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20 Jubilee Street
East Maitland NSW 2323
Ph. 0249341293

Email: maitlandcms@gmail.com
<http://www.maitlandcms.org.au>

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The Maitland
Community Men's Shed

Shed News

Editor
Steve O'Brien
Writer
John Williams
MSM Inc.
Chairman
Charles Sanders

The Maitland
Community Men's
Shed welcomes new
members!

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Around the Shed

During the past month, Maitland Toyota reviewed several of its sponsorship arrangements with local community organisations. As part of this review, they made the decision to discontinue their sponsorship of the Utility and transfer ownership to the Men's Shed. We sincerely thank the team at Maitland Toyota for their generous support of the Men's Shed over many years. The transfer of ownership has now been completed, and the necessary insurance arrangements are in place.

Our new defibrillator has been received and installed in the main office. The previous unit, which remains fully functional, has been relocated to the upstairs office, ensuring both areas of the Shed are now equipped with this important lifesaving device.

We continue to work with Story House Early Learning Centre by providing scholastic equipment as part of our ongoing commitment to supporting our local community.

We are seeking a volunteer from within the Shed membership to take on the role of Welfare Officer. If you are interested in helping in this important role, please get in touch.

Meanwhile, Steve, our illustrious IT guru, continues to conduct Shed-based sessions covering computer and mobile phone tips. Lessons have

resumed in the IT area, and all members are welcome to come along, improve their digital skills, and ask questions in a relaxed environment.

AMSA has provided advice regarding membership and insurance arrangements for Centrelink recipients. We are following this up to obtain further clarification so we can better understand how these changes may affect the way we operate at the Shed.

A new community project we have undertaken is the construction of display shelving for Youth Off The Streets (YOTS), a new organisation in Maitland. The shelving will be installed in the front entrance area of their High Street offices.

Don't forget it's time once again to compete for the John O'Keefe Euchre Challenge, to be held on Monday, 17 August, with a 9.00 am start. You have to be in it to win it and more importantly, to enjoy plenty of laughs with your fellow Shed members.

The AGM will be held on 10 August and will be followed by a BBQ lunch. We encourage all members to attend and support the future direction of the Shed.

Recently, while visiting Green Hills Shopping Centre, my wife and I

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CLEMENTS
AIRCONDITIONING
REFRIGERATION
ELECTRICAL



stopped for a coffee. We were served by a young lady whose manners, cheerful attitude and professionalism immediately stood out. While we were there, an elderly gentleman, who we later discovered was 93 years old, sat at a nearby table. The same young lady served him a chocolate milk, which was initially presented in a soft plastic cup. He politely asked if it could be served in a different glass. Without hesitation, she smiled, said it would be no trouble at all, and returned with the drink poured into a large glass.

The gentleman held the glass carefully with both hands as he enjoyed his drink. Before leaving, I thanked the young lady for the kindness, patience and respect she had shown him. It was heartening to witness such genuine consideration. It reminds us that courtesy and respect are still very much alive in many of our younger generation, and that is something worth celebrating.

See you at the shed!

Charlie Sanders - Chairman

Aged Care Advocate Visit - Writer: Steve O'Brien - Shed News Editor

On Monday 27th July, our shed welcomed a representative from Seniors Rights Service, an organisation dedicated to protecting and advancing the rights of older people across New South Wales.

The visit provided members with valuable information about navigating the aged care system, particularly in light of recent changes. As part of her role as an Aged Care Advocate, she shared practical guidance and answered questions to help our members better understand their options and rights when accessing care services.

A key focus of the session was the introduction of the new Aged Care Act and the Support at Home Program. These changes replace previous home care packages with a more streamlined system designed to support older Australians to live independently for longer.

The new framework introduces:

- Tiered levels of support based on individual needs.
- Funding for assistive technology and home modifications.
- Stronger, independent complaint processes to protect consumer rights.

Overall, the changes represent a significant shift in how in-home care is delivered and funded, making it more flexible and responsive to individual circumstances.

If you're thinking about accessing support, you can check your eligibility or apply for an assessment through the My Aged Care system. This can help you access services ranging from basic assistance, such as cleaning and meals, through to more complex clinical care.

If you missed the session and would like more information, feel free to speak with the shed team - we're happy to help point you in the right direction.



