



By Alicia Wynter

Haley Sisler drives towards the basket during her game against the Centennial Colts Oct. 30. Sisler put 11 points on the board as the Lady Lancers played a close game for their season opener winning 51-48. The men didn't fare as well, losing 74-73. For story and photo, see page 3.

## A ghostly, historic walk

By Gail Paquette

Dressed in a top hat seemingly plucked from the head of Ben Franklin, a cloak reminiscent of Jack the Ripper and the colour purple signifying the regality of eras past, Johnathon Boyd is a walking, talking and dressed accordingly, history lesson.

As Boyd winds his guests through the streets of Belleville hosting Shadowicc Ghost Walks, he uncovers what he calls "Belleville's best kept secrets."

Boyd has done his homework, something his mother, a teacher for 32 years, would approve of. Before he stepped out onto the darkened streets to give his first tour five years ago, he poured over facts, photos and newspaper articles for more than a year.

"Everything is true, that I talk about. There is documentation of it all. I am not a historian, I ride on the shoulders of those before me," he said.

Born and raised in the Belleville area, Boyd's personal ties to the area date back to his great-great grandfather.

Beyond that connection, Boyd makes no bones about being attached to the past and in a big way to the spirit world since his near death experience at age 2 ?.

Growing up, he said he wondered why he never heard anything in school about local history.

He scoured library shelves, newspaper archives and historical documents.

Now Belleville's past spills from his lips without abandon, leaving listeners wanting more.

Research is constant and he says the Corby Library, Hastings Historical Society and Belleville Intelligencer archives are his favourite haunts. "Information for the asking," he said.

On his search of publications and old records, very often he uncovers the strange and untalked about past including a visit to the city by the Ku Klux Klan and the last public hanging of a woman in Canada, Mary Aylward.

"It was December 8, 1862 and 5,000 people showed up on one of the worst winter days to watch. They left the bodies of Aylward and her husband hanging for half hour," said Boyd, "and then cut down the bodies and sold pieces of the ropes as souvenirs."

Every so often, Boyd has approached homeowners in wanting more information; some he said are very giving – others not so much.

Fear, he said, is the biggest factor for property owners not wanting to know of the past that eludes their doorstep, especially if it involves a death.

"Over in European countries, death is celebrated and wisdom from the wise men and women who live before is relished," he says. "Here in North America, we mourn the dead."

His insatiable curiosity and need to know was at first a curse in his life but over the years he has embraced that need. His curiosity is never ending.

Labelled as weird throughout his life, he kept his secret under wraps until embracing his psychic gifts and sharing them with close friends.

Shadowicc Ghost Walks, explained Boyd, is a step back in time. He says his life mission is to help people understand the paranormal, supernatural and the occult with intelligence, compassion and understanding.

Anyone could choose to do this, he said. The history on Belleville and surrounding area is in abundance if you are willing and wanting to know.

Dressed in attire indicative of the 1800s, Boyd's theatrics include humorous anecdotes.

"I don't want it to be too dry," he said. The evening is not to spook but to tell truths behind the walls and floorboards of Belleville's most historical buildings.

"It is not only about those who lived here but the buildings they occupied. It is an historical architectural tour as well," he said.

When he began his tours in Belleville in 2007, it wasn't as readily accepted as it is now. He said he believes that it is down to many things. The information highway lined with computer technology and recent writings like the Da Vinci Code and Angels and Demons have awakened people's curiosity.

"It is also because people are wanting to return to their roots and the simpler times of their ancestors. That means learning about their past," he said.

A past that harbours documented truths of the strange and unusual.

"People ignore the strange and unusual, I myself am the strange and unusual," quotes Boyd from a favourite movie, Beetlejuice.

Boyd enjoys the chance through his tours to get together with the open-minded to help them feel at ease with the spirits and answer tough questions most people want to ignore.

## Dual-citizens ready to post absentee ballots from Canada

By Justin Tang

Jesse Cranin was 10 days from turning 18 when President Barack Obama was elected the 44<sup>th</sup> President of the United States on Nov. 4, 2008.

Now 21-years-old, the fourth-year

health studies student at Queen's University wasn't going to miss his chance to vote this time around.

Absentee ballots are hardly uncommon in the American electoral landscape – President Obama made history by being the first president to vote early through

absentee ballot this year. Americans go to the polls Nov. 6 to decide between Democrat incumbent Obama and Republican candidate Mitt Romney.

Being away from his hometown of Acton, Massachusetts has made following the election different, but not difficult for

the dual-citizen.

"The climate is just different," Cranin says, of following the campaigns from Canada.

"While it's easy to connect, discuss and share ideas, at the same time, there is an amount of disconnection because no one

is voting here."

The dual-citizen says it's not difficult to follow the campaigns, thanks to social media and the Internet, but the physical proximity has led to a feeling of disengagement.

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## Priest shares the story of his ministry

*Editor's Note: As part of this documentary photo and feature writing assignment, photojournalism student Richard Barclay considered his own relationship with religion.*

By Richard Barclay

In preparation for my meeting with Father Timothy Shea, local Catholic priest in Belleville at St. Joseph's Catholic Church, I found myself thinking back in time, trying to figure out when was the last time I had gone to church by choice.

It was then that I realized that I had never been to church by my own choice. I realized the last time I had even been inside a church was for my cousin's wedding almost three years ago, and the time before that was when I was in Grade 8 and getting confirmed as a Catholic, which was also not my choice.

So there I was, standing in the parking lot of St. Joseph's Church, realizing that this is the very first time I was going to church because I wanted to, and it wasn't even for a mass moreso for an inquiry into the life of a Catholic priest.

I rang the side doorbell and a woman answered the door. The first thing she noticed about me was all the lighting equipment and camera gear that I had slung around my shoulders. She looked at me and smiled as she said, "You must be here to take Father Shea's photo."

She led me towards the main part of the church where they hold all of the ceremonies. She said Father Shea would be out in a few minutes; he was just on the phone.

So I took this time to set up my lights and try to figure out what I was going to say and how I was going to make an interesting photo.

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Photo by Richard Barclay

Father Timothy Shea originally from Kingston, has been a priest at St. Joseph's Catholic Church in Belleville for the past four years.