

Showgrounds Community Men's Shed Newsletter — January 2023

PRESIDENT'S UPDATE - Peter Panek

Hi Sheddies,

Since my last report I was beginning to think that the Shed had fallen into a bit of a quieter period and so I started to think about some of the things that our shed members have taken part in, and produced the following incomplete list of activities in the Shed:

- 1. Following on from the Perth Royal Show the Shed has been busy finalising the orders taken for wooden Christmas trees plus name plates and signs from the CNC group.
- 2. The Kitchen group prepared a sit-down Christmas lunch for 82 members.
- 3. The Photography Group held a Christmas gathering for its members.
- 4. Members of the Shed have assisted a recently widowed member of the public to collect her departed husbands' tools and sort them, sell some on her behalf and distribute the excess to other needy Sheds.
- 5. Work has begun on reconstructing the flight simulator which has been donated to the Shed and a new group created with approximately 25 members to take ownership of this new venture.
- 6. Members have continued to create fabulous pieces of furniture and Simon Benwell has excelled with his fabulous tree house which he created for his granddaughter.
- 7. Simon continues to enjoy himself with his current project, being a 2m high skeleton of a Tyrannosaurus Rex.
- 8. Not forgetting the substantial number of repair jobs for the general public.
- 9. The Bike group continues to receive, repair and provide working bikes to the Bicycles for Humanity Charity.
- 10. A CNC training course conducted over 2 Saturday morning sessions for a small group of 10 members who wished to discover more about this workshop equipment.
- 11. Collection of several large slabs of timber which members can purchase for their own projects.
- 12. Etc etc.

Shed improvements which are currently being undertaken or are planned to be conducted shortly include:

- 1. Installation of reverse cycle air conditioners into the Kitchen, Photography room and Supervisors' office.
- 2. Construction of a large gazebo in the garden area to provide much needed shade in this area.
- 3. Completion of the roofing in the wood storage area so that our stockpile of raw timber can be protected from the wet weather.
- 4. Maintenance work on the wooden timber frames around the large windows on the garden side of the building.

So, whilst on the surface, the Shed may appear to be relatively quiet, behind the scenes there is considerable activity, and our Shed continues to be a valuable community resource. My thanks to all the members who assist the Shed in maintaining this high level of activity.



If any member wishes to contribute more to assist the Shed, then simply contact the group leader in charge of your particular area of interest or any committee member.

Speaking of Committee members, at our Annual General Meeting we elected 3 new members to the Committee, being Stephen Keenihan, who takes on the role of Secretary and John Bolto and Greg Righton who both join as general members of the committee. Welcome to you all.

Michael Bisset stepped down from his position of Secretary after several years in the role and I want to thank him for his valuable contribution. Michael Bisset continues in his other role as leader of the Bicycle group and hence continues to make a valuable contribution to the Shed and the Charity, Bicycles for Humanity. Michael Sommerville Brown also stepped down from his role as a committee member after his 1 year position came to an end. Whilst Michael has stepped down from the committee, he continues to head up the photography group which is one of our more active groups at the Shed. Les Gunn also stepped down from the committee and Les will continue with his involvement at the Shed with our IT management.

It is through the efforts of our Committee Members, Supervisors, Group Leaders, and active members who all give selflessly give freely of their time and expertise that we all benefit and on behalf of all members, I thank them all sincerely.

The Shed has appointed a small group of members to be the organising committee for the 2023 Perth Royal Show. Drawing upon last year's Show experiences and feedback from our members, this new group has already had several meetings and formulated a plan for moving forward. This group has correctly identified as their primary goal to "Engage with all members in the shed and for them to have fun and feel good about their engagement at the Shed." The Showgrounds organising group will be in touch with Group Leaders and Shed members throughout the year and I would ask that all members give them every consideration and assistance in making the 2023 Mens Shed contribution to the Perth Royal Show an outstanding success. This is our showcase opportunity to display to thousands of Perth Royal Show attendees the benefits of belonging to our Shed and Men's Sheds in general. There will be many opportunities for our members to help and to participate with the preparations and the Show itself and I encourage you all to engage with the process. It is all a part of the "Act, Belong, Commit" ethos which is at the heart of being a Sheddie.

In finishing, I trust you all had a safe, active and happy Christmas and New Year and I look forward to seeing you all at the Shed throughout the year.

