

Port Fairy Men's Shed NEWSLETTER

Edition 2
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Secretary: Harry Bracegirdle, 19, Dyson St. Port Fairy 3284 (5568-2601)

Affiliated with the Australian Men's Shed Association

Update on activities

A few months have passed since our first Newsletter was distributed and it is therefore timely that we put out our 2nd edition to keep the community up-to-date on what has been happening in regard to the **Port Fairy Men's Shed** (PFMS).

The Steering Committee, ably led by our Chairperson, **Don Stephens**, has met on six occasions and is busily working to secure funding and a site for the Shed.

The members of the Steering Committee are –

Don Stephens (Chairperson)	5568-2153
John Ellard (Deputy Chair – Fundraising)	5568-3317
Keith Bunge (Workspace Co-ordination)	5568-2524
Harry Bracegirdle (Secretary / Treasurer).....	5568-2601
Mick Wentworth	5568-2396
Peter Ridout	5568-1873

In some ways, things have (seemingly) been moving frustratingly slowly, particularly in regard to fundraising, but we are mindful that granting bodies have set dates and agendas and we have to be patient and work to their timelines.

Fundraising matters

Grant applications

As reported in the last Newsletter, we submitted grant applications to the **Pacific Hydro Sustainable Communities Fund** and also the **Moyne Shire Community Assistance Fund**.

Unfortunately, we were not successful in securing funding from the **Pacific Hydro Sustainable Communities Fund**. The feedback from Pacific Hydro however, was encouraging. Pacific Hydro thought it was a very worthwhile project and well within their funding guidelines. Unfortunately, because we have not yet finalised a site for the Shed, it somewhat worked against us because their funds had to be expended within six months – so we missed out as there was a risk that we could not use the funds until a firm site was established. They did, however, encourage us to try again once a site was established.



On a positive note, we are pleased to report that we were successful in securing support from the **Moyne Shire Community Assistance Fund**. The Shire has supported the PFMS with a **\$5,000 grant** that has to be expended by next June.

John Ellard is leading the fundraising effort and we now look to a number of philanthropic trusts as an additional means of raising funds. We still believe we need at least \$60,000 dollars in total to erect a suitable sized shed including all flooring, electrical and plumbing works required – so we still have a long way

to go to reach this target but we are confident this can be achieved.

All up now, counting the Shire grant, we have about \$7,500 at our disposal and, given that the Victorian Government grants for Men's Sheds are distributed on a 2:1 basis, we hope to be successful in securing a significant grant from them when they call for the next round of applications expected early in 2009. A number of Men's Sheds in the Wimmera region secured substantial funding in 2008 – some as high as \$50K – so there is support for Men's Sheds from the government and we are hopeful of securing some funding from that source next year.

Shed Location

We have learned that many of the Men's Sheds in neighbouring regions have been established in existing facilities that, at the time, were not being actively used. This made it much easier for them to start up a Men's Shed as most of the funding required is for equipment only. Some Men's Sheds we have visited have minimal running costs as they are funded by the Bush Nursing Centres.

Unfortunately, we seemingly don't have such a ready-made facility available in Port Fairy so not only do we have to secure a suitable site but we also need to cover the cost of erecting a shed.

The Steering Committee is very mindful of the need to finalise a site as soon as possible, particularly in light of the lesson learned from our unsuccessful application to the Pacific Hydro Sustainable Communities Fund.

The Committee's preference is to secure a centrally located site. In the longer term, at least, we want to avoid settling for a private shed as this may limit future funding by way of grants. We only plan to use private sheds for special projects whilst we are in this in this critical, startup period (*see next page*).

In order to secure a suitable site, the PFMS recently held a very fruitful discussion with the Port Fairy Sea Scouts who are enthusiastic about the possibility of us erecting a shed behind the Scout Hall in Bank Street. Obviously, there are many factors to be considered if we were to use the Scout site - which could be both beneficial to the Sea Scouts as well as being a very central and accessible community facility.

We cannot, however, just pursue this option alone. Consequently, we are not overlooking the potential to erect a shed at the Showgrounds. As with all sites explored so far, they all have advantages and disadvantages but we are mindful of the need to finalise the site location as a matter of urgency.



