

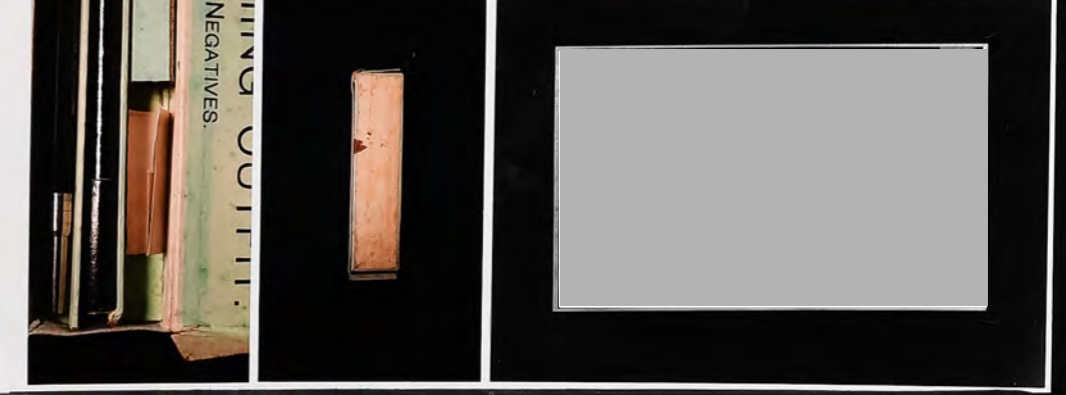
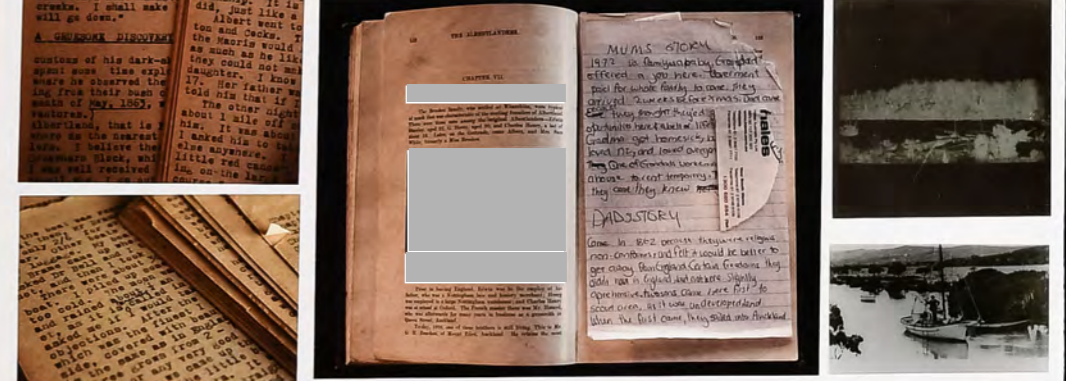
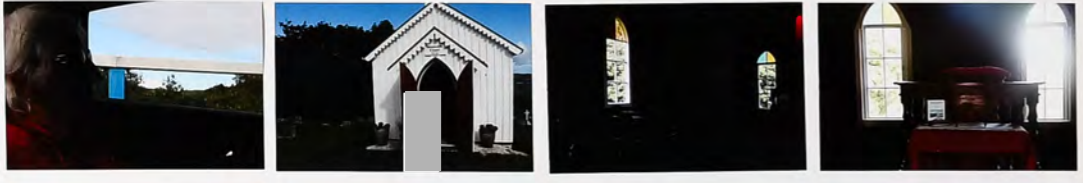
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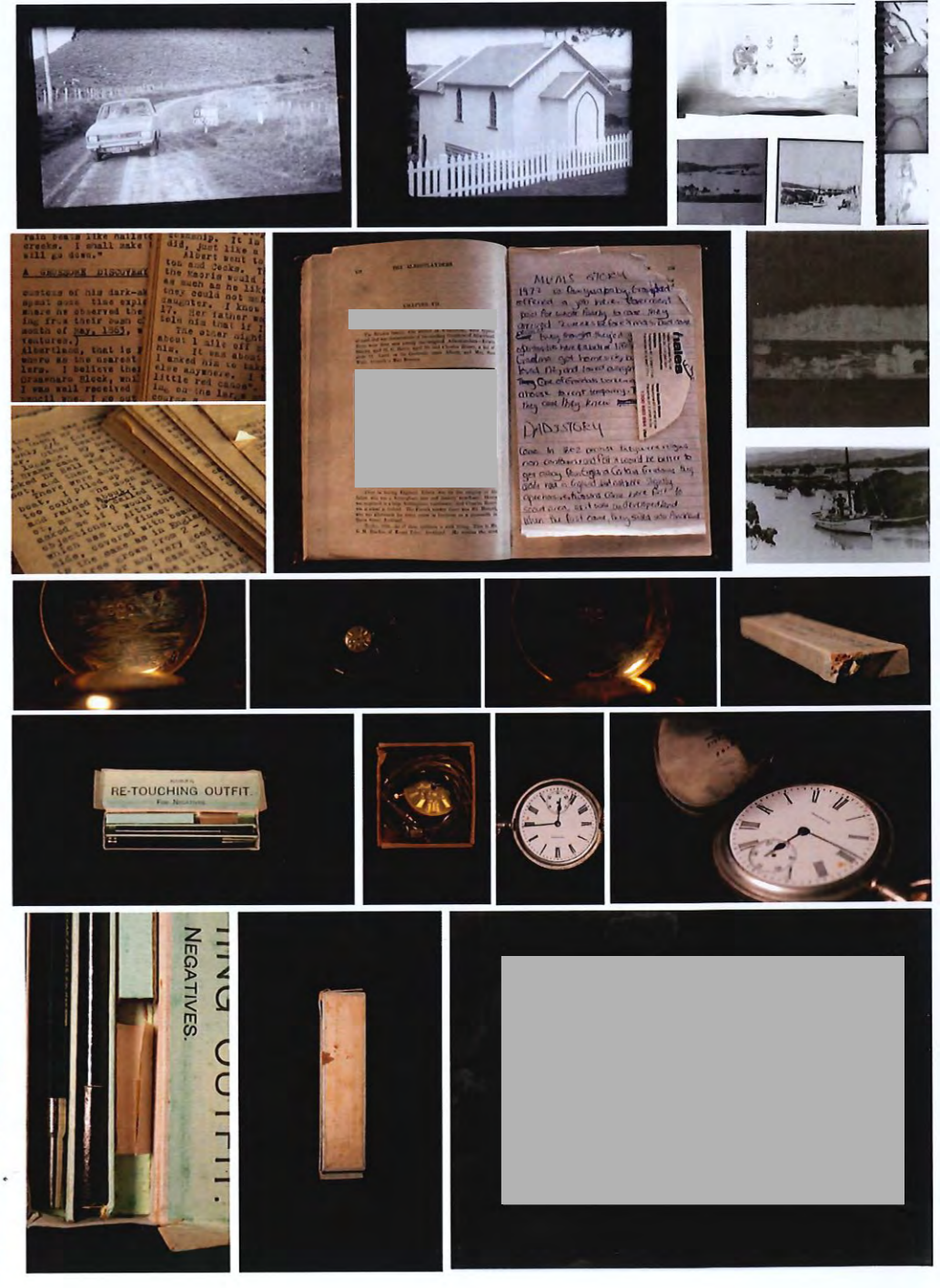
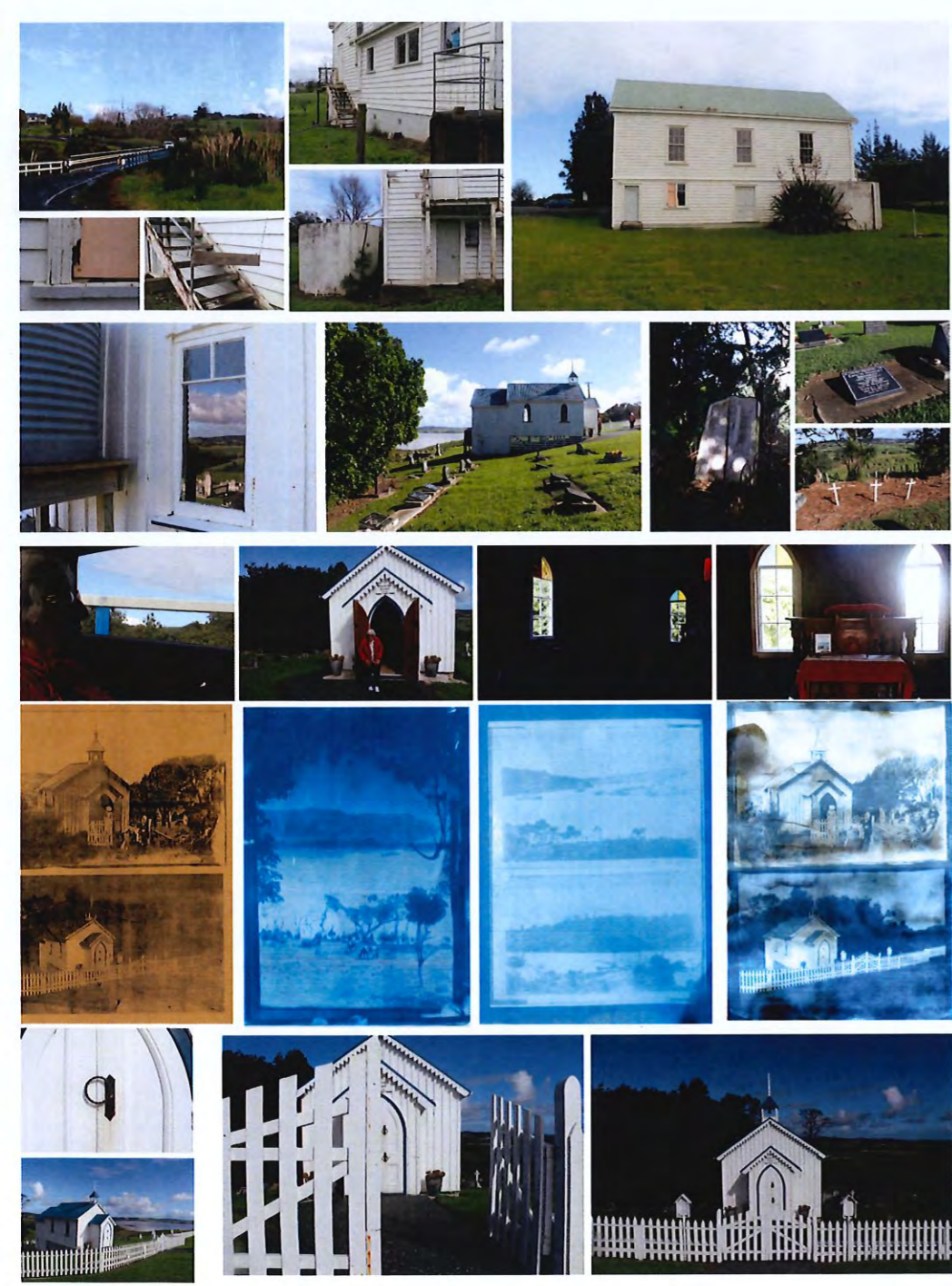


