

Heather Joy

Mikaela Jones

This work is inspired by my unconditional love and admiration for my Nan. As a nurse, she moved from the city to marry a farmer. In respect for this challenging transition, I have drawn using graphite pencil onto three photographic compositions of a collection of my Nan's nursing documents. Drawing from three recognisable photographs of my Nan taken when she first moved onto the farm, I aim to represent the change from Nursing to farm life that she underwent. The first drawing shows Nan on her wedding day, the second driving the tractor and the third looking after puppies.

In exploring ideas for my subject matter, I began drawing, looking at a range of different mediums such as graphite, fine liner pen, pastel and coloured pencil. Influenced by the work of Julian Ashton "*In the shearing shed*" 1883, I drew from my own photographs taken from my family's farming property. Using pen, lead me to look at the work of Nathan Ferlazzo who creates intricate prints of Native Australian wildlife and I considered drawing animals from my property. I found the drawings I completed of our working dogs and found using pencil highly effective. Using pen, I was not able to create a strong sense of realism and tone that I preferred.

This led to the exploration of artist Scott Mackie and his work drawing upon different materials such as his work titled "The heart shaped box" which is drawn on vintage cards. This led to my investigation of multiple artists who draw upon and transform different surfaces to create their artwork and use this surface to add meaning to their works. Laura Wills draws into maps, using their specific shapes to create an inspiring artwork. I tried to create this same effect in my own work.

I knew our family had kept my Nan's documents from her time as a Nurse and this encouraged me to depict a 'portrait' of her. In particular, I was very interested in the transition she made to go from Nursing to working alongside her husband on our family property. Rather than scanning the documents, through experimentation I found photographing and digital editing resulted in clearer resolution and achieving the colour I sought. From here, I explored drawing using fine liner pen again, through the subtleness and detailed realism achieved through tonal rendering was most successful using graphite. In an attempt to incorporate Nan's documents in the work to strengthen meaning, I explored how I might interweave text in the documents with my drawings, similar to the carefully composed work of Laura Wills. With little confidence in drawing, artist Adonna Khare's techniques provided ways for me to realistically shade my drawings to make them as lifelike as possible.

Drawing upon carefully composed personal family documents was important in achieving my desired aesthetic as well as creating interest and meaning for viewers. I believe I have successfully characterised my Nans two different lives coming together as one, in a sensitive, simple use of media, showing respect for this inspiring personal story.

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