



Friends of Fintry Provincial Park

The Octagon – November 2018

The pumpkin colours of fall are disappearing, the deer are rutting and many animals are starting to grow their winter coats. We humans start to winterize as well, by digging out those warm winter coats and sweaters, change-over to winter tires and make sure our furnaces are in good running condition. Closing up the Fintry Manor House is always a sad time of year as we shut the doors on Alice's bedroom, the dining room, J.C. Dunwaters' trophy room and all the wonderful stories that are part of this historical site. The bats have gone into hibernation, the campground is closed, and the Manor House is all winterized and secure. The Friends of Fintry Board members however, are still working hard in the background planning and organizing for next year.

The first thing on our agenda is to hire Caretakers to live on-site at the Manor House. We are in the midst of constructing a contract and will be advertising this position in the coming months. We will also be applying for a student grant and hope to be successful in obtaining two students to conduct tours of the Manor House next summer.

Notes from our Curator, Dan Bruce:

Among the many items of Natural History interest in the Trophy Room is our Narwhal tusk, and a fine specimen it is. It was passed on to us from the Royal BC Museum in Victoria, who felt that they could not exhibit it as it is not from British Columbia, but from Greenland. The Narwhal is of course a famous denizen of Canada's Arctic waters. The name derives from the Old Norse, and means "corpse whale" because of the mottled colour of the animal's skin. The tusks of these whales have a very long history in European culture and lore. Believed to be the horns of unicorns, they were thought to be an indicator and an antidote for poison in medieval times, and were accordingly highly valued. Most of the specimens that were available in medieval Europe passed through the hands of the Danish royal family. They were also a highly prized trade item that the Vikings carried southwards, some even reaching Bhagdad and Cairo. Visitors to Copenhagen's Rosenborg Palace can see the famous "Unicorn Throne", part of the regalia of the Danish kings. This was made of Narwhal tusk and gold, for the coronation of King Christian V in 1671. We have added an Inuit stone sculpture of a Narwhal to the Trophy



Room collection, as so many of our visitors seem to be unfamiliar with the appearance of this species of whale.

Our Library has now received our copy of the just published “Okanagan Lake, an Illustrated Exploration Above and Below the Waters” by Raphael Nowak. This is a very thorough and well researched volume, and we are especially pleased that The Fintry Estate was one of the sponsoring subscribers for this book. This is in fact the third book that Fintry has been instrumental in publishing, the others being “The Armorial of Haiti” and “The History of Wellington College” Copies of “Okanagan Lake” are available at Mosaic Books, Kelowna.

*We have just received from Sharron Simpson a varied collection of bells that was put together by Sharron’s mother over a number of years. Some of these will be added to the Fintry collection, and others will be shared with the Lake Country Museum.
Thank you, Sharron!*

So as you can see, we have not gone into hibernation despite the now gloomy weather. The Board continues to meet every month and we are planning for some exciting changes for the coming year.

Kathy Drew, President
Friends of Fintry Provincial Park