
WOMBAT HOLLOW

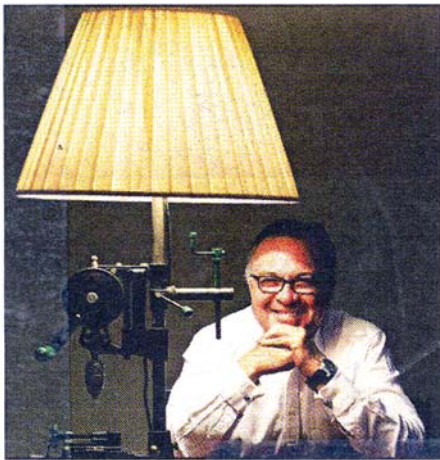


IRON BED & LAMP CO.

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He's Liberals' light on the desk

By SHARON LABI



Artefacts: Michael Yabsley

BY day, he's a smooth-talking lobbyist and political fund-raiser; by night, he's a craftsman beaver away in his country workshop, converting redundant artefacts into expensive, arty lamps.

Michael Yabsley, federal Liberal Party treasurer and a former NSW government minister, has been hoarding stuff since he was a child.

At first he drove his father mad, filling the garden shed with useless iron beds, old drills and surveyors' tripods.

Now he has a "shed city" of his own, a sprawling property in the NSW southern highlands, where he has dug out his collection and designed a series of lamps using the old wares.

The lamps sell for as much as \$12,000 and the business is named Wombat

Hollow after his Kangaloon property.

His first two collections sold about 120 pieces and he has a further three exhibitions planned for later this year.

"As much as I've always been keen to collect, I've always wanted to avoid a situation where I've just ended up with sheds full of things gathering dust," Mr Yabsley said.

He looked at different options to make use of artefacts, including oil cans, shoe lasts and blow torches, and settled on lighting. "I have always been intrigued by the artform and for me this is art rather than lighting," he said.

"From grease and grime, right through to an exhibition in Double Bay, I love the whole process," he said.

Asked if he planned to donate any of his creations to Liberal Party fundraising events, he laughed: "I keep the two separate".