

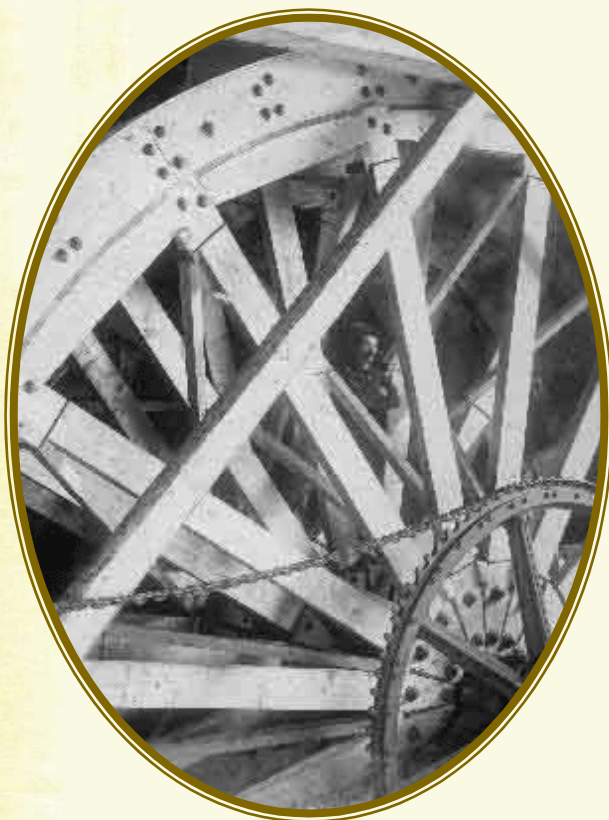
Friends of Barkerville

Cariboo Goldfields Historical Society



April 2014

VOL. 17 ISSUE 1



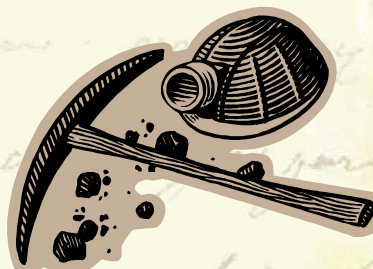
Waterwheel — Photo courtesy Barkerville Archives

Quotes:

- Mark Twain described a mine as “a hole in the ground owned by a liar.”
- “As every thread of gold is valuable, so is every moment of time.” John Mason

In this Issue:

- Winning Bursary Essay
- An early historical background to mining.
- Barkerville facts.
- The making of an artifact.
- Membership info



Friends of Barkerville and the Cariboo Goldfields
Keeping history out of the books! Get in on the act and join us!

Winning Bursary Essay

By Sydney Kaleta

The Friends invite high school students annually to apply for the Jerry McDonald Memorial Bursary. (Jerry passed away in January of 1998 while sitting as the President of the Friends of Barkerville.) The students are encouraged to submit an essay describing some aspect of Barkerville's history. One of the winning essays from 2013 follows:

As young children growing up in the Cariboo, you have all had the opportunity to visit the 20th century's Barkerville. You all remember the water wheel, the bakery, the court house and the candy shop, but how many of you really remember Chinatown? Chinatown is often a piece of Barkerville that people forget visiting or know little about, yet was a huge part of the Barkerville Gold Rush period of history. Chinatown was built between late 1863 and early 1864, and was founded by the owners of the Wah Lee, Yan Wo, and Kwong Lee.

In the late 1860's there was close to 6,000 Chinese in the Barkerville area. All of the Chinese pioneers came from the province of Guangdong. However, only the people in the far south of Guangdong joined the early immigration to Barkerville. The Chinese from south Guangdong decided to come to Barkerville, a place more than ten thousand kilometers away from their home country for both external and internal reasons. The external reason being the discovery of gold. When gold was found in North America there were three major problems in Guangdong. First, was the high population crisis that had been happening for over 100 years. Secondly, was all the various natural disasters that Guangdong had been suffering from, and finally was that their home had become one of the major battle zones during the two Opium Wars. All of these factors, became a strong pushing force, encouraging many Chinese in this area to immigrate to Barkerville.

