



Katoomba Men's Shed

Building Better Blokes

Noise from the Shed

No. 21 May 2019

What goes on at the Shed?

Bruce Ward

This is a common question that people ask. The simple answer is you do whatever you want to do. Different people choose different activities.

The photo below was taken in February 2019. It was a busy morning at the Shed and there were at least six separate activities under way.

From left to right:

- Russel was cutting sheet metal for a bending project.
- Michael, Kevin and Don were clustered around the new Magna Bender. Kevin was explaining to Michael how the machine works.
- Geoff (in the middle) was working on possum boxes for Wires.
- Athol and Greg (both obscured) were working on a shelving unit for Everglades House and Gardens.
- Peter was sharpening his chisels on the new

sharpening station.

- Rob and Dave were preparing materials for the Katoomba North School mentoring project.

Not shown in the photo were several men in the kitchen chatting over a cup of coffee, and your correspondent who was on the lookout for an article for this newsletter!

If you came on a different day, the picture could be very different. On Fridays for example, much of the action is in the computer area.

Keep in mind that while some men are attracted by the action in the workshop, others have little interest in workshop projects. The Shed aims to meet the needs of a wide range of interests and the program is flexible to change as the members and their interests change.

The KMS workshop on a busy day. There were six separate workshop activities under way when this photo was taken.



President's message

Peter Kinkead, President

Many will be aware of the incident in mid March when a vehicle collided with our building. The driver, a Shed member, was seriously injured and the building sustained enough damage to put the Shed out of action for a few weeks.

Clearly we would have preferred not to have such an accident, but we are taking some positives out of the situation:

- Most importantly, our member is recovering from his injuries and has been able to return to the Shed.
- Our emergency procedures were up to the job and everything that could be done was done quickly and professionally.
- The response by the emergency services and Blue Mountains City Council was brilliant!

At the time of writing, repairs were still under way and the Shed is still operating on a restricted basis. We still don't have full access to the workshop.

The closure and restricted operation have shown that a Men's Shed is far more than a shared workshop. To many of the members, a yarn and a cup of tea or coffee is enough. Others are using the opportunity to extend their skills in new areas. For example, several members are teaching themselves to use 3D modelling software with the aim of using the 3D printer to produce objects.

Shed highlights

- The project with the Katoomba North Public School continues. Shed members are helping a small group of boys by running some woodworking classes. The School is very appreciative of the work done by KMS members and presented the participants with a coffee mug decorated with photos of some of the projects completed by the boys.
- KMS completed a project for the Everglades House and Gardens. Shed member Athol led the project which involved the construction of two mobile shelving units for the gift shop.
- The AGM was held in March and a new Committee was elected:
 - President: Peter Kinkead
 - Vice President: David White
 - Secretary: David Christie
 - Treasurer: Bruce Ward
 - Ordinary committee members: John Stanley, Don McKinnon, Kevin Wallace and Michael Dale.

- During April, KMS participated in a Family Fun Day at the oval of Katoomba North Public School, organised by Connect. The KMS activity was a hit with the children who enjoyed hammering nails into logs as well as creating objects out of scrap wood.



The KMS activity at the family Fun Day.

- The Council have appointed a contractor to complete the repairs to the Shed building and we are hoping to be able to have full operations by early July. In the meantime, limited workshop operations are likely to resume as the repair work permits.

KMS now on Facebook

Bruce Ward & Michael Dale

After more than 12 years of operation, the Katoomba Men's Shed has finally entered the world of social media with the creation of a Facebook page.

We are hoping to use the Facebook page to maintain better contact with our local community and to share news about what we are doing at the Men's Shed.

At this stage we would like to ask those among our members and friends who are Facebook users to have a look at the new page and hopefully 'Like' us, or even 'Recommend' us so that we can start to build a stronger profile in the Facebook Community.

We are still novices at Facebook, so will be feeling our way at first.

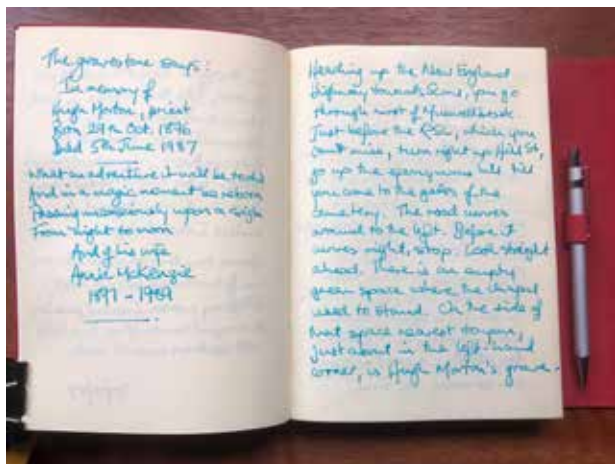
You can find the KMS Facebook page at: <https://www.facebook.com/katoombamensshed>

