



Bowral



Mittagong



Berrima



Moss Vale

BERRIMA DISTRICT HISTORICAL & FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY Inc.

Founded 1960

Located in the Wingecarribee Shire,
Southern Highlands of NSW

ABN 29 362 616 937

NEWSLETTER

No 529 July 2020



From the President's Desk

As we navigate through the easing of COVID-19 restrictions I want to update you on the current situation at both the Archives and the Museum.

The Archives are open for research by volunteers and members. At this stage we are not open to the general public although we are taking email requests for research enquiries. To control the numbers inside the Archives at any one time a booking sheet is provided adjacent to the telephone where names and times can be recorded. There will be no general meeting of the Society for the month of July.

The Museum is in a slightly different situation. Due to the enforced closure of the Museum, the planned renovations to the existing galleries are being carried out under the direction of Lyn Hall and her volunteer group. All electrical, painting and building work has been completed and next week the kitchenette and communications equipment will be installed. It is a credit to all involved and it looks fresh and inviting. It will be some weeks before the Museum re-opens to the public as all the display items were removed and now need to be replaced. I will let you know when re-opening will occur as we will be constrained by the rules in place at that time.

ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO Bowral Council rejoiced on the approval of the Bowral water supply in January 1920. Sir George Fuller, NSW Chief Secretary and local

member wrote to council advising of the approval and requesting a date for turning of the first sod by the Minister for Works, Mr. Hall.

The council advised that 28 July 1920 would be a suitable date and it would be held on the site of the proposed reservoir on Mount Gibraltar at 4.00pm.

Council's joy at finally getting a water supply is understandable after 30 years of indecision, beginning with the following. It was reported in the *Bowral Free Press* on 28 April 1888, "It is still fresh in the minds of our readers, particularly those who are residents of the town that a government officer was sent to Bowral at the solicitation of the Council, to report upon the means of water supply for this town. The officer did a fair amount of inspection and then returned to Sydney, but from that day to this Bowral has heard nothing of the gentleman himself or his official report. Probably it has never been prepared, or something would have been heard concerning it".

The scheme which was adopted was estimated to cost £30,000. The storage reservoir was to be constructed across the lower end of the Wingecarribee Swamp impounding 36,500,000 gallons of water at a maximum depth of 8 feet.

Continued on page 3

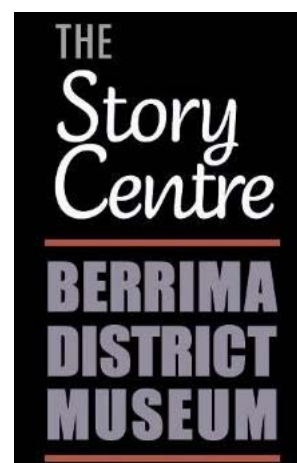
Ian Mackey

ALL GENERAL MONTHLY MEETINGS POSTPONED TILL FURTHER NOTICE

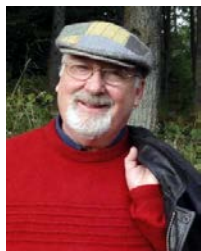
JULY 2020: Thursday 23 July NO GENERAL MEETING

AUGUST 2020: A meeting may be held on Thursday 27 August at 2:00pm.
If so, details will be provided in the August newsletter

We will advise when the **Family History Interest Group** can meet again.



Moore Memorable Musings



SLOW, SLOW, QUICK, QUICK, SLOW

The title has been imbedded into my brain ever since I embarked on my

infamous dancing career.

This vocation was short-lived in the scheme of things, interrupted by other distractions like life, work, girls etc.

Dancing began many moons ago at high school. An all-boys, macho, physical-educated, socially inadequate high school of the post-war type which employed shell-shocked WW2 teachers. Our dancing teacher was a pugilistic football coach who was assigned to reshaping us boys from rugby toughs into ballroom gliders.

Using the gymnasium as our dance studio, we *sashayed* around the floor with all the graceful poise of fairy elephants. In order to get the feel of a partner each boy was issued with ... you guessed it ... a mop! Yes, the mop was to represent the girl.

My dancing partner had lots of tangled fibres with the perfume of freshly rinsed bleach.

We were told to practice dragging this mop around the floor until next week when our dance was to take place. Girls from Hornsby Girls High School were to be our partners.

So, we quickly learned the Pride of Erin, Gypsy Tap and quickstep ready for the big night.

"Slow, slow, quick, quick, slow."

I was getting quite attached to my mop when we were told to go home and get spruced up for the event.

