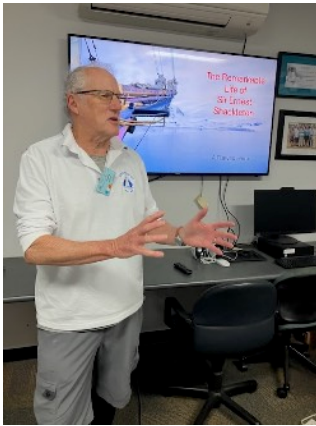




The Remarkable Life of Sir Ernest Shackleton - A Flawed Hero.



Gerry McGaan, who usually brings along great speakers to deliver the 2nd Thursday of the month talks, introduced himself to bring us this terrific talk. He provided a well researched and visual story which kept the audience engrossed for an hour.

Born in County Kildare, Ireland Shackleton was schooled there and then in London where he was sent by his father but he was not really interested at school and dismayed his father by insisting he was going to sea.. He was a great story teller and very engaging to the extent he gathered a group of like minded sailors and was a captain at a very young age. He engaged with Scott (of the Antarctic) and convinced Scott to take him along on the Discovery expedition, 1902- 1904.

This expedition was very poorly set up - not enough food for the length of the trip, scurvy almost killed many on the vessel, malnutrition was rife. Shackleton was very ill and was medivacced out. He and Scott were never reconciled.

What to do next? Woo Emily!! Ernest was not considered a suitable match for Emily by her father but Ernest persisted and won her hand - and a lot of money from her father to finance the next expedition. Emily always said she had married "a boy".

Shackleton spent some of his time on land as a speaker, a journalist, a publisher, a politician and a PR person for the navy but he made no money, showing that he was not an economic force though he was very good at getting money from sponsors to finance his expeditions. He gathered 45,000 pounds to get his expedition on Nimrod up and running. (This "loan" was never repaid!!)

His ship had insufficient coal to go the whole way and so he conned people in NZ to have one of their ships tow the Nimrod to Antarctica - some of his crew were of the same mind as Ernest and supported him well. They got to within 97 mls of the South Pole but had to turn back and they did reach the furthest South point in the time of the expedition and were hailed as heroes on their return. Shackleton gave the money raised from the expedition to a local hospital and did not repay the debt!!

Amundsen conquered the Pole, Scott etc died and the UK felt very flat. War was about to break out in Europe but Churchill said to Shackleton, when he proposed a new expedition to traverse the Antarctic, "Go".

When trouble broke out with the ship crushed by the ice the crew pulled their gear on sleds (weighing 450kg) to where they could launch the 3 lifeboats they had pulled over mountains (South Pole is over 9000ft above sea level), an enormous feat of endurance.

They rowed the lifeboats through enormous seas to Elephant Island. There, the bulk of the crew remained while Shackleton and two others set off for South Georgia where they travelled over land to meet up with one of the whaling stations there. After several attempts to get a ship to rescue the remaining 22 success was achieved. One of the crew took wonderful photographs of the crew, the scenes and the ship trapped in the ice.

Shackleton was clearly a great man while at sea but very poor on land, hence the flawed nature of his career.

I hope I got this all right - there was so much in the talk it was hard to note it all down!!

Footnote: On the evening of the talk a lady appeared on Antiques Roadshow with a diary written by one of the men on that trip with Shackleton. It was valued at 30,000pounds!! What a coincidence but it showed what Gerry had indicated - this man became really interesting in the '70'.

Chairmans Report 2024/2025

In starting to put this final report together, I looked back at what I had said in my Chairman's report at last year's AGM, and that's when the horror movie started. I could have used almost the entirety of last year's report and no one would be any the wiser! Seems that there is too much of the same old, same old and we still have some serious issues with our culture and more work is needed. We know that culture beats strategy hands down, so our work is ongoing.

Thankfully, part of that introduction is not quite true. To the outside world we might look successful, calm and serene like a swan on the water, but underneath some members have been paddling like hell. Most of the paddling has been productive, some not so. On the positive side we have been very busy ticking off many of the boxes that needed attention in our strategic plan. Areas such as leadership and governance, community and partnerships, staying relevant and shed culture have all had time and energy put into them with varying degrees of success. Some of tonight's agenda reflects work done in these areas.

Unfortunately, the Shed culture is one area where several changes seem to have had limited effect. As a result of a complaint from a member of the public, a representative of the Equal Opportunities Commission was asked to address the Members and I feel that meeting showed our Shed in a less than exemplary light, something we all need to consider in the future.

