



(Inc. No. 1400691)

# **A HISTORY**

## **OF**

# **TERRIGAL COMMUNITY**

# **MEN'S SHED INC.**

[www.terrigmensshed.com](http://www.terrigmensshed.com)

**JANUARY 2009 TO DECEMBER 2019**

**RWH 26th January (Australia Day) 2020**

## Background

*"It is important to know where we came from, how we got here, and who got us here, so that we know where we are going." RWH Dec. 2019*

In 2008, the **Terrigal Uniting Church Council** were investigating how to use a two and a half acre site of vacant land next the King's Cottage in the Church grounds. **The Rev. Ken Day** asked **Eric Gibbons**, a Church Elder, if it could be an amenity used by Members of the Church and the local Community. The site had been let go and was full of overgrown bush, noxious weeds and large trees.

A while later, Eric and Anne were on a trip to Lismore and they espied a large sign posted for the "Bexhill Bush Cathedral". They made the detour and found a Bush Cathedral with its large cross looking out over the glorious hinterland. It was open, had bench seating and the view was awe inspiring. Eric immediately envisioned a Bush Chapel on the overgrown patch back in Terrigal.

### Coincidences or Divine Providence?

On his return, Eric began mowing the Church lawns, as usual, visualising where they might put the "chapel". He cleared an area of weeds and rubbish and came across a large cross covered in weeds and dirt. When it was cleaned up, it proved to be white. **Reverend Day** explained that the cross had been erected by a family who had moved to the Coast many years earlier and was in memory of their deceased daughter. It had been lost to nature. The cross was repainted and hung on a tree where the Bush Chapel might be.

The first meeting was held with 4 people in attendance, 3 men and 1 lady and all agreed that it was a project that men in the Church might be interested in. The lady in the group, **Sandra Davies**, sketched a plan in colour and it was posted in the Church notice board for weekend services asking for volunteers. The following Thursday at 9am, 7 men arrived and immediately captured the vision. The Chapel was underway and they all agreed to meet every Thursday and "do a bit".

People have many skills, some obvious, some latent. These men brought a raft of them. Some, such as **Louis Macdessi, John Hales and Ken Nash**, have since passed on, but they, and the others became the Founding Fathers of what was to become **Terrigal Community Men's Shed. (TCMS)**

The White Cross was moved to a new position and a retaining wall was built and 2 loads of clean back - fill put in, to secure a level surface for the altar. Tiered seating levels were constructed and all that was needed was the Table. The Group came across a stone table and 2 seats at a garden centre, that was closing down, on the

Entrance Road, Erina. Cost \$1,200. Prohibitive for these volunteers. A parishioner, **Graham Jackson**, a Stone Mason, examined the stonework, and declared that it was a bargain. Within a week it was paid for and Graham, using his own truck and hoist, had the lot transferred to the site.

Another Church Member and part of the team, **Bob Watson**, and his neighbour, cut pinetree planks 4 inches thick and 2 and a half metres long suitable for seating. Round treated pine logs from the dismantled Shade House were rescued, cut to length as seating supports, seasoned and, in time, all were assembled to make the seating.

The Table proved to be a more difficult construction. It measured 38 inches by 37 by 4 inches thick and was heavy sandstone. It would need a very solid concrete base 29 inches by 13. It would also need to be layered. In preparing the site, the Group found a very large rock just below the surface and this became the bedrock; saving a lot of toil by some very tired Seniors. Twelve layers of sandstone, cemented together, were made to be the piers and the table top was gently lowered in to place. A focal point.

The Group decided that the area should be sympathetic to the land and chose reconstituted granite. Six tons of it were ordered and tamped down around the altar and the seating. They were short. Three more tons were ordered and arrived within the hour and the floor was finished. Plants were donated and planted around the perimeter of the Chapel and water was run up the hill from the Church water tanks.

One major problem was a very large, termite riddled, dead tree which might prove to be a safety hazard. Cost \$1,000. Again prohibitive. The following week, while tidying up the site, a chain saw was heard close by and upon investigation, an extension ladder was propped up against a tree and a 74 year old man, **Don Palmer**, from the local Baptist Church, was lopping a tree down for firewood. The Group explained their plight and he, and his son, immediately sprang into action; cut down the dangerous tree and removed all of the timber. No charge. The Bush Chapel was ready. Only one thing left to do. Name it.

### **Burung Bush Chapel**

The Group agreed that the original owners of the land be asked to help with this, as a mark of respect. **Oomera Edwards**, an Elder of the Gauringai and Darkinjung peoples offered to help. Oomera arranged to meet with everyone at 6pm in the 'Chapel'. She asked everyone to face the bush and feel Mother Earth under their feet. They were asked to listen to all the man made sounds. Then she got them to block them out and just listen to the bush and to nature. Following a period of silence she asked each of the Group for one word as to how they felt about the place. Words

included *'peace', 'safe', 'haven', 'unity', and 'beauty'*. It was decided that *'safe haven'* was best for this new space. Oomera said this would be **"Burung"**, *"haven"* in their native tongue. So the **Burung Bush Chapel** was named and dedicated on Australia Day 2009.



### Small Beginnings.

The men in the Group had bonded together over the previous months and wanted to continue on. Eric had come across an article about **Australian Men's Sheds** and they approached the Church about forming one. The Church agreed that they could use an old store room next to the underground carpark. In 2009, work began on clearing away all the rubbish and the Men's Shed had a base

In 2010, digging began on an earth bank at the back of the Shed to increase the size. A concrete retaining wall was erected and a cement floor laid. I understand that it was something to behold; these men in their 60s, 70s, and a couple in their 80s, some with pacemakers, wielding pickaxes, shovels and pushing wheelbarrows to remove the dirt. Tools and machines were donated by the Public and other Men's Sheds. A sign was placed in front of the Church and slowly numbers increased. Terrigal Community Men's Shed had been born. Below is the "Machine Shop" then.



## The Early Years

As has been proved since, no two Sheds are the same. if for no other reason than the people who attend. They all come from diverse backgrounds and experience.

**Terrigal Community Men's Shed (TCMS)** is no different. Sheds vary in size from a few (6 or 7) dedicated individuals, as we were in our early days, to over a hundred Members. and at this point the Shed Movement had only been going a couple of years. At the time of writing, 2019, the Shed Movement has more outlets in Australia than McDonald's; and I would suggest that our Customers do less damage to the environment! TCMS is different in that we work under cover in the Church carpark, which means we must clear everything away at the end of the day. No luxury of pulling down the shutters and forgetting about it From the beginning **Terrigal Uniting Church (TUC)** backed the enterprise and continue to support us. We even get regular pastoral visits from the Minister, the **Reverend Richard Harris**.

During the course of this narrative, some names will pop up on a regular basis in different areas. This is to be expected, as in every Organisation, there are individuals who breathe life into it. TCMS is no different with a hard core of regulars who move around as needs dictate.



