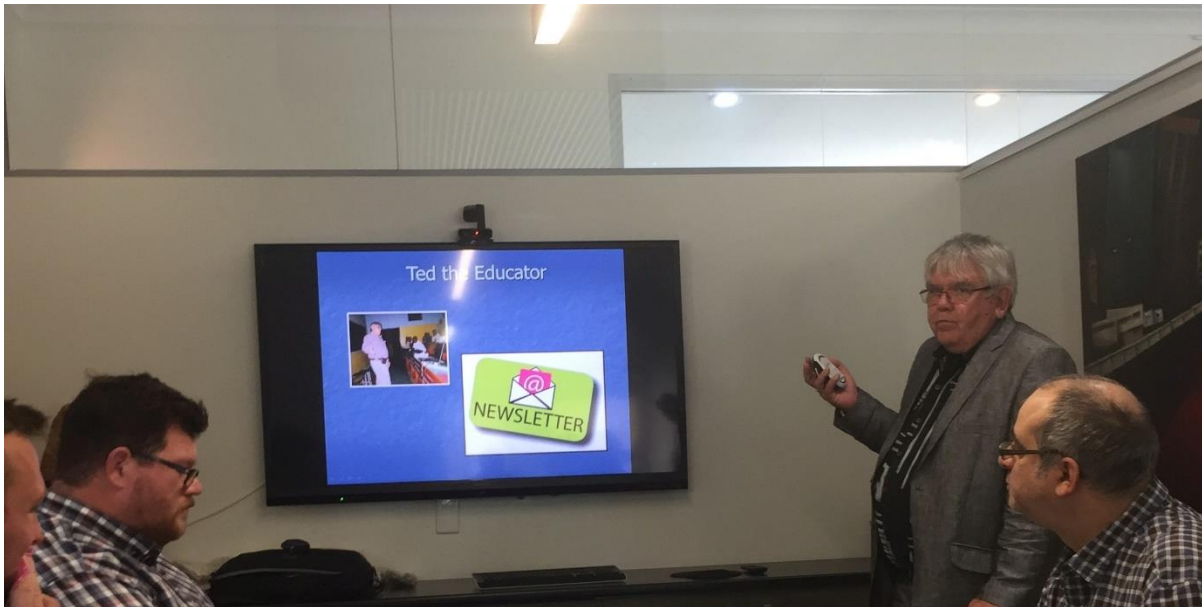


# Ted's News

## August 2018

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### [Free CPD Sessions](#)



For a limited time only, Wilson Timbers/Outdoor Structures Australia (OSA) are meeting the cost of delivering CPD sessions in your office. There are only two conditions, and these are that I can travel there and back in a day and that OSA be allowed to give a sales pitch. These are exactly the same presentations I would give if you paid. It sounds like a good deal to me. Here is a [link to the courses I have available](#). I suggest External Timber 101 would be a good start. The learning outcomes are:

- Know the resources needed for a successful design
- Understand the difference between pine, cypress and hardwood
- Understand the importance of selecting the right species
- Understand the importance of selecting the right part of the tree.

- Understand the importance of preservation
- Understand why natural feature must be limited

These are informative seminars with serious learning outcomes and, if required for CPD points, I can provide a test and a certificate. Call Stuart Madill on 0403 385 707 to arrange a free session and for paid add free talks call me on 0414770261 to arrange a convenient time for your "Ted talk".

### Don't Specify External Timber by F Grade



What you are looking at is a tight gum vein which is a vein with interconnecting tissue between both sides, as opposed to an open gum vein that does not have interconnecting tissue. It obviously hasn't held together when exposed to the weather as it probably would have done in a roof truss. This piece of timber met the grading requirements of F22 and also F17 appearance grade where tight gum vein is unlimited. Despite meeting one or two grades higher than most specify for handrail, timber like this should never be sent to site. This isn't because (at least in this case) it is unfit for purpose, rather instead you generally can't trust contractors to look at the timber, know what they are looking at, and place natural feature like this down or away from view. Thoughtful placement would have seen this piece perform as well as clear timber.

It is almost impossible to get designers to break the bad habit of specifying exposed timber by using general house framing grades and instead use grade descriptions that are appropriate for their intended use. When it comes to getting independent confirmation grading - forget it, until it goes wrong. In my book *Grading Hardwood* you will learn that there is no appropriate Australian Standard grade for timber handrail and it will guide you how to write an appropriate specification. Then get confirmation grading. The book can be [purchased as a PDF](#) from me or a [hardcopy from Amazon](#). As a light hearted warning about poor specifications, I prepared this presentation, [The Parable of the Specification some years ago](#).

## Why You Don't Use Dressed Faced Decking Externally

While dressed face domestic decking is the norm, and perfectly suitable, when used under a roofed verandah, in my opinion, dressed face decking it is not suitable for weather exposed commercial decks. The reasons for this view is:

- The life is adversely impacted significantly and,
- I believe that dressed decking has insufficient slip resistance.

