



AUSTRALIAN
SOCIETY OF
BUILDING
CONSULTANTS

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Perry Setford

Vice-President:

James Campbell

Secretary:

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Issue 13

December 2006

FROM THE EDITOR :

Welcome to the Christmas edition of the ASBC Newsletter. This is the time of the year when work eases and is replaced by our duties for the festive season. Many building consultants are busy inspecting chimneys and roof structures in preparation for Christmas Eve!

I would like to take this opportunity to wish all members and their families an enjoyable Christmas.

I have included in this edition articles from the CSIRO which I am sure you will find interesting.

At the Society's recent annual general meeting an election was held for most of the positions on the committee. I understand that this is the first election that the society has had for some time. This can only generate a positive outlook for the incoming committee. The new committee is featured in this News Letter. Already they have met and plans are in place for a great 2007 for the ASBC. I would like to congratulate the committee on their election with a special congratulation to Perry upon his election as President.

The State Labour Government has just been re-elected. Can we expect favourable economic conditions in the building industry for the next four years?

Recently I received an interesting query regarding who is allowed to install metal roofing products. Currently only registered roofing plumbers are allowed, with responsible licensed roofing plumbers being the only person able to issue a Certificate of Compliance. (It is also a requirement that the Building Surveyor must sight the Certificate of Compliance before issuing Certificate of Occupancy.) This arrangement is currently under review by the Government with a decision due in July 2007. I do not believe that this arrangement will change substantially.

I would like to thank the members who contributed suggestions and articles to this edition. I appreciate any contributions.

May the year 2007 be rewarding and prosperous.

MERRY CHRISTMAS,
Robert



FROM THE PRESIDENT :

I would like to start by thanking the Membership of our Society in electing me as their President. It is my intention to attempt to carry out my term in office to the best of my ability with the membership being the #1 priority.

The year 2007 is going to present further challenges for our Society in that report writing and the content thereof may require complete revision and we have the production of the Building Commission's Guide to Standards and Tolerances allegedly being published during November 2006.

The Newsletter Editor, Robert Quick, is endeavouring to provide a newsletter of some eight page size and is always in need of contributions by membership or if an interesting article is noted by a member which would be suitable please contact Robert.

At our Annual General Meeting on October 17, 2006, we were presented with a talk/discussion by Ian Mudge. I am sure that you all, like me, have gained information from Ian's talk and feedback to me suggested that his talk was one of the best for quite some time.

I would like to thank Charles Lee for his term of President for two years prior to my election and due to his diligence with Continuing Professional Development the Committee has decided that Charles will stay in that area, liaising with the Building Commission and others.

Finally, I congratulate the membership of the Society and the elected Committee in furthering the image of professionalism of the Australian Society of Building Consultants.

I urge any member to contact myself or any of the Committee should they have any query regarding matters relating to the Society, however trivial they may appear.

I wish you all a peaceful and safe festive season and look forward to meeting with you in the New Year on Tuesday 20 March 2007.

Regards,
Perry



THE NEW COMMITTEE



Front: Vice President James Campbell, President Perry Setford, Michael Fagan

Second Row: Ken Ryde, Immediate Past President Charles Lee, Robert Lorich

Rear Row: Robert Quick, Laurie Hargrave, Robert Thompson, John Hay, Treasurer John Coghlan

Absent: Secretary Robert Lees

FROM THE BUILDING COMMISSION: INDUSTRY TO HELP WITH BALCONY SAFETY

The issue of balcony safety has come under the spotlight in recent times – but too often people are prompted into action following an accident, injury or death.

An incident at the Corio Bay Rowing Club in March 2006, in which 19 people were hospitalised after a balcony collapsed, highlighted the necessity for public education on balcony maintenance and safety checks, not just at public venues but for all buildings.

Building Commissioner, Tony Arnel, said to better inform and assist Victorians on the issue of balcony safety the Building Commission has released a new guideline *What you need to know about – Maintenance of Balconies*.

"The guideline emphasises the importance of inspection, maintenance and safe use of balconies and applies not just to balconies, but to all other external structures, such as decking, that is exposed to the elements and is sufficiently high above ground level to harm people in the event of a structural collapse," said Mr Arnel.

