

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

TOURISM MINISTER enjoys the sites and sounds of Barkerville Historic Town

BARKERVILLE, BC, JUNE 18, 2010 – The Honourable Kevin Krueger, British Columbia's Minister for Tourism, Culture, and the Arts, made a memorable stop in Barkerville on Wednesday, during a brief but valuable tour of the Cariboo Regional District this past week.

Mr. Krueger, who was accompanied by Jennifer Iredale, Acting Director of British Columbia's Heritage Branch, met with Barkerville CEO Judy Campbell, curator Bill Quackenbush, and several executive members of the Barkerville Heritage Trust, to publicly celebrate the opening of Barkerville Historic Town's 2010 summer season, and to visit of some of Barkerville's more culturally significant (and, in some cases, conservation-ally sensitive) heritage resources. The Minister was officially welcomed to Barkerville early Wednesday morning by former British Columbia MLA and Barkerville Heritage Trust Chair T. Neil Vant, and spent most of the rest of the day exploring the 100+ historic wooden buildings and structures within Barkerville, western Canada's largest heritage site.

"For the past 51 years Barkerville has been cherished as one of British Columbia's foremost provincial heritage sites and was just reaffirmed as a National Historic Site by the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada," said Mr. Krueger. "We are privileged to have such a wonderful cultural treasure and tourism attraction in B.C."

During his time spent at Barkerville, Minister Krueger was given a "behind the scenes" tour of the town's immense collection of buildings, artifacts, and archives – consisting of more than 180,000 historically significant objects – and showed genuine concern and appreciation for the continued efforts of Barkerville's administrative team to keep those resources safe and accessible to the public in the face of constant environmental, conservational, and financial challenges.

"I would like to thank all of those who work hard in the management, preservation, and promotion of Barkerville, including the board members and staff of the Barkerville Heritage Trust, as well as the contractors, businesses, and volunteers," added Mr. Krueger. "All of your contributions are essential to the dynamic presentation of this site and to its ongoing preservation."

The Minister also took time to publicly acknowledge and support Barkerville's hosting of the 2010 BC Provincial Heritage Fair this coming July 1st, take in a lesson on basic Chinese language and calligraphy skills at Barkerville's newly established 1910 Chinese School, and to meet with several groups of Grade 5 students who, along with more than one thousand students from 60 different schools across British Columbia and Alberta, have made the historic trek to Barkerville since May 10th of this year to participate in Barkerville's internationally-celebrated, multi-disciplinary School Program.

"I hope that those of you who are visiting the site today will find it as rewarding an experience as I have," said Mr. Krueger to a class from St. Ann's Academy in Kamloops, the Minister's home riding. "And that you will return for more fun at Barkerville ... later this summer."

Judging by the excited and inspired expressions on the faces of the St. Ann's students, who were surprised by this impromptu meeting with B.C.'s Minister of Tourism, Culture, and the Arts, it seems likely that Mr. Krueger's advice will be followed to the letter.

ABOUT BARKERVILLE HISTORIC TOWN

BARKERVILLE HISTORIC TOWN is the largest historic site in Western North America (www.barkerville.ca). Barkerville is provincially, nationally and internationally recognized for its historic significance associated with its place in western Canada's gold rush era and the role the gold rush played in BC joining Canada. Barkerville is widely known as a "must see" for travel itineraries in western Canada. The historic town is also a significant contributor to the Cariboo regional economy and is widely regarded as a unique component of the regional identity.

The Barkerville Heritage Trust, as Barkerville's operating and managing partner, works in conjunction with the Province of British Columbia, the owner and statutory guardian of Barkerville's heritage resources, to ensure that Barkerville is efficiently managed, entertaining and educational to visitors, and financially stable as the premier heritage resource and tourism attraction for the Cariboo. The ultimate aim is to maintain and enhance Barkerville's position as a nationally significant heritage resource and tourism attraction for British Columbia and Canada.

Barkerville is situated 80 km east of Quesnel, British Columbia in the foothills of the Cariboo Mountains, close to Troll Mountain Ski Resort and Bowron Lake Provincial Park. The nearby community of Wells (8 km from Barkerville) is the service and housing centre for the area (www.wellsbc.com) and is itself a dynamic cultural community, home of Island Mountain Arts, the acclaimed Toni Onley Artists' Project, the International Celtic Harp School (www.imarts.com), the dynamic indie music festival ArtsWells (www.artswells.com), and the Sunset Theatre (www.sunset-theatre.com). Wells is also situated close to a wide variety of winter and summer outdoor activities.

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