***Berry Landcare Town Crier article July 2020***

**History of Rural Subdivision Berry.**

The map of Berry available on line with <SIX Maps> shows the property boundaries of the Berry country side. It also gives clue to the History of land development since the arrival of European settlers. The initial development was the 10,000 acres of land known as the Berry Estates. The northern boundary is Boundary Road in Broughton Vale.

The country north of the estate was broken up into blocks of 400 Acres that were taken up by later settlers. Most of the blocks were isolated by the Berry Estates from the trade outlets of the road to Kiama and Broughton Creek. Over time laneways were granted by the Berry Estates. These often took the name of the Landholder they serviced: Tomlins Tindalls, Hitchcock, Schofields, Strong, Andersons, Croziers etc. Any part of the terrain that was level was used for Dairying necessitating clearance of trees. Those steep unsuitable parts were eventually repossessed by the banks and remained as old growth Forests.

The Dairying industry after the Second World War introduced a Can Quota system. This was “rationalised“ at a later date and the small holders were compelled to sell their Quota to the larger Dairies. The smaller holdings were unsuitable for farming and the owners demanded the right to subdivide the farms. The council allowed the larger blocks to Subdivide 3 5Acre blocks of the original holding. This can be seen in Six-maps as housing spread along the Lanes. It was realised that 5 acres was too large for the average Pitt Street Farmer so the subdivisions allowed were reduced to 1.5 acres. The long term consequence of all these subdivisions is that the forest area of the upper Escarpment has spread down to the river flats.

Recent trends of development driven in part by the new highway, have put pressure on the countryside development as more people wish to share in the beauty of the Berry Landscape. Changes in the way we use this beautiful part of the South Coast have been going on since the aboriginals moved in from the now underwater coastal plain 3000 years ago. We should be concerned, to quote Oscar Wilde because “Yet each man kills the thing he loves.”