The Chinese also had both internal and external reasons as to why they wanted to build their own Chinatown instead of settling in the existing European Barkerville. The one well known external reason is the host society's anti-Chinese sentiment. The Chinese hardly ever spent any money in the European town, and they shipped most of their earnings back to China. These two factors made it impossible

for the Chinese to assimilate to the European town, and in order to survive, the Chinese needed to build up their own township. The Chinese people also had a deep rooted pride in their culture, they always wanted to keep their Chinese identity wherever they stayed outside of China. The Chinese also had very high appreciations of their family. Thus, the Chinese only came to Barkerville with the goal of digging up gold and then sending it back to China to help their families, and as soon as they got rich they returned to China. To illustrate their appreciation for their family and ancestors, if someone died in Barkerville, they would bury them for several years then ship their remains back to China.

The buildings in Chinatown can be roughly divided into four groups by their function. The first group consists of various business buildings. From the late 1860's to the late 1940's, there was nearly thirty different businesses in Chinatown. The Chinese stores were responsible for building boarding houses for Chinese workers to stay at, providing or searching for jobs for the Chinese labourers, acting as a banker, and reading and writing letters for their illiterate countrymen. The second building group refers to the society or association owned buildings. Society acted as a government in Chinatown between the late 1860's and the 1910's. It dealt with all affairs that took place with the Chinese community. The third build group refers to the residential building group. Finally, the fourth building group denotes Chinese herb medicine stores and the sick room.

To learn more about the history of Barkerville's Chinatown be sure to visit the Chinese Museum next time you are in Barkerville. The displays in the museum are very informative, they will explain to you what caused the decline of Chinatown in the late 1940s and more about Chinatown's history.



Early Historical Background to Gold Mining In British Columbia for Today's Gold Seekers

The following information on gold mining is taken from a Report of the Minister of Mines in 1874. It gives a good explanation of the different types of gold found as well as where to find it.

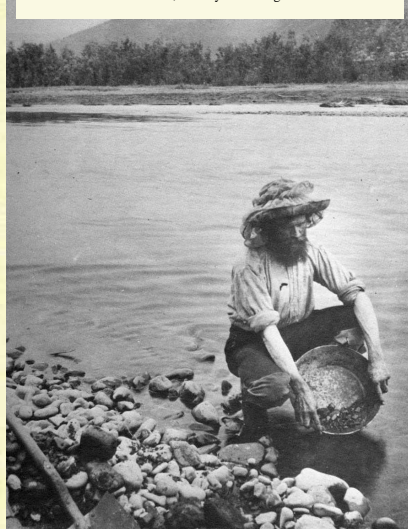
Submitted by Lana Fox



The gold fields of British Columbia at present known extend from Rock Creek on the 49th to Liard River on the 60th parallel of north latitude, a distance of seven hundred miles. The gold is chiefly found on the slopes of a range of mountains, lying between the Rocky Mountains on the east, and the Cascade Range on the west and known as the Selkirk Range, embracing an area of 105,000 square miles. Gold has been found and profitably worked, in different fields throughout the whole of the area in question: such as Similkameen, Rock Creek and Kootenay (between 50° and 52°); Cariboo, Quesnelle, Keithley, and Harvey (between 52° and 54°); Omineca and the Peace River mines, with Skeena and Naas Rivers (between 51° and 56°); and finally, Stickeen River and the last discovered and rich mines at Cassiar and Liard River (between 56° and 60°).

The gold deposits of British Columbia are found on bars, left bare by falling streams; in the beds and banks of rivers; on benches, high above water level; in gulches;

Photo from Western Miner, History of Mining in British Columbia



and far down beneath the surface of the ground, in the beds of ancient water-courses. The gold is collected both by rocker and sluice-box, and steam and water power is brought to bear on its production.

The gold of different localities is very different in as-

pect and value; sometimes it is in round jagged pieces; sometimes in even scales; sometimes in smooth ob-

longs like melon seeds; sometimes in coarse rough lumps. Its color is as variable as its shape, some being an iron rust color, some pale silvery, some glittering yellow, and some bronze green; while its value varies, with locality, from fifteen to eighteen dollars an ounce. (Not much compared to today's price of gold!)

On the bars near the mouths of rivers it is found in a fine impalpable dust known as "flour gold," and can only be collected by the aid of quicksilver. As the headwaters of the streams are reached, the original matrix of the gold is approached, and the gold becomes larger and less water-worn, till the veins of quartz, from which it is supposed to have been originally disintegrated, may be traced up the sides of the steep mountain precipices, whence the streams have their source.