**Seniors Rights
Service**

Inside Our Shed - Reorganisation Plan Review Meeting

Writer: John Williams - Men's Shed Reporter

A Shed That Keeps Getting Better

Last month, members gathered for a short meeting to review our progress on the Shed's "clean-up" plan. Over the past six months, we've seen what happens when we stop catastrophising problems and start fixing them. "We've rolled up our sleeves, shared ideas, argued a bit (constructively), laughed a lot, and delivered real improvements that make the Shed a better place to work, talk, and belong."

None of this happened by accident. It's the result of a positive, collaborative approach, one where we look honestly at the system we've got, identify what's not working, and get on with improving it. No drama. No doom-talk. Just practical action. This recognises that you can't build a better future by shouting at the present. You build it by doing the work." That's exactly what we've done.

Together, over the past half-year, members have stepped forward, offered ideas, and worked within the Shed's existing structure to make meaningful improvements.

Highlights include:

- A safer, more organised workspace - benches cleared, tools sorted, hazards reduced, and everyone knowing where things live.
- New roles and shared responsibilities - more members involved in planning, maintenance, and project leadership.
- A stronger sense of community - more conversations, more checking in on each other.
- Better systems - from project planning to tool storage, we've improved how the Shed runs without tearing anything down.

These improvements show what real collaboration looks like: practical, constructive, and shared.

Where We're Heading Next

Our review meeting focused on keeping that momentum going. We celebrated what's been achieved, agreed on the next set of improvements, and made sure every member has a chance to contribute. We're fixers, people who look for solutions, not problems to complain about.

A Shed like ours brings people in. It's a positive place that welcomes members, encourages involvement, and avoids the idea that the system is "beyond repair."

Our next steps will focus on:

- Broad engagement - ensuring every member has a role, a voice, and a way to contribute.
- Bold but practical improvements - changes that make the Shed safer, more welcoming, and more efficient.
- Keeping the culture positive - celebrating wins, supporting each other, and staying focused on what we can build together.

One member suggested a motto for our Shed: could be **"Good, better, best. We will never rest until our GOOD is BETTER and our BETTER, BEST."**

Attributed to St Jerome, this motto captures the spirit of continual improvement - something every workshop understands. And the last six months have proven that when we work together, listen to each other, and stay constructive, we can turn any challenge into progress.

Looking Ahead

Let's keep focusing on what's working, identifying what needs improving, and making sure everyone has a role in shaping the next stage. We're not a group that grumbles - we're a group that builds. And we'll keep building a Shed that works for everyone, welcomes everyone, and keeps getting better because we keep getting better.

Inside Our Shed - Days at the Shed

Writer: John Williams - Men's Shed Reporter

Some days at the Shed stay with you because of where they take you; others because of how they make you feel while you're there. Some are frantic, pulling you from pillar to post until you reach the end wondering what you've achieved. Others are slow and listless, giving you space to gather your thoughts and catch your breath.

There are days full of challenge and complexity, and days that are simple and easy. Days with more questions than answers, urgency rather than importance, and days that remind us to celebrate the company we keep. And then there are the days that reward you with quiet satisfaction when every detail of a project reflects careful thought and steady hands.

Early in July, Jim began one of those projects. Over the weekend he meticulously planned and drew the template for the louvres of a set of shutters commissioned by a Shed client. By Monday morning he arrived armed with a template for the side rails and a jig for routing the channels that would house the louvres.

They say the devil is in the detail, and this project proved it. The new shutters had to match the originals on a traditional, older-style home undergoing renovations, same number of louvres, same angle, and the same non-standard dimensions.

Over the week, with Mick Oakes as his trusty offside (Mick admitted he simply enjoyed watching Jim's skill and the chance to work alongside one of the best), the shutters took shape. The finished result not only met the client's expectations, it exceeded them.

It was one of those days, and one of those projects, that leaves you with a deep

sense of satisfaction. A reminder that no two days at the Shed are ever the same and that most of them, for a variety of reasons, are worth remembering.



