

# THE SCOTTISH SHEDDER

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE SMSA

Edition 32 | May 2023



*In Scotland For Scotland*

The Scottish Shedder  
is back...for now!

Scottish Sheds  
celebrate ten years!

Sheds fit for a King!

Photo courtesy of Inverclyde Shed member Finlay Campbell

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### THE SHEDITOR:

Michelle Wibrew  
SMSA Communications & PR Officer  
07389061498 | [comms@scottishmsa.org.uk](mailto:comms@scottishmsa.org.uk)



### Meet Bob

The SMSA's latest animation aims to break down misconceptions that Sheds are just for the retired.

In this one-minute film Bob—a 32-year-old busy professional—is finding life just a little bit dull before stumbling across his local Men's Shed and finds connection, community and camaraderie to recharge his life.

SMSA Chief Executive Officer Jason Schroeder said: "Our latest animation is a simple key message to promote widely that Men's Sheds are for all men, from all walks of life, aged 18 or over and that life shouldn't just be all work and no play for today's working man.

"Many believe that Sheds are just for older, retired men but that simply is not the case and we are striving to break down these perceptions. With over 202 Men's Sheds groups – open or developing – across Scotland, many are thriving with intergenerational bonds and projects working with local schools, colleges, universities and nurseries.

"Men, young and old, are coming together in a welcoming environment to learn from and mentor each other and pass on traditional and new skills but most importantly make friends and have some fun. It is a win-win situation for all.

"Over the years, Sheds have evolved to offer a wide variety of activities to attract younger Shedders - and not just focus on the workshop – including music/bands, arts and crafts, 3D printing, sport, day outings and much,

much more. We hope that this latest film will encourage men to use our ['Find a Shed' map](#) to search for their nearest Shed and go check it out and see if it is for them. After all, what have they got to lose?"

The **'Meet Bob'** animation, available to view on the [SMSA YouTube channel](#), is the latest in a series of animations from the Association designed to raise awareness of men's health matters and all Men's Sheds have to offer.

In late 2022, the SMSA launched **'The Three Amigos'** which focuses in on men's sex lives and toilet habits to draw attention to possible health issues men can experience like the changes in the hidden 'third nut', the prostate gland. Whilst, the **'Guitar Mike'** film promoted that men do open up and talk about health matters in Sheds which can be life-saving.

The Scottish Shedder (the official FREE magazine of the Scottish Men's Sheds Association) promotes news from Men's Sheds across Scotland to showcase their successes (and challenges)—in addition to highlighting funding opportunities, DIY projects, recipes and much more—to inform and inspire. Each six-weekly issue is sent digitally to over 3,300 Individual Member subscribers and supporters of the Scottish Men's Sheds Movement.

### Contribute to The Scottish Shedder

We want to hear all about your Shed, its latest developments and exciting projects and are therefore asking for your contributions for the next issue (July 2023) by Friday 7th July 2023. We urge you to maximise the potential to raise the profile of your Shed and the Men's Sheds Movement in Scotland. Email Michelle Wibrew, SMSA Communications & PR Officer, at [comms@scottishmsa.org.uk](mailto:comms@scottishmsa.org.uk)

### Subscribe to the Scottish Shedder

To subscribe to receive 'The Scottish Shedder', you must become an Individual Member of the SMSA. It is FREE to join at [www.scottishmsa.org.uk/join-smsa](http://www.scottishmsa.org.uk/join-smsa)

### Past issues

Archived editions available in the [SMSA online library](#) (log-in required)

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Scottish Men's Sheds Association, Banchory Business Centre  
Burn O'Bennie Road, Banchory, Aberdeenshire, AB31 5ZU

[comms@scottishmsa.org.uk](mailto:comms@scottishmsa.org.uk) | [www.scottishmsa.org.uk](http://www.scottishmsa.org.uk)



Support the Men's Sheds Movement in Scotland, follow the SMSA at:



# TALKING SHEDS

by Jason Schroeder

Greetings and salutations to the first quarter of 2023, the return of Spring and your favourite magazine, 'The Scottish Shedder'!

Due to our sole focus on our funding situation we suddenly found ourselves in, we have for the past seven months been on a funding and Scottish Men's Sheds awareness campaign. We had to stop producing the magazine as one of the unfortunate impacts of the Scottish Government's sudden decision to stop our funding for the 2023/24 year.

A very big thank you to all the 4,000+ people who signed our [38 Degrees petition](#) and for the 40+ Scottish Ministers who signed our cross-party letter asking the First Minister and Deputy First Minister at the time to reverse the catastrophic funding decision which I am glad to say they did.

We did not receive what we require for the year but it will help keep the lights on for the next seven months and our small team to keep supporting the grass roots movement which is needed more than ever now post-pandemic and during a cost of living crisis. Now there has been a major Ministerial reshuffle, I will start the journey of taking our cause to these new Ministers over the next seven months and the start of next years discretionary budget considerations.

We have applied to many funders over the past months with many being unsuccessful but have had success with a few I am happy to say. The National Lottery Community Fund Awards for All for our new website and database ([more info](#)) and the GVC Fund for our Development Officer, Tim Green.

Charities across Scotland were invited to bid for Scotland's Census 2022 equipment used by the census field staff and they received 550 bid applications. More than 400 Chromebooks and 130 mobile phones have now been donated to a wide

range of voluntary and charitable organisations across Scotland by National Records of Scotland (NRS). The SMSA was lucky enough to receive three Chromebooks which are being used by our team when out and about visiting Sheds and we are extremely grateful.

Our charity keeps growing and we reached another milestone with our 3,000th follower on Facebook. I am also delighted to announce that we have a new trustee Francis Edwards (Sanday Men's Shed) representing the SMSA in the Highlands and Islands—[more info](#). Francis got straight to work and boarded the ferry to ensure SMSA was represented at the [official opening ceremony of Orkney Men's Shed](#) on Saturday 18th March 2023. One of our great supporters, Liam McArthur MSP, agreed to do their opening.

Research is so important for backing up what we do and recently the Irish Men's Sheds Association (IMSA) has announced the release of a new research report entitled 'Men's Sheds and the Sustainable Development Goals: Local responses to global challenges'. The report evaluates the effectiveness of community-based Irish Sheds as agents of social and environmental sustainability and identifies potential to further develop this role—[click here for the full story and to read the report](#).

We have also been working on a Safeguarding Policy and Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion Policy templates which many funders are now asking for as well as making you aware of having good governance procedures to sit alongside your constitution. We will contact Sheds to advise when they are available in the online resource library very soon.

The discussions, and sometimes quite heated discussions, around 'protected' characterises which allows men and women to meet separately and legally in Scotland are catered for by the Scottish Men's Sheds Movement and the Scottish Women's Institute respectively. However in Australia, the home of Sheds, another theme is developing – Men's Sheds and She Sheds unite separately – confused? Well, [click here for more info](#).

Now, onto a topic that has been brought to our attention of late—the health and wellbeing of our Shed

Trustees, the invaluable cogs that make the Shed wheel turn.

Shed Trustees have a collective responsibility for the actions and decision-making regarding Shed activities in line with a Shed's constitution/governing document. The role of a Trustee is an extremely active one and the decision to take on this position should not be taken lightly.

However, sometimes, Trustees can end up doing over and above to make up for others or take on too much and feel out of their depth and this can lead to feeling demotivated, dispirited and stressed which can impact negatively on their health.

Supporters of the Scottish Men's Sheds Movement believe in this unique health and wellbeing model yet isn't it ironic that sometimes we do not look after ourselves and our own? Here at the SMSA, we unfortunately hear about these incidents far too often and wish to remind everyone to look after yourselves—be kind, treat others the way you wish to be treated yourself and if you are struggling—talk to your fellow Shedder and in some cases ask us for help. We do not take sides and remain neutral and hopefully guide both parties to a successful outcome.

Pay attention to what your own body is telling you—this Movement is all about preventative health measures not reactive, so let's not get in this position to begin with or wish we had done something when it is too late. If you don't have Trustees, you don't have a Shed and you are all volunteers, so please, please keep your hearts open towards one another in gratitude for all who are doing their best so everyone in the Shed has a better life.

Deep breath, smile and on we go lads.

**Jason Schroeder**  
SMSA Chief Executive Officer



## SMSA appoints new board member

The Scottish Men's Sheds Association (SMSA), the national support hub for Men's Sheds across Scotland, announces the appointment of a new Trustee.

Francis Edwards brings three decades worth of health experience from working in the NHS and will represent Sheds in island communities.



**New SMSA Trustee  
Francis Edwards**

Francis, a member of the newly-formed Sanday Men's Shed in the Northern Isles of Orkney, is recently retired after 30 years of palliative care nursing within the NHS and hospice movement.

The appointment sees Francis join six long-standing Trustees to extend the SMSA's reach of regional representation as the voice of the Men's Sheds Movement across Scotland. On the news of his appointment, Francis Edwards said: "I am delighted to be welcomed as an SMSA Trustee and further represent the Scottish Men's Sheds Movement in Orkney.

"When I retired here to live the dream of island life, I joined Sanday Men's Shed mainly for the fellowship but also to pick up a few DIY skills. In my early days of nursing, I was involved in setting up a 'Well Men's Clinic' and, as a recent convert to the Men Shed Movement, feel that my background is a good fit with the SMSA's values and mission."

SMSA Chairman David Gardner said: "We are delighted to have Francis, and his wealth of skills and experience, on board and I am confident that he will be an invaluable asset to the Scottish Men's Sheds Movement and the national hub that supports it. This appointment will allow us to support even more members – inevitably, reaching more men across the nation with the aim to raise awareness of Men's Sheds, combat social isolation and loneliness and improve men's health and wellbeing."

SMSA Chief Executive Officer Jason Schroeder added: "As a membership organisation, all of our Trustees are Scottish Sheddors that know the Men's Shed model and its benefits inside out. They strive to ensure that the charity is effective, robust and financially capable of supporting the needs of our 3,200+ Individual Members and Shed Members across Scotland and develop strategies to further grow and support this thriving men's health Movement.

"We are appealing for more enthusiastic, dedicated and visionary Sheddors—particularly from the East and West Highlands, Edinburgh and Angus—to join our fantastic board to extend our regional representation across Scotland. If this sounds like you, please do [get in touch](#)."

[Click here](#) to read all about Francis' first official Shed visit to Orkney Men's Shed as an SMSA Board member.

Figures as at end of April 2023



**148**

**SMSA SHED MEMBERS**

**3,363**

**SMSA INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS**



**125**

**OPEN SHEDS**

**66**

**DEVELOPING/  
PROPOSED SHEDS**



**32**

**LOCAL AUTHORITY AREAS**

## UPDATE YOUR DETAILS WITH THE SMSA



**New email address?  
Moved house?**



**Change of Office Bearers?  
New Chair?**



**Not sure if you are a member or not?**

If any of your information has changed, don't forget to let us know

[Click here to notify the SMSA](#)

## Scottish Men’s Sheds Association welcomes funding cut reprieve

The Scottish Men’s Sheds Association (SMSA) has welcomed funding from the Scottish Government for the 2023-2024 financial year staving off fears of its impending closure last month.

Addressing the Association’s 3,300+ individual members and 146 Shed members across Scotland, SMSA Chief Executive Officer Jason Schroeder said: “First and foremost, we wish to express our sincere thanks to the 4,000+ supporters that [signed our 38 Degrees petition](#) and the 40+ cross-party Members of Scottish Parliament that co-signed our letter to appeal to the former First Minister and Deputy First Minister to reverse the decision to cut our funding.

“We did not get the level of funding that we require however we are delighted to have overturned this decision and overwhelmed by the backing received from our members, politicians and members of the public far and wide in addition to the local and national media for helping us raise awareness of our vital work and the need for the Association to exist to continue to support and grow this invaluable men’s health movement even further and reach more men across Scotland to combat social isolation, loneliness and boredom.

