



MEDIA RELEASE

27 June 2019

Family secret uncovers Hannah Watts connection

The secret story of a convict who married Melton's beloved midwife Hannah 'Grannie' Watts has been penned in a historical biography which will be launched at Melton Library next week.

Author John Watts chronicled the life of William Rose Watts after he accidentally discovered their family connection.

William's relation to the family was previously hidden for generations due to shame over the family's convict history. It was uncovered when John researched his ancestry ahead of a family reunion.

John found that William, born in Essex in 1811, was sentenced to 14 years transportation for stealing six ceramic mugs from his employer.

William arrived in Van Demons Land in 1831. In 1863, he married beloved Melton midwife, Hannah Watts (nee Burns), and later, they had a daughter and a son together.

City of Melton Mayor Cr Bob Turner welcomed the biography as a new insight into Melton's most iconic midwife and her family.

"Through William Rose Watts' biography, we have an opportunity to learn more about life in Melton's past, and life as a part of Hannah Watts' family," Cr Turner said.

Six Stolen Mugs, the Biography of William Rose Watts, will be launched at 10am on Friday 5 July at Melton Library.

Author, John Watts will speak about his findings and subsequent book at the event.

A Thriving Community Where Everyone Belongs



MEDIA RELEASE

Book launch (FREE event)

What: Six Stolen Mugs, the biography of William Rose Watts
Who: Author, John Watts
Date: Friday 5 July
Time: 10am
Location: Melton Library and Learning Hub, McKenzie Street, Melton

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**Media interview and photo opportunities with John are available upon request*

Melton City Council media enquiries (not for publication): Kylie Kitchen – Media and Communications Officer on (03) 9747 7132.