

The Fascinating Sights and Sounds and Smells of Paisley in Winter

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For quite a while now I have been dying to somehow capture on paper just how wonderful it is to live in Paisley. In the winningly speech written and delivered by Miranda Emke at the Legion last year, she used the words, "sights and sounds and smells of (The Royal Winter Fair)" and I would like to borrow that concept.

Have you ever come out of the arena on a snowy night and smelled a rich toasty smell? It does smell a bit burnt, but not awful. In fact, it smells delicious. You take in a deep breath and inhale one of the favourite smells of Paisley. The delicious odour of organic coffee roasting over at Back Eddies is filling the streets of home.

My boots crunch the snow beneath my feet and I blow "smoke" into the air. It is nippy out tonight. The air is crystal clear and I see a full moon over head. They are unloading another shipment of vehicles at Rier's car lot. As I near home under the orange street lights, I smell another warm smell. The smell of the Belrose's wood fire.

What do I hear? Nothing. Absolutely nothing. When I was in high school I wrote a story in which I described this sound as silent music. My teacher didn't think music could be silent. Maybe not, but it is the kind of peaceful silence that makes my heart sing and my feet want to dance all the way home.

The next morning, I am awakened by the beeping of the McCullough's tractor as it clears the Foodland parking lot. I hear Myles leaving for work. First I hear the squeaky screen door slam, just like



in the movies, and then the roar of his engine. I hear a horse and buggy clip-clopping past the house. I better get up right now or I will soon be hearing the high school bus by which means I will be hearing Mr. Mason telling us we're late...again.

Today, I go up to the post office. It must be baking day in Paisley because I can smell wonderful hot fresh bread. I can smell it at the

Foodland and at The Bakery farther up the street. The signature soap smell fills my nostrils as I pass by Elora Soap Company. This is a famous store, you know. I have read about it on blogs on the internet.

As I cross the bridge, I hear Saugie swish her tale as a greeting to me. Oh wait, or is that just the muskrats playing on the island? Just then a pig truck goes by, bringing a

different smell to the village for a moment.

I shake my head in amazement at the wonderful sights, sounds and smells I encounter everyday. As I walk, I wonder if I will ever get to the post office, because there are so many interesting people greeting me and I can't resist the urge to stop and talk. Now I know why I usually drive. As I walk past Midtown, I hear the telltale warning bell and the Christmas music they pipe out onto the street. I see the children with their , loaded backpacks heading up to the school. I see Bert sitting in his green van, watching. No wonder. There are so many things to see. I hear a saw blade whine as I come out of the post office and pass Allen's Tim-Br Mart. I smell someone's cigarette burning out at the bottom of the steps.

I see the beautiful Town Hall keeping its place as a Beacon of Hope to the other old buildings of town. If it could speak it would say, "I have seen it all! I have felt it all and I have heard a lot of it too." I wave to Marilee as she is opening up at the library. A snowmobile flies across Queen Street at the corner by the arena. The wind is picking up. It is beginning to snow.

Perhaps by evening the silent snow will remove all sights and smells from this beautiful place. But only for a while. Only for a while.



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Photos Craig Budreau