


Men's shed needs \$20,000 for re-build

April 30 2018 - 11:16AM



 Chairman of the Katherine men's shed committee Cameron Smith and Secretary of the Katherine men's shed Chris Dixon in the soon to be refurbished men's shed.

A men's shed for Katherine is just months away from being finished if the steering committee can secure \$20,000 in grants to refurbish the site.

The men's shed will be located at the Rotary Club on Rapide Street where there is already an existing shed.

However, Chairman of the Katherine men's shed Cameron Smith said it will need to undergo significant refurbishment before being deemed safe.

With support from the community and a site in place, the men's shed is just waiting on the funds to get going.

The men's shed is already receiving donations of used tools and materials and is looking into local businesses to start building.

Katherine men's shed secretary Chris Dixon had the idea over five years ago following calls for a community space.

There was little interest then, but it has definitely picked up now.

"There was a broader community interest in a men's shed and we hope the men's shed will fill the needs for a community space," Mr Smith said.

“Primarily, the men’s shed is a space for men’s health issues.

“Men in general and in country need a forum and safe space they can be and have a supportive network that facilitates men’s health.

“Second, the men’s shed is open to all requests from the community,” Mr Smith said.

Mr Dixon said there is a real need for a men’s shed in Katherine.

“For a certain group of men aged around 50 and up there is a void of things to do.

“If you don’t play sport and you don’t go to the pub, there is nothing to do.

“Usually these older people have years of knowledge and we’re hoping the men’s shed can be an opportunity for these men to pass on their knowledge to the younger generation,” Mr Dixon said.

Katherine Mayor Fay Miller said she is on board with the idea.

“Men’s sheds have been successful in other places in Australia and I think it will be very beneficial for Katherine,” she said.

The Australian Men’s Shed Association has identified priority groups of males in which men’s sheds are ideally placed to reach those in need.

With 16 diverse members on the Katherine men’s shed steering committee Mr Smith said they are in a good position to engage male priority groups such as males not in work, isolated men, men with mental health issues and alcohol and other drug issues, and indigenous men.

“The steering committee has a good representation of Katherine, but we’d like to expand to reach out to as many priority groups as possible,” Mr Smith said.

Although the main priority of the men’s shed is to be an open and safe space for men, there is enough support from the committee and the community to use the space as a community education centre as well.

Mr Smith said they are anticipating a high level of interest in the dry season and have even had inquiries from grey nomads passing through.

The Katherine men’s shed will be having a BBQ promotion on May 12 at the Katherine market to promote the new service, get people involved and ask people how a men’s shed can best serve Katherine.