

BACK ROADIN

Now not all of us can say we've gone 'Back Roadin', but for those who have you'll know what I'm talking about in this posting. Back Roding pertains to us jumping in our vehicle and hitting the countryside via usually a grid road that'll take us into the back country/ countryside off the main thoroughfare. You'll often hear the reference 'Sunday drivers' from some who are referring to the slow-moving drivers they come across as they're speeding off to wherever it is they need to get to and that can just as easily talk about those of us who go for that back road cruise, usually on a Sunday, to just drive and see the scenery.

In my high school days, more often than not my friends and I would hit the backroads to find a fishing spot to cast our hooks into and that would include one of us tossin a case of beer into the back of the truck or backseat of our car and having a cold one while we're doing the fishing thing. If the day was nice, it was a great afternoon of relaxing and fishing with the friends telling stories and laughing at somebody doing something stupid while we fished. On the rare occasion the cops would actually be driving the backroads themselves, the ensuing meet up would result in us scrambling to hide the beer to avoid any fine they might want to issue if they actually stopped to check on us. It was a comedy of errors of spilling, downing it or tossin it into the grass only to have them wave and drive on by. The foul language tossed out in such an instance would be enough to make any of our parents ground us for a month.

All fishing aside, hitting the back road to go for a cruise can lead to a chance at seeing countryside you may usually not get a shot at seeing on a normal day not to mention the relaxation it provides. On a few of my back road trips I've come across an old graveyard or two that's overgrown with weeds that leads one to wonder, 'Who in the world put a graveyard way out here?' So I'd stop and take a walk to have a look or maybe cross paths with an old church, school building, or farmhouse and barn that would warrant a stop just to get a picture of the old architectural work that we don't see these days. If cell phone cameras would have been available back in my youth the pictures I could have taken would likely still surprise me to this day. Who knows what lost farmhouse, landmark or a single tree standing vigil on some field you may discover in your travels. Even just parking off to the side near a field and sitting outside enjoying the serenity of the world around you is worth the drive these days. Too often we forget to slow down, breathe, and take in what is always there, but we tend to take for granted. These backroad excursions can often remind us of that.

This past summer I had taken a drive down to my uncle's farm and I hadn't been there in, oh geez, about 15 years! The fields around me at the time were blooming with Canola everywhere. It was giant sea of yellow as far as one could see and scattered in there were some oat crops that almost seemed out of place with all that canola but it was still great to look at. I parked on a side road near the farm and sat on the tailgate of my truck for about, oh, I'd say over an hour. I just listened to the birds, the wind, and grasshoppers (yeah when there's enough of them around they make noise surprisingly). It was so nice to just sit there and do nothing but admire everything. It was so quiet, that when I coughed, I would startle myself. Naturally I took some pics with my cell phone because the landscape was so mesmerizing. I had forgotten what it was like at my uncle's farm and I plan to make another trip down there this summer and yeah, I plan to sit on my tailgate again - perhaps on a different side road this time and maybe I'll get lucky and see a badger ambling along a field or a hawk or two swoop down to snag their lunch (a poor unsuspecting mouse trying to hide in the grass) - or just watch the sparrows and other birds go from tree to post and back again. If you're thinking about doing a little 'backroadin', then I encourage you grab your keys and go. Even if you don't see anything that time, roll the window down and enjoy the aroma of the countryside around you. Let's see where the road takes us.....