“The core funding received from the Scottish Government and several smaller funders has taken the pressure off, for now, enabling us to remain open for another financial year allowing us to continue supporting



the movement and explore alternative funding sources – within and outwith the Scottish Government – to support our development plans. We not only need to keep the Association’s doors open but wish to expand the national hub to meet the needs of this rapidly growing movement - now with 202 Shed groups and a reach to 10,000+ men/volunteers in all 32 local authority areas across the nation - whilst striving to ensure preventative men’s health initiatives, like Men’s Sheds, are a top health priority.

“The future is looking bright with exciting plans and projects in the pipeline working with lots of new partners. We still have a long way to go but are moving in the right direction. Keep up the support - we can’t do this without you for the future of men’s health in our country.”

[Keep up-to-date with SMSA news by joining as an individual member for free today.](#)

## Men's Sheds and Sustainable Development Goals

In 2019, the Irish Men’s Sheds Association (IMSA) was designated a Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Champion by the Republic of Ireland’s Minister for Communications, Climate Action and the Environment.

This report evaluates the effectiveness of community-based Sheds on the island of

Ireland as agents of social and environmental sustainability and identifies potential to develop this role.

Recommendations are offered for consideration by Men’s Sheds across the island.

As an academic study, the key novel contribution is the finding that Irish Sheds in addition to supporting social sustainability, are also already engaged in activities that support environmental sustainability.

There is scope to further develop their role as champions of environmental sustainability in their communities.

While Sheds have received significant attention from researchers interested in their role in health, wellbeing and social inclusion, their current and potential role in environmental sustainability has been largely absent from the academic literature on men’s sheds.

[Click here to read the full report.](#)

## Men’s Sheds and the Sustainable Development Goals: Local Responses to Global Challenges

Dr Carol Power, Alannah O’Callaghan, Michelle Kenny and Dr Ray O’Connor



## My First Outing as an SMSA Trustee

By Francis Edwards

As a new SMSA Trustee, I had the great pleasure of attending the official opening of Orkney Men's Shed at the 'Old herring factory' in Stromness in March.

This was a building that had lain empty since 2012 and has been brought back to life. The Men's Shed shares the building along with two other charities – Stromness Drama Club and the Orkney Historical Boat Society. The Shed's allocated rooms includes a workshop with large woodworking area, a craft/computing room, electrical testing and repair room, lots of storage, a large social area and the all-important 'Mess Room'

First impressions were that it is such an amazing building which is clearly well supported by the local community and Orkney Council, shown by the numbers in attendance at the event (I think around 160 Sheddors), which is just amazing for a place the size of 'mainland' Orkney.

During the opening, there were four key speeches. Morgan Harcus (Shed Chairman) gave us the history of the Shed, how it came into being and the local support. You can read his account in [Orkney Men's Shed's 'Shed in the Spotlight' feature in The Scottish Shedder, August 2022 issue](#) (page 9). He tells the story much better than I can.

In the article, Morgan quotes Councillor Leslie Manson who said: "I am delighted that not only are we divesting ourselves of a building that has been standing empty, but much more importantly we are breathing new life into three very meritorious organisations whose charitable activities undoubtedly contribute to, and have been evidenced to promote, the improvement of health and social wellbeing, cultural heritage and involvement of our young people". This is what Orkney is all about...

The second speaker was Karen Greaves from Orkney Island Council (OIC), Head of Executive Support, who has supported the project from the start and steered the Shed through all the local regulations and things needed to bring the building back to life and make it conform to all the regulations. She had the foresight to see just how the Shed can bring so much more to the community, while saving local health services and other council services money! She did say that she had more 'missed calls' from Morgan than anyone else and she knew his number off by heart now!

John Hamilton from the charity 'Friends of Stonework's Orkney' then presented the Shed with a cheque for £1,000. He spoke about his first visit to the Shed and was shown around the Shed and thinking this is all very nice. However, he was then taken to the 'Mess Room' where he found a group of men sitting around sharing some soup and chatting and listening to each other. He then realised this is what this is all about – companionship and supporting men's health and wellbeing.



**Pictured (L-R):** Shed Chairman Morgan Harcus, Liam McArthur MSP and SMSA Trustee Francis Edwards

Liam McArthur (our local MSP and supporter of the Men's Sheds Movement) gave a very insightful and supportive speech on the benefits of the Men Shed's Movement locally and across Scotland. Liam said: "It was a privilege to open Orkney Men's Shed. Sheds do so much to help tackle isolation & poor mental health amongst men. Great to see Sheds now opening in Sanday, Flotta & Westray and a special well done to local Head Shedder, Morgan Harcus"

I came away thinking what a honour it is to be an SMSA Trustee, what a great journey and what great work Orkney Men's Shed is doing for its members and the local community. They have achieved this by their courage, commitment and perseverance. I also could see how the four Men Shed's in Orkney need to work together in supporting each other in our various stages of development.

Given the geography of Orkney this is not always easy, however we will strive to find a way to grow the support from the SMSA here in Orkney.

## Interested in joining the SMSA Board?

The SMSA is appealing for additional enthusiastic, dedicated and visionary Sheddors to join our board to extend our regional representation even further.

The charity is particularly keen to hear from individuals in the East and West Highlands, Edinburgh and Angus.

The time commitment involved is quarterly Board meetings and an informal catch-up with Trustees. Expenses are reimbursed for visits to Sheds and representation at events.

**Interested? Please do [get in touch](#).**

# SMSA NEWS—DEVELOPMENT OFFICER UPDATE

## Here Comes the Summer: Sheds Without Walls

As the days grow longer and warmer, Sheds are looking outwards and planning excursions and activities beyond the Shed.

SMSA member Sheds qualify to apply for accommodation and travel costs (up to 100% of the costs, up to £750) to visit, share ideas and learn from other Men's Sheds across the country through our membership agreement with the [Scottish Community Alliance \(SCA\) – Learning Exchange grant programme](#)\*.

**\*Please note: Interested SMSA Shed members must make contact with the SMSA in advance of applying to ensure it has knowledge of the application and can endorse it for the SCA.**

As well as making the most of our partnership with the SCA, Sheds are busy planning their summer excursions to strengthen the social side of Shed life.

In the sporting arena, Sheddies are donning their snooker cues for pool competitions; fishing rods for angling trips; clubs for a round of golf; and their hiking boots for walking. Sheds have taken part in Try Curling and Try Bowls and walking football and rugby sessions.

Visits that Sheds have already made include:

- Experiencing Robert Owen's vision for more humanitarian factory employment at the UNESCO World Heritage Site of New Lanark;
- Reliving Scotland's industrial past at Summerlee Museum of Scottish Industrial Life;
- Paying respects to those who have served at the Black Watch Museum and the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders Museum at Stirling Castle
- Going 'doon the watter' on the Waverley Paddle Steamer;
- Understanding women's contribution to the First World War at The Devil's Porridge Museum;
- Exploring the Royal Air Force's close relations with the Moray Firth at Morayvia and Angus at Montrose Air Station Heritage Centre;
- Learning about our maritime history at previous hosts of Men's Sheds like Harbourside Men's Shed, Irvine at the Scottish Maritime Museum, and once home to Fraserburgh Community Men's Shed at The Museum of Scottish Lighthouses;
- Remembering old forms of transport at the Riverside Museum, Scottish Vintage Bus Museum and the National Museum of Flight;

- Touring factories for example Allied Vehicles, North Glasgow who manufacture specialist adaptive transport solutions; and
- Taking trips to local sawmills where there are often opportunities to take away timber off-cuts or to purchase competitively priced turning and carving blanks.

Some Sheds have combined visits to heritage sites where Men's Sheds are located like Stanley Mills where Stanley Men's Shed can be found and Cultybraggan Prisoner of War (PoW) Camp, the home of Comrie Men's Shed.

Regional Shed Network Meetings also offer the opportunity to get together at a host shed and share successes and engage in some collective problem solving. Get in touch with me if you would like to attend as a Shed representative for your region.

### Upcoming Regional Shed Network Meetings:

- Dundee and Angus Men's Shed Network at Broughty Ferry Men's Shed on Wednesday 7th June 2023 from 12.30pm
- Ayrshire Men's Shed Network at Clyde Coast and Cumbraes Men's Shed on Friday 9th June 2023 from 12.45pm
- Perth and Kinross Men's Shed Network at Scone Airport Men's Shed on Thursday 24th August 2023 from 1.00pm
- Glasgow and Clyde Men's Shed Network at Milngavie and Bearsden Men's Shed on Tuesday 29th August 2023 from 10am
- Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Men's Shed Network at Alford and District Men's Shed on Monday 4th September 2023 from 10.30am

Keep an eye on all the latest Regional Shed Network Meeting dates posted on the [SMSA website's 'Events' webpage](#).

**Tim Green**  
**SMSA Development Officer**  
**Mob: 07493361003**  
**Email: [Dev1@scottishmsa.org.uk](mailto:Dev1@scottishmsa.org.uk)**





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## Scottish Men's Sheds Association receives lottery boost

The Scottish Men's Sheds Association (SMSA), the national support hub for Men's Sheds across Scotland, has received a funding boost from the [National Lottery Community Fund's Awards for All Scotland](#) programme to upgrade vital resources for its growing membership and deliver quality-assured data on this thriving men's health Movement.

The member-led national association plans to implement a new Customer Relations Management database interlinked with an upgraded website to maintain records securely online - for its 3,200+ membership and 202 Men's Sheds across Scotland - and increase the level of information held to enable improved recording and monitoring to feed into the charity's long-term development plans and support delivery.

SMSA Chief Executive Officer Jason Schroeder said: "An Awards for All grant back in 2016 paid to launch our original website, when the Movement was in its early stages, and the resource has certainly been well utilised supplying Scottish Shedders with the resources required to set up and sustain Men's Sheds across the nation.

"As the Movement grew substantially to what it is today, it became apparent that we require to record the increase and variety of support requests being received, speed up our processes, improve navigation so members can find what they are looking for more quickly and store wider key information on the sector to report back to our stakeholders - members, board, funders, partners and supporters.

"On average, we are receiving a staggering 40 new individual members each month to this Movement which is remarkable however, the current manual administrative processes are profoundly impacting on the time of the SMSA team.

"We plan to simplify our systems for joining the Association but also for our popular 'Find a Shed' map which receives thousands of hits each month and make things much easier to find in our online 'one-stop shop' members' portal.

"Through this second award from the National Lottery Community Fund Scotland, we will be able to easier maintain data on the Movement safely and securely and be able to evidence and report on its immense success and impact more efficiently – freeing the team up to support the nation's Shed volunteers."

The National Lottery Community Fund Scotland Chair Kate Still said: "This project, delivered by the SMSA, is a great example of community activity in action, showing just what can be achieved when people come together for a common cause or to help others.

"It's all thanks to National Lottery players that we can help give charities and community groups throughout Scotland greater certainty during challenging times."

# SHED IN THE SPOTLIGHT



**Nairn Men's Shed Chairman John Rushforth tells the story of their Shed's full steam-ahead journey to date at their 19th-century railway station hub.**

John said: "Seven years ago, a local public meeting was arranged to discuss the concept of Men's Sheds and if there was demand and a need for one in Nairn. After this meeting, six of us began meeting regularly at Dunbar Golf Club to drink coffee and dream about Sheds.

"We explored several leads for potential premises including a disused garden centre and old stables, but they just didn't fit the bill or would cost a scary amount to get up and running - something that would not phase us today.

"We kept meeting every week, enjoying each other's company and chat, and then a moment of pure serendipity happened at a local football match when a Trustee was walking to the game with a friend and happened to point out a disused building on the south platform stating 'That would make a grand Shed!'"

"The person he was talking to worked for Scotrail, the leaseholder of the building (the old Stephen Seedhouse florist building) which had previously been an old waiting room at the train station. Scotrail had been unable to lease the building out to anyone else so it was just sitting empty and getting in a bit of a mess. It was a fantastic building though and had huge potential to meet our needs.

"So, in 2017, we applied for a lease and within two weeks had received a

long-term lease at £1 per annum. We got the building, but then had nothing to put in it and part of our lease agreement was to do up the outside of the building which would both cost a pretty penny.

