



Friends of Fintry Provincial Park

The Octagon – March, 2021

Greetings all,

As we March into Spring, we are looking forward to longer and brighter days ahead. Snowdrops have emerged in my garden, various other bulbs are poking through the soil and the birds are increasing their chatter..... all the usual signs of a new beginning. We humans are also looking forward to a new beginning. As we wait for that jab in the arm, (despite the fact that the goal posts keep moving), we must continue to do what we have been doing to stay safe! We will get there eventually.

All this uncertainty makes planning for our 2021 season very difficult, but we are hopeful we can open in a similar fashion to last year with Covid-19 protocols in place and with self-guided tours of the barn and Manor House. Unfortunately our Fairs will not be taking place again this year with perhaps the exception of the September one.....fingers crossed!

We were very sorry to hear of the sudden passing of one of the Friends of Fintry's founding members, Ken Waldon, on February 6th. Ken was well-known throughout the valley serving on many Boards and had a Lifetime membership in the Friends of Fintry. Together with his wife Jan, he was awarded the 2008 Central Okanagan Heritage Society Award. In 2011 he and Jan were named Vernon's Citizens of the Year; they received the Sovereign's Medal for Volunteerism in 2019 and the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal in 2020. A virtual service will be available live online on March 6th, at 2 p.m. from All Saints Anglican Church. In Ken's memory, and acknowledging his interest in growing orchids, the Friends of Fintry plan to have a framed print of an orchid, by renowned artist Walter Hood Fitch, as a memorial plaque to hang in the Fintry Manor House. More on this later.

Our Curator and now lecturer Dan Bruce has been busy "Zooming" around bringing some interesting historical info to those wishing to expand their knowledge in retirement.

A few words from Dan:

"The Society for Learning in Retirement, (SLR) was essentially brought to a complete standstill when the Covid virus arrived, but it is now recovering and functioning remotely. With the help of Dr. John Birch, we have been able to re-instate our lecture series to the SLR via Zoom. We decided to try this out and see if it could be expanded to a wider audience. Prior to Covid, I had prepared a set of five illustrated lectures on the domestication of cattle, but for the Zoom trial, I cut this down to two sessions of two hours each. Things went very well once I had adjusted the lighting in the "lecture hall" and determined the best place to stand so as to be seen, and be able to show pictures and objects to the audience. One big advantage to doing this with Zoom is that nobody has to get up and drive out through whatever the weather decides to do. Most people are definitely OK with this!"

The two talks introduced the main types and breeds of cattle worldwide, and ended with a close look at the Ayrshire dairy operation as it was at Fintry. The paintings in the cave at Lascaux in France made it clear that 20,000 years ago the wild cattle of Europe impressed our ancestors. Domestication led to food

production, directly and indirectly, and social mobility as cattle integrated with, and in many cases controlled human cultures.

Another opportunity to keep Fintry available yet without physical contact is being provided by Don Burnett. He has made it possible for me to adapt the Scottish Botanists exhibit for presentation on the radio. Each Saturday the Garden Show airs between 8 a.m. and 10 a.m. on AM 11.50, and I have about fifteen minutes to give some detailed and interesting facts about the various Scottish men and women who were involved in some form of Horticulture. So far, we have featured David Douglas, Archibald Menzies, Sir Ghillean Prance, Walter Fitch, (of whom more in a future Octagon) and Kelowna's own Alastair Beddie. Bob Kingsmill very kindly agreed to go on the air and celebrate Alastair's considerable gardening achievement on El Dorado Road in Okanagan Mission.

We do appreciate the many ways in which Don Burnett has contributed to the Fintry operation over the years.”

For those intrepid campers out there, keep in mind that camping reservations at BC Parks opens up on March 8th. For more details about the reservation system for this year go to: www.bcparks.ca/covid-19/camping-2021.

Stay safe everyone...help is on the way,
Kathy Drew,
Friends of Fintry Provincial Park