Some of the Founding Fathers with their Life Membership Badges. *Geoff Yates; Eric Gibbons; Tony Kirkman; Bob Watson; Ray Crawley; Steve Benoit, Kevin Hooper and Keith Gower crept into the front row*

It was agreed by the Founding Fathers that creating a good ethos was paramount. It was decided that it should be a welcoming place for everyone. Men could come who had a lot of skill, some skills or none whatsoever, so long as they wanted to be part of a Group who cared about Men's health, enjoyed socialising and generally wanted to give something back to the Shed and to the Community. Words such as *Respect*,



*Integrity, Collaboration, Effectiveness and Optimism* were not out of place, and a person's confidentiality was taken as read.

Work began on putting together some outside storage space. The Church, now our Landlords, were fully supportive. **Ken Nash**, one of the Founding Fathers, who has since passed way, paid for a storage container out of his own pocket and it was named **Nashville Terrigal** in his honour and **Ces Menser** welded the rusty base together. General consensus was that this would be all the storage that we needed. So much for Senior Citizens forecasting!

### The Storage Containers go in



The first one ( a tight squeeze) and the second (even tighter)



No.1 is ready for action!



*Sometimes it is better to get the big boys in to do the digging*

At about this time, 2010, it was decided that the Shed should be put on a more 'formal' footing. It was agreed to have a small Committee to run things and meet on a regular basis. **Eric Gibbons**, as the brains behind the whole enterprise, was accepted as President and **Geoff Yates** agreed to be Treasurer/ Secretary. After all, there were only about a dozen Members. **Tony Kirkman (Tony K)** joined in June and was welcomed with open arms as he knew a lot about tools and how they worked, OH&S matters and was good at training people to use machinery properly. A responsibility that Tony took seriously. With his contacts, Tony was able to source most of our equipment at good discounts.

Another bonus from having Tony was his relationship with the Wamberal Cake Shop, who began supplying the Shed with the great morning teas that we are now famous for. All we have to do is pick up the bread and cakes after business on Monday and Wednesday and bring it to the Shed for the following day. Before long there was no shortage of volunteers to do the pick-ups. What is not used goes to Central Coast Shelter, MaryMacs or Vinnies. Everyone benefits.





*This is at the end, not the beginning of Morning Tea*



*Tony K working outside for a change*

Tony implemented a training program to help those less used to working with machines. He also instigated a mentoring programme whereby nominated people



would be available to help others use the machinery in a safe and competent manner. Over time, one became six. As well as Tony, we had **Chris Tyler, Ray Land and Bob Watson** mentoring woodwork. Their proud boast was that give them a month and they *"could help anyone with little or no practical experience, even Doctors and Dentists, on how to use a saw or a drill properly and safely"*. They were later joined by **Geoff Yates** and **Arthur Hand** doing electrical items and latterly joined by **Kevin Thomas, Milton Elliott and Ray Crawley** doing metalwork. Another story in itself.

The Shed also decided about this time to become affiliated to the **Australian Men's Shed Association (AMSA)** for a number of reasons. Numbers were now increasing and it was important to get guidance on what we should be doing; how should we access funding; insurance cover for Members and an umbrella for a myriad of other issues that might crop up with such a disparate Group of individuals.

### **The first Christmas Dinner.**

This proved to be a momentous occasion as it meant wives, partners, girlfriends and grandchildren could come along and meet some of the people that Members would go home and talk about. You know what gossips men can be when they get together. To everyone's surprise the Ladies compared notes and found out that their menfolk were all the same. Such adjectives can not be printed here.



*Bob Chase (L) and John Hales (R) doing the honours for our first Christmas Dinner in 2012, with wives and children invited and has been going ever since, Father Christmas made an appearance for a few years.*

We also hold an Annual Dinner, usually in the Central Coast Leagues Club, towards the end of February each year hosted by the Shed Committee to which all wives and



partners are invited. It is also our awards night for services, or indeed disservices, rendered to the Shed; Sheddie of the Year, Stirrer of the Year etc.



*The Customers await ...*





*Some more impatient than others!*



*On your marks. Ready, Steady, Go - for a morning tea*



## 2011 to 2019 - The Shed grows up - but the Children remain!

As the Shed got under way, word spread in the Community and by 2011 a trickle of new people arrived, which increased to a spate in 2012 and 2013. It must have been the news about our excellent morning teas. By 2016 we had tripled in size.

By then, we had a Shed with Members who could speak 15 different languages; ranging from Armenian and Afrikaans through various strangulated versions of English to Zulu. Some Members even used Anglo-Saxon to emphasise a point! We also had a lot of 'Rays' and 'Bobs' on the books - it should have been called '*The Sunshine Shilling Club*'.

In May 2014, we had a visit from **John Sharples**, our local AMSA contact, who explained to us the benefits of being "*Incorporated*". We voted 'yes' and in May 2014 became Terrigal Community Men's Shed Inc. (No. 1400691) and registered with NSW Fair Trading. This allowed us to access the various Grants Systems and not have to rely on the TUC for support. It also meant that we had to tighten up our act as to what we could and could not do. First step was a Shed Constitution approved by NSW Fair Trading. **Roy Henry** was nominated as the Public Officer to act as liaison with NSW Fair Trading. We were required to hold Annual General Meetings (AGMs) and elect a Shed Committee each year comprising of a President, Secretary, Treasurer and 4 Committee Members. My, how we had grown up in a few short years.

Over the next few years, the Public Officer and the Treasurers managed to source quite a bit of funding. This enabled us to replace worn our equipment and construct new storage and work areas.

**That was then.**



## **The Golden Years**

### **2012 and 2013 ( Special years)**

2012 and 2013 proved to be bumper years for the Shed with a cavalcade of new Members, who, in their various ways had an impact on the Shed. Their motto seemed to be " *What can we do for the Shed and what can the Shed do for us*" It is worth listing some of their names.

**Alf De Bellis; Bob Chase; Chris Tyler; Eddy King; Gary Glenn; Joe Sciberras; Peter Holly; Roy Henry; Steve Benoit; Tony Collits; Eugene Leeb Du Toit; Ray Land; Bob Lumby; John Meredith; Brian Batten; and many more who passed through.**

### **2014 to 2016 ( The quality improves.)**

Word was continuing to spread about this special place which one of the wives had labelled "Daddy Day Care"; or maybe it was the morning teas. Whatever the reasons, numbers were on the up. More names signing up to the Shed ethos.

