



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
VICTORIA

VICTORIAN MEN'S SHED ASSOCIATION RECEPTION

Tuesday 16th July 2019

Mr Lindsay Oates, President, Victorian Men's Shed Association

Mr Warrick (Ric) Blackburn, Executive Officer, Victorian Men's Shed Association

Distinguished guests

Ladies and gentlemen

First, I acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land upon which we are gathering and pay my respects to their Elders past and present and to any Elders here with us this evening.

Tony and I welcome you here to celebrate Victorian Men's Sheds. You represent the over 360 community owned and managed Men's Sheds in Victoria and the 17,500 individual 'shedders'.

We are big fans of Men's Sheds. We have seen the important role that they play right across our State.

Important for what they provide to the men in our community, and important for what you men in turn give back to the community.

As to the former, I think the sheds meet a number of needs.

Perhaps every generation says this, but I do feel that we are living in an age of social upheaval and rapid change.

Across my adult life, we have seen enormous social changes. The role of women has been in transition. And, as it has been redefined, so has the role of men. Sometimes it can leave us all a bit uncertain as to where those roles now sit.

We have seen enormous technological change too. What can be achieved through technology and innovation is nothing short of wonderful, but it can also be bewildering, as the world shrinks and life becomes so fast and so complex.

Add the fact that we are living longer, thanks to greatly improved standards of living and medical advances, means lots of expanded opportunities - but also a significantly longer time in retirement.

And so, Men's Sheds provide a place in which men can remain physically and mentally active, talk to each other, enjoy each other's company and find mateship.

They can also provide the perfect venue for much-needed dissemination of information on men's health.

But something Tony and I have learned, as we have visited Men's Sheds across the State, is just how much you all contribute back to your communities.

We saw that up close and in detail earlier this year when, in my role as Patron of the 10 year anniversary of the Victorian Bushfires, we toured the parts of the State that had been most affected.

Time and time again we heard of the practical part played by the Men's Sheds in working on projects as part of their community's rebuild.

It was that experience in particular that prompted us to host this reception.

You are a growing force. Today, there are almost 1000 Men's Sheds across Australia. Our 360 Sheds in Victoria have grown from about 30 in just over a decade!

It is thanks to Federal and State funding – and the grit, determination and hard work of the Victorian Men’s Shed Association, those who have stepped up to run and manage sheds. And indeed all ‘shedders’.

May I add a ‘thank you’ too to the wives and partners who are here this evening. Nothing really good can happen without great partnerships!

Please enjoy yourselves, and we look forward to meeting and chatting shortly.