

THE SHEDDER

Shoulder to shoulder for every man, and his Men's Shed.

10TH NATIONAL MEN'S SHED GATHERING

The Future of Sheds

Winter Roots & Shoots
WITH YATES

SHEDDER IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Cliffy Cousins



**AUSTRALIAN
MEN'S SHED
ASSOCIATION**

Shoulder to Shoulder

WINTER 2024

1300 550 009 | amsa@mensshed.net | mensshed.org

2024 Shed Diary

- 15**
July **National Shed Development Programme**
Round 28 applications open (Cat 1–5)
- 26**
July **Schools Tree Day**
Planet Ark
- 13**
Aug **Northern Rivers NSW Men’s Health Muster**
Hosted by Bangalow Men’s Shed
- 16**
Aug **National Men’s Shed Awards**
Nominations close
- 23**
Aug **National Shed Development Programme**
Round 28 applications close (Cat 1–4)
- 1–7**
Sept **Men’s Shed Week**
- 4–5**
Sept **10th National Men’s Shed Gathering**
Bridgeport Hotel, Murray Bridge SA
- 6**
Sept **National Shed Development Programme**
Round 28 applications close (Cat 5)
- 17–19**
Sept **Henty Machinery Field Days**
Spanner in the Works? health checks
- 10**
Oct **World Mental Health Day**
- 9 & 10**
Nov **Garage Sale Trail**
- 16 & 17**
Nov **Garage Sale Trail**
- 19**
Nov **International Men’s Day**

The Australian Men’s Shed Association acknowledges Traditional Owners of Country throughout Australia and recognises their continuing connection to lands, waters and communities. We pay our respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures; and to Elders past and present.

AMSA welcomes new Chairman, Luke Clifton



Shedders,

I'm delighted to introduce myself as the new Chair of the Australian Men's Shed Association, an organisation I am immensely proud to both be associated with and to serve.

My passion for this great Australian movement started in a way that I'm sure is not unfamiliar. As a young boy, growing up in the NSW country town of Goulburn, I used to sit watching my dad tinker with things in his own garage on a weekend. He was a mechanic by trade and seemed to have an interest in (and knack for) fixing things. I watched as he tinkered, and I had endless questions on how all this stuff worked. I'm sure he went down to the garage for some peace and quiet too, which he didn't really get while I was there. But, I remember the conversations that we had not realising at the time how important they were. The Men's Shed movement takes these same timeless qualities to a grand scale, reaching thousands from coast to coast. Allowing members to not only use and share their life long learnt skills but also gifting comrades space to be together to share stories, shoulder to shoulder. What you do matters and it makes a difference to all those you share a shed with.

I must take a moment to acknowledge the exceptional leadership of our outgoing Chair, Paul Sladdin. His tireless dedication and vision have steered our organisation through significant growth and transformation over the past six years. We owe him a debt of gratitude for his unwavering commitment to community empowerment and inclusivity.

Since assuming my role on the board, I have been deeply moved by the outpouring of support and stories from individuals whose lives have been touched by the Men's Shed movement. It is with this heartfelt sentiment that I envision building upon Paul's legacy. Together with our executive team, I am committed to fostering AMSA's values and amplifying the impact of our collective efforts across the nation.

I eagerly anticipate the opportunity to connect with many of you in the coming months, to listen to your stories and experiences at the Shed. Your voices are integral to shaping the future of our organisation, and I am humbled and honoured to serve as your Chair.

Luke

Dear Shedders,

We're heading to the Bridgeport Hotel in Murray Bridge (South Australia) for our 10th National Men's Shed Gathering on 4 & 5 September 2024 – just in time to celebrate Men's Shed Week!

With the program set to inspire conversations about The Future of Sheds, we'll have displays and discussions exploring everything from emerging technologies to membership growth and the sustainability of your shed.

There'll be plenty of chances to see old shed mates, and make new ones. We kick off the social program on Wednesday with a Shedder's Big BBQ Breakfast at Murraylands Men's Shed. Then after a day of conferencing we head over to the 1924 Riverfront Steakhouse for the Welcome Reception. On Thursday evening we cap it all off with the Shed Mates Shedder's Dinner.

There's stacks in store... We can't wait to meet you there!

David Helmers
Australian Men's Shed Association



Scan the QR code for more info
or give us a call on 1300 550 009



THE *future* OF SHEDS

Australian Men's Sheds
in 2024 & beyond

10TH NATIONAL MEN'S SHED GATHERING
4 & 5 SEPTEMBER | MURRAY BRIDGE, SA



**AUSTRALIAN
MEN'S SHED
ASSOCIATION**
Shoulder to Shoulder



Sheds & More



2024 National Men's Shed Awards nominations open

AMSA's National Men's Shed Awards give the Men's Shed community an opportunity to recognise the outstanding work of Men's Sheds around Australia.



Supported by AMSA's major partner Fair Dinkum Builds, the National Men's Shed Awards look for Sheds and efforts of all sizes to celebrate the simple greatness of Men's Sheds from all over the country.

In 2024, the Awards fall under four categories:

- **Innovation:** a unique or unusual fundraising activity
- **Sustainability:** a unique or interesting recycling activity
- **Men's Health:** promoting men's health and wellbeing
- **Shed of the Year:** a Shed doing great things, inside and out

Award winners are announced alongside the recipient of the Ted Donnelly Lifetime Contribution Award at the AMSA National Gathering every two years.

The 2022 National Men's Shed Awards were announced at the 9th National Men's Shed Gathering in Albury NSW, recognising seven Men's Sheds across six categories.

Members of the Wodonga Men's Shed (VIC) attended the Gathering Gala Dinner to accept their award for 2022 Shed of the Year.

"The Shed of the Year award is not about shed size or membership numbers. This year we were

looking for (and found) a shed doing excellent things within the shed, as well as alongside community members and most exceptionally creating value for Men's Sheds across the country," said Mr Sladdin.

The Wodonga Men's Shed was established over 10 years ago and despite shared challenges over the last few years has continued to fundraise and support community groups and has retained almost 100 members – demonstrating resilience and adaptability.

The Shed is well respected in the community and enjoy excellent community support.

Recipients of the 2022 Shed Awards were also on hand for the presentation at the Gala Dinner, which was followed by entertainment from AMSA friend and host of the Association's podcast, The Shed Wireless, John Paul Young.

Nominations are now open for the 2024 National Men's Shed Awards.

For more information, download the Information Sheet and Nomination Form from the mensshed.org/shed-community/shed-awards or call 1300 550 009.

Recipients will be announced at the 10th National Men's Shed Gathering *Shed Mates* Shedder's Dinner on Thursday 5 September 2024.

*Building Great Sheds,
shoulder to shoulder*



**AUSTRALIAN
MEN'S SHED
ASSOCIATION**
Shoulder to Shoulder

Every man and his sheep line up for health checks at Mudgee Small Farm Field Days

Stuart Torrance



Last weekend's Mudgee Small Farm Field Days was the latest event for the *Spanner in the Works?* men's health program. Following the foundation forged at the Henty Field Days (supported by AMSA partner Uncle Toby's), these men's health check/chat programs are reaching men that haven't seen their local doctor since the last blue moon... or maybe even longer!

