

Making Over the Training Room

You probably haven't been to the club in a while (thanks for everything, COVID), so your recollection of the training room might be outdated. The room was originally configured as part of our club's move into our Moorabbin premises, it was used for training sessions that utilised a traditional format where the trainer sat up the front, and students lined the rows at their computer desks.



• A cluttered and underutilised space



• It is time for renewal

The old Training Room: Time for a change, towards a brighter, more welcoming and better-utilised space

Back in early 2019, your committee started off a round of consultation processes, and in those processes, we had a lot of conversations and asked a lot of questions. The main questions we asked were, Who does this room currently cater to? How does it cater to them? How can we increase how the club premises overall can better cater for more member uses? Lots of ideas flew around, some bigger, some smaller. Some more feasible, some less. All of the ideas were good, and in the end we decided that the Training Room needed change.



• Training Room computers neatly relocated to the Borrett Room



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It's time to get started

Relocating the Training Room computers was the first thing we did.

People increasingly bring and use their own devices, so we decided the computers in the Training Room didn't need to be there, so they got shifted. After doing some rearrangements in the Borrett Room, we located the computers neatly along the internal wall. It was important to leave enough room for monthly meetings to continue as normal.

While its important to make changes to improve our club, our project team didn't want to inadvertently take away valuable resources from members in the process. One great thing about our club, is the diversity of interests our members have, so we tried our best to ensure that we carefully relocated facilities that the Training Room offered, instead of removing them. There were a few SIGs who helped us understand that part, so thanks to them for that assistance and support.



Stephen and his tech apprentice daughter relocating some AV cables



• Rob getting the first glimpse of natural light for the room

Us grown-ups were very fortunate to have such a keen young apprentice who was ready and willing to learn how to relocate AV cables

After relocating the electrical, data and AV cables, we were ready to start cutting parts of the wall away to expose the natural light that until now, has been hiding away in the atrium. While the work had no shortage of hard yakka, it was inspiring to know that we were inching closer and closer towards a brighter and fresher looking room with every stroke of the handsaw.



• David watching keenly as Rob gets some more of that daylight



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There must be something interesting happening in there

Some of us had some weekender and interstate trips, so the pace of this project hasn't been high, however once we started at the beginning of 2020, the works were fairly consistent. After we'd opened up the bay windows and let in all that natural light, we still needed to get some functionality happening within the room.



- There were lots of holes that needed patching



• Stephen and Dave found them a source of free (legit, not stolen) timber for use on some club projects

There was such a wide range of things we needed to get organised

Some of the furniture from the club would work well by being relocated, for instance, there are several high stool type wheelie chairs from the dumping pile in the back of the Borrett Room, they would work well as workbench stools. Some items of furniture didn't exist, so some of our members set about to make that furniture especially for the room.



There is no substitute for the right quality of undercoating



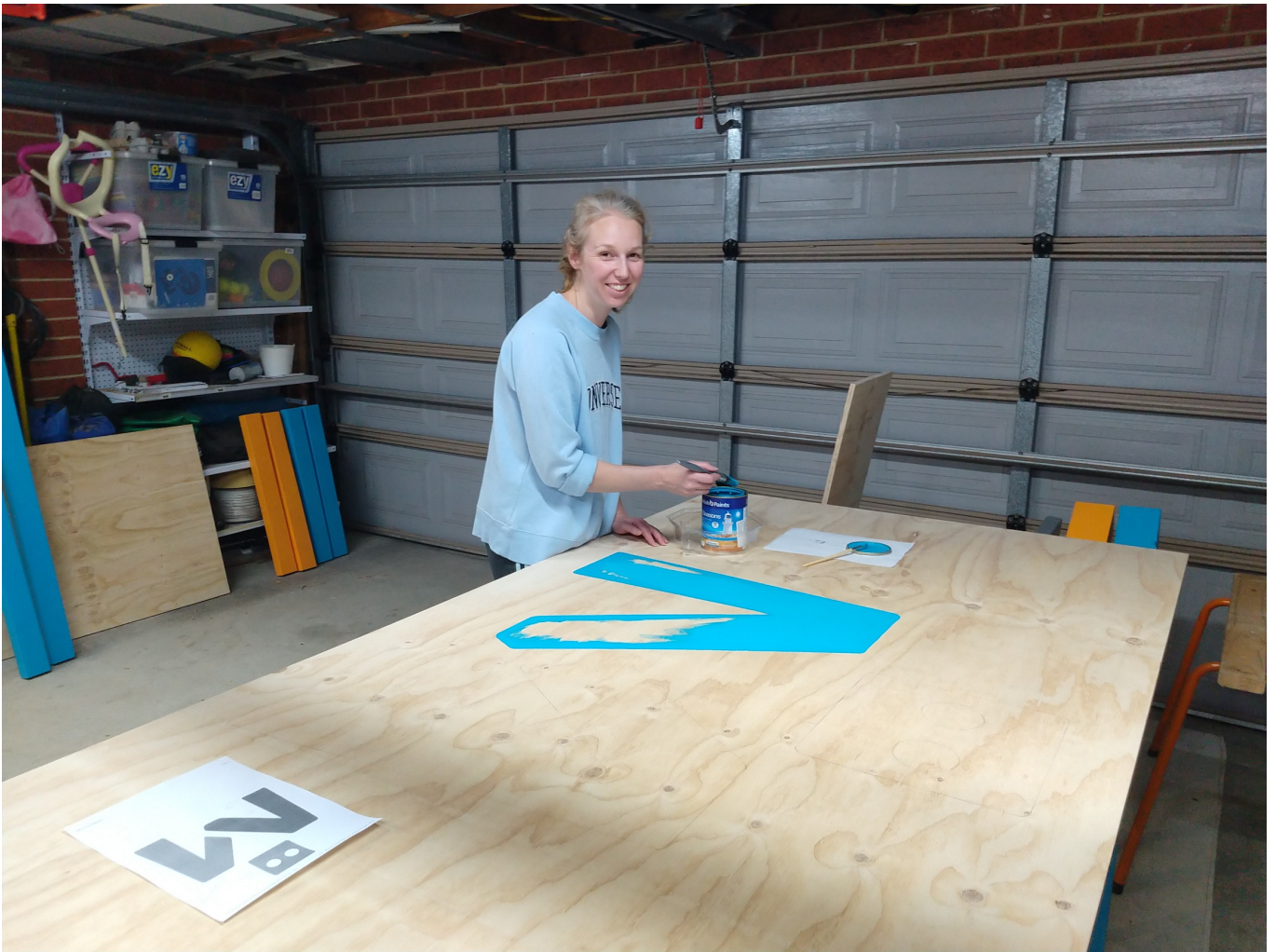
It's time to custom cut these timbers into a workbench

