

Friends of Barkerville

Cariboo Goldfields Historical Society newsletter

Promote, Preserve, Protect

"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, 1889

table of contents

- p1. From the editor
- p2. About us
- p2. In Memoriam
- p4. The 100 Days of Barkerville
- p6. Bloody good bash
- p7. A Little is a Lot
- p8. Olde Fashioned Christmas
- p9. Stanley to Richfield Cariboo Wagon Road Restoration Trail
- p10. From the Editor pt 2
- p11. Notable Events
- p14. Came Upon Him An Opportunity...
- p16. Looking ahead: 2024
- p17. Tracks
Christmas in
Barkerville, 1874



"Heading back down to Sawmill Flats" Lana and Gary Fox on the 1861 Goldrush Packtrail in 1996; photo Glenda Smith, submitted by Lana Fox.

From the Editor

Dear society members, heritage enthusiasts, and curious readers alike, thank you for taking some time out of your day to remain acquainted with us Friends. I hope as you read this quarterly newsletter that you are taking a moment to sit down and relax with a nice, rich cup of coffee, a fragrant mug of tea, perhaps a pint of your favourite Barkerville Brewing seasonal sipper (like their complex and spicy Prescription Porter), or whatever your fancy of choice may be.

Due to volunteer hours being disrupted by non-volunteer responsibilities and commitments, our 3rd quarterly edition -which was scheduled for the autumn- was delayed in publishing. We have therefore opted to combine both our 3rd and 4th quarterly editions in this larger souvenir society newsletter to send off 2023 and harken 2024 in memory of auld lang syne. You will find this newsletter in two parts representing our 3rd and 4th editions. We hope you enjoy and join in our journey as friends.

In Memoriam

We mourn the passing of Bob Smith earlier this year. Bob was the contractor who built the current overshot Cornish Waterwheel in 2007 which is one of Barkerville's most important attractions. It is a living example of historic engineering, a functioning demonstrative educational tool, and an intricate set-piece for dynamic comedic performance as the home of the Sheepskin (hint, hint) Mining Company. The Friends of Barkerville were heavily involved in fundraising for and funding some of the construction of this waterwheel through souvenir shares in the Canadian Claim, industry connections, and donations. Our condolences to Bob's friends and family; one of his many legacies lives on in Barkerville and we couldn't be more grateful for his contribution and time.

So, too, we recognize the loss of a Canadian theatre luminary in Ben Kopelow who passed away on November 11th. Kopelow began

his career as an actor (including early roles in Vancouver's TUTS in the 1950s) before also becoming a producer. Notably, Kopelow started Vancouver's Pacific Show Productions. This company has a long and influential relationship with Barkerville as they brought professional performers to the Theatre Royal stage for a decade between 1977 and 1986. They adjusted the previously established performance model from a singular early twentieth-century influenced Vaudeville production to one of a mid-nineteenth-century influenced variety show paired with a secondary comprehensively researched dramatic book musical (Newman & Wright Productions would later reintroduce elements of this model into their own expansive reparatory production model nearly two decades later). In doing so, Pacific Show began to separate Barkerville's branding from the playful 'corn' of the previous thirteen years and into exploring more subversive and challeng-

ing historical subjects while still maintaining a strong sense of play. Kopelow and his team continued to collaborate with previous site impresario, Fran Dowie (theatre contractor, 1963-1976), into the early eighties and further introduced a new generation of performers and creators to Barkerville and the Theatre Royal stage. Many of these international talents would go on to work for Taylor-Wood Productions turned Eureka Theatre Company in Barkerville through the late eighties and nineties (such as the humble and charming Craig Wood, the beloved and consummate pianist Mary Levine, and recording artist and actor, Ernie Prentice). Kopelow also worked extensively with Marilyn Rummel as theatre manager, and she and her brother would later start the Mason & Daly General Merchants business in Barkerville which remains family-operated and has been a staple in the site for four decades. Kopelow and Pacific Show Productions also produced an LP

Who Are We?

We are the Friends of Barkerville - Cariboo Goldfields Historical Society, a Charitable Non-Profit organization comprised of dedicated volunteers. Our focus is to enhance Preservation, Protection, and Promotion as it applies to Barkerville Historic Town & Park and the Historic Cariboo Goldfields area.

Executive Directors

Hildur Sinclair (president),
Grant Johannensen (vice president),
Dave Jorgenson (treasurer),
Adam Perdue (secretary),
Other Directors: Robin Grady, Brendan Bailey, Barry Curtis, and Rocky Nenka.

Director's Meetings

Monthly meetings are held at Troll Resort. We try to 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 with advance notice, but they cannot vote

unless it is during the AGM. Members are welcome to express their input, suggestions, and ideas.

Newsletter

Credit and Copyright to the contributors unless otherwise noted. Minor editorial supervision by Brendan Bailey and layout by Dirk Van Stralen. All persons with submission of articles and photos are given full credit. Please feel free to send in your items of interest for consideration in our upcoming newsletters.

Positions

Society director positions are a one-year term from the November AGM through the following November AGM, during which time, as per constitution, positions are elected or re-elected.

Committee Positions include: membership, special projects, newsletter, and website.

Membership Perks

- May 1st to April 30th annual issue (only \$25 individual, \$40 couple)

- Quarterly Souvenir Newsletter Subscription \$15
- 20% discount on Barkerville Historic Town & Park Admission
- 10% discount on a day-pass at Troll Ski Resort on Highway 26
- 10% off your bill at Barkerville Brewing Co. in Quesnel
- A free ice cream at Frog on the Bog Gifts in Wells
- 10% off meal, dine in only, at Jack of Clubs Pub

Contact

Mailing Address: PO Box 4152, Quesnel, BC, V2J 3J2
Primary E-Mail: friendsofbarkerville@barkerville.ca
Website: www.friendsofbarkerville.ca
Facebook: Friends of Barkerville - Cariboo Goldfields Historical Society
Memberships: in person or via paypal through website (see QR code)
Newsletter: brendan.bailey@barkerville.ca, or fobgoldfieldsmembership@gmail.com



A smoky early morning in mid-July; photo: B.Bailey

record in 1984 with Craig Wood called *The Spirit of Theatre Royal* (written and directed by Arden Craig). It is one of the finest creative reimaginings of historical 1860s entertainment through recorded media with astounding vocal work and harmonic arrangements. It is an important archival cornerstone of the theatre's legacy of professional theatre since its reopening nearly 62 years ago, and a charming tribute to the historic performers who tread the same floorboards as those today. Ben Kopelow and Pacific Show Productions, both directly and indirectly, contributed expansively to Barkerville's then-developing programming models.

