



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

**VOL. 19 ISSUE 1**

**"Barkerville Characters"**

**Spring/Summer 2019**



**"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



### **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:**

**PRESIDENT:** Hildur Sinclair

**VICE PRESIDENT:** Grant Johannesen

**SECRETARY:** Doug Perdue

**TREASURER:** Tony McDonald

### **OTHER DIRECTORS:**

Robin Grady

Lana Fox

Richard Wright

Cameron Graham

### **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.

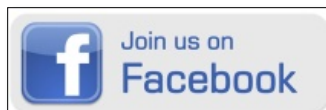
### **CONTACT INFORMATION**

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.friendsofbarkerville.ca](http://www.friendsofbarkerville.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.

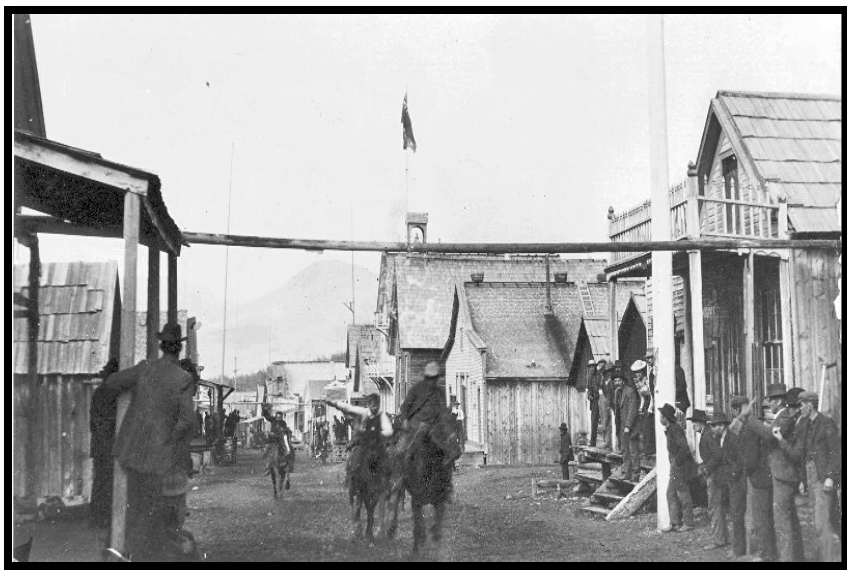
**\*MEMBERSHIP Contact:** Lana Fox

**\*NEWSLETTER Contact:** Direct submission of articles to Lana Fox (FOB email address)

**BARKERVILLE – REVIVES DAYS OF '69**  
**CARIBOO OBSERVER NEWSPAPER, Sept.8, 1934, pg.1, Vol. 27 No. 6**

Labor Day at Barkerville was undoubtedly the outstanding event of the year, and from all accounts was very successful in every respect. The weather being ideal for all events made it the more pleasant. To the time of going to press it is regretted that the report is not to hand, which is probably accounted for by the fact that the spirit (or spirits) of the old days still prevails. We hope to have a most full and complete account from the committee for the next issue.

The large crowd that attended the various sports and contests were well satisfied and paid high tribute to the committee in charge of the celebration. Among the events was a match race between a noted local horsewoman and another Quesnel resident. The lady won hands down. Pete Grant won the gold panning contest, and



the horse racing on the main street was a most attractive card, in fact so much so that both sides of the street were filled with spectators.

At the time set for the first race the crowd awaited the start-off. Then the familiar cry "They're off" was given. All heads were craned to the post and with a very dignified pace one of the town's cows paraded the street to McKinnon's barn, where she turned in to avoid the further plaudits of the crowd. From the very vague information so far received it is understood that no one entered the rock-drilling contest; we learn that H.B. (Hub) King won the high jump; Harlow and Ross put on a very good exhibition for three rounds, and Ross and Simpson in the middleweight class went five rounds to a draw. No word has been received of the ball game between Barkerville and the Quartz. Truly the spirits of the Old Days still live in Barkerville.