Inside Our Shed - Shed Safety for Our Members

Writer: Steve O'Brien - Shed News Editor



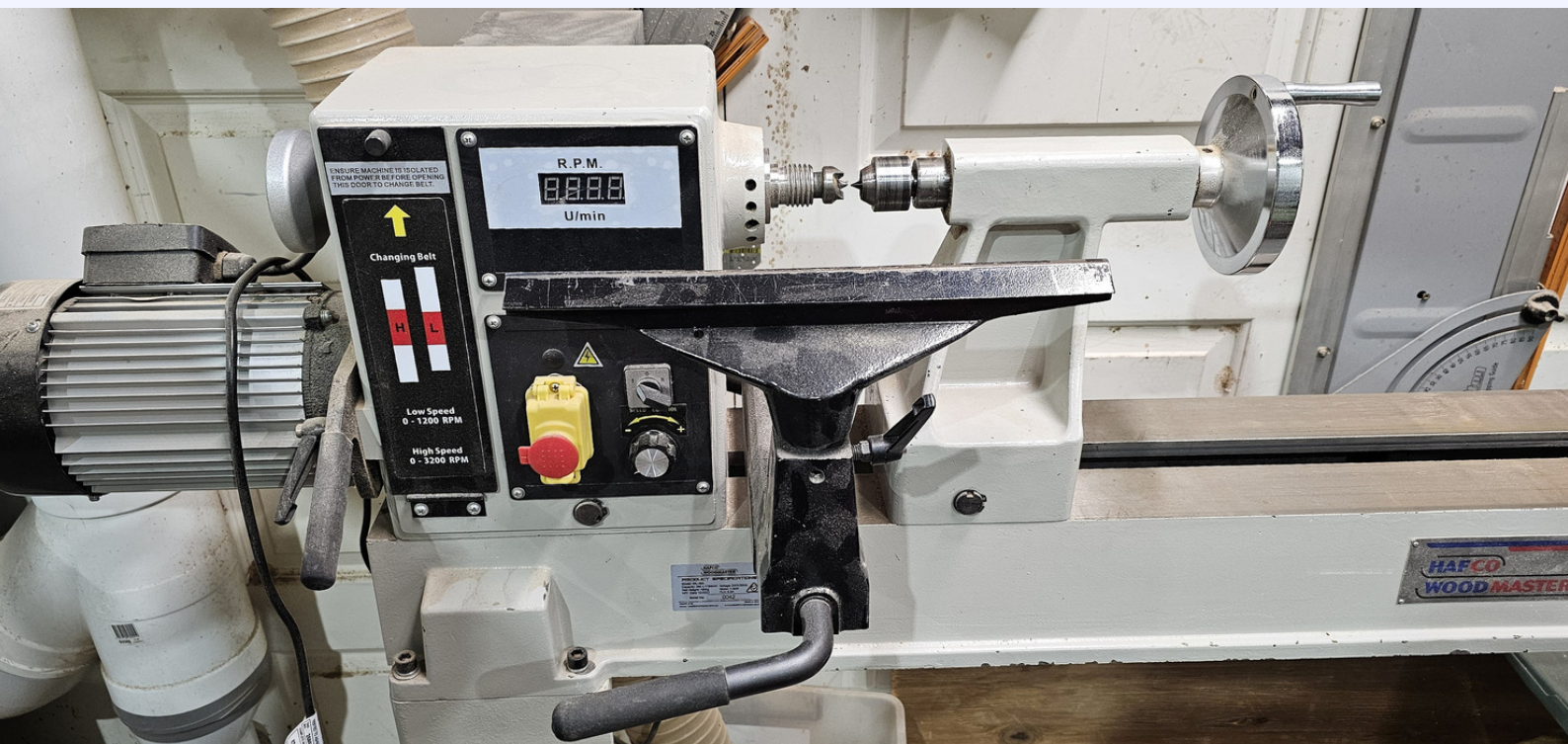
Our Shed is continuing to take important steps toward making our workshop and facilities safer, more organised, and more efficient for everyone. A key part of this effort is the introduction of a Workshop Competency Record for all members.

Under our existing Policies and Procedures, all members are required to be familiar with the safe operation of any machinery before using it. To support this, we have now almost completed the rollout of these new competency records.

Members will be assessed and signed off as competent to use specific equipment by other appointed and experienced Shed members.

In addition, we will once again be running safety and maintenance video sessions covering the correct use of workshop machinery. These sessions are a great opportunity to refresh your knowledge and ensure safe practices are being followed.

We believe these initiatives will help keep all members safe while working on their projects, as well as extend the life and reliability of our equipment. Your cooperation and commitment to safety are greatly appreciated. Get along to these safety sessions and show interest in what we are trying to achieve. We are trying to develop a safe space for us all.



Inside Our Shed - Staying Upright: A Quick Guide for Shedders

Writer: John Williams - Men's Shed Reporter

Most of us still feel 40... right up until the moment we suddenly don't. And the numbers don't lie: falls are now one of the biggest health risks for older Aussies. In 2022-23, there were **238,055 hospitalisations from falls** - nearly half of all injury admissions.