CPD DEVELOPMENT AWARDS

Congratulations to two of our members who have had their achievements recognised at the Building Commission Development Awards. The awards were presented in Melbourne on the 10th November 2006. Terry Lynch (left) received a Commendation Award in the 12 Point Category while Graham Wines (right) was a Finalist in the 12 Point Category.



PLACEMENT Concrete Chemicals

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Victoria, 3150
Office: 03 9802 5486 – Fax: 03 9803 8186
Mobile: 0408 585 096

A.B.N. 53 007 029 156

WEAK SUB-STANDARD MORTAR PROBLEMS?

ANSWER: BRICK MORTAR ENHANCEMENT USING CHYNA L

The following information is tendered to indicate how CHYNA L can increase the effective cement contents of your brick mortars and reduce the effective sand:cement ratio permanently by using a single non-staining water based spray application.

What is CHYNA L?

CHYNA L is an aqueous mixture of active ions which are of such a size that they diffuse and penetrate into the core of the unhydrated cement grains and restart the hydration process. Thus all the cement charge in the original mixture is completely hydrated thereby effectively increasing the cement content in that particular mortar mix. Additional strength and improvement in other properties is a consequence of complete cement hydration, and it must be noted that chemical analysis of the mortar will not reveal an increase in the calcium oxide content.

Example 1

DATA USED: Assuming a 70% hydration rate of the cement in the original mortar CHYNA L will penetrate the joints and bricks and hydrate the remaining cement which elevates the effective cement content by 42%.

MIX PROPORTIONS: Determined proportions (by test): 1 cement :1 lime :12 sand
Equivalent mix after treatment: 1 cement :1 lime : 8.6 sand

Example 2

DATA USED: Assuming an 80% hydration rate of the cement in the original mortar CHYNA L will penetrate the joints and bricks and hydrate the remaining cement which elevates the effective cement content by 25%.

MIX PROPORTIONS: Determined proportions (by test): 1 cement :1 lime :12 sand
Equivalent mix after treatment: 1 cement :1 lime : 9.6 sand

The Product

CHYNA L is manufactured specifically for Placement Concrete Chemicals and is available only on a "supply and apply" basis further to the mix proportions of the mortar having been determined by a recognised laboratory, a test application made to the brickwork and approval by the client and ourselves of the improvement to the treated area. After treatment a Certificate of Compliance and a BCA Form 14 will be issued by I. H. & B. E. Mudge, Consulting Engineers, in respect of the brickwork at a nominal cost of \$500 + GST.

Costs and Service

At the time of writing the cost of the treatment in the Melbourne metropolitan area is \$35/m² or \$700/1000 bricks (excluding GST) and does not include elevation to upper levels where required or the provision of any other equipment or safety requirements.

Projects in country areas will incur charges for time, travel and accommodation where applicable. At this juncture we have no interstate operations but will consider work in other states on a project basis – costs and procedures can be negotiated if required.

For further discussion please contact Ian Mudge on 03 9802 5486 or fax on 03 9803 8186.

* Subject to conditions stated under the heading "The Product"

The text of this communication is intended as indicative effectiveness only and should not be interpreted as being actual case scenarios or predictions of effectiveness.

Information valid as at March 2006.

MATERIALS: Plastic Meltdown a Lifesaver

By Julian Cribb

A polymer that transforms into a fireproof ceramic could have major ramifications for buildings, ships, vehicles, and industrial and defence equipment

A world-first Australian material that transforms into a fireproof ceramic in a blaze is shaping to have a big impact on the \$12 billion global passive fire protection market, where it stands to become a genuine lifesaver. Worldwide, fire accidents cause more than 70,000 deaths and \$115 billion of property damage a year.

Originally developed – by CSIRO and its partners within the Cooperative Research Centre (CRC) for Polymers – for use in fire-resistant electric cables, the ceramifying polymers are finding a host of potential applications in fire prevention in buildings, ships, vehicles, and industrial and defence equipment. The key, says Dr Kevin Thomson, chief technical officer of vibrant young spin-off company Ceram Polymerik Pty Ltd, is the fast-growing area of passive fire protection – materials and structural items that confine fires, giving people more time to escape, reducing the extent of the damage and making the task of firefighters easier.

