



Building a Cob House Workshop

Bob Bennett MBE, UK
The Pratt Foundation/ISS Institute Fellow

Suitable for...

- Archaeologists
- Architects
- Bricklayers
- Conservators
- Builders
- Building surveyors
- Decorators
- Educationalists
from university and TAFE
- Engineers
- Environmentalists
- Government agencies
- Heritage adviser
- Heritage consultants
- Historians
- Interior designers
- Local government
- Manufacturers
- Professional associations
- Property owners
- Specifiers
- Stonemasons
- Suppliers
- Trades people
- Urban planners
- and post-graduates and
final year students

Fellowship Sponsor



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About the Workshop

The workshop aims to cover:

- Sampling and testing the soil for stability.
- Appropriate soil selection and preparation.
- Making a box for forming the bricks.
- Forming simple bricks with the use of the timber box.
- Design parameters for unstabilised earth structures such as cob.
- Laying out the plan.
- Constructing the walls.
- Techniques and details for windows, doors, corners and wallplates.
- Wall trimming.
- Aspects discussed will be door and window framing, roof construction and finishing techniques.

What are the advantages of building with cob?

- Energy efficiency
- Inexpensive
- “Buildability” -
- Creative - this is an excellent style of house to build for those with imagination and who are creative.



Along with Bob’s work on contemporary and historic buildings using lime-based building products, he designs and constructs cob houses.

Cob is a building material consisting of clay, sand, straw, water, and earth, similar to adobe. Cob is fireproof, resistant to seismic activity, and inexpensive. It can be used to create artistic, sculptural forms and has been revived in recent years by the natural building and sustainability movements.

Cob is an ancient building material, that has possibly been used for construction since man first housed himself. Cob structures can be found in a variety of climates across the globe; In the UK it is most strongly associated with counties of Cornwall in the West Country [and many other sites] where many homes have survived over 500 years and are still inhabited. Many old cob buildings can be found in Africa, the Middle East, Wales, Devon, Ireland, Cornwall, Brittany and some parts of the eastern United States.

Traditionally, English cob was made by mixing the clay-based subsoil with straw and water using oxen to trample it. The earthen mixture was then ladled onto a stone foundation in courses and trodden onto the wall by workers. The wall height would progress according to how long it took for the last course to dry. After drying, the walls would be trimmed and the next course built, with openings for doors and windows being placed as the wall takes shape...The thick walls provided excellent thermal mass which was easy to keep warm in winter and cool in summer. Walls with a high thermal mass value act as a temperature fly wheel inside the home...

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cob_\(building\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cob_(building))



The little cottage is a very old 'peasants' building in the New Forest which was King John's hunting ground all those years ago. The owner was probably 'tied' to the Land Lord and was either allowed to live free providing he worked for the Lord of the Manor or paid rent of about £2 per year. It is an earth structure (we call this construction 'cob') and has a thatched roof made of reed from the river bed.

Text and photo courtesy: Bob Bennett MBE



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With appreciative thanks



Mildura Rural City Council



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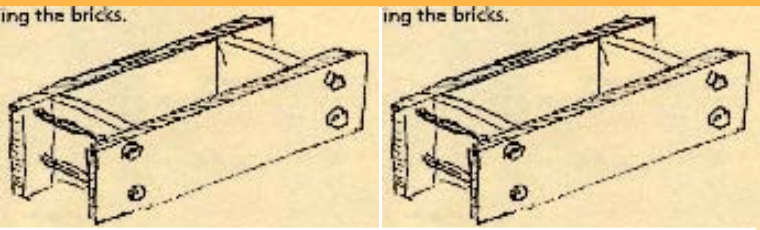
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NSW Office, NSW Department of Planning
RAIA ISS Institute thanks the RAIA for distributing to Victorian members via Vmail.



Registration Form

Building a Cob House Workshop

If you have not received an email or fax of confirmation, please contact the ISS Institute office on 9882 0055 to find out the status of your application - do not assume that because you have sent an application you are automatically enrolled in the conference

Post, email or fax to:

David Grasby, Project Officer, National Centre for Sustainability
Sunraysia Institute of TAFE, Mildura, Victoria

Ph +61 3 5022 3720 **Fax:** +61 3 5022 3698
Mob 0428 760 400 **Email** dgrasby@sunitafe.edu.au

[] **Building a Cob House Workshop**

Fees ISS Institute is sponsoring free registration

Date Friday 12th and Saturday 13th October 2007

Time 10.00am to 4.00pm

Venue Sun Festival site, Sunraysia Institute of TAFE,
Benetook Avenue, Mildura, Victoria.

Should you be interested in other activities being run by ISS Institute as part of Bob Benett's fellowship program in Melbourne, please contact the ISS Institute office for flyer and Registration forms on 03 9882 0055 or issi.ceo@pacific.net.au

[] **Ten years on... The Great Lime Revival Conference**

Friday 19th October 2007, 9.30am to 5.00pm

[] **Workshop 1 : Slaking and Mortars**

Wednesday 17th October 2007, 9.30am to 5.00pm

[] **Workshop 2 : Surface Treatments**

Thursday 18th October 2007, 9.30am to 5.00pm

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