

# Ontario Straw Bale Building Coalition

[www.osbbc.ca](http://www.osbbc.ca)

## Natural Building Conference 2013

March 16 & 17, 2013

## Presentations & Bio's



Tina Therrien (OSBBC)

### Opening Remarks – Natural Building for a Better Tomorrow

Saturday, March 16, 2013, 10:00 am

Tina Therrien

OSBBC Board Member, President

Camel's Back Construction

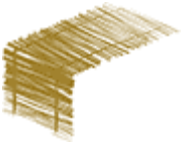
[www.strawhomes.ca](http://www.strawhomes.ca)

[strawbus@auracom.com](mailto:strawbus@auracom.com)

A former elementary school teacher, Tina began building with straw bales 14 years ago when she became a partner in Camel's Back Construction, Ontario's first straw bale construction company. She is currently sole proprietor of the company, and continues to build, plaster, teach workshops, and do presentations across the province. Her team of talented camels, who are most dedicated in the field of natural building, specialise in plasters, including earthen, lime, and tadelakt.

Tina has worked in the natural building field in Quebec, France and Thailand, and more recently, was involved in natural reconstruction efforts in Haiti. A new love of timber framing and a timber framer bring new direction to her personal world of work, and she continues to challenge herself in acquiring new skills.

A presenter at events for the Ontario Building Official's Association and the Timber Framers Guild, co-author of '*More Straw Bale Building*', one of the key organisers of the International Straw Bale Building Conference in 2006, and Chair of the Ontario Straw Bale Building Coalition, she remains actively involved in the natural building movement.



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Frank Tetterer (OSBBC)    Jacob Deva Racusin (NBNE)

## Straw Bale Building for a Northeast Climate

Saturday, March 16, 2013, 10:30 am

Frank Tetterer & Jacob Deva Racusin

A slideshow of homes and details, from Ontario and the North Eastern States, to kick off the discussion of building details for a cold, moist climate. Beyond LEED and PassivHaus, we stretch the limits of natural building materials to achieve comfort coziness, and minimize the use of petrochemicals, concrete and steel. A collaborative presentation, with a mix of Canuck and New England wise cracks!

## Frank Tetterer

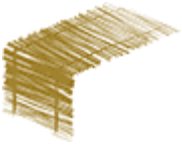
**OSBBC Board Member, Professional Members Liaison**

**Living Sol ~ Building and Design**    [www.livingsol.com](http://www.livingsol.com)    [info@livingsol.com](mailto:info@livingsol.com)

Frank was apparently born with a hammer and a saw in his hand. He had built many tree-forts, a chicken coup, a pinball machine, and a cedar strip canoe by the age of 16, in 1964. This indicated a clear path to study Architecture at the University of Delaware. But after working for a year on the layout of the "new" Toronto Star building, at Number One Young Street in '69, he exchanged his drafting table for a carpenter's tool belt, and has been working hands-on ever since.

With a wide range of artistic experiences, including shoe making, leatherworking, log building, stone fireplace construction, book binding, cabinet making, custom hardwood furniture, and nearly every type of construction experience, Frank is now active in custom residential design-and-build. His greatest delight is working with owner/builders, assisting them in realizing their dreams. He often designs half dozen homes each Winter for homebuilders all over Ontario. The firm's B.C.I.N. qualifies him to design and draft plans for application for building permits.

His construction crew, Living Sol ~ Building & Design, is an extremely unique grouping of building artists, who work in Renfrew County, near Algonquin Park. The crew excels in enthusiasm and personal commitment, and bring joyful energy to every off-grid home that they create. Sustainable construction is Frank's obsession. With over 26 years experience at living off-grid, he and his love and partner, Cheryl Keetch, have the know-how to live lightly, open-heartedly, and to live well.



