



Katoomba Men's Shed

Building Better Blokes

Noise from the Shed

No. 11 August 2016

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Computer upgrade

Peter Kinhead, Vice President

Our Shed has been successful in gaining a grant from the Australian Government to improve our computer equipment. The grant is from the 'Strengthening Communities' program and is to

upgrade the Shed's Broadband for Seniors (BFS) Kiosk.

Credit for obtaining the grant must go to BFS coordinator, Ted Burke, ably assisted by head BFS tutor Stephen Crisdale.

The grant funding is tied specifically to computer hardware. The Management Committee has

**Artists impression of the reorganised computer area, with spaces for three new computers.
Illustration by Stephen Crisdale.**



approved an ambitious upgrade program and will also contribute some Shed funds to ensure that we make the most of the government funds.

In summary, the developments will include:

- ☑ retaining existing computers and upgrading where feasible
- ☑ purchasing 3 new computers
- ☑ purchasing 2 tablet devices
- ☑ purchasing a data projector and screen
- ☑ adding a computer interface to the television
- ☑ installing an uninterruptible power supply (UPS) and security locks to protect the computers from lightning strikes, power interruptions and theft.

The computer area will be reorganised and improved to accommodate a total of 8 computer work areas.

The new facilities will allow an improved computer program at the Shed with better facilities for group learning sessions. We also hope the new facilities will allow Shed members to participate in online tutorial sessions broadcast in real time by the national BFS organisation.

The purchase of tablet devices will allow members to explore tablets as an alternative option for accessing the internet and other content.

The facilities will also be of benefit to other Shed activities, allowing the use of video or Powerpoint presentations to support talks or courses.

Well done Ted, Stephen, David and Chris, who together with myself made up the subcommittee that put the implementation plan together.

You are not sick, you are thirsty

Stafford Lowe

Have you ever heard the saying 'You are not sick, you are thirsty'?

This is the introduction to the book *Your Body's Many Cries For Water* by the late F. Batmanghelidj M.D.

When you think about it your body is about 75% water. It stands to reason therefore that as that water is used up through excretions, perspiration, breath vapour etc it needs to be replenished. The quickest way to replenish it is to drink sufficient water to replace that which is lost.

Pure water quickly enters the cells while polluted water needs to pass through the kidneys before being accepted by your body. Polluted water is recognised by your body as including tea, coffee, beer, sweetened drinks, even fruit juice.

This is not to say that you cannot consume such fluids but you should recognise that they are much slower at reaching the needed replenishment in the cells than pure water. Not only that, but most drinks other than water contain toxins and dehydrating agents to a varying degree, so your body must spend considerable energy in removing them and the need for water still persists.

It has been shown that if you have reached the point of thirst where your mouth feels dry then you are already dehydrated. Modern medicine tends to then treat this symptom with medication rather than resorting to the most simple remedy of all – a glass of water. Other common symptoms of dehydration include heartburn, rheumatic pain, back pain, heart or anginal pain, headaches and leg pain on walking. It is suggested that before taking the usual analgesic remedies a healthy slug of pure water should be tried. You will be surprised at the almost instant relief obtained.

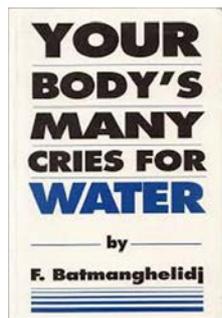
Children in particular are not being educated to drink water so they become dependent on soda drinks and juices. It is not generally possible to drink manufactured beverages as a replacement for the water needs of the body. Additionally the children do not accept the habit of drinking pure water when the soda or fruit juices are not available. The result is usually dehydration which will be manifested in behavioural problems, pain and sickness.

Like most of you I took the easy way out for many years when I took aspirins or other analgesics when I had a headache or even a simple hangover in my younger years. In fact for many years we didn't have a pain killer in the house. Recovery from surgery has been the only time either my



wife or I have taken a pain killer in the last 10 years.

This is a simplistic overview of the needs for water that were discovered by Dr. Batmanghelidj. An Iranian who was fortunate enough to be educated in Scotland where he also became the house doctor in his own medical school. He later returned to Iran to build and practise medicine in his family charity medical centre. However, after the start of the revolution in 1979 the revolutionary government incarcerated him along with many other educated leaders and were to prepare him for execution. The guards of the Evin prison, however, discovered his usefulness as a doctor for other prisoners and continuously delayed his execution. It was here that he discovered because of a lack of medications that the only treatment he had for many illnesses, starting with treating a peptic ulcer, was water. The pain of his patient disappeared within eight minutes. Whilst in prison until 1982 he continued his research and treatment of many diseases, including stress related illness, with just water. This resulted in the publication of his book in 1992.