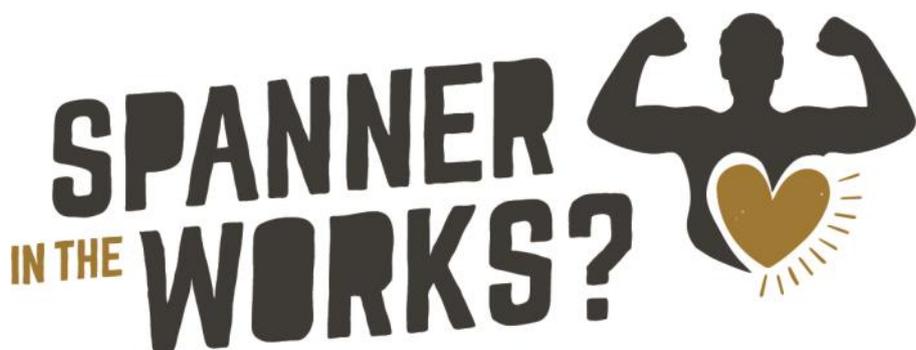
AMSA Shed Development Coordinator - Health and Wellbeing, Stuart got a little too enthusiastic inviting any and every male to have a health check/chat. Students from Western Sydney University Rural School performed blood pressure and blood sugar checks along with a holistic health survey.

Utilising students from numerous health streams to conduct the health check/chats serves two very important functions. The participants start a conversation about their health and have a great introduction to the health network. The students get some much-needed clinician/patient interaction time without the pressure of an intense environment such as the emergency department, learning to and how to ask those important questions that will draw out the health and wellbeing needs of their clients.

The Mudgee Men's Shed were in the right place at the right time, being able to support such an important health initiative as well as being able to showcase their Shed facilities and projects past and present to the teams of visitors and other Shedders that came for a look-see. The shedders displayed their lead lighting endeavours, as well as some creative steel man construction going on in the metal shop.

Health events like these are prime examples of health events worthy of NSDP funding. This could be a small suicide awareness workshop, regional shed gathering with health education and local health organisations setting up stands and engaging attendees. Read more about NSDP grants at mensshed.org/nsdp

Talk to AMSA Shed Development Coordinator - Wellbeing and Health Stuart Torrance to discuss your ideas and take a look at the Men's Shed Gathering and Health event manual in the AMSA Resource Library (visit the Member Portal to access).



**WHEN WAS YOUR LAST SERVICE?
VISIT MALEHEALTH.ORG.AU FOR MORE INFO**

Governance seminars strengthening shed practices around the country

Running a men's shed as a not-for-profit organisation requires a lot of forms and paperwork, certain roles must be filled, and records kept correctly – basically it requires good governance.

This year Justice Connect's Not-for-profit Law ran a series of governance seminars specifically for men's sheds hosted by AMSA - in Brisbane, Geelong, Ballarat and Shepparton.

The seminars are designed to help Sheds ensure that they are familiar with legal and everyday practices in their sheds, for the ultimate benefit of all members.

Delivered by Justice Connect NFP lawyers, session content covered three modules: Governing a NFP Organisation, Managing Member Disputes & Conflict on the Committee, and Safety, Risk & Insurance. Attendees were able to ask questions of lawyers who specialise in how the law applies to not-for-profits.

Geoff Haw, Secretary of the Sebastopol Men's Shed said of the day: "What an informative day for the 30+ Shed Committee members who attended the Victorian Men's Shed Governance Seminar! Everyone enjoyed the relaxed but focused presentation and discussions, specifically designed for the Shed environment.

The handouts were a valuable resource to take away, and the day provided highly relevant details relating to the responsibilities and management of committee members to run Sheds efficiently, whether incorporated or not. It really was an interactive training day in understandable language without any legal jargon. It's certainly of great value to both experienced and new Shed Committee members. Besides, we also had fun networking with others."

Max Keir Sect/Treasurer of the Katandra West & District Men's Shed attended the governance seminar in Shepparton Vic. He said "I attended with our OH&S committee member and found the information presented to be of great value, and very thought provoking. A summary of the seminar was passed onto our members at the July Shed meal night and meeting. Several changes to our operation will be presented to our Annual meeting within the next few weeks."

AMSA has been working alongside Justice Connect NFP Law for the benefit of Men's Sheds since 2021. This partnership has proven excellent value for Men's Shed Committee members, to help you navigate the laws that impact your Men's Shed. Keep your eyes on the events calendar at mensshed.org/events for more governance training coming to a shed near you!

THE FUTURE OF SHEDS PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT

Governance seminars at National Gathering

As part of the 10th National Men's Shed Gathering program we're excited to bring you access to training on a range of different topics to help Men's Sheds better understand (and implement) their key responsibilities and legal obligations.

The conference program will include *Module 1: A to Z of Men's Shed Governance*. *Module 2: Managing Member Disputes & Conflict on the Committee* and *Module 3: Safety, Risk & Insurance* will be delivered to the participating group via online workshops in the weeks following the Gathering.

The sessions are interactive and in plain language with no legal jargon. You'll have the opportunity to ask questions of lawyers who specialise in how the law applies to not-for-profits. This activity is very useful to all sheds, whether Incorporated, independent or auspiced.

These modules are usually delivered over a two-day seminar, with registrations at \$120 per person. However, your registration fee covers participation in all three modules.

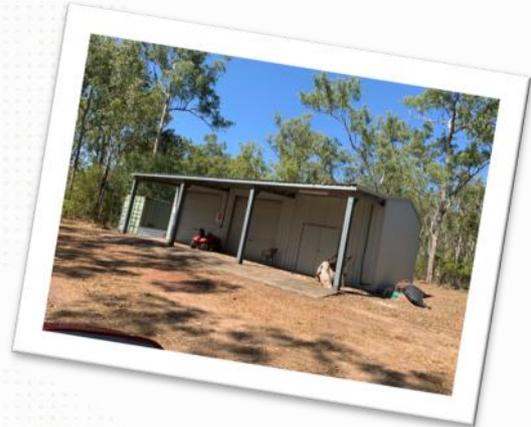
Places in these sessions are strictly limited, so pre-registration is required. Once you've completed your Gathering registration, simply email events@mensshed.net to secure your spot!

Tim Tours the Top End

AMSA's Shed Support SA/NT, Tim Kroehn, spent Men's Health Week touring sheds of the Northern Territory's top end. There was plenty to see and do, with lots of great new developments for sheds in the Northern Territory.



Dundee Men's Shed are in the early stages of becoming a fully-fledged shed. The location allows good access and development of social and trade skills to be used. The existing sheds are in use and the shedders are keen to improve on them.



Batchelor Community Shed has been in recess for a while but it only takes a keen shedder or two to get the spark to rekindle a reopening. We look forward to seeing new developments in Batchelor and the district to bring the community together for the good of all.



There are exciting times ahead for **Katherine Men's Shed**. The shedders are currently in plans for a new shed build—you can see the photo of the concrete chess board being the site to work with existing shed. The plan is to be using new shed by December 2024. This will create a space for a coffee and chat room bringing shedders together for their wellbeing and mateship.



Wagait Men's Shed are in the early stages of meeting together and becoming a shed. They're a very social group keen to involve the community men and the local council is keen to help and are currently working at building a shed for the community to use. Thanks Brian from Darwin Men's shed for joining me on this visit to share your experiences and thoughts to fellow shedders at Wagait. Watch this space!





Darwin Men's Shed has currently relocated to a smaller shed whilst a new shed build is underway – it's been a long time coming! The fellas are making the most of a tight situation with the shedders keen to continue meeting and creating for good wellbeing and health. We look forward to the new custom-built space!

