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HRH The Princess Royal Unveils Plaque at Official Opening of Banchory Men's Shed

Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal, Princess Anne, today unveiled a commemorative plaque marking the official opening of Banchory and District Men's Shed in Aberdeenshire.

Her Royal Highness was greeted on arrival by Her Majesty's Lord Lieutenant for Kincardineshire, Mr Alastair Macphie, who introduced the Deputy Lieutenant of Kincardineshire, Mrs Claire Maitland, and Mr Paul Evans, the Chairman of Banchory and District Men's Shed. Mr Evans introduced Mr Alastair Black, Legion Scotland Area Chairman for Aberdeen, Banff and Kincardine, then invited the Princess Royal to enter the Men's Shed workshop.

The Princess Royal toured the new facility, accompanied Mr Paul Evans, who said: "We are honoured to welcome HRH The Princess Royal to mark the opening of our Men's Shed. It has been heartening to see this project finally come to fruition after many hurdles. It can now go forward as a resource for men in our community who are looking for new social contacts and activities, for example after retirement."

In the workshop, Mr Evans presented members Mr Fred Harrott (silversmithing), Mr Alan Pumfrey (bird table construction) and Dr Bill Byth (bicycle maintenance). Entering the Men's Shed social area, Mr Evans presented members Mr John Dunnett (model steam engines), Mr John Mason (clock repair) and Mr Duncan Davidson (Treasurer). Mr Alan Pumfrey demonstrated his model railway and showed models of Banchory railway buildings that he had made.

Banchory and District Men's Shed is the first 'Shed' in Scotland to link up with Legion Scotland and it was unfortunate that one of the champions of this, Mr Jason Schroeder - Executive Officer of the Scottish Men's Sheds Association (SMSA) - could not take part on the day due to illness. Jason is an ex-serviceman and championed this collaboration from its origin in 2015. Mr Schroeder said: "After so many years in the making, I was personally gutted to not be able to attend the opening due to illness; however, the SMSA still ensured representation at this very special event. It was kind of HRH Princess Anne to convey her best wishes for a speedy recovery and I shall be concentrating on just that. I look forward to visiting the Shed and the guys as soon as it is safe for me to do so."

The Princess Royal then spent some time chatting outside the Shed with other members and their wives and some invited guests including Gerry Robb, the architect upon whose plans the Shed premises were based, and Bruce McCombie, the building contractor for the conversion.

Mr Evans then invited Her Royal Highness to unveil the plaque to commemorate the opening, which was hand-engraved by member, Mr John Mason. Mr Alan Pumfrey then presented Her Royal Highness with a gift of a bird box made by himself.

ENDS

Notes for editors

The Banchory Men's Shed was conceived in 2015 and building of the premises beneath the Legion Scotland building in Banchory was complete and first opened in February 2020. COVID forced a lengthy closure but the Men's Shed re-opened in June 2021. The Banchory Men's Shed is a member of the Scottish Men's Sheds Association (SMSA).



More information can be found at <http://banchorymensshed.org>

About the Scottish Men's Sheds Association (SMSA)

The sole focus of the Scottish Men's Sheds Association (SMSA) is to inspire and support men over the age of 18 with time on their hands to become engaged, in a healthy way, by voluntarily creating their own Men's Sheds in their local communities across Scotland. The Association provides practical help, information and advice for Shedders throughout their journey from the initial seed of an idea to the running of a successful and sustainable Men's Shed.

The Association enables information sharing, communication and co-operation amongst Men's Sheds in Scotland through The Scottish Shedder newsletter, an interactive website, social media channels and community-based events and workshops. It is free to become an Individual Member of the SMSA and receive regular information updates and access to its online resource library and full Men's Shed membership (with various benefits and discounts included) is only £25 per year.

Men's Sheds originated in Australia over twenty years ago where it was recognised that men with time on their hands, whether due to retirement or unemployment, could find it difficult to socialise together in a healthy way. The Men's Shed was to be their place to spend time together whether creating something in the workshop, learning a new skill or having a chat and putting the world to rights in friendly non-competitive surroundings. The Men's Sheds Movement is now a growing global phenomenon and is seen as an integral vehicle for supporting a variety of government's health responsibilities and policies.

All press enquiries to Michelle Wibrew, SMSA Communications & PR Officer on 07389061498 or email comms@scottishmsa.org.uk.

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