"We reached out to the Railway Heritage Trust which offers grants for the reinstatement, maintenance, repair and restoration of railway historic buildings, structures, and fittings and the Davidson (Nairn) Charitable Trust, which benefits the community in the Nairn area or district, and they both offered to stump up half of the total costs each.

"We were off and running – kitting out the Shed, making the building fit-for-purpose and transforming the exterior of the building back to its former glory - and just like the famous quote from the 1989 movie, *Field of Dreams* – 'If you build it, they will come' – they certainly did.

"Thanks to funding from the [Co-op Local Community Fund](#) and a visit from [Axminster Tools](#), we have an incredible workshop with every tool and piece of machinery that our members could dream of. I, as a self-confessed non-DIYer, am happy to be banned from the workshop, it just isn't my thing. After a career in social work since the age of 19, give me the chatting and form-filling any day!

"Some of the members on the other hand, like to get their teeth into projects especially the ones linked to helping our community like making a craft table for the Nairn Alzheimer's Group and storage boxes for the football club to name but a few.

"Projects close to our heart are also the ones linked to the heritage of the railway station like the restoration of the railway clock and owning the original 'Nairn' railway sign that was purchased and gifted to us by Sheena Baker, in recognition of her husband and our founding Chairman, Jeff Baker. The sign is now proudly on display in the Shed social area in his honour.

"Things were going swimmingly and our activities evolved to include walking, crafting, painting, playing games, computing and woodworking but we still especially enjoyed our Tuesday and Thursday morning social gatherings where we put the world to right and just share a cuppa – the most important part of the Shed as far as we are concerned.

"Our oldest member, who is 94, sits and shares his stories which is great for him, and us. We used to have a member, sadly now passed, who saw his place at the Shed to make everybody a cuppa and dare you to try to make your own he would be annoyed – that was his contribution and 'purpose' and one of our veteran members enjoys coming along as 'there is no commitment for me to do anything at the Shed'.

"As numbers increased, we started to notice we were outgrowing our social space. Our 'glue' is that we sit and chat. No topic is off the menu so making this space larger to accommodate everyone was incredibly important to us – you can never have too many friends.

*Continued on next page...*

# SHED IN THE SPOTLIGHT (Continued)



*Continued from previous page...*

“Across on the north platform, was another old waiting room previously used by the florist for storage and it had two big rooms and a toilet but was quite derelict. We contacted Scotrail and to our delight, our lease was extended to include the additional building. The Railway Heritage Trust once again helped us as long as we refurbished the old toilet/storage shed on the South platform. They gave us the grant to improve the interior and the work on the Shed. A really nice bonus is that we are paid hourly to maintain the exterior of our own buildings! We now had the big social space required to accommodate our growing membership and also space for computers and a craft area. And just then, as things were looking bright, COVID hit us.

“Throughout lockdown, our members were incredibly active on Zoom. At each meeting, we had around 20+ members online and staying connected. It was so popular that we also extended an invitation for anyone to join which was great. We had people from Sheds all over the world joining from Australia to Hawaii. It’s funny as now that we have returned to the Shed, I can’t get them to go anywhere near Zoom.

“Today, we have 70+ members, all very much active, and this Shed is making a phenomenal difference in their lives. Only the other day, we had 25 members turn up just for a coffee and you could feel the buzz in the room. Such a lively bunch, happy chatting away and working on a range of different community projects.

“We also have a Saturday activity where some of the younger Shedders join us for an intense and

extremely competitive game of Dungeons and Dragons (pictured above left).

“We are currently in such a good place and also have some exciting plans for the future including visiting other Sheds which we will apply to the [Scottish Community Alliance Community Learning Exchange](#) programme for our travel expenses through our SMSA membership.

“Some weeks we are open five days, there is always something on, but we still have the potential to do even more. To pursue these plans however, like all Sheds, we need more leaders to deliver this. We are in discussions with Scotrail regarding two old signal boxes (one pictured above right) with a vision of turning one into a Shed allotment/ community garden and the other into a model railway club. We already have interest in both from the current membership and think it would bring in additional members also. To be honest, I think we will be beating them off with a stick!

“We have a brilliant set of Directors, everyone has a specific purpose and role to do. It is an absolute hoot. Nairn Men’s Shed is a place where two men, who have work and life experiences that are poles apart - who would probably have never crossed paths before - meet and bond. This is what it is all about.

“Our Shed journey sounds so care-free that we sometimes feel guilty when hearing about other Sheds struggling but then I remember, that this is the way it should be and Sheds should be recognised for this and supported to do what they do.”

**Follow Nairn Men’s Shed on [Facebook](#) to keep up-to-date with their progress.**



## The true worth of Men's Sheds

When a member of Pentlands Men's Shed suffered some setbacks with his health, his fellow Shedders stepped up to remind him that they are, and always will be, his biggest supporters.

Allister McKillop from Pentlands Men's Shed said: "One of our members, Scott Greenwood, has been in and out of hospital recently due to Parkinson's complications.

"Scott had unfortunately had a downturn in his health and as a result lost a bit of confidence and was struggling to come back to the Shed and see us. We wanted to do something to let him know we are ALL here for him.



## Bridge of Don Shedder pops in on Pitlochry peers

Here at the SMSA, we do love to hear about Sheds visiting other Sheds for social visits and learning. Whilst on his travels—enjoying a few days down at Loch Tay Kenmore—Eric Bisset from [Bridge of Don and District Men's Shed](#) decided to pop in by Pitlochry and Moulin Men's Shed where he had a coffee and spent some time with Alan and the men finding out about their Shed journey so far.



## Interested in visiting another Scottish Shed?

*There are funded opportunities to visit and learn...*

SMSA Shed Members, wishing to hit the road for a Shed-to-Shed visit, are eligible to apply to the [Scottish Community Alliance Community Learning Exchange](#) to visit fellow Sheds or community groups and learn from their experience. The programme funds 100% of travel and subsistence expenses (up to £750) including a fee for the host organisation that you want to visit.

For more information about the process and to apply, please visit the SMSA website at <https://scottishmsa.org.uk/scottish-community-alliance>

"Scott is a lifetime supporter of Hearts FC, so I managed to source a signed Hearts top thanks to [Big Hearts Community Trust](#).



"We then presented it to Scott at a recent Shedder convention. He was so overwhelmed!

"Scott deserved it so much as he has really worked hard to get back. Improving member's health and wellbeing is what Sheds are all about. I certainly benefit and every Shedder does their part either with a smile, a chat or a bit of banter. Thanks lads!

"This is the true worth of Men's Sheds!"

For more information on Pentlands Men's Shed, please visit their [website](#) at and follow them on [Facebook](#).

## SHED LIFE



### First Scottish Men's Shed celebrates first decade

Friends, old and new, gathered for the tenth birthday celebrations of Westhill & District Men's Shed (WDMS) in February where one of the co-founders, Jill Sowden, carried out the official and obligatory cake 'sawing'.

Since swinging open its doors in 2013 as the first-ever Scottish Men's Shed, award-winning WDMS has steadily grown and diversified over the years to continue to meet the needs of its impressive 300-strong membership.

Averaging around 100 member visits per week, the heart of the Shed revolves around their high in demand and well-equipped woodworking and engineering workshops and the bustling social area.

The Shed's popularity grew so much that in 2019, just before the pandemic hit, the Shed added a portable cabin extension allowing the Shed to revise and enlarge their layout to maximise the space for members.



The Shed has added more activities to create greater variety for members to enjoy including men's health and local history talks, model making, 3D printing, IT/computing, electronics and Bridge and music groups.

With a strict policy of never wanting a member to pay to attend, an important contributor to this has been the sale of recycled tools and machinery at regular tool sales in their community or bespoke requests direct to customers. This has ensured that they have always had a surplus of funds since its inaugural year.

WDMS was awarded SMSA's 'Scottish Men's Shed of the Year' 2021 title and granted the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service the same year with special recognition for its COVID-19 work. Stepping up to a huge need during the pandemic, the Shed became aware of the grave shortages in personal protective equipment for their local care homes and a small army of 20 Shedders got to work in their own homes to prepare the vital equipment.

Congratulations and here's to the next ten years lads! Follow Westhill Men's Shed's activities on [Facebook](#).

### A Shed fit for a King!

[Aboyne and District Men's Shed](#) hosted a royal visit from His Majesty King Charles III at the [Aboyne and Mid-Deeside Community Shed](#).

Arriving to *Scotland The Brave* being played on the bagpipes, the King joined the Aboyne Shedders for a tour of the facilities and chatted to all the community groups linked to the centre before unveiling the impressive plaque, designed and created by Shedder Tony Atherton.

The King made time to sit and enjoy that all-important cup of tea with the Shed members which was served to him in a 'special cup'.

The building—an integral workshop area and studio facility in the heart of Deeside—is home to, owned and operated by the Men's Shed and is also very much in demand from local community groups. The hub provides a space for the community to create, connect, learn, teach and socialise.



## Carlruke Shedders relish in community and camaraderie at Shed outings

As [Carlruke Men's Shed](#) (CMS) awaits the handover of the keys to their new Shed building on Kilmory Road, they are relishing in community outings and activities to socialise, team-build and celebrate.

Treasurer Tom Kennedy said on behalf of the Shed: "Whilst the Community Asset Transfer for our five-year lease is being processed by South Lanarkshire Council's Planning Department, we have been making the most of our time by coming together as a group to enjoy some social gatherings.

"Our Christmas party was a big hit and well-attended and also in December, we went as a group to see [The Burrell Collection](#) museum in Pollock Country Park in Glasgow.

"Last month, the sun shone as 22 of us boarded a barge on the Union Canal headed to the Falkirk Wheel. Our original 'Santa on the Barge' plan for December was unfortunately cancelled due bad weather so we really wanted to reschedule this opportunity for the members.

"A great time was had by all. The experience was invigorating and therapeutic with all that fresh air and some of our members even received a certificate for steering the 'Govan Seagull' barge.

"We are certainly a very active bunch. It is very important for us to bond outwith the Shed environment so we try to keep things interesting with a range of activities and outings that some may not normally get the chance to experience.

"In February, some of our members visited the local Women's Guild in St Andrews Church in Carlruke to tell them all about the Shed and its benefits

and we also had a visit from Clydesdale West Councillor Eileen Logan who is also South Lanarkshire Council's Champion for Older People. Eileen is extremely supportive of our work in the community and backs us 100%.

"In March, CMS handed over our first planter to Carlruke High School for their upcoming garden project. This continues to be a great relationship linking the younger generation with the not so young!

"Speaking of which, we couldn't be prouder of our 87-year-old member Bill Drysdale who recently ran the 5km race at Glasgow Green. This man has been running since 1947 and there is just no stopping him!

"For the fourth year in a row, my wife Wendy and I fundraised by participating in the Kiltwalk at Balloch, Loch Lomond on the 30th April. You can still donate to the cause through [JustGiving](#). The funds raised will go towards moving one of our two portable cabins (the woodworking Shed) at the High Mill site in Carlruke to our new Shed. We will be selling our other cabin, so if any Sheds are interested, please do get in touch.

"CMS is currently included in our local Tesco's [Community Grants](#) scheme. Here's hoping for many blue tokens being put towards our Shed to receive up to £1,500—we will know the outcome by the end of June.

"We have many plans for the future including a golf outing in July/August, a bucket collection on the 28th May at Motherwell Football Stadium and attending the Carlruke Gala Day on the 10th June in between getting the new Shed fit-for-purpose.

"The Shed building has lain empty for several years—with no heating or ventilation—and there is quite a bit of work to do including painting and decorating, replacing windows, moving our belongings, defibrillator and portable cabin and replacing the leading on the chimney. It is all exciting times though and everyone is eager to get moved in."

Follow Carlruke Men's Shed for their latest news on [Facebook](#).





