

Ted's News

December 2023

[Timber Decks Close to the Ground](#)

[New CPD Course - Domestic Decks](#)

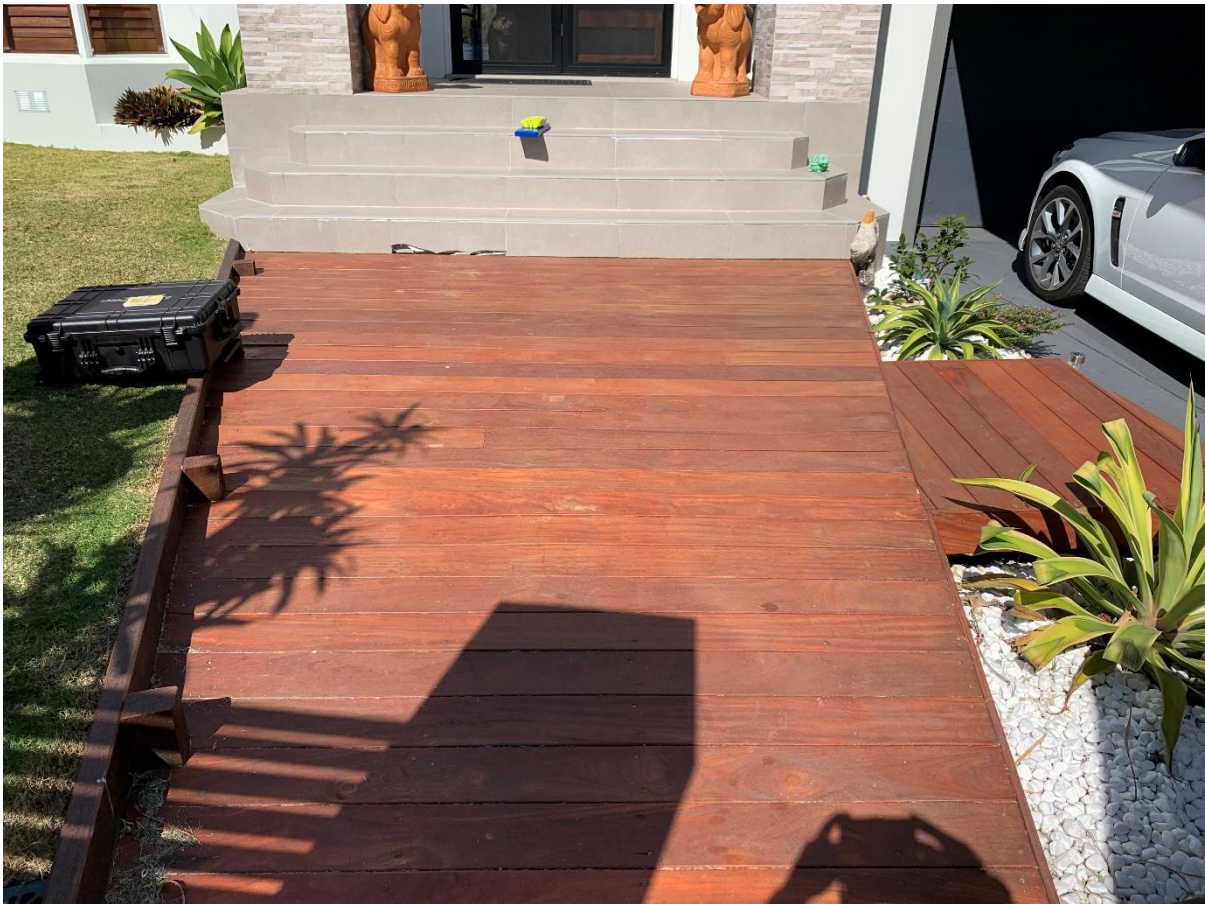
[Spotted Gum Project in Japan](#)

[Signup for One of my Twelve CPD Courses](#)

[Full Day Courses](#)

[Contact Me](#)

[Timber Decks Close to the Ground](#)



The framing of this deck is below ground level

Far too often my advice has been sought about decks close to the ground that are performing poorly. Theoretically, it is possible, but in my opinion, they are too fraught with problems to attempt unless you have done a lot of homework, purchased the very best and most durable timbers, and watch like a hawk to ensure that none of the necessary construction details are missed. Personally, as much as I love timber, I would be using a non-timber option. Let's discuss just some of the issues:



