

# **FRIENDS OF BARKERVILLE**

## **Cariboo Goldfields Historical Society**

### **Volume 13, Issue 3 - August, 2009**

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Contact  
Information

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## **THE STREETS OF BARKERVILLE COME ALIVE!**



Photo by Lana Fox

There is dancing in the streets, filming for television and movies and in general, good times being had by all who visit here in Barkerville.



*The Barkerville Hotel – all dressed up for Dominion day.*

Photo by Cathy Eisma



*Mantracker – filming on Barkerville's Main Street*

Photo by Gordon Crantz

## EXECUTIVE

President: Robin Grady 250-992-2008

Vice-president: Tony Bensted 250-992-5958

Secretary: Doug Perdue 250-747-1695

Treasurer: Tony Bensted

## OTHER DIRECTORS

Lana Fox, Loretta Grady, Andy Motherwell, Pat Pickering, Dave Jorgensen, Rick Galbraith, Jim Gorsline, Grant Johnnesen

## CONTACT INFORMATION

The Friends of Barkerville-Cariboo Goldfields Historical Society (commonly abbreviated to FOB) has its registered mailing address as P.O. Box 4152, Quesnel, B.C. V2J 3J2. FOB staff is in the Barkerville Hotel (mid-May to end-September), phone 250-994-3360. In the off season, contact any executive director. Our e-mail address is [friendsofbarkerville@barkerville.ca](mailto:friendsofbarkerville@barkerville.ca)

Our web site is linked to [www.barkerville.ca](http://www.barkerville.ca).

## MEMBERSHIP

A FOB membership application is invited from anyone wishing to share our enthusiasm for preserving, presenting and promoting knowledge, events and memorabilia of the original Cariboo Gold Rush and its hub city, Barkerville. Membership gives the member (i) a voice and a vote at the Annual General Meeting, (ii) opportunities to attend executive meetings, (iii) the right to run for office, (iv) discounts at associated historical attractions and businesses.

## DIRECTORS MEETINGS

Most of our regular meetings are scheduled for the first Thursday of each month at @5:30pm in Quesnel. There will be a couple of meetings a year in Barkerville.

## MERCHANDISE

The Friends of Barkerville offer souvenirs, gifts, historical books and memorabilia for sale from the Barkerville Hotel during the Town's open season and Christmas weekend.

**THE NEWSLETTER** is FOB's medium for presenting the society's mandatory publications and general news to members. It is published three times a year, exclusively to FOB members and free of charge. It is internet published on the FOB webpage, or is mailed to members without computers. The Editor is Cathy Eisma. Inquiries, letters and contributions can be sent directly to her at [ceisma@goldcity.net](mailto:ceisma@goldcity.net), phone 250-994-3283, or can be submitted to The Editor, c/o FOB. (See Contact Information)

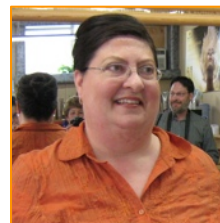
## CREDITS

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The Friends of Barkerville and the editor especially, are always looking for help. The organization is involved with restoration and maintenance of artifacts, buildings, machinery, work, publications, and archival work, supporting town activities, fostering growth, and offering volunteer assistance at many events. The newsletter needs society news and wishes to give our reader's interesting stories along with it. Thank you.

## EDITOR'S CORNER

It has been an exciting season so far here in Barkerville. The season started out slowly, with the weather not so nice and not as many people as we would have liked. It gradually picked up steam and has been quite busy ever since. The weather got much better, too –



sometimes quite hot for “up here”. Dominion Day was great, the August long weekend even better. There has been at least five film crew's in town – from Mantracker to an internet Blog film to a private group making a Chinese history film. There was a very successful St. Saviour's Institute night, the Mason's have been in town and the games day for kids went very well. We also have more to look forward to – the Autumn Moon Festival on August 22/09, and on Labor Day – the Hose Carriage Races are coming back! With all that is happening – there is never a dull moment – you'd better hurry up and get out and join us here on the creek, before it is all over for another year. *Cathy Eisma, Editor*

