



# Shed Torque

The Official Newsletter of the  
Mount Beauty & District Men's Shed

April 2025

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It's time again for me to make some commentary on the happenings in our shed over the past month, though the older I get, the quicker they go past.

First off, on a personal note, the month of April saw me celebrate my 91st birthday, and my wife and I, celebrate our 70<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary, which is the equivalent of at least three life sentences, with time off for good behaviour.

A feat not often accomplished these days.

Thinking about old times and memories affected me, and it seems *Paul L'Huillier* has been looking back also with this next memory.

**November 2014: Dick and Paul sealing the Main Shed floor.** This was done before all the work was done to set up the Main Shed. It took us all of 2015 to prepare the Shed for the opening to members on 16th January, 2016, with the official opening on 19<sup>th</sup> February 2016. *They were good times.*



The Shed Opening, a day to be remembered.



## Remember when?

### THE OPENING

There are not so many different words, to say just how we feel,  
We declare our Men's Shed open; it doesn't feel quite real.  
Look here; it's just a building, from an idea, it grew and grew,  
Now we're so proud to show the world, and be here to welcome you,

We don't open up a building, but our hearts are opened too,  
We welcome all and sundry, white or black, or just dark blue,  
There's 'mate-ship' by the bucket load, doesn't matter what your creed,  
If you can talk, or make a joke, you will be a friend indeed.

You don't need to be a "chippie", and you don't need so many skills,  
If you can laugh, and you can talk, you will lose **all** your ills,  
There's someone here who'll lend an ear, help you with your thoughts,  
Will talk with you, help you through, and the cost to you is 'naughts'.

There are people here we must thank, before this great day ends,  
Some people call them 'Sponsors'. We prefer to call them, 'friends',  
They must know, just who they are, but there's sure to be a list,  
If they were blonde and beautiful, for sure they'd all be kissed.

Our honoured guests we welcome, we're happy that you came,  
You leave us with fond memories, and hope you feel the same,  
Now help us with our open day, and let's really hit the ground running.  
Let's all say, " We love OUR SHED, and wouldn't be dead for quids".

Vinnie Beeston – 2016

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### Off-Cuts (Happenings at the Shed)

- **Kindling** — production is in full swing thanks to Peter Munday, Peter Mills, John Driver, Larry Gardam and Duncan Robertson. We have 250 in storage. (50 were in storage from last winter). *Some help from those who attend the Shed would be appreciated. If you only come to the Shed for a chat and morning tea, how about staying an hour and helping with kindling production?* It's the Shed's main source of funding.
- **Cleaning out a member's Shed** – member Ray Connelly sadly died recently, and the contents of his Shed were offered to the Men's Shed. Ray had a very well-equipped shed, and many items were helpful in the Shed to use or sell.
- **Test and Tagging Electrical Tools/Equipment**—Phil Armitage has developed a system for digitalising, recording (bar codes), and tagging tested tools. The Shed has a 'state-of-the-art' testing machine that Vass



*M...* (Qualified Electrician) will use to test tools and equipment electrical leads.