**Above photo courtesy of Barkerville Archives, P0657. Dominion Day Horse Race July 1, 1900**

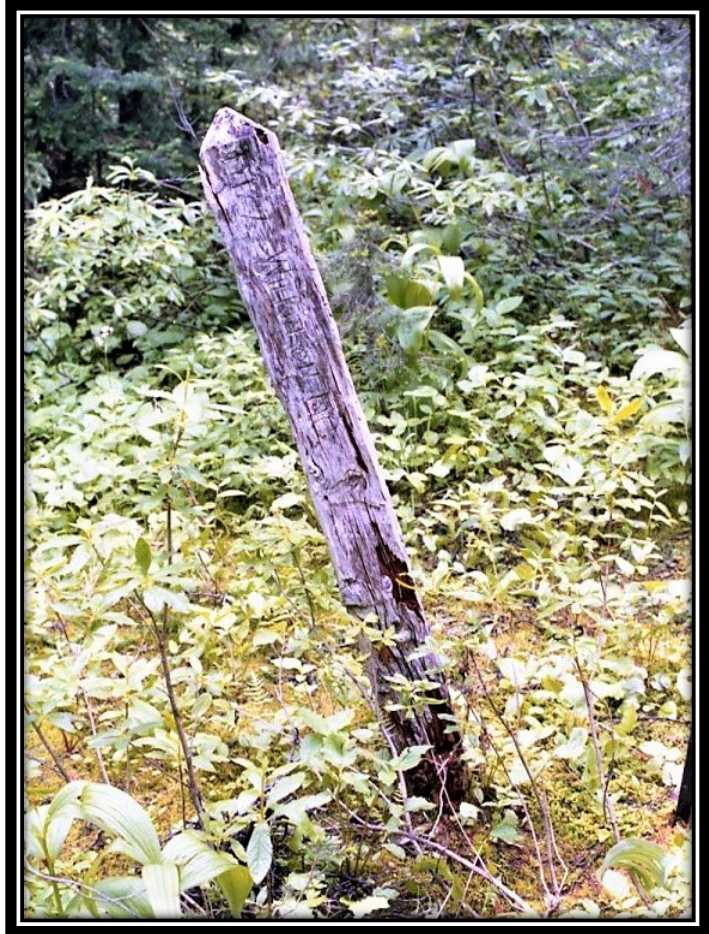




## THE WILKINSON CLAIM & Dr. J.B. WILKINSON

Back during the start of the Cariboo gold rush John B. Wilkinson came to this colony from Canada West and was reported to be one of the first miners on Rich Bar, Fraser river before arriving in Richfield and Barkerville according to his obituary in the Cariboo Sentinel of November 6, 1869., pg.2

*The photo to the right taken by me Lana Fox, is that of an old claim post my husband and I found back in the early 1980's. It says "Wilkinson" on it. It was found on Proserpine Mountain during one of our many ventures into the woods looking for signs of early history. It most likely by now has all but rotted away and disappeared back into the soil. It was not in good shape then but you could still make out the name carved on it.*



The following obituary was found in the Daily Colonist, Vol.22, No.143, Friday, Nov.26,1869. It gives a fairly detailed account of his life from his home to arrival in BC and the Cariboo.

**LETTER FROM WILLIAM CREEK, Cariboo, Nov.9, 1869.....** On Wednesday, Nov.3<sup>rd</sup>, after a short illness Dr. John B. Wilkinson. Deceased was the son of the Rev. Henry Wilkinson, of Eglington, Canada West, at one time President of the Wesleyan Conference in that county. He graduated with honors in Toronto, taking his degrees of B.A. and M.D. He afterwards attended one of the Schools of Medicine in New York. Soon after his arrival in this colony in 1859, he obtained the appointment of Assistant Surgeon to a portion of the corps of Sappers sent up to Harrison River. He did not enter upon the duty, resigning in favor of Dr. Oliver. The excitement of the Fraser river drew his attention and he came up the country and mined during the winter between Forts Hope and Yale.

In the Spring of 1860, he came on to Rich Bar where, with others, he brought in a ditch of considerable length. In the fall of the year he went to Keithley creek where he practised his profession. He remained there and the Forks of the Quesnelle until the opening of 1862, when he came on to Williams creek.



He was interested in the Dead Broke claim on this creek, and was the chief promoter of a company engaged in prospecting for quartz who, in 1865, sunk two shafts each 40 feet deep, between Richfield and Grouse creek. The rock, which he assayed most carefully, gave very promising indications.

