

looking back

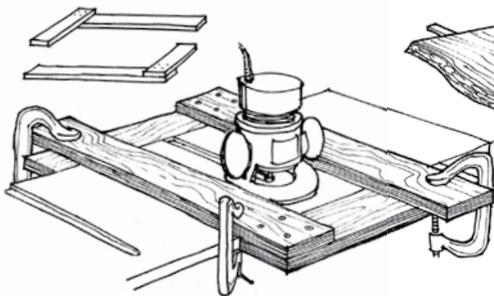
Hundreds of jigs and one fixture

BY ASA CHRISTIANA

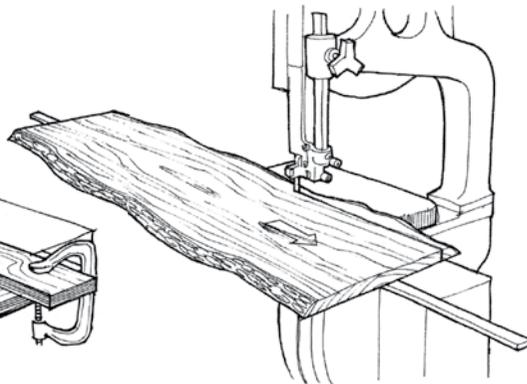


Shop-tested. Jim Richey rebuilt hundreds of reader jigs and fixtures over the years, to make sure they worked and to find the best angle for drawing them.

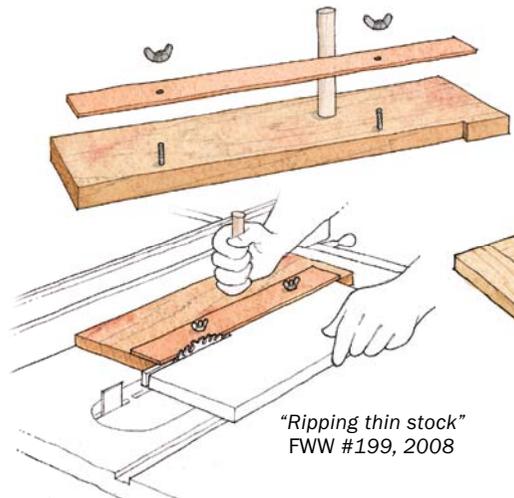
40 YEARS OF TIPS



"Jig for cross-grain routing"
FWW #17, 1979



"Ripping crooked stock
on the bandsaw"
FWW #114, 1995



"Ripping thin stock"
FWW #199, 2008



After editing and illustrating the Methods of Work column for 36 years, Jim Richey bows out gracefully with this issue, as gracefully as he has handled the job from the beginning. It is striking that he steps down at a major *Fine Woodworking* anniversary, not only because of the extraordinary length of his tenure, but also because of the way his story has paralleled the magazine's.

Richey was with *Fine Woodworking* from the beginning, filling out the first promotional mailer in time for issue #1, and answering the call to submit articles soon after. Recognizing his talent and passion, the magazine named Richey one of its earliest "correspondents," charged with reporting and writing about woodworkers in his neck of the woods (Houston at the time). After seeing a treadle lathe demonstrated at a craft fair, he got permission from the turner to draw up plans and submit them to the magazine. By issue #16, Richey's expert drawings and tips had landed him the newly minted Methods of Work department, which he then edited and illustrated at an unwavering level for nearly four decades.

As his editors came and went, as black and

white became color, as paper and post were replaced with email and Dropbox, even after he retired from Conoco and moved back to his little hometown of Alva, Okla., Richey worked tirelessly to make the column great, starting with picking the best tips from the pile and corresponding with contributors to be sure he understood each one fully, and then figuring out how best to draw them.

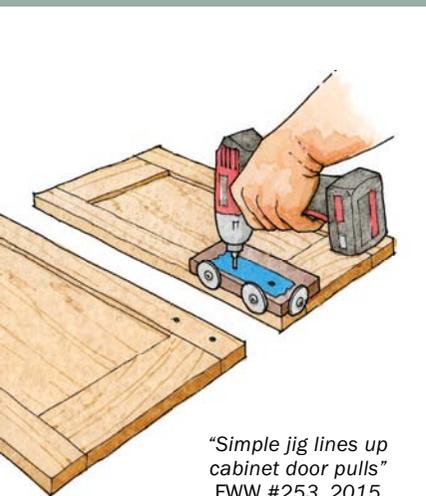
"Every building is built twice, first in someone's mind and then with bricks and mortar. I do that

"Every building is built twice, first in someone's mind and then with bricks and mortar. I do that with every tip."

with every tip," Richey says. For trickier tips, Richey built mock-ups in his own shop, photographing them from different angles and using the best images as the basis for his drawings.

While he is choosing his moment to step off stage, Richey says it feels a little strange to walk away. "Methods of Work was built into my calendar for 36 years. But it will be nice to make travel plans now and not have to worry about that schedule." □

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"Simple jig lines up cabinet door pulls"
FWW #253, 2015

