

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 11, 2010

### Artistic talent and local stories come to life at the 100 Mile Playwright Festival

The Grey-Bruce Arts Collective, in association with the Beautiful Joe Heritage Society, is excited to present "The 100 Mile Playwright Festival" this fall at Meaford Hall. This October 2 and 3, please join us for public readings of three original Grey County plays, all made possible through generous funding from the Ontario Arts Council, the Meaford Rotary Club, Gardhouse Financial, Smith Tire and Auto and the Ardiel Animal Hospital.

"We are so thrilled to bring these stories to life in their birth place. These workshop readings are the first step in the development of plays that showcase our rich local history. Our long-term plan is to present a full production of each play in the future" says Roger Shank, Artistic Director of the Grey Bruce Arts Collective. Each of the plays presented are original works about stories from the area or written by residents. The plays include: The Tank Range Project; A theatrical adaptation of Beautiful Joe and the winner of "The Page to the Stage: A Youth Playwriting Contest."

The Tank Range Project, written by Roger Shank and Jamie Robinson tells the tale of the 1942 expropriation of the land north west of Meaford. With the help of a local advisory committee and hours of research, the play has been in development for over 4 years and will continue throughout the summer.

Recently, the Beautiful Joe Heritage Society commissioned award-winning playwright Michael O'Brien to adapt Margaret Marshall Saunders novel of "Beautiful Joe" into a play. "This has been a dream of ours for a long time and we are thrilled to begin this journey with Mr. O'Brien" says Evelyn Dean, Chair of the Society. Fundraising efforts continue in order to cover the costs of the playwright for the Beautiful Joe Heritage Society including a planned golf tournament this summer. For more information about the golf tournament and getting involved in the Beautiful Joe Society, please visit [www.beautifuljoe.org](http://www.beautifuljoe.org).

"The Page to the Stage: Youth Playwriting Contest" is open to all youth ages 13 to 18 who reside in Bruce and Grey Counties. Applicants may submit an example of their writing and a cover letter describing their story idea to the Grey-Bruce Arts Collective. Deadline for applications is June 25. The winner of the contest will spend the summer writing their play with the support of industry professionals who will offer guidance to this budding playwright. The final draft will be workshopped and read by professional actors as part of the festival. Youth interested in submitting an entry should contact The Grey-Bruce Arts Collective for more information.

"Meaford Rotary is excited to support the work of the 100 Mile Playwright Festival in its inaugural season. This is a great opportunity for the young people of our community to take their writing from seed to the full fruition of a mounted production." Says Pamela Poetker, of the Meaford Rotary Club.

"We will be eternally grateful to the local businesses that are supporting this original idea and investing in the artistic future of Meaford" says Shank. "We felt that this "harvest" of local stories could be celebrated alongside the popular Apple Harvest Craft Show and Scarecrow Invasion. Once we were granted their support, we set the wheels in motion to make this dream a reality."

Tickets for the event will go on sale later this summer. Please stay tuned for more information.

For more information about the project, please visit our website, [www.greybruceartscollective.com](http://www.greybruceartscollective.com), or email [greybruceartscollective@gmail.com](mailto:greybruceartscollective@gmail.com), or call 519-538-4903