

Outdoor Structures Australia

May 2015 Newsletter

Written by Ted Stubbersfield

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Dear Reader

[Where is Timber Construction Headed](#)



Image courtesy of Dennis Clark Photography

0408 459 242

A few weeks ago, a chapter I wrote on timber construction was sent off to the editors of the French publication, *Le Memento du Forestier*. This chapter was initially intended to be in three parts. The first dealt with construction using timber with minimal processing such as natural rounds. And what do you think of this heritage listed bridge [built from natural rounds in 1885 at](#)

[Coominya](#), not far from home? The piles are very impressive. How things have changed from then to now. Last month I complained that I had trouble purchasing [2 girders at 8 m for a footbridge](#).

The second part of the chapter looked at construction using semi processed (i.e. sawn) timber. The final part was to cover construction using modern highly processed timber and this was to be covered by my friends in the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry. The editors in France decided to drop the third section! The reasoning was that timber technology is changing so radically that whatever is written will be relatively quickly out of date. I think they are right.

Those who think timber is yesterday's material should look closely and the radical advances that are being made. Many have not progressed in their thinking about timber beyond the "old rattler" country road bridges.

Wisdom of High Design Loads



This Anzac Day I was reminded of the wisdom of the high design loads for footbridges and other structures. In Gatton we have the normal march down the main street and then we all head off to the Weeping Mothers Memorial (not the traditional lighthorseman) for the ceremony. This involves crossing the railway line over the heritage design footbridge. It would not be possible to load the bridge any more than it is for a short time every Anzac Day, then it goes back to having virtually no one on it for the rest of the year.



The problem with most footbridges is that purchasers, who often are not qualified to assess the suitability of the product offered, look at price only and the fact that the bridge seldom will have anyone on them. But then one day someone organises a fun run across it and for a short time it is fully loaded. You cannot tell in advance which bridge needs the high loads and which one does not so you make them all capable of withstanding the unusual event.

Still we see footbridges being offered with a 3 kPA loading and the load factor not being published. If this happens to you show the salesman the door immediately. We are so used to structures being safe that we forget that they can and do fail like the one above where the deck dropped into the creek.

Talking Timber with Ted



There has been a good uptake of the offer last month to do a free CPD session in your office. If you haven't thought about it, you really should. Timber construction and durability in external application has always been my passion and In particular to see timber used In a fit for purpose application and last a lifetime In all its glory. I have written several books on external timber design and application over the years and presented as guest speaker at many Seminars including Timber Queensland's on the topic.

Nigel Shaw, the CEO of Outdoor Structures Australia has agreed to fully fund the costs of me giving one of my CPD seminars in your office (providing if it is roughly within a two hour drive of Gattton). The seminars being offered are either the Seven Deadly Sins of Timber Design or Timber Decks - Designing for Durability (or both if you can make the time on the same day). Also being subsidised by OSA is a free copy of my Boardwalk Design Guide and Deckwood Selection guide as well as the book, The Seven Deadly Sin of Timber Design. These are serious seminars with [serious learning outcomes](#) if required for CPD points it comes with a test and a

certificate. Call me on 0414770261 or Keith Smith on 0403 601 030 to arrange a suitable time for your personalised "Ted talk".

The full range of subjects I have available are:

Timber Preservation.

Hardwood Grading.

Timber Decks – Designing for Durability,

Utilising Small Diameter Hardwood.

The Seven Deadly Sins of Timber Design.

Joints and a new one just about finished.

Architectural Battens

[I need Help With Architectural Battens](#)



I have been asked to develop a CPD session on architectural battens. Simple enough I thought until I looked into it. I need help from my readers. I need images, accounts of where they have worked and very importantly, where they have not worked and why. I need to learn what insights you have. Image courtesy of Architectus.

[A Particularly Attractive Seat](#)



We have a seat called the Saltwater. We supplied one recently, not quite standard, for the Kenmore Rotary Club. I think it is stunning. One thing it is is that it is extremely comfortable. The signwriting is by laser etching, not routing. [Click here for more info.](#) the Saltwater seat is manufactured under license to Guymer Bailey Architects.

[Improvements to Website](#)



We have been working on our website to make navigation easy and greatly improve the sections that relate to shelters and bollards and brochures. Now I know that most of my readers are creatures of habit, as I am also, and when choosing a shelter tend to look no further than my competitors catalogue. We should do something new every day. Why not look at the new pages and explore them and the design tools we have available. Here are the links:

[Shelters](#)

[Bollards](#)

[Brochures](#)

Bridge Quote Requests

If there is any doubt that OSA make the best kit bridges in the country look at the [Berrinba Wetlands Project](#) . Not all bridges are equal. After encountering three bridges in one month that did not meet the Bridge Code I wrote the [May 2012 newsletter](#). Refer to it when assessing the suitability of quotes.

[Steel bridge Quotation Request Form](#)

[Timber Bridge Quotation Request Form](#)

More information:

If you have longer span timber road/rail/heritage bridge issues, we suggest you talk to Mr. Dan Tingley Cell: 04 5957 6314 or 04 28983328 E. dant.tingley@gmail.com



Ted Stubbersfield

0414 770 261

Outdoor Structures Australia
Mail: Sales@outdoorstructures.com
Web: www.outdoorstructures.com.au

Phone: (07) 3202 3026
Fax (07) 3202 2520
4 Turley St, Raceview Qld 4305