



# **FRIENDS OF BARKERVILLE CARIBOO GOLDFIELDS HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER**

**VOL. 17 ISSUE 2**

**St. Saviour's Church**

**APRIL 2017**



**“PRESERVE, PROTECT, PROMOTE”**

**“THESE OLD BUILDINGS DO NOT BELONG TO US ONLY; THAT  
THEY HAVE BELONGED TO OUR FOREFATHERS, AND THEY WILL  
BELONG TO OUR DESCENDANTS,”**

**William Morris**



**FRIENDS OF BARKERVILLE-CARIBOO GOLDFIELDS  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY**



**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:**

**PRESIDENT:** Brenda Beatty

**VICE PRESIDENT:** Grant Johannesen

**SECRETARY:** Doug Perdue

**TREASURER:** Kristie Seaborn

**OTHER DIRECTORS:**

Robin Grady

Lana Fox

Richard Wright

Derek Burdikin, Bridget Nowakowski

**DIRECTORS MEETINGS:**

Directors meetings are dinner meetings and usually held the first Wednesday of each month at 5:30 pm at Savalas Restaurant. We do hold two of the meetings about June and September in the town of Barkerville in the new school

building. Members and or the Public can attend these meetings if they like but, cannot vote unless it is at the AGM meeting itself. You can however express your input of suggestions or ideas.

**NEWSLETTER CREDITS:**

The contributor is the editor unless otherwise noted. All persons with submission of articles and photos will be given full credit. Please feel free to send in your items of interest which further helps the newsletter to continue.

**CONTACT INFORMATION**

The Friends of Barkerville – Cariboo Goldfields Historical Society mailing address is P.O. Box 4152, Quesnel, BC, V2J 3J2. Our email address is [friendsofbarkerville@barkerville.ca](mailto:friendsofbarkerville@barkerville.ca) and website is [www.barkerville.bc.ca](http://www.barkerville.bc.ca)

Watch for notifications posted for newsletters, and upcoming announcements of hikes and work bees or special events happening at Barkerville. They can always use an extra few hands during these times. We are always in need of volunteers. Any help is very much appreciated!

**POSITIONS:** are good for a one year term at which time there will be another election of officers at the AGM meeting in October.

**COMMITTEE POSITIONS:** membership, special projects, trails, cemetery projects, newsletter, website.

**MEMBERSHIP** is from May 1<sup>st</sup> and ends April 30<sup>th</sup> of the following year. A season's pass is included with the membership and entitles the bearer to visit Barkerville as often as they wish.

**WHO WE ARE:** We are a registered non-profit organization comprised of dedicated volunteers. Our main focus is to enhance the preservation, protection and promotion as it applies to Barkerville and the Historic Cariboo Goldfields area.

**\*MEMBERSHIP Contact:** Lana Fox

**\*NEWSLETTER Contact:** Direct submission of articles to Lana Fox





## August Hike in Mountains above Barkerville

(A Golden Cariboo Moment)

**We** were on the road at 7:00 a.m. with our hot drinks from Tim's, driving on Highway 26, destination – Barkerville. My wife and I and another couple from Quesnel had been looking forward to this day hike in the mountains. The trails we were going to be using were ones that volunteers from "The Friends of Barkerville-Cariboo Goldfields Historical Society" had freshly marked with signs, blazes, and blown down logs and brush was bucked out of the way in August of 2015.

**We** checked in at the Visitor Reception Centre and left details of our departure time, ETA, our names, and our planned hike route with the ladies at the front desk. We had our dogs with us so we travelled through Barkerville using the back street that is adjacent to and parallels Williams Creek to avoid main street and the horses and wagon. We were informed to use the same route upon return but to wait until after 5:30 p.m. to avoid the last wagon ride and to check in with security to let them know when we returned to the parking lot.

**With** our backpacks on, dogs on leash, and enthusiasm at a high, we headed south on foot at 08:30 a.m. towards Richfield. Following the Cariboo Wagon Road along the west side of Williams Creek we came upon a water tank truck spraying water on the road for dust control for the horse drawn wagon. After he passed by we found that he had lost a brass valve cover in the middle of the road. We picked it up & hung it on the courthouse door handle with a

note we scribbled on a candy store paper wrapper that we found in the garbage can, explaining where the valve came from and who it belonged to.