Peter Panek

President



WOODWORKING GROUP - Simon Benwell

The woodworking group has continued to thrive after the Royal Show, thanks in part to the

number of orders for Christmas Trees we got from the Show. Some 30 trees have now been built and (mostly) delivered and this has provided some considerable earnings. Thanks goes to Steve Gerreyn for leading this effort and Calvin, Danny, Noel, Dennis and a number of others for their hard work.

There has been a number of individual projects continuing to be crafted in the shed over the last couple of months. Here we see an example from Chris Harding with his wine and cheese table. Note how it has places for flat bottom glasses as well as normal glasses. Chris assures me that his table can handle the biggest bottle of wine he could find. Well done Chris.





I'm always amazed at the inventiveness of the woodworking group.



I have had a lot of fun over the last month or so crafting a dolls house for my Partner Vicky's granddaughter Violet. Many thanks go to Otti for helping me with the bathroom suite on the CNC machine and John Hassel for the assistance with the electrical system (well, he did most of it really). It's now waiting at home for Violet to grow old enough to get it. I'll bring it back to include it in the display for the 2023 Royal Show next year.

Merry Christmas to everyone at the shed from the Woodworking Group.



GARDEN GROUP – Stewart Forbes

The garden team has been very busy since the last newsletter in October.

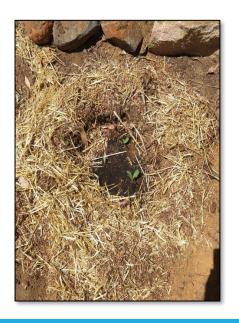
Gavin has been propagating more geraniums of a variety of colours and has just about sold out of his black geraniums, which have eventually started flowering to prove that they indeed have black flowers with deep burgundy too.



The current hot spell is throwing up some challenges to keep all the potted plants hydrated, especially in the afternoons when the garden tends to be overrun by bees wanting to drink all the surface moisture. Hopefully the bee group will be able to install a timer on the tap in the apiary to provide them with an alternative water source.

In the New Year we should see great things on the northwestern side of the shed. Noel recently celebrated his 82nd birthday and planted some rock melons to celebrate.







Noel has assured me that he will challenge the world record melon which currently stands at 30.47kg.



Dennis and I are a little more conservative about our expectations for our butternut pumpkins and watermelons. Look out for the results in the February newsletter.



I have everyone had a great Christmas and may all our gardens flourish in 2023 (thank goodness plants don't get Covid).



KITCHEN GROUP - Werner Ribul

Now that it's over, we can declare that 2022 turned out to be "The Year of Great Achievements" for the SCMS Kitchen Team! Not only did we successfully commission our new Wood-fired oven, we also broke all previous records on events catered, number of patrons catered for and – most importantly for the Treasurer, a record cashflow generated by one hell of a team. Here's how the final chapter went by.

Kitchen Team Events

One of our treasured partnerships is the cooperation with **Matilda Bay Rotary Club** where we cook tasty food for Perth's Homeless people every other month. To show our appreciation after a full year of commitmment, SCMS hosted MBRC for their pre-Xmas function which turned out to be a "**Pizza Night at SCMS**".

They say that "a picture says more than a 1000 words", so I let the photos below tell the story. But we can confirm that all Rotarians thoroughly enjoyed the food and company and I expect they will be knocking on our SCMS door again to repeat this exercise. They even found time to wander through the 'Great Hall of Woodworking' and were amazed by **Simon Benwell's** "Playground for Adults", aka a very special dolls house, whilst the Master chef was busy cooking his trademark pizzas!











Hot on the heels was a charming Saturday lunch with the **HeartsKids dads and granddads** which we hosted to a light BBQ at the SCMS garden. Some of the Kitchen Team 'elder statesmen' made an appearance to lend a very welcome hand – it was good to have you back! In the event, many heart-warming stories were told by the visitors and we bonded really well with this group of people who life had handed a difficult card. They were so impressed by our hospitality and the shed setup that some might be back joining our membership in future.





A little delayed due to yours truly forgetting to have his name embroidered on our treasured Kitchen Team aprons, our latest SCMS Kitchen Team graduate,

Andrew Britton, finally received his well-earned personalised apron in November. Andrew has taken to the Kitchen Team like 'a duck to water' and has for many months now been a tremendous support for the entire team. From being 'the' apprentice on the Thursday morning Scone baking team, he's moved on to co-lead the team and taking all new apprentices under his big wings. Well done, Andrew!