His ability as a professional man was well appreciated, and his kindly disposition made him the reliever of suffering in the afflicted.

Towards his professional brethren he was always courteous and affable. The community on the creek and its environs can testify to many acts of kindness received at his hands.

His early death is a source of deep regrets to his friends in this country, who have had the pleasure of his acquaintance for the past 10 years.

An interesting added note to mention comes from Richard Wright's book, "Barkerville, Williams Cr, Cariboo," is that he was the physician to Sophie Cameron, wife of John "Cariboo" Cameron and was one of the men to help pull out the sled with her coffin in the winter of 1863.

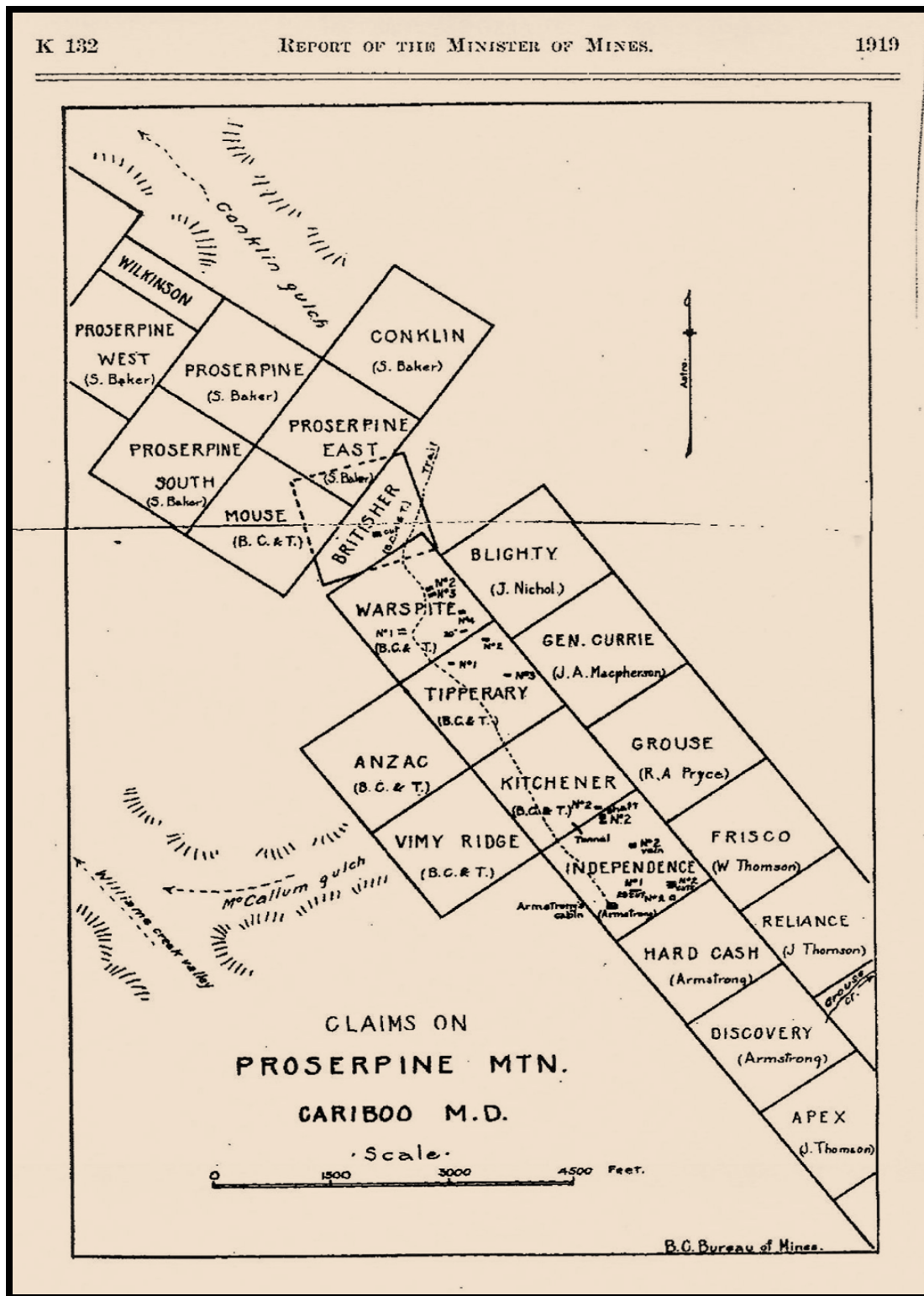
A few other documented facts from early newspapers was that he was elected to the Cariboo Mining Board along with a few others in 1866; The Daily British Colonist newspaper of 1877 talks of "The Wilkinson Ledge" and Doctor Wilkinson as the original discoverer. Records also show that he applied for and took out mining licenses over his time spent here.

