

Official Opening Mount Beauty & District Men's Shed

19th February 2016

By Alex Craig

After over four years of hard work the Mount Beauty & District Men's Shed finally opened its doors officially last Friday.

The opening ceremony and the unveiling of a plaque were performed by Bill Tilley (MLA Benambra) in front of a crowd of about 125, consisting of Shed members, their families, friends and supporters.

President Dick Puttyfoot said that the purpose of the Men's Shed is to provide a place where men can work on private and community projects and mentor young people.

“During the process of working together an invaluable metamorphosis takes place,” he said.

“Members start to talk to each other, mateship develops, and men may open up about health problems or pass on helpful information to each other.”

The movement for a Men's Shed in Mount Beauty began in 2011 when Ian Docking, soon to be the founding president, suggested that Alpine Health's Community Health and Advisory Groups (CHAG) support Mount Beauty in its need for a Men's Shed as it had supported Myrtleford and Bright.

A public interest meeting was held in October 2011, the first committee met shortly after and the group was incorporated in November.

The new group was offered the use of a slice of land near the Mount Beauty Neighbourhood Centre, partly owned by Alpine Shire and partly by AGL Energy, and in late 2013 received a grant of \$60,000 from the State government, supplemented by \$8,000 from the Alpine Shire.

Extra funds were raised through local service clubs, members working at local events and especially through a scheme to build 33 bunks for the Outdoor School Bogong, a project which brought many men into the organisation and taught them the basics of carpentry.

Construction of the shed began in October 2014, using local tradesmen and volunteer work from members with many local businesses donating time and materials to the project.

Project manager Ian Howley said that a core group of members had clocked up over 4,000 hours over the past 18 months working on the shed, and that now completed, the Shed is fully paid for.

“We have spent over \$102,000, as well as in-kind contributions estimated to equal \$20,000,” he said.

“While we are financially debt free we owe a big debt to the community for all the help we have received – our goal is to repay that debt with our service to the Mount Beauty community over the years ahead.”