Nov-2022 SCMS Luncheon – **Wiener Schnitzel & Apfelstrudel**. As you might have guessed, this menu

comes right out of my Austrian heritage-based corner. Luckily, I managed to talk **Andrew Britton** into taking on the reigns as Kitchen Leader of the day, which also functioned as his Apprentice Graduation challenge - he did get the apron before we started to cook though! Andrew really relished this task and went through an entire menu testing spree the weekend before the lunch, and it showed in his confidence and skills on the day. What an emerging Master Chef you are! In another smart move, I got the butcher who supplied the meat to cut it into individual Schnitzels. With 50 portions to cook, this would have taken us ½ hour at best. By the time the SCMS dining room had filled, all 50 Schnitzels were pan-fried and the "Apfelstrudel" had been baked to perfection. Take it from an Austrian, you wouldn't be able to get a better Schnitzel in a Viennese restaurant if you tried!

At the end, there were cheers and standing ovations from the diners which brought out a blush on Andrew's cheeks, or was it the exhausting work that finally showed through his otherwise cool complexion?













Our regular SCMS Thursday Morning Teas are sometimes made more special by having a cake made in honour of one of our 'Birthday boys'. And last month it was **Andrew Britton's** turn to put on the silly hat and pose for posterity, otherwise known as the **Men's Shed Facebook Page**! Below you can see that he cannot only bake delicious scones (he really has taken our Thursday morning tea scones to another, much higher level), he can also bake delicious cakes – what a catch we've had with Andrew joining our team earlier this year!









The final catering act in a given month is normally reserved for our SCMS Sundowners which follow on from one of our Monthly Presentations. The November presentation was all about men's greatest curse, Prostate cancer and 35 members turned out to listen to a highly engaging and informative panel discussion. To balance the mood after learning about this desease, the Kitchen Team put on a sumptuous spread of dips and finger food which was highly appreciated by the remaining shed members. **Peter MacGregor** and **Sami Tadros** had worked tirelessly to put this all together before cleaning up and listening to the panellists themselves.







Our last Homeless Meal of the year prepared in cooperation with Matilda Bay Rotary Club was also our last cooked meal before we return to healthy salads in January. Kitchen Team lead **Werner Ribul** decided to cook "Cottage Pie", a perennial favourite for the hungry homeless souls of Perth. A small group of Kitchen Team members made short work to prepare 50 portions that were delivered by the Rotarians, as usual. Apparently, that day more than 250 homeless people gathered in the city and 5 other kitchen teams also contributed to the food that was offered. I'm sure our pies ranked high in the popularity stakes!





Also in November, we celebrated "International Men's Day" with a free Pizza Event in our SCMS Garden which was open to a number of community groups in the Claremont area. Interestingly, the event was well attended with several women making up a strong contingent. They somehow knew that Pizza Masterchef Simon Benwell and his team of SCMS Pizza chefs had lined up to produce a mouth-watering array of delicious wood-fired pizzas and, despite the afternoon setting, all pizzas were consumed with a few going out the door by way of take-away boxes. Even some of the Kitchen Team members enjoyed the tasty delights.







Our final, and also biggest, catering event in the 2022 calendar was set for early December - the by now renowned SCMS Xmas Luncheon. Under the common proviso that "if it ain't broke, don't change it!" we convinced our former Kitchen Deputy Lead Bill Macleod to return to the SCMS Kitchen and to lead another Xmas feast for our members. To make it more interesting, we increased the available tickets to 80, the biggest number of patrons we have ever catered for with a traditional 3-course meal of freshly cooked prawns with dips, glazed ham with a selection of healthy salads and, to finish it off, a traditional Italian Tiramisu with fresh fruit platters. A whole army of sheddies helped to make this happen, starting with the woodworking team who cleared the "Great Hall" of the work benches and setup tables and chairs to host 80 patrons. We even managed to locate the old party lights which had been taken down before the Royal Show to give the Shed a more serious look, and they were given another run for our money. Whilst a sizeable Kitchen Team under Bill's direction went to work, a few other members set up the drinks bar and made sure that plenty of cold beverages were available to Shed faithful. Nobody had to go home thirsty!

Yet another clockwork operation ensured that the food was not only plentiful but at an even higher quality as last year and all feedback received during and after the luncheon confirmed this very resoundingly. Boys you did us proud again!







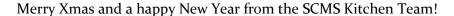








Finally, it is time to say thank you to all members, whether they worked with us on the Kitchen Team or supported us through their attendance at the various catering events. I hope you enjoyed the food and camaraderie as much as we enjoyed cooking a healthy fare for you. Please stay safe and healthy during the festive season and make sure you return in January when the first catering event in 2023 is going to take place. It's going to be another memorable feast!







