

Lislea Men's Shed AGM. Wednesday 14th June 2023

Chairpersons report.

One year ago, this month, saw the beginning of the construction of our new shed on what was referred to as "The polytunnel site". On the hottest days of the year Abtech staff began erection of the steel framework, then to proceed with the cladding thereafter. Before all of that, our very generous benefactor, Joe Doherty had moved the lock up container, built a new retaining wall, levelled the remaining ground before creating a concrete platform as the base for the new shed. Without the input and generosity of Joe Doherty and family it is very difficult to envisage where we might be today. For this report, I place on record our sincere thanks to Joe and family for their time and generosity.

In the twelve months since, the men's shed team have therefore, slowly but surely, worked to bring the shed and the area surrounding to the point of almost finished. That indeed has been the area of our greatest focus, from winter days where the stove was an essential item to allow our meetings to be conducted in comfort, to in the last few days, all doors open to allow as much fresh air as possible.

The work has been carried out with goodwill from every member of our shed group, to look at some of the highlights.

James Mooney for his persistence with the Electrician's, thereafter for his great work painting the inside of both sections of the shed.

Peter Mc Parland along with Terry Hanaway for panelling and joinery work, finished to an excellent standard.

Seamus Malone, secretary, for his input across all areas, doing the stuff that many of us take for granted.

John Mc Elroy, vice chair, for his experience and expertise, gardening, joinery etc in large part for keeping the group going.

Seamus King, treasurer, always with a realistic eye on our finances, keeping our spending grounded, also his involvement with painting and work in the Polytunnel.

Graham Smith working tirelessly with his excellent work in leading submissions for fundraising and project work.

During the year we attracted four new members, Gerard Quinn, Joe Brady, Joe Finnegan, and Gerard Markey. All four are most welcome, each adding valuable contributions across many activities within the group.

Our opportunities going forward, now that we have a very fine facility in the new shed must be to enhance the wellbeing of all our members. We have already had discussions about topics such as men's health, finance, development of workshop area for woodwork and metalwork training, development of our gardening activities, continuation of our walking group. Within the shed we now have excellent AV facilities soon to be added to with internet access. All of this will allow us to properly host relevant presentations to expand the interests of our members.

In the past year we have been involved in several activities / projects, to highlight a few.

- Gardening support for local ladies' group.
- Gardening instruction and support from SRC.
- Visit to Bloom for members interested in gardening.
- Visit to Castle Espie in relation to Camlough Wetland and Wildfowl project.
- Continued development of Camlough Lake wildfowl preserve.
- Visits to several other Men's sheds, Kilkeel, Derrymore etc
- Visit of Lissummon Men's Shed.

Our aim as a group is to provide a forum to foster the mental and physical wellbeing of men. A key factor in this is providing the facilities and focus already mentioned. Needless to state this all costs. As a small group in a rural part of the country our options for fundraising are somewhat limited. Our main fundraiser is organised around a coffee morning and plant sale each Summer. Earlier this year it was very disappointing to receive a backdated invoice from Land and property services for the use of the plot of land that we occupy. Whilst we have made representations to have this removed or at least reduced, should it run its course it will leave our men's shed group very stretched financially. The current position is that our appeal is under review.

It is important to acknowledge that Lislea Men's shed is part of the wider Lislea Community. As such the input of the wider community, our families, and friends, is vital for the support and development of our Men's shed group. In the past 12 months this has been evidenced by the very welcome and wide range of support we have received from many sources in supporting the development of our new shed.

Martin Darling.