

## June 2015 Newsletter

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## Your Opportunity to Inspect Forestry Research Centre



Lock the date Wednesday 5th August into your diary and come down to the Blomfield Street Salisbury research facility of the 1.30 pm to 3.30 pm? If your career is ahead of you, not finishing like mine, you need to be very aware of the radical changes that are occurring in both timber supply and the products that will be made from it. Right at the cutting edge is Henri Bailleres and his remarkable team of scientists and technicians. Henri would love to show you around the facilities and discuss the new directions for timber. You will see:

Material testing laboratory,  
Plywood facility  
Kilns  
Practical constructions  
Vacuum drying  
And lots more

You will have the opportunity to study the above shelter. What makes the above shelter impressive is not the design, though you have to admit Michael Dixon of UQ's architecture department has done a great job, (note no visible fixings) but it is the fact that it is built from 12 year old plantation hardwood! This shelter incorporates both laminated beams and LVL in hardwood.

If that is not enough reason we will finish up with a CPD session on the Seven Deadly Sins of External Timber Design. Phone me on 0414 770 261 for the RSVP.

## **Feedback on Being Able to Drive a Bus Through Timber Standards**

In the March newsletter I wrote about timber standards that you can drive a bus through. When doing a CPD session recently I was told of a job where exactly the same thing happened I warned about. Deckwood was specified and the builder substituted with a lower priced timber that contained large amounts of untreated sapwood. It lasted four years and now the asset owner has lost all confidence in timber. He will probably do something unwise and replace it with plastic.

You specify Deckwood or approved equivalent for a reason and people substitute for a reason, and they are not the same reason. The approval process for a substitute must be followed to protect yourself, the public and your client. It is not something left to the whim of a contractor who, in this case, did not have the faintest idea what he was doing. We can help you honestly assess the differences.

## **Why do I bother?**



I get so frustrated and disillusioned at times. Yet again we were beaten on price for a boardwalk. I happened to be driving past and saw the alternative so I thought I would have a look. Hardwood posts set in concrete, (one of my seven deadly sins) and

the joists attached with galvanised triple grips (and it is in a floodway!). The very poor image above shows a boardwalk where the joists were fastened by triple grips and was washed off the bearers in a flood. I write my books, I do my CPD sessions and at the end of the day it almost always comes down to price not specification and best practice. One of the things I do in my consultancy service is check plans. It would have been money well spent.

### Paint System for External Structures (Not a paid advertisement)



Timber has its limitations; reluctantly even I have to admit it. Ironbark is wonderful but you cant weld it yet though Henri and his team are probably working on that. There simply are times when you have to incorporate steel to lesser or greater degree. I once quoted to supply a new steel framed footbridge but

lost the tender for, I understand, \$2-300. The bridge that was purchased (illustrated above) instead was showing rust after only 6 months. This is not the result you should be aiming for or what we offered. I want to share with you how we get a long life from our steel painted structures.



The truss that was developed for me is a fully welded one piece construction which gives us the U frame action required under the bridge code. The above truss is 27 m long and was moved in one piece. Because these bridges are too large to fit in the galvanising bath we have to use a painted finish to get our corrosion protection. We were originally pointed to PSX 700 by PPG and we could not have been happier. This paint's genesis was from the coating systems used for the rocket launch facilities of NASA. This finish gives us:

High gloss retention

Equal to or better than galvanised protection

Very high adhesion properties

Good environmental outcomes

Damage can be touched up simply with a paintbrush

Graffiti wipes off with solvent.

Our contact in PPG is David Slinger 0459 823 768

So between robust steel sizes, high quality PSX 700 finish and Deckwood decking you should not be specifying anything less than one of my trusses. Thinking of allowing a lower priced substitute? check out and ponder the third image in last month's newsletter.

### **New Book Being Written**

I started to accumulate so much material on Architectural Battens that I thought I would try to put it into book form. I fully expect to sell as many as six copies. If you have stories of Architectural battens, either successes or failures I would love to hear them so we can all learn. An image of leaching from battens would be helpful. I need a good image of a clear film finish breaking down, can you help?