Dr. Batmanghelidj's book.

As you age the need for water does not decrease. Many of us tend to drink less water especially at night before going to bed to lessen the need to get up during the night to urinate. This is a mistake.

Accept the need to get up and just get on with it. Your good health will depend upon it.

Activity program

Peter Kinkead, Vice President

When the last newsletter went out, the Activity program was just starting. Some of the activities are proving very popular. In this edition, we can provide some more detail on the currently available activities.

For the latest information on activities and times see the Shed website at kms.org.au/activity or

check out the notice boards that have been attached to the doors of the lunch room.

Basic electronics

The introductory course (held on Fridays) was very popular activity and covered a range of basic concepts and principles. The activity has now progressed to individuals working on their own projects. The suggestion at the end of the course was to start with a kit project and use the Shed's electronic test bench if needed. Advice is always available from the electronics experts, John, Kevin and David.

Electronics is now focussed on Wednesdays and Thursdays when Kevin and John are at the Shed.

The basic electronics course can be re-run if there are sufficient members interested. If you would like to see it run, talk to one of the experts.

Woodwork group

A new woodworking activity will start on Wednesday 17 August at 10.00 am. This will not be a formal course as such, rather a series of shared projects that will both introduce woodworking and explore tools and techniques. We plan to start a new project on the first Wednesday each month, and woodturning projects will be interspersed. The first few projects planned are:

- Cutting boards (the basic properties and shaping of wood)
- Wooden spoons (warning – can be addictive!)
- Basic woodturning
- Wooden toys (in time for Christmas)
- Wooden pens on the lathe (another Christmas gift possibility)
- Small coffee table
- Jewellery box

The woodworking group will meet each Wednesday between 10 and 12. Contact Bruce at the Shed on Wednesday mornings for more information.

Leatherwork

Leatherwork is back on the activity program under the expert guidance of Mick. Mick will help you get started in leatherwork and lead you through your first few projects. A leather belt is a good first project, but Mick can also show you how to make a phone wallet, bag or sandals.

Tuesday is the best day for leatherwork, and Mick is usually in attendance between 10 and 12.

Cards

For those interested in a range of card games including bridge, euchre, uno, poker and canasta, the card group is purely for fun. Gambling is not permitted on Shed premises, so members sometimes play for matchsticks or plastic tokens.

The card players meet on Tuesday mornings.

Computer club

The Katoomba Men's Shed Computer Club is a general interest group of Shed members who have an interest in computers. Activities range from individual help for people new to computers and more complex information-sharing and problem solving for experienced computer users.

The Shed is a kiosk for the Australian Government Broadband for Seniors (BFS) program and members can access the BFS training program and use the kiosk's computers to access the Internet. A wireless network is available for men bringing their own computers. Just ask the coordinator for access details.

The Computer Club operates at the Shed on Fridays, but the computers are available every day that the Shed is open.

Following a generous grant from the Australian Government, the computer facilities are set for a substantial upgrade. See the separate article in this newsletter.

For information on the Computer group, talk to David Bowskill who is usually at the Shed on Fridays. For information on Broadband for Seniors, contact Ted, also at the Shed on Friday mornings.

Chess group

The Chess Club is for men interested in learning and playing chess. Participants are needed to make this Club work, but there are several active members already playing live and computer games of chess. Contact Graeme who is usually at the Shed on Tuesdays.

Bikes and toys

The Shed has a small subcontract to do some assembly work for Big W in Katoomba. We assemble bikes and some display versions of flatpack toys and sports equipment. The work generates a small but worthwhile source of funds for the Shed, which is used to develop Shed facilities and programs.

The work is usually done on Wednesdays and Thursdays, but there is not always work to be done. It's not production line stuff but there is often sufficient work to keep 2 or 3 shedders

occupied for most of the morning. See Robbert at the Shed on Wednesdays or Thursdays if you would like to help.

The house that Jack built

David White

For an accountant, my old man Jack White wasn't a bad builder.

He had a dream – a holiday house for his family, a place for his wife and 4 kids to enjoy. He couldn't afford to just buy one, so he had a plan – build one. We were on holidays in a caravan park in Sussex Inlet in early 1966 when he and mum found a block of land fronting a little canal, for sale for £500. They snapped it up.

