



President's Note

Hello members and welcome to another edition of our newsletter.

Hard to believe a year has already passed, and it has been an absolute pleasure through my first Presidential tenure. We've been lucky enough to receive a few new additions to the committee and hope they've enjoyed their time thus far.

Big thank you to Barry, Michael, and Robyn for breaking bread and forming a relationship with Tony Issacs; in a pursuit to research energy rating systems in sustainable building material. Exciting news for the NMA, and Earth Building communities Australia wide. Further information in the newsletter. It has been a busy year planning and publishing yet another mud infused paperback... our brand new Trade Guide, which we are hoping to issue before the end of this year. Thank you to the committee members Keryn, Lou, Michael, and Andrew; whom have helped so much over the last year. Not to forget Eleisha Yau for her graphic design inputs, and mammoth effort collecting, and collating the information.



Once again we are indebted to the Bendigo Bank for the very important financial support we receive, and we are hoping to build another important partnership with the Shire of Nillumbik into the future as we start to tackle a number of challenges. Thanks once again to the Eltham High School for putting on a wonderful tour of our beautiful mudbrick homes around Eltham.

Last but definitely not least, thanks to all the support from our members. It's always exciting hearing about renovations or building plans from our members across Australia. We hope we're doing our part and keeping you informed and passionate about getting your hands dirty.

Hope to see you at the AGM!

Ryan Peters
NMA President

Eltham Mudbrick House Tour

The location of this years Eltham Mudbrick Tour is in St Andrews. It is the 10th anniversary of Eltham High School running the tour (and impeccably so!) and takes place on Sunday 20th October. The tour supports the Eltham High School's renowned music program.



The tour will commence at the St Andrews Market Hall, which has ample off road parking. A free shuttle bus service is provided manned by our volunteers to take you between the houses at your own pace, just catch the next shuttle bus to the next house! You will have an opportunity to watch Eltham High School musicians performing in the St Andrews Hall prior to embarking on the shuttle bus.



This year's tour includes a two storey heritage listed mudbrick home, that was last on the Tour 30 years ago, a John Pizzi designed off-the-grid mudbrick home, a two storey Alistair Knox mudbrick house that survived the 2009 bushfires, a recently built mudbrick home designed to new bushfire regulations, and a modern attic apartment. The tour will finish at the recently built mudbrick business cluster at Scott Street in St Andrews, enabling you to visit the local baker (with his 1850 vintage oven), Punch wine room, a boutique cheese maker, A Boy Named Sue Restaurant and the pub.

Tickets are available soon – follow Facebook to be notified of ticket release:

<https://www.facebook.com/ElthamMudbrickTour> or to www.elthammudbricktour.org to find out more and to view photos from previous years.

Notice of AGM

Wednesday 16th October 7-8pm at the Eltham Library (Panther Place Eltham)

Drinks & food provided. RSVP Mike (0417 599 677) by Friday October 11 for catering purposes

Recruiting Volunteers!

The NMA is recruiting volunteers for the Committee. If you have a background in administration (or even a notion of how to take minutes!), marketing/social media, finance or any other applicable skills please get in touch with Michael Young on 0417 599 677 Nomination forms will be available on the night of the AGM.

Projecting Mudbrick into the 21st Century

We are all aware of the low embodied energy of Mudbrick... very low in comparison to some of mudbrick's more recent brick cousins. We are all aware of the many sustainability aspects of a building that may not be included in the First Rate thermal assessment. The question becomes..."Can we develop a framework that provides sufficient quantification of the evidence for proposing an alternative solution for assessing the energy effectiveness of a building using Mudbrick as the primary material?"

The NMA has been in discussion with Tony Isaacs in pursuit of such an alternative means for capturing the other benefits of mudbrick houses that contribute to the objectives of the National Construction Code. Tony is a Building Sustainability Consultant and one of the original developers of the First Rate software (and the NatHERS scheme) used in rating a building for regulatory compliance. Tony has now prepared a preliminary Report for the NMA to outline a proposal for using a Proforma as an alternative means for the thermal assessment of a mudbrick house.

A 6-Star rating, or better, can be attained for a mudbrick house, and if this is achieved, then the mudbrick building can follow the normal path toward energy compliance. However, the cost of modifying a particular mudbrick design to attain 6-Star rating can prove expensive, when the design could be argued as being more sustainable than many others that have attained NCC compliance via First Rate assessment. A proforma has been proposed that can be used to show that the mudbrick design demonstrates compliance using an alternative assessment. This alternative could demonstrate the sustainable characteristics such as:



- a: The much lower embodied energy of mudbrick than, say, a baked-brick veneer wall.
- b: The advantages performance in summer of mudbrick over a conventional house construction, with a corresponding reduction in peak energy loads.
- c: The cost benefit in attaining compliance with a mudbrick house.
- d: The general differences with mudbrick houses such as the relative floor-plan sizes, the type of heating generally used, occupant behaviour and attitudes, etc..

It will, of course, be necessary to quantify these attributes through research and documenting. The NMA, and its members, have already been involved in some related work with University studies to help quantify some of these attributes. Tony Isaacs is well qualified to work with the NMA in tying some of these aspects together into a cohesive document, and in a format that may be acceptable to the regulatory bodies. The aim will be to produce a proforma that can be filled in to gain an alternative compliance with the NCC.

The research and documentation will mean we need to raise funds for the study program... estimated at \$20,000. It may be that NMA Members can assist in the compilation of one or more of the above characteristics, including:

- 1: The quantity of mudbrick-house building permits issued over past years to the present.
- 2: The embodied energy of a mudbrick wall c.f. a baked-brick wall.
- 3: Climate Resilience and Peak-Load data for a mudbrick c.f. conventional construction.
- 4: Cost-Benefit ratio for achieving a 6-Star rating for a typical mudbrick house.
- 5: Statistics revealing the sizes of mudbrick dwellings.
- 6: Environmental and living attitudes of mudbrick dwellers.