**Alan Rogerson; Bob Cartwright; Bob Hornby; Colin Bonnar; Dennis Allen; Derek Bailey; John Bramwell; John Savage; Joe Cefai; John Savage; Keith Gower; Kevin Thomas; Milton Elliott; Robert Pike; Reg Bird; Tony Kite; Allen Egan; Paul Golden; Peter Whitelake; Ian Smith; Quentin Riley; David and Keith Murphy; Kevin McCaskie; Tim Mara; and others who spent a few days with us and moved on.**

By now TCMS had grown with over 45 Members. It was decided to add Fridays to our normal opening days of Tuesday and Thursday. The original days had on average about 30 plus attendees and Fridays crept up from about 7 to average 15, with some, such as **Len Samuel**, Members dropping in to the Table of Knowledge for morning tea while out shopping or as family commitments permitted.

### **2017 to 2019 ( The Wonder Years)**

TCMS then reached a point where we began to question where to go to next. Some Members had moved on for health or personal reasons. Sadly, we lost some through bereavement. Yet, men kept turning up to sample the ethos. 2019 was a particularly good year.

**Derek Barr; Eric Wokker; Gary Oakes; John Zammit; Joseph McGloin; Kevin Bartholomew; Mark Elliot; Mark Watson; Pat Rafter; Paul Webb; and Bill Howard.** These individuals brought a new set of skills and had not been tainted by the past. They helped to energise the Shed with a new sense of purpose, and to make it worthwhile. It was time to take stock and put in place a strategy for the future. New Decade, new start.

## Where are we now?

This growth also meant more storage space and more equipment as well as ensuring that everyone was kept safe. Tony K and the other Mentors arranged regular training seminars. The Treasurers and the Public Officer spent endless hours trying to get grants for all the various requests. In some cases this required a very creative use of the English language as supplicants did now always know themselves what they wanted. Thankfully, we had **Tony K** to guide us on tools and machinery and **Bob Watson, Bob Chase and the Two Joes** to help with any building work. In the end we got there. Storage was put in place and machines were acquired. The Public Officer and the Treasurers supplied the language.

Not all our money comes from donations, Member's fees or Grants. It takes between \$12,000 and \$14,000 Per Annum to keep the Shed running. Sometimes we have to go out and earn it. Firstly our thanks to Natalie , and of late, Amy, at Bunnings in Erina who have been happy to oblige.



This would not be possible without a dedicated team of 12 volunteers who, under the expert tuition of **Peter Holly**, have now got it down to a fine art. Even though we book for 3 performances a year, TCMS has been called up by Bunning's to fill gaps in the their schedule. In this picture is **Barry Evans, John Bramwell and Ray Crawley**. Over the 2 days the 3 man teams could include, the **Two Joes**, (**Cefai and Sciberras**); **Eric Wokker**; **Geoff Yates**; **Derek Bailey**; **Derek Barr**; **Alf DeBellis**; **Milton Elliott**; **Ross De Fraine**; **Reg Bird**; **Alan Jones**; **Kevin Thomas**; **Eric Gibbons**; **Dennis Allen**; **Gary Oakes**; **John Zammit**; **Steve Benoit**; **Paul Slayter** and **David Miller**. A forminalbe selection of good people to pick from. Thank you.



## Have we reached our full storage capacity?

It has been mentioned earlier that the Original Members thought that the Workshop and one storage container would be sufficient to meet our needs. How did some of these people survive in their chosen professions with this sort of forecasting? We now have the original fully stocked Workshop, a ToK Shed for the tables which used to be stored in the Workshop, Container 1 for timber, paint and workbenches, Container 2 for machines and wood storage, 2 long fixed work benches, Container 3 which is linked to Container 2, half of which is used by the Mower Men and the *piece de resistance*, a metal work Shed, which also uses the other half of Container 3.

### The Metal Workshop.

In the early days the Shed had a number of Engineers and it had been a dream of **John Hales**, a Founding Father, to have a dedicated area for metalwork. Sadly, John did not live to see his dream realised but others such as **Ray Crawley**, **Eric Gibbons**, **Geoff Yates** and **Bob Watson** ensured that the vision was not forgotten. With **Bob Chase's** help they put a cunning scheme together. Encouraged by the **Reverend Harris**, they drew up plans to build a Shed at right angles to the existing structures. This would have the distinct advantage of shutting off the cold winter blasts blowing through the main working area. There is no truth in the rumour that the **Two Joes** encouraged them in this so that they could have a quiet area behind it where nobody else could see what they were up to!

Plans agreed by the Committee and the Church; and it was a question of funding it. This proved the biggest headache so far for the Treasurer and Public Officer. It needed four (4) different submissions to get funding for the Workshop and the equipment. It was fortunate that both had a reasonable command of the English language and a realisation of how elastic the Truth can be. Led by **Bob Watson**, everyone pitched in and, before long, we had a Metal Workshop. It was opened by our local MP, **Adam Crouch** and dedicated to the memory of **John Hales**.



The John Hales workshop



The metalwork lathe



*The annex (Container 3)*



*Storage cupboards*



*The Memorium Wall*



*The Two Joes' inner sanctum*



*John Zammit demonstrating Bob's mini sander*

Slow to begin with, it soon gathered speed and has produced some fine work. **Kevin Thomas, Ray Crawley and Milton Elliott** are the Mentors. **Paul Slayter** has deserted the Mower Men and found a home here and the **Two Joes**, who did a lot of the building, are to be found close by. We are fortunate that we can call upon the services of **Bob Hornby** for minute items. A true metal craftsman, when we needed a bespoke machine to finish off our crosses; Bob delivered. Bob has made many such items from working sawmills to replica boats fitted with working engines. Bob floats between the Metal shop and a bench.

Lately, the workshop has been requisitioned for storage by a team of Mariners working on a scale model of the **MV Krait** using actual timber from the original ship. The area outside the Workshop has now become the Shipyard and a port of call for all visitors.

### **The MV Krait.**

A Japanese fishing vessel commandeered by the Australia Special Services in WW2, **The Krait** was the first of a long distinguished line of boats used by them. **Ray Crawley, Ross De fraine and David Miller** decided to pay tribute to this little boat with such a fearsome reputation. After all, the Crew did their training on the Hawkesbury, not too far from here. The Maritime Museum just happened to be restoring the original in time for the anniversary of the first attack on occupied Singapore. Ray, Ross and Dave went to see it; took loads of pictures and explained what they wanted to do and the museum supplied them with plans and original timbers. Bets were taken as to whether the model would be finished in time for the anniversary, but with other commitments, time was against these Master Boatbuilders and they wanted to do it justice. No rush.





*The keel is laid*



*and the planks are in place*



*Dave, a picture of concentration.*



*Ray and Ross chipping in.*



*Taking shape.*



*Not quite there but close*

An undertaking to be proud off and one which continues the tradition of the Shed doing nautical projects.

## Shed Tools

Given the right tools, one can do anything. Below are some of the tools available to us at The Shed. Training is provided by experienced Mentors in the correct and safe way of using each tool.

Our aim is to operate following best practice and we have a comprehensive Occupational Health and Safety policy in place.