Many of these accidents happen in the places we know best: the bathroom, the back steps, the garden path, or on that ladder we've climbed a thousand times. Trauma doctors warn that **anyone over 60 is at real risk on ladders**, and at one major Queensland hospital, **over a third of ladder-fall patients were 65+.**

This isn't about weakness - it's about balance, reaction time, and physics quietly changing on us.

Common Trouble Spots

- Ladders (especially the "I'll just quickly..." jobs)
- Uneven paths, loose pavers, steps
- Wet bathrooms and kitchens
- Cluttered sheds or hallways
- Poor lighting

SLIP, TRIP, AND FALL PREVENTION



- Carrying too much at once
- Rushing because it "won't take long"

Simple Ways to Stay Steady

- **Think before climbing.** Ask yourself: Should I be doing this?
- **Use proper gear.** No milk crates, chairs or wobbly steps.
- **Clear walkways** inside and out.
- **Improve lighting** around entrances and stairs.
- **Clean spills straight away** - water, oil, tea, anything.
- **Slow down.** There's no medal for speed.
- **Ask for help.** Family, neighbours, Shed mates - it's smart, not soft.

A Final Word

A fall isn't "just a tumble." It can change a life in seconds. But a few small habits and a willingness to share the jobs that don't need to be solo missions, can keep us upright, independent, and enjoying the Shed for years to come.

Let's look out for each other.

Inside Our Shed - Annual General Meeting

Writer: Steve O'Brien - Shed News Editor



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Maitland Community Men's Shed Annual General Meeting will be held at the Shed on Monday, 10 August at 10:30 am in the upstairs meeting room. All members are strongly encouraged to attend.

The AGM is an important opportunity for members to come together, show their support for the Shed, and have a say in its future. At this meeting, the new Board will be announced, including the Chairman, Vice Chairman, Treasurer, Secretary, and five Board Directors. The Board represents the voice of the members, and your input into its makeup is vital to ensuring it reflects the interests and direction of our Shed community.

A report on the year's financial position will

also be presented to the meeting, keeping members informed about how the Shed is financially tracking.

We also invite all members who have a Shed shirt to wear it on the day, as we plan to take a group photo in front of the Shed. It's been a number of years since our last group photo, and it will be a great way to capture and celebrate our members as the years roll on.

We look forward to seeing everyone there for what promises to be an important and enjoyable morning. Following the AGM the shed will be providing a sausage sizzle lunch for all those members who have attended the meeting.



August Birthdays

Allan Cantello, John Carey, Darren Prior, John Rissler, Scott Sessions, Hilary 'Zac' Shorter and Chris Vollmer

Inside Our Shed - The Clock King at Work

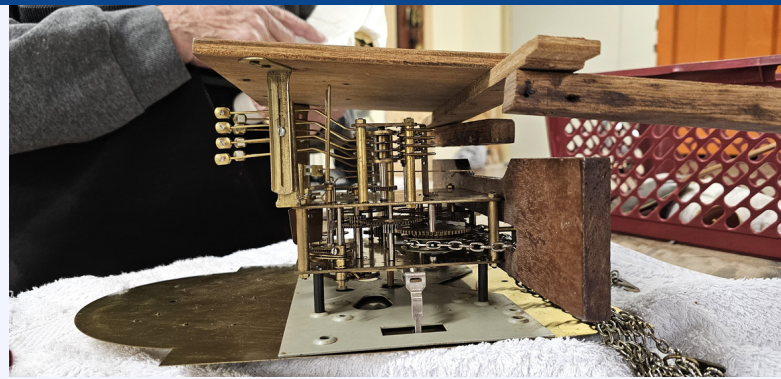
Writer: Steve O'Brien - Shed News Editor

John King, our resident “Clock King,” may be taking on fewer repairs these days, but he’s certainly not slowing down. With plenty happening in his life outside the shed, John is a busy man, yet he always finds time to help members of the community with their treasured timepieces.

When someone arrives with a beloved family clock in need of care, John can’t help but empathise. His usual response? “Yeah, just bring it in and I’ll fix it for you.” It’s this willingness to help, combined with his remarkable skill, that makes John such a valued part of our shed.

These days, John has taken on what he jokingly calls an “apprentice” - Graham. Graham thoroughly enjoys heading out with John on his repair visits, lending a hand and learning the ropes. Of course, it doesn’t hurt that many of their visits are accompanied by a warm welcome and a generous morning tea from grateful owners!