Scholarship Visual Arts 2023

93310 Photography

SCHOLARSHIP EXEMPLAR





Why did they move to an uninhabitable isolated bush?

The movement to Port Albert was initiated in 1861 by a man named William Rawson Brame for his group of religious nonconformists who had seen religious settlements grow rather successful in other parts of New Zealand, like Otago. I would equate modern day nonconformists to the spiritualist hippy movement, but back in 1861 subsections of Christianity were no small deal. Not being religious, I didn't really understand what this meant, Britannica defines it as being 'all protestants who have dissented from Anglicanism- Baptists, Presbyterians, Methodists...' I don't know what subsection they were from, but I do know that the Brookes family came to New Zealand for religious freedom. This movement became highly popular with many willing to pay the adult fee of five shillings. Five shillings is equivalent to about 1/4 of a pound, meaning that with inflation rates from the last 160 odd years the fare would be about £24.59 given that a pound is worth roughly \$98.34 today. Unfortunately for the Albertlanders, life would prove to be extremely tough, and Brame's plan was a failure. When they arrived in Auckland it had sad gravel roads, most settler houses rudimentary for their English standards, many not even having proper access to water. Life would only get worse for the 1500 out of 3000 who continued their journey north where they expected to find the beginnings of what was promised to them to be a proper town to rival Auckland. Instead, they found bush, and a murky brown river, with no roads. Port Albert never was a bustling town, with the settlers having virtually no farming knowledge and their incompetence would have starved them if not for the good graces of the friendly welcoming Māori tribe Ngāi Whatua whom the settlers ended up having a good relationship with.



I am entirely interested in a town not many know about

When I was eight, my year four class was tasked with finding out our family's migration story to New Zealand, and presenting it on a board to our class. Other people talked about how they remember flying here on a plane, or how their grandparents met during a war and came here, and some had parents who migrated here in their childhoods. I knew that my mum was born in England, but her parents brought her and her two older siblings to [redacted] when she was an infant. On my dad's side, however, I knew nothing. They had been living here since forever although realistically in my little brain we had to be from somewhere.

