

'Wrap yourself in the flag'

Lately bright red flags have been cropping up all over town, in preparation of celebrating Canada's upcoming 144th birthday tomorrow.

I think it's great, but I wonder why we wait until July 1 to express this patriotism?

Why not show our flag all year 'round?

Sadly, I think we take our patriotism for granted.

Our American neighbours can show us how it's done. They're so proud of their country and their flag, they go to the extreme, pledging allegiance to it in the school classroom every morning.

And for their national holiday, July 4, Independence Day, they pull out all the stops.

But it seems we straight-laced Canadians feel we must wait until the time is right, until fashion dictates we can put up our Canadian flags for all to see, in preparation of Canada Day.

Now, I will admit we are improving. When I was a kid, July 1 was called Dominion Day, and almost slipped by without a whimper.

But as the years have passed, we've come to observe Canada Day in our conservative Canadian way, almost going hog-wild at our parties. (Okay, hog-wild for Canadians.)

Let's face it, Canada's a great country, and at times we don't take time to appreciate the great life we enjoy here.

For years, the United Nations has voted Canada as the number one place in the world to live, and by the number of immigrants willing to take the gamble to settle here, we must have lots to offer.

My family has deep Canadian roots. My kids are eighth generation Canadian Browns, all because my great, great, great grandfather John Brown made the arduous journey from Northern Ireland, to serve his country and fight under the command of General James Wolfe on the Plains of Abraham, in 1759.

And I'm damn proud of that heritage.

I wonder if we ever consider what

Ted Brown



our forefathers endured to take that gamble to settle here. Just imagine what hardships were here when they landed.

Think about it. They sailed for weeks across an uncertain sea, to fight for a country that was no more than a name in their homeland.

After the fighting was over, and the military awarded the veterans a tract of land for their service to their country, they sent for their families, to make that same tough voyage to settle on a wild land, clear it, and make a life for themselves.

They did it because they fell in love with a country called Canada,.

And it's still the same today.

Every day new immigrants take an equally traumatic step, pull up roots in some distant country, and land here to start a new life.

Canada, by world comparison, is the best country in which to live. We enjoy the best social programs, a fine standard of living and a low crime rate. We have the most diverse cultures in the world, in a country steeped in history and tradition.

We come and go as we please and have few justifiable complaints of this land in which we live, (except perhaps fickle gas prices...)

So observe Canada Day.

Attend a Canada Day celebration, watch a parade, eat a hot dog and join in a sack race or egg toss. Enjoy a fireworks display at local parks around the country.

But above all, 'wrap yourself in the flag' and celebrate.

Because dammit, we are Canadians!

And incredibly proud of it!

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