ACCOMMODATION

Travellers in the 1800's stayed overnight at many of the famous Mile Houses on the Cariboo Waggon Road, but today's visitors have more choice. Barkerville offers picnic and camp sites. Hotel and motel facilities are in the nearby town of Wells. Quesnel, Williams Lake and Prince George are within comfortable driving distance of Barkerville. Lodges at nearby Bowron Lake also offer accommodation. For more information, contact the Wells Barkerville Chamber of Commerce.

Ministry of Tourism, Recreation & Culture
Honourable Bill Reid, Minister

1870's GOLD RUSH TOWN
BRITISH COLUMBIA, CANADA

STEP BACK IN TIME AND RELIVE HISTORY.

Come to Western Canada's most famous Gold Rush Town and live the excitement of 1870's life and lifestyle. You'll step back in time the moment you step through the entrance gate. And what a time it was! The Cariboo Gold Rush began in 1858 and took British Columbia from a Hudson's Bay Company fur trading monopoly to a settled colony that would eventually join Canadian Confederation.

Thousands of prospectors poured into British Columbia from the United States, Canada, Europe and China, in search of fame and fortune. In August, 1862, a stubborn British miner named Billy Barker hit "deep" pay dirt – the richest strike anyone had ever seen. The site of Barker's claim became the centre of a new town called Barkerville. It was a typical gold rush boom town, springing up overnight and looking that way – a jumble of log shanties, saloons and false-fronted stores perched on stilts along a narrow, muddy street.

In its prime, it was said that Barkerville was fast becoming the largest city west of Chicago and north of San Francisco complete with laundries, bakers, barbers, churches, hotels, saloons, a theatre, breweries, restaurants, tinsmiths, a newspaper, even a library!

Today, Barkerville's residents are on the street and in the buildings waiting to help you relive the big finds and disappointments, the love stories and murderers' tales, the joys and hardships of life in the 1870's. The restoration of this significant British Columbia Heritage Site has been ongoing since 1958 – more than 40 original buildings still stand. As well, there are over 75 displays, walk-in exhibits, live stage performances at Theatre Royal, street scenarios and music, Special Event Days, local "period" merchants and restaurants.

History is alive and well in Barkerville. Come live it!
KEY TO BUILDING LOCATIONS

Walk-in Displays • Operating Business • Original pre-1900 Building • Washroom • Outdoor Toilet • Limited Wheelchair accessibility

1. Administration Building (information & Audio Visual presentations)
2. The Gold Rush Diner (Refreshment stand)
3. Aurora Claim Cabin & Comish Wheel
4. Eldorado Goldpanning & Souvenirs •
5. Tregillus Family Buildings •
6. Admissions Building (entrance to Heritage Area)
7. Security Office & First Aid
8. Wesleyan Methodist Church
9. Miner's Boarding House •
10. St. Saviours Anglican Church **
11. Williams Creek Schoolhouse •
12. White House •
13. Wente House •
14. Cameron & Ames' Blacksmith Shop
15. Barrie's Express (Theatre Royal tickets sold here)
16. Barkerville Bakery •
17. Post Office (Full postal services)
18. J.P. Taylor Drugstore
19. Masonic Hall (Meetings 2nd Saturday April–December)
20. Joe Denny's Saloon
21. House Hotel
22. Carriage Shed
23. Mason & Daly General Store •
24. C. Strouss General Merchants •
25. Carriage Shed
26. Van Volkenburgh Cabin •
27. Barker Co. Flume (Future reconstruction)
28. Cariboo Sentinel Print Shop •
29. Mrs. Neate's House (Dressmaker) •
30. Kerr's Phoenix Brewery •
31. Johnny Knott's Carpenter Shop •
32. Kwong Lee Wing Kee Manager's House •
33. Water Pipes
34. Kibbee House (Original New England Bakery) •
35. W. Baker Stables •
36. Yan War Store •
37. Ming Yee Tong •
38. J.R. Taylor Drugstore
39. Masonic Hall (Meetings 2nd Saturday April–December)
40. Joe Denny's Saloon
41. Site of a later Barker Co. Shaft
42. Sing Kee Store •
43. Chinese Miner's Cabin •
44. Lee Chong's Store
45. Chee Kung Tong •
46. Tai Ping Fong •
47. Lung Duck Tong (Chinese Restaurant) •
48. Sporting House •
49. The Clearing (Site of special events)
50. Flagpole (greasy pole climb on special event days)
51. Miner's Cabin •
52. Site of the original Barker Co. Discovery Shaft
53. Sandy MacArthur's Blacksmith Shop •
54. Fire Hall
55. Theatre Royal
56. Barkerville Hotel (Rooftop Saloon) •
57. Kelly General Store •
58. Kelly Saloon •
59. Government Assay Office
60. St. George Saloon
61. Mme. Bendixon's Saloon & Boarding House •
62. Louis Blanc Photographic Gallery
63. Dr. Hugh Watt's Office & Residence •
64. Dr. Jones' Dentist Office
65. Mme. Bendixon's Saloon & Boarding House •
66. Dr. Hugh Watt's Office & Residence •
67. Moses' Barber Shop •
68. Wake-up-Jake Restaurant & Saloon •
69. H. T. Field General Store
70. Wilfred Thompson House
71. Gold Commissioner's Office & Library •
72. Staff Facility
73. John Browne House
74. Billy's Tin Shop •
75. Staff Facility
76. Walsh Claim Cabin •
77. H. T. Field General Store •
78. Friends of Barkerville Historical Society (Display and information)
79. Staff Facility
80. Michael Claim Cabin •
81. Louis Barker Office & Residence •
82. Mrs. Browne's House •
83. Louis Barker Office & Residence •
84. Louis Barker's Office & Residence •
85. Hibernia Claim Cabin •
86. Sheppard Mining Co. Shaft
87. Sharpin's Tin Shop & Cabin •
88. Chinese Miner's Cabin •
89. Murdoch's Stage & Stable
90. Eagle Claim Comish Water Wheel
91. Eagle Claim Cabin
92. Flume
93. Michael Claim Hydraulic Mining Pit •
94. Tunnel and Adit Mining Exhibit
95. Keystone Drill
96. Sawmill
97. Stamp Mill