**Beyond** the Courthouse we still followed a well beaten, solid road surface but the terrain went from flat to a steadily steeper incline. We were now feeling a bit of a burn in our legs and breathing harder and we were definitely warming up. Once at the top of the hill where the trail levelled out into a marshy meadow, we came to Summit Rock. Here we took off our packs and had a drink and snack and rested, taking photos of each other in various poses standing atop Summit rock.

**On** our way again, we passed a log shelter cabin on our right and then came to a junction in the road. We stayed right (west), following the Cariboo Wagon road that leads to Stanley.



**Here** the trail was narrower and the ground wetter and muddier with tall spruce and balsam trees towering over us. Soon we came to Jack of Clubs creek that was flowing about shin deep. The first person nimbly stepped on large boulders to get across and then found a long stick to reach



across for the others to hold onto as they stepped on wobbly rocks. Everyone made it across without getting water in their boots. Along the trail we found an abundance of black huckleberries and highbush blueberries. It wasn't long before our fingers, lips, and tongues were stained purple from the delicious wild berries.

**We** were steadily climbing upwards along the old wagon trail and as we came to mud puddles in the road we saw very large paw prints about a couple days old.



We were following the path of a bear and our senses were on alert as we trudged on towards Ella Lake.



**We** had a good view from above, of the beautiful blue or turquoise water far below us in the lake. A noisy, dark blue, stellar jay distracted us as it squawked and flitted about in the trees just far enough away and partially hidden by branches and leaves that we could not get a photo of the bird. The trail turned to the south and we had a gradual downhill section to follow. Next we came to a sign indicating the Van Winkle trail branches off to the south through a brushy, marshy trail.



**We** followed some FOB yellow trail markers and blazes on trees that we made using a hatchet in 2015. Soon we were following an old ditch (dry at the moment) that used to transport water further down to miners' sluices on their claims. The trail is not very discernable other than where logs have been bucked off the trail by power saw or yellow FOB tags are nailed to trees and blazes are chopped on the stems of trees. We followed along Lightning creek and crossed it several times.

**Our** plan was to stop for lunch at Black Lake which is about 500 metres SW. of Lightning

Creek. The lake lies at the base of a rocky mountain face, beyond boulders and a mess of balsam (subalpine fir) that has been deposited from snow and landslides in the area. We were unsure of where the trail was and didn't risk trying to walk on and through the tangle of rocks and trees. The water from the lake is black looking due to the moss and soil. It empties into Lightning creek. A fallen tree beside the junction where the outflow of Black Lake meets Lightning creek made a nice bench for us to sit upon. We ate our sandwiches and some fruit, veggies, and trail mix and drank juice and water. The mosquitos and black flies that nearly pack you away in spring or midsummer were nearly non-existent at this time of year. The clouds began moving in with a steady breeze, making it nice and cool even though it was in the mid 20's. We were at about the half way point and it was about 1 p.m.

Some more bushwhacking along Lightning creek and we came out into alpine meadows where we had to have all eyes on lookout for signs/indicators marking the direction of the trail. A few times we had to



scout around a bit to find a blazed tree or yellow FOB trail marker, but we did manage to find our way. One last steep, uphill climb into the alpine and we were on a long ridge (west arm of Mt Agnes) behind Elk Mtn.

**We** saw sign of Caribou (droppings and flattened vegetation where they bedded down). The narrow alpine trail soon merged with a rock and gravel ATV trail and we followed it over the ridge and downhill to where we came to Groundhog Lake. It again, was a beautiful blue-green, turquoise colour. We could see the cabin on its east shore. We also heard the voices of other people. Our legs and feet were feeling sore and tired now. There were some mountain bikes at the cabin and a family down at the shore of the lake. We rested and drank some more, putting band aids on blistered toes and heels. A quick bathroom stop to use the elevated outhouse (built tall to be above the snow in winter).



