

## VIP visit for Street Men's Shed



On Thursday 20th June, Street Men's Shed welcomed journalist Kate Humble and Membership and Support Officer, Laura Winkley, to their newly refurbished Men's Shed. Kate initially contacted UKMSA on learning about the Men's Shed movement, keen to learn more as part of research for her next book, and was put in touch with Street Men's Shed.

Kate fondly recalls her visit with the Shed *"I was promised tea and perhaps even a biscuit. The promise was more than honoured with not just one biscuit, but a whole tin of them—and there was a Victoria sponge, although Dave had a proprietorial eye on it so I stuck to the chocolate digestives.*

*What I hadn't expected, when I walked into the old chicken shed on a farm on the edge of Street, was to be made to feel that I had walked into a family gathering and that I was instantly part of that family. There was banter, and laughter, the wonderful ease of familiarity and yet this group of men, aged between 60 and their mid-80's - had not known each other before this Men's shed was formed. Many of them had been lonely or at a loose end after retirement. Some had suffered from depression, others had skills they wanted to put to use. This building, entirely fitted out with reclaimed materials by the Shed members, had become a place of respite, support, creativity, purpose.*

*All the men I met there said that joining the Shed had transformed their lives. And together they were also helping their community by making and repairing things in the workshop they had created. I was moved and inspired by my time there and delighted to discover that such a simple concept could be so effective and so uplifting. "*

The chair of Street Men's Shed, Brian Bastable, said *"Well what a day, we really want to thank UKMSA for putting us forward to Kate. We all agreed that she was everything she is like on the TV and more. We are grateful to Kate for being so patient with us in sharing our stories and experiences with her. The men in our Shed are what shedding is all about—work is just a bonus by product of the social life of the Shed."*

Thank you to Street Men's Shed for hosting a great afternoon and the warm welcome!

# Welcome to the new UK Men's Sheds Association Trustees

At the meeting of Trustees on 1st July, 2019, the Trustees co-opted four new members to their number.

This was following an extensive and competitive recruitment process and is part of the desire to strengthen our governance and ability to support Sheds more and better. The successful candidates come from a range of backgrounds, two may be familiar to you from Sheds and two are relatively new to the movement but bring fantastic experience, skills and contacts to contribute to our programmes.

We hope you join us in welcoming them and they look forward to meeting you in Sheds or at ShedFest.

## John Latchford

John is a Shedder and Ambassador for UKMSA. He has an extensive background in Scouting and Project Management. John has a great support to the Association and is keen to support the development and governance of Sheds across the UK.

## John Rushforth

An incredibly active individual who runs marathons and has walked the Camino Way. John is a founder member of Nairn Shed near Inverness which is based in a former railway station. John spent his career working within Social Policy.

## John Jarvis

John joins us as an individual with extensive experience in the development of leaders in his role as Chief Officer of The Leadership Centre. He has a diverse background in leadership development, public sector innovation, psychology and local & national public services.

## Elise Cook

A senior human resources professional (MCIPD qualified) experienced in designing and implementing people solutions that are business relevant, commercially focussed and pragmatic to support organisational change and sustain business growth. Experienced at successfully delivering for stakeholders and moving between strategic and operational activity.



*Top row, left to right -* **Nathan Sarea** (Chariman & Denbigh Men's Shed member),

**Jo Phillips** (Royal Voluntary Service & GatewaySHED member),

**Chris Lee** (Hemel Repair Shed),

**John Jarvis** (Independent with Leadership specialism),

**Brian Cook** (Andover Men's Shed & Ambassador).

*Bottom row, left to right -*

**John Rushforth** (Nairn Men's Shed),

**Elise Cook** (Independent with Human Resources specialism),

**Mark Lindsey** (Treasurer),

**John Latchford** (Amersham Men's Shed & Ambassador)

# Booked your tickets for ShedFest 2019?

We are delighted to announce that tickets for ShedFest 2019 on Tuesday 3rd September at the University of Worcester Arena are now available.



