



Timber Design Awards.

The winners of the 2014 Australian Timber Design Awards were announced on Thursday 18 September at the Australian National Maritime Museum in Darling Harbour, Sydney. The overall award went to Bates Smart (in collaboration with Irwin Alsop Group) for Dandenong Mental Health Facility.

This exceptional project comprises a series of linked pavilions surrounding internal glazed courtyards. The extensive use of natural timber internally in walls and ceilings and externally in cladding and exposed structures gives the facility a residential, suburban character. This is enhanced by carefully landscaped courtyards and external garden areas.

Many well-known individuals from government, the timber industry, and the design community were on hand to enjoy the presentation night—the premier event in the Australian timber-design calendar.

For the full rundown on the awards visit this web site.

<http://www.timberawards.com.au/news>

Information courtesy of Australian Timber Design Awards.

Innovation for growth.

The following is an extract from Scoop Business news.

Research indicates innovation the linchpin to drive SME sales growth

Sydney, Australia, 1 September 2014: Australian small to medium enterprises (SMEs) are increasingly investing in innovation in a bid to improve productivity in a low growth environment.

According to the latest July 2014 Bibby Financial Services Barometer, more than half of SMEs surveyed (53.1%) are focused on undertaking innovation in the short to medium term, primarily to focus on future growth.

Almost one third of SMEs are committed to innovate in the next 12 months, while a further 21% intend to innovate over the medium term (after 12 months). Over 70% of SMEs say that innovation is important to compete with larger business.

Technological innovation is the main priority for medium sized business, with 67.4% of respondents citing this as a high priority. For small businesses, with between 5 and 19 employees, product innovation is a top priority (53.3%) and for micro businesses, with less than 5 employees, customer acquisition innovation is a top priority (51.5%).

The key benefits of innovation identified by SMEs include future growth; improving productivity; generating higher quality products and services; increased customer satisfaction and having more efficient work processes.

After reading this article I thought about our own business and what innovative things we do. For starters we have relatively modern machinery which helps to improve efficiency and safety. It has taken some years to get to this position as we have self funded a lot of our machinery upgrades. A slower process but means less exposure when things get tight. With our range of equipment our capacity both in volume of work and work type has increased meaning we can better meet the needs of the market. We have also been helped by the fact a lot of joineries these days outsource solid timber work, the field we specialise in. Last issue I talked about the serving trays we were prototyping. We have also made an internal door in Spotted Gum using the same techniques. We have pushed the limits of the material a bit but if it is successful we will be able to offer a range of new possibilities for our designers and builders. The door is currently undergoing assessment which should be finalised around February. Check it out on our Facebook page and stay tuned. Finally, we are looking at solar power for our business and converting our waste into firewood rather than landfill. We aren't setting the world on fire but in our own small way we are constantly striving to improve our business and services we offer.

That's all for another month. *Cheers Shaun*

See our new Spotted Gum door on our Facebook page. Check it out now.

If you have anything of interest you would like to show us please jump on Facebook and share it.