The girls eventually arrived in fleets of cars and as fully trained gentlemen, we ushered them into the hall. The school orchestra was tuning up. They hunkered down one end of the hall while we boys huddled together down the other, in true-blue Aussie style.

Surprise, surprise, we danced! The night was a blur, but I can remember going home with a smile on my face. If you think that virus-affected social distancing is new, then our school dance was ground-breaking.

Bruce Moore

Research Fees

Research fees for non-members:
\$30.00 per hour or part thereof for telephone and postal enquiries.
\$5.00 per hour or part thereof for enquirers who attend the archives and carry out their own research.

Archives' opening hours

Monday 10:00 am – 4:00 pm
Tuesday 10:00 am – 4:00 pm
Saturday 10:00 am – 1:00 pm

PLEASE NOTE: Our Museum at Berrima and the Mittagong Archives/Research Centre remain closed to the public.

Anyone with a question, a research inquiry, or who wishes to obtain local or family history information, or order photos from our Image Library (viewable via our website) may do so by emailing the Society.

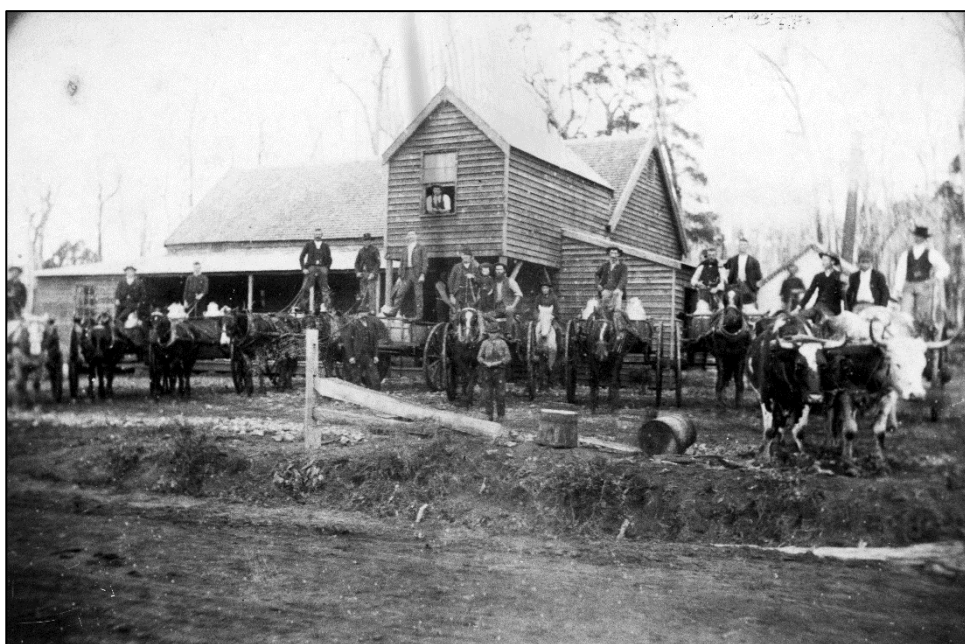
Nomenclature Guidelines

Recently, I received a communiqué on the current recommended guidelines for writing and communicating on matters pertaining to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders. I have forwarded a copy to the archives for anyone interested in its perusal.

Whilst we may not concur with the current guidelines, we should be aware that for any scholarly articles written contemporaneously to be taken seriously, they should follow the current direction for vernacular.

Several prominent Australian historians such as Henry Reynolds and Grace Karskens have acknowledged their incorrect use of language in past works however, it is acknowledged that the terms they used were considered acceptable at that time. Vocabulary and language are constantly evolving and we, as historical enthusiasts, should aim to uphold current trends and, in so doing, encourage the correct dissemination of nomenclature that is reflective of our time.

Kerry Bunker, June 2020



The 'Waratah' butter factory at East Kangaloon, opened in 1891.

Lined up in front are some of the suppliers. The factory manager Arthur Pritchett is at centre standing in front of the men up on carts. He and his family spent a brief period in the local district. A history of their lives has recently been provided to the BDHS archives. *See story on pages 4 and 5.*

President's Report *continued*

ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO by Ian Mackey

On 28 January 1920 a scheme was adopted by Bowral Council to construct a water storage reservoir across the lower end of Wingecarribee Swamp impounding 36,500,000 gallons of water at a depth of 8 feet.

