Scape accommodation on the outer edge of the CBD, AMES has been connecting the affected community with programs that are not only beneficial to their safety but also their wellbeing.

Partnering with the Peter Mac Men's Shed, AMES hopes to encourage local Afghans to not only meet people from the broader community but to find enjoyment in learning practical skills.

Established by the Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre and accommodation provider Scape, Peter Mac Men's Shed was originally created for patients at the centre dealing with the stresses of their cancer treatment and to allow them a space to share their experience.

But it was shortly after their opening in December 2021, at the base of the Atira accommodation, that they saw the potential in extending the offer.

It was a move AMES senior management accommodation Maree Symons said was "very generous."

"Scape and Peter Mac approached AMES about the possibility of inviting some Afghan refugee clients staying at the Atira to use the shed. A number of our clients and children attended the launch and a Christmas party and they had a wonderful time – which included having the kids help with decorating the Christmas tree," she said.

As a space used to unwind and relax, shed coordinator John Howarth said the opportunity to open their doors to Afghan refugees living in the same location had received good responses so far.

"Although there is an obvious language barrier, we have had lots of the Afghans, especially the boys, showing great interest," Mr Howarth said.

"We have built a workbench and the kids have been

involved. They are keen to make wooden models of four-wheel-drive vehicles."

Open to anyone in the facility expressing interest, the shed has found favour with one 11-year-old Afghan child who not only "loves" visiting the shed to help out but also has high hopes to "make a model of a Toyota Land Cruiser."

In addition to the work done at the Peter Mac Men's Shed, AMES is also partnering with Life Saving Victoria and the Melbourne City Baths after seeing the benefits of teaching new arrivals how to be safe around unfamiliar waters.

"With summer here and our newly arrived Afghan clients beginning to explore their new environment, it's important that they are aware of the danger beaches and other waterways present," AMES Australia CEO Cath Scarth said.

Alarming, Royal Life Saving's 10-year national study documented 27 per cent of drowning deaths in Australia were people born overseas.

"In Australia the water is everywhere and swimming and enjoying the beach is a very Aussie thing to do. So, we designed the program to give people the basic safety knowledge they need to enjoy the water," Afghan refugee and program coordinator Jalal Ahmadzai said.

"The program includes a water safety presentation, a tour of the pool facility which is more than 160 years old, followed by activities inside the pool for parents and children."

Ensuring the experience is a "fun and entertaining" process for all involved, the program takes culture into consideration and has incorporated female-only sessions with female lifeguards and instructors closely monitoring.

One-hundred Afghans have already signed up for sessions at the city baths, with half of the attendees being children, and swimming programs and water safety lessons are currently offered one day a week •

For more information: ames.net.au

The Ballarat Sub-Branch of the Vietnam Veterans Association has found a new home at the Ballarat East Community Men's Shed.

When the Ballarat Sub- Branch of the Vietnam Vets were looking for a new place to meet, It seemed like a great fit with The Ballarat East Community Men's Shed (BECS). Aside from having large woodwork and engineering buildings, BECS has extensive recreation and meeting spaces and, in recent years, BECS has opened up its facilities to the broader community, making the spaces available to other community groups and clubs. The facilities were already being utilised by the Ballarat Soup Bus, a four wheel drive club, vintage car club, and - on occasions - VMSA and AMSA to hold their meetings.



The VVAA group offers welfare, support and advocacy services, and a sense of community to Ballarat's Vietnam Veterans. They now use BECS' facilities as a social space and hold fortnightly barbecues. The lunchtime sausage sizzles are held every second Wednesday, welcoming Vietnam service people, and younger veterans from Somalia to Afghanistan into the fold.

The Men's Shed movement and VVAA have similar objectives supporting men suffering from loss, isolation and loneliness, but events like the BBQs help because they can talk to like-minded people and have fun. There's a synergy between the VVAA and BECS, working with men, the same age demographic, and some people who have experienced a loss in their life.