The earliest discoveries of gold in British Columbia were on the bars and benches of the Fraser River, extending from below Hope to Lillooet; on Bridge River, which empties into the Fraser above Lillooet; and on the Thompson, which joins the Fraser at Lytton. Considerable quantities of gold were taken out in 1859-60, from these localities, and soon afterwards discoveries of great value were made on Williams Creek in the district now known as Cariboo, at a distance of 350 miles from the original diggings; while to the east, discoveries were reported on the Similkameen River, at Rock Creek and in Kootenay.

Cariboo soon became the centre of attraction; deep diggings of immense value were discovered, and miners from all part of the Province left diggings where they were making a certain livelihood, on the chance of participating in large strikes of which they had only heard. Cariboo has, up to the present time, maintained its supremacy, and the yield of four claims alone, on Lightning Creek, have amounted in 1874 to \$479,980. Further reading can be found on line for the Ministry of Mines Annual Reports from 1874 to 2001 at the following website:

<http://www.empr.gov.bc.ca/Mining/Geoscience/PublicationsCatalogue/AnnualReports/Pages/AnnualReports.aspx>

In the time of the Fraser River gold rush, the daily routine of thousands ...

panning for gold.

Fun Facts

Did you know:

Not only is Barkerville a provincially designated Heritage Site and a National Historic Site of Canada, there are two additional sites within Barkerville with National Historic Site of Canada designation – the Cariboo Wagon Road and the recently designated Chee Kung Tong building.

Barkerville is more than just heritage buildings; it includes two cemeteries, 187,000 artifacts, 60,000 photos, and a resource library and archives.

To learn more check out: <http://www.barkerville.ca>.

Or better still ... come for a visit!



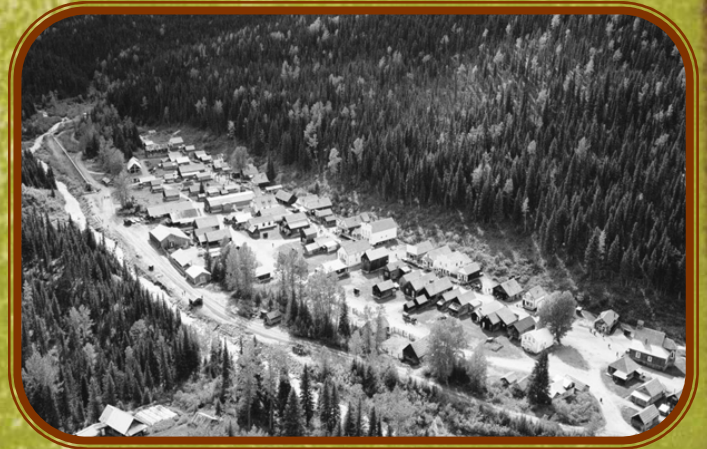
The weight of gold is always determined in Troy ounces as opposed to the avoirdupois scale used in most other daily commodities. The common denominator for the two scales is grains. There are 437.5 grains per avoirdupois ounce as opposed to 480 grains in one troy ounce.

GOLD WEIGHTS: 24 grains = 1 penny weight

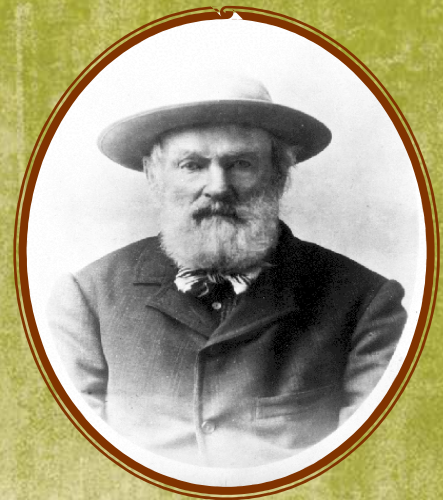
31.1 grams = 1 ounce

20 penny weight = 1 ounce

480 grains = 1 ounce



Barkerville from the air. Photo Kent Kahlberg.



Billy Barker - Photo courtesy
Barkerville Archives

Billy Barker was born in 1819 or 1820 in England.

During the 1850's he worked as a miner in California, but didn't have much luck.

By 1861 he worked his way up to what is now Quesnel.

In 1862 he moved to an area near Richfield to work in several mines. After he didn't find any gold, he decided to look in the area where Barkerville now lies.