## Macmerry Men's Shed celebrates 10th birthday

Members of Macmerry Men's Shed gathered last month to celebrate their 10th anniversary back where it all began in Macmerry Village Hall. The event also saw Honorary President David Dickson (74) presented with a shield in recognition of his pivotal role in the Shed's success as founder and long-standing Chairman.

The SMSA, who attended the celebrations along with East Lothian Council representatives and Recycling First, interviewed David who has stepped down as Chairman after ten years and handed over the reins to former Secretary, Stuart MacKenzie (41).

David said: "Myself and Lesley Kidd began this journey back in 2013. I heard Lesley talking on the radio about a new concept in Scotland – Men's Sheds. A public meeting was then organised which three of us attended.

"Tim Green, who worked for Age Scotland at the time, was an amazing help to us and so inspiring – still is, in his role at the SMSA. He supported us to get a £4,000 start-up grant and buy tools and machinery. We had an absolute field day, Lesley and I, in B&Q getting in the kit to get us up and running.

"Our first project began when we saw that the stage at the back of the village hall was in much need of replacement. We asked if we could reclaim the wood and transformed it into the tool cupboards we still have today.

"We began to get noticed in the community and started receiving donations of tools and machinery from local widowed wives. Membership began to grow so much that we couldn't remember everyone's names so we came up with the idea to make name badges for members and implement an induction process, sign-in register and the recording of members' details including any medications for health and safety purposes.

"The number of visits we have received from our fellow Scottish Sheds over the years to learn from us and share our knowledge and processes to help them on their way is testament and something that we are extremely proud of.

"The Shed is a fantastic engagement model however we know it is not for everyone; it is just not their cup of tea. We have tried to come up with other ways to meet the needs of our community such as using our experience and expertise to complete projects for local schools and wider area and when we were faced with the closure of our local library, we started up a mobile library. New community members would come along and sit and read and over time, some of them would open up and be intrigued by the Shed activities and join us to socialise and come play a game.

*Continued on next page...*



## Macmerry Men's Shed celebrates 10th birthday (continued)

*...continued from previous page*

"We had quite a few members that had health conditions and the feedback received from the person attending and their family and friends was phenomenal. We would hear how that wee break was life-changing for all involved. It would give the family member a chance to have some respite to relax, go shopping or visit friends and that was a huge benefit for all parties, not just the men.

"At our tenth anniversary celebrations, I was flabbergasted to be presented with the shield and accepted it with humility. I have also recently been nominated for the East Lothian Volunteer of the Year award under health and wellbeing category. Although, it is an absolute honour and I have thoroughly enjoyed being involved in charitable work since my teens, I have never done any of it for the glory or pat on the back and I certainly didn't do it alone.

"As a Shed team - and with support from our local authority, the SMSA, Age Scotland and all of our supporters, funders and partners - we have met a need in our community and ten years down the line, it is still here with some of the same guys still involved and still enjoying it and reaping the benefits.

"After a recent downturn in my health and a three-week hospital stay, I am taking stock. I was inundated with visits and calls from my Shedder pals at the hospital with many of them – and of course my wife (and my rock, Mhairi) - supporting me through my thought process.

"I have devoted ten years of my life to the Shed's growth, and attended every Tuesday and Thursday, but now it is time to take a step back from some of my commitments and have a well-earned rest.

"After recently receiving the all-clear from bowel cancer, it is time for me to enjoy just the social aspect of the Shed. I won't be able to go as much as I used to but I still want to be connected and involved and will make a point of going along once a fortnight.

"Our Shed prides itself on a fantastic committee with shared responsibilities and great members who welcome anyone new with open arms. I am confident that, with Stuart at the helm, it will continue to go from strength to strength."

Follow Macmerry Men's Shed on [Facebook](#).



# macmerry



# mens shed

## Huge progress made at Lanark Men's Shed

Massive progress has been made at Lanark Men's Shed (LMS), SMSA's bronze 'Scottish Men's Shed of the Year' 2022 winner, since our last update from them—[check out their 'Shed in the Spotlight' in the June 2022 issue](#)—from getting the workshops all tooled-up to featuring in a new music video!

Shed Chairman Alan Ross said: "It has been an extremely busy few months. In March, we had another visit from SMSA Development Officer Tim Green where he saw what we had been up to since the last time he came.

"It has been all go building our second wood store; attending the ONECAN Climate Conference in Carluke; meeting with a local nursery to discuss their requirements for new garden play equipment; and hosting our first Annual General Meeting which had a good turnout and was also attended by Paul Creechan from South Lanarkshire Council and Ann Sangster from Voluntary Action South Lanarkshire.

"We also had a very special guest visit us— my grandson Elliott—who volunteered to help with recent clear-out work and was presented with his own LMS polo and sweatshirt for his efforts. Our Treasurer even gave him a 'wage' for his assistance.

"Our Shed's Guitar Group also performed at Glebe St Sheltered Housing as part of their St Patrick's Day event and also participated in the video filming for [Jimmy Findlay's new song 'Take a Chance'](#) at the Shed.

"After a long haul to secure a defibrillator, we are thankful for the funds raised—and a private donor that made up over half the cost—to install and have this life-saving kit from St Andrews First Aid now fully operational on the Shed site to give peace of mind for our members and the surrounding community.

"In April, various site work was undertaken including installing new infrared security lights, outdoor electrical sockets, additional workshop sockets, ceiling air filter sockets, building new workbenches for the second workshop to house our new CNC Router and CNC Laser Burner machines; and reversing the workshop door to provide addition interior space.

"Although, we are all keen to get everything just right and in place, it certainly hasn't been all work and no play for our members and we always make time for those all-important get togethers which included some guest speaker days when our contacts from NHS Lanarkshire and CBT Counselling attended and presented on men's mental health and the importance of prostate cancer awareness.

"The Shed was also donated wood from the Merson Group in East Kilbride and we are also part of the Co-op Funeralcare scheme and these materials will aid many of our forthcoming projects. We are always appreciative of the donations we receive, and once again a huge thanks to everyone that has funded and supported us and helped us go from strength to strength."

Follow Lanark Men's Shed on [Facebook](#) for their latest news.



## Developing Zetland Men's Shed is putting down roots

The SMSA interviews David Goudie (76 years young), a former science teacher—inspired by [Sir Billy Connolly CBE's visit to a Scottish Men's Shed back in 2018](#)—who is now on a mission to get a Shed up and running to support men like him in his local community in Grangemouth.

David said: "I was born and raised in Grangemouth. My background is teaching chemistry and working in the Imperial Chemical Industries laboratory. I have also worked in the research labs and dabbled in IT. I have travelled all over for teaching and training and in my spare time liked to play rugby and golf and I was also an archery coach.

"After retiring from a busy and varied career, I started looking for something to get my teeth into. I will fully admit that I look back to five months ago and I was becoming a couch potato flicking through the TV channels and I knew that I needed to change that. I joined a book club, as I have written several books in the past, but it unfortunately was not for me and I was branded 'cheeky' but I just don't think they got me or my sense of humour.

"I remembered watching Billy Connolly's World Tour of Scotland on the TV when he visited Dalbeattie Men's Shed and was amazed to hear all about the concept of Sheds originating from Australia. Since then, I researched the Shed model on the [SMSA website](#), which was really useful, and have also been very impressed hearing about the impact that Sheds in the Scottish Borders are making. I wanted to interact with my local community more and decided that my long-term focus would be to get a Men's Shed up and running in Grangemouth.

THE SCOTTISH SHEDDER | MAY 2023

"I got in touch with the national hub for support and also asked for SMSA leaflets to hand out in the local shopping centre and people would stop to chat to me about it. I designed and created our own information leaflets and posters designed and printed to display in shop windows with their permission. Since then, we have also promoted the proposed Shed through the Falkirk Herald, Central FM and on Facebook.

"People responded to the advertising positively and suddenly, we had ten men on board. We are fortunate that a good few are tradesmen including a joiner and a retired engineer that want to help out—and this will be ideal to get a Shed up and running when we identify suitable premises but also to pass on these skills on to fellow members.

"A small group of us were keen to visit an established Shed so we headed to the [Wee County Men's Shed](#) in Tillicoultry and were delighted with what we saw. There was so much to learn and take in—it really motivated us—and I would encourage others to [get in touch with them](#) to discuss a visit too.

The Shed held a successful inaugural public meeting on Monday 23rd January 2023 at their local Community Education Unit which SMSA's Development Officer Tim Green attended to offer support. Tim said: "I was encouraged by the turnout of around 20 people at Grangemouth Men's Shed's first public event. There was a wide range of skills and interests in the room and commitment shown to take things forward.

"The Shed was initially offered five-week's free rent at the Community Education Unit and this was extended until the end of March allowing the members to get started, get to know each other and shape the future of their Shed. Fantastic support was shown by Falkirk Council."

David added: "We had to move to our current premises, Kersiebank

Community Education Centre, due to Falkirk Council using our premises on a fairly regular basis for its meetings.

"Going forward, we will meet on Wednesdays from noon until 5pm at the Kersiebank Community Education Centre (behind the Charlotte Dundas Court shopping centre). This may be subject to change in the future to meet the needs of the growing membership. We have appealed to our community through the local press for people with creative ideas and good communication, organisational and/or fundraising skills to get in touch and make themselves known to us and come by for a chat. We have also put out a call to get us all tooled up and for members of the public to donate any relevant items that they no longer need/use. We have access to storage facilities to keep the items safe. The public has been very generous with their donations, and we owe them a great debt of gratitude.

"At the meeting, we also voted on different name options and the winner was **Zetland Men's Shed**. So, that is now officially our name. Our next step is to apply for charitable status and the search begins for long-term premises. We now have a constitution. Tim Green has given us considerable advice, information, and support to help us to start up. From here, it is onwards and upwards. Watch this space."

If you are interested in finding out more about Zetland Men's Shed, can help out in any way or have tools/equipment that you would like to donate to the cause, please contact David on [dm\\_goudie@hotmail.com](mailto:dm_goudie@hotmail.com) or call him on 01324 471500.



## Inverclyde Shed begins a new chapter

Inverclyde Shed—SMSA's 'Scottish Men's Shed of the Year' 2020—is revelling in success following the official opening of its new state-of-the-art facility at East Blackhall Street—a four-year journey to preserve a heritage asset in Greenock's harbour area whilst fully maximising its potential to benefit the community for many years to come.

Inverclyde Provost Drew McKenzie cut the ribbon at the official opening event which was strongly supported with Inverclyde councillors, Shedders and the community out in force and packing out the 4,000 sq ft facility last month.

A Shed worthy of the envy of many, the SMSA and Men's Sheds from the surrounding area were delighted to get a guided tour from Shed Treasurer and founder Bruce Newlands at the recent Greater Glasgow and Clyde Regional Shed Network Meeting to see the impressive eco-friendly space for themselves.

The fit-out of the pioneering building saw the Inverclyde Shedders work closely with its contractor, Lochlie Construction to ensure the historic building stayed true to its heritage whilst also implementing eco-friendly elements. The building, with its three multi-purpose rooms and huge open space boasts a wide range of machinery and equipment which will be powered completely by solar panels.

Bruce said: "Our journey to obtain this new facility for our growing membership started back in September 2019 when we submitted a Community Asset Transfer application for a 25-year lease on the former garage. With some hold-ups along the way due to the pandemic, the application was formally agreed by Inverclyde Council's Environment and Regeneration Committee in March 2020 and signed by our Shed Board in November 2021.

"In January 2021, we were awarded funding through the Scottish Government's Regeneration Capital Grant Fund and began the refurbishment in March 2021 and it was completed in January of this year. We could not have done this without our funders, local supporters, partnership working and the blood, sweat and tears of our board and members. We wish to thank and recognise everyone who has helped us achieve this goal, one which we are immensely proud of.

