

FATEH CHAND

Fateh Chand was born on June 5th, 1931 in village Thanawat, Tehsil Moga district, Punjab, India. He was only able to pursue his studies up to the eighth grade because the school was shut down due to the India-Pakistan partition in 1947. Fateh Chand then joined the Indian National Army (INA) and served his country for nine years. His father Hari Singh has also served in the INA during the Second World War.

Fateh Chand arrived in Canada on July 16, 1960 and was sponsored by his *mamaji* (mother's brother). He lived in Port Alberni and worked there for a few years. Fateh Chand initially didn't work for a year, as it was hard in those days to find work and especially for immigrants as there was no international union at the time. He started working at Port Alberni (Vancouver Island), in a logging company named Sport Lake. Fateh Chand faced some challenges at the workplace. Caucasians were paid more wages because there were no unions at the time but later with the emergence of the unions, jobs became fairer and they were eventually paid equal wages to the Caucasians for doing the same job. Other than this he didn't face any difficulty in adjusting to the new culture as his *mama ji* helped him all until he was able to sponsor his family and settle in Canada.

After working for a few years, Fateh Chand returned to India in 1965 but returned to Canada a year later in 1966. Initially, Fateh Chand had no desires to return back to Canada, built ultimately after five or six months in India, he decided it was his best decision to return to Canada. While working at the Sport Lake, Fateh Chand was injured when a log fell on him, and he was hospitalized for 6 weeks. He was compensated for this accident and in 1967 he again went back to work and the company provided him with an easier workload that he could handle with his disability. Fateh Chand would continue to work with Sport Lake for 25 years.

Fateh Chand sponsored his family of four in 1969. His wife Suhagwanti with their three children: Balwinder Chand, Beena Kumari and Gurdev Chand arrived in Canada on February 16, 1969. Their fourth and youngest child, their son Surinder Chand was born in Canada. A few years after Fateh Chand's wife Suhagwanti passed away in 1986, he moved to Abbotsford in 1992 and bought a raspberry farm on McCallum Road, the

same year he took an early retirement and took care of his children as a single father. Today, Fateh Chand continues to live on this farm but due to his age and ill health he no longer works or grows anything on it. Fateh Chand remembers some pivotal moments in BC's history, including when a great flood hit Port Alberni in 1950. According to Fateh Chand there were huge losses of property but their house, being on a hill, escaped the catastrophic effects of the flood.

After completing his education, Fateh Chand's eldest son Balwinder Chand began working at the MNB log company as a worker and became a heavy duty mechanic thereafter. He continued to work at the same log company where his father worked. Fateh Chand's younger son Gurdev Chand, after completing his education at Simon Fraser University, began working for a Broker Company in Toronto and eventually moved to Vancouver. His daughter Beena presently lives in Langley with her husband and children.