

Founded 1960

# BERRIMA DISTRICT HISTORICAL & FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY INC

NEWSLETTER  
No 451 June 2013

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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 newsletters of other societies.

**MUSEUM:** Market Place, BERRIMA. Tel: 02 4877 1130 Email: [berrimamuseum@bigpond.com](mailto:berrimamuseum@bigpond.com) OPEN: Saturdays, Sundays, NSW Public and School Holidays (except Good Friday, Christmas Day and Boxing Day) 10.00 am to 4.00 pm.

**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 \$20.00 - Family \$33.00.

**AFFILIATIONS:** Royal Australian Historical Society, NSW Association of Family History Societies, Museums Australia Inc & Regional Chapter.

## GENERAL MONTHLY MEETING

**JUNE LUNCHEON MEETING:** Thursday 27 June 2013 at 12 noon  
**VENUE:** Exeter Village Hall, Exeter  
**GUEST SPEAKER:** Elizabeth Burness

Elizabeth brings us history with a difference - **Flapper Fashion** - taking us back to the 1920s and 30s and shows that women changed in that era, not only in appearance, but also in attitude.

**JULY MEETING:** Thursday 25 July 2013 at 2pm  
**VENUE:** Society Research Centre, Old Council Chambers Building, Bowral Road, Mittagong  
**GUEST SPEAKER:** Geoff Goodfellow  
**AFTERNOON TEA:** To be served following the speaker - Members - please bring a plate or a donation.

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And more ...



## Diary dates

### JUNE

- 13 Management Committee Meeting
  - 27 General Monthly Meeting
- LUNCHEON**
- 28 School holidays commence

### JULY

- 11 Management Committee Meeting
- 15 School holidays conclude
- 25 General Monthly Meeting

### AUGUST

- 8 Management Committee Meeting
- 22 General Monthly Meeting

## Anzac Day

The following email was received from member, Gloria Williams, in reference to the Anzac Day services in the Highlands.

*Dear Editor,  
I refer to the item 'Society at Anzac Day Services' on page 3 of the May 2013 newsletter.*

*I feel it should be noted that while attending the Dawn Service at Berrima, Museum Curator Bob Williams also laid a wreath on behalf of the Society.*

*Yours sincerely  
Gloria Williams*

## July Guest speaker Geoff Goodfellow

**Topic: A little peek behind the Iron Curtain**

In the past few years Geoff Goodfellow and his wife have travelled in former Soviet countries like Russia, the old East Germany, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Bulgaria, Albania, Poland and, in April 2013, Uzbekistan. That part of the world has changed a lot since the Wall came tumbling down in 1989 and Geoff will offer some insights, including some light hearted tales.

## From the President's Desk

*Bruce Moore*

### ALL ABOARD!

In early May, the Bowral/Moss Vale Sesquicentenary committee organized, through Trainworks, a steam fest at Moss Vale, one of many celebratory events planned during 2013. Two steam engines hauled passengers from Central station to Moss Vale and back, treating locals to a lunch-time ride from Moss Vale to Robertson and return.

Arriving at Moss Vale Station (maybe it was platform 9¾) we were taken back in time, greeted by some bold BDHS thespians who, dressed in period costume, reminded the bride and I of a bygone era. Reliving childhood memories, the Heritage Express, looking resplendent in her green & black livery, steamed into the Moss Vale platform.

As a youngster growing up in the railway town of Werris Creek, I spent hours collecting engine numbers and having my eyebrows singed from standing too close to those superheated engines. I watched these

great monsters spitting steam, literally with fire in their bellies and the brute's body was lined with passenger and compartment cars, affectionately known as 'dog boxes'. During the war years, thousands of soldiers passed through Werris Creek, briefly stopping for a snack and a scalding hot cuppa presented in a tin mug at the Railway Refreshment Rooms. Soon afterwards someone blew a whistle and quickly those soldiers disappeared back inside the monster's body, doors banged shut, another whistle shrilled and the giant locomotive lurched forward, puffing and panting on its unhurried journey to Queensland.

Afterwards I noticed a man in a blue uniform collecting those tin mugs and pouring the unused contents back into a large urn.

