

Ted's News

December 2019

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Did you miss November's newsletter? The proof reader of my books said it was one of the best I had ever written and one reader said the contents were very timely as they were relevant to a large job he was designing. Despite that, it had the lowest opening rate for a long time. Perhaps I need to hire the headline writer for *New Idea* for my email notifications. [Here is the newsletter many missed](#)

[The Perils of Reverse Engineering](#)



The shelter illustrated shows an Outdoor Structures Australia (OSA) Lindsay 10x6m shelter that was supplied to Ipswich City Council a couple of years ago. Frankly I am surprised that they trusted OSA to supply this shelter and it is a good thing that corporate memory can be short. I need to explain that, don't I. The Lindsay shelter was originally

developed for me by our consultant who was regarded as possibly the best specialist timber

engineer in the country. A few years back, we were supplying a deck to a developer, again in Ipswich, and we were asked to price the same size and type of shelter but did not make the sale.

When I went to photograph my deck, I found the above monstrosity had been installed. The developer thought, "The OSA price is too dear" and, following the [stripped down drawing on the back of the Lindsay shelter brochure](#), reverse engineered the building. The problem is that they made a hash of it and it had to have those horrible braces fitted to stop it flapping in the breeze. Anyone knowing the OSA product range would say - these people don't know how to make a shelter which is far from the truth. So, what went wrong? Steel footings for a shed like this are expensive if they are going to work.



These didn't work



OSA brackets do work

What you can see of the two brackets that are above ground shows where a lot of the cost was involved. Below ground there are extras too. So reverse engineering to save cost is not always a brilliant idea.

Please Explain



"Please explain." No this was not the "[Perils of Pauline](#)" (to my overseas readers, don't even try and understand this) but a genuine question from a Deckwood customer. Hayden Donnelly of Iliv Constructions is building a timber bikeway at Coomera designed by Cozens Regan. The design closely follows my construction guides. Hayden, who had built his fair share of domestic decks was surprised at how different the design was. So, with Deckwood being purchased for the deck, and as part of the full support I give to users of Deckwood, I went down and explained the intricacies of the design.

He and his carpenter Glen Cowper (pictured) are both old school builders and understood immediately how everything about this design is intended to maximise the life of the structure. You can see here that the joists have all been painted with CN Oil and the centre joists are lapped not butted. As well, concrete abutments with side walls keep soil from encroaching and good air circulation is maintained at the ends. That is just the start. Well done Cozens Regan and Iliv. There is no excuse for building troublesome exterior timber structures. Ask me to "Please explain."

What has a Big Mac and Cladding got in Common?



What has a Big Mac and building cladding got in common, you may well ask. Some of you may say, "Taste". Far be it from me to disagree with you as taste is very subjective. I have been visiting my local Maccas and wondering what the cladding was. It was timber like and had a film forming finish like Intergrain but was far too uniform to be timber. It certainly wasn't maintenance free.

Well, all was revealed when an adverse finding, in the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal was made against a supplier of wood/PVC cladding. [Click here for a report.](#) I visited the supplier's website and found pictures of McDonald's restaurants using their products. The case was brought by the owner's corporation of four multi-storey towers in Sydney's Ryde. The report states "the tribunal found that it is not safe and, if ignited, a fire could spread from apartment to apartment on the exteriors of the façade and then flow inside the building to put residents at risk. It could cause another catastrophe like Grenfell or Lacrosse."

To an old sawmiller like me, the revelation that material that is one quarter petroleum based will burn is hardly a surprise. [See this newsletter on burning plastic decking](#) and decking is a lot easier to replace. While I gather there are [no restrictions on the use of real timber on class one buildings](#) what will be the situation with highrise into the future? I am hoping that we will eventually get a serious fire retardant timber treatment industry in this country. It is massive overseas. The penny

is dropping about getting cladding right and there will finally be clients that will pay what it costs to do it well.