In addition to the pictured major equipment, there are also many hand tools (both electric and manual) available for all to use. These include drills, drivers, routers, power saws, sanders and just about everything imaginable!



A high level safety Table saw



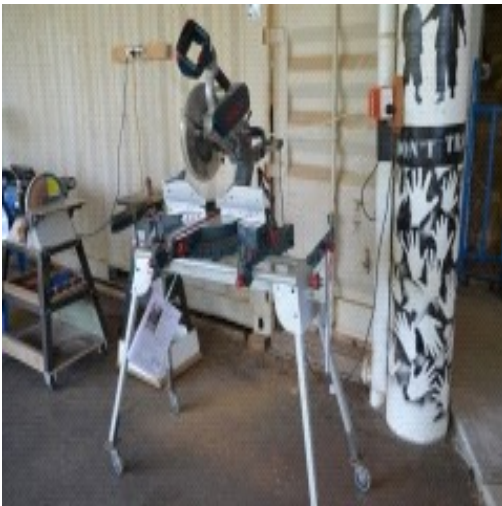
An oscillating sander



The linisher



The wood lathe



Sliding drop saw



The thicknesser



Assorted band saws, dust extractors and a spindle sander



The Jointer



A sand blaster





Air compressor



Bench drill press



The metal lathe



Sliding drop saw

**And this what we look like when all is put away**



## **A Shed full of Stories (Craftsmen and Characters).**

Every Shed has its fair share of characters and craftsmen. TCMS is no different. One requirement is that everyone wears a hi-vis jacket and strong footwear. This helps to differentiate the Sheddies from the Visitors/ Customers and it also helps to level the playing field. No one person is more important in the Shed than any other.

### **Eric Gibbons and Geoff Yates.**

It is only fitting that these two names head the list of Characters and Craftsmen. Both Church Members. Both in the Shed from the beginning. Both former Presidents. Both guiding the Shed as Father Figures for the first 6 years and firm believers in a proper ethos. Always available for guidance and counsel. It should not be supposed that they did nothing.

After a while, Eric took a back seat and began restoring park benches found by the wayside. There is no truth in the rumour that he sleeps on them when out on his daily walk. He later branched out and, with the help of **John Bramwell**, who had learned his trade with **Tim's Team**, made various curios. such as plant pot holders, small trains, two - up holders for old pennies. It should also be mentioned that John became known as '**The Birdman**' when he joined Eric as they began to make Ornamental birds for the back garden. Another feather in their caps.



*Bench ready for occupation*



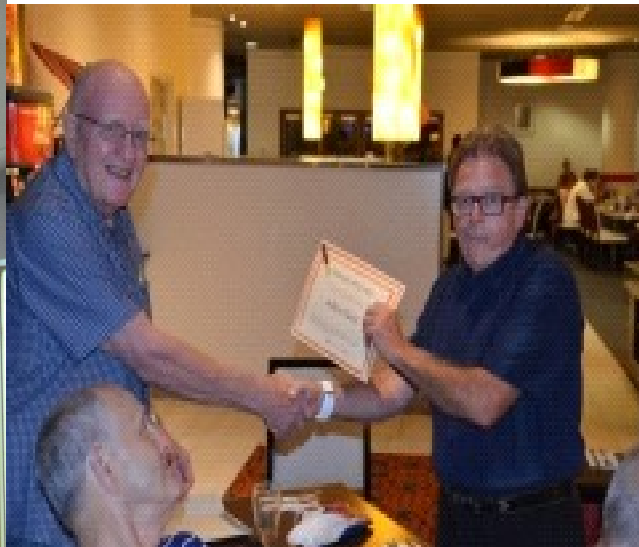
*Plant pots ready for planting*



*Planted up*

*Yet another bench ready for occupation*

Geoff's talents, as befits someone who planned the electrification of NSW for a future Government to sell off, lay in a different direction. He, and **Arthur Hand**, another Church Member, became the go to people for all matters electrical. Between them they rewired the workshop and the working area. Any new structures were electrified. In their spare time they also help the Church and produced a monitoring system to measure electric use.



*Arthur at work in the Church. Sadly there are no pictures of Geoff actually working as - he, along with Dave Menere, were the photographers for the Shed ! We did find one of him carrying out his Presidential duties*



## 'Rear Admiral' Ray Crawley

One individual, one of the original members of the Shed, had been absent due to hospitalisation and was not present when Tony K joined in 2010 and therefore missed the new *status quo*. He returned to the Shed and went straight to work on a machine. There was an inquiry, an explanation, a reconciliation, all over a cup of tea. By the way, this erstwhile machinist was **Ray Crawley**, who leased a bench outside the office for the next 3 and a half years, at a minimal rent, and put together a scale model of the HMAS Melbourne. This became a talking point for all visitors to the Shed and now sits proudly in the Office of our local State MP, **Adam Crouch**, a great supporter of Men's Sheds in his area and the concept as a whole. For some time it held the record for the longest time to complete a project.



*'Admiral' Ray Crawley at the beginning and at the end. A successful launch of the HMAS Melbourne*



*Ready for the water in the workshop. The bench is now the home of the MV Krait. The other is a picture of concentration.*

Ray finally took his turn as President, having managed to avoid putting his name forward for some years. He still spent time on maritime projects but he also pushed us in a slightly different direction. Instead of solely concentrating on our own efforts we became more involved in Community Projects; notably the Buddy Boxes, and helping drought relief out west, especially in the Narromine area.

During this time Ray was asked to take over from **John Sharples** as the Zone 8 Coordinator for AMSA and use TCMS as his base. John had moved on to the AMSA Executive. This is a real feather in the cap for TCMS, although we do not get any favours and we see a little less of him. It is obvious that the good grounding Ray got at TCMS with advice, counselling, listening, guidance and learning the grammar and syntax of the English language had stood him in good stead.

Ray stepped down as President in August 2019 with **Ross De Fraine** being elected. What is it about people who work on boats getting into elected positions? Is it a perception that they know how to chart a course? At the time of writing, Ray is embarking on a major project with Bunning's NSW to help fire ravaged Communities. This came about as, in his new role, Ray organised a Christmas convoy for the **Casino** area. Good Luck and well done to all concerned. Despite all this Ray, still manages to do his bit to help his home Shed.

### **Dave Menere ( a 10 pound Pom)and Keith Gower (who paid full fare)**

No organisation that takes in money, even donations, can run smoothly without the services of a good Treasurer. We have been blessed with 3. **Geoff Yates** in the early days, **Dave Menere** who revolutionised the accounting and paperwork and **Keith Gower** who has carried on that legacy. **Dave**, a solid individual in more ways than one, had a vast administration background and great grounding in IT. After all, this is the man who reorganised Junior Rugby Union in NSW and eventually Australia. ( It seems that they are crying out for his expertise now.) Numbers were increasing and, in January 2012, Dave set to work. Before long he had brought the Shed into the 21st Century. Soon everything was on the computer and could be accessed at the press of a button. He still managed to take cruises, although there is no truth in the rumour that they were financed by TCMS; and still found time to learn a host of woodworking skills. He even got married in the Bush Chapel. Now that is dedication to the Shed.