Tickets are £5 per person for non-members, but Shedders from member Sheds can book **FREE tickets** using the code we have sent out to members this week. If you've not received your code, please contact our Membership and Support Officer Laura at [admin@ukmsa.org.uk](mailto:admin@ukmsa.org.uk) or 0300 772 9626.

You can book tickets through Eventbrite at [shedfest2019.eventbrite.co.uk](https://shedfest2019.eventbrite.co.uk)

We are also excited to announce our **inspirational keynote speaker, Paul Sellers**. Paul describes himself as a lifelong amateur woodworker, but he is also considered one of the best known woodworking teachers in the world, his [Youtube](#) channel is the most subscribed to UK woodworking channel.

We are now pulling together the agenda and presenters for ShedFest and are inviting you to let us know what you believe should be in this year's programme. To **share your ideas with us**, please [complete this short survey](#).

## Looking to fund a large Shed project?

We know it's a tight deadline, but there's a larger funding pot (up to £50,000) for new projects which is available through The Ecclesiastical Fund is looking to give 10 charities the backing they need to propel their plans forward and helping to turn creative ideas into practical solutions that benefit society.

Their £50,000 awards are open to eligible charities registered in the UK with an income of less than £5m, to support the advancement of education and skills; citizenship or community development; arts, culture or heritage. For more information and to see whether your Shed (if it is a registered charity) is eligible to apply, follow this link to see their terms and conditions—[bit.ly/2LgCLIA](https://bit.ly/2LgCLIA).

You only have one chance to submit your application. To ensure you are in with a good chance of being shortlisted, [read their application guide](#) containing useful information about the assessment criteria and how each application will be scored.

**The £50,000 awards close on Friday 26 July.**

Looking for tips on how to write a successful funding application? You can see our tips in our [Resource Library—Income Generation & Fundraising area](#).

Not a member? Find out more about the benefits of being a UKMSA Member Shed at [menssheds.org.uk/join](https://menssheds.org.uk/join).



# My Journey to visit The Sheds 'Down Under' (or There and Back Again)

Martin Young, Chairman of Dunstable Men in Sheds, and a UKMSA Ambassador was lucky enough to go travelling in Australia and New Zealand for four months, starting in November 2018. Martin shares his story, and reflections, on his many Shed visits he included during his journey...

The concept and formation of Men's Sheds started in Australia, so when my partner—Ann and I started to plan our four-month tour of Australia and New Zealand the opportunity to visit as many 'Sheds' as feasible was an opportunity not to be missed.

So, venturing forth from Perth, our planned route was to Adelaide (via the 'Indian - Pacific'), then by train to Melbourne, Sydney, Katoomba, the Gold Coast and Cairns. For New Zealand the route was Christchurch, Dunedin, Queenstown, Hokitiki, and Greymouth by car, and then Greymouth, Christchurch, Blemheim, Picton, Wellington, Hamilton and Auckland by train! (Ferry across the Cook Strait)



Unfortunately, our itinerary, the Christmas, New Year and Australia Day holidays meant visits to the Sheds in Perth, Melbourne, Sydney, Katoomba, Cairns and others passed en-route could not be made. However, these omissions were more than made up for by the unexpected finds of other Sheds: some 'off the beaten track'!

If I had done them all, I am sure that Ann would have been very displeased.

The sheer differences between individual Sheds and how they are managed has to be admired and complimented, and to write detailed accounts of each visit, compare or criticize would fill volumes; is not my intention.

Every Shed I visited was totally different to any other, not only in the premises, but in the way problems and obstacles are managed and solved. However, it became clearly evident that the drive to be successful and sustainable was the only common thread.

So, I asked myself: "What are the prime factors behind the drive for success and sustainability?"

I deduced from all the many conversations and all that I saw, the following five factors:

- Tenacity
- Comprehensive and effective management of resources
- Ability to negotiate effectively with local councils and other agencies
- Detailed planning and scheduling of community works
- Following the Shed ethos: respecting others by being inclusive and considerate

I am sure you all agree.

