

Architects and designers plan projects for flood affected town

By ELLE WATSON

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Jiri Loew opening ArchiCamp and introducing the clients and briefs. Photo: ArchiCamp

Mudgee building designer Jiri Loew is leading a one-of-a-kind architecture event that has attracted interest from interstate.

ArchiCamp is an annual grassroots event for architecture students, professionals, artists, craftsmen, their friends and families, with camping, design workshops, tours, talks, discussions and entertainment.

Starting with 20 students on his Mudgee property last year the event has grown to more than 60 architecture and design students from six states working with 20 guests and awarded architects.

“I decided to do this year’s camp closer to Newcastle and then the floods in Dungog came,” ArchiCamp organiser, Mr Loew said.

“They lost lives, they lost houses and the community economically was badly hit as well.”

He said the aim of the October 2-5 weekend was aimed to directly benefit Dungog and the nearby sustainable village of Shepherds Ground through design work.

“Ahead of each ArchiCamp, specific ethical causes for architectural intervention are identified within the host community and the environment where ArchiCamp is to be held,” Mr Loew said.

“This informs creative brief, which is presented to participants at the opening of ArchiCamp.

“During the following days, students may choose to create one or more design concepts with help of experienced tutors, and present these to the community representatives at the end of ArchiCamp.”

Following the camp student continue to work with their mentor on the concept through design development to DA submission, construction drawings and construction itself.

“This year, ArchiCamp introduced five real design projects, which have been successfully addressed and outcomes well received by the community representatives,” Mr Loew said.

“These projects include cycling and camping facilities for Dungog Common, a community hall and youth housing for Shepherds Ground. Students are also working on Dungog Showground masterplan and shade structures design, which will be presented to the showground committee in the coming weeks.”

ArchiCamp has no sponsors, receives no funding, and has no budget beyond the sum total of participants’ contributions towards communal meals. All guests and mentors are donate their time.

Mr Loew said the event has attracted interest from other areas in NSW and Victoria. He did not rule out hosting another event in Mudgee.