BECS' committee voted unanimously to share their space with VVAA Ballarat. The committee saw the partnership as a "win-win," where the men can continue to "talk shoulder-to-shoulder" with others like them.

The Vets see that the collaboration has a lot of potential. It allows them to learn from the Men's Shed group and they have skills of value to BECS. The local VVAA committee has members in common with BECS and they have plans to contribute to the facility. Their members are 70-plus. so the Vets applied for and received a grant to replace broken concrete paths to make the site more accessible for people of all abilities. Other improvements planned include a shade sail, landscaping and putting in fixed seating.

BECS looks forward to a long and happy association with the VVAA.

Announcement by Senator Sarah Henderson of the grant to VVAA for concrete works at BECS. From Right to Left: VVAA Secretary Gordon Hunt, VVAA President Eric Duggan, Senator Sarah Henderson, BECS past President Ron Lancaster, BECS Committee member Denis Costigan.

Photo courtesy of the Ballarat Courier.

How to get started with your own computer



Got a computer? If not this special series of topics could help you get started and begin to learn how to use it.

Refurbished Laptops Delivered to Victorian Communities

21 March 2022

The Andrews Labor Government will deliver refurbished laptops to Victorian Learn Locals as part of a pilot program that reduces e-waste and will build up digital literacy and increase online access in communities across the state.

The Labor Government's program will allow learners across the state to develop stronger digital literacy skills – with Learn Locals making the laptops available onsite as well as lending them to community members.

An initial 50 computers have been delivered across regional Victoria with a total of 1,000 expected to be rolled-out this year to up to 200 Learn Locals.

The computers have been repurposed from the Department of Education and Training and have been securely wiped, tested and have Microsoft Windows 10.

The program will help Learn Locals overcome the financial barriers associated with purchasing the laptops, collectively valued at about \$300,000.

See the full story here: <https://www.vmsa.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/220321-Refurbished-Laptops-Delivered-To-Victorian-Communities.pdf>

Learn Local

Many Sheddars are interested in learning new skills, particularly digital literacy so that laptops, computers, smart phones iPads and Tablets are not seen as foreign objects to fear or requiring skills in some form of black art to operate. Learn Local providers run courses in digital literacy and would be willing to help the local shed and shedders learn these skills.

How can Learn Local providers help you?

Learn Local providers can help you get the skills you need for study, work and life. They offer a range of training programs that can help you return to study, improve your digital, reading, writing and maths skills, gain a qualification, get a job, change careers, or learn something new.

With over 250 Learn Local providers across Victoria, you can access training in your community, close to where you live or work.

Learn Local providers are not-for-profit community organisations. They are registered and funded by the Victorian Government, via the Adult, Community and Further Education (ACFE) Board, to deliver pre-accredited training and programs.

Learn Local providers are friendly and welcoming, with highly capable and professional trainers who are focused on helping you achieve your goals. They can help you to build the confidence to get a job or go on to further education, whether at a TAFE or other training provider.

Low-Cost Computers

Before setting out on a digital literacy course, it would be wise to have a computer to practice on when you get home. The cost of new computers keeps coming down with special discount deals being offered by the major retailers.

But there are alternatives? There are several organisations that offer fully wiped and refurbished computers with a warranty.

Here is one such organisation:

WorkVentures, suggested by Centrelink. Here is what they say on their website:

For over 40 years, WorkVentures has been committed to empowering individuals and creating inclusive vibrant communities.

Today we are Australia's leading IT social enterprise providing sustainable technology solutions, influencing digital inclusion in the community and igniting the potential in young people with meaningful skills, training and jobs.

Here is the link to their website:

<https://shop.workventures.com.au/>

Dell does offer refurbished and overstocked computers direct to public at their outlet website at: <https://www.dell.com/en-au/outlet>

Cannot afford a computer?

