

# Ted's News

June 2022

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These newsletters only touch on matters dealt with in detail in my timber guides. Unfortunately, due to a glitch with Amazon, not all of them were printed in Australia. That has now been rectified and Amazon prime members should now receive a hard copy within a week. If you are a design professional these guides really should be in your library. [Here is the link.](#) alternatively, [PDFs can still be purchased from me.](#)

[New Hardwood Requires Care in its Specification](#)



I have been involved in the grading of a number of 100-year-old plus buildings now. These were constructed well before the days of stress grades. The builder just ordered timber to a given size and they probably mentioned a species of lower shrinkage. Despite the lack of a specification, the one thing these old buildings have in common is the very high quality of the framing timber. Take these floor joists, for instance, you are struggling to find a defect. They exceed the modern minimum requirements for appearance-grade timber.



This steel footbridge slated for replacement is at the other end of the scale. Just assume you were going to design a footbridge and you could purchase steel like this with as little as 30% of its strength remaining and not protected against rust. Assume further that you could make the numbers work; would you use it? The thought is ridiculous yet this is what is happening with timber. It can be specified, though hopefully not supplied, with as little as 30% of its strength remaining (e.g., F17 KD grey ironbark, F14 KD spotted gum.) Also, remember that only a few species have the durability you need.

When I was a much younger man, F grades were introduced. I remember our industry magazine saying that we did not need to fear them because now we would be able to sell timber that was previously considered unsalable. In practice, it meant that if you ordered F14 to *AS2082 Timber—Hardwood—Visually stress-graded for structural purposes* you were likely to receive F22. But the quality of logs harvested from the state forests has deteriorated. The best logs, quite rightly, are kept for seed trees. This means that if you now ask for F14 you are increasingly going to receive that grade, and what about durability, an entirely separate issue. Receiving what you ask for is not necessarily a bad thing. If you are building a set of roof trusses that will never see the light of day, that is all you need as there is no further deterioration. But exposing that timber to the weather, it then becomes the last thing you need. Say, for handrails, the timber has to look like the joists above. The same applies to the top face of decking. And durability becomes critical as well in these cases.

My different guides give specifications for a range of exposed applications and there is no need to repeat them here. (You could help my retirement fund by [purchasing them](#).) AS2082 tells you what the timber looks like to achieve a given grade, and the grade is selected first. My philosophy on grading is more in line with *AS3818.7-2010 Timber – Heavy structural products – visually graded Part 7: Large cross section sawn hardwood engineering timbers*. It assumes that external timber will be used for either structural or exposed applications. It then describes what a piece of timber



looks like to succeed for both applications and then it dictates what the F grade is for different species. Unfortunately, it only applies to timber larger than 200x75 though.

I can assist your organisation through writing a meaningful performance-based specification for timber and in providing grading certificates for new or installed timber.