**Keith**, on the other hand, was slight of frame but he too had a solid financial background and had managed major projects for **British Telecom** in the UK. He had the added advantage of having a daughter who was a wizard at accounting. With some arm twisting, Keith became Treasurer when Dave went to pastures new. Like Dave, he wanted to spend time out of the office and to learn new skills, which he put to good use.

Unlike with Geoff, there are examples of the work of these gentlemen when they managed to get out of the office and become quite expert in woodwork. Not bad for 'desk jockeys'. Always willing to learn.



*Tom's train by Dave*



*Dave's marital bed and cupboards*



*It pays to have your spouse do the finishing touches so that it ends up like this.*



*Didn't they do well?*

Keith began with small items at the **ToK**, and was happy to do a bit of sanding; making a little something for his beloved Sue. Then he progressed to cheeseboards/ serving platters and finally into making beehives for endangered Australian bees. Keith and the **Rev. Richard Harris** swapped nectar stories. Using Dave's bedrock in accounting and savings acumen, Keith, bringing good fiscal management, soon turned the Shed in to a land of milk (when someone remembered to bring it in) and honey.



*Keith's very first effort. Below are the 3 stages to Keith's hairpin*



*What is this?*

*Of course, it is a shawl pin*



*Above a cheeseboard or  
it could be a serving platter*

*The 3 stages of the hair pin!*



*An early beehive.*

*The shawl pin in action*



*A Kenyan Top bar bee hive*

You can see that in anything Keith does, it begins small and then grows; just like the Shed's finances.

### **"The Table of Knowledge" ToK**

From the beginning, close to the workshop area, this became the first port of call for all visitors to the Shed. In the early days it was a hum of activity as the Members supported all other enterprises in the Shed especially the sanding and finishing of items. Membership was quite fluid and it was always seen as an area where people could relax and chat. All major meetings are held around it as well as some morning teas. It also happens to be close to the Hot Water for the tea and coffee that is so necessary to keep us functioning at full capacity. It is also the centre of activity for the monthly BBQ.





*The Table(s) of Knowledge in use for a Shed meeting.*

Founding Members of ToK were **Geoff Yates, Brian Molloy, Kevin Hooper, Peter Gates, Maurice Davies, Bob Watson, Graham Jackson, Ken Nash, Bob Lumby and Jacques Minassian** and conversation and ideas flowed freely. Brian, or should that be Brian, had written a thesis on the Trades Union movement in Australia. There was a gap in his knowledge and before he knew it Kevin, our oldest Member at 93, a staunch Union Man, had filled in all the gaps. Dave Menere overheard this and said that it was " *a right table of knowledge*" and the name stuck. We had an advantage with Kevin, in that his son, Greg, was a highly qualified OH&S Officer and lectures on the subject at Uni. So Greg became our unofficial guide in such matters.

It should be mentioned that the whole history of modern Australia was represented by Ancestry at the table beginning with the First Fleet, through the Convict Years and on to the post WW2 Immigration Policy, finishing with the Modern Era.

Everyone who came to join the Shed, served some time at the table until they had identified what they wanted to do. Some, such as **Alan Rogerson, Gary Glenn, Dennis Allen**, stayed and produced their own work at the table; although Dennis has been known to go 'walkabout' in search of fresh conversation, especially with the **Two Joes**. Dennis also holds the record for the length of time it takes to sand a hand cross. Others, such as **Tony Kite, Milton Elliott, Reg Bird, Alf DeBellis**, the **Two Joes, Cefai and Sciberras** drifted in and out as they found their own projects to work on.



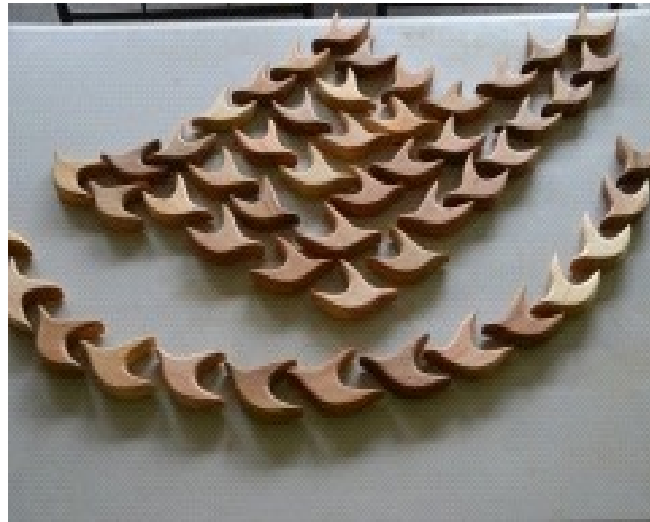


No pictures of Alan actually working.

*Alan receiving a special award at the Annual Dinner (for parking?!)*



*All Holdens?*



*Doves for the Uniting Church*



*One of Alan's cars*



*Our bread and butter. Over 15,000 made in the past 8 years, going all around the world, even to the Vatican*

Alan puts the finishing touches to everything and ensures quality.

## Tony Kite

Came to us in 2016 and quietly began making his mark with his intricate carving in wood, including figures, signs and curios. A true craftsman.



*No. Tony Kite is not a Kiwi but he set us this puzzle*



*A special bowl made by Tony. Note the contrasting woods.*

Tony also has a special knack and patience working on the bandsaws and, with **John Zammit**, has helped a lot in making sure that a major source of our revenue, Godly play items, are delivered on time and with quality.

## Bob Dowling and his Cohorts

Geoff Yates was out walking his dog one day in 2009 and he met **Bob Dowling** and his wife **Mary**. Bob patted the dog and walked on. Mary asked Geoff if he could think of some way to get Bob out of the house for a while as he was in poor health and was driving her crazy at home. Geoff suggested that he try the newly opened Men's Shed in Terrigal. Bob came by one day and made it known that he was not interested in woodwork or making things but he would repair lawnmowers, whipper snippers etc. for local people. And so a very good money earner for the Shed was born. Initially, Bob and **Paul Slayter** began working from a single table using their own tools. As business picked up, they acquired a good reputation in the general area for quality work at a very fair donation to the Shed. No run down mower could beat them. Their income kept the Shed going in the early days.



*Bob and Paul starting out in 2010*

Then the demands began; which proved to be a headache for the various Shed Committees over succeeding years. They needed more tools, more space to work, more storage space for all the work, more people to help, more financing to keep the operation running. For whatever reason, they got their way in all things. **David Lynch**, sadly now deceased, **Eddie King**, **Derek Bailey** and **Joe McGloin**, joined the Team, with intermittent appearances by **John Dettman**, **Michael Collins**, **John Savage** and the "**Two Joes**", **Cefai** and **Scibberas**. The Team, once known as the Mower Men but now known as the Miracle Men and they have moved on from this --



to this in 2019. I have no doubt that they will be asking for more!