So, my parents like me joined my investigation with full enthusiasm, finding information about my family and traveling. From this we went up north to [redacted] along a narrow dirt road with a small cemetery behind it. I remember being so excited to go to my family's chapel as it was my first real encounter with a religious building, I had never been inside of a church or chapel or anything of that nature before. The chapel was so well preserved, so loved and cared for with the shining white of the building, the deep blue of the roof; I tried to imagine what it would have been like for my family to sit in the narrow chapel pews and wondered how much time would have been spent here. How much time do people spend in church? I knew that people go to church on Sunday, but did they have to spend more time there too? I wondered if they went to church on weekdays too, and I wondered why or when my family stopped being religious.

We walked through the cemetery, and we looked at the graves of family members who died long ago. My Dad looked at his grandfather and grandmother's grave which was nearer to the front of the chapel. [redacted] shared a headstone. When I went there for my project, my nana asked if I'd taken pictures with the grandparents yet, I thought it was funny.

[redacted]

Recently, I remembered my dad saying that his father [redacted] had himself written out of a few things in [redacted]'s will as [redacted] refused to name his son [redacted] and continue the family name.

[redacted] There is no word to describe [redacted] except incredible. In the late [redacted] It was very unusual for a woman at the time to do this sort of thing. We have a newspaper cutout about her racing, stating that although it was unusual for a woman, she was very good leaving all the men she raced in the dust.

They are the last [redacted] to have been buried at [redacted] as I don't know where my Grandpa [redacted] was buried. Ever since my migration project when I was eight, me and my parents have made the effort to go up to [redacted] and visit the church every few years, the most recent one before this year was back in 2020.

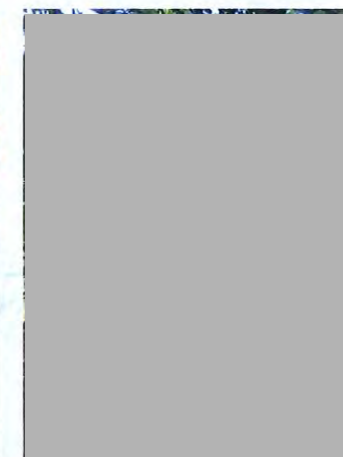


(above) 2014 trip to [redacted]
(right) 2017 trip to [redacted]

in both 2014 and 2020 we went back to the small museum in Wellsford detailing the Albertlanders experiences as early settlers. I loved all the photos and documentation and the people there seemed overjoyed that more people were a part of it, and as interested as us.



photographs I took of [redacted] in 2020



Why are there so many

In 1862 three brothers of the [redacted] Family were sent out to New Zealand on a ship named the [redacted] and my great-great-great Grandfather [redacted] came to Auckland after a 92 day journey to Auckland. From there they made their way up to what is now farmland and mangrove swamp but was promised to be a town to rival the great Auckland. Oh how wrong they were. The men suffered hard years, living in tents and having no knowledge of farming, oftentimes all their crops failed. The brothers and all other Albertlanders were very lucky that the local Maori chiefs of Ngati Whatua [redacted] and [redacted] were kind to the new settlers, for without them my family would have likely starved. They were just as lucky that they [redacted]

Nonetheless, the men still managed to have a good time in Port Albert despite its hardships, and their enthusiasm, or sometimes lack thereof is documented in a typed up manuscript copy of their letters we have at home. The [redacted] family was a big part of Port Albert, we bought over New Zealand's first [redacted] building, a small chapel merely assembled here in 1867. [redacted] Chapel still stands today in [redacted] near [redacted] if anyone wishes to brave the dirt road to go visit it. The surrounding grass, farmland and bush is well maintained, and one can see the homestead [redacted] built still lived in from the chapel but it is all very isolated from the outside world. [redacted] was the [redacted], his and his wife [redacted]'s photograph hanging in the chapel. Unfortunately the bungalow [redacted] built is long gone having moved to [redacted] a mere 20 or 30 years after Albertlands inception, and I don't know where it would have been in the first place. Whilst [redacted] both lived long lives, [redacted] the youngest of the three died tragically in [redacted]. He came over on the ship at the young age of 14, and stayed through the hardships of the first few years of Port Albert being nothing but a borderline uninhabitable bush, a far cry from the neatly farmed blocks of England. The day he passed, he was trying to cross the [redacted] trying to meet his sweetheart; he was advised not to go as it was a rough day and his boat tipped. The settlers discovered that drowning was a fairly common death in New Zealand for most of them were unable to swim, and it was most unfortunate that young [redacted] (nicknamed [redacted]) had to meet this same fate.

[redacted] met and married [redacted] who came out to New Zealand with her family on the [redacted], which arrived 9 days after the [redacted]. In our book about the pioneers, there is a section where [redacted] (or Mrs [redacted]) details some of her life and experiences in Port Albert, what stood out to me was how much she endured on her own and how tough that would have been. 'My husband had a position in Auckland offered to him, so we decided it was best for him to go, as our family was very large, although very young.' 'I was left to look after sheep, cattle, eight young children, three of them almost babies, and my husband's parents, both over 70 and his father not well at all. The crops were in the ground and I could not let my boys miss attending school.' This amount of work would ordinarily not be spoken about as she is a woman, so I feel these accounts are special. [redacted] lived out his days as a surveyor, and when he retired published a book in [redacted] about his life as a surveyor.

[redacted] on the other hand moved to Auckland, and my family has lived here ever since. His son, [redacted] lived in [redacted] which is in [redacted], I don't know particularly much about him. [redacted]'s son and my Great Grandfather [redacted] also lived in [redacted], this time on the beachfront, and married [redacted] who was known at her time for [redacted]. My Grandpa [redacted] lived in [redacted], which is a town near [redacted], he Married my Nana [redacted]. They had two children together: [redacted], and my Dad Anothony Lee (Tony). Stan found it so outrageous that Lee was unwilling to name his son Edwin [redacted] that he wrote [redacted] out of several things in his will.

I have always been interested in this story, this year I was able to learn so much more about them, I felt very connected to my past.

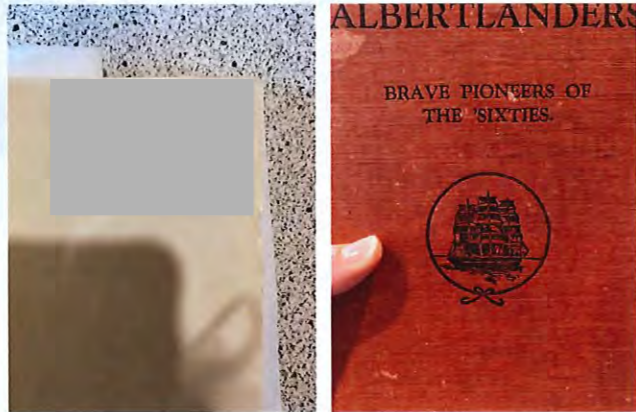
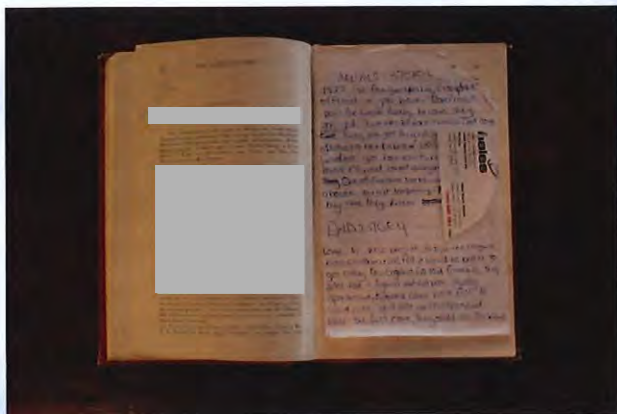


Family Tree
(helpful diagram for both of us)

BAS ED ON WHO IS MOST RELEVANT TO THE PORTALBERT STORY

Is it still hoarding if its cool?