The story began when the commercial partner in the collaborative CRC for Polymers project, Olex Australia, set the multidisciplinary team the challenge of designing a revolutionary fire-resistant electrical cable that could keep electricity flowing in a fire at temperatures above 1000°C. Other collaborators on the project were Monash University (ceramics expertise), CSIRO (fire engineering), the University of New South Wales (polymer and other materials expertise), the Defence Science and Technology Organisation (fire performance) and RMIT (polymer expertise extending the technology to non-cable applications). CSIRO's contribution was led by Vince Dowling from Manufacturing and Infrastructure Technology (CMIT).

The answer was to combine the properties of a polymer with those of a ceramic. As the polymer melts and disintegrates in the heat, the ceramic forms a solid protective insulating layer, preventing short circuits and enabling the current to keep flowing. "It was quite a challenge," Mr Dowling says. "The cable had to keep operating for two hours at temperatures of 1000°C, but at the same time it had to perform as well or better than the substances used to coat cables under normal conditions."

Typically, polymers start to melt between 100°C and 200°C and disintegrate completely at about 300°C–400°C, whereas ceramics are typically formed at temperatures that exceed 1000°C. The clever chemistry lay in selecting the right polymer to form a protective char round the wire at higher temperatures, and the right components to form a tough ceramic coat around it by the time the polymer char burned off.

Getting good fire performance was one thing – but fires happen infrequently and cables and other structures have to perform all the time under normal operational conditions. "It was a long and difficult path – a lot of good ideas ended up being false starts," Mr Dowling says. "Some days it seemed like one step forwards, two back. The coating had to perform as well as other materials on the market, and it had to be cost-competitive and easy to use as well. There were a lot of factors involved."

Yet the CRC for Polymers' success in developing polymer technology for cable products (Pyrolex® Ceramifiable® fire performance cables with Olex, and cellular cable insulation and sheathing materials with Orica) is attested by sales worth \$16.6 million in 2004 and 2005 by these commercial partners, according to a recent study by the Allen Consulting Group. These sales alone saved Australia imports worth \$11 million and the revolutionary fire performance cables are expected to make a significant contribution to the Australian economy, earning about \$75 million over five years.

According to Dr Ian Dagley, CEO of the CRC for Polymers, it became clear early in the research that the idea of blending a polymer with a ceramic had a host of potential applications. "The beauty of this technology is that it works for a wide range of plastics and rubbers," he says. "These composites can be flexible or rigid to meet the particular performance requirements of a fire-protection component or

material.

"It is particularly valuable for passive fire protection, which refers to products in buildings, structures or transport vehicles that enhance their fire resistance. Here, the aim is to contain the movement of heat and smoke between floors, rooms or compartments by sealing penetrations, prolonging stability or creating barriers to the passage of flames, heat or smoke." This realisation led to the formation of Ceram Polymerik in September 2004, funded initially through the CRC for Polymers and its partners and then through venture capital firm Starfish Ventures and private equity. The company has recently received a \$1 million Commercial Ready grant from the Australian Government.

Nick Peace, Starfish investment manager, says: "Starfish and our co-investors were impressed by the core technology and by the high-calibre international companies willing to partner with Ceram Polymerik to develop superior fire-protection products. We're delighted to be working in partnership with the CRC for Polymers and Ceram Polymerik team."

Potential fire-protection applications of the composites being investigated or developed by Ceram Polymerik include:

- compounds for extrusion or injection moulding;
- door and window components;
- gap seals for concrete wall panels;
- ducting and building penetrations;
- structural steel protection;
- fire protection in marine and transport;
- partitions, ceilings and wall linings;
- equipment security;
- fire barriers for material storage; and
- protection from incendiary devices.

"Passive fire protection is a big global market, and our technology can address a segment of it worth \$3 billion or more," says Ceram Polymerik's Dr Thomson. "We're receiving a lot of interest from large companies both in Australia and overseas."