*Bob D,(C) Derek (L) and Eddie (R) posing in front of their new premises. With thanks to Tony Kite, a quiet talent, for the sign.*

Question? Why do all our female Customers gravitate to this part of the Shed? This cannot be good for the health of these characters.

### **Ray Land and Barry Evans.**

**Ray** came to us following a distinguished career on Cockatoo Island. In his youth he had represented Australia at the Olympic Games in Melbourne. He was also part of the planning Committee for the Games in Sydney 2000. His woodworking background made him an obvious choice as a Mentor and he looked around for a Sidekick.

Enter **Barry Evans**, part of the excellent 2012 intake, and before long the pair of them were involved in all sorts. Mending chairs, making dartboard covers for the Breakers, spears for a Doctor's practice.



*Barry and Ray ready for action. Dartboard cover for the Breakers*



*A choco?*



*Ray and his trusty mallet*

*Its all child's play for Barry now.*





*The bed steps*



*The 'Barry' Table*

It should be noted that Barry, like some others, may appear elsewhere in this narrative as he organises Barbecues in the Shed and at Bunnings. He has also been involved in some of our charity projects.

### **Jacques Minassian**

**Jacques**, an Armenian by birth, but a proud Australian by choice and a bona - fide QANTAS hero . Arrived at the Shed in 2010 and teamed up with Tony K and before long they had started a garden on some waste ground.



Tony in the garden



Next they were in to making planters





Jacques joined Tim's Team but did not neglect the garden or his morning duties with Tony K in setting up the morning tea. (This keeps cropping up. It must be good.)



*All my own work*

*A letter of thanks to Jacques*

## **Brian Molloy and Bob Chase**

Along with **Kevin Hooper**, founding Members of the ToK

Brian was always trying out new projects to work on. Something **Tim Mara** did when he joined. Bob, a qualified Surveyor, was the ideas man and an inventor; always looking at ways to make life easier for us. All his inventions had a practical application.



*Old timber reshaped*



*How to get a mower into your car*



*Anyone for chess*

## **Eugene Lieb DuToit**

Originally from South Africa where he had practiced as a Vet and knew little about woodwork, Eugene came to the Shed in June 2012. He found an old wood lathe in a corner and began playing with it. Tony K gave him training and some tools and before long, with the help of the Internet, Eugene was turning out works in wood that would not be out of place in a West End Store. Before long he had outgrown the old machine and, just like the Mower Men, needed a new lathe and tools. Unlike the Mower Men, Eugene was happy with his work area and before long he was turning out works of art. A Master Craftsman. Fondly remembered.



*A local micro brewery needed paddles to display their wares so Eugene came up with this design.*



*Said to have been inspired by the South African Cricket bats after Lillie and Thompson had been bowling. The other picture shows sample of his output.*

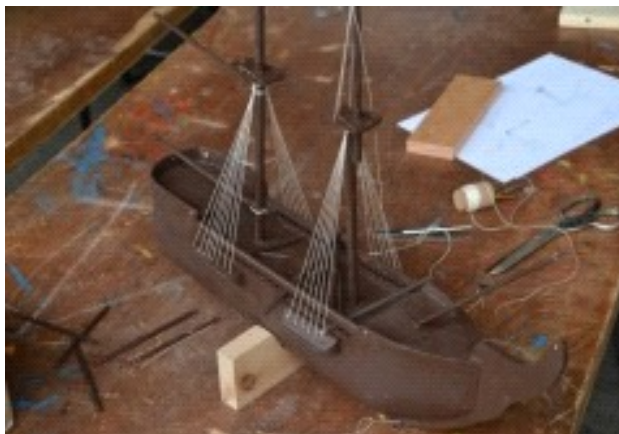
Since Eugene passed away, his mantle has been assumed by **Robert Pike** who has carried on the tradition of quality workmanship with much success. Robert had been a Member of **Tim's Team** and had obviously learned much there. **Barry Evans**, formerly mentored by **Ray Land**, has now started to follow in their footsteps.

### **'Captain' Bob Cartwright**

Bob was a Captain of Industry and always had a love for sailing boats, even going so far as to building his own racing yacht. He joined the Shed and proceeded to build many models of sailing crafts - much to the distress of his dear wife Anka who had to find room for them at home.



Eventually he began to give them away to others. This has nothing to do with the fact that he took some Members on a little jaunt, one and a half hours, around Brisbane Water and returned 9 hours later having been rescued by the Water Police. The Police could not believe that a former Commodore of the Gosford Yacht Club could become grounded on a sandbar! Reports differ on how far the boat listed in the water.



From this

to this



*It isn't always plain sailing.*

### **Bob Watson and Ray Madden.**

**Bob**, a Canadian by birth, represented his country in the Commonwealth Games in the pole vault. Maybe this is why he keeps asking the rest of us to jump higher in our ambitions. A self employed builder who has been instrumental in getting much of the infrastructure of the Shed together. Fell in with **Ray Madden**, a wizard on the band saw, and between them they came up with the idea of creating a Godly Play section. Beginning small with hand (comfort) crosses, they soon branched out into other items and, having linked up with **The Godly Play Movement**, began exporting their wares all over Australia and even Overseas. Before long they were in competition with the Mower Men as donation earners for the Shed. By the way over 15,000 crosses have been made in the last 8 years. A formidable team.



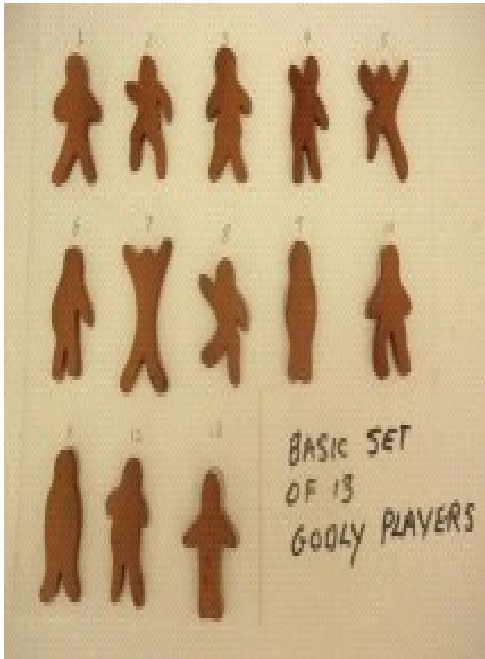
Bob with only some some of the Risen Christ Crosses



*Bethlehem*



*Noah's Ark*



*Godly play for Bible studies*



*The hand crosses*

Not content with small band-saw items they branched out, beginning with a scale model for a slide feature in the Australian Reptile Park which was engineered into a full scale visitor attraction.



