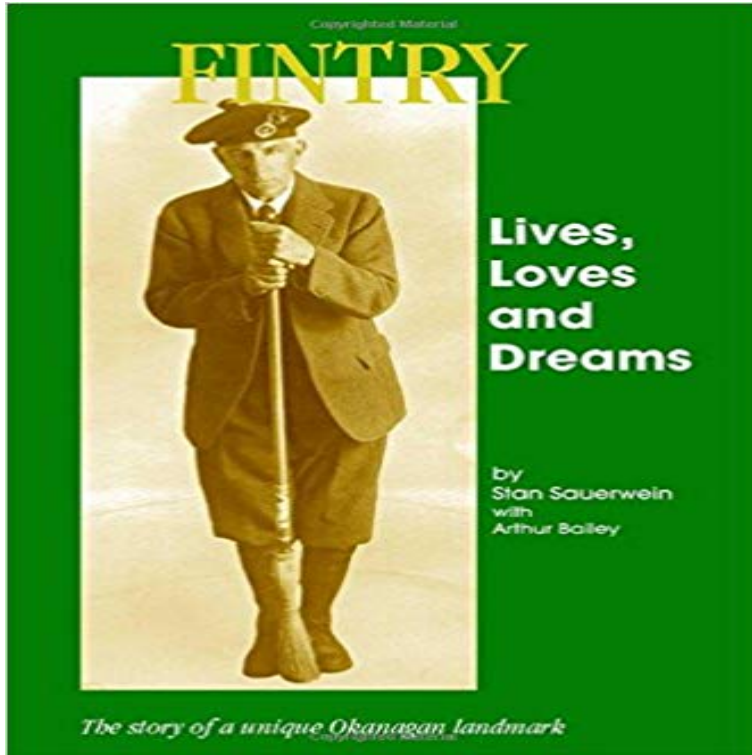


# Fintry - Lives, Loves and Dreams: The story of a unique Okanagan landmark



Fintry - Lives, Loves and Dreams chronicles the memorable people, the secret loves and the engaging history of the Shorts Creek delta. Containing visitor maps, photographs and interesting anecdotes, this readable account covers Fintry from pre-history to the present. It follows a trail of dreams through Fintrys incarnations as an enigmatic millionaires private estate and school for orphans, to the grand plans for an international resort. Media reviews Millennium book project captures Fintrys history from the Capital News (Kelowna), Wednesday October 11, 2000 (A18-A19) by Judy Steeves, Staff Reporter A verdant delta of flat land created by the rushing waters of a little creek has acted as a magnet over the decades, attracting stubborn people with dreams that inevitably are smashed before they leave. Fintry, a 360-hectare plot of Westside lakeshore, waterfall, canyon and upland wilderness, was purchased in 1995 by the Central Okanagan Regional District and province as parkland for \$7.68 million.

Public ownership was the culmination of nearly two centuries of a parade of white mens private visions for this isolated point of land jutting into Okanagan Lake, following an unknown length of time when it was part of the domain of the Native people. It oozes history. So its no wonder that Westbank author and freelance writer [Stan] Sauerwein and Fintry resident [Arthur] Bailey chose to collaborate on a chronicling of some of the characters who made their mark on the province, the valley and Fintry in particular over the past few decades. It was published with the partial financing support of the Canada Millennium Partnership Program and private donations. A portion of the revenue from each copy sold goes to the Central Okanagan Heritage Society to assist in ongoing restoration projects. The property and the ghosts of the people who populated it are fascinating enough,

but Sauerwein has woven the stories of their lives, loves and dreams into an even more compelling tale, at the centre of which is just a simple little parcel of land.

It initially was visited by fur traders in the early 1800s as they traversed what was originally a trail used by the Okanagan Native people on the west side of Okanagan Lake and stayed at the delta at Shorts Creek. It became part of the Okanagan Fur Brigade Trail, a route for transporting trade goods and furs from Northern B.C. to the Pacific Ocean at the mouth of the Columbia River. Gold miners followed, and eventually Thomas Dorling Shorts took out the first pre-emption on Fintry in 1883, 129 ha at the mouth of what was then called Biche Creek. That began what turned out to be an extremely colourful century of life on the delta.

From Captain Shorts, renowned for the unusual and often unsafe contraptions with which he ferried people and supplies up and down Okanagan Lake with irregularity, the delta was purchased by a pair of sporting dilettantes with British titles. However, the most memorable mark on Fintry was made some 20 years later when a wealthy Scot named James Cameron Dun-Waters purchased the spit of land, turning it into an estate for growing some of the valleys first fruit, Ayrshire dairy cattle and as a base for hunting expeditions. The granite manor house, inventive irrigation system and unique octagonal dairy barn he built remain today as part of the new park, remnants of this valleys history. Sauerwein, with the help of Bailey, has also chronicled in fascinating detail, Fintrys tangled but sometimes glittering history as a pawn in the game of real estate development and in the entertainment industry. \*\*\*\*\*

Fintrys colourful history now in black and white from the Westside Weekly (Okanagan Valley), Wednesday September 27, 2000 by Dorothy Brotherton Stan Sauerwein feels a novel brewing. The colourful lives hes written about in his latest non-fiction book beg for a romantic treatment. Theres a good novel, a fine

romance, in some of these stories, said Sauerwein. That may come next. For now, the book he has completed is called *Fintry: Lives, Loves and Dreams*. It chronicles the history of a spit of land that juts into Okanagan Lake midway between Kelowna and Vernon. It is the first area history that pulls together all the bits and pieces of accounts written over the past century or so, and weaves them into a chronological whole. First Nations chiefs, lords, premiers, prospectors, the idle rich and the humble poor, visionaries and speculators, stubborn pioneer women and eccentric pioneer men - all have had a part in taming the Shorts Creek Delta, on which Fintry is formed. Or is it tamed? Under Sauerwein's pen the land itself becomes the most colourful character. It defies civilizing. It lures an enigmatic millionaire and a school for orphans, it hosts a trail of dreams. It spurns plans for everything from a hunting lodge to an international resort, until it reaches its current status as a B.C. park. Sauerwein spent a year writing the book. He has fun with the character of Thomas Shorts, High Admiral of the Okanagan, who tries to sell Fintry for \$75, after convinced it could only grow cabbages, but he can't find a buyer. A short time later he is offered \$4,000 for it. Sauerwein has fun exploding some of the myths surrounding the Laird of Fintry, James Dun-Waters and speculating about why he apparently did not marry the love of his life. But Sauerwein has the most fun on a hectic trip to Scotland to track down and verify some stories, to follow the steps of Dun-Waters when he went back to Scotland. Katie is so fascinating. She stuck by him, says Sauerwein, smiling obliquely, as if he knows or suspects more to Dun-Waters' friendship with Catherine Stuart than records reveal. But again the land obscures the people. Sauerwein jumps into his own narrative about Stuart to say, So many firsts happened at Fintry - telephone, power, Ayrshire cattle, a curling rink - the province actually started up the strata title act as a result of Fintry. Referring to attempts by the Bailey and

Graham families to turn Fintry into an international resort, Sauerwein says, It was as if Fintry would not have it. It seems fitting that its become a park - this special little place in the valley will be enjoyed by my children and childrens children. Sauerwein poured over journals, historic records, military archives, government documents and interviewed people who remember some of the Fintry pioneers. The book is heavy with annotation, and reads like a lively history. He says its not a textbook, not scholarly, but it is history and probably as close as a person can get to what actually happened in those bygone days.

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