

# MEDIA RELEASE

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## HOW DO THEY DO THAT? FESTIVAL PLAYERS PLAYWRIGHTS READING SERIES RETURNS

**Prince Edward County, ON, (April 17, 2009):** Which comes first, the idea for the story or the characters in that story? Why is it a play and not, say, an essay? What makes a story come to life in three dimensions? If you've ever wondered what it takes to write a play then you'll want to mark your calendars for **Sunday May 3rd at 2pm** for the first in the Festival Players 2009 Playwrights Reading Series. Writers and composers will read (and play) from their works and chat with the audience, Q & A style.

At this first reading, well-known local singer/songwriter/playwright Suzanne Pasternak (*Minerva, The Lily Sisters*) will be joined by *Ship of Fire* collaborators Marion de Vries, Bernie Gaw and Tom Leighton. They'll read from the play and share some music from it. Discussions will include the joys and challenges of this collaborative creation process, their inspiration for the piece, translating history into living artwork, and how the musical has evolved since it was first born as an idea.

*Ship of Fire*, inspired by actual events that took place off the shores of Prince Edward County, is a musical about a tragic moment in our marine history. In 1853, a luxury passenger steamship, The Ocean Wave, burned and sank on its voyage from Hamilton to Montreal, just off the south shore. This play imagines some of the lives lived and lost in that disaster and the stories of the everyday heroes who rescued survivors.

Local audiences have seen draft versions of *Ship of Fire* presented by Pasternak at the Kerosene Lamp Series at Black River Chapel. The script has gone through various revisions and more engaging music has been created. This summer you can see it in its full glory, fully staged with a cast of professional actors including Festival darlings Natasha Pasternak and Michael O'Hara.

The next two Playwrights Reading Series events are Sunday June 7<sup>th</sup>, when we will be joined by charming *Schoolhouse* playwright Leanna Brodie and Sunday June 28<sup>th</sup> when *Colours in the Storm* writer Jim Betts will regale with tales of his trajectory through decades of Canadian theatre.

**Admission to the Playwrights Reading Series is free. Light refreshments will be available.**

**Playwrights Reading Series begins Sunday May 3<sup>rd</sup> at 2pm**  
***Ship of Fire* creators Suzanne Pasternak, Marion de Vries, Tom Leighton and Bernie Gaw**  
**Books & Company, 289 Main Street, Picton**

- 30 -

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