




Speech By
Christian Rowan

MEMBER FOR MOGGILL

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PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT

Shed West

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (2.52 pm): I rise to inform the House of the Shed West organisation. Men's sheds perform a valuable role in providing both an opportunity for younger men to benefit from the experience of those older than themselves as well as providing a social environment for older men who might otherwise have become somewhat isolated and lonely.

The potential to become isolated tends to increase with greater urbanisation. Social isolation can have adverse consequences for both mental and physical health. The importance to a community of organisations such as men's sheds, the University of the Third Age, the Country Women's Association and like bodies therefore tends to increase with time.

Indeed, social isolation has been shown to lead to an increase in morbidity and mortality, with the associated risk being comparable to cigarette smoking and other major biomedical and psychosocial risk factors. The implication is that any reduction in isolation is likely to reduce overall costs for health related services.

So what are men's sheds? The modern men's sheds are an updated version of the shed in the backyard that has long been a part of our Australian culture. Men's sheds are springing up all around Australia. If people looked inside one they might see a number of men restoring furniture, perhaps fixing bicycles for a local school, maybe making myna bird traps, fixing lawn mowers or making a kid's cubby house for Camp Quality to raffle. They might also see a few young men working with older men and learning new skills and maybe also something about life from the men they are working with. They would see tea bags, coffee cups and a comfortable area where men can sit and talk. They would probably also see an area where men can learn to cook for themselves or where they can learn how to use social media and enhance their information technology skills.

Many men have learned from our culture not to talk about their feelings and emotions. That means they usually do not ask for help. Becoming a member of a men's shed provides an environment where a man can find support in an atmosphere of old-fashioned mateship. Members of men's sheds come from all walks of life. The bond that unites them is that they are men with time on their hands who seek something meaningful to do with that time.

My electorate of Moggill is home to a very active men's shed—Shed West, which has two campuses. The main workshop is on Brookfield Road, Kenmore Hills, with the Bellbowrie group having set up at Priors Pocket Road, Moggill, and now building membership rapidly. I was recently invited to officially open the Bellbowrie facility. I take this opportunity to acknowledge Neil McMenimen, Graham Barnard, Doug Nissen, Phil Castle, Max Lockwood, Graham Browne, Vic Lorenz, Chris Young, Roger Harding and all the other members involved in Shed West.

In addition to the well-equipped workshops, there are a range of special interest groups and weekly meetings with guest speakers. The special interest groups include computer, photography, card

playing and dinner groups. There are occasional visits to other sheds and places around Queensland. There is really no limit to what members can do. The success of Shed West in my electorate depends on its members, of which there are now over 180, with new members always welcome. May I commend to the House the good work men's sheds do in an increasingly urbanised state and propose that, as a matter of principle, we encourage and assist them in any reasonable way.

In my remaining time I also acknowledge the great collaborative work of the Kenmore Police Community Consultative Council and the various Neighbourhood Watch groups that do great work for our community.