Call for volunteers

Keith Bunge may have been away in Broome and other parts of WA for 6 weeks over winter whilst some of us endured the cold weather in Port Fairy but, to Keith's credit, he soon got into action on his return!

Following discussions with members of the Folk Festival Committee, Keith is finalising plans whereby willing participants of the PFMS can work together on a community-based project. This involves assembling up to **500 bench seats for the Folk Festival** and is an important project that:

- Can be spread over the ensuing months up to next year's Festival in March;
- Can be carried out in a number of private sheds (*we have three in mind at this stage*);
- Will keep up to a dozen volunteers busy on a one day per week basis for a few months;
- Will have all materials provided by the Folk Festival Committee;
- Will mean (hopefully) that we will be looked on favourably by the Folk Festival Committee when we need additional funding in the future.

The Steering Committee, being mindful of the need to get interested members of the PFMS actively working together, is very keen to facilitate this project even if we don't yet have a shed we can call home!

In order to be in a position to commit to this project, we are now **calling for volunteers** who can put in about 4 hours per week (you won't have to commit to every week) to work on assembling the tables.

If you are able to assist on this worthwhile project then please call either **Harry Bracegirdle** on 5568-2601 or **Keith Bunge** on 5568-2524.

We need sufficient responses by about **13th October** in order to proceed - so please, if you can lend a hand, give us a call.

Other Committee activities to date

The Steering Committee has also been active on other administrative matters. These include:

1. Getting formal plans drawn up for the Shed and associated utilities as well as getting quotes for required electrical & plumbing work;
2. Incorporating the PFMS: We are pleased to report that we are now an incorporated body.
3. Pursuing various options for raising funds apart from the usual granting bodies;
4. Contacting and seeking support from other, local groups who might benefit from sharing the facilities of a Men's Shed.

Membership fees of the PFMS

Under our rules of Incorporation a joining fee of \$5 along with an annual fee of \$5 has been established. We believe these to be modest membership fees but these will not be called for at the moment.

Wood turning demonstration



One potential activity that the Committee considers as useful in getting PFMS members together is to conduct a **woodturning demonstration**.

Gary Hommelhoff has kindly offered the use of his shed and his wood turning equipment for such a demonstration so we are

now calling for expressions of interest from those of you willing to attend. It is anticipated that the session will go for about two hours (date yet to be set). **If you have any interest in attending the demonstration then please contact Don Stephens on 5568-2153 or leave a message on his answering machine.**

Visit to the Balmoral & Harrow Sheds

In July and as a follow up to the previous visit to the Hamilton Men's Shed, about five members of the PFMS visited both the Harrow and Balmoral sheds.

The **Harrow Shed** is a relatively new shed that is auspiced and financially supported by the Bush Nursing Centre. The Shed has about eight members and most of their tools are donated. The Shed does various odd community-based jobs including signage for the town's Sound & Light Show.

The **Balmoral Shed** is also auspiced by the Bush Nursing Centre and operates out of the old Masonic Hall. They have both men and women active in the Shed and carry out a number of projects including planter boxes, mailboxes, building project kits for use by school children as well as carrying out re-upholstery work on old furniture.

Although the Hamilton Shed, being a larger facility, stood out in comparison to the Harrow and Balmoral sheds, the two smaller sheds nevertheless proved to be very active groups.

Benefits of Men's Sheds

A recent article about the recent establishment of a Men's Shed at Dunedoo very aptly covered the real benefit of a Men's Shed. The article highlighted how:

Men's Sheds have proven to be a novel and effective weapon in the fight against high rates of male suicide, depression and loneliness. The Men's Shed movement has been highly effective in making men feel useful, having a valuable role in their community, learning and sharing their skills and simply making friends.

Men's health isn't just about their physical wellbeing; it's also about self esteem, a valued role in society and being part of a supportive social network.

Men's Sheds are creating spaces shared by men from all backgrounds. "Shedders" work together on personal or community-based projects, but socially, it's just as important to have a place in which to swap yarns and jokes.

