Berrima itself took its rise over 133 years ago, when Surveyor Robert Hoddle laid out the Government Reserves and some allotments of a township there; Governor Darling approved the plan, without personal inspection, in May, 1831.

Hoddle had previously surveyed Liverpool and Campbelltown, was later to lay out Melbourne in 1837, and when Victoria became a State, became its first Surveyor-General, on 15th July, 1851.

W. R. Govett laid out the streets of Berrima in 1832.

The town or rather village, lies athwart the Hume Highway, about seven miles south of Mittagong, and is about the same distance from Bowral; despite its former importance, and subsequent decline from that eminence, it is still near scenes of great industrial activity.

Only a short distance away is New Berrima, where the huge works of Southern Portland Cement are situated, and a few miles west lies the Medway Colliery.

When Bong Bong (first surveyed village in the Southern Highlands—1821)—faded, Berrima for many years was the hub of the district and a very busy place, with Court sessions, constant flow of goal inmates, and the heavily-laden teams and coaches which Mitchell's new line of road brought to it. Many hotels, too, sprang up, one of the factors which caused Rev. John Dunmore Lang in 1852, while conceding that the children of the locality "have fine ruddy faces, as at home, unlike the pale faces of Sydney, and the low country generally", to write adversely of the locality as unsuitable for a town.

The speaker dealt extensively with many activities and buildings in Berrima in the early days, but space, unfortunately, precludes detailed mention of the many interesting facts which he quoted.

Many of the buildings still stand, including the Court House (not now used as such); the walls of the Gaol (now Berrima Training Centre); Holy Trinity Church of England (the first designed by the noted ecclesiastical architect Edmund T. Blacket); the Roman Catholic Church; what is now the Presbyterian Church, but was once a School of Arts, partly a Masonic Temple, later a day school conducted by an Order of nuns, later a skating rink, and so on, and is unique in that it has two chimneys); the Surveyor-General Inn, built probably in 1834, oldest country hotel carried on in the building for which the license was first issued, recently declared an historic inn (the first so declared) under an amendment of the Liquor Act, and to be restored later this year; and many other homes too numerous to mention.

Mr. Parry said that one of the most important developments in the widespread and growing awareness of the interest and importance of Australian history was the foundation of the Berrima Village Trust (whose chairman is Mr. Tom Lewis, M.L.A. for Wollondilly) on 28th April, 1963.

This has a number of local and Sydney Councillors and is receiving much support in its extensive aims, which, summarised, are the maintenance, protection and preservation of buildings and so on, in Berrima, along the lines of the famous Colonial Williamsburg, in Virginia, in U.S.A.

He said that at a conference in Mittagong in 1962, Mr. F. Gaven, Director of the N.S.W. Department of Tourist Activities, pithily pictured the position, when he said that it would be unique in the history of N.S.W. to present a village where buildings were standing in their original state, and where the people of Australia could look with pride on the progress achieved by the pioneers of the Colony.

Preliminary planning is going on, and in years to come it is hoped that the Berrima Village Trust will achieve much towards this objective.

A SOIREE AT THE QUEEN'S HOTEL (1864):

The induction on 17th July of the Rev. R. A. Caldwell to the charge of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Wollongong, gives topical interest to this century-old report from the "Illawarra Mercury" of Friday, 9th September, 1864:
"THE INDUCTION OF THE REV. MR. MITCHELL:

The ceremony of the Induction of the Rev. Mr. Mitchell, to the Presbyterian Church at Wollongong, will take place today, and will be followed by a Soiree and Tea Party at the Queen's Hotel."

The papers for the following Tuesday said, "The Soiree was attended by upwards of 300 persons, amongst whom were clergymen of several denominations" (all of whom, by the way, appeared to speak briefly and at full length). "The greatest good feeling existed throughout and all appeared to enjoy themselves."

The fact that the Soiree was held at the hotel (where some time later the Wesleyans also held a bazaar in aid of the erection of the Bulli Church) shows the part which hotels played in the life of the community. — A.P.F.

KIAMA IN THE SIXTIES:

KIAMA, 34 deg. 39' S. lat., 150 deg. 52' E. long. (Co. Camden), is a small and pleasantly situated seaport town in the electoral and police district of Kiama. It lies on the head of a small bay, protected from the S. winds by a large jetty. There are several small creeks about the town, which afford a plentiful supply of water. The Illawarra lake lies 4 miles N.W. The district is an agricultural and pastoral one, mostly occupied by small dairy farmers. The district is justly celebrated for the excellence of the butter it produces. There is a steam flour mill in the town, also a brewery and 2 tanneries, all working. The nearest places are, Gerringong, 5 miles S., and Jamberoo, N.W. about 5 miles. The communication is by horse and dray, or hired carriage, and with Sydney, 89 miles N., by steamer or sailing vessel, or by a good overland mail road. Kiama has a newspaper — the Kiama Independent; it has also branches of the English, Scottish and Australian Chartered City, and Commercial banks, and of the Imperial, Pacific, Victoria, Sydney, Northern, Liverpool and London and Globe, and Australian Mutual Provident Insurance companies. There is also a branch Bible society, in connection with the one in Sydney. Kiama has a post and money order office, a telegraph office, and a court of petty sessions. There are stone churches belonging to the Episcopal, Roman Catholic, Presbyterian, and Wesleyan persuasions. A fine stone breakwater and dock basin are in course of construction. The hotels are, the Steam Packet, Beehive and Fermanagh. There is a singular natural phenomenon on a rocky hill lying between Kiama and the ocean, in the form of a perpendicular hole, nearly circular, and about 5 yards in diameter at the top, perforating the rock until it opens into a chasm at the foot of the outer cliff, up which the breakers rush with great force. In heavy weather, or when the wind blows strongly from the E., the water forced along the narrow channel finds egress up this blow-hole, and spouts upward in a magnificent volume, until it is driven by the wind over the hill in a cloud of spray. The surrounding country is elevated, and the geological formation is mostly sandstone. The population numbers about 700 persons. Kiama is a municipality, declared August 11th, 1859.

The Kiama electoral district embraces an E. portion of the county of Camden; and is bounded on the N. by the Illawarra lake, and the Macquarie rivulet to its source; on the W. by the Illawarra range, and the middle source of the Kangaroo river, to a point due W. from the head of the Crooked river; on the S. by a line from that point to the head of the Crooked river, and by that river to the sea; and on the E. by the sea to the Illawarra lake, aforesaid. This electorate returns 1 member to the Legislative Assembly, the present representative being H. Parkes, Esq. The number of registered electors in this district is 1215, of whom 931 voted at the last general election, 1864-1865.

Kiama is a police district, embracing an E. portion of the county of Camden; and is bounded on the N. by the Illawarra lake, and the Macquarie rivulet to its source; on the W. by the Illawarra range, and the middle source of the Kangaroo river, to a point due W. from the head of the Crooked river; on the S. by a line from that point to the head of the Crooked river, and by that river to the sea; and on the E. by the sea to the Illawarra lake, aforesaid. The place of petty sessions is Kiama.

(—Bailliere, "The New South Wales Gazetteer", 1866.)