## PRESIDENTS REPORT – BY ROBIN GRADY JULY/09



Summer has finally made its appearance with hints of fall thrown in. The winter's snow has all finally melted to make room for next years dump. Blessing Grave was hit directly by 20 inch diameter spruce tree, which made quite a mess of the new fence that we had just put up last year. Tony, his son and I cut the blow down up and removed the wrecked fence and it's now replaced. The head board is also damaged and will require replacing at some time. The Wells portion of the Wells/ Barkerville Cemetery has now been transferred to the District of Wells for the everyday administration that a cemetery requires. We have indicated that we would try to help with work bees for cleanup etc. Tony and I, with the help of Rick Cindric did a detailed survey of the cemetery and many of the plots. Alison West from Prince George is going to produce a more accurate map as the current one has some problems and the original survey notes were destroyed in a fire. Our project in the Canadian Claim has been started with the selling of shares. They are available at the Hotel for \$5 each.



We have found two log stringers in Wells that will make the base for a walking bridge to the Claim, as the original bridge was destroyed in the spring ice flood on Williams Creek. There is abundance of timbers and decking to cover the stringers for the bridge. The Royal Engineers have indicated that they may be able to help with work on the bridge this summer, so we may need to supply the required materials needed.

I would like to express my thanks along with all the Directors to all those who have volunteered at the Hotel so far this summer, I won't name you in case I miss someone, Thanks. Two months to go until we close shop, so if you haven't been out to Barkerville, better get to it.

#### MEMBERSHIP REPORT – BY LANA FOX



The Friends joined in at Barkerville's table for FOB's annual membership drive at the May Home Show in Quesnel. It was a success as we had many renewals and first time members signing up. We began selling the new "\$5.00 Canadian Claim Shares". Our goal is to raise money which will go towards the

much needed restoring and up-grade at the Canadian Claim site located across Williams Creek.

The last fundraiser the Friends helped with was the restoration of the Cornish Waterwheel which had to be completely restored. It's such a popular site with the tourists as Mr. Grimsby puts on a great show.

The Friends also had the opportunity to sell more memberships at the Gold show held in Quesnel in June of this year. To give you an idea of how the membership is going, as of the end of July, we have 1205 members. Thank you to each and every one of you for your continued as well as first time support to the Friends of Barkerville.

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My good friend Marie Elliott was in Barkerville July 8<sup>th</sup> to do book signing for her new book "Fort St. James & New Caledonia, Where British Columbia Began". She spent time at the Barkerville Hotel with the Friends as well as at the Eldorado, and then later in the evening presented a slide show at the Visitor's Centre. You can purchase her book in our store at the Barkerville Hotel. A fellow by the name of Ron Brown stopped in at the Hotel back in June. He is the great nephew of Lottie McKinnon. He had a lot of great stories to tell Andi of when visiting Lottie, Catherine, and the Kelly's, the Wendles, Tregellis's all local Barkerville people back in the days. "How much better could it get than this? The people are what make this job so great!" *[said Andi]*

Another person of interest stopped by August 1<sup>st</sup> by the name of Barry Curtis. He is the son of Barry Jason Curtis, who was the artist of our Barkerville poster and coloring book. Barry lives in Oyama, B.C. He pointed out a few things on the poster that we were not aware of such as his father's face which shows a striking resemblance to him, peeking out a window at one of the hotels, his second wife located on the street across from Joe Denny's saloon and his dog in front of Barnard's Express. Barry Jason was better known as "Jason" around Barkerville.

