



Katoomba Men's Shed

Building Better Blokes

Noise from the Shed

No. 18 August 2018

Anzac memorial garden

David White

As reported in the last newsletter, the Katoomba Men's Shed is working with the Katoomba RSL Sub-Branch, the Katoomba ANZAC Memorial Hospital and several other community organisations to restore the Memorial Gardens at the hospital. The target is to complete the restoration in time for the centenary of the signing of the Armistice that ended World War I.

The Shed is constructing over 120 timber posts for the brass plaques that commemorate

Australian men and women who have served their country in the Armed Forces.

The cost of the materials is being donated by the Leura Gardens Festival Committee.

As this is being written, construction of the posts is largely complete and painting is under way. As soon as the garden cleanup is done, the plaques will be re-fitted to the new posts one by one to ensure that the plaques remain in their original place.

Shed members (left to right) Greg, Jim, Steve and Michael painting the assembled posts for the memorial gardens project.





Steve lends a hand painting the posts.



David White with a post ready for painting.

Health in focus – support information for carers

Michael Whitehead, Lawson Community Health Centre

In my recent talk about men as carers I mentioned that there are some good resources available to support people who find themselves acting as a carer in their home environment. Some of the better resources are listed below.

- ❑ **Carers NSW:**
<http://www.carersnsw.org.au/how-we-help/information>
Ph: 1800 242 636
- ❑ **Carers Australia:**
Overall structures of carer support, including Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander specific information.
<http://www.carersaustralia.com.au/about-carers/aboriginalandtorresstraitislander/carers/>
- ❑ **Carer Gateway:**
Federal Govt website, overview of carers resources and supports, mental health
<https://www.carergateway.gov.au/resources-for-older-carers>
- ❑ **Young carers NSW (under 25yrs)**
<http://www.youngcarersnsw.org.au/the-yc-program/>
- ❑ **Dementia Australia**
<http://www.dementia.org.au/resources/support-for-carers>
Ph: 1800 100 500.
- ❑ **'Walking with Carers'**
Resource booklet (NSW Health)- concise information about carer rights, respite information, general info.
<http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/carers/Publications/walking-with-carers-in-nsw.pdf>
- ❑ **Lawson Community Health Centre**
Aged Care Assessment Team (ACAT), dementia support, palliative & support care, continence assessment, respite information.
Ph: 4759 8700

Katoomba North Public School project

David Christie

At the request of the Principal and School Counsellor, The Men's Shed has been providing woodworking classes to a small group of 9 year old boys over several terms since the end of 2017. The classes are for 1hr and 15mins, one day a week.

The program has developed ad-hoc since we're not teachers, and hopefully the next term may be a bit more structured. The aim is to provide a space for young boys who have trouble concentrating in class and to show application of some of the principles learnt in maths classes. So far the class has been well received by the boys and the school, to the extent that the boys are eager to come to school on woodworking days.

The Principal has suggested that we will be working with Year 5 boys next term, Term 3, 10-11 year olds. The program will consist of something like the following:

- Basic hammering skills, learning how to hammer nails into a block of wood.
- Hammering nails into a pre-shaped block of wood in a random manner to represent an echidna.
- Constructing a small wooden toy out of numerous timber off-cuts,
- Hammering nails into a pattern and creating string patterns using the nails
- Making a bird box. The boys will nail and glue pre-cut pieces.
- Making a tool box out of the same pine panelling. The boys will fabricate from pre-cut pieces.
- Making a small box with a lid, from the same pine wall panelling
- Making a bird feeder. Similar process as above.
- Making a small model.

On some occasions the boys have enjoyed painting their finished work.

The boys showing their completed tool boxes.



Some examples other projects completed by the boys.

Open Day

**Saturday 29 September 2018
10.00 am to 1:00 pm**

Katoomba Men's Shed will hold a public open day during Men's Shed Week. This is an opportunity for potential members and the community to have a look at the Men's Shed and find out what we do.

