

My favorite Canadian...

With father's day just passed, I got thinking about my dad and how important he was in my life and development. I miss him terribly!

If I could I'd nominate him as the Greatest Canadian in our history, at least in mine. Let me tell you why.

My dad was born on a farm in outside of Regina, (Estevan area) the only son with a passel of 7 older sisters. His father died young, so he worked and helped out around the farm and later in town after they sold it. He worked and went to school until the 2nd world war where he volunteered for the air force even though he could have sat it out due to his family responsibilities. **He was committed to freedom and to this concept we call Canada and he was willing to risk his life in its defense.**

Toward the end of the war he came to Olds with my mom's brother and the match was struck. A love affair that lasted 55 years until death finally separated them. After the war they adopted me and then my sister, as they were not able to have any kids of their own. They chose to make a home for us and to nurture us as we grew into adulthood.

My dad never received any fame or fortune when he was alive, never received any awards for service (and he served faithfully and fully), never made a lot of money or left a huge fortune to my mom or us kids. He was never elected to office or did anything overtly newsworthy. Why would I say he was the greatest Canadian I knew?

Ronald Howard Hooey had a heart and a soul as vast and giving as our county has diversity in its landscape and ethnic blending. He positively loved people and was no respecter of persons, treating everyone he met with respect and hospitality. He was, and is in my memory, the quintessential Canadian role model. Giving, loving, hard working, genuine, family oriented, forgiving, industrious, and above all loyal and dedicated to making this country better because of his life.

I have a fantastic *standard* to inspire me and to challenge me as I travel North America sharing my Ideas with my audiences. A standard, I would wish everyone would seek to emulate and build on. **If we could follow his example, this country would truly be the greatest country in the world and then some.** Sadly, he left us on Feb 11, 1999 but his memory and his inspiration remain.

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