If you are on a Centrelink or Veterans pension, you can get a short-term loan (advance) that can be used to buy a computer and then make regular payments automatically taken out of your pension. WorkVentures can help with this option. This may suit some Sheddars to get them into a computer of their own.

OK, What can I do with that Computer – get connected!

Now that you have got that computer, let's get the most out of it. The Australian Government Website "Be Connected" is a great place to start. It has easy to follow guides on how to get started, heaps of subjects on all the skills to help you go from basic skills to handling the more common day-to-day uses for your computer. Check it out here:

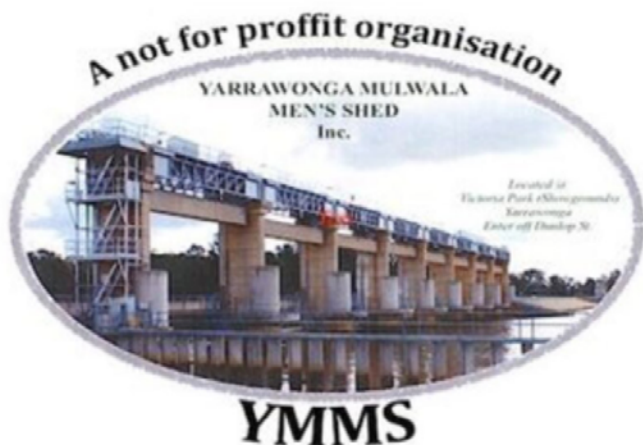
<https://beconnected.esafety.gov.au/>

Editor's note: Was this information useful?

Sheds in the News

Riverine  **Herald**

Men's Shed to get solar



The Yarrawonga Mulwala Mens Shed will receive \$5,339 for solar installation as part of the Community Climate Change and Energy Action program.

The program includes \$1.3 million in funding to deliver projects that will reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 1,695 tonnes annually, while slashing energy bills.

Member for Northern Victoria, Mark Gepp MP said organisations can apply for up to \$50,000 through the Community Climate Change and Energy Action program to upgrade heating and cooling, install shading, insulation, double glazing, lighting and renewable energy installations like roof-top solar panels and battery storage.

The program helps organisations reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve energy efficiency,

A further \$1.8 million in grants is available in the next round of funding which has already opened.

For more information and to apply, visit: www.sustainability.vic.gov.au/grants.

Courtesy of Riverine Herald, March 23 2022

Euroa cinema's chairs get a sequel



Recycle, re-purpose: Violet Town St Dunstan's Hall Film Society secretary Rebecca Cole and Hank Bakker at Violet Town's Men's Shed where old chairs from Euroa's cinema are being remodelled for the hall.

Smaller community theatres are benefiting from Euroa Community Cinema's makeover.

Violet Town St Dunstan's Hall Film Society and Albury-Wodonga Theatre Company are repurposing Euroa cinema's middle to back rows of seating, which were installed second hand in 2004.

While the cinema's historic seating (original balcony chairs) will stay in the front rows, the subsequent rows of cloth chairs will be upgraded to modern theatre seating within an accessible and inclusive new floorplan for 260 movie-goers.

Strathbogie Shire Mayor Laura Binks said 145 cloth chairs with external cupholders would soon be replaced by 158 wider chairs with built-in cupholders, and five dedicated wheelchair spaces within some rows of seating.

"We advertised for expressions of interest from community groups in December (2021) and are delighted the Violet Town and Albury-Wodonga film and theatre groups wanted to repurpose the old chairs in their arts spaces," she said.

"While enhancing the cinema experience in Euroa, rehousing the old chairs is a great outcome for cultural assets in three communities – and saved unnecessary waste to landfill."

The Euroa Community Cinema renovation is funded by a \$130,000 cultural and infrastructure grant from the Victorian Government.

The makeover started in January with re-sanding and polishing floorboards, and will include repainted walls, steam-cleaned drapes, in addition to spacious new seating and improved accessibility.

