

THE WAY WE WERE

It's hard to believe that summer is winding down and students of all ages will be heading back to class next week. One of the rituals of the new school year is the class photo, and in this image dating back to 1908, students dressed in their best, gather for picture day outside Ashgrove SS#3, which stood on Trafalgar Road near 10th Sideroad. Submitted by Heritage Halton Hills

Esqueuing Historical Society photo



OPINION

IN THE FUTURE, I THINK I'LL PASS ON 'DADDY'S LITTLE HELPER'

WOODWORKING MISHAP COULD HAVE BEEN MUCH WORSE, SAYS BROWN



TED BROWN
Column

ment that operates in a field, cutting or harvesting a crop.

I also have a collection of woodworking power tools, including drills, routers, sanders, skil saws, sawzall and two stationary saws - a radial arm saw and a table saw.

I give them lots of respect too. It's an unspoken law that I'm careful with all equipment.

Last week, I was working on a project in the garage. I had to frame the garage doors to install new ones.

After struggling with the first cut using a skil saw, I decided this was a job for the table saw.

I took the tractor and front-end loader to the barn, loaded the table saw in the loader and moved it to the garage. I decided to

let our border collie Hamish out of the barn to join me as I worked on the garage.

Hamish loves to hang out with me, especially when I'm building something in the barn. I sometimes call him Daddy's Little Helper as he's so happy when he's included.

I returned to the garage, and set up the saw.

I did my first cut, and smiled to myself at how easy it was to cut with the table saw.

I started to cut another two-by-four and Hamish began to bark; he doesn't usually bark.

He ran around the garage, like he was playing. We often play fetch when he's in that mood.

I was in the middle of a cut, and he kept barking and circling me. As I was

finishing my cut, I caught him in my peripheral vision as he grabbed the power cord of the table saw in his teeth and gave it a tug.

I turned my head, to see what he was doing.

Momentarily distracted by the dog, the tip of my left index finger 'touched' the saw blade, cutting a tiny notch the width of the blade out of my fingernail, and with it, took a bit of flesh.

I hit the kill switch and felt the throbbing in my finger. I was afraid to look.

Miraculously, it turned out to be almost superficial - little more than a nick.

But the full severity of the action suddenly struck me, and chills ran up my back. I could have easily cut the end off my finger.

Hamish couldn't understand why I had stopped; he

was still in play mode.

I tell you, you could have bought Daddy's Little Helper pretty cheap at that moment.

I wrapped up my finger to stop the bleeding, then continued.

And the moment I turned on the saw, Hamish started barking all over again.

It was the whine of the saw in the close quarters of the garage that set him off. In the barn, there's more space, so the saw doesn't bother him.

I returned him to the barn until I finished.

Afterwards, I trimmed the ragged end of my fingernail, and thought about my close call.

Losing a fingertip could have a huge impact. There would be no more guitar playing, difficult keyboard-

ing and a myriad of other things we do with our index finger.

And I did nothing different from countless other times I've used the saw, except I allowed myself to be distracted by Hamish for mere seconds.

I can tell you one thing, I won't have Daddy's Little Helper 'help' me with a project anymore.

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