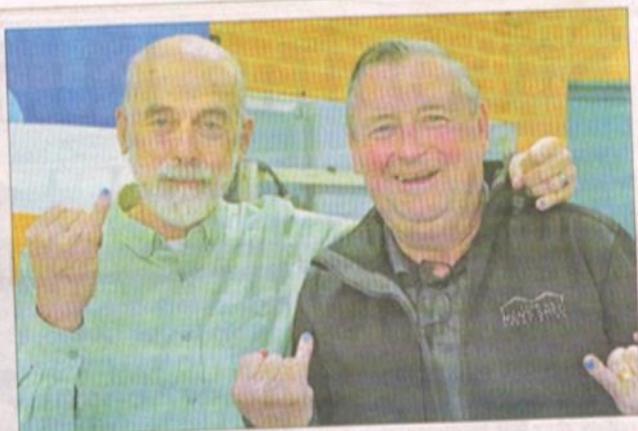
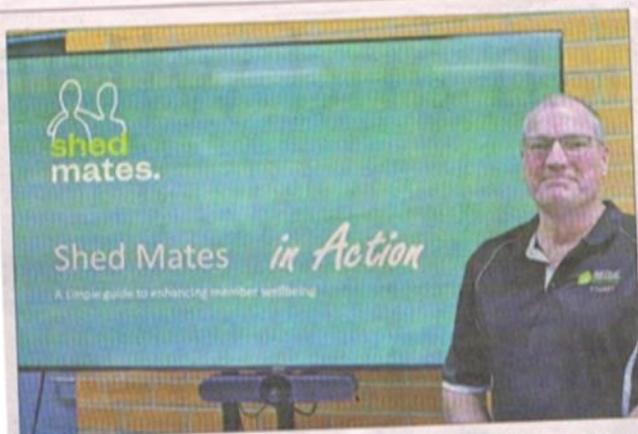
Pensioners Workshop Inc is a space filled with learning. Was great to see men and women building relationships over morning tea and working with community groups to improve wellbeing and good mental health.



Palmerston Men's Shed is currently working in partnership with local council to build new toilet facilities to improve disabled access. A great place for sharing skills for better health, and blokes being blokes!

Thamarrurr/Wadeye Men's Shed is a hive of activity in the shed, socialising, wood work, painting and more. Shedders are keen to learn from Joe the shed supervisor to increase skills and knowledge especially using iron wood for traditional cultural products.





Australian Men's Shed Association health and wellbeing officer, Stuart Torrance, presented a thought-provoking and informative 'Future-proofing Your Shed' interactive workshop.

Marc Tyrell from the Victorian Men's Shed Association (right) was promoting Men's Health Week and is pictured with Moss Mahoney with their little fingers painted blue.

Men's shed gathering

The Australian Men's Shed Association held a men's shed gathering at Lakes Entrance last Tuesday, with members from Maffra to Bemm River and everywhere in between attending.

There was a barbecue breakfast before presentations and workshop sessions on 'Future-proofing Your Shed' were presented.

From humble beginnings there are now 1300 men's sheds in Australia which take on the essential role of health and wellbeing for not only their members, but men in general.

Health and wellbeing officer with Men's Shed Association, Stuart Torrance, introduced the program, Shed Mates in Action, which centres around the next phase of the health and welfare initiative and is a simple and easy guide to taking a purposeful approach to improving and evaluating member wellbeing.

It has been majorly supported by the Black Dog Ride, which is a group of motorbike enthusiasts who have fundraised and supported the shedder wellbeing initiative, Shed Mates.

"It centres around forming a

team or officer within the local shed specifically for wellbeing, often presidents and others have not got the time for extra roles," Mr Torrance said.

"This team or individual can have tasks such as engaging old members that have left and address their needs, ensuring that they reach out to as many men as possible, not just to join a men's shed, but encouraging them to join a bowls club or some other activity.

"Those getting older may not be able to do the same activities as

they used to, so even a day where the shed downs tools and has a barbecue, board and card game day for example could entice some members that have left to join in once more."

Mr Torrance was pleased with the opportunity to visit Lakes Entrance and have so many sheds attending.

"Those in cities have more opportunities to hold workshops etc. It is good to get out into the regional and remote areas which sometimes miss out on these types of events," he said.



Joe Weeland and secretary of Lakes Entrance Men's Shed, Mal Mathisen.



Max Davenport (Lakes Entrance), Jim King (Maffra), Neil Sach (Paynesville), Greg Hayes (Twin Rivers) and Russ Francis (Bemm River) in a discussion group.



Wayne Hind (Bemm River), Rob Ward (Lakes Entrance), Peter Biseter (Bemm River), Moss Mahony (Lakes Entrance) and David Cree (Paynesville) with Rob Kas, from



Community engagement officer with Mental Health and Wellbeing Local, Susie

2025 Senior Australian of the Year nominations now open

The 2025 Australian of the Year Award nominations are now open to celebrate the efforts of inspiring and hardworking Australians.

If you know an older person doing incredible things, you can celebrate their achievements and contributions by nominating them for an award.

You can nominate a role model, colleague, community champion, friend or family member – perhaps even a fellow shedder! They might be an older person dedicated to making Australia a better place or someone of any age dedicated to helping older people, like an aged care worker or volunteer.

Categories include:

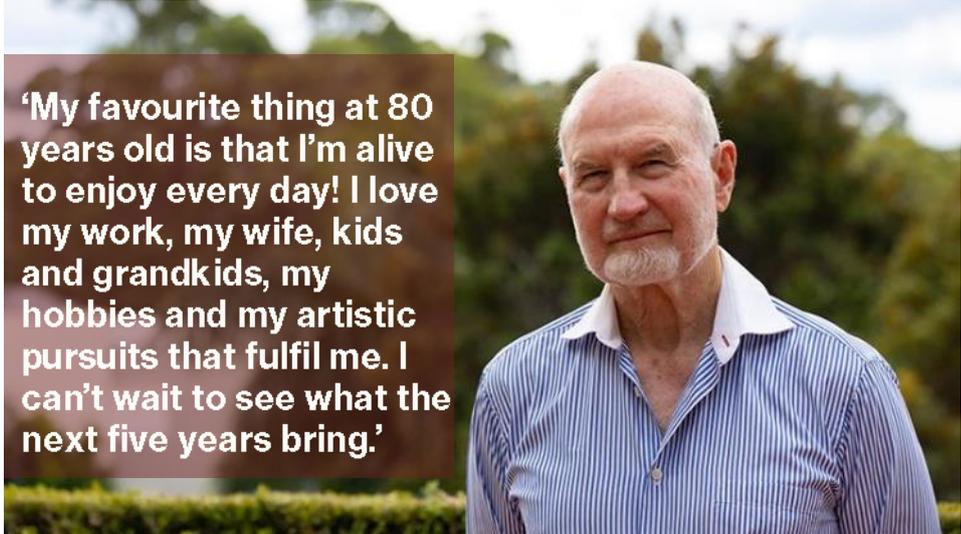
- Australian of the Year
- Senior Australian of the Year (people aged 65 years or over)
- Young Australian of the Year (people aged 16 to 30 years)
- Australia's Local Hero.

Nominating someone for an award is easy. Being nominated gives amazing Australians the opportunity to share their passion, gain more support and get the recognition they deserve.

Visit Australian of the Year Awards at australianoftheyear.org.au to nominate now.

Nominations for the 2025 Awards close at midnight AEST on 31 July 2024.

The Australian Department of Health and Aged Care have partnered with the National Australia Day Council to sponsor the 2025 Senior Australian of the Year Awards. This year, they're looking to see more nominations for amazing Senior Australians and those doing incredible things to help older people.



'My favourite thing at 80 years old is that I'm alive to enjoy every day! I love my work, my wife, kids and grandkids, my hobbies and my artistic pursuits that fulfil me. I can't wait to see what the next five years bring.'

Peter's story – Conquering life's greatest challenges

2020 QLD Senior Australian of the Year Peter Dornan shares his story of resilience and how he overcame a prostate cancer diagnosis.

