



Friends of Fintry Provincial Park

The Octagon – January, 2023

Happy New Year to all our members!

Beneath its snowy mantel cool and white, the Manor House sits waiting for another exciting season full of events.



Photo courtesy of Sue Cseh

The Friends of Fintry Board is busy planning for the 2023 season; we are once again applying for grants for summer students so that we can be open most days of the week. We often hear from people that they have come for a tour of the Manor House only to find us closed, but when we only operate with volunteers it is difficult to staff more than just weekends.....fingers crossed that we will be successful this year in our application. That being said, we are constantly looking for volunteers to help with all aspects of running the Manor House, giving tours, assisting with

events, as well as new Board members. If you are at all interested in keeping our history and heritage alive please contact myself (Kathy) at 250-309-7868.

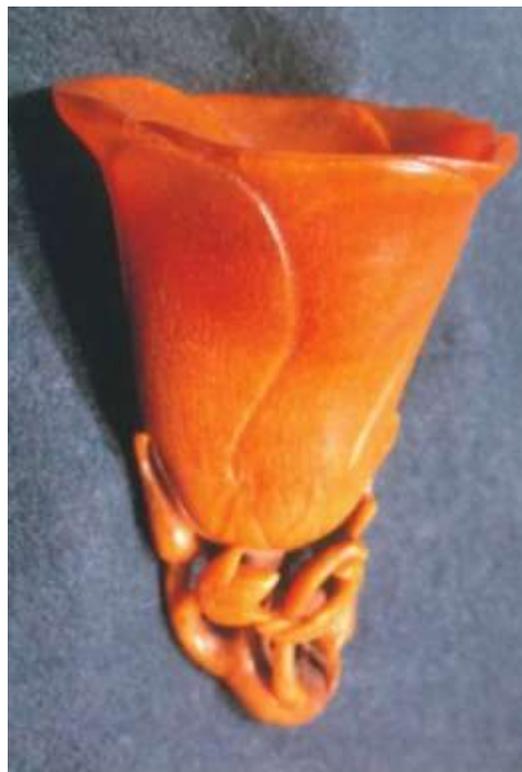
BC Heritage Week is always held in February this year from February 20-26th and the national and provincial theme is "Always in All Ways". It is unfortunate that the Fintry Manor House will still be in the depths of winter but we encourage everyone to participate in events taking place in your community. The Friends of Fintry will be having a table at the **Kelowna Community Theatre on Sunday, February 19th from 10-3pm** so do come down and say 'Hi' to our trusty volunteers as we kick off this very important week. Check out the BC Heritage web page www.heritagebc.ca for more information.

Looking ahead to the upcoming season, these are some dates that we have penned into our 2023 Calendar:

- Fintry Manor House Spring Clean-up..... Saturday, May 13th (Volunteers needed)
- Mother's Day Spring Fair Sunday, May 14th
- Art Show & Strawberry Cream Tea Saturday & Sunday, June 24th & 25th
- July Summer Fair Sunday, July 9th
- Highland Fair (new event!) Sunday, August 20th

And now we have a very interesting contribution from our Curator, Dan Bruce:

The late Joan Heriot of Vernon presented a number of items to the Fintry Estate, among them, this small but significant Chinese wine cup. Four inches high, it may once have had a separate base that held it upright but which is now missing. It is carved to represent a magnolia flower, the petals being delineated on the outside as well as right down to the base on the inside. It is perhaps the material of which it has been carved that imparts its very special nature, namely Rhinoceros horn.



There has been a very long tradition of carving this substance in China, going back at least to 500 B.C. at which time it is known that there was a belief that Rhinoceros horn was able to protect the user from the effects of poison, and also ensured long life.

The Chinese had access to Rhinoceros horn from the three species that are native to Asia, and were also very keen to acquire the horns of the two African species in more recent times. The three Asian species are the Great Indian Rhino, (*Rhinoceros unicornis*), the Javan Rhino, (*Rhinoceros sondaicus*), and the Sumatran Rhino, (*Dicerorhinus sumatrensis*). Today, all these species are in imminent danger of extinction, especially the last two. Africa is home to the White Rhino, (*Ceratotherium simum*) and the Black Rhino, (*Diceros bicornis*). They are considerably larger than the Asian species.

The wine cup shown here is very probably carved from the horn of the Sumatran species, and we believe it to date from the mid Ming Dynasty, circa 1450 or 1460. Apparently, there was a custom for cups such as this to be created for very high-ranking officials, who would then present them to the emperor on his birthday, especially if the official was wanting to ask a special favour or promotion. It is therefore a possibility that this cup may have been a gift to the Emperor Chenghua who ruled China from 1465 to 1487.

There is one extensive publication that deals specifically with items such as this, "The Art of Rhinoceros Horn Carving in China" by Jan Chapman, published by Christie's Books, 1999. Having consulted the author and sent a photo with a detailed description of our cup, she agreed with our estimate of date. Estimate, as there is no inscription on this cup.

Rhinoceros horn is one of the few substances that occur in museum collections that actually benefit from being handled. In fact, Jan Chapman advises an occasional application of pure lanolin, and no extremes of temperature. We therefore do not keep our specimen on site at Fintry.

Looking forward to Spring.....

Kathy Drew,
Friends of Fintry Provincial Park