

January 2016 Newsletter

Large Price Reduction for Deckwood

Timber Fence Book Finalised

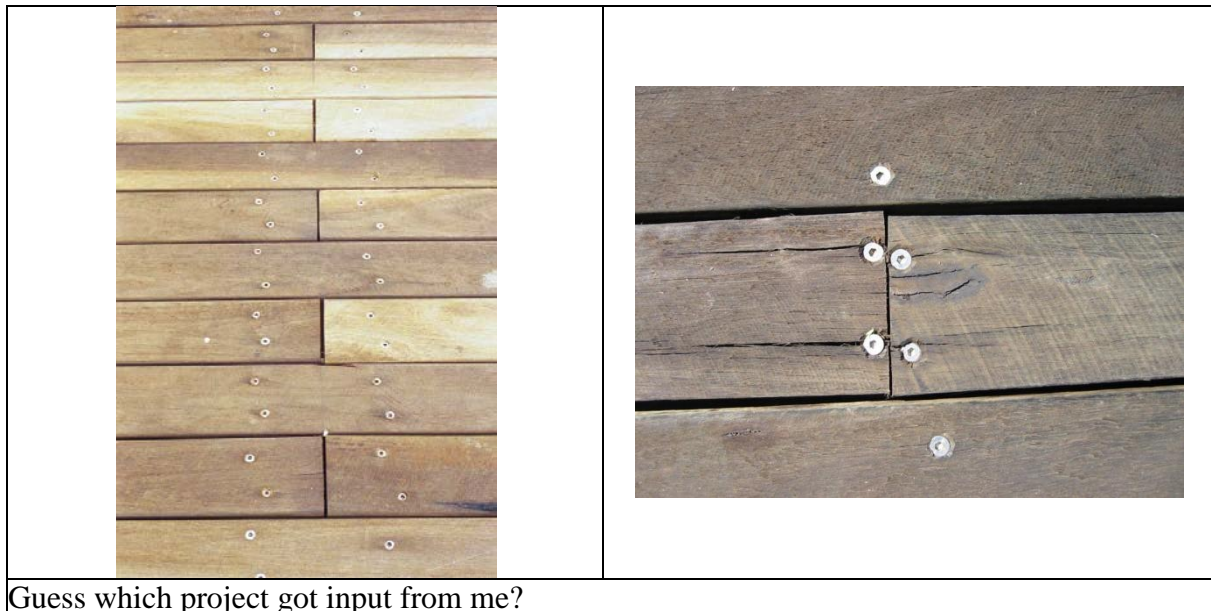
Why so Hard to do the Right Thing? - Very important article

Decay in Treated Pine

Large Price Reduction on Deckwood

My lovely wife, Rachel, who holds the IP on Deckwood, has decided that we will take the marketing of Deckwood back in house. That IP does not expire till 2019. The new manufacturers have given me revised pricing to our specification and profile and that will see a very big reduction in price despite a small royalty being paid to her. There is a new website being prepared www.deckwood.com.au which will be up and running in a couple of weeks. Please bookmark that address for future reference.

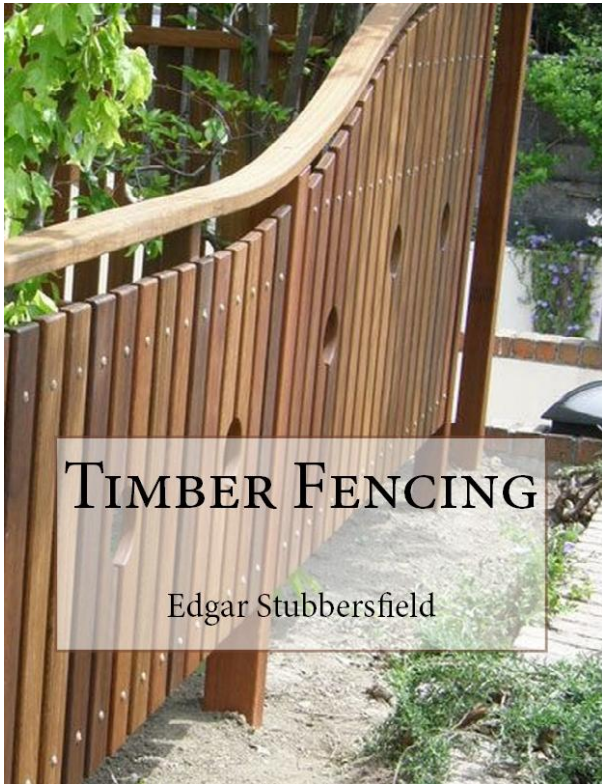
We have decided to make the Boardwalk Design Guide and the Deckwood selection Guide free again on the website, long overdue. My role will be as it has been for many years now, to advise you on how to use it correctly. There will be more information about my consultancy services on the new website but basically if you specify Deckwood I do not charge. The trade name Deckwood and the Registered Trade Name LifePlus is also held by my wife.