- **Dust extraction additions** — *Mal Darwent* is adding piping and covers to additional machinery.
  - **Child's High Chair repair and painting** — *Warwick Mitchell* repaired the chair, and *Paul L'Huillier* is doing the painting.
  - **Stilts for Secondary College** — *Warwick Mitchell* has produced a pair of Stilts (poles with foot rests).
  - **Tool rationalisation** — The Shed has many tools of the same type. *Don Terry and Phil Armitage* have taken on the task of sorting out what we need and what we can discard or sell. It's a big task. We have lots of 'stuff'. Thanks, *Don and Phil*, for taking on this task.
  - **Shelves for the Uniting Church Opp Shop** — *Mal Darwent and Don Terry* are preparing the timber to add to the existing shelving system.
  - **CNC Router** — *Phil Armitage* has produced a 'grid' on the router's bed that will allow users to position and clamp jobs more easily on the bed.
  - **Grass Cutting** — The Shed has an MoU with the NH Centre, in which we agree to cut all the grass on NH Centre land when we cut our own. *Ian Howley* was hard at it last week. Thanks, *Ian*.
  - **ANZAC Day (25th April)** — Two of our Shed members always lay a wreath on this day. *Irvin Beeston, Warwick Mitchell, Reg Hollonds, and Len Sims* have done this in the past. The RSL uses the Shed's BBQ for their gathering after the ceremony. Thanks, *Warwick and Reg*, for laying the wreath this ANZAC Day.
  - **Future Proofing Your Shed** workshop, (AMSA), on Thursday, 8 May 2025 Lavington, NSW. *Ian Howley* and *Paul L'Huillier* are attending this on behalf of the Shed.
  - **Members get well** — *Les Bevan* had a medical procedure last week, *Reg Hollonds* has had a hand/wrist problem for some time now and also problems with his balance, and *Phil Armitage* had an accident and broke a couple of ribs. *An update:* *Les* is moving around and has visited the Shed for morning tea, *Phil* is mending well, and *Reg* is up and about after a couple of nights in hospital.
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## ANZAC Day

### My contribution to Anzac Day

I have always paid my respect to our 'Heros' no matter when or where I may have been, so maybe a couple of anecdotes from my travels will set the scene for this special day.

I passed through Gildandra NSW one time and took a little time to learn, to feel, and re-live the spirit, that makes Aussies who and what they are.

I checked out the 'Cooee March'.

In a nutshell. The 'Cooee March' started in 1915, with two Gilgandra local lads, who heard that recruits were needed for the war in Europe/the Middle East/Gallipoli. They organised a march from Gilgandra to Sydney, and on the way, they would shout 'Cooee' in all the towns and villages to get the locals to enlist in the Army for service.

They started off with 35 recruits in Gilgandra and arrived in Sydney with 350, which then started a trend that spread throughout the country.

Not too many returned, but all of them deserve to be remembered.

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My second snippet concerned:

### Old John

I met "Old John" on Anzac Day in the caravan park in Proserpine, and just in passing, we got talking about how good life is just now.

After a few minutes, I learned that John was now 83 years old, and his wife a pretty young 79. They were travelling around Australia in their little Mazda Bus/Motor home, and after 20 years, were still enjoying every minute.

A little more talk and I learned that Old John was an ex-commando, having enlisted in the Australian army as a teenager to serve during WW2. His tours of duty took him through the islands of New Guinea, fighting the Japanese, onto Hiroshima, then subsequently to Japan, after the surrender.

I asked him what his feelings were toward the Japanese soldiers he was fighting against then, and what his attitude was now, after all this time?

I felt sorry for him trying to answer my question, and had second thoughts, but it was too late by then. It seemed to re-kindle so many sad, emotional memories, and brought not just tears to his eyes, but also a saddening sob to his words.

I can only relate his reply in John's own words, and hope that it touches you like it did me.

**Close to tears**, he told me, *"They were honourable, dedicated soldiers, and nearly equal to us Aussies. They would fight to the death; they didn't want capture and imprisonment. They were all "Kamikaze's".*

*"When we did an 'operation', maybe half were killed, and we captured the living, mostly against their will, they would rather be dead, not prisoners.*

*We would then go back up the track to check out the wounded. If we got to them before the wild pigs found them, we would save the best of them, and I sent them back with my men".*

*"What was left, I had to deal with my own way.*

***It hurt. Every time, it hurt".***

*"The bomb on Hiroshima may have been devastating, but it did stop many more 'operations' and a lot more of the hurt, on both sides"*

*"I have been back to Japan a couple of times since then. I still believe that they are honourable and dedicated people, and they have my respect. Their soldiers were then doing the same job that we were—protecting what they thought was right".*

John and I parted with the words between us, "But all that is passed, and life is now good".