**ISN'T IT GREAT THERE WERE EARLY NEWSPAPERS, FOR WITHOUT THEM MUCH HISTORY WOULD BE LOST! EVEN THOUGH THE CARIBOO SENTINEL NEWSPAPER IN BARKERVILLE WAS ONLY TEN YEARS OF MAKING, 1865-1875, THERE WERE OTHER EARLY NEWSPAPERS BEFORE AND AFTER THE SENTINEL, THAT CARRIED ON PUBLISHING EVENTS, STORIES, AND JUST ANYTHING, IT GAVE US MUCH KNOWLEDGE OF WHAT WAS HAPPENING DURING THESE TIMES, WHETHER IT BE ABOUT PEOPLE, MINING OR JUST PLAIN GOSSIP.**

*Submitted by Lana Fox*



*Wilkinson claim shows top left corner on map.*





## **ADD TO YOUR BUCKET LIST – A TRIP TO BARKERVILLE LOAD UP THE CAR AND COME ON OUT AND GET YOUR FILL.**

Several events took place in the Activities Season or shoulder season. Historic ghost town – literally lived up to its name with Halloween taking place over an entire weekend, with ghosts, goblins, and scary characters wandering the streets and haunting houses. The Victorian Christmas brought record crowds to the town site over a three-day period. Shopping, tube rides, sleigh rides, and meeting Kris Kringle are some of the things to do. Family Day weekend in February brought families out to enjoy the tube run, a wiener roast, hot chocolate and just good fun in the snow. New this spring was an Easter egg hunt, where children and parents dashed through the snow in pursuit of hundreds of sweet treats left behind by the elusive snow hare. An Eggciting time was had by all that attended.

It seems that people enjoy the age-old traditions and events that occur throughout the year that they celebrate or participate in at home with their families, but they want to experience them in a unique and different environment, with other people. Barkerville offers this opportunity and welcomes the public to come and experience a tried and true tradition in a new or different way in an old town.

The Barkerville Heritage Trust Board of Directors held meetings in Prince George in January and in 100 Mile House in April where they conducted business and interacted with members of the respective communities by hosting luncheons. Four Directors will be leaving the BHT Board of Directors as their terms come to an end and new Directors will be appointed and approved. The BHT AGM will be June 15<sup>th</sup> in Barkerville in conjunction with the Theatre Royal grand opening Gala event.

The staff in Barkerville are busy running operations in the historic town site and park and are ready to host visitors for the busy summer season, as the gates officially opened May 16<sup>th</sup>.

Admission is half price for the month of May. Joining the management team of Ed Coleman, Dawn Leroy, and Jillian Merrick, is Carrie Chard, the new Protection and Operations Manager. Richard Wright and Amy Newman and their Theatre Royal performers are touring Central BC in May and presenting special shows to communities affected by the wildfires over the last 2 years.

Fox Photo Credit



Cottonwood House is undergoing a transition and new management model and there will be changes occurring on the site this year. There will be no fee to visit the site, for this year only, as a result. The site is still open for visitation and for event bookings. An Atco trailer camp has been set up near Forest Rose campsite for much needed accommodations for Barkerville staff, Barkerville merchant's staff, and for contracted street interpreters.

Highway 26 was paved last year from Wingdam to Barkerville along with the parking lots in Barkerville.

Bring out your pen and add a trip to Barkerville on your bucket list and come see the historic town site and park.