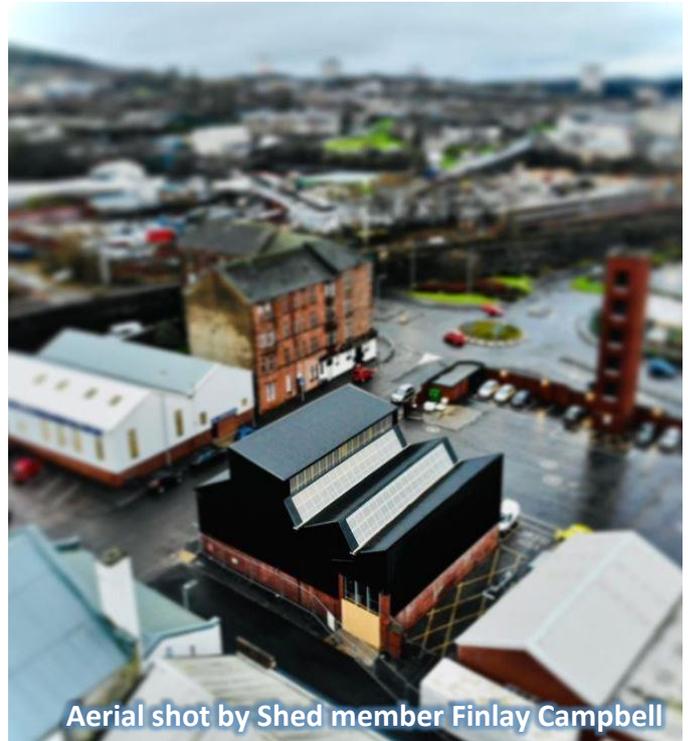
"With so much potential for this much-larger space and membership high in demand, our activities will be member-led. There is the space for our existing groups like spoon-carving, 3D printing, pyrography and proposals for new ones such as weaving, ceramics, jewellery-making, 3D resin printing and an electronics club. Some of our newly-purchased kit includes a full-bed CNC router with the ability to cut up to 1200 x 2400mm of plywood, MDF, acrylic, plastics and aluminium; a new 1200 x 1000mm hybrid laser cutter with the ability to cut and engrave steel as well as paper, card, acrylics, rubber, leather, plywood or MDF; and a 3 in 1 sheet metalworking machine for bending, cutting, shearing and rolling. The possibilities are endless.



Provost McKenzie said the new Shed was a great example of community responsibility. He said: "It's a demonstration of people seeing a need and taking the steps and using their talents to develop that need. It's a project that Inverclyde Council was very keen to support and thankfully it also received support from the Scottish Government. Congratulations to everyone involved from start to finish."

With Spring well and truly here, it is not just all go at the new Shed. Their Muirshiel Lane Garden project— rejuvenated in conjunction with local community gardening group, [Blooming Inverkip](#)—and their Shore Street Garden are all set for the busiest growing season and beehive inspections as they plant a wide range of fruit and vegetables, biodiverse trees, shrubs and plants and get ready to make their own homemade comfrey liquid plant food. New taps have been added to their rainwater harvesting barrels ready for the hot summer months ahead and two new polytunnels are now in place for the Muirshiel Lane Garden volunteers.

Follow Inverclyde Shed's activities on [Facebook](#) and [subscribe to their YouTube channel](#) as they document their Shed journey.



Aerial shot by Shed member Finlay Campbell

## SMSA Targe on tour!

The Secretary of [Men's Shed Govan](#) presented to a [Unite](#) union members meeting at Thales, a local defence contractor on the Clyde-side, to raise awareness of the Men's Shed model and their Shed activities whilst bringing along the SMSA 'Scottish Men's Shed of the Year' targe for the ride.

Shed Secretary Chris McCartan said: "It was an honour and a privilege to address the meeting. There was around 40-50 people in attendance with another 30 or so watching remotely.

"Unite supported us with a one-off £3,000 donation from Union funds and I delivered a 15-minute talk on our activities and the impact on our members and they really wanted to see the impressive trophy for themselves.

"Each Union member has 24 volunteer hours throughout the year which are paid by the company to spend at a charitable organisation of their choice. I was very much encouraging them to volunteer with us or, as a great many of them commute from further afield, their own local Men's Shed."



## Nothing goes to waste at Clydebank Men's Shed

Clydebank's Men's Shed has donated surplus machinery to Barnardos Clydebank to support a fellow charity with contributions and help reduce the amount of waste entering landfill.

Clydebank Shedder Colin Cranwell said: "We are often gifted items from the local community. These come in many forms including machinery and equipment or in this case, tools that have been generously gifted to the Shed but for various reasons we are unable to utilise.

"These items we like to pass on to charities to give a new lease of life rather than lying idle or worse, landing up in landfill. We have passed on a variety of items over the last few years and on this occasion, donated fret saws of commercial quality to children's charity, Barnardo's.

"We truly appreciate every donation that we receive and want to see them put to good use. Some items are gifted after a bereavement or challenging circumstances, and it is always good to see love and support being passed on. For this exact reason, we refuse nothing and if it can't be put to good use by the Shed, we will strive to find someone who can benefit, helping to support and strengthen the community."

The Shed currently has some bench machinery and tools looking for a new home. So, if your Shed needs a help, please drop them a line at [mens.shedclydebank@gmail.com](mailto:mens.shedclydebank@gmail.com).

Clydebank Men's Shed at Dalmuir Community Centre, bottom of Duntocher Road, is open 11am to 4pm on Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays. All welcome.

Keep up to date with news from Clydebank Men's Shed by following them on [Facebook](#).

You can also view their new '[Shed walkthrough](#)' video online [here](#) which showcases all the machinery they have acquired for their impressive workshop.





## Govan Shedders reel in new activity

A great day out was had by all as a group of members from Men's Shed Govan, SMSA's 'Scottish Men's Shed of the Year' 2022, relaxed and bonded over a day's fishing.

Some lovely big fish were caught when the Men Shed's fishing club had an outing at scenic Waterfront fishery near Coylton earlier this month.

Sarah Everett from Men's Shed Govan said: "This is the members' third fishing trip and they all had a fantastic time. Some members are even going along for the day out and don't actually fish! Our second oldest member David was there (*pictured top, second from the right*) at age 87."

We all know that Men's Sheds boost health and wellbeing, but outings with fellow peers outwith the

Shed environment can be just as beneficial.

Fishing can not only give you a good workout—engaging your shoulders, back, arms, core and legs—but can also improve your concentration, reduce stress, allow you to unwind and gets you out in the fresh air to enjoy nature. Not to mention the friendly competitiveness, banter and personal goal setting that can improve self-esteem.

And, what better way to do it than with a group of friends. Why not get your Shed members fishing for wellbeing to rest and reset?

Follow Men's Shed Govan on [Facebook](#).



## Gala Shedders teach the young some new tricks

Earlier this month, Gala Men's Shed had a visit from a group of young lads from Works+, an employability charity based in Galashiels that helps young people aged 16-24 to gain a positive destination in life.

The group, after a health and safety talk and tour of the Shed, experienced how to make bug hotels from scratch as well as how to rewire a plug with guidance from Shed members. The group enjoyed the session—learning practical skills, measuring, preparing and building and some had never worked with any of the tools previously.

Attendee Jack said: "I have never built a bug hotel before and thought that I would not be very good at it as I really didn't enjoy woodwork at school. Today, I actually enjoyed myself, learned a lot and feel proud of what I built."

The bug hotels produced will be on sale at Why Not? in Galashiels (41-43 Channel Street) as well as some of the other Shed products made over the past few weeks.

Follow Gala Men's Shed on [Facebook](#) for more updates.



## Castle Douglas Men’s Shed on membership drive following move

Following the Shed’s move to a former garage on Carlingwark Street, the members are on a mission to raise awareness of their new facilities and recruit new members to their 6,000 sq ft space!

The SMSA caught up with Jimmy Robertson (81) from Castle Douglas Men’s Shed on the phone just as he was about to board a flight from his holidays in Malta back to Scotland. Jimmy said: “The location of our new premises is much better for those travelling by public transport. We have a bus stop right across the street now and have already noticed that we are already attracting new members from further afield. We now have signed up members from Dundrennan and Kirkcudbright.

“We currently meet every Wednesday afternoon but as our membership grows, we hope to offer additional opening times. The possibilities are endless as we have so much space at our fingertips now with work area, car parking, ample storage space and even a shop-front window to sell our wares.

“It has been a major task cleaning up the building—which was previously home to a flock of pigeons—but now it is time to enjoy the space and make it our new Shed home. The first priority was to get our mess room up and running.

“We are very much into reclaiming, reusing and recycling and are working on numerous projects made out of old pallets like mud kitchens for local primary schools. All the leftover wood is also made into kindling and donated to our local charity shop. We have also been creating flower planters, bird nesting boxes and refurbishing summer seats.

“We are striving to raise awareness that men do not need to have a skill or trade behind them to join us—they just need to come along and bring their own tea mug!

“We currently have 30 members and it gets these men out of the house and offers a place to enjoy company and comradeship. I have seen some men, who are really quite quiet when they first come along—end up laughing the loudest and enjoying the craic.”

**Anyone interested in attending can contact Jimmy on 07711499700, email [glenlown@gmail.com](mailto:glenlown@gmail.com) or pop along to the Shed.**



### Cromwell in partnership with the Scottish Men's Sheds Association

Helping you keep your members and volunteers safe, and your shed running essential equipment that will benefit the local community.

Get on board with Cromwell and see the exciting range of products and discounts we offer to the Scottish Men's Sheds Association

Keeping Industry Working

**Click here for more info on the SMSA/Cromwell partnership and benefits for SMSA Shed members**

## Stonehaven & District Men's Shed's 'Shedder of the Year' 2022

Last Christmas may seem like a long time ago but as this is the first issue of 'The Scottish Shedder' magazine in 2023, we simply could not let this announcement slip by.

At the [Stonehaven and District Men's Shed's](#) Christmas party held on the 15th December 2022 at the Station Hotel, Chairman Bill Allan announced and presented the Stonehaven 'Shedder of the Year' 2022 award.

Bill said: "For the 2020 awards, we had two winners , Peter Cooper and Tom Hannan, and 2021 saw Vice-Chairman Andy Lorimer scoop the title. As a result of the pandemic and being unable to meet, all three were awarded their trophies at the last Christmas lunch in 2021 for their efforts to steer the course of the Shed and the surprise trophy—made from a ship's wheel—was revealed for the first time.

"For the 2022 award, the three previous winners were asked to meet and make a recommendation for their choice of stalwart member. It was quite difficult for Tom, Andy and Peter to decide as there have been many fine contributions by all of our members over the past year.



"The gentleman nominated is appreciated, not only for his unstinting efforts for the good of the Shed, in identifying, initiating, supporting and carrying out a range of community and client projects but also his behind the scenes and often unnoticed efforts on tasks that are often taken for granted. Things like, bin emptying, doing recycling skip runs, use of his trailer for delivering and picking up items and organising the supply of cleaning materials.

"He gets stuck into the maintenance of machinery and equipment and, into improving the fabric of the Shed and even into the minutiae of sorting out screws and nails. This man's approach could hardly be described as 'unobtrusive'! Even if you are in the loft, you know when he comes in the door..... he brings his unique sense of humour to the Shed.

"In addition, his wide range of contacts amongst the other community groups in and around Stonehaven often facilitates communication between the Shed and these organisations and can get the ball rolling for partnership working.

"It was unanimously agreed that Paul Tosh is our 'Shedder of the Year' 2021."

## Lanark Shedder completes Etape 2023

Congratulations to Lanark Men's Shed Treasurer Joe Sheerin for completing the charity bike ride [Etape 2023](#) in five hours and 24 minutes for a worthy cause.

Joe (68) braced the cold howling wind and rain to reach the end of his challenge raising vital funds for his chosen charity, Prostate Cancer Research.

Etape 2023 is a charity cycle sportive around the iconic Loch Ness offering the chance to cycle 66 miles (106 km) on traffic-free roads. The 360° closed-road route around the loch with breath-taking scenery starts and finishes in the Highland capital of Inverness, offering 900m of ascent.

The 'King of the Mountain' phase is a 4.8 mile (7.72 km) climb gaining 380m in height with a gradient reaching 12% at times.