Dad had tucked away one of the house plans they used to publish in the Sunday paper, designed for 'any man with a basic knowledge of tools'. It became the blueprint for his project.

He had a full-time, pretty demanding job and a family. His solution to building a house in a place 3 hours drive away in those days was to commandeer a large part of our chook yard. There he built some dummy piers which replicated the ones he had built on the block, and got the job under way.



The weekend that my Dad, Jack White, built at Sussex Inlet.

Step 1 – He bought, at a pretty good price, a stack of redundant timber that had been used in some temporary buildings at his workplace, plus a big old bench saw the builders had been using there. The 12x2 oregon beams were then laboriously ripped down with the saw into 4x2s and 3x2s. He also got his secret weapon for the job – a box of double-headed formwork nails.

Step 2 – He put down hardwood bearers and joists on the dummy piers, and built the wall frames. Various sections were assembled with the formwork nails so they could be pulled apart. The frames were stacked aside.

Step 3 – The floor joists were replaced with ceiling joists and he built the hip roof on them. He had a little cardboard contraption called a ‘Raftograph’ which apparently helped calculate the angles for the various end cuts and birdsmouth cut-outs for the rafters. Banged them together with the formwork nails and then pulled the whole thing apart.

Step 4 – The whole building, in its component parts, was loaded onto a semi and taken down the coast. My brother and I were interested enough in the process by then to help reconstruct it. The frame was given an aluminium sheet roof and fibro walls (yes, the hazardous fibro) because they were materials an accountant/builder and his 2 young apprentices could handle.



Dad’s secret weapon! Double-headed formwork nails.

We had our first holiday in our little dream home in 1970 – it didn’t seem an issue at all that there were 4 kids stacked in 2 double bunks in one of the 2 bedrooms.

That house has been the favourite destination for 4 generations now – dad would be delighted to see how much fun his great-grandchildren have there. Without his thrift, ingenuity and capability we wouldn’t have this precious family asset. It’s my project now – restoring it to a level of comfort and convenience that won’t disrespect its handbuilt heritage and mid-century modern charm. Thanks dad.

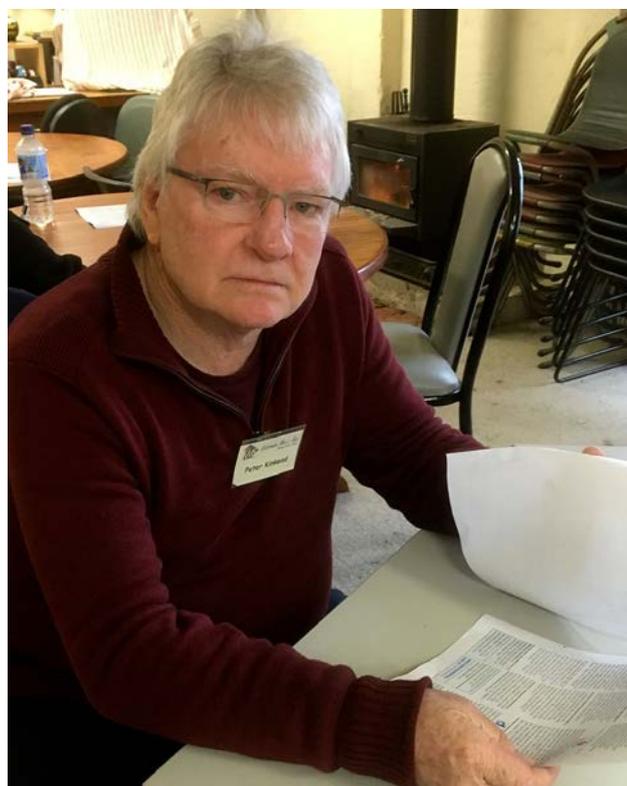
Member profile: Peter Kinhead

I grew up in what was then the outer western suburbs of Sydney around the area known as Belmore/ Strathfield / Bankstown and as progress happens, I can hardly recognize most of the area now. For those of you who know of the area it was near the railway’s ‘Enfield Marshalling Yards’ and those steam trains of that era were the bane of my mother on washing day as she had to wipe the soot off the clothes line before hanging out the washing.

Around that time I remember my Dad replacing the long line washing line with a new Hills Hoist and it did not take too long before some mates and I had one of the arms bent by using it as an impromptu swing. There were a few sore bums around the hood that night.

