



Welcome to the first newsletter for 2026, It's going to be a big year with a big project – so we are starting with an update from Peter Ehrlich....

Omokoroa Bird Observatory sculpture nearing construction ... at last!

Construction for the large '*godwit in flight*' – the aluminium sculpture that will grace the entrance to the Omokoroa Bird Observatory – is finally about to get underway.

After delays with engineering calculations, drawings and council conversations regarding consenting, we had hoped to start work early January. However, subsequent detailed discussions with the reinforcing contractor brought an alternative foundation design to the table which delayed progress once again. However, we now have a cheaper and easier option that's been approved by the engineers who are now finalising those construction plans.

While the project has been beset by a few unforeseen delays, the imminent kick-off is a great reward. Suffice to say, everybody involved is thrilled with the final tweaks, and are rearing to go. All the relevant pricing is in hand, and the contractors are in the starting blocks.

Much of the construction is scheduled to be carried out off-site, including the reinforcing steel for the foundation. The aluminium fabrication of the bird structure will be carried out and supervised by Richard Wilde at the Menzshed. The team involved are cautiously optimistic that the sculpture will be in place for the next Godwit Festival in November.

In addition to the sculpture, there's also a parallel development at the Bird Observatory that's gaining momentum – namely the information walkway. OEMI and its secretary Murray Grainger are actively supporting the development which will include several storyboards to educate and inform visitors along a designated information walkway adjacent to the entrance into the protected wetland.



Built at the Shed – now in community use. A table with a view, and extended overhangs to enable wheel chair use. You'll find it at the start of Bramley Drive.



Committee News

Recently Secretary David recently circulated a shed update, which is summarised here -

- In a few months we will be celebrating five years in existence for the Shed. A few determined men held several meetings, and in August 2021 the Shed received a letter from WBOPDC confirming the use of the land and buildings which we currently occupy – initially for a period of five years.
- Following approaches by your committee members, we have been advised by Council that our likely tenure may extend out to a further 7 years, but in the event that the tenure was to be shortened then a minimum notice period to vacate the premises would be two years. In short, our right to continue to operate in our existing premises would appear to be secure in the medium term.
- Over this period of nearly five years, membership has grown from the handful of early hardy souls, to a current roll of eighty.
- However, as with the whole of the population, we are faced with mounting costs to operate a working facility for the benefit of members and for the many tasks and activities we undertake or provide to our community. Our nomination in the BOP Regional Awards in 2025 for community recognition is testament to our standing within the community.
- Identified rising costs include:-
 1. Previously Sheds paid a total affiliation fee of \$25 annually to Menzshed NZ. The national body of Menzshed NZ passed a resolution that all member sheds would be levied \$5 per member effective 1 January 2026.
 2. Insurance costs have soared.
 3. Internet costs have increased significantly as we lost the 'free' connection via our former neighbours at the childcare centre.
 4. Accounting charges, and bank charges etc have all increased, some by 100 percent.
 5. The costs of the traditional smoko, seen as part of our mental health well being, have increased along with member attendances.
 6. In late 2024 following the building of a Shed trailer, we introduce a policy to reimburse members using their private cars, towing the trailer, for delivering or collecting items and materials for the Shed and its customers.

Your committee has determined that after nearly five years with no changes, an increase in member subscriptions is inevitable. We have compared ourselves with other sheds, including Katikati, and have found that we are approximately half the sub level of those sheds. Therefore it is proposed that the annual subscription be increased from the current level of \$50 (equivalent to less than \$1 per week) to \$100 (less than \$2 per week).

In order for this to proceed it will be necessary to call and hold a Special General Meeting. Notice of the meeting with the necessary remit will be notified in due course.



A sign brought in by a customer for restoration, has had a transformation from a painted disaster, back to its original state. Michael and Alan have spent more than fifteen hours, and five coats of paint stripper and scraping to get this result. The customer now wants the background to the lettering to be darkened so that the letters and frame stand out.

Thanks to our sponsors and supporters:



President's comments.

The year is already well underway with the planning and undertaking of various projects – it's great to see our members coming along to join in.

Along with our big project this year, we also have the usual repairs and requests coming through to test and extend our skills with some of the smaller items. While some are an “easy fix”, others tend to be a bit more thought provoking, and which though they may seem initially simple often end up requiring a lot more time and effort being needed. We are conscious of the fact that we need to cover the costs of materials and consumer items – these soon mount up (even on small projects). It is always difficult to estimate the length of time needed to undertake these challenges, Thank you to those who are willing to assist in getting them done – your attitude and skills are what the “Shed” is about.

While we are happy for you to do your own projects, please remember that working and contributing together for the benefit to the community is another one of the reasons why we are here. You may feel that you don't have the knowledge and skill, but be assured that your help is appreciated, and I'm sure advice and guidance is available from your fellow “sheddiess”.

Did you know that this year is in fact rather special, occurring once in every eight hundred and twenty three years – there are exactly four of each day in this February!

Looking forward to catching up at the “Shed”.

Dick Megchelse



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A COMMUNITY TO BELONG TO,
& MATES THAT MAKE IT ALL WORTHWILE
(MENZSHED NZ)**

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The Shed is open -

9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday.

Trivia Questions –

- What year was the Rainbow Warrior sunk in Auckland?
- What is the definition of the word “codswallop”?
- Who is the host of the TV show Taskmaster NZ?
- Who is the author of the Footrot Flats comics?
- What is a group of porcupines called?
- Which country was split into two zones by the Yalta Agreement?
- Which North Island town features giant corrugated iron animals?
- “Who shot JR?” is a reference to which popular TV show from the 1980's?
- Which mountain range is the longest in the world?
- What's the shortcut for the 'copy' function on most computers?

Shed news . . .



You can't hold him back! Des busy cutting out godwit profiles for use by the school.

Despite the weather the garden is blooming. Shortly those flaxes and dragon trees will be gone allowing for the garden size to be increased.

The gardening team is looking for a volunteer to do some maintenance and watering on Thursdays and Saturdays. 8.30 to 11.30, beginning 1 March. If any member can help, please talk to Ivan or Wayne.



And a big 'Thank you' to Mitre10 Tauranga. Every Wednesday they have been supplying us with seedlings.



Dick and Richard working (and muttering) on a trailer which was donated. Some of the frame has been replaced, and once the refurbishment is complete, it will be up for sale.

Answers –
1. 1985
2. Nonsense
3. Jeremy Wells
4. Murray Ball
5. A prickle
6. Germany
7. Tiran
8. Dallas
9. Andes
10. ctrl c