

The Ernie Ball was truly a marvel, easily loud enough to keep up with acoustic guitars, but the body was much bigger and the fretboard clear of the body much shorter. Ernie's design was inspired by a similarly proportioned guitarron he brought back from Mexico. That's not me in the pic, but it does show the proportions you need for a functional all-acoustic bass guitar. This is the 8" early model.

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-----BUT.... like Scott said "*No acoustic bass touches the Earthwood*".

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-----I'll get some pics as soon as I can. I'll have to get one with me included in it, just so you can get an idea of how huge this thing is. I look like one of Santa's elves standing behind it....anybody but Paul Bunyan would :D

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Hey Scott, any idea how the serial numbers ran.....as mentioned , mine is #657. I heard from someone in Ernie Ball Customer Service recently that *just under 800 were shipped worldwide*.

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If there is any serious consideration given to making these things again, I would highly recommend a bridge like mine as an improvement (you'll see it when I get some pics up. It is a hand made piece with *sliding bone saddles for adjustment*.

The guy who made it (Savannah Guitars), held a patent on it. He made them specifically for Martin guitars. I had *some issues with mine original bridge lifting off the body*. After the second time it happened, he offered to hand make the same style bridge for my Bass. It worked out really well, bringing up the volume , brightness and sustain a bit. Savannah is long gone now, but when he first set me up with this thing he took pics and wrote an article on it for Guitar Player magazine. However , they sent it back with a nice letter that pretty much said "real nice and thanks ... but no thanks, not of interest to the readers. It's kind of an oddball and we're trying to sell magazines to a more mainstream market".

Anyway, as of about mid 70's when Savannah disappeared from the face of the earth , mine was the only bridge made for a bass. Thanks for the warm welcome, and I'll get some pics up as soon as I can. I'm a new guy to this forum and the proud owner of an *Ernie Ball Earthwood acoustic bass (serial #657)*, bought in 1972. I also have a Fender Precision, bought in 1970 and a Hagstrom 8 string, purchased about the same time. I've owned several others over the years, but these are the keepers.



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----- Yes. The sheer size is what makes them great -- you can hear them over an acoustic band. Some had Hot Dots pickups, but they weren't the best. For reasons he didn't explain to me, which probably relate to selling your product for more than it cost to make, Sterling said no way to more Earthwoods. It's his call but I wish they'd make more. It took me ten years to get one and I'm glad I kept looking.

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----- You'd think that some Chinese or Korean company would offer a knockoff, considering the cult following and market value of the originals. Or at the very least, someone should have produced an acoustic bass similar in dimension/specs by now, knowing that these are widely regarded as the only acoustic basses with a halfway decent volume output. PJ Muck

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----- I understand why they wouldn't tool up to do this but at the same time I would LOVE for it to happen. I am sure Brian Ritchie would be very excited.

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----- If you hold your plucking hand over the soundhole, and pluck with your thumb, you can feel air rushing out of the soundhole when you play low notes. Just an awesome sound.

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----- The best ABG I've ever played without a pickup. Loud, pure, bass tone. It's all about the size. (And bracing) I to call EB last year about reissuing Bass. They said that they had, no plans to reissue bass now.

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----- They really are something to behold. It's come up in conversations over on the EBMM board, but my take is that it would require an entirely new and very different factory to make those. Would they sell a few? Sure. Would it be enough to justify the start-up costs and so on? It's hard to imagine, isn't it? It really is surprising that some other company (that already makes acoustic instruments, for example) hasn't tried to fill the niche.

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----- even if they did come out with a reissue I'm sure it would be miles beyond my budget...just like any musician product

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----- Earthwood bass Information update. I spoke with Dan Norton today, he was involved in the Earthwood line and he gave me some real insight on the Earthwood's. Some of you may already know this information but for those of you who don't here goes. Around 1972 they started and stopped in 1973 and then reopened it again 1973 or 1974 until sometime in 1985 when they ended the earthwood line. Earthwood's encompassed more than just ABG they also made acoustic guitars and electric too. Although there were fewer ABG made because I guess they didn't take off as well. He said that numbers start at 500 and ended at 1052 so approx. 552 were made total .He also said that about 100 or so got trashed for whatever reason (not up to spec.) He thinks about 250 are still around today.

