



INTELLIGENCER PHOTO BY HENRY BURY  
Bruce Bedell

make Belleville our home again."

Bedell's other passion has been writing and performing one-man shows on characters from 18th and 19th century Canadian history.

"I tell people that a country without a history is a country without soul," he said. "People say that Canada doesn't have an interesting history. But I found it fascinating and want to impart this fascination with others through my writing and performing of one-man shows."

He has also acted in community theatre for almost five decades, including locally for such groups as the Brown Bag Lunch, Hastings County Historical Society, 7th Town Historical Society and Westgate Lodge.

It was his play writing that introduced him to the world of town criers in 1984.

He wrote a play for his elementary school's drama club to mark the bicentennial of the arrival of the United Empire Loyalists to Ontario and then played the part of the town crier — and he was hooked.

At a July 12, 1984 competition, he became the official town crier for Sault Ste. Marie and subsequently made it to the Ontario finals in Ottawa a few

"While in Ottawa, I helped form the Ontario Guild of Town Criers and that was the beginning of modern town crying in Ontario," he said proudly.

Bedell won the provincial town crier's title in 1989, 1990 and 1991 and was ranked as high as eighth in the world in 1993.

He also had the distinction of being the international town crier of the two Sault Ste. Maries of North America from 1988 to 1997.

His last placing was fifth in North America at a competition in 2004 in New Jersey.

"The 50-year-old kids are winners nowadays because their voices are stronger," he said.

Bedell will not be attending the international competition later this year in Australia because of the costs involved.

He is extremely content and honoured to serve as Belleville's town crier.

"I am glad to represent my hometown and I hope to live up to the abilities and reputation of my own town crying friend, Al Kelleher, who served Belleville for many years," said Bedell.

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