



Katoomba Men's Shed

Building Better Blokes

Noise from the Shed

No. 14 August 2017

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What owning and dealing with the Fiat's issues is doing for me as I get older is increasing my awareness of the need for me to have a greater degree of tolerance when dealing with the curve balls that life has a habit of occasionally throwing.

Prior to joining the Shed I had little to do with mental health issues as I worked in an industry that was active and challenging, and apart from peak hour traffic (road rage etc) there were very few issues of that nature that I had to deal with. Yes, there were the occasional upset staff members and traumatised members of the general public (fire victims) and even people writing letters of complaint to the Minister of the day, but these were considered part of the package and we just got on with the job, not realising there may have been more to it.

As you and I get older we need to be more aware of mental health issues and just as importantly we need to be a touch more tolerant of people around us who may be silently struggling with one or more of these issues. To this end David Christie and I visited the Lawson Community Health Centre in July with this very topic in mind and we and a couple of other Sheddors are starting to develop an up-to-date policy / procedure / program (I haven't worked out the correct name for it yet) that hopefully will give all of us at the Shed a better understanding of these issues and how best to deal with them.

The Shed's constitution encourages and promotes the concept of men's health and well-

President's message – tolerance

Peter Kinkead, President

A few years ago I bought my 1977 Fiat with the view of having a 'project' at hand for the spare time I thought I would have in my retirement. The logic was that being a 35-year-old car and unregistered, it would need a bit of TLC to get it registered and back on the road and then even more TLC to keep it on the road. Remember it is an old Fiat, so it's very prone to rust and electrical problems.

Those of you who have had this experience or even just had an old car will understand why at times I question my sanity. Yes it's great when it is in tune and you go for a run when the sun is out and the top down but reality hits home when you consider I live in Katoomba (cold), I have Celtic skin (skin cancers) and I and the Fiat are not always in tune at the same time.

being, however, the general Australian culture does not encourage men to talk about their issues. This makes it difficult for Shedders to talk, particularly if the problem appears to be psychological and not your general 'put a bandaid on it' or 'take an aspirin' type of issue.

- Do we tackle such an issue head on?
or
- Do we not mention it in case of our own embarrassment?
or
- Do we cross the street to avoid an issue altogether?

I know a few years ago what my answer would have been, but hopefully with the assistance of some mental health professionals via the Lawson Community Health Centre visiting us and giving talks on a range of topics over the next few months, we will have a greater understanding of this complex area. As Shedders we will in time become more tolerant and better blokes.

What's on

Wed 16 Aug: Woodworking demonstrations – handsaw care & sharpening with Bruce Ward.

Wed 18 Oct: Woodworking demonstrations – Xmas project ideas with Geoff Mulligan (see article below).

Wed 15 Nov: Woodworking demonstrations – More Xmas project ideas with Geoff Mulligan and Bruce Ward (see article below).

Wed 13 Dec: Christmas social function - claim the date!

Computer club

Stephen Crisdale

A new multi-function printer has been installed at the Shed, replacing the two previous printers. The new printer is black and white only. It is possible to print from most of the computers.

Members are reminded that the printer is mainly for use for Shed business, but if you need to print out something for your own purposes, a donation to cover the cost of paper and toner would be appreciated.

Following a request from a member, access is now available to Microsoft Office applications including Word, Excel and Powerpoint. The software is installed on one computer, known as the 'administration computer' and can be

accessed from the guest account (so you don't need a password).

The final pieces of hardware are now in place for the new projector in the quiet room. The projector can be used with a laptop, DVD player or other device that has an HDMI port. If you've got a presentation you'd like to give, just check with the Shed's computer administrator (me) who'll gladly assist with connecting all the hardware!

A request has also been made regarding either the projector or the HDTV to show pre-recorded Broadband For Seniors sessions at times other than the usual Friday computer club times in order to generate interest in the Shed's computer facilities and computer related activities.

Members are reminded that if they would like assistance with any computer related issues, to come along to the Shed on Friday mornings. There's bound to be someone who'll be able to help.

