

## MEDIA RELEASE

# 2026 AMSA Shed Awards recognise the positive impacts of Men's Sheds

## Australia's Men's Sheds recognised for innovation, wellbeing and community impact at the 2026 National Shed Awards in Brisbane

Men's Sheds from across Australia have been recognised for their outstanding contributions to community, wellbeing and sustainability at the Australian Men's Shed Association's 2026 National Shed Awards.

The awards celebrate the remarkable work taking place in Men's Sheds across the country – from supporting men's health and strengthening communities, to developing innovative environmental projects and fostering meaningful social connections.

AMSA congratulates the winners and finalists whose initiatives demonstrate the powerful role Men's Sheds play in improving lives and building stronger communities.

### Bright Spark Award

The Bright Spark Award recognises creativity, innovation and practical problem-solving within Men's Sheds.

#### Finalists

- **Raymond Terrace Men's Shed (NSW)** – Created a community Christmas pop-up shop selling toys and wooden items made in the Shed, raising funds for local charities while helping families access affordable gifts.
- **C.Y. O'Connor Men's Shed (WA)** – Developed creative social initiatives including "Finding Fast Friends" events and themed bake-offs to help members build friendships and confidence.
- **Brunswick Junction Community Men's Shed (WA)** – Turned a cyberattack into a learning opportunity by developing practical cyber safety education sessions for members and neighbouring Sheds.

### Winner – Marlin Coast Men's Shed (QLD)

Members designed and built a custom bocce ball launching device to allow a fellow Shedder living with the impacts of a stroke to fully participate in games. The invention has transformed his ability to join in with the group and embodies the inclusive spirit of the Shed.

### Green Shed Award

The Green Shed Award recognises environmentally sustainable projects and initiatives.

#### Finalists

- **Marlin Coast Men's Shed (QLD)** – Established a native species nursery growing more than 4,500 trees across 204 species for community planting and environmental restoration projects.
- **Hawker Men's Shed (ACT)** – Operates a highly successful Community Repair Café that has saved more than 1,600 items from landfill by repairing appliances, furniture and household goods.

#### Joint Winners

- **Dingley Village Men's Shed (VIC)** – Developed machinery to recycle plastic milk bottles into durable products such as benches, garden stakes and planter boxes, diverting more than 20,000 bottles from landfill.



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- **Nepean Men's Shed (NSW)** – Designed an innovative system for safely cleaning paint brushes while capturing contaminants and protecting the environment.

### Healthy Shed, Healthy Blokes Award

This award recognises initiatives that promote men's health and wellbeing.

#### Finalists

- **Maleny and District Men's Shed (QLD)** – Developed a comprehensive wellbeing program including workshops, guest speakers and a practical wellbeing workbook used by members and families.
- **Wagga Wagga Men's Shed (NSW)** – Delivered a wide range of health initiatives including workshops, screenings and partnerships with medical professionals and universities.
- **Ashgrove The Gap Men's Shed (QLD)** – Strengthened member support through a whole-of-committee welfare approach and programs including My Health for Life and CPR training.

#### Winner – Belconnen Community Men's Shed (ACT)

Belconnen Community Men's Shed established initiatives such as *Shed Nights* and *Focused Blokes*, creating safe spaces for men to share experiences, build trust and discuss life's challenges. In partnership with experts from the Australian National University, the Shed is delivering practical, evidence-based mental health support for men.

### Community Impact Award

The Community Impact Award (Shed of the Year) highlights Men's Sheds that make a significant difference in their communities.

#### Finalists

- **Croydon Men's Shed (VIC)** – Crafted more than 900 "Angel Boxes" for families who have experienced the loss of a baby through the Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) Association's Treasured Babies program.
- **Blackall Range Woodcrafters Guild (QLD)** – Donated over 1000 handcrafted toys, furniture and woodwork projects to community organisations across the Sunshine Coast
- **Hawker Men's Shed (ACT)** – Partnered with Outback Grave Markers to help preserve local history by producing plaques identifying unmarked graves.
- **Erina Community Men's Shed (NSW)** – Runs the "Kids Shed" program mentoring young people through hands-on woodworking and life skills.

#### Winner – Cockburn Community Men's Shed (WA)

Through partnerships with schools, universities, disability organisations and the justice system, Cockburn Community Men's Shed provides learning opportunities, community projects and support programs that benefit thousands of people. Members also contribute thousands of volunteer hours each year delivering projects for schools, aged care facilities and local organisations.

#### Winner – The Ted Donnelly Award for Lifetime Contribution to Men's Sheds – John Sharples.

The "Ted Donnelly Award" recognising outstanding and lifelong contributions to the Men's Shed movement was awarded to John Sharples. John's service to the Australian Men's Shed movement has been exceptional spanning decades.

John was a founder of the Bateau Bay Men's Shed (Central Coast, NSW), served on the NSW Men's Shed Association and Australian Men's Shed Association Boards and remains an active member of Cessnock Men's Shed & Garden (Hunter Valley, NSW).



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These awards highlight the enormous contribution Men's Sheds make to communities across Australia.

"Men's Sheds are places where friendships are built, skills are shared and communities are strengthened," said David Helmers, AMSA Executive Officer.

"These award winners and finalists show just how powerful the Shed movement is in supporting men's wellbeing while delivering real benefits to the wider community."

"Ordinary men with a heart can make a difference," said Gordon Cooper from the Belconnen Community Men's Shed ACT (Winner - Healthy Shed, Healthy Blokes Award)

Across Australia, more than 1,300 Men's & Community Sheds provide welcoming spaces where men can connect, learn new skills and contribute to their communities.

## **MEDIA CONTACT**

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