Another former board director, author, editor, poet, painter, and historian passed on late last year. We recognize Jean Speare for her time with the Friends, but also for the extensive legacy of poetry, publications, documentation, and drive she leaves in her wake. Speare was an avid outdoorswoman and passed that passion down to her children (including her son and present board director, Robin) regularly hiking and canoeing the backtrails of the Cariboo, Bowron, and Barkerville with various family cabins in remote locations. In the early 1970s, Speare interviewed her neighbour, Mary Augusta Tappage Evans, and helped Augusta's oral history

through poetry, stories, and reminiscences to be documented and shared in *The Days of Augusta*. [While out of print for decades, *The Days of Augusta* has just been republished and a royalty on each copy sold is donated to The Indigenous Voice Awards.] Not only was Speare an important board director for the Friends, but her family is intrinsically tied to the society: her husband, former MLA Bill Speare, helped to establish Barkerville as a museum, park, and heritage site in 1958 as well as advocating for and mentoring the Friends of Barkerville through the society's foundational years. With sincere thanks to Jean Speare and condolences to her family, the FOB (and the documentation of local history) wouldn't be what it is without her contributions over many years.

We also mourn the passing of one of our lifetime members, Gary Fox, on November 14th. Gary and Lana have been members of the Friends since shortly after its inception in the mid-eighties with Gary serving as a member and volunteer and Lana as a board director for many years. Though there are many, one of Gary's most significant contributions to the local community, heritage conservation, and to our society, was the months of work over six years that he and Lana spent hiking, document-

ing, brushing, and remapping the historic 1861 pack trail. This work often required them to literally work on their hands and knees sifting through brush and overburden to locate the historic trail.

Our deepest condolences to one of our dearest friends and members, Lana, and to the rest of their family and loved ones. May Gary's memory live on in the work of this society that has been such an important component in your lives these last four decades. Our history would not be where it is today without you.

We also mourn the loss of two Quesnel youths, Tayler Bennett and Lane Wiggins, whose lives were taken tragically in an accident along the Barkerville Highway on November 26th. Tayler spent her summers in Barkerville working for the photo gallery and helping to create a memorable experience for visitors. Our deepest condolences to their families, friends, and peers."

Previously acknowledged earlier this year in our spring newsletter were the losses of Lauchie MacLean and Ross Douglas.

May they all rest in peace, and may their legacies in Barkerville and the surrounding Cariboo Goldfields live on.

FRED

FRIENDS OF RESPONSIBLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
PROUD SUPPORTERS OF WELLS, BARKERVILLE & THE BOWRON LAKES

www.fredinwells.wordpress.com



Please contact:
Donna Williams
SarrasInWells.ca Donna.williams777@gmail.com
250.661.4426



**The Friends of Barkerville
Cariboo Goldfields Historical Society**



The 100 Days of Barkerville



Indigenous Celebrations 2023, courtesy of Thomas Drasdauskis, Bowron Lake Photography (photodras.zenfolio.com)

The 100 Days of Barkerville, stretching from June 3rd through September 11th of this year, proved to be a successful post-pandemic model for the second year in a row. Visitation climbed approximately 4,000 persons (from 31,000 in 2022) to around 35,000 this year.

Assuming an increased growth of 5,000 visitors a year, Barkerville may be on track to experience pre-pandemic numbers of up to or in excess of 60,000 again within a five-year window. Our fingers are certainly crossed! Barkerville has already announced that next year's season will again follow the 100-day model and extend from June 1st to September 8th, 2024. Mark your calendars and start planning your visits!

Programming this year continued essentially as it had in 2022. Again, due to limited staff and restoration work, interpretation in the Richfield Courthouse was unavailable and that also expanded to include St. Saviour's Anglican Church with no pastor on site this year. The interpretive educational performance programming continued with a rotating model comprising day-start and day-end drum circles, late-Victorian and Chinese school lessons, Waterwheel demonstrations, a daily musical variety show featuring most interpreters called Here's to the Fools in the Theatre Royal (in tribute to the late Ross Douglas), daily occidental and Chinese town tours, Court Sessions held in the Meth-

odist Church, and the Amazing Tales discourse each morning. Original Peoples interpretation continued to compassionately open the eyes of visitors to the whole story of colonialism and its impacts surrounding the systemically ingrained and limited pioneer-settler mythology (as did Chinese interpretation, also). Beloved scenes again returned to erupt with activity on the streets. The site archeologist led discourses and cemetery tours while the blacksmith kept the forge hot and miner's (and camper's) tools stocked and at the ready for purchase. Fine stationery and unique prints were regularly pressed and available for purchase at the newspaper office, and old-fashioned cosplay family portraits could be secured at the photographer's. Mr. Bowron trialed a popular 30-minute discourse exploring gold rush history through musical selections a few days a week. Merchants were welcoming visitors into their shops for quality goods, education, and fine conversation, while the restaurants and bakery sated appetites with wholesome offerings. Cottages, campgrounds, and bed and breakfasts were available for overnight or extended experiences. Mr. Tingley's team of horses led carriage rides throughout the town. The Visitor Reception Centre was rebranded the Welcome Centre, and the limited team of interpreters were again able to begin carving a little more time out of their busy days of leap-frogging from one

program or performance to the next for one-on-one immersive historical interaction with visitors (allowing for play, memory-building, a sounding board for questions and complexities surrounding historic living and societal standards, expectations and pressures, wit, and a photographic opportunity or two). Special events included Dominion Day on July 1st, Indigenous Days Celebrations on August 19th and 20th and the Chinese Mid-Autumn Moon festival on September 9th.

Dominion Day included a traditional Dominion Day parade, games, and the official season opening of the Theatre Royal. The 8th Annual Indigenous Celebrations included an artist's market, games, dance, stories and a celebration of Original People's culture and history. The Mid-Autumn Moon Festival closed off the 2023 Barkerville season and was attended by MLA, Coralee Oakes, Prince George Mayor, Simon Yu, and Barkerville Heritage Trust Chair, Al Richmond. Mayor Yu reminded those in attendance that Barkerville Historic Town & Park contributes \$95 million annually to local economy and is a principal example of historic multiculturalism dating back to the 1860s. He made a commitment to significantly promote tourism to Barkerville. Sintse (Dr. Retasket) offered a beautifully moving and graceful welcome to all peoples. CEO, Kate Cox, spoke about Barkerville's additional significance as not only a museum, provincial and national heritage site, tourist attraction, and educational site, but also as an archeological site. BHT Chair, Al Richmond, emphasised the importance of Barkerville being a safe space for all peoples, harkening to the multiculturalism of the past for multiculturalism in the present. In closing, Dr. Ying-Ying Chen, Chinese interpretive lead, and Stewart Cawood, public programming and media manager, formally opened the ceremonies as the organizers of the event.