RECIPE OF THE MONTH – Werner Ribul

SCMS Spiced Christmas Jam

Cinnamon, ginger, allspice, and cloves come together to create a warm and cosy holiday flavour in this Spiced Christmas Jam recipe. Made with strawberries and cranberries, this jam is both sweet and tart with a warming and comforting hint of seasonal spice.

Prep Time: 20 minutes Serves: 80

Cook Time: 40 minutes Total Time: 60 minutes

Ingredients

- 700g fresh or frozen strawberries (6 cups)
- 250g fresh or frozen cranberries (2 cups)
- 700g sugar (5 cups)
- 2 pouches pectin (we're using Jamsetta)
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon ground ginger
- 1/4 teaspoon ground allspice
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cloves



Method

- 1) Begin by pureeing the strawberries and cranberries in your food processor, either frozen or fresh. Depending on the size of your food processor, you may have to do this in batches. Transfer the pureed strawberries and cranberries to a large saucepan or stock pot.
- 2) Measure the sugar and spices and add those to the saucepan now as well.
- 3) Over medium-high heat, bring the mixture to a full boil.
- 4) Once fully boiling, meaning that even while stirring, the bubbles are still forming on top of the jam, continue to boil for 10 minutes.
- 5) Remove the saucepan from the heat source and add in the fruit pectin. Stir well to combine and place the saucepan back on the heat.
- 6) Once the jam returns to a full boil, boil for one full minute, stirring the whole time, then remove from the heat.
- 7) The bubbling will settle and once it does, use a spoon or ladle to skim off any foam and discard it.
- 8) Ladle the hot jam into the sterilized jars being sure to leave 1/4 inch of headspace. Place a clean, sterilized lid on the jars and screw on until just finger-snug.
- 9) Allow jam to cool and set, undisturbed, for 12 hours. Wipe jars and label accordingly. Now you are ready to enjoy the fruits of your labour!

Recipe Notes

To store the amount of jam for this recipe you will need 10 250ml canning jars with lids which both should be sterilised before bottling.

Store jam jars in a cool, dark cabinet. Once opened, keep the jam in your fridge and use within a month.



COMPUTING AND SOCIAL MEDIA – Les Gunn

We support the Shed's diverse groups and members in many Information Technology areas. Group activities for 2023 are being planned now, so please contact Les Gunn if you have ideas about the function of this Group.

Computing and Social Media Group is an important **operational** contributor to other Groups, such as supporting software for Photography, CNC, general WiFi access, printing for signs, Art projects, and Kitchen rosters – for example. We also maintain the desktop PCs, printers, scanners and wired/Wifi networks in support of day-to-day running of the Shed.

Many of the members who have joined this group are interested in learning more about computing or how to better manage their smartphone, desktop, tablet or laptop. Understandably, only a few have a background in Information Technology and are interested in helping the members who may have missed the opportunities to take full advantage of these tools. Depending on feedback from members, we plan to address this requirement in 2023.

For example: One of our members had to purchase a new phone after totally disabling his old phone with too many PIN code attempts. We were able to recover important contacts information from his old backup files after resetting the old phone to the original factory setting to unlock the disabled phone.

Regarding computer/phone backup, one of our new members has an extensive background in supporting computer storage technologies including cloud storage. This could be a topic for our Group in 2023.

The Computer and Smart Phone Help Desk is open by appointment, and you are welcome to bring your PC, Tablet or smart phone or just use one of our desktop PCs/Macs.

Whatever you decide, almost always, a password is required so don't leave at home those credentials for your Google/Microsoft/Apple/ TidyHQ account sign-on.

Please set up your appointment with Les Gunn via email: les.gunn@gmail.com or text: 0412171006, for help with email, smartphones, Wi-Fi, Cloud storage, malware or virus protection and any other IT issues that may have you bogged down in technology. On Facebook see our page at: https://www.facebook.com/groups/739066453191187 for the private Group.



BEE KEEPING GROUP - (Curt McDonald) Ant McGrath



In Curt's absence (Skiing Japan!) I have put together a short report on our Group's activities.

A large Spring Honey extraction was undertaken on 7th November by Stephen & Des's group yielding 30l & 18l respectively. A fair bit of this has now been bottled with some more to do. As such, New Season's Honey is all available for sale and it tastes tremendous! Also, one of my favourites is Stephen's Creamed Honey - this is a great product and always a winner as a present!