"Previously wheelchairs could only be parked beside a row of seating, but the new floor plan has dedicated wheelchair spaces within some rows," Cr Binks said.

"There will also be two rows of chairs with lift-up arm rests for people who would like more room.

With the arrival of Euroa cinema's new seating delayed by the COVID-19 pandemic, a reopening date has not yet been confirmed.

Violet Town St Dunstan's Hall Film Society secretary Rebecca Cole said two 11-chair rows of cloth seating from Euroa Community Cinema were being reconfigured to replace the group's plastic outdoor seats.

"Our 'gold-class' chairs are six house recliners and a couple of couches, and the Euroa cinema seats will complement them well – becoming our 'silver-class' seating," Ms Cole said.

Strathbogie Shire Council delivered two 11-chair rows removed from the Euroa cinema to the Violet Town Men's Shed in late January for remodelling.

"We are grateful to Strathbogie Shire Council for the donation and delivery, and we're hoping to have them ready for our next film night on March 18.

"We are always looking for new members, so our new chairs may also attract more people to come along."

Albury-Theatre Wodonga Theatre Company president Joseph Thomsen said 13 rows (123 chairs) of Euroa cinema's old seating had transformed the group's modest theatre space in south Albury.

"It has changed the whole look and helped the area feel like a theatre space," he said.

Calling all men who love to play with trains



John Brandt (front) and David McRobie at Gosford City Model Railway Club

They might be men who love to play with trains at heart, but the members of Gosford City Model Railway Club also bring a lot of skills to the table.

With a clubhouse at Kincumber, the club holds regular sessions on specific days, but is accessible at other times to members – and is always looking to swell its ranks.

John Brandt is one of the original members.

“It all started in the early ‘80s, with two or three model train enthusiasts meeting at a coffee shop and it grew from there,” Brandt said.

“We moved on to a sort of round robin of meetings at members’ homes and then into a variety of venues before leasing land from the

Uniting Church at Kincumber and building our own base with the aid of some State Government grants.”

Brandt’s interest began at an early age.

“I remember hauling a wooden locomotive around when I was about three and I’ve had a fascination with trains ever since,” he said.

Fellow member David McRobie remembers riding in the cabin of a steam train at the age of nine with his uncle, who was a driver.

“That was the beginning of a lifelong love of trains,” he said.

The Kincumber base is a feast for the eyes, with railway memorabilia and completed beautifully crafted railway tracks on a HO scale of 1-84.

Under construction in another part of the building is a larger course to a N scale of 1-160, featuring townships, bridges, and scenic vistas.

All of the tracks and surrounds are lovingly created by members of the group.

“We have people here with a variety of skills - from timber and artistry to electronics,” Brandt said.

His personal speciality is hand crafting buildings working from photographs.

“We have members who have worked in various professions, including some who actually worked on the railways so there is a variety of skills available,” he said.

A registered Men’s Shed, the club officially meets every Monday and Wednesday from 9am, where members concentrate on crafting the railway tracks and their surrounds.

On Thursday nights from 7pm there is an emphasis on artistry and on Friday nights, it’s time to simply play with the trains.

With members ranging in age from their 30s to 80 plus, the club is also open seven days a week for those who want to make use of it.

“We try to cater for all our members, including those who still work,” Brandt said.

“But the club is about a lot more than just building the trains and tracks- it’s about camaraderie and mutual support.”

With a membership of around 34, the club is always keen to welcome newcomers.

See the Gosford City Model Railway Club Facebook page for details.



Mens Shed's long-awaited opening



Paul Morris, Bruce MP Julian Hill, Doug Rowley, Casey chair of administrators Noeline Duff, Trevor Ratcliffe, Roger Bartlett and Narre Warren North MP Luke Donnellan.

The 58 members of the Endeavour Hills Men's Shed at last formally opened its 'new' headquarters last week.

The members moved into their impressively sized \$1.2 million shed in Syd Pargeter Reserve just on 12 months ago, but the opening ceremony had been Covid-delayed.