The water would flow down the Wingecarribee River and be pumped to a reservoir on Mt Gibraltar with 250,000 gallons capacity, using a gravity reticulation system to feed the town. In April 1922 the system came into operation, but soon serious issues arose regarding water quality. The Council requested that the Department of Works provide a filtration plant and this was built, opening in March 1929. The town was the fourth in Australia to adopt filtration.

Thanks to the determination of our Council 100 years ago, Bowral water supply was completed and some of the original infrastructure is still in use today.

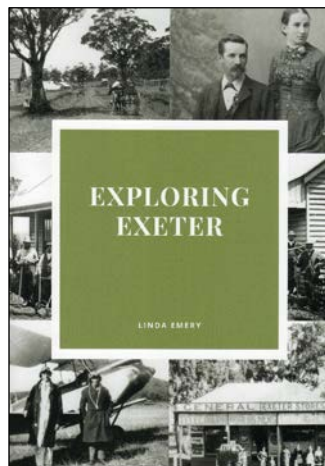


A large crowd attended the official opening of Bowral Reservoir's dam and pump-house in April 1922.

Exploring Exeter book updated

After being out of print for several years, Linda Emery has updated and reprinted *Exploring Exeter*, a short history of the village and its built environment.

The new edition includes a number of new photographs that have come to light since the book was first published in 1998. Available from the archives, the museum and in our online shop for \$20 plus postage.



New RAHS publication available

Playing Their Part: Vice-Regal Consort of New South Wales 1788-2019, Hughes, Liston & Wright (eds.)

Soft cover, 264 pages, over 70 illustrations (some colour), portraits, 26 x 21.5 cm; reference notes and index. More information on RAHS website. Cost \$35.00 – \$50.00.

This new Royal Australian Historical Society book examines the lives of the women (and one man) who were the wives, daughters, sisters (and husband) of the governors of NSW over the past 230 years.

The lives of these 38 consorts were researched and written by 22 dedicated volunteer authors whose commitment, and that of the three volunteer editors (Joy Hughes, Carol Liston AO and Christine Wright), has resulted in a publication that adds to the understanding of the consorts' service and survival.

The consort is the companion to the governor, a position usually filled by the governor's wife (or more recently the husband of the governor), daughter or sister. This is not an official role and it comes with no job description, nor salary. Young or old, with or without children, noble or commoner, all consorts found themselves supporting spouse and family, sovereign, empire or nation.



A 'Her-story' rather than a 'His-story' - Linda Hurley:

"In October 2014, on my arrival at Government House, I found that there was not a training course or manual for the role of governor's wife, or consort: neither was there any training protocol. It was a steep learning curve as I tried to understand the role." So began Her Excellency Mrs Linda Hurley's historical enquiry into the lives and careers of the women who came before her. However, her search turned up very little. Except for the first vice-regal wives to accompany their husbands to the Antipodes, little was known of the women (and one man) who held the role of vice-regal consort in NSW.

She resolved "to uncover their stories, and if possible, publish a 'her-story' rather than a 'his-story' of the women (and one man) who worked behind the scenes of the governors".

Our archives gains a family history

Arthur and Agnes Pritchett emigrated from England, aged 23 and 22, in 1884. They first settled at Kiama and then moved to the Robertson locality in the Southern Highlands, where he was employed as a butter factory manager until 1896. The family then moved to northern NSW.

Until now, our archive contained no entries about the family, they being in the Berrima district for only a short period. It is thanks to a descendant, Elaine Zendler of Brisbane, that we now possess some information and photographs.

Elaine, who has researched and documented the history of her Pritchett ancestors, contacted us recently to request photos from our image library of the two butter factories at which Arthur worked. In return she sent us several early local photographs that we have never seen before and provided us with a family history document she compiled. We are most grateful for her additions to our history archive.

With Elaine's permission, edited extracts from her history, illustrated with the photos, follow here.

The local period of the Pritchett family history

Arthur Pritchett and Agnes Wright both grew up in the East Midlands Shire of Nottinghamshire, England. They were born in neighbouring rural villages in the Rushcliffe District. He was born at Cropwell Bishop on 9 February 1861 and Agnes at Langar on 21 August 1861. Their families appear to have lived in this area for a long time, probably generations.

On 18 October 1882 they were married at Langar. Unfortunately, they lost their first child, a son, John Thomas.

Two years later Arthur and Agnes decided to move to another country, and on 19 January 1884 they set sail from Plymouth on the *SS Warwick* with 621 other passengers bound for Australia. The *Warwick* had been launched only two years before and was designed to carry 632 second class passengers and another fourteen in the spacious and neatly fitted-out saloon.