Ceram Polymerik is adapting the technology to a range of applications. Some of this activity is being carried out within the CRC for Polymers, with CSIRO's Greg Griffin making a substantial contribution through his modelling of the performance of ceramifying polymers in fires. The company's first commercial product, a fire-resistant material for seals around windows in fire doors, is scheduled to enter the market in 2006. Ceram Polymerik is also working on a range of PVC-extruded profiles for fire doors and other fire-protection products, as well as foam insulation with ceramifying properties.

"The main uses are in the building industry, but we also see applications in ferries, cargo and passenger ships, in trucks, trains and cars and even in aircraft," Dr Thomson says. "There are also specialist uses in the defence sector."

"In conventional plastic and rubber composites, inorganic components are widely used as fillers. When burnt in a fire, these conventional polymers leave behind a powdery ash, which provides little or no fire protection. Our ceramifying technology aims to compartmentalise or contain the fire, to reduce its speed and ferocity and give people a better chance to get clear."

The success of the new ceramifying polymer products is the result of excellent teamwork across Australian science and industry, Dr Dagley says. "The wonderful thing about CRCs is that they are able to bring together the best teams in the country to develop technology that can lead to new products, and in turn, export dollars and jobs."

The ceramifiable polymer technology won a CRC Association award for excellence in innovation in 2004.

APPLICATION Polymers that form a solid protective and insulating ceramic layer when they melt

BENEFIT Fire prevention applications in buildings, ships, vehicles, and industrial and defence equipment – for example, electric cabling and fire door seals

For further information contact: **CSIRO Enquiries**

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BUILDING DESIGN: Working Out With the Stars

By Jason Major

New software is helping building designers achieve five-star standards for energy efficiency.

As Australia grapples with reducing its greenhouse gas emissions, new software is helping building designers meet tough new national building standards that require new homes to reach a five-star standard for energy efficiency.

The star rating is based on the sum of a home's annual heating and cooling requirements; more stars mean it is more comfortable and energy-efficient. Some Australian states are already using software to help implement existing energy-efficiency laws, but the software tools have limitations and have been the subject of controversy.

CSIRO has developed AccuRate – software that more precisely assesses the heating and cooling energy-efficiency of even complex building designs and overcomes many of the limitations of the software in use now.

"AccuRate will play a key role in future building regulation and affect the design and construction of Australian homes," says the leader of the software's development team, Dr Angelo Delsante of the Future Cities research theme of CSIRO Manufacturing and Infrastructure Technology.

NatHERS, BERS and FirstRate are the software tools used today to calculate a building's energy efficiency. AccuRate is a greatly improved version of NatHERS and will replace it when it becomes commercially available early this year. The soon-to-be-upgraded versions of BERS and FirstRate will run the calculation engine that powers AccuRate.

Overseeing this push for greener homes is the Australian Building Codes Board, the national regulatory body for the building industry, and the Nationwide House Energy Rating Scheme (NatHERS – the same as the software). The scheme is a collaborative one between the Australian Government and state and territory governments, and is managed by the Australian Greenhouse Office.

Two of AccuRate's important improvements are its modelling of natural ventilation and its incorporation of extra climatic zones – in fact all 69 for which the Bureau of Meteorology has sufficient weather data.

Natural ventilation is a vital strategy for reducing use of air conditioners. Good ventilation flushes heat from a building and provides cooling air movement. For example, an indoor air speed of one metre per second can have a cooling effect of 3.8°C.

The improved natural ventilation model rewards good design practice in hot and humid climates. Australian building codes have efficiency standards based on just eight climatic zones. With weather data from 69 locations, AccuRate will be able to home in on specific towns or locations, making this aspect of its calculations highly responsive to the local climate. AccuRate can also model up to 50 living spaces within a home. The NatHERS software can model only four.

AccuRate was tested using the International Energy Agency BESTEST protocol, a powerful tool for revealing program bugs or deficiencies. "AccuRate compared well against BESTEST's eight reference programs from Europe and the US," says Dr Delsante.

Just to ensure all bugs were eliminated from the system, hundreds of building designers and builders around Australia, including members of Master Builders Australia, the Royal Australian Institute of Architects and the Building Designers Association of Australia, participated in a real-world trial of AccuRate.