The Shed will also be gauging interest in opening on Saturday or Sunday. It has been suggested that this may suit men who have weekday commitments.

New metal milling machine

Kevin Wallace, Workshop Coordinator

The Shed's metalworking capabilities have been enhanced with the purchase of a new milling machine. This machine complements the existing metal lathes and greatly extends the projects that can be completed.

Without getting too technical, a metal lathe uses a fixed cutter to remove metal from a rotating workpiece. Lathe jobs are therefore mostly round. A milling machine moves a workpiece under a rotating cutter. This allows shaping of flat and irregular-shaped objects.

The new machine is more accurately described as a 'mill drill with tilting head and digital readout'. It also functions as a high-precision drill press, so it has replaced the somewhat worn drill press in the metalworking area.

Members need to have a level-4 workshop safety rating to use the milling machine and should talk to Kevin before attempting to use the machine.



Kevin Wallace briefing Shed member Ashley on the finer points of using the new milling machine.

Within a week of installation the milling machine was already at work on a paying job, manufacturing parts for a precision piece of equipment for the local lapidary club.



Kevin made this small bull-nose plane (woodworking tool) to demonstrate what a milling machine can do.

What's on

August 24: The Australian Hearing Bus will visit the Shed and offer free hearing checks. Also enjoy a free barbeque!

September 6, 1.00 pm: Health talks program – Men & Muscles.

September 24, 2.00 pm to 5.00 pm: Repair Café, Junction 142 Op Shop Building, 142 Katoomba Street, Katoomba. See <http://toolo.com.au/repair-cafe-katoomba/>

September 24–30: Men's Shed week.

September 29, 10.00 am to 1:00 pm: Open Day at Katoomba Men's Shed.

October 4, 1.00 pm: Health talks program – Prostate Health.

November 1, 1.00 pm: Health talks program – Advanced Care Directives, Palliative Care and End of Life conversations.

December 6, 1.00 pm: Health talks program – Mental Health and Men and Depression.

Safety Snippets – Push sticks

Bob Loss, Manning Men's Shed, WA

Around the shed, usually hung on various machines, you may see what looks like a thick stick with a V-notch cut into one end, a bit like this:



These simple but very effective 'finger savers' are used to hold down and push wood through bandsaws, table saws and planer/jointers. They also reduce the likelihood of 'kickback' on a table saw. They are not there for decoration but to be used and if they get damaged, then better that than you, and you can always make another one.

Push sticks come in all shapes and sizes and can be purchased from woodworking shops.

The simplest and cheapest are made of plastic and look like this:



Often push sticks are used in pairs like this.



Health humour

Bruce Ward

I recently found myself affected by a common malady among men who potter with tools. I was suffering from 'New Tool Syndrome' (NTS). The signs of this condition are:

- a new tool has been purchased;
- it is being kept in a prominent position in the workshop;
- you suddenly find all sorts of uses for the tool that you were not expecting.

NTS symptoms can be magnified if you have had to wait a long time for the new tool. As the old saying goes – 'when you have a new hammer, everything looks like a nail'!

The good news is that in most cases NTS usually fades within a week or two. Unless of course you buy another new tool!

What can I do at the Shed?

Peter Kinkead

Men at the Shed can do a wide variety of activities. Below are some examples of things that have been done by members.

Individual activities

- Use one of the Shed's computers to search the internet or play Youtube videos.
- Come to the Friday computer group and learn how to use a tablet computer.
- Have a cuppa and a chat.

- Find a quiet corner and read something from the Library.
- Use the Shed's electronics equipment to build and test an electronics project.
- Undertake your own or help someone else with a woodwork project.
- Undertake your own or help someone else with a metalwork project.
- Learn to use a wood turning lathe.

