

## **North Balwyn Community Men's Shed**

### **Update September 2020**

In 2015, North Balwyn Rotary, in the event that the Shed became a reality, committed to the City of Boroondara, the underwriting and management of the Shed for its first five years of its operations.

The Shed has now completed its third full year of operation since it was official opened on September 18<sup>th</sup> 2017.

The 10 person Board of Directors, originally all of whom were North Balwyn Rotarians, now has only 5 North Balwyn Rotarians with the other 5 members being Shed users who have taken an active role in the management of the Shed.

All Board members continue to have, as their prime aim, the making of the Shed a welcoming and friendly place for all.

The Shed has continued to prove popular and successful over the last 12 months with membership currently at 80 of whom 40 are regular weekly attenders.

Ongoing enquiries from prospective members are being continually received. Membership is diverse with men from various ethnic backgrounds and from all walks of life.

Interaction with other community groups including those working with the disabled, Council, social workers, local schools and kindergartens etc. continues strongly.

The operation and activities of the Shed have unfortunately been severely disrupted this year by the Coronavirus pandemic which has necessitated the closure of the Shed for much of 2020. However during this period the outside area of the Shed has been asphalted and work has continued to arrange the installation of a canopy at the rear of the Shed.

The Shed has been maintained and regularly cleaned during the shutdown in readiness for reopening and various projects are in the pipeline once the Shed reopens.

Contact with members was maintained during the shutdown by way of Zoom meetings on the internet, regular Bulletins and the email distribution of jokes and interesting material on a daily basis.

One of our directors, Keith Chidlow, has taken on the job of maintaining the Shed's website and keeping it up to date during the shutdown.

Prior to shut down a variety of projects were undertaken including the construction of a Street Library for Council, Display Cabinet for Servants Community Housing, furniture repairs and restoration, making jigsaws etc.

Bernie Smith and his band of helpers constructed raised garden beds around the external perimeter which will provide another avenue of activity for members. Completion will be achieved once the Shed is permitted to reopen and the planting out with flowers, shrubs, herbs and vegetables may commence.

The Shed is now well established with a wide range of equipment, programs and activities for members. O H & S requirements are in place. Member feedback is regularly sought. We have Keith Coghlan as Activities Committee Chairman.

Friday opening has proven successful and our opening days and hours are regularly reviewed.

The Men's Shed Board is confident the Shed will continue to grow and prosper and remain a valuable asset for the North Balwyn Community. Its success reflects very well on the community involvement of North Balwyn Rotary in our local community.