Over the years, John has collected plenty of stories about the challenges of repairing old clocks. In a world that has largely moved to digital timekeeping, there are fewer people who truly understand how these intricate



mechanical pieces work. That’s where John’s expertise really shines.

At the moment, John is working on a particularly special clock brought in by a local lady. While the clock itself is in excellent condition, its counterweights had seen better days. John had them professionally restored in Newcastle, bringing them back to as-new condition. Now, he’s giving the entire clock what he calls a “big maintenance birthday.”

John estimates the clock is around 90 years old and suspects it may never have been properly oiled. For most people, accessing the inner workings of such a clock would be near impossible, but for John, it’s all part of the craft.

Thanks to John and now Graham too, these beautiful old timepieces are being given a new lease on life, preserving not just their function, but the memories and history they carry.



Youth Off The Streets (YOTS) is a not-for-profit organisation dedicated to supporting young people facing significant disadvantage, including homelessness, disengagement from education, and complex life challenges. Through a combination of education, wellbeing support, and community programs, YOTS helps young people reconnect with learning, build stability, and create positive pathways for their future.

Rise College Maitland opened at the beginning of Term 2, 2026, and has already enrolled 26 students across Years 9 and 10. The college plans to expand to include Year 11 in 2027, with its first HSC cohort expected in 2028. The campus is located at the rear of 226 High Street, Maitland (the former Centrelink building), with access via the rear entry from James Street and the Art Gallery car park driveway



Recently, the college approached our Shed seeking assistance to recreate a YOTS display shelf similar to one at their Head Office in Alexandria, Sydney. The new shelf will be installed in the college's entry and waiting area, where it will be seen by many visitors. They provided photos of the original piece to guide the project.

On hearing about this opportunity, our workshop team quickly got to work. Supporting worthwhile community projects like this is something we are always proud to be part of.



Photo Credit - The Maitland Mercury

Opening Hours



Following a recent review of our operating hours, we would like to clarify how our opening and closing times work. A few concerns were raised about the shed being closed earlier than the advertised closing time.

As a reminder, our shed is run entirely by volunteers. While we aim to remain open during the stated hours, members who are attending the shed are free to leave when they need to, and we cannot require

Running Repairs

It never ceases to amaze us at the shed just how many different ways we can help each other with the everyday problems that come our way.

Recently, one of our members who walks to the shed each day, arrived with a bit of a footwear emergency. As he put it, his shoe had a “blowout.” Faced with the prospect of walking home in damaged shoes, he was

anyone to stay until a set closing time.

To better reflect this, we have adjusted our published hours. Closing times should now be considered a guide only and are dependent on member availability on the day.

If you are planning to visit the shed close to closing time, we recommend giving us a quick call beforehand to ensure someone is still on site. Thank you for your understanding and continued support.

understandably concerned.

That’s when Barry stepped in with a simple but effective solution. He suggested using duct tape to patch things up just enough to get our mate safely home.

It’s moments like these that remind us of what the shed is all about: lending a hand, sharing a laugh, and helping each other out whenever we can.



In today's world, technology is everywhere. From smartphones and tablets to laptops and smart devices, these tools can make everyday life easier, more connected, and more enjoyable when you know how to use them.

That's why we're excited to be running our "Shed Tech Time" program here at the Shed.

Held every Monday morning at 9:00am upstairs, Shed Tech Time is a relaxed, friendly session designed to help our members better understand their devices and get the most out of them. Whether you're completely new to technology or just want to pick up a few handy tips, these sessions are for you.

What is Shed Tech Time all about?

It's all about learning at your own pace in a supportive environment. Members can bring along their own devices, phones, tablets, or laptops and get hands-on help with things like:

- Sending messages and emails
- Using apps and the internet
- Staying in touch with family and friends
- Online safety and avoiding scams
- Managing photos and files

But it's not just about learning the basics.

One of the most important parts of the program is helping you adjust your device so it works for you. Simple changes like increasing text size, improving sound settings, or using accessibility features, can make a big difference in comfort and ease of use.

Why is this important?

Technology, when used confidently, can open doors. It helps you stay connected, access important services, manage everyday tasks, and even explore new hobbies and interests. By learning how to use your device properly, you gain independence and confidence in an increasingly digital world.

A supportive, no-pressure environment
There's no such thing as a silly question at Shed Tech Time. Everyone is learning together, and the focus is on helping each other out. Come along, have a cuppa, and take the opportunity to build your skills in a relaxed and welcoming setting.