Our Hives are all in good condition and over the next few months will be rationalised. In January some time we expect to extract a bit more Honey!

Hope everyone had a great Christmas and all the best from our Busy Bees!

WINE APPRECIATION GROUP – Stephen Keenihan

Our Wine Group were treated to a great selection of wine from Mornington Peninsula in November. The event was hosted by Brent Coulson who has a residence there and through his contacts provided a fine selection of reds and whites from the Crittenden Winery of Dromana.

As you would expect, Pinot Noir made up the reds while Chardonnay dominated the whites. There was an outlier being at Pinot Grigio/Muscat blend. The blend divided the group as some thought it was a good choice while others were less convinced of its quality. The other wines presented came from two different areas of Dromana; one near sea level (Kangerong) and the other in the hills (Tuerong). It was interesting to see what the impact was of this change in terroir as the wines were quite different. The Group preferred the Tuerong wines.

Brent put a lot of effort into ensuring we were treated to some very nice wines which he had organised to be delivered from Victoria. We look forward to him carting more wine back for the group to sample.

In early December the group decided to try something different and rather than a member hosting the event we decided to try a "Bring Out Your Dead" event. Many of us have wines that have had stored away for a long time and don't know what to do with them. We can't

bring ourselves to throw it out but we're not brave enough to open it with friends in case it is past its best. These are our "dead" wine. All Members were encouraged to bring along a wine they think might be past its best **but** on the other hand might just be great.

As a result, we had a very varied array of wines. Some were clearly beyond resuscitation, but many were quite drinkable, even pleasant. The attached photo shows the range of wines.





The wines varied from a very old Beerenauslese, Chardonnay and Semillon for the whites to Cabernet, Shiraz, Merlot and a few blends and ranged in vintage from the mid 70's to 2018 (ring in). Most of the wines were from vintages in the 1990's and 2000's. It was surprising how many of them, most of which were well past their suggested drinking age, were still quite palatable albeit showing their age.

Many of the wines had very questionable corks but none except a Wendourie Shiraz were decanted (and for the Wendourie that turned out to be a mistake). All the wines needed to be tasted immediately after opening as many quickly lost character and flavour once in the glass. This reinforced the notion that decanting old wines should not be done unless it's to get rid of debris - let them open in the glass if need be.

The most highly rated white wine was a Lindeman's Hunter Semillon while the best red wine was a Cabernet from Victoria from a winery no one had heard of and no longer exists. So clearly pedigree with reds is not as important as one might expect. Overall, the old Cabernets had withstood the ravages of time better than the Shiraz's. Two stalwarts, Wynns Black Label Cabernet and Howard Park Cabernet were both judged as very good while the Wendourie topped the Shiraz wines.

Having additional food was judged a positive. During preparation, I was ably assisted by Colin Scott and Peter Goodes and of course a mystery pixie in the kitchen who made sure it was ready on time and presented tastefully.

Overall a good night enjoyed by all and likely to be repeated.

PHOTOGRAPHY GROUP - Mike Somerville-Brown

Perth Architecture Field Trip, Dinner and Movie - 3 November 2023

The photography group conducted a tour of both modern and historic buildings within the Perth Central District. The objective of the field trip under the guidance of Peter Buck and John Bolto was to consider photo composition, light, shade, building lines and look for interesting perspectives. As usual we had a range of cameras from smartphones, compact cameras to DSLRs. See examples below and see if you can identify the camera that took each photo.











The field trip concluded with an early dinner at Sienna's Italian Restaurant in Leederville before continuing onto the Luna Cinema to see "The Sanctity of Space" documentary. The movie presents the story of two climbers who undertake a climbing expedition in Alaska, retracing the exploits of the legendary explorer, climber, photographer and cartographer, Bradford Washburn who carried out and photographed many of the first climbing expeditions in Alaska in the 1920s and 30s.





Fremantle Field Trip - 16 November 2023

The Fremantle walk-around was very relaxed, and the objective was to give people the opportunity to simply photograph the streetscapes and the waterfront in a relaxed manner. It was left up to the participants to select subjects and to later review their results themselves. Once the sun started to go down the group adjourned to the trendy Emily Taylor Bar and Kitchen for a delightful evening meal and accompanying wines.





