



Blue Mountains Family History Society Inc.

Newsletter

DATE: October 2026

Patrons

Mayor, City of the
Blue Mountains
Federal Member for
Macquarie
State Member for the
Blue Mountains

Office Bearers

President

Ann Krasny

Vice President

Anne Devrell

Secretary

Helen Allan

Treasurer, Research & Members' Interests,

Public Officer

Ian Kendall

Committee

Helen Allan
Marilyn Deitiker
Anne Devrell
Ian Kendall
Tanya Kirk
Ann Krasny
Alison Tissington
Chris Wenman

Coordinators

Explorers' Tree

Editor: Jan Koperberg
Layout/publishing:
John Arnold
Proofreader: Ian Kendall

Web Master

Ian Kendall

Librarians

Ann Krasny
Alison Tissington

Library Roster

Helen Allan

Newsletter Editor

Kate Santleben

Hello everyone,

Our next meeting of the Family History Society is on **Friday, 9 October 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.

Ian Kendall will be presenting a talk on **Using Wiki-Tree**. WikiTree (wikitree.com) is an amazing site where advanced genealogists and casual historians collaborate on a global family tree for our cousins and descendants to enjoy for FREE.

WikiTree has been growing for 17 years from the grassroots up. It is now the most accurate and trusted collaborative family tree. There are 1,407,014 community members and 46,241,562 ancestors and cousins on our tree, 16,731,421 of which have DNA connections.

It's all free! Everything on WikiTree is free for everyone, forever. Expenses are covered by unobtrusive advertisements. Members who sign the Honor Code don't even see most of the ads but enjoy member benefits that cost money on other websites.

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.

Vicki Edmunds announced the **Bob Howard and Coolgardie Safe Awards** at last month's meeting. Congratulations to the following winners:

The Bob Howard Award

Winner: *Pride and Prejudice* by **Chris Moon** about a dairy in 1870s Surry Hills in Sydney.

Runner Up: *My Ancestral Mothers. Fourth Generation: Mary Ann Murphy (nee) Taylor Martin (1837-1880)* by **Patricia Liddell** about a baby girl born at the Parramatta Female Factory and her life thereafter.

The Coolgardie Safe Award

Winner: 'Mum and Dad' by **Pat Southgate** about Pat and her family's emigration to Australia.

Runner Up: 'The Streets of Sydney' by **Lynne Tocher** about door-to-door market research.

Street stall

The street stall held on in September raised \$150.45. Thank you to all those who contributed to this welcome boost to the Society's funds.

Woodford Academy Open Day

On **17 October**, the Society will have an information table at the Open Day. We are asking for a few volunteers (?) to help on the day, and Ian will be giving a presentation on the BMFHS following their own speaker at 1pm. A wonderful opportunity to promote the Blue Mountains Family History Society.

Blue Mountains Writers' Festival Family History Workshop

'Writing family history' will be run by Cynthia Banham on Friday, 30 October from 9.30am-12.30pm at the Blue Mountains Cultural Centre, 30 Parke St, Katoomba.

- Do you have a story lurking in your family history that won't let you go? Join author, journalist and lawyer **Cynthia Banham** to learn how to turn those unearthed family secrets into a story that will thrill readers and expand your own understanding of your past.
- Where do you start? How do you write honestly even when the subject matter is difficult? And what happens if the story you think you're looking for turns out not to be the one you find? This hands-on workshop explores the unexpected joys and challenges of a well-researched memoir, and the pitfalls to watch for along the way.
- **Cynthia Banham** is a writer, journalist and lawyer. She's the author *A Certain Light: A Memoir of Family and Loss and Hope*. Her most recent book is *Mother Shadow: A Meditation on Maternal Inheritance*.

To book: <https://www.bluemountainwritersfestival.com.au/workshops>

The Explorers' Tree

The latest issue of *The Explorers' Tree* will be ready for the October meeting. Jan Koperberg has been Editor of the Society's journal for some years and has, during that time, edited excellent editions. In Jan's own words, 'I originally took it on for 12 months, but that grew! I've been happy doing the editing, but it is time to hand it on.'

Consequently, we need a new editor. **The next edition will be March 2027.** The task of Editor has been the compiling and editing of the journal, distribution to members and mailing out copies to members who have chosen a mailed copy and to other family history groups who share their newsletters and journals with us. A digital copy of the journal is also sent to those family history groups who prefer this.

The layout and contact with the printer have been done by John Arnold. Printed copies are then mailed to the Editor for distribution.

These tasks are onerous. They could be split up:

1. Collation and editing
2. Distribution and mailing
3. Distribution of digital copies by email

This could be carried out by a team effort or other suggestions are welcome. Let's discuss the options at the October General Meeting. Please give serious consideration to being part of proud history of *The Explorers' Tree*.

Society's AGM

Next month's meeting of the Family History Society will be held on **Friday, 13 November at 10am** in our usual meeting place, the small hall behind the Presbyterian Church. It will be time to find out if our Society can continue for another year at our AGM. All Office Bearer and Committee positions will become vacant and await volunteers to fill them. Please speak to a committee member to submit your nomination.

Membership Fees Next year's annual fees can be prepaid if that suits you. \$50 for an individual or \$60 for a joint or family membership. Remember that you will also need to complete your annual membership form which is available [online from our website](#) or Facebook page or pick one up from Ian at the meeting. Also, there is an additional postage fee if you prefer to have your 'Explorer' magazine posted rather than picking it up at our meetings. Our mailing fee is \$15.

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**

End-of-year lunch

The Society's last meeting for 2026 has been booked for **Friday, 11 December** for 12 noon at the Alexandra Hotel in Leura. The hotel is located within walking distance of Leura Railway Station which makes it accessible via public transport. If travelling by car, parking is available adjacent to the venue.

To view the a-la-carte menu: <https://alexandrahotel.com.au/dining/>

The room, kindly booked by Helen, holds up to 50, so partners are welcome. Final numbers are required by the hotel so please **advise Helen by 3 December if you are attending and how many.**
hfraserallan@gmail.com