



After years of planning and months of construction, Chapman Valley Menshed officially opens. Pictures: Jon Solmundson

Menshed now open for business



Trevor Martin and Rhett (Banjo) Patterson work the juice bar to keep the hot shed hydrated.



Garry Hargrave, John Rogers and Richard Porter.



Member for Moore Shane Love and Cliff Conroy enjoy the food, drink and good conversation.

■ Jon Solmundson

The Chapman Valley Menshed opened their shed for the first time on Saturday morning with a grand ceremony.

The ribbon on the Nabawa workshop door was cut by Marion Mewman, whose husband Jed started the club as a group of men meeting under a tree in the football oval, behind where the shed is now built.

As the inaugural president Mr Mewman aimed to create a place where men could talk openly, as the onset of prostate cancer made him realise he had no good places to discuss the issue.

Mr Mewman passed on, but the club still recognises him as president, and "acting president" Ralf Mulks said he would never officially adopt the presidency.

Member for Moore Shane Love gave a speech at the opening of the shed, and said men's sheds were one of the biggest success stories he'd seen in the local community.

"I think once men finish work they have a little less tendency to remain in contact with other human beings, so men's sheds are a great way to keep men social," he said.

"Ladies, you haven't lost your men, don't look at this as them re-retreating into the shed with their tools, it's about creating an environment that they feel comfortable to talk in."

Men's health consultant Glen Fleeton was also at the opening and said the shed was a great place for sharing stories and allowing men to empower themselves.

"From a young age men identify

with sport as key to their identity, then from 30 onwards men identify themselves primarily with work and career," he said.

"When that ends they head into retirement they can clam up a bit.

"The shed is a space where the fish you caught on the weekend goes from being too small to keep, to a monster the size of a man, and that kind of storytelling builds confidence and maintains mental health."

The men's first project was a smoothie-making trailer, which will be towed around to various regional events to be used as a fundraiser for the club.

The shed was constructed with funding help from the Shire of Chapman Valley and various sponsors, and construction help from Greenough Regional Prison.



Trevor Cooper, Ross Barden and Angus Mackay.



Marion Mewman, whose husband started the Chapman Valley menshed club, and Chris Stevens.



Phil Vigilante and Andrew Mills bring out food for the masses, or at least whatever is left after they've finished taste testing.