

VICTORIA DAY

Victoria Day is a holiday that celebrates Queen Victoria's birthday. It happens on the last Monday before May 25 and many people look forward to the long weekend it creates.

Queen Victoria died more than 100 years ago, but she was very important when Canada became a country. She encouraged **Confederation**, which helped the provinces join together to form Canada. She even chose Ottawa as our capital city. She never visited Canada, but five of her nine children spent time here.

Although her birthday was celebrated on May 24 since 1845, when Queen Victoria died in 1901, the Canadian **Parliament** created a holiday in her honour. In 1957, Victoria Day was also **declared** the official birthday of Queen Elizabeth II, who is the queen of England today. Her real birthday is April 21.

Canada is the only country in the world that has this special day. It is not a public holiday in the provinces of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, and Prince Edward Island. In Quebec, the day was renamed as National Patriot's Day in 2002.

Back in 1845, people celebrated the Queen's birthday with activities like picnics, parades, sporting **tournaments**, fireworks, and **cannon salutes**. Today, stores and businesses close for the day to enjoy an extra day to rest. Some communities still enjoy concerts,



parades, and sporting events to celebrate the former queen's birthday.

Many people see the Victoria Day long weekend as the beginning of summer. They start looking forward to outdoor barbecues, festivals, camping, and going to the cabin. Summer parks and outdoor restaurants choose this day as their opening day. Gardeners in many areas of Canada think it marks the beginning of warmer weather and planting can begin.



Confederation: The joining together of provinces and territories forming Canada, which began July 1, 1867.

Parliament: The group of people who have been elected to make laws.

Declared: Announced something formally or officially.

Tournament: A sports competition.

Cannon salute: An event in which cannons are fired in honour of something.

VICTORIA DAY QUESTIONS

1. Victoria Day is a holiday that celebrates _____ birthday.
2. When does Victoria Day happen?

3. Queen Victoria encouraged _____, which helped the provinces join together to form Canada.
4. Queen Victoria even chose _____ as our capital city.
5. When did the Canadian Parliament create a holiday in Queen Victoria's honour?

6. In 1957, Victoria Day was also declared the official birthday of _____.
7. Back in 1845, how did people celebrate the Queen's birthday?

8. Many people see the Victoria Day long weekend as what?