A significant return to the site this year post-pandemic was the Barkerville Post Office, one of Canada's oldest functioning offices, which was staffed by the lovely and ever charming Mrs. Murphy. As well, a commitment from the site to hosting traditional off-season events was announced shortly after the season's conclusion. This begins with the upcoming return of the Olde-Fashioned Christmas on



Indigenous Celebrations 2023, courtesy of Thomas Drasdauskis, Bowron Lake Photography (photodras.zenfolio.com)

Saturday and Sunday, December 16th and 17th. We share in the delight of many that this beloved event is returning! For those who plan to spend their Saturday night (Dec 16th) in Wells, the Sunset Theatre will be presenting their holiday-themed Christmas Cabaret, a multimedia extravaganza (but please be forewarned, the second act is typically 'adult humour' and not always appropriate for young or sensitive patrons).

Don't forget that Barkerville accommodations remain available through the winter and spring, and that Wells also boasts the historic Wells Hotel, Historic Stays, and the White Caps Motel.



AGM

Following our AGM on November 21st, we welcome Adam Perdue to the executive as secretary, Barry Curtis joins us as a director, and Dave Jorgenson returns as a board director after a hiatus. Stepping down from the board this year are Hayley Archer (who served a one year term), Emily Bailey (who served a two year term), Kwynn Bodman (who served a two year term), and Tony McDonald (our former treasurer, who served an eight-year term). We thank our four departing board members for their years of volunteer commitment to this society and its endeavours.

Our President reported a productive and successful year with a significant donation to Barkerville's interpretative programming, the completion of signage being mounted on the Stanley to Richfield section of the Cariboo Waggon Road, and our 2nd Annual Gala Fundraiser. Our Treasurer reported healthy, clean financials. Our Membership Report reflected declining membership and a need for more drives, promotion, and society awareness. Our Newsletter Report reflected that while not necessarily a source of driving memberships, our newsletter is a source of donations to the society (pending location) and is enjoyed by collectors, historical enthusiasts, casual readers, and patrons alike.

Ongoing Society Activities

We Friends continue to work on restoration of the trail between Stanley and Richfield. At 21km, it is mostly suited to mountain bikers and endurance hikers. This year we completed and mounted the historical information signage along the trail. See our photo journal in this newsletter. Now we proceed with annual maintenance.

We continue to restore and maintain the Stanley Cemetery with thanks to a generous donation from Tolko Industries - Lakeside Division.



Some of our attendees included this glamorous group from Barkerville, L to R: Michelle Liefertz (interpreter, costumer), Danette Boucher (interpreter, theatrical director), Tonya Ludwig (commerce lead), Stewart Cawood (interpreter, public programming and media), and Kate Cox (Barkerville CEO). Photo: B.Bailey

Our 2nd Annual Bloody Good Bash!

On September 16th, we hosted our 2nd Annual Fundraising Gala event, The Bloody Good Bash, at Troll Ski Resort. Our 1st Bash was held in late October of 2022 and while we did find our attendance numbers dropped slightly to just under 60 persons with a mid-September date this year, our guests were enthusiastic, joyful, and supportive including a strong contingent of Barkerville staff.

The event is so named as, historically, Pine Grove House, also known as Englishman "Bloody" Edward's Roadhouse, stood on the ground where Troll Ski Resort now stands. Mr. Ed Edwards was renowned for his colourful use of language, principally his ability to expressively use the word 'bloody' as both an adjective and adverb.

Troll Ski Resort provided a richly delicious traditional homestead-inspired dinner; Barkerville actor, Alex Judd, hosted the event as none other than the charming Bloody Edwards; we paid tribute to all former Friends of Barkerville directors over the last 37 years from 1985 through 2023; we received some extremely generous contributions from donors for our boisterous live auction and bids climbed rather high for prized items; former Barkerville

interpreter, ballerina, and film-maker (see SugarPlumCeleste.com), Capri Aspe and husband Jeffery Wannop, taught most attendees some traditional Contra Dance; and The Interstellar Jays kept the dance floor alive with their eclectic

Friends of Barkerville
Cariboo Goldfields Historical Society

INVITES YOU TO

A Bloody Good Bash!

2nd Annual
Troll Ski Resort on Saturday Sept. 16, 2023
Doors open 5:00 PM - Dinner 6:00 PM

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT
Interstellar Jays

DINNER, CASH BAR, and AUCTION

FREE CAMPING AVAILABLE
First come, First served

1860-1900's PERIOD COSTUMES RECOMMENDED

INDIVIDUAL TICKETS \$80/PERSON OR
PURCHASE A TABLE FOR \$750 (SEATS 10)

LIMITED
TICKETS
AVAILABLE

Proceeds from ticket sales and auction will go towards the
FRIENDS OF BARKERVILLE
CARIBOO GOLDFIELDS HISTORICAL SOCIETY
to continue supporting Barkerville Historic Town & Park
and other important heritage sites in the Wells-Barkerville area.

TICKETS AVAILABLE FROM:
-Frog on the Bog (Wells)
-Rocky Peak (Queens)
-Contact: Kwynn Bodman via email: kwynnbodman@gmail.com

BARKERVILLE
HISTORIC TOWN & PARK



2nd Annual Bloody Good Bash at Troll Ski Resort; photo: B.Bailey

mix of interstellar musical mastery. Thank you to all those who attended, donated, and supported. We had so much fun that we can hardly wait for next year's bash (although I think my stomach is still full from that delicious meal!).

Our thanks again to all those who attended. An additional thank you to local businesses, societies, and individuals for their generous donations toward our live auction and in support of our society. These included donations from The Mill Restaurant, The Wells Hotel, Island Mountain Arts, Frog on the Bog Gifts, Peter Corbett Gallery, Back Alley Designs, West Fraser Mills Ltd., Kathie Davis, Louie Hong Family, Lana and Gary Fox, and Paul Zeegers. Your support of our work is deeply appreciated.

Be a Friend!

Don't forget, if you want to support the Friends, it's not too late to join us as a member for the 2023 season. Our 2024 memberships will be available as of May 1st, 2024. If you'd like to learn more, please visit us at www.friendsofbarkerville.ca

Winter membership perks include 10% off a day-pass at Troll Ski Resort, Barkerville Highway, 10% off of your purchase at Barkerville Brewing, Quesnel, and the recent addition of 10% off your dine-in meal (food only) at the Jack O Clubs Pub in Wells! Yes, memberships are still available and your annual membership fees support our society in its mandate of promoting, protecting, and preserving Barkerville and the surrounding Cariboo Goldfields. Should you wish to donate to our society, we are a Charitable Organization. Should you wish to volunteer for the society, we are always looking for more volunteers to assist in social 'workbees,' annual maintenance, and new projects.