My Dad has always said about our vast collections of stuff: 'it's not hoarding if it's cool.' We take pride in all our ancestors' belongings that we have and usually take care of them, having them as a part of our everyday lives. My Grandpa [redacted] rallied and collected vintage and veteran motorcycles, boosting a collection of about 25. He sold many of them before his death not wanting them to be a burden when he died, and my father has about eight now; the oldest being a 1911 BSA which was their first year of production. When my Dad was a kid he had Astrix and Footrot Flats comics, which I too read and loved. All of my Great Grandfather's photographs and diaries from his time in the New Zealand Navy in WW2. He even brought back a loaded artillery shell and a grenade. These were just normal parts of my everyday life and I didn't think much of owning these things. I do think that having these small things has impacted my everyday life; I remember trying to explain the books to my friends who had blank looks and showed no interest. I remember being surprised when other people did not have much memorabilia from their parents' childhood (why throw it away if it works?) As I've grown older I've realised that there are a lot more things that are in our possession, and they are a lot older than we realise.



Initially when I was about eight and researching the Port Albert settlers we pulled this book from our shelves, 'The Albertlanders: Great Pioneers of the (18)60s'. A whole chapter is dedicated to The [redacted] Family and our journey and life in Port Albert with excerpts from the [redacted]. I have read parts of it, but never the whole thing. It was given to either [redacted], son of [redacted] in 1927.



A couple of months ago my Nana came over for tea again and with her was a small but well made cardboard box. Inside were two pocket watches. One was silver with the second hand and class cover missing; this belonged to [redacted] and we could not get it working. The other watch, however, was something quite special. It was gold, with a cover to flip down to see the watch face, revealing a stunning intricate design inside. The coil is even more special, beautifully woven with human hair and a key with small stones at the end. The gold watch belonged to [redacted] with the coil very romantically made from his wife's hair. He met her in New Zealand, she and her family came over on a later ship to ours. No one could remember her name so we turned to our book on Port Albert, the chapter after the [redacted] Family is one about the 'The Woman's Side' where [redacted] recounts her time in Port Albert. Soon after we found her with her own family and her maiden name of [redacted] with a photograph. I was so excited to have so many pieces of her, documentation of women in history is fairly weak so to have not only her name, not only her photograph but a page of her life recounted by her was so special. Her hair is a similar colour to my own, and I was just over the moon.

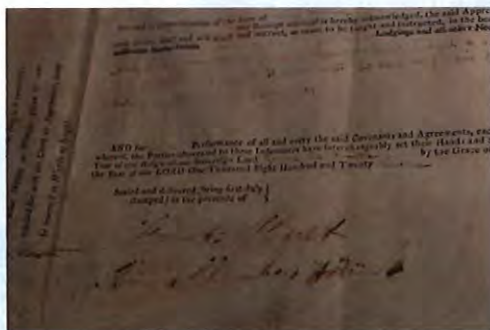
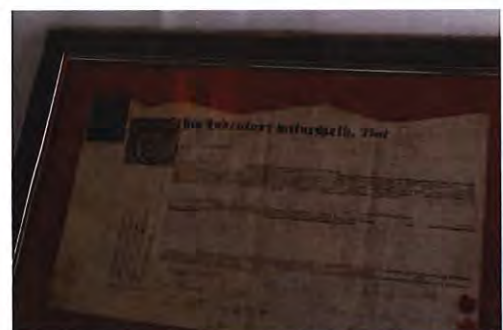


Every month or so My Nana comes to our house for tea and she brings us something she has found around her house. One time she brought a very large book wrapped in paper to help preserve it, we unwrapped it and looked through some of the pages. The [redacted] family had been very religious when they came to New Zealand; this book was brought with them, printed in 1705 and was about the bible. Dad said he remembered pressing leaves in it because it was so heavy, and somewhere in the back of the book was a little pencil drawing of a face. None of us knew who did it, I was so excited by this discovery of human contact which could have been in this book for over 100 years! The book was gifted to [redacted] by his parents, and in one of the pages, is a documentation of the family's births dating all the way back to 1811, although it is difficult to read much else.



Back in England, the [redacted] family was involved in lace making which was a very profitable industry at the time. In a cupboard searching for other artefact's I pulled it out and casted it aside not recognizing it but when I read it later I started to get excited. It was a lace making apprenticeship for [redacted] signed in 1827! I believe that this was [redacted], the father of the three [redacted] sent to New Zealand in 1862.

To the left is the large book, and below is the document, My Grandparents had it framed and hung on their wall, but took it down when the ink started to fade.

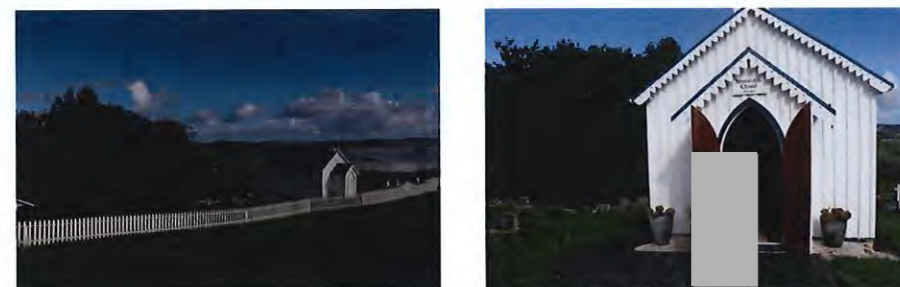
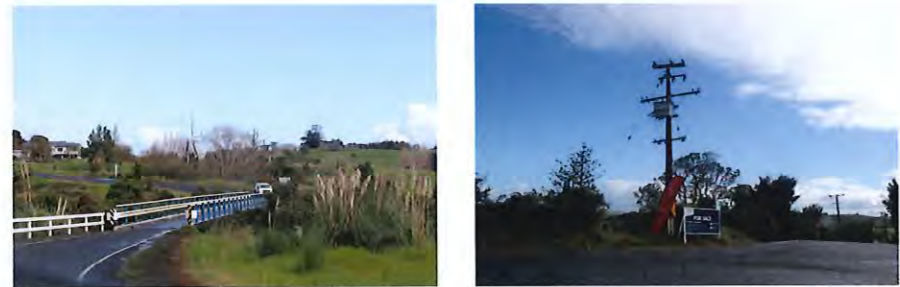


I have always had a fascination with these and used photography as a new method to preserve what we have. I wanted to capture their beauty and what made them so interesting. Every time my Nana comes over and brings something from her or her late husband [redacted]'s family I learn new things about them, and I love it.



