



## Friends of Fintry Provincial Park

### The Octagon – March, 2023

Greetings all,

As we March into Spring we look forward to another exciting season at the Fintry Estate. Surely winter is done with us now and we are looking ahead to brighter (and longer) days.

We are still hopeful that the Regional District of Central Okanagan will assist us with some funding for this coming year but as of now have not officially heard if or when this might happen. As always at this time of year, we continue to search out any grants that we may be eligible for both federally and provincially as we continue to plan our many fund-raising events to be held throughout the year with some new twists and new activities to keep things interesting!

Some of our Board members attended the Heritage Week kick-off at the Kelowna Community Theatre on February 19<sup>th</sup> and it was great to see so many booths representing the historical associations in the region.

Our latest project through Digital Museums Canada has now launched. It is called “The Fintry Ayrshires: Scottish Cattle in the Far West” and is dedicated to one of our long-time Board members and historian Paul Koroscil, who passed away in 2021. If you go to our website [www.fintry.ca](http://www.fintry.ca) you can access this incredible story through the link on the home page. Many thanks to Shannon Jorgenson and Dan Bruce for all their work putting this together.

While touring the Fintry Manor House your attention will be drawn to these interesting tea caddies we have in the Dining Room, and now Dan Bruce explains how important these were in large stately homes.



This eighteenth century tea caddy is almost identical to one that can be seen in the Dining Room. Made in England of walnut wood, the favoured material for fine cabinetry and furniture, and which was expensive, so that in many cases, a base of another wood was overlaid with a walnut veneer.

As was typical, there are three compartments, two rectangular ones with lids, and a central open circular one in which sits a glass bowl. The knob handles and the key-hole surround are made from bone in this caddy, but sometimes were of ivory or cut glass. Black and green teas were kept separately on each side, and mixed in the centre bowl just prior to being used.

Tea at this time was a valuable commodity, brought from the warehouses of the Chinese merchants by sea via the Cape of Good Hope. It had to be kept perfectly dry, and in containers as air-tight as possible. Once in the hands of the consumer it would have been under lock and key. The lady of the house would have the only key, kept with all the other household keys on her chatelaine. In larger establishments, the responsibility would very likely rest with the Butler.

It would seem that the term " caddy " here referring to the small box, is derived from a Malay word, "katy" which was a measure of weight, probably used in the early days of the tea trade in the Orient.



The commercial production of tea today is of course spread worldwide, wherever conditions allow the plant, *Camellia sinensis* to flourish. A mild climate with high humidity and an acidic soil is required, so we can be fairly sure that Canada will not be in the tea production business for the foreseeable future.

The Hudson's Bay Company supplied consumer goods to the traders and settlers across the North. They provided tea in much larger quantities than coffee, which may explain the preference for it in the Bay's territory, while coffee was more readily available in the American trading area to the south.

"If Hampton Court these eyes had never seen! . . .  
Oh, had I rather unadmired remain'd  
In some lone isle, or distant northern land;  
Where the gilt chariot never marks the way,  
Where none learn ombre, none e'er taste Bohea!"

*Alexander Pope, 1688 -1744  
The Rape of the Lock*

Bohea is a Chinese black tea, popular in England in the mid eighteenth century.

What a delightful piece of history to ruminate over as you sit with your cuppa of Tetley or Red Rose listening to the birds singing, and watching for signs of life in the trees and soil around us.

Til next month....take good care,

Kathy Drew,  
Friends of Fintry Provincial Park