The SMSA caught up with Joe to hear all about why he chose to take on this challenge. Joe said: "Some of our Shed members are currently going through

radiotherapy or are on medication as part of their treatment for prostate cancer. It is a condition that will resonate across all Men's Sheds.

"I wanted to do something to not only raise funds towards the research for this condition but to also raise awareness. It was the push that I needed to sign up to the challenge.

"I have cycled since a young child but not the last couple of years. Ten years ago, I did the Pitlochry Biking Trail but there is a big difference between tackling such a task at aged 58 than 68. Since early February this year, I have been training for the day.

"Despite the freezing cold weather—one minute it was rain and then hailstones— and how physically tough those inclines were, I can honestly say I would rank it as one of the nicest cycles I have ever done with the most beautiful views. And, who knows, it may even encourage other men out there to get that old bike out of the garage and hit the road."

**Between July 2020 and June 2021, 3,543 men were diagnosed with Prostate Cancer in Scotland. To support Joe's fundraiser, please [donate to the cause here](#).**



## Raise awareness of prostate health by showcasing the 'Three Amigos' animation in your Shed!

The SMSA's animation 'The Three Amigos' focuses in on men's sex lives and toilet habits to draw attention to possible health issues men can experience like the changes in the hidden 'third nut', the prostate gland.

**Early detection is key!**

[Share this health animation with your Shedders today.](#)

## Gala Men's Shed E-bike Project

At the beginning of April 2023, Galashiels Men's Shed took delivery of four E-bikes thanks to a grant from the [Energy Savings Trust](#).

Ross Hall from the Shed said: "The members involved in the E-bike project aim to not only to get up the wee hill outside the Shed but to improve their general health and wellbeing and contribute to a reduction in car journeys.

"The E-bikes will not be stored at the Shed, they are being stored remotely—to discourage nefarious activity—and are available for long-term loans to Shed members and the local community.

"Such is their popularity (and fun) that they are already booked up over six months ahead!"

Watch the 'Sons of Ibuprofen Chapter' video right to see the E-bikes in action and follow Gala Men's Shed on [Facebook](#) for more information.



# A PERSONAL STORY



**72-years-young veteran Ray Elliott shares his journey from Royal Engineer Commando with mountain and arctic warfare training to Shotts Shedder and mentor and everything in between.**

Born in 1950 into the family haulage and scrapyard business, Ray did not need toys – he was the envy of many kids as he got to play and help cut up real tanks! At age nine, after being badly attacked by a local for being a Romany Gypsy, he was then trained by a WW2 Commando to defend himself. Leaving school at 14, he began an apprenticeship as a Heavy Diesel Plant Fitter with McAlpine's in Hayes, Middlesex and for five years got to work with bulldozers and cranes on building sites.

Ray said: "Following my apprenticeship after school, I moved to a concrete factory making prefabricated building sections as a Plant Fitter. My family then wanted to train me to take over the family business, something I really did not want to do, so I rebelled and joined the Royal Engineers at Cove, six weeks of drill and using the self-loading rifle (SLR) followed by trade training driving a Land Rover and a 4-tonne lorry.

"After 18 weeks, I was posted to Osnabruck in Germany (BAOR – British Army of the Rhine). We lived in confined accommodation with zero privacy. I applied to join the Royal

Engineer 9 Parachute Squadron with a two-year wait and got my head down and trained hard but unfortunately, trouble and jealousy seem to follow me around and a fight resulted in me being kicked out of Germany, luckily avoiding prison.

"I had to go to Chatham for trade training and was put on an Engine Fitters' course, usually six-months long. I was given 12 weeks to pass, I tried to drag it out, but very quickly got bored. After six weeks, I entered the training room and told the trainer to sit down and watch. Within a few hours, I had stripped the engine, re-built it and put it on the engine test bed. To say the trainer was amazed is an understatement.

"After undertaking more commando training – I was the only one out of 24 Engineer hopefuls to pass. I then joined the new Condor Troop and moved to Arbroath to support 45 Royal Marine Commando Group serving NATO at the end of the Cold War with Russia, this was a Mountain and Arctic Warfare Group.

"We climbed up 700ft mountains, abseiled down headfirst at high speed and learned to casevac (casualty evacuation) a wounded soldier up and down mountains. Arctic warfare took your breath away, temperatures around minus 24C, skiing down a mountain would go to minus 60C.

"Our first trip was purely survival skills, sleeping in 10-man tents at minus 28C, skiing with 60lb packs into a hole cut in a frozen lake. Get the pack off, get the skis off, say your name, rank and number then use the ski poles to get out and start running. Just four minutes in that water could kill you, so running was required to warm the body up - at least five miles of running.

"Then, Northern Ireland in 1971 was brutal - our job was to attend to bombings, get the people out first, then the walking wounded, then the dead, or just pieces of bodies. We had to check the building structure and make it safe or pull it down whilst being shot at, petrol bombed or stoned. This experience teaches one to stay focused on the mission ahead.

"In my personal time over the years, and much more since my retirement at 69, I have enjoyed making small models from matchsticks in my own shed and also doll houses which I donate to local toddler groups. After recovering from Covid, I was asked by a charity in Shotts – the next village to me - to call in for a chat. They had seen photos of one of the dolls houses that I had made and asked if I could make their currently closed Men's Shed work. My initial thoughts were that it was just a place for older men to drink coffee and chat, how wrong I was.

# A PERSONAL STORY (CONTINUED)

*...continued from previous page*

"I had a peek in the Men's Shed at Shotts, and it was sad to see it empty except for some birdhouses and a couple of pieces of machinery. I got to work, locating a nearby factory that had pallets left outside for people to take. Now we had some wood. A new building behind the Shed supplied additional timber and I fitted two under-bench vices, put up shelving and brought the large table saw and Mitre saw into use.

"I then received permission to strip the old fence slats around the community hall and used the wood to start producing garden planters. In no time at all, previous members started returning, including a group of lads with learning disabilities and I started to teach them basic woodworking and they helped make the planters.

"When the previous woodworker Simon visited, his face was an absolute picture as he stood at the door amazed at what had been achieved. Six months on, this man is now full of confidence and we make an amazing team. We have produced many items to generate Shed funds and even encouraged an 86-year-old ex-Carpenter to join us. I am not the 'boss' but utilising my military skills and background, I tend to fall into a leader/mentor role that I thoroughly enjoy.

"My perception of Men's Sheds has really changed – they are vital and effective tool in our communities. We

are now a fully operational Shed offering activities and skills experience including general woodwork, painting, basic carpentry, plumbing and soon we will cover electrics like how to wire a plug and change a socket.

"The Shed is a platform to make friends, relax in each other's company, just sit and chat or get involved, there is no pressure. They can make a project of their choice, or we can give them a project to do with full support, in a helpful manner, not in an authority manner. The charity hall next door also offers yoga, circuit training and much more. Jointly, we are encouraging members of our community to get out of the house and come do some exercise within good company.

**"Build the camaraderie you miss and help set up a Men's Shed using military know how."**

"As a veteran, I fully support the Men's Sheds model as a worthwhile adventure. Sheds are reaching out to and supporting all men from all backgrounds. With the SMSA always there in the background to offer support, help or advice, anyone with a pro-active nature can help set up a Shed in their locality and encourage others to get involved.

"For all the veterans out there, I urge you to get involved in the Men's Sheds Movement. Build the camaraderie you miss and help set up a Men's Shed using military know how. Pull up some sandbags and tell your stories to people, they will hang on your every word. YOU can make a BIG difference in people's lives and it can help with yours too."



Pictured: Ray (front row, far left) at the Condor Troop Reunion

# SHED PROJECTS

## Dunbar Shed creates 'Big John'

Dunbar Shed, along with local artist, Gail Wallace, created a larger than life version of a local hero to celebrate Dunbar Civic Week's annual parade.

The Shed chose to model their five-metre-high creation on Dunbar man [John Muir](#), a farmer, inventor, botanist, geologist, explorer, mountaineer, writer and pioneer of nature conservation and the first national park system.

Dunbar Shedder Bob Fleet said: "Big John took several months to make, but we were not working on him full time. The Craft Centre next door helped make the costume using ex-army blankets. Most of him was recycled with some locally-grown willow forming the body frame.

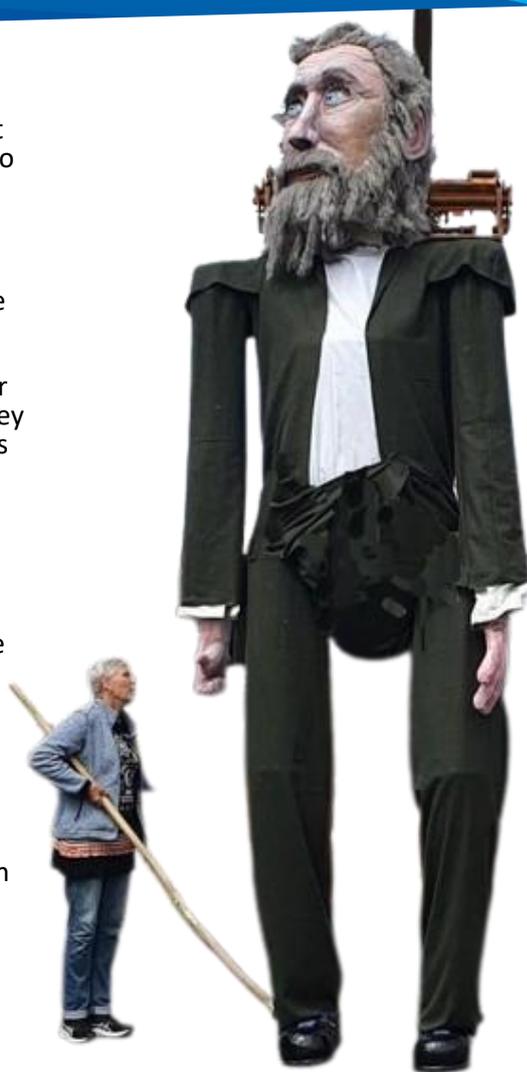
"We created John for last year's parade and had a trial of lifting him under a telehandler but, although it was going to work, it wasn't going to be as simple as we thought and it added to the height.

"On the day of the parade, it was unfortunately too windy and unsafe to walk with him so I searched for a site along the route and found the perfect place. I knocked on the door to speak to the householder and they then helped get the head and hands peering over their garden wall (pictured below left) so the public could see him.

"John was then packed away safely in two potato boxes at Drysdale Freight near Cockburnspath for safe keeping to then work on him at a later date for future events.

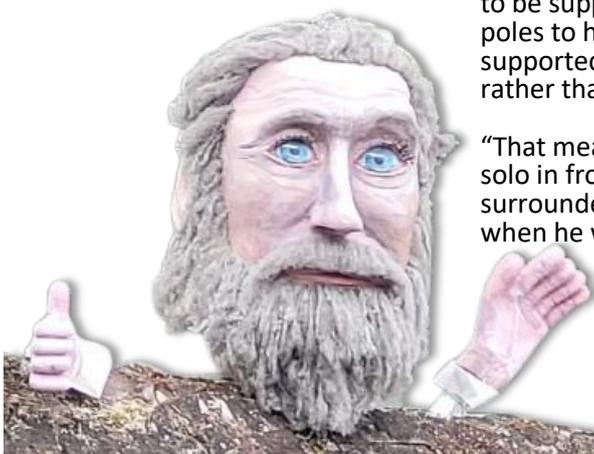
"We are now currently modifying him before his next outing to this year's Dunbar Civic Week (10th—18th June 2023) community parade to be supported by four people with poles to his shoulders and his head supported on a pole from below rather than on the rope.

"That means instead of appearing solo in front of everything he'll be surrounded by a group of friends when he walks.



"We are hoping our local amateur dramatic society will be parading him and we've got a wee while yet to totally perfect him!"

Follow Dunbar on [Facebook](#) for more of their projects.



## A bird table with a difference...

Last month, Macmerry Men's Shed member John Bathgate unveiled a new bespoke bird table that he designed for Harlawhill Day Care Centre in Prestonpans—a charity that specialises in providing care and activities for those who need daily support in order to continue living at home.

