

Images Alberta Photography Club

March 27, 2020

### **Musings by Mufty.**

Boy, do we have time to muse these days, so here goes.

We are photographers. We are all photographers. We are going through an unprecedented time in world history and we have the ability to record this time.

We all have cameras. We all have lives we can record. We all need to take those cameras and document day by day what our lives look like. Maybe our photographs will never be in LIFE magazine or National Geographic, but someday, they will be family heirlooms. Someday, your daughter or grandson or great grandniece will wonder what life was like in 2020 when the great pandemic, Covid 19 changed our lives.

My mother was 16 when the Spanish flu hit Canada. She volunteered as a nurse's assistant to sick people in Kingston Ontario in a situation I know nothing about. Why didn't I ask her what it was like? A young woman driven to become a nurse by the experience she had in the 1918 flu epidemic. Someday one of your heirs may find you in a wheelchair with age related infirmities and ask you what it was like to live through the 2020 pandemic. You might be able to say, I took pictures, dear one, I recorded what it was like. I recorded each day as the pandemic spread around Canada and came to our city Edmonton, and came to our very house where we stayed inside for day after day, week after week, month after month.

I photographed the daily business of our lives. I photographed the minutia of not being able to visit with friends, with family and with shop keepers. I photographed what I could see in my day, the food we ate, the walks we took, the distancing of people needing to be 2 meters apart. I photographed the empty streets, the boarded up shops, and the boredom of my life.

I feel trapped, restricted to where I can go and with whom I can speak. I photograph fence posts to reflect this jail bars feeling. I walk on the sidewalk, frightened of others who don't seem to care about the six feet rule. I meet with a friend on a parkway with long park benches. We sit, six feet apart, at either end of

the bench and catch up on our family news. It is good to see her dear lined old face because we are old, old friends, both octogenarians, wondering, because we are most vulnerable, if there will be another spring for us. And so we take selfies, we old women, who are learning technology.

Photographers can record this. (I thought today, imagine if we needed film and processing to record this!) But no. We have instant images. And we are Photographers. Shoot on my friends, shoot on. Record your life in this pandemic. It is historically important.

As an apartment dweller, I watch out my windows for subjects. I note the absence of traffic on Jasper Ave. I photograph a man in the window in an apartment across the street who is working from home in his white undershirt with his computer by the window. I photograph a magpie swooping from trees below the balcony. I shoot the workers still working on the Groat bridge rebuild. I shoot our son leaving groceries in the hallway of our apartment so that we do not exchange droplets of the dreaded corona virus. I shoot washing our hands. I shoot the impossible jigsaw puzzle we set up. I shoot a little songbird in a bare tree bringing music to my walk.

I am making a Power Point record. Each day, I choose a picture. Today's will be our visit to our daughter, Wendy who lives across town. Bill and I drove there together. She greeted us on the deck at the front of her house where she is recuperating from hand surgery, being cared for by multiple caregivers. We sat eight feet apart and visited for fifteen minutes after which time we waved goodbye without hugs and came back to our apartment, pushing the elevator button with gloved hands and washing our hands the minute we came in.

It is an historic time. Photographers, enjoy your craft and record your history! And please keep in touch. I miss our Thursday nights. If you want to, email me at [muftynbill@telus.net](mailto:muftynbill@telus.net). Let me know what you are doing. I'm sure it will set me to more musings.