– Brendan Bailey

A Little is a Lot

Friends & relatives have relayed interesting stories of intrigue.

A trek over water & mountains causing duress & fatigue.

Afraid, yet excited, not knowing what to expect.

Feeling unsure, vulnerable, like a small insect.

Being adventurous & setting out, showing determination.

Greeting others with kindness & open lines of communication.

Keep your money & possessions hidden, close at hand.

As you travel great distances, crossing foreign land.

Be confident, eat, drink, as necessary.

Work hard & play hard but always be wary.

Some of the first to arrive earned riches & success.

Some suffered & often had to make do with much less.

Constructed of logs, a crude shack, rustic home.

A stove, door, window, chimney & floor of loam.

A good book, newspaper, or letter, something everyone needs.

Keeping the mind active & the heart warm, of someone who reads.

Essential supplies, flour, coffee or tea, sugar, beans, bacon, & rum or whiskey.

Sustenance in the form of bannock, flapjacks, oatmeal, spuds, grouse, or hare if lucky.

Equipment - Goldpan, pick, shovel, lantern, snowshoes, pack board, traps, rifle, knife, matches, fire starter.

Hat, long johns, boots, suspenders, handkerchief, gold poke, wool socks, coat, pocket watch, needing a partner.

A keepsake from home, a picture, book, letter, or lighter.

Stored somewhere near & dear, helping to make one's days brighter.

Money, gold or small items of value, hidden, even from kin.

Under a stump, rock, or log, stuffed into a tobacco tin.

A trusty metal mug for a morning coffee.

Or to dip into a chilly stream running free.

On a shelf, a deck of cards, a bottle of whiskey & a candle.

On a belt or leaning near the bed, a revolver or a rifle.

Hiking the trails to & from work, scanning the woods with an intent look.

Hoping to see a grouse, hare, deer, or caribou to take home & cook.

Daily chores leave little time to just sit back & relax.

Firewood is piled after using a chopping block & axe.

Luxury items were a shaving blade, lotion, a mirror on the wall.

Facial hair was common, trimmed or removed for social events at a hall.

Christmas, New Year's, or to a Theatre Royal show.

That's where everyone from town & around would go.

On the stove or over an open fire sits a pot.

Where essential tea or coffee is brewed, strong & hot.

A pipe, cigarette, or chew, daily pleasures.

Certain things were to miners, simple treasures.

Cans, bottles, bits and pieces tossed over a bank or in the moss.

Convenient, a short distance from home, trash given a quick toss.

At the end of the day, just happy to end up in bed.

Unfortunately, many poor souls wound up being dead.

– Grant Johannesen

Barkerville's Olde-Fashioned Christmas Returns!



End of Day, Olde-Fashioned Christmas, December 2009; photo courtesy of Lana Fox (previously published in our February 2010 society newsletter)

Barkerville Historic Town & Park is pleased to announce that the heritage site will begin re-introducing shoulder season events starting with Olde-Fashioned Christmas on December 16th & 17th. This will be Barkerville's first Christmas event since 2019 and it is shaping up to be a fun and majestic weekend.

"We're very excited to bring back Olde-Fashioned Christmas," says Stewart Cawood, Barkerville's Manager of Public Programming & Media. "Over the last four years, we've had to pull back on many of our events because of financial constraints due to the pandemic, but we saw a positive upswing in our visitation this season which has allowed us to start thinking about winter again."

"We had 35,000 people come through the gate this past summer, which was about 4,000 more than we had last season," says Rocky Nenka, Manager of Commerce & Indigenous Relations in Barkerville. "Obviously we want our numbers go even higher than that, but seeing growth is a positive sign for our future attendance."

Those who visit on December 16th & 17th can expect Barkerville's Olde-Fashioned Christmas to include holiday shopping at McPherson's Jewellers, Mason & Daly, and C. Strouss, as well as carolers at the Methodist Church, fresh baking at the Goldfields Bakery, chilli at the House Hotel, photographs with Father Christmas, horse-drawn sleigh rides, and of course, plenty of snow. The blacksmith's forge will be hot, and the press will be running at the Cariboo Sentinel. \$10 daily admission will be charged for adults at the Welcome Centre and online with an \$8 rate for seniors, and children and youth will be admitted for free with a non-perishable donation to the Food Bank.

"Admissions are very important to our operations," says Nenka, "especially for our special events. In order to provide quality programming and other services such as accommodations and public washrooms, the Barkerville Heritage Trust relies on admissions at the Welcome Centre, as well as grant opportunities, sponsorships, and donations."

"We are also very excited to announce next season's dates," says Stewart Cawood, "Our 2024

programming will return June 1st and finish on September 8th, and we will be announcing our special events when the new year rolls around. Our Cottages and Kelly Guest House are available for booking year-round including the weekend of December 16th & 17th, so people will want to make their reservations right away before they are booked up. The St. George Hotel also has rooms available but those are going fast!" 2024 annual passes for the heritage site will be available for purchase starting December 1st with an early bird rate of 20% off until January 15th.

Visitors to Barkerville's Olde-Fashioned Christmas are reminded to dress warmly and to be prepared for changing winter conditions when driving Highway 26. For more information about this exciting event and to book accommodations and purchase advance admission, visit <http://barkerville.ca>.

- Stewart Cawood, Public Programming and Media, Barkerville Historic Town & Park



Barkerville main street in snow; photo by D.Van Stralen



Stanley to Richfield Cariboo Waggon Road Restoration Trail

A Photo Journal Courtesy of our President, Hildur Sinclair.

Featured in the photos are directors: Robin Grady, Tony McDonald, Kwynn Bodman, and society president, Hildur Sinclair (and a special nod to Millie for company). Thank you all for your hard work mounting the signage. Further thanks to all the Friends who researched, developed, and contributed to the signage over the past two years, to Barkerville Curator, Mandy Kilsby, for additional support and editing, and to Back Alley Designs for the beautiful layouts and printing. Further thanks to our partners: New Pathways to Gold (the Cariboo Waggon Road Restoration Project; multicultural megaproject), Emcon, Osisko Development (CGP-ODV), and, of course, Barkerville Historic Town and Park.