We encourage all members to come along and give it a go. You might be surprised at just how much your device can do and how easy it can be once someone shows you how.

Join us upstairs every Monday at 9:00am for Shed Tech Time. We look forward to seeing you there!



**Remember, This Is Your Shed - Be Proud Of
It And Contribute Where You Can!**



Last Months Picture Gallery



August Community Noticeboard

The Maitland Community Disability Expo

The Maitland Community Disability Expo is set to take place on Wednesday, 5th August at the East Maitland Bowling Club, bringing together a wide range of local services, organisations, and community groups dedicated to supporting people living with disability.

This important community event provides an opportunity for individuals, families, carers, and support workers to connect directly with service providers in a friendly and accessible environment. Attendees will be able to explore information on a variety of supports, including health services, social programs, assistive technologies, employment opportunities, and community activities.

The Expo is designed not only to inform but also to empower. By bringing services together in one place, it makes it easier for people to discover new opportunities, ask questions, and build valuable connections within the community. Whether you are seeking support, looking to expand your network, or simply wanting to learn more about what is available locally, the Expo offers something for everyone.

Auslan Interpreted Tour

Join us for a tour of our winter series of exhibitions with our Gallery Guide and Auslan interpreter Karen Lantry, where you will learn more about the Gallery's exhibitions and events along with fascinating stories about the artworks on display. Bring a friend or two for a relaxed social afternoon.

For more information about the exhibitions on display check our website

<https://mrag.org.au/exhibitions/current-future/>



Events like the Maitland Community Disability Expo play a vital role in strengthening community ties and promoting inclusion. They highlight the importance of accessible services and ensure that individuals living with disability have the information and resources they need to live fulfilling and independent lives.

We encourage our members to attend, support the event, and help spread the word throughout the community. It promises to be a worthwhile and informative day for all involved.

Hosted by The Disability Events Community (DEC) – NSW

Please contact us either by phone 4934 9859 or email, artgallery@maitland.nsw.gov.au if you would like to discuss accessibility or any requirements that would make your visit easier. The Gallery is wheelchair accessible.

Where: Maitland Regional Art Gallery, 230 High Street Maitland

When: Saturday, August 15 from 2:00pm - 3:00pm

Contact to reserve a spot
This is a free event

There's a common saying around the Shed: "It all goes down the same way – tea, coffee, even a beer – it's all got water in it!" While there's a bit of truth in that, it doesn't tell the whole story. As we get older, drinking enough plain water becomes more important than ever.

Our bodies are made up of around 60% water, and it plays a vital role in keeping everything running smoothly – from regulating body temperature to keeping joints lubricated and helping digestion. But here's the catch: as we age, our sense of thirst weakens. That means we may not feel thirsty even when our body actually needs fluid.

Why Tea, Coffee and Beer Aren't Enough

Yes, tea and coffee do contain water, but they also contain caffeine, which can act as a mild diuretic – meaning it can make you urinate more and potentially lose fluid. A couple of cups won't hurt, but relying on them alone isn't ideal.

Alcohol, including beer, is even more dehydrating. It increases fluid loss and can leave you more dehydrated than when you started. So while it's fine to enjoy a drink socially, it shouldn't be counted as part of your daily hydration.

What Happens If We Don't Drink Enough?

Even mild dehydration can have noticeable effects, especially for older adults. These can include:

- Fatigue and low energy
- Headaches
- Dizziness or light-headedness
- Difficulty concentrating
- Increased risk of falls

Longer-term dehydration can also contribute to more serious issues like kidney problems and urinary tract infections.

How Much Water Do We Need?

A good rule of thumb is around 6–8 glasses of fluid a day, with most of that being plain water. Of course, this can vary depending on the weather, your activity level, and your health.

Simple Tips to Stay Hydrated

- Keep a water bottle nearby while working in the Shed
- Take a drink before you feel thirsty
- Have a glass of water with each meal
- Increase your intake on hot days or when doing physical work
- Add a slice of lemon or lime if you prefer a bit of flavour

The Bottom Line

Tea, coffee and the occasional beer can certainly be enjoyed, but they shouldn't replace water altogether. Think of them as extras, not the main event. Keeping properly hydrated helps you feel better, think more clearly, and stay safer – both in and out of the Shed.

So next time you put the kettle on, maybe pour yourself a glass of water as well. Your body will thank you for it.