As money and especially credit was very tight just after the war my Dad did whatever maintenance he could around the home and even branched out into doing an extension/renovation at the back of the house. He worked on the railways and one of the gardeners at his work was a European refugee from the war and a bricklayer by trade. Dad hired Michael to do the brickwork and at sunset one Saturday Michael asked in his broken Russian/English for 100. Dad was furious thinking he was asking for 100 pounds until he realized Michael was asking for a 100-watt light so he could continue working into the night.

There wasn’t too much emphasis on career options in my high school years (St Patrick’s College Strathfield) but I had no problem getting a job. I applied to all the usual banks and insurance companies for clerical work and snagged a fill-in job with the water board as a labourer until one of the more formal applications came good. I learnt very quickly how to pace myself in the summer heat of Sydney’s western suburbs while on the end of a pick or shovel.



It took a couple of months but I graduated from the pick and shovel to becoming a bank teller and then along came National Service. I spent the next two years up and down the east coast of Australia at various army camps as an infantry soldier and to this day I don't know how, but I did not go to Vietnam. The more I hear about those poor buggers who went over there, the more grateful I am that I did not.

My early adulthood after National Service and back with the bank was spent in the lower Blue Mountains and I ended up joining the local volunteer bush fire brigade. In the time I was there I experienced just about every type and location of bush fire and that whetted my appetite to become more involved.

I managed to get a job as the Fire Control Officer for the Singleton area of the Hunter Valley and spent the best part of the next 20 years learning how to manage people and fires.

The managing of volunteer fire fighters was easy for me as I came from that background but the managing/predicting of fires was altogether different. Learning about local weather patterns, the science of fire behaviour, the paramount safety precautions that needed to be observed and all of this before the proliferation of computer and phone technology. Gut feel was a good guide but there was always the realization that gut feel did not always hold up in a Coroner's court if something went wrong.

The two greatest challenges I had in that time were the local politicians and a 40,000 Ha fire in the Wollemi National Park. I think the fire was my preference because it was more predictable.

After the best part of 35 years fighting fires both as a firefighter and a manager I was promoted to the big house and began teaching what I had been doing for so long. This teaching gig slowly morphed into the formal promotion of statewide mechanical / burning hazard reduction works programs and seeking state funding to assist in the implementation of those hazard reduction works as well as seeking funding for aerial support.

I retired several years ago and recently joined the Shed to have another 'thing' to do to keep myself busy. Several years ago I had a heart stress test at Dr England's office and was warned that even though my heart and its associated bits were in good order, I needed to make sure I was mentally occupied as much as possible. This is a good reflection on the Shed and its members, not a criticism, as I find a variety of 'things' to do, both at the Shed and from home.

I have currently put my hand up to help out as Vice President and the Activities Coordinator. I do have talents in those areas but I have very little in the way of a skill set I can offer to the workshop projects apart from lending a hand or putting in some muscle where and when it is needed.

Whilst I have very little in the way of a skill set that can be applied in the workshop I am so fascinated by looking at and talking to people about their projects.

Maybe this fascination is another attraction of the Shed, to watch and talk to people who can do things that are way beyond my capabilities.

Is it another "thing" or is it good therapy?

The star project!

The workshop team has taken on several paying projects over the last month. But the star of the projects has to be the manufacture of 100 steel stars for the Leura Village Association.



A bundle of 20 completed stars. Each star is bent to shape on Joe's jig, then the ends are welded together.

The stars will be decorated and used for street decoration.

Joe and Kevin have done most of the work, with Joe taking the lead role. Joe was in his element devising and constructing a special jig for the bending of the steel into the star shape.

While many of the stars are made from a single piece of steel, some have to be fabricated from offcuts to reduce wastage.

At the time of writing, one more welding session was needed to complete the final batch. The clients have already taken delivery of the first 40

stars and are reportedly delighted with the results.

The star-making project is one of the larger ad-hoc jobs undertaken by the workshop team. Together these projects make a worthwhile contribution to the Shed finances and the resulting funds go towards new equipment and keeping member fees to a minimum.

NBN update

Bruce Ward

In the February Edition I wrote about the impending connection of the upper mountains to the National Broadband Network (NBN). This is a brief update, just after my own home was connected to the NBN.



My home phone and broadband service provider is Telstra. The first sign that the NBN was available was the arrival of an installation package in the mail. It included a new router/modem, a new cordless telephone and basic but adequate instructions on what to do.

So I set everything up as instructed. All the new equipment worked exactly as expected and after a lot of flashing lights, and updating all our wifi devices, everything returned to exactly as it was before we started. A few days later, we had a message from Telstra to say that the NBN service would be connected by a technician on a given date, but it did not require access to our property.