One of our members' garage at home, turned into a painting and sawing workshop

Stephen turned his garage at home into a woodworking workshop, and his wife Stacey enjoyed not being able to park her car in the garage about as much as you might imagine. In truth, the spouses(and kids) of our renovation team were great, they understand we're passionate about our club and each supported us.



• Combine a cheap eBay projector with some creativity...



• ..and you get Stacey's idea to paint the club logo onto the workbench

This project provided many opportunities to be creative

Sometimes you might build something, and be surprised how quickly it can be done, sometimes it's the opposite, this workbench would have taken much more time had it not been for the many-hands-make-light-work spirit that we saw. Stephen and Stacey's garage became a temporary extension of the club while it was being used for assembly.



• Aavon and Stephen, showing off their assembly work for the workbench by climbing inside it then hiding behind the benchtop



• Aavon, accepting nothing less than an accurately placed and fixed benchtop

That's a pretty big workbench, how do you think we got it upstairs?

After Aavon and Stephen took the bench to the club premises, they realised that this workbench frame was too big for the stairwell, and the lift, they conceded that it was time to wrap up the day. A few days later, they came back, with a renewed burst of energy, got the thing upstairs, and finally that part of the works was done.



With some materials left over, a raised shelf for the workbench was in order



The Oscilloscopes and friends look quite at home perched upon that raised shelf.

A while back, the committee threw the idea around that maybe the Training Room wasn't the right name for the room anymore, so after a bit of brainstorming, they voted and agreed to rename it to the Maker Room. You'll need to imagine a better-looking sign than a simple piece of paper over the word Training, but for now, your imagination will have to suffice.



• Hang in there, we'll put a proper label up soon



• Rob is truly resourceful in getting timber to stay where it should and look neat after it's been installed

By now, the world had been swept up in a very strange situation caused by COVID-19. There were only seldom visits to the club, for specific purposes. Finally the works resumed on the Maker Room project, which felt strange because it had sat dormant for months. It was like the world was hit with some form of a dystopian apocalypse.



Don't you wish the person who painted your house had a beaming smile like this guy?



This is the stage of the project where the focus is all about the finishing touches. Stephen and Paul were excited.

As things get closer and closer to being able to say that the Maker Room is able to be handed back to all of you, the members, the project team has been buzzing with excitement. Maybe you'd like to use the space to build or design something, or maybe your children or grandchildren could learn from the many skilled members who know so much about such a diverse range of topics. Please go right ahead, that's what it's there for.



These boys were keen, they couldn't help themselves



Wasting building materials is not cool, Aidan helped us get our measurements right from the start with his CAD skills

This project has been great fun for those involved, it's been interrupted by a global pandemic, and it's only the start of many more projects which will freshen, brighten and add value to the space that is our amazing club. If you think this Maker Room can help you make something you'd like to make, please, very seriously, when the world and our club opens back up "post COVID", come and use this space, if you are a member of Melbourne PC User Group/Melbourne Computer Club, this is your room. It's one of an increasing number of facilities that we will be developing for you, our members.