

Christmas Newsletter 2012

drsteve@drsteveburroughs.com.au

Ph: 61-414-625164

Quarterly newsletter Dr Steve Burroughs
ISSUE 04 December 2012



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Steve & Jane, June 2012, 40th
Wedding Anniversary in the
Flinders Ranges, South Australia.

Seasons Greetings

I hope you and all your coworkers, family, and friends have a lovely holiday season filled with joy and meaning. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to work and/or share with you this year. It has been an honour and a valuable experience for me. I wish you a wonderful Christmas and a Happy New Year filled with all good things.

What follows are some of my professional highlights from 2012.

Research Activates

During the year I have prepared several abstracts for conferences that are coming up in 2013. My abstract for the NOCMAT (NON-Conventional Materials And Technologies) conference (to be held in March in João Pessoa, Brazil) was accepted earlier in the year. The full paper, entitled “Sustainable and Affordable Housing for Indigenous Populations in Remote Regions: A Case Study from Northern Australia” has now been prepared and is being considered by the NOCMAT committee.

I have also had two abstracts accepted for the CESB13 conference in Prague, for which I am on the scientific committee. The first is for a keynote address, entitled “Design of an Environmentally Sustainable Business and Cultural Centre for Indigenous People in Yarrabah Community, Australia”. This paper examines the design of the proposed Yarrabah multi-purpose centre with respect to environmental, economic, and cultural sustainability, with the aim of producing a building that holds both cultural significance and environmental integrity. The second abstract is for a session paper entitled “Post-Construction Review of Environmentally Sustainable Housing for Indigenous People in Nguiu Community, Australia.” This paper reports the findings of a review of four houses in the remote community of Nguiu, emphasising environmental design features and performance, construction materials and methods, and cultural aspects.

During 2012 I have also reviewed several articles submitted to journals including Construction and Building Materials and Journal of Green Building, and have reviewed abstracts for the CESB13 conference.

During 2013 I hope to pull together some data for compressed earth blocks and have a look at aspects of their strength and durability and the factors that affect these parameters.



Last minute addition to newsletter

December 14, 2012

Prof. Bassam Abdel-Karim Abu-Hijleh, Dean and Atkins Chair, Head of the Sustainable Design of the Built Environment Programme and Chair of the SB13 Dubai Conference has extended an invitation to myself which I have accepted to server as a member of the International Technical committee for the SB13 Dubai Conference.

This conference will focus on the issues and challenges facing the Green Agenda in the MENA & Asia region in general and the gulf region in particular. Countries in this region face different challenges than those faced by the Western & Developed countries. These challenges require a different approach from what is prevalent in the West and most conferences. Thus the papers in this conference will bringing a new perspective which will hopefully complete what is not addressed by other SB13 conferences.

Hope to see you this coming 2013 calendar year either, Brazil in March, Prague in June or Dubai next December.





Traditional Owner Sam Zaro visits Dr Steve in Canberra.

Sam and Steve relaxing in a sustainable earth home designed and built by Steve in 1990

Education Activities

At the University of Canberra, I have been involved in several faculties including the Education Faculty, Landscape Architecture Faculty, and Architecture Faculty. It has been rewarding working with students on various projects. I obtained the services of three students finishing year two to accompany me to Cherbourg Aboriginal Council Shire in Queensland to help with an education program related to the Material Recycling Facility (MRF). The students are developing some education programmes for the elementary students years one through seven. In October, the Traditional Owner (TO) of the Wunta aboriginal corporation visited Canberra after meeting me on his patch a month earlier. The TO is keen to work with the Architecture Faculty through me to help prepare concepts for an eco-tourism retreat on the Nesbit River in Far North Queensland. This design studio would take place during the winter semester of the 2013 university year involving the fourth and fifth year students

In February 4 Landscape Architecture students and three students from Education will accompany myself and UC staff member to give advice and help support the community of Cherbourg.



Dr Steve outside Cherbourg on some figurative style decorative art sculptures of turtles.



Dr Steve in Cherbourg Queensland

Business Navigator Imitative Consultant Kim MacDonald visits Dr Steve at one of his rammed earth homes in Burra, New South Wales



Kim MacDonald and Sam Zaro outside a rammed earth home designed and built by Dr Steve in 1990.

The outside veranda and inside floors are poured of earth using the same soil as the rammed earth walls.



On the Peninsula Development Road (PDR) heading North to Weipa. 800 k's North of Cairns, Queensland.

Projects/Consultancy

The year has been busy with various projects, including those at Cherbourg, Yarrabah, and Nguiu.

Cherbourg

This involves a scoping study and project management of a Material Recycling Facility in Cherbourg, SE Queensland, on behalf of the Cherbourg Council. The project has been evolving rapidly. Staged implementation diagrams have been prepared and issued to council, and an design and feasibility consultant have been engaged. A waste audit document is currently being drawn up, and the audit should be completed by late January 2013. Students from the University of Canberra will be involved in various aspects of the project.

Yarrabah

I have completed the scoping and feasibility studies for a new Yarrabah Business Centre on behalf of the Yarrabah Shire Council. These studies included concept design, potential tenancy arrangements, strategic issues and constraints, benefits to the community, the costs of construction and operation of the centre, and its potential income. The overall feasibility assessment recommendations are being considered by council.

Nguiu

On behalf of Indigenous Business Affairs (IBA), I completed a two-year post-construction review of four houses built in the remote community of Nguiu (Bathurst Island, Northern Territory), constructed under the Homes on Indigenous Land programme. The review found many positive aspects related to the design and construction of the homes, materials used, environmental features, cultural suitability, occupant satisfaction, and value for money achieved. The report should inform IBA regarding future housing projects.

Fuel tank at Archer River on the PDR. Diesel \$2.60 per litre.



To all my colleagues around the world, Australian clients and friends.
Cheers and all the best for the New Year .
Dr Steve Burroughs