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Issue 112

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**Maitland Community Men's Shed welcomes new members!**

**We are here to assist our supporters and friends.**

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**The Maitland Community Men's Shed would like to acknowledge our major supporters**



## The Shed Report.....

The Shed continues to produce the usual products, meanwhile, the grounds are receiving the long-awaited upgrades in the gardens. However, with this newsletter I would like to talk about support given to the community.

We produce many items for community entities, and, where possible provide some community residents with small articles and jobs.

Having retired some years ago and since joining the Shed I have also become involved with assisting at the many school Athletic carnivals around our district at Maitland Athletic facility, Fernley Dawes (Newcastle) and Glendale Sports centre.

At these events, it is common place to receive help from senior students from the competing schools. Its been a pleasure meeting and working with these Yr 9 and 10 students, They are helpful, articulate and engaged. They perform any tasks with fairness and an interest in learning new things.

The students enjoy becoming involved officiating at these events and are always eager to understand the reasons that we do what we do. It makes me realise that we may have more in common with our younger generation than differences

At this month's Board meeting, a motion was passed to extend honorary membership to carers and support workers, accompanying some of our shed members. This recognises the important work they do enabling our fellow shedders' greatest participation.

Our 2 recent shed closures on 30 July and 27 August, due to major work on the area electrical supply, have highlighted a communication difficulty we face when we

have to close the shed at short notice. Apologies if you were caught unawares by the second closure. In future, we will also send out a group email announcement in addition to notifications at toolbox meetings, notices on the notice board and Facebook alerts.

Four new directors were welcomed to their first board meeting this month. Preliminary discussions have been held about the roles they will play in our plans for the next steps in the development of MCMS. They look forward to working with shed members to plan the reorganisation of the work areas and further improve our shed.

The Board wish to thank the 7 members who have shown great participation and commitment by successfully completing first aid training. Jeff Dunn, Glen O'Brien, Graham Smith, Rees John, Allan Hancock and Scott Sessions are our newly qualified first aiders.

Take care and see you at the Shed.

*Charlie Sanders* - Chairman





### Aspect's Brilliant Brunch.....

On a sparkling spring day in late September a group of shed members visited Aspect Hunter School in Thornton for a 'Brilliant Brunch'. The Maitland Community Men's Shed has a long and strong relationship with this Aspect school and played a small part in helping transform a green field site in Thornton to the treasured place it is today.

Aspect is a school dedicated to serving students with autism. Autism is a lifelong developmental condition that affects how a person perceives and interacts with the world. It presents differently in every individual, with varying strengths, challenges, and support needs.

Aspect at Thornton has children from pre-school through to Year 12. It also provides support to families and students throughout the region through its 6 satellite programs with classes within Department Education and Catholic Schools. Aspect Hunter School works with some of the most vulnerable and misunderstood children in our community to ensure that they have opportunities to reach their full potential.

Our visit provided an update of the school's development plans, and a school tour gave us a glimpse into school life at Aspect. We visited some classrooms and were grateful that we didn't have to answer some of the harder questions that were being asked.

Beyond the purpose-built security fences and gates, it quickly became clear that Aspect is a caring



environment providing the highest levels of duty of care. Students are afforded the opportunities and knowledge to exercise control and make appropriate choices to maximise their independence and minimise personal risk.

As guests we were entertained by the choir and drum ensemble, asked about our ages, and our names by a range of students, and we were thanked for our past contributions to the school.

In the carpark at the conclusion of our visit we reflected that It was two hours of quiet time that made our hearts sing. It certainly will encourage us to renew an important relationship with Aspect and visit again to refurbish some of the outdoor furniture we built that has stood the test of time but, like us, could do with a bit of a makeover. We can highly recommend the brunch too, especially the barista coffee and the scones and jam.

Writer: **John Williams** - Men's Shed Reporter



### Birthdays This Month.....

Wayne Bailey, Bruce Campbell, Anne Maree Herbert-Park, Frank Loveridge, Andre Van Der Velde and John Williams





## My Grandma Believed That 'Cleanliness Is Next To Godliness'.....

My grandmother was a wily old lady who had a great influence on me during my formative years. She taught me about SP bookies and horse racing odds at an early age. I used to go with her to place her bets with 'Little Johnnie' our local SP bookie behind the factory block in the next street. I was posted in the entrance way to keep an eye out for the beat policeman who would visit Little Johnnie's known haunts on race day.