If any of you out there have any connections with Barkerville and its people, we would love to hear from you to share your stories with others. Till next time.....Lana

#### THIS DIRT HAS COLOR - BY RICK GALBRAITH THE RED HAT SEA



Once or tooth a year, Barkerville is graced by a group of extraordinary women who flaunt themselves gaily on Main Street. The Red Sea of the Middle East has nothing on these ladies who wear red and purple (pink and lavender for the not-so-mature) as they prance through town giving us a flamboyant demonstration of their love for life. The Red Hat Society is exclusive to ladies (thankfully, for what man would dare to wear red on his head and purple on his shoulders?), who often take that penchant for living to some cause greater than their own, such as raising funds for the underprivileged or the sick. Perhaps when you visit Barkerville you will meet one of them. Prepare yourself for her exhilaration, perhaps even lift-off.

#### CANADIAN CLAIM UPDATE

It was reported in our last issue that Barkerville Heritage Town is looking at restoration of the Canadian Claim grounds to enhance the visitor's impression of hydraulic mining and, at the same time, annex existing trails that would provide for a great view of the town. The Friends of Barkerville are considering ways to help funding of the restoration, and started off with a campaign to sell fantasy shares. You can help us out with this worthy project by picking yours up at the Barkerville Hotel, our home in Barkerville, for only \$5.00. Or, contact us at the hotel, 250-994-3360, to have one mailed to you.

Meanwhile, you might also recall from the last issue our President's remarks about the spring flood of ice and water that destroyed the foot bridge to the Canadian Claim. It is important that the bridge be repaired and the site cleaned for current viewing and access by construction crews before restoration plans can be started. To that end, the Friends are working on repairs to the bridge using donated muscle, minds and lumber. Some of that lumber will come from the excess of lumber gathered for the reconstruction of the Cornish water wheel, another project the Friends helped to fund. While some costs will still be incurred on the bridge repair, we are fortunate to have people like the Royal Engineers, Pete Wright Contracting, Friends' President Robin Grady, Friends' directors Jim Gorsline and Tony Bensted, among many others, donating time and materials.

#### **MARKETING BARKERVILLE**

Barkerville Heritage Trust has a new man to market Barkerville Heritage Town, and the hiring team picked someone who already did a good job of that 150 years ago! Governor James Douglas' namesake, why none other than James Douglas, who not so long ago played the part of Judge Bushby and other historic characters in town, has returned as a real person with a real job ahead of him. Talk about following in footsteps and filling shoes, this unique situation takes that a, shall I say it, "step" further. I met James, the living – a jolly good fellow. 33 Welcome aboard!

#### **OTHER COLOUR**

At the next AGM, coming up in September, there will be a number of modernizing by-laws presented for your vote. Check out the separate notice in this issue.

The new old sawmill is up and sometimes running. Give it notice, but give it time, too

Barkerville Heritage Trust hired several local displaced loggers to help with restoration projects, and sponsored their education through New Caledonia College in Quesnel

Barkerville Heritage Trust is hiring additional displaced loggers for a fuel management program that will see the creek's clear cut corridor considerably wider, something like it was 150 years ago!

There's no mention from anybody whether there's a connection between the last three points, but it certainly would make for an economic triangle, wooden it?

#### **BOOK SIGNING OF HER NEW BOOK BY MARIE ELLIOT –**

On July 8, 2009, Marie Elliot was in Barkerville – first at the Barkerville Hotel and then at the Eldorado Gold – signing copies of her new book "Fort St. James & New Caledonia".

The book signings were followed by an evening slideshow at the Visitor's Centre. This book "delivers a rare glimpse into the lives and times of the first fur traders who built modern British Columbia" and is available at the hotel.

#### **Jerry MacDonald Memorial Award Essay, Friends of Barkerville** by Jenna Boyd

For those who grew up in the Cariboo, Barkerville was an accessible and frequent day trip. By taking a walk down the main street of Barkerville, one feels as if they were transported back to the 1860's. As many people know, Barkerville is the preserved historic site of the main town during the Cariboo Gold Rush, however many do not know the full history behind the town.