On August 17th, 1862 Barker's hard work paid off. It is estimated that Barker's mine produced a total of 37,500 ounces of gold, worth about 40 million dollars at today's gold prices!

Source: Barkerville Website.

How Artifacts are Made

Submitted by Robin Grady

This story details the trials and tribulations of the Friends' attempts to "repatriate" a mining artifact to Barkerville.

This story started possibly in the early years of the 1900s, when a large steam boiler was obtained by some miners who some how transported it to a remote mining claim in the Barkerville area. This boiler was fired by burning wood and heating the water within to boil where they then captured the steam to use in a new idea to drive equipment in their underground mining venture. They either made a fortune or lost everything as the boiler has now sat idle at the mine site for close to a 100 years. I have recently learned from the Placer Lease holder that this claim was once in the hands of Bill Brown, the same old timer that built "Coopers Cabin" near Groundhog Lake and had a job of keeping the snow cleared in Devils Canyon by welding two snow shovels together to do the job faster.

The Friends of Barkerville (FoB) were made aware of the boiler a while ago and felt it should be removed and placed in Barkerville along with many other mining relic for the public to view. The boiler was viewed and felt it would be fairly easy to remove as the loggers would soon be nearby and they had the equipment capable of lifting and transporting it to a spot to be picked up by a hi-ab truck and delivered to Barkerville, all at little or no cost.

As the boiler was located just outside the marked boundaries to be logged, West Fraser Mills needed FoB to ensure they could obtain from the



Photo courtesy Westforest Consulting Ltd.

Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations (MFNLRO), permission for the logger to walk their equipment beyond the boundary. Without this permission the logger and or mill could be fined by the MNFLRO for trespass. The next day FoB went to the MNFLRO office and after talking to several officers, it was finally agreed that a Special Use Permit (SUP) could be issued to do the job of recovery. But first before

issue of the SUP the FoB would need approval from Mineral Titles Branch (MTB), and then after gaining written permission from the lease holders for the Placer Lease and the Mineral Lease. After several phone calls to Edmonton we finally made contact with the right person who was very interested that this was on his claim and happy to see it donated to Barkerville, as for the other lease holder from Wells, after five or six phone calls they have not supplied a letter or returned our calls.

So without both letters we emailed the Mineral Titles Branch with what we had. They then informed us that the current lease holders would had no rights to the boiler as it would be classified as abandoned and is then vested to the Government. At this point we should have lied regarding the original use of the boiler since if it was used for forestry we were to deal mainly with the MFNLRO and possibly the SUP would be in our hands. Unfortunately we didn't. Our information was now to be sent to an Advisor in the Vancouver Mineral Title office, Ministry of Energy, Mines and Natural Gas (MOEMNG).

The last email received from MTB, MOEMNG was that an Inspector will have to visit the site to enable and prepare a report on the matter, unfortunately this would need at least six months to a year before they could do this. After this report is done it may be required to involve the branch of the Government that administers the "Heritage Conservation Act".

At this point we felt it would be easier to leave the boiler where it is and if anyone is interested we would give them the GPS coordinates for viewing.

Editors Note: After many more negotiations, the BC Government finally decided to allow the removal and transport of the boiler to Barkerville. Many thanks to Ken Randle of West Fraser, and Dave Nestel of Nestel Contracting Ltd. for their efforts in relocating the boiler. A big thank you to Robin Grady for not taking NO as an answer!

"access to government services made easy" ... a BC Government Motto

APRIL 2014

Membership Drive

Hello Past and Present Friends of Barkerville! It's time to renew your Friendship!
The **Friends of Barkerville** now has an **online Annual Membership** and Annual Barkerville pass. It's even more convenient to register and pay for your Membership/Annual Barkerville Pass from home anywhere in the world!

<http://barkerville.bc.ca/membership.html>

VOL. 17 ISSUE 1

Our e-mail address is:
friendsofbarkerville@barkerville.ca

Check us out on Facebook



<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Friends-of-Barkerville-Cariboo-Historical-Society/233437226719775>
WWW.BARKERVILLE.BC.CA

How to Contact Us.

The Friends of Barkerville-Cariboo Goldfields Historical Society (commonly abbreviated to FOB) has its registered mailing address as:

P.O. Box 4152
Quesnel, BC
V2J 3J2