She'd had eleven children of her own so knew well how to gain a child's attention, confidence and cooperation. I used her 'reverse psychology' with my own children and grandchildren. I still remember how proud I felt when as a young child, she offered me her hand and asked if I could help her cross the busy local High St. She was, of course,



helping me cross the road.

I remember she had a saying that guided most occasions. If you left the door open, she would ask, 'were you born in a tent'. She had a collection of sayings about work that included, 'a good workman cleans up after themselves' or 'don't put it down put it away'.

My grandmother had a special list of sayings reserved solely for my grandfather who was a particularly untidy upholsterer. He could smoke and swear even with a mouthful of blue tacks when his job wasn't turning out how he would like. It never helped his mood when she would advise him to, 'measure twice and cut once' or 'don't blame the tools if you can't do the job' and in the next breath offer encouragement telling him, 'not to try to fix what wasn't broken' or 'leave it better than you found it' or 'if you're not proud of it don't sign your name to it'.

It amazes me that I remember with some clarity what she said all those years ago. It would help tremendously if I could apply the same clarity to what my wife asked me to buy for her from the shops this morning.

What we learn during our formative years can have lasting impacts on our habits for the rest of our lives. She was a terrific grandma (as we called her) but, by necessity a tough wife - just ask my grandfather and he'd tell you in a whispered voice if she wasn't in the room.

Writer: **John Williams** - Men's Shed Reporter



### BBQ News.....

Our Next Bunnings BBQ is on Saturday the 15th of November

A cartoon illustration of a man in a military-style uniform with a peaked cap, pointing his finger. Below him, the text 'YOUR BBQ NEEDS YOU' is written in a bold, stylized font.



## The Dead Dogs We Step Over And Ignore.....

Our Men's Shed is more than just a workspace - It's a sanctuary for mates, for creativity, and for creating a sense of wellbeing. The environment we create together shapes the experience for everyone. If you drive a 'Monster Ute' its an optional extra to allow traffic to merge or use blinkers for lane changes. However, cleanliness and tidiness must be compulsory in the shed.

Doing your bit to keep the shed clean and tidy are the cornerstones of a thriving shed. If we keep doing what we always do, we will keep getting what we always got. This is where the 'Dead Dogs' idea comes from. A dead dog is something we get used to, we accept, overlook or generally disregard. If you took snap shots in the cupboards, on the shelves, in the tearoom, dare I say in the laundry and toilets and around our workspaces it would show how grubby things can become. And... the camera never lies.

A tidy shed is a safe shed. Tools left lying around, sawdust on the floor, or cluttered benches can lead to accidents. By keeping our space clean we reduce the risk of trips, slips, and injuries and ensure tools and materials are stored properly and are easy to find.

Cleanliness/tidiness shows respect, builds shared responsibility and lowers frustration caused by misplaced, damaged or dirty equipment. A clean shed demonstrates pride in what we do and reinforces



es a sense of purpose and positivity

As we move to 'spring clean' our shed, rearrange the location of equipment, refresh and service machinery and consolidate our collection of tools keep an eye out for those dead dogs. Cleanliness isn't just about wiping down benches and putting tools back where they belong - it's more about building a culture of care. When we take pride in our shed, we take pride in ourselves and each other. It's a small act with a big impact.

Let's keep our shed clean, safe, and welcoming, At-the moment we probably need a little more godliness. It's everybody's responsibility.



**Remember, "This Is Your Shed". Be PROUD Of It And Contribute Where You Can.**





## From Chaos to Cosmos.....

We have now flooded the dog bed market. The team that brought you recycled dog beds made from reclaimed pallet timber has found a new use for this abundant material. They now have boot/shoe racks available to transform the trip hazards outside your front door into a neat and orderly storage space. It must be spring this month because there is a recurrent theme developing about cleaning up and getting organised.

*Turn This*



*Into This*



The timber shoe racks come in a variety of sizes and are virtually indestructible, like all of Ray and his team's products. Get your orders in now with Ray. They will make a lasting and quirky Christmas present.

Writer: **John Williams** - Men's Shed Reporter

## Morning Tea and You..... names have been changed to protect the innocent

It's 10:00 AM at the Shed. The kettle's whistling, the bikkies are out, and the blokes are gathering like moths to a flame or more accurately, like retirees to a Tim Tam.