Bernard Hockings, from the Association of Building Sustainability Assessors, who managed the trial, says: "To be able to improve the design and construction of a building you need to analyse, measure and compare options. AccuRate is giving us a high level of accuracy and sophistication."

Victoria was the first state to introduce a mandatory five-star rating for all new homes. Sustainability Victoria has commissioned a number of studies into the cost-benefit of five-star homes. One study calculates such homes will save \$30–40 million in energy bills, or about \$210 per household a year, and boost the economy by having more money invested directly into homes, for example through the purchase of insulation and improved glazing.

Most of these products are made in Australia, which directly benefits the Australian economy and helps increase employment. A second study says that within five years five-star homes will reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 200,000 tonnes a year, the equivalent of taking 45,000 cars off the road.

And for those worried about the extra cost of a five-star home, a Building Commission Victoria analysis says that for the average 250 square-metre Victorian home, achieving a five-star energy rating adds just 0.6 per cent to the cost of the new house.

APPLICATION AccuRate, a new CSIRO-developed software tool, is helping building designers meet tough new national building standards

BENEFIT The software assesses the heating and cooling energy-efficiency of even complex building designs

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METALS: Healing Powers

By Jason Major

Researchers have discovered metals that can quickly self-repair cracks and respond to fatigue Stress and fatigue force a rupture. Immediately, a repair mechanism kicks in and the healing begins. 'Heal thyself' is a natural trait of living things, but this self-healing is also possible with metal, and has caught the attention of the world's aerospace and transport research scientists and engineers.

However, disregard thoughts of a liquid metal 'Terminator' appearing from a laboratory any time soon. The investigation into self-healing metals is still blue sky research that almost never began, because the self-healing mechanism seemed so obvious when it was first observed it was thought that someone must have already found and exploited it.

CSIRO and a number of international teams – including close collaborators at the Delft University of Technology, Netherlands, and Monash University – are now working on understanding and controlling this mechanism at the atomic level. If they succeed – and they are tantalisingly close – metals that can quickly self-repair cracks and respond to fatigue will be used to improve the performance of metal components. This will expand the scope of design and applications of these metals.

"Such metals could have an important application in components used in hard-to-access areas or those that are expensive to maintain," says Dr Roger Lumley, research scientist and project leader with CSIRO Manufacturing and Materials Technology (formerly CSIRO Manufacturing and Infrastructure Technology).

Testing so far has shown, under certain conditions, up to a tenfold increase in the useable life of metals showing self-healing behaviour during fatigue.

Dr Lumley first observed the self-healing mechanism 10 years ago as a PhD student at the University of Queensland when he was testing the effects of different thermal processes on metal behaviour. However, it took him until this year to have a report on it published in peer-reviewed literature.

"What we observed was, we thought, so obvious, that it must have been reported on before," Dr Lumley says. "The mechanism was textbook solid-state metallurgy with much of the background theory for it appearing in the 1950s, but nobody seemed to have taken the next step."

It was not until he was working with CSIRO and using the same mechanism for improving fatigue life of metal that colleagues pointed out to him that he was onto something new and potentially significant. CSIRO is now funding Dr Lumley's further research in this area.

Metallurgical heresy

Metallurgists have a philosophy that the more stable a metallic alloy, the better it is at resisting environmental and service life stresses such as fatigue and creep

(changing shape at elevated temperature).

What Dr Lumley proposes is almost heretical: create an unstable metal, one that takes advantage of the features a more stable metal is designed to avoid.

"To achieve self-healing in metals, you need the metal to be relatively unstable," he says. "This instability allows the metal to respond or adapt favourably to its service conditions, something a stable metal will not do."

But unlike living organisms that come with an in-built repair mechanism, a metal must have self-healing designed into it. Dr Lumley works with aluminium alloys, but says the mechanism should, in theory, apply more widely.

Metals and alloys are known to degrade and lose functionality during service. Factors shortening the service life of these materials are internal defects and changed surface conditions, for example, corrosion and wear. To improve the mechanical properties of aluminium alloys, manufacturers use heat treatments to age and stabilise the metal.