We agreed, **and we remembered.**

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I spent an hour at the cenotaph and witnessed the parade down Holland Street in front of quite a large crowd.

The speeches and participants at the service were equally as good as those in the big cities, and they were a credit to our town.

However, my photographic skills were completely spoiled by a woman's head jumping in front of me, obscuring the picture of *Reg and Warwick* under the flags carrying our wreath up the walkway.

So if someone has a better picture please send me a copy.





*The display of wreaths to be presented.*

I presume all enjoyed the partying and two-up at the Mountain Monk Brewery afterwards.

### **A letter received from Mount Beauty RSL**

The Committee and Members of the Sub-Branch wish to express their sincere appreciation for your support in laying a wreath and lending your barbecue, which contributed to the success of our Anzac Day Commemoration Service.

Participation by Community Organisations such as yours ensures the spirit of ANZAC Day lives on. Thanking you once again.

*Yours sincerely  
Peter Bellman  
Secretary*

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### **Have a Laugh!**

#### **Drunks**

- You're not drunk if you can lie on the floor without holding on.
- I can tell when my wife drinks, her face gets blurred.
- A man arrives home so drunk his wife chases him with a broom. He turns and says "are you cleaning, or flying somewhere"
- A drunk vomits on a dog, as the dog runs away, he says, "I don't remember eating that"
- You know you're drunk when you feel sophisticated but can't pronounce it.
- You know you're drunk when you get out of bed and miss the floor.
- I got home and my wife said, "how many drinks have you had?" I said, "I don't know- I'm an alcoholic, not an accountant".

*Cheers*



## And still the Busy Little Bees are slaving in The Shed



*Peter Munday is always doing something...and always offers to help.*



*Peter Mills is working on the slats for two garden seats. Don Terry is also involved with this project.*



*250 bags in storage*

**1. Kindling production** — Larry Gardam and Peter Mills are photographed on the Splitter. Helpers have been Larry Gardam, Peter Mills, Peter Munday, John Driver, and Duncan Robertson. Thanks for the assistance.

**2. Storage Shed (Kindling)** — 250 bags in storage.

**3. Child's High Chair repair** — Repaired by Warwick and painted by Paul.

**4. Planter Box with shelf** — Clients purchased both Boxes that Warwick made for \$75.00 each. Top job, Warwick ... and thanks.



*Larry Gardam & Peter Mills  
(on the Kindling Splitter)  
Peter Munday has also been a huge contributor to kindling production.*



*Paul L'Huillier, undercoating the High Chair, which Warwick Mitchell repaired.*





*Vass is relocating all the roller door locks to waist level because bending down to floor level was becoming difficult for us.*



*Ian Howley is painstakingly sorting two trailer loads of items retrieved from Ray Connolly's garage.*



*Planter Box – Clients are delighted.*

**Community Bank**

**Mount Beauty**

**& District**

**B Bendigo Bank**

*A major supporter – thank you.*

## This month's Member Profile

**Paul L'Huillier** (Shed committee member & past treasurer)

*Irvin is asking the questions:*

### How long have you lived in the area?



My wife, Helen, and I moved to Bogong Village in 1973 as young physical education/outdoor education teachers to work at the recently established Bogong School Camp for four years. Then, we moved to Mt Beauty to teach at the Secondary College and raise our two daughters, Kate and Brooke.

### What did you do before and after retiring

After working as a physical education/outdoor education teacher for 22 years (Alexandra High School, Bogong School Camp & Mt Beauty Secondary College), I worked with the Australian Ski Federation for eight years as the cross-country skiing development officer and national coach, coaching at two Winter Olympics (1988 (Canada) & 1992 (France)). Then, looking for a career change, I managed the Mt Beauty Swimming Pool and Sports Stadium with my wife, Helen, for eight years.