**We** knew it was about 3 to 4 hours back to Barkerville, all downhill on loose rock and well beaten trail/road. We passed a few more people just coming to the top of the Groundhog trail. They left their bikes below and hiked the last steep part to where we were descending. They had a dog so we put our 2 dogs on leash and let them all sniff



and visit. Turns out we knew the people, they were from Quesnel too. As we were now getting a steady dose of steep downhill hiking, new muscles were getting a workout and toes were rubbing on the tips of boots. It was relief when we had flat portions. The trail flattened out and then as it turned and began a gradual incline, we came to the junction where we originally turned right (west) to take the Cariboo Wagon road to Stanley. We passed the shelter cabin again and soon we were back at Summit rock. Here again, we shed our packs ate snacks, and drank water and juice. We picked some more wild berries and after a few minutes rest made the last push downhill to Richfield and Barkerville.

The last part was like a forever downhill just like the first part of the hike seemed as it was a forever uphill climb. Once at the bottom, we reached the Richfield courthouse and put the dogs back on leash. We had thoughts of checking out the Richfield Chinese/Catholic cemetery, where recent work has been done to fence the site and identify grave sites. But, the common look and feeling amongst us was one of arghh, we're too tired, maybe another time. We passed a few stragglers walking up to the courthouse.

When we passed Stout's gulch and approached Chinatown of Barkerville we saw the last stage coach returning to Barkerville. We stopped at a "Y" in the road and waited until the stagecoach was out of sight. As we walked the backroad adjacent to and parallel to Williams Creek we could see people high up on the hillside on the stairs and in the bush above the Canadian Claim, dressed in bright orange clothing. They were the Shaolin Epo Martial Arts

School students who had performed in Barkerville earlier in the day. Today was the Autumn Moon Festival and the town was humming with people and activity.

We put the dogs and our hiking gear in the truck, made a quick change of clothes, and had a quick snack and drink. We stopped in at the VRC to let the ladies at the front desk know that we had arrived back safe and sound. It was a welcome relief to remove our foot wear and to sit on the soft seats of the truck. It was now 5:30 p.m. Nine hours and 26.5km since we started the hike, we were now headed home. First, we stopped in Wells for supper where there is a limited but fine selection of restaurants to choose from. An hour on the road and we were back in Quesnel. We did keep our eyes peeled for wildlife such as moose, caribou, bears, etc. along and on Hwy 26. The trip didn't disappoint as we saw a black bear on the side of the road. We all slept like babies that night, with dreams and thoughts of alpine meadows, rocky peaks, bouncing streams and blue sky highlighted by a bright warm sun, filtered by overhead tree stems, branches, and leaves.



A Golden Cariboo Moment.

by Grant Johannesen

**\*Editor's Note: This hike was done in 2016**  
**All photo credits to Grant Johannesen**

### FLASHBACK IN HISTORY

September 2008 Billy Barker's great great granddaughter Elaine Edgington and with her husband from England, came to visit Barkerville. She had been to Ross Bay Cemetery in Victoria where she dedicated a memorial plaque affixed to a boulder that was brought down from Williams Creek to serve as a new headstone for Billy's grave.

## BARKERVILLE REPORT

This winter, the normally quiet and laid back Historic Barkerville, welcomed and hosted outdoor enthusiasts taking full advantage of the "Activities Season". The Shamrock Tube Run was in full operation, with the official opening/ribbon cutting January 28, 2017. The new cafe and gift store in the Visitor Reception Centre were open, serving visitors a variety of hot meals, beverages, interesting gifts, and souvenirs.

Many families and individuals took advantage of great winter/snow conditions to skate, tube, snowshoe, ski, snowmobile,



Photo courtesy of Grant Johannesen.

and try their foot at kick sledding. The fire pit located beside the tube run was a popular gathering place, where chairs were set up and people visited, ate, and kept warm. Wieners, buns, condiments, hot chocolate, and marshmallows could be purchased from the café to enjoy at the fire pit. The tube run was open for spring break but is now closed for the season. The café and gift store will be open until April 13th from 11:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Tuesday through Sunday.

The Barkerville Heritage Trust (BHT) held its Quarterly meeting in Barkerville January 27-29. Spring-like conditions were enjoyed Friday and Saturday, while Sunday was a wintry, white, snow filled day. Business and plans were discussed for another busy upcoming season in Barkerville. Many events/activities are being scheduled with this being Canada's 150<sup>th</sup> Birthday. The BHT meets quarterly for face-to-face meetings and by conference phone calls a couple times per month. The quarterly meetings move around to communities within the Cariboo/North Central Interior (Barkerville/Wells, Quesnel, Williams Lake, 100 Mile House, and Prince George). The next quarterly meeting will be April 21-23 in Prince George.