Shed highlights

- A Special General Meeting adopted an amended Constitution. This brings the Shed into compliance with NSW Government regulations that were updated last year. Members also enjoyed a tasty barbeque lunch put on by John Stanley and a band of helpers.
- The Shed has undertaken to construct a new counter for the Cancer Care Shop in Katoomba.
- Jim Campion has remodelled a donated glass-door cabinet to house the personal protective equipment (PPE). Assets Coordinator John Stanley has also updated the equipment.
- The woodturning facilities at the Shed are being upgraded following the donation of two variable-speed wood lathes. There are now three good usable wood lathes and a good range of tools available for use by members.
- Another generous donation has been a heavy-duty metal lathe. When the present refurbishment is completed, this lathe will be a welcome addition to the Shed's metalworking facilities. The oldest of the existing lathes is being retired.
- The Shed has received a grant from the Blue Mountains City Council to improve the storage and organisation of nails, screws and fittings. John Stanley will be coordinating this long-needed project and would appreciate some help once he gets started.

Safety tips

This is a new regular column in our newsletter. In this column, we will share some simple safety tips from our members.

Extension cords

Tip: When rolling up an electrical extension cord, make a habit of always rolling it up starting from the male end of the cord, where it plugs into the power outlet. This makes absolutely sure that you have switched off the power and unplugged the cord first.

This tip comes from Don McKinnon who saw a man electrocuted on a work site when he rolled a cord from the female end. The cord had been damaged, and was still live. The unfortunate man contacted exposed wires while rolling the cord and was killed.

Don't leave machines running

Tip: When you are using a machine such as a drill press, saw bench or lathe, always switch off the machine before turning your back on it.

There is a big temptation to leave the machine running while you get the next piece of material ready or take some measurements. But a running machine is always a much greater risk if you are not actively watching it. This is more important in a shared workspace like our Shed where other people may approach the machine not knowing that it is running.

This tip comes from KMS workshop supervisor Kevin Wallace.

Three things not to take for granted about your health

David White

I knew it was likely to provoke a reaction, but I thought I should do it anyway. I fessed up to my cardiologist at my annual check-up that I had been having some little niggly pains in my chest – nothing serious, just annoying.

That of course lifted the whole cardiac investigation to a new level of intensity. Off to have something called a CTCA scan – shoot you full of dye and do a CT scan while it flows around your heart. Relatively painless, but it showed up some worrying things like potentially blocked coronary arteries. When the cardiologist got the report on a Friday afternoon, he rang me and said, "I think we should have a chat – now."

Within days I was in Westmead Private having an angiogram. The blockages turned out not to be serious enough to require any further intervention, but resulted in a set of instructions about how my lifestyle needed to be changed. And I had thought my lifestyle was already health-conscious enough.

What I took out of all this was that there are some things you just can't take for granted:

- You might have a total cholesterol score within the recommendations – below 5 usually. Mine was 4.8. There are two components to that score though – HDLs ("good cholesterol") and LDLs ("bad cholesterol"). Again both those readings were in the acceptable range, and on that basis I could therefore eat toasted cheese sandwiches, drink full fat milk and indulge in lamb roasts with impunity. Turns out my LDL score was only within range if I had no other risk factors, which the CTCA and the angiogram showed I did. I now have to lower it by 35%. And give up the aforementioned bits of my diet along with plenty of others.
- Just because you pass some regular tests doesn't mean everything is fine. I had just done the treadmill stress test, with the nurse telling me eventually to get off because I would just wear out their machine; ECG and echocardiogram were fine; blood pressure good. Despite all that there were still underlying issues.
- Being fit and the right weight on their own won't protect you – those are just part of the picture. There are apparently no guarantees.

I guess I am lucky that all my cardiac issues are now out on the table, and I can do my best to address them all. I can't give you any medical advice on what you should do. I can just say this:

1. Never get complacent about your heart, even if you reckon there is nothing wrong with it.
2. Be as educated as you can about cardiac issues – like what HDLs and LDLs are and what the recommended ranges actually mean.
3. Insist that your doctor shares your actual blood test scores with you so that you can have a better-informed discussion with him or her. You are entitled to have that information.

And at the end of the day, remember: none of us is immortal.