If you have some ideas that relate to these or other similar aspects of mudbrick building, please contact the NMA, or perhaps come and chat to the Committee at the NMA Annual General Meeting.

Mudbrick Book Lays Out New Course

The Diamond Valley Leader wrote an article about Nillumbik's history in Mudbrick, renowned across the world, being set for a bright future thanks in part to the Nillumbik Mudbrick Association's new publication "Mudbrick Design Guidelines". Engineer Robin Bliem's compilation, Architect Barry Pearce's illustrations and input from builder Michael Young, have produced a long overdue set of guidelines, dedicated to the design and construction of Mudbrick buildings. Robin says "This is just the beginning of a bunch of new initiatives that we are undertaking that include new testing of Mudbricks, its great attributes of fire resistance, energy efficiency, strength and life cycle". Barry went further and said "there are really significant reasons for considering Mudbrick for new homes. Apart from the obvious visual appeal and versatility that Mudbrick offers, both in traditional "Eltham style Muddies" or for cutting edge modern homes, Mudbrick is the most ecologically sustainable and environmentally supportive option available".



Books are on sale for \$40 each (or cheaper in quantity) and available through the office of R Bliem and Associates, Unit 9, 23 Dudley Street, Eltham. Phone 03 9431 4630.

No Practically Green Festival this year!

We have experienced a wonderful opportunity to platform Mudbrick at the Practically Green Festival for the last 12 years. Along with a host of other environmental businesses and community groups, we have enjoyed the whole festive nature of the event and have benefited by the opportunity to spread the word on all things Mud. The NMA is currently confused by the Council's priorities regarding this important event and note that they have not arranged the Festival for this year. They say they will be going out to the public to find a partner and although the NMA has made an early



overture to Council, we await the expression of interest

process that they say they will undertake. Let's hope their focus is to invigorate the Festival.

We will **watch this space**. In the meantime, any one that is interested in helping with the Festival, please email mymudbrick@hotmail.com.

There are over 2,000 Mudbrick homes across Nillumbik dating back as far as the 1940's. Mudbrick is a very important local industry.



Christof's Mudbrixicon - Earth building terms explained by a dilettante

On a lighter note, thanks Christof for these few funnies that I reckon a lot of us can relate to!

Bank: a looming and unstable structure that should be retained or it could collapse on your build at any time; the larger, the more dangerous. Also a mound of earth.

Budget: to give something a whack with a sledgehammer to make it line up.

Building permit: when your partner gets on board with your cockamamie dream.

Building premit: completing aspects of the build prior to council approval, (fine if you get away with it), or spousal approval (not fine).

Certificate of Occupancy: apparently this document is awarded when you have lived in your muddie for more than a decade.

Civil Engineer: an expert who doesn't rudely treat you like an idiot.

Colourbond: to totally agree with your partner on paint finishes.

Dead level: a broken tool your carpenter left on site.

Deadline: a broken promise ...

Disappointment: when the building inspector doesn't show up at the agreed time.

Distress: to artificially age (applies to materials and people).

Energy efficiency: building a home of proportions that you don't exhaust yourself with cleaning or commuting to the bathroom.

Engineer: a generic term for anyone who understands electronics, designs roads, grasps aerodynamics, works with chemicals, manipulates genes, drives a choo choo train or, occasionally, is qualified to advise you on structural aspects of your build. Pick the last one.

Hold up: to support.

Hold up: to undermine - go figure.

Lime wash: cleaning out your Corona bottles.

Load bearing: Carrying mudbricks up a ladder.

Lost the plot: stockpiling so much "useful" and "free" material that you can no longer find your building site.

Non-Load bearing: getting someone else to carry those mudbricks up the ladder.

Owner builder: Two ends of a spectrum, practically impossible to achieve at the same time.

Plans: a drawing of what your house should have looked like.

Plumb: to establish true vertical by lining up with an existing structure with your thumb.

Plump: an upright post that is fat enough so that some part of it must be vertical (see plumb)

Post and Beam: proud. smiling progress pictures on social media.





Annual Membership Application Form to June 2020

(Please complete with BLOCK LETTERS and email to andrewrichardevans@hotmail.com)

Your relationship to mudbrick is:					
Owner / Occupier	Builder	Trade / Supplier	Architect	General Interest	Other
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Your details:					
Name:					
Company Name (if applicable):					
Postal Address:					
Phone:					
Email:					
Annual Membership Fee:					
		Qty	Total		
<input type="checkbox"/>	New Membership @ \$20				
<input type="checkbox"/>	Renewal Membership @ \$10				
<input type="checkbox"/>	New or Renewal Membership PLUS Mudbrick Construction Guidelines booklet @ \$50				
How to Pay:					
EFT:			Cheque:		
Bank:	Bendigo Bank		Payable to: Nillumbik Mudbrick Association		
BSB:	633 000		PO Box 385,		
Account:	139 530 935		Eltham VIC 3095		
Desc:	NMA & your name				
Date transferred:			Date posted:		

RENEW NOW

The NMA invites all our current members to renew their membership for 2019/20. We also welcome new members from within and outside the Nillumbik Shire who share with us a passion and commitment for the future of the earth building industry. Become a member today! Complete this form and email to andrewrichardevans@hotmail.com or post with your membership fee. Please note no receipts will be issued unless requested. Your fees assist us advocate for improved recognition of mudbrick as a building medium. Thank you for your