

News Release

For immediate release

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Theatre Royal, Barkerville Embarks on 3rd provincial tour “Are you from Barkerville?”

Barkerville Historic Town’s popular Theatre Royal cast is rolling through British Columbia on another provincial tour.

“This tour is called ‘The Legacy Tour – Barkerville or Bust’, encouraging folks to come back to Barkerville in 2009. At our tour shows we will have a computer database and a complete record of early mining licenses where folks will be able to search out whether their ancestors or grandparents were in the Barkerville, Williams Creek area during the 1860s gold rush. “It will make our history more interesting and interactive for folks,” says manager and impresario Richard Wright

“So we will be asking folks in story, song and historic records, ‘Are you from Barkerville? Were your grandparents goldseekers?’ Come and search the goldrush records for your golden past. We will help you find your family's adventurers,” says Wright, a Cariboo historian and author.

“Each year we tour the province to perform in over 20 venues for more than 5000 people. Again this year we are hitting the road to the hinterlands.

“We will travel from the west coast through the interior, including Pritchard, Terrace and Prince George, north to Dawson Creek, from small, intimate venues to large theatres. Everywhere we perform we have good houses and leave them all with a smile.”

The tour goal is to promote Barkerville as a tourist destination, but the secondary goal is to take a little of Barkerville to BC communities.

“Our shows bring back a lot of memories for folks,” says musical director and partner Amy Newman. “They recall visits to Barkerville or remember the music we perform. Last year in Port Alberni we met a man who was celebrating his 88th birthday. He was born in Barkerville in 1920 in the old Cariboo Hospital.”

“The most common comment from folks is that they have not laughed or sung so much in years,” adds Wright. “That’s a great accomplishment for us,” says Wright. “We all take pride in bringing a light entertaining moment to folks, particularly with the depressing news we hear on the nightly news.”

The show focuses on material actually sung on the stage of the Theatre Royal, Barkerville. The Theatre was built in 1869, right after the Great Fire of 1868, but before that time performances were held in the Parlour Saloon. The music includes tunes that were popular as BC was entering Confederation, stories that tell the story of Barkerville. It also moves into the later years of the Theatre with rollicking songs and humour

associated with the great British Music Hall era. All of the performers are masters of this era and bring a great evening of entertainment, explains Newman.

“In historic terms one might say ‘The cast of the Newman & Wright Theatrical Troupe presents an array of magnificent musical numbers, engaging sketches, fantastical farces, romantic interludes and ostentatious olios. We bring you the best thespians and musicians that money can buy, direct from the music halls, theatres and grand stages of London, New York, San Francisco and Victoria,’” she expounds.

The tour cast features Elliott Loran on piano with Amy Newman, Marcello Sequeira, Thomas Boutilier and newcomer Alison Jenkins in a variety of song, dance and comedic numbers. Stage Manager is Aaron Wicks and Richard Wright serves as the host and manager.

The tour is being undertaken with the financial support of the Barkerville Heritage Trust, local businesses and other sponsors.