*Open day and Bob had to try the slide*





*Bob and Ray survey their upscaled model.*

Next they turned their attention to a large Risen Christ Cross to be used at an **Ecclesiastical Conference** in Sydney. It became the centre of attention and now sits proudly in the entrance hallway of the **Uniting Church College in Parramata**



*Ray acting as the model ( You will notice that it is hollow. Some malcontents thought that it might be used for gun running or dope!.)*



*Where did we get the idea of gun running from. (Items for Gosford RSL)*



*Bob as a model too and with the finished piece.*

It should be remembered that these two 'gentlemen' were still churning out hand crosses and other Godly Play items as well as doing jobs for The Breakers Country Club, one of our Sponsors. But it seems they were always plotting as to how to inveigle other Sheddies into their arcane world. Hence the big project for TUC.



*A nativity scene in the Burung Chapel Area. Full circle.*

### **Tim Mara (and his Crew)**

Tim came to the Shed in 2016 and was well qualified to use all the tools. Always coming up with ideas for small projects, Tim enjoyed helping others and before long he had his own little group - **Jacques Minassian, Robert Pike, John Bramwell, Colin Bonnar**. Between them they turned out many pieces, some quirky, all practical



*Tim in the Centre with Jacques Minassian and Robert Pike*





*Colin Bonnar (another Maranite) making his own table*



*John Bramwell ( another Maranite) and Jacques presenting the Church with the pencil holders*



*A classic piece from Tim's Team.*



*Hello Ducky*



*Square on the hippopotomus!*



*Coasting along*



*Tim's lolly box*



*A wine box*



*A bottle and glass holder*



## Chris Tyler (and his Crew)

**Chris** joined the Shed in 2012 and it was 6 months before anyone found out that he had been a Master Craftman and Cabinet Maker. He had been the No 1 Apprentice in NSW and his work went on tour around the Country. After that he worked for others and then set up his own successful business. A serious illness put paid to his career and he sought solace in the arms of the Shed, quietly sanding crosses at the ToK.

One day **Ray Land** sought his assistance on a matter and the cat was out of the bag. We have not been able to keep him quiet since then. It is a little known fact that Chris was "*Stirrer of the Year*" for 2 years in succession. This was unfair to others so it was decided to give him the title in perpetuity.

Since then, Chris has been the go to Man for all matters of Restoration as well as making projects from scratch. **Tony Collits** joined him as Chief Sander and set a very high standard of finishing. Before long Chris had his own coterie of woodworkers. In the last 7 years they have repaired small items for Customers as well as detailed and intricate restorations. Too numerous to list but available for all to see on our website. Notable mention must be made of the Table, Lectern and Baptismal font for the new Uniting Church in Warnervale and the 150 year old cabinet below.



*Milton Elliott, Alf DeBellis, Reg Bird and Chris.*



*Tony C still at work*



*From this*



*To this. Final Inspection*





*150 years old restoration*



*Reg's Record Cabinet*



*It can start like this*



*and finish like this (Phew)*



*A restoration by Milton*



*A painting briefcase*



*An old meat safe*



*Restored to new life*

We have a limited supply of workbenches. Chris and his team of **Tony Collits, Reg Bird, Milton Elliott, Pat Rafter** and **Gary Oakes** have been known to use more than one. Their philosophy is that - timber takes a long time to grow, so it is important to treat it slowly and properly.

### **Ian Smith (The Luthier)**

Like many others, Ian, a Psychologist, popped in one day and found a vacant space and quietly began to work. Before long he was making guitars, ukeleles and cigar-box guitars. Did I mention that Ian was also an accomplished musician? He also did repairs.





*Just a small sample of Ian's prodigious output*

Before long he had guided others into his musical world.



*Arthur (custom built) Bob ( a break from building). Dave posing?*

## **Gary Glenn**

An Academic by profession, Gary joined the Shed in April 2010 following a very severe illness. Initially he worked at the Table of Knowledge sanding pieces using a special set- up designed **by Bob Chase**. Naturally right handed, Gary had no movement on the right hand side of his body and his left hand side was slightly impaired. His speech had also been affected. Yet he understands everything that is going on.

Someone donated a painting set and easel. This was spruced up by **Chris** and his team and **Gary** set to work learning to paint with his left hand. In the beginning, it seemed to be from the '*School of Pointellism*'. His confidence grew and before long he was painting scenes on old saws cleaned up by **Milton**. From there he graduated to many different scenes on canvas. Some he donated to Members of the Shed. Others he kept at home. Poor **Virginia**. When they moved house, she had to find homes for them.



In 2019, Gary entered some of his works in Art Exhibitions, without letting on about his background. He won several awards in the landscape categories. A marvellous achievement of which we are all proud. He should be writing this history as he, along with **Alan Rogerson**, take in everything that goes on. However, we have yet to convince him to use his right hand; and please do not mention how the light shines on his paintings. Whilst slow of speech, he is fluent in Anglo-Saxon. Gary epitomises what a Shed should be doing.



*Graduating from seascapes to landscapes to portraits, Gary has even managed to get the lorrikeys to pose for him on his easel.*



## The Two Joes.

During this narrative there has been sporadic mention of the **Two Joes**. They are not figments of our imagination. Around for the last 6 or 7 years, **Joe Sciberras and Joseph Cefai**, are hard to pigeonhole as, despite their illnesses, they are always the first to put their hands up to keep the wheels turning. Maltese by birth, they enjoy fishing as a hobby and have been known to go 5k out to sea in search of their dinner. Joined in 2017 by a fellow Countryman, **John Zammit**, another excellent grafter and humble with it, the Maltese nation are gradually taking over. It is no accident that the most popular breed of dog in Australia for 2019 was the Maltese Cross. Is there a link here?



*The only pictures to be found of the Two Joes ... working?*

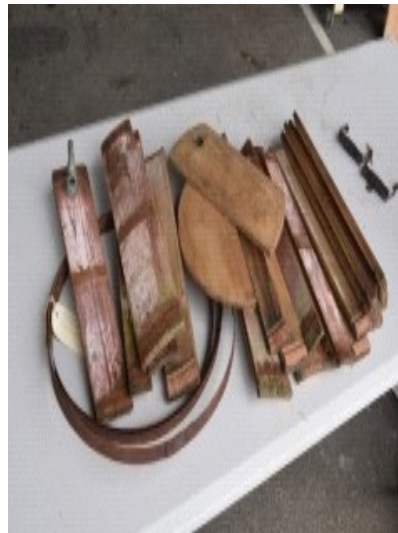
**It's not always plain sailing. Sometimes we scratch our heads.**



*You want me to do what?*

*Let's just pose for the camera.*





*An old wine cask*

*Ian concentrating*



*Is it a table?*

*Where do I put the rudder?*



*Why did I take this apart?*

*Where do we begin?*



**But when we get it right. That is another story.**



*Adirondack chair*



*The axeman cometh*



*Barry's dollhouse*



*Dave's marital bed (made in the Shed)*



*A happy swinger*



*Not bad for a piece of flotsam*



*Surfing trophies made by Chris, Milton and Alan for Central Coast Disabled Surfers Association. Did you know that it can take up to 40 Volunteers to put one disabled surfer in to the water safely?*



*Table and chairs*



*Barry's round table*





*Dave's planter*



*Peter Whitelake's work in pumice*



*Given a new life by Milton and Tony*



*Ian's finished cigar box guitars*



*Still going strong*



*Eric and his plant holders*





*Dave's toy train*

*Happy customers*

It is not suggested for one moment that any of the toys depicted in this narrative are used solely by the makers.