### Deckwood is Available for Vehicle Decking



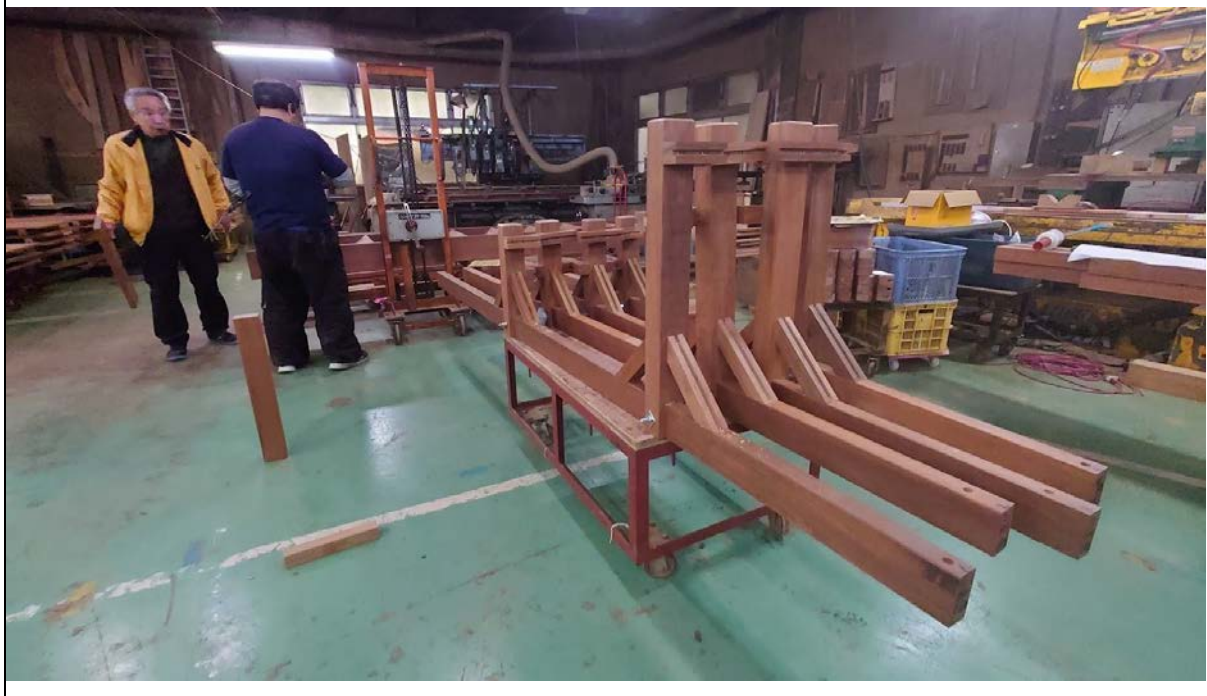
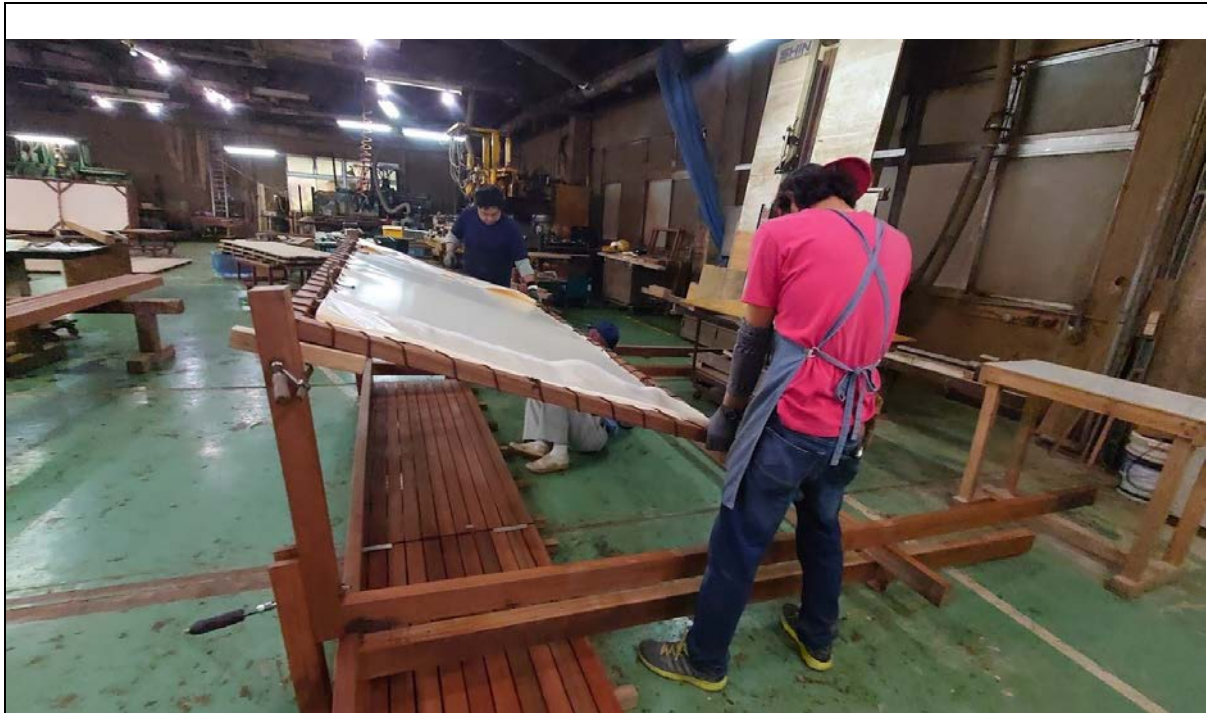
Recently I was visiting Wilson Timbers/Outdoor Structures Australia who manufactures my Deckwood under License. There was an order of 140x70 Deckwood ready to be dispatched for use on a rail trail that needed light vehicle access, (5 tonnes if I remember rightly.). While the most commonly used size is 120x35, this is a reminder that Deckwood is available up to 190x120.