The 25<sup>th</sup> Annual Dogsled Mail Run from Quesnel to Barkerville, according to participants, spectators, and dog teams, was a howling success. The banquet and awards night was hosted by Troll Ski Resort. Once envelopes were stamped and the Barkerville dash was completed, the initial 150<sup>th</sup> Barkerville celebration event of the year took place with a group picture taken in front of St. Saviour church, including dogsled organizers, participants, BHT board members, Barkerville staff, Wells mayor, and members of the public.

March 19, 2017 a commemorative plaque was unveiled in Barkerville, officially recognizing contributions of Chinese Canadians to B.C.'s culture, history, and economy. This follows up and preserves the May, 2014 apology made in the legislature for historic wrongs committed against Chinese Canadians by past provincial governments. It was a sunny but windy and cool day. Ray Hong, a third-generation descendant of Barkerville, now living with his wife Muriel in Quesnel, attended the

ceremony along with other dignitaries and invited guests.

For more on the Chinese apology go to this link <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2017MIT0010-000672>

Barkerville is open to the public year round. The gates officially open for Barkerville's Canada 150 spring, summer, and fall season on May 18.

Be sure to purchase your Friends of Barkerville membership which entitles you to a season pass to Barkerville. You have the option of also purchasing a pass to Cottonwood House historic road house for a minimal fee. Visit our website to purchase online or purchase at the gate when you come to Barkerville. Your membership support goes directly towards preserving, promoting, and protecting heritage, recreational, and cultural projects and interests in and around Barkerville.

May your travels this year take you to see the many not so hidden treasures of Barkerville and area, creating golden memories for you, your family, and your friends.

Grant Johannesen, V.P. Friends of Barkerville – Cariboo Goldfields Historical Society/FOB-CGHS rep. on BHT.



#### SNOWSHOE HIKE – by Brenda Beatty



#### ON A PERFECT WINTER DAY, 13

Friends of Barkerville members and guests clipped into their snowshoes and enjoyed the foot of fluffy snow, clear blue skies and fresh Barkerville air.

They explored the town of Barkerville, watching the snow removal team hard at work and smelled the fresh cedar timber frame of the new covered skating rink on their way to the woods.

They turned away from the road to Richfield and trekked along a parallel ridge through mature evergreens as Robin Grady told tales of the previous slaughterhouse and water pipes that had once stood below their footsteps. Soon, they arrived at a perfect picket fence line and found themselves in the Richfield cemetery.

They continued traversing the ridge until they gazed down at the familiar rooflines of the Richfield Courthouse, from a new perspective. After pausing for a snack in the warm sunshine and noticing that the snow had become much heavier, they returned to Barkerville along



the road, while sharing stories of previous adventures in those mountains.

After working up solid appetites, they feasted upon soup and sandwiches at the new Barkerville Café and even celebrated one of the hikers' special birthdays with a cheerful chorus of the Birthday Song.

By Brenda Beatty



Photos by Lana Fox



## TRAILS, WORKBEE'S & HIKES – by Robin Grady



Sometime after the snow disappears we should have an extensive work bee at the Stanley Cemetery, dead tree removal, repair any fencing that may be damaged, possible scrape and paint some of the enclosures and install the new headboards.

With the success of our Canada 150 grant, we plan to have a kiosk installed at the cemetery and have many pages of interesting information on those buried as possibly could be found. Style and size of the kiosk has not been finalized as yet. It is hoped that some major cleanup of some of the Barkerville trails may be carried out with the BCFS fire crew as long as they are not needed to fight fires.

Our hikes and the Quesnel Naturalist hikes will be advertised together for those who wish to take part. The first one was at the Kersley Trails above Sisters Creek, turnout of 19 had a nice easy afternoon hike to wake up those leg muscles.

Check our Facebook site to see their schedule of hikes.