Robin Morrison's photography

My photography in Port Albert



Capturing Port Albert - Robin Morrison and Grandpa Lee

Robin Morrison is one of New Zealand's most famous photographers. What draws many to him nowadays is a nostalgic view of this country, photographs of places that no longer exist due to the country being so built up.

What drew me to Morrison was the simplicity of his work, and how he saw the beauty in everyday life and took the time to capture it. Putting his work in context makes it even more interesting- it's not just the simple click of today's mobile phones and cameras. His photos were developed, and all have beautiful composition and colours. The focal point is clear and all his photos can easily be dissected using 3:3 grid lines.

I love all of his photos I came across and thought it would be appropriate to put this inspiration to use. I had a mission to depict the places of my ancestral past in a way that is simple yet intriguing. Morrison's photographs are not staged, and as I did different photo-shoots this year I found it's far easier to keep them this way; to distract any participant by making them do something else for the perfect candid.

My parents, my Nana and I went for a small road trip to Port Albert one weekend to visit [redacted] Chapel for this photography project. Along the way we spotted a building of interest, the Port Albert Hall, built in 1916, appearing to have been abandoned for some time. The older style, and show of neglect was of interest and walking around the building I thought about what made it appealing or interesting. My Dad pointed out that our family had likely moved down to Auckland by the time the hall was built. Still, why should it not be documented?

I spend most of my time as a passenger in the back seat looking out the side of the window. Robin Morrison's photography is exactly that, so trying to emulate a similarly interesting composition featuring the road we travel upon to little avail.

[redacted] Chapel is down a narrow dirt road with a scenic view. It is a picturesque chapel and although my non-religious nature wouldn't call it or its surrounding cemetery inviting, it is well maintained. The photographs center around the chapel yes, but I wanted to capture the environment around it. I tried to take the photos in manual mode, something very difficult for such an amateur photographer but I think my ineptitude was successful in making the subject more interesting and atmospheric.

Later on this year I went through at least 300 individual slides on a small projector looking for imagery for my level three art design work; which also has some focus on my family but in the way we remember it instead of the objective way it is. Almost all of the photos were taken by my Grandfather [redacted], who was, as it turns out, a brilliant photographer. The pictures' compositions feel purposeful and deliberate, he really cared about the photograph feeling compositionally interesting. He presumably subconsciously created photographs with interesting leading lines of roads, the negative space of the sky or land, and the compositions of his photographs always appear balanced. His photography becomes more impressive when you remember when they were taken and the actual expensive and arduous process of developing and taking photos in the 1970s and 80s. Virtually none of them are significantly over or under exposed or even blurry; as of the time film was very finite and so each picture had to be meticulously crafted as its result would be a mystery for weeks or even months. Being able to see these photos and note their visual similarities to a celebrated artist made them even more interesting beyond their depictions of my Dads childhood.

My Grandpa's [redacted] Photography



Its not all digital - experiments with camerless photography processes



Robert Frank

Frank photographed New York City, and was initially very unpopular due to his black and white photography which was viewed as outdated. His work was unglamorous, but to me, interesting. I loved his repetition and how negative space was so effectively used and filled. Scratched textures overlaid his work, implying physical work and nature to his photography. I liked this and decided to do some digital experiments with stencils to emulate him. the objects and documents I'll be photographing this year are extremely old, they have a lot of human contact; leaving scratches and fingerprints and marks on them. Something I think is interesting is how the print can be left on a photograph for a very long time and so we take care when holding photos to not leave a mark.

Making Stencils

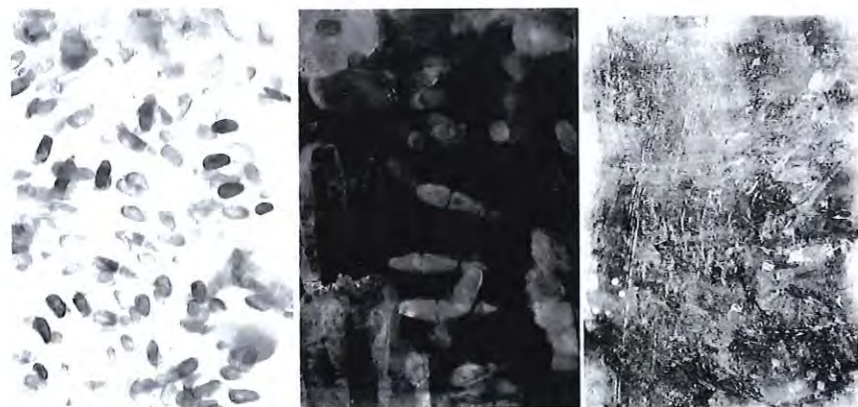
I figured I could create a stencil, scan it into Photoshop and change the colours and mess with layer settings in Photoshop to change the photo. Once dry the stencils were scanned to Photoshop, where I feel as if there is a juxtaposition to be spoken about; manufactured wear and tear of people on a digital photograph.

While creating the stencils I remembered a box of glass plate negatives at home. At that point I couldn't remember what they were but thought it would be interesting to see how they could look overlapping with the new photograph in a similar nature due to the transparency of glass.

Why plastic not paper? Paper will soak in the paint or ink in it, and is also opaque. If it is on plastic, it will simply sit on top of the material, meaning you can work into the existing ink not on top of it.

My first experiment was with black paint. When the paint was still wet, I used a coarse bristled wide brush and scraped back the paint so much of the sheet was still sheer. Although it didn't look bad, the stencil did not quite have the depth and pigment I was looking for.

Last year in my level 2 Painting, we worked with lino stencils where we had to roll the ink onto a steel plate before rolling it onto the lino. The thick ink had to be rolled perfectly flat on the plate to ensure it covered the roller properly. With this in mind I experimented with rolling ink directly onto the sheet. The ink and roller had a much more even thin layer which could easily be scratched into, letting light stream through the stencil. Although this worked very well, the ink takes a very long time to dry, and possibly will never dry fully because it is on plastic and cannot be soaked into the material like it can on paper..



ink stencils on transparency (left)
digital emulations of Robert Franks work (right)



My Early Cyanotype Experiments

Relying on light, sunlight particularly, is what lead me to cyanotype. My photography teacher showed me how you can print photos onto clear plastic sheets and use them to create images in cyanotype- which is a light sensitive chemical. This chemical is painted onto the sheets which is best to be left to dry overnight before it can be used. It is very interesting to use other forms of photography that are not just a modern digital camera.

