

Woodcraft Guild ACT

COVID-19 Update – 22 March 2020

The Woodcraft Guild Shed is closed from midnight Sunday 22 March until further notice

The Guild Committee has decided that it is now necessary to close the shed and cease all Guild activities to protect the health of our members and the Canberra community.

This closure is effective from Midnight on Sunday 22 March until further notice.

The ACT Chief Minister announced today that all non-essential services will be closed in the next 48 hours, in line with what is happening in NSW.

COVID-19 is spreading in Canberra and there is an upsurge in cases. Social distancing measures are being significantly tightened. The rules we have in place are not sufficient to stop the spread of this disease through the shed to the detriment of Guild members and the local community. It is no longer safe to keep the shed open.

A large number of our members are in the higher risk category. Some have already decided to stop visiting the shed.

The shed will be open from 10-11 am and again between 6-7pm on Tuesday 24 March for people to collect any of their part-completed projects or tools from the Shed. No further work on those projects will be possible at the shed.

Former Guild President Graham Reynolds has provided sobering advice on the implications of the virus for the Guild and the Canberra Community. Graham is directly involved in managing the Canberra Hospital's response to the virus and gave us early warning with the recommendation that the shed should close this week until further notice. His advice helped bring forward the Committee's decision to close the shed.

"Hi Craig. I am back at work heading my old department and co-ordinating covid responses for our wards and staff.

The word is that things are going to get very bad. We are preparing for a rush on intensive care beds and facilities for adults let alone children.

*The shed is very vulnerable and as we get community spread this week we will see ACT health move into stage 2 lock down. Members appearing on Tuesdays and most other days are in an extremely vulnerable group. Adults over 65 have a 30-70% chance of severe illness and those with established co-morbidities at even higher risk, meaning if infected they will die. **I think that the shed should close this week until further notice.** Members should visit their friends and colleagues in their own sheds at their own discretion but no amount of distancing in the WCG will suffice.*

*This disease at best is all bad. **We have capacity for about 160 intensive care beds in the territory and a predicted need of 2000.** Members need to get the message before they get the disease. I for one am terrified. A new age has dawned - do you wish to be part of it!*

Graham Reynolds

FRACP

Professor, ANU College of Health and Medicine

Clinical Director, Paediatrics

The Centennial Hospital for Women and Children

Canberra"

There will be a number of knock-on effects from this closure that the Committee and members will need to address. We will keep members informed through email newsletters. The advice in these newsletters can also be viewed on the Guild's website.

If you have any questions, please contact me at president@woodcraftguild.org.au

Craig Pennifold

President