

Waving the Flag



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Over the past quarter century, the maple leaf flag has become Canada's most prominent and visible national symbol. It was first raised over Parliament Hill as the country's national flag on February 15, 1965, and this year marked its 25th anniversary.

From 1867 till that time, Canada's official flag had been Britain's Union Flag or "Union Jack" — although the Red Ensign bearing the Arms of Canada was regularly flown for Canada as well — until it was replaced by the red and white maple leaf in 1965.

The search for a new Canadian flag began in earnest in 1925 when then Prime Minister MacKenzie King appointed an armed services committee to begin investigating possible flag

On February 15, 1990, Canada celebrated the maple leaf flag's 25th anniversary.

designs. Later, in 1946, a select parliamentary committee was appointed with a similar mandate and examined more than 2 600 submissions, but Parliament was never called upon to formally vote on a design. As the 1967 centennial of Confederation approached, however, the Canadian government increased its efforts to choose a national flag.

Early in 1964, the Prime Minister at the time, Lester B. Pearson, informed the House of Commons of the government's desire to adopt a distinctive national flag. After considerable debate, the final design was adopted by Parliament and approved by royal proclamation. Red and white had already been sanctioned as national

colours by the royal proclamation granting a coat of arms to Canada in 1921, and the maple leaf had enjoyed a long tradition as a symbol of Canada.

The official ceremony inaugurating the new Canadian flag was held on Parliament Hill in Ottawa on February 15, 1965, in the presence of Governor General Georges P. Vanier, Prime

Minister Lester B. Pearson and thousands of Canadians. On that momentous day, the Honourable Maurice Bourget, Speaker of the Senate, added further symbolic meaning to the ceremony when he said: "The flag is the symbol of the nation's unity, for it, beyond any doubt, represents all the citizens of Canada without distinction of race, language, belief and opinion."

Places for Peace

The Montreal-based International Institute for Peace through Tourism recently launched its "Places For Peace" campaign. The effort stems from a recommendation made at a major international conference on the theme of Tourism: A Vital Force for Peace. Held in Vancouver in October 1988 to support the United Nations International Year of Peace, the conference attracted some 800 participants from a broad range of disciplines and from more than 65 countries spanning the globe.

The purpose of the conference was to heighten awareness of the concept of tourism as a force for peace and to examine ways for tourism to promote understanding between peoples, to improve the quality of the environment and to contribute to the World Conservation strategy for "sustainable development."

A central recommendation of the Vancouver conference was that the tourism industry join forces with landscape architects, the parks and recreation community, and environmental and peace groups as catalysts in creating "Places For Peace" throughout the world. From the local community level (peace gardens, peace memorials, peace parks) to the national and international level (international peace parks, world heritage parks and sites, international friendship trails), "Places For Peace" will serve as places of ceremony and reflection, as well as cross-roads for both domestic and international travelers.

Some recent noteworthy examples of "Places For Peace" are the Toronto Peace Gardens, dedicated by Pope John Paul II; a Peace Park in Tashkent U.S.S.R., and the recently announced National Peace Garden in Washington, D.C., which