

Town Crier hopes to add more events to his schedule

By Bill Rea

After two years on the job, the Town of Caledon is getting lots of mileage out of its Town Crier, although he believes there's more that can be done.

Andrew Welch delivered his annual report to Town council Tuesday, outlining some of the successes that have been experienced, as well as his hopes for the coming year.

The successes have included Welch winning recognition as the 'Best Representative of Their Town and Community' at the International Town Criers Contest, which was held early in August in Kingston. He also took part in the Marshville Heritage Festival Town Crier Competition in Wainfleet Sept. 1. He won top prize there and was presented with what he said at the time was the world's largest Town Crier trophy.

'My number of appearances at community events and charity functions are fewer than last year, though not for want of trying to generate interest,' he stated in his report to council.

On the other hand, he pointed to his successes in the competitions.

'I think there remain a number a number of untapped opportunities for Caledon to promote its tourism and heritage with proclamations at community events, at no cost to the Town,' he added.

Welch said he's continuing to work as a goodwill ambassador for the Town whenever the opportunity presents itself, with his wife Elswyth Fryer joining him, in period costume, at out-of-town events. He also sits on the Board of Directors of the Ontario Guild of Town Criers.

He's also been filling in for Orangeville's Town Crier, who has been dealing with illness.

The community appearances he has made (pro bono) in the last year included the Santa Claus parades in both Bolton and Caledon village, the Christmas Tree lighting in Alton, the Alton Millpond Hockey Tournament, the Alton Dry Stone Wall Festival, the Canada Day celebrations at the Caledon Fairgrounds, the opening of the Farmers' Market at Southfields Village, the Caledon Townhall Players' 50th anniversary celebrations and the FarmStock dinner last month.

He was also at five civic appearances booked by the Town, including WinterFest in January, the Caledon Farmers' Market opening in Bolton, the Caledon Walk of Fame ceremonies, the opening ceremonies of Caledon Day and the two-year countdown for the 2015 Pan Am Games at Caledon Equestrian Park.

'It's a matter of getting out there and getting visible,' he remarked.

Welsh said there have been a few complications over the year. One of them involved who he actually reports to. He added, however, he plans to meet with Town Clerk Carey deGorter, and he was hoping that would soon get straightened out.

'I think you do an excellent job,' Councillor Gord McClure told Welch.

'We're proud of you and you certainly bring a great deal of excitement to events,' Councillor Richard Paterak added.