I retired in 2007 (aged 60) and have enjoyed the Kiewa Valley lifestyle with my wife, Helen, and friends. I have been heavily involved at the committee level and also 'hands-on' in several community organisations, including Birkebeiner Nordic Ski Club, the Kangaroo Hoppet, Alpine FM, Men's Shed, Alpine U3A, and recently the Tennis Club as treasurer. On arriving in the valley, I played a lot of cricket with the local club.

### What are your hobbies and interests?

Helen and I enjoy the outdoor lifestyle and have travelled and camped extensively throughout Australia and the Alpine High Country 4WDing. For exercise, I walk, lap swim at the pool, cycle, cross-country ski, and recently, I have taken up tennis again with the over-50s group after an absence of 35 years. Hobbies/Interests include Apple technology, website development and maintenance, reading, geocaching, navigation (maps & GPS), community assistance, gardening, and my five grandchildren.

I am interested in the Men's Shed and have been involved since its formation in 2011. I appreciate the friendship and camaraderie of our work days. A current challenge is learning how to use the new CNC Router (thanks, Phil).

### What do you like about the area?

The lifestyle, the mountains, the climate, and, of course, the snow. Having lived here for 50 years, we really appreciate how lucky we were to land a job here in 1973 (thanks to Brian Woinarski and Jim Crebbin).

### **Would you like to change anything about the place?**

We have witnessed many changes over the years and truly appreciate how the town has evolved. More parkland development is necessary, particularly in the large area opposite the Information Centre.

### **Where would you take visitors to showcase the area if visitors were coming here?**

The new Kiewa River Trail, West Kiewa Gorge Walk, Mermaid Beach, Rock Pool, Mountain Creek, Bogong Village, Falls Creek, and the Bogong High Plains offer stunning views. The view from Mt McKay is fantastic.

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### **"Time For a Mate" initiative**

This has been used twice over the last couple of weeks. So it works.

First, *Noel McDougall* volunteered his services to transport 'yours truly' for work to be done on my eyes (I was not allowed to drive), thanks *Noel*.

Second, *Rob Van der Linden* volunteered to transport *Shane Clooney* for medical scans.

You don't realise how good your Shed Mates are till you need them.

*Thanks to all our volunteer drivers.*

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### **More laughs!**





- My wife said she wanted something black and lacy for her birthday. I bought her a pair of football boots.
  - My wife said I should buy her something nice to run around in. I bought her a tracksuit.
  - If God had intended for us to touch our toes, he would have placed them higher.
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I saw this article in the **Wodonga Men's Shed Newsletter**, which shows just what a state our local medical service is in, and how much interest our state governments care about us.

There must be some way to pressure the authorities to align our facilities with an acceptable system.

Could our Men's Shed organisation do anything to apply some pressure? What are your thoughts?

**Copied from Wodonga Men's Shed April Newsletter:**

### **Greenfield Hospital site for Albury Wodonga.**

On Saturday, 29th March, I attended a rally featuring A/W mayors, a local general practitioner, an Albury pediatric surgeon with 40 years of experience, an Albury Wodonga Health administrator, a nurse from the local Albury hospital emergency department, and a retired ambulance officer, all of whom spoke passionately about the plight of our hospital system. However, the most moving address came from Andrew, whose father had spent three weeks in Corryong hospital due to a blood infection.

He was showing good signs of improvement but then became quite ill and needed to be taken to Albury Hospital for further tests. He left Corryong at 7:45, and after 5 hours of waiting for an ambulance at Albury, he was admitted to the emergency department at 3:30, where he was diagnosed with a blockage in the blood supply to his bowel. However, due to the lack of available beds in the hospital, he lost his chance for surgery, leaving him with 6 to 12 hours to live. He died in the emergency department the following morning.

According to GP Lachlan McKeeman, many stories like this suggest we have a broken hospital system in Albury Wodonga, which serves both cities and 13 surrounding council areas.

Back in 2021, both states committed to a greenfield site for a new hospital in the area, yet now they refuse to honour that commitment.