It was exciting for me watching the restored 3642 (introduced in 1925) refill her water tank as is necessary, then gently hook up to her little sister as we chugged off to Robertson, past a battery of cameras and photographers scattered along the line.

Throwing open the window I tried to grab a camera shot of the engines rounding a bend but alas, a piece of coal about as big as a fist lodged in my eye.....ah, the romance of steam train travel!!



## Archives opening hours

Opening hours are as follows:

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

## Newsletter

Newsletter Deadline is **25th** of every month. It may be necessary to hold submissions after this date till the following month.

## June Luncheon Guest Speaker

### Elizabeth Burness

Elizabeth delighted us in 2009 with her wonderful presentation *There's history in the bottom drawers* that showcased her vintage clothing collection. She returns to bring us more history with a difference.

**Flapper Fashion** takes us back to the 1920s and 30s and shows that women changed in that era, not only in appearance, but also in attitude. Seniors may remember snippets from that time, but for people of Elizabeth's generation, born in the 1940s, it provokes enormous admiration for young people from that time.



Because she is delving into the past, Elizabeth calls her presentations 'historical' - but as a storyteller she tries to choose material which will bring back memories for those in our community who have enough years behind them to remember!

Elizabeth uses her collection to evoke emotions. She encourages her audience to appreciate her collection with their senses; to smell, to touch and to see. She values any 'use-wear' that is apparent on the clothing. The stains and the mends are used to imagine the life of the garment before it came into her hands.

Elizabeth studied history at Melbourne University, where she preferred subjects with colour rather than those emphasising dates, economics or politics. She was also studying art at this time, and after two years of teaching, became an Education Officer at the National Gallery of Victoria. Here her great interests in art, history (particularly Australian), fashion, lifestyle changes, interesting artists, all were catered for in the nine years she spent there.

**June Luncheon: Thursday 27 June 2013,  
12.00 for 12.30pm at Exeter Village Hall**

A two-course lunch with juice, tea and coffee will be prepared by the Society's Master Chefs. BYO wine.

Cost: \$25 per head.

Exeter Village Hall was built as the School of Arts in 1902. There is plenty of parking adjacent to the hall. Book early, as this will be a popular event and is sure to be not only informative, but great fun.

## Kangaloon centenary celebrations

The Kangaloon community will this year celebrate the centenary of Kangaloon Hall in its present location. In the past 100 years the hall has been the focal point for many community events including weddings, parties, dances and concerts.



**Kangaloon Red Cross Society outside the Hall in WWI**

It was used for meetings of the Kangaloon Motor Transport Company, the Kangaloon Patriotic Society, the local branch of the Red Cross, and many other local organisations including sporting clubs and special interest groups. The Kangaloon Public school holds its annual Christmas concert in the hall as well as other school-related activities.

The Kangaloon Hall committee is planning a charity auction and dinner on 12 October, while a 'Back to Kangaloon Day' will be held on 2 November to which all present and past residents are invited to attend.



**Arch Simpson's bullock team hauls a load of grain at East Kangaloon, c1890**

A book containing much of the recorded history of East Kangaloon and Kangaloon will be launched at the hall during the celebrations. An historic exhibition of photos and memorabilia will also be on display.

Anyone who is willing to share their photos, memories or documents relating to Kangaloon's history, or of their experiences of the hall itself, is asked to contact Society member Bernadette Mahony.

Email: [bernadette\\_mahony@hotmail.com](mailto:bernadette_mahony@hotmail.com)  
or call 0402198294.



## Two of the Southern Highlands 1200: Donald and George McBean

### Donald McBean

*Regimental number: 2826, AIF  
Enlisted: 13 January 1916. Unit  
Name: 1<sup>st</sup> Australian Light Horse  
Regiment, 19th Reinforcement.  
Embarked from Sydney: RMS  
'Mongolia' on 8 July 1916.  
Returned to Australia 13 March  
1919. Medals: British War  
Medal, Victory Medal.*

Born in Sydney in 1880 of Scottish immigrant parents, Donald became a blacksmith and keen horseman and in 1903 married Maud Lucas. They had two daughters, Doris and Clarice, and lived on a property at Mittagong in the years prior to the outbreak of World War I.