## A HIKE TO RACETRACK FLAT AND ITS GHOST – by Richard Wright

*There Is A Mystery in the Cariboo Mountains, A Mystery Perhaps As Old As The Gold Itself.*

On the bottom of an ancient lakebed, where wooly mammoths grazed some 12,000 years ago, lie two rows of stones, 22 feet apart and 244 feet in length. They run almost due east and west, slightly north of west and of course, slightly south of east. They are not so much lines of stones but rather two ragged lines of clumps of stones.

If you walk down the centre of these lines you can imagine that many of them were cast to one side or the other by someone walking down the centre, though some would take a good shot putter or caber toss-er to manage it. At the west end the lines peter out near a grove of



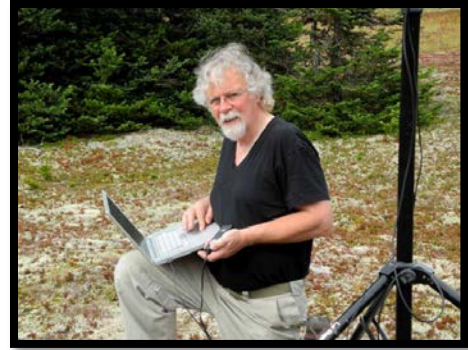
trees. At the east end they almost run off the bank of the small flat, the former lakebed. And at this eastern end there is another larger pile of rocks and detritus - an old roadhouse from the earliest gold rush days, built we are told, by one Tom Maloney as a road house in 1862, or thereabouts.

It is easy to forget when visiting the bustling site of Barkerville on a busy weekend how many other camps and towns and roadhouses were in the area. Life may have been centered on Barkerville but the other towns were equally important, towns like Antler, Grouse Creek, Camerontown, Mosquito Creek and roadhouses like Maloney's.

Maloney's roadhouse is a special spot for me. It's situated on an open flat near the headwaters of Antler and Grouse Creek on the site of Racetrack Flat, a place where, Fred Ludditt tells us, early miners held horse races. It is only a half-hour walk from the end of a 4-wheel drive road on Antler Creek, along an old ditchline from Rhubarb Cabin. The appeal of



this hike is that rather than climbing to a mountain summit with a view it leads us to human history, a place where 150 years ago men and women left their mark. Thousands must have crossed this open meadow. Hundreds likely stopped here for a meal or overnight rest. Even the outlaw Liverpool Jack dined here, with Richfield constables hard on his heels. For a few years this trail, now designated the 1861 Pack Trail, was the main route into the northern slope goldfields.



I have been hiking to this flat at the head of Antler and Grouse Creek for 30 years, even camped there one night, and it has always puzzled me – why is it thought to be a racetrack and who named it? And for the same 30 years I have looked for other references. All research seems to stop with Ludditt.

A few questions come to mind. How long have these lines of rocks been in place? Who says it was a racetrack? Is Ludditt the first to mention them? If this is a racetrack where are the remains of the barns, corrals, judges' stand? Is the track wide enough for two, three, or four horses? Where is the grazing area for a race-card of horses? And why is there no mention of such races in any known documents? We do know this:

Tom Maloney, of whom we know little, had a roadhouse or "halfway house" here on the flat at the head of Antler Creek on the 1861 Pack Trail by 1861. Branwen Patenaude says he has pre-empted 80 acres of land here by October 1861. In January 1863 Robert Stevenson refers to the party of men hauling out Sophia Cameron's casket as stopping at Maloney's their first night at night. He had a miner's license in June 1863. In September of that year he made a petition for bankruptcy and was ordered to appear before Judge Begbie on November 16<sup>th</sup>. Nothing is recorded of him after that date. Two men are buried on a bench just above the old roadhouse; John Ross and John Emmory.

The *British Colonist*, May 20, 1862, reports: "Died at Maloney's Half-way House, between Williams' and Antler Cks, Cariboo, Vancouver Island, May 10, 1862 - John Ross, native of Can, aged about 25. Ross came to British Columbia in 1859.



The *British Columbian* in New Westminster added a little more information. Under news from the Cariboo it said, "*John Ross, Expressman, arrived at Malloney's [sic] Halfway House, from Williams Creek, on the evening of the 10th, very much done out, and died on the following night. He was a steady man and well liked.*"

The other grave is that of John Emmory, 58 years old, a New Brunswicker, who died August 14, 1862 in Cameronton of intussusception of the bowels



and asked to be buried next to his friend John Ross.