### **Reduction in service life**

It is well known in the industry that a dressed face decking surface deteriorates more rapidly than a natural sawn finish. Independent verification can be found in Timber Queensland's *Technical Data sheet No. 7, Timber Decks Commercial, Industrial & Marine* (2017 edition) under "Surface texture" where it says "Experience has shown that timber with a sawn upper face provides greater long term weathering ability than a dressed surface. Decking therefore should be rough sawn all round or sized on two edges and one face (underside) only." This information can also be found in my *Deckwood Selection Guide, Boardwalk Design Guide* and *Deck and Boardwalk Design Essentials* which are free from the [Deckwood website](#).

It is impossible to quantify the life lost as it is largely dependent on the amount of moisture and the amount of shade (or lack thereof) the timber is exposed to.

### **Insufficient slip Resistance**

There is little information available on slip resistance of decking. Fortunately, Forests and Wood Products Australia are finalising a publication on the subject but at the moment the only information I have is testing that was undertaken for me by the University of Southern Queensland. The image to the left of a pendulum tester on sawn face decking was taken at the time. Pre-oiling with products such as Tanacoat exacerbates the issue but is less so with a rough sawn surface. My own testing resulted in R12 slip resistance with dry rough sawn Deckwood, lightly sanded and with a Tanacoat finish.



The issue is very complex and requires a PhD study to come up with a definitive answer. But my testing showed it was highly likely that someone would slip when dressed face decking is used. I have had years of experience of disappointed asset owners who have rung me after people had slipped. Sometimes they were facing legal action as a consequence. I know of at least one large deck where the asset owner had to roughen the surface after litigation.

Of course, decking supply involves more than this. The correct species with superior rot and termite resistance, at the correct grade and installation in accordance with best practice on a

minimum of 75 mm wide joists is also required. Appropriate material is more expensive than house framing and often is not used because of the cost. Low timber quality specifications can allow substitution of material the author considers inappropriate.

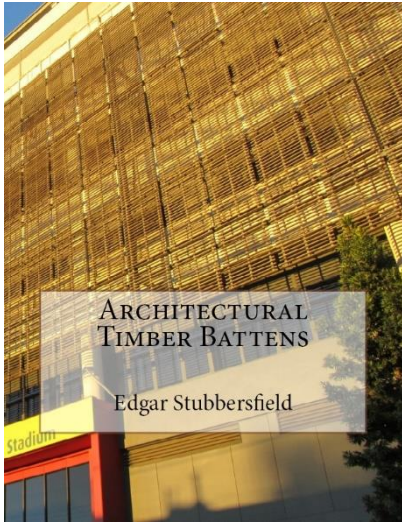
### Footbridge Inspections



You really wouldn't want to be crossing this footbridge at night as you would be in for a rude shock. Even a novice at timber would have little trouble condemning this bridge. However, when it is less obvious, many really don't know what they are looking at, I am afraid to say. I can help with footbridge inspections. One recent customer said "I have several bridges that require repairs and by using your services I ensure the City is getting the best service, Again thank for your expertise." You too can tap into this expertise.

Incidentally, no surprises here, CCA treated pine (and hardwood with treated sapwood) continues to burn after the ignition source is removed due to afterglow caused by the arsenic in CCA. More on this in the [June newsletter](#) - scroll down to the section on posts.

## Free Update of a Design Guide



If you have purchased a full set of guides (now \$440) you would have downloaded the book *Architectural Timber Battens*. I have recently revised this book by adding a new case history, a project from the UK where the mounting system is integral part of a very attractive design instead of being a necessary evil. Copyright restrictions prevent me from showing the image here. If you do not already have this book it can be [purchased as a PDF](#) for \$44 or as a [paperback from Amazon](#).

Your original login details should still work but if not contact me and I will send you a fresh one.

## Strengthening BCRC Links in Melbourne



On my recent trip to Melbourne, I met up with Shane Connolly of [BCRC](#) and had the opportunity to experience Melbourne's famous coffee culture with him. There has to be some consolation for putting up with the weather!! Shane, a chartered civil engineer, is BCRC's manager for Victoria and has substantial experience as a durability consultant on major infrastructure projects. He is experienced in durability planning, early age cracking assessment, corrosion modelling, condition assessment and concrete repair. Shane is keen to add extra materials to the services offered and this is where I can assist as I am a Senior Timber Consultant with BCRC.

So, for my Victorian readers with not just timber related durability problems, contact Shane on 0434 050 194 or [by email](#).

## Facebook Business Page Now Launched

Recently I launched a business page for my consulting services. [Here is the link](#). I will try and keep different content on Facebook. See my post *Life Threatening Decks*.

## External Timber Furniture



My new book, External Timber Furniture is all but finished. I am having copyright issues with some of the images and until that is resolved I cannot make it available. Can you help with images of :

- Decayed sapwood in furniture
- Failed glue joints
- Problems with edges of round tables
- Corner details
- 

### Bell Tower Superfluous to Needs



It is not every day a very well-built bell tower comes up for sale but here is one. Does your building/complex need a statement piece to make it stand out? This is your opportunity. Call me on 0414770261.



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