

## **Somerset Levels and Moors Shed**

### **January 2019 newsletter**

**Welcome** to the January 2019 edition of the Shed Newsletter. I hope everyone has had a nice Christmas and New Year and that everyone is refreshed following the Christmas break. For those who managed to make the Christmas Social I think a good time was had by all.

As always with the newsletter, your contributions are most welcome. Keep it clean and legal and I'll be happy to include it here. My contact details are at the back of this newsletter.

#### **Colin writes....**

In assembling my thoughts before putting pen to paper, it occurs to me that SLaMS has come a very long way during the last 12 months or so. We took possession of a very empty, cold, dark and dirty Shed on 1st December 2017, and after 4 months of hard work opened for new members in April 2018.

Although we have lost several members from our Burrowbridge days, either through worsening health, moving away or just finding other things to do while we were closed for normal Shed sessions, our membership has built steadily over the last 8 months so that now we have a solid core of "regulars", and in excess of 30 members.

There has been lots of very useful activity too, not only in undertaking personal projects and Shed "improvements", but some excellent team efforts on community projects. Many of these have resulted in some very useful donations which help us cover our operating costs.

At the end of 2018, (including £500 paid in 2018 for the cast iron finger post renovations for Burrowbridge PC that we did in 2017), we have managed cover 78% of our operating costs through membership and session fees, and community and "commissioned" projects. That is a fantastic result given that we have only really been operating since May.

But although money is important (without it we can't continue), its not why we come to the Shed. The real reason is to meet new people, make new friends and get involved in Shed Life. By doing just that many of us realise that we are combining having a purpose - doing projects - with having a sociable time with new friends.

The Questionnaire that many of you kindly took the time to fill in and return shows very clearly that you think that SLaMS is hitting the spot. Here are some of the highlights from your responses....

SLaMS Welcome, Induction, Facilities, Learning and Skill Sharing, Health and Wellbeing

Please give us your opinion on aspects of SLaMS (tick number that applies to you)

Average scores calculated from respondent results	<b>Average score</b>
SLaMS initial welcome to you	4.7
Your induction to the shed & its facilities	4.3
Inclusiveness & encouragement by members	4.4
SLaMS range of tools, benches and facilities	4.1
The opportunities to work on	
- your own project	4.6
- community projects	4.8
- shed improvements	4.2
Health and Safety in the Shed	4.1
Training and skill sharing among members	4.2
Men's Health & Wellbeing talks	3.3
SLaMS Newsletter	4.5

All in all a pretty good response, though there is still room for improvement on H&S training and skill sharing. Interestingly the one area scoring lower than the rest is the health and wellbeing talks. Here the response was split between those who thought they were really useful and those

who were just not interested. Life was ever such!

And here is what some of you have been saying about how SLaMS has changed your life for the better....

Before I joined SLaMS I was doing/I was feeling .....

- “Need to have more contact”; “Lonely”; “Nothing - bored!”; “Low due to bereavement”; “Looking for help and support”; “Down”

On joining SLaMS I felt/ I was able to .....

- “Speak with like minded folk”; “Meet people and get out of the house”; “Meet people and socialise”; “Share friendship”; “Was made most welcome and became part of a team”; “Use equipment not available to me”; “Do jobs and mix with others”

After working in the Shed for a while I was feeling/doing ....

- “Useful on project”; “Part of a team”; “Happier in myself”; “Felt I was part of a team”; “Better”

Now I am feeling/doing ....

- “Better”; “Valued team member”; “Enjoyment in my hobbies”; “Confident and capable, getting stuck-in is very good”; “Work!”

In 2019 I am looking forward to ....

- “Becoming more fully integrated”; “Meeting more people”; “Continuing”; “More wood turning”; “Moving on in life and keeping a circle of friends”; “Being part of a vibrant community asset”; “Assisting with any “shed” projects and making my own projects”; “Continuing SLaMS”

So from your own responses I think we can pretty much all claim that SLaMS has been a big success in 2018. SLaMS Success is built on 5 “S”; Safe, (financially) Sustainable, Supportive (of each other, and our wider community) Sharing (skills, duties and clearing up) and above all Sociable (its fun). Lets keep it that way in 2019.

### **More History of our Shed – Ted Cubbitt**

*This continues on from the November newsletter and earlier editions.*

More information has come to light about John Browne, who built our Shed building. He had four children.

Sophia Jane Browne was born 1821. She died a spinster in June 1842, aged 20 and was interred in the Chapel graveyard. The school room was subsequently built on top of it. She could not be interred in the family vault, as Wembdon Road Cemetery did not open till 1851.

Emily Browne was born in 1823. In 1841 she was living in Ilminster at a Dame School. In 1859, she married Joel Spiller, a Civil Engineer, who was born in Bideford, Devon in 1791. They lived at The Lions, West Quay, Bridgwater. Joel was also a Corn Merchant in Bridgwater. He developed dog biscuits and his company “SPILLERS” is still in business today. By 1871 they had moved to Salcombe Regis in Devon. Joel died in 1873, Emily continued to live there until her death in 1903.

Fanny Browne was born in 1824. In 1850, she married George Tertius Talbot MRCS, who was born in Kidderminster, Worcestershire in 1826. He was a surgeon. In 1851 they were living Park Street, Bristol. They had one son, George, born 1854. **(Nothing further known about him)** By 1871, they were living with Fanny’s Parents in Bridgwater. George died 1873, aged 47. After his death Fanny moved to Tyn-yffynon, Barmouth, Merionethshire. She died there in 1917, aged 93.

On the 29 March 1895 the estate, known as Dinaus Oleu was the first property to be donated to the National Trust, founded two months earlier by her friend Octavia Hill, who was a fellow Unitarian.

Charles John Pine Browne was born in 1825. Charles converted to Anglicanism and married on 25 October 1848 in St Mary’s church, Bridgwater, Clara Reed, daughter of Henry Reed, solicitor, who was born in 1825. They had one known daughter, Eva born 1856. In the 1861 census they were living in Wembdon, Bridgwater, and he was an iron and timber merchant. They had two

servants. He died in 1876. We have been unable to find his 1871 census record.

This article was compiled with the help of Bernice Lashbrook of the Unitarian Chapel, Bridgwater.



The most recent shed project has been the splitting up of the main bench into two smaller benches to give us more workspace. The work on this began at the last Maintenance Day at the end of November. Bert and Dave have done much of the work on this through December.

New member John has been constructing a number of wheelbarrow planters during December – at the rate of one per week!



Mike Dando has also been busy with the Lathe during December. Marcus has been working on two bowls, the first of which was a Christmas present for his mother, the second for himself. These have been constructed from smaller blocks of wood glued together before being turned on the lathe. The following photos illustrate this quite well.



Tony has also been working in the Lathe room – and has produced this urn.



After a few weeks of work, the first of the toy cars/buses I have been working through have been completed.



Another December project has been a DVD case for new member Mark. This has been constructed using offcuts of MDF from a plan drawn by me. Tom, Marcus and myself have been assisting with this project which will hopefully be completed in January.

*Remember, if you've got something to contribute to the newsletter, you can make contact with me via email at [newsletter.slamshed@gmail.com](mailto:newsletter.slamshed@gmail.com) or just have a chat with me during a shed session.*

*For those who don't know me I'm normally the one hiding in a corner **trying** to paint things.*

**Stephen Oxbrow**  
Newsletter Editor

**Shed Opening Hours from 1<sup>st</sup> November 2018:  
Tuesday 10.00-1500, Thursday 1300-1600 & Friday 1000-1500.**

Facebook <https://tinyurl.com/ycx8vgvh> website <https://www.slamshed.org/>