As the Cariboo Road was completed in 1865 traffic shifted from this route through Quesnelle Forks, near Likely, to Quesnelmouth, now Quesnel. The Antler Creek trail and Maloney's fell into disuse. Patenaude says Maloney was gone by 1866 as the trail was no longer heavily used. Like so many miners he wanders off to another strike or warmer climate and we lose sight of him. Now there is a big gap in information – from 1867 to 1922.

The first map reference to the word Racetrack in relation to this map feature, references "...an old racetrack in the vicinity" a notation provided in April 1922 by D.A. Nichol (a surveyor with Geological Survey of Canada) during compilation of the GSC map of Barkerville. The information was extracted from the Canadian Geographical Names database in Ottawa, and in turn copied from their map compilation file 93/SE., according to Janet Mason, Provincial Toponymist, BC Geographical Names Office. On the suggestion of Nicol's the creek at the headwaters of Antler Creek was named Racetrack Creek.

However, Janet Mason adds that, "Unfortunately we don't have detailed descriptions, personal journals or large scale sketches of the area that indicate *where* the racetrack had been situated, or specifics about *when* it had been active. This particular stream is not compiled on the 1885-86 Amos Bowman/McEvoy maps of the Cariboo Mining District, and even Antler Creek above Saw-Mill



Flat is only vaguely compiled and labeled "Old trail to Williams Creek". Bowman's accompanying report (GSC 1887- 88 Pt. 1, vol. III, Sec. C) does not shed any light.

So, at this point the first mention of a racetrack at the headwaters of Antler Creek and the name Racetrack Creek comes from surveyor D.A. Nichol in 1922, 60 years after Maloney built a roadhouse here; many years after the most of the early miners had gone to their last gold rush in the sky. Yet someone must have pointed out or mentioned the rock feature to him.

The next reference is ten years later, by Fred Ludditt. In his "Gold in the Cariboo" Ludditt says "The race track which can still be seen, was a *four furlong straight track*. The stones from the surface were piled along each side of the straight-away. At the finish line end of the course are the remains of the 'Casino', a building which was approximately 30x40 feet in size."

In his *Campfire Sketches of the Cariboo*, Ludditt says "we revisited this track and saw clearly outlined the over 70-year-old straightaway which had been eight furlongs in length."

The track has now doubled in length and Maloney's ruin has become a "Casino."

Presumably Ludditt heard of the track from old timers, as he did not arrive in Barkerville until the 1930s. The puzzlement is this: there is no mention of this feature in any letter, journal or early newspaper, only in Fred Ludditt's books on Barkerville.

Search in the *British Colonist*, the BC newspaper of record, from 1858 onward and you will find nothing related to a racetrack, or racing horses at Antler Creek in its pages. The same goes for the *Cariboo Sentinel*. There are a couple of mentions of Maloney's, as we will see, but nothing on Grouse Creek, or Antler Creek racetracks.

The archives at Barkerville archives are equally silent. In a vertical file are three notes: the Ludditt references and one from yours truly. (And clearly I can't be relied on.)

The BC Archives is a dead end. There are no web-based entries for Racetrack Creek and those that come up under Racetrack have nothing to do with this specific feature.

Maloney's roadhouse is gone now, marked only by a pile of rubble left by rapacious collectors who dug through the historic remains in search of bottles and whatever. Unfortunately an archaeological dig of Maloney's would yield little information as it has been thoroughly picked over.

With some imagination we can still see piles of rocks that mark the building's two chimneys. On the bench above are the two graves; John Ross, an Expressman and John Emmory, a miner. The old markers are gone but new grave boards mark the site.

The racetrack, if that be what it is, stretches away from its beginning at the roadhouse to the southwest for 250 metres. Its defining features are two rough rows of stones, probably randomly piled when the track was cleared of stones.

"Without taking a compass bearing and perhaps taking astrological sightings, one might imagine that the rows of stones are some ancient solar or lunar markings, such as those found in the southwest desert country of Arizona. Or perhaps a lawn-bowling alley for giants, or a clearing for a garden", I wrote in the Quesnel Observer in 2005.