Be sure to visit Cottonwood House and ride Barnard's Express Stagecoach.
WALK IN DISPLAYS

Spring through fall, visit with characters from the 1870’s in their homes and places of work. (See on-site schedule for days and times.)

Holt & Burgess Cabinetmaker’s Shop
Learn about the role of the carpenter, cabinetmaker and blacksmith in Barkerville; see the tools of the trade in action.

Mrs. Neate (The Dressmaker)
Original costumes of the period, how they were made, and the history of the building. A “must do.”

Williams Creek Schoolhouse
Learn the Three Rs the old-fashioned way; nostalgia of the one roomed schoolhouse.

Wendel House
An 1870 style boarding house. Cooking, baking, laundry, daily household chores.

Cameron & Ames Blacksmith Shop
The smoke and noise of a working 1870’s blacksmith shop.

Post Office
Full postal services available in British Columbia’s eighth oldest continually operating post office. The Barkerville postmark is very collectible. Open year round.

TOURS, DEMONSTRATIONS & SHOWS

Spring through fall
(See on-site schedule for days and times.)

Guided Tours of the Town
Accompany one of Barkerville’s residents on an informative journey through the town. A glimpse into the lives of the colourful characters and the history of the buildings. A “must do.”

Behind-the-Scenes Tour
A glimpse into what makes Barkerville tick. Tours include curatorial department, archives, conservation lab, storage areas, and displays.

Cemetery Tour
From St. Saviour’s Church to one of the most interesting, historic cemeteries in BC. Final resting place of such notables as Cariboo Cameron, Scotch Jenny, S.A. Rogers and Captain O’Hara (Tobin). First grave: Peter Gibson, 1863.

Williams Creek Schoolhouse
An hour long “period lesson”; What was school like in the 1870s? Mrs. Neate (The Dressmaker)
Demonstrations of proper dress, manners and deportment; fancywork and lace.

Mining Demonstrations
At the Cornish Water Wheel on the Bulkhead, demonstrations of 1870’s mining technology including a real gold “clean-up.”

Judge Begbie
A reminiscence of early justice in the colony of British Columbia, colourful anecdotes about the criminals and infamous characters. The judges day of rest is Tuesday.

Street Scenarios
Lively vignettes depicting life in Barkerville. Different vignettes several times a day, happening right on the street. Live music.

BARKERVILLE MERCHANTS

Barkerville Bakery
A tantalizing selection of freshly-baked breads, pies and other goodies is available daily. Be sure to try the sour-dough and ham-near both staples in early Barkerville.

Barkerville Hotel – Root Beer Saloon
Swig back a foamy ice-cold root beer in the recreated saloon of this historic hotel. There are snacks as well, and hot coffee.

Barnard’s Express
Buy your tickets here for the performances at the Theatre Royal.

Cariboo Sentinel
Watch the presses in action and choose a souvenir printed on them. Pick you own headline or perhaps a copy of Swenny’s poems, a facsimile publication, or some note cards.