Take the time to overnight, hike, bike, shop, camp, play, and watch for the abundant wildlife in the area and marvel at the gorgeous scenery. Take time to explore and visit Stanley Cemetery, Blessings Grave, Wells, Troll ski resort, and Bowron Lake Park, just to name a few of the many attractions.

Don't forget to support Barkerville and the Friends of Barkerville – Cariboo Goldfields Historical Society by renewing or purchasing a new membership.

Grant Johannesen, Vice President, FOB-CGHS



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**FOB MEMBERSHIP/SEASON PASS**, AS OF July 1<sup>st</sup>, we have 520 members. Thanks to each and everyone of you for your support! We also have a number of long-time dedicated members since 2004! Remember that all the membership money goes towards worthy projects around Barkerville and surrounding area.

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**BARKERVILLE'S 151<sup>ST</sup> DOMINION DAY CELEBRATIONS** was a huge success despite the rain that came down, sometimes by the bucket full. There were many hardy people who persevered through it all.



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### **Barkerville Heritage Trust AGM & Theatre Royal Gala Event**

**June 15 and 16** The Barkerville Heritage Trust (BHT) Directors, CEO, Ed Coleman and General Manager, Dawn Leroy held their AGM in the new School House in Barkerville. JoAnn Francis, CPA, CA from Williams Lake is with PMT Chartered Professional Accountants LLP and she did the financial audit and report.



Richard Wright and Amy Newman of the Theatre Royal and their talented group of performers put on 3 live shows. The 1:00 p.m. show was a Benefit for the Theatre Royal, the 4:00 p.m. show was the Cariboo Gold Quartz Radio Hour, and Saturday at 7:00 p.m. Mrs. McGinley's Gold Rush Variety evening show, sponsored by the BHT, included a live auction. Staff, performers, and guests attended the Theatre Royal reception at the House Hotel, featuring refreshments, dancing, and music. The surprise moment of the weekend was Consul Ning Wang singing an impromptu solo of an Italian operatic song and he received a standing ovation.

**Photo Courtesy of Consul Ning Wang and Deputy DG Kong**



At noon there was a ribbon cutting at the new Atco camp located beside the Forest Rose campground. The camp can accommodate 26 people. There is a central shared kitchen with 4 stoves and a commercial dishwasher that can do the dishes in 90 seconds. The camp houses staff from Barkerville, employees of Barkerville merchants, and Barkerville street interpreters.

Ed Coleman then toured a group of guests/Directors to the Wildfire Fuel Management project. An access road has been built, trees and brush have been felled, trees have been pruned and debris has been chipped. Quesnel Tree Services is the contractor chipping the limbs and woody debris.

At 2:00 p.m. there was a Dim Sum provided by the Lung Duck Tong restaurant for Staff, Invited guests, and Directors. Kirsten Clausen, Chair of the BHT welcomed everyone and gave a short introduction, MLA, Coralee Oakes provided a warm and enthusiastic welcome to Barkerville, and Chinese Consul Ning Wang addressed the guests, stating that it was nice to be here in summer, as the last time he was here it was in March 2017 when the streets and buildings were covered in snow. Mayors and/or Councillors and Regional District representatives attended from Prince George, Quesnel, Williams Lake, and 100 Mile House. Four BHT Directors' terms came to an end and have stepped down.

Rhonda Hunter, a retired accountant from Victoria, a dedicated and long serving Director and Treasurer stepped down and is replaced by Roger Solly, from Williams Lake, a retired Accountant with PMT Chartered Professional Accountants LLP.

Walt Cobb, Mayor of Williams Lake, also a long serving Director and Vice Chair stepped down and is replaced by Williams Lake City Councillor and X'atsul (Soda Creek Band) manager, Craig Smith.

Dr. Jacqueline Holler, Associate Professor, Department of History, Women's Studies and Gender at UNBC has stepped down and is replaced by Glenn Thielmann of Prince George.

Gary Champagne of Wells, has served on the Board for a couple of separate terms and is replaced by Gabe Fourchalk, Mayor of Wells.

Some exciting new projects are in the works for Barkerville. An Indigenous Cultural Interpretive Centre is being planned. An interpretive mine adit (tunnel) is being explored and developed to give visitors a glimpse into the past and at how underground mining looked and felt. The Wildfire fuel management project is ongoing and is being done in phases around the historic town and in the park.