A self-healing metal's secret is its combination of alloying elements, such as copper, zinc, magnesium or silver, and how these solute elements interact in the metal matrix during heat treatment. Controlled solute instability creates a metal that is capable of further change triggered by loading conditions.

In a self-healing metal, areas of fatigue or stress such as tiny cracks – sometimes only tens of atoms in length – create what are termed high free-energy sites. The alloying elements are moved to these sites and, in the case of a tiny crack, will come out of solution as small crystallites to fill or repair the crack.

One of the primary research tasks now is to enhance the self-healing process and properly understand, control and exploit it. CSIRO researchers have had success with some experimental alloys and are homing in on the optimum processing conditions. Although the philosophy and research into self-healing metals is still embryonic, CSIRO and its collaborators are already looking for opportunities to demonstrate the effectiveness of these metals in practical situations.

APPLICATION Self-healing metal – combining alloying elements and determining how these interact in the metal matrix during heat treatment – has the ability to quickly repair cracks or respond to fatigue

BENEFIT Improvements in the performance of metal components under loading stress



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BUILT ENVIRONMENT: A Boost for Timber

By David Adams

A new software tool will demonstrate wood's credentials as an environmentally and economically attractive building material.

The capacity to know in advance the likely life-cycle performance of building materials could give the timber industry a new competitive edge in its efforts to increase the use of wood in construction. A new software tool called TimberLife tells asset managers, designers, engineers and builders the likely lifespan of a timber construction, in any climatic zone, enabling them to predict with accuracy the performance of new or planned buildings.

The design and assessment software is based on a world-first set of service-life models, which have been developed in a collaborative national research program that has been running over the past 10 years.

Dr Greg Foliente, leader of the Asset Performance and Sustainability team at CSIRO Manufacturing and Infrastructure Technology (CMIT), says the scenario-based software allows a user to estimate the likely lifespan of timber according to the mix of materials being used, the type and location of construction and, in some cases, the type and frequency of maintenance.

Dr Foliente says the TimberLife software incorporates data on 80 species of timber, with distinctions between sapwood and outer and inner heartwood, as well as the effects of wood preservatives.

He says the 10-year project – which was partly prompted by a growing trend within the regulatory environment in Australia and overseas to implement durability requirements in future building codes – is the first of its kind in the world.

Funded by the timber industry through the Forest and Wood Products Research and Development Corporation (FWPRDC), the project's research partners have included CSIRO, Timber Queensland, Forests NSW and private consultants.

It has involved researchers from different fields and experts in three states, contributing knowledge and data from field exposure experiments (some over a 30-year period and estimated to have cost \$10 million), laboratory tests and actual construction.

Other national and international experts have also been consulted on timber degradation. Statistical techniques have been used to develop models for predicting how long timber will last in a construction.

"It can be a pergola, a bridge, a house or a utility pole anywhere in Australia," says Dr Foliente.

FWPRDC executive director Dr Glen Kile says the ability to predict timber's lifespan is a key to increasing its use in construction. "It's becoming more important for the building industry to predict product quality and lifespan," he says. "Having this tool enables builders and designers to



do this, which increases their confidence in timber use."

The long-running research program has also included the development of timber degradation and fastener corrosion hazard maps (for Australia) and various engineering models that take into account differing conditions in terms of 'exposure to the elements'. Different conditions have differing consequences for timber decay.

These models include the effects of termites and marine borers, as well as how different environmental conditions affect the metal fasteners that hold timber together.

As well as the TimberLife software (due to be on the market soon), the CSIRO team, working closely with industry partners, has used the service-life model to develop a series of prescriptive recommendations or guidelines that can be used to determine a timber's lifespan in relation to a set series of applications.

The software comes with a sophisticated set of asset management tools that can be used to balance the risk of non-performance or failure against cost and maintenance over a specified time period.

Colin MacKenzie, Timber Queensland's technical manager, who ran the project, says the project outcomes and final products will form the basis for timber service life prediction for decades to come.

"It will raise the confidence of designers and specifiers in the durability and performance of timber, which in turn should lead to increased and more efficient use of timber and wood-based products," he says.