Peter Dornan never expected to get cancer. At 52, he thought his life was going perfectly – he had his dream career, a wonderful family and was extremely well and healthy.

A physiotherapist by trade, Peter has always been alert to the importance of good health. He says a diagnosis of prostate cancer left him in complete shock.

'I thought I was doing everything right. Despite being a health professional myself, I didn't really know what my prostate was, what it did or why it was important. I think that's a big failing of our awareness,' Peter said.

Peter was told that if he didn't receive treatment, he would only have 3 to 5 years left to live. He launched immediately into the treatment his oncologist recommended, the surgical removal of his prostate, without realising the impact it would have on his life.

'All you hear when you get a

cancer diagnosis is that it may kill you. I wanted to be here, no matter what the side effects of treatment were. Because I thought of myself as absolutely invincible at the time, I believed I would get over the side effects and it wouldn't be a problem. I was wrong," Peter said.

'The side effects of incontinence, impotence and depression hit me hard. There was no way out of it at the time. The doctors were there to save my life and that's what they did, but there were no programs in place to help me cope with everything that came along with treatment. I had to find my own way.'

Peter first turned his attention to treating his incontinence, which was having the biggest impact on his daily life.

'With prostate cancer, you lose your identity very quickly. I couldn't work, walk or exercise after my surgery. It was like my life had stopped; I was barely surviving. I spoke with my physiotherapy colleagues who

treated women with incontinence through pelvic floor exercises.’
‘They taught me how to do the same exercises, which helped me a great deal over a period of 6 months. This meant I could work, but it wasn’t enough to make me happy. Every time I had a leak, it would bring back the same trauma and stress and I would get depressed.’

From this dark place of his life, Peter found support in speaking with fellow men with prostate cancer and their families – but they weren’t easy to find.

‘When I was diagnosed, there were no men putting their hands up to talk about prostate cancer. The pathway was very murky. I thought that there must be other men experiencing what I’m going through, I can’t be alone. I put an ad in the paper asking if there were any other men going through this and whether they would come and meet with me.’

‘During that first meeting, we had 70 men and their partners turn up. Many of them were in denial and didn’t know how to talk about what they were going through. No one wants to be seen as weak or like something is wrong with you. After this, we began meeting monthly and together formed the Brisbane Prostate Cancer Support Group.’

He says the group, which he was convenor of for 20 years, had three main goals:

1. To help men manage and work their way through the side effects of prostate cancer treatment.
2. To raise awareness in the general community and among doctors to increase support for men who are struggling with the impact of prostate cancer diagnosis and treatment – especially common psychosocial effects such as depression and suicide.
3. To improve investment in prostate cancer research in Australia.

Peter’s Brisbane Prostate Cancer Support Group went on to join forces with other prostate cancer support groups across Australia and form the Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia, now the peak consumer body for prostate cancer in Australia.

Four years after his diagnosis, Peter also had the opportunity to go to America to explore the management of prostate cancer-related incontinence. From this experience, he wrote and published the book *Conquering Incontinence*.

‘I went to 6 of the biggest hospitals in the US who were treating prostate cancer and eventually worked out that the pelvic floor and abdominal muscles are all part of the same system. When I came back, I put this into practice and spent a great deal of time trying to get myself superbly fit.’

‘My incontinence dried up, my depression went, and my head became clearer. This allowed me, with great elation, to experience the joy of being alive compared to the tragedy of the diagnosis. To climb Mt Kilimanjaro, which I did at 60 years old, was a triumph for me personally and proof that my incontinence program worked.’

In the more than 20 years since his diagnosis with prostate cancer, Peter has continued to conquer new heights. Now 80 years of age, he has climbed Mt Aconcagua, Mt Elbrus (the highest mountain in Europe) and the Italian Alps, received the Commemorative 2000 Australian Sports Medal for his contribution to sport physiotherapy, and was appointed as a Member of the General Division of the Order of Australia (AM) in 2002.

In 2020, Peter became the Queensland Senior Australian of the Year for his inspiring contribution to men’s health. Reflecting on this incredible honour and all he has achieved,

he is most proud of his impact on prostate cancer management in Australia.

‘The fact that I’m still surviving and have been able to influence a lot of people and make these changes is amazing. When I was diagnosed, 65% of men survived prostate cancer. Now 95% of men survive. We’ve made changes throughout the diagnosis, treatment and management of prostate cancer. I like to think I’m part of that journey.’

For Peter, the challenge of climbing mountains has compelled him to reflect on the meaning of resilience and how he can continue to live his life to the fullest – no matter the obstacles he faces.

‘When you’re climbing a mountain, you’re not just trying to get to the summit. It’s actually a personal climb within yourself. As you climb and reach greater heights, you find who you really are – not who you’ve been told you are. You’re really climbing towards yourself.’

‘There’s a saying that on the outside of every nasty life event, you have to look for the silver lining. Every time you’re under stress, you find out who you are. It doesn’t matter whether it’s a cancer diagnosis or a big problem at work, you can work through it. Just keep saying ‘yes you can’.’

Peter urges everyone in Australia to put their health and happiness first, and to look forward to everything that ageing has to offer.

‘As you age, it’s important to get enough rest and sleep, to take breaks in a day and meditate, to exercise (more as you get older, not less!) and to follow a healthy, balanced diet such as the Mediterranean diet. And enjoy a glass of red wine every now and then! That’s the best way to live as long as you can.’

The wireless you'd listen to, if you were in the shed

The Shed Wireless podcast was born when Men's Sheds all over Australia went into lockdown in 2020.

The Shed Wireless was an emergency response to protect a highly-vulnerable population spread across the expanse of Australia. As our mandate is to help protect older men against the health dangers of social isolation. When social isolation became compulsory our small team worked furiously – within the constraints of public health restrictions – creating the first episode within two weeks. It was a case of 'shoulder to shoulder' virtually.

With the tagline "It's the Wireless You'd Listen to if you were in the Shed" the first episode featured relevant topics such as an interview with a shedder who survived COVID19, Barry Golding's nostalgic trip back to the birth of the first sheds, top tips on staying healthy and happy and we were introduced to the ultimate Shedder – Rip Woodchip. It was originally hosted by award-winning broadcaster Aaron Kearney and AMSA Boss David Helmers. A change in career for Aaron led him to introduce John Paul Young (JPY) as the new host.

John has now been hosting since 2021 and with his strong musical influence, he introduced Mac' Music Shack with Mac McDonald. Mac is music trivia king, with Mac and John hosting a radio show called The Real Music Master file for Radio 2.

John said "it has been an absolute pleasure to host The Shed Wireless over the last 3 years - so many wonderful stories, meeting people involved with the inception of The Men's



Shed, learning about our ageing processes, and of course the many switched on members or should that be Shedders! I look forward to hearing lots more stories and picking up some more healthy tips in the future."

Each episode we put a spotlight on a shedder, who has some unique skills or a more unusual activity in the shed, or a particular shed who are doing some amazing things.

Other regular segments include: On the Tools, On the Road and On the Pulse – our health segment.

Now The Shed Wireless is a regular staple for many shedders, some sheds even play the latest episode during "smoko" break for everyone to listen to.

Listeners can choose whether they listen on a podcast service, or simply click the YouTube link.

To make sure you never miss an episode, go to mensshed.org/the-shed-wireless and scroll down to the red "Subscribe" button.



Winter Roots & Shoots

Yates Australia



Winter is the season for buying and planting some of the most interesting edible plants. These are the ones that are sold as roots, crowns or bulbs in the cooler months.