### **We do do other things as well.**

It should not be supposed that we spend all our time drinking tea and putting the world to rights. Over the years Members have completed projects for themselves or banded together for worthwhile Community charity causes. Even in the early days, the Shed linked up with **Lynfox** and helped out during the Victoria Bush Fires by donating much needed tools, (2 cwt ) and funds. A car was done up and sold for \$3,000 with the funds going to the Red Cross. More recently we have helped with Drought relief where in excess of \$11,000 was raised. Even more recently, we have helped out the Central Coast Shelter. We have even been known to engage in 'Vanity' projects in our spare time!

### **Buddy Boxes**

In October 2017, **Elissa Healy** approached the Shed with an idea to put together "suicide" and "Domestic Violence" boxes. Inside of them would be items to remind the holders that they were not alone in the world and that others cared about them. We did not like the name and called them "**Buddy**" boxes instead and the name stuck. It was envisioned to be a National rollout and we were asked to produce the prototypes.

Under the direction of **Ray Crawley and Barry Evans**, a team was quickly put together and very soon had produced over 40 such boxes. Ray got other Sheds involved and before long the whole enterprise, driven by Elissa had grown like Topsy. At this stage we passed the project on to AMSA as they had the contacts and better resources to carry on.



*Barry, Ray and Elissa with the first batch of boxes.*

## 10 top facts about male suicide



**Sheds are not just about making things, but also Mens' Health.**

## The Shitbox Rally 2019



*As part of Terrigal Men's Shed ongoing support for worthy causes we are proud that we are able to sponsor the son of one of our Members, **Derek Bailey**, in his participation in the Shitbox Rally each year to raise funds for Cancer Council of Australia.*



*This year, 2019, they finished the 2790 km journey from Perth to Sydney in a 30 year old Volvo 240 within the allotted 10 days.*





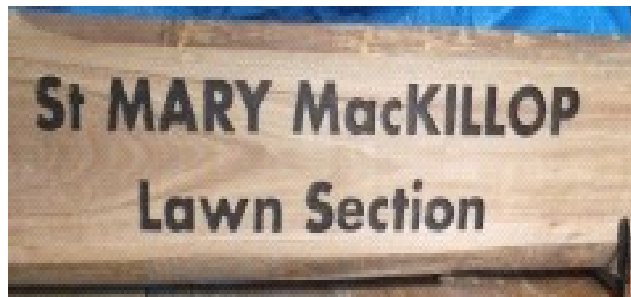
***John Bramwell** was advised by **Darren Hooper**, a member of the Breaker's Bowling Club, that the Unity Bank, of which he is the Regional Manager, wanted to enter a billy cart in the Hunter Soap Box Derby at Muswellbrook. All proceeds to helping Families in Need. Could we help? Of course we could. It will be even better next time now we know what we have to beat.*

## **Trophies**



*Surfing trophies made by **Chris** and **Milton** and finishd by **Alan** for the Central Coast Disabled Surfers Association.*

## **A Special Commission**





Terrigal Men's Shed were approached sometime in 2018 with a request to produce some signs for **Holy Cross Catholic Cemetery in South Kincumber**. This was a project that **Tony Kirkman** was delighted to take on board. Chris and Tony sourced the very large pieces of timber, collected them and prepared them. Most of the Shed members were unaware of the time and dedication involved in producing these stunning signs. The work was carried out by Tony using the facilities he has at home.

The signs were completed and erected in time for the 2018 Anzac ceremonies. Tony also made the Shed sign at the Church entrance.



*A bench cleaned up by Eric and going to a good home*



*A knotty problem*



*Part of a village by Ray Madden*



*Another new life*



*Just a sample from the Miracle Men*



This project was NOT part of Ian's stable but a job for a Play School in Kariong who wanted to make a lot of noise (*Alf and Roy H*)



## **This brings us up to date- 2019**

This brings us up to date. What began as a dream by one man grew in to what we are now, albeit with a few changes in direction. So now you know where we came from, how we got here and who got us here. Sadly we have lost some very good colleagues along the way, so it is up to you, dear Reader, to decide how we go forward.

None of what we have done could have been achieved without some excellent supporters, The Church, Adam Crouch MP, The Breakers CC, the local Community, the Wives and Families of our Members and of course the many Individuals who passed through our portals.



Am I in time for morning tea?      Our defibrillator. Thank you Adam



**And this is some of us now. My thanks to each and every one.**



This cupboard and panel was made by Eugene Leeb-Du Toit

### **Roll of Honour ( 2009 to 2019)**

**Presidents :-** Eric Gibbons; Geoff Yates; Ray Crawley; Ross De Fraine.

**Treasurers:-** Geoff Yates; Dave Menere; Keith Gower

**Secretaries:-** Geoff Yates; Roy Henry; Arthur Hand; Barry Evans.

**Committee Members:-** Brian Molloy; Tony Kirkman; Chris Tyler; Arthur Hand; Tony Collitts; Barry Evans; Bob Chase; Reg Bird; Alan Rogerson; Kevin Thomas; Bob Watson; Derek Bailey; Geoff Yates.

**Mentors :-** Tony Kirkman; Chris Tyler; Bob Watson; Ray Land: (woodwork): Geoff Yates; Arthur Hand (electrical): Kevin Thomas; Ray Crawley: Milton Elliott; (metalwork):

### **Sponsors and Supporters:-**

Rev. Richard Harris and the Terrigal Uniting Church Council;

State Member for Terrigal, Mr. Adam Crouch MP and his office staff through the Community Building Partnership Scheme;

Ken Pearson, John Atkins and the Committee of the Breakers Country Club through the Clubs Grants Scheme and various commissions;

Chris Tyler, Kevin and Greg Hooper and the Terrigal Rotary Club;

Kevin Thomas and the Committee of the Terrigal Lions Club;

Bunning's at Erina

**RWH 26th January (Australia Day) 2020 With grateful thanks to Eric Gibbons and Geoff Yates ( Past Presidents) for their memory recall and guidance**