



## Friends of Fintry Provincial Park

### The Octagon – February, 2019

Greetings Friends,

Just when we thought we were having an “easy” winter and spring was in our sights, along comes the dreaded Arctic air! Hopefully it won’t last more than a week and we can get back on track with watching for those first bulbs poking through the soil.

The Friends of Fintry Board held a planning meeting in January as we step out into another year with a few unknowns. We have started the process of getting all our old photographs, letters etc. of Dun-Waters’ time at Fintry digitized so they will be available online. This is a huge job but will be a wonderful addition to our archives when complete.

We are still sorting through the many, many applications we received for a Caretaker and a decision regarding which way to go with this will be made within the next month. Student grants have been applied for, so now it is a waiting game (until April) to find out if we have been successful. Having students give tours during the summer months will certainly take a load off our volunteers, so fingers crossed there!

Here is a rather interesting segment from our Curator, Dan Bruce on one of the most talked about creatures in the Fintry Trophy Room.....

*“Giraffes are impressive animals, and the specimen in the Trophy Room at Fintry is no exception. Visitors coming into the room for the first time usually stop at the entry step and gasp. Some are enthralled by the unexpected, and others are resistant, and unwilling to accept the presence of such a creature.*

*Fintry’s giraffe was actually born and lived in the Penticton “Game Farm” and was not at any time the object of a hunt. The taxidermy was done by Abe Braun of Okanagan Falls, and a very skilled job he did too.*

*Native only in Africa, the giraffe has found its way into many other parts of the world, and has gained a significance of its own in diverse cultures around the world. In 1415, not one, but two giraffes were presented to Yongle, the emperor of China, one of which was shipped direct from Malindi in East Africa direct to China. At a later date, 1827, a young giraffe was presented to King George IV by Mehemet Ali, the pasha of Egypt. This animal was brought from the Sudan to Cairo, strapped to the back of a camel. It was then shipped, via Malta to England, and arrived*

*safely at Windsor Castle. King George was delighted with the gift, and commissioned the Swiss artist, Jacques-Laurent Agasse to paint the giraffe, together with the Egyptian attendants who were sent to look after it on the journey. The painting is currently on loan from the Royal Collection to the Zoological Society of London.*

*Many of Fintry's visitors accept the idea of the giraffe's long neck, but then have to reject that notion in view of the fact that almost every four footed creature can easily reach the ground by lowering the head while standing normally. The giraffe cannot, and must spread the front legs to allow the animal to get a drink at ground level. (Elephants cannot reach the ground either, but they have solved the problem with unique equipment of their own)."*

Anyone wishing to delve into the details of the life of the giraffe may refer to several books on the subject, the best of which is "The Giraffe, its Biology, Behaviour and Ecology" by Anne Innis Dagg and J. Bristol Foster, published by Van Nostrand Reinhold Company, 1976. It is pleasing to note that both the authors of this work are Canadian scientists."

Kathy Drew, President  
Friends of Fintry Provincial Park

One of our Board members, Jim Klein, recently met up with a gentleman who lived and worked at Fintry back in the 40's and following on the next page is a rather interesting story.....  
Thanks Jim!

## Summer Work at Fintry

During its time, the Fintry Estate operation employed a considerable number of people. While most of those who worked at Fintry between 1909 and 1948 have passed on, a fortunate connection was made recently.

Tye (Kiyoshi) Akagi, a Japanese Canadian, born in Vancouver, spent his early years on the west coast of British Columbia. His parents worked in the fishing industry, father operating a fishing boat, and mother working in a fish cannery. They lived on Wales Island about 48 km north of Prince Rupert.

When Tye was 6 years old the family moved to Prince Rupert so that Tye could attend school.

The Second World War changed the Akagi's life, along with the lives of many Japanese. Considered a threat to national security, Japanese families, in 1941, were uprooted from their homes and livelihoods and were interned to camps in a number of places away from the coast. Tye recalls his first move was to Hastings Park (PNE grounds). From this camp families were dispersed to other interior areas of the province. At 13 years old, Tye and his family were transferred to Slocan City near Nakusp.

When he was 16, another experience arose for Tye. As a result of a labour shortage in 1944, able-bodied men from Japanese internment camps were sent to work in other parts of the province. Tye recalls the choices of Okanagan Centre, Vernon Orchards and Fintry to do farm work. Tye and 6 other boys (Bunk Odagaki, Nappy Sakamoto, Muggins Hayashi, Kiyu Kawami, Itso Matsumoto, and George Kadowaki) chose Fintry Estate to work in the orchard. They were transported in the back of a truck on unpaved roads to Vernon. The short distance from Slocan City to New Denver took one hour over a very rough road, and it took them eight hours to get to Vernon.

So began Tye's time at Fintry. He and his friends were there for one summer, starting in May and returning to Slocan City in October.

The boys were greeted by Japanese families already working and living at Fintry. There were three families there, and four single men. Butch Kaneda was the first person Tye and his friends met. The Kaneda's lived in a cabin east of the barns just along the north side of Shorts Creek. By all accounts the boys were well looked after by the Kaneda family. They were well fed, eating mainly traditional Japanese food. Tye also remembers ham and eggs for breakfasts and pork for dinners on occasion.



For that summer the boys lived in the building referred to as the "chalet". It was up on the hillside at about the present day step number 307 on the way to the Shorts Creek Falls. When asked if the accommodation was comfortable, Tye replied,

"Oh yea. It was fine. We were just kids; we didn't care. It was summer, we didn't need much. We'd just scramble up the hillside at the end of the day and go to bed. We had our own sheets and blankets, and did our own laundry."

Tye and his buddies worked only in the orchard on the estate. They worked 10 hour days, 7 AM to 12:00, and 1:00 PM to 6 PM, with coffee breaks. Early in the season their job was thinning the apple crop to ensure fruit had a chance to grow and size properly. Later, of course, picking apples became the job. They used 12 to 14 foot ladders, picked into picking bags then filled boxes dispersed in the orchard. Another crew was responsible for loading the boxes on a truck and transporting the load to the packinghouse for sorting and packing. Tye remembers the foreman, a Mr. Scott, who was a stickler for making sure the apple pickers did not come down their ladders before quitting time.

" He didn't want us just standing around there yakking; we worked right to the last second."