From the Editor - Part 2



St. Saviours in snow; photo D. Van Stralen

**“Christmas makes you feel emotional,
It may bring parties or thoughts devotional,
Whatever happens, whatever may be,
Here is what Christmastime means to me...”**

-Silver Bells, Christmastime with The Judds

I am a Christmas music junkie. Maybe this is because my household only allows ourselves a month of each year to enjoy this genre explored by artists of all genres, maybe this is because the music tends toward overwhelmingly sentimental spanning from the ecstatically joyful to the hauntingly melancholy, or perhaps it is because it's a tradition carried over in a collection of artefacts in the form of vinyl, cassette, cd, and digital and passed down from generation to generation, or maybe the roots of it are in spending years carolling dressed in Dickensian attire each December, and, so too, it might be

because no other genre of music inspires such creativity and originality in artists covering the same old songs over and over and over, or maybe it is simply because it's a shared family experience overflowing in collective memory. Mother and daughter team, The Judds, recorded a little known country album that became a holiday staple for my family in the early nineties. Sara Evans' new introduction to their cover of Silver Bells includes some of my favourite lyrics.

While I cannot attest to celebrating the holiday season religiously, I absolutely celebrate the

season spiritually. As it happens, I have felt as fortunate, joyful, and reverent sharing in Hanukkah celebrations with friends as I have spending time with loved ones around an adorned tree on Christmas morning, as I have while listening to Sintse recite a prayer for the land in Secwepemc during a Barkerville street scene in the summers, as I have while snowshoeing under a winter moon. The holidays mean something different to everyone: different circumstances, different thoughts and reflections, different traditions, different backgrounds; whatever happens, whatever may be... And what was, is that Barkerville, historically, was a multicultural experience in its heyday. It has for many years now been again returning to those roots in its curation and interpretation. So, truly, the holidays mean something different to everyone and many traditions that are held are intertwined, just like languages, dialects, social etiquettes, and customs. As well as, unfortunately, systemic propaganda, but that is something we are wading through as a collective presently as truth and reconciliation become the priorities that they always should have been.

Not all is well in the world. Climate change presents seemingly insurmountable challenges. War wages and drives political, racial, and religious agendas, ruins innocent lives, and creates intergenerational global trauma. The holidays are supposed to symbolize community, empathy, connection, family, and inclusion. How can we celebrate when there is so much injustice in the world?

Small gestures of kindness, appreciation, and respect, exemplified in the giving of a gift are at their root an exercise in goodness, in care. Our world needs more community, more multiculturalism, and more goodness. Sometimes a gift is simply a smile or even summoning patience in an anxious moment. Small care can lead to big change. That can often be felt in these Cariboo Mountain foothills.

The holiday season in Wells and Barkerville is always a special one. Several feet of snow have usually already fallen by mid-December; sometimes it is bitterly cold with clear, crisp telescopic skies where every star, planet, galaxy, and satellite is crystalline clear, and sometimes it is reasonably cold and a blizzard

Notable Events, Our Year in Review:

- Fred Ludditt's 1969 historical account and part-memoir, *Barkerville Days*, was republished with a new forward by daughter, Karin Ludditt, in December of 2022.
- Barkerville hosted Indigenous Tourism Workshops and Courses in February.
- Barkerville hosted a free four-hour Family Day event on Sunday, February 19th.
- The 31st Annual Dog Sled Mail Run concluded in Barkerville on February 26th.
- CEO, Kate Cox, was awarded Business Woman of the Year at the BC Tourism and Hospitality Gala on March 2nd.
- 1st Quarterly FOB Newsletter of 2023 published in April (digital edition)
- *British Columbian: A Millennial in a Gold Rush Town* 'memoir' by Josie Teed was published on March 28th.
- Barkerville Historic Town & Park and the Friends of Barkerville attended the Cariboo Chilcotin Heritage Network Spring Gathering on April 18th.
- FOB donates \$25,000 to fund an additional Chinese Historical Interpreter on April 17th (\$20,000 of a previously unused donation + an additional \$5,000).
- Barkerville awarded \$1,000,000 grant from the Destination Development Fund for campground facilities upgrades in May.
- Barkerville opened to visitors on June 3rd for the 100 Days of Barkerville extending to September 11th and saw an attendance of approximately 35,000.
- Mike Retasket, Barkerville interpreter and Original Peoples contractor alongside partner Cheryl Chapman, was awarded an honorary Doctor of Letters by the University of the Fraser Valley on June 13th.
- Dominion Day was held on July 1st.
- 2nd Quarterly FOB Newsletter of 2023 published in July (print and digital)
- A "workbee" was held by FOB Directors to install mounting posts on the Cariboo Waggon Road.
- Three "workbees" were held over July and August by FOB Directors to maintain and restore the Stanley Cemetery.
- FOB Directors finalized signage for the Cariboo Waggon Road in coordination with Barkerville and Back Alley Designs.
- A "workbee" was conducted by FOB Directors to mount signage on Cariboo Waggon Road trail in August.
- Indigenous Celebrations were held on August 19th and 20th.
- As no Chinese historical interpreter applied for the position, the FOB donation of \$25,000 to Barkerville Historic Town & Park was re-allocated to the Barnard Express Horse and Carriage contract.
- A list of all former FOB Directors, 1985 to present, was compiled for a commemorative plaque (presently in development).
- Formal criteria defining a Lifetime Membership of the FOB-CGHS was established.
- Chinese Mid-Autumn Moon Festival was held on September 9th.
- 2nd Annual Bloody Good Bash Gala Fundraiser held on September 16th.
- *The Days of Augusta* by Mary Augusta Tappage Evans and edited by Jean Speare republished (a royalty of each copy sold supports The Indigenous Voices Award)
- Director, Robin Grady, completed mounting signage on Cariboo Waggon Road trail during the Autumn.
- Barkerville Interpreter and Theatre Royal writer/director, Danette Boucher, travelled to Valencia, Spain to speak at a theatre research conference, Women Staging and Re-Staging the Nineteenth Century (II), with her presentation "*How Miss Florence Wilson Brought European Style Theatre to the Cariboo Gold Rush, and How Her Influence Continues to be Felt in Barkerville, British Columbia.*"
- 3rd Quarterly FOB Newsletter of 2023 delayed until December (digital edition) and 4th Quarterly FOB Newsletter of 2023 combined and published for Olde-Fashioned Christmas
- Olde-Fashioned Christmas in Barkerville returns December 16th and 17th.



End of day, Victorian Christmas, Barkerville;
photo D. Van Stralen

of a snowglobe fills every horizon. Snow devils swirl across the open meadows and summer golden hour sunsets turn to a peach pink and heliotrope when harkening nightfall. The late afternoon inversion forces the sweetly scented smoke from chimneys to street level while inside dwellings the scents of pine or spruce Christmas trees, citrus, anise, and cinnamon, mulled wine on the stove, baking sugar cookies, and eggnog intermingle. (In our house, Christmas music is usually blaring).