Participation by members has broadened again this year with the formation of a motor vehicle group which adds to the already burgeoning range of Shed activities. To allow these varied groups to survive, members are always needed to put their hands up and volunteer to do something for both themselves and the Shed,

Like many Sheds we are experiencing issues surrounding dispute resolution. The standard model Rules of Association (read Constitution) do not contain sufficient powers to allow reasonable and timely responses for deliberate wrongdoings, something Men's Sheds WA are in the process of addressing on a more global basis. Also, some of our governances are lacking in clarity and they are being worked on.

Now for some thank you's.

Duty Overseers. We have been modifying the role of the most important people in the Shed, our volunteer Duty Overseers, who now are no longer tasked with some of the more time-consuming duties they once had and are free to roam the Shed helping members in whatever way they can. There is still some way to go in this changeover, but with continued support and education this will eventuate. These guys are the public face of, and critical to, the Shed's future and get very little thanks for the job they do. That needs to stop now, and I thank each and every one of them for their continued performance in the face of at times some very ordinary situations from members.

Management Committee. I call these guys our coal miners, often faced with working in dark and difficult situations. As a group they have had to contend with my at times belligerent approach to important matters as I do not suffer fools gladly, and the brief thank you I extended to them socially recently was poor recompense for the work they do throughout the year – thanks again gentlemen.

The future. Today's world is changing rapidly, and if this Shed does not change with it, we will become irrelevant. The respectful practices that we all knew and used in **our** working lives no longer cut it in this new world and we should set an example by showing more respect to each other without losing our senses of mateship and humour which are paramount to the Men's Shed movement and what makes it one of the most successful and powerful groups nationwide. I have said many times if we fail to keep up with the new world the Shed will slowly wither and die – something I believe most of our members do not want to see happen. Change is inevitable and soon I believe the Shed will have to alter its working hours to accommodate a younger demographic who will become the Shed's new lifeblood.

Finally, I have had a great ride in this Shed over too many years. I have learned an awful lot about myself and how this Shed works, made many new friends over the time, and hope I have not offended too many too often. I am the first to admit at times I have talked the talk but not necessarily walked the walk – I'm only human after all, so please forgive me for failing at times. I know I leave the Chair with the Shed at least no worse off than when I took it on, hopefully a little better prepared for the future, and trust that in that future you will give the same support to your new Chairman that I have received in the past. Thank you all.

Tony Lalor

Brain Maintenance - Looking After Your Best Tool. Dr Kelly Gough



Most of us knew the “bones” of brain disorders and remedies to improve the functions of the brain in the aging process but Kelly put “meat” on the bones with his very articulate and knowledge based presentation with a touch of humour where appropriate.

Aging sees slower processing speed, mild memory changes, attention and learning and stable core abilities retained. **Abnormal decline** sees confusion, severe memory loss, losing old “tools”, personality and behavioural changes.

Depression and Dementia are similar but recognition of which is often not recognised. Depression comes along quicker whereas dementia is a gradual onset.

Cognitive Reserve - Brains are not all the same- larger brains are more resilient but “fall apart” quickly. Early and long term learning, mentally demanding work, cognitive and socially stimulating activities and physical health are already built in to build cognitive reserve. Lifelong learning, good health maintenance, physical exercise and social connections are all ahead when retirement and aging are incoming conditions.

Brain Healthy Habits include move, eat and sleep well, challenge the mind. During sleep the brain “shrinks” as the lymph glands purge the extraneous mind clutter. Exercise should include aerobic resistance and balance with 150-300 mins aerobic exercising and 2 session of resistance exercising /week being recommended. **Diet** should be varied but include vegetables, fruit, legumes, nuts, fish and unsaturated oil - this will reduce the possibility of dementia by 40%. **Sleep** should be consistent, not more than 9 hours but around 6 or 7 (aging usually requires less than the 7-8 suggested in earlier years) and insomnia is bad and should be checked by doctors. Physical activity eg. gardening, new projects, new interests and socialising all help to build brain reserve. **Loneliness** is a major factor in both depression and dementia - equivalent to smoking 15 cigarettes/day. Healthy friendships are great, hostile friendships are really bad!!

Hopefully this summary of a really interesting talk is true to the content of the presentation and will provide some clues to good brain health for those who were at and missed the talk. Editor.

