

Around the House

with Phil Davy



There must be a name for the phenomenon.

You know,

when you're stuck indoors at the height of summer, while the sun is blazing down and you could be 'catching some rays' in the garden. Although it would be great if we could plan the weather, most of us probably have a growing number of woodworking jobs to do both indoors and out. But when you do finally cross one off the list that's been stuck on the fridge door for months, another task has been added at the bottom... Oh, what it is to be appreciated!

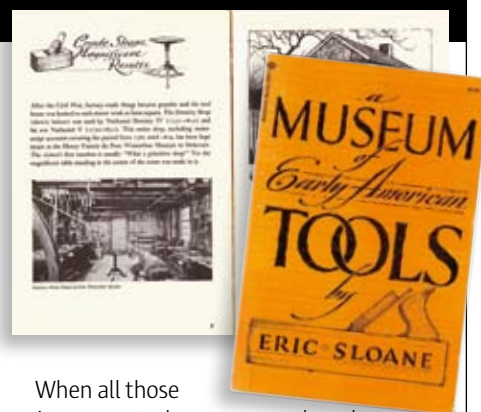
Phil Davy, Consultant Editor

Book review

A Museum of early American tools

Eric Sloane, pub by Ballantine Books
108 pages Size: 135 x 202mm

Certain books establish themselves as classics over time, even though they may go in and out print. I'd certainly put 'A Museum of Early American Tools' in this category, having picked up a well-thumbed copy in a New England second-hand bookshop a few years ago. Written in 1964, long before the days of desktop publishing, it's a fascinating collection of pen and ink sketches, plus simple notes on how to use some long-forgotten tools. It's not just woodworking kit that's featured either, but farming items too – from apple shovels to wheelwrights' tools. If you ever wondered how to build a timber raft, remove bark from a tree or even make nails, you'll find a description here.



When all those noisy power tools get too much and you yearn for a bit of peace and quiet, take a few minutes out with this absorbing book, a cuppa and that easy chair, and all will be well... Sometimes out of print, you should still be able to pick up a used copy for a few pounds on Amazon. Superb stuff.

Price: varies

★★★★★

Workshop update

Musical mayhem

Faced with a tricky guitar repair the other day, I scratched my head for a solution. An object had been dropped on to the edge of the soundboard, not just damaging the finish but creating a serious hole in the timber too. Normally, I'd cut away the damaged section, clean up the exposed edges and splice in a matching piece of wood, before refinishing. Not easy, as this would mean adding support from inside the soundbox – expensive, and the owner wanted a quick, cheap solution. Fortunately, I'd heard about Behlen's new Epoxy Putty Sticks. These come in natural maple, cherry and oak/

light walnut and cost around £5.50, plus postage and minimum order (www.behlen.co.uk). Unlike some two-part epoxy products, these can be kneaded safely with your bare hands. Resembling a miniature Swiss roll, the resin and hardener are ready to be mixed in the correct proportions. All you do is slice off a suitable amount and knead together with your fingers, applying to the damaged area with a putty knife. I found the product fantastic for filling large holes, with no need to build up layers. After sanding I stained the repair using Mohawk Blendall Sticks. Finally, a quick blast of Behlen Jet Spray and the job was done.

