

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **For Immediate Release**

November 7, 2018

### **Maritime Museum of British Columbia and The Little Chamber Music Series That Could Present *Sounding the Sophia* A Concert Performance**

#### **- Commemorating the Lives Lost On Board the SS *Princess Sophia* -**

During the early morning hours of November 11, 1918, the SS *Princess Alice* arrived in the Port of Vancouver carrying the bodies of the victims from the tragic sinking of the SS *Princess Sophia*. Referred to as the “Ship of Sorrow”, the SS *Princess Alice* arrived in Vancouver to the sounds of jubilation over the announcement of the Armistice and the end of World War One.

The Victoria-based coastal liner struck Vanderbilt Reef in Alaska’s Lynn Canal during the early morning hours of October 23, 1918 and sank during the early evening of October 25, 1918 some 40 hours later. Everyone on board perished including over 360 passengers and crew. The sinking of the SS *Princess Sophia* remains the largest marine disaster along the Pacific Northwest coast of North America.

Over seventy of the victims from the disaster were buried at Mountain View Cemetery including the Radio Operator, David Mearns Robinson, who valiantly stayed at his post relaying messages until the water was entering the wireless room which was located beside the bridge on the top deck of the ship. His last message at 5:20 p.m. was, “*Alright but for God’s sake hurry, water coming in room.*”

Another victim buried at Mountain View Cemetery is John (“Jack”) Maskell who was on his way to England to marry the love of his life, Miss Dorothy Burgess. On October 24, 1918, Mr. Maskell wrote a final letter including his last will and testament that was later recovered and reported around the world.

The commemoration event will also recognise members of the O’Brien Family. William, Sarah and their five children were on board the ship and most of the family are interred at Mountain View Cemetery. A new grave stone monument has been placed at their gravesite in lasting memory of the family.

David Leverton, Executive Director of Maritime Museum of BC stated that, "It is hard to imagine what the passengers and crew experienced in their final hours. We are holding these special commemorative events at Mountain View Cemetery to honour the passengers and crew who lost their lives on board the SS *Princess Sophia* as well as out of respect for the descendants, co-workers and rescuers whose lives were dramatically affected as a result of this terrible shipwreck at sea."

### **Event Schedule**

Date: November 9 & 10

Location: Celebration Hall, Mountain View Cemetery, 5455 Fraser Street, Vancouver, BC

### **Planned Activities:**

7:00 p.m. Maritime Museum of BC Mobile Exhibit, Celebration Hall

7:30 p.m. Presentation by David Leverton, Executive Director, Maritime Museum of BC

8:00 p.m. "Sounding the Sophia" Concert begins

Admission is free to the event. Seating is limited.

To learn more about this event click here:

<http://littlechambermusic.com/soundingthesophia/>

For further Information, please contact:

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