But amid the clinking mugs and heated debates about whether the footy was better in the '80s, a silent drama unfolds: The Morning Tea Payment Shuffle.

You know the dance. One bloke reaches for his wallet, pats his pockets, and suddenly remembers he left it "in the car." Another swears he paid last week - 'Ask Kev, he saw me!' Kev, of course, has no memory of anything past 9:30.

Then there's Barry, who always arrives with a thermos and a smug grin. "Brought me own," he says, while casually helping himself to three packets of biscuits and the last of the milk.

Let's not forget the Donation Tin, that noble vessel of honesty and loose change. It sits there, dented and dignified, watching the parade of excuses roll by. Some days it's flush with gold coins. Other days, it's got a button, a New Zealand 20c coin, and a note that says 'IOU - Mick.'

I don't like to quote Joe Hockey, but he did coin a useful phrase about being a 'lifter' or a 'leaner'. Our profit and loss statement for morning teas is suggesting that we have too many leaners. Please remember to bring your tea money and 'kick the can'. There is no such thing as a free lunch or morning tea. You can pay \$40 dollars per head for high tea in the Hunter Valley or morning tea for \$1 at the shed.

Writer: **John Williams** - Men's Shed Reporter





## Trash or Treasure? John Found the Answer!.....

About six months ago, one of our shed members was approached at the shed by an elderly gentleman from the local community who arrived with a box of old bits and pieces.

At first glance, it looked more like a pile of junk than a cherished family heirloom. However, the gentleman believed it had once belonged to his grandfather and estimated it to be well over 100 years old. He asked if John, our resident master of recycling, could he somehow make sense of it and possibly restore it.

Even John was initially puzzled by the chaotic jumble of parts. But after many hours of research, he finally uncovered the truth. The mysterious object was actually an antique English Victorian writing slope or desk compendium that was manufactured in Liverpool by a company called, John Bagshaw & Manufacturers.

With its identity finally revealed, John began the

painstaking process of restoring it to its former glory. Crafted from fine wood, likely rosewood or coromandel and the piece featured a fitted interior with compartments and a tooled leather writing surface.

These portable desks were popular during the Victorian era, designed for travellers or for use in different rooms of a home. Their organized interiors typically included storage for letters, pens, and inkwells, making them both functional and elegant.

Over the course of six months, John meticulously reassembled the writing slope, restored the leather, and brought the wood back to life with careful staining.

Well done, John, another mystery solved, and a beautiful piece of history brought back to life.

Writer: *Steve O'Brien* - Shed News Editor





## MCMS Airport?.....



Promises have been made, and a great deal has been said about Sydney's second airport. It's opening day moves closer. Yet every Tuesday upstairs in the conference room of our shed we have our own state of the art airport. If you listen carefully, you may even hear the cabin crew announcement, 'Ladies

and gentlemen, we will be landing shortly. Please ensure your seatbelt is securely fastened, your seat back and tray table are in the upright position. Cabin crew, please prepare the cabin for landing.' Well, you will if you have a very good imagination.

Tuesday you can have fun flying with Radio control simulator planes or helicopters on the big screen upstairs. Try your hand at the controls of a true radio control model with the ability to fly aerobatics, crash without being hurt or damaging the aircraft, having it repaired ready to fly again in less than 5 seconds.

So come on boys, let your inner self be a little bit curious and adventurous, would you not like to try, and see if you can master the art of flying Radio control models without the cost of repair.

If you want to challenge your brain, would like to develop a skill to surprise the grandkids, or if you would just like to try something different, John and Darren will be able to assist if you need help, come and have a go. Tickets, passports, vaccinations and airport transfers not required. See you on Tuesday.

*Co-Writers:*

*John Williams and John Rissler*

## Just a Little Joke.....

My grandfather says to me, he goes, "when I was a boy you could walk into a grocery store with two dollars in your pocket and walk out with a loaf of bread, a dozen eggs, even a little butter!"

He says, "but now, these days, too many damn cameras."





## Your Legacy, Your Voice: Why Every Man Should Make a Will.....



I've been watching a show on ABC iView called 'I, Jack Wright'. I can recommend this. It's a six-part drama series about the last will and testament of a rich father who dies in unusual circumstances.