***The roads go ever on!***

# How much do you know about Welsh Lovespoons?

## Making a Welsh Lovespoon at the Men's Shed

Are you looking for a traditional craft project to make at the Men's Shed? A Welsh lovespoon is a great way of honing in your skills, working with a pattern and carving something that is a little more intricate. You could make a lovespoon that is as small as a dessert spoon, or even a large three foot spoon to hang as a decorative item on your wall. They are far more than utensils for eating your soup with though. These skillfully carved items have a history that dates back to the 17th Century. In fact the earliest known example is displayed in [St Fagans Natural History Museum](#) in Cardiff and dates back to 1667.

## What is a Welsh Lovespoon?

A lovespoon is a symbolic gift that was traditionally given by a man to the girl that he wanted to be with. Often they were made by sailors on long journeys. It was of the utmost importance that the girl's father saw the beautiful lovespoon, so that he knew the potential suitor was competent in his woodworking skills and serious about the affections towards his daughter. The message of a lovespoon is offering to provide and nourishment. At the Men's Shed, a lovespoon would be a creative and unique gift to make for your loved one, or even someone you would like to see more of. It could be the most romantic and heartfelt gift ever!

## The Symbolism of a Welsh Lovespoon

Down the handle of a lovespoon, there are usually three or four different symbols, that each have a particular meaning or message. Common symbols are a heart to represent love, a lock to represent security, bells for marriage, a horseshoe for luck, a wheel for support and a cross for faith. If you are thinking about making a lovespoon at the Men's Shed though, you could use your own interpretive symbols - it is the opportunity to really be creative.

## Carving a lovespoon

Traditionally a lovespoon is made from one piece of solid wood. You should first plan out your pattern, before using a scroll saw to cut out your shapes. If you want parts of your spoon to be concave, you will have to clamp your spoon to the workbench and scoop them out. A rotary tool is the easiest way to add shape to your design. When you are finally happy with your spoon, use 80 grit sandpaper to start rounding off the edges. After this, 150 grit sandpaper, followed by polishing.

A Welsh lovespoon could make a wonderful gift, something really memorable and personal. You can then share the skills that you have learned making your lovespoon with others at the Shed.



We were kindly sent this interesting article by Alicia Rennoll.

# National Listening Day

Wednesday July 24th (24/7) is #SamaritansAwarenessDay. A reminder that sometimes we all have difficulties in life that are best shared, even if they're not the easiest to talk about.



Samaritans have been offering a 24/7 service listening without judgement for over 60 years. If there is something you'd like to talk to someone about you can—

- Call 116 123 for free, anytime of the day
- You can write an email to [jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org)
- You can visit them at your nearest branch, which you can find at [samaritans.org/how-we-can-help/contact-samaritan/visit-us-branch/](https://www.samaritans.org/how-we-can-help/contact-samaritan/visit-us-branch/)
- You can also write to Samaritans, addressing your letter to Chris at Freepost RSRB-KKBY-CYJK, PO Box 9090, STIRLING, FK8 2SA

## How good are your listening skills?

Sometimes knowing what to say can be difficult. It's ok not to be an expert. Samaritans have some simple tips to help you consider—

- Find a good time and place—Choose somewhere quiet, where you won't be interrupted and the other person feels comfortable. Make sure you both have enough time to talk.
- If you say the wrong thing, don't panic—Don't be too hard on yourself. If you feel able to, you could try something like: "Last week I said ... and I realise that was insensitive, so I'm sorry. I'm still here for you."



It's okay if you're not an expert – just listening can help someone work through what's on their mind. Samaritans **SHUSH** tips on how to be a good listener can help.

- **Show you care**—Focus on the other person, make eye contact, put away any distractions
- **Have patience**—It may take several attempts before a person is ready to open up
- **Use open questions**—Ask questions that need more than a Yes / No answer, and follow up with questions like 'Tell me more'
- **Say it back**—Check you've understood, but don't interrupt or offer a solution
- **Have courage**—don't be put off by a negative response and, most importantly, don't feel you have to fill the silence.