In short time however, the shed has been a hive of activity – with a woodwork and metalwork workshop, sausage sizzles, a ukulele and guitar group and a camera club.

Secretary Paul Morris says there's often enquiries from "wives and girlfriends" as much as men.

"They say I wish you could get my dad or husband out of the house because he's a bit of a nuisance".

"And the men come down and fall in love with the place."

The aim of the Men's Shed is to improve men's health, Mr Morris says.

"Everyone is smiling here – that's what it's all about."

Their new workshop is abuzz most days, with members working on special projects – often in response to public requests.

Like outdoor furniture for Montague's orchards in Lysterfield and for Parks Victoria in Cardinia Reservoir, raised garden beds for a disabled pensioner, and children's toys.

At the official opening were Casey chair of

administrators Noelene Duff, Narre Warren North MP Luke Donnellan, and Bruce MP Julian Hill.

Ms Duff said that the new site would allow the members to continue the great work for the community and to expand their activities.

"Since 2017, the Endeavour Hills Men's Shed has provided a place where people can come together to share their skills, find a creative outlet, and make those invaluable social connections.

"At a time when social isolation is increasing in the community, groups like this that provide purpose and a sense of belonging for people are so valuable".

"While the workshop is a fantastic space for the Men's Shed, the rest of this building has delivered a new hireable space that will be well used by other members of the community for a range of activities."

The new shed is a far cry from the group's cramped first home at Essex Drive Community Centre, which was shared with other users.

Before each get-together, the men had to roll in a mobile storage unit of tools and shuffle around the furniture to create a workshop.

City of Casey contributed \$1.1 million to the shed, the State Government \$80,000 and the Men's Shed \$40,000.

The Endeavour Hills Men's Shed is aiming for 100 members. It's open from Tuesday-Saturday 10am-3pm with a Tuesday meeting and sausage-sizzle lunch. To join, call 0418 313 395.



Endeavour Hills Mens Shed ukulele players and guitarists perform for the opening on 1 March.



Members on the tools in the \$1.2 million facility.



A ukulele and guitar performance during the opening.

By Cam Lucadou-Wells

Trentham's shed opens



Left to right: Stephen Adams, Peter Gibbs, Tony Johnston (president), Joseph Bonnici and Charles Sherlock were thrilled to finally officially open the Trentham Men's Shed after two years of delays because of COVID-19. Photo: Sandy Scheltema

Members of Trentham's Cool Country Men's Shed are pleased to be officially opening their wonderful new community facility after two years of delay due to COVID-19 restrictions.

"I would like to see this shed alive with men being together sharing skills, knowledge, life stories and companionship," said President Tony Johnston.

"It's not just about wood or metalworking skills, it's about men's health, which can be physical or mental.

"Some men have a sense of loneliness; it's the isolation that can occur after retirement or the loss of a life partner.

"Or they might have moved to Trentham and surrounding districts and lost their close social networks, there's also the fear of COVID-19.

"If we can improve men's health, the whole community benefits."

Mr Johnston said shed members were fortunate to receive permission from the Dja Dja Wurrung Corporation and DELWP (Department of Environment, Land, Water, and Planning) to use the 1.2 hectares of land.

"Initially we were given \$6000 from the Hairy Arch Art Show (part of our local art community), then we received \$60,000 from the state government, our local Bendigo Bank invested \$42,500," he said.

"\$20,000 came from the federal government, \$15,000 from the Trentham Lions Club, as well as \$15,000 from the Australian Lions Foundation.

"We've also received many donations from our generous community."

The idea for a Men's Shed in Trentham has been a long time in the making, with initial discussions in the community in 2006. But it wasn't until 2016 that a committee was formed and in 2018 project funding began to come through and works could begin.

The shed has many donated tools, including a sliding table saw, a router table, wood and metal lathes, some welding equipment, and a wood heater. It has a well-equipped lounge, a functional kitchen, and was built with fully accessible facilities.