The Rearranged Metal Shop

Thanks to the many who helped out to rearrange the metal shop in double quick time the photos below show how well the guys did with the area being much more functional.



Member Profile - Dave Russell



I was born in Gravesend, Kent in 1948. Left School at 15 and went to a local technical college for a couple of years. Although I had part time jobs, my first full time job was with a Mining Finance Company. One of my jobs was to transfer 50k or 100k pounds to Mt Newman every week. That gave me my first interest in Australia. I moved on to a Stockbroker doing company research on a computer, we were the first in London to have one. My Sister had migrated to Perth with her Family, so I decided to pay them a visit. I had heard about the Hippy Trail to Kathmandu, so I booked my bus ticket. The ten-week trip turned out to be three months because of the Pakistani / Indian war. In Perth I was offered a job with the Exploration Arm of

the London Mining Co. That took me out to Kalgoorlie. What a shock after London. A few weeks there and I needed the big lights of Sydney. Here I worked for Seabridge, a shipping agency. The travel bug bit again and I was planning to return to the UK via North America. Talking to a German guy in the Office, I found out he was planning returning home via South America. We put our plans together and found a Ship which would sign us on as Crew. After three months travel to places like Rio for the Carnival, Machu Picchu, we split up in Bogota so he could return home. I went on to spend the summer on a greyhound bus travelling around Mexico, the USA and Canada.

Back in London I worked for Costain Concrete. Going home on the Tube my glasses were knocked off my face and because we were packed in so tightly, I could only catch them with my teeth. The next morning, I phoned a shipping agent and booked a one way passage to Fremantle.

In 1975 I got a job with the University of WA. Whilst there, I thought I might as well try for a degree. About eight years later they awarded me a B.Com.

Towards the end of 1975 I met Marian, and I moved in with her in 1976. We did not want children so spent our spare cash on Travel, with several trips to Australian Cities, NZ, Bali and back to Scotland where Marian was born. We decided to upgrade our house in 1987 and bought a Townhouse in East Fremantle, where I still live today.

In 2006 there was a major restructuring at the University, and I took early retirement. Marian and I looked at our finances and decided that we would spend most of our time travelling. We started to do cruises and went around the Baltic, South China Sea, across the Pacific to USA, Canada and Alaska. We also went to China a couple of times, along with other adventures.

Unfortunately, Marian developed dementia. About five years ago, she had to move into a Nursing home for her own safety. Marian passed away in June this year.

I joined the Mens' Shed about six years ago. Initially it was respite from looking after Marian but then it sort of became addictive. Over the years I have learnt several new skills, like digging holes, cooking, spray painting and using power tools.

The worst thing about the Shed is when you ask how to do something you get half a dozen suggestions. You then must decide whose advice to accept without offending the others.

SENIOR'S MEDICAL ADVICE - from Dr A Locke (Retired after imbibing!!)

I don't understand why prescription medicine is allowed to advertise on TV or why anyone would think of trying one of the medicines after listening to the laundry list of warnings of possible side effects. But this is definitely an exception!

Do you have feelings of inadequacy? Do you suffer from shyness? Do you wish you were a better conversationalist? Do you sometimes wish you were more assertive? Do you sometimes feel stressed?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, ask your doctor or pharmacist about Whisky.

Whisky is the safe, natural way to feel better and more confident. It can help ease you out of your shyness and let you tell the world that you're ready and willing to do just about anything.

You will notice the benefits of Whisky almost immediately and, with a regimen of regular doses, you'll overcome obstacles that prevent you from living the life you want.

Shyness and awkwardness will be a thing of the past. You will discover talents you never knew you had. Side Effects May Include: Dizziness, nausea, vomiting, incarceration, loss of motor control, loss of clothing, loss of money, delusions of grandeur, table dancing, headache, dehydration, dry mouth, and a desire to sing Karaoke and play all-night Strip Poker, Truth Or Dare, and Naked Twister.

Warnings: The consumption of Whisky may make you think you are whispering when you are not.

The consumption of Whisky may cause you to tell your friends over and over again that you love them. The consumption of Whisky may cause you to think you can sing. The consumption of Whisky may create the illusion that you are tougher, smarter, faster and better looking than most people. Rum, Vodka, Gin, Vodka or Bourbon may be substituted for Whisky, with similar results, but with far less pleasure!



All items for the newsletter to be
emailed to
jamiemc1wa@gmail.com
before the monthly meeting
0418334513

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