Statistics from regions similar in size to ours indicate that we have been sidelined, with many suggestions, because we are two different states. Neither state is willing to combine its funding, which is evident in other areas of each state. This attitude

impoverishes our hospital system, where Albury and Wodonga Health Services merged with Albury Wodonga Health (AWH) in July 2009, making it indivisible, not two separate entities:

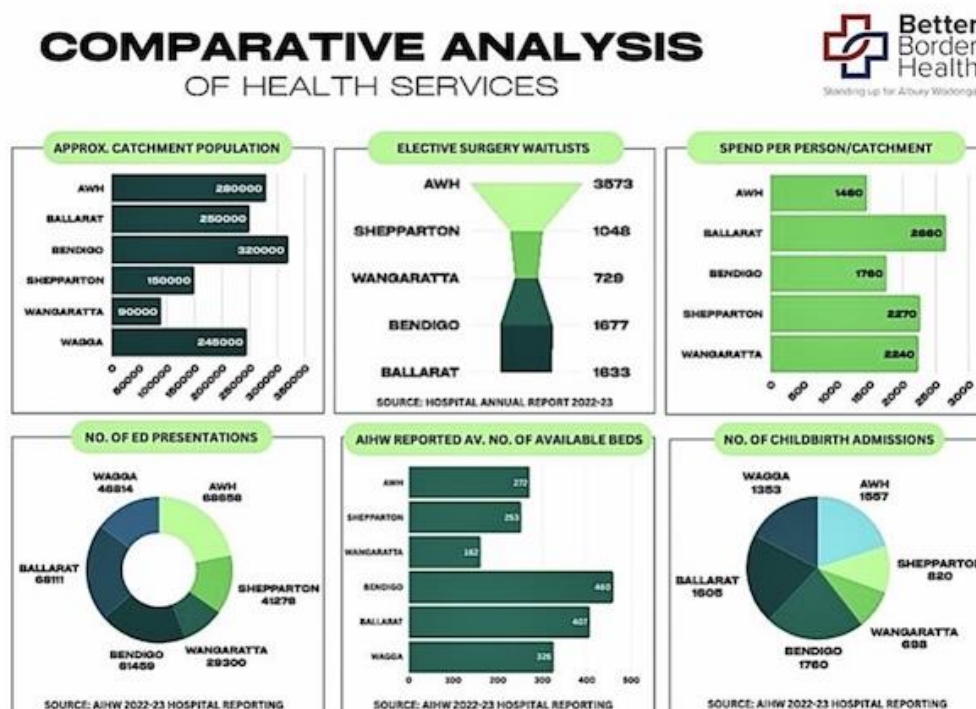
*WE ARE A CROSS-BORDER HEALTH SERVICE.*

We in this community cannot be apathetic about this issue as we or someone dear to us is in an emergency where our lives might depend on adequate hospital services that, at this moment, are not available. We are the most prominent regional area between our two major cities, Melbourne and Sydney.

AWH currently operates between 115 and 125 per cent of capacity daily, whereas government guidelines recommend a rate of 85 per cent. This results in patient waiting times in the emergency department (ED) and elective surgery wait times that are double those of similar-sized hospitals in other areas. Occupancy rates above 85 per cent are considered perilous, increasing both the risk of medical errors and staff burnout. Compounding the issue of hospital congestion is the fact that ambulance ramping is another consequence of the lack of beds.

The 2029 date for the supposed completion of the extension to Albury Hospital, which includes one new ward with 35 beds, is inadequate given the daily shortage of 50 to 75 beds.

This situation reflects the needs of the fastest growing rural community in Australia.



## Last words

Although news and action have been rather slow this month, we've done our best to entertain and inform you of the 'goings on'.

I hope our '**Shed Torque**' is of interest to you, and will accept any input that you can add, just e-mail any comments you might have to [vinniebeeston@gmail.com](mailto:vinniebeeston@gmail.com) and get your name in the press.

See you all next month.

*Irvin Beeston (Editor)*

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## Our Supporters. Thank You!