Collaborative activities

- Build a wood fired pizza oven.
- Construct a new counter for the Cancer shop.
- Make new plaque posts for the Katoomba Hospital memorial gardens.
- Assemble bikes and toys for the Katoomba Big W store (a fundraising project).
- Help out with the gardening around the Shed.
- Participate in the Management Committee in operating and improving the Shed.
- Screen videos and movies using the Shed's audio-visual facilities.
- Play a game of chess or cards.
- Share your previous life skills with other like minded members.

Tool tip

Kevin Wallace and Bruce Ward

Buying tools is full of risks and pitfalls for the unwary. In this age of cut price and package deals, we need to make sure that the tools we buy will do the job that we expect them to do.

Here are a few tips from our own experience:

- Very cheap tools are rarely good value. At best they will do for one or two small jobs, but in some cases they will not even be fit to use for the intended purpose!
- Most of the respected old names in tool manufacturing have been bought up by big corporations and are now mass-produced, often with inferior materials.
- Some used hand tools made pre-1960s will be superior quality to all but the most expensive modern equivalents.
- Avoid impulse buying. A good question to ask yourself is 'can I do without it?'. If you can do without it, perhaps don't buy it.
- Some people think that the best strategy is to buy the best quality tool you can afford at the time.

The price will usually depend on the brand and is a good guide to the quality of the tool and the work life you can expect from it.

The cost of materials, manufacturing and quality control makes up about 40% of the retail price for most products. The remaining 60% covers distribution, warehousing and profit margins. So it makes perfect sense to us that very cheap tools are almost certain to be junk. We found a set of threading taps at the Shed recently (a donation) where the cutting edge and clearance angles were ground on the wrong side, so they could not possibly work. Low cost materials and no quality control!

In preparing this article, we looked at a range of tool suppliers and brands on websites. We looked at one particular tool that was available in a similar size across a wide range of brands (800-900 watt corded multi-tool). Prices ranged from \$25 to \$750. The following is a summary of what we found:

- **Throw-away tools** (cheap imports and house brands). Our multi-tool would cost \$25 to \$75. These may be suitable for the occasional small job but are not precision tools. Generally unsuitable for regular or heavy use and generally unrepairable. But you can be lucky and get a good one.
- **Handyman quality tools.** Our multi-tool would cost \$100 to \$150 and would be suitable for regular home handyman type use. These are better quality but may not stand up to heavy sustained use. They are generally not repairable. Brands include Ryobi and Bosch Green.
- **Tradesman quality tools.** Our multi-tool would cost \$200 to \$300. These are reasonable quality tools made for regular and sustained use. They are usually better designed and are higher precision tools. They are sometimes repairable. Brands include Makita, Dewalt, and Bosch Blue.
- **Superior quality tools.** Our multi-tool would cost over \$700. These are suitable for the specialist. They often have substantially more power or features not available in the cheaper brands and are only available from specialist suppliers rather than general hardware stores. They should be repairable at that price! Festool is an example of a brand in this category.

Puzzle corner

There is no new puzzle this edition as the puzzle corner is taking a break. The solution to the puzzle from the previous newsletter is provided below.

Solution to 'At the pumps' from last edition

We know:

The total number of spark plugs is 74.

There are two 4-cylinder cars for every 6-cylinder car.

We can deduce that for every 6-cylinder car, 14 spark plugs are used – 6 for the 6-cylinder cars and 4 each for the two 4-cylinder cars.

The formula to calculate the number of 8-cylinder cars is:

$$(74 - (a \times 14)) / 8$$

where 'a' is the number of 6-cylinder cars.

If we test each value of 6-cylinder cars from 1 to 5, the total number of plugs will be 14, 28, 42, 56 and 70. The remnant of plugs in each case would be 60, 46, 32, 18 and 4. Only 32 is evenly divisible by 8, so the number of 8-cylinder cars must be $32 / 8$, or 4.

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

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Thanking our supporters

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- Blue Mountains City Council
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- Cleanaway Katoomba