Turmeric and Ginger

These are tropical plants that do well in warmer areas. The dormant roots are planted in late winter in warm regions, or in spring in cooler areas after the soil has warmed up. In cold regions they can be grown in a glasshouse but they will need plenty of space. Feed with Yates Dynamic Lifter Soil Improver & Plant Fertiliser through the growing season and keep well watered. Harvest roots in autumn.

Both are used in cooking and, increasingly, for their medicinal qualities.

Horseradish

This is a traditional European favourite that does particularly well in cool climates. Plant the roots out in a sunny spot into soil that's been improved with some manure or compost and

some Yates Dynamic Lifter Soil Improver & Plant Fertiliser pellets.

Keep well watered, especially in the early stages of growth, and prune off excess shoots, leaving about three of the strongest. In good conditions horseradish will develop a thick, fleshy, pungent taproot that can be harvested next autumn or early winter. Dig out each year, trying to remove all of the roots from the soil, as it will grow from the smallest piece and can become a bit of a weed.

Replant healthy roots to start a new crop. Grate harvested roots and mix with vinegar and mustard to make a pungent sauce. Horseradish is related to cabbages so watch for caterpillars in summer and autumn. Treat with Nature's Way Caterpillar Killer (Dipel).

Asparagus

Asparagus is a slow and long lasting crop that is worth growing because it tastes so good when freshly cut. Deep, rich soil to which some Yates Hydrangea Pinking Liquid Lime & Dolomite has been added is ideal. Plant the

clump of roots, called a 'crown', at the bottom of a 20cm-plus trench.

Gradually fill in as the shoots grow. Clean out old tops when they die down in winter and don't begin to harvest new spears until the second year. If you want white asparagus, hill soil up to exclude light from emerging spears.

Look after your asparagus and you'll be able to continue harvesting it for many years.

Rhubarb

Rhubarb also grows from a crown. Dip the crown into a solution of Yates Liquid Copper before planting into pre-prepared soil in a sunny spot with the top (called the eye) at ground level.

Feed well through the growing season with regular applications of Yates Thrive All Purpose Liquid Plant Food. A couple of times a year spread some Yates Dynamic Lifter Soil Improver & Plant Fertiliser pellets as a side dressing.

Begin harvesting stalks – by pulling, rather than cutting – when



Preparing your garden for planting winter vegetables

the clump is well established, but go gently at first. Watch for fungal diseases and use Yates Liquid Copper again if necessary. Stalks will be a better red if the plants are mature, if they're in a cooler climate and if they're fed a high potassium fertiliser such as Yates Thrive Roses & Flowers Liquid Plant Food.

Jerusalem Artichokes

These can be easily grown from the knobbly tubers that are sold as winter vegetables. They grow into tall plants that flower with bright yellow daisies in late summer. Nipping off the flowers at bud stage is said to improve tuber quality but, even if almost totally neglected, the plants will produce a satisfactory harvest each winter. The greatest difficulty comes in cleaning the soil off the bumpy surface. Tubers can be baked, boiled or added to winter stews.

Shallots and Garlic

True shallots are small, brown-skinned bulblets with a mild onion flavour that are ideal for stews and casseroles. Bulbs are planted in mid winter and the crop harvested in mid summer.

Homegrown garlic's creamy flavour adds a special touch to many dishes. Plant the cloves and, after the leaves appear, begin feeding with a liquid plant food such as Yates Thrive Vegie & Herb Liquid Plant Food. Watch out for aphids on the leaves – control with Nature's Way Citrus & Ornamental Spray, which has no withholding period – and water evenly throughout the growing season. Pull up the plants – bulbs and all – after the leaves yellow off in mid-summer and harden them in the sun for a few days before hanging them to store in a dry, airy place.

To promote healthy crops and maximise your harvest, it's important to prepare your garden beds.

1. Clean up Your Garden: Remove any dead plants, weeds, and debris from your garden beds. This will help prevent pests and diseases from taking hold during the winter.

2. Enrich the Soil: Most vegies prefer a spot in full sun with well-drained soil. Before planting your winter vegetables, enrich your soil with organic matter, like Yates Dynamic Lifer Soil Improver & Plant Fertiliser. This helps to improve soil structure, fertility, and water retention, providing a healthy environment for your plants to thrive.

3. Sow Seeds or Plant Seedlings: There are many benefits of growing your own seedlings, including being able to economically grow as many seedlings as you need, when you need them. It's also immensely satisfying to watch a tiny seed develop into a young leafy seedling.

Many vegie seeds, such as Broccoli, Cabbage and Cauliflower, are best sown into punnets or trays (rather than sown direct into the soil), and then transplanted into their final home when they're around 5 cm tall.

To grow your own seedlings, fill punnets or trays with Yates Specialty Potting Mix Cuttings & Seeds and firm down. Sow seed at the depth indicated on the seed packet.

It's important to keep the mix consistently moist, but not wet, until the seeds have germinated and the seedlings are established. They're ready for transplanting once the roots are well developed.

What vegetables grow in winter?

Root vegetables: Carrots, Beetroot, Parsnip, Radish and Turnips.

Leafy greens: Asian Greens (Bok Choy, Chinese Cabbage, Kaiilan) Kale (Cavolo Nero), Spinach, Lettuce, Silverbeet (Swiss Chard), and Spring Onion.

Brassicas or cruciferous vegetables: Broccoli, Brussels Sprouts, Cauliflower, Cabbage and Kale.

Peas or legumes: Snow Peas, Sugarsnap Peas, Telephone Peas, and Broad Beans (early winter in warm areas).

During winter, warm-climate gardeners can also sow and grow Beans, Cabbages, Capsicum, Cucumbers, Pumpkins, Silverbeet, Sweetcorn, Sweet Potato, Tomatoes, and Zucchini, so there are plenty of options to keep your vegie patch

Visit the Yates Garden Hub

Be inspired to grow, take on your new projects and flourish in the garden.





From the farm, to the Shed

Marty Leist

If you ever go to Beechworth in North-East Victoria, I would suggest you go around Autumn. Well, that's when I visited anyway. Beechworth is famous for its growth during the 1850's gold rush days... but the only real gold you'll find there now is in the blanket of Autumn leaves mixed with the rich reds and vibrant oranges from the Elms and Oaks that line the streets (and, of course, in the people).

You could take a snapshot from just about anywhere you stood, and it would make a perfect postcard with the backdrop of heritage style buildings that host the chic boutique stores catering to a strong flow of tourists. And if you tire of the wine tasting you could spend a good hour tasting the myriad of flavours at the Beechworth Honey storefront on the main street. Winne the Pooh would be in heaven!

Like most Australian towns these days, Beechworth is home to a Men's Shed. A good one, dare I say, a great one! Nestled discreetly behind the Beechwood Health Service facility, the shed is not only neat, tidy and well set up to keep the riff raff off the street, it's a cosy respite for many of the members, including long time member Cliff "Cliffy" Cousins.

An ex-farmer, born and bred in Gapsted (about 20km out of Beechworth), Cliff has been going to the shed for about 10 years, mixing it with the gents and doing his share including taking on the role of Shed Coordinator for a few years.

I spoke to Cliff via video call. I wanted to interview 'someone who had a bit of a story' as I proposed it to the Shed President, Smithy. And he said, "Cliffy is your man."

Cliff first joined the Beechworth Men's Shed when his wife was at the worst of her illness and he needed an outlet. He said he had heard about the shed from a couple of 'old blokes' talking in the street. He's a full blown 'Shedder' now.

Prior to receiving his Shedder title, Cliff was a farmer, just like his father. In fact, Cliff and his wife Elaine were both farmers (as from all accounts she tended to get her hands dirty as much as he did), and they made for a great team.

