

Appreciation

Written by

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I am really enjoying my early morning bicycle rides when the weather co-operates and fortunately today was one of those days. I've gone from wearing shorts to long pants due to the much cooler temperatures compared to last week and I've also extended the time spent on my bike.

Today as I followed the lakeshore through Tudhope Park to Couchiching Park I couldn't help but wonder how all of this may change over the next ten or twenty years. Will folks taking this trail be able to appreciate the quaint beauty that Orillia offers or will it become another citified community where everyone becomes a stranger? I have friends from Barrie who think Orillia is just a retirement town and rave about the amenities offered in their city. They haven't seen the young families using the wonderful playgrounds here or experienced the communal ambience, only seeing the retirement homes, one of which they may end up living in some day. Why wouldn't people want to retire to Orillia anyway? It is within two hours of Toronto, is built on two lakes and offers the small-town atmosphere disappearing from many similar communities.

As Toronto slowly grows closer to the north, there is little doubt that the complexion of this town will be altered in time and it saddens me to think of what will change in the name of progress. For now I will absorb as much of the beauty here that I can and photograph it for others to enjoy. Today, I ventured on a different route surrounded by protected wetlands and running alongside a beaver dam, obvious from the many chewed trees along the trail. I rode almost 25 kilometres and appreciated every single one of them in ways I never could when I lived here before. It's funny how it takes some time away to really see what was always just under my nose!