Things my family might want to know – my 'Red Book'

David White

I went on an expedition once, to find my grandfather's grave. I eventually located it, based on some sketchy information from my

mum, tucked away in a corner of the cemetery in Muswellbrook. Not wanting it to be lost again, I thought I'd better write a few instructions down on how to find it. That started what my kids now call "the Red Book", and what I call "Things you might want to know."



The story of my grandfather's grave written in my Red Book.

Something else pushed me to write in the Red Book. Family and friends sometimes ask me to conduct the non-religious funerals of their dear departed, or even help them plan the permissible bits of the religious ones. "So what music [or hymn] do you think dad would have wanted at his funeral?" I'll ask, or "What was your mum's favourite book, that she might want something read from?"

I'm surprised when it's hard to get an answer to questions like those. It's probably why some funerals you go to seem flat, or impersonal. And it's kind of sad that you mightn't know your mum's favourite poem anyway.

I don't want to sound too maudlin, or pessimistic, but I've written some stuff in the Red Book in the hope my kids won't face problems like that. Or worse, that they will take a guess at what my favourite poem might be.

You could think about writing some things down, and telling someone where it can be found should anything hit the fan. Maybe, things like:

- Stuff you know that no-one else does now, like family memories (my kids call it "dead relative stuff")
- The five books that influenced you the most (even if they will never read "The Teachings of Don Juan")
- Your favourite albums of all time (would they know one of them was Rock'n'Roll Animal by Lou Reed?)

- Your top five movies and the favourite line from each one (Gladiator and "At my command, unleash hell.")
- Personal objects that may not be important enough to go in your will, but mean something to you ("my silver Tiffany cuff links I was given when I retired should go to Tim" – it can stop some unseemly family arguments when you're no longer around)
- The music you actually want played at your funeral (just in case you are haunted through eternity with something they thought you might want, like "Bungalow Bill").

What has also become apparent is that you might not know what they want to know. On occasions when I am talking to the kids, one of them will say "Have you put that in the Red Book?" – and it will be something I didn't think was really worth recording.

Hey, you don't have to write a memoir or autobiography (although I have burdened my descendants with much more than they might actually want to know about). But if you think some things are important, write them down, or they might as well never have happened.

Safety snippets

At KMS we are proud of our workshop safety record. At the time this newsletter was published, we had not recorded a single serious accident with workshop machinery in over 12 years of operation.

A common workshop injury is the loss of one or more fingers, and the most likely culprit is a power saw such as a panel saw, drop saw or bandsaw.

This safety tip comes from Shed member Athol, the proud owner of a full set of fingers after more than 60 years in the building trade.

Always keep your fingers at least 50 mm away from any moving blade on a machine or power tool. There is always a better way than putting your fingers too close.

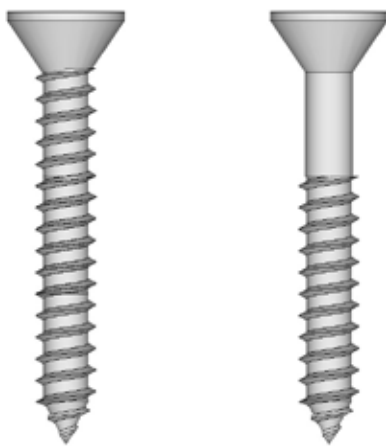
A better way is often to use push sticks and finger boards to control the work piece when working close to the blade. There was an article on push sticks in an earlier newsletter and we will feature fingerboards in an upcoming issue.

Tool tips – Wood screws

Bruce Ward

Wood screws are a great way to secure joints in woodwork – provided you use the correct screws and install them properly.

Choose screws appropriate for the job. There is a confusing array of screws available. In woodwork, the most common screws are general-purpose screws and wood screws.



The screw on the left is a general-purpose screw with the whole length of the screw threaded. The screw on the right has a section of unthreaded shank – this is a wood screw.

For outdoor use, galvanised or stainless steel are probably best. Indoors almost any coating is probably OK.

The screw packet will usually give you a gauge (thickness) and length. Sometimes there may also be a thread count, which can be confusing:

- 8G 50mm – these are 8 gauge, 50mm screws.
- 8-10 x 50mm – these are also 8 gauge, 50mm screws. The 10 refers to 10 threads per inch (which is not really that important).