Full Day Courses

 <p>The Footbridge Purchasing and Inspection Course run by Edgar (Ted) Stubbersfield is intended for those responsible for the specification, purchasing and ongoing maintenance of footbridges. The course will enable participants to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prepare an appropriate specification• Assess suitable product to purchase• Recognise where corners are cut• Ensure value in purchasing• Know quickly where to inspect• Recognise suitable timber for bridges <p>I can offer valuable assistance to your organisation by empowering your people to recognise an appropriate low maintenance footbridge from one that requires expensive rectification over a shorter life span.</p> <p>On retiring from Outdoor Structures Australia, a company I founded in 1997, I have been concentrating on publishing guides on external timber and steel use and educating professionals in that field. You can now take advantage of my experience gained building low maintenance steel and timber bridges.</p> <p>I have extensive expertise in exposed timber applications. This knowledge was developed initially through a number of formal research projects followed by years of observation. I acquired a deep understanding of the issues relating to designing, supplying and constructing fully weather exposed timber and timber and steel structures including bridges.</p> <p>With over 40 years experience of supplying timber and timber and steel products, I have supplied some outstanding low maintenance footbridges. Conversely I have also witnessed many structures that simply should never have been purchased.</p> <p>This course is centred on a checklist that can be used as a specification and also a confirmation that common shortcuts that affect longevity have been addressed. Through hundreds of images the importance of each line of the check list is explained. Participants will recognise what good practice is and how important it is to ensure it is used.</p> <p>Contact Details Mobile: 0414 770 261 Email: edgestubbersfield@gmail.com</p>	 <p>The Coastal Deck Design Course run by Edgar (Ted) Stubbersfield is intended for those responsible for the specification, purchasing and ongoing maintenance of boardwalks and decks with emphasis given to the more difficult coastal environment. The course will enable participants to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prepare an appropriate specification• Assess suitable product to purchase• Recognise where corners are cut• Ensure value in purchasing• Know quickly where to inspect• Recognise suitable timber for decks <p>I can offer valuable assistance to your organisation by empowering your people to recognise an appropriate low maintenance deck or boardwalk from one that requires expensive rectification over a shorter life span.</p> <p>On retiring from Outdoor Structures Australia, a company I founded in 1997, I have been concentrating on publishing guides on external timber and steel use and educating professionals in that field. You can now take advantage of my experience gained building low maintenance steel and timber bridges.</p> <p>I have extensive expertise in exposed timber applications. This knowledge was developed initially through a number of formal research projects followed by years of observation. I acquired a deep understanding of the issues relating to designing, supplying and constructing fully weather exposed timber and timber and steel structures including decks.</p> <p>With over 40 years experience of supplying timber and timber and steel products, I have supplied some outstanding low maintenance decks and boardwalks. Conversely I have also witnessed many structures that simply should never have been purchased.</p> <p>This course is centred on a checklist that can be used as a specification and also a confirmation that common shortcuts that affect longevity have been addressed. Through hundreds of images the importance of each line of the check list is explained. Participants will recognise what good practice is and how important it is to ensure it is used.</p> <p>Contact Details Mobile: 0414 770 261 Email: edgestubbersfield@gmail.com</p>
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I have been collecting images of good and bad practice for over 20 years and learning from those images. I now have an unmatched library of do's and don'ts of external timber use. This vast collection of images allows me to clearly explain design issues in my two full day courses, one deals with footbridges and the other with coastal decks. These are incredible resources going into the close attention to detail that is required for a weather exposed timber bridge or deck to succeed.

These are serious courses that are unmatched in the value you will extract from them by delivering expensive infrastructure that ages gracefully and with little maintenance. They both start by going through a design checklist and explaining, line by line, why you must attend to that point. They then look at a number of case studies, showing good and bad practice.

[Click here for footbridge course brochure](#)

[Click here for coastal decks brochure](#)

Call me to discuss your training needs. These courses, which are eligible for CPD points, will give you an incredible understanding of good timber use from them. Call 0414 770 261 or [email me](#).

Seeking Spiritual Enlightenment for Christmas



I do have other interests outside of timber. Very recently I published my third book of sermons, *Twenty-four Carrot Faith*. They were preached in the small Baptist Chapel in Tenthill Queensland. The building is in the middle of a potato field and many of the members are farmers hence the rural theme of the titles. These books can be purchased from Amazon as a paperback or as Kindle. [Here is the link.](#) You will probably enjoy "So Much Blood" as well. I am happy to spread the Christmas cheer by sending a free PDF.

Architectural Batten Course coming to eClassroom



Following the success of my CPD course [Outdoor Timber: Design and Specification Basics](#) with eClassroom I have agreed to increase the number of CPD courses available from them. My Architectural Timber Batten course will cover all the information you will need to design them well. [Don't forget, there is a book on the subject as well.](#) Hopefully by next newsletter it will be up. I

saw this job in Toowoomba. The architects were Sims White who have their own offices in the building.

Need a Timber Consultant or Expert Witness?

I have over 40 years' experience in the industry and can assist you with many of your timber needs.

Inspection – I can assess timber products on their performance, fitness for purpose or cause of failure. I also examine whether best practice was used in design and construction. I have recently completed inspections on boardwalks, bollards, support beams and external timber furniture.

Grading - Quite literally, I have written the book on the subject. Recent experience has shown that up to 30% of timber supplied may not be to grade.

Design - I can provide detailed technical drawings and advice. I can also review already prepared drawings.

Reports - I have authored many books on timber and can prepare a report providing recommendations and practical instructions on to how to rectify issues.

Please note as I am now employed a Senior Timber Consultant with the firm BCRC all large and complex consultancies and requirements for an expert witness will be handled in conjunction with them. Existing consulting arrangements remain unchanged and I am also available to assist on small projects. For more information see www.bcrc.com.au

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