I am writing this having just returned from holiday, and the installation occurred while we were away!

Good points:

- We had a speed improvement as soon as the NBN infrastructure was turned on, even before we did any connections. Our average of about 5 megabits per second (MBPS) increased to a reliable 8 or 9 MBPS.
- Our broadband plan has not changed – same price, same download limit.
- Our connection speed has increased from an 8 or 9 MBPS to 22 or 23 MBPS. Upload speed increased from less than 1 MBPS to 4.5 MBPS.

- The changeover process was relatively easy with no technical problems.

Bad points:

- The landline telephone works differently and we had to unplug all corded handsets and use the new cordless handset supplied in the upgrade kit. We later discovered you could plug a normal corded phone into the router, as long as the phone was NBN compatible.
- We no longer have a working answering machine and have to rely on Telstra's message bank.
- With the phone now relying on the router to work, we will have no landline at all if the power is off.
- We will have to throw away a router that I purchased only six weeks ago! If only we had known what Telstra had planned!
- Overall, the quality of the information provided was adequate, but not helpful if you wanted to know more than the bare basic instructions.
- In my opinion, the security settings on the router were not at all adequate as supplied.

My advice to anyone else who is a Telstra (Bigpond) customer:

- Be aware that there is a delay between setting up the router and the technician making the NBN connection. (This may be faster if you are switching to Telstra from another provider.)
- You can plug a normal corded telephone into the router if it is NBN compatible. This is in addition to the supplied cordless phone. In our case, we plugged in our previous cordless phone unit, which has an extra handset. This overcame some other problems with placement of handsets. However, our answering machine no longer works.
- Once the new router is plugged in and switched on, you can connect to the router with a computer and change the default settings. This includes the name and password of the wireless network. This would have saved a lot of time for us had we known, as we had to change the wireless network and password on at least 8 devices!
- Even if you don't change the wireless network settings, I would recommend connecting to the router and setting an administration name and password.

- You have a choice not to switch over to the NBN, but about 18 months after the NBN is switched on for your area, the old phone network will be switched off. If you have not switched over to the NBN by then, you won't have **any** landline phone service or internet service!

Requests and suggestions

Bruce Ward, Secretary

Disclaimer: The following notes are from a draft code of conduct that is under preparation. This article does not imply that violent or other improper conduct has occurred at the Shed.

We have a new form to make it easier for members to submit a request or suggestion to the Management Committee. This came out of a discussion with a member who was frustrated that the Committee had not discussed an idea that he had raised with several different Committee members. So we designed a form to collect the full details of a simple request or proposal, and ensures that the Committee is clear about what is expected. It also provides a document trail to ensure that things don't fall between the cracks.

The form is available in the document rack outside the lunch room, or from the website at kms.org.au/forms (or look under the 'members' area of the website).

Feel free to attach any extra detail you think necessary, such as drawings for something to be built. Drop the completed forms in the Secretary's tray in the lunch room and it will be put on the next Committee Meeting agenda.

Dealing with conflict

Our Shed is usually a happy place, but there are occasional disputes or disagreements. In most cases these disagreements arise from a misunderstanding or a personality clash and it is likely that both parties will go away with a very different version of what happened and why. Even people who are eye witnesses are unlikely to know exactly what occurred, or what led up to it.

A few points relevant to conflict and arguments are:

- Always treat others with respect and courtesy.
- Aggressive or violent behaviour is not tolerated in the Shed at any time.
- If you find yourself in conflict with another member, it is expected that you will try to sort out the issue directly with the member concerned. In other words, if you have an argument, go back and talk it over when tempers have settled. A chat over a cuppa will resolve most issues!
- If the direct approach doesn't work or you don't feel you can sort it out directly with the person involved, talk to a member of the Management Committee. They may be able to act as an intermediary, but keep in mind that we are all volunteers and can only be expected to do our best.
- A formal complaint should only be considered if the previous steps have not worked.

About Katoomba Men's Shed

This newsletter is produced by:

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The Shed is a not-for-profit organisation that aims to advance the health and wellbeing of its members by providing a safe and happy environment where skilled and unskilled men can, in the company of other men:

- Pursue hobbies, pastimes and interests
- Learn new skills, practise, and pass on old skills
- Learn about their own and other men's health and well-being
- By their efforts, contribute to their families, their friends, the Shed and their community
- Mentor younger men