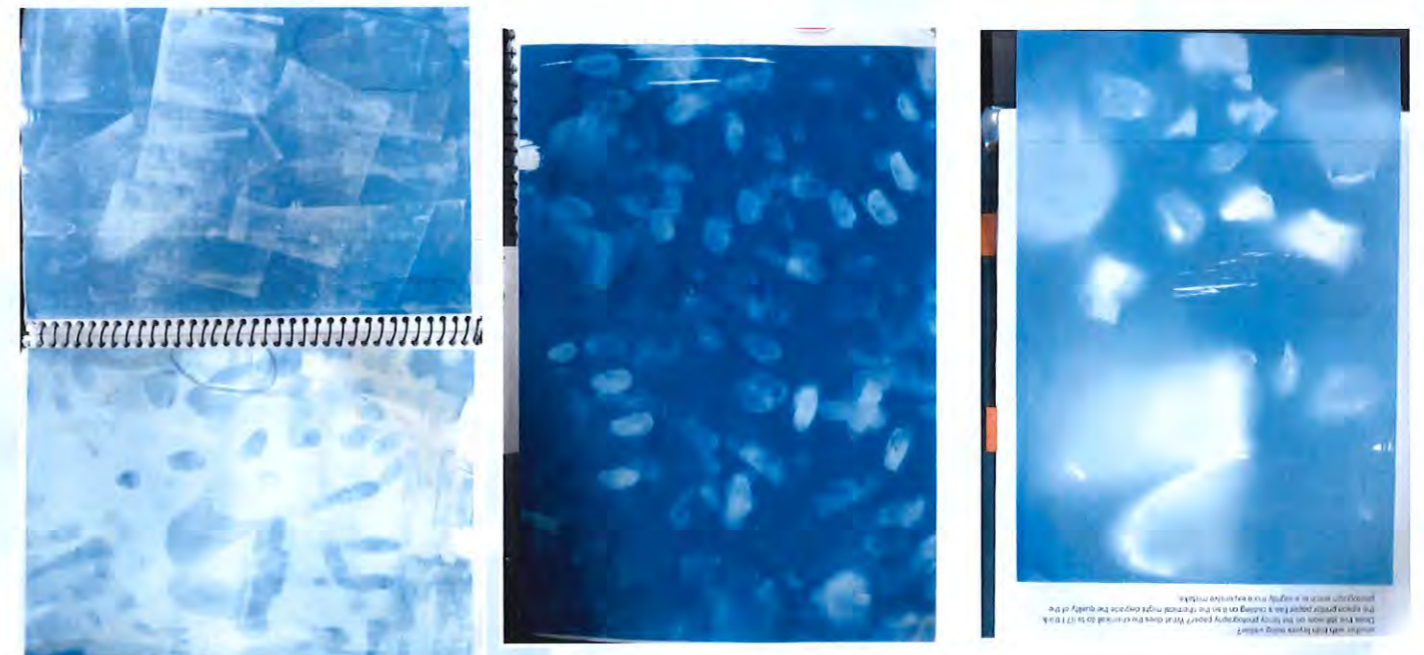
These experiments are simple.

I took a sheet of cyanotype paper, my stencil, and a glass sheet to hold down the paper outside. Layering them all, we left the first one, for about two and a half minutes before bringing it back inside and running the paper under water for about five minutes. I was shocked by how fast it developed, but making sure to bring everything in on time can be a little stressful. I put the sheet in an overflowing shallow container so that the water is not stagnant.

But these are just experiments here, but that was just the beginning.

These textures are able to work as standalone, but for me it was just the beginning. It was exciting to be able to make my own pictures, and it could be done with anything that had a shadow.

On one occasion, I was carelessly trying to do more prints and accidentally knocked a glass jar on the floor. I then wondered what would happen if I lay out my glass over a cyanotype sheet and left it in the sun and although the result was underwhelming it was still an interesting experiment. It was an interesting way to see how light goes through glass, and makes way to other experiments I did.



I can do more than use a digital camera? PHYSICAL EXPERIMENTATION

Those are HOW old?!

There are two types of glass plate negatives; wet plates, which were the first type and were unreliable, and dry plates which were produced from around the 1880s-1920s. My family owns a box of the latter. How did these old and valuable pieces of my history come into my hands? Auckland's Maritime Museum, which generally focuses on New Zealand's early pioneers, both Māori migration as well as early pākehā settlers such as my own family. In 2016 they sent a letter to my grandpa Lee but addressed to our house; we opened it and my dad called them about the letter.

Sometime before his death, my Grandpa [redacted] had donated a large box of glass plate negatives and photographs to the Maritime Museum unbeknown to anyone else. We brought them home, looked at the plates and photographs before carefully sliding them back into their foam and paper wrappings in the box to be hidden in a cupboard for years. Only this year did I really think about them. None of the paper photographs were labeled with anything bar one (see left). So whilst these are enigmatic we can assume that they were mostly if not entirely taken in the Kaipara Harbour or Oruawharo River, as much of it looks similar.

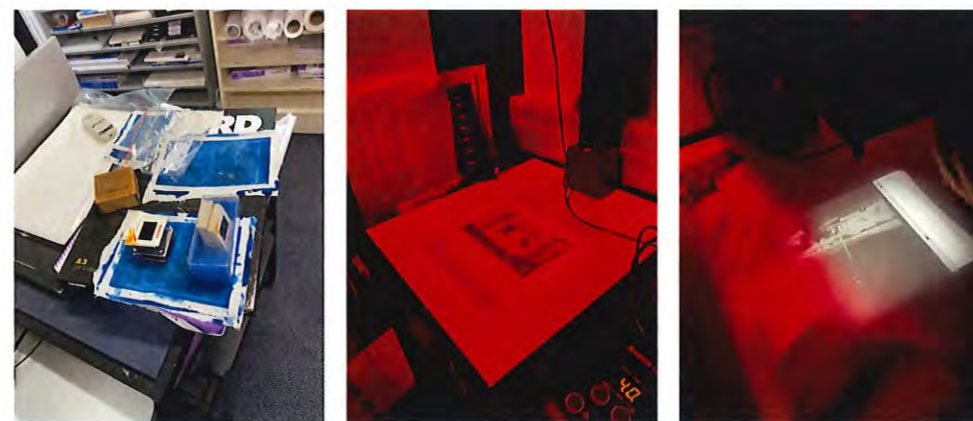


Pinhole Photography and Darkroom Exposures

A pinhole camera is very simple and one of the most rudimentary forms of capturing images. I love how accessible it makes photography as an art form- at least in taking the image. It still needs to be developed, but so long as you have access to a darkroom then this is not an issue. This form of photography excites me greatly because of its simplicity: it's just a box with a hole in it. And yet you are able to capture an image, a moment or rather a couple minutes of time (given that it has to be exposed). It also makes me feel connected to my family members, who would have also had to sit for several minutes to have a photograph of them. It is an immersive experience. Whilst in theory and even in practice Pinhole cameras are simplistic, exposure times are always experimental and you don't know what the photo will look like until you develop it, which for me was usually days or weeks. I tried Pinhole photography on two occasions, with the same camera. On the first, my Nana was over and she sat with us in front of the box which my father meticulously balanced on top of rocks on top of the wheelie bin (glamorous). The exposure time was far too long and the only thing visible was some lines of our garage. Feeling a tad dismissive, I decided to take a backup photo on my phone to develop on the enlarger if it went wrong next time. On our second attempt I felt so excited when we found an image, a negative! A real negative and we just sat in front of a box for a couple of minutes!