Mr Johnston said that if community groups had a project they wanted, they could submit a Project Request Form for consideration by the Men's Shed Committee.

Mr Johnston's original idea to make his dream of a men's shed a reality came from his hope to reduce the suicide risk in the community. "There's been several suicides in the last few years that have affected our community," he said.

"I hope that bringing men together in this way can help in some way to prevent further tragedies."

With COVID-19 restrictions and lockdowns over the last two years causing social isolation, especially among the elderly, the opening of Trentham's Cool Country Men's Shed will help local men come together and enjoy the facilities and companionship at the Shed.

Stories from the Sheds

New Endeavour Hills Men's Shed opens

The Endeavour Hills Men's Shed officially opened their new workshop in early March, which also incorporates a new community space available for use by the broader Casey community.

The new \$1.2 million community facility was made possible through a collaboration between the City of Casey, the Victorian Government and the Endeavour Hills Men's Shed, with Council contributing \$1,098,911, the Victorian Government \$80,000 and the Men's Shed \$40,000.



Funding boost for Hurstbridge Men's Shed

The Hurstbridge Men's Shed is set to get a permanent home of its own with the Victorian Government and Nillumbik Shire Council to jointly fund the construction of a new workshop and meeting place.

Yan Yean MP Danielle Green this week announced that Nillumbik Shire Council would receive a \$364,000 grant through the Victorian Government's Growing Suburbs Fund to complete the project. Council will contribute \$300,000.

Mayor Frances Eyre and Bunjil Ward Councillor Karen Egan met with Danielle Green, Federal Member for McEwen Rob Mitchell, and members of the Hurstbridge Men's Shed on site at their latest project, the Edible Hub garden at the Hurstbridge Community Hub, to discuss the plans.

Mr Mitchell, who is co-chair of Federal Parliament's Friends of Men's Shed group also presented the Men's Shed members with a cheque for \$3100 to help fund a barbecue and tandem trailer.

The new Men's Shed will be built at 4 Hurstbridge-Arthurs Creek Road, near Araluen, Allwood House and the Hurstbridge Tennis Courts. Preliminary designs have been completed and construction is expected to start in early 2023.

Cr Eyre thanked Danielle Green and the Victorian Government for their support of the project, which will include a workshop, meeting area, kitchen and amenities, storage, covered outdoor area and parking.

She said it was a project that was particularly close to her heart because she had worked with the Hurstbridge Men's Shed and Men's Shed groups across Nillumbik in her previous role as a Community Development Officer with the Shire.

"First established in 2005, the Men's Shed is a vital part of the Hurstbridge community. Not only does the group provide benefits to the members themselves including friendship, social connection and support, but to the wider community through their local projects and initiatives," Cr Eyre said.

Cr Egan said this was exciting news for Hurstbridge and the group was in desperate need of a permanent home.



"The group has had a very transient existence, moving from place to place to find space for their growing membership. They currently meet in small storage room at the Hurstbridge Hub," Cr Egan said.

"We're so pleased that the men who do so much for this town and community will now have a permanent place to call home and continue their great work."

Hurstbridge Men's Shed president Darryll James said the group was excited they could now move forward with the shed's construction and thanked the Victorian Government and Council for their support of the project.

"A thriving Men's Shed is a real asset to any community, and we hope to be up and running in our new facility soon," he said.

"Ongoing, the Men's Shed would welcome interest from men prepared to be a part of this exciting project. Many local men will be excited to be able to finally have a functional and dedicated Men's Shed."

Myrtleford Men's Shed Goes to Market

The Myrtleford Men's Shed made a good showing at the local market with a diverse range of products to sell. Well done fellas.