Copyright unknown

A deck low to the ground is defined in [Timber Queensland's guide to Residential Timber Decks](#) as being less than 400 mm from the bottom of the bearers (and open on at least three sides). Timber Queensland has a very good [guide to decks close to the ground](#). However, I would differ a little in that I would be asking for higher-quality decking such as [LifePlus](#). Also, this guide allows H3 treated pine to be used with a 150 mm gap underneath when there is a plastic membrane on ground that drains and with open sides, The nature of a low-to-ground deck is that it will be unusual for them to be open so forget H3. I would be using H4 or better, H5 if using pine. It will likely need to be custom treated and then getting correctly treated pine without incising is another matter. A

durability 1 in-ground termite-resistant hardwood solves this problem. It sapwood is under 20% it only needs to be H3



All of the low decks I have consulted on have had 130x19 decking. Without fail each one has cupped and even a small amount of cupping will hold water and become hazardous with rain or heavy dew. 130x19 has to cup, as the width-to-thickness ratio of 6.8 to 1 is unstable. You will get away with a 90x19 but beyond that would need a 3.5 to 1 ratio. (Note: some sources say 4 to 1 ratio and others a 3 to 1, I have had claims against 145x35). As it will need to be produced from an ex 50 mm board that will give you something like 136x42 if you want a wide board. This is all in the Timber Queensland guides. (Note: You may well get away with 130x19 decking when not low to the ground and with a roof.)



Decking is best installed from underneath (American Deckmaster system illustrated) but this is all but impossible with a low deck. Resist the temptation to nail if the deck is open to the weather.

New CPD Course - Domestic Decks

Three Very Different Decking Applications



Weather exposed and potential for slipping



Fully covered and low likelihood of slipping

This is one of the opening slides to my new CPD course, Domestic Decks. The observant among you will notice that there are two images yet I talk of three main different deck types. The third is on the next slide, decks close to or in the ground. This course covers:

- Resources needed
- Factors affecting deck specification including
- Factors affecting joist specification
- Alternate joist material
- Deck Construction
- Finishing
- Decks close to the ground

If you are in Brisbane or surrounds, book your free seminar through Outdoor Structures Australia/Wilson Timber. Contact Stuart Madill 0403 385 707. Interstate or further afield, contact Fiona at BCRC the durability specialists at 0416 326 366 to obtain a quote.

Spotted Gum Project in Japan



My friends at Kurata Co recently welcomed Mark Furner MP Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries and Minister for Rural Communities in the Queensland State government. They inspected the [Sunpu's workshop Takumijuku](#), a project they built with

Queensland Spotted gum in 1998..The facility in Shizuoka City, Shizuoka Prefecture is one of the largest traditional craft experience facilities in Japan. [Click here for images of a totally different aesthetic](#) than we are used to.

[Index to Past Issues](#)

If you are a new reader or just want to find details on a particular topic such as 150x150 mm posts, here is a link to an [index of articles back to 2015](#).

[Signup for One of my Twelve 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	eClassroom link
Topic 6	Timber Joints	eClassroom link
Topic 7	Architectural Timber Battens	eClassroom link
Topic 8	Timber 101	eClassroom link
Topic 9	Boardwalk Design (recommend delivered with Timber 101)	
Topic 10	Timber Handrail Design	
Topic 11	Timber Bollards	

[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.

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"> • Prepare an appropriate specification • Assess suitable product to purchase • Recognise where corners are cut • Ensure value in purchasing • Know quickly where to inspect • Recognise suitable timber for bridges <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 of understanding of the issues relating to designing, supplying and constructing fully weather exposed timber and steel structures including bridges.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><small>Contact Details Mobile: 0414 770 261 Email: edgarstubbersfield@gmail.com</small></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"> • Prepare an appropriate specification • Assess suitable product to purchase • Recognise where corners are cut • Ensure value in purchasing • Know quickly where to inspect • Recognise suitable timber for decks <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 of understanding of the issues relating to designing, supplying and constructing fully weather exposed timber and steel structures including decks.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><small>Contact Details Mobile: 0414 770 261 Email: edgarstubbersfield@gmail.com</small></p>
--	--

Don't embark on any major footbridge or coastal deck project before you do my full-day courses. These are serious courses run through [BCRC](#), the durability experts, 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](#).

<u>Contact Me</u>	
	E Mail: edgarstubbersfield@gmail.com
	Phone: 0414 770 261



Web: www.deckwood.com.au

SPORTS & PLAY MEMBER
INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION LIMITED