



Earthen Ripples

A Hand Sculpted Cob Cottage Workshop



Join us on an inspiring journey, a journey that has filled our hearts with bliss, a journey that leaves ripples in our earth and mud in our souls. Let us show you the power of mud, the power of self-empowerment. Create your ripple in our earth, learn how to sculpt and build a home from the very earth you stand on. Take part in building a whimsical cob structure on a beautiful property at Crystal Waters, Queensland, Australia.

In nine intensive days we'll build a small 4m circular structure that has been started in experimental poured earth. The structure will include alcoves, seats, nooks, a reciprocal roof, earthen floors and perhaps a mud brick oven. We'll cover in depth all aspects of cob and the many techniques of building with cob including arches, details, shelving, furniture and earthen floors. You will learn construction of walls, installation of doors & windows, artistic details, earthen plasters and we will discuss earthen floors, roofing, foundations, siting and design.

There will also be site visits to other handmade houses in the area.

We will be incorporating ideas and things such as crystals, glass driftwood, etc from any course participants willing to participate, to imbue a unique and special building. We will source as much recycled, local, natural materials as possible. You'll leave confident enough to build a cob building of your own!

What is cob?

Cob is a structural composite of earth, water, straw, clay and sand, hand sculpted into buildings while still pliable. There are no forms as in rammed earth, no bricks as in adobe, no additives or chemicals and no need for machinery. The word cob comes from the Old English root, meaning 'a lump or rounded mass'. This term refers to the material itself, to buildings made of it, and to traditional building techniques used for centuries in Europe, in rainy, cold, windy climates as far north as the latitude of Alaska.

Cob is one of many methods for building with raw earth, the world's most common construction material. In simplicity of construction and freedom of design, cob surpasses adobe and related techniques such as rammed earth and compressed earth bricks. Since you don't need straight forms or rectilinear moulds, cob lends itself to organic shapes, curved walls, arches and vaults. Building with cob is a sensory and aesthetic experience much like sculpting with clay.

Our Instructors

Earthen Ripples consists of Michelle Stewart and Nick Theodore from South West Victoria, Australia. We are budding natural builders hoping to share our knowledge as we aspire to live in true harmony with Mother Nature and her cycles. Having built a whimsical cob cottage of our own and participated in many other building projects, we are passionate about sharing our skills and empowering people to be able to sculpt a home for themselves. A home that is free of life-long debt, that teaches us how to truly appreciate our earth and that shows us that a home is more than a material object, it is our cradle in the universe, a sacred space full to the brim with LIFE!

Earthen Ripples



A message from our host Jane:

I have called Crystal Waters home for nearly 20 years! Coming originally from England, with my husband, James, to escape the 'rat race' the (and the weather!) We spent a couple of years exploring the west coast and working in Darwin, me as a paediatric nurse James in construction. We had been checking out communities as we travelled and the birth of our first son focused us again to find somewhere to put down roots. James was done with the Darwin weather (!) so we headed off to Melbourne seeking our dream life! Fortunately the kombi-van broke down before we hit the cold and we spent some time wwoofing at Crystal Waters, loved the land, particularly the river, and the people and embraced the Permaculture principles: caring for the land, care of people and distributing abundance.

We bought an acre of sloping bladey grass! The past twenty years has seen the bladey grass paddock transform into a playground for three inquisitive children, and a place for the grown ups live in a more environmentally and socially conscious way. We have reforested the lot with native species, including bush foods, planting fruit trees and gardens and realising a dream to build our own home using materials such as earth, wood, stone and bamboo. The buildings include a rammed earth construction with a sod roof, a pole frame cabin with shakes and a recycled tin shed, which has been transformed into rooms for the boys. All this, with a mixture of expert help and volunteer labour, has imbued us with a unique home. I would love if you could join me on the next step of the adventure, learning to build with cob, creating another beautiful natural room.



Location

Crystal Waters, Queensland, Australia

Crystal Waters is set in 650 acres of beautiful bushland at the headwaters of the Mary River, 26Km from Maleny in south east Queensland. An environmentally and socially responsible rural subdivision, designed using Permaculture principles, Crystal Waters is home to more than 200 people of all ages and abounds with native wildlife.

For more information see the website: www.crystalwaters.org.au

Dates

Sunday May 10th till Monday May 18th

You are encouraged to come on Saturday the 9th to get tents set up and settled in for an early start on Sunday.

You are also welcome to stay until Tuesday the 19th

\$750 per person

\$680 if you book and pay by March 1st 2015

Children under 16 welcome, only food costs will need to be covered

The basic fee includes three meals a day

Camping space provided onsite free of charge

Limited on site rooms also available

and offsite accommodation at Crystal Waters Visitors Camping Area

Local residents in Crystal Waters please contact us for local discounts

A non-refundable \$200 deposit is required to reserve a space

Balance is due 3 weeks (April 19th) prior to the workshop start date

Withdrawals within 10 days of the workshop may forfeit the fee



If you would like to take part in this wonderful adventure please apply via email with your name, number and what inspired the desire to create your ripple... We will notify you if your application is successful and to sort out payments and the finer details. Space is limited to allow personalized hands on instruction.

For more details

email us at earthenripples@gmail.com

phone Michelle Stewart on 0416 187 267

or Nick Theodore on 0400 510 368

You can also check out our facebook page

[facebook.com/earthenripples](https://www.facebook.com/earthenripples)

Don't hesitate to call or email with any questions
In the meantime, a great book to read up on cob is
'The Hand Sculpted House, A Practical and Philosophical
Guide to Building a Cob Cottage'

Authors: Ianto Evans, Michael G. Smith and Linda Smiley