The Theatre Royal is open for the summer season and the staff, merchants, stagecoach ride, and street interpreters are excited and ready to welcome you all, whether you are first time or return visitors annually or occasionally. Be sure to book into a campsite, Bed and Breakfast, cabin, cottage, or motel and visit for a day, night, or even better, several days, to have time to explore and visit Barkerville, Cottonwood House, Wells, Troll ski resort, Bowron Lakes, Quesnel, Williams Lake, 100 Mile House, Clinton, Prince George, Vanderhoof, Fort St. James, and surrounding communities and wilderness. Bring your camera, fishing, hiking, biking, and camping gear. Keep your eyes open for wildlife and wildflowers along the route. Enjoy your travels and capture some treasured memories.

**Submitted by Grant Johannesen, Vice President- Friends of Barkerville-Cariboo Goldfields Historic Society, Director BHT**

**\*When travelling to Barkerville from the south or north, visitors and locals alike, should notice on the roadsides, some new, large, gold coloured billboards with catchy phrases promoting Barkerville.**



## THE STANLEY CEMETERY KIOSK

*The Friends of Barkerville directors* are pleased to announce that our special project for the Stanley Cemetery is now complete and on display. This project will add to a better understanding of the historical significance to the site that relates to some of the people who once lived and mined in the Stanley area from it's beginning 1862 to later years.

Today very little is obvious to show but for the old Lightning Inn Hotel at the old town site and the cemetery that remains to this day, and that it once was a thriving community!



Lana Fox Photos, 2019

While on your way to Barkerville this summer take a moment to visit the Stanley cemetery site by turning off on to the Stanley loop road. This will take you back to the main highway and then on to Barkerville. A future goal will be to include information on the Chinese section of the cemetery. A work bee in the near future is being planned for cleaning and clearing. Do stop by to have a look, you won't be disappointed!



## **FRIENDS OF BARKERVILLE BURSARY AWARD IN MEMORY OF JERRY MACDONALD**....by Marshall Kline, one of two winners selected for 2019.

MY NAME IS FRANK LAUMEISTER.....I am a man who makes my own work. I continually look for opportunities with which to expand my own wealth. Not that I have a lot of wealth to begin with, but I always seek to increase what amount I have. I am going to recount for you one particularly interesting chapter in my many business dealings.

The year was 1862. As I am sure you know, talk of gold had been going around. It seemed everyone was going to the Cariboo in an effort to strike it rich. I was not so inclined to start following the aspirations that many had of finding gold. Instead, I considered the amount of money the desperate miners were spending to survive at their claim sites. There was more opportunity for wealth than just gold. Every man working a claim needed supplies and supplies were not readily available especially because most everything came from Victoria.

The route to the Cariboo Goldfields then was very rough. Mules were used to pack supplies but the journey was long and tedious. I was made aware of an animal better suited, or so I thought, for the harsh travel that was necessary to pack supplies in. These animals were camels. It was said that the US Army used camels with great success. I also heard that camels can go a long way without water and food and are larger than a mule, allowing them to pack more weight. One day I saw that there were camels for sale from San Francisco. Immediately I purchased twenty-three of the curious animals.



The camels were transported to Victoria by means of a steamship and then moved up to Port Douglas. There were two losses on the way to Port Douglas but I was still excited for the majority which were doing well. Pretty soon I was making my way along the inland trails carrying supplies. I realized soon enough that the camels were not a perfect solution for the rugged British Columbian routes. The camel's feet would often get cut from the rocks. The camels also created problems for other people using the roads. Mules and horses were terrified of the strange animals. Many a time a horse would run off leaving its rider sitting on the road. For this reason, I was threatened and shouted at often. The camels also had a disagreeable personality. They would eat anything in sight which meant many of my clothes and the property of others. Some people wanted me to pay for the damage caused by my camels and in the end, they lost me a great deal of money.

One of my camels was shot dead by a miner. Whether it was intentional or not I do not know. Because of all the issues that came along with these strange critters, I sold all the camels I could to whoever would take them and got away from that way of doing my business. I hope I never experience failure on such a scale again. Perhaps camels are better suited for the sand.