Shooting Portraits on the Fly - 24 November 2023

Portraiture can be a challenging photography genre and the emphasis was placed on capturing candid portraits as one would do when traveling. The workshop covered the most appropriate lenses to use, applying aperture mode, and focusing and metering modes. The workshop presented a number of simple suggestions on composition and using aperture to shorten depth of field and blur backgrounds (bokeh). Typically, a number of shots are required to capture changes in rapid facial expressions. Understanding the lighting, particularly the position of the subject relative to the direction of light, and sharp focusing on an eye, all contribute to the quality of the result. When traveling, portrait opportunities are fleeting and the photographer has to be well prepared with fast reactions to be successful.



Finally, attention was given to how to successfully photograph family groups and children when cooperation may be challenged.



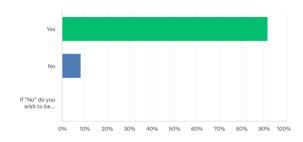


Photography Group Survey Results - 3 December 2022

A survey of was conducted of the over 50 Shed members who indicated an interest in Photography. The purpose of the survey was to seek feedback on the 2022 program of activities and to use this information to plan for 2023. In 2022 we had 34 active members from whom we received over 80% response rate; of which 90% propose to continue in 2023. All activities received score greater than 50% with knowledge workshops receiving the highest score of over 80%.

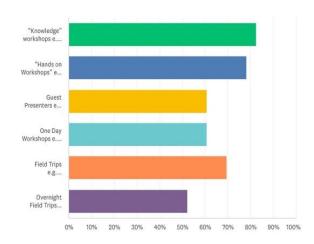
Do you plan to be an active Photography Group member in 2023? (Y/N)





What activities did you like in 2022? (Tick each relevant box below)

Answered: 23 Skipped: 2



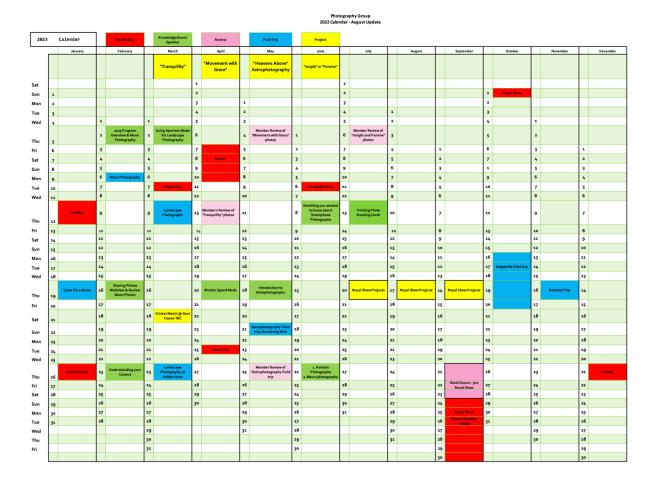
The survey results were presented to photography members on 10 Nov 2022 for further discussion and confirmation of activities. The Photography Leadership Team then used this information to prepare a program of activities for the first six months of 2023 for presentation at our first workshop on 2 Feb 2023.

Program improvements for 2023 include:

- More Practical activities "camera in your hand"
- Help Forum to help resolve member's photography "problems"
- Photography Projects & Challenge Activities
- Mentors for all members
- Training/Induction for hardware/software, Google Classroom and our photo website.

Active members in 2023 will pay a 6 monthly fee for access to the Photography Room computers, software, scanners and printer and attendance at Workshops, field trips, etc.





Photography Group Christmas Function - 10 December 2022

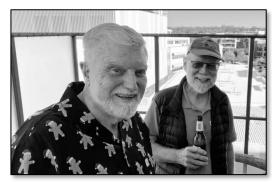
John Bolto generously offered to host a Xmas function at his home in Subiaco for members and their partners. John and his wife Kim provided a scrumptious array of nibbles and finger food including cheese platters, sushi, satays and fruit platters. For the sweet tooth we also had Christmas mince pies. We had a wonderful evening and thanks to John and Kim for their hospitality. Also thanks to Brant for the photos.











Photography Group Busy Bee - 17 January 2023

We ran a Busy Bee to make the Photography Room more functional and accessible to our members and clear out all the "junk" that has accumulated on and under the benches.

We retained 4 computers with the necessary software, two scanners and a colour printer. Surplus computers were assessed for storage in a nearby shipping container or disposal. Similarly we assessed our collection of picture frames either for storage in a shipping container or disposal.

We hope to see you at our next Photography Workshop on 2 Feb 2023.

Stay Safe and enjoy the activities of the Shed!