

SUMMARY OF AUDIO/VISUAL PRESENTATION AT THE BERRIMA COURTHOUSE

This presentation is a wonderfully graphic depiction of the early settlement and penal system of New South Wales as it existed in Berrima during the 18th and early 19th centuries. It relates the history of the district from the time the early explorers set out from Sydney, venturing to find suitable grazing land for the expanding colony of New South Wales.

The story of Berrima is traced through its initial settlement, as it became a judicial centre with its grand Courthouse. It shows the buildings of its early settlers, its inns and surroundings. Today it is recognized as one of the finest examples of an Australian historic village. Its history is preserved in these buildings, many of which you may still see as you walk through Berrima. It is here that the visitor can literally take a look into the past and experience how life must have been in the days of early colonization.

FEATURES OF THE PRESENTATION

This audio/visual presentation is of enormous interest. Some of its features are listed here:

- Governor Phillip's concern over absconding convicts
- Early interaction with local Aboriginal tribes
- Hume and Throsby exploring this new territory
- The allocation of land grants to new settlers for grazing their cattle and sheep
- The choice of Berrima as a centre for settlers in the Camden district
- The coaches and drays that were the only form of transport
- Inns established as staging posts for travellers
- The building of the Great South Road by convict labour
- Plans for Berrima to be an administration centre for the district and the subsequent building of a courthouse and gaol
- Difficulties encountered in the erection of the Courthouse
- Pictures of significant buildings in early Sydney settlement
- The addition of the Berrima Gaol showing the harsh treatment of prisoners at that time. E.g. the use of the gag which forced prisoners into complete silence for the first nine months of their sentence- one of these gags is on display in the Courthouse.
- The use of the Courthouse during the First World War 1914 – 1918 to house German prisoners of war
- The restoration of the Courthouse after it fell into disrepair
- Photos of buildings around Berrima that have endured to the present day as examples of early colonial architecture.

This audio/visual presentation includes a wide range of historical material. The commentary is clear, informative and immensely interesting. Students at upper Primary level will gain a pictorial insight into significant aspects of Australia's history

This 17 minute presentation will undoubtedly open a doorway into Australia's past. We trust you will find it a valuable addition to your teaching resources.