The ship had refrigeration on board which allowed the passengers to be supplied with fresh meat throughout the voyage and a distilling apparatus which supplied ample fresh water. This was the *Warwick's* first visit to Australia. They were fortunate to have very fine weather throughout the voyage and arrived at Sydney Heads on 12 March 1884, two days in advance of the contract time.

Arthur and Agnes began their new life in Australia on the south coast at Kiama, where he worked initially as an agricultural labourer. Their son, James William, was born at Gerringong on 26 August 1887. A daughter died shortly after birth and their second daughter, Ada, was born at Kiama on 30 June 1889.



By the time Ada was born, Arthur was the inaugural manager of the cooperative butter factory built in 1889 at Fox Ground (located between Kiama and Gerringong). Elaine notes that "perhaps he had developed some skill or interest in this area of work at Cropwell Bishop, which, to this day, is noted as having fine dairy products such as Stilton cheese".



In the early 1890s the family moved to the Robertson locality in the Southern Highlands, where Arthur (at middle in photo) became manager of the butter factory at Robertson, which had commenced in 1888, and then later of the 'Waratah' butter factory at East Kangaloon which began operations in 1891.

Note: very little is found in early newspapers on Trove about Arthur's time in our local district, just that his name appears as a team member in cricket matches played at Kangaloon.

Our Society does hold considerable information about the early dairy industry. A major turning point was the opening at Kiama in the 1880s of the first co-operative butter factory which revolutionised butter making, until then done on the farm, and which spurred farmers to apply co-operation to production. The movement took off and many factories soon existed, including at Berry and Barrengarry, and on the Berrima district's eastern side, at Wildes Meadow (the 'Beehive'), at Robertson, at Kangaloon, at East Kangaloon (the 'Waratah'), at Glenquarry ('Roberton Park'), and at Manchester Square near Moss Vale. Farmers carted their whole milk in cans to these factories and, after separation, the skimmed milk was taken back to feed animals.

In 1891 local farmers formed the Berrima District Farm & Dairy Company, a marketing co-operative. In 1895 it acquired existing butter factories at Mittagong and Robertson, converting them into central factories to achieve greater efficiency than provided by the small, scattered depots, which soon closed. The 1890s was thus a time of rapid change and progress for the local district's dairy industry.

In July 1896 Arthur Pritchett decided to move his family north. Elaine notes that he sought a warmer climate and the chance of better health. The lure of gold, which had been mined at Tallawudjah Creek since the beginning of the 1880s, probably also influenced his decision.

Before the Pritchett family moved, they sold much of their furniture, household goods and tools. Included in these sales was the bird and bird cage, seen in the photograph below.



Jim, Agnes, Ada and Arthur Pritchett on the verandah of their Robertson home, prior to departure

A record in Arthur's account books tells us that, "ten cases and boxes were stored up in Mr Graham's store, one box to go down the mountain".

The Pritchetts left Bowral on 22 July 1896 and travelled by train to Sydney. From Sydney the family journeyed with Harry and James Shipman to Grafton on the "Kallatina". Two other Shipman brothers, William and George, had already settled at Glenreagh south of Grafton, so no doubt they would have known about the gold mining in the area.

The Shipman boys had grown up at Robertson on their father's farm. Families who moved from the Robertson area to Glenreagh include the Pritchetts, the Shipmans and the Greens.

William Shipman had selected 275 acres of land at Tallawudjah Creek in 1887. His wife Theresa was the recognised midwife and nurse around the district and was later known by locals as "Mum Shipman". Agnes often spoke of "Mum" Shipman's kindness to her.

After leasing Shipman's property for a year, in August 1887 the Pritchett family moved a little further north to Levenstrath, near McPherson's Crossing just south of Grafton, and farmed there for three years.

While at Levenstrath, two more children were born, Agnes Grace on 20 April 1898, and Arthur on 3 March 1900. They were born at the home of Mrs Lentfer of German Town, who accommodated the expectant mother and the youngest child as well. It was while they were living at Levenstrath that Arthur registered their cattle brand on 15 July 1899.

On returning to live at Glenreagh in August 1900, the Pritchett family farmed George Shipman's property near Glenreagh village, either leasing or on shares. While they were living there, their last child, Evelyn Elsie Pritchett, was born at Nurse Orme's Private Nursing Home, South Grafton, on 8 February 1902.

Elaine notes that life would have been very busy for Agnes, Arthur, James and Ada, with farm work to attend to, the younger children to care for and prepare for school, as well as the household tasks.

