

FIRST BOOK PUBLISHED

# Challenging labour of love

**Former diamond miner and colourful character Wayne Fipke takes on the life of Jesus.**

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Wayne Fipke admits his first book is going to challenge readers.

The brother and former business partner of diamond miner Chuck Fipke, Wayne Fipke will be appearing in Kelowna on Saturday at Mosaic Books to promote *The Way In*, described as a first century history, written from the point of view of Jesus.

A history novel, it explores the life of Jesus Christ and what his early years might have been like, what kind of adventures he may have gotten into.

"We only know Jesus from about the age of 30 when he started his ministry so what I have tried to investigate is what could have happened before that time, what could have or could not have happened," said Fipke in an interview with the *Kelowna Capital News*.

"Everybody is familiar with Jesus and astounded at the things he did and said, but this is about how did he become the person we are familiar with today."

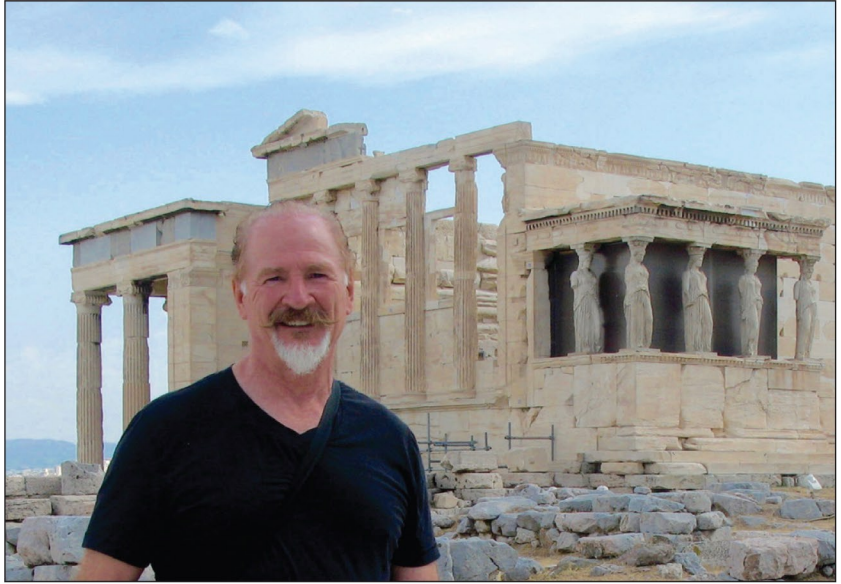
You might call *The Way In* a labour of love. Fipke said he's been working on the book for some 50 years, since originally coming up with the idea as a university student.

He went through 14 different versions and re-writes before coming up with the final draft.

"It took a long time and a lot of revisions," said Fipke.

"It wasn't so much the words I was working at; I'm really trying to look inside the mind and behind the words of Jesus.

"Although the story is my imagination working



**Author and former diamond miner Wayne Fipke at the Acropolis in Athens, Greece. Fipke will be appearing at Mosaic Books from 3 to 5 p.m. Saturday to launch his new book, *The Way In*.**

its way through the book, it really had to be historically accurate that it could have happened."

Born in Ottawa and raised in Peachland, Fipke, now 67, has had a long and colourful career spanning many variations.

He has been a logger, carpenter, musician, actor, director and pilot.

But perhaps he is most well-known as a miner and corporate executive who, along with his brother Chuck, struck it rich in diamond mining.

The Fipkes famously staked out one of the most productive diamond mines in Canadian history and possibly the world, when Wayne joined Chuck in Dia Met Minerals in 1988.

At the time, Wayne was the general manager for the Citadel Theatre in Edmonton, but he joined Dia Met and headed to the Northwest Territories with Chuck to stake out the Ekati Mine.

"People used to think we were crazy," said Fipke of the time before Ekati exploded with diamonds and made millions for early investors.

"My brother was quite a detective and he had determined that this area was the best prospect at that time in what could have been the world.

"So we took my dad's old farm truck loaded with stakes and went up and staked out the mine.

"We did have some science so it wasn't the same as going for a lottery ticket."

Wayne had done a lot of work on raising capital for Dia Met and when the stock opened on the Vancouver Stock Exchange it was valued as low as 25 cents.

When the mine produced diamonds, the stock ripped up to as high as \$50.

Five years later Wayne retired and later the company was sold. Just last year, Chuck Fipke was bought out for \$67 million, according to Wayne.

"It was something that was pretty improbable but it did turn out," said Wayne of his five-year sojourn as president of Dia Met.

"I got it listed on the stock exchange and made a lot of money but I got tired of answering the phone so I retired in 1993.

"But one doesn't retire if you are young and active. There are lots of things to do."

And for Wayne Fipke there was his labour of love, what he refers to as more a piece of art than a novel.

He says *The Way In* is written in a way the ancient Greeks used to write, devoid of punctuation with each line in the book meaning something specific and needing to be read together and interpreted by the individual.

"*The Way In* is an impressive achievement, an outside of the box imagining of a wandering Jesus who is more of a modern than you might expect," said novelist Steven Miller.

"It's a song cycle, a mind expanding meditation and a hero's quest rolled into one dynamic vision."

"This has been a fascination for me," said Fipke. "Over the years I had written some poetry and short stories that tied into this but I was able to concentrate and bring this to publication.

"I don't have ambitions for the book. It's out there and I hope it finds readers but if it doesn't that's OK. I've done it. I've completed my part."

For more on *The Way In* and to purchase a copy, go to [thewayin.ca](http://thewayin.ca).

Wayne Fipke will be appearing at Mosaic Books in Kelowna on Saturday, Sept. 24, from 3 to 5 p.m.