Akoonah Park Men's Shed

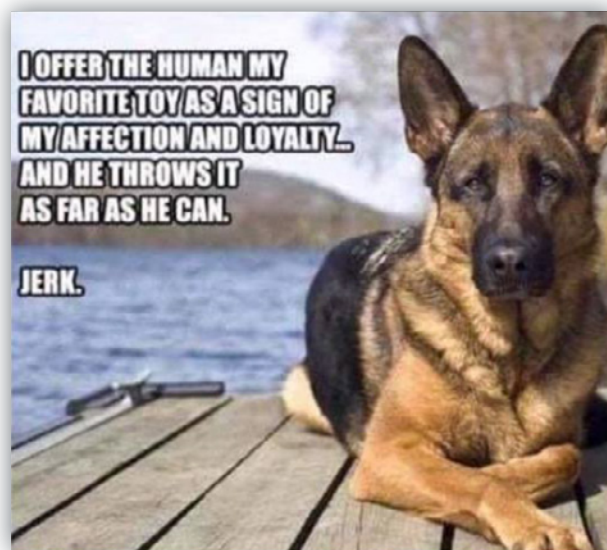
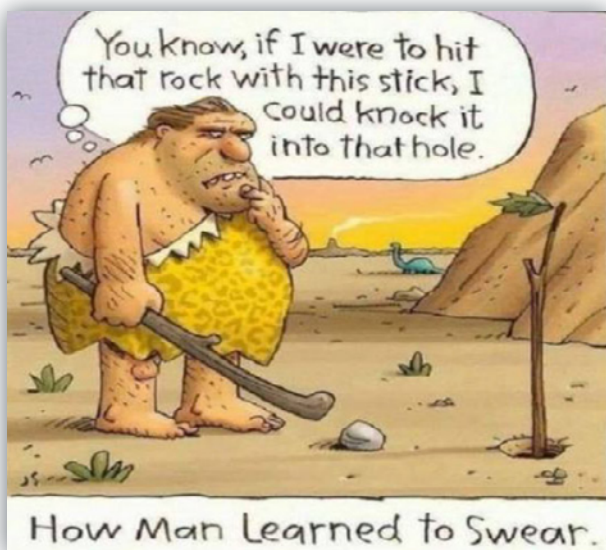
<https://www.vmsa.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Akoonah-Park-March-2022.pdf>

Midland Men's Shed

<https://www.vmsa.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Midland-Mens-Shed-News-124.pdf>



Just for Laughs



Do you know how weird it is being the same age as old people?



Light hearted relief

Modern Day Yuppie Blues

Tom Rush - The Remember Song
(Modern Day Yuppie Blues)

(click the link)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U57eAe2okAM>



Bob Hawke – The Canoe Joke in the Andes

Former PM Bob Hawke shares a joke with 1983 America's Cup winning skipper John Bertrand and syndicate owner Alan Bond on the 30th anniversary of Australia II's historic victory (click the link)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YMa0j5A3nWw>



Billy Connolly – Signal Man Joke

An oldie but goodie from Billy Connolly (click the link)

<https://youtu.be/suHlvvMLWUw>



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Our CEO and members of the Board are always willing to help our member sheds.
Do not hesitate to contact us.

**Don't forget these important organisations that are there to help in these difficult times.
REMEMBER TO CALL A MATE.**

| | | | |
|---|-----------------------|---|---------------------|
| Beyond Blue | 1300 224 636 | Grief Line - 12-3pm 7 days: | 03 9935 7400 |
| Lifeline | 131 114 | Pain Management Line | 1300 340 357 |
| MensLine | 1300 789 978 | Sane Australia | 1800 18 7263 |
| Suicide Call Back Service Veterans Line | 1300 659 467 | Mind Australia Carer Helpline | 1300 554 660 |
| Veterans Line | 1800 011 046 | Men's Referral Service for help to avoid domestic violence: | 1300 766 491 |
| Black Dog Institute | (02) 9382 4530 | | |

Head to Health <https://www.headtohealth.gov.au>
Fantastic portfolio of resources

The Victorian Men's Shed Association is funded by the Victorian Government.

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