His brother George, younger by six years, who also lived in the Mittagong area, enlisted at the start of war and was killed in action at Gallipoli in 1915, aged 29. This may have prompted the 35 year-old Donald to answer the call put out because Australia was in desperate need of fighting soldiers in the Middle East.

The names of Donald and George McBean are on the Honour Roll at the Mittagong War Memorial. One of Donald's other brothers, Harrie, also served in the Australian Light Horse Regiment. Happily both Donald and Harrie came back from the war.

Donald enlisted in January 1916 and served in the Middle East. During his time there he carried a camera in his kitbag, with which he amassed an amazing collection of photos. As there weren't many cameras in the WW I trenches, his collection is a rare snapshot of the campaign.

An article in the *Sun Herald* of 21 April this year featured his story and the significance of his photos, particularly now as the Anzac centenary in 2015 draws near. It was Glenda Miskelly, a Mittagong resident and member of our Society, who supplied the story to the paper. Glenda is a descendant of Donald, being the granddaughter of his daughter Doris.

Throughout her childhood years, Glenda and her sister Judith used to play with the photos which were housed in a chocolate box. Now identified as a historical treasure-trove, Glenda is cataloguing them for the family and for the district. They add to the information being collected about the Southern Highlands 1200, the district's serving men and women in WW I, many of whom made the ultimate sacrifice for their country.



The 1st Australian Light Horse Regiment (ALH) was raised from NSW recruits at Rosebury in August 1914. It was one of three regiments of the 1<sup>st</sup> Light Horse Brigade, the first mounted formation committed by Australia to the war.

Although considered unsuitable for the Gallipoli operation, the regiment was nevertheless deployed (without their horses), to reinforce the infantry there and landed on 12 May, 1915. While for the most part playing a defensive role, they did take part in the offensive on Turkish positions and, of 200 men involved, 147 became casualties. The remaining regiment then left for Egypt in December 1915 where it joined the ANZAC Mounted Division, which was under the command of Lt-Gen Sir Harry Chauvel.

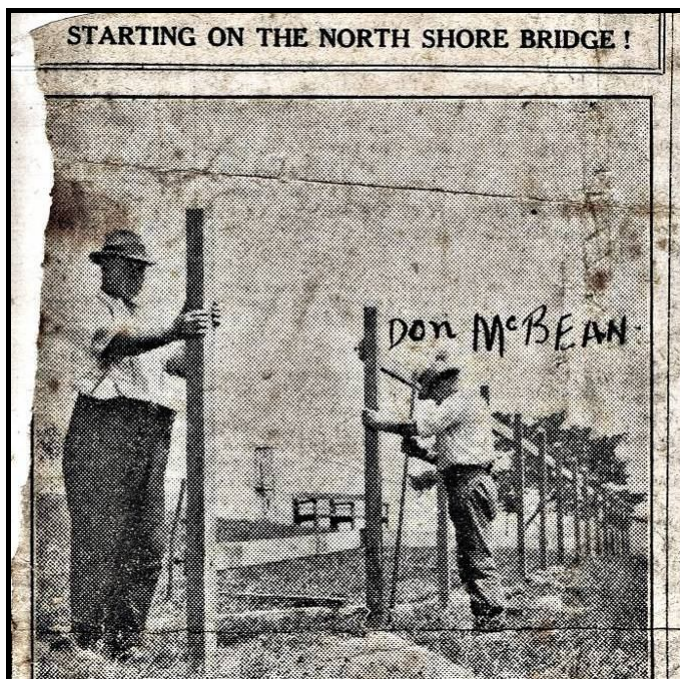
Between January and May 1916, the regiment successfully defended the Suez Canal and fought in the victorious battle of Romani. After a short rest it rejoined the Allied advance across the Sinai and was engaged in the abortive second battle of Gaza in April 1917. Gaza finally fell in November that same year and the Turkish position in southern Palestine collapsed. The 1<sup>st</sup> ALH regiment participated in the advance to Jaffa that followed and was then committed to operations to clear and occupy the Western bank of the Jordan River.