The current tradition of mid-December Christmas celebrations in Barkerville dates back to the mid-1980s, but the Barkerville community prior to becoming an historic site were known for their community-mindedness, resiliency, and cheer as early as the 1860s. (An 1870s excerpt from the Cariboo Sentinel suggests that Barkerville had everything it needed for the holidays, except equal gender representation and companionship for all persons in the community, reminding us that even in the mid-1870s, the community was still predominantly male). The Olde-Fashioned Christmas weekend in Barkerville, also previously branded as Old-Fashioned Christmas and Victorian Christmas through the years, usually takes place over a weekend but has sometimes taken place over multiple weekends, or, during one season, extended to two weeks. It features horse-drawn



Above and below: Family Day 2023, courtesy of Thomas Drasdauskis, Bowron Lake Photography (photodras.zenfolio.com)



sleigh rides, good company and Christmas shopping for quality goods with the merchants, carollers, dramatic readings, and historical interpretation... as well as snow... a lot of snow. A photographer's dream, Barkerville is one of the most beautiful winter locations the globe around. You don't have to take it from a local - come and see for yourself.

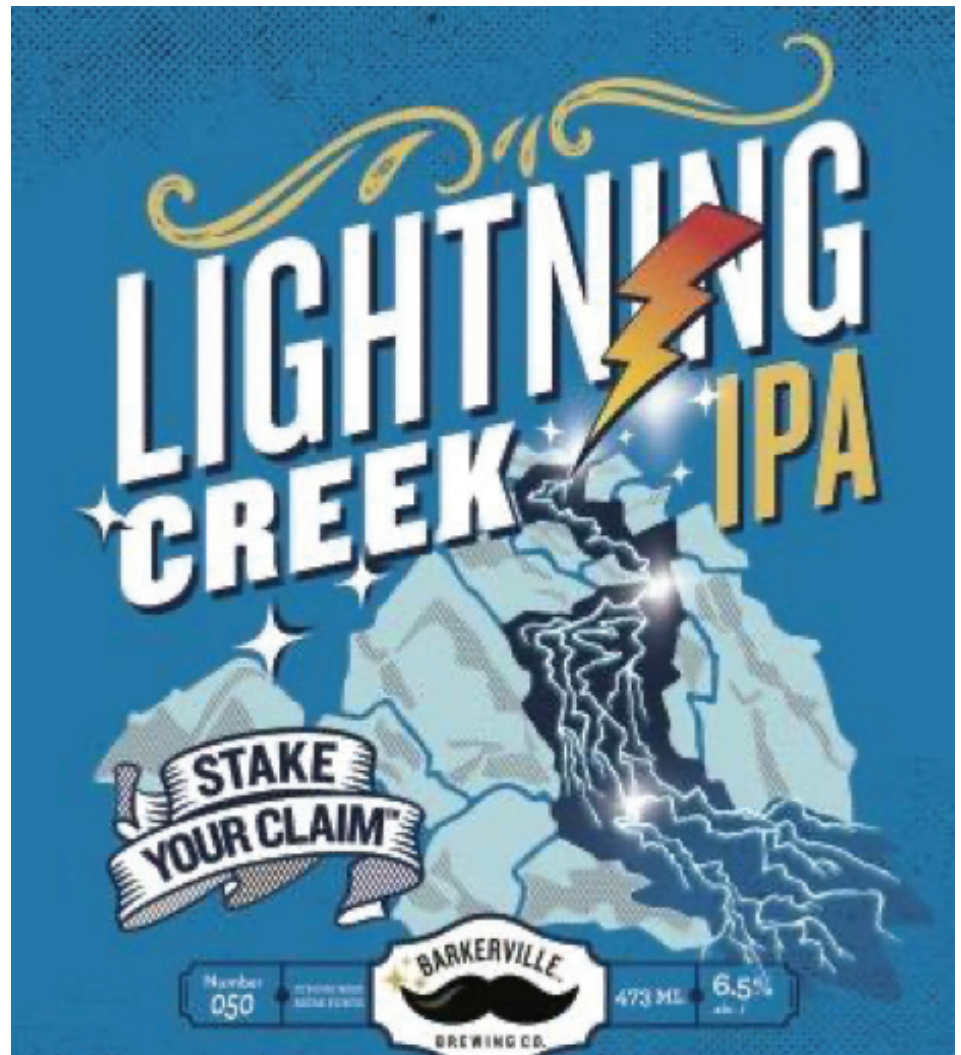
In Wells, the gang of children (affectionately known as the "Wells Angels") trade in their bicycles for toboggans and put any hill or slope to use in fulfilment of joy in a cache of white gold. Snowshoers, skiers, and ski-doers take to crisp backcountry adventuring, solstice celebrations abound, and carollers take a Christmas Eve journey to each house with wassail and cheer.

The homes in Wells are already vibrant colours, but adorned with coloured lights they stand out as beacons of goodwill and hope in this little mountain valley filled with snow. When industrial activity isn't resonating through this amphitheatre, the silence is blissful as sound carries for miles. A child laughs unseen across town, one can hear a snowflake fall on the shoulder of their jacket, far off on the other side of the meadows a brraaapp signals the return of a snowmobiler from a trip up to Groundhog Lake. There is a serenity in the stillness where the spirits of past, present, and future make their presence known. This is precisely why many of us have chosen to make Wells and Barkerville our home.

Sentimentality and stewardship for the history and future of these communities sweeps and grows like snowdrifts, while a reverence for all that has been and will be steadies one's beating heart as the aurora borealis sometimes dance overhead. What I personally know and have come to understand is that preserving and maintaining family, preserving and maintaining community, and preserving and maintaining these historical assets, these homes and buildings and lands and green spaces and archives and people and memories and traditions, and accurately at that, while forging new friendships, maintaining community, supporting local businesses and artistry and endeavours, learning more and more deeply through empathy and understanding, sharing history, developing exciting destination tourism and events, and building the next generation of Wells and Barkerville by inspiring a new generation of local stewards through passion, empathy, compassion, and love, and perhaps raising more "Barkerville Brats" and "Wells Angels" who know more about the local flora and fauna, community and neighbourliness, and local history and their place in it than they do about the latest social media craze is a lot of what "Christmastime means to me." In a small community like ours, residents operate on a first name basis. Neighbours shovel each other's driveways. Nemeses still offer one another the shirts off their backs in times of need. Friendship doesn't know age, and social circles aren't predicated on whether you're a youth, middle aged, or have seen Wells and Barkerville mature since the 1940s or earlier. Everyone has value and, generally, everyone contributes. My own life experience has shown me that this is rare, to be treasured, nourished, and protected.