The town of Barkerville was established almost overnight by a miner named Billy Barker whom the town was named after. He was the first man to strike gold in 1862 and by word of mouth, the town flourished almost instantly. During the beginning, the town consisted of approximately 500 makeshift cabins and tents, however, by the mid 1860's, Barkerville was the largest town north of San Francisco and west of Chicago with a population of 5,000. Though the population of Barkerville was greatly dependent on mining, it was becoming less of a "service town" and more a real community. More and more general stores were being established as well as a barber shop, several boarding houses, a drugstore, a theatre call "The Theatre Royal" and the "Wake Up Jake Restaurant". Due to the fact that supplies were hard to come by, the prices were extremely high and the miners had to either haul their own supplies or in a pack train. These high prices stayed until the creation of the Cariboo Wagon Road, where supplies could be transported by huge freight wagons. This new road also prompted more travel by women to Barkerville which helped the entertainment aspect of the town. Barkerville was not just a mining community it was also a place for good old fashion entertainment. Socialising in the forms of drinking, gambling and dancing were a fundamental part of the growing town. Other forms of common entertainment were horse racing as well as prize fighting. For the people who were described as "sober set", church services were available and very frequently attended. Of course Barkerville would not have been the same without the Chinese, who were an important part of the community for almost one hundred years. They established their own "China-town" equipped with the Kwong Lee Company (a drugstore supplying groceries, clothing and mining tools) as well as a number of other businesses. This company had many other stores around British Columbia however, the Barkerville store was among the most impressive. The Chinese community also built several cabins for the miners who developed a system of sharing a cabin between four or five men as to minimize their expenses. When

a dispute broke out among the Chinese community, BC courts were avoided because a Chinese benevolent system was established to settle arguments within the community.

On September 12, 1868, Barkerville was destroyed by a fire that quickly spread through the many wooden buildings. Though the fire was said to be an accident, it did not change the fact that the entire town had to be rebuilt from the ground up. The rebuilding began almost immediately. Within six weeks over ninety buildings has been restored and the narrow road of main street had been widened and straightened. By 1880, Barkerville built its first school, finally having enough pupils to attend; thirteen. Though the town seemed to be thriving, by the end of the century it was considered a ghost town. Barkerville experienced a small revival due to the Great Depression and the price of gold skyrocketed, however it was not enough to maintain the town. In 1958, the government of British Columbia decided that the town should be made into a tourist attraction, thus "Barkerville Historic Town" was born.

Barkerville was founded over one hundred years ago and it is fascinating that the original structures still remain. It is a true testament to the resilient nature of the Cariboo and its people. As a resident of the Cariboo, it is my opinion that the history of Barkerville should be explored more often. It is a fundamental part of our history that we as a community should be proud of.

#### **SPOTLIGHT ON THE BARKERVILLE HOTEL-**

At the Hotel – our home base in Barkerville – we carry a number of different products. All these products are hand crafted and purchased in our local area, with an eye for appropriateness to the era in which we find ourselves there – the 1870's. We have a number of new products this year, from birch syrup and dandelion syrup to Alpaca Wool socks, from teddy bear sweaters and doll clothes to new books about the area. Some of those new books include Marie Elliot's "Fort St. James & New Caledonia, "I Am Full Moon" by Lily Hoy Price. We also carry the new Site Guide – put out by Barkerville Heritage Trust.

New in the store in just the last couple of weeks is our new FOB re-usable Tote bag and they are proving quite popular. We have some great new prints and cards by Leif Grandell and are now carrying Barkerville pins.

Our main problem at the hotel this summer is keeping the shelves stocked as things keep flying out the door. Despite the 'recession', people are still coming in and still buying, although it seems more people are spending, but in lesser amounts. All in all – it has been a great season so far – with more than a month to go!

#### **Report from the Chair of the Board 2008/2009**

##### **Neil Vant**

On behalf of the very diverse, talented and representative fourteen-member board of the Barkerville Heritage Trust, I am very pleased to report on this past year.

First, you should be aware that the Barkerville site is over 1200 acres (405 hectares) in size. The townsite itself consists of 133 heritage buildings which date as far back as 1869, 17 service buildings, countless, but still counting, thousands of artifacts and several kilometers of roads.