### Case History - Spotted Gum Viewing Deck in Japan



I have had a longstanding friendship with the proprietors of Kurata Co in Japan. Ms. Aki Kurata recently shared with me some pictures of a project showing the construction, transport, and erection on site of an observation deck. This terrace, made from spotted gum, was built to view a tea plantation owned by the famous green company ITO EN. It is situated in Kyushu about 1400 km or 18 hours travel from the Kurata factory at Shizuoka on Honshu Island.)





The deck was precut and partially assembled in the factory under a controlled environment and the scrutiny of the Kuratas. They were previously furniture manufacturers and everything is done with that level of precision and quality. the timber quality is similar to that in the first article. Kurata Co order well and their miller knows their expectation.





After the partial construction, all the components had to be trucked to the tea plantation and then successfully erected on site.

A few things worth noticing for an Australian designer. See the respect that things are accorded. The deck was covered during construction and then shoes are removed when in use. You would not see that here! Notice also that there are no handrails - see my [guide for commercial handrails](#). It also knocks for a six my recommendations for picnic table heights in my guide [External Timber](#)



[Furniture.](#)

[For many more images download this link](#)

(Incidentally, the ITO EN Company also grows Japanese “Macha” Tea near Melbourne and you should be able to purchase their tea at your local Coles Supermarket.)

## [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"><li>• Prepare an appropriate specification</li><li>• Assess suitable product to purchase</li><li>• Recognise where corners are cut</li><li>• Ensure value in purchasing</li><li>• Know quickly where to inspect</li><li>• Recognise suitable timber for bridges</li></ul> <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 steel structures including bridges.</p> <p>With over 40 years experience of supplying 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><b>Contact Details</b> Mobile: 0414 770 261 Email: <a href="mailto:edgarstubbersfield@gmail.com">edgarstubbersfield@gmail.com</a></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"><li>• Prepare an appropriate specification</li><li>• Assess suitable product to purchase</li><li>• Recognise where corners are cut</li><li>• Ensure value in purchasing</li><li>• Know quickly where to inspect</li><li>• Recognise suitable timber for decks</li></ul> <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 steel structures including decks.</p> <p>With over 40 years experience of supplying 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><b>Contact Details</b> Mobile: 0414 770 261 Email: <a href="mailto:edgarstubbersfield@gmail.com">edgarstubbersfield@gmail.com</a></p>
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Don't embark on any major footbridge or coastal deck project before you do my full-day courses. 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 the footbridge course brochure](#)

[Click here for the 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. Call 0414 770 261 or [email me](#).

## [Signup for one of my ten CPD Courses](#)



Learn from my four decades of experience with these CPD training sessions, some of which are available in eClassroom.

Topic 1	Timber Preservation	
Topic 2	Hardwood Grading	
Topic 3	Timber Decks - Designing for Durability	
Topic 4	Utilising Small Diameter Hardwood	
Topic 5	The Seven Deadly Sins of Timber Design	<a href="#">eClassroom link</a>
Topic 6	Timber Joints	
Topic 7	Architectural Timber Battens	<a href="#">eClassroom link</a>
Topic 8	Timber 101	<a href="#">eClassroom link</a>
Topic 9	Boardwalk Design (recommend delivered with Timber 101)	
Topic 10	Timber Handrail Design	

[Click here to learn more about these courses](#)

Are you aware that [Wilson Timbers/Outdoor Structures](#), who I am affiliated with and are suppliers of quality timber, will have me come to your office (in person or remotely) and deliver one or two of my CPD sessions for free? The only condition for in person presentations is that, with travel,

we can do it in a day from Brisbane in Queensland. [Contact Stuart Madill by email to arrange a time](#) or call his mobile 0403 385 707.

### **Need a Timber Consultant or Expert Witness?**

I have over 45 years of 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.

**Trainer and Presenter** – I can provide tailored training to meet your CPD needs and also have experience at lecturing to universities and presenting at conferences.

Please note as I am now employed as 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](http://www.bcrc.com.au) or [download their capability brochure here](#).

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