Some of the screw packets will describe the screws as ‘self tapping’ or ‘self drilling’. On rough work you might be able to get away with self-drilling, but for important work, always pre-drill screw holes.

Fig. 1 below shows the important elements of a pre-drilled screw hole.

The *countersink* allows for the screw head to sit flush or below the surface.

The *clearance hole* allows the screw to pass through the top piece and to be pulled down firmly onto the substrate. The threads should not bite into the sides of this hole.

The *pilot hole* locates and guides the screw, The threads need to bite into the sides of the pilot hole. Dense woods may need a slightly larger pilot hole than less dense woods.

Without the pilot hole, or if the pilot hole is too small, the screw may get too tight. Then something will have to give way. The wood may split, the screw may snap or the drive socket may strip. If the screw starts to get too tight, then it’s advisable to back out and drill a larger pilot hole rather than risk breaking a screw or damaging the work. Broken or stripped screws and cracked wood are all difficult to deal with.

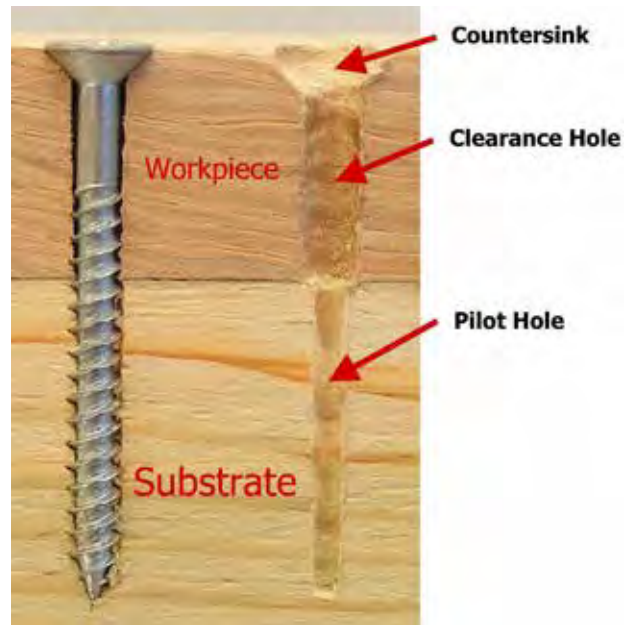


Fig 1. Pre-drilling for wood screws.

Gauge	Metric size	Clearance hole size	Pilot hole size
6	3.5mm	4.0mm	2.0mm
8	4.0mm	4.5mm	2.5mm
10	5.0mm	5.5mm	3.0mm
12	5.5mm	6.0mm	3.5mm
14	6.5mm	7.0mm	4.0mm

Approximate sizes for pre-drilling holes for wood screws. Metric thickness of the screw is shown in case you don’t know the gauge.

You should also avoid over-tightening screws. The countersink of the screw can act as a wedge and this can also split the workpiece.

A memorable project!

Keith Adamson

My wife and I have recently enjoyed a holiday exploring Western Australia. At a place called Jurien Bay, about 200 km north of Perth, we spotted a plaque about an interesting project by the Jurien Bay Community Men's Shed.

The Shed is involved in making 'reef balls' which are being used to construct an artificial reef just off the local beach.



Reef balls are made in a number of sizes. The plaque on this one explains how reef balls are used to build a reef.

There were several plaques explaining the reef project, but I was particularly interested to read about the involvement of the Men's Shed. Reading their plaque, I learned that you could arrange to have the ashes of a deceased loved one incorporated into a reef ball and become part of the reef!



Plaque explaining the 'Rest in Reef' concept.

What's on

June 7-9, 10.00 am to 4.00 pm Timber Tools & Artisan Show, Rosehill Racecourse.

June 10-16, Men's Health Awareness Week.

Regular events recommended by KMS:

Repair Cafe, Junction 142 Op Shop Building, 142 Katoomba Street, Katoomba - third Saturday of each month, 1-4pm.

About Katoomba Men's Shed

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The Katoomba Men's Shed is a not for profit community organisation that promotes the health and wellbeing of men by providing opportunities for men to share time together, swap yarns and work together on community or personal projects.

Disclaimer

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Thanking our supporters

The Katoomba Men's Shed thanks the following organisations who provide ongoing in-kind support to the Shed and its operations.

- Blue Mountains City Council
- Blue Mountains Burglar Alarms
- Bunnings Katoomba
- Cleanaway Katoomba
- Digital Mountain
- Mitre 10 Katoomba