The process of photo development makes me feel a similar way. I made a plastic negative from my family portrait and brought the plastic negatives from the maritime museum alongside some of Lees slides. Lee wasn't an Albertlander, but his photos were stunning, and I wanted a way to be able to more easily show the slides to others. We weighed down the negative, and paper with glass so that the image exposed flat. For each negative we had to test them to see the best time of exposure for the clearest photograph. The negatives tended to have an exposure of about 4 seconds, and although one of the test exposures has had a light leak it is still clear how long each section was exposed (in increments of two seconds). For my slides it was very different, light is meant to go through them to see the photo, since it was in colour no one knew how or even if they were going to turn out. After a 2.5 second exposure and putting them in the buckets of stop, go, fix, and running water they turned out very well. Before exposing I was careful to put the slides at the right height with the safe-light so that the photographs didn't come out blurry.

As a result I have physical copies of photos that had previously never been more than little bits of plastic tucked away in an enormous box of many little slides, rarely touched.





Trial 1- DID NOT WORK. chapel and cow field landscape. - didn't leave in the sun for long enough, chapel was faintly visible before water but sunlight may have changed it before I rinsed it? found some more plates with a more noticeable contrast so next I will try with them.

Trial 2- different negatives, these ones let more sun through. this trial had a sun time of about 3-3.5 minutes? it works well, other still faint BUT VISIBLE (progress) Def needs long exposure time. note- the weather was slightly better and had more sun during this one.

Trial 3- exposure time 6.5 minutes approx, weather cloudy. Can sort of see that the transparent negative has less exposure than empty space? could use slightly longer but I only have a couple sheets of cyanotype paper left, and this was one of the best results so far
A darker image is visible but hard to see.

Trial 4- Chapel 2, exposure time 10-15 minutes in cloudy/rainy weather. Waited for it to get more sunny again before printing, picked up to hold to sun at one point, probably distorted image. image was super visible when removed glass plate, but the water seemed to remove majority of its definition

Trial 5- collage thing? left for about 15 minutes because it seems that image may show up better. 15 minutes then rinsing, again the print looked really good but then the water seemed to have ruined it? I don't understand why but maybe the tones were too subtle and thus got washed away.

I wanted a way to preserve the Plates Photographs in a way that would not damage them. All my previous cyanotype experimentation led up to this. Seen in these pages I lay my glass negatives on the cyanotype paper in the sun to try from the images but to no avail., In my first trial, I did not leave them long enough, only three minutes. Trial two and three were with much smaller plates that had distinct contrast which was easier for the sun to penetrate through.

I quickly learnt that to get a clear image I had to leave the plates out to develop for much longer than I wanted to, anywhere from about 10-20 minutes; and even then the images were unclear. When the negatives are placed down onto a surface the whole plate appears foggy, so this is not surprising.

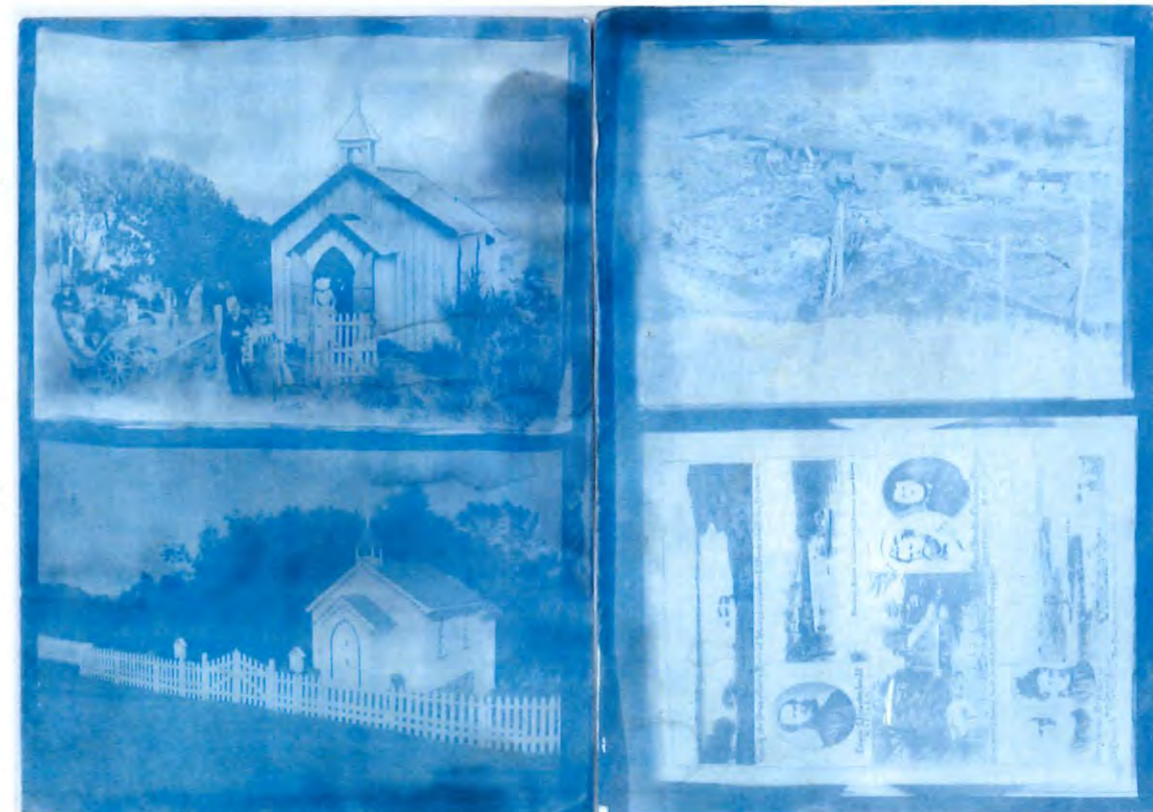
On some of my trials the transferred image was clear before rinsing (see bottom left) but when I rinsed them under water the image faded almost entirely. Due to the age and sensitivity of the plates, leaving them exposed in the sun for long periods of time can be damaging, which is the last thing I would want to do. Feeling discouraged by the failure of this experiment and wary of their vulnerability I figured the only feasible way to create clear cyanotype exposures was to create stencils on transparency.