It explores the impacts of the terms of his will on his loved ones and extended family. I won't tell the story and spoil it for you but it did prompt me to think about my family and the currency and terms of my will.

Talk about wills, is a sensitive topic that's often pushed aside. Your will is not just a legal document, it's your final say, your legacy, and your gift of clarity to those you love.

A will matters because it avoids confusion for your family at a challenging time. A will ensures your chosen beneficiaries receive what you intend. To make a valid will you must be over 18 and of sound mind, you must sign it voluntarily and have it witnessed by two independent adults.

DIY will kits exist, but mistakes can cause legal headaches. A solicitor ensures your will is watertight and reflects your true intentions. Once you have made a will it's important to keep it up to date. The one constant in our lives is change so you need to accommodate any changes in your family, marital status, new assets and new intentions. This

means you should review your will every couple of years to maintain its currency.

Making a will isn't about dwelling on the end, it's about taking charge, showing love, and leaving peace behind. It's one of the most thoughtful things you can do for your family and community.

Writer: **John Williams** - Men's Shed Reporter



## A Brilliant Little Parable.....

'The rich industrialist was horrified to find the fisherman lying beside his boat, smoking a pipe.

'Why aren't you out fishing?' asked the industrialist.

'Because I have caught enough fish for the day.'

'Why don't you catch some more?'

'What would I do with them?'

'You could earn more money. Then you could have a motor fitted to your boat to go into deeper waters and catch more fish. Then you would have enough

money to buy nylon nets. These would bring you more fish and more money. Soon you would have enough money to own two boats... maybe even a fleet of boats. Then you would be a rich man like me.'

'What would I do then?'

'Then you could sit back and enjoy life.'

'What do you think I'm doing right now?'"

*From Timeless Simplicity by John Lane*



## QR Codes - Handy but Handle with Care.....

Over the past few years, QR codes have popped up everywhere. They are those little square black-and-white barcodes you see on signs, receipts, menus, bills, posters, and even in shop windows. By pointing your phone's camera at a QR code, you can be taken directly to a website, payment page, or online form without needing to type in a web address.

While QR codes can be very convenient, especially for things like checking a restaurant menu or paying a bill, they also come with risks - and unfortunately, scammers in Australia are catching on.

### *Why are QR Codes Risky?*

You can't see where it's taking you. Unlike typing in a website address yourself, you can't tell what site a QR code will open until you've already scanned it.

Scammers can trick you. Criminals are now creating fake QR codes that lead to dangerous websites. These sites might try to steal your personal information, ask for banking details, or download harmful software onto your phone.

They can be placed anywhere. A scammer could stick a fake QR code over a real one on a poster, at a bus stop, or even on a bill or letter you receive in the mail.

### *How Seniors are Being Targeted*

Many older Australians are now used to scanning QR codes after COVID check-ins, and scammers are banking on that trust. Sadly, seniors are more likely to scan a code without thinking twice, assum-

ing it's safe because it looks "official."

### *How to Stay Safe*

- Only scan codes from trusted sources. If you don't know where a QR code came from, don't scan it.
- Check for tampering. If a code looks like it's been stuck on top of another one, avoid it.
- Be careful with bills. Scammers have been sending fake bills with QR codes that direct you to pay into the wrong account. Always use the official website or app of your provider instead of scanning.
- Look at the link before clicking. Most phones will show you the web address before opening it, check that it looks genuine. If it seems odd or misspelled, don't proceed.
- When in doubt, don't scan. It's always safer to type in the website address yourself or ring the business directly.

### *The Bottom Line*

QR codes are a handy tool, but they are not automatically safe. Treat every QR code with caution - the same way you would treat an email or phone call asking for personal or banking details. A moment's pause could save you from a scam.

Writer: *Steve O'Brien* - Shed News Editor



## Lithium Batteries - Friends or Foe.....

Rechargeable electrical items can now be found in every aspect of our daily lives. Lithium-ion batteries are in everything from your phone and laptop to your car, e-bike and beard trimmer and are often referred to as lifestyle enablers. However, as well as making life easier they can, occasionally, try to burn your house down. They're small, full of energy, and mostly well-behaved... until they're not.

Lately, lithium batteries have been making headlines for all the wrong reasons. In NSW the number of battery fires has tripled since 2019. Fire and Rescue NSW responds to nearly 6 lithium battery fires per week.