One of Donald's photos titled "smoko" (Donald on right)

The final Allied offensive of the campaign was conducted along the Mediterranean coast during September 1918 with the ANZAC Mounted Division taking part in the campaign east of the Jordan aimed at Amman. Turkey surrendered on 30 October 1918. The 1<sup>st</sup> ALH regiment sailed for Australia on 12 March 1919 without their horses, which were either shot or transferred to Indian cavalry units.

Donald returned home to his wife and daughters at Robinson Street, Mittagong. During the depression years of the 1930s the family resided in the Sydney suburbs of Arncliffe and Carlton and Donald gained employment on the construction of Sydney Harbour Bridge, commencing from the turning of the first sod.



His photo appeared in the *Sydney Morning Herald*. At some time after this (probably when the Bridge was completed and the work ran out) he and Maud moved to Tuggerawang on the NSW Central Coast (in those days it was a rural area) and Donald would swim his horses in Tuggerah Lake.

Donald McBean had no sons. He nicknamed his two daughters 'Bobbie' and 'Billie' and the nickname stuck for Glenda's grandmother.



**Maud McBean with daughters  
Doris 'Bobbie' (right) and Clarice 'Billie'**

While performing as a musician who played the piano, the piano accordion and sang the popular songs of the day, Doris used 'Bobbie' as her stage name. As an entertainer in the 1930s and 40s, even though by that time she was married to Joseph Walker, she was always known as 'Miss' Bobbie Walker. As a result of Bobbie's touring schedules, Glenda's mother Dawn spent many of her childhood years being cared for by her grandparents Donald and Maud McBean.

Donald died on 12 January 1953, leaving Maud his wife a widow for 15 years. She died in 1968 aged 82, one week before her daughter Doris also died at the age of 64. Doris (Bobbie) had been living in Bargo for several years preceding this, performing occasionally at functions for places such as the Picton and Mittagong Bowling Clubs.

### First Fleeters

As mentioned, Glenda's great grandmother's maiden name was Maud Lucas. It has recently been established that her forebears arrived in the Colony of New South Wales on the First Fleet. She was (and therefore Glenda is) descended from not *one* but *three* First Fleet convict ancestors, namely Nathaniel Lucas, Olivia Gascoigne and James Squire.

Nathaniel Lucas was transported on the *Scarborough* and Olivia Gascoigne on the *Lady Penrhyn*. After arriving in Sydney Cove in January 1788 they were part of the handpicked contingent that was sent in March that same year to settle Norfolk Island. Eleven of their thirteen children were born on the island including their fourth child (and first son) William. William Lucas married Sarah, the daughter of First Fleeter James Squire who arrived in 1788 on the *Charlotte*. William Lucas and Sarah Squire are Maud's great-grandparents and she is Glenda's. As Glenda says, the generations seem very close when expressed in that way.

Unfortunately, the emergence of this family history has come too late for Glenda to have the opportunity to discuss the details with her great-grandmother Maud, grandmother Doris and her mother Dawn.

However, what is clear is that the story is one of honourable, hardworking people who overcame adversity to establish themselves in the fledgling colony and, four generations on, the trooper who married a girl named Maud and rode away to war.

◆ Glenda Miskelly and her husband Paul moved to Mittagong in 2007 and their love of all things historical prompted them to join the BDH&FHS. Glenda's family has had a connection with Mittagong since the turn of the last century and so, to Paul and Glenda, it seemed an ideal place to settle when relocating following retirement.

With thanks to Glenda for supplying the information and photographs used in this article



## The early settlers of Canyon Leigh

*Part One of a 2-part series compiled by P Morton*

South of Berrima on the western side of the Hume Highway is an area of the Wingecarribee Shire known as Canyonleigh. It extends west to the Wollondilly River and is bounded in the south by Uringalla Creek and by the Wingecarribee River to the north.

Although early censuses do not indicate a large Aboriginal population in the Berrima district, throughout the Canyonleigh area there is much evidence of Aboriginal habitation. Caves and shelters with drawings and artefacts have been found and, in the creeks and gullies, whetstones used to sharpen primitive tools are still evident.

In 1834, on a map drawn up by the Surveyor General, Major Mitchell, this 90 square miles of secluded valleys ringed by steep granite and sandstone hills was named Wombat Brush.