Barkerville has a complete water and sewer system from water reservoir to sewage treatment lagoons, an underground electrical system and fire alarm system and partial sprinkler system. Off the main site we also have 168 campsites in the Government Hill, Forest Rose and Lowhee Campgrounds. In addition to all that, in the community of Wells, some 8 kilometers away, we have four residences and an above-ground gasoline/diesel fuel station acquired this year to ensure very vital fuel services for visitors, residents and our employees.

Given the scope of the physical infrastructure we are responsible for, we are doing very well at keeping it all functional, safe and enjoyable with limited resources in a harsh climate over 4,200 feet in elevation! On the day last June when I assumed the Chair, we were hosting as guest of honour, Mr. Yang Qiang, Consul General of the Peoples Republic of China. He addressed the crowd assembled on the occasion of the declaration of the Chee Kung Tong (Chinese Masonic Hall) as a National Historic Site of Canada.

On June 19<sup>th</sup>, 2008 Barkerville celebrated Government Agents Day by re-opening the Government Agent's Office for the first time since 1956. This was possible thanks to the hard work of Deborah Lipscombe, Regional Director of Service BC, Bill Quackenbush, our Curator and his assistant Anne Laing. This is noteworthy as the project was runner up for the Premier's award for the most innovative inter-governmental partnership@ Another highlight of this past year was the marking of the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Provincial Government's involvement in Barkerville along with BC150. Robin Sharpe, our Visitor Services Manager, arranged a reunion held in July for people who had worked in Barkerville over the last half century. The weekend event was a great success and by the popular demand of the participants, this should be repeated at least every 5 years!

On British Columbia Day we had the representative of the Queen in Canada in Barkerville! The Honourable Stephen Point, Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia, and Mrs. Point visited in the context of a well-attended and memorable Citizenship Ceremony. We also had a member of the upper House of Parliament, Senator, and The Honourable Lillian Dyck present. These distinguished visitors took in many of the activities happening in Barkerville and stayed overnight, enjoying the dining venues offered in Barkerville and Wells. This past year, the Board has been aggressively contemplating ways and means of getting more money to make Barkerville more attractive and more self-sustaining. Based on engineering studies of our water, sewer and fire alarm and suppression systems, it has become clear that over time we must increase our budget by \$500,000. to \$1,000,000. annually just to maintain the assets and to replace aging infrastructure. We have formed a Resource Development Committee which includes members of our Board and the broader community. The Committee has been working very hard towards the launch of a professional province-wide fundraising drive within the next 12 to 18 months. This initiative, chaired by Roy Spooner began with a feasibility study that confirmed that with appropriate Provincial participation, this endeavor could realize \$20,000,000.00. Barkerville is full of surprises and I commend our CEO Judy Campbell and her staffs for responding quickly, as major challenges to our success come up unexpectedly. These surprises range from a sudden break of the main water line to the sudden closure of the only gas station in the area at the beginning of our season!

I am delighted that work is being done on the First Nations consultation on the development of the Purden Lake-Barkerville connector road to Highway 16. This is but one more necessary step towards making this initiative launched by Gord Rattray a reality. The work of Lily Chow, our "Ambassador to Guangdong Province of China" has borne fruit with the National Historic Site Designation of the Chee Kung Tong building. Moreover, I am happy to report that a successful familiarization tour with a Chinese Tour Company was conducted and we expect the first tour group from China in Barkerville soon! We trust that this signals the first of many tour groups coming from China. As I report for another year, we are nearing completion of the reconstruction of the Myatovic Cabin, and the Waterous Sawmill equipment is being refurbished and will be installed in the new log structure that is already complete. Another goal of the Board this year was the re-launch of our web site. This will allow us to market in a most effective way all that Barkerville and its merchants offer for the enjoyment of the visitors as well as provide public access to digital photographs and our collection catalogue. I take this opportunity to express

gratitude to the former Minister of Tourism, Culture and the Arts, The Honorable Bill Bennett, for providing what I term "hold the fort" funding which provides the basic operating funding for the next three years. This has been provided in very difficult times given the current global recession and it gives the Board time to garner further resources to ensure the quality of Barkerville's existence and operations well into the future. Barkerville is grateful also to the Friends of Barkerville for their fundraising and volunteer efforts to take on projects and get them done. They have many accomplishments over the last 25 years. This past year, the retaining wall in the old cemetery was completed with support from the Friends.