In 2011 a group of Wellites and Barkervillians headed up to the Flats to see if we could discover some more about the site. First of all some research on Google Earth showed that there simply was not room for a four-furlong track on the flat, even if trees were cleared and the flat extended at the east end. A furlong is 220 yards/metres. The shortest racetrack is a ¼ mile, (two furlongs) hence the development of the quarter horse, bred for running short distances. A four-furlong track would be 880 yards, plus a run-out area. Ludditt's later claim of an eight furlong would be 1760 yards. The track area at Racetrack Flats is 260 yards – just half of a normal ¼ mile track.

So Ludditt's straight, four-furlong track is simply not possible. But, if we search the *Cariboo Sentinel* we do find references to horse racing, such as the races on





Dominion Day 1871, when several horse races were held, and all were 300 yards, not a quarter mile. So it seems these Cariboo races were short enough to fit on the track at Racetrack Flats.

So, off we went, loaded with gear, including a new camera mast I had built that would allow us to raise a camera to 20 feet, enabling a low aerial view of the supposed track. The camera can be operated remotely with a motorized pan/tilt head and a tether or link to a laptop



computer allowing the camera to be controlled from the ground.

We took photos from a variety of heights, up to 20 feet, measured anything that seemed pertinent and took a few close-ups of rock piles. Meanwhile Dave Jorgenson painted the grave markers. While we got the photos I was after I don't think we learned anything new. As a horseman I have doubts that it was a racetrack for horses. It is rough, shorter than a quarter-mile track should be by half, and narrow – just 22 feet in width. (It is .28 kms or 280 metres, not a quarter mile, which is the shortest track.)

Then on October 18, 2011, I get an email from Bill Quackenbush, curator at Barkerville, announcing that the *Cariboo Sentinel*, Barkerville's early newspaper, had been digitized: a long-time dream of many researchers, and an announcement that will seriously affect my winter. I type "Maloney" into the search box - an item appears; July 28, 1868, a notice stating that: "For Farming Purposes – On Maloney's Flat [there is that



name again], at the head of Grouse Creek, James Pullen" [Pullen] had on the 16<sup>th</sup>, inst. "taken up" the flat for farming purposes.

So there we have it: farming. It seems likely that James Pullen, a Grouse Creek miner, in the area for several years, took over when Maloney left and had the idea of farming the flat.

Did Pullen clear an area of rocks for farming? While the plant life of the flat does not seem to support or reflect this possibility it also does not support horse races and the seed scatter that would take place from horse manure and feed.

Those are the facts of the case. The *facts*. Except, years ago Tim Cushman and I had a strange experience here. At the head of a group of Barkervillian horseback riders we had become confused in the tangle of forest on Bald Mountain, as this was long before the Friends of Barkerville had re-opened many of the trails.

Finally, feigning confidence in our location as any good guide would do, we made our



way down the east slope and came to an opening. "I'm sure this is Racetrack Creek," I said. And, as if in confirmation, without any signal, knee pressure or encouragement from either Tim or me, our horses broke into a gallop down the well-defined "racetrack". We did not see any ghosts, but our horses sure did. We may not be sure it's a racetrack, but those horses knew and raced with their ghostly equine ancestors.



Photos courtesy of Richard Wright



**FRIENDS OF BARKERVILLE**  
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Website: [www.barkerville.bc.ca](http://www.barkerville.bc.ca)



Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*Please Circle & Print Clearly*

New

Renewal

Family (\$65) **(\$70)** Couple (\$60) **(\$64)** Single (\$30) **(\$32)**

For an additional **\$2** Single, **\$4** Couple and **\$5** Family,  
this entitles you to visit Cottonwood House for the season.

Name: (1) \_\_\_\_\_ Card # \_\_\_\_\_  
Given Surname

Name: (2) \_\_\_\_\_ Card# \_\_\_\_\_  
Given Surname

City: \_\_\_\_\_ Province/State: \_\_\_\_\_

Country: \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

MEMBERSHIP ENTITLES YOU TO AN ANNUAL PASS INTO BARKERVILLE HISTORIC TOWN AND A VOICE IN THE PRESERVATION, PROTECTION AND PROMOTION OF THE HISTORICAL SITES OF BARKERVILLE AND THE CARIBOO GOLDFIELDS. YOUR SUPPORT IS GREATLY APPRECIATED!

