

Musings by Mufty Summer 2022

I shouldda kept the albums.

When we moved, four years ago, from a six-bedroom house with lots and lots of space, I worried about how we would fit all our stuff in our new 3-bedroom apartment. Much had to go.

I had been making pictures seriously for 47 years. Forty-seven years for Pete's sake! My system was that I worked in negatives and prints for family and casual events and slides for teaching and making slide shows. I had 35,000 slides and bookcases full of albums of prints. 1970 to 2006 as after I changed to a digital camera, I continued to have prints made of family events that I wanted to share. (Slides were never the kind of images that you took out of your pocket at a party to share! Here's Doug's birthday party! Here's Kory's Bar Mitzvah! No. Not with slides.) So, family pictures were prints and prints went into albums. Titles on the spine of the albums read 1972, 1973, 1974..... etc. etc etc. You get the picture! That's a lot of albums. And we were moving.

I sat in front of the bookcase featuring all these albums, took each one out, thumbed through it and determined, I didn't NEED all those pictures. I selected the really, really great ones, gave them to the subject photographed and tossed the rest. Tossed them. There were too many. Too, too many. Who on earth might ever want Bob's first garden in the Yukon? Who would want Bruce's new car in 1992? Who would ever want all those prints I made of visiting the Bog, that wonderful house out on the Devon Road beside the Botanic Gardens? We were chosen family to the Dyde family that built the amazing summer house created by Arthur Erickson. We both loved that house, but the family moved away, donated the property to the University of Alberta and we stopped going. Nine years ago.

But now I want those prints. This is the house that we fondly called The Bog. It has historic value now as an early work of a now famous Canadian architect. The Arthur Erickson Foundation is a society of people dedicated to restoring this house and maintaining it as part of the history of the University of Alberta Botanic Gardens. And I had years of visits where I photographed every inch of the house and property. I threw them all out. All the prints and the corresponding negatives. They are gone.

I shouldda kept the albums.