The document compiled by Elaine Zendler continues with more details of the family's history in the northern area of NSW. A copy of the text is available at the BDHS archives for those who have an interest.

On 26 September 1932 the Grafton *Daily Examiner* provided an obituary for Arthur Pritchett, who had died at the age of 72 years.

The brief period that Agnes and Arthur spent in the local district is now documented in the BDHS archives and we are grateful to Elaine for her contributions.

A history of our local newspapers

With the rise of the internet, printed newspapers world-wide have suffered a decline in sales and income, with some ceasing to maintain a print edition or going out of business entirely. Several of Australia's local and regional newspapers have folded recently and many are facing the threat of closure.

A town or regional newspaper is a vital source of local and council information, and many people rue the loss of their paper. From a historical perspective, the demise of local newspapers is a tragedy, as the news of local events and about people, accidents, disasters etc is an essential resource for local historians in the future. It is not possible for a national newspaper or website to cover local events in sufficient depth to meet such a need.

Our local *Southern Highland News* halted its print edition back in April, but we are delighted that it has now been resurrected and long may it continue.

Today's readers might be surprised that from the 1880s at least three newspapers were published weekly in the local Berrima District. The towns of Mittagong, Bowral and Moss Vale each had a newspaper and, as these were circulated throughout the district, they were effectively in direct competition with each other.

An historical overview of the Berrima District's early newspapers, based on the reminiscences of local newspaperman Ben Moule, was published on 31 December 1937 in *The Southern Mail*. Some edited extracts and extra information follow here.

The first fully-fledged newspaper published in the Berrima District was the *Scrutineer and West Camden Advocate*. It was founded in 1874 by William McCourt (pictured in later life) who came from the South Coast to Moss Vale, where the paper began business in April 1874.

McCourt, the owner and editor, was then aged 23, and had served his apprenticeship on the staff of the *Illawarra Mercury* at Wollongong. McCourt later became Member for Camden, which then included the Berrima district, in 1882, and with one break in 1885/86, continued to represent the district until his death in June 1910.



The Hon McCourt also served a lengthy period as Speaker of the NSW Legislative Assembly.

McCourt conducted the *Scrutineer* successfully until 1886 when he sold to Samuel King Miller, who had been a schoolteacher for many years at Burrawang, then reached retiring age and took up journalism. He was the father of Sir Denison Miller, well-known for his connections with the Commonwealth Bank. Miller's successor on the *Scrutineer* was J R Toplis.

Toplis disposed of the paper to Edward Hewison in 1899. Hewison was an Englishman who reached Australia in 1853 and taught at Cooma from 1863 to 1873. Retiring from the position he became the first Town Clerk of Cooma. He ran the *Scrutineer* at Moss Vale until his death in August 1913 and the paper was carried on by members of his family, in particular his daughter Ada who became sole proprietor. She ran the paper until it went out of publication in 1949.

Another local newspaper was launched by William Webb around 1882 at Burrawang. He made a practice of starting country papers and selling out to advantage while people were enthusing over the advent of a local journal. After launching *The Burrawang Herald*, running true to form, he soon sold out to Barrett Bros (then leading storekeepers, saw and oatmeal mills proprietors) and William Moses, a local auctioneer. The scope for a newspaper in that part of the district was rather limited and, after unsuccessful efforts by A J and LE Ball and Ben Moule to make a financial success of the business, the shutters were finally put up about 1893.



The first edition of a newspaper published in Bowral, the *Bowral Free Press*, appeared on 7 July 1883. It was William Webb who established it, and who then sold it in March 1884 to William and Daniel Beer.

In February 1885 Daniel became sole publisher of the *Free Press* and it attracted a wide readership. Due to illness he met an untimely death in November 1891. His widow took over the paper, selling it back to her brother-in-law William Beer in September 1895. He changed the name in March 1906 to the *Wollondilly Press* and continued publishing it until 1 July 1914.

In the 1880s Daniel Beer had started to publish a paper in Mittagong, the *Mittagong Mail*, the first issue appearing on 9 September 1885. In January 1886, he sold the paper to J C Murphy, who changed its name to the *Southern Mail* from February 1886.

Murphy registered the *Robertson Advocate* in July 1887, the *Moss Vale Record* in 1888 and the *Mittagong Express* in 1891. In March 1893 these papers and the *Southern Mail* were purchased from Murphy by T C Brown and C Stubbings. Financial difficulties arose late in 1898, and J White, Ben Moule and A Holmes purchased *The Mail*.