If damaged or improperly charged, lithium batteries can overheat uncontrollably. This is called thermal runaway and can lead to fires and explosions. Lithium battery fires can be fast, fierce, and frightening. Even after a fire is put out, lithium batteries can re-

ignite. Water is often required to cool the cells completely. You don't need to toss out your rechargeable gadgets but like most things in life, you do need to manage the risks to enjoy the benefits.

### *Stay Safe by*

- Storing batteries in cool, dry places away from direct sunlight.
- Never charging damaged or swollen batteries.
- Using original or certified chargers.
- Not leaving devices charging unattended - especially overnight.
- Keeping spare batteries in separate containers to avoid short circuits.

**ALWAYS RECYCLE LITHIUM-ION BATTERIES RESPONSIBLY IN ELECTRONIC WASTE BINS**

Writer: *John Williams* - Men's Shed Reporter



## October Picture Gallery.....





## Maitland Riverlights - Celebrate Diversity Through Food, Music And Dance



This year, The Levee, Central Maitland will transform into a global village on Saturday the 11th of October from 2pm - 9pm, where you can see, taste, feel and experience up to 50 different cultures from around the world.

Collect your Riverlights Cultural Passport on the day and explore your way through The Levee's global village. Stop by the World Stage, Language Lounge, Groove Fusion Stage and the Global Kitchen to experience a trip around the world right here in Maitland.

Don't miss the Riverlights Finale on the riverbank. From 8pm, the multi-layered finale will consist of a dazzling procession of luminous puppets, a lantern river flotilla, and captivating music, dance and lighting displays.

Maitland Riverlights is made possible thanks to the generous support of the NSW Government through Multicultural NSW Stronger Together Major Festival Local Council Grant and Destination NSW through the Regional Flagship Event Fund.

We are pleased to announce presenting partner The Mutual Bank for their support in Riverlights 2025.

### *Week Of Riverlights*

The region's biggest cultural festival will return with

a vibrant week-long school holiday program running from Tuesday, the 7th of October to Friday, the 10th of October.

We invite locals and visitors alike to experience, learn from and connect with different cultures in a fun and inclusive environment.

The program will feature an exciting array of cultural workshops, live performance and interactive activities held across various locations throughout the city of Maitland.

### *Cultural Villages*

Riverlights Cultural Villages are the heart of the festival. Representing up to 50 different nations and cultures, the Cultural Villages offer free interactive experiences, delicious food samplings and arts and crafts to purchase. Visit each one to taste traditional food and learn more about the culture.

Be sure to collect a stamp in your official Riverlights Cultural Passport, which will be available from the festival volunteers at the event or for download on the website closer to the event.

Location: The Levee Central Maitland

More Info: Ph 02 4931 2801

Email: [events@maitland.nsw.gov.au](mailto:events@maitland.nsw.gov.au)

**MAITLAND  
RIVERLIGHTS**

**Saturday 11 October**  
2pm to 9pm  
The Levee, Central Maitland

[maitlandriverlights.com.au](http://maitlandriverlights.com.au)







### Getting Out and About - A Boost for Health and Wellbeing.....

As we get older, it can be all too easy to spend more time at home and gradually withdraw from the activities and people we once enjoyed. While a quiet day at home has its comforts, regularly getting out and about plays a vital role in maintaining both our physical health and emotional wellbeing.

Isolation is one of the biggest challenges faced by seniors, and it can creep up without us realising. Staying socially connected, whether through visiting friends, joining community groups, or simply taking a stroll and chatting with neighbours, helps to keep feelings of loneliness at bay.

The benefits go far beyond companionship. Physically, gentle activities such as walking, gardening, or even heading to the shops help keep our joints moving, muscles active, and circulation healthy. Just as importantly, being out in the fresh air and interacting with others stimulates the mind, lifts our mood, and strengthens our sense of belonging.

Our Shed is one example of how getting out and engaging with others can make a real difference. Whether it's working on projects, learning new skills, or just sharing a cuppa and a chat, these small



but meaningful moments add up to better health and greater happiness.

So, make it a habit, step outside, connect with others, and keep moving. It's one of the simplest and most effective ways to live longer, healthier, and more fulfilling lives.

Writer: *Steve O'Brien* - Shed News Editor