I know I speak for all of our hard working dedicated board members when I say that the greatest reward any one of us can receive is when people say to us, "Gee, I hadn't been to Barkerville for years and what an improvement – I learned and saw new things and had a good time – you are doing a good job!"

Finally, all this is possible because the CEO Judy Campbell and the Barkerville Staff, merchants and contractors implement our directions so well that more and more of our goals are reached. We still have much to accomplish and I look forward to continuing one more year as your Chair.

#### UPDATE ON THE BARKERVILLE CEMETERY

The District of Wells has taken over responsibility for the management of the new Barkerville Cemetery from the Friends. In return the Friends have signed an MOU (Memorandum of Understanding) with the District. The Purpose and Intent of the MOU as stated in the agreement is as follows: *"The District of Wells and Friends of Barkerville recognize the need to have a dedicated local entity take over the day-to-day administration of the "new" portion of the Wells-Barkerville Cemetery. The intent of this MOU is to transfer the administrative responsibility for the "new" portion of the Wells-Barkerville Cemetery, currently managed on a volunteer basis by the Friends of Barkerville, to the District of Wells.*

*The Friends of Barkerville will attempt to continue to assist with the maintenance of the Wells-Barkerville Cemetery. The Friends of Barkerville will attempt to continue to help fundraise for necessary capital projects at the Wells-Barkerville Cemetery."*

This explains both the reason and intent of the transfer very well. As part of our maintenance commitment the Directors of the Friends have allocated funds to be spent on hiring a contractor to cut the grass and generally clean up both the 'old' and 'new' portions of the cemetery. The Friends have also, with the valuable volunteer assistance of Wiles and Cindric Surveying, surveyed the boundaries and marked burial plots within the new cemetery. From this survey data, Bill Quackenbush of Barkerville along with volunteer Allison Morton of Prince George will construct an accurate map of the new cemetery for use in the ongoing management. **By Tony Bensted**

Notice To Members Of Special Business To Be Conducted  
Intention To Change By-Laws

During the course of the current fiscal year, directors of The Friends Of Barkerville – Cariboo Gold Fields Historical Society have discussed the need to modernize our by-laws. At the September 3, 2009 Annual General Meeting, to be held at the Wee Chippie Restaurant in Quesnel, British Columbia, at 6:30 PM, the directors will move, separately with respect to each, to establish the following by-law changes. *The italicized, underlined portions are the parts being changed.*

1. Motion to amend By-Law 25(2) to read as follows: The number of directors will be *twelve*.
2. Motion to amend By-Law 58 to read as follows: A notice may be given to a member personally, or by mail to the member at the member's registered address, *or by fax to the member at the member's registered fax number, or by e-mail to the member at the member's registered e-mail address, or by notification by any one of those media that requires the member to reference a document published on the Society's internet site. A notice also may be incorporated into a larger document of general interest, whether in printed or electronic form, provided the larger document includes a reasonable table of contents that specifically references that notice. For the purpose of this by-law, the contents of an electronic document are considered to be written.*
3. Motion to amend By-Law 16(3) to read as follows: A quorum is *five* members present.
4. Motion to amend By-Law 31(1) to read as follows: The directors may meet at the places they think fit, *or by engaging in electronic messaging or teleconferencing or video conferencing*, to conduct business, adjourn and otherwise regulate their meetings and proceedings, as they see fit.

Members are encouraged to attend, enter the discussion and, above all else, vote on these motions.

During the year, the directors also amended the quorum for a directors meeting to five.

Rick Galbraith, Director