The last mentioned later withdrew from the firm and, in April 1910, partners White and Moule registered the *Southern Mail*, *Robertson Advocate*, *Moss Vale Record* and *Mittagong Express* which they continued to publish with considerable success. In 1914 they purchased the printing plant and premises of the *Wollondilly Press* from William Beer whose health was failing. His paper ceased publication on 27 June 1914, thus removing a rival newspaper from the path of the *Southern Mail*.

The first world war proved a difficult time for the *Southern Mail*, as for most other papers, the cost of paper rising from 15 to about 100 pounds a ton. However, they pulled through, and the business continued to flourish.

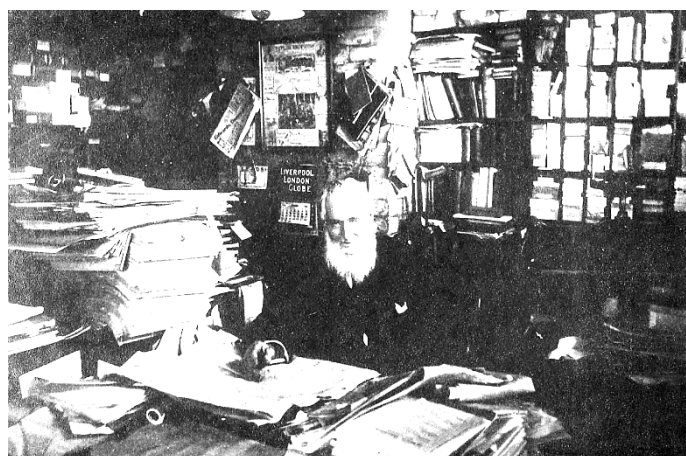
Hector Lamond acquired the *Southern Mail* and its associated papers in November 1923. He had been editor of *The Worker* for many years, and also acted as manager for a time; he had been the Member for Illawarra. On 24 October 1923 he registered the *Southern Mail*, and renamed the three other papers as *The Robertson Mail*, *The Moss Vale Mail* and *The Mittagong Mail*, thus producing *The Four Mails*, and continued publishing them until his death in 1947, when his younger son, H S Lamond became the managing editor.

Hector had a printing shop and office in Merrigang St Bowral until around 1930 when he renovated a shop also in Merrigang St and made it his newspaper headquarters (pictured at top in next column). When his *Southern Mail* celebrated its fiftieth year (around 1930), it published a history of its origins and of the other early local papers. It was stated that all these

papers were started in little bush villages, some of which since becoming important and prosperous towns. Hector Lamond was quoted as saying: "Who shall say how much of this progress was due to the untiring efforts of these newspaper men to live up to the highest ideals of their profession".



The Southern Mail printing works at Bowral in 1930s



Edward Hewison at work in the Scrutineer office, Moss Vale, early 1900s

As stated earlier, the *Scrutineer* was published locally until 1949, under the proprietorship of Ada Hewison, daughter of Edward Hewison who bought it in 1899. The history of the various owners of the *Scrutineer*, its successes and eventual decline is worthy of an extended series, and this will commence next issue.

In 1960 the Lamond family sold the *Southern Mail* and their other local papers to the Mittagong-based Southern Highland News Pty Ltd and the following year the *Southern Highland News*, the *Four Mails* and the *Mittagong Star* were amalgamated as a tabloid-sized publication.

This paper became the *Southern Highland News*, a tri-weekly from 1976. The print edition's recent hiatus was mainly due to the pandemic, with only online issues being produced, but the paper is now back in production, looking good, and here to stay.

compiled by Philip Morton

Berrima District Historical & Family History Society Inc

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- ARCHIVES:** Cnr Old Hume Highway and Bowral Road, MITTAGONG.
OPEN: Mondays, Tuesdays 10am-4pm and Saturdays 10am-1pm. Closed Public Holidays.
Library collection contains reference books, journals and a general collection.
- MUSEUM:** Market Place, Berrima. Tel: 02 4877 1130. Email: bdmuseum@bigpond.com
OPEN: 10.00am to 4.00pm, Wednesdays to Sundays throughout the year. This includes during school and public holiday periods.
- MEMBERSHIP:** Any person wanting to join the Society may do so at any stage during the year by completing a form and paying the appropriate fee. Joining Fee \$10.00 – Single \$25.00 – Family \$35.00.
- AFFILIATIONS:** Royal Australian Historical Society, Museums Australia Inc and NSW Association of Family History Societies.

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BERRIMA DISTRICT HISTORICAL & FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY Inc.

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