John, who has a great talent for these projects and an excellent eye for detail, modelled the bird table on the Day Centre building and donated the gift to the centre.

On receipt of the gift, Manager Fiona Mitchell (pictured below right) said "We look forward to many happy hours watching our new Harlawhill feathered members visiting. Thank you so much gentlemen, you have certainly brightened up our day."

Follow Macmerry Men's Shed's project on [Facebook](#).



# SHED PROJECTS

## It all started with a donation of a doll's house in need of some TLC...

When a doll house was donated to Inverclyde Shed—to finish the project of someone that had unfortunately passed away—Shedder David Maugere jumped at the chance to renovate it to give it a new lease of life to be enjoyed by another child.

David said: “The house was in not-so-great shape and needed some TLC to bring it back to its former glory. It came with some furniture and some unbuilt items still in their packaging.

“I got to work and replaced the roof tiles, wallpaper, carpets and lino throughout. The existing furniture and fittings were repaired and given a makeover and I built the remaining pieces.”

Now a house worthy of keeping up with the Jones’, it was to be donated to a very special little girl—five-year old Eloise who loved playing with the one at her school.

David added: “When Eloise learned that it was being renovated for her, she was always asking ‘is it ready yet?’ and if I was going to the Shed today to work on it. It did take quite a while since I only go to the Shed one day a week after work, but I started in August 2022 and finished it on the 19th April 2023.”

Eloise now plays with her very own modernised doll house every day in her bedroom. And just check out that happy grin...

Click here to watch the [renovation film](#) and see the attention to detail on Inverclyde Shed’s You Tube channel.



## Dunfermline Men’s Shed’s folding bench/picnic table

At a recent meeting of the Dunfermline Shedders, member Gary Dignan gave a talk to the gathered masses about his latest project—a bench that also transforms into a picnic table.

Gary said: “Our Shed is a place for informal learning and sharing skills of both our individual pursuits and community projects. I had decided to make a bench at home (yes I know, ‘not another bench’ I hear you say), but this one was different as it could also fold into a picnic table!

“For members that missed my riveting talk (pun intended) or even fell asleep during it, and non-members far and wide too, we thought it would be great to add a ‘Tool-up’ section to our website to store this information on how to make these project to share with others— visit the Dunfermline Men’s Shed website at [dunfermlineshed.org.uk/tool-up](http://dunfermlineshed.org.uk/tool-up).”



# SHED PROJECTS

## A wrecked fishing village canoe, clocks and the Gala Shed...

*By John B. of Gala Men's Shed*

As most things 'Shed', the stories of our creations either begin or end with wood; how it is sourced, perhaps repurposed or brought to life in a different guise, this tale is no different.

However, this time there is a far greater sense of mystery and intrigue.

Through a painstaking and often extremely noisy process, the age old dozen layers of protective coatings, tar, paint and varnish were stripped and planed back revealing some beautiful rustic pieces of hard wood. The retention of dowel and brass nail holes together with the original shaping that held the vessel together lending character to our remodelled items.

These relics were now ready for our members to bring their creative skills to bare.

The first items off the benches are a selection of unique clocks.



Each one unique—different in its shape and composition. A beautiful contrast between the rustic hard wood, with some original features, and the pristine clock faces are enhanced with nautical touches such as cordage.

Mystery still shrouds these salvaged pieces of hard wood.

No one really knows the life story of our curious vessel remains or the details of its journey to Scotland.

What secrets do our artisan time pieces hold within?



## Mind-boggling fundraiser has the Wee County community stumped

[Wee County Men's Shed](#) has come up with a clever fundraiser that is frustrating people so much—as they try to guess what the mystery object is—that they are putting their hands in their pockets to find out.

Shed Treasurer Jon Searle said: "The device is sold in two ways. To youngsters for £1 - a present they can afford for their parents or grandparents. They are not told what the item is until they buy it but are told that the recipient will love the gift. Secondly to adults for £2, we tell them that it is a dinner party conversation starter and again, only divulge the device's name on receipt of £2 to be paid to our Shed or another charity of their choice. Then they are sworn to secrecy.

"The whole exercise is done as a wee game, we don't push the item at all. Some people say they will Google it to find out what it is, others say they will get it from Amazon. Both of these ideas fail. Of course while we are 'playing the game' we tell them all about Men's Sheds and show them some of the other items we sell.

"One other important point is that we explain that these devices are one of the first items that a Wee County Shedder, learning to use a woodlathe, is taught how to make. Often it is the first thing they have



*The mystery object*

ever made in their life and this again reinforce what we do at the Shed."

For the purpose of this article, SMSA Communications & PR Officer Michelle Wibrew googled away and failed to identify the item before waving the white flag and calling Jon to transfer funds to get this conundrum out of her head. Michelle said: "Even on transfer of my funds, I had to wait impatiently until my transaction appeared in their bank account before Jon emailed me the top secret answer I had been waiting for and told me I was now an official member of the elite band and duty bound NOT to tell anyone."

**So, can you guess what this mystery object is?** Well, you too can find out on receipt of a donation to your chosen charity. Contact Wee County Men's Shed at [weecountymensshed@mail.com](mailto:weecountymensshed@mail.com)

**Has your Shed organised a fundraiser with a difference? SMSA would love to hear from you, contact [Michelle Wibrew](#) to feature in a future issue of The Scottish Shedder magazine.**

## Our Men's Shed

*A poem written by  
Gordon Shepherd of  
St Andrews Men's Shed*

Up out of bed  
Off to Men's Shed  
Get together  
Brew and blether  
Then make a start  
All play their part  
Someone will ask  
Help with a task  
Collect the tools  
Angles and rules  
Planters and chairs  
Bench with layers  
Of wood gifted  
Now moods lifted  
As things are built  
Laugh at a tilt  
Sort with some skill  
To keep it still  
Get the right screws  
Just to amuse  
It'll be fine  
It can be mine  
Who needs craft  
If we all laughed  
An awful sight  
Fix next one right  
Here is the tale  
Of fellows male  
We get on well  
Lots more to tell  
Work in a team  
Build self-esteem.

## Macmerry Men's Shed features on BBC Podcast on Retreat

Check out Vincent Proc and Michael Stewart from Macmerry Men's Shed on the BBC Podcast 'The Digital Human' focussing on the value of retreat.

Presenter Aleks Krotoski talks to the Macmerry Men's Shed members (13 minutes in) to raise awareness of Men's Sheds offering a revitalising sense of retreat, and escape from day-to-day life, for many and deriving enormous benefits.

[Listen to the BBC Podcast here.](#)



# WHAT'S COOKING?

## Nine delicious recipes from the British Heart Foundation to try this spring...

*The days are longer, the weather is warmer and there is lots of produce in season. The British Heart Foundation (BHF) has selected their best healthy recipes for you to try this spring.*

[Click here to subscribe](#) to the BHF's 'Heart Matters' magazine for free information, inspiration and recipe ideas.

You can also use the [BHF 'recipe finder'](#) to source healthy recipes and filter by dietary requirements, cuisines, health conditions, cooking times etc.



**British Heart Foundation**

### Asparagus and salmon risotto



It's asparagus season, so there's no better time to try this tasty risotto recipe, packed with other vegetables including peas and leeks. You can make extra and freeze the risotto for up to a month. [Recipe info >](#)

### Pasta with purple sprouting broccoli



This tasty pasta recipe is easy to make and full of seasonal flavour. The broccoli, cherry tomatoes and chopped red chilli add lovely colour and fresh flavour. [Recipe info >](#)

### Muffins with leeks and cheese



Try making these tasty savoury muffins as a healthy alternative when you want a baked treat. The individual portions are perfect for your picnic basket. [Recipe info >](#)

### Pork and fennel traybake



These succulent pork tenderloins will be perfect to serve at dinner or for lunch in the garden. Switch up the vegetables to suit your taste – leeks, celery and large mushrooms work well. Add a teaspoon of wholegrain mustard to the gravy for delicious flavour. [Recipe info >](#)

### Thai sweet chilli chicken wraps



Sweet chilli sauce complements the chicken, while spinach, tomato and chopped coriander makes it wonderfully fresh. Make extra to share with family or friends for a day in the sun. [Recipe info >](#)

### Roasted mackerel with new potatoes and beetroot



This delicious fish dish will be perfect for a light but filling dinner and will provide you with omega-3 fats to keep your heart healthy. [Recipe info >](#)

### Asparagus and edamame frittata



Get your five-a-day with this heart-healthy frittata recipe. It's perfect for sharing at a picnic lunch, and radishes add lovely, bright colour. [Recipe info >](#)

### Creamy fish in filo pastry



These crispy parcels of white fish and veg make a quick and simple supper, and are an easy way to fit more fish into your diet. [Recipe info >](#)

### Roasted rhubarb and orange fool



This fool is a simple way to showcase fresh rhubarb. It could be a great addition to your picnic basket, so serve in individual jam jars and share with friends. [Recipe info >](#)

## Scotland leads the way in rewilding with new funding recognition

- *Over half of projects awarded up to £15,000 from Rewilding Britain's Rewilding Innovation Fund are based in Scotland*
- *All projects highlight rewilding's positive effects on health and community as well as landscape recovery*
- *Research shows stronger connections with nature benefits the health and wellbeing of individuals and communities*

**Rewilding Britain** is highlighting the importance of community-based rewilding projects and those that benefit people's health and wellbeing through the UK's first Rewilding Innovation Fund. Seven projects around Britain have been awarded up to £15,000 each, four of which are in Scotland.

The new fund awards financial backing to locally-led land and marine rewilding projects countrywide. Its first official round follows a successful pilot launch earlier this year, and focuses on rewilding projects that have a strong community element or are working towards improving people's health and wellbeing.

Sara King, Rewilding Britain's Rewilding Manager, said: "It's wonderful to see so many innovative and exciting rewilding projects taking place in Scotland. We're delighted to be able to use this latest round of funding to highlight rewilding projects that recognise the tangible benefits this has on both individual mental and physical health, and also the wellbeing of our communities."

The Rewilding Innovation Fund supports rewilding projects across Britain's lands and seas, and two of the seven successful projects are working towards marine rewilding in Scotland.

The Community of Arran Seabed Trust (COAST) charity is one of the leading marine rewilding projects in Britain, whose work has resulted in a stunning recovery of marine habitats around Arran and the Clyde. The

backing from the Rewilding Innovation Fund will help the charity further develop its community engagement work.

Áine Purcell-Milton, Executive Director at COAST, said: "The actions to achieve rewilding the ocean need to be fully supported and driven by the local community. This dedicated funding allows us to involve Arran residents in discussions and decisions about the seas that surround their island home, deciding on what's important now and what to prioritise for the future."

The Rewilding Innovation Fund is also supporting a feasibility study to assess the potential for seagrass restoration at Knoydart, a community-owned and managed estate. Habitats like seagrass are an amazing carbon store, the rewilding of which is a vital natural solution to help in the fight against the climate emergency. The Knoydart Climate Action Group will be using the funding to support training and survey equipment for volunteers, encouraging the community to discover an amazing rewilding project right on their doorstep.

Scotland-based projects also receiving funding are the Talla-Hartfell Wild Land Area project, led by the Southern Uplands Partnership, and the Rewilding Ardura Community Forest project, led by Mull and Iona Community Trust.

Covering 47,215 hectares in the central Southern Uplands, the Talla-Hartfell Wild Land Area project aims to increase rewilding and nature restoration in the area through working with local communities. This funding will support development of a circular walk, an eco-museum, community talks and ongoing advisory and engagement visits.

The Ardura Community Forest, located on the east side of the Isle of Mull, was bought by community charity Mull and Iona Community Trust in 2019. The Trust is now in the process of developing its rewilding action plan, which seeks to protect, expand, connect and diversify the forest – making it accessible to the whole community through amenity



opportunities including improving sustainable access, particularly for people with mobility impairments. Ardura Community Forest is also part of the Northwoods Rewilding Network, a Scotland-wide chain of landholdings committed to nature recovery.