My bass is *number 816* which would mean mine is the 317th Earthwood ABG made. Bassmedic Steve Terry

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----- I have a *lined fretless* Earthwood that was made for me in *1983*. From what I can tell from your photos, mine looks the same except for the fretlines and dots on the fingerboard and along the edge of the fingerboard, which has 16 fret positions. Like yours, mine strings from inside the body. It originally came with Ernie Ball Earthwood phosphor bronze strings but *I've used LaBella nylon tape wounds for years*. It came with

Barcus-Berry Hot Dots but Larry Fishman made me a piezo element that Mark Stevens, then of Austin, TX, installed under the bridge sometime in the mid-80s. Like yours, mine has a button on the body behind the neck where a strap can be attached. It came with a padded gig bag, which I still have, but *I had a hardshell case made by Harptone back in the mid-80s*, that Mandolin Brothers facilitated. I made all of the initial arrangements for the bass with Sterling Ball, who said at the time that the basses were not in production but only being made to order. (I think they ceased to make them at all soon thereafter.) They would not sell it directly to me but said I could purchase it through any retailer who sold their products. I therefore had it shipped to West Music in Iowa City and purchased it from Steve West out of loyalty as that was one of several area stores (along with Everett's in Washington, Hiltbruner's and Keeney's in Cedar Rapids, and O'Brien Music in Iowa City) that I frequented in my youth. While it's the only ABG I've owned--at the time, *the choices were limited to short-scaled Guilds and Harptones, the Earthwood*, and a few custom products--as I've mentioned before, it's the only one I've found that can hold its own in an acoustic setting, *no doubt due to its size*.

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---- Do you know if they are going to make another one? My guess is that you don't. Nobody knows for sure apart from EBMM, so it may be that sometime in the future a limited run is released.

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**(The EB factory gets a little testie with a newbie forum dude. I can't blame the EB guy!—Editor's note)**

---Have you ever designed something of your own? Just because a product has been released on the market and then discontinued, doesn't mean that it's then 'open season' for all to copy. If you've spent time and money in the past designing and manufacturing a product, *why should you feel the need to pass on drawings/blueprints/schematics etc so that another company can make your goods?*

**(This is why The Lamont Guitar Co. has been very careful to design our own instrument and not just copy the Earthwood. We went back to the same source—the guitarrón, that Ernie did.—Editor's note)**

What gives you the right to come onto a manufacturer owned forum and criticise them with your first post? It's a really good way to make an impression you know.....

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----- I happen to own 8-inch deep Earthwood #6. There is Nothing like 'em! They have a distinctive bass "thump" that records exceptionally well. I've heard that Ernie left enough wood to make a thousand of these things. And that the wood is just sitting there unused. I hope Sterling decides to Do The Right Thing and reissue this Exceptional instrument. (There is a pic of mine at my Ernie Ball forum username site).

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----- I'm kind of in the middle here. I understand TenorClef's desire to get his hands on an original Earthwood bass or something designed and made in a very similar way. I'm in the same boat, and I'm going to take a wild guess that there are a lot of other bassists that feel the same way whether they've already bought a competitor's instrument or not. I also understand Ernie Ball's desire to maintain quality branding that may include the mystique of an historic product, and that Ernie Ball should do as they like with their intellectual property.

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*And finally some comments from a frustrated non-Earthwood owner:*

-----I have spent the last year looking for an ABG that works unamplified. What I mean is, loud enough to be played with other acoustic instruments without the aid of an amp. For all of my research very few can do this. The original *Ernie Ball "Earthwood" Bass* built from 1972-1985. Was the best of the bunch. The Taylor ABG was very good, but not as loud as the Earthwood. No longer in production. There are other builders like Doolin, and Whecter, that make wonderful ABG's. (They are very expensive) It all comes down to body size, construction, and woods used. Any jumbo, guitar sized body,(15"-17" is simply too small to work) Putting a bass neck, on a guitar body is not going to do it. It has

to have a pickup. My question is why won't any builders make a ABG the size of the Earthwood Bass? Do builders feel there is no market for this? Or is the design too tuff? If Ernie Ball could do this 34 years ago; why can't someone else do this now? Just for the record, I called Ernie ball. Despite requests, they have no plans on re-issuing the Earthwood.

**There is no reason why this product can't be produced in the \$1500-\$2000 range?**

**(When I read this I decided that the time had come for me to step forward and do something. I had obtained an Earthwood bass for my wife but now I could do more—I could produce this instrument for sale. In ten years, I had collected enough information to know exactly how to build a similar bass. I really wanted to have this bass completely built in the United States. I am for purchasing all I can from America. I want to put more Americans to work. I found Craig Wickstrom, a talented luthier, who was willing to head up our Custom Shop and who holds a strong interest in making only solid wood, quality instruments by hand. At last, we could produce a quality product at a fair price to help American bass players enjoy something that has been unavailable to them since 1985.**

**A BRAND NEW, REAL ACOUSTIC BASS GUITAR like Ernie used to make—only better! Please see our new link to the [Lamont Guitar Co.](#)**