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## Jacob Deva Racusin

**New Frameworks Natural Building**

[info@newframeworks.com](mailto:info@newframeworks.com)

Jacob Deva Racusin is co-owner of New Frameworks Natural Building, LLC, offering services in green remodeling, new construction, consultation, and education featuring natural building technologies. Through his work as a builder, consultant, and educator, Jacob is able to merge his passions for fine craft, ecological stewardship, relationship to place, and social justice. His goal in this work is to create a meaningful impact on the built environment in developing healthy, resilient communities. Jacob is an instructor at the Yestermorrow Design/Build School, where he is the former director of the Natural Building Intensive Program. A BPI-certified contractor and Certified Passive House Consultant, Jacob has conducted field research on moisture and thermal performance of straw bale wall systems, which is featured in the book *The Natural Building Companion* which he co-authored with Ace McArleton (Chelsea Green Publishing, 2012). He has lectured and presented at universities, conferences, and other events across the Northeast. Jacob lives with his family in Montgomery, VT, in a straw bale house on his permaculture-inspired homestead.



Mike Jones (OSBBC)



David Lanfear (NBNE)



Melinda Zytaruk (OSBBC)



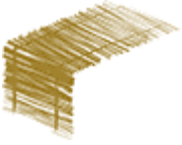
Ingrid Cryns (OSBBC)

## Natural Building Panel Retrofit

**Saturday, March 16, 2013, 1:30 pm**

**Mike Jones, David Lanfear, Melinda Zytaruk, Ingrid Cryns (OSBBC Panel Moderator)**

Four 15 minute presentations on divergent experiences of retrofitting buildings with a unique emphasis on natural building methods, including detailing problems, solutions, client challenges and more. With a lengthy question and Answer period afterwards, bring your notepads, insights or other questions you might be concerned or curious about – or email them to us in advance to include in our presentations or to start our Q & A with time to prepare responses! Hosted by OSBBC Board Member VP, Ingrid Cryns; send comments to [Ingrid@somaeearth.com](mailto:Ingrid@somaeearth.com).



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## Mike Jones

**Terra Construction**      [terraconstruction@gmail.com](mailto:terraconstruction@gmail.com)

**Mike Jones** resides in New Dundee, a small sleepy town southwest of Kitchener, Ontario with his partner Katherine and children Ella, Ava and Emmett. He currently teaches high school Construction and Woodworking in Cambridge, Ontario, and has been involved in the residential construction industry for about 13 years. He was an employee of Evolve Builders Group and other construction companies where he worked in sales, planning, management and as a lead labourer in all aspects of the construction process of new conventional and straw bale homes and additions. He also has a Red Seal as a Construction and Maintenance Electrician, a B.SC in Geography and B.Ed in Technological Studies.

On their rural property, Mike and Katherine first hatched the idea of a straw bale retrofit after estimating just how much building a new straw bale and timber frame home would cost. It would be a daunting process to build new - an existing home would take much labour to dismantle and it was unknown what materials the demolition would provide, but they were up for the challenge. After opening up a few walls, a diamond was revealed in this rough old home - it was constructed in such a way that a straw bale retrofit would work perfectly. It also had a hybridized timber framed floor structure and south exposure to boost passive solar gain – all of the things they wanted. Why build new? A straw bale retrofit it would be.

Since the gutting began in April 2006, they are still working on various details of their project which is part art project, part green building experimentation, and part reclamation project. Some of the elements include: a masonry heater fuelled from their own sustainably managed forest, hydronic heating, a green roof, reclaimed barn board flooring, terazzo countertops constructed with recycled glass, clay floors, earthen plasters, concrete plasters, alis clay paint finishes, reclaimed timber, lumber milled from their own property and many other examples of ecological responsible building practices. Although they feel the project will probably never be completed, they slowly labour on – in between diaper changes and wiping runny noses.

## David Lanfear

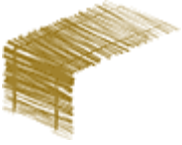
**Bale on Bale Construction**      [www.baleonbale.com](http://www.baleonbale.com)      [david@baleonbale.com](mailto:david@baleonbale.com)

**David Lanfear** builds straw bale buildings and designs green roofs in Western New York, the Northeastern US and midwest. He has been involved in dozens of projects in the Buffalo, NY area and has a goal of installing so many green roofs that whole neighborhoods disappear from google earth. He recently began teaching Green Building at Erie County Community College (ECC).