Three further projects based in England have been awarded funding in this round. Spains Hall Estate in West Essex is working with local charity Wilderness Foundation to support social prescribing and community outreach development as part of its 400 hectare rewilding project. The charity Yorkshire Rewilding Network will be using its funding for further community outreach, including hosting a Rewilding Festival in Yorkshire next spring. A new landowner-led charity West Dorset Wilding has been awarded funding to further develop the charity's rewilding aims and increase public understanding of rewilding and its wider benefits to nature, the environment and wellbeing.

Rewilding Britain's Rewilding Innovation Fund has been made possible through funding from Evolution Education Trust, Charles Langdale, The Vintry and Dormywood Trust. Rewilding Britain opens the fund for several rounds per year, and the next opportunity to apply will be in early spring 2023.

Projects in Scotland, Wales and England—working to apply the principles of rewilding to benefit nature, climate and people—can apply, and just need to be part of Rewilding Britain's growing **Rewilding Network**. Land-based projects need to be at least 40 hectares in size, while marine projects can be of any size.

For more details, please visit [www.rewildingbritain.org.uk/the-rewilding-network/rewilding-innovation-fund](http://www.rewildingbritain.org.uk/the-rewilding-network/rewilding-innovation-fund)

## Men's Sheds' contribution to making Scotland net zero



### Some good news about the climate...

In 2019, the Scottish Government announced that our country will be net zero by 2045. We then hosted COP26 where we talked about the just transition, the circular economy (or do we call it the sharing economy now?), the climate emergency, the biodiversity crisis, climate justice, climate change mitigation (but also adaptation of course)...



### What is net zero?

Put simply, net zero means cutting greenhouse gas emissions to as close to zero as possible.

### But what does all of this even mean?

Is anyone else a little bamboozled by the jargon that keeps changing and getting thrown around? With the message about the climate changing so often, it's almost impossible for us to know what we should be doing about it, even if we have the time to think about it amongst a cost-of-living crisis, cost-of-heating crisis and running a Men's Shed.

But I come to you today with **good news!** Men's Sheds are already contributing to making Scotland net zero.

You see the zero in net zero is talking about greenhouse gas emissions; CO<sub>2</sub> and methane mostly. Because we burn things (oil, gas, coal) to generate power, any kind of manufacturing or construction emits some greenhouse gases.

By the simple act of reducing the need for endless production of new things and new materials, Men's Sheds are helping Scots to reduce the emissions of greenhouse gases. Fixing Mrs Smith's bedside cabinet means she won't go to IKEA for a brand-new one. Making planters for the local school garden out of old wooden palettes means that the school won't be buying new ones, made of newly-felled trees.

This leads on to the 'net' part because nature has its own ways of absorbing greenhouse gases. If we protect and increase the amount of nature around us (not just planting trees; seagrass or peat bogs or even gardens also store carbon) we can hope to offset the emissions that we do produce. Most of the Men's Sheds I've heard of aren't only helping to protect our tree cover by re-using wood; they're also supporting local green spaces, like their own Shed garden and polytunnels, that school garden, or the park round the corner, or the community allotments.

Finally, Men's Sheds are doing one vital work towards Scotland's action on climate change; they're making it affordable. For too long, a climate-friendly lifestyle full of recycled products and visits to repair shops has been the reserve of those lucky enough to be able to afford it. And the Scottish Government is finally realising that if we want to tackle the climate, we have to make climate action available to everyone—and that's why they've funded me and my colleagues across Scotland to set up [Community Climate Action Networks](#) in Argyll and Bute, Ayrshire, Dumfries and Galloway, East Lothian, Edinburgh, Forth Valley, Glasgow, Lanarkshire, Mid Lothian, Scottish Borders, Western Isles, West Lothian and Tayside.

### Become a part of the Climate Action Regional Networks

These networks will support all kinds of community groups, no matter what their primary focus is, to contribute to a greener and fairer society. Each region has a network coordinator ([click here for their contact details](#)) and we would all love for Scottish Men's Sheds to join our climate action networks! You don't need to change anything you're doing to join; but be warned, you might have many more customers on your hands once we connect you with other groups around your area.

**Sarah McArthur**  
Edinburgh communities Climate Action Network (ECAN)  
[Scottish Communities Climate Action Network](#)

## Bowel screening could save your life!

Did you know?

- you are 14 times more likely to survive bowel cancer if it is caught early
- bowel cancer is Scotland's 3rd most common cancer
- it is more common in people over 50 – especially men
- almost 4,000 people across Scotland are diagnosed each year
- 9 out of 10 people will survive bowel cancer if it is detected early enough
- men and women aged 50 –74 are sent a test kit by post every two years
- men and women aged 75+ can request a FREE test kit every two years

Do you know the signs and symptoms of bowel cancer?

- repeated bleeding from your bottom or blood in your poo
- a recent change in your bowel habit (how often you go to the toilet) that continues for more than four weeks without going back to normal
- watery poo on its own or with constipation (constipation on its own is less likely to be serious)
- severe pain in your tummy that will not go away, especially after eating, combined with losing weight without trying
- feeling tired all the time

These symptoms can be caused by a number of conditions, not just cancer, but if you've noticed any of these yourself, it's important to tell your doctor even if you regularly take part in bowel screening.

If you are concerned about a potential sign or symptom of bowel cancer, don't wait for your invitation to arrive.

## This little test could help save your life...

One sample | Complete at home | Results in two weeks

What are the benefits?

- 9 out of 10 people survive bowel cancer if it's found and treated early
- the test helps identify people who may benefit from further investigation, even if they don't have any symptoms



For more information call the Bowel Screening Centre Helpline on 0800 0121 833 or visit the NHS Inform website at [www.nhsinform.scot/bowelscreening](http://www.nhsinform.scot/bowelscreening)

## Partnership supporting older veterans gets funding boost

Unforgotten Forces, the partnership of armed forces and civilian charities, who deliver high quality and joined-up support for ex-service men and women over the age of 60 in Scotland, has received a £950,000 investment from the Scottish Government. This funding will help improve the health and wellbeing of older veterans in Scotland over the next three years, until March 2026.

Graeme Dey MSP, the Scottish Government Minister for Veterans, said: “I am always impressed by the vital support provided by the veterans’ charitable sector here in Scotland, their hard work, and their dedication. I am delighted that we are able to continue to fund the excellent work of the Unforgotten Forces consortium.”

Working with its partner charities, Unforgotten Forces offers support for ex-servicemen and women which is matched to each person’s individual needs.

For instance, partners [Fares4Free](#) and [Defence Medical Welfare Services](#) recently joined forces to help 91-year-old Royal Air Force veteran Patrick through a period of medical treatment, with DMWS arranging for Fares4Free to escort Patrick to his appointments.

Fares4Free operations manager Leon Fisher said: “Our drivers being there to offer support, reassurance and then take him home safely afterwards made the world of difference to Patrick. They built up a great rapport with him.”

Collaboration also benefited Paul, a disabled and widowed Army veteran who lives alone, is in poor health and has a low income.

“When our Veterans Community Support Officer met him, he was quite distressed,” said [Royal British Legion Scotland’s](#) Tommy Douglas. “He’d been told [SSAFA, the Armed Forces charity](#), was arranging a new cooker for him, but he was getting anxious that it might have been a scam, so we got in touch with SSAFA and confirmed everything was in order and the cooker would soon arrive.”

Because of his dyslexia Paul had misunderstood official letters and as a result had his benefits stopped. “We got the situation sorted out and his benefits were reinstated,” said Tommy. Paul has been introduced to a Legion Scotland Unforgotten Forces volunteer, and fellow Queens Own Highlander. “Our volunteer makes regular social visits and can help Paul with reading his mail whenever required,” said Tommy.

[www.unforgottenforces.scot](http://www.unforgottenforces.scot)

**Doug Anthoney**  
Veterans’ Officer



**UNFORGOTTEN  
FORCES**

Supporting Scotland’s  
Older Veterans

# UNFORGOTTEN FORCES—SIGHT SCOTLAND VETERANS

## SUPPORTING VETERANS WITH SIGHT LOSS ACROSS SCOTLAND

Sight Scotland Veterans provides support to all veterans in Scotland who are experiencing changes to their sight, regardless of the cause, how it affects you or what point you are at. The charity aims to ensure that veterans and their families and carers have access to the support that they need when they need it.

The charity supports veterans to maintain or learn new skills while adapting to life with sight loss. Our experienced teams instil the confidence to manage everyday tasks that can seem overwhelming after a sight loss diagnosis and provide support either at home, out and about in local communities or within our Activity Hubs in West Lothian and Renfrewshire. In addition to this, the service offers access to sporting opportunities, financial wellbeing support and a confidential information line for anyone with questions or concerns about sight loss.

People with visual impairment can lose their confidence, self-esteem and their ability to do many day-to-day activities. For families and carers, they have huge concerns about how to best support their loved ones and often don't have the support themselves in coping, particularly following the initial diagnosis. For many, providing a simple piece of equipment and a guiding voice on how to make the most of it can transform their life. From reading that first piece of mail in a long time, to making a cup of tea safely once more, time and time again they support veterans to make the first step towards being as independent as possible.

### 'Life changing support'

Tom Smith, aged 34 from Renfrewshire, a former Submariner in the Royal Navy, went for a routine eye test in 2020 which highlighted a retinal degeneration problem, further investigations throughout the year resulted in Tom being diagnosed with Retinal Dystrophy, a group of rare, inherited diseases that damage the retina, causing progressive and severe loss of vision. Since 2020, Tom has been medically discharged from the Navy, and has also lost his driving license due to his vision impairment and with that a lot of his independence.

Tom Explains: "I cannot thank Sight Scotland Veterans enough for everything they have done for me, the support they have given to both my wife, and I has been quite literally life changing and I honestly do not know where we would be without it. My diagnosis obviously came as a big shock, and there was a huge number of adjustments to be made as our life was going to change dramatically. It was difficult to come to terms with it, and we were both a bit lost and in shock.



## Sight Scotland Veterans

"We were told about Sight Scotland Veterans and got in touch with them in January 2021, and the support we have received has been amazing. They talked us through everything that was happening to me, and what to expect, and made us realize that life does not end with a diagnosis of sight loss. They helped me with work, travel, adjustments to our home, plus new technology that will help me as my sight gets worse. However, I think the biggest thing the charity helped us both with was our mental health."

Joining Sight Scotland Veterans is free and membership is open to anyone living with sight loss who has served in the Armed Forces – including National Service. If you are a veteran, or know a veteran, who is affected by sight loss, please get in touch today via the helpline.

For more information, please visit

[sightscotlandveterans.org.uk](https://sightscotlandveterans.org.uk) or call 0800 035 6409.

The freephone line is open for calls 10am - 4pm  
Monday to Thursday and 10am - 3pm on Fridays.



The SMSA acknowledges and express our sincere thanks to our partners and funders for their support in 2023 for the development and growth of the Men's Shed Movement in Scotland:



# Support the SMSA

Want to help make a difference? There are many ways to support the Scottish Men's Sheds Association (SMSA) and our vital work.

**Make a direct donation to the Association:**



**Donate while you shop online, at no extra cost to yourself:**



**Fundraising and social media events**

You can raise funds for the SMSA through fundraising and social media events like Facebook Birthday Fundraisers!

**Legacy donation**

Become a guardian for future generations of Shedders by leaving a gift in your will to the Association. Start a conversation with the SMSA to discuss the difference this could make

*The SMSA is a registered Scottish charity (SC045139), its Board of Trustees—all volunteers that receive no remuneration for their time and efforts—passionately believe in the SMSA's aims and vision for the people of Scotland. The Association's small staff team of passionate individuals work to promote and support the growth of the grassroots movement across Scotland. From speaking to hundreds of individuals requiring support to start their own Men's Shed; creating pathways and documentation specific to Scottish law; and lobbying policymakers on men's health and wellbeing.*