A dog's life?

We are all probably guilty of sometimes feeling that life is tough. A member sent in this story of a dog that was able to rise above her circumstances.

Faith the dog seemed doomed from the beginning. Born with severely deformed front legs, Faith could not suckle properly. Her mother tried to smother the deformed little puppy. Almost everyone, including the veterinary professionals, thought that Faith should be put out of her misery.

But a woman who believed Faith should be given a chance adopted the little puppy. Using a spoon with peanut butter as an incentive, she taught the puppy to hop, then walk, and finally run on her two normal hind legs.

Over time, Faith became an inspiration to many. She was a symbol that animals and people can adapt and overcome their circumstances. She worked as a therapy dog and held a non-commissioned rank of Sergeant in the US military.



Faith the two-legged dog in 2008. Photo Mike Matney.

Faith died at the age of 11 in 2014, but her story is still doing the rounds on email, inspiring people around the world.

Saturday opening?

The Management Committee are considering opening the Shed on Saturdays, subject to sufficient interest and Shedders who are prepared to act as the day coordinator.

If you are interested in attending regularly on Saturdays, contact the President or Secretary. See the contact details at the end of this newsletter. Also keep a lookout for an upcoming open day planned for a Saturday in September or October to further test the idea.

Storing your tools

Bruce Ward

The way we store and organise our tools is a very individual thing. Some men know exactly where they put down a tool and as a result, often have a messy but effective working space. Other men have everything as neat as a pin, with everything put away in its correct place.



Some workshops are as neat as a pin; others are so messy, you wonder how the owner does any work.

Like most people, I think I fit between these two extremes, depending on when you look. It can get pretty messy when I have three projects under way, but I try to clean up and put unused tools away at least once each week.

One thing that I don't enjoy is searching for tools and I curse when I discover that tools are missing, rusty or damaged when I need to use them.

Over the last couple of years I have reorganised my tool storage at least three times, and now have something that works for me.

Tool storage needs to be practical, convenient and flexible, while protecting the tools from rust, theft and damage.

In my case, I like to have the regular tools just a hands reach away. For tools that I use every week or two, I don't mind walking to the other side of the workshop and opening a drawer. For a tool that I rarely use, I am happy to delve deeper into cupboards and boxes. What I don't

want to do is to delve deeply for a tool that I regularly use.

Your main enemies are rust, loss and physical damage. Rust needs moisture, such as condensation. Loss can come from leaving tools where you were working, lending to others and possibly theft. Physical damage can come from accidents such as dropping a tool, but can also be caused by other tools. Cutting tools such as saws, chisels and handplanes are particularly prone to this kind of contact damage when stored loosely in a toolbox.

The tools we own and the type of work we do changes over time, and the tool storage needs to accommodate these changes.

Shadow boards and similar wall racks are a popular choice for tool storage. Provided the

Taking tool organisation to extremes. Made by Henry Studley in the USA around 1900, this tool cabinet is now a museum piece. It cunningly holds 245 tools in a space that takes up about 102 x 51 cm of wall space when closed.

tools are firmly attached, they are generally safe from damage. You can easily see when a tool is missing too. But shadow boards put the tools on display for potential thieves, have limited capacity for a given area and tools are exposed to condensation and rust.

Some people go overboard with the shadow board concept, neatly fitting tools into elaborate racks. These systems look impressive, but tools are sometimes awkward to access and the racks can be difficult to adapt to accommodate changes in tools.

Multi-drawer cabinets are another option. Shallow drawers are good for accessing tools, which are less prone to damage and condensation. Most commercial tool cabinets are lockable too. However, some men don't like



continually opening drawers to get to their tools and the size of drawers can limit what you can fit in. There are also some tools, such as handsaws, that don't easily fit into drawers.

I do a lot of my woodwork with hand tools, so my workshop is arranged around a big solid bench. A power tool woodworker would probably organise their workshop around a table saw, while a mechanic needs a large space for a car or motorbike.

I eventually came to a compromise in my workshop between tool racks and tool cabinets.

