

Serving Canada with Pride

This issue of *Our World* comes out just before Canada Day, the day on which we celebrate the blessings that are ours because we are Canadian. Political freedom, security, material comfort, respect for law and human rights—there are so many aspects of being Canadian to which we can only respond with gratitude and appreciation.

Canada has been doing a lot right. We have the lowest debt and deficit and the strongest economic growth of any of the developed countries. Our banking system, one of the strongest in the world, allowed us to pass through the recent recession in better shape than any other country. Our workforce is uniquely skilled.

For DFAIT, a foreign affairs and international trade ministry, Canada Day offers a chance to project our national pride and sense of unity around the world.

Nearly 3 million Canadians live abroad, enough to populate a medium-sized province. The department's Canada Day celebrations abroad help to reinforce their attachment to Canada, especially among younger members of the expatriate community.

As the chief of protocol of Canada, I read this issue with real pleasure. Many will be astonished and touched to see the many ways that DFAIT employees celebrate Canada Day here in Canada and at our missions abroad. In London, 50,000 people regularly attend the festivities in Trafalgar Square. In Ramallah, in a demonstration of the volunteer work that many Canadians do on Canada Day, the representative office helped to beautify one of the city's parks. And Washington will once again use social media to create its "Canada Day Across America" event that last year saw 50,000 people uniting in a mass virtual celebration of our country.

We also hear about how Canada Day is celebrated here in Canada. Employees from across the nation tell us about their personal celebrations, and we learn about the festivities of our country's Aboriginal peoples. In a charming touch, the children of DFAIT employees tell us, through artwork and short essays, what being Canadian means to them.

Not least, we read about the history of Canada Day from its quiet beginnings up to the patriotic outpourings that have typified our celebrations since the centennial year in 1967.

This is my first year back in Canada after a decade working at missions abroad. I can tell you that our Canada Day celebrations have always been enthusiastically received in the countries in which I have had the honour of representing Canada. We aim to combine the requisite sense of dignity with an informality that puts people at ease and allows us to make the important connections to help promote Canada's international agenda.

I remember last year's Canada Day celebrations in Jordan. As Head of Mission in Amman, I welcomed many guests to a special outdoor terrace event financed by corporate sponsors. Thanks to current technology, we were

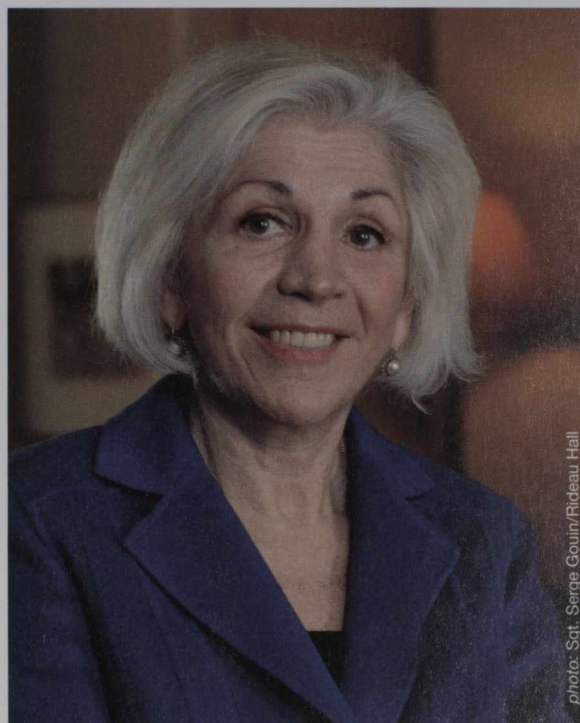


photo: Sgt. Serge Gouin/Rideau Hall

Margaret Huber, Chief of Protocol of Canada

able to put on audiovisual presentations that gave a concrete sense, not only of Canada's natural beauty, but of Canada as a nation at the forefront of technological innovation.

Here in Ottawa on Canada Day, we will be hosting, as we always do, foreign heads of mission and their spouses at a reception on the ninth floor of the Lester B. Pearson Building. There's no better vantage point from which to enjoy the fireworks display.

I am sure most DFAIT employees will have a wonderful time on Canada Day. As professionals, here and abroad, it is an opportunity to advance the work that is the department's *raison d'être*. As Canadians, it brings to mind our simple love of this country we serve.

Margaret Huber
Chief of Protocol of Canada