C. Streuss General Merchants
A good choice of grocery items and specialty goods awaits the visitor in this store. Stock up on cheese, cold-cuts, preserves and teas.

Eldorado Goldpanning & Souvenirs
Share in the excitement of panning for your own gold! Looking for the perfect rock specimens? There is a varied selection here.

Louis Blanc Photo Studio
Step into period costume at a reconstructed Victorian photo studio. Take home a photograph that will revive wonderful memories of your Barkerville visit for years to come! (Camera supplies available here.)

Refreshment Stand
Located in the parking lot. Try a tasty burger or some chicken, with French fries. Coffee, cold drinks and ice cream are available, too.

Wake-Up-Jake Restaurant & Coffee Saloon
Here in the atmosphere of a 19th century restaurant, you may enjoy a full meal 1870’s style, a cup of coffee or tea with some delicious old fashioned desserts. Special evening entertainment. Licensed.

Mason & Daly General Store
Step back in time in this delightful store. Choose a special gift – from candles to toys to jewellery, there is something for everyone here! All items are in keeping with 1870.

Mandorff Stables
Relive the scenic horse and mule rides of the 1870’s. One hour and longer.

Lung Duck Tong Chinese Restaurant
Enjoy a delicious Chinese light or full meal. Licensed.

THEATRE ROYAL

Late May and June
Special 30 minute musical comedy

Late June to Labour Day
A 75 minute musical comedy depicting aspects of life in Barkerville in 1870. Reenactment of the style of entertainment enjoyed by the miners 100 years ago.

Two shows daily. No shows Fridays.

SPECIAL EVENT DAYS

Dominion Day – July 1st
We’re celebrating Canada’s Birthday just the way they did in 1870 – with contests and races for the whole family, a Tall Tale Telling Contest and Greasy Pole Climb.

Old-Fashioned Pic Pic – July
Music, pie baking contest, races and contests for all ages. Just like the Old-Fashioned Church Social.

St. Saviour’s Church Institute Concerts: August
Choir and individual music recitals in keeping with original concerts presented by the Church Institute in the 1860’s and 1870’s.

Institutional Hose Carriage Races: Labour Day
Part of the Wells Heritage Festival. Races and contests for the whole family! Fire Departments from around British Columbia are invited to participate in a fire-fighting competition, 1870’s style! Bucket Brigade race for women and children. Greasy Pole Climb.

Victorian Christmas – Weekend Before Christmas
A weekend of tree decorating, carol singing, sleighrides and cross-country skiing.

LOCAL FESTIVALS

Wells Homecoming Weekend – July 1st Weekend
Canada Day festivities in Wells and Barkerville.

Queens Billy Barker Days – Third Week in July
One of British Columbia’s largest and best local festivals. Parade, rodeo, over 100 events.

Island Mountain Arts, Wells – July and August
Intensive courses in the visual and performing arts. Fall, winter and spring sessions as well.

ON THE ROAD TO BARKERVILLE

The Cariboo Wagon Road is rich with historic sites. Look for Mexican Hill, Lover’s Leap, Wingdam, Blessing’s Grave, Pinegrove, Beaver Pass House, Donovan Creek, Stanley/Van Winkle, and Devil’s Canyon.

Cottonwood House (30 km east of Quesnel)
One of the few remaining Roadhouses from the 1880’s that were positioned every 10 to 15 miles along the 500 mile stretch of the Cariboo Wagon Road. Built in 1864, completely restored house, gardens, barn, Farm animals. Stagecoach Rides in the summer months.

Blessing’s Grave (near Troll Resort)
The last resting place of Charles Morgan Blessing who was brutally murdered by one James Barry. Barry was brought to justice by the efforts of Wellington Delaney Moses, Barkerville’s famous barber, and an incriminating gold nugget. Barry was tried by Judge Begbie and hanged at Richfield.

Wells (8 km west of Barkerville)
Belied a mining boomtown of the 1930’s, Wells supplies full tourist facilities year round for the traveller including gas, food, and lodging. The historic “uptown” section is noted for its museum, art galleries, famous old hotels, and art deco theatre.

Camping
Available at Troll Resort between Cottonwood and Wells, at three provincial campsites adjacent to Barkerville, and at Bowron Lake.

Admission
Your admission fee to Barkerville helps us maintain the high quality of our on-going restoration program. Free admission in the off-season.

Barkerville Quilt Festival
Between Labour Day and June, visitors will discover another, quieter side of Barkerville.

Winter Wonderland
A weekend of snowball fight, snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, ice fishing, and more!

Fall, Winter, Spring.
Please call ahead about our programs.
(604) 994-3322.