Cliff and Elaine first grew tobacco on share farms at Gapsted and Myrtleford. That was back before it was all imported. Cliff told me they were profitable years but they were big days: 4:00am until 10:00pm at night, for seven to eight months of the year. First thing in the morning Cliff and Elaine would get up and steam the kiln, stack it, and then get out to start picking again.

At 1:30pm they stopped for a bit of lunch, then they would tie the tobacco up and put it in the kiln again. Eat, sleep, repeat.

Tobacco grows quite quickly. As Cliff told me, "We would plant in October/November and were picking by early January."

The tobacco was sold at auction to big multinationals like Phillip Morris. Cliff said it was good money in those days, "It was hard work for a while, but it set us up. We also had a lease property and ran a few cows, but tobacco was the main income."

When land was selling well, Cliff and Elaine bought 20 acres in Bunbartha and ran pigs and dairy for about 18 years, until they finally bought 262 acres in Arcadia South and started dry land farming. They cropped about 200 acres and grew mostly Triticale and Oats.

Elaine was never a silent partner. Cliff would often go out and do a bit of orchard work on the side during the summer (because that's what you do when you can only fill 98.5 per cent of your days), and if he wasn't able to be on the farm in Autumn when it was time to plant the crops, Elaine would do it. And even when they had the pigs Cliff recalled fondly with admiration, "If the truck came to put the pig feet in the silo, she'd have no problem climbing up the ladder to the top to open it up so they could blow the feed in."

All this as well as 'flipping' three properties on the side, and two children on the side, kept them both pretty busy.

Cliff loved farming. It was a good life, but there were some tough years.

"2000 to 2004 were very tough but we got by," said Cliff.

"In the year 2000, we didn't get a thing. We couldn't fill the grain from the crops. We could grow straw but it just wouldn't make grain so we used to bail it and sold it to dairy farmers as they couldn't grow enough of their own feed. That's how we got by."



In 2008 Cliff and Elaine retired, sold up the farm and moved to Beechworth.

Elaine's history of diabetes had caused kidney problems and then later failure and she wanted to spend her final years closer to town. Cliff became Elaine's full time carer.

For anyone who has never been involved in the process, kidney dialysis is a grueling experience that takes time and effort. For the patient it involves being hooked up to the dialysis machine for about four hours, three to four days a week. For the nurse or caregiver, it's an exhausting procedure of needles, machine maintenance and maintaining the comfort of the patient.

Elaine wasn't much on hospitals so Cliff decided that he would do this from home and dialysed Elaine every second night for the next 11 years. He described it as "a big job". Blokes like Cliff are prone to understatement.

As if that doesn't sound challenging enough, Cliff didn't want this to define the final years of his and Elaine's adventure through life together, so he

It's a special kind of language at the shed, more actions than words, and a simple gesture like a hand on your shoulder can speak volumes and mean the world.



packed the dialysis machine up in the caravan and hit the road. They managed to see the best part of New South Wales, and a little of South Australia too. Wow, just wow.

Unfortunately for Cliff and Elaine, the hits didn't stop with kidney failure. Elaine was diagnosed with ovarian cancer. With the prospect of more time spent in and out of hospital, Elaine withdrew from all treatments so she didn't have to suffer from the cancer and lengthen the process. A brave and selfless decision.

Cliff cared for Elaine throughout her illness until she passed away in 2013 at 71.

Cliff said his mates at the Beechworth Men's Shed played an integral part of supporting him through this period, and again recently when he tragically lost his son Doug, to Covid.

Yeah, you read it right, covid. At 54 years old Doug was as fit as a fiddle and just six weeks shy of meeting his first grandchild. Doug suffered from long Covid for about six months but had been improving so the sudden loss was a real shock for Cliff and his family.

Cliff has had some health issues of his own of late, but now he's equipped with a fancy new valve in his heart and a pacemaker so he's just about ready to get back to work at the shed.

The fellas say he's a pretty clever woodworker but one his favourite things is working with the kids from the local school. Some of the 'troubled' kids he calls them, from year five and six.

"They seem to be more interested than the older kids that tend to just want to be on their phones," he tells me.

"There was one lad who wanted to build a cupboard so I used to open up on a Saturday morning for him to come in. He loved it so much it became a bit of a job getting him to go home. I really like working with those kinds of kids," Cliff tells me with a look you could describe as grateful contentment.

Cliff is 80 years old now. At home he still has a few tools and says his next project is building a larger cage for his canary with the thought that maybe he'll breed them.

Cliff's daughter lives nearby in Lavington and he often gets visits from his five grandchildren and nine great grandchildren often visit, "so that's nice," says Cliff. "But it's also nice to wave them

Cliff goes down to the shed three days a week (that's pretty much every day it's open) and that's good. His mates are there, and they love him and I'm sure he is just as endeared by them (although neither would ever let on).

goodbye... They can be a bit loud at times.”

Cliff is a very humble and unassuming man that tends not to give much away, so I had to dig a bit and ask his shed mates for information.

“Tell him about your cricket Cliffy,” I hear from Smithy in the background.

Apparently Cliff was a gun cricketer in his day. He Captained the Bunbartha B-Grade side all the way to the grand final, undefeated. And then lost it. “The wheels totally fell off,” he said.

Cliff was described to me (by Smithy) as a “stalwart of the Shed. Even tempered, not one of them flamboyant or boisterous ones, but a quiet achiever. But a bit of a hoarder too.”

Cliff goes down to the shed three days a week (that's pretty much every day it's open) and that's good. His mates are there, and they love him and I'm sure he is just as endeared by them (although neither would ever let on).

It's a special kind of language at the shed, more actions than words, and a simple gesture like a hand on your shoulder can speak volumes and mean the world.

Cliff has some great mates at the shed and, with his refurbished 'ticker,' the shed will have Cliffy for a long while yet too.



Gladstone Men's Shed and the Wave Machine

Marty Leist, AMSA's Partnerships and Engagement Coordinator, visited the Gladstone men's shed and he heard about a project the men had been working on with Jack Greenshields, a PhD student in Marine biology at the Central Queensland University.



One of the questions in Jack's PhD was do microplastics get trapped in seagrasses and mangrove ecosystems more so than in other marine environments such as beaches – and what are the health effects associated from that. In order to answer this question, he needed a wave machine to be able to conduct research.

Jack had an idea for what he needed, but quickly realised he had no idea how to build it or how to find someone who could attempt such a thing. A colleague suggested that Jack have a chat with the local men's shed. Lucky for Jack, Gladstone is an area that is highly populated by retired engineers and many of them frequent the Gladstone Men's Shed so there is a wealth of information and knowledge there.

So Jack talked to Malcolm Leinster, a retired mechanical

engineer in the power generation industry. Malcom said he has the ability to design complex things but when it comes to complex control systems, he brings Darryl Bond in to solve those things. Darryl's career was in the electrical industry – he has his electrician's ticket and along with additional qualifications in control system tertiary education and a degree in information technology.

Jack wasn't sure exactly what he needed and what could be done, so he collaborated with Malcom and Darryl to work that out, and together they built an incredible wave machine.

The wave machine has six separate tanks that slope upwards to generate a wave, with a sort of pendulum mechanism with a wedge shape that goes up and down and creates the wave on top of a well of sediment. Each has a different treatment with

seagrasses, and mangroves and so on. Then there is a pump that spins to create a tidal cycle, and the water goes up and down within the tank to create different kinds of waves that splash down on the sediment with the microplastics in it.

Jack said "For the results to be statistically significant and not merely result of chance, it's really important for our research to create replicates so that you have identical things over and over again, which is why there are six tanks doing the exact same thing.