The holidays, and all the different seasonal holidays, mean different things to different people. I hope that as you go your way and as I go mine, that we do so with respect and empathy and acknowledgement, because you are appreciated (yes, you!). From our homes to yours, may your holidays and traditions be full of cheer. After all, we're all friends of Barkerville, aren't we?

- Brendan Bailey



Beer Review – Barkerville Brewing's Lightning Creek IPA

If you're looking for an energizing buzz - this might be your new favourite beer!

Barkerville Brewing's new offering, the fiftieth in their comprehensive canon of brews since first impressing consumers with their 18 Karat Ale in 2014, is their Lightning Creek IPA. Unveiled via their Instagram account (@barkervillebeer) on November 7th, this IPA is available in 473ml tall cans, boasts a beautifully designed cool, electric-blue label, and packs a delicious shock to the system with 60 IBUs (international bitterness units) and 6.5% abv (alcohol by volume). Drink a few of these too quickly and you'll be sure you were actually dunked in a creek so cold it's shocking.

This IPA pours a sunset-rose' amber with a fine head. The bouquet is quite sweet and tropical. The tongue is crisp and fruity with a lingering

though subtle hint of creamy malt, but finishes with excellent hop forward citrus bitterness and notes of pine for balance. The label describes additional notes of tropical fruit such as pineapple and passion fruit, and those flavours certainly contribute to the overall complex aroma of this offering.

The texture offers a velvety viscosity due to the slightly syrupy oil of the hops, and that adds to the magnetic sensuality of this beer. It is very smooth and clean despite its intensity, thanks in part to being a rice beer, and yet your hair will still be standing on edge for all the flavourful energy it contains.

Continuing the tradition of sharing Cariboo Gold Rush stories through their beer, Barkerville Brewing has named this offering after the second richest gold bearing creek in the

Barkerville region: Lightning Creek. It was along this creek that the significant 1860s communities of Van Winkle and Stanley were formed and countless claims came and went. While Van Winkle faded into a boomtown relatively quickly, Stanley was a late 1860s community that flourished in the 1870s and had a resurgence in the 1930s. A Lightning Creek community near present-day Troll Ski Resort, Wingdam, also flourished in the 1930s.

Although little remains of Stanley today, one can visit the Stanley Cemetery (which is maintained by the Friends of Barkerville), snowshoe or ski the 21km from Stanley to Richfield and into Barkerville along the historic Cariboo Waggon Road (also maintained by the Friends of Barkerville), or see the Historic Lightning Hotel (presently owned and being restored by Osisko Development).

Wingdam is once again being actively mined and is passed-by by any traveller on the Barkerville Highway heading east or west. Learn more about Wingdam in Cameron Finlay's scholarship essay included in this newsletter.

If you enjoy the Lightning Creek IPA, don't forget to also try the masterful High Stakes Imperial IPA (first unveiled in 2017), the intense Big Strike IPA (first introduced in 2022), or the more traditional original line-up offering: the Wandering Camel IPA (first introduced in 2015).

I'd be remiss if I didn't remind you of Barkerville Brewing's seasonal limited releases such as the rich, earthy, chocolatey and spicy Prescription Porter (it will keep you warm on a crisp winter day, believe me), and the Winter Rations Belgian Quad (a slow fireside sipper when you're settled for the night at 9% abv).

If you'd like to learn more about Barkerville Brewing's historic connections to Barkerville and their own story through their legacy of beers, you can find Stake Your Claim in our Summer 2022 newsletter ready for your reading pleasure under 'newsletters' at www.friendsof-barkerville.ca

Barkerville Brewing will also celebrate its tenth birthday next year! What better way to tip a cap to them after a day in the snow than with a sip of Barkerville's continuing legacy - not all that's gold is gold, if you catch my 'drift,' and Lightning Creek is full of it. Enjoy!

- Brendan Bailey

FOB-CGHS Scholarship in Memory of Jerry MacDonald

The Friends would like to congratulate Sophie Turton and Cameron Finlay for their competitive essay entries, and for being awarded this year's Jerry MacDonald Scholarship by the society. The first of these entries was published in our Summer Edition (To Play God, a story by Sophie Turton) and the second appears here:



Wingdam Mine, 1930s by James L. Brown; Image F-00896 courtesy of the Royal BC Museum

I'd like to thank you very greatly for the opportunity to share with you all a small part of the story that is the history of British Columbia.

I was born and raised in the heart of the Cariboo, that is, Quesnel, B.C. Which was at the time known as home to the largest lumber producing facilities in the world! And to the Cariboo and her denizens, and most fondly goldminers the world over, Quesnel is known as "Gold Pan City."

That's right, gold. Still to this day one of the richest gold-bearing regions in the world. In fact, the Gold of the Barkerville terrain has been of such great economic value that the weather in Barkerville was conveyed daily to the London Stock Exchange from the mid 1860s right up until the mid 1980s!

My father came from Ontario, moved out west and lived in Vancouver for 20 years or so. And like many before, came upon him an opportunity...

Hired as a strong back with ten fingers and a willingness to work, Lightning Creek at Wingdam was to be mined for underground gravels

at a depth of 165 feet in an effort to access one of the world's richest buried placer channels.

He went up there in 1992 and in my lifetime relayed to me some interesting facts and stories...

About halfway from Quesnel to Barkerville, Wingdam was at one time proud to have a school and staffed hospital. A thriving place for the 1930s.

By golly, what an interesting place, and what the heck is a 'wingdam' anyway?

Well, a wingdam is simply a board or a plank set into a waterway to direct the flow away from an area. This might be to power a water wheel or drain a bog or to block water from coming in. In the case of Wingdam itself, it was to allow the processing of gravels in a gold catching rig by directing the flow of water away from the spot you're working.

There was when it was discovered good values of gold in the surface gravels of Lightning Creek. The gravels were staked up and mined lickety-split.



Wingdam, 1930s, photo David R. Brown; P7209 Barkerville Historic Town Archives

The real bonanza laid within the steep sided canyon of Wingdam, the underground gravels found by drilling and testing, until shafts and tunnels chased the value that was being discovered. Soon workings at a level of 120' became known as the Sanderson mine.

Nearby is an area known as the Melvin mine, 165' below the current creek bed level. This project was the most extensive of the two and was known to have had several fatal incidents, accumulating a possible list of fourteen men lost to tragedy during its long production history, different outfits in different decades working the gold rich gravels from the 1860s up until the mid 1960s.

These two projects have created one of the most extensive underground placer mines in the world, with proven values in zones yet to be excavated rated at \$100,000,000 per mile in 1992.

Both of these mines operated for many years. From the discovery of surface placer gravels of the famous Lightning Creek in around 1859, to the closure of the Melvin mine in the early 1960s when gold was still fixed at \$35 US per ounce.