## Melinda Zytaruk M ES

**The Fourth Pig Workers Cooperative**      [www.fourthpig.org](http://www.fourthpig.org)      [info@fourthpig.org](mailto:info@fourthpig.org)

**Melinda Zytaruk** is the General Manager of the Fourth Pig Worker Co-op. She enjoys managing eco construction projects almost as much as troweling on a smooth coat of fresh earth plaster. Melinda has a Masters in Environmental Studies from York University focusing on community renewable energy and sustainability. Melinda was an intern at Solar Energy International and is a graduate of their Renewable Energy Education Program. She has been the general contract for several eco-renovations, and has worked on straw bale houses and designed and installed solar electric and hot water systems. A frequent presenter on energy efficiency and renewable energy, Melinda is on the board of Passive Buildings Canada and the Solar and Sustainable Energy Association of Canada.



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**Ingrid Cryns** BES, B Arch

**OSBBC Board Member, Vice President & Natural Building Retrofit Panel HOST**

**soma earth** [www.somaeearth.com](http://www.somaeearth.com) [info@somaeearth.com](mailto:info@somaeearth.com)

**Ingrid Cryns**, BES, B Arch, OAA, CBT, is the Founding Director of **soma earth**. **soma earth** is a holistic company which includes a broad scope of services and products that supports the building of relationships between body, mind, soul and the built environment. **soma earth ARCHITECT**, **soma earth TEACHINGS** & **soma earth BUILDING** are all part of the **soma earth** organization. **soma earth** also works collaboratively with a number of non-profit and social enterprises.

**soma earth ARCHITECT** is a pioneering architectural firm specializing in deep sustainable living through designing buildings that are energy efficient, with a low carbon foot print and low embodied energy. We specialize in healthy, EMF-Free, non-toxic natural building environments as well as how to build with straw bales! **soma earth TEACHINGS** offers workshops and seminars that cover everything from homesteading and self-sufficiency to natural building and energy balancing. **soma earth BUILDING** is our integrative design-build services for, healthy & sustainable renovation building and handyman work.

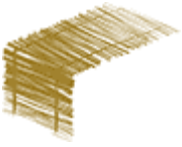
**soma earth** is about learning how to live, create and build more holistically and sustainably. We invite you to become a member, sign-up for our educational newsletters and join our teaching programs and building forums if you would like to live more naturally. Ingrid has a great passion to create work that is in alignment for what is best for the Earth, as well as for several generations of human beings on the Earth. She is deeply committed to teaching others what are the better sustainable and healthy choices.

**Ingrid** brings versatility and a wide range of experience to her work as an Architect. Graduating in 1981 with a Bachelor of Environmental Studies and in 1984 with an Honours Bachelor of Architecture, Ingrid also has trained in Straw Clay, Earth Plaster and Timber Framing with Paula Baker Laporte & Robert Laporte of Econesthomes.com. She has been involved in 5 natural building retrofits, two of which are straw bale and/or straw clay. Ingrid will be Hosting the Panel on Natural Building Retrofits on Saturday Afternoon.



Maria Klemperer-Johnson (NBNE)

**Moisture Management Failures**  
**Sunday, March 17, 2013 9:00 am**



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Most of us are well aware of the do's and don'ts of moisture management and weatherization, but sometimes we're tempted to take shortcuts, or push the envelope with some untried or poorly thought-out detail. This presentation on the failures of certain details will give graphic proof of what can go wrong, and how quickly it can happen. After this presentation, the thought of eliminating an overhang or a kickout diverter will never cross your mind without a violently visceral response!

## **Maria Klemperer-Johnson**

Miller Tilling      mklempjo@yahoo.com

**Maria Klemperer-Johnson** is a builder in the Ithaca, NY area. During the past 12 years she has worked as a cabinet maker, conventional home builder, and natural builder, focusing on timber frame and straw bale construction. She is currently a foreman at Miller Tilling, operating out of King Ferry, NY.

Whatever building hat she wears, Maria brings quality and care to her work, striving to push even the most conventional designs in a more earth-friendly direction.

Her mission, besides building beautiful and sustainable structures, is to challenge society's attitudes about the value of manufacturing, always fostering appreciation for the thought and craftsmanship that go into creating buildings of lasting beauty and quality.