It really does make a difference when you get us involved. We know our craft well and we can help you to avoid the things that cause premature degrade of a weather exposed timber structure. You can tell the difference between a structure with my input and one that does not.

We would be the only people who would tell you that that our product should not be used when it is inappropriate.

Timber Fence Book Finalised



TIMBER FENCING

Edgar Stubbersfield

For some reason, this latest book has been all blood sweat and tears but finally it is near enough to being completed to sell copies. The cost is only \$33 but you really should purchase the full set of all my guides. The book covers hardwood, cypress and pine fences.

You can't be vague in an area where there are no standards, widespread ignorance among contractors and a huge variation of quality and performance. If you are a professional designer who has to provide certainty and repeatability in your fence designs, you need this book!

Do you like the fence on the front cover? It is a pity you have to go to Japan to find designers who appreciate the possibilities of spotted gum combined with customers who will pay for it.

Image courtesy of Kurata Co. [Click here for more of their fence work.](#) I would like to hear of good fence projects that can be added as case histories. What is next? Joints?

The following article, of critical importance to all specifiers, was written by Jack Norton, National Secretary of the Timber Preservers Association of Australia (TPAA). It was originally published in TPAA's January Contact magazine and is reprinted with permission.

Why so Hard to do the Right Thing???

As the name implies, vacuum pressure impregnation of timber involves putting wood into a pressure vessel and applying some combination of vacuum and pressure in order to achieve complete sapwood penetration. Apart from envelope treatment for termite protection, all specifications in Australian Standard AS1604.1 (the solid wood Standard) require all the sapwood to be penetrated. Sapwood and heartwood are described in TPAA's Technical Note 3 but an easy way to think about how a tree is built is to think of wood as a clump of drinking straws. The straws around the outside are unblocked and allow dissolved food and water to travel up and down the stem. This is the sapwood and in a freshly felled tree is full of liquid sap. The straws on the inside or the heartwood zone are blocked with resins and waxes that stop the passage of liquid.

Logs are most often cut up when they are green or full of sap and the resulting sawn product is called 'green-off-saw'. Because the sapwood is full of sap, green-off-saw material is extremely hard, some would say 'impossible' to treat properly to meet the specifications in AS1604.1. It is

impossible to get preservative solution into the cells or fluid pathways that are already full of liquid. It is like trying to pour a beer into a glass that is already full of water. The best practice to treat green-off-saw material is to dry it before preservative treatment. This is more important with sawn pine compared to sawn hardwood. However, by far the majority of treatment plants treating products such as fence palings, fence rails or landscape sleepers treat the material without any pre-drying.

Why...???... because “if I don’t treat it the bloke down the road will” and we wonder why we are losing market share to plastic and the alternate building materials! Why does one supplier condition timber before treatment and another does not? Often, sawmillers shipping green-off-saw timber know that the material they are supplying to timber treaters will undergo a treatment process, but justify their action by saying: “we haven’t done anything wrong because we have marked it as green-off-saw.” Whilst this may be true (and legal) is it the right thing to do?? I wonder who will get to the bottom first???

Decay in Treated Pine





Recently at a CPD session I was asked about the durability of treated pine. The questioner told a story of a large job where treated pine was specified and used in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations. The timber decayed and the rectification cost was staggering.

Treating pine is no guarantee of success, just as it isn't with hardwood. Consider the two packs of sleepers above. You can easily see that only a small part of the timber is actually treated. The heart of pine is just as untreatable as the heart of hardwood. The outside of the two packs is coloured green but not the bulk of the inside. It is still durability class 4 material being used where you need a class 1 and it simply has to fail. The maximum amount of untreated heartwood in pine should not exceed 20% but in these cases above it is probably 80%. This is why treated pine can decay.



If I was purchasing significant amounts of pine I would require the timber to be preconditioned, incised to a depth of 10 mm and treated preferably to H4. The incising process allows the chemicals to penetrate the heartwood and the extra chemical cost for H4 is not significant when weighed against the cost of failure. Many Australian purchasers do not know what incising is and the image on the left shows what incised timber.

In some overseas markets it is very common, western USA users expect external timber to be incised and it is becoming increasingly common in the UK. The pattern on the post illustrated is not the modern high intensity system which is preferred - [see the Excalibur system from the UK](#) which is arguably the best on the market. The incisions on this post was only 6 mm deep and I only got 6 mm penetration when I needed 10 mm. Always specify and check the depth of incision. For more information on incised pine or incising machines talk to Greg Jensen of Arch Timber Protection on 0419 329 006 or email greg.jensen@lonza.com