The project has already received international recognition. Dr Jerry Winandy, of the Forest Products Laboratory at the USDA Forest Service in the US, says the predictive models are the first of their kind for timber and are a milestone for wood engineering. "Engineers in every structural material around the world are now demanding that serviceability and durability be given equal consideration as structural integrity."

He says the Australian research has been the first major step within the wood engineering community to specifically address this demand.

APPLICATION TimberLife tells asset managers, designers, engineers and builders the likely lifespan of a timber construction, in any climatic zone

BENEFIT The software tool will demonstrate wood's credentials as an environmentally and economically attractive building material.

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MEETINGS 2007

The proposed meetings of the ASBC for the year 2007 are:

20th March	The Tudor, Box Hill
12th June	The Tudor, Box Hill
14th August	The Tudor, Box Hill
16th October	The Tudor, Box Hill
December	Partners Night --(TBA)

YOUR DETAILS

Have your contact details changed? If so please advise us:-

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OUR WEBSITE

www.buildingconsultant.net

SUBMISSIONS TO ASBC NEWS

If you have any articles that may be of interest to other members, they may be reprinted from other publications, or if you have the writing bug, please write about your experiences. All submissions to the Editor, Robert Quick:

Email: rquick@bigpond.net.au
 Fax to: 03 9537 2339
 Post to: ASBC Newsletter
 C/- Robert Quick
 307 Beaconsfield Parade
 Middle Park Vic. 3206

The deadline for submissions to be included in the next newsletter is 28 February 2007.

Everything has a gender. You may not know that many non-living things have a gender. e.g.

Freezer Bags - Male, because they hold everything in, but you can see right through them.

Photocopiers - Female, because once turned off, it takes a while to warm them up again. They are an effective reproductive device if the right buttons are pushed, but they can wreak havoc if the wrong buttons are pushed.

Tyres - Male, because they go bald and they are often over-inflated.

Hot Air Balloons - Male, because, to get it to go anywhere, you have to light a fire under it, and of course, there's lots of hot air.

Sponges - Female, because they're soft, squeezable and retain water.

Railway Stations - Male, because they use the same old lines to pick people up.

Hourglass - Female, because over time, the weight shifts to the bottom.

Hammer - Male, because it hasn't changed much over the last 5,000 years, but it's still handy to have around.

MEMBER PROFILE

JOHN R COGHLAN Treasurer



- When did you join ASBC**
Joined ASBC at it's formation some 30 years ago.
- How long have you been a building consultant?**
40 years
- What aspects do you specialise in?**
All aspects of building inspections, contractual matters and dispute resolution – arbitration, mediation and adjudication.
- What has been the highlight of your period as a building consultant?**
The growth in the importance and acceptance of building consulting as a profession.
- What is the funniest situation that has occurred to you as a building consultant?**
I haven't found my time in building consulting to have a funny side. It is a serious business with disputing parties suffering real stress and anxiety to the extent suicide is contemplated. They need our sympathetic support.
- Do you believe that the building industry needs improvement? If so, in what way?**
I believe that the building industry is in serious need of improvement. For too many in the industry, their knowledge is limited to what they learnt in the years in which they trained. Because the work experience in the year of training is increasingly in specialised areas of the industry they do not have the broad, basic, hands on knowledge. These employees with the passing of time become supervisors and their lack of knowledge is passed onto the next generation. Efforts to rectify these problems by continuing professional development fail because those who attend the training are those who already know and not those who need to increase their knowledge.
- What is your family situation?**
I live with my wife of 40-odd years. I have 8 children, 16 grandchildren and 3 great grandchildren who visit us regularly but thankfully do not live with us.
- What do you do for relaxation?**
In between periods of working I watch television – usually crime or war stories – play computer games and sleep.
- Do you have any hobbies or play any sport?**
I don't play any sport now but I am a keen cricket fan and strong Carlton supporter – Go Blues! I have a large Australian Stamp collection which, if I ever retire, I will be able to spend many months in sorting and categorising. My major activity away from work is my Christian witness. I am an active and regular attendee and a lay leader in the Anglican Church.
- Do you have a favourite restaurant?**
My favourite restaurant is Enrik's in Blackburn. My wife and I lunch there every Sunday after church unless we have a family engagement.