



Blue Mountains Family History Society Inc.

Newsletter

DATE: August 2026

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Hello everyone,

Our next meeting of the Family History Society is on **Friday, 14 August 2026 at 10am** in the small hall behind the Presbyterian Church, Macquarie Road, Springwood. Members and visitors will be warmly welcomed. Morning tea is available for \$2 for tea/coffee and a biscuit.

This month's talk will be presented by **Neil Renaud of the Huguenot Society of Australia** on 'Revealing the Huguenots. Their history, their diaspora, their descendants, and my own discoveries.'

Biography – Neil Renaud



Neil is a retired librarian, having worked in TAFE college libraries for over 29 years. He was Librarian-in-Charge at Penrith and Nepean-Kingswood Colleges. Educated at the Universities of Sydney and NSW, Neil has a degree and two diplomas. He is married, living at North Richmond NSW with his wife Jill. They have two sons, David and Ben, and two grandchildren.

Originally from Belmore, then Penrith, Neil has lived in the Hawkesbury area since 1996. He began family history research about 15 years ago, with the encouragement of Joy, his mother-in-law. A long list of discoveries has included more extensive German ancestry than expected, previously unknown family tragedies, and French Huguenot ancestry. He has written much on what he has discovered, for newsletters and other publications.

Neil has been a committee member of the Huguenot Society of Australia since 2019 and maintains its website. He helps arrange the technology for its presentations and has given a number of presentations to the Society himself. He has been secretary of the Colo Shire Family History Group since 2017, for whom he has also given a number of presentations, and has organised many activities. Neil is secretary of the Friends of Belmont House and either assists with or conducts guided tours there.

His other big interest has been the sport of tennis. He was on the committee of Nepean District Tennis Association for nearly 46 continuous years (1974 to 2019), in the roles of president, secretary, publicity officer and tournament director. He was made a life member in 1989 and still plays tennis socially.

Neil has written two books on local historical topics and one day intends to write a full account of his own family history, fully update his online family tree, and write the history of the Nepean District Tennis Association.

Neil has previously presented at the Conference of German-Australian History and Heritage in Adelaide (2018), the Connections Australasian Conference in Brisbane (2025) and the NSW & ACT Annual Family History Conference at Fairy Meadow (2025). He has been awarded a Penrith City Council Wall of Achievement Award (1998), an Australian Sports Medal (2000), Penrith Valley Sports Foundation's Jim Anderson Memorial Award (2011), and a Tennis NSW Certificate of Achievement for service to tennis (2012).

Trade table

Our trade table will be operating again this month, so please donate any unwanted good quality items to the table display. To purchase items, please drop some cash in the Society's moneybox, then take it. Remember that if your donated items don't sell, you'll need to take them home.

Publishing opportunity: The Explorers' Tree

We are short of articles for the October 2026 issue. Please consider submitting an article for publishing. It can be a researched article, or it can be a family story. You can submit with images or without images.

Please send your articles in Word format to either j.koperberg@bigpond.com or xploretree@yahoo.com.au

Street stall

A street stall will be held on **Saturday, 12 September** in front of the Springwood Presbyterian Church at which the framed photo of the Grose Valley kindly donated by Kate Doyle will be raffled.



Donations for the street stall can be brought to the meeting on **14 August** or the **11 September** meeting or on the morning of **12 September**. Assistance on the day of the street stall to set up will be appreciated.

Library news

Our volunteers are available to assist with your family history research:

Springwood Library on Thursdays

from 10am to 1pm

and

Katoomba Library on the second and fourth Tuesday

from 10am to 12 noon

To wrap up this month's Newsletter:

The end of year lunch has been booked for **Friday, 11 December** at the Alexandra Hotel in Leura.