**James Blackman**



**Mark Allen**

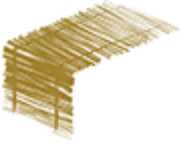


**Tim Krahn (OSBBC)**

## **Attainable Building Solutions: Bringing Rammed Earth Beyond the Custom Architectural Home**

**Sunday, March 17, 2013 1:30 pm**

**James Blackman, Mark Allen & Tim Krahn**



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This talk will highlight a summary of rammed earth building and current research and development, including the selection of materials utilized in the process. Formwork and logistical challenges with a review of lessons learned from past projects will give the audience a basis for understanding the current state of rammed earth building. A discussion of the actual thermal performance of a new rammed earth home with a review of pre construction energy modeling, as built parameters, and sharing of actual first winter heating energy requirements. It will include a discussion about the obstacles to making rammed earth and natural building accessible to a broader audience and some ideas on how to move beyond these limitations.

## **James Blackman** BAS

**Muskoka Sustainable Builders Inc.**

[www.muskokasustainablebuilders.ca](http://www.muskokasustainablebuilders.ca)

**James Blackman** was raised in a farming community located in southwestern Ontario where he developed a respect for nature and an understanding of mechanical systems. He then went on to the University of Windsor where he completed a degree in mechanical engineering, and was the project leader of an interdisciplinary thesis project to design and fabricate a car to compete in an international competition.

Upon graduation he was recruited by Honda of Canada Manufacturing to the Product Engineering Department. While at Honda James evolved his engineering and project management skills through work on component and system process development, product testing and failure analysis.

During his tenure at Honda James' awareness of environmental issues was expanding and a particular interest in our built environment and its current deficiencies developed. In 2009 James took an opportunity to leave Honda and in 2010 he formed Muskoka Sustainable Builders Inc. with his business partner Mark Allen P. Eng.

MSB was formed to take a holistic view of our built environment. They want to bring together experts in the fields of architectural design, building science, structural engineering, construction and project management that results in a project that exceeds a client's expectations of current sustainable building practices. MSB is developing a team of project managers and rammed earth builders to complement our business objectives.

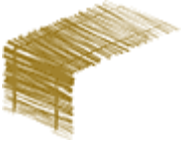
## **Mark Allen** P Eng, BAS

**Muskoka Sustainable Builders Inc.**

[www.muskokasustainablebuilders.ca](http://www.muskokasustainablebuilders.ca)

Mark was raised in the city of Chatham in southwestern Ontario where he enjoyed family, sports and outdoor activities. He enjoys working with his hands and summered throughout high school making custom furniture and cabinets.

Mark graduated from the University of Waterloo with a bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering. Throughout university Mark's co-operative education experience was in manufacturing or the automotive industry which led to employment at Honda of Canada Mfg in the product Engineering department.



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While working at Honda Mark continued to explore his interest in the built environment via various renovations and additions for his family and friends homes. A sudden and drastic change of mindset towards sustainability prompted Mark to leave Honda move his young family to Huntsville and co-found Muskoka Sustainable Builders along with James Blackman. After several years of research and trial and error Mark and James successfully completed their first rammed earth build in the summer of 2012, Mark's home.

Mark's goals are to build sustainable homes for others in the Muskoka region as well as to continue with his family's plan towards increased sustainability.

## **Tim Krahn** P Eng

**Building Alternatives**      [www.buildalt.com](http://www.buildalt.com)

**Tim Krahn** is a registered professional engineer and partner in Building Alternatives Inc. He holds a Masters degree in geotechnical engineering and a Bachelors degree in civil engineering from the University of Manitoba. He has experience in residential home building and holds a certificate in carpentry and wood working from Red River College. Tim is also a LEED™ accredited professional, an active member of the Timber Frame Guild's Timber Frame Engineering Council and a founding member of the Natural Buildings Engineering Group.

Tim and his partner Dalila have lived in southeastern Ontario since 2010, moving from Manitoba to take care of her family's property near Codrington. While in Winnipeg, Tim was active in the inner city housing community as well as at the University of Manitoba, where he was a sessional and technical instructor in both architecture and engineering. Tim also spent two years as the coordinator of the Alternative Village at the U of M, which was founded by Building Alternatives principal, Kris Dick. His research interests include earthen construction, energy and material efficiency and sustainability in the built environment.

Tim is currently the engineering manager of Building Alternatives, which is a consulting engineering company licensed in BC, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, Nova Scotia and the North West Territories & Nunavut. They specialize in non-conventional structural and building envelope engineering, with an emphasis on natural materials and energy efficiency.