

GRAPEVINE

CELEBRATE CANADA 150 AT PROSPECT PARK

There is lots happening to celebrate Canada's 150th birthday at Prospect Park this Saturday, July 1. Performances by Monty and his Crew, and Scarecrow—the best of John “Cougar” Melencamp at the Prospect Park Bandshell. There will also be the Robert Little Choir and Everybody Dance Club, Canada's most Patriotic Town Challenge, and the winner of #whyitsworththedrive will be announced. Enjoy food from Acton Pizza, Pizza Hub, The Funnel Cloud, Vanilla Dilla Ice Cream, and the Optimist Club of Halton Hills. And at dusk, sit back and be wowed by the Acton Firefighters' incredible fireworks display. The fun starts at 6 p.m.

USE FIREWORKS SAFELY

The Halton Hills Fire Department would like to remind residents that as we celebrate Canada's 150th birthday when discharging family fireworks, residents must follow the rules contained in By-law 2004-0122.

Some safety tips: Carefully read and follow label directions. Do not allow children to discharge fireworks without adult supervision. Discharge fireworks only if wind and weather conditions do not create a safety hazard. Keep onlookers a safe distance from the discharge area. Keep a pail of water or water hose close by. Discharge fireworks well away from combustible materials, structures, trees and dry grass. Bury fireworks that do not have a base halfway in a container of sand or earth unless label

states otherwise and angle them at a 10 degree angle, pointing away from people. Light only one firework at a time. Never light fireworks in your hand. Do not smoke near the fireworks. Stay away for at least 30 minutes before approaching a firework that did not go off. Clean up all fireworks debris when finished and check for embers or smouldering materials.

Also, keep sparklers away from children. They burn hot and can ignite clothing. Immediately soak spent sparklers in water. If someone gets burned, run cool water over the wound for three to five minutes and seek medical attention if necessary.

OUR NATIONAL FLAG

The Canadian Flag, or the National Flag of Canada, is a relatively new addition to our country. While discussions regarding a national flag began in the 1800s, shortly after Confederation, after decades of public input and ideas, nothing could be decided upon.

However, in 1956, Secretary of State for External Affairs Lester B. Pearson—who would later go on to become Prime Minister—decided to work towards a national flag after is offer of Canadian Troops as peace keepers was rejected because of the British symbol they wore.

In July 1961, Pearson took his idea to John Ross Matheson, a Member of Parliament and noted expert in flags, insignias and coats of arms. Over the next year, Matheson sought ideas for a national flag, and in 1964 Dr. George Stanley of the Royal Military College of Canada suggested a design that included the College's flag, the Victoria Medal and a document from 1919 that

suggested the use of a single red maple leaf like the one used by Canadian Olympic athletes since 1904.

On February 15, 1965 on Parliament Hill, Canada's official National Flag was raised for the first time.



LETTERS

The views expressed in these published letters are those of the writer and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of The New Tanner Publishing Ltd.



RE: Nuclear Weapons...The fireworks you really ought to care about!

To the Editor,

While it is entirely appropriate to disagree with The Prime Minister of Canada, he is the Prime Minister and should be granted respect through disagreement. I personally can't agree with anything he does or says, but that does not change

the fact HE is the Prime Minister of Canada, and Ms. Bell should not be referring to him as Boy Trudeau! This is Canada, and we are quickly approaching the 150th anniversary of this great land, this G7 Nation. What we say in confidence with those in ear-

shot we trust is one thing, but published petty names for our world leader simply demeans this Nation and it's people. We should leave name calling to children, even then we tell them to stop.

Brian Wilcox
Acton

JUST A THOUGHT

Fad Patriotism – only in the 21st century!

Bright new flags are flying high amid a plethora of red, white and Canadian anything strung through storefronts in the hopes of a quick buck or two; yep, Canada's sesquicentennial has finally come. And like all special milestones, it has done so with a wee bit of contention, a whole lot of bravado, a mountain of taxpayers' money (\$500 million and rising), and perhaps a slight scrap of soul searching. But does the 150th deserve all this hoopla? Are we really the great and noble nation we claim to be?

Well, we might be, but it appears Canadians really don't know. The usual talking points come up: freedom, peacekeeping, beer, but these are but myths, stereotypes reminiscent of those iconic I am Canadian commercials. For starters, this isn't actually Canada's birthday, simply the anniversary of confederation. Some argue Canada was a group of nations long before Europeans arrived; others contest that her political beginnings date back before 1867, while for some moments like the War of 1812, Vimy Ridge in 1917, or the Canada Act of 1982 are more appropriate markers to Canada truly becoming a nation unto its own. Yet, even celebrating nationhood can cause debate. In a world of conflicted, swiftly changing ideals, globalization, indigenous claim and populism (which one could argue is really progressivism but we'll save that for another day) have fueled ideas that celebrating is wrong. While for others the fad-like patriotism is merely a reason to party, a fleeting interest not too unlike the 2010 Vancouver Games.

So, this Canada Day, should we sing proudly or repent history's past transgressions? Must



By
Trish Bell

we spend the next 150 years making up for the choices that lead us to the Canada of today? No, of course not. We cannot change the past. We can say we're sorry, and we are, but nothing can change it. I don't persecute the futures of my children to rectify the mistakes made by my great grandparents. I talk about the mistakes, explain why they were made, learn, and move on. We are where we are. But some of us are a bit slow at learning lessons. Take the Ipsos poll asking us what Canada means. For 25 per cent it meant freedom; for another 20 per cent it was home. (Only 20 per cent? That eerie image of the cheap, unruly and arrogant roommate comes to mind again.) The other answers danced all over the map, showing that Canadians themselves don't have a true idea of what Canada is. This can be great news; our nation is still pliable, not yet hardened into something so permanent that change is difficult and that seems natural; after all, we are a young nation. Yet, it also feels almost too acquiescent; I mean aren't there some truths to a Canadian identity that can't be altered? Thank goodness for the stereotypical beer commercial; everyone living on mountains or at the lake and ALWAYS with an ice-cold beer in hand (no wonder the world doesn't take us seriously; we seem like college kids on an eternal spring break). Yet, the irony is the only group actually swayed by such messaging seems to

be Canadians themselves. 72 per cent of us claim the best beer in the world is Canadian, yet the top two selling beers in Canada are actually imports from our American neighbours, clearly showing you shouldn't judge a beer drinker by the bottle in his (or her) hand. Yet, this is just one of hundreds of things we assume to be true. Us peacekeepers actually contribute less than Mongolia and Yemen, ranking 52 on the world list. Our national sport is really lacrosse. 83 per cent of us felt that we should commemorate the 100th anniversary of Vimy, yet even when given a choice of five possibilities, only 12 per cent of us could even identify the memorial (even though it is shown on the back of our \$20 bill!). With all this incorrect thinking out there, what do we have to brag about? Tons! We just don't seem to know it. While many of us found the teacher's dissertation of Jacques Cartier's explorations of indigenous lands tedious, history isn't written for entertainment value. Sometimes we have to push through to get to the good stuff. And Canada has a LOT of good stuff: the foghorn, insulin, Winnie the Pooh, gas helmets, the Canada Arm, the telegraph, 16 Victoria Crosses, pabulum, batteries, Ardox nails, the list is endless. Yet, more than all that, it is truly our people that make us great. Be they astronauts or athletes, soldiers or scientists, Terry Fox or John McCrae, great Canadians have marked our place in history and in the world. The value in celebrating 150 years is not at all for the reasons you think, but if you learn a little more about Canada, it will be worth all the fireworks.