



Friends of Fintry Provincial Park

The Octagon - April, 2021

Happy Spring everyone!

The crocuses are blooming, the birds are singing and the earth is awakening after this long and difficult winter. Brighter days are ahead and soon this whole pandemic will be in our rear view mirror and we'll be saying "remember when....."!

The awakening of the Fintry Manor House in readiness for our 2021 season will soon be taking place once the weather warms up. Our troupe of hardy volunteers armed with vacuums, buckets, mops and dusters will descend on the house and get everything spic and span for viewing once again. There will be some new additions this year, a whole new room, some new and interesting artefacts and of course the beautiful Walter Fitch print in memory of one of the Friends of Fintry founders, Ken Waldon.

We were delighted to hear from Heritage BC that our Curator Dan Bruce will be the recipient of an Honour award in the Lifetime Achievement category. This year because of COVID the recipients will be featured in the BC Heritage virtual conference in May. Dan is well deserving of this award for his dedication and contributions to heritage not only at Fintry but nationally and internationally over the past fifty years. Way to go Dan!

And now, here is Dan's latest snippet of fascinating information.....

The Shaggy Dog story

"There is a new dog at Fintry. His name might be 'Willoughby' but that is still open to question. He will be found wherever he was put and told to stay, because he is a cast iron doorstep. Made sometime around 1935, probably by the Hubley Company in the United States, Willoughby is a Fox Terrier, a breed that has a long history in Britain, and one that James Dun-Waters knew well. The framed photograph of 'Vic' in the Manor House is a Fox Terrier that presumably was an esteemed pet in the Waters' household.



Willoughby has been in my family since 1957 or 1958. He came as a gift from Francis Cary Willoughby, who was living in Jamaica at the time my parents moved to the island from the UK in 1954. Francis Cary Willoughby was a remittance man, and his remittance was adequate for him to enjoy a life of leisure in the West Indies. He owned property on the north coast of Jamaica, not far from Ocho Rios where he built a large house which he named 'Cary Island'. There was a small rocky islet just off-shore, and he built a bridge for access to it. No sandy beach, just limestone rocks straight into the sea. (An advantage, as erosion during hurricanes was minimal).

As a small child I remember him taking my family to see the place, at that time abandoned, for reasons that I cannot explain. The gardens were overgrown, but still were home to a flock of peacocks, and a

herd of local goats were using the main living room as an evening shelter. The large stone fireplace was their cool spot during the heat of the day. Stone swans with raised wings stood atop the gateposts beside the main road along the coast. Cary Island has survived. It is now a luxurious resort. . .see <http://www.sunnyvillaholidays.com/careyvilla.html>. The resort spells the name with an 'e' but in fact Cary is the correct spelling, taken from his signature in two books, once his property and now in my library. A look at the beautifully restored house will remind our members of the architectural style of the Gatehouse at Fintry.

*The doorstep has done duty during our time in Jamaica, and after returning to England, came to Canada in 1985. It being exactly the kind of item that would have attracted James Dun-Waters' attention, I had been on the lookout for a replacement so that I could hand Willoughby over to Fintry. A very heavy lignum-vitae wood sculpture of Bob Marley took his place.”
End of Shaggy Dog Story*

In preparing for a second set of lectures for the Society for Learning in Retirement (SLR), Dan has chosen 'Dogs' as one of the topics. It seems that the earliest instance of a non-human creature to be given a personal name was, not surprisingly, in Egypt. Just over 3,000 B.C. the Pharaoh Den of the First Dynasty had a much-loved dog named 'Nub', perhaps best translated as 'Goldie'. He was provided with his own funerary monument on which his name was spelled out, thus in his owner's belief, granting him eternal life. The dogs that enjoyed life at Fintry continued a very ancient tradition indeed.

Stay safe everyone...the end of this challenging time is in sight.
Kathy Drew,
Friends of Fintry Provincial Park