So the water goes up and down and the plunger making the waves on the sediment and you can see the plastics moving around. And you can see a core here and at the end of the experiment I will be looking at the core and see where are the plastics, how deep down they go

and where they get trapped. And there will be different kinds of sediment in the wells because seagrass sediment, mangrove sediment and beach sediment are all different sizes and weights.”

The project wasn't a quick process – it took about 18 months to complete and a few iterations to get some of the parts to work as they needed. With a very limited budget, the men managed to find some materials that were low cost or free, such as the timber for the tanks was recycled and treated to make it waterproof. There were quite a number of complexities and problems that had to be solved during the build such as the mechanisms not interfering with the sediment.

Jack was very fortunate to find these guys, and he says “it would have actually been impossible for him to produce the wave machine if I'd had to pay an engineering firm to make it, and I'm very grateful!”

And Malcom and Darryl are contributing to some very valuable research for our environment.

Jack is hoping to have the results around September this year and hopefully finish his PhD!

Active Stronger Better at the Men's Shed



There are many benefits to warming up with stretching exercises prior to starting on any shed projects for the day.

Not only will a few minutes at the beginning of the day help you stay mobile, a limber body will reduce the potential risk of injury as well as get the brain firing.

Gentle warm up exercises can include practice moving heavy objects and using machinery that requires manual handling techniques.

Thanks to the gents at Belmont Men's Shed (NSW) and Cardiff Edgeworth Men's Shed (NSW) for getting involved.

Download and print off the posters below and put up in your shed, to remind members to stretch and warm up before you start the day.



Scan to watch
the video on
YouTube



Scan to access the
warm up videos
and resources

What's on at your shed?

Every shed has more than a few stories to tell, and we want to hear about them.

Tell us about your Shed – diverse interests and activities, special projects and community initiatives or even a particularly ingenious way around a problem!

Send your story (and photos, please) to amsa@mensshed.net

The Chef's Secret to the Perfect Steak

Brighter with Natural Gas

Methods for cooking the perfect steak vary hugely. Renowned celebrity chef Adrian 'Richo' Richardson teamed with Brighter, an initiative of Australian Energy Producers, for several episodes of the ever-popular *The Chef's Secret* series.

Richo, the owner of renowned restaurant La Luna Bistro, lets you in on his go-to steak tips for cooking with natural gas – from temperature control to seasoning, and how to know when your steak cooked to perfection.

"Listen for the sizzle – that's how you know it's cooking properly"

"They say I'm the meat man, and I know all about meat. For me, cooking on gas gives me the control and accuracy I need to make sure every steak I cook is perfect"

Rib Eye Steak with Olive Salsa

Serves 2

Ingredients

2 x Bass Strait rib eye steaks (Chef Suggestion: Adrian recommends picking a piece of good grass-fed Australian steak from your local butcher.)
Squeaky Gate extra virgin olive oil
Pepper to taste
Adrian's '*Salt loves meat and meat loves salt*'

Olive Salsa

2 tablespoons Always Fresh olives, chopped
2 tablespoons Always Fresh red peppers, chopped
2 tablespoons Always Fresh cornichons, chopped
2 tablespoons Always Fresh sun-dried tomatoes, chopped
2 tablespoons red onion, finely diced
2 tablespoons parsley, chopped
2 tablespoons chives, chopped
¼ cup lemon juice
¼ cup Squeaky Gate extra virgin olive oil

Method

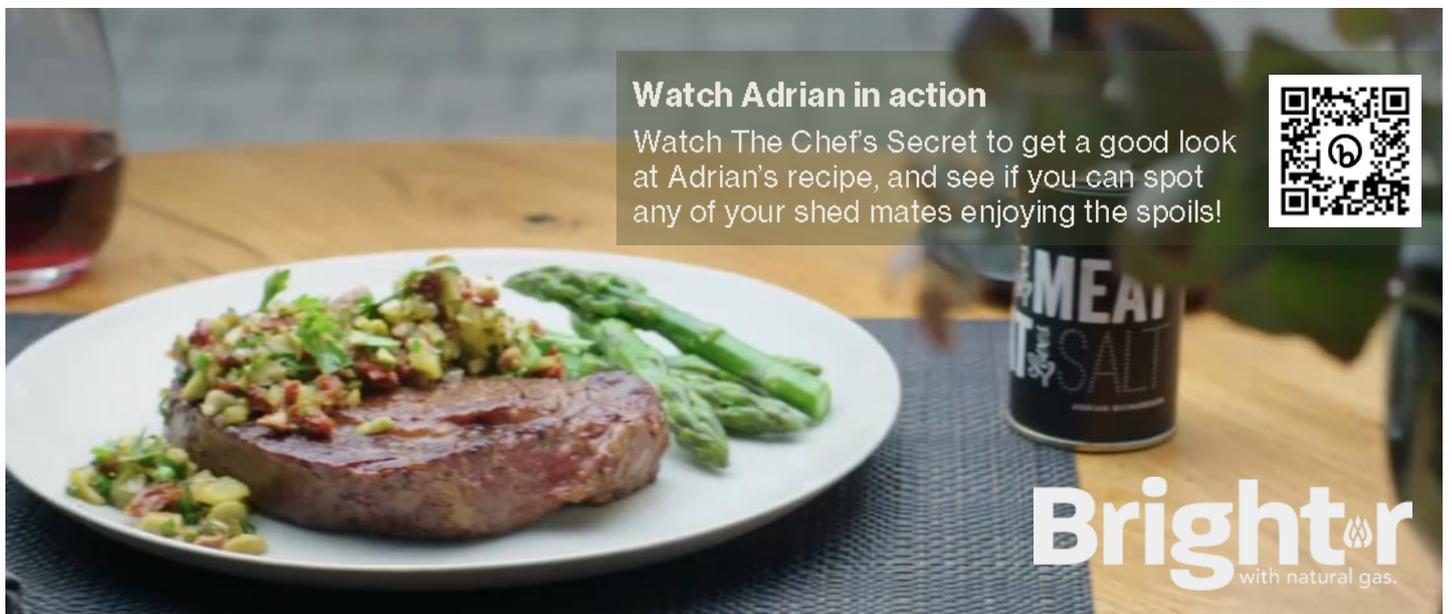
- 20 minutes before cooking, take the beef out of the fridge and let it come to room temperature. This will allow the steaks to cook evenly.
- Season generously with salt and pepper, and drizzle a little extra virgin olive oil over the steak.
- Sear in a hot pan/grill over medium to high heat, turning frequently (every minute).
- When cooked to your liking, rest the steaks for 3 to 4 minutes before serving.
- Serve with olive salsa.

Olive Salsa

Combine all ingredients in a large bowl and serve with steak.

Watch Adrian in action

Watch *The Chef's Secret* to get a good look at Adrian's recipe, and see if you can spot any of your shed mates enjoying the spoils!



Brighter
with natural gas.

Optimal Ageing

with Stuart Torrance and Dr. John Ward



Photo by Mark Timberlake on Unsplash

We often talk about Positive Ageing, but Dr. John Ward suggests we think of it as Optimal Ageing. AMSA's Stuart Torrance caught up with Dr. Ward, Geriatrician and co-founder of the Hunter Ageing Alliance,, in our On The Pulse segment of The Shed Wireless podcast and they chatted about the good ways to get old. Check out the interview transcript or listen on Season 6, Episode 2 of The Shed Wireless.

Dr. John Ward has dedicated his life to providing exceptional medical care for disadvantaged individuals and elderly Australians. This year, his remarkable contributions were honoured with the 2024 NSW Senior Australia of the Year award.

Since the mid-1980s, he has specialised in geriatric medicine and aged care, advocating for older Australians and emphasising the significance of social determinants of health such as social connection, exercise, and accessible environments. His integrated, collaborative approach to dementia care for patients and their caregivers has established the Hunter region as a leader in this field.