The bulk of my small tool storage is a 16-drawer tool cabinet. I have drawers for different types of tools, like spanners, screwdrivers, cutting tools and layout tools. The tools in each drawer are only loosely organised, but it is easy to find things and easy to put things away when cleaning up.

I also set up racks close to my bench, with the tools I use frequently, or that I need at hand's reach. My racks accommodate mallets, squares, chisels, screwdrivers, handplanes and handsaws.

I also built a set of shelves for the more bulky tools, such as power tools, and I keep some special tools in purpose-made boxes (to keep all the parts together).

It is now more than a year since I completed my latest reorganisation and it is working so well that I don't see the need to organise things any more.

Recipe:

Baked salmon with lemon sauce

Preparation time :
15 min
Cooking time 45 min
Serves 2



Ingredients

- ½ cup rice
- 2 salmon fillets
- 3 teaspoons parsley (fresh or dried), finely chopped
- Zest and juice of 1 lemon*
- 1 teaspoon garlic (fresh or dried)
- 2 teaspoons wholegrain mustard

Method

1. Cook the rice.
2. Preheat oven to 200°C (180°C fan-forced).

3. Wrap the salmon in foil and bake for 15-20 minutes.
4. Prepare the dressing by whisking together parsley, lemon zest and juice, garlic and mustard.
5. Remove salmon from oven and transfer to two separate plates. Drizzle dressing over salmon.
6. Serve the salmon with rice and vegetables.

Serve with:

- 2 cups steamed vegetables
- * Lemon zest: tiny pieces of lemon peel. Grating the outer yellow layer of a lemon will give you lemon zest.

Make something for Christmas

Bruce Ward and Geoff Mulligan

There is no better Christmas gift than something you have made yourself. Once you can make things, the possibilities are almost endless.

The informal woodworking group at the Shed will be exploring some ideas for Christmas decorations and gifts during October and November. As the activity leaders, we will bring along some ideas, but we encourage members to also bring along ideas that they would like to try. Together we will have a look at the best way to achieve the projects.

The Christmas project activities will focus around the third Wednesday in October and November, with the opportunity to work on the projects at other times as well.



Clockwise from top left: walking sticks, stars, shaving set, pens, icecream scoop, keepsake box.

Brain teasers

David Bowskill

I like logic puzzles and thought that others might like to exercise their brain by trying one or two. If these prove popular, we will publish more in future newsletters.

The answers will be available one week after the newsletter is released. The answers will be on the activities board at the Shed and on the newsletter page on the website.

Puzzle 1: The census

The census collector comes into a house and asks: 'how many people live in this house, and what are their ages'.

The householder says: 'I live here with my three children. I am 36 years old. If you multiply the ages of my children, the result is also 36. If you add the ages of the children, the result is the same as the number of windows in the building across the road'.

The collector looks at the building across the road, and after a moment of thought says: 'I can't work out your children's ages from those clues, I need more information'.

The householder says: 'The oldest child has red hair'.

The collector says: 'Thank you, I now know the ages of your children'.

What are the ages of the three children and how many windows are there in the building across the road?

Puzzle 2: Pills

Your pharmacist gives you 5 jars each filled with an identical number of pills. The pills contained in each jar have an identical appearance and size, so if you mixed all of the pills you wouldn't be able to tell them apart.

4 of the 5 jars hold pills that weigh 10 grams each, and the remaining jar holds pills that weigh 9 grams each. However, you don't know which jar is the one holding the lightweight pills.

You have a set of electronic scales that are accurate to within half a gram, but you only have enough battery power for a single use.

Using the scales only once, how do you determine which jar is holding the 9 gram pills? (Assume there are more than enough pills for your needs.)

About Katoomba Men's Shed

This newsletter is produced by:

Katoomba Men's Shed Inc.
6 Orient Street, Katoomba

Ph: (02) 4782 7433

Email: secretary@kms.org.au

Website: www.kms.org.au

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

Disclaimer

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Thanking our supporters

The Katoomba Men's Shed thanks the following organisations who provide ongoing in-kind support to the Shed and its operations.

- Blue Mountains City Council
- Digital Mountain
- Blue Mountains Burglar Alarms
- Cleanaway Katoomba