The present name Canyonleigh became officially allocated in 1970 by the NSW Geographical Names Board and its choice of spelling caused considerable controversy. The following outline of the area's settlement will explain why.

It was through this area that, under the supervision of Dr Charles Throsby, a southwest extension of the first cart road from Picton was constructed in 1820. This section headed west from Sutton Forest along basically the same line as the current Canyonleigh Road that commences at Hoddles Crossroad on the Hume Highway. After about 10kms it turned more to the south, crossed Paddy's River and proceeded to the Cookbundoon Ranges near present day Marulan.

By the 1830s Hannibal Macarthur had taken up land on the Wollondilly and established Arthursleigh, an extensive estate. Other settlers ran cattle and sheep and over time increased their holdings, having access to thousands of acres.

The cart track through the Wombat Brush and across Paddy's River became a major route for travellers and bullock wagons.



**Richard Murray's bullock team crosses Paddy's River near Canyon Leigh, early 1900s.** Photo: Grahame Tooth

The Wombat Brush's rich stands of timber attracted fellers and their families and traces of old sawmills still remain. Many descendants of these early settlers still live in the district including the Murray, Carter, Ellsmore, Casburn and Quigg families.

Due to their isolation, settlers had to be self-sufficient, relying on orchards and vegetable gardens. They made the arduous trip into town as little as possible and bought supplies in bulk. Life was tough but families enjoyed their social outings to visit neighbours, tennis parties and woolshed dances.

ONE of the earliest settler families were the Carters. In 1833 Benjamin and Ann Carter, with three children, arrived in the colony as free settlers.

Born in Nottinghamshire, England in 1787, Benjamin came from a family of Sherwood Forest farmers and was employed as overseer at John Nicholson's substantial *Newbury* estate near Sutton Forest. Benjamin then took up land at Emu Creek (now Megalong, Canyonleigh) in 1836 where in a beautiful valley he built a substantial stone house named Sherwood.

Eventually the Carters expanded their holdings to include the Nandi and Bangadilly properties and the family prospered until it ranked amongst the largest landholders in the district. After the deaths of Benjamin and Ann, their eldest son Edward took over the estate and by the 1880s had added properties including the Gap, Tugalong, Evandale and Lake Edward at Crookwell.



**Lord Carrington at annual kangaroo shoot, Nandi, c1885**

An annual kangaroo hunt was held at Nandi, with horsemen coming from far and wide to join the three-day event that sometimes had the colony's Governor in attendance. Forty or so horsemen would set out from the Royal Hotel at Sutton Forest for Nandi, ten miles to the west.

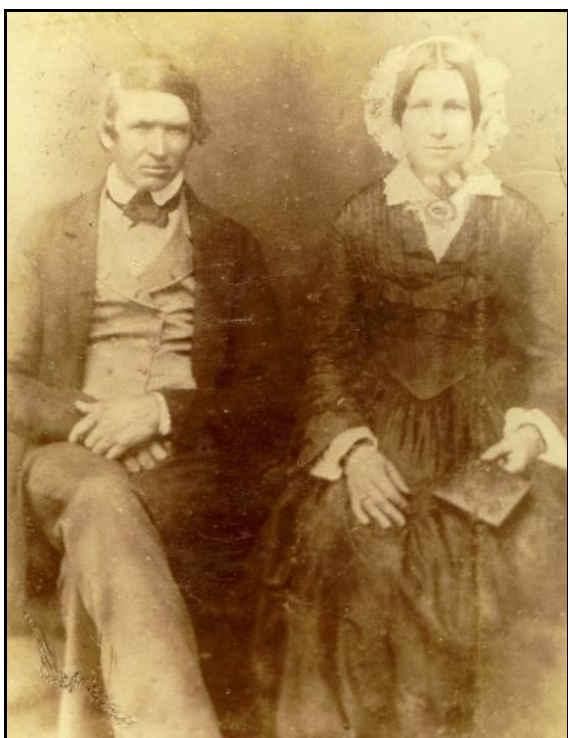
ANOTHER settler family to have a major influence in the area came about with the arrival in the 1830s of James Murray, a young man who commenced work on the Carter property and took a liking to their daughter Jane. Despite her parents' strong objection to the union, their love blossomed.