John also co-founded the Hunter Ageing Alliance, which urges governments, businesses, and organisations to better address the needs of older people. The organisation is planning on implementing eight programs aimed at creating age-friendly communities, combating elder abuse, and ending the social isolation of older adults.

A big supporter of Men's Sheds, John is chatting to Stuart Torrance, AMSA Shed Development Coordinator – Wellbeing & Health.

Stuart: So John, you talk about optimal ageing, rather than positive aging. What does that mean?

John: Not everyone has the chance to enjoy positive ageing. Everybody can do the most with what they've got, so we call that

optimal ageing.

What we know from studies is that the people who do enjoy optimal ageing – the most important component is relationships. We know that once you have a certain amount of money, wealth doesn't make a great deal of difference to your contentment. Your physical health is important but not that critical, but relationships are certainly the most important thing.

Stuart: So if you're trying to live an optimal older age, what are the things you can do to help?

John: Well, you've got to exercise. Exercise is probably the most important strategy in dealing with almost all of the chronic problems that older people have.

Obviously you've got to have safe secure habitation which unfortunately is for the case for many older people now, and:

- you've got to eat properly
- not smoke
- drink alcohol in moderation
- sleep well (sleep is terribly important for optimal aging)
- and maintain those social connections.

Stuart: Social connection the sheds have this down in spades, but is one outlet enough social connection?

John: The more outlets you have the better. I always say if people can maintain their relationships – with their family or an intimate spouse or close

partner. Certainly your children if you have them. Then try to retain some friends. It doesn't have to be an enormous number of friends - a few friends that you can rely on. Then join activities that connect you with new people. That could be a Men's Shed, a book club, a U3A course and that will introduce you to interesting people.

The other thing that Men's Sheds, U3A and book clubs do is to expand your brain activity. One of the other important things as you get older is to keep on learning. The learning should be multifocal, rather than just focused on one thing. If you spend all day doing Sudoku, you'll become an expert at Sudoku, but it's not going to help your brain.

Going to the Men's Shed, learning new skills, meeting interesting people, doing some reading, some puzzles, using a computer, learning more about your garden. All of those things are important for optimal cognition and the prevention of dementia.

Challenging yourself and doing something a little different will 'stretch your brain' to give you more neuroplasticity.

Stuart: As I've gone through life I've got a bit softer around the middle. What about nutrition as you get older?

John: A balanced sensible diet is certainly the way to approach nutrition. Overeating and then dieting is a very poor way to approach it. My mantra is that dieting makes you fat. When people diet, their metabolism slows, and so you're less inclined

to exercise, and one of the things you lose in muscle and bone and the weight goes back on often past where they were before. So dieting is really dangerous to be going unless you are rigorous about your exercise. So don't diet. Just approach your nutrition in a sensible way.

Stuart: I've often thought about the word diet and it strikes me as "Die if you eat it!"

John: Ha, that's right. Also as you get older, make sure you have enough protein at each meal. We need about 20-30g of protein at every meal, which isn't usually too difficult. But for breakfast this can be tricky if you're having cereal or toast as there's almost no protein, so we have to work out how to get protein into our breakfast.

In the other meals make sure you have some vegetables and fruit, and protein, and as little refined carbohydrate as you can get away with. Anything that smells nice and looks yellow, and you're attracted to, avoid like poison, because it will be poison. All those yellow chips and donuts and things like that should not be eaten. But the Mediterranean-style diet where there's a lot of vegetable, fruit, pasta, rice, protein, meat - that's probably the best sort of diet to stick to.

Stuart: What sort of oils should we be using?

John: A lot of virgin olive oil - keep away from the other oils.

Stuart: A lot of people say this sort of diet is expensive.

John: It's not really expensive to eat well, it just takes a bit more effort. And there's very few of us who can't actually grow a bit of



food ourselves. I have a big vegetable garden and grow a number of fruits. And that doesn't provide a huge part of my diet, but certainly enough to take the expense off it. And most of these fruit and vegetables if you buy them sensibly, and in season, and if you look at those not-so-perfect produce that most green grocers are selling now, you can get it for a reasonable price.

Stuart: John, the advice you've given on diets is great. I know for many of us a diet can actually mean we put on more weight in the long run. That brings up another point for me - exercise. How much exercise do we need to do?

John: For people of my age, I'm 80 and I'm still working, I have to exercise regularly. My wife and I go for a 40 minute walk every morning. And then we do a resistance exercise workout a couple of times a week. I should also do some balance exercises, which I haven't been doing!

What we say for older people ideally is aerobic exercise each

day for 30-40 minutes at least five days a week, resistance exercises a couple of days a week - not everyday so you give your muscles some rest - and some balance exercises. This is the ideal if you want to maintain your independence for as long as possible.

There are a myriad of benefits of exercise. There almost isn't any chronic health condition for older people that exercise isn't one of the most important strategies that can be employed.

One of the sad things, is that the health system doesn't take any real interest in exercise as a health strategy – it doesn't fund it and doesn't encourage it, and that's a real tragedy.

For most older people with depression, exercise is as effective as any medication.

We know that exercise helps to stop people going on from impaired glucose tolerance to type 2 diabetes, and that almost an epidemic in our community today. Exercise helps reduce high blood pressure, it helps mood, it's the most effective strategy to prevent cognitive decline. It's a really important strategy in chronic neuro-degenerative conditions like Parkinson's disease. It's essential if you're getting cancer treatment. We know that you'll get much more benefit from the treatment than those who aren't exercising. And for men that becomes really critical in prostate cancer treatment. Because one of the treatments for prostate cancer is anti-androgen therapy, particularly if

you've got metastatic prostate cancer, but even to prepare yourself for cancer treatments.

Anti-androgen therapy really eats away at muscle. So unless you're exercising, you will lose a lot of muscle strength during this type of cancer treatment.

Chronic heart failure, chronic respiratory failure, getting yourself off the poly-pharmacy - exercise is really important in almost every aspect of older age and all of the chronic diseases that go along with that.

Stuart: John, if you look at any health organisation, the one fall back that they go to is diet and exercise as a preventative. And as a way to lessen the progression of all sorts of ailments – I think you've hit the nail on the head. And the other thing you pointed out is that exercise is really good for your mental health. And I've found that going for a swim first thing in the morning, really lights up the brain and gets me going into the day with a great outlook. John, any last thoughts on optimal ageing?

John: One of the programs that we've got going under the Hunter Ageing Alliance, is the Active, Stronger, Better program for seniors. We now have 50 ASB programs running in 25 locations, run by trained fitness leaders and we're spreading up through the Hunter Valley. When we go to talk to politicians about funding this, they will offer us one-off funding, but not ongoing. They just don't see this as something that government health departments should be funding. They have no compunction about funding all the drugs and surgical treatments which often

have adverse effects, whereas exercise has no adverse effects and can reduce the need for these drugs and surgeries.

Stuart: I know AMSA has also come on board with the Active, Stronger, Better program which is a simple warm up routine to address falls and balance.

Thanks to the men from the Belmont and Cardiff Men's Sheds who went through the exercises and allowed us to video them. We now have it on our website for other sheds to watch and possibly run in their own sheds. There are also posters that can be downloaded so anyone can do them any time!

Well John, thank you very much for talking with us today and sharing this very important information with us.



Scan to listen to the interview on The Shed Wireless podcast

SUDOKU

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**Riddle
me this**

Sometimes I am born in silence, Other times, no. I am unseen, but I make my presence known. In time, I fade without a trace. I harm no one, but I am unpopular with all. What am I?



**SCAN HERE FOR
PUZZLE SOLUTIONS**