

Evidence of lives lived

21 April, 2020

I love road trips. Long or short, along the coastline or through forests or rolling farmland. There's just no better way to spend a day than motoring along, noticing and wondering about the lives of the people whose 'home' is other than my own.

One of my favorite 'thinks' comes when we pass by a ramshackle farmstead in the middle of elsewhere, with drooping porch, missing windows and a sway-backed barn with only a remaining hint of a feed store advertisement evident among the greying boards. I can't help wondering about the lives lived there. Can't help imagining the first day when they moved into their newly built house and the last day glancing over their shoulders as they finally moved away and all the days in between. Because there was a time when that forlorn house and those gone-to-seed acres I see now were alive with hope and plans for a future unknown.

Our own futures can't be known. Which of us will fall to this virus or be ruined by its effects, economic and social. All we can know for certain is that our present will become the past about which future travelers might wonder as they go by.

None of us is guaranteed a happy legacy and we surely can't define what folks a generation or two down the line will think of us. Posterity belongs to the future. Belongs in the future.

What I do know is that we've been here before. We've seen pandemics and we've suffered under questionable leadership. Wars and famines and all manner of upheaval have beset us but we're still here. Because that's what we do. We persevere.

We can't dictate how the history of our time will be written. But we can live our lives well, caring for others as we manage for ourselves. We can make of the now the best we can and be ready to move forward.

My whole life is a road trip. I make of it what I can. And if a stranger someday wonders about my life and times, I hope they'll assume that my life was worthwhile and my times well lived. Because all things considered, that would be true.