

Ted's News

November 2020

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Are you aware that there is an index for the newsletters from 2015 onward? [Here is the link](#)

[Playground Timber](#)



I have completed the draft of the first chapter of my new book on playground timber. It deals with standards that relate to playground timber and guides the designer in selecting timber that is fit for purpose. I have started on the chapter dealing with specifications. I am looking for some images and hope some of my readers can help. These are;

- Playground damaged by fire
- Splintering timber in a playground


- Decay
- Imported timbers that are or are not doing well
- Round timber - good and bad, particularly needing split ends

If you can help, [please send them to me](#) with advice on how to acknowledge copyright. High resolution needed. Ideally the images should be able to be cropped so they do not identify the location. Incidentally, if you were unsure, the above image is not recommended practice.

Incised Timber



It is permitted under AS4685.1-2004, *Playground equipment, Part 1: General safety requirements and test methods* to design a free-standing swing like the one above using H4 100x100 mm pine embedded in the ground. The likelihood is, however, that the timber will be full of heartwood and so could simply be coloured on the outside and not preserved. It would then be expected to decay just like this H3 pine post. Such a structure could be expected to injure a child and moving from the hypothetical, the brother of a friend had his skull crushed by something similar.

	
Incised timber	The working bits of an Incising machine

There is theoretically answer to this and it is incising when pine with heartwood is run through a machine that puts thousands of small slits in the surface that fill with H5 preservative and diffuse from there. There are a couple of machines in Australia but to my knowledge none of them are

producing structural timber. [There is no way I would build a serious retaining wall using pine sleepers that were not incised](#) but then they need to be structural too so I would again be out of luck and have to use concrete. The industry really should be on top of this and the big box hardware stores should be demanding (and paying for) incising. For more information [contact Joe Watson](#) from the manufacturers of the Excalibur incising machine. The real answer is not to use sawn pine but an in ground 1 hardwood with correct installation practices.

[Here is an video of an incisor working on round timber](#), note how the inground section can be treated differently to the above ground section

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>Contact Details Mobile: 0414 770 261 Email: edgarstubbersfield@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>Contact Details Mobile: 0414 770 261 Email: edgarstubbersfield@gmail.com</p>
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Forgive me for being a bit frustrated but I cannot understand why an asset owner will spend hundreds of thousands of dollars if not over a million on a large deck [but refuse to purchase a \\$50 book that explains the pitfalls and includes a design checklist](#) so even a novice can do a credible job. So, why would I be engaged to do a full day course?

You would do it because I have been collecting images and case studies 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](#).

Correct Detailing Does Matter



New 75 mm joist against a failed 50 mm



The team and I from Parker carpentry Contractors.



Deckwood for this project preoiled with Tanacoat

A boardwalk on the Gold Coast built 27 years ago failed and was being replaced with one designed around our boardwalk systems and using Deckwood decking. As part of the arrangement I have with Wilson Timbers/Outdoor Structures Australia who manufacture Deckwood, I offer all the technical support needed to make its use a success. There is no charge for this. So, when I was asked by Simon Parker of Parker Carpentry Contractors to go to site and meet Mark Sheldrick and the team and run through the best practices in construction I jumped at the opportunity.

The decking was nailed back then and they were all driven in a straight line so the joist split and the boardwalk eventually became unserviceable. The lead image shows the new 75 mm joist against the failed 50 mm, note also the new joists have been oiled with CN oil. Had attention been given to the original design this refurbishment would have only required a redeck, but, instead, it was a complete rebuild apart from the 200 mm H5 CCA pine posts which were in excellent condition. The new deck will be screwed after fully predrilling in a staggered alignment. For more information about this project [contact Simon Parker](#) on 0416 577 525. Simon said, "It's a great system and we want to use more of it." For information and pricing on Deckwood [contact Stuart Madill](#) 04 3612 2852.



What really surprised me was the condition of the galvanized bolts after 27 years. I would not wager any money on the same thing happening now (granted I wouldn't wager anyway but we do take a gamble with our professional indemnity when we use galvanized in a marine environment). Simon replaced them with 316 stainless. But then these were good Australian made Ajax bolts not low-cost imports. [Yes there is a difference.](#)

Another One of My Follies



I was visiting Dalby last month and had a good chance to check out the bell tower we engineered and built back in 2002. Though I have supplied some truly amazing bridges, this simple structure gave me an incredible sense of satisfaction, probably because it looked so good despite being

very

simple.



Timber was pre-cut then treated



Construction after precutting and treatment

The take away from this project is that we fully pre-cut the timber and made all the housed joints in the posts and then treated the timber prior to assembly. This is the reverse order which would be to supply the timber treated then pre-cut. This way we had preservative into the housed joints. Will it make a difference? Ask me in 50 years' time. It will still be around though I won't.

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.

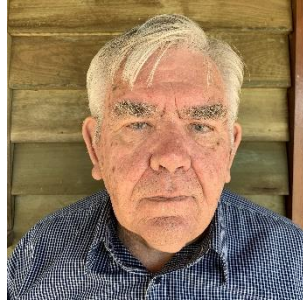
Inspection – I can assess timber products on their performance, fitness for purpose or cause of failure. I also examine whether best practice was used in design and construction. I have recently completed inspections on boardwalks, bollards, support beams and external timber furniture.

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



Edgar Stubbersfield

Mail: edgarstubbersfield@gmail.com

Web: www.deckwood.com.au

Phone: 0414770261