As soon as she turned twenty-one, the young lovers married. The wedding took place at All Saints, Sutton Forest in February 1843 and on the following day their first child, John James, was born.

The early life of the husband James is recounted in a Murray family history book (published by Grahame Tooth) from which the following is taken.

The father of James was Kennedy Murray who grew up in poverty in Glasgow, was convicted of theft and transported to Sydney Cove in 1792. Eventually freed, he married Ann Parker and they had several children, including James who was born in 1819 at Windsor. In 1820 Ann was admitted to the Castle Hill lunatic asylum and she remained institutionalised for the rest of her life. As Kennedy was a troubled man, the boys were placed in Cabramatta Orphanage.

Later Kennedy found another partner and went to Tasmania where he prospered. His abandoned son James left the orphanage in 1832, aged 13, and his search for work led him to the Carters at Emu Creek.



After their marriage, James and Jane Murray lived at various places in the Berrima District but eventually settled at Murrimba, located on the Great Southern Road (now Hume Highway) at Paddy's River, where two hotels and a blacksmith's shop serviced the needs of travellers.

James found work as a bullock team driver taking provisions to the goldfields in Victoria. He also won a contract in the 1850s to construct the first bridge over Paddy's River (later washed away). He and Jane established a general store at Murrimba that did a flourishing trade despite the on-going prevalence of bushrangers; on one occasion Ben Hall's gang robbed the store of 13 pounds in silver and 36 pounds worth of goods.

They had another eight children: Jane (who died at age 12), William, Richard, Charles Joseph, Edward, Benjamin Henry, James and Solomon Kennedy.

Shortly after the birth in 1862 of their youngest son, James suffered a fall from his bullock wagon. This caused him to suffer from mania and brought on epilepsy probably inherited from his mother.

Tragically in 1864 he had to be escorted by his eldest son to Gladesville and admitted to the Tarban Creek Mental Asylum. He was only forty-four and, between fits, a normal man taken from his family and locked away. He became feeble and died in 1879.

Jane meanwhile had the daunting task of raising the younger boys on her own. She decided to move from Murrimba to lower down on Paddy's River near its junction with the Wollondilly River. She chose a location fronting the old road to Goulburn opened by Charles Throsby in 1820, along which cattle and sheep were driven almost daily.

The Crown land Jane acquired included a steep-sided gully or 'canyon' overlooked by the house she built, so she named her property Canyon Leigh - 'canyon' being an Old English spelling of the word in Spanish.

By 1885 this remarkable woman had acquired 4000 acres on which she ran horses, cows and 1200 sheep. With her son Richard she established a Post Office that operated out of their home and also made four acres of land available for a school.

In 1890 her son James gave a portion of their Canyon Leigh land for use as a school. Prior to that schooling had to be carried out on the properties.

In the Sutton Forest Public School Centenary booklet of 1980, Jean McKern recounts that for 30 years children walked or rode to take lessons in the one-roomed weatherboard building at Canyon Leigh. One student remembers they only wore their boots in school, taking them off to walk to and from home. On frosty mornings they would warm their feet in the urine from the cattle. From the 1920s children went by bus to school at Sutton Forest. *To be continued*



**At Canyon Leigh, the Clarke family held regular social gatherings in their barn.** Photo: Wendy Quigg

## DIARY DATES

THURSDAY	13 JUN	Management Committee Meeting	
THURSDAY	27 JUN	Monthly General Meeting	<b>12:00 noon</b> at Exeter Village Hall
THURSDAY	11 JUL	Management Committee Meeting	
THURSDAY	25 JUL	Monthly General Meeting	<b>2:00pm</b> at the Historical Society
THURSDAY	8 AUG	Management Committee Meeting	
THURSDAY	22 AUG	Monthly General Meeting	<b>2:00pm</b> at the Historical Society

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## THE BERRIMA DISTRICT HISTORICAL AND FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

is proudly supported by the following organizations that encourage the work of our Society in collecting, preserving and maintaining the history of the Southern Highlands.

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