In the 1980s the current project intended to drive a spiral decline into the South hillside down to 165' nearby previous workings. A new portal was driven into the Southwest rock face

and a decline of sorts was achieved by blasting and mucking down, down, down into an ever deepening spiral.

Cariboo slum is zones of mud, that's the real killer! Sedimentary shist that was ground up during the glacial periods, and then still as liquid uncooked rock debris gets folded within the structures of the local bedrock, forming pockets and gushing arteries of semi-solid fluid. And if the mining process opened up one of these lum pockets... you got a flooded mine!

Within the bedrock lies the mineral bearing ore which we seek, along with many other minerals which we don't. Iron pyrites, Sulphides, et cetera. Some of this ore was ground up as the glaciers ripped up the host rock, then washed into the waterways along with all the other stuff.

Sometimes, heavy minerals can accumulate in a water way in such a manner to be called a "placer deposit of minerals," which is surface mined with shovels and picks and excavators.

In this location, at Lightning Creek, B.C., the richest gold bearing gravels still lay underground. In this case it is to be "drift mined."

There is still some hardrock with mineral steaks intact, but the placer gravels are the real meat and potatoes here. Incredibly rich zones of placer gold are proven to still be in place, yet ironically the techniques needed to access and

harvest the ore are still out of reach. Flooding of the works from hydrodynamic cycles of the rivers and valleys that drain into this canyon are apparently incalculable! Recent attempts to access the deposits have failed as of this writing in 2023. Failing in the ability to control the lenses of slum and water in the workings have resulted in catastrophic accidents of the worst kind in the past.

Alike to many of the town and gold camps of history, it has been said that some of those who were there during the bonanza and the tragedy are there still. And if you were to visit and light your miner's lamp when the moon is high, you may be greeted as the crew ascend from their long long shift below...

And with that, I would like to express my gratitude to the Barkerville community in its past and in its present, acknowledging my connections to it through being a citizen and descendent of its immediate influence, as well the great education and many experiences I've had there.

*Sincerely,
Cameron Finlay
March 29th, 2023
Quesnel, BC
"Gold Pan City"*



Wintertime dusk in Barkerville; photo, D. Van Stralen



RESTAURANT HOURS: 8:00 am - 6 pm daily

Looking ahead: 2024

Be prepared for more special events throughout the year in Barkerville, and take note that the 32nd Annual Dogsled Mail Run mushes along starting February 9th and concludes on Barkerville's main street on February 11th. HeritageBC's Provincial and National Heritage Week takes place from February 19th-25th, our 2024 Society Memberships will be available on May 1st, and Barkerville's summer seasonal programming begins on June 1st, 2024. Follow Barkerville on facebook, instagram, and at barkerville.ca for regular updates.

The date for our 3rd Annual Bloody Good Bash is still under consideration but is tentatively scheduled for the evening of Saturday, September 7th, 2024 and is subject to change. Our 2024 AGM is tentatively scheduled for the evening of Monday, November 18th, 2024 and is subject to change.

There is a lot to see and do in Wells and Barkerville and region over the winter months

with cozy accommodations and some of the best snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, and snowmobiling around. Don't forget to stop in at Troll Ski Resort and show your membership card for a discount on a day on the slopes, or at Barkerville Brewing's tap room in Quesnel for a discount on a pint, meal, or merchandise, or the Jack O Clubs Pub in Wells for a 10% discount on a dine-in meal, and visit the Frog on the Bog Gifts, the Wells Hotel Restaurant, the Sunset Theatre for select performances, IMA Gallery, Peter Corbett's Gallery, and the Owl's Roost gallery. Find more at www.whatsupinwells.com for current events.

Happy Holidays, Seasons Greetings, and a Merry Christmas from our hearth and home to yours.

- Brendan Bailey, *On behalf of the Friends*

Christmas in Barkerville, 1874

CHRISTMAS

Christmas is always celebrated in the mountains of Cariboo with a degree of jollity which one would not expect in a community numbering amongst its members many disappointed gold-hunters, the majority of whom consider themselves as exiled from their native lands, where they were accustomed to pass the day under the roof of the old home, surrounded by father, mother, brother, sisters, and friends, and where the time passed joyously by in the enjoyment of those special pleasures which make men forget for the time the disappointments and trials which are the common lot of all. "Let joy and mirth go unconfined," is the motto of Caribooites at this season of the year, and the miner who has had years of bad luck throws dull care to the winds, and enjoys himself as heartily as his more fortunate brother who has "struck the lead."

We hope everybody enjoyed a "Merry Christmas!" Everybody should have done so. There is no place in the world where Plenty more widely reigns, no place where Want is so seldom seen, no place where the people are so generally blessed with the greatest blessing which they can enjoy, the most robust health. A measure of Contentment, and Wives for our Bachelors, would make Cariboo the happiest spot in the world.

– Robert Holloway, Editor,
Cariboo Sentinel,
Barkerville, Williams Creek, BC,
December 26th, 1874

– Submitted by Mandy Kilsby,
Barkerville Curator

A CORRECTION:

In our Spring 2023 Edition, in The Theatre Royal Part 2, my phrasing implied that Captain Jack Crawford travelled to Barkerville in 1878 solo and only performed his solo show. This implication is misleading. Crawford travelled to Barkerville with his theatrical troupe, performed, and then remained in the community as a solo artist for a time after the troupe dispersed.

– Author, Brendan Bailey

TRACKS

Always before me I like to see
Tracks that will tell me just where you'll be.
So much the better, this will I say -
The flash of your jacket not far away.
The broad lips of snowshoes pressed to the snow,
Steady in measure take me where you go.
Through the darkest of woods, the going is fine,
If I follow the blaze on the white flesh of pine.
And stream-threaded lakes with dusk in their eyes
Search for our coming, your paddle replies.
A thousand thrills haunt me and line up the trail
That you carved with your skis in the swirl of a gale.
Yet always, I notice, as far as we roam,
The trail takes a bend to the place we call home.
We seek beds of pine in the fire-lit way
And plan for the trail we will follow next day.

– Jean Speare

STAKE YOUR CLAIM

To local craft beer. Our lounge offers 12 unique taps, locally sourced snacks, and a huge patio.

barkvillebeer.com
778-414-2739
185 Davie St, Quesnel

JACK O' CLUBS PUB

Deliciousness Awaits You!



12383 Barkerville HWY, Wells, BC
(250) 994-3242
Jack.o.clubs.general@hotmail.com



YOUR SUPPORT AND ANY VOLUNTEER HELP IS GREATLY APPRECIATED! THANK YOU!
PRESERVE - PROTECT - PROMOTE