

BX Express

Site Identification

Nearest Community:

Ashcroft, B.C.

Site Identification:

N 50°43.248'

W 121°16.832'

Geocache Location:

N 50°43.234'

W 121°16.803'

Altitude:

303m/994 ft

Date Established:

BX Building, 1911

Heritage Park, 2000

Ownership:

Heritage Park, Village of Ashcroft

BX Express building, Privately owned

Accuracy:

2 meters

Overall Difficulty: 1

Overall Terrain: 1

Access Information and

Restrictions:

Downtown Ashcroft. High visibility area,
use stealth. Year round access

Parking Advice:

Main parking area is to the left of the park.

For more information or to report a
problem with this site please contact:

Gold Country Communities Society
PO. Box 933
Cache Creek, BC.,
VOK 1H0

Tel: 1-877-453-9467
email: info@exploregoldcountry.com

For more site pages go to:
www.goldtrail.com

Apply Sticker Here



Photo: GCCS

BX Company

In 1858 the lure of gold brought a flood of hopeful seekers into the interior of B.C. This intrusion of men up into the tributaries of the Fraser River also brought the dilemma of how to transport supplies in and carry gold out. In 1864 Francis J. Barnard, was awarded the government contract to provide this service from Yale to Barkerville. A transportation mode, which originally started by foot and packhorse, progressed to stage coaches, and sleighs and then grew into an organized transportation company in Western Canada, the renowned B.C. Express, or BX.

Some 20 years later with the completion of the CPR, Ashcroft became the strategic spot to move goods from and it was here that new BX owner Steve Tingley set up headquarters. At this time the main stage line extended from Ashcroft to Barkerville, a distance of 280 miles. Routes branched off from the main road to include the settlements of Lillooet, Alkali Lake, Alexis Creek, Harpers Camp and Keithley Creek. Stage fare from Ashcroft to Barkerville was \$42.40 in the winter and \$37.50 in the summer. Rain or snow, the mail was expected to be delivered on time and the BX kept a rigid schedule. The way stations were about 18 miles apart along the road, with fresh horses waiting at each. The Company prided itself on using the finest horses and the best of drivers.

In 1897 Tingley lost the contract to haul mail to a group of Toronto Businessmen. This new company bought out the BX, including stages, harnesses and horses. The 1910 addition of two sternwheelers on the Upper Fraser Rivers and the completion of the railway to Fort George, gave the BX Company's network of stages claim to the longest route in North America. That same year improvements made to the Cariboo road allowed for automobile traffic. The B.C. Express Co. accordingly purchased a fleet of "Winston Sixes" to adapt to the passage of the stage coach travel.

This addition of vehicles called for a new headquarters to be built. In 1911 a cluster of new buildings were erected on 6th and Railway; these included an office, blacksmith shop, carpenter's shop, workshop and up to date garage. The B.C. Express Company remained in business until 1914, just three years after completion of its new buildings.

The BX Company's history spanned over 50 years. It weathered floods and snow and the occasional hold up. It's red and yellow coaches have provided service to dukes and princesses, judges, politicians, artists, poets, wealthy business men and the everyday people of the Cariboo.

The BX office still stands on the corner of 6th and Railway. As you journey up the Cariboo road, stop in at the roadside houses and museums. It's here you'll find more treasures and stories of the infamous B.C. Express.

Written and Researched by Kathy Paulos

BIBLIOGRAPHY & SOURCES

Mill, Ted (1977) Former Provincial Government Building, 601 Railway Avenue, Ashcroft, BC, (Canadian Inventory of Historic Building) Correspondence-Ashcroft Museum Archives

West, Willis J. (1937) "Old Cariboo Road." *The Standard Magazine*

Leighton, J.B. (1938) "Pioneer Tells of Early Days Of BC Express." *Kamloops Sentinel*

Letterboxing Clues:

From the main parking area at the Heritage Park walk along the trail heading south until you come to a bench marked Chamber of Commerce.