# Skeoch car picking up speed

Last year we heard from Dalbeattie Men's Shed, previous UKMSA Shed of the Year winners, about their exciting project to bring a piece of forgotten motoring history back to life.

Through publicity gained from winning UKMSA Shed of the Year, along with several other Voluntary Sector Awards, Dalbeattie Shed were contacted by Fiona Sinclair, designer James Skeoch's granddaughter and motoring enthusiast Martin Shelley, who had been looking after the car. The innovative design, using modified motorcycle wheels, engine and gearbox, were sadly lost in a factory fire, which wasn't covered by insurance.

When we last heard from Geoff Allison, Shed Secretary, the Shed were starting to plan how they'd accomplish this impressive challenge. Geoff brings us up to date with how the project has been developing.

*"It is a year since Dalbeattie Men's Shed undertook a project to re-create a 1920s Skeoch Cycle car from scratch - as reported in Shoulder to Shoulder issue 42 - and we are finding it every bit as challenging as anticipated, but immensely interesting and satisfying to boot.*

*There is strong local interest in the project which has manifested in donations of cash and parts/materials as well as bringing new members to the Shed with expertise and knowledge to move us forward.*

*Our milestone target to have a rolling chassis ready to display at the 9th June Orroland Lodge garden open day and vintage/veteran car display stretched our resources to the limit, but resulted in a very satisfying event which brought in much needed funds, publicised the project to a wider audience and most importantly allowed descendants of James Skeoch to see progress to date,*



*especially his nonagenarian daughter who satisfied her lifelong ambition to sit on a Skeoch Cycle Car."*

You can keep up to date with the developments of the Skeoch Car project on Dalbeattie Shed's dedicated webpage at [dalbeattiemensshed.co.uk/skeoch](http://dalbeattiemensshed.co.uk/skeoch)

Have you got a community project you'd like to share with Sheddors?  
Share your stories by contacting Laura at [admin@ukmsa.org.uk](mailto:admin@ukmsa.org.uk)

# Shoulder to Shoulder

Would you like to find out a little more about other Shedders experiences? Have some exciting news to share, or an invite for other Shedders? Please send your questions or information to share with others to [admin@ukmsa.org.uk](mailto:admin@ukmsa.org.uk) for inclusion in next month's *Shoulder to Shoulder*.

## New Job Opportunities with UKMSA

UK Men's Sheds Association will shortly be advertising for two paid roles. One is a Communications role, and the other is a maternity cover for our Membership and Support Officer, Laura. If you're interested, keep an eye on our website page— [menssheds.org.uk/about/work-with-us/](http://menssheds.org.uk/about/work-with-us/) . We plan on putting the adverts up in the coming weeks.

## Is something brewing in your Shed?

We're keen to hear from any Sheds who may be brewing any beer in their Sheds. If you are, please get in touch with our Membership and Support Officer, Laura, [admin@ukmsa.org.uk](mailto:admin@ukmsa.org.uk).

## Are you a Shed in Surrey?

We've been contacted by a gentleman in Surrey, who's looking for some support finishing off some projects.

Andrew wrote to us to say *"I have a number of dolls houses I hand built which need to be completed in order to find a permanent home for others to enjoy. Once completed I'd like to donate them to a charity, museum, or hospice, etc. All material costs will be paid for including transportation. There is one large Georgian and three Tudor dolls houses."*

The houses look beautiful! If you'd like to be able to help Andrew, please email [ffreddy123@gmail.com](mailto:ffreddy123@gmail.com).



## Is it a lifelong ambition to take part in a TV show?

On a relatively regular basis, UK Men's Sheds are contacted by TV shows and production companies looking for men to take part, from cookery and dancing, to dating and crafting! We don't send all these emails out, as we know they're not what Men's Sheds are about, and aren't relevant to most of you!

However, if you have an ambition to be on a TV show and would like us to let you know about these opportunities, please contact Laura at [admin@ukmsa.org.uk](mailto:admin@ukmsa.org.uk).

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