I made my own copies of some of the glass plates by making my Dad hold them up against the window toward the sun so that the image was visible. Then I just took a photo and edited it on Photoshop, and printed it out to make my own plastic negatives that would not only work far better, but not cause damage to my precious artefact's. I have written on the backs of my most successful exposures with dates in and explanations in the hopes that it will help the preservation of the existing plates by keeping them in their dark bags for longer.

How I almost destroyed 140 year old glass plate negatives



Putting these works on my board was important to me, it was the beginning of my experimentation with physical mediums of photography and printmaking. Later on I got into the darkroom with other traditional methods of photo



The bearer of knowledge

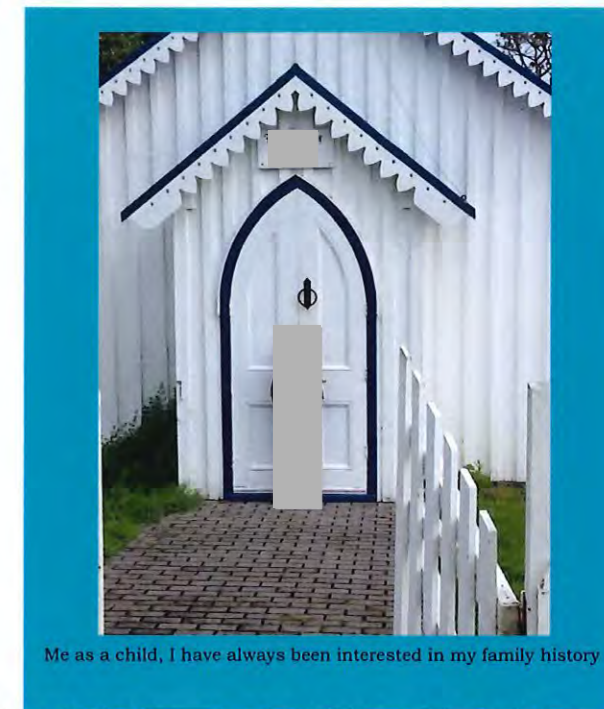
When people die their memories and knowledge go with them, unless they are passed on. When I was little my dad often talked about how my Grandpa [redacted] knew a lot about his family, cousins, and was a spectacular mechanic owning 25 vintage motorcycles before his death in 2003. When he talks about his family, or the motorcycles we still have, he gets frustrated at the things he is unable to know or must go and find everywhere.

When I was doing my photography project this year I asked my Nana if my cousins knew anything about our families history or would have been interested in going up north to see our chapel or anything. 'Oh no no no' came from my Nana with no hesitation. I have always felt like it was my duty to continue finding out who everyone is and to know where all our artefact's came from in both eras and who it belonged to. But now it seems more dire in a way; every time I have been to the [redacted] Chapel the only people I have seen have been very very old.

Am I the only person to be able to continue our, not really a legacy but to preserve what we have, to be the bearer of knowledge. How do I instill this knowledge and passion into my children so I have less fear of the loss of history when I die? I know this is something I won't have to worry about for a while. In the meantime, I can continue to fuel my knowledge about my family and where we are from, and where we have been. When I'm older I want to go to England to see The [redacted] Family homestead; I know it still exists, I've seen photos of it on-line and although its now a block of flats its still important to me. Up until recently I thought when people talked about how important family is, that blood is thicker than water was sappy cheesy nonsense. But the more I investigate the Albertlanders, my grandparents, my great grandparents the more I understand. I feel ecstatic when I find mentions of them in articles that my own blood, a part of me could be remembered and documented and known in this way. I've found articles about other Brookes and wonder if they are related to me; some moved to America or Australia, and the religious Albertlanders had many children so could I be distantly related to these people? My interest in my history has been such a brazen part of my childhood even with the simplest of things like my own bed. I feel so passionate about all of it and I don't think that it's the sort of passion that dies. I intend on continuing to broaden my understanding of my family and to recreate it in artworks in my tertiary studies; I will be studying at The [redacted] School of Fine Arts. I can explore preservation and research my family in even more interesting ways.



The [redacted] Family, then vs now (its shrunk)
I shot this on black and white film, and digitally. Below is the digital print.



Me as a child, I have always been interested in my family history

Below is an installation I made for our school exhibition: I included my family portraits, alongside much of my experimentation. To demonstrate a timeline perception



Scholarship

Subject: Visual Arts – Photography

Standard: 93310

Total Score: 18

Marker commentary

This Scholarship Photography submission focuses on sites of significance for the candidate and her whānau, setting the scene for their family migration story. Their investigation into this family history began at primary school (revisited in 2017, 2020, 2023). Utilising this familial search as a beginning point for a photographic enquiry provided many inroads to the nature of the unfolding image-making.

Seeking out stories and spending time in the town's chapel, 'imagining' these spaces and places where their grandparents once sat, was a pivotal move in developing a connected relationship with the past. The workbook effectively documents the journey taken in honouring the family story through a mix of the candidate's own conversations with family, recording and telling (written text and old photographs), and thereby establishing a modus operandi for seeking out new ways of seeing whakapapa in the context of their creative discovery process.

In conjunction with their pursuit to know more, the candidate started asking questions about aesthetics and collections. They understand the productive tension between the aesthetics of a handwritten mark, the fade of a well-worn page and the significance of holding an object once held by their ancestors. We know this via their own photographs on the folio and the accounts in the workbook. These were productive prompts for reflecting on family ephemera/printed matter, old photographs and artefacts found or gifted and how these elements/subject matter could be used to stretch out the imagined content across time. Due to the lived experience component of the enquiry, the project remained active and inquiring throughout. The candidate's Nana was able to share various treasured objects, such as the family bible (containing a hand-drawn face) and two silver/gold pocket watches, which became the central subject matter for later photographs.

Various photography practices are employed; cyanotype, pinhole and darkroom (including stencils and glass negatives) position the work across and in time. Experimentation with non-digital processes conceptually supports their interest in looking into the past, such as using the pinhole camera to take a contemporary family portrait akin to the qualities of the historical family photograph and working with family-owned film slides and glass plate negatives. Incorporating these found images/processes into their own work trajectory created a rich layer to the work that both honours and makes the past present.

Links to artists' work like Robin Morrison and Robert Frank inform processes and aesthetic decision-making. The candidate was analytical and thoughtful in how they engaged in their artmaking, in parallel with their ongoing experience of learning and knowing more through each iterative phase and artwork made. The folio work evidences an authentic journey through an articulately composed and well-executed body of practice.