

STORIES OF A WOODWORKER
As told by John Tegeler aka Mr. Radial Arm Saw
CHAPTER 2
MUCH MORE TO DO

Recently, I reflected back to the time that I bought and brought home, my radial arm saw. An abundance of memories crept in like a drill bit boring its way into a new piece of maple. I have been called a block head from time to time, however, that sounds a little endearing to me. Oh well, I digress.

I picked up the original handbook, blew off years of accumulated dust and opened it with care. The first thing I found, and right where I left it, over thirty years ago, was the original receipt. I anxiously and unhurriedly read over the receipt:

Date:	11-20-1972		
Place:	Omaha, Nebraska		
Purchase:	Radial Arm Saw	\$188.00	
	Saw Book	3.99	
	Tax	6.72	
	Total	\$198.71	

Customer will pick up.

“Ah yes”, I said to myself, looking up, staring blankly, and wistfully remembering picking up and bringing home that new, marvelous saw. Of course with the help of the store employees, the saw, still safely packed in its carton, was gently placed into the trunk of my car. With several bungee cords and lengths of bailing twine, the trunk lid was secured and off I went smiling and dreaming. While driving home, at less than 25 MPH because I didn’t want to damage this precious cargo, I began to wonder how I was going to get this 150 pounds of steel out of my trunk and into my basement. I reflected back and wondered if this wasn’t an omen of many other worries and complications yet to come. I didn’t care, I had my brand new Craftsman Radial Arm Saw.

Once home, I enlisted the kind help of my next door neighbor (Andy, I believe his name was). And so, on a pleasant Saturday morning, Andy and I hauled this beauty down the stairs and into the basement. We carefully set the box on a couple of saw horses. Once placed on the saw horses, Andy and I peeled open the cardboard box, carefully removed the Styrofoam and gradually the saw began to emerge. We both stood back and admired this piece of machinery with pride and wonder, hope, joy, and thoughts of all the wonderful things I was going to be able to do.

Andy said, “Man, I wish I could get one of those”. We both talked shop and told stories about making things and doing projects, and relived stories about when this happened and when that occurred and on and on we went. Was I ever proud.

Well, after about an hour of talk and a cold one, Andy, my friend, had to go. I was left there, alone, in my basement with my radial arm saw. All excited and happy, I sat on the floor, knees up, and manual firmly pressed against my thighs. I leaned back against the basement wall and started to read the manual. Chapter one, 'Your radial arm saw features', chapter two, 'Getting the most from your radial arm saw', and many more intriguing chapters captured my attention. As I scanned through chapter two, I read the subheadings, 'Selecting a location', 'Leveling your saw', 'Preparing the work table'. "Leveling your saw?, Preparing the work table?, Location?", defiantly and out loud I said, "What in the world does this all mean?" It was then reality suddenly reared its ugly head. When the purple cloak of doom began to descend. I realized that there was a lot more to do, a whole lot more to do, before I could even turn this baby on and cut a piece of wood.

(to be continued)

John Tegeler
johnteg@hotmail.com
913-461-9396



**Published by the
Kansas City Woodworkers' Guild**
www.kcwoodworkersguild.org